

Little Gem of the Cascades:  
An Administrative History of  
Lassen Volcanic National Park



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## Preface

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In August 2016, Lassen Volcanic National Park will celebrate its 100-year anniversary in the same month and year that the National Park Service commemorates its own 100-year anniversary. The fifteenth national park established by Congress, Lassen is one of the oldest national parks in the United States. And yet it is not well known to the American public. Compared with a handful of other national parks of similar vintage, it is arguably the least known of the lot.<sup>1</sup> That is one anomaly that this administrative history sets out to explore.

The purpose of this report is to describe how the park was conceived and established and how it has been managed to the present day. Its primary audience is park managers and staff, but it is also directed to the interested public. The report aims to be as comprehensive as possible while emphasizing management issues of ongoing concern. It is essentially a chronological narrative with the selection of topics and the amount of detail weighted somewhat more heavily toward the recent past. While the administrative history covers many diverse management issues, its core objective is to distinguish those historical themes that most ably explain this national park's unique character and course of development. Two themes are outstanding.

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<sup>1</sup> Lassen was the fifteenth national park if one includes three small national parks that were later disestablished or incorporated into non-park reserves: Mackinac Island NP, established in 1875 and made into a state park in 1895; Sullys Hill NP, established in 1904 and turned into a game preserve in 1931; and Platt NP, established in 1906 and incorporated into Chickasaw National Recreation Area in 1976. In addition, several national monuments were established by presidential proclamation prior to the establishment of Lassen, a few of which later became national parks. Congress established Hot Springs Reservation in 1832 but made it a national park only in 1921. The other parks established prior to Lassen in chronological order are: Yellowstone, Sequoia, General Grant (Kings Canyon), Yosemite, Mount Rainier, Crater Lake, Wind Cave, Mesa Verde, Glacier, Rocky Mountain, and Hawaii (Haleakala and Hawai'i Volcanoes). Soon after Lassen came Mount McKinley (Denali), Grand Canyon, Lafayette (Acadia), and Zion. See Barry Mackintosh, *The National Parks: Shaping the System* (Washington: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1991), 11, 16-17.

The first theme is tied to the geography of the park and the region – and to the historic eruptions of Lassen Peak. Although Lassen is located in the most populous state in the union, it is in a rural part of the state remote from big cities. Beginning as early as the late nineteenth century, townspeople and ranchers from the surrounding counties visited the high country around Lassen Peak to enjoy camping and fishing and to seek relief from summer heat in the valleys. Some people came for the mineral waters. But the area did not attract many tourists from afar, and in the early 1900s it was an unlikely candidate to be made a national park. Measured against most other existing national parks, Lassen’s scenery was pleasing but not spectacular, its volcanic and geothermal features wonderful but not monumental. Then the volcano erupted and the local movement to establish a national park, which had faced long odds when it was conceived, suddenly bore fruit. And then, almost as quickly, the volcano went dormant again. Lassen entered the pantheon of national parks as the most recently active volcanic area in the United States outside of Alaska and Hawaii, a measure of importance that receded over time. By other measures the new national park was destined for relative obscurity: it was a small national park, one-seventh the size of Yosemite; it was California’s fourth (most national parks outside of California were the only ones in their state); it lacked a nearby metropolis or a transcontinental railroad to build grand hotels and promote its attractiveness; and perhaps most importantly, apart from the eruptions of 1914 and 1915 it was not monumental.

None of these factors lessened Lassen’s appeal for park visitors. As visitation to Lassen remained relatively modest through the years, regional writers began describing the national park as an overlooked “little gem” in the National Park System, a worthy tourist attraction that was off the beaten path, a “friendly wilderness” for people who prized solitude or relaxation. If its scenery was not as spectacular as, for example, Yosemite’s, neither was the place overrun by hordes of people. And if its volcanic and geothermal features were not monumental like those of Crater Lake, Mount Rainier, or Yellowstone, they existed on a scale and within a close proximity to each other that made them ideal for interpretation. Lassen attracted an unusually high percentage of family groups and repeat visitors, most of whom came from the local area – just as they had before the area was made a national park. The park acquired a pattern of visitor use that most visitors and staff found much to their liking. But Lassen’s placid character meant that the park did not receive all the financial and technical support that park managers often desired for it. Still, a rather lean administration was usually preferable to the alternative – a park with lots of problems and controversies.

The second theme in this administrative history centers on chronology. Lassen’s history follows the main contours of National Park Service history, and such major thrusts as road construction, land protection, and fire management are best understood when viewed in the wider context of what was occurring in the National Park System. Indeed, Lassen Volcanic National Park may be viewed as one of a cohort of national

parks established in the early twentieth century that “grew up” under a shared set of circumstances. These parks were molded by the rise of car culture after World War I, heavily impacted by the Great Depression and World War II, and largely completed, in terms of the development of park infrastructure, by the time of the Wilderness Act of 1964. Typical of its cohort, Lassen passed through three distinct eras: first, a time of discovery, establishment, and preliminary development; second, an extended period of planned development punctuated by the New Deal (1933-1940) and Mission 66 (1956-1966); and third, the present era in which the emphasis of park management has shifted from development and use to resource protection. In Lassen, as in other parks, the present era commenced in the mid-1960s in response to heightened public attention to ecological values. In keeping with this chronology, the report is divided into three parts: “Genesis, 1907-1931,” “Development, 1931-1964” and “Naturalization, 1964-2007.” Each part is broken into topical chapters that treat various aspects of park administration within this chronological framework.

The term “naturalization” requires comment. By the 1960s, many people began to think that Lassen and other national parks of its vintage had been overbuilt during the New Deal and Mission 66 eras, and there were calls to move overnight accommodations and other kinds of development out of parks, “unbuilding” some of that infrastructure. Usually, initiatives in this direction were blunted or entirely prevented by people interested in seeing the national parks used and exploited to their fullest potential. But in Lassen, two such initiatives succeeded, each for reasons peculiar to Lassen, with the result that patterns of visitor use at Lassen changed significantly during the last third of a century. The first of these initiatives, closure of the park’s main overnight use facilities at Manzanita Lake in 1974, was accomplished suddenly and dramatically when the potential for a massive rockslide off Chaos Crags was judged to pose an unacceptable threat to public safety. In the second instance, closure of the Lassen Park Ski Area in 1993, the park went through a classic give-and-take struggle between environmentalists and developers that played out over a span of more than 20 years. Both initiatives continued with landscape restoration of the former development areas after their closures. These important initiatives are each given their own chapter, while the term “naturalization” is used to describe the overall paradigm shift toward greater ecological awareness that characterizes the present era.

The authors would like to thank friends and staff of Lassen Volcanic National Park for their kind assistance in this project. Karen Haner, Cari Kreshak, Nancy Bailey, David Louter, Tim Purdy, Susan Watson, Tandy Bozeman, James O’Barr, Mary Martin, Scott Isaacson, and Steve Zachary gave many hours of their time assisting with research or reviewing drafts or both. In addition, numerous people contributed to the project with oral history. The names of all people interviewed for the project are found in the bibliography.



## Prologue

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On September 29, 1863, William H. Brewer of the California Geological Survey sat on the summit of Lassen Peak, his second visit to the top in three days, penning a lengthy description of what he saw. “The arch of dawn rises and spreads along the distant eastern horizon,” Brewer scribbled in a shaky hand. His thermometer read 25 degrees Fahrenheit and a raw wind was making him shiver. “Its rosy light gilds the cone of red cinders across the crater from where we are. Mount Shasta comes out clear and well defined; the gray twilight bathing the dark mountains below grows warmer and lighter, the moon and stars fade, the shadowy forms rapidly assume distinct shapes, and day comes on apace.” Despite the cold, Brewer continued like this in his journal for several pages, so enthralled was he with the view. “Many volcanic cones rise, sharp and steep, some with craters in their tops, into which we can see – circular hollows, like great nests of fabulous birds.” It is easy to sense Brewer’s elation on that day. He stayed on the summit for nine hours.<sup>1</sup>

Just as it did for Brewer and the many geologists who followed in his footsteps, the Lassen Peak area offers the modern visitor a cornucopia of volcanic and geothermal features. Within the boundaries of Lassen Volcanic National Park are found all the main types of volcanoes recognized by modern volcanologists: plug dome, composite, shield, and tephra cone volcanoes. Lassen Peak itself is perhaps the largest dome volcano in the world.<sup>2</sup> Fumaroles, mudpots, and boiling springs occur in several locations. Scientists and visitors can observe the devastation wrought by Lassen’s recent eruptions in 1914 and 1915, as well as the process of forest regeneration that has occurred since then.

Lassen Volcanic National Park lies at the southern tip of the Cascade Range. Geologically, the area is connected to the Cascade uplift and the chain of volcanoes that

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<sup>1</sup> William H. Brewer, *Up and Down California in 1860-1864*, edited by Francis P. Farquhar (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 462.

<sup>2</sup> Philip S. Kane, *Through Vulcan’s Eye: The Geology and Geomorphology of Lassen Volcanic National Park* (Mineral, Calif.: Loomis Museum Association, 1980), 36.

extend down the west coast of North America. Biologically, it is at the junction of the Cascade Range and the Sierra Nevada Range to the south. Lying within this transition zone, the park contains an unusual diversity of plants and forest types.

After Brewer's expedition in 1863, other scientists visited Lassen and gradually added to geologic understanding of the region. Clarence King led a survey of the country surrounding Mount Shasta and Lassen Peak in 1870, noting that the many cones around the latter occupied the caldera of a much larger volcano. Harvey W. Harkness ascended Cinder Cone and explored the environs of Snag and Juniper lakes in 1874 (nearby Mount Harkness would be named in his honor). Harkness publicized the fact that this cone was of recent origin, although subsequent investigations would push the date of the last eruption back about 200 years. Lieutenant S. E. Tillman led a survey party into the area in 1878 and in the course of his survey he mapped the limits of the extensive lava beds that covered the area. Tillman's survey laid the groundwork for J. S. Diller, whose geologic study of the Lassen region was the most comprehensive of the era. In 1889, Diller established the geologic history of the region and its relationship to the Cascade and Sierra Nevada ranges. Diller's work also contributed to the belief that the Cascade volcanoes were extinct, a misconception that would be shattered when Lassen reawakened in 1914.<sup>3</sup>

At the same time that these nineteenth-century scientists were laying a foundation for the eventual campaign to make the area a national park, local residents were using the area for their own various purposes. Beginning with ancient use of the area by Native Americans and continuing through the years of white settlement and the development of resource extraction industries, the matrix of human strivings in the region created a cultural setting that would have an enduring influence on the development of Lassen Volcanic National Park in the twentieth century.

## **Indians of the Lassen Peak Region**

The present area of the park historically fell within the customary use areas of four Indian tribes. The Atsugewi lived north and east of Lassen Peak in the Hat Creek drainage and around Eagle Lake. The Maidu inhabited a large area southeast of Lassen Peak in the rugged Feather River watershed. The Yahi occupied the narrow Mill Creek

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<sup>3</sup> Howel Williams, *Geology of the Lassen Volcanic National Park, California*, University of California publications in geological sciences series, vol. 21, no 8. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1932), 207-208; H. W. Harkness, "A Recent Volcano in Plumas County," *Proceedings of the California Academy of Sciences* 5 (1874): 408-412; S. E. Tillman, "Report of Lieutenant S. E. Tillman, Corps of Engineers, in charge of party No. 1 Utah Section, Field Season of 1878," in U.S. Geographical Surveys West of the 100<sup>th</sup> Meridian, *Report upon United States Geographical Surveys West of the One Hundredth Meridian* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1879), 209-214; J. S. Diller, "Geology of the Lassen Peak District," in J. W. Powell, *Eighth Annual Report of the United States Geological Survey to the Secretary of the Interior, 1886-87, Part I* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889), 401-404, 430-432.

and Deer Creek valleys to the south, while the Yana lived along Battle Creek southwest of Lassen Peak. These four tribes mostly kept to their own respective territories, but they traded with one another, sometimes intermarried, and occasionally gathered resources together in the upland meadows and streams around Lassen Peak where their territories adjoined.<sup>4</sup>

Sharing similar environments, the four tribes followed much the same seasonal rounds. In the summer they dispersed in the high country, including the area that is now the park, where they hunted deer, gathered roots, nuts, and berries, and fished for salmon and trout in the cold mountain streams. In the fall they moved to the lowlands to harvest acorns before gathering in semi-permanent villages at low elevations to pass the winter below the snow line. As with most subsistence-gathering cultures, the seasonal round for these tribes was characterized by a mix of staple food sources – deer, salmon, acorns – and a wide variety of alternative food sources that were relied upon when one of the favored food sources failed. For example, in addition to deer, these Indians hunted elk, mountain sheep, pronghorn antelope, black bear, grizzly bear, mountain lion, and possibly bison. They also hunted smaller animals including cottontail and snowshoe rabbits, ground squirrels, skunks, badgers, woodrats, porcupines, woodpeckers, quail, ducks, and geese.<sup>5</sup>

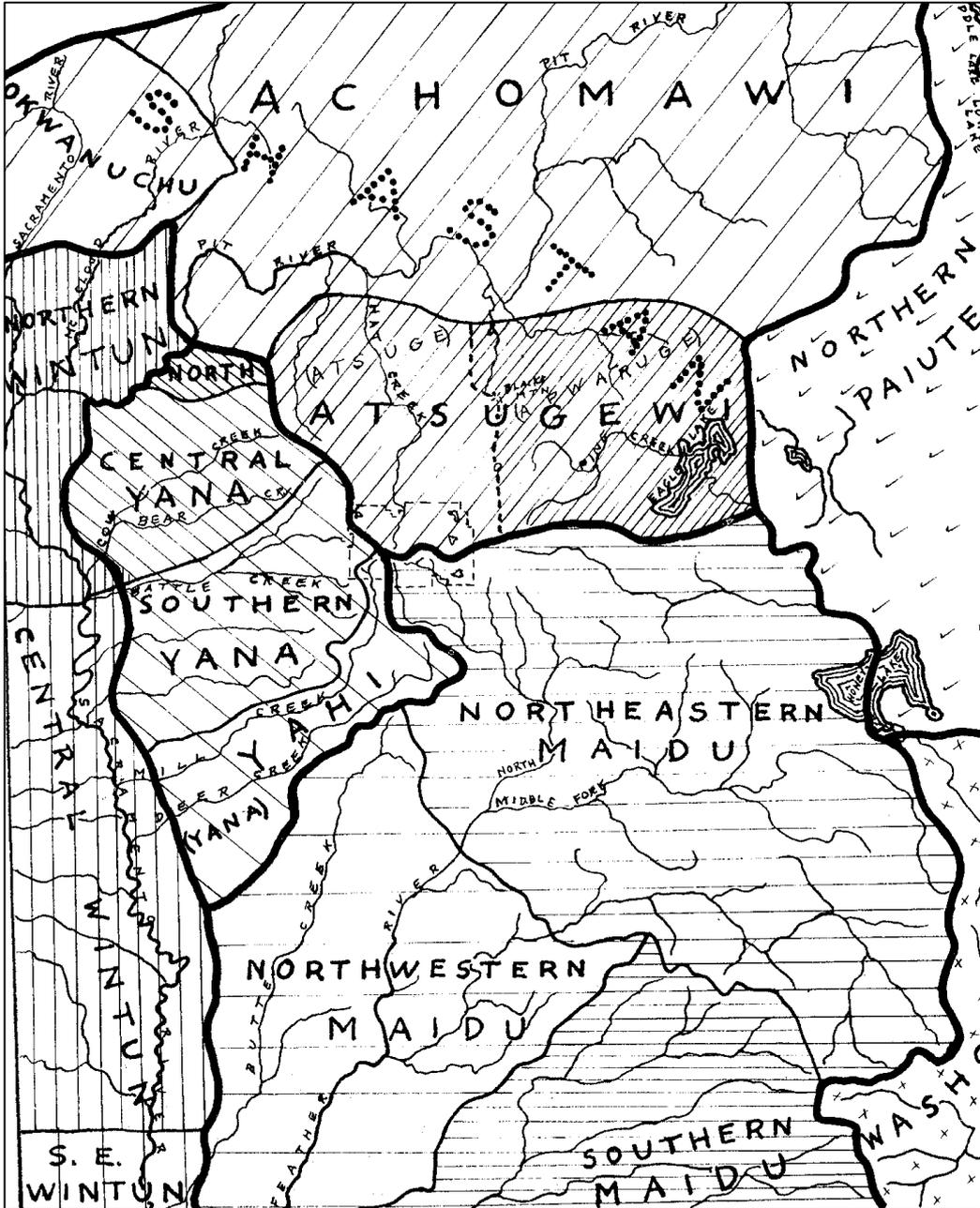
The four tribes surrounding Lassen Peak came from three different linguistic stocks. The Atsugewi spoke a Shastan language. The Maidu language was of the Penutian family. The Yahi and Yana spoke two distinct dialects of the Yana language, which was itself in the same Hokan family with the Shastan language. Despite their proximity to one another, the four tribes also possessed many differences in their material culture, social organization, and ceremonial life, all of which are richly detailed in *Indians of Lassen Volcanic National Park and Vicinity* by Paul E. Schulz, a former naturalist at Lassen Volcanic National Park.

The four tribes probably numbered a few thousand people before they came in contact with Euro-Americans. Schultz gave their total combined population in 1770 as 4,025 (1,000 Atsugewi, 750 Yana, 275 Yahi, and 2,000 Maidu). By 1950, the population had declined to less than one tenth of their original number and one tribe, the Yahi, was extinct. This fearful rate of decline was characteristic of the fate of many Indian tribes in California, where white-Indian relations in the frontier period were exceptionally brutal. Historians attribute these conditions to the California gold rush and the suddenness with which whites poured into the region, disrupted the Indians' subsistence base and cultures, and dispossessed the Indians of their lands. White settlers feared the Indians whom they were victimizing and killed them indiscriminately. Often what began as an expedition to

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<sup>4</sup> Paul E. Schulz, *Indians of Lassen Volcanic National Park and Vicinity* (Mineral, Calif.: Loomis Museum Association, 1954), 16-17.

<sup>5</sup> Ann Emmons and Theodore Catton with contributions by Derek Beery and David Strohmaier, *Lassen Volcanic National Park Historic Resources Study*, report prepared for the National Park Service (Missoula, Mont.: Historical Research Associates, Inc., 2003), 7-8.



Map 1. Tribal Areas of the Lassen Region. Lassen Volcanic National Park is outlined at center. Source: Paul E. Schulz, *Indians of Lassen Volcanic National Park and Vicinity* (Mineral, Calif.: Loomis Museum Association, 1954).

capture Indians and force them into peonage ended in murder when the Indians tried to flee. These widespread homicides went unpunished. For their part, Indians did what they had to do to survive. Driven from their villages and hunting grounds, isolated and starving, they begged or stole from white settlers. When these acts of “outrage” by desperate Indians became particularly threatening, whites mounted a “war” against them. Indian resistance lasted longest in the northern part of the state and included the so-called Pit River War north of Lassen Peak.<sup>6</sup>

The story of the Yahi tribe’s demise is especially poignant. As the Sacramento Valley below Lassen Peak became settled by whites during the 1850s, the Yahi took refuge in the steep, inaccessible country of the upper Mill Creek drainage. Fearful of being killed if they ventured down to the oak-covered foothills to gather acorns, they survived by concealing themselves in the conifer forest and occasionally making night raids on farmers’ fields and livestock. Whites mistakenly believed that this phantom tribe, which they dubbed the “Mill Creek Indians,” was composed of desperados from various other tribes in the region. In 1865, a party of armed whites surprised the tribe in their camp on upper Mill Creek and killed an unrecorded number of men, women, and children. While most of the tribe seemed to have been wiped out, a small number escaped. Remarkably these survivors managed to elude discovery and to forego all contact with whites for more than four decades. Returning to their traditional seasonal rounds, they made a winter village in the remote upper Deer Creek drainage and probably made summer hunting trips as far east as Lassen Peak. They continued in this mode of life until they were finally rediscovered in 1908 by a party of surveyors. Coming upon the Indians’ camp, the surveyors found one old woman who was too weak to move and spied an old man and another woman making their escape. The surveyors helped themselves to some artifacts and left the old woman alone; when they returned the next day she was gone.<sup>7</sup>

Three years later, in 1911, a solitary, middle-aged Yahi man emerged from hiding on the edge of Oroville, some 40 miles south of Deer Creek. From there he was brought into the sympathetic custody of a prominent anthropologist, Dr. Alfred Kroeber of the University of California, Berkeley. This Indian, unwilling to reveal his name, became known to the world as “Ishi” – the Yana word for “man” or “one of the people.” For the remaining five years of his life Ishi made his home at a museum in San Francisco, where he informed anthropologists and the public about his people’s culture.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Sherburne F. Cook, *The Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 280-300.

