

POLITICAL JUXTAPOSITIONS: WILDCRAFTING AMONG HERB DIGGERS IN
GRAHAM COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA (1900-2004)

by

Shannon E. McBride

(Under the direction of J. Peter Brosius)

ABSTRACT

Since 1980 the harvesting of nontimber forest products has become an increasing concern of land managers, economic development organizations, and a variety of individuals interested in finding ways of earning a living in western North Carolina. Chief among these concerns are issues regarding who has the right to harvest these species, sustainability, marketability and profitability. Between the summer of 1997 and the fall of 2004 I explored these issues by conducting historical/archival and ethnographic research on the cultural history of 'wildcrafting' in Graham County, North Carolina. An emphasis was placed on ideas stemming from Political Ecology and Ethnoecology while also addressing several applied concerns. My results show that the number of 'mountain people' who are wild harvesting species from the forest in order to supplement their income is decreasing over time. Several factors are determining this trend including: diminishing access to resources, increasing degrees of land privatization, diminishing resources, the increasing amount of time and labor required to obtain nontimber forest products (NTFP's), low prices being paid for NTFP's and inconsistent markets. At the same time, however, increasing numbers of 'outsiders' are interested in cultivating these species and producing value-added products made from them. This dynamic has resulted in cultural conflicts over what are and are not appropriate standards of living and livelihood strategies. Current notions of wildcrafting pose a threat and a challenge to the identities of mountain people who have lived in Graham County for generations. This threat is locally perceived as being yet another stage in a 'government' effort to disenfranchise mountain people that began near the beginning of the twentieth century. Such beliefs, while often justified, pose an impediment and a challenge to organizations attempting to identify constructive ways of managing our nation's public resources.

INDEX WORDS: Wildcrafting, Herb Digging, Moss, Ginseng, Sustainable Economic Development, National Forests, Political Ecology, Ethnoecology, Snowbird Cherokee

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DEDICATION

For all of those who are striving for a better tomorrow, a world in which our differences no longer divide us.

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Anyone who has completed a Ph.D. dissertation will tell you that it requires a lot of perseverance and soul searching to get it done. I do not believe that any of us would complete such a task without the reassurance, support and generosity of other people. This has certainly been true for me. This project began when Phil Gibson of Western Carolina Tomorrow suggested that I meet with Robin Suggs of Yellow Creek Botanical Institute. At the time Mr. Suggs was in the beginning stages of creating an organization to initiate a sustainable economic development initiative in Graham County. While witnessing this process I was introduced to a variety of people and issues in the area, and became intrigued by its history of harvesting nontimber forest products. Eventually Yellow Creek Botanical Institute came into being and helped support my research by hiring me as a consultant for a three months, for which I am very grateful. This opportunity also afforded me the opportunity of interacting with a variety of people who became my future participants and advisors. They include; Melissa Caldwell, Frank Rogers Jr. (Director of Graham County's Mapping and Land Records office), Anna Van Scoyoc (University of Georgia librarian), Frank Findley, Gary Kaufman and R.E. Vann of the United States Forest Service, Iva Rattler (caretaker of the Junaluska Museum), Ronnie Mason, Joanne Parrott, Monty Holder, Ila Hatter and Jerry Coleman, Jeanine Davis, Tony Hayes, and Jackie Greenfield. I also owe a special thanks also to Bruce DeGroot, Karen Mickler and the rest of the DeGroot family at Yellow Branch Farm. They provided me with a place to stay for many months and fed me well. I also want to

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CHAPTER 1

POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF 'FORGETTING'

In recent decades numerous researchers in Southern Appalachia have documented the existence of a rich body of ethnobotanical knowledge among inhabitants of the region (Arnow 1960, Banks 1953, Bolyard 1981, Brunk 1997, Cozzo 1996, Hamel and Chiltoskey 1975, Hufford 1995, Hufford 1997, Olson 1998, Patton 1988, Wigginton 1972). Much of this knowledge has revolved around what have come to be known of as 'wildcrafting' practices. As the term is used today, a wildcrafter is someone who harvests nontimber forest products, usually to sell and thereby supplement their personal income, but sometimes to consume themselves. The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization defines nontimber forest products as being, "...foods, such as wild edible mushrooms, fruits, nuts, and berries; medicinal plants and fungi; floral greenery and horticultural stocks; fiber and dye plants, lichens, and fungi; and oils, resins, and other chemical extracts from plants, lichens, and fungi (McClain and Jones 2002)."

In addition to identifying Appalachian wildcrafters as sources of ethnobotanical knowledge, recent researchers have revealed that throughout the twentieth century this body of knowledge has increasingly become eroded (Bolyard 1981, Cozzo 1996, Hamel and Chiltoskey 1975, Dyer 1988, Wigginton 1972). This is a cause for concern among those who are interested in understanding and monitoring the wildcrafting that is occurring today. This concern is largely motivated by questions that have arisen as the commercial demand for natural plant products (nontimber forest products) has increased,

particularly since the 1980's. In order to document the way in which local or so-called traditional knowledge is being eroded, and the consequences of this erosion during a time in which commercial uses of indigenous plants are increasing, I have written a historical ethnography of ethnobotanical knowledge in Graham County, North Carolina. The value of this project lies not only in the documentation of this history, but in the elucidation of the ways in which political and economic processes transact with local knowledge systems.

Because of its particular history of economic, political, and demographic change during the twentieth century, Graham County, North Carolina is an ideal setting in which to pursue this research. Unlike many segments of Appalachia that are facing the pressures of a 'World System' economy (Dunaway 1996), Graham County still has resources that can be managed and maintained productively. Some families have managed to retain their family land, and the landscape has not been irrevocably degraded the way it has been in other parts of Southern Appalachia. Nevertheless, Graham County residents have experienced many economic and political transformations. Among the most significant changes that have occurred in the county are the following:

- Development of the logging industry in western North Carolina.
- Labor recruitment initiatives by outside industry.
- Construction of roads since the 1930's.
- Enclosure and regulation of land use.
- Influx of second home builders.
- Conservation initiatives in Appalachia.

One overall effect of these changes has been a significant shift in patterns of plant use and exploitation. Until these changes began to occur, plant collecting for a number of uses was widespread and largely unregulated (Arnow 1960, Banks 1953, Bolyard 1981, Duncan 1997, Dyer 1988, Hamel and Chiltoskey 1975, Hufford 1995, Hufford 1997, Lee and Oliver 1967, Olson 1998, Otto 1983, Patton 1988, Wigginton 1972). As the above changes have occurred, however, mountain people have increasingly pursued economic alternatives outside of Graham County, and households have become less dependent on local resources. Identifying and examining the nature and extent of these changes is therefore one of the main objectives of this dissertation. I have also examined how each of these shifts contributed to the erosion of ethnobotanical knowledge in the twentieth century. I have done this by integrating concepts from both Ethnoecology and Political Ecology.

Ethnoecology and Political Ecology are both relevant to this study in that the funds of knowledge available to a community and its members is an aggregate of individual and social experiences which are informed by the political and economic structures dominant within that community (See Figure 1.1). Considering both sets of dynamics allows for a better understanding of why changes have occurred in the ways that they have, and why ethnobotanical knowledge has been affected in particular ways. Considering this tension also helps evaluate why current conservation dilemmas being faced in Graham County are being felt in the ways that they are. Individual experiences are viewed as being a product of the type of practices (context, job, hobbies) that particular people have participated in and a person's positioning in the overall social structures that are present (such as gender or class). The dominant economic and

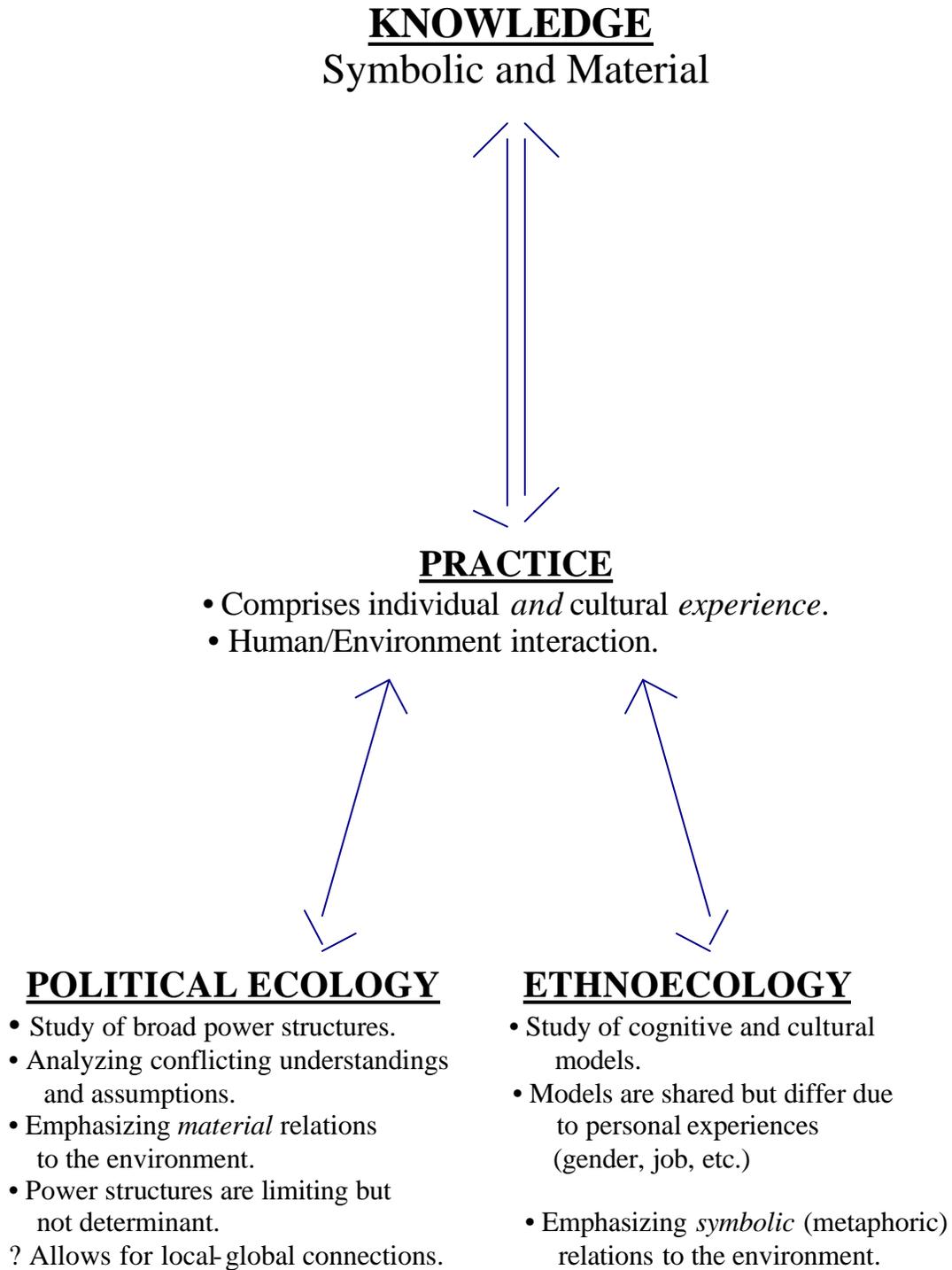


Figure 1.1: Intersection Between Knowledge, Practice and Theory.

political structures being analyzed include the United States Forest Service, outside land owners, Graham County's Planning and Economic Development strategies, tourism programs and objectives in western North Carolina, development initiatives, non-profit organizations, city and tribal councils, natural plant product markets, and the roles of various county and state officials.

Objectives

This research addresses three main questions.

- I. To what extent is botanical knowledge dependent on context or practice?

There are several ongoing debates regarding what knowledge is and why humans perceive some aspects of their environment and not others (Berlin 1992, Boster 1996, D'Andrade 1995, Ellen 1993). It has been hypothesized that ethnobotanical knowledge stems from the type of activities and economic practices in which humans participate, and that these practices determine the structure and forms that such knowledge takes (Ellen 1993). I will address this question in Graham County by considering ways in which changes in the local economy have altered resident's interaction with the plants of the region. At the same time I hope to be able to discern whether ideas about common Appalachian plants have changed among long-term residents. In order to do this I have partially re-constructed the ethnobotanical knowledge of Graham County, North Carolina circa 1900. This partial reconstruction is a baseline of information that I have used in order to identify specific structural changes and to interpret the affects that these changes have had on ethnobotanical knowledge. It also serves as a body of information with which to compare current ethnographic data. The methods that were used to gather this data are outlined in the chapter that follows.

Although I believe that ethnobotanical knowledge was being modified, lost, and acquired prior to 1900, this time has been chosen as a beginning point in order to make the scope of this project more manageable. This year is a logical point at which to begin because it was at this time that the number and degree of changes that have been experienced by European settlers in Graham County, North Carolina intensified and began to occur more rapidly. It should go without saying that Cherokee people had already been experiencing tremendous upheavals for quite some time. The types of patterns that I have tried to identify include:

- How various types of plant knowledge are distributed throughout local communities.
- Whether or not plants that were culturally and/or economically important around 1900 are still important today.
- The cultural and economic contexts in which local residents consider given plants to be important in some way.

Identifying these types of patterns has helped me begin to determine the structure of local knowledge regarding Southern Appalachian plants and how this structure has been affected by economic changes that have occurred since 1900. It has also helped me to gain some insights in to how changes in human practice and human/plant interactions have structured this knowledge.

II. The second question that I have considered is, to what extent does long-term residence in Graham County promote the acquisition and maintenance of botanical knowledge? It has been documented that human communities that have been sustaining themselves in a given place for many generations have better understandings of those given landscapes than communities that have migrated to these regions relatively recently (Wittman and Geisler 2005, Atran 1999). It has been argued that such understanding

may make these individuals more aware of the ways in which their own activities change or alter their immediate surroundings and that such areas are botanically or biologically diverse relative to those inhabited by more recent human populations (Atran 1999, Jones and Lynch 2002, Nabhan 1997, Peet and Watts 1996).

For the purposes of this study ethnobotanical ‘knowledge’ is evaluated in terms of the number of non-cultivated plants that are known, whether individuals recognize these plants in situ and ex situ, and the degree to which individuals know how to manage, cultivate and/or use given plants. As mentioned above, this set of information is used here as a second body of baseline data that, together with the circa 1900 knowledge reconstruction, is used to evaluate what has been ‘forgotten’ from one generation to the next, and the forms that changes in ethnobotanical knowledge have taken. This data has also been taken one step further by comparing what is known by long-term residents with what younger people (ages 18-50) and recent immigrants to the area commonly know about local and native plants. By asking how long-term residency affects ethnobotanical knowledge I hope to also be able to evaluate three applied questions.

The applied questions I consider are, 1) What is the nature and extent of so-called ‘wildcrafting’ in Graham County, North Carolina today?, 2) Are traditional nontimber forest product harvesting practices compatible with current ideas about wildcrafting?, and 3) Is harvesting nontimber forest products compatible with the management of public lands? I hope that by answering these questions I will be able to help identify ways in which local people may be integrated into a process that can result in the development of effective and just policies regarding native plants in western North Carolina. By outlining what people understand, know, and are concerned about, important sources of

information can be identified. This creates the potential for enlisting allies in a common cause, rather than focusing on enforcing policies and settling disputes. I particularly hope that by asking these questions I have learned things that will enable me to suggest ways in which the United States Forest Service might collaborate with Graham County residents more effectively.

There is a history of tension between federal employees and the rest of the community in Graham County. Long-term residents resent the fact that the Forest Service regulates land and resources that have historically been largely unregulated, and that were formerly used and shared among county residents regardless of whether or not the land was privately owned. Many changes have been imposed upon locals by ‘outsiders’, and these changes are often thought to only benefit non-residents, tourists, and newcomers. However, Forest Service objectives regarding conservation can only be successful if they have the support of these residents. Any goals that can be identified that are mutually beneficial, and any mutual understanding that can be established would therefore help to achieve this end. Since political ecology provides a means of considering the differential meanings and power relations that act upon such situations, and since ethnoecology helps to identify why certain things are important to individuals and how they go about making complex decisions, combining the two fields productively will facilitate fulfilling this objective.

III. Finally, the third major objective of this research project is to identify how various kinds of power mechanisms can influence the way in which harvesting nontimber forest products is understood by outsiders, and whose knowledge is legitimized and deemed relevant when dealing with current nontimber forest product issues. I am also

interested in considering the ways in which these same power mechanisms can influence what knowledge is utilized and passed on from one generation to the next. In other words, to what extent do various mechanisms of power determine what is remembered and forgotten in Graham County, North Carolina?

Many efforts have already been made to document resistance movements (Guha 1996, Routledge 1996), the ways in which people can be silenced (Escobar 1996, Foster 1988, Gaventa 1980, Shapiro 1978), and the results of globalization (Forstater 2002, Norberg-Hodge 1991). But the ways in which power relationships can affect systems of ethnobotanical knowledge have not been greatly explored. By incorporating aspects of political ecology into my exploration of nontimber forest products and ethnobotanical knowledge in Graham County I hope to ameliorate this situation. Doing so will enable me to identify unintended consequences associated with current policies, and possible strategies for future development that can be successful without unnecessarily disenfranchising local people.

Knowledge/Change Relationships

Two major premises of this research are, 1) that ethnobotanical knowledge systems are not, and never have been, fixed in time or unchanging, and 2) that bodies of knowledge evolve both because of changes in individual understandings and because of social, political, and economic changes in a given region. The former principle is well established in the literature (Atran 1999, Boster 1996, Brush et al. 1992, Bye 1981, Dove 1999, Harrison 1989, Nabhan 1985, Nazarea 1999, Richards 1996, Sperling 1992, Vasavi 1994, Zimmerer 1991). The latter is perhaps understood but has not been applied to ethnobotanical knowledge in a broad or systematic way (Escobar 1996, Zerner 2000).

Vasavi (1994), for instance, describes how changes in agricultural technology have altered former ideas about society and are leading to the disappearance of traditional crop varieties in India. He does not, however, consider ethnobotanical knowledge as a patterned whole or consider what criteria individuals use when deciding what to plant for both private and commercial use.

The methodologies from Ethnoecology and Political Ecology offer essential insights for a more complete understanding of how ethnobotanical knowledge changes over time. Ethnoecology is largely concerned with cognitive models that individuals use to consider the advantages and disadvantages associated with various behaviors and/or courses of action, while political ecology addresses political structures and ideas that tend to limit what individual's see as being acceptable choices. Viewed in this way it would clearly be impossible to understand how entire 'ways of knowing' disappear without considering the relationship between these two perspectives. Just as there is a 'politics of memory' (Amin 1995, Bahloul 1996, Boyarin 1994, Dove 1999, Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983, Honig 1997, Klein 1997, Nazarea 1996, Norkunas 1994, Rappaport 1990) and a 'politics of knowledge' (Brosius 1997, Dalby 1996, Zerner 1995), so too is there a politics in what is forgotten. In the context of ethnobotanical knowledge this is a two-way interaction between individual activities and experiences (such as farming or plant collecting) and rapid change (economic re-structuring, land regulation).

Practitioners of both ethnoecology and political ecology ask questions about what constitutes knowledge. The reasons for this interest tend to differ, however. Political ecologists utilize larger scales of analysis that are simultaneously able to consider issues of marginality, recognize a plurality of perceptions, and acknowledge the ways in which

social relations can limit the options that people have and the questions that they are able to effectively ask (Paulson et al. 2003). Ethnoecology primarily identifies and analyzes the schemas and cognitive models that individuals use in particular contexts. This difference and its implications are described below.

Ethnoecologists have traditionally attempted to define what knowledge is (Boster 1996), and to explain how knowledge is shaped by an individual's environment, through processes of human cognition and vice versa (Atran 1997, Berlin 1992, Ellen 1993, Hunn 1985, Toledo 1992). Ethnobotanical knowledge, in particular, has been defined as having a high degree of consensus among group members (Boster 1996), and has been shown to be differentially distributed within and between communities (Boster 1986, Gal 1973, Nazarea 1999, Rocheleau et al. 1995). Discussions of these findings began with what is known as the Utilitarian/Cognitive debate.

The driving force behind the utilitarian/cognitive debate was the desire to determine the basis on which traditional principles of classification are built. According to Berlin (1992), the Intellectualist (cognitive) stance evolved out of French Structuralism and the work of Levi-Strauss, and out of Ralph Bulmer's work in American Ethnoscience. The Utilitarian (adaptationalist) approach is based on English Functionalism (Malinowski) and neofunctionalists such as Hunn and Morris who, like Bulmer, were influenced by American Ethnoscience (Berlin 1992). The key issue at hand was to determine which plants are and are not classified in traditional classification systems (Berlin 1992). This question was raised soon after it became widely recognized that none of the systems that had been identified treated the natural world

comprehensively. In other words, no traditional group of people labels every living organism in their environment.

To summarize the debate, intellectualists argue that the plants that are labeled in a given nomenclature are the ones that are most perceptually salient. This means that monotypic genera, especially if their family is monotypic in the local area, are the organisms most likely to be named. Utilitarians counter that an organism is particularly salient if it is recognized as being useful in some way, and that a human's first priority is to meet their basic needs. Therefore, things that are used are given names. To this, the intellectualists respond that people must make some sense out of the world, order it in some way before they can 'use' it, and counter that many non-used organisms *are* given names. Utilitarians, in turn, respond to this by pointing out potential uses for everything named, stating that any given system has implications for adaptation and is therefore useful in and of itself. This brings cognitive intellectualist advocates back to the point that they can predict what will be named in a local environment (monotypic genera), based on complete biological inventories, without any prior knowledge of the cultural significance of any plant, animal, etc.

Ethnoecologists who are not as concerned with cognitive salience or universal principles of classification have for the most part side-stepped the utilitarian/cognitive question. As noted earlier, many ethnoecologists today are primarily concerned with specific, applied problems or contexts, and are therefore more interested in what people think they know and the ways in which 'cultural models' influence behavior. Cultural models are understood to be widely shared understandings (knowledge) or action plans (D'Andrade 1995, Kempton et al. 1995, Strauss and Quinn 1997). This shift has resulted

in a relatively large and diverse body of literature, much of which has come from outside of anthropology. These authors have been analyzing the conditions under which new technologies are adopted (Brush et al. 1992, Vasavi 1994), people's ability to make adaptive land use decisions based on traditional knowledge (Crumley 2000, Frechione et al. 1989, Nazarea 1995, Quiros 1990, Richards 1996, Sperling 1992, Zimmerer 1991), and the different ways in which plants can become culturally significant (Brush 1992, Dove 1999, Harrison 1989, Shigeta 1996, Vasavi 1994), among other things. These studies have shown that, 1) all cultures experiment and gain understandings of their environment by hypothesizing about the things they observe (deductive reasoning is not limited to the domain of Western Science)(Bellon1991, Zimmerer1991), and that 2) plants and practices are sometimes imbued with multiple and symbolic meanings (Dove 1999, Mitra and Pal 1994, Shigeta 1996).

In addition to the above, it has come to be understood that people's ideas and decisions are based on complex understandings of what they have learned, experienced, and value (Frisch 1994, Strauss and Quinn 1997). It is also understood that if people recognize given patterns and/or associate given ideas with one another enough times, the association can become a powerful and sometimes unconscious, motivating force (Jeffrey and Edwall 1994, Strauss and Quinn 1997, D'Andrade 1995). In other words, ideas can be believed to be natural or true regardless of a given individual's personal experiences or lack thereof. For example, people can come to believe that economic growth, regardless of the form it takes, is good for everyone associated with a given economy while at the same time experiencing a drop in their overall quality of life as a result of this growth. They can spend increasing amounts of time in traffic jams, experience asthma attacks

exacerbated by air pollution, and live with water shortages caused by rapid and poorly planned development, but still consider the economic growth that caused these things to be positive. Social memories can become constructs that limit individual thought as well.

For instance, the American Civil War is often portrayed as a war over slavery, a philosophical debate over the role black people should play in our society. In popular culture this theme has been repeated frequently. This understanding is so prevalent that individuals who are instructed in the root causes of the Civil War (i.e. conflict over the South's overall positioning in a broader market system) in high school or college are likely to forget them within a year's time and continue to frame the Civil War in terms of slavery (Frisch 1994, Jeffrey and Edwall 1994). It is therefore important to be able to distinguish between memories (knowledge) based on personal experiences and those that are cultural understandings or assumptions based on a general, often repeated idea or discourse (Gee 1996). Combining political ecology and ethnoecology helps us be able to accomplish this goal.

Political ecologists study the cultural processes through which certain concepts of nature become politicized and come to dominate human understandings, and the ways in which these ideas can be manipulated by social relations influencing production (Cronon 1995, Cooper 1992, Escobar 1996, Zerner 1995). Like practitioners of ethnoecology, political ecologists are concerned with the ways in which human ideas and behaviors are affecting human environments (Cronon 1995, Bellon 1991, Frechione et al. 1989, Luke 1995). But Political Ecology is different from Ethnoecology in that political ecologists tend to be more interested in local-global interconnections that can result in differential power relationships (Greenberg and Park 1994, Paulson et al. 2003, Peet and Watts

1996). Because of this, researchers are increasingly taking concepts from both political ecology and ethnoecology and are expanding on them.

There is in fact a lot of overlap in the contemporary ethnoecology and political ecology literature's, but political ecology has taken a more critical look at the social implications of contemporary discourses of nature. Political ecologists are especially interested in how meanings and understandings are limited because of particular ways in which knowledge is framed and in some cases privileged (Brosius 1997, Cohen 1994, Cooper 1992, Dalby 1996, Escobar 1996, Zerner 1994). This interest has resulted in a more, "...refined concept of marginality, in which political, economic, and ecological expressions may be mutually reinforcing (Paulson et al. 2003)." I.e., poverty can be both the cause and the result of resource degradation. Proponents of political ecological concepts have critically analyzed a variety of key concepts that are driving conservation and development (Brosius et al. 1998, Cronon 1995, Pigg 1992, Shiva 1991, Zerner 1995, Zerner 2000, Peluso 1996), and are concerned with the changes that have resulted from the prevalence of mass media and trans-national organizations (Dalby 1996, Gottlieb 1991, Luke 1994, Turner 1991).

Practitioners of both ethnoecology and political ecology have documented that 'ethnobotanical knowledge' and ways of conceptualizing nature are disappearing as more and more communities become increasingly dependent on global markets (Brosimmer 1991, Escobar 1996, Hyndman 1994, Nabhan 1996, Seremetakis 1994). And individuals from both fields agree that much of this disappearance has been stimulated by differential power relationships, and is therefore political (Brosimmer 1991, Guha 1993, Shiva 1991, Sperling 1992, Vasavi 1994). But political ecologists emphasize multi-scaler

systems in which these changes are taking place, while ethnoecologists tend to place more emphasis on culture as a unit of analysis. The process of knowledge erosion might be more fully understood, however, if the above insights were to be productively woven together. Changes in ethnobotanical knowledge imply a number of different things including shifts in local economies and social values. Ethnoecologists have documented a number of specific cases of loss, but few have documented the actual *processes* through which entire bodies of ethnobotanical knowledge have either disappeared or been transformed. By, ‘body of knowledge’, I mean, ‘ways of thinking and knowing’ (complex cultural models), as opposed to a catalog of plants and plant uses. The current literature in political ecology seems to imply that such processes involve transformations of meaning that are imposed from outside communities (Brosius 1997, Dove 1999, Guha 1993, Said 1989, Turner 1991). In the context of ethnobotanical knowledge, however, these transformations of meaning are also an internal process of *forgetting* that is as political as that of knowledge construction.

Looking at two maps of the continental United States that a friend pointed out to him, Gary Nabhan (1997: 2) has noted that, “Where human populations [have] stayed in the same place for the greatest duration, fewer plants and animals [have] become endangered species; in parts of the country where massive in-migrations and exoduses were [and are] taking place, more [have] become endangered.” Atran (1999) has shown this to be true of the Mayan Highlands as well. Considering this in light of insights that have been gained from political ecology suggests two things: 1) that people are more likely to behave in ways that maintain biological diversity if they are long-term inhabitants of a given area, and 2) that dramatic and rapid change has a tendency to

negatively affect ethnobotanical knowledge. What remains to be specified, however, is precisely *how* change influences ethnobotanical knowledge. I would propose that this can be achieved by shifting our focus from ‘change’ as an abstract process to a series of specific types of change that characterize a given ethnographic context. In Graham County, North Carolina, for instance, I argue that it is more useful to analyze such transformations as land regulation and road building than it is to consider ‘development’ or ‘modernization’. The logging industry that developed in Graham County, North Carolina at the turn of the century, for example, has not had the same influence on the loss of ethnobotanical knowledge that the fencing off of land has had or the influx of second home builders is having today (Beavers 1977, Davis 2000, Parlow 1978). Furthermore, the rhetoric’s and ideologies leading to each of these kinds of changes are different. Understanding the mosaic of forces currently influencing ethnobotanical knowledge in Graham County therefore requires yoking ethnoecology and political ecology together. By combining ethnoecology and political ecology it becomes possible to see what is stimulating changes in ethnobotanical knowledge both from within and outside of given settings.

People who have lived in a given area for multiple generations, for instance, are in some ways more likely to notice important changes in their surroundings than are first generation inhabitants. Not all environmental changes are as dramatic as those resulting from the Exxon Valdez Oil spill, the eruption of a volcano, or an atomic spill or eruption. Many changes occur gradually over time or appear to be benign. This is one of the frustrations involved in ecological data collection. It takes decades of systematic data

collection to compile insightful and useful interpretations that have predictive value. Policy makers do not have that much time to wait.

In the case of Graham County, North Carolina species compositions and distributions may be changing, an entire plant community may even disappear, but as long as it is covered in green foliage and set against a foggy mountain backdrop tourists and second home builders may still see such areas as being pristine and picturesque, ecologically sound even. In contrast, long-time residents may sometimes be aware of subtle transformations that have been occurring since 1900 or before (Hufford 1995, 1997). Such observations are only possible when people have been intimately associated with given landscapes for generations. Under such conditions oral histories and testimony can accumulate and be passed down from generation to generation, and indigenous plants can come to symbolize the lives and identities of the people who live among them. In some ways they are therefore more likely to act and effectively manage some resources than are outsiders (Geores 2003).

Dove (1999), for instance, has documented instances where a former economically important plant has come to be ritually cultivated in order to conserve it and remind people of their past. A similar phenomenon has been noticed in India with regard to sacred groves (Mitra and Pal 1994), and regarding red pigeon peas on the Georgia coast (Tison 1998). In all three of these cases the meanings associated with old practices and plants have changed and been adapted to contemporary conditions. It may be that the above cases are responses to 'modernization', but who did and did not respond, and why have these people responded in the ways that they have? Not all local plants will necessarily become culturally important, and not all local communities will

necessarily respond to the loss of native plants by creating preserves or rituals that will sustain them.

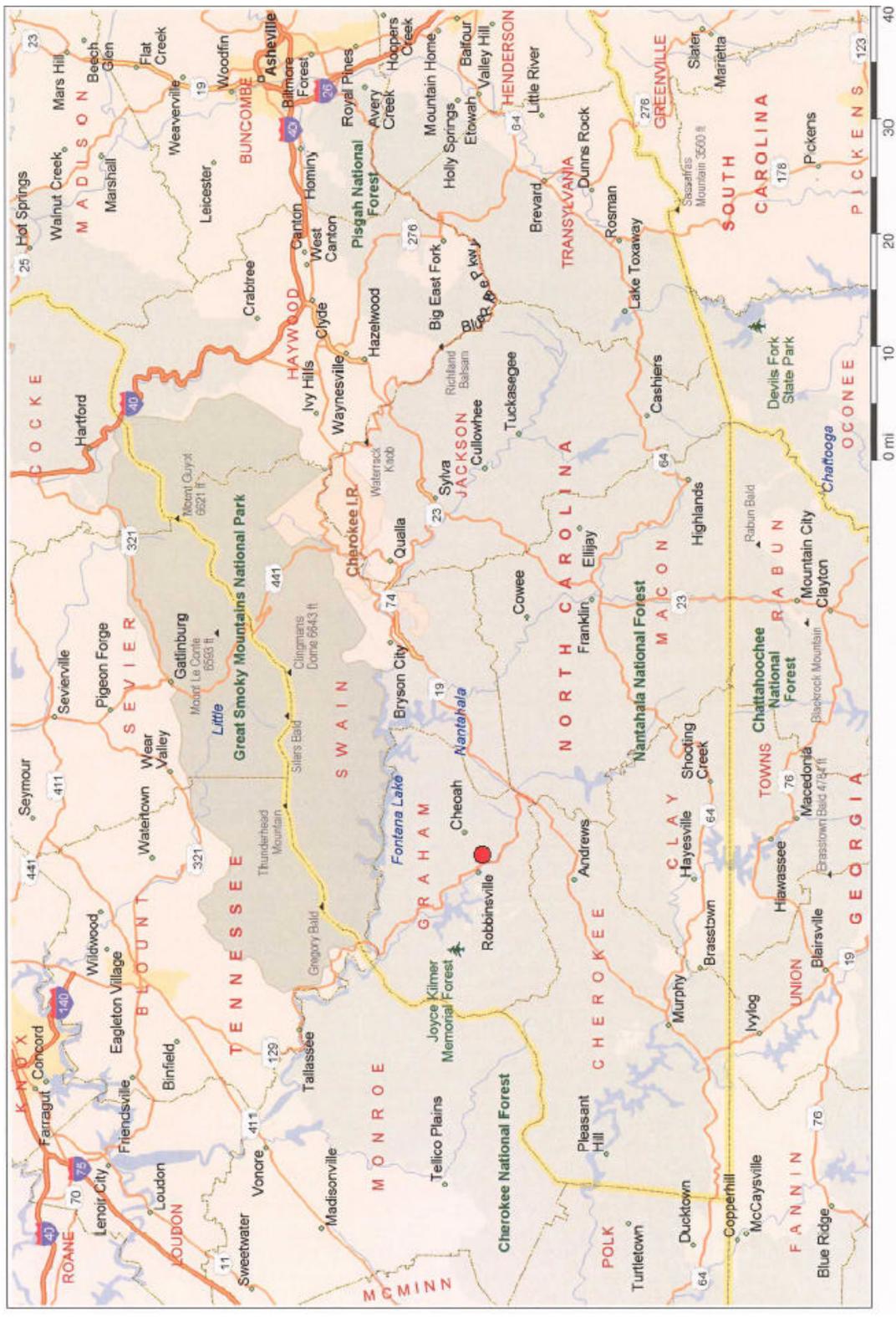
The above implies, however, that communities that have existed in a given place for multiple generations are more likely to include individuals who have a detailed understanding of how to cultivate and/or manage some resources, and that these individuals are more likely to make such resources an integral part of their personal lives. They are therefore also more likely to find creative ways of maintaining native plants that are important to them under changing, environmentally unfriendly conditions, and to make sacrifices to do it. Where such local knowledge is present oral testimonies can also help elucidate the characteristics and growth habits of plants that have become severely diminished or extinct in very short amounts of time. In such cases economic or environmental transformations may have occurred that happened too rapidly for residents to respond to either culturally or legislatively. In either case, such residents are privy to valuable information and insights that can't be obtained from any other source.

Study Area

As mentioned above, western North Carolina has experienced a unique and continuing history of change since at least 1900. Despite this history of development and economic fluctuation it is nonetheless one of the least developed areas to be found in Southern Appalachia. This county includes Joyce Kilmer National Forest, portions of Nantahala National Forest, and marks the southern edge of the Smoky Mountains. Because of this Graham County contains a large diversity of indigenous plants that have been targeted by a variety of conservation groups. This interest is partially due to

concerns regarding poaching and the over-harvesting of wild plants for commercial purposes.

Graham County, North Carolina is located in the far, northwestern end of the state (See Figure 1.2). 80% of the land in the county is National Forest (See Figure 1.3). The county's boundaries are partially demarcated by four mountain ranges. The Unicoi Mountains which are a part of the Great Smoky Mountains, the Snowbird Mountains, Yellow Creek Mountains, and the Cheoah range. "The county seat, Robbinsville, is nearer to the capitals of six other states than it is to Raleigh (Henry 1997)," North Carolina's state capitol. The population totaled 7,993 in 2000, and the per capita income was about \$13,000. The rate of unemployment in the county has ranged between 7% and 19.6% over the course of the past ten years. Many former residents have been forced to leave the county in order to find jobs, and a growing percentage of the county's current residents are second home builders who are not present for much of the year. This is also an area in which the percentage of agricultural land that is under production has been dropping over the past few years. There are currently initiatives underway that are responding to this situation by attempting to create alternative job opportunities within the county. Funding organizations for such initiatives include the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency. These initiatives are leading to an accelerated rate of development and change in the county. Because of this, tensions are mounting between those striving to conserve the unique resources found in the county, and those wanting to use and/or affect these resources for economic and social gain.



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Figure 1.2: Map of Western North Carolina.

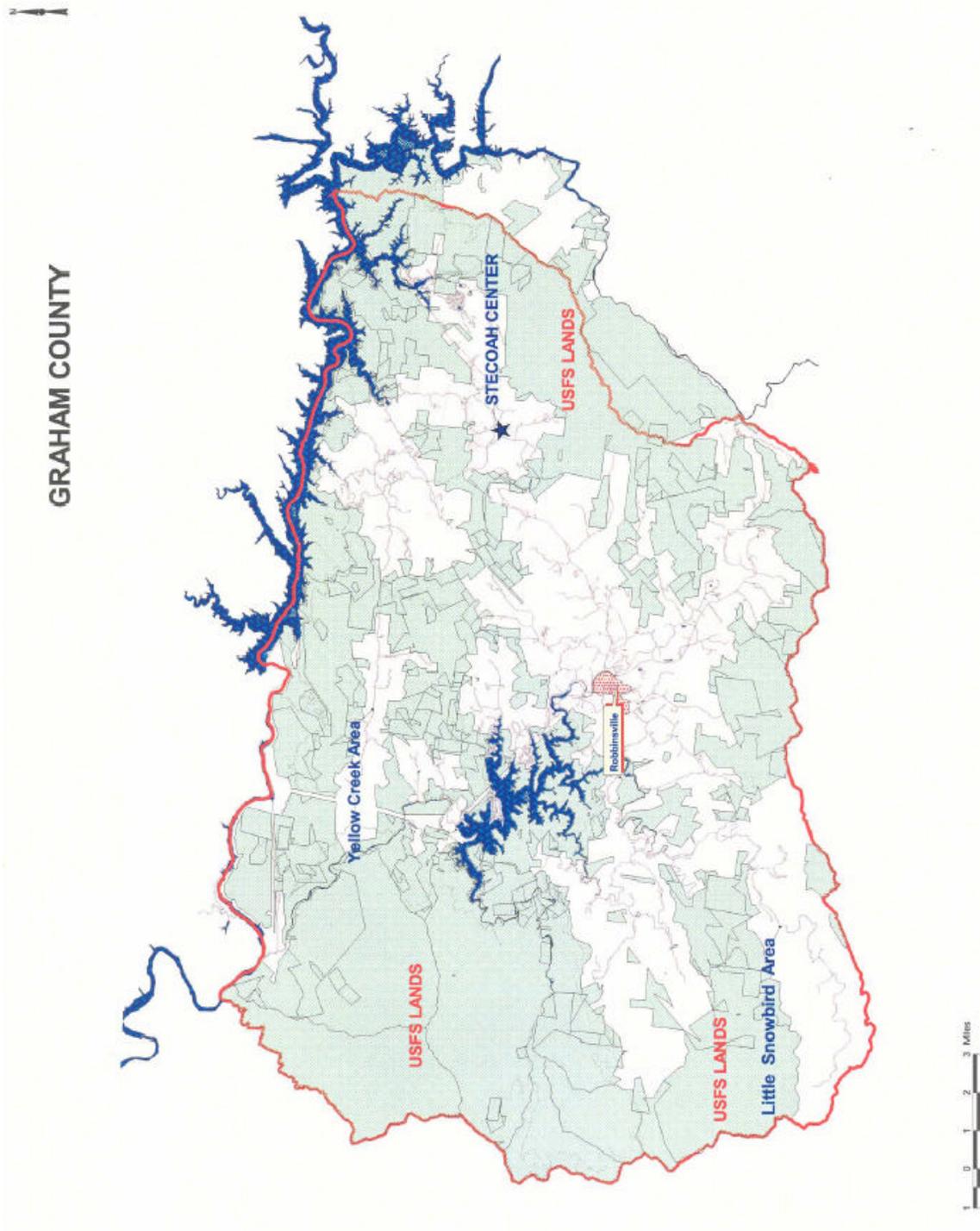


Figure 1.3: USFS Lands in Graham County, NC.

The ecology and diversity of this landscape is such that it contains a large number of species, such as ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*), blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*), bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), and ramps (*Allium tricoccum*), that have become increasingly sought after by natural plant product markets for both medicinal and food supplement purposes. As the demand for these plants and their medicinal properties continues to grow, so will concerns about the viability of their current populations. This is due to the fact that it is not yet possible to cultivate most of these species under agricultural conditions, and the habitat available for wild populations is diminishing at the same time that it is believed that harvesting pressures may be increasing. If the price being paid to wild harvesters were to dramatically increase for any of these species the way it did in 1995 for wild ginseng (\$600 per dried pound), it is believed that the species in question would then be harvested into extinction at a very rapid rate. The price of ginseng can fluctuate dramatically and unpredictably from season to season, and sometimes from week to week, depending on the Chinese market. But in recent years it has been more common to sell ginseng for about \$250 to \$300 a dry pound. In 1995 \$600 per dry pound set a record high that was unexpected and resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of people who dug ginseng relative to the year before. Geographically, Graham County is centrally located in a region in which such wild harvesting has historically taken place.

Since there has been relatively little industry in Graham County, and since few roads have been built in the area, the landscape is less disturbed than in other parts of Southern Appalachia. Graham County is therefore a likely place to find many plants, particularly medicinals, that people remember, use, or have heard about. It is also a

likely place in which to identify and observe people who harvest nontimber forest products. The consistently high unemployment rates found in the county, combined with the presence of so much public land, has resulted in a small population of ‘oldtimers’ who still have access to and use a variety of forest resources. In addition, over the generations a few younger people who love working outside in the woods have picked up and retained portions of older harvesting traditions, and have developed some new ones. This is therefore a good site in which to glean information on current wild harvesting values, beliefs and practices. By doing so, and by gaining a better understanding of how these things have changed over time, I will be better able to offer informed opinions as to the effects that future market and policy trends might have on relevant plant populations and the behaviors of people who harvest nontimber forest products.

I begin this dissertation by describing the techniques used to collect information on these subjects in Chapter Two. While doing so I have also outlined some of the challenges that I faced along the way, some of the adjustments that I had to make given the context of conducting fieldwork in Graham County, and how I was able to position myself in the community while doing my research.

Chapter Three outlines some of the major historical events that have dramatically influenced community life and the context for earning a living in Graham County, North Carolina. My goal here is to look at the major types of development that have taken place in Graham County over the past 100 years and to consider the changes that have taken place as a result of this development. The transformations that I am focusing on relate primarily to the strategies people use to earn a living, the ways in which the strategies used have changed (or not), and why. I do this by outlining three general

periods of change that have occurred in Graham County's history since 1900. While outlining the series of events that have resulted in major changes I will also show how the particular wild plants used by local people, and the ways in which they are used and harvested, have changed in response to these transformations. Most of the changes in the ways that indigenous plants are used are related to modifications of the strategies people use to earn their livelihoods, an adaptation of sorts. Over the long term these changes have also resulted in the loss of some forms of ethnobotanical knowledge, and in some cases the addition of new ones.

Chapter Four looks at the overall historical significance of so-called wildcrafting. In this chapter I look at the ways in which the label, 'wildcrafting', has been applied regionally and inter-regionally, and by whom. Doing this has allowed me to better understand how wild harvesters are defined and perceived by a number of different parties interested in nontimber forest products. This process has also given me some insight into the ways in which so-called wildcrafting practices have ebbed and flowed over time. Having a better understanding of the processes which have taken place could help elucidate in more detail the conditions under which individuals choose to pursue these practices and why. Questions of interest include; Under what conditions are particular wildcrafting practices a lifestyle choice? When do they represent a rejection of a dominant society? Under what economic conditions do individuals resort to harvesting nontimber forest products? And to what extent do growing demands for natural plant products actually influence the harvesting behavior of individuals? Considering these issues will help me begin to situate my findings in Graham County within a larger, global context.

In Chapter Five of this dissertation I illustrate the variety and range of wild harvesting practices, behaviors, and attitudes currently operating in Graham County, North Carolina. The motivating factors that are present are broad in scope and diverse in nature. This chapter identifies the challenges to be faced when attempting to define what and who wild harvesters are, and therefore some of the difficulties to be addressed when attempting to configure affective management policies. I also identify some of the potential danger involved in pigeon-holing all wild harvesting practices into one category when legislating policy and development initiatives. It is my intention in this chapter to both challenge and confirm assumptions that are being made about ‘diggers’ in Graham County in an effort to work towards making them active participants in the development of affective ecosystem management strategies. As long as the people who have the actual power to affect change in the county remain bystanders, the time, money, and resources required to maintain healthy ecosystems on public lands will be astronomical. Moreover, the disempowerment of traditional harvesters could lead to a loss of knowledge that could be beneficial to the interests of all involved. This would mean that future conceptions of forests could come to be based more on the definitions and models of outsiders, and less on the observations and experience of people who know and utilize them.

Chapter Six evaluates some of the major institutions responsible for managing wild plants and harvesters in Graham County, North Carolina. I also consider some of the major laws and legislative bodies that are currently monitoring nontimber forest product markets. A lot of tension between harvesters and management officials has resulted from the fact that many harvesters do not distinguish between state, federal, and international legislative bodies. To many people in Graham County all of these outside

authorities simply represent just that, *outside*, ‘government’. In other words, people who have historically not understood, and therefore in the minds of locals, still do not understand, the needs of either people or plants in *their* county.

By mapping out who these different governing bodies are and how they intersect with one another I hope to be able to identify some specific sources of contention. Doing so will help interested parties to facilitate constructive dialogue between wild harvesters and various legislative and management institutions. It will do this by helping harvesters more clearly identify problems or complaints using language that will be better understood by those governing these institutions and vice versa. This will also help lay people articulate courses of action that they feel to be appropriate management objectives, instead of solely resorting to acts of resistance that can be powerfully and mistakenly reported as criminal activity, thereby robbing these acts of their true significance and meaning. Discussing these institutions also helps elucidate the way in which removing management responsibilities away from those who utilize given resources can negate the need for passing on knowledge pertaining to resource management and the motivation to learn it. This is another form of forgetting.

Chapter Seven discusses conflicts that have arisen between people who have always harvested nontimber forest products as part of a ‘multiple livelihood strategy’ typical of many long-term residents of Graham County, North Carolina, and newcomers to the region. I consider some of the differences between these two demographics by describing some of the interactions that have taken place between the two groups within the Smoky Mountain Native Plants Association. This organization is a community group that was initially proposed as a means of involving local people interested in harvesting

nontimber forest products in the creation of a sustainable economic development initiative. As the group grew, it came to also include new residents interested in learning about native plants and potentially generating incomes for themselves.

The resulting interactions between individuals in the group highlight the ways in which outsiders tend to see economic stability differently than old locals do. Outsider's assumptions and viewpoints tend to mirror those of lending agencies and development organizations, and compound the pressure being put on old locals to change. The desired change involves forcing locals to abandon an ideology and value system that limits ones dependency on cash, and therefore increases the degree to which they must rely on outside institutions that stand to benefit from making old locals dependent on them. As younger people become increasingly exposed to the ideas of outsiders and seek to fit into the status quo, fewer of them are learning the variety of skills necessary for maintaining a multiple livelihood strategy. This, then, represents another form of forgetting initiated by people in preferential positions of power.

Chapter Eight concludes this dissertation by tying the above referents together into a web of relationships that are currently creating the context for wildcrafting and supplying natural plant product markets in Graham County. I then discuss how these relationships are significant to Anthropology and anthropological endeavors and reflect on how the results of my fieldwork can inform current theory in Ethnoecology and Political Ecology.

CHAPTER 2

TECHNIQUES AND CHALLENGES

The research methods used focus on the three primary objectives of this study. The first objective is to determine what kinds of botanical knowledge are dependent on context or practice. The 'context' will be considered as a dynamic relationship between an individual's mode of making a living and the particular political and economic pressures that are present. These pressures are considered in terms of power relationships that stem from both within and outside of Graham County. Toward this end, I used two techniques: archival research and data collection and semi-structured interviews. Archives visited include those housed at Western Carolina University; Great Smoky Mountains National Park; Foxfire in Rabun County, Georgia; libraries at the University of Georgia; and the Lloyd Library in Cincinnati, Ohio. Archival information was used to identify events since 1900 that have initiated specific changes in plant use, access to specific plants, or landscape changes. I then determined the relative degree to which each of these transitions was caused by economic pressures outside of Graham County as opposed to being driven from within. By doing this I was able to identify some of the reasons behind certain courses of action and why they have affected the way in which people in Graham County, North Carolina make their living. This has also allowed me to identify some of the ways in which these changes have affected what people do and do not know about Appalachian flora.

Semi-structured interviews are the heart of this research. The archival data discussed above helped inform and guide the interviewing process by providing me with information regarding key events, and a timeline along which to guide my questioning. By doing the archival research I was also able to obtain information that helped me differentiate between what was previously known about plants from what is currently known depending on a given informant's positioning in Graham County life. In other words, it allowed me to get an idea of how ethnobotanical knowledge is distributed throughout the community and how factors such as age, gender, career, and class influence what people know about mountain flora. The archives and literature seldom addressed these issues directly. But the background information and series of events that I identified by doing the archival research provided common points of reference that could be used to draw out information from most of the people whom I interviewed. My interviewing protocol is discussed below.

Semi-structured interviews were usually conducted with individuals either in their homes or where they work. I began by interviewing older informants. This helped me to piece together a general timeline of events that supplemented my archival data and that were particular to specific communities within Graham County. No attempt was made to single out or interview individuals who are particularly isolated or 'traditional' or 'backwards'. I spoke both to people who could be considered 'specialists' or expert herb diggers and to people who have memories of using different plants but have not gathered or processed any themselves. Though I did make a point of identifying and trying to interview people who were known to harvest and sell nontimber forest products, the

purpose of this research was to identify general trends in the process of knowledge erosion among the population of Graham County.

I began by attempting to interview people who fit into the age category of 60 years of age or older, whose families were long-time residents of the county, and who were physically and mentally able to participate. I also chose to interview people with expertise in some aspect of nontimber forest products and product harvesting. These individuals included long term herb dealers, United States Forest Service personnel, rangers and biologists at Great Smoky Mountains National Park and horticulturalists conducting research on the plants that are typically harvested. Much of the information obtained during the course of these interviews was more pertinent to my applied research questions than to my primary objectives, but they served to provide a context from which to constructively interpret the responses of county residents as well. People who have recently retired in the county but who are not originally from Graham County were not formally interviewed. Much of the information that was collected during these interviews was also relevant to my second and third research objectives as well as the first. They will be discussed in greater detail later. The following is a list of questions that were used to guide the interviewing process;

1. How long have you and your family lived on the property that you live on now? In Graham County?
2. How many generations have your relatives lived in Graham County?
3. **RESIDENCE HISTORY:** Where are the different places you and your family have lived and when did you live there?
THEN; What is the piece of property in Graham County or the immediately surrounding area that your relatives have lived on the longest? Where have you lived the longest in Graham County? On what piece of property? Do you own it?

4. How has the _____ (ask the informant about each of the variables identified during the baseline research) changed each of these pieces of property, if at all?
5. Did you or your family use these pieces of property differently after _____ (ask about each of the above variables)?
6. Who performed these activities?
7. What did men and/or women plant around their homes before each of the above events?
8. What 3 or 4 wild plants do you think of when you think of Graham County and its people? Why?
9. What plants did they collect in the woods? Were there plants collected from other places?
10. Do you plant or collect any plants? Where (store, friends, save seeds, landscape) do you get them?
11. If you have not collected or used any of these plants how did you learn about them?
12. Did your parents plant or collect any plants? Why? What kinds?
13. What plants can you think of that are less common today?
14. Why do you think they are less prevalent?
15. Do you feel that this is a problem?
16. Are there any things about Graham County that you would like to see change? Why or why not?
17. Would you be willing to show me around the home sites and land you mentioned earlier?
18. Where is _____ (each of the plants identified above) found and why was/is it planted or collected?
19. Can you think of any other mountain plants that we have not talked about yet?
20. Would you be willing to go with me to look for any of the plants we have talked about and help me identify them?

As is inevitably the case, informants have their own agenda's and stories to tell. Because of this, not all of the above questions were asked in every interview. Participants who were particularly knowledgeable in given areas pertaining to harvesting or the growing of nontimber forest products were encouraged to tell their own stories and to demonstrate how they do certain things without interruption. Therefore, due to limitations in time, not all questions were asked during every interview, and in many instances potentially more interesting questions that are not listed above were asked.

The second objective of this study was to determine to what extent long-term residence in Graham County promotes the acquisition and maintenance of botanical knowledge and ecological diversity. Some of the questions listed above were also asked during informal interviews as I met people during the course of my fieldwork. I considered differences in experiences and responses between Cherokee and non-Cherokee people, older people and young people, people who were born, raised, and have worked in and around Graham County all of their lives and those who have left for extended periods of time. I also compared the responses of people who are from the mountains with that of those who are not from Southern Appalachia but live here now. The questions that I asked for these purposes included the following:

1. What is your age?
2. How long have you lived in Graham County?
3. Is your family from around Graham County? If so, for how many generations have they lived here?
4. What do you do for a living?
5. Do you work outside of western North Carolina for any portion of the year?

6. For how many months of the year do you live in Graham County?
7. Please list three or more wild plants that you consider to be 'mountain plants'.
8. Have you or any of your family members ever gathered or transplanted plants from the mountains?
9. If you have collected any mountain plants, was it for primarily economic, subsistence or recreational purposes? Please explain.
10. If your parents collect or collected any mountain plants, was it for primarily economic, subsistence, or recreational purposes?
11. If your grandparents collect or collected any mountain plants, was it for primarily economic, subsistence, or recreational purposes?

The above questions were initially intended to take the form of an anonymous questionnaire. The logistics involved in handing them out proved to be problematic, however, and I ended up abandoning this form of data collection in favor of simply talking to people. I did use a questionnaire to obtain comparative information pertaining to young people in Graham County. The county's high school science teacher administered them for me during her unit on ecology and indigenous plants of the region on September 24, 2002 and again in November 2003. This questionnaire provided more information that I could use to compare the responses of long-time residents with those from relative newcomers, and the responses of younger people with the responses I heard from older people whom I was interviewing. Melissa Caldwell, the instructor, teaches a course that all high school students are required to take before they graduate. The 57 surveys that I received in 2003 therefore represent approximately one quarter of the high

school students currently attending Graham County High School. The questions that were asked in the questionnaire are as follows:

1. How old are you?
2. Were you born in Graham County, North Carolina?
If no, how long have you lived in Graham County?
3. Were your parents born and raised in Graham County, North Carolina?
If no, were they born and raised in western North Carolina?
4. Were your grandparents born and raised in Graham County?
If no, were they born and raised in western North Carolina?
5. How many people in your immediate (parents and siblings) family or household (those living in the same house that you live in) either collect, or have collected, wild plants from the woods in western North Carolina?

6. Do you collect, or have you collected, any wild plants from the woods in western North Carolina?
7. Do or did your grandparents collect wild plants from the woods in western North Carolina?
8. Did your great-grandparents collect wild plants from the woods in western North Carolina?
9. Do you think collecting wild plants is important to your family?
If yes, why is collecting important? Please check all of the following that apply:
It is fun _____
It is a tradition _____
Because it provides income _____
Other (please explain) _____
10. If your family sells wild plants that they collect, how much does this income help your family? (for example: it is important because it is how your mom pays for school clothes, because your dad transplants the ginseng to use as a savings account, your family uses this income to buy things like television sets, OR, it is not economically important at all).
11. Please list as many forest plant names as you can in the space below. Try to list no fewer than ten plants:

12. Do you consider yourself to be (check all that apply):
 Cherokee _____ Other (please specify _____
 An 'outsider' _____
 From Graham County _____
13. What does your mom do for a living?
14. What does your dad do for a living?
15. If you do not live with your mom or dad, what does your primary caretaker do for a living?
16. Do you think that plants that are native to western North Carolina should be managed, conserved or protected for ecological reasons? Why or why not?
17. Do you think plants (both trees and herbs) native to western North Carolina and Southern Appalachia should be managed and conserved for future generations of people in Graham County? Why or why not?
18. Would you like to learn more about the plants and ecology of Graham County?
19. Are you interested in growing plants native to western North Carolina?
20. Please provide contact information for anyone that you think would be interested in being interviewed (for about one hour) about plant collecting traditions in the region.

My third objective, which was to identify how various kinds of power mechanisms can influence how the harvesting of nontimber forest products is widely understood, whose knowledge is considered to be relevant when dealing with current nontimber forest product issues, and what kinds of knowledge pertaining to nontimber forest products are passed on from one generation to the next, was addressed by listing the institutions and organizations that are interested in nontimber forest products and asking informants to share their experiences and any insights that they have gained from interacting with these structures. The mandates and policy objectives of such institutions as the United States Forest Service were then compared and contrasted with the personal

objectives of people who harvest nontimber forest products in Graham County. The differential ways in which people and institutions speak of and define these plant products, and the specific concerns that they have regarding nontimber forest products in general, were compared as well.

To reiterate, the applied questions being considered are; 1) Has the erosion of local knowledge negatively affected the overall biodiversity of Graham County, North Carolina?, 2) Have recent land and plant collecting regulations negatively affected ethnobotanical knowledge in Graham County, North Carolina? And if so, what kinds of knowledge?, and finally 3) What is the nature and extent of so-called 'wildcrafting' in Graham County, North Carolina today? As with my primary research objectives, these questions have largely been addressed by comparing the historical information that I was able to obtain with the information that I gathered during the course of my semi-structured and informal interviews. Much of this information was then also compared with that obtained from the questionnaires.

