

Rocky Mountain

Administrative History



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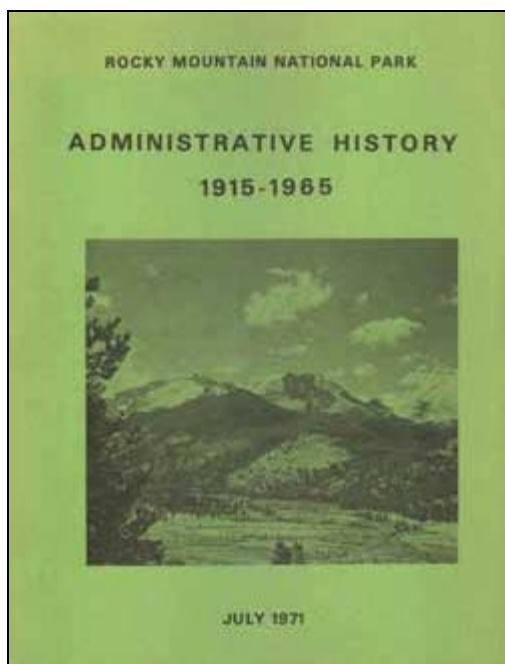
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Rocky Mountain National Park ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY 1915-1965

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July 1971

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Office of History and Historic Architecture
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ABSTRACT

This study contains the administrative history of Rocky Mountain National Park from its creation in 1915 to 1965, fifty years. It is divided thematically into 13 chapters and a conclusion.

Chapter I reviews the history of white settlers in the area prior to 1915. Chapter II describes the creation of the park. The next three chapters, III-V, discuss the controversies and court battles concerning transportation and roads. Chapter VI covers the developments of roads and trails. The Civilian Conservation Corps is discussed in Chapter VII. Chapter VIII traces the history of the Colorado-Big Thompson Project. The story of Wildlife Management is found in Chapter IX. Chapter X describes the park naturalist and the development of an interpretive program. Chapter XI discusses winter sports, with emphasis on skiing in Hidden Valley. Chapter XII dwells on inholdings, concessioners, and boundary extensions. The final chapter, XIII, tells the story of the park rangers.

There follow some conclusions by the author concerning the history of the administration of Rocky Mountain National Park, an appendix that lists the park superintendents, and a bibliography.

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FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This administrative history of Rocky Mountain National Park was prepared in 1966-67 under a National Park Service contract by Mr. Lloyd K. Musselman, then of Denver, Colorado. The format and style of the report differ in many aspects from those usually employed by the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation. However they are valid; and very few changes have been made in them. In some rare instances, such as the manner of identifying book titles, small changes were made. The list of park superintendents has been brought up to date. Also, a few long bibliographic entries (those referring to many individual newspaper issues) have been shortened.

The justification for reproducing this worthy study is to make available a sufficient number of bound copies for the various levels of management within the National Park Service that are or might be concerned with the subject.

The original final copy of the report was not available for reproduction. Rather than a reproduction made from a machine copy, the decision was made to retype the document. This typing was delayed until it could be suitably done without interfering with the regular program in the Office of History and Historic Architecture, Eastern Service Center. Thanks are extended to the four ladies who turned out the report in record breaking time. They are: Mrs. Beatrice Libys, Miss Debra Mason, Miss Nancy Reed, and Mrs. Judy Sprouse.

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INTRODUCTION

The creation of Rocky Mountain National Park in 1915 followed a policy of retaining under the control of the national government land areas of scenic beauty and historic worth in the American West. The policy complemented a program for conserving certain natural resources, such as timber and water, through the establishment of national forests on the public domain. Both types of endeavor had arisen during the period after the Civil War when the public lands were subjected to increasingly rapid absorption and despoliation through private ownership and use. Because of growing concern over these results and the methods employed to accomplish them, far-sighted citizens and organizations promoted measures for preserving the landed heritage of the country through government control.

The first major step in accomplishing the goal of preservation was taken in 1872 when Congress was persuaded to establish Yellowstone National Park in the Wyoming section of the Rocky Mountains. A second significant step followed nearly twenty years later through the passage of a bill which authorized the president to select and set aside large areas of western lands for forest reserves. Within a few weeks of the bill's passage, that is on March 31, 1891, a presidential proclamation withdrew from private entry more than a million and a quarter acres of land in order to form Yellowstone Park Timberland Reserve. This initial effort to further an avowed move for conservation was shortly implemented in Colorado by the establishment of the White River Reserve. During the remainder of the 1890s the president continued to add to the list of forest reserves. The first national park in Colorado embraced the Mesa Verde area (1906) in the southwestern corner of the state, and the next was Rocky Mountain National Park.

The distinction between the complementary forest reserve (later called national forest) and national park systems arises from their respective purposes. The reserves has been set aside for "wise current use" such as regulation of water supplies, selective timber cutting, regulated grazing, mining, hunting and recreational activities. In general, such activities are precluded from national parks, however, for the parks are designed to maintain in unimpaired form for the use of current and future generations, primitive and historic areas. The uses of parks include observation of and instruction about natural, phenomena and wildlife and the pursuit of out-of-door health and pleasures by visitors.

It might be noted that the gradual increase in the number of forest reserves (today there are 152 reserves enclosing 186,000,000 acres of land) led initially to the establishment of a Division of Forestry in the Department of the Interior, and later (1905) the Division was revamped into the Forest Service and placed under the Department of Agriculture. Correspondingly, while at first each national park was administered as a separate unit under the Department of the Interior, by 1916 the National Park Service was organized to supervise the then twelve parks, which embraced four and one half million acres of land. The creation of this agency meant that for Rocky Mountain National Park there was only one year of independent operation under the Department of the Interior before the National Park Service began its task of coordination of the work and efforts of all the parks. But the Service provided guidance and help in meeting the various needs, so as to ensure promotion of many

types of improvements, particularly those that required obtaining money from a somewhat reluctant Congress.

It is the purpose of the present study to trace with reasonable detail the administrative history of Rocky Mountain National Park from the time of its creation in 1915 to 1965. The author intends to review mainly the implementation of Park Service policies by administrators on the scene, rather than the fabrication of these policies by national officials. This history involves many controversies. They begin with the efforts of local and national individuals and organizations to establish the Park. Thereafter Park officials became involved in a dispute over granting a transportation monopoly and the ceding of jurisdiction over the Park's roads from state to federal authority. Litigation involved Colorado's officials and an early Park superintendent on the question of regulating traffic in the Park and finally was resolved by the Supreme Court of the United States.

After these early jurisdictional problems were decided, the Park's administrators turned their attention to improving the physical condition of the area. Old roads and trails were improved and new ones constructed. Foremost among these developments was the building of the famous Trail Ridge Road, which is the highest continuous auto road in the nation, crossing a pass at 12,183 feet and connecting Estes Park Village on the east with Grand Lake Village on the west. Further construction within the Park was carried on by the Civilian Conservation Corps during the depression years of the 1930's. The activities initiated under this government program, along with those of the Reclamation Bureau's Colorado-Big Thompson water diversion project, not only brought necessary changes to the Park area, but also helped to stimulate the region's economy.

Throughout the Park's eventful history, administrators worked to resolve a basic dilemma: how to preserve the wildlife and scenery in their natural state and still allow tourists to visit and explore the region. Included in the problems growing out of this dilemma were wildlife management, winter sports development, removal of private inholdings and concessions, and the extension of Park boundaries.

Heretofore, no comprehensive study has been made of the administrative history of Rocky Mountain National Park. Both popular and scholarly works have been published, however, concerning the early days of the Park, as well as the pioneer history of nearby towns. Useful for its reminiscences of the early days of Grand Lake's development is Mary Lyons Cairns' Grand Lake: The Pioneers. [1] For accounts of pioneer life in Estes Park, there are June E. Carothers' Estes Park, Past and Present [2] and Florence Shoemaker's "The Story of the Estes-Rocky Mountain National Park Region." [3] Enos A. Mills The Rocky Mountain National Park [4] provides a colorful view of the first seven years of the Park's existence. Finally, Edwin C. Alberts' "Administrative History of Rocky Mountain National Park" [5] is a sketchy rendering of this aspect of Park history through 1952.

Despite these helpful secondary materials, primary sources proved to be more valuable for this monograph. An intensive study was made of the Superintendents' Monthly and Annual Reports filed in the Rocky Mountain National Park Library. Much useful material also was found in the library's files labelled "Historical Data." The Annual Reports of the Chief Park Naturalists were invaluable for an understanding of the naturalist service.

The author also relied heavily upon newspaper accounts. The weekly Estes Park Trail was thoroughly examined beginning with its first issue, April 15, 1921. In addition, the Rocky Mountain News and the Denver Post were sifted for their coverage of the more controversial aspects of the Park's history. Several other newspapers were drawn upon, notably The (Boulder) Daily Camera and the Boulder News-Herald, for their editorial comments on Park administrative policies.

Some sources were especially helpful for their contributions to specific topics. The Enos Mills correspondence for the years July 12, 1910, to July 9, 1915, found among the papers of J. Horace McFarland, contained important information on the struggle to create the National Park. Neal G. Guse's "The Elk of Rocky Mountain National Park" [6] provided a summary of decision-making which led to the reduction of elk in the Park.

Interviews either previously made or undertaken by the author substantiated and supplemented information for certain events in the Park's history. R. T. "Dixie" MacCracken, Robert Griffiths, Mary Lyons Cairns, Jack Moomaw, Fred McLaren, and Charles Hix contributed valuable data about the early days in the Park. On the efforts to create the Park, significant anecdotes were contributed by James Grafton Rogers, Morrison Shafroth, Henry Toll, and H. N. Wheeler. Mrs. Esther B. Mills consented to two interviews about the role of her husband, Enos Mills, in the transportation controversy. Former superintendent Edmund Rogers gave insights into the building of Trail Ridge Road. Life in the CCC camps was recalled by Merlin K. Potts and William James. Former superintendent David Canfield talked freely on a wide range of topics, including public relations, the Colorado Big-Thompson project, and the Hidden Valley winter sports development. Another former superintendent, T. J. Allen, Jr., described problems associated with boundary extensions. Controversies involving the rangers and naturalists were retold by Dr. Ferrel Atkins and Wayne Bates. The story of the Steads Ranch purchase was sketched by former superintendent Allyn Hanks. Finally, former management assistant Roger Contor ably summarized the philosophy underlying the creation of national parks.

This administrative history of Rocky Mountain National Park has been divided into thirteen chapters and a conclusion. The first reviews the history of the region from the time of the coming of the first white settlers to 1915. Particular attention is given to the region of Estes Park and Grand Lake, in which villages of the same names were developed. The struggle to establish a national park in the region is described in Chapter II. It emphasizes the striking character and notable contribution of Enos Mills. Chapters III and IV present a detailed account of the bitter controversy and court battles growing out of the federal government's grant of a transportation monopoly for sight-seeing vehicles within the Park's boundaries. This account is followed by the story of the dispute over ceding jurisdiction of Park roads to the federal government.

The next three chapters deal with significant building projects within the National Park. Chapter VI surveys improvements in the Park's road and trail systems. Chapter VII describes the constructive contributions of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Chapter VIII concentrates on the building of the Colorado-Big Thompson water diversion project.

The remaining chapters encompass a variety of topics. Chapter IX discusses wildlife management policies, with particular emphasis on the question of elk and deer reduction. The evolution of the Department of Interpretation forms the theme of the next chapter. Because of the Park's obvious advantages for winter sports, the construction of various facilities, including the Hidden Valley ski and ice skating complex, warrants separate consideration. Chapter XII concerns administrative and legislative efforts to deal with private inholdings, concessioners and boundary extensions. Activities of the park rangers are highlighted in a final chapter, which is followed by a conclusion. Finally there is an appendix containing a roster of superintendents.

While all the many persons who have contributed to this study deserve my gratitude, several deserve special mention. The project would never have been initiated without the cooperation of Merrill Mattes of the National Park Service. During two summers at Rocky Mountain National Park, the author was aided in his research by Ranger Naturalist, Dr. Ferrel Atkins, Chief Park Naturalist Merlin K. Potts, and Assistant Park Naturalist Pat Miller. Finally, the

quiet inspiration imparted to his men by former superintendent Allyn Hanks also had an impact on the author and helped to lighten the task of preparing the Park's administrative history.

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CHAPTER I:

THE PIONEERS OF THE ESTES PARK AND GRAND LAKE REGIONS

An administrative history of Rocky Mountain National Park must take into account the fact that the scenic features and natural resources of its locale had attracted settlers, visitors and business enterprises during a period of more than a half century before the Park was created in 1915. In other words, the residents and business men whose lands came to be included within the Park's boundaries, thriving villages like Estes Park that lay just outside the boundaries, and other nearby communities, as well as farms and commercial firms that had established economic ties with the Park land, formed important elements in administrative planning and policy determination for Park officials after 1915. Consequently, following a brief reference to the principal geographic features of the area, the present chapter will highlight the story of the settlement and use of the region before the Park was established.

Rocky Mountain National Park is located in portions of three counties (Larimer, Grand and Boulder) in north-central Colorado, about sixty-five miles northwest of Denver. It presently contains 260,000 acres of land and is oblong in form. The Continental Divide traverses the Park, extending from the northwest area toward the southeast, where it approaches the Front Range, which faces the plains. The Park's most notable landmark is Longs Peak, rising 14,256 feet above sea level near the southeastern corner of the Park. Fifty-eight other peaks reach a height of at least 12,000 feet above sea level, and numerous picturesque meadows and deep valleys are scattered throughout this mountainous region.

Several important rivers or streams begin in or near the Park, such as the two forks of the Big Thompson in the northeast section; St. Vrain Creek in the southeast; the Cache la Poudre in the northwest; the North Fork of the Colorado River on the western side of the Divide; and a number of small creeks which feed into Grand Lake, which is the main source of the Colorado River. The heavy winter snows of the region melt during the warmer months of the year to provide water for the streams and many small lakes, although some of the snow contributes to the glaciers found in the southern half of the Park. There is an abundant variety of flora, from the tundra plants of the high elevations to the various kinds of trees growing below timberline, some of which will be considered later as they posed administrative problems. Wildlife, too, is abundant and varied, as subsequent discussion will show.

Reserving for another section brief mention of the Indians that were associated with the Park area, it may be pointed out that for the entire Rocky Mountain chain there are records of visits to various areas by explorers, troops and a few fur traders of either France, Spain or Great Britain before 1800. The first official expedition sent to the future northern Colorado region by the United States government, however, was headed by Major Stephen H. Long (for whom Longs Peak was named) in 1820. It was followed by other expeditions in the next several decades, including those led by General Henry Dodge in 1835 and John C. Fremont in 1842. Throughout this period fur trappers and traders such as Louis Vasquez and Andrew Sublette traveled the valleys of the Rocky Mountains. Still, there is no firm evidence of any

white man entering the present boundaries of Rocky Mountain National Park until 1859. In the autumn of that year, which marked the gold rush to Colorado, Joel Estes and his son Milton had set out to follow an old Indian trail in search of game. Each step took them further from their home in Fort Lupton, on the South Platte, where Joel raised cattle. Walking was nothing new to him. He had walked or ridden horseback from Missouri to California three times before settling in Colorado—first at Auraria, then at Golden Gate, and finally at Fort Lupton. Estes was a frontier wanderer in search of a home and a fortune. [1]

On October 15, 1859, [2] Joel Estes and history met by chance. After climbing to the top of a high ridge, he saw for the first time the park that would someday bear his name. [3] He liked what he saw and reportedly said, "The very place I have been seeking. Here I will make my home." After he had laid out his claims, he and his wife Patsy and their six children—Milton, Francis Marion, Joel, Jr., Sarah, Molly, and Mary Jane—moved to the park-like area. There, Estes resumed his occupation of raising cattle. [4]

The Estes family lived a secluded life with a rough twenty-five mile trail separating them from the nearest ranch. While neighbors were scarce, provisions were not. Fish, berries and game were plentiful and milk and cream were always available. According to Milton Estes, one fall and winter he used a muzzle loading rifle to kill one hundred head of elk, as well as some deer, mountain sheep and antelope. [5] Most of the clothing worn by the family was made from animal skins and flour sacks, but such clothing was sufficient to protect them from the usually severe winters. The pioneers made some money by selling dressed game and skins in Denver about every two months. It was on these infrequent trips that the Estes Family got their mail and staple supplies.

While operating their ranch, the Estes family had no contacts with Indians. There were a few freshly cut Indian lodge poles in the Park area when they arrived. No Indians, though, intruded on their claims. There was, however, a Ute raid in 1865 to the east, on the St. Vrain River near the present site of Lyons, Colorado. [6]

Sightseers soon began to visit the region, attracted by the mountain scenery. Henry M. Teller, later famous as a Senator from Colorado, seems to have been the first health seeker. In the fall of 1861, he hiked into the park after an attack of mountain fever, and was a guest at the Estes home all of that winter. By spring, he had fully regained his health. [7] In 1864 William N. Byers, editor of the Rocky Mountain News, came with a party of mountain climbers and tried unsuccessfully to scale Longs Peak. [8] Byers was impressed with the hospitality of the Estes family and upon his return to Denver named the area "Estes Park" in honor of his host.

Cold mountain winters made more of an impression on Estes than this singular honor, however, so he sold his claim for fifty dollars and a yoke of oxen to Michael Hollenbeck and a man called "Buck." On April 15, 1866 the Estes family left the Park for the warmer climate of New Mexico. [9] Joel Estes never returned. He died at Farmington, New Mexico on December 31, 1875, at the age of sixty-nine. [10]

The Estes Park area did not have long to wait for other interesting pioneers, after the Estes family had left. Barely a year later, it was settled by two rather explosive characters. They were Griffith ("Griff") J. Evans, a Welshman who bought the Estes property from its former purchasers, and James ("Rocky Mountain Jim") Nugent, a man of unknown origin, who settled in Muggins Gulch with a yellow dog of equally obscure ancestry. Jim's cabin overlooked the trail from Lyons, the only road to Estes Park.

Gracious when sober and dangerous when not—which was much of the time—Jim made his living by trapping bears and entertaining tourists with tall stories. A run-in with a bear cost

Jim his right eye, right thumb, most of the right side of his face and all of his left arm. Indeed, the bear almost scalped him and only a primitive, haphazard bit of surgery saved for Jim an irregular hairline. His strange, scarred appearance and flamboyant personality typified for many tourists the wild, romantic spirit of the West.

Isabella Bird, a well-known author of the nineteenth century and an Englishwoman with an indomitable spirit, was one of the early visitors to the Park area, arriving in the early 1870's. She was enraptured with the scenery and interested in the area inhabitants, especially Jim. They spent a great deal of time together, for Jim served as her guide and she became his confidant. [11]

Unfortunately Jim could not control his combustible nature and he soon had a disagreement with his neighbor, Griff Evans. While the cause for the argument is obscure, there is no doubt about its end. Evans won after blasting Jim in the head with a shotgun. Somehow Jim remained alive for several months—long enough for him to write several articles for a Fort Collins newspaper—before a combination of liquor and buckshot resulted in his death. [12]

Jim's articles had protested the proposed sale of lands to an Irish nobleman, the Right Honorable Windham Thomas Wyndham-Quin, Fourth Earl of Dunraven. [13] The Earl, having heard of the fine hunting in the American West, had visited Estes Park in 1872 and again in 1873. In 1874 he decided to take the whole of Estes Park as a game preserve for the exclusive use of himself and his English friends. By stretching the provisions of the Homestead Act and the rights of preemption, Dunraven claimed 15,000 acres in the Park. His efforts resulted in what has been called "one of the most gigantic land steals in the history of Colorado." [14] The coming of more settlers in 1874 and 1875 stopped this wholesale entry of land. Although for thirty—three years Dunraven considered the Park his personal property, the settlers did not. Their hostility forced him to give up the game preserve idea.

Dunraven later described the influx of settlers and his consequent plans:

Folks were drifting in prospecting . . . preempting, making claims; so we prepared for civilization. Made a better road, bought a sawmill at San Francisco, hauled the machinery in, set it up, felled trees, and built a wooden hotel. . . . [15]

The noted landscape artist, Albert Bierstadt, induced by Dunraven to paint in Estes Park, helped select the site for Dunraven's English Hotel, which was built in 1877. It was situated in a meadow east of the present Estes Park village and was the first strictly tourist hotel built in the Park. The hotel was a three—story frame building. There were twelve narrow windows, and a large door opening onto a one-storied, columned porch. The roof of this porch formed an open deck surrounded by a small hand railing. The porch ran the full length of the front of the building and about halfway around each end. [16]

Despite the success of this "English Hotel and Lodge," the disillusioned Dunraven left the area forever in the late 1880's. He later explained:

People came in disputing claims, kicking up rows: exorbitant land taxes got into arrears; and we were in constant litigation. The show could not be managed from home, and we were in constant danger of being frozen out. So we sold for what we could get and cleared out, and I have never been there since. [17]

His hotel burned to the ground in 1911.

When Dunraven realized it would be impossible for him to control all of the park region, he first leased the land he had acquired, about 6,000 acres. Theodore Whyte held the lease from about 1883 to 1890, at which time C. Golding Dwyer took it over. Frank Bardolph was

another lessee. In 1907 Dunraven sold his property to B. D. Sanborn of Greeley and F. O. Stanley of Estes Park.

The plans of Dunraven and his general manager, Theodore Whyte, to transform Estes Park into a British colony touched the lives of most of the area's early settlers. In the early 1870's when "the West was still fresh, and the Union Pacific railroad was young," [18] other pioneers moved their families and belongings to the Park. Some selected desirable sites in the vicinity of the land owned by the English Company. Claims were made in Black Canon, Beaver Creek, Willow Park, and the Wind River area. Among the early settlers were A. Q. MacGregor, H. W. Ferguson, and W. E. James.

Alexander Quinter MacGregor was a native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He had come to the Colorado Territory in 1869 and settled in Denver to practice law. He first visited Estes Park in the summer of 1872 on a hunting trip. The next year, he and his bride, Clara, took up a homestead in the Park on land not claimed by the English Company. There on a slope along Black Cañon Creek the MacGregors grazed cattle. Not long after his arrival, MacGregor built the first toll road in the area. It connected Glenn Evans, a few miles from Lyons, with Estes Park. His wife distinguished herself as the Park's first postmistress, in 1876. MacGregor also operated a sawmill, off and on, until he was struck by lightning and killed in June 1896. [19]

Successful hunting trips influenced others to settle in Estes Park. After a winter hunt in 1875, Horace W. Ferguson decided the mountain climate would have a therapeutic effect on his wife, who was ill. He took up a claim a half mile north of Mary's Lake. Subsequently, in April 1875, his family joined him. There, in his crude homestead cabin, the Park's first wedding took place. In October 1876, Ferguson's daughter, Anna, married Richard Hubbell, a Longmont merchant. Ferguson later distinguished himself by shooting a brown bear on the shores of a park lake, thereby providing it with the name Bear Lake. [20]

Yet another pioneer was persuaded to settle in the Park after a successful hunting trip. W. E. James, a former grocery store owner from New York, brought his family to Estes Park in May 1875. They settled down in a dirt roof homestead cabin near McCreery Spring. James soon found a more suitable location near Alexander Q. MacGregor's homestead on Black Cañon Creek. The family, however, moved again in April 1877, to the present site of Elkhorn Lodge. There they opened a modest lodge to the tourist trade. [21]

In the mid-1870's newcomers to the Park mingled with old-timers to create a pioneer potpourri. Some like the Rowes, Hupps, and Cleaves remained obscure, while others like the Spragues would be remembered for significant contributions to the region. [22] One historian has concluded: "The year 1875 might be said to mark the beginning of permanent settlement in the Park." [23]

The influx of pioneers to the region did little to change Estes Park's rural character. By 1892 only two buildings were located along what would become the main street of Estes Park village. One was a frame house belonging to John Cleave, and the other was an eight-by-ten-foot frame post office. By the turn of the century, though, Estes Park village was gaining the appurtenances of a town. It could then show a shoe repair shop, a bakery, barber shop, and livery stable; by 1906 the first of the village's hotels—the Hupp, run by Mrs. Josie Hupp--had been erected. It contained twenty-three rooms, with steam heat and hot and cold water.

In 1907, a major land purchase helped spur the growth of the village. B. D. Sanborn and F. O. Stanley purchased approximately 6,000 acres from the Earl of Dunraven. The purchase included the Estes Park Hotel, the Earl's cottage, stables, dairy, and the Country Club House. The reported price was "in the neighborhood of \$80,000." [24]

To consummate the deal, Sanborn and Stanley had formed a significant partnership. For one-

half the interest in the Estes Park Development Company, Stanley had agreed to build a hotel and an electric light plant. As part of this agreement, the now famous Stanley Hotel was opened in 1909. F. O. Stanley, who, with his brother F. E. Stanley, had earlier invented the Stanley Steamer automobile, is still remembered as "the man who brought the modern tourist business to Estes Park." [25]

While Estes Park Village steadily grew, it did not become a boom town. A bank opened in 1908 with F. O. Stanley as President. That same year the Estes Park Water Company and the Electric Light and Power Company were incorporated. One year before a volunteer fire fighting group had organized itself, while in 1906 a new school house employing three staff members had opened. Still, by August of 1908, it was believed that "the development of Estes Park was just getting started." [26]

Before the white man came to Grand Lake, less than twenty miles southwest of Estes Park village, the Ute Indians of the Shoshone tribe, who roamed the western slope of the Continental Divide in Colorado and Utah, often camped on the shores of the Lake during the summers. East of the mountains their enemies, the Cheyenne and Arapahoes, hunted. [27] By the time that the first white settlers visited the Lake, most of the Indians had left, for reasons that still puzzle the historian. To replace the Indians as frequent occupants, there came an influx of pioneer personalities, some bizarre, almost all interesting.

In concert with the pioneer history of Estes Park, the Grand Lake area could boast of hunting expeditions by European noblemen, but not until June of 1867 did the first white settler come to that area. He was Joseph L. Wescott, a former Civil War Union cavalryman. Suffering from inflammatory rheumatism, he had come first to bathe in the waters of Hot Sulphur Springs in 1865. Later he moved to Grand Lake and remained there until his death in 1914. [28] He built a log cabin on the west shore of the Lake and for several years had the country generally to himself. He hunted, fished and trapped for a living. Often he prospected for gold in the "big mountains," certain that he would make a rich strike some day. [29]

In 1877 Wescott became Grand Lake's first postmaster, his "post office" being a canned-goods box from which fishing parties sorted their mail. [30] Wescott also assumed the role of preacher pro tempore, when, a few years later, an anxious intended bridegroom lamented, "Hell, we ain't got no parson!" [31] Although Grand Lake was no Gomorrah, it did lack the trappings of religion. For Wescott to perform the marriage ceremony, it became necessary to borrow the nearest Bible from "old lady Kinny" in Hot Sulphur Springs, twenty-four miles away. According to a contemporary, a drunken prize fighter named Pete Gallagher then punctuated the proceedings by pummeling the bridegroom. [32] Later, in 1881, when the town of Grand Lake was surveyed and platted, the settlers elected Wescott justice of the peace with the title "judge"—a title that would stay with him for the rest of his life.

The first family to visit Grand Lake regularly was the Proctor family, consisting of the father, Alexander, the mother, Tirzah, and their eight children. They spent each summer and two winters at the Lake between 1877 and 1885. Two of the boys, A. Phimister and George, had spent the summer of 1875 with Wescott hunting and fishing. At that time there were only two cabins on the west side of the Lake where Wescott lived, and none on the present site of Grand Lake village, located on the north shore. [33]

A. Phimister Proctor remembered that along with Wescott there were a Jack Baker and his eighty-year-old father, as well as two characters called Mowery and Munger, although "nobody knew what their names were back East." [34] Even earlier than 1873, there were prospectors and trappers "who used to come to Grand Lake to get grub and booze" but did not live there. Among these early foragers were Len Pollard, Sandy Mellon, Tom Coppard, and "Doc" Porter, men of superhuman qualities, if one believes some contemporary accounts.

One old timer remembered that

The story went the rounds in those days that Len, Doc and Tom shot an antelope one morning, and by night they had eaten it all up and tanned the hide and patched their buckskin clothes with the skin. [35]

The last time A. Phimister Proctor visited Grand Lake was 1889, when he went on a hunting trip with Henry L. Stimson, later Secretary of State under President Herbert Hoover. At the time of the visit, Wescott still had a box containing the grease from the first grizzly bear ever shot at the Lake, back in 1876.

Through the 1870's and early 1880's, "outsiders drifted in" and began populating the west and north shores of Grand Lake. Joe Shipler built the first cabin on the North Fork of the Colorado River in 1876. He and the other early prospectors were perhaps representative of the good and bad that settled other western areas. Jim Bowen is remembered because Bowen Gulch and Mt. Bowen were named for him, while Jack Baker gave his name to Baker Gulch and Mt. Baker. Perhaps of equal importance, Hank Booth ran the first saloon in Grand Lake village and served the volatile temperaments of men like Jack Bishop who came to Grand Lake from Georgetown, Colorado, after having killed a man named Snyder there. Then there was "Texas Charlie," a trigger happy pioneer who lived near Hot Sulphur Springs and regularly used an old single action Colt revolver in his favorite past-time, making a "Ute Bill" dance in the streets of Grand Lake. Texas Charlie met his end near the Lake when he went down to "clean out the court one day." [36]

A mining boom of the 1870's and the 1880's brought substantial changes to Grand Lake. It became the distributing point for supplies to the mining towns of Lulu, Gaskill, and Teller. Lulu was located on the headwaters of the North Fork of the Colorado River about twenty miles northwest of Grand Lake, and was named after Lulu Burnett; it was settled mostly by Fort Collins people. Gaskill, about seven miles from Grand Lake, had a population of only sixty to eighty people, but was considered one of the "toughest mining camps in the country." Some of its characters were John Mowry, the first saloon-keeper, Prince Dow, George Pops, and a man named La Roche. Teller was the largest of the mining camps, with a population of between 500 and 1,000, and about twenty "thriving" saloons. [37]

In January 1880, the Grand Lake Mining and Smelting Company was formed. It owned mines in both Baker and Bowen Gulches. Some of the mines were the "Wolverine," "Toponas," "Sandy Cambell," "Lone Star," "Manxman," "Jim Bowen," and "Hidden Treasure." Among the prominent prospectors were Jule and Everett Harman, Andy Fairheart, Alonzo Coffin, Ezra Kauffman, Isaac Alden, "Doc" Dudy and Bob Plummer. Because of the influx of people drawn to the area by the "get-rich-quick" philosophy of the day, the county seat was moved to Grand Lake village from Hot Sulphur Springs in April 1881. There it remained until November 1888, when it was moved back to Hot Sulphur Springs.

During the mining boom and perhaps because of it, Grand Lake's history was spiced with just enough murders to give it an "out—west" flavor. County Commissioner Wilson Waldron, the man responsible for building Grand Lake's first jail, became its first prisoner, after his cold-blooded murder of Bob Plummer at one of the Lake's colorful dances. Waldron then established another "first" by being the first man to break out of the jail. Inadequate as a jail, the building was turned into an ice house. [38]

Another exception to the usual tranquility of Grand Lake occurred at the July 4, 1883, murder of six men. The participants were the three county commissioners (E. P. Weber; Barney Day; and J. G. Mills, chairman of the board); the county clerk, Captain Dean; the sheriff, Charlie Royer; and the under-sheriff, William Redmen. Some testimony indicates that the murders

resulted from a dispute over politics, while other sources suggest that the dispute concerned a conflict over mining claims. The true cause is impossible to determine. Day and Mills died instantly; Weber lived until about 2:00 a.m. the following morning. Captain Dean lived several days, although literally shot to pieces. Royer and Redmen later committed suicide, perhaps distraught over their parts in the July 4 murders. [39]

Grand Lake, though, had not been turned into a shooting gallery. The residents did not spend most of their waking hours dodging bullets and digging graves. Mary Lyons Cairns, an early settler, remembers the leisurely life and the winter sports, but especially the dances, as many as five a week during the boom times. The frolics at the ranch of Henry Lehman and his wife drew people from all over Middle Park to dance to the fiddling of "Old John" Mitchell, a local trapper. [40]

The mining boom also caused the constructive build-up of Grand Lake village. The increase in population of the area prompted the erection of new hotels, notably the Grand Lake House, the Fairview House, and the Garrison House, and a rustic circle of cabins a few miles from Grand Lake called Camp Wheeler, or "Squeeky Bob's Place."

"Squeeky Bob" was born Robert L. Wheeler, the cousin of the famous General Joseph, "Fighting Joe," Wheeler of the Spanish-American War. He gained the name "Squeeky Bob" because of his high pitched epithets when angered. After having served in the Spanish-American War he came to Grand Lake in 1902 and homesteaded in 1907 on the North Fork, where he established his Camp Wheeler or "Hotel de Hardscrabble."

His place was the first dude ranch in the area and was visited by guests from around the world, attracted by "Squeeky Bob's" hospitality. He always left his cabins unlocked and fitted each with a sign saying: "Blow your nose and clean your shoes. Use all the grub you need and leave things as you find them." One oldtimer remembered that Bob never changed his sheets but scented them with talcum powder. [41]

Guests rarely objected to his meals. He used to say, "The reason people think my food is so good is that they get so darned shaken up on the way coming that they are starved when they get here." Then, too, Bob spiced his porcupine dinners with "little stories." Wheeler eventually sold out his place in about 1927. [42]

Another Grand Lake fixture was "Cowtit Ike" Adams, who homesteaded a mile south of the Lake and peddled milk for a living. A. Phimister Proctor remembered that

Ike was a great tobacco chewer and could squirt juice further and straighter than any man in town. He always had a big 'chaw' in his face which made that cheek look as though there was a rat's nest in it. Ike always had his quid in the cheek on the opposite side from the hand that carried the milk pail and when he shifted hands the tobacco slid to the other cheek, evidently to balance himself. [43]

According to legend, Ike weighed only thirty-five pounds with his over coat and boots on.

While "Cowtit Ike" and "Squeeky Bob" exemplified the colorful history of Grand Lake, other solid, if less picturesque, citizens did as much to build up the area. James Cairns, lured from Canada by tales of the "boom" at Lulu and Gaskill, came to Grand Lake in 1881. He started a grocery and general merchandising store, the first building erected in the town after it was platted as a townsite. [44]

Perhaps best typifying the spirit of settlers at Grand Lake was the life of two indomitable sisters, Annie and Kitty Harbison. They homesteaded, ran a guest home, ranched, operated a dairy farm, and provided almost all of the milk for Grand Lake. They lived and worked and

shouldered all of their pioneer burdens together. And when one died the other followed a few days later—some say of pneumonia, others say of a broken heart. [[45](#)]

This has been a mosaic of the pioneer history of the Estes Park and Grand Lake regions. Against this backdrop stood Enos A. Mills, a fiery personality who welcomed the twentieth century with a controversial and consuming idea for establishing a national park, which, when adopted, would influence the development of the district between and surrounding the two villages described above.

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CHAPTER II:

ENOS MILLS AND THE CREATION OF THE PARK

Enos Abijah Mills, who was credited with leading the campaign for establishing a national park in the Estes Park area, had made the Longs Peak valley his home since 1886. He had been born near Fort Scott, Kansas, on April 22, 1870, and had moved west alone as a boy of sixteen to live in the mountains. His love for them is attested by the fact that subsequently he climbed Longs Peak more than 250 times. Meanwhile, as a devoted outdoorsman, he had, by 1902, camped in every state of the Union, as well as in Mexico, Canada, and Alaska. Before 1915, he had established his reputation as a naturalist, conservationist, author, and publicist, especially of the Estes Park region. [1]

While on a camping trip in California in 1889, Mills had met John Muir, the noted naturalist. Muir urged Mills to take up the study of nature lore and introduced him to the values of national parks. In 1891, Mills accompanied a survey party to Yellowstone National Park, and later recalled that it was at that time that he first began to consider the possibilities of advocating the creation of a national park near his Colorado home. During the next twenty years, Mills became increasingly convinced that the area along the front range of the mountains from Longs Peak to Pikes Peak should be reserved and protected for the enjoyment of all citizens before the area could be expropriated in piecemeal fashion by lumbering, mining, and cattle interests. [2]

To publicize his ideas, Mills became the Estes Park correspondent for the Denver newspaper. He also contributed articles to the Saturday Evening Post, urging that a national park be created in the region. In 1901, he established Longs Peak Inn, a rustic hostelry having cabins complete with steam heat and private baths, in order to encourage "city-folk" to visit Estes Park. Subsequently, he started a trail school to acquaint his guests with local nature lore. [3] As a prolific writer of nature stories Mills reached a far-flung public. Some of his most popular books were Wild Life in the Rockies, 1909, Beaver World, 1913, and Rocky Mountain Wonderland, 1915. Meanwhile, Mills publicized his park idea through another means, namely, his contact with the Forest Service. In 1907 President Theodore Roosevelt had appointed him to the Forest Service as an independent lecturer on forestry. For the next two years, Mills traveled extensively as an apostle for conservation and Colorado tourism. Then suddenly he turned against the Forest Service, which administered the Longs Peak area as part of the Medicine Bow National Forest, because the Forest Service opposed the establishment of a national park there.

It was in the spring of 1908 that the Estes Park Improvement and Protective Association met to hear Wheeler lecture on protecting the animals of the region. He told the meeting that the establishment of a game refuge was a prerequisite for attracting large numbers of tourists. Although Mills did not attend this meeting, he wrote Wheeler, inquiring about the limits of the proposed game refuge. Wheeler replied that the boundaries might run from the Poudre River along the foothills, west to Estes Park. [6]

The next year, on September 4, at the annual meeting of the Association, the matter of how

best to protect the wild birds, game and flowers in Estes Park again came up for discussion. The members then unanimously agreed to seek the cooperation of the federal government in establishing a game refuge, since much of the land in the Estes Park area was government owned. The proposed game refuge was to extend forty-two miles from east to west and twenty-four miles from north to south. [7]

Enos Mills' vision, however, encompassed something larger than a game refuge. In September, 1909, only days after the Association's meeting, he issued a statement for publication that was to serve as his platform for a national park.

Around Estes Park, Colorado, are mountain scenes of exceptional beauty and grandeur. In this territory is Longs Peak and one of the most rugged sections of the Continental Divide of the Rockies. The region is almost entirely above the altitude of 7,500 ft., and in it are forests, streams, waterfalls, snowy peaks, great canons, glaciers, scores of species of wild birds, and more than a thousand varieties of wild flowers.

In many respects this section is losing its wild charms. Extensive areas of primeval forests have been misused and ruined; saw-mills are humming and cattle are in the wild gardens! The once numerous big game has been hunted out of existence and the picturesque beaver are almost gone.

These scenes are already extensively used as places of recreation. If they are to be permanently and more extensively used and preserved, it will be necessary to hold them as public property and protect them within a national park. [8]

Within a year Mills gained a valuable ally in his campaign for a national park in the person of J. Horace McFarland, the President of the American Civic Association. While enthusiastic about Mills' plan, McFarland believed that the goal of a national park in the Longs Peak area could only be achieved after a "Bureau of National Parks" was created. According to McFarland, an observer sympathetic to the "park idea" might then visit Estes Park as a representative of the new bureau and bring back a report for the consideration of Congress. A bill could then be drawn embodying the observer's recommendations for a national park. [9]

Such legislative gamesmanship was not the style of the mercurial Mills. His generally unsophisticated mind saw the campaign as a struggle between good and evil. And in this conservationist crusade the angel of darkness wore the green of the Forest Service. Mills was certain that the Forest Service was behind a malign conspiracy to kill his dream. He set about to acquaint the cautious McFarland with the nature of "the enemy." In February of 1911 he wrote:

A resolution condemning the Park proposition has been suggested to members of the State legislature by some one of the chiefs in the Denver Forest Service office; the suggestion that 'a game preserve is sufficient' is also being pushed by these people. 'A national park will lock up the resources in that region.' Balinger [sic; Secretary of the Interior Richard A. Ballinger] . . . is condemned and Enos Mills discredited. False issues are repeatedly raised; any point is raised that may reach or confuse the individual addressed. This activity enthusiastically extends to the Forest Supervisor and the rangers [sic] in this district. [10]

McFarland, duly alarmed, promised action to the combustible Mills.

. . . . we will get the Forest Service out in the open, and one of these days I will hang up a sign-board before Mr. President William H. Taft which will show him how one bureau of a department is openly and viciously fighting against another

important department. [11]

The opposition appears more insidious in Mills' next communique on the National Park Service.

As you know their fight is largely under-cover and while one knows it is vicious it would be difficult to absolutely prove: they realize this and are going the limit of unfairness. [12]

A short time later Mills asserted: "Scratch any old Forest Service man and you will find a Tartar who is opposed to all National Parks." [13]

The audience to this fight was a public reportedly both apathetic and ignorant. McFarland lamented:

Most people conceive a park as a place in which to drive, it being decorated something like a cemetery, with images and borders and flower gardens. [14]

Then, too, there was some local opposition. This fact was evident in the correspondence sent to Congress bearing the letter-head of "The Front Range Setters' League," a small organization which, according to Mills, was actively subsidized by the Forest Service.

Nevertheless, neither apathy nor opposition could deter Mills. He was a man dedicated to a cause. Believing the Forest Service to be "the enemy of human liberty," Mills set off in the fall of 1911 on a speaking tour that included Kansas City, Omaha, St. Louis, Chicago, and Indianapolis before he reached his destination, Washington, D.C. There he met with Secretary of the Interior Walter Fisher, Senator Reed Smoot of Utah, and President Taft, without receiving much satisfaction. Arriving home in the spring of 1912, Mills wearily wrote to McFarland, "This campaigning annihilates me and on arrival home I felt so aged" [15] Yet, for all his work Mills, according to a contemporary, "had not gained an inch" in his fight for the park. [16]

In April, 1912, the same month that Mills had written so disconsolately to McFarland, the Colorado Mountain Club was formed. Under the leadership of its founder, Denver attorney James Grafton Rogers, it undertook to support the creation of a Rocky Mountain national park as one of its first major projects. A National Park Committee was soon established in the club, with Rogers' law partner, Morrison Shafroth, as chairman. [17] The club found that the plans for the national park were still nebulous. The available maps of Estes Park were amateurish and frequently in error. Questions of boundaries, acreage, and private property had not been fully studied, let alone solved.

Rogers later remembered the contributions of the Mountain Club in the park campaign. He wrote:

In these matters the Club could contribute more familiarity, and geographic knowledge than any agency in America. . . .

The Club also could and did reach the outdoor societies of America on a footing of confidence no Chamber of Commerce could gain. [18]

As Rogers recalled, the assistance of the conservation clubs in the fight "counted like the dickens in Congress." [19] The Colorado Mountain Club furthermore drew up the first outline of the Park's boundaries and drafted each of the Park Bills introduced in Congress.

The Mountain Club and Mills were not the only active advocates for the Park. There was

also the Denver Chamber of Commerce. Its commitment dated back to December 1910 when its secretary, Thorndike Deland, pledged its support in correspondence with McFarland. [20] A "live" national park committee was established by the Chamber, with Frederick Ross, a noted Denver realtor, at its head, and the committee actively promoted the cause of creating a park.

