

WEST SIDE ROAD
Mount Rainier National Park
Between Nisqually Road and North Fork Puyallup River
Longmire Vicinity
Pierce County
Washington

HAER No. WA-122

HAER
WASH
27-LONG.V,
24-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
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I. INTRODUCTION

Location: Between Nisqually Road and North Puyallup River
Mount Rainier National Park, Lewis and Pierce
counties, Washington.
Quads: Sawtooth Ridge, Wash.
Mount Wow, Wash.
Mt. Rainier East, Wash.
UTMs: South end: 1.5 miles east of Nisqually Entrance
10/584200/5176950
North end: North Puyallup River
10/586300/5184480

Date of Construction: 1926-1934

Designer: Bureau of Public Roads

Owner: Mount Rainier National Park, National Park Service

Use: Park road

Significance: Begun as part of a "round-the-mountain" circuit road,
the West Side Road was never completed. The road
provides access to the southwest flank of Mount
Rainier, but the ambitious plans to extend it north to
the Mowich Lake and Carbon River districts were never
realized. The road and its principal structures were
carefully engineered to harmonize with the park
environment, with the National Park Service Landscape
Engineering Division closely monitoring all work.
Closed above Fish Creek in 1989 by a debris flow, the
road's future is uncertain.

Project Information: Documentation of the West Side Road is part of the
Mount Rainier National Park Roads and Bridges
Recording Project, conducted in summer 1992 by the
Historic American Engineering Record.

Richard H. Quin, Historian, 1992

II. HISTORY

This is one in a series of reports prepared for the Mount Rainier National Park Roads and Bridges Recording Project. HAER No. WA-35, MOUNT RAINIER NATIONAL PARK ROADS AND BRIDGES, contains an overview history of the park roads.

West Side Road

As early as 1907, plans were being discussed for a "round-the-mountain" circuit road for Mount Rainier National Park. That year, Major Hiram M. Chittenden of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, who was in overall charge of the park's road-building program, suggested a circuit road to foster development, increase tourism, and facilitate administration of the twelve-year old national park. Access to the park was at the time very limited, the only road being a rough wagon road to Longmire Springs in the southwest corner, although the Corps was then engaged in constructing a better road to Paradise Valley. The so-called "Government Road" (now known as the Nisqually Road, HAER No. WA-119) was completed in 1915.

At the direction of the Interior Department, a reconnaissance survey for a new road along the west side of the park was made in 1916. The surveyed line began at the Government Road at the Tahoma Creek Bridge, then headed north via Tahoma Creek, Round Pass, Puyallup River, Sunset Park, Mowich River, Crater Lake (Mowich Lake), Ipsut Pass and Ipsut Creek to connect with another proposed road up the Carbon River. The approximate length of the proposed road was 40 miles, and it would have a maximum grade of 6 percent. The estimated cost was \$600,000 or \$15,000 per mile. The surveyors suggested that the road could be built in three seasons, working from both ends.¹

The survey report also included recommendations for a "North Side Road," which would start at Carbon River (where a new hotel was proposed) and head east via Crescent Lake, Moraine Park, Mystic Lake, the snout of Winthrop Glacier, Grand Park and Frozen Lake, to connect with the Starbo Mining Company road at Glacier Basin. The 30-mile road would have a maximum grade of 6 percent and cost about \$15,000 per mile.² However, the proposals were not adopted, although construction did begin on the Carbon River Road in 1921.

As tourist travel to Mount Rainier increased, the park administration again began to press for construction of the proposed road up the west side of the park. During the intervening years, the State of Washington began construction of the State Route 5 or the National Park Highway system, which would provide improved access roads to the four corners of Mount Rainier National Park. The old "Mountain Highway" to Ashford and the Nisqually Entrance was the first segment of the state route to be improved. Next, the state upgraded its connecting road from Fairfax to the Carbon River Road in the northwest corner of the park. Citizens then began to demand the construction of a suitable tourist road through the park between the two sections. Park Superintendent W. H. Peters in June 1922 pled with National

Park Service Director Stephen T. Mather for work to begin on the "Westside Highway":

It is of the utmost importance that a connection be made between the Southwesterly and Northwesterly corners of the park. The public has for a long period expected the Government to build this so-called Westside Highway having been constantly promised that, with the completion of park approach roads such roads would be extended and connected by a system of inter-park highways. The State of Washington and Counties adjacent to the park have shown their good faith by expending nearly seven million dollars in such approach roads and have adopted a program which when completed will have cost the state close to double that sum, while to date the Government has spent less than \$200,000 on actual road construction in the park. It seems distinctly our duty to connect these state projects.

