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# ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY

# SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

1924-1976



by

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B&W Scans

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# Shenandoah National Park

## Administrative History

## 1924 - 1976

by Darwin Lambert

Luray, Virginia
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# Chronology

(The time order of the text is necessarily disconnected or overlapping here and there because the chapters are designed to focus main subjects for meaningful linking while most in the spotlight.)

| | | See Chap. No. |
|---|---|---|
| 1894 | George Freeman Pollock starts Stony Man Camp (Skyland) | 1 |
| ✓1921 | ✓ Appalachian Trail proposed by Benton MacKaye | 1 |
| 1924 | Shenandoah Valley, Inc., formed for regional promotion | 1 |
| | NPS asks for an Appalachian national park | 1 |
| | Secretary of the Interior names committee to find a site | 2 |
| | Northern Virginia Park Association formed | 2 |
| | Secretary's committee recommends Shenandoah (and Great Smoky) | 2 |
| 1925 GMP | ✓ Congress authorizes land-money study for possible parks | 2 |
| | National leaders in park field gather in conference at Skyland | 3 |
| | SNPA Inc. formed to get pledges for Shenandoah land fund | 3 |
| | Three-state group plans national fund drive for two parks | 3 |
| 1926 | SNPA Inc. reports $1,249,154 pledged for buying Shenandoah land | 3 |
| GMP | ✓ Congress authorizes Shenandoah (and Smoky) if land donated | 3 |
| | Virginia Commission on Conservation and Development created with park as main project and Wm. E. Carson as chairman | 4 |
| 1927 | Potomac Appalachian Trail Club formed, partly to foster park | 4 |
| | "Cammerer Line" drawn as boundary for smaller "feasible" park | 4 |
| 1928 GMP | ✓ Congress reduces minimum acreage for Shenandoah to 327,000 | 4 |
| | Three-state association collapses without raising any funds | 4 |
| | Virginia legislature appropriates $1 million for park land, passes "National Park" and "Blanket Condemnation" acts | 4 |
| 1929 | ✓ "Summer White House" (Camp Hoover) established on Rapidan | 4 |
| 1931 | ✓ Skyline Drive construction started as "drought relief project" | 5 |
| 1932 GMP | ✓ Congress reduces minimum acreage for Shenandoah to 160,000 | 4 |
| 1933 | Shenandoah park project office (ECW-CCC) set up in rented space at Luray, Va., with J.R. Lassiter as engineer-in-charge | 6 |
| | CCC brings hundreds of men to live and work in proposed park | 6 |
| | President Roosevelt visits CCC camps and projects in park area | 6 |
| 1934 | ✓ Virginia acquires minimum land and delivers deeds to U.S. | 4 |
| | Skyline Drive (central section) opened to public with much travel | 5 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1935 | Wilderness Society is organized, largely to fight skyline drives | 7 |
| | ✓ Supreme Court case delays U.S. acceptance of park lands | 6 |
| | Forcible eviction of family from park area shocks public | 6 |
| | ✓ Supreme Court affirms condemnation, so Secretary Ickes accepts park land, thus establishing park | 6 |
| 1936 | First rangers and other NPS-paid employees come on duty | 6, 8 |
| | ✓ FDR dedicates Shenandoah National Park (at Big Meadows) | 6 |
| | James R. Lassiter becomes park's first superintendent (serves until 1941) | 6 |
| | Shenandoah Nature Society organized to aid interpretive experiment | 12 |
| | North section of Skyline Drive opened to public | 5 |
| | PATC tries to keep Skyline Drive off park's south section | 7 |
| | PATC authorized to operate locked cabins for park hikers | 7 |
| | Resettlement Administration budgets $1,520,219 to create "homesteads" outside park for mountain folk | 9 |
| 1937 | Virginia Sky-Line Co., Inc., becomes park concessioner | 10 |
| | NPS takes over "exclusive" police jurisdiction on park lands | 8 |
| | First permanent campground for public (Big Meadows) opened | 6 |
| | Shenandoah visitation exceeds one million a year (first time in any national park) | 5, 10 |
| 1938 | Main exodus of park residents (started 1937) is completed | 9 |
| | Lewis Mountain developed to serve Negroes only | 10 |
| 1939 | Park entrance fee inaugurated--and vigorously protested | 6, 10 |
| | Big Meadows Lodge, built by concessioner, opened to public | 10 |
| | FDR vetoes congressional resolution demanding road openings | 6 |
| 1940 | Park headquarters moves from rented building in Luray to new stone structures on US 211 at park's edge | 6, 15 |
| 1941 | Supt. Lassiter ousted by Ickes in race-relations crisis | 10 |
| 1942 | Edward D. Freeland becomes park's second superintendent (serves until 1950) | 11 |
| | Park concessions closed by World War II slump in visitation | 11 |
| | CCC closed out and CPS (conscientious objectors) occupies former camp of CCC at Pinnacles | 11 |
| 1943 | Park visitation lowest in history, 42,000 for the year (most drastic drop of any national park) | 11 |
| 1946 | Concessioner threatens to drop contract rather than accept full racial integration | 11 |
| 1947 | Benton MacKaye and associates help create (maybe world's first) "environmental" nature trail. | 12 |
| 1948 | Shenandoah's first park naturalist comes on duty | 12 |
| | Skyland dining hall burns (park's worst building fire through 1978) | 8 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1950 | Guy D. Edwards becomes Shenandoah's third superintendent (serves until 1958) | 11 |
| | All park facilities reported racially integrated at last | 11 |
| | Shenandoah Natural History Association organized | 12 |
| 1952 | New 20-year contract negotiated with park concessioner | 11 |
| 1955 | Visitation exceeds a million and a half a year | 11 |
| | Mission 66 planning foreshadows much development including visitor centers (also people-in-nature view of park's mission) | 11, 12 |
| 1956 | Natural gas line forced across park despite NPS resistance | 11 |
| 1958 | R. Taylor Hoskins becomes Shenandoah's fourth superintendent (serves until 1972) | 12 |
| 1960 | 30-year contract negotiated with concessioner to speed building of more facilities | 12 |
| 1961 | Blue Ridge Parkway between Jarman and Rockfish gaps added by Congress to Shenandoah (previously administered by Shenandoah) | 13 |
| | Work starts to augment park water supplies (from springs) by drilling wells | 12 |
| 1963 | Nucleus of Camp Hoover preserved as historic | 12 |
| 1966 | Major land-and-boundary legislation dies with death of Sen. Byrd | 13 |
| 1967 | Harry F. Byrd (Sr.) Visitor Center, Big Meadows, dedicated | 12, 15 |
| | All-out effort to straighten and shorten park boundary fails | 13 |
| | NPS proposes designation of wilderness in park, holds hearing | 14 |
| 1969 | "Environmental education" with National ESAs launched | 12 |
| 1971 | International conglomerate (ARA) buys control of concession firm | 14 |
| 1972 | Robert R. Jacobsen becomes Shenandoah's fifth superintendent | 14 |
| 1973 | New basic "general management planning" begins | 14 |
| | Many "special uses" of park lands eliminated | 14 |
| 1974 | New policy disperses backcountry camping throughout park | 14 |
| 1975 | New planning suspended to avoid jeopardizing wilderness designation by Congress | 14 |
| | New bear management policy inaugurated | 14 |
| 1976 | Annual Shenandoah Research Symposium launched | 14 |
| | Construction begins on $7-million wastewater treatment program (five plants to be built) | 14 |
| ✓ | Congress puts large areas of park in National Wilderness Preservation System (and new basic planning for future resumes) | 14 |

## Initials Used

AP - Associated Press

A.T. or A-T - Appalachian Trail

ATC - Appalachian Trail Conference

BPR - U.S. Bureau of Public Roads

CCC - U.S. Civilian Conservation Corps

C of C - Chamber of Commerce
CPS - U.S. Civilian Public Service (conscientious objectors)
CWA - U.S. Civil Works Administration

ECW - Emergency Conservation Work (arm of CCC providing expertize and supervision for conservation projects, usually working under established federal or state agencies, such as NPS)

ESA - Environmental Study Area (federal designation)

FDR - President Franklin Delano Roosevelt

FERA - Federal Emergency Relief Administration

FSA - U.S. Farm Security Administration

FSHC - Federal Subsistence Homestead Corporation

HEW - U. S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare

GPO - U.S. Government Printing Office

NAACP - National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

NPS - National Park Service (U.S. Dept. of the Interior)

NVPA - Northern Virginia Park Association

PATC - Potomac Appalachian Trail Club

PL or P.L. - Public Law (Act of Congress)

PWA - U.S. Public Works Administration

RA - U.S. Resettlement Administration

RD - Recreational Demonstration (federally funded project)

SANPC - Southern Appalachian National Park Committee (1924)
Southern Appalachian National Park Commission (1925-31)

SNHA - Shenandoah Natural History Association, Inc.

SNP - Shenandoah National Park

SNPA Inc. - Shenandoah National Park Association, Inc.

SV Inc. - Shenandoah Valley, Inc. (regional C of C)

USFS - U.S. Forest Service

USGS - U.S. Geological Survey

VFS - Virginia Forest Service

VPI - Virginia Polytechnic Institute

WPA - U.S. Works Progress Administration

WPB - U.S. War Production Board

# Contents


| Chapter No. | | Manuscript Page No. |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Converging Streams<br>. . . Shenandoah's seminal meaning as first great park to be "re-created" . . . pre-park history condensed, Indians, White exploration, settlement, exploitation . . . early pleasuring places including Pollock's camp on Stony Man (1889, 1894, later Skyland) . . . conservation urges for southern Appalachians bring national forests and ultimately lead NPS to ask for eastern parks . . . Appalachian Trail advocated by Benton MacKaye . . . Shenandoah Valley organizes for active "boosterism" (Jan. 1924). | 1 |
| 2 | Blitz for Discovery<br>. . . Interior Secretary Work creates committee (Feb. 1924) to find park site . . . SV Inc. recommends national forest lands for national park . . . Pollock and friends suggest Skyland and vicinity, stressing scenery and "virgin forests" . . . Pollock and valley boosters collide, then join, as park committeemen are impressed by Shenandoah Blue Ridge and plan further exploration (though preferring Great Smoky) . . . committee recommends Shenandoah first (more accessible) followed by Smoky . . . Shenandoah-Smoky competition heats up until (Feb. 1925) Congress passes bill encouraging both at once. | 17 |
| 3 | "Buy an Acre at $6"<br>. . . federal commission spars with problem of raising non-federal money to buy park land until in May 1925 Virginia idea emerges in big gathering of U.S. park leaders at Skyland . . . Virginians form association to solicit pledges for park fund . . . Smoky leaders fight Virginia plan, but "peace" is negotiated with idea for national drive to follow state drives . . . Virginia drive starts, lags, revives, and finally reports $1\frac{1}{4}$ million pledged . . . though pledges far short of goal Virginia plans state agency to condemn needed land . . . in May 1926 Congress authorizes Shenandoah park (and Smoky) conditional on vast areas being donated to the United States. | 39 |

4 Virginia Tackles the Impossible 61

. . . Wm. E. Carson, named by Gov. Harry F. Byrd in 1926 to head new state agency, is shocked by park proposal and problems as he probes details--but starts effort anyway . . . area's qualifications questioned as federal and state leaders disagree on procedures . . . state starts collecting pledges and mapping needed lands while Virginians argue over desirability of park . . . Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (organized at Washington in 1927) and New York interests give moral support . . . state-gathered facts overwhelm reluctant Secretary Work and win reduction of minimum area to 327,000-acre "Cammerer Line" . . . Virginia legislature appropriates $1 million and strengthens state laws to get land, but "peace" group for national drive collapses, leaving Carson and NPS's Cammerer to seek donations personally . . . "blanket condemnation" law faces tests in state courts . . . Carson promotes "summer White House" and wins President Hoover's support that extends to drastic "saw-toothing" for stretching land funds . . . state courts affirm condemnation law, but many Virginians are displeased, some urging state park instead of national . . . Congress reduces Shenandoah minimum area to 160,000 acres . . . thousands of residents in proposed area recognized as problem . . . condemnation proceeds and deeds for minimum area are delivered by Virginia in 1934, but U.S. Supreme Court accepts case attacking constitutionality.

5 Herbert Hoover and Skyline Drive 99

. . . Skyline Drive precedes and "rivals" park . . . President instructs NPS director--on horseback ride in 1930--to speed survey and construction . . . genesis of skyline idea traced to Appalachian Trail pioneers . . . Carson has promoted drive along with a Rapidan entrance to park and helps NPS and Hoover work through teasing financial labyrinth and clinch "drought relief" funds for central section contracts in 1931 . . . work goes fast on ridgecrest route with Marys Rock tunnel, while Rapidan entrance wins and loses favor and public is made Skyline-conscious by publicity throughout East and sneak preview of unfinished road . . . northern and southern sections follow inexorably, and Carson promotes further skyline roads including Blue Ridge Parkway . . . Skyline Drive visits exceed a half-million a year before national park is established in Dec. 1935.

6 FDR and the CCC 122

. . . President inspects unfinished Skyline Drive and park area while creating CCC in 1933 . . . NPS quickly sets up staff with ECW funding--J.R. Lassiter, engineer-in-charge (later superintendent)--to supervise a thousand CCC "boys" in park area, and FDR visits to check on projects and welfare of "boys" . . . FDR's direct participation confuses park land acquisition while pushing pre-park development and launching Blue Ridge Parkway . . . NPS struggles with shaky authority in non-park, having immense "emergency" projects and park-system-wide record in travel (also world-publicized sailplane events) . . . a forcible eviction brings adverse publicity while Supreme Court is considering legality of land taking by Virginia . . . park established, gets NPS staff, is dedicated at Big Meadows by FDR (his speech, meaningful to park's purpose, given in full) . . . multiplicity of projects includes lightning-plagued underground phone system linking new park headquarters at foot of mountain with developments on skyline . . . extra-road disputes with Virginians (including Rapidan entrance) aggravated by park entrance fee requiring gates . . . FDR supports NPS in road dispute by ~~vetoing~~ vetoing congressional resolution . . . CCC aids "nature," fights fires, develops picnic and campgrounds, ~~rebuilds Appalachian Trail~~ carries bulk of park work . . . World War II dooms CCC.

7 Appalachian Trail vs. Skyline Drive 159

. . . starting in 1928 PATC builds Appalachian Trail and first shelters for hikers on ridgecrest . . . Skyline Drive shocks trail people as, almost without warning, it takes over crest route while trail leader Avery seeks compromise and trail leader MacKaye battles skyline drives partly by organizing Wilderness Society . . . Avery and MacKaye views collide in 1935 at Skyland conference ~~mountain parks~~ . . . Avery seemingly wins but tries pushing Skyline Drive off crest in south section, with a plan that NPS studies in detail, then rejects . . . PATC continues massive and complex cooperation with park, winning lean-to shelters, permit to operate locked cabins, small ski area, and numerous trails on which the club shares maintenance during and after war . . . Avery dies in 1952 with trail and shelter systems firmly established.

8 Protecting "Nature's Return" 189

. . . rangers enter on duty in 1936 and find park residents their main problem (chief ranger quoted in detail) until 1937-38 exodus . . . NPS gets "exclusive" police jurisdiction but dissatisfied Virginians win modifications . . . park helps "nature"--through "landscaping," battling insects, diseases and exotic species--to speed return of wilderness . . . fire protection gains effectiveness (fire history--including customs of Indians, mountain folk, vast incendiary burns of 1930-31, early cooperative agreements, and the use then abandonment of fire towers traced and summarized to 1976) . . . efforts made to re-introduce certain wild creatures (long-ago population and its dwindling described) . . . beaver effort fails but beaver return later anyway; turkey, deer and bear increase . . . trout planting is practiced, then discontinued in 1955 . . . many wild species numerous again in the 1950s and on . . . cougar remains a mystery.

9 Residents and Resettlement 219

. . . reduced park area deeded by Virginia in 1934 with 2,306 residents remaining (their diversity described along with missionary and other influences) . . . Virginia officials worried as early as 1928 . . . federal and state agencies find massive aid may be needed to relocate as many as 465 families . . . resettlement plans move by fits and starts while residents feel lost in confusion . . . permits (with family heads promising to move soon) are renewed from time to time while complications increase . . . federal Resettlement Administration budgets $1½ million to prepare "homesteads" outside park, but "aged and meritorious" persons may stay in their old homes . . . "homestead lady" and welfare worker visit and study every family . . . FSA takes over from RA, and from Oct. 1937 through March 1938 172 families move to homesteads . . . Virginia welfare is relocating nearly 80 more families . . . the people adjust diversely to new homes and outside world . . . by 1966 only one woman retains a home in park (she dies in 1979).

10 Serving the Park System's Largest Public 252

. . . Pollock in 1931 envisions "new and Great Skyland" while Cammerer of NPS urges advance planning for heavy visitation, but land problem delays firm action for years . . . Pollock has

trouble adjusting to motoring crowds . . . overall concessioner sought by NPS with ambitious though tentative plans . . . contract finally goes in 1937 to Virginia Sky-Line Co., Inc., organized at Richmond (to replace Pollock and others) as park visitation exceeds a million a year . . . company's organizers, soon dissatisfied, sell to other Virginians who make fresh start with NPS advice . . . park entrance fee imposed and opposed, visitation slips, transfer of park superintendent ordered and rescinded, concessioner builds more units, and valley interests complain park concessions hurt their business . . . race problem causes trouble among Virginians, Secretary Ickes and NPS as Lewis Mountain developed for blacks . . . Ickes, a promoter of integration, finally ousts Cammerer from NPS directorship (crediting him with establishing Shenandoah), and in 1941, following further difficulties and changes, ousts Lassiter from park superintendency despite widespread protests in Virginia.

11 Quiet War and Busy Postwar 285

. . . Freeland becomes superintendent in 1942 as war snatches away CCC, cuts NPS staff, closes concessions, silences Skyline Drive--but hiking survives and a four-year-old girl is lost five days and nights . . . conscientious objectors (CPS) help with maintenance, firefighting, razing old buildings . . . park weathers mining threats, military and other non-park uses while visitation drops more drastically than in any other park . . . at war's end park is wilder, but pre-war problems emerge again and Freeland holds open house to improve public relations . . . concessionr wants swimming pools, stubbornly resists but gradually accepts racial integration . . . Supt. Edwards tackles long-troublesome phone problem, helps negotiate a contract with a phone company, also a new contract with concessioner expanding accommodations . . . he loses a fight against putting natural gas line across park . . . with visitation swiftly rising (above a million and a half a year) voluminous Mission 66 plans (approved 1957) call for increased staff and facilities (including three visitor centers) and "improving" park boundary.

12 The Park in Search of Its Mission 318

. . . Shenandoah suffers identity crisis when NPS finds area not primeval as supposed by Administration and Congress . . . in 1935

detailed overall planning of land acquisition and exchange supported by up-to-date data, and gets backing in mid-1960s from NPS Washington and influential Sen. Byrd, but Byrd dies in 1966 with the needed bill not passed . . . all-out effort in 1967, with fresh and voluminous data including appraisals of every tract involved (land prices are rising fast), is complicated by large exchange proposal pushed by Virginia's game and fish agency--and fails to get needed support in Congress . . . a few small land exchanges solve acute crises, but boundary troubles keep increasing, and even a full and accurate survey of the existing line proves beyond reach as Hoskins retires in mid-1972.

14 After All, Wilderness 383

. . . movement begins toward congressional designation of wilderness with NPS proposing 61,940 acres in 1967 and, after public hearing, pushing a 73,280-acre plan--which a Senate hearing in 1972 rejects . . . Skyline Drive remains dominant, concession firm thrives and is taken over by an international conglomerate (ARA) while need for lodging inside park nowadays is questioned . . . Supt. Jacobsen emphasizes backcountry, disperses backpack camping with an innovative program, brings other innovations such as ~~[illegible]~~ keeping Big Meadows facilities including lodging open all winter, launches $7-million sewage treatment program . . . new "general management planning," starting in 1973, highlights problems of land-and-boundary, brings diverse input, and generates a proposal for shuttle-bus transportation to avoid car-crowding, while "special uses" are reduced and threats to trail access at boundary get attention if not yet final solution . . . land-and-boundary investigation arouses controversy, and planning effort is suspended so as not to jeopardize wilderness designation . . . annual research symposium helps stimulate and coordinate various studies to aid interpretation and park operation, especially resource management (vegetation, fire, wildlife), and a new bear policy--with garbage cans bearproofed and all garbage hauled out of park--is inaugurated . . . natural history association grows with full-time manager and other personnel hired and sales rising above $100,000 a year . . . wilderness proposal is further expanded and opposition rises, mostly in Madison County, but

NPS seeks historic significance to augment "nature" and Skyline Drive but finds too little, so experiments and considers while postponing full interpretation . . . collaborating scholar finds no "dividing line" possible here between "wonders of nature" and "historical evolution," while old buildings and meadows are being lost . . . Benton MacKaye helps create unique nature trail here, featuring what would become "environmentalism" . . . after World War II concessioner's request for swimming pools to help hold visitors longer is rejected by NPS director who prefers "passive recreation," that is, an interpretive program . . . first park naturalist concentrates on flora, fauna, geology, founds Shenandoah Natural History Association, tries to find ways to reach Skyline motorists, while human past keeps haunting . . . second park naturalist melds nature and history in Mission 66 planning of full interpretation including visitor centers . . . main visitor center created on theme "Man and the Mountain," but funds for saving mountain-folk buildings are refused . . . Supt. Hoskins welcomes geographic-historic view, saves Camp Hoover nucleus, encourages concessioner's interest in human past (new, 30-year contract is negotiated despite valley protests against additional lodging in park), expands interpretive program and starts well-drilling to augment water supply ~~despite valley protests against additional lodging in park~~ . . . shows awareness of budding environmentalism in resisting toxic sprays in park and reaching for improved garbage disposal . . . NPS adds "environmental education" to environmental interpretation already active here, though "gypsy moth panic" causes some static--yet by 1972 Shenandoah seems close to solving its identity problem by integrating its mission.

13 The Trouble with "Saw-Toothing" 353

. . . park established in 1935 with expectation its skeleton of "saw-toothed" land will be fleshed out, but "RD" land-buying and other federal funding die out with but small gains, leaving boundary confusingly unsatisfactory, its endless zigzags nearly impossible (even for civil engineers) to trace on the ground . . . this 450-mile-long boundary proves a serious strain on personnel, funds and public relations, but efforts by second and third superintendents fail to bring substantial improvement . . . some Blue Ridge Parkway lands officially added to park prove endlessly troublesome . . . Supt. Hoskins tackles boundary problem, with

Jacobsen copes with multiple complications, and Congress finally designates (Oct. 1976) nearly 80,000 acres, thus officially recognizing the park's "return to nature."

15 Thinking Back--and Ahead 420

. . . author (personally involved with park from 1934 to present) considers new wilderness significant to humanity and earth, seeing Shenandoah as the "recycling park" symbolizing renewal . . . he brings out his thoughts and feelings about the park's past, present realities and future possibilities through discussing three stubbornly persistent questions . . . Who deserves credit for establishing this park? . . . Which is more important, Shenandoah National Park or Skyline Drive? . . . and Is Shenandoah one of the crown jewels of the continent as implied by the name national park?

Discussion of Sources 444

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DRAFT

Darwin Lambert

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# Converging Streams

A century ago national parks were new in the world. The setting aside of Yosemite Valley in 1864, for "public use, resort, and recreation" (in state control for a while but under federal mandate) and the establishment of Yellowstone in 1872, "as a public park or pleasuring ground," are meaningful in history. They marked the first dedication of large areas of public land, dominated by wild nature, for preservation of scenery and natural features to be enjoyed by the whole people forever. The establishment of Shenandoah National Park in 1935 may be considered at least equally significant. It marked the first dedication of a large populated area of private land, all human-dominated, for restoration and preservation of scenery and natural features to be enjoyed by the whole people forever. Here at Shenandoah there was hardly an acre of virgin land to save. 'Nature' would have to be invited back and zealously guarded in her return.[1]

The right of eminent domain was extended here beyond the previous definition of public necessity. The milleniums-long advance of material consumption so characteristic of civilization was not merely halted; there was a reversal that allowed natural forces to take back an entire 300-square-mile domain where human exploitation had been rampant for two centuries.

The persistent movement that brought about this seminal reversal began in 1924, though there had been earlier bursts of effort in a similar direction. It started in quiet dignity but was joined by turbulences that speeded the tempo and muddied the water. It built up behind obstacles, such as the federal refusal to buy the needed land and the unwillingness of owners to sell. It

[1] Horace M. Albright (National Park Service director 1929-33), personal letter, 27 Sept. 1976, in my files. Albright had "gained the impression... that what forest there was could not be regarded as virgin."

broke loose in rushes and conflicts or wandered and dwindled in unmapped financial and judicial sinks. Yet somehow it kept on until, after twelve years minus seven weeks, it reached something resembling the dreamed goal. Understanding such a movement calls for examining the topography and the headwaters of the streams that joined or were pulled in.

The Shenandoah part of the Blue Ridge is so close to the nation's capital that some people claim to have caught from its heights shimmering glimpses of the Washington Monument. It is an old range worn by weather; still, here and there, it rises three thousand feet above its base. It is a single crest with branching ridges separated by deep hollows and has been said to resemble under its ever-regenerating vegetation the skeleton of a fish. Yet its form, though repeating the theme, varies like music. As a well-formed body rhythmic with life remains beautiful regardless of decoration, this range has proved incurably scenic with untamed mystery regardless of what has been done to it, regardless of being nowhere so wide that an able hiker could not walk from Piedmont to Shenandoah Valley, or vice versa, in a day.

Since 7500 B.C. and possibly longer humans have roamed or occupied these mountains, affecting the wildlife, the flora and the soil. American Indians used fire in hunting and, during the last two milleniums, in clearing land for crops, thus influencing vegetational character and coverage. Though Indians became rare here within the century following English settlement of Jamestown, they left their signs, not only artifacts such as arrowheads but openings in the forest such as Big Meadows.[2]

Seventeenth-century whites, seeing from a distance the hazy-curvy outline

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[2] Robert Wayne Vernon, "Historical Demography in Shenandoah National Park," diss. University of Virginia, p. 1; and Gene Wilhelm, "Fire Ecology in Shenandoah National Park," reprint from proceedings of Fire Ecology Conference, 8-9 June 1972--both in my files. See also Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia (Paris, 1785, and Chapel Hill, N.C.: Univ. of N.C. Press, 1955).

on the sky, considered the Blue Ridge a formidable barrier. John Lederer, earliest explorer of the range on record, wrote of climbing one of the higher peaks in 1669 (1670, new calendar):

> The eighteenth of March, after I had in vain assayed to ride up, I alighted, and left my horse...climbed up the Rocks, which were so incumbred with bushes and brambles that the ascent proved very difficult: besides the first precipice was so steep, that if I lookt down, I was immediately taken with a swimming in my head; though afterwards the way was more easie.... The height of this Mountain was very extraordinary: for notwithstanding I set out with the first appearance of light, it was late in the evening before I gained the top.[3]

In 1716 Virginia's colonial Governor Alexander Spottswood and his "Knights of the Golden Horseshoe" rode in one day up the Blue Ridge, down the far side, and on to Shenandoah River, a total distance of fourteen miles. Two decades later there were settlements on both the Piedmont and Valley sides and already one or more homes in the range itself. By 1740 a wagon road, maybe not even the first, was being pushed across Thornton Gap. In 1748 George Washington, age 16, crossed the range farther north to help survey Lord Fairfax's land. Though impressed by "wilderness," he easily surmounted the obstacles and was most impressed by crops of grain, hemp and tobacco. Later in that century Thomas Jefferson often enjoyed Blue Ridge scenery, including close-up views of waterfalls, and studied vegetation, wildlife, mineral deposits and Indian mounds.[4]

Samuel Kercheval wrote in 1833 that "the Blue Ridge is thickly populated.... wherever spots of arable land are to be found...there scattered settlers are to be found also." He mentioned a large level place at a high elevation (almost certainly Big Meadows) that was producing "fine crops of grass, rye, oats,

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[3] John Lederer, The Discoveries of John Lederer (London, 1671, and Charlottesville, Va.: Univ. of Va. Press, ed. Wm. P. Cumming, 1958), entry of 18 March 1669.

[4] Charles E. Hatch, Jr., "Alexander Spotswood Crosses the Blue Ridge," National Park Service, 1 Dec. 1968. Duplicated typescript, illus., 61 pages; for first mountain settlement, Jean Stephenson, PATC Bulletin, Oct. 1936; Harry M. Strickler, A Short History of Page County (Richmond: Dietz Press, 1952); and Claude Lindsay Yowell, A History of Madison County (Strasburg, Va.: Shenandoah Publishing House, 1926); for Indian mounds, etc., Jefferson, 1785.

potatoes and turnips" but was "too moist for the production of wheat, and too cool for the growth of Indian corn."[5]

The population of the area later proposed as a national park reached its high point in the nineteenth century. When the minimum park area first set by Congress to qualify for federal development (385,500) acres) was studied in 1928, it included 5,650 tracts with 3,250 homes. At five persons per home there would have been 16,250 people. Claude Yowell, Madison County historian, told me that "the mountaineer life was falling apart at least a third of a century before the park was established" and said that about half the mountain folk moved out within a decade or two around 1900. If this is so--and my own findings through conversations with the older mountain folk tend to confirm it --the population of the minimum area first set for the park could once have been as high as 32,500 and that of the whole area wanted (521,000 acres) could have been fifty thousand. In any informed view the resident population was sizeable and its exploitation of the land and other resources, such as wildlife and timber, heavy.[6]

Geographer Gene Wilhelm wrote:

> For 200 years fires were intentionally set by the mountain folk to improve pastures and clear new tracts in the forest for small field agriculture. In order to hasten the growth of new shoots in spring, the people often burned off the winter's dead leaves and forest debris. Again in the early fall they burned the forest floor to make it easier to find and collect fallen chestnuts.... Often...fires got out of control and burned whole segments of the landscape.[7]

My acquaintance with park-area residents before they moved out showed that they varied widely. A few were well-educated. Some were living just as they wanted to live. Some farms had continued prosperous, and a number of apple

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[5] Samuel Kercheval, A History of the Valley of Virginia (Strasburg, Va.: Shenandoah Publishing House, 4th edition, ~~1850~~ 1925--first edition was 1833).

[6] Vernon, 1976; ~~xxx~~ Claude L. Yowell, personal interview, 17 March 1969, SNP archives; and L. Ferdinand Zerkel, typescript "Virginia CWA Project...Subsistence Homesteads Survey," 1934 (giving average family size as 5.01), SNP archives.

orchards were large and commercially successful. But the majority of the residents--according to NPS historian Edward Steere who studied them in the mid-1930s--was not prosperous. Steere concluded that the park-area people had "lived with a fair margin of security on their farmsteads, in the glens, only so long as their household industries supplemented industrial processes as conducted (nearby) beyond the household stage.... A variety of causes destroyed the balance"--depletion of forests after the railway came, portable steam mills replacing old water-driven sawmills, flour mills at distant railroad centers replacing grist mills at the mouths of hollows, chemical tanning of leather replacing the process that used chestnut oak bark. Far from all exploitation was by residents. Outsiders exploited the timber, with the peak of logging reached about 1900. Outsiders controlled mining and processing of minerals--mostly copper, manganese and iron--and businesses connected with cross-mountain travel on the turnpikes. By the time the park movement started, Steere concluded, the Blue Ridge residents were largely a "destitute generation, bereft of the domestic arts and crafts of their ancestors and unable to accommodate themselves" to the reduced productivity of the mountains and changes originating in outside civilization.[8]

The first "pleasuring" place in the park area may have been Black Rock Mineral Springs near the rangecrest above Grottoes. As early as the 1840s Virginians were gathering there for the enhancement of health, recreation and social life. The waters were "good for whatever ails you." The scenery from the hotel's wide veranda was "picturesque." Black musicians made music for

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[8] Edward Steere, typescript "Report on Preservation of Structures in the Shenandoah National Park," 1 June 1936, SNP archives. For the story of these mountain people from different viewpoints, see Darwin Lambert, The Earth-Man Story (Luray, Va.: Shenandoah Natural History Association, Inc., 1972), pp. 73-95, and E.J. Wilhelm, Jr., "Ecological History and Historical Ecology of the Blue Ridge Mountains," Report 68-1, National Park Service, 1968, SNP archives.

dancing. Around the turn of the century there were thirty private cottages in addition to the hotel. Then in November 1909 a forest fire ~~swept through the area and~~ destroyed almost everything burnable. There was rebuilding on a small scale, but the resort never regained its former glory.[9]

More directly connected with the park movement was a pleasuring place on a shoulder of Stony Man above Luray. A teenager named George Freeman Pollock came out from Washington in 1886 to collect animal specimens (without pay) for a Smithsonian naturalist. The scenery impressed him so powerfully that he did not collect anything. "Then and there," he wrote later, "I made up my mind to consecrate my life to the development" of this "marvelous opportunity for a resort--cool, up among the clouds, sparkling springs, glorious sunsets, majestic views, and only ninety miles from Washington."[10]

Too young at first for full authority, Pollock recognized his function was "to tell the world," and he told with impressive flair. An early result was a Blue Ridge Park Association that in 1889 issued a pamphlet rich in revealing language:

> Blue Ridge Park lies only six miles almost due south from the famous Luray Caves...on the highest plateau...overlooking from Stony Man Peak, still 500 feet higher, the Shenandoah Valley as far as the eye can reach.... The air of this altitude is fresh and pure, filled with ozone almost to intoxication, and grateful to the robust as well as the ailing. On this lovely and unrivalled plateau of about 1,000 acres, where nature has exhausted effort to beautify, there comes forth from the rock-ribbed terraces, a half score or more of large springs with bounteous store of cold, pure water that would gladden the palate of the elect, from thence dashing down the mountain sides, through deep, mossy canons at madcap pace, forming cascades, water falls and trout pools innumerable.... It is proposed to maintain here a game and fish preserve, and not a fashionable,

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[9] Jean Stephenson, PATC Bulletin, Oct. 1936; Myron Glazer, Bulletin, April 1943; and typescript found in desk files of naturalist Paul G. Favour, SNP archives.

[10] George Freeman Pollock, Skyland (Chesapeake Book Co., 1960) and Pollock, "Why Skyland?" in PATC Bulletin, Oct. 1935 and Jan., April and July 1936, interpreted in the light of my conversations with Pollock 1936-42. These are the sources of all information about Pollock in this chapter except where another source is cited.

but a health resort, where the weary man may flee and find abundant rest and freedom.[11]

Pollock's father and a friend--as major owners of stock in a company that had tried mining and smelting copper in the Blue Ridge about 1850 with little success--had partial and tenuous claim on 5,371 acres of Stony Man land. They and a few other adults were involved in the association. Some memberships and lots for tents or cottages were sold. Young Pollock with two partners formed a building company, set up a sawmill and a livery stable. A steep road was roughed out. Camping parties were brought from Washington, and a few rustic buildings were constructed. Then the elder Pollock and his friend died of pneumonia, and the project collapsed in litigation. All but one of the buildings burned, having been set afire by someone never identified, apparently to cover burlgaries.

Pollock refused defeat and in the spring of 1894 launched a "colony" first called Stony Man Camp and later, when a post office was gained, Skyland. "For thirty years," he wrote in 1936, "I could not go to bed with the certainty of being able to stay there." He had trouble with drunken mountaineers, land titles, forest fires, half-wild cattle and hogs, and continuing shortage of funds. But whenever absolutely necessary he managed miracles--and meanwhile became a gardener, a dairyman, a horseman, a purveyor of gourmet food both local and fresh from Chesapeake Bay. More and more guests lodged in his tents and cabins; more and more persons with cottages of their own dined at his tables. And he kept telling the world--through annual booklets, a camp newspaper, letters, and in person. He showed the world too--through excellent photographs and, to an ever-increasing extent, on the ground at camp, from the peak, and from a growing network of bridle trails.

Many of those he told and showed were influential in New York, Boston,

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[11] "Blue Ridge Park Association," pamphlet-prospectus, Aug. 1889, SNP archives.

Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington and other cities. They told their friends. A few helped directly by investing in improvements and added facilities, including a recreation hall, for the benefit of all who would come. Among the owners of cottages was Richard E. Byrd, father of Admiral Richard E. Byrd and Senator Harry F. Byrd. The elder Byrd gave free legal advice to Pollock--who wrote: "I am afraid I would have lost my hold on the mountain if it had not been for Mr. Byrd; and if I had lost my hold on the mountain, there certainly would have been no Shenandoah National Park."

Pollock was always a dramatic enigma, often misunderstood by those who focused on but one or two of his many facets. As a boy he longed for wilderness and sneaked off to hunt, fish or camp, often alone except for his dog. He kept live owls, flying squirrels, a raccoon and other creatures in attic rooms at home. In adult life he was still an amateur naturalist. He caught venomous snakes or bought them from mountaineers, sold some, kept some, and became a charmer of rattlers that could have killed him.

Though still sometimes a loner, he was at other times the life of the party--an arranger of festivities and excursions (dances, picnics, hikes, horseback rides, musical performances, elaborate pageants with large casts in colorful costumes). He entertained with stories of wild adventures representing his own conflict-filled life in the Blue Ridge. With great bonfires--some consuming, he claimed, three hundred cords of wood in an evening--he thrilled not only his mountaintop colony but valley people far below. For years he dressed Teddy Roosevelt style. He yodeled. He mobilized guests for meals and activities by blowing a bugle. He was a self-publicizer, gravitating as if by instinct toward center stage, especially when a camera was aimed. Yet he had hundreds of friends--wealthy or wondering where their next meal might come from. A guest in the 1920s wrote: "How we loved him, dear old 'Polly,' / Direst foe of melancholy...."[12]

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[12] Skyland, 1960, front endpapers. This is one-twelfth of the poem.

Partly to avoid being driven from the Blue Ridge, he dominated the mountain folk, sometimes with a gun, sometimes by understanding their motives better than they did, sometimes by sheer nerve. He employed them, bought apple brandy from them on the sly, gave Christmas parties with gifts for all. When the remaining folk faced eviction from their generations-long home to make way for the national park, he urged officials to resettle them in suitable surroundings. Many remembered him fondly all their lives.[13]

Though physically small, he was a powerhouse of energy and endurance. Though short of formal schooling, he could converse well on almost any subject, intellectual, cultural, practical, with guests who were leaders in business, government and the professions, with farmers, small-town merchants, blacks. He dodged the teaching career urged by his parents and his sisters who were planning to teach, yet he became a "teacher" with few equals. He married an attractive woman who had inherited a "fortune." Though she was normally retiring in contrast to his aggressive flamboyance, she followed him in consecration to the Stony Man pleasuring ground.

Hard-pressed for funds in early years, he sold a big block of timber for tanbark, and he continued to cut trees for lumber and for firewood. Yet in the long pull he was a conservationist. He drew on scarce funds to pay crews for battling forest fires. Time and again he kept lumber companies from acquiring rights in large enough blocks to make logging economic. In one much-discussed situation--a lumberman threatening to cut virgin hemlocks--his wife gave key help by providing a thousand dollars. The agreement, made in 1920, involved a hundred trees in Limberlost Swamp at ten dollars a tree. Pollock paid $200. At intervals after that the lumberman would threaten again to start cutting, and Pollock would pay more until the whole thousand was gone.[14]

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[13] For resettlement plea, Pollock to Horace M. Albright, 29 Feb. 1932, National Archives; for fondness, Charlie (Buck) Corbin, personal interview, 1969, tape in SNP archives.

[14] Frank Kiblinger (long-time "encyclopedia" of park facts) in undated

Pollock's ability in business must have been substantial. How else could he, starting without firmly tangible assets, continually improve and expand his complex enterprise? But he operated at a financial loss and was seldom if ever out of debt. The explanation can only be found in his priorities: Money-making (as I gathered from conversations with him) was far down the list. At the top, bringing him the strongest satisfaction, must have been revealing Blue Ridge beauty to the world and helping people to enjoy it.[15]

Two doctors--when Yellowstone was young and alone as a national park--suggested large parks in the East. Politicians were not far behind, though they may have wanted forest reserves instead of parks. The first doctor, speaking in New York to the American Academy of Medicine in 1885, advocated "securing under state control a large reservation of the higher ranges (of the southern Appalachian Mountains) as a park." The second doctor, moving from Ohio and settling in Asheville in 1889, began almost at once to urge a large park in North Carolina, maybe spreading over into South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee and Virginia, possibly occupying 12,000 square miles. By 1900 there was an Appalachian National Park Association in Asheville advocating Mount Mitchell and Clingmans Dome among other areas. The first decade of the new century saw a flurry of bills in Congress aiming for something called parks, sometimes a "McKinley National Park and Forest Reserve."[16]

The Department of Agriculture pointed out the need for conservation in the southern Appalachians:

> In some places the entire surface rapidly wears away, each freshet removing a thin layer, so the fertile soil is soon exhausted.... The loss resulting from erosion...means also...failure of water power and navigation....

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[15] Sen. Harry F. Byrd, speech of 14 Oct. 1951, Skyland, 1960, p. xv: "I happen to know that his financial operations at Skyland were conducted at substantial losses."

[16] Henry W. Lix, "Short History of Great Smoky Mountains National Park," Smoky park office, 1958, p. 29; and Michael Frome, Strangers in High Places (N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1969), p. 174, the doctors being Henry O. Marsh (Marcy in Frome) and Chase P. Ambler; and Edmund B. Rogers, "History of Legislation

> Clearing, destructive lumbering, and fire are far the most prevalent and damaging, but grazing, mining, and insects contribute.... Their combined influence, if unchecked, is sufficient practically to obliterate the commercial forest of the Southern Appalachians within the next sixteen years.[17]

No bills for Appalachian national parks were passed, but the Weeks Act of 1911 authorized purchase of lands to make national forests in the East.

As part of Weeks law action in 1914 the Agriculture Department sent forest examiner R. Clifford Hall into the area that would later be considered for Shenandoah park. He found that only the higher and wilder parts--40,450 acres between Simmons and Manassas gaps--had forest resources worth notice. Twenty percent of that acreage was in clearings, 80% in forest. Half the forest was "culled and cut over." Virgin forest added up, in my calculations based on the examiner's report, to 9,700 acres. The land was mostly in small tracts, but a few holdings were between 1,000 and 20,000 acres.

> Lumbering is an important industry, but is conducted by small scale operations.... There is not much timber left on the west slope, but the east slope...contains enough timber to maintain the industry for some years.... the work of dealing with so many owners and building up a large boundary from many small tracts would be tedious.... The removal of the forest and the common practice of burning the woods has resulted in conditions which have undoubtedly promoted erosion and irregularity of stream flow.... There is much land on the west slope which has been cleared and burned until it supports only a scrubby growth of worthless brush, which prevents gullying but does not appreciably check sheet erosion....
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> A large tract [Skyland resort] is owned by the manager...[who] desires to sell to the Government, reserving, of course, the improved portion....
>
> The region as a whole is so cut up by rather high-priced grazing lands as to make the desirability of purchase by the Government at least questionable.... It might be considered as a possible area of third-rate importance [after] the more desirable lands in the southern Appalachians have been acquired.

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[17] Department of Agriculture, "Southern Appalachian and White Mountain Watersheds," report of 11 Dec. 1907--copy in Rogers, 1958, Part IV.

Sawmills were usually portable; main products were lumber and cross ties. There was a lot of tanbark cutting. Agriculture was important and expanding as "prosperous valley farmers" were buying land for summer pastures.[18]

Desire for national parks, as different from national forests, continued to ferment. "As early as the years preceding the entrance of the United States into the World War," businessman Hugh E. Naylor, secretary of the Front Royal-Riverton Board of Trade, was trying to persuade his board to campaign for a national park in northern Virginia. The project was rejected as too big and costly. But Naylor kept talking about it to individuals and groups interested in business and community advancement, insisting that a national park near Front Royal, not far from the nation's capital, was possible, in fact almost bound to come. Several bills calling for national parks in the Appalachians were introduced in Congress in 1922 and 1923--but without results. One site so boosted was in Wise County, Virginia.[19]

"At least as early as 1919" Stephen T. Mather--who had made a fortune in the West before becoming the ambitious first director of the National Park Service--was urging creation of eastern national parks in addition to Lafayette that consisted of five thousand citizen-donated acres (later Acadia with ten thousand acres, and growing).[20] In his report to the Secretary of the Interior, reviewing the year 1923, Mather finally put his urging on record:

> I should like to see additional national parks established east of the Mississippi, but just how this can be accomplished is not clear. There should be a typical section of the Appalachian Range established as a national park with its native flora and fauna conserved and made accessible for public use and its development undertaken by Federal funds.[21]

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[18] Hall, "Report on the Reconnaissance of the Blue Ridge in Virginia Between Simmons and Manassas Gaps," Department of Agriculture, Sept. 1914 (R.E.C. Report No. 1), National Archives.

[19] Naylor, "A Brief History of the Beginning of the Movement for a National Park in Northern Virginia," privately printed, June 1934, and Laura Virginia Hale, personal interview, 30 June 1969--both SNP archives.

[20] Frome 1969, p. 180, and Robert Sterling Yard, The National Parks Portfolio (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1931), p. 250.

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Forester-regional planner Benton MacKaye had been dreaming of a footpath connecting Maine and Georgia. Publication in 1921 of his article, "An Appalachian Trail--A Project in Regional Planning," started the dream going in uncounted others. The path would not be just a path but "a new approach to the problem of living," an escape from urban congestion, maybe in time a total alternative for those who have had their fill of cities. MacKaye described the uses of such a trail: Recreation--"vast areas of secluded forests, pastoral lands, and water courses, which, with proper facilities and protection, could be made to serve as the breath of real life for the toilers in the bee-hive cities." Health and recuperation--"The oxygen in the mountain air along the Appalachian skyline is a natural resource (and a national resource) that radiates to the heavens its enormous health-giving powers.... Here is a resource that could save thousands of lives." Many people suffering from physical or mental disease "need acres not medicine." Employment on the land, redistribution of population --Appalachia has room for "a whole new rural population."[22]

The MacKaye dream included shelter camps at convenient distances built by volunteer workers ("For volunteer 'work' is really 'play'"); community camps to grow naturally from shelter camps, little communities "on or near the trail (perhaps on a neighboring lake) where people could live in private domiciles... each camp a self-owning community...not allowed to become too populous"; and food and farm camps, "the natural supplement of the community camp. Here in the same spirit of cooperation and well-ordered action the food and crops consumed in the outdoor living would as far as practicable be sown and harvested." These camps could be special communities in adjoining valleys; they "would provide one definite avenue of experiment in getting 'back to the land.'"

MacKaye's dream proved a lively yeast; some of it joined the dream of an Appalachian national park and grew there. His diary for 1922 includes:

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22 Journal of the American Institute of Architects, Oct. 1921, reprinted in PATC Bulletin, July 1942.

"April 19: P.M.--saw Cammerer of Nat'l Parks Serv." Many years later he recalled that Cammerer--who in the meantime had served as NPS director--"took keen interest from the start in the A.T. project. Through him the initial plans were made for the Shenandoah and Great Smoky National Parks, including provisions for routing through them the Appalachian Trail." A Washington group MacKaye stimulated, that would become the nucleus of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, went reconnoitering the Virginia Blue Ridge in 1922 for a possible skyline trail.[23]

Early in the 1920s Virginia began simmering with boosterism, apparently caught from Florida. The "roaring leader" was Governor E. Lee Trinkle. He urged Virginians to help their state rise again. Old-fashioned people who deplored such noisy aggression and kept their traditional dignity were called "moss-backed fossils." Trinkle once mockingly exclaimed: "Poor old Virginia! Anyone who uses this phrase should, in my opinion, be taken out and shot at sunrise in the presence of his neighbors." Soon he was saying that his travels to convince Virginians of the worth of Virginia had cost him 45 pounds, his weight having dropped from 260 pounds to a mere 215.[24]

"In January, 1924, a call was sent out by some of the businessmen of Harrisonburg...for a convention...for the purpose of rallying all the resources of the Valley together in a program that would tell the world of the scenic, historical, industrial, and other values of the famous Shenandoah Valley." The convention was held January 10, five weeks before the movement started for a large park in the southern Appalachians. If a national park was mentioned in the convention at all, it could only have been "in a more or less casual

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[23] Benton MacKaye, "Some Early A.T. History," PATC Bulletin, Oct.-Dec. 1957, and Darwin Lambert, "A Running Start on Earthmanship," National Parks Magazine, Aug. 1968, and "Yes and No for Shenandoah," 40th Anniversary Dinner talk, PATC, Washington, D.C., 23 Oct. 1967.

[24] Virginius Dabney, "Virginia," The American Mercury, Nov. 1926, pp. 349-55, and Harrisonburg, Va., Daily News-Record, 16 Jan. 1925.

way" without hope that such a park could ever be secured.[25]

The Harrisonburg paper spread banner headlines:

Twelve Hundred Men and Women, in Remarkable Mass Meeting, Call for Boosting Movement Like Florida.... Great Throng Amazes the City with Its Earnestness, Determination -- Twelve hundred leading business and professional men, farmers and women of the 13 Shenandoah Valley counties of Virginia and West Virginia, gathering in Harrisonburg yesterday in one of the most remarkable and gripping mass meetings ever held in this section of the state, abandoned their old policy of contented isolation and formally organized "The Shenandoah Valley, Inc.," a non-dividend corporation to proclaim to all the world the material resources and scenic attractions of the 175-mile stretch of kaleidoscopic landscape from Harpers Ferry and Martinsburg on the north to Lexington and Hot Springs on the south, lying between the Blue Ridge and Allegheny mountains. The mass meeting marked a new era in Virginia. It sung the Doxology over the Valley's century-old custom of self-satisfaction and self-anointedness and in their place proclaimed a new spirit to boost, to advertise, to seek new settlers, to invite tourists and above all to unite and co-operate to win for the Shenandoah Valley her just place in The Sun....

Valley Booster Spirit is Destined to Sweep and Unite All Virginia, Declare Richmond and Roanoke -- That the organization of the Shenandoah Valley, Inc., here will receive the hearty support of Richmond and Roanoke interests and will eventually develop into a statewide movement ridding the Old Dominion of long-standing and detrimental sectionalism was the opinion expressed by representatives of these two cities. Colonel Robert D. Ford, editor of the Richmond Times-Dispatch, declared that he believed he spoke for the United interests of the State Capital when he pledged cooperation with the Valley movement, "for, whenever we want anything done in Virginia, the people of the Valley do it. It has been so since the Civil War when the Valley boys under Stonewall Jackson stopped the advance of the Northern troops.... This movement, started here in God's Valley, cannot be limited to the Blue Ridge and Alleghanies," continued Colonel Ford, "as no power on earth can restrain the indominable xpxi spirit of unity that pervades this meeting; it is bound to spread and wipe out that

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[25] H.J. Benchoff, "Report to Arno B. Cammerer, Director, National Park Service," privately printed pamphlet, 20 Aug. 1934, and John R. Crown (editor, Daily News-Record), "The Shenandoah National Park," in Shenandoah National Park Souvenir Book (Harrisonburg, Va.: D.P. Wine, 1933). Adoption of nine xx aims, including a national park, came later.

petty sectionalism which is retarding Virginia. I thank God that the beginning of the end of sectionalism is at hand."[26]

The tributary streams of the torrent that would thrust and struggle toward establishment of Shenandoah National Park were about to join.

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[26] Harrisonburg Daily News-Record, 11 Jan. 1924.

Blitz for Discovery

Stephen T. Mather wanted a strong and complete national park system. As the first director of the Park Service he had proved himself a skillful worker in various channels to get what he wanted. He followed his mention of the need for an Appalachian park by discussing possible actions with his chief, the Secretary of the Interior, Dr. Hubert Work--formerly a practicing physician in Colorado and long before that a Pennsylvania farm boy who "would look longingly toward the Blue Ridge and wonder what it was like and if the world ended there." On February 16, 1924, Work asked three men known for their familiarity with parks, scenery and outdoor recreation to serve without pay on a park-seeking advisory committee. They were Dr. Henry W. Temple, a congressman from Pennsylvania (formerly a professor of history and an authority on Indian and bison trails); William A. Welch, manager of Palisades Interstate Park (New York and New Jersey); and Col. Glenn S. Smith, engineer (soon to become chief of the topographic program) of the U.S. Geological Survey. Work further asked the Council on National Parks, Forests and Wild Life (New York) to name two members to complete the committee.[1]

Temple, Welch and Smith promptly accepted, and Work told the press what the committee was for. Spotting the item in the Washington Star, Harold Allen --a lawyer with the War Department who was acquainted with the resort on Stony Man--clipped it and mailed it to Pollock with a note asking, "Why not Skyland?" In Shenandoah Valley/Frank L. Sublett businessman suggested to an inquiring reporter that the committee's attention be invited to nearby mountains. Hugh Naylor wrote the district's congressman, T.W. Harrison, urging immediate contact with Work. Friends of Naylor persuaded Rep. Harrison and others to ask

[1] "Final Report of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission to the Secretary of the Interior, June 30, 1931," Government Printing Office, 1931, p. 1. This report, in thin booklet formx(pp. 1-9) is my basic source of facts about the committee (predecessor of the commission) and will not be further cited except where source would otherwise be in doubt. The glimpse of

that this first dreamer of a northern Virginia park be appointed to one of the two seats remaining on the park-seeking committee.[2]

A board meeting had now completed formal organization of Shenandoah Valley, Inc., under its state charter, just granted; elected Sublett and Daniel P. Wine, both of Harrisonburg, as president and secretary, respectively; and taken this action:

> Mr. Naylor of Front Royal, Va., moved that some plans be taken up... and they went on record as being in favor of the establishment of a national park comprising the Massanutten Division, the Natural Bridge Division and the Appalachian Division now owned by the Government [national forest lands], and the secretary be instructed to write to the various congressmen of the Shenandoah Valley area endorsing this plan, also the U.S. Senators.[3]

Naylor was not named to the committee; Work wanted impartial members so accepted the parks council's recommendations--landscape architect-botanist Harlan P. Kelsey of Salem, Mass., a former president of Appalachian Mountain Club; and manufacturer William C. Gregg of Hackensack, N.J., prominent in the National Arts Club, New York, a board member of National Parks Association, and fond of pack-train exploration in western parks. The advisory group met in Mather's office on March 26 and organized as the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee. Dr. Work had designated Dr. Temple as chairman; Smith was elected secretary-treasurer. As no federal funds were available, Gregg donated $500 for expenses (to be supplemented as needed, Mather promised, by funds from his own pocket and from John D. Rockefeller, Jr., a friend of Mather).[4]

The committee--no member of which lived in the area involved--would seek a park site in the Appalachians south of Maryland's northern border. Suggestions

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[2] Star, 19 Feb. 1924; George Freeman Pollock, Skyland (Chesapeake Book Co., 1960), p. 213; Jean Stephenson, "Harold Allen, 1877-1939," PATC Bulletin, July 1939; John R. Crown, "The Shenandoah National Park," in Shenandoah National Park Souvenir Book (Harrisonburg, Va.; D.P. Wine, 1933); and Hugh E. Naylor, "A Brief History of the Beginning of the Movement for a National Park in Northern Virginia," privately printed, June 1934. The Naylor booklet is my source for Naylor's doings and will not be further cited in this chapter unless necessary to clear confusion.

[3] H.J. Benchoff, "Report to Arno B. Cammerer, Director, National Park Service," privately printed, 1934. The 24-page Benchoff pamphlet is my basic source of Shenandoah Valley, Inc., facts in this chapter, the source to be

for parks had already been received--from six locations in Tennessee, four in North Carolina, three in West Virginia, three in Kentucky, two in Georgia, one where Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia join; and four in Virginia. More were coming in almost daily. Shenandoah Valley, Inc., was represented--Rep. Harrison planned to bring Temple as soon as "the trees are in bloom and in leaf." But there had been no word from Pollock, nothing putting the Skyland area before the committee.[5]

A questionnaire was distributed--to gather from each place its key facts--and as answers came in the committee would decide what sites to inspect. In July there were Georgia inspections--with Secretary Work accompanying his committee and with the Governor and two Georgia congressmen helping and urging. Various committeemen made inspections in North Carolina and Tennessee, with emphasis on the Great Smoky Mountains, in July and August. In September, invited by the West Virginia governor, two committeemen explored around White Sulphur Springs. Mather, a constant influence behind the scenes, reported ~~that~~ the five highest private experts on park matters in the country...making a careful study.... Every indication is favorable...for a permanent national museum of nature, established in the most scenic section of the Southeast. I believe the South stands strongly and broadly for such a park wherever it may eventually be located and that purely local interests will be subordinated to achieve this remarkable opportunity. The selection of this park must be based on merit and merit alone. Its establishment will benefit every State in the South and East.[6]

Pollock had received Allen's clipping and note in February. He was "very busy at the time." Also (I think) he needed more persuasion before inviting

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[5] Michael Frome, Strangers in High Places (Doubleday & Co., 1969), p. 181, reveals that Kelsey, though living in New England, was raised in Highlands, N.C. For quote about bringing Temple, T.W. Harrison to Naylor, 10 March 1924, Naylor pamphlet, p. 7.

[6] Mather, Annual Report of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior, 1924, federally printed booklet, p. 4.

the government to take over the resort to which he had dedicated his life. Who can blame him if he was not quite ready to let go? Just four years before, when he and his wife were buying off the lumberman who threatened Limberlost hemlocks, "the idea" in their minds "was that some day, sooner or later, this area would be used for public recreation purposes. We had no idea, however, of a federal park or even a state park." According to Naylor, it was not until September 14 that Pollock "first disclosed to Shenandoah Valley, Inc., officials his interest in behalf of the Blue Ridge area."[7]

Pollock's decision was made at a conference with Allen and George H. Judd. Though Pollock said it was "early in the summer," L. Ferdinand Zerkel, a Luray realtor centrally involved in the park movement through all the crucial years--often signing himself modestly as "one of the park nuts"--said it was "in the late summer of 1924." The place, anyway, is known--"Tryst of the Winds," the Judd cottage at Skyland--Judd being the senior owner of Judd & Detweiler, printers of National Geographic, who was "almost boyish in his enthusiasm for Skyland." Allen, impatient, had visited Glenn Smith and learned that the park-seeking committee felt there was no suitable location north of Smoky. He had ~~taken~~ picked up one of the committee questionnaire blanks and hurried at once to Skyland.[8]

He and Judd/converted ~~convinced~~ Pollock and the three began answering the questionnaire. Pollock said, "We all got excited with the task as it progressed, and no wonder! We were convinced that we had a real national park site to present and our answers not only sounded good, they actually were good." The deadline was so near that Allen carried the answers to Washington and handed them to Smith, saying, "When you have read these you will see that the Committee must...inspect...Skyland."

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[7] Skyland 1960, chap. XIII (pp. 211-33) is my basic source of Pollock material used in this chapter, the source to be assumed unless another is cited. The quote on a possible park, however, is from Pollock, "Beginnings of Shenandoah National Park," PATC Bulletin, April 1937. Some of the differences between the book and the much earlier Bulletin articles (April, July and Oct. 1937 and Jan. 1938) are meaningful.

[8] Zerkel, park history typescript accompanying Zerkel to Supt. Lassiter, 7 Aug. 1940; ~~SHP~~ Zerkel to Benchoff, 16 March 1949; and four full file

Those first answers pertained only to the area between Thornton and Fishers gaps:

The special features...are numerous mountain peaks over 4,000 feet high, a stream of water running for 8 miles through the district with such magnificent scenery that it far surpasses in beauty the famous Watkins Glen, many hundred beautiful trout pools, some of them 6 to 8 feet deep, over twenty beautiful waterfalls, seven of which approximate 100 feet in height between high cliffs.... As to the variety of timber, there are large quantities of very fine hemlock, spruce, oak, ash, poplar, and chestnut; all kinds of hardwood, which in large portions of this area have never been touched with the axe.

.... the location in the temperate zone is one that gives a succession of blossoms from early spring to late fall; there is never a time from the breaking of spring to the coming of winter that there is not a profusion of blossoms in great variety; the gorgeous purple trillium, which grows sparsely farther north, covers the glades in great masses. The succession of wild azalea, locust, and laurel, gives the visitor three weeks of spring in a single day. The great mass of laurel bloom on the mountainsides is unsurpassed by that of any other section of the United States.... In autumn, with the profusion of fall flowers and berries everywhere and the varied and brilliant coloring of the giant trees, mass color effects greet the eye in every direction, indescribable in beauty and grandeur....

6. Does the area contain improvements...? No--absolutely free.

7. State if area is held in small or large holdings.... This area is mostly held in large holdings of from 3,000 to 5,000 acres.... There are within this area, of course, a few small mountain farms, of no great value....

8. Has the area been lumbered or burned over...? Except for sporadic fires of a few acres in extent, which have not destroyed the big timber, there has been no devastation by fire throughout this entire region.... Except along the lower fringes of the area the timber is fine, and has not been lumbered....

The following public advantages would follow location of a national park in this section:

a. Preservation of virgin forest area, permanent bird and game refuge.

b. Insurance of water supply to District of Columbia....

1. High altitude provides winter sports rivalling those of Montreal

or Chamonix.[9]

Pollock and friends had begun to dream a vast national park in the Blue Ridge and to "tell the world" with romantic exuberance.

The Pollock thrust and the Naylor-Shenandoah Valley, Inc. thrust sideswiped --with Zerkel in the middle, close to Pollock yet also, like Naylor, a charter director of ~~Shenandoah Valley,~~ SV Inc. Pollock looked down from Skyland on Massanutten Mountain, hardly a dozen miles away. When he learned, from a news item quoting Rep. Harrison, that this long mountain and its enclosed Fort Valley were being pushed for national park status, he was shocked. He and his wife, Allen and Zerkel and their wives, drove with Naylor into the Massanutten, and (Pollock wrote) "even this brief excursion made it obvious that comparison with the Blue Ridge was absurd." A meeting was arranged with ~~Shenandoah Valley,~~ SV Inc., and Pollock "laid the facts on the table, cold and hard." He said those favoring the Massanutten were "betting on a lame horse.... My home in the Blue Ridge is 1200 feet higher than the highest peak in the Massanuttens and is surrounded by wonderful scenery with towering peaks, sheer cliffs and hidden stands of virgin timber." Later, a Massanutten-Blue Ridge debate was held at Dan Wine's place near Harrisonburg. "There," in Pollock's words, "Hugh Naylor advocated the Massanutten area while I, with Ferdinand Zerkel supporting me, advocated the Blue Ridge, and at the finish Brother Naylor lacked a leg to stand on."

Naylor's version differs. He said he argued, not specifically for the Massanutten but for everyone here "to support the park idea but not to definitely drop any proposed section until the committee gave...indication of its preference." He insisted that his policy, not Pollock's, won, and that ~~Shenandoah Valley,~~ SV Inc. "continued its campaign for some time for a national park in northern Virginia...without committing itself to any one definite area."

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[9] "Answer to Government Questionnaire Concerning Proposed Southern Appalachian National Park," old printed copy, undated but obviously 1924, SNP archives.

Whatever the details, both thrusts were stimulated. SV Inc. intensified and spread its efforts to sell Virginians and federal advisors and officials on locating the park in northern Virginia.[10]

Pollock, when aroused, was almost impossible to resist, and after arguing with Naylor he was very much aroused:

> Fortifying myself with letters of endorsement from influential people familar with the Skyland region, I went to Washington and to Colonel Smith's office, taking with me Major General Merritt O. Ireland, Surgeon General of the Army and for years an enthusiastic patron of Skyland. Arriving there, I talked loud and long. Colonel Smith told me that his wife had once spent several days at Skyland and he knew that the area was beautiful, but the Committee still did not feel that it could measure up to the requirements for a national park. However, I was persistent and ...invited any or all of them to come to Skyland as my personal guests.

Though the park-study committee had rejected in September (according to Naylor) any and all sites in Virginia, a slight crack appeared in this solid opposition. Welch and Smith, going to inspect the vicinity of White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, at the invitation of that state's governor, decided to return to Washington via "Luray to inspect an area lying in the Blue Ridge, extending from Front Royal to Waynesboro." The committee later reported:

> On arrival at Luray they were met by several hundred residents headed by a band. It developed that two delegations were present, one representing those interested in...the Massanutten Mountains...and the other, headed by Mr. George Freeman Pollock...recommending...the Blue Ridge area. The committee members decided to go immediately to Skyland.... The delegation from the Massanutten Mountains area was invited by Mr. Pollock to accompany the Blue Ridge delegation, and the invitation was accepted.
>
> The committee members, under the guidance of Mr. Pollock, spent three days inspecting the area in the immediate vicinity of Skyland, visiting White Oak Canyon, Stony Man Mountain, and the mountain ridge south of Skyland for a distance of 12 or 15 miles. After this short inspection

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[10] The effort of Shenandoah Valley, Inc., at this stage, is described in both Benchoff 1934 and Naylor June 1934.

Colonel Smith and Major Welch were so favorably impressed...they postponed further investigation until arrangements could be made for the whole committee to visit....

The delegation recommending the Massanutten Mountains...were convinced that the area surrounding Skyland was superior.... therefore the committee made no investigation of Massanutten.[11]

A vivid glimpse is credited to Harold K. Philips, Washington Star writer, who said that Smith and Welch, upon reaching Skyland,

hurried to a room and agreed that after riding around for a few hours and satisfying themselves again that no national park could ever be found in that vicinity, they would politely tell Mr. Pollock they had engagements back in Washington.... But they hadn't yet glanced out over the cliffs into the valley, nor back over their shoulders to the sea of primeval wilderness that awaited their doubting eyes.

The peak of Stony Man Mountain, more than 4,000 feet above the Shenandoah Valley, was their first stop. From that mass of grim granite, they gazed on the left down the Shenandoah, where history was made half a century ago, and on the right their unbelieving eyes traveled out over the Piedmont Plateau, feasting upon scores of spots of poignant memory in the history of this nation's beginning, and in back of them the wilderness whispered of even greater treasures to come.

"W-w-w-what d'you think, Major?" stammered Colonel Smith to his companion.

"Think!" almost shouted that worthy, "I think we'd better look some more."

And they did. They looked down into the wild depths of White Oak Canyon where a singing mountain stream drops 2,500 feet over an uninterrupted series of singing cascades in less than five miles, and where a great forest has lived through the centuries without ever hearing the sound of the axe. They looked over the face of Crescent Rock, straight down 1,500 feet, onto the summits of the foothills which seemed like ant hills by comparison to their giant brothers. They rode through the giant hemlocks of the Limberlost Forest....

Back to Washington they went, two days later, and reported to Dr. Henry W. Temple...their great discovery.[12]

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[11] Welch and Smith were at White Sulphur Springs on September 12 and most likely came to Luray on the 13th as Pollock said. But Naylor said September 17—and wrote further: "The night of September 18 was spent by the scouts in Harrisonburg. They planned to inspect [the Massanutten] the 19th. This was

Shortly after the Welch-Smith visit--for which he had organized the double-pronged greeting--Zerkel brought together at Mansion Inn, Luray, a large group of now-stirred-up leaders including Pollock and friends and Naylor and friends. This meeting organized Northern Virginia Park Association--with Zerkel as chairman of the board, which included Naylor and other prominent citizens of Virginia and Washington, D.C. Pollock was elected president; Wine (already secretary of SV Inc.), secretary; Judd and Allen, vice presidents. The date was October 7. From that time on the two thrusts mixed and moved more or less together. Zerkel reported that Pollock, during the next two months, spent about $7,000 of personal funds, mostly to build viewing towers and improve trails for inspections in the Blue Ridge area's central and south sections, and that SV Inc. spent a similar amount in the north section.[13]

Meanwhile, the park seekers were struggling toward decision. Welch visited an Alabama area in October, rejecting it because of mineral deposits. Gregg, intrigued by what Welch and Smith had told him, spent a week exploring on horseback from Skyland southward toward Waynesboro, mostly riding alone, away from Pollock's direct magic, then explored in the Carolinas and Georgia, finding areas scenic enough but "too thickly settled and too highly cultivated." Welch visited Cumberland Gap but felt its mining prospects ruled it out.

Then Pollock announced, in detail that took three columns in the Luray paper, a full-fledged park-study "expedition." It would be launched November 6 by a public gathering at Waynesboro with Naylor, Zerkel, Pollock and others speaking, and would continue through November 14. Many writers would accompany the committee, including Robert Sterling Yard, a "Mather man" who left NPS to strengthen the Director's hand by organizing National Parks Association. Pollock interlarded his gleeful announcement with arguments for public pressure

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[13] Zerkel to Benchoff, 16 March 1949, SNP archives. The officers are listed in Skyland, p. 218, but Benchoff 1934 added F.W. Weaver, Luray, treasurer. Zerkel, in his brief history 1934 said "Shenandoah Valley, Inc...used more than $15,000.00 of its limited funds in two years on Park activities."

and quick action:

> The importance of doing something to save the Blue Ridge Mountains for posterity is shown by instances that happen every day. Only a short time ago, a square mile of beautifully timbered area was destroyed by fire.... merchants owning small stores...are paying seven cents a pound for dogwood seed. One merchant at Harriston, Virginia, had 125 bushels of dogwood seed, which had been obtained in the Paine Run section of the proposed Park. The people collecting the seed cut down the dogwood trees to get the berries in many instances, so that in this particular gap in a few weeks only, the dogwood has been practically cleaned out and as everyone knows the dogwood with its beautiful white blossoms is a principal attraction.[14]

Rep. Temple, committee chairman, came for the first time; Welch and Smith for their second look. Pollock was lavish with free food and drink, lodgings, riding horses and assistant guides. He reported:

> All of this inspection trip was made on horseback, the committee thus being enabled to get a close view of the special scenic features as well as a general bird's-eye view...from high points.... During their stay at Skyland the committee was met by Governor E. Lee Trinkle, Representative T.W. Harrison, Judge J. Barton Payne, Robert Sterling Yard...and William J. Showalter, all of whom advocated the location of a national park in the Blue Ridge area.[15]

The day this inspection ended, Virginia State Chamber of Commerce, newly organized by boosters, "came squarely behind the undertaking" through a unanimous resolution of its board. Three days later Northern Virginia Park Association issued a 16-page pamphlet, "A National Park Near the Nation's Capital," mailing several thousand copies to influential citizens and organizations, including state officers and members of Congress. Though later crediting the text to Allen, Pollock signed the Foreword, testifying to the truth of the ~~park~~ pamphlet

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[14] Page News & Courier, 4 Nov. 1924.

[15] Yard was considered a key man. He was assumed to be a sort of personal representative of Director Mather, and he was also widely known as the author of The National Parks Portfolio (written when he was with NPS) that brought unprecedented attention to the national parks of the West. I have the sixth edition (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1931).

and urging people not to pressure the committee now but to "help Congress, by intelligent public demand, to put the grand new park where it logically belongs --in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia!" There were expanded answers to the "Government Questionnaire." Though no overall acreage estimate was given, it was stated that "at least 25,000 acres of the finest Blue Grass pastures" would be included. Land in nine counties was suggested, from Warren and Fauquier on the north into Augusta and Albemarle on the south--a stretch 100 miles long with an average width of nine miles. Eastern and western boundaries would follow the "lower contours of the mountains" and the widest place,"where Greene, Madison, and Page Counties unite," would be 20 miles wide.[16]

Obstacles were crumbling, but tough ones remained. Roanoke (Va.) Times, mentioning demands on congressmen to support the Skyland region, said:

> If this happened to be the only suggested site in the Virginia mountains, the response of Virginia Congressmen would be a simple matter, but when it is considered that another Virginia site is proposed in a bill pending in Congress for nearly two years, the situation is seen to be embarrassing....
>
> Besides the Skyland site, the state offers a site in Wise county, and an organization of Norton business men is deeply interested in the success of that project. The offer from Wise was reduced to the terms of a bill which former Congressman Slemp introduced and which Representative Peery reintroduced at the beginning of his term. So far the Wise site has not been inspected by the park committee.

The Luray paper reprinted the Roanoke piece while also revealing that a score of landowners, farmers and stock raisers between Front Royal and Waynesboro had sent in a protest against the Skyland location--"for the reason that we own valuable grazing land on the Blue Ridge. It would be a great sacrifice...as we

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[16] Pamphlet (Skyland, Page County, Va.: Northern Virginia Park Ass'n, 17 Nov. 1924). Pollock said (in Skyland, p. 218): "Through the generosity of Mr. Judd, 5,000 copies...were printed." The association's officers and 42 additional directors with location of residence, mostly Va. and D.C., but one from Annapolis, Md., were listed on the back cover, mostly for show, I think, as there is little evidence they were active. For state chamber, see LeRoy Hodges to Harry F. Byrd, 16 Feb. 1926, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

do not have grazing lands down in the valley sufficient to pasture our cattle." The protest urged the committee "not to select this site."[17]

Wise County competition and complaints from Shenandoah grazing land owners were bad enough, but the truly big worry was that Kelsey of the park-seeking committee, known as an admirer of the Great Smokies, had thus far resisted all invitations to visit the Skyland region. He claimed (Pollock wrote) to be "absorbed in private business." Many kinds of persuasions were used. His fellow committeemen let him know they relied on him to inspect the thus-far unexamined northern part of the proposed Shenandoah area. At last he agreed to attend a dinner sponsored by SV Inc. and take a short trip into the mountains next day. The dinner, first planned as a testimonial to Naylor, was quickly revamped to honor Kelsey. Main speaker was H.J. Benchoff, military academy headmaster and a director (soon to be president) of SV Inc.[18]

Benchoff was capable of oration. He dwelt on history, leading up to a suggestion that the United States might wish, through putting the park here, to repay "the mother of States" for lands it once owned but released to form "Maryland, parts of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, West Virginia, Kentucky and even the fringe of North Carolina." What effect the history might have had on Kelsey is unrecorded. But then Benchoff sharpened his aim:

> I understand that one of our great competitors for this park is the Smoky Mountain region.... It is beautiful; it is grand; it is eloquent and all that the honorable commissioner could wish for in the way of native beauty, and yet I submit to you, gentlemen, that it has no qualifications surpassing those which we are offering here.... I should like to picture to you a number of National Parks and many state parks covering this whole beautiful mountain system, for the day may soon come when we shall

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[17] Page News & Courier, 21 Nov. 1924. The piece reprinted from Roanoke Times, 19 Nov. 1924, was signed by R.M. Lynn. The Slemp-Peery bill in Congress was for the vicinity of High Knob (elev. 4162) in the far southwestern corner of Virginia.

[18] Benchoff, p. 9; Naylor, p. 12; Skyland, p. 221. Benchoff (p. 8) reported that shortly before the dinner he had a letter from Harry F. Byrd referring to "the Park in the Blue Ridge area" as "the greatest opportunity for the material advancement of Virginia that has been suggested for generations."

need all of them for our increasing population....

And so I can conceive of this great mountain range as becoming the play ground of the whole eastern section, and when we are through with the rush and dazzling excitement of this modern day, we may be very glad to hasten off into the retreats of nature and there recover our native refuges, fast waning from our grasp....

Standing where I am tonight, a radius of four-hundred miles includes... a population amounting to almost one-third of that of the whole country. Seventy-five per cent of this population could enjoy this National Park at this location in a week-end party. And as this is to be a park to meet the needs of the greatest number who will be attracted, it is not necessary to establish it so far from our Nation's Capital. Let us establish it here, and let us establish another later, farther down the line. (Italics added.)[19]

Pollock was among those lastingly impressed by Benchoff and the Front Royal meeting--and even more impressed by the inspection that began next morning:

We were too far from Skyland to use my horses, and all arrangements, including transportation, had been made by Hugh Naylor. Motoring to the eastern slope of Mount Marshall, we then rode horseback over old logging roads and trails through a primeval forest which it was deemed important for Mr. Kelsey to see.[20] After that we went south by trail between Mount Marshall and the neighboring mountain known as "The Peak" and thence on to Browntown in the Valley, about five miles from the railroad. The last ten miles were ridden in darkness, and of all the trips I made with the various members of the Committee, this was the most memorable because it was the most severe and the region was strange to me. Let the reader take my word for it, that thirty miles on horseback over rough country, climbing or descending steeply most of the time, was no nursery romp.... I was so sore that I could scarcely get out of the saddle. However, Mr. Kelsey was tough and next day, despite bad weather, we set forth again....

Two days later, after varied adventures, what was left of the party reached Skyland after dark. Then Pollock led Kelsey alone up Stony Man:

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[19] H.J. Benchoff, address given at Afton Inn, Front Royal, Va., 6 Dec. 1924, privately reprinted as a six-page pamphlet from Warren Sentinel, 12 Dec. 1924, SNP archives.

[20] I call special attention to the unlikelihood of "logging roads and trails through a primeval forest." Pollock's use of the word primeval may explain a lot--which will become more evident as this history advances.

We tied our horses and climbed the lookout tower whose platform, supported on a structure of thirty-foot poles, rocked in a wind so strong that the skirt of my poncho was continually flapped up over my head. We literally had to hold on to keep from being blown away as Mr. Kelsey just gazed in silence for perhaps five minutes. Then, holding on with one hand, I pointed out Old Rag Mountain, to the east and clearly defined in the moonlight, and, to the north, Mount Marshall, which we had visited two days before and which was almost as distinct, although thirty miles away. Completing the magic circle, the mist-shrouded Piedmont Valley was spread out to the east; The Shenandoah Valley and its faintly-twinkling diamond and ruby lights lay to the west; Skyland, roofs gleaming in the moonlight, was at our feet while, to the south, loomed up the solid bulk of old Hawksbill. In the distance far below we could clearly hear the booming of waterfalls in Dry Run Canyon, and as our fragile tower swayed, we felt as though we were aboard a ship at sea. It was almost unearthly but it all was very grand and since our dinner had been forgotten for a time, I thought: "Why not take this man down the Devil's Climb to Dry Run Cliffs?" When I proposed this...Mr. Kelsey said: "I am now prepared for anything. Go ahead." So down we went to Stony Man Cliffs and from there we descended Devil's Climb, a strange, one hundred and fifty foot stairway of broken rocks. We then pushed on to Raven Nest Rocks, where ravens build their nests in the spring, and, finally, to that duck dinner and so to bed.

Kelsey reached Washington in time for the decision-making session of the committee on December 12. That session's report to Secretary Work reviewed the eight months of investigations and said that many amply scenic areas had been eliminated because they were less than the minimum size agreed upon (500 square miles), or because they were already controlled by the government (in national forests), or because they were populated or had "commercial" use in progress or prospect. Emphasis was put on the fact that "conditions in the East, where all land is held in private ownership, as compared with those existing in the West when national parks were created from Government-owned

lands," made the problem especially difficult. Many areas were found that "could well be chosen." Of these,

> The Great Smoky Mountains easily stand first because of the height of the mountains, depth of valleys, ruggedness of the area, and the unexampled variety of trees, shrubs, and plants.... the Great Smokies have some handicaps which will make the development of them into a national park a matter of delay; their very ruggedness and height make road and other park development a serious undertaking as to time and expense....
>
> The Blue Ridge of Virginia, one of the sections which had your committee's careful study, while secondary to the Great Smokies in altitude and some other features, constitutes in our judgment the outstanding and logical place for the creation of the first national park in the southern Appalachians. We hope it will be made into a national park and that its success will encourage the Congress to create a second park....
>
> It will surprise the American people to learn that a national park site with fine scenic and recreational qualities can be found within a 3-hour ride of our National Capital and within a day's ride of 40,000,000 of our inhabitants. It has many canyons and gorges with beautiful cascading streams. It has some splendid primeval forests, and the opportunity is there to develop an animal refuge of national importance. Along with the whole southern Appalachians, this area is full of historic interest, the mountains looking down on valleys with their many battlefields of Revolutionary and Civil War periods, and the birthplaces of many of the Presidents of the United States. Within easy access are the famous caverns of the Shenandoah Valley.
>
> The greatest single feature, however, is a possible sky-line drive along the mountain top, following a continuous ridge and looking down westerly on the Shenandoah Valley, from 2,500 to 3,500 feet below, and also commanding a view of the Piedmont Plain stretching easterly to the Washington Monument, which landmark of our National Capital may be seen on a clear day.[21]

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[21] The SANP committee did not originate the idea of a skyline drive here; see chap. 5 for more details. As to seeing the Washington Monument--though nearly all the statements made in the surging effort to secure this park have now been proved or disproved, this one has remained a teaser. I have never found anyone who claimed personally to have seen it from anywhere in the park. S.V. Moore reported (PATC Bulletin, July 1949) that he may have seen it on April 10 that year from a height some distance north of the park. Through "6-power binoculars...a slender spire...was observed projecting above the horizon. Several careful examinations convinced me and my companion, Len Stevens, that the object was unmistakably the Washington Monument...like a will-o'-the-wisp. Others in the party were unable to verify this view."

Work invited the committee to dinner that night at Wardman Park Hotel. Also present were Mather and Horace M. Albright (assistant director and/superintendent), Yard, and Rep. Louis Cramton (a congressional friend of the national parks). During discussion someone asked what the park would be called if the recommendation were accepted. Kelsey suggested Shenandoah--"which met with the unanimous approval of those present."[22]

Next day Mather wrote to Rockefeller (who had agreed to pay part of the committee's expenses), praising the report and saying the amount needed was $750. He said Dr. Temple was introducing a bill authorizing the Secretary to determine boundaries, and he enclosed a copy of Interior's press release. The release mentioned "primeval forests," a possible "skyline drive," and a size of "approximately 700 square miles." The resident population was not mentioned, nor any plan for further exploration, though neither Work nor Mather (nor anyone of the NPS staff) had yet inspected the area.[23]

Sunday papers far and near carried the story. A piece/columns long in the Washington Star--by Philips who had been a lyric publicist for the site since September--said "experts predict" Shenandoah "will become America's outstanding national park, a mountain playground and natural museum covering approximately 800 square miles." An editorial in the same issue of the Star boosted the size still farther, to "900 square miles." It said that, "save for a few miles in the lower fringes...the timber growth is virgin," and that Shenandoah "will be to the Easternpart of the United States what the Yellowstone and Yosemite and Rocky Mountain Parks are to the West."[24]

All Virginia seemed ripe for mobilization to complete the victory. Roanoke Chamber of Commerce, previously reluctant because of the Wise County park bill

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[22] SANPC, p. 8; Albright, personal letter, 27 Sept. 1976, my files; and interview with Albright, 14 April 1969, tape in SNP archives.

[23] Mather to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 13 Dec. 1924, and Interior memo for the press, 14 Dec. 1924, National Archives. Gregg, Mather and Rockefeller apparently contributed a total of about $1750 for the committee's expenses. It is obvious that Pollock, SV Inc., and other communities and organizations donated far more in paying inspection-exploration costs. Frugality of the federal govern-

in Congress, sent congratulations to SV Inc., adding:

> We are very anxious to see this park definitely located in Virginia, and since the committee has recommended your section instead of ours, we desire to lend every possible effort to the location as recommended, and to this end we are writing our representative in Congress to lend his influence.[25]

xxxxx Tennessee and North Carolina threatened to fight; at least one Smoky advocate claimed that an inferior area had been given unjustified priority.[26]

A great Christmas gift came from National Parks Association (Herbert Hoover, president; "Mather man" Yard, executive secretary and editor)--an eight-page Bulletin praising Shenandoah and supporting its top priority. Yard described the proposed park as "an irregular strip of virgin forest sixty-six miles long and from eight to eighteen miles wide." He described the historic setting--then:

> Though crossed by several roads, two of them famous in American history, the precipitousness of the range, forbidding profitable exploitation, has saved for us through centuries of civilization more than six hundred square miles of almost untouched native forest.... Even Virginians had not realized their possession of a natural treasure so extraordinary.
>
> Near Skyland, twenty-five miles south of the area's northern point and five miles below the crossing of the Lee Highway at Thornton Gap, there is a narrow saddle ffom which the larger soft woods have been lumbered during the last quarter century; and there are several lesser areas similarly lumbered along old highways farther south. But these forest spots remain, nevertheless, beautiful and all together the partly cut areas are trifling compared with the great body of untouched forest, which constitutes an invaluable exhibit of the wilderness that covered eastern North America from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf when our forefathers settled at Jamestown and Plymouth.

"Stony Man," Yard said, "towers above Shenandoah as high as El Capitan above Yosemite." He took his readers on a journey from Skyland, with the influence

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[25] B.F. Moomaw, C of C secretary, to Secretary D.P. Wine of SV Inc., undated clipping from Harrisonburg Daily News-Record in Zerkel scrapbooks, SNP archives.

[26] Frome 1969, p 185: Col. Chapman, Tennessee leader for Smoky, accused the SANP "committee of yielding to political pressure when it granted priority to a clearly inferior area."

of Pollock easy to spot. He mentioned cliffs where "was fought the finish of a celebrated feud" and said "the neighborhood had been famous for its moonshine" and "was the haven of refuge for bandits and desperadoes who preyed upon the neighborhood settlements." He said "Great Fork Mountain...is the commanding elevation of the range, rising probably to 4,500 feet." He reprinted the park-seeking committee's entire report of December 12. His Bulletin became a bible for Shenandoah enthusiasts.[27]

The Yard text formed the body of a 16-page pamphlet issued, as the new year (1925) got going, by the Virginia State Chamber of Commerce--with romantic Blue Ridge photographs in color (rare then, hand-tinted). Imitative publicity bloomed in newspapers from New York to Texas and sometimes much farther and, soon, in national magazines. But the seesaw with the farther-South continued. On January 6 Sen. Simmons of North Carolina announced a meeting of his state's park commission to adopt a plan for snatching the park. He said he doubted that Secretary Work would support his own committee's priority at the hearings expected soon in the House. Work was reported saying he favored simultaneous creation of Smoky, but Smith of the committee (at a meeting of SV Inc. that elected Benchoff president) said Work still wanted the Virginia park first.[28]

Gov. Trinkle with a "Battalion of 300" invaded Washington to protect Virginia's priority. After a war party at the Senate Office Building, aided by Virginia's Sen. Claude Swanson, the battalion was welcomed at the White House by President Coolidge. It visited General Lord, head of the budget bureau, and Secretary Work. The Secretary said the three states must cooperate on two sites or the whole project was lost. Yet he also suggested (so the news reports said) that the state making the best financial offer might win

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[27] National Parks Bulletin, No. 42, 25 Dec. 1924. It included a full-page map showing a fat, smooth-bordered park.

[28] "Shenandoah National Park in Virginia," Richmond, Doc. No. 3, 1925, SNP archives; Virginia State Chamber of Commerce was organized in 1924; Daily News-Record, 7 Jan. 1925, Richmond Times-Dispatch, 11 Jan. 1925, and News-Record, 16 Jan. 1925.

the southern park. This statement probably related to an understanding (recalled by Benchoff) that the park-seeking committee agreed to Shenandoah on condition Virginia donate the land. On that same day Benchoff announced endorsement of Shenandoah by the American Federation of Woman's Clubs (300,000 women) and the National Civic League. And State Senator Harry F. Byrd (soon to succeed Trinkle as governor) accepted chairmanship of a "Virginia Citizens' Steering Committee on the National Park...for aiding and cooperating with the Virginia Congressional delegation" in pushing needed legislation.[29]

On January 28 Trinkle proclaimed equal endorsement of Smoky and Shenandoah. Virginia and Tennessee had formed a congressional coalition for both, with Sen. McKellar (Tenn.) agreeing with Swanson (Va.) in offering a joint bill. The D.C. commissioners endorsed both parks, and Rep. Temple gave the House a new bill identical with that by Swanson and McKellar. But Sen. Simmons (N.C.) said his state "was watching developments," its citizens not ~~quite~~ sure they wanted Smoky instead of Linville Gorge-Grandfather Mountain. Simmons would wipe out the study already made and start the whole process over.[30]

Early in the morning of January 29--the day the House committee would hold hearings--Rep. Temple said the only obstacle in Shenandoah's path was a North Carolina statement that taking the Blue Ridge area would throw 15,000 people out of their homes. Pollock, Zerkel and others were in Washington prepared to testify that the area's population was only 1,000 to 1,500. There were six House bills--two by Temple, the first for Shenandoah alone; two bills for Smoky alone; two for Grandfather Mountain-Linville Gorge-Roan Mountain. None would actually establish a park or parks; the idea was to set up a commission to recommend boundaries and arrange to get lands. The House committee had letters

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[29] News-Record, 21 Jan. 1925--except the Benchoff recollection that is from Benchoff 1934, p. 10.

[30] Richmond Times-Dispatch, 28 Jan. 1925.

from Work--a long one specifically endorsing Temple's first bill while favoring as an alternate Temple's second bill; shorter ones leaving the door open for either Smoky bill while pushing Shenandoah as top priority; and still shorter ones closing the door on Grandfather.[31]

Chairman N.J. Sinnott (Oregon) called Dr. Temple as first witness, Temple stressed the qualifications of his unpaid committeemen and made a strong case for their recommendations. He said he had conferred with congressmen who had introduced all the House bills and they had agreed to support his two-park bill. Smith and Welch also testified. Welch described Shenandoah as an "unpeopled area" remaining in the "primeval stage" because of "inaccessibility." He said he had seen "a number of large tracts of virgin timber" there. No private citizens were heard--unless in the executive session, unrecorded, that followed the public hearing--though many besides Pollock's group were present. No one opposed either Shenandoah or Smoky, and questions by the House committee brought out nothing significant not already publicly aired. Enactment of the two-park bill in due course seemed assured.[32]

On February 3 U.S. Forest Service officials denied rumors they might oppose the Shenandoah plan. National forest acquisition of the proposed area--rejected years before--had been discussed recently (as to lands near Waynesboro) but rejected again.[33]

On February 13 the Luray paper carried a long article by Pollock, sent from New York where he often visited in winter. His conscience may have been hurting in relation to the mountain people. The park-pushing article included:

> To the mountaineer who has very little property of any value, and who has growing boys and girls, perhaps an old mother and father living

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[31] News-Record, 29 Jan. 1925, and "National Parks in Southern Appalachian Mountains; Hearings Before the Committee on the Public Lands, House of Representatives, 68th Congress, on H.R. 11980," 29 Jan. 1925, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1925.

[32] House hearings document, 1925.

[33] Page News & Courier, 3 Feb. 1925.

on the place, I would say by all means sell your holdings to the Government, and apply for work just as soon as improvements within the Park begin; you will get good pay near home; you probably will not have to leave the farm which you sold to the Government, the old folks can continue to raise the little crops, your growing children will soon have schools to attend, and if you are careful with what you earn, you will soon save up enough money to buy a place elsewhere, if you desire it. Why then, is this occasional growl I hear about being compelled to give up your home and lead a life of slavery? There is nothing to it, my friends. You are not going to have anything taken away from you in the long run, but you are going to have a great deal provided for you by Uncle Sam. It stands to reason that Uncle Sam can't do this thing, if there's going to be a lot of kicking and high prices charged for the land by those who would like to prevent the Park from going through; but from the citizen who has the welfare of his state and county at heart, there is going to be cooperation and assistance, and from all indications, the great majority of the people are with the Park. It would be a fine thing to have everybody friendly, and satisfied. Let those citizens who are familiar with various aspects of this project seek out those who are opposed to it, and try to enlighten them....

If I thought the people owning the land would not get the full worth of their holdings...I would not have identified myself with this project.[34]

Behind-the-scenes negotiations, plus parliamentary maneuverings, put an Appalachian park bill through Congress swiftly--not Temple's two-park bill but one for three parks. It was the Swanson-McKellar bill of the Senate onto which not Grandfather but a possible Mammoth Cave national park was grafted--because the Kentucky congressional delegation had threatened otherwise to throw a monkey wrench and thus stop "unanimous consent" passage. Pollock received a telegram in New York on Lincoln's birthday, 1925, that it had passed the Senate that day and been sent to the House. Then:

The House, in its consideration of the unanimous consent calendar, reached the Southern National Park bill much sooner than expected [Feb. 16]. There were 30 measures ahead of it, and many of these were disposed of

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[34] Page News & Courier, 13 Feb. 1925.

by objections or by passage in a short time. When the measure was reached Rep. Temple explained it....

It took Thirty Years to get some national park bills through Congress, eight years to get the Sequoia national park bill--Blue Ridge Bill Put Over in Thirty Days' Intensive Drive.

"On hand to see victory perch upon their banner" were Byrd, Zerkel, Wine and Pollock, among others.[35]

The bill was signed by President Coolidge on February 21, 1925, just one year and five days after Secretary Work had started to form his Southern Appalachian National Park Committee.

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[35] Harrisonburg Daily News-Record, 18 Feb. 1925.

3

## "Buy an Acre at $6"

A start but only a start had been made toward establishing Shenandoah National Park. Congress and the President had merely authorized the Secretary of the Interior to "determine the boundaries...and to receive definite offers of donations of land and moneys, and to secure such options as in his judgment may be considered reasonable and just for the purchase of lands." He could appoint a commission to help him, and it might later get funds for "necessary expenses...including the salary of one clerk...not to exceed $2,000 per annum, necessary traveling expenses of the members of the commission, and $10 per diem in lieu of actual cost of subsistence, in all not to exceed $20,000."[1]

Secretary Work kept his park-seeking committee as the official commission --Rep. Temple, chairman. Gregg was elected vice-chairman; Smith, secretary. The $20,000 came in the congressional session's "last deficiency act," and a clerk was hired. "Temple and his commission set to work with energy, called meetings in the various areas and discussed the problems ahead, particularly the problem of raising money, for the federal government was committed to the policy of appropriating nothing for purchase of lands."[2]

How could an unpaid part-time commission cope? Director Mather and Dr. Work might help. Mather had written Zerkel at Luray that he hoped to bring the Secretary to look the situation over in early spring, adding "there is no doubt but that the State of Virginia as a whole should be warmly behind this project as it will be of great economic value to them, but necessarily they must be shown."[3]

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[1] Public Law 437, 68th Congress, approved 21 Feb. 1925.

[2] "Final Report of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission to the Secretary of the Interior June 30, 1931," GPO. This SANPC report (pp. 9-22) is my basic source for doings of the commission and will not be further cited in this chapter unless necessary to clear uncertainties. Quote is from John Ise, Our National Park Policy (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1961), p. 255.

[3] [illegible] Jan. [illegible] National Archives. Zerkel to

Time passed. Mather and Work did not come. Virginia State Chamber of Commerce was impatient. It printed forms, "Proposal for Sale of Land for National Park," and sought offers from owners--with prices and descriptions, acreage of virgin timber, of cut-over land, farmed land, burned timber land, and lists of improvements. Responses were not encouraging. Northern Virginia Park Association was impatient too. On March 7, 1925, it staged a banquet for the commission at the City Club in Washington. Mather, Virginia Senators Swanson and Glass, Rep. Harrison, Yard and others were also present.[4]

No clear path opened. Influential people were having second thoughts. Frederick Law Olmsted (the second) was "much perplexed" as to whether the American Society of Landscape Architects should endorse Shenandoah. It deserved to be a public park--that much was true--but a national park? Finally, persuaded by Work and the commission, Olmsted leaned toward yes. But others leaned toward no. Unknown numbers of people would be displaced. Memories surfaced of the 1914 report by forest examiner Hall and weakened belief in the primeval forests.[5]

At the April 28 meeting of the commission the main decisions were that members should go look at Mammoth Cave as a possible park and that as many as possible should "attend the fifth annual conference on State parks to be held at Skyland, Va., May 25 to 28, inclusive." Pollock had felt after he converted Kelsey that his "own particular task of 'selling'...was done" and had relaxed.[6] But he outdid himself for the state parks conference; it might clinch the sale. The Luray paper said, as "the advance guard of the 250 park leaders" gathered:

> George F. Pollock...has been an army in himself.... Fifteen carpenters...doubling the size of the kitchen and dining halls and porches. A total of fifty employees are busy preparing the Camp for guests....

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[4] SANPC plus George Freeman Pollock, Skyland (Chesapeake Book Co., 1960), endnotes p. 281 (by Stuart E. Brown, Jr., ed.). The Virginia chamber forms (blank) are scattered through the Zerkel papers, SNP archives.

[5] Olmsted to Bremer W. Pond, 20 May 1925, National Archives. The park-seeking committee may have picked Shenandoah without knowing of the Hall report; the copy I found in National Archives carried evidence the committee acquired it in October 1925.

> New equipment includes a 3500-pound range that had to be rushed here by express. Twenty-five waiters are to be employed.... The Skyland stables of 35 saddle horses have been more than doubled. Joe Johnson has brought over 15 fine animals from Rappahannock to assist in taking the parties up and down the mountain and over the long trails.[7]

Secretary Work came to sound the keynote in the evening of the conference's first day. He spoke of long cycles and deep forces:

> It may be the urge of the returning cycle that is drawing our people from the conveniences of modern homes...to the more natural surroundings of the outdoors.... It may be the call of the primitive in us rebelling against the hothouse existence to which we have become accustomed; it may be the instinct of self-preservation working to insure the survival of the species by the disciplinary effect of resistance to the elements, sometimes seen in those who go out to walk in a storm....
>
> And here in the Blue Ridge of Virginia, in the very heart of civilized America, lies preserved for our use a bit of nature that is identical with the virgin territory found by Capt. John Smith and his heroic followers. Its very inaccessibility has kept it intact, and in the hurried distractions of modern life your forefathers have not had the time to conquer this wilderness, which is one of the few remaining in the East. It is now, I hope, to be dedicated to the encouragement of our instinctive tendency to return to nature.[8]

He pushed "Director Mather's slogan, 'A State park every hundred miles,'" and pictured chains of small parks linking via improved highways the great national parks, of which Shenandoah would be one. But he had no time now to seek the "wilderness" he discussed so glowingly, and he could hardly have understood Blue Ridge realities, for he said as he was leaving for Washington after speaking that he hoped to return in a year for the formal opening of the new national park.[9]

An impromptu event at the conference would prove significant. Dan Wine--secretary of Shenandoah Valley, Inc. (SV Inc.) and of Northern Virginia Park

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[7] Page News & Courier, 22 May 1925.

[8] Printed in SANPC report, 1931, pp. 10-12.

[9] Page News & Courier, 29 May 1925.

Association (NVPA)--came up with a slogan for a Shenandoah fund drive, "Buy an Acre at $5" (later $6). Howard B. Bloomer (recent board chairman of Dodge Motor Co.) stepped forward with $50, saying, "I want to be the first purchaser of ten acres." Pollock caught the sudden fever and "bought" 1,000 acres. Others followed--"a Pittsburgh millionaire," a National Geographic editor, Philips of the Washington Star.[10]

"Pollock," the Luray paper reported after the conference, "never took his clothes off Tuesday night.

> On Wednesday his voice had gone and he articulated only by sounding the bugle but 'twas a glorious victory.... Never were distinguished delegates better fed and better treated....
>
> It was cold; ice was an inch thick several mornings; icicles clung to the trees; dozens of the delegates wore light underwear and had no overcoats; but as great stacks of wood drawn from the primeval forest roared up the chimnies they forgot they were ever cold.... Everybody rode horseback, ladies included. Governor and Mrs. Trinkle were among the faithful equestrians.... President John Barton Payne, who presided, was originally from Warrenton [Va.]. He is a fighting advocate of the park.

The paper said the "great majority" of delegates were so impressed they "go out as apostles."[11]

But not all of them did. The secretary of the Massachusetts Forestry Association, influential in conservation, reported after returning to Boston:

> I spent two full days climbing mountains and walked all the way up the gorge to see the water falls. There is no question but that this section is very beautiful, and if the Luray Caverns were part of it I would be very much inclined to agree with the committee, but I found that it was the general concensus...among the delegates that the area does not measure up to National Park quality.[12]

Mather, unlike Work, took advantage of his first visit by exploring. He later wrote:

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[10] Harrisonburg Daily News-Record, 29 May 1925.

[11] Page News & Courier, 29 May 1925.

[12] Harris A. Reynolds, Report to NPA, 1 June 1925, National Archives.

> Our State Park Conferences have been held in many picturesque spots ...but the most picturesque was our meeting which has just closed at Skyland, Virginia, where 4,000 feet above sea level we held the most inspirational conference of all.... I am sure that both the state park movement and the proposed Appalachian National Parks will receive a distinct impetus from this successful and well-attended meeting.[13]

Mather proved right about the impetus; the doldrums ended. On May 27 the Temple commission sent out a directive:

> To facilitate this work the commission considered it necessary that an organization statewide in scope be incorporated to act for the citizens and organizations of such state for the purpose of centralizing their efforts...and in order that it may be the custodian of monies, lands, and options for the purchase of lands within the proposed areas to be held in trust for park purposes.[14]

An informal Shenandoah National Park "Bureau" had already evolved from "a resolution of Shenandoah Valley, Inc...and an agreement with the Virginia State Chamber of Commerce." Zerkel, Wine, Naylor and Benchoff were among the members --but not Pollock. This bureau accepted the commission's directive, asked a lawyer to draw up papers for a "non-prophit sharing...Shenandoah National Park Incorporated," and set June 29 for a "statewide" meeting.[15]

The State Chamber of Commerce and the Lynchburg Chamber protested, saying no new organization was needed. A professional fund raiser came from New York to the June 29 meeting--in hope of a contract--but few Virginians attended. The bureau issued a statement stressing the crucial importance of pleasing the Temple commission and set a new date, July 7. Attendance was again sparse, but

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[13] Mather, letter quoted in Skyland, p. 231, no date given. See also Annual Report of NPS, 1925, pp. 2-3 and 20. Mather wrote nothing about "virgin forest"; indications he may have felt slightly disillusioned and passed the feeling to others--maybe Yard, Work and Rockefeller--would emerge later. But Mather and the others remained "loyal" to Shenandoah.

[14] H.J. Benchoff, "Report to Arno B. Cammerer..." privately printed, 20 Aug. 1934, p. 12. This 22-page booklet is the source, unless otherwise cited, of all information attributed in this chapter to Benchoff. See also SANPC 1931, p. 18.

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the state charter had come and the meeting adopted constitution and by-laws for "Shenandoah National Park Association, Inc." Benchoff was elected president. Men from Richmond, Newport News and Marion, though not present, were elected vice presidents. Hollis Rinehart of Charlottesville, where the meeting was held (nearer the center of the state), was elected treasurer. Both Wine and Zerkel were nominated for secretary. They were asked to leave while a vote was taken but quickly returned suggesting Wine be secretary and Zerkel executive secretary "at a salary of three thousand dollars and expenses...to be paid as funds are available." The suggestion carried. An executive committee was "empowered to contract with the Bankers Service Corporation [of New York; an affiliate of American Hardware Corp., New Britain, Conn.] or any similar Corporation for the raising of two million five hundred thousand dollars, the cost of same not to exceed ten per cent of the total amount subscribed." (For a feeling of the value of $2\frac{1}{2}$ million in 1925, consider that mountain acres worth $3 to $6 then could be sold for $1,000 to $3,000 in 1978.)

SNPA Inc., having thus taken over, boldly guaranteed launching expenses for a "Buy an Acre at $6" drive. Bankers Service would, the representative said, put 25 paid experts in the field and raise the needed amount before Congress convened in December. "The whole East" was seen as the territory. "Great financial interests and the wealthy classes in the big cities" would be tapped. All parts of Virginia would be asked to do their part. One dollar per acre pledged would be collected at once, the balance due on billing.

Pathé News was already making a movie of the proposed park. Promotional articles written in the quiet months began to appear. Gov. Trinkle was the author in Journeys Beautiful (New York); Zerkel, in Country Homes. An article in Review of Reviews borrowed freely from Pollock answers to the government questionnaire and from Yard's extravagant early enthusiasm. The Democratic nominee for Governor of Virginia, Harry Flood Byrd--whose father, a cottage

owner at Skyland, had given free legal advice to Pollock--became chairman of an "Advisory Committee...composed of thirty prominent men of the East." SNPA Inc. announced it was setting up--in addition to its headquarters at Luray--branch offices in Woodstock, Harrisonburg, and Washington, D.C. It did not reveal that all were already existing offices--of Zerkel, Benchoff, Wine, and Star writer Philips.[16]

The drive would begin September 1 in Page, Rockingham and Shenandoah counties, with Capt. John Paul of Harrisonburg as tri-county chairman. Paul, the lawyer who had drawn up the SNPA Inc. papers, declared that "if the people of Virginia are in earnest in wanting the first great Southern National Park ...they must make up their minds to furnish the money."[17]

Virginia's burst of ambition worried Tennessee and North Carolina; pleased, then bothered, the Temple commission. Temple and Kelsey snatched back part of the initiative by visiting Shenandoah to start a boundary study, using aerial photographs. They said Army aviation would take new pictures of base lines. Fighting land speculation, they said tracts priced too high would be excluded. The commission decided to employ, with its own limited funds, "five men of experience to obtain options." But, "after a brief trial with two men...within the Shenandoah area, it was found that this plan was going to be more expensive than had been expected and, furthermore, that the results were not satisfactory."[18]

Persistent disunity in North Carolina endangered the whole Appalachian plan. The commission had already warned that "the opposition of certain business interests" to Smoky might push that park out of North Carolina--into Tennessee only--but the opposition kept on. In mid-August the Knoxville Democrat printed

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[16] E. Lee Trinkle, "The Valley of the Shenandoah--The Site of Virginia's National Park," Journeys Beautiful, July 1925; L. Ferdinand Zerkel, "Shenandoah--The East's First Great Park," Country Homes Magazine, July-Aug. 1925; and Plummer F. Jones, "The Shenandoah National Park in Virginia," Review of Reviews, July 1925. For SNPA advisory committee (primarily for prestige) and offices, Daily News-Record, 13 Aug. 1925, and Page News & Courier, 14 Aug. 1925.

[17]

a cartoon showing Tennessee with an acceptable park plan inviting recalcitrant North Carolina and Virginia to join it and enter the gate of Congress. The same issue reported a fresh inspection of Smoky---by/Cammmmr Cammerer, an assistant to Mather, accompanied by Kelsey and by Pollock. Cammerer said Smoky was the only Carolina site now possible. Pollock too praised Smoky--and invited its leaders to visit Skyland as his personal guests.[19]

But the farther-South's fear of Virginia's pending fund drive soon mgm engulfed and dissolved other problems. North Carolina's park commission warned Secretary Work that such an aggressive drive might render any other park in the Appalachians impossible. The Temple commission summoned all three states for peace talks. Tennessee leader D.C. Chapman proposed that after Virginia completed its drive inside its own state, they all "join hands." He said both parks "would be lost should there be a fight, caused by competition in raising funds and the lining up of political endorsements for the individual Parks, but that...if the two could be put on even keel and kept so...Congress would accept both Parks at the same time, and there would be no friction." Prolonged discussion brought no decision--except to hold another peace session in Richmond.[20]

SNPA Inc. met at Richmond's Jefferson Hotel the morning of September 9 and heard a vague report from Bankers Service that the fund drive was "progressing nicely." Pros and cons of cooperating with Smoky were argued--without concensus. SNPA Inc. was host at a luncheon for the Smoky groups. All then met with the Temple commission. Tennessee and North Carolina, pushed into unity at last, came out "100% for cooperation" with Virginia. SNPA Inc. accepted. A committee of five was named to work out details. It included Welch of the commission, Chapman and State Sen. Mark Squires (N.C.) for Smoky, Benchoff and Dr. Joseph W. Smith (president, Virginia Chamber) for Shenandoah. The five proposed an

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[19] Knoxville (Tenn.) Democrat, 13 Aug. 1925.

