

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Mount McKinley National Park.

File Olym-16.

SUPERINTENDANTS MONTHLY

REPORT

for

September, 1925.

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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
MOUNT MCKINLEY NATIONAL PARK

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

MCKINLEY PARK, ALASKA

The Director,
National Park Service,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir;

The following is respectfully submitted as my report for the month of September, 1925;

GENERAL STATEMENT

THE MOUNT MCKINLEY NATIONAL PARK was set aside by Act of Congress, February 26th, 1917, (Sec. 5716 R.S. Stat. 938) as a pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people, and placed under the exclusive control of the Secretary of the Interior, who was authorized to make such rules and regulations as he deemed necessary for the care and maintenance of the Park.

By Act of Congress, January 30th, 1922, the Park boundaries were extended eastward to the 149th meridian.

The Park is situated principally in the south-eastern central Alaska. Its dimensions are about one hundred miles north-east and south-west, and an average of twenty-six and one-half miles wide north and south, giving it an area of 2,645 square miles, or 1,692,800 acres.

Its altitude is eighteen hundred to twenty thousand three hundred feet, which is the summit of Mount McKinley.

The Park headquarters are now located at Mile 2, on the Park highway, east of McKinley Park Station, which is near the entrance to the Park.

DAILY REPORT OF CONDITIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Sept. 1 Rangers Nyberg and Armstrong working on superintendants cabin. Clerk Mackie in the office.

I assisted the men on the superintendants cabin also made a trip to the railroad for mail and freight.

Col. Steese returned from his trip over the park highway but did not stop here but proceeded on his way to Fairbanks.

Received a short visit from Mr. H. M. Gillman, Jr., chief clerk of the Alaska Railroad, in Washington, D.C. Mr. Gillman accompanied Supt.

Hawley Sterling to the end of the park road. They will return tomorrow.

Sept. 2

Rangers Nyberg and Armstrong on patrol into the park and along the northern boundary.

Clerk Mackie and myself in the office on accounts and annual report.

Supt. Hawley Sterling and Mr. Gillman, returned from their trip over the road and Mr. Gillman took the train for Fairbanks.

Supt. Sterling states that considerable graveling will be done on the road this Fall also that the road will be graded to Sanctuary River and bridge completed, at that point.

Sept. 3

Rangers Nyberg and Armstrong returned from patrol. No evidences of hunting. They report having seen 2 coyotes, and they were very close to them and are sure they are not mistaken about their species. It is hoped that these animals do not get a hold on this country.

Mr. Stephan Capps, Geologist, returned from summer in the park on official business. Mr. Capps states, that the report that Guide Gibson has been circulating, that large numbers of park caribou are dying from some disease, is not quite true, as in his summer wanderings through the western portion of the park, he observed only 6 dead animals, which is a very small percentage of the large park herds.

Mr. Thos Marquam, of the Transportation Company, returned from a trip through the park, to the Kantishna country via Wonder Lake, to observe conditions in the park relative to transportation problems. He is more enthused over the park, than ever and predicts a wonderful future for it. For, as he stated, the farther one goes into the park, the more wonderful and interesting it becomes. During his trip Mr. Marquam has observed several interesting camp sites for future operations. In extending their camps into the park, they will confer with me, in the near future.

Clerk Mackie and myself were in the office also hauled coal from the railroad. Mr. Stephan Capps visited us in the evening.

Ground squirrels at lower Savage River ranger cabin are becoming a nuisance, as they have destroyed the bed mattress and quilts and the pots and pans were all over the floor.

Sept. 4

Rangers working on the superintendants cabin. Mackie and myself were in the office.

Mr. James Galen, president of the Richardson Highway Transportation Company, who bought out the Kennedy interest in the Park Transportation Co., arrived today and paid us a visit. Mr. Marquam is going to take Mr. Galen through the park to Wonder Lake to observe the conditions for next season's operations.

Sept. 5

Rangers working on superintendants cabin. Mackie and myself were in the office. I also assisted in the work on the cabin.

Sept. 6

Rangers cleaning up their quarters and caring for the stock.

Mackie and I drove out to the divide between Savage River and Sanctuary River and walked to Sanctuary River. Three crews are working on this section, two on the road and one carpenter crew on the bridge. A large portion of this section of the road is graded and the material consists, to a large extent, of a good grade of gravel, especially on the higher portions of the road, with here and there some very soft spots and fills to be made across the numerous draws. A good part of the lower portion of the road is soft and will require considerable gravelling. It is doubtful if this section of the road will be open to automobile traffic the coming season and Savage Camp will be the end of the auto traffic. From the divide between Savage and Sanctuary Rivers, one gets a beautiful view of the surrounding country and of Mount McKinley also the northern hills from the railroad to Sanctuary River, were well stocked with sheep also with several bands of caribou, plainly seen.

