

RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE NATIONAL FOREST

by

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## RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE NATIONAL FORESTS

### INTRODUCTION

Forest recreation (probably the oldest of all forms of forest use), is the last of the major forest uses to have been recognized and provided for by the Forest Service. Today it constitutes the most active and growing form of forest use. Certainly it is the phase of forest activity in which the public is most keenly interested.

The large amount of forest development for recreational use carried on by the C C C Camps in both State and National forests during the past year has been particularly impressive in showing the great demand for increased recreational development in all forest areas. Before wise recreational development can be carried on in forest areas intelligent recreational planning is necessary.

The urbanization of our nation presents one of the most vital problems of our history. Can we continue to concentrate our population in large cities as we are doing? Can generation after generation of our human resources live in cities with no resultant nervous disorders?

Charles Eliot in speaking of this subject said: "The history of humanity has proved nothing more clearly than that crowded populations if they would live in health and happiness, must have space for air, for light, for exercise, for rest, and for the enjoyment of that peaceful beauty of nature which, because it is the opposite of the

noisy ugliness of towns, is so wonderfully refreshing to tired souls of townspeople.". Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., stated "that the average human nervous system could stand only 3-4 generations of city life with its lights and noises, poor air, and lack of exercise; that there was thus a biological reason why the majority of leaders in every walk of life came from the country and that in physical and mental inheritance as well as in financial it was frequently three generations from shirt sleeves to shirt sleeves; that the decline of great families was frequently due to the 'Running out' of mental and physical vigor occasioned by the continued drain of city life upon the nervous and physical vigor of succeeding generations." (1)

That our great national leaders have realized the constructive value of outdoor recreation and the destructive value of certain types of recreation is evident when we consider that Calvin Collidge (2) in addressing the National Conference on Outdoor Recreation in 1924 said that the type of life which we live today makes it essential that we enjoy some form of outdoor recreation, and that outdoor recreation had a desirable physical, mental, and emotional effect. "It restores the natural balance of

(1) Senate Doc. No. 151, 68th Congress, 1st. Session, pg. 55, from remarks of Franklin Moon (Dean N. Y. State College of Forestry, 1920-1929).

(2) Collidge--National Recreational Opportunities. The Playground, 18: 193-194, 246, 1924.

life and nourishes the moral fibre of youth," and added "It is altogether necessary that we keep our own amusements and recreations within that field which will be prophetic, not of destruction, but of development. Americans are having more and more leisure and they must be educated to use such leisure for their own enjoyment and betterment and the strengthening of the quality of their citizenship." There is no doubt that outdoor recreation is one of the vital problems affecting us today.

The motor age is possibly the most important factor in the recent rapid growth of recreation. There was a time when a motor car was a luxury--today it is a necessity, and with the progress of road building, the speed and ease of travel has been developed until driving a few hundred miles is of no consequence. With modern methods of production it is inevitable that the average American worker is going to have increased leisure on his hands. More and more this leisure will tend to find its outlet in the use of those areas and activities which call for a fairly low expenditure of money and many will turn naturally to the mountains, lakes, and streams.

Other great nations of the past have reached the zenith of their civilizations and then for some reason have become stationary, finally disintegrating as nations and others have arisen to take their places. It may be that there is such a thing as a nation becoming too urbanized with the resultant mental and physical

breakdown of its citizenship.

NATIONAL FOREST RECREATION

By National Forest Recreation is included all activity on the National Forests which is for the purpose of recreating one's self, and also the added educational, inspirational, and spiritual values which the National Forests offer. For some people this recreation takes the form of merely driving through and enjoying the beauties of nature from a motor car, while for others it means the spending of entire summers in a region far from motor roads; experiencing all those activities associated with a life lived under the conditions of a nearly primitive existence. Recreation as used in this paper, then, includes the activities of the whole mass of people who use the National Forests for recreative purposes, ranging from mere amusement or diversion, to the acquiring of education, inspirational and spiritual values.

