

STATE PARKS
of the
COLUMBIA GORGE

Following the uplift of the Cascade Range in the eons of the geologic past, the impounded waters of a vast inland sea lay over the eastern part of Oregon and beyond. When the disturbance of this uplift had subsided, the waters began the task of opening away through this barrier to the new shores of the ocean. This almost direct channel is now generally known as the Columbia Gorge. Except by the Columbia River, the Cascade Mountains are unsevered from the Klamath River gap, near the Oregon-California line, to the Fraser River in British Columbia.

In this deeply worn and notably scenic Gorge there is visible evidence of the titanic forces that opened this great chasm and enriched the picturesqueness of Oregon and Washington with its towering slopes of rock and forest. These are marked by stupendous cliffs with immense taluses below them; there are monoliths, great and small; interesting side canyons breach the walls, with beautiful high waterfalls plunging into sylvan dells, all in a constantly unfolding panorama of extraordinary scenic features. However, as pleasing and inspiring as all these may be, the everlasting and crowning glory of the Gorge is the silent majesty of the mighty Columbia itself. In the eras of the past it was this then greater river that had worn down through thousands of feet of Columbia basalt, layers of andesite, cemented beds of Satsop gravels, Carson lavas and into the Eagle Creek formation, the lowest stratum so far exposed.

In this base formation lying beneath the thousands of feet of later formation, there are strata of alluvium enclosing fossilized leaves and the petrified trunks of trees as evidence of a flora that flourished in this area thousands, perhaps millions of years ago. In 1871-73, Professor LeConte identified the leaves of two oaks, and one conifer, found at the mouth of Moffett Creek. Later on J. S. Diller of the United States Geological Survey, added to

this list both poplar and maple leaves.¹ In 1915 when the Eagle Creek trail was being constructed, not far from the Columbia River Highway, a fossil bearing bed was opened up by the Forest Service and Dr. Ralph W. Chaney, then of the University of Chicago, collected many perfect specimens, recognizing at least "twenty different genera and some forty species, of types that still flourish upon the earth, although the individual species found in these ancient beds are now extinct". The specimens found were, "maple, black oak, sweet gum, smilax or greenbrier, elm, walnut, sycamore, magnolia, sumac, cherry, poplar, horn-beam, birch, alder, pine, and almost certainly spruce, chestnut and willow. What luxuriance of forest must this have been! And though of types that yet flourish upon the earth, the individual species found in these ancient beds are now all extinct".²

Identical specimens have since been found by Dr. Chaney, now of the University of California, in a stratum of sand and clay in the face of the gravel cliff along the descending curve of the highway, just west of Tanner Creek. Sometime, somewhere in this vicinity, there grew a forest of the listed trees whose leaves budded in a distant spring time, ripened in a succeeding autumn, fluttered down upon a stream and were imbedded in its silts, just as they do today, to be unearthed and identified by the genius of mankind, millions of years later.

Here in July 1926, Dr. John C. Merriam, of the Carnegie Institute, was studying the fascinating geology of this locality with a party of scientists and students. A student uncovered a specimen of the ancient Ginkgo tree "originally known as living only in groves about the ancient temples of China and Japan." A very interesting story of this find is told in Dr. Merriam's "The Living Past" Chapter III, p.p., 41-54. Later on he brought from Washington, D. C., specimens of this ancient tree and had them planted; some near where the leaf was found, others at the west end of the gravel cliff. In 1942 the small Ginkgo tree at the upper end of the cliff was growing thriftily, and bid fair to become a tree where this species

1. Vol. 2 No. 3, November 1916 issue of the Mineral Resources of Oregon, by Ira A. Williams, p. 126.

2. Ibid - p. 126 - 128

flourished so long ago. Unfortunately, in June 1945, it was found the crowding of the highway area by Bonneville workers had destroyed the tree. The fossilized leaves that have been identified, and the visible, petrified trunks of trees imbedded in the gravels of this underlying Eagle Creek formation are indicative of the great antiquity of the exposed base of this geologic structure.

It is not within the province of this article to attempt any detailed description of the extraordinary geology of the Gorge. For a layman's study of this subject the mentioned November 1916 issue of the Mineral Resources of Oregon, containing Mr. William's comprehensive, well illustrated and geologically informative story of this subject is well worth reading by anyone who may be at all interested. The leading libraries still have copies of this excellent description of this section of the Columbia River, nationally known as the "Columbia Gorge". And the assertion is here ventured, that in the combination of its geology, legendary and pioneering history, and early and modern engineering development, it ranks second to no other like area in the richly endowed, scenic northwest.

The descriptions and histories of the several state parks situated along or adjacent to the Columbia River Highway in its scenic march up the river, merge into and are so much a part of the natural and historic features of the non-park areas that, except in a few outstanding instances, the parks are a part of the general picture as viewed by the traveler in passing through this area.

In the Gorge section, state park history began in 1922 with the purchase of certain small tracts for the protection of slopes along the Hood River loops. Sheridan Park, also in Hood River County, adjacent to the Bonneville Dam site, was purchased in 1923. The first tract acquired in Wasco County was the Meyer Park, a 1924 gift area. The Guy W. Talbot Park was the first Multnomah County tract, a gift to the state in 1929. Since then the acquisition of state parks in the Gorge area has gone on in an orderly succession of well chosen sites, selected by Samuel H. Boardman, State Parks Superintendent, with his usual discriminating care. As of December 31, 1944, they aggregated 4,883 acres, 1,431 acres were gifts to the State

and 452 acres were purchased.

Beginning from Portland eastward to The Dalles, the first state owned park area along the Columbia River Highway is a tract of one acre, situated just above the lower Sandy River bridge; the last one the Lewis and Clark Plaza, just within the west limits of The Dalles. The Sandy tract is only a widened parking space beside the Sandy River, recognized as an excellent location for dipping eulachons (smelt) when they come to the Sandy River spawning grounds. It is described as being in Section 25, Township 1 North of Range 3 East, W.M., Multnomah County, the deed date July 20, 1936.



W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

ROOSTER ROCK STATE PARK

Rooster Rock is a "minor" state park that has not, up to this time, been directly identified with the Columbia Gorge series. It is situated near the river level and entirely away from the present highway, lying below, and a short distance west of Crown Point. It is described as being in Section 25, Township 1 North of Range 4 East, W.M. and in Section 30 of Township 1 North of Range 5 East, W.M., in Multnomah County, containing 33.63 acres.

Its principal physical feature is a tall, shepely, basalt monolith, long known as a prominent land mark. In his Oregon Geographic names, page 301, Lewis A. McArthur, says: "This is probably the rock mentioned by Lewis and Clark as their camping place on the night of November 2, 1805". If this site could be definitely, or even approximately determined, it would be quite appropriate to erect a marker at the designated place.

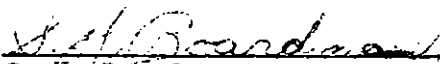
The tract was acquired by purchase on February 26, 1938, for right of way for the proposed river grade highway. It lies between the railroad and river and there are no park improvements of any kind, up to this time.