For me, there were two main challenges conducting this research. One was the fact that residents in Graham County are widely dispersed, despite living within a relatively small geographic area. Since 80% of the county is United States Forest Service Land, there is not a lot of private land available to county residents. But even though the total area of the county that is actually populated is relatively small, it is spread out. And there are few roads in the county covering the mountainous terrain. This means that it can take 45 minutes or more to drive from one informant's house to the next. Because this is the case, living 'in the community' the way anthropologists are accustomed to doing does not always provide easy access to local people, or make it easy to observe

how people in the community interact with one another, or how the community as a whole functions. Simply learning about community events can be a challenge at times. This is also due to the fact that Graham County is not a community in and of itself, but houses multiple communities that operate independently from one another in important ways. Until relatively recently, people attended school, worshipped, and socialized within their own valley or cove, and rarely traveled to neighboring towns. This makes it difficult to identify informants. People who live in Stecoah, for instance, seldom know people who live a few miles away in Yellow Creek.

The second major challenge to conducting interviews was creating and maintaining scheduled appointments. Many informants actively pursue activities that require taking advantage of specific weather conditions or spontaneous opportunities. People prefer not to make formalized plans and schedules, and just want you 'to come on by' when you are in the neighborhood. It was not uncommon for me to arrive at someone's home for an interview and end up helping pluck a wild turkey or cleaning jars for wild honey because a good opportunity had presented itself while my informant was out working, planting, or running errands.

Because long time residents of the county tend to rely on one another by reciprocating various forms of assistance and labor, interviews can also end abruptly in order to go repair a tractor that is needed to finish a task that must be completed that day, go pick up somebody's sick child from school, or rush out to help a neighbor plant before the rain comes. While this provides opportunities for meeting new people and getting to know present informants better, it makes completing interviews difficult. Because of

this, formal interviewing was largely abandoned in favor of informal interviews that could be conducted while doing other things.

Generally speaking, people in Graham County are courteous, welcoming and hospitable. But when it comes to discussing issues pertaining to nontimber forest products with people who do the harvesting, they can also be cautious, reserved, and therefore quiet regarding some subjects. At first diggers wanted to know why I was interested in such matters and whether or not I was an environmentalist, they did not want to reveal very much about themselves. Initially diggers were willing to share, and sometimes brag, about particularly successful harvesting seasons that they had had, or to complain about ways in which they believed that they had been wronged by the government, outsiders, or the United States Forest Service, but they did not tend to reveal personal insights or go out of their way to make time to speak with me. They had no reason to.

In addition to being an outsider, I am highly educated, female, and am too old to be married yet not have children (by local standards). Many also consider it to be inappropriate, or at least unusual, for me to be traveling without my husband. At first people frequently asked me, "Your husband lets you run around here all on your own?" I would usually explain that I had traveled to other countries all by myself before we met and got married, so he probably figured that I would be all right in Graham County. He knew that I loved to return home and see him. In the beginning I also tended to unknowingly ask questions that were silly from the perspective of locals, revealing my own ignorance. This meant that they could not be confident about my intentions at first.

Because of this, several obstacles had to be overcome before I could have in depth and relaxed conversations with people. This took time.

One of the primary ways in which I was able to accomplish my goals was to participate in a community group called Smoky Mountain Native Plant Association (SMNPA). I was first introduced to this group by Robin Suggs, the director of Yellow Creek Botanical Institute. Mr. Suggs and Randy Collins, a NC agricultural extension agent for Graham County, were responsible for first visualizing the possibility and potential of having a community organization composed of local people interested in native marketable plants and their cultivation. Together with the Center for Participatory Change they facilitated the formation of such a group which eventually began to operate independently and call themselves Smoky Mountain Native Plants Association.

Becoming a functioning member of this group was helpful to me for a number of different reasons. Attending regular meetings provided a venue in which to regularly visit with several different people in an atmosphere that was a comfortable one in which to get to know one another. In this context I was able to observe individuals interacting with a number of different kinds of people and discussing a variety of issues pertaining to native plants and nontimber forest products. It also gave me (and occasionally my husband) the opportunity to volunteer my time and labor in order to help locals to achieve their goals. This was important in that it allowed me to interact with people in a way that more closely resembles the ways in which certain communities in this region actually function. In other words, it allowed me to seem a little less like an outsider to locals. I was an outsider, but I was trying to do things the way mountain people do things. My

participating in SMNPA also gave locals who were members the chance to observe me, and to ask me questions before they decided whether or not to answer mine.

Interestingly, the fact that I did not have a grant to conduct research, and that my research was not associated with a job that I was getting paid to do also seemed to be appreciated by many people. Though I do not believe this to be true of diggers my age (people in their early thirties) or younger, older people who were born and raised in Graham County tend to have specific ideas about what appropriate wage rates are, and feel very strongly that people should work hard and earn what they receive. For example, one of my principle research participants became severely ill and eventually had to resort to accepting Social Security Disability checks in order to take care of his family. A year or so later he was feeling better and felt able to work and take care of his family without this assistance. He notified the authorities that he no longer wished to receive these checks and was told that he would continue to receive them because he had been determined to be 'disabled'. This infuriated and frustrated him. He saved all of the checks and returned them. After a lot of fuss the checks eventually quit coming. Similarly, locals in SMNPA were hesitant to accept micro-grants from the organization until they were absolutely sure that they could more than repay the loan. People were given the option of repaying their debt in the form of labor, but most old locals wanted to be able to ensure that the cash resources were replenished as well, or that they could provide something beneficial to the entire community if they were to accept any money. I believe that because of this, once it became clear that I was doing what I was doing at my own expense, people seemed to appreciate my efforts more and to be a little more

open with me. However, it is also possible that they had just come to know me better as well.

I had in fact initially applied for a couple of different research grants, but had not received funding. The fact that this ended up helping me as much or more than it hurt was not part of my initial strategy for successfully completing my Ph.D. dissertation research. But as I came to know people that invited me to stay with them in their homes and who helped me to minimize my personal expenses I did gain a new perspective on my situation and ceased to contemplate writing grant proposals. I briefly worked for and got paid to interview local people by Yellow Creek Botanical Institute, but this raised more questions than it had answered. Initially I had believed that it would help me to have accepted such employment because a job is a concrete reason to be interviewing people, a reason that most people can understand and identify with. Voluntarily becoming a graduate student in Cultural Anthropology at one's own expense is more difficult for most people to understand. But I believe that in the end having a job separate from my research in order to pay my bills displayed my earnestness and sincerity in a way that would not have been possible otherwise.

Over time I was also able to evolve into an individual that could fill temporary and intermittent roles outside of my normal purview. I hope that this enabled me to be valuable in some way. As an outsider I could occasionally intervene in certain situations from a point of view that could be considered to be objective relative to that of new and old locals. I did not bring to the table a history of past arguments or hurt feelings regarding the issues that I was studying. I was interested and had an agenda, yes. But my preconceptions were not based on past experiences with any one individual or their

family. In general, my disagreements with people were not personal in nature. This allowed me to have a voice in a few instances, and to mediate certain kinds of disagreements. I also think that because I am female my questions were sometimes just not perceived as being threatening.

For example, at one point there was a local dispute over access to and the management of a certain piece of privately owned land. Emotions ran high, and all parties involved imbued their opponents with motivations and characteristics that were only poorly understood and that were blown out of proportion with respect to actual events. The conflict ended up being between the absentee land owner, a North Carolina State forester, Yellow Creek Botanical Institute (YCBI), certain members of Smoky Mountain Native Plants Association (SMNPA), the United States Forest Service, and at least one graduate candidate conducting botanical research on the property. As a result, Yellow Creek Botanical Institute's permission to utilize the site was revoked. Soon afterwards, a member of Smoky Mountain Native Plants Association went and got written permission from the land owner to dig bloodroot on the property that had been planted in experimental beds established by YCBI. YCBI's initial study had ended and they had been forbidden to return to the site. When asked about the bloodroot, YCBI's director had told individuals from SMNPA that if they were able to obtain access to the site, he did not mind if they dug the roots and kept them to cultivate themselves. So a handful of members arranged to meet and dig up as many of the roots as they could in order to transplant them. As far as could be discerned, the state forestry plan developed for the site would not necessarily protect or accommodate the research beds, so SMNPA

members felt as though they were rescuing the roots to some extent. I joined the group to participate in this activity.

While at the site our group was confronted by the North Carolina State forester involved in the dispute and one of his colleague's. Since I had spent a lot of time up at the site camping and assisting with research without ever having met this individual before, I can only assume he came because he suspected (or had been told) that we were up there. He did not threaten anyone, but did initially treat the group as though he believed that we could be committing some kind of crime and wanted us to believe that he had authority that he could wield over us. It also became clear that he believed we were all working for Yellow Creek Botanical Institute in some way. I asked him why. After the forester finished speaking we handed him the letter that we had brought with us from the land owner and took turns explaining our respective intentions for being there. Some of us had worked with YCBI or participated in YCBI events, others had not. I then asked the forester what YCBI's mission was. He mentioned part of it, I filled in some gaps. I then asked him why he would want to hamper these goals in any way. He insisted that he did not have any problem with any of the goals in and of themselves, just with YCBI. I then explained that everyone in our group was working hard and using their own money to try and accomplish goals that we hoped would be beneficial to more people than just ourselves. Why did this make him angry? This prompted a broader, slightly more relaxed discussion that everyone could participate in and that was informative for all involved. Some distinctions were made and communicated, and some community dynamics were made slightly clearer to those of us who are outsiders.

Because I was able to be simple and direct out of honest ignorance (and because nobody expected me to understand certain things because I was an outsider), I was able to diffuse certain kinds of situations and focus people's attention on specific issues that were mutual concerns. This also meant that I could earn a certain degree of credibility that helped me with my research. But my insights into Snowbird Cherokee life are currently limited relative to those of whites in Graham County. For reasons that are complicated and that I only partly understand, no Cherokee people chose to join SMNPA, and very few have lived on Yellow Creek, the community that I ended up spending the most time in. I therefore was able to interact and interview a few individuals from Snowbird, but do not have an in depth understanding of how these Cherokee people interact with each other and the rest of Graham County.

CHAPTER 3

CHANGE, CONFLICT AND MECHANISMS OF POWER

Introduction

Over the course of the twentieth century dynamic and interrelated forces within and outside of Graham County have shaped its landscape and its people. These forces are power relationships, some moving, in Bakhtin's terms, centripetally and others centrifugally (Knauff 1996). They can also be thought of as being multi-dimensional relationships like those described as operating in another part of Southern Appalachia by Gaventa (1980). Bakhtin's description provides a useful way of imagining the tension that has been, and is, present between the ideals of insiders versus those of outsiders in the county. According to Knauff's interpretation of Bakhtin (1996), centripetal forces are those that try to 'dominate and unify voices', and centrifugal forces are those that 'drive creativity and diversity', read here as voices in opposition to, or at least alternatives to, the dominant, centripetal ones. 'Voices' in this context are those existing both within and between cultures and/or differing discourse communities. Voices can also be thought of in terms of the interaction between contrasting schemas, and in some cases contrasting cognitive models.

I want to imagine a tension between such forces in Graham County because I believe that it will allow me to identify key points of conflict, misrepresentation and misunderstanding between people in this particular setting. I will add to this construct Gaventa's multiple dimensions of power in order to further my understanding by

identifying particular *mechanisms* of power that are operating here at particular times and in particular ways. This kind of model is a useful tool to use when considering historical contexts in that it allows for the description of instances in which voices and ideas are effectively silenced by not being heard (or forgotten as opposed to being remembered). In other words, a way of explaining how and why efforts to contest dominant assumptions or ideas sometimes fail to drive diversity and therefore do not always result in Bakhtin's 'hybridity' of linguistic consciousnesses. The idea of tension, combined with the conceptualization of multiple dimensions of power allows us to more productively imagine the circumstances in which meanings are inter-subjectively reinterpreted in some instances, yet not in others. Gaventa has argued that it is possible for individuals to unknowingly allow themselves to be dominated, even unjustly so, because they either express themselves ineffectually or are manipulated into believing that they should or do want what the dominating force wants, even if it is not in their own best interest to do so. In both cases this is described as being a result of specific mechanisms of power.

In order to begin to identify some of the general forms and mechanisms of power operating in Graham County I have outlined some of the changes that have occurred in the area since 1900. By considering the particular kinds of changes that have occurred, and the reasons for these changes, I hope to be able to more successfully interpret human responses to these transitions and the conflicts that have resulted from them. Power relationships are suggestive of the kinds of ideals, knowledge and sets of skills being valued at any given time and by whom, and of why people in the county have behaved in the ways that they have. By considering these identified behaviors further I will be able

to see how these power relationships have resulted in particular kinds of experiences, thereby limiting the particular ways of knowing that are realistically possible. Our story begins at the turn of the twentieth century.

Early Graham County

In much of American consciousness and early literature, western North Carolina remained an undeveloped 'frontier' until well into the twentieth century (Kephart 1976, Shapiro 1978). People living outside of the region believed that it was a dangerous and difficult place to get to, a wilderness, and that the people who lived in western North Carolina were typically ignorant and/or dangerous. In many ways it was a frontier. The resources of the region, including those of Graham County, were largely unutilized as of 1900. This was partly because much of its land had been reserved as Cherokee territory by the United States federal government. It had been an area where whites were not supposed to settle so that the Cherokee would have a place to live. Because of this, not many white settlers moved into the area until after the Cherokee forced removal in 1838. According to Jim Bowman of the Junaluska Museum in Robbinsville, North Carolina, in 1838 Cheoah was a flourishing, Cherokee town located approximately where the county seat, Robbinsville, now sits. A few white settlers had moved into the area before the Cherokee removal (an action that was technically illegal), but shortly after Cherokee claims to this land were revoked and denied by the federal government more came. Once this happened, it was not long before many newcomers came to Graham County and tried to make a life here.

But despite the so-called 'Removal', these settlers ended up sharing Graham County with at least some Cherokee people. A few Cherokee had decided to hide in the

rugged mountains in Graham County in order to avoid what is now known as the “Trail of Tears.” “John Ropetwister, Organdizer, Big Fat Commisseen and others moved from East Buffalo creek to Slick Rock [both of which are areas encompassed by Graham County] during the Removal of 1838, where they remained in concealment until Colonel Thomas arranged to have the remnant remain (Arthur 1914:212).” These Cherokee that stayed behind in Slick Rock are now known as the Snowbird Cherokee.

After white settlement of the area intensified, North Carolina’s general assembly ratified the act creating Graham County in 1872 (Corbitt 1950:63). Before 1872 this portion of western North Carolina had been annexed to Cherokee County, the county that now lies along its southern border, and was only sparsely populated. Up to this point in time the changes that had taken place within written human history in this county were primarily social and cultural in nature (Perdue 1979, Perdue 1998). They were the result of European colonization and primarily affected Cherokee culture.

In 1872 the Snowbird Cherokee were still only sharing Graham County with approximately 1,800 white people. In addition to having been temporarily reserved as Cherokee land, this area was rugged, relatively inaccessible, and had little land suitable for agriculture compared to other parts of western North Carolina and Southern Appalachia at the end of the nineteenth century. It therefore took a fairly long time for this area to be extensively settled even after the Cherokee forced removal. However, white settlers did eventually become well established in Graham County, and after 1900 dramatic ecological and landscape changes took place as a result of this colonization.

Since this time, the commercial use of Graham County’s natural resources and the exploitation of its human labor force have resulted in a series of social and ecological

changes within the county. These changes are the result of both the desire of outsider's to profit and/or benefit from the county's resources, and of the ways in which people in this county have chosen to live. To a large extent these changes also reflect the particular ways in which Graham County has gone from having a population primarily engaged in subsistence agriculture, to one that is fully participating in a global economy.

Outside market demands have both helped and hindered the economic goals of full-time residents over the years, and have therefore influenced the ways in which residents interact with both their landscape and outsiders. Graham County residents were not isolated from a global economy before 1900. The Spanish had moved into the region and were trading with the Cherokee as early as the 1500's, therefore native people in this area felt the effects of North America being colonized almost as soon as the process began. But it was not until much later, after industrialists moved into the region, that people here could no longer be self-sufficient. Outsiders continue to exert pressure on local people and to instigate change today.

Many authors have already critiqued globalization and the destabilizing effects that it can have on people, their identity, and landscapes (Appadurai 1990, Bodley 1996, Kaplan 1995, Norberg-Hodge 1991, Parlow 1978, Peluso 1992, Sachs 1993, Seremetakis 1994). Graham County is not the only place in which people have had to adapt to the unexpected consequences of so-called 'development' and 'progress' (Parlow 1978). Other authors have also described various ways in which these processes have resulted in dramatic decreases in various plant and animal populations such as beavers in the southeastern United States (Krech 1999), overall decreases in environmental quality (Davis 2000), and declines in the use of old varieties of food plants and wild plant

resources (Fowler and Mooney 1990, Lukes 1994, Nabhan 1997, Peluso 1992, Safran and Godoy 1993, Vasavi 1994). These themes are not new in and of themselves. What I hope to accomplish in this chapter is to develop a preliminary understanding of how and why people have used indigenous forest plants in Graham County, North Carolina in the ways that they have.

In the pages that follow I will outline some transitions that have taken place and describe how individual families in Graham County adjusted their economic behaviors in order to accommodate these changes between the years 1900 and 2004. For the sake of convenience, these transitions will be described in terms of three stages. In reality, we are looking at a slow, continuous process in which the human behaviors and trends described greatly overlap. Individuals living in specific communities made different decisions at different times according to their own needs. But by loosely defining three general stages of transition I will be able to more easily point out shifts in thought that have occurred over time, and give the reader some idea of how and why certain economic behaviors were altered across these communities. During the first stage, access to wage labor becomes a critical factor in household economies. In stage two, entire families begin to leave the mountains to earn a living or else, 'just get by' by diversifying their livelihood strategies. And in stage three outsiders have moved into Graham County and many local families have come to rely on social services or have left the mountains altogether.

NOTE: In the pages that follow there are quotations from interviews that have been lightly edited. This was done in order to make them easier to read, and therefore more understandable. The intended meanings of these statements have not been altered.

STAGE ONE
1900-1930

At the turn of the twentieth century there was no industry in Graham County, and most residents lived largely at a subsistence level. Since the terrain is rugged here, even relative to the rest of Southern Appalachia, there were no auto-worthy roads in the region in 1900, and many oxen and sled trails were too treacherous for even wagons to drive over. Mabel Orr's (born 1905) account of traveling to Graham County to teach in 1924 gives us some sense of how isolated and rough the area was at this time.

...I couldn't find it (Robbinsville), on a map. And I sent him (the school superintendent) a telegram asking him how to get here! And he said, 'come to Topton on the train, and come on to Robbinsville on the mail car.' Well I did. And it took all that day. I started about 3:00, took that day and night and all the next day. I got to Asheville and, things got to looking scary. It was so different! And it got rough. And there was a conductor on the train that told me I shouldn't come up here in such a rough place. He said, 'What in the world is a girl like you going to such a place!' And I told him that I wouldn't be in any danger, I was going to teach school. He said, 'oh! They shoot people up there over nothing!' He said not long ago somebody in the school got shot! (laugh) Well I heard later that there was some kinda party and these two men were drunk and got to fighting over a woman, and one shot the other one. But that was, (laugh) a long time ago. But, anyway he said, if you want - he tried to get me to go back home where I came from - he said it'd be dangerous to come up here. I said well I've come this far, I'm not going back. And he said well at least stay in Asheville and then you'll get to Topton in the daytime! He said, it wouldn't do to go now, you'd get there about 9:30 at night, after dark. But if I had known it, the superintendent, met me.

But I waited until the next day. I got here in the early afternoon on Sunday, and came over in the mail car. That crooked road from Topton to Robbinsville. And there were other people in there, in the car. And they were looking, and talking about what a dangerous road it was, scarred to death! And I wasn't scarred, I was numb. I had been through so much, and (laughter) seen so many strange things that I just, I reckon lost all my feeling. And I was hoping I'd get to teach the third grade at Robbinsville. But Mr. Moody had all the teachers placed and set me down to Santeetlie. He said it was six miles on down the road. Little narrow road! And he found a man that was, I think he was logging. Anyway he looked rough. He was a young man, but he was bearded, and I thought he was old. And he took me down there to my boarding place. And there were not very many houses and I couldn't see many people. And there were cows in the road, and pigs. And everything where the Santeetlie Dam and lake is, it

was just big old orchards and old fields, and just a little house every once in a mile. And then we came to a white house on a hill, and I thought this is it. And the man kept right on going!

And he had said it's six miles! Well it seemed like we went on and on. And he went right on. I thought, where is he taking me to? I'll never get home. My daddy won't know what's become of me. And finally we got to Loan Oak Church. It's not, wasn't a log building it was a plank, big plank building, no paint. And one road turned off that to the right. That went to East buffalo. And one went around the mountain and went on and on, to the Brook's Gap. That's where Thunderbird is now. It was the Brooks Gap. And it just wound around the mountain, just a little narrow, just like a little shelf carved in the mountain. And finally we came out, off of the mountain to the river. Cheoahie river. And a road right by it. And there was a place there called stump ford and it had a small house with a little store connected. And John Shay Orr and his wife Lily lived there. And that's where I boarded. But that river went right across, went right down a wide river! And it had a swinging bridge. I had to cross that swinging bridge and walk about a mile, and cross another swinging bridge, but this other one was a smaller bridge but it was really high. And oh it was a beautiful walk! I didn't mind it. I was used to walking, and walked about half a mile on to the school.

Because of this remoteness, people living in a given valley or on a particular creek rarely visited those living elsewhere in the county. In 1900, as today, Graham County was composed of disparate and contrasting communities of people, each community having its own web of social relationships that operated relatively independently of one another. Many people knew of or had family members living on neighboring creeks, but they did not see each other or rely on one another on a daily, weekly, or sometimes even monthly basis. This was probably especially true for women whose duties tended to keep them close to home. Because of this relative isolation from one another, the different communities apparently developed different characteristics despite their close proximity. One woman, Dovie Randolph, was born in 1911 and grew up on Yellow Creek. She said in a 2001 interview that she did not visit Robbinsville, the county seat, until after she was an adult (2001 video interview for *Mountain Talk*). Even today, people living in the communities known as Stecoah, Robbinsville, Snowbird and

Yellow Creek tend to socialize mainly within their own valley. As a result, each community has its own defining characteristics.

Stecoah Valley was a flourishing farming community by 1875 (Holland 2001:38). The 1910 Census of the United States records 'Stekoah township' as having a population of 972 people in 1890, 1,216 people in 1900, and 1,498 people in 1910. Present day Murphy had a much smaller population relative to Stecoah during these same years. At the turn of the century Stecoah already had its own school, church and store. Residents rarely had a need to leave their community.

On the other side of the mountain across Stecoah Gap sits Robbinsville, the current county seat, and the former site of Fort Montgomery (See Figure 3.1). Van Noppen and Van Noppen (1973) described Robbinsville as being a 'hamlet of sixty-one persons' in 1880 (Van Noppen and Van Noppen 1973:56). Thirty years later, the 1910 13th Census of the United States reports 'Robbinsville town' as only having a population of 122 people. However, Cheoah township, which includes Robbinsville and the area known today as Snowbird, had a population of 1,723 in 1890, 2,368 in 1900, and 2,579 people in 1910. Robbinsville was made the county seat of Graham County shortly after the county's ratification, so this was where circuit judges came periodically to settle disputes and to try criminals (Van Noppen and Van Noppen 1973). Older residents of Graham County who grew up in Snowbird and are now in their 70's and 80's remember walking to Robbinsville to trade goods and shop at Snyder's Department Store.

According to some informants, Cherokee people would walk into town from Snowbird and across the Yellow Mountains through Yellow Creek, the women carrying large knapsacks full of baskets and other crafts over their shoulder to trade in

Robbinsville. Older people describe watching these Indians walk into town in single file, the men often on horseback riding in front of the women who were on foot.

Oh lord, they'd pass our house a-going, they'd come across from the Welch Cove, what's known as the village (Fontana) now. They'd come from over in there somewhere. We never did know where. But anyway, they'd be maybe 15 or 20 of 'em. And they'd come across the mountain, that mountain (in Yellow Creek), and then they'd come right down by our house (in Yellow Creek) headn' towards the other mountain across from the creek, ya know. And they'd be gone maybe two weeks and they'd come back. And the mommies'd have something on their, like-a, I'd say a habbersack, and have the baby in that. And the man would be walking along not a-carrying a thing (laugh)! And I thought a big Indian man oughtta be carrying that (Dovie Randolph 2001 raw footage for *Mountain Talk*).

Like Stecoah, Yellow Creek was a farming community at the turn of the twentieth century. According to one current resident who grew up on Yellow Creek,

...but still and all, about anybody that lived anywhere lived way back in the sticks, way back on, why I imagine in 1850. My grandpa, my great-grandpa came here from Kansas in 1883. And Yellow Creek wasn't nothing but just, there was maybe, ten or twelve houses on Yellow Creek when he came here. So I mean you can just about go by that and figure how, I mean there just wadn't nobody living here. But about 1840's and '50's people were still trying to come in here and settle, pioneers, if you want, you know. For want of a better word (Viola Laughtry, born 1941).

During the early 1900's Yellow Creek had a distinct upper end and lower end.

According to Dovie Randolph (born 1911), some people attended the 'upper school' and some people went to the 'lower school', she does not recall there being any other name for these school houses (raw footage filmed in 2001 for the production of Hutcheson's video *Mountain Talk* that was released in 2003). People on the creek also had a church of their own that they attended regularly, and Sam Peterson had a store on the lower end of the creek (Dovie Randolph, born 1911). No places of business exist on the creek today. And children now have to commute to Robbinsville to attend public school. But people still specify whether they live on 'upper Yellow Creek' or 'lower Yellow Creek' and

some say that people living on one end of the creek speak a little differently than people who grew up on the other end. The 13th Census of the United States reports Yellow Creek as having had a population of 618 people in 1890, 759 people in 1900, and 672 people in 1910.

Ethnically the communities described above were relatively homogeneous. In contrast, the area known today as Snowbird was a patchwork of small homesteads, those of full-blood Cherokee interspersed among those of whites. This was a result of the way in which reservation land came to be established for these Cherokee. After a long period of American history during which Native Americans did not have any legal rights, it became legal for Native Americans to own land in 1866. William Thomas, a white man who had befriended the Cherokee and ran several trading posts, had arranged to buy a tract of land for the Snowbird Indians living in Cheoah, a culturally significant site for the Cherokee that lies within Graham County (Neely 1991). This would have enabled the Snowbird Cherokee to form a cohesive 'boundary' or reservation as had been established for the so-called 'white Indians' on the Qualla Boundary 50 miles northeast of Cheoah (Neely 1991). But the Cheoah Indians never provided the necessary funds and so Thomas was unable to complete the deal. Because of this, Snowbird reservation land is composed of scattered parcels of land purchased by individual Cherokee families during this time. These individual tracts now total 2,249 acres, a few of which lie within the Stecoah area. In 1914 Arthur stated that, "One hundred and fifty Cherokee Indians live on the head of Snowbird and Buffalo creeks," on these tracts (Arthur 1914:211).

Because of how their homesteads were interspersed, whites and the Snowbird Cherokee seem to have had to work among and with each other. In contrast, the Qualla

Cherokee had a cohesive boundary, but experienced obvious cultural changes much earlier than the Indians in Snowbird did. According to local lore the first marriage between a full-blooded Cherokee and a white person did not occur in Snowbird until 1960, for instance, and Snowbird Cherokee who are 50 or older today went to an elementary school where they were taught in Cherokee and became fluent Cherokee speakers. Iva Rattler (born 1930) says that before she was eight years old, “Well, we talked Cherokee, I mean, it was all Cherokee when I was growing up. And I didn’t, I had to go learn when I became eight years old – to speak English. I don’t know how soon after that I learned, but anyway I did. And to me, eight is – really (laugh) – a pretty good sized kid (Iva Rattler 2001 video interview, raw footage for *Mountain Talk*).” She began learning English when she was enrolled in Snowbird Day school.

By 1900 the Qualla tribal members were already thought of as ‘white Indians’ who had lost their language and traditions by some Snowbird residents (Neely 1991). This is partially due to the fact that Qualla Cherokee were forced to attend a boarding school where they were not allowed to speak Cherokee much earlier, and at much younger ages than most Snowbird Indians. At the time that the first boarding schools were established it was too problematic for officials to get to and remove Cherokee children from Snowbird homes because the landscape was so rugged, and the trip so time consuming. Because this was the case, until recently the Snowbird Cherokee seem to have retained more traditionally ‘Cherokee’ cultural ideas and practices than many people have on the main reservation. This presents an interesting dichotomy.

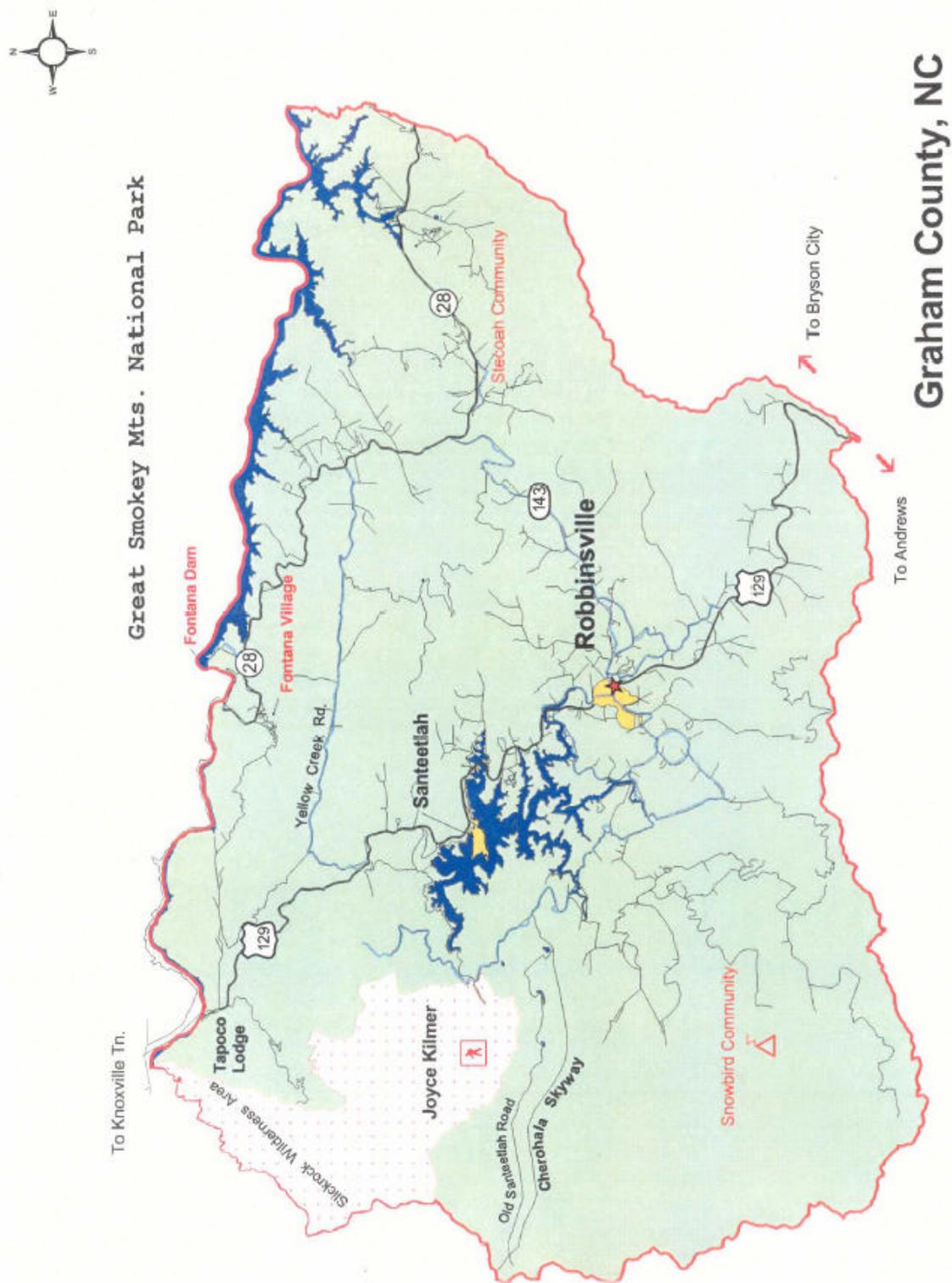


Figure 3.1: Map of Graham County, NC.

On the boundary Cherokee are able to live in a cluster completely apart from white households, despite a large degree of intermarriage with whites. In Snowbird, Indian land consists of parcels that are scattered between and among the former farmsteads of white settlers. The Snowbird Cherokee have to some extent participated in the political and economic activities of their white neighbors since the settlers arrived, but are still considered to be more traditional than most tribal members who live on the Qualla boundary. In 1900, the Snowbird Cherokee were mostly, if not entirely, composed of full-bloods who were subsistence farming alongside their white neighbors in a relatively remote section of the county. Because of the geography of the area, they had relatively little contact with other Cherokee, or with whites that did not live in or around Snowbird.

It has been suggested by Neely (1991) that the cultural resilience of the Snowbird Cherokee is partially due to the 'traditionalist' ideologies of the particular Cherokee who hid out in the Snowbird Mountains during the removal period. Hill (1997) argues that, in addition to this, it is also important to remember that the Snowbird Cherokee did not have the extreme experiences with boarding schools that those on the Qualla Boundary reservation did. It is also true however that many Qualla Boundary Cherokee had already intermarried with white people at the time of its formation, and that their land was more desirable from the perspective of whites, and therefore heavily encroached upon (Perdue 1998). Because of this, and the fact that Qualla was more accessible than the Snowbird area, the Qualla Boundary history includes a post Civil War period during which people not listed on tribal rolls claimed to be Cherokee in order to receive land on or near the Boundary (Perdue 1998). The Cherokee were being pressured to break their communally

owned land up into allotments. Because this was the case many people attempted to get their names on the list to receive a 160 acre tract even if they were not Cherokee, culturally (Neely 1991). Once this began to happen, many of the people living on the Qualla Boundary soon began to behave more like white people than like Cherokee people from the perspective of Snowbird Cherokee.

Whatever the reasons for people's perception that Snowbird is inhabited by 'traditionals', at the turn of the century the Snowbird Cherokee had relatively little contact with people outside of their own valley communities. Iva Rattler (born 1930) said that when she was growing up people in Snowbird pretty much kept to themselves, and that most white home places were clustered in and around Robbinsville. The only contact she had with white people when she was young was with the teachers at Snowbird Day school. But today things have changed. Even before Iva was born, Snowbird Cherokee men were leaving their farms in order to find work. This trend began around 1900.

Mechanized Logging

According to Oliver (1989), soon after 1900 mechanized logging began to occur in the Smoky Mountains of Southern Appalachia (Oliver 1989:79). When this happened, local economies began to change, and people began to rely on wage labor in order to earn a living rather than primarily on subsistence farming (Davis 2000, Oliver 1989:79). The shift to wage labor was sudden, and was largely the result of the extension of the Western North Carolina Railroad to Murphy, North Carolina (Eller 1982). After a lot of political debate, large amounts of money, and a significant loss of human life, Richmond & Danville completed this leg of the 'Murphy Branch' in 1891 (Parce 1997:35). Once this

happened, logging and the milling of lumber became big business in and around Graham County. Before this time there had been little means of getting forest products to market, but, “With rail service, the lumbermen of Maine, Upstate New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Michigan moved into western North Carolina en masse (Parce 1997:50).” Each logging company mapped out its own territory and laid track for individual log trains (‘feeder lines’) that could interface with the Murphy Branch line. Between 1910 and 1930 the resulting mills strewn across western North Carolina and Tennessee, “...sawed millions of board feet a month (Parce 1997:50).” Some stories say that at this point in time there were still trees in the Smokies that could be turned into as much as 18,000 board feet of lumber (Parce 1997:73). This boom lasted less than 40 years (Davis 2000, Eller 1982).

In Graham County the transition to wage labor did not really begin to take place until 1910 when the Whiting Manufacturing Company purchased a lot of property in the county. In, “1910-11 the Whiting Manufacturing Company bought up many of the lots and houses in Robbinsville and many thousands of acres of timber lands (Arthur 1914:211).” Whiting ended up being responsible for most of the mechanized logging that took place on the Graham County side of the Little Tennessee River at the turn of the century, though there were apparently smaller logging operations around, such as the Graham County Lumber Company and Crosby Lumber Company (Holland 2001:79, Mastran and Lowerre 1983). Other logging companies that were operating in the area during this logging boom were the Kanawha Hardwood Company, Champion Paper, Bemis Lumber Company and Gennett Lumber Company (Parce 1997:74). Babcock

Lumber and Land Company logged the Slickrock area, and Kitchen Lumber logged an area around 20 mile Creek (Parce 1997:75).

...they had a humongous big saw mill. I think it was, if I'm not mistaken, now I could be wrong, I think it was Kitchen's Lumber Company, way back. Had a big sawmill way up in the Gold Williams Cove. Back up in there in a place they call mill springs. The sawdust, the big pile of sawdust, the biggest one is still there with big trees growing up in it now. So you can imagine it's been a long time ago. But they would, I think, 'ball-hoot' those logs. Yeah, they ball-hooted them out...that's having you a sleuce. Well, they probably hauled the first four or five big logs, pulled 'em by horses, and then after it made it kinda a route, they could just get 'em started and it'd ball hoot plum outta there, right down that route. And then they would load them on the train. And it'd haul them back outta here. All the way into Tennessee, it went all the way into Tennessee, down the river there. That river road, over here where you get onto 129, all the way down the river there... it's built over a railroad, that road is. And they would take 'em into Tennessee, them big logs...If you ever go back in on Bear Creek. There was a big settlement back in there. I mean, a logging camp, and uh, they had mess halls and everything back in there. People lived back in there, they had railroads back in there...anybody could get a job at a logging camp. There was lots of logging camps (Viola Laughtry, born 1941).

...Well that was after, now when, about 1925 and 6 they started building the Santeetlie Dam. And they built that road on down from Robbinsville to, to Santeetlie, but, it didn't go on down the river. Ya had to go to Yellow Creek, and cross that mountain on a little narrow road. And Bemis Lumber Company came, and built the railroad, and all, and people came in from other places. And it really was booming for a while (Mabel Orr, born 1905).

Before this time, labor was valued and thought of in terms of monetary equivalents, but actual cash rarely changed hands (Salstrom 1994). Rather, people were accustomed to exchanging goods, such as ginseng roots, for store items such as coffee, sugar, and sometimes shoes (Yoakley 1932). But a barter system prevailed.

We had a local merchant that would go to Knoxville as often as he need be, and it was a barter society. So you would collect what you could and swap it in to this local merchant, and he in turn, if you wanted to buy gun powder or whatever you needed, then he would take your furs and hides and herbs to Knoxville and trade 'em in. And a, my father-in-law kept telling me back in 1925 the price of a mink hide was ten dollars...(Glen Cardwell, born 1930).

Yeah they traded with things like that (ginseng). They had to a lot of people...And the Indians would come and bring, they'd bring baskets tied up in a sheet over their shoulder. And just trade them for groceries...But that was just something that people did. Some man would cut a load of wood and bring it to the store or to somebody to trade for something. Did that instead of money. I reckon it's always been that way (Mabel Orr, born 1905).

It was also common for one family on any given creek to operate a grain mill.

The other families would take their grain (usually corn) to this mill to be ground, and pay for the service with a percentage of their milled grain (Marvin Grindstaff, born 1938).

However, with the introduction of mechanized logging people began to rely primarily on cash in order to obtain their basic needs, instead of either producing what they needed themselves, or exchanging something that they had produced for what they needed. This change altered the ways in which people utilized wild plants in the mountains.

Many changes in patterns of wild plant use in Graham County had already taken place prior to 1900, especially among the Cherokee (Perdue 1998, Hill 1997). For instance, before 1900 it was not uncommon for Cherokee and whites to dig and sell ginseng and other herbs fairly consistently as a means of obtaining either cash or goods (Mooney 1972). This is how many settlers in southern Appalachia were able to generate enough income to buy land and establish a homestead for themselves (Duncan 1997). But for the most part, after 1900 plant uses in Graham County reflected the needs of subsistence agriculture production strategies. Many different forest plants were utilized by Cherokee and white households for both trade and their own consumption. Once people were living on established farms they and their livestock continued to consume wild foods and medicines, but they seem to have infrequently dug herbs to sell (possibly due to a lack of time and/or consistent market). According to interviews, this was certainly the case after large scale commercial logging entered the area in 1910.

The physical impact that large scale commercial logging had on the landscape made it less suitable for meeting people's basic needs even for those who continued to try to make a living subsistence farming (Davis 2000, Eller 1982, Otto and Anderson 1982). In the past, logging had resulted in the clearing of small areas, a process that temporarily increased populations of nontimber forest plants frequently used by local residents. The commercial logging practiced by large scale operations such as Whiting Manufacturing produced much different results. Much larger areas were cleared at a time, entire mountainsides, in fact. And the methods used were much more destructive, so few populations of valued plants were able to re-establish themselves over the short term (Davis 2000, Duffy and Meier 1992, Eller 1982).

Furthermore, more people moved to the county in order to take advantage of the jobs that logging provided, further diminishing the landscape's ability to sustain its human population. There were fewer resources to go around, and increasing amounts of land were becoming privatized, thereby limiting individual's access to many resources (Davis 2000). The expanded trade network that the logging industry, particularly its railroads, enabled also resulted in a demand for new foods and consumer goods that had not been obtainable in Graham County in the past. In order to get these goods people had to spend more money or barter a greater monetary equivalent. This ended up being a critical turning point for people in western North Carolina.

At the turn of the twentieth century subsistence farmers in Graham County grew their own food and raised cows and pigs that fed off of the mast of American Chestnut and other trees (Davis 2000, Eller 1982, Salstrom 1994). These farm animals were allowed to roam freely through the mountains, so families did not have to grow or buy

very much feed for their animals. People hunted wild turkey, raccoons, opossums, squirrels and other game as well. They also made their own medicines from wild forest herbs and trees. Many people spun and wove fabric, and made their own clothes.

... grandma would can everything and they'd make sausage, you know, they'd kill hogs, and make their sausage, and their meat to go in the beans. They'd salt that down...they had a little, a little spring house down there you know where it stayed cold? They'd salt their meat down when they killed a hog. They'd kill 'em usually in the Fall of the year. And then its cool you know, it'd go to getting cold and they'd salt that meat down, they'd cut that meat off to put in their fryer or put in their beans and for their lard you know, their, you know, seasoning? They'd render that up and put it in jars or something...to cook with, store it in, and they'd keep it stored in that little spring house. Where it'd stay cool. Yeah. And grandpa would log a lot. 'Bout all these men logged, from down in here. You know both of my grandpa's they would log, and grandma she'd raise chickens too. And they'd have chickens to fry, and they'd have their eggs you know. They just about lived off the land (Ruby Crisp, born 1934)!

In short, families were largely self-sufficient and individual households did not have a dramatic impact (relative to mechanized commercial logging) on nontimber forest resources (Davis 2000). Even in the 1880's when people began to supplement their income by selectively logging their land, their farms and forests remained productive (De Vivo 1986, Eller 1982, Otto 1983). As mentioned earlier, they frequently created small disturbances on the landscape, but these disturbances often stimulated populations of nontimber forest products such as ginseng that are not very productive in deep forest settings. Such disturbances therefore proved to be beneficial to most individuals. People were 'just getting by' and few, if any, were attempting to export goods from the county for sale because the distances that people needed to travel were too far and rough to be cost effective. But people did grow and sell some corn and potatoes around 1910 and after on a small scale (Dove Randolph, video interview 2001).

...I know grandma and them would sell, I betcha they sold meal. You know, like corn meal. They'd probably sell it, 'cause I remember grandma said they'd ride

this train down there to, Topoca must a been, and she'd take stuff to sell down there, you know. And I think there's places down there you could buy cloth, and she'd take it and sell it and then buy her cloth, and then they'd make their dresses, you know (Ruby Crisp, born 1934).

In addition, Horace Kephart who lived in the Hazel Creek area (which is now under Fontana Lake) in 1904, recorded that some mountain families sold moonshine that they made from surplus corn because they could haul it out and sell it in small quantities and because it wouldn't spoil (Kephart 1976). This practice must have become fairly widespread. Mabel Orr (born 1905) said that when she first began teaching school in Graham County in 1924,

...the children had a game they played at that time. This was supposed to be a dry county. And the government had revenue officers that would go around and hunt stills, and put people in jail if they had liquor. And later my father-in-law was sheriff and, if somebody had liquor in their car, he had to take the car, keep it, and put the men in jail. And they were real strict. But anyway, the children had a game they'd play. One bunch would be over here, they were making the moonshine liquor, and the others over here were the revenue officers. And they would come and the moonshiners would run off, and they'd – that was the game they played all the time. And I found out that the reason why, that's about all their daddy's did. *That's all there was to do!*

If and when people needed cash for some reason, they would usually dig the amount of ginseng roots they needed to sell in order to obtain the dollar amount needed. The price that people could get for ginseng in Graham County was generally too small to make digging more than was needed worth their time. Locating ginseng to dig could be difficult and time consuming, so people tended to transplant roots and treat the beds of it that they established as savings accounts. Several people told me that their fathers or grandfathers would draw on these 'accounts' only as needed. If ginseng was not available during the season in which someone needed some cash, and if they did not have any surplus crops, they would trap furs, dig other roots, or peel bark to sell.

Graham County residents also made their own medicines and used a variety of raw materials to construct their homes, build their furniture, and make toys, crafts, and tools.

One of the things that my father said that they'd always bring back (from the mountain forests) would be the sap, the resin from the fir trees. And...you collected that...many of them are dead up yonder, but they had blisters on them, the bark, the trees, and it was easily pierced. And you had a Prince Albert can (laugh), but you know what a Prince Albert can is? You could collect it easy by putting, letting it run – but you could sell that to pharmaceutical manufacturing, somehow...mostly for bed sores. Balsam lotion. Bed sores. But it's also good for kidney infection... my father and these other old men would say, ' Aunt Sarie said that she wanted us to bring her back a little bottle of resin for her kidneys!' ...living over in Greenbriar (in what is now Great Smoky Mountains National Park), they went to Alum Cave. There wasn't even a trail to Alum Cave in the 1880's and 90's! I said, what took you to Alum Cave? Well, it was to get alum. Now, why would you want alum? You needed alum when you died something, as a mordant, to make the color permanent...(Glen Cardwell, born 1930).

But I know my mother-in-law used Yellowroot. Now that grew in a little branch. Near where we lived on Moose branch. And you could chew that root – it's real yella – and, if your mouth was sore, it would cure it...And if you made a little tea out of it, it was good they said for stomach troubles. And they's a, indigo, I know my mother-in-law would - that was a blue looking plant - but they used it for dye. And I remember one of my husband's old aunts would gather herbs and make ointment to rub on you for rheumatism. And she put, she said grease. She put lard, and jimson weed, and rat's vein. I didn't know rat's vein, I know jimson weed. And, turpentine. And several things like red pepper. That made it red. She cooked it all together, and strained it. And it made a pretty, red looking salve (Mabel Orr, born 1905).

For the most part, people had to either produce what they needed themselves out of forest materials, or else make something out of them that they could trade for what it was that they needed. According to Glen Cardwell (born 1930), "It was an economy of make due or do without," until after 1947 when WWII and the Depression were both over. According to Mabel Orr (born 1905),

When I came (in 1924) most people just had a stove and a table, and these home made chairs. And beds. That's about all anybody had. And that's all that's

necessary, really. And most the women would make quilts...but it was funny, people would sit around the fire with their chairs. And when the women would say dinner was ready, they would come and pick up their chair and take it to the kitchen, to the dining room, and use the same chair to eat.

A few people were employed as postal workers, teachers, or shopkeepers before 1910, but the services of these professionals were frequently paid for with food or ginseng.

By 1930, however, formal wage labor seems to have been viewed as a necessary component of making a living. Between 1910 and 1930 many men chose to work off-farm for various periods of time logging as the timber companies moved in (Eller 1982). But it seems that many boys were beginning to leave the county to work as well, possibly so as not to be a burden on families that could no longer grow enough food to feed all of its members without acquiring more land. Between 1900 and 1920 the size of family farms were decreasing in size, possibly due to the practice of partible inheritance, and there is evidence suggesting that the productivity of existing farms were diminishing (Otto 1983, Otto and Anderson 1982). Many men also left to fight in WWI.

Consider, for example, the case of Ed Collins. Before he began working on log trains Ed Collins had left Graham County to work in a steel mill in Pennsylvania for a while. He then returned to live in Graham County in 1925. Ed Collins would have been less than 15 years of age when he went to Pennsylvania (Interview #A-74-29, Foxfire archives). This suggests that a pattern of leaving to make money and then returning home, a pattern common today, had already been established by 1925. There are few people still alive to ask about this, but it seems likely that this became fairly common. It is probable that as families grew and increasing amounts of land became privatized by lumber companies, children began to have to leave their homesteads in order to make their own way. According to Neely (1991), this was especially true for Cherokee people

in Graham County. The reservation land that had been obtained for the Snowbird Cherokee was very limited, and by 1900 this land was not extensive enough to support the human population attempting to live off of it. So, by the turn of the century many Cherokee men were already leaving home in search of opportunities for wage labor.

Only six percent of the land in Graham County is cultivatable, and as its human population grew it may have become increasingly difficult for both white and Cherokee families to grow enough food to support all of their members. It is also possible that the money being offered by potential employers may have seemed like a lot to people who had not had the opportunity to work for wages before, particularly since subsistence farming is very difficult. Married men probably took advantage of employment opportunities close to home when they could, but may have spent just as much or more time working around their homesteads. Several informants who are now in their sixties remember their fathers having helped maintain gardens around their home, but taking advantage of wage labor whenever they could. Unmarried men with no land were probably freer to leave the county entirely.

Since many young men seem to have left the area between 1910 and 1930 and then returned, they may even have left in order to acquire the means to buy their own place back in Graham County before choosing to get married, others probably left only because they went to fight in WWI. The women probably stayed at home unless they married. But in 1910, opportunities to work on logging trains or for large timber operations for wage labor were welcomed. There does not seem to be any evidence suggesting that people resisted efforts to log their region or to accept employment. The lumber barons needed people to cut and load the timber, grade roads, and to operate and

maintain the trains that hauled the wood, pulp, and supplies. And at the turn of the century Graham County would have been a prime area to log in.

In 1913 the lawyer and historian John Preston Arthur wrote, “There is more virgin forest land in this [Graham] county than in any other now (Arthur 1914:211).” United States Forest Service records from 1912 list Graham County as having a total area of 193,280 acres, 173,763 of which were forested (90% of the county), an average stand of 6,255 board feet per acre, and 1,086,937 total feet (Arthur 1914:515-516). A handbook put out by the Department of Agriculture in 1893 stated that 7/8 of Graham County was covered with trees (Van Noppen and Van Noppen 1973:269). Graham County may still have more virgin forest than any other county in North Carolina today, though much less than it once did. In 1926 Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest was created in order to preserve 3,800 acres of old growth forest in Graham County. This tract had been owned but never logged by Gennett Lumber Company. Andrew Gennett sold the tract to the United States Forest Service after proposing that this watershed should be maintained for the public as an example of undisturbed Appalachian forest (Hayler 2002). Approximately 80% of Graham county is currently designated as national forest, but most of it has been logged sometime during the twentieth century.

As mentioned earlier, before 1910 logging had already been occurring on a small scale for a long time. It was fairly common for family and small scale operations to manually cut down individual trees in relatively accessible areas and haul them out one at a time with oxen or horses for use or sale (Eller 1982, Oliver 1989). But by all accounts mechanized logging denuded entire mountainsides and ravaged the landscape (Davis 2000, De Vivo 1986, Eller 1982, Oliver 1989). Photographs from this time period are

striking, horrific even, because of how this process altered the landscape so dramatically. The splash dams used eradicated speckled trout and other freshwater fish species from some areas, clear cutting eliminated the availability of mast for many years to come, and the lack of trees increased incidents of flash flooding and erosion, and intense fires among other things (Davis 2000, De Vivo 1986, Eller 1982). One wonders how residents of the area, many of whom were farmers and woodsmen, would have felt about these landscape changes.

Eller (1982) and Davis (2000) indicate that at least some individuals were upset by what they saw happen, but that they did not understand the full significance of what was being done until it was too late. According to Oliver (1989), people willingly sold their land, and the rights to timber on their land, to lumber companies. Many people were eager to earn wages and to participate in an economy that they had formerly been unable to fully engage, some were successfully coerced into selling either their land or timber because they had not paid their property taxes in a long time and the timber barons were in a position to outbid local people for their own land (Davis 2000). It is also likely that people simply believed that the trees would grow back, and that they would be able to earn a living in Graham County via wage labor for as long as they chose to. In addition, many people may not have wanted to live at a primarily subsistence level any longer. Therefore, the productivity of the land may not have been an issue for most of them at this time, though records suggest that efforts were made to propose logging legislation requiring that the lumber industry not use logging methods detrimental to the overall viability of the landscape (Davis 2000, Eller 1982). But the lumber barons successfully opposed all such legislation efforts (Davis 2000, Eller 1982). The resulting

changes in the local economy and landscape had lasting effects on the ways in which local people utilized nontimber forest products in the region.

Mechanized Loggings Effect on Plant Use

Poignant indicators of both change and persistence can be seen by studying basket making traditions in southern Appalachia. In 1900 all of the cultures present, whites and Indians, had long histories of weaving baskets, though the traditional materials that they used, and basket forms and functions tended to differ. Cherokee women had been making rivercane (*Arundinaria gigantea*) baskets for ceremonial, exchange, and utilitarian purposes for centuries (Hill 1997). In contrast, white settlers primarily used White Oak (*Quercas alba*) splits to make baskets, and the baskets that they made seem to have been produced solely for functional purposes. Sometime between 1838 and 1900 many Cherokee women had begun making white oak baskets as well. They continued to adorn their creations using traditional dyes made from plants such as bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), yellowroot (*Xanthorhiza simplicissima*), and Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*), but the shapes that they created began to change somewhat and to reflect European traditions. It has been argued that this shift may have been at least partially due to the depletion of rivercane populations in western North Carolina (Hill 1997).

By 1930 Cherokee women had also adopted Japanese honeysuckle as a basket weaving material (Hill 1997). The ecological disturbances caused by extensive commercial logging in the region allowed this species to become well established in the mountains so that it was readily available even when white oak and rivercane were not. The number of different materials these women were using expanded as individual species populations diminished over time. In contrast, white women do not seem to have

adopted rivercane into their repertoire, indicating either a lack of resources, cultural barriers, or lack of interest. But, given that Cherokee and whites were living in close proximity to each other, were both living at a similar level of subsistence, and both used baskets extensively during this time, a lack of resources seems to be the most likely explanation. It would not have been cost effective for white settlers to adopt Cherokee basket weaving traditions, despite their potential usefulness, if it was too labor intensive to locate the weaving materials.

However, rivercane was considered to be a valuable feed crop by whites when they first settled the area. Burning canebrakes to stimulate new, tender growth to feed cattle was the primary use of rivercane by white people. This resource management strategy may have limited the amount of taller basket making cane that was available (Cozzo personal communication). In addition, the impact of hogs rooting around and cattle walking over the roots of canebrakes apparently destroyed many populations of rivercane by damaging their rhizomes (Hill 1997). Even today, farmers like to eradicate it in order to enlarge the area they have in prime pasture land (Randy Collins personal communication).

Another difference between Cherokee and non-Cherokee basket makers seems to be the degree to which they produced baskets for exchange purposes. I have not identified any stories of white women in Graham County trading baskets that they have made for groceries or wares during this time period. But several people and accounts mention Cherokee women walking to towns or to the homes of white people to sell their baskets. This may suggest that Cherokee families had less arable land, and therefore more limited means of providing for their families than did white families. It may also

indicate that basket making resources that remained were being utilized more heavily than they had been historically and were becoming increasingly difficult to find. Instead of just making baskets to use themselves, at some point in time Cherokee women began to produce baskets and sell them in order to obtain food for their families, and possibly other commercial goods as well.

Between 1900 and 1930, already depleted populations of white oak and rivercane were losing habitat because of agricultural and logging practices of the time, in addition to being increasingly utilized for commercial purposes. The building of dams diminished many plant populations as well (Davis 2000). Cherokee women may have had a greater knowledge of the landscape and have been better able to locate weaving materials than relatively recent settlers, and perhaps were therefore more able to sell their baskets commercially than white women. It is also possible that there just was not a market in the area for baskets made by white people at the time.

American Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) is another plant that was utilized for both home use and exchange purposes during this period. "It's value, use and how to prepare it for the market of China were first taught us [western North Carolinians] by Andre Michaux on his first visit to the Blue Ridge in August, 1794 (Arthur 1914:523)." Both Cherokee and non-Cherokee people traded ginseng and used it for medicinal purposes (Hill 1997, Mooney 1972, Okrent 1990, Wigginton 1975). However, by 1913 Horace Kephart wrote in, *Our Southern Highlanders*, that ginseng populations had been severely depleted in western North Carolina. Trade of this indigenous plant had almost single-handedly financed the settlement of Southern Appalachian during the 1800's (Duncan 1997).

According to Goldstein (1975), Chinese ginseng (*Panax ginseng*) has been included in Chinese pharmacology's for at least 2,000 years. Okrent (1990) sites that there is further evidence indicating that the use of Chinese ginseng is a part of Chinese oral tradition's going back 5,000 years. Both Chinese and American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolium*) are herbal roots,

...known as the panacea of Chinese medicines, attributed with such properties as the ability to prolong life, strengthen and/or restore sexual prowess, and generally invigorate the body. The Manchu-Tartars call it *orhota* – 'queen of plants'. Its more common Chinese name, ginseng, means 'man root.' While the above generally invigorating properties result from daily ingestion, ginseng can be employed more specifically to cure digestive problems, nervous disorders, difficulties having to do with the blood and heart, and especially pulmonary problems. Ginseng has been claimed to cure no less than twenty-four bodily disorders. Not least among its qualities is the root's reputed value as an aphrodisiac when used in a pure, unmixed form. Particularly well-shaped human figure roots are considered strong enough to be potent without being taken internally and so are preserved as amulets instead (Goldstein 1975: 223).

