UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

History
of
Boundary Adjustments
Rocky Mountain
National Park

Submitted
to
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Director
This History
Prepared
for
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by.
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EXHIBITS "A" "B" "C" "D" AND "E"

Note: Photographs are bound in original only in the section to which they relate.

Exhibits are bound in original and first copy only.
Memorandum for Mr. Wirth.

Rocky Mountain Boundary History.

Herewith is submitted for your consideration a history of the boundary adjustment problems of Rocky Mountain National Park.

It seemed logical to consider the problem in six phases, each of which deals with a specific area. The six areas are as follows: Estes Park, Tahosa Valley, Arapaho Section, a region adjoining the northern boundary, Watershed of the North Fork of the Colorado River, and the Village of Grand Lake.

Charts have been prepared to graphically explain the narrative material. Photographs have been incorporated in the original report only. To get another set would have involved considerable time and expense.

The reason for exhibit "E" might require some explanation. It was thought appropriate to place on one sheet a composite of proposed additions, purporting to show a consensus of opinion of the various studies. The addition might be too idealistic especially in the southern section of the Colorado River area, however, it is contended that a good solution of the problem would bring into the Park all the Colorado Watershed to and including the Grand Lake country. The Arapaho proposed addition has been a matter of long controversial standing. If added it will bring a highly scenic and educational unit into the Park. Its addition look more to future development than to a solution of present demands. The proposed addition in the vicinity of Estes is principally for the purpose of developing a parkway entrance up the Thompson River in addition to rounding out the Park boundary along the Fall River region.

Croft
For several years prior to 1915, the Department of the Interior had been urged to establish a national park typifying the Rocky Mountains.

In 1912, under instructions from the Secretary of the Interior, Chief Geographer R. B. Marshall made a study of that Colorado section of the Continental Divide from Mummy Range south to Arapaho Peak and from Estes Park west to the North Fork of the Colorado River. The boundaries which Mr. Marshall recommended are outlined in green on the attached map, exhibit "A". The boundaries of the park as established January 26, 1915, are outlined in orange on the same exhibit.

It will be noted that much of the area proposed by Marshall, particularly the southern portion, was not included in the original boundaries. With the exception of the watershed of the North Fork of the Colorado, all the boundary disputes which are the subject of this history have had to do with the area recommended by Marshall but not included by the Act creating the Park. The boundaries as originally set were in most instances artificial, and continuous efforts have been made to rectify this condition and establish natural ones.

In April 1924, President Coolidge called a national conference on outdoor recreation. A coordinating commission of five members was appointed to consider proposed revisions of boundary lines between national parks and national forests.
Superintendent Toll and Colonel Peck of the Forest Service anticipating the Commission held several conferences, made field trips and studies and submitted recommendations to the Departments of Agriculture and Interior which were approved and duly referred to the Commission and the Commission approved the joint recommendations. These recommendations are outlined in purple on exhibit "C".

In the fall of 1930, C. W. Eliot 2nd. made a general boundary study of Rocky Mountain Park. In the limited time available he was unable to go thoroughly into the entire problem but his report contains valuable suggestions for boundary adjustments within the vicinities of Estes, Grand Lake and the area west of the Colorado River. His recommended boundaries are outlined on exhibit "B". On exhibit "B" are also drawn the boundary adjustments suggested by Superintendent Rogers. These may be considered more practical while Mr. Eliot admits that his ideal solution would be obtainable only at an exhorbitant purchase price.

Mr. Wirth visited Rocky Mountain the latter part of May 1931 and reported his recommendations, in which Superintendent Rogers concurred. For the most part, Mr. Wirth's conclusions were in harmony with the Superintendents', as shown on exhibit "B".

In the history of boundary adjustments for Rocky Mountain there have been several suggested revisions, each of which are local to a distinct area and, therefore, in the following pages they are treated individually.
ESTES PARK

In 1859 Joel Estes ascended Park Hill and had his first view of what is now Estes Park. The following year a cabin was built on Willow Creek near the present ranch house and thus Mr. Estes began the establishment of the first permanent settlement in this region.

In 1869 the Earl of Dunraven with a hunting party visited Estes Park. The Earl was so pleased with the abundance of game, that he returned three years later with Bierstadt, the artist, and made arrangements to acquire the bulk of the land in the Park. Ultimately, he obtained possession of 14,000 acres. He planned to develop the entire area into a game preserve, but the invasion of settlers and the quarrel with Rocky Mountain Jim, together with the worthless titles which he had to some of these acres, led to the abandonment of the preserve idea.

In the year 1875, development of Estes Park began. It was this year that a number of families moved into the area, acquired land and constructed permanent homes. Since 1875, Estes Park has developed into an ideal vacation and year round village. The region is composed of several valleys surrounded on all sides by lofty peaks, with the snow-capped Continental Divide in the western background.

