

E C O L A

an
OREGON STATE PARK
of
Beauty and Historic Interest

Eccla State Park is situated between the townsite of Cannon Beach and Tillamook Head, touching the coast line for a proximately three and a half miles. It is located in Sections 6 and 7, Township 5 North of Range 10 West and in Sections 1 and 12, Township 5 North of Range 11 West, N. W., Clatsop County, Oregon.

This tract of land was acquired from the incorporated Eccla Point and Indian Beach Company; the deed having been signed by L. A. Lewis, President and R. L. Glisan, Secretary, and the corporate seal affixed, on the 11th day of February, 1932, pursuant to a resolution of its board of Directors, duly and legally adopted. The described tract contains 451 acres, more or less, one half of which was purchased and the remainder was a gift to the State of Oregon by the late Rodney L. Glisan, his ester, Mrs. Florence G. Minott, and their cousins, Caroline M. Flanders and M. Louise Flanders, who owned a controlling interest in the vendor company.

The title is subject to an easement in favor of R. L. Glisan, his heirs, executors, administrators and assigns for the maintenance of private bath houses now on or which may hereafter be erected on a parcel of land fifty by one hundred feet in area, in the southwest corner of Lot 4, Section 13, Township 5 North of Range 10 West, N.W., and a further easement for the use and maintenance of a trail to the residence of R. L. Glisan on Block 6, Seal Rock Beach, south of said Lot 4, but not for the public at large.

The conveyance is conditioned on the said property being used and maintained by the State of Oregon for park purposes.

The word E-co-la, originally the Clatsop tribe's term for a whale, was first used and introduced into our written vocabulary by Captain William Clark of the Lewis and Clark expedition, on January 8, 1806, when he wrote in his diary, "I returned to the village of 5 cabins on the creek which I shall call Ecola or Whale Creek", thus naming the stream now called Elk Creek which flows into the ocean at Cannon Beach. It is regrettable that this original, likable name for a stream of such historical significance should have been set aside by a mistaken parochial influence for the commonplace widely used term now employed.

The term "Ecola" was first used in connection with the park area by J. Couch Flinders, according to the following excerpt from Lewis A. McArthur's Oregon Geographic Names, page 116, "Some time prior to 1900, J. Couch Flinders of Portland was attracted by the name and applied it to a group of cottages owned by the Couch family on the south flank of Tillamook Head, about two miles north of Elk Creek. The name was attractive and patrons of Elk Creek Post Office had the postal authorities rename that office Ecola. To avoid confusion E. L. Glisan and L. Allen Lewis then changed the name of the Couch family cottages to Ecola Point because of the prominent projection nearby."

The history of Ecola State Park began with the purchase of the Ecola Point and Indian Beach tract of 451 acres on February 11,

1932, since increased to 482 acres, eleven of which are park roadway. The park approach leaves the Coast Highway at the end of the bridge over Elk Creek, at the north entrance to Cannon Beach. From there a narrow paved road leads to two roomy parking areas, the lower accommodating fifty, the upper, sixty, cars, the paved road and parking spaces all kept in condition by the State Highway Maintenance Department.

The structural and other park development was by CCC forces working under the direction and supervision of National Park Service technicians in collaboration with the State Highway Commission's State Parks Department. Camp Eccla SP-5 was built and work started in the fourth CCC period, beginning in October, 1934. Work was continuous until the sixth period, ending April, 1936, when the camp was closed. Intermittent side camps operating from Saddle Mountain SP-11 and later from Short Sand Beach SP-18, dismantled the Eccla Camp, effected needed changes in the water system, built reservoirs and made other improvements which were concluded in October, 1941.

The site of the improved portion of the park is singularly inviting and unusually prepossessing, reflecting credit upon those who chose and planned it. While the parking spaces occupy a conspicuous place in this charming setting of open grassy slopes and surrounding forest, they by no means dominate the situation. From the lower one, a wide gravelled path dips down, then rises up the grassy slope to the apex of the narrowed, projecting Eccla Point - now a forbidden lookout point - which rises precipitously high above the tide, with sweeping views of coast line and ocean. Tillamook Head, two miles or so away, blanks the view to the north. To the south it reaches in all its glory to far

away Cape Lookout. Looking down upon the sea there are bird rookeries, rocks where in modest numbers sea lions are wont to rest, amidst many lesser rocks that serve only to crash the rolling waves and heighten the beauty of the scene.

The view from Ecole Point, is a splendid one. While cut off by Tillamook Head to the north, the view of the foreground, and to the south, is comparable to that from the south elevation of this famous promontory itself, which moved Captain Clark, when on his arduous, blubber seeking journey, to comment in his diary of January 8, 1806, as follows: "Last night was fair and cold, wind hard from S.W. We set out early and proceeded to the top of the Mountain, next to the former, which is much (1) the highest part and that facing the sea is open. From this point I beheld the grandest and most pleasing prospect which my eyes ever surveyed." It is indeed a significant triumph for Oregon coastal scenery that after journeying across the entire continent where every feature of the landscape was new and unheralded, Captain Clark, the first white man known to stand upon the high, open face of Tillamook Head, should have been moved by the sublime grandeur of the Oregon Coast scene revealed to him from there, as to have recorded in his journal of events his impressions of what was before him. Here, despite hunger and weariness, the soul of this leader rose above the sordidness of his errand and gave to the world an enduring, written expression of his spirit of exultation on that bright January morning 136 years ago. His words were few, but pages could not have said more.

