

NORTH CASCADES CONSERVATION COUNCIL

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"To secure the support of the people and the government in the protection and preservation of scenic, scientific, wildlife, wilderness, and outdoor recreational resource values in the North Cascades...."

In this issue:

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| North Cascade Primitive Area Study Continues | 1 |
| Establishing Parks Wasn't (and Isn't) Easy | 2 |
| Natural Resource Planks in Party Platforms | 4 |
| SPECIAL - The Relationship of Man and Nature | |
| Courtesy of Royal Bank of Canada | enclosure |

NORTH CASCADES PRIMITIVE AREA STUDY CONTINUES

(Daily Journal of Commerce - Seattle)

The study, now under way, of the 801,000 acre North Cascade primitive area in Washington, will extend into 1961, according to a statement by Regional Forester J. Herbert Stone, Portland.

The study is part of a nationwide program of the Forest Service to review areas previously set aside as primitive areas to determine their suitability for reclassification as "wilderness" or "wild" areas under U. S. Department of Agriculture Regulations U-1 and U-2.

Regulation U-1 provides for the establishment of wilderness areas of over 100,000 acres, and Regulation U-2, for wild areas of 5000 to 100,000 acres.

Wilderness has long been recognized by the Forest Service as an important form of outdoor recreation, Stone said. Under multiple-use management, wilderness areas are managed with the objective of maintaining them in an undeveloped and natural state. Timber harvesting, roads, and commercial developments are prohibited. Grazing of livestock is permitted, as are hunting, fishing, prospecting, and certain types of recreation.

The North Cascade primitive area was set aside by the chief of the Forest Service July 19, 1935, under authority of the Secretary of Agriculture.

It is located on the Mt. Baker and Okanogan National Forests, with 434,000 acres on the Okanogan. The area, bisected by the Cascade mountain range, adjoins Canada on the north for about 65 miles, and extends southward some 20 miles.

A variety of conditions are found in the area. Forest types range from the typical Douglas-fir and associated species found west of the Cascade summit to east side ponderosa pine type, and various subalpine species. There are open grasslands and alpine meadows, many of which are utilized by both domestic and wild animals.

Rock barrens, snow fields and glaciers abound on the higher peaks. Elevations over the area vary from about 1500 ft. near the Skagit river to more than 9000 ft. Ross Lake, which divides the area in the Mt. Baker forest, is not a part of the primitive area.

Ranger district multiple use plans supplemented by all available resource data will be used as the data for the study of the North Cascade primitive area. Individuals and groups familiar with the area who wish to express their views on the area under study are encouraged to send their comments to the supervisor of the Mt. Baker National Forest, Bellingham, or to the supervisor of the Okanogan National Forest, Okanogan. To receive full consideration they should be submitted prior to Dec. 1, 1960.

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ESTABLISHING PARKS WASN'T (and Isn't) EASY

Condensed from an article in the New York Times, June 5, 1960, under the title "The Uses of Conservation"; also appearing under the above title in the June issue of the Sierra Club Bulletin. Author: John B. Oakes.

Henry David Thoreau, whose legacy to the world is the Walden ideal, wrote more than a century ago: "Why should we not . . . have our national preserves, in which the bear and the panther . . . may still exist, and not be 'civilized off the face of the earth' - our forests . . . for inspiration and our own true recreation? Or shall we, like villains, grub them all up, poaching on our own national domains?"

In the century since Thoreau's "Maine Woods" appeared, we Americans have been grubbing up and poaching upon our own national domains with a carelessness born of prodigious wealth, but suddenly we have found that we are no longer as wealthy as we had thought in unspoiled natural resources, and we are beginning to take seriously the need for their conservation. Even Walden Pond itself was grubbed up and poached upon, until some outraged citizens of Massachusetts finally took up the arms of the law. Only a few weeks ago the won a ruling from the Supreme Judicial Court of the Commonwealth requiring that Walden not only be protected from further despoliation but also be restored by the officials entrusted with its preservation to the "natural aspect and character" that the original donors of the property to the county had expected would be maintained forever.