Roots that are sold whole and that have this shape sell for particularly high prices today, as much as \$1,500 per root.

The French had established a profitable North American trade in ginseng with China by 1718. The first shipments of ginseng were purchased for 10 cents a pound, green in Quebec and sold for \$10.00 a pound in China (Goldstein 1975). (For a good overview of the history of the American ginseng market SEE Goldstein 1975). This trade in ginseng has continued through the present, but this market has proven to be volatile because of global and local politics, cultural fads outside of China, and because of how difficult it can be to grow and process ginseng commercially. Because of this, the price being offered for ginseng from one year to the next fluctuates dramatically. Despite this, people have consistently harvested ginseng. Settlers and Indians had been over-harvesting ginseng during the 1700's and 1800's. But it is perhaps also true that the

intensive, mechanized logging that began to occur in Southern Appalachia in 1900 is even more responsible for any population declines that ultimately occurred between 1900 and 1930 (Davis 2000, Duffy and Meier 1992).

At the turn of the twentieth century there were probably few, if any, people in Graham County that relied solely on ginseng for their living. But this species represented an important insurance policy for them. People were trading or selling ginseng if they needed to and the opportunity presented itself, but they were not harvesting large quantities of it for the sole purpose of acquiring capital. Besides ginseng roots and rivercane baskets, there is also reason to believe that people may have engaged in trading parts of other forest plants at stores in the region around 1900 (Mooney 1972). Glen Cardwell (born 1930) said that his father-in-law told him that before 1925 he could work all day to get a sled load of indigo, which was a little over a bushel when it was dried, and that it would bring him \$3.00. Many plants indigenous to Southern Appalachia were being used in some medical circles at the turn of the century (Berman and Flannery 2001), though people in Graham County may not have always had access to these markets. This will be discussed further later in this chapter.

During the 1960's and 1970's Foxfire students at the Rabun Gap-Nacoochee school were interviewing 'old-timers' in their 60's, 70's, and 80's about life in the mountains for a school magazine. These were people who would have been born around 1900 and grown up during this period of change and transition. At least a few people from Rabun County moved to Graham County during this time in order to work on logging trains or with one of the lumber companies. Some eventually worked on the Fontana dam (Foxfire transcript, interview with John Lee about Fontana Dam). The

Foxfire Books are suggestive of the foods and resources people used in order to live, farm, and maintain their homes. They also suggest that people had to work hard if they were going to survive. According to Aunt Arie, “We made a good life here, but we put in lots’ a’ time. Many an’ many a night I’ve been workin’ when two o’clock come in th’ mornin’-carnin’ n’ spinnin’ n’ sewin’ (Wigginton 1968).”

The Foxfire books and magazines contain long lists of wild plant foods and recipes. Spring greens alone account for at least 32 wild food plants (Wigginton 1970). Most of them were either cooked, usually fried in an iron skillet with some fat-back, or canned rather than eaten raw. They include:

Wild Onion (*Allium cernuum*)

Meadow Onion (*Allium canadense*)

Ramps (*Allium tricoccum*)

Wild Garlic (*Allium vineale*)

Dock (*Rumex crispus*)

Sheep Sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*)

Pigweed (*Amaranthus hybridus*)

Lamb’s Quarters (*Chenopodium album*)

Pokeweed (*Phytolacca Americana*)

Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*)

Chickweed (*Stellaria media*)

Peppergrass (*Lepidium virginicum*)

Shepherds Purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*)

Wild radish (*Raphanus raphanistrum*)

Black Mustard (*Brassica nigra*)
 Charlock (*Brassica kaber*)
 Water Cress (*Nasturium officinale*)
 Creases (*Barbarea verna*)
 Spring Cress (*Cardamine hirsute*)
 Toothwort (*Dentaria diphylla*)
 Brook Lettuce (*Saxifraga micranthidifolia*)
 Blue Violet (*Viola papilionacea*)
 Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)
 Ground Hog Plantain (*Prunella vulgaris*)
 Broadleaf Plantain (*Plantago major*)
 Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*)
 Tall Coneflower (*Rudbeckia laciniata*)

Cherokee families ate bean bread wrapped in the leaves of forest trees as a staple during this time period. Sometimes this ‘bread’ (a fist of deep fried meal or mush) was made from ground hickory nuts or chestnuts. Whites and Cherokee both roasted chestnuts and ate them in addition to feeding them to their hogs. People also ate hickory nuts (*Carya ovata*, *Carya laciniosa*, *Carya tomentosa*, *Carya glabra*), hazelnuts and black walnuts. Beech nuts were roasted and ground to make ‘coffee’, and acorns were sometimes ground into a flour and mixed with wheat flour if supplies were running low (Wigginton 1975). “Beech nuts (*Fagus grandifolia*) were also ground for cooking oil, meal, or made into beechnut butter (Wigginton 1975).”

Persimmons (*Diospyros virginiana*) are another tree fruit that was prized for food in the mountains. People used persimmons to make persimmon bread, beer, pudding, frosting, pie and candied persimmons. They made persimmons stuffed with nut meats, pulp to top pudding or ice cream, marmalade, butter, and persimmon-nut bread (Wigginton 1975). Pawpaws (*Asimina triloba*), river plums (*Prunus americana*) and crabapples (*Pyrus angustifolius*) are other tree fruits commonly eaten by mountain people and used in a variety of ways (Wigginton 1975). I have even drunk a 'coffee' made from persimmon seeds that had been roasted and ground.

Berries eaten by both Cherokee and whites in the mountains include; white mulberries (*Morus alba*), red mulberries (*Morus rubra*), wild gooseberries (*Ribes cynosbati*), allegheny serviceberries (*Amelanchier laevis*), serviceberries (*Amelanchier Canadensis*), black raspberries (*Rubus occidentalis*), dewberries (*Rubus flagellaris* and *Rubus trivialis*), various blackberries (*Rubus sp.*), buckberries (*Vaccinium erythrocarpon*), sumac berries (*Rhus typhina*), elderberries (*Sambucus canadensis*), and many others (Wigginton 1975). These fruits were dried, canned, made into candies, eaten raw, turned into jellies and jams, beverages and pickles. The memories recorded in the Foxfire archives make it clear that in 1900 mountain people knew how to utilize and store many possible food sources. In addition to growing their own food and storing corn, beans, cabbages, pumpkins, and in some cases growing sorghum and making molasses, teas and tonics from mints and the roots of sassafras trees, they were harvesting and preserving whatever other wild foods they could find as well. Their diverse sets of production strategies and access to a variety of resources both on and off their own land undoubtedly helped assure that they had food on their tables even during very hard times.

During the early 1900's, wild plant resources were also heavily relied on for medicines. Most communities had a mid-wife or 'granny woman' that they could call on to assist with an ill family member, but doctors were scarce (Ila Hatter personal communication, Ruby Crisp, born 1934). The nearest doctor was often a day or more away by horseback, and few people could afford to pay the fee doctors charged. Because of this people were more likely to rely on the services of a local granny woman or to do without. Such women were usually well respected for their ability to locate wild herbs and make medicines from them. Spring tonics were widely consumed as preventative cure-alls and to restore energy for working the land after long winters during which people's diets were limited. These tonics are consistently mentioned as containing Yellowroot (*Xanthorhiza simplicissima*) by people that I have interviewed in Graham County. Various other ingredients such as cherry tree bark, yellow poplar bark, and white liquor are sometimes also mentioned. The Foxfire books mention cures for toothaches, stomach problems, bedwetting, general sores on dogs, sore throats, measles, pain, nosebleeds, nail puncture wounds, kidney and liver trouble, foot problems, fevers, headaches, and skin irritations, among other things (Wigginton 1968). The most salient characteristic of these home remedies seem to be their taste. When I have asked people about some of these home remedies I have frequently been regaled with jocular stories of how they dreaded the time for each years 'spring tonic' when they were children.

Oh gosh yeah! You know back then they'd claim all kids had to be wormed, you know, because they had worms. Grandma had an old planting, I never will forget. I don't know exactly what it was, but they'd call it, 'wormy fuse' they'd call that. And grandma would boil that stuff and make us drink so much of that and it'd, you know they'd claim that'd get rid of the worms. And boy we hated to drink it! It didn't have no good taste (Ruby Crisp, born 1934)!

Yellowroot, pine resins, turpentine made from pine trees, bloodroot, ginseng, a variety of tree barks, the leaves of trailing arbutus, poke roots, sassafras root, boneset, a variety of tree leaves, goldenseal, wild peppermint, pokeberries, gilead buds, elderberries, and red sumac are also ingredients listed as being used by whites near the turn of the century (Wigginton 1968). In the Cherokee tradition many more plants are mentioned (Cozzo 2004).

In 1900 at least some people in each community must have known how to find, process, and prepare a multitude of wild plants for the teas and treatments described in the literature (Cozzo 1999, Mahoney 1846, Mooney 1972). Granny women and midwives, and some individual Cherokee people had more specialized knowledge than did the community as a whole. This was because these individuals regularly used and prepared certain plants, and many of them came from families who had lived in the area for many generations. This knowledge would at least partially have come from experience, but may also have been passed on selectively by a specialist from one generation to the next, particularly among the Cherokee. Though not the specific domain of women, as caretakers of their homes and families most women did know how to make a variety of teas, tonics and simple remedies for wounds and sores. However, among the Cherokee, 'medicine' related to spiritual matters that were often the domain of men. Knowledge of plants associated with such spiritual and healing concerns was passed on very selectively (Cozzo 2003 personal communication, Iva Rattler raw footage for *Mountain Talk* 2001).

Mountain people, Cherokee and white, relied on wild forest plants for innumerable other purposes as well. They used hand hewn logs to construct their homes,

to make shingles for their roofs, and planks for their floors. They also cut down trees to build fences, pens, furniture and coffins, in addition to needing lumber for wagons, wagon wheels, ploughs, barrels, buckets, axe handles, looms, toys, gun stocks, firewood, and smoke houses. They also used wood to construct lathes, mills, bee hives or 'gums', barns, and butter churns, among other things. In short, access to forests and forest resources were vital to everyday existence at the turn of the century. The woods and fields provided a source for peoples basic needs much as grocery stores do today.

Utilizing these resources required a large number of specialized skills and sets of knowledge in order to process them in beneficial ways. One had to know which kinds of wood were suitable for firewood, as opposed to furniture, shingles, or baskets. Many types of wood will work well for one purpose but not others. People also had to know how to locate these resources, which meant that they needed to have access to a number of different habitats, and therefore a large expanse of relatively undisturbed land. Small scale disturbances such as selective logging, the clear cutting of small areas for gardens and pastures, and controlled burns that cleared away underbrush stimulated many useful plant populations (Davis 2000). But the effects of large scale commercial logging introduced later did not.

I have already mentioned that some populations of plants that were sold or processed for commercial purposes, particularly ginseng and rivercane, are believed to have become depleted by 1900. Locating White Oak trees suitable for basket making soon became increasingly difficult as well (Hill 1997). Despite the fact that the baskets that Cherokee women made from cane were exchanged commercially, the intensity of this use would have had little impact on overall rivercane populations in and of itself.

This is because cane patches spread via rhizomes and grow relatively quickly. The plant is not actually killed when cane is harvested to make baskets, and populations are easy to maintain if cared for properly. So it was more than the fact that it was being utilized for commercial purposes that led to rivercane's decline. Ginseng, on the other hand, is valued for its root. Once it is harvested it is dead and will no longer grow or reproduce. In addition, it takes at least seven years for a new plant to mature and grow to a size worth digging. Similarly, white oak trees require many years of growth before they are suitable for basket weaving, and not all of them develop a suitable form for basket weaving once they are mature. This, combined with an increasing loss of habitat, made it difficult for white oak and ginseng populations to recover at a speed commensurate with their use.

But between 1900 and 1930, Graham County's overall landscape and the ways in which residents of the county made their living began to change dramatically. Because of this, the amount of time people spent in the woods for subsistence purposes, the skills that they utilized, and the knowledge that they passed on began to take new and different forms. Those who knew how to utilize forest resources effectively had fewer overall resources available to them by 1930 (Davis 2000). So it was by both choice and circumstance that people began to rely less completely on their knowledge and use of wild forest plants, and more on skills that enabled them to acquire the cash necessary to buy their food, medicine, clothes, and tools necessary to sustain their standards of living. Because of the methods that timber barons used to log this region, much of this land had been denuded and disturbed to such a degree that in some areas it would take many years for it to recover and be productive.

Further Development

As has already been mentioned, besides wage labor logging companies such as Whiting also brought railroads. Many people probably found this to be a blessing. The train systems allowed people to move around more freely within the county, and to have more contact with markets and people outside of the county as well (Interview #A-74-29, Foxfire archives). This would have been thought of as beneficial because Graham County's relative isolation presented certain challenges. In 1845, for instance, western North Carolina experienced a massive crop failure that resulted in a regional famine (Holland 2001:71). Across the mountains in Tennessee and along the North Carolina coast a surplus of food had been produced that year, but there was no way to transport it to this 'last frontier' without spoiling, so many people died. The presence of trains implied other potential benefits as well. In 1914 it was argued that,

"If Ashe, Clay, Graham, and Watauga counties, four of the richest counties in the mountains naturally, had railroads the enhanced value of their property would give the State [North Carolina] a larger and more constant revenue from taxation than she now derives from the raising of uncertain crops of cotton and corn on the State farms by working her convicts in that malarious section of the State (Arthur 1914: 489)."

According to Ed Collins, an old 'Graham County Common Carrier' engineer interviewed by Foxfire students in 1974, the logging train was viewed as being a necessary part of the community. The Graham County railroad hauled all of the community supplies. "That's right, we hauled them in for a long time. There wouldn't no trucks much, you see. But we hauled them in until the trucks come in y' see. We hauled in fertilizer, feeds and building material. Stone for the highway and tar...(Interview #A-74-29, Foxfire archives)." Before 1930, there were no auto-worthy roads in Graham County, only the new logging trains and a few wagon and sled trails.

Mr. Collins also said that a lot of men in the county went to work in Tennessee for the Babcock Land and Lumber Company around 1930. Mr. Collins began working on that company's log train in 1928 at 18 years of age, before he took a job operating the Graham County shay engine (a type of steam engine specifically engineered and geared to be able to pull heavy loads up steep grades for logging purposes). When asked whether anybody ever rode the train down with him from Robbinsville Ed replied, "Somebody practically rode with us all the time. Never did hurt nothin'. We would sometimes stop and pick them up or they would get on by themselves, there wasn't no charge." It seems that people came to rely on the log trains for purposes other than logging or wage labor. The Graham County Railroad was a feeder line that was completed in 1905 in order to haul timber out of the Snowbird Mountains, Santeetlah and West Buffalo Creek (Parce 1997:74). After operating as a tourist line for a few years, it shut down in 1975 after two of its trestles were knocked out (Parce 1997:74).

Once mechanized logging and trains were introduced, other kinds of development began to take place in Graham County as well. In 1913 John Preston Arthur stated, "The Union Development Company has bought up many potential power sites along streams in Graham County (Arthur 1914:211)." In 1916 the, Tallassee Power Company (now Tapoco, Inc.), a subsidiary of Alcoa, built a camp at 'The Narrows' and started work on the Cheoah Dam. This dam was completed in 1919 and resulted in the formation of what is now called Cheoah Lake (Holland 2001:124). Still later, between the years 1925 and 1928, the Santeetlah Dam was built and formed Santeetlah Lake. And finally, in 1945 the Tennessee Valley Authority completed the Fontana Dam and reservoir (Holland 2001:179). The TVA had been contracted by the United States Government to build the

dam in order to supply electricity to Alcoa Aluminum Company during WWII. The project began in 1941 and the village set up to house the laborers working on the dam was later turned into a resort, 'Fontana Village'. When these dams were built many people were forced (by having their land be condemned) or induced to sell their land, land that is now under water (Oliver 1989). According to Mabel Orr (1905), "...a lot of those people down there had to move out when this Santeetlie Lake covered over so much of the land that they had to move out to other places. Some of them moved out to West Buffalo, and some to Long Creek, and different places. And they, some of them went down to Santeetlie." These dams, like mechanized logging, dramatically changed the ecological and human landscape in the county and diminished the total amount of agricultural land that was available. Some farmsteads and communities were literally drowned out by the creation of the Cheoah, Santeetlah and Fontana Lakes.

In addition to the wage labor provided by logging, log trains and dam building, small industries eventually began to enter the county. Manufacturers such as Lee Carpets, Stanley furniture, American Uniform and Bemis have provided a lot of jobs in the area. Ed Collins mentioned in his Foxfire interview that in 1931 the Graham County Carrier was hauling a lot of 'hemlock pine and pulp' to 'the paper mill'. He was probably referring to the Champion Paper mill in Canton (named after Canton, Ohio)(Eller 1982). In 1907 Champion Paper and Fiber, out of Canton, Ohio built a plant on the Pigeon River and bought pulpwood from lumber companies, the materials that were unsuitable for milled lumber (Parce 1997: 51). Champion remained in the region even after the so-called 'lumber barons' had left (Eller 1982). In fact, Champion was one of the few companies in the region that attempted to sustain the resources present for

future use, they implemented a reforestation plan in the hopes of maintaining a consistent supply of wood pulp for their mill (De Vivo 1986, Eller 1982).

Overview of Stage One

The above is a brief overview of the first stage of transition that took place in Graham County over the course of the twentieth century. It is the most difficult of the three periods to deal with in that few written records pertaining to Graham County are available from this time period, and because there are not many people still alive today to interview about the changes that took place during this time. Those that are still living were very young at the turn of the century and have a difficult time remembering very much about it. There are many clues as to what this period of time was like, however. We know that it is one in which residents quickly took advantage of the opportunity to sell their labor and to work away from their farms for somebody else. They either wanted or needed to find alternative sources for acquiring cash and/or commercial goods. There were many reasons for this, but I will speculate on only a couple. If people like Ed Collins were leaving rural Appalachia and going to the cities to work during this time, and the extension of the railroad was simultaneously exposing people to a variety of outsiders, markets and consumer goods, it seems likely that Graham County people would have begun to be exposed to new ideas as well.

According to Shapiro (1978), prominent among the ideas of the general American public at this time was the concept that the United States was (and should) become a 'unified and homogeneous' country. We were believed to be becoming a country in which everyone was 'progressing' and living under similar standards of living and by similar means. The United States was also becoming less agrarian and more 'modern'.

The conditions under which many people in Southern Appalachia were living were felt to be out of sync with the expectations of the rest of America, and many social reformers and missionaries were greatly disturbed by this seeming anomaly known of as 'Appalachia' (Barney 2000, Shapiro 1978). It is possible that many residents of Graham County came to agree with these expectations and therefore self-consciously and uncritically began to believe that they were somehow 'backwards' and behind the times. Evidence to this effect is suggested by the number of missionaries that held beliefs similar to these and were able to successfully establish themselves in southern Appalachian communities during this time.

Perhaps most importantly, however, it is true that life in the mountains could be very difficult, and was becoming even more challenging. According to Otto (1983), southern Appalachian farms were decreasing in size during this time period and the overall productivity of agricultural land was steadily dropping. As people's farm sizes decreased a larger percentage of their farms was dedicated to agriculture, and less and less land remained forested. At the same time, much of Graham County's forests were becoming privatized and fence laws were being proposed. Timber companies and other industries did not want farmers to have free access to company land. This meant that farmers had access to fewer forest resources. Furthermore, the land use practices of these companies changed the species composition of these forests.

Once the majority of land in Graham County was purchased by lumber companies and logged, damaging forest fires became more prevalent. Large northern logging companies left a lot of limbs and debris behind as they cleared out the major timber from a given area. This meant that forest fires occurring in such areas burned long, intensely,

and hot, with little means of controlling or fighting them. Since many of the locomotives hauling timber puffed out ash and sparks, as did some of the other logging equipment being used, forest fires became more frequent. “Because of the occurrence of fire, fast-growing, thick-barked trees were encouraged, while thin-barked, slow-growing trees were not. The above-ground biomass was damaged by fire and the root system and humus were weakened (De Vivo 1986).” During this same period the American Chestnut trees died of Chestnut blight. In 1909 twenty-seven percent of the standing timber in western North Carolina was American Chestnut, and in some counties it accounted for as much as forty-three percent (De Vivo 1986). In addition, it has been shown that it is likely that herbaceous understories have probably still not recovered from the practice of clearcutting in this area (Duffy and Meier 1992). These changes would have had a dramatic effect on subsistence household economies. Many people were probably eager to find easier ways of making a living and obtaining cash after much of the land became privatized, cut over, and flooded.

This process of change can also be described in terms of power relationships that were present. Looking back, there is little evidence suggesting any overt conflict among or between county residents and the incoming lumber companies in regards to the railroads and logging that initially occurred. This also makes it easy to believe that locals may have begun to think of their way of life as being backwards, or at least very difficult. But if there actually were any conflicts, their circumstances and nature may be impossible to discern at this point in time. The presence of certain kinds of power dynamics that can lead to conflict are suggested, however. In hindsight we can see that those who ultimately most benefited from the changes that took place in Graham County during this

time were those who were not from here and who did not stay long, the lumber barons and their associated railroad companies.

According to the literature, in the larger national consciousness of the United States, mountaineers needed to be saved in some sense, i.e. modernized and brought into the 'progress' that was supposedly being experienced by the rest of the country (Barney 2000, Shapiro 1978, Whisnant 1994).

A new era dawns. Everywhere the highways of civilization are pushing into remote mountain fastnesses. Vast enterprises are being installed. The timber and the minerals are being garnered. The mighty waterpower that has been running to waste since these mountains rose from the primal sea is now about to be harnessed in the service of man. Along with this economic revolution will come, inevitably, good schools, newspapers, a finer and more liberal social life. The highlander, at last is to be caught up in the current of human progress (Kephart, 1976).

Because this was apparently widely and strongly believed, the motives and methods of industrialists seem to have gone unchallenged. The force of the values that were predominant in American culture at the time were such that it was inconceivable that someone would not want to make a living earning wages instead of farming at a subsistence level. And there does not seem to have been a mechanism in place that could enable the dispersed and largely isolated human populations in Graham County to actively engage the political and economic forces that were in play and determining their affairs for them. Because this was the case, Appalachians themselves had no part in identifying what the key economic issues were in the mountains. The result was that few decisions were made during this time that ultimately benefited people living in Graham County.

In addition to the actions that were being taken by the lumber companies, state and federal governments were disinterested in considering the development of industry

and agriculture specifically adapted for mountain environments and people. The models being used to modernize Appalachia were the same ones being used in urban settings not found in mountain environments. Little attempt was made to understand the needs and adaptations of southern mountaineers (Salstrom 1994, Shapiro 1978). At the time, the long-term consequences of this shift away from subsistence farming, and of the ways in which this shift was accomplished, were probably not fully appreciated by either Cherokee or white people in Graham County.

The resulting changes in the ecological landscape made former modes of making a living impossible. As has already been mentioned, farmsteads relied heavily on the mast of forest trees to feed their livestock, and people ate many wild foods themselves (Eller 1982, Hill 1997, Wigginton 1968). They relied on the availability of these kinds of non-timber forest products both on and off of their own property. The removal of a large percentage of forests by large scale timber operations and the concomitant fires, flash flooding and erosion that resulted would have severely diminished many food sources for families, livestock and game (Davis 2000). The flooding of large areas as a result of building the dams also contributed to the loss of agricultural land and resources. In short, between 1910 and 1930 people gained access to wage labor, but most people lost the means to be entirely self-sufficient if they hadn't already. People could not continue to divide up their property among their children and have viable farms, and the land that had been deforested by mechanized logging would require many years to rejuvenate. Even the streams were not what they once were. The splash dams that had been used to transport logs had eliminated many trout and fresh water mussel populations that had once thrived in them and provided food in the region (Davis 2000, Eller 1982). This

meant that many local residents now had no choice but to rely on their ability to earn at least some wage income. After 1930, however, opportunities to work in the county had diminished. This created a new set of challenges for Graham County residents.

STAGE TWO 1930-1980

By 1930 the large timber companies that had swarmed the hillsides of western North Carolina in 1900 began to leave (Eller 1982, Oliver 1989). When the logging industrialists pulled out, they left behind communities of people who no longer had the resources at their disposal to meet their economic needs without some kind of formal employment (Oliver 1989). People responded to these changes by decreasing the size of their land holdings and relying on periodic out-migration to the cities (Davis 2000). Throughout Southern Appalachia areas that underwent intensive, large scale, commercial logging experienced an out-migration soon afterwards (Davis 2000). “Timber speculation, along with new fence laws introduced in state legislatures by railroad and timber interests, had greatly narrowed the range of subsistence possibilities for mountaineers and their families (Davis 2000).”

In addition to this, by 1930 the Chestnut Blight eliminated much of the mast available for livestock, especially hogs and wild game (Brown and Davis 1995). This disease had spread to the southern Appalachians by the mid-1920's, and for all intents and purposes all of the mature American Chestnut (*Castanea dentate*) trees in the region had been wiped out by the end of the 1930's (Davis 2000, Hill 1997, Treadwell 1996). The Chestnut trees had comprised almost half of the valuable hardwood in the region's forests, and had produced more than half of the mast available to livestock and wildlife, not to mention having produced chestnuts for human consumption (Davis 2000). This

meant that people had to either buy or grow more of their feed if they were going to raise hogs and cattle to eat. As a result, the ways in which people were utilizing forest resources in 1930, and their knowledge of these resources, were very different than the strategies that end up being used in 1980. These changing patterns of nontimber forest product use were also partly due to the fact that between 1930 and 1950 many people in Graham County began to raise tobacco in order to earn a living.

Burley Tobacco

Many of those who could not find work in Graham County and did not want to leave the mountains either resorted to selling moonshine as had been done in the past (Crisp interview 2002, Hill 1997, Kephart 1976, Mabel Orr, born 1905), or to growing Burley tobacco as a cash crop, or both. Those who began growing Burley tobacco were part of a general trend characterizing southern agriculture between 1930 and 1950. Instead of raising a wide variety of crops and livestock, some of which was for their own consumption and some of which was for sale, mountain farmers in southern Appalachia began to spend more time and resources growing one or two specialized crops (Walker 2000). These were crops largely being promoted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the TVA (Tennessee Valley Authority) (Walker 2000). Burley tobacco was what was adopted by most farmers in the mountains. This was probably because it is a variety that can grow well in relatively poor soils, and because it could be air dried relatively inexpensively (Goodman 1993). Other varieties of tobacco required extremely specialized methods of flue-curing and a significant investment of capital (Goodman 1993).

...Yes, Dad grew tobacco, until about 1970 is when he quit growing tobacco. And everybody used to raise tobacco on the creek, it was their income. I mean

like they'd charge they're groceries and whatever at the store. We used to have a general store down at the lower end of Yellow Creek, Jeff Millsap's. And he would charge people. He would charge them, let 'em charge on a yearly basis, and when they're tobacco sold they would go pay him. And back then everybody raised tobacco. But then everybody raised corn too, 'cause everybody way back then had horses and cattle. And I can remember back when all the meadows on Yellow Creek was just full of corn. And people had big herds of beef cattle, I'm not talking about thousands, now, but some of them would have 40 and 50 beef cattle. And I'd raise corn. Back then people raised mostly what they'd eat. Because really there wasn't a (manufacturing) plant here in Graham County. The only place to work was over at Fontana, and that was a summertime thing. 'Course if you worked over there for like two or three years you got to sign up in the winter. But back then I can remember Dad signing up and he wouldn't draw maybe fifty or sixty dollars a week. But back then that was like \$200 a week now, I guess. 'Cause it went farther (Viola Laughtry, born 1941).

...but I can remember, I was about nine or ten I guess, when they did it (began growing tobacco). I can remember daddy'd built this big barn over here, you know. You've seen the barn before they built this house...daddy'd built that barn there. You know back then they'd have workin's, and all these men would help, help build each other's barns to put their backer and stuff in. And they fixed that big barn, and fixed them racks in there to where they could hang that tobacco. And every year it'd come in about Christmas time, is when we'd, you know they'd sell it? Just in time for us to get some Christmas. And it didn't bring that much, but it was a lot to them, I guess. You know, it seemed like it wasn't hardly nothing a pound. But...a lot of people just made good you know. Yeah, see, money meant more back then. It'd buy more wouldn't it? And money don't buy much now. Just, you don't hardly get nothing. They could get like ten dollars and get everything they needed (Ruby Crisp, born 1934).

Once families began growing tobacco they did not have time to be out in the woods as much as they used to be. Burley tobacco is labor intensive and requires putting in long hours, particularly during harvest season (Duncan 1997). Before mechanized harvesting technology became available, when it was time to put up a crop to dry every member of the family was involved. Since the planting and harvest seasons for tobacco coincide with the times when it is most appropriate to harvest many wild plants, especially ginseng, some forest activities subsided. A few people still used home remedies that they were familiar with, but most, "...never did mess much with the m

herbs (Bell Boyd, born 1922).” There simply was not time, and many resources were less abundant and required more effort to find than they had in the past.

A few people continued to supplement their incomes by using and selling nontimber forest products after they began farming tobacco, but to a lesser degree than they once had. People who are now 60 years of age or older, and who were born and raised in or around Graham County, have memories of their parents digging and processing a variety of raw plant materials, but few of them continued these practices themselves after they had established their own households. Almost everyone continued to hunt ginseng now and again, but very few chose to harvest or process nontimber forest products full-time, or for a substantive part of their income. One explanation for this has been that harvesting nontimber forest products is such difficult, strenuous work that just about anything else people could find to do would have been easier (Cozzo personal communication 2004, Bill Elliot interview 2002).

...and way back, back in the 20's and 30's and before, it wasn't unusual for people to get a 25 pound sack full of dried ginseng the fall of the year, there was no restriction on it or anything. You didn't have to have a permit, just you know, git it. But I guess that's what's wrong with the mountains today. Is because it was just about cleaned out...But it just takes somebody, a young person, a young go getter now. To find any ginseng now I guess, because it's so scarce I imagine anybody'd have to do a lot of walking! To try to find any of it (Viola Laughtry born 1941).

Iva Rattler, now 73 (born 1930) years of age, remembers her father selling firewood, locusts posts, and working in a little ‘dogwood shop’ in Atoah. Apparently there used to be a small store in Snowbird where he worked and built things out of Dogwood to sell. Iva does not remember her family selling herbs, but does remember her mother and father using them to treat illnesses, though specific plants were not pointed

out and shown to her. She never saw them until they had already been harvested and carried home. Her family also ate a lot of wild foods, both plants and animals.

Lou Jackson (born 1950) said that she remembers her mom sometimes digging and selling ginseng, bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) and yellowroot (*Xanthoriza simplicissima*). Her family ate a lot of wild foods as well, especially mushrooms and field greens. Lou and her mother taught her son Bud to hunt ginseng. He sometimes digs it and sells it for extra money if he is not busy with other forms of employment.

Mrs. Taylor (born 1934) sold chestnuts, rhododendrons, and mountain laurel in a roadside stand in Tallulah. It was a stand where tourists frequently stopped. She helped with her family's stand until she moved to Graham County with her husband. When she was growing up, she and her siblings also sold blackberries and strawberries to earn money for school clothes.

Viola Laughtry (born 1941) has described how her father used to sell some tree barks occasionally, and also ginseng and dock root. Her family ate a lot of wild foods when she was growing up, and her mother treated her and her siblings with wild medicinals. She herself has dug and sold ginseng on several occasions, but mostly because she just loves to get out in the woods. She transplants almost all of what she finds.

All four of these women have grown up in or near Graham County and were raised in families that relied on forest plants for both supplementary income and to consume themselves. They are all 52 years of age or older, and none of them depend on these plants today. They all occasionally consume wild greens or mushrooms if they are easily available, but they seldom take the time to actively seek them out. When they do,

it is for the sheer pleasure of being in the woods, remembering relatives that have died, or a means of sharing memories and stories with their grandchildren. Eating and selling wild forest plants is not an important part of their economic livelihood. This seems to be typical of many long-term residents in the county.

There are, however, a few people this age (50 or older) who actively seek out and harvest wild forest plants for food or money. All of these individuals that I have met who have continued to get out into the woods and harvest a variety of plant materials for income are men. They are few in number and will be discussed at length in Chapter Five. For now it is enough to say that, in general, only those people who remained specialists of some kind (basket weavers, Cherokee healers, regular ginseng diggers) or continued to be able to spend a lot of time in the woods continued to dig herbs. Very few people from this generation even dug or prepared medicinal herbs for their own use. By 1930 patent medicines became easier to come by and fewer herb dealers were around to buy raw plant products.

Shift in American Medicine

By 1930 patent medicines were becoming popular, and whole plant drugs were less in demand (Berman and Flannery 2001). Because of this many businesses that dealt with crude botanicals ceased their operations between 1930 and 1950 (Berman and Flannery 2001). Between 1790 and 1939 there had been a series of populist movements within the medical and pharmaceutical professions (Berman and Flannery 2001, Griggs 1997). These movements were characterized by a variety of forms, but were all geared towards developing a pharmacopeia for the 'common man' based on flora that was indigenous to the United States and was available to everybody. Partially because of this,

up until 1910, botanicals represented a majority of the official substances that were listed in The United States Pharmacopeia (Berman and Flannery 2001). But from 1910 onward, the expertise and drive was present to focus research and development on patentable medicines that could be more economically lucrative, not on developing whole plant drugs (Berman and Flannery 2001, Foster 1995, Griggs 1997).

Chemically manufactured medicines using new, 'scientific' methods began to gain prestige. There was an increasing demand for products with measurable compounds that were produced in modern chemical laboratories. Physicians became less able to rely on their own observations when determining whether or not a given treatment was effective because of these new cultural and professional expectations. In the United States this led to a shift away from many medicinal plants and plant research. In 1820 67% of the official substances listed in the United States Pharmacopeia were phytomedicines, in 1930 only 36% of the official substances used were directly derived from plant materials, and by 1990 this percentage had dropped to only 2% (Berman and Flannery 2001). "Medical botany had, in effect, been replaced with phytochemistry (Berman and Flannery 2001:152)." Because of this, many botanical wholesale distributors closed down during the first half of the twentieth century. This abandonment of whole plants as medicine, particularly southern Appalachian plants, was not a global phenomenon, however. "By 1960, for example, America knew less about Echinacea than it did in Uri Lloyd's day (1849-1936), while Germany continued to pursue serious research into the therapeutic uses of a wide range of Echinacea dosage forms (Berman and Flannery 2001:156)." German researchers are pursuing research on Appalachian plants such as Black Cohosh (*Cimicifuga racemosa*) to this day (McCoy 2002).

Because of this shift among medical practitioners, the demand and marketability of medicinal plants dropped dramatically during this time, rendering this labor intensive strategy for earning money unfeasible for most people. Many of the medicinal plants that are indigenous to Southern Appalachia and that are or were found in Graham County have very specific habitat requirements, are sparsely distributed across the landscape, and require careful and time consuming processing in order to be able to sell them. As the landscape changed and became more developed, large amounts of acreage became submerged under water due to dam construction, and large amounts of land began to be managed primarily for fast growing timber by the United States Forest Service (Davis 2000, Duffy and Meier 1992, Kahn 1978) harvesting nontimber forest products became even more difficult.

In addition, as fence laws went into effect prohibiting trespassing and the cost of living rose, harvesting wild plants became economically unfeasible for almost everyone but those who 'dug roots' just for the fun of it. One informant has also suggested that, though the policy seems to have initially been poorly enforced, sometime around 1950 either the United States Forest Service or the National Parks Service began mandating that people purchase permits in order to harvest plants in some areas. At this point, the practice of harvesting nontimber forest products was in some cases no longer free (Cornelias Hall, born 1910).

People in Graham County had to work harder to sell their raw plant products during this time period even when they did choose to dig them. There were several places in or near the county where people could sell furs during the 1950's, but these dealers seem to have primarily bought ginseng if they bought any herbs at all. This is

despite the fact that a major dealer in Boone, North Carolina known as Wilcox kept people digging herbs well into the 1970's, and were still buying at least minimal amounts of raw product from local diggers into the 1990's (Tony Hayes and David Cozzo, personal communication). Those who did continue to dig herbs often sold their own.

...Dad sold his ginseng directly to New York. Ti Sing ginseng company out of New York city. He would ship his, is what he did. In the fall of the year he used to buy ginseng from people, and that was another good source of income for people that just had a summer job, you know. And depended on what little unemployment they could get in the winter. That was a good source of income (Viola Laughtry, born 1941).

But this was only the case for those who had additional sources of livelihood.

Those who could not afford to keep or buy land, or who could not produce enough tobacco on the land that they had to make a living, left in search of wage labor.

According to Viola Laughtry (born 1941),

“...when I was growing up in the ‘40’s, a lot of people were leaving here then. A LOT. A lot got drafted during WWII, and then there was nothing going on here and people would go off because they were having plants all over! Making weaponry, you know, or uniforms, or whatever. And they would go off. A lot of them never did come back. But a lot went off and made their fortunes or whatever and then they come back after they retired. But even after... I would have been through school...there was people leaving then. Because the FBI, out of Washington was coming in here and recruiting students from high schools and stuff. And there was a lot went away then. And never did come back...And then...a lot of people I’d say left back in the 30’s. Because of the ‘Hoover Panic’, I know you’ve heard of it. And there was nothing here, absolutely nothing. You couldn’t get a job, you couldn’t earn any wages. So I’d say a lot of them left during the 30’s. A lot of ‘em went up north. Most of them, a lot of ‘em, two thirds of ‘em went to Ohio. And made their living up there, stayed till they retired, come back.”

When I asked Ruby Crisp (born 1934) what made people start leaving to go find work she replied,

...I don’t exactly know why, but I guess they probably just, when they got to getting more and more, seeing more at the stores, big stores going up or something, you know. And got to getting away from the stuff that they’s raised up

with I guess. And they just, you know some of the younger men come on. They went to this war, you know...come back from wars they just went different places and some of them, when WWII was over, they all headed up in Ohio. And then some of the others went to follerin them years later, you know. So that's just the way, they just went to drifting, you know. Like that.

I have been told by several people that I have interviewed that a brother, cousin or uncle left the county and found a job, then sent word back home that other jobs were available. Eventually entire families began leaving

1950's Outmigration

By the 1950's families were leaving the county in order to follow relatives who had found employment for them in Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio or Pennsylvania (Ruby Crisp, born 1934). Some eventually returned to Graham County to their 'homeplace' if they were laid off or became homesick.

Yeah, we've been in different places. Stayed for a while with Arnold on jobs, you know, in New Jersey. Arnold worked up there a lot, you know in New Jersey and backwards and forwards up there. And then my sister, they lived in Ohio, Arnold got a job up there - Frigidaire. We lived up there for a while until he quit. He didn't like it up there so he quit the job (Ruby Crisp, born 1934).

I asked Arnold why he stayed in Yellow Creek even though he and his family had such a difficult time 'getting by' during the 1960's and 1970's. He said, "Just got my feet wet in the crick I guess (Arnold Crisp, born 1927)!" His companion replied, "Life is good on the creek (Yellow Creek). It's tough but good (Steve Birchfield)." A woman interviewed told me that people did this because, 'the mountains get in your blood'. In yet another interview, a man stated that he returned and stayed, "Because I learned how to live here. As far as a place to live...[its] hard. If just visiting [Graham County] it's a nice place to visit (John Jenkins, born 1951)."

Before he left for the service and got married, Marvin Grindstaff (born 1938) and his family left Graham County to work on his Uncle's farm in Ohio, they helped his uncle raise trees and with the farming. His wife Frances (born 1943) graduated from high school and then left the county to work in Atlanta, then Andrews for a few years before returning to Graham County and marrying Marvin. After Marvin got out of the service he returned to his family's farm in Graham County and worked in Lee's carpet plant. He and Francis also grew Burley tobacco during this time. In addition, Marvin sold fence posts, locust stakes, and lumber. After their children were school age, Frances worked in the Burlington furniture factory that used to be in Robbinsville for 11 years while they farmed. Today they are retired. Francis can no longer work due to a disability, and Marvin is still raising an extensive garden, taking on odd jobs for people such as helping them clear land for home sites, and hunting. They themselves remained in Graham County, but they say that after 1950 a lot of people left and sold their land for \$10-15 an acre. Many moved to Ohio, they said, and others went to work in cotton mills in Gastonia or to work in manufacturing plants in Detroit. This pattern seems to have been typical for their generation.

Throughout western North Carolina in general, 33% of the human population left the region between the years 1950 and 1960 (Van Noppen and Van Noppen 1973:283). Salstrom (1994) describes a 'mass exodus' of people from Appalachia between 1940 and 1960 that was exacerbated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's desire to stop the deterioration of the region's environmental quality by creating public lands. The establishment of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and then the purchase of much of Graham County (about 80%) for National forest during the late 1920's and early

1930's were a part of this effort. This further limited the ways in which forest resources could be utilized by Graham County residents.

In Graham County, a lot of land was condemned by the federal government during the 1930's in order to create these public lands. This timing coincided with the Great Depression, a time during which people who lived on this land had few alternatives to fall back on in order to earn a living. Because of this, resentment harbored towards the government is particularly fierce in this area. This timing meant that a lot of land could be purchased very cheaply or be repossessed for failure to pay taxes. Much of it was purchased coercively and for prices below the market value of land in the region (Davis 2000). In addition, a lot of people who received money from the government for their land between 1926 and 1929 put it in the bank only to lose it soon afterwards because of the financial crash that initiated the Depression (Glen Caldwell, born 1930). Therefore, some people believe that this effort to acquire land was part of a systematic, governmental effort to destroy mountain people's way of life (Eller 1982: 119).

Many people lost their homes and had to leave the mountains, some because of the acquisition of private property for public lands, others, as has already been discussed, because their property became submerged by the lakes formed by dam building. But the 'Hoover Panic' forced many Appalachian immigrants who still owned land in the mountains to return home during the 1930's. The national economy was such that there were no jobs being created in the mountains, and no jobs were available in the cities at this time.

...But, the Depression came. And people in towns were almost on starvation and had, they had soup lines. But here everybody was used to having it hard and most people had a cow, and a few chickens, and a hog to kill. And they usually put up enough potatoes and things to do through the winter...course there was no money

for shoes, or coffee, or anything. And it got pretty bad, like they had. But still, people here didn't suffer like they did in a lot of places. And some people didn't even know there was a depression because it had always been that way with them. But anyway I love the place (Graham County), and I think it's the best place in the world to be (Mabel Orr, born 1905).

The main employment available in Graham County as of 1935 was with the WPA (Works Progress Administration) logging companies, and this source of employment was fairly limited. According to John Alger, a logging historian who wrote the foreword to Andrew Gennett's (founder of Gennett Lumber Company) memoir, the depression hit the timber industry especially hard because it coincided with a decrease in demand for lumber (Hayler 2000). The usage of new manufacturing materials such as plastics, glass and steel peaked during this same time. During the mid-1930's many companies closed their mills and never reopened (Hayler 2000). The whole country was in an economic crisis.

The 1950's exodus was also a result of years of agricultural policy development that did nothing to identify economic strategies suitable for mountain land, or that would help people remain on their farmsteads despite arguments and research suggesting that it was possible to do so (Salstrom 1994:107). The sole exception to this rule was the promotion of Burley tobacco and the maintenance of policies that initially supported small farmers between 1930 and 1950 (Goodman 1993).

But interviews suggest that by 1960 many people in Graham County were ceasing to grow Burley tobacco. People interviewed who are now in their mid to late 50's or younger had parents who raised tobacco when they were growing up, but aside from a few exceptions, they themselves did not grow tobacco when they grew up. The reasons for this are undoubtedly many and complicated, but this observation may also support

Salstrom's (1994) argument that the Agricultural Adjustment Administration's (AAA) policies, part of Roosevelt's New Deal, systematically disenfranchised small Appalachian farmers. As early as 1934, no minimum allotments were being set in order to protect farmers that grew two or fewer acres of a crop, which is the category that most mountain farmers fell into (Salstrom 1994). There was a lot of resistance within the legislature to do anything that might impair the ability of larger growers to earn a profit. Therefore small mountain farmers that had no other means of earning a living were disproportionately affected by changes in allotment policies that occurred later.

After the Depression, in 1940 acreage allotments were put into effect for Burley tobacco (Van Noppen and Van Noppen 1973). The amount of tobacco people were allowed to sell began to be 'allotted' by the federal government (Agricultural Adjustment Administration), thereby fixing the amount of tobacco that people in Graham County were able to produce and further limiting people's means of making a living in the county. A lot of people initially approved of the allotment system because it prevented the market from being flooded and therefore prices from dropping so low that a farmer would lose money on their crop. But these allotments were structured in such a way that if a given farmer had only grown a half acre of tobacco the year before allotments were put into affect, they were only allowed to grow a half acre the next year, even if they had two acres of prime tobacco land and had intended to grow at least one acre. Many individual families ended up with allotments too small in size to be cost effective once one's travel time and the expense of taking their tobacco to market was factored in.

We had a little bitty... allotment on our place out here. We used to raise just...a little bit, and, you know just be a basket, few baskets, you know – Arnold raised it a few times but, then we went to, didn't have no way to haul it out, we didn't

make enough to hardly fool with it. 'Cause it's such a little allotment (Ruby Crisp born 1934).

Because of Graham County's relative remoteness, lack of roads and distance from market centers, transportation was still an issue. "They'd have to take it (tobacco) all the way to Knoxville, down there, to Knoxville, Tennessee. And then later on I think some of them in North Carolina went to, up at, toward, somewhere in Asheville to sell it. But, I remember...yeah, they had to take it so far, plum to Knoxville to sell it, and-a, you'd had to have pretty much..." to make it worth it (Ruby Crisp born 1934). Over time allotment sizes and other policies diminished mountain farmer's ability to compete with larger growers, and those who did not participate in AAA programs were heavily taxed, further limiting the ability of small farmers to be competitive (Salstrom 1994).

Because of technological improvements that occurred during the 1950's the work routine that had formerly characterized tobacco culture eventually began to change (Goodman 1993). And between 1961 and 1968 several allotment policies changed that ultimately undermined the profitability of the small tobacco farmers that remained in the mountains. Allotments began to be limited in terms of poundage instead of acreage, individual farms began to be allowed to lease acreage across a county, and legislation passed allowing tobacco to be marketed in loose leaf sheets instead of being neatly tied into bundles (Goodman 1993). The overall effect of these changes was that they made it possible for the industry to become mechanized instead of being labor intensive. This meant that small growers that relied primarily on family labor quickly lost the ability to be competitive. This meant that few families continued to grow Burley tobacco after this time, and even more families left the county in search of wage labor.

In 1968 Graham County was ranked eighth in the state of North Carolina for the amount of tobacco being grown. Graham County contained 685 farms that grew tobacco, and the combined acreage that was allotted to tobacco on these farms totaled 301.51 acres (Van Noppen and Van Noppen 1973). Most of the people who had allotments were growing what tobacco they were allowed to, plus working for wage labor whenever jobs were available. Ivy Hollifield (born 1919) was raised on Meadow Branch in Graham County and moved to Yellow Creek when she got married. She and her children raised 'bacca' while her husband Albert went to work on the Fontana dam, and then in it's powerhouse. Before that he used to work 'hard labor' for ten cents an hour in a sawmill. When she first met him he was driving the area's school bus.

As has already been mentioned, many of the families that left Graham County between 1940 and 1960 returned after they retired, if they did not move back earlier. Few that left during this time seem to have sold all of their family land and left the county for good. Many left to work for wages for a year or more at a time if they needed to, came back for a few months, and then left to work again when their money ran out. Many of these individuals eventually inherited part of their families land. Those people who remained in the county, or who were living in Graham County between jobs, made a living by not 'putting all their eggs in one basket,' as one person interviewed put it. They did this by utilizing several different livelihood strategies. They maintained gardens and 'put up' food in can houses for the winter, hunted, sold various kinds of nontimber forest products when they had a market for them, and sometimes farmed or logged, among other things.

When dad was a young man what they did, a lot of the men, they got out tan-bark. And they sold tan-bark, and for the life of me I don't know what they did with tan

bark, but dad used to get it out. He used to split rails, um, that was out of locust...and ginseng, and a lot of people ginsanged (Viola Laughtry, born 1941)!

Effect of Outmigration on Nontimber Forest Product Knowledge

Between 1950-1980 traditional nontimber forest product harvesting practices, and knowledge associated with these practices, were generally not passed on. This was because people were either busy growing tobacco in addition to working part-time for wages, or had left the county to work in various factories, plants, or construction sites. Many individuals were not in the county consistently or long enough to develop the skills necessary to become an effective harvester. One digger told me that it took him at least 15 years of digging ginseng to become an 'expert' (Bill Elliot, born 1947). And by 1950 most herbs other than Ginseng were no longer considered to be worth the effort of digging because few dealers were buying them and the price being offered per pound was too low to make digging them worthwhile. Because of Graham County's remoteness, when people factored in the time and expense of traveling someplace to sell their herbs they found that they could not afford to do it. They could earn more money doing odd jobs or seeking out employment opportunities elsewhere.

Instead of 'just getting by', once the Depression was over many people began working away from the mountains for years at a time. Because of this, people born in the 1950's or later do not know how to find and identify plants the way some of their parents did, or how to harvest and process them. Formerly people would have learned how to hunt things like bloodroot and ginseng beginning around the age of eight or nine, but after 1950 many people were living outside of the county and in cities during these formative years. Many of those young people who did remain in the county did not learn because their parents were too busy working and growing tobacco to instruct them and

prices being offered for herbs were low. And as has already been mentioned, popular ideas about traditional medicinals and healing practices had changed as well. 'Old timey' medicine came to be discouraged and thought of as being backwards.

The effects of boarding schools on Cherokee culture further limited what plant lore and uses were passed on to younger generations during this time period. Boarding schools and missionaries further devalued folk medicine and other forms of traditional knowledge. Many Cherokee abandoned, or more accurately never learned how to find, process, and use wild plants. The one exception to this general trend is ginseng, which will be discussed in more detail later. Both white and Cherokee residents have continued to seek out and sell ginseng, though what is done with the money garnered from selling it, and the skill that one is expected to have when digging it, seems to have changed to some extent.

According to Arnold Crisp (born 1927), before 1980, "People didn't dig it just to sell it and buy stuff....they went and dug it when they needed it, just what they needed." He said that he used to go and get a list of what people were buying and dig it, but that some of the things listed 'weren't worth messing with,' because the prices people were giving for them were so low. He joked that Mayapple was so thick in some places you could run a plough through it and it would clog up the plough in one sweep, so sometimes he would sell it despite the low prices being offered for it. But for the most part, by the time he was an adult neither he, nor most people he knew, were harvesting many wild plants. He could make more money doing other things, even when times were bad. For instance, Arnold (2002 raw video footage for *Mountain Talk*) said that he used to take government rations and put them in traps to trap fur to sell for food. Apparently,

the rations tasted bad and were not worth consuming himself, but fur trapping was still fairly lucrative as of 1950. According to Ronnie Mason, his dad could make more trapping mink in the 1950's than he could working for wages at 90 cents an hour.

Women's Work

Women who worked between 1930 and 1980 usually sought out employment only after their children were older and in school, or before they had children. Many never worked away from home at all. Some stayed at home and raised gardens and put up most of their family's food while their husbands went away to work periodically.

...Arnold would have to go off on right-of-ways and I stayed at home. You know, right-of-ways, that work you know he'd go off on, where people's building roads and stuff, and then I'd stay at home. And try to raise gardens and this and that, we'd raise gardens and I'd stay at home and can, and do all of that you know. While he was up on them jobs (Ruby Crisp, born 1934).

Especially for those who stayed in the county during this time, there seems to have been strong cultural barriers to women working off of their farm, in addition to there being fewer job opportunities available to them (Deidra Williams, personal communication, Walker 200). But they did find ways to earn a cash income when they had to. Three women told me that either they or their mother harvested and sold wild medicinal plants in order to get money for things like school shoes because their husbands would not allow them to work outside of the home. Some even formed a 'Women's Club' in order to earn a little extra income for their families.

...I, we, the woman's club, used to make, quilts, and sell tickets. We made \$1800 or \$2000 dollars on a lot of those quilts. And all the quilters, Mary McClone and different ones, just got so we couldn't. So we don't do that anymore. And I made sock dolls, and we, the woman's club got to selling them at these festivals, and they ran up to four dollars and we'd sell, ten or twelve, up to forty dollars, and it was, you know, every little bit helps...(Mabel Orr, born 1905).

Other women have told me that they would often process goods that their husbands brought home, but only rarely helped obtain these resources. For instance, women have said that they used to clean and dry ginseng that their husbands dug, or clean wild turkeys that they killed, but did not go out and hunt themselves. However, the women that I have interviewed who are now in their 60's and 70's have said that they remember their mothers going out to gather spring greens, mushrooms and medicinal plants for home use or for sale on a regular basis. This would have been during the Great Depression when few jobs were available to anyone, male or female, and gathering medicinal herbs to sell may have therefore been worth the effort it took to find and process them.

1930-1980 Overview

Again, as during stage one, we can see issues pertaining to differential power relationships arising in Graham County. Though it might be more accurate to say that during stage two of the twentieth century, many of the dynamics set in motion during stage one are seen to continue. Outsiders continue to make demands of the region that suit their own needs, or even national needs, but that do not necessarily benefit people in Graham County. Because of this, increasing numbers of people left in order to find employment. After sharing experiences in the cities, many people found that they preferred living in the mountains to working in other parts of the country. For some, living at a lower standard of living doing things that they enjoyed was preferable to working away from where they were raised. This was partly because it was not uncommon for city people to make fun of the way mountain people talked and behaved.

Others were laid off of work and chose to return home because they had nowhere else to go, or simply because they loved the mountains.

Of those who either remained or returned to Graham County, many experienced land being condemned and seized, or purchased for minimal sums of money for public lands despite the protests of many residents (Davis 2000, Eller 1982, Oliver 1989). Several families were forced to sell and leave property against their wishes. Others had to cope with AAA policies that inhibited their ability to produce enough Burley tobacco to earn a living. In addition, a growing number of restrictions on access to forest resources continued to make it increasingly difficult for people to live independently and self-sufficiently in Graham County. They therefore became increasingly vulnerable to fluctuations in the local and national economy.

The overall consequences of these changes meant that between 1930 and 1980; 1) There were fewer plants available to harvest, 2) People had less access to the plants that remained, 3) Many people's everyday activities did not involve spending as much time in the woods as they once had, 4) Which meant that they spent less time learning, sharing their knowledge, and teaching others based on their experiences, 5) The plants themselves became less valuable, 6) The markets for medicinal herbs became less accessible to people in the county, and therefore, 7) Harvesting plants became a more costly means of obtaining income at the same time that a permit system for harvesting wild plants on public lands began to come into effect, thereby making harvesting even more expensive. After 1980 some new harvesting practices emerged, however. At the same time that the number of people being raised in a tradition of wild harvesting was

decreasing, new market demands for nontimber forest products began to emerge. This has led to some new harvesting forms and practices.

STAGE THREE 1980-present

During the 1980's transitions began to take place that have continued to change the nature of wild harvesting in Graham County, North Carolina. The markets for natural plant products, some of the tools and techniques used to harvest wild plants, harvester's ideals and values regarding forest resources, and the ways in which people spend the money they earn from harvesting have all changed. In some cases the particular plants being harvested have changed as well. The nature and extent of these transitions vary, but they are all related to the particular ways in which people in Graham County have begun to view forest resources primarily in terms of their commercial value, as opposed to their use value.

Over the past twenty years unemployment rates have remained high in Graham County. At the same time, the cost of living has risen for many residents, and their access to forest resources has continued to diminish. In addition, nontimber forest products are becoming increasingly regulated and require more risk and capital investment than they had previously. Many people have been unable to buy land, or only own a very small acreage, and much of the deeded land in Graham County is being turned into housing developments. Long time residents are therefore still prone to diversifying their livelihood strategies, but their options have become increasingly limited to various forms of formal employment and commercial production. Since 80% of the county is designated as national forest, there are many forest resources present in Graham County, but they are not always legally obtainable. There are however individuals who are open

to opportunities to work in the woods when they present themselves. Because of this, at least some interest in harvesting nontimber forest products remains. This is partially due to current, global market trends.

Within the last twenty years the global economy has shown an increased demand for American Ginseng and a variety of other natural plant products. In the United States this new demand led to the creation of the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) in 1994 (Alexander, Weigand and Blatner 2002, Berman and Flannery 2001). This act formally allows herbal products to be sold as ‘dietary supplements’ since the process that medicinals have to go through to be clinically certified as medicines in the United States is cost prohibitive for non-patentable drugs (Berman and Flannery 2001). The increased interest in natural plant products has not been limited to medicinals, however. The popularity of stores such as ‘The Body Shop’ during the 1980’s and 1990’s suggests a yearning for consumable plant products in containers of all sizes, shapes, and colors, just as long as they can be *perceived* as being authentically natural to those with expendable income (Kaplan 1995, Price 1996, Rubin and Gold 2002). But over the course of the past couple of decades, interest in medicinal herbs has grown tremendously in the United States as well (Foster 1995). There are many reasons for this.

Among other things, “Contributing factors are increased marketing of herb products by manufacturers, adverse reactions to conventional drugs, dissatisfaction with the current health care system, and the high cost of pharmaceuticals (Berman and Flannery 2001:161).” In a few cases this increase in demand, both nationally and internationally, has resulted in somewhat higher prices being offered for raw plant materials being harvested. This is especially true for Goldenseal and American Ginseng.

