RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

DELAWARE WATER GAP
PENNSYLVANIA AND NEW JERSEY

Compiled by
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
REGION ONE OFFICE

W. T. Ammerman, Park Planner
Wilbur L. Savage, Forester
Frank Barnes, Historian

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PURPOSE OF REPORT

The objective of this report is to assemble information concerning the park, interstate recreation area, or national recreation area possibilities appropriate to the needs and potentialities of the Delaware Water Gap and its environs in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

TYPE OF PARK PROPOSED

Sponsors of the proposed EDISON NATIONAL PARK - INTERSTATE AND EDISON NATIONAL MONUMENT AT DELAWARE WATER GAP visualize development of an active recreational park in which are furnished "food services, shelter both for lodging and camping, land and water sports and other recreational facilities, winter sports, at least one lake in each of the 6000-acre twin-state tracts, one large swimming pool on each tract, a zoo, game preserve, bird sanctuary, museums, auditorium, amphitheater, . . . . . . . .".

LOCATION

The Delaware River forming the boundary line between Pennsylvania and New Jersey flows through a gap (Delaware Water Gap) flanked by Mt. Minsi in Pennsylvania and Mt. Tammany in New Jersey, units in Kittatinny Mountain Range. Measured along the Pennsylvania side, the Gap is about midway between the northern and southern boundaries of that State. Stroudsburg,
Pennsylvania, about one mile north and three miles west of the Gap, is the largest urban community in the section. There is no urban settlement in the immediate vicinity of the Gap in New Jersey. (Appendix A).

**PROPOSED BOUNDARIES**

The sponsors have not prepared a proposed boundary map for the contemplated park area. Aside from the desire to include the Water Gap, the criteria that governed the list of other properties that might be incorporated in the park are not quite clear to us. Boundaries set forth in promotional literature (Appendices D and E) are described as "covering 12,000 acres divided equally between Pennsylvania and New Jersey centering around Delaware Water Gap — — — — exclusive of established villages, boroughs, railroads, and tracts for other industrial purposes."

Numerous resort developments exist in the area covered by the above description. Some represent a considerable monetary investment while others, to all appearances, are not the income producers which they were in years gone by.

On one of the attached maps is outlined a park boundary which appears suitable if the sponsors' proposal to establish a 12,000-acre park -- 6,000 acres in Pennsylvania and 6,000 acres in New Jersey -- is adopted. (Appendices B, C-1, and C-2).
This is an arbitrary boundary and could well be changed to conform with other influencing factors. The entire Kittatinny Ridge from the Gap to New Jersey's Stokes State Park is "park country". It is recognized as such and included in a long range plan prepared in 1941 for New Jersey state parks and public lands. Mr. Charles P. Wilber, State Forester and Chief of the New Jersey Bureau of Forestry, Parks and Historic Sites, before retiring on December 1, 1953, expressed continued interest in obtaining the necessary lands to implement that plan.

Pennsylvania has no similar long range plan. When the subject of an interstate or state park in the environs of the Water Gap was discussed with Mr. Samuel S. Lewis, Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Forests and Waters, he expressed negative interest. He did indicate that he would be interested in any proposal having the objective of restoring Pennsylvania's highway approach to the Gap to a more naturalistic character.

TOPOGRAPHY AND ELEVATION

The Kittatinny Mountains are the southern most range of the Appalachian chain in eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey. All have been rounded by the erosions of time. Mt. Tammany on the New Jersey side of the Gap reaches an elevation of 1625 feet. Elevation of Mt. Minsi is slightly more than 1480 feet. Elevation of the Delaware River at the Gap is slightly below 300 feet. (Appendices C-1 and C-2).
New Jersey is building a four-lane highway southward from the Gap along the river. A toll bridge in the Gap connects this new road to Pennsylvania. (Photographs Nos. 1 and 2).

**NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS**

There are few places remaining where an unspoiled view of the Gap is obtainable. (Frontispiece). A two-lane highway and a double-track railroad on the Pennsylvania side of the river are relatively unintrusive. Time, railroad smoke, and plant growth have combined to mellow the conspicuousness of the old scars. Large cuts and fills have been involved in building the new highway on the New Jersey shore. Their surfaces will require considerable time to tone down.