By this time, Colorado political leaders could see the merits of a national park near Denver. The following "Memorial," directed to Congress, was passed by the Colorado State Legislature on February 25, 1913:

That the people of Colorado desire that said park shall be established. It includes the highest mountain peaks in the state; the area is little adapted to either agriculture or grazing; its scenery for sublimity and grandeur is easy of access to America's millions who seek health and recreation in the summer months, being situated in the front and main range of the Rocky Mountains. [21]

The legislature, in framing this statement, was probably motivated in part by a report released two weeks earlier by the Chief Geographer of the United States Geological Survey, R.B. Marshall, concerning his recent trip to Estes Park. He had reached Estes Park on September 2, 1912, and after securing a pack train outfit, engaged in a topographic mapping on the Longs Peak quadrangle. Then in the company of two assistants from the survey party, Arthur Fisher and John Baker, Marshall began as detailed an inspection of the mountain area as was possible in his limited time of six days.

After completing his trip, Marshall talked with Mills and Charles E. Hewes of the Front Range Settlers' League before leaving for Denver. There he met with retiring Governor John F. Shafroth, Governor-elect Elias Ammons, Mayor H.J. Arnold, Frederick Ross and former U.S. Senator Thomas Patterson. In his discussions, Marshall discounted the commercial value of mining, timber, and grazing interests in the park area. He believed that the most attractive feature of the proposed park, aside from its scenic features, was its accessibility to Denver and other population centers. [22]

Throughout 1913 and 1914 more organizations rallied in support of the park idea. Besides the Denver Chamber of Commerce and the Colorado Mountain Club, support came from the Boulder and Greeley Commercial Clubs, the Denver Real Estate Exchange, the Denver Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Colorado State Federation of Women's Clubs. The Colorado Democratic State platform of 1914 urged the creation of a Rocky Mountain National Park. Furthermore, President Thomas B. Stearn of the Denver Chamber of Commerce renewed his organization's commitment by listing the passage of the park bill by Congress as the Chamber's foremost project in 1914. [23] Added impetus was given to the park movement by the work of the Colorado delegation in Washington, mainly Senators Charles S. Thomas and John F. Shafroth, along with Congressman Edward T. Taylor.

Still, in the words of James Grafton Rogers, "There were many hard nuts to crack, many compromises to make." The proposed Park area was thought to be too large; water users wondered about their rights; resort owners feared government control; property owners imagined that their lands would be condemned. Trouble also came from an unexpected quarter, the uncompromising Enos Mills.

Worn down by five years of almost constant campaigning, Mills became ever more critical of friend and foe alike. He even distrusted some of his supporters because they were more quietly ardent than he. As usual his confidant was J. Horace McFarland. It is not surprising that the "insolent," "arrogant," "IRRESPONSIBLE," "big" and "grass stealing" Forest Service

was still considered a major target. [24] Unfortunately, Mills also began to attack those he should have considered allies. He chided Rogers for his "peculiar and tardy attention" to the park proposal. He furthermore protested against Rogers' supposed collusion with the Forest Service. [25]

Throughout the summer and winter of 1914 Mills in his free lance fashion managed to alienate or baffle many others working for the Park. In December of that year, McFarland felt compelled to warn him:

Your splendid work is being discounted because of the hostility toward the Forest Service. My feeling is that while these fine things in which we are greatly interested are being pushed along we ought to try to overcome some of the completely defensible animosities that have grown up. I do not trust the Forest Service any more than you do, but I do not want to let my feeling in that direction handicap the possibility of doing something for the National Parks. [26]

The recalcitrant Mills replied with indictments of Frederick Ross and Rogers. While he allowed that Ross wanted a national park, Mills nevertheless believed he was "a sincere, slow-going and a blind, ardent worshipper of the Forest Service." Mills' evaluation of Rogers required more ink and more venom. Although "a brilliant young lawyer," Rogers was "a typical politician," "a hypocrite," "a Forest Service mouthpiece," and the Park's "powerful enemy and alleged supporter." [27]

While Mills was writing these diatribes, much constructive work was being done for the park cause in Congress. As 1914 drew to a close, the bill for the creation of a Rocky Mountain National Park was presented for a third time. Twice before it had died in committee. Now Colorado formed a united front that was truly bipartisan. Before the House Public Lands Committee a number of Colorado officials testified for the bill. [28] Retiring Governor Elias M. Ammons opened the testimony with a statement on the projected expense of the Park's operation. The committee heard that Colorado had already begun building a twenty-one mile road through Estes Park at a cost of \$40,000. Later the committee was told that the estimated salary of the "supervisor" of the national park would be only \$2,100 a year and that the total federal expenditures for the first two years would not exceed \$25,000. [29]

Governor-elect George A. Carlson then spoke on park tourists. He reported that 56,000 people visited Estes Park in 1914, but he predicted that the number would almost double in 1915, with the visitors that would arrive in 25,000 automobiles. Congressman Edward T. Taylor stressed the accessibility of the Park to Denver, noting that the sixty mile distance could be covered in only three or four hours by auto. Senator John F. Shafroth contended that some of the nation's unfavorable balance of trade could be corrected by redirecting American tourists from the Swiss Alps to the Rocky Mountains. Then, after a letter was read from Secretary of Interior Franklin Lane favoring the park, Enos Mills concluded the formal statements with a "stirring plea." [30] For the committee's further edification, young Morrison Shafroth and Frank W. Byerly of Estes Park showed colored stereopticon pictures of the scenic features of the park area. The Colorado contingent left the meeting confident that victory would soon be theirs. [31]

In Colorado, the new year of 1915 brought little comment in the Denver newspapers on the park bill. Lengthy items about the Great War in Europe and the prospects of economic prosperity in Colorado crowded out references to a national park. The Rocky Mountain News contained an editorial about "a new era of development and prosperity for the state," and mentioned livestock, mining, farming, and industry—but nothing about the Park or tourism or scenery. [32] Furthermore, there was nothing in Governor Ammons' farewell address or in Governor Carlson's inaugural message concerning the proposed national park.

The calm at home contrasted with the dogged activity of the Colorado delegation in Washington. The park bill, introduced in both houses on June 29, 1914, had already passed the Senate, mainly because of its skillful handling by Senator Thomas. In the House progress was slower. The Senate version of the bill had been sent to the House committee on Public Lands on October 9, 1914, where it remained until Congressman Taylor had it reported out on January 12, 1915. In the meantime, Taylor had arranged to have it placed on the calendar for passage under a suspension of rules on January 18, the earliest date for the consideration of bills on that calendar.

There was no quorum present on January 18 and a quorum call would have killed the bill. [33] However, promptly at 3:30 P.M. Speaker Champ Clark recognized Representative Taylor to call up the slightly amended Senate bill. After a forty minute debate, the measure was adopted almost unanimously by voice vote. [34] Regarding Taylor's efforts, "a Denverite" wrote to Frederick Ross, "His colleagues in the House haven't ceased to rub their eyes and wonder how he got away with it." [35] Taylor's accomplishment was supplemented on the following day when the Senate approved a modification adopted by the House, and on January 26, President Woodrow Wilson signed the bill. Thus Colorado obtained a 358.5 square mile national park.

The Rocky Mountain News was ecstatic over the outcome:

The people of Colorado have many things to be thankful for at the beginning of this new year, but perhaps none of them, not even the remarkable revival of the mining industry, means more to the future of the state than the creation of the Rocky Mountain National Park.

The passage of this bill is the crowning result of one of the best organized and most efficiently managed campaigns ever conducted by Colorado people to obtain any benefit for the state. [36]

Many organizations and personalities shared in the victory that was six years in coming. There is little doubt, however, that Enos Mills had been the major force behind the Park's creation. He, more than anyone else, deserved the title "Father of Rocky Mountain National Park," as given him by the Denver Post. The dedication ceremonies for the Park attracted dignitaries from the state capital, the national congress, and the Department of the Interior. It was fitting that the chairmanship of the proceedings was held by Enos Mills.

Unfortunately, the creation of the Park did not mark the end to controversy. In the years to come, Park policies ineptly administered or simply misunderstood would arouse local feeling against either the Park or, after 1916, the newly created National Park Service. Ironically, behind much of the criticism was the restless mind of Enos Mills.

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CHAPTER III:

THE EARLY YEARS AND THE TRANSPORTATION CONTROVERSY

In 1915 few people were prepared by experience to administer a national park, so it became necessary to employ men from various walks of life to form the initial staff at Rocky Mountain Park. The first person to be placed in charge of the Park was C. R. Trowbridge, a native of New York who had distinguished himself primarily as a military man. He had fought the Philippine insurrection and at its close was named chief of the secret service of the city of Manila. He held this position until his appointment in 1913 as field representative for the Secretary of the Interior. In this capacity he was sent in 1915 to organize the administration of Rocky Mountain National Park. He was given the title "acting supervisor," and told to "run" the Park on a budget of \$10,000 a year. Perhaps it is not surprising that initially he and the local townspeople viewed one another with mutual apprehension. [1]

The first ranger at the Park was R. T. ("Dixie") MacCracken, a twenty-two-year-old structural engineer from Washington, D. C. He reported on the job a month before the Park was officially dedicated in September 1915. [2] Subsequently, he was joined by two fellow rangers, Frank R. Koenig and Reed A. Higby. The employment of these two men completed the roster of the Park's first administrative staff.

The ranger's salary was \$900 a year, or roughly \$2.50 a day. Out of this sum, MacCracken not only supported himself but also two horses and a Ford car. He recalled that part of his job was to "guide Washington big shots" around the Park. On these junkets he paid his own expenses which, when he entertained at Grand Lake, amounted to \$3.50 a day, or \$1 more than his daily salary. [3] "You're not supposed to worry about the money," he was told. "You do this for the love of your country." [4] Once when the Park office was moved, MacCracken hauled papers and furniture in his own automobile, again at his expense.

MacCracken recalled that the ranger stations at that time were inherited from the Forest Service and "were the most gosh awful places." Only after blizzards completely covered them with snow were they warm and comfortable inside. He always left his station at Mill Creek unlocked so that weary travelers could find a respite there. When he returned from field trips he often found money on the table, left by honest travelers who had used some coffee or food in his absence. [5]

In 1916, after Trowbridge had completed his assignment of organizing administration at the Park, he was replaced by L. C. Way, a former Army captain and forest ranger. Way had served as a forest ranger at Oracle in Arizona, and then at Grand Canyon. His position at Rocky Mountain was first called chief ranger in charge, but was later changed to superintendent. He was said to have had military ideas about operating a national park. One early park ranger remembered that Way was sometimes arrogant and often "tough on his men," that is, his fellow rangers. Frequently, also, Way did not inform townspeople of Park policy because the "policy" itself was rather indefinite. [6] About the only guidelines that he had to follow were embodied in the text of the law of August 25, 1916, which established the

National Park Service. According to this law, the Park Service's purpose in administering certain areas was

to conserve the scenery, the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. [7]

National parks therefore were to be operated for two reasons, which were basically contradictory, for administrators were to "conserve the scenery" and promote the public enjoyment of it at the same time. Endeavoring to carry out these injunctions naturally created problems. Some of Superintendent Way's problems, however, resulted from his own administrative innocence. A pioneer attempt at public relations cost him the allegiance of his number one ranger.

Way believed the Park needed special publicity to attract visitors. So, in cooperation with a leading Denver newspaper, he created the "Modern Eve." He employed a pretty girl to dress in a leopard skin and roam through the Park, skipping about and catching fish with her hands and picking berries. Way ordered Park Ranger MacCracken to meet "Eve" at regular intervals and hand over her street clothes. She then changed clothing and rode with MacCracken to one of the local inns where she spent a few days in relaxation. At the end of that time, MacCracken would supply her with a dry-cleaned leopard skin, and she would spend another few days in the wilds stalking fish and picking berries. MacCracken soon had a serious argument with Way over the propriety of such an advertising venture. So when Gifford Pinchot of the Forest Service offered MacCracken a job in France scaling timber for the Army he accepted it. [8]

The first major controversy to involve the administrators of Rocky Mountain National Park concerned the control of commercial transportation within the Park's boundaries. In the spring of 1919 the National Park Service awarded an exclusive franchise to Roe Emery's Rocky Mountain Parks' Transportation Company to carry passengers in the Park for profit. The transportation company agreed to comply with Park Service requirements of scheduling, rates and safety features. In keeping with its established concession policy, the Park Service neither held public hearings nor accepted competitive bids. [9] The public was informed of the monopoly only after it had been granted, even though endorsements of the transportation company had been secured to satisfy official requirements. Many independent rent-car or "jitney" drivers were put out of business by this Park Service policy.

Opposition to this "secret deal" [10] developed almost immediately from a minority [11] of the Estes Park hotel owners, notably Clement Yore, F. O. Stanley, and Enos Mills. These men had thought that once the National Park was created, it would be run by the business leaders of Estes Park village. The idea that "their Park" could be regulated by Washington bureaucrats from desks 2,000 miles away was at first inconceivable. To Mills and his group the Park was something local. It belonged to them first and to the nation second. In fact, they had originally wanted it named "Estes National Park." When its destiny began to be shaped by people unseen and unknown they were disillusioned and angry.

Still, when the concession policy went into effect on June 10, 1919, it seemed to find popular acceptance. Way noted that

while there has been some little dissatisfaction on the part of certain parties, who wish to operate for profit within the National Park, generally speaking, the people appear to be satisfied with conditions, and endorse the concession policy. [12]

The few written complaints against the transportation franchise came almost wholly from

Enos Mills. He believed that both in frequency and in price of service the transportation company discriminated against his guests at the Longs Peak Inn. [13] This complaint can be evaluated in light of the fact that none of the other three hotel owners in the Longs Peak section made a similar objection. Each in fact stated he was receiving better service from the transportation company than he had ever been given by jitney drivers in the past. [14]

Seemingly a satisfactory compromise could have been reached if Mills had been content to limit his energies to writing complaints. He was an activist, however, a man who liked a good fight. And apparently in his mind this was a good time to start one, so he defied the monopoly. On August 14, 1919, Way warned Mills by telephone that his automobile had been seen in the Park carrying passengers. Mills freely admitted the infraction and stated that he was going to manufacture a test case to determine whether the concession could be enforced. [15] Pursuing this plan, Mills telephoned Way on the morning of August 16 to tell him that his rent-car was leaving on a trip over the Highdrive and Fall River roads. He then asked Way to take appropriate action. [16]

Way personally drove to the first switchback on Fall River Road near Chasm Falls and there intercepted the Mills' car. At the wheel was Ed Catlett, a regular driver for Mills. The passengers were Mrs. W. H. Knight, a Miss Knight, and Lieutenant C. B. Ritchie, all of Hinsdale, Illinois. Way ordered the car from the Park, after telling the driver that he could not return without written permission from the Director of the National Park Service in Washington. He later explained the situation to Mills, who appeared undecided about his next move. [17]

In a letter to the Park Service Director, Way militantly suggested that

it is highly desirable that we push this case against Mr. Mills driving in the Park, to the limit, for it has been rumored in the Village by other jitney drivers that we are favoring Mr. Mills and permitting him to violate the regulations, when we will not permit others to do so. Mr. Mills seemed satisfied for us to prosecute the case. So far as I could judge, he was perfectly friendly with me in this matter. [18]

Assistant Director of the National Park Service Arno B. Cammerer was quick to answer the Superintendent. Obviously speaking for the Director, he cautioned Way against being too abrupt in his handling of the matter. He told Way to continue ejecting violators, but under no circumstances was he to arrest anyone or even to secure a warrant for anyone's arrest. Cammerer warned that, "it would be decidedly dangerous to let the case get into court at present time. . . ." [19]

Way, in a lengthy letter to Mills, explained the Park's position on the franchise. His remarks were both clear and comprehensive.

Our object is to give adequate service, at reasonable charges to the people, also to the Transportation Company, which furnishes such service under contract. In fixing the charges, you must take into consideration the fact that we compel this Company to operate, regardless of weather conditions or volume of business.

There are exceptional cases where it would result in inconvenience to the traveling public to be compelled to use Transportation Company machines. As these cases are brought to our attention, we devise means to overcome the same by issuing special permits, or by other readjustments. To safeguard the public against excessive charges, and to insure adequate services, permits are issued to reliable parties only. One readjustment that we have made is to place no

restriction upon hotel owners hauling their guests to and from their hotels in the Park, where they desire to do so. Since we have placed no restrictions upon the Long's Peak Road, any hotel keeper within the National Park may carry passengers to and from the Long's Peak region; also, any person outside of the boundaries may give this service without hindrance from the National Park Service. If the Transportation Company's service is not adequate between your hotel and other hotels within the National Park, you will be given permission to render such service, making a charge for the same. No permission is necessary within the National Park for any trip that is not made for profit.

As to prices, Way explained,

their fairness is vouched for by disinterested rent car owners. We will be better able to judge whether or not these prices are reasonable after the first year's business, and if unreasonable, we will adjust them.

As added assurance to Mills, Way concluded, "we are very anxious that the people travel from one hotel to another, and will do all in our power to encourage this practice." [20]

Apparently this lengthy exposition did little to mollify Mills, for within the week, the situation had grown worse. On August 25 Way telegraphed to Assistant Director Cammerer,

Mills Attorney called yesterday about forcing case. His car reported in Park on Highdrive. Other jitneys following his example. Ejecting when found, by us. Situation acute. [21]

While Mills was indeed "forcing the case," he found the Park Service to be a reluctant adversary. Cammerer remained convinced that a court suit at that time would be acutely embarrassing due to the dubious legal status of the Park's roads. Under the transportation franchise, Emery's company had an exclusive monopoly on roads controlled by the Park Service. As yet the State of Colorado had not ceded its jurisdiction over those roads to the Park Service. Therefore almost any compromise short of dissolving the franchise was preferable to court action. If Mills could not be won over, perhaps he could be quieted, at least until jurisdiction of the roads was ceded. Cammerer assured Way,

What Service hopes is to keep these matters quiet, until complete jurisdiction over both Park and roads has been granted by State, and if you hold Mills over present season, we can push this matter to conclusion before next. [22]

Way then tried to act as mediator between the transportation company and Mills. He met with little, if any, success. The attorneys of the transportation company, E. O. Brown and E. A. Holmes, flatly refused to compromise with Mills. They told Way that this "was as good a time as any to fight out this case and find out where they stand." In their opinion, no concessions would be made because Mills "could not be satisfied." [23]

On the evening of August 27 Way again contacted Mills, "but without any success whatsoever." Way submitted a plan to Mills whereby independent jitney drivers would be permitted to use the state and county roads within the Park if they could furnish a bond to give adequate service, regardless of weather conditions or volume of travel. In this plan, the Park Service would fix the maximum charge for the service and permit competition below that price. Unmoved by this attempt at conciliation, Mills also remained adamant when Way told him that appropriations desperately needed elsewhere might have to be diverted to pay for any litigation that might result. [24]

Mills envisioned the transportation monopoly as something more than just a threat to his

livelihood. What was at stake was the independence of the Park Service itself! According to Way,

Mr. Mills is obsessed with the idea of fighting the concession policy in National Parks. He states that he now sees that the policy is wrong, and that in a short time the corporation that we are protecting will dominate the Park Service. [25]

As a result of the meeting which proceeded the foregoing report, Way became convinced that further attempts at compromise would be folly. "As I see the situation," he wrote, "we are backed up against a wall, and there is nothing to do but to fight." [26] Jitney drivers enlarged the problem by spreading the rumor that driving restrictions had been revoked. [27] Way continued to eject cars, but only on the Fall River Road. The majority of his time was taken up in the jurisdictional end of the controversy.

Though attempting to avoid public notice, Way investigated the legal status of the Park roads. He found that the Fall River Road, extending from the Park's eastern boundary line near Estes Park along the Fall River to Grand Lake, was officially a state road. The state also claimed the stretch between the boundary and the Longs Peak Road, and the road between the county line and Lily Lake. The county roads within the Park included the Highdrive, Moraine Park Cutoff, and the Moraine Park roads. All other roads were listed as private or national park roads.

It is safe to say that Superintendent Way never ceased to doubt the state or county's claim to ownership over many of the roads in the Park. The Park's principal roads were developed forty years before, by state and county workers, over what was then public domain. He believed therefore that no one, state, county, or private property holder, could claim ownership of the land over which the roads were built. Way maintained that the Federal Act of 1866 granting rights of way over the public domain merely gave an easement for a certain use, such as road building, but did not transfer title. [28]

Adding more confusion to this already unclear situation, the Board of County Commissioners of Larimer County resolved on August 19 to transfer their control over the highways in the Park to the federal government. In point of fact the Commissioners only transferred jurisdiction having to do with maintenance and supervision. They could not cede ownership because they did not technically own the roads. [29] H. E. Curran, First Assistant Attorney General for Colorado, advised Way that only by legislative action could the transfer of jurisdiction be legally consummated. [30] Getting the General Assembly to legislate away their jurisdiction would be a feat of no mean proportions.

While Way was thus preoccupied with the status of the roads, Enos Mills filed a complaint against him in the United States District Court of Colorado. He sought to enjoin the superintendent from interfering with the exercise of his "common rights as a citizen of the State of Colorado in traveling over the Park roads." Mills declared that all of the road from which he was debarred were public highways of the state and had existed long before the creation of the National Park. [31]

In his complaint, Mills referred to Section 2 of the act creating the Park, which excepted from federal control

any valid existing claim, location or entry under the land laws of the United States, whether for homestead, mineral, right of way, or any other purpose whatsoever, or shall affect the rights of any such claimant, locator, or entryman to the full use and enjoyment of his land.

He also referred to Section 3 which excepted land "held in private, municipal, or state

ownership." [32]

At the hearing before the District Court, Assistant United States Attorney Otto Bock argued that Mills was misinterpreting Sections 2 and 3, and he moved that the case be dismissed. Presiding Judge Robert E. Lewis replied that the whole subject of the monopoly was within the exclusive control of the Interior Department and that Mills had no vested rights in the premises. He then dismissed the case, after refusing to allow witnesses to testify in Mills' behalf. [33]

With the close of the hearing and the summer tourist season, the rent car controversy died down. Although Mills and F. O. Stanley continued to oppose the concession, the area's other twenty-six hotel owners gave it their support. The Hotel Men's Association of Estes Park appointed Enos Mills' brother, Joe, to look into the working of the concession and to gather complaints. Although he wrote to every hotel operator in the Estes Park region asking for suggestions or complaints, he received no answers. [34] A visit to Estes Park by National Park Service Director Stephen T. Mather in September was well received by the local residents. [35]

This relatively peaceful interlude was interrupted in January 1920. The concession's opponents dominated a joint meeting of the Commercial Clubs and Chambers of Commerce of Boulder, Lyons, Longmont, Loveland, Greeley, Berthoud, and Fort Collins held at Fort Collins. Although supposedly called at the request of the people of Estes Park, Clem Yore and Fred Lamborn, manager of the Stanley Hotel were the only Village residents to attend. In the principal address, Yore spoke against the transportation monopoly. The delegates then adopted a resolution recommending that their parent organizations protest officially to their congressmen and senators against the monopoly. [36]

Way remained cool toward this development. In one of his more eloquent moments he wrote:

It is obvious that we will continue to have annoying cases of this kind from time to time, due to the fact that there are a few in this section who are actuated by motives of personal gain and interest, who can not see the bigger and broader view of our policy. While this is regrettable, [sic], I can not see why it should have any detrimental effect. There is an old saying that one braying ass will make more noise than a hundred nightingales. We have, perhaps, a dozen braying asses in this country, but the thousands of satisfied people who do not only enjoy but show their appreciation of our work more than compensate for the trouble, and form an incentive for us to pursue our policy of the greatest good to the largest number of people. [37]

Though Way's "braying asses" were few in number they were imaginative, vocal, and verbose. By this time Enos Mills had convinced himself that the transportation company had become "the political machine of the Director of National Parks." [38] The Denver Field and Farm magazine meanwhile, editorialized on the "devil theory" of Park management.

We are now saddled with a new set of grafters which will be set up to out do all the deviltries that have been perpetrated by the hungry bureaucrats in the hungry forest service. This cunning outfit has commandeered the county roads for its monetary benefit. [39]

Closer to home, the half-dozen members of the Allenspark Commercial Club condemned

the present transportation concession . . . as monopolistic, unnecessary, unjustifiable, unlawful, unjust, unreasonable, undemocratic, un-American, corrupt, vicious and iniquitous; as autocratic favoritism conceived in secrecy; as

the incubator of a dangerous political machine; as an invitation and license to exploitation, extortion and blackmail; as an alliance of bureaucratic politicians and profit-grabbing special interests; as an assault upon the people's rights; and as a betrayal of trust by public servants. [40]

To answer these and similar charges, Way shouldered the burden of a one-man "truth squad" as he hurried from commercial club to chamber of commerce and explained Park policies to skeptical audiences. [41] While Way spent valuable time rebutting Mills and debating Yore, the transportation concession actually had little bearing on the volume of tourist travel in the Park. Park visitation was significantly increased from 101,497 visitors in 1918 to 169,492 in 1919. Yet only about fifteen percent of these people made use of the transportation company. The rest, even at this early date, came in their own cars. [42]

As the 1920 summer season began, the jitney drivers renewed their attack on the transportation monopoly. Some were bold enough to advertise openly. L. E. Grace, one of the most militant critics of the concession, posted the following message in the window of his Estes Park jewelry shop.

If you are opposed to concessions in our National Park, step inside and register. Your assistance is required to rid this country of the possibility of the Prussianized control of National playgrounds. [43]

In the local telephone directory he advertised:

Phone 160 for Auto Service Day or Night. We know the roads and places of interest. See the Park in comfort and safety. We furnish you both. Small parties combined for trips. Make reservations with us. Call or telephone and will gladly explain Trips and Rates. The National Park Service Auto Company. Phone 160. Established 1915. L. E. Grace, Mgr. Office with the Gracraft Shop, Op. W.U.Tel. Co. Office. Late Model Cadillac 8's, Chandler 6's, and 5-pass. Touring cars at your service. Only experienced and licensed drivers in charge of cars. [44]

In addition to these notices, L. E. Grace, along with Charles Robbins, erected a large billboard advertising their rent cars at the forks of the road near the old Dunraven Ranch, on the Big Thompson and North St. Vrain entrances to Estes Park village. Robbins also issued cards giving prices for trips to the Fish Hatchery and Fall River Road. [45]

Confronted with this provocation, Way remained cautious but firm with violators. His rangers, however, sometimes fell prey to overexuberance in the carrying out of their orders. On July 13, 1920 an incident occurred that would again involve the Park in litigation. On that afternoon Charles Robbins was stopped by Ranger Dwight S. McDaniel while driving with passengers on the Fall River Road between the Horseshoe Inn and the Fall River Lodge. McDaniel told Robbins that he would not be permitted to travel on the Fall River Road and if he tried it again he would be arrested. Robbins was ejected a second time on the same afternoon.

Seemingly this was just another violation of no real consequence. Way, abiding by advice given him by Acting United States Attorney Day, continued filing information on guilty parties, but for a time did not go to the United States Commissioner. There was good reason for Way's cautious actions. He had heard that Charles Robbins, L. E. Grace, and Enos Mills had sworn out a warrant accusing him of assault and battery to be served whenever he made an arrest of one of their drivers. Way related his problems to Cammerer.

I have endeavored in every way to handle this situation without going to the extreme. I have talked with Robbins on the street, and have received nothing but

ridicule. I have also had a conference with Robbins and Grace in this office, and was laughed at and sneered at; and urged to take action. [46]

The initiative was taken, however, by the attorneys for Charles Robbins. On July 17 they brought suit against both Ranger McDaniel and Superintendent Way. A major contention in the suit was that Robbins, as a United States citizen and a resident of Larimer County, was entitled to travel freely "and without molestation" over all the public roads and highways in Colorado. It was charged, furthermore, that McDaniel's actions in ejecting Robbins "were attended by circumstances of insult and a wanton and reckless disregard" for the plaintiff's rights to the amount of \$1,000. [47]

While the lawyers for both sides prepared their cases, jitney drivers circulated rumors that Park officials would not interfere with any rent cars until the determination of the Robbins case. The Park was "flooded" with rent cars. Some drivers, rather than turn back when ordered, tried to run down the rangers. [48] Way instructed his men to continue ejecting the rent cars but not to make any arrests.

On July 24, Cammerer telegraphed Way to post additional rangers at Park entrances immediately. He also ordered Way to keep a close count of all illegal entries into the Park, since each would be counted as a separate and distinct offense in future prosecutions. Warning signs to this effect were to be posted at once in Way's office and at the Park entrances. Even Cammerer's telegram was to be hung at a conspicuous place. [49]

The next day Way called Clem Yore into his office and explained his instructions to him. Yore reportedly told Way that if he carried out his orders there would be trouble. According to him, some of the other rent car owners "were in a killing mood." Later Yore told Way that he had instructed "the boys to go ahead as before but not to use violence." [50]

Way immediately appointed Maye M. Crutcher as temporary ranger with instructions to gather evidence against violators of the monopoly. Armed with high-powered binoculars, Crutcher kept a time-sheet of illegal entries, and recorded six intruders for the period July 25 to July 28. [51] With so many violations, it did not take long for another incident to occur. On the morning of July 26, L. E. Grace drove Mrs. John F. Thomey and Mrs. George W. Howell over the Fall River Road. At about 10:30 a.m., while halfway between the Fish Hatchery and Horseshoe Park, they were stopped by Ranger Lloyd F. McDaniel. According to the ladies, McDaniel jumped upon the running board, grabbed Grace by the neck, and apparently tried to pull him out of the car. Grace managed to stop the car and argued that McDaniel had no right to stop him or anyone else until the Robbins case was decided. At that point McDaniel reportedly shouted, "I'll show you," and again grabbed Grace by the neck, while Grace continued to argue with him "in a legitimate way." [52]

On July 26, a complaint was filed by the ladies with justice of the peace, J. J. Duncan, charging that McDaniel did "willfully choke and assault" L. E. Grace. Before this case could come to trial, though, the Robbins suit reached a decision. The case of Robbins vs. McDaniel and Way was started in a state court, but the United States Attorney, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, asked for and was granted a removal to a United States District Court. As soon as this removal was granted, the United States began a suit against Robbins, seeking to enjoin him for disregarding rules laid down by the Secretary of the Interior governing the Park.

In answer to this turn-about, the Robbins' attorneys used a familiar argument. They claimed that the roads used by Robbins in his rent car business were constructed either by the state or by the county. Since the roads were public property they came under the jurisdiction of the state, not the federal government. And the state had never legislated away its jurisdiction to

the United States. The title to all the roads in question belonged to the public by reason of the Congressional grant contained in the Act of 1866 to the various states for the construction of highways over the public domain. The "rule" that Robbins supposedly broke was held to be not a regulation but a prohibition of use. Furthermore, the "rule" was called "unreasonable and void" for two reasons. First "autocratic control" was given to the Secretary of the Interior. Second, the government was depriving Robbins of his vested rights, contrary to the due process clauses of the Constitution. [53] Robbins also moved to remand his suit to a state court, contending that no federal question was found in the original complaint. Under such circumstances he held that he had the right to choose his own forum.

Three issues, therefore, confronted District Court Judge Robert E. Lewis at this time: the government's motion to dismiss the Mills case, the motion for remanding of the Robbins vs. Way case and the application made by the government for an injunction against Robbins. After the first two matters were dismissed, Judge Lewis granted an injunction in the case of United States vs. Robbins. [54] The Court enjoined Robbins

from engaging in the occupation or business of transporting passengers for hire in the Rocky Mountain National Park . . . without then and there having permission from the Director of the National Park Service so to do. [55]

On July 30, 1920, Way happily sent the following telegram to Cammerer.

We won complete victory in Robbins vs. McDaniel and Way. stop. Mills vs. Way. stop. U.S. Govt. vs. Robbins in District Court today. Permanent injunction issued against Robbins his agents etc. this case appealed. stop. other cases held in abeyance until Robbins appeal is settled. [56]

With the Robbins case out of the way, Park officials now turned to the suit against Ranger Lloyd McDaniel. The trial which was held on August 11 at the I. O. O. F. hall has been called variously "a farce" and "a frame-up" by Superintendent Way. The State District Attorney did not question the ranger's right to arrest Grace, but took issue with the manner in which he carried out this right. In defense of his actions, McDaniel charged that Grace was reaching for a gun. Grace countered by saying he was only reaching for the gear lever. [57]

The Court decided that McDaniel used more force than he was officially charged to use, thereby making his action a personal one instead of an official one. [58] He was found guilty of assault and battery and fined \$50.00 and costs. Since McDaniel acted outside of his official capacity, he could not be reimbursed for his fine by the Park Service. The Park's attorneys believed an appeal would be useless, since the evidence against McDaniel was overwhelming. Assistant Director Cammerer concurred, "It seems we are woefully shy on corroborative evidence in this case, and McDaniel will have to take the count." [59]

Way, however, remained unconvinced of McDaniel's guilt.

McDaniel is innocent of any blame in the matter . . . I would stake my life . . . that he did not use undue violence . . . Some of the people here have even gone so far as to say that McDaniel should be promoted for his action. [60]

Cammerer, though sympathetic to McDaniel, pointedly reminded Way that in future confrontations with violators, "Our rangers should at all times keep a cool head." [61]

Way did not remain in office to take part in future controversies. He resigned his position as Park Superintendent on October 24, 1921, to go into the cattle business in Arizona. While superintendent, he had been earnest but sometimes uncommunicative with the townspeople. He was a man beset with new and vexing problems, and he expected to solve them with

orders. But such forceful individuals as Enos Mills and F. O. Stanley were not men to be ordered around. Dixie MacCracken recalled later that when Way left Estes Park for the last time in 1921 he did not leave a friend in the town. [62]

Roger W. Toll, Way's successor, assumed the Park superintendency on October 25, 1921. He was a man of far different personality and background from his predecessor. A native Denverite, he was graduated from Columbia University in 1906, with a degree in civil engineering. Following his graduation he, with his brother, Carl, made a round-the-world trip, stopping in Switzerland to hike and climb in the Alps. Returning to Boston he worked for a while in 1907 with the Massachusetts State Board of Health. The following March he reported for duty in Washington, D. C., with the Coast and Geodetic Survey, having passed highest in a class of forty-four who took competitive examinations. He then worked with a surveying party sent out to chart the coastline of Cook Inlet in Alaska. [63]

By the fall of 1908 he had returned to Denver and shortly accepted the post of chief engineer of the Denver City Tramway Company. During World War I he received an appointment as captain in the ordnance department and rose to the rank of major by the time of the Armistice. Visiting the Hawaiian Islands in the spring of 1919, Toll met Stephen T. Mather, National Parks Director. Mather, having heard of Toll's abilities, appointed him superintendent of Mount Rainier National Park. There Toll remained from September of 1919 to October of 1921, when he became superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park. [64] Toll was to receive a salary of \$3,000 per year "and quarters when available." [65]

Toll was an excellent public relations man—considerate, honest and extremely knowledgeable. It was claimed that those who knew him loved him. One newspaper described him as "a veritable Orval Overall in build, and the best of it all is, he possesses heart and spirit to match his splendid physique." [66] These attributes were to be sternly tested in the days ahead, as the next chapter will show.

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Rocky Mountain

Administrative History



CHAPTER IV:

COLORADO vs. TOLL

While the Robbins case on the control of Park roads was pending in the United States Circuit Court of Appeals in 1920, Colorado's Governor, Oliver H. Shoup, became interested in its possible ramifications. He believed the transportation monopoly had "very grave implications" with respect to the general use of most Colorado highways. All of the state highways connecting the east and west portions of Colorado traversed either Rocky Mountain National Park or forest reservations. The authority of the Secretary of the Agriculture over forest reserves was similar to that of the Secretary of the Interior over park lands for the establishment of "reasonable rules and regulations." Moreover, practically all of the state highways crossed at some point lands still held in federal ownership. [1]

Governor Shoup worried that the federal government might seek exclusive jurisdiction over all the mountain highways in the state. He became so concerned in the matter that he requested the state Attorney-General's office to assist Robbin's lawyers, Lee and Shaw of Fort Collins, before the appellate court. Accordingly, Forest C. Northcutt of that office accompanied attorney Paul Lee to St. Louis and participated in the oral argument before the Circuit Court of Appeals. Northcutt's request to file a brief prepared for the state was, however, denied. [2]

Consequently, Governor Shoup directed his Attorney-General, Victor Keyes, to work with Lee and Shaw in anticipation of a possible state suit against the Park officials to settle the questions involved. By this tactic the state could sue in behalf of itself as proprietor of the roads in question and as representative of all the people of Colorado. But before making a decision to initiate litigation, Governor Shoup called a conference of a few interested parties for July 27, 1922, to discuss the matter. Present at the conference were attorneys Lee and Shaw, Attorney-General Victor Keyes, Park Superintendent Roger Toll and the Governor. Toll carefully noted and recorded what transpired that day. [3]

Apparently only Lee and Shaw strongly favored court action. Keyes, though urging compromise, placed himself at the disposal of Governor Shoup. The Governor, in turn, while harboring no grievance against the Park Service, wished to be "fair" towards the Fort Collins attorneys. In short, if they wanted the state to sue, then the state would do so. Superintendent Toll assured Shoup that the Park Service would support any changes in Park boundaries or Park regulations that Shoup might suggest in order to settle the transportation question definitely. Shoup escaped making a decision by advising Toll to confer with Lee and Shaw. The next day, July 28, Shaw informed Toll that a suit would be the best method of settling the argument, since any change in Park regulations would be unsatisfactory. He further explained that he was authorized to bring the suit in the name of the state, although the state would bear none of the expenses. Nevertheless, the state would be represented by a member of the Attorney-General's staff. [4]

The case would be brought in the court of Judge J. Foster Symes, who had succeeded Judge Robert E. Lewis as Federal District Judge. Both Keyes and Shaw believed that Judge Symes

shared the views of Judge Lewis and would likely decide for the national government. The resolve of the opposition, however, was not weakened by their vision of almost certain defeat. Their plans went beyond the initial legal confrontation. If the state lost in the District Court, Shaw planned to appeal directly to the United States Supreme Court, thus bypassing the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals. [5]

Superintendent Toll assumed that Enos Mills and F. O. Stanley were prodding Lee and Shaw into action. He sensed, however, another reason for Shaw's persistence in the controversy, and explained:

I am inclined to believe that politics is one of the leading considerations in Shaw's action, rather than any unusual activity on the part of Mr. Stanley or Mr. Mills. Mr. Shaw told me that three of the Democratic candidates for Governor had stated that one of their platform planks would be opposition to the Park Service regulation in this Park. It is quite possible that Mr. Shaw, who is Chairman of the State Republican organization, wishes to forestall this action, and it may be that the Governor is also influenced by political considerations. [6]

Whatever the motivating factors, on August 5, 1922, attorneys Lee and Shaw, in the name of the State of Colorado, instituted a suit against Roger W. Toll, questioning the right of the United States to regulate traffic over the roads in Rocky Mountain National Park. Although Toll had acted under the authority of his superiors in the Interior Department, the state thought it unnecessary to make those officers parties in the case. The state was only complaining of the acts committed by Toll under his direct authority within the Park's boundaries. His actions, the state claimed, were neither authorized by the Federal Constitution nor the act creating the Park. [7]

Three weeks later, at the request of the Interior Department, Granby Hillyer, the United States Attorney at Denver appeared for the United States in the case. Further legal assistance came from Roe Emery, owner of the Rocky Mountain Parks Transportation Company. Since neither Toll nor Assistant Park Director Cammerer objected, Emery appointed William V. Hodges of the firm Wilson, Hodges, and Rogers, to represent the transportation company and assist Hillyer. Hillyer's initial move was to file a motion to dismiss the case, first on the grounds that the suit was actually brought against the United States government, and second that the state's complaint was without equity. [8]

Before argument was presented on Hillyer's motion, a decision was reached on the appeal in the Robbins case. The United States Circuit Court of Appeals in St. Louis rendered its opinion on October 9, 1922, sustaining the previous judgment. The court thus decided for the government on every contention. Assistant Director Cammerer optimistically noted,

the hearing on the 'motion to dismiss,' even if carried to the United States Supreme Court, will not decide the case, but if it comes down to a case going to decide on the merits, I think the Robbins' decision is so sweeping that it will form one of the best arguments for our side of the case. [9]

The hearing on the motion to dismiss the case against Toll, which was held in the District Court in Denver on December 27, 1922, resulted in no decision. While awaiting a new hearing, Hillyer began to question the wisdom of filing another motion to dismiss. He passed along his ideas to Toll on April 5, 1923:

I could wave [sic] a ruling on the motion to dismiss and by answer raise all of the defenses, as well as that of want of jurisdiction, and thus give the Court opportunity at least to pass on all questions involved which might have the effect of better satisfying those who have instigated the bringing of the present suit.

[10]

Judge Symes was also told by Hillyer of the possible switch in tactics and he offered no objections.

In fact, nearly everyone connected with the case was dissatisfied with the "motion to dismiss." Lee and Shaw requested that the motion be waived so the case could be heard on its merits. Superintendent Toll urged Cammerer to have the case tried on its merits "unless the Park Service doesn't desire a decision." [11] According to Cammerer, he, Assistant Interior Secretary Pinney, and Secretary of Interior Hubert Work all agreed with Toll. On April 16 Cammerer wired Toll, "It has always been our feeling that the case should be decided on its merits." [12]

Four months later, Toll read in the Rocky Mountain News that the case had been dismissed. [13] To him the turn of events was "somewhat expected," [14] while Cammerer found the situation "rather perplexing." [15] Apparently no one had informed Judge Symes of the desire of Department officials to have the case tried on its merits. The Judge sustained Hillyer's earlier 1922 motion to dismiss on his initiative, even though no new motion to that effect had been made by Hillyer. Judge Symes presumably believed that if the Court did not have jurisdiction, it did not have the right to try the case. [16]

Superintendent Toll evaluated the Park's position in the light of Judge Symes' imaginative decision.

While the determination of the case on its merits would have had some advantages, the present situation is not without other advantages. The delay is more objectionable to Lee and Shaw than it is to the government, and it places a series of obstructions in their path, which may dampen their enthusiasm for litigation. Legal expenses for litigation are probably less easily obtained since the death of Enos Mills. [17]

Certainly the death of Mills on September 21, 1922, hastened by injuries suffered in a New York subway accident, reduced the strength of the opposition. However, those who had fought for years against the transportation concession appealed Judge Symes' decision to the Supreme Court. They had to wait until May 11, 1925, for an answer, in a decision prepared by Associate Justice, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. Holmes' ruling maintained that the District Court of Colorado had erred when it dismissed the suit against Toll, so the case was remanded to the District Court for trial on its merits. But the Supreme Court considered and ruled on the vital question of jurisdiction. The opinion read in part:

It is said, although it does not appear in the record, that the decision below was based upon *Robbins v. United States*, 284 Fed. Rep. 39, in which these regulations were held to be justified by a cession from the State. But the alleged cession is not in this record and the State denies it in the bill. . . . The State is entitled to try the question and to require the alleged grant to be proved. . . .

There is no attempt to give exclusive jurisdiction to the United States, but on the contrary the rights of the State over the roads are left unaffected in terms. Apart from those terms the State denies the power of Congress to curtail its jurisdiction or rights without an act of cession from it and an acceptance by the national government. . . . The statute establishing the park would not be construed to attempt such a result. [18]

While awaiting the next move by the state, national park officials instructed Toll to investigate state expenditures on the maintenance of park roads. Attorney-General William L.

Boatright had heard that the state for some years had done little toward maintaining the roads or exercising supervision over them. If this were true, it might indicate that the State in effect had abandoned the highways to the United States. [19]

After a thorough investigation, Toll found that during 1920 and 1921, the State Highway Commission expended \$68,000 for construction on Fall River Road. From 1919 to 1925 the Commission had spent \$3,500 on maintenance of the road. The total amount expended upon the construction of Fall River Road by the Commission was about \$212,000. This expenditure did not include sums for approach roads to the Park, such as the Big Thompson Canyon Road or the Berthoud Pass Road. [20] According to Toll, the state completed its work on the Fall River Road in 1922, after spending \$14,000 that year for work done north of Grand Lake. [21] Regardless of these expenditures, Toll believed that the state had generally been delinquent in the care of Park roads. He reported:

In general, however, the State has not exercised supervision of the roads, and with the exception noted above, the State has not undertaken the maintenance of the roads in the park. The three counties adjacent to the park all have maintenance crews that maintain roads leading to the park, but, as a general thing, they stop their maintenance work at the park boundary. [22]

Toll further learned from Casey Rockwell of the Transportation Company, that before 1915 very little work had been done on the roads. After the Park had been created, a regular overseer was appointed for the district and some road work was completed, but certainly not much. [23] Harris Akin, Chairman of the Larimer County Commissioners and a signer of the resolution of August 19, 1919, informed Toll that the Board of County Commissioners relinquished its control over the Park roads to the government "in the belief that it was advantageous for the county to be relieved of the expense of maintaining these mountain roads." [24]

Despite the receipt of this information, George Stephen, the United States Attorney in Denver, thought that the government's position was "not a strong one." Although he agreed to follow Park Service instructions, he urged that a compromise be reached out of court. [25] He reasoned that if the case were decided against the government, the decision would have an unsettling effect upon transportation franchises in other national parks; especially where the state had not ceded jurisdiction.

Despite the dangers inherent in an adverse decision, neither Toll nor Cammerer believed that a compromise would be wise. They were willing to take their chances in court. As Cammerer wrote to Toll,

We have taken our stand and should adhere to it until the question is finally disposed by the court—then we must abide by its decision. [26]

About a month after the Supreme Court ruling in the Toll case, Secretary of Interior Hubert Work presided over a meeting in United States Attorney Stephen's office to consider the Department's course of action. Lee and Shaw, E. O. Brown, E. A. Holmes, Wilson, and Toll attended the meeting. No major decisions were reached then, but presumably everyone got "a clearer idea of the various view points." Toll sent the following impression of the meeting to Cammerer:

It seems quite probable that Lee and Shaw will permit the case to drag along. I think this is satisfactory to Mr. Stephen as he is not particularly desirous of having the case brought to trial. . . . This tactic would not clear up the question of jurisdiction, but even a decision of the case might not do that. [27]

The next item of available Park correspondence in the suit is dated January 9, 1926, and consists of a telegram from Toll to Cammerer that was as surprising as it was concise: "State of Colorado has dismissed litigation regarding control of roads." [28] In sudden and shocking fashion, the suit, originally brought in 1922 to enjoin Toll from "interfering with the rights of citizens to the use of Colorado state highways" was dropped.

The decision to end the suit of four years standing had been reached in a conference held in Governor Clarence J. Morley's office on January 6. Present besides the Governor were Senator Laurence Phipps, Colorado Secretary of State Carl S. Milliken, Attorney-General William Boatwright, Deputy Attorney-General Charles Roach, and Attorney Paul Lee. The meeting was called after Congressman William N. Vaile in Washington warned Boatwright by telegram that Colorado would lose the appropriations for the Park unless action was taken immediately to withdraw from its stand on highway matters. On the other hand, dismissing the suit against Toll, the state would receive "at least" \$140,000 in Congressional appropriations for use in maintenance and new road construction in the Park. This inducement had led to the Governor's decision to dismiss the suit. He also decided that he would submit to the next state legislature a bill to cede to the federal government all state highways within the Park. [29]

Having escaped unscathed in this legal battle, Superintendent Toll was, however, soon to become embroiled in a controversy more bitter than anything that had yet confronted his administration. This controversy arose over the question of Colorado's ceding its jurisdiction over roads in the Park to the national government, and will be discussed in the following chapter.

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CHAPTER V:

THE CEDE—JURISDICTION CONTROVERSY

The question of jurisdiction over the roads in Rocky Mountain National Park lay unresolved for more than a decade after the Park was created in 1915. Colorado had retained jurisdiction so that it could complete the construction of the Fall River Road, but there had been much subsequent litigation over questions of control, as described above. Understandably federal officials became a bit sensitive on the failure of the state to cede jurisdiction, as it had indicated it would as early as 1913. In December of 1926, Interior Department officials warned that \$199,000 in appropriations for Rocky Mountain National Park might be forfeited by the state if jurisdiction were not ceded. National Park Service officials further cautioned that future appropriations for road work totaling \$500,000 might instead be switched to Yosemite National Park. [1]

When Superintendent Roger Toll returned to Colorado in December, 1926, from a visit to Washington, he commented on the mood of Congress:

The appropriation committee . . . took the attitude that, if the state really wanted jurisdiction, it was welcome to it . . . but that the obligation of building and maintaining park roads should also be assumed. The government does not intend to enter controversy or litigation with the state, but if the state wishes to cede jurisdiction, the government will accept it and assume obligation for road development. [2]

The Rocky Mountain News had earlier quoted Interior Department officials as saying that such a transfer of jurisdiction would in no way disturb the rights of any property owners within the borders of the Park. Rather, the cession would simplify the administration of the Park's rules and would probably prevent a recurrence of a controversy similar to that over the transportation concession. [3]

Working toward that end, late in 1926 James Grafton Rogers drafted a bill for the Colorado legislature to cede jurisdiction of roads in both Rocky Mountain and Mesa Verde National Parks to the federal government. The bill was the result of several years of study by Denver Chamber of Commerce officials. It reserved to the state only the right to serve civil and criminal processes and to tax individuals and corporations within the two parks. Furthermore, Park residents would retain the right to vote in state elections. [4] The Rogers' bill was introduced in the Colorado State House of Representatives in January, 1927, by Representatives Edward C. King, F. W. Flebbe, R. W. Calkins, and E. W. Newland, and in the Senate by Senator I. L. Quiat. Initial action was taken by the House when the bill was referred to the Committee on Federal Relations.

Meanwhile, opposition to the measure was evidenced in northern Colorado. There, some people feared their water rights would be endangered; others believed that an exorbitant entrance fee would immediately be charged. Those owning land within the Park worried lest the government claim their property. Still others argued that the ceding of jurisdiction would

constitute federal encroachment on state's rights. Of those groups opposing the cession, the mining representatives were at first the most vocal. [5]

M. M. Tomblin, secretary of the Colorado Mining Association, warned that passage of the House bill

would mean eventual confiscation of all private property within the boundaries of the Park, since it will be possible for the management to make rules and regulations as will make valueless any private property included in this area. [6]

In an address given on January 27, to the annual convention of that association in Denver, John R. Wolff, President of the Boulder County Metal Mining Association, called the federal government's threat to cut off appropriations

truly a disguised offer of a bribe to the State to sell its sovereignty and control over transportation arteries from the eastern slope to the western slope of the state for the considerations. [7]

Elsewhere in Colorado, the state legislature's consideration of the bill was complicated by rumors of an impending boundary extension in Rocky Mountain National Park. According to hearsay, the boundary change would encompass 60,000 acres of Forest Service land extending from Mount Audubon south to the Arapahoe peaks. [8] Representatives of miners and stockmen wanted the Forest Service to retain control over the area, since that bureau encouraged private development within the forest reserves.

The bill's opponents also claimed that its adoption would "spell the death" of a major water diversion project planned for lands that would presumably be included in the Park addition. The project was to divert water from the Grand River on the western slope to the eastern slope. Planners predicted that the project would be capable of developing 200,000 kilowatts of electric power and one-half million acre feet of water. In all, it would cost from \$10,000,000 to \$15,000,000.

John R. Wolff, a major opponent of the bill, warned that if the boundary extension was realized,

not an irrigation project will be permitted to be developed within it, not a power line from the eastern to the western slope may be run across it, not a single one of its resources . . . may ever be put to beneficial use for the people of this state. [9]

Not all commentators, however, opposed the bill. Joe Mills, proprietor of the Craggs Hotel in Estes Park and a resident of Boulder, spoke in its favor. He believed that the bill would make available government resources to develop roads in an area where the state could not finance them "for fifty years, if ever." Mills showed an awareness of the profit to be made from government management of scenery, something overlooked by the mining and cattle associations. He warned that the Estes Park Chamber of Commerce, hotel men and other property owners within the Park resented the effort made by organizations centered in Boulder to defeat the bill. [10]

When James Grafton Rogers returned to Colorado from Washington in February, he cautioned opponents of the bill that members of the National Park Service Commission were becoming impatient at Colorado's "tardiness" in ceding jurisdiction. [11] Indeed, Congressman Louis Cramton, chairman of the Interior Department appropriations sub-committee, threatened to abolish the Park, if jurisdiction were not ceded. Senator Laurence C. Phipps and Congressman Edward T. Taylor stated that it would be "a serious blunder" and

"very foolish" if the Colorado legislature failed to pass the cession bill. [12]

Opponents of state cession ignored, or were unaware of, the fact that the ceding of jurisdiction over certain tracts of land by the state to the federal government was not unknown in Colorado. At various times, the state legislature had approved bills for ceding state land used by the federal government for post offices, court houses, army posts, arsenals, and Indian schools. But the part of the pending cession bill that especially frightened some Coloradans was the stipulation that Colorado cede jurisdiction "over and within all the territory which is now or may hereafter be included in the Rocky Mountain and Mesa Verde National Park."

Moreover, residents or owners of the many farms, cities and industries lying along streams that had their headwaters in Rocky Mountain Park, feared that cession might affect them adversely. The Boulder News-Herald reflected the fears of many such citizens when it asked:

Who can say the time will not come that Boulder, Longmont, Loveland, Fort Collins, and other cities may not imperatively need territory in the Park in order to have an adequate water supply? Who can say that agricultural development may not need and sorely require irrigation and ditch rights? [13]

Other residents of these same valley towns became concerned that their lucrative positions at the "Gateway to the Park" would somehow be endangered by federal regulation. C. D. Brumley of Boulder prophesied that if Fall River Road were ceded, "traffic would be diverted via Denver and Idaho Springs over the non-fee Berthoud Pass route to the detriment of all northern Colorado." [14] It was not surprising that the furor raised over the cede jurisdiction question was compared with earlier debates on free silver.

Editor Arthur Parkhurst of the Boulder News-Herald recoiled in anger from what he considered intimidation by the federal government:

This State does not surrender to threats. We believe it wrong and dangerous to principle for Colorado to cede jurisdiction . . . Colorado must protect itself for the future . . . It would be unwise and foolish to let a monopoly-granting, fee-charging Federal Bureau like the National Park Service become the absolute czar of State-built, State-owned roads leading to and through the Rocky Mountain National Park. Abolish the Park if you wish! A rose by any other name will smell as sweet! Czaristic Federal encroachment on the rights and property of States must stop! [15]

R. J. Ball, editor of the Loveland Reporter-Herald and President of Colorado Editorial Association, supported "the old-fashioned idea" that Colorado would be better off without the federal government's control of any land in the state. "Surely," he declared,

this State is capable of managing its property for the best interests of the public at large and its citizens in particular without placing it in the hands of bureaus and commissions at Washington whose personnel have little if any knowledge of what is best for the best interests of our citizens. [16]

The call to defend "states-rights" was echoed in the Boulder News-Herald of February 5, 1927. This opposition paper ended in a typical emotional,

The showdown has come. . . . If Colorado surrenders, Federal bureaucracy will be supreme over a reasonable, righteous doctrine of State sovereignty. [17]

The News-Herald predicted:

It will soon be known of what stuff the present Colorado legislature is made. God help Colorado if a majority of the members of the Legislature show themselves to be a bunch of cowards without common sense and courage enough to stand firmly for the just rights of this State! [18]

While the News-Herald appealed to God, the Sterling Advocate preferred to call on a local deity.

In a year when Colorado's highway funds are skimpy the Federal government dangles before the State a plum—or should it be likened to the apple that Father Adam relishes to his sorrow? . . . What would Enos Mills say, were he here to raise his voice? [19]

16. Editorial in the Loveland Reporter-Herald quoted in The Boulder News-Herald February 5, 1927.

Such vehemence was bound to bring about a like reaction from supporters of cession. While The (Boulder) Daily Camera mildly wondered "if we are not given more to prejudice than to reason," [20] Congressman Cramton reacted as a man influenced by shock and disgust. He characterized the people living near the Park as having, "the most unfriendly, unappreciative, unhelpful public sentiment that has ever surrounded any national park." To him, the self-styled champions of states-rights were merely "trouble-makers trying to monopolize the spotlight." [21]

What should have been a rational debate was degenerating into raucous name-calling. The Colorado delegation in Washington interjected into this statewide argument a calm but firmly worded appeal. In early February Senators Phipps and Means, and Congressmen Vaile, Timberlake, Hardy and Taylor sent Governor William Adams a message which stated:

We have watched situation in congress for several years and have positive information that if jurisdiction is ceded, congress . . . will authorize expenditure of additional \$1,435,000 for roads in Rocky Mountain National park during next few years.

Please note that . . . maintenance appropriation for next year is \$97,000, which is largest in its history, and Mesa Verde will receive \$50,750.

Withdrawal of maintenance appropriations will, therefore, mean practical abolition of national parks in Colorado.

All states containing the principal national parks except ours have ceded jurisdiction thru legislative act including California, Wyoming, Washington and Montana, while in no other case does state assert or claim jurisdiction over the roads.

We believe it to be extremely advantageous and entirely safe for Colorado to take similar action. [22]

On February 18, after a public hearing, the Colorado House Committee on Federal Relations reported out the cession bill bound with the shackles of an amendment drawn by the Colorado Mining Association. This "Colorado-protecting amendment" read:

the State of Colorado reserves for its citizens the free and uninterrupted use of all public highways now or hereafter constructed within said Park, or any extension

thereof, or other valid locations within said boundaries, may have free entrance to or egress from their property which shall remain under the jurisdiction of the State of Colorado, the development, the use or enjoyment of which shall in no way be abridged by the Act. [23]

The Boulder News-Herald hailed the insertion of this amendment as a victory for the opponents of the cession. [24]

Two days later, the Rocky Mountain News predicted that if the bill passed the House it would surely meet bitter opposition in the Senate. The newspaper believed that senate approval depended upon the adoption of amendments that would limit federal jurisdiction. [25] On February 23, the Denver Post stated that "the national parks fight had started . . . in earnest," since the House and Senate Federal Relations Committee had met in joint session and held a public hearing on the controversial bill. To persuade uncommitted legislators, citizens of Loveland perfected plans to parade in front of the capital bearing signs that read, "Kill park bill. Save our water." [26] Meanwhile, for "three stormy hours," proponents and opponents "rolled up their sleeves, polished their vocabularies and unlimbered their heavy oratorical artillery before the joint meeting." [27] Representatives of northern Colorado towns, including Berthoud, Loveland, Longmont and Boulder opposed the bill through the testimony of their spokesman Reid Williams, city attorney of Loveland. On the other side were delegations from the Chambers of Commerce of Denver and Estes Park led by James Grafton Rogers.

The next day, February 24, the House discouraged the bill's supporters by voting the bill back into committee, not the Federal Relations Committee that originally had control of the bill, but the Committee on Roads and Bridges. The quick legislative approval of this maneuver indicated to the Denver Post that the group steering the bill was following a carefully prepared plan. [28] The motion carried by a voice vote of 35 to 25. A few observers deemed it improbable that the nine members of the Committee on Roads and Bridges were known to be against ceding jurisdiction.

This turn of events especially disturbed those who had worked longest to accomplish cession. Rogers recalled that originally Secretary of the Interior Lane had refused to approve the creation of the Park until the state legislature ceded jurisdiction. The Secretary subsequently relented when Rogers and his Colorado Mountain Club pledged to carry on a decade of active lobbying for the cession. [29] Another pledge interested workers on both sides of the issue, for on April 23, 1913 the Colorado State Senate, in its campaign for a national park had sent the following resolution to President Woodrow Wilson:

We therefore urge that you pass an act creating the said Rocky Mountain National Park, adopting the metes and bounds as set forth in the report of said Chief Geographer Marshall to the secretary of the interior, and embodying provisions as contained in a bill . . . and hereby declare the willingness of the state of Colorado upon the passage of a congressional act establishing said park, to cede jurisdiction in the manner customary in such cases. [30]

During the 1927 debate over cession, several opponents raised serious questions about this "pledge." Were the people of Colorado bound by a promise made fourteen years earlier? Indeed was it within the power of that assembly even to issue such a resolution? Mrs. Enos Mills, for one, challenged the binding force of the resolution. She claimed, "The resolution of 1913 expressed the sentiment of the legislature at that time, a sentiment which was not now shared by the people of Colorado" [31]

In favor of fulfilling the pledge, twenty-three civic leaders of Denver revived the memory of

the Great War in their cause. They sent a telegram to Governor Adams in which they questioned:

Have we forgotten that a few years ago the whole civilized world flamed with anger because Germany said a national agreement was only a 'scrap of paper'? [32]

The Boulder News-Herald contended that the state never had been bound by the promises of individual legislators. It termed the argument in favor of the pledge nothing more than "sentimental bunk." [33]

By March the Colorado legislative hesitation over cession was becoming acutely embarrassing to the state's delegation in Washington. Congressman Taylor, after conferring with Representative Cramton, reported that all construction on Fall River Road would be held up. Appropriation acts of the past two years carried no limitations only because of promises made by Governor Morley and Attorney-General Boatright that jurisdiction would soon be ceded. The embittered Taylor concluded:

It seems to me this delay puts the state in a very humiliating position in the eyes of official Washington. If they do not want the park they ought to memorialize congress to abolish it and decline all further federal funds. [34]

Dr. Hubert Work, Secretary of the Interior and a native Coloradan, agreed in general with Taylor. In a speech before both houses of the state legislature on March 19 he threatened to close the Fall River Road if the cession were not granted. He appeared ready to wash his hands of the matter. "If the state doesn't want the park enough to fulfill its promise to cede the control," he told the legislators, "let it all go back to what it was before and let's forget it." [35]

The Denver papers, which had tended to be neutral in the jurisdictional debate, then moved closer to outright support for the bill. The Rocky Mountain News took vigorous issue with the bill's opponents. It labeled as "ridiculous" claims of mining resources in the Park. With respect to irrigation, the News pointed out that "every bit of water" in the area was appropriated long before the Park was created. Thus there was no new water to claim. Furthermore, reservoirs could be built outside the mountains at far less cost than within the mountain area. [36]

By mid-month, the House bill was reported out by the Committee on Roads and Bridges. House members then voted to add two amendments to the bill, one reserving to the citizens of the state the free use of all roads, and the other specifying that jurisdiction should not become effective until the citizens of the state were given the right to construct irrigation works in the Park. With these two amendments the bill passed the House on second reading on March 19, and the third reading a day later. [37]

On April 8 the Senate passed the original bill on second reading, adding only the irrigation amendment. The next day, the Senate passed the bill on third reading. The House declined to concur on the revised bill, so a joint committee was appointed which finally reported in favor of ceding jurisdiction over Mesa Verde, but took no action respecting Rocky Mountain National Park. In the closing hours of the legislative session this report was accepted by both houses and the bill was accordingly passed. [38]

Congressman Cramton later prophesied from Washington that, "the first pinch . . . will be felt when the government fails to go thru with a \$500,000 road project in the area." [39] Indeed, by the coming of the new year the "pinch" was to prove irritating in neighboring Fort Collins. The local newspaper complained that because of the funds withheld, "it is high time Colorado

came to its senses The whole controversy results from misunderstandings and bullheadedness." [40] Whatever the causes for the controversy, it was true that the monetary loss to Colorado would be great. Approximately \$500,000 originally appropriated for road construction in Rocky Mountain National Park was divided among eighteen other national parks. Then, too, a five-year road-building program for the state, calling for an expenditure of \$1,237,500 was tentatively abandoned. According to Superintendent Toll, plans were suspended for constructing or reconstructing forty miles of highway and about ninety miles of trails in the Park. Even the hope of future appropriations for the Park was dimmed by the unforgiving attitude of Congressman Cramton. "As long as I have something to do with appropriations for national parks," he declared, "I will not sanction the expenditure of federal funds on national park highways over which the authority of the government is disputed." [41]

By the early spring of 1928, economics had partially begun to crowd out politics in Colorado as the predominant consideration in the controversy. The Rocky Mountain News studied Denver's economic pulse and reported that "it is high time for Denver's business interests to take a hand and tell politicians and obstructionists where to get off." [42] By September the News further warned that "a way out must be found between now and January. The deadlock is bad for Denver from a business point of view." [43] Perhaps answering this call, the Colorado Kiwanis Club adopted a resolution in favor of the cession on October 2, and soon after the Denver Chamber of Commerce intensified its activities for the bill through its Civic and Legislative Council.

In early December the News again brought up the economic advantages of the cession. "On a straight business basis," it believed the Park was more valuable for its "tourist crop" than agricultural products. The News reasoned, "the tourist crop is perennial, and does not wear out the soil," [44] By December 24, the paper could report that businessmen's clubs of Denver were lining up behind the Kiwanis Club for the ceding of jurisdiction. Also, the Round Table, an organization of presidents of businessmen's service clubs, had decided to endorse the measure. [45]

While Denver moved to support the cession, sections of northern Colorado remained adamantly opposed to the proposition. In July 1928, both the Boulder County Republican and Democratic Assemblies officially commended the 1927 state legislature for its refusal to cede jurisdiction. On September 30, an organization of water users was formed to lobby against the cession. Representatives from Fort Morgan, Brush, Greeley, Fort Collins, Loveland, and Johnstown were present at the first meeting held at the Loveland City Hall. [46] When the Greeley Chamber of Commerce held a mock trial over the ceding of jurisdiction, half of the jury refused even to vote on a verdict. [47] The Boulder Camera predicted that the upcoming legislative fight over jurisdiction "promises to be a lively scrap." [48]

As state legislators prepared for the 1929 session, late endorsements for the cession came from such diverse groups as the Moffat Tunnel League, the Denver Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Colorado Women's Service Club, and the Englewood, Colorado, Chamber of Commerce. On January 4, the Rocky Mountain News advised the legislators, "there's no sense in Colorado seeking to fight Uncle Sam—it's like butting the head against a stone wall." [49]

Advice both helpful and ominous also came from Washington. Senator Phipps informed the 27th General Assembly that a federal appropriation of \$457,000 for highways and maintenance in the park was certain if jurisdiction was ceded by March 3. Congressman Cramton, chairman of the sub-committee on Interior Department appropriations, meanwhile warned of the consequences if the March 3 deadline were not met. He said, "failure to cede jurisdiction will not end the park as a national playground but it will end all appropriations

indefinitely." [50]

On January 10, 1929 House Bill No. 44 to cede jurisdiction was introduced in the state legislature by Representatives William C. Burchfield of Denver (Republican), Edwin C. Johnson of Craig (Democrat), and James H. Beggs of Keenesburg, Weld County (Republican). The House Committee on Federal Relations, to which the bill was sent, held public hearings on January 29 and 30. After listening to more than twenty witnesses repeat the arguments previously advanced for and against the cession, the committee members set off on a visit to Estes Park to "see the situation on the ground." [51]

The new House bill met many of the opposition's old objections. It restricted the Park boundaries to their existing limits; it permitted a change of the boundary to permit the building of a forest road through Allenspark; and it guaranteed existing water rights. Still, opposition persisted from the Boulder Livestock Growers Association, and the Boulder News-Herald remained defiant. The Denver Chamber of Commerce thought the situation was serious enough to warrant its sending of "an urgent request" to the Colorado congressional delegation for assistance. The Boulder Camera sought to remind its subscribers:

We are living in a different age than that in which Enos Mills conceived the idea of a national park and the people of this region should adjust themselves to it . . . NOW. [52]

And later:

Since the legislature is about to vote what the government asks . . . we fail to discover any good reason why Boulder county, almost alone, should continue to oppose it, Why not get in the bandwagon and ride? Why be always opposing something? [53]

It was becoming increasingly evident, however, that the opposition to the bill was to be found mainly, if not only, in Boulder. As far back as December of 1928, Roy Ray, the editor of the Poudre Valley and a militant foe of the ceding measure, worried that "it is not an easy matter for citizens of the rest of the state to reach any definite conclusion." [54]

Supporters of the bill became ever more confident, while those who had fought so long against it fatalistically predicted its passage. Then the ease with which the bill passed the House surprised even its more optimistic proponents. [55] It was approved on February 7, on second reading without argument and without a dissenting vote. Furthermore, the awaited "last stand" of the die-hards never developed, as the bill passed the next day on third reading by a vote of 54 to 7. [56]

The House included a short amendment protecting all vested water rights within the Park area and all canals and ditches already constructed. Some opposition developed among state senators who questioned whether future water needs would be satisfied by this amendment. For instance, they wondered if the government would allow the future diversion of water from the western slope to the eastern slope, particularly if the diversion required the building of tunnels and canals across Park limits. While the Denver Post predicted "a bitter fight" in the Senate, [57] the Boulder News-Herald foresaw that the bill would pass by an overwhelming vote. [58]

In the Senate the bill was referred to the Committee on State Affairs and Public Lands. Following a public hearing this committee reported the bill favorably. The bill passed its third and final reading on February 15 "without a word of debate" and with only one dissenting vote. [59] Governor William Adams promptly signed the bill on February 16. His action was followed by the introduction of a bill in Congress (through Congressman Edward

T. Taylor) to accept the Colorado cession. The bill passed both houses and was signed by President Calvin Coolidge in one of his last official acts on March 2, 1929. Thus the cede jurisdiction controversy was finally settled.

Almost at the same time, Horace M. Albright, National Park Service chief, announced that Rocky Mountain National Park would benefit from a ten-year road-building project to cost \$1,750,000. The project would begin with the construction of a new \$650,000 approach to Milner Pass, to supersede the Fall River Road. This "wonder road" would ascend the old Trail Ridge, generally following the path used for ages by Indians in crossing the Continental Divide. [60] Its construction, along with other road and trail work in the Park, will be considered next.

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CHAPTER VI:

ROADS AND TRAILS OF THE PARK

The Trail Ridge Road, which traversed Rocky Mountain National Park and joined Estes Park with Grand Lake, was to become the apex of the Park's road system. It was constructed during the early 1930's. Yet before describing that remarkable accomplishment, it is appropriate to consider the development of some of the other roads leading to and lying within the Park area. When Joel Estes came to the Park in 1859, he traveled an old trapper's trail up to the St. Vrain River, over the mountains to the Little Thompson River, and then through Muggins Gulch and over Park Hill. This was probably the most popular trail into the region despite the existence of several other passable traces. After moving his family to the Park, Estes improved the road to accommodate four-wheeled vehicles. But still it was a road only in name, and a trail in fact. Some further improvements, of a minor kind, were later made by Griff Evans and Rocky Mountain Jim Nugent, as for example when they cut brush and removed stones along the route. Nevertheless, pioneers found that negotiating this "road" could be an adventure. [1]

In 1875 Alexander Q. MacGregor obtained a grant from the territorial legislature to build and maintain a toll road into Estes Park, adjacent to the St. Vrain River. It began at the base of a huge sandstone rock, called Steamboat Rock, near the present town of Lyons, Colorado. MacGregor formed the Estes Park Wagon Road Company to carry out road construction, and after its work was completed, he organized (in 1879) the Estes Park Toll Road Company. Some years later he sold his road to a group of Longmont businessmen. Until 1900 the new owners periodically encountered operational problems, particularly when they tried to hike toll charges. Local teamsters challenged these moves and eventually carried their case to the State Supreme Court, which decided against the owners' right to the increase.

The Bald Mountain Road was Estes Park's first free approach road. [2] Begun in 1876, it connected Loveland to Estes Park. Fred and Abner Sprague started a stage line over this route, but discontinued the run after they were awarded a mail contract for deliveries from Lyons to the Moraine Park post office in 1890. The original Bald Mountain Road was forty miles long. Always a free road, it was used until after the turn of the century. [3]

The present Big Thompson Canyon Road, connecting Loveland with Estes Park, was the first planned approach road, for it was born of blueprints rather than trial and error. Former Estes Park sheriff, C. H. Bond, convinced the county commissioners in 1902 that a road could be built through the "Narrows." W. A. Riley was awarded the construction contract for \$24,000, and the money for the project was raised through private subscription and county aid. When completed in 1904, the road was dusty and narrow with many bridges and steep inclines. At times, though, a horse-drawn stage line and a fleet of Stanley Steamers used this approach, even though for several years only enough maintenance work was performed on it to keep it passable. It remained a "one-way track" until 1919, when the county and state began to make widening improvements on it. [4]

Yet another "highway" into Estes Park was the South St. Vrain Road, which ran past the

Longs Peak Inn, then dropped down into Estes Park beyond Mary's Lake. From 1892 until 1900 the portion of the road extending from Lyons to Allenspark was a toll road. Until 1932, Larimer County maintained the road. [5]

After the creation of Rocky Mountain National Park in 1915, superintendents became primarily concerned with the maintenance of roads and trails within the Park's boundaries. Originally, there were only five miles of such roads under federal jurisdiction, but even so, Supervisor Trowbridge was hard pressed to maintain them under his 1915 appropriation of \$3,000. The other fifty miles of Park roads fell under state or county jurisdiction. All the roads had been built by pioneers and named for nearby geographic landmarks, such as Mill Creek, Beaver Creek, Bear Lake, and Copeland Lake. Without exception these roads were mere trails, almost always in poor condition.

By far the most famous (some might say infamous) road in the National Park was the state-owned Fall River Road. It was originally constructed with convict labor in 1914 from a point near the present Fall River Entrance of the Park (about four miles "as the crow flies" northwest of Estes Park Village) to a distance of two miles within the current boundary of the Park. The road was generally well built, although in some places it was quite narrow, being only eight to ten feet in width. The point known as the "second switchback" was reached by a twelve per cent grade. It was not sufficiently wide for the average vehicle to change direction without a "see-saw" movement. This maneuver was extremely dangerous, since there was no barrier to prevent a vehicle from going over the embankment. In 1915, Park Supervisor Charles Russell Trowbridge recommended a complete survey of the road before extensive improvements were begun. As a stop-gap measure, however, a stone retaining wall was constructed on the switchback at a cost of \$65,000. [6]

Preliminary planning called for extending the Fall River Road so as to connect it with the Grand County Road to the west. This latter road, finished in 1915, extended about one and three-fourths miles within the Park's western boundary. During the summer of 1915, Trowbridge studied the Fall River Road at first hand ten times, and then, because he lacked additional funds, contracted only to have the second switchback widened at a cost of \$181.40. [7]

The National Park's 128 miles of trails in 1915 had been built by residents of the Estes Park region. These trails were constructed for protection of the forests against fires, rather than for tourist travel. The principal and most widely known of them led from Estes Park a distance of 18-1/2 miles to Grand Lake, via Flat Top Mountain. Other trails were located near Loch Vale, Bear Lake, Lawn Lake, Upsilon Lake, Fern Lake, Storm Pass, Bierstadt Lake, and Longs Peak. All of the trails needed extensive improvements if they were to be used by Park visitors. In 1916, the Park administration expended over \$300 on trail repairs. The necessary additional work was handicapped in the immediately following years because there was never enough money for it in the Park's appropriation. Reminiscing on his experiences as Superintendent, L. C. Way remembered, "We had scarcely any funds and had to blaze our trails through the forest on public contributions." [8]

In the fall of 1917, Acting Chief Ranger R. A. Kennedy summarized the Park's road and trail problem from the standpoint of finances:

. . . numerous complaints on road conditions have been received in this office. Owing to a lack of funds, however, we were unable to remedy the situation. While none of the roads are dangerously defective at this time, they are rapidly growing worse. With each month's neglect the initial cost of maintenance will greatly increase, and unless funds are soon provided conditions will become so deplorable that pleasurable travel will be impossible.

Very little trail work has been done . . . our allotment for this purpose having been almost exhausted earlier in the season in removing fallen timber and doing such work as was necessary to open up the Park. The limited amount of money provided for this purpose, however, spread over the vast acreage of this Park, was insufficient to enable us to make permanent repairs. [9]

The eastern, southern, and western approach roads to the Park were hardly in better shape than the Park's own roads. Due to the poor condition of the eastern approach roads from Fort Collins, Loveland, and Lyons, transportation was at times difficult, and the Park's supply of provisions and coal sometimes ran low and Park building operations were retarded.

The deterioration of the state and county roads within the Park presented difficulties to the authorities. The newly created National Park Service was prohibited by law from spending money for improvements or maintenance of non-federal roads. Furthermore, it was doubtful whether the Park administration could have done much, even if allowed to, to improve those roads. Acts of Congress passed on January 26, 1915 and February 14, 1917 provided that not more than \$10,000 a year could be expended for administration, protection and improvements in Rocky Mountain National Park. Fortunately, however, the state and county authorities did some work to improve their roads. The Larimer County Commissioners agreed to expend \$1,500 during 1918 to maintain their roads within the Park. Road camps located in Moraine Park sent out men to work on the Moraine Park, Fall River, Longs Peak, High Drive and Wind River roads. [10]

The Park Service also tried its hand at road improvement. One mile of road was constructed to connect the Mill Creek Road and the Old Glacier Basin Road. This extension provided "a safe and easy road" to the free public camping grounds in Glacier Basin. A right of way was cleared and all brush burned in the fall of 1917. Grading was completed in time to open the road to the public on July 4, 1918. [11] Private contributions of time and money helped spur further road work. In one instance, Roe Emery of the Rocky Mountain Transportation Company took over the supervision of construction on the Fall River Road in May 1918. Road work between the Brinwood Hotel in Moraine Park and "the Pool" was financed partly by private subscription, as was the construction of a one-mile cut-off on the Glacier Basin Road.

The Park administration found that road maintenance was a never-ending struggle. Superintendent Way did his best to keep Park Service roads in passable condition. Due to extreme dryness of the climate, however, he found it "practically impossible" to do so, especially since there was inadequate drainage. In 1919, Way explained:

We have done what we could to overcome this, but the small amount of money available for all road work permits only an infinitesimal amount of drainage work, and we must concentrate our efforts on dangerous stretches on bridges, making them passable and safe for the season . . . An examination shows that not one bridge within the National Park has a sufficient factor of safety for the travel carried. [12]

Fortunately, Congress took a hand to boost the allotments for the next fiscal year. By a law of March 1, 1919, the \$10,000 ceiling on appropriations for Rocky Mountain National Park was raised to \$60,000 for fiscal 1920. Secretary of the Interior Franklin Lane explained that the \$10,000 inhibition had been included in the organic act as an indication of the intention of Congress to do nothing more than maintain the Park until such time as it might be prepared to proceed with Park improvements. Since 1915, the Park had received appropriations totaling only \$41,000. The popularity of the Park as a tourist attraction, however, prompted greater federal interest. In 1918, 101,497 visitors came to the Park. This

heavy influx apparently convinced Congress that Rocky Mountain was a national park in fact as well as in name. Secretary Lane promised:

Hereafter the park will be given essentially the same consideration by the Federal Government as is given to other parks of the first rank . . . [13]

About the same time, the Grand County Commissioners, who earlier had been uncooperative, agreed to support the building of the Fall River Road on the Park's west side. The state then assumed the responsibility for construction between Grand Lake and the Park boundary. Grand County in return promised to complete a separate five mile stretch for which the state had insufficient funds. The state agreed to reimburse the county at a later date. [14]

Superintendent Way, meanwhile, traveled to commercial clubs in Denver, Fort Collins, Loveland, and Boulder to explain the Park's road problems. As a result, every organization promised to help. Specifically, they agreed to "bend every effort" towards completing the Fall River Road. They even offered to help Way secure the necessary labor. These commercial clubs realized that the completion of this road would constitute an important tourist attraction. [15] By connecting Estes Park and Grand Lake over the Continental Divide, the Fall River Road would make possible a circle trip to and from Denver in three days traveling time. The total distance for the trip was 213 miles. Colorado state officials also realized the value of such a road.

Work continued on the road during the summer of 1920, despite difficulties in finding and keeping men on the road gangs. Still, in September 1920, the 37 mile road was completed. Its highest point lay 11,797 feet above sea level. [16] In the words of one author, "it was not a road for timid drivers." [17]

While the Fall River Road project captured the limelight, the rest of the Park's road system received its due official attention. Widening, ditching, and surfacing kept local work crews busy. Much of the road maintenance consisted of removing boulders, of which there were thousands, to enable road gangs to grade and improve drainage conditions. Despite these problems, Acting Superintendent J. A. Shepherd could report in September 1921, "The end of the month found the roads in better condition, perhaps, than they have been in the history of the Park." [18]

Such diligent road maintenance came at a cost. By early spring, 1922, the Park's financial condition was precarious. Superintendent Roger Toll considered the balance of the regular appropriations insufficient for the minimum operation of the Park until the beginning of the new fiscal year on July 1. The Park was bailed out of its troubles by the State Highway Department. This agency paid back \$4,000 for expenditures made by the Park Service the previous autumn on the Fall River Road. Even with this palliative, Toll worried that "only the most essential work can be done before July 1st, and the greater part must remain undone until that time." [19]

Some additional fiscal relief was in the offing, however. In April 1922, Colorado's Senator Lawrence C. Phipps announced that the Park appropriation was being increased for the coming fiscal year to \$73,900. This sum represented a hike of \$8,900 over the current fiscal year and \$23,900 over fiscal 1921. The maintenance fund amounted to \$53,000, and the rest was assigned for improvements. Superintendent Toll called the increase "very gratifying" and said that it showed that the Park Service, the Congress, and the people realized the "need for improvement of the facilities of this Park." [20]

Even with this appropriation, Toll could not afford frivolous spending. Only five men were employed on trail work during the summer season, and three of these were working without compensation, other than their board. This trail crew removed logs and other obstructions in

the trail to Loch Vale and began work on a trail between Bear Lake and Lake Helene. Toll considered that "when funds become available for trail construction" a regular trail could be cleared between those two lakes. [21]

This skeleton trail outfit was supplemented by the men and teams of R. W. McQueary, who was employed by the Park Service but placed under the supervision of P. J. Becker of the State Highway Department. One road crew was located at Horseshoe Park and another at Poudre Lakes. A third crew had its headquarters near timberline on the Fall River Road. McQueary's men were veterans of the Fall River Road construction. The three crews made improvements on the Fall River and Moraine Park roads. These efforts, especially with respect to the Fall River Road, were well received by the local press. The weekly Estes Park Trail assured its readers:

We found that the switchbacks are being widened and safety retaining walls built so that there will be little danger of an unruly car plunging over a bank and the widening will permit all cars to make the curves without being compelled to back up. [22]

Consistently, state government spending over-shadowed that of the federal government. Between the time of the creation of the Park and the close of fiscal 1923, the federal government had spent \$39,853 on road construction in Rocky Mountain National Park. All but \$1,500 of this sum had been spent on the Fall River Road. In the same time period, federal funds totaling \$50,768 had been allocated for road maintenance and \$7,715 for construction and maintenance of trails. In comparison, the State Highway Department had spent \$261,997.79 on Fall River Road construction alone. [23]

Even so, federal spending on improvements in Rocky Mountain National Park did not match federal expenditures in other National Parks. In the first eight years of the Park's existence, Washington had spent a total of \$126,643 for improvements in the Park, less than the annual appropriations for improvements for some national parks. Appropriations for Yellowstone Park ran from \$286,000 to \$361,000 each year; Yosemite, from \$200,000 to \$300,000 yearly; and Glacier, \$80,000 to \$195,000. The Estes Park Trail blamed the federal government, not local park officials, for this "neglect." It claimed that

Captain Way . . . and Superintendent Toll have both done all that was possible with the limited funds allowed them. The fault is in Washington. [24]

In 1924, Washington went a long way toward rectifying its neglect of roads in Rocky Mountain National Park—and other national parks as well. By April, Congress had authorized the expenditure of \$7,500,000 over a three-year period to improve and construct roads in the national parks. While considering the resolution, Congress was presented with an impressive array of facts, to convince its members that roads had to be improved to accommodate the heavier Park travel. In 1923, the Committee on Public Lands reported that 1,230,886 people visited national parks, as compared with 235,193 in 1914. Yet, since 1916 when the National Park Service was created, Congress had spent only \$1,443,600 in national parks to maintain roads and make a few absolutely necessary extensions. [25] Secretary of the Interior Hubert Work, in recommending the bill, pointed out that since 1872, when Yellowstone National Park was created, there had been appropriated for road construction in national parks \$3,504,100. Of this total \$1,482,000 had been spent in Yellowstone. [26]

The debate over the appropriation bill in 1924 marked the first time that the road requirements of the various Parks had been grouped into one program. Previously, each Park had submitted its estimates for road construction, along with other items of administration, protection, and maintenance. The results from this method had been somewhat unsatisfactory.

Therefore, when Congress approved the 1924 three-year road program, there was definite assurance of a marked improvement in the condition of the roads in Rocky Mountain National Park. It was to receive \$445,000 of the appropriation. Roughly \$300,000 was to be spent in reconstructing and improving existing roadways. Superintendent Toll explained:

The plan is to first improve our present roads to a satisfactory condition before undertaking new construction

On new work it is probable that no grade of more than 6 per cent will be used.

