CELEBRATING THE SIUSLAW: A CENTURY OF GROWTH

WARD TONSFELDT, Ph.D

CPS men planting trees in Yachats Purchase Unit.

impressed with the poetry and drama, however, since they asked that fine arts men no longer be sent to Waldport.[20]

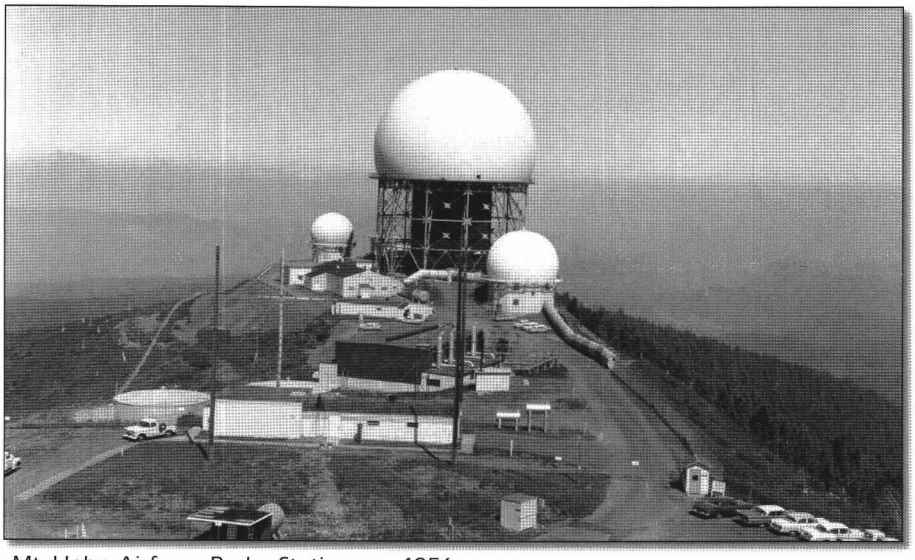
Through 1944 the CPS crew planted trees and did road work on the Yachats Purchase Unit. They eventually planted 9,000 acres with fir, spruce, and cedar from Forest Service nurseries. The country was rugged, roads were muddy, and the weather was coastal. Camp Waldport crews suffered five fatalities from accidents.[21] This was a significantly higher mortality rate than other CPS camps, and far greater than CCC camps.

Despite the heavy logging and fire that the Yachats Purchase Unit had suffered, some timber remained. The Siuslaw made two sales on the Unit during the war, one for $91,107 and the other for $88,315.[22] This was a tidy profit on the initial investment of $99,947.[23]

The war came to a close, and life returned to normal. Veterans came back to their jobs with the Forest Service and the lumber industry. The lookouts resumed their summer schedule, blackout curtains came down, and the conscientious objectors went home. With 10,000 acres of new trees, the old Blodgett Tract was healthier than before the war. Japanese mines continued to drift ashore for several years. Demolition teams blew them up harmlessly on the beach.

Close on the heels of World War II came the third major conflict of the twentieth century, usually called the "Cold War" between the western nations and the communist countries. The Siuslaw was less involved with the Cold War and the outbreaks in Korea and Vietnam than with the previous wars.

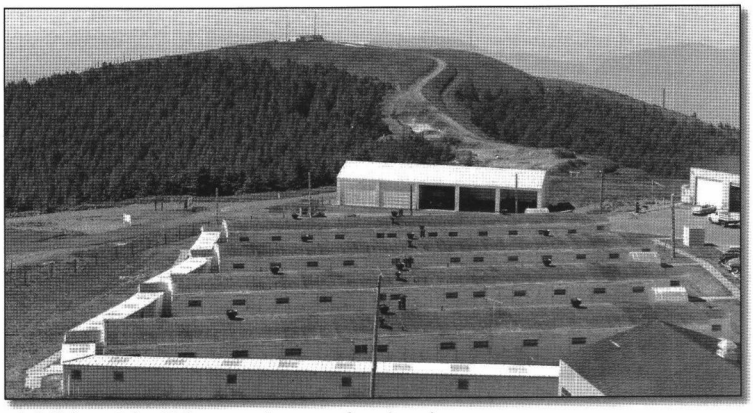
Despite the active hostilities in Korea and Vietnam, the Cold War was largely a technological chess match between the major powers. Each new military technology from the atomic bomb through the sophisticated anti-missile shields of the 1990s was matched by a newer technology, prolonging the military stalemate that lasted nearly 50 years. One important part of the military technology was electronic detection systems to prevent enemy aircraft from launching a surprise attack.



Mt. Hebo Airforce Radar Station, ca. 1956.

In 1953 the Army engineers planned and built a radar station on Mt. Hebo. The station was complete and operating by 1956.[24] This radar station was intended to provide early warning of approaching aircraft, which were considered a major threat to the U.S. at the time. After the Soviets detonated their first atomic bomb in 1950, the possibility of manned Soviet aircraft bombing the U.S. was taken seriously. Many communities established civil defense programs and air raid shelters. Ominously, the government re-established the WWII-vintage Ground Observer Corps.[25] Several radar systems were built in the 1950s, generally oriented to critical military installations like Hanford, Washington, or major population centers. Eventually, the completion of the Distant Early Warning (DEW) line across the Arctic made other radar installations redundant.[26] After 1957, with the Soviet development of intercontinental ballistic missiles, and their successful launch of the first satellite, the defense focus shifted from aircraft to missiles.

To judge from available documents, the Forest Service personnel on the Siuslaw had little interaction with the radar technicians at Mt. Hebo. The Forest's "Historical Notes for Calendar Year 1954" indicates that the military completed their barracks and the mess hall on the mountain and that they widened and paved the access road to the radar site in that year. Of course, the radar station was probably at least somewhat secret.



Additional facilities southeast of radar domes.

As the 1950s and 1960s passed, the Cold War became less of a concern until it finally ended with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. On a more personal level, Forester Clarence W. Jacobs recorded in his "Memories" that while he was working at the SO in the early 1950s he was trained and issued a "large packet of papers and brochures" about surviving a nuclear attack. The materials included information about building a fallout shelter, using a radiation detector, and coping with the "possible hostility and threat of friends and neighbors" who presumably did not have a fallout shelter or a radiation detector.[27]

NOTES

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2 Vernon Jensen, *Lumber and Labor* (New York, NY: Farrar and Rinehart, 1945) 125.

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4 Lloyd Palmer, *Steam towards the Sunset* (Newport, OR: Lincoln County Historical Society, 1982) 33.

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8 B.A. Johnson and Archibald Whisnatt, *The Pacific Spruce Corporation* (Chicago, IL: Lumber World, 1924) 13.

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13 Bill McCash, "The Aircraft Warning Service in World War II," *Waterways*, (Coos Bay, OR: Coos County Historical Society, September 2007) 3-6.

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15 *Lincoln County Leader*, November 12, 1942.

16 Stephanie Finucane, *A History of the Blodgett Tract* (on file, Waldport, OR: Siuslaw NF, 1989) 34.

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25 David F. Winkler, "Searching the Skies" (www.fas.org/nuke/guide/usa/airdef/searching_the_skies.htm) 4.

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE GREAT DEPRESSION

HARD TIMES

The Depression of the 1930s was a defining decade for the U.S. In parts of the Pacific Northwest, the Depression actually started a few years earlier than October, 1929, when the New York stock market collapsed. In Oregon, the lumber industry peaked during the 1920s, then went into a decline. Siuslaw National Forest timber sales reached 19.6 million board feet in 1924, then plunged to 1.9 million board feet in 1925. In 1926 sales climbed back to 12.3 million board feet, then fell below one million board feet in 1928 and remained at that level through the early 1930s.

Men from Resettlement Administration camp at Hebo Lake picnic shelter, ca. 1936.

The lumber industry was not the only business affected by the Depression. Manufacturing, retail, agriculture, and other businesses declined. On the Oregon coast, timber, fishing, and tourism drove the economy, and they were especially hard-hit. Historians have estimated that a third of American workers were out of work during these years. Unemployment numbers do not tell the whole story, for many Americans in the first decades of the twentieth century were self-employed farmers, tradesmen, or retail merchants. These people did not have jobs to lose, but they lost their businesses and their homes.

At the same time as the Depression—and intensifying its effect—an unrelated environmental disaster befell the Midwest and the Great Plains. This was the Dust Bowl, when drought and wind erosion destroyed farms throughout the region. The Pacific Northwest was affected by the Dust Bowl weather, and serious forest fires occurred on the coast in 1933 and 1936. Thousands of refugees forced off their lands in the Midwest made their way to California, Oregon, and Washington. As Depression-era novelist John Steinbeck wrote in *The Grapes of Wrath*, "the dispossessed were drawn west—from Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas" to the Pacific States.

The nation responded to the Depression through the social programs of the New Deal. After President Franklin D. Roosevelt's election in 1932, Congress passed a

wide range of laws designed to put the unemployed to work, strengthen the nation's infrastructure of roads and bridges, reverse years of bad policies toward Native Americans, restore the Dust Bowl, teach conservation of natural resources, and curb the worst excesses of free-market capitalism. This was a tall order. Some of the New Deal programs were successes, some were failures, and most fell somewhere in between.