W. A. Lengille
State Parks Historian

ROOSTER ROCK STATE PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations will be submitted after a thorough survey has
been made.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:ao
March 25, 1946

CROWN POINT STATE PARK
AND
VISTA HOUSE

This now state park area can well be described as being the western end of the Columbia Gorge. It is twenty four miles from Portland, marked by metes and bounds as being in Section 30, Township 1 North of Range 5 East, W.M., Multnomah County, containing 28.71 acres, which includes the Vista House. Of this area 0.79 acres were a gift to the State by Multnomah County, the deed date August 15, 1938, 0.92 acres were a gift to the State by the City of Portland, deed dated December 27, 1938, and 27 acres were purchased from Mary N. Gilbaugh, deed dated November 23, 1945.

Crown Point, with its Vista House, is probably the best known and most widely publicized view point anywhere along the Columbia River Highway. It is situated on an immense resistive rock formation that extends well out toward the river, with recessed basins on either side. A situation that permits of wonderful, unobstructed views from the Vista House, both up and down stream. Looking to the west, the immediate foreground, reveals the top of Rooster Rock. Further to the west, the river is broad, with many low-water sand bars, some naked, some willowed. Both sides of the stream have steep, rock slopes to the uplands which are patterned with prosperous farms, forming a delightfully peaceful scene that merges into the distant rising background of the Coast Range. In the eastward foreground are naked rock formations, channeled sloughs, tree covered sand mounds, islands and river bars, all clearly seen beside the Oregon river bottom farms. Fort Rock, a point on the not distant Oregon shore, reaches nearly to the river cutting off the up stream view, with Larch Mountain looking over its rising right flank. On the Washington side, the elevated sloping plateau is also checkered with farms which reach well up on the slopes of Mount Zion. Cape Horn, tunneled for the railroad, projects prominently to the stream side, with Beacon Rock and the point beyond, intercepting the river view above Fort Rock point. This picturesque, composite view of river, hills and extensive cultural features, as seen from Crown Point, is a most pleasing and edifying introduction to the scenic Columbia Gorge and the state parks that are ahead.

It was a timely, as well as a bold, forward looking movement on the part of Multnomah County and the City of Portland, to acquire this sightly view point and construct thereon the picturesque edifice that has become so widely known, and done so much toward introducing the scenic worth of the Columbia Gorge to the traveling public. Both the County and City are to commended for authoritatively transferring this property to the State as permanent features of the Columbia Gorge State Park setting.

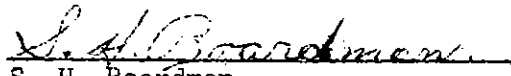


W. A. Lengille
State Parks Historian

CROWN POINT STATE PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

Modern latrines should be installed.

Building needs general repairing.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:ao
March 25, 1946

CROWN POINT LOOPS

On leaving the Vista House site, the Crown Point Loops State Park is entered approximately three quarters of a mile eastward. This tract includes the entire Crown Point Loops area as it winds down the steep slopes. It is described as being in Section 30, Township 1 North of Range 5 East, W.M., Multnomah County, containing 62.75 acres, a gift to the State by Multnomah County, the deed date November 10, 1935. The tract is now a unit of Talbot State Park.


The area is a beautiful roadside forest of Douglas fir, Grand (White) fir, Western red Cedar, Broadleaf maple, alder and a generous distribution of the native Western dogwood, whose white, early flowering livens these clean, attractive waysides with a touch of richness and appealing beauty that is much admired, and greatly appreciated in the springtime, and their abundant red fruiting and highly colored leaves are equally enjoyable in autumn. Along the Columbia River there is often a second flowering of the dogwoods which occurs in the early autumn.



W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

CROWN POINT LOOPS
RECOMMENDATIONS

These Loops should be kept in their natural state with no man-made intrusions.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:ao
March 25, 1946

GUY W. TALBOT STATE PARK

The Guy W. Talbot State Park, which Crown Point Park adjoins on the west side, is entered at Mile Post 26.18. It is described as being in Section 29, Township 1 North of Range 5 East W.M., in Multnomah County, containing 125 acres.

This park area, with its dwellings, out buildings and water system, was a gift to the State of Oregon by Guy W. Talbot and Geraldine W. Talbot, his wife, by deed dated March 9, 1929. The deed has two clauses excepting certain grants for right of way purposes. It was the first tract in Multnomah County to be obtained for a State Park.

The caretaker's dwelling and other buildings are just below the highway and to the right of the approach road that leads to the picnic area and the adjoining hamlet of Latourell, which boasts a post office, small store and a railroad station. Below the caretaker's quarters is an open grass plot of two acres, more or less, in which a number of Port Orford cedars have been planted. These were set out some ten years ago and are making a splendid growth, indicating their possibilities for reforestation purposes in this locality, where they have so readily adapted themselves to the soil and climate. To the eastward is the picnic area, in a carefully thinned grove of tall and straight Douglas firs, liberally interspersed with Broad-leaf maples, rising above an open, grassed surface, free of undergrowth. Water is piped to the grounds, there are fireplaces for cooking, benched tables for serving meals and the usual sanitary facilities, all in clean, attractive surroundings. The park is popular with Portland groups for week end outings.

The greater park acreage is on the rising ground south of the highway. These upper and lower portions, separated by the highway, are connected by a well constructed, overhead foot bridge, from which a trail ascends to the water supply source. The old county road which leaves the loops just below Mile Post 25, passes through a delightful area of open grass land, beside a picturesque, cliff sided point of rock, that offers a pleasing secluded retreat for ground picnics. This old road was a unit of the once Dalles-Sandy Military Road, the route of early

pioneers. From here it descends to the park area and railroad station.

The outstanding scenic feature of Talbot Park is the Latourell Fall, on the creek of this name. Joseph Latourell, whose name attaches to several local features, was a pioneer settler.

The Latourell fall is the first of the series of beautiful water-falls to be seen along, or adjacent to the highway going from west to east. Like water from a pitcher, it pours over the lip of the basalt cliff, dropping 249 feet, practically to the level of the highway, from which this smooth column of water is clearly visible. In peace times all the highway stages paused a few minutes to afford passengers an opportunity to view them. A second fall, with a drop of about fifteen feet, rises a short distance up stream from the top of the main one.

A switch-back trail ascends the slope east of the creek, crosses it at the head of the lesser fall, and circulates out to a rock point which affords a fine view of the river and its opposite shore, then reverses itself and soon connects with the park water supply trail, a short distance westward; making a very interesting walk for those who do not mind a bit of climbing.

The records show that detachments of CCC forces worked part time in Talbot Park during the second period, October 1933 to April 1934, the third period; April to October 1934 and the fifth period, April to October 1935.