On both new and old work we hope to obtain roads 20 feet wide. [27]

Surveys under the direction of the Park's Engineering Division were carried on during the summer, preparatory to advertising for bids and letting contracts for the work which was authorized for 1926 under the 1924 appropriation. [28]

Meanwhile under the 1925 appropriation, noticeable improvements were already being made at certain points on the Park's roads. Widening operations were carried out at the upper end of Horseshoe Park. At a higher elevation on the Fall River Road, two dangerously sharp rock curves were widened and made safe. The surfacing of the eastern side of the Fall River Road was begun with the aid of a portable rock crushing plant. The road at the Moraine Park hill was widened and the grade was improved. Parking spaces were constructed at Chasm Falls and at Bear Lake. A branch road was constructed from the Fall River Road, at the Estes Park Fish Hatchery, to the Aspenglen campground. Also, an eight-foot masonry arch culvert was built to carry this roadway across Bighorn Creek. [29]

The Park made provision for the protection and comfort of the road crews high on the Fall River Road. A stone building was erected east of Fall River Pass and was called Timberline Road Camp. Several times in previous years, road crews had been caught in "freak" late spring snow storms, but the camp building offered helpful protection for the future. [30]

To deal with the Park's impressive annual snowfall, a new experiment in snow removal was tried in 1925 on the Fall River Road. Annually, Park employees had had to cut a wagon road 12 miles through drifts as deep as 19 feet. In October 1924, 13 boxes of dynamite weighing 650 pounds, were placed at the point of the deepest drift on the road. These boxes were connected by a special type of hollow lead fuse, filled with TNT, which would explode them all simultaneously. This dynamite, when exploded on June 1, blew out a trench about 300 feet long, 15 feet wide and six feet deep. About 1,000 cubic yards of snow were removed in this way. A steam shovel, purchased concurrently for road work in the Park, was also used for snow removal. In addition, teams and hand shoveling work helped. The road was opened to travel on June 13, six days earlier than ever before. [31]

Improvements in park trails also took place. Most notable was the completion of the Boulderfield horse trail. Some years before, Ranger Dean Babcock had laid out and constructed the trail from the foot of the mountain to Timberline Cabin. Then a Park Service trail crew headed by Rangers Jack Moomaw and Curtis S. Skinner, completed the upper end of the trail to Longs Peak. As a result, the trail had been extended almost the entire distance to the Boulderfield. [32]

With the beginning of fiscal 1926, Park officials were faced with the happy task of spending \$140,500, the first installment of the Park's three year \$445,000 road building budget. Of this amount, \$40,000 was earmarked for the widening of the Fall River Road on the west side of Milner Pass. The Park administration allowed \$20,000 for the reconstruction of the northern portion of the Highdrive Road, and the construction of two miles of new road from Deer Ridge to Horseshoe Park. This project included the building of a 24-foot reinforced concrete bridge, with masonry facing, across Fall River. Another \$20,000 was to be used in the

building of masonry and concrete bridges between Grand Lake and Milner Pass. Much of the remaining funds, \$125,000, was saved for the reconstruction of the lower portion of the Glacier Basin Road leading to Bear Lake. Grades up to 14 percent had to be eliminated. By agreement with the Park Service, the Bureau of Public Roads supervised these major projects under the new appropriations. [33]

As mentioned previously, further appropriations for road building in the Park were suspended in a congressional committee, pending the outcome of the cede jurisdiction controversy. The suspension involved sums of \$199,000 slated for 1927 and a \$1,237,500 package to be spread out over a four-year period, 1929 to 1933. Road construction already in progress was to be carried to its conclusion, however. [34] When in March of 1929 Colorado's cession of her Park roads had been accepted by Congress, the way was paved for further appropriations. To this good news was added the completion of the newly reconstructed Bear Lake road in July. The Rocky Mountain News called the road

a foretaste of what many future highways are to be like in the national parks . . . it presages a new era in the development of national parks for the pleasure of their citizen-owners. [35]

Ironically, Roger W. Toll, the persistent yet patient administrator who had supervised the improving of the Park's road system, did not witness the completion of this new road. In March of 1929, he was transferred to Yellowstone National Park. But before leaving, he handpicked as his successor, Edmund Rogers, a veteran of the U. S. Geological Survey and the Colorado Mountain Club. Rogers' appointment "was not a surprise in Denver." He had been personally endorsed by Senators Phipps and Waterman, as well as other prominent Coloradans. [36]

Though at the time of his appointment he was a junior officer in the Colorado National Bank, Rogers was no stranger to the history and problems of the Park. National parks had been a "sort of hobby" with him. He knew Stephen Mather and Horace Albright well and "had been in on" the campaign to establish Rocky Mountain National Park. His brother was James Grafton Rogers who authored the bill creating the Park. Furthermore, Edmund Rogers "had grown up" with the Tolls. He and Roger Toll had traversed most of Rocky Mountain National Park by foot on weekend trips. [37]

Rogers was not apprehensive about following his successful friend as superintendent. [38] He later recalled that when he assumed his duties as superintendent, he faced many difficulties. Officials of the Forest Service were antagonistic and some of the old opponents of the transportation monopoly were still active. Clem Yore, whom Rogers later remembered as "crazy as a bed bug," warned the new superintendent that, if he had his way, he would have him fired. Rogers recalled that in Estes Park village there were those "who wanted to come to the trough." [39] To help him overcome his difficulties, Rogers counted on Chief Ranger John McLaughlin, recently transferred from Yellowstone, and John Preston, newly appointed Assistant Superintendent. Park Service officials had deemed it wise to "clean house and give the new Superintendent a chance." [40]

Rogers' superintendency is chiefly noted for the building of Trail Ridge Road. There were several reasons for seeking to provide an alternate route to the Fall River Road, not the least of which was the fact that for years, tourists had figuratively with good cause been "scared to death" while traveling over the latter. A ranger was regularly stationed on the road to drive the cars of frightened visitors through various dangerous switchbacks. [41] So since the mid-1920's Park Service officials had considered the possibility of constructing a less hazardous way to traverse the Park. They had ruled out the possibility of widening the old road, for its grades were much steeper than those used on a normal highway. Some sections had grades

up to 15 percent, while six percent was the ordinary highway maximum. Clearly the Fall River Road could not be satisfactorily modernized. Therefore, in August of 1926, S. A. Wallace of the Bureau of Public Roads was ordered to take a crew of ten men to chart a location for a new road over Trail Ridge. [42] After they accomplished their mission, there was an understandable delay, due to the road cession debate, before the Bureau believed it could take the next step of calling for bids, by the spring of 1929, on the first section of the \$1.5 million Park road project. It would run from Deer Ridge through Hidden Valley along the "Long Trail Ridge" to Fall River Pass, where it would join the old Fall River Road. [43]

As it turned out, there was further delay until the jurisdiction question was resolved, but when that was settled, Congress made a first appropriation of \$450,000 for Trail Ridge in April 1929. The contract for the eastern part of the project was awarded in the autumn of that year to W. A. Colt of Las Animas, Colorado. Colt was a 72-year-old veteran of railroad and ditch construction. He had maintained a camp at Glacier Basin campground since the completion of his surfacing contract on the Bear Lake Road, in anticipation of the Trail Ridge contract. He immediately set up a base camp at Hidden Valley and began construction in October. [44] The camp structures were built so they could be moved by trucks without dismantling. The locations of the camps were, in every instance, selected with the view to minimizing the damage to the scenic properties along the road. [45]

Local enthusiasm for the project was high, although sometimes false hopes were raised as to the utility of the new road. For instance, the Estes Park Trail optimistically predicted that when completed the road would be kept open all winter, since "it will be practically free from the drifts which early obstruct the present Fall River Road." [46] In any case, Colt and his men experienced exceptional luck in the mild Colorado winter of 1929-30. Not until March 16 was he forced to shut down work, and then only until April 7. Park Service officials were encouraged by Colt's progress, and by May, Park Service Director Horace M. Albright announced that a second contract, of \$500,000, would be awarded within the year. In so doing, he expressed the opinion that, "the Rocky Mountain National Park no longer is the 'stepchild' of the national parks system." [47]

By early fall Colt's progress was slowed as he began drilling operations at the Rock Cut area above the forest-line. At 11,000 feet, high winds and snowstorms buffeted men and machines. The frozen tundra forced engineers to perfect new drills to penetrate the surface. The bitter cold and the high altitude made breathing difficult and heavy labor almost impossible. Colt's average work-force consisted of about 185 workers, most of whom were laborers. One old-timer later recalled that in fact three crews were kept busy—one working, one leaving and one on the way. [48] Despite the construction difficulties Colt and his men had completed 55 percent of their seventeen and two-tenths mile project by the end of September 1930.

While Colt supervised construction on the east side of the Park, another contractor, L. T. Lawler of Butte, Montana, began operations on the west side on October 8, 1930. Lawler's project extended for nearly 11 miles from Fall River Pass, where it tied into Colt's construction, to the floor of the Colorado River valley. It crossed the Continental Divide at Milner Pass at an elevation of 10,754 feet. The line of the road followed a new location from Fall River Pass to Milner Pass. From that point to Far View Curve the line followed the old road and practically obliterated it for that distance. From Far View Curve to the end of Lawler's project the new road traversed an entirely new location. [49]

The severe winter of 1930-31 inhibited both contractors. Lawler closed operations for the winter on November 26, while Colt struggled on with a crew of twenty until January. Since most of the remaining work on the east side had to be done above timberline, snow and frost conditions at that altitude made it impossible for Colt to resume operations until mid-June.

Lawler, still working at lower elevations, resumed operations in early May.

All of the contract work was performed under the direction of W. L. Lafferty, United States Highway engineer, who endeavored to prevent the marring of the area's natural beauty. For example, when ever blasting threw "country" rock across the landscape, the contractors carefully removed the debris. [50] At the foot of long slopes, logs were placed in such a manner that all material could be retained within the limits of the staked area. When logs were not available, windrows of rocks were used. At the Rock Cut near the high point of the road, a lattice work of heavy poles was constructed by Colt to protect natural rock pillars and the age-old lichens on them. [51]

The obvious caution exercised by the contractors did not unduly slow down their operations. By the time the 1931 fall snows shut down construction, Colt's men had completed 95 percent of their project in 94 percent of the allotted time. Lawler, meanwhile, had finished 65 percent of his project in 45 percent of his time. [52] Colt's progress made it possible to open the east side of the Trail Ridge Road to traffic on July 16, 1932, and early in August travel was permitted on the west side over that portion of the road from Fall River Pass to Poudre Lakes. [53]

A contract to surface the entire project was awarded that year to an Albuquerque firm, and a year later a Denver contractor was authorized to build approximately eight miles of road on the west side of the Park. Construction on this section started near the Phantom Valley Ranch and proceeded in a southerly direction along the floor of the Colorado River valley. [54] Then on October 28, 1934, a contract was let to the same concern for laying an oil mat on approximately 32 miles of road, beginning at the Fall River entrance and extending to the floor of the river valley on the west side. [55] During the summer of 1935, the Trail Ridge Road was given the "finishing touches" of a plant-mix bituminous surfacing. Except for some minor work yet required, work on this "wonder road" had been completed.

The finished road had been constructed to a width of 24 feet, from shoulder to shoulder, with additional widening on curves. Grades were limited to seven percent, and curvatures to a 200 foot radius on blind curves and a 100 foot radius on open curves. [56] Today, the Trail Ridge Road connects the Fall River and Thompson River entrances, on the east side of the Park, with the Grand Lake entrance on the west side. Eleven miles of this road lie above 11,000 feet, while four miles of it rise above 12,000 feet. It reaches a maximum elevation of 12,183 feet just above Iceberg Lake. [57]

The Trail Ridge project was a triumph of human ingenuity and perseverance. While the men on the job deserved and received the admiration of the public, park administrators working behind the scenes shouldered the ultimate responsibility for success or failure. Superintendent Rogers handled all of the construction details after the contract stage. He walked the "line" of the road about 20 times before construction began. Furthermore, he was instrumental in changing the course of the road through Rock Cut and other scenic spots so that millions of visitors would be offered breathtaking mountain views. [58]

The Estes Park Trail in September 1931, prophesied accurately when it said

These men are building an enduring monument to themselves in the name of beauty and of the spectacular. There is no other road in the entire world that will compare with it. [59]

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Rocky Mountain

Administrative History



CHAPTER VII:

THE DEPRESSION AND THE CCC

The building of Trail Ridge Road in the early 1930's was a godsend to the region's economy, which had been severely dented by the great depression of that decade. The construction provided work for many formerly unemployed young men from Estes Park, Grand Lake and the valley towns. The completed road also attracted visitors to the area during the summer. Yet appropriations for the Park had been gradually reduced, so that for its staff, it was a "pinchpenny time." Superintendent Rogers recalled that he felt obligated "to look at a nickel twice" before spending it. [1] Often old roads went unrepaired and new ones were not built because of skimpy appropriations.

During the early 1930's, Estes Park Village faced unusually hard times. Superintendent Rogers observed:

There is no activity in the town of Estes Park. "Old Timers" say it is the quietest year in the history of the region. Business and hotel men are going about with long faces, realizing of course, that the coming summer will be a gamble. It's our opinion that the community in general has just begun to feel the sting of the depression. [2]

The depression had relatively little effect on Grand Lake village, since money was scarce there most of the year anyway. There were only four salaried people in Grand Lake during the off season. So during the depression, economic conditions remained basically unchanged there. [3]

The above reference to the economic contribution of the Trail Ridge Road, however, suggests the necessity for describing other favorable developments in the Park which resulted from New Deal policies after President Franklin D. Roosevelt took office in 1933. Among the relief measures which he promptly sponsored was the Civilian Conservation Corps Reforestation Relief Act in May 1933. This act empowered the President to create an agency named the Civilian Conservation Corps. According to one author, Roosevelt had

purposefully designed the CCC to provide unemployed young men with work which would contribute to conserving the nation's natural resources. [4]

Through the cooperation of several federal departments, CCC "camps" were soon established around the nation. The Department of Labor directed the selection of the "enrollees." The War Department set up camps to house the men and care for their needs while they were not "on the job." The Departments of Agriculture and Interior planned projects and provided the necessary technical supervision. [5] A reserve army officer and a staff of CCC specialists provided direction in the camps. Included among the specialists were a project superintendent, a camp doctor, and an educational advisor. A technical assistant supervised the foremen, "straw bosses" and various project assistants. [6]

To qualify for enrollment in the CCC, a man had to be unemployed and unmarried. He had

to be an American citizen between the ages of seventeen and twenty-three, physically fit for manual labor, and free of a criminal record. If the enrollee had any dependents, they too had to be on relief. Besides enrolling unemployed young men, the CCC enlisted veterans, Indians, and college students in search of summer work. [7]

Colorado soon shared in this government program. The state's first CCC tent camp was started in early May at Trout Creek near Buena Vista. Within several days two other camps began operations, one in Pike National Forest at Lake George and one at Hardscrabble. And on May 13, 1933, the first of a contingent of CCC enrollees came to Rocky Mountain National Park. The day was raw and threatening, with eighteen inches of snow on the ground, as Park officials ushered an advance party of eight men to Little Horseshoe Park a few miles from Estes Park Village where they began the task of pitching tents and establishing Camp Number One. Four days later, 159 men, ranging from cowhands to college graduates, arrived from Greeley and Fort Lupton. In the words of a contemporary they were "a pretty sober and responsible bunch." [8]

Camp One (NP-1-C) was laid out in quasi-military style, with a single company street, flanked by tents perfectly aligned on either side. At the upper end of the street on one side were the administrative office, infirmary, and officers' mess hall. At the foot of the street were the bathhouse and lavatory, with hot and cold water and showers. [9]

The workday began at 8:00 a.m. and ended with the return to camp at 4:00 p.m. Because transportation to and from work was provided by large, red, sightseeing buses, the enrollees were soon given the name "woodpeckers." The enrollees earned \$30 a month. Of this sum, they usually sent about \$25 home to their families. Furthermore, the boys were generally conscientious workers for their modest wage. An oft-repeated phrase, to the rhythm of a swinging pick or ax, was "Another day, another dollar. I get the day, my mammy gets the dollar." [10]

Battell Loomis, an unemployed magazine writer and one of the first enrollees, later recalled those early days in Rocky Mountain National Park:

That same Saturday May 13, 1933 the army surgeon examined and enlisted thirty-five local experienced men (men over twenty-five—they may be married men) to serve as foremen and straw bosses of the forest gangs. The next day a truck load of camp material arrived. A detail of twenty men shoveled the frozen snow away and leveled the camp site. A field kitchen was erected, four tents were set up, latrines were dug, boulders were blasted away, and 1,400 feet of two-inch galvanized pipe was laid to have water in the kitchen for supper that evening.

On Monday the 15th twenty-four pyramidal tents and three twenty-four bed hospital ward tents were ready. On Tuesday forty-eight of the forest workers arrived from Fort Sill, Oklahoma. On Wednesday 111 more arrived by bus from Greeley. They were in their own worn clothes, many without coats or sweaters. The doctor examined them and rejected only ten. No supplies had come, and at three-thirty on Thursday morning the men began to riot—they were freezing to death. The army built fires, hot coffee was served out to all hands, and a disused government-owned lodge at Moraine Park, was pillaged for bedding. It was not until Friday night that the balance of the equipment arrived from Fort Logan.

Instead of the authorized issue of one canvas cot, one straw bed sack, and four army blankets per man, we were given six blankets each and cotton-stuffed mattresses. For the rest, our issue of equipment followed the general rule: two

pairs of khaki shirts, one blue-denim hat, six pairs of socks, two pairs of boots, one toilet kit, and one aluminum mess kit, canteen. [11]

Loomis then described the routine work day schedule:

At that, the work isn't too hard. Up at six o'clock in the morning. Breakfast—hot and plenty of it—at seven. Camp police from seven thirty to eight. Then off to work for four hours. Lunch at twelve—plenty of it (we get a pound of bread and a pound of meat per man per day, as well as eggs and plenty of vegetables)—followed by four more hours of work. Back in camp by four thirty. The rest of the day is on our own time, except for camp details.

Each day a few of us get leave to go to town, and week-end leave to visit families is also handled in rotation. No liquor is the hard-and-fast rule. At first there was the making of trouble between us and the enlisted men. Here we were, getting thirty dollars a month and some of the group leaders and foreman drawing down thirty-six and forty-five, while the army men, who did more work, only rated between fifteen and twenty. The army didn't kick, but they didn't like it. The field kitchen was put under a roof that wouldn't blow away, a heavy-duty range was installed instead of the flat field stove, and four army men cooked for us and helped the captain handle 200 CCC's without a fight. [12]

Without arousing much local excitement, work under the CCC program had gotten under way promptly. The men in the camp at Horseshoe Park started on various projects on May 13 and remained busy until transferred out for the winter months on November 15, 1933. Another camp was established on June 23 near Phantom Valley, thirteen miles from Grand Lake, and its recruits worked until transferred to State Park number one in Arizona on October 15, 1933.

Under the leadership of camp superintendents L. E. Douglas and Arthur A. Mathews the camps functioned smoothly and the morale of the workers remained high. Park Superintendent Edmund Rogers noted that the enrollees were doing more and better work than he had anticipated. [13] The excellent work record of these early camps can partially be attributed to the close cooperation of the Park rangers with the Emergency Conservation Work enrollees. Rangers were put in complete charge of the work in their districts, thereby expediting the jobs as well as holding overhead costs to a minimum. Furthermore, before being put out into the field the enrollees were familiarized with the nature of their work projects through talks from the chief ranger and his staff. By such careful planning a Black Hills Beetle infestation in the Ponderosa Pine was controlled before reaching epidemic proportions. [14] In addition, the enrollees completed a miscellany of projects, including construction of fire trails, trout rearing ponds, and guard rails on the new Trail Ridge Road.

After the young men of the two CCC camps were transferred to winter projects in another area of the country, the Park continued to benefit from various civil works projects undertaken by the temporary national relief agency known as the Civil Works Agency (C.W.A.). Under the direction of Park engineers A. Van Dunn and Frea A. Fair, 170 C.W.A. men from Estes park and the valley towns earned forty-five cents an hour enlarging the Bear Creek Parking area, burning debris, reconstructing and relocating roads, and performing extensive work on a new utility area. [15] Not only was the Park's appearance embellished by these efforts, but the region's economy was reportedly raised to a higher status than it had enjoyed since 1929. [16] Much of the \$46,805.42 appropriation for the Civil Works program was absorbed in salaries, which in turn were spent within the region. Aided by unseasonably warm and dry weather, Civil Works projects proceeded ahead of schedule. Not a single working day was lost in January. Superintendent Rogers explained, "The men appreciate the

opportunity to work and the results achieved have been gratifying." [17]

Even while the CWA people were completing their projects, army officers and local men anticipated the return of the CCC's by rehabilitating the two camps that had been erected the previous year. The first contingent of approximately twenty enrolled men moved into the first camp, at Horseshoe Park, on April 28, 1934, a bare two days after the Civil Works program had been terminated. Two weeks later a new camp was established and filled with recruits, who were shortly followed by a new group for the Phantom Valley camp. The new camp had been established at Mill Creek, five miles west of Estes Park Village.

In July the Park's CCC camps were visited by Robert Rechner, Director of Emergency Conservation Work. Accompanied by Congressman Edward T. Taylor, Superintendent Rogers, and Colonel Peck, who was the Regional Forester, Fechner inspected all three camps during July 11-12. Both he and Congressman Taylor expressed their approval of the camps and the work done by their occupants. [18]

While the "brass hats" looked on approvingly, the enrollees developed an esprit de corps that was at times defiant. One CCC boy took time to describe the psychological impact of the program

They say the New Deal brings luck. It brought it to me.

A few months ago I was broke. At this writing I am sitting on top of the world. Almost literally so, because National Park No. 1 CCC Camp near Estes Park . . . is 9,000 feet up. Instead of holding down a park bench or pounding the pavements looking for work, today I have work, plenty of good food, and a view of the sort that people pay money to see. . . We are going to have a hamburg steak tonight. And I am on the payroll. [19]

To avoid confusing the reader, this explanation is offered concerning the number and status of CCC camps located in Rocky Mountain National Park during the depression and early years of World War II. NP-1-C was a temporary camp operated every summer from 1933 until 1938 at Horseshoe Park on the east side of the Divide. There is no mention of this camp after 1938.

NP-3-C was a temporary camp operated during the summers of 1933 and 1934 at Phantom Valley, west of the Divide. In the summer of 1935, NP-3-C was replaced by NP-7-C, another temporary camp which was disbanded during the spring of 1936. NP-7-C was re-occupied in the summer of 1938. It was eventually replaced by a permanent camp, NP-12-C, established near Grand Lake in the summer of 1940. NP-12-C was one of the last two camps to serve the Park, being abandoned in the summer of 1942.

NP-4-C was established as the Park's first permanent camp at Hallowell Park on Mill Creek in May 1934. It was used year round. In 1940 it was combined with a new permanent camp, NP-11-C, to form the Park's only "double camp." NP-4-C was abandoned on June 30, 1941. NP-11-C became the last CCC camp to serve the National Park, being abandoned on July 29, 1942.

His co-workers he found to be

An interesting lot, mainly from Denver—one Negro, twelve Mexicans, the rest ordinary Americans. . . . These aren't panhandlers; they are the men we use to make wars, or revolutions—or crime waves. They're husky, intelligent, clean-living youngsters. In spite of four years of depression, their physical condition when examined by the army doctors stacked up better than the draftees during

the World War. . . . You can build a new state out of men like these. They are the Green Guard of the Roosevelt Revolution—200 out of the 300,000 scattered throughout the country. Think that over! [20]

After eight months service in the camp this same enrollee began to wonder realistically, "how are we going to fit into life by the time the New Deal is a bit older." Probably reflecting anxieties common to many enrollees, he wrote:

Where are we going from here? There are rumors of a CCC of a million men next year. But, we all know that we can't stay with the organization for the whole of our lives. [21]

While to the enrollees problems seemed to lie mainly in the future, CCC administrators had to deal with more immediate crises. Rocky Mountain National Park became involved in supervisory scandals. Superintendent Rogers reported in May 1934 that a camp at Mill Creek was "particularly weak from a morale standpoint, but a change of camp commanders has been reflected in a marked improvement." [22] Later in the same Monthly Report he noted:

Although considerable work has been accomplished by the men in the fields the camps are not functioning one hundred per cent. The difficulty is in the foreman, the men holding these positions are for the most part not experienced in the type of work required of them. [23]

As late as August 1935, although some improvement had been realized, a new camp on the west side of the Park still "experienced considerable difficulty obtaining supervisory personnel." [24] David Canfield, later to be superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park, remembered that some of the superintendents were of "fearful" quality. Some of them had only "sold shoe laces" for a living prior to their Park appointments. [25]

In the early fall of 1935 the most dramatic incident of the CCC program occurred when ninety enrollees at Mill Creek Camp received dishonorable discharges for their part in a work strike. These dismissals resulted from an effort to head off an order requiring truck drivers while on duty to perform manual labor when not driving or maintaining their vehicles. [26] Apparently believing that the drivers were being overworked, the enrollees, led by twenty-five year old Kenneth Burke of Loveland, refused to work as long as the regulation was effective. When negotiations between the enrollees and the Park administration proved to be fruitless, the truck drivers were taken to Denver and given administrative discharges. Thus further inflamed, the enrollees gathered outside the quarters of George Carlson, the camp superintendent. In a seemingly threatening manner, they dared him to come outside. Order was restored only after Carlson was escorted from the camp by armed army officers. The most vehement strikers were then administratively discharged. Their discharges denied them the right to enroll in another CCC camp, made it impossible for them to hold government positions, and kept them from ever obtaining federal relief. [27]

This dramatic episode did not seriously affect the Park's public relations with the surrounding towns. Seldom did townspeople object to the presence of CCC workers as visitors. The town officials realized that the great majority of the boys were hard-working and well-behaved, despite a few misfits. As the Estes Park Trail reported on July 6, 1934;

There are three hundred and fifty-five young men at the CCC camps in this vicinity—and one-tenth of that number of hoodlums. The clean young fellows have to suffer abridged liberty and curtailed privileges on account of the carryings on of a few. . . . However Estes Park will not permit them to stand on the street and continue to pass remarks about the women on Elkhorn Avenue. [28]

Throughout the years 1935-38 the Park received sufficient enrollees for two camps and sometimes a third, as the spring to autumn visits of the CCC became routine. Their appointed tasks, whether major or minor, according to Superintendent Rogers, constituted "work that had been needed for years but which was impossible to accomplish under normal appropriations." [29] Early in the spring of 1938, while awaiting a new group of enrollees, the Estes Park Trail summarized the five-year record of the CCC. During that time, it had built eight travel-checking stations, two each in the Grand Lake, Thompson River, Fall River and Wild Basin areas. It had improved the Park water system by installing five concrete reservoirs of 2,500 to 6,000 gallons capacity and utilizing 12,557 lineal feet of pipe line to serve the Park Utility Area, Glacier Basin campground ranger stations and the Moraine Park Museum. It had constructed a total of 2,179 lineal feet of sewer line, as well as six disposal tanks, all according to United States Public Health Service standards. [30]

In addition, campgrounds were developed and improved. At Aspenglen and Glacier Basin 158 fireplaces and 125 rustic table and bench combinations were built, and twelve acres of new campgrounds were created. Roads and trails received appropriate attention, also. Besides devoting 9,094 man-days to the maintenance of 350 miles of Park trails and 1,347 man-days to the maintenance of 100 miles of telephone lines, the CCC constructed nearly twenty-one miles of new trails and seventeen miles of telephone lines. Then, too, more than ten miles of secondary dirt roads were built in the Pole Creek area. Another dirt road was also engineered from the Bear Lake Road to the Park's powder magazine. A major construction achievement was the building of the Moraine Park amphitheater. It seated 390 people and was used for nature programs.

In their role as conservationists, the enrollees planted 2,565 trees and shrubs. They also landscaped more than forty-two acres, and developed 15,396 square yards of parking area. The work crews planted 1,500,000 trout in the Park's lakes and streams and built four fish-rearing ponds. Additional construction involved two portable temporary cabins and eight equipment sheds, and the installation of a twenty-ton scale in the Utility Area. Furthermore, 339 man-days were devoted to fire fighting. The young men seeded and sodded 62,131 square yards of land and made 302 large directional and place signs. They erected 667 rods of guard rails, and ran 30.5 miles of grade line and forty-eight miles of lineal surveys. And, finally, they undertook tree-insect control measures over an area of 37,315 acres. [31]

The CCC program, though, included more than work projects. An educational program was established by the Park's personnel to acquaint the enrollees with the Park's administrative structure. Various Park Service employees, including Assistant Superintendent John C. Preston, Ranger-Naturalist Donald J. Obee, Park Commissioner Ray Baxter, Lloyd Fletcher and G. H. Laucks, contributed to the orientation. Enrollees learned the major functions of the Educational, Protection, Legal, Landscape, and Engineering Departments. This training program was primarily designed to prepare the enrollees for museum and education duty during the travel season. [32]

Clearly, both the Park and the young men had benefitted from the presence of the CCC program in Rocky Mountain National Park. So it was with a special enthusiasm that "all hands" helped celebrate the fifth anniversary of the CCC in the Park. Over 400 gathered at the Mill Creek camp on the evening of April 7, 1938, to participate in the celebration. Joining the enrollees and Park personnel were villagers from Estes Park and representatives of the valley towns. Captain Leo A. Noble first took the visitors on a short inspection tour and presented a demonstration of insect control methods at one of the infected areas. Arriving back at the camp, the celebrants then witnessed the transplanting of a large ponderosa pine. They were then given a tour of the camp itself. [33]

The day following the celebration, conservation work resumed as usual. Throughout the

summer the crews worked on twenty-nine different jobs under thirty-six classifications. Furthermore, project training was boosted and contrary to previous years, a decided interest was shown by the supervisory personnel in the work programs. [34] The next year there was further development of the Timber Creek campground on the western slope of the Park, and the installation of water and sewer systems at Fall River Pass for the museum and store in operation there during the summer months. Much maintenance work was completed and enrollees responded to fire calls within the Park and on national forest lands. Emergency work consumed hundreds of man-days, the most important of which was the futile search for a five-and-one-half-year-old Denver boy, Alfred Bielhartz, in early July. [35]

The prolonged presence of the CCC's stimulated the region's economy. During 1938-1939, Park officials were able to spend \$68,918.50 from CCC funds for skilled labor. These funds did not include sums from regular Park administrative appropriations and for routine CCC operations. Carpenters received about thirty percent of the total and mechanics nearly half as much. The CCC enrollees further stimulated Estes Park's economy by spending \$2,000 a month in town. [36]

For three more years the CCC were employed on additional projects, occasionally totalling thirty-one a year. The Estes Park Trail faithfully reported all accomplishments. [37] The importance of its work was evident when in 1940 a permanent camp replaced a temporary one at Grand Lake. [38] The Park Service operated this camp on a cooperative basis with the United States Reclamation Bureau. It housed approximately 150 young men, the majority of them seventeen and eighteen years old. Most of them came from Oklahoma, though there were a few from Texas and northeastern Colorado. The principal project of the camp was to clear timber from the basins of the proposed Shadow Mountain and Granby reservoirs. [39]

Besides a safety record matched by only four other camps in the nation, the Grand Lake camp was proud of its vocational training program. Classes were held four times a week to aid especially the ten per cent of the enrollees who could not read and write. Vocational training classes, coordinated with the project work, was another educational feature of the camp. Opportunities for recreation included volley ball, pool, ping pong, and softball. The enrollees also frequented the local library where books were made available for their use by the Grand Lake Woman's Club. [40]

The CCC accomplishments in the fiscal year 1940 included the near completion of the Timber Creek campground north of Grand Lake along the Trail Ridge Road, and the entire completion of two outdoor amphitheatres at Aspenglen and Glacier Basin campgrounds east of the Divide. [41] And toward the latter part of the year, the CCC program was enlivened by a new educational feature. Under the leadership of naturalist Raymond Gregg, a new course of study was drawn up to be given at the Park's two permanent camps. The course dealt with the National Park, its problems, history, and geography, and its role in the management and conservation of resources. The Park's administrators designed the course to acquaint the enrollees with the local Park Service staff and their responsibilities. [42]

Despite the accomplishments in work and the success of the educational innovations, the days of the CCC were numbered at the Park. In fiscal 1941, booming defense industries, enlistments in the armed forces, and improving labor conditions in general kept the CCC camps undermanned and retarded their volume of work. One of the Mill Creek camps was ordered abandoned on June 30, 1941 in conformity with a general order to reduce CCC camps throughout the nation. Also procurement office activities which had been handled at the Park were ordered moved to the National Park Service Region Two office in Omaha at the end of the fiscal year. [43] Still CCC enrollees were engaged on sixty-six jobs of more than minor importance during that fiscal year. The jobs included installation of an underground telephone cable through Fall River and Milner Passes and the reconstruction of

more than twenty-one miles of transmontane telephone line. [44]

The death knell of the CCC came on Tuesday, July 1, 1942 when Congress abolished the Civilian Conservation Corps by denying it funds for the next fiscal year. Congress did, however, appropriate approximately \$8,000,000 for the necessary work of demobilizing the nation's camps. [45] The order to disband affected 305 enrollees in the Park's two camps. Park spokesmen believed that the enlistment period for one-third of the young men would have terminated on July 10. [46] At any rate, the last enrollees left the second Mill Creek camp on July 29, shortly after the abandonment of the Grand Lake camp. Five months later work was started on removing the twenty-one buildings from Mill Creek. [47]

Thus the CCC era at Rocky Mountain National Park ended. It obviously had brought many changes both to the Park and to the lives of those who had worked there. One of the early enrollees later recalled:

The Green Guard of the CCC has accomplished much. It can accomplish anything human. The one thing it will not do is to retreat into the bread lines whence Roosevelt recruited it. For the Green Guard is the vanguard of the new economic army. History has taught us that first an army makes men and that then the men make the nation. The CCC camps may be broken up, their work stopped and their men disbanded—but the Green Guard will never surrender. It will fight on, with Roosevelt, for a New Deal in which every one has the chance which he has given us. The CCC has dug in. It is here, and it is here to stay. [48]

The Estes Park Trail editorialized on both the esthetic and economic importance of the CCC. As the last enrollees left on July 29, 1942, the Trail stated

Their work will live after them in the many miles of trails they built in the wilderness, for the acres of landscaping they carried on to aid Nature healing up old construction scars and to beautify surroundings about Park buildings.

.....

Needless to say, the CCC enrollees will be missed by all Estes Park, especially on evenings when they had their 'nightout' to come to the Village to see the movies or invest in soft drinks, personal supplies and novelties. And now the Villagers hope that perhaps the boys will be back again, when the war is won. There will be a hearty welcome awaiting. [49]

Time could not diminish the luster of their accomplishments. Almost thirty years after his experience in the program, Superintendent Edmund Rogers remembered that the Park had been "very, very fortunate in the CCC." [50] Perhaps the real meaning of the conservation program was best summarized in an unsigned 1934 article published in the Nature Notes from Rocky Mountain National Park. This article concluded:

The youngsters . . . came into the mountains with little or no experience. . . . They left . . . with a broad outlook and a keen insight into conservation principles. The majority of them left with a love of nature gained by intimate contact.

.....

They have acquired a wholesome love of the forests and a respect for everything which lives in them. . . . Long after the work of the CCC has been forgotten the principles which grew out of it will be in force. [51]

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Rocky Mountain

Administrative History



CHAPTER VIII:

THE COLORADO-BIG THOMPSON PROJECT

Efforts to develop Rocky Mountain National Park in order to fulfill increasingly its dual purpose of preserving its primitive state and yet making it attractive to visitors occasionally ran counter to the needs and interests of neighboring regions, if not also other government agencies. One such instance involved a project for transporting water from streams on the western slope of Colorado's mountains to the eastern slope, through the Park, thus making the Park serve a new and possibly conflicting purpose. Behind the project was the demand for additional water by eastern slope users and the Bureau of Reclamation, a powerful federal unit. The story of how the project came about and was carried through, despite objections of Park officials, is the story of the Colorado-Big Thompson enterprise, which received official approval in the latter 1930's, and is the theme of this chapter.

The need for securing transmontane water for use on Colorado's eastern slope became evident during the latter nineteenth century. The reason arose from the fact that normally, the western slope was blessed with ample snow or rainfall, while the eastern plains, where Colorado's largest cities had grown up and extensive agriculture had developed, was semi-arid at best and often drought-stricken. Moisture-laden winds heading east from the Pacific coast rise as they approach the natural barrier of the mountain. Chilled by freezing temperatures, particles of water vapor condense into rain. Once over the Continental Divide, however, the westerly winds spill into warmer zones where air-borne water reevaporizes into particles too tiny to fall. [1]

As settlement progressed on the plains, farmers and their allies began to consider the possibility of diverting water from the western slope to augment their irrigation efforts. In 1889 the Colorado State Legislature voted \$25,000 "to find a route for bringing these waters across the mountains where they can be used." [2] Nothing positive came from this survey because a feasible route could not be found without building a three-mile tunnel through the mountains.

In 1904 the Bureau of Reclamation outlined a plan by which a large storage reservoir could be built on the Colorado River about twelve miles south of Grand Lake. The water from this reservoir would then be pumped up to Grand Lake and diverted through a long tunnel under the Divide to a point on the eastern slope near Estes Park. Engineering students of Colorado Agricultural College (now Colorado State University) surveyed this contemplated project in 1905. But no further steps were taken in connection with the project until the 1930's.

Just prior to that time, the Greeley Chamber of Commerce emerged as the leading representative of eastern slope irrigation interests. The Chamber's spokesmen endeavored to have reserved for Northern Colorado a portion of the water of the North Platte River when Congress was considering the Casper-Alcova project. [3] The project was finally authorized in July 1933, but without any reservation of water for transmontane diversion to northern Colorado. Hence the Greeley spokesman and their supporters were forced to seek some other source for supplemental water. They realized that their only hope lay in tapping the water of

the Colorado River, and so they turned to the "Grand Lake Project," which would lie solely within the boundaries of Colorado. L. L. Stimson, W. R. Kelly, and Fred N. Norcross solicited the aid of Charles H. Hansen, head of the relief agencies in Weld County and editor of the Greeley Tribune to work for the project by obtaining a new survey. This group then interested the Weld County Board of County Commissioners in the project at two meetings in August of 1933. [4]

Meanwhile, O. G. Edwards, President of the Greeley Chamber of Commerce, had appointed a "Grand Lake Water Committee," with Norcross as Chairman. Others on the committee were C. G. Carlson of Eaton, Charles Swink of Milliken, Charles Hansen, Frank B. Davis, attorney William R. Kelley, Claude Carney, and Harry W. Farr, all of Greeley, and State Representative M. E. Smith of Ault, and County Attorney Thomas A. Nixon. This informal organization later became the Northern Colorado Water Users Association. Its purpose was to promote the project and to find financial backing for it.

A meeting of irrigation leaders from Weld, Larimer, and other counties was held at the Greeley Courthouse on August 17. There, Stimson and Burgis Coy, the latter a noted tunnel engineer from Fort Collins, declared that the proposed diversion tunnel was feasible. A separate meeting was later held with the Larimer County Commissioners. As a result of these meetings, the Weld County Commissioners agreed to advance \$2,000 for a survey, while Larimer County added \$700. A survey party, organized and led by Stimson, prepared to work on the Grand Lake side of the Park during the middle of the following September. They were directed to run lines for reservoirs and tunnels from Grand Lake. [5]

In seeking to carry out his duties, Stimson faced the opposition of the Park Service. Director Arno B. Cammerer rejected outright a request from Weld and Larimer county citizens for permission to make a preliminary survey in the Park for the proposed tunnel. To this decision, Secretary Harold Ickes added the full weight of the Interior Department when in a wire to Colorado Governor Edwin C. Johnson he advised that neither the survey nor the project would be allowed in the National Park. [6]

While the National Park Service recognized the need for water diversion, it believed that an alternate tunnel route could be found outside of the Park boundaries. It also believed any consideration of a tunnel in the Park had to be based on satisfactory answers to certain questions. Would not a tunnel drain the Park lakes by creating fractures in the underlying rocks? Would not such a project run counter to the basic philosophy of protecting this area from exploitation? Supporting the Park Service position were some of the older residents of Grand Lake who opposed the project for fear that the lake would be muddied by waters pumped there by the proposed storage reservoir. On the other hand, newer business interests in the area welcomed the enterprise as an additional source of revenue.

At Grand Lake, Stimson's party was blocked from entering the Park by Chief Park Ranger John McLaughlin. Still, the eight-man survey party spent four days at Grand Lake and five days near Estes Park making the survey, though at no time setting foot inside the Park boundaries. Stimson made his survey by using the uplifted head of Hallet's Peak for a point from which to work on both sides of the Divide. He claimed he had located tentatively the eastern and western portals of the tunnel by triangulation. In the same way he made a profile of the whole operation. [7]

The proponents of the tunnel next sought federal financing for their project through the Public Works Administration (P.W.A.). On Labor Day, 1933, attorneys Kelly and Nixon submitted a preliminary application from the county commissioners of Weld County to the Colorado P.W.A. This petition aroused resentment from the western slope over the distribution of public works money for water conservation projects. In late September,

delegates from around the state gathered in the Denver office of George M. Bull, engineer with the state public works advisory board, to resolve these differences. James Quigg Newton, Denver investment broker, presided. After a day of wrangling it was decided to form a united front in an effort to get Colorado's share of the \$3,300,000,000 of P.W.A. funds set aside for public works in the United States.

The meeting was characterized by Congressman John Martin of Pueblo as "historic." The Rocky Mountain News claimed that it was the first instance in the state's history when irrigation men peaceably adjusted their differences. In fact, though, western slope delegates had agreed to cooperate only after northeastern Colorado representatives had approved the construction of a dam above Grand Lake to compensate that area for the loss of water through the proposed tunnel. [8] Yet not everyone west of the Divide was satisfied with this deal. A citizens group called the Grand County Natural Resources League was formed to combat any proposal that would drain Grand Lake in the interests of a diversion tunnel. The League promised to oppose the tunnel and "any other plan to divert water from the west side to the east side of the divide." [9]

In the meantime, proponents of the project tirelessly carried on their publicity campaign. Enthusiasts explained the project to irrigation groups in Greeley, Eaton, Fort Collins, Loveland, Longmont, Fort Morgan, and Sterling. In October 1933, Charles Hansen replaced Fred Norcross as chairman of the Special Grand Lake Project Committee. Norcross in turn became secretary of the Northern Colorado Water Users organization to push the diversion scheme.

Sharing in the effort were men outstanding in irrigation development in the Poudre, Thompson, lower St. Vrain, and lower South Platte rivers. Among these supporters were J. M. Dille, a leader in irrigation in the Riverside and Bijou areas at Fort Morgan; Robert J. Wright, a manager of the North Sterling and Prewitt projects at Sterling; Ed C. Munroe, of the North Poudre; and W. E. Letford, T. M. Callahan, and Ray Lanyon, of Longmont. Also included were James Stewart of the Platte Valley, Greeley, and Loveland systems; R. C. Benson of Loveland; C. M. Rolfson of Julesburg, Ralph McMurray of Fort Collins; Charles A. Lory, President of the Agricultural College at Fort Collins; and Governor Edwin Johnson. [10]

After a year of promotional activities, that is by September, 1934, tunnel advocates had begun active negotiations with representatives of the Bureau of Reclamation. Charles Hansen and attorneys Kelley and Nixon met several times that fall with a Reclamation committee made up of Ray Walter, Chief Engineer; E. B. Debler, head of project investigations; and C. O. Harper, Assistant Chief Engineer of the Bureau. These negotiations were successful, for in the spring of 1935 the Reclamation Service agreed to make a survey for the project. A total of \$150,000 in government funds was allowed for the survey.

Not until the Reclamation Service had made application to undertake the survey did Park officials realize that the projected tunnel was to be driven through twelve miles of the most scenic part of the Park. Only then did they also learn that Grand Lake was to become a storage reservoir. Despite subsequent Park Service protests to the Secretary of the Interior, the Reclamation Service received authorization to proceed with its proposed surface and geological survey. [11]

By late February 1936 the Reclamation Service reported that its preliminary surveys indicated that the Grand Lake water diversion project was feasible from both engineering and economic considerations. [12] Shortly thereafter, the Estes Park Trail optimistically reported that construction work on the project seemed to have "slightly better than a 50-50 chance of getting started" later that year. [13] Though failing to get approval from the Budget Bureau

for \$3,000,000 to start work, the project's proponents nevertheless worked for congressional authorization of the plan. They succeeded in obtaining a rider to the Interior Department appropriation bill which would have authorized construction of a Grand Lake-Big Thompson Inter-mountain Diversion Project, with plans for an electric power plant on the eastern side. The appropriation bill passed both houses of Congress, but had to be sent to a conference committee early in March.

Alarmed conservation-minded groups and individuals promptly sent protests to Secretary Ickes. One important protest, which was published early in April, was endorsed by thirteen national civic groups. In perhaps its most telling paragraph the protest read:

We submit that this project violates the most sacred principle of National Parks, namely, freedom from commercial or economic exploitations and that if approved by Congress it will establish a precedent for the commercial invasion of other parks. We urge the American people to rally to the defense of their National Park system and demand of Congress that this project be stopped. [14]

Not only was the end-result of the tunnel building considered deplorable, but the means to achieve that end seemed Machiavellian. The conservationists' protest also declared:

We submit that the Grand Lake-Big Thompson Intermountain Diversion project included by the Senate on March 2 as a rider to the Interior Department Appropriation Bill, has not been adequately investigated, has not been approved by the Budget Bureau, and has not been considered by the appropriate committees in either house of Congress.

Moreover, the Congress by amendment to the Federal Power Act has enunciated the policy that National Parks should be exempt from power projects. The scheme . . . involves the development of power and the construction of unsightly power lines near the eastern and southern boundaries and across a scenic area which has long been contemplated for addition to the park.

In the building of the tunnel the disposition of debris will deface the landscape and leave a scar on the wilderness character of the park and its environs. We have no faith in promises to maintain the level of Grand Lake if water becomes needed for power or growing crops in dry years. [15]

Opposition also came from within the Colorado congressional delegation. The Denver Post warned of a possible "legislative civil war," led by Representative Edward T. Taylor, a champion of western slope interests. [16] Taylor became the spokesman for the House in the Senate-House Conference Committee. He objected to the bill first on the technical ground that new legislation was being proposed in an appropriation bill, and he complained that the Senate Appropriation Committee, by choosing to include the project in the Interior Department bill had ignored some fifteen smaller water projects on the western slope, which had been recommended by the State Planning Commission. [17]

Taylor also contended that the western slope would not be fully compensated for water that irrigation interests proposed to divert. For some time he had demanded that eastern slope water users support efforts for constructing on the western side of the Divide storage and power facilities equal to those for the eastern side. Incidentally, proponents of the diversion project held out for "adequate" rather than "equal" compensation. [18] Taylor also insisted that any diversion should be delayed until a survey of all water resources of the upper Colorado River Basin was completed, as provided under the Colorado River Compact. In the face of Taylor's opposition, Representative Fred Cummings of Pueblo struck back by contesting a million dollar item in the same Interior Department bill for an Indian irrigation

reservoir on the Pine River in Taylor's district. [19]

In the midst of this acrimonious debate new pressures were exerted from the White House. President Roosevelt, concerned about "superfluous" federal spending in an election year, protested the package of reclamation projects, including the Grand Lake project. [20] After considerably more debate in both houses, the tunnel project was dropped in the final passage of the Interior appropriation bill on June 19. [21]

Numerous official and unofficial visitors to the Park that summer, however, gave evidence to the fact that the diversion project was not yet dead. Arriving in July were representatives of the Wilderness Society and the state planning board. Another group included Congressman Cummings, Charles Hansen, editor of the Greeley Tribune, and Porter Preston and M. A. Bunker of the U. S. Reclamation Service. They were met in Grand Lake by Thomas J. Allen, Jr., the new superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park. They inspected the site of the eastern outlet of the proposed diversion tunnel on Wind River and continued along the route for the water which would serve an electric power plant at the junction of the South St. Vrain and Big Thompson roads. At Grand Lake they inspected the sites of two proposed dams, and saw working models of devices to control the level of Grand Lake. They also surveyed several streams, the flow of which was essential to the diversion project. Upon his return to Fort Collins, Representative Cummings predicted that the project had "an excellent chance" of passing in the next session of Congress. [22]

Cummings' optimism did little to daunt the determined Taylor. He contradicted his fellow congressman by declaring:

I can assure you . . . that the house is not likely to approve any budget estimate for the Grand Lake-Big Thompson project at the next session. With approximately 300 house members present, an amendment to the interior bill to authorize the project received only two votes, Representative James P. Buchanan of Texas, chairman of the house appropriations committee, has joined me in warning the president that the project has no chance of approval. [23]

Indeed the President found himself, in the words of one newspaper, holding a political "hot potato" with respect to the diversion plan. Whether he supported the project or not he stood to lose votes in Colorado in the November Presidential election. He was also confronted with the news of a strong upswing for the Republican Presidential nominee, Alfred Landon, in the Centennial State. [24]

In October 1936 the Rocky Mountain News predicted that "Taylor still brandishes the club with which to knock the proposed item out of the interior department budget." [25] In his role as chairman of the subcommittee on Interior Department appropriations of the House Appropriations Committee, Taylor seemed to be an insuperable obstacle to obtaining House approval of the appropriation necessary for the project.

The chances for approval of the diversion project were brightened considerably, however, by President Roosevelt's overwhelming victory in the 1936 election. He then seemed ready to throw his support behind the project. The Denver Post predicted "the president's word is likely to be law with at least a majority of the overwhelming Democratic membership of the house." [26] Encouraged, the Reclamation Service began an intensive effort to secure public support for the project through newspaper articles and speeches. [27] Reclamation Commissioner John C. Page assured audiences that the project was not only feasible but also capable of repaying its cost "with entire certainty." [28]

On June 18, 1937, Senator Alva Adams of Colorado introduced in the Senate a bill to

authorize the construction of the diversion project. The bill was approved, without opposition, first by the Senate Committee on Irrigation and Reclamation and then by the Senate itself. Adams was confident of success as the bill was sent to the House. He told the Denver Post:

I think we have made some real progress toward launching this project. Even though the house should refuse final action on it at this session we have gone far enough to give substantial assurance of favorable action at the next session. [29]

The House Reclamation Committee hearings attracted a number of witnesses for and against the bill. Included among the opposition were A. E. Demaray, assistant director of the National Park Service; Dr. H. Dorsey Magee, vice president of the Izaak Walton League; Mrs. Dora Padgett, secretary of the American Planning and Civic Association; Robert Sterling Yard of the Wilderness Society; and Colonel Joseph I. Pratt of the North Carolina Forestry Association. These critics were dismissed by the Denver Post as "eastern 'nature lovers'." [30] Demaray argued that some other tunnel route should be followed even if it proved more costly. He then offered amendments to the bill to assure Rocky Mountain National Park both water and electricity from the project without charge to the government. His amendment would also require Park Service approval of all construction, parkways and the screening of debris.

A vehement Senator Adams charged Demaray with hypocrisy. In part he said:

When we first asked Mr. Demaray for his cooperation in getting a survey of the routes suggested for diversion of water from Grand Lake across the divide, he and other officials of the park service declared they would oppose all the routes . . . Now he comes here asking why the other routes have not been surveyed. They were against the low level route south of the park because they said it would drain the lake. So partly because of their objections we concentrated on the high level route under the park.

Adams went on to assure the critics of the project that, "Not one inch of the surface of Rocky Mountain park will be touched by this project." [31]

To the people of Estes Park village the proposed reclamation project seemed to offer a way out of their depressed economic condition. The completion of the project would likely bring more people and more money to the village. By September of 1937, the Estes Park Chamber of Commerce had set machinery in motion to have the offices of the Reclamation Bureau in charge of the water diversion project located in Estes Park. [32] Glen Preston, president of the Chamber of Commerce, in a letter to the Loveland Reporter-Herald emphasized the support of his organization to the project.

At no time has the Estes Park Chamber of Commerce opposed the Big Thompson-Grand Lake diversion project. At all times have we realized its value to our valley neighbors and its potential value to us people in the mountain village. [33]

By November, much if not all of the project's opposition had been overcome. In a hearing in Estes Park on November 12, all of the Coloradans who testified approved the project. Among these were Senator Adams, Representatives Taylor, Lewis, and Cummings, President C. A. Lory of Colorado Agricultural College, Clifford H. Stone of the Colorado water conservation board, and L. H. Kittell, Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce; Kittell claimed to represent "every organized group in Estes Park." Telegrams approving the project were read from President A. Lincoln Fellows of the Colorado Forestry Association, the Colorado State Planning Commission, and the State Game and Fish Commission. Any criticism from conservationists was further diluted by a statement prepared by Arno B. Cammerer, which

recognized the Reclamation Service's right to flowage waters and outlined a program to preserve the Park's beauty. [34]

During December, the House approved the Senate bill and President Roosevelt signed it on December 26. According to new Park superintendent David Canfield, Coloradans viewed the approval "with mingled feelings." Many remained skeptical even though Senator Alva Adams claimed that the project ranked in importance with the discovery of gold in the state and the construction of the first railroad. Canfield thought the majority of local people believed that the water would be worth any disfigurement of scenery. [35]

After the project was authorized, Congress allotted it an additional \$2,000,000, making a total of \$4,150,000 available for work the first year. Contracts were soon let by the Bureau of Reclamation for the construction of a Green Mountain Dam and reservoir on the Blue River, as well as approach roads to the east and west portals of the tunnel. In addition, construction work began on the building of headquarters, residential, and utility areas near Estes Park and Grand Lake villages. The architecture of these sites, though functional, resembled according to one observer, "a concentration camp." [36] Park Superintendent Canfield reported "intensive activity" on the whole project by May 1939. One of the most difficult features lay in boring the tunnel for carrying water from Grand Lake to a projected dam on the edge of Estes Park village.

Although work was seriously curtailed by World War II, water was delivered through the Alva Adams Tunnel on June 23, 1947. All authorized features of the project were completed in 1954. To avoid spoiling the beauty of Grand Lake by changing its level, the Bureau of Reclamation built Shadow Mountain Lake to the southwest on the same level as Grand Lake and connected to it. The water pumped from the Granby Reservoir now flows through Shadow Mountain Lake to Grand Lake and is then diverted by the Adams Tunnel through the mountains to Lake Estes near the Village.

The entire project was an impressive engineering feat. When the two tunnel crews finally joined the thirteen and one tenth mile Adams Tunnel, they found the horizontal alignment off by seven-sixteenths of an inch. The total error could have been covered by a twenty-five-cent piece. [37]

Has the project been a success? Facts seem to prove that it has been for eastern slope water users. In the severely dry year of 1954 the Grand Lake-Big Thompson project was credited with supplying 300,332 acre-feet of supplemental water and thereby being responsible for over half of the \$41 million worth of crops grown that year.

Of greater importance for a study of the administration of the Park is the question of the effect of the project on efforts to preserve intact the natural features of the Park, in accordance with one of the major purposes for its creation. There is no doubt that Park Service officials opposed the proposal for constructing a water diversion tunnel within the Park's boundaries, both because they desired to avoid damage to the primitive environment and because they believed that an alternative route could be found. But they were overruled. Their concerns, however, caused the Reclamation Service to exercise great care in planning for and carrying out construction work, so that nature's setting was disturbed as little as possible and that necessary auxiliary features, such as Granby Reservoir and Lake Estes, were placed outside the Park's boundaries. Thus the practical needs of nearby water users resulted in only minor modifications of the Park's primitive character.

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Rocky Mountain

Administrative History



CHAPTER IX:

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT ^[1]

The management and conservation of wildlife in Rocky Mountain National Park have posed special problems for its officials ever since the Park's inception. In part, the problems arose from the dual objectives that were established for wildlife management in national parks. According to the Act of August 25, 1916, which created the National Park Service, the agency was instructed to

conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and wildlife therein, and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. ^[2]

During the ensuing years, Park officials worked out a reasonable balance between conserving wildlife and providing for its enjoyment. Neil Guse, Wildlife Biologist for Rocky Mountain National Park, later explained the philosophy of wildlife management in the following terms:

The application of wildlife management in a National Park today is governed not by the principle, as is the goal of certain other land use agencies both Federal and State, of providing an optimum sustained production crop of wildlife for harvest. It is more nearly, the attempt to arrive at a natural, harmonious union or balance between the present wildlife population and their environment which was disrupted by the coming and subsequent actions of the white man. This is our immediate objective, particularly of the elk and deer numbers, and to a lesser degree, the bighorn sheep, in Rocky Mountain National Park. ^[3]

Initially, the policy of Park administrators aimed at insuring an abundant supply of animals to complete the picture of a wholly natural, wilderness condition. Early administrators apparently did not anticipate the day when herds of elk and deer would exceed their available forage supply. Later Park officials had to face this reality. These officials had to deal with a situation for which there seemed to be no satisfactory solution. To understand and evaluate their responses, it is necessary first to review conditions during the period before the Park was established.

In the middle and late nineteenth century big game was plentiful in the area now occupied by Rocky Mountain National Park. Milton Estes, son of the founder of Estes Park, later recalled that during the latter 19th century

the Park was a paradise for the hunters. . . . There was no end to the game, for great bands of elk, big flocks of mountain sheep and deer were everywhere . . . so plentiful that we could not suffer for anything to eat or to wear. . . . We never killed any of the stock for food, for there was plenty of wild game. ^[4]

Range conditions were quite adequate to support not only wild game but also the domestic stock of the Park's pioneers. Early residents of the area reported that there were few times when it was necessary to provide special feed for cattle ranging in the vicinity.

Ironically, the accessibility of the wild game contributed to their near extinction. Much game was killed to support the rapidly growing populations of the valley towns and gold camps. Pioneer accounts indicate that, prior to 1900, elk and deer carcasses were taken from the Estes Park area by the wagon load. So extensive was the slaughter that from 1900 to 1910 wild game became scarce. Milton Estes, returning to his former homeland after an absence of thirty years, reported seeing "The same old mountains, hills, valleys and streams, but no wild game." [5]

While the amount of all wild game had diminished, the number of deer had not suffered as greatly as the elk. Deer were less gregarious and smaller, therefore less productive of marketable meat. Moreover, the deer made a rapid recovery after the creation of the Rocky Mountain National Park in 1915. From an estimated population of 600 in 1915, the herd was reported to have risen to approximately 4,000 in 1923.

On the other hand, even before 1915 dramatic steps were necessary to save the vanishing elk herds. Twenty elk were reintroduced into Roosevelt National Forest from Yellowstone National Park in 1912. When this planting proved unsuccessful, further shipments were tried. In 1913, twenty-five elk were unloaded from a railroad car at Lyons, Colorado, and taken by truck to the Elkhorn Corral at Estes Park. Only twelve head survived the trip. These were then driven to Horseshoe Park and freed. Again in 1914, twenty-two more elk were released in the Park area. The Forest Service paid for the shipment of these elk from the Yellowstone Park region to the railway terminals, and popular subscription made possible the rest of the trip. In 1915, there were an estimated thirty head of elk within the Park's boundaries. [6]

These elk, along with other big game, thrived under the protection of the Park. Not only did officials prohibit public hunting in the Park, but in 1917 they also began to eliminate predatory animals. Superintendent L. C. Way reported in 1913 that wild game were flourishing without exception. Elk were "in the best condition and increasing rapidly." Mountain sheep were "so numerous that I feel like saying that we have the largest band in the United States." Deer were more plentiful in the Park than any other animal." [7]

Way took an active, almost paternalistic, interest in the welfare of the game. Commenting on the hunting of deer outside the Park, he worried that:

much of our game strays outside the Park boundaries, and if not killed will again learn to fear human beings, and we will lose the confidence of the wild creatures that we have gained within the past few years. [8]

Residents of the area shared his concern and appreciation of the game. In 1918, he reported:

The local people are beginning to realize the value of game, and I look forward to their hearty cooperation in the preservation of the . . . wild life. . . . The increase in the numbers of game in the past two years is almost unbelievable to the local people, as well as a source of great satisfaction to them. [9]

The creation of the Colorado State Game Refuge in 1919 further stimulated the increase of wild game in the National Park. The Refuge embraced a section of the Colorado National Forest, which joined that part of the National Park lying east of the Continental Divide. Later in 1927, the boundaries of the Refuge were made contiguous with the entire eastern boundary of the Park, thereby adding additional protection and winter range. Though the Game Refuge was opened to hunting in 1939, it had done much to provide the time necessary for the recovery and increase of the Park's wild game. [10]

As added insurance that the desirable species of wild game would multiply, the first full-scale

predatory animal control program was started in 1922. Classified as "predatory" animals were mountain lion, bobcat, wolf, fox, lynx, and the most numerous of the lot, the coyote. The program was launched early in January, when Park Superintendent Roger W. Toll, Predatory Animal Inspector Stanley P. Young of the U. S. Biological Survey, and his associate, John W. Crook, met with the newly formed Estes Park Fish and Game Commission. This meeting led to a decision to "open war" on coyotes and mountain lions with the idea of "practically cleaning out those pests from this district." Both poisoned bait and trained dogs would be used. [11]

The Estes Park Trail left no doubt that the campaign was supposed to be merciless and decisive. With a hint of sadism it reported:

Dainty morsels of horseflesh will be served Messrs. Coyote and Lion a la Grubb fresh from Frank's pastures and the local Newhouse wizards Hayden and 'Bobcat' Becker will give Trapper Crook all the necessary pointers. . . . Mr. Crook has a pack of nine trained dogs and we anticipate there will be fur flying ere long. [12]

Young and Crook instructed the Park rangers in the application of poisoned bait and other methods of predator control. During their two week visit in the Park they helped provide for the killing of four lions, two coyotes, and one bobcat. Thereafter, most of the actual trapping, poisoning and shooting was performed by the rangers, although a limited number of permits were issued to hunters to trap predatory animals.

Rangers were first allowed to retain part of the funds, generally twenty-five per cent, derived from the sale of pelts taken in the control programs. This was offered as compensation for expenses involved in poison, traps, feed for horses and ammunition, all of which came out of the ranger's salary, then about \$900 per year. This "kickback" induced rangers to become enthusiastic about eliminating the predators. Later, the government sold the pelts through public auction and the rangers were reimbursed only for expenses. [13]

Park Superintendent Toll stood consistently behind the predator control program. Initially, he had declared that "there are too many predatory animals in the Park for the good of the game." [14] In November 1924, as the control program for the year neared a close, he wrote:

It is my opinion that predatory animal control should be continued in this park. I would consider it advisable to reduce the number of mountain lion, coyotes and bobcats to the lowest practicable numbers. [15]

Rocky Mountain National Park was not alone in this particular game management practice. Yellowstone National Park was reported to have killed more predatory animals than any other park. Intensive predatory animal control continued at Rocky Mountain until 1926, when the Park officials began to realize that the campaign against predators was essentially contrary to national park philosophy. [16]

There is little doubt that this control program stimulated the growth of deer and elk herds—so much so that their very numbers proved a threat to their continued vitality. In September 1930 the Superintendent's report showed for the first time a concern about the carrying capacity of the range. Due to abundant summer forage, the Park's wild game appeared to be in good condition. Yet superintendent Edmund Rogers warned:

Some apprehension is felt for the herd this winter, since the lower altitudes, inside and outside the park, are well grazed by domestic stock during the summer months. It is high time that some provision were made for winter feeding, else the herd will become a nuisance to nearby ranchers. [17]

With the coming of colder weather, Rogers' fears increased. "It is a source of wonder," he maintained,

how deer and elk can remain in good shape on range that has been already well grazed off by livestock during the summer months. However, they seem to be doing very well so far, but the range must now be near its maximum capacity. [18]

This limit was soon reached and even exceeded, yet neither the townspeople nor the Park officials wanted the herds artificially reduced. Consequently, hungry elk increasingly broke down fences and destroyed haystacks along the North Fork of the Big Thompson River, and 3,600 deer "munched away" on browse plants already thinned by a six-year drought.

A hostile public reaction met any plan that involved harming the big game. A case in point occurred in November of 1931 when the State of Colorado considered opening Larimer County—including all of the Park's winter range—to elk hunters for a special five-day hunt. This threat to the Park's elk was met with a broadside of angry recrimination. Superintendent Rogers predicted that "the whole herd could be exterminated" if driven to lower elevations by early snows. [19] The Estes Park Chamber of Commerce, American Legion, Rotary Club, and Game and Fish Association joined in the protest. Rogers noted with satisfaction that "The Village of Estes Park and all its organizations were one hundred per cent opposed to any open season in this section." [20] Confronted with this barrage, the state redesigned the hunting area to protect the winter range from the hunters. Still necessary was some way of protecting the winter range from the elk and deer.

The summer range was ample enough to satisfy many times over the number of elk and deer in the Park. The winter range, however, was made up largely of the lowland meadows, which consisted of patented land subject to heavy grazing by horses and cattle. The scarcity of food was indicated by the number of aspen trees stripped of bark. Some conservationists regarded the elk situation as "precarious." [21] Deer, on the other hand, fared much better than elk. They fed mostly on browse plants and therefore were not in direct competition with livestock.

In 1932, the national government eased the problem somewhat when it purchased for the Park extensive amounts of private land in the Beaver Meadows, Mill Creek, and Horseshoe Park areas. By 1933, livestock had been prohibited from all winter range within the Park, except in Moraine Park. The effect of the land purchases was, according to Rogers, "remarkable." [22] Seemingly the winter range problem had been reduced in seriousness, if not solved. Yet, despite the increased range, "barking" of the aspen continued. In previous years it had been assumed that this gnawing had been due to a lack of forage. This continuing damage to the aspen prompted the initiation of detailed studies by employees and wildlife technicians assigned to the newly created Civilian Conservation Corps. [23]

During 1933 and 1934, twelve small enclosures or "check plots" were set up on the winter range where animal concentrations were the heaviest. These enclosures were twenty feet square and were built with steel posts, each two of which were connected by two strands of woven wire. These plots were used in studying the effect of protection upon the vegetation. Also, unfenced plots were used to determine the effects of browsing on different shrubs.

These investigations showed that grass growth in the area was better than at any time during the previous four years. The status of browse plants, however, showed no improvement, largely because of over-grazing before the lands were acquired by the Park Service. Some method to control the browsing by deer constituted the most difficult problem on the winter range. The aspen, bitter brush, willows, and sage brush were being heavily drawn on as a

source of food. Even young pines and firs, species not ordinarily eaten by deer and elk, showed signs of browsing. [24]

The seriousness of the range condition was reflected in Park wildlife reports for 1933 and 1934—reports which continually hinted at imminent catastrophe. Some typical comments were: "the range is being more heavily used than ever"; "some control measures may be necessary"; "the winter range is making a desperate effort to come back." Other reports concluded: "The range is not in good condition and is not sufficient for our present population"; "problem is in the waking here and must be closely watched"; "vegetation is steadily decreasing." [25]

To complicate the problem further, the natural balance between predators and the wildlife was decidedly out of kilter. The merciless predator control campaign of the 1920's had diminished a natural check on the increase of other forms of wildlife. In the mid-1930's some officials advocated outright protection for the predators. They believed that control of the amount of other forms of wildlife by predators was preferable to indiscriminate shooting because the lion and coyote killed already weakened and sickened animals, whereas hunters aimed for the best specimens.

One of the most emphatic voices on behalf of the coyote belonged to Dorr Yeager, Rocky Mountain National Park Chief Naturalist. He concluded:

The fact that the deer are on the increase and that we have more than the range can accommodate seems . . . the best argument for the continued welfare of the coyotes. Leave the two species alone and they will strike a balance. If not then control measures will be adopted. At the present time, however, the deer and not the coyotes need control. [26]

The problem and its alternative solutions could not have been better stated. There was apparently not enough winter range to sustain the Park's deer and elk herds. Little if any prospect of additional land purchases by the government seemed likely in the foreseeable future, and the official efforts to reduce predators had left too few to re-establish a natural and suitable wildlife balance. Superintendent Rogers presented his understanding of the situation in the 1935 Annual Report, when he wrote:

It would appear that the most satisfactory way out of the present unstable situation would be to artificially reduce the number of elk and deer to the carrying capacity for the available range. Artificial control of these two species seems to be necessary within the next several years. [27]

While Park officials were finally facing up to the deterioration of the range, they were perplexed by another wildlife problem. The number of bighorn sheep was diminishing and no one seemed to know why. So beginning in 1935, Rocky Mountain became one of four national parks selected for the study of the habits of the bighorn in order to determine the reasons for the decline. Older residents had reported that previously there had been several thousand bighorn sheep within the Park's present boundaries. About 1875, bands of 100 or more were counted in Moraine Park and Horseshoe Park, while others were spotted at Mary's Lake. [28]

Study revealed that the coming of white settlers caused the initial decline in bighorn numbers due to extensive hunting for market and sport. Whole flocks were exterminated at Sheep Rock near Mary's Lake. Restriction of the lower winter range following the introduction of domestic stock, and the infection of scabies was another factor contributing to the initial decline. Pioneers reported that sheep died by the hundreds between 1878 and 1906. But from 1909 to 1921, the bands increased in numbers and in health. Bighorns were plentiful again in

places from which they had been nearly extirpated. This increase was believed to be due primarily to the removal of elk as a competitive factor through excessive hunting. Moreover, the sheep had become tame. In 1918, Superintendent Way counted forty-one mountain sheep during a one hour's drive along the High Drive Road. Way also reported that often the sheep ate with his horses no more than 100 feet from his house. [29]

These favorable conditions did not last long, for by 1920 the elk had recovered sufficiently to compete again with the bighorns for the available range. This competition factor led to another period of decline in bighorn numbers. Another reason for the reduced numbers was the apparent deficiency of mineral salts in the granite soils of the range. The loss of lower ranges to the elk and deer where mineral salts were once obtained was believed to account for the reduced stamina of the sheep and the increased susceptibility to internal parasites. Artificial salting had been tried, but with inconclusive results during the early years of the Park.

Additional factors which affected the sheep adversely were the lungworm, coccidia and other parasites discovered in autopsies of dead sheep found in the Park. Several sheep showed symptoms of pneumonic infection during 1939 and 1940. No valid records exist of scabies among the Park's bighorn between 1906 and 1940, but in 1943, a ewe was found heavily infested with scab mites at Sheep Lake. Recent studies have indicated a high mortality among new-born lambs, a factor which has tended to keep the herd size stable. [30]

The major wildlife problem in the Park, of course, concerned elk and deer. In December of 1937, a wildlife census was taken by Merlin Potts (Senior Foreman Naturalist of the Emergency Conservation Work), Ranger Harold Ratliff, and Park Naturalist Howard Gregg. The census resulted in an actual count of 648 deer and 263 elk, although later estimated figures for the winter range showed 810 deer and 329 elk. Even the estimates were considered to be on the conservative side. The condition of the game at that time appeared, in general, to be "fair to good." The problem of an adequate winter range seemed "slightly less acute" than formerly. Still Potts maintained that a reduction in deer numbers would soon be necessary if the range condition and upward population trend continued. [31]

For a brief period, the trend was reversed. In the spring of 1939, the deer count showed a slight decrease from the previous year. This decline was attributed to drastic winter starvation and an increase in coyotes. Nevertheless, the month's use of the winter range was bringing over-browsed conditions on all of the lower feeding grounds. And the number of elk was rising. For instance, in 1940, the numbers in the elk herd increased twenty-five per cent over that of 1939, and thus compounded the deer problem. Harold Ratcliffe reported:

The annual increase of the elk herds which do not migrate beyond the eastern boundary of the park is a factor which has reached a climax. . . . They can no longer sustain themselves in such numbers without irreparable damage to the range. [32]

A utilization of forty to fifty per cent of the annual forage growth was considered the maximum allowable for the good of the species involved. Much of the range, however, was being utilized to the extent of seventy-five to ninety percent of the new growth annually. Construction of the Colorado-Big Thompson diversion project contributed to the deterioration of the winter range, by blocking the normal migration routes of the deer and elk. Ratcliffe warned:

This heavy use cannot be allowed to continue if the range is to be saved and restored to a carrying capacity of anything like its original status. [33]

To help relieve this situation, adjustments were made in the winter elk hunting season. The regular winter hunt was poorly timed, coming before the big game had wandered outside the protection of the Park boundaries. A special season was therefore arranged by the State Game and Fish Department in cooperation with Park officials to run from November 28 to December, 1941. Licenses were limited to 400 hunters, representing the amount of herd reduction desired. The hunting area extended from the Buckhorn Ranch north of the Park, and followed the eastern boundaries of Roosevelt National Forest south to the South St. Vrain and Middle St. Vrain creeks below the southern boundary of the Park. Excluded was a section surrounding Estes Park village and the Twin Sisters area of the Park. During the ten day special session only ninety-seven elk were killed, far fewer than expected and far fewer than necessary. [34]

Faced with a worsening wildlife problem, Park officials fortunately received special aid. In 1941-1942, a representative of the Pittman-Robertson Federal Aid to Wildlife Research group conducted an elk-range-and-food study in the Park. The Pittman-Robertson Act for 1938, made such wildlife surveys possible annually with the aid of federal funds. Counting crews began work in the fall of 1941 to determine the sex-age ratio of the elk. This count indicated the size and nature of the average "family group" in deer and elk herds. After this ratio was determined, a complete census was undertaken by employing both airplane and ground methods as quickly as possible, counting in an area where natural barriers prevented the drift of herds, thus eliminating duplications. In rugged regions, too vast and thickly timbered for complete coverage, a count was made in sample areas of known square mileage, and an average obtained for the entire area. The last phase of the count involved tallying the winter death loss. This type of census was estimated to be ninety-seven percent correct. [35]

The conclusions of this careful study probably surprised some local wildlife observers. The study reported

an elk herd of approximately 1400 head may be carried in the Park, east of the Continental Divide, without over-populating the range. . . . if range damage, particularly on browse species is occurring in the Park at the present time by overpopulation of a game species, it appears to be an oversupply of deer rather than elk. [36]

Park Naturalist David Condon weighed this report with the backlog of earlier wildlife studies. He concluded that artificial reduction of both elk and deer herds was still necessary. In his report he advised

the elk and deer herds in Rocky Mountain National Park be reduced to and maintained at the optimum numbers for the available range. . . . To attain this objective, 300 elk and 200 deer should be removed. . . . [37]

This report was submitted to the Director's office where it was approved in December of 1943. After Assistant Secretary of the Interior Chapman added his approval in January 1944, Park officials were authorized to proceed with the reduction program.

The Park officials tried to prepare the local townspeople for the reduction program through such publicity releases as the following which appeared in the Estes Park Trail:

One of the greatest values that can probably be attained through controlling the number of animals which might be found in any given area is that by so doing we provide an environment in which the animal can maintain a fine state of physical health and . . . will provide a picture of vitality and vigor in a delightful background of healthy plant life. The beauty of wildlife is not in numbers but in the setting in which the animal is found and the beauty of the individual

specimen itself. [38]

Negative reactions to the planned reduction did not appear in either the major Denver dailies or the Estes Park Trail. Park officials learned, however, that there "were a few local people who apparently mumbled in their beards in a sour grapes manner. . . ." [39]

During a two-month period, 300 elk and slightly more than 100 deer were killed by Park rangers. In this endeavor, the Park secured the reluctant cooperation of the Colorado Game and Fish Department. This department was basically opposed to direct control of the elk and deer populations in the Park, other than by public hunting. Because of the apparent seriousness of the wildlife conditions, Game and Fish officials agreed, in October 1944, to accept and dispose of all elk and deer killed in control operations within the Park. In return for the carcasses, they agreed to supply ammunition, trucks, horses, and feed, when necessary, and assist in research.

Russell Grater, who became Park Naturalist in the summer of 1944, reported on the success of the reduction program. In so doing he added an interesting interpretation of the role of in wildlife management.

From the standpoint of elk, it is now apparent that no serious problem has existed in the past at Rocky Mountain nor had one reached a really serious point at the time of the reduction program. This conclusion is reached only after noting the over-all excellent condition of the herd and checking the available food supply. . . . Thus, the present reduction program served to avert a range crisis rather than correct one already in existence. [40]

Later he spoke out increasingly against control programs, by declaring:

Out of all these studies has come one definite conclusion. It seems to me to be vital that our philosophy on wildlife management studies be based on averting a problem before it arises rather than controlling the problem after it is with us. It seems to me a basic fallacy to assume we must always have control. [41]

39. Guse, "Administrative History of an Elk Herd," p. 37. One of the critics of the reduction program was R. T. "Dixie" MacCracken, the first ranger in Rocky Mountain National Park. MacCracken and Jack Moomaw, another old ranger, examined some elk carcasses and found them to have good hearts, lungs, and livers. According to MacCracken, "Some guys in Omaha didn't know what they were talking about." Author's interview with R. T. "Dixie" MacCracken, July 1, 1964.

In January 1946, the Director's office cautioned Park officials against a regular reduction program. Assistant Director Hillary A. Tolson stated:

As you are well aware, this office has a strong dislike for 'reduction programs' either inside or adjacent to the National Parks. . . . We would not urge that deer and elk be reduced except for good cause. [42]

Range studies following the first reduction program were discouraging. They indicated that serious damage to many browse plants was continuing and that native grasses were also being depleted. By 1948, Park observers noted that some plant species, such as aspen and willow, were actually disappearing from areas where growth should have been luxuriant. The "problem range" of the Park lay east of the Continental Divide. The animals on the west side were driven by weather into legal hunting territories and were thereby controlled.

The annual elk and deer census of that fall showed 1,267 mule deer and 932 elk in the Park

area. Indeed, the population trend of elk and deer seemed destined to climb. If it did, it would result in heavier abuse of the already weakened plant growth and the serious weakening and possible starvation of the animals themselves. Consequently, a second reduction program was proposed for the following winter. In an effort to placate sportsmen, final approval for the reduction was delayed until the results of the regular hunting season were tabulated. [43] When the public harvest of elk and deer proved to be mediocre, officials decided to hold a control program in the Park between November 28, 1949 and February 1, 1950.

To some insufficient critics, this decision was abrupt and accompanied by publicity. The Estes Park Trail editorialized:

Out here, we think quite a bit of our deer and elk—both in and out of the cold storage locker. We realize that they are a tremendous asset as a tourist attraction.

We likewise realize that game management is about the same as wise domestic animal management; when the numbers are too great for the forage and range, then some of them must be sent to market.

Admitting all these factors, we still believe that Washington officials . . . for better public relations—should have preceded this reduction program with an educational program. Folks around here don't mind a necessary reduction program, but they want to have the facts and know that it's necessary. [44]

This second extensive control program resulted in the removal of an additional 340 elk and 100 deer from the winter range. The reduction brought the number of elk in the Park down to about 500, the estimated carrying capacity of the winter range. Additional help in the control of excess deer came from an especially heavy public harvest of animals outside the eastern boundary of the Park, for public hunters killed 1,406 deer during this same season.

Park Superintendent David Canfield remembered that the reduction program caused "a pretty rough time." Game was still held to be "sacrosanct" by many of the local people. One man wrote Canfield protesting the reduction and stating that one of the great joys of his life was to see the elk roaming the Park. Now he would never again hear their "glorious burgling" [sic]. [45] Nevertheless, the idea of an annual reduction program seemed desirable to Park officials. To Chief Ranger Lynn Coffin, annual control was, in fact, imperative. In his report on the reduction, he declared:

Had the control program been continued on an annual pruning basis since the winter of 1944-45, the Park would not have been faced with the problem which confronted it in 1949. [46]

Coffin proposed an annual elk reduction program equal to the annual increase of the herds, which meant about seventeen percent of the herds' numbers. With some minor changes, his plan was approved on August 22, 1950. Park officials believed that 500 elk and 800 deer could subsist on the critical winter range.

The Estes Park Trail gave its grudging support to the annual reduction program. It noted that hunting was becoming more difficult as areas bordering the Park became more inhabited. It admitted that transplanting elk to already well-stocked forest areas was both costly and unwise. Artificial reduction, therefore, seemed to be the "only out." The Trail concluded:

It would seem that our deer and elk will be 'mostly for show' from here on . . . and that they will have to be kept to certain numbers by artificial means. . . . None of us likes to think of an annual control program, but as we crowd around in our little world we seem to do many things that we do not really wish to do.

[47]

Park officials were loath to admit, at least publicly, that they were solely committed to control by shooting. In November 1951, Superintendent Canfield announced that more than 100 deer would be live-trapped within the Park that winter and transplanted east to the Roosevelt National Forest. To facilitate this exercise, corral posts were erected just west of Estes Park village on Buck Creek. Netting ten feet high was stretched on the posts. A chute was then placed on one side of the enclosure.

The purpose of the control program was not only to prevent damage to the range but also to break up and scatter the sedentary herds within the Park so they would migrate and become fair game for the public hunters. A Park ranger reportedly told the Trail that it was hoped the experiment in live trapping would "demonstrate the desirability of this method of control." [48] Between 1950 and 1953 a total of sixty-two deer was trapped and transplanted to other locations, generally from along the South St. Vrain highway near Allenspark.

Though more humane than reduction by shooting, the trap method did not replace the gun as the major tool in game management. From 1950 through 1960, 225 deer were killed by Park rangers. Annual public hunting outside the Park boundaries also helped relieve the pressure on the winter range. The peak years for public hunting were 1959, when 1,370 deer were killed, and 1961, when hunters took 1,408.

Meanwhile the annual reduction campaign aimed at the Park's elk herds was having some effect. From 1950 to 1960, 505 elk were destroyed in connection with the wildlife management program. The greatest number, eighty-nine, was killed in the 1951-1952 season; the least, sixteen, in the 1957-1958 season. Of the total, 212 were males, 293 females. The age classes represented were: seventy-two calves; forty-six yearlings; 230 two-to-five years old; and 157 five years and older.

By 1960 there were still over 600 elk observed on the winter range. It was evident that the annual reduction program was insufficient to allow full and necessary range recovery. So a quota of 200 elk was set for elimination in order to bring the number on the winter range down to 400. However, after 140 animals had been removed, a halt was ordered, pending the completion of studies for a new long range management program. [49]

While these studies were being conducted, Park officials co-operated with the state in consistently recommending and encouraging more liberal hunting in areas adjacent to the Park. The Park administration had also recommended extended hunting seasons, additional open areas, post seasons, and licenses permitting the killing of male or female elk. Some of these recommendations bore fruit, as will be noted below. But the problem persisted east of the Divide. The problem herd wintered on the slopes of Mt. Ypsilon on the north to Alberta Falls on the south, and from Fern Lake on the west to the Park boundary on the east. To survive during the winter an elk required about sixteen pounds of food daily. This meant that the eastern slope herd of 510 animals consumed eight tons of grass, willows, and aspen each day. [50]

In October of 1962, Colorado Game and Fish Department Director Harry Woodward called on Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall to allow a pilot program of controlled hunting in the Park, itself. [51] When rebuffed, Woodward took a more dramatic step. In 1963, he announced a special pre-season hunt for elk in the region east and north of the National Park. The hunt extended from January 26 through February 17 and was opened to resident and non-resident hunters alike, with a bag limit of one elk of either sex. Many land owners opened their land for the hunt. Through the efforts of the Colorado Cattlemen's Association and the Game and Fish Department, ranches were tied into a network of headquarters. Concentrations

of elk were reported to all cooperating ranch owners. In this way, hunters were kept informed of the location of the elk. [52]

Officials of the National Park said they "welcomed" the special hunt. Chief Ranger Stanley Spurgeon and his men stood ready to cooperate with hunters who shot elk outside the Park and tracked their prey to the Park boundaries. The Estes Park Trail was told that if the kill was sufficient, other methods for keeping the herd "in balance" with the range would not be necessary. One Park spokesman added, "We hope that hunters are able to get them." [53] The hunt was generally successful, with over 400 kills reported. A veritable army of 4,933 hunters had descended on the area. Local residents, many of whom were successful in "getting an elk," voiced favorable comments on the hunt.

Perhaps of more lasting value has been the meaningful cooperation exercised among the Forest Service, the Game and Fish Department, and the Park Service in the tagging and transplanting of wildlife. On December 18, 1962, a "Memorandum of Understanding Covering the Rocky Mountain Cooperative Elk Studies" was signed by all participating agencies. [54] According to this "Memorandum," it was agreed to mark and release the first eighty elk trapped and then transplant a minimum of twenty animals near Craig, Colorado. Through this program the migration habits of the elk could better be studied to the end that public hunting seasons and hunting areas could be more intelligently planned.

On February 26, 1964, for the first time in Park history, elk were transplanted from Rocky Mountain National Park. Fifteen of them were transferred to Danforth Hills, southwest of Craig, Colorado, through the cooperation of the Park Service, the Colorado Game and Fish Department and the Craig Jaycees. A Park Service official claimed that transplanting was "the best possible solution to the surplus elk problem. It will probably eliminate the necessity for future direct control." [55]

According to Park Superintendent Allyn Hanks, "the highlight of two years of elk research" was a combined meeting of the Advisory Council and Technical Committee of the Rocky Mountain Cooperative Elk Studies, held at Park headquarters on March 20, 1964. In attendance were representatives of the Colorado Game and Fish Department, Roosevelt National Forest, and Rocky Mountain National Park. Also present was Neil J. Reid of the Midwest Regional Office of the Park Service. The group determined to continue the trapping and marking program and to extend aerial coverage west of the Park. These recommendations were made in an effort to determine the extent of the elk population summering in the area and the possibilities of harvesting an appropriate number of them. [56]

The elk and deer problem in Rocky Mountain National Park was not solved by 1965. Neither was there a solution for the continuing demise of the bighorn sheep. Perhaps the wildlife in the Park, as well as in other national parks, will remain in but an imperfect balance with the available range. As long as wildlife engineers are saddled with the dual imperative "to conserve the . . . wildlife . . . and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations," only an imperfect solution can be achieved. In all probability the day has not passed when the ranger must once again "wet his sight" and bring down the elk and deer in Rocky Mountain National Park.

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Rocky Mountain

Administrative History



CHAPTER X: THE NATURALISTS

The National Park Service has striven through specially trained naturalists to interpret outstanding aspects of the nation's landscape and wildlife for the pleasure and edification of the millions who have visited the national parks. To tell his park's story, a park naturalist, aided by his staff and seasonal ranger-naturalists, has carried out a varied program of talks, nature walks, and field trips. As a result, travelers have been shown flora and fauna thriving in a protected habitat. Moreover, the naturalist program has been aimed at transcending what the eye can perceive, so that hopefully, visitors have been led to an understanding of the forces underlying life. The late Merlin K. Potts, former Chief Park Naturalist at Rocky Mountain National Park, maintained that the interpretive program was "the most important phase of service to the Park visitor by the Park Service." [1]

The roots of the sophisticated, professional naturalist service lay deep in the history of Rocky Mountain National Park. In fact, it can be said that a naturalist program existed before the Park's boundaries were drawn. Enos Mills, a disciple of John Muir, used to entertain guests at his rustic Longs Peak Inn with stories and explanations about the animals and flowers of the area. He often took his friends on hikes into the back country and up mountain trails. Whether sitting on rocks at timberline or in the comfort of the Inn, his guests listened enthusiastically to his tales—tales liberally sprinkled with the spice of his imagination. Most important, he made nature study interesting and meaningful to many who might have otherwise remained totally ignorant of nature's mysteries.

In the years immediately following the creation of the Park, there was no officially sponsored naturalist service for visitors. It was not until 1917 that a "new attraction" was introduced in the form of "Nature Guide" tours. These tours were conducted by young ladies versed in "flowers, birds, animals and trees." The guides were apparently reasonably well qualified, since they were required to pass an examination to prove their qualifications as "nature teachers and in first aid work and knowledge of the country." Being of the so-called weaker sex, their excursions were limited to day trips below timberline, unless accompanied by a "first-class" male guide. Superintendent Way reported that the girls were successful and popular and they filled "a long felt want." [2] There is no record, however, that they ever worked a second year as naturalists in Rocky Mountain National Park.

Nevertheless an attempt was made to continue an interpretive program. The Park administration prepared, printed and distributed to visitors in 1918 a list of the Park's birds and plants to help satisfy "the great interest taken in nature study by adults and children." [3] The "demand for authentic information on natural science" was so great the following year that the list was enlarged. Much of the data was gathered by Park Ranger Dean Babcock.