<sup>7</sup> T. T. Waterman, “The Last Wild Tribe of California,” *Popular Science Monthly* 86 (March 1915): 233-244; Theodora Kroeber, *Ishi in Two Worlds: A Biography of the Last Wild Indian in North America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), 105.

<sup>8</sup> Emmons et al., *Lassen Volcanic National Park Historic Resources Study*, 47; Frederic R. Gunsky, “The Legacy of Ishi,” *Living Wilderness* 40 (January 1977): 4-11.

While the Yahi tribe was driven to extinction, the Atsugewi, Maidu, and Yana tribes survived. Today, a small community of Atsugewi resides in the Hat Creek vicinity and forms part of the Pit River Tribe with tribal headquarters in Burney. The Mountain Maidu are mostly scattered among California's Indian reservations. The Yana were greatly reduced during the nineteenth century and survivors came to settle with the Wintu Tribe in the Redding area and in the Pit River watershed.<sup>9</sup>

## Peter Lassen

Lassen Peak was named for Peter Lassen, one of the first white settlers in the northern Sacramento Valley and the discoverer of a route through the mountains called the Lassen Trail. In the decade and a half that Peter Lassen lived in the area – from the establishment of his ranch near present day Red Bluff in 1844 until his death on the east side of the Cascades in 1859 – great changes occurred in California. The United States took California from Mexico, and the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill less than a year later sparked a gold rush such as the world had never seen. By the census of 1860, California had attained a population of some 362,196 non-Indians. Even the relatively remote counties surrounding Lassen Peak contained a total of more than 10,000 non-Indians.<sup>10</sup>

Born in Farum, Denmark in 1800, Peter Lassen began his wandering at the age of 30, traveling to Boston, Massachusetts, then to Missouri, then by wagon train to Oregon, and finally by ship to Alta, California, where he obtained a 22,000-acre land grant located at the confluence of Deer Creek and the Sacramento River a little south of present-day Red Bluff.<sup>11</sup> Lassen named his ranch *Bosquejo* (wooded place). He acquired some 200 to 300 head of cattle, and with the help of Indian laborers he built an adobe house, blacksmith shop, and barn for his livestock. The California pioneer artist J. Goldborough Bruff made a drawing of Lassen's ranch, depicting a comfortable main house and two neat outbuildings.<sup>12</sup>

Joining in the Bear Flag Revolt of 1846, Lassen formed an ambition to establish an American settlement near his ranch, which he wanted to name Benton City in honor of Senator Benton of Missouri, a champion of westward expansion. With the Mexican-American War not yet concluded, he returned east in the fall of 1847 to recruit emigrants. In the summer and fall of 1848, Lassen led a wagon train westward, following the

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<sup>9</sup> Emmons et al., *Lassen Volcanic National Park Historic Resources Study*, 5.

<sup>10</sup> Superintendent of the Census, *Population of the United States in 1860* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864), 22-27.

<sup>11</sup> Ruby Johnson Swartzlow, *Peter Lassen: Northern California's Trail-Blazer* (San Francisco: California Historical Society, 1940), 1-6.

<sup>12</sup> "Peter Lassen," *Hutchings Illustrated California Magazine* 3 (July 1858 to June 1859): 352; Andy Hammond, "Peter Lassen and His Trail," *Overland Journal* 4, no. 1 (Winter 1986): 40.

Oregon Trail, then the California Trail, and finally the Applegate Trail to the Pit River in the northeast corner of California, from which point he blazed a trail westward to the upper Sacramento Valley, a new route soon known as the Lassen Trail.<sup>13</sup>

The route was difficult and the wagon train came near to disaster. The Pit River entered a canyon that was too steep and narrow to follow, but when Lassen led the party out of the river canyon it was soon struggling through pine forest so thick that the wagon boxes had to be trimmed to smaller dimensions to maneuver them among the trees. According to tradition, Peter Lassen became disoriented, using Mount Shasta as a reference point one day and confusing it with Lassen Peak the next. Anxious to avoid rough lava beds around the base of what would become his namesake peak, Lassen gave the volcano a wide berth and led his party on a circuitous path east and south of the present park area. By then the party was in dire straits: low on provisions, with the possibility of early winter snows pressing upon them, and on the verge of mutiny. Fortunately Lassen and his followers were overtaken by another emigrant party who had followed their tracks where they branched off the Applegate Trail. The latter party gave them food and went ahead, blazing the trail the rest of the way to Lassen's ranch.<sup>14</sup>

Ironically, Lassen's hopes of founding a settlement near his ranch were dashed as gold fever swept the region. However, Lassen promoted his scheme anyway and an estimated 7,000 to 9,000 gold seekers followed the so-called Lassen Trail in 1849. The route was much maligned by the people who used it, and after one big year it fell into disuse. After a series of failed business ventures, Lassen moved to Indian Valley on the other side of Lassen Peak with his partner, Russian immigrant Isadore Meyerwitz. In 1851, he took part in a war between the Indians of Indian Valley and the Indians of Pit River. According to Meyerwitz, Lassen coolly shot and killed three of the Pit River Indians when they appeared on the edge of his camp. Lassen then led his party of whites and Indian Valley Indians in a decisive attack against the Pit River band.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, Lassen developed a reputation among his white contemporaries for fairness in his relations with Indians, at least by the standards of that day. On several occasions, he assisted federal officials in their efforts to resolve difficulties between Indians and whites in the area. He was reportedly on good terms with Winnemucca, chief of the Paiutes. In 1855, Lassen moved to Lassen Creek, near Susanville, and four years later he was murdered while prospecting about 140 miles northeast of Susanville. Although the murder was never solved, evidence pointed toward a Paiute.<sup>16</sup>

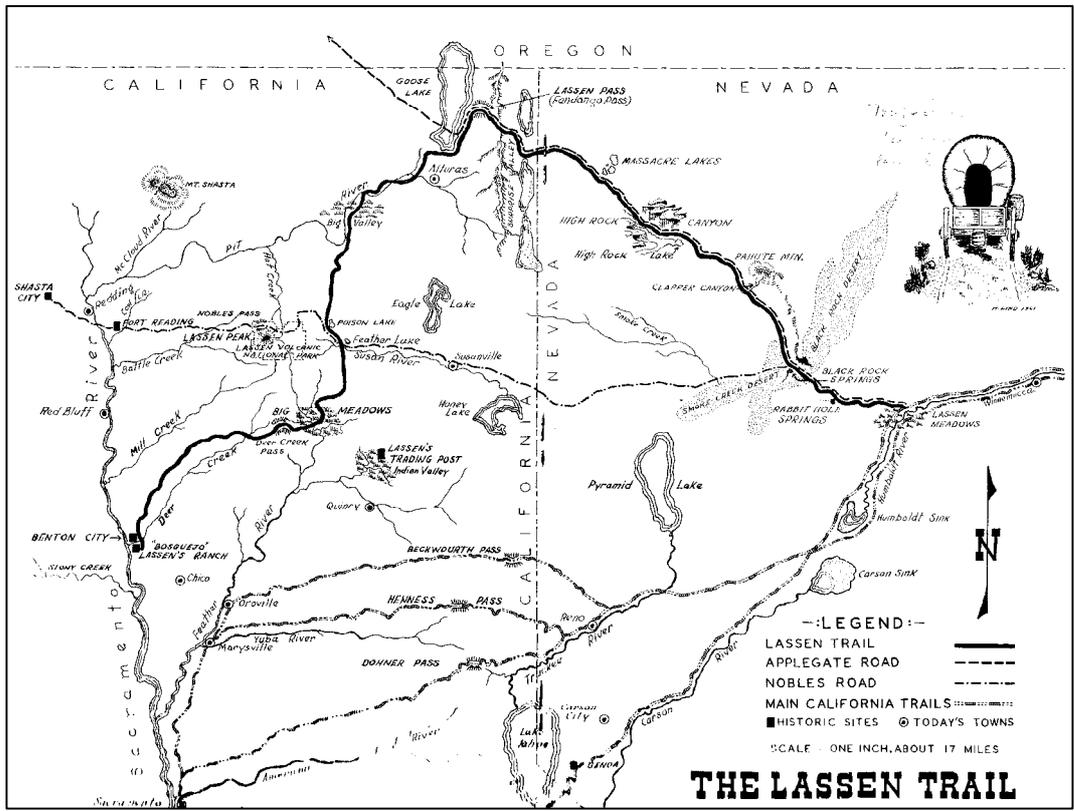
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<sup>13</sup> Emmons et al., *Lassen Volcanic National Park Historic Resources Study*, 29.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 30-31.

<sup>15</sup> "A Jaunt to Honey Lake Valley and Noble's Pass," *Hutchings' California Magazine* 1, no. 12 (June 1857): 319-320.

<sup>16</sup> Swartzlow, *Peter Lassen*, 13-14.



**Map 2. The Historic Lassen and Nobles Emigrant Trails, among other Overland Routes.**  
*Source: Ruby Johnson Swartzlow, Lassen: His Life and Legacy (Mineral, Calif.: Loomis Museum Association, 1964).*

### Settlement and Environmental Change

Although Lassen’s dream to create a thriving town near his ranch eluded him, he nevertheless lived to see enormous changes in the Lassen Peak region and particularly in the upper Sacramento Valley. Thousands of settlers poured into the region, many arriving over the Nobles Trail, which was established in 1852 and ran just north of Cinder Cone and Lassen Peak along the northern edge of the national park area.<sup>17</sup> Shasta, Tehama, and Plumas counties were formed during the 1850s. In 1860, the town of Red Bluff had a population of 1,391, the settlement in Indian Valley numbered 479, the population of Mineral was 480.<sup>18</sup>

With the influx of population came profound changes in California’s natural environment. Mining activity had drastic effects on California’s extensive wetlands.

<sup>17</sup> William H. Nobles tried to form a partnership with Peter Lassen to develop this route, before earning the support of the Shasta business community – in the form of a \$2,000 guide fee – in the spring of 1852. Tim I. Purdy, *Lassen Volcanic* (Susanville, Calif: Lahontan Images, 2009), 42-43.

<sup>18</sup> Superintendent of the Census, *Population of the United States in 1860*, 30-32.

Miners dammed creeks and diverted water into ditches for the purpose of washing gold from the creek bed. The silt from these operations washed downstream, clogging channels. With the advent of hydraulic mining in the 1860s – a technological process whereby powerful jets of water were used to blast whole hillsides into sluices – the clogging of streams and rivers by silt increased markedly. During the winter of 1861-62, the load of silt or “slickens” caused major flood damage in the lower Sacramento Valley.<sup>19</sup>

Nowhere was environmental change more conspicuous than in the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys. The lowland country was a maze of sloughs and wetlands during the gold rush era. A tall marsh sedge, called “tule” by the Spanish, dominated this landscape. A traveler who observed the country from a steamboat on the lower Sacramento River in the 1850s described an “apparently interminable sea of tules extend[ing] nearly 150 miles south, up the valley of the San Joaquin.”<sup>20</sup> As California’s population swelled in the 1850s, settlers began draining these wetlands and converting them to farm land. Agricultural and mining interests collided as the effects of silting became widespread, and eventually hydraulic mining was prohibited in order to protect agricultural crops downstream.

The livestock industry also modified California’s grasslands. Beginning in the Spanish and Mexican periods, open-range livestock grazing began to produce a change from native to Mediterranean grasses. Domestic cattle and horses competed with elk, pronghorn antelope, and other native grazing animals. Moreover, the Spanish introduced exotic species of grasses and forbs which thrived in California’s climate. Seeding and germinating annually, they were able to sustain both drought and heavy grazing pressure better than the perennial native species of bunchgrasses. The exotic species of grasses were probably well established in southern California by the 1840s. As cattle and sheep grazing spread to northern California in the 1850s, similar changes in grassland vegetation occurred there.<sup>21</sup>

The gold rush also began a period of wildlife decline in California. In Spanish and Mexican California, elk and pronghorn antelope were abundant, particularly in the tule marshes. The jaguar may have ranged as far north as California, and grizzlies were present in large numbers – probably helped by the introduction of cattle, which provided an additional food source. Wolves and mountain lions were also common. The mining camps provided a market for wild meat, and market hunting quickly reduced the herds of elk, deer, and pronghorn antelope in the valleys. However, increased hunting pressure in the 1850s was only the first cause of decline among California’s large grazing animals.

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<sup>19</sup> Raymond F. Dasmann, “Environmental Changes before and after the Gold Rush,” in *A Golden State: Mining and Economic Development in Gold Rush California*, edited by James J. Rawls and Richard J. Orsi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999): 117-118.

<sup>20</sup> Ann Vilesis, *Discovering the Unknown Landscape: A History of America’s Wetlands* (Washington: Island Press, 1997), 25-26, 86.

<sup>21</sup> Dasmann, “Environmental Changes before and after the Gold Rush,” 113-114.

The spread of agriculture, the draining of tule marshes, and the destruction of other habitat – a process that expanded after the gold rush era – ultimately drove California’s ungulates out of their preferred ranges. The spread of livestock grazing further restricted them. Pronghorn antelope soon disappeared from all of their former range in California except in the northeast corner of the state. California’s tule elk (a smaller animal than the Rocky Mountain elk) was reduced to a single herd of 2,800 animals by 1895, while its range was restricted to a limited area of mountains extending roughly from Lake Tahoe to Lassen Peak. Predators, too, were hunted mercilessly. The last recorded shooting of a grizzly in the Lassen Peak region was in 1895.<sup>22</sup> The last reported sighting of a grizzly in California occurred in Sequoia National Park in 1925.<sup>23</sup>

## **Agriculture and Industry**

Tens of thousands of cattle and sheep were driven into California to feed the mining camps. Thriving on the abundant pasture land, cattle and especially sheep herds grew prodigiously in the second half of the nineteenth century. Cattlemen suffered setbacks from heavy floods in 1861-62 and drought in 1863-64, from which they learned the necessity of moving their stock to high mountain meadows each summer and to low lying pastures each winter. Sheepmen lost large numbers of stock in the bad years, too, but the sheep herds were able to recover so quickly that the sheep ranching industry soon came to dominate grazing resources in California. Severe winters in 1874-75 and 1879-80 killed millions of sheep in northern California, yet in spite of these losses the state still ranked second in the nation as a producer of wool in 1870 and 1880 and it ranked first in 1890. Only in the last decade of the nineteenth century, as significant pasture land was put into crop land, did California’s livestock industry begin to wane.<sup>24</sup>

Both cattle and sheep were driven each summer to high pastures around Lassen Peak. Cattle ranged in the summer from Big Meadows (present Lake Almanor) up to the south flank of the mountain. Small cattle herds were maintained in the winter in Warner Valley and were driven to summer pasture around Twin Lakes, Kings Creek, and Badger Flat – all areas later encompassed in the national park. In the early twentieth century, cattle ranchers pastured their stock in these sections under Forest Service grazing leases. Sheep, meanwhile, appear to have been the dominant livestock animal on the north side of Lassen Peak. Sheep ranchers located around Red Bluff drove their herds each summer to Battle Creek Meadows, upper Hat Creek, Kings Creek, and Manzanita Lake. One

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<sup>22</sup> Elias G. Weigart, “The Last Grizzly of Shasta County,” *The Covered Wagon 1976 Bicentennial Edition* (Redding, Calif.: Shasta County Historical Society, 1976), 29-30.

<sup>23</sup> Dasmann, “Environmental Changes before and after the Gold Rush,” 109.

<sup>24</sup> Rodman Paul, *The Far West and the Great Plains in Transition, 1859-1860* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1988), 211-212.

sheep rancher by the name of Rossen pastured sheep around Butte Lake and Snag Lake in the 1880s.<sup>25</sup>

The lumbering industry also took hold in the wake of the gold rush. Several sawmills sprang up in Shasta County in the 1850s, and mill towns soon grew up around them. Viola and Shingletown both developed as lumbering towns in the heavily wooded foothills northwest of Lassen Peak. Lumber operations intensified in the region as transportation improvements, increased capital investment, and new technology made it possible to produce lumber for wider and wider markets. By the early 1900s, lumbering was an important industry in all four counties abutting the present area of the park and it was especially strong in Shasta County. But logging operations never reached into the present area of the park. The heavy snow and high elevations around Lassen Peak prevented the timber from growing to a size that would attract logging companies until later in the twentieth century.<sup>26</sup>

Mining, like the lumber industry, shaped the development of the region around Lassen Peak without having much direct impact on the area of the park. In the decades following the gold rush, geologists suggested that the gold-bearing ancient river channels found in the Mother Lode Country extended northward where they underlay more recent deposits of mud and lava in the volcanic region surrounding Lassen Peak.<sup>27</sup> But this was erroneous and by 1900 mineral maps of California showed what a few prospectors had had to learn the hard way: the vicinity of Lassen Peak is largely devoid of copper, gold, and silver despite the rich concentrations of those precious metals found to the north, south, and west. Most miners and prospectors shunned the volcanic landscape around Lassen and flocked to the American River and other streams well south of the peak in the Sierra Nevada Range.

If the Lassen Peak region lacked precious metals, however, it had another kind of mineral that was easy to find. Prospectors only had to follow their noses to the sulphur deposits found on the south-facing slope of Lassen Peak. In addition to the strong odor given off by hydrogen sulfide, the deposits were plainly visible from the plumes of steam rising over them and the bleached white crusts and barren ground surrounding them.<sup>28</sup>

In September 1865, the *Red Bluff Independent* reported that T. M. Boardman and some partners had made arrangements with Dr. Mathias B. Supan of Red Bluff to develop one of these sulphur deposits into a working mine. Supan, a medical doctor and chemist, apparently had a plan for refining the sulphur ore. The *Red Bluff Independent*

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<sup>25</sup> Emmons et al., *Lassen Volcanic National Park Historic Resources Study*, 72, 75.

<sup>26</sup> Douglas H. Strong, "These Happy Grounds: A History of the Lassen Region (Red Bluff, Calif.: Loomis Museum Association, 1973), 22-23.

<sup>27</sup> Ernest K. Murray, "The Almanor Story," *Plumas Memories* 9 (July 1962): 1.

<sup>28</sup> Charles Volney Averill, "Mineral Resources of Shasta County," *California Journal of Mines and Geology* 35 (January 1939): 173.

stated, “We may expect in a short time that Red Bluff will be shipping sulfur to the San Francisco market.”<sup>29</sup>

Supan apparently worked his sulphur works claim each summer for about 20 years, hauling the material by pack train to a furnace and retort on Paynes Creek. He used his knowledge of chemistry and medicine to experiment with various products that he dispensed in his drug store in Red Bluff. Cooking the sulphur in kilns, he made bricks and various kinds of earthenware products. Using the ferrous salts that formed a crust at the edge of the hot springs, he produced dyes and printers’ ink, which he sold in San Francisco.<sup>30</sup>

When Mathias Supan and his wife Angeline divorced in 1886, she obtained the sulphur works and the mine was idled. In 1892, Angeline Supan filed a homestead claim for 160 acres nearby the sulphur works, obtaining the patent in 1900. Each summer, the family lived in a cabin and ran cattle in the area.<sup>31</sup> In May 1916, Milton Supan and seven other members of the family filed a claim to the site of the sulphur works, calling it the Yellow Ochre Mine. Probably they were anxious to establish their right before the area was included in a new national park. (Congress established the park only three months later.)<sup>32</sup>

The geothermal area now known as Bumpass Hell also attracted prospectors at an early date. The area was named for Kendall Vanhook Bumpass, “an old and experienced mountaineer,” who found the site in 1864 and together with Major Pearson Reading filed a mining claim for it. Bumpass guided the *Red Bluff Independent* editor Watson Chalmers and his companions into the area in 1865. While treading around the mudpots Bumpass unfortunately broke through a thin crust, scalding one leg severely. Sometime later an unknown person prospected the area. In the early 1880s, a surveyor of the General Land Office labeled the feature on his map “Bumpber’s Hell, Boiling Sulphur Spring” and recorded a “mining shaft 20 feet deep (abandoned).”<sup>33</sup>

More valuable than the mineral deposits on Lassen’s slopes were the fast running streams that could be harnessed for water power. In 1902, Joseph A. Rossi claimed water rights on Hat and Lost creeks with a view toward increasing the water supply to a powerhouse he had at a lower elevation on Snow Creek, a tributary of New Creek. Two years later, Rossi formed the Shasta Power Company with mining engineer Harry Shannon and started construction of a ditch and flume. The work was completed in three

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<sup>29</sup> Paul E. Schulz, *Stories of Lassen’s Place Names* (Mineral, Calif.: Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1949), 51.