As an agency of the Department of Agriculture, the Siuslaw National Forest was involved in some of the largest programs of the New Deal. The Civilian Conservation Corps built roads, campgrounds, administrative buildings, and other infrastructure on the Forest. The Resettlement Administration purchased marginal farms in and around the Siuslaw, and those lands became part of the Forest. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) contributed to highway projects throughout western Oregon.

One enduring success of the New Deal on the Siuslaw and the Oregon coast was the completion of the U.S. 101, the Pacific Coast Highway. Funds from New Deal agencies, including the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC), the Relief and Construction Act (RCA), and the Public Works Administration (PWA) paid for the highway and the major bridges. The new road linked the parts of the Siuslaw together, and opened the coast for logging and recreation as the economy improved.

Like other national forests, the Siuslaw also felt the influence of the New Deal in the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) and its successor, the National Recovery Administration (NRA). The NRA regulated log prices, lumber prices, and lumber workers' wages through legislation known as the Lumber Code. Although the government's experiments in the lumber market were not entirely successful, a lasting benefit of the Lumber Code was Article X, which called for conservation and sustained yield management of national forests.

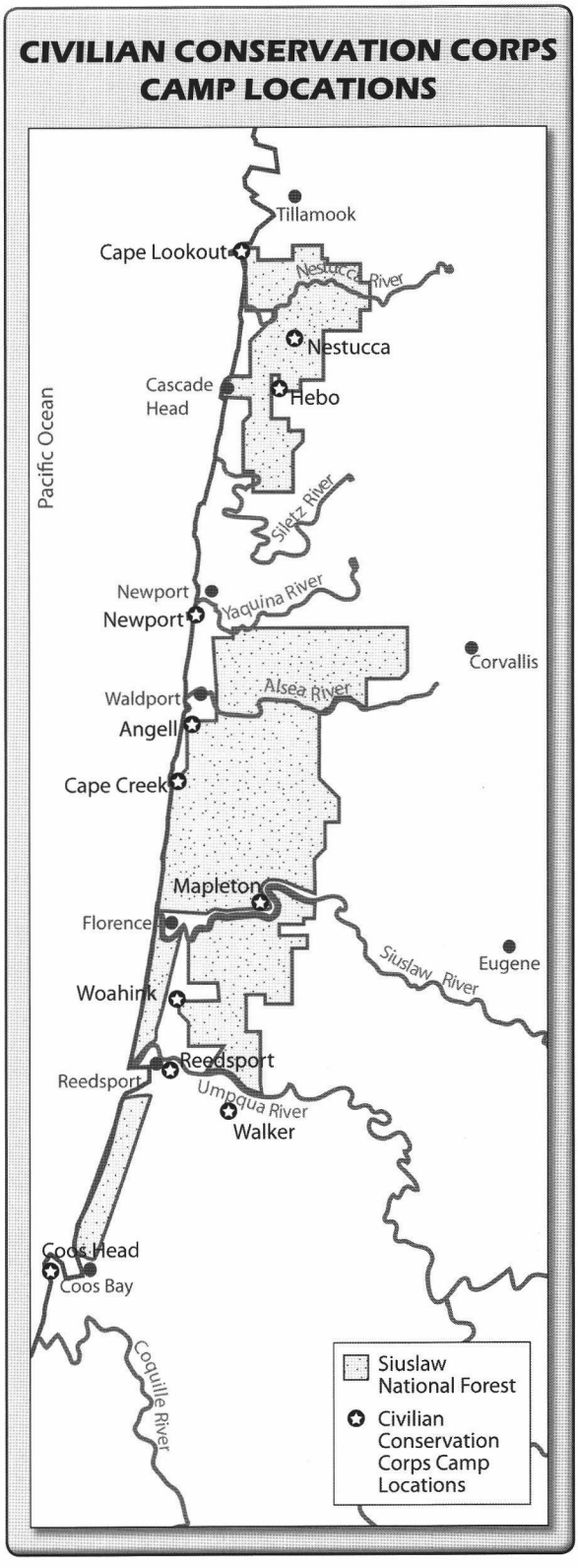
Camp Nestucca was one of the permanent CCC camps on the Siuslaw.

THE CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS

The Civilian Conservation Corps or CCC was one of the most ambitious programs of the New Deal. It was also one of the first New Deal programs, beginning in April of 1933. The program is closely identified with President Franklin Roosevelt because it was an idea that he had presented in his campaign. In essence, the CCC would enroll young men whose families were receiving public assistance. The young men would work on conservation projects on public lands for a basic wage of $30 per month. The Department of Labor was to provide personnel services for the CCC, including recruiting and finance. The Department of Defense would provide transportation, basic training, uniforms, and health care. The Forest Service, the National Park Service, and various state agencies would put the young men to work and supervise their activities.

Over three million men enlisted in the CCC during its nine-year life. The CCC mobilized a larger number of young Americans than any government program before the World War II draft. The CCC was military in character. Army officers organized the recruits and put them into a para-military setting where they wore uniforms, lived in barracks, and worked under military discipline.

Young men came from many backgrounds and circumstances, from both rural and urban areas. Many had never seen a national forest, much less had any outdoor experience in a forest

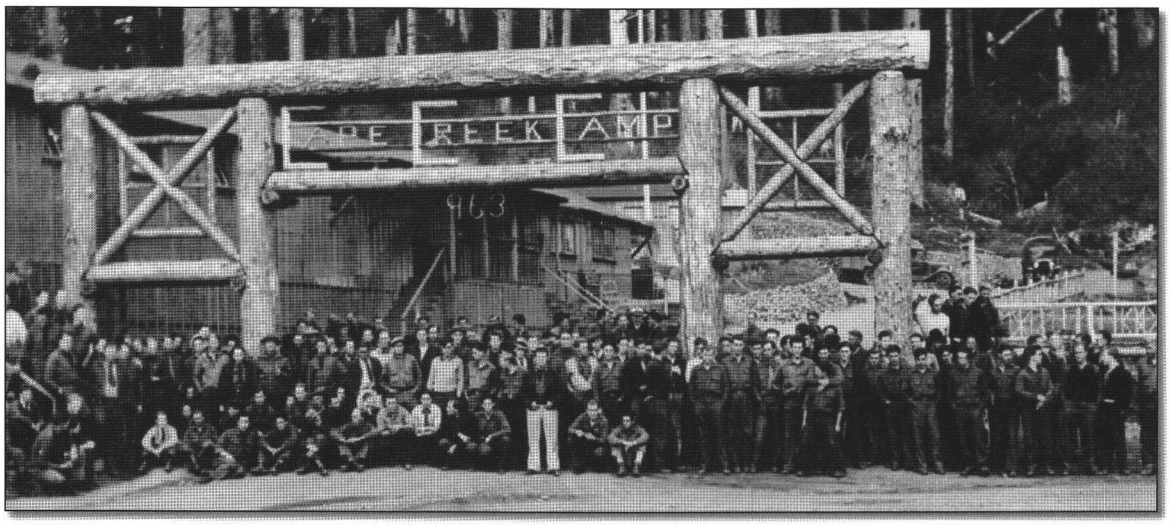


or mountain environment. Others came from the rural south, sons of tenant farmers and sharecroppers, who had lived in poverty, without adequate nutrition, for many years. Some from urban centers, lacking jobs or recreational opportunities, had drifted towards delinquency. Many had limited education, some to the point of illiteracy. As the CCC program matured, education in basic literacy and numeracy as well as vocational skills became a major focus.

In addition to teaching specific skills, the CCC program also taught certain social values. For example, the enlistees' allowance was officially set at $30 per month, but $25 of that was deducted and sent to their families, who were on relief. The wages of the CCC men supplemented the county welfare programs that offered their families assistance. The enlistees were given food, shelter, and occupation by the government, but they were required to contribute to their families' well-being, thus preserving a sense of family obligation and personal responsibility.

One element of the CCC program that was critical to its success was including local veterans and local craftsmen as mentors and leaders for the enlistees. These "local experienced men" (LEMs) were important for enculturating the enlistees into the world of work and teaching them the rudiments of various trades and crafts. In some instances, the skills of the LEMs were remarkable. Some of these men were masters of their trades, and like most other workers during the Depression, they were often unemployed.

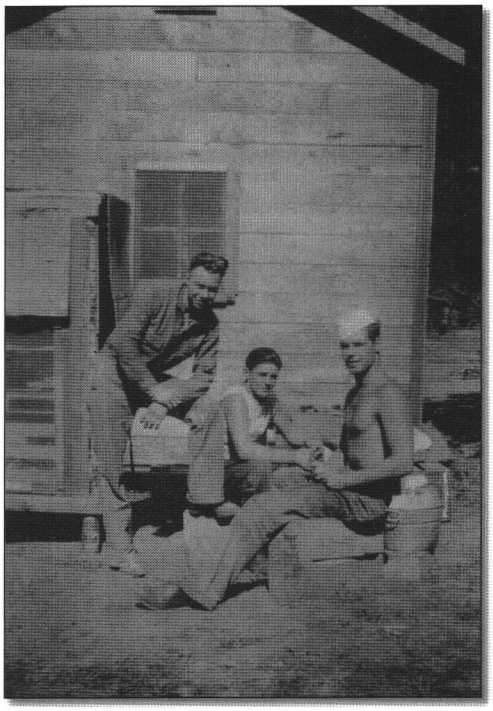
The CCC operated five permanent camps on the Siuslaw National Forest. These were the Camp Cape Creek, Camp Hebo, Camp Mapleton, Camp Nestucca, and Camp Angell. There were temporary or "side" camps at numerous locations, including Marys Peak.



CCC men at Camp Cape Creek, Cape Perpetua.

THE IDEA BEHIND THE CCC

President Roosevelt brought legislation to Congress in March of 1933 proposing the Civilian Conservation Corps. The CCC was to have dual purposes of financial relief for unemployed young men and conservation programs for public lands.[1] Roosevelt had an interest in conservation and forestry. His cousin, President Theodore Roosevelt was one of the first conservationists and is remembered as a powerful proponent of the forest reserves and the Forest Service.



CCC men in camp after work, Camp Cape Creek.

This idea of conservation work for the unemployed was very much "in the air" during the early years of the Depression. In Europe, conservation projects operated in several countries. In 1932 as Governor of New York, Franklin D. Roosevelt had enlisted 10,000 unemployed men to plant trees in New York State Forests. When the Depression arrived in the Pacific Northwest, the Forest Service began operating conservation work camps for unemployed men.[2]

In Oregon and Washington, Region 6 cooperated with counties in establishing Subsistence Construction camps for unemployed men before the CCC was formed. Men could work for shelter, food, clothes, and tobacco. The Forest Service provided camping equipment, the counties provided funds, and the Forest Service assigned supervisors to coordinate work programs. The Siuslaw operated a Subsistence Construction camp in Lane County for 50 unemployed men.[3]

The CCC was to enlist "unmarried, idle men aged 18 to 25" for two purposes—to conduct conservation work and to provide employment. The relation of these two goals changed over time. At first, relief was primary:

Goals of the Civilian Conservation Corps

Goal 1	*Relief of unemployment, especially among young men*
Goal 2	*Health and attitude of enrollees*
Goal 3	*Relief of destitute families*
Goal 4	*Conservation projects*

CCC Manual, 1934

Ten years later, in 1944, relief had dropped to second place:

> *"The CCC program was looked on by many as a relief program rather than a conservation program. A good conservation program can do much toward the relief of the unemployed, but its main objective should never be thought of as relief."*
>
> *Conrad L. Wirth, "Final Report to the Secretary," 1944.*

Other goals were important too, especially goal #2 from the *CCC Manual*, which was the "Health and attitude of enrollees." In addition to the formal education programs that the CCC provided, it also offered opportunities for what many former enrollees refer to as "character building." The program took young men out of their homes and mixed them with men from different regions, ethnicities, religions, and cultures.

There are two tractor trailbuilders here, one "thirty cat" and a new "50" which arrived but ten days ago. These are being double shifted in order to get the maximum work done before the rain sets in.

***Six Twenty-Six*, September, 1933**

WHAT THE CCC ACCOMPLISHED

As interpreted by the CCC, conservation work often meant building roads and trails, constructing administrative buildings, and developing campgrounds. On the Siuslaw, as on other national forests, CCC crews also contributed to reforestation and fire fighting, although these activities had a 20-year history on the Forest before the CCC. Other CCC conservation work included insect control programs, erosion control, flood control, range improvements, and some work with wildlife habitat restoration.

The work projects of this company are confined primarily to the Siuslaw National Forest. They are under the direction of the Supervisor of the Forest and the Ranger of the Hebo Ranger District. Types of projects vary with the seasons. During the summer practically all work ceases and the time is taken up fighting forest fires. Winter is the planting season. Road construction and improvement goes on throughout the year as do the various building projects. In the spring the telephone lines to the lookout stations must be repaired and put in shape for fire season and foot trails cleared and repaired.

***Coast Range Beacon* CCC Camp Nestucca, Blaine, Oregon, Company 5436, 1940**

Captain K.E. Kevenen at Camp Mapleton.

Planting and Pruning The planting of 200,000 Douglas fir seedlings was completed November 19. The work was started October 29 by a crew from the Nestucca CCC camp. This planting is a continuation of the planting begun on the Kay Burn in 1910. The total plantation now covers an area of 10,000 acres.

***Six Twenty-Six*, December, 1935**

Accomplishments of Company 5436 at Camp Nestucca

Since its arrival at Camp Nestucca, Company 5436 has put in an average of more than 3500 man days per month of projects. Listed below are a few of the accomplishments:

- **2,100 man days constructing 3 bridges.**
- **6,500 man days constructing 6 buildings of all types and sizes**
- **Construction of 21 miles of telephone lines and maintenance of 43 miles**
- **Construction of 5 ½ miles of truck trails and maintenance of 50 miles. Not included in this is the gravelling of a road from Blaine towards camp, a distance of about five miles to date. Gravel for this was crushed and the crusher operated by the enrollees of the Company.**
- **Maintenance of 30 miles of foot trail and construction of a mile of new trail.**
- **Improvement of 346 acres of forest stand. This includes pruning selected trees in order that they will produce a better grade of lumber when they mature.**
- **900 acres of land has been planted in forest trees.**
- **2,200 man days have been spent on fire prevention and pre-suppression.**
- **6,060 man days have been spent in fighting forest fires, not only in the immediate vicinity of this camp but also in other areas of Oregon and Washington.**
- **900 man days have been spent improving and constructing public campgrounds.**
- **29 man days have been spent on survey.**

***Coast Range Beacon,* CCC Camp Nestucca, Company 5436, 1940**

CCC BUILDING AND DESIGN

The distinctive CCC structures on the Siuslaw and other national forests of the Pacific Northwest are perhaps the most visible legacy of the program. CCC structures included buildings for forest management and public recreation.

Standards and plans for Forest Service buildings in the CCC construction program were provided in the *Improvement Handbook*, published in 1937 and later supplemented by *Acceptable Plans for Forest Service Administrative Buildings,* published in 1939. These two books offered sample plans, specifications of material, and suggestions for choosing appropriate sites. The books promoted a style that was sometimes called "Government Rustic." It was popular during the 1920s and 1930s for park buildings, cabins, and lodges.

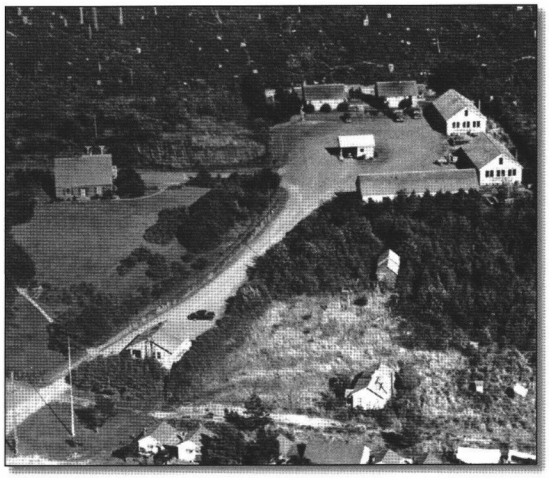
The CCC built the Ranger's residence at the Waldport Ranger Station.

As Forest Service historian Gail Throop points out, the Rustic Style had no single point of origin in architectural history. Influences include the British and American romantics, like Andrew Jackson Downing, and such original American designers as Gustav Stickley, Frederick Law Olmstead, and Bernard Maybeck.[4]

The Rustic Style also derives from vernacular building traditions in wood and stone. In 1934, President Roosevelt's friend and Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes, realized that the CCC and other New Deal programs would be making an unprecedented contribution to the infrastructure of parks and other public lands in the U.S. Ickes assigned National Park Service architect Albert H. Good and his staff to prepare a book explaining the Rustic Style and offering examples of successful buildings and outdoor

facilities designed in this style. The Department of the Interior published the first edition of *Park Structures and Facilities* in 1935. A second edition was available after 1938.

Good defined the Rustic Style as "a style which, through the use of native materials in proper scale, and through the avoidance of straight lines and over sophistication, gives the feeling of having been executed by pioneer craftsmen with limited hand tools. It thus achieves sympathy with natural surroundings and with the past."[5]



Waldport Ranger Station complex was a CCC building project.

The goal of sympathy with natural setting and with the Euro-American past was, of course, exactly the kind of value statement that was appropriate to the Civilian Conservation Corps program. In the Pacific Northwest, this style took the form of wooden frame buildings with fieldstone masonry. The siding of the buildings often combined two or more textures, including horizontal clapboard, vertical board and batten, shingles, shakes, and various patterns of drop siding. Roof pitches tended to be steep. Roofing material was usually cedar shingle. The fieldstone masonry generally included the exposed foundation of the building, and also the entry, patio, and chimneys. Outdoor fireplaces were common, as were other stone hardscape features. Ornamental elements included timber brackets at doorways and entries, and wooden shutters with the familiar Forest Service conifer cutout.

