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(May 1929)
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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
PROPOSED..... NATIONAL PARK

Files

FILE NO. 0 - 32

PART I

PROPOSED NATIONAL PARKS

CHILCOOT

LAST DATE ON TOP

IMPORTANT

This file constitutes a part of the official records of the National Park Service and should not be separated or papers withdrawn without express authority of the official in charge.

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ARNO B. CAMMERER,
Director.

Bank of Alaska

Mpls. Minn, 7/5/34.

Hon. A. Dimond,
Delegate from Alaska,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Dimond:

Some time last fall, when discussing the future tourist possibilities for Alaska and improvements around Skagway with the above in view, with Governor Troy, he suggested to me the value to all S.E. Alaska and Skagway in particular, to have set aside as a National Park or Monument, the region around Skagway to the boundary line north of that town, including the old town of Dyea and the old Chilcoot trail.

The matter was taken up at a regular meeting of our Skagway Chamber of Commerce and I, together with Father Gallant and W. C. Blanchard were appointed a Committee to work for this object, I have discussed the matter with others and in as much as we have nothing of the kind in S. E. Alaska, where more than 75% of the tourists to Alaska go, we believe it is feasible and would be a worth while project. Naturally we must have, and expect, your full assistance in bringing the project about.

The first thing we need are authentic maps, on a large scale, which would show the territory we want included. Roughly it should begin at a point just south of the town of Skagway, running thence East to the boundary line, following this North and West and South, taking in all the territory North of Skagway and Dyea and also, the Dyea Inlet. Of course, though Skagway would be within this area, the town as such would be excluded; also the White Pass R. R. There are very few private holdings within this area, hence no conflicting claims.

I shall appreciate very much if you can get and forward to me at Skagway, Alaska, any and all maps which would clearly show on as large scale as possible the boundary line between us and Canada, as far as this matter concerns so that we then can pick out and return to you, plainly marked, the area we desire having set aside so that a bill for purpose can be introduced in Congress.

Thanking you for your assistance in this matter and welcoming any suggestions you may offer re same, I am,

Sincerely yours,

E. A. Rasmuson

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Skagway, Alaska.

Nov. 20, 1934.

Hon. Anthony J. Dimond,
Alaska Delegate,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Dimond:

On July 5th last Mr. E. A. Rasmuson of Skagway wrote you from Minneapolis in regard to the proposed setting aside of the region in this vicinity as a National Park, and you acknowledged his letter under the date of July 12th.

The Committee of this Chamber which was appointed to investigate the whole subject held a meeting on November 15th, and the writer was asked to communicate with you with a view to securing information on certain points which we have discussed.

If it is possible to obtain any general information on the subject—how to proceed, etc. we shall be very glad to have it.

We would like to know if present townsite (Skagway), mining claims, homesteads, railroad right-of-way, etc. would be disturbed in any way whatsoever.

Is fishing permissible under the rules and regulations of National Parks?

Is hunting absolutely prohibited, or are there varying rules on this point at different Parks? There is some local opposition to the project on this ground, and we would particularly appreciate as full information as it may be possible to obtain.

In general, any information bearing on the subject would be most welcome to the Committee.

With thanks for your kind assistance, I am

Yours very truly,

W. C. Blanchard.

P.S. Inasmuch as I expect to be away from Skagway at the time your reply will likely be received, will you kindly write to Mr. E. A. Rasmuson.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON

DEC 17 1934

Hon. Anthony J. Dimond,
Delegate from Alaska,
House of Representatives.

My dear Mr. Dimond:

I have received your letter of December 6, enclosing copies of letters from Mr. E. A. Rasmuson and Mr. W. C. Blanchard of Skagway, Alaska, proposing the establishment of a national park or monument between that town and the international boundary line.

National parks and monuments are established to preserve in a natural condition areas of outstanding scenic, historic, or scientific value to the entire American public. In general, it may be said that national parks are predominantly scenic in character, while national monuments are of a historic or scientific nature.

Areas to be considered should not be similar in character to areas already under the administration of the Service. As the region proposed is not far from the Glacier Bay National Monument, it is not probable that there is a marked difference in the character of the two areas. However, we shall be glad to study maps of this section if you feel that it is advisable to present them for our consideration.

While an act of Congress is necessary for the establishment of a national park, a national monument may be established by Presidential Proclamation. In either case, however, it would be necessary for the land to be free from private ownership as the National Park Service has no funds for its purchase.

With reference to Mr. Blanchard's question regarding property rights, all acts of Congress and Executive Proclamations establishing national parks and monuments are made subject to existing rights, thereby protecting private and local interests.

Answering Mr. Blanchard's other question, fishing is allowed on areas administered by this Service under regulations, but no hunting is permitted under any condition.

Cordially yours,

Arno B. Cammerer,
Director.