<sup>30</sup> Douglas H. Strong, “Supan’s Sulphur Works,” *The Covered Wagon* (Redding, Calif.: Shasta Historical Society, 1973), 28-29.

<sup>31</sup> “Non-Mineral Affidavit,” October 15, 1892, and “Final Certificate No. 2208,” October 12, 1900, File 2208, Box 1474, Land Entry Files – California – Shasta Land Office, Record Group 49 – Records of the Bureau of Land Management, National Archives II (hereafter NA II), College Park, Md.

<sup>32</sup> Strong, “Supan’s Sulphur Works,” 30-33.

<sup>33</sup> Schulz, *Stories of Lassen’s Place Names*, 7. “Township No. 30 North, Range No. 4 East, Mount Diablo Meridian,” General Land Office Plat, 1884.

years by a crew of 80 Italian laborers. The so-called Sunflower Flume and Canal began at the intake on Lost Creek below Summit Lake, skirted below Sunflower Flat and the east side of Nobles Pass, and traversed the east slope of Table Mountain before going west. The flume was briefly operational around 1908. The mudflow that came down Hat Creek in 1915 wiped out a large section of it, and it was not rebuilt.

In 1906, the Northern California Power Company purchased 280 acres and water rights to Manzanita Lake from homesteader Albert Smith. In an effort to augment the flow of Manzanita Creek for its power plant at Volta, the company cleared brush and debris from the creek bed and developed a plan to dam the outlet of Manzanita Lake. The plan called for an earthen dam 500 feet across, 10 feet high, and 8 feet thick at the top, with timber riprap on the inside slope. When the company began construction in 1911, however, the lake level rose only two feet. It was decided that the volcanic rock in the area was too porous to hold water, so the project was abandoned.<sup>34</sup>

A much larger hydroelectric development took place not far from the present park area on the North Fork of the Feather River. There the Great Western Power Company built a dam and transformed Big Meadows into a reservoir named Lake Almanor. The plan originated with Julius M. Howells, a civil engineer who accompanied a geological survey of the Lassen Peak region in the early 1880s. Howells saw the possibility of building a dam where the river dropped through a narrow canyon below Big Meadows. Above the dam site the broad valley covered an area of some 50 square miles, while below the dam site the river began a descent of 4,350 feet in elevation in 74 miles. By 1901, promoters had taken a keen interest in Howells's plan and began purchasing private lands in Big Meadows. In 1914, the Great Western Power Company completed the dam and the reservoir began to fill.<sup>35</sup>

The eventual drowning of Big Meadows eliminated a substantial community of farms and ranches and resulted in the largest privately developed reservoir of its day. Yet the project did not arouse much opposition or controversy. Unlike Los Angeles' battle with Owens Valley farmers, or San Francisco's fight with preservationists over Hetch Hetchy, the Great Western Power Company was able to convince most residents that the dam and reservoir were for the public good. The primary reason was that Lake Almanor was promoted as a recreational resource that would surpass the value of the land for ranching.<sup>36</sup>

During the latter nineteenth century, Big Meadows was inhabited by Maidu Indians and white homesteaders and ranchers. The town of Chester, dating from the 1890s, was a service center for the scattered valley residents and the mining camps at the upper end of the North Fork of the Feather River. It was also an overnight stage stop on

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<sup>34</sup> Douglas Hillman Strong, "Lassen Volcanic National Park's Manzanita Lake: A Brief History," *The Pacific Historian* 15, no. 3 (1971): 73-74.

<sup>35</sup> Newspaper clippings, no dates, Big Meadows vertical file, Plumas County Museum.

<sup>36</sup> Jessica Teisch, "The Drowning of Big Meadows: Nature's Managers in Progressive-Era California," *Environmental History* 4, no. 1 (January 1999): 32-51.

the Humboldt Road between Chico and Susanville. With the creation of Lake Almanor, area residents hoped that the reservoir itself would provide compensating recreational attractions. In 1915, the *Plumas National Bulletin* boasted that the artificial lake could “rival” Lake Tahoe and claimed that it was “the best fishing ground in California.” A year later, it remarked that “the eyes of vacationists of the Sacramento valley and bay cities have been turned to this new Mecca for sportsmen.”<sup>37</sup>

## Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

Although the tourism industry would not outgrow the West’s resource extraction industries until the end of the twentieth century, it was already well-established at the end of the nineteenth century. Westerners advertised their recreational resources to all comers, establishing roadhouses, resorts, outfitting and guide services, and other small tourism enterprises, which they usually supplemented with ranching or other kinds of work. Indeed, a few years prior to the establishment of Lassen Volcanic National Park, a Forest Service ranger named William T. Rutherford turned his temporary home on the Lassen National Forest, which was located on the road from Red Bluff to Susanville, into an outfitting business known as “Camp Rutherford.”<sup>38</sup>

The Lassen Peak region attracted tourists primarily from the nearby Sacramento Valley in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As early as the 1860s, townspeople of Red Bluff built summer cabins in the high country to give them a place to go to escape the heat. They also went to the mountains to enjoy fishing, hunting, and berry picking. Some area residents were interested in visiting geothermal areas or in hiking to the top of Lassen Peak. In 1864, a landscape painter named Helen Tanner Boldt and her husband Aurelius, both of Red Bluff, scrambled to the top of Lassen Peak – the first recorded ascent by a woman.<sup>39</sup> Lake Helen was named for her.

Hot springs were another major draw for nineteenth-century tourists. Many liked to sojourn at hot springs for the perceived health benefits of “taking the waters.” Morgan Springs was located within what later became the Hanna Ranch property on the south edge of the park. Campers came from Red Bluff, Redding, and other towns in the region and generally stayed for several weeks. The property owner sold groceries to the campers and charged a fee for pasturing stock.<sup>40</sup>

The most popular hot springs resort in the area was known as Drake’s Springs, then Sifford’s, and finally Drakesbad. Edward R. Drake settled in Warner Valley southeast of Lassen Peak about 1875. During the 1880s, he acquired 400 acres of land

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>38</sup> F. A. Stearns, “Trip to Mt. Lassen Forest, California,” *Overland Monthly* 60 (November 1912): 489.

<sup>39</sup> Harry Noyes Pratt, “A Woman Pioneer on Lassen’s Peak,” *Overland Monthly* 82 (November 1924): 488, 524, 528.

<sup>40</sup> Emmons et al., *Lassen Volcanic National Park Historic Resources Study*, 127.

including the hot spring on Drakes Creek and the geothermal area now known as the Devil's Kitchen. On this property he raised cattle and built a cabin, a barn, and pasture fences, together with a bathhouse and latrines for the small number of campers who came for the mineral waters. In 1900, Drake sold his property to one of these sojourners, Alexander Sifford of Susanville.<sup>41</sup> Sifford and his family became annual summer residents of the place, which they slowly developed into a popular resort. In the early years they hosted the same families again and again, many coming from their own community of Susanville. Between 1904 and 1907, they completed a rough automobile road into this most remote residence in Warner Valley. Soon thereafter, the Siffords settled on the name "Drakesbad" for their establishment. Gradually the resort began to attract people from elsewhere in the state and from around the nation.<sup>42</sup>

Automobile access to the park area was still quite limited in 1916. A tourist who approached Lassen Peak from the southwest could get no farther than Red Bluff by car. From there, the person could transfer to a stage coach, which left Red Bluff at seven o'clock in the morning and arrived in Mineral, 45 miles away, at dusk. Continuing east toward Susanville over this rough road, the tourist could choose from a handful of outfitters and guides who took parties into the high country around Lassen Peak. On the northwest approach to Lassen Peak, the tourist could drive a car or a wagon to the lumber towns of Shingletown and Viola and then go by horse or foot to Manzanita Lake. Around 1920, the final approach to Manzanita Lake would be improved to automobile standards by area resident Benjamin Loomis as the so-called "Manzanita Lake Motorway."<sup>43</sup>

As primitive as these roads were, however, Californians were beginning to glimpse the automobile's future importance as an agent for mass tourism. In the coming decade cars would have a transformative effect on northern California and the whole American landscape. One of the myriad consequences of the rise of the automobile in American life was the establishment in 1916 of a national park system and a separate government bureau, the National Park Service, to administer it. The national park system, together with Lassen Volcanic National Park itself, would grow up with the automobile.

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<sup>41</sup> Tandy Bozeman, "A History in Photographs: Drakesbad Guest Ranch, Lassen Volcanic National Park," [www.nps.gov/archive/lavo/drakesbadhome.html](http://www.nps.gov/archive/lavo/drakesbadhome.html) (January 22, 2007).

<sup>42</sup> Roy D. Sifford, *Sixty Years of Siffords at Drakesbad* (Susanville, Calif.: Lahontan Images, 1994), 36-40.

<sup>43</sup> Emmons et al., *Lassen Volcanic National Park Historic Resources Study*, 129.



Part 1  
Genesis  
1907-1931



## **Chapter One**

### **Born of Fire**

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The campaign to establish Lassen Volcanic National Park spanned some ten years at the height of the Progressive conservation movement. It began in the year of the Antiquities Act in 1906, during the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt, and it concluded just two weeks before passage of the National Park Service Act, which was signed into law in 1916 by President Woodrow Wilson. This crucial period saw the rise of the U.S. Forest Service as the exemplary federal agency committed to “conservation for use” – or as the chief forester, Gifford Pinchot, famously defined this new federal responsibility, managing resources “for the greatest good for the greatest number over the long run.” The ten years from 1906 to 1916 also saw the creation of new national parks and maturation of the idea that national parks ought to exist as a counterpoint to national forests. Toward the end of this ten-year period two close yet diverging groups, conservationists and preservationists, clashed over a proposal to dam and flood the Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park. Although preservationists ultimately lost that battle, Hetch Hetchy aroused national attention and helped compel Congress to establish a federal bureau for administering all national parks so as to place the national parks and the national forests on an equal footing. And so the National Park Service (NPS) was created.

The campaign to establish Lassen Volcanic National Park developed in the context of this opening rift between conservationists and preservationists. In 1905, President Roosevelt proclaimed the Lassen Peak Forest Reserve (later the name was changed to Lassen National Forest), assigning the whole area to Forest Service administration. Thus, the campaign to establish Lassen Volcanic National Park was predicated on carving land from the national forest and rededicating it to another purpose. Here, as in numerous other places throughout the West where national parks were

similarly carved from national forests, the Forest Service opposed such measures. Lassen Volcanic National Park was born of this conflict.

There were other obstacles to making a national park around Lassen Peak. The most formidable obstacle was simply that Congress could not get excited about an area that was so obscure to most of the American people. Bills introduced in Congress in 1912 and 1913 did not get any traction. Then the mountain erupted, capturing news headlines from across the United States, and the most significant obstacle to the park's establishment was suddenly blown away. The park's enabling act soon followed in 1916, coinciding with the final push to create the National Park Service. Lassen Volcanic National Park was literally born of fire.

Despite its fiery origin, however, the park, like the mountain, was destined to fade from popular view. Once the volcano grew quiescent, the new national park never had a chance of acquiring the kind of renown associated with many other national parks of similar vintage such as Crater Lake (1902), Glacier (1910), Rocky Mountain (1915), or Grand Canyon (1919). Unlike these others, Lassen Volcanic National Park lacked a strong promoter such as a transcontinental railroad or nearby metropolis to invest large sums in transportation or hotel facilities and advertise the park to the nation. Its diminutive size also tended to conceal the park from the nation's view. But relative obscurity would come with its own set of benefits. In time, Lassen Volcanic National Park would attract such accolades as "little gem," "little jewel," and "friendly wilderness," positive tags that aptly described its character as a compact, nicely varied, rather humble and often overlooked national park. Those labels still lay a few decades in the future when the park was first conceived and established.

### **Establishment of Lassen Peak and Cinder Cone National Monuments**

As soon as Lassen Peak Forest Reserve came into existence in 1905, local people began talking about securing greater protection for Lassen Peak and its surrounding countryside in the form of a national park. These advocates had as their model three existing national parks in California: Sequoia, General Grant, and Yosemite. All designated in 1890, these parks encompassed several of the nation's remaining giant sequoia groves as well as two generous swaths of scenic High Sierra. After a decade of initial neglect by the federal government, in the early 1900s California's first three national parks began to receive congressional appropriations and official military protection. By 1905, these measures had begun to curb vandalism of the great trees, grazing trespass, poaching of wildlife, and other illegal acts. With public funding, the federal government commenced building roads in Sequoia, General Grant, and Yosemite national parks. In March 1905, the California legislature relinquished ownership of Yosemite Valley, inadequately managed by the state from the start, to Yosemite National

Park.<sup>1</sup> As California's three national parks began to attract more tourism, citizens of Lassen and Plumas counties could see the national park idea bearing fruit in their home state.

In June 1906, 100 residents of these counties petitioned President Roosevelt to appoint a committee to study the possibility of creating a national park of "Lassen Peak and its surroundings." These petitioners included farmers, ranchers, teachers, merchants, county administrators, and federal officials, representing a broad cross-section of the local citizenry. Offering no boundaries for the proposed national park, they asked "that the beauties of nature there may be protected and preserved, as intended by the Government" and cited J. S. Diller's writings as testament to Lassen's geologic wonders and scenic vistas. The two separate but identical petitions (one for each county) were forwarded to Secretary of the Interior Ethan A. Hitchcock by U.S. Senator George C. Perkins of Oakland (R – Calif.), along with the senator's "most hearty" endorsement.<sup>2</sup>

Several months later George F. Pollock, acting commissioner of the General Land Office (GLO), provided Secretary Hitchcock with a geologic overview of the area that the petitioners said warranted national park status. The Lassen Peak vicinity contained "many points of scientific and scenic interest," Pollock wrote. In conclusion, he agreed with the petitioners that the lands surrounding Lassen Peak "should receive the fullest protection possible, which can only be afforded by the creation of a national park." Because "practically all" of these points of interest were located within the Lassen Peak Forest Reserve, Pollock suggested that the Secretary next consult with the Department of Agriculture.<sup>3</sup>

Once this initial Lassen national park movement was relegated to the Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service (USFS) officials deflected it toward a national monument designation. Congress had just passed the Antiquities Act, which allowed U. S. presidents to protect public lands of archeological, historical or scientific interest from vandalism, appropriation and commercial use by proclaiming them national monuments. While Congress recognized the need for large-scale national parks that preserved grand scenic landscapes, the Antiquities Act intended each national monument to be small, "confined" to the minimum acreage necessary to preserve its ancient ruin, geologic oddity, historic site, or other valued national treasure within its boundaries. President Roosevelt made liberal interpretation of the act's minimal size provision, naming the 84,000-acre Petrified Forest National Monument in 1906 and the 800,000-acre Grand

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<sup>1</sup> John Ise, *Our National Park Policy: A Critical History* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1961), 51-118.

<sup>2</sup> George C. Perkins, U. S. S., to Hon. E. A. Hitchcock, Secretary of the Interior, June 16, 1906, with two petitions, File 12-17 Part 1: Parks, Reservations and Antiquities, Lassen Volcanic National Park, Miscellaneous, Box 94, Entry 6, Record Group 79 – Records of the National Park Service (hereafter RG 79), NA II; Strong, "*These Happy Grounds*," 34-35.

<sup>3</sup> George F. Pollock, Acting Commissioner, General Land Office, to Secretary of the Interior, October 22, 1906, File 12-17 Part 1: Misc., Box 94, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II.

Canyon National Monument in 1908. Later presidents would also designate large national monuments. The act also required no change of jurisdiction for national monuments. Not until 1933, as part of Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 6166, did all national monuments under the care of the USFS and the Department of War transfer to the National Park Service.<sup>4</sup>

Louis A. Barrett, forest supervisor for the Lassen National Forest, was among the signers of the Plumas County petition calling for a national park designation for Lassen.<sup>5</sup> But once called upon by his superiors to study the matter, Barrett recommended that several specific localities in the Lassen area ought to be proclaimed national monuments instead. Lassen's volcanic features surely qualified as "objects of . . . scientific interest." In a series of reports Barrett filed in January and February 1907, he advocated national monument protection for Crater Lake and Crater Mountain (located northeast of future park boundaries); the so-called Supan Hot Springs (Barrett believed the Supan mining claims to be invalid); Bumpass Hell; one other "boiling springs" of unnamed location; Lassen Peak itself; and Cinder Cone with its surrounding lava flow and the two lakes this lava flow formed, Snag Lake and Lake Bidwell (later renamed Butte Lake). He lamented that thermal features in Warner Valley could not be part of his list because they were located on patented lands. Careful surveys of these sites would have to await the spring melt, Barrett explained, "as the area is now under from 5 to 50 feet of snow."<sup>6</sup>

Barrett was especially keen on immediate protection for the perfectly symmetrical Cinder Cone – "without further examination," he urged, "as it will be a shame to allow it to pass into private hands." At this time, the state of California owned Cinder Cone, which sat upon a square-mile school section of the former public domain. Being on state land, the miniature mountain of ash was still vulnerable to sale. Barrett was also worried about losing Lassen's hot springs and mineral springs to placer mining claims, which were "plastered about 4 deep over a large share of the rest of Plumas county," he wrote, as well as special privilege permits for hotels and bath houses. All of these places would have "better care . . . if they were reserved for the benefit of all the people and the special use of none." These sites held no grazing or timber value, being "of a volcanic formation almost devoid of vegetation." But once these "natural curiosities" were known, Barrett advised, they would attract the "tourist, camper, scientist and pleasure seeker." Barrett claimed that his staff had already made some road and trail improvements to facilitate

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<sup>4</sup> Antiquities Act, 34 Stat. 225 (1906); Mackintosh, *The National Parks: Shaping the System*, 13-14; Hal Rothman, *America's National Monuments: The Politics of Preservation* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1994), 46-49, 187, 233-234.

<sup>5</sup> In 1907, the U.S. Forest Service changed the name of the lands it administered from "forest reserves" to "national forests."