[20] Michael Frome, Strangers in High Places (Doubleday & Co., 1969), p. 188, supplementing SNPA Inc. original minutes, entry of 24 Aug. 1925.

Appalachian National Parks Association with themselves as incorporators. Agreement was worded into a resolution:

> Resolved, That the associations agree upon a plan of cooperation for the general campaign outside of the States of Tennessee, North Carolina, and Virginia, which is to include the District of Columbia.
>
> Any campaigns in either of these three States above mentioned are to be conducted by their respective State agencies, and funds so raised are to be controlled by said agencies.
>
> Expenses and guaranties of the general campaign outside of the above-mentioned States are to be borne by the two parks on a 50-50 basis....
>
> Division of funds from the general campaign is to be made on a 50-50 basis except that those designated shall go to the area designated by the donor and shall not be included in the division.
>
> That the Shenandoah National Park Association (Inc.) be requested to revise its contract to apply only to the State of Virginia and the District of Columbia and that the new association be organized for a general campaign and authorized to enter into a contract...[SNPA Inc.] being relieved of this portion of the contract now existing.[21]

Newspapers in all three states, and some elsewhere, gave front-page headlines to the four-organization declaration of peace.

The Virginia fund drive had elements of the fantastic. William E. Carson --who, for the state government, later supervised collection of pledges--paid a tribute of truth clothed in irony,

> to the wonderful, the marvelous, and able campaign that was put on to sell the Shenandoah National Park; it was as ably done a piece of salesmanship as the state will ever see again, for not only was the park idea sold, but pledges from the people were taken in amounts running from six to twenty thousand dollars and when we analyzed the campaign we found that little or no information was at hand as to the extent of the area, as to the value of the land within the area, as to the condition of the titles of the land, as to whether the people wanted to sell their lands, nor was there any definite assurance that the United States Government would

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[21] SNPA Inc. minutes, 9 Sept. 1925, for the day's events, and SANPC 1931, pp. 15-16, for text of resolution.

accept it, and yet the idea was sold, the area in which it was to be established named, and approximately twenty-six thousand pledges secured. This great work was done by the Shenandoah National Park Association, Incorporated, and its subsidiary, The Bankers Service Corporation.[22]

A new pamphlet, "Virginia's Proposed National Park," was produced by SNPA Inc., repeating the now-standard story but including also a statement that "Showalter, of the editorial staff of the National Geographic Magazine, does not hesitate to estimate the money results to the people of Virginia" of obtaining a national park "as at least one hundred million dollars annually." He said he based this figure largely on Washington state's experience with Mount Rainier National Park.[23]

Leaders of SNPA Inc. selected, persuaded and appointed chairmen of territories throughout Virginia, provided pledge cards and promotional materials, answered innumerable questions and otherwise provided encouragement. The files of Zerkel and Benchoff grew voluminous.[24] Whether ~~Whether~~ Bankers Service really put 25 experts in the field was (and is) undetermined. Few or many, the "experts" kept on the move, gave speeches, tried to tighten up and inspire sectional teams, sometimes recruited workers and gave them pep talks, sought publicity and generally built an impression of a vast and inexorable movement.

A "Buy Acres" meeting drew a large crowd to Luray on the opening day of the drive. The Pathe movie showed waterfalls, scenic mountains, flowers and forests, and the magnificence of Luray and Page Valley (part of Shenandoah Valley) as seen from Skyland. Main speaker was Edwin L. Quarles, vaguely identified as a former Luray boy now with "banking interests in New York." Bankers

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[22] "Conserving and Developing Virginia, Report of W.E. Carson, Chairman, State Commission on Conservation and Development, July 26, 1926 to December 31, 1934," report on park (in Carson's words) beginning on p. 23, SNP archives.

[23] Copy of pamphlet in National Archives. ~~(maybe elsewhere too).~~

[24] Zerkel files are in SNP archives. Howard J. Benchoff (headmaster, Massanutten Academy, Woodstock, Va.) wrote me on 3 Feb. 1948 that he had several "cases of files" that "deal with our whole effort in a very personal way." Because of limited time and because essential information was found elsewhere, I have never gone to see them. I do not know whether they have been saved.

Service was apparently not mentioned. Quarles's original contribution was a statement that 10,000 saddle horses would be needed in the park to meet the demands of 1,000,000 tourists:

> I can see that the Blue Ridge National Park, if established, will become the greatest horseback riding area in the Western Hemisphere. People will go to Parks in autos, but when they get there they will demand horses to ride through the bridle paths.... I mention this because since I have been back among my home people I have been asked what would become of the great cattle industry which thrives on the pastures fields in the mountains. I answer this right now. The horse-breeding industry will take the place of the cattle industry...and the maintenance of these thousands of horses... will create demands for hay and corn. Farmers...will have a market right at their door.[25]

There were numerous criticisms of Bankers Service--insufficient publicity on local levels, territories abandoned without completion of canvass, inadequate reporting of pledges and cash. SNPA Inc. met to consider them. Benchoff wanted the firm to employ a newspaperman who was really "a native of Virginia" so he "could sense the various communities and cooperate with the various newspapers in a way that would place the Park publicity squarely up to the people." All original signed pledge cards must be turned over to the executive secretary (Zerkel) promptly and often. He would record them, after which the treasurer would keep them in a safety deposit box. Zerkel was authorized to hire a stenographer to help cope with the paper work. The drive went a bit more smoothly.

Yard, "one of the nation's noted park experts," was persuaded to issue a public statement confirming the area's quality. He emphasized the "millions of visitors and of capital" the park would bring to Virginia. Pollock helped by sending to "Skyland Guests" a two-page appeal for quick and liberal donations. It included a dire warning that

> this magnificent area...is now on the brink of ruin. By this I mean that the chestnut blight has taken hold of our Blue Ridge Mountains, and no man

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[25] Harrisonburg Daily News-Record, 2 Sept. 1925.

nor body of men that now exist in the State of Virginia can cope with this menace. In two or three years, these mountains (unless the National Park is established) will be covered with the dead chestnut trees.... My personal experience in the lifetime of fighting fires around Skyland has taught me that it is difficult enough to control such fires as things have been, but with these great chestnut trees towering high and so inflammable that during the dry spells a single match is enough to start them burning, and would, in destroying themselves, create so hot a fire, that all the surrounding nearby trees would also be destroyed. Even down to the depths of the Canyons, where are now left a few areas of primeval forests, these fires would get in their deadly work. What then will be the Blue Ridge Mountains for recreation or health? All the beautiful scenery gone, never to be replaced![26]

When the drive lagged, Virginians were publicly prodded, shamed or scared. A widely printed story, source unidentified, facts unproved, challenged:

Kentucky has obtained almost overnight $1,500,000 for the purchase of the Mammoth Cave section.... The Kentuckians, with money in hand, will go to the next session of Congress and announce that they are ready to deliver, free of cost to the Government, a site for the proposed park east of the Mississippi.

The drive in Virginia has been going forward for three months. Twenty-two of the one hundred counties have been canvassed, and approximately $300,000 has been subscribed.... The Southern Appalachian National Park Commission has given Virginians another month of grace to raise the funds.[27]

As the year was running out, the commission's vice-chairman published an appeal, emphasizing the scenic roads and other development that NPS would bring:

It will restock...with native game, so that elk, deer and buffalo can again be seen in herds in the East....

Dr. Work, being a physician as well as an administrator, thinks of these Parks in terms of outdoor health of Eastern America. Our Commission, being composed of practical men, thinks with him also of the business, social, and political advantages of the mingling of the North with the

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[26] Yard, News-Record, 1 Oct. 1925. Pollock, circular 15 Oct. 1925, SNP archives; it is interesting that there are now but "a few acres of primeval forests" in "the depths of the Canyons"--only a year after there were 600 square miles of "virgin forest."

[27] Baltimore Sun, 6 Dec. 1925, the item datelined Harrisonburg, Va., 5 Dec.

South, of the West with the East. Surely democracy can have no better school-room than a National Park where all meet equals to learn and enjoy.[28]

Nevertheless, the doldrums returned. Benchoff explained that the "task was new and, despite strenuous efforts by all concerned, the results were not ...satisfactory." The drive was halted for analysis. SNPA Inc. met, facing failure. Zerkel reported only 54,285 "acres at $6"--mostly money pledges but including offers to donate directly 4,359 acres. Rinehart reported total money received at $43,549.84, of which $39,000 had been disbursed to Bankers Service and all but $441.84 paid out for other expenses. Zerkel had worked ten-to-sixteen-hour days for more than six months as executive secretary and been paid only $1,000. Bankers Service felt obligated to complete the campaign in Virginia, D.C., and two counties of West Virginia, and Hagerstown and Frederick in Maryland, but was no longer willing to attempt an Eastwide effort.

Then Gov. Trinkle and governor-elect Byrd agreed to (and did) preside together at a pep meeting in Richmond. Mather came and spoke. Benchoff reported:

> The discussions were most spirited.... The leading citizens of the State, representing the most important industries, institutions and organizations ...were willing to accept service in this cause. The opinion of the meeting was expressed perhaps most admirably by Dr. Edwin A. Alderman, President of the University of Virginia, who said that, "It would be a tragic misfortune if Virginia should pass up this opportunity to obtain a National Park."

Trinkle, just before leaving office, issued an official proclamation "earnestly" calling upon all Virginians "to lend every aid and all encouragement." He said "Virginia is the Mother of Commonwealths" and within a hundred miles of the proposed park the most crucial history of the United States was made. Just after becoming governor, Byrd took the chairmanship of a Statewide

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[28] William C. Gregg, "Two New National Parks?" The Outlook, 30 Dec. 1925. According to his testimony of 11 May 1926, before the Senate committee on public lands and surveys, Gregg was a director of The Outlook magazine.

Fund-Getters Committee and wrote Benchoff he hoped "that by this time our people understand the enormous and permanent results promised us by the success of this enterprise." He stressed not only "preservation of forests, watersheds and the animal and plant life" but also "education, Americanization and recreation." He forecast that the park would encourage investment from outside Virginia in "our resources" and bring "enormous increases of the amount of cash going into the various normal channels of trade." The Temple commission extended its deadline for raising funds to April 1 (1926).[29]

Along with each pledge card now went a blue pamphlet with "HARRY BYRD WANTS IT--for Virginia!" on the cover, and inside, "EVERYBODY WANTS IT!" Why? Primarily because the park "would distribute annually in this state at least $100,000,000 of tourists' money"--and the probable result in permanent settlers would resemble that in California where 900,000 of the present citizens came first as tourists. The goal of $2,500,000 was reiterated. We can still "put the whole matter through at this session of Congress."[30]

Richmond Times-Dispatch began a series of illustrated articles about the great national parks of the West, with frequent insertions of impressive Blue Ridge pictures showing how Virginia deserved a place in the same respected category. Park publicity, advertising and speeches were "in" throughout the state. The drive surged even in the General Assembly where State Sen. Holman Willis of Roanoke introduced an extraordinary bill. It would authorize the State Geological Commission to issue certificates of indebtedness totalling $2,000,000. Owners of park-area land would be paid in these certificates, that could be cashed in installments annually for ten years. The bill would

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[29] Mather participation, Washington Star, 14 Jan. 1926. Trinkle proclamation, 28 Jan. 1926, in Governor's papers, Virginia State Library, and in Benchoff, p. 14-15. Byrd action and statement, News-Record, 6 Feb. 1926.

[30] Pamphlets and blank pledge cards, SNP archives. The pamphlet was signed by Benchoff as president of SNPA Inc. The back cover showed Byrd as chairman of "state campaign executive committee" and listed eleven prominent citizens (throughout Virginia, plus one in D.C.) as regional chairmen.

appropriate $200,000 for 1927 to be used for cashing 1926 certificates. "Buy Acres" donations could be used to cash the certificates dated 1927 and on. No interest would be paid.[31]

A "Park Week" was set, and Gov. Byrd wired regional chairmen that full quotas should be raised by the end of that week. Benchoff pointed to the Smoky campaign just starting in North Carolina, saying $350,000 had been collected almost instantly there and that it was "unthinkable" for Virginia to "lose the park."[32]

Sen. Willis's first bill was labeled "unconstitutional," so he introduced a second. This one would have the state highway commission allocate funds to build state highways in the proposed park--but not build them, assuming they would shortly be built by Uncle Sam. The state allocations could then go into the park land fund. He estimated the amount as $200,000. Rockingham County fund-getters seized the thought and worked out figures showing $2,000 would be saved annually in their county because the park would maintain county roads inside the boundaries. "If the other park-area counties have the same proportional mileage," the fund-getters declared, "counties will be relieved of maintenance cost of 660 miles of roads." So the counties could afford to donate substantial funds.[33]

A few "moss-backed fossils" criticized. A Norfolk attorney wrote Byrd objecting to the pressure on individuals and to transferring the scenic land to the federal government. If the park would be such a great thing, Vifginia should keep it and thus get "income from concessions, taxation of improvements and development of the water-power." It would be "a serious matter...to part with a resource of so many hundred millions of dollars" and to renounce "control of protective jurisdiction and of the fountainheads of rivers."[34]

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31 News-Record, 11 Feb. 1926.

32 News-Record, 17 Feb. 1926, Byrd and Benchoff items in same issue.

33 Richmond Times-Dispatch, 16 Feb. 1926, and News-Record, 20 Feb. 1926.

34 G.M. Dillard to Byrd, 11 Feb. and 25 Feb. 1926, and Byrd to Dillard,

A fund-getter in Roanoke protested the 10% commission to Bankers Service, saying it was causing "considerable lukewarmness.... The experts have rendered us very little assistance, and all of the work except clerical...has been necessarily thrown upon our own busy men." Byrd answered that he had had nothing to do with the Bankers Service contract but that it would be up for review shortly and might be changed.[35]

Florida, the boosters' inspiration, was brought into the publicity through Shenandoah Valley, Inc. On March 12--aboard the "Apple Blossom Special"--the editor of the Harrisonburg paper sent a dispatch that was bannered, "Get National Park and Watch Virginia Crow, Florida Says":

> St. Augustine--That statement summarized the opinions of a score of leading Florida real estate developers given to Col. Howard J. Benchoff and others in their tour of fourteen Florida cities.
>
> Col. Benchoff...told them of the park movement, of the hopes of Virginians, and asked their opinion. Their answer was that the creation of a great national park in the Blue Ridge mountains should stimulate a "Virginia development," will bring thousands of tourists to the state and from this tourist traffic will come investors and developers. It was learned that one of the Coral Gables officials has already been in the Valley, has made a preliminary survey.[36]

Railroads were contributing. Fredericksburg & Potomac and Atlantic Coast Line each pledged $10,000. Byrd thanked them, saying "this action is consistent with my expectation that the railroads would, upon a mere suggestion of the need ...willingly demonstrate their policy of progressive cooperation." But when he brought SNPA Inc. directors, Bankers Service and other key leaders to meet with him in the governor's office, he called some railroad pledges too low--for instance, $12,000 by Norfolk & Western that paralleled the entire western edge

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[35] James P. Woods to Byrd, 9 March 1926, and Byrd to Woods, 11 March 1926, Governor's papers, Virginia State Library. Roanoke was not exempted from the 10% commission, but Richmond was exempted with Byrd's backing in advance of any drive action there, and no commission was paid on a $5,000 donation by Natural Bridge of Virginia whose owners simply would not pledge

[36] John R. Crown, News-Record, 13 March 1926.

of the proposed park. Smith of the Temple commission said an offer by L & N Railway of its entire Colossal Cave property (value $500,000) in the Mammoth Cave area might be a useful wedge to increase railroad pledges in Virginia.[37]

The Virginia drive reached Washington. First contribution there was $1,000 by the Star, and at the end of two days $20,000 had been pledged. A banquet was held to spread the action. Shenandoah was called "the greatest business proposition which has presented itself in the history of Washington." By whom, the news reports did not say, though they named the main speakers--Mather, Sen. Swanson, Col. Smith, Pollock's friend George H. Judd, and Dr. Showalter of National Geographic. Yet the drive in the nation's capital moved only by starts and stalls and never met expectations.[38]

Congress was far along, and the Temple commission's final deadline passed. Benchoff reported $1,249,154 in pledges and cash--by Willis bill, $200,000; by Richmond city, $205,000; by the rest of Virginia, $775,414; and by a few places just outside Virginia, including Washington, $68,740. Upon receiving the report the commission went into a days-long session "to decide whether the amount is Satisfactory" and to prepare a report for Secretary Work.

The campaign had been phenomenal. It was in a way what Benchoff later called it, "a victory for Virginia...unprecedented in her annals." And it had, as Zerkel would point out, "accomplished the first all-State activity that broke down the age-old jealousies and 'trading' between the Old Dominion's 'Five Grand Divisions': The Valley, Piedmont, Southside, Tidewater and the Southwest." But now it was dying far short of its goal. Its cost and the cost of collecting

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[37] Byrd letters, 23 March 1926, Governor's papers, Virginia State Library, and SNPA Inc. minutes, 26 March 1926. Bankers Service people meeting with Byrd were R.B. Nisbet, president; T.L. Farrar, ass't to president; Adrian Wychgel, director, SNP campaign; and Edwin L. Quarles, publicity manager--names seldom appearing in news items and now virtually forgotten in Virginia.

[38] Washington Post, 26 March 1926; Washington Star, 30 March 1926; and other clippings in National Archives and SNP archives. Also Col. Robert H. Harper, Washington chairman of SNPA Inc., to Mather, 6 April 1926, National Archives.

pledges were estimated at $100,000 to $150,000 and might go higher. Bankers Service claimed a loss of $28,000 and insisted the contract called for further large payments.[39]

Some of the pledges, including the $200,000 credited to the Willis bill, would never be collected. But maybe the failure in success would not be fatal. Having felt in March that the drive would fall short, Byrd had gone to see Secretary Work and been assured that "they [the Temple commission and the Appalachian National Parks Association?] can raise $1,200,000 out of the State." Byrd had even moved beyond the fund campaign to ways of acquiring vast acreages from owners unwilling to sell. Almost a month before taking over as governor, he had suggested a new state agency to bring the park to a live birth while also developing Virginia's other natural resources. It would absorb existing state agencies dealing with ports, water power, geological research and state forests and would administer the state advertising fund. A bill was soon drafted and a copy sent to the Temple commission.[40]

Welch commented from New York on this "Park Authority" bill that he had studied "very carefully":

> It would be most unfortunate if the condemnation proceedings would have to be conducted by juries or through Commissioners appointed by local Courts as this would open the door for much unfortunate and unwarranted land speculation and might easily make the power of eminent domain almost useless by establishing fictitious values and unwarranted awards.
>
> I speak of this particularly, since we have had so much trouble in New York State with one or two carelessly drawn condemnation statutes, notably one of which has cost the County of Westchester and the State...a good many millionm dollars in condemning the lands for the Bronx Parkway.
>
> Your bill seems to have been drawn on such broad terms that the Park Authority, with the consent of the Governor, would be able to make rules and

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[39] News-Record, 5 April 1926, and Benchoff, pp. 15-16.

[40] Byrd to R. Gray Williams, 23 March 1926, Virginia State Library, and News-Record, 12 Jan. 1926.

regulations to meet all contingencies and I think this of great importance.[41]

Benchoff had always hoped the federal government would do the land buying even if it would not furnish the money. Byrd had also wanted "the Government to undertake the acquisition...but was informed by the Park Commission...that Virginia would be expected to do this, and I had prepared the bill to establish the machinery."[42]

This bill, authorizing the Commission on Conservation and Development, was passed before the General Assembly adjourned in 1926. Virginia, though drastically short of funds, was thus legally ready to attempt the next step. But it could not do so without approval of the Temple commission and Secretary Work or without further action by Congress.

The Temple commission's long meeting lasted from April 5 through April 8. Though not fully satisfied with the fund drives, it built optimism into its report to Work, crediting SNPA Inc. with raising "a minimum of $1,200,000 for the purchase of the proposed Shenandoah National Park" (and organizations in Tennessee and North Carolina with having "raised jointly the total sum of $1,066,693.91" for Smoky).

> In addition, these organizations reported that they have obtained many signed options covering considerable acreage. The Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association, the Great Smoky Mountains (Inc.), and the Shenandoah National Park Association (Inc.) have entered into an agreement to carry on a national campaign to procure additional and sufficient funds to purchase substantially all the lands within the purchase areas of the designated Shenandoah National Park and the Smoky Mountains National Park.

Both were therefore recommended--to become national parks when minimum acreages "have been transferred in fee simple to the United States." Shenandoah's boundary, taking in approximately 521,000 acres, was described as follows:

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[42] Byrd to Benchoff, 13 April 1926, Virginia State Library.

[41] W.A. Welch to Byrd, 15 Feb. 1926, Virginia State Library.

> Beginning at a point about 1 mile west of Front Royal at the highway crossing of the Norfolk & Western Railway and thence following the railroad right of way in a southwesterly direction to Kimble [Kimball?], thence following public highways via Valleyburg to the intersection of the highway and the Norfolk & Western Railway to a point about 1 mile west of Marksville, thence again following in a southwesterly direction the Norfolk & Western Railway right of way to a point about 4 miles north of Shenandoah, thence following public highways along the foothills of the Blue Ridge and in part along the Norfolk & Western Railway right of way to a point about one-quarter of a mile east of Waynesboro Junction, thence following the Midland Trail in a southerly and easterly direction to Afton, thence following the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway to an intersection of public highways with the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway about 1 mile west of Crozet, thence following public highways in a northeasterly direction via Whitehall, Nortonsville, Stanardsville, Wolftown, Criglersville, Hughesville, Sperryville, and Washington (Va.), back to the beginning near Front Royal.[43]

The proposed area extended far outside the realm of secluded mountain folk and embraced large acreages of normally prosperous farms, orchards and hamlets.

Work congratulated the commission and sent the report to Congress. On April 14 identical bills--to establish Shenandoah and Smoky but not Mammoth Cave where funds and lands in prospect were considered insufficient, after all--were introduced by Temple in the House and Swanson in the Senate. Minimum acreages for protection by the National Park Service were 250,000 for Shenandoah and 300,000 for Smoky. Development for public use could come only after "a major portion of the remainder of such area shall have been accepted by" the Secretary.[44]

Time left in the congressional session was short; the agenda was crowded; unanimous consent had become a virtual necessity. But Kentuckians again threatened legislative sabotage because Mammoth was omitted. It seemed too much:

> Virginia is reluctant to believe--in fact, Virginia will not believe except it be forced to do so by the facts--that Kentucky will assume a

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[43] Southern Appalachian National Park Commission, Report to Secretary of the Interior, 9 April 1926, printed in SANPC report 1931.

[44] SANPC 1931, pp. 21-22, and Washington Post, 15 April 1926.

> dog-in-the-manger role to the point of defeating the ambitions of Virginia, Tennessee and North Carolina to be chosen by Congress as sites for great national parks. And yet Kentucky is making a determined fight for inclusion of its own Mammoth Cave area...in the bill..and may in its vigorous enthusiasm carry its battle to the point where four States instead of one will be disappointed.[45]

Rep. Harrison (of Shenandoah's district) and Rep. Thatcher of Kentucky were among those continuing to negotiate. Harrison would not add Mammoth unless Work approved--because it is "better to have Kentucky against you than the Interior Department." Gov. Byrd wrote Virginians in Congress that "no stone should be left unturned to secure...the bill." Sen. Swanson then conferred with Kentuckians and was "hopeful." When the bill was to come before committee, Byrd sent Swanson a review of all Virginia had done to get ready to buy park lands and to donate lands owned by Virginia and its counties, including delinquent tax lands.[46]

Work remained adamant, so neither house amended the bill to mollify Kentucky. A small but significant amendment asked by Tennessee leaders was made, reducing minimum acreage for acceptance of Smoky for protection from 300,000 to 150,000, giving Smoky a lead over Shenandoah. As for the Kentuckians, they introduced their own bill, and nobody saw fit to fight it. The House committee approved both bills on May 11, after hearings with no opposition. The Senate committee let that day pass without decision, except arranging to hear next day the witnesses that had testified for the House. Then it approved both bills.[47]

The evening of May 13 both passed the Senate swiftly by voice vote. On May 14 Shenandoah-Smoky passed the House "like a bolt from the sky.... The House's approval...was accomplished by a shrewd, quick parliamentary move, which

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[45] Richmond Times-Dispatch editorial, 20 April 1926.

[46] Page News & Courier, 5 May 1926; News-Record, 7 May 1926; and Byrd to Swanson, 11 May 1926, Virginia State Library.

[47] Carlos C. Campbell, Birth of a National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains (Knoxville: U. of Tenn. Press, 1960), p. 44, for Smoky amendment; "Hearings Before the Committee on the Public Lands, House of Representatives," 11 May 1926

may be called a legislative coup d'etat, and it was done with such lightning swiftness that even staid old legislators as Rep. Temple...and Rep. Harrison... were knocked from their feet." When the speaker had announced Senate passage, Rep. Sinnott (lands committee chairman) had leaped to his feet, suggesting immediate consideration. The vote was taken--with no time for speeches. "The procedure had been schemed the night before." President Coolidge signed the Shenandoah-Smoky bill on May 22, 1926 (and the Mammoth bill that had also sneaked through the House, on May 25).[48]

It was a bit surprising in all the hurried maneuvering after the late start that the parks-to-be were immunized against water power developments. But someone (Mather?) remembered. Someone had also taken the trouble to make it illegal for the United States to "purchase by appropriation of public moneys any land" for these parks. The bills extended the life of the Temple commission--with the main thought now, as member Welch testified at the House hearings, that the commission would, after the states had completed their own campaigns, "inaugurate a national campaign to raise the rest of the money."[49]

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[48] News-Record, 14 May 1926, and Washington Star, 14 May 1926, for Senate action; Staunton (Va.) News-Leader, 15 May 1926, and News-Record, 17 May 1926, for House action; Washington Post, 23 May 1926, for Shenandoah-Smoky signing; and Annual Report of the National Park Service, 1926, for summary of essentials.

[49] The Shenandoah-Smoky bill became Public Law 268, 69th Congress, approved 22 May 1926.

4

## Virginia Tackles the Impossible

A month after Congress agreed to accept Shenandoah as a national park--if the land were received free of cost and encumbrances--Gov. Harry F. Byrd named William E. Carson to bring the miracle to completion. As chairman of the new State Commission on Conservation and Development, Carson would serve without salary, so he would continue as president and manager of Riverton Lime Co. with office and plant at Riverton near Front Royal. "Mr. Carson is a nationally recognized business leader," Byrd told the press. He had been president of the National Lime Manufacturers' Association for fifteen years, had been largely responsible for establishing "the National Mines Bureau," had been "chairman of the southern states" for "Citizens' League of Reform of the Currency" moving toward the Federal Reserve system, and had served with the War Industry Board during the World War. A long-time friend of Byrd's father, he had become close also to the new governor. They began many letters with "Dear Harry" and "Dear Will," and it was said Carson had accepted the state post only after a strong personal plea from Byrd.[1]

Carson faced the park complications head on, his realism cutting through the earlier romanticism and boosterism, and he suffered one disillusionment after another:

> From the beginning to the end, the acquisition, which was our share in the Shenandoah National Park movement [he wrote for the state commission] was a disagreeable and abhorrent job.... It was not to our taste or liking to dispossess thousands of people from their lands...or to be the object of criticism by well meaning but impatient citizens who wanted the Park finished forthwith, failing to realize the enormity of the task....
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> It was only the strictest sense of duty and patriotic desire for the good of the people of the state and the fact that we had undertaken

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[1] See announcement in Harrisonburg (Va.) Daily News-Record, 23 June 1926. The personal relationship is gleaned from hundreds of letters in Governor's papers (Byrd), Virginia State Library.

> the task, although when we pledged ourselves to its accomplishment we did not realize what it meant, backed by the knowledge we were giving every landowner a square deal, that made it possible to go through the seven and one-half long years.... Time and again we were threatened with sudden death by infuriated landowners....
>
> Of course the zest of accomplishment, the joy of combat, the enthusiasm in doing what was regarded and we were assured was impossible, and in the end the hope of high achievement, sustained us.[2]

Carson began this new task in mid-1926 with something close to rebellion. He was confronted with decisions and reports from a joint meeting of the Work-Temple commission and the Shenandoah National Park Association (SNPA Inc.). One decision was that, to satisfy Secretary Work,

> the first 250,000 acres, as typifying the best national park features... should be acquired on the main ridge, including spur ridges and canyons lying between them, from Mount Marshall to Jarman Cap, plus such occasional holdings elsewhere within the designated area as can be secured at low cost for the purpose of establishing reasonable values for later acquisition of other holdings by purchase or condemnation.[3]

He studied that course and discussed it with Byrd. Neither of them wanted a park for protection only--which was what the 250,000 acres would bring. They wanted a full-status park with development and public use as well as protection. The Shenandoah minimum for this was 385,500 acres. But, Carson reported, they could "not believe the State of Virginia, even with the help it was promised from the outside, could purchase and present to the United States Government so large an acreage." It was a dilemma. Furthermore, they resented the amendment in the statute that would allow Smoky, with two states to work on it, to get the title of national park (even if for protection only) with a hundred

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[2] "Conserving and Developing Virginia, Report of W.E. Carson, Chairman, State Commission on Conservation and Development, July 26, 1926 to December 31, 1934," Richmond, Commonwealth of Virginia, 1934. This Carson report (pp. 23-31), printed in paperback, SNP archives, is the source to be assumed in this chapter wherever the text says Carson reported.

[3] The joint meeting was June 29, 1926. Basic source to be assumed for SANPC (or Temple commission) doings is "Final Report of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission," Washington, GPO, 1931, SNP archives. According to

thousand acres less than was required of Shenandoah.

On top of all that the promise of outside help was obviously flimsy. Adolph S. Ochs, New York Times publisher, had been asked to lead the three-state "peace" organization (Appalachian National Parks Association, Inc.) in the national drive, but had declined. The Temple commission implied that, in any event, the drive could not proceed until "a substantial amount of land had already been acquired by the States themselves," proving they were doing all they possibly could to help themselves. Carson and Byrd felt they were being pushed out on an undependable limb. Byrd protested to Benchoff--who had just published a magazine article reweaving the old romantic propaganda and was supposedly eager for the national drive, being Virginia's senior member of the "peace" group. Benchoff teased them forward, saying he was trying to help the Temple commission secure well-known John Hays Hammond as drive chairman--and "the plan is to get the machinery ready for a campaign this fall and winter." He teased also by suggesting that Secretary Work might help get the Shenandoah acreage reduced.[4]

Hammond seemed unlikely to accept the drive chairmanship. An acreage reduction would be good--in fact, maybe the only feasible course--but Work seemed unlikely to agree. What course might keep Virginia off the undependable limb? Carson could not take the 521,000 acres of the authorizing law seriously, knowing what he knew of the area--except maybe for a different era "fifty or a hundred years from now." He could not even see 385,500 acres suitable for a national park. But he did not feel quite ready for a direct confrontation on acreage. He wrote a disarming little letter to Secretary Work, asking advice on purchase programs, condemnation, budgeting for the mechanics of acquisition. Work said Interior had no experience in buying land for parks, but he suggested that Carson talk with NPS executive Cammerer who had experience that "would be impracticable to communicate to you by letter." It was an opening for teamwork

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[4] Byrd to Benchoff, 6 July 1926, and Benchoff to Byrd, 8 July 1926, Virginia State Library.

with someone whose interest and authority might last and become knowledgeable, and Carson cultivated it, gradually educating Cammerer on Shenandoah's interlocking tangle. But the Temple commission was still seeing through rose-colored glasses. After what must have been an urgent bit of nagging by Smith of that commission, Carson wrote Byrd that Smith

> must have it in his mind that he is dealing with a lot of half-wits. His proposition that we go ahead and purchase...cheap lands with money that has been subscribed, as the only way on which they could go to the large donators and get money from them, is a thorough plan of a smooth article, and I am about convinced that Col. Smith bathes in Mobil A oil instead of water, he is so slick.
>
> It is quite transparent that if he could get...our Commission to spend a million dollars in purchasing land that when he failed to raise the remainder of the money necessary to buy the Park. he knows that the State, with one million dollars invested in land would have to go forward...; it is either that, or he realizes that we are not going to buy the land until the remainder of the money is in sight, and he knows he cannot get the remainder of the money, so he is preparing a plan by which he can excuse himself when the remainder of the money is not raised....
>
> Have you any letters or written statements from him that when the State of Virginia raised a million two hundred thousand dollars, he would get the remainder of the money?.... It would be well to have this safe in hand to pin him down when he starts squirming from under.[5]

Carson and Byrd went on probing the complexities until they felt quite sure what had to be done. Carson's summarizing report then says:

> After due preparation and arrangements, we called on Secretary Work. In our party were Senator Swanson, Governor Byrd, the Hon. Walton Moore, Highway Commissioner Shirley, Colonel Benchoff, and the Chairman of the Commission, W.E. Carson.
>
> Senator Swanson explained the purpose of our visit, and was followed by the Governor, who told the plain facts in connection with the whole proposition. We did not have long to wait for a reply--we were told that

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[5] Carson to W.G. Hall, 29 April 1927, State Library, for comment on 521,000 acres; Carson to Work, 12 Aug. 1926, and Work to Carson, 18 Aug. 1926, National Archives; and Carson to Byrd, 26 Aug. 1926, State Library.

the Secretary "was unalterably opposed to a reduction in the area, that the boundaries within which the park was designated and which aggregated 521,000 acres, were laid down by a commission of the ablest landscape engineers in the United States, and that he would demand that the area be increased rather than decreased." He further said "that what Virginia was wanting to do was to have the invaluable asset, a national park within her boundaries, and have the national government pay for it."....

Senator Swanson then said, "Mr. Secretary, we will relieve you of the burden of recommending that the park should be reduced in acreage by passing a law...reducing the area, without referring to you."

To this, the Secretary replied, "Senator, I have this finally to say to you, that I will fight any movement of this kind in committee; if you beat me there, I will have the fight carried to the floor of the House and Senate; if you beat me again, I will fall back on my last recourse and have the President veto the bill, as I cannot, conscientiously, with the information I have in hand, allow a reduction in the acreage."

We left the Secretary's office about as crestfallen a lot of men as it would be possible to find.

But they did not stay crestfallen. The words, "with the information I have in hand," kept echoing, and Carson started large-scale preparations to supplement or correct that information.

Work worried. He asked pointed questions of Director Mather and Cammerer. In August he redeemed his previous failure to explore around Skyland by making a three-day inspection. He traversed the foothills from Front Royal to Waynesboro and made side excursions deeper into the mountains. His statement upon returning was cautious--"The park, when established, will undoubtedly prove of inestimable value as an outdoor recreational area for the people of the Eastern States, particularly of Washington." A dispatch, coming from unidentified sources, said Work had gone exploring to prepare himself to meet criticism of the area by Robert Sterling Yard (who had been so enthusiastic, reporting "600 square miles of virgin forest"):

> Mr. Yard has written several articles, leaving a veiled impression that the Blue Ridge is suitable for a state park but not a National Park, despite the fact the...eminent national park authorities held the Blue Ridge mountains as national park area. Dr. Work, from his personal inspection... is satisfied that the Blue Ridge mountains measure up to the standards of rugged scenery required for a national park.[6]

The Luray paper, suggesting Work had come secretly, said he was to have been accompanied, but maybe was not, by "Frederick Law Olmsted, of Brookline, Mass., the world-famous landscape engineer."[7]

Yard's change of attitude worried Carson too. He considered that one of the five great crises in the park's genesis came "when an influential park organ" suggested that Shenandoah might not be "of national park caliber," presumably because its forest was not, after all, virgin. The Yard attitude was hard to pin down but easy to guess. In February 1926 he had written:

> As museums of primitive America our National Parks constitute a national institution whose like the world elsewhere does not possess....
>
> As museums of primitive America, our National Parks have been, can be, and will be powerfully defended against violation. But, as merely recreational areas, they cannot be defended long, and none but dreamers will risk the System on such a misconception. As soon as man-handled areas are introduced anywhere, the sole logical argument against man-handling existing areas for water power and irrigation will disappear, and the beginning of the end is at hand.
>
> If the condition of primitiveness is eliminated from our National Parks System in one part of the country, it cannot be maintained in another part. The same system cannot serve God in the west and Mammon in the east.[8]

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[6] News-Record, 19 Aug. 1926.

[7] Page News & Courier, 27 Aug. 1926.

[8] National Parks Bulletin (No. 48), Feb. 1926. I find no direct statement in the files of the Bulletin, of which Yard was editor, that Shenandoah should not be a national park or should be a state park. In the Nov. 1927 Bulletin (54) there is news North Dakota's governor agreed on state park status for a "Roosevelt Memorial" in the badlands--plus: "North Dakota's example may well be followed by promoters of eastern national park projects, almost every one of which falls short of the incomparable scenic grandeur and other standards of the National Parks System." Yard seemed to have wanted to rectify his error in reporting vast virgin forests in Shenandoah without confessing it and without actually hampering

Work and the Temple group were gradually penetrating Shenandoah's romantic aura. Temple wrote Wine about "difficulties that have arisen....

> A life ownership or any similar arrangement with a resident would, I suppose, prevent the reckoning of his lands as a part of the minimum which under the act passed last May must be transferred to the United States in fee simple.... [Yet I see] no insurmountable difficulties in making arrangements in special cases for certain residents to remain...even though their lands should be entirely surrounded by lands acquired in fee simple.[9]

What he still did not realize was that people lived even on slopes and shelves higher than all but a few of the peaks.

Zerkel--as several times so crucially before--sought unity, through compromise if need be. He urged Carson to acquire a little land, at least the 9,092 acres offered as donations and the few tracts the Temple group had optioned. Benchoff was also promoting agreement. But Carson and Byrd had become as adamant as Work:

> We were first told...that Virginia must pledge $1,200,000. This was done. It is now suggested that we, without any guarantee whatever as to ultimate establishment of the park in Virginia, should start purchasing....
>
> In the light of information I now have, and after conferences with several of the largest contributors, I believe that if we were to purchase the land without a guarantee as to the establishment of the park, we would be violating faith with those who have contributed the money.[10]

The Temple group kept nagging, though now indirectly. Member Welch--chairman of the three-state "peace" association--wrote Wine that he could not understand "why the Conservation Commission...has been so slow.... Our Commission can do nothing more...until they have carried out their part of the bargain." When Carson saw this letter, he sent a copy to Cammerer--to whom he had already explained Virginia's reasons for not buying land piecemeal--and said he was

> planning to put an engineer in every County to list and map the different properties over fifty acres.... Won't you get across to Major Welch the new thought as developed in our interview? Any agitation, such as this

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[9] Temple to Wine, 30 Sept. 1926, National Archives.

[10] Zerkel to Carson, 17 Sept. 1926, and Byrd to Benchoff, 29 Nov. 1926, State Library.

letter, causes hold-up in collection of money, and that is now our vital job. Byrd wrote Wine that "at the proper time we will present this fully to Welch."[11]

The state commission was well organized now, with a full-time staff including Elmer O. Fippin, executive secretary, and Alexander Stuart, national park supervisor. Carson kept in touch from Riverton, or traveled to Richmond or wherever he might be helpful. The seven-man commission met as necessary to set policy, make major decisions and check on the work (which involved many matters besides the park). SNPA Inc. had transferred to the commission the pledges and cash from the "Buy an Acre" drive--except $8,000 to complete payment to Bankers Service (reducing that corporation's claim that $18,000 was due in addition to $92,000 already paid), plus $5,000 for SNPA's own expenses, plus $15,000 kept by SNPA as Virginia's share in the cost of launching the national drive.[12]

Between November 10 and December 18--after most of the pledge records had been checked over--22,500 collection notices were mailed. Returns, some with part payment, some with the full amount, grew to a daily volume of 400 by mid-December, then declined; 382 notices came back from the post office unclaimed. Second notices were mailed in February 1927. When the commission met late that month its office had received $409,368.20--which did not include $101,952.40 of park-drive funds already disbursed by SNPA Inc. (mostly to Bankers Service) nor the amount still in SNPA hands. Collections had thus passed a half-million dollars.[13]

Fred T. Amiss, civil engineer and Page County surveyor, was hired by the state commission to take charge of listing and mapping tracts within what seemed the most eligible 385,500 acres--Chester Gap on the north to Jarman Gap. Amiss (pronounced Amos) was a prober of history, family traditions and legends

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[11] Welch to Wine, 7 Dec. 1926, National Archives; Carson to Cammerer, 21 Dec. 1926, National Archives; and Byrd to Wine, 30 Dec. 1926, State Library.

[12] Fred T. Amiss, 30-page typescript of park history, April 1935, SNP archives. Amiss lists the original commissioners as Carson, Coleman Wortham, Junius P. Fishburn, E. Griffith Dodson, Rufus G. Roberts, Thomas L. Farrar, and Lee Long. The Amiss history is especially strong in details of surveying, mapping, appraising, and condemning land. Also, SNPA Inc. minutes, 9 Sept.

as well as of land facts. He made the long background of settlement and exploitation immediately evident. Numerous grants dating from the 1700s were found, including Big Meadows, then "thousands of acres," from Lord Fairfax to John Martin "who has numerous descendants still living in this county."[14]

Many land titles and lines overlapped or were otherwise confused--for instance:

> Mr. Pollock had made a pledge of 1,000 acres...and had requested L. Ferdinand Zerkel...to locate a tract of mountain land for him which could be used in making good his pledge. Such a tract was located...which was supposed to contain 1,017 acres. Mr. Pollock was so informed, and the pledge made good. When the engineering force...reached Page County, Mr. Zerkel frequently inquired if the Pollock tract had been located on the map, and when he was informed that no tract of that size had been located, he came to the office to investigate.... The tract was located but instead of 1,017 acres, it was found to contain only 431 acres, although it had been listed on the tax books for years as a 1,017 acre tract, taxes were assessed and paid on this basis, and Mr. Pollock's predecessors in title had borrowed money on it as a tract of that size.[15]

During November and the first half of December Amiss listed and sketched 442 tracts, area 43,539 acres. He estimated average cost at $10 an acre. He told the state commission that grazing land owners would not sell their mountain pastures. Thousands of tracts remained to be located, so the commission hired more men, including Hugh Naylor, to complete questionnaire-type forms for each tract. It became obvious that Shenandoah differed greatly from Smoky--where, though 6600 tracts existed, 85% of the total acreage was owned by 18 timber and pulpwood companies, and 5,000 of the tracts were no more than summer home lots (one thousand of which, in one section, totalled only 52 acres).[16]

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[14] Richmond Times-Dispatch, 5 Dec. 1926, and Amiss typescript, pp. 15-16. As far as I can determine, no detailed examination was ever made of the full 521,000 acres. Land records fill many filing cases at SNP headquarters.

[15] S.H. Marsh, "Shenandoah National Park; Solving Virginia's Greatest Jig-Saw Puzzle," The Commonwealth, State C of C, Richmond, May 1934.

[16] State commission minutes, 16 Dec. 1926; Amiss typescript; and Michael Frome, Strangers in High Places (Doubleday & Co., 1969), p. 173. Welch to Carson,

Amiss worried about the Blue Ridge folk. He told the commission that they --especially men over 60---were "loath to move." All the folk felt sharpening suspense, and people outside the park area felt it too. Madison sheriff John T. Hall insisted that the park, and "employment in prospect while it is being made a great playground," would be "a godsend" to many, as "their former means of livelihood has disappeared." Confusion and pessimism were spreading. Some Virginians said the park project should be halted. Others wanted it speeded up--saying, imitate Smoky, issue bonds, call a special session of the legislature to appropriate all needed funds and raise the gasoline tax to get the money back from tourists. The state commission mailed a third batch of collection notices, saying the attorney general considered pledges as enforceable at law as any debts.[17]

Carson issued a five-page statement to the press, hoping to steady the citizen attitude. He reiterated the economic advantage of a national park, explained Virginia's constitutional prohibition of bonding, insisted the Shenandoah project was moving forward at least as well as the Smoky project, and concluded: "Virginia has committed her hand to this Park movement and her spirit of the past is not such that she may be expected to turn back."[18]

Instead of ending complaints the statement may have helped stimulate a crucial one from the heartland of park support. A front-page editorial in the Luray (Page County) paper blamed the park project for the long delay in building the last section of the Lee Highway--"on the Rappahannock side of the Blue Ridge" --to complete the hard-surface from New Market via Luray to Washington, D.C. More specifically, it blamed the Willis law that was supposed to add $200,000 to the park fund. It said:

> Our name is written high on the tablets of fame as the little county that gave five times its quota to the Shenandoah National Park, and surpassed all other counties. [Now there is] a growing conviction on the part of

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[17] State commission minutes, 1926-27, for Amiss and mountain folk; Page News & Courier, 18 Feb. 1927, reprint from Madison Eagle, for Sheriff Hall; and state commission minutes, 18 March 1927, for complaints and collections.

[18] State commission press release, 20 May 1927, National Archives,

> many of our people that Page's voluntary gift...has been dwarfed by an involuntary contribution that makes the voluntary contribution look like thirty cents.... We are told that the money that should have gone to build this road will be diverted to buy Park lands, because the Federal government will build the road when the Park is established. The bill by which this alleged transfer of funds is provided for is heralded as a triumph of statesmanship inasmuch as it gets around a constitutional provision and enables Virginia to donate to the Park....
>
> The supposed amount of $200,000 which is diverted...is practically speaking the sum that would have built the Lee Highway on the Rappahannock side.... That is the amount of our involuntary contribution....
>
> Page, Rappahannock, Fauquier and other counties do not relish being made the goat, and being offered up as a smoking sacrifice on the altar of the Park.[19]

Luray leaders carried their protest to Secretary Work, but he could not tell them when, or whether, the federal government would build the road. A Richmond editorial tried to explain how the Willis law had helped stimulate the park-fund drive. The state highway commissioner entered the argument, denying a Luray accusation that the $200,000 was "being employed in building roads elsewhere"--in fact insisting that such a fund never existed. The Luray paper used three front-page editorials in the squabble, making quite clear that "our people and others on the route want the road built now."[20]

The state built it--fairly promptly. I drove on it before the park was established. The Willis law never brought money into the park fund, and the reports of the amount raised or pledged by Virginia--even the figure of $1,200,000 written into the park-authorizing law passed by Congress--were padded by $200,000 that was never as firm as a pledge.

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[19] Page News & Courier, 7 June 1927. Highway promotion organizations, such as a Lee Highway Association, were strongly supported and aggressively active. The News & Courier of 26 May 1925 revealed "an ambitious scheme for a practically continuous parkway from the national Capital to Shenandoah Valley," this plan further endorsed by the "towns of Fairfax, Manassas, Warrenton and New Market and the city of Staunton." Other routes that might serve the park were promoted by a Park Circle Association and a Skyline-Shenandoah Scenic Route Association.

[20] Vernon H. Ford to Hubert Work, undated, National Archives; Richmond Times-Dispatch, 7 and 14 Sept. 1927; and Page News & Courier, 9 and 16 Sept. 1927.

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But all was not protest and disillusionment--or even Carson might not have kept on. In the fall of 1927 the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club was organized in Washington, D.C. One of its main purposes, written into its constitution, was to encourage establishment and use of Shenandoah National Park. Zerkel was among those testifying to its important influence in government and among conservationists. It persistently spearheaded an essential thrust.[21]

That same fall another part of the same urban-based thrust showed dramatically at a "Congress of Tour Veterans"--a reunion at Harrisonburg of passengers on three special Shenandoah Valley trains, which turned into a spontaneous promotion for the park. Dr. Frank Bohn, a New York Times editor, spoke with apt eloquence, saying "the price of the Blue Ridge" must not be allowed to kill the park.

> Build industrialism in this Valley as the Saints of old built the Church. Give to it the best you have. Say to the million people who are to come into Virginia to make their homes here, that you invite all of them to live life more abundantly.... invite thousands of tourists to come, other thousands to live here.... the mountains and fresh air will make abundant life possible even with industrialism--abundant life no longer possible in crowded cities.
>
> Every child here is familiar with the word "jazz".... Jazz, as I use the word here, does not refer only to a popular form of music. It refers to a terrible state of mind that has now come to mark our majority.... This horrific creation has one cause and one cause only.... That cause is the herding of our millions into the great industrial cities, and their surrender, in the environment of the great cities, to the madness of the crowd....
>
> Save the mountains as a spot where the masses can get a breath of sweet pure air.[22]

Reports of Bohn's talk spread widely. Virginians and others were inspired again. Bohn continued as an effective friend, through the powerful Times and otherwise. The park simply must not die in birth. More of the "Buy an Acre"

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[21] Zerkel, undated pencil ms. on 12 years of the park movement, SNP archives.

[22] News-Record, 1 Oct. 1927.

pledges were paid--until Carson could report net collections of $849,408.45--and could believe for a time that a national drive might really be organized.

The state commission became bolder in its collection effort. It obtained court judgment on a $125 pledge from an Albemarle County business firm. Suits were filed against 34 other pledgers for amounts totalling $2,508. There could be no leniency when so much was at stake. Cash collected reached $908,069.60--out of a grand total of $1,009,813.83 of genuine pledges--and still later Carson said that all but "sixty-five thousand dollars" had been paid in, a far better proportion than either Tennessee or North Carolina would achieve for Smoky.[23]

The land investigation was also pushed harder and faster. But when Amiss and assistants had completed their examination of the 385,500-acre minimum for a national park with development and use, the result was discouraging. Carson saw

> there were 5,650 separate parcels...3,250 homes, and more than 7,000 people .... the actual value might be somewhere between eight and ten million dollars, and the purchase value any price.[24]
>
> After tabulation...checking up values in the different counties, and holding meetings with outstanding citizens, we realized that it was utterly impossible to purchase the park area just as we thought in the beginning, and that if even we had the money necessary to make the purchase, we would have such resistance from not only the people who would be affected, but the other citizens.... because of the taking away of highly assessed property out of the taxable resources...it would be impracticable.
>
> With exact data, facts and figures collected and assembled, we reported our findings to the Commission and Governor. The upshot of it was that the Chairman went to Washington alone to see what could be done.

Before confronting Work again, Carson met with "the men who were at the head

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[23] State commission minutes, 19 April 1929; Carson, talk, Radio WRVA, Richmond, (Oct. 11 Sept. 1930) printed copy in State Library. Cammerer of NPS found --see Carlos C. Campbell, Birth of a National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains (Knoxville: U. of Tenn. Press, 1960), p. 67--that Tennessee pledged $471,155.09, of which $106,473.84 was still unpaid in 1933 and North Carolina pledged $397,174.67, of which $250,066.20 was still unpaid in 1933. These states blamed the depression. Tennessee tried court suits; Carolina did not.

[24] My own calculations at least double Carson's population estimate. William Porter McLandon, "Economic Aspects of the Shenandoah Park Project," thesis, U. of Va., 1930, estimated "forty or fifty thousand mountaineers."

of the National Park Service"--presumably including Mather and Cammerer but not Albright who was in the West.

> These officials like the Secretary felt that a reduction of the acreage was unthinkable, but after we had gone into the matter in detail and analyzed it and found that the coves around the area had been taken in, and that these coves, which are the cultivated tracts of land that lie between spurs of the mountains, contained orchards, expensive homes, highly cultivated land, and were, in fact, the most fertile spots of the different counties--they began to see the matter in a different light and realized that the great landscape engineers who had laid out the original boundaries, had done an impractical thing.[25]
>
> Later we called to see the Secretary, and after three hours of wrestling with him he ordered a resurvey.

But Work did not expect the "resurvey" to change his stand. He wrote Byrd that it would enable him to designate 250,000 acres plus a major portion of the remainder of the gross acreage of 521,000--designate, that is, 385,500 specific and identifiable acres that would qualify, so Virginia could start buying free from risk that lands purchased might be rejected. Director Mather chose Cammerer to do the job--actually the federal government's first study of the area that could rightly be called a survey. Federal topographical engineers helped by mapping a border belt--after Carson personally had advanced $10,000 to double inadequate funds in the USGS budget--thus starting a project that would grow with special appropriations of $35,000 in 1928 and $45,000 in 1929, and sometimes more than a hundred men working at once, until large-scale topographic maps of the area within the now-evolving "Cammerer Line" were completed. Cammerer was also helped on the ground by Kelsey and by Carson and his assistants, notably Amiss and Fippin. Amiss told me later of Cammerer's and Kelsey's frequent

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[25] Carson had cooled a bit by 1934 or was trying to be polite in his official report. He put the matter more strongly to Byrd (9 Sept. 1927, State Library): "The more I see of the Park project as proposed, the more inexcusable are the projectors of the Park, in forcing it on the people; it is a thoroughly impractical proposition, and I do not believe we ought to consider it further, unless we can get it cut down to 250,000 acres."

surprises at finding so much cultivated and populated land. Here is an Amiss glimpse that is on record:

> .... the party stood on the Lee Highway west of the concrete bridge over Pass Run when Mr. Kelsey said in substance, "Cammerer! our Park is only a shoe string, and it is necessary to widen out at these entrances to impress the public as to the extent of the project."[26]

Cammerer himself spent "one intensive month" in the proposed park. He inspected the entire original boundary, inspected and re-inspected the new one he would recommend, traveling sometimes by car, often on horseback or on foot. His 17-page report said he often stumbled upon "actual cultural conditions....

> The Norfolk and Western Railroad runs very close to practically the entire western base of the range, and farms, orchards and cultivated fields, cities, towns, and villages nestle close to the Foothills on all sides.... valuable orchards and farms have encroached...even up some mountains.... I could not see that such highly cultivated areas had their place within the park line or were necessary to be taken in just to add size to the area, and I therefore excluded such cultural lands...except where absolutely imperative to protect the main road approaches...or to protect views from within the park outward....

He word-painted a picture that would greatly influence park development:

> .... the crest of the central ridge of the Blue Ridge running through this proposed Shenandoah Park area, has thousands of acres of comparatively level places scattered here and there. Some of this is cut-over land and some meadow lands of considerable extent, while occasional cultivated fields are encountered. It is dotted with springs of sufficient capacity to supply hotels and camps that would be required for the accommodation of visitors.... Thus, Shenandoah will differ from all other national parks.... Were it not for the fact of the comparatively level topography in many places on the top...with excellent water supply for culinary and sanitary purposes, the boundary problem would have been complicated by the necessity of taking in large areas of cultivated lands...for recreational purposes.

He spelled out the immediate meaning in a five-page letter with a map:

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[26] Work to Byrd, 4 Oct. 1927, State Library; Washington Star, 20 Dec. 1928, for topographic survey appropriations; SAMPC 1931, p. 36, for Carson's $10,000;

> [My recommended line] includes those lands that were considered essential for inclusion from a scenic and administrative standpoint for a complete park and no more. After establishing and rechecking this line it was found that it inclosed an area of essential land comprising only 327,000 acres, exclusive of Dickeys Hill on the extreme north end, which might be taken in, and, therefore, was lacking about 58,000 acres, planimeter or horizontal measurement, of the acreage specified in the Act.[27]

After studying Cammerer's report Work admitted--at last--to Gov. Byrd that suitable land totalling as much as 385,500 acres was not to be found. Carson spent the very next day in Washington helping to draft a bill to reduce the minimum acreage to 327,000. He reported to Byrd that the bill would also allow two-year leases to residents--"The Secretary did not want it, but he finally had to give in, as we had the fairness of the argument on him." The lease provision was wanted by Smoky too, so the bill moved swiftly through Congress and was approved by the President on February 16, 1928.[28]

Carson--though his own figure for a full-status park fitting the Shenandoah situation was 250,000 acres--hoped for "plain sailing" under the 327,000-acre law. He was helped by a remarkable coming together of needed persons and factors at a reception in Richmond. This reception, with buffet supper, was arranged by the Richmond Chamber of Commerce, originally to inform state legislators of the park project's needs. But managing director Mason Manghum--who would later organize the park's concession company--sent invitations also to both federal and state leaders.

Key ones came, including Work, Temple, Gregg, Smith, Cammerer, Byrd, Carson. Work contributed philosophy and inspiration:

> I like to think of our national parks as areas fashioned by the Creator and protected by Him in their pristine state, by natural obstacles,

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[27] Arno B. Cammerer to Secretary Work, with attached "Report and Map on Shenandoah of Mr. Cammerer to the Secretary of the Interior, dated Dec. 8, 1927," National Archives.

[28] Work to Byrd, 22 Dec. 1927, and Carson (at Riverton) to Byrd, 24 Dec.

> for an age such as ours when men know much of cities and all too little of the simpler things of Nature.... I am sure the Virginia people will not lag behind neighboring States in showing what they can do toward making the Shenandoah National Park a reality.... I am confident that the 40,000,000 of people we now have within 24 hours' ride of the Shenandoah National Park, and future generations, will be grateful for the foresight of those of your State who today have this great task entrusted to them; and I am also sure that the people of Virginia will be for all time proud of its outstanding position as a member of our magnificent National Park System.[29]

A million-dollar state appropriation had been proposed by Carson for prompt action. It would approximately double the land fund--which, in turn, would be doubled by matching funds from the national campaign promised soon to be launched, making a total of around $4 million that just might be enough to buy the new minimum acreage. Banking now on the national doubling, Byrd was recommending the appropriation despite some citizen protests--among them a strong statement by attorney G.M. Dillard, who considered such use of taxpayers' money,

> without referring the matter back to the people...a clear misappropriation and breach of trust....
>
> The proposed Shenandoah Park has already been a prolific source of immature judgment, misrepresentation of facts and misconception of its real importance to the State of Virginia, and I beg that you consider maturely before advising another step which may still further add to the confusion. I wish that many of the enthusiasts for this exploitation of Virginia's territory and resources could share with me my familiarity with the principal national parks of the West during the last 35 years, and could observe how completely they have failed to develop or augment the surrounding regions in which they are located.[30]

Most of the legislators at the reception supported Byrd and Carson, not only as to funding but also in working for enactment of a faster and firmer condemnation procedure and of legislation specifically authorizing donation

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[29] Manghum, invitation, 4 Jan. 1928, and copy of Work's speech at Richmond, both in National Archives.

[30] Dillard to Byrd, 13 Dec. 1927, State Library.

of park land by Virginia to the federal government.

With the enthusiasm generated by the reception the General Assembly moved swiftly, granting the money and passing the bills--barely ahead of disillusioning events that could have prevented the actions. Already in January, Welch--chairman of the three-state "peace" group that was to put on the national drive--had resigned from the Temple commission. Then word came that a Rockefeller contribution of approximately $5 million--despite the "peace" agreement that outside-state donations would be divided 50-50--would go entirely to Smoky. Late in March, Cammerer wrote Carson that the "peace" group, Appalachian National Parks Association, Inc., was breaking down. Welch was gone; members from the farther-South were resigning because the Smoky fund now seemed ample. There would be no national matching funds. Cammerer supposed Virginia would now have to try on its own to raise outside money--which was exactly what she had been starting to do when "peace" had been declared. But now the momentum had died, and the best prospect was drained.[31]

Carson felt "left in the lurch" and wrote Benchoff that "we do not expect to take another step...until we have definite assurances that the guarantee for the entire amount for acquisition of the 327,000 acres is in hand, or at least in sight." Yet, after meeting with his commission, he bounced back and agreed to do what he could, "in cooperation, if possible, with Mr. Cammerer,

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[31] Cammerer to Carson, 20 March 1928, State Library. There is a case for feeling that the three-state, four-organization "peace" agreement (see chap. 3 for its genesis) had been violated. But by whom? Ise, p. 58, says Cammerer "decided to give the donation to Great Smoky Mountains because there were about 200,000 acres of fine virgin forest there which he wanted to save." Campbell, p. 130, says Cammerer "first enlisted the interest of John D. Rockefeller, Jr.," but that it was "Chapman who convinced him that the park movement [Smoky's] was a sound and meritorious project." Campbell, p. 59, thickens the plot by saying that, because the Shenandoah-Smoky national drive appeared "impractical," a national drive was decided upon for Smoky alone, with Welch heading it, saying further that Henry Ford was "inveigled to visit" Smoky, but "the visit didn't pay off," saying yet further that Mather assigned Cammerer to get Rockefeller help (for both parks?), that Chapman was then brought in and the $5 million was pledged to Smoky alone. It is confusing, but the "peace" agreement did allow a donor to direct his donation to one park or the other, and Rockefeller himself apparently did direct the $5 million to Smoky and would later make a comparatively tiny but still substantial

to get in touch with different benevolent foundations and any other agencies that might aid in financing the Shenandoah Park project."[32]

This Carson-Cammerer effort became another of the novel threads in the Shenandoah tangle, maybe the oddest of all--high officials of federal and state governments directly soliciting donations for a governmental project. The Secretary himself authorized Cammerer's involvement--"in his personal capacity, not as an official.... I am willing to have Mr. Cammerer devote so much of his time...as can be given by him without detriment to his services in the Park Bureau." They solicited for several years. Carson gave Byrd this early glimpse:

> On Tuesday I have an interview with the potent men in the Carnegie Foundation, and am laying plans to reach other foundations, but the fact is there are very few nationally minded rich people....
>
> I want to say that I have never had a more disagreeable job than this last one that has been thrust on me. I never asked for money from any person in my life before, and to "boot-lick" a lot of rich men is a job that don't suit a man of my kidney, but I am going through with it unless there is no show whatever to get money to carry through the proceedings for the acquirement of the Park, then we must stop.[33]

Cammerer drafted a four-page letter to be sent, with slight modifications, to possible donors. It said Virginia's governor was honorary chairman of the solicitation committee; Carson, active chairman; himself, as a "resident of Virginia," secretary; and John M. Purcell, Virginia's state treasurer, custodian. It reviewed the Shenandoah movement and said two public-spirited citizens of other states have already "pledged $550,000." It conveyed urgency by saying that logging was being stepped up. Cammerer, unlike Carson, maintained a tone of vague optimism like that exuded for so long by the Temple group. In May 1929--when accepting an invitation to Byrd's "mansion"--he said his aim was to bring the Shenandoah total to $5 million. But he had not foreseen the stock market

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[32] State commission minutes, 23 March 1928, State Library.

[33] SANPC, p. 30; Work to Byrd (about Cammerer), 13 April 1928, and Carson to Byrd, undated, State Library.

crash or the Great Depression.[34]

Early in 1931 Cammerer reported to Temple that the Shenandoah fund consisted of a million-dollar appropriation from the state, $800,000 in net cash from citizens, "and $566,250 from funds collected by myself for the project....

> I may be able to add another $500,000 or $1,000,000...later on.... If the money is not available for the entire 327,000 acres, I judge they will apply for a reduction in acreage to bring it within funds available. I think this can be done. As this is liable to be finished during the next three or four months, and as Mr. Harlan P. Kelsey and Colonel Smith, of your commission, are particularly acquainted with this project, it is my hope that, based upon this, any plans for disbanding your commission will be, say not earlier than June.[35]

Two months after the Temple commission had disbanded, Cammerer implied in a letter to Carson that he had a secret cooking with Rockefeller. Carson thanked him promptly and briefly, in a letter of September 3, 1931, and added only, "I think by February we can tell whether we are going to have a park or not."[36]

The new condemnation act had been needed in the park project for these reasons given in Carson's report:

> .... the land was split up into some 3,870 separate tracts or parcels, owned, occupied or claimed by more than that number of claimants; a large number of whom did not themselves know the precise boundaries of the unfenced, uncultivated mountain land claimed by them; some of whom were squatters on small parcels of land, with no paper title, claiming under adverse possession for generations or for more or less prolonged periods of years; while others held duly recorded titles ....
>
> It was manifestly hopeless to undertake to acquire the necessary area by direct purchase, or in ordinary condemnation proceedings, in which any of the thousands of owners or claimants could hold up the entire project unless paid exorbitant and unfair prices, with jury trials, appeals, and

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[34] A carbon copy of the Cammerer draft, undated, is in National Archives, with names of four wealth-controlling persons to whom it was first being sent. The goal of $5 million is in Cammerer to Byrd, 6 May 1929, State Library.

[35] Cammerer to Rep. Temple, chairman of Southern Appalachian National Park Commission, undated, National Archives. Cammerer had not literally

all the endless delays which can be injected into ordinary condemnation proceedings by selfish, stubborn and avaricious litigants.

The complex "Public Park Condemnation Act" and the accompanying "National Park Act" were written by Judge A.C. Carson, a Front Royal attorney who had been chief justice of the Philippines. Rumors said the condemnation act was based on successful "foreign" procedures, but Judge Carson had explained the principles to the state commission as being long accepted here. For court ascertainment of ownership, value and title, he said he followed widely tested plans in keeping with Virginia's own laws and court decisions, and for condemnation proper, the law already in use for acquisition of lands for national forests. He had consulted other Virginia lawyers, and they had approved the bill as written. The second bill outlined the new boundary and authorized the state to transfer land within it to the federal government (except for rights of way of the two main transmountain highways). Both bills were studied by the Interior Department and approved prior to enactment. An Associated Press dispatch from Richmond declared they would shorten the time of land acquisition and park establishment from "an estimated ten years" to "eighteen months." The dispatch gave a clearer explanation of the condemnation act than I am qualified to word:

> In a nutshell the law, which is a special one and has no general application, provides that the County Circuit Court judges, in the counties in which the park area is located, shall name outside-county commissioners to appraise the value of the land in their [the judges'?] county. When the appraisers fix the value of each parcel...the Virginia Conservation Commission...is then directed to deposit with the County Circuit Court judges a sum to cover the total appraised value.... When this is done, the Circuit Court judge is authorized to issue a blanket fee simple title to the land to the Conservation Commission....
>
> The land-owner can come into court and accept the price fixed by the condemnation jury. If he thinks the price is too low, he has the power to ask the judge to name another condemnation jury to fix the value of the land. When this [arbitration] jury acts, the valuation is submitted

to the court, whose decision is final and cannot be appealed.[37]

All seemed in order for action, except the funds which were, in effect, shrinking as prices "demanded" for park lands increased. Rep. Harrison, having found that even $5 an acre would exceed the average price obtained in recent sales of lands within the park area, said: "How serious the high price factor is may be understood by contrasting the sum of $6,840,000 which the land would cost at $18...with the sum so far in hand." A (Will) Carson warning to landowners to forget "boom prices" got him scolded in a Luray editorial:

> It has been said that the price asked...had suddenly taken a rise far above the first figures at which it was offered.... But the owners have never offered their land for sale. That being the case a "sudden rise" in price is impossible. Early park propaganda was based on an estimate of six dollars an acre by park boosters who made no real study of the situation but had to have figures of some kind with which to go before the public. Present valuations...as arrived at by the engineers are three times as much as the off-hand, arbitrary valuations made by the boosters. The owners of park lands have not been really heard from since the park agitation began.[38]

Somewhat used to criticism and uncertainty by now, Carson and his commission tried taking park land in Warren County--having made "arrangements...for the institution of an injunction suit and reply to test the validity of the Park condemnation law." While waiting for the test, Carson and Cammerer sent 69 solicitation letters to "selected...wealthy men," but results were slight--12 replies, nine negative, two uncertain, one a pledge of $5,000. Doubts of one kind or another continued to plague almost everyone involved. Carson's active mind kept scouting in varied directions. He suggested to Byrd that the proposed

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[37] State commission minutes, 20 Jan. 1928, State Library, for Judge Carson's explanation; News-Record, 5 March 1928, for Associated Press explanation. The two laws are: "Public Park Condemnation Act," 40 pages as printed, Chap. 410, Acts of General Assembly 1928, approved 23 March 1928, and "National Park Act," 8 pages, Chap 371, Acts of 1928, approved 22 March 1928. They are probably the most significant legislation in the park's history and were contested all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. I suggest them as a subject of research, maybe a dissertation, by a law student or an expert in the history of eminent domain.

[38] Page News & Courier, 4 Oct. 1927 for Harrison statement, and 25 Oct. 1927 for editorial.

park should really be "Shenandoah National Historical Park.

> My thought on it is this, that when people come to the Shenandoah Park, they will expect something such as they see in the Yellowstone, and will be disappointed, and further, we want to bring to their attention the historic associations that lie around the Park, drawing them...through Virginia.....
>
> I give you this to think about as you may see it differently.[39]

And then Carson really plunged off the expected course--into a bold gamble to get the President of the United States, in person, directly involved.

In 1926 President Coolidge had expressed a wish to spend his vacation in mountains close to Washington. Pollock of Skyland had offered him a cottage on "famous Stony Man Mountain" as a "Summer White House...the rent for which would be one dollar for the season." Carson, thinking of this incident after the election of 1928, went to see Larry Richey, long close to President-elect Hoover, and learned that Hoover's "peculiar penchant lay in angling for the spotted mountain trout." So--he located "the best mountain trout stream in Virginia," the upper Rapidan River in the park area, where a Madison-Orange club had secured fishing rights from the owners. Charmed by Carson, the club agreed to surrender those rights if Hoover would use them. Hoover gladly would--Carson found upon visiting him--if the stream could be reached by a busy man who, because of his office, would require special protection.[40]

Carson got an engineer's estimate on the cost of a good dirt road--$15,000 --and persuaded the Madison County supervisors to put up half if the state would allot the other half. When the highway department refused immediate allotment, Carson personally guaranteed the second $7,500. There were inspections--by Richey, by Horace M. Albright (now NPS director), by the new Secretary of the Interior, Dr. Ray Lyman Wilbur, among others, and soon by Hoover and his wife.

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[39] Carson to Byrd, 2 April 1928, State Library.

[40] Washington Star, 31 March 1926, for Coolidge incident. As to Carson's crucial role in the genesis of Camp Hoover, the brief account here is based mostly on Carter Wormeley, "Hoover on the Rapidan," reprinted in Carson report from The Black Swan (a publication I know nothing else about, date not given)--with some slight use of my detailed research for the writing of Herbert Hoover's Hideaway (Luray, Va.: Shenandoah Natural History Association, Inc., 1971).

Hoover liked the stream, and "the next morning found Carson on his horse riding the mountain with an engineer," planning a route for the road. Within three days construction started with heavy equipment and 200 men.

The "speed and efficiency" was such that "the President is said to have exclaimed that he had rarely known it equalled and never surpassed." Telephone and electric lines were run, and the Marines moved in. Carson was ready to buy land and construct buildings, but Hoover declined this offer and personally bought 164 acres for his "fishing camp" (at $5 an acre!), land that he would later donate to the park. Tents were erected on wooden platforms, and by mid-May of 1929 the President was using the camp and the stream; he and his wife were planning more permanent construction. The "Summer White House" had been secured.

This sub-miracle, that would focus worldwide attention on the proposed park and greatly influence its development, was followed by another victory. Late in 1928 landowner Thomas Jackson Rudacille filed suit for an injunction to stop the state commission from condemning lands in Warren County for the park. The case would be heard by Judge Philip Williams of the 17th Judicial District, Virginia circuit court, at Winchester. The complexity and special character of the new laws, and the unprecedented purpose, consumed month after month in contentions and replies, legal research and pondering. The locale was close to home for both Carson and Byrd, and they were affected personally as well as officially by the suspenseful delays. Byrd, whose service as governor was in its last year, showed his confidence in Carson by appointing him to another four years as head of the commission.[41]

At last, on October 1, 1929, Carson was able to telegraph Byrd:

> In a closely reasoned opinion 23 pages in length Judge Williams sustains the park condemnation law and overrules all contentions as to its unconstitutionality including objections because no jury allowed or

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[41] E.O. Fippin to Byrd (acknowledging appointment), 24 April 1929, State Library.

appeal authorized from findings of value by the circuit court and commissioners and holds the statute "a very carefully drawn act based on established principle and precedent of the law of eminent domain and well designed, practical and sufficient for the purpose of providing a system of procedure adapted for the condemnation of extensive areas..."[42]

Popular arguments that the state had no right to condemn land for a mere "pleasuring ground" or to give it away once condemned were defeated or by-passed.

But the case was indeed two-sided. The decision was enough to justify the commission in going ahead, but it was appealed, so uncertainty continued. All that was done could still be undone. Two years later the Williams decision and the constitutionality of both 1928 laws would be sustained in what Carson called "a sweeping decision rendered by the Supreme Court of Appeals [of Virginia] .... The validity and correctness of the condemnation proceedings were uniformly sustained in the eight circuit courts in which they were instituted and maintained." Yet even that would not end the challenge to this unprecedented taking of a vast and populated area--with removal of thousands of residents, halting of material production that contributed to the economy, inviting a return to natural conditions--all not for public necessity but for public pleasure.

As often before in the Shenandoah movement, even spectacular victories did not end the struggle. Wilbur, Work's successor, worried about the area's national park qualifications. Director Albright "reviewed on the ground the findings of the [Temple] commission...and informed the Secretary" that the area "measured up to national-park standards." Still, though the state commission now had a "park office" in Front Royal, it could not proceed with blanket condemnation because funds were insufficient for payment into the courts for distribution to all owners in amounts the courts were likely to award.[43]

Carson and staff, seeing little chance for more money, undertook to assemble

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[42] Carson, telegram to Byrd, 1 Oct. 1929, State Library. A copy of Judge Williams's long and complex decision is in National Archives.

a jigsaw puzzle of mostly low-value tracts, thousands of them, that would make a contiguous whole acceptable as a national park. Land claimants were invited in to confer on values; some options were taken. Indications of price pushed the commission into more and more of what Carson called "saw-toothing"--that is, altering the boundary by leaving out fertile hollows that would be expensive while adding on rocky ridges that would come cheaply--all the time keeping in mind the 327,000-acre total that any boundary, to be acceptable under present law, must enclose. /~~His~~/Carson's contacts at the top were useful now:

> I spent six hours with the President, Mrs. Hoover, and Secretary Wilbur on Saturday, and the President has a very comprehensive view point on the Park now, as has Secretary Wilbur....
>
> I talked to both the President and Secretary Wilbur about our problems around the edge of the Park and they are both with us in saw-toothing....
>
> I expect to be in Washington on Wednesday, and would like to get you and Glenn Smith together and prepare the letter to be written to him [Wilbur?], so that it would keep both you and Glenn Smith out of any difficulty which might arise from the changing of the boundary line.[44]

Again, months later, he wrote Cammerer that the commission's men in the field were "saw-toothing....

> But we have not been making wholesale cuttings, except at Batman's Cove and there we have made fairly extensive cuttings, cutting out over thirty homes, two school houses, and four churches.... As Dr. Wilbur says it would be poor advertisement to the Park to have abandoned homes and farms around the foot of the area.... Added to this we have a hard problem to solve in keeping the people contented, whose land we are taking from them.
>
> It is easy enough to lay down the line in a wholesale way, but when it is encroaching on thousands of home owners it requires tact, diplomacy and common sense to keep these land owners from going into frenzy and raising such a howl that the whole Park scheme will be destroyed.[45]

But even this saw-toothing would not be enough. And while conclusive action was thus delayed, lumbermen were "after owners of timber lands every day seeking

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[44] Carson to Cammerer, 8 April 1929, National Archives.

[45] Carson to Cammerer, 10 Sept. 1929, National Archives.

to buy their timber...and they are no doubt making representations to them that they will get more money by selling their timber to them, rather than to the Park." Carson issued public statements that park land appraisers were assigning full value to any and all timber, but much was nevertheless cut--young timber, Carson said, on which profit, if any, was poor. There were no mature or old trees except a few lonely individuals in the most rugged places.[46]

In January 1930 Smith of U.S. Geological Survey reported that a boundary tentatively worked out by the state commission was 326.8 miles long and enclosed 312,677 acres. Smith asked if there should be a new bill setting a minimum acreage of 300,000. But Carson knew he could not buy even that acreage. Could there be more saw-toothing? Carson was challenged again by a comparison of --Smoky now had the title of national park (though for protection only)-- Shenandoah with Smoky progress/ and his retort was abrupt: "With us the matter has to be done with the utmost skill; with the Smoky Mountains' people, by the pure brute force of money." His park division head died, and it took almost two months to persuade a qualified successor--but, then, a good one, the supervisor of what was called Shenandoah National Forest at the time, S.H. Marsh. The task was still to assemble a contiguous area of 327,000 acres that Virginia could afford to buy and that the Interior secretary could accept.[47]

Forest fires raged that spring near Skyland, near Hoover's camp, and in the southern section near "famous Black Rock." Carson made "all efforts" to get firefighters; most of the mountain people were struggling only to save their homes. Pollock said the fires were the worst "in a lifetime." Both opposition to the park and impatience to see it achieved were surfacing. Carson took to the radio to justify his commission's course. Though little that was new could be said, the talk gave the feel of careful but strong and continuing movement.[48]

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[46] Danville Register, 29 June 1930.

[47] Smith to Cammerer, 28 Jan. 1930, National Archives; Carson to Gov. John Garland Pollard, 8 Feb. 1930, State Library (retort about Smoky); and Amiss typescript, p. 25. Great Smoky became a park with 158.876.5 acres.

[48] Washington Star, 13 April 1930, for fires; World News (Roanoke, Va.),

There had been citizen appeals to abandon the national park and make a state park instead. Seemingly adequate answers had been given. But now an aggressive pamphlet campaign was launched--by Alfred Akerman who was "teaching forestry at the University of Virginia" after having worked for Virginia Forest Service. He published three different pamphlets, wrote Secretary Wilbur an anti-national park letter, and tried to turn Gov. John Garland Pollard against the national park. He contended that the only reason advanced for federal ownership was that Uncle Sam had greater financial resources so could build roads and make other improvements faster. But would Uncle Sam do so?

> All that the federal Congress has done is to declare it to be the policy of the Congress then sitting to accept the gift, if offered....
>
> As the steam from Jacob's pot beclouded hungry Esau's vision and led him to sell his birthright for a bowl of bean soup, so haste to develop the park may lead us to part with something worth more to us and to our children than any federal appropriations....
>
> There is question as to whether, under the Constitution, the legislature of a state can transfer jurisdiction except over lands purchased by the federal government "for the erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards, and other needful buildings." But aside from the doubtful constitutionality...there is the risk and inconvenience of having an area...extending through eight counties governed by laws made outside of the state, administered by a federal bureau, and construed by federal courts....
>
> While the main purpose of the park is to provide a playground, its use as a playground does not prevent the bulk of it from being used for growing timber.... Virginia is wealthy, but is Virginia so wealthy that it can afford to give away a tangible asset worth millions of dollars?[49]

A Richmond News-Leader editorial answered many of Akerman's minor points but failed to face the question of playground only vs. continued material production.[50]

The second pamphlet said the park ought to be part of the state forest system. It cited Sihlwald in Switzerland that is enjoyed recreationally while

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[49] Akerman to Secretary of the Interior, 24 Jan. 1930, National Archives; and Pollard to Akerman, undated, State Library. Quote is from first pamphlet, "Should Shenandoah be a National or a State Park?" 4 Jan. 1930. The other two are, "Further Notes on the Shenandoah Park Project," 27 Jan. 1930, and "The Shenandoah Park Project and Public Policy," 30 Jan. 1932. Privately printed copies in State

also bringing money from timber sales. It also--quite accurately, two decades would show--forecast race troubles:

> The negroes, whether they come from Virginia or from the large and wealthy colored population of Washington, Philadelphia, and New York, are entitled to use the park facilities.... Under the Virginia policy of separation, both whites and negroes can enjoy the park with no more risk of clashes than anywhere else in Virginia. Under federal ownership, we will be on the horns of a dilemma.... Unless the races are separated at the danger points...we are likely to have an all-white or an all-negro park, and that is not fair to either race.

The third pamphlet stressed the advantages of uniform government throughout the state as contrasted with the divided government that would result from a vast federal domain inside the state. It declared that Virginians should not have to pay for property to be given away.

From numerous conversations with Virginians in diverse walks of life, I feel that Akerman validly expressed what he called "an undertow of dissatisfaction with the Shenandoah park." This undertow seldom surfaced, but sometimes it did. A letter to the editor of the Luray paper objected to running "the poor people out of their mountain homes" and said the park would be "a hotbed of iniquity where all kinds of immoral practices will be conducted." Much more thorough and valid was a case against the park presented by Lewis Willis, landowning resident near Marys Rock. Willis had attended the University of Virginia and had been a contractor and broker for chestnut oak bark (used by tanneries in making leather). My family and I lived in his isolated house during the summer of 1946, thus guarding it from vandals while this little old man went out to make needed money by wholesaling flyswatters. His wife, also college-educated, had died, but his spirit remained strong in loneliness and his mind sharp. He had been a great reader but was now going blind. Books were everywhere in the old house--to which he had lifetime rights, courtesy of the Secretary of the Interior, because even when others were being moved out he was elderly. In 1931 Willis had written

Secretary Wilbur, saying he believed that only one side of the park movement had become known so the situation from the landowners' side needed airing:

> .... the park project was promoted and rests on a speculative basis.... park bills were railroaded through, land owners not being represented.... pro-park press minimizes and suppresses opposition (for example, it is not generally known that an overflow meeting of land owners was held in Luray February 23, 1929, a protective association organized and counsel retained).... the unconstitutional ejectment of several thousand families would establish a perilous and far-reaching precedent.[51]

The answer was signed by Director Albright, saying the letter and enclosed attorney's brief had been read "with great interest, but I am sure you appreciate that the United States has no responsibility or authority in any matters having to do with the acquisition of the land, which, under existing law, is solely under the jurisdiction of the responsible agencies of the State of Virginia."[52]

The next year Willis sent a three-page typed letter to President Hoover, making these points:

> To be included in [the national park system] an area should be unique and virginal. The scenery of the Blue Ridge is repeated again and again from Maryland to northern Georgia. This area is not virginal....
>
> .... if preservation of a sample of Appalachian scenery is the goal, in federal ownership, that object is accomplished in part by purchase of more than a million five hundred thousand acres of national forests...and fully accomplished by Great Smoky as a park.
>
> .... for condemnation, we have a right to insist that "public necessity" be proved.... Some politicians thought that a national park would help them attain their ambitions. Some other people ~~that~~ thought that a national park would bring tourists and in that way help them fill their pockets. A promoting agency was brought from another state.... The national park project was conceived in ambition, brought forth by an appeal to greed, and fed on exaggerations and misstatements.... We are willing to make any

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[51] Willis to Wilbur, 13 April 1931, National Archives. Supt. Hoskins, personal interview 1969, supplements my memories of Willis. An old handbill advertising chestnut oak bark for sale by Willis (Luray) is in SNP archives. For "iniquity" letter, signed "Bill Wiggins," Page News & Courier, 25 Nov. 1930.

[52] Albright to Willis, 16 April 1931, National Archives.

> reasonable sacrifice for the public good when necessary. We are unwilling to part with our homes to advertise a few politicians and to help a small part of our population to get their hands into tourists' pockets....
>
> Landowners Protective Association petitions the President, for the federal government, to refuse to accept this land for a national park--and throw responsibility back to the State.[53]

A satisfactory answer to this letter would be a treasure, explaining this park in a deeper and more interrelating way than any park had ever been explained. But I have been unable to confirm that an answer was ever sent.

Byrd and Carson had once argued, by mail between Richmond and Riverton, which of them was more responsible for victories in the park project. Byrd credited Carson. Carson thanked him and called him "the most unusual and fair-minded person I have ever known." He added:

> I have but one real ambition, and that is to deliver the park to the United States Government within your term of office, as it will be an outstanding accomplishment that will be handed down through all time. Despite anything you write or say, you are the sole and only person to whom credit for the park should go; I am but one of your lieutenants, and would be working along other lines but for you.[54]

If there had been any doubt before 1930 that Carson was responsible, there was none from 1930 to 1934, and the responsibility was heavy and somber. The depression kept worsening, and it became obvious to Carson and gradually through him to Washington that they had to settle for the best possible park the now-available money would buy or get no park at all. Some of the pledges from wealthy persons outside Virginia, secured by Carson and Cammerer, were withdrawn; others were sharply reduced. Instead of the millions Cammerer had forecast, instead of the $566,250 he once even reported "collected," the whole effort with

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[53] Willis to President Herbert Hoover, 22 June 1932, National Archives. I wish I had known of the Willis letters when I knew Willis, but I did not, and the subjects discussed never came up in our conversations.

[54] Carson to Byrd, 20 Dec. 1927, State Library.

the outside-Virginia "rich" brought only $219,881. The boundary kept lengthening with farther zigs back into the fertile hollows and farther zags out the rocky ridges. Saw-toothing could go no farther without being ridiculous.[55]

Late in 1931 an NPS team, including Kelsey as a "park collaborator," was at work on the ground trying to alleviate the worst of the saw-toothing already tentatively done. The team reported eliminating "the German Ridge salient, the Dovel Mountain salient, and the Kirtley-Flat Top-Allen Mountain salient" and rebuilding "protective areas" south of the Spottswood Trail and north of Lee Highway. It finally produced a picture of a quite different but maybe possible park--a broad bulk of 133,661.46 acres in the center, between Spottswood Trail and Lee Highway, and a mile-wide strip 20.75 miles along the main ridge to the northern boundary near Front Royal and a similar mile-wide strip 26.2 miles long southward to the boundary near Waynesboro. The narrow strips would add up to 30,060 acres, making a total for the whole park of 163,721.46 acres.[56]

Just before Christmas, Dr. Showalter of National Geographic, visiting in Luray, told a reporter:

> You can safely assure the good people of Page that so far as this area is concerned the depression is ready to end. I happen to know that the responsible officials...are now willing to take over for immediate development an area that can be purchased with the funds in hand, and to leave the acquisition of the remainder to future years.[57]

Sen. Swanson introduced a bill providing for a park of as little as 160,000 acres, and just after New Year's Day 1932 Director Albright favored it, saying:

> Appraisals, which have been exceedingly difficult, will soon be completed, but it is already evident that the State will have sufficient pledged funds to acquire only about 160,000 acres. Further studies by...national park experts have indicated that a suitable national park can be secured with this 160,000 acres, or 250 square miles. It should be pointed out that

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[55] Amiss typescript, p. 12, lists out-of-state donors as Thomas A. Edison Estate, $250; Edsel Ford, $50,000; John D. Rockefeller, Jr., $163,631.05; W.T. Grant, $1,000; and Ball Brothers Co. of Indiana, $5,000.

[56]

such reduction will not prevent the State of Virginia if at any time in the future it can secure additional funds, from acquiring the remainder of the 327,000 acres, or any portion thereof.[58]

Secretary Wilbur, acting swiftly the same day, sent a copy of Albright's recommendation to the Senate, calling the legislation "urgently necessary." The committee on public lands and surveys decided, "do pass." There was no hitch in either chamber, and the bill was signed by President Hoover on February 4, 1932. It not only brought the acreage within reach of the funds but also cleared the way a bit by authorizing the Secretary, if he chose, to let park area residents live in their old homes as long as they did not hamper the park.[59]

Policy makers of both federal and state governments gathered at Skyland in the spring for a two-day conference. Wilbur was there with top men of NPS--Albright, Cammerer, Wirth, chief engineer Kittredge. Carson was accompanied by his appropriate executives. The Bureau of Public Roads was represented by its chief, Thomas H. MacDonald and others. Dr. Roy Lyman Sexton of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club and Miriam M. Sizer, teacher and social worker, both acquainted with the mountain folk, participated. So did Pollock. The boundary for the much-reduced park was on the agenda--and roads and trails. These problems were attacked mostly on maps. There were also "various sociological problems." Wilbur and the NPS people, among others, visited a mountain hollow "in which," Cammerer reported, "a number of mountaineer families have been squatting for years." The group discussed relocating the folk "outside the park area proper." Cammerer's report continued:

> This particular class of mountain people is as low in the social order and as destitute as it seems possible for humans to get. They have been the objects of a good deal of charity work on the part of visitors... and from Miss Sizer for the State of Virginia and the several counties....

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[58] Albright to Secretary Wilbur, 5 Jan. 1932.

[59] Secretary of the Interior Ray Lyman Wilbur to Senator Gerald P. Nye, 5 Jan. 1932. Both the Albright memo and the Wilbur letter are reprinted in Report No. 104 of the Senate committee on public lands and surveys, 15 Jan. 1932, National Archives. The bill became 47 Stat. 77

> It is not known how many squatters of similar degree of intelligence, or lack of intelligence, are within the park area proper, but, every one of them being a potential beggar, it is not considered a practical proposition to authorize their retention on lifetime leases within the park. Furthermore, I have always contended that if the removal of these mountain people is to be insisted upon, it is for the State of Virginia to remove them before the United States takes possession.... None of the considerations controlling leases in the Great Smokies project is comparable to those presented in the Shenandoah project.

Carson suggested that several hundred acres of the park be set aside for concentration of these folk. But this was opposed as impracticable--they would still be in the park. Another proposal was that acreage outside the present park boundary line, but within the maximum boundary, could be approved by the Secretary for the folk, then bought by the state, maybe near one of the Episcopal missions "for social settlement work." This acreage would not be turned over as part of the park but disposed of by the state commission otherwise. But this was called improper "as there really is a park purpose, the problem having arisen out of the park project."

The group concluded that "sociological data, a census of such people," were needed, so Miss Sizer would be hired--for two months--to gather information. But the mountain folk were not to interfere with full speed ahead for the park; the conference saw them as nuisances and obstacles.[60]

During the next year there were futile gestures toward bringing the shrunken park up to the minimum of 500 square miles set by the old park-seeking committee for consideration of any site. Sen. Carter Glass (Va.), urged by a resolution from the city of Lynchburg, proposed annexing all or part of Natural Bridge

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[60] Arno B. Cammerer, 4-page memo for Director and files, with photos of mountain people, 7 May 1932, National Archives. The hollow the Wilbur-NPS party visited may have been one of the two or three "worst" in the whole park area; such a one was to be found near Skyland. Horace M. Albright, personal letter, 27 Sept. 1976, said: "As to the mountaineers inhabiting parts of the park area back in the 1920's they were a pretty terribly degraded lot, and needed to be moved out and restored where possible to decent health and appearance. I visited a few of the cabins of these people, and came away depressed and sad." See chap. 9 for different views of the mountain folk.

National Forest, to the southwest, including James River Gorge and the Peaks of Otter, and possibly reaching out to take in the famous Natural Bridge of Virginia. Albright saw problems in such annexation but said it would be given "careful thought." Elkton Chamber of Commerce wanted the park expanded above its community, saying it was most important that the Blue Ridge be reforested --"older people know that in the 1870s all our mountain streams ran to the river all seasons of the year, but they now are running dry a major part of the time." Lee Long, owner of Big Meadows, who had refused a hundred dollars an acre for this land a year or two before, now accepted the park appraisers' price--$5 each for 238 acres of rough land and $45 each for 278 acres of tableland.[61]

Condemnation shifted into high gear. Court appraisers followed the state commission's appraisers in visiting every tract, no matter how small, and inviting the owners to show all elements of value. Public hearings were held. Four separate boards of court appraisers were thus kept busy for more than two years. Then there was arbitration. Gov. Pollard appointed three circuit court judges as arbitration committee for the four southern counties. A similar board was named for the other counties, and the governor was soon signing papers authorizing payments into the courts for distribution to owners. A total of 133 claimants asked for arbitration, some represented by attorneys, others appearing on their own behalf. Some adjustments were granted. By 1934 Virginia was "entering the final stages preparatory to presenting to the United States deeds to Shenandoah National Park. Minor matters such as clearance of titles and removal of squatters remain to be accomplished."[62]

Marsh, park division supervisor of the state commission, saw the job as done and looked ahead:

It will be the aim of the National Park Service to reforest as rapidly

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[61] Albright to Glass, 16 Dec. 1932, and W.E. Kite of Elkton to Carson, 14 June 1933, National Archives; also Madison Eagle, 1932 (undated clipping, SNP).

[62] State commission minutes; Carson report; Amiss typescript; Gilliam to Carson, 17 Nov. 1933, confirming phone talk; and Albright quote from p. 177

as possible those spots...which are now devoid of timber, and to repair as soon as it may the damage done by preceding generations in the exploitation of the timber and other natural resources....

A few years will see very radical changes...; lands now naked and devoid of cultivation, which should never have been cleared, will be clothed with young growth; fire scars now seen on every hand will be given an opportunity to heal, and intensive protection will prevent new ones from occurring; and mighty forests will arise to inspire succeeding generations.[63]

The recent plan for a park with a broad central body and mile-wide strips extending northward and southward--pushed by an NPS team when the action seemed stalled--gave way, after all, to the saw-toothed fish skeleton and the dream that the skeleton would be fleshed out in years to come. It is ironic that the saw-toothed boundary, moderated but slightly in the sprint on what seemed the home stretch, should be named "Kelsey Line" after the man who had helped draw other boundaries he liked so much better.

In August 1934 Gov. George C. Peery, the fourth four-year governor of Virginia since the park movement started--Trinkle, Byrd, Pollard, Peery--signed deeds "transferring to the federal government a tract of land 100 miles long, extending through eight counties, to form the Shenandoah National Park." There was a burst of public praise for Carson who had been so long and so often nagged and criticized for delays and supposed errors. There were reviews of the seemingly endless run of the gauntlet "that would have discouraged and disheartened men less determined than Chairman W.E. Carson and his associates."[64]

But all was not praise and "plain sailing" even now. There were reports from Washington of a countermovement to restrain the Secretary of the Interior, the third since the park movement started--Work, Wilbur, Ickes--from accepting the deeds. A candidate for Congress in the park's own district was urging a congressional probe into the land acquisition:

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64 "A Dream Becomes a Reality," editorial, Madison Eagle, 17 Aug. 1934. It also stressed that "considerable impetus" was given the park movement by the winning of Camp Hoover (a tract Hoover deeded to Virginia for the park), and said, "Chairman Carson delivered the deed for the park area to Secretary of the

> ... the Shenandoah Park for ten years has been a political football among Virginia politicians. I, myself, have personal knowledge of hundreds of injustices in the park area. Under the condemnation proceedings it is practically impossible to get concerted action.

But the candidate was not elected.[64]

Carson, when leaving the state conservation commission at the end of 1934, reported:

> ALL IS WELL THAT ENDS WELL...and our report is that the lands within the park area have been purchased and paid for; that deeds for same have been made to the national government and are in the hands of the Secretary of the Interior; that the skyline drive is more than two-thirds completed and that through the diligence, forethought and energy of the commission the park is advanced more than ten years in its development and that it is one of the greatest beauty spots in the United States.

On January 8, 1935, addressing the Front Royal Lions Club, Carson said the are covered by deeds waiting in Washington totalled 181,578 acres, representing 1,088 tracts, acquired through expenditure of approximately $2,258,910. Of this amount $1,859,910 went to the land owners. The rest, about $400,000, went for "overhead," including promotion and acquirement work by his commission, surveying, mapping and appraising 3,328 tracts, appraisal, arbitration and court costs, promotion of "the Hoover Road" and securing right of way for Skyline Drive, and salaries, travel and subsistence expenses of employees. Because he had so often been accused of failing to do as well with Shenandoah as was done with Smoky, he again mentioned the size of Smoky's fund as compared with Shenandoah's. He said North Carolina had already spent $5,723,940 and Tennessee $4,020,700, yet Smoky could hardly become a full-status national park for at least another year. Smoky's overhead already totalled nearly three times Shenandoah's. Smoky's cost per acre thus far had been $22, while Shenandoah's total cost was only $12.44 an acre, despite the fact that Shenandoah's overhead

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[64] Richmond Times-Dispatch, 27 Oct. 1934, for quoted words. The candidate was J. Everett Will of Luray, Republican.

was "notably increased by the need for repeated reductions in the size and location of the area" involving thorough study of three times as many tracts as could in the end be bought.[65]

Carson was justified in defending his record--as the future would confirm --but that future was not yet ready to start. The federal government had not accepted the Virginia deeds, and a case that could still wreck what had been achieved was heading for the Supreme Court of the United States.

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[65] Harrisonburg Daily News-Record, 9 Jan. 1935.

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## Herbert Hoover and Skyline Drive

Skyline Drive, the motor travel-sightseeing route in Shenandoah National Park, is a multiple paradox. It has been called the park's "greatest single feature," but in a true national park sense it is not a park "feature" at all --it is an artificial development. Maybe it is a historical feature. It was created contrary to the law authorizing the park--that barred development until after an adequate acreage had been accepted by the federal government--yet it was not illegal. It was built for the park, because of the park, yet it started four and a half years before there was a Shenandoah park. It had more visitation than any actual national park for fifteen months before Shenandoah existed.

Parks historian John Ise declared in 1961--after echoing a popular view that "the Skyline Drive comes rather close to <u>being</u> the Shenandoah Park"--that "President Hoover had conceived the idea of the drive when he spent vacations in his camp on the Rapidan, in the area that was being bought for Shenandoah Park." NPS Director Albright retold in 1969 the story behind the Ise statement. Interviewed at Shenandoah, he recalled the genesis of Camp Hoover, during which he got acquainted with William E. Carson, who "became one of my closest friends....

> I was out here quite a number of times with Will Carson, and we saw the buildings being built and the establishment of the camp, and then from time to time we were guests.... I refer particularly to one time. It must have been late 1930.... President Hoover announced that [Sunday] morning...anybody who wanted to ride horseback would be out there at the post at eight o'clock. Well, nobody was out there but me. The President then came along with his wife and Ted Joslin, one of his secretaries, and a Secret Service man.... We rode up onto the summit...to the Big Meadows....
>
> The President motioned me to come up alongside of him.... he told me that these mountains were just made for a highway.... And he said, I think everybody ought to have a chance to get the views from here. He said, I think they're the greatest in the world, and I've been nearly everywhere in the world. And I pointed out, well, if they build a road...

> that's the end of his camp, because they'd have so many tourists.... and he said, well, I'm not going to be President all the time and my successor might not like this place, and besides, I feel, even if I was here, he said, that the people should have this sensation that I have, this exhilaration, this experience that I have riding along here. He said, I want you to consider undertaking a survey right away...talk it over with Mr. Carson and then...get a crew in here and see what you can do. So that's where I got my instructions for this Skyline Drive. Right from the President's mouth, right up there where the road is now.[1]

But Albright knew this was not the conceiving; it was the start of labor pains; the conceiving came earlier. Tracing back through the twenties, I find varying mentions of a skyline highway. In 1925 State Senator Harry F. Byrd (soon to be governor) quoted from an article in Old Colony Magazine:

> The East has no great mountain drive, but if the National Parks Committee has its way a highway will be built the entire length of the park on top of the mountains.... Often the drive will be above the clouds, and already there is some agitation to extend it through the North Carolina, Tennessee and South Carolina mountains.[2]

This points to the leading view of the conception, that it occurred in the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee, headed by Rep. Temple, and was first mentioned in the 1924 report that recommended Shenandoah and said its "greatest single feature...is a possible skyline drive." But this was not the conceiving either. And the committee was divided in regard to this so-called "feature." Member Kelsey wrote:

> I know that some of my associates want a skyline road. That's good propaganda stuff and it would make a magnificent drive but the Park itself

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[1] Horace M. Albright, interview by R. Taylor Hoskins, E. Ray Schaffner and Bruce McHenry, 14 April 1969, tape in SNP archives; this is the source to be assumed wherever in this chapter Albright remembered. For John Ise statement, Ise, Our National Park Policy (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1961), p. 263. I see that in Donald C. Swain, Wilderness Defender: Horace M. Albright and Conservation (U. of Chicago Press, 1970), p.204, the Hoover-Albright ride was placed in May 1931, but Albright's recollection of late 1930 fits much better with NPS files and other records.

[2] Page News & Courier, 11 Sept. 1925. I have not found the magazine and do not know who wrote what Byrd quoted.

> averages about 10 to 12 miles wide and it would split it right in two.... There are two main highways crossing the Park in low gaps and I believe that from these gaps roads could go up to some of those Mountain peaks and that is about all for roads in the Park...[which is] to be kept in as natural a state as is possible.[3]

The skyline idea was being discussed almost casually by Washington Star writer Harold Philips long before the committee's report was written, and he got it from the answers to the "Government Questionnaire" compiled by Pollock and associates:

> A scenic highway of several hundred miles in length could be built; extending along the backbone of the Blue Ridge for the entire length of the Park, which in many places would border upon high, rugged cliffs, giving extensive views of the valley 3,000 feet below.[4]

Still the search is not complete. Zerkel credited another early "park nut," Harold Allen. And how did the skyline idea come to Allen? I am conjecturing now--likely conjecture, I think, but with one reservation. Allen, who became an assistant to the U.S. Attorney General, was a trail man prominent in the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club after it was organized in 1927, editor of the ambitious Guide to Paths in the Blue Ridge, hence probably an early admirer of Benton MacKaye whose 1921 article suggesting an Appalachian Trail repeatedly emphasized "skyline"--for instance,

> The skyline along the top...of the Appalachians would overlook a mighty part of the nation's activities. The rugged lands of this skyline would form a camping base strategic in the country's work and play.[5]

My reservation grows from the fact that the Appalachian Trail movement was seeking an escape from highways and cars. Would trail leader Allen, even when

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[3] SANPC Report to Secretary of the Interior, 12 Dec. 1924, in "Final Report" booklet 1931, SNP archives, and Harlan P. Kelsey to Barrington Moore, 27 March 1925, National Archives.

[4] Star, 2 Nov. 1924, for instance, and answers to questionnaire, later printed in "A National Park Near the Nation's Capital," pamphlet issued by Northern Virginia Park Association, 17 Nov. 1924.

[5] Pollock, Skyland, p. 283, endnote 12 by Stuart E. Brown, Jr., ed., and

caught up by enthusiasm for the possible park and knowing an extraordinary scenic drive might help obtain it, have gone so far with MacKaye's "skyline" as to wish a highway on it?

The scheme to turn the skyline drive idea into reality had been growing for more than a year before Albright got his "instructions." In a letter thanking Carson for helping with Camp Hoover, the President said:

> Your commission together with the state of Virginia and especially the Madison County supervisors, have advanced the improvement of the road which will form one of the fine openings to the new park; local residents have contributed labor to the opening of fine trails, and this week the engineer corps volunteered to further improve the road as one of its summer exercises.[6]

In his prompt reply Carson included these words:

> Of course, all the work being done on the roads and trails will rebound ultimately to the benefit of the State and the United States, when the Rapidan Valley road becomes (as it will, in due time) one of the important gateways to the Shenandoah National Park.

Carson--as so often--was busy behind the scenes. He asked the highway engineer who supervised construction up to Camp Hoover to estimate the cost of extending this "good country road" to the rangecrest at or near Big Meadows, northward to Skyland, and down to Luray. The estimate was $80,000.

> Carson asked the counties of Page, Madison, Culpeper and Orange to put up half this amount, promising that he himself would find the other half. Page County readily agreed to its quota but the other counties for various reasons were unable to do so.[7]

Pollock was aware of the scheme:

> Mr. Alexander Stuart...spent last week-end with me, and we went into details in making arrangements to assist Mr. Carson in an endeavor which he may make to have the State, or others, make a side branch from the

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[6] Hoover to Carson, 2 Aug. 1929. This letter and Carson's answer are both printed at end of "Hoover on the Rapidan," by Carter Wormeley, in "Conserving and Developing Virginia," Richmond, state conservation commission, 1934.

President's road to Skyland. We went so far as for me to give the Commission a deed to a right of way, and I am going to use my efforts, just as soon as I hear from Mr. Carson, to get other landowners to join in. We, all of us, are to agree that we will expect no higher price for our lands, when such land is sold to the State, from any enhancement of value which the land may receive from the putting through of this road. I feel very hopeful that we can do something toward making a beautiful side trip for the President's guests over the crest of the ridge...and it would be a factor, we all feel sure, in enabling the Commission to raise funds to complete the purchase of the park, in view of the fact that, by having this road, it would make it possible to bring members of the State Legislature, wealthy men, and others who might be approached for funds, to get a real idea of what the Shenandoah National Park is like.[8]

Carson wrote Cammerer of NPS that he was planning a trip up from Criglersville to Camp Hoover, thence

across the mountain by horseback to Skyland...to consider the advisability of building a road from where the Marines are encamped to Skyland; primarily for the accommodation of the President and his guests, but eventually as a Park road.

We feel we should not consider or undertake such a project unless it falls in with the general plan of Park development; so we are writing you to urge you to go along with us.[9]

I find no evidence that Cammerer came. NPS had no Shenandoah appropriation or staff, hence little capability to make a "general plan" that would pattern the park forever--which a highway might do.

Col. T.C. Northcott, owner of Luray Caverns, who had offered $10,000 to help build the road, suggested there should be something in writing from the President. Carson asked--and received this answer from the White House:

This is in reply to your inquiry as to whether or not the President would object to the proposal of building a road from the Marine Camp via Skyland to the foot of the mountain at Luray. I am very glad to inform you that the President has no objection whatever. In fact, he thinks it

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[8] George Freeman Pollock to George Akerson, 8 Aug. 1929, SNP archives.

[9] Carson to Cammerer, 27 Aug. 1929, National Archives.

would be a very good thing inasmuch as this is going to be one of the main entrances to the park, as well as for the people living in that vicinity and for the traveling public generally.[10]

That fall (1929)--Davidson reported--still about a year before Albright got his "instructions"--

> the President rode over the proposed road with Mr. Carson...and expressed himself as having been "thrilled".... He said he had no idea that such scenery could be found in Virginia. It was a psychological moment and Carson seized it and secured from the President a promise of Federal aid in building the road as soon as funds that could be used...became available.
>
> Then came the drought of 1930 and with it the first proposal to extend the road the full length of the park. The Blue Ridge Mountain area was one of the hardest hit sections of the country. And the President knew it. So when Mr. Carson went to Washington and asked him for an allocation from the drought relief funds to build a scenic highway from Front Royal to Jarman's Gap, he said he would sanction such an allocation if given the authority by Congress....
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> At a dinner given [in honor of Rep. Louis Cramton] in recognition of his services to the state in securing legislation for the restoration of Arlington and for the Colonial National Monument at Yorktown, Carson said to him:
>
> "There is one more thing I want you to do for Virginia--offer a bill in Congress making the drought relief funds available for building roads in the national parks."
>
> He thereupon told Cramton about his conversation with President Hoover, with the result that Cramton agreed to offer such a bill.[11]

In August 1930 the New York Times carried an item that must have been elaborated around sparse information picked up on the fringes of Camp Hoover. It said the first link of the main artery in Shenandoah would run 20 miles from near Camp Hoover to Hawksbill, Crescent Rock and Skyland, where it would become part of "Blue Ridge Drive...the main travel artery, which will extend from Front

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[10] Davidson 1934 and Lawrence Richey to Carson at Riverton, Presidential Library, Herbert Hoover National Historic Site, Iowa. It is worth remembering here that Hoover had beenpresident of National Parks Association when Shenandoah was recommended and was inclined to keep up with park matters.