JLB:fm
RHW:cjw

cc Mr. Leo Brown

CLARK UNIVERSITY
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

February 12, 1935



Mr. Arno B. Cammerer, Director
National Park Service
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Cammerer:

I have had this matter of the Chilcoot National Park project on my mind for some time, and I am willing to go ahead and do all that I can that is appropriate providing there is any movement started to carry through a bill, or to make any preliminary steps toward the selection of an area and the establishment of a park in southeastern Alaska. I think I have called to your attention one of the very picturesque parts of the country, another real wonderland, and this time one in Alaska that is accessible. I also think that the international idea could be worked out, and that we should have another fine bond of sympathy with the Canadian people by the establishment of adjoining areas on the two sides of Chilcoot Pass as national reservations and a kind of international park.

Anthony J. Dimond is the delegate from Alaska, who should, of course, take an active part in any such project. I suppose with your help he could draw up a bill and introduce it. He thinks the first move should come from the local residents, but I am not convinced of that. I think this project could originate in the National Park Advisory Board, or in the National Park Service. I know Mr. Ickes so well that I have taken the liberty of writing a brief note to him, suggesting the attractive possibility that lies before him of doing something that will be popular, and probably much more pleasant than many of his duties. I have further told him that I have taken this matter up with you more in detail and that Mr. Dimond is also interested and will probably carry out his part.

Under separate cover I am sending you a map on which I have shown in outline the area which I should suggest for the American portion of this park. The eastern half is outlined in red and that would be the minimum area. I have added, with a boundary line in

Mr. Cammerer
Mr. Dimond
Mr. Virth
With
Let's discuss this
with Bryant
Wright
and

Mr. Cammerer

- 2 -

February 13, 1935

pencil, the western half which I think is a very desirable section. Of course the important town sites would have to be excluded, but I understand that virtually all of this land outside of the town sites is now government property. Perhaps the first move which you will want to make, and the only one that you might make this season, would be to provide for an examination of the proposed territory and a reasonably comprehensive report upon the features of the region. You realize, however, that in addition to the scenic and scientific values in this bold, mountain region there is a very interesting chapter in our frontier history recorded here.

I think the title Chilcoot National Park might make quite a strong appeal.

With kindest personal regards, I am

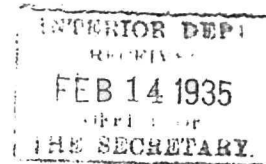
Cordially yours

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Wallace W. Wood". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "W" and a long, horizontal flourish at the end.

CLARK UNIVERSITY
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

February 13, 1935



Hon. Harold L. Ickes
Secretary of the Interior
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Ickes:

I know of a wonderland within our national domain which is, for the most part, public land, which should be set aside as a national park. It is the region surrounding Skagway in Alaska, and I should suggest the title "Chilcoot National Park." From the scenic and scientific standpoints this region measures up to the high standards of our system of national parks, and in addition it has associated with it a very interesting chapter of the frontier history of North America. This is one of the few scenic regions in Alaska that are accessible to the public. Fully ninety per cent of the visitors to Alaska never go farther west than Skagway.

We might persuade the Canadian people to set aside a similar area on the other side of Chilcoot and White Horse passes, and thus make another bond of interest and sympathy with our friends to the north.

I have told Mr. Cammerer about this region. I seem to be one of the few who know of it, and Mr. Cammerer could take hold and put this matter into form. With Mr. Dimond, the delegate from Alaska I suppose a bill could be introduced.

I think the establishment of Chilcoot National Park would be a very popular move and undoubtedly a much pleasanter task than many that you now have.

Sincerely yours

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON



February 18, 1935.

*file
gma*

*0-32
Chilcat
Miss.*

Memorandum for Director Cammerer:

If this territory is as described by Dr. Atwood, why shouldn't we make a national park out of it before anyone else is particularly interested in it for other purposes? Is there anyone in your department who knows anything about this particular territory? Please draft a reply for my signature.

H. Z. P.
Secretary.

Enc: Letter of Feb. 13 from Pres. Wallace W. Atwood, Clark University, Worcester, Mass., re park at Skagway, Alaska.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON
February 28, 1935.

Wm
Please
incorporate
these suggestions
HCB

Memorandum for
DR. BRYANT: *Wm*

Reference is made to Dr. Atwood's proposal for the establishment of a Chilcoot National Park in Alaska.

Draft of letter for Secretary's signature

It is suggested that the word 'examined' in the second paragraph, fourth line, be changed to 'considered', since the reference is to the word merits in the preceding line. The areas would be examined and their comparative merits would then be considered.

Draft of letter for Acting Director's signature

It appears to me that this memorandum as now written would indicate that the Chilcoot Park project meets with our approval, providing certain boundary changes are made. I do not believe this to be the case. The following draft is suggested for your consideration.

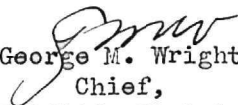
Memorandum for
THE SECRETARY:

Suggested for your signature is the attached draft of reply to Dr. Atwood's letter of February 13, which proposes the establishment of Chilcoot National Park in the vicinity of Skagway, Alaska. Because this proposal would involve the inclusion of one of the five principal cities of Alaska, and of a railroad, within the outside boundaries, thus necessitating an exception to the principles governing the selection of national parks, it is felt that you would not wish to give your approval except on the basis of the existence in this area of some extraordinary values not to be duplicated elsewhere.