<sup>6</sup> Antiquities Act, 34 Stat. 225 (1906); L. A. Barrett, Forest Supervisor, Quincy, Calif., to The Forester, Forest Service, January 5, 1907; Barrett to The Forester, January 30, 1907; Barrett to The Forester, February 22, 1907, File 12-17 Part 1: Misc., Box 94, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II.

visitor access in the summer months, but more funding and manpower was required to truly “open up this region” to the general public.<sup>7</sup>

Barrett believed the national monument option was preferable for the Lassen area because its points of interest were considerably scattered through high pastureland that should mostly remain open for grazing use, and he believed most locals shared that opinion. One park encompassing all of Barrett’s proposed protected sites would require removal of 144,000 acres from utilitarian purposes, while the small monument designations would total only about 10,000 acres. Having the entire area managed by the USFS was also desirable, Barrett thought, as “many complications” would arise if portions were placed under the Department of the Interior. “A division of authority in a case of this kind does not work well as is illustrated by the Yosemite National Park and the adjoining forest reserve,” Barrett wrote.<sup>8</sup>

Secretary of Agriculture James Wilson seconded Barrett’s arguments for national monument designations within the Lassen region. Keeping these sites within USFS jurisdiction “would prove a much more economical arrangement,” Wilson wrote, and the national monument proclamation process, requiring only the president’s blessing, “would also save considerable delay in securing the needed protection” for these sites. At a later date, Congress could still pass legislation designating the Lassen area a national park if it wished, he added. Wilson believed Lassen Peak and Cinder Cone to be “the most important” of the sites Barrett nominated, and recommended just these two for national monument status. Wilson stressed the importance of expediting the federal acquisition of Cinder Cone from the state of California, already underway via a land exchange.<sup>9</sup>

In April 1907, Secretary of the Interior James R. Garfield assured Wilson he had “no objection to the proposed substitution of small national monument reservations for the large national park heretofore proposed” for Lassen. In fact, Garfield “heartily approve[d]” the amended plan, commended its cost savings, and sent the two national monument proposals to President Roosevelt.<sup>10</sup>

Roosevelt acted immediately on Garfield’s recommendation. On May 6, 1907, the president signed two separate proclamations that established Lassen Peak National Monument and Cinder Cone National Monument, each retaining the boundaries drawn by Forest Supervisor Barrett. Both areas were set aside for the purpose of “tracing the history of the volcanic phenomena of that vicinity.” The 1,280-acre Lassen Peak National Monument contained only the summit and immediate slopes of this southernmost mountain in the Cascade Range, which the proclamation described as a “long line of extinct volcanoes.” The 5,120-acre Cinder Cone National Monument

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<sup>7</sup> James Wilson, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, to Secretary of Interior, April 1, 1907, File 12-17 Part 1: Misc., Box 94, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>8</sup> Barrett to The Forester, February 22, 1907, File 12-17 Part 1: Misc., Box 94, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>9</sup> Wilson to Secretary of Interior, 1 April 1907, File 12-17 Part 1: Misc., Box 94, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>10</sup> James R. Garfield, Secretary of Interior, to Secretary of Agriculture, April 10, 1907; Garfield to The President, The White House, May 4, 1907, File 12-17 Part 1: Misc., Box 94, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II.

included the cone's sprawling lava field, Snag Lake, and Lake Bidwell, as Barrett had insisted. Roosevelt indicated that these new designations would remain under the administration of Lassen Peak National Forest and were "not intended to prevent the use of the lands for forest purposes," although in cases of conflicting land use, the preservation-oriented national monument "shall be the dominant reservation." Cinder Cone and Lassen Peak were the sixth and seventh national monuments to be designated under the Antiquities Act.<sup>11</sup>

In the years that followed, USFS management of the highest altitudes of Lassen National Forest, inclusive of the two national monuments, was minimal.<sup>12</sup> In 1916, Forest Supervisor W. J. Rushing stated that the national monuments required "practically no administration," although the small amount of pasture within the Cinder Cone designation was part of one grazing permit. In 1912, the Lassen Forest Supervisor L. A. H. King reported that Forest Service protection of the monuments proved adequate: "there is no danger of the various attractions being destroyed." Although Lassen National Forest was valued primarily for its timber (namely future production because logging on private lands still met regional demands), the Lassen high country was classified as "inaccessible" with no existing timber sale policy. In the alpine, sub-alpine and yellow pine forests surrounding the monuments, merchantable species of yellow pine, red fir, white pine and lodgepole pine did grow, but no timber in this remote, west central section of the Lassen National Forest was harvested. Growing above 6,000 feet, these trees were of "poor, stunted quality" and nearly impossible to get to, wrote Forest Assistant Richard Boerker, who believed this portion of the national forest would remain inaccessible "for a great many years to come." But if the high-elevation forest had little stumpage value, it was important for watershed protection. "Situated at high altitudes with a very heavy snowfall, with sharply defined topography with many steep slopes, the value of this forest for water-shed protection is hard to over-estimate," Boerker stressed. "Tremendous amounts of water" flowing from the Lassen Peak vicinity were utilized "for water power and irrigation purposes" below. The area's high meadows, finally free of snow and lush with vegetation in the late summer, provided local ranchers with ideal late-season pasture. The USFS divided this pastureland among about a dozen permittees, who in total grazed several thousand head of livestock, mostly sheep, in these mountain meadows. The USFS also acknowledged the area's recreational appeal. Forest Supervisor King reported on modest recreational and infrastructure development in the Lassen highlands, noting in 1912 that the USFS was building trails and telephone lines

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<sup>11</sup> "Cinder Cone National Monument, California, A Proclamation" [No. 753 – May 6, 1907 – 35 Stat. 2131] and "Lassen Peak National Monument, California" [No. 754 – May 6, 1907 – 35 Stat. 2132] in U.S. Department of Interior, *Proclamations and Orders Relating to the National Park Service, Up to January 1, 1945* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1947), 33-36.

<sup>12</sup> By 1912, the name Lassen Peak National Forest was changed to Lassen National Forest.

through this portion of the forest and making the area accessible for a rugged type of recreational use.<sup>13</sup>

Forest Service paternity of the Lassen Peak and Cinder Cone national monuments was significant because it fostered local sentiment that scenic preservation and conservation for use could fit hand-in-glove. That was certainly the way the USFS saw it. Foresters King and Boerker filed their reports on the high-elevation forest lands surrounding Lassen Peak and Cinder Cone national monuments in the spring of 1912 in response to a second attempt to preserve this area as a national park, an effort spearheaded by U.S. Congressman John E. Raker (D – Calif.).

### **Congressman Raker’s Vision of Peter Lassen National Park**

Raised from the age of ten in Susanville, just east of Lassen National Forest, Raker practiced law and served as a superior court judge in nearby Modoc County before entering Congress in 1911. “From the rugged mountains among which he lived,” wrote a fellow congressman, Raker “absorbed the sturdy elements of a character which shaped his whole career.” A Democrat elected eight times in a Republican-majority district, this revered congressman wasted no time in seeking national park status for Lassen early in his freshman term.<sup>14</sup>

Both before and after he entered Congress, Judge Raker was a regular at Drakesbad Guest Ranch. According to Roy Sifford, who ran Drakesbad after his father Alex retired, it was Raker’s “favorite vacation ground.” The Sifford and Raker families were friends, and Roy Sifford recalled that Raker “got the best part of his education with us, in the school of hard knocks.” Two of Raker’s nephews worked as wranglers and guides at Drakesbad in the 1920s. Alex Sifford claimed that the idea of making Lassen a national park originated with Raker’s mother-in-law Lucy Spencer, who had frequented Warner Valley since the 1880s.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> W. J. Rushing, Forest Supervisor, to District Foresters, San Francisco, June 22, 1916; Richard Boerker, Forest Assistant, “Forest Description,” undated; L. A. H. King, Forest Supervisor to District Forester, San Francisco, March 18, 1912; John E. Raker, to B. T. Galloway, Acting Secretary of Agriculture, January 9, 1914; W. J. Rushing, Forest Supervisor, to District Forester, January 24, 1914, File: LP – Boundaries, Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1920 and Previous Years, Box 25, Acc. 93-007, Record Group 95 – Records of the U.S. Forest Service (hereafter RG 95), National Archives – Pacific Sierra Region (hereafter NA – PSR), San Bruno, Calif.; Louis Margolin, Forest Examiner, “Preliminary Reconnaissance Report on the Lassen National Forest,” March 1909, File: S D-5 Supervision – Lassen 1909-1916, Box 27, Entry 64, RG 95, NA II, pp. 3-7.

<sup>14</sup> “Raker, John Edward,” *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1774 - Present*, <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=R000019> (March 12, 2007); House, *Memorial Addresses Delivered in the House of Representative of the United States in Memory of John E. Raker*, 69<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2d sess., April 18, 1926, H. Doc. 782, 75-76.

<sup>15</sup> R. D. Sifford to John Preston, September 2, 1938, File: Correspondence, Sifford Collection, Tim Purdy, Susanville, Calif. (hereafter Sifford Collection); Sifford, *Sixty Years of Siffords at Drakesbad*, 40, 63-74; Harry B. Robinson, Park Naturalist, memorandum, January 17, 1946, Folder 54 (H14, Warner Valley Area,

Serving on the Committee on Public Lands, Raker introduced House Resolution (H. R.) 19557 to establish “Peter Lassen National Park” on February 6, 1912.<sup>16</sup> According to Acting Assistant Forester F. W. Reed, the congressman consulted with USFS officials as he wrote this legislation and changed certain portions of his original draft to be more to their liking. The Department of Agriculture’s official report on H. R. 19557 offered only a neutral physical description of the 82,800 acres slated for park designation and brief discussion of the area’s current primitive recreational and grazing uses. Interior’s initial report was more instructive, identifying several “defects” in the bill. Assistant Secretary of the Interior Carmi A. Thompson recommended adding language found in existing national park legislation that provided for the renewal of leases for tourist accommodations, the designation of revenue from these leases for park administration and protection, and additional funding for park operations.<sup>17</sup>

Raker incorporated these suggestions and reintroduced the Lassen park bill to the House floor as H. R. 22352 in late March. This new version “appears to fully protect the rights of the people and those of the government,” wrote Thompson, who now had “no objection” to the legislation, as long as Congress also appropriated “sufficient” funds to Interior for administration of the park. The Lassen Highway Association passed a resolution in March 1912 that unanimously endorsed Raker’s bill to preserve this territory, which its members knew intimately. The group lauded Lassen’s world-class scenic attributes: “lakes, streams, waterfalls, geysers, hot springs, mineral springs, boiling lakes, recent extinct volcanoes, and many other features of great singular beauty.” Nonetheless, the rewritten H. R. 22352 died in committee.<sup>18</sup>

In April 1913, Raker introduced an identical Peter Lassen National Park bill, H. R. 52, to a new Congress. Interior remained favorable to the legislation, suggesting an annual appropriation of \$5,000 for Lassen, which would cover salaries for a superintendent and two rangers and a preliminary evaluation of necessary park improvements. In August, the Oroville Chamber of Commerce lent Congressman Raker its support for a Lassen national park, which would “be of much benefit to Oroville” and Plumas and Lassen counties, its resolution read.<sup>19</sup>

The Department of Agriculture did not weigh in on H. R. 52 until January 1914, and once again it was dubious. It repeated much of what it had said in its 1912 report on the earlier Lassen park legislation. The portion of Lassen National Forest slated for

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1946), Box 21, Lassen Volcanic National Park Accession 506 (hereafter LAVO Acc. 506), Redwood National Park Archives (hereafter REDW Archives), Orick, Calif.

<sup>16</sup> *Congressional Record*, 62d Cong., 2d sess., 1912, 48, pt. 2: 1794.

<sup>17</sup> F. W. Reed, Acting Assistant Forester, to District Forester, February 20, 1912, File: LP – Boundaries, Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1920 and Previous Years, Box 25, Acc. 93-007, RG 95, NA – PSR; House, *Lassen Volcanic National Park*, 63d Cong., 2d sess., July 27, 1914, H. Rept. 1021, 7-9.

<sup>18</sup> H. Rept. 1021, 9-10.

<sup>19</sup> H. R. 52, “A Bill to establish the Peter Lassen National Park in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in the State of California, and for other purposes,” 63d Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess, File: LP – Boundaries, Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1920 and Previous Years, Box 25, Acc. 93-007, RG 95, NA – PSR; H. Rept. 1021, 3-4, 10.

national park designation, “in the heart of the most recent volcanic disturbances in the United States,” ranged in elevation from 6,000 to 10,400 feet and contained ten prominent summits, the highest being Lassen Peak, which retained snow year-round. The proposed park boundaries contained both Lassen Peak and Cinder Cone national monuments, as well as patented lands that totaled 3,690 acres, according to Agriculture’s calculations. About twenty percent of the area was brush, lava rock or barren soil. Forest – with an estimated stumpage value of \$994,000 in total – covered the remainder of the proposed park. Earlier reports indicated none of this forest had been cut due to inaccessibility and poor timber quality.<sup>20</sup>

The author of the Agriculture report, Acting Secretary B. T. Galloway, emphasized the grazing and recreational values of the area surrounding Lassen Peak. He estimated the carrying capacity of its late summer pasture to be from 1,500 to 2,000 head of cattle. Assuming grazing would be prohibited within this park, as was the national park norm, Galloway stated that Raker’s legislation would eliminate three existing permittee ranges altogether and cut in half each of the area’s other dozen ranges, which straddled the proposed park boundaries. Fencing the entire park would be necessary to eliminate grazing trespass, wrote Galloway, but this endeavor would “entail the expenditure of a considerably greater amount of money than I believe would be warranted.” To accommodate tourists expecting national-park-quality amenities, Interior would require more major funds for the difficult task of building roads, more trails and other improvements in this “hilly and rocky” terrain. While wagon roads provided access to “the most attractive places, like Cinder Cone and the Warner Valley Hot Springs,” Galloway admitted that the USFS trails through the rest of the Lassen high country were not of superior quality. “The natural features of this region will always be fully protected under national forest administration,” Galloway offered, but he made no comment on whether or not the USFS could provide for Lassen’s increasing numbers of campers and day visitors. In conclusion, Galloway called for the postponement in the creation of this or any other national park until the simultaneous legislative matter of establishing a national park bureau was concluded, a further complication in the story of Lassen Volcanic National Park’s creation that will be discussed later in this chapter.<sup>21</sup>

While Agriculture refrained from blatant opposition to the Lassen national park proposal at this point, USFS officials more openly criticized the idea. “What will be gained by having a park created is hard for me to say,” Lassen Forest Supervisor King pondered in 1912, aside from free advertisement for “a few individuals now in the resort business or owning land” within the proposed park boundaries. King’s superior, Coert DuBois echoed this sentiment and urged USFS officials in Washington to object to the bill. He believed the Lassen area to be “most valuable to the people in its present form,” with the USFS allowing both grazing privileges to local herdsmen and public access to

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<sup>20</sup> H. Rept. 1021, 4-5.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

Lassen's recreational opportunities, including hunting in season. The following year, in spring of 1913, the district forester's office reiterated that conditions in the Lassen area remained the same and "there seems to be no necessity for the creation of a National Park there."<sup>22</sup>

Forest Service resistance to the Lassen national park proposal was part of a larger agency response to what Assistant Forester William B. Greeley described as a "National Park craze" sweeping the West, fomented by railroads and other commercial interests. Greeley, who would serve as chief of the USFS in the 1920s, woefully anticipated the transfer of "innumerable areas scattered though the National Forests" to Interior Department jurisdiction as national parks. "We should emphasize clearly our acceptance of the National Park *idea* as applied to tracts which can be most useful to the country as a whole as recreation grounds, but make clear at the same time the ability of the [Forest] Service to accomplish this object in its administration of such areas," Greeley opined. Albert F. Potter, the USFS's top expert in range management, shared Greeley's concern, lamenting that "the general demand for [national park] legislation...is so strong that it seems sure to result in the creation of several new National Parks." Yet, the USFS was "on entirely defensible ground," argued Potter, in willingly relinquishing for national park designation only those lands "chiefly valuable for their scenic interest" and retaining all other lands "which have a greater value for timber, agriculture or mining." Greeley believed preservation of these recreational treasures within the national forests could be "far more satisfactorily and justly accomplished by the creation of National Monuments or some similar plan under which desirable areas can be protected from alienation...but whose resources will otherwise remain open to utilization under Forest Service regulations." Lassen's most scenic features were already protected as national monuments. Grazing was the primary utilitarian land use threatened by Raker's park proposal.<sup>23</sup>

In response to Agriculture's concern over the grazing issue, Congressman Raker inquired about the actual numbers of stockmen and animals using pastures contained within the proposed park boundaries, and he offered that perhaps Interior would see fit to permit limited grazing within park boundaries "for the purpose of eating off the overgrowth of grass" as long as it did not impair "the park and its beauties in any way."

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<sup>22</sup> L. A. H. King, Forest Supervisor, to District Forester, San Francisco, March 18, 1913; Coert DuBois, District Forester to The Forester, Washington, D.C., March 25, 1912; Roy Headley, Acting District Forester, to The Forester, May 21, 1913, File: LP – Boundaries, Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1920 and Previous Years, Box 25, Acc. 93-007, RG 95, NA – PSR.

<sup>23</sup> W. B. Greeley, Assistant Forester, Portland, Ore., to The Forester, Washington, D.C., August 29, 1911; A. F. Potter, Associate Forester, Forest Service, Washington, to Greeley, September 25, 1911, File: S-Supervision National Parks, Box 36, Entry 64, RG 95, NA II. USFS resistance to national park designations intensified with the introduction of legislation to create the National Park Service, which came to fruition in 1916. The rivalry between the USFS and the NPS continued with much fervor into the Great Depression. See Hal Rothman, "'A Regular Ding-Dong Fight': Agency Culture and Evolution in the NPS-USFS Dispute, 1916-1937," *Western Historical Quarterly* 20, no. 2 (May 1989): 141-161.

Forest Supervisor W. J. Rushing informed Raker that 15 ranching outfits grazed about 2,250 sheep and 1,000 cattle and horses in the Lassen highlands each summer. These herds ranged in size from James Kelly's 1,400 head of sheep to Alex Sifford's seven horses and one milk cow at Drakesbad Guest Ranch. As for Raker's idea of Interior allowing grazing to continue once the park was established, Acting Agriculture Secretary Galloway thought this lent support to maintaining the status quo: "if the resources are to be handled as in a national forest, there would seem to be no reason for creating a park."<sup>24</sup> Through a combination of Agriculture's lack of enthusiasm for the bill, hesitation over the local grazing issue, and general indifference in the House Committee on Public Lands, H. R. 52 stalled, awaiting a fierce force of nature to knock it free from its bureaucratic mooring.

## Lassen Erupts

On Memorial Day, May 30, 1914, the volcano that had been presumed extinct suddenly came to life. Rancher Bert McKenzie saw a dense black cloud rising over Lassen Peak and immediately telephoned the forest supervisor's office. The forest clerk relayed the message to Forest Supervisor Rushing, who ran out to the bunkhouse shouting, "Mount Lassen is in eruption!" Ranger Harvey Abbey decided that despite the dangers he wanted to get a closer look.<sup>25</sup>

Snowshoeing to the top of Lassen Peak the next day, Abbey found a new explosion crater on the mountain's broad summit and confirmed that a fire lookout, built by the Forest Service the previous year, remained standing nearby. (The lookout would be demolished by natural forces by the end of the summer.) Abbey descended part way into the new crater, where a small crevasse had formed overnight. "From the crater and crevasse were coming puffs of steam and ashes," he reported. "Noises coming from the crater were heard that sounded like something dropping down in the bottom of the crater....Along the sides of the crater were small, round holes, where the steam was gushing out."

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<sup>24</sup> House, *Lassen Volcanic National Park*, 64<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., May 24, 1916, H. Rept. 749, 6-7; John E. Raker, to Hon. B. T. Galloway, Acting Secretary of Agriculture, January 9, 1914; W. J. Rushing, Forest Supervisor, to District Forester, San Francisco, January 24, 1914, File: LP – Boundaries, Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1920 and Previous Years, Box 25, Acc. 93-007, RG 95, NA – PSR. This folder contains another list of "Permittees Affected by the Proposed National Park" dated 1914 (perhaps tallied after the 1914 summer season) that indicates more cattle (1,247) and less sheep (1,800) – but a similar total number of animals – grazed this area. According to this list, 28 stockmen utilized pasture within the proposed park boundaries.

<sup>25</sup> Aubrey Bieber manuscript, no date, Shasta Historical Society, Redding, Calif., p. 38, as quoted in Emmons and Catton with contributions by Derek Beery and David Strohmaier, *Lassen Volcanic National Park Historic Resources Study*, 109.

In the following days, Abbey led two parties up to the summit. The first included a reporter from the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The second included a motion picture maker from San Francisco and his crew. When the latter party was making its ascent, Lassen erupted again. Fortunately, the debris rained down about a half mile to the north of where Abbey and the film crew were huddled on the summit dome. They managed to climb higher, set up the equipment on a flat rock, and shoot some film, before bivouacking on the side of the mountain for the night. At dawn they descended as far as Lake Helen, when the volcano erupted again. The place they had slept the night before was showered with pebbles, while ash fell as far away as Mineral and Battle Creek Meadows.<sup>26</sup>

The news and photographs of Lassen Peak's eruptions excited interest in the volcano all around the nation, breathing new life into Raker's effort to establish a national park. The most famous photos were taken a week later by Benjamin F. Loomis, an amateur photographer who owned a sawmill and store in Viola. Loomis had the idea of getting a series of images all of the same eruption. With his camera and tripod set up by the side of the road near Manzanita Lake, his two-day vigil was rewarded when Lassen erupted spectacularly on the morning of June 14, its eleventh eruption in two weeks. His series of six photos showed a dense, black, roiling cloud of ash rising about 2,500 feet into the air and rolling down the west side of the peak to enshroud the whole dome. Although bigger eruptions would follow later that summer and the next, Loomis's series of photos became the most widely disseminated image of the mountain in eruption.<sup>27</sup>

People came from all over the United States to see the live volcano. One party was composed of 33 men and women associated with university geology departments in Vermont, Rhode Island, New York, and Pennsylvania. Staying overnight at Drakesbad Guest Ranch, this party rode horseback to the summit of Lassen Peak. Several eminent geologists traveled to the area, including J. S. Diller of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), who had written a treatise on the Lassen Peak area 25 years earlier, and Arthur L. Day and E. T. Allen of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, who would eventually publish the definitive study of the eruption, *The Volcanic Activity and Hot Springs of Lassen Peak*. Diller made his headquarters on the northwest side of the mountain, while Day and Allen stayed at Drakesbad. The Sifford family hosted a bumper crop of tourists, obtaining extra saddle stock from their neighbors, the Kelly and Lee families, to accommodate the unusual demand for getting to the top of the volcano. "People did not

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 38-43, as quoted in Emmons and Catton, *Lassen Volcanic National Park Historic Resources Study*, 109-110.