In these periods the accomplishments were one rustic foot bridge, fourteen rods of guard rail, four fireplaces for cooking, thirteen table and bench combinations; nine tenths of a mile of difficult forest trail, one mile of fire-break, three quarters of a mile of roadside fire hazard reduction, six and one half miles of trailside fire hazard reduction, three acres of other fire hazard reduction and one mile of lineal survey. Other trail work was done by state park forces.



W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

GUY W. TALBOT PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

Additional picnic tables should be provided. One three-stove kitchen should be constructed with electric plates to take the place of stoves now in place. A parking area should have consideration as part of a street is now being used. An additional thirty-acre tract on the east side of Latourell Creek and south of the highway is needed for the protection of the park. The land is located in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 29, Township 1 North, Range 5 East. I had its purchase before the commission for \$3500.00 but was turned down. This land is absolutely necessary for the protection and completion of the park. A new trail bridge leading from the park to the highway should be constructed.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent


SHB:ao
March 25, 1946

GEORGE W. JOSEPH STATE PARK

The George W. Joseph State Park adjoins the south side of Talbot Park. It is made up of two separately deeded forty acre tracts, described as being in Section 32, Township 1 North of Range 5 East, W.M. in Multnomah County. Both tracts were gifts to the State of Oregon by Bertha L. Joseph and George W. Joseph, her son, by deeds dated September 11, 1934 and June 23, 1942. Title clearance to the later deed tract was by Sheriff's deed from Multnomah County, dated August 10, 1945.

These tracts are also located on Letourell Creek and have a beautiful double waterfall, located approximately three quarters of a mile up stream from the head of the Talbot Park falls, and easily reached by a good trail that ascends the east side of the stream.


While there are no improvements in this park area, other than the foot trail, in conjunction with Talbot Park and the Crown Point Loops, there is formed a single administrative unit, which in combination has all the natural attributes of a very attractive state park area, less than one hour of driving time from Portland's business center.



W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

GEORGE W. JOSEPH PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

This park should be kept in its wilderness state, it being a complement to Falbot Park. Only the upkeep of the trails should be considered.

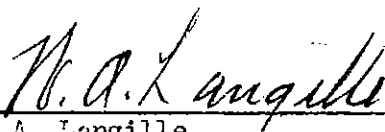

S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:ao
March 25, 1946

SHEPPERD'S DELL STATE PARK

Eastward, the next state park is Shepperd's Dell, at Mile Post 27.38. This unusual park site was given to the City of Portland by George W. Shepperd, for "park and recreational purposes". For a number of years it was under Portland's stewardship. Situated at Young's Creek, it is described by metes and bounds as being in Section 28, Township 1 North of Range 5 East, W.M., Multnomah County, containing 10.03 acres. It was a gift to the State of Oregon by the City of Portland, the deed dated October 14, 1940.


Shepperd's Dell itself is a slightly rock bound, hill side cove, down which Young's Creek wends its broken ever-hurrying way in a series of cascades and minor falls that angle in almost every direction. The highway approach to this charming spot, from either east or west, is along the side of an almost vertical wall of massive basalt. Particularly noticeable is the unique, overhanging cliff of finely jointed basalt, overlying a splendid natural palisade base of heavy basalt columns, just east of the bridge, the striking contrast between the two forms of rock being very apparent, even to the casual observer. At this time there are no facilities nor are there other park improvements. Its scenic highway approaches and surroundings, in connection with its impressive geologic formations, win and hold attention as one of the unusual and picturesque features of highway construction in this area.



W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

SHEPPERD'S DELL PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

This park should be kept in its natural state. Larger parking area
if possible.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:so
March 25, 1946

BENSON STATE PARK

Benson State Park, classified as a "minor" state park, was so named in honor of Simon Benson, a zealous and untiring worker for the development of the Columbia River Highway, who gave most liberally of his time and substance to make it a reality.

The park is a tract of land of irregular width, extending from Wahkeena Creek on the west to a vanishing point east of Multnomah Creek, lying between the Oregon-Washington Railroad and Navigation Company's north right of way line and the meander line of the Columbia River. It is described as being in Lots 1 and 2, Section 12, Township 1 North of Range 5 East, W.M., and in Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4, Section 7, Township 1 North of Range 6 East, W.M., Multnomah County, containing 75.80 acres. This tract was a gift from the City of Portland to the State of Oregon, by deed dated November 8, 1959.

Some years previous the present Benson State Park area and a strip of land south of the railroad right of way, exclusive of the highway right of way, were acquired by the City of Portland from Simon Benson, the Railroad Company and the other owners extending from the Wahkeena Falls area to and including the Multnomah Falls area, where the City of Portland erected the commodious and substantial, chalet type of concession building that adorns this picturesque, widely known Multnomah Falls setting. In normal times it was well patronized by motorists and stage passengers.

When the Benson Park tract was conveyed to the State, the City transferred all of their holdings south of the railroad right of way to the United States Forest Service and they became a part of its previously established Columbia Gorge Park.


The state park is 800 or more feet in width at the west end, approximately 400 feet wide at Multnomah Creek, and from there to its eastern extremity it rapidly slivers to nothing. The entire area is low land. Prior to the construction of the Bonneville Dam, it was subject to overflow by the extreme freshets of the

Columbia. A small portion of the wider west end supports a growth of cottonwood, ash, willow and underbrush, typical of the Columbia River bottom lands, having little or no commercial value, but is a soil stabilizer that affords shade and shelter for any future park development. East of this limited growth there are scattering, old cottonwood trees, but most of the ground is open.

When owned by the City a CCC Camp was established on the tract near Wahkeena Falls, and its members were employed several periods. They erected some buildings, built good trails to the scenic upland points, did considerable roadside and trailside clean up, and extensive fire hazard reduction. In this area, where forest fires are a potential danger throughout the entire fire season, clean up adjacent to highway and trails is essential.

All stages going either way, now stop for a few minutes at Multnomah Falls, and in the past, all daylight passenger trains paused giving passengers a chance to glimpse Oregon's highest waterfall which has a total drop of 620 feet (U.S.G.S.).

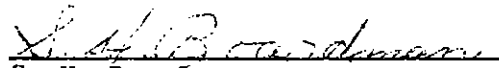
There are no facilities or improvements in Benson Park at this time.



W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

BENSON STATE PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

This is an undeveloped tract situated between the highway and river.
This should have detailed study for improvement purposes.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:ao
March 25, 1946

ONEONTA PARKING SPACE

Oneonta Parking Space at Highway Mile Post 34.31 is situated at the west end of the Oneonta tunnel where the highway crosses Oneonta Creek. In the leisurely days of past years, this site was a railroad flag station, where many came on The Dalles local in the early forenoon and returned to Portland in the early evening with creelwell filled with trout taken from this beautiful stream that flows quietly through a narrow, enchanting gorge, its high cliffed wall clothed with masses, lichens, an abundance of drooping maiden hair ferns and a liberal sprinkling of golden mimulus (monkey flowers) to enrich the general effect. However, the average visitor must view it afar, as the stream bed is the only pathway to the falls a thousand feet or more distant.

