



The Oasis



A Model For The Ages

On June 6, 1936, Robert Fechner, Director of Work for the Civilian Conservation Corps, and Conrad Wirth, Assistant Director of the National Park Service toured Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area (RDA), known today as Prince William Forest Park. Chopawamsic was their brainchild - a model recreation area with easy access to Washington, DC that provided overnight recreation for impoverished youth. It was relief through recreation. RDAs would not be the vast, awe-inspiring landscapes of Yosemite and Grand Canyon, but in their quiet woods and trickling streams, all Americans could afford to vacation in nature's palace.

Behind the games and crafts, campfires and woodworking, a social agenda for wellness took shape. At the Mess Hall, nutrition was closely supervised as the National Park Service did its part to fight childhood malnutrition. At the Camp Infirmary, nurses and doctors weighed each child as they came to camp and when they left, hoping to find weight gain and greater health. Sanitation was closely inspected and great thought was given to ventilation and healthy activities. At one camp, single mothers and their 'tots' were taught child rearing skills and nutrition.

In 1937, "The Nation's Finest Camp for Negro Youth" took root in the soils of the Chopawamsic. Camp Lichtman belonged to the ground-breaking All-African American 12th St Y.M.C.A. of Washington DC. The opportunity to take part in a "character building camp experience" was made possible from the generous support of Abe Lichtman, a Jewish man and major theater magnate in Washington, DC. His generosity made standardized camping for African American boys a reality. He expanded the camp by moving it from its former location at the George Washington National Forest to Camp 1 at the Chopawamsic RDA.

For a small fee, Camp Litchman offered the boys instruction in a myriad of activities such as crafts, woodworking, swimming, fencing, and photography, and provided them with new

experiences that would last a lifetime. The camp provided a full-time physician and cooks to provide "scientifically supervised" menus, something not easy to come by during the hard times of the Depression. The boys learned good sportsmanship as they played baseball, ping pong, basketball, and

checkers, in competitions between camp units. They planned hiking routes and cooked their own meals at the campsite. Many youngsters restored their health, found their voices, and made lifelong friends.

As our nation left behind its fight against the Great Depression, it joined the new national fight of World War Two. Chopawamsic joined the war effort by becoming the Advanced Special Operations

and Communications training schools for the fledgling Office of Strategic Services. The OSS was America's first centralized intelligence agency and the foundation of today's Special Forces. At Chopawamsic, the art of spying and enemy infiltration was honed in the same cabins and play fields that once held the laughter of children.

Today Chopawamsic, known since 1948 at Prince William Forest Park, welcomes visitors into a 75-year legacy of serving our citizens. Escape, explore and experience this oasis in all of its quiet beauty.



Superintendent's Message

Vidal Martinez,
Superintendent



It is my pleasure to welcome you to Prince William Forest Park during our 75th Anniversary celebration.

In 2009, when I became the Park Superintendent, I was intrigued by the untold stories of this special place. I am proud to share with you the profound history of this site as a national model for the Recreational Demonstration Area (RDA) program.

RDAs were developed to meet the needs of a nation in economic turmoil. Federal, state, and local governments worked with non-governmental organizations to bring recreation areas to the doorstep of all Americans.

Here, at Chopawamsic RDA, development focused on organized group recreation for children. Health and outdoor play was our focus.

Today, the children of the 'Great Recession' need places for healthy outdoor recreation just as much as their Great Depression counterparts.

Enjoy your visit to Prince William Forest Park, the perfect place to escape, explore, and experience.

Read about
our partner
in celebration
on the other
side of this
newspaper.





National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Prince William Forest Park

75 years ago, Prince William Forest Park first opened its doors to the public as Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area. Chopawamsic was developed as the 'model' for organized group recreation sites around the nation.