Numerous commercial developments, catering to the tourist trade, are distributed along the Pennsylvania highway. They occupy vantage points where auto parking is available and the more spectacular views of the Gap are obtainable. (Photographs Nos. 8, 9, and 10).

The village of Delaware Water Gap, located just north of the Gap proper, still retains some of its earlier resort structures. More recent intrusions contribute to the loss of early quaintness which will be difficult to recapture.

Fewer developments, resort or other, exist in the park area in New Jersey than are found in the Pennsylvania portion.
Except for limited open fields near the river, the New Jersey area is heavily forested. A rough and rocky road, negotiable only by jeep, leads to Sunfish Pond on the mountain. This forest-bound pond was estimated to be about 40 acres in area.

Terrain in the park area on the Pennsylvania side of the Gap is less rugged and with more cleared land than exists on the New Jersey side. A few old hotels are still operated in the vicinity of the Gap. A golf course and club house, abandoned during the late war, have not been rehabilitated. Cherry Creek, a clear water stream, is the only body of water of consequence in the area. A fire tower and airways beacon located on Mt. Minsi just above the Gap are accessible by a low-standard mountain top road from State Route No. 90 at Fox Gap and a negotiable road through Tott Gap. (Appendix C-1). Excellent views to the north and south are obtainable from the top of the mountain.

The bed of the Delaware River in the Gap is generally rocky and falls about five feet per mile. The river is reported to overflow its banks and flood the valley land on occasion. Above the Gap the river widens out and is placid. (Photograph No. 3). Water in the river was reported to be unpolluted which seems remarkable, considering the extent of the watershed.
The historical aspects of the Delaware Water Gap region that would seem to have greatest claim to "national" importance are those relative to Indians, and Indian-settler relationships. Next in importance, perhaps, is the "resort" character of the Water Gap itself.

Before the white man came, this was "Delaware country" (the Shawnees were transients in the area briefly) — more particularly, the habitat of the Minsi (Munsee) branch of the Delawares. At one time perhaps the equals of the Iroquois, the Delawares (Leni-Lenape) passed under Iroquois dominion about 1720. One of the great Delaware chiefs was Tamanend, for whom Mt. Tammany, the New Jersey "side" of the Water Gap, is named — also, "Tammany Hall" in New York City. The stronghold of the Minsi was Minisink Island, in the Delaware River about 30 miles above the Water Gap. Here the Heye Foundation of the American Indian disinterred 67 Indian burials in a "major" excavation in 1914, finding much in the way of pottery and stone artifacts. From this island the Minisink Trail — the only Indian trail of consequence in the general area — ran

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"... the Walkers should have walked for a few Miles and then have sat down and smokt a Pipe ... and not have kept upon the Run, Run all Day") ending, even, somewhere south of the Lehigh; they were bitterly chagrined when the stalwart young woodsmen employed for the walk reached a point twenty miles north of the Kittatinnies — beyond the Water Gap, and 55 miles from the starting-point. The boundary was squared off at the mountains — but the Forks Delawares had lost their camping-ground. 3

In the French-inspired "time of troubles" that followed, 1755-58, the general area north and west of the Water Gap was subject to Indian raids, and here the provincial governments of Pennsylvania (under the direction of Benjamin Franklin) and New Jersey constructed a chain of stockade-forts. The Pennsylvania forts included (in the Water Gap area) Fort Norris (near present Kresgeville, 22 miles west of the Gap), Fort Hamilton (in the western end of Stroudsburg), and Fort Hyndshaw (just below Bushkill, 14 miles north of the Gap); the New Jersey forts, Fort Westbrook, and Fort Normanock — both just south of Montague (35 miles above the Gap), and Fort Wallpack (near Wallpack, about 16 miles above). The Water Gap itself was not guarded directly by any fort — the modified stone house of early settler Nicholas De Pui,

four miles north at Shawnee, serving as protection for this route — such as it was — to the southeast and Easton. None of the forts figured in important actions; by affording permanent places of "retreat" for the provincial militia, however, they were important in maintaining English settlement in the Minisink region. 4