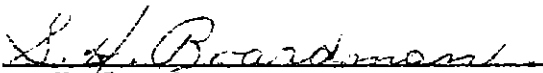
Due to the crowding of the precipitous cliffs at both ends of this stop-light tunnel, the highway has encroached upon the Oregon-Washington Railroad Company's right of way and the limited parking space is their property, which they have graciously leased to the State that travelers may have a chance to stop and glimpse the spectacular rock point and the very interesting Oneonta Gorge picture.



W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

ONEONTA PARKING SPACE
RECOMMENDATIONS

A long-term lease should be obtained on this tract or it should be purchased.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:ao
march 25, 1946

AINSWORTH STATE PARK

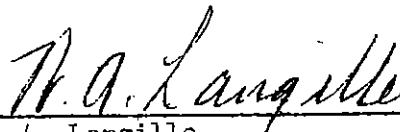
Ainsworth State Park entered at Mile Post 35.20 is the next one eastward. Practically all of this tract lies above the highway, with the highway and railroad rights-of-way clipping off a small triangle at the northwest corner. It is described as being in Section 3, Township 1 North of Range 6 East, W.M., in Multnomah County, Oregon containing forty acres. This area was a gift to the State of Oregon by the late J. C. Ainsworth, and Alice H. Ainsworth, his wife, by deed dated July 29, 1933.

The tract is well wooded, rising with a moderate slope near the highway, which increases in steepness in its southward ascent. Its special feature is a splendid, very cold, free flowing spring which wells from the hillside, below the highway surface level. To make this excellent supply of pure water available to the public, space was excavated for the installation of a concrete basin, with surrounding floor space, easily reached by a few downward concrete steps.

An old railroad grade at one time covered the spring, and a short distance westward, this has been widened to provide a limited parking space and a small, but very pleasant picnic area, where a table or two and a stove have been set up for public use in a bower of cool shady alders.

The wooded area above the spring has been cleaned up and is a delightful restful place for anyone who enjoys the quiet peace of a pleasant, secluded forest.

The picnic area facilities, fire breaks, fire hazard reduction along the road and trail sides, camp ground clearing and lineal survey were all done by CCC forces in the second, third and fifth periods, in 1933-34 and 35. The water installation was also by CCC forces.



W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

AINSWORTH STATE PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

This is a wayside and possibly a few more tables might be added. Search should be made for a hillside contact of the spring developed by the wayside. If found, a fountain could be constructed at highway level, and the present spring development abandoned.


S. H. Boardman
State Park Superintendent

SHB:ao
March 25, 1946

JOHN B. YEON STATE PARK

The John B. Yeon State Park is situated on McCord Creek, formerly called Kelly Creek, at Mile Post 38.37, a short distance east of Warrendale. A few acres lie north of the railroad right of way with the greater portion of the area on McCord Creek and the contiguous abruptly rising, rock highlands. The tract is described as being in Section 31, Township 1 North of Range 7 East, W.M., in Multnomah County and contains 115 acres, together with certain water rights. The deed dates were July 25 and September 17, 1935.

This state park was named in honor of John B. Yeon, a contemporary of Simon Benson with whom he worked earnestly and persistently in promoting and developing the Oregon State Highway system, showing particular interest in the Columbia River Highway. He was at one time a fellow member of Mr. Benson's on the Oregon State Highway Commission, in the days of its beginnings.

The John B. Yeon state park has a high order of scenic and geologic interest. To the public the chief bid of the park is the beautiful waterfall with a total height of 289¹ feet. Altho a comparatively short distance from the highway, the fall is not entirely visible from the McCord Creek highway bridge, because of the intervening trees or crowding cliffs. The cliffs also preclude any ample, nearby parking space. A one car pocket is on the outer side, at the east bridge end, safe for one west bound car. Opposite this a good trail leaves the bridge end and meanders upward along the cliff side to an inner vantage point, which opens upon a superlative view of the fall, and its impressive, picturesque surroundings in this unusual exhibit of Gorge geology. There are interesting exposures of layered boulders surmounted by tremendous basalt cliffs rising in successive strata to towering heights of grandeur, which are deeply fissured or worn to forms of interest, forming a scene of secluded weirdness, where voice echoes resound eerily from beetling cliffs, as if mocked by scores of mountain nymphs, hidden in the niches and crannies of the rock walls where they are supposed to dwell.

1. See Vol. 2, No. 3, P. 66, of the November 1916 issue of "Mineral Resources of Oregon, published by the Oregon Bureau of Mines and Geology, containing Ira A. Williams' fine story of the Columbia Gorge.

From this observation point the trail descends to the stream below the fall, crosses on a rustic bridge, where large, detached blocks of stone have lodged, rounds a point and circuitously climbs the west wall of the basin to Point Nesmith, rising almost vertical far above the base of the fall.

In years past a flume led from the creek along a shelf, in part natural, in part blasted from the cliff side, to the turn of the point, where the water entered a pipe conduit that carried it to a pulp mill, once situated near the creek, on the river side of the railroad. This high flume shelf is now utilized as a portion of the park trail that reaches Point Nesmith, then follows up stream some eight hundred feet to a large, creek pool. Those who are physically able, and suitably shod, should not ~~miss~~^{Mind} making the climb and experience the thrill of walking this benched trail along the spectacular cliff side and look down upon the pouring waters of the fall and into its fascinating basin.

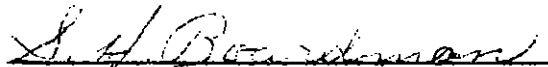
Note: While generally called McCord Creek Falls, we read in Lewis A. McArthur's Oregon Geographic Names, that in 1915 they were named Elowah Falls "by a committee representing the Mazamas and other organizations", with the further comment that "the name was obviously Indian but its meaning had not been determined".



W. A. Lengille
State Parks Historian

JOHN B. YEON STATE PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

Picnic areas at the foot of the falls and at the top of the falls should be developed. Also on the tract bordering the river. To reach the river tract, a foot-way will have to be provided thru the railroad culvert. The flat open tract west of the creek and bordering the river owned by the Crown-Zellerback Corporation should be purchased to round out the park. This development to follow the new construction of the highway. The new highway starting at the west end of the present bridge and extending eastward will be some fifty feet south of the present alignment. The old highway beginning at the east end of the bridge and extending eastward some eight hundred feet should be brought to the same gradient as the new highway in order to provide parking space for the park.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:so
March 25, 1946

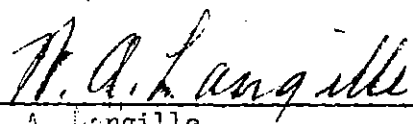
SHERIDAN WAYSIDE STATE PARK

The Sheridan State Park is on the old Columbia River Highway at Mile Post 44, adjacent to the Bonneville Dam. It is located in Section 14, Township 1 North of Range 7 East, Hood River County, Oregon, containing 11.50 acres, the deed date, April 24, 1923.