Goldenseal is too scarce and too little known in Graham County for people to be interested in harvesting it currently, though some people do have it growing around their homes. But nearly everyone who was born and raised in the county has an idea of what ginseng looks like. When the price rose to \$600 a pound (dry) in 1995 (over the past decade it has been more typical for wild ginseng to sell for about \$250 per pound, dry), even people who had never dug it before hit the woods in search of it. Tourist markets for natural plant products have grown as well.

In Southern Appalachia in particular, there has been a dramatic increase in tourism, and the tourists are ready and willing to buy, taste, and carry home a variety of so-called nontimber forest products in the form of baskets, rustic furniture, jams, jellies, honey, and even potted forest plants. In addition, upscale magazines such as *Martha Stewart's*, 'Living,' and many fine restaurants have featured wild foods from the region such as ramps (*Allium tricoccum*) (Horyn 1994, Isle 2001). Also, the florist industry has been promoting the use of moss and galax (*Galax sp.*) species native to the region since around 1897 (Yoakley 1932). Moss and galax have long been used by people to decorate their homes and by florists locally, but the demand for moss, or at least the harvesting pressure that it is currently experiencing in Graham County, has risen dramatically as its uses have become more heavily marketed and as Graham County residents became more able to access these markets after 1970.

Mountain people in other parts of western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee have been harvesting moss for years, some since the turn of the twentieth century, and especially during the 1930's (Cozzo 1996, Yoakley 1932), but people living in Graham County did not have access to places to regularly sell moss until much later.

Furthermore, it has only been over the past ten years that ramps, a wild leek, have been harvested for commercial purposes at all. Before now it was only consumed directly by the family of the harvester, a plant that was eaten as a restorative, a means of celebrating the return of spring, and sometimes used as a medicinal. All of these factors have contributed to a small resurgence of wild plant harvesting in and around Graham County. The nature of this 'wildcrafting' is qualitatively different than what was formerly practiced, however.

The increased demand for products made from plants that are native to the region has made wild harvesting economically feasible for a small number of people, but some of their reasons for harvesting, what they choose to harvest, and the ways in which they harvest have changed to various degrees. Furthermore, this harvesting usually only provides supplemental income. People are collecting a limited range of materials relative to the variety being collected during the first half of the twentieth century, and a smaller percentage of the overall population is harvesting for commercial purposes. As will be discussed at length in later chapters, locals are still hanging on to their use of multiple livelihood strategies (Halperin 1990). They are reluctant to rely solely on one source of income, but for most people herbs comprise a relatively small percentage of their earnings, and they only harvest a small range of species. Most people who harvest nontimber forest products still do so primarily for the fun of it. The two most important commercial nontimber forest products in and around Graham County today are moss and ginseng.

Moss

Moss is arguably the most important material being harvested in that, for those harvesting it for their livelihood, it is easier to come by and is easier to process than ginseng. It is therefore ultimately more profitable than ginseng for most people. It can also be legally obtained in greater quantities and requires fewer permits to gather in mass quantities than ginseng does. But, as mentioned earlier, 'pulling' moss is fairly new to the wild harvesting tradition in Graham County. According to Yoakley (1932) and Cozzo (1996) pulling moss had been regionally viable for some time, but not many families in Graham County seem to have been participating in this market. In fact, during the course of my interviews only two people have mentioned pulling moss when they were young, and none have mentioned their parents or grandparents pulling moss. If it is true that people in Graham County were less involved in the moss market than people in other parts of western North Carolina were during the first half of the nineteenth century, it would be interesting to know why. It seems probable that there was simply not a buyer in the county, and therefore no access to the market until the late 1960's and early 1970's.

...Probably around 1970, probably around that time (people began pulling moss). And I don't even know who started it. I don't know anything at all about it. I know I went mossaing one time with my sister years ago. And I was trying, I was trying like the devil to tug my bag of moss off the side of the mountain, and I'd have to pull and tug, and I decided if this is the only way there are to make a living then, I – it's not for me! So I never did go again. But I know people make a lot of money on that stuff! Some people that's where, that's their livelihood. Is dragging moss off the logs and trees, and, everything else they can find I guess (Viola Laughtry born 1941).

Only one person mentioned that they remembered anybody pulling moss to sell before 1960. Bill Elliott (born 1947) told me that the earliest he could remember anybody

mentioning it was when he was about ten years old, he thinks it was bringing about eight cents per pound at the time. He says that he was about 15 years old the first time that he himself ever pulled any moss.

...it was known as a seasonal occupation then. At one time nearly all the self employed people, especially like tobacco farmers. I personally remember a lot of tobacco farmers that depended on tobacco growing as an income, because they only got paid once a year in the fall. I would make a guess that half of our small, let me put it this way, small tobacco growers in the springtime would pull moss to buy their tobacco bed covers, or seed, fertilizer. And it was a common practice then. Now, a lot of individuals like that only did it in the springtime. Here, we have a rainy season here, and usually in the spring, before the leaves come out, one day of sun will dry the moss up, you know. And it was an opportunity, you know, it was kinda a seasonal thing then. And they was a few people – only a few people – that done it other times of the year.

The increase in mossaing in Graham County since 1980 may be partially due to an increased demand for the product, easier access to markets, or a temporary increase in availability. The species and quality of moss that is most highly valued is what harvesters call ‘chestnut moss,’ a kind of log moss. The various species that comprise the mosses being harvested are still being determined by botanists, but this type of moss would not have been widespread and prevalent until the American Chestnuts died from the chestnut blight that hit this area during the 1920’s and 1930’s. Not until these trees died and fell would ‘chestnut moss’ have established itself and been able to grow on these fallen logs in the quantities that it has more recently. Chestnut moss is now becoming difficult to find and may eventually become extinct, however, due to the loss of the American Chestnut trees and to current levels of harvesting. But other types of log moss and rock mosses are now being marketed as well.

...they went to getting a different kinda moss, now... it’s right on the ground, you know... it’s a lot of dirt with it I think. But I noticed, he said it’s really bringing good, that rock moss. It’s just, you’ve seen little ole banks where you’ve seen it

just kinda spread, with just a light spread? But...they're even buying it now (Ruby Crisp born 1934).

...things has changed in the moss industry. From this area up 'til about eight or nine year ago, it was impossible to sell any moss unless it was what we call a Chestnut moss. And the demand for moss is increased to where now they buy the other varieties of moss. Now the moss going to Florida, they'll buy anything that's green and will hold together. Rock moss, it's impossible – nobody - you couldn't sell moss that grows on a rock eight year ago at any price. Nobody wanted it. And the demand for it's increased to where they'll buy the other varieties of moss. And, in that sense we have harvestable moss, way, way more moss available to us than we did ten year ago. And we're losing our Chestnut moss because eventually most of these dead fallen logs we collected the Chestnut moss from is been dead for, fell laying on the ground for about seventy years. Killed by the Chestnut blight, and that was the only moss collected up 'til about ten year ago. And actually even though they're decay resistant, the chestnut is decay resistant wood – most of it's actually rotted, you know just deteriorated to where it won't no longer grow the moss...(Bill Elliot, born 1947).

Other Current Harvesting Practices

Ginseng is potentially the most valuable plant material being wild harvested in and around Graham County, but it is more difficult to find and process than moss, and has a shorter collecting season. It therefore comprises a smaller overall percentage of harvesters' incomes. Other materials currently being harvested for sale besides ginseng and moss include; dogwood berries, fence posts, salvage wood for making crafts, ramps, plants for landscaping, and some bloodroot. Most of these items have been collected or produced in the past, but in many instances the actors and uses have changed.

People in the mountains have been known to transplant forest plants around their homes for generations (Dyer 1988), but it has only been relatively recently that people have tried to base their livelihoods on this endeavor. For instance, one long time resident, Mr. Taylor (born 1931), worked for Chrysler in Michigan for about six years before returning to Graham County and buying about 160 acres during the 1950's. Forty-two

years ago he opened a plant nursery near Robbinsville, and over the past couple of decades he has been digging wild plants and selling them in his nursery.

Another change is the way in which bloodroot is being used. Until recently it was only common for people in Graham County to dig it to use for medicine or as a dye. My interviews indicate that nobody had been digging bloodroot and selling it since the 1950's or 60's. There was a strong market for it in some places during the 1960's (Cozzo personal communication 2004), but people in Graham County do not seem to have been digging much of it. As with the log moss, access to markets was probably fairly limited relative to other parts of southern Appalachia. Few people remember their parents ever having harvested it either. There are some people now digging it to sell to an organization conducting research on how to cultivate it so that it can eventually be used in products such as pig food. In general, however, everything being harvested in the county today other than ginseng and moss, and possibly ramps, is being harvested inconsistently and in minimal quantities. This is partially due to the fact that not many people in Graham County who are of prime working age are interested in harvesting nontimber forest products, or even know how to do it for a broad enough range of materials to make it feasible as a primary livelihood strategy. That being said, when profitable opportunities present themselves some individuals take advantage of them. Many locals have the ability to harvest nontimber forest products and are interested in harvesting them when other forms of employment are not available.

Contemporary harvesters will be discussed at length in a later chapter, but for now it is useful to note that many of those harvesting today are not necessarily continuing a family tradition of wild harvesting, specifically. What they are doing is continuing to

utilize a multiple livelihood strategy (Halperin 1990) that periodically involves utilizing nontimber forest products. For the most part, those who choose to go out into the forest and dig are comfortable in and around the woods, and are people who seek out opportunities to be outside. Most of them have grown up hunting and identify themselves as being ‘common’ mountain people. In many ways, these particular individuals are opportunists. Though many of them are continuing to utilize practices that they learned from their parents in the sense that they are earning a living utilizing multiple livelihood strategies, they are not always carrying on a family tradition of wild harvesting that they have depended on all of their lives. For instance, their grandfather may have grown tobacco and/or logged, their father worked in a plant in Michigan, dug ginseng and built roads, while they themselves pull moss and mow lawns.

Many mossers taught themselves how to ‘pull moss’ after they identified a potential buyer or a buyer identified them. Ginseng, in contrast, is widely harvested by almost anyone who has grown up in the county. But few people actually sell the ginseng that they harvest, and even fewer actually rely on it for a portion of their income. Most people who dig it go hunting for it for fun, as an excuse to get out into the woods, a free source of family entertainment, or as a means of remembering deceased friends and family members. Ginseng is literally rooted in the mountains and mountain people’s culture, stories, and identity (Beavers 1977, Huffard 1997).

... I talked to old people, my father, and many of the people that lived to be close to their nineties, ‘What did you do as a boy that you enjoyed most?’ And most all of them said going to the mountains. I knew they didn’t go to Knoxville, but, going to the top of the mountains? It was usually if their crops were laid by, they would go to the top of the mountains and hunt. A week, it was a week’s vacation for a father and sons to go out. But it was not always just hunting. They’d go up there and collect certain things to be brought back...resin (Glen Cardwell born 1930).

And there's people still ginsengs today! I mean, and I have to say I used to love to ginseng. I enjoyed that better than anything. Me and Dad would go and we'd stay all day in the woods. And it, I enjoyed that...(Viola Laughtry born 1941).

Most older men have a story to tell about the tallest ginseng plant, the heaviest root, or a plant they found with the greatest number of 'prongs' or compound leaves on it. And most families that own land that has been in their possession for multiple generations have an area in which they have transplanted roots found while they were out turkey hunting or gathering nuts, a tradition that goes back for as far as people can remember.

Until recently it was common for parents to manage a population of ginseng on their own land for one or more of their children or grandchildren until they came of age, at which time they would give the roots to the child or sell the roots and give them the money that they were able to get for them. As this plant has become scarce, and in some areas illegal to harvest, the antics of certain ginseng harvesters have become locally legendary and the plant has become imbued with a wiley personality by local story tellers (Huffard 1997). Ginseng is the only plant species for which I know this to be true.

Fewer Experts, More Technology

Possibly because much of the wild harvesting that is occurring today is being done by practitioners who are largely self-taught, many harvesters do not follow the protocols and harvesting ethics previous generations of harvesters espoused. As was true in the past, many of the people harvesting today are the children of families who either lived away from the mountains during their parents' prime working years, or who were too busy tobacco farming to be wild harvesting while they or their children were growing up. This means that a large number of the people harvesting these things today have

parents who never became 'expert' harvesters themselves and who did not teach their children how to identify and locate medicinals or other wild plant materials, or how to manage and process them. These families may have occasionally hunted together for food or recreation and found a ginseng plant or two along the way, but in general they did not teach their children how to earn a living or subsist gathering plant materials from the woods. Frequently there was not the opportunity or the time. There has also historically been a negative stereotype associated with mountain people who have continued such practices.

Wild harvesters have often been considered to be 'backwards', further discouraging the continuation of traditions associated with this means of making a living.

In the south, most of the wild root is gathered by poor, ignorant people and their methods are not the best. When gathered, it is usually strung on strings and hung up in the living room, where it gathers dust and colors unevenly from the light striking it on one side only. Not only this shiftless manor of handling but often stems are put on the string and sometimes other kinds of root and all left on strings when sent to market (Harding 1908).

This contributes to the number of people harvesting today that do not have the understanding that comes with experience, or the values that at least some of their predecessors had. If there have been practices and values in place in the mountains that were designed to help ensure that the resources being used are maintained over time, and there is some evidence to suggest that this is the case (Davis 2000), they are not being actively passed on today. Or if they are, they are not widely shared and upheld. In addition, there are an increasing number of harvesters who are migrant workers from far away places and who have nobody to learn conservative harvesting protocols from (Elliot 2002 interview, Ginger Deason, Rural Action/Appalachian Forest Resource Center, personal communication 2003). Therefore, even if people currently harvesting are

willing to promote sustainable harvesting practices, many do not know what these would be.

On the other hand, there are older people who remember things that they heard their parents say about managing and harvesting wild plants that would promote healthy populations. When these individuals discuss harvesting issues amongst themselves they are quick to bring up and complain about the methods and carelessness of younger diggers, especially with respect to ginseng. According to Leda Crisp,

“...greed is killing all our herbs and medicines...if he (her father Arnold) needed some money, one time, he said, they needed some medicine, they needed some flour, they needed some-some just meals, here, essentials. And at that time the crops hadn't come in good to sell?...Daddy said he went out, buddy, and he dug – gosh – I don't know, he said it was one root, buddy. One root. One or two roots, and leave the rest.”

There are also a growing number of foresters, researchers, and plant nurseries interested in cultivating, understanding and promoting 'certification' programs that would try to re-train and teach people how to harvest wild plants in a sustainable manner. My interviews suggest that many Graham County locals would be interested in supporting such efforts under certain circumstances. Several of them joined an organization called, Smoky Mountain Native Plant Association between 1997 and 2003, for instance. This is a community group geared towards exploring ways of generating income utilizing locally indigenous plants in a sustainable manner. However, there are still many questions regarding how to identify methods that are sustainable, and how to identify people who still utilize techniques based on 'traditional knowledge' (August 2003 'Preservation of Cherokee Artisan Resources' conference on Qualla Boundary, sponsored by Cherokee Preservation Foundation).

The nature of wild harvesting today is also different in that it can involve more specialized equipment and a greater degree of intensity than it once did. "...There's a lot better access to it (some of the herbs). The logging roads that's been built, and the highways and things that's been built, lot easier to get to it. And you have different tools now that you dig with than you used to (John Jenkins, born 1951)." Most people who pull moss use a four-wheeler to get in and out of the woods, for instance. This means that they can pull more moss in a shorter amount of time since they do not need to carry large, heavy rolls of moss out. They can strap a large quantity onto the four-wheeler instead. And some extreme forms of ginseng hunting include geographic positioning systems, night-vision goggles and other electronic paraphernalia whose effectiveness is somewhat questionable, but is used nonetheless (Bill Elliot, born 1947). The use of such equipment not only potentially increases the amount of material removed from forests, but can be rough on the habitats that harvester's are entering as well. Four-wheelers, for instance, are well known to be more destructive and to cause more soil erosion than people on foot typically do.

Wild harvesting may also be more intensive today than in the past in that those who are harvesting nontimber forest plants in order to earn a living are harvesting larger quantities than people were during the first part of the twentieth century in this area. One possible exception to this is ginseng. Since 1900, people were typically involved in a subsistence strategy other than wild harvesting for commercial purposes. They were either growing their own food and producing their own tools, subsistence farming and working part-time off of the farm, working for wage labor away from home, or commercial farming. The forest plants that they were harvesting were either being

directly consumed by the harvester or being sold in relatively small quantities in order to supplement their primary means of earning a living. This is largely still true regarding ginseng. Few people actually rely on it to pay the rent. Though there are exceptions to this.

A few people are pulling moss and digging ginseng together as their main source of income. As will be seen in chapters Four and Five, such individuals are seeking out as much as they possibly can and are trying to accumulate as much money as they can within the given harvest seasons. Unless the price being offered for ginseng is extremely high, they place more emphasis on moss than they do ginseng. But many local people schedule time off of work each year during ginseng season in order to be able to dig it for fun. Those who are really good at it may bring in as much as \$3,000 dollars a year digging ginseng. But most people who dig ginseng harvest less than one pound during any given season.

New Challenges

Other issues complicating harvesting behavior, and attempts to generalize about wild harvesters, are drug use, increasing numbers of festivals dedicated to the consumption of ramps, wildcrafter want-to-be's, and a growing degree of oversight at state, federal, and international levels. At least two harvesters in Graham County have expressed a concern that there are increasing numbers of substance abusers ('crank', 'crystal meth', metha-amphetamines) who are pulling moss in order to subsidize their addictions, or are pulling moss because their addictions are such that they cannot sustain other forms of employment.

I do not know whether this is true, nor do I have a sense of how concerned people are about it. Such things are generally not discussed in Graham County and especially not with an outsider. Locals do not want outsiders to have a poor image of their county and are highly sensitive about possibly perpetuating negative stereotypes of mountain people. This is therefore an issue that is particularly difficult to address. It has been suggested to me, however, that one reason why long time harvester's would be bothered by this practice is that, in addition to considering the purchase of drugs to be an inappropriate use of these raw materials, they are worried about what meth abusers do to themselves. I am told that people who are under the influence of methamphetamines are able to go long distances without food or sleep in order to pull moss, sometimes injuring themselves in the process and not stopping to receive proper treatment. The recent proliferation of related issues in the media would seem to suggest that such concerns are not limited to Graham County, but are of increasing concern in rural areas nationally (Drug-Rehabs.org 2003, Jadhay 2000, McFadden 2003, Potter 2004).

In addition, the relatively recent increase in the number, variety, and popularity of festivals and fund raisers in the region has created yet another breed of mountain harvester. 'Ramp Festivals' have recently been established all over Southern Appalachia. In Graham County there is a festival held every spring to benefit the local volunteer fire department. People gather and donate vast quantities of ramps, clean them, cook them and serve up large plates of food after church on a Sunday afternoon. People who attend the event are then asked to make a donation in exchange for their meal. Lunch typically consists of fried trout or chicken, ramp hush puppies, corn bread, potato salad, beans, raw and cooked ramps, and a variety of deserts. As more and more people attend, and as

nearby ramp festivals attract growing numbers of tourists, increasing quantities of ramps are needed to feed them all. There are now people who are going out to dig ramps to sell to festival organizers or to donate to fund raisers each spring, but who do not harvest nontimber forest products in general.

As will be discussed at length in the chapters that follow, there are also a few people harvesting today who are not from the mountains and who do not identify themselves as being from a family of wild harvesters. These individuals seem to be people who have become dissatisfied with urban life and many aspects of modern society. For the most part, they are highly educated people seeking out a particular quality of life and who are attracted to some aspect of living in the mountains and learning about mountain species and ecology. These individuals represent a subset of a larger population of people currently moving to the mountains. They are part of a larger trend that began during the 1970's, and then intensified during the 1980's and 1990's.

Outsiders, New Locals, and Mountain People

Around 1980 many 'old locals' began to leave Graham County for good, and many 'new locals' and outsiders began to move into the county. "Old local" and 'new local' are terms coined by Beverly Whitehead, herself a new local, to distinguish between locals that are from families who have lived in the county for several generations and those who are full-time residents but whose parents were not born and raised here. Outsiders, 'foreign' or 'Florida People' as most old locals call them, are people who have built second homes in Graham County and do not live in the area year round. Old locals often say that someone 'isn't from here' if they have not lived in the county all of their life, even if their parents are from the county and the individual in question is currently a

full-time resident of the county. This sometimes means that this person just doesn't quite fit in, fully participate in the traditional ways of doing things, or that this person's ideas and behaviors are incomprehensible to old locals. It also seems to signify that people who 'aren't from here' are people who have not shared certain community experiences that old locals have. You are not necessarily excluded if you are not from Graham County, but you are not expected to understand certain things either.

After highway 129 and the Cheorahala Skyway roads were built during the 1960's, Robbinsville began to build up and more people began coming to visit and buy land in Graham County. But after 1980 larger numbers of people began to move to, or build homes in the county whose experiences, relationship to, and ideas about Appalachia were very different from those of so-called old locals. Because this is the case, a certain amount of tension between old locals and new people has manifested itself in subtle and not so subtle ways. Newcomers have often arrived expecting to do things in the same way they have done things elsewhere and have met resistance from old locals who do not want to change.

...Yellow Creek is still primitive to an extent. And anybody's got half a mind or half sense would hope that it would stay that way, just the way it is. But of course it can't because there's too many foreign people moving in here now. And poor people around here, back 40 years ago I mean they might have 8 or 10 acres of land and sell it for two or three hundred dollars, you see. But then, once they got a taste of how expensive earth could be you know they just upped the price so nobody around here, if we don't have property to give to our children when we're gone, they can't afford to buy it. Because foreigners are coming in and buying it and able to give those big humongous prices for it. And if we don't have something, if we don't have property to leave our children then they'll have to leave, because what are they gonna do?... I said if they sell this place across the ridge up here for \$89,000 and some Floridian comes in there and builds them a big mansion it's not going to change me one bit. I've lived here for many a year. And if I get up there yonder in my gardens and I see a snake or something, and I decide to holler down here for Bill I'll just let loose! Whether they like it or not (Viola Laughtry, born 1941).

Part of the reason that old locals have resisted, and sometimes resent, many newcomers is that they associate these new people with unexpected changes that have occurred since the newcomer's arrival. Historically outsiders have made it increasingly difficult for people to live using livelihood strategies that worked for them in the past. This tension also stems from old locals being sensitive to the ways in which they know they have been stereotyped, and continue to be stereotyped, by outsiders. Outsiders, on the other hand, typically are not sensitive to these stereotypes. They are often unaware that they themselves are actively stereotyping their neighbors when in fact they are. They come to the county with preconceived ideas about who mountain people are and why, and often believe that old locals need to change more than they themselves need to adapt to their new environment.

A mild example of such tension can be seen in the jokes that newcomers make about 'Graham County time'. It is often debated which is easier to deal with, Graham County time, or Cherokee time. 'Running into town' means sitting and chatting a while with various folks, not just hurrying in and out of the grocery store in five minutes. Hiring someone to do an odd job often means letting them take a large part of the day to do it, and sometimes sitting down and having lunch with them on or off the clock. Newcomers are not always comfortable with these expectations and choose to believe that certain rituals signify things that they usually don't, like laziness or a lack of industry.

Part of this conflict can also be seen as relating to identity issues, particularly Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital. Newcomers bring to the table different sets of values, ideas about what it means to be successful, and life goals than do old locals. A lot

of people feel that a man is respected in Graham County and is someone you want to know if he owns and raises particularly good hunting dogs, has lived in the county and been helpful to his neighbors all of his life, and has a lot of different kinds of skills that enable him to get by in Graham County during economically difficult times. People who talk a lot, especially if they use a vocabulary stemming from an educated background, and/or insist on advising people as to what and how they should do things are not usually respected. At least, not if they do not have the skills that are most valued by many locals in Graham County and do not use them in ways that are respected. If you offer a lot of advice, but do not visibly produce anything, such as crops, timber, crafts, excellent canned goods, roads, or buildings, people do not tend to believe you know that much about things old locals care about.

From the point of view of new locals, on the other hand, most old locals do not have or seek out signifiers that garner respect. Few new locals are moving into the area who would value a new mobile home, for instance. Newcomers, especially Florida people and people from Atlanta, are building expensive homes, the simple ownership of which is expected to be recognized as a sign of success that should be respected, something to be proud of. But old locals are more likely to resent the newcomers that enter the county with such attitudes and consider them to be ‘getting above their raising’ (because they are focused on accumulating things as opposed to focusing on family and the community).

The lakes that formed after the three dams were built in the county, and the establishment of various resorts, Inns, and bed and breakfasts, have turned Graham County into a favorable location for tourism and retirement homes. According to local

residents, the housing developments that currently surround Lake Santeetlah contain the most expensive homes found in North Carolina. I was unable to confirm this, but a local real estate agent did tell me that it is not unusual for even older homes that are on lake front lots around Santeetlah to sell for over one million dollars. This realtor also told me that a piece of property that he could have purchased 10-15 years ago for \$28,000 would now sell for \$300,000. This dramatic rise in property values has meant that the county's tax base has increased as well, providing more money for county schools and other services. It has also made it increasingly difficult for many local people to continue to use livelihood strategies that they are accustomed to.

Viola: ...but this place is still primitive, really, and I like it just like it is. Got a lot of outsiders moving in though. This guy, you know they got a sign down there at our driveway. Dad sold a guy ten acres there across the ridge over yonder. And he in turn sold it to the guy that owns it now. And the guy that owns it now, Dad got \$11,000 out of that place. And now the guy that owns it is asking \$89,000. That's how the value of property has gone up. That was in 19-, about 1969 Dad sold it. But at that time there was very few out of state people in here.

Bill: Them Florida people ruined us.

Viola: Yep, they ruined it.

Bill: They run our taxes up and everything else. Come up here and build a big house...stay about two or three weeks and go back to Florida, and then...dare you to cross they're property.

Viola: Now see, if they do it that way...they don't have to pay NC tax like we do. They'll come and stay, they can stay as long as three months and still not have to pay North Carolina tax. So they're getting out of having to do a lot that we have to maintain every year, and the thing about it is our taxes have went up...

People now complain that older folks have to sell their land in order to receive government assistance, and that they can't get by without federal aid. As one man put it, "...while they were young they could afford to have a house...now they can't afford to have nothing here when they retire...they sell to get help from the government...it don't

work no more (Delmas Crisp 2001 raw video footage for *Mountain Talk*).” The increasing property values have consistently benefited the county as a whole by helping to support it’s schools and infrastructure, but they have made day to day living increasing difficult for many individuals. Having a better infrastructure is not much of a consolation to people who are used to having the flexibility of getting by on their own and doing without if they need to when unemployed.

In addition to having an influx of newcomers, another transition began to take place during the early 1980’s as well. At the same time that increasing numbers of new people began to move into Graham County, the children of many ‘old locals’ began to permanently leave the county in order to go to school or earn a living elsewhere. Many of these folks grew up ‘just getting by’ under rough circumstances and are trying to create a different future for themselves and their children than the life they had growing up. As Delmas Crisp put it,

...when I grew up we grew up hard. I mean, there wadn’t nobody wanted to come back to these mountains and stay or nothing, you know, ‘cause you couldn’t live...now the tourists are paying ungodly sums for property here...The regular mountain people that’s been in here and lived all their life, we learnt how to make it. But now, you know, that ain’t good enough.

Delmas said that now most people have to leave in order to make money. He also said that when he was growing up during the 1960’s and 1970’s,

...Sure enough when you got 16 you didn’t have no other choice if you made any money, or if you made a living you know, you had to leave home...And Phillips and Jordan, they employed the biggest part of these people and still do. And own most of the county anyway, you know. And uh, so you went to work for them on these right-of-ways...went off to these big cities and they learnt...(2001 raw video footage for *Mountain Talk* produced by Neal Hutcheson).

And they used what they learned to help them get by if and when they returned home.

A New Generation

But today people in their 30's and younger typically complain that there is nothing to do in Graham County and that there is no work available for them. They crave luxury items such as wide screen TV's and pick-up trucks and do not seem to feel that the strategies many of their grandparents used, or even those of their older siblings, are cost effective. Farming and logging involve long, hard hours with relatively little return on your labor. Many of them do not have the options that their parents had, and those who have not completed high school can't take advantages of opportunities that they could have that their parents did not.

The previous generation may have been limited in terms of the extent to which they could be self-sufficient, but beginning in the 1980's a large number of younger people simply could not find the means to own land. In addition, increasing numbers of families can no longer portion out or buy land for their children when they get married the way they once did. A lot of families have either sold most of the land they had in order to pay bills or decrease the amount of property taxes that they owe every year, or have divided the usable land they have as much as it can be divided. In some cases, the remaining property is too rugged for the construction of an access road, house and electricity to be cost effective, or even to make gardening possible. Therefore, those young people who are not yet able to own land and who have not chosen to complete their education or acquire economically marketable skills have few options.

One resource that they do have is access to social services such as unemployment compensation, Medicare, and other forms of so-called welfare. According to Consolidated Federal Funds Reports put out by the U.S. Census Bureau, between 1993

and 2002 direct payments to individuals in Graham County has risen from \$4,269,010.00 to \$8,871,051. Grants paid out to Graham County by the federal government rose from \$5,448,141 to \$11,860,334.00 during this same time period. The direct payments to individuals include such things as food stamps and Medicare. The use of food stamps has fluctuated significantly from year to year, but was \$100,000.000 less in 2002 than the total for 1993. Medicare accounted for 79% of the direct payments in 1993, 83% in 1997, and 85% in 2002. The rise in grant payments is partially due to the addition of federal programs available to the county over time. For instance, a program titled 'temporary assistance to needy families' was available in 2002 that was not available in 1993.

It is difficult to say whether people are inherently poorer today than the past generation was both because lifestyles have changed, and because forms of assistance are available today that were not present in the past. People are, however, using increasing amounts of social services. Population growth cannot by itself account for the rising payments. Between 1980 and the year 2000 the population in Graham County only rose from 7,217 to 7,993 people, and some of this increase was due to outsiders retiring here. This amounts to about an 11% change over the course of 20 years. There are other differences between younger people (people in their 30's or younger) and older generations as well.

Of those old locals I have interviewed who are of prime employment age, have stayed in the county during most of their adult life, and who do not have extensive formal educations, 'getting by' means something different than it did to previous generations. Their alternative sources of income are somewhat different, their needs are different, and

the job markets are different. For one thing, most of these individuals expect to have more material goods than their parents and grandparents had, and they feel that they need more expensive tools and equipment to complete household tasks. Even those who are willing and able to go into the woods and gather and process forest products frequently use more expensive, labor-saving technologies than past generations have, four-wheelers and portable saw mills, for instance. In some cases these tools probably increase the profitability of their economic ventures, in other ways they may not. In addition to this, growing tobacco is not as profitable as it once was even for those who own land. By 1980 the tobacco industry had become a multinational enterprise, and the demand for Burley tobacco, as opposed to flue-cured tobaccos, was diminishing (Goodman 1993).

...It's (tobacco farming) been a fading out over the last 15 or 20 years. Just gradually a fading out, the government and the media and all, discouraging the people about the usage of tobacco. And the money's not there. The cost of growing it, and the different diseases that's a hitting the tobacco. The blue mold, the different blights and the things that happens, is just a discouragement to the farmers, that they don't make the money that they used to off of it (John Jenkins, born 1951).

There is a tension that has arisen between the old and new ways of getting by that may best be described using the conceptual tool 'Heteroglossia' (Knauff 1996). The idea of getting by in Graham County currently embodies multiple and conflicting goals within individuals. Many old locals, both young and old, want to maintain their identities as mountain people who can get by in the woods and sustain themselves through difficult times, but they also want some of the amenities that the more widespread dominant culture teaches them to desire. Pick up trucks, satellite TV and fancy stereo equipment, for example. There are both centrifugal (internal voices holding to ways of being that are in opposition to other, more dominant ones) and centripetal (outside voices trying to

unify or homogenize ideas) forces at work here. Especially in the case of younger generations, there is an expectation that they be able to have things that older generations were not as concerned with. To them, 'getting by' means being able to consume items and services that their parents saw as being luxury items that could be done without, or that they simply did not have access to.

Until very recently (the 1950's and later for some) people were not worrying about paying for telephones, electricity, satellite dishes, and other monthly expenses now considered to be standard necessities. At the same time local people desire these goods and services, many of them maintain traditional beliefs about education and work responsibilities. Many young people do not wish to complete high school and still expect to be able to have jobs that do not penalize them for showing up late during turkey hunting season, and that allow them to have time off to dig ginseng every September. These kinds of values and practices often conflict with those of potential employers. Furthermore, they conflict with the expectations of government institutions such as those that deal with families and children's services.

In contrast, most of the people who have chosen to formally educate themselves have left Graham County in order to use their skills and capitalize on them. This strategy is more congruent with cultural patterns that lead to types of employment that easily allow for the consumption of such goods and services. But by leaving the county these individuals give up the option of maintaining cultural capital where they grew up. They are soon unable to claim that they are 'from here'.

Of those who have left and are leaving, it remains to be seen whether they will return to retire on family land as people did in earlier generations. It seems unlikely that

many of them will. As mentioned earlier there is less family land to be had than there was previously, and many people are beginning to sell most of their land in order to decrease the amount of property taxes that they owe every year, or, as has also already been mentioned, in order to qualify for government aid. This is on top of the fact that the cost of land is rapidly rising in this area as outsiders continue to build multi-million dollar homes around Lake Santeetlah, making the purchase of land cost prohibitive for most consumers. In addition, many people are marrying individuals who are not from Graham County, which may increase their already growing ties and interests outside of the area. A few will return or maintain vacation spots, because at least some families are still reluctant to part with the land they have left. Others feel strongly about not selling their land to outsiders, further indicating some of the tension that can exist between old locals and more recent immigrants. It will be interesting to see what happens to such land in future generations.

As more and more people build second homes in the county, and as more ‘outsiders’ or ‘new locals’ retire here, the habits and traditions of ‘old locals’ are increasingly called into question. As mentioned earlier, the expectations of recent immigrants just tend to differ from those of ‘old locals’. They have different ideas about trespassing, what houses should look like, how to conduct business, and how the woods should be appreciated. For example, one woman I interviewed got upset when she discovered that some newcomers buried a spring on what used to be her grandparent’s farm,

...They just ruin that! These people that comes outta here, lotta times from Florida and them, they don’t realize what something’d be worth! With that spring! They just don’t know or something. And used to, back years ago, that’s what people looked for, you know. Natural springs and things, you know, that’s

what they wanted... the old people did, you know, when they bought land. If there wadn't no springs on it they didn't buy it. They didn't have much use for it (Ruby Crisp, born 1934)!

The newcomers have also brought with them an increased demand for new and different kinds of development in the county. Sub-divisions and gated communities have recently been established, along with neighborhood 'covenants', proposed leash laws, and different kinds of zoning. These are literally foreign concepts to many 'old locals', and in some cases they are offensive ones.

...I kinda joke, the best business anybody could get in to, the most profitable, is printing no trespassing signs. Or, a new one, 'You're entering gated communities: Be prepared to turn around and go back.' I can't blame a lot of my, most of my problems on the Forest Service. A lot of it's just changes in society (Bill Elliot, born 1947).

The new residents have also brought with them a demand (and money) for specialty goods and services like ethnic foods and coffee shops. This has resulted in increasingly rapid development in the area. Partly because of this, old locals must increasingly maintain their property in ways that suit newcomers. This involves doing things like finding ways to make roads and hillsides beautiful to tourists after they have been logged by not leaving debris lying where it is visible from certain roads.

Issues of Power

Between 1930 and 1980 outsiders were able to mobilize the economic and political resources necessary to remove Graham County residents from their land in order to build dams and create public lands. By 1980 local uses of forest resources, and what is considered to be an appropriate use of forest resources, have been criticized and redefined by voices that wield political and economic power more effectively than county residents have. Because of this, policies began to be put into place by state and federal

governments without seriously considering input from the people who are most immediately affected by them. This is a dynamic in which one group of people is able to position themselves successfully against another because they are more able to make themselves be heard and understood, regardless of the legitimacy of their argument.

Secondly, outsiders are determining the 'rules of the game'. A game in which outsiders are able to maintain a large degree of control over what kinds of questions are being asked and researched in the county, and therefore how issues are perceived by people who live and work outside of the county. This type of dynamic can happen inadvertently, or it can be the result of a conscious effort, a prolepsis.

After 1980, this kind of power can be seen to be operating in Graham County via various non-profit organizations and development initiatives. Most of these programs have been created by outsiders who assume that the problems of long-time residents need to be solved by causing them to adopt the values of the dominant society. Such groups and people are working hard and sincerely to provide economic opportunities for people in Graham County. But they are working at providing options that are not appealing to many old locals, the people they profess to be trying to help. It is therefore not the old locals who are attempting to take advantage of the limited opportunities being presented. It is newcomers who are often benefiting, the people who share most of their values with the dominant culture and who have benefited from the changes taking place to begin with.

Because of this, those who have already been disenfranchised are further disenfranchised by their nonparticipation and inability to constructively voice their concerns. For instance, most old locals are not interested in taking classes on grant

writing, obtaining small business loans, or writing traditional business plans. However, this does not mean that they are not practiced entrepreneurs or not willing to learn.

For example, it is not uncommon to find people in Graham County who are strongly opposed to being in debt. In such cases, taking on a business loan is not a comfortable prospect. Many individuals manage their financial affairs on a cash basis, and arrange to pay debts during times when they know they will be paid for specific projects. Someone might arrange to rent a portable sawmill from a neighbor in June but arrange to pay for this service in September after having sold some ginseng and moss. This kind of logistical flexibility is necessary for people who make a large portion of their living by combining a variety of seasonal activities and income strategies. Most formal programs do not allow for this kind of flexibility. And as often as not, local attempts to articulate why they are not interested in these ventures are interpreted as being a form of ineptness, ignorance, or as indicating that the individual in question is unenterprising. This dynamic will be discussed at length in later chapters.

A third dimension of power involves identifying, ‘...power processes operating behind social construction of meanings and patterns (Gaventa 1980).’ The mechanisms of power used in this case manipulate old locals into actually wanting and believing in things that benefit outsiders more than themselves. Theoretically, this kind of power can even be used to make individuals actively participate in their own subjugation and to undermine their own goals. This can be seen today in efforts to co-opt and profit from the traditional skills of diggers in Graham County, and the rhetoric used to argue for the construction of a four lane highway in the county.

The marketing of nontimber forest products will be discussed at length in the chapters that follow. For now, it is sufficient to say that the active marketing of local products based on indigenous plants can have unforeseen consequences on local people and plant populations. If not approached carefully, a small number of people providing the financial backing and the business connections can reap a profit and then simply back out and abandon a proposed business venture when their profit margins decrease or the market fluctuates. If a venture is abandoned suddenly, both people and resources can be left unmanaged and without any guidance or plan for adjustment. But arguments for attempting to grow, market and sell native plants can effectively appeal to the identities of locals and their concept of ideal ways of making a living.

Likewise, arguments in favor of building a major highway through the county target people who pride themselves in their skill and ability to operate large earth moving equipment. The opportunity to earn a living utilizing these skills close to home, probably under the direction of Phillips and Jordan, a company that many people in the county have worked with for a long time, is very attractive. Building such a road would provide a fairly steady income for several years to come. Part of the argument also claims that the presence of this highway will bring more development and employment opportunities to the county. This is easy for people to believe because they have seen this happen in the past. Once roads and railroads were built in the county jobs did come as well. What this argument ignores, however, is the degree to which similar strategies have failed in Appalachia in more recent years.

A large part of the Appalachian Regional Commission's (ARC) development initiatives and strategies for eliminating poverty in the area have been based on building

infrastructures (Raitz and Ulack 1984, Whisnant 1994). The duration and frequency with which the ARC has reasserted its claims and funded these kinds of projects has generated a popular conception that what they are doing will eventually work. This is in spite of the fact that there is little evidence supporting these claims even though more than 40 years have passed since these efforts began (Whisnant 1994).

The construction of roads as an answer to a lack of economic development ignores the fact that today's global economy encourages industry to seek out labor where it is cheapest (Gaventa et al. 1990). Today, this usually means establishing one's manufacturing base in a country other than the United States. These arguments also choose not to acknowledge the possibility that any increased accessibility to the county will make it easier for outsiders with more capital to strategically position themselves in the county, capitalize on its resources, and leave. This also precludes any attempt to ensure that the resources of the county be utilized to equitably benefit its current residents and their chosen lifestyles. After all, to what extent have residents of Gatlinburg benefited from the tourism and economic development made possible by road building? Employment opportunities are still largely seasonal, and those making the most money from the enterprises present are absentee stock holders.

These three dimensions of power cogently described in John Gaventa's (1980), "Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and rebellion in an Appalachian valley," are interrelated and act synergistically to complicate and obscure many of the issues that have arisen around the politics of harvesting wild forest plants in Graham County, North Carolina. The rights and responsibilities of diggers have been increasingly called into question in recent years as increasing numbers of people are looking to profit from the

plants that are a part of this tradition. Still others want to ensure that they are preserved for future generations. Some want to ensure both.

The current intensity and variety of interests pertaining to nontimber forest plants has resulted in a series of uncertain attempts by federal, state, and international trade monitoring institutions to regulate harvesting behavior. These attempts have complicated decision making processes for many harvesters. Policies have failed to distinguish between the many different types of people harvesting and their different motivations for harvesting. Little identification and overall understanding of the issues being faced has therefore been achieved to date. Some of the challenges that policy maker's face will be explored in Chapter Six. For now it is only important to note that these attempts are changing the ways in which people in Graham County perceive and pursue nontimber forest product harvesting activities.

For some, wild harvesting is an act of rebellion. Mountain people have been routinely excluded by outsiders making decisions that have had severe consequences for local people (Kahn 1978, Parlow 1978). And many mountain peoples' requests have been disregarded because of condescending notions about what objectives are good or appropriate for mountaineers (white and Cherokee) to pursue. Therefore, many old locals do not see the value of participating in the decision making processes that outsider's value. Diggers do not always believe that there is any way for them to be taken seriously, and they have experienced tremendous frustration and condescension when they have tried to participate in dominant political and economic processes (Parlow 1978). This being the case, many have given up voicing their concerns and simply ignore the policies, regulations, and suggestions of outsiders and outside institutions.

Summary

In sum, the last century of Graham County's history delineates a process resulting in the gradual transformation of wild harvesting. In 1900 raw plant materials were being harvested from the wild and were being directly consumed by the harvester or were being traded for an item that was critical to the harvester's ability to meet their family's basic needs (Yoakley 1932). By 1930 local residents were harvesting wild plants for commercial purposes in order to supplement cash incomes they were generating from other forms of wage labor or from commercial agriculture. At this time people could no longer produce everything necessary for meeting their basic needs themselves, they were consuming fewer nontimber forest products directly, and people were seeking out a greater number of consumer items. As an increasing number of employment opportunities became available few people had the time to harvest raw plant materials full-time, and those who did harvest nontimber forest products generally did so only when other jobs were not available. Because of this, less and less information was passed on from one generation to the next during this time period, especially after 1950.

Beginning around 1980, people who were not knowledgeable about forest plants and processing methods began harvesting nontimber forest products. Many of these individuals began harvesting as a means of acquiring luxury items or for strictly commercial purposes. Though there are exceptions, people generally do not use the income that they generate from wild harvesting to pay for their basic needs the way they once did. People have also begun harvesting fewer species, and when they are able to, harvest larger quantities of the species that they do harvest relative to 1900. At the same time that this has happened there has been a movement among outsiders that has

romanticized what is known of as 'wildcrafting.' This phenomenon will be explored in the chapter that follows.

CHAPTER 4

WILDCRAFTING: VALORIZING THE PAST, CO-OPTING THE FUTURE

What is wildcrafting? Broadly speaking, it is a term being used today to identify the act of gathering resources from natural habitats in order to sell them for economic gain, as opposed to personal enjoyment or use (Cleaver and Cleaver 1969, Jones et al. 2002, Rubin and Gold 2002). The resources referred to are usually plants, but the term can include animals, clay, minerals, stones or gems, honey from wild bees, or any other resource that is gathered from undeveloped areas and sold. It is not, however, a term that is currently used by most wild harvesters in Graham County, North Carolina. Rather, it is a word that was made up relatively recently in order to promote a particular kind of lifestyle in an increasingly contested terrain.

If there is one idea that has come to embody the deeply political nature of harvesting wild plant resources in western North Carolina it is the notion of ‘wildcrafting’. The meaning and nature of wildcrafting has been changing since its inception and is constantly being re-invented. Because of this, who uses this term and the context in which it is used suggests some things about what is perceived to be at stake when people are discussing harvesting wild plant resources today. People who call themselves ‘wildcrafters’ or label others as such are typically outsiders who think of wildcrafting in very narrow terms relative to the way most traditional wild plant harvesters in southern Appalachia think about what they do.

These particular outsiders (people not born and raised in Graham County) are mostly comprised of people who have never had to rely on wild harvesting to supplement their income. They also tend to be people who are enthusiastic about the concept of sustainable economic development. They want to participate in research and marketing strategies that simultaneously promote their conservation objectives while generating income for themselves utilizing the formal market system. People who harvest nontimber forest products, on the other hand, are primarily interested in making money in a way that protects their agency and autonomy. These differences between outsiders and local harvesters have come to be embodied in the word 'wildcrafting'. The current use of this term marks a cultural divide that has arisen in the county. On one side of this divide sit old locals who value their own way of life, on the other newcomers who want to change things for the better.

Among outsiders there is a lot of interest in creating value-added products based on the notion of wildcrafting and selling them using marketing strategies that are typical of dominant economic institutions around the world. They are asking focused questions about how to actively market local resources for individual profit. In Graham County, this is happening within specific venues. Several outsiders have joined a local community group called, Smoky Mountain Native Plant Association (SMNPA) and have participated in workshops in the region sponsored by Mountain Micro-enterprises. By participating in these programs they can access educational resources and consultants that assist them in creating business plans and accessing grant money. Many have also chosen to attend conferences being promoted on a state-wide basis through university and economic development initiatives such as the North Carolina Natural Products

Association and Yellow Creek Botanical Institute (YCBI). ‘Growing Opportunities in Non-timber Forest Production’ was the theme of one such series of programs. There are also a few outsiders that have adopted the idea of wildcrafting from popular fiction and use it as a way of promoting knowledge, skills, and an alternative lifestyle that revolves around Appalachian culture and mountain wildlife. But for the most part, the notion of wildcrafting is a valorization of a particular kind of money making strategy. Both of these visions seem to have been derived from earlier ideas about wildcrafting found in popular literature.

Origin of the Word Wildcrafting

The earliest reference to wildcrafting that I was able to find was in a manual on how to dig and plant ginseng that was first published during the 1940’s (Bryant 1947). It is unclear to me whether this word first appeared as a trade or industry term used by businessmen who dealt in crude botanicals during the early part of the twentieth century, or as an expression of an ideology that was emerging among American citizens after experiencing the Depression Era and the supply shortages felt during WWII. As was mentioned, in North Carolina the term is currently used by people who are not harvesting nontimber forest products themselves, but who are involved, or want to be involved, in some aspect of research, economic development, or trade in wild, medicinal plants. However, according to Tony Hayes, a former buyer for Wilcox (A 100 year old herb buying company that used to be based in Boone, North Carolina), dealers working for Wilcox used to call wild harvesters “diggers”, “herbers” or “pickers” depending on what it was that they were gathering, not wildcrafters (personal communication 2003). This

lends credence to the latter hypothesis that it was a term that was made up to describe an emergent ethos among portions of the American populace towards the middle 1900's.

One self-declared wildcrafter, Ila Hatter, has told me that she first developed an interest in wild foods and medicinal plants from her parents. They felt that it was important for her to know how to find food and be able to treat illnesses and injuries with things that were free and readily available. Ila, who is now in her early 60's, was raised by parents who experienced the Depression first hand, a time when jobs and money were scarce and people had to struggle to make do. At a very early age, she herself would have experienced some of the shortages resulting from WWII, when certain goods that people did not manufacture themselves were not always readily available. A motto that she has adopted for herself is a saying quoted from Thoreau, "The woods and fields are a table always spread." Ila now considers it her mission to educate people around the country, and especially in the Smoky Mountains, about wild foods, medicinals, and forest plants. Graham County is her adopted home. She has spent many years in the area under the tutelage of both Cherokee and white people who are knowledgeable about plants and plant lore, and is continuing to study under their mentorship as she teaches others. According to David Cozzo, another anthropologist studying Appalachian plants and cultures, he has encountered similar experiences among people that he has interviewed. He has run across people who say that they have tried to pass on what they know about forest plants, or to revitalize certain kinds of knowledge because their family learned how important such things could be during the 1930's and early 1940's.

After the logging companies began to leave western North Carolina during the late 1920's, many people left the mountains to go find jobs in the cities. When the

economic market crashed in the United States soon afterwards, many returned to the mountains and were only able to feed their families and keep their homes because of their knowledge of wild food and forest resources. According to Mabel Orr (born 1905),

...But, the Depression came. And people in towns were almost on starvation and they had soup lines, but here everybody was used to having it hard and most people had a cow, and a few chickens, and a hog to kill. And they usually put up enough potatoes and things to do through the winter...course there was no money for shoes, or coffee, or anything. And it got pretty bad, like they had. But still, people here didn't suffer like they did in a lot of places. And some people didn't even know there was a depression because it had always been that way with them.

These skills served people well yet again during WWII when many supplies were difficult to find and purchase because all of our nation's resources were being invested in the production of items necessary for the war.

Another woman I interviewed in Graham County said that she was working hard to write down the things that her mother and father taught her, believing that what she knows is important because, '...it was how we survived!' The mountain people that Cozzo and I have interviewed who come from families with long and continuous traditions of wild harvesting do not, however, call themselves wildcrafters as Ila Hatter does. Wildcrafting seems to be a broader ideology rooted in a popular culture outside of the Appalachian Mountains.

At the same time that people were sharing a common national experience of shortage and need during the 1930's and 1940's, the nation was becoming less agrarian and more people were living in cities. In addition, job opportunities became uncertain in many rural areas and the availability of basic household supplies became inconsistent and expensive. It is likely that there were individuals who were uncomfortable with these changes and who embraced the idea of going back to living off of the land. In this sense,

the 'wildcrafting' that began to be spoken of during the 1940's and 1950's is a precursor of the 1970's 'Back-to-the-land' movement. Two little-known publications support this hypothesis.

George Bryant's, 'The wildcrafters ginseng manual, a guide to American ginseng: Where to find it, how to find it, how to grow it,' was published in 1949. Beginning in 1947, a little periodical independently published and edited by Laurence Barcus of Terre Haute, Indiana began to be sold and distributed as well. It was called, 'The Wildcrafters World and Sportsmans Trading Post.' It was published quarterly (25 cents per issue) and offered miscellaneous advice and illustrations on how to make novelties out of gathered materials and sell them, how to trap furs, fish, grow ginseng, etc. Readers were invited to write articles and submit them to be included in future publications. Some people wrote about various kinds of 'Indian ways', others shared their experiences using different types of fishing bait or building campfires. But the primary focus of the publication revolved around how to make money working outdoors. 'Collecting and Marketing Salamanders,' by Wallace N. Liles of the mountains of Arkansas, and 'Outdoor Profitunities' are examples of the kinds of articles to be found in this little magazine. Herb dealers such as S.B. Penick and Company, Asheville, North Carolina sometimes advertised that they wanted herbs or roots in 'The Wildcrafters World.'

Like later 'back-to-the-lander's, people interested in these publications seem to be rejecting, or at least struggling to cope, with the economic trends of their time. The topics addressed in these publications do not critique issues pertaining to development or conservation, however. In fact, they were not overtly political in any way, though they could represent a nostalgic response to change. Among other things, as was mentioned in

earlier chapters, most of the dealers in crude botanicals (raw plant products) in western North Carolina had ceased doing business by 1950 (Berman and Flannery 2001). The drive in the United States for patentable medicines that could replace whole plant drugs (because they were more profitable and 'scientific') was decreasing the demand for plants harvested from the mountains.

Tony Hayes, an herb dealer in Boone, North Carolina, has suggested that the term wildcrafting may be more commonly used in the Midwestern region of the United States, but I have been unable to confirm this one way or the other. Since I have been unable to find any references to the word, even with the help of several diligent reference librarians at the University of Georgia, that date any earlier than the late 1940's, I also suspect that it may have been invented as a partial means of portraying these activities in a new, more positive light. Many of the practices being advocated in 'The Wildcrafters World' were mainstays of many rural and mountain people's lives shortly before this publication came into being. At this time these skills were beginning to be seen as outmoded and behind the times. On a national scale, people were just beginning to trade in their solid oak kitchen tables for Formica ones, and were moving to suburbia. 'Wildcrafting' may have been meant to make this lifestyle choice sound more respectable and glamorous relative to 'diggers' or 'pickers'. The people using it in this context are people who are, or want to be, knowledgeable about wildlife, and who like to be outside, working independently.

Earlier writings, such as Kain's, "Ginseng: Its cultivation, harvesting, marketing and market value, with a short account of its history and botany," first written in 1899, do not use or mention the word wildcrafting. Though he clearly blames wild harvesters for the diminished populations of ginseng found at the time,

The principal agents in the extermination of the native supply are the ginseng hunters, “sang-diggers” they are called. They exercise no judgment whatever in collecting. They take even the tiniest roots whenever they see them, whether in April, June or November, and the plants are thus given no chance to reproduce themselves. It is of little consequence to these shiftless people to be arrested and jailed according to the laws of the two Virginias and of Ontario. They take the matter coolly and live at the expense of the state until the end of their sentence, and go back to dig as before. When the plant is cultivated it will be to the grower’s interest to dig at the proper season, and to prevent, as much as possible, the digging of the wild root in his locality during the spring and summer (Kain 1912: 13).

In light of the above, by the 1940’s it may have become advantageous to distinguish wildcrafters from ‘diggers’ in popular culture. The use of the term may even be an attempt to legitimize acts of wild harvesting. ‘Wildcrafting’ in the 1940’s is promoting the processing of raw materials and the independent production of consumer items for profit. People were encouraged by ‘The Wildcrafters World’ to make animal figures made out of pinecones and to sell them to tourists, for instance, in addition to digging and selling roots and trapping furs. During this same period people in Graham County were giving up digging roots in favor of other ways of earning a living, they never had relied solely on selling nontimber forest products, and the prices being offered for these products at the time – even ginseng – were low. As opportunities to help build roads and dams came along they took advantage of them. But ‘The Wildcrafters World’ often seems to be encouraging people to make new or alternative lifestyle choices. In an article titled, “Wildcrafting as a Way of Life”, Cyrus Woodman (1954) states, “The first, and probably the most important requisite, for the person contemplating the life of a Wildcrafter, is deep, thorough-going love of the outdoors in all its phases.” ‘The Wildcrafters World’ ceased publication in 1961.

Later, during the 1970's the idea of wildcrafting had a brief resurgence with the publication of the children's book, and subsequent film, "Where the Lilies Bloom", by the Cleavers who were living in Boone, North Carolina at the time. This happened to coincide with the environmental and Back-to-the-Land movement of this decade. These two social movements were largely responses to tensions that arose far away from Graham County and western North Carolina between outsiders. But the book and film helped to inspire many of these outsiders to move to the Appalachian Mountains and try living off the land and wildcrafting for wild food and medicinal items themselves. Many of these people had no previous experience living off of the land. They also brought with them different reasons for wild harvesting, and different expectations for how it should be done than those held by locals. Few of these newcomers ended up staying in the mountains for very long (Beaver 1986). Then, during the 1980's, a growing commercial demand for natural plant products brought the notion of wildcrafting into a new and contested terrain, that of sustainable economic development.

Sustainable Wildcrafting

Over the course of the past two decades growing numbers of people in the United States and abroad have begun to be interested in whole plant drugs and dietary supplements. This increased demand for crude botanicals has caused the price being offered for many wild medicinal plants to increase somewhat over the course of the past few years. Because of this demand, there have also been efforts to create a variety of value-added products whose active ingredients rely on the input of wild, crude botanicals. These developments are hopeful to some and fearful to others.

In sustainable economic development circles the notion of wildcrafting has been embraced as a potential panacea for areas with high unemployment rates and large amounts of undeveloped resources. All across the United States there are regions where labor is relatively cheap and where marketable plants are available in local fields, forests, and deserts (Bailey 1999, Cozzo 1996, Emery 1998, Jones et al. 2002, Nabhan 1996). In Southern Appalachia there is a particularly high concentration of indigenous, medicinal plant species growing in mountain forests. There are also large numbers of unemployed people who have experience working in the woods and growing plants. Places like Graham County, North Carolina are therefore the perfect setting for funding institutions, researchers such as myself, and entrepreneurs to try to sponsor local initiatives to develop markets for medicinal plants and to create value-added products. Because of this, county planners and some nonprofit groups have latched onto the idea of 'wildcrafting'. They are using the term to describe what it is that local harvesters do, but in some ways they have reinvented the concept in order to promote their own objectives pertaining to economic growth and stability, local self-determination, conservation, and social justice.

In addition to this, outside contingents are also using the notion of wildcrafting in order to promote the formation of sustainable economic development initiatives based on the collection, cultivation and marketing of indigenous medicinal plants. However, most of the species in question are only poorly understood by botanists and ecologists and have yet to be successfully cultivated in a commercially viable way. Promoting markets for products developed from these plants could therefore have deleterious effects on wild populations of these species and increase the already onerous task faced by public land managers.

In the case of Graham County, 80% of the county is national forest managed by the United States Forest Service, Cheoah District. To date, very few people who are charged with poaching or who are caught harvesting more than the quantities of herbs allowed by their harvesting permit on USFS land are actually tried and prosecuted with the full force of existing laws (Gary Kaufman, USFS botanist, personal communication). In addition, it is believed that very few people who do harvest illegally are actually caught. The USFS and the National Park Service are charged with the dual task of policing public lands and identifying and implementing affective strategies for managing the resources and wildlife found in these habitats. This has proved to be a difficult task.