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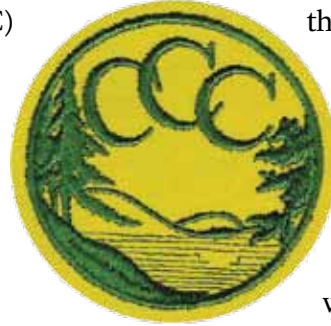
The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

The Vanguard of a New Spirit

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) transformed many of the men who entered its service. A generation that knew only joblessness and hopelessness found purpose in building the infrastructure of America's parks. In 1933, President Roosevelt devoted one of his fireside chats to the men of the CCC. He said,

"Men of the Civilian Conservation Corps - you nearly 300,000 strong - are evidence that the nation is still strong enough and broad enough to look after its citizens. You are evidence that we are seeking to get away as fast as we possibly can from the soup kitchens and free rations. Through you, the nation will graduate a fine group of strong young men, clean-living, trained to self-discipline, and above all, willing and proud to work for the joy of working. It is time for each and every one of us to cast away self-destroying, nation destroying efforts to get something for nothing, and to appreciate that satisfying reward and safe reward that comes through honest work. That must be the new spirit of the American future. You are the Vanguard of that new spirit."

At Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area (RDA), over 2,000 men of the Civilian Conservation Corps found honest work building the cabins, roads, dams and infrastructure of



the park. First to arrive were the men of Company 1374, Camp SP-22. Company 1374 worked from May of 1935 to 1939 building Cabin Camps 1 and 4. Company 2349 was established in Camp SP25 in July of 1935 and worked on Cabin Camps 2 and 5 until March of 1938. Co. 2349 was known across the CCC for excelling in academic instruction, vocational classes and sport and hobby competitions, as well as for its parties, sing-a-longs, and weekly stunt night. Co. 2383 arrived in August of 1935 and stayed at Chopawamsic into the early days of the occupation of the park by the Office of Strategic Services in 1942. Company 2383 constructed Cabin Camp 3 and many of the guard houses, shooting ranges, and outbuildings used by the OSS.

In each of these companies, daily life revolved around U.S. Army overseers who woke the companies to reveille, and organized uniforms, supplies, and exercise routines around Army standards. The work however, was supervised and directed by the National Park Service. The all-white companies of CCC boys of Chopawamsic, worked alongside their racially-integrated Works Progress Administration (WPA) counterparts. Together they built Chopawamsic from the ground up and transformed themselves in the process.



Joe Hebda

For the Chopawamsic CCC camps, no one better exemplified the 'new spirit' of the CCC better than Joe Hebda. His life story could have, in a large part, been written by the designers of the CCC. He embodies all they hoped would come from the program.

Joe Hebda was born as the eldest of nine children in July of 1914 in Everson, PA. He left home at the age of 14 to find work to help support his family. In 1934, at the age of 19, he joined the CCC. In 1935, he joined Company 2349 at Camp SP-25 in Joplin, Virginia. There he met, and later married, Thelma, a local girl.

Joe stayed with the CCC until 1938 when he joined the United States navy and proudly served in World War II with Construction Battalion 59.

In July of 1949, Joe went to work for



the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service at Chopawamsic National Capital Park (known today as Prince William Forest Park). In August of 1979, after 30 years of service to Prince William Forest Park, Joe Hebda retired as the Chief of Maintenance; a job that he loved.

The life of Joe Hebda and the life of Prince William Forest Park are inextricably intertwined. The park and country are indebted to him and to all members of the CCC for their service. Joe passed away in 2007 and is buried at Quantico National Cemetery, next to Thelma.



Anniversary Events

May, 1935

The First CCC Company arrives at Chopawamsic RDA.

July, 1936

The first kids from Washington, DC arrive at Chopawamsic.

1937

The All-African American 'Camp Lichtman' operated its first boys Camp at Chopawamsic.

1940

Chopawamsic RDA is renamed Chopawamsic National Capital Park.

April, 1942

Chopawamsic National Capital Park becomes OSS Training Areas A (special operations) and C (communications).

1948

Chopawamsic National Capital Park is renamed Prince William Forest Park.

June, 1989

4 of the 5 historic cabin camps are nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

December 2002

The Cabin Branch Pyrite Mine is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

2008

The park hosts the 75th anniversary of the CCC with 15 original CCC alumni.



Summer Interpretive Programs

Throughout the park

Fridays & Saturdays through Labor Day

Enjoy a guided hike with a ranger, engaging campfire program, a spooky cemetery hike, or Saturday morning craft hour.

75th Anniversary Camp-Out!