This wayside area, with a view of the Bonneville Dam and power site, is an historical park named in honor of Major General Phillip H. Sheridan who, as a Lieutenant participated in the Yakima Indian troubles at the Cascades. A marker beside the old highway, indicates the place where Sheridan with a small force of soldiers and civilians crossed from the Oregon shore, to assist the beleaguered citizens on Bradford Island who had been attacked by some two or three hundred Yakima Indians on March 26, 1856, two days previous to Sheridan's arrival. As told by Captain Lawrence Coe in Gaston's Centennial History of Oregon, page 413, Sheridan came up from Fort Vancouver on the steamer Belle, picking up a group of civilians on the way who readily volunteered to return and join him in the conflict. Troops also came from Fort Dalles and with volunteers from Portland and elsewhere the Indians were soon defeated, but not until there had been a considerable number of casualties on both sides.

The park offers a good view of the Bonneville Administration site for those who wish to pause for a few moments and look upon this famous structural achievement that has obliterated the Cascade Rapids and for many miles stilled the waters of the Columbia.

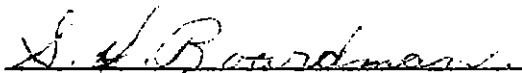
There are no facilities within the park area and development work has been limited to roadside cleanup and reduction of fire hazard.



W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

SHERIDAN WAYSIDE
RECOMMENDATIONS

More should be made of this wayside with its historical background. The point provides two wonderful views, the Cascade Bridge and the Bonneville Dam. More tables, a water supply would add to the development. The area south of the highway should have study.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

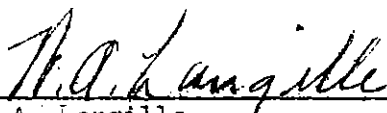
SHB:ao
March 25, 1946

LANG STATE PARK

This forest wayside park is situated at Mile Post 50, a few miles east of the Cascade Locks. It is described as being in Section 33, Township 3 North of Range 8 East, Hood River County, Oregon, originally containing 72.32 acres, of which 3.69 acres were deeded to the United States when flooded by the Bonneville Dam, and 0.85 acres were deeded to the Oregon-Washington Railroad and Navigation Company for grade protection. The present net acreage is 67.78 acres. The deed date is February 1, 1932.

The tract is a sheltering, forest wayside lying on both sides of the highway. The old Dalles-Sandy-Military Road, which crosses the south side of the property, was reported open for pack trains and for driving loos stock from The Dalles to a point one mile below the lower Cascades, early in 1867.

During the Third Period, April to October 1934, members of the Camp Wygant CCC Camp encircled the most vulnerable portion of the tract with a fire break and cleaned up the roadside fire hazard. There are no other improvements and no park facilities of any kind.



W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

LANG WAYSIDE
RECOMMENDATIONS

This should remain as a timbered wayside. Fire protection should be provided.

S. H. Boardman
S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:ao
March 25, 1946

STARVATION CREEK STATE PARK

Starvation Creek State Park is situated on Starvation Creek at Mile Post 56.47. It is described as being in Section 3 and 4, Township 2 North of Range 9 East, W.M., Hood River County, Oregon, containing 78.13 acres, after minor deductions for Bonneville Dam flowage easements up to the 94.6 contour line, and additional right of way to the railroad company for necessary grade protection. The deed dates were August 7, 1930 and July 18, 1938.

The original name of this creek was "Starveout", so designated in the winter of 1884-85 when a deep snow stalled two trains in the immediate vicinity. Hood River men using home made skis, were employed to carry food to the snow bound passengers. In the beginning they were paid \$25.00 per trip. This was before the days of huge rotary snow plows, now used by the railroads which clear the tracks so rapidly and effectively. A similar type is also employed to keep the highways clear.

Almost the entire area of this park is on the steep slope of the south side of the Gorge, with the park facilities snugly situated in a delightfully restricted nook between fern-cled cliffs, thru which the tumbling stream leads upward a short distance to the foot of the picturesquely broken waterfall that flows over a basalt ledge nearly two hundred feet high. In its descent there are three minor breaks over protruding rocks, before it splashes widely on the base of fallen stone at its base. The form of this fall is somewhat different from others in the Gorge, and is the most easterly major fall of this remarkable series, which notably range in height from near two to near three hundred feet, most of them clean drops, Multnomah, with an overall descent of over six hundred feet being an outstanding exception.

Near the entrance to the park, a rustic foot bridge crosses the stream to the facilitated picnic place, which is frequently visited, especially by out of

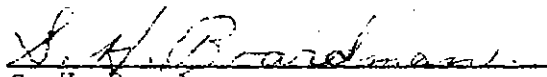
state motorists passing westward, who sight this most easterly fall from the highway as they approach it, and stop to obtain a more intimate view. Another foot bridge once crossed the stream over a jumble of rock near the base of the fall, but a winter flood carried it away. The trails, bridges and picnic area facilities were all the work of CCC forces.



H. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

STARVATION CREEK PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

Additional land was purchased between the railroad and river a few years ago with the thought of providing a boat picnic area at some later date. A water system should be provided in the main park, latrines also. A few more tables should be provided.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:ep
March 25, 1946

VIENTO STATE PARK

Viento State Park, situated on Viento Creek, north of the highway, is approximately nine miles west of Hood River, Mile Post 58.27. It is described as being in Section 34, Township 3 North of Range 9 East, W.M., Hood River County, containing 3.60 acres which, with certain water rights, were acquired by deed, dated May 13, 1925. The former owner of the tract and its water rights has his home adjoining the area and has been the park caretaker ever since it became state property twenty years ago.

This small park is in a delightful, open grove of fir with many of the Broadleaf maples that are such a pleasingly conspicuous element of the forest growth in all the Gorge State Parks, wherever moisture is found. Viento Creek cheerily liltts its way through the area, and watchful eyes may now and again see a brook trout wavering in the deeper water, or rising to the surface to seize any stray insect that drifts to its lair, as the murmuring stream gently hurries on its way to the not distant river. On warm days children like to play beside the brook and dabble their bare feet in its shallow water.

The readily accessible, clean, open grounds, its stoves, tables and other park facilities, with pure water running free from a convenient drinking fountain, combine to form an inviting, hospitable atmosphere that has attracted the motoring public driving along this much traveled highway, ever since its establishment. It is an outstanding example of a small, well equipped, wayside park, and has been a popular resting place for a score of years, with public appreciation growing as time goes on.

Members of Camp Wygant CCC forces, working during the Third and Fifth periods in 1934 and 1935; built a rustic foot bridge over Viento Creek, controlled menacing stream erosion, set up benched tables and stove, cleared fire brecks, reduced fire hazards and, not the least of their efforts, eradicated patches of the


obnoxious poison oak; a plant that is conspicuously prevalent along this section of the highway. The drinking fountain with its grotesque face, the several water outlets, stoves, tables and rest rooms, were the work of the skilled, state park, traveling construction crews.