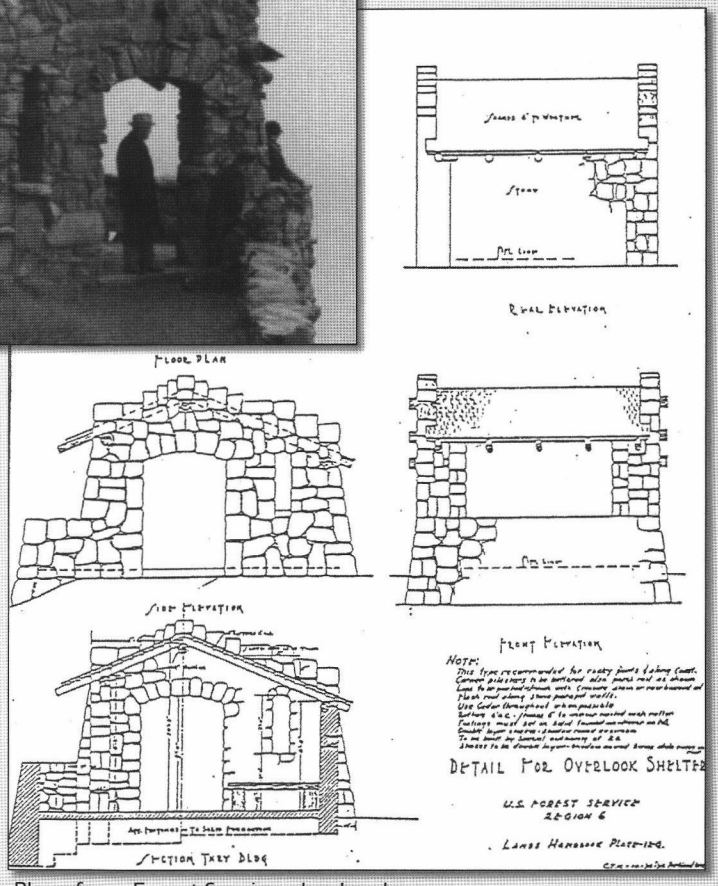
Staff residence in the bungalow style, Waldport.

Windows were a signature design element on CCC Forest Service buildings in Region 6. These were generously used on most buildings. They were always mullioned windows with multiple lights that gave the buildings a distinctly "cottage-like" look. Window surrounds were typically wide and often ornamented with moulding. Paint or stain schemes favored earth-tones, especially brown stain in forested areas. Buildings in the open could be grey or white. The Ranger's houses at Waldport and Mapleton are excellent examples of CCC residential design.

Rock work needs first of all to be in proper scale. The average size of rocks employed must be sufficiently large to justify the use of masonry. Rocks should be placed on their natural beds, the stratification of the bedding planes horizontal, never vertical. Variety of size lends interest and results in a pattern far more pleasing than that produced by units of common or nearly common size. Informality vanishes from rock work if the rocks are laid in courses like brick work or of the horizontal joints are not broken. In walls, the larger rocks should be used near the base and by no means should smaller ones be used exclusively in the upper portions. Rather should a variety of sizes be common to the whole surface, the larger predominating at the base. Rocks should be selected for color and hardness.

Albert H. Good, *Park Structures and Facilities*, 1935

The West Shelter on Cape Perpetua.



Plans from Forest Service plan book.

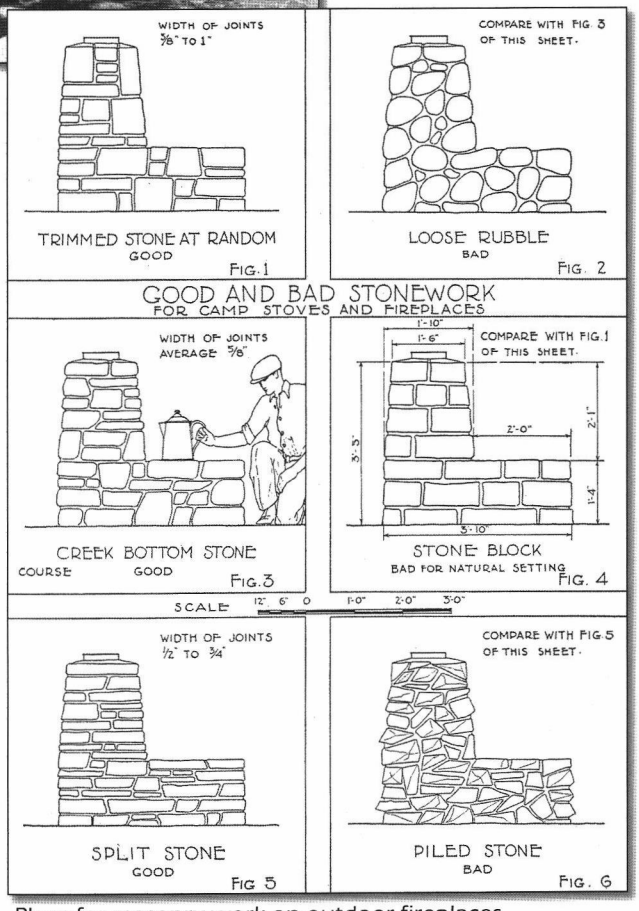
CCC RECREATION CAMPGROUNDS

Campground structures were especially important in the CCC building program. In the 1930s, outdoor recreation for the American public was rapidly gaining popularity and significance. The Forest Service began its recreation program in earnest after March 4, 1915, when Congress passed the Term Occupancy Act. This allowed national forests to make public lands available to private parties who wanted to build lodges, resorts, or cabins.

Building fireplace, Cape Perpetua campground.

In the same year, the Forest Service created the Columbia River Gorge Park on the Oregon National Forest (now the Mt. Hood NF). This park encompassed nearly 14,000 acres, and was the most ambitious national forest recreation facility to date.[6] In the following year, 1916, Congress created the National Park Service within the Department of the Interior to manage the national parks that were growing in popularity and becoming oases for recreation. In 1917, the Forest Service engaged landscape architect Fred Waugh to investigate forest recreation. His report, *Recreational Uses of the National Forests*, was the first agency-wide approach to this topic.

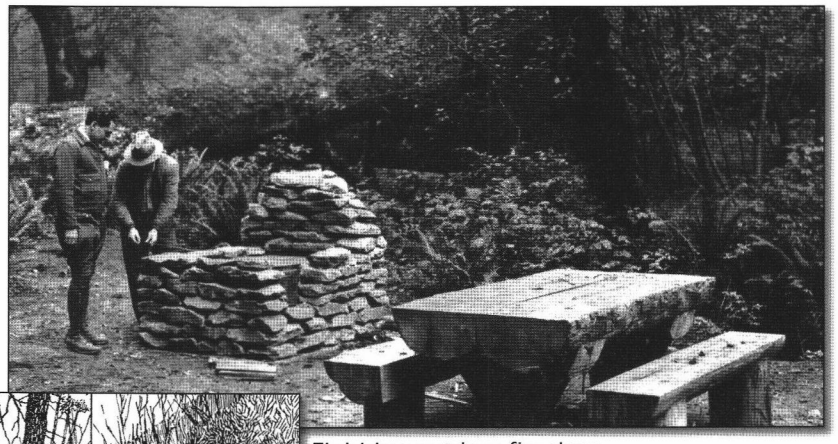
During the 1920s, national forest recreation grew in popularity and the Forest Service struggled to provide campgrounds, trails, and other amenities for the recreating public.



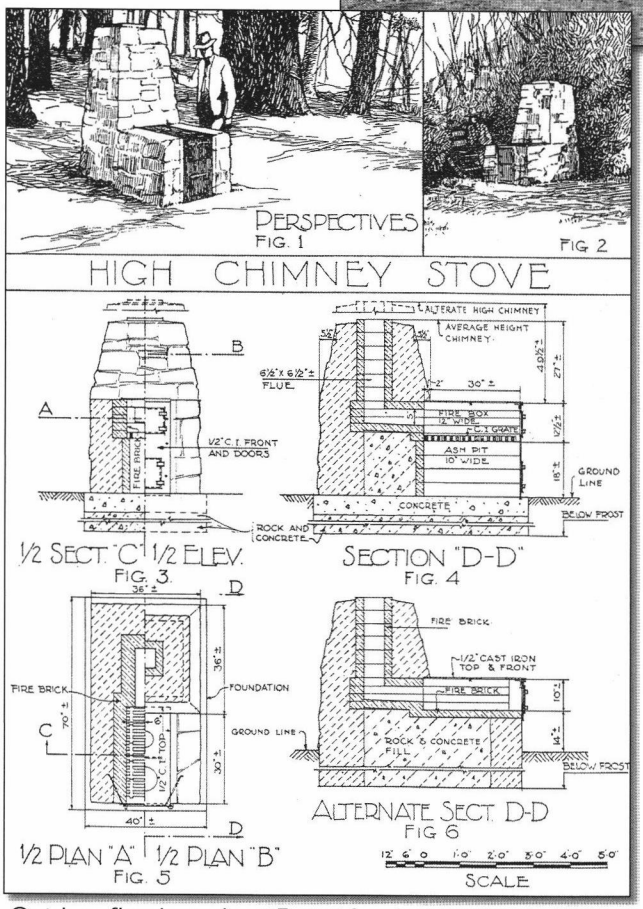
Plans for masonry work on outdoor fireplaces.

