

Kane and Iona

Kane was a thriving community in the early 1900s. It boasted a bank, two hotels, two general stores, a pool hall, a dance hall, a school, and a post office. Kane was the site of the Kane Ferry and was also served by the Burlington Railroad. Located just west of the Big Horn River and south of the mouth of the Shoshone River and near the confluence of the two rivers, Kane was named after Riley Kane, foreman for many years of the ML Ranch.

The land around Kane was used for cattle ranching and farming. The Kane Ferry was used by shearers to move sheep from Cowley, Byron, and Garland to the Big Horn Mountains. Thousands of sheep were trailed through Kane. Crops that flourished were sugar beets, vegetables, and fruits. There was mining of gold and gemstones in the area at Horseshoe Bend. Walter Quarstrom and Harry Abercrombie, two bachelors lived near Horseshoe Bend. Abercrombie had many mining claims in the area and felt someday the bentonite would be worth millions. Albert Gifford and Seth Durfee are two names associated with another industry in the area, the making of gyp blocks (which are similar to cinder blocks.) Although the population of Kane was small, ranchers and farmers from all over the Northern Basin came to Kane on Saturday nights to attend dances.

Iona was settled by Mormons, and was located two miles from Kane on the north side of the Shoshone River. The Shoshone River was diverted into several canals for irrigation of the area. For the Iona area the Big Fork canal and Jim Creek provided most of the water. The water for Kane came from the Nebel and Sunlight canals. Farming and homesteading abounded but cattle ranching suffered as land was fenced off. The ML Ranch, which earlier had run herds of 10,000 – 15,000 from the Montana line to Thermopolis, dwindled in size. After Anthony L. Mason, one of the partners died, Henry Clay Lovell (the other partner) continued to ranch until his death in 1903.

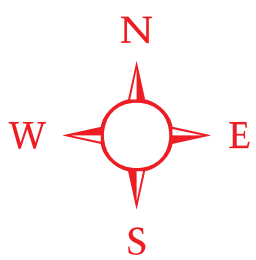
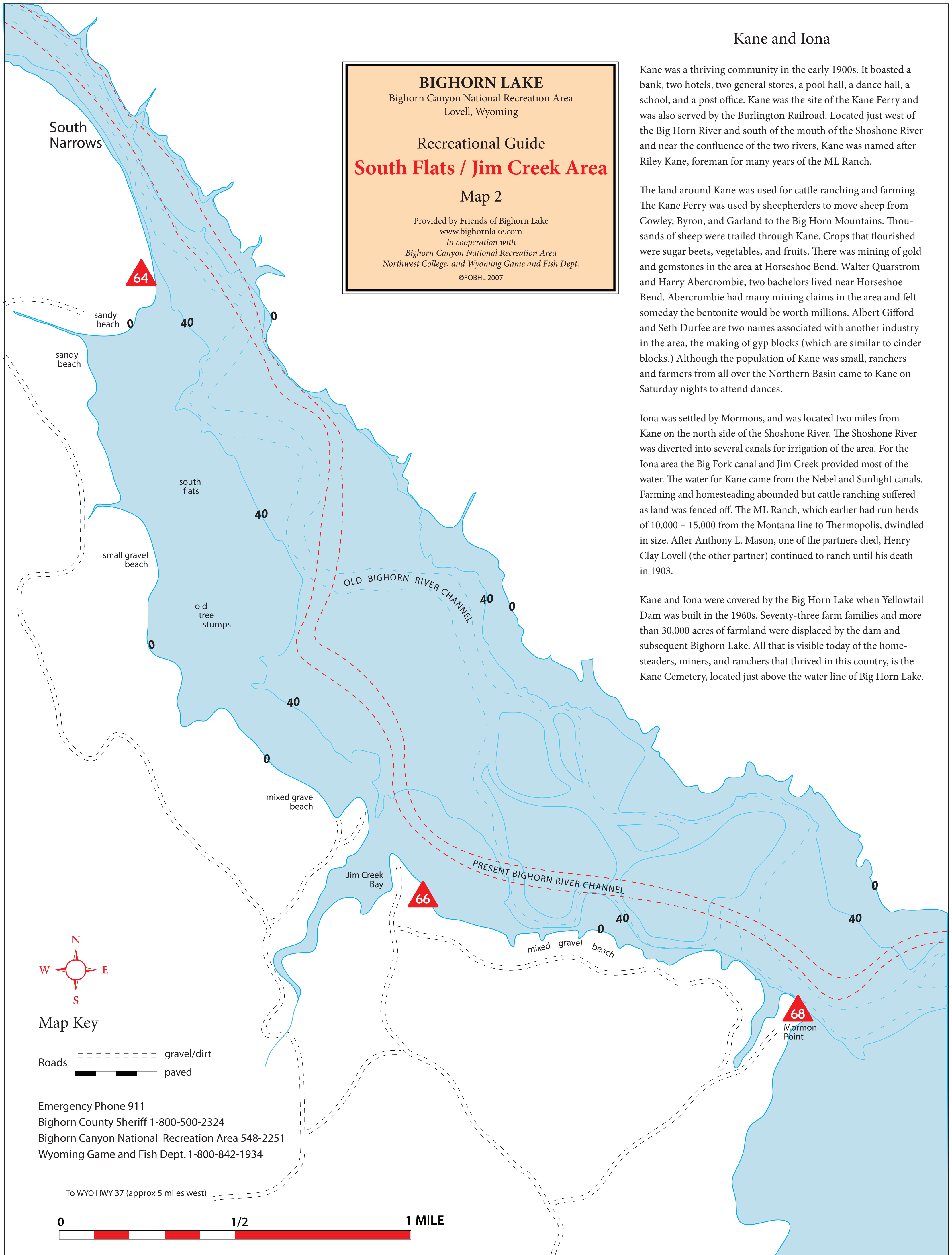
Kane and Iona were covered by the Big Horn Lake when Yellowtail Dam was built in the 1960s. Seventy-three farm families and more than 30,000 acres of farmland were displaced by the dam and subsequent Bighorn Lake. All that is visible today of the homesteaders, miners, and ranchers that thrived in this country, is the Kane Cemetery, located just above the water line of Big Horn Lake.

BIGHORN LAKE
Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area
Lovell, Wyoming

Recreational Guide
South Flats / Jim Creek Area

Map 2

Provided by Friends of Bighorn Lake
www.bighornlake.com
In cooperation with
Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area
Northwest College, and Wyoming Game and Fish Dept.
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Map Key

Roads gravel/dirt
 paved

Emergency Phone 911
Bighorn County Sheriff 1-800-500-2324
Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area 548-2251
Wyoming Game and Fish Dept. 1-800-842-1934

To WYO HWY 37 (approx 5 miles west)