W. A. Langille

W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

VIENTO STATE PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

This is a wayside park heavily used by tourists. More tables should be provided. Investigation of the land between the railroad and river should be made from an acquisition standpoint.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:ao
March 25, 1946

WYGANT STATE PARK

Wygant State Park is on Perham Creek where the stream debouches from the hills at Mile Post 60. This creek was named after a Hood River family, whose several men were active in the lumber industry on the headwaters of this stream and on the slopes of Mount Defiance, in the days when logging was with oxen and the lumber was flumed to the railroad at Sonny.


The original Wygant Park area is described as being in Section 36, Township 3 North of Range 9 East, W.M., Hood River County, Oregon, containing 251.50 acres. This tract was a gift to the State of Oregon from Simeon Reed Winch and Olivia F. Winch, his wife, by deed dated January 13, 1932. Twenty six and fraction acres were deeded to the United States as a flowage easement for land flooded by the Bonneville Dam. Adjoining the south side of this park is a tract of 80 acres, also described as being in Section 36 of the same township and range, which was a gift from Hood River County, deed dated October 4, 1933. In addition other tracts aggregating 360 acres, described as being in Section 1, Township 2 North of Range 9 East, in Section 6, Township 2 North of Range 10 East and in Section 32, Township 3 North of Range 10 East, Hood River County, were also a gift from Hood River County, by deed dated September 4, 1935, making the total net acreage of the Wygant State Park 665.23 acres, more or less.

With a rather steep gradient, Perham Creek crosses the east forty of the Winch tract, and the former county forty adjoining it on the south. A well built trail ascends the stream for a distance, crossing and recrossing it on three substantial rustic bridges; thence on an easy grade, climbs a steep sloping ridge on the west side of the creek, touching two points with good outlooks upon the Columbia River; thence on to the apex of the ridge, elevation 2,300 feet, four and eight tenths miles distant from the highway. This unnamed point has a superb view of this section of the river, the scenic walls of the Gorge, portions of the

beautiful Hood River Valley, and to the south, Mount Hood rises to new heights, from an out of the ordinary view point of its most picturesque north side.

This trail was built by Camp Wyant CCC members during the Third Period, April to October, 1934. Although well made, the grade uniformly easy and the panorama of river and mountains an inspiring one, its usage has been moderate. Other improvements and facilities made during this period were 2.6 miles of fire break, 4.8 miles of trailside clean up, 14.7 acres of fire hazard reduction, 1,450 square yards of parking area prepared, vista cutting 4 acres, and five miles of lineal survey. There were 800 feet of water pipe laid, one drinking fountain installed, one substantial rock monument erected, with a bronze plaque inset commemorating the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Winch who donated the first tract of land for the Lygent Park.


One camp stove was set up, several benched tables were built and placed in the enticing picnic area, near the highway, where the facilities are located in a grove of firs, shady maples and alders, along the narrowed streamside floor where there is a pleasing air of quiet seclusion.



W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

WYGANT STATE PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

This park should be kept in a wilderness state other than its roadside development. Protect its mile of weysides. The new highway alignment will parallel the railroad where it passes the roadside development. Have the new grade extended to the old road to provide parking space.


S. H. Boardman
S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:sp
March 25, 1946

SENECA FOUTS MEMORIAL STATE PARK

The Seneca Fouts Memorial State Park is situated south of the Mitchell Point tunnel, its north side a half mile, more or less, horizontal distance from the highway, at an elevation of about 1,000 feet, just south of the sharp disintegrating ridge that leads to the steep north end of what has been termed "Big Mitchell".¹ On the south side of the tract there is a forested hill that rises to 1500 feet (U.S.G.S.).

The tract is described as being in Section 31, Township 3 North of Range 10 East, Hood River County, containing 160 acres, excepting therefrom the right of way granted to the United States for its Bonneville transmission line, 150 feet in width, containing nine and a half acres, completely dividing the park property into two almost equal parts. The net park area is 150.50 acres.

The tract was a gift to the State of Oregon by Seneca Fouts, with a reversion clause in the deed, requiring that the State erect and maintain an appropriate marker or plaque on the property, forever. The deed dated August 26, 1944.

A basined few acres, crossed by the power line, had at one time been cultivated, fruit trees set out and water has been piped to the improved portion. The wilderness is reclaiming the cleared land and the several varieties of fruit trees have practically gone wild. The south side of the tract, on and around its high point, has considerable green timber of size, but most of the area has been logged or burned over, with a fair reproduction taking the place of the destroyed stand.

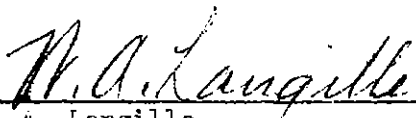
Access to the property was formerly over an extension of the Post Canyon road, leading from the west side of the Hood River Valley. This the Forest Service had improved for a protection road, and a locked gate precludes its use, except by a special permit from the Herman Creek Ranger Station.

The elevation on the south side affords a splendid view of the beautiful

1. Ira A. Williams in Mineral Resources of Oregon Vol. 2, No. 3, P. 108

Hood River Valley and its surroundings, with nearby Mount Defiance and Mount Hood lifting prominently on the Oregon side, and the upper portion of the great bulk of Mount Adams rising above the Washington hills.


Definite plans for development of this newly acquired park are in abeyance for the war period.



W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

SENECA FOUTS MEMORIAL
RECOMMENDATIONS

This park consists of 160 acres located on the top of Mitchell Point. It does not take in the direct point. Forty acres should be bought to take it in. A complete wayside development should be made, a trail leading from the wayside to the Point. Memorial highway signs should be erected. The Parks Department owes an obligation to Mr. Fouts for a complete development of the area, Mr. Fouts passing on to other lands. Mr. Fouts was a good friend of the writer.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

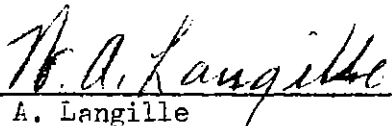
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March 25, 1946

HOOD RIVER LOOPS

- Development Area -

The Hood River Loops Development Area, is made up of small wayside units situated at the junction of the Columbia River Highway and the Mount Hood Highway, and bordering the loops of the rising main highway, just east of Hood River. The junction tract is described as being Lots 1, 2, and 3, Block 1, of Reynolds addition to Hood River, containing 2.77 acres, a gift to the State of Oregon by the County of Hood River, the deed date February 4, 1931. The tracts bordering the loops, aggregating 4.20 acres were purchased in three parcels, described as being in Section 31, Township 3 North of Range 11 East, W.M., Hood River County, Oregon. The deed dates being May 22, June 13 and September 12, 1922.

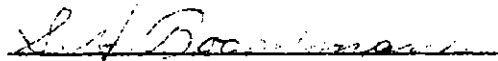
The lots at the junction of the highways were acquired for extra right of way and the loop tracts were obtained to prevent encroachments upon the banks of the ascending loops, where there were usable gravel deposits. No park improvements of any kind have been made up to this time.



