Ute Indian Tribal History

***Source**: A part of a summary from the Utah Division of Indian Affairs about the Ute Indian Tribe and Ouray Reservation. The summary briefly covers the historical movements and culture of the tribe, as well as their experiences with other groups of people, including the US Federal government and Mormon settlers. Found at https://indian.utah.gov/ute-indian-tribe-of-the-uintah-ouray-reservation/*

The Utes lived in bands in a gathering and hunting economy, and with the introduction of horses in the 1600s they were able to travel farther and quicker. Their way of life was disrupted as contact with the Spanish began, who brought the slave trade and who increased tribal conflicts. Further problems developed with the arrival of Mormon settlers, who expanded into Ute land and competed for their natural resources.

After conflicts with the Mormons, the Utes signed the Treaty of Spanish Fork in 1865 and were forced to move to the dry Uintah Basin. In 1881, the U.S. government forced the White River Utes from Colorado to the Uintah Reservation, and the following year they created the Ouray Reservation next to it, later consolidating them. By 1933, 91% of their reservation lands had been taken due to allotment. This made their traditional way of life impossible. Farming proved unsuccessful, so the Utes turned to raising sheep, cattle, and horses.

In the 1950s the Utes won multiple legal battles and received $32 million in reparations for their land losses. Today they have many businesses, continue to raise cattle, and mine oil and natural gas.