C. J. Buck defines Forest Recreation thus: "Recreation in the sense used is a quest for space and for things that are calm, colorful, bright, and restful; the thrills, exhilaration of the high mountains; the establishment of summer communities within the forest areas. This means mental health as well as physical. This is forest recreation." (3)

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(3) Buck--Journal of Forestry 1933, pg. 191.

## HISTORY OF FOREST RECREATION

The forest recreation movement began, probably, with the first dawn of history. Its existence is first known of in England in very early times, when the forests served as hunting grounds for the King and his nobles. The primary purpose of the forest at that time was to furnish food and shelter for game animals, and a place for the King to enjoy himself.

"Manhood in his 'Laws of the Forest' published in 1598 defines forests as 'a certain territory of woody grounds, fruitful pastures, privileged for wild beasts and the fowls of the forests to rest and abide in, in the safe protection of the King, for his princely delight and pleasure.' This conception has been long since forgotten and replaced by an economic one almost as extreme in its meaning." (4) During this period the forests served a very few people, yet many found precarious pleasure in "poaching" on the "Kings Forest".

During the early period of the settlement of America, the only recreation which the forest afforded was that of hunting and fishing, and even these activities may be considered rather as necessities of the pioneer life than as forms of recreation. There were many reasons for the early colonists pushing the forest back as rapidly as possible. The forests harbored Indians and

(4) Brooks--Uncle Sam's Forests as Game Refuges, Forests and Forest Life, 32:160-163, 1926.

covered ground which was needed for agriculture and other purposes. At best, the forests were considered only as inexhaustible supplies of timber waiting to be cut.

As America grew, the frontier was steadily pushed back until it practically ceased to exist. During this period of expansion, no thought was given to the conservation of natural resources. Everyone had the idea that there was an inexhaustible amount, with the result that in the latter part of the nineteenth century the American people suddenly found themselves face to face with the fact that many of the country's most valuable natural resources were being exhausted by destructive methods of utilization. The leaders of the nation, realizing the situation, sought some method of conserving our resources. The leaders in this movement were Presidents Cleveland, Harrison, McKinley and Roosevelt. During this period the country was gradually becoming more urban, until in 1920 we passed from the rural to the urban stage-- that is, in 1920, 51.4% of our population lived in cities of 2,500 or more. In 1930 56.2% of our population lived in our urban communities. This trend may continue to predominate, but the demand for outdoor recreation should not be greatly affected since the actual number of people seeking outdoor recreation will tend to increase through more efficient transportation facilities, and the fact that more people are being educated to the value of this type of recreation.

HISTORY OF NATIONAL FOREST RECREATION

Twenty years ago Treadwell Cleveland, Jr., (5) of the United States Forest Service said:

"The National Forests are maintained to conserve the vast national resources of wood and water. These resources are located on the slopes, crests, and peaks of the Rockies and the Coastal Ranges, which are the most picturesque and healthful regions in the United States. They are as a rule supplied with pure water in great abundance. They contain much of the best fishing and hunting country. Within them are many of the most striking and important historic and prehistoric landmarks, as well as natural wonders which do not suffer by comparison with the National Parks. An endless variety of landscape and every natural charm are included in their boundaries."

"Fortunately the objects for which the National Forests were created and are maintained, will guarantee the permanence of their resources and will bring about their fullest development for every use"; and he concluded by saying:

"So great is the value of the National Forest area ~~for recreation and so certain is this value to increase~~

(5) Cleveland, Jr., Treadwell--National Forests as Recreation Grounds and Public Recreation Facilities, pub. by Am. Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 1910.

with the growth of the country and the shrinkage of the wilderness, that even if the forest resources of wood and water were not to be required by the civilization of the future, many of the forests ought certainly to be preserved in the interest of national health and well-being for recreational use alone."

So true were Mr. Cleveland's words that many of the scenic wonders he spoke of have been set apart as National Parks, and the number of people using the National Forests for recreational purposes has increased from approximately 400,000 in 1910 to 32,228,613 in 1931.

A review of a few of the annual reports of the Forester will reveal that as early as 1912 mention was made of the increasing recreational use of the forests, and before that time "Game Preservation" had been given annual consideration in the reports of the Forester.