By contrast to the foregoing, the Moravian missionary activity of 1740–60 represented a "positive" approach to the Indian problem. The Moravians were German evangelical Protestants who emigrated to America in 1735 — moving from the vicinity of Savannah, Georgia, to the "forks of the Delaware" in Pennsylvania in 1740, where they founded Bethlehem and Nazareth in the following year. Working in the frontier country just beyond the Kittatinny Range and Blue Mountain — west of the Water Gap, such impact did the Moravians have, that the (Delaware) Indians of the area became known as "Moravian" Indians. These Indians were given special protection by the colony of Pennsylvania during the French and Indian War; their friendship was important in this time of frontier disorder. Notable mission stations (in the Water Gap region) of the Moravians — who stressed Indian missionwork perhaps more than any other religious body in the English

colonies — were Wechquetank, near present-day Gilbert (20 miles southwest of the Gap), and Dansbury — in present-day East Stroudsburg. Interestingly, the Moravian missionaries first approached the area west of the Water Gap through Smith Gap, some 16 miles to the southwest through Blue Mountain, and Lehigh Gap — where the Lehigh River breaks through that mountain, some 28 miles to the southwest.  

In the Revolutionary War period, Monroe County (Pennsylvania, west and northwest of the Water Gap) witnessed the assembly of men for, and the passage of, the John Sullivan expedition of 1779. Prompted by the "Wyoming Massacre" of the year previous (in the Wyoming Valley, about 40 miles northwest from the Gap), this expedition — by victory at Newtown (Elmira), New York, and beyond — "materially reduced the offensive threat from the Iroquois" and thereby did much to secure the Pennsylvania-New York frontier for the patriots. At Fort Penn in Stroudsburg (where fugitives from the "Wyoming Massacre" had been sheltered in 1778), several companies of the Sullivan expedition rendezvoused — to unite with the main column, advancing from Easton, at Learned's Tavern (site today in Tannersville, 8 miles northwest from the Water Gap). Near Brincker's Mill (an old stone mill — perhaps dating to Sullivan's

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5 Keller, op. cit., 150-164, 253-4, 257; Hugh T. Lefler in DAH, IV, 22.
expedition — standing beside U. S. Highway 209 about 15 miles southwest of the Gap) the main expedition had stopped at the storehouse erected for the expedition's supply. It had not passed through the Delaware Water Gap — where, indeed, there was no road at this time — but through Wind Gap, some 11 miles to the southwest, through Blue Mountain.  

The Delaware Water Gap itself has historical importance only (1) as (perhaps) one of the earliest-known Eastern landmarks, and (2) as a popular "resort" of some note, late 19th century. It was too difficult of passage, alone, for it to become a route of more importance than for the "rafting" of logs down from the Catskills. It was badly oriented (southeast-northwest) for pioneers, and mountains impeded progress beyond. The main Indian trial in the region, as noted, was north of the Gap. Even that (the Minisink Trail) was not of the fundamental importance

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7 Keller, op. cit., 139-148; A. C. Flick, in DAH, V, 201-2.

8 Niagara Falls, with which the Water Gap can scarcely be compared in natural greatness, was known before 1700 — the earliest published view appeared in Father Louis Hennepin's *Nouvelle Decouverte d'un Tres Grand Pays* (1697); Mammoth Cave was discovered by the white man in 1799.

9 A local economic activity of considerable importance, however, in the years 1800-1880. (See Leroy J. Koehler, The History of Monroe County During the Civil War / Stroudsburg, Pa., 1950, p. 33.)
of the Iroquois Trail, Nemacolin's Path, and the Warrior's Path. The main pioneer routes west ran south of the Water Gap (the Wilderness Trail, Braddock's Road, Forbes Road) or north (Mohawk Valley). Still, the Gap may have had "incidental" importance with regard to those settlers from western New York who may have joined the stream of settlement south to the Valley of Virginia. As early as 1800 the Delaware Water Gap was the subject of a painting by Thomas Birch (1799-1851). In the form of an engraving by William Strickland, this — in the view of one authority — "first put [The Water Gap] on record as a place of scenic importance in the new United States." And this was only seven years after Antoine Dutot, refugee from the (French) Revolutionary disorders in San Domingo, had founded the village of Dutotsburg (present-day Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania) at the Gap. The earliest-recorded summer visitors to the Water Gap came in 1820 — boarding with the local inhabitants — and the spot had begun to

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10 It is not mentioned, for example, in A. B. Hulbert, Indian Thoroughfares (2 vols., Cleveland, 1902) in A. B. Hulbert, ed., Historic Highways of America (16 vols., Cleveland, 1902-06), II.