Conservation Can Win

This decision of the Massachusetts court, though affecting only a few acres of land, does illustrate the principle that conservationists can succeed in their objectives if they are willing to fight hard enough to achieve them. But the history of American conservation is the history of rear-guard actions, of desperate measures to save a little scenery, a little forest, a little land in its original state before it has been entirely "improved", developed or bulldozed away by the march of urban, industrial or agricultural civilization.

As millions of Americans rush out of their cities this summer looking for breath of "nature", let them remember that conservation is a very practical thing: it is the force that if successful will ensure preservation of a minuter fraction of the natural heritage of our country unspoiled for future generations. If unsuccessful, no can doubt that the economic and political pressures against conservation are formidable, there will literally be within a very few decades, no worthwhile natural preserve left for the public to enjoy.

Every time an effort is made to set aside, on behalf of the public, an area of unique natural beauty, some vested interests are sure to be adversely affected. They may be lumber interests, or grazing interests, or mining interests, or bureaucratic interests, or simply shortsighted, if well-meaning, citizens who think that no interest is superior to that of the Federal Treasury.

When the bill to create Glacier National Park was introduced fifth years ago by Rep. Charles Nelson Pray, he was told by his colleagues that there was no need for another park in Montana because Yellowstone already existed on the state's southern borders, and "if this bill were enacted it would create a perpetual drain on the Federal Treasury for which they did not care to become responsible." Last year the nearly three-quarters of a million visitors to Glacier are estimated to have spent some \$18 million in the state of Montana.

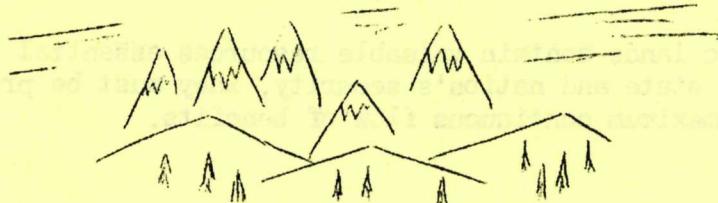
Basic Values

The real value of the national park and wilderness system has nothing to do with cost or returns. The real value consists in the inherent worth of permanently preserving the best remnants of our country's natural scenic beauty for the spiritual, esthetic and physical enjoyment of the American people for all time to come. Until a few years ago, it was possible, although it was never desirable, to approach this objective in leisurely fashion. But spectacularly rapid urbanization, industrialization and mechanization have created an immediate emergency in the long slow process of enlarging the protected domain that is to be handed over intact to succeeding generations.

Time Running Out

Even some of the government agencies that were established to protect our national resources have in one guise or another joined the exploitative procession. For example, the United States Forest Service, with a brilliant record of intelligent timber management behind it, is now fighting with all the bureaucratic skill it can command against ceding to the national park system even a square foot of the most scenic lands. So long as these lands remain within the Forest Service they are always subject to commercial exploitation by mere administrative fiat. Similarly, the Park Service itself occasionally has been tempted away from the business of preservation and protection for which it was set up, into the conflicting field of mass recreation. This process has fortunately not gone far, but borderline evidence of it has aroused some concern.

With the increase of population, of leisure time, of transportation facilities and of disposable income, the pressures from tourists and travelers on America's remaining natural areas are going to go steadily upward, while the supply of such areas is going steadily downward.



Legislative Goal

What can be done about it? The most immediate goal is passage of legislation that would give permanent, statutory protection to existing wild areas already in the Federal Government's possession. The instrument with which to do this is the pending Wilderness Bill, now blocked in the Senate by spokesmen for some of the special interests already mentioned. The next, or concurrent, action is to acquire more of such lands before their prime scenic assets disappear.