It was Estes Park that R. E. Marshall in 1912 used as a base and focal point for his investigations of the proposed national park. In fact, the Chief Geographer designated the proposed mountain park as Estes, until the more appropriate and comprehensive name of Rocky Mountain was suggested.

Estes Park has never been within the boundary of Rocky Mountain
National Park. Nevertheless, this village has always been considered the eastern gateway to Rocky Mountain, and will ever be deemed an integral part of the Park. Even though Estes Village is almost entirely privately owned and has never been seriously considered for park jurisdiction, and since this condition might forever prohibit the inclusion of Estes within Rocky Mountain, nevertheless there should ever be present the possibility of federal control of such features as architectural character, zoning, sanitation, and related matters. This federal control will no doubt have to be obtained by scenic easements or by a liberal interpretation of the enforcement of the police power.

Immediately following the establishment of Rocky Mountain there were numerous petitions seeking to add certain lands to the Park, particularly in the Estes region. Many of these petitions were signed by the owners of the lands in question.

By an inspection of exhibits "C" and "D", it will be noted that the boundaries of Estes Park section have been the source of considerable alterations and proposals for alterations. The Act of January 26, 1915, excluded desirable portions of the Thompson and Fall Rivers region, particularly Horseshoe and Moraine Parks. By the Act of February 14, 1917, as shown within the green line, exhibit "C", a considerable area was added to the eastern portion of the Park. This line remained until 1926 during which time there was considerable agitation to restore the original boundaries of 1915. This agitation was based principally on the inclusion of so much private land within the Park boundary by the Act of 1917, resulting in difficult administration of the area. By Act of June 9, 1926, the boundaries were again changed, as outlined in red,
excluding large tracts of privately owned land. The 1926 boundary was largely determined by private holdings and was therefore arbitrary with no conformity to topography.

It will be noted that lands along the Fall and Thompson Rivers were not included by Act of June 9, 1926. The Act of June 21, 1930 fixed certain boundaries within which lands could be added to the Park by Executive proclamation. This boundary is printed on exhibits "A" and "B" in the broad green line within a thin black dashed line. Under authority of this Act and by Proclamation of January 11, 1932, the area outlined in purple east of Moraine Park was added.

The present boundary in the Estes Park area is arbitrarily drawn. Parts of the meadows of Horseshoe, Beaver and Moraine Parks are omitted. Part of the moraine south of Thompson River is not, as it should be, within the Park.

Under date of November 7, 1932, and at the suggestion of Director Albright, Junior Landscape Architect Howard W. Baker, submitted a report proposing the development of a proper eastern Park approach from Estes Village along the Thompson River. The lands necessary to develop this parkway entrance are outlined in green, exhibit "C". In 1931, the Director recommended this addition be effected by proclamation.

The present appearance of Estes Park is not sufficiently attractive to justify its position as an eastern gateway to Rocky Mountain. Since acquisition is practically impossible, some kind of development control should be obtained by the Park Service, particularly in that section between the Village and the Park boundary. Such control will be even more vital if the proposed parkway is developed.
VIEW LOOKING WEST FROM ESTES PARK
MORRAINE PARK IN FOREGROUND
TWIN SISTERS AND ESTES CONE IN BACKGROUND
HORSESHOE PARK LOOKING EASTERLY
TRAIL RIDGE ROAD IN RIGHT FOREGROUND  ESTES PARK BACKGROUND
DEVELOPMENT AT BEAVER POINT, ILLUSTRATING UNDESIRABLE CONDITIONS ALONG PROPOSED EASTERN APPROACH PARKWAY
The area of Tahosa Valley which centers around the village of Longs Peak, was excluded from the original boundaries in 1915 and did not follow the recommendation of Chief Geographer Marshall that it be incorporated in Rocky Mountain Park. Numerous petitions were presented with the result that Congress, by Act of February 14, 1917, changed the boundary to include the Valley.

Superintendent Way objected very seriously to this change since, as he contended, it brought into the Park a heavily traveled through highway which made administration of the area very difficult, and subjected the Park to maintain a road which was almost entirely used as a public thoroughfare. The Valley also contained many private holdings in addition to the development of the village of Longs Peak.

It was not until the Act of June 9, 1926, that the boundary was readjusted. Congress set the line back to its original location but in addition retained Twin Sisters as Park property. These changes eliminated Longs Peak and the highway from the jurisdiction of the Park Service, and it also created the isolated Twin Sisters area. A fire lookout is maintained on the Sisters Peak which is perhaps the main reason for the ownership and control by the Park Service. The present system of bridle paths in Twin Sisters should be protected as far as possible.