12 Ibid, pp. 90-92

assume some prominence as a vacation resort even before the Civil War. The Kittatinny House had been established in 1829 (at the village of Delaware Water Gap) and it had been enlarged to a capacity of 150 by 1860.

But it was in the period following the Civil War that the Delaware Water Gap came into its own as a resort. The Kittatinny was enlarged yet again under the managership of Luke H. Brodhead; the greater Water Gap Hotel was built on "Sunset Hill," 200 feet above the Kittatinny; then Glenwood was built, and others of lesser note. Brodhead popularized the area with his book *The Delaware Water Gap: Its Scenery, Its Legends, and Its History* in 1870; in 1872 William Cullen Bryant's *Picturesque America* featured it prominently; meanwhile, a "doctored" George Inness painting of the Water Gap had been in circulation as a Currier & Ives print for over a decade.

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14 Keller, *op. cit.*, pp. 264-269, 257-260


17 The print (1860) was based on a painting done by Inness in 1859; it was not the more famous view of the Gap (at the Metropolitan) done by the latter in 1861. See Elizabeth McCausland, *George Inness* (New York, 1946), pp. 18-19, and F. A. Coningham, *Currier & Ives Prints* (New York, 1949), p. 279.
appear on the hotel registers in the area: Generals Grant, McClellan, and Patterson, Horace Binney — the great Philadelphia lawyer of the post-Civil War period; then, most memorable of all, Theodore Roosevelt. An electric trolley-line from Philadelphia did much for the area. Then, the burning of the Water Gap and Kittatinny Hotels in 1913 and 1915, respectively, brought to an end the "major" phase of the Delaware Water Gap's resort history. The years just before had witnessed a decline in the popularity of the spot; the years following have been anti-climactic.

*Passing note should be made of the earlier "white" history of the Delaware Water Gap region. It is of some significance that the vicinity of Shawnee, 4 miles north of the Gap, Pennsylvania side, is the probable site of Dutch settlement antedating William Penn by some twenty years.*

Even the earliest known settler at Shawnee — Nicholas De Pui, 1727 — preceded settlers elsewhere in the Water Gap region, and anticipated settlement at the Gap itself by nearly seventy years. One authority places

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19 But not antedating Swedish settlement at Chester, in 1644 (Christopher Ward in *DAH*, IV, 113).
the date of Dutch settlement at 1659 — the migrants coming down from Esopus (Kingston, New York) over the "Old Mine Road" on the New Jersey side of the river, to work the copper deposits in present Pahaquarry (New Jersey) township. Considerable research would be necessary in archival material to authenticate this early settlement — likewise, the road (which has been called "the oldest road of any length built in the United States"), and the exact particulars of the mining operation — perhaps the earliest mining operation in this country. Rough shaft holes for copper mining (presumably) may be seen in the side of the mountain back of the Boy Scout camp some 4 miles above the Water Gap, New Jersey side. The route of the road (over which three regiments under the command of Horatio Gates are supposed to have moved to reinforce Washington just prior to the Battle of Trenton) is followed today.

by modern roads — and, according to the best local authority — no traces of the old roadbed are extant today.

**Historical Evaluation:** The historical interpretation in any park that might be established in the vicinity of the Delaware Water Gap would inevitably be incidental to the scenic and geological aspects of the area.

There are no Indian remains above ground in the area; presumably, there are some below ground (the location of several Indian village sites is known) — though such authorities as George G. Heye (Museum of the American Indian), and Dr. Frank Setzler, head of the Bureau of Ethnology, Smithsonian, question the relative value of this region, archeologically.