The completion of the Westside highway when considered in connection with the State's road program will give three sides of the much discussed "Around the Mountain Road"...Aside from such consideration as keeping faith with the people of the State of Washington and as the fact that such an encircling road would be the world's most scenic and spectacular highway...such a road will give a shorter and more scenic route for both North and South and East and West travel.³

The Park Service management agreed that the road should be built. In July 1922, NPS Associate Engineer Victor A. Endersby began a preliminary survey for the West Side Highway, starting in the north at a point on the Carbon River Road near the mouth of Ipsut Creek. The survey was completed in October. The route followed Ipsut Creek 8 1/2 miles to Ipsut Pass. As the air mileage was only 2 1/2 miles, the road would have had to utilize a number of switchbacks to reach the 5,050' pass. From there, it would drop to Mowich Lake, then climb along the side of Eagle Cliff to Spray Park before heading generally south and southwest to a crossing of the South Mowich River. A 1,000' tunnel would be required to pass through the ridge at Division Rock between the North and South forks of the river. From South Mowich crossing, the road would head northwest for several miles along the ridge between the South Mowich and Rushingwater Creek before turning south and southeast to a crossing of the North Puyallup River. The road would then turn west to Klapatche Point before resuming its southward route across St. Andrews Creek and Round Pass to the Tahoma Creek valley, which it would follow south and southwest to a meeting with the Nisqually Road near the main park entrance. Several alternate lines were suggested in the roughest terrain.⁴

A new, more detailed survey was begun in 1925 by the Bureau of Public Roads (BPR), which that summer had assumed responsibility for major park road projects. The surveys were field checked by the National Park Service Landscape Engineering Division and by the park staff, which wanted to insure that the planned road caused the minimum negative impact to the park landscape. The original intent was to extend a road from the Longmire Road at a point near the Nisqually Entrance northward along Tahoma Creek to Round Pass, then through the basins of the North

and South Puyallup rivers, then over and through a series of ridges to Mowich Lake, and finally over Ipsut Pass to meet the Carbon River Road.⁵

National Park Service Assistant Landscape Engineer Thomas C. Vint made a field trip over the proposed route in August 1925 in the company of Asahel Curtis of the Rainier Park Advisory Board and Bureau of Public Roads Location Engineer C. R. Short and Assistant District Engineer J. A. Elliott. On 20 August, Vint submitted his recommendations to Mount Rainier Superintendent Owen A. Tomlinson. He argued that the topography of Ipsut Pass would make any extension of a road through the pass impracticable. The Ipsut Creek valley itself would be reduced from a beautiful gorge to "an extremely visible example of extravagant road construction, destroying one of the landscape views the Park Service was bringing people into the park to see." Vint had no problem with the south half of the proposed road; however, he maintained that the north part of the road should wait for a new location survey which might suggest better alternatives.⁶ BPR District Engineer C. H. Purcell suggested that Spray Park and Mowich Lake, the chief objectives on the north end, could be better reached by following the drainage from a point on the Carbon River Road in the vicinity of Fairfax.⁷

Four days later, Superintendent Tomlinson wrote Park Service Director Mather to report that the inspection party had recommended that, since the route over Ipsut Pass would be too expensive and result in considerable damage to the mountain scenery, work on the north segment survey be suspended and alternative routes be given consideration. The surveyors should be shifted to the south part of the West Side Road to begin final work there in order for a contract to be let in the next season. All funds should be shifted to the south leg, the route of which had been fixed and where topographic conditions were more promising. Tomlinson added that since construction would be cheaper on the south end, more mileage could be obtained for available funds. This would also simplify administration, as a connection would be available with the existing road, while the northern road might not be connected with the main park road system for some years.⁸ (It never was.) As a result of the suspension of the work on the north end of the road, some of the funds were reallocated for improvements to the Nisqually Road, which was in poor condition and needed resurfacing.⁹

In May 1926, Vint and Short inspected the south part of the road between the Nisqually Road and Round Pass. Vint found the landscape quality of the route quite satisfactory. While the dense forest might have been expected to produce a depressing, closed-in effect, a number of burned over areas and good scenic vistas provided variety. He suggested parking areas at "Ford's Rest" (later called Tahoma Vista) and at Round Pass, as well as at several other observation points. Vint suggested the suspended survey of the northwest corner of the park be completed to allow for planning for the future extension of the road.¹⁰ Following the inspection, plans were drawn up for the construction of the southern segment of the West Side Road.

