

Because of the very fact that in the Parks, as well as in the Forests, considerations of economics and of direct human enjoyment must both be carefully weighed in reaching decisions, and because the physical problems are much the same in both, the fundamental difference in the points of view which should control the management of the National Parks and that of the National Forests can be safely maintained only by keeping them under separate administration.

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THE FOREST SERVICE AND THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL BEAUTY

The administration of the National Forests is under the charge of the Department of Agriculture, of which the Forest Service is a part, while the administration of the National Parks is in the Department of the Interior. More than ten years ago, jurisdiction over the National Forests was transferred from the Department of the Interior to the Department of Agriculture, in order to make possible the application of specialized and technical knowledge to the problems of timber and forage production and utilization and to those of water conservation. Experience had proved that the Department of the Interior, whose functions in connection with public land matters are principally those related to the disposal of the lands, rather than to their control and development as permanent public resources, was not well equipped for the constructive work necessary in order to open the forests to wide use while safeguarding them against abuse. Consequently the transfer was made by Congress, on the repeated recommendation of the Secretary of the Interior and the Commissioner of the General Land Office. These officials pointed out that the Department of Agriculture was best fitted to grapple with the underlying administrative problems, since these related to the use of the soil in the production of what are essentially crops—timber and forage—and in the adaptation of the methods

employed to the needs of those who use the water derived from the forests.

Primarily, therefore, the National Forests are administered with a view to obtaining from them certain essential material products. From the outset, however, it has been recognized that public ownership differs from private ownership in that it permits and demands recognition of every form of public usefulness of which the forests are capable. The private owner of a piece of timberland handles it in whatever way he believes will enable him to get most out of the timber. What the effect of his action may be on the purity and regularity of streams, on wild life, on natural scenery, or on any other kind of matter which does not personally affect him, is no concern of his. But the Government is a trustee for all the people, and must seek to secure the largest possible net total of public benefits of all kinds. Therefore, in administering the National Forests the interest of the public in the recreation resource involved—already of large importance, and destined to be of steadily increasing importance—must be taken account of and intelligently provided for.

In providing for recreation use of the National Forests and the protection of notable scenic features, the Forest Service approaches the field of work of the Department of the Interior, in its National Park administration. To a large extent the National Parks have been created by setting aside for this purpose portions of the National Forests. Such portions have been selected because they possessed scenic attractions of so extraordinary a kind as to make them worthy of the care of the nation, on the ground of their national importance, and to justify closing the door to material development of the resources involved, in order to protect the paramount interests of the public in the scenic features. Thus the distinction between National Park administration and National Forest administration is a definite one, although National Forest includes for one of its purposes that which forms the sole purpose of National Park Administration. National Parks are areas where

economic considerations can be practically excluded. Without this distinction the two forms of administration would cover precisely the same field.*

Since public use of the National Parks involves expenditures by the Government to make them accessible and to provide for their care and protection, only areas which are a matter of interest to the country as a whole should be made National Parks. Our National Parks include such wonderful and unique things as are found in the Yosemite, the Yellowstone, Glacier Park, and Crater Lake. The National Forests, covering as they do the principal mountain regions of the West, contain not hundreds but thousands of places of great natural beauty and local importance from the recreation standpoint. In some cases, already it has been found that the local importance of recreation use of limited areas was so great that it should be recognized as paramount, and that economic use of the land for timber production, grazing, or even agriculture, should be excluded or subordinated. Wherever it appears that productive use for the supply of strictly economic needs will conflict with recreation use, and that recreation use is the highest use for the particular area involved, the Forest Service plans accordingly.

One example of the application of this principle is furnished by the action of the Secretary of Agriculture in classifying as chiefly valuable for purposes of public recreation 13,873 acres of land on the northern edge of the Oregon National Forest, near the Columbia River Scenic Highway. This Highway has recently been built at a large cost, by the City of Portland and by the counties concerned, through the gorge cut by the Columbia River across the main divide of the Cascades. It is one of the chief attractions of the Northwest, and it eminently deserves that the Forest Service coöperate in providing for its enjoyment by the largest possible number, and in largest measure. Therefore, no timber within the area classified by the Secretary of Agriculture as chiefly valuable for recreation purposes will be cut; no exclusive occupancy of

*See the distinction between National Parks and National Forests, page 114.

any portion of the land by any one permittee will be authorized, but all portions will be alike open to the general public; and in all respects the administration of the land by the Federal Government will have in view the most intelligent provisions for this recognizedly dominant form of public interest.

Another example is in a portion of the Cleveland National Forest in southern California, which affords an opportunity for summer homes accessible to the people of the Imperial Valley. The need of these people for a convenient place of resort from the summer heat of the valley is such that an area on the Cleveland Forest has been closed, for their benefit, against any timber cutting or agricultural settlement. Road development to enable them to reach this area will be made by the Government in coöperation with the settlers in the valley, and land will be leased to them for the building of summer homes.

Already there are thousands of individuals who have sought and obtained authorization from the Forest Service for the use of National Forest lands as a place of summer residence. Some of these applicants are provided for through issuing permits allowing the use of a plot of ground, at a nominal charge. In other cases term leases are given. But, in any case, a careful provision is made for the most wide-spread use of the resource. Where a limited amount of desirable land is in demand, or is likely to be soon in demand, by any considerable number of people, the land is subdivided so as take care of as many people as possible, in the best way possible.

Throughout the National Forests the development of means of transportation and communication, through the construction of trails, roads, and other facilities for the use of the forests by the public, is being pressed as fast as the available funds permit. The National Forest force is expected to render all the help that it can to those who go on the forest for recreation. More than one and a half million people are now visiting the National Forests each year for recreation purposes, and this form of use is rapidly increasing. Great as is the economic

importance of the National Forests as sources of timber supply, water-supply, and forage production, it is not improbable that their value as playgrounds for the public will in time come to rank as one of the major resources. The Forest Service is giving due consideration to this fact. It has definitely aimed to foresee what the public needs in this respect will require, and to plan accordingly, as well as to provide for the public needs of the present.

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THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS AND OUR NATIONAL PARKS

In considering the question of our National Parks The American Society of Landscape Architects has principally before it these two problems: First, the conservation of the primeval landscape beauty of the National Park areas unimpaired for the generations to come, and second, the increasing of the public's facilities for the enjoyment of this beauty. The value of the first to man is greatly increased by the second. The value of the second without the first is *nil*. Without the utmost skill and care,—yes, without the utmost reverence for the natural beauty of the areas—coupled with experience in the adaptation of artificial structures to natural topography so that they shall seem as near as may be to be a part of the whole,—the accomplishment of the second purpose will almost surely defeat the first. For both these purposes we need, first, a safe and sane administration backed by the popular will. But for the second, and for the first also, we need to have that safe and sane administration make fullest possible use of wise expert professional counsel.

Let me now go on record as believing that the surpassing beauty of our National Parks is neither safe, nor will be made enjoyable, for the maximum number of people with the minimum of injury to that landscape beauty, unless the administration of the National Park areas employs the best expert counsel it can secure in the profession of Landscape Architecture, and that this is needed for four principal purposes: