

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

MARCH 26, 1926.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. LEAVITT, from the Committee on the Public Lands, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 9390]

The Committee on the Public Lands, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 9390) to eliminate certain privately owned lands from the Rocky Mountain National Park and to transfer certain other lands from the Rocky Mountain National Park to the Colorado National Forest, Colo., having considered the same, report it favorably to the House with the recommendation that it do pass without amendment.

The purpose of the proposed legislation is fully explained in the following reports from the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior, dated March 2, 1925, and March 5, 1925, respectively, to the chairman of this committee, which reports are herein set out in full for the information of the House, as follows:

MARCH 2, 1926.

Hon. N. J. SINNOTT,
*Chairman Committee on the Public Lands,
House of Representatives.*

DEAR MR. SINNOTT: Receipt is acknowledged of your request of February 20 for a report on H. R. 9390, "A bill to eliminate certain privately owned lands from the Rocky Mountain National Park and to transfer certain other lands from the Rocky Mountain National Park to the Colorado National Forest, Colo."

The proposed legislation would change the existing north and east boundaries of the Rocky Mountain National Park. The reasons for this change, no doubt, will be explained to your committee in the report you will obtain from the Secretary of the Interior. Growing out of the proposed change, some small subdivisions of publicly owned land aggregating less than 640 acres will be eliminated from the park and it is proposed shall be included within the adjoining Colorado National Forest. This department has no objection to the proposed legislation.

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. DUNLAP, *Acting Secretary.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,

Washington, March 5, 1926.

Hon. N. J. SINNOTT,

*Chairman Committee on the Public Lands,
House of Representatives.*

MY DEAR MR. SINNOTT: Reference is made to your request of February 20 for a report on H. R. 9390, entitled "A bill to eliminate certain privately owned lands from the Rocky Mountain National Park and to transfer certain other lands from the Rocky Mountain National Park to the Colorado National Forest, Colo."

By the proposed change in the east boundary 11,480 acres of privately owned land are eliminated from the park. At present visitors cross the park boundary, and those who are not familiar with conditions assume that they are on Government property. They are surprised to travel for several miles along roads fenced in—some cases on both sides—and to see many signs such as "Private property. Keep out." Much of the land proposed to be eliminated has been plotted for cottage sites and extensively improved by the construction of cottages and other buildings not of a public nature.

Not all the privately owned land will be eliminated by this proposed legislation; approximately 9,100 acres of unimproved land remain scattered throughout the park. Practically all of this retained property is unimproved and much of it should eventually be acquired for camp ground and other park purposes, and for the protection of the native landscape beauty. Elimination of this unimproved land by purchase or donation is desirable in order that the park may be national in the fullest sense.

Two separated tracts in the area excluded on the east side will be retained as part of the Rocky Mountain National Park. One, a tract of 40 acres in section 34, township 5 north, range 73 west, purchased with Federal funds for a utility site, is used for shops, road camp quarters, warehouse, stable, and other like purposes. Part is also used as a public camp ground. The other tract in township 4 north, range 73 west, is Government land on the slope of Twin Sisters and The Craggs. A fire lookout station on Twin Sisters is operated by the National Park Service, and it is desirable that this fire lookout continue to be operated as part of the park fire-protection system.

Such existing roads as connect the approach roads and are eliminated from the park are not necessary to a proper development of an adequate road system, for which funds appropriated under the national park road act are in part available. It is proposed to build a road connecting the High Drive at Deer Ridge; with the Moraine Park Road, to supersede the present "cut-off" road, the location of which is unsatisfactory. A preliminary line has been run for this road. The proposed park boundary between Deer Ridge and Moraine Park is so located that the projected road may be entirely within the park. Moraine Park and the Glacier Basin public camp ground may be similarly joined by park road.

A small elimination is proposed and recommended on the north boundary. The present north line cuts across a small lake which is desired as a storage reservoir in order to irrigate farming lands on the plains. The outlet of the lake where dam and storage works would be constructed is now entirely outside of the park. While park land could be but slightly affected, it is desirable that the proposed reservoir site be entirely outside the park as provided by the bill.

Section 2 of the bill would care for an existing situation within the park. The Arbuckle Reservoir Co., before the national park was created, secured a right of way to construct a series of four reservoirs, utilizing small lakes high up in the mountains. Work on only one of the reservoirs was started. After the park was established the company filed an application for an enlargement of this reservoir and for an extension of the time in which to complete it. The application was denied, because of then existing laws, but misunderstanding the order the company did proceed to complete the reservoir, and it is now finished. The original right of way called for a dam of 18 feet and a reservoir area of 17.6 acres. The reservoir at the present time covers 24.6 acres, with a dam 57 feet in height, and represents an investment of about \$50,000. The company has relinquished the other three reservoir sites. The only relief open to the company to operate and maintain its reservoir No. 2 is by such provision as is now contemplated. It is believed the interests of the Government would be adequately safeguarded under the wording of this provision.

I, therefore, have to commend this legislation to the favorable consideration of your committee.

Very truly yours,

HUBERT WORK.