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**UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Washington, D.C.**

May 13, 1918

Mr. Stephen T. Mather
Director
National Park Service

Dear Mr. Mather:

The National Park Service has been established as a bureau of this Department just one year. During this period our efforts have been chiefly directed toward the building of an effective organization while engaged in the performance of duties relating to the administration, protection, and improvement of the national parks and monuments, as required by law. This constructive work is now completed. The New Service is fully organized; its personnel has been carefully chosen; it has been conveniently and comfortably situated in the new Interior Department Building; and it has been splendidly equipped for the quick and effective transaction of its business.

For the information of the public, an outline of the administrative policy to which the new Service will adhere may now be announced. This policy is based on three broad principles: First, that the national parks must be maintained in absolutely unimpaired form for the use of future generations as well as those of our own time; second, that they are set apart for the use, observation, health, and pleasure of the people; and third, that the national interest must dictate all decisions affecting public or private enterprise in the parks.

Every activity of the Service is subordinate to the duties imposed upon it to faithfully preserve the parks for posterity in essentially their natural state. The commercial use of these reservations, except as specially authorized by law, or such as may be incidental to the accommodation and entertainment of visitors, will not be permitted under any circumstances.

In all of the national parks except Yellowstone you may permit the grazing of cattle in isolated regions not frequented by visitors, and where no injury to the natural features of the parks may result from such use. The grazing of sheep, however, must not be permitted in any national park.

In leasing lands for the operation of hotels, camps, transportation facilities, or other public service under strict Government control, concessioners should be confined to tracts no larger than absolutely necessary for the purpose of their enterprises.

You should not permit the leasing of park lands for summer homes. It is conceivable, and even exceedingly probable, that within a few years under a policy of permitting the establishment of summer homes in national parks, these reservations might become so generally settled as to exclude the public from convenient access to their streams, lakes, and other natural features, and thus destroy the very basis upon which this national playground system is being constructed.

You should not permit the cutting of trees except where timber is needed in the construction of buildings or other improvements within the park and can be removed without injury to the forests or disfigurement of the landscape, where the thinning of forests or cutting of vistas will improve the scenic features of the parks, or where their destruction is necessary to eliminate insect infestations or diseases common to forests and shrubs.

In the construction of roads, trails, buildings, and other improvements, particular attention must be devoted always to the harmonizing of these improvements with the landscape. This is a most important item in our program of development and requires the employment of trained engineers who either possess a knowledge of landscape architecture or have a proper appreciation of the esthetic value of park lands. All improvements will be carried out in accordance with a preconceived plan developed with special reference to the preservation of the landscape, and comprehensive plans for future development of the national parks on an adequate scale will be prepared as funds are available for this purpose.

Wherever the Federal Government has exclusive jurisdiction over national parks, it is clear that more effective measures for the protection of the parks can be taken. The Federal Government has exclusive jurisdiction over the national parks in the States of Arkansas, Oklahoma, Wyoming, Montana, Washington, and Oregon, and also in the Territories of Hawaii and Alaska. We should urge the cession of exclusive jurisdiction over the parks in the other States, and particularly in California and Colorado.

There are many private holdings in the national parks, and many of these seriously hamper the administration of these reservations. All of them should be eliminated as far as it is practicable to accomplish this purpose in the course of time, either through Congressional appropriation or by acceptance of donations of these lands. Isolated tracts in important scenic areas should be given first consideration, of course, in the purchase of private property.

Every opportunity should be afforded the public, wherever possible, to enjoy the national parks in the manner that best satisfies the individual taste. Automobiles and motorcycles will be permitted in all of the national parks; in fact, the parks will be kept accessible by any means practicable.

All outdoor sports which may be maintained consistently with the obser-

vation of the safeguards thrown around the national parks by law will be heartily endorsed and aided wherever possible. Mountain climbing, horse-back riding, walking, motoring, swimming, boating, and fishing will ever be the favorite sports. Winter sports will be developed in the parks that are accessible throughout the year. Hunting will not be permitted in any national park.