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23 *Itr.*, Mrs. Amelia Decker, Sussex, New Jersey, to investigator, July 24, 1953. The Old Mine Road extended from Kingston to Pahaquarry, closely paralleling the left bank of the Delaware below present-day Port Jervis, New York. No numbered state highway covers the route at any point today, but a macadam road extends along it for some distance above and below the mine vicinity, and country dirt roads from just south of Flatbrookville north.

24 *Itr.*, George G. Heye, Director, Museum of the American Indian, to investigator, July 16, 1953; telephone call, Dr. Frank Setzler and the investigator, Washington, D. C., July 21, 1953. Opinions were asked (by correspondence) of the Archeological Society of New Jersey and of Dr. John Withoff of the State Museum, Harrisburg, but such opinions had not been received at the time of the writing of this report.
The Stroud House — a stucco-covered stone house dating to 1795 — is the most significant (and largely-unspoiled) historic structure remaining in the near-vicinity of the Delaware Water Gap. Now used to house the local library and the Monroe County Historical Society, this structure is historically important only for its association with the founder of Stroudsburg, architecturally important as an example of a Pennsylvania frontier home of the period. The Indian relics therein could well furnish the nucleus for a fine modern museum of Delaware Indian lore. Of the old hotels at the Water Gap, only one (Glenwood) remains; the latter is not a "grand Union" — Delaware Water Gap was not Saratoga. The ruins of only one of the frontier forts — Fort Normanock, New Jersey — are extant; the "remains" of another (the house-fort, "Fort Depui") form the core of the much-modified and enlarged house in Shawnee known as "Manwalamink." This house, in its modified state, is similar to two others in Shawnee, and several others (reportedly) on the New Jersey side of the Delaware, below Montague. Many of the historic "sites" of the general area are marked (forts, mission stations, Sullivan Trail) — most often by attractive State highway markers. More could be marked; certainly, the "Old Mine Road" could be better designated, and the Gap "resort story" could be told.
But is any of this of real national importance? Very probably not. There is "history" here, of course, but not "national significance" — certainly there are no "matchless or unique qualities" entitling the area "to a position of first rank among historic sites." And, whatever national historical significance there is in the general area seems outweighed, at the start, by the lack of fundamental historical significance of the Delaware Water Gap itself.

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25 Most of the "history" discussed, it should be noted, falls outside the boundaries of the possible national park suggested by this report (see Map Appendix B).
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GEOLOGY

While the site survey did not include a geological study of the proposed park, it is not unreasonable to assume that the area affords considerable popular interest in that category.

Copper was mined there by the Dutch in the Seventeenth Century. The old mines near the base of the mountain in New Jersey could be made a place of public interest and should be considered for inclusion in any park development established in that section. A Boy Scout camp is currently operated on the site. Sponsors of the park visualize a bust of Thomas Alva Edison sculptured in the rock outcropping on Tammany Mountain facing the Gap. (Photographs Nos. 5 and 10).

FORESTRY

It is estimated that 85% of the area studied is forested. Although there is a variation in elevation in this locality from approximately 300 feet near the Delaware River to 1,620 feet above sea level on the summit of Mt. Tammany, generally speaking there is one forest type which can be distinguished throughout. This type, White Oak - Black Oak - Red Oak, Type No. 49, Forest Cover Types of Eastern United States, Report of the Committee on Forest Types, Society of American Foresters, is also referred to as Oak - Hickory.
The type contains several different species of trees and is reported to have widespread occurrence in the north and east-central states at elevations up to 2,000 feet. Locally it is common in the Delaware, Schuylkill, Susquehanna, Cumberland, and other valleys of Pennsylvania and in western New Jersey. Oaks, white oak, black oak, and red oak, predominate generally throughout the type. However, there is considerable variation in the associates, depending somewhat on elevation and exposure. Black walnut, American sycamore, Eastern white pine, and yellow-poplar are common on the lower slopes, whereas the hickories, including shagbark, pignut, and mockernut, are more plentiful on the higher elevations. On sites between the bottomlands and ridge tops the oaks are dominant with a pronounced variation of associates including the hickories, red maple, yellow-poplar, white oak, yellow birch, sweet birch, aspen, and others. Thirty-four species of trees and eighteen shrubs were identified during the field inspections. Eastern hemlock appeared to be common on the northern exposures and on moist sites.