When the Depression came along, recreation slowed slightly, and the agency was able to catch its breath. As CCC labor and resources became available after 1933, recreation development was a priority for the Forest Service.

The CCC put its distinctive stamp on the recreation facilities it built. Here, as with other CCC building projects, the aesthetic of the Rustic Style prevailed. National Park Service architect Albert Good devoted 10 of the 21 chapters in his book *Park Structures and Facilities* to outdoor amenities including signs, walls, steps, seats and tables, fireplaces and camp stoves, and entrance ways. His designs emphasized native stone and timber construction, with a careful eye to craftsmanship and proper scale and proportions.



Finishing outdoor fireplace.



Outdoor fireplace plans, Forest Service plan book, 1937.

The CCC built several campgrounds on the Siuslaw, but the crown jewel was the complex at Cape Perpetua. The stonework on the walls and parapet, the trails and trail shelter are excellent examples of the CCC design and craft. The West Shelter, built in 1933, shows influences of the trail shelters featured in *Park Structures and Facilities*. Plans for this shelter were published in the Forest Service Region 6 *Lands Handbook*.

CCC CAMP CONSTRUCTION

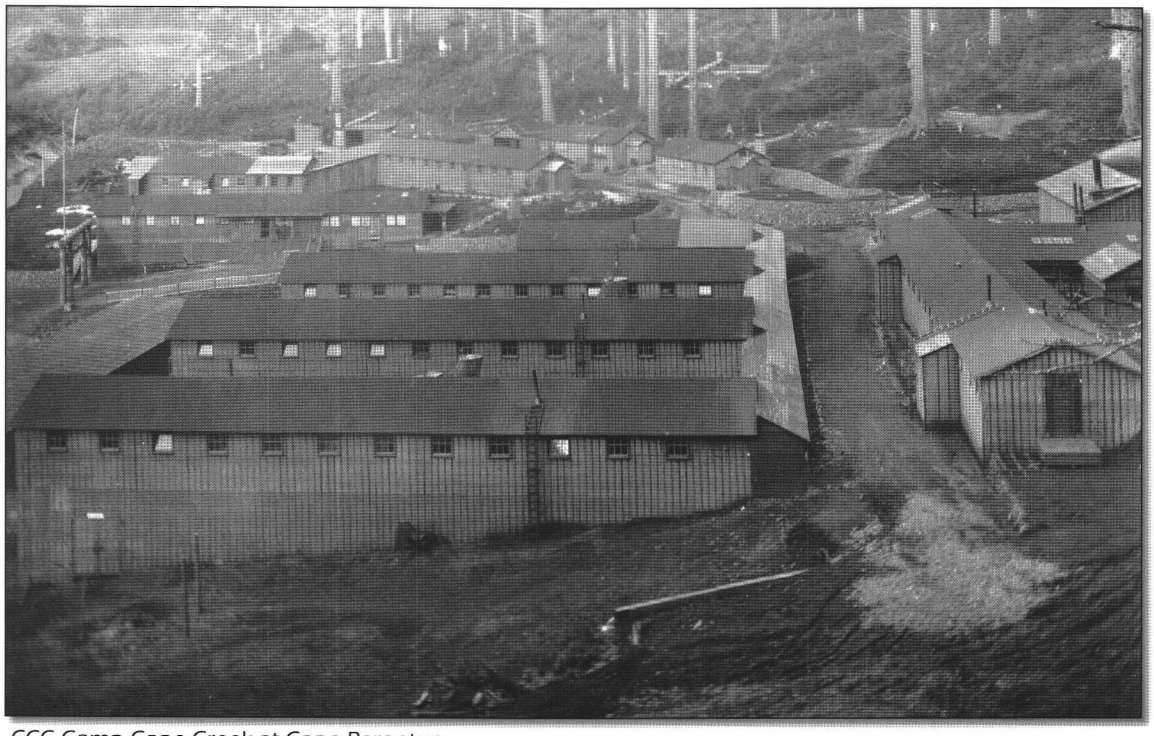
In its nine-year life on the Siuslaw, the Civilian Conservation Corp built and occupied five permanent camps—Camp Cape Creek, Camp Hebo, Camp Mapleton, Camp Nestucca, and Camp Angell. Temporary "side camps" or "spike camps" were built at several locations and used only for the duration of a specific construction project.

Photos of the camps show plain, utilitarian buildings arranged in rows and squares. While the CCC crews lavished their best building skills on the buildings intended for public or administrative uses, their camp buildings were temporary and intentionally plain.

Structures used for the CCC camps included three broad categories: tents, frame buildings, and portable buildings. In general the first camps were tent camps, and these were replaced with "all-weather" camps, usually of frame buildings. After 1937 all CCC camps were to be built with portable buildings. These were buildings assembled from wall units built in factories. The portable buildings could be assembled by unskilled crews on site, and then could be disassembled and moved when the camps were abandoned. The military had developed these portable buildings as "portable cantonments."

CCC Camp Nestucca on Clarence Creek.

The CCC frame buildings were built without a perimeter foundation. They were typically set on wooden sills or on posts. The walls were platform framed and sheathed with nominal one inch shiplap sheathing. Roofing was composition roll roofing, and



CCC Camp Cape Creek at Cape Perpetua.

windows and doors were conventional units. The standard buildings for a permanent camp included eight different kinds of separate structures:

Mess hall
Recreation hall
Infirmary
Officers' quarters
Truck garage
Latrine
Shower house[7]

Photos of Camp Nestucca show rows of frame buildings with cupolas. The buildings are sided with tar paper secured with vertical battens. Two of the buildings—the office or headquarters—are shingled. The Camp Cape Creek features barracks elevated at the downhill end and joined at the rear (uphill) with covered walkways.

THE END OF THE CCC

As the 1930s ended, the U.S. moved closer to prosperity and to joining the war in Europe. Military enlistment and lower welfare rolls meant that fewer young men were eligible for the CCC. The organization had problems finding enough recruits. Finally in December, 1941, the U.S. entered the war, and in June of 1942, the CCC program officially ended.

CCC camps were dismantled, and the building parts moved to military installations. Some camps were re-used by the military. The camp at Big Creek became the Waldport CPS camp and this site is still in use as the Angell Job Corps camp. Many of the CCC enrollees entered the military, where their training prepared them for various specialties.

Within the last six months the Siuslaw group has held seven gatherings for its members: Three farewell gatherings, three newly-wed gatherings, and one dance for general principles.

***Six Twenty-Six*, August, 1935**

THE RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION

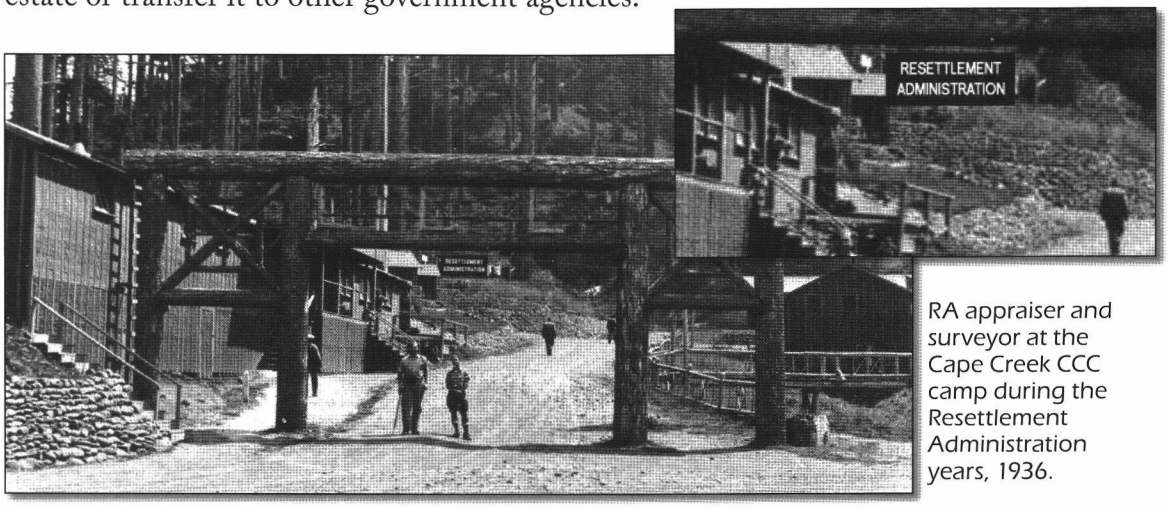
One of President Roosevelt's priorities for the New Deal in 1933 was to help the victims of the Dust Bowl. These people had lost their farms in the Midwest and South during the late 1920s and were relocating to other parts of the country as seasonal farm workers. Most of the Dust Bowl farms were dry farms in land too arid to grow cereal crops during the drought years of the late 1920s.