The first bids for construction work were opened at the Portland, Oregon office of the District Engineer of the Bureau of Public Roads on 29 June 1926.¹¹ This section would leave the Nisqually Road a mile and half east of the park entrance and head

north to the Puyallup River drainage. The specifications were originally based on the old 16' Forest Highway Standard, but were subsequently changed to a new standard adopted in 1926. This provided for an additional 2' in the width of cuts but left fill sections the same.¹²

The contract was awarded to contractors Joplin & Eldon of Portland, Oregon, who submitted the low bid of \$306,094. The Bureau of Public Roads advised the company that its bid was too low (the engineers' estimate for construction was \$113,000 more), but the bid was accepted by the Secretary of the Interior. Work began on 10 August. The clearing work was sublet to the firm of Aldman & Lickman, but after a month's work, this company decided the work was not going to be profitable and its progress slackened. The work was then sublet again to De Long & Co. This change created organizational problems, and a month or more was lost. The main contractors were forced to use their own crews for part of the work. With partial clearing complete, excavation work began in November, but little progress could be made on account of the encroaching winter weather. Although some work was done in good spells through the winter, it was not until the spring of 1927 that real progress could be made.¹³

The contractors did not provide adequate hauling equipment, so their shovels often outpaced the work and the fill section work lagged as material could not be transferred quickly enough. By the end of the 1927 season, the contractor was approximately 3 1/2 months behind schedule. Work was shut down for the season on 7 December.¹⁴ The delays led the National Park Service to consider annulling the contract with Joplin & Eldon,¹⁵ but the contractors were allowed to proceed.

The bids for clearing and grubbing the next section, 3 miles at Klapatche Ridge, were awarded on 11 August 1927 to the Lidral Construction Company of Seattle, which had submitted the low bid of \$14,300. The contractor set up camp and began operations on 9 September. Superintendent Tomlinson observed that the contractor's bid was considerably below the engineers' estimate and predicted problems ahead.¹⁶ The Lidral Construction Company completed its clearing and grubbing work on the Klapatche Ridge section on 15 August 1928.¹⁷

Two men working on a revised survey of the northern section of the road, Joe Fix and Andrew Rawling, were arrested in the Carbon River area on 22 August 1927 and charged with killing a bear. The men claimed the bear had been bothering their camp, so they constructed a trap out of baling wire. They stated that once caught, the bear became so furious that they could not let him go, and that it choked itself. The two were fined \$50, which was suspended for good behavior, but they were dismissed by BPR Engineer Short.¹⁸

The Spray Park area was still under consideration as a destination for the north end of the road in September 1927. That month, BPR engineer Short located a route along the north edge of the meadows and a 1,500' spur road to a proposed hotel site. The main road would terminate in a loop overlooking Mist Park and the Carbon River valley.¹⁹

Joplin & Eldon sought to make up time on their delayed contract by making an early start, and received permission to begin work on 20 February 1928. However, another three feet of snow fell almost immediately, and it was not until 7 May that work could be resumed. This early move cost the company considerably.²⁰

Another contract was issued 13 June 1928 to Alvin C. Greenwood of Portland, Oregon, for clearing, grubbing, grading and draining the 4-mile section between Round Pass and Klapatche Ridge. Greenwood won the work on the basis of his low bid of \$216,924.²¹ In August, Greenwood received a second \$18,400 contract for the clearing, grubbing, grading and draining of the section between Klapatche Ridge and the North Puyallup River.²²

Joplin & Eldon's 1928 work was pushed rapidly to make up time, with some equipment running on double shifts. By late fall, all clearing and grubbing was complete, and the crushed stone surfacing was being laid.²³

The park road funds were exhausted in October 1928. While awaiting a new appropriation, Joplin & Eldon indicated that they were unable to finance their work until Congress came up with a new appropriation. The other contractor, Alvin C. Greenwood, working on the Round Pass-Klapatche Ridge section, was able to continue work with his own funds. Joplin & Eldon dismissed their crews and returned most of their equipment.²⁴

