

The Forest before the Park:

The Historic Context of the Trail System of Olympic National Park, 1898-1938

Most national parks began as national forests. Although the first national parks predated the first national forests, only a few parks--namely Yellowstone and Yosemite--were carved from the public domain in the nineteenth century. The history of many national parks, then, extends back to their years as national forests. In this sense, parks and forests had a common past, one that can be traced to the Forest Reserve Act of 1891 which empowered the president to establish forest reserves in the late 1890s--the source of nearly all of today's national forests and thus the source of nearly all of the national parks established since the turn of the century. The most common story about this common ancestry is the considerable controversy the transfer of national forest lands to national parks has raised. The transfer pitted two conservation philosophies against each other--one whose advocates believed in the preservation of the nation's remaining wild lands and the other whose advocates believed in the use of those lands. It was a battle represented primarily by the two land management agencies responsible for caring for the public domain: the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service. In this regard, Olympic National Park was no exception. In fact its creation in 1938 serves as one of the best examples of the two bureaus' conflicting management philosophies. The Forest Service adhered to the management belief that forests should be used, albeit wisely and efficiently, for a wide variety of uses, such as timber harvests, mining, grazing, and recreation. The Park Service, on the other hand, followed a management philosophy centered on preserving the nation's scenic wonders, the last remnants of original America. The establishment of Olympic brought to a close a hard-fought battle by preservationists to preserve the virgin forests and spectacular glacier-clad peaks of the Olympic Range. Only as a national park, they believed, could this wilderness be saved.

The history of forest development prior to the park's establishment, however, has not received the same extensive treatment as the creation of the park itself. Forty years of federal land management preceded the arrival of the national park, and for most of that time, the Forest Service managed the region. When the Park Service took over, then, it inherited what had been a working forest, complete with its infrastructure of ranger stations, campgrounds, roads, and trails and their related facilities. These developments reflected an administrative focus that was largely

different from that of a national park. The Forest Service was commodity oriented and strove to regulate--but promote at the same time--the use of forests by eliminating wasteful and destructive practices through scientific management. These were the main tenets of conservation guiding the bureau whose origins lay in the Progressive era. Prior to World War II, the Forest Service practiced custodial management of the nation's forests. The bureau placed the greatest administrative emphasis on protecting forests from fire, and meeting the wide range of demands from local communities, industry, and the nation for timber, water storage, and range for live stock, as well as opportunities for homesteading, mining, and recreation. These concerns shaped the built environment of the forests. It was a legacy of forest management that remained imprinted on the landscape of the nation's forests like Olympic well after they became national parks.

As one component of that legacy, the forest's trail system reflected both the administrative aspect of forest development as well as its recreational counterpart. This study will focus on the planning and development of Olympic National Forest's trails within the larger context of forest management through several periods. The first is from 1898 to 1905, the years the Olympic Forest Reserve was established and managed by the Department of the Interior. The second is from 1905 to 1916, the first decade of Forest Service management, years that produced the first trail plan. The third is from 1916 to 1933, years of modest improvements and a comprehensive forest plan for recreation. And the fourth is from 1933 to 1938, years of significant advances in forest developments, based on previous plans, with the arrival of the New Deal work programs.

The Olympic Forest Reserve was created on March 1, 1898. It covered some 2.2 million acres, a government report described, of the "high and broken Olympic Mountains...a region of steep and jagged mountains," clad with permanent snow fields and glaciers. Its forests were equally, if not more, spectacular. Here was "the largest and most valuable body of timber belonging to the nation; and here is the only part of the United States where the forest unmarked

by fire or the axe still exists over a great area in its primeval splendor.”¹ The creation of forest reserves like Olympic, ranked high among the most significant conservation achievements in the nation’s history because the reserves protected the nation’s timber supply from the abuses of private interests. However the reserves themselves were poorly managed. The General Land Office, within the Department of the Interior, was charged with their care and was notoriously corrupt; its field offices were understaffed and funding for managing the reserves was scarce. Reserve rangers contended with settlement claims, among other duties, but their main focus was on protecting the reserves from timber trespass and fire.

This was essentially true of the General Land Office’s management of the Olympic Reserve. In 1903, a General Land Office (GLO) inspector described the poor state of affairs concerning the reserve’s administration. There were only a handful of rangers to patrol this vast entire area, and most of them were off dealing with agricultural claims in the lightly settled drainages of the Hoh, Quinault, and Elwha rivers, among others. Moreover, the inspector observed, the Olympic Reserve “had suffered more than any other in the state from lack of supervision.” Early supervisors were dishonest, lazy, and incompetent. Currently, there was no supervisor, and the acting supervisor had no time to make field inspections. To underscore the seriousness of the situation, he asserted that this was actually an improvement over the past.²

The forest inspector also suggested that the reason for this situation was not entirely bureaucratic but due in large part to the physical environment. The “peculiar topography and remoteness of the reserve makes proper patrol absolutely impossible at present.” This description provides perhaps the first commentary on how federal officials wanted to tame the wilds of the Olympics in order to oversee them in an orderly and efficient manner. One of the main problems was access. “The Olympic Mountains,” the inspector continued, “have almost no trails in them and are exceedingly rough and inaccessible.” These conditions pressed the main patrol activities to the perimeter of the reserve, where some roads and the occasional trail skirted the reserve’s

¹ Quoted in [Guy Finger], *Olympic National Park: An Administrative History* (Seattle: National Park Service, 1992), 22. According to Finger, the reserve, while recommended in 1897, was not officially created until the following year.

² Forest Inspector to the Secretary of the Interior, February 26, 1903, Record Group (RG) 95, Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Regional Office files, box 3, file: Olympic Forest Reserve--Inspection, 1903, National Archives--Pacific Northwest Region (NA-PNR), 2.

boundaries. In some places, trails penetrated drainages on the southern and western edges, but not to any great extent. Nevertheless, this situation had its positive side, he believed, since the reserve's rugged character was universal, restricting most human activities to its edge and thus where most of the fires and trespasses occurred. In the long run, though, the reserve would require a better system for transportation. The current "routes are often roundabout and consume too much time." They also required rangers to spend valuable time and energy opening trails outside the reserve just to reach it. Finally, the inspector concluded that the "necessity of trail work is obvious," but its solution was in doubt, since it required "more assistance from the Department (of the Interior) than has been accorded."³ (Nor would any likely be forthcoming.)

The forest inspector painted a rather bleak picture of the early reserve's management and stressed at the same time the importance of a system of trails to improve the situation. Federal land managers inherited an informal network of trails leading through principal areas in the rugged and often jungle-like conditions of the Olympics. These pathways had evolved over long periods of time, the product of countless years of Native American use during their seasonal trips up the valleys and into the high country of the peninsula. The peninsula's wildlife, especially the range's herds of elk, also wore visible trails along the rivers through dense forest cover and up into the alpine zone. Other path breakers appeared in the 1880s and 1890s when the peninsula's first European explorers and settlers blazed trails through the Olympic country, though often these, too, followed established routes.⁴

In general, then, the trails of the early forest reserve were the product of private efforts by settlers homesteading on the peninsula or timber speculators attempting to harvest the region's massive trees under primitive conditions. Naturally, these pathways aided forest officers in the administration of the reserve but only coincidentally. And though reserve managers did develop some trails or improve existing routes, such as with the construction of the trail along the southern shore of Lake Crescent in 1903, these projects reflected immediate needs rather than an overall plan for a trail system. They also reflected the meager funding available to forest officers for making improvements of any kind. Besides funding, the peninsula's seasons foretold of slow

³ Ibid., 2-3.

⁴ Gail Evans, Historic Resource Study: Olympic National Park (Seattle: National Park Service, 1983), 5-50.

progress in this area, since the summer ranger force spent its time entirely on fire patrol and heavy winter snows prevented any trail work from being accomplished. Under the best conditions, one ranger may have time to carry out trail projects, but he was "almost helpless," the forest inspector concluded, building trail "in a region where logs are so large."⁵

A harsh environment and limited financial means were the main reasons why foresters undertook so many improvements to meet immediate needs rather than long-range administrative goals during the forest reserve years. This changed, however, in 1905 when Congress transferred the responsibility for managing the reserves from the General Land Office to the Forest Service. In one sense, the transfer was a simple matter of a new government agency overseeing the nation's forests. In another sense, the transfer solidified the protection of the nation's forests. A federal agency, dedicated solely to them, would now control their use. And use would be central to their existence. (In 1907, Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot managed to have legislation passed changing the names of the reserves to national forests so that there would be no confusion as to their purpose.) Moreover, the transfer of the reserves to the Forest Service ushered in an important change in their administration. They would be managed by career professionals rather than political appointees who would oversee the forests using the conservation principles set down by Pinchot himself, one of the key figures in the Progressive conservation movement.⁶

Pinchot believed that the nation's forests should be managed wisely and efficiently for their continued use by the American people. In 1905, he set down this management philosophy, which came to be known as multiple use, for the administration of the forest reserves. In this regard: "it must be clearly borne in mind that all land is to be devoted to its most productive use for the permanent good of the whole people, and not for the temporary benefit of individuals or companies. All the resources of the forest reserves are for use, and this use must be brought about in a thoroughly prompt and businesslike manner, under such restrictions only as will insure the permanence of these resources." Proper management, in other words, could ensure the perpetual supply of forest resources for the nation, a point of view summed up in Pinchot's

32. ⁵ Forest Inspector to Secretary of the Interior, February 26, 1903. See also [Fringer], Olympic National Park.