New Deal programs for the rural poor began with the Division of Subsistence Homesteads (1933-1934), then changed to the Rural Rehabilitation Division (1934-1935), then the Resettlement Administration (1935-1937), and finally the Farmers' Home Administration (1937-1994). In the Midwest, these organizations acquired lands abandoned by farmers, and put the lands into several conservation and reclamation programs, including the national grasslands. The Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act (July 22, 1937) was the enabling legislation for creating national grasslands, federal wildlife refuges, and adding lands to the national forests, including the Siuslaw. Specifically, the Act directed the Secretary of Agriculture to develop a program of land conservation "to correct maladjustments in land use and assist in such things as reforestation and the protection of fish and wildlife and natural resources."[8]

President Roosevelt created the Resettlement Administration (RA) by Executive Order 7027 on May 1, 1935. The new agency had three main tasks:

A) to resettle destitute or low-income families from rural or urban areas,
B) to initiate conservation projects for soil erosion, stream pollution, seacoast erosion, reforestation, and flood control, and
C) to lend money to help farmers or farm tenants purchase lands or equipment.

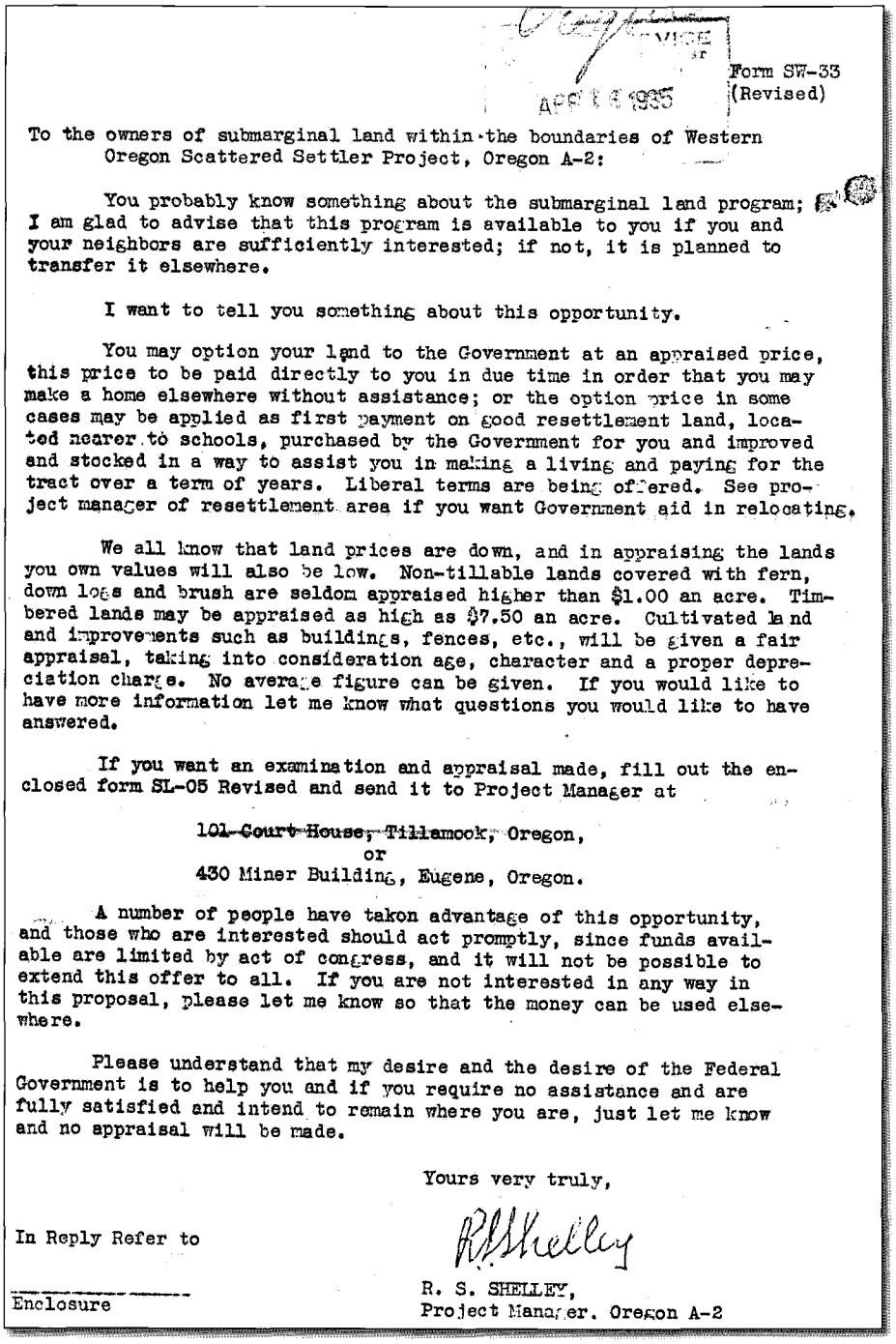
A forth provision of the Act empowered the new agency to acquire by purchase or eminent domain farms, ranches, or timber lands. The agency could then sell this real estate or transfer it to other government agencies.



RA appraiser and surveyor at the Cape Creek CCC camp during the Resettlement Administration years, 1936.

RESETTLEMENT ON THE CENTRAL OREGON COAST

Although Oregon's Coast Range was certainly not part of the Dust Bowl, there was widespread rural poverty and subsistence farming. The Resettlement Administration created the Western Oregon Scattered Settlers Project, and opened offices in Eugene and Tillamook. The project solicited participation by subsistence farmers who were willing to sell their lands at the prices the program was paying.



SERVICE
APR 16 1935

Form SW-33
(Revised)

To the owners of submarginal land within the boundaries of Western Oregon Scattered Settler Project, Oregon A-2:

You probably know something about the submarginal land program; I am glad to advise that this program is available to you if you and your neighbors are sufficiently interested; if not, it is planned to transfer it elsewhere.

I want to tell you something about this opportunity.

You may option your land to the Government at an appraised price, this price to be paid directly to you in due time in order that you may make a home elsewhere without assistance; or the option price in some cases may be applied as first payment on good resettlement land, located nearer to schools, purchased by the Government for you and improved and stocked in a way to assist you in making a living and paying for the tract over a term of years. Liberal terms are being offered. See project manager of resettlement area if you want Government aid in relocating.

We all know that land prices are down, and in appraising the lands you own values will also be low. Non-tillable lands covered with fern, down logs and brush are seldom appraised higher than $1.00 an acre. Timbered lands may be appraised as high as $7.50 an acre. Cultivated land and improvements such as buildings, fences, etc., will be given a fair appraisal, taking into consideration age, character and a proper depreciation charge. No average figure can be given. If you would like to have more information let me know what questions you would like to have answered.

If you want an examination and appraisal made, fill out the enclosed form SL-05 Revised and send it to Project Manager at

~~101 Court House, Tillamook~~, Oregon,
or
430 Miner Building, Eugene, Oregon.

A number of people have taken advantage of this opportunity, and those who are interested should act promptly, since funds available are limited by act of congress, and it will not be possible to extend this offer to all. If you are not interested in any way in this proposal, please let me know so that the money can be used elsewhere.

Please understand that my desire and the desire of the Federal Government is to help you and if you require no assistance and are fully satisfied and intend to remain where you are, just let me know and no appraisal will be made.

Yours very truly,

R. S. Shelley

In Reply Refer to

Enclosure

R. S. SHELLEY,
Project Manager, Oregon A-2

Forest Supervisor Ralph Shelley was re-assigned to lead the Resettlement Administration Program in western Oregon.

As "scattered settlers" from Coast Range homesteads sold their lands into the program, they were moved off the land and into Resettlement Administration camps established in conjunction with CCC camps at Mapleton, Nestucca, and Cape Creek, plus eight side camps. Men in the camps continued CCC projects and built guard stations at Alsea, Big Elk, and Vincent Creek.

Through the agency of the Bankhead-Jones Act, 69,482 acres of timberlands and sub-marginal farm land acquired by the Resettlement Administration became part of the Siuslaw National Forest in 1940.[9] At the same time, lands acquired by the government through two other New Deal programs—the National Industrial Recovery Act and the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act—were added to the Forest.