The new National Park Service appropriation for 1929 provided \$240,000 for extension of the West Side Road work from Round Pass to Klapatche Ridge. No funds were provided for the north section from Carbon River to Mowich Lake, as a decision on a route had still not been reached, and the state had not programmed a connecting link between Fairfax and the National Forest boundary. The U.S. Forest Service, however, had budgeted \$24,000 for clearing a section from the park boundary 3 miles out. The Park Service would not begin work until the intervening section had been budgeted, as any contractor on the Mowich Lake section would have to build a tote road to begin construction, increasing costs significantly.²⁵

Joplin & Eldon were able to resume work on the Nisqually Road-Round Pass section on 21 June 1929. Work this year consisted of finishing work and construction of a temporary bridge across the South Puyallup River. All operations on this section were complete and ready for acceptance on 20 November 1929; however, the removal and restoration of the work camps took some time longer.²⁶ Total cost of this contract, including engineering fees, was \$350,860.87.²⁷

This southernmost section of road included three principal developments. These were parking areas at Fish Creek, Tahoma Vista, and Round Pass. Water fountains were provided at Tahoma Vista and Round Pass. The Tahoma Vista area was provided with stone masonry guard walls at the request of the park landscape architect. Round Pass also featured an observation platform offering splendid vistas of the mountain.²⁸ The 9-mile section was opened to the public in 4 July 1930. The road had been oiled and was "in perfect condition" according to Superintendent Tomlinson's monthly report. The remaining sections to the North Puyallup River were scheduled for completion in 1931.²⁹

On 27 June 1930, bids for the grading of a 0.7 mile section of road on the North Puyallup River section were opened at the BPR's Portland, Oregon office. Recommendation was made to award the contract to Elich & Company of Seattle, which submitted the low bid of \$144,586.20. (The engineer's estimate for construction was \$189,209.) Bids for clearing a 1.5 mile section on Klapatche Ridge were also opened, and C. R. Johnson of Portland, Oregon, who submitted the \$20,445 low bid, was recommended for the award.³⁰

Contracts for the construction of permanent bridges over St. Andrews Creek [HAER No. WA-51] and the South Puyallup River [HAER No. WA-52] were awarded on 15 July 1930 to the W. T. Butler Company of Seattle, which had submitted the low bid of \$36,580. The bridges, both stone-faced reinforced concrete arch structures with stone railings, were completed 17 August 1931. Total cost, including BPR engineering fees, was \$41,985.94.³¹

While the two new bridges were being built, the grading work was nearing completion. Contractor Greenwood's grading contract for the four-mile Klapatche Ridge section was inspected by Superintendent Tomlinson on 15 August 1930 and accepted on the 23rd.³² Elich and Company completed its grading contract on 10 August 1931.³³

On 7 November 1930, fire escaped a smoldering brush pile on contractor Johnson's clearing project. Gusty winds caused the fire to scatter over the heavily timbered slope of the Puyallup Canyon, up the ridge to Sunset Park, and down into the North Mowich River Canyon. Practically all of Sunset Park was burned. Rains that night, followed by snow, put out the fire, but not until about 3,500 acres had burned.³⁴

In 1931, the grading work was extended to the South Puyallup River crossing, a distance of 1.23 miles. The northern 6.11 miles of the road was surfaced with crushed rock. These two phases of work were contracted to Myers and Goulter of Seattle, who submitted the low bid of \$161,705.00. The company began work on 18 May. This work had fallen behind schedule because of a number of substantial rock slides which disrupted operations and damaged equipment. To preserve the standing timber along the route, the excavated material was removed with extreme care and dumped at specified places to build up fill areas.³⁵ Myers and Coulter eventually sublet their surfacing work to Fred G. Redmon, who was to complete the work by the end of the 1931 season; however, delays of the grading work caused by the rockslides caused the project to be postponed until 1932. The surfacing work was finished on 28 September of that year.³⁶

The Myers and Goulter contract also included the construction of a masonry railings around the St. Andrews Creek Bridge, construction of stone steps on the sides of the bridge, a masonry guard wall around the parking area at Klapatche Point, walls and border stones at the parking area at the North Puyallup crossing, several other stretches of guard wall, and masonry headwalls for the culverts. All of the masonry work was sublet to a mason named Carl Youngquist, who commenced work on 6 July 1932 with a crew of three masons, three helpers, two quarry men, a mortar mixer and a man hauling rock. The principal quarry site was the inside curve of