<sup>27</sup> Stephen L. Harris, *Fire Mountains of the West: The Cascade and Mono Lake Volcanoes* (Missoula, Mont.: Mountain Press Publishing Co., 1988), 61; Arthur L. Day and E. T. Allen, *The Volcanic Activity and Hot Springs of Lassen Peak*, (Washington: Carnegie Institution, 1925), Plate 1; B. F. Loomis, *Pictorial History of the Lassen Volcano* (Mineral, Calif.: Loomis Museum Association, 1947, second edition), 12, 20-21.

want to see any other place around here,” Roy Sifford remembered. “All they wanted to do was climb that Peak.”<sup>28</sup>

Local people became avid volcano watchers. A party of mill workers from Manton were actually on the crater rim at the moment that Loomis took his series of photos. As the four men were fleeing for their lives, one member of their party, Lance Graham, was knocked down by a flying rock and presumed dead. The other three found shelter and waited for an hour until the eruption subsided before racing down the mountain to get help. A rescue party returned for Graham later that day and found him alive. He was evacuated to a Redding hospital where he was treated for a concussion, deep lacerations on his scalp, a broken collar bone, and three broken ribs. Fortunate to have survived, he made a full recovery.<sup>29</sup>

Lassen’s most destructive eruptions occurred in May 1915. On the night of May 19, 1915, the volcano erupted in a fiery display of shooting hot lava. From 20 miles west of the peak, Northern California Power Company Superintendent G. R. Milford saw a “deep-red glow” illuminating “the entire outline of the mountain-top.” At the same time, another tongue of molten lava coursed down Lassen Peak’s steep northeastern flank, breaking into many streams and rapidly melting the snow, which, mixing with ash and pumice, rapidly gathered force and created a slurry of mud, water, and boulders. The mudflow surged down Hat Creek, terrifying valley residents. Several houses were washed away but remarkably everyone was able to get to high ground. After the flood, the valley was littered with more than a hundred boulders of five to ten feet in diameter.<sup>30</sup>

On the following day, Milford and some companions hiked to Manzanita Lake in the hope of glimpsing the mountain through shifting clouds. A brief opening in the weather revealed a dark mass of what appeared to be a new extrusion of volcanic mud about 2,000 feet down the mountainside. As the clouds once again hid Lassen from view, Milford heard splashing in the lake. The men soon realized that lava bombs were “coming down through the storm clouds and landing around the base of the mountain and in the lake.” Milford and his companions made a hasty retreat.<sup>31</sup>

The events of May 19 and 20 were building toward a climactic eruption on May 22. This time, the gigantic plume from the eruption was visible over great distances and was witnessed by thousands of people throughout northern California. The most devastating effects were produced by a ground-hugging cloud that swept the northeast face. A seething mixture of hot gas, ash, and rock fragments of various dimensions

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<sup>28</sup> H. Rept. 749, 15-16; Loomis, *Pictorial History of the Lassen Volcano*, 26-28; Sifford, *Sixty Years of Siffords at Drakesbad*, 57.

<sup>29</sup> Mazie Phelps Sanders, “Mt. Lassen Came to Life,” *The Covered Wagon* (Redding, Calif.: Shasta Historical Society, 1975), 58; Douglas H. Strong, *Footprints in Time: A History of Lassen Volcanic National Park* (Red Bluff, Calif.: Lassen Loomis Museum Association, 1998), 40.

<sup>30</sup> Day and Allen, *The Volcanic Activity and Hot Springs of Lassen Peak*, 14.

<sup>31</sup> G. R. Milford to Charles Coleman, May 5, 1947, Lassen Volcanic National Park vertical file, Tehama County Public Library.

traveled approximately 4.5 miles down Lassen's northeast flank into the heads of Lost and Hat creek valleys. Described as a "pyroclastic surge," this swift-moving cloud mowed down thick stands of virgin timber, snapping off tree trunks as much as six feet in diameter and hurling them hundreds of feet from their stumps. Altogether, an estimated five and a half million board feet of timber were destroyed. So great was the force of the surge that trees toppled along side ridges defied gravity by falling uphill, away from the explosion source.<sup>32</sup>

After this eruption, Diller correctly predicted that the volcano had largely spent itself. In the meantime, it had gotten the attention of Congress. For preservationists, the timing of Lassen's eruption cycle was truly fortuitous, suddenly bestowing on Lassen Peak the mantle of active volcano. Even as this eruption cycle ended, the volcano would continue to rumble and vent for many more years, and the U.S. Geological Survey would station a scientist, R. H. Finch, in Mineral to keep an eye on it. Indeed, for the next 65 years Lassen would maintain the distinction of being the most recently active volcano in the contiguous United States – until the eruption of Mount St. Helens in 1980. Also remarkable was the fact that Lassen's series of eruptions in 1914-1915 drew so many curious visitors right to the crater rim without taking a single human life.

## **The Creation of Lassen Volcanic National Park**

The House Committee on Public Lands finally reported on H. R. 52 in late July 1914. Lassen Peak's series of eruptions in the previous two months had "attracted the attention of the civilized world," the report read. The committee voted unanimously that Lassen Peak, now representing the only active volcano in the contiguous United States, deserved national park status, as did Lassen's surrounding mountain peaks, mineral and hot springs, deep canyons, trout-filled lakes and streams, and forest habitat for deer and game fowl. The committee's proposed park boundaries enclosed 80,506 acres, 5,680 of which were private land. The park would be "readily accessible" from two railway lines. An "automobile stage" already ran from Redding to Manzanita Lake and from Susanville and Westwood to within ten miles of the proposed southern boundaries for the park. From these points of departure, tourists could venture into the park "by means of a number of fairly good trails."<sup>33</sup>

The only substantive change the House committee made to H. R. 52 was the park's name. "Lassen Volcanic" National Park replaced "Peter Lassen" National Park in the bill's language, as advocated by the Shasta County Promotion and Development Association's newly formed Lassen Volcanic National Park Committee. This group believed "Lassen Volcanic" to be the most fitting name, given that all the area's natural

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<sup>32</sup> Harris, *Fire Mountains of the West*, 69-70.

<sup>33</sup> H. Rept. 1021, 1, 6, 7, 13.

wonders were tied to volcanism in some way, and the House committee agreed. The Lassen Volcanic National Park Committee also lobbied – unsuccessfully – for more park acreage than Raker’s bill prescribed, although this cause would come to pass some 15 years after the park’s establishment. It also supplied Raker with locals’ sensational photographs of Lassen in eruption, with the hope that this photographic evidence would advance the progress of H.R. 52 through Congress.<sup>34</sup>

Shortly after Lassen began belching steam and cinder, Raker also received eruption photographs and testimony for a national park designation from Michael E. Dittmar of Redding. The founder of the *Redding Searchlight* newspaper in the 1890s, Dittmar had since engaged in a variety of local endeavors: real estate investment, the mining industry, political activism, and tourism promotion. Even before Lassen erupted, Dittmar lauded the Lassen Peak National Monument and vicinity as “an unheralded wonderland,” an area that “will become known as nature’s curiosity shop,” in a descriptive booklet he was writing on Shasta County. Dittmar shared with Raker the Lassen section of his manuscript that advocated for the extension of the monument into a larger national park, inclusive of fantastic countryside that “supports nothing of commercial importance.” Now, with Lassen in eruption – “not menacing in character [but] of great scientific interest” – and attracting tourists from afar, the time was right to move forward with a national park designation. In June 1914, Dittmar made no indication he was aware of Raker’s existing and previous legislation for this purpose, but their common efforts soon converged. By the close of the year, Dittmar’s booklet *Shasta County, California* appeared in print, extolling the virtues of the proposed Lassen Volcanic National Park, which Dittmar predicted most visitors would access from Manzanita Lake.<sup>35</sup>

Meanwhile, the impending loss of grazing access both within and adjacent to the proposed park boundaries continued to bother local USFS officials and area stockmen. In 1914, concerned ranchers met with the Shasta County Development Board to voice their opposition to the park legislation. Stockman Vint Stevenson and Forest Supervisor Rushing agreed that more was at stake than losing range within the park. The accumulation of ungrazed forage inside the park would surely draw stock from “the crowded condition of the range” surrounding the park on all sides, Rushing thought. Without fencing around the park, “wouldn’t the adjoining ranges have to be grazed very lightly if at all to prevent wandering and trespass?” Stevenson asked. This scenario worried Rushing, who, in light of the increase of California’s livestock in recent years, believed that “any reduction of forage area is a serious matter.”<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 1, 11.

<sup>35</sup> H. Rept. 1021, 11-13; Strong, “*These Happy Grounds*,” 45-46.

<sup>36</sup> Vint W. Stevenson, to W. J. Rushing, Forest Supervisor, December 28, 1914; Rushing to Stevenson, December 29, 1914, File: LP – Boundaries, Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1920 and Previous Years, Box 25, Acc. 93-007, RG 95, NA – PSR.

Despite the spectacle of Lassen's continued eruptions, the 63<sup>rd</sup> Congress failed to act on H. R. 52 and adjourned in March 1915. Following Lassen's most wrathful explosions in May, Raker introduced what would be his final Lassen national park bill, H. R. 348, on the opening day of the 64<sup>th</sup> Congress, December 6, 1915. Raker was "very desirous of having the bill considered at an early date" and requested that Department of the Interior Franklin K. Lane report on it as soon as possible.<sup>37</sup>

Lane reported favorably on the bill, reiterating Interior's suggestion in 1913 that the Lassen bill provide for an annual park appropriation of \$5,000, for maintenance, supervision and improvements. Initially, H. R. 348 requested that Congress provide Interior with twice that amount annually for Lassen, but the House Committee on Public Lands took Lane's advice and lowered the appropriation ceiling to \$5,000, a more attractive price tag to legislators.<sup>38</sup>

Unlike his predecessors, Agriculture Secretary David F. Houston took a firm stance against this Lassen park proposal in his formal report filed in April 1916. He noted that H. R. 348 called for less stringent regulations than Raker's previous bills. The new legislation allowed for "the freest" recreational use of parklands, automobile touring, and "the reasonable grazing of stock." With these changes, the park would be managed no differently than the USFS already managed the two national monuments and the surrounding high-elevation portion of Lassen National Forest, Houston argued. The creation of this Interior-run island within a sea of national forest, "when all the public purposes can be secured by the present single jurisdiction of the whole area, will increase administrative difficulties, complicate service to the using public, increase expense, and decrease efficiency in fire protection," he lamented. "These facts raise a serious question whether the net results would justify the action proposed."<sup>39</sup>

Houston's report on the Lassen Volcanic National Park bill reflected the strong anti-park viewpoints echoing from the ranks below him. In December 1915, Chief Forester Henry Graves shared with agency staff his belief that "the Service should consistently oppose" all national park proposals other than for exceptional scenic lands of *national* significance. Most proposals were unjustified, he thought, "simply local advertising and boosting schemes" seeking federal dollars for road construction. Graves stressed that the USFS needed to educate Congress and the American people to the fact that it could do better than the Interior Department in providing the public with "maximum use and pleasure of such areas." Lassen Forest Supervisor Rushing considered Congressman Raker's revived Lassen park campaign the classic advertising-

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<sup>37</sup> H. R. 348, "A Bill to establish the Lassen Volcanic National Park in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in the State of California, and for other purposes," 64<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., File 12-17 Part 1: Parks, Reservations and Antiquities, Lassen Volcanic National Park, Legislation, 64<sup>th</sup> Congress, Box 94, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II; John E. Raker to Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior, January 31, 1916, Folder 3: H14: Area and Service History – Early History of LVNP, Box 21, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>38</sup> H. Rept. 749, 3.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

and-road-appropriations ploy that Graves instructed USFS officials to oppose. District Forester DuBois agreed, instructing Rushing to publicize Graves' gospel that the national forests in California were the people's "natural recreation grounds," best managed by the USFS. "To jam this idea home on every citizen of the State" would lead to the end of this "agitation" for national parks, DuBois thought.<sup>40</sup>

Despite this opposition, the House Committee on Public Lands recommended H. R. 348 for passage in May 1916. Press coverage and lectures by Dr. Diller and other geologists in eastern cities had spread the word of Lassen Peak's remarkable volcanic displays, and people from near and far were drawn to the mountain in the hopes of witnessing for themselves a volcano in eruption. The House committee's report on H. R. 348 stressed that more citizens would include Lassen in their "See America First" tour (a national campaign to promote domestic tourism during World War I) once it became a national park. Under the new designation it would attract more foreign visitors, as well. Thanks to an ambitious state initiative, the committee reported, travel to Lassen was about to become much easier. Road building in the Lassen area was already underway as part of California's highway construction project aimed at linking each county seat to a primary truck corridor through the state's Central Valley. The citizens of California had approved \$18 million in bonds for the statewide project and in November they would vote for \$15 million more. Construction had begun on the lateral roads from Susanville to Red Bluff and from Alturas to Redding, which would pass south of the park and north of the park, respectively. These new roads will enable travelers in California to take "a side trip with ease and comfort" to the Lassen area and allow "the citizens in California to go from the valley to the mountains where real beauty and natural wonders and curiosities exist," the report read. Lassen Volcanic National Park "will add to the health and prolong the life of many who take the opportunity to make the visit," the report boldly concluded.<sup>41</sup>

This House report contained page after page of endorsements for the Lassen park movement from college professors, geologists, volcano enthusiasts, and other interested citizens from local counties and from across the country. A number of California business organizations, civic associations, and city chambers of commerce, including the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, also went on record to support the legislation.

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<sup>40</sup> Coert DuBois, District Forester, to Forest Officers, District 5, December 1, 1915; W. J. Rushing, Forest Supervisor, to District Forester, San Francisco, December 4, 1915; DuBois to Rushing, December 13, 1915, File: LP – Boundaries, Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1920 and Previous Years, Box 25, Acc. 93-007, RG 95, NA – PSR. Barrett, the former Lassen National Forest supervisor, in his final protest against the park legislation, predicted the actual transfer of full management responsibility of the park to Interior would not be forthcoming, saddling the USFS with extra work and confusing the visiting public. Barrett's prediction held true for nine years, during which Congress refused to appropriate Lassen more than token funding. L. A. Barrett, Acting District Forester, to The Forester, Washington, D.C., June 26, 1916, File: LP – Boundaries, Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1920 and previous years, Box 25, Records of the Forest Service, Lassen National Forest, Alpha Series 1901-53 (Acc. 93-007), RG 95, NA – PSR.

<sup>41</sup> H. Rept. 749, 23-24.

These park proponents spoke to the Lassen area's "distinct scientific value" and its potential as a great "playground" for tourists. Secretary A. J. Mathews conveyed the Susanville Chamber of Commerce's conviction that "the Government should not hesitate to provide the necessary funds to keep the natural wonders existing in the area specified for the public good."<sup>42</sup>

Members of the House discussed H. R. 348 on the House floor only briefly on June 10 before passing the bill. Raker touted the proposed park's virtues: its active volcano and surrounding oddities, including ice caves and "glass lakes" of obsidian. Frank W. Mondell (R – Wyo.) questioned the enforcement of federal laws and regulations within the park prior to the state ceding jurisdiction of these lands to the federal government. Raker stated the California legislature was expected to relinquish jurisdiction after the park's creation, "to bring it fully within its highest use and make it so it will be in the same condition as the other parks." William P. Borland (D – Mo.) raised the access issue. Raker responded by explaining progress made on the Alturas-Redding highway and the Susanville-Red Bluff highway, which he claimed a bit extravagantly went "right to the base of this mountain."<sup>43</sup>

The Senate Committee on Public Lands reported favorably on the bill and the Senate passed it with no floor discussion on July 27. On August 9, 1916, President Wilson signed the Lassen Volcanic National Park Act.<sup>44</sup> California's fourth national park came into being via legislation permissive of a wide range of land uses. The act read that within this "public park and pleasuring ground" further settlement would be prohibited, although the rights of existing landowners within park boundaries would be upheld. Congress deemed appropriate for this park railroad, automobile and wagon road rights-of-way, as well as federal reclamation projects. The Secretary of Interior, now in "exclusive control" of the park, would formulate a set of rules and regulations to govern it. Congress directed that these regulations would be "primarily aimed at the freest use of the said park for recreational purposes by the public" while protecting the park's "timber, mineral deposits, and natural curiosities or wonders." The regulations were to control automobile use within the park, as well as continued grazing of livestock. The Secretary was instructed to prevent "the wanton destruction" of fish and wildlife and outlaw "their capture or destruction for purposes of merchandise or prohibit," but no language in the act prohibited hunting outright. He could lease parcels of land up to ten acres in size to concessioners for the development of visitor accommodations and tracts up to one acre to private parties for construction of summer homes or cottages. The Secretary would determine the fees charged for these 20-year, renewable leases. He could also allow for

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 14-22. Direct quotes from pp. 14, 17, 19.

<sup>43</sup> *Congressional Record*, 64<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 1916: 9435-9438.

<sup>44</sup> By presidential proclamation, Wilson created the Capulin Volcano National Monument in New Mexico the very same day.

the removal and sale of “mature or dead or down timber” as he saw fit. The act’s last provision placed a \$5,000-cap on annual appropriations for Lassen Volcanic.<sup>45</sup>

The host of utilitarian land uses contained within the Lassen Volcanic National Park Act – which USFS officials had correctly pointed out were characteristic of national forests, not national parks – was representative of Congressman Raker’s brand of conservation. He believed recreation and resource utility went hand-in-hand, all in the name of good land stewardship. Raker was a prominent pro-dam advocate in the Hetch Hetchy controversy that raged a few years prior. He introduced the 1913 legislation that ultimately authorized the damming of the Tuolumne River within Yosemite National Park’s Hetch Hetchy Valley. Raker believed the resulting Hetch Hetchy reservoir would actually enhance the scenic experience of visitors to this portion of Yosemite, while providing the city of San Francisco (still recovering from its catastrophic earthquake and fires of 1906) with a reliable water supply. Raker championed water development throughout his legislative career. Memorials to Raker after his death in 1926 spoke of the recently completed Hetch Hetchy Dam as the congressman’s “lasting monument.” Mourners also acknowledged Lassen Volcanic National Park as another important gift Raker left to California and the nation.<sup>46</sup>

The same day President Wilson approved the Lassen Volcanic National Park Act, Interior issued a press release on the new park designation. Interior announced that Lassen encompassed a total of 82,880 acres, lands “of extraordinary interest” inclusive of “the only active volcano in the United States.” This repeated claim about Lassen excluded the U.S. territories of Alaska and Hawaii that contained a number of active volcanoes. Only a week prior to the establishment of Lassen Volcanic National Park, legislation was enacted creating Hawaii National Park, which included Haleakala on Maui Island and Kilauea and Mauna Loa on the island of Hawaii. But American tourists need not leave the mainland to view Lassen’s volcanic features “with ease and safety,” the Interior press release read, drawing from an account of Columbia University professor Douglas W. Johnson who had recently visited Lassen. “On the whole it is difficult to imagine a region where the more striking phenomena of nature are developed on a grander scale or in a manner calculated to appeal more strongly to the average individual,” wrote Johnson.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Senate, *Lassen Volcanic National Park*, 64<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., June 22, 1916, S. Rept. 536 (identical to H. Rept. 749); *Congressional Record*, 64<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 1916: 11684; “An Act to establish the Lassen Volcanic National Park in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in the State of California, and for other purposes, approved August 9, 1916” (39 Stat. 442) in U.S. Department of Interior, *Laws Relating to the National Park Service, the National Parks and Monuments* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1933), 186-189.

<sup>46</sup> Ise, *Our National Park Policy*, 85-96; H. Doc. 782, 74-104 (quote on p. 74).