Royal to Staunton." It credited the state conservation commission with plans "to commemorate the week-end sojourns of President and Mrs. Hoover at their Rapidan camp...by naming the first highway into the new Shenandoah National Park in their honor."[12]

At about this point Albright got his "instructions...from the President's mouth." In October the Park Service was seeking a way to get and spend federal road money for construction in Shenandoah despite the provision in the amended authorizing law "that there shall be no improvements undertaken by the Federal Government until a minimum of 327,000 acres have been donated to and accepted by the United States." A formal request soon came from Carson through White House-Interior-NPS channels for $200,000 to build a road from the Marine Camp as far as Skyland. Albright made appointments to discuss the matter with Secretary Wilbur and with Larry Richey.[13]

> Carson kept a step ahead, writing to justify "drought relief funds....
>
> for six months this particular section has had only two showers...the people...facing not only privation but starvation, and this road would be a godsend.... If you can plan for the building of this road this winter, you will not only have done the right and proper thing in protecting the President's life and the development of the Park, but it will probably mean the saving of many lives from starvation.[14]

Carson and Albright both wrote Rep. Cramton, urging him to put in the deficiency appropriation bill an authorization to build a road in Shenandoah. Albright asked for $250,000 and said the road would be valuable in park administration and protection. Cramton obliged, and by February 1931 there was an official allotment sheet-"Shenandoah - Appropriation 41436.1 Roads & Trails, National Parks Emergency Construction, 1931 - $250,000." NPS landscape architect Charles E. Peterson was sent in a hurry to examine a survey already made by the

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[12] "Blue Ridge Road Named for Hoovers," New York Times, 25 Aug. 1930.

[13] A.E. Demaray to Albright, 2 Oct. 1930; E.K. Burlew to Albright and Albright to Burlew, both 30 Oct. 1930--all National Archives.

[14] Carson to Albright, 3 Nov. 1930, National Archives.

Bureau of Public Roads from the Marine Camp to Fishers Gap. He found the routing "very good," though "there are certain details which should have a little more study."[15]

The pressure to employ the unemployed and build was immediate and irresistible; the time to plan, to get bids and award a contract, virtually zero. Albright "talked with the Secretary" and found he would like "to have the whole job done, letting it under contract for June 30th bringing the highway down to Panorama." More estimates were needed, more quick surveys. The Park Service studied appropriations to see if money might be taken "from Zion, Bryce or Petrified Forest or even Colonial...together with the Sequoia allotment...and replace out of regular appropriations.... looks like we ought to make up about $500,000."[16]

Demaray of NPS had a long talk with Bishop of BPR and learned the survey was already completed for 17 miles from Marine Camp to Skyland. The Skyland to Panorama survey might be speeded to completion within three weeks and accurate estimates produced two weeks after that. Bishop revealed ("confidential," Demaray warned Albright) that $5,000,000 of the fiscal year's $80,000,000 emergency fund was still unallotted and might be tapped.

> Mr. Bishop also told me that he has carefully canvassed the situation with regard to the road from Skyland to Panorma. He tells me that there are only two or three members of the Appalachian Trail Club that are opposed to the sky line Road. Bishop says that the road ought to go on the summit;

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[15] Carson to Rep. Louis C. Cramton, 31 Dec. 1930; Albright to Cramton, 3 Jan. 1931; Advice of Change in Outline of Work, 7 Feb. 1931; and Peterson to Bishop (chief, div. of construction, BPR)--National Archives. Demaray to Prof. Alfred Akerman, explains that "the funds for this work became available upon passage of the 'First Deficiency Act, fiscal year 1931,' approved February 6, 1931, which provides that 'the appropriation for the construction of roads and trails in the national parks and national monuments...contained in the Act approved December 20, 1930,' (Emergency Public Works Act) 'is hereby made available in so far as may be necessary for the construction of highways within the areas authorized to be established as national parks under the Acts approved February 21, 1925 (43 Stat. 958-959); May 22, 1925 (U.S.C., title 16, sec. 403)....'"

[16] Albright to Demaray, 12 March 1931, National Archives.

that there are no particular engineering difficulties; that it will be one of the most scenic roads in the country and that it is a shame to consider any other location.... he guarantees to get the entire project under contract prior to June 30th.[17]

This date was so important because the funds would/be lost as the fiscal year ended. otherwise

But what about the right of way? The land was still privately owned. Zerkel:

With a "Drought Relief" Fund available, but only for its immediate award; it was clear that, if the start of the Park's Skyline Drive was to antedate the conclusion of the slow-moving Court condemnation, a series of negotiated purchases...from Panorama to Swift Run Gap, just had to be accomplished and very speedily. The hundreds of owner contacts, rights of way agreements and deed preparation and execution activities were entrusted to the writer [by Carson], with Thomas T. Early of Madison taking most efficient care of the onerous field work.[18]

Panorama to Swift Run Gap? Yes, there had been another change. NPS chief landscape architect Thomas C. Vint had written a memo, a last-chance effort to steer the speeding steamroller away from obvious errors in planning:

1. It is essential that an agreement be reached as to the general plan of the main road system.... 2. My study...to date indicates that the park road system will center around a main tourist road along the backbone.... 3. The road into the President's camp as it now stands is a good solution for its present purpose. It is built for light traffic and to afford necessary seclusion. However, it does not fit the ultimate park plan.... It makes an additional lateral approach...which in my opinion is not necessary.... 4. The immediate problem is a connection from the President's camp to the school and the ridge.... I recommend that [this] road...be built on a low standard...in order that the major effort will be made on the high standard ridge road.[19]

There was Presidential involvement in setting Shenandoah's basic pattern --to an extent never, to my knowledge, approached in any other national park. Two days after Vint's memo was written, Albright revealed that Larry Richey

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[17] Demaray to Albright, 13 March 1931, National Archives.

[18] L. Ferdinand Zerkel, history typescript ca. 1940, SNP archives.

[19]

called me from the White House yesterday and told me that the President had personally studied our Shenandoah road map and was in entire agreement with what is proposed in the way of road building this year.

The only suggestion he had to make is that we ought to explore a possible route for the road on ridge between the Rapidan and the Robinson River, taking off from the Rapidan about four miles east of the President's camp, not far below the Marine Camp and where an old white building is located, as I understand it, near a fishrack on the river.

It is very important that this route be explored and a memorandum be prepared on it to send to the White House when the President returns.[20]

Davidson reported that Hoover had

...allocated sufficient funds to build the road from Front Royal to Jarman's Gap, the entire length of the park.

This allocation, however, travelled a devious and difficult road.... Some unfortunate publicity given to it prompted a middle west Senator to lead a very strong opposition to so much money being allocated to Virginia and the project was held up. A sum was subsequently allocated to build a road from Red Gate, above the President's Camp, to Panorama, but charges that Mr. Hoover was building a road to his own camp sidetracked this also. It was reinstated and dropped again in a general order of economy when the President returned from the Virgin Islands.

The chairman of the conservation commission, however, had his heart on building this mountain top highway...and he hammered away at the Federal authorities until he was successful in having allocated enough money to build the road from Panorama to Swift Run Gap.

At least once during the planning fluctuations and the fast "flagging" of tentative routes, Hoover rode the skyline again with Albright and others:

.... we came up here after a preliminary line had been run and staked... from Panorama...to Swift Run Gap. We would ride the trail, ride that line, as best we could on horseback. And we wouldn't try to ride it all, but we were satisfied they had the right idea, which was carrying out Hoover's idea. He pointed out that there were places where you could ride the ridge and see both ways. You could look to the Piedmont and you could look to the Shenandoah Valley. Other places you could just look to one,

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[20] Albright to Demaray and Vint, 18 March 1931, National Archives.

and then you'd go round through a gap and you'd see the other side; he thought it was one of the greatest things about it; he noticed that in his own right, you see....

It was a welfare project, and it was by Herbert Hoover.[21]

In March 1931 the Interior Department announced construction plans. Skyline Drive would be built immediately from Panorama to Swift Run Gap and "may ultimately extend for 150 miles." Main road construction would be limited to this scenic highway. "Already there are roads just outside the proposed park boundary and completely surrounding it, and in addition two lateral roads cross the area.... The tentative plan to construct another lateral...has therefore been abandoned." The park, after all, is to protect wilderness. "The people of this mountainous area are in dire straits.... Like all mountain people they have a sturdy independence. The construction...at this time will...offer them employment instead of charity."[22]

The New York Times did not merely carry the release. It published an editorial, "The Blue Ridge Road," with a thought and a forecast somewhat shocking to national park purists and to Appalachian Trail leaders:

> The plan..."to follow the skyline" in the Shenandoah Park in Virginia brings to mind Mr. Hoover's sentiment that national parks should be "those of outstanding scientific and spiritual appeal, those that are unique in their stimulation and inspiration." The National Park Service believes that the Shenandoah road will give the park the character thus indicated....
>
> In the course of time its skyline highway will be continued to join the north-and-south road of the Great Smoky Mountain Park.[23]

By now the cost of SNP Project 1--with crushed stone base course 8" thick before compaction, oiled, surface course omitted, approximately 35 miles from Panorama to Swift Run--was estimated by Bishop of BPR at $1,297,991. But Bishop (among others) had not abandoned the idea of "a permanent road to connect from

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[21] Albright interview 1969.

[22] Interior Department news release, 25 March 1931, National Archives.

[23] Clipping of Times editorial, 29 March 1931, Skyline Drive file, National Archives.

Criglersville with the Skyland Boulevard." Bishop proposed several different routes for this connection. Secretary Wilbur resisted asking for the $1-million-plus allotment until the Rapidan was given further study. Architect Peterson, apparently upset that the extra connection was not firmly abandoned, urged Albright to consult with the White House to see if the Vint plan--no "laterals additional to those existing at Thornton Gap and Swiftrun Gap"--might not, after all, be supported, with only a "scratch road," not for the public, connecting with the Camp Hoover road. What oral consultations might have taken place is uncertain, but on May 1 the Secretary recommended that the $400,000 now available be used to build "from Thornton's Gap to the Big Meadows, and from Big Meadows to Fish Rack [below Camp Hoover] at an estimated cost of $383,329.65." If construction from Big Meadows on to Swift Run is later found desirable, an additional $217,329 could be allotted.[24]

Some of the documents imply confrontation between NPS and the Secretary (even the President), but it is hard to be sure. There were other causes of shifting decisions--among them the protests against spending so much in Shenandoah that was not yet a national park. Sen. McKellar of Tennessee, when he heard of the skyline drive project, demanded a skyline drive for Smoky too. Albright worked to avoid that and probably saw value in keeping the Shenandoah allotment small and in some degree camouflaged; McKellar could not demand a President's camp road as Smoky had no President's camp.[25]

On the other hand, Hoover was sensitive to public criticism that he was building a road for himself and friends; he had already refused both state and federal funds offered to help with the "summer White House." Besides, he really did like solitude while fishing and quite likely had put public good ahead of personal preference in agreeing with Carson's road proposal in the first place.

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[24] Bishop to Demaray, two separate letters of 27 March 1931; Albright to Demaray, 9 April 1931 (after talking with Secretary); Peterson to Albright, 14 April 1931; and Secretary Wilbur to the President, 1 May 1931--National Archives. The last is signed not only by Wilbur but also by Herbert Hoover as "approved, May 1."

Part, at least, of the reason for agreeing was that he habitually came to the park area via Criglersville and thus tended--as did Carson and Wilbur, and even Albright for a time, to take a Rapidan entrance for granted. What he considered crucial here were jobs for those in need and the great views from the skyline.[26]

The files in the National Archives are quiet for almost two months, until on June 26 Demaray wrote Carson of the low bids--Thornton Gap (Panorama) to Big Meadows, Albert Brothers of Salem, Va., $316,981.21; Big Meadows to Swift Run, including a narrower road down to the Rapidan, West Virginia Construction Co., Inc., Huntington, W.Va., $171,002.22.

> It is up to you now to furnish the necessary rights-of-way at the earliest possible date as both contractors will be getting on the job. Also it seems to me almost essential that the land acquisition program go forward in order that the Shenandoah Park can actually be established. Unless we can get some appropriations to administer and protect the park, we are going to be in a serious situation. Here we will have a road completed and probably open to travel surely by the first of next July and great numbers of people going up there, and unless the State or Federal Government assumes protection of the area which certainly will entail considerable expense, things are going to be pretty serious.

Albert Brothers subcontracted 4.1 miles from Lee Highway at Thornton Gap southward to a point on Pinnacle Mountain near the corner of Page, Rappahannock and Madison counties, including Marys Rock tunnel, to F.C. Sammons Co., Inc., and 6.3 miles from Pinnacle to a point near Skyland to Rosenbaum Brothers, Inc., and reserved the 10 miles from near Skyland to Big Meadows for themselves. West Virginia Construction subcontracted its entire job--to Wood & Shipley, Inc., 3.3 miles of the crest route southward from Big Meadows and all of the narrower road, 3.85 miles from Big Meadows to Broyles Gap near the school for mountain folk (created and operated by the Hoovers at their own expense) and 2 miles from Broyles Gap to the Marine Camp; and to McComas & Bostic, Inc., 11.2 miles

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[26] Substantial support for this opinion, though not positive proof, is to

from the Wood & Shipley terminus south of Big Meadows to the Spottswood Trail.[27]

William M. Austin of BPR--a native of the Shenandoah area; also, according to Albright, "a protege of Mr. Mather's"--was resident engineer with headquarters at the Mansion Inn, Luray. Sometimes he stayed as a personal guest of the Pollocks in their cottage at Skyland. BPR's chief of construction, H.K. Bishop, came from Washington about once a week to check on the work. NPS engineers, especially Oliver G. Taylor, and landscape architects, especially Peterson at that early time, became more and more involved. In view of the personal involvement of the President (who was also an engineer, though his specialty was mining) the supervision must have been especially close.

At least one contractor, Rosenbaum, could not reach its section by existing routes--Marys Rock tunnel not yet existing--so had to improve an old wagon trace up Shaver Hollow and what became known as Crusher Ridge (because a rock crusher was among heavy equipment taken up). The tunnel may have been designed into Skyline Drive partly for show, but it seemed justified "to eliminate extensive scars and expensive rock retaining walls.... A little more than three months was required to dig through" this 700 feet of "solid granite...and several springs were encountered."[28]

> An average of 1,000 pounds of dynamite is being used daily.... Five hundred pounds...is loaded into 40 holes and set off by electricity twice in 24 hours. These holes are drilled to a depth of 12 feet, three or four feet apart, over the face wall at the end of the tunnel, the object being to carry the tunnel back at its full height and width all the time.
>
> Every day 15 or more feet of solid rock are eaten away by the blasts. The opening is now nearly 300 feet long and with about 50 feet more the middle point of the tunnel will be reached. Work is progressing steadily and satisfactorily and the tunnel should be driven through by some time

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[27] Zerkel, notes on history of Skyline Drive, ca. mid-April 1932, in SNP archives. For details about the Hoovers' school, see Herbert Hoover's Hideaway, pp. 82-100. Students ranged in age from 7 to 63.

[28] Harvey P. Benson, "The Skyline Drive," The Regional Review, NPS region 1, Richmond, Feb. 1940. This source is to be assumed in this chapter wherever Benson is quoted without a letter or page being cited.

in January. No one has been injured....

.... After the blast goes off with a mighty roar it requires two or three hours to clear away the loose boulders and stone and to roll them over the side of the dizzy fill at the mouth of the tunnel. Three 8-hour shifts of about 15 men each are on duty...the machinery never being idle except on Sunday.... Machinery, big and little, and all other equipment must be cleared out of the tunnel just before the blasts are exploded.... The tunnel, which is not quite 30 feet high and 30 feet wide, is 300 feet under the surface of one of the razor backed ridges running down from Marys Rock peak. The floor...is sloped upward toward the back end at the usual mountain grade. Water is dripping at many places from the roof...and collects in puddles here and there. The labor on the job is paid from 20 to 35 cents an hour.[29]

NPS was designing portals--as the entrances at first crumbled--but once the surface material was gone the rock proved stable so was left exposed to display the geology. The tunnel did not require supports, but there was an ice problem in winter, some "stalactites" reaching the floor. In January 1932 the blasts broke through to daylight at the far end, and almost immediately venturesome drivers pushed through. The next Sunday, "from early morning until dusk there was a constant stream [of traffic] passing both ways."[30]

Newspapers gave Skyline Drive extraordinary attention. It was a novelty, but another factor was more influential. Reporters were assigned to the President, and when he was at camp but not accessible they looked for other news to fill columns, preferably items in which the President could be mentioned. A typical one was "A New Path of Mountain Beauty" by Mark S. Watson in the Baltimore Sun. It described construction--and linked with Hoover thus:

From one of the nearby eastern crags one looks down into the valley of the Rapidan and sees the thick-forested areas which President Hoover acquired for the Presidential fishing camp, almost inclosed by the park boundaries and almost as rugged and wild as the rest of the park. The

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[29] Madison Eagle, ca. Nov. 1931, credited "From the Blue Ridge Guide," in clipping collection of Isla Bickers donated to SNP archives in 1963.

[30] Madison Eagle, ca. Jan. 1932, Bickers collection. The bit about NPS

road from Washington past Criglersville up to the camp no doubt will ultimately be carried on upward to a union with the Skyline road.[31]

Whatever the cause (mostly Carson?), the Hoover entrance kept rising from the oblivion to which the landscape architects hoped to relegate it. A copy of an Albright letter to Virginia's commissioner of highways--saying the Hoover School-Syria "extension is to meet local demand for an entrance into the park" and suggesting the state connect from Syria--is accompanied by a Demaray note explaining that Carson recommended this language as an effort to get the state to build four miles inside the park line because the park allotment would not stretch far enough. The highway commissioner "would be glad to discuss with the Bureau of Public Roads a connection with this extension."[32]

Then that road as a public entrance dropped into oblivion for another eight months, while the narrow administrative-protective road was built to the Marine Camp. The Skyline Drive drew so much public interest that Albright instructed engineer Taylor to start planning camp and picnic grounds and checking stations, and to work up an operating budget with a "superintendent to be at $3800 grade." The Skyline Drive interest had advanced the park--as Carson had expected--and Congress was speeding reduction of the needed minimum to 160,000 acres. McKellar was calling for bigger allotments to keep Smoky even with Shenandoah, and gentle but alert Ferdinand Zerkel was trying to help Albright silence the Tennessee Senator:

> I am thinking of Col. Dave Chapman AND the memory he will have of the very cordial gentleman's agreement that our two groups had in the very early days that the funds raised outside of Va. and Tennessee and N.C.... should be divided 50-50...remembering that AND the graceful way, under the circumstances, that the proponents of the Shenandoah Park accepted the passing to the Smoky Park of the $5,000,000 fund from the Rockefellers

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[31] Sun, 15 Nov. 1931.

[32] Albright to H.G. Shirley, 1 Dec. 1931, and Shirley to Albright, 2 Dec. 1931, National Archives.

when that fund saved for its friends and the country the Great Smoky...at a critical moment.[33]

Zerkel was also happily watching, with his passion for detail, the Shenandoah construction:

> On payroll as of April 13, five contractors 161 men, including 5 superintendents, 4 timekeepers, 11 foremen, 9 shovel operators, 9 shovel oilers, 9 tractor operators, 23 truck drivers, 1 team driver, 28 drillers and compressor men, 11 blacksmiths and helpers, 2 master mechanics, and 67 laborers.... 106 of these are local men... laborers average rate 25¢ per hour.... 39 other men from Page, Rappahannock, Madison, Greene and Rockingham in skilled classifications at wages in some cases as high as 50¢ per hour....
>
> The five concerns using 134 items of major equipment, inventory value $245,000, including 7 gasoline shovels, 9 Caterpilar tractors, 33 motor trucks, 17 air compressors, 35 jackhammers and special hard rock drills, 6 graders, 5 Athey-type dump wagons of 7 and 8 cubic yard capacity, 6 automatic drill sharpeners and 16 items of miscellaneous equipment--bulldozers, iron mules, Fresno scrapers, oil furances, electric pumps.[34]

Further, he was cautioning Albright that if the Hoover entrance were built from Madison County, then Page County "can't agree to keep quiet about the road up to meet the Drive from near Stanley--Tanner's Ridge Road, or Fishers Gap, or other in the vicinity." Maybe in part because of his warning there was a tricky reservation the next time that entrance emerged from oblivion--with the President and Secretary approving an allotment of $250,000 for the Rose River Entrance--"construction to be deferred, however, pending the actual establishment of Shenandoah Park."[35]

Albright brought Secretary Wilbur to Skyland several times to see Skyline Drive construction and to enjoy Pollock's ever-dramatic entertainment. Pollock "had picnics down along the road as we got it built." Once, Albright remembered,

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[33] Albright to Taylor, 14 Jan. 1932, and Zerkel to Albright, 24 Feb. 1932, National Archives.

[34] Zerkel, notes on history of Skyline Drive, 1932.

[35] Zerkel to Albright, 30 May 1932, and Demaray to Carson, 2 Aug. 1932,

Pollock was performing with a rattlesnake, and he let it loose, frightening Mrs. Wilbur. Will Carson attended many of these parties, often with someone who was helping with the land acquisition or was considered likely to donate for land buying.

By August 1932 the Thornton-Swift Run section was far along, and Carson invited officials at a county clerks' convention in Luray to take a look. There were numerous gates to open and close as cattle had to be kept in the proper pastures. But the clerks "marveled at the wonderful road, hanging as it appears in place onto the Blue Ridge, and at the views presenting wide expanses." The 300 working days allowed in the contracts had run out, and a 60-day extension had been granted.[36]

Carson aimed toward an "advance opening" of Skyline Drive from Lee Highway to Skyland and maybe to Crescent Rock, about 15 miles. He charmed NPS and BPR into consent. The public would be welcomed October 22 through November 30. The BPR chief insisted gates be closed whenever fog or slippery conditions occurred and all persons entering must sign a form releasing governments, contractors and employees from legal responsibility. Resident engineer Austin would designate parking places and erect signs. Conservation commission and Interior Department jointly issued an information sheet with map for visitors and for wide promotion.[37]

Newspapers blossomed with publicity. Boston Evening Transcript, for instance, had a long, illustrated article, "The Boulevard of a Thousand Vistas Atop the Blue Ridge," telling of "a new thrill in the field of fall touring....

> This boulevard, whose construction was undertaken by the Federal Government as a drought relief measure, has come to surpass the fondest dreams of those who urged the building of a skyline trail along the crest...in preparation for the opening of Shenandoah National Park.
>
> All who have gone there, from President Hoover and Secretary of the

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[36] Madison Eagle, 26 Aug. 1932.

[37] The leaflets were printed in green. I find one in my research files for the park's first guidebook, Beautiful Shenandoah 1937. Further details are in state conservation commission minutes, 6 Oct. 1932, and Thomas H. MacDonald of BPR to Albright, 12 Oct. 1932, National Archives.

> Interior Wilbur to Governor Pollard and other Virginia dignitaries, have been amazed at the triumph of the road-builder's art.[38]

New York Times, displaying a photo of the new highway, said "there is a drive in Switzerland comparable to it...but it stands alone on this side of the Atlantic." As crowds swarmed over the mountain, pleased with a few brilliant leaves that remained, thousands of pictures were taken. Some showed landscape architect Peterson in uniform distributing leaflets; others showed cars of the era on the coarse-gravel road with scary slopes dropping beyond the shoulder or among massive and ghostly dead chestnuts. Much bare land, or grass and brush, showed in the backgrounds.[39]

Carson used the popularity to justify extension northward. Albright wrote:

> I had a conference with Will Carson yesterday...and told him that inasmuch as he now wanted to withdraw his endorsement of my proposal that we first surface the existing road...I would accede to his request and get authority for [the north section] provided two things were done: First, that the Senators and Governor and Congressman...ask us to have the road built; second, that he secure all necessary rights of way including the valley leading down toward Front Royal so that we can have an appropriate entrance at the north end.[40]

The conditions were no obstacle to Carson now; the officials complied promptly with his request, stressing their enjoyment and appreciation of the section already built and pointing out that the new project would "greatly relieve unemployment." Zerkel helped by giving an exact count of visitors during the advance opening—30,837 persons in 7,891 cars. The right of way would take only a little longer. Wide publicity continued; enthusiasm soared. Cammerer wrote:

> I met Doctor Wilbur a few minutes ago as he was coming out of the elevator from a Cabinet meeting and just as I was on the way to get the map of the Shenandoah Park showing the road lines off his desk. He said to tell you that the road project to Syria could be abandoned and the work

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[38] Clipping of 22 Oct. 1932, National Archives.

[39] Times, 13 Nov. 1932. Additional photos are in old NPS files, Nat'l Archives.

[40] Albright to Cammerer, 22 Nov. 1932, National Archives.

proceed on the northern end from Front Royal to the Lee Highway.[41]

President Hoover, defeated in the recent election, had written to Wilbur:

> Having just this week explored the entire length of the Blue Ridge Skyline Road, I am qualified to tell you what I think of it. As one mountaineer to another, it is a good road--and a very beautiful one.[42]

The scenic highway he had hurried Albright to build pleased the people, even if he himself that November did not. The Skyline Drive had taken on a life of its own and would grow inexorably toward completion.

The rushed early work had flaws. Cammerer commented to Demaray, in sending along a voluminous report on minor deficiencies, that "our work here in the park is going to be judged by that job, and it must be in shape from completion to oiling to finishing of cut slopes and parapeting, even if you have to let the Rose River Entrance go for a while."[43]

Landscape architect Harvey P. Benson, shortly after the entire Skyline Drive was opened, took a thorough look back and summarized:

> A limited time was set for use of the allotted funds and both design and construction had to be speeded. Horizontal curves had to be laid out in plain circular fashion and the required superelevation built into them. Minimum standards allowed some of the horizontal curves to be built with radii of less than the 200 feet now effective so that time could be saved and excavation costs kept within the funds available....
>
> All this work was finished by the end of 1933 but motoring was somewhat hazardous in wet weather as crushed rock for the road bed had not been placed, nor had any guard walls been built on the shoulders. In 1934 additional contracts were let to revise a few cases of bad alignment, spiralize all horizontal curves, and to provide bituminous surfacing....
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> On September 15 of that year the entire central section of Skyline Drive was opened to public travel although guard walls and many parking overlooks had not been completed. At the same time reconnaissance and

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[41] Zerkel to Demaray, 12 Dec. 1932, for travel count, and Cammerer to Albright, 16 Dec. 1932, National Archives.

[42] Swain, Wilderness Defender, p. 216.

> surveys were being made over the north section of the park, extending the Drive northward to Front Royal.... On October 1, 1936, the new section was completed and opened in time for motorists to enjoy the fall-colored woodlands that reached their maximum beauty two weeks later.[44]

An interesting incidental: When Cammerer became NPS director in 1933 he opposed center striping on highways in the parks--but excepted "Skyline Drive in Shenandoah Park where fog conditions so many days of the year may prove it to be a necessary thing."[45]

The southern section, Swift Run to Jarman Gap, was surveyed and designed by spring 1936. Rugged terrain there complicated the problem of maximizing scenic views and minimizing scars. Different routes were carefully considered. BPR engineer Austin, flagging for preliminary survey, briefly revived the virgin-forest myth:

> The southern extension will consist of about forty miles over some of the roughest and wildest territory.... Where other sections have virgin timber in spots this section will have thousands of acres of contiguous stretches of virgin timber.... Portions of the trail will be blazed where a white man's foot has never trod.[46]

The tunnel-loving Madison Eagle announced that there would be "a tunnel 1,500 feet long passing through the solid rock of Black Rock mountain, one of the beauty spots.... This new tunnel...will be directly under the bridle path that goes through the park." But that tunnel, sometimes estimated at 1,700 feet, was soon eliminated in favor of a less spectacular but more economical routing. Landscape architect Benson protested that the alternate route was

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[44] Benson article, 1940. Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 8 Aug. 1925, "Skyline Drive Big Feature of Virginia Trails," says a PWA allotment was set up for the surfacing. I have not tried to identify all funds used, but I understand they were all drought or depression "emergency" funds. As the first NPS employee of the park to be sworn in, 1 March 1936, starting records of regular NPS appropriations only then beginning to be used, I remember clearly that no regular NPS money was used to build the Drive.

[45] Cammerer to Bishop, 21 Oct. 1935, National Archives.

[46] ~~Bickers clipping collection, Oct. 1934; Benson to Austin, 4 June 1935; and Benson to Kenneth McCarter, 8 July 1936--all SNP archives;~~ Harrisonburg

"uninteresting.... no good outlooks, country scrub oaks, poor alignment, excessive gradient, should stop staking.... the cost involved is not the only factor we should consider." A higher ranking NPS landscape architect was called in, but the tunnel was not restored to the plan.[47]

Benson revealed another problem at two sites considered historic:

> The first occurs where the line goes thru a gun emplacement supposed to have been made by General Jackson. The line should be swung about 30 feet to the east to clear the pit and it was decided to make this revision in the field until it was noticed that further...the line again cuts into another emplacement where a considerable change in line and grade will have to be made.... the Historical Division insists that these emplacements be left undisturbed.[48]

The line was changed and the survey completed, but even after advertising for bids there was a further delay when Appalachian Trail protests seriously disturbed the Secretary of the Interior.[49]

The steamroller proved unstoppable, but ruggedness ultimately forced an economic reduction from the 34-foot width of the north section back to the 30 feet of the central, though size of overlooks was increased so buses could maneuver. The south section overlooks, added to those of the other sections, made a total of 67 with parking capacity of 1,800 cars.

Cost of the 97 miles of Skyline Drive construction--the eight and a half miles from Jarman Gap to Rockfish Gap were built as Blue Ridge Parkway and only later made part of Skyline Drive proper—averaged about $47,000 a mile. Guard walls of native stone averaged about $1 a running foot. Total costs were $1,335,177 for the 32-mile north section, $1,570,479 for the 34-mile central section, and $1,666,528 for the 31-mile south section, which opened to the public on August 29, 1939. Travel on Skyline Drive--recorded by travel years,

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[47] Bickers clipping collection, Oct. 1934; Benson to Austin, 4 June 1935; and Benson to Kenneth McCarter, 8 July 1936--SNP archives.

[48] Benson to McCarter, 25 Aug. 1936, SNP archives.

[49] Details of this A.T. episode will be given in chap. 7.

October 1 through September 30--totalled 516,637 person-visits for the year ending in 1935, 694,098 for 1936, 1,041,204 for 1937, 954,967 for 1938, and 911,612 for 1939. The biggest day in the 1930s was September 4, 1938, with 33,681 person-visits.[50]

Skyline Drive won instant fame, while Shenandoah National Park, in and for which the Drive was built--so widely and eagerly publicized in the early years when it was a romantic and remote dream--faded from the public mind and would climb back to recognition as a genuine national park only with agonizing slowness. Carson was so impressed with the early success of Skyline Drive that by mid-1933 he was proposing to put more than 7,500 men, possibly as many as 25,000, to work on similar projects, thus giving employment to "the greatest number of people...at the nearest possible point to their homes." Among projects he suggested were a "Skyline road" along Massanutten Mountain connecting Front Royal with Harrisonburg (that did not materialize); a "Skyline road" from Afton near the south end of the park to the Peaks of Otter (that materialized several times over as Blue Ridge Parkway); and a scenic-historic drive from Mount Vernon to Yorktown (that largely materialized, though not in the way he envisioned it).[51]

The Carson-Hoover expectation that the Rapidan would become an "important gateway" to the park did not materialize but kept on rising from oblivion as a thorn in the flesh of NPS. Almost automatically, each time it came alive, it created demands for entrances elsewhere in the park. But such thorns festered to crises in the Roosevelt era. The Hoover era set the basic pattern of the area's development, leaving a wound or two that would scab over and break out again a time or two before healing. But the Hoover era had run its course and was long gone before Shenandoah National Park itself was established.

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[50] Benson article, 1940, for figures on widths, parking overlooks, construction costs, and travel counts.

[51] Carson to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, 11 April 1933, and Carson to Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, 3 May 1933, both letters quoted in full in Davidson article, 1934, as are encouraging replies from FDR and Perkins.

6

## FDR and the CCC

President Franklin D. Roosevelt's personal effect on the Shenandoah park may have been as great as President Hoover's. FDR also saw on the ground what needed doing. He funded many projects before the park was established, and he checked for himself on progress. Inaugurated on March 4, 1933, he immediately made a rough organizational sketch for a Civilian Conservation Corps, including a handwritten note: "I want personally to check on the location, scope, etc. of the camps...work to be done etc. - FDR." He planned further with six men, one of whom was the new Secretary of the Interior, Harold L. Ickes, who shortly designated NPS Director Albright to take over his CCC responsibility. FDR asked Congress to authorize the CCC, and this was done before March ended. By executive order on April 5 he set it going with $10,000,000, naming as its director the general vice president of the International Association of Machinists, Robert Fechner.[1]

Ickes wrote on Sunday, April 9:

> I went with President and Mrs. Roosevelt down to the Hoover Camp.... Henry Morgenthau was in the party, and Colonel Louis McHenry Howe, the President's secretary. I had Director Albright with me and we went in my car, the last in line....
>
> The President wanted Mr. Albright to drive back with him.

Albright reported that the President

> tried to walk a ways, but he couldn't so I happened to be one of the fellows right near him, and we carried him down to the President's house. Put him on the porch. And later on he went through the place, and he said he couldn't use it; the terrain was too rough. And I think we all understood that, although we were disappointed.
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> .... Will Carson was there, and of course we talked about the park, talked about the road, and Carson insisted that he see the road--the

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[1] James F. Kieley, "CCC," NPS Washington, 1938. See also The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, the First Thousand Days 1933-36 (N.Y.: Simon & Schuster, 1953), entries of March 15 and 22, 1933; this diary is the source to be assumed in this chapter for Ickes's statements unless another source is cited.

Skyline Drive.... When he got to the car, he put me on the jump seat; he put three men in the back, and I don't remember who the three were, except that one...was...Henry Morgenthau.... We came up on that rough road...and got up to Big Meadows section and got on the Skyline.... He couldn't say enough in favor of the alignment, and I can well remember... as we started around a curve he said, "This road has been superelevated to about 25 miles an hour"....

... from the back seat Morgenthau kept criticizing Hoover for the expensive parapets, because these stone parapets were being built. Two or three times he criticized Hoover extravagance and Hoover did this and Hoover did that.... just before we got down to the tunnel...Morgenthau made a complaint again about the parapets and the President turned around and said, "Aw, shut up, Henry." He said, "Nobody gets more scared than you do. If it wasn't for the wall, you'd be out walking." That was the last we heard from Morgenthau.

FDR never said one single solitary word against Hoover. He praised the road, praised the project, praised the objectives; he was just delighted....

Coming down toward Panorama, you could see off to one side over there ...an awful lot of desolation, erosion, and there was one great big place that stood out. It was just devoid of everything.... I said, Mr. President, you've been saying a good deal about erosion. There's a beautiful piece of it." He stopped everybody; he stopped a newspaper car that was in there; I don't know just how many, but he talked with everybody. He had them come up around the car, and he pointed to that and talked about it...made rather a point of it.[2]

The Labor Department was just starting to certify men for the civilian conservation army. The park area might have had the first camp; FDR was eager to put it here. But the CCC came together with such unprecedented speed--"the most rapid large scale mobilization of men the country had ever witnessed," exceeding that in mid-1917 for World War I--and the park was not ready. It had no staff to supervise conservation projects, no land on which to carry them out, no sites even for the camps. Albright and Ickes came out again as soon as they could to find a way to make fullest use of FDR's keen interest.[3]

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[2] Horace M. Albright, interview by R. Taylor Hoskins, E. Ray Schaffner and Bruce McHenry, 14 April 1969, tape in SNP archives.

[3] For fast mobilization, see Kieley "CCC" 1938.

They quickly named James Ralph Lassiter to set up an office in Luray for supervising CCC work. Lassiter--of a Virginia family and a graduate in civil engineering of Virginia Polytechnic Institute--had been working on NPS projects since 1931, first in preparing for Yorktown (Va.) Sesquicentennial, then in charge of road work at George Washington's Birthplace. Earlier he had engineered bridges and water and sewer systems in other southern states. He immediately hunted suitable locations for camps to accommodate 200 men each.[4]

FDR and Fechner announced that "the first of the national park camps will be placed in the Blue Ridge." Pollock of Skyland offered 5,000 acres for "Camp No. 1." A basic problem was just what projects the young men would work on. FDR had had an idea that 800 or so of them might build the north section of Skyline Drive and possibly in due course the south section too. Upon taking office he had impounded the million dollars Hoover had allotted for this construction, but Carson had persuaded him to reinstate the fund to be spent through contracts. CCC projects, then, would be more strictly conservation-oriented--erosion control, fire hazard reduction, reforestation.[5]

Architect Charles E. Peterson came out from NPS Washington to help Lassiter pick the right places, and on May 5 they showed recommended sites to officers of the U.S. Army--which would manage the camps while ECW (Emergency Conservation Work, the CCC-funded auxiliary of public-land agencies) would plan and direct the work projects. Ferdinand Zerkel was hired to negotiate leases, not only for camp sites but also for larger acreages on which owners would allow CCC work to be done.[6]

Oliver G. Taylor, chief of NPS engineering, eastern division, helped hire foremen and technicians with special training in forestry and landscape architecture. Taylor wrote:

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[4] Lassiter's personal file lent to me by Mrs. Lassiter.

[5] Washington Star, 28 April 1933 and 6 May 1933; Madison Eagle, 14 April 1933; and Arthur Davidson, "Skyline Drive and How It Came to Virginia," in "Conserving and Developing Virginia," State Conservation Commission, 1934.

[6] Page News & Courier, 3 and 15 May 1933, and file 903, SNP archives.

We will need to make arrangements with the BPR about handling that portion of the work to be done on the road proper...improving road slopes ...planting on slopes...building guard rail...building railing to keep cars from driving onto open meadows.... The Director states that Mr. Carson can turn over certain park areas to the Government so as to give us sufficient authority to do E.C.W. and he desires you and Mr. Zerkel to contact with Mr. Carson or Mr. Marsh to arrange for such a transfer of authority. I have in mind such areas as White Oak Canyon, Big Meadows... land near Rapidan camp and other desirable areas...where we may want to have picnic or camp areas.[7]

By May 11 young men trained at army posts for two weeks were ready for action, and two camp sites were lined up. The 334th company of 185 men would move from Fort Humphreys to camp NP-1, Skyland, and the 350th company of 180 men would move from Fort Monroe to camp NP-2, Big Meadows. Experienced woodsmen would be recruited locally to lead the younger men. The two CCC companies arrived May 15 and pitched army tents with the aid and advice of several soldiers. All camp equipment was supplied by the War Department. Lt. N.A.A. Burrell was camp commander at Big Meadows, assisted by two other army lieutenants. A fourth was camp doctor. The men seemed to appreciate their new home, "with plenty to eat and comfortable quarters." The situation at NP-1--its site actually about a mile from Skyland--was similar.[8]

There were "misgivings" as hundreds--soon to be a thousand and more--"boys," mostly from cities, unfamiliar with the woods or the wild or even with work, were "turned into the park." Would they really help toward a national park goal? Lassiter realized his job was different, maybe more puzzling than management of any other national park--

> much complicated, because people have lived in the park area for centuries and have cultivated the lands, cut the forests, and killed much of the wildlife.... the first thing to be started was a program of restoration of natural conditions. This restoration will take many decades, for it

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[7] Taylor to Lassiter, date missing but ca. April 1933, SNP archives.

[8] Harrisonburg Daily News-Record, 12 May 1933, and Madison Eagle, 19 and 26 May 1933.

takes a long time for Nature to restore what has been destroyed by man.

In the meantime, development...to care for the great number of persons who want to come here is a necessity.[9]

He wrote for NPS Washington a brief of organization and work plans:

> Supt. Zerkel will be placed in charge of office details, purchasing, vouchering, contracts, and securing permission to operate on private lands.... Supt. Noyes will have charge of field work of both camps....
>
> Camps will be divided into seven groups each, approximating thirty men. Each gang will have a foreman in charge, with a varying number of sub-foremen or straw bosses, selected in the most part from the locally enrolled woodsmen. Camp 1 will have two gangs detailed to roadside clean-up, which will consist of the removal of dead chestnut from the areas bordering the Skyline Drive for a varying distance from the road and the placing of roadside barriers at certain points to confine traffic to the roadway. One gang will be assigned to opening up and grading a trail, following in general the existing Appalachian Trail.... One gang will be allotted to such work on the Skyline Drive as the Bureau of Public Roads may direct. This work will, in the main, consist of flattening slopes, opening ditches, removing loose and scattered stones.... There will be other gangs...to clean up the woods surrounding Skyland and down through the upper White Oak Canyon....
>
> Camp 2 will be organized similarly.[10]

In June camp NP-3 was established beside Skyline Drive north of Swift Run Gap and camp NP-4 was set up near Front Royal. Pay for the "boys" was $30 a month--food, clothing, shelter, medical care and other necessities being furnished free. The boy's family received $25 a month, the boy himself only $5. A few enrollees might be promoted to $36 or even $45, depending on ability and performance. There was a continual weeding out process:

> Those young men who enlisted...under the impression that it was to be a lark are finding they were very much mistaken. The drones...are being let out--also those who are inclined to make trouble either in

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[9] Harvey P. Benson, "The Skyline Drive," The Regional Review, NPS Richmond, Feb. 1940, and J.R. Lassiter, "Developing the Shenandoah National Park," Shenandoah Nature Journal, Summer 1937, Shenandoah Nature Society, Luray, Va.

[10] Lassiter to Taylor, 18 May 1933, SNP archives.

the camps or in the surrounding country.[11]

One boy was soon "undone by Blue Ridge moonshine":

> Many people looked with sympathy on one of the boys discharged... last week. The youth, who was extremely young, lingered on the street in a bewildered dejected condition all day and evidently had not a cent of money. A Luray family gave him his dinner.... He said he got with some of the boys the night before and underestimated the kick in the moonshine, a beverage of which he knew nothing.[12]

On August 12 the President came to see how things were going. He traveled from Hyde Park to Harrisonburg, where he was met by Sen. Harry F. Byrd (the former governor), Rep. A. Willis Robertson (of the park's district), and others including Ickes. The party went first to a camp at Grottoes (then working with Virginia Forest Service but soon, maybe as a result of FDR's visit, assigned to the park as NP-5). NP-3 was next to be visited. Lunch was served at NP-2--after which NP-1 would be inspected, then a VFS-linked camp near Sperryville (which, like the Grottoes camp, would soon be transferred to the park).

> Saturday was the day of days in the history of the civilian conservation camp at Big Meadows...when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and three members of his cabinet sat down with the boys for dinner and ate out of the regulation aluminum mess kit, consisting of a plate, cup containing about a pint, and knife, fork and spoon. It was a thoroughly democratic function for eight of the rank and file members of the camp were honored with a seat at the President's table, which was set on the blue grass on the edge of the camp while the remainder of the visitors and the camp personnel were eating in the mess hall. At the right of the President sat Secretary of the Interior Ickes and Gen. Malone, area commanding officer of the camps. To Mr. Roosevelt's left sat Secretary of Agriculture Wallace and Secretary of War Dern....
>
> The menu...consisted of string beans, mashed potatoes, fried beefsteak and gravy, lettuce and tomato salad, bread and butter, ice tea and apple cobbler.... the menu was representative of all the dinners at

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[11] "With the Civilian Conservation Corps," American Forests, July 1933, and Madison Eagle, July 1933, no exact date, Bickers collection, SNP archives.

[12] Page News & Courier, undated, clipping of reprint from Eagle, Bickers collection, SNP archives.

the Big Meadows camp, other meats and vegetables being substituted at times, and beefsteak being served twice a week.[13]

Ickes wrote in his secret diary:

> In all the camps the men seemed fit, and we were told by the commander of this corps area that the average gain in weight had been 15 pounds....
>
> There is one incident that I must record because it was so amusing, and the President on the way back, when I brought it up, laughingly said that I ought to include it in my memoirs but he couldn't. The commanding general, while probably a very good officer, is just a little pompous and doesn't want to be left out of any conversation.... At the camp where we were having luncheon, he began to tell what the Army is going to do in the way of educating the CCC boys.... Apparently he didn't know, or chose to ignore the fact, that we are going to assign teachers to these camps, not on invitation of the Army but in spite of the Army. At any rate, he is the type of man that is ready to adopt and claim credit for anything for which credit can be claimed. It gave him great pleasure to assure the President and all within hearing of his voice that any CCC boy could receive instruction on any subject. He told how someone was teaching trigonometry to one of the boys, how another was learning French, and he concluded with this gem: "There won't none of these boys leave these camps illiterate."

If any question was raised in the early CCC years as to the propriety of federal development of a park that did not exist--the requirements of the authorizing act not having been fulfilled--my research has failed to disclose it. The push and the funding and the manpower threatened continually to exceed the ability of park planners to keep up. Yet Lassiter was soon reporting

> a large amount of useful work...justifying, in greatly multiplied measure, the outlay they have represented. This fact is attested not only by all local observers, but also by departmental officials and distinguished visitors, including the President....
>
> The development of these callow and disheartened boys...into sturdy and self-reliant men in the period of a few months is marvelous.... Our camps are well possessed of esprit de corps and have entered into athletic meets, games and recreational pursuits with considerable enthusiasm....

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[13] Page News & Courier, 15 Aug. 1933.

> One has but to inquire of local supply houses, tradesmen and citizens at large in...nearby communities to see that the CCC camps are highly welcome.

As to the work, Lassiter stressed "fire control benefits," building 9.65 miles of Skyline Drive guard walls and 42.7 miles of truck, horseback and foot trails, white pine blister rust control on 922 acres with 243,240 gooseberry bushes pulled, mountain laurel planted along the Drive, and substantial clearing of dead chestnut with resulting firewood hauled for distribution to the needy.[14]

Early blasts of winter with snow squalls caught the mountain-crest camps unprepared, especially the "most exposed camp at Big Meadows.

> Some of the tents were ripped partly to pieces and made unfit for occupancy with the camp's official thermometer registering 10 above zero. The boys...spent the rest of the night in automobiles, which were rocked by the wind, but stayed on "all fours."....
>
> Work on the winter barracks of frame has not proceeded as expected due, it was said, to the delay in the arrival of lumber.[15]

But before Christmas wooden barracks had replaced tents, wind breaks had been put up where most needed, and the boys were "snug and comfortable." The work went on except in the worst weather, and then the boys reviewed their summer, sometimes with fun and satire. The Madison Eagle picked up this story:

> .... a new industry may grow out of the C.C. activities on top of the Blue Ridge. It is none other than a rattlesnake meat canning factory.... R.W. Rogers...who hails from California, and George F. Pollock, mine host of Skyland...have supervised several rattlesnake feasts and [the snakes] are proving an exceptional table delicacy....
>
> If a factory results from the present agitation it will be established just outside the park area and snakes will be used up in canned meat and by-products like pork packers use up a hog--everything but the squeal. The hide, the poison, and the rattles will all be used.
>
> It is understood that rattlesnakes designed for the table must be killed in a very special way and that they must not be permitted to bite themselves, as they sometimes do in their death agony to the great peril

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[14] Lassiter, reports to NPS Director, 14 Nov. and 1 Dec. 1933, National Archives.

[15] Eagle, 24 Nov. 1933.

of those who eat them.... All rattlers for the table are skinned and parboiled, and after this the real work of the trained chef is required to give them the right flavor.[16]

FDR's enthusiasm amounted to troublesome meddling at least once. While traveling from camp to camp he had been so moved by the scenery that he remarked to Byrd and Robertson he was ready to approve full opening of Skyline Drive. They told Ickes and Cammerer, who agreed to open the road a week from Sunday if Virginia's governor approved. Associated Press picked up the idea and reported further that FDR "hoped a mountain highway would be constructed from New York to Georgia" through Shenandoah and Smoky.[17]

This dream passed in good grace, but the thought of immediately opening the unsurfaced Drive angered stockmen whose cattle were grazing the meadows. Carson was in a hospital at Norfolk, unable to advise Gov. Pollard, so Pollard apparently answered a reporter's question about the possible opening by saying, why not? A majority of the conservation commission gathered at Richmond in executive session but could not decide without Carson what to do. The head of Shenandoah Valley, Inc., regional chamber of commerce, argued that running traffic one-way would cut the cattle problem, that CCC boys, already manning gates for the park project's traffic, could do the same for the public while keeping cars and cattle apart. Others suggested barbwire. A mass meeting at Elkton planned a motorcade to urge Pollard to open the road at once.[18]

Carson recovered enough to wire his attorneys and quote their opinion that "pending the next three or four months opening the road may and probably will have seriously detrimental effect on the state commission cases now pending on exceptions and arbitrations." Carson explained to the press that some landowners were refusing to withdraw their cattle at all--unless, say, for a

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[16] Eagle, clipping dated only Dec. 1933, Bickers collection, SNP archives.

[17] Washington Star, 12 Aug. 1933.

[18] News-Record, 15 and 24 Aug. 1933.

payment of $1 to $4 a head. About 600 cattle were involved, so money cost of the opening might run as high as $1500 a month. Better delay until surfacing.[19]

Business interests and the now-eager public did not wish to listen. The Staunton paper editorialized, "Why Delay in Opening Skyline Drive?":

> Surprise and disappointment are affecting those persons who feel a deep interest in everything likely to draw people to the Valley, over the declaration from the chairman of the Conservation Commission that it will be absolutely impossible to open the Skyline Drive for several months yet, which will be after the summer travel is about all over.
>
> This flat dampening of hopes comes with the greater force, seeing that President Roosevelt who recently drove over part of the course, expressed the hope that the drive would soon be opened to the public.[20]

Yet Carson cut across the stacked situation by using the dream of a much longer "skyline drive" to squelch hasty opening of the unfinished Skyline Drive in Shenandoah. FDR, Ickes, Byrd and Pollard were quickly involved in the bigger scheme. In October, Pollard appointed a Virginia commission to promote it--with Byrd as chairman--and asked the governors of Tennessee and North Carolina to do likewise. Public Works Administration, headed by Ickes, outlined a Shenandoah-Smoky parkway and speculated that it would pay for itself with 250 cars a day paying two cents a mile in tolls. When the farther-South protested tolls, PWA indicated the project just might be federally financed without tolls. Influential advocates encouraged Ickes to allot $20,000,000--among them the region's public works director, George L. Radcliffe of Baltimore, BPR chief MacDonald, and NPS director Cammerer. At Cammerer's suggestion, a 65-mile link from the nation's capital to connect with the already built Skyline Drive at Panorama was included, and the plan was carried to Ickes's office by Byrd and Sen. Reynolds of North Carolina. MacDonald said he could start work thirty

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[19] Madison Eagle, 18 Aug. 1933.

[20] Staunton News-Leader, 24 Aug. 1933.

days after the fund was granted.[21]

Ickes wrote in his diary on November 16, 1933:

> .... I made one delegation happy and this was a big one consisting of Senators, governors, Congressmen, and others from Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. I made known to this delegation that the President had approved in principle their plan for a scenic highway connecting the Shenandoah and Smoky Mountains National Parks and that we were ready to proceed with the preliminary survey.... The cost of the survey will be borne by the three states and they will also provide a right-of-way 200 feet wide. The driveway is to be well up toward the top of the mountain range all the way. This driveway when completed will become part of our national park system and for that reason our bureau of National Parks will be charged with the selection of the route, the surveyors to be furnished by the three states in question. Everyone in the delegation was delighted.

Ickes told Cammerer to arrange with MacDonald to initiate action. He said that in addition to the 200-foot right of way "where this Parkway crosses other than Federally owned lands," the President suggests the states take options on additional lands as may be indicated by NPS as necessary for recreational purposes. Federal funds would be used for purchasing if such options were exercised, though it was hoped that much of the recreational land would come through donation. Landscape architect Rogers at Shenandoah was instructed to get together with Lassiter and with Austin (BPR) "and gather data so that you can make a recommendation as to just what sort of a physical tie-in" the parkway should have with Skyline Drive proper.[22]

The emergency-relief, pre-park years were complex and confusing. NPS--working through the back door with spotty and uncertain authority on lands in

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[21] Davidson article, 1934, with Carson to FDR, 11 April 1933, and to Frances Perkins, 3 May 1933, and answers of 25 April and 3 May, and News-Record, 6, 16 and 17 Oct. 1933. See also Harley E. Jolley, The Blue Ridge Parkway (Knoxville: U. of Tenn. Press, 1969), p. 22 ff. It is hard not to imagine Carson behind the scenes pulling strings for every major event he cared about; in this case anyway the documentary evidence is strong. Another comment: I feel irony in Carson's finding millions easily available for roads and even recreational lands while he is pinching every penny to buy the skeletal minimum of Shenandoah park lands.

[22] Ickes to Cammerer, 18 Nov. 1933, and Peterson to Rogers, 18 Nov. 1933, SNP archives.

limbo-custody of the state commission or still privately held, with personnel and funds not quite its own--struggled to grasp the problems of the future national park. One problem grasped almost immediately was water supply. On August 1, 1933, NPS and the state commission jointly launched a study of the flow of springs, with engineer J.J. Dirzulaitis as main investigator. After two years of work Dirzulaitis explained that the problem was especially urgent because the park's volume-visitation would be "on top of the mountain ridge where water is not easy to get in quantity." Among possible sources, he said, were 63 springs and 19 streams between Panorama and Swift Run Gap, and unknown numbers in the south section where he was just beginning to explore. Dependable quantities were mostly small, and he expressed a hope

> that the recreational areas will be designed to meet the water supplies available and instead of having large recreational areas with partial conveniences, there will be many small areas to take care of all needs.[23]

In sharp contrast to this increasingly meaningful matter were a small surge of downhill skiing and a great surge of soaring on the wind. The park area became in early CCC years almost as famous for unpowered flight as for scenery. Director Cammerer would write in an article woven on threads of historic roads and the new Skyline Drive:

> Most picturesque of the modes of transportation, however...is the glider, which gave man his earliest successes in conquest of the air and now is being advanced rapidly as a vehicle of air navigation.
>
> When soaring enthusiasts were casting about for a site that would equal if not surpass the famous German Wasserkuppe, in the Röhn Mountains, they discovered an ideal soaring site in about the center of the Shenandoah.[24]

The Washington Glider Club had first noticed the quality of the Blue Ridge breeze in the spring of 1930, and the club's Franklin glider made the first flight in May 1933. Other flights followed. NPS welcomed the activity and

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[23] Dirzulaitis, paper presented at American Water Works Association meeting at Roanoke, Va., 1935, National Archives.

[24] Arno B. Cammerer, "Romance of Road is Found in Shenandoah Region," Washington Star, 9 May 1936.

"designated Big Meadows as a National Soaring Site, the first to be so named." While the surge was on it got nationwide, even worldwide attention. In September 1933 Richard duPont bettered the American soaring record (that had been 66 miles) and came within 14 miles of the world record by flying 122½ miles to Frederick, Md. He said he could easily have gone farther if he had not struck fog over Catoctin Mountain. Three days later he tried again for the world distance record. Secretary Ickes and other federal officials came to watch, but adverse winds cut the flight short. Officials of the Soaring Society of America were present and said they believed a 200-mile flight could be made from Big Meadows. DuPont said he would make further attempts.[25]

CCC camp 2 prepared a runway 200 feet wide and 1600 feet long and built a temporary hangar. In September 1934 the soaring society, that had been holding its meets at Elmira, N.Y., held a 14-day meet here with a dozen sailplanes. Though no records were broken, "definite results were obtained that will do much to further the science of motorless flight." Among the "firsts":

> first time in this country that formation flying has been practiced in order that both pilots might profit from the experience of each; first time a motorless craft in this country reached an altitude of over 9,000 feet above sea level from ground takeoff; first time that a two-place motorless craft was flown in Virginia.[26]

The formation flying was "as beautiful as seagulls in flight." Warren Eaton and Lewis Barringer glided "about 35 miles as the bee would fly but longer as they glided in a zigzag motion." They remained aloft almost five hours, stayed close together, and landed side by side at the edge of Front Royal.[27]

Local organizations joined in sponsoring "The Third Annual Big Meadows Expedition" in the fall of 1935, presenting trophies to honor best flights. Crowds came by car to watch, and eight different powered planes were allowed to

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[25] American Soaring Handbook, Soaring Society of America, Inc., Los Angeles, 1975, chap. 1, "A History of American Soaring," and News-Record, 22 and 24 Sept. 1933.

[26] "The Gliding and Soaring Bulletin," Elmira, N.Y., 1 Oct. 1934, with collection of CCC and soaring photographs, Lt. Joseph W. Koch, SNP archives.

[27] Harry M. Strickler, A Short History of Page County (Richmond: Dietz Press, 1952).

land and take off. Aviation notables attending included Lt. Comm. Ralph S. Barnaby, U.S. Navy, president of the National Soaring Society. Years later, when soaring enthusiasts wished to use Big Meadows again, NPS discouraged them. Big Meadows was being heavily used in more generally accepted park enjoyments.[28]

Thousands of mountain people remained in the park area and were intrigued yet irritated and sometimes frightened by the activities, gadgetry and equipment, and continuing busyness associated with the CCC era. Local papers reflected the CCC-mountaineer relationship in various ways--for instance:

> DAN CUPID.... It would be a difficult job to determine the number of CCC men...who have captured brides in this region. The Roosevelt camp, the Big Meadows camp and the Bald Knob camp all have contributed to the nuptials.... This paper has only congratulations for the contracting parties, with the hope that the distressing conditions that went with the years of 1932-32-34, which were in a measure responsible for the numerous marriages, are now nearing their end.[29]

> CCC BOYS CARRY ILL WOMAN FROM MOUNTAIN HOME TO HOSPITAL. A 42-year-old mother of 12 children is in Rockingham Memorial hospital well on the road to recovery because of the heroism of 18 boys from a CCC camp near Elkton who battled drifts six feet high in zero weather a week ago to carry her over almost impassable mountain roads to remove her to the institution.... The mother...was stricken with appendicitis.

The CCC had inched in with an army truck, taking along the camp doctor, and had reached the cabin at dusk after a harrowing day of shoveling snow.[30]

In the fall of 1935 the still-nonexistent national park was jolted by a tidal wave of unhelpful publicity that resulted from the state commission's efforts to satisfy congressional requirements. Papers all over the East printed Associated Press reports:

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[28] Page News & Courier, 27 Sept. 1935; booklet, "Camp Fechner," camp NP-2, commemorating 4th anniversary of CCC, 4-11 April 1937, my files; and Tolson of NPS to Ben Shupack, 14 Aug. 1946, National Archives. Both the superintendent and the regional director opposed renewed soaring in Shenandoah.

[29] Page News & Courier as reprinted in Eagle, May 1934, Bickers, SNP archives.

[30] Eagle, Feb. 1934, Bickers clippings, SNP archives.

Luray, Va., Oct. 3 (AP) - Sheriff E.L. Lucas...today evicted Melancthon Cliser [from his service station and home]...and tonight the Virginia Conservation Commission was in possession of the spot, which it had failed to obtain by purchase or persuasion.

Cliser, who maintained he was standing on rights granted him under Magna Carta and the U.S. Constitution, seemed disconcerted when the state took possession. The park resident, who said he had been in communication with President Roosevelt by mail and telephone, protested to the last that he would remain on his holdings.

.... Overwrought, he cried out: "The state has me but these men will be imprisoned and you will find that the Star-Spangled Banner will wave over the land of the free and the home of the brave."....

Local officers were represented as being loath to carry out the eviction order and Sheriff Lucas was said to have conferred with Governor Peery on whether some other course could be taken....

Chairman Wilbur C. Hall, of the commission [who had succeeded Will Carson the first of that year], said at Richmond that eviction was decided on as a "last resort."[31]

Washington, Oct. 4 (AP) - The Federal government's answer to eviction protests coming from the Shenandoah National Park area in Virginia is "We have nothing to do with it."....  (Wilbur C. Hall...was quoted as saying earlier in the day that the state was acting at the request of the National Park Service)....

The park area still is property of the state, which is holding up its transfer to the Federal government...until a condemnation proceeding case now in the Supreme Court is decided.[32]

Pictures in the Washington Star showed Cliser (age 62) and his wife "stunned" as officers handcuffed the man and piled household effects beside the highway, then barred doors and windows to prevent re-entry. A CCC crew guarded the Cliser possessions and offered to move them in CCC trucks to any new house Cliser might select. The Clisers spent the night with relatives in Luray. The Star said the sheriff evicted them after Judge H. W. Bertram threatened him

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[31] Harrisonburg News-Record, 3 Oct. 1935. Cliser's given name is one of those--like Spotswood or Spottswood--that was variously spelled in documents of the time, Melancthon, Melanchthon, Melanthon.

[32] News-Record, 4 Oct. 1935.

xxxx with contempt of court if he did not do so.[33]

The Harrisonburg paper editorialized:

> The eviction of Melancthon Cliser...doubtless will draw a great deal of maudlin sympathy from persons who picture a simple old mountaineer being driven out into the cold, cold world from his humble home in the hills. Most of that sort of sympathy is wasted, for Cliser is neither aged nor simple, nor is he in dire distress.... His worldly assets perhaps are greater than are those of most of his sympathizers. He has nearly $5,000 in cold cash awaiting his claim as the price of his forty-six acres of mountain land....
>
> Cliser's property was condemned and taken over by the state under the law of eminent domain, which gives the state the right to take possession of property needed for public uses upon payment of a fair...value. Eminent domain is universally recognized as being inherent in all government....
>
> Turning a person unwillingly from his home, however, is a most unpleasant task to perform and one that no public official covets. They know that sympathy in such cases, however misguided, is unquestionably real, and they are afraid of popular repercussions.[34]

A few days later the same paper said NPS denied there was any controversy between it and the state and went on to explain that NPS was working with the state. NPS said Cliser was cutting timber and had refused to let either state or federal officials inspect the property, that no one could "work with him." Yet the public argument grew and spread, and the flames were fanned when, on November 21, Hall ordered the eviction of twenty additional families. He said time was short for rendering the area acceptable as a national park, because the period of effectiveness of deeds made by the state would run out before the end of the year.

> J.R. Lassiter...of the Shenandoah Park, who conferred with Mr. Hall ...in regard to the evictions, declared that the twenty families had "refused all efforts to get them to sign permits" which would enable them to remain under certain restrictions.
>
> "Friends, neighbors, federal, state and county officials, and even

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[33] Washington Star, 4 Oct. 1935.

[34] News-Record, undated clipping but surely in fall 1935, SNP archives.

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>
> "Friends, neighbors, federal, state and county officials, and even

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[33] Washington Star, 4 Oct. 1935.

[34] News-Record, undated clipping but surely in fall 1935, SNP archives.

ministers, have pleaded with them to cooperate with the state and adhere to the permit requirement," Mr. Lassiter said. "Some of the families have been living on state land unmolested in the park area so long that they think it actually belongs to them. One man said, 'I own as far as I can see.'"[35]

The Star tried, through an editorial, to calm the furor:

> While there is ample ground for sympathy with and for the...people who stand in danger of eviction...with no place to go, the situation does not justify condemnation of the Government or State authorities for ruthlessness. In every case of ouster, required for the clearance of the area, opportunity was offered these settlers--many of whom have no strictly legal title to their lands--to go elsewhere, to homes established by public enterprise, with funds for the purchase of these new homes assured in the payments for their quitted housings.... The great hardship which they were required to bear was removal from places which they had occupied for a long time, in some cases several generations. Some who are sympathetic with them feel that there was actually no need for the ouster. That is a question of judgment respecting the requirements for ...a national park. Some have urged: "Why not let them stay? They do no harm and they add to the picturesqueness of the park." Therein lies the primary issue, which has been met by the decision, reluctantly reached, that the use of the park lands for habitation was undesirable.[36]

During the height of this 1935 furor over evictions--all of which, except the Cliser case, were settled without physical force--the U.S. Supreme Court made the final decision about the state's exercise of the right of eminent domain to establish a national park. The case (Via v. Virginia) had been decided in state courts as had the earlier Rudacille case and others. But Robert H. Via--of Hershey, Pa., owner of land in the Albemarle County part of the park area--had persisted. The three-judge federal district court of Virginia had considered the case and found the land condemnation legal. Yet Via, encouraged by other landowners, had appealed again, insisting the state was depriving him of rights granted by the fourteenth amendment to the U.S. Constitution:

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[35] News-Record, AP item, 21 Nov. 1935.

[36] "The Dark Hollow Evictions," Washington Star, 6 Dec. 1935.

> No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.[37]

The fifth amendment, also being widely discussed in relation to the state's condemnations, decrees: "nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation." Legal precedent, though not the U.S. Constitution, was considered to hold "public necessity" as a requirement for condemnation. Park area resident Lewis Willis and others had expressed doubt that a vast "pleasuring ground" was a "public necessity." Were there really adequate precedents for using eminent domain for such a purpose? The people discussed such questions and hoped the courts would answer them. Yet courts tended to pass as necessities whatever legislatures chose to take, checking only on compensation and procedural details.[38]

The Supreme Court had accepted the Via case for review on June 3, 1935. Virginia had asked for dismissal, but the court decided to hear arguments. NPS felt that, under such circumstances, it must delay planned development--that is, water systems, comfort stations, camp and picnic grounds and other projects intended to be paid for from the first funds appropriated by Congress to NPS specifically for Shenandoah National Park, an amount of $80,000 for the 1934 fiscal year, $27,680 for 1935, and $39,800 for 1936, none of which had yet been spent because the park had not become a reality. The CCC program could go ahead but not Skyline Drive construction, unless already under contract.[39]

Via's challenge was heard by the highest court on November 19. His counsel said the question of "whether Virginia has the power to condemn land with the

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[37] News-Record, 3 June 1935, and Page News & Courier, 7 June 1935, with quote added direct from the Constitution.

[38] Francis W. Marshall, Modern Legal Principles (N.Y.: Wm. H. Wise & Co., 1943), p. 354; Encyclopedia Britannica, 1972, vol. 8, pp. 335-36; and Willis to President Hoover, 22 June 1932, National Archives. What the people were discussing is from my conversations of the mid-1930s with people of Virginia and Washington, D.C.

[39] News & Courier, 7 June and 22 Nov. 1935, and NPS Annual Report, 1935.

sole purpose of making it a gift to the national government for national park purposes is the only question we are bringing before this court." The justices asked numerous questions as to just what this Via question was meant to include and why it was not a matter for state courts to settle. Via's main argument was that there was no assurance the federal government would use the land for the purposes for which it was condemned. He contended that since the property was to be transferred promptly to the government, he would have no redress from the state as condemnation agent if the purposes were not carried out. The "public necessity" of a "pleasuring ground" was not brought into question, as many had hoped it would be. Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes halted the proceedings before the state's answer was presented, an action widely interpreted as foreshadowing a decision favorable to the park. Virginia attorney general A.P. Staples saw victory and said the Interior Department's solicitor's staff was also "happy."[40]

On November 25 the Supreme Court affirmed the decision of the federal district court, against Via, "on the ground that appellant has an adequate remedy at law." Staples said this action cleared away the last legal barrier and the government could now accept the park with no possibility of further legal challenge--though "there may be some difficulty in taking possession of some of the tracts."[41]

NPS continued to speak of Virginia clearing the area of residents and businesses, but the meaning in fact now was that all persons occupying land inside the boundaries must have agreed, by signing permit applications, to move out in due course, not necessarily at once. Federal acceptance of the land--

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[40] News & Courier, 22 Nov. 1935.

[41] News-Record, 26 Nov. 1935, and United States Reports, vol. 296, p. 549, U.S. Supreme Court records, Washington, D.C. The Supreme Court and other courts involved have detailed records that I, feeling poorly qualified and short of time, did not study. Though the high court gave the final word on legality of the park land condemnation, I think a person with legal background could produce a meaningful dissertation on the place of this extension of legal taking in the history of the right of eminent domain.

which would constitute park establishment--was set for the last day on which deeds long since delivered to Washington would remain valid. It turned out to be a hairbreadth thing. Secretary Ickes, the responsible official under the applicable act of Congress, was hard to satisfy.

> Telephones and the telegraph were used to confirm for the secretary's information that $150,000 of FERA money had been set aside in Virginia for the care of some 50 cases of indigent residents...and it was not until the last minute that Park Service officials received formal word from Rexford G. Tugwell, Resettlement Administrator, that a homestead project on the outskirts of the park would accommodate nearly 300 other cases found to need moving assistance, but capable of financing the project's small but modern homes, now under construction, over a long...payment period.

Even then two unauthorized squatters remained--among "five discovered recently to have moved into cabins once abandoned." Eviction suits for these two were confirmed to be in Virginia courts for action in January. A nervous Ickes at last accepted three deeds transferring a total of 176,429.8 acres, and at the end of that hectic day--December 26, 1935--Shenandoah National Park was an official reality.[42]

Will Carson, who had donated eight of the best years of his life to establishing the park, started from Riverton on impulse the next day to see engineer-in-charge Lassiter, maybe for mutual congratulations. A blizzard caught him on Skyline Drive, which he had so effectively promoted, and his car got stuck in a snowdrift. He tried to dig out. There was no traffic, no help. His family, not knowing where he had gone, checked twenty hospitals in the region. Virginia state police, private groups, and detachments from an army depot near Front Royal searched for him. Night came. On Sunday the full personnel of three CCC camps joined the search. Trucks moved in low gear along Skyline Drive with men clinging to the sides peering over the precipices. Many

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[42] News-Record, 27 Dec. 1935. Carson spoke on Jan. 8, 1935 (Front Royal Lions Club) of 181,578 acres covered by deeds then awaiting acceptance in Washington, and Lassiter in his monthly report to NPS of January 1936 said 181,000 acres were accepted on 26 Dec. 1935.

people have wondered--what did Carson in this ironically poignant situation think and feel during 26 freezing hours caught in that snowdrift?[43]

A mood of cautious celebration grew. H.J. Benchoff, president of Shenandoah National Park Association, Inc., reviewed the "long hard fight" and proclaimed "it has been won.... I think I am safe in saying a new era and a new day is now dawning." One sign of the new era was the start, on March 1, 1936, in forming a regular, permanent NPS staff for Shenandoah, with offices in Luray, funded at last by non-emergency funds appropriated by Congress for this park itself. Rangers came on duty. Gov. Peery wrote the President asking that a postage stamp be issued for the new park but had to settle for FDR's agreement to speak at the dedication on July 3 and an FDR letter confirming that "this Park is one of the scenic wonders of our country." Cammerer wrote a long article for the Star, "Romance of Road Is Found in Shenandoah Region." It praised the roads of history but declared that "Skyline Drive, largely constructed by P.W.A. funds, tops them all in the startling beauty of the many vistas that crowd its way," creating "a hiker's paradise by making access to it comfortable"--so "adventure still beckons to those who search for it."[44]

Madison Eagle rejoiced in the coming dedication:

> The road to Hoover camp has been put in excellent condition. The grounds have been put in fine shape, virtually like they were when Mr. Hoover was President. They will be policed so that the many who desire to visit the former Summer White House can do so that day, as well as any other day now. Visitors to the Hoover lodge are growing in number this summer since the place is being kept up like it was in the Hoover days.[45]

New York Times devoted a page to the "spectacular vistas":

> Wilbur C. Hall...predicts a crowd of 50,000 people for the dedicatory

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[43] Madison Eagle, 3 Jan. 1936, was one of the papers carrying this story.

[44] News-Record, 27 Dec. 1935, for Benchoff; FDR to Gov. George C. Peery, 16 June 1936, State Library; and Arno B. Cammerer, Washington Star, 9 May 1936.

[45] Eagle, 26 June 1936.

ceremonies.... park authorities have authorized the establishment of temporary gasoline and oil stations along the famed Skyline Drive, from which all concessions are ordinarily barred, and has permitted the setting up at Big Meadows of food and refreshment stands.

With the impetus given it by the dedicatory day activities, Shenandoah National Park is expected to go rapidly ahead to a leading place among the nation's great public playgrounds. Already it is far from unknown. James Ralph Lassiter, park superintendent, reports that from 12,000 to 15,000 persons from many States are visiting the park every week-end....

Occasionally, as the traveler follows his leisurely way along the Drive he will come upon the primitive shacks of the Blue Ridge mountain folk, many of them believed to be descendants of captured British soldiers who were quartered near Charlottesville during the Revolution....

.... It is hoped that the influx of visitors may create a market which will induce the mountain folk to take up again the arts of weaving, basketry and metalwork which years ago they developed to a high point, but now almost abandoned. With that end in view it is planned to have a place in the park where articles of local manufacture may be put on sale.[46]

Ickes wrote in his secret diary (July 7) of the trip to the dedication:

I was at the office last Friday morning just short of two hours. Shortly before ten I went to the White House to join the President's party.... It was a threatening day, with the chances apparently ninety out of one hundred that we would have lots of rain. I was in one of the White House cars with Jim Farley and Judge Moore, an Assistant Secretary of State. He is an old Virginian who served several terms in Congress. We started down the Lee Highway at a respectable pace and got up into the park about one o'clock. By that time the weather had cleared, with a beautiful day in prospect. We stopped to eat lunch that we had brought with us and then went up to Big Meadows for the ceremonies.

The crowd, though far short of expectations, numbered thousands, mostly seated on rows of logs placed by CCC crews who had also built the platform for distinguished guests. The ceremonies went out on nationwide radio. U.S. Marine Band and two Virginia bands played. Will Carson was among the few accompanying the President to the platform. His successor as state conservation

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[46] New York Times, 28 June 1936.

chairman, Wilbur Hall, presided. Ickes spoke. Gov. Peery introduced FDR. "Hundreds of enlisted men of the corps [CCC] stood at attention while the President spoke."[47] FDR's talk rose from his personal involvement:

> The creation of this park is one part of our great program of husbandry --the joint husbandry of our human resources and our natural resources. In every part of the country, local and state and federal authorities are engaged in preserving and developing our heritage of natural resources; and in this work they are equally conserving our priceless heritage of human values by giving to hundreds of thousands of men the opportunity for making an honest living.
>
> The product of the labor of the men of the Civilian Conservation Corps, who have opened the Shenandoah National Park to the use and enjoyment of our citizens, is as significant as though instead of working for the Government they had worked in a mill or a factory. They have a right to be as proud of their labor here as if they had been engaged in private employment.
>
> In bygone years we have seen the terrible tragedy of our age--the tragedy of waste. Waste of our people, waste of our land. It was neither the will nor the destiny of our nation that this waste of human and material resources should continue. That was the compelling reason that led us to put our idle people to the task of ending the waste of our land.
>
> The involuntary idleness of thousands of young men ended three years ago when they came here to the camps on the Blue Ridge. Since then they have not been idle; and today they have ended the idleness of the Shenandoah National Park. It will be a busy and useful place in the years to come, just as the work of these young men will, I am confident, lead them to busy and useful lives in the years to come.
>
> Our country will need many other young men as they come to manhood for work like this--for other Shenandoahs.
>
> Is it a dream--will I perhaps be accused of an exaggerated passion for planning if I paint for you a picture? You who are here know of the great usefulness to humanity which this Skyline Drive achieves from now on, of the greater usefulness which its extension, south through Virginia and North Carolina to the Big Smoky National Park will achieve.
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> In almost every other part of the country there is a similar need for

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[47] Baltimore Sun, 4 July 1936; personal memory; and R. Taylor Hoskins, personal interview, 1969, tape in SNP archives.

recreational areas for parkways which will give to men and women of moderate means the opportunity, the invigoration and the luxury of touring and camping amid scenes of great natural beauty.

All across the nation at this time of the year people are starting out for their vacations in national and state parks. They will put up at roadside camps or pitch their tents under the stars, with an open fire to cook by, with the smell of the woods and the wind in the trees. They will forget the rush and the strain of all the other long weeks of the year, and for a short time at least, the days will be good for their bodies and good for their souls. Once more they will lay hold of the perspective that comes to men and women who every morning and every night can lift up their eyes to Mother Nature.

There is merit for all of us in the ancient tale of the giant Antaeus, who every time he touched his mother earth, arose with strength renewed a hundredfold.

This park, therefore, together with its many sisters which are coming to completion in every part of our land, is in the largest sense a work of conservation. Through all of them we are preserving the beauty and the wealth of the hills, and the mountains and the plains and the trees and the streams. Through all of them we are maintaining useful work for our young men. Through all of them we are enriching the character and the happiness of our people.

We seek to pass on to our children a richer land--a stronger nation.

I, therefore, dedicate Shenandoah National Park to this and succeeding generations of Americans for the recreation and for the re-creation which we shall find here.[48]

As FDR said, the park was not idle. It was busy not only with the surges of "nature" growing strong again and with the burgeoning steams of human visitation but also with hundreds of diverse work projects. The superintendent was busy supervising ECW-CCC work to get maximum benefit from the 1200 or so men in six camps assigned to the park and from large sums of money available through depression-emergency appropriations. He seldom left the office at quitting time. Often when I left he was just beginning long conferences with project superin-

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[48] FDR's Copies and FDR-voice recording of/talk, 3 July 1936, SNP archives.

tendents or others. He was likely to be late for dinner or to take a visiting engineer or other official from Washington home with him.[49]

I remember how shocked he was when a "ghost camp" was "discovered." A man named Reno Stiteley, working in Washington with ECW accounting, had set up a Shenandoah CCC operation on paper complete with project superintendent and the usual number of foremen. He had obtained the payroll checks of these non-existent people, forged endorsements, and diverted the money to his personal uses. The amount thus stolen, as I recall, was almost a hundred thousand dollars. Lassiter was briefly suspected of being in on the deal but was promptly cleared by investigators. Stitely was convicted and sent to jail.[50]

A very real matter that brought Lassiter much puzzlement and some regret was the underground telephone system. Its story shows CCC operations from the inside while revealing other aspects of the park's nature and history. C.V. Bert, camp NP-3 superintendent, remembered in his sharp and amusing way much later:

> A lot of the things we did then are buried now--water systems, sewer systems, telephone system.... That darn telephone situation--we had two systems, overhead and underground. In the summer the lightning would get into the underground cable.... We used to call the fellows that worked on it..."the gophers": they'd dig, you know. They'd have to go to where one of these manholes were, and they'd test to find out where the trouble was--approximately. Then they'd have to dig a whole row of holes along, to locate it exactly.... In the winter the confounded ice would get on the overhead lines and break them down, but in winter the underground usually worked--no lightning.[51]

The underground system was recommended by an NPS telephone engineer to replace the hastily erected overhead lines. He favored the underground--"first, because it would provide continuous efficient service; second, because it would cause no unsightly scar on the landscape; third, because its maintenance cost

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[49] Mrs. J.R. Lassiter, personal interview, 10 Nov. 1976, tape in my files, and my personal memories and unrecorded conversations through the years.

[50] C.V. Bert, personal interview, 2 April 1969, tape in SNP archives, and personal memory. The case in detail would make an interesting story.

[51] Bert interview, 1969.

would be low." After discussion and calculations by Lassiter and the Washington engineers, NPS asked PWA for $41,200 to buy the needed materials.[52]

> The application for CCC job 81, March 28, 1936, asked for 1300 CCC man days to install a telephone system along the Skyline Drive from the headquarters at Thornton Gap to Swift Run Gap, with connections at the CCC camps and at strategic points along the Drive for reporting on fires and for increased efficiency in the administration of the work. A sufficient amount of telephone cable is available from a PWA project to supply this material. It will be necessary to purchase, from the material fund in this estimate, telephones, switchboard, splicing material, man hole and hand hole materials. It will be necessary to employ a cable splicer for approximately three months, and $400 is requested for this.[53]

As the work advanced, the electrical storms proved so viciously destructive that a lightning expert, L.S. Inskip. was brought from Bell Telephone Laboratories. Inskip reported in August 1939 that an average of two lightning storms per week since May 1 had made phone service from Panorama to Skyland impossible and had prevented even exploring farther south as the cable had had to be cut at the Skyland tap. He wrote of nine "troubles" within 400 feet at a place near Skyland where a large oak had been struck and oak splinters scattered widely. More than 125 "troubles" had been located and cleared already that year. In many cases the seal at the end of a cable length was blown off, and there was much "crushing of the lead sheath." Inskip blamed geology and altitude. He first recommended two shield wires of copper alongside the cable to fend off the electric blasts, then "four shield wires and additional bonding."[54]

> Trouble from one storm is not cleared up before another storm creates more trouble.... We have made several phone installations at camps and other places for the purposes of intra-park communication and to test out the switchboard operation, but due to line trouble we have not been able

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[52] Alexander M. Brown to Lassiter, 29 April 1935; C.D. Monteith to Lassiter, 19 Dec. 1935; and Hillory A. Tolson to Lassiter, 20 Jan. 1936--SNP archives.

[53] CCC job applications and completion reports, National Archives.

[54] Inskip, five-page report, 7 Aug. 1939, SNP archives.

to put any of them into operation. I am beginning to become quite discouraged.[55]

Job 81 was too far along to benefit from Inskip's recommendations. Even without the shield wires, its man days had exceeded the first estimate a dozenfold. The completion report showed 17,302 CCC man days, $3,029.93 for other labor, and $4,632.66 for materials, a total of $7,462.59 in money--plus $43,000 from PWA for the multi-wire cable itself.

> The work of installing this cable began in January 1937, and by October 1938, all of the main line cable had been installed. The laying of the laterals had to proceed much slower and sections laid as new developed areas were added so it was not until September 1940 that all of the cable was laid to the existing areas.

Job 200, with 3,714 man days and $6,103.14, extended the underground system from Panorama to park headquarters, which had been shifted to a foothill site along Lee Highway since Job 81 was authorized. Job 218, with 75 man days and $283.93, constructed a switchboard building at Thornton Gap. Job 229, installing the underground cable with shield wires as recommended by Inskip, in the park's north district, cost the CCC 12,121 man days and $1,860.46 (for 25 phones at $30 each, also terminals, sleeves, solder and paraffin) and cost PWA $21,416.94. Job 277, to extend the system into the south district, authorized 15,000 man days and $27,500, all CCC. It carried this explanation:

> The automatic telephone system is now in operation from the Front Royal entrance to Swift Run Gap with connections to the headquarters area and developments along the Drive, a total of about 70 miles of cable. With the recent opening of the section from Swift Run to Jarman Gap and the developments along this section, it becomes increasingly important that telephone service be provided.

On the north section, with its shield wires, there were during the first summer (1940) "only seven interruptions, compared to thirty cases of trouble in the central section where there are no shield wires." Most of the seven interruptions were blamed on one "direct hit by lightning, which jumped from

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[55] Lassiter to Monteith, 5 Aug. 1939, SNP archives.

a large tree at Camp NP-12.... This charge was so strong that one telephone was completely burned up and the aerial wire burned in half." Shielding was added to the central section; there was improvement but not enough.[56]

Lassiter asked the NPS utility expert:

> what do you think of the possibility of stringing the cable on a messenger cable attached to trees or poles about 4 to 6 feet above ground? This would, I believe, eliminate the stray ground currents and would leave the cable available for an exploring coil to locate any troubles that may develop. I thought maybe it might be a good idea to try a section of this and see how it works.[57]

By 1942 the CCC cost had reached approximately 50,000 man days. Total money cost, including PWA, was given by the NPS engineering office as $186,205, not counting the CCC labor. This amount did not include 11 miles of ten- and five-pair cable installed later that year from Simmons Gap to Blackrock Gap, farther into the south district (by CPS not CCC). The underground system was not a total loss, of course. It usually worked well in winter and sometimes quite well in summer. With heavy maintenance by "the gophers" and their successors, it served for more than a decade after the CCC was gone, but it never satisfied the high expectations that launched it.[58]

FDR's continuing influence on basic patterns of the park showed directly in the approach-road crisis of 1939. This crisis grew partly from the "Hoover entrance." Madison Eagle said in May 1933 that "the old Blue Ridge turnpike across the mountain from Syria to Stanley is to be rebuilt." Lassiter investigated and found a CCC crew, supervised by the state forest service,

> cutting brush to widen out this road, which is now entirely overgrown. The state road forces are following up...with certain grading and blasting

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[56] J.R. Lassiter and A.L. Betz, "Final Construction Report, PWA project 752-05-257," undated copy in SNP archives.

[57] Lassiter to Monteith, 22 Oct. 1940, SNP archives. I have found no evidence that the idea was tried.

[58] CCC job reports, National Archives, and Monteith to Lassiter, 10 April 1942, SNP archives. CPS is Civilian Public Service; more in chap. 11.

operations, to make a passable road. They are doing a much better job in the valley where they are now working than will be possible or practicable when they start up the mountain.... I am today starting a crew from the Big Meadows Camp down from Fishers Gap to connect with this work.

When this road is opened up, it will afford an excellent means of access to the Rose River Valley and Dark Hollow for fire protection, which will offset any disadvantages that may occur from the small amount of local traffic that may cross the mountains at this point.

After the gang completes cutting out the road on the east slope, I propose to transfer it to the west slope to repair some of the roughest spots. This side is used considerably by Camp 2 in carrying supplies.[59]

The Luray paper reinforced the action:

Attention of Madison County citizens was first called to the need for the road when they were forbidden to travel the Skyline Drive, and all way of access into Page County was cut off. Then Stanley citizens conceived the idea of a new entrance...through Milam's Gap...at the junction of Madison and Page counties. Officials and the board of supervisors requested the reopening of the road, once twenty feet wide, and now a mere mountain gulley. At first they were refused.

Other organizations interested in preserving the history of the region recalled the act incorporating this turnpike in 1848, and the fact that for years it was a main highway of travel.... Confederate troops used it.[60]

That winter there was overlapping action:

The old roads and bark trails that enter the Park lands up the Blue Ridge hollows are being worked by fourteen CWA [federal Civil Works Administration] gangs of 20 to 30 men each. Some of the roads are little more than mountain gulches. Many were bark roads years ago and have never been repaired. Yesterday 281 men were employed on these Park entrances in this county. Similar work is going on or being organized in all of the eight counties around the Park rim.[61]

This work was mostly on private lands. A few owners were suspicious and refused to let the crews on their property, but most of the owners welcomed the work.

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[59] Lassiter to Demaray (NPS Washington), 20 July 1933, answering Demaray to Lassiter, 26 June 1933.

[60] News & Courier, 15 Nov. 1933.

[61] News & Courier, 5 Jan. 1934.

They and the local people who encouraged it tended to suppose the improved access to the park would be both public and permanent.

The Blue Ridge proved full of sleeping roads. One comparable to the "Hoover entrance" grew restless in the south district near Grottoes. An Army captain at CCC camp NP-5 wrote NPS Washington, suggesting improvement of that old Browns Gap route that cut distance to Richmond by 20 miles and could give CCC boys work opportunities close to camp. He said it offered "scenic views and historical effects.

> Old Furnace built 1778 standing in plain view, where Pig Iron was made, hauled 3 miles to Grottoes, where it was Forged into plates, loaded on boats in South branch of South River and delivered.... Along this road General Stonewall Jackson led his Army after his engagement with General Shields in the battle of Port Republic, at the top of the mountain and at the intersection of the Skyline Drive are the breastworks and gun pits built to protect his army from attack.[62]

Other letters, including one by Rep. Robertson, urged Browns Gap road work.

Lassiter began suspecting hidden dangers. He wrote NPS Washington a reminder that the state, in transferring the park land, had reserved only Lee Highway and Spottswood Trail. "All such roads as the Browns Gap Road should be closed at the Park Boundary, but should be maintained in the Park to serve as part of the fire trail system and not thrown open to general public traffic." Emphasis on the "fire" system increased, and the Eagle reported:

> A survey is being made of the truck trails in and around the Shenandoah National park...to assist in fire control and prevention.... [C.H. Arnold, NPS Washington forester] said: "As far as possible we shall stick to the old roads rather than make new scars on the topography. Truck and fire trails being used will be connected up with primary roads, and all will lead to the Skyline drive as a backbone."[63]

Such items tended to increase rather than decrease expectation of public access at numerous points, and the pressure escalated.

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[62] Capt. John W. Olcutt (spelling unclear) to NPS, 29 Sept. 1934, SNP archives.

[63] Lassiter to Monteith, 1 Oct. 1934, and clipping, Oct. 1934, SNP archives.

In 1935 Director Cammerer was confronted by a letter from Sen. Byrd that suggested "a new entrance to the...Park from Washington, Virginia, to the Skyline Drive at Gravelly Springs." He must, of course, carefully consider anything from the Senator, but he had the courage to add:

> We are not inclined to favor the construction of any new transverse roads...which would create additional landscape scars and tend to destroy certain wilderness values which we must cherish in order to carry out the original purpose of the Park.[64]

Later that same year Byrd joined those urging Browns Gap road improvement, and Lassiter again warned against establishing "a precedent."[65]

But local expectation had grown beyond control, and during the next two years still more routes were proposed--some for public travel, some only for special uses, such as one in Harmony Hollow for access to orchards and one joining Skyline Drive for the convenience of an Episcopal mission. In November 1937, hard-pressed, Cammerer sought help from Ickes. He said many cross-over roads, other than Lee Highway and Spotswood Trail, had never been for cars but had been "negotiable only by horse and wagon....

> Since the opening of the park great pressure has been and is being exerted by small local communities, such as Grottoes and Browntown, on their Senators and Congressmen and on this office, to have some of these old roads opened for motor travel...so that these small communities would have the benefit of some of the heavy automobile travel attracted by the park.[66]

In 1938 a resolution favoring especially Browns Gap was pending in the Virginia General Assembly. Both Cammerer and a personal assistant to Ickes wrote the involved state legislators, and Byrd, summarizing the case against additional access roads and adding this thought:

> The value of a national park is measurable in a monetary sense to the local countryside and it is to the interest of the citizens...to uphold the development policies of the Service. The value to the nation as a

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[64] Cammerer to Byrd, 16 Aug. 1935, answering Byrd, 20 Aug. 1935, SNP archives.

[65] Lassiter to Director, 19 Nov. 1935, SNP archives.

[66] Cammerer to Ickes, 13 Dec. 1937, SNP archives.

> whole is dependent on the maintenance of national park standards which demand that the primitive quality and expanse of wilderness be preserved. The establishment of a national park is primarily for the purpose of preservation and every effort must be directed toward that end. The results of this protective policy become more apparent as the years pass by and the land within the park boundary remains unspoiled in contrast to the unrestricted and ever increasing development outside. The Browns Gap Road proposal would bisect the most extensive and valuable wilderness portion of Shenandoah National Park with a consequent lessening of its quality.[67]

By this time the push to open old roads was so emphasizing the non-primeval character of Shenandoah's land that romantic conservationists renewed criticism of the area as a national park. The narrow way NPS had long been obliged to try to travel was pointed up by the citing of wilderness quality as a defense against unwanted roads, on the one hand, and on the other by this statement from Cammerer to the park purists:

> I would much rather [than lose a magnificent area] have a national park created that might not measure up to all that everybody thinks of it at the present time, but which, 50 or 100 years from now, with all the protection we would give it, would have attained a natural condition comparable to primitive condition.... I often reflect on how these areas will look a thousand or two thousand or five thousand years from now.[68]

In 1939 a Shenandoah entrance fee of 25¢ per car entering (or $1 a year) was ordered by Ickes, and the fee created "a deluge of newspaper publicity" in opposition. To enforce the fee, all access points lacking entrance stations would have to be closed. State legislator C.C. Louderback of Page County protested to Byrd: "The Hoover Road is to be kept open. Why not the Old Highway on the West?" Gates closing many roads were being put up. Byrd firmly opposed the closings, especially of the Stanley-Madison "turnpike," and Cammerer asked Lassiter to consider putting an entrance station where the old turnpike

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[67] Henry Slattery to Byrd, 1 March 1938, SNP archives. Other letters by both Slattery and Cammerer were similar, all probably drafted by NPS.

[68] "Park Service Leader Abandons National Park Standards," National Parks Bulletin, June 1938, National Parks Association, Washington, D.C.

intersected Skyline Drive to serve the traveling public from both east and west. Lassiter made a strong reply:

> If authority is granted for the maintenance of this road as a public entrance, I sincerely believe that in the course of the next ten years we will open at least one road a year. Beginning at the South end, Charlottesville is now endeavoring to secure an entrance through Crozet to Jarman Gap; Grottoes has been quite active on behalf of the Browns Gap Road; Stanley is advocating opening the Gordonsville Turnpike; and I have been successful, I think, in keeping the people of Washington, Va., from writing you concerning giving them a direct entrance....
>
> If any one of these roads is opened upon the insistence of the local group directly affected, then you will not have a leg to stand on to combat the pressure that will be brought to bear by other local interests.[69]

Appeasement of Byrd (and others) was rejected. Rather than opening more roads, NPS finally put a locked gate on the one that had first generated pressure. The prompt response was a mass meeting at Orange on May 16, 1939, "to protest the closing of the Rapidan Road." Citizens attended from Orange, Madison and Culpeper counties and from Fredericksburg. Lassiter was there--and reported:

> It was felt by all of the local representatives that the Federal Government was acting in a high-handed manner in closing this road....
>
> It was further brought out that Madison County had made an appropriation of $7,000 for the construction of the road from Criglersville to the Rapidan Camp. This was done upon the insistence of Mr. Carson and based upon his assurances that the construction of this road would insure the establishment of one of the most important entrances to the park, resulting in a continual flow of tourists through that section and giving Madison County national recognition and increased business.

Lassiter had been called on to answer the protest and had given the NPS reasons for limiting park entrances, but the meeting felt he "was not sympathetic to their plea" so had "appointed a committee to make further representations to whatever powers the committee may deem advisable."[70]

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[69] Lassiter, monthly narrative report, March 1939, National Archives; and Cammerer to Lassiter, 13 April 1939; and Lassiter to Cammerer, 18 April 1939, SNP.

[70] Lassiter to Cammerer, 18 May 1939, SNP archives.

In June 1939 Senators Byrd and Glass introduced a resolution in Congress "to provide for the maintenance for public use" of the Madison-Page "turnpike" and the Browns Gap Road. It condemned the closings as a "great injury...to the people of Virginia" and directed the Secretary of the Interior to keep them "available to the public in a safe condition for travel" from Skyline Drive to both eastern and western edges of the park.[71]

Lassiter added to previously expressed reasons for not opening the roads a statement that "safe condition" would mean the old roads must be "replaced by a modern highway.

> This would require an expenditure of not less than $50,000 a mile, as these are mountain roads requiring heavy grading. As there are some twenty-five miles involved...there would be required the sum of $1,250,000 for capital outlay, with its attendant annual maintenance cost of not less than $400 a mile or $10,000 per annum.

The Secretary of the Interior (E.K. Burlew, acting) gave the appropriate committees of both houses of Congress all the arguments against opening the roads, including Lassiter's cost estimates.[72]

The Senate committee on public lands and surveys reported on the Byrd-Glass resolution, reviewing the state's donation of park land and concluding:

> The two roads directed to be kept open...have been long in use and have great historical prominence, both having been used in early colonial days and also by Gen. Stonewall Jackson and other Confederate generals....
>
> In view of the great interest and absolute right of the people residing in the locality in keeping such roads open, and the interest of the public at large because of the historical background of such roads, and the small additional cost necessary to achieve that result, the committee is of the opinion that the resolution should pass.[73]

The full Senate and then the House, early in August, passed it unanimously.

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[71] SJR 160, introduced 23 June 1939, SNP archives, along with mention of similar resolutions introduced in House 26 June 1939 by Robertson (337) and Smith (328).

[72] Lassiter to Director, 30 June 1939; Burlew to Sen. Alva Adams, 26 July 1939, and Burlew to Rep. Rene De Rouen, 1 Aug. 1939, SNP archives.

[73] Report No. 961 (on S.J.R. 160), 26 July 1939.

FDR promptly vetoed it, saying among other things:

> The primary objection to this legislation is that it would subordinate national park standards to local considerations. National parks are created for the benefit of the Nation as a whole, and for the preservation of specific areas in their natural condition, with a minimum of development. Such developments as may be required in national parks are undertaken for general public use, as distinguished from local use. The approval of Senate Joint Resolution 160 would encourage local communities to request the opening of minor roads in national park areas solely for the purpose of conferring local benefits upon adjacent communities, and would establish a dangerous precedent. Both the Congress and the executive agencies have in the past rejected similar attempts on the part of local interests to force construction of roads within the Yellowstone and other national parks. This proposed legislation...would, therefore, be in direct conflict with an established precedent.[74]

In 1940 the CCC was declining. That was a year of changes and pauses, a year of looking back and of puzzling over the future. Lassiter was recovering from a heart attack suffered at the end of the tense 1930s. Cammerer, tired and ill, stepped down to a regional directorship, honored for his part in establishing Shenandoah and Smoky parks. Newton B. Drury of California became director as both funds and personnel were dropping drastically, being shifted to military preparedness.

Shenandoah landscape architect Harvey P. Benson wrote of the CCC:

> In addition to the usual work of fire hazard reduction, fire protection, erosion control, and the construction of fire trails and roads, much has been accomplished in the recreational development.... Slope flattening, which was not possible under the construction contracts of the Drive, has been in progress during the last five years and approximately half the route is graded and planted.
>
> Five years ago Pinnacles Picnic Grounds, five miles south of Thornton Gap, was developed.... Parking accommodations for 170 cars, 20 fire places, 100 tables, five water fountains and a standard comfort station, together

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[74] FDR veto message, 7 Aug. 1939, SNP archives. Similar resolutions, persistently introduced by Virginians in later Congresses, did not pass.

with water and sanitary system, were installed by the CCC. Since this first major recreational development others have followed in rapid succession due to the overwhelming demands made on the park by the increasing travel on Skyline Drive.

South River Picnic Grounds came next, followed by Elkwallow, Dickey Ridge and Big Meadows. By 1940 there were 350 picnic tables, 95 fireplaces, 30 fountains, six comfort stations, and parking space for 715 cars. First campground was completed by the CCC at Big Meadows in 1937, and "five minutes after the opening... a camper appeared." Twenty places had been provided for tents and 50 for trailers, but it turned out that tent use exceeded trailer use by "about four to one." The CCC later completed camp and picnic grounds for Negroes at Lewis Mountain.[75]

Shenandoah was not likely ever to have so much help again. FDR's mind and energy were devoted now to countering the Nazi threat, and the emphasis of Ickes's efforts had also changed. Pollock was no longer the host of Skyland. Secretary of the Navy Swanson, former senator who had sponsored basic legislation for Shenandoah in the early years, had died at Camp Hoover in 1939. Carson was no longer active in park affairs, either behind the scenes or in the forefront; he had but two years more to live. Yet travel was booming.[76]

The decline of the CCC left park development incomplete; in the south district it had barely begun. Lassiter argued in Washington that the CCC should be made permanent, but in July camp NP-3 was abandoned. He continued to keep all available work crews busy on useful projects, initiating new ones when possible. In October, for instance, he initiated job 334, to take care of winter periods unsuitable for outdoor work, and to help clear away excessive chestnut killed by blight. It called for 5,000 man days to produce 27,500 chestnut rails needed in restoration of historic landscapes at Manassas, Fredericksburg and George Washington's Birthplace.[77]

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[75] Benson article, 1940.

[76] Richmond News-Leader, 12 March 1940, and Ickes diary, entry of 8 July and general reading of 1940 entries.

[77] Lassiter's monthly reports and CCC job records, National Archives.

When the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor, CCC was conclusively doomed. But even now it is far from forgotten. Each fall at the site of camp NP-2, Big Meadows, the "boys" gather to remember "the joint husbandry of our human resources and our natural resources."[78]

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[78] This CCC organization, centering on camp NP-2 but including persons interested in all the CCC camps of Shenandoah, has no formal name. A key contact is L.L. Cashion, 10100 Taylor Road, Winterpock, Va. 23832. Sam Dowdy of Richmond, a CCC man attending the 1976 reunion, gave me a copy of a poem he wrote at the Big Meadows camp in 1933. Its central message is: ~~"..., the Blue Ridge Mountains /~~ ".... I have been there, so I ought to know / Of the pretty summers, of the wintry snow / Of the Valley below, the fields so green / The beauty there you've never seen / ... in the Blue Ridge Mountains / With God's heavenly care / I would rather be than anywhere."

7

## Appalachian Trail vs. Skyline Drive

The dream of a long, long trail on the Blue Ridge skyline started growing in the nation's capital when Benton MacKaye's famous article was published in the October 1921 Journal of the American Institute of Architects. "Few proposals have fired the imagination as did this. Almost at once scattered groups began to work, and by 1925 the first Appalachian Trail Conference was held in Washington. In November 1927 the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club was organized to undertake clearing a section accessible to Washington."[1]

Preliminary meetings had been small, and the organizational meeting in H.C. Anderson's office at the Metropolitan Bank Building, Washington, was small too. Anderson, writing for the 25th anniversary issue of PATC Bulletin, listed only six--four who were elected officers, Myron H. Avery, president; P.L. Ricker, vice president; Frank Schairer, treasurer; and Anderson, secretary, plus L.F. Schmeckebier and Homer Corson. Anderson also remembered:

> One of the pleasures of those early days was the carefree zigzagging from side to side across the Blue Ridge searching for a favorable route.... During the summer of 1928 the Trail from Thornton Gap to Skyland was put through. There was already a path up Mary's Rock. And, believe me, that path was steep.... Locating a trail over Pinnacle was no easy task, especially because of the unusually rocky terrain and the scrub shrubs.
>
> At times we would be working in a dense fog. Then one or two would go ahead a hundred feet or so and call out the direction toward which the rest would cut through the scrub oak. During a day a party of six would do well to cut half a mile of trail....
>
> .... we used Geological Survey maps, but some of them were woefully inaccurate as far as contours were concerned, especially in the area between Thornton Gap and Skyland.[2]

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[1] MacKaye, "An Appalachian Trail--A Project in Regional Planning." The quoted words are from Harvey Broome, "Origins of the Wilderness Society," The Living Wilderness, July 1940. The Broome article is the source wherever in this chapter something is attributed to Broome.

[2] H.C. Anderson, "The Good Old Days," PATC Bulletin, Oct.-Dec. 1952.

Anderson, Avery and Schairer were leading locators of the whole PATC route --"some 260 miles of trail from the Susquehanna River to Rockfish Gap at the southern end of Shenandoah National Park...constructed and marked...between 1928 and 1932." Schairer, who called himself "a lousy treasurer," soon became the club's first supervisor of trails, a post he held for many years, having "an awful lot of fun." Often in later decades he entertained with anecdotes. He remembered "a scouting trip before the trail club was actually founded....

> Harold Anderson, Myron Avery and his uncle...and I...took the bus to Winchester and got off at Ashby Gap...scouting.... Andy and I went south.... Some roads on the mountain--but they all went in the wrong directions.... We decided maybe we could build a trail, but there was more to it than just marking old roads....
>
> Our first trail-building trip.... We'd never built a trail in our lives. We didn't know what tools to use or how you went at it. So we had these little Boy Scout axes, duller than the devil to start with, and a pocket knife...and a very inadequate amount of water--I remember that very distinctly.... We found out there were no big trees to cut; it was a case of marking, plus millions of little sprouts, none bigger than your thumb, and every time you hit one of those sprouts there were stones underneath it, and after about fifteen minutes the little Boy Scout axe looked like a saw instead of an axe, so you had to hold the sprout and kind of saw it off--and we were dying of thirst.... We soon found out about things like pruning shears and bush hooks and a few other things, but we had to learn it the hard way....
>
> One of the first objective of the club was to foster the proposed Shenandoah National Park. We were in the northern section trying to build a trail from Chester Gap to the top of Mt. Marshall. That's a devil of a country to get into. The only way you could do was go into Flint Hill and back on little side roads, go as far as you could along the wood roads, and camp, and then climb the mountain.... By the time you get up there you only have two or three hours to work, then it's time to get the devil out if you're ever going to get home again.... Remember there was no Skyline Drive or any nonsense like that.... And [in those days] people worked till one o'clock on Saturday....
>
> Skyland was one of the bright spots.... everybody loved to go to

> Skyland; they had riding horses and good food.... Pollock was one of the early members of the trail club.... Pollock's trail ended a short piece below Hawksbill, Crescent Rock.... You could get as far as the Red Gate which was Fishers Gap.... From there on there were mountain paths.... We'd get to Luray and get a taxi-man to drive us to Fishers Gap, and we scouted the trail from there toward Swift Run.... Then it was a bus to Swift Run Gap...and clearing trail south of there.... We wanted to demonstrate that here in the middle was a section done--all you had to do was connect it up both ways.... trail psychology...make 'em think it's fun and they'll go.[3]

The first hikers' shelter--considered by Ferdinand Zerkel, another early club member, "the first permanent shelter on the Appalachian Trail south of New England."--was built near The Pinnacle in 1930 at a cost of $930. It was "the gift of Dr. Roy Lyman Sexton and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas P Hickman....

> Mountaineers built the shelter, with PATC hands performing only the labor that required a weak mind and a strong back, such as digging rocks and carrying in stoves over foot trails. On September 28, 1930, this bit of hallowed ground was dedicated by those "who go to the hills." Evil days soon fell upon the shelter, however, for the chosen route for the Skyline Drive encircled the beautiful Sexton amphitheater. Its isolation was lost.[4]

Another shelter was built that same year near Marys Rock--"the original Meadow Spring log-cabin...built...at the direction of and presented to the...club by members H.C. Anderson and J.F. Schairer."[5]

PATC soon had three hundred members, many of them people of influence in Washington. The versatile Avery became an eager measurer, pushing a bicycle wheel with pleasure and precision along every foot of the club's 260 miles of main trail and along an increasing network of intriguing side trails to get distances accurate to the hundredths of a mile. Club members made and put up

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[3] Schairer, 40th anniversary dinner, PATC, 28 Nov. 1967, tape, SNP archives.

[4] Zerkel papers, SNP archives, and Avery in PATC Bulletin, April 1946.

