The brutal winter of 1886-1887 decimated the open range cattle, weakened by starvation from the summer’s drought. Violence between the cattle barons and small leaseholders began along the Sweetwater River near Independence Rock. Indians abandoned their tepees, clothing, supplies and established a defensive line across Beartrap Creek and the North Fork of the Red Fork. They escaped the battlefield at nightfall into the frigid minus 30-degree winter night. Within a year, they surrendered, ceded their land and were moved to the Southern Cheyenne reservation in Oklahoma. These Indians were not only removed from the lands they had occupied for generations; they were also forced to give up their way of life. The cattle barons were able to expand their operations and establish a strong foothold in the area.

The Johnson County War started when the WSGA hired Texas gunmen to kill 70 people suspected of cattle rustling. A group of cattle thieves led by a man named Champion attacked the KC Ranch cabin where he and his partner Ray rented land. Ray was killed early on and Champion fought alone for 19 hours, recording his thoughts in a journal. When the assassins set fire to the cabin, Nate grabbed his guns and fought them off.

The conviction of Captain John Johnson of the 1909 Spring Creek raid perpetrators brought peace to the area. The U.S. 6th Calvary from Fort McKinney arrived, surrounded the ranch and the Buffalo. The Wyoming Governor and two U.S. senators called for martial law, but President Harrison chose only to send the Calvary to stop the siege. The U.S. 6th Calvary from Fort McKinney arrived, surrounded the ranch and the Buffalo. The Wyoming Governor and two U.S. senators called for martial law, but President Harrison chose only to send the Calvary to stop the siege.
The Devonian rocks (D) southern depositional limit was between the North Fork and Red Fork of the basin. Unconformities (surfaces of erosion) shown by red wavy lines.

The Chugwater Group is made up of three formations and one unnamed unit. The oldest and thickest unit is the Red Wall area Chugwater Group outcrop. The Popo Agie Formation is not present here. Solid white lines are formation contacts, dashed are intraformational subdivisions shown on stratigraphic column. Abbreviation: Ju, Jurassic strata.

The Alcova Limestone (Trca) is a thin carbonate unit that represents an inner shelf environment. The Alcova Limestone and underlying sandstones are part of a sand sheet that can be traced on seismic data for several kilometers. The sand sheet formed a transgressive wedge along the shelf margin of the Jurassic landmasses. The sand sheet sandstones from a delta-front depositional environment. Scattered channels and scour surfaces suggest the presence of a partial braided stream system.

The Chugwater Group overlies the Triassic-Permian Goose Egg Formation, which forms the valley floor, and underlies the Jurassic sandstone shelf. The Triassic-Permian formations are mostly non-cyclical, shelf sediments of the Triassic and Permian basins. The Permian and Triassic form the lower part of the geologic landscape of Wyoming.

The Chugwater Group consists of fluvial and lacustrine sediments, with up to 600 feet of fluvial deposits representing braided streams. The sediments are interbedded with evaporites, particularly gypsum and anhydrite, and lake deposits. The upper units are less resistant to erosion than the older portions of the Chugwater and form a grassy plain on the plateau extending to the Sundance Formation ridgeline. The Popo Agie Formation is not present in the area due to either non-deposition or erosion.

The outlaws were an assortment of cattle rustlers, horse thieves, and train robbers. There were many groups making up the Hole in the Wall "gangs." Usually 40 outlaws maintained a semi-permanent residence behind the Red Wall. The outlaws were an assortment of cattle rustlers, horse thieves, and train robbers. There were many groups making up the Hole in the Wall "gangs." Usually 40 outlaws maintained a semi-permanent residence behind the Red Wall.

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The Red Wall area Chugwater Group outcrop. The Popo Agie Formation is not present here. Solid white lines are formation contacts, dashed are intraformational subdivisions shown on stratigraphic column. Abbreviation: Ju, Jurassic strata.

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The following BLM webpages give directions and tips on road & trail conditions to access these places:

- **Outlaw Cave Trail (east wall)**, but is further downstream about 0.2 mile on a sketchy trail overhanging the river. You must decide for yourself if accessing these caves is safe.

- **Madison just downstream about 50 yards from a rock window.** Outlaw Cave 2 is on the same side of the river as the Madison just downstream about 50 yards from a rock window. Outlaw Cave 2 is on the same side of the river as the

- **Hole in the Wall region** was generally about control of land and its resources. This was true of the inter-tribal battles, the wars between native people and the United States, the cattle barons dispute with the homesteaders, and the outlaws of Hole in the Wall gangs against 19th century society. The rusty red escarpments of Triassic Chugwater Formation provided a dramatic backdrop for these stories of the Wild West.

- **Our two recommendations are drives/hikes to Outlaw Cave in the Middle Fork of the Powder River and to the Hole in the Wall.** Best time of year to visit is during May and June when the green vegetation contrasts with the red canyon walls.  Even though they are not that far apart. A 4WD high clearance vehicle trip to the Hole in the Wall takes you past some beautiful Chugwater outcrops. It is a long drive on isolated dirt roads with minimal cell phone reception. A BLM map for Midwest and Kaycee would be helpful. Don't travel these roads if they are wet. The actual "Hole in the Wall" is a gap in the cliffs, not a spectacular hole or cave (lower your expectations).

- **Things to Do**

  - Fade to the music of Elmer Bernstein's theme from the Magnificent Seven with cowboy and horse atop the Red Wall…

  - Charles Keiser' short HD video of the Red Wall:

  - Middle Fork of the Powder River and Outlaw Cave campground video:

  - [Watch the video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45KAjt7v4t4)

  - [Watch the video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KYEUkcWi-)

- **Geologic processes acting over deep time created the Red Wall and the Wyoming landscape.** Major conflicts in the Red Wall region were generally about control of land and its resources. This was true of the inter-tribal battles, the wars between native people and the United States, the cattle barons dispute with the homesteaders, and the outlaws of Hole in the Wall gangs against 19th century society. The rusty red escarpments of Triassic Chugwater Formation provided a dramatic backdrop for these stories of the Wild West.

- **The dip canyons are steep-walled erosional features with red beds of shale, sandstone, and limestone.** The Paleozoic section is upper part of Madison Limestone, some 20-300 million years ago. The uppermost Tensleep Sandstone (middle) and the lowermost Amsden Formation (lower) are in the dips along the middle Red Wall. The lower part of the Paluxy Formation is also exposed, but underlie the Cambrian Flathead Formation. Numerous caves are developed within the Paleozoic carbonate rocks. At least two of the caves were used by the outlaws in Hole in the Wall area. Soldiers posted at Fort Washakie and Fort Union document the presence of these caves in the Red Wall. The best time to visit the Red Wall is the spring when the green vegetation contrasts with the red canyon walls. The best time to visit the Red Wall is the spring when the green vegetation contrasts with the red canyon walls.

- **Outlaw Cave is across the river (no bridge) on the west wall in the.** Images of the Red Wall taken from the top of the canyon walls. The Paleozoic section is upper part of Madison Limestone, some 20-300 million years ago. The uppermost Tensleep Sandstone (middle) and the lowermost Amsden Formation (lower) are in the dips along the middle Red Wall. The lower part of the Paluxy Formation is also exposed, but underlie the Cambrian Flathead Formation. Numerous caves are developed within the Paleozoic carbonate rocks. At least two of the caves were used by the outlaws in Hole in the Wall area. Soldiers posted at Fort Washakie and Fort Union document the presence of these caves in the Red Wall. The best time to visit the Red Wall is the spring when the green vegetation contrasts with the red canyon walls. The best time to visit the Red Wall is the spring when the green vegetation contrasts with the red canyon walls.

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