The report for 1917 has the following to say regarding recreation: "The use of some of the National Forests for recreational purposes is growing to such importance as to be one of the major activities."

In 1918 Frank A. Waugh made for the Forest Service an investigation and report on "Recreational Uses on the National Forests" in which he traced briefly the growth of recreation and the priority of right of camping over other uses. It was in this report that recreation was first stressed as being one of the "major uses of the forests.

In the 1920 report report this comment in reference to recreation is significant: "As an important use it bids fair to rank thrid among the major services performed by the National Forests, with only timber production and stream flow regulation taking precedence of it."

The 1922 report said: "...Failure to develop recreational possibilities would mean withholding a form of public service which though intangible in value, ranks in social and indeed economic importance with the timber, forage and waterpower values of these properties.

Schreck of the Forest Service said in 1922 (6): "The recreational movement in the National Forests had done what years of propaganda could never have accomplished."

In the July, 1924, issue of "Review of Reviews", W. B. Greeley, then Chief Forester, said:

"As a matter of fact, the most unsentimental inventory of the national forests would have to set down recreational assets as scarcely less valuable than their economic resources."

The 1931 report has this to to say in regard to recreation: "The inspirational and recreational values of the national forests grow in popularity with each passing year. particularly as new regions are made accessible."

(6) Schreck, Robert G.--Recreation on the National Forests in the Lake States, Ames Forester Annual for 1922, 10:15-22.

## PRESENT STATUS OF NATIONAL FOREST RECREATION

A brief summary of the present condition of forest recreation was given by L. F. Kneipp, Assistant Forester in speaking before the State College of Forestry at New York as follows:

"To realize its true significance, forestry must be regarded as a social process, its objective to realize through the agency of trees and from certain parts of the Nation's land area the fullest attainable enrichment of human life, the largest practicable measure of human security and advancement."....

"As a field for the popular forms of outdoor recreation the forest has few rivals.".....

"The Forest Service..... has designated 37 Primitive Areas, containing almost 10 million acres, within which, so far as practicable, the primitive conditions of the old order will be maintained for the interest and education of the recreationists. It has at least partially developed about 2,000 camp grounds. It has made available areas suitable for summer homes, of which over 11,000 are now under permit, and for camps and resorts which now number almost 1,222. It is systematically conserving the natural beauty of the lands adjoining the highways and roads, so managing its timber-sale operations as to safeguard important scenic values, and so regulate grazing use that it will not conflict with public use and

enjoyment of the National Forests." (7)

When it is realized that many of the technically trained foresters were trained only in forest production, it is understandable why their apparent reluctance to seriously consider recreation as a major use. Mr. Kneipp makes this point clear when he says: (8) "Generally speaking, the first reaction of the Forest Service, of foresters as a class, to this new phase of social development was negative. It was in direct conflict with the first phase, that of work, or production and utilization." E. W. Tinker, also of the Forest Service, says that foresters seem little inclined to encourage recreation within National Forests, and states that the reason may be caused by lack of care with fire by the campers, or possibly by the inherent dislike that is characteristic of all with an engineering viewpoint, of dealing with anything that is not measured in terms of figures or calculated on the slide rule. (9)

Foresters, as a class, are just beginning to realize the importance of recreation. They are beginning to re-

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(7) Kneipp, L.F.--"Forestry as an Agency of Social Progress." Address delivered at the dedication Louis Marshall Memorial Building, N. Y. State College of Forestry Feb. 23, 1933.

(8) Kneipp, L. F. -- Recreation Uses of the National Forests, Journal of Forestry, 28:618-625, 1930.

(9) Tinker, E.W.--Federal Forests, Foresters, and Recreation, Journal of Forestry, 27:251-253, 1929.

realize the importance of recreation. They are beginning to realize that it is a new form of land use that is likely to grow and expand as more and more land is thrown out of the agricultural class, and as they begin to see that even such timbered land is submarginal from the standpoint of producing high quality timber, which may be supermarginal for recreation use. Recreational use is today a factor in practically every national forest.