W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

HOOD RIVER LOOPS
RECOMMENDATIONS

They should be left in their natural state.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:cc
march 25, 1946

HOOD RIVER-MOSIER FOREST WAYSIDE

The Hood River-Mosier Forest Wayside begins at Mile Post 68.22, a mile or so east of Hood River, and ends at Mile Post 70.48, a little over two miles of highway distance. The tracts are described as being in Sections 31, 32, and 33, Township 2 North of Range 11 East, W.M., all in Hood River County, containing 101.50 acres, more or less. These tracts are designated in the deeds as being "Indian Deed Inherited Lands", conveyed to the State of Oregon by noncompetent "Cascade" Indians who were of Hood River origin. Their names and the respective acreages are: Katie Coon, heir of Charles Coon and Jack Coon, 36.83 acres; Thomas Jim, a single man, 28.60 acres; Martha Aleck, widow of Joe Aleck, 15.07 acres; William Johnson and Isabel Johnson, his wife, Frank Johnson and Celia Johnson, his wife and Edward Johnson and Esther Johnson, his wife, 21.00 acres. All were respected citizens of this community. In his younger days Jack Coon was a noted bear hunter. For several years Joe Aleck, Martha's husband, carried the white Salmon mail and ferried passengers across the Columbia in an open, not too seaworthy skiff. He had three sons all of whom met death in river accidents. At the time of her death in 1939, Martha Aleck was the oldest member of the Hood River Indians, erroneously reputed to be a hundred years old. She was a small child, possibly two years of age, at the time of the Indian troubles at the Cascades in 1856. Her father was warned by a friendly Klickitat Indian that the Yakimes planned to attack the settlement the next day. To avoid being involved in the conflict he put Martha, her mother, and their meager possessions into his canoe and left for Hood River at midnight before the trouble started. This would fix Martha's age at eighty five, more or less, when she died.

The east end of this wayside forest is approximately a half mile from the Hood River-Wasco County line, and marks what is practically the east limit of the western Oregon Douglas fir forest area along the Columbia River Highway. Within the length of the wayside forest there are two small, privately owned, triangular tracts that corner on the highway right of way and interrupt its state owned continuity.

Although the acreage is not great, their sylvan value is high, especially in this locality, which punctuates the waning edge of the fir forest that borders the highway on its march from the ocean to the treeless region beyond.

The only improvements in this wayside where fire breaks, fire hazard reduction and a lineal survey, by CCC forces in 1934.



W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

HOOD RIVER-MOSIER FOREST WAYSIDES
RECOMMENDATIONS

The waysides should always be kept in their natural state.
Connecting forties should be acquired.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:ao
March 25, 1946

MEMALOOSE ISLAND OVERLOOK

The Memaloose Island Overlook is situated at Mile Post 76.30, nearly three miles east of Mosier. It is described as being in two parcels, lying in Section 32, Township 3 North of Range 12 East, W.M., in Wasco County, Oregon. One parcel with 1.48 acres is north of the highway, the other with 1.16 acres, is south of the highway, the total 2.64 acres. These tracts were a gift to the State of Oregon by Roy D. Chatfield and Bernice M. Chatfield, his wife, the deed date May 25, 1925.

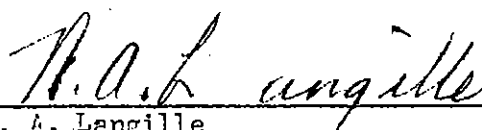
The surrounding area is rocky, the soil shallow with scrubby pines holding a precarious rooting in the deeper soil or rock crevices. In the very early spring, the thin, moist layer of soil of the adjacent areas produces a profusion of Blue eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium idahoense*) with a touch of the scattering, vividly golden blossoms of the *Hydastylus borealis*, resembling the Blue eyed grass in form. These welcome harbingers of spring are the earliest wild flowers to appear along the highway between Hood River and The Dalles. They have been known to be in bloom before mid-February.

The Overlook is located on a prominence 532 feet (U.S.G.C.) above the river. There is an ample parking space beside the highway, adjoining a well graveled inclosure, that is almost surrounded by a cut stone wall. The site affords lengthy views up and down the river. A particularly noticeable feature on the Washington side, is the evenly layered basalt of the eastern limb of the Bingen anticline that dips into the river just above Memaloose Island.

This deeply sanded rock islet was a repository for the fleshless bones of the native dead where they had been deposited for untold years. The crude shelters on the island attracted the attention of Lewis and Clark as they were drifting down the river on October 29, 1805, and they stopped to note the sheltered pits that were the final sepulchers of the dead. They named it Sepulcher Island.

In the late 1880's and early 1890's, these charnel houses were frequently visited by white persons, some from curiosity, some seeking artifacts or flathead skulls. Long before the coming of the white man, it had been a practice of the Chinookien tribes to flatten the heads of the female children and thus enhance their appearance when grown up, as by tribal standards, the more the head was flattened, the more desirable was the individual. These flattened skulls were the most coveted objects to be obtained and some of the vaults had been disturbed to a depth of eight or ten feet in the search for select specimens. The Indians keenly resented this profanation by white people, and not infrequently the impious invaders were shot at from the Washington shore. Nevertheless the flattened skulls in the open vaults practically all disappeared.

The highwater of 1894 washed away the lowest of the vaults and back water from the Bonneville Dam has since submerged the lower portion of the island. It is regrettable that vandalism and indifference have been the cause of the almost complete obliteration of this outstanding site of early Indian burial customs.




W. A. Lenville
State Parks Historian

MEMALOOSE ISLAND OVERLOOK
RECOMMENDATIONS

Always keep in neat condition .

Secure permission of adjoining owner to clean up area of debris wherein
it detracts from river view.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:ap
March 25, 1946

MAYER STATE PARK
and
ROWENA LOOPS

Mayer State Park is situated on the Columbia River Highway, between Mile Post 79.60 and 81.97. The park includes practically the entire Rowena Loops area, and is described as being in Sections 2, 3, 10 and 11, Township 2 North of Range 12 East, W.M., Wasco County, containing 260 acres, less 4.21 acres to the United States for a flowage easement, the net area 255.79 acres. This entire tract was a gift to the State of Oregon by Wasco County and Mark A. Mayer, the deeds dated, March 8, 1924 and April 12, 1924, respectively.

Two clauses in the deed from Wasco County recite the following:

"Whereas, Wasco County has heretofore paid the Cost Bill (\$755.05) and, acting through its Board of County Commissioners, decided that damages in the sum of \$2,800.00 could not be paid out of County Funds for the taking of the land; and

"Whereas, thereafter and thereupon a public spirited citizen in the person of Mark A. Mayer, Mosier, Oregon, has paid to Wasco County, the said sum of \$2,800 in order that title to the real property hereinafter described may be acquired by Wasco County to be deeded and conveyed to the State of Oregon for the use of the public as a park-site forever..." It was a worthy gift to the State and has been much appreciated by the public.