<sup>47</sup> Department of Interior, “The Lassen Volcanic National Park,” memorandum, August 9, 1916, File 12-17 Part 1: Misc., Box 94, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II; Ise, *Our National Park Policy*, 218-221; “Two New National Parks,” *The Outlook* 113 (August 23, 1916): 935.

The creation of Lassen Volcanic National Park was the first instance in which Congress created a national park from lands already protected as a national monument – in this case, two. In 1919, Grand Canyon and Lafayette (later renamed Acadia) national parks replaced existing national monument designations, and this trend continued. In the coming decades, many park proponents would use the executive authority of the Antiquities Act to first secure national monument protection for scenic lands before navigating the complex and often contentious congressional process to “parkhood.” “Elevation” to national park status usually meant a substantial increase in the flow of federal dollars to these remote federal areas now slated for major tourism development, but in Lassen’s case, the very first monument-to-park metamorphosis, more funding would not materialize for some time.<sup>48</sup>

After passage of the Lassen Volcanic National Park Act, Congressman Raker and Secretary of the Interior Lane asked Congress to include Lassen’s \$5,000 annual appropriation in its general deficiency appropriation bill, which was to supply miscellaneous funds to projects left out of the federal budget for fiscal year 1916. Otherwise, Lassen would not receive Interior funds and therefore not be transferred to Interior management until the following summer. Congressman John J. Fitzgerald (D – N.Y.) convinced a majority of his colleagues that Lassen was better protected from forest fires by the USFS than by Interior, which could hire only two employees for the entire park with its paltry appropriation. Fitzgerald pointed out the heightened incendiary potential for the forests surrounding the active volcano. On August 31, 1916, Congress rejected Interior funding for Lassen Volcanic National Park in the deficiency appropriation bill. Congress continued to exclude appropriations for Lassen from annual federal budgets until 1920. From 1920 to 1925, Congress granted Interior only token sums for Lassen. The park remained in the care of the USFS during these years, although it was officially administered by the superintendent of Yosemite National Park.<sup>49</sup>

### **Impact of the National Park Service Act on the Lassen Park Campaign**

The campaign to create Lassen Volcanic National Park happened to coincide with the legislative effort to establish a national park bureau within the Interior Department. It also happened that Congressman Raker was a key player in both legislative drives. Both of these coincidences affected Lassen Volcanic National Park. It was ironic that Raker

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<sup>48</sup> Rothman, *American’s National Monuments*, 97; Mackintosh, *Shaping the System*, 22; Robert W. Righter, “National Monuments to National Parks: The Use of the Antiquities Act of 1906,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 20, no. 3 (August 1989): 281-301. A national monument would be “elevated” to national park status, according to National Park Service Director Stephen Mather, who termed the monument designation a “halfway house” to “parkhood.” See Righter, pp. 289, 291.

<sup>49</sup> House, *Estimate of Appropriation for Lassen Volcanic National Park*, 64<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., August 15, 1916, H. Doc. 1326, 1-2; *Congressional Record*, 64<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 1916: 13519-13525.

stood with utilitarian conservationists on the Hetch Hetchy controversy in 1913 and then joined with preservationists on the matter of establishing the National Park Service three years later, and that he introduced bills in both cases. But the fact that Raker championed both causes only served to highlight the complex nature of the rift between utilitarian conservationists and preservationists.

Proponents of a national parks bureau stressed the need for a unified management approach for existing and future national parks, as well as the need to develop consistent standards for future national park proposals and legislation. Although the Department of the Interior had finally appointed a supervisor of national parks in 1911, this single individual had negligible influence. Each park retained “its own rules and laws and fetishes” as nothing like a national park system existed. Beginning in 1900, congressmen of the emerging “aesthetic conservation” movement introduced a number of park service bills, none of which spawned any action due largely to effective opposition by Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot and his cadre of utilitarian conservationists. On this issue, John Raker sided with the aesthetic camp and sponsored two park service bills, in 1912 and 1913. The most ardent advocate for a national park bureau in the House, Raker introduced another with the 64<sup>th</sup> Congress but agreed to retire his third park service bill and support another introduced by his fellow California congressman, William Kent, an Independent, who was less objectionable to House Republican leadership than Raker, a Democrat. In the spring of 1916, Raker joined forces with Kent, Robert Sterling Yard, Stephen Mather, Frederick Law Olmsted, Horace McFarland and other national park champions to formulate a winning bill that passed both houses without extensive debate. The biggest bone of contention between the House and the Senate with this bill was the issue of grazing, most pertinent to Lassen. Ultimately, the legislation was drawn so as to allow the Secretary of the Interior to grant grazing privileges within any park but Yellowstone. President Wilson signed the National Park Service Act into law on August 25, 1916, just two weeks after the Lassen legislation became law.<sup>50</sup>

As the National Park Service bill headed toward enactment, it tended to suppress debate about the many utilitarian conservation provisions in the enabling legislation for Lassen Volcanic National Park. But for a time, it appeared that the National Park Service bill might derail the latter bill altogether. Agriculture Secretary Galloway, in his January 1914 report on H. R. 52, Raker’s third Lassen bill, declared that if Congress was going to establish a bureau of national parks then all legislation for individual national parks – including the Lassen bill – should be shelved until this bureau was organized and its

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<sup>50</sup> Ise, *Our National Park Policy*, 185-193; Robert Shankland, *Steve Mather of the National Parks* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1954, second edition), 100-104, 170; Herbert Corey, “Steve Mather Sells the Parks,” *Collier’s National Weekly* 73 (June 21, 1924): 10; Donald C. Swain, “The Passage of the National Park Service Act of 1916,” *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 50, no. 1 (Autumn 1966): 4-17. For a detailed legislative history of the National Park Service Act see Robin W. Winks, “The National Park Service Act of 1916: ‘A Contradictory Mandate?’,” 74 *Denver University Law Review* 575 (1997), reprinted [www.nature.nps.gov/Winks/](http://www.nature.nps.gov/Winks/) (March 12, 2007).

policy for park lands formulated. In an otherwise dispassionate report, this was Galloway's only pointed statement opposing the Lassen legislation.<sup>51</sup>

Stephen Mather, special assistant to the Secretary of the Interior and the driving force behind the park service legislation, shared Galloway's sentiments but for very different reasons. Mather, a wealthy businessman and tireless publicist who had gone to work for the Secretary mainly to see this legislation enacted, would not support any individual park bills, including Lassen's, that would divert attention from the more important objective of establishing the National Park Service. Mather also objected to the many utilitarian activities Raker's legislation would allow within Lassen, most of which ran counter to the standard regulations Mather envisioned for the NPS. In addition, Mather had never visited the Lassen area and he doubted that its scenery was indeed superlative, a mandatory requirement for all national parks, he believed. Apparently, Congressman Raker was unmoved by Mather's concerns and pushed forward with both bills.<sup>52</sup>

During House discussion of H. R. 348 in June 1916, one freshman representative expressed some confusion about a seeming overlap of the Lassen bill with the park service bill. Albert Johnson (R – Wash.) asked if passage of the impending park service legislation wouldn't "take care of this proposition" by preserving Lassen "for national park purposes without actually making it a park?" Raker explained that the two processes were independent: "You have to create your park, and if the park service is created then [the park service] takes care of it."<sup>53</sup>

By early July, Mather had little faith that Congress would act on the park service legislation before it adjourned its current session, and so he left Kent's bill in the hands of his able assistant Horace Albright and departed the nation's capital for a summer tour of the Western parks. Mather was in San Francisco, between mountain excursions, when the Senate passed the Lassen park bill. Mather relayed the disturbing news to Albright, who was traveling by train back to Washington. Mather's telegram intercepted Albright in Chicago. "Try and have President's signature withheld," instructed Mather, "in view [of] various special exceptions railroads etc. included."<sup>54</sup>

Mather's dire view of the Lassen bill was relayed to Secretary of the Interior Lane, but Lane decided not to press Wilson for a presidential veto because he calculated that to do so would risk alienating Raker, possibly leading to defeat of the park service bill. In Lane's mind, supporting passage of the Lassen legislation despite its offensive utilitarian provisions was a just sacrifice for the greater political cause of ensuring the birth of the National Park Service. And so the president signed the Lassen Volcanic National Park Act into law just two weeks prior to putting his signature on the National

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<sup>51</sup> H. Rept. 1021, 5.

<sup>52</sup> Shankland, *Steve Mather of the National Parks*, 170-171.

<sup>53</sup> *Congressional Record*, 64<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 1916: 9435.

<sup>54</sup> Shankland, *Steve Mather of the National Parks*, 102-103; Mather, to H. M. Albright, telegram, August 2, 1916, File 12-17 Part 1: Legislation, Box 94, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II.

Park Service Act. The close timing of the two measures, together with Raker's crucial support of both, explains why Lassen Volcanic National Park came into existence with such lax provisions for use and development. "It was not a real national park bill," historian John Ise wrote disparagingly in his treatise, *Our National Park Policy* (1961), "but was designed to give the name 'national park' to an area which, like Glacier, was a sort of hybrid cross between a national park and a national forest."<sup>55</sup> This judgment was perhaps a bit harsh, considering that numerous national parks both before and after were established with so-called "birth defects" that were later corrected by amendatory legislation. But it did place Lassen at a disadvantage relative to other areas in the new national park system, setting an enduring pattern for this small park. As for Mather, he eventually changed his mind about Lassen, according to biographer Robert Shankland. Once Mather visited Lassen, the first NPS director admitted that Lane's call had been the correct one and he was pleased to have Lassen among the national parks under his charge.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Ise, *Our National Park Policy*, 223.

<sup>56</sup> Shankland, *Steve Mather of the National Parks*, 171; Swain, "The Passage of the National Park Service Act," 16-17.



## Chapter Two

### Meager Beginnings

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Following its charismatic launch to national park status, Lassen Volcanic National Park entered into a protracted state of limbo. Deprived of Department of the Interior funding, Lassen could not be developed or properly protected, but neither could it simply be treated as a part of the surrounding Lassen National Forest. The preserve now straddled an awkward administrative divide between the USFS and the NPS. On the ground, USFS personnel kept an eye on the park during fire season, issued grazing permits to local ranchers each year, and did a bit of access road construction on the Park Service's behalf. From afar, the NPS called for new grazing restrictions, sent in a few high-ranking agency men to tour the park and begin charting its future, and eventually hired one seasonal ranger to count visitors and dissuade hunters from killing park wildlife. A consortium of California citizens, the Lassen Volcanic National Park Association, grew impatient with Lassen's appropriations moratorium and its continued inaccessibility, and created a publicity stir for the park that eventually resulted in congressional appropriations. Although national attention given to the eruptions had cinched the establishment of Lassen Volcanic National Park in 1916, it took sustained local commitment to unlock federal coffers for the park's development.

While this set of circumstances was unique to Lassen, it roughly corresponded to situations found in other national parks established in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This was the start of Lassen's first stage of park development, a period in which administration was improvised, development was largely ad hoc, and protection was rudimentary. In some ways, the first decade and a half of Lassen Volcanic National Park's existence was a continuation of its period of discovery as government officials explored the area and began to gain a more intimate knowledge of its topography, climate, and biota.

## Unequal Partners in Management

Because Congress appropriated no money for the Department of the Interior to administer Lassen Volcanic National Park, that responsibility mostly remained with the USFS after the passage of Lassen's establishing act in the summer of 1916. Shortly after President Wilson signed the bill into law, Secretary of Agriculture David Houston assured Interior that USFS personnel would continue to protect the park area from fire and other harm until such time as Interior could assume responsibility for it. This arrangement held for nearly a decade, and with few exceptions the Forest Service continued business-as-usual operations in the high elevations of the Lassen National Forest now designated a national park.<sup>1</sup>

Most of Lassen Volcanic National Park's 80,000 acres lay within the Mineral Ranger District of the national forest, and fire protection during the summer season remained the primary duty of foresters in this area. Lassen Forest Supervisor M. R. Tillotson estimated that in the mid-1910s forest patrolmen under his charge devoted a total of about 57 days per fire season to the park area. Summer headquarters of the forest supervisor was located in Battle Creek Meadows near Mineral, not far from the park's southern boundary. In 1911, a USFS crew had constructed a telephone line from this site to the Coppervale Ranger Station some 25 miles east of Mineral. Including a spur line to the summit of Prospect Peak, a valued vantage point during fire season, about 20 miles of this wire system ran within park boundaries. Continued maintenance of this communication line was mandatory for proper fire protection of the park and the surrounding forest, Tillotson stressed. In the coming years, the Forest Service expanded its fire detection capabilities across the greater Lassen vicinity by constructing two fire lookout structures within the park, one at the summit of Prospect Peak and one atop Brokeoff Mountain.<sup>2</sup>

Early fish planting within Lassen Volcanic National Park involved neither the NPS nor the USFS but the initiative of local businessmen. In 1918, fishing tackle retailer William Rice arranged for the stocking of Manzanita Lake with 125,000 rainbow trout from a nearby hatchery. The muddy aftermath of Lassen's most violent 1915 eruptions had killed all the lake's trout. The hatchery fish thrived, and by the early 1920s Rice and his fellow anglers were pulling from Manzanita Lake trout weighing up to two and a half

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<sup>1</sup> D. F. Houston, Secretary, to The Secretary of the Interior, August 14, 1916, File 12-17 Part 1: Parks, Reservations and Antiquities, Lassen Volcanic NP (Miscellaneous), Box 94, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>2</sup> Carl Vrooman, Acting Secretary, to The Secretary of the Interior, September 8, 1916; M. R. Tillotson, Acting Forest Supervisor, to District Forester, September 2, 1916; Tillotson to District Forester, August 26, 1916, LP – Boundaries, Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1920 and previous years, Box 25, Records of the Forest Service, Lassen National Forest, Alpha Series 1901-53 (Acc. 93-007), RG 95, NA – PSR; Ruliff S. Holway, "The Volcanic Activity of Lassen Peak, California," *The Popular Science Monthly* 86 (March 1916): 293; H. E. Williams, Field Representative of the Secretary of the Interior, "General Report on Lassen-Volcanic National Park," July 22, 1929, File 204-010 Part 1: H. E. Williams, Lassen Inspections and Investigations, Box 353, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II, p. 5.

pounds. C. P. Snell, who in 1914 purchased a 475-acre property on the northwest shore of Juniper Lake, was rumored to have stocked that lake with trout, an initial investment in his scheme to develop an extensive tourist resort there. San Francisco resident E. T. Niebling is credited with planting 5,000 rainbow fingerlings, provided by the California Department of Fish and Game, in Juniper Lake in the summer of 1915.<sup>3</sup>

In 1920, Congress began to appropriate meager sums of \$2,500 to \$3,000 per year for Lassen Volcanic National Park. In an effort to expend this paltry amount “as economically as possible,” NPS Director Mather entered into a cooperative agreement with the Forest Service that maintained the status quo of USFS personnel covering rudimentary park supervision and funneled all Lassen appropriation money directly into access road development. Using Lassen appropriations to purchase materials, a Lassen National Forest crew upgraded the old Supan wagon trail – which branched off from the Red Bluff-Susanville highway near Mineral and led into the southwest corner of the park – into an automobile road. In lieu of hiring an on-site employee for Lassen, the NPS assigned Yosemite Superintendent W. B. Lewis the job of acting superintendent of Lassen. From Yosemite National Park, over 200 miles to the south, Lewis administered the transfer of Lassen’s funds to the USFS for the road work and in other capacities served as the park’s authorized representative.<sup>4</sup>

Before Lewis assumed this role, he and James Lloyd (a Yosemite ranger that would serve as Lassen’s superintendent in the 1940s) had traveled to Mineral in 1917 to meet with Lassen National Forest officials and discuss Forest Service activities within the new park. Lewis returned to Lassen Volcanic in 1921. In June, he inspected only the park’s approach roads; a lingering snowpack kept him three miles from the park boundaries on this trip. Lewis returned in September to investigate the park itself. He stayed overnight at Drakesbad Guest Ranch and from there enjoyed a “very delightful” horseback trip to Cinder Cone. Lewis lamented that by NPS standards “the conditions in the Park are not at all good.” Excessive grazing had damaged every meadow he encountered and hunting was rampant, according to reports. These assaults on the park

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<sup>3</sup> “1954 Investigations of Special Fishery Problems, Lassen Volcanic National Park, California,” Folder 41: N1423, Investigations of Special Fishery Problems LVNP by Wallis, Box 39, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Strong, “*These Happy Grounds*,” 73; Purdy, *Lassen Volcanic*, 186.

<sup>4</sup> Stephen T. Mather, Director, to Judge Raker, March 16, 1921, File 12-17 Part 1: Parks, Reservations and Antiquities, Lassen Volcanic NP (Miscellaneous), Box 94, Entry 6; Arno B. Cammerer, Acting Director, to Judge Raker, December 6, 1922, File 630 Part 1: Roads – General, Box 356; W. B. Lewis, Superintendent, to The Director, National Park Service, August 11, 1920, File 201 Part 1: Lassen Admin. (General), Box 353, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; unsigned letter from Washington Office, NPS, to Paul Redington, Dist. Forester, July 19, 1920, File 1: A26 Supt. General Corresp. 1920, Box 1, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Department of the Interior, *Report of the Director of the National Park Service for 1921* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1921), 96; Department of the Interior, *Report of the Director of the National Park Service for 1922* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922), 67; National Park Service, “Cultural Landscapes Inventory: Lassen Volcanic National Park Highway, Lassen Volcanic National Park,” 2000, unpublished report in the administrative files of Lassen Volcanic National Park (hereafter LAVO Files), Park Headquarters, Mineral, Calif., pp. 11, 17-18.

resources would continue unabated until the Park Service took full control of Lassen, Lewis conceded, although he did suggest to Mather the idea of paying young Roy Sifford a small salary to enforce a proposed hunting ban for the park. Lewis also revisited the park access road under construction by the USFS. He praised Lassen Forest Supervisor C. E. Dunston for the eight-mile stretch of fine new road that by season's end almost reached the park boundary and had cost the NPS less than \$5,000.<sup>5</sup>

In 1922, the NPS decided to devote a small portion of Lassen's annual funding to a more thorough investigation of Lassen's resources and public use. A young local man by the name of Lynne Walker Collins was hired to tour the park for a month and report on its visitation, immediate administrative needs, and patrol requirements. Collins had spent part of his boyhood in Corning, California, and had recently married into the local Beresford family, owners of the Hampton Lodge in Mineral, so he was already somewhat acquainted with the park area. Collins crisscrossed the park numerous times through the month of September. He talked with campers, hunters, trail guides and their saddle-sore customers, Warner Valley resort proprietors (the Siffords, Kellys and Lees), and Forest Service officials. He also accompanied Michael Dittmar and a team of engineers on a five-day reconnaissance during which they investigated possible scenic road routes. A motor road through the park would transform Lassen into a great tourist attraction, Collins believed, and with a ban on hunting it would become a "great game refuge" as well.<sup>6</sup>

Collins was rehired back the following summer as Lassen's first seasonal ranger, at \$150 a month, an inflated wage because Collins had to report for duty with his own horse, camping equipment, and supplies. Lewis assigned Collins two monumental tasks: protection of the park's hot springs, lava flows, and other natural features from vandalism and inadvertent damage by visitors, and enforcement of the new park regulations, formulated for Lassen by the NPS and approved by Interior the year before. Collins was to enforce regulations "by persuasion rather than by arrest" whenever possible, especially concerning the ban on all hunting and carrying of firearms within park boundaries. Lewis instructed Collins, as the park's solitary ranger, to simply educate hunters and other armed visitors of the new rules and "urge them . . . to desist." Lewis issued a news bulletin to local newspapers to help spread the word. "From now on," it stated, the park would be "maintained as a game sanctuary" by Collins. Nuanced enforcement of the no-hunting rule would test Collins in his final job responsibility: to "make friends for the

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<sup>5</sup> Comments on final draft report; Department of the Interior, *Report of the Director of the National Park Service for 1921*, 96; W. B. Lewis to The Director, National Park Service, July 26, 1921, File 3: A26 Supt. Gen. Corresp. July-Dec. 1921, Box 1, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Lewis to The Director, National Park Service, November 1, 1921, File 630 Part 1 Roads – General, Box 356, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>6</sup> Department of the Interior, *Report of the Director of the National Park Service for 1922*, 67; Walker Collins to W. B. Lewis, Supt., October 25, 1922; Diary of Walker Collins, Park Ranger in Lassen National Park, File: Miscellaneous Part 2, Box 95, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II; comments on final draft report.

