

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

Intermountain
Region

Sawtooth
National
Forest



History of the Sawtooth National Forest

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#84



Grading the Highway north of Ketchum, Idaho — 1920's

- 1937 Dwelling for Forest Supervisor at Hailey
- 1938 Large warehouse and equipment building at Hailey.
Lookout building on Horton Peak.
- 1940 Rubble masonry, deluxe, lookout, two-story, on Bald Mountain.

Stations yet to be improved are the Bowery Guard Station (new building residence constructed in 1941), the Garfield Guard Station, the Hunter Creek Guard Station, and the Paradise Lookout.

14. CCC Program

The CCC program was established on April 5, 1933, approximately four weeks after President Roosevelt took office. The purpose of the program was to furnish young men employment in the conservation of our natural resources. It provided for 300,000 men, in camps of 200 men each. It was the army's responsibility to feed, clothe, and look after the general welfare of enrollees, and the technical agency's job to take the men at 8:00 a.m. in the morning and work them on various jobs and return them to camp by 4:00 p.m.

Since the program started, camps have been located on the Sawtooth during the field season as follow:

1933 - The Big Smoky Camp was established near the mouth of Big Smoky Creek about June 1. This camp had various men as superintendents this year. The primary work projects were the building of the Soldier, Big Smoky, and the Liberal Ranger Stations, and road work from Soldier R.S. to Big Smoky and down the river below Big Smoky R.S.

The Ketchum Camp was established on Warm Springs Creek about five miles above Ketchum on about May 15. R.E. Carney was superintendent. The principal work projects were the building of the Ketchum R.S., the reconstruction of the Warm Springs Creek Road, and campground work.

The Redfish Lake Camp was established about June 1 at Redfish Lake. C.H. Ramage was superintendent in charge. The important work projects were the building of the Sawtooth Valley R.S., the Redfish Lake Guard Station, road construction, campground work, and general cleanup work around the lake and campgrounds.

Considerable difficulty was encountered because of politics entering into the program. When overhead for the camps was employed, no consideration was given

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to politics; consideration was given only to qualifications and ability to do the job. Democrats and Republicans were hired. Since this was a Democratic program, the forest was severely criticized because some Republicans were employed. In some cases, Republicans were released. This is probably the first time that politics entered into the administration of the Sawtooth Forest.

Within a very short time, the forest was required to place 600 men to work. This necessitated hiring overhead, hiring trucks, purchasing equipment and supplies, planning work, supervision, etc. The regular overhead on the forest worked long hours; and it was a difficult job which was well done, considering circumstances.

1934 - No CCC camps were occupied on the forest during 1934, probably because of political reactions.

1935 and 1936 - During the field season of these years, the Big Smoky Camp was occupied, and the work consisted mostly of construction of the South Boise Road. C.H. Ramage was superintendent in 1935, and C.R. Engelman in 1936.

1937 - Redfish Lake Camp was occupied in 1937, during the field season, and work was done on the campgrounds, road construction, cleanup, fire suppression, bridges, etc. C.R. Engelman was superintendent.

1938 to 1940 inclusive - Redfish Lake Camp was occupied during the field season of these years. In 1938, Jack Evans was superintendent; during 1939, Emmett Steeples was superintendent. During these years, the camp moved in around May 20 and left October 15. The work program was road construction, construction of bridges, campground work, telephone line construction, fire control work, clean-up work, and other miscellaneous jobs.

The Ketchum Camp was occupied during the field season these years, and was in charge of Ralph Reed as superintendent. A variety of jobs were completed, among the most important of which are: the hill section of the Trail Creek Road, Warm Springs Creek Road, Baker Creek Road, Trail Creek Campground, water system on Wood River Campground, telephone line continuance of various projects, and many other jobs.

The CCC program has been a God-send for the Sawtooth Forest the past seven years. Without such a program, many of the worthwhile jobs could not have been accomplished because of lack of funds. Besides the various improvements accomplished, the CCC's have been the best fire fighting organization available. Many other worthwhile jobs, too numerous to mention have been performed by the CCC's. The Civilian Conservation Corps have improved the health of thousands of

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boys, provided worthwhile work, trained and taught boys to work, taught the boys discipline, and in many cases, they have learned a trade and secured good jobs. The United States is a stronger nation because of the CCC program.

15. Sawtooth Primitive Area

An area of 200,042 acres located on the Boise, Challis, and Sawtooth National Forests was designated as a primitive area on October 12, 1937, and has been administered as such since being established.

This primitive area was created, to prevent unnatural alteration or impairment of unique natural values, and to conserve, so far as controlling economic conditions will permit, the opportunities to the public to observe the condition which existed in the pioneer phases of the nation's development; and to engage in the forms of outdoor recreation characteristic of that period; thus aiding in preserving national traditions, ideals, and characteristics, and promoting a true understanding of historical phases of national progress.

It is now in as near a primitive state as it is possible to find an area of this size, there being no roads, but few miles of trails, and no human habitation. Half the area is within a state game preserve, and affords an opportunity to see wild game in its natural habitat and unmolested.

The area is being visited frequently by such organizations as the Trail Riders, the Mazamas, and other individuals desiring recreation in a wilderness area.

16. Forest Homesteads

A large percent of the land filed on and patented under the Act of June 11, 1906, proved to be non-agricultural. Settlers have moved off, and most of the land is now used for grazing purposes. This Act authorized the filing on 160 acres of land within the National Forests as homestead if classified as agricultural by Local Forest Officers. Local officers apparently were too liberal in their classification reports for the good of the homesteaders and service.

17. Statements of Early Pioneers

(A) Early Livestock History - Statement dictated in the fall of 1940 by Frank J. Bown, who worked with livestock all his life.