[5] Shelters booklet, PATC, Washington, Feb. 1946, p. 15.

signs using these mileages; by the end of 1931 they had thus marked 145 miles of the skyline path in Virginia. They were proud of their vast volunteer effort dedicated to all persons, club members or not, "who seek escape from the noise and gas fumes of the city in the cloud-washed silences of the Virginia hills."[6]

But while success was thus being won, "construction of the Skyline Drive... was authorized practically without notice; no opportunity was afforded for discussion of the general advisability of the undertaking. It was premised as a drought relief measure"--which tended to make opposition unpopular. "When road construction advanced, the club attempted to reconstruct the old trail where obliterated," but the laboriously taken measurements, the guide data, and the careful marking were upset. Great stretches of the "cloud-washed silences" were stolen in the name of the proposed national park which the constitution of the club obliged it "to foster."[7]

Opposition was restrained, but the shock went deep. MacKaye protested and would not forget. Avery invited NPS landscape architect Charles E. Peterson to go with him into the mountains to reconsider the road routing:

> I had hoped that the Park officials would consider the possible location of the new highway from Sperryville through the Old Rag Valley to Skyland. This route is passable for automobiles at the present time, although it is a very rough road.... I had thought the advantage of this location would be that it would make Old Rag Mountain and Old Rag Valley accessible and preserve, as a wilderness area, the section between the Lee Highway and Skyland, which to my mind affords the best wilderness area in the entire park.... If the route is located along the crest of the ridge from Panorama it will divide this area and I feel sure that within a few years you will find it necessary to improve the road...through Old Rag Valley, and will thus have two parallel highways.[8]

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[6] Washington Star, 3 Jan. 1932, and Harold Allen and L.F. Schmeckebier, "Shenandoah National Park, the Skyline Drive and the Appalachian Trail," Appalachia, June 1936. This Appalachia article is the source in this chapter wherever Allen and Schmeckebier together are credited.

[7] Allen and Schmeckebier 1936.

[8] Avery to Peterson, 26 March 1931, National Archives.

The situation for "wilderness" hikers did not improve. The Carson-Hoover-Albright road blitz was quick and powerful, and as to trails the influential Will Carson welcomed a plan, suggested by the Orange county clerk, to "give to the park a charm of antebellum days when dashing cavaliers and their fair ladies rode or roamed through Virginia's vast estates." It would connect Washington with park features via bridle paths that would also be the footpaths, a prospect the trail club did not like. Carson said "1,000 saddle horses are to be a part of the park's equipment." The high-handedness of the blitz embarrassed some people inside NPS. When Peterson was told that road men would move Sexton Shelter and he was to locate a new site, he replied that the trail club should at least be given a chance to pick a site.[9]

PATC efforts to rebuild in the wake of the blitz gave way in 1933 to CCC projects for a graded Appalachian Trail-bridle path along a route chosen by landscape architects. By 1934 the CCC was at work on the combined trail in all three sections, and the central section was nearing completion. Pollock went so far as to publicize "a through bridle path built along the crest of the ridge, superseding the old Appalachian Trail."[10]

Avery--a lawyer with the U.S. Shipping Board, Merchant Fleet Corporation, working in New York and other port cities as well as in Washington--was in part a determined wilderness romantic. Yet he preferred reasonable compromise to direct conflict. He wrote:

> As far as interference experienced by the Trail Club is concerned, members are already familiar with the practically completed new trail between Thornton Gap and Swift Run Gap. In the extreme northern and southern portions...where there will be further interference, certain sections have already been constructed. Trail Club officials have pressed the Park Service to complete the Trail in these links and we have been

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[9] Madison Eagle, "March 1932," Bickers clippings, SNP archives; and Demaray to Peterson, 13 June 1931, and Peterson to Demaray, 16 June 1931, Nat'l Archives.

[10] Roland W. Rogers, landscape architect, to Avery, 25 May 1934, and George F. Pollock, "Skyland" promotional booklet, 1935, p. 4--SNP archives.

assured of every possible cooperation.... While the location at times may be nearer the highway than would be desirable under ideal conditions, nevertheless the ease of travel and the improved footway will make possible access to this region by those for whom the previous route was too difficult....

Skyline Roads have presented problems which have worked out not nearly so formidable as in prospect. In Shenandoah National Park thirty-five miles of the Trail were affected by the road; this fall there will be completed thirty-five miles of new Park Service Grade A trail instead; the trail project is, therefore, the winner.[11]

He was trading acceptance of "accomplished fact" for whatever hiking gains might be possible, not only within the park but along the Appalachian Trail southward where the extended "skyline drive" (Blue Ridge Parkway) threatened it. Under his persuasion, Cammerer had asked Ickes to provide for construction of such portions of the A.T. as may be destroyed "between Swift Run Gap and the James River, and between Adney Gap and the Virginia-North Carolina boundary." Avery also wanted chains of shelters and other advantages for hikers. He considered the prospects good and did not want to jeopardize them. He cautioned:

It must...be remembered that the term "wilderness areas," as applied to the eastern Atlantic states, is very much a misnomer. This term properly belongs to the extensive areas in the far west, which are protected through being a part of the Federal domain. All of the land in the east has passed into private ownership and was and will again be exploited when advantageous for the owners. Only in the lands acquired by the Federal and State governments is there any guarantee of the sanctity of such wilderness areas....

.... those who travel the trails on foot are only a small minority and, unfortunately, much as we regret the admission, only a very few "hikers" or those who urge the preservation of the wilderness actually use difficult, long, or isolated mountain pathways. The public, as a whole, will not concede to the "hiker" any monopoly of the love or appreciation of the out-of-doors. The majority will wish to approach by means of a

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[11] Myron H. Avery, "The Skyline Drive and the Appalachian Trail," PATC Bulletin, Jan. 1935. Avery does not seem to have commented at this time on horseback use of hiking trails, but he would later.

motor road; a large group wish the sparsely settled mountain or forest lands of the east to be established as recreational areas with picnic grounds, swimming pools, etc., where those forced to live in overcrowded cities may find an opportunity for a few hours out of doors with exercise within their physical capabilities; and it is only the small minority that demand that such areas be kept in an absolutely natural state. We have heard much of government by minorities. The minority here can ask for an exclusion of the majority, but it will be useless; far better it is to ask for a planned development which will give due consideration to the conflicting interests and will provide for the minority.[12]

Benton MacKaye was not so conciliatory. When the Carson-Hoover-Albright thrust was first becoming known, he had protested personally to his NPS friend Cammerer. Later in 1931 he had put his growing concern in writing:

> Perhaps you will remember a couple of talks we had (one with Miss James and one with Harlan Kelsey) regarding the "Skyline Drive".... I showed you a map being exhibited at Skyland...on which a line was drawn along the Blue Ridge northward from Thornton Gap and labelled "Future Extension." You said that you had not seen this map and knew nothing about this proposal. Now stakes have been found on that route. Does this mean the "Future Extension" that we feared? Does it mean the extension of the policy of motor skyline vs. foot-path skyline in the National Parks?

Cammerer replied carefully, saying there had been "a reconnaissance survey" northward to Front Royal and would probably be one "from the Spottswood Trail southward," but that such surveys to not mean the NPS "is committed to construction of additional roads."[13]

Harvey Broome, a Knoxville trail leader, reported:

> Benton MacKaye went to Tennessee as an employee of the Tennessee Valley Authority in 1934. When he settled down in Knoxville, he and I resumed an acquaintance of several years and joined our efforts to curb or control needlessly destructive road-building projects. He had among

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[12] Avery, Appalachian Trail Conference, Skyland, 22 June 1935, SNP archives.

[13] MacKaye to Cammerer, 13 June 1931, and Demaray (for Cammerer) to H.C. Anderson (for MacKaye's information), 17 June 1931, National Archives. Harlean James (in 1935 anyway) was executive secretary of Appalachian Trail Conference and editor of the American Planning and Civic Annual.

other things recently written his article "Flankline vs. Skyline," and I had for a number of years battled with Park Service officials over road limitation in the Smokies.[14] Three projects interested us particularly: the proposal for a skyline drive along the Green Mountains in Vermont; the Skyway in the Smokies which was already under construction; and the huge Shenandoah to Smokies Parkway. Each of these, as did [Skyline Drive] in the Shenandoah, affected the Appalachian Trail.

By this date several leaders in the Trail movement believed that the opposition to skyway encroachment upon foot trails in the Eastern mountains should be united. Among these was Harold C. Anderson, one of the founders of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club.... Both Anderson and MacKaye had read, and had been moved by, Marshall's "The Problem of the Wilderness." Thinking thereon, Anderson, in the summer of 1934, addressed a letter to a Southern trail leader urging a federation of hiking clubs to combat skyline road-building in the Trail region. This letter was dated August 9, 1934, and a copy was sent to MacKaye in Knoxville. By an incredible coincidence, on the same day that Benton received the letter from Anderson he received also a telegram from Robert Marshall stating that he would be in Knoxville on August 11. "By gum," said Benton, "we'll put up to him this proposal of Anderson's."

They did--at stolen intervals during an inspection of Smoky with NPS officials.

.... the project agreed upon...was not Anderson's more restricted proposal for protecting Eastern wilderness, it was Bob's broader suggestion, of four years before, for uniting "all friends of the wilderness ideal."....

In October Marshall returned.... The wilderness matters were threshed out during a field trip.... We rode with an old friend of Bob's, Bernard Frank, a confirmed outdoorsman, then Associate Forester of the TVA, and his wife. Dropping out of the motorcar, we climbed a bank beside the road, and there under the jibes of friends who were continually driving by, we, including Frank, revised Benton's statement of principles.... One by one, we took up matters of definition, philosophy, scope of work, name of organization, how we should launch the project, the names of persons.... Much of that roadside parley came back to me when I found in Benton's files, carefully preserved, his original "Draft Copy" with revisions, in pencil, in Bob's handwriting. The revised draft...was signed by the four

[14] The MacKaye article mentioned by Broome was in Appalachia, March 1934.

of us and sent out under date of October 19, 1934, to six other persons, including Anderson, as an invitation to join us as organizers of the Wilderness Society. Four of the six addressees accepted, namely Anderson, Aldo Leopold, Ernest Oberholtzer with whom Marshall was associated in the Quetico-Superior studies, and Robert Sterling Yard.

The two-day organizational meeting--attended by MacKaye, Anderson, Marshall, Yard, and Broome--was held at Washington in January 1935. The opening words of the adopted "Reasons for a Wilderness Society" were: "Primitive America is vanishing with appalling rapidity. Scarcely a month passes in which some highway does not invade an area which since the beginning of time had known only natural modes of travel." Thus was born, eleven months before Shenandoah became a national park, the organization that decades later would be a major factor in winning back for wilderness more than two-fifths of this park. And dreamer MacKaye would be alive, though more than ninety years old, to see this significant if partial victory building toward accomplishment.[15]

Avery's and MacKaye's attitudes collided during the Appalachian Trail Conference at Skyland in June 1935. A published report focused on the two "A-T Head Men":

> Benton MacKaye, the Dreamer: "The Appalachian Trail should be real or absent--genuinely wild or nothing. The use of a mountain highway to reach Skyland is inconsistent with our objective."
>
> Myron H. Avery, the Practical Man: Whole-hearted cooperation with federal and state agencies to ensure replacement of the A-T interfered with by highway developments...and...a liberal distribution of lean-to shelters on government lands.
>
> Both head men have their critics, as is to be expected....
>
> In...Shenandoah National Park...the A-T is now little more than a combination of pedestrian and equestrian path paralleling the Skyline Drive....

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[15] MacKaye was born in 1879; he was very much alive when the Interior Dept. and the President recommended wilderness designation in Shenandoah but died before Congress enacted the legislation.

Let's be charitable and regard the A.T as the main gateway to blue-blazed side paths that really chase away the blues.[16]

Avery--now chairman of the board of managers of the overall Appalachian Trail Conference--may have stacked the deck against the long-range dreamer, though with the best of intentions. Wilbur C. Hall, new chairman of the Virginia conservation commission, was there to argue against MacKaye's belief that "the Skyline Drive should never have been built." Hall's statement, as he summarized it in six words, was: "Most of American travels on wheels." Avery may even have felt he had gone too far; he welcomed suggestions from MacKaye supporters that Skyline Drive might still be pushed off the park's southern section.[17]

Whatever the forces and feelings, this policy toward "Skyline Drives" or "Parkways" was adopted at Skyland:

> THAT, with respect to such highway projects, contiguous to the route of the Appalachian Trail, as have been definitely authorized or are now under construction, the action of the Chairman of the Board of Managers in initiating and directing the procedure which has resulted in the authorization by the Public Works Administration for the rebuilding of the Trail, where interfered with by such highways, is approved....
>
> THAT, with respect to such future projects as may be proposed in the form of an extension of the so-called "Appalachian Parkway" or otherwise, or recreational areas contiguous to the route of the Trail...there should be neither a predetermined general approval nor a predetermined general opposition...by the Conference or by its officers as such, but each project should be considered on its particular merits....
>
> THAT, for such projects as may be authorized, the Conference directs its officers to exert every possible influence to procure, as a part of said project, the construction of a foot trail at a suitable distance from such highways and recreational areas, with the result that such projects would provide a proper dual route or means of access--both for the motorist and for those who wish to travel on foot and in seclusion.[18]

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[16] E.A. Dench, "Hiking & Camping Forum," Nature Magazine, Sept. 1935.

[17] Harrisonburg News-Record, 24 Feb. 1936, reviewing background of an effort to save Swift Run-Rockfish section as "wilderness."

[18] A.T. Conference, Skyland, 22 June 1935, resolution in SNP archives.

But the ATC policy resolution did not set the conflict to rest, either in personal talk or in trail and conservation magazines. PATC's Allen and Schmeckebier, supporting Avery, pointed out that the trail as first put through the park area was far from perfect, that the landscape-architect designed, CCC-graded trail might prove better:

> One striking contrast between the old and the new trails lies in the absence of views along the old and the constant succession of breath-taking panoramas from the new route. Perhaps there is a lesson...in trail location, hitherto unperceived, to be gained from the Shenandoah situation. Possibly, because of its own slogan as a skyline route, builders of the Appalachian Trail have invariably followed the crestline without exploring the possibilities of some route formula presenting other advantages....
>
> Harlan P. Kelsey, a former president of Appalachian Mountain Club, has said that "the National Park Service is building a type of trail which is infinitely superior to the old novice trail.... I have climbed mountains all my life and am firmly convinced that a well-built trail adds extremely to the pleasure of the pedestrian. If a bungled trail is better than a well-built trail, then no trail at all would be still better....
>
> "The plan of [NPS] is to tie in the trails and other development with the Skyline Drive. Trails lead off from it, hence the numerous connections between the drive and trails which permit short trips from cars parked on the highway, fostering an interest in further exploration."[19]

Avery, the practical compromiser--whose deep wishes may have been more like MacKaye's than generally realized--fought for wilderness in his own way. Though he had barely begun to defend the wild skyline between Panorama and Skyland before it was blitzed, he tried again. He drew encouragement for further effort from Ickes's statements showing a desire to save wild areas from "too great recreational development," including these words to CCC workers:

> I am not in favor of building more roads in the National Parks than we have to build.... This is an automobile age, but I do not have a great

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[19] Allen and Schmeckebier (see footnote 6) were, in part, answering an attack, "What Price Skyline Drives?" in Appalachia, Dec. 1935. Remember, there is evidence Allen first suggested Skyline Drive in Shenandoah--and Kelsey was one member of SANPC (that selected Shenandoah for park status) who opposed the Skyline Drive idea in the 1920s.

> deal of patience with people whose idea of enjoying nature is dashing along a hard road at fifty or sixty miles an hour.... I do not happen to favor the scarring of a wonderful mountain side just so that we can say we have a skyline drive. It sounds poetical, but it may be an atrocity.

A related encouraging factor was a plan that Blue Ridge Parkway "is not to be an all skyline location. Sections of mountain top will be interspersed with sections of mountain side, mountain stream valley and, occasionally, the broad river valley." Still another was an NPS pledge "to prevent any road construction in the eastern Great Smokies."[20]

Avery studied Shenandoah's southern section, and in January 1936, when he had worked out what he hoped might be a "practical concrete proposal," he presented it to Ickes in the name of PATC:

> The plan...would leave the southern third of the Park in its natural condition, untraversed by a longitudinal road and as much of a wilderness area as the nature of the region permits. The Skyline Drive, if continued along the crestline...will, for all time, control the development.... While reserving one-third of the Park from road development, this plan will not result in a gap in the proposed Shenandoah-Great Smokies Highway....
>
> Our proposal is...either to leave the ridge at Swift Run Gap, the southern limit of the present road construction, or at Simmons Gap, the ...limit...for which bids have been tendered, and skirt the west slope of the southern section..., crossing it to the eastern side at Black Rock Gap by an existing dirt road and then skirting the eastern slope..., coming onto the ridge crest again at Rockfish Gap....
>
> May we respectfully request that you instruct the National Park Service to make surveys for a location...which will result in leaving the southern third of the Shenandoah National Park a wilderness area?[21]

Ickes was impressed enough to withdraw an advertisement for bids already issued for building the second ten-mile section of Skyline Drive south of Swift Run. He did nothing, however, about two contracts already issued--upon which work

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[20] Harold Ickes, "Wilderness and Skyline Drives," The Living Wilderness, Sept. 1935; Stanley W. Abbott, "Shenandoah-Great Smoky Mountains National Parkway," American Planning and Civic Annual, Washington, D.C., 1935, p. 32; and Avery, "Status of Skyline Drive," PATC Bulletin, Jan. 1936.

[21] Avery to Ickes, 9 Jan. 1936, SNP archives.

was to start as winter loosened its grip. Avery knew there were already two strikes against him, that road plans had advanced dangerously far--"We fear we must admit that had it been advanced earlier, the chances of success might have been greater."[22]

Lassiter and staff studied Avery's proposal and plotted it on a map. Lassiter discussed it with chief landscape architect Vint and others, then wrote:

> .... If the change in location started from Swift Run Gap, and stayed out of the southern section of the Park entirely, connecting with the Blue Ridge Parkway at Rock Fish Gap, I would be for it 100 percent. With Section 3-A [Swift Run Gap-Simmons Gap] and the Parkway section Jarman Gap to Rock Fish Gap under contract...this latter routing is out of the question unless these contracts are held up.
>
> The Skyline Drive is 22 miles in length between Simmons Gap and Jarman Gap, whereas the Avery route is 32 miles.... there are numerous streams to cross at the foot of the mountains which will necessitate bridges varying from 20 to 60 feet in length, as these streams carry a large quantity of water during flood periods.
>
> The wilderness area of the south section is not found on the crest... where grazing land has been used for several generations, but in the coves and outlying ridges. Along the crest is found either open land or a scrub growth of bear oak and mixed shrubs which do not, in my opinion, constitute a very worthwhile exhibit of native forest.... The crest location will form the backbone of a fire detection and control system, for it affords views looking over most of the area, and will be the means of ready access of fire crews when most badly needed....
>
> The Avery route, crossing the Ridge at Black Rock Gap, will create two more entrances to the Park, with the additional annual cost of maintaining entrance stations. This crossing will take the place of the Brown Gap road, recommended by Senator Byrd to give the people of Grottoes a shorter connection with Charlottesville and Richmond....
>
> I urge the continuation of the Blue Ridge Parkway northward from Rock Fish Gap via Waynesboro and the foot of the Blue Ridge, connecting with the Skyline Drive at Swift Run, or the original crest route.[23]

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[22] Chairman of the board of managers, Appalachian Trail Conference, Letter Report No. 3, 15 Jan. 1936, SNP archives.

[23] J.R. Lassiter to Director Cammerer, 18 Feb. 1936, SNP archives.

There is no evidence that a connecting route along the western foot of the Blue Ridge--all the way past the southern section, as endorsed by Lassiter--which would have served Avery's purpose admirably--was ever seriously considered. The contractor preparing to build from Rockfish to Jarman, along the crest, remained "unperturbed" and moved carloads of equipment to Rockfish ready for action. Byrd prodded Ickes and told the press the crest route would win. Rep. Robertson also contacted Ickes, and on March 17 the Secretary's office wrote him, "It has been decided that the rerouting of the road at this time would not be a practical solution." Construction then pushed northward along the skyline from Rockfish and southward from Swift Run Gap.[24]

Yet a part of the Avery proposal was still alive eighteen months later. NPS landscape architect, Harry T. Thompson--calling himself "an ardent advocate of using at least a reasonable amount of valley floor locations in our National Parks"--made a study of "Moormans River Low Line Location vs. High Line Location." He liked Moorman River scenery--"one is impressed with the difference in character of vegetation as contrasted with typical forest in the upper reaches.... On the South Fork...a very lovely waterfall...would provide a point of interest." He felt that variety introduced by the low line might help avoid "museum fatigue" from too much sameness. But the low line might cost $200,000 more, grades as high as 8% might be necessary, and additional land might have to be acquired. Thompson reached his conclusion "only after considerable self-imposed discipline to overcome an inherent desire to find sufficient justification" for the low line. He felt forced to "recommend that the proposal to build a roadway along the two forks of the Moormans River be abandoned."[25]

Avery's "wilderness" proposal thus died. He continued to work with NPS for practical reconciliation of Skyline Drive and trails. MacKaye continued his

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[24] News-Record, 15 Feb. and 1 March 1936, and Acting Secretary of the Interior to Robertson, 11 March 1936, SNP archives.

[25] Thompson, "Report on SNP Skyline Drive Black Rock Gap to Jarman Gap Section D-1," four single-spaced pages, plus topographic map and "profile diagrammatic blueprint," 26 Oct. 1937, SNP archives.

battle against "the roars and scars of skyline drives," persuading the Wilderness Society--grown strong on the course set by reaction to Shenandoah's Skyline Drive--to resolve firmly:

> THAT the "Skyline Drive" as a type of motor road be generally discouraged. THAT mountain roads be restricted to occasional summits and short stretches sufficient to open striking scenic mountain areas to nearby populous centers. THAT the major ranges of our limited primitive mountain country be kept free from main roads running parallel to such ranges upon their sides or crests.[26]

Complex and massive cooperation continued between trail people and park people. Files had already grown thick--and would keep on growing--with the almost endless details. In April 1935, for instance, Avery wrote Lassiter asking if the CCC had set posts for trail signs--if so, he and associates would bring the signs and put them on the posts "so as to encourage people to use the new trail." Further, "we shall be interested to know...the result of our discussion ...of lean-tos in the way of having this project added to the CCC program."[27]

Avery was in even more frequent contact with landscape architect Benson at Shenandoah, both in person and by mail. A typical letter was about place names and distances.

> We have not measured the Trail from Thornton Gap north but I hope to do so this weekend.... The distance to Range View Shelter is, of course, by the old trail, which has already been replaced in part.

A few weeks later he praised Benson for 7.2 miles of new trail:

> I have written Mr. Lassiter about this work, which I consider the best yet....
>
> Incidentally, there will be a long section of trail from Range View to Thornton Gap without any break. You may have noticed that there is a source of water about 100 feet below where the trail crosses the old road in Beahm Gap. This might be a possible shelter site.[28]

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[26] Wilderness Society, minutes of annual meeting, 23 April 1938.

[27] Avery to Lassiter, 10 April 1935. Dr. L.F. Schmeckebier was sign chairman; he made signs personally in the evenings (see Schmeckebier to Benson, 26 Oct. 1935). Letters referred to are in SNP archives unless otherwise noted.

[28] Avery to Benson, 21 May and 3 July 1935.

Many of the contacts had to do with shelters. Architect Peterson favored trying one or two lean-tos and one or two locked cabins "as an experiment," but deputy chief engineer Taylor, while favoring open-type shelters, balked at cabins:

> There has always been a question in my mind about the advisability of building shelters for sleeping purposes where the building would be locked and used only by permit. It seems to me that you may get into a great many difficulties of operation, and I wonder if there is a real need to provide such accommodation inasmuch as there will be various stopping places along the ridge which will later be operated under concession.[29]

Lassiter agreed with Taylor but called attention to NPS approval for PATC to build Range View Shelter, "presumably with money the club received from the award made by the State on the Sexton Shelter" which could not be kept because it was "directly on the watershed and just above the springs which are furnishing water for Camp NP-10." He said it would be impossible to keep anything of value at any shelter not locked.

> It was my idea that, after the Park is fully established and the dwellers in the area removed, the [cabins] would remain unlocked and available for use by anyone using the trail. In this case they would be of a higher type than the ordinary lean-to, but would serve the same purpose. Unless this is done I feel that we would be establishing a policy which would be very embarrassing if some other organization like the Lions Club or Boy Scouts, for example, asked us to provide them with some form of shelter.[30]

Avery and Lassiter were sometimes ironic with each other. Lassiter called PATC the Potomac Appalachian "Trucking" Club, because its members so often used the Skyline Drive about which they complained. Sometimes communication was through intermediaries. For instance, Avery dictated the following for Lassiter to the secretary of another PATC leader:

> .... the Potomac Appalachian "Trucking" Club has invited several members of the Park Service...Bryant, Wirth, Taylor...to see the two-track system, roller coaster, etc., which you have installed in the northern Shenandoah

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[29] Peterson to Benson, 11 May 1935, and Taylor to Lassiter, 3 Aug. 1935.

[30] Lassiter to Taylor, 5 Aug. 1935.

> Park. We are going in over the Highway to Compton Gap and start walking there. One trip will be to Gravelly Springs and the long hike to the "undertaker's establishment" at the CCC Camp. For the purpose of explaining to these honorable gentlemen why conditions are not worse than they are, you are hereby notified to be present and represented by counsel, namely Landscape Architect Benson, if you are so advised, and to put whatever questions seem expedient to you and to take whatever action may shorten the years for which you will remain the guest of the United States at either Atlanta or Luray.[31]

Lassiter answered through the intermediary, agreeing to be present. He referred to "the subtle humor of that champion hitch-hiker, Myron Avery....

> It is noted that the "Truckers" are up to their old tricks, and planning a longer bus ride. From your October Bulletin I learned that you were going to hike from Chester Gap but assume that someone found out that you could drive to Compton Gap...hence the change.[32]

Out in the park as well as in Washington and by correspondence, Avery kept urging shelters. There had been a staff conference on the subject at NPS Washington, with action delayed until the park became official. Immediately after the land was accepted by Ickes, Avery wrote Cammerer and applied for "a permit to operate the existing shelters and others built, for such periods as consistent with your regulations." He realized there could not be exclusive use by one organization and said PATC "had arranged...to care for all hikers...in addition to Club members," having already accommodated "during the past year, some 390 people who were not members." At that time the Meadow Spring log-cabin may have been the only locked shelter in the park, as Sexton had been closed "for over a year," but "during the current ECW period there is to be built along the A.T. between Hawksbill and Naked Top Mountains, a closed shelter...Rock Springs...regarded as taking the place of Sexton," and two similar shelters, Pocosin "and one on Compton Mountain."[33]

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[31] A.H. Jackman to Lassiter, 31 Oct. 1935. Atlanta had a federal penitentiary.

[32] Lassiter to Jackman (for Avery), 2 Nov. 1935.

[33] Avery to Cammerer, 27 Dec. 1935.

Asked for recommendations, Lassiter repeated his statement about the near-certainty of theft if equipment or provisions were left in unlocked shelters. Further:

> If the shelters are equipped and maintained in the same manner as the Trail Club now operates them, they will be in direct competition with the facilities to be provided by the operator [concessioner].
>
> Experience will have to determine the length of time one visitor or group of visitors will be permitted to remain in a shelter. If they are completely equipped in a comfortable manner, it may increase the tendency of many to use them for a week or more, whereas if the bare shelter is provided, this will be overcome to some extent....
>
> It is suggested that the Trail Club be given a temporary permit to continue to operate the shelters until our personnel is appointed and becomes an efficient organization, and has time to study the problem.[34]

Such a permit was sent to Avery by Cammerer--fee $1, no "commitment beyond the current year." Thus the problem was temporarily dodged, and ironic dueling broke out again.

Marion Park, working closely with Avery, wrote Lassiter:

> I have been officially appointed by the Excursions Committee of the "Potomac Appalachian Trucking Club" to extend an invitation to you to join us in our Moonlight Hike on August 1st and 2nd, when we will actually walk from Skyland to Thornton Gap, having a midnight supper en route and observing the sunrise from Marys Rock.

Lassiter replied:

> .... it would be better if I declined this invitation, as I fear the effect of subjecting myself to such a long stretch of moonlight. Even the ancient Romans realized the powerful forces of the moon and their effect on man and gave to that glowing orb the name "luna." From this word we derive an expression which has been aptly applied to certain members of "Trucking Clubs" and allied associations.
>
> I feel that similar excursions in the past have already had their effect on members of your Club, in that they extend to me an invitation, whereas it would take a direct order for me to walk ten miles at night.[35]

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[34] Supt. Lassiter to Director Cammerer, 1 Feb. 1936.

[35] Park to Lassiter, 6 July, and Lassiter to Park, 8 July 1936.

Lassiter rejected Avery's guide intended for distribution by NPS:

> It seems to me that this description...goes into entirely too much detail and is so complicated as to frighten off rather than attract visitors to the trail system. The use of mileage distances to hundredths... may be all right for the occasional through hiker who is used to following a trail by such directions, but will be of no use to the casual hiker who enters the trail at 15.74 miles and hikes to 19.53 miles.
>
> I think what we are after is something to induce the motorist to park his car..., take a short hike from one to four miles on a trail, and either return to his car or have someone...drive his car on to the next junction point.... This could probably be accomplished by simple instructions... followed by a description of things to be seen along and from the trail, such as the trees, flowers, rocks, streams, etc., together with the outstanding distant views.[36]

Early the next year, Avery--advised by NPS Washington--made formal application direct to Lassiter for continuance of the PATC shelter operations permit, for a year or longer, for Range View, Meadow Spring, Rock Springs, Doyle River "and such others as might be built...and which you would wish us to equip." He said equipment for a shelter "runs between $150 and $200," including table, benches, stove, stools, register stand, 4 double mattresses, 4 single mattresses, 10 blankets, one cot, first aid kit, snakebite outfit, lanterns, axe, spade, incinerator, garbage pails, dishes, knives, forks, spoons (a dozen each), coffee pot, fry pans, saucepans, buckets, and so on and on to tea towels and salt shakers. During 1936, he said, Range View had served 101 club members and 175 nonmembers; Meadow Spring had served 54 and 78; Rock Springs (put into use October 18), 21 members and 24 nonmembers. Members were not charged for use of the shelters (costs were considered included in club dues); the charge for nonmembers was a mere token, so small that 333 nonmembers using the three cabins in the park (plus one PATC cabin not in the park) paid in 1936 a total of only $73.75.[37]

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[36] Lassiter to Director Cammerer, 24 July 1936.

[37] Avery to Lassiter, 30 Jan. 1937, and Kathryn Fulkerson, general sec'y of PATC, to Avery, 19 Feb. 1937.

Uncertain what to do about Avery's application, Lassiter waited six weeks, then asked the Director for instructions:

> .... There is, in my opinion, a very small difference in the operation of these shelters and the issuance of a permit to some small group...for the erection and maintenance of a summer home in the park.... it is recognized that the allotment of the shelters to individuals or groups...is made in rotation, but it is entirely possible for sufficient requests for the use of the shelters to come in at one time from members...who know the procedure so that the accommodations are booked for the entire season.... This number of people [nearly 500 last year, probably double that number this year], if they stopped at one of the cabin camps, would probably make the difference between failure and success, and it is entirely possible that the concessionaire would have sufficient grounds to object to such an amount of business being conducted in the park....
>
> I feel that the type of shelter provided...should be the open unlocked shelter, equipped with bunks and fireplace or stove. The camper should provide his own bedding, cooking utensils, etc. There would be no allotting of shelters, but let the first come have the use of them.[38]

Meanwhile, Avery had been persuading NPS Washington executives, reviewing the history of shelters in the park area, the cost of furnishing them, the voluntary inspection system with a committee visiting each periodically to fix trouble, clean up, bring equipment and supplies up to standard. He said the club was interested in "maximum efficiency" of operation--by the club under the requested "five-year permit," by the Virginia Sky-Line Co., Inc., or by park officials, whatever group is "in the best position to handle the matter." He went into the functions of the closed cabins and reasons for locking them:

> 1. Stocked as they are, they relieve hikers of bringing anything except food and personal clothing...so they can be used by many who do not own complete equipment...also by family groups or other groups with infirm participants unable to carry....
>
> 2. With reservations, a person is assured of accommodation....
>
> 3. They are increasingly used in winter.... people can definitely plan for real shelter regardless of weather....

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[38] Lassiter to Cammerer, 17 March 1937.

4. The system now in effect also assures users of a clean camp, adequate fuel, lighting, blankets, etc....so they can have maximum time for hiking.... If not locked...the structures would be frequently in a deplorable and even filthy condition. This is unfortunately the experience of using the lean-tos.[39]

The Director too delayed decision. During the impasse Avery wrote him praising both site and construction of the Doyle River cabin, calling it "a very considerable improvement upon the existing structures," crediting Benson, the CCC and the NPS, not excluding Lassiter. He also "stung" Lassiter again:

It has been such a long time since your friends in the Trail Club have been favored with the Superintendent's turn of wit and humor that I was a bit unprepared for its manifestation this morning...in having you refer the reporter from the Star to us on questions of what should be carried by people hiking the trails.... I should have announced...your excessive modesty and told Miss Cummings that the Superintendent would be best able to list for her what people should bring, for he would necessarily have given such problems considerable thought in connection with the proposal to remove all of the equipment from the closed shelters.

Lassiter answered:

Mrs. Cummings had particular reference to campers in the true sense.... Feeling that the Trail Club must have had considerable experience along this line in their early days, I thought that you would be much better qualified...for I am sure that many of your members can still recall their experiences before the period of hiking de luxe.

Avery followed up:

I am not sure whether the stains on your letter...can be rust from my creaking and aged joints, or whether the rust dropped from [your] pen.

After listening to the tale of woe from the fair newspaper reporter, I am afraid that we are going to have to recede from our former adamant attitude and rescue both you and the lady. I would venture to suggest, however, that, in the future, in self-defense the Superintendent exercise more of the charm of his personality with these ladies of the Press, or

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[39] Avery memo for files, 18 Feb. 1937--of discussion with associate director A.E. Demaray and assistant to the director Ben Thompson.

> he may have the pleasure of reading in their columns such comments as Mrs. Cummings made to the effect that she didn't believe that the Superintendent knew much about hiking, camping, or shelters, or ever had pitched a tent, but she did think that he knew an awful lot about concrete mixers, only she wasn't writing about concrete mixers.[40]

Avery's skillful use of the press showed in the illustrated article that resulted, based on his ideas--"Trail Club Shelters Inviting to Washington Hikers." It included his definition of hiking, his information about the locked cabins in the park, and his declaration that "there are...District residents who never spend a weekend in the city all year long. You find them in the hills, whatever the season, snoozing in down sleeping bags...or cooking bacon in shelters when snow lays on the trails." And his conclusion that "a hiking craze is sweeping the country."[41]

The assistant secretary of the Interior, brought into the matter by Cammerer, cut across the impasse by approving a permit for PATC to operate the closed cabins--for a period of two years. The reservations procedure would be the same as before; the charge would be 25¢ per night per nonmember accompanied by a PATC member, 50¢ per night per nonmember not accompanied by a member, and no charge for members (who paid $3 a year dues).[42]

Avery now focused his versatile and persistent concern on open shelters. PATC wanted more of them, as they served a different kind of hiking that the club considered equally desirable. But it would be necessary to block car access to the vicinity of <u>all</u> shelters. He sent Lassiter a recent statement by a "genuine" hiker:

> We were no sooner settled at Lewis Spring Leanto than a motorist, wife and daughter came down off the Drive, stating that they had driven up from Charlottesville intending to camp the weekend in the Leanto. As I get it this is the only Leanto to date in the Park, where to me everything has been done for the motorist and little or nothing for the hiker.

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[40] Avery to Cammerer, 29 April 1937; Avery to Lassiter, 6 May and 15 May, 1937; and Lassiter to Avery, 10 May 1937.

[41] Washington <u>Star</u>, 3 July 1937.

[42] Demaray to Secretary, 17 May 1937, signed approved by T.A. Walters, first assistant secretary, 21 May 1937.

Two such groups would fill up the leanto, and 4 hikers coming in later would be unable to sleep there. He and his family went off when he found we were hikers, to the new trailer camp on Black Rock, I believe. A native we met said this Shelter (hog-pen, he called it) is often filled by motorists. What could the Supt. of the Park do about this matter?[43]

Lassiter agreed with Avery that motorists should not crowd hikers from trail shelters, but his agreement proved hard to enforce.

In 1938, with Lassiter's encouragement as he found himself agreeing with Avery more often, the Park Service and the Forest Service approved a formal agreement to promote the "Appalachian Trailway" as a distinct type of recreational area devoted particularly to hiking and camping. Avery, as chairman of the Appalachian Trail Conference, said, "this constitutes the first co-ordinated Federal policy to be adopted in support of the trail project, and apart from insuring protection of the trail now located in Federally owned lands, points the way toward future preservation of the entire trail route." The Interior Department's news release said the two-thousand-mile-long trail had been completed "after many years of effort by the eighty outdoor organizations affiliated with the...Conference" and that:

> The agreement provides for maintenance of a zone at least two miles wide along portions of the trail passing through national parks and national forests except where it descends into main valleys, within which zone there will be no new paralleling routes for the passage of motorized transportation or other incompatible developments. Wherever desirable, those portions of the through trail which are now located within one mile of paralleling motor roads will be relocated as funds permit.
>
> Both the [USFS] and NPS already have made substantial progress toward the ultimate objective of a complete chain of campsites and shelter facilities, located not more than a comfortable day's hike apart.[44]

All 96 miles of the new route of Appalachian Trail through the park were now complete. Both Lassiter and Avery were proud; I recall hearing Lassiter

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[43] Avery to Lassiter, 23 Sept. 1937, with lean-to letter by Sterling Edwards.

[44] Interior Dept. news release, 30 Oct. 1938, with copy of agreement, SNP archive.

say he considered it the most valuable project completed by the CCC under his supervision. It was not largely a bridle path as some PATC people had once feared it might be, and it had clung to much of the skyline, including the highest peaks, despite the onslaught of Skyline Drive. Though little of it was far from the motor route, the rugged topography and the returning forest protected much of it from the "roars and scars." More and more hikers were enjoying it.

Avery called Lassiter's attention to the fact that the lean-to chain in Smoky--eight shelters--was now approved for the entire trail route in that park. He came to Luray to discuss Shenandoah shelter planning. Lean-tos began to appear on Shenandoah's master plan and in applications signed by Lassiter for CCC projects. When, the next April, Ickes ordered the Shenandoah and Smoky superintendents to change jobs, Avery wrote Lassiter that he hoped all needed shelters would be added by "the present administration....

> Schairer and I expect to come to Luray within the next two or three weeks and I trust that you will be there at that time, for we would like to see you before your transfer to the firing line.
>
> We can't say very much except that your friends in the "Trucking Club" will miss you and that we are mighty sorry that you are going.[45]

In spite of, maybe partly even because of, disagreements, a friendship had grown between Lassiter and Avery. Mrs. Lassiter said they were sarcastic with each other because they liked each other.[46]

In July a new permit for PATC operation of locked shelters was signed by Lassiter himself. And then--not Lassiter, after all, but Avery was transferred. He would be stationed in New York. "So," he told his Shenandoah friends, "my Blue Ridge days will soon be a thing of the past." But this could hardly be.[47]

PATC kept operating the five closed cabins. In 1940 they were used by

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[45] Avery to Lassiter, 5 Dec. 1938 and 14 April 1939. See also Lassiter's monthly narrative reports, May and Aug. 1938 among others, National Archives.

[46] Mrs. J.R. Lassiter, personal interview, 10 Nov. 1976, tape in my files.

[47] Permit, 17 July 1939, and Avery to Benson, 10 April 1940.

1665 persons, only 390 of them club members. An NPS audit in the fall of 1941 showed that the cabin concession had taken in an average of $743.30 a year from 1938 through 1940 and that PATC expense of operating the cabins had averaged $616.40, so $126.90 could be called the average yearly compensation to the club for its investment in equipment and for its substantial volunteer labor and constant vigilance. That fall before Pearl Harbor, Myron Avery, though in New York and no longer president of PATC, was compiling a history of the Shenandoah shelters, and Benson was helping him. In less than three years the lean-to shelters here had leaped from one to seventeen, putting Shenandoah far ahead of Smoky in this respect.[48]

PATC and the park were in continuing contact through many individuals on many subjects. There was skiing. An NPS Washington news release, issued the very day of Pearl Harbor, included far down the list a mention of Shenandoah where skiing "is a week-end to week-end proposition...depending on the weather." The NPS chief of information soon asked the superintendent to telegraph snow reports--"We do not believe it wise to give much publicity to skiing at Shenandoah but we would like to be able to answer telephone requests." A 1942 directory of skiing locations included:

> PINNACLES - Area of approximately 10 acres in Shenandoah National Park on the east side of Sky Line Drive opposite the picnic grounds.... Snow reports available at National Parks Observer, Department of Interior.... Slopes mainly north and northeast, width 100 yards, length 900 feet, descent 200 feet, altitude 3,350 feet, minimum snow 5 inches.[49]

Shenandoah skiing had started in 1936 when Harold H. Leich of PATC sparked interest and soon reported to the PATC council that the CCC was removing loose

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[48] Shelters chm. A.E. Peterson to Lassiter, 12 March 1941; NPS operators div. memo, 18 Nov. 1941; and Benson to Avery, 18 Nov. 1941, reviewing construction: closed cabins, Rock Springs 1936, Doyle River and Pocosin 1937, and Meadow Spring (replacing old log cabin) 1939; lean-tos, Lewis Spring 1936; Big Run, Rip Rap, Old Rag, Hightop and Pass Mtn., 1939; Hawksbill Gap, Bearfence, Shaver Hollow, South River, Pinefield and Big Flat, 1940; Gravel Springs, Indian Run, Black Rock, Sawmill Run and Elkwallow, 1941. Range View Cabin was designed by Otis H. Gates, PATC shelters chm., and completed for PATC under his supervision in 1933, according to Shelters booklet, Feb. 1946.

rocks and mowing high weeds and briers to "permit the laying out of a downhill or slalom ski course." The Ski Club of Washington was founded the same year. Leich later reported a "good excursion" to Pinnacles,

> a bowl-shaped pasture heavily covered with snow.... PATC skiers also climbed Hawksbill and Stony Man several times during those years. The gentle grade...precluded any dare-devil descent, but the winter scenery proved rewarding.... Under proper snow conditions the...Park does offer one superb descent--a drop of 2000 feet in about 3 miles on the old Skyland Road, from 3500 feet at Skyland...to 1500 feet on the valley floor.[50]

Park personnel stressed the "infrequent occurrence" of suitable snow--"the period from late October to April may produce as many as ten days of skiing." Focus was on Pinnacles, but there were "many open areas...with varying slopes" and "graded trails with their standard four-foot width because of the variety of scenic beauty which they offer."[51]

After the war the skiers asked the park to "rehabilitate Pinnacles ski slope including 'slalom glade.'" This glade had been created by the CCC years before:

> No large trees were cut, but the underbrush and rocks were cleared away so that a skier could make his own trail down through the timber, winding among the oaks and young pines. A short trail with two or three good turns was cut, down the steepest pitch....
>
> But there had been amazing growth on open spaces. Judicious trimming and cutting should therefore be done to keep a number of interconnecting trails open through the pines. Thus in time the open slope will become a glade of protected, winding ski runs, shaded from the hot sun through most of the day and sheltered from the wind. The beauty of such a spot after a frost storm would match the snow-laden evergreens of Yosemite.[52]

The under-staffed park could not fully oblige but mowed briers and removed fallen timber. The Pinnacles slope was maintained into the 1950s, but fitting weather and skiers seldom arrived together, and forest kept crowding in.[53]

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[50] Leich to PATC council, 17 Nov. 1936, and "Ski Tracks in the Shenandoah National Park," PATC Bulletin, Jan. 1949.

[51] Ranger W. Drew Chick, article draft, with Supt. to Regional Director, 12 Aug. 1943.

[52] Supt. to Leich, 29 Oct. 1946, and Leich ms. for PATC Bulletin, 1949.

[53] Supt. to Pat Hamilton, 4 Dec. 1952, and personal observations.

Appalachian Trail was in ascendancy over Skyline Drive during the war. Motoring for pleasure was virtually dead, but hiking for pleasure continued, though a bit reduced. PATC reported to its members:

> With its chain of lean-tos, [the park] section of the Trail offers unusual possibilities. Those who know the area will be indeed relieved to know that the trail system has been thoroughly renovated and put in better order to struggle against the obliteration which is so easily attained in this region.[54]

despite shortages of gasoline and of labor,
The superintendent emphasized trail work,/and PATC cheered:

> .... There are many groups making three to ten day trips, utilizing the lean-tos. Apparently the curtailment of normal vacations and normal living has resulted in a greater urge to seek the mountains. After all, the conception of The Appalachian Trail was immediately after the last war, and to meet a greatly felt need; and we feel that if it can be done we should see it is maintained, not only for use now, but so it will be available when the war is over and the men returning.[55]

The Bulletin of October 1943 reported:

> .... Shenandoah National Park has become a somewhat distant land.... While...the Skyline Drive is a deserted black ribbon winding through ingrowing trees which have hidden much of its former rawness and intrusion, there are still activities of interest.... hikers still visit the Park....
>
> [Supt.] Freeland, who was trained in the trail and shelter system of Yosemite...has very much the viewpoint of the user of trails.[56]

The club continued to care for the closed cabins for all who could use them.

Lassiter had been transferred after Pearl Harbor and would not return, but in 1945, Myron Avery--who had exercised his legal talents as a Navy captain during the war--returned to Shenandoah and found it changed, even the graded trails masked by vegetation, moss-grown--"matured....

The war...has brought a real gain to the Park Service trail systems

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[54] Avery to Supt. Freeland, 5 Dec. 1942, with item written for Bulletin.

[55] Freeland to Jean Stephenson, ATC editor, 17 April 1943, and Stephenson to Freeland, 26 April 1943.

[56] PATC Bulletin, Oct. 1943.

regulations--providing that nonmembers must reserve 60 days in advance while members may reserve 21 days in advance--had been discussed with the superintendent and agreed upon. It explained again its long-performed and generally appreciated services in furnishing, inspecting, cleaning and fixing.

> Furthermore, the depleted manpower resources of the Park Service are supplemented by the Club's ability and willingness to perform major repairs as evidenced by...Range View, replaced wood floor, built new stone floor on porch, projected asbestos shingling of roof; Pocosin, wood shingles removed and replaced by asbestos; Doyle River, wood shingles replaced by asbestos.... PATC's bona-fide offer to provide labor to reconstruct Meadow Spring Shelter [destroyed by fire] if NPS will place material at or near the site....
>
> In view of the foregoing, it did not seem unreasonable or inconsistent with Park policy to establish the regulations cited above.

Demaray reviewed the situation with the regional director and superintendent--including even the difference in rates charged--now 25¢ per member per night, 50¢ per nonmember per night--and concluded that, "in view of the maintenance and upkeep of the cabins...by club members" the regulations, as adopted, were not unreasonable. So the non-discrimination requirement was "waived during the lifetime of the permit."[59]

In 1949 the possible rebuilding of Meadow Spring cabin was discussed again, stimulated by an offer by the school outing club that had been using the building when it burned. The old NPS preference for open or unlocked shelters re-emerged, and some NPS people expressed a wish for a trailside "camp site" with an open shelter, outdoor fireplaces, toilets, and a tent area "perhaps with tent frames." But no action was taken.[60]

Avery was active in trail affairs again, though not in positions of direct responsibility, more as an inspirational speaker, historian and senior statesman.

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[59] Demaray to Helen Devine, shelter reservations chm., 7 April 1948; Victor A. Howard, first v.p., PATC, to Demaray, 18 June 1948; Demaray to regional director, 25 Aug. 1948; and regional director to PATC, 2 Sept. 1948. Meadow Spring Shelter had burned on Thanksgiving day 1946; cause of the fire remained a mystery; a party from a Baltimore preparatory school, using the shelter at the time, had gone hiking to White Oak Canyon and the smoke was seen from Hogback.

[60] Notes in file 902-02.3, April 1949, SNP archives.

Benton MacKaye was involving himself in Shenandoah again--as Wilderness Society president rather than as the Appalachian Trail dreamer. An invisible cycle, I feel, was completing itself--and it closed with a letter to Shenandoah from a lasting pillar of PATC about the long, long trail's "practical man":

> I wanted to tell you our sad news, that Captain Avery came to the end of his Trail travels last Saturday. It was a great shock to us.... His passing leaves a void that can never be filled. But it is a consolation to know that he has seen most of his projects through the crucial years and things like the Appalachian Trail are so well established that they will stand and can go on.[61]

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[61] Jean Stephenson to Supt. Edwards, 29 July 1952.

## Protecting "Nature's Return"

Park rangers came on duty at Shenandoah in March 1936. R. Taylor Hoskins, first chief ranger (decades later, superintendent), was sworn in March 1, maybe an hour after I entered on duty in the office, and we were the beginning of the regular NPS staff inaugurating use of funds appropriated by Congress specifically for this new park. Personnel already here--including J.R. Lassiter, engineer in charge, soon to be superintendent, and T.T. Smith, chief clerk--were being paid by ECW (Emergency Conservation Work), the project-supervising arm of the CCC. Both Hoskins and the second ranger, Wallace T. Stephens, transferred from what is now Colonial National Historical Park, Virginia, where Lassiter had also worked. They were immediately engulfed in "inaugurating protection, much needed"--as Lassiter put it.[1]

The primary problem was people. The CCC numbered 1200, not all of them liking discipline. There were contractors and concessioners with assorted employees and work projects of depression agencies other than CCC. Shenandoah would also have that year 694,098 visitors, few of them used to rules governing national parks, so unusual in the East. But most of the difficulties would be with mountain folk, two thousand of whom still lived inside the boundaries, despite a continuing decline during the park's twelve-year-long genesis.

Hoskins told me he worked "all the time" until Thanksgiving that year, no days off, not even Sundays. Stephens and three other rangers put in long hours too. Lassiter reported arrests in March for stealing lumber and chestnut rails, also investigation of an incendiary fire. In April he went out with the rangers "in connection with...residents...who do not appreciate the fact that they are living within...a National Park subject to rules." Stephens was soon

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[1] Lassiter's monthly narrative reports to the Director, which began in Jan. 1936, each ten or more pages long, National Archives, are the source throughout this chapter wherever Lassiter is credited and no other source cited. The quote here is from the March 1936 report.

stationed at Elkton to protect southern regions. One resident, already under suspended sentence for moonshining, was arrested for stealing at Skyland and was imprisoned. Of six fires in April, burning approximately 400 acres, three were incendiary. May had five incendiary fires. Traffic did not control itself, and for a time, I remember, the rangers patrolled Skyline Drive on motorcycles. Mountain children were found selling paper flowers and begging. As fall advanced the main problems were hunters and fires--and the wish, often but not always honored, of some mountain families to move into houses vacated by others. In the winter the rangers tried to catch night hunters--by listening for dogs that had treed raccoons or other animals, then hurrying to the site and waiting for the human hunters to appear. Many of the people suffered from lack of food and clothing, and the rangers tried to help.

Hoskins remembered:

> A Corbin and a Nicholson had been sent to the feeble-minded colony at Lynchburg for setting fires. When they were released I met the train and talked with them about the park and their own futures. We had no more trouble with those two. But the mountain people had a different code, a different relationship. "Sticking out fires," as they called it, wasn't such a crime. They did it to kill snakes and chiggers or make more berries....
>
> Moonshiners sometimes tried to burn each other out, and their fires spread. And we ran into several real pyromaniacs. Two girls living down near Camp Hoover saw two teenage boys sticking out a fire. One, a Buracker boy confessed. It was a sad case, an only child living with his mother and aged grandfather, but we had to take him in. We got the other one too, a Meadows boy whose father washed dishes at Skyland. They were tried in state court--the park had only concurrent jurisdiction then--and sent to reform school. When Meadows came back he set more fires and was convicted again. He used hollow chestnut trees; they act like chimneys without dampers, the fires roaring up and dropping sparks for hundreds of feet. Later he reformed and wanted a job with us....
>
> Big Meadows was owned by the Longs--which reminds me of a family I helped evict, the only forcible eviction after the park took over. The Longs had told this Walker Jenkins, their tenant out toward Tanners Ridge,

he could remain as long as he lived. Jenkins wouldn't admit the park made any difference. The state served eviction papers, but he still wouldn't leave. We rangers were asked to help, and we accompanied the Page County sheriff and deputy. Officers go in at night, you know, so as to find everyone home. It was 4 a.m. when we got there, but the lamp in that cabin was lit. We didn't know whether they'd been warned, but everybody was in bed claiming they were sick. Next time we brought a CCC doctor. He examined Mrs. Jenkins first and pronounced her well, through pregnant. She wouldn't walk, so we picked her up bodily. She started praying, but before we got her out of the house and into the car she'd called us all kinds of names. Then we got Walker out--which left five or six large girls who fought like cats. But we had plenty of help. We moved the furniture out, and the CCC crew started tearing the house down. A reporter arrived about then, and the story got quite a spread.

But most of our contacts...were friendly. We had to go out and collect the occupancy permits issued by the state and execute new ones. That involved a lot of walking...and we got better acquainted with the whole park than we might have otherwise. We took pictures of each family. Some were reluctant about that at first, but soon they were sending messages for us to hurry...so they could get their pictures.

On the whole they were nice people. One thing--if you're invited to eat you'd better do it even if they're destitute, even if you have to force the food down. Another thing--word of mouth means more to them than a written document.... if you go back on your word, the news spreads like wildfire, and you're not likely to be believed again.... They liked to ride with us. Give them a ride, and you'll find out more in a few minutes than if you seek them out otherwise and ask questions all day. One new ranger stopped and asked a mountain man if he wanted to ride, and the man said, "I don't care if I do," which was a form of acceptance. But the ranger said, "If you don't care, you can go ahead and walk." He left the man standing on the road. That ranger wasn't very useful with mountain people after that.

.... [The mountain folk] weren't allowed to turn any new sod or cut green trees. Hunting was prohibited and no timber or tanbark could be sold. You might say their way of living was suspended. On the other hand, a lot of them got WPA work or other employment related to the park. Mountain men worked on the Skyline Drive as far back as 1931, and some of those same men still work for the park or the concessioner. It was a question

of pulling loose from outdated ways and adapting to the new.

> Quite a few mountain girls married CCC boys or Marines from Camp Hoover. One of the first things the girls would ask me was, "Are you married?" When I told them I was, they'd say, "If you git a single ranger, we'd like right well to meet him." When Cliff Harriman came, we drove down to Old Rag School. Even the very young girls gathered around the pickup when I said, "Here's a single ranger." One named Esther examined him closely through the window, then said, "Ain't he purrrty!"

Hoskins remembered a mountain music group often found at Franklin Cliffs--

> two Caves, the Woodward boys--they played to gather people, then offered moonshine for sale behind those rocks there. They had homemade paper flowers for sale in the open--probably the school teacher taught how to make them. I helped some of those musician-moonshiners move out of the park about 1938.

He remembered a vacated mountain home across the hollow from Lee Highway west of Panorama. Such houses might be re-occupied or wrecked illegally for the lumber. But this one was in plain sight; park personnel, including himself, passed daily. The house seemed to stay vacant and intact. Only later did a ranger go over there and find nothing but a false front propped up by poles cut from the forest. Everything else was long gone.[2]

Hoskins came to know the mountain people, many of them by their first names. He knew their kinships, who married whom, names and ages of children. He knew the abilities and shortcomings of many individuals and their hopes for the future. He was their friend. But he was also a tough park ranger whose underlying responsibility in this national park of novel genesis was to encourage "nature's return." He had to train other rangers, some of whom started with little knowledge of eastern mountains. One found a mountain man acting strangely and asked, "What are you doing?" The man said, "Hunting chinquapins." The ranger, thinking of something like chipmunks, demanded, "Then where's your gun?"

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[2] Hoskins, personal interview, 5 Nov. 1969, tape in SNP archives. This is the source to be assumed wherever in this chapter Hoskins is credited or quoted without other explanation.

Another ranger--Iassiter reported in November 1937--was "found guilty in Trial Justice court of Greene County for wounding a dog belonging to Jesse Shiflett and fined $25." An NPS Washington attorney appealed the case, and it was set for trial in Greene Circuit Court. This was while legal jurisdiction was in process of transfer. The ranger, as I recall, was ultimately vindicated, but he had violated the mountain code in which a man's dog was as sacred as a human member of the family. This ranger soon transferred away.

The efforts to cope with the people problem showed in newspapers:

> Park rangers a few days ago cut up two tubs containing ten gallons of mash at the upper end of Ida Hollow. The rangers are said to be conducting a vigorous campaign in the extermination of moonshine operations. One of the rangers a few days ago informed one of the citizens...that there is a fine of $80 for discharging a gun on the Federal lands.[3]

> Mervie Bradley...was brought here yesterday on a charge of stealing lumber from a house the government is dismantling.... Government agents have said in no uncertain terms that trespassing on the park area will not be tolerated and that any property will be protected.

This item went on to say that park residents were moving out and the government was tearing down the buildings and saving what lumber might be useful.[4]

The main exodus of residents--with rangers and CCC helping--was to "homesteads" prepared by the government. It continued through March 1938--after which, Lassiter reported, only about twenty families remained in the park. With this greatest obstacle to "nature's return" thus reduced to manageable size, other protection problems could be tackled more vigorously. There were now nine rangers--three-quarters of the NPS staff.[5]

Legal jurisdiction had been an issue ever since the park movement started. Virginians tended to dislike transferring to the "Union" any rights of the

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[3] Page News & Courier, 24 Sept. 1937. I helped Hoskins and Stephens to raid one moonshine still.

[4] Harrisonburg Daily News-Record, undated clipping, scrapbook, SNP archives.

[5] Photo of staff, Baltimore Sun, 18 April 1938, shows an even dozen. Re-

"Commonwealth." Many citizens cared--as shown in earlier chapters--whether state or federal law, state or federal courts, would regulate their doings. Racial friction was among the troubles forecast. ~~Yet the state administration.~~ Yet the state administration had been so eager for a park in the category with Yellowstone that it chose to ignore opposition. It persuaded the General Assembly to pass the "National Park Act" that, among other provisions, authorized exclusive jurisdiction in due course by Uncle Sam--except that Virginia would keep Lee Highway and Spotswood Trail across the park and hold the right to serve civil or criminal process inside the park on cases occurring outside, also the right to tax gasoline and oil sales in the park and to tax persons, corporations, franchises and properties, and the right of persons to vote in the counties in which they would have been living had the land not gone to federal ownership.[6]

This pending loss of jurisdiction kept rankling, most sharply in state fish and game and county law enforcement officers, and the state began shunning such commitments. For instance:

> WASHINGTON, Nov. 7 1935 (AP) - Virginia informed the Federal government today that it insisted upon security of state criminal jurisdiction before conveying Shenandoah-Great Smoky parkway rights of way....
>
> Attorney General A.P. Staples in a conference with Federal authorities described the state's attitude as one of insisting that such security... be specifically provided before deeds for the Virginia sections of the proposed 500-mile parkway are presented to the Federal government....
>
> Jurisdictional difficulties of the Colonial National Monument were said to be identical with those of the parkway. In both cases the federal-state jurisdiction would be concurrent. Unlike these two projects a separate act of the legislature cedes exclusive jurisdiction...to the Federal government for the Shenandoah National Park.[7]

The state continued to feel obligated to honor its Shenandoah commitment, and the call/came in 1937 to do so. Gov. Peery wrote Rep. Robertson (of the park's

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[6] "National Park Act," approved 22 March 1928 (Acts of 1928, p. 983).

[7] News-Record, 8 Nov. 1935.

congressional district) that the state's attorney general had examined the "bill which was submitted to you by the Assistant Solicitor of the Interior Department with reference to jurisdiction over Shenandoah National Park, and he finds no objection to the bill."[8]

In August, by passing this bill, Congress directed the Interior Secretary to notify Virginia that the United States assumed the promised police jurisdiction, Shenandoah park to be part of the U.S. judicial district for western Virginia, the U.S. district court to judge all offenses committed within the park. This act provided for appointment--on recommendation of the Secretary--of a U.S. commissioner to handle park cases and impose penalties. It reserved to Virginia the rights specified in the state's 1928 law. It said that all fugitives taking refuge in the park would be subject to the same laws as refugees from justice found elsewhere in Virginia, also that hunting was prohibited and that all items used in killing, trapping, etc. may be confiscated as part of the penalty, further that fishing would be only by hook and line under Interior rules.[9]

There were months when jurisdiction was uncertain, but in January 1938 the Virginia attorney general clarified the matter in a long letter to the Governor, allowing full force to a December 1937 letter from Acting Secretary West, giving notice that the United States was taking over:

> It is my opinion that, under the provisions of the Virginia statute ...the jurisdiction which was ceded by said statute...became effective on the 3rd day of December, 1937, upon receipt of the said letter...by you.[10]

Virginians remained dissatisfied, and in April 1940 the General Assembly passed a bill to recover concurrent jurisdiction of Virginia courts with U.S.

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[8] George C. Peery to A. Willis Robertson, 14 May 1937, Virginia State Library.

[9] Public Law 322, 75th Cong., chap. 703 (50 Stat. 700), approved 19 Aug. 1937. John Ise, Our National Park Policy (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1961), p. 263, equated approval with U.S. assumption of jurisdiction, but in fact more formalities were necessary. Ise complained: "Here, as often in national park administration, the federal government assumes the cost of development and administration and the state gets the tax revenues--a very profitable business for the state. The tax provisions were quite too generous to the state."

[10] A.P. Staples to Gov. Peery, 6 Jan. 1938, State Library.

courts in all civil cases arising in the park and to allow state officers the right to enforce the resulting judgments of state courts on people inside the park, as well as to collect taxes on alcoholic beverages sold in the park. Congress did not respond. In April 1942 the General Assembly repeated its 1940 effort in somewhat changed language. This time Congress agreed, restoring concurrent jurisdiction on civil cases arising in the park, while holding "exclusive jurisdiction, legislative, executive and judicial, with respect to" crimes committed in the park. The congressional wording on alcohol was complex:

> The United States shall have the power to regulate or prohibit the sale of alcoholic beverages on such lands; provided, that, if the sale of alcoholic beverages is prohibited by general law in the Commonwealth outside of such lands, no such alcoholic beverages shall be sold on the lands contained in the Park area; and provided further, that if the general laws of the Commonwealth permit the sale of alcoholic beverages, then the regulations of the United States relating to such sales on such lands shall conform as nearly as possible to the regulatory provisions in accordance with which such sales are permitted in the Commonwealth outside of such Park lands. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as reserving in the Commonwealth power to require licenses of persons engaged in the sale of intoxicating beverages on such lands, nor the power to require that any sales be made through official liquor stores.[11]

The jurisdictional arrangement remained constant for five years, then Congress made a tiny change, eliminating participation by the Interior Secretary in the ~~appointment~~ procedure for appointing the U.S. commissioner. This minor amendment did not affect the Virginia-U.S. relationship. No one but a Virginian was likely ever to be named commissioner as the job was but part-time. An early commissioner who served for years was L. Ferdinand Zerkel, Luray realtor. This situation--the commissioner living not far from park headquarters--was convenient for the rangers.[12]

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[11] State laws, approved 1 April 1940 (chap. 402, Acts of 1940) and approved 4 April 1942 (chap. 414, Acts of 1942); and Public Law 583, 77th Cong., approved 5 June 1942.

[12] Public Law 54, 80th Cong. (61 Stat. 92), approved 15 May 1947.

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Because the park area--sold to Congress and conservationists as wilderness --was far from primeval in fact, NPS was under pressure to try re-creating the wilderness that was supposed to be. The effort began through the CCC, was more complete after the rangers came, and had more chance of success after most of the mountain people had moved out. A mimeographed booklet issued by Camp Fechner (NP-2), Big Meadows, described a program typical of the park's CCC camps:

> The work program...which is under the direction of the Project Superintendent and his foremen, is comprised mainly of landscaping the...Park, reducing the hazard of forest fires... controlling the White Pine blister rust, building roads and trails and constructing recreational centers.... fourteen foremen and technicians have had their headquarters at Camp Fechner.... in addition to regular work foremen...landscape architects, wild life conservationists, engineers and foresters.[13]

The primary position of "landscaping" was significant. My dictionary defines it as changing the features of the ground "so as to make it more attractive." Out in the world this hardly means more natural, yet I think it is fair to say that in national parks proper the landscaping aim is to blend in needed development as naturally as possible and that in Shenandoah there was more reason than in any other national park to apply landscaping even beyond development sites to bring back quickly an approximation of natural conditions. An effort substantial on human scales was made.

In its first four years camp NP-2 rounded and smoothed 40,000 square yards of construction-caused banks along Skyline Drive and put sod on 16 acres. It dug, moved and replanted along the Drive and in visitor-service areas 15,000 native trees and shrubs. Methods and reasons showed, for instance, in CCC job 62:

> .... this project covers planting on the cut and fill slopes along Skyline Drive to check erosion...and to bring back the forest cover to its original appearance.... Other planting activities include projects in

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[13] "Fourth Anniversary Civilian Conservation Corps," 4-11 April 1937, copy in my files autographed and given to me that year by project superintendent D.B. Coffman. This is the source to be assumed in this chapter for all facts about camp NP-2 work of 1933-37 unless another source is cited.

picnic grounds, campgrounds, and specially developed areas for the purpose of screening undesirable objects, framing important views, screening camping and picnic areas for privacy, foundation plantings around buildings and the general transplanting of young stock in areas of intensive use to replace the existing mature stands in future years. A more detailed justification will accompany specific projects as they are advanced.

The completion report showed 90,000 man-days used, with transplanting of 300,000 trees or shrubs and costs other than labor of $2,371.81.

Under this job local native plant material and a limited amount of nursery stock was moved and planted along treated banks, within overlooks and at strategic intersections along the Skyline Drive. The job was primarily a landscape treatment.[14]

CCC job 88, nursery bed operation (Big Meadows), was justified in April 1936, the month after the rangers came on duty:

This project is not intended to be a nursery in its usual interpretation. The purpose is to assure the success of transplants introduced on the cut slopes and banks along the Drive, in the vicinity of parking overlooks, and near special development areas, by planting for a short time in special beds to allow adjustment and strengthen and develop root systems. The establishment of these beds would insure an immediate supply of planting material in optimum condition for distribution to the planting crews. Certain species of shrubs and other perennials may be introduced by cuttings.

Further species such as Fraser Fir, Red Spruce, and Canadian Yew will be introduced into the beds by transplants and some seeding. Studies will be made as to the germination and growth percent of these species, in order to investigate the advisability of furthering a project for the propagation of these decadent species in the...Park.

The completion report showed 2,035 man-days and $153.54 used in this job.

Lassiter reported that in March 1938 the nursery supplied 3600 one-year black locust seedlings for planting on an erosion control job in the Moorman River section and that 1200 Blue Ridge fir transplants were ready for planting.

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[14] CCC job records in National Archives, justification 14 March 1936, completion record 21 Nov. 1942. These records are the source of all CCC information in this chapter that is identified by job number.

In November he reported the nursery had "a hundred successful Canadian yew cuttings, also many Virginia creeper, trumpet creeper, and others." A year later he reported "400 table mountain pine and Blue Ridge fir planted along Skyline Drive in the Skyland vicinity." The NPS director gave this nursery special mention in his annual reports to the Interior Secretary for 1938 and 1939.[15]

In his June 1938 report Iassiter told of a "field survey of the entire park...to secure first-hand information in respect to acreage and location of all areas to be programmed for planting," erosion treatment where needed, and other nature-restoration work. The study was by forester R.B. Moore, not by landscape architects, and Moore's 40-page report was sent to NPS Washington. It made three major proposals: (1) planting with appropriate native species about 245 acres of eroding lands, recently cultivated or grazed, and ten miles of eroding trails; (2) planting with appropriate tree species all areas of dense sod that will not easily reforest without help; and (3) underplanting indigenous species on chosen sites, using especially rare trees and shrubs such as fir and spruce, fringe tree, Canadian yew, rosebay rhododendron, catawba rhododenron, mountain ash, and native pines other than Virginia pine. Moore was especially worried about lands suffering from "sheet erosion" or "gully wash." He had found long-unusued trails still eroding, as well as "major areas of general erosion"--all this despite five years of effort by the CCC thus far, directed against what Albright had called to FDR's attention and FDR had so deplored.[16]

The Director approved the proposal for eroding areas, disapproved forced reforestation of sod areas ("unless further justification can be given"), and approved the underplanting with strict insistence that "no artificial introduction of species" will be permitted. The question of what to do with sod

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[15] There has been much confusion about the appropriate name for the fir tree native to this park. Many considered it Fraser (Abies fraseri). In the 1930s botanist E.H. Fulling of N.Y. Botanical Garden named it Blue Ridge fir (Abies intermedia). It is now considered to be Balsam (Abies balsamea). It is my understanding that all plantings--except a few in immediate proximity to major buildings, landscaped by outside nurseries--were of native stock. In P.J. Barry and R.F. Bassett, "Insect Detection Survey on the SNP, Va.," it is stated that "former park employees indicate," for example, that the fir at Big Meadows was transplanted from the Hawksbill area.

meadows--save them or reforest them or let "nature" decide--would remain a puzzler. So would the extent of tree preservation and repair in developed areas and the (also "unnatural") vista maintenance and vista opening along Skyline Drive and hiking trails.[17]

Foresters were also involved in efforts against tree diseases, the most destructive of which were people-caused (even though not directly or intentionally). Early surveys showed that the chestnut blight, people-introduced from Asia, had killed chestnut trees "throughout approximately 35,000 acres of the Park." Another fungus from Asia--apparently carried by people-commerce to America via Europe--was caught in the act of killing white pines.[18]

No way was known to treat chestnut blight, but a white pine blister rust program was started in the CCC's first year, 1933. Blister rust had first been discovered in this area just two years before--on wild gooseberry at Thornton Gap--and by 1933 it had been found on white pines of Pinnacles, Skyland, Hawksbill and the vicinity of Big Meadows. A few years later it was known to exist spottily from Hogback Mountain in the north district to Simmons Gap in the south, with the heaviest infestation centers at or near Elkwallow, Skyland and Big Meadows. About a third of the 15,000 acres rich in white pine harbored the infection, and the CCC fought it vigorously by digging out or pulling gooseberry-currant bushes (Ribes) in and around white pine stands. During the life of the CCC, 28,523 acres were so treated, and when the CCC was gone 14,275 acres were considered to need continuing treatment. The CCC also pruned blister rust cankers from white pines in major developed areas. The fight against blister rust would continue in Shenandoah through four decades.[19]

Orchardists of Warren County--blaming red cedars, especially north of Compton Gap, for trouble in their apples--pushed the park into a much smaller effort

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[17] Demaray (for the Director) to Lassiter, 18 Aug. 1938, National Archives.

[18] "Forest Protection Requirements Report," Oct. 1943, National Archives.

[19] "Forest Protection...," 1943; also SNP "Master Plan," April 1963, SNP archives. Herbicides were used in later years; the program was discontinued [illegible] 1970s.

against another rust, cedar-apple, apparently a Virginia native. By 1935 the CCC had treated 3,190 acres, destroying the fantastic total of 42,239 galls on 1,833 cedar trees. But galls were so numerous that the men could not be sure of getting them all. Some years later, orchardists in Rappahannock and Madison counties were demanding the destruction of red cedars growing on 700 acres of park lands near orchards. An NPS survey indicated that from one to fifteen trees per acre would have to be cut, and it was agreed that this might be done where the Virginia cedar rust law was effectively enforced on land adjacent to the park, cedar being but a tiny and temporary part of the Blue Ridge forest. However, anti-cedar policy "should not...be construed as favoring the elimination of red cedars from landscape plantings, such as around park headquarters, where protection through spraying would be practicable and desirable."[20]

There was early concern over insect pests, including walking sticks and locust leaf miners, and a campaign against exotic vegetation, especially the tree of heaven that had gained ground where native forest ought to return. CCC job 90 was authorized in April 1936, at 245 man-days, to fight this Ailanthus altissima "near the streams and habitations along the Lee Highway....

> One release cutting job was completed...to retard the growth of the exotic by maintained cuttings and allow the native species to form a natural cover....
>
> Another job (143) was submitted April 21, 1937.... It is proposed to continue job 143 to cover man-day expenditures and additional work planned [as] an investigation and study for the purpose of securing a more satisfactory method of eradication.... The job was carried on by camp NP-10.

The tree of heaven in Shenandoah (from Asia) led toward a park-system-wide policy. Historian John Ise referred to this "nuisance" here, then wrote:

> Where an exotic species has become established in a national park the rule, enunciated in 1939, is that it "shall be either eliminated or held to a

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[20] C.R. Ingling to Lassiter, 4 May 1935, and NPS chief forester to Director, 18 April 1946, signed approved by Director Drury, 25 April 1946, National Archives. The Latin name of the cedar-apple rust is Gymnosporangium juniperi-virginianae, which I assume indicates it is a native.

minimum provided complete eradication is not feasible."[21] Ailanthus has been held to what might be called a minimum in Shenandoah--but not so much by direct human efforts as by the native forest that grew tall and claimed the sunshine.

The same theme emerged almost everywhere in the new park. Even vast human efforts to landscape or restore and to fight forest enemies soon proved puny compared with what "nature" did for herself once national-park protection became real.

Most obvious priority of the rangers and their helpers has been fire protection--which was "protection from people" because nearly all the really damaging fires have been people-caused. Through the years rangers have explored in one way and another the pre-park past, and in the current "fire management plan" there is an "ecological view" of the area's fire history. Between the explorations of Lederer (1669-70) and the Spottswood expedition (1716) the forest was considered to have been intact except for scattered clearings along the main ridge, in isolated coves, and at the mouths of some hollows. It was dominated by oaks and chestnut. The chestnut forest was seen as open with some distance between trees. Lightning was a natural cause of fires, so much so that not many places, if any at all, were never subject to lightning fires. The Indians used fire--"in a very intelligent manner." They knew that fire increased accessibility so could improve hunting. New growth following fires attracted wildlife and also made the gathering of nuts from trees easier. Clearings like Big Meadows "may have been created by Indians burning or girdling trees." European man "continued the use of fire...to burn slash after logging, improve grazing lands, control insects, facilitate collecting nut crops, also to increase berries." At the time of the park movement the use of fire was "quite extensive," and the

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[21] John Ise, 1961, p. 601.

area had been generally "burned, logged, graded and cultivated" leaving but little of the original vegetation "except in isolated spots."[22]

Pollock of Skyland had battled forest fires ever since the 1890s. Mountain people had fought them where they menaced homes, while otherwise welcoming or encouraging them. The fire menace frightened park advocates. In 1927, for instance, the Harrisonburg Chamber of Commerce telegraphed Gov. Byrd, saying that fire was destroying the park area south of Spotswood Trail and urging him to "act with any means at your command."[23]

The worst fire year was 1930. In April raging flames were reported:

> in the vicinity of Skyland.... near Hoover Camp.... already about 2,000 acres burned near Skyland...new fires starting threatening Skyland settlement.... conservation chairman Carson making "all efforts" to get more men to fight fires... two fires near Hoover Camp.... White Oak Canyon so far saved with great effort.... Pollock says..."worst blaze...in a lifetime".... Famous Black Rock, another of the most scenic points...threatened by another fire, while still another...in the flat woods where Browns Gap road penetrates.... some mountain outbuildings and fences lost...but no homes--yet.[24]

After two years of such troubles, the state conservation commission, then responsible, took embarrassing action and later explained:

> Upon investigation of the disastrous fires which swept the...area during the prolonged drought which marked the years 1930 and 1931, the Commission was shocked when it learned that the Federal Forestry Service had succeeded in effectively controlling fire risks, during the same period, in the great National Forestry Reservations in Northern Virginia, to such a degree as to reflect very sharply and adversely on the work done by the State Forester, Chapin Jones.... And this more especially as the state forester had been specially instructed to take special precautions against fire in the proposed park area, and to call for and to expend such funds as might be necessary to hold down the fire risks in that area to a minimum, as the Shenandoah National Park, he was told, "was the show window of Virginia."

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[22] "Park Fire Management Plan for 1977," in current SNP files.

[23] Harrisonburg Chamber to Byrd, 5 July 1927, Virginia State Library.

[24] Washington Star, 13 April 1930, clipping in National Archives.

> .... Upon an appeal to the Governor and after extensive discussion in the newspapers and elsewhere, the assistant state forester was appointed state forester and a place made for the former state forester under which his valuable experience and training were retained...in a subordinate capacity, in which executive and administrative ability do not appear to be a sine qua non.

The statistics for 1930 showed that while 41,873 acres were burned in the 327,000-acre area then being sought for the park, only 7,237 acres had burned in the 802,700-acre George Washington National Forest, 10,811 in the 352,300-acre Natural Bridge National Forest, and 1,435 in the 625,700-acre Unaka National Forest, making a total of only 19,483 acres burned on a total of 1,780,700 acres of national forest lands.[25]

Some allowance should be made, I think, for park area residents' "sticking out" fires in resentment against the taking of land. Yet even with that allowance the 1930 record was spectacularly poor--by comparison, say, with the record of 1933-37 when park residents remained numerous. During this half-decade 50 of the 96 fires were labelled incendiary and all but 5 were people-caused, yet only 2,307 acres burned. For the entire decade, 1933-42, the average annual burn was 453.3 acres--only 0.15% of the total land under park protection which, counting the park-responsibility zone outside the boundary, was approximately equal to the 327,000 acres considered park area in 1930 when 12.8% burned.[26]

The state's poor showing could hardly have been due to drought primarily or the nearby national forests, in the same drought, should have had similar losses. If "sticking out" fires was the main cause, there must have been an even greater incendiarism than during 1933-37 when 52.1% of the fires were incendiary. Maybe there was; maybe in 1930 a concerted burst of hostility was aimed against the proposed park and never repeated on such a scale. I cannot

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[25] Quote and statistics from "Conserving and Developing Virginia...July 26, 1926, to December 31, 1934," p. 14, state conservation commission, 1934.

[26] Forest Protection report, 1943, and Master Plan, April 1963. The highest recorded number of incendiary fires in one year was 19 in 1934; only 17% of the fires were incendiary in the 1938-42 period.

easily accept the placing of the entire blame on the state forester who was considered, even by the state commission and the governor, a conscientious man. Was there a cover-up, an unwillingness to confront--or, at any rate, to publicize --a resentment against taking the park land so great as to cause the 1930 disaster?[27]

Beginning in 1933 the CCC used almost endless man-days in fire hazard reduction (on more than 9,000 acres of strategically located park land) and in fire detection and active firefighting. In a broad view the anti-fire work included not only cleaning up or scattering flammable debris but also the building and maintenance of roads and trails. Detection towers were faithfully used, but Skyline Drive was central in the anti-fire system, and nearly all other roads, except short ones serving developed areas, were called "fire roads." Projects such as spring development and water lines, cutting firewood, hauling and sawing logs were partly justified by their anti-fire effects. Of 27 significant "work accomplishments" claimed, for instance, by camp NP-2 for the 1933-37 period all but ten had strong anti-fire effects. This camp was responsible for fire control on 60 square miles, and the other five CCC camps had comparable areas.[28]

Fire control gained further strength in 1936. A forester from NPS Washington spent a week with Lassiter and the new rangers, inspecting operations and discussing with Virginia Forest Service and county fire wardens new plans for closer cooperation. A formal agreement was planned with George Washington National Forest--"their lookouts have direct vision of much of our land and our lookouts of much of theirs." The spring fire season of 1936--with its incendiary fires and 505 acres burned despite 639 man-days of firefighting--impressed rangers.[29]

Detailed understanding with other agencies spread a protective network over the entire region. Zones of primary responsibility were accurately worked out and accepted--the park giving first priority to its own land plus a buffer zone, neighboring land

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[27] This speculation, though growing from my conversations with mountain folk and others, 1934-43, is mostly a result of my recent bringing together of facts that I had not previously confronted in juxtaposition. See chap. 4 (with footnote 45)

[29] Lassiter's reports, March and May 1936. I was a fire-line volunteer in May.

[28] Master Plan, April 1963, and NP-2 CCC anniversary booklet, 1937.

agencies doing likewise for their areas, and each standing ready to help all others. Elaborate procedures were planned and followed for training, detection, reporting and suppression. Fire losses kept dwindling. Though incendiarism never again approached the 52.1% of all fires reached in the 1933-37 half-decade, it climbed again to 34% in the 1958-62 period and brought this realization:

> Some of the residents in relatively isolated valleys...have an unfriendly attitude toward the Park. They must be considered a potential fire risk... until relationships with them are substantially improved. Particularly patient and tactful promotion of good relations with such neighbors will need to continue. In park employee contacts with other local mountain or rural residents it will be advisable to continue to encourage their cooperation with the Park and observance of safe practices in debris burning.[30]

Two fires in the south district--Sawmill Run and Big Run--largely accounted for the worst half-decade (1946-50) since park establishment. The sawmill Run fire (spring 1946) burned 1400 acres. The Big Run fire occurred the next spring, and a park news release said it was

> brought under control 3 a.m. April 8.... latest reports give size as approximately 800 acres in park and 1100 acres outside. Fire started on railroad in vicinity of Lynnwood P.O. and burned northeast between the railroad and the highway for several miles, driven by a high wind. It was held on the north along Big Run but roared up Rocky Top Mountain out of control for several hours.[31]

The park's worst building fire was in this same half-decade; on the evening of November 5, 1948, it "completely destroyed" the dining room at Skyland.[32]

In CCC years and for a time thereafter towers were considered necessary in forest fire detection. C.V. Bert, project superintendent of camp NP-3, reported building "two" fire towers on Hightop just south of Swift Run Gap:

> The first one... we didn't have any material or anything. Got some big, tall chestnut trees—four of them, you know, and put them up there, and

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[30] Early agreements and plans, old file 883-01, SNP archives, and Master Plan, April 1963.

[31] SNP news release, 8 April 1947, National Archives.

[32] R.F. Gibbs, telegram to NPS director, 6 Nov. 1948, National Archives.

> built a house on top...with chestnut shingles and everything. The boys used to stay up there, of course, and watch for fires. I think I worked them 24 hours on and 48 off. They'd take their provisions. You know, they liked that. Of course, the fire seasons, early spring and late fall--they had to have heat up there and a fire to cook. And a spark from the stove set the shingles on fire, and the fire tower burned down.... Then after that we built a steel tower with a copper cab on top. We had to carry concrete up there--on our backs.[33]

The date of the fire tower fire was March 17, 1939. Lassiter reported the men on duty fought the flames but could not win. The stove pipe had been "jacked" and screened and the installation had been found in "good condition" on the last inspection. A "temporary tower" was put up for the remainder of the spring fire season. So Bert and "boys" may actually have built three towers on Hightop.

In the fall of 1939 the NPS chief of forestry, on an inspection visit, mentioned the 40-foot-plus steel tower being erected. He reported also on the four other "primary fire lookouts." On Trayfoot Mountain, farther south, a 22-foot temporary wooden tower had been built and a 25-foot steel tower was to be erected when money was obtained. In the central district, a 45-foot steel tower had been put up on Fork Mountain by Virginia Forest Service and transferred to the park for operation, and on Millers Head a temporary "wooden shack" was being used while plans for a "ground house" were being readied. In the north district, a 38-foot wooden tower had been built on Hogback Mountain, and a 40-foot steel tower was planned to replace it.[34]

Use of towers gave way to mobile and lowland detection in the 1950s. It was found that adequate detection could be achieved with less trouble and expense by rangers and other park personnel traveling in other work along Skyline Drive and elsewhere and by volunteer fire reporters outside the boundaries. All fire towers in the park were eventually dismantled and removed.[35]

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[33] Bert, personal interview, 2 April 1969, tape in SNP archives.

[34] L.F. Cook, memo for NPS Washington, 18 Sept. 1939, National Archives.

[35] Granville Liles, personal interview, 20 Aug. 1977, and June Campbell, Bob Johnson and Miriam Reeve, personal interview, 20 July 1977, my files.

A fire history review was recently compiled by park personnel--with fires summarized in eight half-decade periods, divided into lightning-caused and man-caused, acreages being given for each. The smallest number, only 14, occurred in 1956-60 and burned only 178 acres. The largest number, 46 each, occurred 1951-55 and 1961-65, burning 1532 and 1171 acres, respectively. The most acreage burned was 2854 in 1946-50 when there were 33 man-caused fires and no lightning fires at all, this being the only half-decade without lightning fires. Lightning-caused fires generally burned much less acreage than man-caused fires, the 41 during the forty years (15% of the total number) burning only 223 acres (3% of total acreage burned). The 232 man-caused fires (85% of the total) accounted for 8340 acres burned (97% of the total).

This review pointed out that one result of excluding fire is the loss of open land. "Berg and Moore (1941) estimated approximately 30,000 acres of open land...~~within the park~~ 16% of the park.... Now, less than 1% is open." Exclusion of fires has, on the other hand, helped the land recover from over use and has stabilized erosion. "Forests have grown where the area was denuded by grazing and agriculture.... Wildlife has returned."[36]

Back about 1925 when 600 square miles of wilderness were believed to be available here--to become among other things "an animal refuge of national importance"--Director Mather thought of boosting the proposed park by entering a float in the Apple Blossom Festival at Winchester. He wrote Albright at Yellowstone:

> If you could spare that buffalo calf which I have just seen in Sam Woodring's movies it might make a good feature for the parade and might be labelled the first shipment of wild life for Shenandoah.... They said they would be glad to take care of the calf until...he could be turned over to the park.[37]

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[36] "Park Fire Management Plan for 1977."

[37] Mather to Albright, date lacking on copy, National Archives.

The dream as it first grew included re-establishing the whole primeval population, except maybe the Indians.

> When explorers first visited this area, in the late 17th century, they found...mammals which have since disappeared. Bison grazed...elk occurred...the fisher...was probably present.... Timber wolves ranged through the mountains and forests. Mountain lions, also known as cougars or panthers, were resident. Beavers were abundant along the lowland streams, and porcupines were doubtless here in the forests. Most of these mammals are now absent from Virginia. The last bison in the state was recorded in 1798, the last native elk was killed in 1855, the fisher probably disappeared in the 1890's, wolves were last seen in 1912, while the mountain lion may have persisted at least until 1911.
>
> In the 1720's the first settlers moved up into the coves and along the ridges.... For about two centuries these hardy mountaineers eked a living from the hills and forests. They depended to a large extent on the native mammals for food and clothing. Small patches of land were cleared and cultivated, and cattle and horses were grazed on pasturelands carved from the forest. Trees were cut for lumber and for their bark, used in tanning, over most of the country. And fires burned.... All this had its effect on the mammal population. Overtrapping completely eliminated the beaver.[38]

A 1931 news item said the land classifiers of the state conservation commission--

> in their four months of work in Page county have seen no wildcats or bears or other large game other than Soly Sours' wild hogs.... The field men say that the fires and drought have swept great areas of the mountain of almost every vestige of animal and vegetable life.[39]

Restoration of all wild life--or even its preservation--met some resistance:

> LURAY, VA. - A premium law will probably be enacted by the next session of the Virginia legislature for the killing or capture of rattlesnakes within the...Park area...according to information from Richmond.... Agitation is for safeguarding tourists in summer.... The largest

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[38] Richard H. Manville, Mammals of Shenandoah National Park (Luray, Va.: Shenandoah Natural History Association, Inc., 1956), pp. 13-15.

[39] Unidentified clipping in Bickers collection, SNP archives, probably from Page News & Courier, 1930 or 1931.

rattlesnake den in Virginia, according to old residents, is located near Crescent Rock, one of the wonder spots.... No fewer than 50 rattlesnakes have been killed at this place in one day.

The place is also infested with the deadly copperhead.[40]

The mountain man at whose home near Elkwallow I lived for a time spoke with regret of creatures that were gone or almost gone. He had hunted, mostly at night with his "coon dog," until rangers stopped him. He had taken his share of raccoons, opossums, foxes and wildcats (bobcats), and his oldest son trapped "pole cats." The family also killed and ate groundhogs and sometimes made shoelaces of the hides. Mink had teased the man:

I tried many a time to track mink--never got one. Last winter I found a track in snow, commenced following, seen whar he'd gone in a den and whar he'd killed a rabbit, et a little and hid the rest. I followed over Elkwallow, down Jeremys Run, up over Knob Mountain, showed the track to Jerry Sours, and he followed to Overall and back to Jeremys Run, told Hershbergers and they followed a-heading back thisaway but give up, come and told me. Next evening that mink was shot by a feller never tracked him none. Winter 'fore last one trapper down Little Washington way got a dozen mink at slab piles around old sawmills--mostly brown minks brought 50¢ to a dollar, but three blacks brought $12 a piece. Blank mink 15 years back was $30.

He insisted that bear still lived in the park:

Four y'ars ago hounds treed a b'ar along Thornton River. Last winter I saw tracks near a den in rocks--Frazier Hollow. Three y'ars ago saw old b'ar and two young-uns under a cherry tree down thar.... Penny Carter has a b'ar trap in Little Washington, because b'ars been killing pigs and lambs. Bate with honey or meat--or you can track 'em in the snow and shoot. Fine meat. Tan hides and make overcoats. B'ar hide brought $25 to $100 fifteen y'ars ago.

He knew other creatures that park experts considered absent. For instance:

"Jack rabbits" are twice as big as cottontails. They stay in ivy [mountain laurel].... They're darker color than cottontail, ears six inches long, twice as long as other rabbits', tail nearly black....

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[40] Washington News, 18 Jan. 1933, clipping in National Archives.

> One link cat was caught by Charlie Whitehead...on Jeremys Run...while coon hunting. Dogs treed it--awful big feller. Charlie didn't know what it was, shipped it to New York and got good money for it. Note said it was link cat--Canada link cat.

This mountain man never saw or heard a deer or a "painter" (panther), though his grandfather told him about them, but he recalled wild turkeys being shot and sold at "high prices" to "city folks" in his youth.[41]

The park did not actually develop a comprehensive program of restoring wild populations but did consider wildlife along with other factors and did release individuals of several scarce or missing species. Lassiter wrote in May 1934:

> We have received 3 shipments of 6, 4 and 3 deer respectively; all of these have been released in Big Run...one of the wildest and most isolated sections.... Mr. Komarek, who is making a preliminary wild life survey, went in with the last shipment...and reports that the Big Run Valley is an ideal location for deer, with plenty of cover and food.... Working details from the Grottoes Camp have seen 1 or 2 of them on several occasions.[42]

Maurice Sullivan, naturalist assistant, ECW, reported "nine does and six bucks" turned loose in Big Run. He said that, though "donated from Mt. Vernon," they had come from Grand Isle, Michigan "and may be a different subspecies from the native Virginia deer." One more buck was expected. A doe had been shot, but the suspects were acquitted by the court. "The park may be too narrow for even a summer range for deer." He said two bears had been released before he came.

> Bill and Betsy, the black bears, were secured from the Allegheny Mountains. They are from the same litter, born in February 1931. They had been held captive at Panorama until released, Betsy on June 8 and Bill on June 11 [1934], both in Deep Run.
>
> The female has not been seen for certain since she was turned loose, but Bill spent Friday, June 15, with a work crew at the foot of Lewis Mountain and was not seen until the next Friday, June 22, when he spent

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[41] Newt Sisk, personal conversations, 1936, 16 pages of pencil notes in my files. The "jack rabbit" may have been varying hare. If the "link cat" was indeed a Canada lynx, it was a rare novelty here, though I have met one or two other mountain men, not acquainted with Newt Sisk, who insisted there were occasional cats larger than bobcats yet not "painters."

[42] Lassiter to Isabelle Story, NPS Washington, 29 May 1934, National Archives.

the day with a crew on Big Flat Mountain. Tracks and various depredations have been reported, but most are doubtful. The last report was that one crossed the Spotswood Highway ahead of a car about three miles east of Elkton. This was July 10.[43]

These two bears, I believe, had been roadside-exhibit animals and became available only after officials and many citizens had protested their captivity. They were accustomed to being fed, even to begging, and were not well suited to founding a wild population. ECW personnel accepted them with hope but not much faith. Project superintendent Hagenbuch of the CCC camp near Grottoes told hilarious stories of one, maybe Bill, frightening people outside the tentative park line by following them around. He and a CCC crew enticed and personally escorted this bear, unfettered, back to camp and then out into the forest where they tried to leave him. But he kept returning. A second ECW wildlife man reported in 1935 that "one of the animals was killed in an organized hunt shortly after liberation, while the other has never been accounted for."[44]

Actually, no introduction of bears was necessary. If a wild population had not survived in the park area, one had certainly survived in mountains to the westward, including the Massanutten, within easy range of travel on their own four feet. All they needed was attractive habitat with protection. Lassiter reported in July 1938 that an adult bear was seen "two different evenings" and a female with two cubs on another occasion. In January 1939 he reported "tracks of a large and a small bear were followed together for about two miles in the south section, where it became apparent they had been attacked by and fought with dogs."

The fate of two different beaver couples, released after the rangers came, was more liberally recorded. Lassiter reported:

November 1938 - An attempt to restock the Park with beaver, which has been extinct in this section for generations, was undertaken when a pair...

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[43] Sullivan, report of 16 July 1934, National Archives.

[44] Charles J. Spiker, wildlife report, 1 April 1935, National Archives.

> received from New York state were liberated in the Bear Wallow Flats on Nov. 5. Their activities were noted on Nov. 9, when it was found that they were eating bark from young elm trees and alder bushes.... The first attempt, however, to introduce beaver...met with difficulties.

Rangers caught an 18-year-old boy with the pelt of the male.

> Luray, Va. Nov. 15 - Jesse Henry of Browntown, Warren County, was arraigned before United States Commissioner Ruebush in Harrisonburg...on the charge of hunting in the...Park and killing a beaver.... Ruebush ordered young Henry's gun confiscated, his dogs impounded, and held him under bond for appearance before the Federal Grand Jury which convenes in Lynchburg on December 5.
>
> The offense was not only a violation of regulations governing the... Park...they are [also] protected under the regulations of the State Game and Inland Fisheries Commission.... It is the hope of Park officials that additional beaver can be secured next year and a colony of this industrious and interesting animal developed.
>
> In commenting on this case...Ruebush stated that all violations of the Park regulations will be vigorously prosecuted.[45]

Lassiter's report for December said the female "seems to be adjusting herself despite death of mate; a dam approximately 20 ft. long, 2 ft. deep, has been constructed by her." Henry, who killed her mate, had been released following a hearing at Lynchburg, having remained in Harrisonburg jail from November 14 to December 5. In January the female was found increasing the size of her dam at Bear Wallow Flats. In April she was seen just outside the park but returned to the "headwaters of Overall Run" where she was making "good progress."

The beaver saga became mildly confusing after that--and then became a newspaper-promoted legend. Lassiter reported a second pair--from Palisades Interstate Park--liberated September 17, 1939, on Jeremys Run. His October report told the sad news of rangers finding a beaver skeleton (one of the pair liberated September 17, he said) and of finding also some evidence of beaver feeding. But the newspapers did not accept the death of a 1939 beaver, so maybe

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[45] Northern Virginia Daily (Strasburg), 18 Nov. 1938.

it was the 1938 female. Or maybe the 1939 and the 1938 females had met and quarreled over the one male, and maybe the 1938 female had killed the 1939 female and tried to take her place--with results, minus the key fact, reported:

> PARK RANGERS WISH 'BILLY' BEAVER WOULD COME HOME - Domestic difficulties threaten to disrupt efforts to establish a beaver colony....
>
> "Billy" Beaver, who with his estranged mate are the only survivors of four beaver originally placed in the park, picked up in a huff sometime ago and moved across a mountain range into Rappahannock County where he's taken up quarters on Piney Run. Meantime his mate continues to keep up the old homeplace on German (Jeremys) Run in Page County.
>
> Park rangers say they're confident they can patch things up if they can just get hold of "Billy," but the industrious little animal seems to prefer bachelorhood...and goes into hiding every time rangers show up on Piney Run where he's building a dam.[46]

Associated Press picked up the story:

> BEAVER REFUSES TO WORK FOR U.S. - Strasburg, Va. - Dec. 6 (AP) - A beaver named Billy doesn't give a conservation dam in the Shenandoah National Park much of his time.
>
> Billy and his mate are the only survivors left of four such animals placed in the park as a natural conservation measure. The park rangers had high hopes for Billy, but the furry little dam-builder showed none of that old Park Service spirit.
>
> Instead, he ran away from his wife and started a private dam project.[47]

The Culpeper paper continued the story:

> WHEN BILLIE BEAVER CAME OVER THE MOUNTAIN - Many of you, perhaps, read last week an account of Billie Beaver--becoming dissatisfied with his mate owing to domestic infelicity or a personal ambition to conquer more fields --leaving his peaceful habitat on Jeremys Run, crossing the mountain and wending his way downstream almost to the village of Sperryville--he having stopped where, perhaps, many of his forebears found shelter thousands of years ago, in what is said to be an ideal beaver den located just across the creek from Doctor Johnson's orchard....
>
> .... he began working mightily on Dr. Johnson's apple trees.... He has kept continually at this mighty destruction, even though Dr. Johnson

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[46] Northern Virginia Daily, 6 Dec. 1939.

[47] Washington Post, 7 Dec. 1939.

and C. Ennis Brown, our efficient game warden, have notified the Rangers....

First they brought a cage or coop made out of ordinary wire poultry netting to catch this mighty marauder, who was cutting down full-grown apple trees overnight; then they brought twenty CCC boys with only two picks and only one shovel. Of course Billie got a great kick seeing three men working and 17 loafing.

So this has been going on now for nearly two weeks and Billie continues his nightly damages and further destruction of Dr. Johnson's apple trees and all the consolation the Doctor gets from the executive experts is that the government will pay all the damages--which may be true, but if Uncle Sam takes time in proportion to the recapture of Billie by his rangers, then Dr. Johnson's great grandson will be as old as Methuselah before he ever gets a cent.[48]

The day after Christmas the acting superintendent reported this beaver "removed to another section where it is hoped both he and the neighbors may live in comparative peace. The orchard owner has submitted a claim for damages estimated at $45." In April 1940 Lassiter reported, "It is believed our lone beaver has left the Park and gone on down Hughes River." So, the effort to re-establish beaver ended. But--many years later--they would re-establish themselves.

There was also an effort to bring back wild turkeys. Details are lacking of a release made in 1937 or before, but Lassiter reported six turkeys liberated at the head of Nicholson Hollow and five near Jeremys Run in March 1938. These came from George Washington's Birthplace (Virginia) where they had been "raised by Superintendent Hough" from stock supplied by the state's game propagation farm. Lassiter then arranged to get 70 turkeys direct from that farm for release in the spring of 1940. I have found no record of when or where they were turned loose, or of how they fared. Wild turkeys are nowhere near as easy as beavers to trace. Anyway, turkeys were considered "exceedingly rare" in the park for many years--but gradually became more abundant, maybe from the park's effort but just as likely from game commission releases not far from the park.[49]

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[48] Virginia Star, 14 Dec. 1939.

[49] Lassiter's March 1938 report indicates some had previously been released. Populations of both turkey and deer grew more or less simultaneously inside the park and elsewhere in Virginia.

In 1940 the NPS regional director wrote that he was sending a biologist to study factors involved in carrying out the superintendent's wish to re-establish turkey, beaver and deer. After studying the situation, the biologist was to help carry out the wish. But I find no record of further introductions of mammals or birds; the biologist may have recommended simply watching to see what "nature" would do on her own. In 1942 the rangers made a wildlife count--by what method I do not know--and reported, among other species, three cougar, 37 bobcats, 27 deer, 64 turkey, and no bear. They estimated the park's total population of cougar at 3, bobcat 370, deer 40, turkey 64. Cougar was not introduced--except maybe by itself--but reports of its presence would go on teasing for decades.[50]

There was a persistent and substantial program of releasing trout, maybe partly because the park had a reputation, enhanced by President Hoover, for good fishing. In October 1936, Lassiter reported, a wildlife technician was inspecting park streams, studying possible restocking. In March 1937 nine streams were stocked; in January 1938 nearly ten thousand brook trout were planted in eastside park streams by the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries; in March 1940 the state released 4,560 trout in streams of the central section; in March 1941 the state released 29,000 trout; in the spring of 1942, 34,500; and so on. At least 14 streams were thus stocked; the fish came from Virginia State Hatchery and were mostly 7" to 8" long. The superintendent reported in 1948:

> .... we're fairly well satisfied with the stocking program.... The State of Virginia did a good job of stocking Park streams last spring. In fact, we believe that some of the streams were overstocked. The fish food in the streams is limited, so consequently it seems unwise to stock more fish than the stream can feed.[51]

Fisheries scientist Robert E. Lennon summarized the trout-planting history: "Some of the waters were stocked with hatchery-reared brook trout or rainbow

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[50] Supt. Freeland to Director, 21 Oct. 1942, and Alexander Wetmore and Remington Kellog, "Preliminary List of Mammals in SNP," June 1947, National Archives. The Wetmore paper estimated 15 bears in 1947.

[51] Freeland to regional director, 15 Nov. 1948, National Archives.

trout up to 1950, and with brook trout again in 1955. No stocking has been done since that time." Lennon had reviewed studies other biologists had made in 1936, 1941, 1950 and 1951, along with reports by rangers, and made intensive observations from 1953 through 1959 on six of the main trout streams. He found that "many of the streams had been abused" before park establishment and that alternating droughts and floods in the early 1950s reduced the brook trout so drastically that the park had to be closed to fishing in 1954 and 1955 to protect survivors. More than 22,000 fingerling-size brook trout were released in June 1955--

> after drought conditions abated. The stocking of hatchery-reared fingerling trout in selected waters failed to augment the recovery of populations. Survival and growth of young, wild trout were especially good. Their redistribution through miles of previously dry streams was rapid. The park was opened again to fishing in 1956 under regulations which restrict the take but afford an increase in sporting opportunity. Two streams were placed under fishing-for-fun-only regulations in 1961.
>
> The welfare of the trout populations is dependent mostly on the weather cycle. Fish may be abundant in wet years but very scarce in dry ones. Thus, the streams must be managed as marginal for trout.[52]

Meanwhile, a lot of mammals, birds and other wild creatures--fully protected but not further augmented except by "nature"--were regaining health and abundance. Dr. Manville summarized the mammal situation as of 1955:

> Deer and bear have increased to the point where they may occasionally be seen along the Skyline Drive. Bobcats, gray fox, skunks and raccoons are common in the woods. And rabbits, gray squirrels, chipmunks and woodchucks are frequently encountered along the roadsides. In addition, a host of lesser, inconspicuous creatures, such as mice and shrews, inhabits the meadows and woodlands, though they are seldom observed.

The beaver was still "absent from the Shenandoah fauna." Beaver "cuttings on pitch pine were noted along the Big Run" in April 1951; the next month a beaver had been "seen feeding on willows" not far away but outside the park "and was

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[52] Lennon, "The Trout Fishery in Shenandoah National Park," Washington, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Special Scientific Report, Fisheries No. 395, 1961.

killed by the property owner." The cougar remained a mystery--"it is highly doubtful if Cougars occur in the Park today, yet since 1941 they have been reported each year by rangers, tourists or others, from such scattered locations as Simmons Gap, Big Meadows, Chapman Mountain, Hemlock Spring, Pass Mountain, Elkwallow and Beahms Gap."[53]

Such a mystery, persisting so long, dramatized "nature's" subtly speeding re-creation of wilderness under National Park Service protection.

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53 Manville, 1956, various pages.

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## Residents and Resettlement

Virginia donated the park land to the federal government free of legal encumbrances but with 2,306 residents still on it. Misleading views of these people have been spread. Before the park movement started they were not an inner-linked community; those of most hollows did not even know those of other hollows. It was not primarily because they were mountaineers that they are remembered (much clearer and more dramatic examples of mountain culture are known in the Appalachians), nor because they illustrated an early phase of the westering movement in America (most of them did not), nor because they carried 18th-century patterns of living into the 20th century (they carried only fragments of lost patterns). It was with creation of Shenandoah National Park that these people became historically significant--as the people displaced for the first large preplanned reversal of civilization's long-established direction, from more and more material exploitation of natural resources toward re-creation of natural wilderness.[1]

The people were diverse in background, in character, in degree of prosperity or poverty. Lewis Willis was college-educated and was prosperous in his prime. Hunter Dodson as a boy helped plant corn near Old Rag Mountain, not in fields or patches or rows but in tiny hills among the rocks wherever pockets of soil could be found--as Indians often did long before. Two members of the Barbee family, with its home a short distance east of Thornton Gap, had become capable sculptors, one with an international reputation. Charlie Smith lived within walking distance of Skyland and kept pigs and chickens with him in his cabin; his father came here during the Civil War, "fathered him" and left. A Marine got one of Charlie's daughters pregnant, "and the baby became quite a beautiful girl."[2]

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[1] Though the planning was unclear, due to shortage of facts, it did exist.

[2] Supt. R. Taylor Hoskins, personal interviews while touring the park, 4 Feb. and 21 April 1969, notes in my files.

Roy Sullivan (later a park ranger struck repeatedly by lightning) was one of eleven children in a family living near Simmons Gap. He attended the "full course" of mission school--"through seventh grade." Roy's father owned 186 acres, "a good-sized mountain farm"; the house had "six rooms plus attic." They would "rotate crops--that is, farm two years, then put the land back in grass"--and enjoyed abundance. There was a "lot of stock--cattle, some sheep, hogs, chickens running loose in the daytime." They sold chestnut oak bark, hauling it in a wagon to the tannery at Elkton, receiving $8 to $12 a cord. Later they sold dead chestnut wood to the tannery. They sold locust posts for 10¢ each. Water from Morris Spring on Flat-top was also a sales item--25¢ a pint.[3]

Charlie Sisk killed a man and was imprisoned but would go far out of his way to help others; he was an excellent stone mason and still handsome in his seventies when I knew him. Jack Dodson lived near Hazel Mountain, made good whiskey, resisted the coming of a school but later helped with it, sent his daughter, and finally attended in person, learning to read a little and write his own name.[4]

George T. Corbin lived at the head of Nicholson Hollow. When he had come of age (about 1910) he bought four acres, cut logs and hewed them with a broad ax. Neighbors came to help, and the logs and roof of his cabin (now a hikers' shelter) were put up in one day. George split the shingles from logs, using a froe, and nailed them on. About the time the park movement started, he put on an expensive metal roof. George made moonshine for five years, then quit without ever getting caught. He made peach and apple brandy and "right good whiskey" from rye and corn. He hauled his liquors as far as Washington, D.C., in a Model-T Ford.[5]

Corbins and Nicholsons had settled in the Blue Ridge long ago, maybe before

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[3] Sullivan, personal interview, 25 July 1969, tape in SNP archives.

[4] Much about mountain people and resettlement is in Hoskins, personal interviews, Feb. and April 1969, my notes, and 5 Nov. 1969, tape in SNP archives. The taped interview is the source of all information in this chapter attributed to Hoskins unless another source is cited.

the Revolution. According to Jean Stephenson, they may have numbered among their ancestors "Major Lawrence Smith...of the syndicate to which was granted originally the entire Blue Ridge area." According to Claude Yowell, Madison County historian, the Nicholson blood was "as blue as any around here....