Money, solid research, and adequate staff sizes have all been limiting factors in trying to successfully meet public land manager's responsibilities. Marketing 'wildcrafting' as an answer to the problems faced by counties with plenty of resources, high unemployment rates, and few development opportunities could therefore seduce people into making decisions with unforeseen consequences if not approached slowly and carefully. Without effective monitoring strategies in place, nobody would ultimately benefit from such economic development initiatives. Wildcrafting could increase the harvesting pressure on many indigenous plants at the same time that large, outside corporations making short term investments could come to the mountains, turn a profit, and leave, just as commercial logging companies did during the 1920's and others have done since. Sustainable means of harvesting wild plants need to be identified and enforced, or viable means of cultivating potentially valuable species need to be determined before actual products are marketed on a national or international scale. If this is not done, there will be little local control over the viability of local plant

populations, and businesses would be able to leave, cease employing or quit buying raw materials from local residents as soon as other investment opportunities proved themselves to be more profitable. This would leave Graham County and its residents worse off than they are now. People would again be unemployed after the regions resources were no longer cost effective to collect, and they would then have even fewer resources at their disposal than they do now. In addition, 'wildcrafting' as it is currently being presented and discussed in economic development circles also poses a challenge to the lifestyle and chosen identities of those who have traditionally given such practices form.

Conflicting Ideologies of Wildcrafting

As will be described in more detail in Chapter Seven, wildcrafting, to the extent that is understood by land managers, economic development groups and county planners, is a distorted interpretation of a variety of traditional practices. Though the nature and purpose of wild harvesting has been changing from one generation to the next, part of its appeal for contemporary practitioners is the sense of independence, agency and flexibility it allows them to have. Wild harvesting is one way in which many people identify themselves as 'mountain people'. The harvesting traditions that have been passed on mesh well with cultural and social attitudes about hard work and livelihood, outsider's ideas about 'wildcrafting' often do not.

In Graham County, if you are known to be a good picker, one who processes your raw product well so that the buyer is assured a high quality crude botanical, and one who delivers what they promise, it is possible to earn a degree of trust and prestige that can get you through difficult times, financially or otherwise. Three buyers told me that they will

pay consistently higher prices and lend equipment to pickers who have proven themselves to be reliable providers of high quality materials. They will also prioritize buying from these individuals if they are only able to buy a limited quantity of something at a particular time, turning away materials harvested by pickers that they have less of a relationship with. Pickers who are difficult to work with, whose materials are consistently dirty, or who try to cheat the buyer in some way are usually excluded from doing business with that buyer in the future. These social relationships that develop inspire loyalties that in many cases also allow the individuals involved to operate on credit if necessary.

For instance, if times are particularly tough financially for those involved, it is not unheard of for a digger to provide raw materials (though this does not hold true for ginseng) to a local buyer who is not able to pay the digger until after the harvested materials have been sold to a regional herb dealer or company. The new systems being proposed by outsiders are much less flexible, do not rely as much on local interpersonal relationships, and would increase the degree to which local harvesters would be vulnerable to global market fluctuations. They do not constructively build on existing networks, ideas, and motivations. Most significantly, the ideas being proposed require a much greater commitment and outlay of resources than harvesters are used to, with no guaranteed return.

Understandably, the goal of many nonprofit organizations (Yellow Creek Botanical Institute, Smoky Mountain Native Plant Association, North Carolina Natural Products Association) and state officials (NC Agricultural Extension, Mountain Micro-enterprises) is to make everybody in Graham County more like people who live under

what are considered to be ideal conditions elsewhere. The goal is to increase people's standard of living, decrease unemployment, provide access to competitive levels of education for people who live in the county, and minimize the need for social services. There is also a covert, if not overt, assumption that people in Graham County should think and behave differently than they do, and that some of their ideas are misguided, holding them back and making it impossible for them to be successful. Old locals are known to do things like drop out of high school, for instance, or to show up to work late because it was a good morning for turkey hunting. Many outsiders involved in development efforts believe that if local people would just listen and do the things that are suggested to them they would be better off. While it can be argued that this may be true, it can also be argued that many people in the county are resistant to proposed plans because their idea of success is different from the one being presented to them, and that there is nothing wrong with this.

In practice, what sustainable economic development initiatives have done so far is to construct a one-sided argument that is difficult for people to respond to constructively. Locals are presented with options and are asked to participate in decision making processes, but they are not presented with any choices that are meaningful to them. A group of people in dominant power, political, economic, and social positions have identified, discussed, and defined Graham County's problems and created a possible solution or solutions. Local people have then been invited to attend meetings and to participate in planned projects. The problem is that the agendas have been pre-determined and have therefore by-passed issues that are of central concern to current local harvesters. Old locals who harvest nontimber forest products do not only wish to

have jobs, they want jobs that will allow them to maintain a lifestyle and identity of their own choosing. Many outside sponsors have either ignored or not understood the key features that have made wild harvesting work, and sometimes not work, from the perspective of pickers, and have therefore failed to obtain very much credibility among old locals in Graham County.

For instance, when Yellow Creek Botanical Institute (YCBI) was founded no old locals were chosen to be on the board of directors or included in the initial grant writing process. Talented experts from a variety of fields were included, but nobody who was an expert harvester from Graham County, or even born and raised in the county. The goals and objectives of the organization have focused on completing various kinds of market analysis studies and on monitoring study plots for cultivating various indigenous, marketable plants. Long term resident's lack of support and enthusiasm has frustrated people working with this organization. The reasons behind the reticence of many local people are many and complicated, but for the most part understandable. Many of them understand from personal experience that cultivating anything is risky and requires a lot of hard work, and that you are never guaranteed a stable market for your product. They also know that the examples of success that they are being shown or have witnessed involve operations that require a large capital investment that must be maintained.

This has happened in the same way that 'The Body Shop' has perhaps believed its own rhetoric while promoting its own pre-determined corporate objectives. The retail chains' founder and CEO declared that 'The Body Shop' stores could assist third world communities through 'trade NOT aid' by, 'creating a world without boundaries (Kaplan 1995).' But given the current advantages and disadvantages that third world

community's face, it may be more appropriate to ask, 'On whose terms is the business to be conducted?' rather than whether to give them money or business. In Graham County, an area that has experienced many of the same disadvantages as those faced by third world nations (Dunaway 1996), old locals feel as though outsiders who have spoken to them about jobs and conservation are doing so in order to meet goals and objectives totally unrelated to the concerns of wild harvesters. They feel as though they are either being asked to be complicit in the demise of their own identities, or being asked to trust and follow people who do not know as much about mountain life and ecology as they themselves do. This suspicion is not unwarranted given the history presented so far in Chapter Three.

This lack of credibility among mountain people that economic development initiatives and non-profits have to contend with is compounded by the fact that (also like 'The Body Shop') they often send mixed messages when promoting their objectives. For example, one local non-profit promotes itself by claiming that its goal is to, '...improve the lives of people in southern Appalachia' by developing new crops from native plants. Similar claims regarding various indigenous plants have been being made off and on by various groups since at least 1899 (Kain 1912). To date nobody has truly been successful at it or followed through on the research and development necessary to accomplish the task on a broad scale. Markets consistently change and outsiders repeatedly loose interest in the endeavor. This nonprofit presents their objectives and approach as being new and worth pursuing, but from the perspective of long term residents the ideas are not new, and are believed to be untenable.

In addition, the forms of work and labor that are most highly respected among most mountain people are those that involve persistent, physical hard labor. People who log, farm, work on construction jobs and who can operate heavy equipment are considered to be people who 'work for a living'. To date, representatives of the nonprofit in question are paid higher salaries (four times as much and more) than the average yearly income of local residents, and produce little or no observable results. Local residents do not understand what it is that the nonprofit actually accomplishes. When they are told that the nonprofit has received grants to conduct research with state universities, locals are unable to see how such research will actually help them, the lives that are supposed to be being improved. They ask, "Why wasn't the money spent in Graham County?"

Just as The Body Shop sends mixed and conflicting messages by encouraging people to consume products that they do not need while packaging them in reusable containers, and visualizing a 'world without boundaries' while simultaneously reinforcing lines of difference by marketing products based on ideas of exoticism, this local nonprofit and other programs promote 'wildcrafting' in Graham County as something that is ideal because it is already what people do, but then they turn around and tell people to do things differently, the way outsiders want them to do things. In the eyes of locals, this nonprofit is supposedly accumulating money in order to improve the lives of local people, but is then sending this money outside of the county or is using it to pay themselves a salary greater than most residents can imagine ever earning in one year.

It should be mentioned that my purpose here is not to question the legitimacy of these programs and institutions now operating in Graham County. I respect and admire

most of the work that has been completed to date and the people that have been associated with it. Rather, I feel it necessary to try and understand the current context from the perspective of the people who are ultimately supposed to benefit from these endeavors. Doing this also helps to develop a more complete understanding of how and why the idea of 'wildcrafting' has begun to be discussed in such a broad spectrum of contexts of late, and what this means to local people. It is also important to understand that wildcrafting is a co-opted notion that is being used by outsiders to valorize mountain people, culture and traditions in a way that undermines the value of wild harvesting for many of these individuals.

Sustainable economic development initiatives and research foundations actively sanitize the practice of harvesting nontimber forest products and turn it into a knowable, acceptable norm. By doing what they are doing they are also changing the meaning and significance of wild harvesting for traditional harvesters. Instead of being something that is culturally rich and complex it is becoming a regulated formula for making a living. The implications of this can be seen as being positive or negative in nature, or both. The active marketing of wild harvesting practices are making them accessible to new and growing numbers of people, but this process has had both good and bad consequences associated with it.

The Marketing of Wildcrafting

Over the course of the past six or seven years, conferences and workshops have been sponsored by nonprofit organizations and county extension agents that discuss wildcrafting as an economic alternative to tobacco farming, manufacturing jobs or the tourist industry. These programs have attracted the attention of nurseryman, garden club

members, horticulturalists, herbalists, and a variety of individuals who are interested in living alternative lifestyles in the Appalachian mountains. But very few long time residents or harvesters have attended these meetings. These workshops have instead promoted and increased public awareness regarding many native plants, how to cultivate them, how to process medicinal plants for various markets, and they have informed the general public as to how these plants can be used. In the meantime, the wants and needs of the few individuals who are experienced wild harvesters have either been ignored or not prioritized. In essence, such programs have increased the competition faced by wild harvesters while simultaneously silencing their concerns.

This is not to say that this has been done in either a malicious or calculated way, merely that it is a natural consequence of the way in which wildcrafting is being envisioned and essentialized as a consequence of 'selling' the concept to potential funders. Wildcrafting is now a category used to refer to a diverse set of people and practices. The North Carolina Natural Products Association, "A non-profit education and research organization supporting North Carolina's natural products community," hosted their first annual conference in October 2003. The meeting was titled, "Planting North Carolina's Medicinal Herb Economy," and included a talk titled, "Ethical Wild-harvesting and Plant Rescues," and one called, "Wildcrafting on Public Lands: Regulations and Conservation." Ila Hatter regularly conducts seminars on wildcrafting that focus on the identification, past uses and local folklore associated with various plants. Yellow Creek Botanical Institute (YCBI) has proposed a, "Graham County Economic Diversification Program," that includes establishing local co-operatives for producing such things as herbal teas, and an analytical laboratory for standardizing the

active compounds found in dietary supplements. The proposal is partially justified on the basis that it is culturally appropriate because it is encouraging an industry that is based on a local history of wild harvesting, and the current director of YCBI often uses the term wildcrafting to describe the organizations objectives to its board members and local residents. In addition, a small community group in Graham County called, “Smoky Mountains Native Plants Association,” is mostly comprised of recent immigrants to the area and has been working hard to create a value-added product that the group can market as being ‘wildcrafted’. The proposed product’s ingredients include ramps, ‘...traditionally used by Native Americans as a spring tonic.’ They purchase the ramps that they use from local people, some of whom used to be members of the organization, who are known harvesters.

As the term ‘wildcrafting’ is currently being used, it does not distinguish between retired professors who are growing medicinal mushrooms to supplement their retirement income, Cherokee grandmothers that take their grandchildren out to harvest wild greens in the spring as a tradition, old timers who sell ginseng to offset the cost of keeping hunting dogs, multigenerational mountain families that earn their living almost solely by pulling log moss, Latino migrant laborers that are dropped off in the woods and paid to pick galax leaves, and highly educated newcomers who want to wildcraft as a means of escaping the ‘rat race’ of city lifestyles. The way in which the ‘wildcrafting’ concept is being implemented by universities and development sponsors therefore obscures the issues of central concern to the people it was originally designed to empower, the people who were born and raised in the mountains who are unemployed and who do not want to move away from their homes.

As they are currently being visualized, sustainable economic development initiatives seek to create institutional structures that support and control the production of medicinal plants for a global market. Such structures and infrastructures require a systematic series of regulations and detailed monitoring systems that prioritize maintaining specified production levels. Such systems usually involve information pathways that are unidirectional. In other words, they run the risk of marginalizing their constituents and rendering them incapable of adapting to changing circumstances and market demands on their own. This is not what traditional harvesters are typically interested in. They want to be less dependent on outside institutions, not more dependent on them.

Current Herb Diggers

Wild harvesters in Graham County are primarily interested in questions of access. They want access to forest land, animals, plants and seed stock.

Well, rainy weathers one of the worst local problems collecting moss. And most of our national forest service roads and all of our timber mover roads are gated. You can't drive a vehicle in it. Most of the moss I personally collect, I have to carry about, approximately two miles to my vehicle... And now, with all these posted land we have now, that's created an additional problem. And up until a few year ago we still had quite a bit a land like in Graham County, that's maintained for timber lands. And the people that usually owned 'em, you didn't even have to go to ask for a permit, just for walking across it, something like that, you know. And, if you went to harvest something it was appropriate to go to asking, and I've never knowed 'em to turn anybody away. But they've sold these timber lands to development companies and businesses. And they divide it and put lots up for sale. I kinda joke, the best business anybody could get in to, the most profitable, is printing no trespassing signs. Or, a new one, 'your entering gated communities be prepared to turn around and go back.' I can't blame a lot of my, most of my problems on the forest service. A lot of it's just changes in society (Bill Elliot, born 1947).

Harvesters also want reliable relationships with herb buyers that they can trust. They want to be able to sell harvested material for an amount that will yield them a

reasonable amount per hour of labor, they want land managers to utilize maintenance strategies that encourage and maintain populations of marketable plants, and they want to feel as though the overall system is operating with a sense of fair play. One informant is fond of saying, "There is a difference between enforcing the law and making enemies." He feels as though many of those responsible for carrying out regulations do so in an arrogant manner and treat people poorly, and with little understanding of the difficulties that diggers and moss pullers face.

In Graham County the wage rate is an issue particularly for younger generations. Cozzo (1996) found this to be a critical factor among younger diggers around Boone, North Carolina as well. But more people seem to be continuing to harvest the more time consuming and difficult to process crude plant materials (such as cherry bark, slippery elm bark, and witch hazel) in Ashe County than in Graham County. This is probably partly because of the large number of herb dealers and warehouses that have historically been present in and around Boone. This area was centrally located amidst a variety of wild harvesting populations and had railway access to transport crude botanicals at a very early date relative to Graham County. And it is still easier for diggers in Ashe County to find a buyer for products other than ginseng and moss than it is for diggers in Graham County. So Boone may have retained a more specialized and long-term tradition of 'diggers'.

Another factor is that people in Graham County have become accustomed to relatively high wage rates over the course of the past fifty years. Employment opportunities have been short-lived and inconsistent among residents of the county, but loggers, heavy equipment operators, and construction jobs typically pay more per hour

than can be earned harvesting any nontimber forest product other than moss. Most harvesters would rather accept these forms of employment when they are available and collect unemployment during the off-season than work their fingers to the bone for very little money harvesting herbs, though they will sometimes supplement their regular incomes harvesting. Medicinal herbs are typically purchased by dealers for just a few dollars per pound, dry (See Figure 4.1) and are extremely time consuming to collect and process. Most harvesters in Graham County are not interested in collecting anything that is selling for less than \$14.00 per pound, dry (depending on how easy the material is to find) since their access to these resources has been steadily diminishing, and the time required to harvest increasing.

But regardless of whether potential harvesters always choose to harvest marketable plant materials, they believe that they have a right to have access to forest resources and they want these rights to be acknowledged and protected. Many white residents feel no less strongly about this than do Cherokee individuals. In fact, the degree of confrontation that the National Park Service (NPS) has faced among area residents has led park officials to use these beliefs of non-Cherokee as a reason for why the park has not always honored federal laws regarding the rights of Cherokee people (Park Assistant Superintendent, personal communication 2002). There are executive orders stipulating that Cherokee tribal members have the right to harvest and use certain plants from Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Park administrators say that they feel as though it is unfair or too complicated in some way to allow one group of people to harvest in the park based on historical precedents that pre-date the parks' formation and not another. (Though such a justification ignores the fact that there are federal laws and executive

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Current Market Demand & Price List

Today's date: *October 19, 2002*

ITEM	LBS.	PRICE	ITEM	LBS.	PRICE
BALM OF GILEAD BUDS			OREGON GRAPE ROOT		
BALMIONY LEAVES			PINK ROOT (TRUE)		
BAYBERRY ROOT BARK			PIPSISSEWA HERB		
BETH ROOT	500	3.00	PI EURISY (Sliced)		
BLACK COHOSH ROOT (Cut)	2,000	2.25	PRICKLEY ASH BARK (Southern)		
BLACK HAW BARK (Root or True)			QUEEN OF MEADOW ROOT (Cut)	1,000	1.00
BLACK INDIAN HEPIP ROOT			QUEENS DELIGHT ROOT		
BLACK ROOT (CULVERS)			RED CLOVER BLOSSOMS		
BLACKBERRY ROOT (Cut)			SARSAPARILLA ROOT (True)		
BLOOD ROOT	2,000	9.00	SASSAPARILLA LEAF		
BLUE COHOSH ROOT (Cut)	500	1.00	SASSAPARILLA ROOT BK (Natural)	500	2.50
BLUE FLAG ROOT			SASSAPARILLA ROOT BARK ROSSSED*	500	5.00
BLUE VERVAIN HERB			SAW PALMETTO BERRIES		
BONESSET HERB			SCULLCAP HERB (True Blue)		
BUCHWEED HERB			SENECA SNAKE ROOT		
BURDOCK ROOT			SKUNK CABBAGE ROOT (Sliced)		
CALAMUS ROOT-SWEET FLAG			SLIPPERY ELM BARK - Rossed Only*		
CASCARA BARK			SOL OMON SEAL ROOT	500	2.00
CATNIP HERB			SPIGNET ROOT	500	2.00
CLEAVERS HERB			SQUAW VINE HERB		
CRAMP BARK			STAR GRASS ROOT		
CRANESBILL ROOT			STAR GRUB ROOT - C LUTEUM	500	30.00
DANDELION ROOT			STONE ROOT	2,000	2.00
DEER TONGUE LEAF			SUMAC ROOT BARK		
FEVERFEW HERB (True)			SUMAC TREE BARK	2,000	.50
FIGWORT HERB			VIRGINIA SNAKE ROOT		
FRESH ROOT/HERBS	CALL-4-#		WALNUT HULLS - BLACK		
FRINGE TREE ROOT BARK			WHITE PINE BARK (Smooth Outer Bark)		
GERMANDER (PINK SCULLCAP)			WHITE WILLOW BARK		
GINSENG CULTIVATED**		MKT	WILD CHERRIES (DRIED)		
GINSENG WILD**		MKT	WILD CHERRY BARK THICK	2,000	.25
GOLDEN SEAL HERB			WILD CHERRY BARK THIN	2,000	1.00
GOLDEN SEAL ROOT			WILD GINGER ROOT		
INDIAN TURNIP ROOT (Sliced)			WILD HYDRANGEA ROOT	5,000	1.25
KANSAS SNAKE HERB			WILD INDIGO ROOT (B. Tinctoria)		
KANSAS SNAKE ROOT			WILD LETTUCE LEAVES		
LOBELIA HERB			WILD YAM ROOT	2,000	1.50
MAYPO HERB-PASSIONFLOWER HERB			WITCH HAZEL BARK	5,000	1.50
MISSOURI SNAKE HERB			WITCH HAZEL LEAF		
MISSOURI SNAKE ROOT			YELLOW DOCK ROOT		
MULLEIN LEAVES					

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Figure 4.1: Example of the type of list that herb dealers hand out to harvesters.

orders stating that the Cherokee have certain rights regarding resources found in the park that whites do not.)

Because of the way they have been used by park officials and other outsiders, key words like 'sustainable', 'environmentalist', and 'conservation' often trigger resentment among harvesters and creates a communication barrier between themselves and people who use and advocate for these ideas in conjunction with 'wildcrafting'. These words signify ideas and objectives that are owned by outsiders and that interfere with the agency of old locals. Such concepts have been used as excuses for not acknowledging harvester's needs and perceived rights.

As will be explained further in later chapters, to many locals environmentalists are rich people who have not experienced what it means to do 'real work' and who could not survive a day in the woods under rough circumstances. They are also people that old locals see as having the power to keep 'common mountain people' from getting by and who accomplish this by saying plants and animals should not be touched so that they, the rich people, can drive from Atlanta to see them if they wish. In order to ensure that this remains possible, mountain people believe that outsiders want them to refrain from eating ramps and wild turkey even if they are currently unemployed and have no other way of making a living. This is how mountain people typically perceive environmentalists and conservation agendas. This perception is problematic for sustainable economic development programs seeking to promote local participation. This language is often a large part of their promotional rhetoric and is often what funding organizations are looking for in grant proposals even though it has also been used in efforts to restrict the activities of many mountain people as well.

In addition, mountain people see many contradictions within the United States Forest Service (USFS). This is partly because many of them fail to distinguish between national forests, national park land, and North Carolina state forests. This means that the same rules and grievances are often applied interchangeably. For instance, someone who has purchased a collecting permit may wander onto national park land and feel as though they are doing so legally, or that the increase in undergrowth in mature forest settings in GSMNP may be blamed on the USFS land management policies. This is not because people literally do not know that there are differences, it is that in some contexts mountain people tend to think of these institutions collectively as simply 'the government'. For example, if I ask an individual a question about complaints they have had with the USFS, they will often respond with stories that involve GSMNP while blaming 'the government', not necessarily the USFS or GSMNP.

Mountain people are also skeptical of a lot of the justifications that they have heard for why they cannot do certain things on public land. Many arguments sound weak or not completely true from their perspective, so they do not trust what they hear. For instance, they are told that they are not allowed to hunt because wildlife populations need to be protected in order to maintain healthy forest habitats, but these animal populations must periodically be culled, and the increased undergrowth in many forests has decreased the amount of ginseng (they believe) and other herbaceous plants present. I continually hear complaints such as, 'common people' are forbidden to hunt bears in the park, but 'the government' pays outside people to come in and kill bears and other animals in order to maintain appropriate population sizes, even though there are many local people who are good hunters and who need jobs. Some believe that permits should simply be issued

because there are avid hunters that would hunt the animals for free. The money saved could then be used to do things like clear out the underbrush and administer controlled burns that would prevent accidental fires from becoming as intense and dangerous as those that have been experienced in recent years.

In the past Indians and white settlers had periodically burned forested areas for the purpose of hunting game and slash-and-burn agriculture (Arthur 1914, Davis 2000, Salstrom 1994). These fires burned quickly and cold because they prevented the build-up of deadwood and underbrush that causes fires to be damaging (burn intensely for a long period of time and become very hot) to forests today. Regular burning also encouraged the growth of many useful non-timber forest plants and helped control the population sizes of some insect pests like the boll weevil (Davis 2000). In contrast, the USFS has historically emphasized preventing forest fires without considering the ecological role of periodic burning for mountain farmers. Mastran and Lowerre (1983) reported that one of the biggest struggles that the early USFS had with locals regarded the use of fires. Small mountain farmers in areas with rough terrain were accustomed to burning their fields before they planted their crops in the spring and after the fall harvest in order to, "...clear brush, vines, and weeds, and to destroy insects, vermin, and snakes (Mastran and Lowerre 1983)." The ash produced by burning off brush from fallow fields and forested areas also temporarily enriched the soil before cultivation, which was necessary for people in remote areas that could neither afford or obtain access to modern fertilizers (Otto 1983, Otto and Anderson 1982). In some places small farmers in southern Appalachia still do this today.

Such practices are not a problem, and are in fact quite adaptive, when woodland areas are extensive and human populations are small. But in southern Appalachia a lot of area was either purchased by various forms of industry or turned into public lands during the early part of the twentieth century, and human populations grew. In 1920 60-75% of mountain farms typically remained forested, and only about half of the improved land on a given farm was cultivated (Otto 1983). But by 1930 only 60 percent of the land in southern Appalachia was owned by farm families, and farm sizes had shrunk from an average of 176 acres in 1880 to 83 acres in 1920 (Otto 1983).

Because of this; land was lying fallow for shorter periods of time, steep slopes were increasingly being cultivated, fallow fields were being grazed by farm livestock more intensively, productivity was dropping, erosion was increasing, and the rate of forest regeneration was decreasing (Otto 1983). Shortly after the Great Depression farms were therefore being abandoned and reformers were urging that mountain slopes not be cultivated and instead be converted to public forests (Otto 1983). In some cases these efforts caused conflict between local people who continued to farm using slash-and-burn techniques and the USFS. Mountain families simply had few options at their disposal, it was not necessarily that they were unconcerned about erosion or forest regeneration.

Many local people care about conservation. They just do not trust people they have seen who call themselves conservationists. Because there are so many people involved whom they do not have a reason to trust, harvesters have chosen not to participate in current wildcrafting discussions that push these objectives. I believe that the reasons for this stem from the language that is being used to promote sustainable economic development, the agendas that have been set, the way in which these agendas

have been presented, and from a failure to at least make a concerted, good faith effort to validate the beliefs and practices of diggers. Old locals are skeptical of plans to ensure peoples livelihoods via any form of farming or wild harvesting, but they are not unmotivated or apathetic.

Consequences of Outsiders Controlling Development

For generations now, outsiders have been making decisions that have had direct, and frequently undesirable, consequences from the standpoint of local residents in Graham County. Before and after 1900 Cherokee people have had to struggle with state and federal governments in order to retain ownership of their land. The timber barons sold a lot of land that they had logged to the United States government when they left the region during the late 1920's. Some of this land that they sold included Cherokee acreage that they had only purchased the timber rights for, not the land itself (Brenda Norville, personal communication 2002). This is in addition to using ecologically unsound logging practices that affected the entire county's ability to maintain productive homesteads.

After the timber barons left, agricultural policies that disenfranchised local farmers were implemented by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) during the 1930's. At the same time, many people were forcibly removed from their family's land in order to create Great Smoky Mountains National Park, national forest land, and to build dams that supplied energy to industries that did not employ Graham County residents. Some of these same families later had their tobacco allotments decreased or revoked. More recently, manufacturing industries that have established themselves in Graham County consistently leave to go where labor costs are cheaper for them. In

addition, locals have seen many natural resource policies implemented by experts that have been unsuccessful in terms of sustaining wild populations of medicinal plants. Now a lot of the money being generated for ‘sustainable economic development’ in the county is actually being spent outside of it. There is therefore no reason for old locals to believe that any outsider’s that come in to evaluate and propose solutions to their problems are actually capable of doing so.

At least initially, my actions as a graduate student were not distinguished very much from those of land speculators, the director of a local nonprofit that is focusing on developing alternative crops that can be grown in the county, wealthy retirees, or USFS botanists. All of these roles listed mark the individuals in them as being relatively well educated outsiders that do not really understand acceptable ways of getting things done in Graham County. These roles also mark those of us in them as people with expectations and ideas that conflict with those of old locals, and perhaps most offensively, as people who believe that we can fix problems by explaining to people how they should behave differently. Because this advice often includes doing things that we have not done ourselves, it is not believable and implies that we believe the problems at hand are a reflection of the shortcomings of local people, not systemic in nature. From the perspective of old locals, we are all part of the system that undermines the objectives of common mountain people by virtue of being educated outsiders who have never had to walk in their shoes. We are privileged, at least relatively speaking, and therefore cannot possibly understand the true nature of the difficulties being faced.

The extent to which the above beliefs are or are not true vary, but the point remains the same. Credibility must be established before respect can be earned and, if

necessary, changes made. The difficulty for activists has been that, what is seen as being legitimate in the eyes of one group is not always believable to another. One complaint that is consistently directed toward some initiatives is the use of ‘fancy talk’ that sounds like that of ‘a businessman’. To locals, this means that the individual speaking can’t know very much about the life of a farmer, despite the fact that they may have a degree in horticulture, botany, or forestry. People in Graham County do not trust the validity of a person’s opinion based on the level of education that they have acquired; they trust what they have seen someone actually accomplish. To date, they have not seen many proposed programs actually work; they have just witnessed a few outsiders profiting from the attempt.

In contrast, old locals do come to respect outsiders that mind their own business, work long, hard hours on their property gardening or farming, and who adapt to the ways in which things are typically done in and around the county. The couple that I often stay with while conducting research moved to the county in 1980 and are described as being ‘good people’ by those who know them, for instance. One woman has even commented to me that, ‘we need more outsiders like them.’ Other outsiders are described as being ‘strange’, or as being people who came to the mountains to get away from the kind of life that they have elsewhere, but then demand that things in Graham County work the same way that they do in the places they came from. This is believed to be particularly true of business people, ‘Florida people’, and economic development organization officials.

Characteristics that inspire skepticism among old locals appeal to many outsiders, however. Because this is the case, the programs and strategies that have been designed to attract ‘wildcrafters’ and to promote wildcrafting using ‘sustainable harvesting practices’

have drawn in outsiders, not old locals. The academics, graduate students, retirees, and new career seekers that have attended regional discussions and workshops are eager to hear the opinions of researchers. They have faith in people who can speak articulately and who dress professionally. They want and expect to hear the latest development jargon and to be exposed to new insights. They also believe it is worthwhile to spend money in order to be able to do this, and they tend to have the expendable income to do it. Traditional wild harvesters, on the other hand, do not typically have a lot of expendable income. They are not likely to pay to hear professors and other professionals speak about wild harvesting unless they are sure that they will get something specific out of the experience that will help them achieve their own goals.

The conferences and meetings where current research and project alternatives have been identified have therefore not tended to include old locals that harvest nontimber forest products. Examples include; 'Planting North Carolina's Medicinal Herb Economy' and 'Growing North Carolina's Natural Products Industry' conferences organized by the North Carolina Natural Products Association in 2003 and 2005, respectively, and Yellow Creek Botanical Institute's workshops titled, 'Growing Opportunities in Native Plants' in 2001 and 'Growing Opportunities in Non-timber Forest Production' in 2002. They have often been held one or more hours away from Graham County and have cost \$75.00 or more to register. In addition, the topics that have been chosen and the language that is used are often designed to attract the support of potential funding and development institutions, not to inspire the confidence of old school harvesters. Therefore, there are undoubtedly issues and problems associated with

wildcrafting that have yet to be identified. Those who have the most experience digging mountain herbs have yet to be fully engaged in the decision-making process.

Attempts to fill this void have been made. The director of one nonprofit that is active in Graham County, Yellow Creek Botanical Institute (YCBI), asked for the assistance of another, Center for Participatory Change (CPC), in order to facilitate the gathering of potential herb cultivators in the area. People who had experience harvesting and processing nontimber forest resources were asked to participate. The resulting group eventually became a local organization that is now known as the, 'Smoky Mountains Native Plants Association.' The group is a success in that it is a local venue in which to discuss issues associated with nontimber forest products and production. But problems have arisen because the objectives of the group were not clearly identified and defined before it was formally organized as a non-profit and began seeking funding for its projects.

YCBI primarily wanted to organize growers for a long term research and development program that might result in a new alternative crop, one that relied on one or more species indigenous to the mountains of western North Carolina. CPC's goal was to establish and empower a group whose interests revolved around native plants and to help them meet any objectives that the group collectively identified. What individual members ended up wanting to get out of the association has proven to be a matter of contention. As will be discussed at length in Chapter Seven, these combined differences have resulted in conflict.

The people who first met together were mostly old locals, all men, who were born and raised in or near Graham County. They had all supplemented their incomes

harvesting nontimber forest products at one time or another, and they all had experience cultivating gardens and had been involved in some type of farming at one time or another. Once the group began meeting regularly and advertising its existence, outsiders interested in native plants began to attend the meetings and eventually came to dominate group activities and discussions. These outsiders had very little experience, if any, with harvesting, and many of them were solely interested in finding new ways of generating incomes for themselves. A few outsiders also joined because they were interested in learning more about native plants as an avocation and wanted an opportunity to socialize in the community.

What has happened is that the outsiders, many of whom are new locals, have been more outspoken than the old locals and have either volunteered or been elected to be officers in the organization. They therefore began setting the agendas and dominating the discussions during regular meetings. Many of the members that had participated in the initial organizational meetings quit attending. The energies of the group are now focused on creating a value-added product based on local resources to market and sell, and on becoming a nonprofit organization so that they can apply for grant money more effectively. The people who joined because they wanted to learn more about native plants, share their experiences growing and harvesting nontimber forest products, or who were primarily interested in preserving local culture and community have for the most part quit attending the meetings. Many of these individuals became bored with long, repetitive business discussions and/or feel as though their own interests have been disregarded. Most of the old locals fall into this latter category.

Because this is the case, what began as an attempt to draw local people into current discussions about wildcrafting and wildcrafters has become a club composed largely of outsiders seeking out an alternative lifestyle. Old locals are still involved, but they are not setting the goals and objectives of the group. They are benefiting from the groups existence, but certain questions are still not being asked or addressed. Because of this, most old locals and like-minded individuals have ceased to be members of SMNPA and have formed their own group. This split has been partially do to SMNPA's failure to discuss such issues as who should or should not benefit from sustainable economic development programs designed to alleviate unemployment in southern Appalachia? Why? How and why have the unemployed become 'unemployed' in the first place? And, can local people gain autonomy and financial security by attempting to supply a global market with medicinal herbs or products? If so, who will benefit or not benefit and why? What are the needs and motivations of female wildcrafters? What are the needs of Cherokee wildcrafters, who are they, and what do they do? What are all of the different kinds of wildcrafting that are taking place? What non-commercial wildcrafting is taking place? How will commercial harvesting affect these activities? Under what circumstances? How will the wild populations of plants be managed and by whom? And, what kinds of insurance policies can be put in place to enable producers to adjust to environmental, economic, and market fluctuations if they do market their herbs and/or value-added products? Who will have the power to regulate wildcrafting locally, and under what circumstances? And perhaps most importantly, what are the operative power structures found within these systems and what are the implications of their presence?

We are therefore faced with the following situation. By the end of the 1990's the value of harvesting nontimber forest products was being debated by multiple and diverse parties with very different and sometimes conflicting agendas, and their collective objectives had become re-visioned as 'Wildcrafting' (Harnischfeger 2000, O'Brien and Flora 1992, Robbins 1999). This has meant that a traditionally private and somewhat secretive activity has become increasingly public.

Lost Opportunities

Though harvesting nontimber forest products has been a widely accepted and acknowledged activity in Graham County for generations, it was not rigorously documented or a matter of public concern until relatively recently. A curious outcome of current contestations has been that so-called wildcrafting practices have become both increasingly hidden and more public in nature. It has also meant that the idea of wildcrafting has been co-opted by a variety of outsiders who actively participate in discourse communities that dominate and set agenda's for future economic development in the county and region. These discourses include assumptions about the value of economic growth, what sustainable economic development is and means, and what it means to have a stable income and financial security. Ironically, these outsiders are not knowledgeable about and do not participate in a local culture of wild harvesting. Because of this, those with the most to gain or loose are not fully engaged in current dialogues. This means that critical opportunities are being lost.

By re-inventing 'Wildcrafting' as an activity to be managed by outsiders in order to achieve a set of objectives outlined by outsiders, for outsiders, county planners, nonprofits and developers may be undermining cultural traditions that could be used to

sustain both mountain people and mountain wildlife. If you sit and listen to older generations talking at Ronnie Mason's store during ginseng season, or swapping stories at the local farmer's market you will hear them sharing stories about changes they have seen in plant populations over the years, problems they have had digging ginseng, and successes and failures that they have had transplanting and growing ginseng and other herbs and shrubs. They have had experiences that outsiders have not. They have also seen a lot of policies and regulations fail to work and have ideas about why they were not effective.

Those who love to be out in the woods harvesting a wide range of nontimber forest products are becoming few and far between, but by not engaging them we are losing an opportunity that will not exist for very much longer. There is currently an opportunity to cultivate the expertise of people who could develop a vested interest in maintaining the wild populations of plants on which a sustainable economic development program will ultimately depend. This would not only benefit the ecology of Graham County, it would help inspire a sense of pride and purpose in the Cherokee and white old locals that do not always see a future for themselves as specifically mountain people.

As things currently stand, the deployment of wildcrafting by outsiders represents a mobilization of power similar to that exerted by the lumber barons and the Tennessee Valley Authority in earlier decades. Outsiders who believe that they can benefit from the advice of professional and academic 'experts', whose identity is not threatened by participating in dominant discourses, and who can effectively manipulate these discourses to their own advantage have done so. They have stepped in and created jobs and opportunities for themselves because they have been able to identify what it is that

funding agencies want to hear. Their movements have then largely been guided by the agendas of these institutions.

Old locals who have been wild harvesting for years have no reason to have faith in the advice of these experts and do not understand how funding programs operate. They therefore have little means of protecting their own interests or taking an active role in setting policy objectives. As with previous forms of development, they may end up having some opportunities for employment, but they continue to lose autonomy. Because of this, they are less able to make choices that are best suited to the long term maintenance of their own personal priorities than many outsiders are.

Being able to effectively manipulate and transmit dominant discourses is one mechanism of power, being able to determine what are pertinent questions and issues to be addressed is another. Wild harvesters have been invited to comment on ideas that others have proposed, but they have so far been unable to re-define the agendas that have been set by larger institutions. They have been asked things like, 'Would you benefit from access to a co-operative herb processing structure?', but have not been told where and how they can be assured of materials to process, or had it explained to them how much a co-op would cost or how it would be run. Experience has taught them that long term time and financial commitments are not conducive to life in the mountains. They need to be able to be diversified and grab opportunities to earn money as they come in case one project does not work out. Low capital investments based on simple structures and technologies are therefore believed to be best. To get by in the mountains, they say, "...you can't put all your eggs in one basket."

CHAPTER 5
ROOT DIGGING, MOSS PULLING AND HERB GATHERING: CHANGING
MARKETS AND PRACTICES

In Chapter Four I presented an argument that the notion of ‘Wildcrafting’ is a product of outsiders, people not born and raised in western North Carolina. Rather than being an authentic description of a traditional way of life, it is a nostalgic vision of a largely invented past, a concept being used to guide future economic development, and a marketing tool. The people of Southern Appalachia’s past were not comprised of a population of so-called wildcrafters. Many of those families who have lived in these mountains over the past 100 or more years *were* part-time diggers and herbers, but this was something that most people did. Locally there was not a specific term used to label people who harvested wild forest plants because it was an activity that was so common. People would just say they were going out to dig roots or “get some herbs”. As one person put it, “It used to be so common we just kinda called it ‘making a living’, part of making a living, you know, stuff like that (Bill Elliot, born 1947).” Labeling harvesters was only useful to people in the natural plant products industry, such as herb buyers and dealers for pharmaceutical companies. Today people who live in Graham County, North Carolina and who harvest plants from the wild do so either for non-economic reasons, or are known locally as being diggers, mossers, or both. The question that I am addressing in this chapter is, “Who are they?” What does it mean to be a ‘digger’, and how does

digging, mossaing, or herbing compare to being a *wildcrafter*? Culturally, socially and economically speaking, what is in a name?

When people in the herb industry, conservationists, or law enforcement talk about ‘diggers’ they are speaking as though the people who can be labeled ‘diggers’ (or as poachers) are more alike than they are different. This, I suggest, is far from true.

Furthermore, I suggest that the fact that widespread and pervasive generalizations have been made regarding people who harvest plants from the wild has contributed to an institutional inability to monitor harvesting practices constructively. In turn, this has resulted in attitudes and the adoption of policies that are not effective. This dynamic will be considered at length in Chapter Six. In this chapter I will argue that it is not so much the presence of diggers and a tradition of wild harvesting that makes this region unique, but rather their extreme diversity that challenges our ability to define, monitor, control, motivate, and most importantly *understand* such individuals. Understanding these individuals would bring with it the potential to establish a positive cycle of policies, interactions, and relationships.

Wild harvesting in and of itself is not a new or rare concept. Even in the most urban and contemporary of environments it is possible to find individuals who have picked wild blackberries or raspberries, hunted for morel mushrooms, or woven baskets out of honeysuckle vines. What is unique about Graham County is that there are a large percentage of residents who either participate in wild harvesting activities or have in the past, and the fact that there is a large amount of undeveloped land present here. But this is changing. The percentage of individuals in given communities who have collected and processed wild plants, especially for sale, and the quantity of these resources that are

readily available to harvest, are both diminishing. The number of things that motivate individuals to go out and harvest materials from relatively undeveloped areas seems to be decreasing as well. What makes Graham County a focal point in discussions pertaining to wildcrafting in North Carolina is its political context, the number of marketable raw materials that can be harvested there, and the number of people who are interested in harvesting forest resources relative to other parts of the country for both economic and symbolic reasons.

I believe it will be useful to temporarily set aside the labels wildcrafter, digger, herber, harvester, and mosser and briefly consider a number of individuals who use wild plants today, and what they use them for. In many cases people who were born and raised in or near Graham County occasionally use a variety of wild plants, but are not labeled by either locals or outsiders as being any of the aforementioned things. They are just ‘mountain people’, though their numbers are greater than that of commercial harvesters, and the overall impact that they have on regional resources is most likely significant. Yet their activities and motivations go largely unrecognized. Looking at a range of activities, some of which are commercial in nature, some of which are not, will help us to outline the complex and potentially interdependent relationships that exist between people and plants in this part of the world. Doing this will also help alleviate some of the misunderstandings that have developed from assuming that current behaviors are inappropriate attempts to hang on to out-dated traditions that are inherently unsustainable, as opposed to being human responses and adaptations to change.

People in Graham County who harvest one or more species of nontimber forest plants from the wild may be young, old, male or female, Cherokee or white. In some

parts of western North Carolina they may even be Latino. These individuals may be ‘experts’ in the sense that they have been harvesting wild plants all of their lives and were taught how at an early age by a family member or a family friend, or they may be beginners who are self-taught. A characteristic I have noted that unites all of those harvesters that I have interviewed who I would consider to be ‘expert’ harvesters is that they were all out in the woods harvesting between the ages of about 8 and 25.

Diverse Motivations and Experiences

Consider Viola Laughtry (born 1941), for instance. Viola is a woman who is now in her early sixties. She lives in a different house, but on the same piece of land she lived on when she was growing up. A neighbor described her mother as being, “...a woman who walked into the creek (the valley known as Yellow Creek) barefoot one day, got married, and then never left the mountain (Viola’s family’s land).” Her father, ‘D’ Millsap, was known as a man who was capable, and who loved being out in the woods until the day he died. Viola’s family lived on the same piece of land the entire time she was growing up. They grew most of their own food, her father picked up odd jobs and harvested and sold a lot of nontimber forest products such as locust posts, tan-bark, and herbs. Her mother spent a lot of her time in the woods as well.

Viola’s mother, Eudora Millsap, is known in the county (Yellow Creek) as being the most knowledgeable person around when it comes to harvesting, growing, and using mountain herbs.

Well, the Indians, most of them knew, you know, all about herbs. And this woman that lived on Yellow Creek – she’s in a rest home now, over at Cherokee – D Millsaps’s wife, and she had a herb garden. It had all kinda herbs! And she would send me little packages of dried herbs, tied in cellophane. But I couldn’t, I didn’t know what they were, just sage and rosemary, and a few like that. But she had all kinds (Mabel Orr, born 1905)!

Eudora's two daughters Rena and Viola have followed in her footsteps. Of all of the people that I had the opportunity to interview, Viola listed more plants that she had collected and used than anyone else, and pointed out many of them to me on her property. She loves describing how to prepare such things as what she calls Poke, Speckled John, Lancey Britches, Creek Grapes and Indian Collards. Both she and her sister, Rena Williams, developed a great love for being out in the woods and using forest plants while going out with their parents, especially their father, to harvest. Many of the plants that they would find when they were growing up they carried home to transplant in suitable places nearer to home. These plants would sometimes just be enjoyed for their smell or pleasant appearance, others were used to create a ready supply of medicine or food for household use. Some species were also transplanted in order to establish a healthy population that could be readily collected and sold if the family ever needed money for things like school shoes.

Viola's family produced almost everything that they needed on their own land. Her father sometimes left for short periods of time to log or to work at Fontana Village for wages, but Viola did not leave the creek for any significant amount of time until after she got married. For the past few years she has worked full-time at American Uniforms in Robbinsville, about 20 miles away from where she lives in Yellow Creek. She says that she is looking forward to retiring so that she can choose to, "...come up here and never step foot off the mountain." Viola has spent a lot of time working on her family genealogy and keeping a journal about her memories growing up, and how to prepare and grow the plants that she uses, or remembers her father and mother using. She says, "...it

is important not to forget because this is how we survived!” She is very interested in teaching others, particularly her daughters, about what she knows.

In contrast, Iva Rattler (born 1930), a Cherokee woman in her seventies, spent very little time harvesting or preparing wild plants when she was growing up. Iva and her sister Lois began attending Snowbird Day school when they were seven or eight years old. Then, in 1944 Iva left for boarding school fifty miles away on the Qualla Boundary reservation. At that time Iva would have been about 14 years old. This is the age at which many white children whose families remained in and around Graham County were going out in the woods with their father, uncle or other family member. This is when they learned to seriously hunt and harvest wild game and nontimber forest products for food, medicine, or sale.

In addition to not being with her family in Graham County during these formative years, the economic life of Iva’s family was a little different than that of Viola’s. Both of Iva’s parents relied primarily on earning cash in order to provide for their family, and less on things that they produced themselves on their own land. Her mother earned money selling things out of her home that she ordered out of a catalog, her father spent most of his adult years working at a gas station in town, and for a while at a little shop that made things out of dogwood. This being the case, they did not have time to be out in the woods harvesting wild foods and products as frequently as Viola’s parents did. Iva’s family had a garden and some livestock, and they sometimes ate wild foods when they happened across some while out doing other things, but she does not remember her mother or father ever selling any nontimber forest products. She believes that her father

sold some wood, locust posts possibly, at one time or another, but she has no recollection of her family digging and selling such things as furs or ginseng.

Iva was born and raised in Snowbird and, except for the time during which she was away at boarding school, has lived in Graham County all of her life. Growing up, Cherokee was her primary language. As Iva puts it, she was ‘full Cherokee’ before she had to go away to Cherokee for school. Before this time she had spoken no English. But she does not know and use wild plants the way that Viola, a white woman, does. She has memories of her mother, and especially her father, harvesting various plants and barks to treat illnesses or to eat, but she does not remember either of her parents selling them. “You don’t sell your medicine,” she says. This is a common belief among Cherokee people who consider themselves to be ‘traditional’. Tribal members who are spoken of as being traditionally minded are those who follow more of the old ways, beliefs, and tenets of the Cherokee tribe relative to non-traditionals.

Iva’s Cherokee roots are very important to her. She is in a dance group and is an active participant and organizer of ‘Fading Voices’, an annual event in Snowbird that celebrates Cherokee culture, craftsmanship and traditions. She has also spent the past several years working as one of the caretakers of the Junaluska Museum in Robbinsville. Her job there has involved speaking to school children about Chief Junaluska and Cherokee history, helping to run the museum’s office, and helping put together a ‘medicine trail’. This trail is intended to be used for interpretive purposes. It is a path along which plants that have been historically important to the Cherokee people can be planted, pointed out and discussed. These experiences, combined with her memories of her early childhood, have helped her to learn a lot about plants that grow in the mountains

and Cherokee uses for them. But it is important to recognize that this knowledge is qualitatively different than that of Viola's, if no less valuable. Both of these two individuals consider mountain plants to be an important component of their heritage, but their respective experiences are very different. Because of this, one of them considers wild harvesting to be a core part of her identity while the other does not.

Iva is interested in growing medicinals and other mountain plants near her home, and eats wild greens when people bring them to her, but she does not make time to harvest them herself. She says that both she and her mother were too busy working outside of the home and raising their children to be able to spend time in the forest hunting plants to sell and/or eat. Iva is also the youngest of several children. Her parents probably had even less time to spend with her out in the woods than they did with her siblings. Viola, on the other hand, had a mother and father who both spent most of their time working in or around their home, and frequently in the forest. The nontimber forest plants that they collected were primarily harvested for home use, but if time allowed, her parents, especially her father, would also dig things like Dock root to sell. As an adult, Viola herself has occasionally gone out to hunt ginseng and sell it if time allowed, or if there was a particular financial need. She harvests wild foods like persimmons and creek grapes every year. She also has a passion for wild flowers and encourages and transplants patches of them around her home. In addition, she maintains populations of plants that she does not take people to see because she wants to try and keep people from stealing the plants in them. Viola only harvests a little bit, if any, from these beds at any given time.

Iva, a Cherokee woman, will not hesitate to use certain plants if she knows how to prepare them and they are brought to her, but she is not interested in digging or selling nontimber forest products of any kind. In addition to having beliefs that prohibit her from selling medicinal plants in particular, she does not have a craving to spend her time hiking in the woods seeking them out. She has never spent much time digging, even when she was a child and her family was producing much of their own food. This is very different from Viola's experiences. Viola spends as much of her time as possible 'on the mountain' where she likes to garden and wander out in the woods. She likes to leave work and get home as quickly as possible so that she can change clothes, get outside, and teach her granddaughter some of the things she knows. When Viola was the age that Iva was when she had to go away to boarding school, she was frequently going out in the woods with her parents. When she was not in school herself, she was home learning how to hunt, dig, prepare, and use a variety of nontimber forest products. Most importantly, she seems to be proud of having had to do these things and does not seem to have ever been ashamed of such skills. There are many individuals in the mountains that have not learned certain skills from their parents because they have not wanted to be perceived as being either backwards or poor, and because wage labor, when it was available, was preferable. Viola firmly embraces these skills and believes that being able to live off of the land is an important part of her heritage.

In short, Viola learned and loves to do things that Iva does not. Iva values her heritage, and eats specific traditional Cherokee foods at certain times of the year, but for her, being a mountain woman does not entail digging or gathering nontimber forest products to use or sell. But despite these differences, both of these women have an ethic

regarding the use of forest plants. Iva is ideologically opposed to selling nontimber forest products based on traditional Cherokee principles, Viola is open to selling many wild plants, but also maintains healthy populations of the plants that she has sold, and believes that she behaves in such a way that allows both her and the plant population's needs to be met. This is typical of many people who are their age or older, or who are experienced, expert harvesters.

Marvin Grindstaff's (born 1938) grandfather moved to Beech Creek in Graham County from Yancey County in the 1800's. Though a quiet place today, historically Beech Creek was famous for its 'liquor' (moonshine) and for being 'rough'. Marvin has never dug many plants to make medicine out of, though he remembers some home remedies being used on him when he was growing up. But he has dug ramps to eat as far back as he can remember. He and his wife Frances (born 1943) are in their early sixties and were both born and raised in Graham County. They grew up going out every year to dig ramps and to hunt for morel mushrooms (they call them 'morals'). They say that they eat a lot of both when they can get them. Frances has recently lost most of her vision and no longer goes out into the woods, but Marvin still gets out whenever he can.

In addition to getting out into the woods to hunt ramps and 'morals' to eat, Marvin has dug a lot of ginseng, bloodroot and lady slippers to sell during his life. In fact, he would be considered by many locals to be a digger, or to have been one at one time. This suggests that he has spent a lot of time doing it, that he is considered to be experienced at digging, and that he has sold some of what he has harvested. It does not suggest that he has earned the bulk of his living harvesting. This is an important distinction for sustainable economic development initiatives focusing on marketable plant

products to understand. Many development initiatives treat harvesting as solely an economic activity that can be made more profitable by improving digger's efficiency and identifying more markets for their product. But Marvin considers it to be more than that, and he is disturbed by many harvesting practices today. A lot of older harvesters dig roots and pull moss only when income is needed for basic necessities, regardless of whether there is a market for their product during other times. They are not interested solely in accumulating capital.

Marvin's uncle began taking him out and teaching him how to hunt ginseng when he was eight or ten years old. He complained to me that, "...back then you weren't allowed to dig until it was yellow and the berries were red." He said that his uncle would not let him dig three pronged ginseng plants either. Now, he says, a lot of younger people are digging ginseng too early and when the seeds are still green. Marvin will dig a root if he happens to accidentally run across one and then transplant it, but he waits until late September and early October to dig ginseng to sell. He also lamented that people dig three pronged (plants that have only three compound leaves on them) ginseng plants because the law states that it is legal to do so, but that a lot of ginseng plants with three prongs have only three leaflets on each prong and are therefore still too young to dig. He believes that individual plants are not truly mature until they have at least three prongs, each one containing five leaflets per prong, like the prongs of older ginseng plants do. Another thing that seems to separate Marvin from many younger diggers is that he has pulled and sold very little moss during his life. The market for log moss seems to be a fairly recent development in Graham County relative to other areas of western North

Carolina. People in the county were not pulling moss to sell until the late 1960's or early 1970's.

Marvin and Frances have lived on their present home site for all of their married lives. Though they have both pursued wage labor for various periods of time, they have been able to stay in Graham County. For much of this time Marvin primarily stayed on their land growing tobacco. Frances worked for several years before she and Marvin married, then, after her children were in school she worked in Robbinsville at Burlington's furniture manufacturing plant for eleven years. She and Marvin also sold fence posts, locust stakes, and lumber, among other things. They chose to find a way to get by without having to leave the county. However, their primary means of making a living has never been 'digging'. Despite Marvin's love for being outside in the woods, neither of them chose to dig and/or sell as many plants as some people did when they were very young. This was because, despite being very difficult, growing tobacco and earning wage labor was easier and garnered them more money per hour than digging would have, and because they preferred going to the doctor over relying on home remedies. For them, harvesting nontimber forest products to sell was just an insurance policy during times of need.

This is not unlike the experience of John Jenkins (born 1951) who lives about 10 miles away on Yellow Branch. He has supported his family mainly by logging and sawing lumber, but is always supplementing his income by doing things like collecting dogwood seeds for a large grower and seed company, and growing boxwood plants from cuttings and selling them to large scale growers.

...it's just a something to supplement my income when work gets slow. We try to find something to do that we can pick up a few dollars at, and most of the time

that's the only reason I dig any kinda herbs or gather moss. And I've not gathered very much moss in a long time. I have gathered it, but as far as catching spring lizards to sell – I haven't done that in probably 15, 20 years. But digging bloodroot, and ginseng, I still do some of that.”

He grew up digging ginseng and still does on occasion for fun, but not to make money. According to John, finding a patch or a large plant of ginseng gives you a feeling, ‘sorta a thrill, like when you catch a fish.’ It is fun. It is not worth the time it takes to dig it for money, he says, because people have ‘dug it all out.’ They get paid so much for what they do find that they, “...don't appreciate things,” so they don't maintain plants and replant the seeds that they find. In contrast, John also says that,

“I know a lot of them that is even buying seed to replant, to make it more plentiful. They take it and then just plant it as they go, different places where they find sang grows good they'll replant so they'll have more sang years later to go back to, or whoever finds it.”

There are only two families that I know to be earning a living in Graham County solely by harvesting and selling nontimber forest products. Whenever I asked anyone how many people in Graham County they thought were making a living primarily by selling or processing wild plants other than trees, they either said that they did not know of any, or that they thought one or two families on Mill Creek and/or on Yellow Creek were able to do this. Almost everyone I met that had been born and raised in Graham County and had remained in the county for most of their adult lives has dug ginseng at one time or another, but they have done this primarily for sport. Most people do not even bother selling what they find, or if they do it is only when the price being offered for it is particularly high. A few others are known to arrange to have time off of work during the fall specifically to dig ginseng and sell it. But it is rare to find anyone that has dug and sold anything other than ginseng or moss.

People who are particularly good at hunting ginseng and work at it full time during ginseng season are usually able to dig between five and twelve pounds of dry ginseng, which would be between 15 and 36 pounds of green ginseng. During the past eight years such people could easily earn between \$1,000 and \$3,000 with these amounts (Ronnie Mason and Bill Elliot personal communication 2002). For some individuals this is just a fun supplement to their regular incomes, a means of obtaining extras like a new TV or new hunting gear. But a few people feel as though they need this extra income. According to Ronnie Mason, a local dealer, there are older people who rely on this income to supplement their social security and who would suffer without it.

Apparently, few people that dig ginseng actually make any money off of it during any given year. Of those that do go out hunting ginseng and that plan to sell it, most do not earn more than \$200 or \$300. Digging 'sang' is just a fun past time for them. One informant described hunting ginseng as, 'A poor mans sport,' because family's can go out and do it together without spending a lot of money since hunting ginseng does not require any specialized equipment. However, this has changed somewhat since permit regulations have changed in recent years. It used to be that the people living in one household could all dig on the same permit, now each individual family member must have their own. This makes hunting ginseng legally cost prohibitive for some families.

Full-time Harvesters

I have only identified and spoken to people in two families that earn a living primarily through wild harvesting. One of them lives on Yellow Creek, the other on Mill Creek, as my conversations with various local people had suggested. Both of them are small, nuclear families in which the husband does most of the collecting. Before they

had children their wives sometimes went out with them as well, and in the case of the family in which the children are old enough, the wife and two children frequently go out with their father on weekends, especially during ginseng season. The entire family seems to really enjoy participating, and all help with the processing of the harvested materials.

Both families are relatively young, are parents who are in their late twenties and early thirties, and only 'trade' (sell) moss and ginseng in any quantity. Mitch and Deidra Williams have only been harvesting as a primary means of earning a living for the past five or six years. Lee and Shannon Elliot have never done much else. Lee's father, Bill Elliot, began taking him out to hunt ginseng when he was just five years old. The first time that Mitch went out to hunt ginseng was when he was about 11 years old, but his dad took him out with him to pull moss for the first time when he was only five or six.