Park Service” among adjacent property owners, the public at large, and the Forest Service.<sup>7</sup>

## **Controversies Surrounding Grazing Privileges**

In addition to fire protection and road construction, the Forest Service’s other significant duty within Lassen Volcanic National Park in the early years was grazing management. Beginning with the 1917 grazing season, the USFS was obligated to tweak its past grazing permit practices within park boundaries to abide by Park Service grazing policy. Both Lassen’s enabling act and the National Park Service Act granted the Secretary of the Interior discretion to allow grazing within the park, and so provision was made for grazing of cattle and horses. But NPS leadership hoped to institute a ban of sheep from all national parks, based on some rudimentary federal studies and a legion of casual observations of the detrimental impact sheep had on wildflowers and other delicate vegetation of the high-elevation mountain parks. Mather wanted Lassen free of all sheep but allowed one “temporary” exception. In the spring of 1917, the NPS granted William Conard permission to continue to graze sheep on his accustomed permit range that included a small pocket of meadow just inside the park. Conard’s sheep permit was renewed annually well into the 1920s. Otherwise, the NPS allowed the USFS to issue permits for cattle and horses only for established ranges that extended from the Lassen National Forest into the new park.<sup>8</sup>

The exclusion of sheep from Lassen did not set well with local stockmen, especially in light of the fact that in nearly all other respects the park continued to operate under the same rules as the surrounding national forest. Late in 1919, the Red Bluff Chamber of Commerce joined with the California Woolgrowers Association in issuing a resolution that called for a repeal of the Lassen Volcanic National Park Act. The park abolitionists believed that with Lassen Peak becoming dormant again, the public’s fervor over its recent eruptions would recede and the Forest Service should consequently resume full control of the area. The anti-park movement summoned other community institutions to support its effort but was unsuccessful. In response to the widely-publicized Red Bluff resolution, a number of local organizations, including the Susanville Chamber of Commerce, the Corning Chamber of Commerce, the Lassen County Board of

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<sup>7</sup> W. B. Lewis, Superintendent, to Lynn W. Collins, May 11, 1923, File 7: A26 Supt. Gen. Corresp., May-June 1923, Box 1, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Arno B. Cammerer, to Mr. Dittmar, May 15, 1923; Lewis, Superintendent, news bulletin, July 12, 1923, File: Miscellaneous Part 2, Box 95, Entry 6; Cammerer, Acting Director, memorandum, July 24, 1922; Lassen Volcanic National Park Rules and Regulations, Approved July 26, 1922, E. C. Finney, First Assist Secretary of the Interior, File 208 Part 1: Lassen Rules and Regulations, Box 353, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>8</sup> File 901-1 Part 1: Privileges – Grazing, Box 361; Cammerer to Mr. Mather, August 28, 1924, File 720-01 Protection and Care, Box 1316, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

Supervisors, and the Northern California Counties Association, rallied instead behind the park. Passing pro-park resolutions, they argued that most communities in the Lassen vicinity were patiently awaiting appropriations that would initiate development of the park. They placed far more stock in the future recreational and economic benefits of the park than in profits gained by the few individual stockmen who were impacted by changes in grazing regulations. NPS Director Mather believed this backlash against Lassen Volcanic National Park was entirely in response to his ban on sheep grazing. Although he expressed little concern that the small anti-park movement would snowball into a real threat, Mather called upon newly appointed NPS Chief Engineer George Goodwin to speak to citizen and business groups in Red Bluff and other nearby towns about the reasons for the ban on sheep grazing. Goodwin, who had already scheduled a tour of the area to investigate road development plans, proved an effective NPS representative in this capacity. The anti-park movement proceeded no further.<sup>9</sup>

In 1920, the Park Service officially granted the USFS regional forester in San Francisco direct authority to issue grazing permits in Lassen Volcanic National Park, until such time as the NPS could assume this responsibility itself. Under this arrangement, NPS officials received scant information on USFS permitting operations for the park (the USFS did not share copies of permits with the NPS), but other sources prompted NPS leadership to question the wisdom of allowing grazing to continue within Lassen's boundaries. During a summer-long zoological survey within the park in 1924, Dr. Joseph Grinnell of the University of California at Berkeley expressed grave concern for "the marked depletion in all forms of life" due to excessive grazing. He observed that cattle ranged from the park's lowest elevations all the way to timberline on Lassen Peak, wherever could be found "a spear of grass, or leaf of browse within reach." Given the sorry state of Lassen's vegetation, Grinnell wondered, was it not within Mather's authority to ban all livestock from the park? In response to Grinnell sounding this alarm, Yosemite Superintendent Lewis reminded Mather that he had been reporting on Lassen's overgrazed range to headquarters since 1921. Ranger Collins, meanwhile, claimed that forage plants in Lassen's meadows were "eaten right into the ground" during the summer of 1924, so much so that the four horses he and the park's second ranger used all season could not find adequate forage on their frequent patrols into the park. In late October, the horses had yet to recover from their sparse summer diet and were still "in very poor condition."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Frank B. Durkee to Horace M. Albright, Director, NPS, November 16, 1930, File 901 Part 3: Public Utility Operators Privileges; File 901-1 Part 1: Privileges – Grazing, Box 361, Entry 7; File 12-17 Part 1: Parks, Reservations and Antiquities, Lassen Volcanic NP (Miscellaneous), Box 94, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II; Stephen T. Mather, Director, to Mr. Ramer, February 11, 1920, File 1: A26 Supt. General Corresp. 1920, Box 1, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>10</sup> Arno B. Cammerer, Acting Director, to W. B. Greeley, Forester, U. S. Forest Service, December 9, 1922; W. B. Lewis, Superintendent, to The Director, National Park Service, September 18, 1924; Lewis to The Director, October 20, 1924, File 901-1 Part 2: Privileges Grazing, Box 361; J. Grinnell to Stephen T. Mather, August 12, 1924, File 720-01: Protection and Care, Box 1316, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

In 1924, the NPS approved eight USFS-administered grazing permits that included range within the park, including Conard's "temporary" sheep permit. For this compromise to park vegetation, the NPS banked a grand total of \$114.46 in permit revenue. In his annual report for 1924, Mather acknowledged that Lassen was "already overgrazed," endangering the native flora and fauna. The time had come to further restrict grazing in the park or prohibit it altogether, he said. That year, the Lassen Forest Supervisor made a start in that direction by discontinuing one range unit in Warner Valley that extended into the park. But even if all legal grazing within the park was eliminated, it seemed that trespass of cattle onto park property would be rampant until a force of patrolling park rangers could be hired. Evidence was mounting that lack of appropriations – beyond the petty amounts coughed up by Congress since 1920 – rendered the NPS helpless to do much of anything with Lassen.<sup>11</sup>

### **The Park Association and the Appropriations Deadlock**

Frustration and embarrassment over the situation in Lassen slowly passed up the chain in the Department of the Interior and flashed back and forth between the administration and Congress. Yosemite Superintendent Lewis met with park supporters in Red Bluff when he visited the area in June 1921. He reported to Mather that the local people showed "a real live interest in the park's development," and that in light of the area's scientific and scenic interest any further delay in properly funding the park could not be justified. Mather highlighted the problem in his annual report for 1921, stating that Lassen was the only park in the system that the NPS was not actively administering. He blamed this anomaly on the "inhibition" contained in the park's enabling act that capped federal appropriations at \$5,000 per annum, an amount that fell far short of what was needed to relieve the USFS of protection and administration duties and to begin development. Secretary of the Interior Albert Fall urged Congressman Raker to "get busy" with legislation to repeal the funding cap. Raker, offended, pointed the finger back at Interior. "If there is anything in persistency, I think I have been busy," he retorted. His several bills to lift the appropriation ceiling had gotten nowhere largely because Interior had been delinquent in providing timely, impassioned reports to support them. Interior repeatedly fell down in its obligation because the NPS knew so little about the park.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Cammerer, Acting Director, to Mr. Mather, August 28, 1924, File 720-01: Protection and Care, Box 1316; Acting Forester to Director, National Park Service, January 22, 1924; Cammerer to Mr. Lewis, September 27, 1924, File 901-1 Part 2: Privileges Grazing, Box 361, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Department of the Interior, *Report of the Director of the National Park Service for 1924* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1924), 63-64.

<sup>12</sup> Department of the Interior, *Report of the Director of the National Park Service for 1921*, 96; W. B. Lewis, Superintendent, to The Director, July 26, 1921; John Raker to Mr. Cammerer, Acting Director,

As this bickering in Washington was getting the park nowhere, citizens in northern California took up the matter themselves. The chief organizer was Arthur L. Conard of Red Bluff, who had been active in the Lassen Volcanic National Park Committee during the legislative campaign of 1914-15. A longtime sheep rancher of Tehama County with a genuine affection for the Lassen area, owner of two hotels, and chairman of the local Democratic Party organization, Conard's personal connections, gregariousness, and dynamism uniquely fitted him to take this lead. He organized a meeting of park advocates in Sacramento in January 1922, inviting people from all over the state and especially from the northern counties to attend. Mather and Albright both came, together with Paul G. Reddington, supervisor of the Lassen National Forest. Conard was elected chairman of a committee to work toward establishment of an organization that would be wholly focused on advancing the needs of Lassen Volcanic National Park. Over the next month Conard prepared a constitution and bylaws for the proposed organization, contacted additional people, and arranged a charter meeting for March 1, 1922, in San Francisco. At this meeting, the Lassen Volcanic National Park Association was incorporated for the purpose of securing cooperation among federal, state, and county entities in the development of the park. Conard was elected president, and Michael Dittmar was selected to fill the association's sole paid position of manager-secretary.<sup>13</sup>

Albright spoke to the association members at their inaugural meeting. He advised the group that its first priority must be to get the appropriation ceiling lifted. As long as that limitation continued, Albright bluntly asserted, Lassen would remain a national park in name only. But he held out the glittering prospect that in time, once Lassen was properly developed, it would become well-known and would attract tourists from across the nation. "You have not realized through actual experience the amount of money that the eastern tourist leaves in communities," Albright said. "You have not felt the Eastern tourists' economic value."<sup>14</sup> This frankly economic argument, aimed at inspiring local investors to act in a spirit of public-mindedness, was used often by both Mather and Albright. It was an example of what historian Richard West Sellars has described as the "utilitarian" basis of national park policy.<sup>15</sup>

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August 26, 1921; other correspondence and House bills, File 303 Part 1: Appropriations General, Box 94, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>13</sup> "Notes on Lassen Volcanic National Park, as told by A. L. Conard, Red Bluff, California," File 003: H14 Area and Service History – Early History of LVNP, Box 21, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Constitution of the Lassen Volcanic National Park Association of California; Articles of Incorporation of the Lassen Volcanic National Park Association of California; Minutes of the Lassen Volcanic National Park Committee, January 27-28, 1922; Minutes, Lassen Volcanic National Park Association of California, March 1, 1922, File: Miscellaneous Part 2, Box 95, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II; Strong, *Footprints in Time*, 50-51, 57-59.

<sup>14</sup> Minutes, Lassen Volcanic National Park Association of California, March 1, 1922.

<sup>15</sup> Richard West Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks: A History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1997), 41 and passim.

Albright further advised the association that once Lassen's enabling legislation was amended, the Park Service would want to work with the association on two lines of development. The first would involve federal funding for the development of the park with roads, trails, campgrounds, and administrative buildings. The second would involve raising private capital for the construction of hotels and other visitor accommodations within the park. In terms of the latter effort, Albright explained, the NPS desired to work with a single corporation, a concession. He pointed out the example of Yosemite, where the cities of Los Angeles and San Francisco had each raised \$500,000 for this purpose. In Lassen's case, the park hotel corporation should have representatives from all parts of northern California on its board of directors, Albright suggested, and its president should be "the biggest man that you can get in the northern part of the state."<sup>16</sup>

In April 1922, Albright happily reported to the association that Congress had repealed the \$5,000 appropriation ceiling for Lassen Volcanic National Park. On his fifth attempt, Raker had finally gotten the measure approved. The existence of the association no doubt helped this bill's passage, as it provided evidence that the park enjoyed strong local support. Dittmar also published a timely article about Lassen in *Motor Land*, giving it some much needed publicity.<sup>17</sup>

But the quest for appropriations did not end there. The Park Service submitted an estimate of \$20,300 for Lassen for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1923, for the employment of personnel and the construction of administrative buildings and ranger stations. The Bureau of the Budget slashed this nearly in half to \$11,000, prompting Mather to withdraw the estimate and submit a request for \$3,000 instead, continuing the minimal funding level of the past two years. The director's haughty explanation for this maneuver was that \$11,000 was only sufficient to put in personnel without buildings or buildings without personnel; it would not cover both. The association lobbied Congress to restore the budget item to \$11,000 but to no avail. A similar impasse developed the next year. Dittmar complained that it now appeared to be the Park Service that was indifferent toward Lassen Volcanic National Park. Mather replied politely but firmly that he had to live with the Harding administration's efforts to control the federal budget; under the circumstances, he had to give priority to those national parks that were already developed with visitor accommodations.<sup>18</sup>

In desperation, the Lassen Volcanic National Park Association turned to the state government for money. In June 1923, the state legislature passed a bill, which the governor signed into law, appropriating \$8,000 from the state treasury for the purpose of making a preliminary survey of the Lassen area. Due to a cumbersome provision in the

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<sup>16</sup> Minutes, Lassen Volcanic National Park Association of California, March 1, 1922.

<sup>17</sup> John E. Raker to Stephen T. Mather, January 10, 1922; Raker to Mather, February 2, 1922, File 303 Part 1: Appropriations General, Box 94; Mather to Mr. Conard, April 14, 1922; Mather to Mr. Dittmar, April 14, 1922, File: Miscellaneous Part 2, Box 95, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>18</sup> Arno B. Cammerer, Acting Director, to Mr. Dittmar, January 2, 1922 [1923]; Stephen T. Mather to Dittmar, February 5, 1924, File 303 Part 1: Appropriations General, Box 94, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II.

state law, the Lassen Volcanic National Park Association actually stepped forward with a \$3,000 check, made to the Park Service, which served as a loan until the state funds could be made available. The money provided timely support for the Park Service to complete its road survey.<sup>19</sup>

## **A Road Plan for Lassen**

In addition to its influential publicity and fundraising efforts for the park, the Lassen Volcanic National Park Association took a prominent seat at the table for planning roads. Road planning was the Park Service's top priority as Lassen appropriations began to materialize. In the summer of 1922, the association made arrangements for NPS Chief Engineer Goodwin to study the landscape of Lassen Volcanic National Park intimately, by horseback, after which he was to prepare the park's initial development plan. This plan would center on meeting the needs of the automobile tourist. By this time, Dittmar had already devised a road plan for the park: one large circular route, starting at Manzanita Lake and following close to the park's perimeter on its west, south, and east sides. From Butte Lake in the park's northeast corner, the road would round east of Cinder Cone and the Fantastic Lava Beds and turn back to Snag Lake before heading due west past Summit Lake, through the Devastated Area (the northeast flank of Lassen Peak scoured by the volcano's violent blasts of May 1915) and around the edge of Chaos Crags back to Manzanita Lake. No doubt Dittmar hoped Goodwin would endorse this plan after investigating the landscape for himself.<sup>20</sup>

Goodwin toured the park for five days in early September, accompanied by Dittmar and the park's brand new hire, Walker Collins, for the whole distance. Conard and J. T. Williams, chief engineer of the Western Pacific Railroad, joined the survey party for short stints. (The nearest railroad station to the park at this time was at Keddie in Plumas County.) Goodwin reported that his time in the park was "extremely strenuous" but "very pleasant." The first NPS official to inventory Lassen's attractions in any detail, Goodwin conveyed the great appeal of the park's diverse landscape in colorful prose that rivaled Dittmar's. The Devastated Area made "a profound and even appalling impression" on Goodwin, and the still-steaming fumaroles atop Lassen Peak gave him "the uneasy feeling that the mountain could again erupt on short notice." In contrast, the

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<sup>19</sup> George E. Goodwin to The Director, May 17, 1923; M. E. Dittmar to Stephen T. Mather, May 29, 1923; Dittmar to Friend W. Richardson, Governor of California, May 22, 1923; Goodwin to Mr. Hewitt, June 25, 1923; Goodwin to The Director, July 7, 1923; Dittmar to Mather, July 9, 1923; Horace M. Albright to Dittmar, July 11, 1923; Dittmar to Mather, July 12, 1923; Arno B. Cammerer to Dittmar, July 13, 1923; Cammerer to Dittmar, July 19, 1923; Cammerer to Dittmar, August 4, 1923; Mather to Dittmar, no date; Dittmar to Mather, October 9, 1923, File: Roads, Box 95, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>20</sup> George E. Goodwin, Chief Civil Engineer, "Report and Recommendations Regarding Lassen Volcanic National Park, California" January 1923, File 630 Part 1: Roads – General, Box 356, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; National Park Service, "Cultural Landscapes Inventory: Lassen Volcanic National Park Highway," 4.

lake country of the eastern portion of the park Goodwin “considered purely as a place of quiet, restful beauty.”<sup>21</sup>

Although Goodwin saw some merit in Dittmar’s proposed road plan, he believed Dittmar’s route through the rugged southwest corner impractical, while he found other stretches of Dittmar’s route through wooded low areas unworthy, “affording little outlook and but few attractions.” Aiming to stay within reasonable budgetary limitations, Goodwin sought to link the park’s major attractions with roads that afforded motorists the most scenic vistas possible. To do this, he proposed two north-south roads for the park, one along its western boundary and one along its eastern boundary, both roughly following Dittmar’s route. Goodwin proposed to connect these two north-south roads with just one east-west road initially, making an H-shaped road system, the latter crossing a high plateau from Horseshoe Lake to Summit Lake and then rounding south of Lassen Peak to Emerald Lake. In time, when funding allowed, Goodwin advocated for more roads to be added to this primary road system, including “a circuit route around Lassen Peak, using a part of the Emigrant Road outside of the Park” and eventually a higher-elevation road along the east shoulder of Lassen Peak and the base of Chaos Crags. In time, Goodwin asserted, the Park Service could add two other east west routes across the park, a northerly one linking Cinder Cone with the Devastated Area and a southerly one through the upper Warner Valley to Devil’s Kitchen, Crumbaugh Lake and onward to Emerald Lake.<sup>22</sup>

Goodwin envisioned Emerald Lake as the major crossroads in the park and therefore saw it as the best location for Lassen’s principal hotel, which he suggested should be built in the style of a Swiss chalet, given the rugged mountain backdrop. He recommended Juniper Lake, Snag Lake, Butte Lake, Manzanita Creek and even the Devastated Area as good locations for other hotel or camp resort sites, and foresaw the expansion of Drakesbad Guest Ranch into a larger, more luxurious accommodation for park visitors. Because these facilities would be spread out throughout the park, Goodwin recommended that they be operated by different concessioners. Lassen could serve as the NPS’s one experimental park where free competition among several concession companies could be tested and analyzed, Goodwin proposed to Mather. As these resorts would be constructed by private enterprise, they did not figure into the NPS budget that Goodwin submitted with his development plan for Lassen.<sup>23</sup>

In total, Goodwin’s primary road system entailed 79 miles of road at an estimated cost of \$1.2 million. For an additional cost of \$80,000, Goodwin also proposed over 100 miles of new horse and foot trails, 70 miles of telephone lines, 12 automobile campgrounds, administrative buildings (to be located just inside the park’s southwest

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<sup>21</sup> Goodwin, “Report and Recommendations Regarding Lassen Volcanic National Park,” 1-9.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 10-12, map.