> When Nicholson was Governor of Virginia, the family had a "black sheep" who got in trouble with the other colonists. He went out and settled in the mountains, and all the Nicholsons there were his descendants.

Yowell believed that many mountain settlers were "the same kind of English stock that was settling all around the Piedmont." They chose high places "because the land there was easier to clear, being dryer, not complicated by swampiness which made extra difficulty in much of the lower land...and because the mountain land would grow better tobacco, which was the earliest money crop." But some mountain settlers were "of German stock," some "Scotch-Irish," some "Hessian deserters," and some "real Irish." In the 1840s when the Blue Ridge Turnpike was being built "the Irish were hired to build that road, and they stayed." Potato-famine Irish were also hired to build railroads, and some of them stayed. The "18th-century way of life" was already dying here, and decades before the park the mountains lost "about half their population."[6]

A social worker, after studying all the families in the reduced park, wrote:

> It is impossible to describe a typical park-area family, but using the median (the number above and below which an equal number fall) as "typical," we can say that our "typical" family head is between 36 and 40 years old and his wife is between 31 and 35. There are five persons in his family. He and his wife have between first and fourth grade education. His cash income for a year is from $100 to $150. He is a share renter, cultivating less than five acres.... He lives too far away from school for his children to attend, and they go to church only occasionally, since no regular church services are held within reach. The family has good health,

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[6] Stephenson of PATC to Supt. Guy D. Edwards, 14 June 1953, and Claude Lindsay Yowell, personal interview, 17 March 1969, taped, SNP archives. Col. Francis Nicholson was governor of Virginia colony, 1698-1705. See also Yowell, A History of Madison County, Virginia (Strasburg, Va.: Shenandoah Publishing House, 1926), and Edward Steere, "Report on Preservation of Structures in the Shenandoah National Park," 1 June 1936, SNP archives.

with the exception of bad teeth. The weight and height of the children are normal. They live in a log house which is kept reasonably clean and there are flowers around the door. They have canned fruit and vegetables, some dried apples and beans, at least ten gallons of kraut, potatoes, pumpkins and cabbage stored for winter use. They have a hog to kill for their winter meat, a few chickens, and a cow....

Why hasn't he moved out of the mountains? He couldn't. He has little education, no vocational training, no cash and only a very limited credit.... Nowhere else could he make even a bare subsistence with so small an investment. It has been impossible for him to raise himself in the economic scale.[7]

The people did not know they were "mountaineers" until outsiders convinced them that they were. Pollock and his guests, romanticizing them in that way as far back as the 1890s--using them as entertainers and mysterious dangers, servants and laborers, sources of liquor and objects of charity--convinced those of the Skyland section and made a lot of them dependents, holding in the mountains many who would otherwise have left. It was in the Skyland vicinity that NPS officials and others formed their early, largely adverse view of the people.[8]

Missionaries convinced many other park-area people that they were "mountaineers"--or anyway "lost sheep." The most extensive missionary effort was led by an Episcopal archdeacon, F.W. Neve, D.D., who came to Albemarle County in 1888 and began services in the "foot-hills." One Sunday--

A mountaineer...broke the silence and said, "I want to jine the Church." So I rode up to his little cabin on top of the mountain. He dragged a box out from under the bed and produced an old fiddle.... from the quavering notes I made out the tune of "Jesus, Lover of My Soul"....

In 1900, the work that I was doing aroused the interest of some Church women in Richmond, and I felt that the time had come when a venture of faith could be made. After securing the services of a young lady teacher, I took her up to Simmons Gap...to begin work there. We had no equipment and scarcely any money, but I felt that the people were the lost sheep of

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[7] Mozelle R. Cowden, "What Are They Like?" Shenandoah Nature Journal, Winter Issue 1936-37, copies in SNP archives and Virginia State Library.

[8] See George Freeman Pollock, Skyland (Chesapeake Book Co., 1960); the relationship of Pollock and (mostly wealthy) guests with the people is evident throughout this book.

the Good Shepherd and that if we would try to find them for Him He would undoubtedly bless our efforts.

Neve pushed on until he had "thirty missions scattered all along the Blue Ridge section...in eight different counties." His educational and religious work reached most of the southern half of the park area. It created Blue Ridge Industrial School--at first a "preventorium" where "undernourished children" were "restored to health"--and a Home for Motherless Mountain Girls. One mission worker discovered that "our mountain people do not like to be called ...'mountaineers.'"[9]

The quality or lack of quality of people may be mostly in the eyes of the beholder. Elizabeth J. Winn, who founded "Mountain Neighbors" in 1931 to help revive folk arts and crafts in the Skyland-Old Rag section, "fell in love with" the people there:

> It has been the style...to write stories about the Southern mountain people, representing them as museum specimens of ignorance and inter-breeding.... Yet when you get to know these people they compel your admiration and affection....
>
> Consider, for instance, Uncle Ben. You may have noticed him as he passed us a little while ago, walking down the path with an ax over his shoulder. You saw how sure his step was over the rocky ground, how straight his back and how high he held his head. Would you have guessed that Uncle Ben is 70 years old and has been blind since he was 5? Although he takes his meals at the cabin of a niece, he has lived alone for many years on his own farm, doing his own work and, in addition, odd jobs for his neighbors. He whittles and sells ax handles--good ones--and all summer he has cut my firewood, making the lengths just right to fit the stove....
>
> As recently as forty years ago, the mountain women practiced many skilled handicrafts and were good at them. They wove all the cloth used by their families and were extremely skillful in the making of dyes from native plants.... most of the women have forgotten this art of their

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[9] Rev. Dennis Whittle, personal interviews, July 1969, notes in my files, and mission pamphlets lent to me by Whittle and returned to him, and files of Simmons Gap ranger station. Whittle criticized the "too pessimistic" view of park-area people in Pollock's Skyland and in Hollow Folk by Mandel Sherman and Thomas R. Henry (New York: Crowell, 1933).

grandmothers.... A little outside direction would revive their skill and give them a new source of income, of which they stand so much in need.[10]

Virginia officials worried as early as 1928, if not before, about the mountain residents. At the closing session of a two-day conference in Richmond, attended by the Rev. George P. Mayo, president of Blue Ridge Industrial School, the state conservation commission discussed "disposition of thousands of persons" and of mission schools and church properties. No decisions were made; the feeling was that "final disposition rests with" NPS. Meanwhile, "residents... will not be molested, and even after Federalization...it is probable the natives will not be required to leave for two years."[11]

School teacher Miriam M. Sizer was already concerned and was bombarding Pollock, Zerkel, the state and NPS with suggestions that the people be helped to resettle in favorable locations. Her addressees in turn were bombarding each other. In September 1928, for instance, state conservation chairman Carson wrote Cammerer of NPS:

> I have Miss Sizer's letter, and it is a well prepared piece of bunk, as I see and know the mountain area, with proposals that we could not carry out.... The very best thing that can be done for these people is to have the Government come in and take the land. The next best thing, if there are people of this kind, is that they be forced into the open. To go through what this woman proposes would mean years of work and trouble.[12]

The problem dragged along unsolved. In April 1929 the Solicitor of the Interior Department gave his opinion of a Shenandoah area-reduction and land-leasing bill promoted by Carson and enacted by Congress. Though leases to residents or churches were to be for two-year terms, "the Secretary is authorized to extend... for another period of two years and may grant successive renewals."[13]

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[10] Joan Hampton, Baltimore Sunday Sun, 1 May 1932. "Uncle Ben" was John Dyer; Winn later credited him with telling kinds of trees by feel and with making pipes, "bowl of laurel root, stem of willow" (Lambert's Travel Lore, July 1939).

[11] Richmond Times-Dispatch, 21 April 1928.

[12] Carson to Cammerer (cc: Gov. Byrd), 22 Sept. 1928, State Library.

[13] E.C. Finney to the Secretary, 29 April 1929, National Archives.

Director Albright discussed the residents with two editors of National Geographic and wrote his main assistants:

> Graves and Fisher...claim that we ought to leave the old timers in.... They claim that one of the reasons why so many people go to Europe is that every place one goes there he sees interesting and unique people and structures, picturesque people, and the habits and customs.... They thought we would make a great mistake if we put all the mountaineers out... or seriously tried to change their habits of living.

Cammerer attached a comment saying the Graves-Fisher view was "all wet.... Those that want to stay are being permitted to remain on two-year leases for the periods of their lives, but beware of the second generation.... There is no person so canny as certain types of mountaineers, and none so disreputable."[14]

The official focus sharpened further in 1932 following Albright's receipt of a letter from Pollock favoring Sizer's ideas for resettlement. Albright circulated Pollock's letter, with a memo saying that chairman Carson will

> have to expect me to vigorously oppose any opening of the new road through Shenandoah Park as long as these terrible conditions exist....
>
> I maintain that the mountain people of low intelligence will have to be removed before we will open the road for general use. First, because many of these people are dangerous if they take a dislike to officers of the park or tourists and may do them bodily harm or kill them. Second, because they are inclined to be beggars and will be a nuisance even if they are not dangerous. Three, their living conditions are so terrible that if seen by many visitors...would...bring us...unfavorable criticism.[15]

That March brought snow and cold. Pollock was trapped at Skyland by immense drifts. Newspapers told of "the sufferings of hundreds of people.... In Corbin Hollow, Madison County, the food situation has assumed a very serious phase." About 15 families lived in the hollow. No one could get in or out.[16]

A conference of state and federal officials at Skyland that spring decided to hire Sizer for two months so she could complete her "sociological data" as

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[14] Albright to Cammerer, Demaray, etc., 25 March 1930, National Archives.

[15] Pollock to Albright, 29 Feb. 1932, and Albright to Staff, 3 March 1932, National Archives.

[16] Washington Star, 11 March 1932.

a basis for considering all suggestions, including concentration of the residents on land to be purchased outside the reduced boundary, near an Episopal mission. Sizer's findings confirmed the urgent need of people in the Skyland section. In the five hollows were 132 families, 652 individuals--about a fourth of all residents that would finally be taken into the much-reduced park, according to later figures, living in less than a tenth of the park's acreage. Of the 652, 189 persons over six years old were illiterate; 246 were nearly illiterate (below fifth-grade level); 65 were literate; and the remainder were children under six. Of the 132 families, 22 were called self-supporting, while 110 were said to be "begging." Sizer came up with surprising information on attitudes of the 132 families as to "leaving the park area":

> Denial of existence of park, 27; hostility, 4; anxiety, 10; indifference, 17; want to remain in park, 9; approval of leaving area, 65.... the majority wish to move...and...many are glad to make the change. It also appears that there is little realization of the significance of the change in their lives, and that few have made any plans.... This means that the problems of family placement...are practically unsolved.

She listed 93 families with no plans at all, 3 families with definite plans for moving, and 36 families with plans called indefinite. Her reports and accompanying materials, including letters written by some of the people, show that she personally felt driven to help, that to the best of her ability she was already doing so, with food, clothing and whatever reassurance was possible.[17]

Meanwhile, the state was getting ready to deed the land, and NPS was insisting it could not be accepted with people occupying it. When FDR became President there was hope that federal emergency relief funds might be used to relocate the residents. Pending decision on such aid, a form to authorize

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[17] See chap. 4 and its footnote 60 for sources and further details about the conference at Skyland. Cammerer was quoted in the Washington Daily News, 24 May 1932, item announcing the Sizer study: "Somewhat the same problem, but in a lesser degree, was met in the Great Smokies park project."

National Archives have "Miriam M. Sizer Investigations, 1926-32, Five Mountain Hollows," NPS Shenandoah 204. Included is a poem by Sizer that reveals her strong feeling of dedication to the park-area people.

"continuing residence in the park" was drafted by NPS Washington and accepted by the state. It was headed "STATE COMMISSION ON CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA - SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK - SPECIAL USE PERMIT." The key words were ~~phrases~~/"agreement to promptly vacate the premises at the expiration of the authorization hereby granted." This would be "after the harvesting of crops to mature during the growing season of 1934 and in no event after November 1, 1934." Fourteen conditions were set forth--among them that the family would be "subject to supervision of the State Commission...and shall comply with the regulations of the Secretary of the Interior." The permittee was to sign in the presence of two witnesses, including "ENUMERATOR." There were lines for signed approval by William E. Carson, chairman of the state conservation commission, and Arno B. Cammerer, NPS Director.[18]

The designation "ENUMERATOR" connected with a companion effort to get a grip on the situation. Zerkel was again a crucial figure--and reported later:

> The Federal Civil Works Administration approved a State Project with the lengthy title of "Shenandoah National Park Evacuation and Subsistence Homesteads Survey." The writer, with a personnel of 25 made up of Enumerators and Office Staff and an expenditure of $1,650 of the appropriated $2,878, accomplished, in February and a part of March 1934, under very adverse weather conditions, the family history to the extent of 80 important facts about each of the 465 families in the Park, resulting in the following groupings: 68 with their own unaided plans and special status; 104 State Welfare Clients and 293 Homestead Prospects. This family history data would justify a thesis or report of large booklet if not, indeed, a book's length.[19]

This survey produced a fairly accurate picture of the resident population for the first time (except Sizer's for the Skyland section only). Family size averaged 5.1. Forty-four families had no father; 37, no mother; 80, no children. As to mentality, 57% of the 417 fathers were rated bright, 39% average and 4%

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[18] A copy of the permit form is in SNP archives.

[19] L. Ferdinand Zerkel, untitled typescript, a brief history of SNP movement and related projects 1924-36, prepared for Supt. J.R. Lassiter, 1940.

dull; 52% of the 424 mothers were bright, 42.3% average and 5.7% dull; 53% of the 1465 children were bright, 42.5% average and 4.5% dull. As to physical condition, fathers rated 73% good, 17% fair, 9% poor, 1% crippled, and on father had tuberculosis; mothers rated 67%, 22%, 11%, one mother crippled; children rated 87% good, 9% fair, 4% poor. Houses, a bit surprisingly, averaged 3.9 rooms--"unfortunately, often the large families were with small houses"--but as to condition rated 167 poor, 201 fair, and only 88 good.

> Out of 465 families, only 348 had gardens and only 230 had adequate garden tools.... Average of 5.27 acres [cultivated] per family.... however, more than half the families have less than 2 acres under cultivation. Only 185 have farm implements.
>
> Corn leading crop; oats next, with rye, wheat and buckwheat and hay falling far below. Potatoes grown by many and apples by a few. 158 families no corn; 389 families no oats; 116 no potatoes....
>
> Cash income for family - 19 not recorded, probably very low; 33 no cash income; 218 $1 to $100 per year; 88 $101 to $200 per year; 78 $201 to $500 per year; 26 $501 to $1000 per year; 2 $1000 to more per year.... As acreage increased toward 10, the cash income decreased.... Apparently, those who did less farming did more outside work which brought in more cash....
>
> Source of cash income [by number of families] - farming 49, labor 331, handcrafts 7, moonshine 17, miscellaneous sources 25.....
>
> Remembering that over $1,800,000 went into Park area land purchase, one might expect these mountain families to have considerable sums for their properties. However, more than half of them had no equity at all in the land on which they lived; being tenants most often and "squatters" in some cases. Most large grazing tracts as well as some smaller ones were owned by valley farmers and other larger tracts by timber and mineral concerns. 268 families...no equity; 61 $1 to $500 equity in real estate; 60 $501 to $1000; 41 $1001 to $2000; 35 families $2001 to more.[20]

Thick files labelled "Park Residents" support my personal impression of near-chaos during and after the survey. State-federal buck-passing delayed

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[20] "Virginia CWA Project, Shenandoah National Park Evacuation and Subsistence Homesteads Survey," 5-page summary, undated typescript; copies with more information than given here are in SNP archives. Other researchers and I have sought the complete "family history data" that "would justify" a large booklet or a book--without success thus far, to my knowledge, yet I can hardly believe it has been destroyed. One fresh clue was recently found and needs to be followed up.

final decision on whether crops could be planted, orchards sprayed or cattle grazed, so permit signing was hampered. Some family heads refused to sign permits committing them to move out. Enumerators missed a few families entirely. Families kept starting or splitting up. Some moved from one house to another without notice. Yet there were lines of control that, more often than might have been expected, were effective. Governmental powers of coercion were exercized--usually--with warnings far in advance. Most family heads did not quite understand what was going on, much less why, but generally respected the state and federal governments and tried to get along with them while doing the best they could for their families.[21]

A conservation commission executive, who had been working full time on park land acquisition, wrote of residents simply abandoning homes:

> One striking instance...was discovered in Rappahannock County, where a large hollow, formerly the home of seven families, was entirely deserted. The land seemed to be fairly good. The houses, barns, and outbuildings indicated that the inhabitants had been moderately prosperous, but one by one they had drifted away. A home belonging to an old woman was still partially furnished; apparently the owner still cherished the thought of some day returning.[22]

John T. Nicholson wrote two dozen stanzas to express the feelings of his father, age 73:

> Sad the thought you must depart
> From the old mountain home
> Where life has been so sweet.
> Sad will be the rest of my life....
>
> No longer here to stay,
> To drink at the springs,
> Where the water is so cold,
> Both in summer and in winter,
> Flowing so full and free....

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[21] "Park Residents" files and scrapbooks of photographs showing the people and their homes are in SNP archives.

[22] S.H. Marsh, "Shenandoah National Park; Solving Virginia's Greatest Jig-Saw Puzzle," The Commonwealth, Richmond, Va., May 1934.

Sad and lonely is the thought,
To plant a tree in the valley
at the age of seventy-three
Just to hasten on death
Of the tree in the valley....[23]

Labor pains for the birth of a resettlement program were erratic, excruciating and prolonged. By January 1934 President and Mrs. Roosevelt and Virginia governors (Pollard turning the reins over to Peery) were personally involved. Ickes had a project analyst of Interior's Division of Subsistence Homesteads sent to study possible action. He and Dr. B.L. Hummel, sociologist of VPI (Virginia Polytechnic Institute), met with county officials, mission workers and businessmen, finding "great interest." They were convinced that most of the residents could not relocate themselves but that "homesteads" could remove them as obstacles to the park while also enabling them "to enjoy community life rather than one of isolation."[24]

Virginia's welfare commissioner then informed Gov. George C. Peery that the "necessary machinery" was ready and that "potential resources" were available for "a comprehensive and complete job." Peery immediately granted further authority that was needed, while also creating a committee to help--Prof. Hummel, chairman; Wm. A. Smith, Virginia administrator of Federal Emergency Relief; conservation chairman Carson; Dr. B.D. Bagby, State Department of Health; and B.H. Van Oot, State Department of Education. Using Zerkel data, the committee worked out a plan to build 340 homesteads and applied to Washington for financing. On May 10, 1934--possibly in time to clear the park area of residents before it was transferred to Uncle Sam--$460,000 was tentatively allotted, $310,000

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[23] "The Old Mountain Home," Madison Eagle, 1 June 1934. The father, John Russ Nicholson, was placed on a list to be allowed to remain in his old home. He died there before the main exodus from the park.

[24] Edmund Richardson, Investigator's Report, 12 May 1934, with Zerkel papers in SNP archives.

from Federal Subsistence Homesteads Corporation and $150,000 from Federal Emergency Relief Administration. The FSHC fund was to be paid back from homesteaders' installments; the FERA fund was for "families not likely to pay loans in full." Formal approval was granted by the FSHC board in July.

> It was intended that approximately 2,900 acres of cultivable land and a minimum acreage of additional woodland should be purchased. Two hundred of the homesteads were to consist of ten acres each and 140 homesteads would consist of 6½ acres each, exclusive of pasture or interests in community wood lots.
>
> The Homesteaders' income was to be derived as follows: Preferred park employment, $360; production of small fruits, $150; picking and packing and other jobs with nearby orchards for apples, $50; handicraft production, $50, making a total annual income of $610 from outside employment and for such agricultural produce as might be raised.
>
> The original plan contemplated that 200 of the homesteads should cost $1550 and that the other 140 homesteads should cost $1050.[25]

The committee tried to think of everything the people would need. Estimates included such items as "cow stable, poultry house, pigsty and sanitary privy, $75; livestock, $60; tools and equipment, $15." There was a proposal to let the people have dead chestnut from the mountains as raw material for "hand-rived shingles" and to help market other handcraft items the people might make.

Two hundred fifteen tracts in fifty locations in seven counties were examined by Zerkel and his survey supervisors in cooperation with Peery's committee and Interior's homesteads division. Land was tested for production potential by a VPI soils specialist. First and second choice sites were selected in five counties--Rappahannock, Madison, Greene, Rockingham and Page. Action on the ground was authorized September 1, 1934--with Frank C. Hanrahan as project manager and Zerkel as assistant manager. They bought a 343-acre site in Ida Valley, eight miles south of Luray, and laid out 28 homesteads. Construction of homes began October 28, using designs quickly produced by Luray architect

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[25] Welfare commissioner Arthur W. James to Gov. Peery and Peery to Cammerer, both 31 Jan. 1934, Virginia State Library; and Richardson, 1934, and review in FSHC General Manager's letter to Col. Lawrence Westbrook, FERA, 9 Jan. 1935, Zerkel papers, SNP archives.

J.R. Mims. Arthur L. Yates (as construction foreman) and other skilled men were hired. Seven foundations were completed, and three more were started.[26]

Then the project was declared illegal. According to a "ruling by the Solicitor General of the Department of the Interior, it is now necessary for all homesteaders, selected for subsistence homestead projects, to be selected from urban centers." FSHC tried to save the Shenandoah program by transferring it entirely to FERA. But FERA, uncertain of its own legal right to build homsteads, delayed acceptance, and the Shenandoah staff had to be dismissed as of the last day of 1934. Chaos became rampant again. Park residents were offered an extension of their occupancy permits.[27]

Until April 1935 there was week-to-week hope that special legislation might be passed to allow FERA to take over. Then Peery's committee tried new approaches. Virginia's emergency relief administrator

> got permission to use the remaining portion of the $150,000 allotment, that had been made for use in cooperation with the Subsistence Homesteads Division, as a separate fund to relocate the families eligible for rehabilitation on an individual family basis. This he proposed to do as a part of the state rehabilitation program rather than wait longer for the Subsistence Homestead project.

This welfare work started forward.[28]

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[26] Zerkel, "Shenandoah Park Homesteads Project," 4-page typescript, 12 Jan. 1935, and "Summary of Preliminary Information for Proposed Subsistence Homesteads," 1934 typescript, SNP archives. See also "Report of Dr. S.S. Obenshain, soils specialist, VPI and State Dept. of Agriculture," 8 Aug. 1934, SNP archives.

[27] FSHC to Westbrook, 9 Jan. 1935, and Zerkel, 12 Jan. 1935, SNP archives. The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, The First Thousand Days 1933-36 (N.Y.: Simon & Schuster, 1953) mentions quite often Ickes's talks with FDR about "homesteads," though seldom specific projects. He felt that homesteads were one part of his vast administrative work for FDR that he needed to apologize for. On 4 Nov. 1934 he told FDR that the homesteads administration "has been in a bad way" and that he had erred in selection of executives. He commented (not to FDR but to himself): "Then, too, Mrs. Roosevelt and Colonel Howe have interfered altogether too much."
(President and Mrs. Hoover had cared deeply about the Blue Ridge people, but I have found no evidence of their looking ahead to possible resettlement. Of course they could not have been at all sure the park would ever be established.)

[28] Hummel to Gov. Peery, 11 April 1935, Virginia State Library.

Then FDR took steps to rescue all the trapped residents by completing the homesteads:

> The President's memorandum of June 15, 1935, allocating $7,000,000 for the completion of Subsistence Homesteads projects, appropriated $900,000 for...the Shenandoah Park project.
>
> [It] was assigned to the Rural Resettlement Division by the Administrator of the Resettlement Administration [Rexford G. Tugwell] by... memorandum of August 10, 1935.

Virginia Emergency Relief Administration would cooperate with Rural Resettlement in using the $150,000 (less than $3,000 of which had been spent). Families "unable to pay out unassisted" would "be treated the same as the others except that they will be placed on smaller plots of one or two acres." The idea then was that state authorities would turn over funds to these families so they could pay for the tiny homesteads, but this idea soon gave way to a largely separate "welfare" effort.[29]

Zerkel became Shenandoah homesteads manager. Construction began again at Ida Valley. Land was bought at other sites previously examined. A red-haired home economist named Mozelle R. Cowden became family selection specialist and was sent into the mountains to get to know the people even more thoroughly than they knew themselves, so as to separate the homesteaders from the welfare cases. She had adventures:

> One time I got stuck in a perfectly awful mudhole, and I couldn't go forward or backward. A man I'd just passed up came along and asked, "Can I help you?" And I said, "Well, I certainly need help, but I hate to ask you...because I just passed you up." He said, "That's what you shoulda done. You didn't know me." So I told him who I was, and he said, "You've just passed a woman's place you meant to stop, first house in the park, just a little off the road. Now, you go back and see her, and I'll go... get you a team...and that way you won't lose much time.... He got back with the horses just as I was coming back, and I lost no time at all.

Cowden became even more eager, in return, to help the people:

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[29] Zerkel, "Shenandoah Park Resettlement Project - Project No. RH-VA-1," undated (ca. Aug.-Sept. 1935), SNP archives.

> One of them, Bernie Taylor, had a child that was sick.... You know they wouldn't let them kill any animals...or cut any timber.... It was awful for those...still trying to live there. Foxes...killed all the chickens they tried to raise.... This little boy had anemia...and the doctor said he had to have meat. Bernie told me, "I just don't know what to do. I haven't got money to buy meat." I said, "If my little boy was about to die for want of meat, I'd get him some if I lived right in the middle of meat. But now, understand, I can't give you permission...but if you get caught I'll go to court with you and tell them why you did it."
>
> I met Hoskins [chief ranger] and told him the situation. And he said, "I can't think of a thing that would take me up that way in the next three weeks. If you see Bernie...sort of let him know."

All the families applying for relocation help had to have medical examinations, but one locality had a special fear:

> A child had died having his tonsils taken out--in a clinic--and our medical examinations were given in what we called clinics. The welfare worker and I got health department doctors to come and do the examinations. When the people above Sperryville heard the word "clinic" they weren't about to come--and didn't.... So I went around and talked to the people--and hauled in one family. And by the time that family was examined, I'd persuaded another family. We got them all except one family that positively would not go. But I never worked as hard in my life. Even that one family --you see, we had a series of three different days with a week in between, because there had to be many tests--that family came to the second clinic, so,after all, we got everybody.

The "homestead lady" shared the lives of the people and thus was able to write her reports with real understanding:

> I got invited to go to Washington and become a writer for Resettlement.... I'd written my supervisor an account of going to a home...not far from Big Meadows. I went in...and two children were in bed.... The father came in --he was a Holy Roller preacher--and I asked my questions. He let me get all my answers written down, and then he asked, "Did you bring a doctor?" And I said, "No. Should I have?" He said, "Well, yeah. Them two children got diphtheria.... I've had two children die with it before, and I know that's what they've got."

So she went and brought a doctor, and together they treated not only that family but two other families. It was her writing about this adventure that got her invited to become a writer. But she did not go--"I was having the time of my life with the homesteaders."[30]

In mid-1935 engineer-in-charge Lassiter was reporting 300 families under permit and 69 families without permit. The Via case, questioning in the U.S. Supreme Court the state's right to take the land, was pending. Yet efforts were continuing to bring the 69 families under permit, agreeing to move out. When the high court decided for the state, these efforts were stepped up; those refusing to sign were threatened by the state with forcible eviction.[31]

In December Cammerer authorized Lassiter to offer the recalcitrant families, if the need was real, permits extending beyond 1935--but only to April 1, 1936.

> If these people were thrown out...at this time of the year, not only would they be compelled to undergo great hardship but also would be deprived of what little substance they may have accumulated for the winter. Furthermore, we wish to avoid as much publicity as possible consistent with our plans for taking over and developing the park.
>
> Each case should be disposed of on its own merit and after a most thorough study.[32]

The added months of grace brought some families in. By December 14 only 21 were not under currently valid permit. Lassiter blamed their resistance on what had been said by a "Mr. Ewing when he was soliciting funds for the Via case." Strong pressure persuaded all but two of the 21 to sign during the next week--all but "Walker Jenkins and John Mace, who are to be evicted."[33]

The crisis of park land acceptance by Ickes, at the end of 1935, was no sooner weathered than there had to be authorization for residents to make 1936

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[30] Mozelle R. Cowden Brown, personal interview, 15 Sept. 1976, tape in my files. This is the source of all material attributed to Cowden or the "homestead lady" in this chapter except where a different source is cited.

[31] Lassiter to Wilbur C. Hall, 23 Aug. 1935, SNP archives.

[32] Cammerer to Lassiter, 7 Dec. 1935, SNP archives.

[33] Lassiter to Cammerer, 14 and 23 Dec. 1935, SNP archives.

gardens--as no homesteads were even approaching readiness. There was a new round of permits, with rangers now responsible--to expire "January 1, 1937, or earlier if homesteads become available."[34]

The tightened permit process with the listing of all families--whether for welfare or homestead aid or no aid--revealed to Zerkel a phenomenon that he called "drift." Though the 1934 enumeration had found but 465 families, the number identified by name as having lived in the reduced park area at one time or another since the Carson "saw-toothing" was larger. A total of 219 were identified as having moved out on their own resources and initiative, 22 were identified as remaining but planning to move without assistance, 15 were on a special list authorized by Ickes to remain, yet 336 were on the relocation-aid rolls--a total of 592 families. Facing this puzzling arithmetic and the actual names of families backing it up (but not mentioning marriages), Zerkel concluded that "it is for about 250 families that we should plan our homestead provision and our cooperation...with the welfare group." He was considering the families leaving on their own and the "offsetting cases of families coming into the area before the vacated cabins could be demolished"--a net outward drift of about 25% each two years.

> This situation, combined with the normal time for land acquisition and development beyond that for the Ida Valley unit and, perhaps, the Greene County unit, accounts for our estimate that 25% should be about the interim removals of families from the "Homesteader" and "Welfare" groups making up the...Total to Consider families.[35]

A still further complication was pending--a new land-purchase thrust, a "recreational demonstration project" that would bring indefinite thousands of additional acres into the park, with indefinite dozens of resident families. So "guestimating" on number of homesteads would continue along with the construction that moved with agonizing slowness, largely because the confusion in

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[34] Lassiter and Zerkel, letters to park residents during March 1936, SNP archives

[35] Zerkel to NPS assistant director Moskey, 13 March 1936, SNP archives.

Washington remained almost as great as that in the park. Ickes wrote in his Secret Diary such things as:

> I am very fond of Mrs. Roosevelt. She has a fine social sense and is utterly unselfish, but as the President has said to me...she wants to build these homesteads on a scale that we can't afford....
>
> I will be sorry to see Tugwell go, because I think he is a man of real vision and ability. I do feel, however, that he never should have undertaken the administrative job that he has in Rural Resettlement. I do not think that he is a competent executive, and word that comes to me from various sources is to the effect that his organization is a shambles....
>
> Henry Wallace...frankly stated that Rural Resettlement was in a good deal of a mess. His point was that it had been an architects' program and that the architects hadn't known anything about the requirements or the wants of farmers.... Morgenthau told me after Cabinet meeting that the average cost per housing unit under the Resettlement Administration had been $11,000.[36]

The budget for "Shenandoah Homesteads, Va., RF-VA-1," approved by Tugwell in June 1936, totalled $1,520,219, which made $6,089 per homestead unit. This included household furnishings, operating goods, equipment, livestock, family selection and management for a five-year period, and other items. Land was to cost $291,605, water supply $120,666, houses $398,000, outbuildings $193,750--total construction $840,440. A gravity water system at Ida was to cost $32,111; tests reportedly showed wells not feasible there.[37]

In December 1936 the Resettlement Administration tried to answer Cammerer's pressing question as to when the park residents could be moved:

> Land...has been optioned, appraised, options accepted, and abstracts ordered on all of the approximate 7,000 acres....
>
> Abstract of title for all properties are now practically completed and in the hands of the Attorney General for opinion.
>
> Boundary surveys have been completed on 93% of accepted options.
>
> Title opinion on 1,598 acres has cleared to the Site Account Section of the Land Utilization Division.

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[36] Secret Diary, 1953, selected from entries 1934-37.

[37] RA ass't adm. Taylor to Tugwell, 28 May 1936, approved by Tugwell, 1

> Acquisition of title by the government on all lands to be purchased should be completed by March 1, 1937.
>
> Construction, with the exception of water installation, has been completed on the Ida Valley group. This group provides for twenty families....
>
> Initial construction operations are now started on the Greene County group near Stanardsville, providing for sixteen families, and on the Madison group in Madison County providing for sixteen families.
>
> Construction on the Wolftown group in Madison County and on the Washington group in Rappahannock County, providing for 38 and 30 families respectively, is scheduled to start in January 1937.
>
> It is not possible to fix any accurate date for completion for the entire project.[38]

Suspense and tensions seemed endless. Still another round of occupancy permits was authorized--to expire when homesteads are ready or January 1, 1938, whichever comes first, and to carry additional prohibitions recommended by Lassiter--no grazing of livestock unless fenced in, no begging or soliciting, no fishing in park streams. The question of residents on "recreational demonstration project" lands now had to be confronted. Lassiter wrote:

> The people living on this land, which is contiguous to the park area, consider themselves as living within the park and they are so considered by the park residents and others.
>
> .... it is requested that you authorize us to assume jurisdiction over this land and to issue the same type of permits.

The "recreational" project was fading out with but a fraction of the land that had been planned, so the homestead load was but slightly increased--an increase soon canceled by outward drift from the whole park. Only 24 new family heads were put on permits.[39]

Another special situation was re-confronted--"aged and especially meritorious" persons on the "Secretary's List" to be allowed to live out their lifetimes at their old homes. The original list, with 43 individuals, had been recommended

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[38] Walter E. Packard, Resettlement Adm., to Cammerer, 10 Dec. 1936, SNP archives.

[39] Lassiter to Cammerer, 2 March 1937, SNP archives; John O. Walker, R.A., to Demaray, 1 July 1937, and Demaray to Walker, 22 June 1937, National Archives.

by Carson in 1934 and approved by Ickes, but the persons had not been told "as it was felt that they could not be notified without the news spreading all over the mountain, resulting in innumerable requests from others to be included." Lassiter reported in 1937 that five of the original 43 had died, 21 had moved out, and 17 were still living in the park. He, along with Welfare and Resettlement personnel well acquainted with the people, had studied current conditions and wanted to take six names off and add eleven new ones--"it being understood that the privilege of remaining in the Park is...for the individuals listed only and that at their death the remaining members of the family will have to move out."

NPS Washington resisted changing the list, but Lassiter persisted, saying his was "not a haphazard list such as the one originally compiled by Mr. Stoneburner at the request of Mr. Carson." He said that if planning for these people was not done now, Welfare may not have "suitable places or funds" when moving time comes. Ickes approved Lassiter's list.[40]

There was another reorganization--inside the Department of Agriculture "umbrella" but with repercussions at Shenandoah. In late September it was the Resettlement Administration, Zerkel as project manager, RF-VA-1, headquarters Luray, that promised to start "moving the people to the Ida, Madison, and Greene Homesteads on October 1," but when October came it was the Farm Security Administration, James S. Wills, community manager, RF-VA-1, Shenandoah Homesteads, Elkton, Virginia, in charge.[41]

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[40] Original list signed by Ickes 31 Dec. 1934 not found, but names repeated with current status in Lassiter to Director, 24 Sept. 1937, SNP archives. See also Lassiter to Director, 7 Oct. 1937; Demaray to Secretary, 13 Nov. 1937; and Ickes's approval, 20 Nov. 1937. Zerkel in 1936 had counted 15 listed persons remaining in the park but must have missed two as Lassiter in 1937 listed 17. Demaray used the number of 74 names as being on the list approved 31 Dec. 1934, but this must have been an error as Lassiter said 43 and gave the names by county, ages of persons as of 1934 (only one under 60, a wife, age 58; oldest person, age 88) and actual situation of each as of 1937.

[41] Cowden said Wills went after Zerkel's job, arguing that a person trained in agriculture (as Wills was) should now be in charge. Cowden said further that the change was a "mistake" as Zerkel was an efficient manager and Wills was not. Chester C. Housh later replaced Wills.

There were last-minute appeals from residents--for instance, John T. Nicholson:

> Mr. Lassiter, I know that you are holding a big position, and for that reason you can not afford to say, nor make any promises what you will do for us...but I will wait and see, because I believe your generous heart will do all it can to permit us to remain on here.... I know from your pleasant look and good disposition that you are a real man at heart....
>
> "Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed upon the earth, and will not deliver him unto the will of his enemies" (Psa. 41:1,2).[42]

A staff correspondent of the Baltimore Sun, Clarke Beach, reported from Elkton on October 18, 1937:

> Mountaineer families tomorrow are going to start their migration out of the hollows and gaps...and one of the Government's most widely debated resettlement projects will enter its testing stage.
>
> The mass movement of families living on sub-marginal lands and in impoverished industrial areas has been effected before, but transferring the entire population of a mountain range into the valleys seems to be unique....
>
> The Shenandoah Homestead Project...came to national attention during the past year when Senator Byrd, of this State, repeatedly tried to have work on the project halted, criticizing the Administration for waste and extravagance.[43]
>
> But the work was well advanced before his protests became very emphatic, and the plans for the project have been only slightly modified....

Beach told of mountain housewives preparing for moving day--most had asked for

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[42] Nicholson to Lassiter, 20 Sept. 1937, SNP archives.

[43] Cowden said that Byrd, who had a cottage at Skyland, would "go around and talk to the people and try to get them not to take a homestead.... He wanted them to stay so they would pick apples for him at a dollar a day or less." Byrd probably contributed to Carson's attitude of 1928, calling Sizer's recommendations for resettlement "a well prepared piece of bunk." Time Magazine, 17 Aug. 1962, says Byrd complained about NPS not letting the mountain people stay in the area and about building settlements outside where the people were required to put everything they raised in together (an apparent reference to a Tugwell plan for the Greene County unit). Byrd was quoted as referring to the resettlement as "that Russion business." His opposition must have been for complex reasons, but it seems likely that some of his concern ~~anyway~~ really was over "waste and extravagance"; he was long known as a leading budget-cutter.

later dates, after "we bile our butter," meaning apple butter of which, he said, a family usually makes 15 gallons or more, taking a day and a night. The women had been packing and cleaning, with washes hanging out every day. The men had been making crates and boxes to be filled with harvest--pumpkins, apples, potatoes, turnips and cabbage to be stored for winter--and with quantities of canned foods--"one woman had 600 quarts of corn, string beans, tomatoes, soup mixture, preserves and jellies." Some families bundled up corn stalks for their cattle. New straw ticks had been made for beds; fresh straw was waiting for them at the new homes, a gift of FSA. Beach continued:

> Pets, poultry and livestock will be loaded on trucks. Some of the families who have hogs have asked to be moved later, after hog-killing time. That means "a cold spell." They don't want to take any chances of injuring their fat hogs by moving them on trucks....
>
> None of them has any conveyances--even wagons--so the trucks of three CCC camps will be the moving vans. CCC boys will load and unload.

The move continued even as weather worsened. This was the time--between harvest and spring planting--that the people could spare. Arrangement of exact dates for moving families was not easy in winter weather with the people beyond quick communication, but the rangers helped coordinate CCC crews and the FSA. As fast as the old homes were vacated they were demolished--except thirty possibly historic structures previously listed for further study. These had doors and windows boarded up and appropriate signs put on them. Associated outbuildings were also "saved" but did not all survive the coveting of scraps of lumber.[44]

> NP-3 superintendent Bert said of the many families his CCC crews moved:
>
> I never really had any trouble with them, though one said he was going to kill me. He lived at the first place north of Swift Run Gap along Skyline Drive. The old man didn't want to move, but he did....
>
> Somebody, though, the park surveyor, maybe...got me in dutch.... First thing I knew about it was that a deputy sheriff came up from Greene County, subpenaed me into court.... The way it worked--Lassiter would

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[44] Lassiter to camp superintendents, 13 July 1936, and Hoskins to rangers, 30 Nov. 1937, SNP archives.

send me a list of these places...where the people were to be moved out.... I'd give it to the foreman. His crew would...move those people out, then take care of the buildings, tear them down, or get rid of them some way--see?.... So I'd sent this foreman over there--I didn't know which house it was--and he'd asked somebody.... Got the wrong house. Nobody was living in it, and he'd just pushed it over and burnt it up.

This house and the outbuildings, also destroyed in this November 1937 error, proved to be Willie and Edgar Lam's property, barely outside the park line. Legal maneuverings kept Bert worried, and only after World War II was the case settled--by an act of Congress appropriating $650 to compensate the Lams.[45]

There were other novelties. A rumor started that "they" really meant to move <u>everybody</u> out. The Luray paper reported:

> It is said that the disinterring of bodies in old graveyards inside ...the Park will result in crowding many of the other cemeteries and graveyards throughout Page County. Many of the latter burial grounds... at present are in a crowded condition and their boundaries will have to be enlarged before many more new graves are made. In this county the number of those that are interred in Blue Ridge graveyards will run into the thousands.[46]

It took an extra effort to convince people the graveyards inside the park would remain undisturbed and open to continued care and use by the families.

A crucial question was whether the homesteaders could earn enough to live <u>and</u> pay for their houses and land. Rent of $5 a month was to be charged during 1938, no one being allowed to buy. Cowden explained:

> Since we are taking families with no other security except their reputation, it is felt that a try-out period is best for our protection; and since they are taking homesteads without a clear understanding of what the purchase price will be, a try-out period may extend over three or five years, or it may be concluded at the end of the first year, but at the time when

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[45] C. Victor Bert, personal interview, 2 April 1969, tape in SNP archives; Abe Fortas, Acting Secretary of the Interior, to Comptroller General Lindsay C. Warren, 31 Oct. 1944, SNP archives; and 56 Stat. 1238, approved 22 June 1946.

[46] <u>Page News & Courier</u>, 30 Nov. 1937. This odd idea must have grown from Sec. 43 of the state's long "Public Park Condemnation Act" (Chap. 410, Acts of 1928) that authorized condemnation of "other lands or burial places to which the bodies and monuments...may be moved." But how did the idea get into this law?

homes are bought, they will be purchased over a long period--forty years perhaps. The value of the place will be based on appraisals made by a committee of three men, including the local County Agricultural Agent, which is familiar with prices and conditions in the locality. In this way, the homesteaders will be charged for the place what it is actually worth regardless of its cost of construction.[47]

There were hitches in FSA's aid. Wills appealed to Lassiter in December, saying "our homesteaders" are in "rather distressing circumstances." Loans will be provided but none have yet cleared "Government procedures." He asked if the CCC could deliver some of the material from razing the old buildings--much of that lumber fit only for firewood--to the homesteads. Lassiter replied:

> We have already done much more work on the movement of these families than was originally contemplated, and with the removal of the remaining families we will have our hands full. Although I am sorry that these people do not have sufficient fuel, I do not feel that it is our responsibility to furnish them with wood, and I think that the sooner they realize that they have to support themselves, the better for all concerned.[48]

Meanwhile, the welfare program for those who did not qualify for homesteads, was continuing with low costs and little fuss:

> In the past year the State Department of Public Welfare has cared for 71 families declared ineligible for rehabilitation...by the Resettlement Administration, according to a report filed with Arthur W. James, welfare commissioner....
>
> Of the 71 families...homes must be bought for 24, six will be placed in rented houses, six will be established with relatives in homesteads, and five have been found financially able to make their own arrangements.
>
> Five of the families will be referred to the RA as possible applicants for homesteads, and two families will be aided in repairing houses on land they own outside the park....
>
> Families placed in homes outside the park are expected to pay a nominal rent, the amount being based on ability to pay. When the amount paid totals the cost of the property, title is transferred to the tenants.

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[47] Cowden to district ranger W. Drew Chick, 4 Dec. 1937, SNP archives.

[48] James S. Wills to Lassiter, 9 Dec. 1937, and Lassiter to Wills, 13 Dec. 1937, SNP archives.

One such purchase has been made at an expenditure of $750.

Welfare personnel on the removal project, supervised by Mrs. Mable B. Humrickhouse, consists of one case worker, a stenographer and a field assistant in addition to the supervisor. During the year $1,350 was spent for home aid, $150 for aid to the aged. Total administrative expense was $4,163.04. Four hundred and eighty home visits were made in the year, along with 152 reference visits.

Numerous personal services, including medical examinations, special assistance to individuals and the like, were rendered.[49]

Some confusion on numbers of park residents and responsibility for them continued. There was no mass exodus of welfare families similar to that of homestead families. In March 1938, Humrickhouse listed "ten families for which the welfare project feels some responsibility" that could not be moved to new homes before the time to plant crops. "Even more might fall within this category if any aspect of our plans is delayed, such as by time to clear title to new places being purchased." Lassiter's monthly reports indicate that at the end of March only about twenty families remained to be relocated, but an April report showed 54 families still living in the park--4, north district; 38, central; 12, south. Among these were lifetime residents on the Secretary's List. Total families aided financially in relocating came very close to Zerkel's estimate of 1936--that is, 250, which was less than half the families known to have lived in the reduced park area. The rest were accounted for by outward "drift" and by the Secretary's List.[50]

Homesteads took 172, and their resettlement was summed up in a Sun-reported talk in April by the "homestead lady":

> She...confessed she had been dubious about the results of the experiment but said it was working well in most cases--"A few of our homestead families are not going to make good, but on the other hand some of those we were

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[49] Richmond Times-Dispatch, Sept. 1937, no day on clipping in scrapbook, SNP archives. See also Humrickhouse, "They Can't Buy a Homestead," Shenandoah Nature Journal, Spring 1937.

[50] Humrickhouse to Hoskins, 18 March 1938, SNP archives, and Lassiter's narrative reports, March and April 1938, National Archives. No one seems to have suggested that outward "drift" might within a few years have taken care of

most dubious about are taking hold in fine shape."

One difficulty...was that many of the families were unwilling, in their frugality, to borrow as much money as was necessary to get equipment.... But the point of view changes quickly for most of them...and in some cases there already is discernible a "keep up with the Joneses" spirit as the transplanted families begin to acquire the trappings of civilization....

A few of the 172 were given full-time farms of fifty to sixty acres... while the others were given subsistence farms...and expected to make their needed cash by working away from home. "Those with full-time farms have been loaned money to buy farm implements.... Those with the smaller plots are investing cooperatively in equipment, which they will share on a partnership basis with their neighbors."

Effects on some...have been strange.... There was the mountaineer who expected level ground and found his new farm on rolling ground. "He went to work right away to level it off. I suppose he must have moved 3,000 wheelbarrows of dirt. He said if he was leaving the mountains, he wanted real level ground, not a hillside."....

Swapping work with each other, [the settlers] built fences, outbuildings, new chimneys, extra rooms to their houses and other needed facilities. Women have taken pride...in making their new homes decorative. Some of the latter were spellbound when first they saw their new homes. A small cottage appeared to one mountain housewife "the biggest thing I ever seen --and the purtiest." Similarly, the men have displayed pride in the "ownership" of their new acres.[51]

At the end of summer 41 families were still living in the park, almost all in the central district. Welfare moved two of them out in October and four in November. Remaining, besides lifetime people and their families, were a few stragglers, temporarily permitted for varied reasons where they were not hampering the park--one, in effect, guarding an interesting old mill near Swift Run Gap. The furor of resettlement subsided, but reverberations continued.[52]

A moving picture of the people leaving the land they had lived on so long went through my mind a few years later as I was reading The Grapes of Wrath,

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[51] Baltimore Sun, 20 April 1928.

[52] Lassiter's monthly reports, Oct. and Nov. 1938, National Archives, and "Park Residents" file for the period, SNP archives.

and I went to Ida to see how they were doing. Most were doing "tol'ably well" --far better than Steinbeck's Joads who had been pushed from their homes by stepped-up exploitation, the opposite of the Shenandoah push. Some of the men at Ida were getting "right good pay" from jobs at the Luray tannery or the Front Royal "Viscose," a large plant built to make rayon starting in 1940.

The "homestead lady" watched more closely. She became "family adjustment specialist-home economist" and remained on duty with the homesteaders until 1943. Project manager Housh stayed "another six months or so, then closed out the FSA office and sent the records to Washington." Both Cowden and Housh realized that the land allotted to the homesteaders was generally too small to produce fully adequate livings--or too far from jobs. The war brought a big Merck plant to Elkton that helped the people there, but industry was remote from most of the sites. Refusing a park request that FSA accept one or more stragglers, Housh wrote:

> After several years experience it has been determined that those people who live on farms should have more land to farm and other families who depend on outside labor should be near industrial areas where they could get more permanent employment. It is on account of this need of land that we are not in a position to offer a place to Mr. Dodson which would be satisfactory to him in making a living on the land.[53]

Cowden did not remember the homesteaders ever paying money rent. They paid by working for the project. When buying was authorized only a few bought, but some who did, later sold and "made real money." Page historian Strickler wrote that one homestead at Ida was bought in 1946 for $1,400 by Wallace J. Dyar, who sold it two years later to Epp Weakley for $2,700. Prices of others sold had risen as high as $5,000 by 1952. Strickler said the 19 homesteads at Ida had cost the government about $7,000 each, including $1600 for the water system.[54]

No homesteader bought any part of the Greene County community. Tugwell had imposed a "French village" despite protests, including one by Cowden:

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[53] Chester C. Housh to Supt. Freeland, 30 Jan. 1943, SNP archives.

[54] Harry M. Strickler, A Short History of Page County (Richmond: Dietz Press, 1952).

> They told me they were going to put up thirty houses in a row and the people were going to have this big dairy farm, all together.... And one of the executives...looked dreamy and said, "Wouldn't it be nice if they had one big dining room and just a few women each night would have to sweat over a hot stove?" And I really just hit the ceiling; I never heard of anything so stupid...and I really told them so--those people never even went to school together, they never did anything together, they lived way up in the mountain because they didn't want others too close.... I've talked them into signing up to move out and told them we'd offer them some decent kind of place....
>
> One man said, "Then maybe we'd just better fire you." And I said, "If the time has come when I can't defend the people that I'm supposed to be helping, you won't have to fire me. I'll resign."
>
> The planners did take out every other house. They did do that much....
>
> The people didn't stay there long. I don't believe they ever tried to raise crops together. Finally, we just rented the people the houses, and made work--put up some chicken houses and let them raise chickens. We rented the big farm to two men, divided it in two; it was just the right size for two families, not sixteen families.

FSA soon sold the houses; they were "cut in two" and hauled away. The land was sold to two men who had never lived there.[55]

The arrangement at "Little Washington" (Washington, Va.) was much more favorable; the local people there had planned for the homesteaders. The schools were prepared. The churches welcomed them, actually offered rides if they wanted to attend. The law officers went to see them and told them if they ever needed help just to call or come. One of the originals, Burnam Atkins, was still living at this "resettlement" in 1975:

> In 1945 I bought the house, barn, smokehouse and "silo" with just two acres of land--some others bought as much as thirty--for $1200. The way you paid it off was $5.04 a month or $60.48 once a year, including everything. You could also get a loan for a cow without interest.[56]

Cowden told of other successes. George T. Corbin was a "dependable

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[55] NP-3 superintendent Bert was among others ridiculing and deploring this Greene County "French village." (Interview, 2 April 1969.)

[56] Washington Post, 7 Aug. 1975.

homesteader" for years, an influence toward the success of others. She recalled a touching incident of gratitude during a visit to the Corbins' homestead:

> Their little son Franklin...walked up to his mother and said, "I want my property." So she dug the key out and unlocked the trunk, took out a paper bag and handed it to him. He untwisted it and came directly over to me and offered me a piece of candy, which I took. He put a piece in his mouth and twisted the bag shut again--though several other people were in the room--and said, "Lock it back up."

Many years later, age 85, George Corbin was "evicted" again--from a "one-room, $89-a-month basement apartment at Tyler Gardens in Falls Church, Virginia... where he has lived for the past 20 years." The apartment building was being converted to condominiums, and he not only could not afford one but did not want one. He went to live with his son Virgil who now had a sizeable brick house in Luray.[57]

Cowden was proud of the Bernie Taylors--living at the "isolated farm" of the Elkton homestead community. There were five or six boys, no girls. As his father had taught him personally, Bernie taught his boys "to fourth grade." They all did well through high school and all "bought and paid for their own homes before they got married."

Some time after World War II the "homestead lady" stopped at a filling station and a man asked if she was Miss Cowden. He had been a small boy when his family moved to a homestead "over at Madison." He and a brother had been in the armed service and later bought that station, also their father's homestead and sold off some lots. "You will be happy to know that all of us are making a living and getting along fine."

> Then there's a woman I've seen every once in a while.... They never made a lot of money, but they were real nice people and they're still living "over at Madison." One of her boys bought the place there.
>
> I remember when I was visiting... She had her sister--they'd married

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[57] Washington Post, clipping with photo of old George T. Corbin in his apartment, mailed to me, undated, ca. 1975. I have visited Virgil in his Luray home, and he remembered when he was a boy my visiting the family in Nicholson Hollow.

> brothers and all lived in the same house...and the sister had on a chiffon-velvet dress.... She had real dark hair, and it was kind of down on her neck, and she was barefooted.... She was perfectly beautiful. She looked like she ought to be in a painting. She was washing over a washboard in a round galvanized tub...in that evening dress. Somebody had sent it to her, and home was the only place she had to wear it.

Cowden kept contact with some of the Flint Hill homesteaders. The older daughter of Fred Dodson, Elsie, quit school and worked and sent her younger sister, Margaret, to college. After Margaret got a job teaching, Elsie finished her college education. In the early 1970s my wife and I met Dennis Corbin and his wife at their Flint Hill homestead. They had bought it and also through the years other homestead land. They had sold land at prices considerably higher than they had paid and given home sites to their children too. I think the "success" ratio of the homesteaders, in the long run, has been little different from that of the other rural people of the areas in which they settled.

I asked Cowden what had happened to the crafts program that was expected to add substantially to the homesteaders' incomes. She said that World War II "happened to that." So many good jobs became available that the people let handcrafts go. FSA had had two crafts shops, one on each side of the Blue Ridge. The equipment was auctioned and brought ridiculously low prices--some beautiful looms, for instance, $5 a piece. She supposed the program had not been as well organized as it could have been. The "Southern Highlanders" shops in the park never did sell the work of Shenandoah homesteaders, so this local work had to compete with machine-made goods in the general souvenir-and-gift shops.

Other remnants of the old life, like the people themselves, blended into the new life or simply faded. Quite a few of the people gravitated toward Washington, D.C., and its suburbs where they got jobs--at service stations or in construction, building maintenance and janitorial work at government buildings or in schools. Even the elderly persons on the Secretary's List

tended, after all, to be absorbed into the outside world--though some, if near a public road or near the park line where, just outside, were relatives or friends, stayed many years. In 1940 there were 19 families in the park (total individuals, 78), mostly held by kinship to Secretary's List persons. In 1942 the superintendent notified NPS Washington of the death of a man and wife with lifetime tenure and was told:

> No action need be taken in the case of George and Lucy Hurt except to dispose of the structures and restore the land...in the manner provided for in park development plans.... There are no permits to cancel; the persons were informed orally that they were on the Secretary's List.

In 1944 the Waynesboro paper carried the obituary of another, Joseph Franklin Wood, 73, "affectionately known as 'the Mayor of Sugar Hollow.'" In 1945 only ten lifetime tenure people remained on the list. More of the others had moved out than had died.[58]

That year there was a surprising flurry of letters, stirred by what must have been a stock response to a constituent by Sen. Byrd. Richard Nicholson of Leon, Virginia, wrote Byrd:

> I have received your letter of July 31st and was glad to note that you will make full inquiry into...the Government letting the people go back to their homes.... Mr. Byrd, a number of mountain people have asked me to write and ask you if it would do any good or be a chance whatever of the people getting their homes back to have petitions wrote out and lay these petitions before Congress on the grounds that the mountain people was badly misled.

Byrd sent Nicholson's letter and similar ones to Ickes and asked for comment. The answer was a condensed review of the whole park movement and a polite conclusion "that permitting former residents to return to the park would be unwarranted." In 1947 there was a renewal of reverberations from the two forcible evictions, especially that of Melancthon Cliser, brought up this time

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[58] "Park Residents" file including Supt. Freeland to Director, 4 June 1942, and Director to Freeland, 15 June 1942, SNP archives; and, for "the Mayor," News-Virginian, 15 Jan. 1944.

by Rep. Burr P. Harrison (of the park's district) who wanted to know if money was, in fact, still due Cliser. Such reverberations subsided again.[59]

In 1951, Lewis Willis, 85, of the Secretary's List was living alone, nearly blind, being supplied with firewood and sometimes with food by park personnel and others. But by the fall of 1953 he was in a nursing home at Charlottesville, never to return. Another being helped in 1951 was Matilda Breeden of Greene County, who lived near Swift Run. In 1966 the only one still living in the park--near US 211 above park headquarters--was Annie Bradley Shenk, 77. She and her husband T.W. Shenk had been added to the Secretary's List in 1937 on Supt. Lassiter's recommendation--because, she thought, "unlike Cousin Melancthon [Cliser] we were as humble as could be." Her husband had died in 1943. She said the park employees were kind to her--Supt. Hoskins even brought his wife to call on her. Annie Shenk stayed on in the park until the early 1970s when she moved to a nursing home.[60]

When in 1976 I asked the "homestead lady" what she thought of the resettlement, her response surprised me:

> The people on unsuitable land weren't the primary thing--as some of us supposed or wished. The families didn't even come second--maybe third or fourth--so rehabilitation success couldn't have been 100%.
>
> But when you focus on land use and consider that what fundamentally was being tried was to fix a recreational place and take land that was not fit to be used for farming and put it into recreational use or wilderness--there has certainly been a big success.

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[59] Nicholson to Byrd, 7 Aug. 1945; Byrd to Ickes, 16 Aug.; Oscar L. Chapman, Assistant Secretary of the Interior, to Byrd, 31 Aug. 1945; and, about Cliser, Freeland to NPS Washington with information to be sent to Harrison, 3 April 1947.

[60] Chief ranger to Supt, 15 Jan. 1951, SNP archives, about Willis and Breeden, and Irene Moore, "Last of the Shenandoah Settlers," American Forests, Feb. 1966. At this writing (1977) Annie Shenk is still alive.

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## Serving the Park System's Largest Public

Shenandoah was having more visitors per year than any other national park even before it became a park on December 26, 1935. The count for the travel year ending September 30 that year had been 516,637 persons in 149,408 cars. No facilities and services, except 34 miles of Skyline Drive, were ready for people in such numbers. There was a hodgepodge of businesses. Only Skyland --and Panorama restaurant with a few cabins to rent--had promise.

Pollock had understood since the quick-planning of Skyline Drive in 1931 that the old Skyland, though it had served well as a Shangri-La, could do little for thousands of motor-borne customers per day. He had written a welcome for the NPS landscape man and architect:

> I am glad Mr. Peterson is coming to Skyland, and that we can get together and make preparations for the new and Great Skyland, which is soon to be born.... I have been interested in this work since I was fifteen years old, and devoted my entire life to Skyland developments. You can realize how very happy I am in the prospects.

But Peterson had had too much on his mind to help very much. Early the next year when Director Albright planned a visit Pollock wanted to show him the opportunities for expansion, where the water supply could be drawn from, where the reservoir might be placed, the relationship of the new road and Skyland, where development would be most convenient. He said facilities would be needed for crowds--adequate toilets, food capacity, parking space, maybe large-size tents to supplement the cottages. He wanted to give the Director "the benefit of my experience in order to acquaint" him "with conditions as I can visualize them." But busy years passed and Skyland still was not readied for crowds.[1]

Cammerer too saw what was coming--wherever Skyline Drive would reach--and was stirring discussion inside NPS:

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[1] See G. Freeman Pollock to A.E. Demaray, 22 June 1931, and Pollock to Horace M. Albright, 29 Feb. 1932, National Archives.

Now that the new road in the Shenandoah is practically completed, we are going to be the recipients of applications for permits to run scenic bus lines.... I don't know whether you feel it timely to think about some regulations for the control of that road, or not.

I want to point out...that the Panorama installation is not to be continued, for two reasons: first because it is right on the highway in a commanding position that should be kept free from such buildings, and secondly because the present owners have done nothing except try to block the park project.

Pls. look over the attached...application by representative men of Virginia for a contract to provide service...through a corporation to be known as Virginia Hosts, Inc.... Check plans over and comment whether sound or not. Also give me any other suggestions.

In...contracts for concessions in...Shenandoah...and...Smoky...we desire to limit all [curio] sales...to mountain craft and mountain people products. We do not want the old type miscellany of curio stuff, celluloid trinkets, pennants, pillow covers and the like sold in these eastern parks where there is so much opportunity to help the mountain people.[2]

Gov. John G. Pollard wrote Albright "to commend...Virginia gentlemen of prominence and standing...proposing to organize...Virginia Hosts, Inc." Albright circulated this letter to his assistants and, a month later, circulated the opinion of Senator Fess--"tremendously interested...in Shenandoah"--that "we will need very extensive accommodations."[3]

More than three years before NPS had authority, Cammerer wanted real plans:

I suggest that early next spring the entire area from Front Royal to Waynesboro should be carefully studied by our landscape and engineering forces with the view of preparing a map on which available water sources for drinking, sanitary and culinary purposes are located, desirable camp, hotel and lodge grounds indicated, so that a development project map for the entire area may be prepared as a basis for study of essential public service installation....

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[2] Arno B. Cammerer to GAM (Moskey), 4 Dec. 1931; to Demaray and Moskey, 15 July 1932; to Charles L. Gable, 19 Oct. 1932; and to Moskey again, 26 Oct. 1932, National Archives.

[3] Pollard to Albright, 12 Oct. 1932, Virginia State Library, and Albright to Staff, 16 Nov. 1932, National Archives.

I suggest that the integrity of Skyland, due to Pollock's pioneering work and wonderful cooperation with park authorities, should be maintained. We will of course have some definite demands to make on Mr. Pollock for showing adequate financial support to make needed repairs, replacements and extensions. He says he is prepared to do this....

No commitments have been made with Panorama. Williams and Cheatham, who have done pioneering work there, have rendered good service. But the place is run down worse than Skyland, and illy located....

I suggest that entrance charges to the eastern national parks should not be levied on cars as in some of the western parks, due to the fact that these eastern parks are given to the United States.

Cammerer added a handwritten afterthought--"Provision for colored guests"--an omen of crises to come.[4]

Chief architect T.C. Vint did not wait until spring. In December he and his team, almost certainly including Peterson, "reviewed...the length of the Skyline Drive as now constructed" and recommended:

(a) Four or five points should be developed where people can stop and picnic.... the concessionaire supplying facilities for light lunches, souvenirs, cold drinks and a gasoline station....

(b) Overnight facilities at two places, Skyland and Big Meadows... rooms, bath, meals in a dining room...and a second unit where one might get a cabin without bath and eat at a cafeteria....

(c) .... I believe it would be best if all operations were run under one management rather than a divided one. I think it is important that before a further study is made on the general development scheme...that we know whether Skyland can be incorporated into the principal company.[5]

A one-concessioner policy had been growing for years:

Mather and Albright always operated on the theory that since Congress refused to appropriate enough money to develop the parks the only alternative was to turn to private capital, making each park a well-regulated business preserve for a single franchise holder. By 1924, the policy of regulated monopoly, which was firmly rooted in the ideas of Theodore Roosevelt's New Nationalism, an ideology that had deeply influenced both

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[4] Cammerer to Albright, 30 Nov. 1932, National Archives.

[5] Vint to Albright, 12 Dec. 1932, National Archives.

Mather and Albright, was a reality in Yellowstone Park. Some of the other parks had always operated on a monopoly basis.[6]

Though NPS still lacked authority, two staff conferences in mid-December 1932 sparred with the problem. Both Pollock and John C. Temple of Natural Bridge, Va. (representing Virginia Hosts, Inc.) attended the first. "The general tendency of the staff...was that in the Shenandoah...it would be the preferable plan to have one operator." Yet both Pollock and Temple were asked to prepare data on possible financing and on specific improvements or developments they would undertake. Pollock was not present at the second conference. Temple said his group would accept any arrangement NPS deemed necessary--but he felt "it would not be satisfactory for Mr. Pollock to have any responsible place in the business management of any operations which Virginia Hosts, Inc. might undertake."[7]

Other conflicts emerged. Secretary Ickes disliked private-capital monopoly in the parks. Agreement seemed firm on but one minor matter:

> Native craftsmanship will come into its own in the Southern Appalachians if the plans of Secretary Ickes materialize in regard to the Great Smoky Mountains, Shenandoah, and Mammoth Cave National Park projects.
>
> When the Department of the Interior takes over the full administration ...it plans that all stores operating in them...shall build their displays around the native mountain handicraft.[8]

Virginia conservation commission authorized Pollock to continue operating Skyland "until October 31, 1934," and Cammerer approved. Pollock was still going strong, with similar authority, in 1935. His 32-page booklet carried the old enthusiasm:

> An area of tremendous mountain panoramas, deep primeval forests.... horseback riding...trails being built...reasonable prices for meals and lodgings.... anti-hay-fever resort...tennis courts...bathing and swimming pool.... Skyland gardens have five acres in sweet corn alone...

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[6] Donald C. Swain, Wilderness Defender: Horace M. Albright and Conservation (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. 133-34.

[7] Meetings, 15 and 19 Dec. 1932, reports signed "Gable," National Archives.

endless beds of other vegetables.... Pollock's book on Skyland and beginnings of the park soon to be published....

The Drive in perfect condition and a wonder and delight to the amazed tourist who is under the impression that asphalt, oil or tar will soil his car. Not so.... Hundreds of automobiles daily drive over it.[9]

Cammerer, now Director, had written the state commission that, although the 1935 agreement with Pollock was "agreeable to this Service at the time it was executed...we hope that you will be able to negotiate arrangements with Mr. Pollock that will afford us" what we need--as "the matter of accommodations... is before the Department for final disposition." He had also written that "the Virginia Hosts...already have authority to go ahead if they desire to."[10]

Before the end of the 1935 season Pollock, at age 66, realized that his years as the much-loved "Little Chief of Stony Man Camp" were ending. As I listened that fall to his retelling of the old stories, while a characteristically immense bonfire burned, I felt that he both welcomed and fought retirement. In December, Cammerer wrote:

> I am willing to approve the temporary continuance of the Skyland Camp and the Panorama Tea Room operations on the grounds that these...fulfill a public necessity that will have to be continued either under temporary arrangements with the present operators or by the general operator.... The signature of Mr. Pollock and Mr. Cheatham should be secured to temporary special use permits containing a clause that the same will automatically terminate with the letting...of a general concession contract.[11]

Pollock signed for the 1936 season--and then wrote:

> I would respectfully submit that in view of the fact that we really have (Mrs. Pollock and I) done a great deal toward furthering the interests of the Shenandoah...we be allowed to continue to use in future years, for our personal use only...the cottage known as Massanutten Lodge where we

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[9] Cammerer to Carson, 31 Jan. 1934, State Library, and booklet, SNP archives.

[10] Cammerer to Wilbur C. Hall, new chm., state commission, 22 July 1935, SNP archives, and Cammerer to R.L. Cheatham, 3 Jan. 1935, National Archives. I do not know how Virginia Hosts could have had "authority." An oral promise?

[11] Cammerer to Lassiter, 4 Dec. 1935, SNP archives.

reside, and the small cottage next to it, known as Annex.[12]

Pollock drew satisfaction from seeing so many people enjoying the scenic surroundings and from knowing the natural beauty was firmly protected at last from logging and fire that he had fought so long. But he chafed under NPS supervision. NPS operators division made an inspection July 3-5, a busy time:

> .... there was considerable confusion and it was necessary for Mr. Pollock's organization to inquire of the guests as to the time of their arrival, the number of meals taken and similar information which the records of a properly managed organization should show at a glance....
>
> There appear to be plenty of waiters in the dining room and also a sufficient number of cabin maids but there is only one porter to carry bags and no service is available for the handling of the luggage of departing guests. Also there appears to be no one in charge of the cabin maids.... Meals are always late.[13]

Lassiter, while praising the quality of the meals, summed up the trouble when he wrote that Pollock "is continuing his operation in the same manner in which he has operated Skyland for the past 35 or 40 years, not adjusting."[14]

After that difficult year was lived through, Pollock's "lease" on Massanutten Lodge and Annex brought complications. Cammerer wrote:

> I have already mentioned to Mr. Pollock...that we would have to make a charge.... He objected stating that he had been taking care of these buildings, and improving them, and in fact had made additions that had improved the property vastly so that there was an accretion of value to the Government in them. I figure that about $25 a month for each of the two structures would be about right, especially since they are occupied only about 5 months in the year. Mrs. Judd for her vastly larger and more valuable property pays only about $1,200, which, by the way, her attorney said she was more than willing to pay. One reason for letting Mr. Pollock have this place was that he worked unceasingly for the park, spending a great deal of his money, which Mrs. Judd did not do; furthermore

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[12] Pollock to Cammerer, 27 March 1936, SNP archives.

[13] Charles L. Gable to Hillory A. Tolson, 9 July 1936, SNP archives.

[14] Superintendent's monthly narrative report, July 1936. Beginning Jan. 1935 there is such a report for each month in National Archives; they are the source to be assumed in this chapter where Lassiter is credited, unless a different source is given.

> Mrs. Judd is wealthy and got full price for her property which she kept - Pollock never got a dollar from the returns for his vast holdings which all went to his creditors. I think he is entitled to the use of the two structures during his and his wife's life at a reasonable rental.[15]

Lassiter negotiated a rent of only $120 a year, with automatic renewal annually for three years, then renegotation if either party wished. Pollock would outlive his wife and keep this home at Skyland, mainly for summer use, until he died in 1949 at age 80.[16]

Cammerer wanted to let contracts for public accommodations to the "highest and best bidders." In mid-1935 the operators division was preparing an advertisement for the central section, and Cammerer wanted similar proposals worked up for the north and south sections. But the section-by-section approach did not prove attractive. F.P. Loth of Staunton, Va.--writing both Sen. Byrd and Gov. Peery of his interest in a workable contract--implied that even all concessions in Shenandoah might be too little, so Blue Ridge Parkway should be included. Loth disliked the bidding idea and favored "awarding these contracts to a capable organization of Virginians."[17]

An invitation for bids issued February 17, 1936--for opening March 30--offered a concession contract for the entire park. It called for an initial investment of $300,000 "with the probable investment of $1,750,000 in a five-year period." It was based on a "mammoth map" showing fourteen lodge, picnic and camp developments with these estimated costs: Skyland reconditioning $325,000, Big Meadows $300,000, Black Rock Lodge $210,000, Hogback Mountain $200,000, Loft Mountain $185,000, Bear Wallow Springs $100,000, Hog Wallow Flats $70,000, and $5,000 each at "Grand Gravel Springs," Sexton Shelter, Dickey Ridge, Calvary Rocks, Ivy Creek, South River and Comers Deadening.

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[15] Cammerer to Moskey and Gable, 18 Nov. 1937, SNP archives. Mrs. Judd was the widow of George H. Judd, one of the original "park nuts."

[16] Agreement signed 18 Jan. 1938, SNP archives. For voluminous details about Pollock and his wife and Massanutten Lodge, with recommendation it be saved as a historic building, see John Bruce Dodd and Cherry Dodd, Historic Structures Report (NPS--Mid-Atlantic Region, 1977).

15 Oct. 1935, National Archives; and Loth to Peery, 15 Nov. 1935, State Library. Loth was associated with Virginia Hotels.

An Interior Department news release elaborated on the invitation:

> .... in making the award, the basis of selection of the best and most responsible bidder will be demonstrated financial ability to carry the project to a successful conclusion, personal experience, and availability of trained personnel.... The successful bidder will be required to operate, if requested...the Panorama tea house...and such other public facilities now existing...as the Secretary may select.[18]

There was only one nibble--"conditional on installation by the federal government of public utilities." No money was at hand for the utilities, so the proposition was advertised again--for opening May 19. Yet it was a time of almost unlimited possibilities, and before the second bid opening Lassiter reported 40 WPA laborers excavating for a Skyland water system, expected to be ready for the 1936 season. His May report said Public Health Service representatives were visiting "in connection with water and sewer system work at Skyland and Big Meadows as WPA projects." Even so there was but one bid, identified as being by a John V. Bauserman--whose "financial responsibility and experience were being investigated."[19]

No contract materialized. Planning was fluid. In July a Washington paper carried a long article with scenic photographs and architectural drawings of "proposed cabin colonies" to cost approximately $1,500,000. A cabin would have a kitchen with refrigerator, stove, sink, built-in table and cupboards, and either one or two living room-bedrooms.

> Ultimately seven such colonies are to be built, with seven picnic-ground developments, covering the entire mountain-top stretch of more than 100 miles...from Front Royal to Jarman Gap....
>
> Already, with Works Progress money, some 875 workers from five CCC camps are building roads, water and sewer systems, clearing away underbrush and vistas, and making foot and bridle trails....
>
> Secretary Ickes would like to have these...recreation colonies operated

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[18] Harrisonburg Daily News-Record, 10 March 1936, and Madison Eagle, 17 April 1936. News-Record, 10 March had two items, one by AP Washington.

[19] Eagle, 17 April 1936, and Lassiter's monthly reports.

> by the Government...but there is as yet no authority in law for this. However, legislation may be introduced in the coming session of Congress, possibly by Senator Harry F. Byrd...and by Representative A. Willis Robertson, whose district lies just down the mountain side from the sites....
>
> It is the hope of the park officials to have such facilities that Summer visitors...will be able to do some "housekeeping," cooking their own light meals, or to entertain guests, with the host house convenient for any heavy meals.

Skyland would have a new host house, costing at first $50,000 but later to be expanded with $100,000. Big Meadows would have a minimum host house costing $40,000, later to be expanded with, say, $60,000. Other colonies would have similar facilities on a smaller scale. The seven picnic ("and camp") sites would include a lunch stand, store, gasoline and oil pumps.[20]

The 1936 season was now in full swing with Pollock operating Skyland; Williams and Cheatham, Panorama; and Ralph Mims of Luray, the Spotswood Tea Room at Swift Run Gap. The Panorama water supply had proved inadequate, and the CCC was developing two small springs to help. A "seventh plan" for Skyland was submitted and discarded. Virginia Hosts, Inc., was nowhere in evidence, but by October a group of Richmond businessmen including Mason Manghum was visiting the park with Cammerer to study the opportunity. Encouraged by this new interest, NPS made changes in its proposition and advertised the third time for bids--to be opened January 15, 1937. Two bids came.[21]

NPS concluded that one offered too little but that the other, from the Richmond group headed by Manghum, now called Virginia Sky-Line Co., deserved serious study. This bid was accompanied by two long letters, one running to fifteen pages. If awarded exclusive concession for twenty years, the company would pay the Interior Department a minimum of $1,250 a year, plus additional amounts based on net profits, including 10% of net profits from "vehicular

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[20] Paper unidentified on clipping (from printing style I think it is the Star), 26 July 1936, SNP archives.

[21] Lassiter's monthly reports, July 1936 to Jan. 1937. One bid (offering the lower percentage of net profits) was by Robert A. Nordblom, Boston, Mass.

transportation of persons within the park." Manghum explained:

> Our opinion that 10% of the net revenue of the vehicular traffic will be substantial is based primarily on the fact that this park is so close to the population centers where hundreds of thousands of people have no means of transportation except by buying fares. We believe a properly maintained and operated transportation system through the park and to and from these population centers is certain to be one of the Park's largest revenue producing factors. The trend of the times is to legislate so that the populace will have more time for recreation and play.... a source of possible revenue in this particular line is the convention business. It would be very simple to make arrangements with conventions being held in Washington to spend one day of the week driving over Skyline. Washington had nearly 500 conventions during the year 1936. If these conventions only averaged 200 persons each, this would mean 100,000 people.

Manghum had operated the Richmond convention bureau while serving as executive vice president of the Richmond Chamber of Commerce, his office a "clearing house for all community problems, business and otherwise." He said he had rescued the C of C Restaurant that had been in the red. Both lawyer and businessman, he also had responsible experience in government--as attorney for Interstate Commerce Commission (1915-18) and other federal and state agencies (1920s and 30s). His Virginia Sky-Line associates, he said, were prominent in manufacturing, auto business, hotel and restaurant, engineering, wholesale, architecture and construction. They had ample funds but intended to be cautious:

> In view of the fact that this project is so different from any of the other parks...it seems almost impossible to make any intelligent forecast as to what the peculiar, fast-traveling public will demand.... Therefore, it is felt that investment...should be <u>slow</u> and <u>conservative</u>....
>
> If, in the judgment of the Secretary, we should finance ourselves at present up to $300,000, we will do so.... It is our opinion that the Government officials desire to grant the concessions...exclusively to Virginia interests in order that this magnificent project may be carried on and developed with distinct Virginia atmosphere, embodying not only the hospitality for which Virginia has long been famous, but also

presenting a picture of the industrial and colorful characteristics of the people of the Virginia mountains.[22]

The award was made to this Virginia Sky-Line Company, Inc., on the last day of February 1937:

> Under the terms of the contract, which runs for 20 years, the Richmond company is to provide, establish, maintain and operate lodges and camps for visitors, and stores, cafeterias, barber shops, bathhouses, gasoline filling stations, automobile and saddle horse transportation facilities....
>
> All facilities...are to be operated under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior, including the fixing of rates and character and standards of services and accommodations and submission of business report. All construction must be done from full and detailed plans and specifications prepared by a qualified architect or engineer satisfactory to the Secretary...who will approve the plans in advance of construction.[23]

By April, Lassiter reported, Virginia Sky-Line was serving hundreds of people at Panorama and Spotswood tea rooms. Pollock had offered to help Manghum get Skyland going. He said he was receiving numerous inquiries for the 1937 season, and he suggested the company take over his "1200 booklets from last year and with pink slip of corrections or changes send them out to prospective customers...no time for additional printing now, vacations already being planned." He gave advice on water works and sewers and condition of cottages being repaired by the CCC:

> When you take a small house lightly built and out of level and it has to be leveled and pulled into shape, it is bound to leave crevaces and holes in some places where not only mice but snakes can crawl in. It is extremely important before you put beds into these cottages that each cottage is carefully gone over and made as near as possible mouse-proof. A snake can crawl in where a mouse can and in log and bark cottages they can crawl up the sides and find empty holes if there are any. I have kept the carpenter at Skyland busy several days out of a week all summer, one

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[22] Mason Manghum, two letters to NPS Washington, 15 Jan. 1937, SNP archives.

[23] Washington Herald, 28 Feb. 1937; copy of contract in SNP archives. It is Contract No. I-1p-9458, 18 March 1937, 11 pages plus bid documents; advertisement was 4 Jan. 1937, bid opening 15 Jan., which short time suggests a degree of pre-arrangement between NPS and Manghum.

of whose principal tasks has been to continually go over the cottages and see they are mouse-proof, as you know a good healthy mouse can do irreparable damage to mattresses and blankets in a few minutes time.

Pollock drew a rattlesnake at the bottom of his letter.[24]

By May several Skyland cottages were in use. In July Cammerer and Gable came out "with a view to speeding up operations" and had a two-day discussion with Manghum and Lassiter. Seventeen of the Skyland cottages had now been renovated and were in use, and ten more were "in process of modernization." The dining room was open. NPS thought 20 new cabins, each for only two or three persons, would help--because the older cottages were for larger groups. At Big Meadows roads and water and sewer lines had been readied by the CCC, and a central lodge and overnight cabins were to be built by Virginia Sky-Line. Plans were being completed for picnic, camp and lodging facilities at Lewis Mountain--"a development for colored people." A trailer and tent campground at Big Meadows, built by the CCC, would be opened July 30 by NPS--no connection with the concessioner, a change from Cammerer's early thinking for Shenandoah. Lassiter and Manghum traveled together in August studying concessions in western parks. Manghum tried without success to persuade Lassiter to leave NPS and work for him at higher pay, according to Mrs. Lassiter. Virginia Sky-Line was now planning a gas station at Big Meadows, two new "central buildings" at Skyland, and a completely new lodge on Dickey Ridge near Front Royal.[25]

Before the end of September visitation passed the million-a-year-mark--the first time for any national park anywhere. The Shenandoah count for the travel year ending September 30 was 1,041,204, more than 300,000 ahead of the second highest national park visitation--at Great Smoky. The state and its newspapers hailed the count as a great victory for Virginia and NPS. The

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[24] Pollock to Manghum, 15 April 1937, National Archives.

[25] Washington Star, July 1937 (day lacking on clipping), SNP archives; Lassiter's monthly reports; and Mrs. J.R. Lassiter, personal interview, 10 Nov. 1976, tape in my files. This interview is the source of everything in this chapter attributed to Mrs. Lassiter.

Washington Star found "something deeply reassuring" in it:

> Some may have gone in the spirit that moves men to follow a fad, some merely for the exercise they get in climbing mountain trails and some to "kill time," but the vast majority entered the park to satisfy the age-old thirst for beauty.
>
> The vistas from Panorama and Skyland, mists in the valleys, inspiring sunsets, frail, fragrant blossoms in the Spring and multicolored foliage in the Fall, sly glimpses of wild animals, cool, sparkling streams and range on range of mountains--these were the things that caused the multitude to turn its back on cities and the routine of life to get literally closer to the heavens. These and perhaps a spark of the pioneer spirit on which the Nation was founded account for the ever-increasing pilgrimage....
>
> While wars range and share the headlines with crime and scandal it is encouraging to find even small items in the newspapers which mean not only what they say--in this case that Shenandoah Park sets the pace in attendance --but that, after all, the human race still responds to the intangible spiritual forces of beauty, tranquility and inspiration.[26]

Yet the park brought annoyances and disappointments, along with promise, to Virginia Sky-Line. Public transportation showed no sign of meeting Manghum's expectations. Cammerer objected to the company's proposal to raise the prices of meals and refused permission to install coin-in-the-slot telescopes. Lassiter wrote Manghum that "the practice of having...demonstrators...promoting sales of their products in concessions...is not acceptable." Manghum and NPS often failed to agree, mostly on small matters at first.[27]

In August a basic difference came to the fore in a roundabout way. Manghum wrote to Will Carson, who had long since left the conservation commission and was helping create a recreational center at Front Royal. Manghum urged maximum development of that center--

> as there are so many tourists...who would stay...for vacations if there were some recreational facilities in the Park or some nearby place, such as your Front Royal park, where they could play tennis, golf, swim, etc.

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[26] Star, 7 Aug. 1937.

[27] Cammerer to Manghum, 22 May 1937, and Lassiter to Manghum, 7 Aug. 1937, National Archives.

> We have been operating...two seasons, and our most serious handicap is that there is nothing to keep the people in the Park. The percentage of people who walk the trails and ride horseback is very small. Ninety-nine per cent of the people must have ways to amuse themselves, whether it is in a national park or elsewhere. Out of the million people who came ...last year, our experience was that not one-tenth of one per cent...were satisfied to spend their vacations...and have no recreation except hiking and horseback riding.
>
> The Shenandoah National Park cannot in any way be compared with Yellowstone Park or the other great national parks. The Shenandoah...is a combination of a national park, a city park and a playground, and in order to educate the people to enjoy this wonderful park we must have something in the way of amusement or some way for them to play.[28]

Carson sent Manghum's letter to Cammerer--who circulated it with this memo:

> I shall discuss this with Mr. Manghum at an early date...for of course he is all off the reservation when he says that the park is "a combination of a national park, a city park and a playground." We want it to remain a national park, without intrusion of city park and playground features, and if the Front Royal Recreational Center can supply some demands on the part of our visitors, I think that a wholesome solution.[29]

Another persistent and possibly dangerous issue--race relations--was already simmering. An NPS memo foreshadowed its involvement of the all-Virginian (so segregationist) concessioner and prompted a study of legal aspects, extent and circumstances of racial segregation in the park.[30]

Park recreation and race relations must have weighed on Manghum, and he was probably disillusioned by failure to get going with the large-scale public transportation. He informed NPS through attorneys that he was selling out. The buyer, if approved by the Secretary, would be DeSoto FitzGerald, head of FitzGerald & Co., a railroad supply firm. All the present officers of Virginia Sky-Line would leave with Manghum. Demaray answered the attorneys' questions

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[28] Manghum to William E. Carson, 1 Aug. 1938, National Archives.

[29] Cammerer to Demaray, Tolson and Wirth, 8 Oct. 1938, National Archives.

[30] Gable to White, Demaray and Cammerer, 7 Jan. 1939, National Archives.

--that the company was in good standing with NPS, that there would be no objection to paying Manghum $10,000 for organizing the company ("providing it's not made a capital charge affecting payments to the government"), no objection to allowing Manghum $7500 per annum for the time he managed the operation, and no objection to FitzGerald as purchaser or, with associates, as operator.[31]

FitzGerald became president of the reorganized Virginia Sky-Line Co., Inc.; his son-in-law Samuel M. Bemiss, secretary-treasurer; and T. McCall Frazier, leaving for this purpose the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Board (where he "created" the state's liquor dispensing system), vice president in charge of operations at $7500 a year. The changed company, with "authorized capital of $1,000,000," would honor commitments already made with NPS--including completion of the 300-foot-long lodge at Big Meadows--unless different plans were mutually agreed upon. One difference, to begin in 1940, involved a subcontract for public transportation:

> RICHMOND - Establishment of daily bus service covering the Skyline Drive...was announced here...by T. McCall Frazier.... Connections will be made at Front Royal from Washington, D.C., and Winchester, and at Charlottesville, from Danville, Lynchburg, Staunton, Waynesboro, Luray, Richmond...and practically every other point...under direction of S.A. Jessup, Charlottesville, president of Virginia Trailways.... It is...to run from spring to November 1...using new 22-passenger buses, mountain type ...one schedule each way daily.[32]

In September 1940 Lassiter and Frazier together visited the Smoky region to survey handcraft production and marketing--so as to improve the quality of souvenirs sold at Shenandoah. This would lead to subcontract operation of a gift shop in Big Meadows Lodge by the Southern Highlanders Handicraft Guild--and later, despite early friction between company and guild--of an additional

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[31] Demaray to Hunton, Williams (etc.), 27 Feb. 1939; Gable to Secretary, 27 Feb., signed approved 28 Feb. by ass't sec'y Chapman; and Lassiter's March 1939 report, all National Archives. Review and approval by the Secretary, though not a contractual requirement, had become customary in ownership changes.

[32] Clipping in Virginia Sky-Line scrapbook, from a Richmond paper in March 1939, SNP archives, and, for bus service, Northern Virginia Daily, 11 July 1940.

shop in the new central building at Skyland.[33]

In December 1940 there was a planning conference on the whole Shenandoah concession, the group taking up problems as it moved through the park. The new NPS director, Newton B. Drury from California, participated along with others of NPS and Sky-Line's Frazier and Bemiss. Among the decisions--that businesses at Panorama and Swift Run would be removed when overpasses across the trans-mountain highways were built, both NPS and the company to study relocation sites, one to be in the south section; that Big Meadows and Skyland would be made less exclusive, with all price ranges of meals and lodging; that the company would increase lodging at Big Meadows so meal volume could keep prices low; and that the company would submit plans for Skyland with priorities for annual building.[34]

An economy move in the House appropriations committee led to imposition of a fee for entering Shenandoah, beginning in May 1939--25¢ per car (or $1 for a year's pass)--despite the long reluctance of Cammerer and others to charge people for entering an area donated to Uncle Sam. State conservation chairman Wilbur C. Hall said the "toll charge" was "unfair and unjustified" and would not bring in the anticipated revenue but would hurt the entire state's business. Two Virginia papers printed these words:

> Americans like their national parks, but they like them free. While the number of visitors to all national parks has increased greatly this season, it has decreased in those where admission fees have been imposed lately. A good illustration is found in figures for the Shenandoah and Great Smokies parks....
>
> This year fees were imposed in the Shenandoah...while the Great Smokies remained free. In the latter the number of visitors continued to rise,

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[33] Lassiter, Sept. 1940; Frazier to Lassiter, 12 May 1941; and Lassiter to Alan Eaton, 27 Oct. 1941--National Archives. Copies of subcontract, SNP archives. The guild, with headquarters at Asheville, N.C., had approximately a hundred producers, situated in nine Appalachian states. Though one list showed Elizabeth Winn as a supplier (corn cob pipes and tobacco), very little of the production was from near Shenandoah or by former residents of this park.

[34] Lassiter, Dec. 1940, National Archives, and NPS Washington "Memorandum of Conference," 3 Dec. 1940, SNP archives.

gaining 12 per cent over the 1938 season. The Shenandoah, however, lost patronage, having 10 per cent fewer visitors than a year ago.[35]

Lassiter was puzzled, especially as the decrease came with improvement of facilities, including the new south section of Skyline Drive opened with "very extensive" publicity in August 1939. He believed "that the inauguration of the entrance fee...has had no appreciable adverse effect." He asked opinions of different people, including the head of the U.S. Travel Bureau in New York--who suggested the novelty of Skyline Drive was wearing off, so the people, in the absence of mass recreation in Shenandoah, were seeking their novelty elsewhere.[36]

Whatever the cause or causes, criticism of the fee and mourning over the visitation lag continued. A Memphis paper editorialized:

> [Shenandoah] park was developed at governmental expense, the highways paid for out of the general governmental treasury, and it is patrolled by Government officers. That...is as it should be, but what is irking a considerable number of Americans is that they have to pay a quarter to drive through it.
>
> The scenery was God's idea. The quarter admission fee is the idea of Mr. Ickes, who is rather noted for having odd ideas. It is a small amount, it is true, and one gets more than a quarter's worth of scenic beauty en route over Skyline Drive. What irks is Mr. Ickes' idea of taxation, for that is what it amounts to.... rangers apologetically collect the "two bits" and look as though they wished they were doing something else.[37]

If the Shenandoah fee could not be abolished, imposition of fees on Smoky and Blue Ridge Parkway seemed in order. Lassiter, commenting on an overpass to cross US 250 at Rockfish Gap, advocated "interchangeability of fees between Park and Parkway," with closing of an extra access that could eliminate the need

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[35] Baltimore Sun, 26 Feb. 1939; Northern Virginia Daily, 12 Dec. 1939, reprinted from Fredericksburg Star.

[36] Lassiter, Aug. and Sept. 1939; my own memories of that time; and my recent finding of Travel Bureau letter, which I did not immediately consider meaningful enough for notes. But I do see it as meaningful now, having found opinions that Smoky visitation is largely due to Cherokee Indians and mountain whites, with living demonstrations of their lives and works, and to carnival atmosphere and action at Gatlinburg, Tenn. Many are glad Shenandoah is not similarly "busy."

for extra "checking stations." A conference of the superintendents of the three NPS units, in August 1941, aimed toward a uniform fee. But nothing came of it--Smoky and Blue Ridge continued fee-free, for reasons traceable to "politics."[38]

A Richmond editorial had a catchy title, "Smoke Gets in Our Eyes":

> The State Conservation Commission has announced that for the second time...the Shenandoah...is virtually certain to attract more than 1,000,000 visitors.... The sad part of the story is that the number may not be large enough to keep Virginia's national Park...in the position of national primacy...which it has held continuously since 1935. The mountains of Virginia, and those of North Carolina and Tennessee...have been engaged in a titanic struggle to see whose beauties will attract the most beholders....
>
> Our national park seems about to lose...and for reasons which are highly mysterious.... While the Smokies have two States as champions, which is an advantage, Virginia's national park is nearer the center of the national population, which is a much greater asset for showmanship.
>
> If we should guess with smoke in our eyes, we might say that perhaps military maneuvers in North Carolina and Tennessee might have had something to do with the sudden step-up in attendance at Great Smoky.[39]

The farther-south park was not only snatching the travel record but had a sort of hold on Shenandoah's superintendent. Ickes had ordered Lassiter to change places with Supt. J. Ross Eakin of Smoky. The shift was supposed to end a dispute with Sen. McKellar of Tennessee, who wanted Eakin out because of a patronage dispute hidden under assorted charges that had been disproved through an Ickes probe. Friends warned Lassiter he could hardly avoid being sucked into the same "political situation" that threatened Eakin. The Lassiter family, according to Mrs. Lassiter, "shed tears" at the thought of transferring. Public protests spread in all three states, and Ickes sent Lassiter this odd letter:

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[38] Lassiter, Aug. 1941. For "politics," see, for instance, Harley E. Jolley, The Blue Ridge Parkway (Knoxville: U. of Tenn. Press, 1969), pp. 36 ff. Not only fairness but a technical problem was involved at the Shenandoah-Parkway connection; the crest road Jarman Gap to Rockfish was built as part of the Parkway but was assigned to Shenandoah for administration.

[39] News-Leader, Sept. 1941 (day lacking on clipping), SNP archives. Smoky's count rose above Shenandoah's partly because travel on US 441 across Smoky was counted, whereas travel across Shenandoah on US 33 and US 211 was not. This difference, making comparison suspect, continued.

You will receive in regular course notice of your transfer to the position of superintendent of Great Smoky.... My purpose in writing you this letter is to say that in view of developments since the transfer was announced, the effective date will be postponed indefinitely. One reason for this transfer...was because of the departmental policy to rotate superintendents in the various national parks. However, the publicity which followed the announcement and Senator McKellar's expressed determination to discuss the transfer before the...Senate Committee on Appropriations causes me to withhold its consummation for the present.

You will, therefore, please continue in your present position.[40]

A different disturbance came through an organization without which the park might never have been born:

STAUNTON - Is the Skyline Drive with its accommodations for tourists a blessing or a curse to commercial interests in the Shenandoah Valley? This question is being raised [widely], according to C.G. Gran, executive secretary of Shenandoah Valley, Inc.

Mr. Gran frequently hears complaints that the Drive has diverted tourist traffic off valley highways with consequent loss of revenue to commercial interests.... The complaints, he says, arise most frequently among the proprietors of restaurants, filling stations, tourist homes and inns in the northern part of the valley, opposite the sections of the Drive which have been completed for some time.

"It's all very confusing," says Mr. Gran, "with opinion about evenly divided.... Some proprietors...claim that the bulk of out-of-state traffic passing through this region is using the Drive in preference to valley roads, and that competition of restaurants, inns and a hotel on the Drive has injured their business.

"An equal number...say that the Drive has helped their business despite any competition offered by concessions.... They point out that the Park and the Drive are national drawing cards...that the visitors travel through adjacent areas in going to and from the Park...that the Park has to offer a moderate amount of eating and sleeping accommodations...and that if it did not...it would not be the drawing card that it is.[41]

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[40] Ickes to Lassiter, 19 March 1939, signed original in Lassiter's personal file, lent to me by Mrs. Lassiter in 1976 and returned to her. For McKellar-Eakin conflict, one of the reliable sources is Carlos C. Campbell, Birth of a National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains (Knoxville: U. of Tenn. Press, 1960).

[41] Waynesboro News-Virginian, 15 Sept. 1939.

Gran wrote NPS Washington:

> .... We do not believe NPS intends to develop to the extent of interfering with private enterprises.... However, to keep the record straight--has NPS formulated any policy as to nature, number and size of commercial establishments to be developed in the Park and along Blue Ridge Parkway.

NPS Washington replied:

> .... It is a function of...the National Park Service to make the national park and monument areas available to the public by providing such roads, trails, campgrounds, overnight and meal accommodations, etc., as may be necessary. The policy...is to refrain from providing these facilities until a need therefor has been demonstrated. As national park areas must be maintained in their original state, as far as possible, they must be protected from undue development. Very careful consideration is being given to the needs of the public.... Our policy is not to compete with private enterprises in nearby communities or to provide facilities when adequate and satisfactory accommodations can readily be secured outside the park.[42]

This letter, published widely, reassured some of the complainers--for a time. An Associated Press item based on statements by the state conservation commission also helped. It said, "Outsiders paid $75,000,000 to 'see Virginia' in 1939." It credited Shenandoah park, the state's most popular attraction, and Colonial Williamsburg, second most popular, with being "largely responsible" for a 500% increase in Virginia's tourist trade during the 1930s.

Ickes wrote in his Secret Diary:

> .... my stand on the Negro question is well known. I have been in advance of every other member of the Cabinet, and the Negroes recognize this.... It begins to look as if real justice and opportunity for the Negro at long last might begin to come to him at the hands of the Democratic party, which Negroes have scorned as a political instrumentality until they swung over to Roosevelt in large numbers in 1932, a swing which was more accentuated in this last campaign in spite of money and every desperate effort on the part of the Republicans to drive the Negro voters back into

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[42] Gran to Cammerer, 14 Sept. 1939, and J.R. White, NPS chief of operations, to Gran, 29 Sept. 1939, SNP archives, as printed in News-Virginian, 15 Sept. 1939, and Northern Virginia Daily, 5 Oct. 1939, respectively. Policy, in practice, varied widely; no concessions at all to serve the motoring public were granted in Smoky, a larger area, and its visitors seem to have done well without them.

the Republican fold where they had been since they were enfranchised.[43]

NPS had been aware since 1932 of the racial dilemma in Shenandoah, though possibly not of all its political interconnections. Demaray had put administrative policy clearly in 1936:

> The program of development of facilities...for the accommodation and convenience of the visiting public contemplates...separate facilities for white and colored people to the extent only as is necessary to conform with the generally accepted customs long established in Virginia but not to such an extent as to interfere with the complete enjoyment of the park equally by all alike.
>
> To render the most satisfactory service to white and colored visitors it is generally recognized that separate rest rooms, cabin colonies and picnic ground facilities should be provided.[44]

Lassiter was following this policy. Separate camp and picnic grounds for Negroes were in the master plan. In February 1937, Lassiter reported, detailed plans were being drawn for the "proposed colored picnic ground at Lewis Mountain." Still, in the complex rush of work he found no time and resources to do anything on the ground before mid-summer--when he was prodded by the Washington office:

> There is growing demand for picnic places for colored people.... Two bus loads are going up tomorrow and they have to be fitted into camping places for the white people. This is not a good condition, and I told Lassiter on Wednesday and Carnes and Taylor this morning that Lassiter would have to revise his CCC work so that he could get started on some of his colored camping grounds.... There will be some criticism by colored people against segregation. But I think we would be subject to more criticism by the colored people as well as the white people if we put them in with the white people.[45]

Lewis Mountain plans now called for camp and picnic grounds plus sleeping and eating facilities to be built by Virginia Sky-Line. In June 1938, Lassiter reported, the picnic ground was graded, ready for stone fireplaces, and the

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[43] The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, vol. ii, The Inside Struggle, 1936-39 (N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1953), entry of Dec. 20, 1936.

[44] Demaray to L.E. Wilson, Hampton, Va., 18 Sept. 1936, SNP archives.

[45] Memo quoted in Demaray to Lassiter, 26 July 1937, SNP archives.

comfort station was "75% complete." There was already criticism, and it reached Ickes before the picnic ground was in use. There was disagreement inside the Department. The Interior solicitor told Ickes he was "unable to subscribe to the doctrine that segregation should be continued." He granted that segregation is "constitutional and otherwise legal, provided that the facilities available to members of each race in all respects are equal." But he argued that, in fact, those at Shenandoah were not equal--not as numerous, as adequate, as appealing, as well cared for. So "segregation of the races as now practiced" at Shenandoah is an "infringement of constitutional principles." He said, further, there was "no legal reason why it can't be stopped" as the federal government has "exclusive jurisdiction" and is not bound by either the laws or customs of Virginia. NPS and the concessioner can be required "to remove all traces of...segregation."[46]

Lassiter defended Lewis Mountain:

> .... the member of the Solicitor's Office is in error when he says that I told him that the Lewis Mountain area is inferior in every respect to similar facilities provided for white people. In talking to him about this matter, I went over the various areas provided for the white people, and in some cases it is true that the esthetic value of the location is superior to that of Lewis Mountain, but this is applicable only to Dickey Ridge and Sexton Knoll. Lewis Mountain has as good an outlook and as good surroundings, if not better, than Elkwallow or South River.
>
> As for the facilities...they are all identical--that is, standard comfort stations, standard fireplaces, standard tables.[47]

Cammerer, worried by Ickes as well as by criticism from outside, called for facts on existing and planned facilities for both races, and Lassiter furnished data by units (usually person capacity)--for instance, dining room facilities, 310 white existing, 570 white and 80 colored proposed; picnicking (parked cars), 390 white and 62 colored existing, 545 white and 100 colored proposed; fireplaces,

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[46] Nathan R. Margold to Ickes, 17 Jan. 1939. See also E.K. Burlew, first ass't sec'y, to W.D. Nixon, Federation of Civic Associations of the District of Columbia, 22 Dec. 1938, on efforts to desegregate NPS facilities in Washington.

[47] Lassiter to Director, 8 Feb. 1939, SNP archives.

77 white and 12 colored existing, 185 white and 55 colored proposed; comfort stations, 124 white and 29 colored existing, 251 white and 55 colored proposed.[48]

Most of the argument was in Washington, and a comparison of files kept there with files kept at the park suggests that Lassiter was not kept fully informed. Assistant secretary Burlew, for instance, asked the Virginia senators their opinion. Byrd replied:

> I have no complaints with respect to the matter...and would be glad to be advised by you of the source of the numerous and well formulated protests that you state have been made to you with regard to the segregation....
>
> When the Park was established, it was agreed that all laws governing the State of Virginia would be in effect within the Park area.[49]

The Department's Negro affairs advisor suggested to Ickes "a gradual approach" as what seems unacceptable now may well be easily acceptable soon:

> .... (1) The ultimate aim [should] be to provide for all citizens, without segregation or discrimination, use of all facilities whether furnished by the Federal Government or by concessionaires. (2) As a step toward this objective, all picnic areas and camping areas be undesignated; i.e., open to all persons who desire to use them. This would do away with the special "colored" reservation at Lewis Mountain and would open to Negroes as well as others the areas at Dickey Ridge, Elk Wallow, Sexton Knoll, Big Meadows, and South River. (3) A second step to be elimination of all signs designating areas and facilities by race....
>
> These steps do not involve the facilities provided by concessionaires since it is realized that there are other specific business problems that will have to be solved. It is suggested that later on these recommendations might be worked out to include these facilities as well.[50]

A conference was then held in the Secretary's office. NPS Washington was well represented, but no one from the involved southern parks was there. Lassiter was told that, while "generally" state laws and local customs would be followed, the Secretary wanted one large picnic area in Shenandoah to be

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[48] Lassiter to Director, 24 Feb. 1939, SNP archives.

[49] Burlew to Byrd and to Glass, 6 March 1939, and Byrd to Burlew, 9 March 1939, National Archives.

[50] W.J. Trent, Jr., to Secretary, 20 March 1939, National Archives. Ickes

open to all, with no signs indicating race segregation in the picnic grounds or the comfort stations. The Secretary also decreed that, "instead of operators requiring Negro visitors to secure meals in employee dining rooms, as is the present practice...a separate room or space must be provided." Lassiter picked Sexton Knoll for both whites and Negroes. And he told the Director that an "alcove-like space in Panorama dining room, northern corner, will be allocated for Negroes," and similar arrangements would be made at Swift Run Gap. No change was agreed upon for other locations, such as Skyland and Big Meadows.[51]

Walter White, NAACP, New York, was involved. Whether he knew of the changes Ickes was making at Shenandoah I do not know--probably not. He expressed to the Secretary his "surprise" when a group showed him these words in the official park folder: "Those wishing to picnic should use areas established at Dickey Ridge, Sexton Knoll, South River, and Elk Wallow Gap, and for colored people at Lewis Mountain." He commented: "Knowing your own attitude I assured them that I was certain you did not have knowledge of this racial segregation." Ickes replied carefully, assuring him that "everything possible" was being done "to extend a friendly welcome to all visitors." But--

> I feel that in the interest of all the people the national parks should not become jurisdictional islands in the states. I am of the opinion that the history of discrimination for many years cannot be changed at once by an order of the Secretary...and I am sure you feel the same about it.[52]

For months after that a standard feature of Interior-NPS answers to racial complaints was an explanation that the southern parks should not become "jurisdictional islands." But White's protest would grow on Ickes and cause trouble.

Lassiter soon reported progress--and tension:

> Picnic grounds, both white and colored, have been well patronized during [August]. The recently opened Lewis Mountain area for negroes exclusively enjoyed an attendance of 115 parties, composed of 840 persons.

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[51] Demaray to Director on 24 March meeting, 25 March 1939, SNP archives, and Lassiter's monthly reports.

[52] White, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, to Ickes, 10 April 1939, and Ickes to White, 11 May 1939, SNP archives.

> A church picnic held here on August 17 was attended by 385 people.... The joint use of Pinnacles Picnic Ground [formerly Sexton Knoll]...by both white and colored persons has elicited several verbal complaints from the white users of this area. However, no fights have resulted as yet!

Fights at South River and at Skyland coffee shop, according to the acting superintendent, were avoided in 1939 only by the diplomatic skill of rangers instructed to try for "compromises that would be acceptable to all parties concerned." At Pinnacles the rangers "have been bitterly assailed for allowing the joint use."[53]

Early in 1940 Virginia Sky-Line was speeding its construction at Lewis Mountain--reluctantly. The company had written NPS that this operation--lodging and restaurant--would be a "distinct loss"; if rates were similar to those at other comparable operations in the park, low volume would cause the other operations "to bear an unreasonable burden" amounting to a subsidy by whites for blacks. Cammerer endorsed the company's dissatisfaction:

> I myself have felt right along that there was not sufficient demand for negroes for this particular type of accommodations to make it pay, but I understand that the Secretary has insisted on the installation and that this is why they are progressing. Next year if it does not pay, we can take up the question of closing it or making it available for white occupancy. I think Frazier had better advertise this, sending copies to Howard University. [signed] A.B.C.[54]

The very next month Cammerer was out as NPS Director "for reasons of health"--demoted and moved from Washington. Ickes recorded in his Secret Diary several anti-Cammerer statements, though not specifically mentioning Shenandoah or race. On September 16, 1939, he discussed with FDR making Robert Moses of New York the Director, saying, "I am thoroughly persuaded that I cannot go along much longer with Cammerer." FDR discouraged this change. But then, on June 23, 1940, Ickes wrote:

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[53] Lassiter's August 1939 report; and T.T. Smith (acting supt. while Lassiter was out because of a heart attack) to Director, 28 Feb. 1940, SNP archives.

[54] Cable to Director, 2 May 1940, SNP archives. This memo, with Cammerer's added note, was apparently circulated to NPS top staff and may have reached Department level, even Ickes.