Sept. 7th

Rangers working on superintendents cabin. Mackie and I were in the office. I also put in part time on the work on the cabin. Mackie and I also salvaged and hauled up windows and doors from old quarters.

Mr. Stephan Capps called at headquarters for a short time. He expects to go south tomorrow.

Sept. 8

Rangers working on superintendents cabin. Mackie and I were in the office also we assisted on cabin. Mackie had drawn plans, of the cabin, to help the rangers in their work.

Sept. 9

Rangers working on superintendents cabin. Mackie and I in office and we also assisted on the cabin, at times, when needed to raise logs, etc.

Sept. 10

Rangers working on superintendents cabin. Mackie and I assisting their work and also in the office on accounts and report.

Sept. 11

Rangers working on superintendents cabin. Mackie and I were in the office on accounts and finished annual report also received report that one of our horses were badly mired, south of headquarters. Mackie and I found them alright.

Sept. 12

Rained very hard today. Rangers worked, in the morning, in repair-dog hardness in preparation for winter. In the afternoon worked on the superintendents cabin.

Mackie and I in the office on accounts, proposals and contracts and statement to the Governor of Alaska.

Sept. 13

Rained very hard today. Rangers cleaning up around their quarters. Mackie and I worked in the office part time and made drain to carry off water.

Sept. 14

Rangers working on the superintendants cabin.

Mackie and I were in the office also assisted on cabin. It rained very near all the night. One of the road crews broke camp for this reason and on their way out of the park. In the evening, we went down to old quarters to look over the possibilities of salvaging lumber for new quarters.

Sept. 15

Rangers working on superintendants cabin. There was $\frac{1}{2}$ " ice on the water this morning. Mackie was in the office today, I worked on my cabin, excavating for the cellar.

Sept. 16

Rangers working on superintendants cabin.

Mackie and I finished statement to the Governor of Alaska. Also we went over the railroad charges for transportation and communication service which we have no funds to pay and which will have to be taken out of other allotments. These charges are going to cause us considerable inconvenience as it will run us short of both dog and horse feed, which condition is helped along by the high prevailing prices, this year.

Mr. James Galen and Mr. Thos. Marquand returned from an extended trip into the park, looking over transportation and camp possibilities. They stopped at headquarters to talk the situation over. They do not think it advisable to move Savage Camp to the end of the road, next season, as the road ends at Sanctuary River and there are more points of interest out of Savage Camp than at the end of the road (Sanctuary River), even though the road is completed to that point next spring. Igloo Creek, they believe, would be the logical place for the next move. They are both very enthused over the future possibilities of the park transportation, as on their trip to Wonder Lake, they saw many things which will interest the visitor and make his trip worth while. We also talked over the present road survey along the Teklanika River which we all believe should be changed and will recommend such change to Supt. Sterling.

Exceedingly high wind this morning which partly blew down large spruce trees, which were leaning over superintendants tent. Ropes and braces were put on them to keep them from falling on tent and were then chopped down. Their roots, having been partly chopped by the road crews, weakened them and caused this condition.

Sept. 17

Big wind blew down number of trees on our telephone line, breaking it in five places. Mackie and I put in the morning repairing the line. In the afternoon, we tore down lumber blacksmith shop, at old H.Q. but could not haul it up as Hines Creek was too high. Will be lower, possibly, tomorrow.

Rangers working on the superintendants cabin.

Sept. 18

Repaired teleporary telephone line; the road commission could not locate the brak. I went out with the cut-in set and repaired the break. Also hauled load of lumber and old roofing material from old H.Q. Railroad is tied with slides - no trains.

Mr. Marquess and Mr. Galen visited headquarters again today, and talked over next season's improvements in transportation and care of the visitors. They believe it will be necessary to expend \$25,000 to \$30,000 on the enterprise next season, but before doing so, they would like to be assured of a much longer term of permit; one or possibly both of them will possibly go to Washington D.C. during this coming winter and will take the matter up directly with the Service.

Sept. 19

Rangers working on the superintendents cabin and finished their work on it. I will do the finishing-up myself, as I wish the rangers to start work on the clerks cabin, for the nights are getting cold.

Mackie and I hauled lumber and windows from old H.Q. and put balance of time in the office.

Sept. 20

Rangers cleaning up around their quarters.

Clerk Mackie fixing up around his tent, to make it more comfortable for these cold nights.

I worked on my cabin in the morning then made a trip to old H.Q. for materials.

Sept. 21

Rangers clearing ground and putting in foundation for clerks cabin. Mackie in office also worked on cellar for his house.

I worked on my cabin, putting in the floor.