No first growth stands were seen, and throughout the entire area there were evidences of logging in past years. The most recent logging was done about two years ago on the Coventry Club property along the jeep road to Sunfish Lake on Mt. Tammany. Few trees observed could be estimated at over 70 years old. Generally, the forest area should be classed as second growth.
The forest appeared healthy, no insect epidemics were observed, and restocking throughout the area appeared adequate. The understory, including flowering dogwood, rhododendron, laurel, witchhazel, elderberry, sumac and other shrubs and small trees, in addition to seedlings of the several tree species, adds much interest to the forest. Fall coloring under good conditions should be quite spectacular. Spring wild flowers are reported to be abundant in the area including trailing arbutus which was observed in several localities.

The forest vegetation in the Delaware Water Gap area is not of sufficient national significance to justify establishment of the area in the National Park System, particularly since the same forest type is represented in areas now administered by the National Park Service. The type is of common and widespread occurrence in the north and east central states and is, therefore, not unique or of unusual character or significance. All the area has been logged one or more times, and the present forest is entirely second growth. There are no specimen or historic trees in the area which appear to be of national significance and no rare or unusual species of trees were noted.

The States of Pennsylvania and New Jersey are organized for protection of the forests in the respective states and have active forest fire control programs. Except for one burn in the Delaware Forest District of Pennsylvania, no recent damage from forest fires was noted.
In addition to the more detailed study of the estimated 10,000 - 12,000 acres adjacent to the Delaware Water Gap, a one-hour flight was made over the Delaware Forest District No. 19 and adjacent area in Pennsylvania in order to become more familiar with this forest which is within a few miles of the Delaware Water Gap and is an important part of the well known Pocono Mountain resort section. It is estimated that 70% of this district is forested and that hardwood species dominate the forest throughout. "Know Your Forest District", A Report on the Delaware Forest District No. 19, Monroe, Pike and Northampton Counties, issued by Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Forests and Waters, (Appendix F) contains interesting information regarding State Forest District No. 19. The same general information can be applied to the private lands within or adjacent to the state lands.

WILDLIFE

Two deer were seen during the area survey, both on the New Jersey side of the river. A ruffed grouse was seen on the mountain top road to Mt. Minis. This tends to lend credence to local claims that game, including bear and turkey, is plentiful in the area.
EDUCATIONAL POSSIBILITIES

Opportunity is afforded within the proposed park area and its environs for the study of native plants, Indian lore, geology, and wildlife.

EXISTING PARK DEVELOPMENTS

It may be assumed that existing state parks are capable of providing some of the needed day-use recreational opportunities for the people living to the west, north, and east of a park which might be introduced into the environs of Delaware Water Gap. Hickory Run State Park is approximately 30 miles west, and Tobyhanna is 25 miles northwest of Stroudsburg. The latter area is only partially developed. High Point State Park in the extreme northerly corner of New Jersey, Stokes State Forest, and several smaller areas to the south are meeting some of the recreational needs of those people in northern New Jersey who would be within day-outing travel distance of similar facilities furnished in the Delaware Water Gap area. (Appendix B).

Residents to the south of the Gap would benefit by recreational developments introduced here. Following are the more heavily populated communities within normal day-use distance of the proposed park.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Distance to Stroudsburg</th>
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<tr>
<td>Easton, Pa.</td>
<td>35,632</td>
<td>28 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethlehem, Pa.</td>
<td>66,340</td>
<td>39 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allentown, Pa.</td>
<td>106,756</td>
<td>44 miles</td>
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Note: Trenton, N. J., and Morrisville, Pa., are some 70 miles distant and beyond the normal day-outing travel distance of the proposed park.

LAND OWNERSHIP

A considerable portion of the desirable park property is in single ownership. The undeveloped mountain area in New Jersey is held by the Worthington (pump manufacturer) heirs. Mr. Walter von Broock, principal sponsor of the proposed park, is reported to be related to the Worthington family by marriage. Bottom land on the New Jersey side of the river is desirable for inclusion in the park. It is divided into smaller parcels. Most of the owners of these smaller tracts derive their principal income from tourist or resort-connected activities.