Klapatche Point; locating the quarrying operations there helped reduce the curve from 40% to 18%. The rock work continued until 15 September. The BPR resident engineer appraised the work as "first-rate."³⁷

In May 1933, the Emergency Conservation Works (ECW) program, a division of the Civilian Conservation Corps public relief project, established work camps N.P.1 at Tahoma Creek and N.P.4 at St. Andrews Creek. Over the next several years, ECW workers assisted with roadside cleanup and highway maintenance for the new road. The work included cleaning ditches, removing slides, building up shoulders, cleaning out culverts and removing debris along the road. Rock outcroppings left in the ditches were blasted out, and vegetation along the road was removed.³⁸ The workers also constructed the foot trail from St. Andrews Creek Bridge to Denman Falls.

The North Puyallup River was bridged in 1933 and 1934 by a high wood and concrete bridge. The three-span log stringer bridge was built on masonry-faced concrete abutments and two concrete piers encased in log cribs. The North Puyallup Bridge was one of the most forceful examples of the so-called "rustic style" of architecture built in the park. The work was contracted to Carl Bjork on the basis of his low bid of \$34,687.00. As part of the contract, a parking area for thirty cars was constructed just east of the bridge and the roadway was extended for another 515' beyond. The bridge was completed on 28 July 1934, and the entire project, including the parking area, was finished on 28 August.³⁹ Following its completion, the West Side Road was opened to the north bank of the North Puyallup.

Rockslides and washouts north of St. Andrew's Creek blocked the road in the fall of 1933. Workers using a gas shovel and two dump trucks placed 5,000 cubic yards of material in the washed-out areas, then cleared approximately 10,000 cubic yards from the slide areas. Ditches and culverts were also cleared as part of the project.⁴⁰ Some additional landscaping work was also done in the winter of 1933-34. This involved additional clearing along the road, reducing slopes in deep cuts, and additions to fill sections of the road. The work began on 15 November 1933 and was completed on 9 February 1934.⁴¹

A tight maintenance budget in 1934 forced the park administration to close the road at Round Pass. Later in the summer, following repair work and cleanup carried out by Emergency Conservation Works personnel, the road was reopened. Still, the road was not being oiled, and the resulting dust brought on complaints from tourists.⁴²

On 18 April 1935, Park Landscape Architect Ernest A. Davidson wrote Thomas Vint to express his opposition to the construction of the remaining segment of the road between Mowich Lake and the North Puyallup River crossing. He considered Mowich Lake, the largest body of water in the park, "a worthy objective" for the existing stub road alone. The same applied to the North Puyallup, which for its location just below the Hanging Glacier he termed "the most spectacular [point]...reached by any park road." He elaborated on his reasons for opposing the further road work:

To complete BOTH road systems seems to me to be overdoing the highway development of Mt. Rainier, to the definite detriment of

National Park scenic and wilderness values. To connect this West Side project will involve some of the most expensive and most difficult highway construction in the Park. Viewed merely from the point of making available fine scenery to the traveling public, I feel that the dead-end legs as now existing will be equal to a connected highway, since it will compel tourists to stop, get out of their autos and spend some time at the road termini instead of simply buzzing along over the connected road and perhaps never stopping the auto. While the scenery along the incompleated proposed line is excellent, it is not greatly different or better than that already available from the dead-end roads. Let us save at least the Mowich valleys from the inevitable destruction and desecration incidental to highway construction, along this side of Mt. Rainier Park.

As a matter of preservation of Park values, and economy, it is recommended that the program of connecting the West Side Highway be abandoned.⁴³

Several other reasons for the halt to the project have been advanced, but park records do not substantiate any of them. Park Superintendent Preston Macy is said to have stated that Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes ordered a halt to project. Macy is also reputed to have claimed to have stopped the project through procrastination. Opposition from conservation groups and the Sunset Park fire have also been offered as reasons.⁴⁴ Whatever the case, the West Side Road was never extended beyond the North Puyallup River crossing. The separate Mowich Lake Road [See HAER No. WA-121] was completed in 1933 but private automobiles were not allowed on it until 1955.

The West Side Road was treated with a palliative oiling treatment in 1936 to reduce serious dust conditions. Total cost of the project was \$4,946.92.⁴⁵ The road has never been surfaced with an asphalt pavement.