The picnic areas lie between the lower parking space and the headland where stoves and tables have been placed in grassy nooks or shady hollows, sheltered by lofty spruces. These have been so arranged that those who wish may seek seclusion or, if so inclined, include them-

selves with a merry-making group also on pleasure bent.

A short distance to the south, on a rising wooded slope, rests the neat, homey caretaker's cottage with its shrubs, flowers and bit of lawn, overlooking the active portion of the park area, the grassy slope that drops away to the seashore, also commanding a fine view of the Point and an expanse of the wide, wide Pacific, with its grim portent of potential evil from beyond the horizon.

As a whole, the scene is one that gives an immediate impression of an all pervading atmosphere of peaceful quiet and restfulness that invites repose. There is no undue noise, no tumult. Even the not distant sea seems subdued in harmony with the general tranquility of the surroundings.

In the evening the park is an enchanting spot. To be there then, looking upon the glories of the setting sun as it lowers and dips below the rim of the ocean, is an interval that touches ones very being. If, when in this mood of ecstasy, you should chance to see a group of wapiti, fawns, mothers and antlered sires, emerge from the evening shadows of the forest as they come quiet and unafraid, seeking their accustomed bedding places, fully conscious that here in these peaceful open surroundings was a haven of safety where they might rest in security, for the nonce, you would be in full fellowship with these magnificent wild creatures and enjoy the pleasure of their proud, reticent companionship. In no other state park are these splendid forest creatures to be seen in such close contact with humans.

In their present reasonable numbers, they are notably an unusual attraction of keen interest that should be perpetuated as a living lesson of the confidence that can be engendered between wild denizens of the forest

and mankind when the primordial blood lust of the hunter is, perforce, restrained.

For nature lovers who find pleasure in being away from the pavements, two trails lead from the park center. Crescent Beach is the nearest. Its trail leaves the Ecola Point trail in the dip, traversing the grassy slope southward two hundred fifty yards or more, reaching the beach thru an arched rock near its north end. From a point just south of Ecola Point proper it extends to Chapman Point. In its course, the beach is backed by steep rocky slopes, with a fringe of driftwood where they meet the sands. When the tide has ebbed the beach is wide and firm, rocks protrude here and there to give it tone and the delectable, but elusive, razor clam is said to be quite plentiful. A beautiful and popular beach, not far from the park center, which offers everything that any Oregon sand beach of itself affords.

The Indian Beach trail leads from the north side of the lower parking area. On easy grades, with an occasional crossing of the route of the ancient trail that was the highway of the aborigines, it winds deviously from point to point, each offering some new angle of the near and far panorama, until the nearly mile long Indian Beach is reached. At low tide this beach, too, is wide and firm with its reputation for clams. The shore, especially near the south end is backed by unstable slopes of soft material that slough off almost continually in wet weather. This process is accelerated by the movement of considerable masses of this soft ground from some distance up the hillside, particularly noticeable at the south end of the beach, where short sections of the trail now and again slip away and the trail line must be set back and the trail rebuilt. This south movement is apparent at intervals to the north end of the

beach.

At this north end Indian Creek comes to the sea. Up this small stream an indifferent way trail passes under the foot bridge on the Tillamook Head-Seaside trail and wanders over rocks and logs for a distance of some two hundred yards, to a small, but pretty, waterfall that spills into a deep, dark pool that invites a try for trout, flows over the rim to drop another five feet into a lesser pool, then ripples murmuringly along its way to the seashore. Here the flotsam and jetsam delivered by tide and wave has been piled up, no doubt once a wood yard for the natives who lived nearby.

Above this drift where stream and tide meet, the right bank rises to a low, grassy bench, where in times long since past there seems to have been a few native huts and there is exposed a shell mound of considerable size. These are always intriguing and create a desire to delve into their midst and try to learn their mysteries. Any of these may be a treasure house of ancient native lore.

From this village site wooded Tillamook Head rises steeply, attaining an elevation of 1200 feet (U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey) just beyond the north limits of the park. The bald face of this promontory looks to the west where a mile off shore stands Tillamook Rock, surmounted by the lonely lighthouse whose revolving white light has gloomed its nightly five second flashes, with very few interruptions since it was first lighted on January 21, 1861, to warn mariners of the nearness of the promontory and directing them to the entrance of the Columbia River.

(1)

"The first white man known to go upon the rock was H. S. Wheeler, Superintendent of lighthouse construction, who made a landing from the

(1) See Lewis A. McArthur's "Oregon Geographic Names", Page 355

revenue-cutter Corwin on January 26, 1879. John R. Trewavas of Portland, an English lighthouse mason, was drowned in attempting to land in September, 1879. Construction was started in October by blasting twenty nine feet off of the pinnacle for the station platform. The rock was originally eighty feet high with a sharp overhang to the west."