Both Mitch and Lee come from families that stayed in Graham County for most of their lives and had fathers that regularly harvested nontimber forest products of one kind or another. Mitch said that his father only pulled moss, he did not dig ginseng to sell, because the price being offered for ginseng was too low to make it worth bothering with when he was growing up. Bill Elliot, Lee's dad, seems to have done a fair amount of both, plus a multitude of other things like carving pens out of dead wood, rebuilding a log cabin, and making rustic furniture to sell.

Mitch did not decide to start pulling moss full-time himself until after a lot of logging in the region was put under a moratorium due to concerns about the loss of habitat for the Indiana Bat, and other land management issues regarding the logging industry in western North Carolina. Until this time he was a logger and could earn a decent living for his family. Like a number of families in Marvin and Frances's

generation, they do not want to leave the area and seek to find ways to earn a decent living. So Mitch resorted to pulling moss the way that his father had in order to support his family. Mitch told me that a lot of other loggers began pulling moss at the same time that he did, and for the same reasons. Now he earns more money pulling moss than he did when he was logging, so he has chosen not to return to his former trade. However, Mitch and Deidra stressed that most people can't choose to do what they do because you can only get by earning a living wild harvesting if you, '...don't have bills.' In other words, only people whose house and land are completely paid for and who do not have any debt can make it. They told me that they only knew of one or two other people who have been able to do what they do, and that most people who dig or pull moss do so in addition to some form of wage labor.

Mitch also used to collect bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*), and Mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*), but he says that there is no money in these things now so he quit. After the price being offered for ginseng shot up during the 1990's he began digging some ginseng as well. His wife Deidra had never hunted it before, but he gave her the top of a plant to carry around with her so that she could help him dig it. According to Mitch, Deidra, "...didn't know nothing (about harvesting nontimber forest products) till she met me."

They still rely primarily on moss, but if the price being offered for ginseng is high enough they will dig it as well. If prices remain low during any given year, they do not hunt ginseng full time, but will dig live plants and transplant them near their house if they happen to run across a good specimen while they are out pulling moss. Managing a population of ginseng near their home allows them to let the roots they have dug increase

in weight and the plants to produce offspring. They can then afford to wait to sell their roots until ginseng prices rise to four or five hundred dollars a dry pound. Sometimes they are more interested in potential long term benefits than they are in immediate gain. They will also transplant roots if they have only dug a small quantity, or if a root looks as though it will be 'too small' to bother selling after it is dry.

Lee is in a similar situation. The trailer and land that he and his family live on are paid for, he carries no debt, and so his family's living expenses remain relatively small. This allows them to be somewhat flexible about when and how he and his wife earn their living. Lee has never been formally employed. He often works long, hard hours pulling moss, digging ginseng, or working around his home, but he becomes uncomfortable being inside for too long at a stretch or having to be around a lot of people. He is more comfortable being on his own out in the woods. Sometimes his father or his wife will accompany him. Like Mitch, Lee usually only bothers to harvest ginseng and moss, but moss pulling is what pays his bills. The two to three thousand dollars that he earns during years in which he digs ginseng pays for 'extras' like a new stereo or television. Some years he does not seriously hunt for ginseng at all and focuses solely on moss. He will only dig ginseng if he believes that it will be cost effective for him to do so. He might choose to go out with his father or his son for an afternoon and look for it just for the sake of enjoying some time with them in the woods, but not usually to sell. Lee's wife Shannon works when opportunities arise and do not conflict with taking care of their two small children, but most of their needs are met by Lee's income pulling moss.

Lee, Mitch, and other individuals that I have interviewed that were brought up in families that taught them how to wild harvest are all aware of behaviors that could be

described as being sustainable, or that promote healthy plant populations. Regardless of whether they were taught for reasons that had to do with recreation, use, or personal income, they are all aware of certain precepts or ethics that older generations of mountain people share. It is possible that they do not always follow the guidelines that have been passed down to them, but they are definitely able to articulate them. Mitch and Lee also share a certain degree of discipline that many people their age or younger lack.

For instance, Mitch claims that he does not pack out any of the ginseng berries that he finds, but pushes them into the hole he produces digging out the plant's root. Doing this could potentially help the species regeneration rate by loosening the dirt and making sure that the seed is in contact with the soil. This also suggests that Mitch shares a belief held by many older harvesters that ginseng is not replenishing itself today to the degree that it once did.

...one problem I think is, today, of the herbs not a replenishing theyself, is that when the seeds fall they don't get to the soil. Several years ago they burnt the forest (periodically). Before the leaves got so thick, such a build up on the floor of the forest, and then the seeds could get down to the earth to germinate and come up. But the leaves works as a preservative, seeds may lay there three or four years before they come up. And then they have a bigger possibility for the birds and the mice, and for 'em to just lay the re and decay before they germinate and come up (John Jenkins, born 1951).

Mitch also says that he never digs ginseng out of season because if you dig a plant too early it will not have put out seeds yet. Furthermore, he believes that if you dig ginseng out of season it will not weigh as much as it would otherwise. Buyers have told me that digging ginseng too early results in roots that are 'sappy' (wet and pliable and not worth much). These kinds of understandings suggest attitudes that are potentially practical, insightful, and sustainable. Lee, Mitch, and others like them share other behaviors that show them to be disciplined and practical when it comes to wild harvesting

as well. They reflect aspects of a tradition that older people describe as being from a time past.

Though clearly motivated primarily by economic reasons, particularly when harvesting moss, they are willing and able to plan for long range benefits as opposed to short term gains. A quality that buyers suggest is not always true of many younger diggers. Both Lee and Mitch sell their product dry, and package it carefully whether it is ginseng or moss. They seem to have also taken the time to develop relationships with particular buyers. Some diggers hunt ginseng and then try to sell it immediately instead of drying it first, despite the fact that doing this does not bring them the best price for their product. Both diggers and buyers have told me that you do not get as much money out of ginseng this way because when you sell the roots green you are paid a rate based on an assumption that three pounds of green ginseng equals about one pound dry. But it is believed that if you dry it yourself, you will generally end up with a little more than one pound of dry ginseng after you process three pounds of green. Several diggers have said that they have experimented and found this to be true. It is also true that buyers typically prefer handling already dried roots and are therefore more apt to want to do business with, and offer better prices to, those individuals who are regular suppliers and that do a good job of processing the materials themselves. Particularly in the ginseng business, the cleaner your roots are, and the more carefully they have been handled, the better the price you will get for it. Since processing roots requires the digger to invest a significant amount of time and effort, and involves a significant amount of experience and skill, it is only the more patient and disciplined individuals who tend to do this.

A New Generation of Diggers

More recent, and frequently younger, diggers are likely to be motivated to dig ginseng only when the prices being offered for it are exceptionally high and they want to buy something like a new truck. They often fail to clean and dry their product. Such individuals are frequently turned away by buyers. Others dry their product incorrectly and ruin the marketability of the material. More times than not such individuals are either not from the area, or else have parents that did not pass on a tradition of wild harvesting to them. Even those who are avid hunters of wild game and love to be out in the woods have not always learned anything about nontimber forest plants, their potential uses, or how to process them.

This brings us back to the idea that people who were either away from the mountains between the ages of 8 and 25, or who had parents that did not teach them how to find and process nontimber forest products, have little practical knowledge of mountain plants and their uses. This also implies that such individuals have not been wild harvesting for long enough to recognize significant changes in various plant populations that have occurred in the region. Neither have they benefited from years of experience, or in many cases that of an instructor. One expert harvester told me that he believed that it had taken him 15 years of digging ginseng before he felt that he himself had become good at it. Interestingly, when I asked this individual whether he thought ginseng populations were decreasing he responded, "...looks to me like we have as much, even possible a little more ginseng than we did twenty year ago. And I think we have more, but it could be because I've learned the best areas for it to grow in, that I'm

just actually finding more than I did twenty year ago (Bill Elliot, born 1947).” Also according to Bill,

...just to be basically honest, what individuals I do see, of the younger generation I call ‘em, not my generation, is a more callous. They’re not as responsible. And it just, they don’t take it like it was actually that much a part of their lifestyle or heritage or whatever, you know. And the income opportunity is not there. They don’t want to be involved that much in it. And – a lot of times – if there was a market for it I would dig some quantities of other herbs. Like I mentioned to you earlier about the cohosh, you know. If things woulda work out right where I could make minimum wage or a little more.

There is therefore little reason to expect that younger diggers would know how to behave in ways that would benefit wild plant populations or their own long term interests.

This is a potential problem that is compounded by the fact that, in general, people in Graham County are strongly opposed to ‘environmental people.’ Historically, people have lost jobs and the local community has suffered greatly when conservationists and environmentalists have influenced policy in and around Graham County. What is salient to locals regarding ‘environmental people’ is that they are outsiders who have come in and cost them their jobs and then in some cases left a mess for locals to clean up. People regard these circumstances with a resentment that renders them incapable of listening to what such people have to say, though - importantly - locals do not inherently disagree with the idea behind conservation once it is explained to them in ways that address their own concerns.

Many local families have survived difficult times during which they have had to be resourceful and careful with what they had. Because my research has revolved around the use of forest resources I am frequently asked if I am an environmentalist. I typically respond with a question myself, such as, “Well, if you are asking me if I think it is important to understand how to use forest plants in a way that makes sure they are there

for our children to use in the future, then yes.” On more than one occasion this response was met with a hard stare and a short pause, then a statement something along the lines of, “...well then, if that’s what it means to be an environmentalist, I guess I’m one too...” Others will not go so far as to consider that they themselves might be labeled as an environmentalist, but will concede that they are worried about many of the changes that they have seen in their environment over the past few decades. Or make comments such as,

Well it would be nice if enough was left so that some of the grandchildren some day 50, 60, 70 years from now might enjoy going to the woods and probably thrill ‘em to death to see a bunch. But I imagine that the way it’s going now there’s not gonna be any. If you don’t have it yourself. But...I’ll say there’s probably places in the park that there’s still ginseng beds. Yep, big ones. And that’s good (Viola Laughtry, born 1941).

Here are the responses that I got from two people when I asked them what environmental people were like.

...the true environmentalists, I believe the local people is what I call true environmentalists. Or at least people in my age group. Even working as a logger, and ‘bout all of them, if they was say a salvage timber sale that would do more damage than the timbers worth, we don’t believe in harvesting it – don’t want it harvested. If it can be got out without any damage and it’s profitable, it should be...but a, we seem to be faced with the type of people that’s against doing anything in the forest except recreation. And it’s been abused, and people has lost their tolerance of it (Bill Elliot, born 1947).

The environmentalists, we’re all I guess somewhat environmentalists, people that’s wanting to protect the environment around wherever you might be. If we protect our yard from eroding, washing, their farmland from eroding, by building rock walls, or a sowing cover crops, or sowing grass in the waterways, then that’s part of the environmentalist part. But I think the ones that they mention is those that just carry’s it to extremes. They don’t want the trees cut, they don’t want the herbs dug, they don’t - they think if you dig a little spot in the forest that it’s going to ‘cause erosion or your destroying the forest, or whatever. And, a lot of times, especially like digging the herbs, if you don’t loosen the soil to where the seed can get down to the soil it won’t come up. It’s just on top of the leaves, they won’t germinate and come back. And they, a lot of people don’t understand that’s not been out there and that’s really experimented. Had the experience of what

does happen, I mean just like the Indiana Bat deal. We was knocked out of logging for five months on account of they thought logging would endanger the Indiana Bat habitat. Well, to come to find out it would enhance the feeding for the bats because anybody knows it's a lot easier for a bird to catch bugs and stuff in the open air than it is to try to catch it in the brush and the bramble of the woods. But we always thought well, if it is an Indiana bat and it was an endangered species why was it down here in North Carolina instead of Indiana? And we look at it sorta like this, somebody didn't have much to do to find bats in a bluff area where it was so rough that it's never been logged, and count to see how many female bats and how many male bats there was a-living in one tree. Somebody had to spend a lot of time, or either bring the bats down and place 'em there. That's just something that we didn't really know or understand. But it's a lot of money spent and a lot of time, too, on things that's really not feasible or economical to the area. It causes a lot of problems, just like the salamander or the snail darter that they stopped the Tellico Dam with on account of thinking that the snail darters was an endangered species. And their in every creek and stuff in eastern Tennessee and North Carolina, just like the lizards is. They're plentiful, their just something different that somebody hadn't seen and they thought that it was endangered. Dad always told me, before you say anything, you need to know what your talking about (John Jenkins, born 1951).

In short, locals do not want people who are 'arrogant' and that, "...do not know the difference between enforcing the law and making enemies," to be telling them how to conduct their business.

The notion that environmentalists are people that want the mountains to be preserved for their own recreation and use, but not that of local people, and that they are people that have never really had to work for a living (the way mountain people have) has contributed to a situation in which many people in Graham County have an oppositional attitude towards environmental ideas and policies. The, "Forest Service man says it (moss) belongs to the people. Well, who are we?" One man recounted this story,

...me and my son was on the Appalachian trail, over in Macon County. About three days before turkey season. And we was dressed just like in our normal, everyday work clothes, and there was this middle-aged hiker. I guess he easily recognized we was on the Appalachian Trail and we wadn't the usual trail hiker types. And he just bluntly asked, 'what are you fellers doing in here?' And I said, turkey season's opening next week, we're looking for turkey sign. And he said, 'not near this trail your not.' He said, 'you sure aren't.' He said, 'if there's

not, there definitely should be restrictions, no hunting within a mile of the Appalachian Trail'. And I like to try and get along with everybody and I said, hey buddy, you don't own all this place, you may think you got the deed to it in your pocket but now you don't. I said, you oughtta go to the forest service, tell them take these signs down, 'enjoy your national forest'. I said, that means us too. I said if you got the deed for it in your pocket, show it to me and we'll leave. I said, I don't mind turning a little cheek a little bit, overlooking people's ignorance. But I said, now buddy I'm tired of this here, I run into too much of it. And – I hate to get in those moods – but now if I'm pressured enough I can come out of there and defend myself. Used to be we kinda thought we only had to fight with the government (laugh) organizations that made it difficult on us. Now it looks like we gonna have to, if we're to continue our way of life, just, a life a fighting (Bill Elliot, born 1947).

This is typical of the kinds of experiences that locals have with outsiders. There are, however, people who were raised to be stewards of their land in the event that they ever needed the resources at their disposal and who have inherited a mindset that can be labeled as a type of conservation ethic. These are people who make land management decisions based on the desire to maintain long term economic stability by being prepared for periods of unemployment, who log their own property in ways that they believe maintain a variety of plant resources, and who generally maintain their land's overall productivity in a variety of ways.

But those who have little understanding or experience with the ecology of their immediate environment, in addition to being socialized to be in opposition to 'environmental people', are not likely to adopt behaviors conducive to sustainability whether they become wild harvesters or not. Such individuals have typically not had any mentors that have taught them about nontimber forest products, do not have enough personal experience to recognize the consequences of their own harvesting behaviors and land management decisions, and are not open to being formally educated by outsiders. This means that they probably do not have any framework of understanding that will

allow them to conceptualize harvesting behaviors that will work to their advantage over the long run. This dynamic, coupled with an increasing tendency for people to focus on short term gains and a desire to do more financially than just get by, brings us to a present situation in which what it means to be a 'digger' or an 'herber' is being contested among local residents at the same time in which a new category of harvesting, 'wildcrafting', has entered the scene.

I interviewed very few young, untrained wild harvesters. This was primarily because of a bias inherent in my research methods. I was initially most interested in interviewing older people regarding changes in plant uses during the course of their own lifetimes, then in interviewing people who had supported themselves primarily by wild harvesting at one time or another. It was also difficult to meet and interview younger (people 40 years of age or under) diggers because of social norms and customs that sometimes made interacting with them for extended periods of time difficult. The people with whom I was able to speak to at length and who fall into this category were men and will remain anonymous.

Most people who currently harvest wild plants to sell are male, and the younger, non-expert ones tend to share several characteristics in addition to the ones mentioned above. They tend to be from families in which their parents left the area during the 1950's and 1960's in order to take advantage of various manufacturing jobs out of state, or to have grandparents who left the area during this time period. These individuals were therefore raised by people who did not spend a lot of time teaching their children about wild harvesting, either because they were not living in the mountains during the time in which their children were young, or because they were never taught how to themselves.

These harvesters therefore primarily collect plant materials only when they have an urgent need to supplement their regular income, when they want a quick source of cash to buy something with, or when other forms of employment are not available. Others will dig ginseng only if the price being offered for it is extremely high, as when the price of ginseng shot up dramatically in 1995.

In the minds of non-experts, they are not carrying on a family tradition or utilizing a skill that was bequeathed to them. Rather, they are taking advantage of an opportunity and feel as though they have an inherent right to do so. The individuals that I spoke with that fall into this category were young adults that collected unemployment compensation of one form or another during part of the year. They also tended to be high school drop-outs. None of these factors separates these particular individuals from so-called 'expert' diggers in and of themselves, but what does separate them is the inconsistency with which they choose to harvest from one year to the next, the ease with which they shift from one buyer to a new one, and the limited number of nontimber forest plants that they are able to recognize relative to 'expert' diggers. In addition, they do not voice concerns about the ways in which people are currently harvesting marketable plants the way that expert diggers do.

Both the lifelong harvesters and the inexpert opportunists focus on collecting species that yield a decent return on the time and effort expended harvesting them. But lifelong harvesters are more apt to recognize and/or use species that they do not consider to be marketable ones. They may take the time to go out and harvest a variety of wild foods, for instance, or to plant specimens of medicinals near their home like bloodroot or goldenseal. This is less true of primarily opportunistic, younger harvesters. When asked

whether they are familiar with bloodroot, for instance, they are likely to respond, “I guess I’ve probably been walking over it all my life, but I don’t know what it looks like.” They are therefore less in touch with the ecology of mountain plants and the impact that their own harvesting methods can have on them. For some there is a belief that if a marketable species becomes extinct, though they often claim to doubt that this would ever happen, they will just have to find other ways of earning money when they need it.

As noted earlier, most individuals in Graham County tend to be resistant to ideas proposed by environmentalists, so without personal experiences that suggest to non-expert harvesters how to encourage and maintain the populations that they wish to profit from, their behaviors are likely to be unsustainable. But it is also possible that lifelong experiences with wild harvesting would not alter the behaviors of all individuals, since new generations of harvesters just tend to not be as concerned about the resources that they are selling. However, the generally opportunistic nature of some of their attitudes also suggests that as a given species became more difficult to find due to scarcity, the less likely it is that such individuals would continue to harvest it. The species might then therefore recover.

For instance, according to John Jenkins (born 1951),

Well there are not very many people that I know of that gathers moss like they used to. Just a few. Moss sales in the county is depleted, as far as I know, a whole lot in the last few years. You just don’t see the people a gathering it. I mean I drive around a lot over the county and you don’t see people a-carrying it out, or their trucks a-sitting by the road with moss sacks on the truck, or whatever. You don’t see it being harvested the way you used to...there for several years, it had, untelling at the years to grow. And it was a bountiful crop of moss in the woods. And over several years they had gathered it and it’s not growed back to where it’s as plentiful as it used to be, and it’s disheartening. When people gets out to gathering they don’t make as much money as they thought they was going to. And it just sorta disheartens them and they go ahead and do something else to make their income... I can remember back in the 60’s, early 70’s, gathering moss

would be sorta like taking a job. If you could make, if I had a job a making six or eight dollars an hour, and somebody offered me a job a making fifteen or twenty, then I would be real tempted to take the bigger pay, even though it meant just for a little while. And back then, that's the way it was, that you could make a lot more. Of course, you didn't sell it for as much per pound back then as you do now and the hourly wages wasn't that much. Just like now your hourly wages, you know, is most people make from six, ten, twelve dollars an hour, somewhere along there, and back then it was from two to four, five dollars an hour. So they could make a lot more than wages a-gathering moss because it was plentiful. And a lot of people would take off maybe a day, a week, or off of their job, where they wouldn't lose their regular job, and gather moss, or either gather it on the weekends to pick up the extra money.

Methamphetamines and Moss

It is also possible that sustainable harvesting practices are not utilized by some people because they are chronic substance abusers. I have been told that some people in the region have argued that the construction of new highways in this area would literally result in increased drug 'traffic'. These fears may be coming to fruition. Drug abuse is a topic that is avoided by many locals, and is therefore one that I can only address superficially here. People will only speak with outsiders about things that could be construed as character flaws in mountain people if they have earned the trust of the speaker. Even then, problems are discussed with me quietly and very rarely in public. Those being interviewed stress that they are sharing certain kinds of information with me as a friend, and will not speak if I am taking notes or recording. They do not wish certain kinds of information to be documented or widely discussed. What I can say is that near the end of my fieldwork period the issue began to come up in conversations with people when discussing changes that have occurred in the nontimber forest product industry. People expressed concerns about the recent introduction of 'meth' (crank) into the county and the way the use of it was affecting the harvesting behavior of a *minority* of individuals.

It is impossible to speculate how many people in the county are methamphetamine users or how many of these individuals are harvesters, but the topic seems worth mentioning because of the specific concerns that expert harvesters have raised that pertain to harvesting moss. I have been told that several people in the county who abuse ‘meth’ sometimes pull moss. Some expert harvesters are bothered by this. Moss can be pulled, processed and sold relatively easily. Unlike other nontimber forest products that often require lots of hiking into remote areas on foot in order to find and collect them, moss can still be found in areas that can be reached by either car or four-wheeler. There is not a lot of processing involved, and it is fairly easy to find a buyer for this product as well. Pulling moss is therefore a relatively easy way to obtain money for someone with an addiction that is relatively inexpensive and who has a difficult time holding a formal job because of that addiction. This is upsetting to people who take pride in the fact that they have been able to use harvesting skills to support their families, and not, “...just to buy stuff.” They do not want this tradition to become disreputable. Expert harvesters, young and old, say that they are disturbed to see people who are high pulling moss for extreme periods of time without stopping to sleep, and carrying extremely heavy loads of moss to their vehicles, sometimes injuring themselves in the process.

One individual stated that they simply believed that forest plant resources should be used to pay for basic needs, not be used to purchase things like drugs. But this person was also concerned about the quality of the work that such mossers did, how this trend might devalue the efforts of expert harvesters by emphasizing quantity and speed of delivery over a quality product, and the speed and single-mindedness with which such

people could pull all of the moss in an area without always leaving enough behind to grow back. This kind of competition between mossers seems to be something new to those who mentioned it, and is a circumstance that they are not sure how to feel about.

From a conservation standpoint, harvesters of any kind that are primarily motivated by a drive to satisfy an addiction are a scary prospect, especially if the only thing that led them to pull moss at all was an inability to hold a formal job because of that addiction. Such individuals might lack not only the experience that has led many expert harvesters to adopt some sustainable harvesting practices, they would most likely be too ill to be concerned about the sustainability of their own behaviors. Meanwhile, it is rumored that the total quantity of moss that such people harvest when combined together is greater than the total volume pulled by expert harvesters that are trying to support their families. It would be useful to know whether or not this is indeed true.

The concerns expressed by expert harvesters regarding this form of substance abuse and harvesting are another reflection of the kinds of changes that they are experiencing in their respective communities. Moss does not seem to have been harvested in the volumes that it is now in the past, and it definitely was not an important product in Graham County until after 1970. Now expert harvesters believe it is increasingly being harvested in order to accumulate wealth for extras, not just to meet the basic needs of one's family. It is believed that not as many families are pulling moss today as were doing so during the 1970's and early 1980's, but that a lot of those who are pulling are doing so for somewhat different reasons than they were a generation ago. Selling moss also involves a different network of buyers and dealers than the other crude botanicals do, and therefore different sets of social relationships. In short, the practices

of many (though certainly not all) mossers often conflict with the identity of many mountain people and the image that they would most like to project.

I should also note that, though the possible relationship between drug abuse and pulling moss is an important topic to consider, it is also a potentially dangerous one. Elucidating meaningful answers would require establishing a great deal of trust with a number of different parties. Addicts are unlikely to admit that they have a problem. When the addiction in question involves illegal drugs, they will be even less likely to speak openly about their drug use and how they spend the money that they earn pulling moss. It is therefore very difficult to determine how many people who pull moss are regular drug users. There is also the danger of stereotyping mossers in the process. ‘City people’ and many forest service and park officials already have a tendency to suspect that all local diggers are also poachers. It would not be productive to also generalize mossers as being drug addicts, thereby further criminalizing them.

Furthermore, it would increase the difficulty of communicating with mossers about conservation issues if they feel as though they are being publicly maligned and misrepresented at the same time that their needs are being ignored or misunderstood. This said, in the future it will be important to identify any relationships that exist between the abuse of methamphetamines, other kinds of chemical addictions, and the harvesting of nontimber forest products, if they do indeed exist. As noted in Chapter Three, this type of problem is becoming an issue in many rural areas across the country and needs to be better understood in order to constructively deal with a variety of social problems that are currently being faced (Drug-Rehabs.org 2003, Jadhay 2000, McFadden 2003, Potter 2004).

Crafts, Festivals and Garden Plants

Other forms of commercially driven wild harvesting include the collection of materials for producing crafts, supporting local festivals, and the collection of sellable plant stock. Particularly among the Cherokee, the use of nontimber forest products in the production of crafts to sell is an important source of income in the mountains. Basket weaving, pottery making and wood carving are the primary art forms still in practice. These trades all involve skills that were once utilitarian, but now are used to take advantage of the presence of a thriving tourist industry in the region. Cherokee baskets are particularly popular. Some styles are very contemporary in material and form, others retain characteristics found in older baskets.

In order to produce the baskets that reflect aspects of Cherokee culture in the past as well as the present, artisans want to use materials that currently can only be found in the wild. Because of this, Cherokee artisans that rely on specific plants in order to produce traditional crafts are concerned about the future of this trade. As materials become more difficult to locate, the time required to find and process them makes this form of earning a living less and less viable. The more time it takes to find and acquire materials to make a basket, the more difficult it is to obtain a reasonable return on your investment. Perhaps more importantly, these raw materials become too valuable, and a commitment to learning too great, to be able to pass on the skills needed to produce traditional crafts to the next generation.

Basket weavers such as Emma Garrett rely on the income that they generate in basket sales in order to pay their bills. Emma is retired, frequently ill, and must now rely on friends and family members to help her locate and harvest raw materials. She

produces single weave rivercane (*Arundinaria gigantea*) baskets. The techniques required for splicing cane into weaveable strips and for weaving the baskets are extremely difficult to learn and a lot of product is needed to produce one basket with a volume of approximately one half bushel. This species has been eradicated from most of Graham County, primarily because its habitat coincides with spaces that were considered to be ideal for building a homestead. The cattle and pigs that white homesteaders brought with them to the mountains trampled and killed the cane breaks that used to be prevalent along many stream and river beds (Hill 1997). Now breaks must be identified through word of mouth, and Emma's relatives make arrangements with private property owners in various parts of Tennessee and Georgia to harvest rivercane on their land. She also uses Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) and Yellowroot (*Xanthoriza simplicissima*) to dye some of the strips of cane she uses in her baskets. There are a large number of other plants that are sometimes used as dyes as well, but these are the two that Ms. Garrett uses most frequently.

Emma used to also produce doubleweave baskets. Doubleweave baskets require an added element of skill to make, but most importantly they take a lot more time to produce and require a much larger quantity of raw material. It is also more difficult to sell doubleweave baskets because they must be sold for a much higher price than single weave baskets, and tourists are typically not knowledgeable enough to appreciate the differences between the two forms. Because of this, Ms. Garrett, like many other Cherokee artisans, has chosen to produce a marketable product and cannot always afford to continue to doubleweave in order to preserve this aspect of her cultural heritage. She

must meet the demands of her consumers in order to earn a living, and at the same time she is limited by the quantity of resources that she is able to obtain.

Like baskets, ramps are beginning to be sold as a commercial product as well. As was discussed earlier, a relatively recent way in which people in this region have begun to capitalize on their natural and cultural heritage is through the development of ramp (*Allium tricoccum*) festivals. Going out to harvest a 'mess' of ramps early each spring is a common practice in the mountains. But over the years the annual ramp dinner that is held to benefit the local fire department in Graham County has grown and expanded. This event is held at the fire station in Robbinsville. Every year the quantity of ramps required to supply the dinner has been increasing, and a community wide festival has grown up around this event. In other parts of western North Carolina ramp festivals have become major tourist attractions.

In addition, there is currently a lot of controversy surrounding the question of whether or not there is a sustainable means of harvesting ramps. Some Cherokee believe that you can cut off the plant that is visible above ground at a certain place without diminishing the viability of the plant itself. More research would have to be done in order to determine whether or not this is true. The research that has been completed to date is controversial in that many Cherokee people do not believe that it was conducted using a method that their elders actually use. If there is a sustainable way of harvesting ramps, an education campaign is needed to promote appropriate harvesting practices. It has been my experience that there are a lot of people who dig up the entire plant root and all, regardless of whether they are white or Cherokee. And, unless they are specifically instructed to do otherwise by their employers, it is my suspicion that Latino migrant

workers who are supplying the festivals west of Graham County are probably digging up entire plants as well.

At the moment ramps (other than a particular variety known as 'white' ramps) are not scarce. But there is a growing demand for them in specialty markets, so the potential for them to become scarce, as ginseng has, is great, especially if the root of the plant is consistently harvested. It is highly unlikely that they will ever be consumed in the quantities that ginseng is, or bring the price that ginseng does in the Chinese market. But the growing popularity of specialty foods in fine restaurants and among cooking enthusiasts can bring a premium dollar to a dealer. If this demand continues to grow, more and more people may become interested in harvesting ramps to sell, instead of just to eat themselves. This could then have a dramatic impact on wild populations of this species and greatly increase the harvesting pressure experienced by ramp populations in Great Smoky Mountains National Park (Rock 1996).

Another example of commercially driven wild harvesting practices can be illustrated by the livelihoods of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Taylor (born in 1934 and 1932, respectively). They opened up Taylor's Nursery 42 years ago in Robbinsville. Mr. Taylor grew up in two neighboring counties, Swain and Macon, in a family that made its living working in timber. Mrs. Taylor grew up around Graham County and used to sell plants to tourists at a roadside stand in Tallulah. She and her siblings also used to sell blackberries and strawberries in order to buy their school clothes. Mrs. Taylor's parents made a living digging and selling herbs, in addition to selling apples, chestnuts, Mountain Laurels, drinks, and Rhododendrons at their roadside stand.

Mr. Taylor moved to Michigan for six years in order to work for Chrysler at one of their manufacturing plants. At that time he could earn \$2.47 per hour working for Chrysler, but could only earn \$0.30 per hour working in Graham County. He did not like living in Michigan and missed working in the mountains, so as soon as he was able to he returned to western North Carolina and purchased one 160 acre tract of land. He and his wife have lived on this same land for the past 52 years. He has purchased more land since this time. He doesn't think he needs it all but says that, "...once you have it you hate to part with it." He enjoys having plenty of space to be out in the woods, and he has always dug ginseng. He says that he goes out and picks the seeds and plants them in different places, "...where he thinks they'll do well. I just like to get out into the woods." But this hobby also helps supports his and Jean's business.

Mr. Taylor died in 2003, but when he was still living he was able to provide his nursery with a lot of plant stock by digging and propagating plants from the wild, or by collecting seeds and cuttings. Most recently he had been getting permits to collect such things as wild Trillium, Cinnamon Ferns, and Turks Cap. When I have toured his nursery with either him or his daughter, Karen Wilson, I have also seen such things as Squirrel Corn and Jack-in-the-Pulpits that could have been dug or propagated from wild plants in the area. Most of the plants sold at the nursery are not indigenous to the Appalachian Mountains and were not harvested from the wild by any family members, however. They primarily sell plants that are common nursery items like geraniums and flats of petunias. But Mr. Taylor frequently supplemented their regular inventory with plants that he had propagated from individuals he had collected from the wild while on one of his regular forays into the woods. Like many of the other people described in this chapter, Mr.

Taylor did not hesitate to supplement his nursery stock or income by wild harvesting, but it was not his primary occupation.

Overview

The people and activities that have been described in this chapter are intended to be representative of people in Graham County, North Carolina, but this is not a comprehensive listing. The goal is to present an overview of what wild harvesting activities look like in this region. The main point that I wish to make by creating this overview is that, though nearly everyone who has been born and raised in the region has either consumed or collected a nontimber forest product of some kind, almost nobody has been, or is, able to earn a living based primarily on the harvesting or processing of nontimber forest products. Nor, in many cases, do they wish to. It is also my intention to make clear that wild harvesting can take many forms, and be done for a variety of different reasons including; recreation, subsistence, ritual, food, medicine, maintaining ties with ones cultural heritage or deceased family members, and for profit. Many of these motivations overlap within individuals, or different ones can be found to be meaningful to different people within a single family. But most harvesting practices are not considered remarkable enough to characterize or label the individual that performs them as a harvester. They are just known as being ‘mountain people’, which, to them, means that they do what they have to do in order to earn a living.

To locals, wild harvesting for personal income is something that is either done to pay for extras, or resorted to in order to make ends meet after all other possibilities have been exhausted. It is believed that it is only worthwhile if you keep your expenses low, and minimize your bills. This is because harvesting nontimber forest products is looked

at as being one of the most difficult ways people have of earning money. The people who harvest for any reason other than out of absolute necessity are people who just love the lifestyle.

But like I say, the mountains have been so robbed of it, now, 'cause a lot of the young people, that's what they do. They hunt ginseng...and then, a lot of them hunt it to stay at home. Because they don't want to pull up stakes and leave, and go some place else, and then, some of them just hunt it because, well they like everything having to do with the outdoors. The woods and everything like that. But, one day I guess, there won't be any (Viola Laughtry, born 1941).

Expert harvesters are also typically mountain people who value hard work and having a flexible schedule. For many mountain people a high quality of life is defined as having as few bills as possible, having a flexible schedule so that they are able to hunt and fish when conditions are ideal for it, and as being able to maintain a slow pace of life. Old locals are therefore skeptical, and sometimes a bit confused when they are approached about how to go about making a living wildcrafting. Most of them have never done more than supplement their incomes wild harvesting, and the lifestyle that they themselves have sought to support usually looks much different from, and requires fewer resources, than the one would be 'wildcrafters' are striving for.

...most people that comes to me wanting to learn how, or information on collecting wild plants – in this younger generation – seems like they're people that seems to think there's an escape from the rat race. And they picture it, living back somewhere comfortable, a quiet life that they can actually earn an income from. Most of the people I see that's wanting to learn it, seems to have that ideal. And actually it is a small business. And I try to be truthful and say, if you was to be successful a lot of people's wanting to grow the plants. For income for a different lifestyle. And I tell 'em that to be successful you got to be out there in the rat-race to market it. And seems like most people that comes to me, asking advice or information or something about it, seems like they get the idea I'm actually trying to discourage them from it. And all I'm doing is just telling them the truth (Bill Elliot, born 1947).

What is imagined as being ideal to many old locals could look like poverty to many outsiders. There are a lot of people in the mountains who are unemployed, or who are not formally employed full-time, and who do not own much other than their home and some land. Many of these individuals would gladly work at certain kinds of occupations if they were available, and would probably then buy more things, but they have prioritized staying in the mountains over leaving to find work. It has been shown that it is common for people who come from areas of Appalachia that are somewhat isolated and where there are few employment opportunities to resist migrating somewhere else (Cushing 1997, Watkins 1990). Limiting the number of bills they have by remaining on family land, maintaining gardens and putting up food, using wood stoves, and being able to hunt regularly are more important to many of these people than being able to earn more money and having to spend it all on bills or on things that they don't need. It also gives them a sense of stability. These differences compound the concerns that expert harvesters already have regarding younger people's attitudes towards wild harvesting.

The changes that expert harvesters are seeing and are concerned about make sense in light of the region's economic history. When alternative forms of employment are not available many people resort to pulling moss, the nontimber forest product that is easiest to harvest and process, and that people feel as though they can sell for a high enough price to make it worth their effort. And, as the number of things that people expect to be able to own has increased, they have begun to use the money that they get selling moss and herbs to buy things other than what is necessary to meet the basic needs of their family. But, if more and more people begin to wild harvest, either because they have lost

their job, because ginseng prices have risen dramatically, or because they are seeking a new lifestyle, the pressure exerted on wild populations will increase - at least temporarily - and so will the amount of digging that takes place without the benefit of experience, and sometimes without a concern for the region's ecology. But this does not change the fact that people in Graham County have their own ways of earning a living.

Many local Graham Countians – harvesters and non-harvesters alike - wish to continue to rely on what Halperin (1990) has labeled 'multiple livelihood strategies'. They simply do not want to be like outsiders. Individuals continue to harvest at times, and possibly even poach, not because they do not know that there are jobs that enable people to live differently than they do, or because they are hopelessly entrenched in tradition, but because they are hanging on to what they know works and to what is important to them – a kin based economy (Halperin 1990). They are continuing to do what has worked for them in the past. Others have picked up wild harvesting only after other employment opportunities have failed them, and they are hesitant to risk what they have by trusting that formal employment will always be available to them if they were to sell their land and move elsewhere.

Natural plant product markets, local demographics, and the goals of local residents are all in transition. This makes it next to impossible to predict what kinds of opportunities will be available to harvesters in the future. Expert harvesters are currently having trouble reconciling their belief that everyone who is willing to put in a hard days work pulling moss or digging ginseng has a right to harvest it and sell it, with the discomfort they feel at the proposition that increasing numbers of migrant workers are competing for these same resources, and the fact that many younger harvesters do not

take care to harvest plants during appropriate seasons, or practice other types of basic maintenance such as planting the seeds that they find. In addition, they are also being confronted by outsiders with an entirely new vision of what it is that they do, so-called Wildcrafting. And it is something that is foreign to them.

‘Wildcrafting’ may eventually replace the ideas about wild harvesting currently held by diggers and other locals, but it is still important to recognize that it is inherently different than what has been practiced in the past. If it does become the dominant ideology among harvesters, it will probably be adopted largely by young people who have not harvested nontimber forest products before, and by outsiders. This is because it is unlikely that ‘wildcrafting’ will directly build on skills and traditions that are already present, though economic development initiatives have sometimes suggested otherwise. ‘Wildcrafting’ actually appropriates the tradition of wild harvesting and re-visions these activities as something new. This idea will be explored further in Chapter Seven.

CHAPTER 6

HARVESTING PUBLIC RESOURCES: PERMITS, PROBLEMS, AND REGULATIONS

The changes that have occurred in western North Carolina since 1900 have led to a need to regulate the harvesting of nontimber forest products. Whether wildcrafting, or digging for pleasure or profit, there is currently an institutional framework within which harvesters of any kind must operate. This framework directly influences people's harvesting behaviors, but has not been entirely successful at controlling and monitoring them. As markets for natural plant products continue to grow, this regulation will become more involved and expansive. Many people hope that better ways of working with harvesters and monitoring plant populations will be developed so that this can occur in universally beneficial ways.

As was discussed in Chapters Three and Four, some medicinal plant populations, notably ginseng, had already become depleted by 1900 (Kain 1912). Between 1910 and 1930 the region was then heavily logged, and the chestnut blight decimated all populations of American Chestnuts in Southern Appalachia (Brown and Davis 1995). This had a dramatic impact on the ecology of the mountains and therefore on wild plant populations in general (De Vivo 1986, Duffy and Meier 1992). Many species also lost substantial amounts of habitat between 1930 and 1950 as a result of so-called public works projects sponsored by the federal government. These projects involved clearing land, building dams, and the concomitant flooding of large areas. When Fontana Dam

was built, “The lake that resulted also destroyed a diverse population of native plants and animals, including some of the largest specimens of the extremely rare yellowwood trees ever observed in the southern mountains (Davis 2000).” In addition, after 1930 the Agricultural Adjustment Administration was encouraging people in the mountains to shift from subsistence to commercial agriculture by growing Burley tobacco (Salstrom 1994), and areas that became designated as national forest land were re-planted in fast growing timber species. At this point in time the priority of the USFS was to maintain a consistent supply of timber and pulpwood. Some people feel that because of this, “The ability of the mountains to fully heal themselves remains jeopardized today by Forest Service policies that continue to ignore the cumulative effects of timber harvesting on mountain watersheds (Davis 2000).”

The United States government first responded to concerns about the condition of Appalachia’s natural environment during the early 1900’s by establishing large expanses of public land. Between 1890 and 1930 many landscapes across the country had been radically altered and rendered unproductive by the effects of logging and other forms of industry. In response, Congress approved the setting aside of public land in the eastern United States in 1911 (Antypas et al. 2002). Public lands had been acquired in the western United States before 1911, but in Graham County most of what is now considered to be public land was acquired during the course of the 1930’s.

By the 1930’s the United States was becoming increasingly urban at the same time that many landscapes across the country had recently been decimated for industrial, military, and commercial purposes. The creation of public land as a means of stopping the deterioration of these environments, and the increasing privatization of land and the

elimination of free-ranging in Appalachia all led to rules and regulations regarding where and when an individual can harvest forest resources. This meant that new ways of doing things were introduced that sometimes conflicted with local traditions. Rules became formalized, as opposed to being determined on a case by case basis between neighboring land holders. Then, when the demand for natural plant products began to grow after 1980, and especially after 1995 when the price being offered for ginseng shot up dramatically, attempts to regulate the harvesting of nontimber forest products became an even greater concern of resource managers.

Between 1910 and 1950 there were conflicts surrounding trespassing and land use, but there was not a tremendous market for crude botanicals. As has already been mentioned, most of the botanical wholesalers in the region closed down during this time period because of a shift in American medicine from Medical Botany (whole plant drugs) to Phytochemistry (Berman and Flannery 2001). And by the 1930's most people that lived in Graham County had either begun growing tobacco or had found some form of formal employment. Therefore, they did not have a lot of time to harvest nontimber forest products for commercial purposes.

Because of this, and because public land managers were generally more concerned with timber and timber sales at the time than they were in managing other kinds of forest resources, there was little discussion about monitoring populations of plants that were being marketed as raw botanicals. Some people were harvesting for home use, but there was not an extensive natural plant product industry driving a commercial market in Graham County during this time period. Therefore very few species brought people a high enough price to induce them to harvest these products.

Even ginseng was only being harvested during times when other forms of employment were not available. Most other products that were being harvested were only being picked irregularly and on a small scale. It was not uncommon for children in the region to pick such things as galax leaves and sell them to local people decorating their homes at Christmas time, for instance (Helen Patton, born 1914).

Because not many people were harvesting large amounts of nontimber forest products in Graham County for many years, and because harvesting has always been a part of an unmonitored, informal economy, it has only been since 1980 that issues surrounding nontimber forest products have begun to receive much scrutiny. Cornelius Hall (born 1910), a retired Forest Service employee interviewed in 2002, remembered first selling USFS permits of some form to harvest resources on public land during the 1950's. He said that the funds from these sales went to support local school and hospital facilities, but it was unclear whether he was referring to timber harvesting, nontimber forest products, or both. According to Gary Kaufman, a current Forest Service botanist working in western North Carolina, no clear records or consistent policies were maintained regarding nontimber forest products until around 1990. It was not until this time that resource managers recognized a need to know more about these activities.

Efforts are now being made to understand the markets involved, learn how to monitor them, and thereby affectively manage wild plant populations (Alexander, Weiglandk and Blatner 2002, Antypas et al. 2002). According to Frank Findley, the forest service assistant ranger currently in charge of the Cheoah District office in Graham County, when he began working in the Cheoah office in 1989 permits were being sold for rhododendron, mountain laurel, flame azalea, moss, and ginseng, and "...seemed to have

been being sold for some time,” but no clear records are available regarding when and why permits began being sold. Most local people that I asked remember permits first being required sometime during the 1970’s or early 1980’s. Since 1990, more attention has been paid to permitting policies and procedures, and people interested in economic development in the region have become interested in better understanding these practices and markets as well (Yellow Creek Botanical Institute, Smoky Mountain Native Plant Association, personal communication). This has proven to be challenging.

An informal economy, by definition, is one that is largely undocumented. This is partly because in many instances cash never changes hands. A digger may drive into town to a dealer and trade their ginseng for store goods instead of money, for instance. And there are no trade agreements or contracts involved in digging herbs at the harvester level. In addition to this, harvesters are often secretive about where, what, and how much they harvest. This is particularly true when speaking to people they perceive as being from ‘the government’ or as being ‘outsiders’. Many harvesters do not want anybody to interfere with what they are doing, or to know where they go to harvest.

The monitoring systems currently in place require that people have harvesting permits to dig in national forests, and dealer licenses and certification for trade in ginseng overseas or over state lines. There are two primary sets of policies that must be adhered to. Both of these two systems are federally-based, but their purposes are different. One system focuses primarily on wholesale plant dealers, the other on harvesters. These programs are largely disconnected from one another and do not make it possible to see exactly how raw botanicals flow through market chains or how specific plant populations are being affected by harvesting. Their effectiveness in regulating harvesting behavior is

limited as well. The agencies involved include the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and to some extent the National Park Service. It is illegal for anybody to remove any natural resource or wildlife from National Parks for any reason. Great Smoky Mountains National Park therefore plays a role in regulating and monitoring the poaching of nontimber forest products inside the boundaries of the national park. The only exceptions to this general prohibition involve ecological research and formal agreements between tribal nations and individual parks. The agencies involved in monitoring nontimber forest products at the state level vary from state to state. In North Carolina, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Plant Protection Division is involved in monitoring the trade of some species.

Each of the two monitoring systems currently regulating the harvesting of nontimber forest products in North Carolina has a separate permit system. One is the set of regulations mandated by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service in order to monitor all CITES (Appendix II, Convention for International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) listed plants, the other is the Timber Information Management (TIM) system of the United States Forest Service. These two systems have been established for different reasons and under separate mandates. They do not affect or communicate with one another directly. However, harvesters in Graham County do not always differentiate between these two entities. The two systems are often spoken of as though they are both being run and administered by the same people, 'the government'. And 'the government', at the federal and state level, is thought of as an entity that does not understand or look out for the welfare of 'common people'.

USFS Permits

The United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USFS) only issues collection permits for harvesting plants found on USFS land. In Graham County the land in question is the Cheoah Ranger District in the Nantahala National Forest. Forest Service land is divided into districts and all of the mountain districts in North Carolina are managed based on standards and guides found in the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forest land management guide (Gary Kaufman, personal communication). In order to harvest on forest service land a digger must first determine the district within which they intend to harvest, and then go to buy a permit at the district office for that particular district. If they plan on harvesting in more than one district, they must go to more than one district office and buy a permit at each one.

One of the challenges for both harvesters and USFS personnel has been the fact that some variation occurs from district to district even though they are all supposed to be managed in the same way. For instance, harvesters are required to buy a permit for pulling moss in the Cheoah district of Graham County, but the USFS prohibits the pulling of moss in the neighboring Wayah district, except for within scheduled timber harvest units (because of management concerns). A timber harvest unit is a stand, or land management unit that is defined by an environmental assessment for a particular timber project (Gary Kaufman, personal communication 2004). But the Tusquitee Ranger District in Cherokee and Clay County sells permits for harvesting log moss just like the Cheoah Road District in Graham County does. Because of the confusion that has often resulted from this situation, the USFS has begun to try and design a more uniform system

for monitoring the permits that it issues. They wanted a system that would enable district offices to inform people which districts they can and cannot harvest specific plants in, and how much permits to harvest each species cost, instead of the prices differing from one district to the next for the same species. As a means toward this end, the USFS has developed what they call TIM (Timber Information Management) software.

TIM is the timber database that all national forests have to use. The data for districts in North Carolina is maintained by the North Carolina USFS Supervisor's office in Asheville (Joy Orr, personal communication 2002). This office designs and creates what are known as 'product plans' for each species that is allowed to be harvested from USFS land. They then install these plans and an accompanying set of rules and regulations for harvesting each species into the TIM system. Every district office is then required to access this central database each time a permit is sold. If there is not a product plan available in TIM for a given species, a permit cannot be sold allowing it to be harvested in that district. Different districts sometimes have and sell permits for different species, but the overall management plans are supposed to be the same for all of the districts found in Nantahala National Forest.

When I visited the Cheoah district office in 2002, the USFS employee that issues the permits there was not sure whether or not permits could be purchased for several of the plants that I asked about. One such species was galax. She said that nobody had ever asked to buy a permit to collect it from her, and that she often does not know whether she is allowed to issue a given permit until she logs on to the central database and checks (Galax leaves found in Graham County are typically smaller, and not as pretty as those found in other districts, so this is not surprising. Galax leaves are primarily used in the

floral industry.). The product plans that are available can change seasonally. But despite such variations and fluctuations, the establishment of TIM has meant that the permit prices being charged for a given species are now the same from district to district for any given product. This consistency is helpful to both harvesters and USFS staff.

This is how TIM functions. As has already been mentioned, in order for a permit to be sold from any given district office, the staff must first pull up a 'product plan' from their database system. If one is available for the product requested, the name and address of the individual who wishes to buy a permit must be typed into the computer on the product plan. Each product plan has regulations that accompany it on the screen that are printed out along with the permit being purchased. Two photocopies of the permit are then made (See Figure 6.1). The person buying a permit receives the original (along with the rules and regulations), the ranger station files one of the copies for its records, and the second copy is mailed to the supervisor's office in Asheville. The recorded information detailing how many permits are sold, what species the permits were for, and who purchased them remains in the database as well. It was not known at the Cheoah district office how long these database records are held, but they will potentially be kept for years in order to track monitoring (Gary Kaufman, personal communication). Timber audits are regularly conducted and permit records are included in this auditing process, which is the main reason why the records are kept. They are not kept specifically to monitor harvesting and/or species populations, or to determine whether people are harvesting legally. This lack of detailed oversight benefits some harvesters in the short run, but it is potentially harmful to both them and the species in question over time.

Region: Southern U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE – FOREST SERVICE FS-2400-1 (2/2000)
 National Forest: NF N. Carolina FOREST PRODUCT REMOVAL PERMIT and CASH RECEIPT OMB No. 0596-0085
 Ranger District: Cheoah (Ref. FSM 2430, FSH 2409.18, and FSH 6509.17) Expires 01/31/2002

Permittee's Name and Complete Address: SHANNON E MCBRIDE 520 CAMMELOT DRIVE ATHENS, GA 30606		Issue No. 7896	Preparation Date 09/06/2002	Payment Method PCHECK
		Effective Date 09/06/2002	Termination Date 10/06/2002	Load Ticket Numbers From: Thru:
Permittee Identification 053247047	Type Drivers License	Permit Area Description: Ginseng on the Cheoah Ranger District		
Vehicle Information (Optional) Year: License Plate: State: Model: Make: State: Model: Color: State: Model:		Remarks:		

PRODUCT DESIGNATION

Species	Product	Unit of Measure	Sold Quantity	Rate Per UOM		Total Products	Total Assoc. Chg
				Products	Assoc. Chg.		
Plant Other	Non Conv.	Lbs	1.00	\$30.00	\$ 0.00	\$30.00	\$ 0.00
GENERAL CONDITIONS						Total Permit Value \$	\$ 30.00

Subject to and in strict compliance with all the following conditions and those listed above, the permittee named herein is authorized to cut and remove the forest product described above.

- 1 This sale is final and all payments are not subject to refund.
- 2 Permit must be in the Permittee's possession while harvesting and transporting products.
- 3 This permit is nontransferable.
- 4 This permit and activities hereunder are subject to all applicable Federal statutes and regulations, and State and local laws.
- 5 No motorized vehicles are allowed off existing roads open to the public, unless otherwise specified within this permit. Permittee parking shall not block traffic.
- 6 Permittee shall remove all trash and litter resulting from Permittee's activities. Concurrent with forest product removal activities, unused vegetative material shall be removed from roads and ditches.
- 7 Permittee shall prevent and suppress forest fires; dispose of slash resulting from Permittee's activities; pay the United States for any unnecessary damage resulting from Permittee's activities; repair all damage to roads, trails, fences, ditches, and telephone lines resulting from Permittee's activities under this permit.
- 8 The Forest Service reserves the right to unilaterally revoke this permit for Permittee's noncompliance with its terms and conditions or when revocation is in the public's interest.
- 9 The permit will terminate on the date indicated, regardless of whether forest products are removed.
- 10 None of the terms or conditions of this permit may be varied or modified, except for unilateral modifications by the Forest Officer that signed this permit, the Forest Officer's successor, or superior officer.
- 11 Each person 15 years of age or older must have a Forest Product Removal Permit of their own while gathering this forest product.
- 12 Positive identification (ex. photo ID) shall be carried by the permittee at all times while collecting the forest product.
- 13 Other Specific Conditions, restrictions, location maps are attached to this permit.
- 14 Products may not be gathered within 100 feet of continually flowing streams or within 50 feet of streams that flow seasonally.
- 15 Roads surfaced with pavement or gravel are open to motorized vehicles unless they are blocked by a gate, guardrail, post, boulder, dirt mound or unless signed as closed. Dirt roads or seeded roads are closed to motorized vehicles unless they are signed as opened.
- 16 Products may not be gathered beside developed trails, beside designated parking areas, within developed recreation areas, or within an active logging area.

OTHER CONDITIONS

- 1 Product Quantity Removal Record must be completed each day in ink by Permittee before leaving permit area. Date entry must be completed before harvesting begins and amount must be completed before leaving the permit area.
- 2 Ginseng: Permittee will be required to provide a signed statement from the buyer indicating dry weight quantities harvested. Permittee will be required to plant mature seeds collected from plants near the removal site. Only 3-prong or larger plants shall be harvested.
- 3 Digging or picking plants is prohibited on upper and lower road banks.

PRODUCT RECORD OF REMOVAL

Date	Qty Removed								

SIGNATURES

Shannon E. McBride 9/16/02 PERMITTEE SIGNATURE Date
Brenda Anthony FOREST OFFICER SIGNATURE Date

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency shall not conduct or sponsor, and no persons are required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0596-0085. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

Figure 6.1: Forest Service Permit.

Within the TIM system there is what are known as 'blanket permits' and species specific permits. There are set harvesting seasons for moss, ginseng and firewood. Because of this there are individual (species specific) permits that are specifically designed and purchased for each of these three products. The regulations associated with these three species (or 'products') sometimes change, but the changes are established and the guidelines are set before the opening of any given harvesting season. Which species have these species specific 'product work plans' associated with them, and which ones do not, can vary between districts. Any individual wishing to purchase a permit to collect a nontimber forest product must state what it is that they want to collect and where they are going to collect it. If there is a product plan available on TIM, which ever type of permit is appropriate will be sold to them.

Once a permit has been purchased, the harvester is required to carry it with them when they are gathering in the district specified by the permit. If they are harvesting ginseng or log moss, they must write down (on the permit itself) in ink the approximate weight of the material that they have harvested before leaving the collection area. Each permit limits the quantity or weight that the individual is allowed to harvest, and while on public land a harvester may be stopped by USFS rangers at random and asked to present their permit. If an individual is found to be in violation of their permit (carrying a larger quantity than their permit allows, for instance) they may be fined or jailed. USFS permits therefore attempt to control the impact that wild harvesting has on forest service land, but they are not referred to or used by the buyers or dealers that purchase raw products from harvesters.

CITES Regulations

The second permitting system in place in North Carolina serves to monitor the export of all CITES listed plants, and so directly affects transactions that wholesale plant dealers make. Currently listed species include Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*), Goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis L.*), and all orchid species. Since Goldenseal is listed as an endangered species in the state of North Carolina, it is illegal to harvest it from public land under any circumstances, and you must have a permit from the North Carolina Plant Protection Program in order to legally cultivate or propagate it. Because ginseng is not endangered in the state at this time, it is legal to harvest it from designated public land (though some areas are off limits, such as places of special interest designated as wilderness areas, as well as state and national parks), provided that you purchase a harvesting permit and follow the regulations set by the USFS. But a CITES permit is required in order for a dealer or a local buyer to be able to ship listed species across state lines or out of the country.

Following the Convention for International Trade in Endangered Species, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was mandated to monitor the export of all CITES listed species and to make sure that they are being harvested at sustainable levels. Ginseng has been listed since 1978 (Bailey 1999). Because of this, the USFWS requires that states compile and provide them with certain kinds of data before they will allow any ginseng to be shipped beyond state lines. Different states have designated different agencies to be in charge of compiling this information. In North Carolina, it is the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Plant Protection Division that is responsible for proving to the USFWS that ginseng is being harvested in

a viable manner. This is currently being accomplished by first licensing dealers (though not harvesters) and then requiring that a state ginseng inspector personally inspect and certify any and all material that is shipped out of state.

The certificates that these state inspectors issue are called ‘phyto-sanitary’ certificates. In North Carolina, the current state inspector for the extreme western part of the state including Graham County is Jim Corbin. Dealers are also required to ask each harvester they buy from to provide their name, and the name of the county in which the ginseng that they are selling has been dug (though diggers do not have to provide any kind of proof of where the material was harvested, or present a harvesting permit). This information is then sent to the state’s plant protection program so that the total amount of wild collected ginseng harvested in each county can be calculated and sent to the USFWS (SEE Appendix B). The ‘ginseng coordinator’, the person who compiles all of the county harvest data received from dealers, for the state of North Carolina is currently Marge Boyer. All western North Carolina counties currently report ginseng gathering.

No funding for the administration of the plant protection program accompanies the USFWS requirement to provide county harvest totals, and the program manager in charge has many responsibilities other than those pertaining to the monitoring of ginseng harvesting. Consequently, the effectiveness with which both the state of North Carolina and the USFWS meets their respective mandates and management goals is highly questionable. Program managers do not have the time to verify that the figures they are provided are accurate or to prosecute very many violations. This is compounded by the fact that determining what sustainable populations and harvesting levels for ginseng are is a complex, time consuming task that has not yet been completed.