Park Superintendent Tomlinson continued to support the extension of the road. When the Associated Improvements Club of the South End conveyed through Congressman John M. Coffee their desire to see the road extended and the separate Mowich Lake section paved, Tomlinson wrote the Director of the National Park Service to urge the completion of the road. He stated that the West End Road should be completed to allow motorists "to keep on driving," rather than having to deal with dead-end roads. He suggested that there would ultimately be less impact on the park if the motorists were allowed to make an entire circuit.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, funds were not allocated for further construction.

In the spring of 1939, a large section of cliff near the North Puyallup Bridge broke off and blocked part of the road and damaged a section of the stone guard rail. An appropriation of \$1,700 was made on 10 July for repairs and was later increased. Some Civilian Conservation Corps equipment was used in the project.⁴⁷

The West Side Road was blocked by a larger rock slide at Fish Creek in the fall of 1940. The slide covered the road and blocked the creek channel under the bridge. An allotment of \$5,000 was made for cleanup on 1 March 1941, and was later increased. Approximately 8,000 cubic yards of material was removed.⁴⁸ More rockslides have covered the road in the years since, prompting additional cleanup work.

While rockslides have been the most common maintenance problem, debris flows caused by *jökulhlaups* or glacial floods have severely damaged the road in more recent years. These flows move down Tahoma Creek from an area of rock-covered stagnant ice just below the South Tahoma Glacier of which it once formed a part. At least twenty such flows have been documented since 1967. Some of these have repeatedly damaged the road about 3 miles up from its junction with the Nisqually Road. One flow stranded some visitors and their automobiles. The floods also buried a portion of the Tahoma Creek picnic area and destroyed the trailhead and lower section of the Tahoma Creek Trail.⁴⁹

Due to maintenance problems, the upper section of the road above Klapatche Point was closed in the 1960s and the North Puyallup River Bridge was dynamited. Following a major debris flow in 1989, the park administration closed the road at Fish Creek due to road damage and extreme flood hazard conditions. Hearings have recently been conducted on future plans for the corridor, but as of this writing (1992), no decision has been reached and the road remains closed.

Description

The present West Side Road was intended as a north-south route across the western side of Mount Rainier National Park. The road was originally planned to connect the Nisqually Road with the Carbon River Road in the park's northwest corner; however, the planned section between the North Puyallup River and Mowich Lake was never constructed, and the road remained a dead-end spur. The section between Klapatche Point and the North Puyallup River was abandoned in the 1970s, and the lower segment was closed at Fish Creek in 1989 after a debris flow sweeping down Tahoma Creek washed out the roadway.

The road leaves the Nisqually Road 1 mile east of the Nisqually Entrance. The junction is located in an old-growth lowland forest zone at an elevation of 2,126'. The West Side Road runs northeast and north, keeping to the west side of Tahoma Creek, for three miles to Fish Creek. A barrier here prohibits travel beyond this point except for official vehicles. For the next mile, the road has been badly washed by debris flows periodically rushing down Tahoma Creek. The road then climbs the south side of Emerald Ridge on two switchbacks

Five and a half miles north of the road junction is Tahoma Vista (elev. 3,400'), a small development with a picnic area, "rustic style" log and stone comfort station, and large stone "bubbler" fountain, now dry. The road makes

a hairpin switchback curve at this point; it is lined with low masonry parapet walls on both sides and parking is provided in the space inside the curve. The once-lovely view of Mount Rainier is now largely obscured by timber overtaking the old clearing.

Running east now for three quarters of a mile, the road makes a double switchback turn before heading northeast to Round Pass, on the saddle between Emerald Ridge and Gobblers Knob. An observation tower was once located here for the enjoyment of visitors, also a bubbler fountain, but today only an unpaved turnout marks the spot. Just beyond, on the northeast side of the road, is a stone memorial to Marines killed in the crash of a transport aircraft on the South Tahoma Glacier, visible to the east.

The West Side Road then runs east a mile before looping back to the northwest. One mile further on this heading, or 9 1/2 miles from the junction, the road crosses the stone-faced reinforced concrete spandrel arch South Puyallup River Bridge. The bridge is located in the intermediate forest zone at an elevation of 3,490', just below the river's unusual "bottle gorge."