THE HUMAN SIDE OF RESETTLEMENT

Much of the controversy surrounding the Resettlement Administration comes from the perception that the government was perhaps too aggressive in removing impoverished settlers from their lands. Documents like the solicitation letter show that the agency was careful not to coerce settlers, and that it offered the going price for land, albeit at Depression prices. There is no doubt that the program worked better on the Midwest farms than it did in the Oregon Coast Range. A study prepared by the Department of Agriculture in 1941, after the end of the program, took a negative view towards resettlement in the Oregon Coast Range:

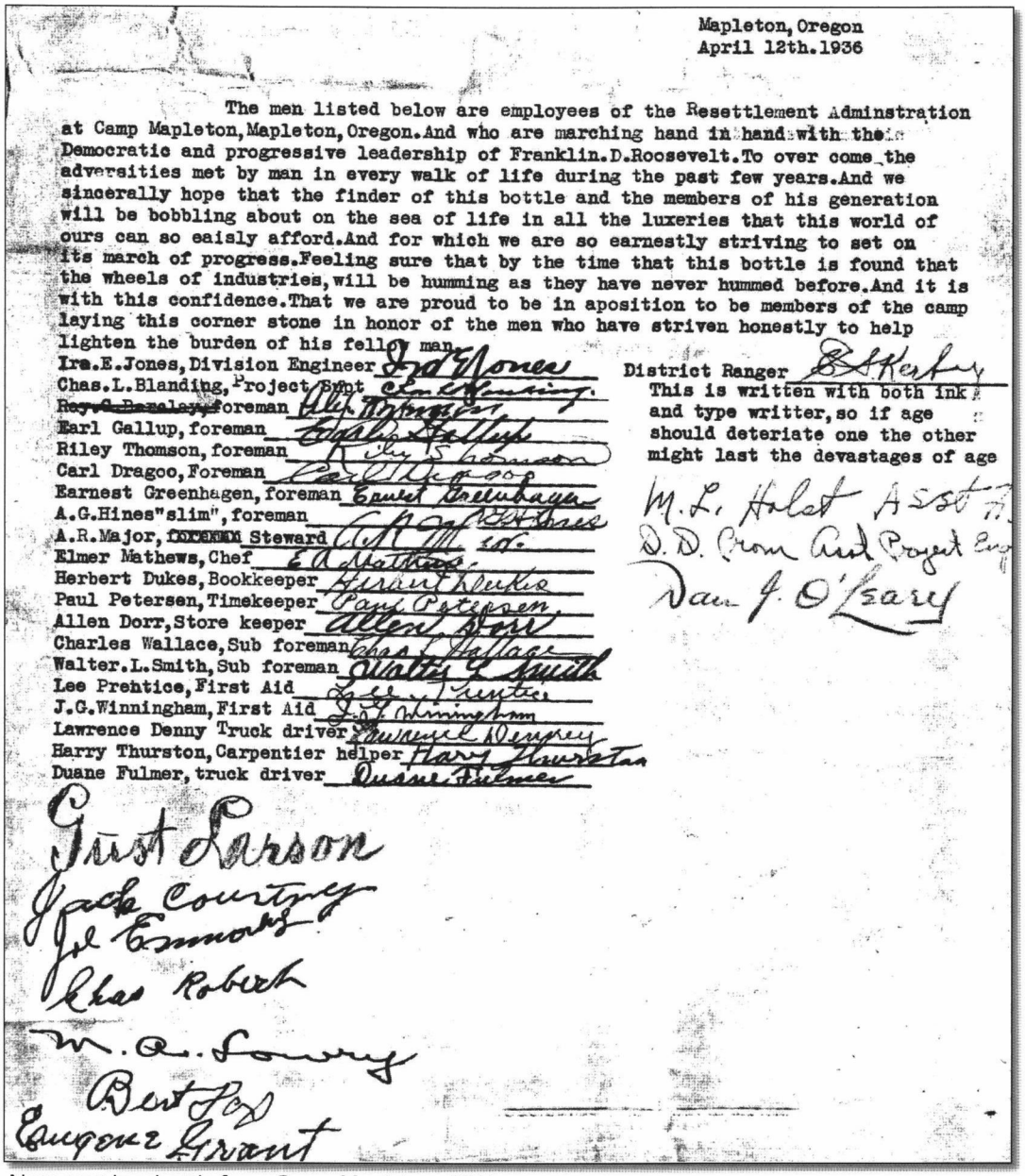
> An extreme instance of isolated agricultural population is to be found in the coastal mountains of western Oregon. Here, scattered small farm units cluster in those few places where the narrow, twisted stream valleys widen sufficiently so that a few acres of arable bottom lands are to be found. These isolated farms and small neighborhoods of farms are located along the lengths and usually far back toward the headwaters of virtually all the numerous streams draining this rugged, mountainous coastal area.
>
> After a resettlement program was inaugurated and it was well along toward completion, in an adjacent area, the Oregon Land Grant College Bureau of Agricultural Economics Committee, contemplating possible extension of such programs, began to feel the need for new criteria for determining the desirability of land retirement and resettlement as applied to the populations of isolated mountain areas. Some of the removed families reappeared in the mountains. Others were reported not successful in adjusting to new environments.
>
> Thus certain questions arose: Were there social factors to be found among such people which should modify purely economic decisions as to the need for retirement of remote lands from agricultural uses? Had the residents of these lands, living under conditions of relative insulation from the processes of social change, developed or retained social values at variance with those prevalent in more accessible districts? And were such differences if they did exist of such character and magnitude as to influence the desirability of resettlement on more productive and less isolated farms? ...Were actual living conditions enough below their standards of living to make them seriously dissatisfied with what they had and willing to accept different environments and different farm practices in return for higher levels of living?[10]

The author answered his own questions a few pages later:

> [Among] these mountain populations, then, ...pioneer traditions are strong. ... In such cases there is considerable reason to believe, resettlement, if it involved

removal from accustomed valleys and breaking family ties, would produce more social maladjustment and problems than it would remedy.

The opposing point of view is apparent in a note prepared by men in the Resettlement Administration Camp Mapleton in 1936. They set their note adrift in a bottle. Their attitude is that they are participating in history, and that they are "marching hand in hand with the Democratic and progressive leadership of Franklin D. Roosevelt" to overcome adversities met by "man in every walk of life during the past few years."



Mapleton, Oregon
April 12th.1936

The men listed below are employees of the Resettlement Adminstration at Camp Mapleton, Mapleton, Oregon. And who are marching hand in hand with the Democratic and progressive leadership of Franklin. D. Roosevelt. To over come the adversities met by man in every walk of life during the past few years. And we sincerally hope that the finder of this bottle and the members of his generation will be bobbling about on the sea of life in all the luxeries that this world of ours can so eaisly afford. And for which we are so earnestly striving to set on its march of progress. Feeling sure that by the time that this bottle is found that the wheels of industries, will be humming as they have never hummed before. And it is with this confidence. That we are proud to be in aposition to be members of the camp laying this corner stone in honor of the men who have striven honestly to help lighten the burden of his fellow man.

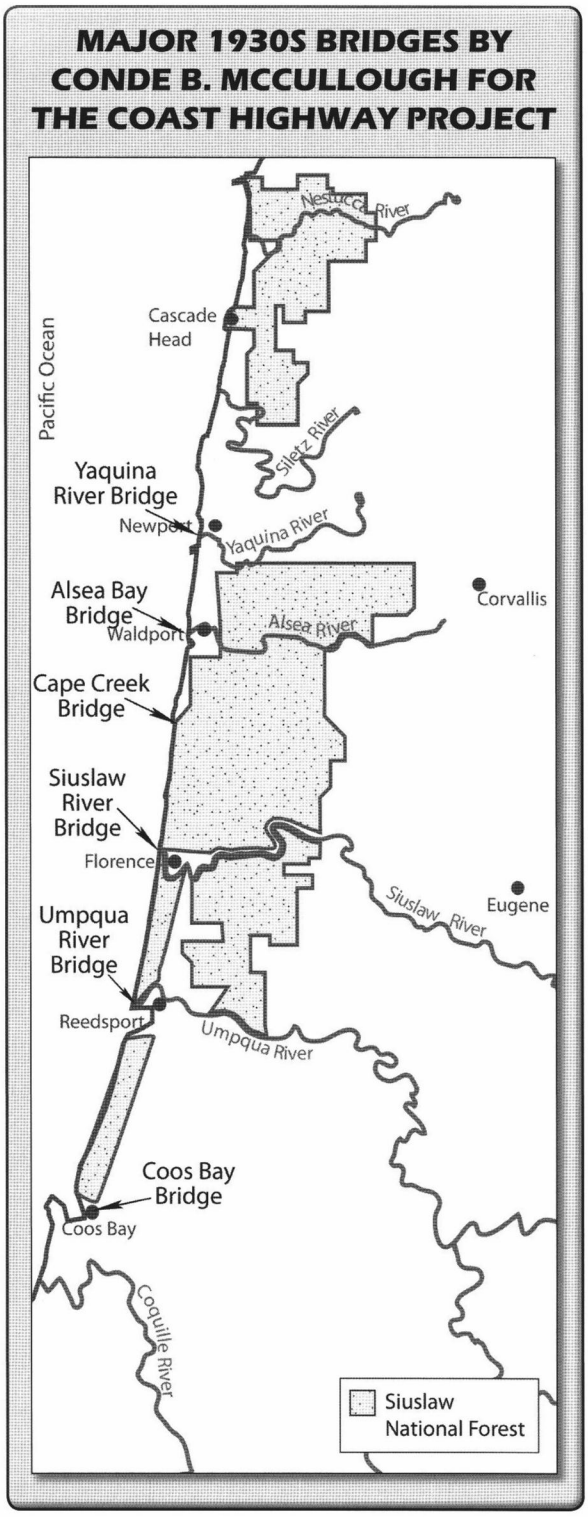
Ira.E.Jones, Division Engineer
Chas.L.Blanding, Project Supt
Foreman
Earl Gallup, foreman
Riley Thomson, foreman
Carl Dragoo, Foreman
Earnest Greenhagen, foreman
A.G.Hines"slim", foreman
A.R.Major, ~~foreman~~ Steward
Elmer Mathews, Chef
Herbert Dukes, Bookkeeper
Paul Petersen, Timekeeper
Allen Dorr, Store keeper
Charles Wallace, Sub foreman
Walter.L.Smith, Sub foreman
Lee Prentice, First Aid
J.G.Winningham, First Aid
Lawrence Denny Truck driver
Harry Thurston, Carpentier helper
Duane Fulmer, truck driver