Further, this proposal must be considered in its relationship to other national parks and monuments in Alaska, both existing and contemplated. The proposal to enlarge Glacier Bay National Monument to a total area of approximately 1800 square miles as approved by you is now before the Secretary of Agriculture, because of the National Forest lands involved. ^{National} Not more than 15 to 20 miles would separate the boundaries of Glacier Bay Monument and the Chilcoot area.

The Mount St. Elias region not far to the northwest of Glacier Bay National Monument includes some of the most spectacular and beautiful scenery in southeast Alaska. Its merits should be considered before a decision is made on the Chilcoot proposal.

The whole problem of national parks in southeast Alaska will be placed before the Educational Advisory Board when it meets March 18-19.


George M. Wright,
Chief,
Wildlife Division.

cc Wildlife Division, Berkeley
Wildlife Division, Washington

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON



March 1, 1935

Memorandum for
THE SECRETARY:

Suggested for your signature is the attached draft of reply to Doctor Atwood's letter of February 13, which proposes the establishment of Chilkoot National Park in the vicinity of Skagway, Alaska. Because this proposal would involve the inclusion of one of the five principal cities of Alaska, and of a railroad, within the outside boundaries, thus necessitating an exception to the principles governing the selection of national parks, it is felt that you would not wish to give your approval except on the basis of the existence in this area of some extraordinary values not to be duplicated elsewhere.

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The whole problem of national parks in southeast Alaska will be placed before the Educational Advisory Board when it meets March 18-19.

(SGD.) A. E. D. MURRAY

Acting Director.

JLB:-fmd
GMW:LW
CC-Mr. Wirth
Mr. Brown



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

Wright
Rosen
Brown
Walton
Wirth
Bryant
Jennings
Salmon

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE OFFICE COPY

MAR 5 - 1935

Dr. Wallace W. Atwood,
President, Clark University,
Worcester, Massachusetts.

My dear Doctor Atwood:

I have received your letter of February 13, recommending that the Chilkoot region in Alaska be set aside as a national park.

This proposal is receiving study by the National Park Service of this Department. Many factors are involved and comparative merits of other areas must be examined before a decision is reached.

A meeting of the Educational Advisory Board is to be called for March 18-19 and I am suggesting that your proposal be discussed at that time.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd.) Harold L. Ickes

Secretary of the Interior.

JLB-fmd
MFS
HCB:LW

CC Mr. Wirth
Mr. Brown

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON



April 3, 1935.

Memorandum for
MR. CAMMERER:

Reference is made to your memorandum of March 30, attached. I can answer your first question by explaining that the Chilcoot National Park, proposed by Dr. Atwood, takes in the country immediately around Skagway to the east and north of Glacier Bay National Monument, whereas the Mount St. Elias range is on the coast of the Gulf of Alaska, some distance to the west of Glacier Bay National Monument. Therefore, they are altogether separate and distinct areas.

From the personal knowledge that I have of this region, I incline to look with disfavor upon the Chilcoot National Park project. Involved in the park would be such developments as the Alaska-Yukon Railroad and the town of Skagway. Other areas in southeastern Alaska, the Mount St. Elias range, for example, are wilder and more spectacular. However, Dr. Bryant tells me that at the recent Advisory Board meeting Dr. Atwood, Dr. Oastler and myself were appointed on a special committee to investigate the merits of the Chilcoot project.

It is noted with interest that the St. Elias range could be set aside as a national monument without special investigation from this office, as was done in the case of Katmai National Monument.

If Mr. Vint goes to Mount McKinley National Park this summer, he might give special attention to the Mount St. Elias proposition. Of course, Joe Dixon, of the Wildlife Division, has seen the range many times, though I do not recall off-hand whether or not he ever spent any considerable time on land in that immediate vicinity.

For some time I have thought we should take advantage of the first opportunity to investigate the Territory of Alaska as a whole, in order to have the proper background for considering the projects which are proposed for this Territory from time to time. We should not be open to inferences of lack of proper background and investigation, as have recently been made by the Forest Service in opposing your recommendation for Glacier Bay National Monument. We must find out for once and for all what areas in Alaska could

I don't like to put Vint on it. I would prefer to have a special committee to go out there and find out for once and for all what areas in Alaska could be set aside as national monuments.

be considered as either acceptable or desirable for incorporation in the National Park system. Both a biologist and a geologist should be included in the personnel of such a party.

Mr. Darling is very anxious to discuss problems of mutual interest in Alaska, and I am meeting with him this week for this purpose.

Gmw
George M. Wright,
Chief,
Wildlife Division.

P.S. Tugwell's 'thumbs down' on Glacier Bay extension is attached hereto. What reply would you like to make?

*It doesn't
kill it - just
suggests
further study.*

*Handbook
Chowder,
→ PHJ*

cc Wildlife Division, Berkeley
Wildlife Division, Washington

Was any action taken at the meeting on March 18-19, 1935 by the Educational Advisory Board? There seems to be no record of any. *I don't know.*
Is there need for any further action on this area?

WEL *No.*
1-31-40 *BH*
1