⁶ Harold K. Steen, The U.S. Forest Service: A History (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976), 98-99.

famous slogan "the greatest good of the greatest number in the long run."⁷

Pinchot set down his management regulations and instructions in the Use Book, so named, naturally, for the purpose of the forests. A pocket-sized volume, the Use Book could be easily distributed to forest supervisors and rangers to carry with them on their daily duties, and in doing so, provide the control and standards necessary for a decentralized agency. In a much simpler time in the federal bureaucracy, Pinchot's Use Book served as a strategic plan for the fledgling bureau.⁸ In this respect, the Use Book recorded the first Forest Service policy statement about the importance of permanent improvements in the broader scheme of forest management. Roads, trails, fire lines, telephone lines, and ranger cabins and stations, Pinchot noted, were essential elements for forest use and protection. They would be part of the overall administrative infrastructure in the management of the forests. In this respect, a complete road and trail system would "render for use the resources of the forest reserve," "make them accessible for travel," and "protect them."⁹

Pinchot placed a great emphasis on the value of trails. The need for them on the reserves, he wrote, "was great." "There is urgent need of more and better trails on most of the forest reserves. They are of capital importance, because they are not only the best insurance against fire, but the means by which the reserves can be seen and used." The chief forester recommended that foresters first plan out a whole system "or scheme" of trails for the entire forest before they begin with improvements. Those trails, he stated, that would provide the most immediate benefits for protection and patrol would be given top priority. But he also recommended that in locating and constructing these trails that forest officers take into account that the general public would use them as well. Trails as a means to patrolling and protecting the forests were related to other improvements as well. Telephone lines, for example, bore a direct relation to trails and their primary purpose of fire control; the lines would run along the trails and link supervisors' headquarters with rangers' headquarters and lookouts, "so that fires may be reported and other

⁷ Steen, The U.S. Forest Service, 78-79.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, The Use of the National Forest Reserves: Regulations and Instructions (hereafter cited as Use Book), July 1, 1905, 105.

business of the reserve managed expeditiously.”¹⁰

Pinehot envisioned a system of roads, trails, telephone lines, ranger stations, and fire lookouts all working as an integrated whole to meet the larger goal of forest use and protection. But it was a vision that would take time to materialize. Congressional appropriations for forest improvements were not nearly enough, and though the bureau sought cooperation with local and state authorities, this approach, too, proved to be only partially effective. Nevertheless, on Olympic National Forest, the chief forester's grand scheme influenced the gradual development of more trails, roads, and other structures in the forest.

These were modest improvements. In the forest's first decade of management, forest officers continued to build trails and other structures in response to need rather than an overall plan. Several projects illustrate this point. First, in 1905 ranger Chris Morgenroth and other forest rangers built a horse trail to Sol Duc Hot Springs to accommodate the rising numbers of visitors heading to this resort. Second, for similar reasons forest crews completed a twenty-eight mile foot trail along the south shore of Lake Crescent, connecting to Sappho, as the popularity of this area grew with the “back to nature movement.” Third, as more people were drawn to the Lake Crescent country and resorts like Olympic Hot Springs for scenery, relaxation, and fishing, the Forest Service in turn built a ranger station here, known as the Storm King Ranger Station, in 1906 to better manage this part of the forest. It would prove to be only the beginning of the bureau's interest in improving the lake country for outdoor recreation. Fourth, in 1907 Morgenroth led a Forest Service crew that built a horse trail up the South Fork of the Skokomish River. The idea and funding for this trail came from a timber baron who wanted to take his friends into the high country to fish and hunt. As it was originally conceived, the trail was to connect to the Quinault River and down to Lake Quinault, a section which was not finished until five years later with Forest Service funds. As suggested by this project, trail construction in Olympic National Forest often depended on the direction or influence of private interests. And fifth, another example of this was the role the Seattle Mountaineers played in financing trail construction up the Elwha River in 1907. The Elwha offered one of the most direct routes into

¹⁰ Use Book, 105, 107.

the Olympic high country and the group's goal was to improve the primitive pathway established by early settlers and others up the river so their climbing expeditions could reach the interior of the Olympics with greater speed and safety.¹¹

By 1909, these kinds of projects had met their immediate goals but they had still fallen short of achieving the long-range improvements Pinchot and other bureau leaders thought necessary for forest management. As a forest inspector reported that year, the local forest officers on the Olympic Forest were competent enough and had made some advances in the overall administration of the forest. He commented, for example, on the high quality of workmanship in the Storm King and Duckabush ranger stations. But he underscored the "great need" for "a more complete system of trails. Travel is exceedingly slow and tedious." To this point, the service had concentrated its efforts, mostly, on carrying out road and trail projects for settlers in the Quinault and Queets valleys, which would be finished well enough after another year. While it made sense to assist these settlers, since it fulfilled the bureau's mission to aid local residents, the time for better trails was at hand.¹²

The first step taken towards planning a system of trails for Olympic National Forest came that same year with the arrival of Forest Supervisor Raymond E. Benedict. Benedict apparently took to heart earlier inspection reports, or at least was of the mind that the rugged interior of the Olympics was naturally off limits to people and therefore harm. He proposed (and mapped out) a system of trails that would belt the forest approximately on its boundary lines. His plan seems to have been inspired by the previous forest supervisor, Hanson, who believed the trail system should run along the section lines of the forest's boundaries and began work on the system by making notches in trees along the boundary in the "jungle," an approach long since abandoned. Benedict's plan was never fully implemented. The trail work, though begun, went unsupervised; the design of the trails was, as one forest officer recalled, "fancy in places (hand rail on puncheon for instance) and the costs were very high." Moreover, it seemed that Benedict had little idea of the country through which the trails would run and never inspected them on the ground once

¹¹ Chris Morgenroth, *Footprints in the Olympics: An Autobiography*, Katherine Morgenroth Flaherty, ed., (Fairfield: Ye Galleon Press, 1991), 83, 93-103, 110-111.

¹² [Olympic Forest Inspection Report], February 1909, RG 95, Regional Forester, Inspections, National Forests, 1904-1916, box 3, file: Olympic, 1909, NA-PNR, 19-20.

built.¹³

Forest inspection reports supported this view. Most of these new trails were poorly located and conceived. As in the case of the East Humptulips-Wynooche Trail, its location, grade, and construction reflected a lack of understanding of the natural conditions and--the bottom line--the costs of such an undertaking. The grade of the trail was too steep, its tread too wide. The main problem was the kind of trail forest workers were building; they were trails for horses, an expensive undertaking, when foot trails would meet management needs for fire patrol and the like at around half the cost. Foot trails would not only provide the necessary access into the backcountry for rangers but could be modified later to accommodate horses.¹⁴

The year 1910 had the most significant influence on forest improvements. That year fires of historic proportions swept through many of the western forests, and as a result, forest improvements, primarily to provide protection from future fires, received top priority. As the chief forester reported in 1911, "The purpose of construction of permanent improvements on the National Forests is to facilitate (1) protection from fire, (2) the administration of the business of the Forests, and (3) the development of their resources." In order to achieve this goal, each forest required a complete system of communication for its protection, primarily trails and telephones--to tie the whole forest together. In addition, quarters and other structures to house rangers and aid in their patrols and in regulating forest use were critical to fulfilling the demands of forest management.¹⁵

Reasserting Pinchot's message, Forest Service leaders already had ordered that each forest produce an improvement plan under which the work would be carried out in an orderly and well-coordinated fashion over a "series of years" so that each forest may "eventually be supplied with an adequate, coherent, and unified system of communications, stations, fire lines, stock fences, and other aids to protection and use of all the resources of the Forest." These plans contemplated primary and secondary systems. The primary system, defined by the above improvements, was

¹³ P.S. Lovejoy to Rudolph Fromme, December 31, 1912, on file Olympic National Park Archives.