Travelers to many of the best known scenic spots in America this summer have the conservationists of the past to thank for the fact that what they see is still relatively unspoiled. But as Secretary of the Interior Seaton recently wrote, "The next five or ten years constitute critical years if we are to add what we need to our heritage of scenic, historic and cultural treasures for the use and enjoyment of the greater, and largely, urbanized population of the future."

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NATURAL RESOURCE PLANKS IN PARTY PLATFORMS

National Democratic Plank on Natural Resources (Seattle Times, July 15, 1960)

C. Girard Davidson of Portland is one of the nation's leading authorities on conservation and development of natural resources.

He is former Assistant Secretary of the Interior, is Oregon's Democratic National Committeeman, and served as chairman of the 13 state natural resources committee of the Western States Democratic Conference which worked for months to prepare material for the Democratic Party's 1960 platform.

Enlargement of the national parks system is called for, and establishment of a national wilderness is urged "for areas already set aside as wilderness".

The platform recognizes the need to "act quickly to retain public access to the oceans, gulf, streams, lakes and reservoirs and their shorelines".

On the East Coast, it has become difficult to get near the waters of the Atlantic, except at congested beaches. The time is not far away when the shores of Puget Sound and the Pacific Ocean will become so highly developed that they will be inaccessible to the public.

In this connection, we can be thankful that more than two decades ago, the combined foresight of national and state conservationists resulted in setting aside a strip of Washington's coastline from north of the Queets River nearly to Cape Flattery as public domain for public recreation in perpetuity.

This was a great controversy of the 1930's, now recognized widely as foresight.

Washington State Republican Plank on Wilderness Areas and National and State Parks

(June 4)

"Since public lands contain valuable resources essential to the economic well-being of the state and nation's security, they must be protected and wisely used to insure a maximum continuous flow of benefits.

To accomplish this, we:

1. Suscribe to the principle of multiple use of our public lands and waters as the means through which to develop and use our natural resources.
2. Encourage the development and use of our public lands to meet expanding recreational needs. Where recreational use is compatible with other land and water uses, it should be fostered within the multiple-use concept. Withdrawal of public land for a special use, such as wilderness appreciation, is justifiable where sound studies clearly indicate social and economic benefits exceed those to be derived under multiple-use management.
3. Pledge rapid and aggressive development of Washingtons state and county parks to be financed by reasonable charges to the users of these facilities.

Washington State Democratic Plank on Land Use and Outdoor Recreation (May 28)

We endorse four basic principles of land use: First, the conservation goal of highest beneficial use; second, the multiple-purpose approach; third, increased research, surveys and inventories; and fourth, wise scientific management.

We favor more intensive exploration of our mineral wealth.

We urge study of our land on a comprehensive, long range, multiple-purpose use basis to replace the present single-purpose approach of many agencies.

Recreation is one of the most important uses of land and water resources. Our growing population requires increasing attention to recreation.

We endorse legislation at the Federal level (1) for the inclusion of recreation as one of the purposes of water resources projects where appropriate; (2) for multiple-purpose use of the public domain including recreation.

We endorse expansion of our city, county, and state park system to handle the increasing leisure time of our expanding population.

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Interesting and Informative Reading

AMERICA THE EXPENDABLE by Charlton Ogburn, Jr., Harper's Magazine, August '60

"Will Americans ever realize that they have made a monstrously bad bargain with the future? . . . or will we continue to destroy blindly our chances for fulfilled and satisfying lives? . . ."

Within this article, laid out in rather terrifying terms, Mr. Ogburn tells what we are perhaps coming to unless we do something about increasing population and saving open spaces.

He (Mr. Ogburn) is vice chairman of the Fairfax County (Virginia) Park Authority, and got his start in conservation as a boy bird-watcher on Long Island, the New Jersey marshes, and in the Bronx. Warner Brothers is to make his bestselling book "The Marauders" into a movie. This book tells the story of the Burma campaign in World War II, in which he served as a lieutenant.

Thanks to Karl W. Onthank, Eugene, Oregon for directing our attention to this magnificent article.

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