Cabin Camp 2

Saturday, July 9

Join us on this special weekend when we open a historic cabin camp for the public. Eat at the mess hall, make nature crafts in the craft cabin, boat on the lake, and join us around the campfire... just like old times.

Chopawamsic Cycle Challenge 2011

Park roads

Sunday, September 11

Challenge yourself on this 14-mile on- and off-road bicycle ride through Prince William Forest Park. Sponsored by the Friends of Prince William Forest Park, this event is a great way to become familiar with the park and its friends group. For more information, visit the Friends' website at www.fpwfp.org.

Marine Corps Marathon

Park roads

September 17

The 11-mile (17.75k) distance is unique to the MCM Event Series and commemorates the year in which the USMC was founded and runs through Prince William Forest Park. Major road closures and disruptions will occur throughout the park.

National Public Lands Day

Saturday, September 24

NPLD is the nation's largest hands-on volunteer effort to improve and enhance our public lands. In 2009, 150,000 volunteers built trails and bridges, removed trash and invasive plants, planted trees and restored our water resources. Join us for the next NPLD in Prince William Forest Park to make your contribution.

Heritage Festival

Saturday, October 15

Come see the history through the trees and celebrate our shared local heritage with music, craft demonstrations, kids' activities and more. Learn about the early farm families of Prince William Forest Park and travel the route that General George Washington and his troops took to win the battle of Yorktown.

The Haunted Campground

Saturday, October 29

Reserve a campsite today and begin to plan your scare-tastic setup! Prizes awarded for best campsite decoration, best scary story, and best costume. Don't want to setup? Bring your family out to hike from site to site then vote on who should win first prize!

Happy 75th Birthday Celebration

November 12

Dance to the sound of the big bands in the historic OSS Theatre. Birthday cake, historic photos and speaker will highlight this old fashion birthday celebration.



Escape. Explore. Experience.

PRINCE WILLIAM FOREST PARK AND CATOCTIN MOUNTAIN PARK were both created by the same New Deal legislation on November 12, 1936. Over the past 75 years, the parks have shared many common stories. Both are stunning examples of this conservation miracle, with the regrowth of the forest and the reappearance of bears, orchids, and even freshwater sponges. Both have demonstrated how outdoor recreation can save us from poverty - in an economic and spiritual sense. These parks were created as Recreational Demonstration Areas to be given to the states. Seventy-five years later we remain in the protection of the National Park Service, so we are celebrating together our proud accomplishments.



Look for 75th-anniversary commemorative items in our cooperating association's sales areas.

The Demonstration Succeeds

Jennifer Miller, Park Ranger, Cunningham Falls State Park

Cunningham Falls State Park in Maryland is a great example of the RDA program's success.

It is almost impossible to imagine the landscape where Cunningham Falls State Park now exists as being anything but picturesque. But less than 100 years ago, the sky was thick with a sulfurous smoke, much of the forest was clear cut for the third time in its history, and the streams were choked with eroded soil and debris from over logging. The degradation was done in the name of the Catoctin Iron Furnace. Today, the remains of the Furnace and Iron Master's Manor House still stand as a reminder of past progress and industrial ingenuity. These remains also symbolize the power of conservation and renewal.

Mark Maas, Cunningham Falls Park Manager, noted the 75th Anniversary of the creation of the Catoctin Recreational Demonstration Area by the National Park Service, saying, "By joining with Catoctin Mountain Park in their celebration, the management and staff of Cunningham Falls State Park honors our common history and shared heritage of natural resource preservation and public service."

The Recreational Demonstration Areas

Recreational Demonstration Areas (RDA) exemplified the success of the New Deal. The National Park Service transformed struggling lands and communities nation-wide into recreational paradises. It was an idea ahead of its time, yet just in time for a nation in need.

The RDA program created or enlarged 46 parks across the nation. The federal government partnered with state, educational, nonprofit, and local organizations to develop the land. Public works programs such as the CCC and WPA played an essential role.

The NPS turned most of these areas over to the states. They became models for continued development of public recreational facilities. Now dozens of state parks and their gateway communities can reap the rewards of our investment in this "human crop."