The wide, parapeted parking space at the crest of the park, with an elevation of 718 feet (U.S.G.S.), above sea level, and over 600 feet above the river which laves its base, is well up on the western limb of the Ortley anticline. It is the most elevated overlook point on the Columbia River Highway from Crown Point to this site, and there is no place on this highway further east that rises to a similar height or affords a comparable up and down stream view of the river.

The axis summit of the Ortley anticline lies about midway between Rowena and Crate's Point, its highest vicinity elevation 2,047 feet, less than a mile south

of the highway. While the line of this anticline axis might be called the east end of the Gorge; Crate's Point a well known geographic feature, bordering the west side of The Dalles basin, more distinctly marks a physiographic change, and is the line of demarcation between the dwindling edge of the forest growth that exists to the west and the treeless zone to the east. Thus, Crate's Point can logically be considered the definite, east end of the Columbia Gorge, as when this point is rounded there is an entirely different aspect and atmosphere going in either direction.

Below the parapeted parking place are the winding, sharp curved Rowena Loops that have been so skillfully engineered down a seemingly impossible precipitous slope. Just beyond their base is the Rowena hamlet.

To those who know where to find them along these warm, sheltered loop slopes, there may be seen the earliest and most exquisite blossoms of the yellow adder's tongue, (*Erythronium perviflorum*) to be found anywhere along the Columbia River Highway. Later on, there are places in the loop area that are fairly carpeted with these beautiful, rich-yellow flowers, which seem to excel all others in color and size. There, too, there is an abundance of Cinnamon brush, (*Ceanothus velutinus*) locally called wild lilac, or perhaps "shooley" brush. This is a waist high shrub, abundant in the Rowena loops, bearing a mass of sweet scented flower clusters, which range in color from white, through shades of lavender and blue. The shrubs are abundant, colorful, and when the spring days are warm and quiet, their sweet odor scents the roadside atmosphere. Unfortunately, in blossoming time they are infested with ticks, and contact with them should be avoided, if possible.


Looking down and across the Columbia, a snug little village of Lyle rests peacefully beside the mouth of the Klickitat (Lewis and Clark's "Cataract River") a stream once famous for its many and large trout. To the east are the brownish gray slopes that mark the beginning of the treeless region of Eastern Oregon, an up-river view that has a singularly appealing charm and beauty all its own.

For a brief time in the early spring a tinge of green spreads over the bordering hills and later they are gay with visible splashes of bright yellow sunflower blossoms, but the moisture quickly drains away from the shallow soil of the steep, arid slopes and they are soon sere and gray. Cool, boisterous winds sweep up the Gorge in the spring and early summer, but in late summer and autumn there are many quiet, delightful days, especially when the leaves of the scrub oaks and shrubs of the gulches have turned to their accustomed seasonal tints of beautiful reddish browns and rich sepia tones. These with the variable mahogany shades of the basalt cliffs and outcrops, are then harmoniously blended with the gray-brown of the steeps, all reflected with mirror like clearness in the placid water of the river. In looking upon these somnolent hills in this pleasant time of the year, they seem to have gone into repose, holding an indefinable something deeper, more impressive, than the bare surfaces indicate. There then comes to mind an inarticulate thought of the mysterious, inscrutable, distant past, when the vast spread of the interior Oregon Country was covered with a flora of tropical or semi-tropical luxuriance, its fauna an aggregation of many animals no longer in existence. These ranged from sheep sized horses to huge mastodons, with many other strange, powerful animals of like or intermediate sizes, and ferocious predators in sufficient numbers to balance and stabilize their existence. All these were long since overwhelmed, their remains buried beneath the hundreds, even thousands, of feet of gravels and basalts that constitute the visible, exposed surface, now dominated by civilized mankind, who with marvelous ingenuity is progressively converting the vast area to human needs and uses, while the past sleeps, wrapped deeply in its timeless obscurity far beyond the ken of ordinary mortal understanding.

Several years ago a fire swept over the loop area killing a good many small to sizable pine trees, and number of large ones. In this fringe of trees that marks the near eastern limits of evergreen growth, this fire loss was lamentable.


Later on, it was aggravated by the loss of other and larger pines, because of a limited bark beetle infestation, probably induced as a result of the trees being weakened by the fire. Every tree killed by fire or insects in this border line growth is a loss to the park that it takes many years to replace, and the fire hazard is always dangerously present in the fire season.

Other than its fine and ample, walled parking space, there are no improvements and no facilities of any kind. However, there are many cars pause for visitors to look in wonderment upon the magnificent panorama that spreads before them.


W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

MAYER STATE PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

Keep the park a wilderness area. Improve view point in every way possible. Have Maintenance Department remove sand bunker just below overlook.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

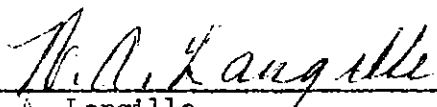
SHB:ao
March 25, 1946

LEWIS AND CLARK PLAZA

The Lewis and Clark Plaza is a tract of land situated on the relocated Columbia River Highway where it enters The Dalles from the west. It is described as being in Section 4, Township 1 North of Range 13 East, W.M., Wasco County, containing one and fifty five hundredths acres, a gift from Dalles City, a municipal corporation, to the State of Oregon, the deed date May 10, 1936. Adjoining and adjacent to the Plaza tract, in the same section, are the parcels of land, given to the state, by Fred F. Thompson and Edna C. Thompson, his wife, the deed date May 8, 1936, containing two and sixty three hundredths acres, involving an exchange of a quarter acre by the State. A portion of this tract is being utilized for highway and access road purposes.

The Dalles City tract was for the purpose of erecting thereon a large stone monument to commemorate the presence of the Lewis and Clark expedition who camped for several days at the nearby mouth of Mill Creek. In Lewis A. McArthur's precious volume of Oregon Geographic Names, he says: "The neighborhood of Mill Creek at The Dalles was called "Quenett" by the Indians, which was a word for salmon trout. Lewis and Clark camped at the mouth of this stream on October 25, 26, 27, 1805 and recorded the form 'Quenett' in their journals and on their maps. In April 1806 they renamed this place 'Rockfort Camp'".

After the site was acquired, the erection of the monument was started as a Works Progress Administration project, sponsored by the Dalles City municipality. The work was suspended when the WPA ceased their activities and has not been renewed since. No doubt, interest in it will be revived when the days of peace return and this worthy project will be carried on to completion.

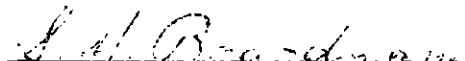

W. A. Langille
State Parks Historian

WAL:ao
December 5, 1945.

LEWIS AND CLARK PLAZA
RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide funds to complete monument.

To landscape grounds.


S. H. Boardman
State Parks Superintendent

SHB:ao
March 25, 1946