A survey made of 138 Forest Supervisors showed that at the present time 52 supervisors rank timber production as the most important use; that 31 rank grazing as of greatest importance, that 51 rank watershed protection as of greatest importance, while 4 supervisors rank recreation as the most important major use of their forests. When it is realized that it has only been during the last few years that the Forest Service has paid much attention to recreation as a use, it is outstanding to know that it is actually placed first in four cases. In spite of the fact that recreation is the last major use to be recognized, it is clear that the public is rapidly pushing it to the front.

Many people have argued that recreation has no place in forest management, because the National Forests were created for the sole purpose of returning a net income to the government. That this is an error is shown by the following quotation from U. S. D. A. Misc. Publication

No. 99, entitled "Government Forest Work in Utah," page 2, says: "National forests were not established for the purpose of returning a profit, nor is the question of receipts a prime objective. They were created for the benefit of all the people." That the whole public must be taken into consideration when determining the relative importance of the various forest uses is brought out in the National Forest Manual, pg. 7-L; "National forest land will be devoted to the highest forms of use to which it is adapted. The determination of what constitutes the highest uses will be governed by the welfare of the community rather than by the interest of an individual applicant or the revenue to be derived."

That the Forest Service intends to make recreation an integral part of National Forest Management and at the same time does not intend to run competition with existing improvements is shown by the following, also from the Forest Service Manual, page 98-L:

"It is not the purpose of the Forest to duplicate within the National Forests the functions, methods, or activities of national, state or Municipal park service, nor to compete with such parks for public patronage or support. Recognition must, however, be given to the occurrence within the National Forests of cliffs, canyons, glaciers, streams, lakes, caves or bridges; objects of scientific, historic or archaeological interest; timber,

shrubs, and flowers; game animals and fish; and areas pre-eminently suited as sites for camps, resorts, sanatoria, picnic grounds and summer homes.

"These utilities, which singly, or in combination affect the bases for outdoor recreation, contributing to the entertainment and instruction of the public or to public health, constitute recreation resources of great extent, economic value and social importance. No plan of National Forest administration would be complete which did not conserve and make them fully available for public use. Their preservation, development, and wise use for the promotion of public welfare is an important and essential feature of forest management which adequately should be coordinated with the production of timber and forage and the conservation of water resources. These areas now constituting the national forests have been used for recreational purposes since the first settlement of the country and such use naturally will grow as the population increases and as wild land is converted to cultivation.

## WILD LIFE AND RECREATION

No study of National Forest recreation would be complete without bringing in the importance and place of wild life in relation to recreation. Hunting and fishing formed one of the earliest forms of human recreation and was both economically and socially beneficial.

According to Senate report number 1329, 71st, 3rd session, "A conservative estimate of the number of people in the United States who have actually either fished or hunted during the year 1929 would be 13,000,000." A representative of the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association found that for 14 south and southwestern states the total number of baseball fans, football fans, golf players, and tennis players, was 4,916,652 as compared to 4,420,876 hunters and fishermen.

The National Forests constitute the largest and possibly the best big game grounds in the entire country. These forests are in many cases the only remaining habitat of certain wild animals which has not been seriously disturbed by the settlement of the country. According to the Forest Service, the National Forests contained in 1931 approximately 12,725 antelope, 50,596 black or brown bear, 3,747 grizzly bear, 969,330 deer, 96,905 elk, 7,835 moose, 22,262 mountain goats, 12,555 mountain sheep and 109,257 beaver, besides innumerable bird and animal life of seemingly less importance.

These forest regions, in many cases, are the native home of various game species, and offer an ideal and permanent habitat for the animals. These areas are the last great hunting grounds of the nation, and at the same time may be considered as the last extensive native haunts of many forms of wild life. Many forests have been overhunted, resulting, as in California, in the extermination of some species. (Grizzly Bear.)

This is one of the outstanding differences, between National Parks and National Forests. Hunting is absolutely forbidden within the National Parks, while on the National Forests hunting is allowed, except of course, on areas set aside as State and Federal game preserves. There is hunting on practically all the national forests.

Paul G. Redington, Chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey, has said (10): "Forest Management in the future is sure more and more to recognize both the importance of the presence of animals and birds as a distinct forest asset, and the value of forest lands as conservators of wild life." There is no question that this asset will be measured in terms of increased recreational use, and also in the economic value of the wild life, whether fish or game, which is taken by the hunter and fisherman.