District Ranger
This is written with both ink and type writter, so if age should deteriate one the other might last the devastages of age

M.L. Holst Asst
D.D. Prom Asst Project Eng
Dan J. O'Leary

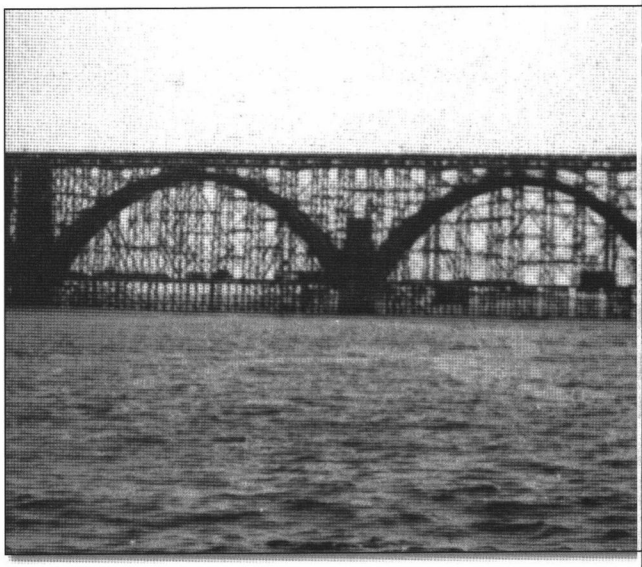
Gust Larson
Jack Courtney
Jos Emmons
Chas Robuck
M.A. Lowry
Bert Ford
Eugene Grant

Note sent in a bottle from Camp Mapleton, 1936.



Completing the Coast Highway and turning it into a viable route for commerce and tourism was a New Deal project that had important impacts on the Siuslaw National Forest. Prior to the project, the north-south route along the coast was a slow, wandering country road. The quality of the road varied. River crossings required a ferry or a long detour inland. Improvement of the coast route was a priority for the Oregon State Highway Department through the 1920s. California was completing its "Redwood Highway," which was invigorating the coastal economy and bringing isolated coastal communities into the twentieth century. Oregon wanted to follow suit, so advocates of the new highway formed the Oregon Coast Highway Association to make their case in Salem in the 1920s.

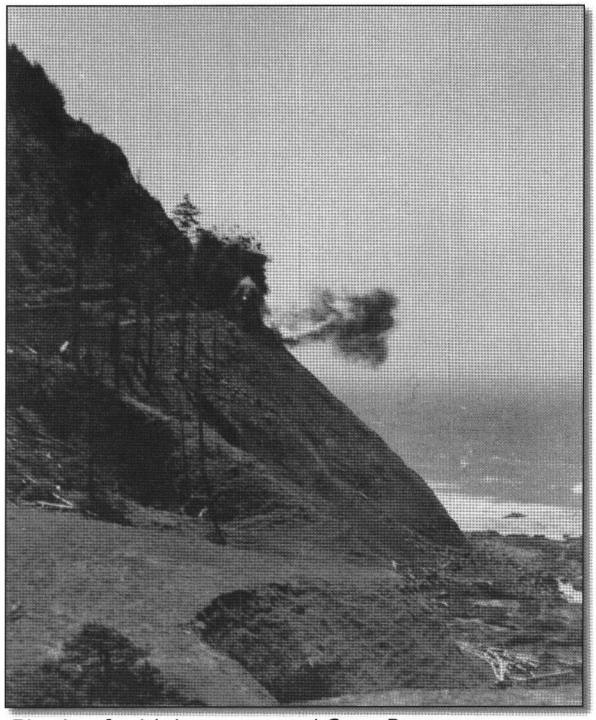
With the end of the prosperous 1920s and the onset of the Depression, the future of the new highway for the Oregon coast looked bleak. The coast highway would be extremely expensive to build



Yaquina River bridge under construction.

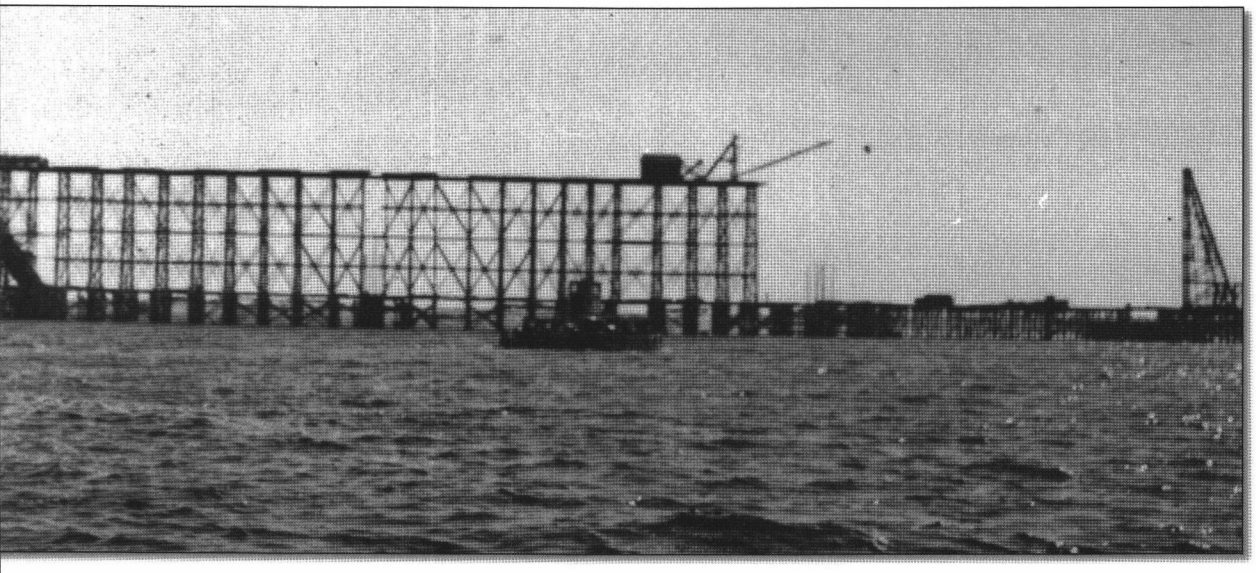
because of the need for bridges, tunnels, and cantilevered roads on the rocky headlands. The first major bridge was built on the Siuslaw National Forest at Heceta Head across Cape Creek in 1932. The bridge required an accompanying 700 foot tunnel. The cost earned this portion of the highway the name "the million dollar mile."[11]

In 1933, the Oregon State Highway Department applied for federal funds through the newly-created Public Works Administration (PWA). PWA projects were to employ workers and improve the nation's infrastructure. The PWA provided grants to the Highway Department and loans which were repaid with gasoline tax revenues.



Blasting for highway around Cape Perpetua.

The Highway Department's strategy for the central coast called for major bridges at Coos Bay, Reedsport, Florence, Waldport, and Newport. These bay and river crossings were served by ferries, meaning long waits and unpredictable service in bad weather. Conde B. McCullough was the Oregon State Highway Department bridge engineer. By 1932 McCullough's bridges throughout Oregon's highway system had won considerable notice. The five coast bridges—plus the Cape Creek bridge at Heceta Head—



Cape Creek bridge, 1932 at Heceta Head.

would earn him a place as one of the nation's premier bridge designers. McCullough's use of concrete and steel arches is probably unrivaled among American bridge architects. The combination of catenary arches and Roman arches that characterizes the Yaquina River bridge and the Cape Creek bridge is striking and aesthetically effective.

NOTES

1 John A. Salmond, *The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942: A New Deal Case Study* (Durham, NC: Duke University, 1967) 4.

2 Lawrence and Mary Rakestraw, *A History of the Willamette National Forest* (Eugene, OR: Willamette NF, 1975) 75.

3 *Six Twenty-Six*, March, 1933.

4 E. Gail Throop, "Utterly Visionary and Chimerical; A Federal Response to the Depression. An Examination of Civilian Conservation Corps Construction on National Forest Lands in the Pacific Northwest." (MA Thesis, Portland, OR: Portland State University, 1979).

5 Albert H. Good, *Park Structures and Facilities* (Washington, DC: USGPO, 1935) 3-4.

6 Throop, 4.

7 Alison T. Otis, William Honey, Thomas C. Hogg, and Kimberly Lakin, *The Forest Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942* (Corvallis, OR: USDA Forest Service, 1986) 73.

8 Act of July 22, 1937. 50 Stat 525.

9 Sidney Baldwin, *Poverty and Politics: The Rise and Decline of the Farm Security Administration* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, 1968) 163.

10 Michael R. Hanger, "The Farm People of Isolated Areas in Lincoln and Western Benton Counties, Oregon." (Berkeley, CA: USDA Bureau of Agricultural Economics, 1941) 1.

11 Robert W. Hadlow, *Elegant Arches, Soaring Spans* (Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University, 2001) 85.