North Carolina's plant protection program has attempted to monitor actual plant populations, but has only been able to collect data sporadically as time and money has allowed. Ginseng plots were initially established during the late 1970's for monitoring purposes, and then again during the early 1980's. All of the plots first established on USFS lands have been re-sampled beginning in 1999 and continue to be monitored. The population numbers indicate that these populations of ginseng are declining, but absolute causes have not been determined (Gary Kaufman, personal communication). Because of time and staffing limitations, dealer licensing, inspecting dealer purchases, and record-keeping are the primary objectives of the plant protection program, not the maintenance of conservation and monitoring studies.

Effects on Harvesters

The above permitting systems sometimes present special challenges to wild harvesters in Graham County, North Carolina. Because this is the case, they have offered several complaints and criticisms of permitting policies and agencies. Though not all harvesters are opposed to the idea of regulating and monitoring the harvest of nontimber forest products, most diggers and gatherers do sometimes resent and have negative things to say about the systems that they have had to deal with.

Well, you know. Actually to be honest with you, we do need common sense permits. I don't mind the permits, but the way sometimes they're enforced, you know. And the questions your asking me sometimes will vary from district to district... some of the things that causes conflict. I'll give you an example. I bought a moss permit over in Tuskigegee. A ranger station that's in Murphy. And they told me the amount of the moss permit, seemed like this was, I believe \$25. And I said, "Well, where can I go get a money order at? I'm not familiar over here where they sell money orders." And they said, 'The bank probably closed,' but they said, 'You don't have to get a money order.' I said, 'Yeah? I thought I did. Cheoah Ranger District won't accept anything except money orders or a personal check. They won't accept cash.' And she said, 'Well, let me tell you this, we've been advised by upper management it is against the law,

actually, for us to refuse cash, especially since we're a government organization and the money says on it legal tender, you know, for all debts.' And she said actually, we're afraid of stirring up confrontation. We'd be pleased to take cash. So the next time I, probably six weeks later, I went to buy a moss permit over at Cheoah Ranger station, and they said, 'That'll be fifteen dollars, money order or check?' I said, well I'd like to pay in cash, they told me over at Tuskquigee that it's illegal for the forest service to refuse cash. She said, 'That's fine, you wanta pay cash for a moss permit, that's fine. Go to Tuskquigee and buy it over there.' Said, 'Here it'll either be a money order or a personal check.' So, you run into things like this, kinda causes the average person some conflict (Bill Elliot, born 1947).

All of the individuals that I have spoken to seem to believe that they have a right to harvest forest plants, and that these plants were created for them to be able to use. Most of these individuals have also stated that these plants should not be misused or overused, however. These feelings coincide with an apparently region-wide ethos that opposes big government, zoning, and regulation. Local harvesters, as opposed to wildcrafters, do not typically articulate their complaints in terms of a general opposition to outside government regulations. But such sentiments would help to explain why traditional diggers would express concern over the state of current plant populations but seek to undermine, or at least not respect, the efforts of the National Park Service and the United States Forest Service at times. The criticisms that I have heard being directed at the USFS and other regulating agencies include:

- The system is ineffective.
- State licensing and inspecting of ginseng is inefficient.
- Permits are too expensive for the people who are most dependent on NTFP's.
- Permits are too expensive to continue treating hunting ginseng as a family activity (they are expensive and each individual participating must have their own).

- USFS permits are inconvenient.
- System criminalizes people trying to make an 'honest living'.
- Policies are sometimes counterproductive and contradictory.

From the point of view of harvesters, the USFS and CITES permits are ineffective in that they do not believe that these systems benefit either themselves or the viability of the plant populations in question.

Well, really they're not (the permits are not accomplishing what they say they are). There's no way to enforce it economically with what permits they sell and the herbs that they get that people harvest. Just like the ginseng, which, that's the biggest thing on the market that people dig. Just say for instance, I got a \$30 permit for one pound of ginseng, and I was back in the mountains five mile and found quite a bit of sang. Well, truthfully, I wouldn't dig a little handful that I figured weighed a pound and bring it out, and weigh it and make sure I had a pound of it, as to just go ahead and dig what I found. And bring it out and sell it. To be honest about it people just brings it out and sells it whether it's a pound or five pounds. And the forest service can't check everybody that's in the woods to see how many pounds that they bring out because who knows where they're at? I mean there are hundreds of thousands of acres of forest land, and they can't have a forest ranger or somebody to watch every vehicle when they come out of the woods. 'Cause so much time, so much expense there that they can't regulate it that way. A lot of it has to be done on the honorary system. That's people being honest on how much they dig, and where they dig it at too. 'Cause a lot of people – and it is dishonest - a lot of people will sell so much sang, and they was supposed to tell where it came from, and a lot of people will say, well it came off of the private sector land. And some of it may have, but more than likely the majority of it come off of national forest lands (John Jenkins, born 1951).

Most of the wild harvesters that I spoke with also feel as though public lands either have been, or are, being mismanaged (allowing logging too close to stream beds, not clearing out dying pine trees, etc.) using the money that they have to pay to receive permits. They do not see any evidence that the permit money is being used to re-plant ginseng, for instance, which would make having to buy a permit seem more reasonable to them. Many also feel as though the money should be used to administer controlled burns that would help promote the seeds contact with the soil. In reality, the money collected

from harvesters for permits does not even cover the administrative costs of operating a permit system (Gary Kaufman, personal communication). But harvesters do not always understand this, and those that do are not comforted by this. Since they believe that the permits are ineffective to a large degree, this just means that the money paid is wasted.

Another thing that is sometimes difficult for harvesters to understand is that there are not any large quantities of North Carolina ginseng seed available to plant, even if there was enough money available to the USFS to do so. Until the ecological and genetic ramifications of introducing ginseng seed from other sources are better understood, the widespread planting of cultivated ginseng seeds is not a viable option. But some harvesters seem to be buying seed and planting it on their own, regardless of where the seed originated from. Lay people are typically not aware of the potential ramifications of introducing individual plants with different genetic compositions into wild populations. But harvesters are very aware that it is easy to abuse forest service permits. Everyone admits that it is easy to collect a larger amount of nontimber forest product than a permit allows. But while some of the current regulations are easy to abuse, and are therefore ineffective, others can seem to be unreasonable from the perspective of a wild harvester.

For instance, one harvester complained that the current law states that a digger must write in ink on his or her permit the amount of ginseng (the number of pounds) that they have collected BEFORE they leave a collection area. Depending on who the ranger is that stops you, you can get a ticket even if you have guessed just a little bit over what your permit allows. This individual also said that you usually do not learn about changes in policy until you or a friend gets a ticket, or are fined or jailed because of one of these changes. 'They (the USFS) just make examples of people,' and assume that you are

guilty until you are proven innocent instead of the other way around. Another harvester commented that you can be, "...put in jail for pulling moss on a first offense if you run into certain Forest Service men, but you get a slap on the wrist if you use drugs or drive drunk." These statements are typical examples of the kinds of things local people, particularly harvesters, say in regards to the United States Forest Service.

Much of this resentment is further fueled by the belief that these policies mean that the government is more concerned about ginseng and other NTFPs than it is about mountain people's livelihoods. People also simply resent the government interfering with their traditional belief that forest resources are there for people to use. The self-concept that 'mountain people' have been, and are, good at finding ways to get by, and that they can survive during rough times utilizing forest resources is important to them, even if they themselves have not had to do so. The specific product involved, and whether or not they have actually harvested it in the past, is irrelevant.

Such beliefs are compounded by the fact that in this region many people who harvest nontimber forest products are doing so on land that used to be owned by their family. Many of them come from families that were forcibly removed from land that they owned, others sold their land to the government for public lands, put the money in the bank, and then lost everything soon afterwards due to the financial collapse that resulted in the Great Depression (Glen Cardwell, born 1930). A few even believe that the Depression was planned, part of a series of events designed to rob mountain people of the right to use 'their' resources anyway they choose.

The problem with these kinds of beliefs is that they do not acknowledge the issues that the USFS is required to deal with. They imply resistance without any coherent

agenda or objective. This makes it extremely difficult for any kind of dialogue to occur that can result in constructive resolutions. An experienced ginseng hunter is good at estimating how much root he or she has dug, and one can choose to guess conservatively in order to avoid digging more than your permit allows. Also, when changes in policy occur, they are supposed to occur before a given season begins, and USFS rules and regulations are printed out for the harvester as part of his or her permit. It is supposed to be relatively easy to find out about changes in policy from the USFS. It is also true, however, that some people have had unfortunate experiences with individual forest service employee's who reflect poorly on the institution as a whole.

...The permits and stuff, which probably some are necessary the way times are, but a lot of this stuff, the way it's handled and maintained, the people involved in things like collecting plants, digging ginseng, even other activities like even hunting, your made to feel like a second class citizen because of the way that they're enforced. And the way that I was taught, not only by my family, but now, when I was in school, you know, we was taught what was the basis for the American system. We don't have any second class citizens. People's not to be regarded that way and stuff like that...that seems to be like maybe, my underlying complaint...Like one night when I went coon hunting, near of a national park, about three miles before I got to the national park, I was blue lighted by a park ranger and I, you know, back in the sixties or seventies everybody, the hippy generation was being taught their rights? Well I got to thinking I had some rights to, and I learned from some of the hippy generation a law officer needs a reason to stop you – I didn't know that before. So the park ranger come up to my vehicle, so I thought, I's sharp, I said why did you stop me? And he said, well, I'll tell you the real reason I stopped you. He said it's about 15 to one in the night, he said there's nobody usually out here of a night except drunks, white trash, and poachers, and I wanted to see which category you fit into (Bill Elliot, born 1947).

Furthermore, in the minds of many local people there are few justifications for restricting one's access to resources. This is particularly true of those that prefer working in the woods to other kinds of employment and who are from families that have been accustomed to being able to freely harvest nontimber forest products in the past.

Another way in which USFS permits sometimes seem ineffective or inconsistent among gatherers is the way in which permits for certain plants are available in some districts and not others. For instance, one person interviewed said that you can't buy a moss permit in the Wayah District but that you can buy a ginseng permit there. This individual doesn't feel as though this makes sense because they believe that ginseng is scarce relative to moss in this particular district and that ginseng takes longer than log moss to grow back. Such comments illustrate that individuals do not understand the different ways in which the USFS monitors various resources. The current strategies being used to adhere to current management goals for the Wayah district are different than those being used in the Cheoah district. Moss permits are being sold, but only within timber harvest units (Gary Kaufman, personal communication). These kinds of ideas and sentiments among harvesters may be symptomatic of a lack of motivation to learn about how and why the area around them is managed, it also points to a weakness in the USFS. Educating the communities that they are involved with is as much their responsibility as it is the harvesters to learn the rules and regulations that they are expected to adhere to.

In addition, many harvesters believe that the plant protection program (CITES licensing and inspecting) is inefficient as well. One older harvester that I interviewed has decided to never serve as a ginseng buyer in his community again because of the experience he had with the state the last time he applied for a dealer's license. This individual believes that the state lost his paperwork and then made him pay for what was their mistake. According to this person, he applied and paid for a dealer's license a few weeks before the ginseng season began. When he called to confirm his paperwork he

was told that they had his application and that he would hear from the state once they finished processing it. He waited for two more weeks and did not receive his paperwork. In the interim he began buying ginseng from his neighbors and finally had to call and request that Jim Corbin, the ginseng inspector, come and inspect the ginseng that he had spent all of his savings buying from local gatherers. He was told that Corbin could not come out to inspect his ginseng because the dealer had to have his license first, and that if he drove the \$10,000 worth of ginseng that he had to Georgia Corbin would be forced to prosecute. This buyer had to get the ginseng to Georgia by a certain time in order to sell it and get back the money he had spent buying it, and before the material deteriorated in any way since he did not have the means to store it all properly. Most established dealers have facilities in which to store and dry these materials until such bureaucratic processes can be completed. But a lot of buyers in Graham County do not because they are not established dealers and wholesalers.

Most of the people who buy ginseng in Graham County do so irregularly, and so do not go through the process of obtaining a dealers license every year. They decide to buy ginseng only during years in which other job opportunities are slow and they have some savings to work with. During the seasons they decide to act as a buyer these individuals are typically buying materials from their neighbors and family and then taking the materials to a large wholesale dealer in another county, or to a relative who has a contact in China that they can mail the product to directly. The dealer described above is such a person. He did not have any money left to buy from the diggers still coming to him, but he could not unload what he had already purchased because Corbin could not come out to inspect and certify the material that he had purchased. Though Corbin was

not legally allowed to certify the ginseng without the proper paperwork being in order, this individual was extremely frustrated and blames Corbin for his feelings about this experience. He does not want to go through this kind of an ordeal again. Buying ginseng is too risky in his opinion. According to Corbin, it is not uncommon for an individual's license to be delayed due to the bureaucratic nature of the process, but most people learn to expect this and to plan accordingly. But this does not change the fact that it is much easier for more established wholesale dealers to navigate such inefficient systems. Small-scale buyers working with a limited amount of cash flow and storage capabilities need more flexibility. It may be normal for the licensing system to get behind, but that does not make getting behind acceptable or professional, let alone respectful. In effect if not in intention, such bureaucracy penalizes low socio-economic buyers for attempting to work hard and pay their own way without federal assistance. Such situations therefore fuel resentment.

In the case of forest service permits, the formats are considered by many to be inconvenient for harvesters, perhaps unreasonably so. While there is no possible way to require the purchase of a permit and make it 'hassle free', including certain features might make some people more inclined to harvest legally. For those whose livelihoods depend on selling nontimber forest products, for instance, having to drive long distances to obtain a permit, and not being able to specify the volume that the permit is good for is not cost effective. This means that people with limited incomes must spend the time and gas money to go buy a permit, the money for the permit itself, and then the gas money to drive to a collection area to dig or pull a limited amount. They are then required to return to the ranger station to buy another permit. They can't buy a second one until after the

first one has expired, and the distances that are being traveled are often significant (30 miles or more one way).

In addition, Ginseng permits used to be good for one pound of dry ginseng, but now they are only valid for one pound of green ginseng. It takes three to four pounds of green ginseng to equal one pound of dry ginseng. A few harvesters told me that they believed more people would be willing to consider digging ginseng legally if you only had to make one trip to buy a permit and were allowed to pay an amount commensurate with the quantity that you intended to dig. It was also mentioned more than once that people wished that they could buy a moss permit that lasted for the entire length of a given season, not just for ten days.

Resource managers are skeptical of such statements. Gary Kaufman, a forest service botanist, has stated that moss permits used to be issued that were for longer periods of time, but when this was done the majority of the mossers only purchased a permit for the minimum quantity allowed (personal communication 2002). In other words, when permits were available for longer periods of time people purchased fewer permits, but just as much moss was being pulled as is being pulled now. If a harvester were to go out and harvest the total quantity allowed by their permit in one day, and if they are not approached by a forest ranger while pulling, they can simply choose not to mark what they have pulled on their permit so that they can take the same permit with them on another day before it expires. Since it is generally believed that the minimum quantities people are able to purchase a permit for can typically be gathered in one day, the idea behind changing the number of days for which a given permit is valid was to help limit the amount of illegal harvesting that is occurring.

Despite the above, some mossers argue that because it is difficult to pull moss on rainy days, and because it rains a lot in southern Appalachia, having a permit that lasted one or two months (even if you had to pay more for it) would help those most dependent on pulling moss as a means of making a living. They continue to argue that more people would harvest legally if they were able to pay more for a permit that lasted longer, and allowed them to pull a larger quantity. The extent to which such statements are true probably varies greatly among individuals and would depend on the prices involved. For instance, Gary Kaufman (2002) has asked me whether these harvesters would be willing to spend \$90 for a permit that was valid for one pound of dry ginseng. I believe that this is highly unlikely. Most people who dig ginseng do not end up harvesting enough to equal one pound of dry ginseng, and those who are willing to work hard enough to dig one or more pounds of dry ginseng are typically doing so because they do not have the capital to pay ninety dollars for a permit. Since they have no guarantee that they will be able to sell their roots for enough money to offset such an expense, people who are only marginally economically stable or only dig ginseng for fun are not likely to purchase a permit that costs very much money. Raising permit prices to such a degree would also exacerbate current resentment and conflicts. It would reinforce the idea that ‘the government’ was working to undermine mountain people’s way of life.

People currently buy moss permits that last for ten days. In this region, all of these days may end up being rainy, or the dry periods may not end up being sufficient to harvest moss. If moss is significantly saturated with water, it is too heavy to handle. If harvesters are blessed with several days of manageable weather, but they can only buy a permit that is good for a quantity that they can pull in one day, they can’t afford to

harvest legally. Not if pulling moss is their primary means of earning a living. If they are not allowed to buy an additional permit until after the one that they have has expired (after ten days), and they have good weather but have pulled all that their permit allows on the first or second day, they can't always afford to wait a week or more before going out to pull again. To some extent this is the USFS's objective. They are mandated to manage resources for specific purposes and are attempting to do so. The problem has been that management goals have been set without acknowledging and being sensitive to the ways in which these goals often hurt local people. The anger and resentment that is directed at the USFS is therefore not surprising.

In addition to these two systems often seeming inconvenient, ineffective, or inefficient, there is a general feeling that low income mountain people trying to make an honest living are being made to pay for the wants of more privileged 'outsiders'. Environmentalists, from the standpoint of many local gatherers, have been able to do things like prevent the removal of pine trees dying of insect infestations. These trees, it is believed, could have been selectively logged and salvaged in order to provide valuable income to unemployed Graham County residents. Harvesters want to know why a fuss is being made about the dying or dead trees, but a fuss was not made to treat them or to prevent the spread of the infestation. They also blame the USFS for this calamity because it chose to plant so many pine trees, a monocrop. Monocrop's are inherently susceptible to such diseases, and pine trees are not the best species to plant if you want to maintain the ecology of the area. It therefore sounds hypocritical to harvesters for the USFS to turn around and accuse harvesters of disturbing the ecology of the region by over-harvesting ginseng and moss.

The planting of hardwoods and other species would encourage the presence of marketable nontimber forest products, whereas pine trees do not. Despite such observations, gatherers feel as though they are the ones that receive all of the blame for the fact that ginseng populations are diminishing. Many also feel as though it is being suggested that their family traditions are wrong, and feel as though they are often punished for having them. "...I'd like to claim kind of a little bit older way of life. You supposed to have the freedom to do that, and there is too many things occurring that conflicts with that. From pursuing that, you know (Bill Elliot, born 1947)." The ongoing conflicts that many individuals continue to experience make them feel as though the government and environmentalists are going out of their way to prevent people from being able to earn a living harvesting nontimber forest products.

Harvesters that I have spoken with admit that some plants, including ginseng, have been over-harvested in many areas. They do not believe that these changes are entirely their fault, however, or that the NPS or USFS is necessarily managing public land in a way that will improve the current status of these plant populations. They also believe that local families should be able to afford to gather nontimber forest products as a form of recreation if they want to. Many feel as though this attitude is justified because they see themselves as being the ones who pay for these resources. They are angered by the idea that these resources are managed primarily in order to please tourists who do not bear the brunt of the cost of maintaining them. The extent to which these ideas are true can be debated, but the beliefs are real and therefore need to be acknowledged.

It has been argued that in counties where there is a large percentage of public lands managed by the USFS (80% in Graham County) there tend to be high taxes, low

public services, and a relatively small number of people residing in these counties to pay the taxes (Kahn 1978). In Graham County, most of these people are also frequently unemployed. And, “Unlike the national forests of the Western United States, which produce valuable old-growth saw timber, the Appalachian national forests have in the past produced trees suitable only for pulpwood (Kahn 1978).” Pulpwood that is obtained by clear-cutting yields very little revenue per acre relative to saw timber that is selectively cut and can be logged again in ten years as opposed to thirty (Kahn 1978).

“Aside from the low revenue which this gives to counties, the problem with this system is that it makes ‘25% Fund’ payments – on which counties must depend to help finance roads and schools – completely dependent on an arbitrary factor: how much wood the forest service decides to cut that year (Kahn 1978).” This creates a bind for local residents. Many are opposed to clear-cutting large tracts of land, but feel pressured to approve high rates of timber-cutting. In addition, in 1972, “The average payment per acre for all national forests in all states was 58 cents. The average payment per acre for all Appalachian national forests was 13.5 cents, less than one fourth the national average (Kahn 1978)!” There is little doubt that this history has ultimately benefited outsiders more than it has the people who were living in these counties when these national forests were first established. The,

...Public Land Law Review Commission in its 1970 report to the President and Congress concluded: While benefits are national, the geographical distribution of the Federal lands makes their burdens regional and local, and, in general, Federal ownership of public lands provides no distinguishable benefits to state and local governments in lieu of the benefits they would receive if the lands were privately owned (cited in Kahn 1978).

As things stand now, the few people who feel compelled to harvest nontimber forest products in order to earn a living do not believe that they can afford to do it legally.

Some will concede that this is partly due to the fact that some species like ginseng are difficult to find, and that they have been too heavily harvested. Such concessions typically coincide (or compete) with a belief that harvesting nontimber forest products is an honest, respectable way of earning a living and one that it is within their rights to pursue. Discussions about harvesting scarce resources are also complicated by the above perception that the USFS could do a better job of managing wild populations of nontimber forest products in national forests. If national forests were managed properly, they argue, some resources would not be as scarce as they currently are. These debates are likely to intensify in the future.

New Policy Initiatives

In an effort to struggle with new mandates, the USFS is in the process of outlining some new policies and proposals. In 1994 the Washington D.C. office of the U.S. Forest Service put together the first national document focusing on nontimber forest products (Antypas et al. 2002). It is a draft for a future strategic plan that was drawn up as a partial response to the increased commercial demand for nontimber forest products that developed during the 1980's, and is the recognition of the important ecological role that these species play in forest ecosystems. More recently, during the fall of 1999, the U.S. Congress made the Forest Service the first federal land management agency to receive a legislative mandate regarding how it should manage nontimber forest products (Antypas et al. 2002). The provisions outlined in this mandate will have dramatic consequences for the raw botanicals industry if it is implemented broadly.

These provisions include fees for harvesting nontimber forest products that are at least equivalent to their fair market value and also include the costs of running the permitting system, including those associated with environmental or other analyses; analyses to determine whether nontimber

forest product harvesting in national forests is sustainable; a prohibition against unsustainable harvest levels; and a special account for the fees so they can be redistributed back to the originating administrative unit to administer nontimber forest product programs and conduct nontimber forest product inventories, studies, and restoration activities (Antypas et al. 2002).

This strategic plan signifies a progressive understanding and appreciation of the role that nontimber forest products play in the ecosystems found on public lands, but not a particularly erudite understanding of the social systems involved. It will be extremely difficult to actually implement. Any ginseng dealer will tell you that it is almost impossible to predict what ginseng buyers in China are going to be willing to pay for this raw product from one week to the next during ginseng season. Figuring out when to sell your ginseng is a large part of the challenge that diggers face, and is a significant factor in the strategies used to decide whether or when to dig it. In addition, there is currently little understanding of what sustainable harvesting methods and quantities are, or even of what healthy populations of many species involved should look like. Except for ginseng and American Chestnut, most people do not have a concept, and there is not a written record, of the extent and abundance of nontimber forest products in the past or the present. So there is currently no way of establishing what 'sustainable' or 'unsustainable' is.

This plan will also undoubtedly provoke hostility from traditional harvesters and present a challenge to contemporary wildcrafters. Unlike most of the situations faced by public land managers in the west, in Graham County much of the land that is now considered to be national forest was privately owned in the recent past. People have relatives that are buried on this land and feel as though they have rights that have been unjustly revoked. In the west, much of the land in question had not been privatized until

the federal government claimed ownership of it, and apart from special privileges that are negotiated for American Indians, the people utilizing these resources are not coming from a cultural milieu in which they have always had access to or been reliant on harvesting nontimber forest products in what are now national forests.

“Regulations in the U.S. Forest Service Manual (USFSM) explicitly state that nontimber forest products can be sold ‘where it will serve local needs and meet land management objectives’ (USFSM 2567.02) set forth in forest plans, subject to fees at fair market value when this is ‘practical’ (USFSM 2467.03)” (Antypas et al. 2002). To date it has not been practical to charge fair market values, and in some cases not even possible. If this were to change in the immediate future and attempts made to charge harvesters the true cost of managing nontimber forest products, in addition to their fair market value during any given year, many harvesters would not be able to afford, and would no longer buy, permits. But it is probable that some would continue to harvest nontimber forest products from public lands. The USFS would need to spend a huge amount of money to enforce such policies. More staff would be required to patrol national forest land, and the cost of prosecuting harvesting violations could drive up the price of permits even more. The USFS would have to make sure that the risks associated with poaching far outweighed the benefits. This could prove to be difficult for everyone involved.

Both traditional harvesters and the USFS are experiencing a period of dramatic change in a very short amount of time. Changes are occurring that demand quick responses from people and institutions, the consequence being that these responses are rarely well funded, thought out or wisely implemented. People have been required to act without knowing or understanding all of the issues at hand, or the full consequences of

their behavior. Individuals have continued to need to find ways of earning a living when faced with new laws, decreasing plant populations, and diminishing employment opportunities. The USFS has been required to enforce and implement new management goals with little funding or research to inform the creation of new policies and guidelines. Neither harvesters or the USFS feel as though they have been as successful in meeting their respective goals as they would like to be, and most people involved in harvesting or land management feel as though they are continually being thwarted, and in some cases as though they are being asked to do the impossible. These feelings will probably continue since it is clear that many more changes will take place in the immediate future. The forms that they will take are still uncertain.

One of the options that the USFS and USFWS must continually consider is banning the harvest of individual species. Because it is a CITES listed plant, this is particularly true of ginseng. If more were known about relative population sizes and structures for ginseng since 1700, we would probably find that ginseng is at least a threatened, if not an endangered, species in this country. But banning the commercial harvest of it in the wild would probably only result in a black market trade that would push the price being offered for it up even more, making it even more profitable - if more risky - to harvest. The Chinese demand for this product would simply not diminish with a change in the legal status of harvesting it.

Managing ginseng is complicated in that Chinese ginseng dealers would be willing to go to great lengths and expense to obtain this culturally important traditional medicinal. The precedent for this has already been seen in the illegal trade in bear gall bladders that has occurred in this country. There is an international market for bear parts,

particularly gall bladders. The bile found in bear gall bladders is used in traditional Chinese medicine to treat some, "...cancers, burns, pain and redness of the eyes, asthma, sinusitis and pain in general (TRAFFIC International 1995)." Black bears in southern Appalachia have been particularly susceptible to this illegal trade (National Audubon Society 1989). However, the commercial significance of species such as moss and galax is of a very different nature; these plants serve a function without being imbued with great cultural significance or power. Regulating such species involves a slightly different set of issues.

Eliminating the commercial harvest of moss on USFS land would surely result in resentment and reprisals. An alternative means of making a living that is *as satisfying* and profitable to current moss pullers as harvesting moss is would need to be available before this could be successfully accomplished. This would presumably be the case with galax and moss harvesters in neighboring counties as well. One question then becomes, is it possible to eliminate the commercial sale of galax and moss without irrevocably and permanently injuring the florist trade in the United States? It is unlikely that the florist industry would be willing to go to great expense developing a high risk black market trade in galax or moss, though there are surely issues pertaining to galax and moss of which I am unaware. Regardless of what these issues might be, however, they probably do not have the significance that ginseng does to the Chinese market.

Banning all commercial trade of moss in order to preserve the nation's natural heritage and ecological well being would also eliminate the challenge (if it does indeed exist) of preventing drug abusers from over-harvesting populations in order to support themselves. Controlling such behavior is impossible without adequate treatment and

recovery programs for substance abusers, something which is beyond the mandate of the USFS. Moss is the only species that currently brings a large enough price quickly and relatively easily, so it is believed to be the only species (the only one indigenous to the mountains) that might be heavily and consistently affected by the behavior of substance abusers. But it must also be kept in mind that the loss of this source of revenue could result in increases in certain kinds of criminal activity, and would negatively affect the livelihoods of many families in the county who supplement their incomes by pulling moss. If this were to happen, it would be appropriate for county residents to be compensated in some *satisfying* way for the loss of this source of revenue.

In other counties in western North Carolina the intensity of ramp harvesting has caused land managers to become worried. As was mentioned earlier, some of the festivals that have been held over the course of the past five years or so have become very large, requiring greater and greater quantities of ramps. Migrant Latino workers have begun harvesting for these events, and are selling ramps to restaurants as well. If this trend continues, these harvesters will most likely move into more remote areas like Graham County once ramps become scarce elsewhere. Because of this, the USFS is considering banning the harvest of ramps in some areas. Similar issues have also arisen around galax and log moss.

Galax and log moss are not currently being harvested by migrant workers in Graham County. A few migrant workers (under 30 in 2003) live in the county and are taking English as a second language classes at a local church, but for the most part they are contract laborers. However, as with ramps, there are business practices in neighboring counties that encourage migrants, especially Latino workers, to harvest

nontimber forest products. During the course of two seasons galax has experienced impacts from heavy harvesting on the escarpment in North Carolina, largely due to an influx of migrant workers (Gary Kaufman, personal communication). It is believed that much of this harvesting was instigated by employers such as apple growers who wanted to keep the workers busy during days that were not suitable for picking apples. They paid the workers a set amount for every garbage bag full of leaves that they pulled and brought back. Now that these workers know that these products exist and know where to find them they may eventually seek out these products in new areas on their own. Florist quality galax is not typically found in Graham County and is therefore not a large concern, but log moss and ramps are.

Other options that are being explored include studying precedents currently being set in the western United States using stewardship contracting (Ringold 2002). The USFS does not have a source of revenue that is large enough or consistent enough to subsidize such land management objectives as reforestation and brush removal. Ringold (2002) argues that many small business are well equipped to perform such tasks and that they could simultaneously profit from sustainably harvesting many nontimber forest products. If such small businesses could be identified and paired with existing land stewardship needs, both the USFS and local communities could benefit. But this type of contracting is still in the experimental stages and has not been applied on a large scale. Where they have been applied they have made, "...use of the following mechanisms: end-results objectives rather than rigid specifications to define contract activities; the use of cooperative agreements and research authorities; and the bundling of management services and product sales within a single contract (Ringold 2002)." There should be no

reason why the use of the above contracting principals could not be an affective way of promoting ecosystem health while at the same time supporting local communities or cooperatives. It would provide an incentive for people to help police given areas themselves so that poaching could be limited, and for individuals to harvest sustainably so that their livelihoods could be maintained.

I wish to conclude with a note about wildcrafting. If commercial trade in wild harvested nontimber forest products were to become increasingly regulated or prohibited except for personal use, wildcrafting as I have described it in Chapter 4 would characterize the future of the natural plant products industry in the United States. Digging and herb gathering would cease to be a means by which economically marginal households could partially sustain themselves. This would be due to an increasing lack of access to the resources in question and the rising cost of buying permits and/or breaking laws. Wildcrafting would become a small business enterprise with few practitioners because it is capital and labor intensive relative to former means of wild harvesting, and because it involves more economic risk to the wildcrafter.

Unless FDA regulations pertaining to natural medicines change, dealing in raw botanicals will remain a small niche industry, but new sets of skills will be required to be successful in it. Wildcrafters will have to cultivate and/or manage populations of the botanicals that they choose to sell on private property or through contractual agreements with authorities along the lines of the stewardship contracting principles described above. The impact that such changes could have on communities in southern Appalachia that are already economically depressed should be closely scrutinized and evaluated. Though it is true that very few families rely solely on nontimber forest products for their living, many

do supplement their incomes pulling moss or digging ginseng enough to prevent them from having to rely on social services or from having to sell their land. It would not be fair or constructive to further eliminate potential sources of revenue for local people without compensating them for the loss. Even with compensation there will be conflict. In the end, regulating these resources is a means of prohibiting people from utilizing a chosen lifestyle and way of being. In many ways it forces them to conform to a system whose values they do not respect. And it is often unjustly accomplished.

Literally cultivating a close relationship with experienced harvesters who have a vested interest in - and a history with - a given area will produce a different outcome than working solely with wildcrafters will. Determining whether to work with one of these two communities, or some combination of the two, should be based on the long term objectives being targeted. It will not be productive to assume that all harvesters are alike. What motivates one digger is not what motivates another. Engaging in stewardship contracts with inexperienced harvesters will not produce the same results that working with old timers and experienced, traditional harvesters would. By the same token, the needs and wants of people who I characterize as being wildcrafters are different than those of diggers. Relationships with a variety of harvesting communities may be fruitful, but these differences should be kept in mind. The results will differ, and therefore so should the immediate objectives and expectations associated with them.

As will be seen in the following chapter, there are people in Graham County who are very interested in remaining and who want to be able to earn a living utilizing forest resources. Even though the only nontimber forest products that are consistently harvested in the county are ginseng and moss, as new markets open up people are readily

willing to adapt to them. At least one buyer has recently offered to buy bloodroot and people have responded by going out and digging it or collecting the seeds. What people have chosen to harvest has been limited by their access to markets and by the price being offered for a given product, not by their lack of ability or interest. It is the multiple livelihood strategy being used and market fluctuations that are primarily influencing the degree to which individual species are being harvested. It is therefore worthwhile to consider this dynamic for a large variety of species, not just those currently being harvested.

CHAPTER 7

FREE CONSUMERS VERSUS FREE MARKETS: SMOKY MOUNTAIN NATIVE PLANT ASSOCIATION'S (SMNPA) CONTESTED TERRAIN

The previous chapters have identified several points of conflict between Graham County locals and outsiders. These conflicts involve differences between the perspectives of diggers and public land managers, and popular conceptions of wildcrafting compared to those of various root diggers and herb gatherers. In this chapter I will describe some aspects of these tensions more fully by focusing on a series of disputes that arose between members of Smoky Mountain Native Plant Association (SMNPA). Interacting with this organization and participating in its meetings afforded a unique opportunity to observe relationships between locals, 'new locals' (people who are not 'from' Graham County but who reside here year round), and outsiders.

Smoky Mountain Native Plant Association evolved out of an attempt by Yellow Creek Botanical Institute (YCBI) to involve local diggers in a sustainable economic development project that it had initiated. After obtaining its non-profit status in 1997, YCBI began trying to envision ways of utilizing Graham County's natural resources in a way that would provide stable incomes for county residents. Particular interest was focused on medicinal plants indigenous to the region. The director of YCBI began this endeavor by meeting with Randy Collins, a NC State Agricultural Extension representative in Graham County, and representative from another non-profit called Center for Participatory Change (CPC). The three entities decided to attempt to organize

a group of local people interested in harvesting or cultivating some of the plants in question. The hope was that these individuals would actively participate in discussions about how to go about collecting, researching, cultivating, and marketing medicinal plants in a sustainable fashion, and perhaps eventually form a co-operative to achieve whatever ends the group agreed upon. What resulted from this effort provides an interesting vantage from which to consider processes operating throughout the county as a whole.

As in all cross-cultural settings, differing conceptions of the world and how people should behave come into conflict when outsiders and locals interact in Graham County. Ideally, such conflict affords individuals the opportunity to learn about themselves and each other, and to thereby gain a fuller understanding of the issues at hand. In reality, people are seldom able to identify and clearly articulate what is truly at the heart of any given argument. People are typically motivated by objectives that are so plainly true or obvious (to them) that they are literally unconscious of the assumptions that they are making. What is 'obvious' to one group of people is not always obvious to another, and vice versa. For instance, when members of SMNPA speak of earning a living, individuals are often articulating conceptually very different things, but believe that what they want is what everyone in the group wants. Or at least, what they would want if they really 'understood' the problem of economic development.

Without always specifically saying so, outsiders believe a stable income stems from building a career or full-time endeavor that yields consistent cash income. When locals discuss earning a stable living they are frequently visualizing the coordination of a variety of activities that may or may not involve cash, any kind of debt for capital

investment, or a regular work schedule. When speaking directly to one another about ‘earning a living’, the respective parties are often assuming that they each understand what this means, and that it is obvious what their respective goals are. But this is not the case.

Within SMNPA, as throughout the county, many sets of ideas are currently being contested. These include:

- Ideas about what it means to be from Graham County.
- Appropriate ways of earning a living.
- The degree to which autonomy and self-sufficiency is valued.
- What it means to have a ‘stable’ income.
- What kind of labor is valued.
- Appropriate patterns of consumption.
- Appropriate ways of doing business.
- Ideas about reciprocity and participation.
- Appropriate forms of regulation.
- What it means to be ‘free’.
- The degree to which profit margins are prioritized when making business decisions.
- What are and are not appropriate forms and structures of power.

What has transpired began when, in November of the year 2000, YCBI, CPC, and the Graham County office of the NC Agriculture Extension organized a meeting of a handful of local men interested in native plants. Some of these individuals were well known ginseng diggers and moss pullers, others were best known for their interest in

cultivating a variety of plants. All of those present were locals (other than the director of YCBI and the representative from CPC) except for Jerry Coleman and Ila Hatter, who were invited both because Ila was on YCBI's board of directors at the time, and because she and Jerry conduct research and educational programming that focuses on the use of wild plants and local heritage. Because of this, they were believed to be inherently interested parties.

The people present expressed an interest in having a venue in which to learn from one another's experiences growing native plants, and in identifying opportunities for selling their various products. They eventually began meeting regularly to listen to guest speakers arranged by YCBI. As time went on the various activities that were being arranged by YCBI, CPC, and NC Agricultural Extension began being promoted county and state wide, and the group became known as Smoky Mountain Native Plant Association (SMNPA). Once this happened, outsiders began to join the group and to dominate many of its activities.

Eventually the membership included a retired school teacher from Florida who was interested in learning about and promoting native plants and local heritage, a couple who moved to the mountains in order to be 'off the grid' for ethical reasons and to feel safe from world events, a counselor seeking a means of living in the mountains full-time in order to escape city life, a few other retired professionals from various parts of the United States interested in being involved in the local community, and researchers working for North Carolina State University, among others. The members that were born and raised in the county soon became a minority. As this happened, the group's agenda

and the priorities that were being set during annual meetings began to shift away from the things that were of most interest to old locals.

In essence, old locals were concerned with maintaining a particular way of life and preserving aspects of their community that they took great pride in. Some old locals felt as though it was becoming impossible to live like ‘mountain people’. But they wanted to teach people about mountain life because they believe that it has more to offer than the alternatives being presented to them. However, once CPC was able to obtain operating funds for the group in the form of grant money, more people became interested in participating in the group, and the dictates of the funding agencies began to structure many of the group’s activities. The people who were most comfortable with granting agencies and how they function were outsiders. Because of this, it was mostly outsiders who initially utilized (or directed the use of) the group’s grant money and created a demand for more. These same people dominated conversations about what types of grants were most relevant to the overall goals of the organization.

The various reasons for this are complex and many. A detailed analyses of the events that took place and the dynamics present would be valuable, but is beyond the scope of this study. For now it will have to suffice to say that all members of the group were welcomed and that there was no inherent animosity between locals and outsiders. Most people were happy to be able to share a common interest in learning about native plants and were thankful for the opportunity to learn from one another. As the group grew, however, it became apparent that conflicting priorities were present that symbolized greater tensions mounting between locals and outsiders in the county. These conflicts expressed themselves in the form of two major fights that divided the group

between 2000 and 2004. One conflict revolved around the group's history and sense of ownership and identity, the other around the group's purpose for being. These were both issues that were of a very personal nature to those involved.

The first storm of contention that consumed the group came to a head during the summer of 2001. Generally speaking, there came a point at which locals no longer wanted to work with, or be associated with, YCBI in any way. Many outsiders, however, valued the contributions that had been made by YCBI and seemed baffled by the hostility being directed towards the non-profit's director. Only a couple of people not born and raised in Graham County were opposed to interacting with YCBI, but these were individuals who had similar livelihoods, and relatively long histories with Graham County locals and politics.

As an active member of SMNPA during this time period, I witnessed many heated interactions that took place. In hindsight, I wish that I had taken better notes and that I had recorded many of the conversations that I had with people during this time period. However, as these events were unfolding my primary research focus was on a very different set of questions, not on the politics of SMNPA. I was also too caught up in these events to be able to analyze them critically at the time. It was not until after I had struggled to make sense of my experiences from a distance that I was able to formulate what I believe to be interesting and important questions. In addition, though the lack of recorded interviews is some cause for regret, the atmosphere at the time included a degree of suspicion and hostility that might only have been intensified by an attempt to introduce a tape recorder. The matters at hand were too important to those involved for me to be allowed to reduce the significance of the debate into what was, from the

perspective of my fellow SMNPA members, merely a school paper. They were anxious to act, not sit down and be interviewed.

Because of the above, at this point in time it would be impossible to outline the exact series of events that occurred, or the specific reasons behind them. Many different individuals and groups were acting simultaneously, and few were upfront about what they were doing or how they were feeling. What can be said for sure is that a general climate of suspicion, distrust, and misunderstanding became directed at YCBI among people in Graham County. By the time a dispute arose within SMNPA, several board members had left YCBI's board of directors. People left for a variety of reasons, all stemming from disagreements over the future goals and management of the institute. Among other things, some felt as though the director needed to keep them better informed about the institute's operations, others felt strongly that the goals of the non-profit would be severely compromised unless it owned the property on which its long term research projects were being conducted.

While these conflicts were brewing, YCBI received several respectable grants totaling over \$200,000. These were to go towards fulfilling its mission of sustainable economic development in western North Carolina. Because of this, YCBI's director was spending a lot of time promoting the organizations achievements both within and outside of the county. Among YCBI's successes the director repeatedly listed the establishment of a local group of potential growers, harvesters, and processors called SMNPA. The local newspaper printed news stories to this effect in an attempt to generate more local interest in YCBI and its endeavors. What became interesting about this is the very different ways in which YCBI came to be perceived by local residents compared to non-

residents. Within SMNPA, a division also formed between locals and outsiders who live in the county.

Once YCBI began being more heavily promoted, many people in the county felt antagonistically towards the enterprise. Some of these feelings first stemmed from a dislike of the county commissioners and their associated policies (Robin Suggs had worked with one of them). Others did not understand why the institute had been given so much money, or what was being done with that money. Since the mission of Yellow Creek Botanical Institute was supposed to be to make things better for people in Graham County, people did not understand why they hadn't seen any visible attempt to achieve this end. Many people said that they suspected the money had been wasted, others believed that it had been misused (spent on expensive vacations, among other things). Some of the individuals in question had little or no understanding of how grant money is obtained or the ways in which granting agencies dictate how the funds that they provide are to be used. Others were deeply rooted in county politics and/or had agendas which they believed necessitated hindering the efforts of YCBI's director. Locals did not see any physical evidence to suggest how the money had been spent because much of the money was being spent outside of the county. A significant amount of the grant money had been ear-marked to pay experts to conduct feasibility studies and to begin research on how to cultivate some of the species that were being considered as potential products.

In part because of the above, when a newspaper article was run that confused the activities of SMNPA with those of YCBI, several locals who were members of SMNPA were very upset. It was very important to them that YCBI not get credit for any activities that they rightly saw as being the fruit of their own labor. By the time that this mistake

was made, the group was largely self-sufficient and was not being supervised by YCBI in any way. Even more suspicions were aroused when it became widely known that the acting treasurer of the group, Rob Jordan, was being paid for some of the time he spent working with SMNPA. People saw this as an effort of YCBI to control the group's activities in some way. In truth, Jordan was (and everybody knew this) a YCBI employee at the time and had begun working with the group at the time of its inception. Since YCBI's director was out of town and could not be at the meetings a lot of the time, Rob Jordan began attending in his place. However, Rob is a local resident who is well liked. He joined the group of his own accord and did not get paid for much of the work that he did, and he was elected to be treasurer by the membership, not YCBI. But the combination of these and other events raised some suspicions nonetheless. It provided some of those who were concerned with something that they could claim as evidence of wrong doing.

Locals did not want to be associated with YCBI for several reasons. Some interpreted the misprinted newspaper article as an attempt by YCBI's director to take credit for what were their own accomplishments. Some wanted to make it clear that the group was autonomous and that YCBI had no say in what the SMNPA membership thought or did. Others were offended at the idea that YCBI's director would try to use the success of the group to get more money for himself or YCBI. Most of this stemmed from misconceptions about how and why YCBI was doing what it was doing. As mentioned earlier, people knew that the money that YCBI was receiving was not being spent in the county itself (other than to pay YCBI's director and Rob Jordan), and some individuals harbored negative feelings towards the director personally, and towards his

efforts working with one of the county commissioners on a long range economic plan for the county, among other things.

On the other hand, SMNPA members who were outsiders tended to think well of YCBI's director and what he was promoting through YCBI. Many had gone out of their way to attend conferences that YCBI had organized and funded, and had sought out the director for various kinds of help and advice about growing native plants on their land - which they had generously received. Few of them were very active in local politics or were aware of the director's history in the county from the perspective of locals. Furthermore, the outsiders in the group understood that in order to receive more funding from grantors in the future, SMNPA had to be perceived as a community organization that was able to work in conjunction with other local groups trying to meet similar objectives. The resulting debates that ensued between locals and outsiders over how their group was initiated and why, and over whether or not SMNPA should work with YCBI in the future, brought these differences into stark relief.

This dispute culminated in a vote of the membership as to whether or not SMNPA would continue to be associated with YCBI in any way. The vote came out in favor of discontinuing the group's relationship with YCBI, and an article was printed in the local newspaper making a statement to this effect. Outsiders were angered and disappointed by this because they felt that many of the people who had showed up at the meeting to vote were locals who had not been active members for a long time. It was believed that they had been called and asked to attend this particular meeting and by locals (and specifically the group's running president) who had been attending regularly. It was also felt that these individuals who showed up had little understanding as to the nature of the

group's differences and therefore little basis on which to responsibly vote. Furthermore, outsiders felt as though the tone of the article that was printed in the newspaper declaring SMNPA's autonomy was mean spirited, immature, and not constructive.

Locals, on the other hand, felt as though some of the outsiders were operating conspiratorially with Robin to manipulate the group into supporting YCBI and its long-term plans. After the vote to completely disassociate itself from YCBI had taken place, a visiting professor and researcher from North Carolina State University that had been invited to speak to the group about bloodroot joined SMNPA. In addition, so did a local school teacher working on projects pertaining to native plants with high school students. Since both of these individuals were known to have worked with Robin Suggs and YCBI, some locals felt that there was a conspiracy within the group to allow YCBI to somehow take over and run SMNPA. They also felt this way because some members had chosen to continue assisting YCBI. Many of them had agreed to allow study plots to become established on their private property, for instance. In the end, SMNPA's president, John Carswell, quit abruptly and without notice, and individuals on both sides of the debate quit attending meetings.

The question that I am posing is whether the extreme emotions that were involved in this ordeal were really about YCBI, or even it's director, or whether they are more indicative of deeper, more important debates taking place in the county. For YCBI to be perceived as a threat, and for the division that occurred to have separated outsiders from locals to the degree that it did, more had to be at stake than just who did or did not conceptualize and found SMNPA. As an outsider who is not actively involved in Graham County community life, the director of YCBI has no real power or social capital

within the county. He can therefore only be a threat symbolically, in terms of what he may represent. Alternatively, he could be perceived as someone who was misrepresenting Graham County people or their interests. It is one thing to simply not like somebody, quite another to be moved to act in the ways that members of SMNPA did during 2001. His isolation from community life makes the director, and therefore YCBI, easy for locals to distrust. In turn, this also makes it easy for people to imbue YCBI with all kinds of meaning and significance that it may or may not have.

Unfortunately, locals equate the kind of venture that YCBI represents with other money-making endeavors that have been proposed and funded by outsiders, some of which were run by people who are believed to have disappeared as soon as they had received the money for their proposed plans, and before they had even initiated their project. People who would do this sort of thing are viewed as being crooks that have profited from the fact that Graham County is largely undeveloped and has a high unemployment rate. Since very few people actually know the director of YCBI personally, it is easy for them to suspect that YCBI might turn out to be a similar kind of venture. It is my feeling that those who have interacted with the director are willing to work with him in order to earn a little extra income from time to time, but they are also skeptical of what YCBI might stand for. They like the general ideas being presented by YCBI, but believe that they are too good to be true.

Well, actually, I believe that the people was in a hundred percent support of all we seen that was printed our newspaper, what the attempts was to do. But, it seemed like it was presented, a lot of people has learnt if something sounds too good to be true it usually is. It seemed to be promoted as - and there would be a reality to it, a good income derived from native plants - mainly through growing 'em and cultivating 'em. And some of the early articles indicated that families could make good income. Like growing plants like black cohosh. And, as it was presented to be, people was fully, 100 percent supportive of the ideals (Bill Elliot, born 1947).

A North Carolina state forest representative was particularly opposed to YCBI and its continued presence in 2001. I asked him point blank, “Do you believe it is wrong to be doing research to support cultivating native plants in Graham County in order to develop new ways for people to earn a living?” He said no. He stated that his opposition was directed towards YCBI’s director, not the mission of YCBI. When I asked other locals similar questions I got similar responses, though most admitted that they did not really know much about YCBI or its director. Many were just not convinced that YCBI was doing anything that could ultimately benefit ‘mountain people’ because they did not see any evidence to this effect.

Why would this be the case? When asked, most residents simply stated that they did not believe that what YCBI was proposing could work. Farming in general, and growing medicinal plants, in particular, is thought to be both difficult and risky. However, many also stated that if someone were to prove to them that they could make a living doing it, they would. It is tempting to sum up local resistance as a symptom of ignorance, or as simply an unwillingness to conform to outsider’s ways of doing things, but I believe Halperin’s (1990) modeling of multiple livelihood strategies in northeastern Kentucky to be more informative in this case.

Graham County closely mirrors the areas that Halperin (1990) characterizes as ‘deep rural’, where people live by what they call ‘the Kentucky way’. The Kentucky way closely resembles the ways of mountain people in western North Carolina.

At its core the Kentucky (Mountain) way is about maintaining livelihood and maintaining rural culture. It includes commitments to kin, to hard work and self-sufficiency, to freedom and to the land, to generosity and reciprocity, and to certain kinds of practical knowledge. Economic knowledge itself is based on rural skills, but most important it involves knowing something about everything within the appropriate male and female domains, many of which are overlapping.

On one level, local knowledge translates into being “a jack of all trades: and should be understood as a positive and self-conscious effort by people to maintain a general repertoire of skills. People resist becoming specialists who must rely on others to perform tasks for them. Self-sufficiency is extremely important to people in this region, for it is a strategy of self-reliance, a mark of one’s versatility and flexibility and one’s ingenuity and cleverness. In this region self-reliance does not serve to isolate people. It is *not individualistic* or self-serving. Rather, it is a form of outreach to kin and to neighbors in the context of offering multiple goods and services in multiple arenas. The fact that people are so versatile creates great *flexibility* for livelihood strategies. Not only can people choose easily between various work tasks, they can switch from one task to another in accordance with the needs of family members and with the opportunities made available through kinship ties (Halperin 1990: 11). (emphasis added)

Like the Kentucky way, mountain people also tend to avoid conspicuous consumption, try to remain debt free (especially those involved in agrarian enterprises), they do not believe that any form of formal employment will provide an adequate or reliable income, they try to retain control over their day-to-day lives, and generally give freely of their time and assistance. They also participate in market systems in complex ways, but are largely anti-capitalistic in that many transactions that take place do not involve cash or generate large profit margins. Mountain people frequently barter, or exchange services. Outsiders moving into Graham County tend to think very differently about their economic activities and social status. This becomes apparent when observing discussions taking place between locals and outsiders regarding earning a living and economic development.

For example, outsider’s ideas about professionalism sometimes conflict with the need of locals to maintain a flexible schedule in order to meet family obligations and balance a variety of economic activities. Locals are also often uneasy about the pay rates that outsiders deem to be appropriate when doing things like drafting grant proposals. Outsiders expect a living wage or higher, as a mark of their expertise and skill, locals are

often uncomfortable putting a monetary value on activities that they are not accustomed to being compensated for in cash. They do not want to be perceived by other locals as being people who expect too much money for their labor. They do not wish to be underpaid, but their conception of what they should earn is frequently different than that of outsiders. It is also important to some that 'common people' be able to afford their services, since this is part of how they are able to maintain relationships with people.

Because of the above, locals sometimes seem to feel that YCBI's objectives have a particular and threatening significance that they find difficult to articulate. The fact that the director, 'talks like a businessman' and is known as being 'different', is threatening to some people. What he proposes implies a belief that people should actively participate in market systems, be like city people, and an assumption that the way they are accustomed to doing things is not good enough. Furthermore, the director is also highly individualistic in his actions. He has no family in the county, is not obviously loyal to projects outside of YCBI, and is rarely available (and is rarely even physically present in the county) to offer assistance to friends and neighbors. So, to local people YCBI symbolizes a power structure that they do not respect, while claiming to be an organization that is representing them and working with their own best interests in mind. But from the perspective of outsiders affiliated with YCBI, it is making an effort to benefit the local community.

In the context of SMNPA, this dichotomy played out under a circumstance in which outsiders identified more closely with YCBI than they did with their fellow members who were locals. Outsiders were relatively comfortable talking to researchers and other professionals about long term feasibility and market studies, whereas locals

were not. Outsiders also felt good about the concept of building on a tradition of ‘wildcrafting’ in order to create sustainable economic development in the region, another aspect of YCBI’s mission. But locals insisted that these efforts would not work, which frustrated the efforts of group members who were outsiders. As a reasonably objective observer, I can say that it is possible to create and supply a market for natural plant products created in Graham County. But because of the ways in which ideas have been presented, the possibility is also threatening to some people. Locals are correct to believe that what YCBI is proposing sounds ‘too good to be true’ in the sense that creating and manufacturing a value-added product, marketing it on a large scale, and commercial horticulture, all require that they give up the structural security that is a vital part of mountain culture. Locals feel as though they are being asked to become like outsiders, and they do not want to be represented by a person or organization that does not uphold the values of mountain people.

The fact that no great or lasting animosity resulted from the SMNPA vote to disassociate itself from YCBI, at least not between individual members, suggests that the primary issue was not to exclude an ‘outsider’ organization or to divide outsiders from locals. Rather, up until this point both locals and outsiders (which include new locals) enjoyed having a venue in which to socialize and share mutual interests. The outsiders in the group were generally more than willing to treat local farmers and diggers as experts and to seek out their advice about doing a variety of things. Soon after the group formed the membership began assisting each other on their respective properties and exchanging services. When it came to the business of running SMNPA, however, outsiders kept the

books and began the work of seeking out and writing grants, while locals were more comfortable providing materials and labor for various projects.

Therefore, at first this early dispute and the resignation of the group's president initially seemed as though it was primarily the result of an extreme distrust of YCBI. While this was certainly true on the part of a few individuals in the group, it was not true of everyone whether they were locals, outsiders, or year round residents of the county. Prior to Carswell's resignation, a degree of animosity had arisen between a few individual members because of misunderstandings, but new officers were soon elected that included both locals and outsiders, all of whom are year round residents of Graham County. Over the course of the following two years the active membership continued to be comprised of both locals and outsiders. But this was to change during the late fall of 2003.

Early in 2003 I had been asked to serve as a board member of SMNPA, which had recently applied for non-profit status as a 201cs organization in order to more affectively apply for grants. I did not, however, serve as an active, regular member of SMNPA during this year. I know about many aspects of the events that occurred during this time from regular conversations with other members, and from the minutes of the group's bi-monthly meetings. In sum, over the course of 2002 a small group of individuals primarily interested in generating income for themselves dominated the group's activities and discussions. Other aspects of the membership's mission statement were almost entirely neglected during this time. Because of this, the group lost several active members, and gained a few new ones. Those who were primarily interested in

education, outreach, local cultural heritage, and conservation for the most part quit attending meetings. Some of them had previously served as officers of the organization.

By the spring of 2003, the six individuals dominating the activities of the organization had created a value-added product with the periodic assistance of other SMNPA members. When possible, all those providing labor were paid. The equipment necessary for producing their ramp cornmeal mix was lent to the group from a variety of sources, or purchased using grant money. By summer, selling and marketing this product was the focus of many group meetings, and by fall 2003, most of SMNPA's membership had left the organization. All had left except for the six outsiders primarily involved in the production of the value-added product. What happened?

As the activities of the core group of people involved in the production of ramp corn meal mixes progressed, less and less time was invested on the aspects of SMNPA that were most valued by locals, and some outsiders. This was partly because there was one individual who was allowed to control and dominate much of the agenda for the group's regular meetings, and partly because the chief officers of SMNPA did not represent these other interests, local or otherwise. Anything not directly pertaining to creating a value added product and improving SMNPA's ability to obtain funds for this initiative was deemed to be of secondary importance by those in charge.

As a result, ill will began to be generated among and between members of the organization. The forcefulness with which the minority's interests were upheld, combined with the active disregard of the goals and interests of other segments of the group, led to a permanent split in the organization. All of the old locals who were members of SMNPA have either quit all together, or have joined a new group that was

formed by former members of SMNPA called, Appalachian Heritage Alliance (AHA). The form that the new group has taken is telling.

The new group is remaining independent, still choosing to refrain from collaborating with YCBI and SMNPA. The feuding that resulted from disagreements between individuals producing the ramp mix and those who wanted to pursue other kinds of activities has resulted in some ill will between the two groups, but in general people are still speaking to one another. On the surface these feelings are based on arguments that individuals had with each other, and the hurt feelings that resulted from the ways in which the individuals involved chose to handle these disputes. The arguments themselves, however, stem from disparate ideologies that the group has been unable to reconcile when it comes to working together to set priorities and earn a living.

The outsiders in the group are accustomed to valuing their labor strictly in terms of dollar amounts and to being concerned with bottom line profit margins. They are used to relying on a market system economy even if they do not always like supporting the kind of ideology they sometimes associate with it. Since most of the outsiders who are members of SMNPA have moved to the mountains to escape some aspects of the market economy, at least in part, many of them feel as though they identify with the problems and choices that mountain people face, and that they therefore must share similar concerns about making a living with locals. This assumption has proven to be problematic. While these outsiders are not heavily involved in profiteering and are not the heavy consumers that many manufacturers and stockholders might hope for, neither do they understand the multiple livelihood strategies utilized by many so-called 'peasant' communities, including those found in Southern Appalachia (Halperin 1990).