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(10) Redington, Beneficial Effect of Wild Life on Forests and Other Lands. Journal of Forestry, 27:692-698, 1929.

"The aesthetic and recreational values of wild life are difficult to estimate in dollars, and consequently are seldom accorded a place commensurate with their true importance in the formulation of protective measures. Many believe that the highest appreciation of wild life is held by those who are content to study it at long range, as it were, without wishing to kill it. There can be no doubt that sentiment in this direction is growing. On the other hand, there is that class who look on the pursuit of wild life as embodying the highest type of recreational use. The situation seems to resolve itself into a question of the abundance of the species involved, and there seems to be a growing tendency on the part of the states to place a greater value than formerly on the live animal or bird, rather than on the dead one as fulfilling its highest destiny from both the aesthetic and the recreational standpoints.

"The economic recreational values of wild life, while difficult to estimate, include such measurable items as license fees of hunters, expenditures on sporting equipment of many types, on forms of transportation ranging from the railroad to the most local and makeshift sort, and disbursements to hotels, boarding houses, guides and other assistants. In fact the flow of expenditures from hunters and tourists is felt in every corner of the land, and in some remote districts it is the most important of all sources of income. In at least three states of the

union the tourists' trade, part of which is based on the attracting powers of wild life, is now recognized as the leading industry. The receipt from recreation seekers who are interested primarily in wild life already is an income of enormous size in the United States and is certainly a growing one."(11)

Mr. Redington has listed six ways in which wild life conservation is being accomplished:

1. Legal restrictions on hunting, fishing and trapping.
2. Beginnings of game administration.
3. Financing conservation activities.
4. Reorganization of migratory bird conservation as an international obligation and adopting of an international measure to fulfill that obligation.
5. Preservation of the habitat essential to the perpetuation of species protected by legal restrictions on capture.
6. Creation of an enlightened public sentiment for wildlife conservation.

Many people have been unable to understand why the Forest Service does not control game on the forests. This can be partially answered by pointing out that in many cases the National Forests furnish summer range only, while for a good share of the year the game is on private lands or on state and public domain where the forage is not under the control of the Forest Service. Although

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(11) Van Hise and Havemeyer--Conservation of Our Natural Resources, Part V, Wild Life, pg. 420-421, by Paul G. Redington.

the Forest Service is consulted by the States in determining the carrying capacity of the ranges, and whether or not the game animals should be increased, decreased, or remain practically the same, yet they have no definite control over the fish or game, and only act in protecting this resource by enforcing the state game laws in the forest areas, and cooperating in the planting of fish and stocking of ranges.

There is a further important legal reason why the Forest Service does not control game on the National Forests. Wild game in the United States is known in law as "fugitive", and does not become personal property until it is reduced to possession. The conditions under which fugitive elements can be made property by reducing them to possession, under our form of present government is vested in the States.

R. Y. Stuart, Chief Forester, in addressing the Izaak Walton League at Chicago in April, 1931, said that the work of the Forest Service with respect to fish and game could be discussed under three heads:

1. Protection, which consisted of law enforcement, control of predatory animals, prevention or control of diseases and parasites, protection from fire, and protection of food supply.
2. Development of fish and game management plans consisting of continual restocking of streams, carrying on surveys, transplanting of game, the consideration of the possibility of introduction of new species, and the production of furbearers.
3. Administration: The Forest Service must rely on the State for execution of its plans.

## PRIMITIVE AREAS AND WILDERNESS RECREATION

The reason for setting aside "primitive" or "wilderness" areas is as stated by the Forest Service "to prevent the unnecessary elimination or impairment of unique natural values and to conserve so far as controlling economic conditions will permit, the opportunity to the public to observe the conditions which existed in the pioneer phases of the Nation's development, and to engage in the forms of outdoor recreation characteristic of that period, thus aiding to preserve national traditions, ideals, and characteristics, and promoting a true understanding of historical phases of national progress." (12) The regulation which governs the setting apart of primitive areas does not prohibit the economic uses of the areas provided it is essential that the areas be thus utilized, but on the other hand if the two uses conflict, it is assumed that recreation is of the greater importance unless it can be shown otherwise.