Eighteen years after the Mountain Tract purchase was made to reclaim the damaged land, the National Park Service presented the title to 4,446.8 acres to Maryland Governor Theodore McKeldin for inclusion in the Maryland State Park System on June 11, 1954. The area was named Cunningham Falls State Park after a local photographer who frequently took pictures of the park's treasured cascading McAfee Falls.

The park has welcomed in excess of 275,000 visitors annually ever since. Remains of the Catoctin Iron Furnace can still be visited in the Manor Area of the park, which also offers a Scales & Tales Aviary, recycled tire playground, and campground. The William Houck Area, located across from Catoctin Mountain Park, offers swimming, fishing, boating, camping, picnicking, and hiking opportunities. The land

that was once scarred is now home to a young, growing, and diverse forest that supports a multitude of life and serves as a gateway for many visitors to the natural world.



Not for Kids Only

Make your own park!
Use the model below to make your dream park.

First give your park a name.

Draw some roads and trails.

Use these symbols to show where you would put:

 Campgrounds

 Picnic Areas

 Ranger Station

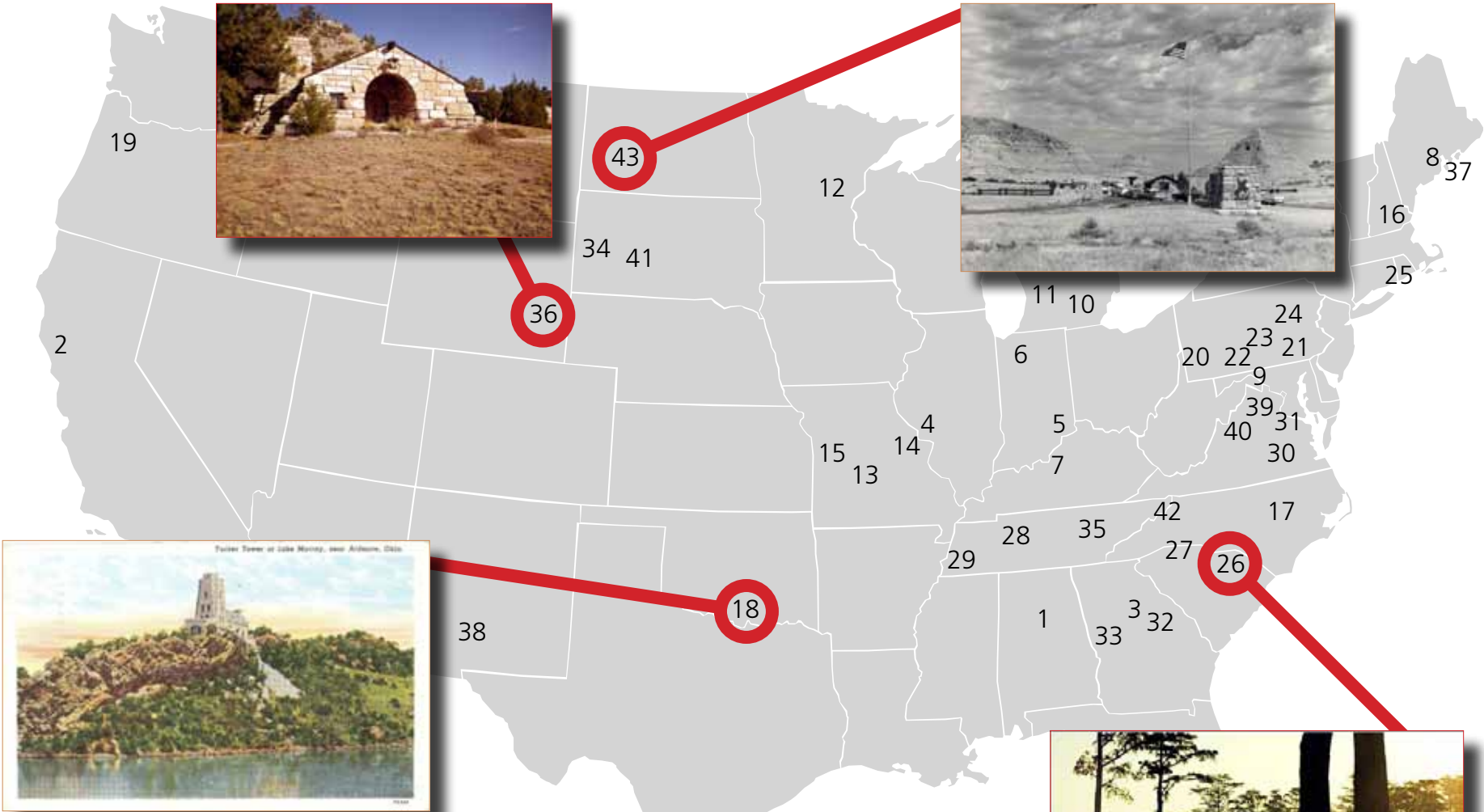
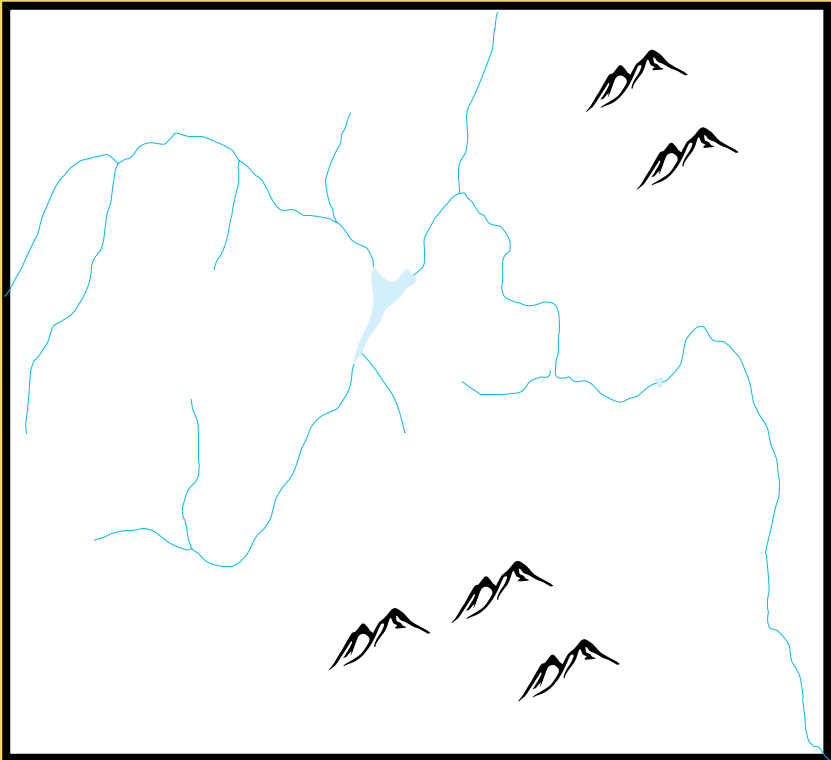
 Swimming