Very recently petitions have been presented to the Washington Office praying for the inclusion of certain Tahosa Valley lands back into the Park and it has been suggested that the boundary changes of 1917 be restored.
TWIN SISTERS
AND TYPICAL VIEW OF TAHOSA VALLEY
ARAPAHO AREA

The present southern boundary of Rocky Mountain is one straight line. Considering the ruggedness of the topography which it defines this is certainly an arbitrary method of determining these southerly limits of the Park. By reference to exhibit "D", it will be noted that there have never been any recommendations to chop off the southern portion of the Park as it now stands.

The Arapaho proposed addition lies within the Arapaho National Forest. It comprises an area 12 miles long and from 6 to 8 miles wide. Since most of the area is above timber line its economic value is conceded to be of little consequence.

It is significant that in 1925 Colonel Peck of the National Forest Service agreed to the boundary line outlined in purple, exhibit "D". It is admitted that the area which he has excluded in the western portion is valuable timber country and that it is open to argument whether or not its value for park purposes is greater than its economic value to the Forest Service. But the fact remains that the Forest Service agrees that the scenic and educational value of most of the area far outweighs the economic.

The Arapaho proposed extension is a continuation of the section of the Continental Divide now embodied by Rocky Mountain Park and its addition will complete a topographic unit. It contains most extraordinary remains of ancient glacial activity in addition to the presence of several existing glaciers. Many small lakes are scattered throughout this mountainous country. The region presents the possibility of developing a great wilderness area through which
a system of trails could be constructed and in which the flora and fauna of this Rocky Mountain section could be preserved and studied in its existing undisturbed condition.

Chief Geographer Marshall included Arapahoe in his proposed boundary, but at that time and ever since, the mining interests have maintained that the country is highly mineralized and that sufficient mining activities have been in operation over a long period of time to justify its exclusion from park status.

The area has been surveyed for its mineral resources and the report has invariably come back that the geologic formation in this particular section precludes the possibilities of mineralization as claimed by the mining interests. Prospectors and claimants have been active in Arapahoe for many years but thus far no "strike" has been made and no important metal bearing formations have been discovered. In one or two instances a very low grade ore has been found but to mine the claim has been considered thoroughly impracticable.

Of late the effort to add the Arapahoe area has remained inactive in order to allow the mining interests an opportunity to prove or disprove their contentions. It seems that with all the mining activity in the region, if valuable minerals were present they would have been discovered long ago.

The city of Boulder has maintained that the addition of the Arapahoe area would be adverse to its interests; that such an addition would not only harm the mining, grazing and timber interest, but that it would shut off possible future development of the city's water resources in the North Boulder Creek and its watershed.
The area under contention is in the southeast section of the proposed addition and could be eliminated from the proposed boundary if necessary. In fact, such an elimination has been concurred in by Park officials.
SCENERY TYPICAL OF
ARAPAHO AREA
A TYPICAL ROCKY MOUNTAIN GLACIER AND LAKE
LONGS PEAK. ILLUSTRATING NATURE
OF COUNTRY IN PROPOSED ARAPAHO ADDITION
The northern boundary of Rocky Mountain Park was arbitrarily drawn in a straight line across the mountainous country and has thus remained since the establishment of the Park in 1915.

The Forest Service has contended that a great portion of the northern section of the Park contains more forest than park value and that much of the scenery is duplicated elsewhere in Rocky Mountain. By letter of May 2, 1925, Colonel W. B. Greeley proposed the elimination of a large strip as indicated by the red line; exhibit "D". Superintendent Toll concurred in this proposal under date of September 12, 1925.

The proposed boundary as drawn would not eliminate the evil of an arbitrary boundary, however, Superintendent Rogers has made suggestions for a northern boundary which would follow natural barriers and where possible in an approximate location of the line drawn by Greeley and Toll.

There have been several petitions presented suggesting that a great region north of the Park extending into southern Wyoming be added to Rocky Mountain. This activity originated in Wyoming and expresses a desire to have a national park in the southern end of that State. Very little has developed from the proposal and it is believed the idea has been discarded.
MUMMY RANGE ILLUSTRATING NATURE OF SCENERY
IN NORTHERN SECTION OF PARK
The original location of the northwestern boundary of Rocky Mountain National Park was almost identical to the recommendation of Chief Geographer Marshall. The North Fork of the Colorado River was considered a natural barrier and a sufficient definition of the Park. But today, in mountainous regions, it is thought more wise to follow a hydrographic divide and thus acquire control of a complete valley and not just one side of a mountain. Of course if a single peak or mountain is the one important feature that is another matter. But in general and for the sake of scenic unity and practical administration, it is unfortunate to acquire but half a watershed as is the case in the North Fork area. By reference to exhibit "C", it will be noted that the original boundary of 1915, outlined in blue, was very arbitrarily drawn. The disadvantages of such a location were not fully appreciated until recently when developments in the western portion of the Park began to approach completion. A movement to remedy the defect was started by Proclamation of July 17, 1930, authorized by Act of June 21, 1930, when a considerable area embracing the headwaters of the Colorado were added to Rocky Mountain. As shown by the orange line, exhibit "C", the boundary line followed for some distance the Continental Divide in the Never Summer Mountains. The regret of the Park Service is that the addition stopped where it did and was not logically carried through so that the complete drainage shed of the North Fork came into the Park.