On the Pennsylvania side of the Gap the desirable park property is much more divided, so much so that it will be necessary to make a careful detailed study before determining where the boundary line could be established most advantageously. Existing developments and property values along the Pennsylvania shore of the river suggest that major park developments be located away from the river where conditions are more favorable.
It will be desirable to acquire as much of the property, in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey, as is possible to restore or maintain a reasonably unspoiled view of the Gap.

**LAND VALUES**

Local parties queried were reluctant to estimate property values in the Gap area. The following estimates have been obtained from tax assessment evaluations by the writer and should be considered accordingly:

- Undeveloped forest and agricultural land on the Pennsylvania side of the Gap -- $75 per acre
- Property in the Mt. Tammany area in New Jersey -- $50 per acre

The value of built-up places, resort establishments, and commercial developments will be increased an undetermined amount depending on their construction costs, use, and earning capacities.

**HISTORY OF PROJECT**

Apparently interested citizens for some time have been studying means to preserve the natural beauty of the Delaware Water Gap. They also have endeavored to obtain better highway access into the Pocono Mountain section just north of Stroudsburg. To accomplish these objectives it was natural for them to feel that the area in the vicinity of the Delaware Water Gap should be dedicated to some type of park use. Various means to obtain that end have been considered. More recently the possibility of creating
an interstate recreational park was conceived. Currently, the sponsors of the project are proposing that the area be considered for inclusion in the National Park System.

Sponsors have requested that the Thomas Alva Edison Foundation, with headquarters in West Orange, New Jersey, assist in fostering and financing the project as a memorial to Mr. Edison. That the Foundation does not look upon the proposal with disfavor is evidenced by the fact that Vice Admiral Harold G. Bowen, Executive Director of the Foundation, has requested that the National Park Service make an evaluation and advise him concerning park potentialities of the area.

PERSONS INTERESTED

Mr. Walter von Broock, one of the former operators of the Penn-Stroud Hotel in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, is an enthusiastic promoter of the project. He has given considerably of his personal time and money to the endeavor. He was formerly associated with the late Thomas Alva Edison and his son, Charles Edison.

Mr. John H. Kunkle, President of the Pocono Forestry Association, and a resident of Stroudsburg, is also active in promoting the project.

Numerous prominent persons have endorsed the proposed park. (Appendix E). So far as was evident during the survey only the two above persons were actively promoting the park.
POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT FOR PUBLIC USE

The Appalachian Trail is located along the ridge of the mountains on both sides of the Gap. (Appendix B).

Each of the 6,000-acre tracts is capable of recreational development of the type commonly provided on state parks. The Pennsylvania tract is not as heavily wooded as is the one in New Jersey. This fact results in a variance in the general character of the two areas. The sense of remoteness created by the heavily forested Kittatinny Ridge in New Jersey contributes materially to its park value.

The Pennsylvania tract lacks existing water-connected recreational opportunities such as those which the Delaware River and Sunfish Pond offer on the New Jersey area. It is possible that a masonry pool would have to be built to provide suitable swimming opportunities. However, public preferences seem about equally divided between swimming in a pool and at an open water beach.

With comparable facility developments a park on the Pennsylvania area might be expected to attract the larger day-use patronage. It would be closer to the large contributing populations of Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton. Comparable major day-use developments on each tract would seem difficult to justify from the economic viewpoint.
It would seem advantageous, under a cooperative inter-state administrative policy of operation, to consider a park use zoning plan in which major day-use facilities would be furnished on the Pennsylvania tract and vacation opportunities, including cabin colonies and facilities for various types of camping, would be provided on the New Jersey tract.

Secretary Lewis, aware of the state park deficiencies in southeastern Pennsylvania, expressed reluctance to sponsor a general park development at the Delaware Water Gap.