The village site, mentioned as being at the north end of Indian Beach, is without doubt the one Captain Clark described as having seen when he descended the south slope of Tillamook Head to the beach. His description written on January 8, 1806, follows: "I proceeded on down a steep "dozent" to a single house, the remains of an old Kil-a-mox town in a "nitch" immediately on the sea coast, at which place a great no. of "erogular" rocks are out and the waves "comes" in with great force. Near this old town I observed large canoes of the "noetest" kind on the ground, some of which appeared nearly decayed, others quite sound. I "examoned" those canoes and found that they were the repository of the dead. This custom of securing the dead differs a little from the Chinooks. The Kil-a-mox secure the dead bodies in an oblong box of plank which is placed in an open canoe resting on the ground, in which is put a paddle and "sundrey" other articles the property of the deceased."

The description Captain Clark gives of this old Kil-a-mox village site leaves little doubt about it being the bench that rises above the small stream and drift pile at the north end of Indian Beach. The open bench area would readily accommodate the five houses he mentions and the burial canoes would most likely be apart from the dwellings.

In the more than a century that has passed, the habitations and canoes could have entirely disappeared from the surface. However, careful investigation would reveal evidence of their former existence.

If the shell mound is old enough, which it well might be, a cross cut thru it could bring to light many interesting features of its early history and the tribal evolution. As the early natives made a practice of burying with the deceased their individual implements of the chase, as well as ornaments, the location and systematic excavation of this ancient burying ground and long since abandoned site of native activity might prove to be of anthropological value and would be of great interest to park visitors.

Captain Clark then mentions that in the neighborhood of the old village the earth "is slipping from the sides of the high hills in "enence" masses, fifty or a hundred acres at a time and a great proportion of an instant precipitated into the "ocean"." This slipping he attributed to the "incessant rains which has fallen within the last two months." However, the "slipping", to a certain extent, still goes on.

The diary also mentions the "Point of View" (Tillamook Head) as being "covered by a very heavy growth of pine (probably spruce) and "furr", also the white cedar or arborvitae (erroneous) and black elder two to three feet in diameter and 60 to 70 feet in height, with some species of pine or "furr" 210 feet in height and 8 to 12 feet in diameter, perfectly sound and solid".

No doubt some of the trees seen by Captain Clark are still members of the background of coast forest that is rapidly being denuded of all the spruce suitable for defense purposes that is economically obtainable. Even now the east line of Ecola park is readily traced by

the slash left from logging operations on the adjoining property. This is a detriment to the water supply and is no doubt an added fire menace to the park area.

The timber stand on this park has many fine spruce trees. Let us hope that the demand for this desirable wood will never become acute enough to require stripping the park area of its remnant of this type of beautiful forest.


W. A. Langille
State Park Historian

September 4, 1942

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ecola State Park consists of an ocean strip terrain with no supporting back country. This back country is very necessary for rounding out the park from several standpoints. First is a supporting stand of timber for the protection of the timber within the present park boundaries. The Crown-Willamette Paper Company has been cutting its timber bordering the east park boundary during the past two years. With this back buffer gone which formerly protected the park timber, there has been a great loss of timber by blow down thru the ravages of winter storms. The acquisition of this adjoining land is not recommended as an immediate preventive but for the future protection of the park timber. Second, a large herd of elk range the present park boundaries and the area proposed for acquisition. This addition would give them a protective area wherein their stability would be assured against the hunter thru state laws, the poacher and general enemies. The same thought applies to deer and other wild animals native to this area.

Tillamook Head proper, Sections 31, 6 and 7, should be acquired for two purposes: first, the full control of the Head by connecting state property which is now segregated in separate lots. Second, the property is needed for trail purposes linking Seaside and Cannon Beach. There is a fine trail thru the park terminating at its northern boundary in lot one. From the northern boundary to Seaside is a haphazard trail, difficult to travel, with no maintenance supervision whatsoever. In spite of these difficulties, many hundreds hike it thru the summer months. This park trail should be carried thru to Seaside and properly maintained.

Seaside and Cannon Beach are destined to become two of the largest seaside resorts in Oregon and this proposed trail will be of great recreational importance.

The property desired, with but one exception, is owned by the Crown-Willamette Paper Co. A majority of this property has been logged off and should be secured for a maximum of five dollars an acre. That portion with standing timber should be bought on a land basis, the timber to be taken off at the Company's own convenience. It is old timber and should be removed. As this proposed acquisition is one recommended for tomorrow, the young forest in the making is much more desirable. Following is a description of the property recommended for purchase:

<u>Township</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Sub-division</u>
5 North	10 West	18	SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$; SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ N $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$; SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ N $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$
		7	SE $\frac{1}{4}$; E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ (that portion not owned by State) S $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$; N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$; NE $\frac{1}{4}$
		6	SE $\frac{1}{4}$; SW $\frac{1}{4}$; NW $\frac{1}{4}$; NE $\frac{1}{4}$
5 North	11 West	1	E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$; Lots 1 and 3
		12	NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ (that portion not owned by State)
6 North	10 West	31	SE $\frac{1}{4}$; S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$; NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$

S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

November 28, 1942