Ward Shepard (13) of the Forest Service points out that "of the seventy-four wilderness areas left in the National Forests it is probable that the majority are of rather low economic value. Most of them are high mountain

(12) National Forest Manual, Lands Section.

(13) Shepard--Remnants of Wilderness. Nature Magazine, 15:29-32, 1930.

country, with scattered forests that may in a large part always remain commercially inaccessible--a land of challenging peaks, of precipitous escarpments, of granite walls and domes intermingles with rough canyons, wild forested glades, alpine lakes, and flowered mountain meadows."

In the preservation of wilderness areas in the National Forest there are two groups of conflicting ideas. One group insists that every resource, tree, forage, mineral and water must be used as a material resource, while the other group of recreational extremists take as narrow a view in the opposite direction.

The preservation of primitive areas is dependent upon the exclusion of all economic uses which would result in opening the area to motor roads, or other means of power transportation, and also the exclusion of certain social uses incompatible with the purposes for which the primitive areas were created. Some few regions contain valuable stands of timber, but low prices and overproduction would justify leaving timber at least until mature, and until no further increment is taking place. Many areas are near or above timber line or where timber does not even warrant exploitation, either because of the quality of inaccessibility. In making decisions on primitive areas we must compare values as a wilderness area with any commercial values that might be destroyed.

## RECREATION AS A SOURCE OF INCOME

The policy of the Forest Service at the present in regard to recreational income and fees for recreation is that the only charge will be for special use permits. Special use permits refer to the privilege granted of allowing a person to build a summer home, to erect concessions, and to operate such concessions as are necessary for the comfort and convenience of the public. Whenever this special use is for the exclusive use of a person or groups of persons to the exclusion of the general public or is issued with the implication that it will return a profit there is a charge made, which in most cases is very low. At the present time the income from special use permits is more than the money spent to develop recreation.

By a recreational charge is meant any form of a charge which has for its intention the collection of a fee from the individual user of the National Forest. By "user" is meant those who go to the forests for recreation purposes.

The arguments used in favor and the arguments against recreational charges may be placed side by side and compared.

### IN FAVOR OF RECREATIONAL CHARGE:

1. It is just and equitable principle that those who use should pay.
2. It would mean a new source of income for the Federal Government and under the present regulations

25% would go to the states in which the respective National Forest are located.

3. It would make possible increased expenditures for recreational improvements.

4. It would put recreation on a sound financial basis, and make it a paying proposition.

5. Increase of facilities for recreational development will be inadequate unless recreation income increases enough to warrant increased recreation expenditures.

6. The American people appreciate much more what they pay for than that which is given free.

7. Forestry is economic as well as social and all forms of forestry should have a carrying charge attached which would at least make the activity self-supporting.

#### NOT IN FAVOR OF RECREATIONAL CHARGE

1. It is an established principle to consider the larger welfare of the state or nation as of vital interest to American democracy.

2. Public good will and cooperation is of much greater importance and value than the revenue which would be returned.

3. The cost of collection and policing necessary to enforce collection would be out of proportion to the amount collected as to be impracticable.

4. Collection of a "recreational charge" would necessitate change in regulations governing collections

and transfer of public money.

5. A "recreation charge" would place the burden on those least able to pay it and indicate the National Forests as existing only for economic reasons rather than for social reasons as well.

After a thorough study of the above conditions and other conditions influencing the matter, the following conclusions have been suggested.

1. All possible means should be used to secure adequate appropriation from Congress to make possible the necessary development of recreation. Appropriations should be made on the basis of need.
2. Everything possible should be done to increase the number of special use permits to a point where they might be able to support the recreational program.
3. The use of the sliding scale for profit making concessions so that they pay according to their profits.
4. On a few intensively developed camp grounds when conveniences are supplied, it may be practicable to charge a small "service" charge, for use of conveniences and wood supplied. These areas would then demand the services of a caretaker.