In part, the demand grew as the number of travelers increased and the Park officials provided camping facilities. The first campground in Rocky Mountain National Park was established in 1918, at Glacier Basin on the Bear Lake Road. Enough ground was cleared for 100 camps, for which some cement campfire stoves were installed, along with garbage pits and sanitary

comfort stations. As many as 83 camp groups were counted there in one day during the first summer season. The next year the use of this free public campground increased by 100 percent. "The need is great for additional improved camping grounds," Way reported,

and I trust that sufficient funds will be available next year to install them. Cross-country travel by auto is increasing by leaps and bounds, and we should be prepared to supply the needs of the people. [4]

The Park's travel statistics reflected the growing popularity of cross-country motoring. Visitors to the Park increased by 48 percent in 1920, with 132,052 people passing the checking stations. What little naturalist service there was by this time came from private guides working for nearby resorts. The Park Service provided nothing but the view. [5] Nevertheless, by 1921 the Park administration began the operation of an Information Bureau in the Park's administrative office. Clifford Higby, for years a local guide, was selected to run the bureau. Though the Park itself did not provide a guide service, it did examine and license local people to act as guides in the Park. [6]

The cause of interpreting nature in parks received a boost at the National Park Service Conference of 1922. Few subjects that came up for consideration there interested the superintendents more than the educational opportunities inherent in the national parks. They advocated the establishment of an educational division of the Service-at-Large, along the lines of the landscape and civil engineering division. Then, too, it was common knowledge that National Parks Director Stephen Tyng Mather had long been interested in "Nature Guide Work." [7]

Yet, there were handicaps to be overcome. The administrative problem seemed not as vexing as the psychological one. The words "nature study" and "naturalist" unfortunately suggested eccentric hobbies and persons in the minds of many tourists. An early naturalist recalled:

A man might be interested in rocks or animals, or trees, but he didn't want to be thought of as a naturalist. Many times I have seen men who were eager to learn of the out-of-doors hang about the outside of the group desirous of joining it yet reluctant to do so for fear he might be considered less of a 'he-man' [8]

Nevertheless, during the 1923 travel season, Rocky Mountain National Park officials updated their service by hiring J. M. Johnson of Ridgewood, New Jersey, as a "naturalist." He had been an assistant principal in the New York City school system and a lecturer on natural history subjects for the Board of Education of New York City and the National Association of Audubon Societies. He had spent five summers traveling and camping in the mountains of Colorado and Wyoming. Johnson was not the first "naturalist" hired by a national park, however, for in 1920, Yellowstone National Park had offered conducted field trips led by a naturalist.

During his first summer in the Park, Johnson delivered 31 lectures and conducted 27 field trips. His lectures, illustrated with lantern slides, were given free of charge at the leading hotels and were attended by an average of one hundred people. The field trips taken on the morning following the lectures usually included twenty to thirty people. [9] In his work, Johnson was guided by the expressed aims of his nature guide program—"to encourage conservation of the columbine . . . to assist in forest fire protection work, and to help visitors to better understand and enjoy what they see." [10] His program was successfully supplemented by the efforts of Charles Bowman Hutchins, another leading naturalist. Hutchins' specialty was imitating the songs of most of the birds on the North American continent, an accomplishment which he demonstrated at lectures or in nature walks. [11]

The growing interest in naturalist activities was spurred by a change in Park superintendents.

When Roger W. Toll, a natural scientist, took office in 1921, he played an active role in promoting many aspects of the Park's program. Typically, Toll often publicized the Park by giving stereopticon slide talks in the valley towns. In 1924, he provided for expanding the nature guide service by employing Perley A. Smoll of Colorado Springs, as "Park Naturalist." Smoll gave stereopticon lectures on trees, flowers, wildlife, and the natural resources of the Park, which did much, according to Toll, "to interest the visitors in the natural beauties of the park and in the need of protecting them." [12] Smoll also drafted "nature notes and studies" for publication each week in the local newspaper, and prepared a permanent exhibit of the conifers of the Park and a separate flower exhibit, for display in the administrative office.

An increasing number of Smoll's clientele stayed at the Park's expanding campground facilities. Three tracts were purchased for use as public campgrounds in 1924, and the first, Aspenglen, on 41 acres located four-and-a-half miles from Estes Park on the Fall River Road, was opened that summer. The second, Endovalley, not prepared till later, was a nineteen acre tract located eight and a half miles from Estes Park at the upper end of Horseshoe Park. The third site, later called Pineledge, was located two and a half miles from Estes Park, south of the Highdrive Road. Park attendants were stationed at both Glacier Basin and Aspenglen campgrounds to supervise sanitary conditions, see that fires were extinguished, and enforce other Park rules. [13]

Perley Smoll further expanded the variety and scope of the Park's interpretive program in 1925 by adding several leisurely all-day hikes to the previous schedule. He also served in activities not under Park jurisdiction. In or adjacent to the Park, there were 21 permanently established centers requiring the nature guide service. Two were summer schools conducted by colleges in the state; two were boys' summer camps, and one a girls' summer camp, while the others were sponsored by the Y.M.C.A. Conference Association, Estes Park Village, and hotels both in and outside the Park. In all during 1925, Smoll gave 24 lectures to 2,652 people and led 477 nature lovers on fourteen field trips. Furthermore, Smoll and Superintendent Toll both spoke over a Denver radio station, under the auspices of the Colorado Mountain Club. At the season's end, Toll analyzed the effectiveness of his program:

Our educational and natural history work is growing in usefulness and popularity each year. . . . [14] Until we secure a museum building, however, where activities and interests may be centered, anything like a full development of the wealth of nature study opportunities in this park will be impossible. [15]

The 1926 season did not bring a museum, but the Information Bureau headquarters in the administrative building served to distribute thousands of Park booklets, maps, and folders and provide information to visitors on a large variety of subjects. Over 1,500 visitors registered at the Information Bureau. To Superintendent Toll, the Park was becoming host to a more perceptive group of visitors. He noted:

Park visitors have shown an increased appreciation of the educational opportunities offered by the National Park Service, and in many cases have shown a desire for more accurate and complete knowledge with reference to natural history subjects. [16]

Park officials were not alone in noticing this heightened sophistication. A naturalist writing later described the change, from the "old days," when the traveling public was

an exceptionally gullible group of people. They were not especially interested in the 'whys' and 'where-fores' of the phenomena which they observed. The jokes and gags of the hotel porters interested them far more than the cause of geyser eruptions or the formation of the country about them

But the viewpoint suddenly changed. The tourists were no longer content to remain in the 'rubberneck' class. They became interested in what the parks contained. In their geology, flora and fauna they found a never ending source of pleasure. With this changing viewpoint it was necessary to institute a service which would deal with the explanatory and interpretive details.

Thus the ranger-naturalist came into being. [17]

Rocky Mountain National Park's first designated "ranger-naturalists" was Dr. Margaret Fuller Boos, who led the interpretive program during the summers of 1928-1929, and both lectured at various hotels in the vicinity and conducted nature study trips. She also edited a series of Nature News Notes during her two-year service in the Park. During her last summer there, about 8,000 people took advantage of the varied educational facilities offered by the Park, double the figure of the previous year. To accommodate the increasing number of visitors, a fifth campground, Longs Peak, at the base of the Longs Peak trail was added to the Park in 1929. [18]

The 1930's opened without the services of a naturalist, but soon this deficiency was remedied by the establishment of the first permanent post of an Associate Park Naturalist. Meanwhile, the clerk in the Information Bureau answered questions on flowers and natural phenomena, collected and classified specimens of wild flowers and collaborated on a booklet, Birds and Plants of Rocky Mountain National Park. Rangers conducted nature trips and the Park staff published three issues of Nature Notes. A reference library was started when Mrs. Enos Mills donated a set of her late husband's publications. [19]

When in 1931 Dorr G. Yeager of Yellowstone National Park was appointed Associate Park Naturalist, he brought new vigor to the educational program. He organized lectures, field trips, auto caravans, and self-guiding nature walks and utilized a new Park museum. In 1930, Park Superintendent Edmund Rogers had successfully requested funds to build a museum just south of the Park office in Estes Park. [20] The Estes Park Trail had considered the need for the museum "the most pressing one in the community today." [21] By the time the museum was constructed in June of 1931, the month that Yeager arrived, the Park's nature program could move from the level of spontaneity to professionalism.

The Park's museum played a prominent role in the overall interpretive program. Yeager and Superintendent Rogers shared the opinion that the museum was the cornerstone of that program. "It is generally the first contact the visitor has with the Educational Department," Rogers reported,

and its effect should be to stimulate him to see more of it. For that reason expansion along museum lines is going forward as rapidly as money will permit. [22]

The museum at headquarters was embellished with exhibits dealing with habitat groups, Indians, and geology. A small branch museum was located in the ranger station at Bear Lake. With the close of the 1932 season, work began on another museum, converted from a stone shelter cabin on Fall River Pass. The Estes Park Trail considered the headquarters museum to be "marvelous." [23]

Visitor interest ran so high as to overwhelm the nearly indefatigable "Education Department." Despite the addition of a seasonal ranger-naturalist position in 1932, Rogers complained: "There is an increasing demand for the work and, due to an insufficient personnel, there have been many requests which could not be filled," [24] Furthermore, the average Park visitor was a hardy soul. All-day hikes proved to be so popular that the Protection Department was

called in to help handle the groups.

There was also an increasing tendency toward camping out. Because of the many cottages, camps, lodges, and hotels in or adjacent to the Park, camping had never been as popular as in other Parks. But because of the depression, more people found camping out to their pleasure. Glacier Basin and Aspenglen were the most popular campsites, with over 15,000 campers recorded during the summer season. The Pineledge campground was turned into a residential area in 1932. [25]

Museum attendance boomed as the total for the two main museums climbed to 21,000. This increased interest was displayed not only by visitors but also by local residents. Illustrated lectures were given at the headquarters museum three times a week—often to overflow crowds.

The Park's popular museum program was supplemented in 1935 by the opening of the Moraine Park Museum. The National Park Service had purchased the buildings associated with Moraine Lodge, and had torn down all of them except a large log structure formerly used as a recreation hall. Federal relief funds made possible its conversion into a museum. Sturdily constructed of logs, it blended harmoniously into the forested moraines of the Park. It stood but a few yards from the Trail Ridge Road and faced south, with the front range in the background. In keeping with the philosophy that "Each museum is . . . a chapter in the information book of the park," the Moraine Park Museum avoided duplicating exhibits at the other museums. Rather, its exhibits dealt with the Indians and pioneer history of the region. [26]

Except for short assignments of naturalists from other parks, the position of Chief Park Naturalist lay vacant until the end of the 1936 season. Then on August 29, H. Raymond Gregg transferred from Hot Springs National Park to become the new Chief Park Naturalist. Most impressive among Gregg's ensuing accomplishments was the beginning in 1938 of a Junior Nature School program of field trips for children. In the beginning, all children were gathered into one group, with ages ranging from seven to 16 years. A series of attainment standards was established and activities were scheduled, enabling children to qualify for certificates through a combination of hikes, museum meetings, and play sessions. [27]

A press release concerning this "school" came to the attention of Program Director Clarence Moore of the Denver radio station KOA. He made arrangements through the Red Network of the National Broadcasting Company for a nationwide, fifteen minute presentation from the school each Thursday afternoon throughout the travel season. Broadcast under the title of "Nature Sketches," the programs attracted wide attention. Favorable comments were received from almost every state. These popular programs continued through the 1942 season, when they were dropped because of war-time demands on radio broadcasting. [28]

Meanwhile, junior activities were expanded. In 1939 and 1940, older children were grouped as boy "Nature Scouts" and "Girl Naturalists," and emphasis upon hiking and nature study, introducing larger elements of self-development and independent pursuit of interest, developed through the activity. These programs were discontinued when the demands upon staff time grew out of proportion to the relative importance of this single phase of the entire Park interpretation program, and the junior activities for 1941 and 1942 were confined to a schedule of field trips with no age segregation. [29]

The expanded naturalist program of the years immediately preceding World War II was made possible by an enlarged naturalist staff. From 1939 to 1941 five ranger-naturalists were employed during the travel season. Their services were complemented by the construction of new amphitheaters in the Park, at Moraine Park in 1937, Glacier Basin in 1939, and

Aspenglen in 1940. Lectures and conducted trips were initiated at the new Timber Creek campground on the west side in 1941. In 1942, Headquarters Museum was converted for administrative use, and the exhibits were moved to Moraine Park Museum, which became a natural history hall. Visitor contacts rose from 121,103 in 1939 to 161,182 in fiscal 1940. The popularity of naturalist activities came as a mixed blessing to the Park's burdened staff. Superintendent David Canfield reported on the seriousness of the situation:

The increased interest in naturalist activities in general . . . has necessitated expanded schedules of services enforcing additional duties upon the already overtaxed naturalist staff of six. In many cases, the ranger-naturalists were forced to work as much as 11 to 14 hours per day to answer the demand for their services, The need for additional interpretation personnel is already beyond the state of acuteness. [30]

Contributing to Canfield's despair may have been some new responsibilities at national monuments recently handed to the Park's administrative and interpretive departments. [31]

As a result of wartime travel curtailment in 1942, the ranger-naturalist staff was reduced from five to three, and services were cut correspondingly. Yet it is interesting to note that in 1942, while total Park attendance was down forty-five percent from 1941, attendance at naturalist activities was up sixty percent from the previous year. It was apparent that fewer visitors were making hurried trips through the Park, but those who came, stayed longer than former visitors. No ranger-naturalists were employed during the war years after 1942. Former ranger-naturalists employed as temporary rangers assisted in providing lectures, however, until Raymond Gregg, who had left for military service in 1942, returned to duty on December 17, 1945. [32]

The post-war years at Rocky Mountain National Park were characterized by booming attendance. The lifting of wartime rationing on gasoline and the flood of returning servicemen contributed to a record number of visitors in the summer of 1946. During July, a total of 70,893 persons were given interpretive services as compared to 65,379 for July 1941, the previous one-month record. [33] And in August, 102,809 visitors came to the Park, well above the previous record set in August 1941, of 57,008. [34]

During 1947, not only did more people visit the Park than ever before, but also a higher percentage of them attended naturalist activities. The beleaguered Education Department substituted more frequent short field trips for the previous lengthy ones. Superintendent Canfield received the following assessment from the acting head of his naturalist service:

The demand for . . . service was far greater than the limited staff could provide . . . The war-weary public apparently has a greater appreciation of, and desire to learn more about, the natural sciences and the great out-of-doors than previously. [35]

Before the next season began, Edwin C. Alberts replaced Raymond Gregg as Chief Naturalist. For the 1948 travel season he was aided by two ranger-naturalists, an information clerk and a "Seasonal Park Naturalist." Canfield predicted that this complement would be "Completely inadequate for the record breaking crowds." [36] By the end of July Canfield reported:

Due to the limited staff, number of requests for interpretive programs, special hikes, etc., had to be declined. Considerable overtime and much doubling up were necessary on the part of all members of the staff in order that the program could be continued. [37]

The Park's campgrounds received unusually heavy use. A 75 percent increase was reported in the number of camper-days of use during the 1948 season. A total of 56,046 camper-days was recorded, as compared to 31,995 during the 1947 season. Lamented Superintendent Canfield:

The heavy use of the park in general and the campgrounds in particular is resulting in a serious impairment of natural features and accommodations. [38]

In the years 1949-1953 the naturalist staff tried new ways to satisfy the burgeoning number of Park visitors. Several experimental developments were put into operation, such as: recorded music before the evening talks at the Moraine Park Museum; a recorded "Glacier Talk" given four times daily; and "continuation hikes." These hikes involved a combination of the regular interpretive trip with a continuation into more remote sections of the Park for those who cared to accompany the ranger-naturalist. As another variation on the interpretive theme, the staff scheduled two talks a week at the Estes Park Chalet, the stopping place of nearly all bus passengers to the Park. New interpretive services included campfire programs at the Timber Creek Campground near Grand Lake, an increased schedule of activities at Glacier Basin and lodge talks at several new points in the Grand Lake vicinity. To serve visitors better, a ranger-naturalist was assigned to the Grand Lake area and full-time attendants were employed at both the Fall River Pass and Moraine Park museums.

The Junior Nature School, in a moribund state since 1942, was revived under the name "Bighorn Club," and in 1953 reached a postwar high in attendance. A "Chipmunk" division of the club was established for children ages seven to ten. Both a "Junior Museum" and workshop were established, giving the young people a place of their own and incidentally freeing Moraine Park Museum as a facility for other activities. [39]

The 1953-1954 travel seasons were filled with new interpretive activities and new discoveries about the impact of the interpretive program. For instance, it was found that the great majority of Park visitors never participated in any phase of naturalist work. During the calendar year 1953, 1,276,807 persons entered the Park, but of these, only 8,701—less than one per cent—participated in the 349 naturalist field trips. Interpretive talks attracted 36,659, or three per cent of the Park travel. The exhibit rooms were visited by 123,983 persons, or roughly fourteen percent of the total Park travel. [40]

Apparently the average Park visitor was not as hardy as his predecessors. In 1954, all-day hikes were just about abandoned, except for a "glacier trip" which was scheduled bi-weekly. Not even the "routine" daily hike from Bear Lake to Lake Haiyaha attracted the anticipated numbers. More popular with the visitors were the leisurely nature walks conducted at the public campgrounds, even though the environment traversed was not as susceptible to interpretation as other areas farther removed from points of visitor concentration. [41]

In 1955, for the first time, two ranger-naturalists carried out an interpretive schedule at the Shadow Mountain National Recreation Area west of the Park near Grand Lake. This area had been established by the Secretary of the Interior on June 27, 1952, and it became administered by the Park Service through an Inter-Bureau Agreement between the Service and the Bureaus of Reclamation and Land Management—all in the Department of the Interior. The original agreement was superseded by that of August 3, 1955, which added 8,000 acres to the land of the Recreation Area, bringing the total to 18,240 acres of land and water surface. It presently encompasses Lake Granby and Shadow Mountain Lake, which cover 8,380 acres and form part of the Colorado-Big Thompson Diversion Project. Early naturalist activities there consisted mainly of conducted boat trips on Shadow Mountain Lake. A park ranger administered the area and a clerk-typist was stationed in the headquarters lobby to act as an information-receptionist. [42]

Despite this information center and others like it in the Park, visitor orientation was still largely in the hands of private and public non-Service facilities. Information booths had long been established by both the Estes Park and Grand Lake Chambers of Commerce and they were supplemented by the efforts of the several hundred private enterprises in the Estes Park, Grand Lake, and Allenspark area. Yet the Park's obvious need for a modern visitor center would not be met for another ten years. Throughout the early 1950's even roadside interpretation remained limited at best. [43]

The rest of the interpretive program exhibited the sure and imaginative touch of Park Naturalist Ed Alberts. While the traditional morning naturalist hikes formed the backbone of the program, conducted field trips reached a new high in frequency and attendance. A number of longer, all-day hikes was offered, including one every two weeks to Tyndall and Andrews Glaciers. Still the major emphasis remained with shorter, more leisurely activities. More short nature walks were scheduled in 1955 than in any previous year.

At the same time, a positive effort was begun to de-emphasize off-site evening talks at privately owned establishments outside the Park's boundaries. Since some of these programs had become traditional, Park officials were careful not to inflame public opinion. By "playing down" the hotel programs, the administration freed naturalists to lead activities within the Park, where their foremost obligation lay. [44] This administrative move may have contributed to the very noticeable overcrowding at both Moraine Park Museum and Glacier Basin Campground. At both places, nightly programs were presented throughout the season.

During the 1956 travel year, visitor use of the Park and National Recreational Area reached a new high, with recorded travelers totalling 2,663,387. To help accommodate the crowds, a new information service was added during the summer season. The Park used two converted housetrailer as temporary movable information stations at Rainbow Curve on Trail Ridge Road and at the south end of Lake Granby near the Shadow Mountain National Recreation Area. The two trailers were manned by uniformed personnel, who were expected to answer visitors' questions and orient them in their tour of the Park. A new Hidden Valley Lodge was also tried experimentally as an information station, with a uniformed attendant. [45]

Though significant, these developments were overshadowed by an administrative crisis, over an experiment for integration of service that threatened to disrupt the entire naturalist program. The Superintendent's Monthly Report for July 1956 contained the following comment:

The summer Interpretive program was in full swing throughout the month, with administrative responsibilities being handled by the Chief Ranger's office in accordance with the experimental integration of protection and interpretive seasonal personnel. Numerous conferences were held between the Park Naturalist and other members of Superintendent's staff concerning problems arising out of this experimental integration. [46]

Behind this terse paragraph lay the most dramatic and serious controversy to involve the Division of Interpretation before or since. On orders from the Washington office, this integration was to achieve a more efficient operation and eliminate friction between regular Park rangers and seasonal naturalists throughout the Park Service. Rocky Mountain National Park became the laboratory for this experiment. If the integration worked there, it might well succeed in other parks. Seemingly Rocky Mountain was made to order for such a move, for the Protection and Naturalist Departments enjoyed a friendly relationship. Furthermore, integration on a limited scale had been tried informally in 1947 when Chief Ranger Barton Herschler became Chief Naturalist pro tempore, after Raymond Gregg's transfer.

Although the experiment of 1956 was not successful, the reasons were known to lie in the breakdown in communications and confidence between the Park administration and the seasonal naturalists. In brief, there was friction between Superintendent James V. Lloyd and the ranger-naturalists. On one side stood an intractable superintendent who reportedly reassured his naturalists with the comment, "boys, this is only an experiment, but it will succeed." [47] On the other side was a group of seasonal naturalists who were defiant sometimes arrogant, but superb in their interpretive ability. This group included several men with doctoral degrees in the natural sciences. To Dr. Richard Beidleman, a seasonal naturalist, the integration seemed similar to an effort for integrating the police and school teachers in Estes Park. Another naturalist, Dr. Ferrel Atkins, argued that no true integration was proposed, for the ranger-naturalists were being absorbed in the ranger force.

District rangers were put in charge of the seasonal naturalists in each district, but they were not relieved of the former duties. The district rangers, more at ease apprehending speeders than planning campfire sings, were made to feel uncomfortable by an increasingly restless group of seasonal naturalists. Had the popular Ed Alberts still been Park Naturalist much of the controversy might have been avoided. However, the recently appointed naturalist, Norman Herkenham, did not have Alberts' rapport with the ranger-naturalists.

Complicating the situation was Superintendent Lloyd's attempt to revamp the substance of the naturalist's programs. Because of the demands imposed by record-breaking crowds and the superintendent's predilections, the interpretive program was geared to shorter hikes and walks and routine information service. Though this shift in emphasis had been developing for several years, the seasonal-naturalists believed it was just another attempt to discredit "their" program. [48]

Lloyd also ordered Chief Naturalist Herkenham to perform audits of some of the interpretive services to evaluate the "content, accuracy, and effectiveness of the programmed events." [49] While this action was in accordance with Park Service policy, it seemed to anger further the seasonal-naturalists. They confided their problems to Park visitors and urged them to write to their congressman on their behalf. At this juncture, National Park officials such as Raymond Gregg and Chief Naturalist John Doerr visited the Park and held meetings—some subrosa—with the seasonal naturalists. [50] Despite these gatherings, misunderstandings were not corrected and hurt feelings were not salved. Neither was there ever a rapprochement between Superintendent Lloyd and his seasonal-naturalists. Some, including Beidleman, never returned to the Park. That winter the integration experiment was evaluated, found wanting, and quietly dropped.

The record breaking crowds that came to Rocky Mountain National Park and Shadow Mountain National Recreation Area in 1957 forced the continued shift from longer hikes to self-guiding walks and information services. Yet the interpretive staff composed of a Chief Park Naturalist, Assistant Park Naturalist, and seventeen ranger-naturalists, was hard pressed to meet the demands of the visitors.

Public contacts at the entrance stations and along the roads were the most extensive media of information and interpretation. Information trailers were again used at Rainbow Curve and Lake Granby, as well as the Rock Cut area on Trail Ridge Road. Uniformed personnel stationed at these points dispensed information, gave short talks, and sold information publications to about 85,000 visitors. Information and orientation services also played a major role in the functioning of the Moraine Park Visitor Center, the Fall River Pass exhibit room, and the Hidden Valley Lodge. Ranger-naturalists were also stationed at points of heavy visitor concentration along Trail Ridge Road and near Bear Lake. Part of their time was devoted to "a roving-type" interpretive duty, to serve groups of visitors wherever and whenever they had questions. [51]

Self-guiding devices were used extensively at various points in the Park. On Trail Ridge Road alone, there were three self-guiding trails. The most extensively used device was "A Guide To Some Major Points of Interest On Trail Ridge Road." It consisted of a guide sheet keyed to numbered wooden shields. Other self-guiding trails were also established at Bear Lake, Moraine Park Visitor Center, and Gem Lake. Visitors could also make use of numerous orientation signs along the roads and the 300 miles of trails in the Park and the National Recreation Area.

The informal campfire program schedule was considerably expanded in 1957. A session was held in one campground on each side of the Park every night of every week of the season. The accelerated program resulted in a 66 percent increase in attendance over 1956. The Park's program was designed to meet the needs of two types of visitors—the "camper or true outdoorsman" and the visitor "who prefers the indoor situation." [52]

A new youth hiking program was initiated in 1957 to replace the one which had served the Bighorn Club. Basically the new program provided interpretive services for all children, ages ten to fifteen. Two hikes, one of a half-day and one of a full day, were scheduled each week.

The annual Naturalist Report boasted:

The program, as presented in 1957, is a result of careful research into the visitor use patterns of the area. There is a definite trend for increased attendance in most activities The area seems to have a reputation for a broad and varied hiking program and every effort is made to retain this. [53]

In 1958, although total Park travel decreased, there was an overall increase in attendance at interpretive activities, due partly to greater publicity for the programs and partly to the greater number of talks and off-site services. [54] For instance, illustrated programs were presented three nights a week at Grand Lake Lodge. By 1960 talks were begun two nights a week at the new Amphitheater at Stillwater Campground and off-site illustrated programs were presented at three other locations.

During the 1959 travel year, Park Naturalist Wayne Bryant, who had replaced Norman Herkenham the year before, questioned the wisdom of tying down trained ranger-naturalists at information stations. He believed that interpretive signs would be adequate at Rainbow Curve, Rock Cut, and Lake Granby, thus freeing personnel for more useful personal contacts. [55] Evidently, an imperfect balance had been struck between serving as many visitors as possible and serving them in a meaningful way. Superintendent Lloyd stressed the former, while Bryant, backed by the seasonal-naturalists, supported the latter. What was needed was an effective merger of these two philosophies.

The basic problem of how best to utilize the ranger-naturalists persisted during the early 1960's. When available manpower permitted, ranger-naturalists on interpretive patrols augmented the information stations in providing person-to-person visitor orientation. Mobile ranger-naturalists stopped to make visitor contacts at Bear Lake and other points of high visitor interest where no manned station existed. However, in order to provide this instant information service, the number of scheduled conducted walks and hikes was reduced. [56] This reduction occurred despite the fact that the 1958 Naturalist's Annual Report urged: "Every effort should be made to retain the varied hiking program in this Park, for which it has a good reputation." [57]

Due to its geographical position "on the way" to the Seattle World's Fair, Rocky Mountain National Park enjoyed a record-breaking visitation of 1,773,836 persons in 1962. Interpretive contacts totaled 4,453,925, up about 42 percent over 1961. This increase was due primarily to

an additional 1,295,257 contacts at selfguiding devices. Increased attendance, however, was recorded in all categories. Some examples were: conducted trips, up more than 44 percent; talks, up nearly 16 percent; attended stations, up more than six percent; off-site service, up 17 percent. Guided interpretive trips were so well attended that the 22-man naturalist staff had trouble controlling the crowds. [58] During the following year, a record total of 1,855,373 persons visited the Park, and visits to the Shadow Mountain National Recreation Area increased from 693,292 in 1962 to 782,894. This was an increase over the record year of 1960, when visitors totalled 748,830. Campers in the Recreation Area increased by 37 percent. [59]

In response to record visitation in several national parks, ecological research projects were initiated regarding the impact of visitors on tundra and vegetation at Rocky Mountain, Grand Teton, Yosemite, Sequoia, and Mount Ranier national parks. From 1958 through 1965, the Park Service financed an Alpine Wilderness Ecology Research project at Rocky Mountain. Dr. John Marr of the Colorado University Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research directed the project while his associate, Dr. Beatrice Willard, led the field work. Their investigations aimed at an understanding of the ecology of alpine tundra and other plant communities and the prevention of further damage to the vegetation. In conjunction with this study, an annual summer seminar on alpine tundra ecology was started in June 1962 at Hidden Valley under the joint sponsorship of Colorado University, the Estes Park Chamber of Commerce, the Rocky Mountain Nature Association, and the Park Service. [60]

In addition to the regular naturalist activities, special evening programs and conducted trips were provided on request. This policy taxed the naturalists' manpower to the limit. Still the Park felt an obligation to those visitors who "went in style." Superintendent Allyn Hanks explained the Park's predicament and philosophy:

Considering the obligations for the presentation of interpretive services within the Park are of primary importance, and the regularly scheduled program is geared to the practical limit of available manpower, special programs when presented, must usually involve uncompensated overtime by interpretive personnel. This is an unfortunate situation, since over-night accommodations within the Park are virtually non-existent, except for campgrounds and travelers staying in the vicinity of the Park in lodges, motels, and hotels are bona fide Park visitors. [61]

Under the direction of Chief Naturalist, Merlin K. Potts, regularly scheduled naturalist activities were continued and expanded during the summer months of the 1964 season. With the naturalist staff at full strength, the program included 72 conducted trips and 54 evening campfire talks per week. In addition, six tours were conducted daily at the Granby Pumping Plant on Lake Granby. Many people, ages nine to 13, took advantage of the Park's youth program. These activities conducted in July and August were devoted to a variety of nature studies and hikes. In 1964 the average daily attendance was 18 children at each of the 19 programs. [62]

The most popular activities conducted by the ranger-naturalists continued to be the evening campfire talks which were presented at ten sites in the Park and the Shadow Mountain National Recreation Area. A total attendance of more than 84,000 visitors was recorded at these talks. The Glacier Basin Amphitheater had an average nightly attendance of 390 visitors, leading all other sites by a substantial margin.

The plans for the interpretive program for 1965—the golden anniversary year—varied from the past in one important aspect. Midway through the travel year an Alpine Visitor Center at Fall River Pass on the Trail Ridge Road was opened. It was expected that more than 1,000

visitors a day would use the information services and peruse the alpine tundra exhibits which the building provided.

The naturalist service, begun almost 50 years before in Rocky Mountain National Park, had acquired a new and significant attraction for the interested tourist. But the most integral part of the naturalist service remained the naturalist himself, just as in the days of "Dixie" MacCracken, and even Enos Mills. From informal beginnings to an extensive and well trained staff, with varied facilities to carry out the expanding demands for instruction, the service had met its assignment. Handicaps, differences over policy, experimentation, innovations and dedication had all marked a part of the effort to fulfill a portion of the purposes for which the Park was created.

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Rocky Mountain

Administrative History



CHAPTER XI:

WINTER SPORTS AND HIDDEN VALLEY

Located along the Continental Divide in northern Colorado, Rocky Mountain National Park became famous as a winter sports center soon after its creation. One old-timer remembered that

most of the kids in Estes Park cut their eye teeth on the art of skiing From the earliest good snowfall, the sound of one after another skiers calling 'track' could be heard at the intersection on the main street. [1]

Probably the first active group to use the Park for winter recreation was the Colorado Mountain Club. Its members began their ski and snowshoe trips into Bear Lake, Fern Lake and other areas of the Park's east side as early as 1917. In February of that year the Park hosted a winter sports carnival. Considered "a new departure in National Parks," the carnival attracted 463 people, 85 of whom were members of the Colorado Mountain Club and the Estes Park Outdoor Club. Events included snowshoeing, skiing and tobogganing. [2]

The Park administration did nothing to discourage this growing interest in winter sports. If anything, officials were delighted by developments. In 1920, Acting Superintendent J. A. Shepherd noted that "It is felt that winter sports in the Park are just beginning to come to their rightful place among the favorite popular amusements." [3] The Park allowed interested citizens to make improvements on ski courses at Fern and Odessa Lakes. A beginners' course was added at Fern Lake and a new ski trail was marked out at Spruce Lake. Also completed was a new ski trail between the Brinwood Lodge and Fern Lake. In 1924, Superintendent Roger Toll, long a member of the Colorado Mountain Club, echoed the thoughts of many sportsmen when he announced: "There are great possibilities for the future development of winter sports in this region." [4]

Evidently the local business interests agreed. The winter sports movement in Estes Park, formerly sponsored by the Estes Park Group of the Colorado Mountain Club, was taken over by the Colorado Ski Club, an organization promoted by local businessmen. On February 7, 1926, this group helped organize the Colorado State Ski Tournament, held on Old Man Mountain just west of Estes Park. The meet attracted the best skiers in Colorado. Competition was intense as the winners gained the right to represent the state at the national championships at Duluth, Minnesota. Over 3,000 spectators watched from the surrounding hills. [5]

For several years following the tournament, interest in winter sports lagged, due to uncertain snow conditions. Aside from the annual Colorado Mountain Club outings, there were no organized winter sports activities in the region. The formation of the Rocky Mountain National Park Ski Club in 1931 did much to stimulate a revived interest. This organization made up of townspeople and Park employees, had as its Director Chief Ranger John S. McLaughlin. The club adopted a resolution urging that a ski hill and toboggan slide be built within the Park's boundaries at Hidden Valley. [6] One of the Club's most interesting projects

was the staging of a ski tournament on June 28, 1931, when members hauled over 300 cubic yards of snow from Fall River Pass and deposited it on Elkhorn Hill, a mile west of Estes Park.

Such winter sports activities received official Park Service blessing. Among the 5,000 spectators on Elkhorn Hill was National Parks Director Horace M. Albright. He maintained there was no reason why the Park area could not be made into a winter resort as well as a summer resort. "It has been done in other parks," he said, "and we will have to find a place for the toboggan slide, ski jump, etc., where it will not mar the natural beauties of the Park." [7]

By April 1932, Park officials had tentatively decided to build "a winter sports playground" in Moraine Park. When Director Albright visited the Park in September he told officials of the local ski club that the matter of building a ski hill was "strictly up the superintendent." The Estes Park Trail, however, quoted Albright as promising to do "everything in his power" to help out. Albright went on to assure Estes Park officials that it was the policy of the Service "To further a winter sports program and any other thing that would permit the people to use their parks to the maximum." [8] The precedent for developing ski areas in national parks had already been established in Yosemite National Park. There a local club and the Park Service co-sponsored a winter sports program.

Encouraged by this news, local people talked of building a ski area to rank with Lake Placid, New York, the site of the 1932 winter Olympic Games. They envisaged ski and toboggan courses in Moraine Park, which presumably would make Rocky Mountain National Park a place "of major importance in the winter sports world." To such facilities would be added others for iceboating, skating and bobsledding—all to cost less than \$50,000. The Denver Post reported that throughout Estes Park signs were posted saying: "Director Albright! We want a winter sports course." [9] As though in response to the local hopes and demands Superintendent Edmund Rogers announced at year's end that

The national park service . . . has a comprehensive winter sports program outlined for Rocky Mountain National Park to be followed out as soon as funds can be made available. [10]

The depression did not dampen winter sports popularity, for during 1933, three ski tournaments were held in the Park. The winter carnival of the Park ski club was held at Bear Lake in January. Two weeks later the Grand Lake Winter Sports Club held its ski meet on its home course. At both outings, Park rangers cooperated by laying out the cross country courses. The Estes Park mid-summer carnival was held on June 25 before 1,600 spectators. [11]

A few months later, Superintendent Rogers took the first step for fulfilling an earlier promise to develop in the Park "the best ski hill in the United States"; [12] he led a "blue ribbon" party to search for an appropriate hill with an adequate supply of snow. [13] He was not successful in his quest, but his continued commitment to the cause of winter sports appeared in his Annual Report:

There is no doubt but that this region has some of the greatest winter sports possibilities in the country. We have the snow, the community is enthusiastic and it is hoped we can do our share towards bringing about a realization of their hopes. [14]

Yet, understandably, some people in the community were becoming increasingly impatient with Park Service promises. The Trail demanded: "Now let's have that ski course." [15]

In March 1934, the Park received nation-wide publicity as it hosted the National Down Mountain and Cross Country Ski Races. This marked the first time that such races were held in a national park. The one-mile downhill race was staged at Hidden Valley, while the 18-kilometer cross country event was run from Bear Lake to the Brinwood Hotel, via Fern Lake and Odessa Gorge. Park Rangers McLaughlin and Jack Moomaw acted as officials at all events. Coloradans placed in a majority of the events. They were led by Joseph J. Duncan, Jr., of Estes Park, who became the national down mountain champion when he "hurtled down the terrifying course" in two minutes 58 2/10 seconds. [16] Meanwhile, both the Endovalley campground area and the Bierstadt Lake region had been considered as winter sport sites, but no clearcut plans had been drawn. Lack of funds coupled with landscape Architect Harold Baker's reservations about "scarring the landscape" delayed further positive action.

Undaunted, the Estes Park Trail maintained that Hidden Valley, which was centrally located, could be developed by using rather than destroying the contour of the land. The Trail believed that Park officials were over-playing the "scarring" issue. It editorialized:

Quibbles about 'scarring' the park have never seemed to us more than the poor argument of obstructionists. It might just as easily be argued that roads and trails should never have been built in Rocky Mountain National Park.

The answer that, after all the parks are for the enjoyment and recreation of the people of America is not only an argument for the building of roads and trails, it is an argument for the building of a winter sports center in Rocky Mountain National Park. [17]

To satisfy at least partially the demand for winter sports facilities Park officials increased their various services. Rangers cleared and bladed a beaver pond in Hidden Valley, thereby making it suitable for ice skating. For the convenience of skiers, the Park Service kept open the Bear Lake Road as far as the Bear Lake parking area, the Trail Ridge Road to Hidden Valley, and the Fall River Road to Willow Park. [18] The Trail first contemptuously called these services "teasers." [19] Later it saw in these deeds a readiness "to lift the vague talk out of the realm of the impossible and actually do something about it." [20] Upon further reflection, this paper lauded the Park's efforts. The Trail continued:

With the super skating rink on the Beaver Pond and the skiing available . . . with all roads kept open directly to the sports areas, Estes Park can look forward to the busiest winter week-ends in its history.

Let's all get behind the National Park Service and show them that we appreciate what is being done for this community. [21]

In seeming response to the Trail's plea, the public use of the Park's ski areas during the 1936-1937 winter season exceeded all expectations. In addition, a demand for the promotion of hockey caused Park officials to help organize a local hockey league to play on the Beaver Pond rink. Other new developments to increase sports activities included the construction of an ash-can slide at Willow Park and a new trail in Hidden Valley. Still, the Park allowed no construction that would mar the Park's scenery. Winter sports developments utilized only natural conditions.

Superintendent Thomas J. Allen, Jr., was proud of the Park's accomplishments, as he reported:

The National Park Service, during recent weeks, has put a great deal of study into Winter Sports possibilities of Rocky Mountain National Park. In order to do something definite . . . we have spent considerable money, while rangers and

park workmen have put in extra time and effort to show their interest. As a result, winter sports are now easily accessible to Estes Park, and roads are being well maintained to those areas. [22]

Often critical of the methodical approach of Park officials to winter sports, the Trail heaped praise on Superintendent Allen. "Never before in the history of the National Park," it claimed in 1937, "has there been a superintendent who was as interested in winter activities as is Mr. Allen." [23]

Soon, however, David Canfield, young Superintendent of Crater Lake, replaced Allen. Canfield was no stranger to snow sports, having fought for winter sports development at Crater Lake. He promised the Trail that he would do "everything in his power" to continue and expand the work of Allen. [24] Not long after his arrival, he was handed a petition carrying 10,000 signatures and calling for the expansion of winter sports facilities.

Canfield realized that Park facilities and personnel were inadequate to meet the demands of overflow crowds. At times CCC enrollees were pressed into service to help Park rangers supervise the parking areas and ski trails. To prepare adequately for the 1938-39 winter ski season, Canfield assigned his staff to begin preparations months before the first snows fell, in order to ensure that ski runs, toboggan slides, and shelter cabins would be ready for the winter sportsmen. [25] Despite such efforts, Canfield made it clear that he was contemplating no new construction. He asserted:

There will be no construction of artificial facilities such as ski jumps and ski tows nor will any professional meets be encouraged. Every effort will be made to make park snow sports attractive to novices as well as experts in the use of sliding facilities available very much as Nature made them. [26]

The Park's winter-time clientele continued to increase, and from October 1, 1938 to May 31, 1939, over 75,000 people patronized it. Canfield, therefore, had reason to complain that the existing winter sports facilities were unsatisfactory, overcrowded, and incapable of adequate expansion. Over 90 percent of the skiers used the three narrow and dangerous ski trails at Hidden Valley. The public use of the recently completed ski courses at Berthoud Pass on United States Highway 40 south of Granby had no noticeable impact on the numbers visiting the Park. [27]

Clearly, emergency steps were necessary to alleviate the congestion at Hidden Valley. Either its facilities had to be expanded significantly or a better ski area had to be found elsewhere in the Park. Canfield had no basic objections to developing a new ski area; he was, in fact, "all for winter sports." On the other hand, he considered it "completely unthinkable" to build a ski run at Hidden Valley, for it was just "a common hill." [28] Therefore, almost from the day he arrived in the Park, Canfield had sought another area well suited for winter sports development. After a cursory investigation, he found that the area at the end of Mill Creek seemed to meet the Park's needs.

On March 4, 1940, Canfield sent a special task force to investigate more closely the Mill Creek Basin. Led by Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin, the group included Park Ranger Ernest Field and Park Photographer Charles Humberger. They reported that the area was a distinct improvement over Hidden Valley. The terrain was judged well suited for winter sports facilities such as parking areas, shelter cabins and downhill runs. However, its location, approximately two miles above the Park's two CCC camps, was practically inaccessible. Humberger took several pictures to be included with Canfield's request for federal funds to begin road construction to the Basin. [29]

Until a definite decision was reached on the Mill Creek development plans, the Park did

nothing to improve Hidden Valley's facilities. The only change in that area's appearance came in March 1941, when local high school boys constructed and installed a primitive ski tow. [30] After the close of World War II, the annual demand for winter use areas in the Park grew geometrically. Communities and civic organizations made their own investigations of areas suitable for winter sports development, while Park officials continued their studies of the Mill Creek area.

In the meantime, conflicting reports filtered down from the Park Service hierarchy on its development plans. John Doerr, former Park Superintendent, told the Estes Park Chamber of Commerce that Rocky Mountain National Park stood at the top of the list for winter sports development. Because of the adjacent Estes Park Village, no facilities would have to be built inside the Park to feed and house skiers. According to Doerr, maps had already been drawn and plans made for the development of a ski area in the Park. [31] Yet Secretary of Interior Krug later informed the Chamber of Commerce of the impossibility of "doing anything" about Hidden Valley, although he held out the hope that "something might be done" at Mill Creek. [32]

Such an explanation did not satisfy local sportsmen. More over, while the Park Service vacillated, the Forest Service not only built a ski area in the vicinity of Allenspark but also ran buses to and from the area. In an angry editorial, the Estes Park Trail lashed out at what it considered the delay and deception of the Park Service bureaucracy:

We've got quite a case against the Great White Father in Washington.

Or, perhaps we should say that the case is rather strong against . . . those civil service employees who go on year-after-year directing policies under the theoretical supervision of political appointees who are too busy tending their fences to pay a great deal of attention to the common complaint of J. Q. Citizen.

.....

