Oral History Projects: Sample Questions

1. Biographical Information: What is your name? Where are you from? How long have you lived there? What is your educational level? What is your job or vocation? What do you know about your family of origin?

2. Work information: Where do you work? How long have you worked there? Does your job require special training? How did you acquire this? Has your job been affected by economic change over time? Are you close with you and your coworkers? Does your work community socialize together outside of work?

3. How large is your home town? What ethnic and/or religious groups are represented in your town and the surrounding area? How well do these groups get along? What community social events happen in your town? Has this changed over time?

4. What has been your political engagement? What causes, movements, or parties have you participated in? What motivated you to join? Were there any memorable events?

5. Do the men and women in your life have different roles and responsibilities? How would you describe them? Have these changed over time?

6. What do you remember about your first experiences with Montana landscapes? Do you work on the land? Do you remember recreational opportunities such as fishing, hunting, and camping? Have the places you know changed over time? If so, how? Have these experiences affected your views about resource use or environmental protection?

7. What historical events do you remember? For instance, do you remember the assassination of Kennedy? The attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001? The Reagan presidency? How did you learn about these events?