Keeping to the southwest and west sides of the ridge extending west from St. Andrews Park, the road crosses the low divide between the South Puyallup River and St. Andrews Creek. The road then drops to the crossing of the latter stream. The St. Andrews Creek Bridge relates especially well to its setting. Stone steps at two corners of the bridge lead down to the bubbling creek, and trails leading from the adjacent turnout lead to Denman Falls to the east and to a connection with the Wonderland Trail and the high subalpine meadows of St. Andrews Park. Located in a damp mixed conifer zone at an elevation of 3700'. The nearby 1922 log St. Andrews Patrol Cabin is an excellent example of "rustic style" park architecture.

From St. Andrews Creek, the road continues another mile to the northwest and its terminus at Klapatche Point (elev. 4,120'). A parking area bordered by masonry parapet walls offers a view of Mount Rainier to the west up the North Puyallup River valley, and northeast all the way to Puget Sound and the distant Olympic Range. Unfortunately, numerous clear-cuts in the adjacent Snoqualmie National Forest are all too visible. The road continued another 3 miles southeast to the North Puyallup, which it once crossed on an unusual rustic bridge with a log stringer deck supported on masonry abutments and timber clad reinforced concrete piers.

III. ENDNOTES

1. Dewitt L. Reaburn, Supervisor, Mount Rainier National Park, Annual Report to the Secretary of the Interior, 1916, 9-10. Mount Rainier National Park Archives Box H2621.
2. *Ibid.*, 10.
3. W. H. Peters, Superintendent, Mount Rainier National Park, to Stephen T. Mather, Director, National Park Service, 22 July 1922, 3. MORA Archives, File D22, Construction Program 1922.
4. C. L. Nelson, Acting Superintendent, Mount Rainier National Park, Superintendent's Monthly Report, October 1922, 3. MORA Archives, Box H2615, Superintendents' Monthly Reports 1920-1923 file; C. R. Short, Associate Highway Engineer, Bureau of Public Roads, "Location Survey Report (1925-1929), West Side Highway, Mt. Rainier National Park Rt. No. 2. (Portland, OR: Bureau of Public Roads, 1929), 2-4.
5. W. T. Utz, Assistant Highway Engineer, Bureau of Public Roads, "Final Construction Report (1934-35) on West Side Highway, Mt. Rainier National Park Project NR-2-E2, Grading" (Portland, OR: Bureau of Public Roads, District No. 1, 1936), 1.
6. Thomas C. Vint, Assistant Landscape Engineer, National Park Service, to O. A. Tomlinson, Superintendent, Mount Rainier National Park, 20 August 1925. National Archives, RG 79, Entry 22, Box 18.
7. C. H. Purcell, District Engineer, Bureau of Public Roads, to Stephen T. Mather, Director, National Park Service, 19 August 1925. National Archives, RG 79, Entry 22, Box 18.
8. Tomlinson to Mather, 24 August 1925. National Archives, RG 79, Entry 22, Box 18.
9. Bert H. Burrell, Acting Chief Civil Engineer, to Horace M. Albright, Superintendent, Yellowstone National Park, 27 August 1925. National Archives, RG 79, Entry 22, Box 18.
10. Vint to D. R. Hull, Landscape Engineer, National Park Service, Los Angeles, 20 February 1926. National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 79, Entry 22, Box 18.
11. C. G. Polk, Assistant Highway Engineer, Bureau of Public Roads, "Final Construction Report (1931-1932) on West Side Highway, Project No. 2-B, C1 (Portion), Grading, Surfacing and Guardrails, Mt. Rainier National Park, County of Pierce, State of Washington" (Portland, OR: Bureau of Public Roads, 1932), 2.

12. Short to J. A. Elliott, Bureau of Public Roads, 16 November 1926. National Archives, RG 79, Entry 29, Box 39, Roads.
13. Short, "Final Construction Report on West Side Highway, Southwest Entrance--Round Pass, Grading and Surfacing, Project 2-A, Mt. Rainier National Park, Rainier County (sic), State of Washington" (Portland, OR: Bureau of Public Roads, 1934), 2-4.
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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
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WEST SIDE ROAD
Mount Rainier National Park
Between Nisqually Road and North Fork Puyallup River
Longmire vicinity
Pierce County
Washington

HAER No. WA-122

Jet Lowe, photographer, summer 1992

WA-122-1 WEST SIDE ROAD FACING NORTHWEST, SHOWING STONE PARAPET

WA-122-2 VIEW OF ABANDONED SECTION NEAR NORTH PUYALLUP RIVER SHOWING
ROADWAY SERVING AS HIKING TRAIL



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LOWE M 32
HAER

HAER NO. WA-122-2