> I got a wire on Monday from Newton Drury...definitely accepting my offer of the Directorship.... So I had Demaray in to tell him what was in the wind. Probably Demaray was disappointed that he was not to be moved up, but he took it very well. I told him that he was paying the penalty of being too efficient in the job he now has.... I would not know how to fill his place if he should go. Yet, while he is a good detail man, he is not the type of man, in my opinion, for Cammerer's place.

Cammerer was publicly credited by Ickes with "creation" of Shenandoah. He became regional director of NPS at Richmond, but in April 1941 he died of a heart attack at the age of 57.[55]

Ickes summarized his use of Shenandoah as a race-relations laboratory:

> For several years I have been working with leaders of the Negro race ...to open up national park and monument areas in the Southern States to Negroes. In the Shenandoah...we experimented with several picnic areas and have had no serious complaint. I expect to extend this non-discriminatory policy to other areas.[56]

It is unlikely that Cammerer knew exactly what Ickes was up to--even less likely that Lassiter did. If Lassiter had known he might have avoided head-on collision with the "old curmudgeon." Lassiter identified with Shenandoah. According to Mrs. Lassiter, he was "absolutely wrapped up in this park." He worked long hours six days a week, and when Sunday came he took his family, and guests if any, into the park.

The day after Christmas 1939 Lassiter had a heart attack (at age 45). While he was sick an order came to his office that "no mention will be made of segregation on the map or in the park literature." The order was obeyed insofar as Lassiter or the acting superintendent knew, but when Lassiter had caught up with the work again he wrote Director Drury telling of racial near-conflicts and criticizing de-emphasis on making known the existing policy.

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[55] Cammerer "resigned" as Director in June 1940 and died 30 April 1941 at his home in Cherrydale, Va., according to unidentified clippings, SNP archives.

[56] Ickes to Archibald MacLeish, 21 May 1942, National Archives.

.... I think the best policy to pursue is definite segregation, either by separate areas or by setting aside a portion of each area for Negroes. Of course, neither of these suggestions will meet with the approval of that group of Negroes and their leaders who are not content with a gradual and steady improvement in the interracial relations but must have their millennium at once....

With our present attitude of providing a Negro area and not advertising it, we merely aggravate the situation. I still don't understand how a Negro is to know that there is a place in the Park for him if we are afraid to publish such a fact. I have just received a letter from the Travel Bureau in New York wanting to know what is available at Lewis Mountain for Negroes and further stating that they wish to comment on the lack of any indication in the official booklet on this Park that Lewis Mountain is for Negroes....

It seems to me that we are making a mountain out of a mole hill in becoming excited every time a high-toned Negro files a complaint.[57]

That same day he answered the Travel Bureau with full information and added:

All information in the official booklet...that this area is for the exclusive use of Negroes was deleted by the Washington office for reasons unknown to this office. I agree with you that publicity should be given to this area [Lewis Mtn.] so that the Negro visitor or prospective visitor may know in advance that facilities are available for him.[58]

Soon he was called upon by Washington to explain markings in red pencil on official maps given to some visitors, identifying Lewis Mountain as "for colored people only." He investigated:

This practice evolved late in the spring or early summer when District Ranger Chick and Chief Ranger Stephens discussed the number of Negroes who were using the Dickey Ridge and Elkwallow Picnic Grounds. In order that the Negroes, on entering the Park at Front Royal could be informed of the areas available for them and at the same time not to hold up other traffic ...the Chief Ranger, being unaware of any ruling to the contrary, instructed the District Ranger to delineate in some manner the necessary information

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[57] Cammerer to Acting Supt., 15 March 1940, and Lassiter to Director, 1 Aug. 1940, SNP archives.

[58] Lassiter to U.S. Travel Bureau, New York (also under Ickes), 1 Aug. 1940, SNP archives.

on the circulars for distribution to the Negro visitors. This resulted in a supply of the circulars being marked as the one complained of....

Immediately upon receipt of your memorandum, the issuance of the circulars with the information indicated thereon was discontinued.

Ickes's first assistant acknowledged Lassiter's explanation--and commented that if "Mr. Lassiter had been told of the object in changing the pamphlets originally ...he was negligent in not passing the word on to his chief ranger." Though the matter might be argued, Lassiter, who had been ill and largely off duty, did not feel that he had been told the "object"--as his letter to the Travel Bureau showed.[59]

Virginia Mitchell, then working in the Shenandoah office, has told the episode frankly:

> Mr. Lassiter got a dirty kick in the pants....
>
> One Sunday afternoon a black who held a high position in government ...had come to the Front Royal entrance and asked the seasonal ranger, "Where is a campground for colored people?"--which was a trick. The ranger ...gave him a pamphlet with the red pencil marking Lewis Mountain, and that guy promptly took that thing back to Washington, to Mr. Ickes's office....
>
> Mr. Ickes himself sent for Mr. Lassiter to come to Washington and there he rolled him over the coals and just laid him low because he--or, rather, employees he was responsible for--had violated this direct instruction that nothing was to indicate any particular area for blacks....
>
> It wasn't long after that when we heard Mr. Lassiter was going to be transferred.[60]

Mrs. Lassiter confirmed that race conflict was the "reason we left.... Ralph and Ickes didn't get along about that." But this transfer too would lag painfully.

Ickes himself publicized in official "literature," almost at the same time, the policy of segregation, stating in his printed annual report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1940, that "the development for the accommodation of Negroes

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[59] Lassiter to Director, 2 Sept. 1940, and Burlew to Demaray, 10 Sept. 1940, National Archives.

[60] Mitchell, personal interview, 28 Nov. 1976. Mrs. Mitchell was promoted to the position of chief clerk of the park in 1942 and continued in that post until 1945. She said that few if any Shenandoah park people liked Ickes.

at Lewis Mountain...has just been completed." There may have been no way for Lassiter through the complex maze. He probably angered Ickes again that fall by, in a sense, defending him. The Republican National Committee was attacking the Secretary by circulating a statement by Sen. Townsend of Delaware that Shenandoah did not "welcome" Negroes. Lassiter told the inquiring press:

> Negroes are welcome.... We have facilities for them, which we wouldn't have if they were not welcome. We have a lodge, a dining hall, cabins and picnic grounds all for Negroes...exclusively...and another picnic ground... for the joint use of Negroes and whites.[61]

NPS chief of engineering Taylor--the man most directly instrumental in bringing Lassiter to Shenandoah and a close associate and friend since then--came out in January 1941 to study the park's racial situation. The result was a 20-page report with maps and data sheets. There had been 9,352 negro visitors in 1939, 1.05% of the total, and 10,217 in 1940, 1.07%. Lodging and dining at Dickey Ridge, Skyland and Big Meadows were for white only (except negro chauffeurs and maids), but all lunch counters, gift shops and gas stations were used in common, though toilets were separate. Panorama and Swift Run had separate space in dining rooms and separate toilets. Pinnacles Picnic Ground, including its toilets, was used by both races, though many whites were separating themselves as far as possible from negroes, and some "got mad, froze up and left without talking to anyone.... The Chief Ranger feels greater concern over the proper handling of the race problem...than in any of his other duties." Most of the negro use of white-only picnic areas is probably because negroes do not know which accommodations are intended for them.

> Whenever a ranger observes negroes using picnic grounds intended only for whites, he informs them of the areas intended for their use, but he does not require them to move.... So far as I could learn the Superintendent and the rangers are not prejudiced in carrying out existing

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[61] Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior, 1940, and, for Lassiter statement, Richmond Times-Dispatch, 1 Nov. 1940. As to the annual report, it is possible of course that Ickes never read all its words, though they were published in his name; his administrative load was extraordinarily heavy.

instructions on racial use.... They report that, in general, the local negroes much prefer to have their own areas. The negroes from Washington and Baltimore and those on tour are the ones who at times object to segregation and write to Washington.

The Superintendent advises against much more common use of areas at this time. He thinks that in time there could be more common use without difficulty, but that it must come gradually.

Taylor endorsed continued dining and lodging segregation. He suggested creating an additional picnic ground for joint use, maybe at Jenkins Gap in the north section. He reported no problem at campgrounds--no negro camping. Lewis Mountain campground, with capacity for 13 trailers and 27 tents, was open throughout the 1940 season and "never used." The lodge there had only about 5% use; the picnic ground, about 10% of capacity.[62]

Drury and Demaray discussed the Taylor report with Burlew, Ickes's first assistant, who later circulated a memo expressing satisfaction with the Shenandoah situation. Then suddenly, at the start of the 1941 outdoor season, came a bold decision to experiment with "no segregation" at all "in any of the picnic grounds." No publicity or statements would "be given out locally regarding this decision."[63]

That July there was a written protest by a white Virginian named Handy against exclusion of whites from the unused Lewis Mountain Campground:

> I have always had the privilege of riding in a Jim Crow car if I wanted to. The way to solve the negro problem is certainly not to begin discriminating against whites. Anyway, please say so in your literature if you are going to discriminate this way so I'll know were I can camp.

Lassiter sent the protest to Drury, saying: "It will be appreciated if you will write Mr. Handy explaining to him why we do not publicize the fact that Lewis Mountain is exclusively for negroes."[64]

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[62] Oliver G. Taylor, "Report on Development for Public Use in Shenandoah National Park with Particular Reference to Racial Use," 23 Jan. 1941, SNP archives.

[63] Drury to Lassiter, 25 Feb. 1941, SNP archives, and Burlew to Trent, 14 April 1941, National Archives.

[64] Lassiter to Director, 1 Aug. 1941--with copy of complaint left at Swift Run checking station by E.S. Handy, Fairfax, Va.--SNP archives.

What Drury did with this complaint I have not learned, but in October he wrote Lassiter a letter of appreciation for his accomplishments at Shenandoah, and said "my best wishes for continued success in your new field of operation go with you." The formal notice of transfer was dated October 18 and was signed by the Interior Department's personnel director:

> Transfer and Change in Status canceling Change in Station to Great Smoky Mountains Park--from Superintendent FCS-16, $4600...to Regional Engineer, FCS-15, $4200...NPS, Engrg., Region 3, Santa Fe.... This transfer is not for the convenience of the employee.

An Associated Press item, quoting Demaray, said the transfer was because of "engineering work to be done in that region for which Lassiter is especially qualified." The fact that the transfer was also a drop in grade and salary remained unknown to the public, even to Lassiter's associates in the park.[65]

Yet an extensive public furor erupted, beginning with an editorial in the Waynesboro paper:

> News...that J.R. Lassiter...is to be transferred...comes as a distinct blow to those of us living nearest this great "playground of the east."
>
> Mr. Lassiter, native Virginian, has taken far more personal interest in the development of the Shenandoah than might have been reasonably expected from a career man in federal service.... largely through this personal interest and an unflagging zeal the area has developed into the State's greatest attraction.... It is no issue to be lightly tossed aside that the man largely responsible...is to be shunted thousands of miles away.

Other Virginia papers took up the cry--at Richmond, Winchester, Harrisonburg, cities and towns that were smaller or farther away. The Harrisonburg-Rockingham Chamber of Commerce adopted a formal resolution asking that Lassiter "be allowed to complete the task." The chairman of the state conservation commission wrote to Ickes himself:

> .... It is only natural, of course, that when a man is giving satisfaction on his job, those who are closely associated with him hate to see any

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[65] Drury to Lassiter, 17 Oct. 1941, and notice by J. Atwood Maulding, 18 Oct. 1941, Lassiter's personal file; plus Associated Press, Washington, 4 Nov. 1941, unidentified clipping, SNP archives.

change. That is certainly true of Mr. Lassiter. He has done a wonderful job and while I would not for one moment stand in the way of a promotion to him, yet I feel that Virginia will sufier some loss by his transfer. Many of the organizations interested in recreation and travel are anxious to have you retain Mr. Lassiter...in his present capacity.[66]

Some Virginians in Congress--including Senators Byrd and Glass, according to Mrs. Lassiter--complained to Ickes. Rep. S.O. Bland did also--and sent Lassiter the reply from Ickes:

> .... Mr. Lassiter served as an engineer with the National Park Service prior to his appointment to the superintendency of Shenandoah National Park. After a careful study of his work in both positions, it was the conclusion of the National Park Service, in which I concurred, that Mr. Lassiter will render more valuable service to the Government as an engineer than as an administrative official. This decision was reached only after a long and detailed observation of his work.

Others protesting directly to Ickes got similar replies.[67]

Ickes again called Lassiter to Washington and verbally attacked him, this time for stirring up "political trouble." Lassiter denied having done so but apparently was not believed. The attack became so violent it left him unsure whether he had any job at all. Two days later Director Drury wrote him (Confidential):

> In reference to...your visit to the Secretary's office on November 25, Mr. Demaray received word today from the Secretary's office that it would be satisfactory for you to proceed with arrangements to transfer to Region Three Headquarters.[68]

Two years and nine months later Lassiter's salary in New Mexico had climbed

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[66] Waynesboro News-Virginian, 6 Nov. 1941; Harrisonburg Chamber, 14 Nov. 1941, SNP archives; and N. Clarence Smith to Ickes, 19 Nov. 1941, Lassiter's file.

[67] Ickes to Bland, 5 Dec. 1941, Lassiter's file--which has other similar letters.

[68] Drury to Lassiter, 27 Nov. 1941, Lassiter's file. Virginia Mitchell told me she launched the newspaper furor (interview 1976): "I felt that Lassiter was a good superintendent, and from my days as a newspaper editor in South Boston, Va., I still had some friends in the press...so I went to them [without Lassiter's knowledge].... He was rolled over the coals for that...and he wasn't guilty.... I was awfully sorry."

to what it had been at Shenandoah. Mrs. Iassiter said he enjoyed working as regional engineer and the family liked Santa Fe. Even so, his personal file shows he applied in 1945 for the superintendency of Great Smoky, to which he had once been "transferred" without going on duty. But he was not chosen this time; he continued in Santa Fe and before the end of 1951 his salary had climbed far beyond the Shenandoah level. Shortly after that he died--before reaching age 60--somewhat as Cammerer had died in Ickes-imposed "exile."

## Quiet War and Busy Postwar

Shenandoah's second superintendent, Edward D. Freeland, was a "Mather man" experienced in western parks and dedicated more to preservation than to development that had been Lassiter's forte. He came on duty January 1, 1942, just weeks after Pearl Harbor. In his February report he wrote:

> Although this month foreshadows the disintegration of both NPS and CCC organizations, with projects crippled for lack of men and everyone finding it difficult to look ahead...we are still optimistic.... There is some reason to believe that [travel] from Washington and other centers of population may this year be as great or greater than ever before.
>
> Now--1942--may be the best opportunity...to reaffirm the importance of the national parks in the American way of life.... Those who will this year need physical and spiritual relaxation and recreation will be receiving these in the national parks.... they should be strengthened in morale and in emotional stability...and we will key ourselves to that need.[1]

NPS here was "woefully lacking in tools and equipment and...almost wholly dependent upon the CCC" that was being pulled away by the war, leaving the "permanent" staff on its own for the first time while facing reduction in its always-sparse numbers and in appropriations. Freeland appealed for conscientious objectors to take over from CCC enrollees at NP-10, closest camp to headquarters.[2]

Gasoline and tires were rationed, and hikers soon complained:

> The draining of gasoline tanks is a frequent if not common occurrence on the Drive.... This is the sort of thing which some trail folks can and do take in stride--an almost natural hazard. But the prospect of finding one's automobile sitting on four hubs is hardly to be relished. And it

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[1] Granville Liles, personal interview, 20 Aug. 1977, tape in my files; Waynesboro News-Virginian, 18 Nov. 1941; and monthly report, Feb. 1942. Freeland's monthly narrative reports, 1942-49, National Archives, are the source to be assumed wherever Freeland "reported" and no other source is cited.

[2] Freeland to Director Newton B. Drury, 9 Jan. 1942, SNP archives, and Freeland, personal interview, 14 May 1978, tape in my files. This interview is the source to be assumed wherever Freeland "said"--and no other source is cited. CCC camp 3 was already abandoned and camp 10 was being abandoned; camps 2 and 12 were "approved for abandonment on or about March 15."

seems a prospect which slight changes in the rules...might alleviate. Freeland rejected PATC's request for the "special privilege" of hiding cars in the woods. He suggested parking at developed areas where rangers came by and the presence of park visitors, employees and remaining CCC "boys" would deter theft.[3]

But the spring surge of visitors was slow in coming despite an encouraging statement by President Roosevelt:

> It has been proven beyond doubt that human beings cannot sustain continued and prolonged work for very long without obtaining a proper balance between work on the one hand and vacation and recreation on the other....
>
> Virginia's Shenandoah National Park...is located in the center of one of the...heaviest populated areas...short driving distance...every reason to believe that a trip to Shenandoah can be easily included.[4]

There was hope also that Congress would continue part of the CCC, but that action also was slow to come. The "boys" were leaving for military service or being withdrawn from camps. ECW-CCC supervisory and technical staffs were decreasing. Then came a telegraphed order to discontinue "work program all CCC camps immediately and devote enrollees to preparing for closing on or about July 15."[5]

The suddenness of normalcy's collapse was hard to accept. Neither NPS nor Virginia Sky-Line Co. could quite believe the busy season would not come. Fee collection went on for a while in the spring at entrance stations. Freeland noticed wild flowers decorating concessions and asked the company to remind its personnel that NPS prohibits picking flowers:

> .... we would suggest the use of small cards by each display.... The cards would give both the common and scientific names of the plants, followed by the statement that while they are native to the Park area, they were secured outside its boundaries.[6]

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[3] Paul C. Woodbridge to Director Drury, 30 Jan. 1942, and Freeland to Director, 27 April 1942, SNP archives.

[4] Christian Science Monitor, March 1942 (date missing), SNP archives.

[5] Director to Superintendent, 8 July 1942, SNP archives.

[6] Freeland to T. McCall Frazier, 24 April 1942, National Archives.

The company, at the request of the Interior Department, had been preparing an added service--food and lodging at Camp Hoover--but NPS Washington wrote:

> .... regarding opening up Rapidan Camp for a resort for Government officials. In view of the developments with regard to rubber and gasoline, I am afraid that this is the wrong time to start anything along this line. However, I am placing it in suspense.... I still think that except for these two reasons this would be an excellent thing.

A month later the plan was still not quite dead. An NPS accountant, asked to study it, came up with rates to be charged--$5 per person or $3.50 each for two in a room with private bath, 40¢ for breakfast, 60¢ for lunch, $1 for dinner.[7]

It was all very confusing. Soon Virginia Sky-Line was asking permission to curtail, rather than increase, its services. Before the end of May curtailment was approved by NPS. Freeland reported May travel down 75%. He was revising work assignments of remaining personnel. It had been a bad month--not only staff deterioration and shortage of visitation but also "the worst lightning seige in Shenandoah's history," five fires, and havoc in the underground phone system. By July both Big Meadows Lodge and the Lewis Mountain business had closed. Meals were still being served at Panorama and Swift Run, and Skyland was struggling with little patronage. All would be closed in a month or two.

After CCC projects were discontinued and the "boys" were gone, some of the ECW foremen and technicians remained--"as they were political appointees," Freeland said, and "we had to find places for them." He took advantage of the brief opportunity and put them to work reconditioning an old farm house on the park headquarters area to serve as the superintendent's residence. No such residence had been prepared when early housing was built at headquarters, because Lassiter had preferred to live in Luray. Freeland was scolded for inaugurating a job without formal approval, but the job was done and the house continues to this day as superintendent's residence.

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[7] A.E. Demaray, quoting Ass't Sec'y Burlew, to Freeland, 24 April 1942, SNP archives, and Wilson H. George to Gable of NPS park operators division, 18 May 1942, National Archives.

My family and I lived in Hepburn cottage at Skyland from 1942 fall color to 1943 mountain laurel bloom and saw no one there but an occasional park employee or hiker. Rent, coal, water and electricity were free--courtesy of Virginia Sky-Line, so Skyland would not be left totally deserted. That memorable cottage with its immense picture window rested on the escarpment as if hanging on a sky hook a half-mile above the scenic valley. I was temporarily a ranger, keeping watch and records on maintenance which was the main task then. The mountain people were gone. ~~and no visitors came to Skyland, not even vandals.~~ We were left with ghosts of the past--and with growing populations of wild creatures that left tracks in the snow. We felt suspended in space and time.

The absence of travel was eerie. Virginia Sky-Line, with no Congress to give even tiny appropriations such as NPS received, was trapped. Its total gross revenue in October 1942, Freeland reported, was $3,127.56--five percent of its gross the previous October. Having no public facilities left open, Frazier asked that the $1250 franchise fee be waived. Drury said this could not be done --unless the Secretary would amend the contract by inserting, say:

> Provided, that in the event of changed conditions due to the war emergency, the operator may...apply in writing to be relieved from obligations for stated periods...and the application of the provision or provisions of this contract involved shall be suspended during such...periods.

Company directors asked for such an amendment, also relief from phone and water charges "until such time as operations are resumed." The Interior solicitor then held that such contracts could be amended only with prior clearance from the Comptroller General--unlikely to be given--so payments were insisted upon. Frazier protested to Drury (whose offices had been moved to Chicago to make more room in Washington for war work):

> [We are] now prohibited from rendering any service...by the fact that in the seventeen Eastern States, motorists are prohibited from using their cars for pleasure.... This makes impossible the use...of our facilities.

Frazier was told that if "because of war" it could be shown clearly that the

company could not finance even limited service the Comptroller General might, after all, relent. But Frazier insisted the company could finance anything there was any use financing. The sparring continued for months. Frazier sent Freeland a news item showing motorists being tagged on Skyline Drive for pleasure driving. Freeland replied that "if it is true that they tagged eleven cars, they certainly did not do it all in one day as we do not have more than three or four cars in any one day." The company paid--and went on losing money with no income.[8]

In an effort to keep visitation from ceasing entirely, Freeland told the press that--while no lodging or restaurant facilities, service stations or stores were open along Skyline Drive--accommodations were available in nearby towns. Open for use in the park were the Drive, camp and picnic grounds, foot and bridle trails, trailside shelters and lean-tos. "Albert W. Lewis operates a pack and saddle horse service over park trails south of Front Royal"--saddle horse rates $1 an hour per person, or 50¢ an hour per person in party of six or more; overnight pack trips (exclusive of meals) $6 per person in parties of four or $5 in parties of six. Also there is trout fishing from April 20 to July 31.[9]

Though bus service was curtailed it did reach the park. The trail club recommended it--for instance, to Thornton Gap. "The traveler should make advance reservation for the use of Meadow Spring Shelter, a distance of only 2.2 miles south of Thornton Gap." He could leave Washington at 4:45 p.m. and reach the gap at 7:25. The daily return bus left the gap at 12:52 p.m.--"an early hour for a mountain devotee to leave his favored haunts"--but on Sundays and holidays there was a return bus leaving the gap at 4:52 p.m., much better for the hiker.[10]

The 1942 growing season intruded on the trails, and the club wrote Freeland:

> Now that the CCC is gone, it occurred to us you have no labor.... [We] can furnish the manpower.... If it had not been for gasoline rationing, so that we can seldom get as far as Shenandoah [because] buses

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[8] Drury to Frazier, 16 Jan. 1943; company board minutes, 4 Feb.; Noble J. Wilt to Freeland, 6 April; Frazier to Drury, 15 April; Tolson to Frazier, 29 April; Frazier to Drury, 1 June; Freeland to Frazier, 12 June; Tolson to Frazier, 16 July, 1943--SNP archives.

[9] SNP news release, June 1943 (no day given), SNP archives.

[10] Potomac Appalachian Trail Club Bulletin, Oct. 1942.

> or trucks from Washington...cannot be chartered...we would long since have offered our services.... it might be that some Government trucks or other transportation would be available, and that if you knew you could call on us for labor, you might have some suggestions.

Freeland thanked the club--but could provide no transportation. He planned to "start a crew next week...in charge of a ranger and clean out and maintain" all trails [as] we have a CPS camp." Then "up to 19 inches of rain fell in five days"--Freeland reported--and the trail system was wrecked. Bridges around the park were washed out, leaving bridgeless Skyline Drive the only north-south route for many miles. For a while it had traffic again, but "essential" local traffic, not real park traffic. The ranger assigned to trail maintenance asked for a stakebody truck and 20 men, instead of smaller truck and smaller crew, saying he could thus utilize scarce rubber and gasoline more efficiently--

> especially if we are to undertake any of the heavier maintenance such as filling in and surfacing...washed out places...several hundred feet in length and sometimes as much as eight feet deep.
>
> Practically the entire trail from Fishers Gap to Big Meadows will have to be reconstructed.... Fire foot trails are much in need.... Many of the Truck fire trails having been rendered impassable...the value... of well defined foot trails is increased.

But even the flood failed to defeat the sparse park staff. Within a month Freeland was able to tell PATC that "the Appalachian Trail in the Park has been worked its full length and brushed out."[11]

Some trails were lost, though, during the war. Before the end of 1944 Freeland was reviewing the system with PATC to decide what mileage might be eliminated from the park's master plan. The club was abandoning some "blue-blazed trails," especially in the north district, painting over the blazes with brown, removing the signs, preparing to report their abandonment in the next edition of the trail handbook, though planning to keep the data in "so any who prefer

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[11] Frank Schairer of PATC to Freeland, 3 Oct. 1942; Freeland to Schairer, 8 Oct.; Ranger Chas. L. Croghan to Freeland, 31 Oct. 1942--SNP archives--and Freeland's October 1942 report, National Archives.

to follow obscure woodland paths may try doing so." Before the war ended Freeland officially recommended deletion of 81.8 miles of trail, retaining only 207.73 miles--161.04 miles to be maintained by NPS, 46.69 miles by PATC.[12]

It is both ironic and indicative of increasing wildness that one of Shenandoah's most serious cases of a lost person came in wartime and involved not a visitor or a hiker but a park neighbor. Doris Dean, age 4, wandered from her home near the south district boundary on a Monday afternoon in May 1943. By Tuesday hundreds of searchers were combing the foothill forests. Then Supt. Freeland said the little girl would not follow the line of least resistance but would take the more difficult course and climb instead of descend. The search took in the higher country, and when Doris was found at last about 2 p.m. Saturday she was on the highest point of Rocky Mount--"half naked, her feet blistered and bruised, and her entire body covered with scratches and insect bites, some of them badly infected. She had a deep bronchial cold." She had been lost without food or other aid for five days and nights. She told her mother that she "drinked water from the leaves," that rabbits had sat close to her at night, that she had seen an airplane. At the hospital she was found to have pneumonia, and she was given blood transfusions along with other treatment. She was saved, and the chief ranger wrote: "Before the brooding silence of those eternal hills, I am humble and awed, for I am reminded so forcibly that the day of miracles has not passed."[13]

A Civilian Public Service camp was "justified" by the Director's office:

> The proposed work is of National importance and will consist of construction, improvement and maintenance of park and recreational facilities, including roads, trails, utilities, and park structures, and the restoration, conservation, and protection of natural resources by reforestation, erosion control, fire suppression and pre-suppression, grading,

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[12] PATC Bulletin, Jan. 1944; ~~and~~ PATC's Schmeckebier to Freeland, 2 Jan. 1945, and Freeland to regional director, 22 May 1945, SNP archives.

[13] Chief Ranger W.T. Stephens, "A Little Girl Is Lost," PATC Bulletin, April 1944.

sloping banks, planting, seeding, sodding, and other similar work. The first 26 conscientious objectors arrived at old CCC camp 10, Pinnacles, in mid-August 1942. The camp--now CPS 45--soon filled, averaging 75 to 130 men.

> We were fortunate in having...various branches of the Mennonite sect, a thrifty, hard-working farm people.... During the first two years...the camp contained many skilled workmen.... Taking advantage of this help, we were able to accomplish much more skilled maintenance...and also complete construction of fire lookouts and similar protection.
>
> However, CPS camp 45 was largely used as a redistribution center for new assignees. New men were brought in, run through orientation training, and sent out on projects, only to be transferred later to other camps.... This resulted in constant turnover...with frequent loss of good men trained for key positions.

Freeland said further that the men were mostly 25 to 30 years old and that the families and the church furnished transportation to camp, food and clothing while in camp. Every weekend, he said, their home people would come with truckloads of supplies. NPS furnished only quarters, tools and supervision--"they didn't cost the government other than that." There was only one instance of their refusing to work. The army wanted surplus CCC barracks and asked the CPS men to dismantle the buildings for hauling. They were nice about it but just would not do it--said, "No. That would help the war."[14]

Several men from the camp, Freeland said, helped compile the park's ranger manual. One of these was Herbert Zim--associated with Golden Nature guides that have sold by the million in paperback. He worked a lot with the rangers, mostly helping to "survey" old mountain homes to decide whether they should be saved. He made several detailed studies of structures he considered especially historic, hoping they could be stabilized or restored and exhibited to the public. He

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[14] Herbert Evison of NPS to Interior Dept. representative, National Service Camps, 15 July 1942; ~~and~~ Evison to regional director, 1 Aug. 1942; Freeland to regional director, 1 July 1946--National Archives--in addition to Freeland interview, 1978. The ~~Zim's studies of structures and park history~~ military authorities exercized an inspection function in regard to the CPS camps, so there must have been this small additional cost to the government.

also made a long outline, with likely sources, for a history of the park area and of the park itself.[15]

Virginia Mitchell, chief clerk, said one conscientious objector who worked in the warehouse and another in the office were "good help." But she found these people "different," hard to get acquainted with. Many, maybe most, ~~of them~~ were married. Wives ~~of many of them~~ would come and stay for varying times at a motel not far from park headquarters, and their husbands would visit them there. The camp had a special room for visiting wives, which was reserved in advance. Once by mistake two reservations overlapped. The two wives came, and there was only this one room available. A temporary partition was proposed, but church authorities frowned on this solution. The couples had to solve the problem for themselves. Zim would often "get weekends off" and go "home to New York and to his office"; he already was/associated with a publishing company.[16]

CPS job 48, "razing undesirable structures," took over from old CCC job 64 which had been wiping out such buildings since 1936, using 11,900 man days to thus "abolish all traces of human habitation...and bring about...the restoration of a wilderness preserve." The CPS job was set up in 1943 to use 250 man days, but there were renewals and the man days reached 1700. The original justification of CPS 48 said:

> The purpose...is to tear down the houses and outbuildings that were formerly [used by] park residents.... in most cases they are so dilapidated that very little material can be salvaged, and in all cases they are an eye sore and a fire hazard.
>
> It is understood that no buildings will be torn down until the regional director has had an opportunity to review our Form No. SNP-116 entitled "Park Building Survey," which gives a picture of the house, a description, the history and its present use, together with its present condition and our recommendation.

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[15] Freeland interview, 1978. The Zim studies of structures and park history are in SNP archives.

[16] Mitchell, personal interview, 28 Nov. 1976, tape in my files.

> The foundation, walls, chimneys, etc., will be taken down and the areas around the buildings will be cleaned up and, where necessary, material will be hauled in to obliterate scars.

The original justification listed the John Beam house, three Panorama Hotel cottages, and the John Bradley house to be torn down. The first renewal listed ten more houses. The job continued to 1946.[17]

Among other CPS projects to aid the "return of natural conditions" were job 19, erosion control, and job 20, propagation of native trees and shrubs, both started in 1942 and continued through "the life of the camp." Job 19 devoted 1,000 man days to wiping out old woods roads and restoring land that had been "overgrazed" or "wastefully cultivated." It included "temporary check dams or terracing where needed, soil improvement and revegetation." Job 20 devoted 450 man days to moving young woody plants from one place to another inside the park and to operating a nursery that was considered "well located for the production of Blue Ridge Fir" and other natives rare in the park.

An Army infantry officer inspected CPS 45 in 1944 and reported the camp operated by the "Mennonite Central Committee" with Dwight V. Yoder as camp director and the "technical work" being supervised by NPS through camp superintendent Samuel Lancaster:

> Quantity and quality of mess, fair.... sanitation, very good; property, storerooms rather disorderly.... infraction of rules, none recently.... the director was attending the trial of John E. Bargas who deserted in August.... morale, fair.... education [includes] religious organization, first aid, electricity, religious studies, shorthand, shop....
>
> Technical service [includes] project and safety training, fire fighting and fire tower training.... safety, no accidents recently, safety meetings held.... buildings, poor.... grounds, good appearance.... fire protection, satisfactory....
>
> Project work has been approved to the amount of 23,687 man days

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[17] CPS job 48, Samuel D. Lancaster, project superintendent, CPS 45, 8 Nov. 1943. Information on all CPS jobs mentioned by number is from National Archives. CCC job 64, completion report signed by Freeland, 21 Nov. 1942, quoting original justification from 1936; CCC job records also in National Archives.

distributed as follows: major road maintenance, 98 miles, 4000 man days; telephone line maintenance, 120 miles, 508 man days; building maintenance, 40 buildings, 554 man days; developed area maintenance, 1000 man days; fire presuppression, 1500 man days; tree disease control, 1282 man days; warehousing and mechanical assistants, 1500 man days; marking boundaries, 2418 man days; fire road maintenance, 1997 man days; surveys and maps, 1100 man days; vista cutting, 1000 man days; procurement of firewood, 1065 man days; farm service, 914 man days....

The camp is doing considerable emergency farm work this fall, the crews running from 25 to 45 men per day....

It appears that the camp will not be able to get sufficient coal for the winter although it has been on order since last spring. The project superintendent is carrying a firewood crew and cutting wood for camp.[18]

Freeland estimated that "25% of the camp strength went out to surrounding counties to help farmers with their crops." This work was authorized by the Selective Service System:

Vital agricultural activity including production of certain crops certified by the War Food Administration as work of national importance; county agent and U.S. Employment Service determine for area involved that ordinary labor for the work can't be supplied; county agent then calls on the project superintendent to provide men...for agricultural work within a 15-mile radius of camp; farmers...provide transportation...and pay prevailing wages to the Government.

Freeland, always hungry for labor, discontinued "assignment of conscientious objectors to farms" as of August 22, 1945, the war being over. Pay to the Government for farm labor from CPS 45 had been approximately $3 a day--for instance, $870 for 284 man days during December 1944. CPS 45 was closed at the end of June 1946, and the park again had only NPS personnel.[19]

War brought different non-park uses to Shenandoah. In November 1942, Freeland reported, the Smithsonian Institution brought twelve truckloads of

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[18] Lt.-Col. Franklin A. McClean, inspection report, 23 Oct. 1944, National Archives.

[19] Freeland to regional director, 23 Oct. 1944, for 25% estimate; Tolson to Dewey R. Wood, 28 Oct. 1944, for farm work procedure; Freeland to G.H. Clark, chm. County War Board, Luray, 22 Aug. 1945; and Tolson to regional director, 21 May 1946--National Archives.

"historical and scientific specimens...for storage in our warehouse for the duration." Smithsonian hired a crew of guards to protect its irreplaceable property which, Freeland said, included the "first automobile ever built" and the "original Old Glory." Humidity had to be controlled, and park storage was pushed upstairs. Alexander Wetmore, head of the Smithsonian, came out from Washington quite often; he began devoting his scientific talents to study of Shenandoah birds and mammals. He continued after the war as an especially helpful friend of the park, so the Smithsonian episode added up to a net gain.

Military use of the park was not generally known, but Freeland's reports carried such items as "Army engineers leaving Hoover Camp after experiments" (October 1942); "711th chemical maintenance company, Air Corps, Langley Field, camped for a week near Panorama" (April 1943); "army here all month demolishing CCC camps 2, 3 and 27" (June 1943); "army groups camp...one in Whiteoak Canyon ten days...classwork in connection with geodetic control activities...another in Dark Hollow about ten days, mapping" (July 1943); "army contingent of 1,000 men moved into park...1,000 more coming into park every two weeks--training camp--each group shifting from and back to Fort Belvoir" (September 1943); "training area heretofore known as the Engineer Replacement Training Center was officially redesignated Army Service Forces Training Center.... 3,117 men entered park for training during month" (April 1944). Various types of military clothing and equipment were tested here--and various military techniques, minus explosions. The Corps of Engineers, Freeland said, helped the park--assembling water lines, building bridges on fire roads, doing trail work. When they wanted to practice with wider roads and straighter alignments, he discouraged them, and they did that kind of training elsewhere.

The Blue Ridge, especially its western edge, had a history of mining. Some months before Pearl Harbor a manganese ore specimen, said to be from the park, was assayed "commercial" by the U.S. Bureau of Mines, but no workable

deposit inside the boundary was found. In 1943 the Dominion Manganese Corp. of Crimora, Va., wanted to build a tiny dam in the park to aid their mining outside. The corporation was substantial, expected by the War Production Board to be the fourth largest producer of manganese in the nation during 1944. Director Drury told WPB the request might be granted if the dam was genuinely important to the war effort. Apparently it was not.[20]

Mining of mica near Hazel River in the park was proposed. The prospect, previously dug 25 feet down, was determined by the U.S. Geological Survey, after fresh probing, to be "not worthwhile" because the mica pieces were too tiny. The hole was filled in. There was another flurry over manganese, with Allegheny Ore & Iron Co. of Elkton, Va., wanting to prospect in the park near Island Ford, along a vein that had produced during World War I. Such prospecting was never officially determined to be "essential to the war effort."[21]

A different threat hovered when the National Housing Agency sent a man to inspect the Dickey Ridge development. Freeland wrote:

> It is my understanding that the buildings will be used to house employees of...American Viscose...Front Royal...planning to expand their plant...and ...taking on...new employees.... any improvement made to the buildings by National Housing will remain when the war is over.[22]

This too passed with no action affecting the park or its facilities.

The Administration had been ready to authorize exploitation of national parks if the resources proved substantial and urgently needed, but NPS was able to congratulate itself in 1945 that threats of damage had been "generally averted"--no logging of park timber or opening of parks to grazing. Mining had been slight, according to historian John Ise--"a deposit of tungsten in Yosemite was opened to mining...some 15,000 tons of salt were mined in Death Valley,"

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[20] H.E. Rothrock to Earl H. Carickoff, 19 Feb. 1941; Freeland to regional director, 25 Sept. 1943; and Drury to WPB, 9 Nov. 1943--National Archives.

[21] Freeland to regional director, 1 Nov. and 21 Dec. 1943, and USGS to NPS, 31 March 1944, about mica; and about manganese, Freeland to regional director, 6 May 1944, D.A. Karr to Drury, 15 May 1944, and WPB to Drury, 15 May--Nat'l Archives.

[22] Freeland to Frazier of Virginia Sky-Line, 8 Jan. 1944, SNP archives.

but reports of significant minerals "in Shenandoah" proved "false."[23]

Shenandoah had endured mainly neglect--that helped it become wild, which was a major goal. Visitor count dipped to less than a twentieth of prewar level. No other national park suffered "such a drastic drop," said the 1944 annual report of the Interior Department. Why did Shenandoah's count drop so far? No one explained, but I suspect the main reason was that Shenandoah was known primarily for Skyline Drive, and Skyline Drive was known for automobile sightseeing, and automobile sightseeing had become taboo. By 1945 Shenandoah was gaining on Rocky Mountain, Yellowstone, Yosemite and others that had become more popular. A five-year average calculated by Interior showed Shenandoah at 394,765 (brought so high only because its million-plus of 1941 was included). The 1945 fiscal year count was only 153,944 compared with Smoky's 535,106.[24]

Freeland said that, lacking the usual park visitors, the rangers had been assigned to use some public relations and interpretive time in nearby schools, giving programs on what the park was "all about." They discussed fire protection --there were "lots of fires then"--but they also "tried to get the children and their families interested in our restoring the landscape...in nature taking over ...the trees and other life coming back." He said the children seemed to understand but that many of the local people "tended not to understand...but may realize after while." Seven or eight of the rangers were on "duration appointment" to expire at war's end, but then they could take an examination and get a permanent appointment if positions were available here or elsewhere. Freeland was proud that "all of ours" passed, showing that "the training here was good."

Peace brought the greatest travel year yet to the national park system, but even as late as June 30, 1946, all of NPS had only 1795 full-time employees compared with 5145 on June 30, 1941. Shenandoah continued under-staffed and

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[23] John Ise, Our National Park Policy: A Critical History (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1961), p. 451.

[24] Dept. of Interior annual reports, fiscal years 1943, 1944 and 1945.

under-funded; its travel count climbed, yet, to some, disappointingly--690,413 for the 1946 fiscal year, 765,701 in 1947 when Smoky reached 1,136,604 and several other parks also out-pulled the pre-war champion.[25]

There were odd events and tentative stirrings, echoes of the past with differences. The postwar little lost girl, Melanie Jones, age 2½, was a park visitor. She wandered away from Pinnacles Picnic Ground at 3 p.m. and was not found until 10:30 the next morning when she was "sitting on a boulder atop Marys Rock." Mostly in the dark she had hiked five miles on the Appalachian Trail and PATC members "proposed she be given an honorary membership in the club."[26]

A Washingtonian, shocked by the way "brush" had taken over so much of the park, vigorously suggested grazing of livestock to help keep "one of the great beauties" of Shenandoah, its open meadows. He rejected NPS's rejection of his idea, incredulous that the agency "apparently means to let Shenandoah become solidly forested." Drury then promised to think about and discuss the suggestion. Whether as a result of this correspondence I do not know, but Freeland said (1978):

> The forest returned so fast the first thing we knew we were just driving through a green tunnel. We realized we had to do some vista clearing. So we called in Virginia Forest Service and our landscape people...had some meetings and surveyed the whole area from Front Royal to Rockfish and outlined on the plans just where the vista clearing should be done....
>
> We had objections to that from various sources. They said, you let the trees grow and then you go and cut them.... Of course these areas were only where there were overlooks--and there's no sense having an overlook if you couldn't see anything.... Devereux Butcher of National Parks Association was one of those objecting to the cutting.

He remembered various "grassy areas the size of Big Meadows" and said some such areas would be allowed to return to forest--but we would keep Big Meadows open, "the parts used by mountain folk, mow it and keep it looking halfway decent." A conference of NPS executives and federal highway engineers here decided that

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[25] Dept. of Interior annual reports, fiscal years 1941, 1946 and 1947.

[26] Florence Nichol, PATC Bulletin editor, to Freeland, 15 June 1946, and Freeland to Nichol, 18 June 1946, National Archives.

funds should be budgeted for mowing "all areas previously cleared of brush" and that Big Meadows "will be maintained by the saddle horse concessioner under a special permit for mowing, under the Superintendent's control."[27]

The desire to open old roads across Fishers and Brown gaps rose again. Page County's board of supervisors contended "that citizens...are being denied a privilege...they are entitled to." The state conservation commission asked that the roads be opened. National Parks Association, The Wilderness Society, and even Virginia Sky-Line opposed any such "additional" roads. The argument faded and revived, faded and revived.[28]

Fee collection resumed in March 1946--the first time since spring 1942. There was another effort toward common policy on fees with Blue Ridge Parkway. The regional director wrote:

> At present, the General Rules and Regulations cover the collection of automobile fees on that part of the Blue Ridge Parkway between Jarman Gap and Rockfish Gap (now administered by Shenandoah...); section between Adney Gap, Virginia and Deep Gap, North Carolina; and between Beacon Heights, N.C., and McKinney Gap, N.C. No provision is made for...bus fees. Therefore it is necessary to prepare for approval Regulations to (1) cover additional mileage and (2) cover busses.

He said fees of the two park system units needed to be comparable, regulations uniform, trip permits good on the Parkway and in Shenandoah. Despite opposition to fees on the Parkway by Virginia's Gov. Tuck, Sen. Robertson, Rep. Stanley, and General Anderson, he insisted the Parkway superintendent draft fee regulations for discussion. Freeland cautiously proposed a one-season trial of present regulations before an effort "to iron out all problems." He believed there should ultimately be a bus fee for both areas together but doubted it would be "practical to have a [private car] fee that would include both." The Parkway somehow dodged fees again while fee collection continued at Shenandoah.[29]

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[27] Drury to Edward B. Burling (who was shocked), 11 Sept. 1946, and Thomas J. Allen, regional director, to Director, 16 Dec. 1948, National Archives.

[28] Commonwealth Review, 12 Aug. 1947; Page News & Courier, 23 Aug. 1956; and park file 630.01.1, ~~SNP archives~~ 1946-56, SNP archives.

[29] Elbert Cox to Supt. BRP. 14 Jan. 1948, and Freeland to region, 21 Jan. 1948, SNP archives.

Granville Liles, who had been chief ranger at Shenandoah around 1950, said after 38 years in NPS that Freeland had the "best ranger organization in my experience." He demanded "high performance...spit and polish." When a series of forest fires was set, bloodhounds were used, and the "felon prosecuted." The rangers were sent to fire schools for advanced training, and they in turn conducted fire training for wardens and crews they recruited outside the boundary. Freeland realized the park did not have the support of all its neighbors, and rangers were expected to be skillful in human relations, to make friends and spread understanding. There was a file card on each family head living near the boundary, kept up to date with accounts of ranger contacts and indications of behavioral patterns. As the forest became wilder it attracted more moonshiners, and a frequent question was how to remove the stills without suffering retaliatory fires. Steam Hollow, not far from the town of Shenandoah, was repeatedly a trouble spot. Freeland's policy was to hire park neighbors whenever possible to man fire towers and for other work such as road and trail maintenance. Some became maintenance foremen, office workers, rangers; others got jobs in concessions.[30]

A major event was the "Open House" at park headquarters in 1949, the first ~~event~~ of its kind here. It featured guided tours, exhibits, nature talks, and food and drink served by Virginia Sky-Line. Numerous articles with main facts about the park and activities in it were distributed. The Luray paper devoted two pages to pieces by Freeland, Lile, park naturalist Paul G. Favour (Shenandoah's first official naturalist, recently arrived), U.S. Commissioner L. Ferdinand Zerkel (on park history), and others. Freeland called Shenandoah a

> noble experiment.... This 300 square mile area had been farmed, grazed, burned and cut over, thoroughly used by man.... Now, as a national park, with protection from fire and inappropriate usage, Nature is gradually reclaiming the plowed fields and pasturelands, and young trees and shrubs are taking over the job of reforestation. Second and third growth forests are maturing, streams and springs are increasing in flow, and wildlife is

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[30] Liles, personal interview, 20 Aug. 1977, and my own contacts with the situation and personnel, 1946-49.

increasing and learning to be unafraid of man....

> During the World War II years...funds were meager and only a small amount of maintenance could be accomplished.... The resulting conditions are slowly being corrected as funds become available. However, not since 1940 have there been funds appropriated for buildings or physical improvements. This causes us great concern.

Large crowds attended. The open house was considered successful in acquainting "Park neighbors with our work, aims, and ideals"--a continuing Freeland theme.[31]

Shenandoah visitation topped a million that year, first time since Pearl Harbor.

Virginia Sky-Line reopened Panorama and Swift Run on September 1, 1945; Skyland, Big Meadows and other units in the spring of 1946. Freeland, realizing the park had not really been "sold" to the general public as more than a scenic road, tried to make the company more effective in promoting the national park. He insisted, for instance, that all post cards offered for sale have printed on them, "Scene in Shenandoah National Park." He said in 1978:

> I was trying all the time I was here to get away from Skyline Drive and talk more about the...park...to get the company in their literature, instead of having this folder headed Skyline Drive--and in little tiny letters Shenandoah National Park--to get them to put Shenandoah National Park in the large letters....
>
> When I came here I noticed that our own people in the office, when they answered the phone, said, "Skyline Drive"!

He corrected that at once, of course, but he had more difficulty with Virginia Sky-Line, and he could make ~~little~~ no headway ~~at all~~ with his complaint that signs put up by the state or county saying Skyline Drive had "no word at all any place about Shenandoah National Park."[32]

The company had its own request upon resuming business--swimming pools, one at Skyland, another at Big Meadows--a beginning of diversified and active

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[31] Page News & Courier, 5 May 1949, and Freeland to regional director, 18 May 1949, SNP archives.

[32] Monthly report, Aug. 1945, and Freeland to Frazier, 4 Oct. 1945, SNP archives--supplementing Freeland interview, 1978.

recreation. This request would entangle Freeland, NPS regional and Washington offices, the state of Virginia, and Sen. Byrd. But Ickes--soon to conclude his thirteen years as Secretary of the Interior--made the most troublesome demand of all. Mandating full desegregation of races, it reached Frazier in the form of a general bulletin calling attention of all national park concessionaires to the "General Rules and Regulations appearing on Page 14866 of the December 8, 1945, Federal Register." Frazier protested vigorously:

> In March, 1939, a few days after the present officers acquired... controlling stock...a conference was held...at which there was present the majority of the Director's Staff, Mr. Manghum and the writer.
>
> .... the question of providing facilities...for the use of negroes was the subject of lengthy discussion before it was agreed that the Virginia Sky-Line Company would provide dining room space at Panorama and Swift Run for negroes, and that as soon as plans and specifications for buildings could be drawn and approved, that the development at Lewis Mountain would be undertaken. In return for the expenditure of funds necessary to carry out these plans, this Company was assured that the facilities at Dickey Ridge, Elkwallow, Skyland and Big Meadows would be reserved for the exclusive use of White people. There has never been any question of this understanding ...and as evidence of the Park Service's intentions...the Lewis Mountain development has always carried the designation, "for the exclusive use of negroes."....
>
> This regulation, if made applicable to the Shenandoah...would be in direct violation of the agreement...and would, in our opinion, create an intolerable situation.... Instead of improving racial relations, it would be a distinct dis-service to the negroes desiring to visit the Park.

Freeland quickly sent Frazier's letter to Washington, saying Virginia Sky-Line "seemed much disturbed, apparently thinking it would not be applied in Shenandoah partly because Virginia is a Southern State."[33]

A few days later regional director Allen at Richmond wired the Director:

> Frazier...desires reply to his letter on non-discrimination for consideration board of directors next Tuesday. Unless permitted operate

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[33] NPS (Tolson) bulletin, 27 Dec. 1945; T. McCall Frazier to Freeland, 18 Feb. 1946; and Freeland to Director, 19 Feb. 1946--National Archives.

same as previous years he will recommend board drop contract.

NPS was in a dither with oral discussion and phone calls, but main trends were put on record. Tolson wrote Demaray:

> You are familiar...with the arrangement with respect to Shenandoah...which was approved in the Department with the assent of Mr. Trent, who was then special [racial affairs] adviser to the Secretary....
>
> Before replying...perhaps you will want to take this matter up informally with Acting Secretary Chapman with a view to securing a reaffirmation of the approval of the Shenandoah arrangement.

Discussion faced the fact that Sky-Line's giving up the contract "would cause inability to serve the public during the forthcoming travel season." Top NPS officials--Washington, region and superintendent--agreed that no exception to the regulation could be granted. So did "Secretary Chapman" who said "he would discuss the matter with Senator Byrd so that the Senator would be advised of possible repercussions from Virginia."[34]

But no letter was yet sent to Frazier. Demaray described the situation to Interior's solicitor, speculating on possible solutions if Sky-Line forfeited the contract. The property could be leased to someone else--but probably not without much delay as there was provision for "fair hearing" and Sky-Line might try in the courts for "injunctional relief." The property would have to be appraised and "adequate compensation" made. There was now no Secretary; Ickes had resigned in an argument with President Truman. Frazier was told merely that the matter was being considered and he would be advised when decision was reached.[35]

The only written clue I have found to actual solution of this crisis was an inside-NPS memo:

> Mr. Drury...said that General Manager T. McCall Frazier...has been, or soon will be, given assurance, through Senator Byrd, that the Company

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[34] Allen to Drury, 27 Feb. 1946; Tolson to Demaray, 28 Feb. 1946; and Thomas J. Allen, regional director, to Director Drury, 6 March 1946--National Archives.

[35] Demaray to Solicitor, 8 March 1946, enclosing copies of extensive correspondence setting forth background of the racial situation in Shenandoah (see chap. 10), and Tolson to Frazier, 11 March 1946--National Archives.

may continue its operations this summer without any change in its plans with respect to taking care of Negro visitors, and that Mr. Chapman is to ask Judge Hastie, who works closely with the Negro groups in Washington, to try to get them to agree that they will not make a test case out of the racial question at Shenandoah this summer.[36]

Freeland said, "We eased in gradually...getting people in the right frame of mind."

The next year Frazier resigned. "Several individuals in the company--C.A. Lakey was one--tried every way to go along with our desires and regulations," Freeland said. "Lakey was one of the first to help us with the race problem.... Some of his superiors didn't go along with him on that, and it was difficult for him because he was in between." Freeland described some "unfortunate tests by blacks for reservations"; the reservations were granted and then the blacks failed to appear. The park of course was ahead of the surrounding area in desegregation, and the process took a number of years. By October 1947, however, Lewis Mountain was being used by both blacks and whites; so was the main dining room at Panorama. In 1950 a park planner from Washington inspected each concession business as well as camp and picnic grounds, talked with NPS and Sky-Line personnel and park visitors, and reported "no segregation." A total of 20,582 blacks had visited the park during the last year.[37]

The swimming pool-active recreation argument also went against Frazier and may have contributed to his resignation, somewhat as Manghum's advocacy of facilities for diverse active recreation had contributed to his selling of the company years before. Sen. Byrd had supported Frazier in this matter too, having surprised Drury when the two were discussing the next NPS appropriation by proposing to add funds for two pools, Uncle Sam to build them and the concessioner to operate them. Drury considered the matter for some months, partly because Demaray favored the pools to further longer stays in the park, accepting

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[36] Tolson to Taylor and Price, inside NPS memo, 27 March 1946, Nat'l Archives.

[37] Arthur F. Perkins, 4-page report on race relations in Shenandoah, 28 July 1950, and Drury to the Secretary, 7 Aug. 1950--National Archives--along with Freeland's reports and Freeland interview, 1978. Lakey was a front-line manager for the company in the park, not involved in the Richmond headquarters.

statements by Frazier that business was poor. Freeland ...

Allen opposed the pools, and Drury rejected ~~them~~ both/pools and the idea behind them. Later he refused another project pushed by Byrd, maybe also at the urging of Virginia Sky-Line--for an airport at Big Meadows, saying it was unnecessary and inappropriate.[38]

Virginia Sky-Line's net profit in 1946 was $80,408.61 (presumably before income taxes), not poor by most definitions. Stockholders at the 1950 annual meeting learned that the 1949 net profit was $42,116.24 after federal and state income taxes amounting to $29,389.49, also after setting aside a reserve of $35,457.52 for depreciation of buildings and equipment. Improvements and additions during 1949, including a ten-room unit at Big Meadows, increased book value of fixed assets by $42,041.38. Plans had been approved for a new dining room at Skyland--to replace the Pollock-era structure that had burned. The company expected steadily increasing prosperity.[39]

Guy D. Edwards was picked in October 1950 to succeed Freeland who was transferring to the superintendency of Grand Teton. "Both," Drury said, "are able veterans of this Service." Edwards, like Lassiter, was an engineer. He had served in the Army corps of engineers; later he was an engineer in western national parks; still later, a park planner stationed at Omaha. He was no longer young but was active enough to hike Shenandoah's trails, though he was most interested in maintenance and development. He focused early on the park's troublesome underground phone system, writing a technical description to the regional director. There were "at present" 87 cases of cable trouble needing splices. Cost of maintenance had continually increased--$1826 in 1941, $4846

(and s... holders' minutes, 12 April 1950)

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[38] Drury to Tolson, Vint and Taylor, 7 June 1946; Demaray to Allen, 19 June; and Allen to Drury, 20 June 1946--National Archives. There will be more about the pools in chap. 12 as the idea affected the park's mission. For the airport, Drury to Byrd, 24 July 1950, National Archives.

[39] Jackson E. Price to Daniel Goldy, 4 Sept. 1947, National Archives; ~~and~~ Freeland to concession advisory committee, 16 Oct. 1947, SNP archives. Price gave the company's gross income for its first ten years as $2,380,592.05, cost $2,462,272.61, loss $81,680.56. There had been a profit of $9,839.18 in 1937, then two years of losses followed by two of gains. During the war (1942-45) losses

in 1944, $7509 in 1948--and "as far as we can determine no way has been found to eliminate the serious lightning troubles."[40]

The regional engineer came with summer to inspect and discuss. He found the situation "even more critical" than had been supposed:

> .... prior to making the present installation, rather extensive studies were made.... in spite of recommendations by the Telephone Company that such a system could not be satisfactorily and economically maintained, the Bureau of Standards...influenced the NPS to proceed with it.
>
> .... frequent lightning trouble was to be expected, particularly with a buried cable, and it was therefore not practical to install repeater stations necessary to maintain proper signal strength over long distances. Consequently, what might be termed good telephone service cannot be expected ...much beyond 10 miles from the exchange at Panorama.[41]

The problem was tossed about--park to region to Washington and back, executives to engineers to budget makers and back. Smoky had an "equally serious" phone problem, but "funds were short" and neither problem could be corrected immediately. NPS Washington ordered negotiation with the phone company, and Edwards began supplying data to Chesapeake & Potomac Telephone Co. of Va. The number of phone calls ranged from less than six thousand in February to nearly thirty thousand a month during summer; cases of trouble averaged around 70 per year.[42]

In 1953, after much investigation, C & P issued a comprehensive report:

> Present telephone system is unsatisfactory.... 1. Service is not dependable.... 2. Quality of service is extremely poor and is subject to unfavorable comment of all who attempt to use it.... 3. The extensive cable layout is such that it cannot be maintained properly.... 4. The capacity of the dial switching system is inadequate...far short of meeting present needs of NPS, concessioner, and the more than 1,500,000 visitors.... doesn't provide coverage throughout the park as originally intended....
>
> Provision of a new telephone system throughout the Park is somewhat

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[40] Drury to John R. Nichols of Secretary's office, 2 Oct. 1950, National Archives, for Edwards's appointment; for phone system, Liles interview, 1977; June Campbell, Bob Johnson and Miriam Reeve, personal interview, 20 July 1977, tape in my files; and Supt. Edwards to regional director, 27 Feb. 1951, SNP archives.

[41] W.E. O'Neil, Jr., to region, 2 July and 3 July 1951, SNP archives.

[42] Director to region, 16 March 1951; Wirth to region, 2 Aug. 1951; Liles to C & P, 29 Feb. 1952; and Zonfell to Edwards, 29 May 1952--SNP archives.

comparable to placement of a similar system which would extend from Washington, D.C., to Richmond.... It is an extremely expensive project due primarily to the great distances involved [and] use of special plant so as to preserve the natural scenic beauty.... Ordinarily no company would plan to serve an area 107 miles long...only several wide...only scattered developments...limited customers.

The recommended plan involved a new exchange and dial equipment at park headquarters, six microwave land stations in the park and one at Winchester, and a separate mobile system with three land stations, 25 mobile units, one fixed unit at the south entrance station, one operating console and control station at headquarters, and five pack sets for fire tower use. The company was willing to buy several segments of the underground cable.[43]

Cost indications in oral discussion were frightening--about $50,000 a year for communication services in the park. A conference was held in Washington with NPS engineers contending the Government could provide "more service...quite a bit cheaper." Everyone present agreed that phone and mobile-radio systems should be separate and that Virginia Sky-Line, not thus far directly involved, should be brought into the discussions. Seven months later, after more study and talk, NPS Washington was planning to advertise for two different bids--one for a system to be installed and operated by the Government, another for a system to be installed and operated "on a lease basis." Edwards saw many problems either way. These were studied and discussed by many people for many months. In 1954 and again in 1955, Edwards reported progress in negotiations with C & P. Finally, in his 1956-57 annual report, he said he had signed the contract, construction was "currently under way," the "switch over" expected August 1957.[44]

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[43] Chesapeake & Potomac Telephone Co. of Va., "A Communications Survey of Shenandoah National Park (NPS) and Virginia Sky-Line Co., Inc.," March 1953, a lengthy and smartly bound report, SNP archives.

[44] W.W. Zenfell, memo for files, 7 May 1953; regional director Elbert Cox to Edwards, 27 Nov. 1953; Edwards to Cox, 9 Dec. 1953--all SNP archives--and Edwards's annual reports, 1954-57, Federal Records Center, Suitland, Md. Monthly narrative reports by Edwards, supposed to be at Suitland, were not in the box thought to contain them and have not been found. Details of the phone contract are more complex than meaningful for present purposes. Regarding mobile radio, Freeland said in 1978 that, though there was no car-to-car radio during the war, there was "good radio communication with every part of the park after the war."

Edwards also tackled a worsening shortage of overnight accommodations at Skyland and Big Meadows where "the demand," especially on "weekends and holidays ...far exceeds the supply." Samuel Bemiss, who had succeeded Frazier in active charge of Virginia Sky-Line, was "ready to expand very substantially" but could hardly justify the investment with only six years left in the concession contract. At a 1951 conference Edwards made recommendations in careful detail, stressing not only the need for more lodging at the "two most popular areas" but also the need for a concession unit in the south section--

> as there are now no accommodations or service stations between Swift Run Gap and Rockfish Gap...40 miles.... we believe more of the visitors in the south section (now about one-third of the park's count) are from out of state than in the central portion (many Skyland-Big Meadows guests return year after year and are Virginians or from nearby).... South district visitors spend more time on trails but many are now hesitant to leave the Drive as no gasoline or camper's supplies are available.... Development would help relieve congestion now existing in central portion.

Edwards said the company was using 54% of all water pumped in the park. He recommended keeping the rate at $0.32 per thousand gallons. Though cost had gone down as total quantity used had increased, the rate "is still considerably less than the actual cost." He thought the rate of $18.75 per telephone should continue but was uncertain what the park should charge for sewage and garbage disposal.[45]

Utilities caused no recorded friction. Major problems were the franchise fee, south district development, and the total investment the company should make to justify the fresh 20-year contract Bemiss wanted. Sky-Line's gross receipts had been above $500,000 a year since 1947. Approximately $784,000 was expected in 1951. A typical year might bring $800,000, say, with net profit before income taxes being $96,000. The fee might be raised from $1,250 to $5,000 a year plus 2% of the gross which would be $16,000. This 2% could go into a

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[45] Thomas J. Allen, regional director, to Edwards, 22 Aug. 1951, and Edwards to Allen, 4 Sept. 1951, SNP archives.

special fund which, with the Secretary's approval, might be returned to the concessioner for adding facilities especially wanted by NPS. But might not such a high fee leave little of the company's own funds "available for betterments"? The regional director thought so. He also thought the new contract should require investment of at least $250,000 of the company's own funds in added facilities.[46]

Director Conrad L. Wirth--who had just taken over from Director A.E. Demaray, who had taken over from Director Drury in April 1951--had a contract drafted to run from January 1, 1952, through December 31, 1971, contingent on completing the new dining room-coffee shop and two multiple lodging units at Skyland and equipping them for public use by the end of 1954. No commitment was insisted upon for the south district where Edwards had urged development. Wirth "omitted transportation and sightseeing service for the reason that...the company has no automotive equipment...and does not conduct any sightseeing service.... maybe we can contract directly with Virginia Stage Lines."[47]

The franchise fee was then set at $3,000 a year plus 1% of the first $500,000 of gross receipts and 2% of gross above $500,000, and the new contract was signed June 26, 1952. Before the end of that year the company had "completed and dedicated a new, thoroughly modern dining room at Skyland." The required lodging units also were completed ahead of schedule. Modern design, especially of the dining building--at Skyland that had always been rustic--brought shocked protest from National Parks Association. Partly for that reason, Edwards refused as long as he was superintendent to allow further "modern" construction at Skyland.[48]

By 1953 the lodging capacity of Skyland was 226 guests, of Big Meadows 112. These two lodges were doing well, but Dickey Ridge Lodge was in trouble. Back in 1947 Freeland had blamed "weakness on the part of the managers" and the

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[46] See Bemiss to Allen, 14 Sept. 1951; Allen to Director, 12 Nov. 1951; and Bemiss, Report to Stockholders, 11 Feb. 1952--SNP archives.

[47] Wirth to region, 14 March 1952, and region to Bemiss, 9 May, SNP archives.

[48] Contract 14-10-01000-50, SNP archives. Quote is from Dept. of Interior annual report, 1952. "Modern" dispute is from Johnson, Campbell and Reeve interview, 1977, and my unrecorded conversations with persons interested, including executive secretary of National Parks Association.

location so near Front Royal that an "undesirable element...frequents Dickey Ridge." In 1953, with Edwards's approval, cabins were being moved from Dickey to Lewis Mountain and Skyland, leaving only three for guests--and these "for emergency use only." In 1956 the concessioner stopped using Dickey Ridge Lodge and remaining cabins--"as park visitors did not patronize this unit sufficiently."[49]

One thing that upset Edwards lastingly was being forced to accept a large new natural gas line across the park. Stopping non-park uses had never been easy; this park, after all, was a late arrival in an area long freely used. Some rights of way were legally continued in deeds transferred to Uncle Sam, including power lines and one gas line. Old roads could not all be closed at once without an army enforcing the order, and even then "the red cow might come grazing" (as park-border people sometimes threatened) and burn the forest. Lassiter had closed many roads but "lent" gate keys at first to almost anyone who could give a reason for having one. Freeland, short of staff and urgently needing cooperation of park neighbors, had understandably been "easy on special use permits."[50]

Edwards and staff tried to reduce special uses, but even so he issued or renewed many permits. For instance:

> Dec. 23, 1953, Town of Front Royal, right of way to operate a 4" water main over park lands...all work or any disturbance with knowledge in advance by Supt. and in manner acceptable to Supt.... March 7, 1954, John R. DeBergh, using five miles of Skyline Drive and a dirt road connecting it with privately owned orchard not otherwise accessible, for hauling produce, one year $30 in advance, no hauling on Sundays or holidays.... Aug. 26, 1954, Department of State Police, 6600-ft. right of way to automatic radio relay stations (also under permit), $10 a year in advance for five years.... Aug. 26, 1954, Floyd G. Hensley, four miles of Skyline Drive and one mile of Smith Roach Gap road, to reach site of private-land logging (but not to haul logs; they to be hauled down steep hill outside park), one year $25 in advance.

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[49] Edwards to Lakey, 3 Dec. 1953; FitzGerald Bemiss to Edwards, 22 Oct. 1951; Freeland to Frazier, 27 Aug. 1947; and Edwards to Lakey, 3 Dec. 1953--SNP archives.

[50] Campbell-Johnson-Reeve interview, 1977, and my personal recollections.

Some roads with mail routes still crossed park lands in Edwards's term. He closed at least one--Hightop area and Simmons Gap.[51]

Atlantic Seaboard Corp. of Charleston, W. Va., applied in October 1955 for a permit to make a survey across six miles of the park for a new 24" gas pipeline--Lost River compressor station in West Virginia to a station at Standardsville, Va. The route would be near South River Picnic Ground. Edwards replied:

> The Act of August 25, 1916...provides that the NPS "shall promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas...by such means and measures as conform to the fundamental purpose...which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the historic objects and the wildlife thereon and to provide for the enjoyment of same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." .... The construction of the pipe line will impair the scenery and destroy natural values.... Furthermore, your project is not one which would provide for the benefit and enjoyment of the visitors.... Therefore we are compelled to disapprove your application.[52]

The gas system immediately approached the regional office, where a meeting was hastily arranged, including the system's vice president and a lawyer, Edwards and Shenandoah engineer Zenfell. The regional director reported to Wirth:

> .... the gentlemen appeared to understand...and accept our position....
>
> We pointed out that Virginia owns the roadway known as Spotswood Trail and that the System may wish to explore with the State the possibility of placing the pipeline along this road. Mr. Kelley (v.p.) indicated that he would discuss this possibility with the State and, if necessary, talk with us again about certain minor uses of Park lands which the System may regard desirable if it uses the State roadway.[53]

Less than two weeks later the system's associate counsel was using both telephone and mails to bombard Assistant Secretary of the Interior D'Ewart, stressing an "insufficiency" of 79.1 million cubic feet of gas expected east of the Blue Ridge in the winter of 1956-57. He said putting the 24" line across the park would be $4,800,000 cheaper than any other plan studied. D'Ewart

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[51] Old file W22, SNP archives, and Campbell-Johnson-Reeve interview, 1977.

[52] H.H. Vincent to Edwards, 31 Oct. 1955, and Edwards to Vincent, 7 Nov. 1955, SNP archives.

[53] Allen to Wirth, 10 Nov. 1955, SNP archives. The system was sometimes called Columbia Gas System.

D'Ewart consulted Director Wirth--who supported Edwards:

> The line proposed...would be at least 80 feet wide over a distance across the Park of six miles or more. It would be built on as straight a course as is possible. It would cross the slopes of Abrams Mountain... go under the Skyline Drive, and then across the slopes of Saddleback Mountain.... The crossing of the Skyline Drive would be at a point about six miles north of Swift Run Gap. This is not easy topography, and the bulldozing...to bury the pipeline two feet or more beneath the surface would badly alter the hillsides; and inasmuch as such a gas line route must be left visible for maintenance purposes it would be extremely damaging....
>
> [NPS] would find it possible to work with...the Swift Run Gap route, where the highway has already made a considerable change.... We cannot, however, recommend your approval of the application as submitted.[54]

Unwritten orders apparently came from "higher up": NPS might negotiate for the least-damaging route, but the gas line must go through. Edwards was hurt and angry, but he did his best to reduce the scar. Complex negotiations--with various meetings, helicopter scoutings, partial surveys, relocations and adjustments--allowed him, along with the regional director and Wirth, to save face. The route was indeed improved, being moved much closer to Swift Run Gap--though not staying on US 33 right of way as NPS desired.[55]

The permit Edwards finally signed in March 1956 cut down the width of the "location strip" and saved trees to help hide damage:

> .... clearing shall not exceed 50 feet total width.... large or valuable trees shall not be damaged...unless...directly on the ditch line or their growth is near enough to be a menace to the uninterrupted operation.... Certain trees...designated by the Superintendent...shall not be disturbed.... clearing shall be narrowed to 40 feet where the line crosses Skyline Drive and US 33...and at these locations a screen of vegetation...will be provided.... also at park boundary lines.... Grading shall not exceed 30 feet total width...except on side-hill cuts.[56]

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[54] John P. Randolph to Wesley A. D'Ewart, 23 Nov. 1955, and Wirth to D'Ewart, 5 Dec. 1955, SNP archives.

[55] June Campbell, superintendent's secretary, in Campbell-Johnson-Reeve, 1977; Edwards to regional director, 15 Dec. 1955 and 27 Jan. 1956; and NPS assistant director to regional director, 24 Feb. 1956.

[56] Edwards to Atlantic Seaboard, 16 March 1956, with permit, SNP archives.

Edwards found it possible to say that summer, in celebrating the 20th anniversary of Shenandoah's dedication:

> The Park today comprises nearly 194,000 acres and after twenty years of protection from logging, forest fires, and hunting, the forest is returning and wild animals, including deer, bears, bobcats, and many kinds of birds are increasing their populations. There is developing now within a day's drive of 70,000,000 people a natural wilderness area.[57]

During this anniversary year Edwards was at the center of planning a revolution at Shenandoah--part of Mission 66, an ambitious program started by Wirth--

> an all-out attempt to evaluate every practice of the Service and all of its administrative and development planning...to formulate a program which, if followed, will see the National Park system adequately developed and adequately staffed by 1966, the 50th anniversary year...of the Service....
>
> Travel has increased to the point of embarrassment, while provision for it and for better protection of both the parks and those who use them has been deferred again and again because of lack of funds.... The system, designed for 25 million visitors a year, is now called on to bear a load that is twice that heavy.
>
> The objective is to...fit park operation and development to the needs of 1966...with provision for a 60% increase in visits over 1955.

The mission was "launched with great ballyhoo and fanfare" and "caught the fancy of Congress, the President [Eisenhower], and the public, and sent National Park Service appropriations skyrocketing."[58]

Visitation trends were traced and analyzed--over a million people at Shenandoah in the 1937 calendar year, then three years of not quite so many, then 1,072,000 in 1941, then far down in the war to a low of 42,000 in 1943, then the postwar rise, 710,000 in 1946, 859,000 in 1947, 932,000 in 1948, 1,158,000 in 1949, on up to 1,543,369 in 1955. Where did these people come from? -- 22% from Virginia; 58% from within 300 miles not counting Virginia (from N.Y., Md., D.C., Pa., Dela., N.C., Ohio, N.J.); 20% from the rest of the nation (with a

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[57] Shenandoah news release, 25 June 1956, SNP archives.

[58] Dept. of Interior annual report, 1955, and (last quotes) Donald M. Swain, Wilderness Defender: Horace M. Albright and Conservation (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. 292-93.

sprinkling from foreign lands). How did they come? -- 98% by private car, 2% by bus (1953 analysis). Where did they concentrate? -- 38% were counted entering the north district, 37% the central, and only 25% the south (1953). How long did they stay? -- 96% to 99%, one to two hours up to all day but not overnight; the remainder (exact numbers uncertain), from 24 hours on up to many days and nights. An idea of the use of the main overnight facilities came from figures for June, July and August 1953: Skyland 7,553, average days stay 3.1; Big Meadows Lodge 4,881, 2.9 days; Lewis Mountain Lodge 405, 3.1 days; Big Meadows Campground 6,756, 3.3 days; Lewis Mountain Campground 1,899, 3.1 days; total lodge guests 12,839, 3.0 days; total campers 8,655, 3.2 days. What did they do here? -- 100% toured Skyline Drive; other activities (far down in percentage), picnicking most popular, then hiking, then camping; "fishing and horseback riding are additional activities but relatively few participate."[59]

An estimate, based on voluntary signing of only 26 trail registers, had indicated 37,910 people using the trails in 1951--2.8% of total visitation. There had been a rapid increase from 1952 to 1956 in percentage of park visitors using interpretive services--nature trails, overlook exhibits, etc., 1952 0.4%, 1953 13.4%, 1956 58.2%; naturalists' programs, 1952 0.5%, 1953 0.4%, 1956 1.2%. The most striking expansion planned at Shenandoah was in interpretive work--with three large visitor centers capable of handling continuing crowds (one of these in each park section, north, central and south) and four campground visitor centers to serve at least the maximum number of campers.[60]

Shenandoah expected 2¼ million visitors a year by 1966. The prospectus said:

> In order to enable the visitor to obtain full realization of the Park's benefits the theme of management and development will be one of encouraging the people to spend more of their time in areas of the Park apart from the Skyline Drive. Through the media of such developments as picnic and camp-

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[59] Shenandoah "Mission 66 Prospectus," as revised 30 Oct. 1956, approved 8 Feb. 1957 by NPS Washington--with pencil notes for further revision, 12 March 1958. This voluminous prospectus is the source of all Mission 66 information in this chapter except where another source is cited. It is in SNP archives.

[60] Hiking estimate from Liles to Edwards, 31 Oct. 1951, SNP archives.

grounds, Visitor Centers and nature trails, will this theme be carried out. Such developments will stimulate visitor interest in the more leisurely pursuits designed for mental stimulation as well as physical recreation.... Through the use of planned publicity and the handling and directing of visitors from the entrance stations, the goal of dispersed visitor use can be achieved.

Camping facilities would be multiplied from the existing 83 sites to 450; picnic facilities, from 203 to 500. A Jinney Grey Campground and a Piney River Picnic Area would be added in the north district. Existing camp and picnic grounds would be expanded in the central, and a new campground created at Comers Deadening near Skyland. In the south district there would be a campground at Dundo; picnic grounds at Pond Ridge and at Ivy Creek.

The concessioner would increase overnight facilities at Skyland from 106 to 175 rooms and add to the present dining room a multipurpose room for banquets or movies and lectures. Big Meadows capacity would be increased by 20 rooms. Loft Mountain in the south district would be the site of a new lodge with dining facilities; farther south, at Pond Ridge, there would be a service station, lunch counter and gift shop. Old structures at Panorama and Swift Run would be razed; "the concessioner proposes new dining rooms and service stations to replace the old ones."

Road and trail work would include grade separation structures at Thornton and Swift Run gaps, lining of Marys Rock Tunnel, Skyline Drive surfacing where needed, guard wall work, and additional parking areas such as for nature trails. Utility system and administrative facilities would be expanded. New entrance stations would replace the old. Housing for NPS employees would be built at Thornton, Swift Run and Jarman gaps, in the headquarters area, at Front Royal entrance, Big Meadows, Pinnacles, Whiteoak, Simmons Gap, some of it primarily for seasonal employees. Fire protection facilities would be expanded.

The park boundary would be improved (legislation required) "to include

more of the middle and lower ridge slopes and intervening hollows," thus aiding administration and protection. Some of the lost meadows would "be reclaimed and retained." Vistas toward the lowlands and distances at strategic points would be cleared and in some cases re-created.[61]

Some people felt the plan was too big, impossible to fulfill. Others felt Supt. Edwards was too cautious, too much inclined to worry about how, if all the additions were made, they could be properly maintained once enthusiasm died down--so was not asking for enough. Director Wirth was optimistic, and in February 1957 the Shenandoah "Mission 66 Prospectus" was approved by NPS Washington--with one small exception:

> The proposal to provide a visitor center in each new campground in addition to the three major visitor centers appears to be excessive and could result in needless duplication of services and subject matter.... The four campground visitor centers are not approved and should be deleted.

Staffing and annual operating costs were approved (subject to adjustments) at 106 man years (62 permanent employees, 44 seasonal) $535,000, and the cost of physical improvements $8,680,300 (roads and trails $4,743,200; buildings and utilities $3,937,100). The biggest government expenditure at one location would be $825,000 at Loft Mountain where, besides NPS facilities, the concessioner was to have a lodge, restaurant, wayside, souvenirs, gas, and so on, to use the same government-financed road and utility development.[62]

Congress had already "appropriated funds to carry out the first year of the Mission 66 program."[63]

Beyond that lay uncertainty.

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[61] See chap. 13 for history of the boundary and its problems.

[62] For attitudes on fulfilling plans, Campbell-Johnson-Reeve interview, 1977; for NPS Washington approval, E.T. Scoyen, associate director, to regional director, 8 Feb. 1957, in "Mission 66 Prospectus," SNP archives. See chap. 12 for detailed history of interpretation, how visitor center plans worked out, etc.

[63] Dept. of Interior annual report, 1956, p. 307.

The Park in Search of Its Mission

Much of Shenandoah's history can be understood only through recognizing that the park's intended mission had been lost. When conceived and authorized by Congress the park was to present for public enjoyment a vast example of the southern Appalachians in primeval condition. When NPS moved in it found that the area was not such an example. So Shenandoah suffered an identity crisis, and the launching of an interpretive program was postponed. Though the deep geology remained primeval, vegetation and wildlife and most of the land surface fell far short of the much-publicized promise. The mountain people seemed a mar on the landscape. Better not encourage visitors to look sharply or to think. Skyline Drive, foisted onto the situation before thorough park planning could be done, added to the confusion. Because it brought record-breaking traffic it was a saving straw to cling to. But the views that attracted the people were mostly into hazy distance--Piedmont and Shenandoah Valley and the far mountains--outside the park. What could a park naturalist do with or for such speeding crowds? What mission could Shenandoah serve among the "crown jewels" of the continent?

It could show impressive scenery. But was this scenery unique and nationally significant, an adequate base for national park interpretation? Maybe not. Then what about history? Demaray wrote in 1933 that "we have agreed in the National Park Service that this area will present a very strong historic element." Edward Steere, junior historian, was sent to explore possibilities--and concluded:

> Any history...should concern itself with the destruction of the eighteenth century forms of life which the first settlers of the hollows brought with them from the lowlands of Virginia. But the people of the hollows have not written their history. The struggle to defend and preserve their way of life against disintegrating forces from without finds no expression in native folk song or ballad. Historical monuments of this

struggle consist only of dilapidated cabins which still shelter the surviving generation. Any search for additional vestiges is doomed to disappoint....

Steere listed 29 structures that might conceivably be called historic. He also discussed early explorations and surveys, turnpikes and an old inn, pioneer-type industrial establishments (lost or in ruins)--none of which had been unique--and campaigns of the Civil War ("only incidental to movement in the Valley").[1]

Engineer-in-charge Lassiter agreed most strongly with this Steere sentence: "A brief topographical study of the narrow Blue Ridge Range between Front Royal and Waynesboro will readily disclose that nature failed to provide for an isolation essential to the development of a distinctive culture." He also wrote:

> As I see it, all that we should endeavor to preserve...should be a nucleus in one or two hollows where the few mountain people permitted to remain in their houses as "museum pieces," would enjoy the same limited social life they have had.... Accessibility is necessary if the home life ...is to be shown the visitor, and isolation is necessary to prevent the too rapid influx of outside influence.... The upper end of Nicholson Hollow will, I think, best fulfill the requirements....
>
> I think it well for you [the NPS Washington historian] to arrange a conference with the Director and other branch chiefs who are interested in the policy to be pursued in the development of this area, for the purpose of determining just what procedure is to be followed.

Director Cammerer accepted the Steere report "in principle." He said "no buildings covered...should be torn down without the approval of the Director." But he mentioned no funds or personnel to care for the structures and suggested nothing that Lassiter could take hold of as "policy to be pursued in the development" of the park and its mission.[2]

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[1] Demaray, quoted in Hans Huth, "Report on Shenandoah National Park," Sept. 1941, SNP archives, and Steere, "The Shenandoah National Park, Its Possibility as an Historical Development," 62-page typescript with photos, Dec. 1935, and "Report on Preservation of Structures," 1 June 1936, SNP archives, often spoken of, together, as the Steere report.

[2] J.R. Lassiter to Verne E. Chatelain, Branch of Historic Sites and Buildings, NPS Washington, 27 Dec. 1935, and Arno B. Cammerer to Lassiter, 7 Jan. 1936, SNP archives.

Some attention was focused on old mills or remains of mills. The "Lam Mill near Swift Run Gap," with a big waterwheel, was "picturesque." The "up-and-down sawmill" near Sperryville had been called by Will Carson "one of the most precious possessions that we have in the Park." Lassiter said:

> Some of the mechanism...seems to be in fair condition although considerable work would have to be done and certain replacements made in order to present a workable mill.
>
> The restoration...would give us a good example of early lumbering practise and preserve some of the crafts...existing here in the early days.
>
> It is recommended that Mr. Vint's office have detailed drawings made ...so that plans and estimates for its restoration can be made.[3]

A third mill no longer existed but had been an even more complete "industrial establishment" located near US 211 on the Luray side where it could if restored be easily accessible to visitors.

Yet, all told, history did not make a suitable mission for the whole park any more than did "nature" in its deteriorated condition. In this dilemma NPS ~~tentatively~~ experimented. Washington naturalist Don McHenry remembered

> our first bus tour from Washington. There were no arrangements for a rest stop. We pulled up at a small-town service station, and these...people unashamedly lined up, the women in one terrific line maybe half a block long, and the men in another, waiting their turns to get into those one-hole things, you know.
>
> We'd stop at overlooks along the Skyline Drive, and I'd get up in front--I finally resorted to a megaphone--trying to tell all about the marvelous scenery that we had before us. Some of the people from the hollows, the real natives here, still speaking the ancient English, would come up in little family groups to sell things they had made....
>
> I remember our first interpretive effort at Skyland.... Pollock--old Pollock, I'll never forget him!.... we were taken down to the tennis courts, and what did I see...but a <u>tremendous</u> pile of wood, native wood, parts of old buildings, about two stories high! Well, I had them pull part of that down. I just couldn't see setting the whole country on fire

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[3] Carson, first chairman of Virginia conservation commission, quoted in A.E. Demaray to Lassiter, 28 March 1936, and Lassiter to Director, 4 April 1936, SNP archives.

to celebrate the occasion.... We had quite a time hooking in on the electric line; it seemed somewhat homemade. But we got going, and the fire didn't quite run us out. I showed lantern slides and talked about the national parks--as an introduction to this new national park here.[4]

In July 1936 park employees organized Shenandoah Nature Society to gather and distribute information about natural features--supposedly the park's major element. The first issue of the quarterly Shenandoah Nature Journal told of the geology, wild flowers and wild creatures. But the growing membership, getting feedback from visitors, soon realized that human history must not be ignored. It was added to the society's constitution, and the second issue of the little magazine (Winter 1936-37) had articles about Indians and their artifacts and about the mountain folk. Supt. Lassiter allowed the magazine to be sold by CCC "boys" stationed at overlooks to answer visitors' questions. The price, as I recall, was 10¢, and distribution rose from one to five thousand copies per issue. The society also sponsored public lectures on natural and human history, broadcast interpretive programs over radio WSVA (Harrisonburg, Va.), and launched the writing of a park guidebook. This guidebook and the magazine (soon called simply Shenandoah and later Travel Lore) became a business proposition approved by but separate from the society and the park. The publishing program and the society were casualties of World War II.[5]

Lassiter authorized a ranger, W. Drew Chick, Jr., to spend part of his official time in testing approaches to interpretive work and trying to fill this gap in the park's operation. The Luray paper reported in August 1937:

Each Sunday there is a nature walk.... More visitors each week are taking advantage of this opportunity to learn about the natural features of their youngest national park.

Auto caravans are conducted by Ranger Chick, also, on Thursday,

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[4] McHenry, Milly and Henry Heatwole interview, 2 April 1969, SNP archives.

[5] James R. Sigler and Gladys R. Homer, the Society's original minute book, 1936-37, my files; copies of magazine, SNP archives; and personal memories. The organization was on 15 July 1936. Permanent officers, 4 Nov. 1936, were Lambert, pres.; Frank O. Judy, v.p.; Homer, sec.; Sigler, treas. Wm. B. Tyree was editor until mid-1937 when I succeeded him. The guidebook was my Beautiful Shenandoah (Lynchburg, Va.: J.P. Bell Co., 1937).

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday mornings.... Plan to be in Front Royal about 9:15...you will be in time to meet the ranger at the second parking overlook south of Front Royal on the Skyline Drive.

Chick favored wild nature but was soon including bits of history. He even set up at Skyland for interpretive purposes a moonshine still "typical...of the hundreds of stills operated" before park establishment. The Interior Department's annual report for 1937 mentioned interpretation "on an experimental basis in Shenandoah," implying that the experiments might lead to a regular program. But they did not.[6]

In 1939 Lassiter replied to an NPS circular on "Museum Development":

> .... We have several potential "historic house museums": former homes of mountaineers, a water-powered "up-and-down" sawmill, and a water-powered grist mill.... It would cost thousands of dollars to restore each of these for public exhibition, and no funds...are available.
>
> .... a community house-amphitheatre development is contemplated in the Big Meadows area and is shown on the master plan. The building, conceivably, might serve as a starter for a "headquarters museum" which will be essential when an interpretive staff points out to our visitors the many educational ~~opportunities~~ possibilities....
>
> Dr. Russell's memorandum served to focus attention on the types of museum development which lend themselves admirably to our peculiar problems.... We refer to the "observation station museum" and the "trailside exhibit".... The plan for the proposed Hogback fire lookout will be considered in the light of an observation station museum as was The Watchman fire lookout in Crater Lake National Park.
>
> Museum development plans naturally await the appointment of a representative of the Branch of Research and Information to this Park, and hence nothing has been done along these lines.[7]

In 1941 Lassiter replied to a Washington question as to whether a proposed Big Meadows trail had been studied from the interpretive standpoint:

> This phase...has received attention from us insofar as our ability goes, but you must remember that although we have asked for a naturalist

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[6] Page News & Courier, 13 Aug. 1937, and "History of Still," undated, unsigned typescript in old file 833, SNP archives.

[7] Lassiter to Director, 22 Dec. 1939, SNP archives.

for the past four years we have not as yet been able to get one. Therefore, it is possible that our idea of the interpretive program, which... has never been established, is not what it will be if one is established.

Inasmuch as we have built some 200 miles of recreational trails... without any interpretive program...bringing this matter up at this date is somewhat like locking the door after the horse has been stolen.[8]

Later in 1941 Hans Huth, NPS collaborator studying preservation and interpretation in national parks, encountered Shenandoah's identity problem:

.... there seems to be some dissension about the proper interpretation.... A few of those who planned this Park in the early 20's seem to have wished to set up in the East a park conserving natural resources in the same way as in the old established parks.... This opinion is best represented by the Park dedication speech of Secretary Ickes. He advocated that "our parks be permitted to retain the natural and wilderness characteristics with only enough highways to make them accessible." This, in the terms of the naturalist, means that the park should revert to nature or at least obtain the character of the wilderness the first pioneer had to face.

To President Roosevelt, the establishment of the Park meant a "part of our program of husbandry--the joint husbandry of our human resources and our natural resources".... Surely this interpretation goes far beyond the recognition of the park as a laboratory for naturalists or as a means for the visualization of early pioneer history. In order to open the eyes of the public to the "beauty" of the area, as well as to achieve a "re-creation" of the people, it is certainly necessary to give the park aesthetic, as well as inspirational, values. There can be no doubt that the former has been thoroughly carried out. The Skyline Drive is a sequence of beauty spots.... Such features alone are apt to lend inspiration, but this also can be achieved by fostering historical interpretation. Neither one excludes the other; nor do both exclude the appreciation of the area from the naturalist's point of view. In reality, all these points are only single factors which contribute to make the general picture complete and well balanced.... there is no reason why such an opportunity for interpreting historic development should be neglected.... It is quite impossible in the East to set a park aside and then make a dividing line between the "beauties and wonders of nature" [quoting from the current park folder] and historical evolution.

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[8] Lassiter to Director, 15 April 1941, SNP archives.

Though I find no evidence Huth's words were understood or acted upon--not anyway for another fifteen years--they would ultimately prove prophetic.[9]

Interior's 1941 annual report said that seven CCC camps in Smoky "have restored mountaineer cabins and structures and collected folk museum materials." It added that "conservation of folk culture values in Shenandoah...also has been studied." But what the CCC had done and what NPS (aided during World War II by conscientious objectors) continued to do with such structures and materials in Shenandoah was the opposite of conservation--so much so that former superintendent Freeland said in 1978,"I think they were a little too fast in trying to 'clean up' the area." Soon Smoky made other gains of a kind that could have been made in Shenandoah too:

> The pastoral charm of this secluded valley [Cades Cove] had already made it one of the major attractions.... But, as farmer after farmer moved out...the forests were rapidly encroaching and blotting out the views. The invariable answer was that the established park policy is to let nature take its course.
>
> The happy solution came in a suggestion...that Cades Cove be recognized as an historical area (which it really is)....
>
> Although the idea was accepted in principle, there was still the problem of how to keep the rapidly growing pines from "taking over." The approved solution was to permit the grazing of beef cattle and the growing of hay crops for winter feed. That decision, announced in 1945, brought considerable rejoicing.

Freeland said in 1978 that "it had been decided, and I certainly agreed, that some areas" in Shenandoah "that had been farmed by the mountain people, should be kept open." Part of Big Meadows has been, but grazing has never been authorized. The persistently dominant feeling in NPS Washington seems to have been that, though diversity could be afforded in Smoky where the central wilderness was primeval and vast, Shenandoah must keep reaching almost desperately for the

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[9] Hans Huth, "Report on Shenandoah National Park," Sept. 1941, typescript, SNP archives. Huth, a recognized scholar in nature-culture interrelations, wrote Nature and the American: Three Centuries of Changing Attitudes (Berkeley: U. of Calif. Press, 1957), republished in paperback (Lincoln: U. of Nebr. Press, 1972).

wilderness it was supposed to possess but did not.[10]

The reaching, along with waiting, did bring results. Dense and varied greenery spread and deepened. Young forest grew. Wildlife multiplied. Conservationists began to lose their disappointment over Shenandoah's not being "forest primeval." Supt. Freeland was enabled to call the attention of scientists to reports that large, long-tailed cats were being sighted. In 1947 scientist Alexander Wetmore of Smithsonian Institution wrote in regard to the cougar (for decades considered extinct in the East, except Florida) "there can be no doubt but that these animals occur in the Park."[11]

In 1947 Benton MacKaye, wilderness leader and father of the Appalachian Trail--once so shocked by Skyline Drive--again saw possibilities in Shenandoah. He wrote Freeland a remarkably wise letter-essay offering to help with the puzzle of interpreting this unique park. I wish I could quote it all here, though it is "heavy" in places, but it is so long that excerpts will have to serve:

> Where are we in the long march since Aristotle toward achieving a full sense of <u>where we are</u> in the total scheme of nature? Precisely what niche therein does this freak genus <u>homo</u> fill (or fail to fill)?....
>
> A few great minds have opened up portions of the "stage setting" at least of the total drama of life. I'll cite but two: Copernicus revealed the cosmic setting and Darwin the biologic. These twin vistas, though sharpened by these two giants, have been in the minds of men since Grecian ancient times; and from such vistas philosophers have drawn inspiring deductions. Among these I'll cite but one, Thomas Jefferson, who deduced the final "plot"....
>
> "I hold (without appeal to revelation) that when we take a view of the universe, in its parts, general or particular, it is impossible for

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[10] Edward D. Freeland, personal interview, 14 May 1978, tape in my files. For Cades Cove quote, Carlos C. Campbell, <u>Birth of a National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains</u> (Knoxville: U. of Tenn. Press, 1960), appendix, p. 147. The effort to keep Cades Cove open had been going on since 1935 or before.

[11] Freeland to Frank S. Setzler, 12 May 1945, and Wetmore to Freeland, 30 June 1947, SNP archives. Freeland would describe Wetmore as not only a "world famous ornithologist" and "a valuable friend of the park" but also "a good personal friend of mine" (to incoming Supt. Guy D. Edwards, 14 Sept. 1950, SNP archives). See chap. 8 for more about the quick "return to nature."

the human mind not to perceive and feel a conviction of design, consummate skill, and infinite power in every atom of its composition. The movements of the heavenly bodies, so exactly held in their course by the balance of centrifugal and centripetal forces; the structure of our earth itself, with its distribution of lands, waters and atmosphere; animal and vegetable bodies, examined in all their minutest particles; insects, mere atoms of life, yet as perfectly organized as man or mammoth; the mineral substances, their generation and uses; it is impossible, I say, for the human mind not to believe, that there is in all this, design, cause and effect...."

Instead of the vague term "nature" [MacKaye again] I'll use the more precise term "wilderness".... In contrast there is the concept of civilization. This in its narrower sense may be defined as the reorganization of the wilderness into a special regime suited to the desires of one member (homo) of the wilderness population. Hence the term means merely a branch regime of the original wilderness regime. But in its broader sense civilization may be defined as any orderly regime, thus embracing the original or wilderness civilization and the branch of homo civilization.

With these meanings in mind our former question becomes one of whether a better comprehension of the original (or wilderness) civilization would aid in a better comprehension of a branch (or homo) civilization? Would a better understanding of the original, and the "design" therein sensed by Jefferson, equip us better for coping with the problems of our particular branch?.... Is not indeed such wisdom a base...for fullest knowledge of where we are and whither tending?....

The first step...is to...teach people how to read the open book... as printed on the trailside.

MacKaye proposed to create a self-guiding trail in Whiteoak Canyon that would really help people learn to read "the language of open nature" in which "the public at large is practically illiterate."[12]

Freeland hesitated. He pointed out that "we are completing our Nature Trails at Skyland and also at Big Meadows" and are hoping "Congress will give us a Naturalist this coming fiscal year." Yet, after talking with MacKaye's associates in the plan, he gave his consent. Sketches and drafts were sent forth and back. Conferences were held, including "Rangers Moore and Gary,"

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[12] MacKaye to Freeland, 13 May 1947, enclosing reprint of MacKaye's article, "The Appalachian Trail: A Guide to the Study of Nature," The Scientific Monthly, April 1932, SNP archives.

and in August of 1947 Freeland wrote:

> In cooperation with members of the Wilderness Society, namely, Benton MacKaye, Bernard Frank and Ivan Tarnowsky, a Nature Trail has been developed along a section of the White Oak Canyon Trail.... from the Skyline Drive 2.4 miles down along the stream to the upper falls, certain stops or stations were chosen where the story of soil and water could be told.... This is the first of its kind attempted.[13]

The trail had a flash of fame. Nature Magazine featured it in an 8-page supplement:

> The White Oak Canyon Nature Trail represents an evolutionary step in helping the layman to understand nature at first hand. Going beyond the usual type of nature trail, whose major interest is to answer the question, "What is it?" this one aims to explain also the "why" and "how."

It was called "a model for similar projects elsewhere," and hundreds of people were coming especially to "test out" the new approach to interpretation. There were seven posts calling attention to: a gully where soil feeding tree roots was washing away (nature took 5,000 years to make this 12 inches of soil); a large whitecak tree and other plants grasping, holding and improving soil; a clear-water stream (not carrying soil away); a box of topsoil and subsoil (people invited to handle); and so on to the upper falls. The magazine gave the whole text; Post 6 can serve as a sample:

> SOIL BUILDERS AT WORK - Notice post with holes. Look through hole A - notice lichens; look through hole B - notice mosses; look through hole C -notice ferns; look through hole D - notice shrubs and small trees.
>
> What is happening? Tiny air-borne lichen "seeds" invade the bare rock. Lichens grow and "eat" into surface of rock. Mosses then appear and crowd out lichens. Ferns flourish on the decaying mosses helping to make soil. Finally enough soil is built to support flowering plants, small shrubs, later larger trees. All soil of this mountainside was originally created this way. Columbus had not crossed the ocean when the first lichens began to work on this rock.
>
> What is the effect? Without this process our world would be barren and lifeless. No steady water falls. No soil, no plants, no food, no you![14]

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[13] Freeland to MacKaye, 18 June 1947; MacKaye to Freeland, 23 July; Freeland to Bernard Frank, USFS, 29 July; Ivan Tarnowsky to Freeland, also 29 July; and Freeland to NPS regional director, 22 Aug. 1947--SNP archives.

[14] Frank and Tarnowsky, "More Than a Waterfall," Nature Magazine, March

Here in Shenandoah, twenty years before "environmental education" was widely recognized, was a working example of it--and more, an example seen by MacKaye in the still more meaningful context of the whole human situation. The central essence of this park--as the world's outstanding exhibit of a vast area where human exploitation was firmly reversed, where a cycle that led from wilderness through destruction was now leading back toward wilderness, placing homo's civilization inside the complete "civilization" of earth--was beginning to be glimpsed. But nature's first reader became overcrowded and was abandoned. The essence, not fitting a familiar category, was hard to see. It came into focus, then blurred again.

In 1946 the Virginia Sky-Line Co., backed by Sen. Byrd, had asked for swimming pools at Skyland and Big Meadows as a start of "active recreation" to increase visitors' length of stay in the park. This led to a months-long argument among NPS executives, Demaray favoring the pools to aid the concessioner's business, the superintendent and regional director opposing them. An idea grew that "passive recreation"--meaning, staff the park with naturalists--would be more suitable. Director Drury finally settled the argument:

> I believe that swimming pools at Shenandoah are not an essential....
> I concur in Regional Director Allen's and Superintendent Freeland's proposal that the furthering of passive recreation would prolong the visitation period and be more in keeping with the purpose of the park.[15]

This decision led to appropriation of funds that ended at last the twelve-year delay in starting a genuine naturalist program.

Shenandoah's first official naturalist, Paul G. Favour, Jr., served from 1948 to 1955. Twenty-one years after he left he remembered:

> I handled the personal services naturalist program [virtually] alone in 1948, then was allowed one ranger-naturalist in 1949. I don't think I had more than 3 ranger-naturalists [seasonal helpers] up until I

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[15] Drury to Tolson, Vint and Taylor, 7 June 1946; Demaray to Allen, 19 June; Allen to Drury, 20 June; Tolson to Allen, 14 Aug., and Drury to Demaray, 24 Aug. 1946--National Archives.

transferred to Acadia....

> .... there was only relatively mild interest in the place that human history should occupy in the interpretation and development of the park on the part of administrators--supt., region and WASO [NPS Washington]. That was all right with me as I considered my job was to interpret nature primarily.... I gave about a 10% emphasis to [human history]--the story of the founding of the park plus the story of the hollow folk....
>
> As far as the preservation, restoration and exhibition of mountain-hollow structures was concerned, (1) my memory is that there were darn few such structures remaining by 1948--practically none close to Skyline Drive itself--and (2) that with both the Blue Ridge Parkway and Great Smokies developing exhibits of mountain culture buildings, I personally felt that it was unnecessary and superfluous for Shenandoah to follow suit.... I had my hands full with the natural facets of interpretation.[16]

There was no precedent for Favour to follow in interpreting this kind of park. Nearly all the visitors went straight through on Skyline Drive or one of its sections, many of them never shutting off their motors even if pausing at overlooks. The mandate from both Congress and the Department of the Interior was for the earliest possible dominance by wild nature. As Favour wrote early in the 1950s he had to battle in order to give "full attention without interruption" to any one project.[17]

Shenandoah Natural History Association which he helped organize on May 13, 1950, though helpful in the long run, was an additional burden to him. J.J. Sperry, newspaper publisher and president of the Northern Virginia League of Sportsmen's Associations, was elected president, but Favour had to carry the load as executive secretary, the pattern being as set forth in a constitution adapted from those of similar associations in fifteen other parks. First actions included arrangements to sell PATC trail maps along with my park guidebook in park information stations and "a number of concession units," to produce

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[16] Favour, personal letter, 3 Nov. 1976, pen-and-ink original in my files.

[17] Favour, personal letters, 5 Jan. and 11 Feb. 1953, my guidebook files, and my memory of working with Favour and others in the park on the second edition of my Illustrated Guide to Shenandoah National Park and Skyline Drive (Luray, Va.: Lauck & Co., Inc., 1954).

printed covers for mimeographed naturalist programs, and to publish Bulletin No. 1, a bird list (188 species) by Dr. Wetmore.[18]

In 1951 the association's membership increased to 72 (15 sustaining members paying $5 a year dues, 57 regular at $1; 12 park employees, 60 from the general public). Gross sales that year were $846.66, net earnings $227.78, both figures more than double the corresponding figures for 1950. In September 1952 Favour reported:

> Bulletin Number Two, "The Mammals of Shenandoah National Park," is well on its way toward publication. The manuscript, written by Dr. Richard H. Manville, Assistant Professor of Zoology at Michigan State College who this past summer served as a seasonal Park Ranger, has already been submitted. As soon as certain photographs can be prepared or secured to illustrate the text, the material will go to...a printer.
>
> The making available of such publications...is one of the prime objects of the...association. The more that may be known of its natural history, the more may Shenandoah National Park be enjoyed.[19]

The naturalist walks and talks were serving but few park visitors. If the interpretive program was to succeed, ways must be found to reach the Skyline Drivers. Favour proposed to Supt. Edwards one possible way:

> [Discussions with] Chief Naturalist Doerr and Assistant Chief Naturalist Franke during a field trip...brought out the fact that Shenandoah differs considerably from a typical park in development and in pattern of visitor-use so that the development of the interpretive program as a whole must necessarily proceed on a somewhat experimental basis....
>
> (1) emphasis should now be placed on...unattended interpretive devices.... (2) of the various kinds of these, exclusive of museum exhibits (since there is no museum here)...the most pressing need is a carefully organized system of interpretive signs to be placed where they will be utilized

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[18] Organizational minutes, mimeographed copy to Drury, 19 May 1950, National Archives, and Favour, "Shenandoah Natural History Association Is Organized," PATC Bulletin, Oct.-Dec. 1950. First officers and directors, in addition to Sperry and Favour, were Mary Helen Hadley, wife of a ranger, treas.; Dr. Wetmore and James M. Black (Luray), board members.

[19] "Annual Report of SNHA for 1951" and circular by Favour to members, 18 April 1952, and Favour to SNHA members, 30 Sept. 1952--my files.

by 99% of the Park visitors, i.e., at the overlooks, concession areas and picnic areas.[20]

Such ideas for presenting natural history to larger numbers of visitors would prove valuable, but mostly in changed forms after budgets were larger.

The human past kept haunting. An archeologist found a "rock shelter" on Madison Run and wanted to excavate its floor. Opinion in Shenandoah was divided, and the application went to the regional director. He also hesitated--partly because approval of this application might open the way for dozens similar to it. "I am presuming," he said, "that you have concluded that aboriginal history has a place in Shenandoah's interpretive program." If not, "then, of course," the excavation "is not at all justified." The truth was that "aboriginal history" had neither been welcomed nor rejected; the bounds and content of Shenandoah interpretation were simply not defined. But the excavation was authorized, and it revealed intriguing facts about Indian use.[21]

An NPS circular asked for lists of "historic structures, military works and monuments," and Favour drafted the reply:

> .... We have been hesitant whether to include...the few unrazed mountaineer cabins still in existence today which were originally recommended in the Steere report of 1936.... Although most...are now in such poor condition as to make restoration highly questionable, we are listing them for whatever value they may have for your record.... There are a few other cabins still standing, more or less...which may nor may not be of value historically.[22]

Ten "original" cabins were listed. Not mentioned at all were Camp Hoover or the Pollocks' Massanutten Lodge, later considered historic, or breastworks and gun emplacements near Browns Gap (for which there had been a change in Skyline Drive location), or the massive old iron-smelting furnace on Madison Run.

Favour did help save one mountain home, though not as a historic exhibit.

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[20] Favour to Supt. Edwards, 5 Feb. 1951, SNP archives.

[21] C.G. Holland, M.D., to Edwards, 17 March 1951, and regional director Thomas J. Allen to Edwards, 4 April 1951, SNP archives.

[22] Edwards to regional director, 16 Jan. 1952.

he examined the George T. Corbin home and recommended that PATC be granted

> permission to make the necessary repairs and to use this mountaineer's cabin as a closed shelter. I doubt very much that such repairs and use would alter the essential character and historical value of the building. It would, on the other hand, serve to preserve this interesting home without cost to the NPS when otherwise, under existing conditions, the cabin would continue to rot gradually away.

The idea had originated in the trail club long before. Now it was approved by superintendent and region, and the old building still stands in 1978.[23]

PATC, ever since its founding in 1927, had been interested in the park area's history, and NPS assistant director Lee showed signs that the interest was mildly contagious by responding belatedly to a "conversation of last spring" with Jean Stephenson, editor, Appalachian Trailway News:

> We...expect to approach the University of Virginia history department to see if anyone might write an M.A. or Doctor's thesis on the subject.... The movement to establish this park represented a revival of interest in the idea of national park development in the East. Hitherto the emphasis had been on...Western national parks, where the scenery and scientific wonders were more striking and more spectacular. We believe that if the movement to establish Shenandoah...is studied in all of its ramifications and with reference to its place in the conservation movement...a thesis of considerable usefulness and general interest could be produced.[24]

Thus human history continued to tease--but was not yet markedly influencing the budget-pinched interpretive program or park planning and management.

Soon after C. Kenny Dale became Shenandoah's second park naturalist in 1955 he was pulled into the enormous task of Mission 66 planning. Interpretation had a good chance for the first time to become a major factor in shaping and operating the park. There might be not just one but several visitor centers

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[23] Favour to Edwards, ca. Oct. 1952; regional director to Edwards, 30 Jan. 1953; Edwards to George F. Blackburn, PATC pres., 20 Feb. 1953--SNP archives--also PATC Bulletin, April-June and July-Sept. 1954; and Ed Garvey, interview with George T. Corbin, June 1962, copy kept in the cabin, summary in SNP archives. The cabin had been vacant 14 years.