Our unfortunate position is that most of our ski areas lie within the National Park, and the benign nod of our Great White Father must be obtained before we are able to develop our present area, or find a new one.

Power and congratulations to Allens Park—but in this other end of the Rocky Mountain National Park area we are thwarted by some Washington big-wigs who write long tomes on why it can't be done. [33]

Amid the rash of promises and charges, attendance increased and conditions worsened at the Park's winter sports areas. As early as March 1948, Canfield surveyed the inadequate Hidden Valley facilities and concluded that "the saturation point has long since been reached." Skiers complained vehemently about the skimpy facilities. Over a dozen Chambers of Commerce and several winter sports clubs joined in the angry barrage. Letters of complaint sent to the Park were forwarded to the Colorado congressional delegation. [34] And all the while Hidden Valley experienced heavier-than-ever use. The skier days-of-use there during the winter season of 1949-1950 totaled 8,811, an increase of forty-seven per cent over the previous season. Canfield deemed further sports development absolutely necessary. [35]

By late 1950 the Estes Park Chamber of Commerce, through its Winter Sports Committee, had settled upon Hidden Valley as the only desirable place for winter sports development. Committee studies had shown alternative sites unsuitable, for Mill Creek had "everything but snow," and development in Willow Park would involve costly road construction. Indirectly, the Park Service lent encouragement to the committee. Park Ranger Ernest Field, a member of the Winter Sports Committee, told Chamber officials that although the Park Service

frowned on permanent ski developments, the Hidden Valley area might "grow gradually with demands." [36]

Certainly the demands were growing in volume and frequency. The number of skiers who used Hidden Valley during December 1950, showed an increase of 377 per cent over the previous December. Such popularity meant that even to provide marginal assistance for the Hidden Valley area proved expensive to the Park Service. Canfield found it "interesting, if not somewhat startling" to note that during the 1950-1951 ski season the cost to the Park of keeping the road open to the ski area was \$5,150.47. This expense covered only the operational cost of snow removal equipment and did not include the time spent by rangers patrolling the area. [37]

By April 1952, the Trail was calling for an "all-out and coordinated community effort" to develop Hidden Valley. [38] It pointed out that skiing was becoming increasingly popular in Colorado. For instance, during the previous winter ski attendance at Arapahoe Basin in the Loveland Pass area had increased 231 per cent over the preceding year. Moreover, at Aspen, the average skier stayed a week to ten days, while at Estes Park, skiers left after four hours. In view of these facts, the Estes Park Chamber of Commerce submitted to the Park Service a prospectus which included a proposal for the construction of a permanent chair-lift ski-tow at Hidden Valley. As the Trail reminded its readers: "A rope-tow-narrow trail area appears to have the appeal of kissing your girl-friend's mother . . . just a substitute for the real thing." [39]

In response to this local activity, the Interior Department equivocated. Secretary Chapman sent word that while he "did not pledge himself to the support of the project . . . he likewise did not turn it down." [40] Hardly more decisive was a telegram from Parks Director Conrad Wirth in August. He assured everyone that the Park Service was

sincerely interested in providing the best possible service for visitors to Rocky Mountain National Park in all seasons within the limits of funds available. . . . [41]

By autumn, the ski lift proponents had secured powerful friends in their campaign. Senators Charles Milliken and Edwin C. Johnson, along with Congressman William Hill, assured the Estes Park Chamber of Commerce of their support. Perhaps feeling heat from Capital Hill, Director Wirth again wired the Estes Park Trail, this time at some length of explain the position of the Park Service:

I want you to know . . . that we are very anxious to have the Park used twelve months of the year, and that it is our hope and desire to work out a program whereby skiing will be a recognized use in Rocky Mountain National Park.

Skiing in Hidden Valley presents a very difficult problem, in that any permanent structure there would be unsightly to summer Park visitors who will perhaps always exceed greatly the winter visitors in the Park. We would not want to do anything to Hidden Valley that would be detrimental to the fine scenic qualities there. [42]

Then, "as a result of local pressure," the Park Service agreed to conduct a survey of the Hidden Valley ski area. First in October of 1952 and again in the following February, Harold G. Fowler, Landscape Architect from the Service's Western Office of Design and Construction, visited the Park to study the terrain and investigate the possibilities of an extensive development. [43] After hearing of Fowler's favorable conclusions, the Trail predicted that "the first big hurdle has been taken towards obtaining a chair lift for Hidden Valley. [44]

More encouraging news came from the State Capitol in Denver, for in February 1953, the Colorado State Senate approved a request to the Park Service to authorize construction of the chair lift and allied developments at Hidden Valley. The Senate's Memorial was introduced by Stephen L. R. McNichols of Denver and E. J. (Ted) Herring of La Porte. [45] After its adoption, the House also gave its approval.

By June, local optimism had melted with the winter snows. The, Trail found the ski lift proposal to be "bogged down as badly as the [Korean] armistice talks." [46] Having heard nothing from Washington since early spring, the Trail decided to make some news of its own. It reminded its readers that the Government was not being asked to develop Hidden Valley, but only to grant permission so that private capital could develop the area under Park Service supervision. [47] The Trail then urged the establishing of a "war chest" of from \$3,000 to \$5,000 so that the local Development Committee could go ahead with plans for ski tows, warming shelters, estimated income graphs.

and all the rest of the details which will help . . . convince the National Park Service that the answer should be an unqualified 'yes' to our request for permission to build the chair lift. [48]

Predictably, this defiant stand brought a typical reply from the Park Service, when Director Wirth explained:

They recognize the need for additional winter sports facilities; however, they believe the additional facilities should be of modest character, scaled to the present recognized needs, normal expectancy of growth, and the number of skiers. The Service feels that these facilities should be designed for winter use only and, as such, there is considerable doubt as to whether the facilities proposed would be a sound financial investment.

The National Park Service would be opposed to the operation of a chair lift in Hidden Valley during the summer months, as it would be destructive to the scenic values and the enjoyment of the Park by hundreds of thousands of people now enjoying travel over the mountains on Trail Ridge Road which the federal government has spent millions of dollars to provide. [49]

Nevertheless, the persistent pressure applied by winter sports enthusiasts paid off, for in July 1954, Assistant Secretary of the Interior Orme Lewis and Parks Director Wirth issued a joint announcement calling for immediate action on the Hidden Valley improvement program. Final plans called for T-bar lifts, instead of chair lifts, at Lower and Upper Hidden Valley, and a warming shelter and shuttle bus service. [50] Surveys began on July 19, under a party of five men on loan from the Bureau of Reclamation. Control points and traverse lines were established, along with topography for the parking and lodge areas. [51] By October, preliminary survey work had been completed and the Park Service then allotted \$130,500 for the construction of basic facilities. [52]

Actual construction of the ski area, begun on October 5, was supervised by a new Park superintendent, for James V. Lloyd replaced David Canfield on September 1. [53] Lloyd diligently studied ski area operations. During a four-day period in January, he and Harold Fowler visited seven popular ski areas in California. They were especially interested in the Badger Pass ski area of Yosemite National Park. [54] In February, they inspected Arapahoe Basin ski area in Colorado. In an effort to develop an interpretive program, Lloyd relied on studies by Park Naturalist Ed Alberts and found that they helped in developing exhibits and other interpretive devices. [55] Later, seasonal ranger-naturalists Slater and Beidleman

reported on the possible use of the area as a summer interpretive center.

By the summer of 1955, the Hidden Valley ski area had been outfitted with two new Austrian disc-type ski lifts, the first ever used in the United States. The lower lift was 1,200 feet long, with a vertical rise of 280 feet, and it could carry 400 skiers an hour. The upper lift on the Big Drift measured 2,300 feet long, climbed 750 vertical feet, and could carry 800 skiers each hour. Also built during the winter was a 400-car parking lot. [56]

Superintendent Lloyd completed negotiations for the building of a ski lodge by August 15, when the Park awarded the \$87,888 contract to the Eagle Construction Company of Loveland. Blueprints called for a two-story concrete structure with a natural wood finish exterior. Interior features included a snack bar, ski rental service, ski lockers, first aid facilities, a cafeteria, and a large lounge with an open fireplace. The original design for the lodge was drawn by Cecil Doty of the Park Service's Western Office of Design and Construction in San Francisco. He was considered one of the nation's outstanding designers of resort lodges, and had previously designed the Hurricane Ridge Lodge in Olympic National Park. [57] Of the four interpretive panels on display in the lodge, one portrayed the weather conditions, while another described the forest-type at Hidden Valley. A third panel suggested the type of animal life, and the last concerned the history of man in the region.

The facilities at Lower Hidden Valley were officially opened on Sunday, December 18, 1955. Park Naturalist Ed Alberts acted as master of ceremonies for the 700 skiers and spectators. Special guests included N. T. Petrocine, president of the Estes Park Chamber of Commerce, Clarence Graves, Mayor of Estes Park, I. B. James of the Colorado Transportation Company, Superintendent Lloyd, Representative William Hill, and the Queen of Hidden Valley, Sheila Brick of Denver. [58]

From the beginning, Park personnel were directly involved in the operation of the ski facilities. By February 1956, weekend interpretive activities had crystallized into a program of informal illustrated talks in the lounge of the lodge building. That month, seasonal naturalists Beidleman and Slater gave nineteen talks to a total of 788 listeners. Then too, Lloyd and Assistant Superintendent Hartzog spent holidays and weekends at Hidden Valley "organizing operations and observing public use there." The Park rangers patrolled and packed ski trails, patrolled roads, and supervised the operation of the lodge. [59]

The following year, naturalist talks were shifted to the lunch room or lounge at opportune times, and beginning in June, ranger-naturalists manned the lodge on a daily basis. They conducted interpretive talks and short nature walks at unscheduled times as conditions of visitation dictated. During the next season, motion pictures on the Park Service were shown on weekends.

A summary of the 1957-1958 winter interpretive program offered evidence of the variety of presentations for but one year at the Hidden Valley area:

Grand Total Attendance	5,145
Types of Programs and times given National Park Service-related conservation and natural history films	90
Hidden Valley film	40
Mission 66 film	27
Total number of programs	157
Number of days programs were presented [60]	37

The Park Service has maintained an active interest in the Hidden Valley area to the present

(1968). Some responsibilities were lifted from rangers' shoulders in April 1963, when the concessioner, the Colorado Transportation Company, assumed responsibility for safety patrols. Most of the Park's interest in the skiing operation came to center on naturalist activities. Though Hidden Valley, since 1959, has been opened five days a week during the winter season, the Park's interpretive program functions only on weekends. Approximately ten per cent of all visitors attend naturalist programs; while total interpretive contacts run to over forty per cent. [61] Considering that 60,000 people visited the ski area during the 1964-1965 season, the seasonal and permanent naturalists often found large and enthusiastic audiences for their services. [62]

On an inspection trip to Hidden Valley in 1955, Park's Director Conrad Wirth mused that the Service faced the grave responsibility of "weighting today's requests against the possibility of destroying tomorrow's heritage." [63] It was impossible to satisfy both naturalists and sportsmen with the ski area development. Skiers wanted some trails, a larger building, and more facilities. Nature enthusiasts mourned the loss of the trees already removed for the present modest development. Considering the promises made by Park Service officials during a forty-year period, some development was inevitable. What finally occurred was a compromise, satisfying to neither side in the controversy.

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Rocky Mountain

Administrative History



CHAPTER XII:

INHOLDINGS, CONCESSIONS AND BOUNDARY EXTENSIONS

When created in 1915, Rocky Mountain National Park contained within its 229,062 acres of land over 11,000 acres of private inholdings. These inholdings consisted primarily of patented lands, based on Homestead, Timber and Stone, and Pre-emption entries, and of a number of irrigation ditches, reservoirs and mineral claims in the name of private parties and corporations. [1] On the west side of the Continental Divide, the private land holdings extended from Lulu City to Grand Lake. On the east side they were located principally in Moraine Park, Hallowell Park, and Beaver Meadows. Most of the land suitable for human use, including every meadow, was privately owned. Then as a result of subsequent boundary extensions, an additional 2,000 acres of private land became incorporated within the Park. Yet by 1965, the total amount of inholdings had been reduced through government purchases and exchanges to 2,300 acres. [2] What follows is the story of the land purchases, the boundary extensions and adjustments, and the people affected by these actions during the Park's first 50 years. A subordinate part of the story concerns changes in Park concession policies and some road building activities made possible or necessary by land and visitor developments.

Initially, the Park administration granted permits for continued operation of the six hotels, lodges and camps that had operated on federal land when the Park lands had been part of the Colorado National Forest. [3] At the same time, there were nine other hotels within the Park's boundaries, all located on private property and therefore not under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service.

In addition to the prompt grant of lodging permits, there also was almost immediate effort to enlarge the Park's boundaries. In 1916, Representative Charles B. Timberlake of Colorado's third congressional district introduced a bill in Congress to add the area of Gem Lake, Twin Sisters Peak, and Deer Mountain to the Park, a total area of 25,256 acres. After considerable debate the bill passed both houses of Congress and received President Wilson's signature on February 14, 1917. This law caused the boundary line to be moved eastward, in some places as much as four or five miles. As a result, a considerable area of additional private land in the vicinity of Estes Park and the Longs Peak district was included within the Park boundaries. Several tracts included in the expansion had formed isolated pockets in the Colorado National Forest, yet the Department of Agriculture had offered no objections to the passage of the bill. This addition of 43 square miles eastward increased the Park's area to 397-1/2 square miles. [4]

The enlargement of the Park brought new problems of traffic control, camp supervision, sanitation, and fire protection, requiring an increase in the ranger force and the assumption of additional financial burdens. The Park's annual appropriation of \$10,000 was hardly adequate to meet the expanded needs. Secretary of the Interior Franklin Lane considered the appropriation sufficient only for the administration and protection of the Park. He doubted

whether maintenance work on the trails or other improvements could be carried on unless the operating funds were increased. [5]

Regardless of skimpy appropriations, Park officials moved ahead with a limited land acquisition program. In March 1920, Superintendent L. C. Way secured a deed from a Dr. H. R. James for land upon which to erect an entrance station on the Fall River Road. Way also continued a previously begun survey of private holdings along the recently completed High Drive Road, looking toward their eventual purchase. The great majority of the property owners agreed to accept government purchase, if the price were right. Only a relatively few residents were downright hostile. They belonged to a small group of Park critics who grumbled publicly over the boundary expansion of 1917, with its inclusion of private lands. The spiritual leaders of this group were Clem Yore and Enos Mills. [6]

The appropriation for the Park in 1924 provided for the acquisition of additional inholdings. One tract obtained under this appropriation comprised 20 acres intended for use as a utility site, located two miles from Estes Park and just inside the Park boundary. Previously, the nearest government land on which shops, warehouses, stables, and road camps could be located was approximately seven miles from Estes Park and inaccessible during the winter months. The new site was accessible the year round and permitted the grouping of shops and utility buildings at a central point. Superintendent Roger Toll declared that the new utility site would facilitate the efficient handling of construction and maintenance work in the Park. [7]

While gaining land in 1924, the Park also lost some. Farmers living east of the Divide needed additional water for irrigation and wanted to dam the Cache la Poudre River on the northern edge of the Park. The center of the river marked the northern boundary of the Park and the southern boundary of the Colorado National Forest. Prior to 1915, a farmers' association had filed for a reservoir site on land soon to be included within the Park's boundaries. After 1915, the area to be flooded by the dam, which would be constructed in the Park, contained no unusual scenic qualities. Park officials were assured that no speculative or power interests would be served by the project, but only lands of the farmers composing the mutual association.

Neither officials of the Park Service nor Interior Department had any objections to the reservoir. [8] But since the Secretary of the Interior had no right to authorize the building of a dam in a National Park, a bill was introduced into Congress to have 345 acres of Park land transferred to the National Forest, where dam building was allowed. Sponsored by Representative Timberlake and approved by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture, the bill passed both houses of Congress without debate and was duly signed by the President.

In 1925 further changes in the Park's boundary were suggested by a Special Coordinating Committee organized by President Calvin Coolidge's Commission on Recreation. The Committee recommended two land exchanges between the National Park Service and the Forest Service, and a revision of the eastern boundary of the Park, as created in 1917, to eliminate certain lands held in private ownership. Representative L. C. Cramton, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Interior Department Appropriations proposed that this boundary be moved westward for an average distance of 2 or 2-1/2 miles, thereby eliminating 2/3 of the private property in that region from the Park. The proposed new boundary line was quite irregular and yet it would have retained much of the Park's government land in the area. [9]

While visiting the Park in July 1925, members of the House Appropriations Committee explained their stand on the proposed adjustment. For example, Representative Cramton opposed retaining privately held land within the Park's boundaries, particularly land which had been platted for cottage sites and extensively improved by the construction of cottages and other buildings not of a public nature. The members of the Committee were opposed in

general to making liberal appropriations for the Park, and especially opposed to appropriations for the construction and maintenance of roads through private property. They believe that such roads should be built and maintained by the state and county which received revenue from taxing the property. The majority of the Committee, however, did not advocate returning the boundary to the 1915 line, so some private lands could remain in the Park. These properties could later be bought with government appropriations, if the land were not too highly priced or extensively developed. Generally, the Gem Lake and Deer Mountain regions were to be retained within the Park, while the land in the vicinity of Twin Sisters was to be transferred to the Forest Service. [10] Yet despite all the investigation and planning for this attempt at boundary adjustment in 1925, Congress delayed acting on it for another year.

Another proposed change in the Park's boundaries became the subject of negotiations between the Forest Service and the Park Service, through conferences held by Colonel Allen S. Peck, District Forester, and Roger W. Toll, Park Superintendent. They sought to arrange the transfer from the Forest Service to the Park Service of an area on the headwaters of the North Fork of the Colorado River in the region of the Never Summer Range. The tract included the area between the Park boundary near Specimen Mountain and the crest of the Continental Divide. In exchange, the Forest Service would receive a strip of land 3 miles wide along the north end of the Park. But this exchange failed to materialize.

By far the most controversial adjustment involved the extension of the Park's boundary to the south. In 1925, also, it was proposed that the Forest Service transfer to the Park Service the high mountainous country between the south boundary of the Park and the Arapahoe Glacier. This adjustment would bring into the Park the St. Vrain glaciers, a part of the crest of the Continental Divide, and the Arapahoe Glacier, itself. Both Services agreed that the recreational and scenic values of this land exceeded its timber and grazing values. In exchange, the Park Service proposed to transfer to the Forest Service an area rich in timber lying south and southeast of Grand Lake. [11]

The Arapahoe region had been considered for inclusion in the Park when the bill for its creation was under study. But at that time, some critics thought there might be extensive mining developments in the region, so the area was omitted from the final bill. Later, in the negotiation over the 1925 proposal, it was agreed that certain private interests would be protected. The proposed boundaries would not include the extensive mineral development in the vicinity of Ward, Colorado. Individuals holding grazing permits on land to be transferred to the Park, would be assigned areas of equal value in the lands to be given to the Forest Service. Superintendent Toll thought it was probable that the holders of grazing permits could either be given satisfactory areas in other locations, or could have their existing permits extended for two or three years. The percentage of private property in the proposed additions to the Park was small, and it would not be affected by inclusion in the National Park. Tentative approval to these boundary changes were given by the Forest Service, [12] but when the proposal became publicly known, opposition developed near the affected area.

The opposition centered in Boulder, where certain interests were satisfied with the type of administration by Forest Service provided for the Arapahoe area, and were inclined to question if anything could be gained by a change of administration. In the Forest Reserve, mining claims could be filed upon and patented; permits could be secured for the construction of reservoirs and pipelines could be built for irrigation and power; grazing permits could be secured and timber sales obtained. If the area were included in the National Park such services, in all probability, would not be allowed. Furthermore, under the administration of the Forest Service, considerable trail construction had been done and the area was being developed for its recreational value. [13]

Superintendent Toll and Colonel Peck of the Forest Service met with members of the local

chambers of commerce throughout the region to explain the proposals and to allay the fears expressed by special interest groups. Toll informed his listeners that toll roads would not be allowed if the people were opposed to them. He declared that he favored the development of the Arapahoe addition as a trail area, un-marred by many roads, and that mountain clubs could continue their hiking if the region were taken into the Park. Toll also urged the local chambers of commerce, as a public service, to finance the establishment of lodges at scenic spots on the trails. [14] He assured Boulder that it would continue to control its own water supply, and predicted that the National Park would give publicity and help to bring business to the town of Boulder. Using many of the same arguments, Colonel Peck tried to reassure Boulder citizens that in no way would they be injured by the boundary change. [15]

The opposition to the boundary extensions, nevertheless, became vocal and well organized. Despite the fact that the region's metal mining industry was moribund, the Boulder Grubstake Association and the Boulder Metal Mining Association warned that the mineral regions of Boulder county would be adversely affected by the extension. Stockmen of Gilpin and Jefferson counties also "strongly protested" the boundary move. Officers of the Boulder County Stockgrowers Association, and the Longmont Chamber of Commerce—all were opposed. The Boulder Chamber of Commerce approved a resolution condemning the proposed boundary extension by a 49 to three vote. A local newspaper estimated that the citizens of Boulder disapproved of the change by a majority of 15 to one. [16]

Perhaps the most articulate—though not always rational—opposition came from the newspapers of Boulder. Some examples of their editorial policies follow:

It is Boulder's sacred duty to itself to oppose having the Arapahoe Glacier area taken out of the National Forest, because, for two major reasons, the fair, liberal policies of the Forest Service help Boulder while the restricted, discriminatory policies of the National Parks Service aid in keeping visitors away from Boulder It is fine to cooperate when co-operation involves no sacrifice of principle and duty. But it is ruinous for a city to want to co-operate for the mere sake of co-operation. There would not have been any United States of America if peace and co-operation had been exalted before justice and right.

The Boulder News-Herald, November 25, 1925. [17]

The park is already overgrown, And National Park interests are and always will be determined by what Estes Park wants Anyway we were here before the National Park was.

The (Boulder) Daily Camera, November 30, 1925. [18]

Boulder citizens are not short-sighted in this matter. They seek to protect their city's fundamental interests just as Greeley or any other alert municipality would strive to safeguard its welfare. There is so much that is wrong with administrative policies and regulations of the National Park Service that Boulder will vigorously fight to be kept from being sacrificed on the destructive altar dedicated to federal red tape and monopoly.

The Boulder News-Herald, December 2, 1925. [19]

Boulder county now receives thirty-five cents on every dollar that goes into a forest department for grazing and timber. If the park boundaries are extended, the county will lose this revenue.

The (Boulder) Daily Camera, December 5, 1925. [20]

Further inflaming Boulder's opposition was the widely believed rumor that the Rocky Mountain Parks Transportation Company was behind the boundary extension. Many Boulderites had not accepted as fair the government's grant of a monopoly to this firm to run sight-seeing cars and buses in the National Parks. Some local residents still felt injured by the outcome of the transportation controversy in the early 1920's. At a joint meeting of the Boulder Grubstake Association and the Boulder Metal Mining Association the following comments were heard:

The scheme in the background is for the . . . Transportation Company to frame a route from Denver over Lookout mountain to Idaho Springs through the Rollinsville country to Nederland and over the mountains to Estes Park. Boulder will be forgotten. . . .The Transportation company doesn't give a one cent's worth for Boulder. It is interested in its own string of hotels. . . . The transportation company is the nigger in the woodpile. [21]

In an effort to save the proposed southward extension, Superintendent Toll appeared before a meeting of the Boulder Chamber of Commerce on December 3. He suggested that the watershed of North Boulder Creek, from which the water supply of the City of Boulder was taken, and which also contained nearly all of the patented mining claims in the proposed addition, might be omitted from the area to be joined to the Park's southern boundary. [22]

Meanwhile, a bill embodying certain boundary changes had been introduced in Congress, and when it was passed, and then signed by President Coolidge on June 9, 1926, that ended the debate over any proposed southern extension of the Park. The purpose of the bill was to eliminate some of the extensive private holdings along the Park's east boundary, generally in line with recommendations made by the Cramton committee in 1925. The bill excluded 12,100 acres from the Park, of which 10,711 acres were privately owned lands and 600 acres were state school lands. Most of the lands in private ownership lay adjacent to the Village of Estes Park, with a small amount near the Longs Peak Inn. The National Park also lost 80 acres of land on its north boundary to permit the construction of a reservoir at Mirror Lake, which heretofore had straddled the Park boundary. As compensation, the Park received about 80 acres of land surrounding Twin Sisters Peaks. All of the other proposed boundary changes were left out of the final bill. The effect of the bill was to reduce the total area of the Park by approximately 20 square miles. [23]

In the midst of the excluded area on the Park's east side, the Park did however retain two separated tracts. One was the 40 acre tract used for a utility area. The other tract was government land on the slope of Twin Sisters, on which the Park Service maintained a fire lookout. Then too, not all of the privately owned land was eliminated from the Park by the 1926 Act, for approximately 9,100 acres of inholdings remained. Practically all of this property was unimproved, however, and Park officials thought that much of it would eventually be acquired for campgrounds and for the protection of the landscape. [24] Not surprisingly, Park officials continued to try to acquire the remaining private lands, either by purchase or by land exchange. In 1927 they obtained the purchase of the 80 acres of the Hewes-Kirkwood placer claim in the Longs Peak district. More significant, though, was a land exchange, perfected with one of the Park's original pioneers, Abner E. Sprague. Through a special act of Congress, the government transferred to Sprague a 160-acre tract of land in Glacier Basin on which Sprague's Hotel was located. In return, Sprague ceded to the government 80 acres of land including the lake at the entrance to Loch Vale, and 120 acres including Lake Mills, at the entrance to Glacier Gorge. Government ownership of the two lakes was considered an important factor in the planned development of Glacier Gorge and Loch Vale. The Park Service wanted to avoid the building of summer homes and the establishing of private enterprises around the lakes. [25]

Two years later, the government tried a new tack in the purchases of private lands in all National Parks, by attempting to obtain half the funds required from philanthropists. Congress provided \$2,750,000, with the condition that an equal amount be subscribed by private donors. Private donors balked, however, for they believed that the government should round out the existing Park with its own funds. But if the plan had been successful, it would have been especially significant for Rocky Mountain National Park, which still contained one of the largest acreage of privately owned lands of any of the National Parks. [26]

In 1930, the Park Service undertook to reacquire much of the land excluded in the June 9, 1926 boundary revision. A bill sponsored by Colorado Representative Edward T. Taylor, authorized the President, upon the joint recommendation of the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture, to extend the boundaries of Rocky Mountain National Park along physiographic lines so as to permit development of the Park's road system and easier administration of the Park. The areas subject to the authorization were the pending Never Summer Range addition, 14,144 acres, located adjacent to the Park's west boundary in the National Forest, and the pending Grand Lake addition, comprising 960 acres, also along the Park's west boundary. East of the Divide were the pending Fall River Valley addition of 520 acres, which formed a block-like indenture in the east boundary just above Estes Park, and the pending Big Thompson Valley addition, comprising 6,920 acres, forming an indenture irregular in shape in the east boundary, southwest of Estes Park. [27]

If authorized, the Never Summer Range addition would bring into the Park more land of a U-shaped loop formed by the Continental Divide and containing the headwaters of the Colorado River. One-third of this area, which possessed great scenic and geological interest, already lay within the Park, and 2/3 in the National Forest. Further more, this addition was required to permit the new Trail Ridge Road to be constructed entirely within the Park's limits. The proposed Grand Lake extension would bring in suitable flat lands for Park developments, as well as permit the extension of the Park's road system. [28]

The two sections of land along the east boundary consisted chiefly of land which had been eliminated from the Park by the Act of 1926. However, after the State of Colorado had ceded jurisdiction over its lands in the Park to the federal government, the Park Service planned extensive developments in the area. Furthermore, it was thought that some of the previously excluded private lands might have to be brought back into the Park to permit proper development of its entrance roads. According to Representative Taylor, many of the landowners whose property had been excluded in 1926 were asking to be re-added to the Park in order to share the benefits of the new roads. The Park Service was already spending \$1,000,000 on road development in the Park and was planning to spend another million. [29]

The Taylor bill, as approved on June 21, 1930, authorized the President to incorporate up to slightly more than 35 square miles of land into the Park. In accordance with the Act, a month later President Hoover added to the Park the Never Summer Range Area, comprising an area of just over 22 square miles, but he failed to act on the other pending additions. [30] The acquisition of the Never Summer Range permitted Park Service officials immediately to advertise a contract for a \$500,000 extension of the Trail Ridge Road through a district affording relatively easy grades. [31]

About the same time, Albright announced that the Park Service would allow no new concessioners to operate in the Park, and that many of the existing concessions would be removed, "if the co-operation of the community is forthcoming." His plan was to eliminate all concessioners, except those holding the transportation franchise, if the businessmen of Estes Park village provided for the needs of visitors. [32]

The following year, the Park Service took the first step toward eliminating the 45 privately

owned hotels, camps and lodges located on patented land in the National Park. It promptly acquired the Horseshoe Inn property, of 120 acres, on the Highdrive Road in Horseshoe Park, placed under contract a tract of 80 acres on the Trail Ridge Road and began negotiations on several other tracts. [33] During late 1931 deals were completed for the sale of 1,870 acres of the Pieter Hondius property in Beaver and Horseshoe Parks, and for the E. S. Allen and Abner Sprague properties on the High Drive. By the end of the year the government had either acquired or was in the process of acquiring more than 3,000 acres of land in Moraine, Beaver, Horseshoe, and Tuxedo Parks and in areas surrounding the Trail Ridge and Bear Lake roads. [34]

Superintendent Edmund Rogers explained that some of the Park's resorts, such as the Moraine Lodge and Horseshoe and High Drive Inns, were to be torn down to "preserve natural scenic beauty, especially along the new highways, and to make preserves for deer and elk." Some resorts, however, such as Brinwood Ranch-Hotel, Sprague's Lodge, Stead's Ranch, Jack Woods Camp, and Bear Lake Lodge were to be purchased and then leased to private operators on 20-year contracts. Rogers also announced that a three-year \$150,000 trail-building program would begin immediately, with the trails extending to the boundaries of Estes Park Village. Resurfacing and oiling of government roads would consume another \$500,000. [35]

In 1932, the Park Service acquired more lands in and around Rocky Mountain National Park. By a presidential proclamation signed on January 11, approximately 3,075 acres were annexed, principally in Moraine Park and along Beaver Creek, thus providing additional winter range for deer and elk. [36] Shortly thereafter, the government acquired by 20 voluntary sales, title to 4,414 more acres in the meadow land along the Thompson River drainage, at a total cost of \$435,316.00. An additional 240 acres were placed under contract for purchase. [37]

The Estes Park Trail, alarmed at the government's vigorous land acquisition program, questioned the survival of Estes Park itself:

Will Estes Park become a close[d] corporation in another ten years? Will the National Park continue its encroachment until it surrounds the village and leaves it no room to expand? Will lots become increasingly more valuable since there would be no further land for subdividing?

The department of the interior has a complete and comprehensive program laid out for the development of the national parks and the existence of this village will not be permitted to stand in the way of this development. [38]

The Park Service experienced several setbacks in its land acquisition program. One of them occurred when Representative Timberlake introduced a bill in May 1932 for adding 5,650 acres to the Park along its eastern boundary. [39] But due to an error in drafting the bill in the Washington office of the Park Service, the extension included the famous Stanley Hotel, the Estes Park Chalet and numerous summer houses. "Almost overnight" objections came from the Estes Park Chamber of Commerce, the Estes Park Real Estate Board, the Larimer County Board of Commissioners, as well as chambers of commerce of Loveland, Longmont, and Fort Collins. To the emotional argument against the inclusion of the Stanley Hotel in the Park, there were objections to removing \$500,000 from the taxable property of the region and blocking the possibility for the future expansion of Estes Park village. [40] Though it was reworked to exclude the Stanley Hotel, the bill became pigeonholed in committee.

Another setback came in late 1935 when the Secretary of the Interior suggested the desirability of incorporating the Arapahoe Glacier area in the Park. Immediately cattle raisers

in Grand County, working through the East Fork Stock Association, filed their objections with the Colorado governor and the trial balloon soon collapsed. [41] About the same time, another proposal which died aborning concerned the acquisition of Grand Lake. On October 1, Superintendent Edmund Rogers met with representatives of the Estes Park and Grand Lake Lions Clubs, and found that there was "strong agitation" among the residents of Grand Lake against the extension, so shortly the plan was shelved. [42]

The depression years were frustrating to advocates of boundary changes. Concessioners in the Park found that the effects of the depression were serious but not fatal. Business, though slow during the early 1930's, picked up steadily and by the summer of 1936 was considered "excellent." [43] With business "looking-up," a new operator's building, the Trail Ridge Museum at Fall River Pass, financed by the Rocky Mountain Motor Company, was opened on June 20, 1937. Furthermore, by 1938, the Park Service believed it was timely to seek further Park expansion by acquiring three areas. The first included a 3-1/2-mile strip of privately owned lands along the eastern boundary, and the second, a 4-mile strip along the Thompson River. These proposed additions totaled 80 square miles. A third tract, of 54 square miles, lay directly adjacent to the southern boundary of the Park but was not as large as that under consideration 12 years before. [44]

At the request of the Secretary of the Interior, Representative Taylor introduced a bill (January 14) to authorize acquisition of the three tracts. Soon thereafter, Park Superintendent David Canfield found that local sentiment seemed to be "mildly in sympathy" with the proposed additions, although the majority of the area's residents appeared apathetic. [45] Within a month, however, substantial opposition had formed. Those fighting against the legislation were in general the same groups that had blocked the earlier attempt at a boundary extension southward—the Stockmen's Association, the State Mining Association, and the Estes Park School Board. [46] Also the fact that President Roosevelt, whose land policies were opposed by many western Republicans, had thrown his support behind the bill did not enhance its chances in this Republican neighborhood.

From the standpoint of rallying support, the proposed legislation came up at an awkward time. Superintendent Canfield noted that the great majority of the people in the region had little patience with the Park Service because of its opposition to the Colorado-Big Thompson diversion project. To explain the Park's position on the proposed boundary extensions, he and members of his staff spoke at public meetings in various valley towns throughout the spring of 1938. There was one particularly "touchy" meeting in Boulder which Canfield, John McLaughlin, and Regional Director Thomas J. Allen, Jr., attended. Canfield later remembered that the hall was filled with "wild cowboys and miners with liquor on their breath and fire in their eyes." His comments were poorly received and he was jostled as he tried to leave. [47] Understandably, Canfield was disturbed by what he found in public sentiment. He reported that "educational and 'missionary' work on the part of the part of the Service is the only answer I can see." [48]

Superintendent Canfield soon proved to be a master at "missionary work." From the first he kept his office in Estes Park open the year round, whereas earlier superintendents had moved their operations to Denver for the winter months. He met with the Park's severest critics periodically. After the critics became personal friends with the youthful superintendent, he believed they found it harder to criticize the Park's programs. [49] Canfield was also a joiner in local organizations, and he had some of his subordinates follow suit in order "to put out the smoke before they became blazes." [50]

He was aided in his efforts by the Park's public relations man, Ernie Rostel, and Canfield himself became good friends with most of the valley town editors. [51] After a while, area editors confirmed stories about the Park with Canfield, before printing them. Moreover,

Canfield promoted talks by the able public speakers on his staff, notably Chief Naturalist Ray Gregg, so that an "awful lot of good missionary work" was done by them. [52] Yet despite all of Canfield's efforts, no gains were made in behalf of Representative Taylor's bill throughout 1938. The Regional and Washington offices of the Park Service gave little support to the Park's embattled and eventually embittered superintendent. Meanwhile, the Estes Park School Board gave him little rest. [53] At year's end, the proposal died in Congressional committee for lack of sufficient support.

During 1939, the contest was renewed. The local School Board continued to send out letters requesting that residents lodge protests with their congressmen against any boundary extension, although by May, the Estes Park Chamber of Commerce threw its support to the parkway plan that was to accompany the eastern boundary extension. [54] And then in June, Senator Henry F. Ashurst of Arizona sponsored a resolution authorizing a thorough investigation of all questions relating to the proposed enlargement of the Park. The resolution, which was approved, appropriated \$6,000 for the purpose. During August, the Congressional investigating group came to Estes Park High School Auditorium. The sessions attracted several hundred spectators and interested parties. [55]

Representatives of organizations on both sides of the issues, as well as individuals representing only themselves, were heard. The major opposition came from the Colorado Metal Mining Association, the Colorado Stock Growers' Association, and the Grand County Commissioners. Support for the boundary extensions was offered by scores of local residents and such organizations as the Colorado Water Conservation Board and the Northern Colorado Conservancy District. [56] From the opposing types of testimony, one point stood out, namely, praise for the Park administration. The Trail reported on

the practically unanimous high regard in which the National Park Service was held. There was no suggestions at any time that the Park Service was other than highly interested in the development of Colorado and this region as a vacation center for the entire country. [57]

But compliments, while welcome, do not pass legislation, and at year's end the Park extensions remained propositions rather than facts. Despite further Congressional study the following year, no further action was taken until 1941. [58] Superintendent Canfield could report that, "It was thought doubtful if any favorable action could be expected in the near future." [59]

While the proposed boundary extensions had been under consideration, the Park had continued to purchase private lands. During the 1939 fiscal year options had been secured on lands needed in the construction of the western section of Trail Ridge Road, and a year later, title was acquired to three estates covering 562 acres of land. In making these and other purchases, the Park Service did not "pressure" the landowners. In fact, the owners were anxious to sell, even impatient at delays encountered in the negotiations. Superintendent Canfield worried lest past delays in consummating land purchases would jeopardize the success of future deals. [60]

Then in mid-August 1941, interest in the Park's southern extension and eastern approach road flared again before being tabled for the duration of the World War. A new bill was introduced in the senate embracing both issues, and another senate investigating committee journeyed to Estes Park. In contrast to the bitterness and hard feeling aroused at the hearing in 1939, the proceedings in 1941 were relatively calm. Many of those who had vehemently opposed the parkway two years before now testified that the construction of a new approach road was of paramount importance to the entire community. [61] Before the hearings closed, the committee recommended that Superintendent Canfield make a new survey of the

proposed roadway between the Park Service headquarters and the Thompson River entrance. Senator Carl Hatch of New Mexico reported that the members of his committee were "deeply impressed" by the need for the new approach road. A proposed 1,080 acre extension on Fall River and the southern extension were dropped from consideration, however. [62] Thereafter, all boundary discussions were suspended for the duration of the war.

After the end of the war, the demand for summer home and cabin sites in the Park caused the value of its private lands to more than double. Several important tracts changed hands at greatly inflated prices. Superintendent Canfield, who returned to the Park in 1946 after serving in the Navy, did not expect that land and building values would ever drop back to their pre-war levels. He estimated that the sale value of the 6,000 acres of private land in the Park would amount to nearly \$1,500,000. During fiscal 1946, the Park Service made a study of these lands and then prepared a tabulation under the categories "Urgent," "Important," and "Long Range." [63] Canfield believed that the private land problem was "one of the most serious" the Park faced. He noted a general tendency to subdivide and parcel out for home construction land which included the natural feeding grounds for the Park's wildlife. He warned that funds were needed immediately if the situation was to be remedied.

In reality, the regular appropriations were skimpy and did not cover the operating expenses of the Park, let alone allow for an ambitious land purchase effort. Due to lack of funds, Canfield could not hire sufficient Park personnel to guard the entrance stations. Ironically, the Park administration could not even collect its own entrance fee, which since 1939 had amounted to \$1.00 per vehicle. All other national parks had also collected a fee, ranging up to \$3.00 per vehicle at Yellowstone. Canfield estimated that with an additional appropriation of \$3,500 the Park could have collected another \$10,000 in entrance fees. [64]

While the Park was hard pressed for funds, the various hotels and lodges within its boundaries were enjoying a booming business. To purists in the Park Service, over-night accommodations and homestead buildings were inconsistent with the purpose of national parks in general and Rocky Mountain National Park in particular. Buildings in the Park, such as the various lodges, became destinations in themselves, focal points of human use. And extensive human use tended to modify or destroy the peculiar habitat of the area. Human habitation often compromised other values. [65]

Superintendent Canfield, nevertheless, considered that hotels were necessary parts of the Park's operation. He believed that they would not interfere with the Park's routine as long as their total capacities did not increase to more than 300. To him, people who stayed at these overnight accommodations gained a better "park experience" than tourists driving to the Park from lodgings outside the boundaries. He believed that the concessioners should be granted long-term contracts at the expiration of their current leases. [66]

On the other hand members of the Park Service Concessions Advisory Group, which visited the National Park in August 1947, favored short-term leases, stiff improvement requirements, and the eventual elimination of overnight accommodations within the Park's boundaries. [67] And their views were gradually put into practice. Perhaps it is significant of the trend that the owner of Forest Inn decided to discontinue its operation in 1951. In any case, by December of that year when the twenty-year contracts for Stead's Ranch, Brinwood Ranch-Hotel, the Jack Woods Cottages, Bear Lark Lodge and the Fern Lake Lodge lapsed, each of the concessionaires was given only a two-year contract extension. [68] This step was followed later by a notice to Park officials from Park Service headquarters that five-year contract extensions, from December 1953, would be allowed for Bear Lark Lodge, Sprague's Lodge, Camp Woods, and the Brinwood Ranch-Hotel, but no further extensions would be granted. Clearly the days of the concessioners in the Park were numbered.

Meanwhile the Park Service's land purchase program gained momentum. During fiscal 1948 an option was approved to purchase the historic 159.98-acre Lulu City townsite, located at the headwaters of the upper Colorado River. An option was taken on approximately 50 acres located just west of the National Park utility area, and negotiations were started for the purchase of five additional tracts of private land. [69] These steps were followed in the next five years by the acquisition of 1,940 acres of inholdings, many of them containing useful buildings, for total of \$176,115. [70]

By June 1953, Canfield's staff completed and forwarded to the Region 2 office the five-year acquisition program for the whole Park, with emphasis on the east side of the Divide. Such planning was supplemented of official appraisals of selected tracts, and by obtaining options on almost 900 acres of inholdings, including the Forest Inn property. During the following fiscal year, 1954-1955, further appraisals were carried out on both sides of the Divide, and the Park Service purchased the Faulkner Cabins in Moraine Park from Dorothy and Edgar Stopher. Old family names, some familiar geographic place names, were gradually removed from property signs and mailboxes in the Park—Williams, Woolf, Husted, Fischer, Godchaux, Ashton. Other names too would soon be missed—Summerland, Faulkner Cabins, Farmers Union Sawmill. These changes, however, were but a prelude to subsequent developments.