In his studies of 1930 (see Exhibit B), Mr. Eliot recommends the addition of the remaining portion of the Valley. He outlines two boundaries, namely, an ideal one and a compromise boundary.
The mining interests have made repeated objections to giving park status to any more land in this area. The Forest Service maintains that the economic value outweighs the scenic and educational. But it is the contention of the Park Service that what few mining claims there are have proven of little value and besides park status would not interfer with any valid existing claims. In answer to the Forest Service point on economic value, the Park Service maintains that with the completion of the present logging activities in the southern portion of the proposed addition, the timber will have been all cut over, thus reducing tremendously the economic worth of the area.
WINTER SCENE IN NEVER SUMMER RANGE
VIEW ALONG TRAIL RIDGE ROAD IN
VICINITY OF NEVER SUMMER RANGE AND COLORADO VALLEY
COLORADO VALLEY WITH
NEVER SUMMER RANGE IN BACKGROUND
TYPICAL TOPOGRAPHY IN VICINITY OF NEVER SUMMER RANGE
VALLEY OF HEADWATERS OF COLORADO RIVER
GRAND LAKE

Grand Lake is the largest lake in Colorado and is now bounded on three sides by the National Park. Mr. Marshall, in his report of 1912, emphasized the scenic value of Grand Lake and its importance to the proposed National Park, but for some reason, due no doubt to private development, the Lake was excluded from the proposed boundaries. It is most unfortunate that this scenic feature was not then acquired, because the Village has attained to such a state of development that complete acquisition is practically impossible, and only partial rights, such as scenic easements, can be obtained.

Without exception, those who have studied the boundary problems of Rocky Mountain Park have recommended that Grand Lake be included within the Park. Failing this, the next choice would be federal control of the architectural and landscape development enforced through acquisition of a scenic easement or by interpretation of the application of the police power.

Since the establishment of Rocky Mountain National Park there have been no changes of boundaries in the vicinity of Grand Lake. With favorable consideration of adding the north fork drainage area of the Colorado river, Grand Lake will almost of necessity have to be included in the Park, or remain as an area of private land within the Park boundaries.

The present unincorporated village of Grand Lake was founded in the early mining days of Colorado and its appearance has changed very little since that time. Today it caters entirely to tourists and therefore has a very fluctuating, though small, population. People from all parts of the surrounding country make Grand Lake
their summer home. The summer colonists are keenly interested in the community development while the year young residents who own the business places have not manifested a similar enthusiasm for the welfare of the Village.

The problem to provide facilities for these two groups becomes more pressing with the approaching completion of the Falls River road, the present proposed location of which does not pass through the village of Grand Lake but around and to the west of it. The villagers are strongly opposed to this location and urge that the new road pass directly through the main street, thus making Grand Lake a western gateway to Rocky Mountain Park.

It has been intimated that this Fall River road will pass through the village if the local people will cooperate with the Park Service and make certain changes in the physical appearance of the Village. The villagers have many times expressed the desire to cooperate with the Service. There has been suggested a restoration and/or development of Grand Lake as a typical western frontier village, entailing the alteration of the exterior of many of the buildings, together with the establishing of certain controlling supervision in all architectural and landscape development. This problem might develop into the application on a small scale of the principles of city planning. The architectural character of many of the houses has an excellent park like flavor, and if the village is developed as has been proposed by the Park Service, only minor alterations will have to be made to existing buildings.

Grand Lake is not an incorporated village and therefore has no central head through which to work, which makes concerted action difficult. In the last two or three months, however, an expression
of opinion has been obtained and the villagers are ready to go ahead with the Park Service. Mr. Vint, in a recent memorandum, opposed locating the road through the Village but Mr. Rogers obtained a postponement of final decision and the matter is now awaiting further action.

The Colorado River addition to the Park is made as outlined and recommended in the report of Charles W. Eliot 2nd in 1932, (see exhibit "B"), the inclusion of Grand Lake as part of Rocky Mountain will become even more imperative. The present anomaly of its exclusion from the Park will be just that much exaggerated should more lands be added to the west, and in the vicinity of Grand Lake.
GRAND LAKE