¹⁴ W.E. Herring, [Olympic National Forest Inspection Report], November 1910, RG 95, Regional Forester, National Forests, Inspections, 1904-1916, box 3, file: Olympic, 1910, NA-PNR, 1, 6-8.

¹⁵ Department of Agriculture, Report of the Forester, 1911 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 59.

the most critical, and only once it was established would the bureau undertake "the development of a secondary system to provide for intensive use of all parts of the Forest." Yet limited appropriations continued to impede the bureau's progress, and only the most urgent projects were taken up over the next several years, all of which were for fire protection. The inadequacy of funding for improvements was astonishing; one report estimated that it would take fifteen years to complete the primary system on all forests for "efficient protective organization."¹⁶

Despite a budget shortfalls, forest managers went ahead with their planning efforts in the years immediately following the fires of 1910. These forest plans covered a range of administrative activities, such as fire protection, road and trail development, and timber harvesting--a chief concern of the agency. By 1914, the chief forester could report that "each Forest more or less" had "complete and comprehensive working plans." These plans lacked perfection, but overall, he stated, "our fire plans, grazing administration, reconnaissance reports, our current timber sale work and endless other activities have resulted in the foundation and establishment of working plans which have been pretty thoroughly tested by several years of actual use." The chief wanted these plans to be public and for forest managers to actively seek to safeguard projected developments for the forests which were still in their formative stages. This desire was driven by the over all goal of efficient and effective forest management but also by the 1906 Forest Homestead Act which made it imperative for the bureau to retain lands on the forests for administrative needs.¹⁷ Finally, in this same year, moving forward with planning found success when the Forest Service finally secured a means of funding forest improvements from the 10 % item, which referred to the percentage of funds taken from forest receipts (from timber sales, primarily) to help finance these important projects. (Another important source of funding would come from the 1916 federal highway which provided assistance in improving roads through national forests.)¹⁸

¹⁶ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Report of the Forester, 1910 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1910), 45; Report of the Forester, 1911, 61.

¹⁷ Chief of the Forest Service to District Forester, April 11, 1914, RG 95, Entry 4, box 6, file F, Forest Plans, General, NA.

¹⁸ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Report of the Forester, 1914 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1914), 25. See also U.S. Department of Agriculture, Report of the Forester, 1917 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1917), 23-24, which states that the agency combined both the 10% fund and the highway act money for forest road and trail improvements.

During this period, District Six of the Forest Service, which covered the states of Oregon and Washington and thus oversaw the operations of Olympic National Forest, reported success in improving the "present working machinery" of the entire region. "The immediate result of the historical 1910 fire season," the district forester noted, "was the rapid extension of trunk trails and telephone lines into inaccessible regions" of all the forests in the Pacific Northwest. By 1916, the district boasted at least "4,000 miles of trails," among other improvements. Still the district forester stated, this situation did not place the forests on the best footing for fire safety, but it certainly placed the bureau in far better shape to combat fires "than we ever were before."¹⁹

As was the case throughout the service, fire suppression determined to a large extent the physical improvements on the district's forests. There were two main needs. One was quick detection. The other was rapid response. In the mountains west of the Cascades, where the quantities of marketable timber were greater than on the east side of the range, the main forest improvements had been the construction of trails and lookouts, and the installation of telephone lines. Over all, trails played an important role, for rangers used the trail system to carry out continuous fire patrols. In time, the construction of more lookouts on high peaks reached by trails would increase the efficiency of reporting fires and their suppression as well. And, it was believed, the lookout system would eventually decrease or eliminate altogether the need for foot patrols. Trails, nonetheless, were essential to fire suppression as indicated by the other "safeguards" augmenting the system. These, the district forester wrote, were "tool boxes containing axes, mattocks, shovels, crosscut saws, grub hoes, and in many instances, grain and provisions at convenient places over most of the Forests."²⁰ By 1916, the district could report accomplishments, namely the Forest Service's success in reducing fire damage. Much, however, remained to be done, the major focus still being to "strengthen fire protective organization." On the whole, the district had barely over half of its needed improvements completed. And of these improvements, "trail construction overshadows all other improvements in importance, "

¹⁹ Annual Non-Statistical Report--District 6, May 8, 1914, RG 95, Entry 4, box 21, file: D-6, Reports Annual, F, Reports, Non-Statistical, 1914, NA.

²⁰ Ibid.

concluded the district forester.²¹

It was within this context, for the most part, that forest managers set out to make improvements on Olympic National Forest between 1910 and 1916. The forest supervisors who succeeded Bennedict around 1911 saw the needs of the forest's protection and improvements differently than their predecessor. Building trails on the boundary of the forest would not accomplish the ultimate administrative goal of regulating the use of the forest and protecting it from fire. Parish Lovejoy was the Olympic Forest Supervisor for a little over a year and Rudolph Fromme occupied that position for the next fourteen years, from 1912-1926. Both men worked to open up the interior of the Olympics for fire prevention as well as public use. Rather than limit trail construction to "foot trails" as previously recommended by one forest inspector, these forest managers embraced the idea of horses in backcountry management and thus the construction of horse trails. Lovejoy, who was especially concerned about fires, had been witness to the Montana fires of 1910, and advised Fromme to develop a fire protection plan for the Olympics with horse trails as its centerpiece. In an often quoted statement, Lovejoy told Fromme in 1912:

My general plan is about so: Trails and trails and trails all looping into one another and into roads so as to allow cross cuts. All main trails and roads parallel, and bye and bye all trails and roads paralleled with phone lines. Patrol boxes not farther than 5 miles apart on the phone lines. Boxes and lots of tools at or near the patrol...stations. Houses and sheds and shelters along the trails where they will serve to shelter crews and patrolmen and all traveling officers and where the tools in the boxes can be concentrated winters and protected....Then lots of guards....Then lookouts.²²

Fromme shared Lovejoy's outlook as well as the general Forest Service belief in the importance of improvements. He spent his first years scouting locations for horse trails in the backcountry, primarily up the major river drainages in the Olympics. Many of the existing trails, he discovered, were dangerous for horse use. Moreover, Fromme's inspections revealed that by this time most of the access to the interior was not quite advanced from the turn of the century--travel still followed elk and deer trails and other improvements made by explorers, speculators, and settlers. At one point, Fromme and his companions chased a herd of elk toward a rugged

²¹ Annual Non-Statistical Report--District 6, 1916, RG 95, Entry 4, box 21, file: D-6, Reports Annual, F, Reports, Non-Statistical, 1916, NA, 4-6.

²² Lovejoy to Fromme, December 31, 1912.

section of valley hoping to see which direction it would take so they could locate the trail along its path. Other trails, like the one up the Elwha River, were passable by horses in most places, but overall the bureau had done little towards these improvements.²³

Soon after, Fromme drafted the first formal plan for Olympic National Forest's trail system. Ironically, the impetus for Fromme's plan, submitted in 1915, stemmed not as much from the Forest Service's drive to complete "working plans" as much as it did from the question of whether part of the forest would be converted to a national park. In 1909, President Theodore Roosevelt had signed a proclamation establishing Mount Olympus National Monument, encompassing more than 610,000 acres in the center of Olympic National Forest and the cluster of peaks surrounding Mount Olympus. The monument's purpose was to protect the region's native elk, named the Roosevelt Elk in 1897 by famed naturalist Clinton Hart Merriam for the president, an avid hunter and conservationist. Concerned citizens acquainted with this species of elk, the largest of four species in North America, welcomed the monument as a significant step towards saving these animals that seemed on the verge of extinction from overhunting. For the Forest Service, on the other hand, it presented a management dilemma. Preservation ran counter to its commercial mission, yet at the same time, if it opposed the monument it stood to lose this large section of forest to a national park.²⁴

The monument, in other words, was the kernel of the national park idea for the Olympics and would be the focus of the hotly debated and controversial movement that eventually led to the creation of Olympic National Park in the late 1930s. From the standpoint of forest planning, however, the presence of the monument introduced an important factor in the bureau's planning efforts. Rather than simply meeting the needs for protection, forest plans now had to embrace recreation as well. Interest in outdoor recreation had steadily increased since the turn of the century, and both national forests and national parks were natural attractions for the American public. Moreover, the popularity of recreation led to a competition between the newly formed National Park Service (1916) and the Forest Service over which agency would control this use of

²³ Rudolph Fromme, "Olympic Memoirs, 1912-1916," typescript, Rudolph Fromme Papers, box 1, UW, 23, 48-53.