Take Bob and Carol Lawson, for example. They are a married couple that recently retired and moved to Graham County from southern California. They spent a long time looking at property around the country before deciding to buy several acres in Graham County. They are highly educated, very interested in nature and ecology, and are in the process of building a very nice, environmentally conscious home using environmentally friendly building materials and a Feng Shui design that they researched extensively. Doing this has required that they make a considerable cash outlay. They are interested in such things as gardening, but have only just begun establishing a site. After moving to Graham County they have supported themselves by both holding multiple wage labor positions. They have no family in the immediate area.

For Bob and Carol this situation means several things. They are accustomed to relying on a market system in order to meet their basic needs. It is also important to them to own and accumulate things that are more expensive (such as environmentally conscious building materials and methods) than what most locals in Graham County can afford themselves, which in turn increases the degree to which they must rely on a market system economy. Since they are not from Graham County and do not have kin (no 'people') from the area, they must also pay cash for the services that they need. Most locals would have been able to call a friend or family member to come and grade a house site for them, in exchange for some other form of labor, for instance, without having had to have the cash to actually pay for this service. Carol and Bob could not do this.

In addition, most locals either maintain a large subsistence garden themselves, or have a family member that does nearby. It is not uncommon for someone to have a few chickens as well. And pretty much all of the men who are locals hunt and fish regularly.

This all serves to provide a significant amount of food for local families. Few outsiders have the help with labor or the desire to maintain large gardens and put up can houses full of food for the year. Many of the people that do produce a lot of their own food have extensive family networks that can be a source of extra labor during times of the year when it is needed, like during canning season. People who put up food are also able to trade their canned goods with relatives for goods or services that they can't produce themselves. Carol and Bob cannot rely on this kind of network of relations that exists outside of the market system.

So what does this mean? In the context of SMNPA this divide has created a difference in perspective among its membership that has proven difficult to bridge. As mentioned, the people who are most interested in producing and marketing a value-added product are outsiders. Among these individuals, some believe that establishing such a business would be a service to the local community, others are primarily interested in earning a profit in order to sustain themselves. All of those currently involved in this project are working from assumptions that are true in terms of their own experiences, but which are unable to account for many of the priorities being set by locals. At their core, the granting agencies and economic development programs that are being sought out to assist this initiative are part of 'the system'. This makes many locals feel potentially more vulnerable, not more secure.

Outsiders want to feel more secure by obtaining such things as regular incomes, substantial IRA's for their retirement, more expensive homes (not mobile homes or trailers), and to be able to maintain a healthy credit history so that they may have more buying power in case of an emergency. Not having to rely on friends or family for

financial support makes outsiders feel independent, more 'free'. They also have a conception that their skill and labor has a certain monetary value, and they therefore expect a significant monetary return for the fruits of this labor. The grants that are being written, and the businesses being proposed therefore reflect these values and expectations. Locals, on the other hand, often feel as though the salaries being proposed for people's labor in the grant budgets are too high. Some feel as though people expect to get too much for their labor, and that many people do not work hard enough to justify such an income. Logging is sometimes viewed as being more physically difficult, and therefore more valuable than accounting, for instance. Others value everyone's skills and right to earn a living and to support their families, but feel as though it is wrong to earn more money, 'just to buy stuff', or to charge an amount for something that 'common people' can't afford.

The reasons for these various forms of discomfort are complicated. Locals do not claim not to want any luxury items or not to consume things. When they can, they spend significant sums of money (or labor and trade goods) on wide screen TV's, fancy hunting equipment, etc. Locals are not, however, typically concerned about making large profits in order to accumulate a lot of things. In fact, most prioritize finding ways of not having to rely on a capitalist market system at all. They see this system as being unreliable at best, and as a form of dehumanizing disenfranchisement at worst. 'The system', it is believed, increases peoples vulnerability by forcing people to become more dependent on cash, and in some cases debt, in order to sustain themselves.

Locals in SMNPA are composed mainly of men who utilize a vast array of multiple livelihood strategies as a means of providing for themselves and their families.

This is very different than Carol and Bob's strategy of utilizing multiple forms of professional employment. In this case, reliance on multiple livelihood strategies includes participating in capitalist, non-capitalist, and marketplace (such as farmer's markets where goods are re-circulated outside of the market system, i.e. the money flow can't be documented by the IRS) economies. These strategies rely on informal economies, they are often operating outside of transactions that can be monitored by the IRS (Halperin 1990). Harvesting, processing, and selling nontimber forest products are an important component of this local system and the social networks that such systems require. Since outsiders do not typically participate in these networks, they are largely unaware of them, and do not fully comprehend their significance.

Since manufacturing jobs, and other types of formal employment are typically ephemeral in Graham County, locals avoid relying on wage labor as their only means of making ends meet. Wage labor is often taken advantage of during times when other options are not available, but is not relied upon otherwise. This is despite the fact that depending on multiple informal economies often means earning fewer dollars per hour of labor than formal employment. This is because individual livelihood strategies are often very labor intensive. Activities such as hunting and processing ginseng and putting up food for the winter require a large labor investment, but it also gives people the freedom to create their own schedules in their day-to-day lives. Many also choose to live in close proximity to family members so that they can assist each other in a variety of ways. It is not unusual for three or four generations to reside in neighboring households on the same piece of land or within a few miles of each other. This creates a flexibility that makes things like childcare, maintaining a garden, putting up food, and utilizing the skills

(mechanical, agricultural, hunting expertise) of a variety of people easier for these families. Such arrangements are highly valued and give many locals a sense of security and stability that they could not obtain otherwise. Working professionals are often required to prioritize the needs of a market system tied to a global economy, sometimes at the expense of their relationship to their family. Because of this, in many ways the ultimate goal of many locals is to reduce the degree to which they rely on cash as much as they can. The following examples illustrate some of the ways in which local people try to keep their options open:

...Arnold raised it (tobacco) a few times, but then we went to - didn't have no way to haul it out. We didn't make enough to hardly fool with it. Cause it's such a little allotment. But we went and sold it, Arnold did. He lets Ted Orr raise it, you know he can raise it on his land...our allotment on his land. But it still keeps this little allotment on it, you know, it just saves us from it agoing dead, you know, or something. So Ted, Arnold's nephew raises that little allotment. It helps him in his'n (tobacco) when he goes to sell it. And it helps us to keep it, keep the allotment, you know. In case they ever do start giving some - sometimes they give it away - to littler people that ain't got too much of an allotment - they start giving them so much and first thing you know they've got enough to raise it on. But we never did raise it too much, just a little (Ruby Crisp, born 1934).

A lot of the people in the county, the, I call it the hard-core Graham Countians, has been borned and raised here. They learnt how to live here by diversifying their income, by being flexible in so many different things that they found to do. From cutting timber, logging, splitting posts and rails, to gathering the log moss, catching spring lizards, to digging the herbs and selling rock. Just doing whatever they could find to do, you know, working on the farm, working in the plants and mechanicing - whatever they could find to do. And as you visit around you find a lot of people that's not really dependent on one occupation... Well, as I said before it's just something to supplement my income when work gets slow. We try to find something to do that we can pick up a few dollars at, and most of the time that's the only reason I dig any kinda herbs or gather moss. And I've not gathered very much moss in a long time. I have gathered it, but as far as catching spring lizards to sell I haven't done that in probably 15, 20 years. But digging bloodroot, and ginseng, I still do some of that (John Jenkins, born 1951).

Locals often resist some forms of capitalism because it frequently disturbs and offends them. Asking them to think, speak and act in such a way that promotes it is therefore a sensitive subject. They do not want to behave like outsiders, but outsiders that try to learn to behave like locals are eventually welcomed. At first it seemed to SMNPA members that they were interested in the same things. Everyone wanted to learn more about native plants and to help each other find ways of earning a living in Graham County, North Carolina. All agreed that the mountains are a good place to live and that a mountain way of life was to be valued and appreciated. And most members also shared positive feelings about people who are able to work hard and live off the land. The differences that eventually arose grew out of assumptions regarding what ideal standards of living are, the degree to which it is appropriate to rely on a market system economy, and people's relationships and obligations to one another.

For example, problems arose such as reluctance on the part of locals to produce things and charge prices that 'common people' can't afford. Outsiders are targeting specialty markets, clients, and packaging in order to obtain a premium return on their investments of time and money. But locals are more interested in producing things that they can make when it is convenient to do so, in between other ongoing projects, and that they can turn over quickly or be able to exchange with friends and neighbors for other kinds of goods or services. They have valid reasons for feeling this way. It is their ties with other people that enable's them to get by in times of need or crisis. Continued flexibility allows family's to function as three generational units that remain relatively stable financially, even though people and sources of income continually shift. The goal of such individuals seems to be to provision their families, not to acquire luxury items or

to reach an individualistic state of 'success'. Spending too much time trading with wealthy tourists or major companies will not necessarily increase their level of security. It might in fact detract from their ability to spend time maintaining their current networks. Many are more than willing to do business and work hard, but they do not want to become overly reliant on these outside sources of revenue that they have no control over. Furthermore, locals do not always respect the premise on which such forms of business are conducted. Self reliance (being highly capable and resourceful) is highly valued, but individualism is not.

Other forms of resistance in SMNPA arose around the ambivalence of locals to form a cooperative and make long term commitments to rent or buy processing equipment. This also involved obtaining a space appropriate for commercial production, and writing grants for the purpose of subsidizing such endeavors. Since markets, by their very nature are not sure things, investing too much time or money into a project or equipment that could limit their flexibility in terms of their ability to take advantage of other economic opportunities is not necessarily perceived by locals as being a good choice. Small scale independent ventures that can be quickly abandoned and picked up again later seem more feasible to them. There is less to gain from them monetarily speaking, but there is also less to lose. But the collaboration involved in creating a value-added project, and the possibility of generating a new source of income were both appealing to locals.

What this shows is that the freedom and flexibility of locals is being pitted against an outside general acceptance of free markets. While it has not been the intention of outsiders to usurp anybody's rights as individuals, their priorities and the solutions that

they propose for local problems are typically at odds with the values of many local people. Because of this, the actions of outsiders often inadvertently pass judgement on the lives of locals and their chosen livelihoods. A more affective way for locals and outsiders to collaborate would be to build on the aspects of multiple livelihood strategies that make them most appealing to locals.

The new organization's emphasis on swapping plant materials and knowledge with one another while serving a community dinner is indicative of a number of things. In addition to spending more time interacting with the public and sharing information with the general community, this shows a continuing priority on their part to maintain and build local networks, and to preserve some aspects of local culture. Such efforts could potentially complement outsider's desire to find ways to cultivate wild medicinal herbs and to produce a value-added product that will sell for a premium price. Without a continuous supply of genes from wild populations, cultivated varieties will eventually senesce and therefore their productivity will drop as is happening with commercial sources of sugar cane. So why not begin future initiatives by meeting the needs of wild harvesters and supporting their ability to effectively maintain and monitor wild plant populations? Since wild harvesting in Graham County has roots with cultural and spiritual foundations among both whites and Cherokee people, why not build on these? Natives of Graham County have something to offer that outsiders do not, and vice versa.

In the meantime, the cultural milieu of wild harvesting is rapidly changing. Medicinal plants and folk knowledge are continuing to become of greater interest to the general public across the country. And more and more people are becoming interested in 'wildcrafting'. As this happens, conversations about medicinal plants and local

knowledge are becoming increasingly dominated by outsiders. This is a natural process, but one that has the potential of reducing the ability of locals to influence how what they do is perceived, what current problems are regarding conserving and harvesting these species, and whether or not they will be able to earn a living harvesting these plants in the future.

A better way of truly understanding mountain culture past and present, Cherokee and non-Cherokee, would be to recognize and utilize the values of those who are carriers of local tradition and traditional knowledge. This would be an act of respect that could lead to an increased awareness and sensitivity that would help to prevent unnecessary misunderstandings and conflict in the future. In addition, it would help to maintain the community life, resources, and traditions that have attracted outsiders to the mountains in the first place.

CHAPTER 8
 ENFORCING LAWS AND ASSERTING CUSTOMARY CLAIMS IN A MARKET
 ECONOMY:
 KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE REVISITED

“The inability to protect natural resource producers who incur greater expenses due to conservation restrictions can have deleterious consequences for both resources and producers (McLain and Jones 2002;xxiv).”

“It’s an arms race, and I guess that’s what it always will be. When you get to the place where they (poachers) can beat the system, you’ve just got to come up with something else.” Jim Corbin (Bilger 2002: 40)

“Wild collection of plants for a variety of uses is an enduring, if not sustainable, practice of rural and indigenous people worldwide (Vance 2002:151).”

Depending on the context, it is easy for many readers and listeners to take these kinds of comments at face value, or as being self evident, without recognizing the very political nature of the ideas that they imply. All three statements make assumptions that effectively define problems that are being faced, and thereby limit the number of questions that can be asked regarding the harvesting of nontimber forest products. This also limits the number of possible solutions and policies that can be conceptualized in order to resolve these issues. While this observation is unremarkable in and of itself, failing to acknowledge this obfuscates many of the underlying issues driving discussions of the use and management of indigenous forest plants, who is allowed to harvest them, when, where, and under what conditions. This dissertation is an effort to do just that -

acknowledge the complex and highly political nature of harvesting nontimber forest products in Graham County, North Carolina.

Research Objectives Revisited

I first approached this endeavor by addressing three main objectives. They are all questions geared towards describing the context of harvesting nontimber forest products in Graham County, North Carolina. They were also chosen so that Wildcrafting and herb digging activities could be better understood and productively analyzed. These primary questions that I initially asked were:

- To what extent is ethnobotanical knowledge dependent on context or practice?
- To what extent does long-term residence in Graham County promote the acquisition and maintenance of botanical knowledge? AND
- To what extent do different mechanisms of power influence how activities are understood and what kind of knowledge is deemed valuable or relevant?

I addressed the significance of these three questions in Chapter One and justified combining concepts from both Political Ecology and Ethnoecology using the model outlined in Figure 1.1. I used this diagram to argue that human interactions with their environment are of both a material and symbolic nature. Individual understandings of the environment in which a given person lives and interacts is therefore a product of their overall personal experiences, the cultural models (shared cultural understandings) that they use to interpret these experiences, and the economic and power structures present that influence, and even limit, these understandings. Therefore, it is not possible to fully

understand human behavior without acknowledging all of these dynamic relationships. Because this is the case, understanding how, why, and where people who harvest nontimber forest products do what they do requires identifying conflicting understandings of the issues that have arisen, the significance of harvesting nontimber forest products from a variety of perspectives, and some of the ways in which 'knowledge' is informed by 'practice'.

I have chosen to do this here by analyzing current debates from the perspective of a variety of actors including; locals (white and Cherokee), public land managers, economic development organizations, and recent immigrants to the county. I then compared their respective viewpoints and how they related to one another in the context of Graham County's local history. The following is a summary of my findings.

My first objective was to determine to what extent ethnobotanical knowledge is dependent on context or practice. What I found was that what people in Graham County, North Carolina know about nontimber forest products and how to harvest and process them largely depends on; where it is that they grew up, whether or not they have harvested NTFP's, who taught them how to harvest, the number of different species that they have harvested, and the number of years and regularity with which they have harvested different species. Such observations can be found elsewhere in the literature as well (Atran 1999, Boster 1996, Brush 1992, Eller 1993). What is significant about this study is that it shows the implications these observations can have for people in western North Carolina. It is an additional example of what has been witnessed elsewhere, but with its own particular dimensions and repercussions.

By utilizing concepts from Political Ecology we can see that individual behaviors, and therefore what individuals know, is influenced by the particular NTFP species involved and the livelihood opportunities that are present. Part of the context that is determining what people spend their time doing is the way in which globalization is occurring in this county, and how it is driving the markets that utilize the county's natural resources. Therefore, by recognizing what is happening on a large scale in the natural products industry I was able to make more complete sense of what harvesters are doing on a small scale, local level and why. Understanding this dynamic and the historical particulars involved is vital to any constructive critique of sustainable economic development and future land management policies.

My second objective was to determine to what extent long-term residence in Graham County promotes the acquisition and maintenance of ethnobotanical knowledge. Among expert harvesters, those who were born and raised in the county and come from families that have been in the region for multiple generations are the most knowledgeable. These individuals typically know how and where to identify the greatest number of different species, have spent the most time in the woods, and behave in ways that suggest that they are responsive to the needs of the species that they are harvesting. They prioritize earning a living over preserving species, but they also plant the mature ginseng seeds that they find, avoid digging the roots of plants that have not reached reproductive maturity, and often maintain populations of wild species around their homes. People who come from families that have lived in the region for multiple generations but have not spent a lot of time out in the woods are typically not very knowledgeable about forest plants whether they are white or Cherokee.

Political Ecology allows us to consider the above in a context within which ‘resources’ and the ‘environment’ are becoming increasingly politicized and managed. Most of the natural resources that can be found in Graham County are being managed by the federal government for the benefit of United States citizens (sometimes at the expense of local people’s livelihoods) at the same time that processes of globalization are driving consumer markets for natural products. The ways in which changes are occurring as a result of these processes are having a direct impact on the ways in which people in Graham County perceive and make decisions about how to utilize the resources present. Without the benefit of concepts from Political Ecology it would be impossible to recognize that changing modes of production and who has control over them changes who the experts are believed to be and how successfully resources can ultimately be managed. As appropriate forms of forest resource management have become increasingly contested, those who have historically had the most to lose have lost – and to date so have the resources themselves. Fast growing timber and recreation have been prioritized over maintaining traditional livelihoods or the ecological integrity of forest habitats.

My third objective was to determine to what extent different mechanisms of power influence how activities are understood and what kind of knowledge is deemed valuable or relevant. The ways in which I have viewed these mechanisms are highly influenced by concepts from Political Ecology stemming from Political Economy (Greenberg and Park 1994, Paulson et al. 2003). Since 1900 Graham County’s resources have been utilized in a variety of ways that have benefited a minority of people who had the means to control them. The actors have changed during the course of the last century,

and each time there is a transition there is a slight shift in favor of markets that are increasingly removed from the day to day lives of people who are most familiar with the resources in question. The implications of this for conservation and social justice are immense, and these dynamics are seen to be operating world-wide (Peluso 1992).

What is clear is that people who are in positions that are influencing the ways in which development and resource management will occur in Graham County are not people who can truly claim to be representing the interests of people who are 'from here'. Whenever possible, the people who are most interested in harvesting nontimber forest products prioritize maintaining a particular way of life over maximizing profits or generating certain kinds of economic development. But because the institutions that are controlling resource management, research, and economic development in the county are largely deaf and blind to (and in some cases uninterested in) the goals of locals, there has been little room for collaboration. The dominating processes involved have been too far removed. The activities and knowledge of traditional harvesters have therefore frequently been misinterpreted or disregarded.

As was mentioned above, I have also addressed three applied questions:

- What is the nature and extent of wildcrafting in Graham County today?
- Are traditional harvesting practices compatible with current ideas about wildcrafting?
- Is harvesting nontimber forest products compatible with the sustainable management of public lands?

These questions are extremely relevant to all individuals and institutions interested in the conservation and management of Southern Appalachian plants and

ecosystems. The natural plant products industry in North Carolina is continuing to grow, and sustainable economic development initiatives will most likely continue to be proposed in the future. Because this is the case, the claims being made should be closely scrutinized. Poor understandings of the issues involved can only lead to losses of time and money, and in some cases the systematic disenfranchisement of local people. Programs should therefore be up front about what their goals are, how they will be achieved, who will ultimately benefit, and why.

What I found was that there is a long history of root digging and herb gathering in Graham County, but that few people are currently harvesting forest products to supplement their income. Most of the people who have harvested nontimber forest products have only harvested ginseng, moss or ramps. Those who do supplement their incomes harvesting do so either to maintain a preferred way of life, or only when unusually high prices are being offered for a particular product. These practices do not reflect popular notions about wildcrafting in that the total number of different species being harvested are limited, a lot of the people harvesting today do not come from families that taught them how to harvest, few people use any of the materials that they harvest to sell themselves, and many of them have not been harvesting for very many years. In addition, most of them are not interested in cultivating and marketing their products on a large scale. I also found that 'wildcrafting' tends to be portrayed as being a timeless and eternal tradition, but that harvesting practices associated with nontimber forest products have been continually changing from one generation to the next. And finally, whether or not harvesting practices are sustainable, particularly when associated with national forest land, is a complicated issue at best.

There are people who have a vested interest in maintaining healthy populations of forest plants and their associated ecosystems. There are not currently mechanisms in place that enable those with the desire to manage and utilize these resources to accomplish this effectively in national forests, and most non-national forest land is being turned into housing developments. The people who have the most influence over how these forest resources are being utilized are outsiders who have little understanding of the social and ecological dynamics involved. Many of the decisions that are being made are strictly economic in nature, and are based on ideas about who should benefit from these resources that conflict with those of local communities. Yet local communities are comprised of people who currently have the greatest ability to monitor who has access to these particular resources. The USFS and local communities of harvester's could work together productively, but only if less bureaucratic, more flexible mechanisms for interaction are established.

Discussion

To date, most discussions regarding economic development and forest management in western North Carolina still include much of the cognitive baggage that motivated, and sometimes hindered, people during the seventeen and eighteen hundreds. The main difference is that instead of focusing on 'civilizing' poor, mountain people, much policy is focused on bringing them fully into the market system as wage laborers and/or catching poachers. This is quite possibly the most recent adaptation of the widely shared, highly motivating cultural model described by Dailey (1999). Dailey (1999) argues that ideas about 'Progress' strongly influenced collective decisions about people and landscape on the Appalachian Plateau between 1740 and 1850. He further argues

that one of the remarkable aspects of this model is its seeming persistence. It does not go away. As the times and issues change people apply it differently, but it has continued to be a highly motivating force.

Given the general belief that turning wild places into cultivated ones led to progress, and the association of Indians and forests with wildness, it made sense to kill, civilize, or remove Indians from the Appalachian landscape (Dailey 1999). Later, it was easy to see mountain whites as being a backward people in need of education and industry in the name of progress and industrialization (Dailey 1999). Now, perhaps, it is still easy for us to see the Appalachian landscape and mountain people in such terms, and through such a lens. If so, this colors our ability to truly identify many mountain people's motivations, needs, and abilities. It becomes easy to see many of them as merely ignorant, suspicious and/or unreasonable because what we are most able to witness are their reactions to change, not the underlying issues that inspire the feelings and behaviors being expressed.

Characteristics such as ignorance and obstinacy may very well be true of some, possibly even many, but it begs the question. Do locals (some of whom are diggers, mossers, and, yes, poachers) really not understand what is being done for them, or why forests are being managed in the ways that they are? Or do they understand what it is that is expected of them, and why, but feel that the people making these decisions are wrong, acting unjustly, or both? There is, after all, a long standing tradition in our country that it is entirely appropriate for individuals to break laws that are unjust.

As was seen in Chapter Three, in order to begin addressing the issues described above I outlined three stages of development and change in Graham County beginning

around 1900. Doing this highlighted patterns of change largely initiated by outsiders, but that were initially largely welcomed. These changes had lasting consequences. Some of them have been perceived as good, others not. How individuals view these changes is largely influenced by where they are positioned within the overarching power structures that are operating in the county. To illustrate this I relied on Gaventa's (1980) modeling of three different dimensions of power to show that these forces are interrelated and that they have acted synergistically (Knauff 1996) to shape people and the landscape in Graham County, North Carolina.

While residents of Graham County were not entirely isolated from the rest of the country in 1900, it was not until after 1911 that outsiders began to have a significant influence on how the area's resources were used, or on how (white) people chose to earn their livelihood. After 1911, the lumber barons entered Graham County in full force, joining small-scale lumbermen already logging in the county. The national ethos of progress empowered them to take advantage of the county's resources and people without making any effort to look towards their respective futures. The underlying assumption was that progress necessitated not letting any forest go to waste that could contribute to industry and profit, and that mountain people were in need of 'uplift' and should 'catch up' with the progress of the rest of the country by contributing to the national wage labor pool. When all the wood that could be profitably obtained was harvested, the lumber barons left. The landscape that was left behind was less suitable for subsistence living due to ecological changes brought on by the logging methods used at the time, the American Chestnut blight, and the concomitant decrease in marketable nontimber forest products (Davis 2000, Yoakley 1932). In addition, without the presence of the lumber

baron's, wage labor became increasingly difficult to come by. Most forms of employment that have followed have continued to be intermittent.

So why did local people allow this to happen? Since the oral and written record on the subject is extremely limited, some conjecture is required in order to answer this question. It seems likely however, that many mountain people shared the desire to be 'progressive' with outsiders, and that subsistence farming was a difficult way to live. All three of Gaventa's (1980) dimensions of power could have been in operation. The first dimension of power is represented by an outside group of people's ability to identify the county's landscape and people as resources that needed to be utilized for the sake of profit and progress, and as a problem in need of uplift. The power itself lies in their ability to act on their assumptions without any meaningful collaboration and discussion with the people whose lives were most affected by their intervention. In the case of Graham County, this is usually people with a lot of money and the connections to make things happen, people with the ability to garner extensive political and economic support for their activities outside of the county.

The second dimension of power being deployed in this circumstance is one in which outsiders are then able to determine, without any input from locals, exactly how the changes they intend to make should take place. This was easy for these outsiders to do because they had the ability to be heard and the monetary resources to implement their objectives. The viewpoint of outsiders remained largely unquestioned until after a proposed course of action had already been implemented. But even if locals did know and understand the repercussions of what was being done, then or now, there was no meaningful way for them to be heard. In the minds of those instigating the change, locals

were/are an ignorant and backwards people who would benefit from industry and development. Outsiders have felt as though they were in a better position to understand the needs of the county than many county residents. Outsiders have controlled the way in which problems are defined, questions are framed, and what has qualified as a legitimate concern.

Gaventa's (1980) third dimension of power is illustrated by considering mountain people's responses to these changes in light of the priorities and values that they have maintained and continue to protect. Some of these things are at odds with each other, and with the beliefs and values of the national status quo. The rhetoric of the early 1900's was such that many people, in a sense, participated in their own subjugation. Those who were introduced to the new industry, movies, and commercially produced merchandise that logging trains carried with them quite likely believed that they were indeed a 'backward' people, just like the popular press portrayed them to be. In turn, this may have influenced them to accept the changes that they were seeing. Even those who thought that they understood the implications of what they were experiencing, ecologically and socially, may have at first believed that it was for the best. But even if they hadn't, they had little means of preventing the lumber barons from buying up hundreds of acres of land and harvesting the timber from it. By accepting wage labor to harvest timber at a huge profit to the lumber barons, and relatively little benefit to themselves or their county, they undermined their own ability to determine the kind of place Graham County would be in the future.

The above processes continued into the 1930's and 1940's as the federal government removed people from their homes in order to build dams, power plants,

create Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and establish national forests. Oral histories recounted today are rife with the perceived injustices of this time period. Whereas the lumber barons and the construction of railroads are only vaguely remembered by locals, stories about family land being taken from them, and the price at which people's land was purchased by the federal government are widely repeated and shared. On a national level, it is clear that the government was able to dictate what the significant questions were at this time, especially in light of a need to acquire resources in order to fuel WWII, and to justify their actions. Mountain people and their concerns were not a priority, and therefore had little role in the process of determining and implementing the government's objectives.

This situation continued into the 1950's with the enactment of policies such as those of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. Mountain people were pressured to produce commercial crops, but no research or money was invested in identifying production strategies suitable for mountain environments, despite recommendations to do so (Salstrom 1994). Because of this, and because of the relatively small amount of land suitable for agriculture in Graham County, many families had to leave to find wage labor during this time. The fact that many of them returned to the mountains and retained their family land suggests that they did not embrace the values and lifestyles of urban industrial life, however. Mountain values and skills continued to be denigrated by being portrayed as 'folk' culture and as evidence of ignorance and being 'backwards' throughout the 1960's and 1970's. At the same time, these outside perceptions were intensified as the extreme poverty found in coal mining regions of Appalachia became a focus of the national media. Little recognition was given to the fact that it was not a lack

of skill or being backwards that caused many of the conditions found in the mountains, but the way in which the region had been exploited by the rest of the country and abroad. Even though no coal mining or other forms of industry have taken place in Graham County on a comparably destructive or large scale as that found in the coal regions, national policy still identified residents as being from 'Appalachia' and therefore as being behind the times and poverty stricken.

Older people describe making a living in Graham County during the 1950's through the 1970's as being 'hard' and 'rough', but also as being 'good'. When questioned further, the 'good' seems to be based on a feeling that food could always be produced or hunted, and that there was little pressure to keep up with bills or please a 'bossman'. Property taxes were low, and most people did not have electric or other bills to keep track of. This time period is now looked back on somewhat nostalgically as being a time when people had a greater sense of freedom than they do now, despite not owning much or having very many cash resources. People often had to do things like sell salamanders and ginseng in order to get the money that they needed to buy school shoes for their children and to pay their property taxes, but they were generally able to do so. Such activities were often perceived as being an indication of poverty by outsiders, however, as opposed to being a worthwhile way of earning a living. Strict notions dictating standards of living determined whether people were poor, not their overall stability and quality of life. It is not uncommon to hear people who were raised in Graham County during this period of time say, "We didn't know we were poor until somebody came and told us."

Then, during the 1980's a new phenomenon came into being. The popularity of the idea of 'wildcrafting' that was romanticized during the 1970's and the back-to-the-land movement became backed by a renewed interest in natural plant products worldwide. Concerns about modern medicines, preventative medicine, and the overall quality and effectiveness of modern health care systems led to a new and rising demand for so-called whole foods and whole medicines. Because of this, by the 1990's the price being offered for many nontimber forest products harvested in Southern Appalachia rose somewhat, and new markets opened up for such things as ramps. The rising demand for specialty, organic, seasonal, and local foods led many restaurants, markets, and tourist communities to begin to actively promote their consumption. A desire to capitalize on these trends has led entrepreneurs and economic development initiatives to re-vision the significance of native or indigenous plants to mountain people, a trend that worries many conservationists and public land managers.

'Wildcrafting' is now being viewed as the means by which mountain people can profit from the resources in the woods around them. The main objective is to enable them to produce and market nontimber forest products, and value-added products utilizing local nontimber forest products. In short, the goal is to turn the entrepreneurial skills of mountain people towards predominantly capitalist endeavors. Many outsiders believe that teaching locals how to utilize their skills in this way will mean that mountain people will be better off. However, the means by which this will be achieved is a matter of considerable controversy and debate.

Several issues have emerged from this process. Between 1980 and the present; the harvesting pressures that many nontimber forest products experience in Southern

Appalachia have increased, who has a right to these resources has increasingly been called into question by locals and public land managers, 'local' diggers and herb gatherers have asserted a belief that it is not to their advantage to cultivate native plants or to participate in the large-scale marketing of nontimber forest products, differences between old locals and new locals have come into direct conflict with one another, and traditional economic activities of white and Cherokee locals have been misinterpreted and used to the disadvantage of diggers and herb gatherers. A major objective of this research has been to identify and understand these issues, how this has happened, and why.

I have argued that the ways mountain people use nontimber forest products has been continually changing according to their needs and the types of economic strategies readily available to them at given points in time. This has certainly been true since 1900, and has probably always been the case. Once the timber barons left the mountains, the exposed slopes and relative dryness of the exposed understory could not be conducive to large populations of most nontimber forest products for many years. As the state of the local landscape became less conducive to subsistence living, whenever wage labor was not available people began resorting to commercial agriculture (and in some cases moonshine). Those without the land, or without allotments large enough to earn a living, began to seek out job opportunities in urban, industrial settings. But many continued to return home whenever they were able to, and during times when they were laid off by their employers. However, the fact that many of them were not living in the county for long periods of time meant that these individuals did not acquire the same degree of skill

and understanding regarding nontimber resources that those who remained in the county did.

Those who remained behind and/or lived in Graham County between times of formal employment often supplemented their incomes and dinner table by utilizing a variety of forest resources. The specific species that were utilized depended on what was available and/or what they had a buyer for. But the particular harvesting methods and species used have continually varied over time. Since 1900, people have not typically made a living solely by harvesting and selling nontimber forest products. They have, however, used their knowledge and experience in the woods to take advantage of specific opportunities as they have arisen. But this was only done as time allowed, and in between laboring at other economic endeavors. This is slightly different than the essentialized view of wildcrafting that has come to represent these activities.

Outsiders have a propensity to see wild harvesting as being something timeless and eternal. Creating avenues via which people can earn a living by harvesting and processing nontimber forest products is seen as being an opportunity to build on local traditions. Learning how to cultivate them is seen simply as a means of making these traditions more profitable and sustainable, and therefore beneficial, to mountain people. It is seldom perceived that by participating in many of these efforts locals may actually be undermining their own values and traditions. Resistance to such economic development efforts is therefore often misinterpreted as being a product of ignorance, or as an inherent distrust of outsiders. In reality, what is being promoted simply appeals to the values of outsiders more than it does those of most local's. How this is understood could have a tremendous impact on how nontimber forest product resources and related

policies will be managed in the future. The dynamics illustrated in Chapters Four, Five, Six, and Seven are suggestive of things to come.

What is common to all four of these chapters is the idea that there are outside (non-local) forces seeking to dominate and unify people in Graham County, forces reminiscent of what Bakhtin has labeled ‘centripetal’ forces. Each of these chapters identifies ways in which people who were not born and raised in Graham County have sought to make locals think and behave in ways similar to themselves. These people and institutions do not question the validity of their endeavors because, for the most part, their intentions are well-meaning and believed to be for the common good. Outsiders see a problem that they are attempting to ameliorate.

Chapter Four discusses where the concept of ‘Wildcrafting’ may have come from and why it is appealing despite the fact that it is a term or concept that is foreign to local diggers and herb gatherers. A key aspect of current efforts promoting wildcrafting as a means of earning a living is an insistence that individuals commit a heavy investment of time, labor, and money in order to either cultivate medicinal plants, or market a value-added product produced from nontimber forest products. This runs directly counter to local understandings that believe that it is wrong to put, “all your eggs in one basket,” and that it is dangerous to put oneself at the mercy of a single market.

As was described further in Chapter Five, most diggers have different ideas about appropriate ways of making money and desirable standards of living than do most outsiders. Funding agencies, developers, and most immigrants to the county all believe that it is more stable and more beneficial to make money through wage labor and to actively participate in a global market system. As was shown in Chapter Seven, this is

even largely true of outsiders who have lived in urban, non-mountain settings as professionals, but who have moved to the mountains in order to escape many aspects of city life and some aspects of commercialism. These outsiders were originally seen as allies by locals because of a partially shared rhetoric and interest in native plants. However, as they worked together to provide each other with additional economic opportunities there proved to be some important differences between these two groups.

Many of the values upon which outsiders base their decisions and determine their respective priorities clearly mirror those shared by economic development initiatives and a wider national milieu, not those of mountain people. In essence, the interactions between old and new locals that occurred within the context of Smoky Mountain Native Plants Association introduced added pressures for some diggers to abandon multiple livelihood strategies in favor of a full-time profession or endeavor that restricts their ability to be flexible. These endeavors also require that they expend a lot of energy participating in 'the system' that they believe has hindered them writing grants, filing reports, and networking outside of the county. They are not currently very interested in doing any of these things.

Finally, in Chapter Six, I argued that the ways in which the policies of the United States Forest Service, National Parks Service, and related regulatory agencies are structured have further contributed to the dominating forces seeking to unify the voices of differing discourse communities in Graham County. In this context, again, the resistance of local people, and their reasons for poaching are spoken of in terms that suggest that they are ignorant and unreasonable, or bounded by unreasonable traditions. The various forms of harvesting that take place, and the different reasons that people have for

harvesting are seldom understood, acknowledged, or addressed. The voices of local people are affectively silenced. The USFS does not even know or understand the history of its own relationship with locals in the county, or how it has come about. There are no records of when, where, and why their permitting systems have been established, for instance. Presumably, it is believed to be irrelevant, at least at an institutional level. At the local level the USFS is perpetually struggling with budget limitations and does not have the time or staff to do more than meet the immediate requirements of day-to-day management. But, despite the silencing of local people, I have also argued that, though they may not always have been heard, local people have not in fact been silent.

There are centrifugal forces acting in opposition to the dominant discourses of market system economies and the top-down management of regional resources. If this were not the case there would not be any controversy. These alternative forces include a local discourse that seeks to challenge the assumptions that have been made by outsiders regarding local people, their economies, and their values. Some policies are perceived as being unjust or criminal, and are therefore ignored. In other circumstances local people simply do not participate in activities that do not interest them or relate to their own priorities and concerns. In still other situations, individuals actively voice their opposition to specific demands being made of them or to newly introduced policies. And there are also a few who simply belligerently break the law and/or threaten individuals that try to enforce it, or viewpoints different from their own. But to what end?

Today, multiple livelihood strategies persist, but they are as likely to include such economies as mowing lawns or operating heavy equipment as they are digging ginseng or pulling moss. The more difficult harvesting nontimber forest products becomes in terms

of time, money, and availability, the less likely it is that people will harvest it for commercial purposes. But in the absence of other opportunities, or in the case of individuals who prefer to be out in the woods harvesting nontimber forest products over other economic endeavors, harvesting, and sometimes even poaching, will continue to be seen as being a legitimate activity by locals.

As Peluso (1992) has shown to be true of forester's in the teak forests of Java, USFS decision-making is constrained by a bureaucratic/corporate structure that cannot meet the expectations of locals and their idea of an appropriate relationship between themselves and USFS officials. It is therefore not surprising that the USFS and GSMNP have run into cultures of resistance that challenge the legitimacy of these institution's attempts at control. "Wherever 'scientific' forestry has constituted an accepted form of political-economic control, the impacts of these controls on forest-dependent people must be understood as well (Peluso 1992)."

In some ways, the restrictions that are increasingly being faced by diggers/harvesters are a new form of 'labor control' similar to those methods outlined by Gaventa et al. (1990). While perhaps not intentional, restricting local's small-scale commercial enterprises in a context of insufficient employment creates a dependence on welfare and unemployment insurance, among other things. This helps to maintain a labor reserve for industry, and what is euphemistically called a, 'business friendly climate' (Gaventa 1990). In other words, it creates a context in which it becomes easy for business and industry to profit at the expense of their workers and the quality of life experienced by the communities in which they become established. This all relates to a

form of power that has been described as governmentality, another aspect of Gaventa's first dimension of power.

“Governmentality, as Foucault acknowledged, is always guided by a moral vision, and competing moral projects are central to the struggle for hegemony, especially for dominance in the configuration of what will count as everyday, popular, common sense (Hall 1996a, *In*; Murray Li 2003).” The object here is to get people to live their lives in such a way that conforms to an idealized vision as formulated by the government or state and its stated objectives. The processes by which this is achieved are by their very nature coercive, and therefore often wrought with resistance.

In Graham County, much illegal activity regarding the harvest of nontimber forest products is seen as being legitimate from the perspective of local residents. To them ‘the government’ often seems to be unnecessarily restricting their values and livelihoods from multiple directions via a number of different agencies. In essence, this is true, if not explicitly or with intent. Agencies and their respective representatives are therefore often imbued with a significance and history out of proportion with people's individual experiences. In some cases being arrested for harvesting an illegal quantity of ginseng symbolizes close to a hundred years of coercion and the systematic disenfranchisement of common people, not simply a legal infraction. This notion is reinforced by the continual repetition and sharing of stories regarding family land that was condemned or purchased for too low a price by the government, how tobacco allotments were taken from them, and logging restrictions have periodically been enforced. At the same time, there is a perception that little effort has been made by the USFS to maintain populations of

nontimber forest products, but that a tremendous effort has been made to provide hiking trails and mountain bike courses for outsiders.

Once repeated enough times, even myths can become true in the minds of individuals, especially when imbued with deep emotions (Strauss and Quinn 1997). Because of this, legitimizing government authority, if that is the objective, will take a long time. And it will require addressing government agency objectives in terms that are thought of as being appropriate from the perspective of local people. The extent to which the objectives of locals conflict with those of public land managers and other outsiders, and whether or not these differences can be reconciled, remains to be seen. To date, the strategies and ideas that have the greatest potential for informing successful policy have yet to be implemented.

Possible Starting Points

Goodman (2002) addresses one possible way of theorizing these issues in his discussion of legal pluralism and customary claims versus formal law. In Graham County, the use of resources obtained from national forests is felt by locals to be legitimate, in part, because of the long-standing use of nontimber forest products within the framework of their multiple livelihood strategies. This kind of behavior can be viewed legally as being ‘customary’. This is true for both indigenous, and nonindigenous communities.

According to Goodman (2002), formal law has proven to be an inadequate means of protecting resources on public lands both here and abroad. The reasons for this, he argues, stem from an inability of formal law to account for the variety of local systems, “...whose form and content likely differ considerably from region to region,” and that

take place within 'fluid' communities where the respective 'practices are dynamic'.

Communal resource management mechanisms are often flexible enough to accommodate changing circumstances whereas those of formal law are not. Communal systems have therefore been identified that have successfully managed natural resources over the long-term, while those that have been managed via extensive formal systems that do not accommodate local mechanisms have ultimately failed (Goodman 2002, Western et al. 1994). He therefore proposes using the construct of legal pluralism to inform the management of natural resources in the United States. "The theory of legal pluralism views the official state legal system as a secondary, rather than a primary, site of regulation (Goodman 2002)." Customary uses are primary, but exist and evolve alongside the formal systems of management. The specific relationships between the two systems are continuously re-negotiated as circumstances change over time.

By allowing this process to occur, it is argued, "Sufficiently stable and localized communities that assert use rights would ultimately develop their own customary system for managing common pool resources," thereby averting a potential 'tragedy of the commons'. Under current systems of management in Graham County this has not happened because, though locals believe that they have customary rights, the process via which customary systems of forest management develop was aborted when complete control of forest resources was encased within a formal legal framework unable to effectively acknowledge customary law. If they are unable to protect their rights and claim the fruits of their conservation efforts, people are unlikely to create and maintain communities that focus on developing appropriate customary systems of management. There is simply too little incentive for them to invest the time and resources required to

accomplish such an end. Especially if management is taking place within a context in which local people believe that the land managers in charge implement practices that actually undermine conservation efforts.

A possible way of beginning the process of exploring ways in which customary and formal systems can work in conjunction with one another in the United States would be to continue to define and experiment with so-called stewardship contracting principles. One of the advantages of the systems being proposed in the western United States is that contractors or cooperatives are allowed to use their own judgment when determining the best way to go about achieving the desired goals of both land management agencies and themselves. This type of contracting includes ecosystem management objectives, and both timber and nontimber objectives. They are characterized by; "...end-results objectives rather than rigid specifications to define contract activities, the use of cooperative agreements and research authorities, and the building of management services and product sales within a single contract (Ringgold 2002)."

Stewardship Contracts should not to be confused with 'Goods for Services' contracts, however (Ringgold 2002). Generally speaking, the Forest Service does not have the legal authority to initiate a 'goods for services' contract. This type of an agreement is one in which a public agency exchanges public goods in exchange for services rendered, something that could potentially result in the USFS budgeting projects in excess of levels approved by Congress. This is different than including product sales and management services within a single contract agreement such as in the form of a cooperative agreement. According to Ringgold (2002):

The Forest Service may be able to gain control over the amounts of product being harvested through entering into agreements with local harvesting

cooperatives. In exchange for the right to exclusive use of a certain area, the harvesters would pay an established permit fee and would police the area to avert overharvesting, thereby promoting the long-term sustainability of NTFP's in their area. This kind of agreement rests on the ability of the Forest Service to enter into long-term agreements. The legal authorities for the agency to engage in long-term agreements exist; however, questions remain as to whether these authorities could be applied within the framework of a permit system. If the NTFP program were to be carried out as part of a broader ecosystem services contract, there would be an increased opportunity to apply long-term, or even indefinite, contract authority (Ringgold 2002: 388).

Applying such principles to the management of public lands in Graham County may enable the USFS to work towards appeasing the customary claims of people who harvest nontimber forest products, and help facilitate the development of a customary system of resource management. This could potentially benefit both harvesters and resources.

The regular exposure of harvesters to an overall ecosystem management endeavor would not only give them some control over the specific resources that they are utilizing, it would also introduce them to the monitoring of an array of species that they might not otherwise notice or pay attention to. Since the nature of multiple livelihood strategies is such that the specific economies involved are always changing (both within and between generations), and since we can see from the brief history outlined in Chapter Three that the specific species people harvest, and the extent to which they harvest nontimber forest products, is continually changing, it would be reasonable to assume that diggers, moss pullers, and herb gatherers are not always aware of the specific needs of the species that they are currently harvesting. It may also be true that, as things currently stand, individual harvesters may no longer be engaged in any one harvesting practice long enough to see the impact that their activity has had on any given area, and therefore to respond to these changes. The continual shift from one collection area to another may contribute to a general lack of understanding and recognition as well. If this is true,

without having any authority to protect, manage, or claim ownership of the resources of a given area, this is likely to continue and become increasingly true over time.

The speed with which market systems are changing is accelerating as consumers become more connected, and markets become more sensitive to consumer demands. New products are introduced into the market every day at the same time that older ones cease to be manufactured. People who utilize multiple livelihood strategies are often required to respond to these changes. As nontimber forest products begin to be cultivated and become available from increasing numbers of different sources, the species that local diggers can find buyers for will shift as well. Harvesting practices will also shift to accommodate the supply of crude botanicals for new products, or the loss of old ones. Finding ways for harvesters to participate in contexts where ecological systems are addressed, as opposed to just individual species, may help make them more aware of ecological changes occurring around them. This would also help them make decisions that protect the viability of their own livelihood as well. The more species they have to draw from, the more stable their multiple livelihood strategies will be. This is what many of them ultimately want.

One option may be to work with local harvesters to model harvesting practices after those used in some traditional fishing communities. Establish a harvesting area that is managed by a pre-determined number of harvesters to produce a sustained yield. Set aside the Cheoah Ranger District for this purpose, for example. Then allow local wild harvesters and USFS representatives to negotiate how many people will be allowed to harvest from this area. Allow harvesters to decrease this number on their own, but require them to consult with the USFS in order to increase it. The first designated

harvesters should be people who have actively been wild harvesting, who were born and raised in the area, and who come from a direct line of harvesters. These harvesters should be allowed to retire and pass on their license to harvest when they see fit. If an occasion arose where there was not an individual that a member wanted to inherit their license, the members could choose to allow an outsider into the membership and train them how to harvest appropriately. The USFS would own the land and set broad limitations for management objectives, but a limited number of local harvesters would be responsible for achieving these ends in exchange for the ability to harvest certain designated nontimber forest products.

Such a group could collectively identify appropriate harvesting practices, identify people who harvest illegally within their designated area, and determine what to harvest or not harvest during any given year. A rental fee could be paid by the group in exchange for a long term lease, during which time both USFS and members could be involved in monitoring test populations in the district. Part of the cost of the lease could be offset through the labor of members. They could be responsible for clearing out excess undergrowth, for instance, in exchange for being allowed to harvest medicinal plants that they find along the way. These harvesters could then supply growers with fresh seed and root stock, or also be growers themselves. Value-added products could then be generated based on annual yields from cultivated populations, and perhaps only from cultivated populations. To my knowledge, options such as these are not currently being considered in Graham County.

Another possibility for establishing positive community relationships could be for public land managers to work in collaboration with Cherokee Preservation Foundation

and Western Carolina University to establish and promote the Revitalization of Cherokee Artisan Resources Initiative. This would present another opportunity to build a relationship for the purpose of establishing mutual understandings of local ecology and appropriate management strategies. There is currently a lot of interest within the tribal council and among Cherokee elders to identify populations of culturally significant plants and to establish new populations of them. Doing this will require achieving a better understanding of the ecological requirements of various species and having access to land resources that are not located on Cherokee reservation land. These objectives are both cultural and economic concerns.

Members of the Qualla arts and crafts cooperative rely on a variety of nontimber forest products in order to manufacture the items that they sell. These resources are becoming increasingly difficult to find. It is not uncommon for people to travel to places in Georgia or Tennessee in order harvest rivercane for making baskets from private property, for instance. The plants needed to make the dye that is used to color basket making materials and yarn are becoming increasingly difficult to find on the reservation as well. The same is also true of many wood carving materials. This is a cause for concern not only because there are tribal members who are only able to make ends meet by being able to sell these traditional crafts, but also because it is a significant aspect of Cherokee culture.

There is currently a fear that nobody will be able to afford to teach these skills to members of younger generations. Since the materials are difficult to come by, most people cannot afford to part with their supplies in order to teach anybody else. In some respects, it is a waste of a valuable commodity to allow beginners to practice on the

limited supplies that artisans have at their disposal, especially since the production levels of many artisans are already limited by the quantity of materials that they can obtain.

As these problems that land managers and locals face become more acute, increasing numbers of people are becoming interested in finding ways of coping more effectively. People from a variety of backgrounds who are active participants in a variety of discourse communities are interested in being a part of positive and constructive changes. This includes people who are agricultural extension agents, entrepreneurial business people, locals, diggers, poachers, Cherokee people, forest rangers, biologists, and tourists. The presence of such a diverse set of skills, combined with the accumulated knowledge that such skills brings with them, is certainly a cause for hope. The learning curve will be great, but there are people who are actively engaged in the process of understanding and reconciling the challenges to come.

The main challenge is to find ways in which enforcing laws can work in conjunction with, instead of in opposition to, the assertion of customary claims. In Graham County, there is no way to achieve this that is straightforward or simple. There are strong personalities present on all sides, and the relationships involved are imbued with a long history of antagonism and misunderstanding. But people are willing to try new things. There is a general concern among older generations that increasingly few people are learning the skills necessary to survive in the mountains during times of economic hardship. They also have a desire to share their experience and knowledge with outsiders and young people alike. They are skeptical, however, of any plan that claims to be the solution for all of the economic ills of the county or region. Promoting stewardship contracting, wildcrafting co-operatives, or any other form of economy

relying on nontimber forest products as the answer to all unemployment is therefore not constructive. Not all locals are interested in being in the woods or managing nontimber forest products. Facilitating people's ability to maintain multiple livelihood strategies, on the other hand, could be a means of earning the respect and trust of local people whether they are currently involved in the harvest of nontimber forest products for commercial purposes or not.

APPENDIX A
PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

1998:

Roy Glen Cardwell. Recorded. Oct. 17, 1998. 68 years of age.

George Barrett. Recorded. Oct. 19, 1998.

Betty H. Huffman. Recorded. Oct. 30, 1998.

Mr. Huffman. No recording. July 17, 1998.

Jean Nations Lefler. Recorded. Oct. 30, 1998.

Duane Oliver. Recorded. Oct. 18, 1998. 66 years of age.

Helen Patton. Recorded. Nov. 3, 1998. 84 years of age.

Keith Langdon. July 21, 1998.

Barbara McRae.

Shorty Mason. August 27, 1998.

George Ellison.

Robin Suggs. Several extended and ongoing conversations between 1998 and 2002.

Phillip Gibson.

Frank Findley.

2001-2003:

Danny Buchanon. 2002. Ongoing conversations at the SMNPA farmer's market and at

Bill Elliot's home.

Chyneer Birchfield. May 23, 2002.

Deidra and Mitch Williams. May 23, 2002.

Mabel Orr. April 26, 2002. 97 years of age.

Joy Orr. May 22, 2002. United States Forest Service employee in charge of issuing permits for the Cheoah district.

Buddy 'Tick' Orr. March 26, 2002.

Bell and Boyd Sawyer. March 26, 2002. Bell was 80 and Boyd was 83 at the time of this interview.

Cornelius Hall. March 26, 2002. In his ninety's. His granddaughter believes that he is 92 years old.

Brenda Norville. April 9, 2002.

R.E. Vann.

Dillard Holder. April 2, 2002. 56 years of age.

Esta 'Estie' Holder. April 2, 2002. 89 years of age.

Opal Meyers. April 4, 2002. 75 years of age.

Ivy Hollifield. April 4, 2002. 83 years of age.

Gary Kaufman. March 23, 2002. United States Forest Service Botanist.

Eva Holder. March 25, 2002. April 10, 2002. 86 years of age.

Ila Hatter. No recording. Several extended and ongoing conversations.

Tony Hayes. Nov. 16, 2002.

Teresa Garland. April 1, 2002.

Monty Holder. Spring 2002.

Rob Jordan.

Marvin Grindstaff. April 4, 2003. At home. 65 years of age.

Frances Grindstaff. April 4, 2003. At home. 60 years of age.

Bill Elliot. March 25, 2002. April 9, 2002. May 10, 2002. May 1, 2003. 56 years of age in 2003

Iva Rattler. April 6, 2003.

Ronnie Mason. April 9, 2003.

Lou Jackson. April 10, 2003.

Mr. and Mrs. Jean Taylor. April 11, 2003. 72 years of age and 69, respectively.

Viola Laughtry. April 30, 2003. 62 years of age.

John Jenkins. April 26, 2002. April 8, 2003. 42 years of age in 2003.

Ruby Crisp. April 2002 through 2003. 61 years of age in 2003.

Arnold Crisp. Arnold Crisp by himself, April 4, 2002 and May 1, 2002. April 29, 2003.

76 years of age in 2003.

Steve Birchfield. May 1, 2003.

APPENDIX B

GINSENG EXPORTED 1989-2001

Certified cultivated American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) in pounds

STATE	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Alabama	0	56	0	16	0	16	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
Arkansas	1,059	797	249	711	286	199	264	110	807	267	640	841	0
Georgia													
Idaho													
Illinois	3,460	6,526	387	2,090	1,280	3,370	39	1,231	35		462	0	0
Indiana	600	362	344	317	440	261	636	750	2,603	125	359	347	349
Iowa	21	10	11	803	19	10	27	122	165	4	161	0	0
Kentucky	958	2,471	2,685	1,815	116	1,931	1,069		1,309	5,222	1,137	75	10
Maine													
Maryland	291	2,150	762	762	1,509	1,371	2,164	2,404		5	0	1	0
Michigan	1,393	2,508	1,329	2,890	5,071	3,921	5,578	5,765	2,089	16,593	21,213	37,192	2,207
Minnesota	1,901	3,206	6,118	3,833	17,588	3,165	1,774	13,235	17,468	12,382	8,554	2,443	5,207
Missouri	290	220	17	28	9	18	148	24	59	44	7	85	42
New Hampshire													
New York	0	0	727	43	486	1,148		22		13	101	41	0
North Carolina	175	792	317	496	24	520	5	0	31	30		16	0
North Dakota													
Ohio	177	0	89	69	113	9	18	0		0		30	0
Oregon													
Pennsylvania	689	238	2,196	24	3,147	381	160	33	27	4,595	1,971	0	1,770
Tennessee	6,670	6,313	6,616	1,278	5,304	0	701	2,952	657	70	11	143	43
Vermont	4,380	4,770	3,952	0	308	95	0	0	78	62	116	211	116
Virginia	763	715	674	1,371	175	184	2,063	105	83	10		0	0
Washington													
West Virginia	25	200	659	1,229	611	184	184,437	206		2,337	316	470	172
Wisconsin	1,356,505	1,341,535	1,160,874	1,634,227	1,371,392	1,258,686	1,437,554	1,107,463	1,312,382	1,011,694	819,762	564,994	421,872
TOTAL	1,379,357	1,372,869	1,188,007	1,652,002	1,407,878	1,275,469	1,636,638	1,134,422	1,337,946	1,054,024	856,691	611,962	431,849

* Amounts include "cultivated woods-grown" as reported by State ginseng coordinators

Certified wild American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) in pounds

STATE	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Alabama	1,034	585	779	1,774	1,037	2,811	828	1,370	1,300	444	331	374	672
Arkansas	4,054	2,666	2,730	5,295	2,582	7,877	1,794	3,089	1,678	730	736	530	919
Georgia	450	447	718	1,137	353	735	1,159	948	579	268	368	309	720
Illinois	6,932	14,048	6,043	8,680	5,977	14,657	5,951	5,288	5,269	3,948	2,532	3,890	3,329
Indiana	11,698	11,670	5,283	13,645	10,459	7,480	9,878	11,916	9,045	4,693	3,440	6,273	7,048
Iowa	1,618	2,159	1,802	2,379	1,874	1,142	1,574	1,299	1,498	588	1,143	1,007	873
Kentucky	14,425	25,286	25,697	26,485	26,508	52,993	26,842	32,675	25,789	16,387	15,375	16,093	21,889
Maine--												0	0
Maryland	128	198	105	105	175	116	305	423	244	1,769	2,885	2,553	905
Michigan													
Minnesota	2,190	2,138	1,770	2,390	1,490	1,359	2,259	2,623	1,941	1,863	2,488	1,517	1,470
Missouri	2,814	2,357	2,865	4,404	2,505	2,172	2,883	3,678	2,795	1,317	908	1,277	1,568
New York	259	478	493	703	864	609	469	469	1,546	541	2,005	1,347	0
North Carolina	4,111	6,415	9,056	9,691	9,674	19,365	8,593	10,594	9,013	6,343	7,614	8,212	5,994
Ohio	8,279	10,811	7,236	12,155	7,694	8,886	9,043	11,566	9,037	4,616	3,800	3,632	3,815
Pennsylvania	1,756	2,454	2,534	4,053	3,690	7,743	1,590	2,915	2,223	1,802	1,756	1,400	1,214
Tennessee	18,701	12,522	16,338	25,299	13,840	17,997	13,841	21,277	12,936	7,231	6,686	8,417	8,734
Vermont	247	378	407	398	308	266	244	302	186	191	199	205	119
Virginia	8,375	10,167	13,134	13,148	10,075	10,325	9,194	11,303	6,742	4,842	5,110	5,815	3,826
West Virginia	14,407	15,991	18,808	23,226	19,224	18,698	16,580	18,607	11,921	7,451	6,742	9,662	5,590
Wisconsin	3,915	4,447	4,007	5,235	4,075	2,880	3,579	3,123	3,110	1,376	1,561	2,693	2,264
TOTAL	105,393	125,217	119,805	160,202	122,404	178,111	116,137	143,465	106,852	66,399	65,699	75,206	70,948

* Amounts include "wild simulated" as reported by State ginseng coordinators

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