 Bicycling

 Rock Climbing

Make your own symbols for other activities and facilities.

Park Name



Recreational Demonstration Areas Across the USA

Areas in green are still associated with the National Park Service.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 Oak Mountain | 16 Bear Brook | 31 Chopawamsic |
| 2 Mendocino | 17 Crabtree Creek | 32 Alex H. Stephens |
| 3 Hard Labor Creek | 18 Lake Murray | 33 Pine Mountain |
| 4 Pere Marquette | 19 Silver Creek | 34 Custer Park |
| 5 Versailles | 20 Raccoon Creek | 35 Falls Creek |
| 6 Winamac | 21 French Creek | 36 Lake Guernsey |
| 7 Otter Creek | 22 Laurel Hill | 37 Acadia NP |
| 8 Camden | 23 Blue Knob | 38 White Sands NM |
| 9 Catoctin | 24 Hickory Run | 39 Manassas NB |
| 10 Waterloo | 25 Beach Pond | 40 Shenandoah NP |
| 11 Yankee Springs | 26 Cheraw | 41 Badlands NP |
| 12 Saint Croix | 27 Kings Mountain | 42 Blue Ridge Parkway |
| 13 Lake of the Ozarks | 28 Montgomery Bell | 43 Theodore Roosevelt NP |
| 14 Cuivre River | 29 Shelby Forest | |
| 15 Montserrat | 30 Swift Creek | |