The educational, as well as the recreational, use of the national parks should be encouraged in every practicable way. University and high-school classes in science will find special facilities for their vacation period studies. Museums containing specimens of wild flowers, shrubs, and trees and mounted animals, birds, and fish native to the parks, and other exhibits of this character, will be established as authorized.

Low-priced camps operated by concessioners should be maintained, as well as comfortable and even luxurious hotels wherever the volume of travel warrants the establishment of these classes of accommodations. In each reservation, as funds are available, a system of free camp sites will be cleared, and these grounds will be equipped with adequate water and sanitation facilities.

As concessions in the national parks represent in most instances a large investment, and as the obligation to render service satisfactory to the Department at carefully regulated rates is imposed, these enterprises must be given a large measure of protection, and, generally speaking, competitive business should not be authorized where a concession is meeting our requirements, which, of course, will as nearly as possible coincide with the needs of the traveling public.

All concessions should yield revenue to the Federal Government, but the development of the revenues of the parks should not impose a burden upon the visitor.

Automobile fees in the park should be reduced as the volume of motor travel increases.

For assistance in the solution of administrative problems in the parks relating both to their protection and use, the scientific bureaus of the Government offer facilities of the highest worth and authority. In the protection of the public health, for instance, the destruction of insect pests in the forests, the care of wild animals, and the propagation and distribution of fish, you should utilize their hearty cooperation to the utmost.

You should utilize to the fullest extent the opportunity afforded by the Railroad Administration in appointing a committee of western railroads to inform the traveling public how to comfortably reach the national parks; you should diligently extend and use the splendid cooperation developed during the last three years among chambers of commerce, tourist bureaus, and automobile highway associations, for the purpose of spreading information about our national parks and facilitating their use and enjoyment; you should keep informed of park movements and park progress, municipal, county, and State, both at home and abroad, for the purpose of adapting, whenever practicable, the world's best thought to the needs of the national

parks. You should encourage all movements looking to outdoor living. In particular you should maintain close working relationship with the Dominion Parks Branch of the Canadian Department of the Interior, and assist in the solution of park problems of an international character.

The Department is often requested for reports on pending legislation proposing the establishment of new national parks or the addition of lands to existing parks. Complete data on such park projects should be obtained by the National Park Service and submitted to the Department in tentative form of report to Congress.

In studying new park projects, you should seek to find scenery of supreme and distinctive quality or some national feature so extraordinary or unique as to be of national interest and importance. You should seek distinguished examples of typical forms of world architecture; such, for instance, as the Grand Canyon, as exemplifying the highest accomplishment of stream erosion, and the high, rugged portion of Mount Desert Island as exemplifying the oldest rock forms in America and the luxuriance of deciduous forests.

The national park system as now constituted should not be lowered in standard, dignity, and prestige by the inclusion of areas which express in less than the highest terms the particular class or kind of exhibit which they represent.

It is not necessary that a national park should have a large area. The element of size is of no importance as long as the park is susceptible of effective administration and control.

You should study existing national parks with the idea of improving them by the addition of adjacent areas which will complete their scenic purposes or facilitate administration. The addition of the Teton Mountains to the Yellowstone National Park, for instance, will supply Yellowstone's greatest need, which is an uplift of glacier-bearing peaks; and the addition to the Sequoia National Park of the Sierra summits and slopes to the north and east, as contemplated by pending legislation, will create a reservation unique in the world, because of its gigantic trees, extraordinary canyons, and mountain masses.

In considering projects involving the establishment of new national parks or the extension of existing park areas by delimitation of national forests, you should observe what effect such delimitation would have on the administration of adjacent forest lands, and wherever practicable you should engage in an investigation of such park projects jointly with officers of the Forest Service, in order that questions of national park and national forest policy as they affect the lands involved may be thoroughly understood.

FRANKLIN K. LANE, *Secretary of the Interior.*