[24] Ronald F. Lee to Jean Stephenson, 2 Dec. 1953, SNP archives.

of substantial size and a dozen or more naturalists in season. But the growth had to be rooted in a unique and appropriate mission for this particular park, a mission linking and enlivening all divisions and thus firmly and lastingly sold to policy makers and fund providers. Dale studied the park and its files, had discussions with key people of NPS. He became aware of FDR's "joint husbandry," of Huth's report and MacKaye's Whiteoak effort, along with Chick's and Favour's experience. Plans were drafted and redrafted and again interlaced with cross-outs and insertions. Skyline Drive's dominance was battled. But if the Drive was not the main meaning of the park, destined to keep shaping development and protection, interpretation and management, what was?[25]

E. Ray Schaffner came from Petrified Forest in May 1956 as assistant to Dale. The two soon agreed that nature and history were not two separate factors in Shenandoah. The history of the mountain folk was largely a relationship with Blue Ridge nature, and nature as it existed in the park was fundamentally influenced by history--mountain residents, exploitation from outside, and the establishment and management of the park itself.[26] Dale wrote:

> In the twenty-two years since the establishment of Shenandoah...there has been a great deal of thought, discussion and correspondence about the significance of the area and the methods of interpreting it to the visitors. On the surface it appears that there may have been a divergence in the thinking as to what should be interpreted and how to proceed. In the preparation of this [Museum] Prospectus an attempt was made to reconstruct some of the earlier thinking.... It has been interesting to discover that there is a definite pattern to the expressed ideas of just what the story of Shenandoah is and the best approach to the telling of that story. What appeared to be controversies were really differences over details. From all that has been written and said there emerges a field of general agreement, which has lacked only a statement of objectives to become an active program of interpretation....

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[25] Mission 66 planning files and notes, 1955-58, including scattered papers, SNP archives.

[26] E. Ray Schaffner, personal interview, 24 June 1977, tape in my files. This is the source to be assumed for anything attributed to Schaffner in this chapter unless another source is cited.

Shenandoah...does not preserve a wilderness. Two hundred years of intensive land use has greatly altered the area from its primeval condition.... Here is a living example of the resilience of nature. Here abused lands, relieved of the heavy hand of man, present a foreshortened view of thousands of years of ecological progression as slopes, denuded by logging and fire, return to climax forest. A rare opportunity for scientific observation of ecological processes is provided as this intensively used land returns to more natural conditions.

Wildlife populations reflect the story of conflict between nature and human interests....

Since the story of human occupancy...is so intricately interwoven with the ecology of the area it is very desirable that certain representative artifacts be acquired and preserved for use in presenting the park story to the public.... The way of life which brought about the changes was still going on at the time of park establishment...but the collection of artifacts and natural objects pertinent to the story is (pitifully) small....

All of Shenandoah...is a museum. It is a living, dynamic demonstration.

Not separate approaches to nature and history, not even just a mix of the two in an overall program--but a melding--showed in Dale's "narrative." In interpreting geology he proposed emphasizing soil, springs and ground water through their human connection:

Some alert visitors have questioned the source of water at Big Meadows and Skyland [developments] and here is truly an astonishing thing when we consider how these springs can continue to produce in such volume so near the top of a mountain of igneous rock....

And in interpreting flora:

.... there is no pretense here of preserving a primeval condition, and to practice extensive controls aimed at individual species would defeat the purpose.... the exotics are really a part of the Shenandoah story and should be interpreted as such with significant changes in their status noted in terms of both scientific and popular interest....

.... large meadows present a problem in park administration. Undeniably they constitute a very striking scenic feature, one that many people feel is a significant part of the park story and should be preserved.... It might be argued that to practice anything other than a "strictly hands off and let nature take its course" policy would be adverse to the

principles under which the park was established. On further consideration this may not be entirely true.... If for no other reason, a large and representative example of the Big Meadows should be preserved as a part of the important story of human use....

One of the primary values that sets Shenandoah apart from all other parks, and even all other areas in the World, is the opportunity to observe, study and interpret dynamic ecological processes on an extensive land surface that has been altered by human use and is now under administration and protection that can assure the continuation of those processes without further intrusion of artificial influences. Provision should be made for a large and definite portion of the Big Meadows area to grow up naturally without artificial treatment of any kind and arrangements made to study and record the changes that occur in plant and animal life during the successive stages.[27]

The genesis of the visitor centers--themes, locations, sizes, priorities at different times in the planning--reveals a continuing subtle movement toward discovering "homo" as part of nature and identifying this relationship with the unique essence of Shenandoah. When Mission 66 planning began homo and civilization were being seen as separate from nature--even nature's opposite--and of minor interest only in the park's interpretation. Dickey Ridge Visitor Center--theme, Mountain Forming--would be created first, in the remodeled Dickey Ridge Lodge. Then, according to the early plan--after all, the new view could not change everything overnight--Dundo (south district), Forests and Wildlife, and Big Meadows, the Mountains and Man, "should be constructed, in that order.... Experience at Dickey Ridge and Dundo...will give a firm basis for planning" the Big Meadows Visitor Center.

But soon it was decided that Big Meadows, already developed with roads and utilities and getting large visitation, should have the biggest and best visitor center as soon as possible. The Forests and Wildlife theme was shifted to Big Meadows. A bit later Forests and Wildlife was crossed out (with pencil in the

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[27] "Museum Prospectus for Shenandoah National Park, Virginia," approved by Supt. Edwards 3 May 1957, by regional director 20 May 1957, and by NPS chief of interpretation 28 March 1958, not signed by an SNP naturalist but (according to Schaffner) prepared by C. Kenny Dale--SNP archives.

Mission 66 Prospectus) and Man and the Mountains written in, thus becoming the theme of the park's main visitor center and by implication the principal theme of the park itself. The Museum Prospectus was correspondingly corrected (through erasure and typing in one new word) to read "Dundo and Big Meadows visitor centers should be constructed, in reverse order." The same pattern of mind-changing brought similar alterations in the park's Master Plan. Yet the Master Plan justification of interpretive work was divided between separate fields--natural history with 16 pages and human history plus archeology with only five. And the Master Plan failed to reflect in its most crucial sentence the basic, if still a bit nebulous, advance in understanding. It said:

> [The park's] Mission is to afford its visitors opportunity for enjoyment and study of the scenic and geologic phenomena, the flora and fauna, and the reminders of the human history of the locale.

No melding here, no recognition that the whole was different from, and greater than, the sum of its parts.[28]

Schaffner--who succeeded Dale as chief naturalist in 1958 and served in that position through 1974--said the visitor center planning shifts took place exactly while Dale was still here. He could not remember details of the shifts or why there was not better coordination, as to statement of mission, between Museum and Mission 66 prospectuses, on the one hand, and the Master Plan, on the other. But he remembered much about the difficult task of bringing the Big Meadows Visitor Center plan to realization:

> Man wasn't even supposed to be in the [Shenandoah] picture...it was all supposed to be natural history.... But...man is a very important part of nature and--supposedly...the only one who could alter nature to any extent....

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[28] See, in addition to Museum Prospectus, "Mission 66 Prospectus" as revised 30 Oct. 1956, approved 8 Feb. 1957 by NPS Washington--with pencil notes for further revision, 12 March 1958--and "Master Plan Development Outline," put into supposedly final form in June 1957, approved by the Director 20 June 1958, but even after that evolving, leading to "Master Plan for SNP, Mission 66 Edition," final draft prepared by J.T. Clark, park landscape architect, 1 April 1960, approved by A. Clark Stratton, assistant director, 4 June 1962--all SNP archives.

> I felt that [Big Meadows] was the place to show man's relation to nature and nature's relation to man. So I took that tack...to try to show the interplay of man with nature.... It was a matter of convincing the planning team that the museum lab sent down from Washington...and to get them on my side to have the exhibits lined up to show the influence man had had on the area and vice versa.[29]

Schaffner "rounded up artifacts." Many were donated; some were bought with natural history association funds. There was wide publicity and many people wrote in to offer old things. Quite a few items came from an auction of Elizabeth Winn's "Mountain Neighbors" when this craft project was ending its work. Schaffner bid in an authentic loom, for instance, at $20. Miss Winn, learning what was planned, donated a second loom, cooking utensils and other things. In regard to historic buildings, that would have fit well with the new orientation, Schaffner said:

> .... when we asked--why not restore or rebuild...structures to show what life was like when the park was created here, or just before...we found opposition from the regional director on up to the Director--oh no, the Great Smokies has this, the Blue Ridge Parkway has this, let's not copy.

No funds were provided to save old structures--though, surprisingly, a few still remained. It seemed impossible to make clear that not copying but a whole different way of understanding the "total drama of life" (MacKaye's words) was involved. This different way, this fully integrated view, did not fit established patterns. There were various maladjustments. One of them was that the first plans drawn for the Big Meadows Visitor Center--to house mountain-man exhibits--showed an inappropriate structure of steel, brick and glass. Only persistent protests, Schaffner said, got stone and timber into the design.

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[29] Schaffner interview, 1977. A later, brief talk with Schaffner, note in my files, suggested a surface reason why the Man and the Mountains theme might have been moved from the south district--because Blue Ridge Parkway planned a reconstructed pioneer farm with visitor center at Humpback Rocks, not many miles farther south, and it might be inappropriate for Shenandoah to feature mountain people so near. I find there was an SNP-Smoky-BRP conference 28-31 Oct. 1957; see four-page report, undated, unsigned, and Edwards to region, 1 Oct. 1957, SNP archives; though neither deals with visitor center specifics, they give context. In regard to the main Shenandoah visitor center being a "history exhibit," Supt. Jacobsen commented 2 Aug. 1977: "It stands as a real enigma..." (personal interview, tape in my files).

The superintendent who took over from Edwards in September 1958 was R. Taylor Hoskins, the park's first chief ranger who had heard FDR speak at Big Meadows of the "joint husbandry of our human resources and our natural resources," of "conserving our priceless heritage of human values," and of "the re-creation which we shall find here." Hoskins was more a "people" man than a "nature" man, yet he was keenly aware of both and was open to the "joint husbandry" idea not only for interpretation but for overall management. He was astonished and pleased by the way "nature" had "really restored and beautified the park" during the two decades he had been away as superintendent of Mammoth Cave and Carlsbad. He was astonished and displeased by "the loss of old buildings"--"If there had been any real enthusiasm, a dozen historic buildings might have been preserved." He especially remembered and regretted "two old mills."[30]

Supt. Hoskins was quick to encourage a proposal by the regional naturalist for research and writing of a "Geographical History" of the park and vicinity:

> Probably no other area [that naturalist had written] so well portrays the drastic ecological change that has taken place within a period of 200 years.... As the area, under protection of the national park, slowly returns to a near-natural state much of the evidence of former extensive use becomes lost. For future planning, development and interpretation... these studies are of primary importance.[31]

The trend toward a mission that would transcend Shenandoah's identity troubles showed in the joint effort of Hoskins and interpreter Schaffner for Camp Hoover. The camp had just been abandoned by the Boy Scouts of America after a decade of use in scout work. The buildings were to be razed, but the Hoskins-Schaffner team managed to involve the former President himself, still vigorous at age 84, and NPS Washington then agreed to save three buildings--The President, The Prime Minister, and Creel. Approximately $28,000 went into rehabilitation from 1960 to 1963.

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[30] Hoskins, personal interview, 5 Nov. 1969, tape in SNP archives.

[31] Hoskins to regional director, 19 Sept. 1958, and project proposal by M.E. Beatty, 15 Sept. 1958. I find no evidence the project was ever carried out; probably the $8,000 intended for it was cut from the budget in Washington.

Some original furniture was found and other furnishings of Hoover-days style were obtained. The three buildings were put in condition to last, and the camp became the first recognized historic site in Shenandoah.[32]

The interpretive program, with Mission 66 appropriations, grew rapidly--as shown, for instance, by the leap from 5,000 mimeographed activities programs distributed in 1956 to 50,000 printed programs distributed in 1959. On all days of the week now there were either three or four naturalist-conducted walks or talks. Dickey Ridge Visitor Center was in operation. The natural history association was paying for the printing and was also issuing guide booklets for the Stony Man and Big Meadows nature trails. An annual publication, Shenandoah National Park News, with sixteen tabloid-size pages, founded in 1955, was being bought by thousands of park visitors. Mission 66 had nineteen projects active in the park. So much was going on that full integration of factors long considered separate was hardly possible, yet drafts for a new round of "Master Planning" showed signs of FDR's and MacKaye's dreams and Dale-Schaffner integration:

> The natural history and human history themes...along with the observable effects of each individual part upon the other, are woven into the background of interpretive programs.... This ecological approach to the Park environment enables visitors to gain an insight into the relationships existing between different components of the Park habitat as well as man's role in these changes.... Through all of these themes the visitor discerns, like a bright-colored thread, the part man has played in the changing environment and the supporting role he can play in wise use of the area so that it may be passed on to the next generation unimpaired.[33]

A review of the period's diverse doings sometimes surprises with evidences of efforts to reach across dividing lines or with convergences that might have

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[32] Darwin Lambert, Herbert Hoover's Hideaway (Luray, Va.: SNHA Inc., 1971), pp. 137-41, based on Camp Hoover files and interviews (including Admiral Joel T. Boone), ~~xxxxxxx~~ SNP archives. The book brings out the Hoovers' influence on the park and the mountain folk and the settings' effect on the Hoovers and on history.

[33] "Minutes of the Annual Meeting of SNHA," 16 May 1959, my files; Supt.'s annual report 1958-59, Records Center, Suitland, Md.; drafts for Master Plan, June 1962, and Master Plan, April 1963, prepared by Joe H. Beer, landscape architect, and approved by Hoskins, 12 Aug. 1963, SNP archives.

been more than half chance. Another new deal was negotiated with Virginia Sky-Line, a 30-year contract to run from January 1, 1959, through December 31, 1988 --provided the company worked along with Mission 66 by spending $1,400,000 on improvements and rehabilitation by the end of 1966 and an additional $600,000 by the end of 1973. The new development in the south district (called Loft Mountain) was to have all the types of facilities and services that characterized Skyland or Big Meadows, including a substantial lodge. The south district visitor center was to be located there (instead of Dundo), and NPS would also put in roads, water and sewage systems, a 500-seat amphitheater, camp and picnic grounds. Plans soon drawn by Sky-Line included an "Old Mountaineer's Home...an interpretive feature to be constructed by the concessioner." By November 1963 the NPS parts were under construction, except the visitor center for which no funds were in sight. The concessioner hoped to have small facilities including a service station in operation before the end of 1964--with expansion to be "governed by ...public response."[34]

The concessioner was not only interested in mountaineer life but in Civil War history too, wanting to emphasize Jackson's Valley Campaign that had utilized the park area to some extent. NPS, looking toward the war's centennial, was preparing maps and text for interpretive signs at certain overlooks, along with displays the company would pay for and install at concession units. Bus travel (about 250 buses a year paying park fees) was being reviewed, partly with renewed hope of coordinating bus policy with Blue Ridge Parkway. NPS Washington was accepting a Virginia commission plan for joint sponsorship of "fishing for fun" on the Rapidan and Staunton rivers in the park.[35]

In 1962 the Thornton Gap Interchange taking Skyline Drive over US 211 (built

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[34] Virginia Sky-Line Co., Inc., Contract 14-10-0100-1038, signed 20 April 1960; Hoskins to regional director, 13 Sept. and 27 Nov. 1963; and NPS Design and Construction office to regional director, 4 Oct. 1963--SNP archives.

[35] Hoskins to FitzGerald Bemiss, 14 Dec. 1960, and SNP news release, 18 July 1961, on centennial; Koster to Kulesza, internal memo SNP, 12 April 1961, on buses; and Interior news release, 1 June 1961, on fishing--SNP archives.

by the government for $794,000) and the new Panorama concession (built by Virginia Sky-Line for $286,000) were jointly dedicated, with Interior Secretary Stewart L. Udall giving the main talk. Later the same day a "Byrd's Nest"--a hikers' shelter of "native stone and handhewn beams" built on Hawksbill Mountain --was dedicated. Sen. Byrd, who had donated this shelter and one on Old Rag and would donate two more, was reported by Time to have "gallantly danced at the dedication" on Hawksbill. Two months later Hoskins announced receipt of "a collection of historical documents, maps and papers relating to the park's early history...from the files of the late L. Ferdinand Zerkel" and said "the photos and other material will be carefully studied by Park personnel." That year too Hoskins agreed with PATC that horseback riding should be prohibited on the Appalachian Trail and the trail-club-maintained blue-blazed trails. It was a busy time with a multiplicity of projects, but through it ran threads of cooperation toward a greater park and an integrated mission.[36]

But all was not convergence; there were discords, divergences and disappointments too. Shenandoah Valley businessmen again protested what they saw as the government's taking customers away from them. Hoskins tried to smoothe the ruffled feathers, but this time it was not easy. The protests spread through Valley papers and got space in Washington--for instance, the Post:

> Front Royal, Va., Oct. 4 [1960] - 50 Shenandoah Valley Motel Operators gathered to assess what they feared was a threat to free enterprise....
>
> A 4-hour session with park officials convinced most of them the NPS plans no massive entry into the motel business and that Byrd's "cozy shelter"...provides no "overnight accommodations."

But this was only an early skirmish of a three-year disturbance--prolonged by motel men's discovery that Great Smoky was doing fine with no lodging at all for car-travelers inside its boundaries. Whether such protests interfered with

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[36] Virginia Sky-Line news release, 22 May 1962, company scrapbook, and printed program of dedication 9 June 1962--SNP archives; Time magazine, 17 Aug. 1962; SNP news release on Zerkel papers, 27 Aug. 1962; and on horses, a success for PATC after long effort, Bernard R. Meyer, ass't solicitor, to Director, 17 Dec. 1962, SNP archives, and Appalachian Trailway News, May 1963, copy in my files courtesy Edward B. Garvey, 7 Aug. 1977.

Loft Mountain development, I am not sure. Certainly other factors were involved. But there were no lodging facilities for the public at Loft the next year, nor "Old Mountaineer's Home" brought in, nor the fifteen years later. Neither was the/Loft visitor center built--which left Forests and Wildlife, in most official expressions still the park's main theme, unemphasized.[37]

Virginia Sky-Line was in business to make money, of course--and might have asked, why take a big risk at Loft when investments in more rooms at Skyland and Big Meadows kept paying off? The company had advertising-publicity investments in these established places (it claimed to have spent $27,064.39 in 1962 alone for advertising "the park"). In 1963 it issued a leaflet promoting "business and professional conferences." Hoskins asked that no such gatherings--with main purpose other than enjoying the park--be scheduled during the already-crowded travel season. Two years later, discussing a new horse trail, the company--despite growth of what Drury had called "passive recreation"--repeated an old complaint:

> We are constantly concerned about the shortage of specific activities in Shenandoah, which is a principal factor in the ridiculously short length of stay.... Though we have greatly improved our stable operation, I feel there is still a great undeveloped potential in the form of wrangler's breakfasts, children's covered wagon rides for supper across Big Meadows, a lunch ride to some attractive stopping and eating place.

Hoskins questioned the suitability to the park of "covered wagon rides."[38]

Emphasis on history was encouraged in 1964 by new Director George B. Hartzog, Jr. Hoskins and Schaffner agreed with

Hartzog's view that Shenandoah should emphasize Pioneer Culture.... We

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[37] Considerable detail about protests and answers to them is in Valley News Letter (motel associations), 31 May and 13 June 1963, SNP archives.
Opinions of people in the park's region do have influence. For instance, all through 1965 Hoskins, the Director and even the Secretary wanted Job Corps camps in Shenandoah, but growing opposition near the park, working partly through Gov. Harrison, ultimately defeated the plan (see file A98, SNP archives).

[38] On advertising, Sky-Line information sheet for motel assoc., 1963; on conventions, Hoskins to Bemiss, 30 June 1964; on horse activities, Bemiss to Hoskins, 28 April 1966, and Hoskins to Bemiss, 29 April 1966--SNP archives.

managed to store most of the working parts from the Jonas Clark up-and-down sawmill, built about 1800 on the Thornton River....

.... In our naturalist conducted hikes and campfire talks, evidence of the former inhabitants and their way of life is woven into the story of the Park area. We have tried to keep this phase of man's influence on the mountain and the mountain's influence on man in proper perspective to the other biological and geological forces.... We hope to eventually publish ...a book on the history, folkways and industries of the...Mountain Folk.

After the Big Meadows Visitor Center has been given a fair trial period, [if it] is then found wanting, we will be the first to insist that a complete Pioneer Culture Exhibit should be established.[39]

One of the obstacles to pursuit of a mission melding culture and nature (and thus multiplying Shenandoah's significance) is illustrated by an NPS "basic-resource inventory" in 1966. It required the listing of "natural" themes or sites and "history" themes or sites--separately, with no opportunity to show interrelations. So Shenandoah was seen as having waterfalls and streams, plant and animal species and communities--and, on the other hand, routes of explorers, homesteads of mountain folk, turnpikes and inn sites--but no man-in-nature sites. Yet change of a sort would come. Hartzog, drawing partly from Shenandoah which he sometimes called a "recycled park," was dreaming what would later be called "environmental study areas"--that could be more important and useful in that way than as either "natural" or "historic." This plan in operation would turn sometimes-embarrassing light on the park's own doings--for instance, an alleged "blooper...pulled in the Big Meadows Swamp" which caused botanist F.R. Fosberg, author of works on flowering plants in Shenandoah, to "wonder if a qualification for national park administrative personnel isn't ecological illiteracy!" Fosberg had been shocked by extension of the campground onto often-damp land that supported Gray birch and certain flowers scarce in this region. Evidence suggests that both Hartzog and Hoskins wanted the park to practice what it preached (years ahead of general recognition, the ecological interrelationships including

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[39] Hoskins to regional director, 10 Nov. 1964, SNP archives.

the human). But support for a mission of this kind--but half-consciously envisioned thus far except by Shenandoah interpreters--was spotty, and there were counter-influences and entrenched routines. Still, the worst-offending camp sites were ultimately abandoned.[40]

In hindsight other possibly regrettable actions (or failures to act) might be spotted--for instance, use of 2,4,5-T and other substances with unintended effects, such as in blister rust control or in efforts to kill certain insects.

> The people using 2,4,5-T [Schaffner said] were after results. They didn't know the side effects.... they kept buying it as long as it was still on the market.... Of course...one reason I joined the Park Service was because I felt it was a little bit more aware of the problems that could be caused by man's careless actions....
>
> They sprayed with DDT here from helicopters--against the fall webworm because they felt it was unsightly--instead of accepting it as part of the natural scene.... It took an awful lot of...convincing to have them reverse the policy.... Yes, there were complaints by visitors, but if you told them what the worms were and that they didn't hurt the trees, and... the cuckoos eat the worms...the visitors soon felt all right about it.

Complaints about the webworm had grown strong in the fall of 1961. Hoskins was reluctant to consider spraying. He said DDT could lead to "serious imbalance," and there "might be an epidemic outbreak from another pest equally or even more offensive." There was a lot of study and discussion. The regional office approved spraying 533 acres at a cost of $3,674--because park values were threatened by "unsightly defoliation." Hoskins referred to articles by Rachel Carson:

> .... helicopter spraying using...DDT...could conceivably result in criticism to the Service based on statistics and facts published in author Carson's articles which are very evidently at odds with our proposed practice.... we quite naturally would be interested in the Service's reaction to author Carson's articles and, also, your reaction to our recommendation that the Service assign biologists to...gather facts relating to any damaging effects.[41]

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[40] Fosberg to Hartzog, 9 May 1964, SNP archives, and personal talk with Rodney Lowe, SNP chief of maintenance, 17 Aug. 1977.

[41] Hoskins to Mrs. A.E. Holdridge (who had complained to Interior), 13 Sept. 1961, SNP archives and Hoskins to region, 3 July 1962, SNP archives.

The spraying was done in July 1962 and called successful. Though Schaffner pointed out that a longer period would be needed to make a proper study of possible damage, an even larger spray project was carried out the next July. This time the regional chief of wildlife management wrote a report saying "no evidence was found of adverse effects on birds or mammals." But the report was written within weeks of the spraying--too soon to know. By 1964 the use of DDT in national parks was "restricted." There was then a forefront experiment here, using Bacillus thuringiensis on 70 webs and a "virus developed in Louisiana" on 30 webs. The webworm "control" episode may be read as showing an advance in "husbandry"--or as showing how difficult such advances were.[42]

There were similar slow advances in regard to use of 2,4,5-T--in blister rust control, in fighting oak wilt, and in brush control by power companies. Shenandoah usually resisted the dangerous pesticides and herbicides--to some extent anyway--while decisions to use them came from higher up. In 1964 Hoskins rejected use of 2,4,5-T and other chemicals by permit holders, but NPS Washington said this rejection was not "good public relations." Hoskins nevertheless held to his rejection that year, but the Washington view prevailed from 1965 to 1969 with 2,4,5,-T and 2,4-D authorized "with very restrictive stipulations." In 1969 2,4,5,-T was restricted by Executive Order (Oct. 28). In 1970 Secretary of the Interior Hickel went even farther and put 2,4,5-T, DDT, aldrin and 14 other chemicals on a prohibited list. While Shenandoah had showed signs of being in the forefront of movement toward environmental husbandry, it had not been particularly successful in resisting the prevalent pressures.[43]

Director Hartzog began to feel "that the whole history of the National Park

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[42] M.E. Stitt to Washington chief of wildlife management, 25 July 1963; record of SNP meeting with representatives of Parkway, USFS, Bartlett and DuPont, 7 Feb. 1963; chief ranger R.I. Kerr, memo for file, 5 Aug. 1964; W.L. Freeman and R.L. Talerico, reports on Bt and virus, 29 and 30 Sept. 1964; and Hoskins to regional director, 1 Oct. 1964--SNP archives.

[43] Blister rust, Ribes, project sheet 1964, approved by Nathan G. Baker, 19 June 1964. Chemical eradication had begun in 1962 on 15,491 acres. Rights of way permit holders. Wm. C. Everhart to region, 8 April 1964; Hoskins to region, 13 April 1964;

idea has been the evolution of an environmental ethic." He said further--in a talk at Charlottesville, within a few miles of Shenandoah, a major source of this evolving view:

> Our interpretive programs...have attempted to communicate to every visitor the excellence each park area embodies, whether its significance be scenic, historic, scientific, or cultural. If we have failed, we decided, it was in not bringing the visitor into the center of his park experience. The parks, like life, are meant to be lived. The answer, we believe, is man himself.

His plan for environmental education by park interpreters, and the linked emphasis on "Resources Management Plans" in the parks that would improve husbandry inside their own boundaries, surfaced as the Man and the Mountain exhibits were being completed in the new visitor center at Big Meadows. He called for "broadening" the mission of all of NPS to include concern "with human as well as scenic and wildlife values"--echoing in a way FDR's speech at the dedication of Shenandoah:

> .... Communicating the values of park conservation so that our citizens may better appreciate their heritage, to the end that all of us learn to live in better harmony with our environment.... [and] Utilizing the national-park concept as a vital means of helping American cities to achieve handsome, livable urban environments.[44]

Environment education at Shenandoah--to reach people not being reached by what was already an environmental interpretive program--was launched in 1969. That spring Supt. Hoskins had told me on one of our trips together in the park:

> Shenandoah could be...the number one opportunity...for environmental education. There were the different periods--the exploration, the Indians here, then the hunting and trapping...the mountain people, the grazing by stock from the nearby lowlands, the logging, and there was even mining--and now, of course, all the different situations returning to natural conditions and the different uses today--watershed preservation, sightseeing, outdoor recreation...and all that history combined with nature study....

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[44] "Statement Prepared for Federal Executive Institute, Charlottesville," exact date (ca. 1968-69) not given, my files; Wm. C. Everhart, The National Park Service (N.Y.: Praeger, 1972), Foreword by Hartzog, pp. v-vi; Darwin Lambert, The Earth-Man Story (Luray, Va.: SNHA, 1972), pp. 145-46; and Charlie Marshall of NPS to Supt. Shenandoah, 26 Sept. 1969, SNP files.

Albright, here the other day, pointed out we aren't altogether unique --even the western parks...had been used, exploited in some degree. But... Shenandoah has gone through the broadest, most extensive cycle...more than any of the others.[45]

National Environmental Study Areas (ESAs) were designated at Big Meadows and at Dickey Ridge. The interpretive staff, sometimes led by the superintendent and assistant superintendent, attended twenty-five meetings of educators in nearby communities that fall, then conducted teacher workshops in the park's ESAs, first at Big Meadows on November 5:

> The teachers related to their environment during a discussion-hike... in near freezing temperatures and threats of snow. Everyone contributed their ideas on the use of the natural resources in teaching their class....
>
> The group hiked...past an old rail fence and into a mature forest. They observed the unique habitat of Big Meadows Swamp and discussed the man-made environment of the maintenance area. Mrs. Lucy Faulk, an elementary school teacher at the Criglersville School...a former teacher in the old Hoover School...brought history alive for the group.

Newspapers helped by publishing articles and photographs, quoting Hoskins as saying, "Our objective is to bring children to an awareness of what an environment is." Before winter closed down 87 teachers and more than a thousand students had used the park's two ESAs. SNHA gave 850 pieces of literature and 60 slides.[46]

It was a promising start. But almost immediately it was threatened--in Schaffner's view anyway--by the "Great Gypsy Moth Panic":

> A lone male gypsy moth [had been] trapped...adjacent to the Loft Mountain Picnic Area....
>
> Gypsy moths have a great potential for damage.... Consequently, the trapping of even one gypsy moth in a new area concerns plant protection officials.... Repeated defoliations can kill most hardwoods and a single defoliation has been known to kill white pines, spruce, and hemlock.... Native to Europe, gypsy moths have been in this country since 1869.... Male moths have been trapped in Delaware and Maryland during the past year.

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[45] Hoskins, personal interview, 21 April 1969, notes in my files.

[46] SNP naturalist division, Annual Report, 1969, and news release, 7 Nov. 1969, SNP files.

After much discussion, including a meeting at park headquarters in January, attended by state and federial officials and pesticide company men, a plan was made to spray a thousand acres with "Sevin 4 oil." Schaffner argued against the plan, and Hoskins allowed him to submit a minority report--in which he said:

> One male moth does not constitute an established infestation.... Sevin 4 oil is non-selective and kills virtually all insects.... Fledgling birds' food supply would either be eliminated or contaminated.... The Loft Mountain area is being considered as an ESA for the South District....
>
> I have already received one letter and several verbal inquiries about the proposed spraying program from conservation-minded friends of the Park. This Park and the Park Service should be careful not to alienate avid conservationists. Our environmental education program could suffer a lethal blow by rushing blindly into a careless spraying program.[47]

Word of the plan leaked--apparently through a state official--and strong environmental protests erupted in newspapers and a flurry of letters. Though the plan was modified, it was not halted. The spraying was substantial, though nowhere near as extensive as that earlier spraying for webworms. The report was--again--no damage. For all anyone knew, no good had been accomplished either; only the one male moth was found, no egg masses or other signs of infestation.

The naturalists felt hurt, but designation of the Loft ESA went ahead; so did the park-sponsored environmental education program. If the "panic" had any lasting effect it was probably a stronger insistence on research before spraying --and afterward too. For 1971 the Washington office authorized "Silvex" for Ribes eradication and 2,4-D to be sprayed on 44.2 miles of Skyline Drive guardwall and on 114 acres in 15 power-line rights-of-way. Were these substances free of harmful side effects? Only years could tell for sure whether the park was practicing what it was preaching.[48]

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[47] U.S. Dept. of Agriculture news release, 10 Nov. 1969; Irston R. Barnes, "Great Gypsy Moth Panic," undated clipping from an unidentified Washington paper (early 1970) along with other papers on the subject; SNP staff minutes, 4 Feb. 1970; and Schaffner to regional director (through supt.) 5 Feb. 1970--SNP files.

[48] Chemical project sheets, 1971, and other papers in file Y22, SNP. Spraying of guardwalls to keep down vegetation was not a new thing in Shenandoah.

In late winter and spring 1970, according to "The Web," a newsletter issued by the park to aid environmental education, 351 teachers of 37 different schools and 121 classes with 3,630 children used the ESAs. Newsletter issues repeated:

There is one web of life.
You are part of it.
The web is in trouble.
You can do something about it.[49]

In 1971 the park helped form an eight-county Environmental Education Council with representatives of a dozen public school divisions, Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind, University of Virginia, Madison College, and Virginia Department of Education in addition to NPS. It applied to the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) for a grant to employ a full-time project director who would "develop a program of community environmental awareness" using resources of park, schools and communities. HEW granted $10,000 for the 1972-73 school year, and through the council the program "improved and expanded." A more complete library of teaching aids was put into circulation. A television program was created and widely shown. During the next year--HEW not continuing its aid--the park helped by employing the council director part-time as technician-naturalist. SNHA, which had continued to aid the program, gave $600, mostly for teaching materials including video tape to copy programs for sending to schools.[50]

Environmental awareness continued as a major theme of Shenandoah's regular interpretation that was now reaching more than half a million people a year through the visitor centers, automatic presentations, live talks and walks and off-site programs, and approximately 2½ million visitors a year through self-guiding facilities including signs. The program more and more resembled MacKaye's vision of 1947, though few traced the connection.[51]

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[49] Naturalist division annual report, 1971, and other division files, 1970.

[50] Environmental Education Council, application to HEW, 1972; SNHA minutes, 19 Jan. 1974; and Council to SNHA, 31 Jan. 1974--SNP files. Paul Lee was director.

[51] See naturalist division annual reports, 1971 and 1972, SNP files.

SNHA was now helping the interpretive division on a significant scale. Among ~~xxx~~ publications while Schaffner was chief naturalist and Hoskins was superintendent--that probably would not have been produced without SNHA--were Skyland by George Freeman Pollock (Chesapeake Book Co., 1960), Wildflowers in Color by Arthur Stupka (Harper & Row, 1965), Trees (1967) and Ferns (1972) by Peter M. Mazzeo, Herbert Hoover's Hideaway and an ecological-environmental work The Earth-Man Story (1972) by Darwin Lambert. Other educational items increased the stock, and by 1972 gross sales were approaching $50,000 a year.[52]

Divisions other than interpretive were involved in different aspects of the same environmental thrust. Maintenance, for instance, was tackling Old Rag Mountain's trash problem with added strength, two men twice a week ("Can the people be persuaded to carry out their own trash?"); trying for improved garbage disposal for the whole park, in cooperation with the ranger division, to eliminate dumps or landfills that were unsightly and caused bear problems (20 refuse contractors being sounded out on hauling all garbage from the park); fighting denudation of land around trailside shelters ("Must we inaugurate a reservations system?"); trying for substantial improvement of sewage disposal (the superintendent and supporting officials meanwhile halting additions to Skyland and Big Meadows, though Virginia Sky-Line, changing ownership again, becoming part of the ARA international chain, was eager to grow at these locations). Schaffner would comment later that one of the best effects/~~things xgrowingxout~~/of the environmental education program was that it re-emphasized "that man can mess things up.... It probably helped toward getting funds for correcting" park management problems; "the sewage problem, for example...that went back to when Pollock was at Skyland and they just dumped the sewage out of the pipe over the cliffs."[53]

In 1972 a long-active program of water studies climaxed with a 158-page

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[52] SNHA minutes, reports to members, and lists of items for sale, 1968-72, naturalist division files.

[53] Minutes of SNP staff meetings, 1 Oct. 1969, 4 Feb. 1970, 12 May 1971, 5 July 1972, and 16 Aug. 1972, SNP files, and Schaffner interview, 24 June 1977.

paperback useful in interpretation as well as in planning and management.

> .... Existing public facilities [the book's Abstract said]...are located on impermeable rocks near the crest of the mountains, and water supplies are premium requirements.
>
> Springs furnished water to all Park facilities from its inauguration in 1936 to 1961, but expansion of facilities had greatly increased the water demand. Efforts were made to recondition existing springs and to locate additional ones for development, but the former was unsuccessful and the latter either too far from areas of water consumption or unreliable during the summer months. From 1961 to 1971 the Virginia Division of Mineral Resources located test-hole drilling sites in predesignated areas along the mountain crest, and preliminary data indicate 20 of the 33 test holes drilled for water can be converted into wells with yields that exceed the summer flows of developed springs.

Yet the book confirmed naturalist Dale's implications of nearly two decades before that adequate water "in igneous and metamorphic rocks, particularly at high elevations...is not a frequent occurrence." It further advised that, before choosing sites for further development on or near the crest, "ground water studies should be made over a large area."[54]

When Hoskins was about to retire in mid-1972, statistics just compiled showed the magnitude of management problems in which he and his staff were involved, trying to demonstrate wise environmental policy:

> Park acreage, 193,533; visitation last calendar year, 2,406,469; federal government's investments, more than $15 million; concessioner's gross receipts, 1968-72 average, $2,535,763 a year; net profit average, $148,327 a year; average return on gross receipts, 5.85%, on net worth, 13.85%; park fee collections going into U.S. Land and Water Conservation Fund during 1971, $821,936; other park revenue, $48,100; annual appropriation for park, 1972 fiscal year, $1,318,000; special use permits in force, 61; federally owned buildings, 246; concessioner owned buildings, 73; water systems, 54; sewer systems, 33; campgrounds, 729 sites; trailside shelters, 21; picnic grounds, 299 sites; permanent personnel, 56; temporary personnel in summer,

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[54] Richard H. DeKay, Development of Ground-Water Supplies in Shenandoah National Park, Virginia (Charlottesville, Virginia Division of Mineral Resources, Department of Conservation and Economic Development, 1972), p. 1 and p. 69.

139; motorized equipment fleet, 121 units, value $176,056; signs, directional and interpretive, 2,612; outdoor interpretive devices, 202; fixed audiovisual installations, 4.[55]

All of this, except maybe the park acreage itself, might seem the opposite of nature, but in the Jeffersonian-MacKaye view it was not. The whole park could be enjoyed as an educational sample of "the original (or wilderness) civilization" identifying and renewing the "branch (or homo) civilization." Even Skyline Drive, with its interpretive signs and similar influences, could be felt as fitting into a mission of people-inside-nature environmentalism or, in FDR's words, of "the joint husbandry of our human resources and our natural resources" or, in the Huth-Dale-Schaffner pattern, of a melding of the human with the wild, the cultural with the natural. The park was coming close to a unique and worthy mission for which it was the best qualified area known. But the view remained a bit hazy, especially from Washington offices, and there were distances to go and decisions to be made if the long years of exploration and experiment were to be integrated with a coordinated consciousness and fully apt action.

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55 "Area Statistics, Shenandoah National Park," typescript, 24 July 1972, SNP administrative division and general files.

## The Trouble with "Saw-Toothing"

Shenandoah's boundary if straightened out would reach from Virginia to Maine. The trouble and expense it causes are as endless as its zigzags. It resulted from Virginia's determination to get enough acreage to qualify for a national park even though the Great Depression was on and the land fund was insufficient. The technique, called "saw-toothing" by Will Carson, was to take in cheap land on the outlying ridges while leaving out costly land in the hollows between. Saw-toothing not only stretched the fund but also cut the population and farm land being condemned and thus reduced citizen opposition.[1]

More land was expected to be bought--with federal funds despite the provision of the Shenandoah-Smoky act of Congress "that the United States shall not purchase by appropriation of public moneys any land within the" proposed park areas, "but that such lands shall be secured...only by public or private donation." Even before Virginia wrote the deeds to transfer 176,000-plus acres in Shenandoah to the federal government, President FDR had "allotted" $1,550,000 to "complete" land-buying in Smoky.[2]

After Virginia had done all it could he might do something similar for Shenandoah. One extra-land plan for this park was brewing in 1934. An allotment of federal "emergency relief" money ($5,439) was made for "land investigation." L. Ferdinand Zerkel, already deeply involved in land work and resettlement planning, would do the investigating. Soon assistant director Conrad L. Wirth of NPS Washington was urging purchase of thirty thousand acres, saying this would

> help solve serious problems of park administration, scenic control and park and recreational development...as well as contributing materially to the solution of serious social and economic problems...within these areas.

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[1] See chap. 4, "Virginia Tackles the Impossible."

[2] Carlos C. Campbell, Birth of a National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains (Knoxville: U. of Tenn. Press, 1960), p. 117.

J.R. Lassiter, working closely with Zerkel, had suggested sixteen specific blocks of land, totalling 35,793.5 acres, in five different counties.[3]

Director Cammerer sent Secretary Ickes two maps showing "six submarginal land areas...that will qualify under the land program of the FERA [Federal Emergency Relief Administration]....

> This park [was] for lack of funds reduced from ideal of 327,000 acres to about 176,000 acres with hope eventually to enlarge to the ideal.... The inclusion of these areas would immediately assist in rounding out the scenic unity...and make for more efficient administration, particularly in respect to fire control and service roads.... the land will not be condemned, but will be acquired by agreement with the owners.[4]

Lassiter soon felt that not enough was being asked for and recommended:.

> that Project Va. R-4 be extended so as to take in all properties lying between the Kelsey Line and the Cammerer Line (authorized ultimate boundary) that fall within the price limit....
>
> .... there are some of the outlying tracts which are not submarginal in all their entirety, having a small part...lying along a creek bottom, which although not highly desirable for agricultural purposes, are above submarginal classification. Generally, the owners...have their homes and improvements on this better class of land which should be in some cases eliminated from the program by splitting the tract...so that the owner could devote his entire time to intensive cultivation of the best portion.[5]

Zerkel, signing as project manager, Va. R-4, sent to NPS Washington 78 "offers to sell" and asked for $702,000 to buy land in five counties.[6]

The FERA "Land Program" was primarily for "relief" but useable for other purposes as long as it carried a relief aspect with it. In April 1935 FDR placed authority in the Resettlement Administration, and in June Ickes recommended "Shenandoah Extension Project, Va. R-4," saying:

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[3] Wirth to Director of the Land Program, 16 Jan. 1935, and supporting papers by Lassiter, "Land Program" file, National Archives.

[4] Cammerer to Ickes, 28 Feb. 1935, in safe at SNP headquarters. Ickes personally signed this memo, "Approved, Mar. 4, 1935."

[5] Lassiter to E.M. Lisle, regional projects manager, Land Program Division, NPS, Richmond, 22 May 1935, SNP archives.

[6] Zerkel to Wirth, 25 May 1935, endorsed by Lisle and Weatherwax at Richmond, SNP archives.

This project requires the acquisition...of a minimum area of approximately 7,300 acres, and the primary purchase area consists of approximately 9,547 acres, covered by seventy-eight tracts, the average price of which is approximately $14.12 per acre, and the total price of which is approximately $134,804.59. The project contemplates the eventual acquisition of...25,000 acres...the total purchase price being not to exceed approximately $487,500....

The development of a Recreational Demonstration Project at this area will provide camping facilities for, not only the thousands...who annually visit the Nation's Capital, but will provide recreational facilities for the people living within a radius of 100 miles of the area.... The project will employ an average of 576 men from the relief rolls of Virginia....

The land...is within the foothills and cove sections.... "Scalds," "gullies" and "washes" indicate land in process of erosion.... The families are generally tax delinquent.[7]

With Ickes now on record in support, Cammerer came to Skyland to meet with Lassiter and Zerkel. He expressed a hope, Zerkel reported, to see the boundary "extended to the original Cammerer Line at some early future date" and felt that "any land acquired between the two lines will further the accomplishment." In August the Harrisonburg paper said:

Approximately 40,000 acres...are under option...around the rim of the present Park.... The approximate location of these tracts is as follows:

In Blackwell's Hollow section, Albemarle county; Garth Run and White Oak sections, Madison county; Hazel and Thornton areas of Rappahannock... with a strip under option in the Keyser Mountain and Flint Hill sections;

In Sandy Bottom, Hensley and Jolletts' Hollows in northeast Rockingham and southern Page, and at the head of Pine Grove Hollow, below Turkey Pen Knob;

In the Ida and Jewell Hollows, Batman Cove, Vaughan and Compton sections of Page county; and a strip...south of Chester Gap in Warren county.

Zerkel now had a staff of eight working on options. Land values had been declining and were running "about 25% less than...during the state's condemnation."[8]

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[7] Secretary Harold L. Ickes to Rexford G. Tugwell, Administrator, Resettlement Administration, 14 June 1935, and attached papers, an NPS Washington file, "Shenandoah Extension Project, Va. R-4," now in SNP archives.

[8] Zerkel to Wirth, 24 June 1935, National Archives; Daily News-Record, 25 Aug. 1935; and Summary of Virginia R-4, undated (ca. Aug. 1935), SNP archives.

The opportunity to correct the worst faults in the boundary seemed strong. But suddenly there was talk of "budget limitations." Ickes rewrote his recommendation of Va. R-4, leaving out reference to any land fund beyond $134,804 while asking for $148,978 to employ men on relief for development work. At this size Resettlement allotted funds. The land-buying project was designated LD-VA-7, and the land development project LD-VA-7. Land in only three counties was approved --62 tracts in Rappahannock, three in Rockingham and one in Albemarle, though "further small adjustments" might be made.[9]

From mid-September 1935 to just after New Year's 1936 "offers to sell" were accepted at a rapid pace--with Wirth setting priorities of tracts for maximum advantage from the limited allotment. In October 1936 the project manager at Luray (now Vincent R. Rhodes) reported a batch of 109 additional tracts pending. But in November the President rescinded authority given to Resettlement in 1935, leaving Interior to carry on as best it could with what money remained. Buying at Shenandoah was not resumed under the RD project. Boundary improvement had been slight; 10,294 acres had been bought.[10]

NPS worried now about the families and about actually adding the RD land to the park--whether a special act of Congress and maybe a special act of the Virginia legislature would be needed to assure the park's jurisdiction. The Budget Bureau was soon asking questions about maintenance costs on the new acreage. LD-VA-7, however, remained alive--with the previously allotted funds supposed to develop and take care of the recreational demonstration area.[11]

In April 1937 Rhodes proposed a job to use 8065 man hours plus $1453.05 on road and trail maintenance "in the Shenandoah National Park." The proposal was approved. LD-VA-7 continued through June 30, 1940, with various jobs, but I find

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[9] Wirth to Lisle, 23 Oct. 1935, National Archives, and note of 20 Sept. 1935 signed "B. Stockton," NPS Washington file "Va. R-4," SNP archives.

[10] RD files on purchasing; Rhodes, status report, 15 Oct. 1936; and Executive Orders 7027 and 7028, 30 April 1935, and 7496, 14 Nov. 1936--Nat'l Archives.

[11] Demaray to Lassiter, 1 Nov. 1937, and Tolson telegram to Lassiter, 9 April 1938, National Archives.

no evidence that any of the work was done on the RD land itself. The records show man hours and money spent on water systems at Big Meadows, Skyland and Lewis Mountain, and on the sewage system at Big Meadows. One of the larger jobs was number 111 for "preparation and transportation of materials," 2805 man days, 30,442 man hours, and $11,078.54. A renewal sheet for this job was signed April 1, 1940, by Lassiter and approved by E.M. Lisle of the NPS region:

> to cover expenditures to date and for the purpose of continuing job 111 until June 30, 1940. This job is in the LD-VA-7 Relief Program...stone for the construction of buildings in the headquarters area.
>
> The employees are to be transported by government trucks from the Luray and Stanley areas to the job site.[12]

In 1939 Congress had passed HR 3959 to "dispose of" RD lands. FDR vetoed it:

> While the objective...is good, I am inclined to think that certain safeguards should at least be studied at the next session of the Congress....
>
> There should probably be a provision allowing departments of the Government to take over for their purposes such projects as it seems desirable for the Interior Department to part with.
>
> Probably the approval of the President should be given to any transfers of these properties to local communities or other departments.

In 1942 Congress passed an amended bill that became law. It provided that land acquired for certain RD projects, including the 10,294 acres at Shenandoah, be officially transferred to NPS areas. Thus the use of $134,804 in federal funds for land-buying here was validated.[13]

But use of federal funds for such buying went beyond the RD project. The authority, such as it was, apparently came from Executive Orders issued by FDR. One of these--No. 6542, "Authorizing the Purchase of Land for Emergency Conservation Work"--specifically mentioned Shenandoah (along with Smoky, Mammoth and Colonial). It said "various lands have been or are being acquired" for these NPS units. Then:

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[12] LD-VA-7 job records, National Archives. The work was "relief"--managed for usefulness to the park but not in clear relation to land bought by LP-VA-7.

[13] Veto message, 11 Aug. 1939, in Congressional Record, 14 Aug. 1939, and 56 Stat. 327, approved 6 June 1942.

WHEREAS such lands lack adequate and proper protection from forest fires, floods and soil erosion, plant pest, and disease control by reason of the present condition of privately owned lands contiguous thereto or intermingled therewith; and

WHEREAS the purchase...of such privately owned lands will permit work and improvements thereon that will provide protection for the aforesaid public lands...and aid in the restoration of the country's depleted natural resources; and

WHEREAS the purchase of such lands will further provide employment for citizens of the United States who are unemployed;

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the act of Congress entitled "AN ACT For the relief of unemployment through the performance of useful public work, and for other purposes," approved March 31, 1933 (Public, No. 5, 73d Cong.), the acquisition of such of the aforesaid lands, by purchase or otherwise, as are suitable and necessary for the aforesaid purposes, is hereby authorized; and by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Fourth Deficiency Act, fiscal year 1933, approved June 16, 1933 (Public, No. 77, 73rd Cong.), the sum of $2,325,000 is hereby allocated for the acquisition of said lands (including the costs incident to acquisition)....

The order detailed the handling of the funds--from Treasury to the War Department, then "under the direction of the Director of Emergency Conservation Work" (Fechner of CCC?) to Interior, to be withdrawn on requisition by the NPS Director, spent either directly by him "under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, or through such other agencies, Federal or otherwise, as the Secretary of the Interior may designate, such expenditures to be made under his direction."[14]

This action by FDR probably explains the earliest allotment of federal funds for Smoky land-buying and certain much-smaller sums mysteriously acquired by the state conservation commission for Shenandoah land--when all funds publicly known to exist were supposedly exhausted. In January 1937, for instance, the commission was reported unable to "complete the purchase" of all the thirteen tracts "condemned in circuit court...six months ago...for Park headquarters"--

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[14] The White House, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Executive Order No. 6542,/28 Dec. 1933, full text in Edmund B. Rogers, History of Legislation Relating to The National Park System.... (Washington: USDI, NPS, 1958), at very end of Vol. 5. SNP "Statement for Management," draft of Jan. 1977, p. 14, says: "Notwithstanding the lack of purchase authority in the authorizing legislation of 1926, but utilizing authority derived" from 48 Stat. 200 and 49 Stat. 115, "and from various Executive Orders...."

but seven months later was apparently able to do so, issuing thirteen checks totalling $26,214.25 at the request of its attorney "for delivery to the Clerk [of the court], so that I can take the order contemplated in section 41 of the National Park Act, 'setting forth the fact of payment.'" Further, in 1938 the NPS chief counsel notified the superintendent of an 863.2-acre addition to the park of lands in Rockingham, Page and Madison counties, costing $14,295--explaining that "these lands were acquired by the State...with a portion of the $47,154 of Federal funds furnished...with the Secretary's letter of March 30, 1935."[15]

In 1940 the chief counsel asked the Treasurer of Virginia for certain information concerning "Federal funds furnished to the State of Virginia for the acquisition of lands within the...Park on the following dates: August 9, 1934, $17,214.25; December 27, 1934, $23,991.50; and March 30, 1935, $47,154.00" Some data had been previously given, "but now the General Accounting Office wants to borrow the original receipts for the purchase price signed by the property owners who conveyed their lands." If three checks were sent, it seems not unlikely there were more. I have found indications that as much as $259,163.75 in federal funds, including the amount for RD lands, were made available for buying land in Shenandoah, despite the prohibition in the basic Shenandoah-Smoky law of 1926, but cannot be sure whether all of this amount was so used or, on the other hand, whether still further amounts were sent and used. Either way the amount was tiny compared with the $3,503,766 of federal money used for buying land in Smoky.[16]

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[15] Washington Star, 22 Jan. 1937; and A.C. Carson to Wilbur C. Hall, 3 Aug. 1937, Virginia State Library; and G.A. Moskey to Lassiter, 27 June 1938, National Archives.

[16] ~~G.A. Moskey to Iassiter, 27 June 1938, and~~ Moskey to Virginia Treasurer, 20 Jan. 1940, National Archives. My total of federal funds for Shenandoah land includes $36,000 for 201.23 acres of "Snead" land in 1962 ("Water Resources Funds, Construction Account, Work Order 6-WR-62B" and A. van V. Dunn, NPS Water Resources, to regional director, 18 June 1962, Federal Records Center, Suitland, Md. If a study or audit has set forth all federal funds used to buy SNP land, I have failed to find the record.

The Smoky total is from Campbell 1960, p. 117, allotment of $1,550,000 for Smoky land on 3 Aug. 1933 by FDR; p. 121, McKellar amendment, approved 14 Feb. 1938, direct appropriation of $743,265.29; but these figures do not add to the full total, and I have noticed no information anywhere about the rest.

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Despite acquisition from time to time of bits of land here and there, the park's boundary still saw-toothed where no one had really wanted it. Moreover, no one could be sure exactly where it was. NPS engineer Oliver G. Taylor, asked by the U.S. Geological Survey to place the new park's boundary on topographic maps to be printed, said accuracy was impossible. He asked Lassiter to furnish an "approximate boundary" to be put on the maps. ECW engineer H.R. Gilroy, assisted by a crew from CCC camp 2, was trying to place the line on the ground. In an early report he told of working eight miles in Page County. He found "many of the old conveyances...loosely drawn" and had "to run several surveys using different deeds of adjoiners." He also tried tying in with long-ago surveys such as "the southerly boundary of the Fairfax domain." Taylor jotted on this report a guess that the task "will require years to complete."[17]

The Luray paper urged that local engineer Fred T. Amiss, already much experienced in the park area, be hired to solve the dilemma. Later, the paper commented that "as yet the Park authorities have not granted our border citizens a very reasonable request that would tend to...more cordial relations."[18]

But, "reasonable" though a precisely known and stable boundary might be, the faulty line would continue to worry both NPS and the park's neighbors for decades. The few changes happened almost incidentally--each for some useful purpose but not as parts of a coordinated overall program for a better boundary. In 1939, for instance, Congress transferred to Shenandoah an "area of 977½ acres, more or less," from the "Front Royal Quartermaster Depot Military Reservation, Virginia." In 1940 the Interior Department accepted from the state 428 acres in Albemarle County--formerly the property of the city of Charlottesville for which it remained a watershed.[19]

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[17] Taylor to Lassiter, 16 April 1936, and Gilroy to NPS Director, 6 Nov. 1936, National Archives.

[18] Page News & Courier, 29 Jan. and 23 Feb. 1937.

[19] 53 Stat. 815, approved 13 June 1939; and Cammerer to N. Clarence Smith, chm., Virginia conservation commission, 6 May 1940, SNP archives.

In October 1944 NPS received a deed conveying 268.32 acres "in fee" and "scenic easement restrictions upon 709.7 acres" in Augusta and Albemarle counties "for use in connection with Section 1A of the Blue Ridge Parkway." Though the parkway was a separate NPS unit, section 1A, Jarman Gap to Rockfish Gap, had been administered by Shenandoah since 1939 as a southern extension of Skyline Drive. Congress recognized the administrative arrangement incidentally in an Act

> Authorizing the conveyance by the Secretary of the Interior to The Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company...of certain perpetual easements near Afton, in Augusta and Nelson Counties, Virginia, being a portion of the Blue Ridge Parkway land of the Shenandoah National Park.

But not until 1961 was this small bit of the parkway officially transferred to Shenandoah by Congress.[20]

Freeland (superintendent 1942-50) had what seemed more urgent problems; nevertheless, he found the terribly zigzagged boundary

> of some concern...especially where it went down far enough where people could use park land...and they would run their cattle on it.... And if we said don't run your cattle on it because it's park property, then they would burn it off, because when you burned off a section the first thing that came and produced at all was the huckleberries. Mountain folk used to make quite a thing of the huckleberries...selling in the towns.... We weren't so sure they didn't set the fires just to annoy us because we were confining them to their own property.[21]

In 1945 Freeland wrote that "large indentations of private holdings, long projections of Park lands and several islands of Park property surrounded by private holdings make administration and protection particularly difficult." He recommended buying land along the Lee Highway near park headquarters and along Spotswood Trail and, further, to "close indentations" such as around "Rocky Branch of Pass Run, West Branch of Naked Creek, Hawksbill Creek south of

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[20] Tolson to Abram P. Staples, 6 Oct. 1944, SNP archives. The deed was dated 1 Dec. 1941. For C & O, 58 Stat. 909, approved 22 Dec. 1944. A deed granting these easements for railroad tunnel under parkway, no surface rights, was sent to Freeland by Wirth on 17 Sept. 1946 and sent by Freeland to C & O. 75 Stat. 192, approved 30 June 1961, transferred section 1A to Shenandoah.

[21] Edward D. Freeland, personal interview, 14 May 1978, tape in my files.

Elkton, Rapidan River, Conway River, and Moorman River north fork." He listed 100 individual tracts he would like to see acquired.[22]

In 1947 the Interior Department reviewed--for Sen. Robertson of Virginia--a "flub" that had allowed 495 acres of Ida homesteads watershed (inside Shenandoah's authorized boundary) to go back into private ownership. A resident had reported water pollution from this land and said the tract should be in the park. But communication failure had let Farm Security sell it for only $2510.50, though the Agriculture Department would have waited for legislation if it had known NPS intended to ask Congress for it.[23]

In 1956, under Supt. Edwards, the "Mission 66 Prospectus" called urgently for acquisition of 2,631.47 acres at a cost of $168,500. This acquisition

> would aid immeasurably...the Park boundary line, which in turn would reduce the patrolling requirement and, of course, the attendant cost. It would also eliminate the continual requests by the present owners for access roads ...a constant source of administrative problems and expense.

Further, the prospectus asked for legislation:

> To adjust the boundary authorization to conform to the ultimate expansion required to best accomplish the purposes for which Shenandoah...was established.... To provide funds to carry out the program.... To authorize NPS to enter into an agreement with the State...to maintain short sections of State road in exchange for the State maintaining a like amount of short sections of NPS roads.

Edwards separately suggested acquiring 38 acres near park headquarters and the "Snead-DeBergh property" on Dickey Ridge. If authority and funds for direct purchase of land could not be obtained, Edwards advocated authority for equal-value land exchanges.[24]

The action phase of Mission 66 moved strongly on several fronts in Shenandoah --but not on the boundary problem.

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[22] Freeland, Boundary Status Report, 2 April 1945, National Archives.

[23] Warner W. Gardner to A.W. Robertson, 19 June 1947, National Archives.

[24] "Mission 66 Prospectus," 1956-57, SNP archives; Edwards to Director, 25 Oct. 1955; regional director Elbert Cox to Director, 5 June 1956; Edwards to regional director, 30 Aug. 1957; acting supt. to region, 18 June 1957; and region to Director, 11 Feb. 1959--Federal Records Center, Suitland, Md.

Supt. R. Taylor Hoskins, who succeeded Edwards, was soon moving the boundary toward the top of the priority list. When in 1960 he asked his division heads for their thoughts on park planning Schaffner wrote:

> One proposal that should receive serious consideration is...a more easily managed boundary. A committee should be established to study this problem...taking into account the original Cammerer Line as a possible goal....
>
> Year round usage could become a reality with acquisition of some of the flat lands and hollows lying between the mountain ridges. Recent real estate promotions have played up the advantages of buying lands adjoining the Park for summer homes and hunting lodges. Any corrections to the boundary should be made before these developments become too numerous.[25]

The acting chief engineer of NPS design, reporting on his first "scouting trip" to Shenandoah, stressed the need for land exchanges and boundary adjustments. The assistant chief of lands wrote about the Snead land--and added:

> I mentioned to our legislative man Frank Harrison the desirability of authority to purchase land at Shenandoah.... He agrees but feels nothing can be done this session.... Frank and I have worked on drafting a bill... authorizing NPS to use appropriated funds to buy lands in any area of the system regardless of limitations and restrictions in other laws.[26]

In 1961 not Shenandoah but Blue Ridge Parkway got legislation authorizing purchase of land with federal funds. This act of Congress led to about ten million dollars of acquisition, including 365 acres condemned just back of Humpback Rocks visitor center near Shenandoah. In January 1962 a thorough revamping of Shenandoah's edges was again suggested--by NPS lands man Clancy who, with an associate named Montgomery, had made a "boundary study":

> Adjustment...is recommended in order to...afford protection against undesirable development; preserve and protect a natural setting; eliminate problems of private accesses. The adjustment would entail acquisition...on the east and west boundaries...and alienation of other Park land...no longer considered necessary for Park purposes.... The completion of subdivision

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[25] Schaffner to Hoskins, 15 April 1960, SNP archives; see also here assistant supt. Francis D. LaNoue to Hoskins on boundary, 22 April 1960.

[26] W.E. O'Neil, Jr., to chief, NPS design and construction, 1 Nov. 1960, Records Center, Suitland, Md.; and Harry K. Saunders to Hoskins, 23 June 1961, SNP archives.

developments will result in problems related to private access, especially where developments are located near Skyline Drive. Private hunt clubs are acquiring land in coves bordered by Park lands, thus adversely affecting law enforcement and public relations.[27]

The Snead land deal, first advocated by Edwards, was a novelty. The tract had six springs, and water was needed for Dickey Ridge development. So the land was bought with water funds. The "one-trade-one-bill" route through Congress brought in the 38 acres near headquarters that Edwards had also wanted. A much larger area wanted by the park was "lost" when the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries bought 8,400 acres in Madison and Greene counties for a hunting and fishing preserve. This "Ward-Rue lumber land" near Camp Hoover might have filled a large bay in the park line. Hoskins "resented" this purchase of land "authorized as park"--bought "50% with federal money." "It burns me."[28]

In May 1963 Director Wirth, the regional director and Hoskins jointly pushed the long-needed overall legislation. Wirth found Sen. Byrd "willing to sponsor a bill." NPS suggested acquiring 25,346 acres, trading off 5,233 acres, and officially reducing the Shenandoah maximum from 327,000 acres to 225,000. Byrd, working on this matter through his administrative assistant, M.J. "Peachy" Menefee, said 225,000 was too much but he would accept 212,000. Copies of a bill and map were taken to the "Hill" in March 1964 by Bill Featherstone and Frank Melvin of NPS Washington:

> Peachy had not seen Senator Robertson, and really thought the NPS ought to see him first. So Frank and I took...a map and a bill and explained our purposes to him. He was very receptive. He felt, though, that since the State had donated some of the land we planned to exchange, Governor Harrison should be consulted. He is going to explain the situation to Gov.

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[27] Granville Liles, personal interview, 20 Aug. 1977, tape in my files, for Parkway, also comments on Shenandoah's need for land-buying legislation; and E.J. Clancy, "Legislative Proposal Explanation," 22 Jan. 1962, SNP archives.

[28] For Snead deal sources, see footnote 16; 38-acre trade, 74 Stat. 945, approved 13 Sept. 1960; 8,400 acres, Hoskins to regional director, 3 July 1962, with Page News & Courier clipping, 2 Aug. 1962, Records Center, Suitland, Md., and, for three-word quote, Hoskins, personal interview, 5 Nov. 1969, SNP archives.

Harrison and send him the map and the bill and expects it back in about a week. Then he will call Sen Byrd and we'll probably go up again to discuss.[29]

A press release draft, prepared by Hoskins for Menefee, stressed that Congress had authorized 521,000 acres in 1926, that only 193,646 had been acquired, and that the reduction in legal maximum to 212,000 acres would "relieve owners of lands in the larger area from authority now vested in the Government to include their property within the park....

> studies indicate that the present irregular boundary, with many pockets and projections, results in difficulties for both the park rangers and adjoining landowners. Where park land projects into a private hunting preserve, for example, hunters may find themselves on park property without knowing it, unless extra rangers are stationed at the boundary.... Similarly, where a pocket of private land is almost surrounded by park property, visitors...often unknowingly trespass on private property.... The new boundary will follow topographic features more closely, to make identification of park lands easier.[30]

Byrd with Robertson as cosponsor introduced S 2807--"to fix the boundary" --on May 5, 1964. The next day Rep. John O. Marsh, Jr., of the congressional district including the park, introduced an identical bill, HR 11157. They would authorize the Secretary of the Interior "to procure by purchase with donated or appropriated funds, by gift, and by exchange, lands" within the 212,000-acre area shown on an accompanying map. The legislation would authorize appropriations and retrocede to Virginia, on lands being alienated, the jurisdiction previously ceded to Uncle Sam. Hoskins commented that the bill, if passed and funded, would be the "most important step taken to further the park...since the ...original legislation." Robertson commented, "Senator Byrd and I anticipate no difficulty in securing favorable Senate action."[31]

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[29] "Boundary Status Report," 2 May 1963, signed by Hoskins, regional director Elbert Cox and Wirth, and Wirth to Cox, 12 July 1963, Records Center, Suitland; and Hoskins to Cox, 2 Aug. 1963, Featherstone to Hoskins, 6 March 1964, and copies of bill and map, SNP archives.

[30] Hoskins to Menefee, 24 April 1964, SNP archives.

[31] Printed bill S 2807, Hoskins to Menefee, 8 May 1964, and Sen. A. Willis Robertson to Hoskins, 9 May 1964, SNP archives.

There was difficulty though. Protests caused Byrd to reject acquisition of the Naked Creek section near Elkton--"approximately 7,000 acres with 82 dwellings, 5 churches, and 1 school." NPS revised the map. Three Hightop-section owners came to park headquarters to protest, were not satisfied with explanations, so complained to Interior. This complaint caused a stir but was far from enough to wreck the bill. NPS Washington provided Interior with ~~xxxxxx~~ justification for changing the boundary--that is "now 450 miles long....

> In some places it is less than a mile from Skyline Drive.... nearness of private lands to the Drive generates demands for access to motor roads which, if granted, would create unsafe conditions and interfere with visitor enjoyment.... moreover, private lands are subject to development incompatible with park and visitor use.... poaching and frequent trespass on park lands result from tracts being almost completely surrounded by park lands.... serious management problems...tree cutting, refuse dumping.[32]

But when Congress adjourned that election year there had been no action in either the Senate or the House, and the bills died.

NPS went to work early the next year. Estimated cost of the 13,331 acres of private land now sought was $1,748,000.. The 8,400 acres of state game preserve might come through exchange. The 290 acres of Agricultural Department land near Front Royal, being federal already, should come without cost. Park lands now proposed for alienation had an estimated value of $176,790. Interior's advisory board on national parks, "at its October 1964 meeting, strongly endorsed this proposed boundary revision [which] would result in better protection and more efficient administration." Tax loss to eight park counties would be about $6,800, "negligible compared to total tax revenue. County officials have been consulted and little or no serious opposition has been encountered." Improvements on lands to be acquired were "6 farm units, 177 houses, 5 churches, a school, a mine and a sportsmen's lodge," total value estimated at $431,500.[33]

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[32] Hoskins to regional director, 20 May 1964, chief ranger memo for file, 5 June 1964, and Jackson E. Price of NPS to legislative counsel, Interior, recommending enactment of S 2807, 4 Aug. 1964--SNP archives.

[33] Hoskins to regional director, 2 Dec. 1964, and Frank E. Harrison to Interior's legislative counsel, 6 Jan. 1965, SNP archives.

Byrd introduced the bill on February 1, 1965, and Marsh introduced an identical bill. Again there were protests--but not many. Hoskins told Byrd that "NPS will be lenient by allowing owners whose land is acquired and who have attained a certain age to reside on such land during their lifetime." To prepare for hearings, expected promptly this time, Shenandoah obtained and mounted both colored slides and black-and-white photographs "of selected tracts typical of those to be added or alienated." Because Byrd was not well, much responsibility was on Menefee. He tried to get the help of Robertson--who answered:

> This matter was mentioned to me in Roanoke by Mr. Stratton of the Park Service last Saturday. I told him that if he could get the approval of such a bill by the House, I would then support it on the Senate side but that I did not feel inclined to make a lot of enemies over this issue, only to have the bill killed when it reached the House.[34]

Menefee invited Hoskins to his home in Luray for strategy discussion, telling him that Byrd "had been out of the office for about three weeks but he would discuss this matter with Congressman Marsh and thought that in view of Senator Robertson's letter they may try to push the bill through." Time passed, however, with no action. Menefee made another effort "to have the Congressman ask for a hearing on HR 4005." It was unsuccessful, and Menefee said he felt "that for this session I have pressed the matter as much as I can, and will have to wait until January and then plan for some future action."[35]

But neither Byrd's health nor the prospects for the bill were encouraging as 1966 came and advanced. Schaffner remembered:

> At the dedication of the last Byrd's Nest shelter...Byrd looked very feeble. He hadn't been pushing anything.... he soon turned over the reins of power to his son by stepping down and having his son appointed as Senator--and of course when this happened...it was a very touchy situation until his

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[34] Hoskins to Byrd, 16 March 1965 (bills now S 917 and HR 4005), Jerry B. House (assistant supt. SNP), 10 Feb. 1965, and Robertson to Menefee, 21 July 1965, SNP archives.

[35] Hoskins to acting director, 26 July 1965, and Menefee to Hoskins, 15 Sept. 1965, SNP archives.

son got used to it, and by that time there had been complaints that the park was "gobbling up all the country."[36]

Byrd died in October. The park staff prepared a funeral wreath of fall foliage from Old Rag Mountain, Byrd's favorite. Director and Mrs. Wirth, Hoskins and his assistant and their wives attended the funeral.

A tremendous effort was made in 1967. Director Hartzog gave Shenandoah's boundary high priority. The team was dedicated, deeply informed and determined; it included two influential land and resource officials in Washington who had been Shenandoah rangers when Hoskins was chief ranger. On January 11 Hoskins held a special staff meeting for campaign strategy, and there were timely strengtheners of incentive--land owners demanding, for instance to use the lower end of Skyland road to reach a tract for obtaining locust posts and to use 1½ miles of South River fire road to reach a tract for logging. Hoskins soon wrote:

> As a result of meeting held yesterday with Senator Harry F. Byrd, Jr., Deputy Director A. Clark Stratton, and other Service personnel, the following action will be taken.
>
> On approximately February 1, an appraiser will be in the area from Mr. Harriman's office [Clifford J. Harriman, former Shenandoah ranger, now a lawyer and supervisory appraiser].... He will work with the Ranger Division and from the appraisals will determine cost for acquisition, which has been requested by Senator Byrd [along with] the following.... 1. Percentage to be condemned by District. 2. Percentage to be secured through friendly purchase.... 3. Percentage that can be exchanged.... Land classification to be obtained [also] by Ranger Division: 1. Acres now in cultivation. 2. Acres not now in cultivation but which could be cultivated. 3. Other, such as scenic, mountains, cliffs, etc....
>
> .... Mr. Harriman has requested.... 1. List of all land sales and offers by District, including prices and names of vendors.... 2. Go to court houses to secure copies of all deeds of present owners.... 3. See assessors in each county and get ownership maps of lands involved.[37]

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[36] E. Ray Schaffner, personal interview, 24 June 1977, tape in my files.

[37] Staff minutes, 11 Jan. 1967, and Hoskins to House, Burgen, Eubanks, Johnson, Lancaster, and Nichols with copy to Harriman, 18 Jan. 1967, SNP archives. Staff minutes 1967-68, SNP archives, are the source of information about the effort in these two years that is not specifically credited to other sources.

Boundary revision became a full-time job for several Shenandoah rangers and almost full-time for the civil engineer and others. The rangers scouted tracts on the ground and studied deed books. Prices were jumping--from $30 to $40 an acre up toward $1,000. Second-home developments were multiplying. The south district ranger said that "in Greene County alone at least 45 landowners" might be involved. The appraiser from Washington, Ralph E. Borman, went to work. Small changes in the plan were necessary. Hoskins eliminated from acquisition the "183-acre tract 11A" as it "has now been subdivided and largely sold to many owners"--and added 4 acres by park headquarters and "tract 13A, 171 acres" which if not acquired could create a bad scar easily visible from Skyline Drive. Support data was drawn from Washington land and water records, with still more data to be requested for hearings after the expected introduction of a bill.[38]

In February the chief ranger reported all districts had secured copies of "deeds to the parcels of land we wish to obtain, but there are some errors which will have to be corrected.... Rangers Wightman, Wilson and Hoar are getting information on comparable sales of land." Central district ranger Lancaster said his men had spent much time gathering data for Borman. After another month land data and accompanying photographs were reported complete "except for two aerial photos of Page County and the summary sheets." Borman was preparing his report that would grow to 396 pages.

Then a diversionary action struck. Representatives of the state game commission and of Madison County, accompanied by Rep. Marsh, called on NPS Washington advocating a land trade in the Rapidan area--3200 acres of state land for 3500 of park land. The declared aim was state development of a trout-fishing area, which was politically popular. The trade would help straighten some miles of park boundary. The next day Sen. Byrd Jr. wrote Hartzog, discussing the trade and expressing the hope that it would "be effected."[39]

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[38] Staff minutes; Johnson, Campbell and Reeve, personal interview, 20 July 1977, tape in my files, and R.E. Dickenson to resource chief, 10 Feb. 1967, SNP file.

[39] Senator Harry F. Byrd, Jr., to Director George B. Hartzog, Jr., 4 May 1967, SNP file.

The exchange plan was not a total surprise. But the definite proposal, favoring the state in form and acreages, endorsed by Marsh and Byrd--the very men NPS depended upon for overall boundary legislation--was a jolt. The NPS attitude toward the trade would surely affect the Byrd-Marsh attitude toward the larger boundary plan. Hartzog replied diplomatically to Byrd that "your proposal...appears to have considerable merit.... however, we can't make a commitment until we review it on the ground." Deputy director Harthon L. Bill wrote, "It appears to us that...this proposal...supported by the Congressional delegation and Madison County...makes sense both from our standpoint and that of the Commission." The regional director, Jackson E. Price, was asked to make a study, working closely with Mr. Phelps of the state commission. A conference and field trip at Shenandoah were scheduled--with NPS people from Washington and region along with state officials. Hoskins told his staff, "It is up to us to defend the park and find out how far we can go locally."[40]

During the conference and tour, June 21-22, the commission pushed for an even greater acreage advantage. The chief of NPS resource planning reported:

> The Commission is interested in developing the lower Rapidan River and its tributaries for fishing on a "put-and-take, pay-as-you-go" basis. The proposed exchange would consolidate all of the lower Rapidan and Staunton Rivers in State ownership. In exchange for approximately 3700 acres of NPS land, the Commission would transfer 3100 acres of its land.... Shenandoah would lose about six miles of the...Rivers, but would add land that would...straighten its eastern boundary....
>
> Recommendations: While the proposed exchange has considerable merit, it is felt that additions of land to the boundary to fill in around the Rapidan "Finger" would be a more desirable method.... Such a solution would result in a larger eastward extension of the park and the retention of greater scenic and ecologic diversity.
>
> Only if a realistic appraisal of political possibilities shows such an extension to be impractical should an exchange based on the loss of the Rapidan "Finger" be considered. Should such be the case, however...

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[40] Hartzog to Byrd, 22 May 1967, Bill to Price, 23 May 1967, Hoskins to staff, 8 June 1967, and staff minutes, 21 June 1967, SNP archives.

realization should be given to the fact that some of the most picturesque and finest fishing streams in Shenandoah occur within the Rapidan "Finger." The lands...have also been protected for over 30 years, whereas the lands proposed for exchange have been logged, some of them very recently. In this light the suggested ratio of exchange...is unreasonable....

A plan (with map) was urged under which NPS "would trade approximately 3700 acres of its land for 5100 acres in return (in a ratio of 1.4 to 1). The 5100 would include 3920 owned by the commission, "plus an additional 1180 acres of private land which the Commission would purchase" and transfer to NPS.[41]

Hoskins agreed. He said further that the necessary legislation should be "all-inclusive, not this trade alone, but allowing us to make other moves in the boundary program." He had in mind most urgently a trade to save a large tract where subdivision threatened very close to Skyline Drive, the tract's owners being willing to consider a trade offer. Further, Hoskins was not happy with the state's fishing program for the area, either present or as planned:

> Both the Rapidan and Staunton Rivers are presently fish-for-fun streams. From the comments and discussions of the review team, there seemed to be general agreement...that the fish-for-fun program has been less than a success.... The Commission, in presenting its proposal, attached to Congressman Marsh's letter of May 2, 1967, to Director Hartzog, stated that, "In the event that this land trade would be accomplished, it would be highly desirable to continue this 'fish-for-fun' operation on Park property." .... In designating the Rapidan area (Camp Hoover) to succeeding Presidents... it was not [Hoover's] intention, in our opinion, to have that portion of the Rapidan River...used as a "fish-for-fun"stream, but rather it should be unrestricted as a trout fishing stream.[42]

Hoskins and others in NPS were most eager to move ahead with the overall boundary plan. The voluminous Borman report, now being circulated, showed the "gross appraisal value" of 18,751.71 acres proposed for acquisition was $3,216,000, of 5,315 acres proposed for alienation, $226,500. He broke down

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[41] Edward S. Peetz to regional director, 14 July 1967, SNP archives.

[42] Hoskins to regional director, 21 July 1967, SNP archives.

the gross acquisition costs: valuation of land (fee title) $1,910,870, valuation of improvements (152 dwellings and 310 outbuildings) $625,775, severance damages $260,000, 15% added for "contingencies," making up the full cost of $3,216,000. The land for acquisition was classified as--woodland 15,907.56 acres, pasture 2,692.14, other 429.01, only 13 acres being "tilled." Borman said more would be "tillable," including garden sites on many of the tracts, but the percentage remaining tillable was "very small.... One sees the last vestiges of a dying mountain culture."

Not so much the present use as the "highest and best use possible" in each case was considered in the report--whether for cropland, orchards, pastures, residences, vacation homes, mines, hunt clubs, timber, or whatever. Borman credited the rangers with obtaining "copies of the most recent conveyances... of ownership units" and said:

> Based on an analysis of 300 transactions involving land conveyances in 1966 throughout the eight-county area...the Washington Metropolitan area residents constitute the largest market demand for land in the Blue Ridge.... The large increase in land sales activity in 1966 results primarily from the promotional efforts of realtors, developers and speculators in attracting large numbers of buyers from outlying population centers.

Borman featured a photograph of the visitor center at Big Meadows "named in honor of the late Senator Harry F. Byrd, Sr., for his dedication and support of Shenandoah"--a clear bid for continuation of support through Byrd's son.[43]

Resource planners in Washington asked Hoskins for information about special attractions on land proposed to be acquired. He replied:

> .... we are trying only to salvage...and there aren't any particularly outstanding features involved. The whole purpose is to give us a better

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[43] Ralph E. Borman to acting chief, NPS land and water rights, 30 June 1967, and his accompanying report on "Proposed Boundary Revisions of SNP," estimating land values as of 27 Feb. 1967. Book One, 116 pages, summarizes the plan and the data and includes many related thoughts. Book Two, about 280 pages, contains the completed forms on each tract and some maps of tract groups. A copy of this Borman report, destined for SNP archives, was found in the superintendent's book case. Everything credited to Borman in this chapter is taken from it except where another source is cited.

arrangement administratively, and there isn't much use in trying to look at it in any other way....

An Act of Congress...authorized...521,000 acres, and it was a park of this size that was sought by the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission. A shortage of acquired funds made such a venture impossible, and obviously it would be even more impossible today. Thus, the proposed legislation would allow the National Park Service to salvage that which might be possible for a total of approximately 212,000 acres.[44]

The immediate plan would increase the acreage from 193,531.16 to 207,257.87, leaving a small leeway for adjustments in the future.

Among those leading the push for legislation in mid-1967 were Robert Jacobsen (later Shenandoah's fifth superintendent) as Washington office "Keyman" and W.D. Chick, Jr. (former Shenandoah district ranger and unofficial naturalist) as Washington office "Study Team Captain." The array of talent, experience, knowledge and dedication was outstanding--but somehow insufficient. Though both Marsh and Byrd Jr. had continued to express interest, neither was ready to introduce an overall boundary bill. Jacobsen has remembered:

I moved to Washington in '67, and I was called into a meeting at which Jack Marsh was present, and I asked him...about his intention to reintroduce the bill that he had put into the 88th Congress.... He told me that he could not "take the heat" of introducing the bill without having a very strong Senate sponsor to carry most of the load of getting the hearings and talking to the local constituency. He said he could have done it had senior Senator Byrd still been alive and still been pressing for this action.... He said he would be very happy to introduce legislation to take care of small specific boundary changes, in which there might be just a few people who would feel damaged....

Marsh didn't choose to run for his seat in--I think it was the subsequent election--and therefore the Byrd-Marsh proposal died totally.[45]

The main subject of the meeting Jacobsen was called into was the Rapidan trade, and it stayed alive and controversial. Tentative approval was given

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[44] Hoskins to W. Drew Chick, Jr., 14 July 1967, and enclosed draft of a "justification" for the boundary revision, SNP archives.

[45] Supt. Robert R. Jacobsen, personal interview, 2 Aug. 1977, tape in my files.

in Washington to the 1.4 to 1 acreage ratio in favor of the park. Some NPS people wanted an ecological study before any final decision, but an NPS ecologist said the question was "not ecological but philosophical--weighing the benefit of...

> refined eastern boundary against the loss. As an ecologist, I fail to see how a variety of forested slopes and the living communities they sustain can be compared with a particular population of fish in any meaningful...way.
>
> What we need to determine...is what our overall...objective...in this portion of the park is going to be. With this in hand we will have something against which to judge the pros and cons.[46]

Further complications intruded. A "George Washington Country National Parkway"--referred to by many citizens as an extension of Skyline Drive--was the subject of two bills in the 90th Congress. There were arguments about the location and the land-taking. NPS planners replied to a question by Marsh:

> Though the routing...between [the park] and Harpers Ferry has not been firmly established, the alignment has been proposed to proceed along the east side of the crest of the Blue Ridge from Jenkins Gap to Manassas Gap. At that point it would descend the west side...generally following the river to Harpers Ferry. It is envisioned that scenic access roads and byways might be developed which would utilize existing State highways and which would connect the parkway to those richly historical areas, as Winchester, Charlottesville, and Appamattox.[47]

An effort was made to persuade the Nature Conservancy to acquire 853 acres at Beagle's Gap, adjoining 1A section, to help solve a troublesome private-access problem. A "watershed study," being made in Rappahannock County, was pushing at the park, and the region took note of Hoskins's worry about intrusions--and said:

> it is contrary to Service policy to construct water control projects within the national parks.... a more comprehensive study should not be permitted in the Park which might look toward this type of activity resulting in any form of encroachment.[48]

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[46] Edward A. Hummel to region, 3 Oct. 1967; Granville Liles to Director, 16 Oct. 1967; ecologist Bob Johnsson to Peetz, 19 Oct., and Peetz to Hummel, 23 Oct. 1967--SNP archives.

[47] Theodor R. Swem to John O. Marsh, 22 Aug. 1967, SNP archives.

[48] Hoskins to chief, NPS land, 25 Aug. 1967, and Liles to Hoskins, 1 Sept. 1967, referring to Hoskins's memos of 15 and 23 Aug. 1967 to region, SNP archives.

Only in NPS planning was the overall boundary revision still alive--and, even here, as a somewhat theoretical "five-year" program looking toward a "ceiling of 212,303 acres."[49]

Five fragments of the land-and-boundary situation were discussed at the first staff meeting of 1968. The "Fletcher sisters" had made a will deeding land to the park, but the sister who died last had not mentioned NPS in the latest document--so was the land lost to the park? The dispute over the Brown property on Cedar Run seemed likely to go to court so was referred to the Solicitor. Widening of Criser Road brought a demand from Front Royal for ten feet of additional right of way plus a "reasonable" amount more for slopage where needed. The Gentry-Dean property in Albemarle, without access except through the park, was being studied with a view toward land exchange; owners were asking the "exorbitant price of $300 per acre." The Rapidan exchange was still under negotiation; an independent appraiser had been engaged by both parties. The appraisal would cost money; rangers and others had to spend time guiding the appraiser in the field. Legislation pending in the General Assembly had to be watched; it passed before adjournment but left doubt as to whether the game commission could acquire private lands to trade so as to make the exchanged acreages of equal value.[50]

A real estate firm demanded a meeting to discuss rights of landowners along section 1A. The Solicitor reported possible solutions of two boundary disputes--on Crawford property in the south district and on the Brown property--both of which required field study and response. Land speculators bought 500 acres on Tanners Ridge, planned to subdivide and sell, and asked that buyers be granted camping privileges and use of a park road; misleading information was advertised;

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[49] Director, memo to field offices on "Five-Year Federal Outdoor Recreation Land Acquisition Program, 1969-73," 20 Sept. 1967; Charles S. Marshall (assistant regional director) to Hoskins, 1 Nov. 1967; and Hoskins to Director, 1 Nov. 1967 --SNP archives.

[50] See NPS new area studies and land and water rights reports, 19 June 1968, SNP archives. Virginia's bill was HB 262, approved 2 March 1968; it did not prove meaningful, except as showing that Virginia had strong interest in the proposed Rapidan exchange.

bulldozing and building would mar views from Skyline Drive. The chief ranger investigated logging on Moorman River tracts; the loggers would have to use road mileage in the park and wanted to "improve the road." Hoskins was looking into the possibility of the National Foundation Fund helping to acquire border tracts where the threat to park values was immediate and substantial. But despite the fragmentation he clung to hope for an overall solution and kept asking for legislation similar to that twice introduced by Byrd Sr. and Marsh.[51]

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 was amended by Congress to allow land exchanges in the national park system--if the properties are in the same state, if a public hearing is held should one be requested by a "party in interest," and if "the value of the properties...either shall be approximately equal, or if they are not approximately equal, the values shall be equalized by the payment of cash to the grantor." But no such payment could be made for Shenandoah, because its basic law still prohibited use of federal funds for buying land.[52]

Hope still lived in 1969--as shown by the SNP chief of maintenance report on water resources for two "possible" boundary-area developments shown in the Master Plan--Hawksbill Creek Campground, new, 150 sites, three comfort stations, water needed "perhaps 1975 F.Y."; and Jeremys Run Campground, new, one park-employee residence, 150 sites, three comfort stations. Another type of boundary problem was illustrated by a park neighbor's request for access to a special spring above Grottoes--"I have ulcerated stomach and hypertension, and that water has been highly recommended as a remedy by a friend." This request was granted (but vehicular access later had to be restricted as that spring's waters grew in popularity).[53]

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[51] Regional director to superintendents, 17 July 1968, and Hoskins to regional director, 13 Aug. 1968, SNP archives, supplementing staff minutes.

[52] Public Law 90-401, approved 15 July 1968.

[53] Chief of maintenance to region, 7 Feb. 1969; Mrs. Frank Claytor to supt., 27 March 1969, and acting supt. to Mrs. Claytor, 1 April 1969, saying ranger will "issue you a key" to Browns Gap road gate--SNP archives--supplementing staff minutes.

In February and again in April I accompanied Hoskins on trips to major trouble spots. We discussed the mania for land near the park stirred by full-page and color ads in Washington newspapers, frantic subdividing and high-pressure salesmanship, building of "lakes," "streets" and "cabins." We saw lots becoming visible from Skyline Drive south of Big Meadows--gouged roads and cars "in the wilderness," though no structures yet. The situation was "unfortunate," but Hoskins could show potentially "worse" places, including one at Pocosin threatened with development--"You could throw a baseball onto it from Skyline Drive." He said the "vacation subdivisions" were continual trouble:

> Those people so often think they deserve special privileges, such as keys to the park chains that block protection roads. Someone asks for a special privilege--and says he's a high official in Washington.... that kind of thing is like waving a red flag at me. The special privilege is usually refused, then refused again by the Washington office. Then the person often goes to his representative or a senator and pressure is sometimes brought...and every time there's a new congressman or new park officials there's a renewal of such pressures. They want special trails built from their places near the boundary...or permission to build trails themselves.... This all takes an awful lot of time.[54]

We looked at the Pocosin situation. The land belonging to Harry and David Berry was so close to Skyline Drive that a subdivision there would mar many a visitor's national park experience. Yet much of the 344-acre tract had bulldozer wounds and the stumps from recent felling of large trees. The owners had gone through it for the best timber. A "road" had been gouged through thick-trunked mountain laurel. The damage, Hoskins said, would be "a good talking point in the trade," maybe reducing the acreage the park would have to give. One tract the Berrys wanted was on Chapman Mountain. We walked the proposed line on that ridgetop above Rapidan River. This land that might be sacrificed was so located as to drain away from the park, away from the Rapidan. Yet it had beautiful tulip trees, some young, many large and straight--good "yellow poplar" logs.

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[54] Hoskins, personal interviews, 4 Feb. and 21 April 1969, notes in my files.

Hoskins hated to let it go, but important advantages could be gained. Large trees would grow again on the Pocosin tract. The long future counted most.

This trade came to decision that spring after much study. Region wrote:

> As Mr. Hoskins points out, this exchange would add to the Park a tract of land which extends to within 250 yards of Skyline Drive and upon which a real estate subdivision development has been contemplated. Ownership and control...is therefore of great significance to the Service.... the exchange is proposed on the basis of equal acreage and equal market values.

For the 343-acre Pocosin tract the Berrys received 20 acres on Entry Run (an "island" separate from the main park), 96 acres identified as "a portion of Lynn's Entry 5½ miles west of Kinderhook," and the 227 acres in the headwaters of Quaker Run on Chapman Mountain.[55]

Other proposed exchanges did not go so smoothly. Region wrote that June:

> In a recent Management Appraisal of Shenandoah, the need for land acquisition was repeatedly discussed. It appears that certain of the urgent acquisition needs might be met by land exchanges if Federal funds were available and could be used to equalize such values. Other acquisition can be consummated only by direct purchase.
>
> Insofar as we can determine...the Berry exchange is the only known possibility where exchange can be completed without...Federal funds.[56]

The state's proposal for the big exchange on the Rapidan struck one complication after another. For instance, Harriman and Borman wrote that the area "is ideal for low-elevation all-year-round camping and picnic use and should never be alienated from the park."[57]

The boundary brought diverse headaches. Dale Hoak, SNP civil engineer who was with Hoskins and me on one trip (April 21), said he and his crew sometimes spent days searching for one survey corner:

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[55] Acting regional director to NPS chief of lands, 4 June 1969, Hoskins to staff, 23 June 1969, and deed of exchange under authority of Public Law 90-401, 13 June 1969, SNP archives.

[56] Charles S. Marshall to Director, 27 June 1969, SNP archives.

[57] Clifford J. Harriman and Ralph E. Borman to NPS chief of land and water rights, 6 Feb. 1969, SNP archives.

The old deeds often designate the corner as an "old Spanish oak" or an "old gum stump." How long can a gum stump last? Probably not more than ten years. And often the lines were never really surveyed. Neighbors walked them together and compromised. Even actual surveying might utilize inaccurate methods. The park's boundary is so fantastically irregular! And vegetation blocks the lines of sight.

Rangers continually encountered needs for boundary checking--for instance:

> Baldwin and Keyser property in Kimball area.... [They] believe the line is not marked straight enough and is marked on their land.... Smelser property in Thompson Hollow area.... Park Engineers have checked this line. Neither the present markings nor the Park Engineers' survey agree with the deed of Mr. Smelser.... Haddox Land--approximately 20 acres on Burgess River.... A Mr. Bradford of Flint Hill now has deed to the 20 acres and he thinks it is surveyed into the Park as a part of Tract 12 Miller land or Robinson and Kerns land.[58]

There were repeated efforts to get more of the boundary accurately surveyed. In earlier years the cost was about $50 a mile, but in 1967 Hoskins wrote in regard to a "contemplated negotiated contract for boundary line survey....

> The money to be allotted by the Regional Office amounting to $4,000 plus our anticipated available funds here of $3,500 make an approximate total of around $7,500.... We are hoping that the per mile charge in this vicinity will be only around $500 per mile, which should make it possible for us to cover about 15 miles.[59]

The Interior Department's solicitor (and an associate solicitor assigned to parks), studying the stubborn Brown case, said there may have been an overlapping of tracts, a fairly common thing in these mountains. But they added that condemned land was definitely taken by law regardless of flaws in, or disagreements between, deed descriptions. The park engineer should run a ground survey and the park should hold the line he finds--unless the courts decree otherwise.[60]

The associate solicitor, after exhaustive delving into the cluster of

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[58] District ranger James R. Johnson, memo of 9 June 1967, SNP archives.

[59] Hoskins to chief, NPS design, 20 June 1967, SNP archives.

[60] Frank J. Barry, Solicitor, to Sen. Wallace F. Bennett, 5 March 1968, with copy to park superintendent, SNP archives.

puzzling cases plaguing park section 1A, wrote a 15-page opinion--"to aid in reviewing an offer by landowners...to exchange certain alleged outstanding rights of access...the nature of which are uncertain...for a definite right of access onto the...Motor Road at one or more points.". He traced the history of 1A lands and easements and discussed almost endless legal complications before concluding that "some rights do of course continue to exist where they have been used" but "in general...cessation of use...extinguishes the right" of access. The long study and opinion represented much time and cost--but did not end the disputes.[61]

Hoskins, lacking immediate hope for a better boundary, proposed a decade of "surveying and monumenting" for the existing line:

> During the early days...survey work was under the CCC program and supervised by Engineer Gilroy. From all indications, Mr. Gilroy often ran random transit lines and computed true bearings and distances between corners. In many cases, the true lines were never cleared and identified, and as a result, the random lines, in some cases, have been used as the Park boundary. When the CCC program was disbanded, much boundary work remained to be done.... the park has experienced difficulty in determining whether or not encroachments do exist....
>
> Justification. In order for lands acquired and set aside...to be managed for Park purposes, it is imperative that the exact boundary...be known and well established.
>
> The problem of land management and protection...has become increasingly difficult due to the pressures of urban-type developments.... The same type of lands which were valued at $5.00 an acre when the Park was established are now being sold at $2,000.00 per half-acre lot.
>
> .... Outside developments are now using high accuracy surveys.... With Virginia land laws being as they are and the present Park boundary being poorly defined, it is felt that the Park may be entering an era of increased legal difficulties with the adjacent landowners if the present boundary is not accurately defined, marked, and protected.

The project was divided into ten parts, in order of urgency, one for each year. A total of 387 miles, with 2,986 corners, was listed for survey or resurvey.

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[61] Bernard R. Meyer to NPS Director, 11 Aug. 1969, SNP archives.

This mileage meant--assuming the 450-mile total for the whole boundary to be exact--that only 63 miles was satisfactorily surveyed and marked as of August 1969. The ten-year cost was estimated at $238,290. The project would include 87 miles in Page County, 65 in Rockingham, 50 in Madison, 48 each in Rappahannock and Greene, 38 in Warren, 32 in Albemarle, and 19 in Augusta.[62]

The next year engineer Hoak reminded Hoskins that--though a small survey had recently been completed in one hollow and an "item" for two additional hollows was scheduled for the 1971 and 1972 fiscal years--the overall survey plan had not been implemented. The needed funds were not available; the uncertainty (and extra expense in the long run) would continue indefinitely.[63]

On another front Hoskins and staff were doing what they could to move counties toward adopting subdivision ordinances that would reduce land abuses and misleading practices. An editorial in the Luray paper resulted from Hoskins's conversation with the editor:

> Current land developments in the Blue Ridge area and plans for similar developments...point up the need for immediate action to control these ventures.... In their present uncontrolled state some of these projects tend to scar the countryside, lower land values, mar the attractiveness of the...Park and spoil one of the most beautiful sections of Virginia.... Misleading advertising should be prohibited and the developers required to provide passable roads, water and sewage connections.... if the...Park is affected one of Page County's major sources of revenue is in jeopardy.... Some are disposed to call some lot buyers "suckers" but unless...control for orderly growth is set by law, the biggest "sucker" of all could be Page County.[64]

By the fall of 1971 there had been "several land exchanges...along the park boundary," and Hoskins was concerned about

> a technical legal question.... We presume that once a tract of park land is exchanged to a private owner the state again has jurisdiction. However,

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[62] Hoskins to region with "Boundary Program 1971-1980," 29 Aug. 1969, SNP file.

[63] Dale H. Hoak to Hoskins, 3 June 1970, SNP file.

[64] E.W. Lauck, "A Serious Threat to Page County's Economy," Page News & Courier, 19 Sept. 1968. Hoskins connected himself with it in Hoskins to regional director, 16 Sept. 1968, having been shown the copy by Lauck.

there is nothing in the federal or state jurisdictional acts regarding the park to cover such an eventuality.[65]

The legal situation, strictly read, was even worse than that; not merely police and court jurisdiction but ownership itself was at stake. Virginia law of 1928 that authorized the state to donate park land to Uncle Sam provided that, "If the United States shall cease to be the owner of any lands...granted...to it by the Commonwealth...the right and title to such land...shall immediately revert to the Commonwealth."[66]

The next year there was increasing concern about private owners cutting off access to trails in the lower parts of the park, including Overall Run and its waterfalls, Big Blue Trail, both Big and Little Devil Stairs. This trouble was discussed at a conference with the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club. The chief ranger suggested that some PATC member might be interested in investigating rights-of-way to see if they were not "actually public" by law. A possibility was seen of losing hiker access from below to the Corbin Cabin hikers' shelter. Once a landowner or two "got away with" closing trails that had been open to the public for decades the practice might sweep around the whole boundary--and "cessation of use" might confirm the closings to the serious disadvantage of the park and its hiking visitors, somewhat as the same principle might work to the park's advantage in eliminating troublesome motor access elsewhere.[67]

The park under Supt. Hoskins had made a great effort to solve, or reduce to the lowest possible level, the endlessly troublesome problem of the deeply saw-toothed boundary. The causes had been traced; the cost in time, money, worry and good will had been shown; fundamental solutions had been pushed. But Hoskins reached retirement in mid-1972 with the problem still unsolved and likely to get worse before it got better.

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[65] Hoskins to regional director, 26 Oct. 1971, SNP file.

[66] See "National Park Act," chap. 371, acts of 1928. This situation would be straightened out by the General Assembly enactment of 20 March 1975, amending the 1928 act (now Sec. 7.1-22 of the Virginia code) by authorizing exchanges "of nearly equivalent value."

[67] Minutes of SNP-PATC meeting, 27 March 1972, SNP file.

After All, Wilderness

People who had known Shenandoah, then been away for a decade or more, were most likely to notice how wild the park was becoming. Taylor Hoskins said:

> When I returned as superintendent in 1958 I hadn't seen Shenandoah for twenty years. I was astonished.... the biggest thing...was that nature really restored and beautified the park.... Just about all the landmarks changed.... Places off the road became hard to find. Those old clearings with gullies, they'd been completely healed over --by nature, not by man....
>
> I'm convinced there are places in the park now so wild that years go by without a person getting into them, no people at all in some places, not a hiker, not even a ranger or naturalist. And the wildlife--bear, for example.... They came back--to the southern section, mostly, at first.... I never saw a bear here myself until after 1960.[1]

The act setting up a National Wilderness Preservation System was approved September 3, 1964. Two weeks later I came back to the Blue Ridge from Alaska, and my wife and I were soon exploring. One

> mid-October Sunday we hiked under a multicolored canopy that continued for miles unbroken. We climbed until noon, rediscovering a series of cascades and waterfalls I remembered. Old trails were blocked by young hemlocks, old log drags choked with fallen leaves. Stump-reminders of past logging crumbled if we kicked them.... We walked all day and returned home without having seen or heard other human beings. Yet park visitation that kaleidoscopic day had approximated the population of Albany, New York, flowing along Skyline Drive, its noises not penetrating downward through the deciduous quilting.[2]

Shenandoah, away from developed areas, felt as wild to us as much of Alaska and the Far West, and in 1965 I discussed this surprising wildness with

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[1] Supt. T. Taylor Hoskins, personal interview, 5 Nov. 1969, tape in SNP Big Meadows library.

[2] Darwin Lambert, "Facets of Wilderness," The Living Wilderness, Spring-Summer 1967.

friends in conservation organizations. The thought that areas qualifying under the Wilderness Act might be found in this "recycled park" seemed revolutionary. The act said:

> A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.[3]

The act required the Secretary of the Interior to review every NFS roadless area of 5,000 acres or more and make recommendations as to its suitability for preservation as wilderness. Most people had supposed the Shenandoah review could be quickly concluded with a negative recommendation. But in April 1966 a preliminary draft of a wilderness proposal for Shenandoah was presented to Supt. Hoskins by the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, and that summer the club's magazine carried a detailed proposal for 51,500 acres of wilderness, declaring that the act's definition

> does not require that a land area be clothed with virgin forest to qualify as wilderness. It was not the intent...to exclude from preservation...areas which may at one time have suffered in some degree from man's use or have undergone some natural disaster such as fire....
>
> This report establishes that there are at least three large areas

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[3] Public Law 88-577, approved 3 Sept. 1964.

in Shenandoah National Park which are worthy of official designation .... the Hazel-Hughes Rivers drainage in the Central Section, the Big Run-Rip Rap Hollow area in the Southern Section, and the Pass Mountain-Piney Ridge area in the Northern Section.[4]

The Wilderness Society, National Parks Association, Sierra Club and other groups were preparing even more ambitious proposals.

NPS already had zoning in its master plans, including Class V for pristine lands, and the agency was beginning its wilderness reviews. Shenandoah's background of diverse human influence made its possibilities a puzzle. Chief naturalist Schaffner remembered that W. Drew Chick, Jr. (in the 1930s a Shenandoah district ranger and unofficial naturalist, in the 1960s a resource official in Washington) was "riding herd on" the review here:

> Drew was very skeptical about Shenandoah having any wilderness.... And somebody in Washington--you know these things come out of the Director's office or one of his assistant's--decided we should have "motor nature trails." Well--if you're going to have wilderness you don't want motor nature trails. So we finally convinced Drew that we didn't have any suitable sites ((for such trails)).... Another thing--I kept running across this all the time... this place was supposed to return to nature; the maintenance crews should go out and clean up all signs of any cabins or any stone walls or any orchards--cut them down, get rid of them--to help nature out. I said, no, that's not the way.... To me it's much more impressive to come across an old stone foundation with a few implements lying around and trees maybe twenty inches through growing up in the middle of the foundation than it is to find no sign of what has been here before.... It's no less wilderness.... And after Drew got out and over the country that he'd been on before...he realized that there was a great possibility of wilderness here.[5]

By the fall of 1966 the idea of wilderness in Shenandoah was being accepted. A wilderness study--unfortunately confused by some local

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[4] "Wilderness Recommendations," PATC Bulletin, July-Sept. 1966, pp. 51-61.

[5] E. Ray Schaffner, personal interview, 24 June 1977, tape in my files.

people with boundary studies--was in progress. Soon there were serious discussions, here and at NPS Washington. In April 1967 a "preliminary proposal" was announced and a public hearing set for June 14 at Luray. The descriptive text (with map) reported study of nine roadless areas totalling 150,100 acres and recommended six wilderness areas with a total acreage of 61,940. Some roadless areas were seen as too narrow or subject to external influences. NPS explained:

> Decades ago, wagon roads penetrated many of the hollows and followed some of the ridges connecting homes and apple orchards in the mountains with schools, stores, and packing sheds in the lower hollows. The roads served also for hauling tanbark to the tannery and the logs to the sawmills. Some of these have been retained as fire trails and for emergencies such as search and rescue. Most of those in use now tie into Skyline Drive. Each management and fire trail is gated at both ends. The most remarkable and most obvious change in the landscape over the past 30 years is the growth of vegetation. Before long much of this area will be nearly identical in appearance to that observed by the first explorers.[6]

Among the 135 persons at the hearing were a few from the Piedmont who opposed parts of the wilderness plan for local reasons, including suspicion that wilderness was just another approach to enlarging the park at the expense of Madison County which, one witness insisted, "was the prime contributor of land" when the park was formed, yet "does not have access." But most of the testimony supported the NPS proposal--and asked that the acreage be increased. Representatives of PATC, Appalachian Trail Conference, Izaak Walton League chapters, Sierra Club, National Capital Wilderness Study Committee, Audubon Society of Central Atlantic States, National Audubon

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[6] Hoskins, superintendent's monthly narrative reports, Oct. 1966-April 1967, and "Description of Wilderness Proposal for Shenandoah National Park, Virginia," with map, NPS, April 1967, SNP archives.

Society, Wilderness Society, Canoe Cruisers Association, Northern Virginia Conservation Council and Virginia Society of Ornithology showed detailed knowledge of the park and wanted 91,000 acres as wilderness. The ATC man said:

> The Appalachian Trail has been regarded as a wilderness trail since its conception. Benton MacKaye...visualized the AT as a backbone, linking together wilderness areas suitable for recreation by the means of side trails, combining retreats and refuges from a civilization which was in 1921 already becoming too mechanized and developed by urban population pressures....
>
> Recovery of the natural environment has been remarkable. In a few years the occasional crumbling cabin and fence that are still to be seen will disappear. The dense stands of young trees indicate an eventual return to a mature oak forest.... The legislative history of the Wilderness Act will show that Congress considered the fact that the regenerative capacity of Nature can and will, in time, restore the ecology of a region to that which preceded man's interference with it....
>
> ((The late Senator Byrd Sr.)) called for wilderness preservation in the Shenandoah National Park of areas which he had trod on foot for many years. On the lonely trails of the park, he sought wilderness solitude to consider weighty domestic and foreign problems.

National Parks Association went even farther than the other conservation organizations, asking that nearly all the park not yet developed be designated wilderness--and that a regional plan be worked out to shift most non-wilderness recreation into nearby national forests, private and state lands.[7]

When the record was complete, including letters, the 91,000-acre proposal had majority support (21 organizations and 185 individuals, 206 responses out of the hearing total of 363). There were 36 responses against any wilderness. The NPS proposal for 61,940 acres was favored by 29, most of the park not yet developed by 27, the Madison County reduction by 8, and some wilderness (no specifics) by the rest.[8]

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[7] "Transcript of Public Hearing on Wilderness Proposal for Shenandoah National Park, Luray, Va.," (hearing officer, John C. Preston), 14 June 1967. SNP archives. The speaker for ATC, quoted, was Grant Conway.

[8] "Wilderness Recommendations for Shenandoah National Park, Virginia," October 1970, NPS Washington, copy in SNP archives.