In the summer of 1956, outstanding success marked the National Park's boundary, road-building, and land-purchase programs. On June 27, 1956, President Eisenhower extended the eastern boundaries by proclamation, thereby adding 320 acres of non-federal lands to the Park. Although the new boundaries were irregular, the annexed territory lay generally south of the utility area, west of Estes Park Village, and between the utility area and the Big Thompson entrance to the Park. Some 240 acres of the total rested high on Eagle Cliff. Sixty of its acres were developed and included land owned by the Estes Park Gas Company, the Graves Gas Company, and the proprietors of the Northrup Cottages and some private homes. [71] Of course, all such private holdings would have to be purchased before their ownership passed to the government, and Park officials announced it would be some time before sufficient funds would be available for such purchases. [72]

Hard on the heels of this boundary extension came the announcement by Superintendent James V. Lloyd on August 31 that the Park Service planned to build a nearly two-and-a-third-mile eastern approach road to the National Park. The road would branch off of State Highway 262 in the vicinity of Beaver Point and connect with the Trail Ridge Road at Beaver Meadows. [73] Such a road had been considered since 1932, when the project was first proposed to Congress. The old approach had been a narrow country road, which became increasingly unsatisfactory for the volume of traffic it had to carry. It contained many blind curves and was poorly maintained, and as the amount of travel to the Park increased, reaching a total of 289,000 cars in 1948, there was a corresponding increase in the number of accidents. [74]

Consequently, in 1949, the Park Service introduced a bill into Congress to authorize the acquisition of a 500-foot right-of-way for the new road. The width of the right-of-way was based on a desire to eliminate or control commercialism such as the Park Service considered undesirable along the old approach road. The bill was readily passed by both houses of Congress and signed by the President on August 24, 1949. Then, the Park Service began drafting plans for acquiring the necessary land, while awaiting Congressional appropriations to implement them. [75] Superintendent Lloyd had told the Trail that the land acquisition program might extend over a considerable period of time, and he predicted correctly. But meanwhile, real estate values on the various properties to be acquired were to be determined by a group of experienced and impartial Colorado appraisers. [76]

By 1956, this land purchase program, as marked by Superintendent Lloyd's announcement of a plan to construct the new approach road, became a part of a larger Park Service project. At that time, the Service initiated the most far-reaching plan of nation-wide park development and park preservation in the history of the Service. The ambitious program was called Mission 66, because it was intended for completion in 1966. Its design was two-fold. First, the program was aimed at the development of additional and vitally needed accommodations for Park visitors, such as campgrounds, visitor centers, interpretive exhibits, and additional trails and roadways. The second aim was to locate these facilities in areas where they could be developed without deterioration of the natural features of the land. Also as part of Mission 66, overnight accommodations would gradually be excluded from national parks, and the government would continue to acquire inholdings. [77]

Because of the initiation of Mission 66 there was much activity in the Park's Land Office during the autumn months of 1956. Forty-three tracts of land had to be purchased in connection with the new approach road and Management Assistant Patterson conferred with the majority of the landowners. During January 1957, the contract appraisers had completed their Basic Data Report and then continued with other aspects of their assignment. By July, all owners of land to be purchased had been contacted either personally or by mail. Appraisal reports were completed in August and within two months options had been received on 36 of the 43 tracts.

While this important work was going on, the proprietors of Sprague's Lodge notified Park officials that Sprague's Lodge would cease operations with the close of the 1957 season. The proprietors requested the termination of their contract, which had a year to run, because of increased costs of operation and the need to spend considerable sums to rehabilitate the depreciated government-owned plant. [78] The Park Service agreed to terminate the contract, so by the end of the year, the Lodge was closed down. So for the first time since 1908, Rocky Mountain Park was unadorned with the name of Sprague. [79]

The elimination of Sprague's Lodge and the imminent elimination of all other government-owned overnight concession accommodations caused the Estes Park Chamber of Commerce directors to urge a community study of the Park Service policy. The special reason for the study arose from the announced Park Service plan to acquire and raze commercial facilities in order to restore the Park's "natural surroundings," when at the same time Parks Director Conrad Wirth reportedly said that some of the land would be used for picnic areas and camp sites. [80] The Estes Park Trail wondered how "picnic areas and camp sites" would serve to "restore the setting to natural surroundings."

The Trail asked some cogent questions:

Just how much 'low altitude' land does a campground for 400 people require, Mr. Wirth? Is it less or more than the land required for lodges of similar accommodation?

We favor guarding and retention of natural beauty, but not capricious change from one type of human use to another. [81]

In another issue, the paper expressed bewilderment:

We can't quite understand why folks who desire lodge accommodations are to be denied the same privilege of 'living in the Park.' A hundred people living at a lodge create less confusion, less muss and fuss, than a hundred camping out. [82]

During August 1958, the Trail continued its editorial campaign. It found that buildings were still standing which once belonged to Moraine Park Cottages, Faulkner Cottages, and

Sprague's Lodge. With the exception of Sprague's, many of the other buildings were occupied by Park personnel. In fact, a greater development than before had been made at Moraine Cottages. The Trail asked, "Is this returning the Park to the glory that was given it by the Creator?" [83] By September, the paper was pleading with the Park Service not to discriminate against Rocky Mountain Park.

We hope that we will be put in the same category as Yellowstone, Teton, Glacier and many other parks where accommodations are being improved, not removed.

We are not asking for more; we are merely asking that we be permitted to keep what we have, on a long-term basis. [84]

Faced with this outcry, the Park Service sent a questionnaire to various local organizations, including the Trail, to find out specifically what accommodations the people wanted in the Park. Rumors, therefore, circulated that the Service was reconsidering or "backing-down" on its concession policy. The rumors proved to be true. After considering the replies to its questionnaire, the Park Service modified its earlier directive during the following November. The Fall River Lodge in Horseshoe Park and the Brinwood Ranch-Hotel in Moraine Park would be permitted to continue operations through 1959, even though their leases expired before then. Plans were drafted to enter into concession contracts effective January 1, 1960, for the operation of the two facilities, plus Sprague's Lodge, on long-term 20-year leases. Meanwhile, local Park officials were advised to proceed with the elimination of the other overnight concession operations in the eastern section of the Park. [85]

As a part of its modified concession plan, the Park Service sought informal offers for the operation of two of the lodges. Director Wirth announced that successful applicants would be required to furnish such public accommodations as overnight lodging, food, and a saddle horse livery. The operators would also have to finance the costs of modernization and rehabilitation in line with Park Service development plans. [86] But there were no takers.

In September 1959, word came that the two lodges were closing down. The operator of the Fall River Lodge told the Trail that the terms offered by the Park Service for the new 20-year lease were unacceptable. They involved an investment of approximately \$112,000 "without even touching guest improvements. His counter-proposal and request for an additional season for operation were both refused by the Service. [87] The operator of the Brinwood Ranch-Hotel also failed to reach agreement with the Service. Thus, two more landmarks of the Park were taken one step closer to obliteration. Probably speaking for many local residents, the Estes Park Trail viewed the passing of the two lodges with regret. "Change generally is a wonderful thing . . . but sometimes its manifestations are difficult for the Old Cowpoke to swallow." [88]

Other aspects of the Mission 66 program meant construction, as when in January 1960, contracts were let for improvement of the Fall River Entrance area; slope stabilization along the Trail Ridge Road on the west side of the Park; and grading, base coursing and bituminous surface treatment of the Bear Lake Cutoff road. [89] Additional purchase of inholdings paved the way for further construction, although at other times it was delayed by difficulties in effecting such purchases, as for the property of the Deer Ridge Chalet. [90]

This Chalet was an exceedingly popular and garish gift-store which annually attracted over 1,500,000 visitors. Negotiations for this 224-acre property had been underway for some years between the Ed Schubert family corporation and the government. Thorough appraisals were made in 1955 and again in 1958, but when no final agreement could be reached, the government started condemnation proceedings. Documents for condemnation and a "declaration of taking" were filed in the United States District Court in Denver in late March

1960. The government was successful in its effort, and thereafter paid \$270,350 for the property. [91] In this case Park staff members visited the numerous private lands owners in the vicinity to maintain "good relations with the local people," as well as to allow Park officials to keep abreast of changes in land ownership and development. [92] This same effort for good relations, plus fair evaluation of property, made it possible to acquired readily all but two of the 43 land parcels needed for the eastern approach road to the Park, and in these two instances, the evaluations were determined by jury trials. [93]

A major land purchase within the Park in 1962 concerned Stead's Ranch, which was the last major dude and guest ranch on the Park's east side. It also represented the last remaining land within the Park of the original 2,000 acres of homesteads taken out by members of the Abner Sprague family in 1862. Various Park officials had worked for years to purchase this property, but either a lack of appropriations or a clash of personalities had stopped the sale from going through. Superintendent Allyn Hanks completed the purchase during July by working closely with its owner, and keeping outside interference to a minimum. [94] A price of \$750,000 was paid for approximately 600 acres of land in and around Moraine Park, and all the buildings of the 185-capacity ranch. In all, eight tracts of land were involved, including a nine-hole golf course. [95]

Saddened by the news of the purchase, the Estes Park Trail editorialized, "The community will be poorer without Stead's; impoverished spiritually, if not actually. No man ever lived who could afford to lose a single friend." [96] Park officials defended the purchase as but a continuation of the Park Service's policy to acquire all private lands within the Park's boundaries in order to restore the area to its natural state. Ironically, the Park Service then reluctantly established a campground near the location of the dude ranch to meet the demands of a growing number of campers. To many local residents the campground seemed a poor substitute for the old Stead's Ranch. [97]

The Park's west side was also the scene of a notable land deal when in February 1963, the Park Service and the Colorado Transportation Company perfected a land exchange which had been contemplated since 1957. The exchange, as authorized by Congress, permitted the government to convey its interest in the Fall River Pass Store on Trail Ridge Road and the land surrounding Grand Lake Lodge, in exchange for equally valued private lands within the National Park. In addition, the act provided that the 47 acres of land encompassing the lodge be excluded from the Park boundary, by action of the Secretary of the Interior. [98]

A month later, a master list of all land acquisitions in the Park was drawn up. It showed that since 1923 when the program began, the government had purchased 11,080 acres at a cost of \$3,235,000. [99] Some 2,300 acres remained to be bought, in 150 separate parcels. Park officials stratified these parcels according to desired priority of purchase time. First priority lands included those tracts needed for Park developments, such as roads or bridges. Next were lands that 13 homestead owners wished to sell, "old folks with a friendly, wholesome relationship with the Park." Third on the time schedule were cabins or homes which were conspicuous, but which were not up for sale. Last were small and inconspicuous private developments, such as lands in Tuxedo Park and Eagle Cliff. A Park official estimated that it would take 30 years to buy up the remaining private lands. Although by 1965, purchasing such land was no longer a great problem, the Park Service hoped to finish the job as quickly as possible, because the owners might sub-divide, thus complicating the land purchasing program. [100]

In addition to furthering the land purchase program, Mission 66 had aided numerous types of construction. By 1965, a total of \$4,391,711 had been spent on construction projects in the Park and Shadow Mountain National Recreation Area. These projects included roads and parking areas; buildings, such as the ski lodge at Hidden Valley, three entrance stations, two

power-generating systems, 32 modern comfort stations, the Alpine Visitor Center (dedicated at Fall River Pass in the summer of 1965), and an elaborate Administration Building, complete with administrative offices, information lobby, and an auditorium for interpretive programs. [101] All told, that is counting Mission 66 funds and regular Park appropriations, an estimated \$8,000,000 had been expended on the Park and Recreation Area from 1956 to 1966. Still much remained to be done to prepare the Park to meet and serve the more than 2,000,000 visitors who pass the entrance stations each year. [102]

Ironically, Mission 66, by "modernizing" the Park and by making travel in it more attractive and comfortable, had detracted from the Park's scenic naturalness. Campers rest where pioneers once homesteaded. Roads wide and with gentle grades make Park travel easier but not necessarily more meaningful. Shelters warm the body, but in some cases, block scenery which could inspire the minds of visitors. Still, amid all the campgrounds, buildings, and comfort stations, Park officials were proud of the fact that there have been preserved unspoiled areas where man could walk and sit and muse. As one official has said

When you travel to a section of the Park which is not adulterated by man, where you see no beer cans or cigarette butts, where the only trails are those made by elk or deer, then you think 'My God, this is something special!' and you experience a secret delight in being there, alone. [103]

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CHAPTER XIII: THE PARK RANGERS

There have been scattered references in the preceding chapters to activities of Park rangers, a group which composed the membership of what came to be called the Protection Department of Rocky Mountain National Park. But their duties, experiences and accomplishments merit supplementary and separate description. Initially, three rangers were enrolled on the Park staff, but by 1966 the number had grown to fourteen. The need for this increase stemmed from the heavy demands placed on the rangers in fulfilling the Park's objectives, particularly as the number of visitors steadily grew. The scope of the ranger's assignment has been broadly summarized by Superintendent Edmund Rogers, when in 1933 he reported on the duties of the Protection Department:

This department is charged with the protection of the Park's forests from fire, insects and trespassing; guidance, control and protection of the Park's visitors' maintenance and rationing of the shelter cabins; care and maintenance of public camp grounds; the keeping of detailed travel records and pertinent related data thereto; protection and control of the Park's wild life; preliminary maintenance of trails; and maintenance of the Park's telephone lines during the winter months as well as many other miscellaneous details during winter months and times of emergency. [1]

Not all of these duties had emerged when the Park opened in 1915, but there was plenty of work for the first three rangers, namely R. T. "Dixie" MacCracken, Frank Koenig and Reed Higby. Superintendent L. C. Way later recalled that in the early days: "The few rangers worked like slaves building camps and enforcing park regulations." [2] They also were occupied with a multiplicity of other tasks. For example, in September 1915 rangers MacCracken, Koenig, and Higby fought the Park's first forest fire. That same month they stocked Lake Odessa, Fern Lake, and Two River Lake with trout. In fact, during the first year, rangers placed a total of 165,000 trout in Park lakes. [3] In cooperation with the State Game and Fish Department and the United States Bureau of Fisheries, rangers have maintained a systematic annual fish stocking program. By 1965, an estimated eleven tons of fish tempted the fisherman in the Park's streams and lakes.

In 1917, rangers strung eighteen miles of metallic circuit telephone line from Mill Creek Ranger Station to Grand Lake, thus giving communication between the District Ranger and Supervisor's office. This work was accomplished mostly on snowshoes and skis during the winter months. Winter work was hard even for the roughhewn rangers. Ranger Fred Michel suffered two frozen toes trying to drive by car from Estes Park to Grand Lake to relieve MacCracken. He succeeded in reaching the Lake only on his fourth try. [4] That same year rangers built their own ranger stations, their chief ranger's residence, and the home of the Park superintendent. The phrase "constructed with all ranger labor" became a familiar one in the Park's Annual and Monthly Reports.

Incidentally, there was marked individualism, as well as occasional instances of

irresponsibility among the early rangers. In 1917, MacCracken balked at being assigned to the Grand Lake ranger district, and decided to enlist in the Army instead. Koenig allowed cattle to run on Park lands, and spent much of his time "gathering medicinal herbs, butterflies, moths, beetles . . . and minerals for profit." [5] As a consequence, he was dismissed from the staff. In 1922, Ranger Fred Grange disappeared from his station at Poudre Lakes, having purloined a pay check from a member of the road crew. [6] He was last seen going due east on the Grand Lake-to-Denver stage.

In addition to the variety of tasks that have been described, the rangers also faced bizarre experiences—oftentimes connected with the mountain range which formed the spine of the National Park. The rangers climbed these mountains both for pleasure and to rescue sportsmen whose ambition overreached their ability. Dominating the range, as previously mentioned, is Longs Peak, 14,255 feet in elevation. The first authenticated ascent to its summit was made on August 23, 1868 by Major John Wesley Powell. Powell's party, which climbed the mountain from the south side, was probably not the first group of people to stand atop this mountain, for legends suggest that the Arapahoe Indians maintained an eagle trap on the summit, and therefore may have visited it frequently.

A later climber, ranger Jack Moomaw, made one of the first winter ascents of Longs Peak, on January 9, 1922, using the same route as Powell. Moomaw did it for no official reason, for he explained:

It was a clear day, one could see every gulch and cliff and the Peak stood out like a gigantic etching. A sudden desire came over me to be up there; it seemed a challenge that could not be ignored. [7]

During the following fall, Moomaw again scaled the Peak, but this time neither alone nor by the relatively safe south face. He accompanied James W. Alexander, Mathematics Professor of Princeton University, up the precipitous and dangerous east face. Two days before, Alexander had made the first ascent by that route. Moomaw added spice to the careful but uneventful climb by taking pictures of the ascent with a Kodak camera. As memorable an occasion as this must have been for Moomaw, he later took part in an ascent more significant—the futile attempt to save the life of Agnes Vaille.

Early on the afternoon of Monday, January 12, 1925, Chief Ranger Thomas J. Allen, Jr., phoned Moomaw at his residence to hurry to the Longs Peak Inn, for trouble had been reported on Longs Peak; Moomaw, Allen, and another ranger were going to have to investigate it. At the Inn, the rangers were told the basic facts of a tragedy. On the previous Saturday, January 10, Agnes W. Vaille, Elinor Eppich and Walter Kiener, all Colorado Mountain Club members, had started up the Longs Peak trail toward Timberline Cabin, with the intention of climbing the east side of the Peak. [8] Subsequently the weather became threatening, so by early Sunday morning the three considered giving up their attempt to continue any further. Then by 9:30 a.m. weather conditions had improved and Miss Vaille and Kiener decided to proceed, but Miss Eppich returned to Longs Peak Inn. It might be noted that no one had yet succeed in ascending the east side during winter time.

The two climbers made good progress, but when darkness came that Sunday, Miss Vaille and Kiener were still a considerable distance from the top. They agreed, however, that it would be more hazardous for them to retrace their steps than to complete their climb, so they continued upward. During the night the temperature dropped to 14 degrees below zero and a strong west wind began to blow, yet they reached the summit at 4:00 a.m. Monday, January 12.

Because of the intense cold and their own fatigue, they decided to descend the north side of

the Peak, direct to the Boulderfield, a shorter but more dangerous route. While on the most difficult part of the north side trail, Agnes Vaille fell and slid about 150 feet down the steep face of the rock. She was stopped only by the rocks at the lower edge of the snow. Kiener quickly reached her, but was unable to help her make substantial progress. After an hour's wait Kiener decided to start down for help. Miss Vaille believed that if she could get a half an hour's sleep she could resume the trip and meet Kiener on his return. In the preceding fifty hours they had slept less than an hour. [9]

Meanwhile a party of local residents, men, composed of Jack Christen, Hugh Brown, Oscar Brown and Herbert Sortland, formed a rescue party and started up the peak. When this party did not return on Monday the rangers were called into the search. Upon reaching Timberline Cabin, the three rangers found Kiener, Hugh Brown and Christen huddled about the stove; Oscar Brown and Sortland had earlier been forced to turn back. The rangers were told that about 4:00 or 4:30 p.m., Brown, Cristen and nearly exhausted Kiener had reached Miss Vaille. They found her body lying face down on a rock, a few feet from where Kiener had left her. She probably had been dead for several hours. Unable to bring her down the mountain, the men returned to Timberline Cabin about 7:30 p.m. where Moomaw and the rangers found them. [10] After spending a sleepless night at the Cabin, the entire party went back to the Longs Peak Inn to wait for favorable weather before retrieving Miss Vaille's body. While at the Inn, they learned that Herbert Sortland had not yet returned.

Not until a week later did the weather clear, and a party of eleven men, including every available National Park Service man, was led by Superintendent Toll back up the mountain. They made a make shift stretcher out of skis and carried out the dead climber. More than a month later (February 25) Sortland's body was found on the edge of a frozen swamp a short distance south and east of Longs Peak Inn. After the Vaille tragedy, and perhaps because of it, rangers extended the Park's telephone line from the Hewes-Kirkwood Inn, 6-1/2 miles below the Boulderfield, to Timberline Cabin. From this shelter the line was extended to the new terminus of the Longs Peak trail at the center of the Boulderfield. [11]

Later, in August 1925, Ranger Moomaw and two workmen, Glen Walker and Harry Simpson, installed a steel cable on the north side of Long's Peak, along the route that Miss Vaille and Kiener had begun to descend. This route from the Boulderfield to the summit was not considered a difficult climb, but was seldom used because about 200 feet of it were steep, and dangerous in freezing weather. Two sections of the cable were placed along the trail, one 160 feet in length, and the other at a higher point, 31 feet in length. The cable was fastened to the steeply sloping face of the mountain by strong pins firmly imbedded in granite. The galvanized cable had been manufactured to sustain a load of five tons. [12]

Since then climbers could use the cable on the north face for the ascent and then descend by the south face, which was marked by small red and yellow disks in the summer of 1922. [13] Rangers and workmen also constructed, in 1925, a masonry shelter cabin and a masonry horse shelter in the Boulderfield. Furthermore, through a donation from F. P. Vaille, they constructed an igloo-shaped storm shelter, with walls and roof of stone, above the Boulderfield. At an elevation of 13,200 feet, this shelter was located higher than any building in all the National Parks.

Because the Boulderfield is reached only by means of a horse trail from the Hewes-Kirkwood Inn, the building of the shelters presented unusual difficulties. All of the cement and lumber materials had to be packed in on burros and horses over a trail which rises 3,000 feet in elevation. Sand, for mixing with the cement, was carried from a sand bed below timberline and the poles used for the window spans and rafters were hauled a distance of 4-1/2 miles. [14]

With no trail of any kind beyond the Boulderfield shelter cabin, the materials for erecting the Vaille memorial had to be carried in by hand. Seven trips a day were made by each worker between the shelter cabin and the memorial. On each trip, each man carried from 40 to 50 pounds of sand and cement. Work on the memorial had to be suspended in 1926 because of severe weather, so construction was not completed until the fall of 1927, when the last workman had to leave the Boulderfield in a snowstorm. Ranger Moomaw later declared that the work ". . . was hell. Horses came in nearly every day covered with ice." [15]

About thirteen years after the Vaille tragedy, another misfortune occurred, not directly associated with mountain climbing, but with the wandering of a small boy. It prompted one of the most intensive mountain searches ever undertaken in Colorado—and as might be expected, Ranger Moomaw was in the thick of it. The tragedy developed out of the fact that in 1938, Mr. and Mrs. William H. Beilhartz of Denver, with their 4-1/2 year old son, Alfred, were spending the Fourth of July holiday in the Park. The family had established a weekend camp about a quarter of a mile west of Fall River Lodge in the rough, timbered country north of Trail Ridge Road. [16] Upon arising on the morning of July 3, the boy's father went to a nearby stream to wash and the boy set out with him. Oran Bronson and Walter Hansen, both members of the Beilhartz party, also went to wash about 500 feet further up stream. Alfred followed them. When the two men returned to camp, they noticed that Alfred was missing, and an immediate search was started. The search proved unavailing and calls went unanswered, so the family contacted Ranger Moomaw at the Fall River Ranger Station.

Moomaw immediately enlisted the aid of the Civilian Conservation Corps and a search began under the leadership of Chief Ranger Barton Herschler. More than 100 members of the CCC participated. W. C. Hilgedick, chief radio engineer for the National Park Service, who happened to be in the Park, directed the rapid establishment of contact between search parties by means of shortwave radio. [17] Bloodhounds from the Colorado State Penitentiary entered into the search on July 4. On July 5 the Roaring River was diverted and every inch of the river bed was scoured to the junction with pikes and grappling hooks, as were the woods and brush for ten miles around the camp from which the boy wandered. By July 11 only twelve of the original 100 CCC boys were kept on the search, since no trace of the boy's body could be found. The next day Cascade Dam, two miles below the confluence of the Roaring and Fall Rivers, was drained, but to no avail. [18]

"G-Men" entered the case when a threat of kidnapping was seriously considered. A Denver couple reported seeing a boy answering the missing youngster's description sitting on a boulder in the Devil's Nest region near where young Beilhartz disappeared. In November 1938, the parents received a hoax ransom note, again hinting at the possibility of kidnapping because the boy was said to be still alive. But the investigation of the note likewise proved fruitless and it was generally concluded that the boy perished in the Park, probably by drowning in Fall River or one of its tributaries. [19]

Ranger Moomaw tried an experiment which pointed up the hopelessness of ever finding the boy, if he had fallen into the water. Moomaw later recalled that

one morning before the crews arrived, I filled a gunny-sack with rags and enough stones to give it about the weight of a small body and tossed it into the stream where the boy was last seen. I had to run fast to keep it in sight until it reached Fall River, and there it promptly disappeared under an overhanging bank. I had some boys work that section for days, but they found nothing, not even the sack. [20]

The great majority of the Rangers' time has been spent in more prosaic but essential tasks. One of their major duties was enforcing Park regulations, and violators have been numerous.

In carrying out such duties the rangers have cooperated with a United States Park Commissioner since 1931. Under the Act of Congress approved March 2, 1929, accepting jurisdiction over the lands embraced in the National Park, police powers were assumed by the Federal Government in April 1931. A U. S. Commissioner was empowered to enforce federal regulations. Rangers apprehended people for such violations as drunk and disorderly conduct, speeding, reckless driving, possession of fire arms, illegal fishing, petty larceny, defacing government property, disturbance, trespassing, cutting trees, poaching, and carrying passengers for hire without a permit. The Park's permanent staff of rangers has been assisted by seasonal, temporary rangers through the years. This seasonal crew has functioned as trail patrolmen, campground caretakers, motor patrolmen, and traffic checkers at entrance stations.

Rangers have not only had the task of protecting the travelers to the Park but also protecting the Park itself. While forestry work and forest control methods have changed over the years, forest protection problems have not changed much. In 1915 the Park's fire fighting equipment fell under the general heading "necessary paraphernalia [sic] for fighting forest fires," and it was placed in six tool boxes strategically located throughout the Park. [21] To reach fires, rangers depended on Rocky Mountain Transportation Company touring cars. In the 1930's the Park acquired radio equipment, to aid in locating fires. Moreover, fire lookouts were established at Twin Sisters, Shadow Mountain, the North Fork of the Thompson River, and near Longs Peak. Since 1915, Park Service and Forest Service rangers have cooperated in fighting fires in their various jurisdictions. By the 1960's forest fire specialists utilized teletype information and aircraft to assist in fire detection.

Rangers have also been required to deal with forest tree diseases and insect pests, which often take a greater toll of trees than do fires. One of the most persistent pests has been the Black Hills Beetle, so named because it was first identified in the Black Hills National Forest. This pest was first found in the Estes Park region about the year 1908. It attacks all pine trees, but is only successful in weakened ones which lack free-flowing pitch. Two hundred and fifty beetles can kill a tree. They enter through the bark and work upward and around, laying their eggs and eating away the inner layer of bark till the tree is entirely girdled. The beetles thereby cut off the tree's source of nourishment and it dies. The female beetle is about as large around as a common wooden match and is 1/4 inch in length. [22]

In March 1922 the beetle made its appearance just below Horseshoe Park, four miles northwest of Estes Park Village, when 12 trees were found to be infected. By 1927 an attack of Black Hills Beetles on ponderosa pine became an epidemic. There were about 28 square miles of yellow pine forest in the National Park. Chief Ranger John C. Preston and Ranger Walter Finn investigated about 20 square miles and reported that the number of infected trees ranged from 700 to 10,000 per square mile. By 1930, after intensive effort by the rangers, the infestation was considered to be at a "harmless minimum." Later in the 1930's CCC crews under the supervision of the District Rangers, helped bring beetle infestations under control. Rangers of both the Park Service and Forest Service cooperated in this work.

After World War II, the Park rangers encountered another serious threat to one particular species of tree, the Limber Pine, in the form of White Pine Blister Rust. In 1950, an annual blister rust control program was begun. By 1965, there were approximately 10,000 acres of Limber Pine protected from this disease by removal of currant and gooseberry bushes. Meanwhile, rangers were assigned to aid in the work of soil and moisture conservation, each of which became a growing field of interest. Data was collected by rangers on snow depths and water contents of the Park's ten snow courses for the benefit of irrigationists, industrialists, and reservoir managers. The rangers also helped foresters return eroded trails and areas of damaged vegetation to their natural condition. [23]

In summary, Park rangers have carried out a potpourri of responsibilities. They have shot elk,

fought fires, killed insects, cleared snow, built ski trails, apprehended law-breakers, spied on rent-car drivers, rescued travelers, recovered bodies of persons who could not be rescued, measured snow depths, drawn maps, stocked fish, led CCC workers, and answered visitors' questions. In large measure, the Ranger was the Park Service's utility man—he was all things to all people and he was expected to be at all places at all times. He could be found behind a desk or behind the scenery. Some served only briefly, but one, Fred McLaren, served 37 years and gave three sons to the Park Service as rangers. Veteran or neophyte, each ranger has made a contribution during his term of service. Chief Ranger John McLaughlin reflected the mood of many rangers when he said: "These were exciting days, vibrant with possibilities and opportunity. It was good to be a part of the times" [24]

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CONCLUSION

In reflecting on the developments in Rocky Mountain National Park during half a century, it becomes evident that its administrative history has been marked by the efforts of fallible but dedicated officials to weigh the demands of the public against the imperatives of nature. The successive superintendents and their staffs have been tested by the challenge of educating the public to the appreciation and enjoyment of a great scenic area in its ages-old, primitive state. They have shared in what President John F. Kennedy called "our primary task . . . to increase our understanding of our environment to a point where we can enjoy it without defacing it. . ." [1] In some instances their efforts mirrored those of administrators in other national parks, and indeed, the transfer of officials from one park to another caused them to encounter similar problems in two or more assignments.

The early history of Rocky Mountain Park was sometimes characterized by administrative inexperience. For example, the Park's first superintendents lacked training in public relations and did little to further an appreciation of the "Park Idea." And L. C. Way, especially, was hard pressed to deal effectively with the controversies of his administration. But it should be added that the Park Service itself added to Way's problems. In short, during the initial period, no official, not even National Parks Director Stephen Mather, had been prepared to meet the problems of Park administration. This pervasive handicap, coupled with parsimonious appropriations provided by a niggardly Congress, resulted in inadequate financing and staffing.

The Park Service policy of granting concession monopolies, without open bidding, turned the minds of many Coloradans against national parks in general and L. C. Way in particular. As a result, battle lines were already drawn when the first professional superintendent, Roger Toll, arrived on the scene. Then even the skillful Toll did not remove doubts in the minds of local residents, as well as other Coloradans, of the trustworthiness of the Park Service. Neither Toll nor Assistant Parks Director Arno Cammerer objected to the appointment of the legal representative of the transportation company to assist the government in the Colorado vs. Toll legal struggle. To some critics this act further muddled the waters and seemed to justify the linking of the transportation company and the Park Service in a clandestine partnership.

In the jurisdictional controversy, the fear of federal encroachment on states rights was added, particularly by certain Colorado editors, to the personal animosities against Park Service policies and officials. The fact that Arkansas, Oklahoma, Wyoming, Montana, Washington, and Oregon had already ceded jurisdiction over their national parks mattered little to the Park's critics. Support for the ceding from the Rocky Mountain News and the entire Colorado congressional delegation left many unconvinced. Then, too, the Park Service's threat of cutting off road-building appropriations, if ceding did not occur, tended to inflame feelings.

Through these early controversies the implementing of Park Service policies often engendered negative responses from suspicious people. In contrast, the building of Trail Ridge Road—ironically made possible by the appropriations originally withheld in the

jurisdiction controversy—might well be considered a turning point in the administrative history of Rocky Mountain. The construction of this road in the face of its attendant hazards captured the imagination of the public. This engineering achievement was an outstanding example of how the Park administrators could accomplish something for the local people. The road also attracted tourists to the Park, a fact of special significance to the nearby communities during the depression days of the 1930's.

During those days, Rocky Mountain Park became host to several of the thirty-two Civilian Conservation Corps camps located in Colorado. Under the leadership of the United States Army and the National Park Service the CCC was an unqualified success. Enrollees maintained hundreds of miles of trails, constructed roads and parking lots, and manned information stations as part of their multiple contributions to fulfillment of the plans of Superintendent Edmund Rogers and his staff. The surrounding communities benefitted financially as enrollees and support personnel spent a percentage of their salaries at local establishments.

About the same time, however, another government agency, the Bureau of Reclamation, encroached upon the Park's area of jurisdiction. The building of the Colorado-Big Thompson diversion project pointed up the clash of two imperatives, the need for water on the eastern plains and the restrictions imposed by Park Service philosophy. In this struggle the economic imperative won. Despite the opposition by conservation societies, the Park Service, the Secretary of the Interior, and Rocky Mountain officials, the east to west water diversion tunnel was built. The Park Service's philosophical armor proved not strong enough when faced with the popular clamor for more water on the eastern slope and a far more powerful rival bureau.

The opposition of the Park Service to the reclamation project inflamed local critics. As a result, proposals to enlarge Park boundaries received short shrift in valley town meetings. Superintendents Thomas Allen and David Canfield with officials of the Forest Service tried unsuccessfully to gain support of the miners and cattle men for the changes. Not even the exceptional public relations skills of Canfield could budge Park opponents. Therefore, the Arapahoe peaks region south of the present Park boundaries subsequently remained outside of national park protection.

Meanwhile, the Park staff confronted the increasingly serious problem of wildlife management. Officials discovered that they had been protecting the native animals too well. Vigorous predator control campaigns in the 1920's had all but eradicated the natural enemies of the deer and elk. By the 1930's L. C. Way's earlier boasts of the plentifulness of wildlife had given way to the warnings of Edmund Rogers concerning the deterioration of the range. Faced with killing the very game the Park was created to protect, officials first tried alternatives to shooting. However, the purchase of additional range and the use of check plots eased but did not solve the problem. Therefore the Park Service undertook a reduction campaign in the mid-1940's, preceding it with an educational campaign. Perhaps the Service could be criticized for not trying this method of control sooner, especially since a similar problem had existed earlier in the Yellowstone and Grand Canyon areas. But the Park Service correctly realized that any solution involved not only wildlife, but also the delicate factor of public relations. To the present time (1968), problems of wildlife management and public relations still exist in Rocky Mountain National Park. The grudging acceptance, however, from the Estes Park Trail, of the reduction campaign represented a real victory for the Park's administrators.

The growth in sophistication and size of the Park's Department of Interpretation is one phase of Park policy approved by visitors and local editors from its inception in 1918. Still, the success of the naturalist programs has been, in a way, self-defeating. Too many visitors have

taken advantage of the programs for the Park Service to be able to serve them effectively. To accommodate growing crowds, Superintendents Canfield and James Lloyd initiated changes in their naturalist schedules without subverting the traditional interpretive premise of enabling visitors "to understand and appreciate what they saw." [2] Instituting shorter hikes and information trailers seemed a far cry from Perley Smoll's intimate walks and talks. On balance though, the interpretive program—especially in the work done by the seasonal ranger-naturalists—has been successful in meeting the needs of the tourists.

Rocky Mountain's problems with winter sports development stemmed from several sources. Park Service philosophy maintained that all outdoor sports, including winter sports, should be encouraged. Also, Stephen Mather believed that to get appropriations from a parsimonious Congress he had to publicize the recreational potential of the Park System. Mather's successor, Horace Albright, contended that visitors should be allowed to use their parks to the fullest. As a result, ski lifts were eventually built in Mt. Rainier, Sequoia, Yosemite, Lassen Volcanic and Olympic national parks. To implement these directives in Rocky Mountain, without marring the scenery, became the special problem of more than one superintendent. The concern of Superintendents Allen and Canfield for the natural wonders of the area appeared to be vacillation by those sportsmen eager to "develop" the winter sports potential of the Park, while to purists, the fact that a winter sports complex was built at all gave evidence of Park Service appeasement to local political pressures.

As in several other Parks, Rocky Mountain officials have been bothered by the presence of inholdings and campgrounds. The existence of both was considered ecologically unsound, since the environment of wildlife became irrevocably altered. Thus it was a sound practice to buy out privately developed lands in the Park. To replace them with campgrounds was, however, philosophically obtuse. Yet, at the same time, the policy was politically realistic. Pressures from politicians and chambers of commerce demanding more campgrounds, more roads and more trails were continued to be an ever-present concern to the administrators at Rocky Mountain.

In eliminating most concessioners from within this national park, Superintendents Lloyd and Allyn Hanks dealt with arguments more emotional than thoughtful. Automobile travel had already greatly changed the character of concessions required by the public. No longer could hotels within the Park compete profitably with campgrounds within and motels without the Park's boundaries. Therefore, by condemning concession properties the Park Service was carrying out an economically merciful practice. Yet, had it not been for the persistence and tact of Superintendent Hanks, this successful Park policy would have been blunted by ugly controversies. Largely because of Hanks and his skilled and patient staff the concession problems have been eliminated from Park boundaries and most private inholdings have amicably been removed.

In carrying out their tasks, those who administered the Park have been men of compromise in the highest sense. They have also been educators in the broadest sense by informing a generally ignorant public of the values of a Park experience, an experience unique with intangible riches. The compromising goes on and with it the need for education. As Freeman Tilden once wrote,

This scheme of land use, so far removed from the average person's economic experience, may glancingly seem strange and remote. And so it is. It is a new theory in the world, of management of the public land for a superior kind of pleasure and profit; for the perpetuation of the country's natural and historic heritage, untarnished by invasion and depletion other than that of invincible time. No wonder, then, that it is a difficult story to tell. [3]

An assessment of the meaning or significance of the administrative history of Rocky Mountain National Park will be seen in better perspective when comparably detailed studies have been prepared on other national parks. Nevertheless in furnishing but one example of the effort to implement the new theory of management of the public lands for the perpetuation of the country's natural heritage through government control and supervision, Rocky Mountain gives the basis for a few observations. Significantly, the National Park Service through its officials at Rocky Mountain has had to bend its philosophy to meet the changing demands of the public. It is an agency sensitive to popular pressures. Fortunately, within the Park Service's dual philosophical imperative there is room for experimentation and growth. Still many problems—such as those concerning wildlife—have remained ongoing, not defying solution but demanding continual re-evaluation. The successful administering of Rocky Mountain Park has often depended more on the personalities of the officials on the scene than the judgments made by an elaborate bureaucracy in a regional office. Perhaps most importantly the history of this Park has proven that government supervision can be effective in achieving the broad objectives of making available to an ever larger clientele, safe, convenient and rewarding opportunities for contacts with nature.

Statistically Rocky Mountain National Park is not the most impressive of the national parks. It is neither the largest nor the most heavily visited. Furthermore its scenic qualities likely fall short of those of other parks. Therefore this Park's ultimate significance rests in the significance of the entire Park System.

A National Park is a fountain of life. . . . Without parks and outdoor life all that is best in civilization will be smothered. To save our selves—to enable us to live at our best and happiest, parks are necessary. Within National Parks is room—glorious room—room in which to find ourselves, in which to think and hope to dream and plan, to rest, and resolve. [4]

For over a half century Rocky Mountain Park has provided such room and therefore has offered its own reason for being.

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APPENDIX: SUPERINTENDENTS OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

Charles R. Trowbridge	1915-1916
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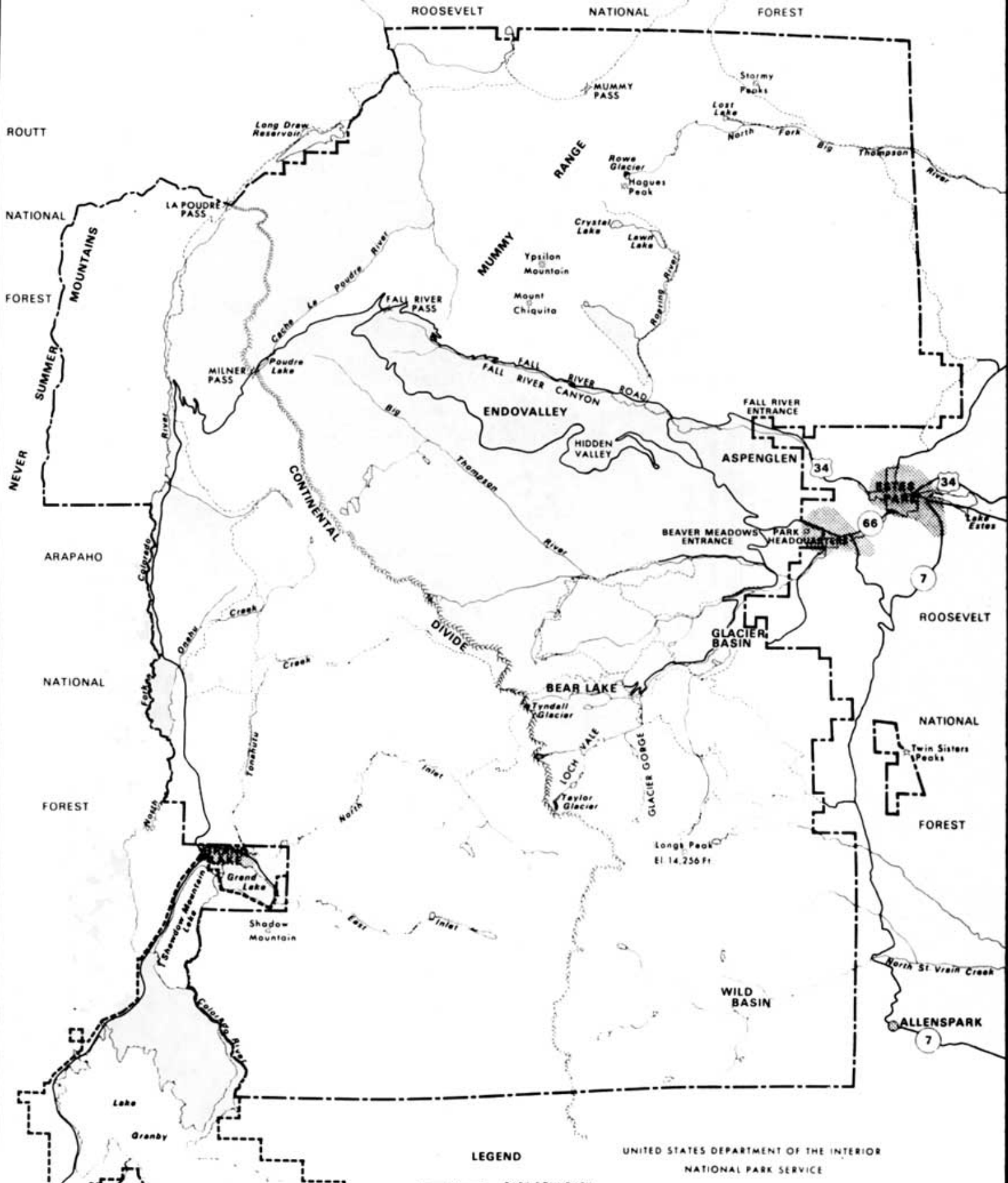
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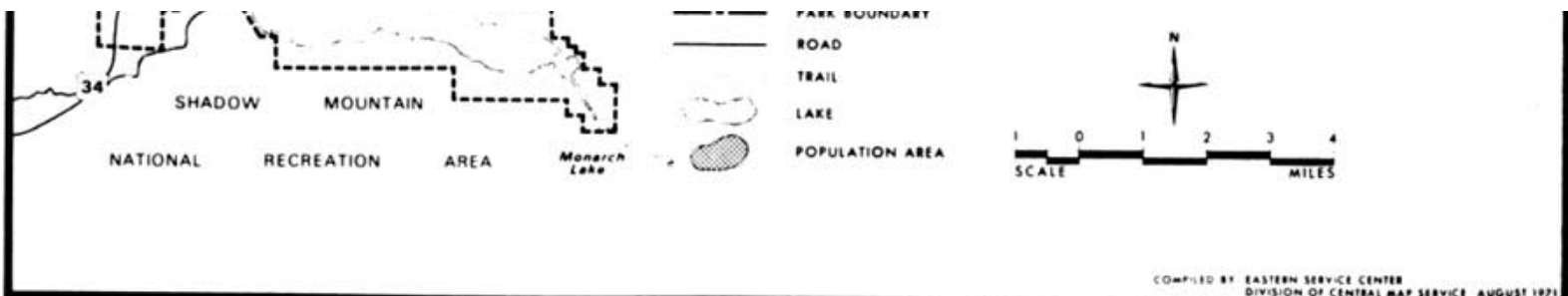
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