²⁴ For an overview of the Olympic National Park battle, see Michael G. Schene, "Only the Squeal is Left: Conflict over the Establishment of Olympic National Park," *The Pacific Historian* 27 (1983): 53-60

the nation's public lands, and for that matter which agency would control the nation's most scenic wonders.²⁵

Under Gifford Pinchot, the Forest Service had treated recreation as an incidental use of the forests, yet as the numbers of people seeking recreation in natural surroundings, especially as a respite from their lives in urban centers, continued to grow, the agency could no longer ignore their presence. Many national forests lay within reach of cities and were brought all the closer with the widespread popularity of the automobile. The automobile had perhaps the single greatest influence on forest recreation, because it provided the means for Americans from many walks of life to access the nation's forests on their own terms. (The North Pacific District [District 6] had reported 45,000 recreational visits in 1909 alone.) The motor car also prompted the Forest Service to develop facilities oriented toward auto tourists, such as campgrounds that accommodated automobiles and roads to reach them. Beginning around 1910, the Forest Service tracked the growth of recreation by the increased demand for permits to build summer camps, cottages, and hotels in national forests. By 1913, Chief Forester Henry S. Graves noted that recreation was a "highly important form of use of the Forests by the public, and it is recognized and facilitated by adjusting commercial use of the Forests, when necessary." Graves concluded that it would be important to prevent grazing or timber harvests from marring the beauty of lakes and other areas of natural beauty for the "enjoyment of the public."²⁶

In this early phase of national forest recreation, the Forest Service focused its development plans on those forests with sizable cities nearby. In the Pacific Northwest, Portland exerted considerable influence on the protection, and improvement, of the Columbia River Gorge for recreation. The completion of the Columbia River Scenic Highway in 1913 (?) opened up the Oregon side of the gorge to auto travel and subsequently to calls for the preservation of its scenic values by concerned Portland residents, who worried that unrestricted tourist development might degrade its natural beauty. This contributed to the Forest Service's creation of the Columbia Gorge Park Division of the Oregon National Forest late in 1915. The designation protected some

²⁵ Hal K. Rothman, "'A Regular Ding-Dong Fight': Agency Culture and Evolution in the NPS-USFS Dispute, 1916-1937," *Western Historical Quarterly* 20 (May 1989): 141-153.

²⁶ Quoted in William C. Tweed, *Recreation Site Planning and Improvements in National Forests, 1891-1942* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, 1980), 2-3.

twenty-two miles of the gorge up to six miles in width by prohibiting timber sales and summer home permits. More importantly, this action marked the first time, it seems, that the bureau dedicated a large area to purely recreational use. Furthermore, by imposing restrictions on the use of the area, the agency had to assume a greater role in providing facilities for recreation. In the summer of 1916, this led the Forest Service to plan and develop the Eagle Creek Campground within the park. Both the area's accessibility and its popularity contributed, it seems, to the bureau's development of the first public campground in the modern sense. Unlike past Forest Service undeveloped camp areas, Eagle Creek contained such facilities as camp tables, toilets, a check-in station, and a ranger station. Another significant feature of the plan was the Eagle Creek Trail--a thirteen and a half mile trail designed and built primarily for recreation use; the trail purposely took a scenic route, at one point even tunneling behind a waterfall.²⁷

The Forest Service's activities in the Columbia Gorge underscored its competition with national parks and the young federal agency that oversaw them, the Park Service. The Park Service had a dynamic leader in Stephen T. Matter who announced that his agency's management purpose was one devoted to preservation and use. That is, national parks were for the public's enjoyment not resource extraction, and thus outdoor recreation formed a central purpose of national parks; recreation would therefore fall under the purview of his agency. The establishment of the Park Service, in fact, grew out of differing views over conservation and preservation. Preservationists, led by John Muir and the Sierra Club, rejected Gifford Pinchot's bid, and the attempts of his successors, to have the Forest Service manage the national parks. The most symbolic evidence of this rift was the loss of Yosemite's Hetch Hetchy Valley to a reservoir for San Francisco in 1913, a plan endorsed by Pinchot and vehemently opposed by Muir. Embedded in the Forest Service's attempts to take over national park management was the bureau's desire to fend off more proposals to create new national parks from national forests.²⁸

As a result of all this, planning for recreation assumed a far greater emphasis in the Forest Service, and for this the bureau turned to the profession of landscape architecture. Landscape

²⁷ Tweed, *Recreation Site Planning and Improvements in National Forests, 1891-1942*, 3-5.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 5-6. Stephen Fox, *John Muir and His Legacy: The American Conservation Movement* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1981), 139-147.

architects like Frederick Law Olmsted and their professional association, the American Society of Landscape Architecture (ASLA), were playing an important role in the development of national parks, and they sought a similar role in planning the recreational facilities of national forests. To keep step with the management of national parks, the Forest Service hired Frank A. Waugh, a professor of landscape architecture, to conduct a national survey of recreational uses of the national forests in 1917. Waugh's report documented existing recreation conditions and it emphasized the popularity of recreation and that it should be considered one of the major uses of the nation's forests. In doing so, he asserted that recreation was so important that the Forest Service should develop its own recreation program, one independent of the Park Service, since recreation was not limited to areas of spectacular natural beauty. He even tried to justify recreation in terms the Forest Service would understand--economic returns. Multiplying an average cost people spent on urban entertainment by the estimated number of people who visited forests in 1916 for recreation, Waugh calculated that recreation on national forests might bring a return of \$7,500,000 a year. Moreover, he emphasized that in order to form a strong recreation program the Forest Service would need to hire trained professionals--landscape architects or "landscape engineers" as they were known in the federal government--to carry out recreation planning and development. Waugh would go on to produce several reports for the bureau on various aspects of forest recreation and would serve as a landscape consultant to the bureau for a number of years. Both his sympathetic understanding of the problems associated with forest management and the role of recreation as one of the several important uses of national forests made his influence both immediate and long lasting.²⁹

The competition with national parks for recreation and the beginning stages of the Forest Service's planning for recreation provide the context for Olympic National Forest's trail plan drafted by Rudo Fromme. In 1914, Chief Forester Henry S. Graves visited Mount Olympus National Monument. His trip was intended to resolve some long-standing issues, namely whether or not the monument should be reduced in size, changed into a national park, or abolished

²⁹ Tweed, 6-7.

altogether.³⁰ Soon after its creation in 1909, forest officials had recommended the latter since, as they argued, the monument's purpose did not match well with the current administration of Olympic Forest under the multiple-use idea. Local business leaders, who wanted better access to the area's minerals and timber, supported the Forest Service's position, while conservationists fought to protect the area's elk and threw their support behind various national park proposals. What had kept the Forest Service from carrying out its plan was its promise to the U.S. Biological Survey that it would protect the Roosevelt Elk habitat in the Olympic Mountains. After his return to Washington, D.C., Graves moved to change his bureau's position. He wrote a lengthy memorandum in which he sided with his subordinates in the field and recommended that the monument be reduced by half. He also, however, recommended that certain wild and scenic sections be included in a national park. This latter proposal was a ploy to keep park supporters and Department of Interior officials happy. Another concession made by the Forest Service—to restrict development on elk breeding grounds—won the support of the Biological Survey for the reduction plan. In May 1915, at Graves' request, President Woodrow Wilson signed the proclamation reducing the monument.³¹

Nevertheless, the park idea, especially as a solution to the elk problem, continued to plague the Forest Service. Graves presented the issue as one of jurisdiction; it would not do well for his bureau to lose another large section of forest to a national park. Yet in managing the monument, the Forest Service faced a dilemma: preservation ran counter to the bureau's management philosophy. As the chief forester said, "In the National Forests the ideal of utilizing all resources at the same time and harmoniously is actually achieved." Graves' task then was to find a way to retain the monument under his bureau's control and to fit its preservation into this forest management philosophy. Besides timber, mining and agriculture, recreation represented an important resource. "The recreation resource," Graves wrote, "is one that should be protected, fostered, and developed." But this did not mean that other uses like mining should not be developed particularly if they can be done without "mutual interference."³²

³⁰ Henry S. Graves, Memorandum on Mount Olympus National Monument," January 20, 1915, RG 95, box 99759, file: L, Boundaries, Olympic, Mount Olympus National Monument, 1905-1916, NA-PNR.

³¹ Schene, "Only the Squeal is Left," 56.

³² Henry S. Graves, Memorandum on Mount Olympus National Monument, 10.