Existing expensive developments effectively prevent opening up a park-like approach with dramatic view of the Gap on the north approach in Pennsylvania. Cost of acquiring necessary property to remove objectionable intrusions along the south approach roads in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey does not appear to be prohibitive. Acquisition of property to control the view to the skyline on both sides of the Gap and of highway overlook pull-offs at points where the most attractive views are obtainable are believed to be the necessary requisites to restore maximum natural values on this side of the Gap and to make them available for public enjoyment. Secretary Lewis indicated an appreciation of the desirability of restoring as much of the natural scene at the Gap as possible and of protecting it from further non-park intrusions.
PRACTICABILITY OF ADMINISTRATION AND PROTECTION

One county road exists in each of the proposed 6,000-acre tracts. These may have to remain open for public travel. The one on the New Jersey side may grow in importance at some future time. Other than those related to these public roads, no unusual park administrative or protective problems are foreseen.

SUMMARY

Much of the primitive picturesque value of the Delaware Water Gap has been marred by man-made intrusions -- highways, railroads, and commercial establishments. The last could be removed from the southern approach road and parking overlooks built without seemingly prohibitive cost. Time alone can mellow the scars of the transportation arteries.

The Gap is not unique when compared with similar features in Pennsylvania or other places in eastern United States. Conemaugh Gap at Johnstown, the Narrows at Lewistown, and the gap near the confluence of the Juniata with the Susquehanna at Duncannon may be considered, among others, as comparable features in Pennsylvania. The Gap is probably not comparable to Franconia or Crawford Notches in New Hampshire insofar as grandeur and scale are concerned. Offscone views from the mountain tops were not considered exceptions in Pennsylvania. They cannot be compared with those obtained from the Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park or the Blue Ridge Parkway.
The Gap lacks the historical significance of having been an important pioneer trail which contributed to the national development as did Cumberland Gap. The Delaware Water Gap, being located close to heavily populated centers, has been much publicized and visited.

Park-type lands exist in the environs of the Delaware Water Gap. These lands include two tracts of 6,000 acres each, one in Pennsylvania and one in New Jersey. Physical conditions at each tract are suitable for specialized development, with the entire 12,000-acre area operated under a cooperative interstate administration. Failing this, each of the 6,000-acre tracts could be developed and operated as independent units by the respective States.

Because of the large amount of forested area and the potential recreational water bodies existing on the New Jersey tract, that area may be considered to possess the more favorable and comprehensive natural values and possibly the greater potential public appeal.

Secretary Lewis of the Pennsylvania Department of Forests and Waters has expressed unwillingness to commit Pennsylvania to an interstate park operation. He also has expressed disinterest in establishing a state park in the immediate environs of the Gap. Mr. Wilber, prior to his retirement on December 1, 1953, favored acquisition of the entire Kittatinny Ridge in New Jersey, including Delaware Water Gap.
It would not be economically practicable to clear the north approach to the Gap of non-park developments to effectually restore its unspoiled natural character. Such procedure would be possible on the southern approaches. Wayside stops at overlook vantage points then could be introduced along the highway approaches in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Secretary Lewis is believed to favor development of this type along the highway in Pennsylvania.

CONCLUSIONS

The Delaware Water Gap or adjacent areas in Pennsylvania and New Jersey are not considered to possess the superlative natural, historic, or scientific qualities established for areas of national park status. The recreational potentialities of the areas in the vicinity of the Gap are believed to be of state or interstate significance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Neither the Delaware Water Gap nor any section in its more immediate environs is recommended for consideration for national park status. It is recommended that copies of this report be sent to State park authorities in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Their attention could well be called to the desirability of restoring and preserving as much of the natural values of the Delaware Water Gap as may be practicable at this time.
Since Secretary Lewis is not favorably disposed toward participating, under agreement with New Jersey, in the initiation and operation of an interstate park, this report will serve to inform him concerning the benefits which would be accorded to the population of Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton through recreational developments in the Pennsylvania environs of the Gap.

Transmission of the report to New Jersey authorities will serve also to confirm, as a National Park Service opinion, Mr. Wilber's evaluation of the desirability of including in public ownership, for recreational purposes, the entire Kittatinny Ridge section of New Jersey.

W. T. Ammerman
Park Planner

Wilbur L. Savage
Forester

Frank Barnes
Historian