Sept. 22

Rangers working on clerks cabin. Mackie in office. I worked on my cabin.

Sept. 23

Rangers working on clerks cabin. Mackie in office and also working on cellar of his house.

I worked on my cabin.

Sept. 24

Rangers working on the clerks cabin. Mackie in office also assisting on the work on his cabin. I worked on my cabin.

Sept. 25

Rangers working on the clerks cabin. Mackie in office also assisting on the work on his cabin. I worked on my cabin.

Sept. 26

Rangers working on clerks cabin. Mackie in office and also assisting on the work on his cabin. I worked on my cabin and hauled load of lumber from old H.Q., which was salvaged from the old feed storehouse.

Sept. 27

Rangers working on their own quarters today and caring for the stock. I worked on my cabin also Mackie and I hauled some lumber and old roofing paper from old H.Q.

Sept. 28

Rangers working on clerks cabin. Mackie in office part time and part time assisting the men in the work on his cabin.

I worked on my cabin. There is considerable work to be done before the cabin is habitable. Floors to finish, partitions to put up, covered back-porch, install furnace, all of which will take considerable time.

Sept. 29

Rangers working on clerks cabin, with Mackie assisting them. I worked on my cabin.

Sept. 30

All personnel working on the cabins, in construction.

ADMINISTRATION

No changes were made in the park personnel during the month which consisted of a superintendant, clerk and two rangers. Mrs F.L. Karstens making a third ranger, at \$1.00 per month, to give her a legal status for assisting the superintendant in his work.

Though there is much office work to be done, the ~~whole~~ whole personnel, in so far as possible, devoted the greater portion of their time, in the construction of log cabins for living quarters. This is very necessary as the personnel must be housed in warm comfortable cabins before the extreme cold weather sets in. During the month, the weather was cold enough to make it very uncomfortable, living tents. As soon as the cabins are habitable, the one assigned to it, will move in and each one will do the finishing work on his own cabin. In this way, the rangers will be relieved for patrol duty, much sooner.

CONSTRUCTION

During the month, the superintendents log-cabin, 22½ ft x 31½ ft., outside measurements, was completed to the extent that he could do the finishing work himself relieving the rangers for construction for the clerks cabin, 19 ft. x 21 ft. outside measurements, which is about 50% completed, at this time, at least as far as rangers will be employed on it.

Though the superintendant and clerk will move into their cabins there will be considerable work to be done on them to make them comfortable for the winter. The main problem is to relieve the rangers for patrol duty as soon as possible.

ROAD CONSTRUCTION

During the early part of the month, three road crews were at work on the section between Savage River and Sanctuary River. Two road crews were gravelling and grading and the bridge crew were working on the Sanctuary River bridge. By the end of the month, most of all the gravelling was discontinued,

and only a small remained on the bridge work and for construction of log-cabin at Sanctuary River, Mile 22.

The section of road between Savage and Sanctuary Rivers is far from being completed though a good portion of this section of road, is through a fine grade of gravel-hills. There are several long stretches of very soft "mirey" ground, which has to be drained, ~~matted~~ matted and covered with gravel. Also many of the cuts, on the hill-sides are very narrow and will have to be widened considerably also a short section on Sanctuary flat has not been graded yet. It is believed that this section of the road will not be in shape for auto travel the early part of year in 1926, though it is hoped that the section between Savage River and the summit of the divide will be open to auto traffic. As from this summit, there is an excellent view of the surrounding and Mount McKinley; at any time, a large amount of game can be seen from this divide.

TRANSPORTATION

Though there was only 1 visitor entered the park, during the month, the dismantling of camps commenced on Sept. 5th. Several tents were left standing until late in the month for the accomodation of possible visitors and also for the accomodation of Mr. Marquam and Mr. Galen, who were still on an extended trip into the park, getting data for their future operations. They are planning on an extensive development of the park transportation and camps, if a satisfactory long-time concession can be secured to justify them in this expenditure. I am sure that is the Trans. Co., puts such ~~motor~~ motor equipment in service in the park, as Mr. Galen has on his Richardson Highway route from Fairbanks to the coast, it will be very satisfactory to the Service and to the public, which is their intention when conditions justify same.

PATROL

The large amount of work necessary in constructing quarters at the new headquarters site, has interfered to a considerable extent, with the patrol work. Several patrol trips were made by the rangers on which they found no hunting on the boundaries or in the park.

WILD ANIMALS

Many sheep and caribou were in evidence during the month. Though the large run of caribou has not started, it usually does so at the end of the month or the beginning of October.

Reports of numbers of wolves having been seen and heard, were received during the last 30 days. If it is advisable, some of them will be killed.

Respectfully yours,

Henry P. Karstens,
Superintendent.