In order to prepare for recreation and deflect interest in converting the monument into a park, Graves ordered Fromme to identify (on a map) all of the scenic features which might be included within a national park. More importantly, he requested from Fromme a report on all of the existing and proposed trails "which would make all the principal features accessible to tourist travel." To accomplish this, he planned to use the interest in a park to get funding from Congress for trails, roads, and other recreational developments. Fromme's plan was one step in this direction. As Graves instructed, Fromme was to prepare a comprehensive plan that would outline the principal scenic features and how to make them accessible through a "comprehensive trail system." This, Graves believed, would satisfy park proponents like the Mountaineers and others who were demanding more improvements for their adventures into the Olympic backcountry.³³

Fromme's plan, dated December 7, 1915, listed many projects that would "open up and develop Mt. Olympus National Monument." His projects, while ostensibly for "the interests of recreation," would also satisfy needs for "increased fire protection and administrative efficiency." Recreation, then, was not the central purpose of the plan; rather, recreation was one of many uses considered in determining the location of trails. In this way, he suggested, the plan would fit within the framework established by the Forest Service's management philosophy. Besides this overarching theme, Fromme's plan may have focused on the monument but it took into account the entire forest--the various routes through the forest one could take to reach the monument itself--and thus serves as Olympic's first plan.³⁴

One of the first things the forest supervisor noted was that there were few existing trails near or leading to the monument, and most of these were constructed by private interests, namely the 1890 Press expedition, settlers like Grant Humes on the Elwha River, and the Mountaineers. In 1915, there were only four trail projects officially credited to the Forest Service that made the scenic features of the Olympics more accessible. These were the Soleduck-Hoh Trail, the Lillian Switchback on the Elwha, and the North Fork Quinault Trail--all completed in 1913--and finally the Upper Dosewallips Trail built in 1915. These trails, with few exceptions, were hastily and

³³ R.L. Fromme to District Forester, July 23, 1915, RG 95, box 99759, file: L, Boundaries, Olympic, Mount Olympus National Monument, 1905-1916, NA-PNR.

³⁴ R.L. Fromme to District Forester, December 7, 1915, RG 95, box 99759, file: L, Boundaries, Olympic, Mount Olympus National Monument, 1905-1916, NA-PNR, 1.

often poorly constructed, especially difficult for horses to travel. Fromme's point in mentioning the condition of these trails was to underscore "what a small step we have actually taken toward accomplishing any network or unified system of trails." Up until now, there had been no comprehensive approach to developing a trail system; most of the improvement work on the forest had been for administrative and protection needs in those areas where the "greatest" threats and use were located--the forest's north and east margins and its southwest corner. Thus, the goal of his plan was to develop a skeleton system of main trails for the entire forest.³⁵

Fromme's idea in general was to have trails leading into the forest up the major river drainages, the spokes that radiated from the hub of the Olympics. His criteria for selecting and ranking the priority of his trail projects were in many respects a "rough approximation" and a rather complex set of requirements. These included a "cursory knowledge" of the Olympic Range's topography, terrain, and scenery. At the same time, it was imperative that he identify routes that would lead through areas of popular interest as well as areas important to forest management efficiency (usefulness and protection). Fromme emphasized that one of the most important routes in the forest was Elwha-Quinault route, for it was the "most natural" trail leading north to south through the central region of the forest. It surmounted the low divide between the Elwha River and the North Fork of the Quinault River, and had been established by years of use by the region's native peoples, settlers, fishermen, hunters, and other outdoor enthusiasts. Despite the popularity of this route and the rather poor condition of the trail itself, he was not recommending that it be improved, since "there are so many other highly interesting regions which are not now approachable by the least semblance of a trail." At best, he noted, this route might serve as the region's one through road.³⁶

The forest supervisor recommended twenty-six trail projects all of which he justified by how they would aid in the broad range of forest management activities. His first recommendation, for example, was a trail along the Hayes River to provide a connection to the forest from east side on Hood Canal. The Hayes River Trail would provide an important link with the Dosewallips Trail and make this the "first main trail highway into the upper Elwha from the

³⁵ Fromme to District Forester, December 7, 1915, 2-5.

³⁶ Ibid., 8.

Hoods Canal side." An added incentive was the fact that this was the same route the Mountaineers proposed to follow in its 1917 ascent of Mt. Olympus. Besides the recreational aspects of the trail, there would be considerable administrative benefits as well; recent lightning-caused fires in the upper Hayes drainage were difficult to suppress without a trail.³⁷

Fromme continued this pattern of selection and tended to focus on those trails or routes already made popular by climbing clubs like the Mountaineers. In some instances this required only renovations not new construction, such as the Kurtz Lake to Quinault Low Divide route. Several more trails were of interest to the Mountaineers or other outdoor enthusiasts, such as the Kurtz Lake to Promise Creek route, the Promise Creek to Queets Basin Trail (for hikers) and the Glacier Creek Trail from the Olympus Ranger Station to Blue Glacier on Mt. Olympus. The other proposed trails or reconstructions were based on a similar formula and would lead up the major river drainages, connecting popular lowland areas like Cushman, Quinault, and Crescent lakes and population centers like Port Angeles and Hood Canal, among others, with the major peaks and other scenic vistas of the interior Olympics. One of these was a route connecting the North Fork of the Skokomish, Duckabush, and Quinault drainages to take parties into Mt. Anderson. Another was a route connecting the Hoh and Elwha rivers.³⁸

In other cases these trails would serve a more administrative purpose. The Seven Lakes and Canyon Creek to Bogachiel Peak trails would provide access to a future lookout on Bogachiel Peak. They would also supply an important new link in the main trail system for the Solduck, Bogachiel, and Hoh river countries. Other trails like the one from Deer Park to Dosewallips would aid primarily in providing a high country patrol route from the Deer Park Lookout to the Dosewallips headwaters. The Queets River Trail would open up a large expanse of heavily timbered country and provide another route into the Elwha from the coast. The same reasons lay behind the proposed trail up the Bogachiel River. These trails would meet administrative concerns by improving travel to areas of the forest for fire protection and other administrative uses; they would open up the country to timber sales and mining, and connect fire lookouts and ranger stations. In many cases, these trails were quite scenic but only by chance, for

³⁷ Ibid., 11-22.

³⁸ Ibid.

they crossed open ridges or led through rain forests with immense trees.³⁹

When Graves received Fromme's plan, he called it "admirable." Graves, however, had no clear intention of implementing the plan. For one thing, the costs were prohibitive. The plan was so thorough that it would require special Congressional appropriations, and because it was so extensive, Graves determined that his bureau should not spend any of its own limited supply of money from its permanent improvement fund. He advised the district forester to make only those improvements that were administrative in nature. More importantly, the chief forester wanted to use the plan as a bargaining chip to retain his agency's jurisdiction over Olympic National Forest in the face of national park proposals. If Graves could show that his bureau was contemplating the same kinds of developments one found in national parks, then he could argue that it should remain under Forest Service control.⁴⁰

The chief forester's tactics seem to have paid off, at least temporarily. For a brief period in 1915, the Department of Agriculture and Department of the Interior agreed that a park should be created embracing the upper reaches of Mount Olympus National Monument. But when legislation was introduced into Congress in 1916, it failed to make it out of committee. The reason for this was that the Secretary of Agriculture now opposed the park idea because with the creation of the National Park Service that year it raised serious doubts in his mind about the role of this new agency and the Forest Service. As the secretary noted, the Forest Service intended to develop the monument for recreation using Fromme's plan. Were Congress to create a national park out of the same area, how, he wondered, would this change anything? Forests, he concluded, could be developed for their scenic charms without being converted into parks, and Olympic was one of those areas.⁴¹

Whether or not the Forest Service would ever develop Olympic National Forest to promote its recreational use was the major theme in its next phase of management, from 1916 to 1933, and here too trails were an important feature of this period. Fromme's plan, one might say,

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Henry S. Graves to District Forester, January 7, 1916, RG 95, box 99759, file: L, Boundaries, Olympic, Mount Olympus National Monument, 1905-1916, NA-PNR.

⁴¹ Secretary of Agriculture, D.F. Houston, to A.F. Lever, December 20, 1916, *ibid*.

served as a blue print for trail improvements, but more importantly, the impetus for the plan--to deflect interest in a national park--remained strong and ultimately led the Forest Service to prepare a master plan for recreation covering the entire forest.