NPS took three years to restudy the park and further consider "management requirements." In 1970 it added 14,062 acres to the preliminary proposal while deleting 2,722 acres. The "management zone" just inside the boundary was reduced to one-eighth mile, so more of the lower slopes were included. Major additions took in Overall Run in the north and Turk Mountain in the south. The NPS total was now 73,820, and designation was recommended by Director George B. Hartzog in October. In regard to requested deletions for "seven water impoundments" in Madison and Rappahannock counties and for a "road access from Madison County," Hartzog cited statutes prohibiting dams (with or without wilderness) and repeated high-level rejections of further public road access.[9]

Secretary of the Interior Morton endorsed the revised proposal, and President Nixon included it among fourteen wildernesses recommended to Congress in April 1971. Nixon stressed the

> importance of wilderness areas as part of a comprehensive open space system. In these unspoiled lands, contemporary man can encounter the character and beauty of primitive America--and learn, through the encounter, the vital lesson of human interdependence with the natural environment....
>
> The scenic grandeur of the Shenandoah's Blue Ridge is well known. This area is one of the few remaining examples of the vast mountain wildernesses that long ago stood as an obstacle before pioneers pushing westward.[10]

Sen. Byrd Jr. introduced S 2158 for the NPS 73,280-acre proposal--representing 48% of the roadless area, 37% of the entire park--and Rep. Robinson sponsored an identical bill. Shenandoah wilderness was also included in omnibus bills, one of which would designate 91,000 acres.

The Senate's subcommittee on public lands included Shenandoah in its

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[9] "Wilderness Recommendations...," October 1970.

[10] "Communication from the President of the United States transmitting 14 proposals to add to the National Wilderness; Part 5, Shenandoah National Park, Virginia," 29 April 1971, House Document 92-102, SNP archives.

hearing of May 5, 1972. The chairman, Sen. Frank Church (who was floor manager of the wilderness bill when it first passed the Senate), said:

> I am especially delighted to see this proposal for wilderness within Shenandoah National Park.... my family and I have often hiked out into the wilderness of Shenandoah--always a refreshing, uplifting experience of the very kind that we wanted to foster by protecting wilderness areas.
>
> Now in particular I want to commend the National Park Service for recognition that this land, though once abused by various disturbances... has recovered under the natural restorative powers of natural forces, to to point where it, indeed, in the language of section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act "generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the impact of man's work substantially unnoticeable."
>
> This is one of the great promises of the Wilderness Act, that we can dedicate formerly abused areas where the primeval scene can be restored by natural forces, so that we can have a truly National Wilderness Preservation System. I have heard it said by some who are simply ill-informed that no areas in the eastern United States can meet the test of qualification under the definition of wilderness in the Wilderness Act. This is just not so.[11]

But Church felt that wilderness proposals being made by NPS, including the Shenandoah plan, were too timid. He criticized "enclaves" (such as a 39-acre exclusion around Corbin Cabin in Shenandoah) and

> exclusions of wildland around even the smallest developed site in... Shenandoah...leaving so-called "wilderness threshold zones" unprotected against encroaching development which could chew away critical fringes ...and the...1/8-mile-wide "buffer zone" along park boundaries.

Interior's main witness at the hearing, assistant secretary Nathaniel P. Reed, said he would work to reorient NPS wilderness policy. So Shenandoah wilderness went "back to the drawing board."[12]

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[11] Official transcript of hearing record, 5 May 1972, copy in SHP archives.

[12] "NPS Gets a History Lesson," Wilderness Report, The Wilderness Society, May 1972.

The seemingly endless land-and-boundary trouble confronted Robert R. Jacobsen at close range when he became Shenandoah's fifth superintendent after Hoskins retired in mid-1972. Such trouble came close to dominating his first few staff meetings. It was active in various forms--a revival of negotiation for massive land exchange with the state game commission on the Rapidan, a motor grader violating the boundary by making a road where a landowning neighbor claimed access rights, the need of an agreement to stop the wasteful sending of duplicate maintenance crews to take care of roads that were partly in the park and partly in state responsibility.[13]

Alert to Shenandoah's boundary problem through his work at NPS Washington since 1967, Jacobsen was eager to eliminate the old congressional restraint against use of appropriated funds to buy land. But he realized that the lack of "a supporting master plan" and detailed up-to-date data would handicap any immediate effort for action in Congress.[14] While working toward adequate preparation for overall boundary correction, he sought all feasible opportunities for improvement through land exchanges. In the period of this history (that ends with 1976) a number of such exchanges were made. Also, maybe of even greater significance, many non-park uses of park land were eliminated. Jacobsen told me:

> This was something I could do because I was a new boy on the block.... Not knowing who was who...I was able to grab back gate keys by the handful...before I built up mutual favors back and forth.... ((In the early years of a park)) you have to kind of fit it in with the ongoing society...((but)) it was time for some of these uses to be stopped.... Bill ((Wm. M. Loftis, Jr., assistant superintendent)) and I have been able, with only one exception that I can think of, to document every special use which now occurs within the boundary, and we have eliminated

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[13] Minutes of staff meetings, Aug.-Sept. 1972, SNP files.

[14] Jacobsen to director of NPS Virginia office, 17 Sept. 1972, SNP files.

dozens and dozens of private uses of public land which should not be occurring.[15]

Planning alternatives were being prepared for the boundary--as well as for development, transportation and waste disposal--looking toward presentation for public discussion in 1975. But in 1974 the planning team (working out of Denver Service Center) could not find much time for Shenandoah, and in 1975 Sen. Byrd said public discussion of boundary and access might further inflame opposition to Shenandoah wilderness legislation and jeopardize its enactment. So the major "general management planning" effort was postponed. A study of visitor transportation was completed; it suggested alternatives that might be considered revolutionary, and the report was quietly filed for later consideration.[16]

Loftis was, also quietly, deepening and extending the study of special use permits, most of which were related to the boundary. Here is a distillation of his summary of December 1975:

> Main cross-park highways: Permits issued in past for widening or re-alignments. Agreed NPS convey to the state the needed park lands in exchange for lands no longer used for the highways.
>
> Minor roads penetrating boundary: Permits issued in past for maintenance on park land. Long-range plan, either relocate such roads entirely outside boundary or convey right-of-way to the state--or, where neither of these courses feasible, renew permits.
>
> Roads maintained mostly to serve local residents: Negotiate for state responsibility with aim of eventually conveying rights-of-way to state.
>
> Owner access to private lands through park lands: Park gates installed and often landowners issued keys with oral approval to use "roads." Identify all such uses and ask firm opinion from Solicitor; discontinue where legally possible when property changes hands or

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15 Supt. Robert R. Jacobsen, personal interview, 2 Aug. 1977, tapes in my files.

16 Superintendent's annual reports, 1974 and 1975, SNP files.

other accesses are developed; otherwise, issue annual permits tightly written stipulating conditions under which use may continue.

Power lines serving park facilities only: If no right-of-way prior to park, issue permits until park no longer uses the electricity, then remove lines and restore sites.

Power lines serving other than park facilities: Most of them have prior rights; a few authorized by permits. Continue established use. Where land added to park seek alternatives before issuing any permits.

Gas pipe lines: Two that exist--one with prior right and one by special use permit issued during Edwards's superintendency--probably will continue indefinitely.

Communication sites: Dickey Hill and Hogback, no changes expected.

Access complications were most frequent and puzzling along section 1A (formerly Blue Ridge Parkway). The narrow federal right-of-way had cut through some tracts and left land in the same private ownership on each side, with owners allowed rights across the Parkway between tracts. Such rights were considered to lapse if not exercised, particularly where tracts on opposite sides of the Parkway (become Skyline Drive) were no longer the property of one owner. But one estate had consolidated ownership of much land on both sides of 1A, and Jacobsen feared subdivision or development of "some Disneyland or Busch Gardens type spectacular" with access claimed via Skyline Drive--"It is very important for us to hold the line against any such access or against any strengthening of questionable rights."[17]

But the boundary could not be made a locked wall. The coin had another side. Jacobsen said:

> A large number of...hikers, horsemen, and campers choose to enter the Park at its perimeter so their uphill exertions can be done at the beginning of their respective trips. Unfortunately, Federal ownership does not extend to a public right-of-way at many key points...

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[17] Wm. M. Loftis, Jr., draft for "Resources Management Plan," 11 Dec. 1975; acting solicitor Edward Weinberg to U.S. attorney general, 21 Feb. 1966; and Jacobsen to regional director, 28 July 1975--SNP files and archives.

> the intervening lands being privately owned. As the patterns of adjacent land ownership change from extensive agricultural uses to subdivision and intensive development, the new owners have shown themselves to be progressively less tolerant of public passage, and a number of very important trail access points have been placed in jeopardy. It is expected that this problem will continue to intensify.[18]

This reverse side of the situation was already intense in places. For instance, a Wanderbirds Hiking Club group, coming down from Rockytop Trail in the park, was met at the lower end of Big Run road, on US 340, by a

> uniformed Rockingham County deputy sheriff complete with official sheriff's car and accompanied by an individual in plain clothes with a pistol dangling in an open holster at his hip (honest!).... This character had complained to the sheriff that the club...had trespassed on his property....

The gun-toter, proprietor of the Shenandoah Valley Campground, also called "Crazy Horse Campground," apparently wanted to collect a toll of $5 for walking on the road that had been "used without interference since time immemorial." The Wanderbirds president said he would protest to the Interior Department. It so happened the club was also concerned with another trouble spot, the western end of Overall Run Trail, where a Washington group had been met by an "irate gentleman" with a shotgun. PATC's supervisor of trails sent the Wanderbirds report to Jacobsen, raising the question

> as to whether use of...access...during the entire history of the park, and use as a public route previously, does not establish some kind of a common law easement for the public. As you know we have a half dozen similar situations around the park boundaries.
>
> Has the Park Service studied the legal complexities...? ((It)) does not seem fitting that park visitors be greeted by an "armed posse" if they do not leave ((or enter)) the park through Skyline Drive.[19]

The next year PATC raised the Big Run problem again, suggesting a new route

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[18] Draft of Statement for Management, Shenandoah National Park, distributed Jan. 1977.

[19] Jerome K. Eldridge to Raymond H. Fadner, 6 Oct. 1975, and Fadner to Jacobsen, 16 Oct. 1975, SNP files.

to connect Rockytop Trail with US 340. Jacobsen replied:

> Concerning our access problem with the Shenandoah Valley Campground, as it affects both the Big Run and Rocky To trails... the problems... occurred prior to my talk with the campground owner concerning the Park's expectations concerning public access across his property. While I have no assurance that similar distressing encounters might not occur in the future, I feel we should continue our contacts...and allow time for a change in relationship before seeking alternative solutions.[20]

Jacobsen wanted to keep as many options as possible open until the new and fundamental plan identified "just where we want access and where we are willing to let it go." This could not be very soon, because the wilderness effort was delaying the planning effort.

One place along the boundary generated trouble in a different way. Jams of cars parked by hikers climbing Old Rag Mountain had brought complaints from landowners whose driveways were blocked or who were otherwise inconvenienced, and state troopers had responded by towing cars away. There was no quick way to get adequate parking space at the Old Rag trailhead, which could ~~no accommodate~~ hold hardly a dozen cars. Maybe the regional office could send a lands man to Shenandoah to assess the various needs and problems. A lands man working here full time might not get all the work done, but any regional assistance would help relieve the pressures and enable, for instance, rangers and the civil engineer to give more of their time to "their own" work.[21]

The Old Rag crisis was temporarily reduced by the park's leasing land, some distance down the road, for hikers' parking. But it was obvious that crises of various kinds would continue to develop and worsen around the boundary until a fundamental overall solution was achieved with the aid of Congress. Piecemeal efforts--including all land exchanges that might be arranged

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[20] Jacobsen to Thomas L. Floyd, 17 Feb. 1976, SNP files.

[21] Record of SNP-PATC meeting, 20 April 1974, SNP files.

under existing authority (small ones were being accomplished from time to time here and there, and some land was being donated by owners especially friendly to the park)--could hardly suffice.

Supt. Jacobsen might be found anywhere in the park at any time, on official business or with his family, getting direct views of situations and activities, generating new ideas. A trail club recording secretary was impressed by his seeing the park as if through the eyes of others--for instance, bikers as well as hikers--"via a family trip yesterday from Panorama to Elkwallow." She further reported that he felt the management task "as a tight rope--affording 'appropriate use to as many as possible without deteriorating the resource or infringing the rights of others.'" He would give the inside view of park problems and opportunities to persons who expressed real interest, whether they favored or opposed his present policies. He seemed always willing to consider change if it could mean improvement.[22]

He made a brief checklist for me of what he considered the most important matters or trends of his early years here--from 1972 through 1976. It included wilderness and backcountry management, land and boundary, change in visitation style toward greater diversity involving more parts of the park and increased use in winter, rapid growth of volunteer help (approximately a hundred non-paid workers were busy here one week in June), more emphasis on research and resource management, growth and change in Shenandoah Natural History Association, ~~xxx~~ stepped up interest in history and archeology, and a new bear-management program. He said:

> I think if I were to be asked to state in one sentence my major accomplishment in the park it would be to take the focus of the

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[22] Minutes of SNP-PATC annual meeting, April 1974, PATC headquarters, Washington, D.C., Louise M. Worrell, acting recording secretary, SNP files.

visitor off of the "center line" and move it into the backcountry--with the wilderness and with the backcountry management, with more interest now in resources management, in cultural history.[23]

The basic pattern of the new plan for backcountry management was worked out by Jacobsen early in 1973 on a plane trip to Grand Canyon. As officially proposed that fall--after being discussed with the rangers and the regional and Washington offices--the plan would allow camping almost anywhere in the park upon securing a permit (no charge). The most startling rule was that there would be no camping at, or within sight of, hikers' shelters (lean-tos) --except during storms. Camping would also be prohibited within half a mile or within sight of park developments such as car campgrounds, ranger stations and lodges, within 250 yards or in sight of a paved road or the park boundary, within sight of any trail or of any sign saying "no camping," and within sight of another party's backcountry camp. No open fires would be allowed except at car campgrounds, picnic areas and fireplaces at lean-tos. Backcountry camping was limited to two consecutive days at any one site (or within 1,000-ft. radius). Discardable glass or metal food or beverage containers (except of foil) were prohibited.[24]

PATC went on record in favor of the new plan--for Shenandoah only, because of special problems here--recognizing that

> dispersal of usage will not only protect the Park, but will perhaps restore to the camper the wilderness experience which is not obtainable at over-crowded, devastated, designated campsites....

The club would work with Jacobsen and staff "to make the regulations finally promulgated effective." The four-page letter cautioned, however, against going ahead unless adequate resources were available for enforcement. It suggested several additions or changes. As to discardable containers, "we

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[23] Jacobsen interview, 1977.

[24] Federal Register, 4 Sept. 1973.

feel an exception should be made for food containers which are necessary to avoid spoilage."[25]

This was the main protest--after publication of rules in the Federal Register and elsewhere--against giving up tin cans, particularly with meats and fruit juices. Next most frequent protest was against the ban on camping in the trail shelters. Jacobsen decided he could accept a strong "pack in, pack out" policy instead of the anti-can policy but believed the park could "weather" the shelter complaints. When putting the new plan (as revised) into effect early in 1974 the park gave its reasons:

> The 120,000 backcountry camping nights recorded in Shenandoah...during calendar year 1973 represented an almost four-fold increase over the 34,000 which occurred in 1967. The late afternoon convergence of the dozens of backcountry campers upon one of the Park's 39 designated backcountry campsites on a typical weekend in 1973 often created an atmosphere not unlike that of a country fair. A camper's chance for finding backcountry solitude, alone or with a small group of chosen companions, was virtually nil; and the natural character of the most popular camping areas was being destroyed by the collective thousands of foraging campfire builders, and by their legacies of stubs, stumps, fire-blackened soil and rocks, charcoal, and partially burned pieces of wood....
>
> .... The possibility of designating more backcountry campsites was considered and discarded, as an increase in the number of blighted areas could only compound the problem and delay...a lasting solution. The alternative of setting up a reservation system utilizing designated areas was also considered and discarded as being unduly restrictive... cumberson in implementation, and yet unnecessary until all other alternatives have been tested.... We determined...to implement a dispersed system...which the Eastern deciduous forest should be able to accommodate without deterioration, and to ban those few disruptive and destructive backcountry camping practices which have caused so much concern.[26]

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[25] Robert C. Wolf, first v.p., PATC, to Jacobsen, 10 Nov. 1973, SNP files.

[26] Leaflets for inquirers and applicants for backcountry permits, Feb. 1974, copies in SNP files.

central purpose.

PATC explained in its magazine each new rule and the overall aim. On prohibition of fires, for instance:

> This rule is made not only because of the fire hazard but because fires are damaging ((and unsightly)) to the surrounding ground.... When you come across illegal fireplaces, we ask that you destroy all trace of them.
>
> .... ((a major purpose overall is)) (1) to give all hikers a chance to enjoy the solitude and the woodland experience they come to the park to find and (2) to give those parts of the park that have suffered fromoveruse a chance to recover by encouraging visitors to hike and camp elsewhere in the park. Dispersion is the name of the game.[27]

In December 1974 Jacobsen considered the backcountry program "very successful..for a first year--as it represented a real change from previous procedure and required complete re-education of this user group." The park had issued 53 citations for backcountry violations from March 15 to October 31 and collected $1325 in fines; also, 668 written warnings were given. Shenandoah ranked fourth among all NPS areas in number of backcountry nights with 120,536. Boat camping was prominent in two of those ahead of Shenandoah, so the only one really comparable was Olympic National Park that had 180,000 backcountry nights. Shenandoah had three times more such nights per acre than Olympic and four times more per acre than Great Smoky. "Most persons found that" the new regulations "allowed them a freedom which they had not had before." The feeling in the park was that with "peer pressure" from "believers" the program would be even more successful; no changes of rules were expected until after another season or two of experience.[28]

The success continued. Interest in the park off Skyline Drive was further enhanced by an attractive pamphlet, "Exploring the Backcountry,"

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[27] PATC to Jacobsen, 10 April 1974, with draft for May 1974 Potomac Appalachian (that, in both newsletter and magazine form, had replaced the old PATC Bulletin), SNP files.

[28] Jacobsen to Edward B. Garvey (a former president of PATC), 19 Dec. 1974, SNP files.

and by conducted hikes for training in backcountry use. In 1975 there were 460 tickets for rule-violations (298 of them for open fires). At the end of 1976, the policy on use of trailside shelters was considered still open. Some Appalachian Trail leaders had continued to oppose it. Jacobsen discussed it at an ATC seminar in Boone, N.C. (June 1975) and responded to opposition letters published in Potomac Appalachian. He said "the validity of trail shelters as a modern-day concept has been called into question nation-wide." A recent poll of ATC member clubs showed them about evenly split on the question. Such shelters were gone from the White and Green mountains in New England and might soon be gone from Great Smoky. He said it was "through the sum of its parts that" the Shenandoah plan "achieves its viability."[29]

An independent researcher was finding that most backpackers considered Shenandoah "an ideal area to backpack, both from a managemennt policy standpoint and from a scenic standpoint."[30] Yet the park was continuing to study the shelter-use question in cooperation with Appalachian Trail people, and a new way of handling the situation, acceptable to trail organizations and concerned hikers as well as to NPS, seemed possible.

The future of the locked cabins, operated by PATC for both members and nonmembers, seemed uncertain too. A trail club planning committee had predicted that by 1985 "pressure on the use of public parks and forests will make intolerable the operation by a private organization of facilities located on them." The club's cabins reservations chairman wrote a 12-page defense of operation by PATC in the national park and forests, tracing the history beginning with Sexton Shelter in 1930 and giving figures to show there had always been more use by nonmembers than by members--in 1936, 333

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[29] Jacobsen to Editors, Potomac Appalachian, 16 Dec. and 31 Dec. 1975, and "Backcountry Violations, 1972-75," ranger division, SNP files.

[30] Wissinger Research, "Backpacker Study...", Potomac Appalachian, June 1977, p. 6.

nonmembers and 267 members; in 1972, 3799 nonmembers and 1095 members. He suggested that all distinction between members and nonmembers might be eliminated for cabins on public lands, while cabins on club land be reserved for members and their guests only. He said among other things that "a few days at a cabin can equal a crash course in ecology." The cabin experience might well die out unless club sponsorship continued. Jacobsen circulated this piece to his staff and the planning team and thanked the author for the "good information....

> The point you make on page 11 concerning the value of the cabins as devices for communicating bygone days was most impressive, and sufficiently stimulating as to set me thinking about ways that we might further enhance the cabin users' and park visitors' understanding and appreciation of this period of our history.[31]

Jacobsen's openness to new ideas led to diverse innovations including hanggliding--with rules for safety and to prevent interference with other park uses. Hogback Ridge became the first launch site, soon followed by Millers Head. One group reported flights as long as 45 minutes, during which they flew on updrafts before gliding to the low-level landing site. This activity was reminiscent of the soaring meets at Big Meadows when the park was being established--but did not involve motors and fields for launching and did not, when properly handled, disturb other park visitors. There was an unsuccessful effort to get the Virginia Highway Department "to adequately acknowledge the presence of Shenandoah National Park on its highway directional signs," instead of almost always saying "Skyline Drive." He and NPS Washington opposed a proposal for a statue of Harry F. Byrd, Sr., in the park, but suggested other ways to further commemorate the elder Byrd's contribution--for instance, donation of funds to buy a parking area for Old

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[31] Jacobsen to Allan P. Tanner, PATC, 13 May 1974, SNP files.

Rag, or to create a rustic amphitheater at Skyland, or to finish and furnish a training room at park headquarters.[32]

More and more emphasis was put on research--for overall management not just for interpretation. Jacobsen felt a need for more facts on which to base a variety of decisions. Though some of the studies coming to fruition in his early years here had been started or conceived before he came, he markedly multiplied the number and range of investigations. The valuable "Statement for Management"--setting forth the park's purpose, the legislative and other influences that shaped its management, and the current objectives --was his own work. He encouraged university people and other professionals to study the park without cost to NPS, and he also worked for allotment of NPS funds to carry out urgently needed projects. In 1976 he launched another innovation, the annual Shenandoah Research Symposium.

A fresh look was taken in 1973 at the park's "historical and cultural resources," through an NPS contract awarded by Denver Service Center. The old studies were re-examined and a start made toward relating them to the current situation. Among the report's recommendations were to make a map showing pre-park sites available to visitors as part of the interpretive program, to save two remaining CCC buildings, to "see that all of the older buildings at Skyland are preserved," and to avoid destroying anything that might prove on further study to be of cultural consequence. The report focused on sites in upper Nicholson Hollow (including Corbin Cabin hikers' shelter)--a group the first superintendent had once considered saving intact--and said:

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[32] Minutes of staff meetings, May-Dec. 1976, SNP files.

All...give evidence of man's efforts in the area... suggest the tremendous tasks the settlers faced when clearing these lands for cultivation and living.... The decayed condition...is symbolic of the different phases of time--before, during and after man's habitation in the hollow.

It is recommended that, except for possible stabilization, all of these structures and sites...be left undisturbed.[33]

In 1975 the naturalist division launched an "oral history" program to:

provide a unique source of material for the interpretive program... preserve part of the culture (the vocal color) of the people who have experienced Shenandoah--accents, dialects, expressions... establish a "bank" of original (prime) historical data which will enhance our knowledge of Shenandoah lifestyles and attitudes... record a cross-section of people on...mountaineer life, park establishment and programs, the CCC, visitor use....

A year later there were more than thirty taped interviews in the oral history collection, and the rate of interviewing was being stepped up.[34]

Also in 1975 an archeological study was started with NPS funding. Michael A. Hoffman and associates of the University of Virginia began work in February "to determine if ((potential sewage disposal plants)) would threaten important archaeological remains" and to assess "the Park as a cultural resource." More NPS funds were furnished in August, and that fall the Hoffman group was

inventorying and evaluating and occasionally surveying some 800 pre-Park historical sites through bibliographic and cartographic research.... the project took on a number of diverse problems, all relating ultimately to the evaluation of the Park's total cultural resources. These included: a prehistoric and historic archaeological survey and test program, historic demographic research, ethnographic and ethnohistoric research, a cemetery survey and...an architectural survey.

The prehistoric survey...yielded a hitherto unsuspected number of archaeological sites spread throughout a variety of topographic zones

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[33] Richard W. Sellars, "Shenandoah Report," 25 Sept. 1973, SNP archives.

[34] Minutes of oral history steering committee, 8 July 1975; John Dooms to Phil Hastings (ass't chief naturalist), 16 Nov. 1975; and Nancy Smith to Hastings, 19 Nov. 1975--SNP naturalist division files.

in the park.... about 100 sites have been located.... These range in time from around 6000 B.C. to about 1600 A.D.... analysis of the prehistoric data...has focused on the systematic description and quantification of all the material recovered and on delineating relationships between prehistory and ecology....

The project advanced on various fronts, becoming more and more complex; it opened many possibilities for continuing study into future years.[35]

The first Shenandoah Research Symposium was held at Skyland on April 9-10, 1976. Some of the subjects--the black bear, insect outbreaks, and the effects on vegetation and vertebrates of controlled burning at Big Meadows--were directly related to management problems. The other subjects--the Shenandoah salamander (found nowhere but in the park), history of botanical research, status of geological knowledge, and plant succession on old homesites--would help in planning, administration and interpretation. The same would be true of a paperback book published that fall, the second and final publication completing decades-long cooperative studies of water possibilities and related geological factors. Park decisions would increasingly be based on scientific facts and, it was to be expected, would more and more interrelate and identify research and interpretation as aspects of enlightened environmental management.[36]

The 1976 draft of the park's "Resource Management Plan" gives glimpses of the interrelationship:

The purpose of this plan is to document the rationale for ongoing resource management practices... propose additional resource management practices where the information permits, and identify the information

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[35] Quotes are from "Man in the Blue Ridge--An Archaeological and Environmental Perspective," a "slightly revised and expanded version of a paper presented at the Second Annual Shenandoah Research Symposium, April 21,1977, Luray, Virginia," by Michael A. Hoffman and Robert N. Foss, Laboratory of Archaeology, Department of Anthropology, University of Virginia, Charlottesville 22903. See also Hoffman and R.N. Vernon, "A List of Classified Structures for the Shenandoah National Park," and Hoffman (ed.), "Man In the Blue Ridge: The Cultural Resources of the Shenandoah National Park--A Multidisciplinary Approach," both under NPS Grant PX 4000/5/0591, Philadelphia, 1976. Copies of these and related papers are in SNP files.

[36] First Annual Shenandoah Research Symposium, (Philadelphia: NPS Natural Resources Reports, No. 11, April 1976). Also, Thomas M. Gathright II, Geology

gaps so this document might serve as a programming document for additional study and research....

For many years, the terms "conserve" and "preserve" meant to many doing nothing.

Nothing could be farther from the truth especially for parks such as Shenandoah which are rapidly changing from the past impacts of man...

This plan represents the first account to document ongoing practices and future needs to successfully execute a mandate creating a national park....

Vegetation Management... On land within the natural zone, vegetation management policy and practices emphasize maintenance or restoration of ecological processes to ensure the perpetuation of complete natural ecosystems. The objectives...are to restore and maintain the ecological diversity...as it was prior to the arrival of European man, and ensure that present ecosystems are not disturbed to the point where significant funding and management are required for their restoration.... Park biological communities have reached a stage of development where the identification of ecological factors that predominate in bringing about community change must be made. There is also the need to know what has shaped the development of the forest system in the past.... ((The goal is)) long-term stability and perpetuation of natural systems....

Research was to show what might be done about insect and disease outbreaks, to identify critical habitat for endangered species, to tell such things as why there was little reproduction in the Limberlost hemlock stand while young hemlocks were numerous elsewhere and what factors affect paper and grey birch stands or rhododendron or the red spruce-balsam fir relicts and whether (and why) such scarce vegetation is gaining or dwindling.

In summary, currently there are no on-going control programs... against any native or exotic insect or disease. The Park continues to monitor the status of white pine blister rust.... Only in a few instances have native insects and diseases had more than minimal impact on the vegetation within the Park....

Any future control programs aimed at natural or exotic insects

must be carefully considered.... The use of herbicides and pesticides, while they may be effective, is increasingly limited. The side effects, often subtle and detrimental, must be considered. The introduction of exotics as control measures will be avoided in the future, as their consequences are often unforeseen. Therefore, in practice this means no further disease and insect control will be carried out in the natural zone of the Park unless present circumstances significantly change, new research indicates otherwise, or there is a clear visitor health and welfare case....

Fire Management... (1) review the historical role of fire in Shenandoah... (2) identify present role fire might play. (3) provide guidance during transition period from complete fire control as now practiced and a more diverse use of fire both as an ecological factor of the environment and as a management tool.

.... fire is to be managed as one of the environmental factors which generates, sustains and enhances the natural ecological diversity. It will be used to perpetuate the indigenous plant and animal associations with the end result a natural vegetation mosaic....

Fire would be suppressed until research better described appropriate alternate actions. Experimental use of fire had started at Big Meadows in the spring of 1975. A continuing plan of action for Big Meadows, and possibly for Patterson Field in the south district, was expected to grow from this research.

Wildlife Management... Manage so native park wildlife occupies its proper niche.... animal populations will be regulated by natural means to maximum extent in natural zone... will be controlled when necessary for visitor health and safety.... Shenandoah...may provide some refuge and habitat for the eastern cougar and the migrating southern bald eagle and American peregrine falcon....

The resources plan repeatedly emphasized the need for research, and the chief ranger compiled a long list of wanted research projects in order of priority.[37]

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[37] Draft of "Resources Management Plan for Shenandoah, Prepared by Park Staff," 1976, 133 pages, copy lent by chief ranger Larry Hakel for my study.

The blister rust control program that had continued in Shenandoah since the 1930s was terminated by NPS Washington. The chief scientist had said in 1973 that the program was "of uncertain value," had not eradicated blister rust, and anyway white pine was but a "pioneer species." Jacobsen defended the program, saying it was helping to save fine stands of trees ranging from 120 to 130 years of age. Further, that the rust was an exotic "accidentally introduced" and that white pine was far more than a "pioneer" tree, never completely eliminated unless by blister rust. The argument continued until NPS Washington finally rejected the park's application for control efforts in fiscal year 1975 and beyond.[38]

The black bear had become more troublesome--until in 1975 there were 228 incidents with property damage totalling $14,577. Shenandoah was second in number of bear incidents in the entire national park system, Yosemite being first with 906 incidents and $141,218 damage, while Sequoia-Kings Canyon had only 214 incidents and $10,474, Olympic 57 incidents and $1,337, and Great Smoky 51 incidents and $2,819. Yet injuries to persons by bears told a different story--Yosemite 15, Smoky 7, Shenandoah only one. Chief ranger Larry Hakel reported:

> Normally, the bear activity begins with food left on the tables and with bears arriving 2-5 a.m. Gradually the bear starts raiding tents with food and does so earlier in the evening. As he loses his fear, he starts hitting all tents and gets earlier each day. If trapping and drug capture efforts are unsuccessful, the bear will begin entering cars by breaking windows. A total of 36 hours overtime was used to capture one bear.[39]

State game biologists had conducted a three-year study in cooperation with the park, and released had trapped many bears and concluded that one bear per square

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[38] Memo of phone call from Robt. N. Linn, 27 April 1973; supt. to regional director, 21 June 1973; act'g supt. to regional director, 27 March 1974; supt. to regional director, 27 Sept. 1974; and associate director Cook to regional director, 31 Jan. 1975--SNP files.

[39] NPS Washington tabulation of bear incidents, 1975, and Hakel at staff meeting, 19 May 1976.

mile, a total of 300, lived in the park. Legal hunting outside removed about 75 a year. Male bears trapped and studied averaged 9.88 years old, females 3.68 years; oldest bear trapped was 16 3/4 years old. The bears ranged in weight up to 700 pounds, a truly extraordinary size for this species.

In 1975 the park began closing landfills and installing bearproof garbage cans. The new bear management program aimed to (1) restore and maintain natural integrity, distribution and behavior of bears; (2) reduce bear-human conflicts to a minimum; and (3) provide opportunities for visitors to observe and appreciate bears in the natural state. In addition to removing unnatural food sources, it would educate visitors, enforce rules, and remove problem bears. Definite gains were made. But in the spring of 1976, "despite compliance by many visitors the leaving of food unprotected ((was)) still a problem." A pamphlet was prepared to inform and warn visitors about bears and to increase visitors' compliance with rules. Warnings were issued to 67 individuals in 1976 for violating food storage rules or intentionally feeding bears. The game commission, continuing its study, had trapped its 288th bear in the park. Additional research was in progress. Bear incidents totalled 257 in 1976, up 26 from 1975--not as many as had been feared would follow closure of landfills and bearproofing of garbage cans. There had been only one minor injury (same as in 1975). Twenty bears were removed from the park during 1976; three returned twice and one three times (the last time from 150 miles away). The bears were moving into the backcountry. "It is too early to claim success, but it is felt the bear situation is under control and moving in the right direction."[40]

Humans were more trouble than bears because crime in the park had multiplied--"Part I Offenses" 16 in 1967, 135 in 1976; "Part II Offenses"

[40] Larry L. Hakel to Jacobsen, "Bear Management Annual Review for 1976," 30 March 1977, SNP files.

10 in 1967, 1095 in 1976; vehicle accidents 73 in 1967, 134 in 1976--and so on. Park visitation was approaching three million a year--almost half coming from Virginia, District of Columbia and Maryland, about 8% each from Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey, 4.6% from Ohio, 4.5% from Florida, and about 18% from other states and countries. Entrance station and campground fees (collected by the ranger division) had also multiplied--$364,531 total collected in 1967, $937,992 in 1976 (down from the all-time high of $1,151,609 in 1975).[41]

Interpretive work was also increasing--with Dennis Carter as chief naturalist following the retirement of Schaffner. The visitor center at Big Meadows was kept open through the winter of 1974-75 for the first time and recorded 277,354 visitors in 1975, 35% above the previous year. It also served for environmental education workshops, training sessions, meetings of employees and of the Shenandoah Natural History Association (SNHA), and for issuing backcountry permits. Evening programs were held throughout the year. The environmental education council was dissolved in August, because of funding problems. Its library was turned over to SNHA for further use in environmental education which the park's interpreters continued. Five teacher workshops were held that year, and 2545 students in 37 groups visited the three environmental study areas. Use of these EEAs by teachers and students declined in 1976, but use of the environmental education library increased. Byrd Visitor Center was again open all winter.[42]

SNHA had been growing fast. In 1973 gross sales increased 37% over the previous year; in 1974, a further 31% to an all-time high of $77,170.40. There was now a full-time manager, and a separate business office. In 1975

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[41] Nahel at staff meeting, 19 Jan. 1977, and compilation of crimes, 16 Aug. 1977--SNP files.

[42] Superintendent's annual reports, 1975 and 1976, SNP files.

gross sales climbed 32% to $101,843.88. SNHA hired two additional employees for visitor center work. In 1976 gross sales climbed a further 30% to $131,919.38. Five persons were on the SNHA payroll in the summer, and the association was regularly helping to sponsor research, environmental education, the annual park art show (1974 on) and the research symposium. It was buying a vehicle for business use and video tape unit for the interpreters. It gave $14,65[illegible] that year in direct financial aid to NPS.[43]

The park concessioner--ARA Virginia Sky-Line Co., Inc.--was thriving. Its gross receipts had averaged $2,535,763 a year from 1968 through 1972; net profits averaged $148,327, 13.85% return on net worth, 5.85% of gross receipts. NPS said "these operating results should be considered reasonable but not out of line or excessive," not enough to justify renegotiation of the franchise fee paid to the government.[44]

The company had changed hands in September 1971, becoming part of the ARA international food-services conglomerate. Jacobsen said, in response to a question as to what had happened to the plan for a sizeable lodging development at Loft Mountain:

> When I came ((as superintendent)) it was a dead issue.... had Bemiss retained ownership he might have been tempted to open up on that. But he had already sold out to ARA, and ARA was down here when I arrived just trying to find out what this thing was that they had purchased. It was the first overnight accommodation in their whole history.... They had started out as a vending machine ((operation)) and then got into the food services and all kinds of other services.... They were so concerned about whether they could make a dime here that they decided they would just keep things as they were.[45]

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[43] SNHA annual narrative reports, 1973-76, and superintendent's staff minutes, 17 Nov. 1976, SNP files.

[44] NPS division of concessions management to NPS associate director, 19 Feb. 1974, copy in SNP files.

[45] Jacobsen interview, 2 Aug. 1977.

They wanted to build more lodging facilities at Skyland and Big Meadows, but NPS was withholding permission--for a while at least.

Supt. Hoskins had repeatedly faced complaints from Shenandoah Valley businessmen against growth of lodging and restaurant facilities in the park. He had said that "nature" was limiting expansion at Skyland by limiting water supply. Then the state of Virginia, backed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, became concerned over the failure of sewage disposal for developed areas in the park to keep pace with rising standards of sanitation.[46] Funds were sought to improve sewage treatment, but before they could be obtained numerous samples of effluent were giving unsatisfactory readings. Just before Jacobsen's arrival the acting superintendent had reported on the concession and its merger with ARA. He said the employees were not "public-relations oriented" and virtually no training oriented toward park values was given. He added other frank comments:

> .... It would appear that...some of the services traditionally provided by the concessioner are no longer necessary.... it does not appear that overnight accommodations are nearly as essential as they once were. It is now possible for a visitor to travel by car to almost any location in the Park within an hour's time from lodging facilities outside the Park, yet the concessioner is still planning new lodging facilities when the National Park Service is facing an extremely difficult problem furnishing sufficient water and sewer capacity.... It is the feeling of many of the park staff that a general freeze should be placed on the concessioner insofar as overnight accommodations and that no additional units be constructed....
>
> There is also serious question that concessioners can continue to provide the quality of facilities and services that have been traditional throughout the parks.... The prime indicator of the decline is the ever increasing number of concessions that are merging with conglomerates.... it appears almost in every instance where this has happened, the large

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[46] See "D5039 Services and Utilities" files at SNP office.

organization has attempted to cut corners wherever possible and to bring efficiency to the point of complete dehumanization. It seems that in every instance the quality of both the service and the facility has declined sharply and rapidly.

While it is too early to tell at Shenandoah, there are indicators that the newly merged ARA-Virginia Sky-Line Company is headed in the same direction.... For example...we are having great difficulty in determining and agreeing on the responsibilities for the various maintenance functions within the concessioner's lease line.

Merging also results in the responsibility being taken away from concession management at the park level so that the park superintendent also has less influence on the concession operations in his own park.[47]

Sewage system funds, totalling about $7 million, were in line by 1976. The Big Meadows wastewater treatment facility would come first and would have an environmental exhibit--evidence of a new high in recognizing the interrelationship of management and development with interpretation. It would place the Big Meadows area into context with the "hydrologic cycle" by explaining rain, springs, streams, man's use of water, where the used water would go and what it would do when released. It would show the treatment process with used water returning to the environment in essentially the same condition in which it was taken from the environment. Jacobsen told an SNHA group on the proposed site that he would "drink the second glass of water that came out"--after the responsible engineer had drunk the first one.[48]

Construction of the Big Meadows plant was started in 1976, to cost $1.3 million, and plants at Skyland, Thornton Gap, Matthews Arm, and Loft Mountain were to be started the next year. Jacobsen answered the concessioner's inquiry about a "timetable" for authorizing "improvements and additions" at Skyland and Big Meadows by saying that the five wastewater plants were all

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[47] Douglas G. Warnock, acting superintendent (regularly chief ranger), to assistant director of operations, Northeast Region, NPS, in answering "Questionnaire about Concession Operations," 14 July 1972, SNP files.

[48] "Scope of Work Statement for Exhibit Planning and Design Projects," Feb. 1976, p. 9, file D5039 SNP office.

to be "operational in spring 1979" and that general management planning would probably be completed and approved by 1980.

> It seems likely, therefore, should not public controversy surface during the public review of alternatives durin the summer of 1978, that we might be able to approve the replacement of existing facilities as early as October 1978. It does not appear, however, that we would be able to give serious consideration to any applications to construct new facilities until October 1979, and, possibly, no sooner than March 1980.... ((There is)) no way to accurately forecast what role the completed General Management Plan might assign to the concession operation...

He said the concessioner's "input" would be invited "at every appropriate point in the planning process."[49]

The concessioner was working well with NPS in keeping visitor facilities at Big Meadows open in winter (while closing Panorama) and was advertising: "For a truly unforgettable winter experience, visit Big Meadows this season...." The 1976-77 winter season would run from November 10 to late March with 30-40 rooms in cottages available, the wayside open for registration, meals, and so on, a lounge in a cottage with cozy fireplace, games and snacks. The campground and visitor center (NPS operations) were also open. There was a walk with a naturalist every Saturday afternoon and an evening slide program in the auditorium at 8 p.m. The company had agreed with NPS to replace throwaway bottles with returnables at all sales locations.[50]

The company had been soliciting conventions to increase its business. As a result of 100% occupancy at both Skyland Lodge and Big Meadows Lodge in August 1974, with some park visitors unable to get accommodations, Jacobsen had written--

> I am compelled by your excellent records--and without any feeling of misunderstanding or violation--to remind you of our long standing

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49 Jacobsen to Grant E. Bannen, v.p. ARASERV, Inc.-ARA Virginia Sky-Line Co., 10 May 1977, SNP files.

50 ARA Virginia Sky-Line to Jacobsen, 15 Nov. 1976, and staff minutes, 22 Sept. 1976.

request that you should neither solicit nor book any conferences, conventions, seminars, training sessions, or other groups during our three summer months, or during the color season, if their primary purpose is other than the enjoyment of our unique park values.

He found no evidence of "conflicts" in 1975 but did again in 1976 and wrote requesting that,

> our moratorium against the booking of groups whose primary concern is simply for meeting and conference facilities be extended in calendar year 1977 to include all Friday and Saturday nights from April 8 to October 22, inclusive; all nights from June 3 to September 5, inclusive; and all nights from September 30 to October 24, inclusive.

He asked for weekly reports to enable him to check on bookings of groups.[51]

Yet I have found no evidence of really serious difficulties. Jacobsen reported late in 1976 that ARA had recently added the Mesa Verde National Park concession to its family. The head of that operation, attending an ARA Virginia Sky-Line advisory board meeting at Skyland, had presented "a fine slide show on Mesa Verde."[52] There seemed reason to hope for a long and mutually beneficial ARA-NPS relationship.

In January 1973 an NPS wilderness coordinator came to Shenandoah to help revise the park's wilderness proposal in accordance with guidelines issued after the "scolding" by Sen. Church at the May 1972 hearing. A plan for approximately 80,000 acres was worked out. A new area of 310[illegible] acres would be added--"It will require our closing of the Mt. Marshall Fire Road, which we are prepared to do." The management zone along the boundary would nearly all be taken in--except future trailheads, projecting arms useful for exchange to help straighten the boundary, and places where roads dip in and out.

A final point worth noting is the Whiteoak Canyon area...one of

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[51] Jacobsen to Bannen, 30 Jan. 1975 and 10 Dec. 1976, SNP files.

[52] Staff minutes, 6 Oct. 1976.

the heaviest day-use areas...((that)) will never have the "essence" of wilderness. It was not included in the original wilderness proposal, but was added after the public hearings at the insistence of the conservation interests who did not want a campground ((at Comers Deadening))... I regret both the campground proposal and the inclusion of this area in wilderness, as this area deserves to be intensively interpreted with nature trails and exhibits.[53]

Both Robinson and Byrd reintroduced their bills from the previous Congress while indicating they could probably accept NPS revisions when completed. The bills moved rapidly toward hearings.[54] Jacobsen explained the "important issues"--among them:

Enclaves - Corbin Cabin is a structure of historical nature which is maintained...under a concession permit...for rental by reservation to hikers.... In order to continue this meaningful use, a minimum sized (one acre) enclave is recommended....

Water Impoundments - Madison and Rappahannock counties requested deletion of lands...for seven impoundments for water supply and flood control. Impoundments would be contrary to the purpose of the national park.... The provisions of Federal Water Power Act of 1920 are specifically prohibited in Shenandoah...by the Act of May 22, 1926....

Proposed Highway Access - Chairman of Madison County Planning Commission favors deletion of lands...to provide a public access highway from the County to Skyline Drive...((that))has been rejected on the basis that it is not desirable from the standpoint of achieving the purpose of this national park....

Conservation groups urge that the wilderness boundaries be extended closer to Skyline Drive and U.S. Highways. The recommended boundaries are located from 1/8 to 1/2 mile from these roads to exclude roadside developments, water supply sources and facilities, vista clearing areas, areas needed for future road alignment, and, also, to permit the wilderness areas to retain their primeval character and influence....

Stock Driveways - A number of adjacent landowners have cattle operations which involve moving cattle across the park over two routes...

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[53] Jacobsen to director of Virginia office of NPS, 6 Feb. 1973, SNP archives. The wilderness coordinator was Paul Kalkwarf (or Kaukwarf, both spellings in letter) from NPS Denver Service Center.

[54] Page News & Courier, 8 Feb. 1973, and personal letter from Byrd, 28 Feb. 1973, my files.

which have been in use since before the park was established.... ((NPS)) recommends that the Paine Run road be classified as a potential wilderness addition, its designation as wilderness to become effective at such time as the last current user of record no longer owns his property or no longer uses his access for agricultural purposes.[55]

Trayfoot Mountain
Another "potential" addition was the/communication site (formerly a fire tower) and access route.

Barely ten days before the House hearing, Jacobsen came up with a small but urgent problem:

Subsequent to...my previous memorandum...I have become personally acquainted with a number of backcountry areas.... we overlooked a very important modification to our official wilderness proposal....

Old Rag Mountain is one of the prime recreational resources.... It receives heavy day use and overnight use from Weakley Hollow and from Berry Hollow, and the existing parking areas...are totally inadequate.... It is essential, at both points, for us to provide adequate trailhead facilities. I anticipate that the forthcoming Master Plan will propose such facilities, and may even propose the construction of a Ranger Station...

.... The exclusion in...Weakley Hollow...is by no means adequate. I strongly recommend, therefore, an additional exclusion of approximately 250 acres...for the management, protection, and enhancement of the recreational and resource values and opportunities of Old Rag Mountain.[56]

At the House hearing in June Rep. Robison said he saw merit in wilderness "as a means of insuring that certain areas of this relatively narrow, heavily used park be preserved, insofar as practicable, in their natural state." He hoped "this experienced committee would arrive at an appropriate acreage limitation" and boundaries. He told of local opposition. Later when questioned by another congressman he said:

in all honesty, the opposition is not substantial. There is opposition, as I mentioned in my formal remarks, from some in Madison County that would hope that at a given point in time they might have highway access

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[55] Jacobsen to regional director, 10 April 1973, SNP archives.

[56] Jacobsen to director of Virginia office, 24 May 1973.

> to the park which is denied them at the present time. And then, also, from the Counties of Madison and Rappahannock, because the only significant source of water supply rises in the park, and in case of the growth of the communities in that area, they would hope, some people would, that small impoundments might be possible within the park's boundaries. But, this again is not something about which I get a great deal of mail.

Conservation organizations presented their case for the largest possible wilderness. Among the eloquent statements was:

> Those few relics of early farms are more like vestiges of ancient times than of man's efforts just 40 years ago--so completely has nature reclaimed the mountains. With each passing year, the forest establishes itself as the master of this environment and man more clearly is the visitor. May it always be so.

After NPS supported its 80,000-acre proposal, Jacobsen was questioned at length--about the boundary problem, land exchanges, special uses, exclusions from wilderness, and the future of fire roads. He said Old Rag Road was frequently used in management but could be closed if "we have the capability of the possible installation of facilities over on this east side, so that we can manage the resource from the perimeter rather than from the center of the park." He said "every fire road within wilderness will be permanently closed." In discussion with Rep. Roncalio, he said that "40 years ago this entire park had been logged, it had been farmed, it had been plowed, and now by the dedication to park purposes it has restored itself." Subcommittee chairman Roy Taylor commented, "He is saying that nature is a great healer." In regard to exclusion of large wild areas, Jacobsen said the Rapidan River and Smith-Grindstone Mountain exclusions were for possible use in land exchanges to help straighten the boundary.[57]

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[57] Designation of Wilderness Areas, Part II (Washington: Government Printing Office, 37-728, 1974), "Hearings before the Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation, House of Representatives, on HR 3568 and HR 6552, June 4-5, 1973." The second bill was by Rep. Broyhill of the heavily populated Virginia district adjacent to Washington; it called for 112,687 acres. The quote, "Those few relics...", is from Robert D. King, Northern Virginia Conservation Council, 4 June 1973.

At the Senate hearing in July Byrd spoke strongly for wilderness:

> The concept of wilderness areas is an important one as we approach the last quarter of the 20th Century. As our population increases and becomes more concentrated throughout the country, it is imperative that we set aside some of our most beautiful countryside in its natural state. Portions of the Shenandoah National Park are truly deserving of such preservation.
>
> This area has the kind of beauty which nourishes the soul. It has sustained me in this way--as it sustained my father, who returned to the Blue Ridge Mountains time after time to be restored in mind and body by the solitude of these ancient mountains and valleys....
>
> The setting aside of a third of the park as an unspoiled wilderness is needed now.

Among witnesses supporting much more wilderness--112,687 acres--were Art Wright (Wilderness Society), Robert Schaefer (Sierra Club), and Brock Evans (Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs). Wright's testimony included:

> this park is a classic example of natural regeneration to the point of good wilderness potential. More than 35 years ago before it became a national park, the land had been badly farmed, its wildlife greatly diminished and its forests severely overcut. It became a national park because of its great scenic qualities and splendid views in all directions. It had little else to commend it. All of this has changed and an area that had suffered from misuse now contains lands which qualify for wilderness designation in the judgment of the National Park Service, the conservation groups, the general public and indeed the Virginia congressional delegation.

Jacobsen a ain defended the NPS proposal--in prepared testimony and in responses to questions by the hearing chairman, Sen. Alan Bible, giving reasons for not designating more than 80,000 acres:

> ((We)) must provide a broad spectrum of appropriate public uses.... ((we)) need middle ground to interpret the park and its resources, conduct environmental education and maybe contribute to creation of an

environmental ethic.... In developed areas we have approximately 2.5 million visitors a year--by automobile primarily. We try to entice them off onto trails in which we may begin to educate them to the values and the resources which are available...so need room for interpretive activities, short hikes, horseback rides, picnicking.... Wilderness is not simply a developmental constraint as perhaps has been suggested by a few other witnesses, neither is it something which can occur by neglect. ((It)) must be managed by a conscious effort in order that we might protect the resources--the physical resources of the Park, the natural, historical and scenic resources--and also it must be managed so that we may retain the essence of solitude which is an important ingredient in the legislative definition of wilderness.[58]

The committee favored Byrd's bill (S 988 embodying the 80,000-acre NPS recommendation). The full Senate passed it on September 20, 1973, and sent it to the House. The Shenandoah coalition of wilderness supporters worked hard then for a compromise at approximately 104,000 acres. Action seemed possible in the House toward the end of 1974, but "Robinson found it necessary to stop the scheduling because of much Madison County opposition." The bills of the 93rd Congress thus died, but the issue remained very much alive.[59]

Opponents of the wilderness as proposed for upper Madison County staged an inflammatory publicity and advertising campaign in 1975. One large ad began:

MADISON COUNTY PEOPLE SHUT OUT FROM THE PARK??? .... Madison people would not be allowed to go into the park from Madison County to enjoy such areas as Old Ra , Whiteoak Canyon and Dark Hollow Falls. Furthermore, it is understood that present plans would eliminate short hikes, horseback trails, fire roads and bridges....

People were urged to sign petitions. Jimmy Graves and the Madison Eagle were given as contacts. Another ad asked: "WOULD YOU LIKE A FIRE HAZARD

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[58] Hearing before Senate subcommittee on public lands, 24 July 1973, details including copies of testimony in superintendent's looseleaf book, SNP archives.

[59] Shenandoah Wilderness Coalition, public letter, map, fact sheet, July 1975. My article, "We Can Have Wildness Wherever We Choose," featuring SNP wilderness as an example for the East, was published in Reader's Digest, Aug. 1973, and National Wildlife, Aug.-Sept. 1973. Jacobsen and I were two of five panelists on a half-hour wilderness program on NBC television (educational exchange), part of a series produced by Lillian Brown, American University, Washington, D.C., widely shown 1973-74.

IN YOUR BACK YARD?'.... It might happen to the people of Madison County." Robinson, who would need the Madison votes most urgently, was the primary target of the petitions. Graves publicized an "alternate plan" that would cut out ten thousand acres of wilderness. He said that Madison (and possibly other counties) would lose protection from fire and other dangers and also lose trails now heavily hiked. Further, the area proposed as wilderness did not offer solitude so could not qualify.[60]

The Charlottesville paper seemed to favor the wilderness. It based a staff-written article on an interview with Jacobsen, quoting, "In the East you can re-create wilderness by simply wanting to have it." Because of environmental factors the eastern mountains have a fast recovery rate from the marks of man. Since the land was presented by Virginia to the federal government the park has fought nearly half way along its 100-year route to recovery. The forest will continue to mature for another 60 years. Another item said Robinson was criticized for trying to get "from under the hammer," having said he would not introduce another Shenandoah wilderness bill until the Madison plan was given attention.[61]

The argument spread over the Piedmont. Rappahannock County's governing board joined with Madison in persuading the Rappahannock-Rapidan planning district commission to oppose wilderness designation of the large area bounded by the Old Rag and Weakley Hollow fire roads. Though some of Graves's anti-wilderness arguments--such as "fire hazard"--were considered invalid by commission members, they wanted to protect the tourist business in Madison that was said to number 10,000 visitors a week. Several members commented that, although Old Rag and Weakley Hollow could hardly be "wilderness" with so many people tramping through, "the two beautiful areas won't last if use

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[60] Madison Eagle, various ads in 1975, also news story and map, 30 Jan. 1975.

[61] Charlottesville Daily Progress, 12 Jan. and 29 March 1975.

is not restricted or controlled."[62]

Byrd, re-elected to a new six-year term, again introduced the NPS proposal, yet sought some way to soothe Madison opponents. He asked sharp questions of NPS Director Gary Everhardt--who answered that roads in wilderness would indeed be "permanently closed to any mechanized transport," with maintenance limited to what was necessary to prevent or remedy damage to natural resources, but would "continue to be used by backpackers, hikers, and horsemen." Designation of wilderness "in no way affects the responsibility of the land managing agency for protection of the designated area" against fire, insects and other serious dangers.[63]

There was a flare-up between the Shenandoah Wilderness Coalition--thinking NPS was exaggerating the difficulties wilderness would cause--and Supt. Jacobsen. He was stung into replying:

> I resent and categorically deny ((your)) implication that I may have conspired to defeat the designation of wilderness areas in Shenandoah National Park.... I find it a little ironic, after alerting your organization...to the increasing wilderness opposition and after nearly a year of singlehandedly carrying the wilderness banner into numerous and oftimes hostile meetings, that I am being criticized on the basis of hearsay evidence by those very persons who should have been standing up with me and sharing my burden of explaining the concepts and management implications of wilderness designation.[64]

Byrd was preparing an amendment to his bill, reserving corridors through the wilderness. The NPS associate director for legislation, in expectation of hearings, wrote:

> An essential aspect of wilderness management is flexibility to change use patterns as necessary to protect resources and to achieve other management objectives. This includes closing some trails and constructing new ones at new locations within wilderness when this is clearly

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[62] Culpeper Star-Exponent, 25 Feb. 1975, and Piedmont Virginian, 5 March 1975.

[63] Byrd to Everhardt, 3 March 1975, and Everhardt to Byrd, 25 March 1975, wilderness looseleaf books, SNP archives.

[64] Robert D. King to Jacobsen, 24 March 1975, and Jacobsen to King, 7 April 1975.

required. Wilderness should be managed as a total unit, including trails, and we believe the departmental guidelines and the Wilderness Act itself provide for this kind of flexible management.

Equally significant, however, is the idea mistakenly held by some that areas excluded from wilderness are not subject to use restriction. Even now in many non-wilderness backcountry areas within the System, use is regulated by permits, temporary trail closings, etc. With the increasing pressure...for backcountry experiences, even greater regulation of backcountry use will undoubtedly be necessary.

.... We oppose corridors, believe adequate trail maintenance can be given under the Wilderness Act...including the use of motorized equipment and mechanical transport when it has been determined to be the minimum tool necessary to successfully, safely, and economically accomplish the objective.[65]

Washington and Richmond papers (and even the Los Angeles Times) dramatized the Shenandoah wilderness controversy. Horseman Jimmy Graves of Graves Mountain Lodge, "tourist mecca" near Old Rag, was the leading character resisting the "landgrab for backpackers." Byrd was "caught in the middle" between the Graves forces and the Park Service that was being urged by conservation groups to "grab" an even greater acreage:

"The rich backpackers and the government," growls Jim Graves, watching through a picture window as the 3,291-foot tip of Old Rag Mountain disappears into a Blue Ridge stormcloud, "could care less about the people of Madison County."

.... .... .... .... ....

"A lot of people feel the government is coming in again and saying this is the way it's going to be and if you don't like it move out," said Graves. "We've lived here and worked here all our lives and our answer this time is, if you don't like the way things are now then go someplace else."

The subcontroversy between wilderness enthusiasts and NPS, that surfaced

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[65] Associate director Richard C. Curry to regional director, 20 Oct. 1975.

occasionally, was summarized by Art Wright as a view of the Wilderness Act as "preservative" versus an NPS view of it as "recreational."[66]

The Madison County Eagle tried early in 1976 to be objective:

> .... It is obvious that forest fires will be fought as usual.... there will be, in fact, trails for walking and riding and they will be maintained.... It is expected that access will in some way be limited in the future, whether or not we have wilderness, and this is because of the growing numbers of people who take advantage of recreational opportunities of the park and of wilderness. Thus wilderness could possibly be advantageous to the county's economic picture. I would admonish citizens who are in opposition to the wilderness proposal to have a second look. The picture is different.[67]

The Senate subcommittee held a hearing on February 5, 1976. NPS supported the Byrd bill, S 885, as first written. Other testimony was similar to that in previous hearings. Byrd proposed his amendment that would leave "four corridors" out of wilderness for existing roads or trails--Rose River, Whiteoak Canyon, Skyland-Old Rag, and Weakley Hollow:

> Within these corridors, the Park Service should continue to maintain the trails and bridges as it does now, without the imposition of any administrative inflexibility imposed by wilderness designation on the pathway itself.... At the same time, I would impose upon its methods of management the stern mandate of this legislative history that the non-wilderness corridors are to be large enough but only as large as necessary to carry out these ministerial duties and to provide for a healthy, satisfactory wilderness experience for the users.
>
> I emphasize this point: the wilderness designation and qualities of the adjoining waterfalls, rivers and forests will endure undisturbed beside these access corridors.

Urging passage of the bill after amendment, he then quoted from Aldo Leopold's Sand County Almanac--"Wilderness is a resource which can shrink but not grow"

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[66] Washington Star, 26 Oct. 1975; Richmond Times-Dispatch, 1 Dec. 1975; Washington Post, 16 Nov. 1975; and Los Angeles Times, 28 Dec. 1975.

[67] Mary G.L. Shackelford, "Wilderness: A New Picture," Madison Eagle, 29 Jan. 1976.

--and emphatically disagreed with it--"I think the Shenandoah National Park and the proposed Shenandoah wilderness are prime examples to the contrary."[68]

Two days later Robinson said Byrd's amendment, if adopted, "may prove to be a broadly acceptable basis for a wilderness area designation." The next week the Eagle said the Byrd compromise "appeases wilderness opponents." Though the conservation groups attacked the corridors as unnecessary and a bad precedent, the Senate committee unanimously supported Byrd. S 885--now providing for 79,019 acres of wilderness, plus 560 acres of potential wilderness (not requiring further legislation but merely administrative closing out of inappropriate uses)--was passed by the full Senate on April 7, 1976.[69]

Robinson seemed for a time ready for action on his HR 13212 or on Byrd's bill as amended and passed, the two now identical. Then, in August, ten conservation groups apparently became aware of a budding scheme that might help ease the congressman, facing election that fall, past the test that could be/~~xxxxxx~~ harmful to him in view of Madison opposition. The conservationists protested the corridors and the "mutilated wilderness" in a letter to the chairman of the House subcommittee and specifically requested that no "procedural means be allowed to substitute for a public hearing on HR 13212 and the crucial issues which it raises."[70]

Nothing seemed to happen for another month, and feeling grew that yet another Congress would end without deciding the question of Shenandoah wilderness. Then suddenly the job was done, and on Monday, October 4, Jacobsen reported:

> Early Saturday morning, following its stopping of the clock to delay adjournment, the House of Representatives voted in favor of designating 70,019 acres of this park, plus 560 potential acres, as Wilderness. This unusual action occurred without the benefit of House

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[68] Senate subcommittee hearing, Sen. J. Bennett Johnston, chairman, on S 885 and S 1096, SNP wilderness, 5 Feb. 1976, details in wilderness looseleaf book, SNP archives.

[69] Northern Virginia Daily, 7 Feb. 1976, Eagle, 12 Feb.; Art Wright to Sen. Johnston, 10 Feb. 1976; Report of Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, 5 April 1976; Senate report 94-1357, 29 Sept. 1976; Daily Progress, 11 April 1976; and Byrd's newsletter, May 1976.

o Hon. Roy A. Taylor, 30 Aug. 1976, copy in my files.

hearings during this Congress, and resulted from the Senate's action of attaching its version of this proposal to an omnibus measure for the designation of Wilderness in several other National Park Service areas. I have been informed by a member of the House Committee staff, who was on the House floor at the time, that Representative Robinson requested personal assurance from Senator Byrd that this proposal included the corridors in Madison County before he would permit the measure to be voted upon. I've also been told that the House action on this measure was its next to last vote prior to the adjournment of the 94th Congress.[71]

Thus, between 2 and 4 a.m., through "extraordinary last moment legislative maneuvers," as Jacobsen put it at his next staff meeting, Shenandoah was officially recognized as having more than 123 square miles of the "vast wilderness" it was supposed to have had more than half a century before when Congress authorized its establishment as a national park.

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[71] Jacobsen to regional director, 4 Oct. 1976, SNP files.

# 15

## Thinking Back--and Ahead

The time period assigned to this history of Shenandoah began with the dream as far back as it could be traced and ended with the year 1976, which turned out to be fitting because it brought an official conclusion of a key cycle in this "recycling" park and foreshadowed fresh beginnings. In the same memo to the regional director that reported wilderness designation by Congress, Supt. Jacobsen asked that work on the new general management plan, suspended so as not to interfere with the wilderness issue, be resumed. The planning was to take three years and to involve the general public as well as federal, state and local officials and the park concessioner. It was to grow from the park's past and all the facts that could be obtained, but it was also to be imaginative and might bring surprises.

Most immediate in Jacobsen's mind was "an effort (perhaps the last) to correct...serious boundary problems before adjacent developments render any further actions infeasible." Next most urgent were patterns for future development and for public transportation to keep heavy visitation from "degrading the environment and the visitor's perception of the Park." Other planning questions were about new "operations-support facilities to include maintenance facilities, seasonal and permanent quarters, administrative buildings, communications systems, etc." and "additional foot, horse, and bike trails." The effort called for completion of the historic and archeological resources studies and of the resource management plan and for production of an interpretive prospectus.

There had been input during the 1973-75 period before this round of planning had been suspended--mostly from NPS personnel including Denver Service Center and from conservation groups. Virginia Wilderness Committee had opposed "further

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[1] Supt. Robert R. Jacobsen to regional director, 4 Oct. 1976, and Jacobsen, "Outline of Planning Requirements," 1975, SNP files, and Skyline newspaper printing SNP news release, May 1978.

development within park boundaries," saying "the time is not far away when admission" to the park "must be restricted to prevent over-use." Potomac Appalachian Trail Club had recommended:

> 1. Develop a system of trails which includes trails for foot travel only, for horse travel only, and for joint use by hikers and horseback riders....
>
> 2. Provide more sites for cabins of the PATC operated type for public use in each section of the park.
>
> 3. Provide shuttle bus service along Skyline Drive, to the end that automobile traffic...be reduced and the visitors' enjoyment...enhanced....
>
> 4. Omit...any provision [for] more vehicular access roads....
>
> 5. Protect the access trails at park boundaries from closure....
>
> 6. Expand the Volunteers-in-the-Park program to include more responsible activities. Explore the possibility of enlisting the help of PATC in search and rescue missions, and in other ways.
>
> 7. Proposals for land exchange should take into account the possible loss in resource values which offset gains in ease of administration....
>
> 8. We recommend that no additional motor campgrounds or motel-type accommodations be provided.... Rather, encourage public bodies and private entrepreneurs in the localities outside the park to cater to the...needs of park visitors.[2]

Jacobsen had discussed the planning problem with PATC, saying among other things:

> Although classified as a "natural area" which will be natural with time (certainly "unnatural" 40 years ago after 200 years of settlement, grazing, logging, and farming), Shenandoah is different...with color and interest from the evidences of man. A great thing about Shenandoah...is the decision to have a park here, unlike other areas whose character as a park was already present.

He said the new plan would "answer the question of what to do about the few remaining structures of the mountain people and the CCC." In regard to public transportation, he expressed his opinion that shuttle buses with recorded or live commentary would be feasible "if frequent, fun, and free (as in Yosemite)."[3]

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[2] Virginia Wilderness Committee, Williamsburg, Va., 9 May 1973, and PATC, 25 May 1973, SNP files.

[3] Minutes of SNP-PATC meeting, 22 April 1974, SNP files.

A detailed study was made in 1975 "to develop a transportation system that" would increase "park accessibility to those without a car" while improving "intrapark mobility and reducing congestion." Three alternatives were seen:

1. No action--i.e., perpetuating the automobile as primary access.
2. Auto access with supplementary shuttle bus service.
3. Allowing no auto access; all access to be by bus.

This study is oriented to the second option, namely, an examination of the feasibility of providing a supplementary bus service. We are recommending a bus service on short, convenient headways running from selected staging areas, at or near park entrances, along the Skyline Drive....

The proposed bus service must be designed to provide two types of service: (1) accommodate arrivals at staging areas and transport them to park facilities; and, (2) provide access within the park between the various facilities (intrapark shuttles). To be acceptable to visitors, bus headways must be kept short to provide convenience to the visitor, flexibility to their activities, and completely eliminate the feeling that they are dependent upon schedules. Therefore, 15- and 20-minute headways were selected for weekend and weekday service respectively.

Routes and staging area locations were selected based on visitation figures at entrances and locations of park facilities. Routes were located in the north portion of the Park (Front Royal to Highway 211) and in the central portion (Highway 211 to Lewis Mountain) and staging areas were located at the Front Royal entrance...and on Highway 211 near Thornton Gap.[4]

Jacobsen devoted more than half of his "Outline of Planning Requirements" (1975) to land-and-boundary:

Shenandoah...is incomplete. The approximately 194,000 acres currently in Federal ownership comprise less than 60% of the 327,000-acre Park which was identified in 1927 for eventual acquisition.... Since 1935, when the State of Virginia donated 176,429 acres, a score of private donations have been received.... areas of the Park lack visual and ecological integrity and in many places the boundary remains unrelated to topographic features, natural and recreational resources, or exterior access routes.

.... donation is no longer a dependable form of land acquisition for public recreation.... Failure to develop another form of acquisition,

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[4] "Transportation Study, Shenandoah National Park," Department of Interior, NPS, Denver Service Center, NPS 563, November 1975, recommended by Donald L. Bressler, DSC, 15 Aug. 1975, William Loftis, act'g supt. SNP, 24 Sept. 1975, approved by Chester L. Brooks, Mid-Atlantic regional director, 26 Sept. 1975, 64-page booklet, SNP files.

with necessary legislative approval, will constitute a de facto decision that Park expansion to an authorized boundary is not in the best interest of the United States and its citizens....

While vacation homes do not absolutely prevent...expansion...they do increase appreciably the cost of expansion by escalating land values. Traditional public access...is being threatened, and potential access to and use of prime natural areas with superb vistas or stream frontage not yet in public ownership will be lost unless the remainder areas of the authorized Park are acquired now, or vast sums of money are expended later.... The need for re-examination of the Park Boundary, in light of present and potential land use conflicts, future perimeter development and public access, and regional landscape protection, is NOW....

Present Park development is oriented toward the spine of the Skyline Drive. All developments on the ridge, e.g., campgrounds, visitor centers, concession facilities, gain access from the Drive. There is modest room for expansion of these facilities. However, developments along the perimeter may be more important in the years to come. Trailhead parking and winter campgrounds are some of the facilities which might be built along the perimeter to facilitate visitor enjoyment and distribution.

Interviewed in 1977 Jacobsen said specifics of the park's future beyond the next few years seem "foggy...so many things will swing on what our final boundary is going to be." Pending completion and approval of the new general management plan and a congressional decision on the boundary, he was "trying...

to preserve options. Any time I see that anyone is trying to do anything that will close out an option, I try to go out and keep it open.

For example, when the Beef Cattle Research Station became available, I looked at that and said what can that do for us, and I figured, well, that's where we can build a by-pass to get around Front Royal in case we ever get into a "Gatlinburg situation." So I went out and made sure that when the government disposed of that land we kept a right-of-way across it...and space for a possible parking area for cars in case a shuttle-bus system is adopted.[5]

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[5] Supt. Robert R. Jacobsen, personal interview, 2 Aug. 1977, tapes in my files. "Gatlinburg situation" refers to the congested condition at Gatlinburg, Tenn., the main north entrance to Great Smoky Mountains National Park. It is not only overcrowded but in the opinion of many people tends toward a carnival-type atmosphere out of keeping with the purpose and mood of enjoyment of a great natural national park.

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Having "lived with" Shenandoah since my late teens, beginning before the park was established--with some years away yet always with a park-related project continuing or with ownership of home and land at the boundary--I have a deep personal involvement. I have done my best during the intensive research and the writing thus far to keep my feelings separate from the facts, and I believe I have been objective enough to have earned freedom for the few pages that remain. So I won't try to connect all the threads in a summary or to write a careful conclusion in "scientific" style. The chapters up to this last one bring out their meanings through their facts, I think, yet I want to glory a little now in some of the interrelating factors, not always and everywhere fully understood, that make Shenandoah unique and important in the world.

The wilderness was "ruined," not just once but repeatedly, yet it has returned, because its seeds and the needed nutrients survived in the earth. This wilderness says the potential of earth and life is eternal, built into basic reality from the beginning. This wilderness becomes a symbol of renewal, the downs and the ups, the cycles of forever, the majesty of the universe, the dignity of life, the role of death in the resurrection of life.

There has been a long search for meaningful history here--in explorations, in settlement, in war--and the search continues. Yet few of the searchers have broken through to realization that the most lastingly historic event which ever happened in the Shenandoah Blue Ridge was the establishment of this park. The wilderness is here again, "nature" is strong again, as much because of this "cultural" event as because the essence survived in the rock and the soil, the sky and the wind and the sun. So the wilderness itself is historic, and everything that has markedly affected the park is historic and deserves to be celebrated. The historic process that gave protection and allowed the return of wild nature is continuing. It should not be cut off, or assumed to

be all in the past, but allowed to keep unfolding in further miracles, though what they might be can't be fully and dependably predicted.

I have encountered questions that I may not yet have answered as well as I might if allowed to include bits of personal intuition that rise from my experience with the park (and to a degree with other national parks), that rise even from the research for this history but mostly not from specific documents that can be cited. I will try to answer a few of them now and will probably pull in threads that strike me while I go as needing to be interwoven. The results, of course, will not be gospel but may penetrate to places from which insights may later flow, maybe for others to catch and correct or improve and use.

Who deserves credit for establishing Shenandoah National Park? In my opinion now, no one person or group. The park movement was not merely a stream with tributaries joining in full knowledge of what they were doing. In its early years it was almost as much an "act of God" as the eruption of lava that builds a new landscape. Two strong forces began melting through the crust independently. They were the wish of eastern millions for periodic escape from urban pressures--the same wish that created the Appalachian Trail--and the sudden mania of Virginia, depressed since the War Between the States, for a fairer share of prosperity. These two forces, hardly aware of each other, became inexorable when they started moving toward the same goal, different though that goal appeared to each.

The particular area was not of key consequence, though it had to be both scenic and accessible to the eastern millions and maybe it had to be in the Shenandoah region where the businessmen launched and kept stimulating Virginia's thrust. I think the pre-1920 southern Appalachian park-or-forest effort had little connection with the Shenandoah park movement. Director Mather's and Secretary Work's desire to add "a typical section of the Appalachian Range" to the national park system was an encouragement, a gate slightly ajar, an

invitation, a light in the dark, but not the main thrust. The federal and state governments--executive and legislative branches--were tools for accommodating and to some extent shaping what pushed up from the social depths. Something resembling the park would have materialized anyway. Though the movement seemed in dire jeopardy time and again for a decade, it proved unstoppable. It became what I have called a democratic act of earthmanship--for the greatest advantage of people and planet--a reversal of material exploitation unprecedented anywhere as far as I can determine after much delving.[6]

The people of both basic forces, though sometimes complaining, got what they needed. The eastern millions came and used the park in their varying styles. The Virginia travel industry multiplied. Its income, almost negligible when Skyline Drive was built, reached $190 million a year in 1948 and $1.63 billion in 1976, with travel-related businesses employing 171,900 persons. Page County alone--that had repeatedly oversubscribed its "Buy an Acre" quota in the mid-1920s with but a few thousand dollars--took in $5,091,000 from travelers in 1976, far more of it attributable to the park in that one year than the state's total investment in land donated for the park.[7]

Of course certain persons played prominent roles in park establishment, and I have tried to tell in the appropriate places what they did. In July 1936 when the park was being dedicated, the Richmond Times-Dispatch emphasized "the dynamic, resourceful William E. Carson," who had headed the state conservation commission (without salary) during the eight years it was the decisive factor in the park movement, crediting him with "the hardest work" for the park:

> Congress must be aroused to action. Legal difficulties must be cleared away. At every turn was found an unexpected obstacle. Through all these difficulties Mr. Carson tirelessly fought his way. He missed no opportunity to impress the proper persons with the natural beauty of the Blue Ridge country and its desirability as a retreat from the heat and

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[6] Darwin Lambert, "A Running Start on Earthmanship," National Parks Magazine, Aug. 1968.

[7] "Travel Impact," Page News & Courier, 17 Feb. 1977, based on study by Dr. Lewis C. Copeland of the University of Tennessee.

noise of the cities....

His efforts were crucial in President Hoover's making "camp" on the Rapidan and taking personal interest in the park. He and Hoover "got Skyline Drive work going." He also managed to heighten the personal interest and involvement of President FDR in the park.[8]

In 1941 the state commission asked NPS to let it erect a Carson "marker" in the park, saying "your records will show that Mr. Carson was...really the leading spirit in the establishment of the Shenandoah National Park and the Skyline Drive." In 1948, six years after Carson died, a mountain was named after him--Carson Mountain, elevation 2500 feet, situated one mile northeast of Compton Peak and six miles south of Front Royal. The park's news release said:

> He represented the interests of the state in its land acquisition program and his judgment and material assistance greatly influenced the state's contribution of properties which were to become known as Shenandoah National Park.... Efforts will be made to designate a portion of the Appalachian Trail which traverses Carson Mountain as "the Carson Trail."[9]

Yet NPS, with key personnel so often transferring, has tended to forget that it was mostly the action of Virginia which brought Shenandoah into existence. For decades little was heard of Carson and Carson Mountain--a shame, for he was a fascinating man of extraordinary ability and perseverance. The name was absent from most maps, but now I see it on a recent edition of PATC's north district map and feel better.

George Freeman Pollock, who died at age 80 in 1949, had a mountain named after him too--in 1951--Pollock Knob, elevation 3580, situated almost a mile south of Skyland. Sen. Harry F. Byrd (Sr.) said that Pollock

> may rightly be credited with a large share of responsibility for the fact that the National Park exists here.... If Pollock had lost his hold on the Mountain and on the other acreage which he came eventually to own,

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[8] Times-Dispatch editorial, 3 July 1936. I consider, though not knowing with absolute certainty, that the amount of direct Presidential involvement in Shenandoah's establishment and development was without parallel in the park system.

[9] N. Clarence Smith, chm., Va. cons. comm., to Demaray, 16 June 1941, and SNP news release, 10 Aug. 1948, National Archives.

> and the Park had been established anyway, it would have been quite a different park, deprived of much of the natural beauty which gives it distinction. For he stayed the hand of the logger, and he exerted himself to prevent forest fires or to confine their damage.... His great achievement, in connection with the establishment...was that he did get all the members of the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee to inspect the present park area, and under circumstances calculated to build a friendly attitude among them.... He was a believer, and a fervid one, in the claims of his part of the Blue Ridge to national parkhood and he labored heart and soul to instill that conviction in the minds of the Committee....
>
> It was not only appropriate and proper that the promontory near Skyland ...be named after George Freeman Pollock; it is a matter of simple justice to a great American.[10]

Sen. Byrd is commemorated in the park by four hikers' shelters--"Byrd's Nests"--which he contributed before his death in 1966--and by Byrd Visitor Center (Big Meadows) dedicated in 1967 with much testimony to his prominence in the park's history. He was among the leaders campaigning for donations to buy the land. As governor he proposed creation of the conservation commission, persuaded the legislature to authorize it and persuaded Carson to head it. In that sense he was responsible for Carson's work, and without his backing the legislature might not have appropriated a million dollars for park land and might not have passed the "blanket condemnation act." He remained a strong friend of NPS and Shenandoah all his life. It is hard to see how the park could have been established without him--as without Pollock or Carson or L. Ferdinand Zerkel or others. Yet, if my view of the basic forces is valid, substitutes would have played the roles.

It so happens, though, that names are needed in the park. There are many geographic features still unnamed and quite a few duplications, including at least three "Dry Runs" (that are not dry) and two "Hawksbill Creeks." Something

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[10] Byrd, "Speech delivered on October 14, 1951 at the Dedication of Pollock Knob," printed as Foreword in Pollock, Skyland (Chesapeake Book Co., 1960), pp. ix-xv.

ought to be named after Zerkel, unifier of key forces that might have kept fighting each other; and after Hugh E. Naylor, who advocated a national park in northwestern Virginia years before anyone else and would not give up; and after Benchoff and Allen and Judd. Or anyone mentioned by Zerkel, after he had been at the center of the movement for eight years, in what he called "a little whimsical article...but...accurate historically":

V I R G I N I A ' S  C H I L D
THE SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

Born in the early fall of 1924 at Skyland, Page County, Va., of Harold Allen and G. Freeman Pollock parentage - attending physician, George H. Judd, Washington, D.C.

Nursed for some months in Luray, Virginia by the "Northern Virginia Park Association", with G. Freeman Pollock and L. Ferdinand Zerkel as day and night nurses and Harold Allen as relief nurse.

Christened in Mid-December, 1924 by Secretary Hubert Work, N.P.S. Director Stephen T. Mather and Southern Appalachian National Park Committeemen Henry W. Temple, William C. Gregg, Glenn S. Smith, William A. Welch and Harlan P. Kelsey, its God-father.

Introduced to the metropolitan public largely by Harold E. Philips through the Washington Star and Dr. Wm. Jos. Showalter through the National Geographic Magazine and other publications and, later, by Dr. Frank Bohn through the New York Times.

Aided greatly in its efforts to walk and talk by Col. Leroy Hodges and Robert F. Nelson of the Virginia State Chamber of Commerce and by the Richmond Times-Dispatch.

Watched and nourished in infancy in the Shenandoah Valley by H.J. Benchoff (Woodstock); H.L. Opie (Staunton); Frank Sublett, Dan Wine, Ray Brown and John Crown (Harrisonburg); Andrew Bell (Winchester); H.E. Naylor (Front Royal); J.T. McAllister (Hot Springs); H.H. Newman (Edinburg); C.N. Hoover (New Market); L. Ferdinand Zerkel (Luray) - with Harold Allen of Washington, D.C. and G. Freeman Pollock of Skyland, Va. as mentors and dieticians.

Trained in the "pre-school age" by its early kin and the friends above named and others of the Directors and Members of Shenandoah Valley, Incorporated, assisted by such good friends in the Piedmont sections as Thomas L. Farrar and Judge A.D. Dabney.

Supported through early childhood by its collective uncle, the Officers and Directors of the Shenandoah National Park Association, Incorporated - ...Benchoff...Opie...Wine...Zerkel...Naylor...W.A. Ryan (Winchester)... Hoover...Thos. B. McAdams (Richmond), T.I. Southgate (Norfolk), R.H. Harris (Lynchburg), Frank Buchanan (Marion), R.H. Angell (Roanoke), Jos. D. Smith (Petersburg), Lee Long (Dante), Julian Y. Williams (Alexandria), Homer Ferguson (Newport News), Hollis Rinehart (Charlottesville); this "Uncle" continuously advised by that master guide, Governor H.F. Byrd.

Adopted, as a promising but enemic young person by the State Conservation and Development Commission; with its Chairman, the Hon. William E. Carson, as foster parent.

Operated on by Judge A.C. Carson, with William Armstrong and Aubrey Weaver as internes.

Under a curriculum outlined by Arno B. Cammerer and delineated by Glenn Smith, Albert Pike and Hersey Munroe; tutored in "Carson College" by Elmer O. Fippin, Alexander Stuart, Richard Gilliam and S.H. Marsh, with incidental assistance from its parents (...Allen and...Pollock) and its early nurse (...Zerkel) and with special health advice and class work prescribed by its new friends, Dr. Roy Lyman Sexton and the Officers of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club of Washington, D.C.

Guided in financial learning and the social graces by its foster parent, William E. Carson, assisted by Directors Horace M. Albright, Arno B. Cammerer and A.E. Demaray, of the National Park Service.

Coached in physical development by H.K. Bishop and William M. Austin of the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads, assisted by its God-father, Harlan P. Kelsey and the master trainers - National Park Engineers Oliver G. Taylor, Charles E. Peterson and V. Roswell Ludgate.

Examination for graduation from "Carson College" under Expert Appraisal Commissioners, Following mid-term tests by Appraisal Engineers, Surveyors and Cartographers under Dean S.H. Marsh.

Post-graduate technical education intrusted to Virginia's "Circuit University"; with graduation, with highest honors, scheduled for the summer of 1932.

Prominent position, with a handsome income, awaiting the adult in the Museum of Nature's Masterpieces administered by Secretary Ray Lyman Wilbur and his National Park Service, with promotion assured by the President and the Congress of the United States of America.

Where so many friends and well-wishers watched the progress of this Child and applauded so heartily its every success and where

24,000 interested folk gave subscriptions to insure that success, passing out "Credit to Whom Credit is Due" is, at very best, relative. This sketch, therefore, cannot but have omitted a large number of names that merit mention, while it attempts to record the "Outline of History" of our beloved Shenandoah National Park in all-too-brief form.

TO ALL GENUINE "PARK NUTS" --

H A I L !

2/22/32 L. F. Z.[11]

Names Zerkel omitted that I think should be included are Herbert Hoover, Franklin D. Roosevelt, J.R. Lassiter, Benton MacKaye, Myron H. Avery, E. Lee Trinkle, and Robert Sterling Yard. Hoover is commemorated in the park by Camp Hoover, but maybe there should be an FDR Peak, a Lassiter Creek, a MacKaye Ridge, an Avery Trail, a Trinkle Falls, and a Yard Run. And I am probably leaving out some good names too.

Which is more important, Shenandoah National Park or Skyline Drive? Though the Drive is part of the park, this question points to a real and complex puzzle. Elements often recognized have been skyline road versus skyline trail (the road stealing and crowding the route); skyline road versus the rest of the park (what can compete for majority attention with those marvelous views so easily enjoyed through car windows?); visitors quickly in and quickly out versus longer stays (as at old Skyland); and skyline road versus interpreters (how can you get in touch with people inside cars?). Elements not so often recognized are ridgetop development versus lowland development (seen in part as travel businesses inside the park versus travel businesses outside the park as at Smoky); inward orientation versus outward orientation (that is, in the view of nearby communities and many hikers, a walled park versus an open boundary); and crowd concentration (sometimes "bumper-to-bumper") versus dispersal.

The extent and persistence of the puzzle could not have been fully foreseen

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[11] Zerkel to Benchoff, 16 March 1949, and enclosed typescript, SNP archives.

by park advocates, nor by NPS in the early years. Though the agency had the period 1924-31--theoretically--to consider the idea of a skyline road, those were years when the park itself was often but a fading possibility, years of no Shenandoah appropriation, no Shenandoah personnel, little incentive to plan in detail and even less opportunity to do so. Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, meanwhile, was opening both its skyline trail and a network of side trails connecting the skyline via diversely intriguing routes with lowland road-ends where the boundary might later be located. Most hikes started in the lowlands or in the few low gaps. With only a few months between President Hoover's (Carson-inspired?) order to survey, plan and build Skyline Drive as a "relief project," and the start of actual construction (more than four years before NPS had possession of the land), there could be at best only "expert" guesses as to what this great project, so quickly setting a central pattern, might come to mean.

Trail people would almost certainly have fought Skyline Drive more vigorously if they had had time to study, discuss and mobilize. There would probably have been a compromise--one section of the park, say, with a lowland drive along the edge instead of a skyline drive along the middle. But with dirt soon flying most of them accepted the "fait accompli" in good grace. PATC itself kept an inward-outward orientation, with side trails for wild remoteness between ridgetop and lowland. NPS tolerated these ungraded blue-blazed trails but otherwise favored inward orientation, grading very few trails down to the boundary, firmly resisting motor access and concession development except along Skyline Drive, even planning for years to build park headquarters on the ridgetop, maybe near Thornton Gap, maybe at Big Meadows. The boundary was often spoken of as the "outside boundary" (was the edge of Skyline Drive also a boundary?). Many NPS people felt the "outside boundary" as a source of trouble, if not menace, rather than as a face with maybe a smile for the neighbors and for hikers. Of course, in a sense, the boundary was "lost." Many mountain-fringe people were moving to towns or to new homes near paved roads. Old fields outside the park as well

as inside were becoming forests. Yet the inward orientation was the main influence; the friendly face was at the entrance stations on Skyline Drive. As recently as Hoskins's superintendency little thought was being given to saving visitor access to the boundary at places other than Skyline Drive entrances. Administrative (or fire) roads were seen as reaching out from Skyline Drive, not in from the boundary.[12]

A policy of doing without lodging and other concessions for motor visitors --as in Smoky--does not seem to have been considered for Shenandoah, maybe partly because Skyland was already developed and had served as a center for exploration of the proposed area. So all businesses as well as camp and picnic grounds were located on the ridgetop. The park to most Virginians was an almost-foreign land with its own laws and police, its own customs and purposes, administered by outsiders, most of whom did not stay long enough to be considered local citizens (except that the maintenance employees were mostly local). An admission fee was charged--whereas admittance to Blue Ridge Parkway and Great Smoky was free. The park turned its back, so to speak, on the eight counties in which it had been created, and nearly all of their people felt left out--despite the park's continuing efforts in "public relations." Page and Warren were exceptions in some degree, Page retaining park headquarters, after all, that faced partly toward the local community, Warren having the northern entrance of Skyline Drive with homes for a park family or two right at the edge of Front Royal. But even in these counties the majority tended to feel excluded. One result of the park's separateness (in combination with other factors) was that nearby citizens and communities, though possibly proud of the park and aware of its economic and cultural values, remained suspicious of it and were inclined to resist its initiatives--such as proposals for legislation to straighten and otherwise improve the faulty boundary.[13]

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[12] Bob Johnson, June Campbell and Miriam Reeve, personal interview, 20 July 1977, tape in my files; also my memories of conversations with Hoskins, 1964-69.

[13] See "Planners Oppose...," Page News & Courier, 9 June 1977; also "Park land payments shortchange counties," same paper, 13 Oct. 1977, referring to government failure to make payments "in lieu of taxes" on park lands (because of

Language for linkup in recently enacted Public Law 94-565--which NPS and others were trying to get straightened out!

Other factors in the half-conscious antagonism among segments of the local citizenry were referred to by Jacobsen at the end of 1976:

> While much of [the resettlement] was welcomed by the affected citizens because of the declining economy and poverty conditions which existed along much of the Blue Ridge, a number of evictions were hotly contested and violently opposed. Some resentment still remains in nearby communities, and continues to be directed toward the Park and its resources, personnel, and programs.... local rancor still exists concerning loss to the tax base; loss of traditional or desired access...; and unavailability of the area...for special privileges, resource exploitation, water impoundment, and unrestricted recreational use.[14]

The inward or central orientation of the park has had advantages, of course. Once the Skyline Drive and its connecting administrative roads existed, administration was simpler and cheaper--or so it seemed in the short view. Also, as Supt. Hoskins once said, the Skyline Drive

> turned out very well. It enables more people to see more of these mountains, to get a more complete picture of the basic situation--and without doing any great damage to natural conditions. There would have been more damage by a different system of circulation--say, different roads coming in at different places, ridges or hollows--that kind of development.[15]

Yet he leaned at times toward development on the "outside boundary"--no additional entrance roads but maybe some campgrounds and trailhead parking areas with improved hiker access upward, maybe even border stations and homes for a few rangers, maybe even an interpretive program or two.

Supt. Freeland, here in 1978 when I was far along with this writing, said:

> It would be wonderful public relations--especially local public relations --to have these little stations, even though manned only part-time, at these trailheads, important trailheads, because a sign doesn't do the job an individual does.... But you know it takes money.... Volunteers in Parks, that would be an opportunity to use them...college people...their work part of their training.... Some of those people could operate these trailhead stations.

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[14] Supt. Jacobsen, "Statement for Management," issued Jan. 1977, pp. 29-30.

[15] Hoskins, personal interview, 21 April 1969, notes in my files.

Freeland also said public relations would be much improved if some way were found to avoid charging local people a park admission fee, especially since Virginians donated the land to the federal government.[16]

I have already quoted Supt. Jacobsen as saying boundary developments will be important in the future, yet he worried that lowlands suitable for campgrounds or other developments requiring level or almost level sites might never be included in the park. I have noticed the advent of private campgrounds in the park's vicinity. Maybe if NPS provided only the permanent trailheads, with attractive access up into the park for hikers and horseback riders and with a ranger or naturalist or park volunteer often in evidence, other things needed would come as private development. In some combination anyway of government and private enterprise the park might link itself at the boundary a bit more fully into local society while also increasing its service to park visitors.

I don't suppose I've answered the question this bit of discussion started with. I want to, but hardly dare, say that the park is vastly more important than the Skyline Drive. But I think of the millions upon millions of visitors over a period of more than forty years who have felt they were coming to Skyline Drive, enjoying Skyline Drive--and I hesitate.

Is Shenandoah really one of the "crown jewels of the continent" as implied by the name "national park"? When Robert Sterling Yard found out that the Shenandoah Blue Ridge did not have 600 square miles of "virgin forest"--which he had said in his National Parks Bulletin it did--that, in fact, it had not even one square mile of virgin forest, he shifted his superlatives to Smoky. Yet he remained loyal to Shenandoah in that he still wanted it saved for "this and future generations" because its scenery was beautiful and its potential for outdoor enjoyment great. NPS directors Mather, Albright, Cammerer, Demaray,

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[16] Edward D. Freeland, personal interview, 14 May 1978, tape in my files.

Drury and Wirth were similarly loyal to Shenandoah. Ever since park establishment in 1935 I have found this "loyalty" among park personnel, conservation leaders and many visitors who come back to Shenandoah again and again. It suggests support for an underdog. It can be aggressive as if answering someone who had said Shenandoah does not belong among the crown jewels. Yet the tone does not make up for the inability of even the loyal one--who may be arguing only with himself--to tell in exactly what way Shenandoah is unique and superb.

I ~~have~~ felt similar "loyalty" in myself for many years. I think it was appropriate during the disillusionment with the "virgin forest," but surely now a less apologetic, a fresher and bolder loyalty is needed. I feel that such a bolder loyalty has long been growing in some NPS people, some outside conservationists, some park visitors--maybe in most, as in me, less than half consciously. It came through in Shenandoah wilderness hearings, carrying hints of its justification. Yet the justification has been vague and incomplete. Traditional patterns have no place to welcome it, no strong words to phrase it. So this park's superb uniqueness--which civilization is at last capable of recognizing--has not been fully expressed or fully accepted.

In studying back toward possible roots supporting a bolder loyalty I have recently been gnawed by an unexpected suspicion. Records of promotional efforts for the proposed park, at least up to enactment of authorizing legislation in May 1926, do indeed show the leaders calling the area "virgin...wilderness... primeval." But how can I or anyone know what people half a century and more ago really believed personally? Official views often differ from personal views, especially when efforts are being made to persuade the public or high officials including legislators. Could it be that Secretary Work and his park committeemen knew far more about the true condition of the Shenandoah forest than they chose to record? Were they really as "brainwashed" by Pollock's enthusiasm as they seemed? And even Pollock--could it be that when he spoke of "primeval forest"

he meant deep inside himself not what he seemed to be saying but that the essence of the primeval lived on in these mountains so powerfully that it would rise again to dominate if given the chance? Could those best informed really have been saying only what needed to be said, in view of political realities, to give the potential the opportunity to prove itself? My growing suspicion is fed partly be intuitive re-readings of Work's speech of May 25, 1925, to the national conference on state parks at Skyland--which included:

> Man's ingenuity has led him into many diverse lines of thought. One of the most remarkable products of his mathematical mind was the discovery of the chronological cycles.... They cause us to realize that our universe is laid out according to a definite plan and help establish our faith and respect for the Architect.
>
> In the most obvious operations of nature we also see this idea of the cycle manifested, as in the ebb and flow of the tide, the seasonal changes, and the budding and falling of the leaves. Man, in his small way, also finds himself running around in circles. The cycle of man's life is easy to follow and was well expressed by the great writer who said that time's glory is to show the grandmother daughters of her daughter, to make the child a man and the man a child.
>
> In our study of man's composite existence, as written in history, we find civilizations rising in splendor from out of the shadow, only to dissolve into the nothingness from whence they came, after completing their cycle of existence. Ruins are sumperimposed upon ruins, and all are now covered by the dust of the ages.
>
> .... It may be the urge of the returning cycle that is drawing our people from the conveniences of modern homes, which it has taken so long to design and build, to the more natural surroundings of the outdoors.... But whatever may be the immediate cause of this outdoor movement, back of it all may be the operation of another phase of the cycle of existence. We are attempting after a fashion to complete a cycle begun by the forebears of those in this region who struggled to overcome the forests and the wild life we now seek to conserve.[17]

I admit that the meaning is not quite clear; further, that some sentences from the same speech (as quoted in Chapter 3) tend to contradict my new

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[17] "Final Report of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission," Dept. of Interior, Government Printing Office, 1931, pp. 10-11.

suspicion. It was as if Work had been trying to tell something, through parables, that he was not quite saying. He used Jeffersonian-type terms such as "Nature's God," and I think of Benton MacKaye's effort, after quoting Jefferson, to use the park as a first reader in the civilization-and-soil cycle. I think of the long years during which NPS engaged in planned coaxing of "nature" to "return," and I think of Director Hartzog's references to Shenandoah as the "recycled park." I think of Hans Huth and C. Kenny Dale and E. Ray Schaffner and the apparent impossibility of separating the natural history of Shenandoah from the human history. I listen again to former superintendent Freeland's words, recently taped:

> One thing that we tried to put over all the time I was here [was] that this was a unique experiment in taking over an area so thoroughly used by man--burned and used and farmed--and then let it return to nature....
>
> I wonder if we're taking advantage of that important point in our interpretive programs. I wonder if they are [now].... Because it is a very important point.[18]

I arrive again at the official designation of wilderness, and I search for understanding in the 1976 draft of the "Statement for Management." First I re-read the opening section on "Purpose of the Park." It's a review of the legislative history. It quotes the old report of "splendid primeval forest... and the opportunity...to develop an animal refuge of national importance," and the separate "historic interest, the mountains looking down on valleys with their many battlefields of Revolutionary and Civil War periods, and the birth-places of many of the Presidents." The purpose section concludes:

> In summary, the legislative history of Shenandoah National Park clearly indicates that the Congress intended the Park to be a natural place--indeed to exist as a sample and vignette of the Southern Appalachian portion of primitive America. It also intended for the Park's natural, scenic, and historic resources to be used and enjoyed, without degradation, by great numbers of visitors each year.

Then I re-study the concluding section that lists "Management Objectives."

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[18] Freeland interview, 1978.

These are important, representing the situation at the end of the period assigned to this study of the park's history, so I quote them in full (supplying numbers to help in discussion):

1 To secure, through acquisition, legislative boundary adjustment, or other means, a land base that is adequate to ensure long-term perpetuation of Park resources, efficient management, and diverse opportunities for public use.

2 To the degree possible, restore extirpated native species, and to enhance the natural ecological diversity of the various ecosystems within the Park.

3 To identify, protect, preserve, and maintain the Park's cultural resources in a manner consistent with historic preservation law, management policies, and the purpose for which the Park was established.

4 To manage native Park wildlife so that it occupies its proper environmental niche.

5 To secure, through research or other means, adequate information on the Park's natural resources, cultural resources, and visitors in order to develop the best possible Park management strategies.

6 To cooperate with other Federal, state, and local agencies; private organizations and interests; and members of the public in (1) helping ensure that land uses in the Park's vicinity are compatible with long-term perpetuation of Park values; (2) helping ensure that recreational opportunities, visitor services, and public facilities in the Park and its vicinity are complementary and efficiently serve the needs of Park visitors and regional residents; (3) restoring, preserving and interpreting structures and sites of cultural significance.

7 To encourage appropriate safe, year-round use of the Park's natural, cultural, recreational, and wilderness resources in a manner that minimizes conflicts between visitor groups and adverse effects on Park resources.

8 To promote public awareness of available recreational opportunities, interpretive programs, and visitor services, and of necessary safety considerations, by providing appropriate information to the public.

9 To foster public understanding and appreciation of the historical and present role of man and natural processes in shaping the changing environment of the Blue Ridge Mountains, through innovative environmental education and interpretive programs.

10 In the Park's wilderness area, to protect and conserve the resources

and the atmosphere of solitude and to manage public activities and Park operations in accordance with the requirements of the Wilderness Act of 1964 and wilderness management policies.

11 To ensure that Park and concession facilities are the minimum necessary to provide for efficient Park administration and essential services for Park visitors, that existing facilities determined to be necessary are maintained at a high standard, and that needed new facilities are constructed on a timely basis.

12 To make available unimpeded vistas from the Skyline Drive and from developed areas and trails so that the varied landscapes, with their respective patterns of natural environments and cultural alterations, can be viewed, enjoyed, and understood.

13 To encourage and coordinate a cooperating Natural History Association in its creation, production, and distribution of educational and interpretive materials which will supplement the Park's interpretive program.

14 To manage the Park in a manner that ensures efficient and effective use of available manpower and funding, conforms to all relevant legal and policy requirements, promotes the greatest possible conservation of energy, encourages employee growth and development, and ensures a safe working environment for Park employees.

All that is necessary is probably in these fourteen objectives. Number 1 (land and boundary) deserves high priority in administrative importance and time urgency. Beyond that I have trouble understanding the order of arrangement and seem to see a confusion between purpose and method. Numbers 2, 9, 12, and the first part of 10 have to do with purpose, though manner of accomplishment may enter in secondary role, whereas all the rest have to do with methods or tools. Number 2 is easily traced to the opening section on "Purpose of the Park" as it connects with "animal refuge" and "natural place." The first part of number 10 (wilderness) may be taken as connecting with "sample and vignette... of primitive America."

But numbers 9 and 12, as I see them, are statements of purpose that do not connect with the "Purpose" section or come from the park's legislative history. They have grown gradually from the park's own realities, from roots seen or

touched by FDR, MacKaye and others--and, I now suspect, by Secretary Work. They point to justification of the bolder loyalty and respect the park ~~mmm~~ deserves. For Shenandoah is a crown jewel of a kind that has become immeasurably precious in the last half of the twentieth century and will be even more precious in centuries to come. It is the superb example of a living cycle from wilderness through diverse and heavy exploitation to wild nature again--yet wild nature interrelated anew with humanity, permeated and protected and enjoyed by humanity, existing as it is and will be primarily because of a historic event of far-reaching significance that is but beginning to win the standing it merits, the democratic decision to reverse here on a large scale the supposedly inexorable thrust of civilization toward ever-increasing material exploitation. The park's all-embracing purpose in this era seems clearly suggested already--"to foster public understanding and appreciation of the...role of man and natural processes in shaping the changing environment"--whether "through innovative environmental education and interpretive programs," or through "unimpeded vistas" revealing "the varied landscapes, with their respective patterns of natural environments and cultural alternatives," or in other ways yet to be worked out.

A strong definition of purpose along this line, fully thought through and officially recognized, seems justified by the history as I have traced it--and would reveal in Shenandoah the common ground of "culture" and "nature," clarifying elements and interrelationships that confirm in a fresh yet valid way the eminent worthiness of this so-puzzling national park. As Dr. Hoffman put in in 1976:

> The story of the Park stretches back geologically to the formation of the Appalachians and culturally to the population of this country by waves of immigrants first out of North Asia and then from Western Europe. It is our hope that that story and the lessons it teaches all of us can be told to more people through the years and influence the attitudes of Americans toward appreciation of their rich and diverse cultural backgrounds in the same way the Park fosters the appreciation of our natural resources. In fact, we believe that culture cannot be divorced from nature and that the two concepts, taken together, will lend a new strength to the public

mission of the National Park Service.

> .... Together the study of man and the study of the environment can provide solutions to some of the most pressing problems of our age--the search for identity and the burning desire to know why things are the way they are.... We hope that this report is a beginning of a new trend toward the awareness of both our natural and our cultural resources and will eventually lead to the development of a new attitude...that stresses the importance of man living within and not divorced from nature.[19]

Though the statement may sound "heavy," the trend and attitude (not really so new but needing firmer recognition) have proved harmonious with present modes of enjoyment. As Supt. Hoskins pointed out when saying the park story involved our heritage, both "natural" and "historic," involved the environment, 'all

> recreation is...suitable and encouraged when connected with the basic purpose [of the park] or, in the broadest view, when it doesn't interfere... with the basic purpose. We're eager to have as many friends of the park as possible.... [This] is of long-range importance in continuing to carry out the basic purpose.[20]

The diverse modes of Shenandoah enjoyment--from backcountry camping in regenerated wilderness, through study and enjoyment of wild plants and wild creatures, to seeing the people-in-nature landscapes from the Skyline Drive--fit the earth-man purpose that has been growing here since the park's beginnings. The diversity of action and interest would almost certainly increase, not decrease, through official recognition of the park not merely as a "recycled" area but as the world's greatest example of an area continuing to "recycle" portions of itself.

Such things as management fires, vista cutting and interpretation of a wastewater plant would be more obviously appropriate than they are now. The meaning of Corbin Cabin and Jones Mountain Cabin (also reconditioned by PATC as a hikers' shelter) would increase. Qualifications of Big Meadows and Patterson Field to be included in the "historic zone" would no longer have to be argued.

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[19] Michael A. Hoffman et al, "Man in the Blue Ridge," Department of Anthropology, U. of Va., report to NPS, p. 420.

[20] Hoskins interview, April 1969.

They would qualify without question for a "people-nature zone." Other areas that, in the opinion of Freeland among others, should have been kept open, not forested, might also qualify. If fire does not maintain the meadows well enough, arranged grazing might help--whether by domestic cattle as at Cades Cove in Smoky (but preferably a breed more likely than black Angus to have grazed there before) or by elk or bison (which Director Mather once hoped to bring back to Shenandoah) or by beaver (which have recently created and are maintaining small clearings in the park)--while park visitors enjoy and learn. There might be a bit of people-nature zone in a hollow, corresponding to a mountain homestead, with a team of specially qualified volunteers authorized to garden there in the old ways and even to use selected trees of the zone to build a log cabin in the mountain pattern--if they would visit informatively with park visitors who came. Or someone--Freeland suggested in 1978--might operate a moonshine still:

> You know there were just lots of stills in the hollows, where they made illegal liquor, and you know we raided quite a few.... It would seem to me that something like that should be done in a living history program.... I've thought about it a good bit, and there's no reason why it couldn't be done. You don't have to distill liquor to be living history--just plain water.... You take the steam off the hot water and run it through the coil and condense it.

Freeland also suggested for living history "a blacksmith shop in operation... or have a little camp set up and the women...making corn bread with a wood fire... and all sort of local industries." Other programs, I think, might emerge within the limits of the park purpose, with small acreages allotted--"in a manner that minimizes conflicts between visitor groups and adverse effects on Park resources"--to show, say, some appropriate action at an Indian site (what Indians once did, even gardening and maintaining and creating clearings--that could be "vistas"--or archeological digging in progress), or for different modern people-nature doings in addition to wastewater purification. In many situations the almost permanent ruins--such as of old chimneys or stone walls--would tell their own parts of

the park story with little or no help. Supt. Jacobsen said--when I asked about old buildings:

> I think the only thing left to us at this point is stabilization of a few selected ruins.... I think that we're going to have a greater appreciation of the human culture associated with the mountains, but I don't see any great tangible movement toward the remaining objects.... they will continue to melt--except for the possibility of using them in self-guiding trails with a little bit of stabilization. We'll probably do more in literature than on the ground.[21]

Even if the people-nature (recycling) orientation is not officially recognized as all-embracing policy in Shenandoah, it will almost certainly continue to grow stronger and to inch forward in time. What is still usually called the "historic" has reached quite generally now in the park to the mid-1930s. Skyline Drive is being discussed not just as a recreational facility but as a "cultural resource." Remnants of the CCC era may be saved. Sewer construction has been shifted to save the "Judd Garden Site at Skyland" for people-nature interpretation. The wastewater interpretation plan shows this orientation reaching the up-to-the-minute present. Chief naturalist Dennis Carter says his "primary function is to orient the visitor to the Park with the environment." One of the ideas for the Pollocks' old Massanutten Cottage is to use it as a "home-made" visitor center with emphasis on concessioners' roles in the park. Such channels extend already, by implication, into the people-nature future.[22]

I believe I have answered the question that launched this last discussion, but in case there is any doubt here is a summary of my opinion: As a strictly "natural" area this park is remarkably beautiful and intriguing but hardly a "crown jewel"; as a strictly "historic" area it is not even the equal of other areas within a few miles of its boundary; but as a wilderness-to-wilderness, people-nature area it is a "crown jewel" without an equal anywhere.

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[21] Jacobsen interview, 1977.

[22] In regard to Skyline Drive, Laura E. Soulliere, NPS cultural resource specialist and planning team member, personal conversation, 21 April 1978; Carter, "Valley Talks" by Dorothy Noble Smith, Page News & Courier, 1977, undated clipping in my files; Massanutten Cottage, Gerald W. Sielaff, NPS interpretive specialist, memo to regional director, 5 July 1974, SNP files.