

THE BIRTH OF A
PARK SYSTEM

Through a pass of the Cascades some 18 years ago, a native of Eastern Oregon sagebrush land entered a panorama of velvety fields, white-water streams, forests tall and straight reaching for the blue, an enchanted land so picturesque that the visitor stood bewildered by its beauty.

This visitor had been appointed state park superintendent. His billet—a park system for the state. To develop one in the valley of Shangri-La needed Aladdin lamps to cope with the perspective. I distinctly remember the first park I blocked off. Its boundaries on the east, the Cascade range; on the north, the Columbia river; on the south, the California line, plus certain areas they have germandered from us from time to time; the west, our own incomparable coastal line. I knew this was impractical, though justifiable. It meant a research of the state as a whole for vivisection purposes.

Through the following 18 years, the park clinic segregated 160 recreational and scenic areas, areas of preferred grandeur. Interwoven in a state tapestry is the azalea of Azalea park near Bookings; the coastal mountain of Humbug Mountain park; the cliffed shoreline carved fantastically by Father Neptune of Shore Acres State park; the miles of mountainous sand dunes of Umpqua Lighthouse State park; the lakes of Jessie M. Honeyman park; Cape Lookout park spearheading two miles into the ocean; Otter Crest promontory thrilling all who stand on its overlook; Tillamook Head in forest grandeur, a lighthouse to the west; the 14 varied falls of Silver Creek Falls park; the white waters of the silver side of the Rogue-bordered Tou Valle park; Crown Point and its intervening waterfalls to Hood River; the Cove State Park with its basaltic 1000-foot bluffs, its three rivers—Crooked, Deschutes and Metolius with 22 miles of park frontage; Pilot Butte with stream-lined vistas encircling the compass; the white waters of Spring creek and the still water of the Williamson river bordering Collier park; the John Day Fossil park where sleeps the life that lived 50 million years ago; Emigrant hill with a westward sweep of a planned economy checkerboarded into a wheat basket that contributes to the satisfaction of the hunger of a world. From the hill to La Grande, one travels through 20 miles of unsurpassed pine forest waysides. At Wallowa Lake, a new park borders on the south, with a Switzerland back country of lakes and mountains thrilling to the eye and soul.

One can cover only a part of this Oregon "horn of beauty" in the space allotted. The teachings of this God-given land of ours should always be retained within us. Keep it immaculate for the whisper in the treetops tells you what men can't tell you at Lake Success. The quiet of a wooded lake takes you from the hum of main street, and the spiritual side of your being is atoned. Might not the answers of a distressed world be found in the God-given sermonettes of a park system? My prayer to those who read this is—never sacrifice His works that the commercial hot dog and its odors may take over; keep things immaculate that there may be a few places open for communion.

Birth of a Park System Continued.

The gathering of the state's recreational heritage is but partially done. A necklace of scenic gems has been strung, but many brilliants must still be added. There is the seashore, the waterfall, the crag in the mountain, the lake, the mighty Columbia at its mouth, the lowly bordering cutover area must be salvaged that tomorrow's scenic wayside may not again be desecrated. Build when your sinews are young. Build before time makes your recreational heritage prohibitive through cost. Husband that which you have; build unto that which you would preserve.

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