While the Forest Service's planning effort at Olympic was an attempt to silence its critics and defeat subsequent efforts to convert much of the forest into a park, it also reflected the bureau's approach to recreation on a national scale, for it demonstrated that it generally supported the idea of professional planning and design. In 1919, after the crisis of World War I had passed, the agency responded to Frank Waugh's recommendation and hired its first "recreation engineer," landscape architect Arthur Carhart, to initiate recreational site planning. A year later, Carhart completed the first forest recreation plan for the San Isabel National Forest in Colorado. It was one thing to plan, but it was another still to execute the plan, because federal funding to develop forest recreation facilities continued to be scarce, though slowly improving, throughout the 1920s. Part of the reason for the agency's funding woes stemmed from the undefined relationship between the Forest Service and Park Service. Until that relationship became clearer, especially since the upstart Park Service seemed intent on dominating the field of recreation, Congress was reluctant to provide funds for recreational planning and development. Limited funding thus reinforced the Forest Service's cooperation with private interests, or "recreation associations," to complete improvements for recreation on national forests. Problems with funding also prompted Carhart to resign in 1923 because he did not believe agency officials had shown enough support for recreation. Afterwards, no trained landscape architect took his place, and only three regions--Northern, California, and North Pacific--had personnel with recreation duties. One of the main reasons was that agency officials wanted personnel who would understand, and be more receptive to, the larger picture of forest management--a sensitivity, it seems, professionals like landscape architects lacked. Thus in the mid-1920s, the Forest Service returned the responsibilities for planning recreational developments back to foresters and collaborators.⁴²

The agency also was cautious and conservative in its recreation site development policy until the early 1930s. As a general rule, the bureau maintained that national forests would supply

⁴² Tweed, Recreation Site Planning and Improvements in National Forests, 1891-1942, 8-13.

"space" for recreation. For this reason, publicly financed recreation facilities in the nation's forests "remained limited in number and usually quite simple in nature." The public would find more elaborate developments in national forests in the private resorts or summer cabin areas operated under Forest Service special use permits. This policy of limited federal involvement in the development of recreation sites on national forests fit well with the Forest Service's own philosophical outlook as well as the those of the Coolidge and Hoover administrations and of Congress.⁴³

Ironically, perhaps one of the most significant elements in outdoor recreation to later generations of Americans emerged largely from within the Forest Service itself--the idea of wilderness. In 1919, Arthur Carhart, for example, proposed managing superb natural areas like Trappers Lake, Colorado, for wilderness or for limited recreational development by excluding automobiles and summer homes. Later, in 1924, Aldo Leopold, famed wildlife biologist and wilderness prophet, then a young forester, pressed for the creation of the Gila Wilderness in New Mexico, the country's first. In 1926, Leon F. Kniepp, assistant forester in the Division of Lands in the Forest Service's Washington office, initiated a survey of roadless areas in national forests. And three years later, he issued the "L-20" regulations which established the agency's official policy on preserving wilderness--or primitive areas as they were known--in the national forests. However promising these trends, the Forest Service continued to emphasize the multiple use of forest resources, and even in primitive areas it reserved the option to promote resource development. For this reason, preservationists were wary of the agency's commitment to primitive recreation and thus recreation in general.⁴⁴

Planning for recreation, rather than full-scale recreational development, characterized the work undertaken in Olympic National Forest up until the early 1930s. As noted above, its main intent was to fend off park proposals as well as to accommodate the growing interest in recreation blooming outside and within the Forest Service itself. One of the main reasons for planning--and the reasons for its success--was because of Fred W. Cleator. Cleator worked for the Northwest Region (District 6) out of Portland and was one of the few agency officials responsible for

⁴³ Ibid., 15.

⁴⁴ Steen, The U.S. Forest Service, 154-157; Rothman, "A Regular Ding-Dong Fight," 155-156.

recreation planning and development. Although his title would change over the years, Cleator was the region's "landscape engineer," a forester--not a trained landscape architect--who understood the complexity of forest management and the bureau's mission. Cleator's work was widespread. He carried out recreational surveys of, and prepared plans for, the forests in Oregon and Washington. Some of his better known projects were the Oregon Skyline and Cascade Crest trails (forerunners of today's Pacific Crest Trail) and the Mount Hood recreation plan, including the famous Timberline Lodge and related developments like the Timberline Trail. Reviewing the status of recreation in the Northwest in the mid-1920s, Assistant Forester Leon Kneipp gave Cleator high marks, noting that the district excelled above all others in the preparation of its recreation unit or work plans.⁴⁵

Olympic Forest was one of the areas that benefited from Cleator's work. In 1921, he completed a recreation plan for the Lake Crescent District. The plan recognized the Lake Crescent region's great popularity and made provisions for summer home tracts, public camps, resorts, and the protection of the lake's scenic qualities. A year later, the regional forester established the Lake Quinault Recreation Area, which embraced the shoreline around the lake and recognized its value for summer homes. In 1924, Cleator played a lead role in preparing the Lake Quinault Recreation Area plan. In order to assess the progress in recreation planning, Assistant Forester L.F. Kneipp asked Frank Waugh to review Cleator's plan for Lake Crescent. Waugh, who was familiar with the Lake Crescent country, called it "a very good and sensible report." Kneipp took this to mean that his agency was headed on the right course. But Waugh also noted that plans like this represented "a preliminary stage in recreation development, and one which will likely soon pass away." The plan, in other words, did not address any broad recreational policies, and thus, as Waugh concluded, the "whole recreation problem is one in which we are making some very crude beginnings."⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Gale Throop, Draft National Register Nomination, Recreation Development in the National Forests in Oregon and Washington--1905-1945. Lawrence Rakestraw, History of the Willamette National Forest (Eugene: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, 1991), 39-79. Leon F. Kneipp to Forester, August 31, 1926, RG 95, Entry 86, box 71, file: U-Recreation, Region 6, 1920-1939, NA.

⁴⁶ Fred W. Cleator, "Recreational Facilities of the Olympic National Forest and Forest Service Plan of Development," Forest Club Quarterly 10 (1936/37): 6. L.F. Kneipp to Frank A. Waugh, April 14, 1922; L.F. Kneipp to District Forester, May 1, 1922, RG 95, Entry 86, box 71, file: U-Recreation, Region 6, 1920-1939, NA.

By the late 1920s, Cleator made a significant step towards improving the "recreation problem" by producing a recreation plan for the entire Olympic National Forest. This recreation, or master, plan was only one of three forest-level plans the region had undertaken, since recreation still was considered a low priority in forest management.⁴⁷ But where Olympic was concerned, pressure to improve recreational opportunities, especially since the topic of a national park continued to rage, prompted the Forest Service to produce the plan. Peninsula groups like the Olympic Development League were actively promoting the region's natural splendors--the many possibilities it held for riding, fishing, hiking, and mountain climbing. To this end, the league was working with the Forest Service to construct a number of chalets, supported by a system of shelter camps, throughout the rugged lowland and alpine interior of the Olympics.⁴⁸

Cleator's initial survey of the forest took place in the summer of 1927, during which he consulted with the league to incorporate their ideas as well as others into the "Olympic Forest Recreation Plan." Completed in 1929, the recreation plan, or "Cleator Plan" as it was known, addressed a wide range of issues. It provided for roads, trails, camps, and shelters; and it set aside certain areas, mostly on lakes, for summer homes and resorts. It also designated for future protection the Olympic Primitive Area, a 134,000-acre alpine area, and established the Snow Peaks Recreation Area which embraced Mount Olympus National Monument. In addition to these provisions, it incorporated the existing recreation unit plans for areas like Lake Crescent and Lake Quinault as well as proposed plans for other areas, such as the Seven Lakes and Mount Angeles recreation units.⁴⁹

Needless to say, the plan certainly had something for every interest and thus brought under one plan many of the issues relevant at the time, and for this reason satisfied many of the Forest Service's critics, especially those clamoring for a national park, at least for the time being. Moreover, the Forest Service thought highly of the plan because it fit well with its overall management philosophy. As Cleator himself stated, the plan "was a classification of recreation values and a coordinated plan of management of these recreation assets along with the utility

⁴⁷ Kneipp to Forester, August 31, 1926.

⁴⁸ Cleator, "Recreational Facilities on the Olympic National Forest and Forest Plan of Development," 6.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 6-7. Fred W. Cleator, "Report on Olympic Forest Recreation Plan," May 25, 1929 (approved June 10, 1929), in Recreation Atlas, Olympic National Forest, Olympic National Forest Archives, Olympia, Washington.

values of the entire Olympic National Forest. It did not purport to be the perfect instrument, but provided a safety valve for recreation usage from the most intensive to the most primitive form. It established, moreover, a well balanced system for handling the extremely important and sharply defined multiple uses which were crystallizing in the Peninsula, and becoming the subject of great public interest."⁵⁰ In other words, the Cleator Plan would enable the Forest Service to accomplish what some thought impossible: to preserve "the beauty of the Mt. Olympus National Monument and the Olympic National Forest...and at the same time permit the proper development of the industrial resources; all for the benefit of 'the greatest number in the long run.'"⁵¹

In terms of trails, there were provisions in the plan for some trails dedicated strictly to recreation, namely those that traversed alpine country and afforded spectacular views like the proposed trail connecting the Elwha basin with the Hoh by way of the Queets Basin. These trails would be for travel by horses and pack trains (and foot if necessary) for extended trips into the Olympic backcountry. Nevertheless, the criteria for these and other trails had changed little over the years. Administrative concerns still predominated. As Cleator wrote, "it is intended that the recreation [provisions of the plan] should interfere very little, if any, with the accepted road and trail program, since we have here types of use that will fit quite satisfactorily with whatever transportation system is considered administratively desirable."⁵² Visiting Olympic Forest to review its recreation planning in 1928, Assistant Forester Leon Kneipp expanded on this point of view.

It is not intended...that a special trail system or unusually heavy outlay of trail funds is necessary to provide for tourist travel. To the contrary, a system of trails meeting the qualifications prescribed in the Trail Manual for secondary trails and designed to provide what eventually will be the administrative requirements of the Forest will be fully sufficient to meet the recreation needs and nothing further than such a system is suggested or approved. As a matter of fact, the territory referred to is not a difficult one in which to build trails at a reasonable cost if a proper preliminary study is made with a view to securing the best and most economical locations. Few of the slopes are so steep as to preclude trail construction, and much of the rock which would be encountered is of a kind

⁵⁰ Cleator, "Recreational Facilities of the Olympic National Forest," 6.

⁵¹ This last quote comes from what appears to be Cleator's draft of his published statement, cited above, on his recreation plan. It can be found in RG 95, box 99759, file: Mount Olympus National Monument, Correspondence 1937, NA-PNR.

⁵² Cleator, "Report on Olympic Recreation Plan," 2.

which could readily be picked up or shot out with a minimum of expense. Sooner or later it will be necessary to bring the whole series of watersheds which head up around Mount Olympus into communication with trails which will permit prompt passage from one drainage to another. This system when established will provide the average tourist with all the good trails he will need.⁵³

The Cleator Plan served as both a guiding principle for forest recreational developments as well as a statement, one by now familiar, that asserted the place of trails within the overall management of the forest. In either case, trails should serve a variety of purposes, when possible; above all, they should satisfy the administrative concerns of forest managers. The plan, moreover, offers the opportunity to assess what the Forest Service had actually accomplished in its trail program. By 1933, Cleator reported that the agency had "constructed or bettered and posted many miles of remote country trail, and along these trails had built about a hundred sturdy camping shelters of rustic material, with fireplaces and rough sanitary conveniences, to accommodate the red blooded fisherman and wilderness seeker." Once again, Cleator emphasized the Forest Service's multiple purpose approach to recreational developments. "These [structures], of course, served also as administrative quarters for trail builders, fire patrolmen, and traveling forest officers, and were frankly intended to be a dual-purpose development."⁵⁴ A 1935 report offered more specific figures for some of the developments Cleator mentioned. On the entire forest, the bureau had completed some 962 miles of trail and 109 campgrounds, including 90 overnight shelters.⁵⁵

Trail-side improvements, such as shelters, were among the most character-defining features of these and other Forest Service trails. They reflected that trails were intended to meet the needs of forest protection and administration as well as recreation, the emphasis of which changed over time. In the early years of forest development, around the 1920s, shelters appeared

⁵³ Leon F. Kneipp, Memorandum on Recreation, District 6, September 8, 1928, RG 95, Entry 86, box 71, file: U-Recreation, Region 6, 1920-1939, NA.

⁵⁴ Cleator, "Recreational Facilities of the Olympic National Forest," 7.

⁵⁵ Chief, Forest Service, to Percival S. Risdale, c. August 5, 1935, RG 95, box 99759, file #5, NA-PNR. A 1933 forest map identified at least thirty-two trail shelters throughout the forest, that is, that portion within today's national park. The figure of ninety shelters, cited by forest officials above, more than likely included the number of shelters associated with ranger stations and front country campgrounds. Although many shelters no longer exist today within today's park and adjacent forest, five trail shelters along the Bogachiel River, spaced roughly four to five miles apart, reflect the design guidelines set down by Fred Cleator. See Evans, Olympic National Park, 215.

along trails in locations where fire and trail crews as well as packers could stop for the night. Many shelters were located in what became natural base camps for forest workers--near trail junctions and meadows which provided ample forage for pack stock (and later shelter for backcountry enthusiasts). Shelters also tended to be abundant in the wetter forests, like Olympic, on the west side of the Cascades. As one bureau official reported, because of the peninsula's heavy rainfall, storms, and fog, "shelter camps were essential."⁵⁶ In this respect, trail shelters were an integral component of the Forest Service's fire detection and suppression system put in place prior to World War II. This was one reason why fire caches seem to have disappeared from forest maps. A 1915 map of Olympic National Forest, for example, identified fifteen caches but a 1933 map showed none. Shelters were also the basic support facilities necessary for building and maintaining the trails and telephone lines which aided in this important work and thus tied the forest together in a transportation and communication network. Many were three-sided log structures, equipped with the basic necessities for overnight stays, but depending on their location and use, their design and associated facilities varied.⁵⁷

Although shelters, like the trails they augmented, had their origins in the administration of forests, they became widely popular for backcountry recreation, and even more so in the 1920s when the Forest Service began to design trails with recreation in mind. Trails designed for recreation differed from those whose purpose was strictly transportation. Rather than direct and efficient travelways, these trails were designed to traverse the forest landscape at a more leisurely pace with pleasure and scenic vistas in mind. Fred Cleator oversaw the design of numerous recreation trails and their construction in the forests of Oregon and Washington. Shelters figured prominently in his plans, and the Cascade Crest Trail, running along the spine of the Cascades from Canada to the Oregon-California border, became a model for his vision of shelters and recreation trails.

Cleator's plans included trail-side shelters where hikers would spend the night, break camp the following morning, travel about six to seven miles to the next shelter, and make camp in the early afternoon. In this way, they could enjoy not only the hike itself but the opportunities for

⁵⁶ F. V. Horton to Forest Supervisor, Olympic National Forest, August 12, 1935, *ibid.*

⁵⁷ All of this and the following information on trail shelters is drawn from Gale Throop's draft domination.

recreation around the shelter before resuming their trip the next day. Even though Cleator's plan was never realized to the extent he had envisioned, some shelters were eventually built. Just as important, the shelters and the trail were conceived and built as an interrelated unit. The trail and shelter system spoke to a time in history when hiking with heavy and cumbersome camping equipment was difficult, and thus without the burden of carrying tents (and stoves), and by having the shelters a day hike in distance apart, Cleator believed that the high Cascades would become more accessible to many more people. While we know little of Cleator's specific plans for recreation trails in Olympic National Forest, we can assume that similar principles applied, for example, in the design and construction of the Skyline Queets Trail.⁵⁸

Further proof of the importance of trail-side shelters in forest recreation appeared in the Forest Service's 1933 Recreation Handbook. The handbook noted that there were three factors that came into play when planning trail-side improvements. These were to meet the needs of trail travelers, to protect the sanitary conditions of camp sites, and to provide better fire protection. The manual allowed for a wide range of improvements, noting that lightly used camping areas would need few enhancements, especially since most backcountry hikers or horseback riders would like the forest conditions to remain as primitive as possible. On the other hand, those popular sites would warrant everything from rustic toilets and garbage collection facilities to tables, benches, fireplaces, and water systems. Finally, simple shelters would provide a valuable element to the outdoor experience along heavily used recreation trails, particularly those forest areas on the wet and cold western Cascades; all of these would include improvements similar to those outlined above. The importance of trail-side shelters, in this context, was readily apparent in Olympic. As Regional Forester C.J. Buck alluded to later, trails for recreation, and their related facilities, were essential in the Olympic region where the "extraordinary density of the undergrowth" was similar to that found in tropical jungles.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ E.J. Hanzlik and Lee P. Brown, "Report on Proposed Elimination of Certain Units from the Olympic National Forest for Addition to the Mt. Olympus National Monument," April 10, 1935, RG 95, box 99759, file: LP, Boundaries, NA-PNR.

⁵⁹ C.J. Buck to Chief, Forest Service, January 19, 1936, RG 95, box 99759, file: LP, Boundaries, Olympic National Park, Miscellaneous Reports, NA-PNR.

Besides its significance for recreational planning and development in Olympic, the year 1933 marked an important turning point in the forest's history. In 1933, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal changed the course of the nation in the throes of the Depression by providing numerous federal-aid programs. For the Forest Service, the New Deal brought funding for the agency's recreation program that was without precedent and beyond the "wildest dreams" of earlier forest officials. Now, a decade of frenzied recreation development was underway. Work relief programs like the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) provided most of the labor for forest improvement projects aimed at completing recreational developments in the national forests. Most of these projects met needs identified in earlier forest plans, but they also were following the recreation program outlined in the "A National Plan for American Forestry," also known as the Copeland Report. Prepared by the Forest Service in 1933 to address the variety of problems affecting the nation's forests, the report contained a section on recreation written by Robert Marshall. Marshall, arguably the nation's most famous forester and wilderness advocate of his time, was then working as a private citizen but would go on to lead the bureau's Recreation and Lands Division in 1937.⁶⁰

Marshall's analysis of the importance of recreation of all kinds in the national forests, from wilderness areas to campgrounds and summer homes, and his subsequent leadership of the bureau's recreation division, placed recreation on solid footing in the Forest Service. As a result, for most of the 1930s the Forest Service built roads and trails, as well as "substantial recreation structures in National Forests from coast to coast," predominantly in the Rustic style of architecture characterized by its use of native materials such as logs and stone for construction and its nonintrusive presence in the natural scene. Assisting in these designing and overseeing these projects were skilled professionals, architects and landscape architects, whom the Forest Service once again returned to, at least temporarily, for their expertise.⁶¹

Reviewing the Forest Service's recreation work in the Pacific Northwest during the New

⁶⁰ Tweed, Recreation Site Planning and Improvements in National Forests, 1891-1942, 16-25. See also, Fox, John Muir and His Legacy, 206-210.

⁶¹ Tweed, 17-22.

Deal era, Fred Cleator wrote with great enthusiasm about its success. "When the CCC program broke," he stated, "the Forest Service in the Pacific Northwest, as a result of its previous experience, had thousands of project plans, not only engraved in the minds of its Forest Officers, but graphically on paper and ready to go. The crying need just then was to correct our very primitive transportation and communication systems." Within a year and a half, Cleator noted, the bureau overcame great physical and logistical odds and set out to accomplish its projects. Meanwhile, the service, with aid of CCC laborers, architects, landscape architects and other experts, improved "dingy" ranger stations and other existing facilities. More importantly, the bureau was able to install a long list of new structures for recreation which exceeded in "both quality and quantity" anything "than had been hoped for." Cleator made special mention of campgrounds and picnic areas, which after long last the agency had been able to upgrade, installing clean toilets, running water, tables, benches, kitchens, bathhouses, and campstoves. He underscored, again, the improved and newly constructed backcountry developments: "thousands of miles of mountain trails...several hundreds of strong, rustic mountain shelters...[and]...hundreds of remote camps with primitive accommodations." In addition, the bureau built and renovated "for special recreation usage" many miles of lakeside and streamside trails, bridle paths and strolls, along with "stub or loop trails to fishing grounds, waterfalls, lookouts, and other scenic or scientific features."⁶²

As suggested by Cleator, the New Deal emergency work programs benefited Olympic National Forest substantially because they allowed forest officers to carry out long-desired and necessary projects for recreation, all of which included extending miles of trails and roads in the forest and expanding the number of shelters and other camping facilities. Some of the structures built during this period also benefited wildlife management. Forest crews built as many as eight shelters on the Hoh, Queets, and Quinault Rivers for the Olympic elk study.⁶³ But, as Cleator concluded, while recreation may have made serious advances, it still had to fit within the traditional framework of forest management. "After 25 years of experience," the recreation

⁶² Fred W. Cleator, "Recreation Work of the U.S. Forest Service in the Pacific Northwest," March 14, 1936, RG 95, box G-1, file: L Recreation, 1936, NA-PNR, 2-3.

⁶³ John E. Schwartz, "A Progress Report of the Olympic Elk Study," May 5, 1936, RG 95, box 99759, file: LP, Boundaries, Olympic National Park, Miscellaneous Reports, NA-PNR.

engineer wrote, "we are more than ever convinced that the multiple use principle of land management is sound, both economically and socially." As American life becomes more complex, he concluded, and the need for outdoor recreation increases, we hope the Forest Service can "meet the new needs, and at the same time keep a conservation balance of vision for the other legitimate forest uses."⁶⁴

Ultimately, the Forest Service's attempts to balance timber harvests and outdoor recreation proved to be a central reason for why the bureau lost most of Olympic National Forest to a national park in the late 1930s. Cleator's recreation plan for the forest bought the bureau some time in its efforts to show its detractors that it could manage the region for its wild and scenic qualities as well as its commercial values. But soon conservationists renewed their attacks on the agency's management of the peninsula, claiming that its interest in preserving the area's mammoth trees was suspect, along with its protection of the Roosevelt elk. While the Forest Service tried to improve its position with the public, it also had to contend with the National Park Service. As part of Roosevelt's reorganization of the federal government during the New Deal, the jurisdiction over national monuments was transferred to the Park Service. And so in 1933, the administration of Mount Olympus National Monument left the Forest Service and went to its rival agency. Afterwards, conservationists, led by the Emergency Conservation Committee, mounted a campaign to convert the monument into a national park. The Forest Service, naturally, as well as entrepreneurial interests in the peninsula, namely those who depended on the timber economy, opposed the proposal. Primarily to protect these interests, Washington State subsequently opposed the park idea, too.⁶⁵

As the controversy escalated over the next few years, the first of several bills appeared to create a large national park, most of it from Olympic Forest lands. Summing up how many preservationists felt, Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes testified against the Forest Service by attacking its multiple use philosophy: "Sustained-yield logging, multiple use, or any of the other smooth-sounding techniques of the Forest Service are no substitute for a national park, and

⁶⁴ Cleator, "Recreation Work of the U.S. Forest Service," 5.

⁶⁵ Schene, "Only the Squeal is Left," 57. Donald C. Swain, "The National Park Service and the New Deal," *Pacific Historical Review* 41 (August 1972): 312-319.

will not save an area of national park quality. Neither will they replace trees that are centuries old after they have been cut down." Ickes was essentially criticizing the Forest Service's claims to be able to harmonize all forms of forest uses, when it appeared to many that timber management would always take precedence over all other forest uses.⁶⁶

Thus, as a result, the Forest Service found itself defending its interest in managing the forest for recreation and all of its recent accomplishments. Once again, Cleator's plan served as a model for how the Forest Service could manage the region for both commercial and recreational uses. The Olympic Primitive Area set aside in 1930, for example, served as an important example of the bureau's commitment to preservation, yet primitive area designations were subject to administrative rather than congressional approval and could therefore be reduced or eliminated with little warning. More importantly, timber production was an essential component in determining the primitive area's boundaries as well as all other recreational units on the forest. As Cleator wrote, in order to supply the forest industries of the peninsula, it was imperative that "the largest possible portion of the National Forest area compatible with recreation needs and values be managed primarily for timber production." Even Assistant Forester Leon Kneipp who had promoted forest recreation sided with his agency's timber management practices, suggesting that they were fully compatible with its recreation program. A park, he maintained, would destroy the local economy.⁶⁷ In the long run, the Forest Service's belief that a rational, economic argument for multiple-use management of the forest, including recreation, would defeat the park proposal and win it public support contributed to its loss of the park battle.

On June 29, 1938, President Roosevelt signed the legislation creating Olympic National Park. The bill created a large wilderness park of some 634,000 acres, primarily from Olympic National Forest, with provisions for the president to enlarge it up to nearly 900,000 acres. When the National Park Service took over management of the area, its new domain included the former Mount Olympus National Monument and a substantial portion of Olympic National Forest. The Park Service would manage the new park as a wilderness reserve as much as possible, preserving

⁶⁶ Ibid., 58. See also Ben W. Twight, Organizational Values and Political Power: The Forest Service Versus the Olympic National Park (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1983).

⁶⁷ Fred W. Cleator, "Report on Olympic Primitive Area," April 10, 1936 (approved July 3, 1936), RG 95, box G-1, file: U Classification, Olympic Primitive Area, NA-PNR, 2. Schene, 57.

its great forests, as well as its impressive array of peaks, glaciers, rivers, lakes, and wildlife, in their primitive state. The Park Service would manage the Olympic country differently than the Forest Service. True, it would continue many of the projects underway in the CCC camps and in the planning stages for administrative improvements, and it would engage in its own development projects for visitors and management programs. It would also promote recreation as a valuable use of the Olympics, but it would eliminate all forms of commercial use, and with that eliminate the administrative policy of multiple use championed by the Forest Service for nearly forty years. But the Forest Service legacy, that of a working forest, would live on in the new park's system of trails, shelters, and various structures augmenting the trails. The trail system would speak to an earlier vision of the Olympics, one informed by Progressive era beliefs in efficiency and scientific management of resources--that natural resources should be used in a variety of ways and that properly managed forests should produce timber, among other resources, indefinitely. Recreation fit into this management scheme, and it too would be reflected in the new park's trail system. But recreation was only one use of many that factored into the design, planning, and development of the Olympic Forest's trails. In essence, the Forest Service's development of trails in Olympic for administrative and recreational interests was an important element in the Park Service's management of the region.