<sup>23</sup> Goodwin, “Report and Recommendations Regarding Lassen Volcanic National Park,” 22-23; Goodwin, Chief Civil Engineer, to The Director, January 27, 1923, File 630 Part 1: Roads – General, Box 356, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

entrance), ranger stations, checking stations, maintenance facilities, and restrooms for “lady tourists.”<sup>24</sup>

Like Dittmar’s proposal, Goodwin’s road plan took advantage of four park access points either already or soon to be reached by automobile roads: Manzanita Lake, Southwest Entrance, Warner Valley, and Juniper Lake. Savvy to the park’s various local constituencies, Goodwin proposed that park road construction proceed simultaneously from these entrances, so that nearby communities could gain deeper auto access into their respective corners of the park at roughly the same time. Goodwin credited this impassioned local interest – and wider regional interest – to “the good educational work” of Dittmar, Conard, and the Lassen Volcanic National Park Association. Northern Californians demanded “that something be done to make the park accessible.”<sup>25</sup>

Goodwin recommended that survey work be done on his or any other potential road routes through Lassen prior to the expenditure of major funding on actual construction. Lassen’s 1923 federal appropriation of \$3,000 did not cover the cost of this work, so the California legislature made up the difference with a gift of \$8,000 in June of that year and Goodwin’s assistant engineer Frank C. Hewitt began the survey work.<sup>26</sup>

That summer, after his second visit to the park, Superintendent Lewis warned Mather that automobile routes in Lassen should not be “overdone.” He criticized both Dittmar’s and Goodwin’s proposals to build an east-west road through “the heart of the park,” which Lewis stressed would be better left to trail travel and backcountry camping. Should this offending portion of Dittmar’s circular road be repositioned along the park’s northern boundary, where it would assist the job of patrolling, then Lewis would favor Dittmar’s plan over Goodwin’s, which he called a “veritable net work of roads.”<sup>27</sup>

Agreeing with Lewis, Mather instructed Goodwin to scale back his road plan for Lassen. “Think your road through center of park should be eliminated,” Mather wired Goodwin in October. Survey work was to proceed on the outer routes only. In many of the national parks, Mather – an avid automobile enthusiast himself – was now reining in ambitious road development plans in order to preserve more wilderness and more opportunities for visitor solitude. In his 1924 annual report, Mather insisted that he had no intention to “gridiron” the parks with roads but sought to provide each with “a good sensible road system” that left large areas accessible by horse and foot trails only. Ultimately, Mather abandoned both Dittmar’s and Goodwin’s proposed park-boundary

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<sup>24</sup> Goodwin, “Report and Recommendations Regarding Lassen Volcanic National Park,” 13-21.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-10, 28-29.

<sup>26</sup> Goodwin, “Report and Recommendations Regarding Lassen Volcanic National Park,” 29; National Park Service, “Cultural Landscapes Inventory: Lassen Volcanic National Park Highway,” 4.

<sup>27</sup> W. B. Lewis, to The Director, National Park Service, August 9, 1923, File: Roads, Box 95, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II, pp. 3-4.

routes for Lassen as well, favoring instead Goodwin's secondary route around the east side of Lassen Peak for Lassen Volcanic National Park's single scenic drive.<sup>28</sup>

Although the NPS made no headway whatsoever on Lassen road development in 1924, the U.S. Geological Survey began its study of the park later that year and completed its first topographical map of the park in 1926. Mather, with characteristic exuberance, said the work was "invaluable" for future park development.<sup>29</sup>

## Inholding Development and the Growth of Park Visitation

The various surveyors, engineers, and visiting bureaucrats planning for Lassen's future often stayed at Drakesbad Guest Ranch and used the Siffords' saddle stock to travel into the park, just as geologists had earlier when they came to study Lassen Peak during and after its eruptions. In their 1925 treatise, *The Volcanic Activity and Hot Springs of Lassen Peak*, Carnegie Institution geologists Arthur Day and E. T. Allen acknowledged that the Siffords provided the scientists "all facilities and much camp comfort" during their extended field work. Just prior to the initial onslaught of volcano enthusiasts in 1914, the Siffords incorporated Drakesbad Guest Ranch and used the capital raised from sales of stock to make major improvements to their rustic resort, including construction of a dining room with seating for 64 and a rock and cement hot pool. In 1920, they added a new bath house adjacent to the pool. Through the 1920s, tourist business boomed at Drakesbad. Its access road remained a navigational challenge to motorists, although after a number of labor-intensive summers with picks, axes and a homemade road grader, the Siffords had made Drake's original wagon trail passable to autos in 1907.<sup>30</sup>

During his 1922 Drakesbad stay, Goodwin discussed with Alex Sifford the idea of a government road into Devil's Kitchen, which would require Sifford to grant the NPS a right-of-way across his land but would further increase tourist volume to the resort. Sifford had no interest in the proposition and would allow the NPS no privileges short of

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<sup>28</sup> Mather to Goodwin, telegram, October 5, 1923, as quoted in National Park Service, "Cultural Landscapes Inventory: Lassen Volcanic National Park Highway," 5; Department of the Interior, *Report of the Director of the National Park Service for 1924*, 14. Mather also turned back from plans for an around-the-mountain road at Mount Rainier. See David Louter, *Windshield Wilderness: Cars, Roads, and Nature in Washington's National Parks* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 49-53.

<sup>29</sup> Department of the Interior, *Report of the Director of the National Park Service for 1924*, 63; Department of the Interior, *Report of the Director of the National Park Service for 1925* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1925), 46; Department of the Interior, *Report of the Director of the National Park Service for 1926* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1926), 51.

<sup>30</sup> Day and Allen, *The Volcanic Activity and Hot Springs of Lassen Peak*, iii; Amy Hoke and Len Warner, *Cultural Landscape Report for Drakesbad Guest Ranch, Lassen Volcanic National Park*, March 2005, File: Warner Valley, Interpretation and Education Division Records (hereafter I&E Division Records), LAVO Files, pp. 8-11.

purchase of his entire property, which Sifford valued at up to a quarter million dollars. In 1924, the first of many Interior appraisers visited Drakesbad to assess its worth. Inholding acquisition was among Mather's top priorities for Lassen when the NPS officially assumed administrative control of the park in 1925. Mather made a point to steer park road development well clear of Warner Valley because such government investment would only inflate the value of Sifford's property and make its acquisition all the more difficult.<sup>31</sup>

Despite the fact that Lassen contained a number of inholdings, none stood in the way of initial park development. Albright and other NPS officials sometimes told local park supporters that the federal government must acquire these tracts before it could proceed with development, but in point of fact this was not the case. Mather and Dittmar believed most inholders would likely trade their land for parcels of equal size and value outside the park. Owners of ruined agricultural lands within the park's Devastated Area would surely seize this offering, too. But other inholders would likely not, including Mr. Snell and his wife Cora, who had big plans for their property along the shoreline of the park's largest lake.<sup>32</sup>

In 1917, the Snells and their business associate, A. J. Forbes, had constructed a road from Chester through the national forest to the park boundary three miles south of Juniper Lake and their inholding. The next year, they secured permission from Mather to complete their access road on park lands, with the condition that the road would remain open to public use. Snell was not granted his request to build an electric power station on park lands. In April 1918, Mather made no objection to Snell's plans to develop "a thorough camping resort" but offered the hope that all structures built on the inholding would be sound and blend into the landscape.<sup>33</sup>

The access road was completed in mid-August, and about 500 campers flocked to the newly opened Juniper Lake Resort in the remaining two weeks of the 1918 summer season. Although the Snells hosted campers at Juniper Lake for many years, all the while they aimed for a grander, more profitable resort complex. They dreamed of Juniper Lake becoming California's most popular resort. Their 1918 Juniper Lake Resort brochure boasted superlative scenery, hunting, fishing, and camping, plus the opportunity for vacationers to become permanent owners of prime lakeshore building sites within the national park. Snell had already subdivided his property into 30-by-100-foot and 50-by-

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<sup>31</sup> Goodwin, "Report and Recommendations Regarding Lassen Volcanic National Park," 25-26; Sifford, *Sixty Years of Siffords at Drakesbad*, 73-74; Department of the Interior, *Report of the Director of the National Park Service for 1924*, 63; Hoke and Warner, *Cultural Landscape Report for Drakesbad*, 10.

<sup>32</sup> Goodwin, "Report and Recommendations Regarding Lassen Volcanic National Park," 25; Department of the Interior, *Report of the Director of the National Park Service for 1924*, 63.

<sup>33</sup> A. J. Forbes to Department of Interior, April 15, 1918; Stephen T. Mather, Director, to Forbes, April 27, 1918; Forbes to Mather, May 4, 1918, File 630 Part 1: Roads – General, Box 356, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; M. R. Tillotson, Acting Forest Supervisor, to District Forester, August 15, 1916, LP – Boundaries, Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1920 and previous years, Box 25, Records of the Forest Service, Lassen National Forest, Alpha Series 1901-53 (Acc. 93-007), RG 95, NA – PSR.

100-foot cabin lots and had made some sales. The Juniper Lake developer vexed Park Service officials even more than Alex Sifford did. If successful, Snell's scheme would have presented the NPS with an inholding nightmare. But his venture struggled from the start. When Goodwin visited in 1922, the resort was temporarily closed, "tied up by legal attachment on account of unsatisfied indebtedness." By 1925, Snell was tangling with Ranger Collins, demanding that the park administration eliminate all stock grazing and hunting, both of which disturbed resort guests and kept away the semi-tame deer and bears that Snell often lured to his place with handouts. Collins had already assessed Snell as "a very peculiar person" who complained too much.<sup>34</sup>

The Sifford and Snell resorts, islands of private enterprise within the boundaries of Lassen Volcanic National Park, contributed significantly to the rising number of tourists visiting the park in its first decade, prior to NPS management or development. Visitors could also find accommodations in Chester, in Mineral, and at the Lee and Kelly ranches in Warner Valley just outside the park. The opening of Benjamin Loomis' Viola Hotel in 1922 offered visitors comfortable lodging on the north side of the park where none had existed previously. Many visitors at this time toured the park on horseback, renting saddle stock from the Siffords, the Lees, or the Kellys in Warner Valley, or the Montgomery brothers in Mineral. The USFS estimated a modest 2,000 visitor total for 1918. In 1924, Dittmar's visitor count for July alone was over 10,000. In his 1924 annual report, Mather acknowledged that despite the absence of park roads and park tourist facilities, the number of visitors to Lassen had "increased greatly this year."<sup>35</sup>

Although geologists Day and Allen concluded that Lassen Peak's true eruptions concluded in 1917, people observed and newspapers reported on suspicious aerial disturbances and puffs of smoke over the summit of Lassen Peak through the early 1920s, which helped to sustain the public's intrigue with the park. The hundreds of tourists who climbed the peak each year could still regularly experience steam rising from vents and fissures in the volcano's three summit craters. Many more came to enjoy the park's more serene offerings. In the words of Day and Allen, the Lassen area possessed "magnificent scenery of mountain, meadow, lake, and stream" and "a wonderful forest of great

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<sup>34</sup> "Juniper Lake Resort in the Lassen-Volcanic National Park," brochure; A. J. Forbes, General Manager, Juniper Lake Resort Company, to Mr. Stephen T. Mather, February 20, 1919, File 12-17 Part 1: Parks, Reservations and Antiquities, Lassen Volcanic NP, Miscellaneous, Box 94, Entry 6; C. P. Snell to Stephen T. Mather, Director, August 26, 1925; L. W. Collins, Chief Ranger, to The Director, September 10, 1925, File 901-1 Part 2: Privileges Grazing, Box 361, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Strong, "These Happy Grounds," 73; Goodwin, "Report and Recommendations Regarding Lassen Volcanic National Park," 7.

<sup>35</sup> M. E. Dittmar, Manager, Secretary, Lassen Volcanic National Park Association, to Mr. Arno B. Cammerer, Acting Director, May 8, 1923, File: Miscellaneous, Part 2, Box 95; handwritten note by A. E. D. (Arthur E. Demaray), October 18, 1918, on Horace Albright, Acting Director, to Mr. Henry Graves, Forester and Chief, September 18, 1918; Dittmar to Mather, September 29, 1924, File 303 Part 1: Appropriations General, Box 94, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II; Goodwin, "Report and Recommendations Regarding Lassen Volcanic National Park," 24; Department of the Interior, *Report of the Director of the National Park Service for 1924*, 63.

conifers.” Already, the national park was evolving from laboratory to pleasure ground, its harsher landscape features shading into the kind of place where people would choose to come for family vacations.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Day and Allen, *The Volcanic Activity and Hot Springs of Lassen Peak*, 87, 186; “New Lassen Eruption Held Worst of Year,” *San Francisco Examiner*, August 27, 1923; W. B. Lewis, Superintendent, to The Director, National Park Service, September 10, 1923, File: Miscellaneous Part 2, Box 95, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II; “Only Active Volcano Affords Ideal Mountain Country for Out-Door Living,” memorandum for the press, April 26, 1921, File 2: A26 Supt. General Corresp. January-June 1921, Box 1, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

## Chapter Three

### Lassen's Grand Opening

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For Lassen Volcanic National Park, as for other national parks in this era, transitioning out of the first stage of development hinged on the coming of the automobile. The completion of the park "highway," as it was then called, would finally put Lassen on the national tourist map.

The process began nearly a decade before the road's grand opening in 1931. Mather and Albright worked assiduously in the early 1920s to build support in Congress for an ambitious plan of road construction in all the national parks. Their efforts bore fruit in the spring of 1924, when Congress passed a measure providing \$7.5 million for road and trail construction over the next three years, a princely sum that included an initial allotment of \$110,000 for work on Lassen's main park road. When this money became available at the start of the next fiscal year in July 1925, construction got underway on the north and south ends of Lassen's main park road under two separate contracts. The work would proceed steadily over the next six construction seasons.

Congress's munificent appropriation for road building in the national parks marked a turning point in the early development of Lassen Volcanic National Park. In the next year, Mather concluded an interagency agreement with the Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) under which that agency would administer all road construction contracts in national parks. These twin measures – the congressional appropriation and the arrangement with the Bureau of Public Roads – assured that henceforward Congress would make separate appropriations for road development and administration in national parks. Since road-building was such a costly endeavor, this was a boon to Mather's effort to improve national park administration, and it had a marked effect on the administrative development of Lassen.

Dovetailing its support of park road development, Congress appropriated a bountiful \$10,000 for Lassen Volcanic National Park administration in 1925. Previous

appropriations for the park had begun at \$2,500 in 1920 and remained at \$3,000 per year over the next four years. A substantial portion of the earlier funds had gone into construction of an approach road leading from the Susanville-to-Red Bluff highway to the southwest corner of the park. The \$10,000 appropriation in 1925, which was exclusive of road construction funds, gave the Park Service its first opportunity to appoint a permanent field representative to the park. Ranger Collins was selected for the job. He was designated chief ranger the first year, acting superintendent in 1926, and superintendent in 1928.

Collins saw the park through the remainder of its founding years, a period ending with the park's formal dedication in 1931 following completion of the main park road. While construction of the road went forward under the supervision of the BPR, Collins established a headquarters, oversaw the development of a small ranger force, facilitated a small but growing visitor use, and implemented more effective protection of fish and wildlife and other resources. During these years, Congress passed no less than nine acts concerning Lassen Volcanic National Park. Most of these acts dealt with additions to the exterior boundaries and acquisition of private lands within the area.

### **Location of a Permanent Park Headquarters**

In the spring of 1925, Mather directed one of his top planners, Thomas C. Vint, to get started on a development plan for Lassen. Since the comprehensive road plan proposed by Goodwin had been rejected, Vint would be starting with a clean slate. The first question to be addressed was where to locate the park headquarters. The question was significant not only because the decision would affect local communities, it would also be a pivot point for conceiving the whole park development plan.

Thomas Vint was one of a handful of landscape architects hired by the National Park Service in the early 1920s. A young World War I veteran with a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture from the University of California at Berkeley, Vint apprenticed under the Park Service's chief landscape architect, Daniel Hull, first in Yosemite and then in Hull's office in Los Angeles. Soon, Vint would succeed the semi-retiring Hull as chief landscape architect and relocate his office to San Francisco, where his growing staff of landscape architects would work closely with the Park Service's Branch of Plans and Design.<sup>1</sup> On his first visit to Lassen in June 1925, Vint spent three days with one of Mather's close assistants, Arthur E. Demaray, and a congressional party headed by Representative Louis Cramton (R – Mich.), chairman of the House subcommittee on appropriations for Interior, and another three days with Collins and a road engineer. After this visit, Vint made a brief report to Mather in which he suggested how to proceed

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<sup>1</sup> Ethan Carr, *Wilderness by Design: Landscape Architecture and the National Park Service* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 190-191.

with construction moneys for administrative buildings that were included in the current year's budget and in the following year's estimates. Nearly half the total of \$9,500 was designated for an administration building and a superintendent's residence, and the remainder was to cover costs of a ranger station, ranger cabin, three barns, and a warehouse. Vint's park development plan called for locating the headquarters buildings outside the park. He proposed an area of 20 to 40 acres near the town of Mineral, which could be leased from the Forest Service.<sup>2</sup>

Vint's park development plan surprised some who assumed the headquarters would be located in the park. Vint explained that plausible sites in the park were too high and snowbound. He drew comparisons with other mountain parks, including Crater Lake and Mount Rainier. He noted that in Crater Lake National Park the headquarters was moved between a summer location in the park and a winter location in the town of Medford, Oregon, and that the move each spring back to the park tended to get tangled up with snow removal operations. In the case of Mount Rainier National Park, the decision to maintain headquarters year round in the park, albeit at a low elevation in the southwest corner of the park, rather than move it to the city of Tacoma each winter, was regarded as a success. These examples pointed to the advantages of establishing a year-round headquarters as near to Lassen as possible.<sup>3</sup>

Vint's development plan was immediately endorsed by Collins, Demaray, and Superintendent Lewis in Yosemite, and it received qualified approval by Assistant Director Arno B. Cammerer.<sup>4</sup> Cammerer merely insisted that construction of the two headquarters buildings should be deferred until the following year so as not to interfere with Congress's deliberation over park boundary adjustments. But the issue of where to locate headquarters quickly became embroiled in local politics. This was because people in Red Bluff and Redding believed that they had a great deal riding on this decision, based on their assumption that the location of headquarters would influence where visitor services would be established and which entrance road to the park would receive the most tourist traffic. The proposed headquarters site at Mineral, it seemed, would establish the main park entrance on the south side of the park off of the Susanville-to-Red Bluff highway, a prospect that pleased citizens of Red Bluff and Susanville and greatly distressed citizens of Redding.

The Redding Chamber of Commerce and the Shasta County Board of Supervisors were four-square behind a north-side entrance to the park by way of beautiful Manzanita

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<sup>2</sup> T.C. Vint, Assistant Landscape Architect, to The Director, June 26, 1925, enclosing "Report on Landscape Problems Lassen Volcanic National Park," File: Repairs and Improvements, Box 95, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>3</sup> T.C. Vint, Assistant Landscape Architect, to Mr. L. W. Collins, Acting Supt., July 14, 1925, File: Repairs and Improvements, Box 95, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>4</sup> W. B. Lewis to Mr. Collins, July 2, 1925, File 17: L1417 Boundaries Adjustments Administrative Sites 1925-1944, Box 29, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; A. E. Demaray, Assistant in Operations and Public Relations, to Mr. Cammerer, July 21, 1925; Cammerer to Collins, August 4, 1925, File: Repairs and Improvements, Box 95, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II.

Lake. Shasta County was improving the road from Redding to Viola to connect with the existing passable road from Viola to Manzanita Lake. Although these roads were not of the same standard as the Susanville-to-Red Bluff state highway, the north-side advocates argued that the difference would fade over time as California's highway system matured. The points in favor of a north-side location for park headquarters were that the area around Manzanita Lake offered a superior view of the mountain and that it was at a lower elevation. While the town of Mineral might be lower than Manzanita Lake, the south entrance was higher than the north entrance and the snowpack at the south entrance would block communication between Mineral and the rest of the park for much of the year.<sup>5</sup>

Three individuals led the effort to force reconsideration of where the park headquarters would be located. The first, Benjamin Loomis of Viola, who was already well known in park circles for his remarkable photographs of the eruptions, got the attention of Park Service officials by making a generous offer. If the Park Service would establish either a checking station or headquarters at Manzanita Lake, he would build a museum on a 40-acre parcel of land he had purchased the previous year, and give both the museum and the land to the government. Loomis tendered his offer through Bert H. Burrell, the NPS engineer in charge of Lassen Park road construction, who forwarded it to Mather. While Loomis's offer created an opening for others to push the Manzanita Lake headquarters location, importantly, Loomis did not insist on getting the headquarters at Manzanita Lake; even a checking station would do.<sup>6</sup>

The second individual opposing the proposed headquarters location was Michael E. Dittmar of Redding, the manager-secretary of the Lassen Volcanic National Park Association. Dittmar wanted to bring the matter before Congress as it considered possible additions to the park – the very complication that Cammerer sought to avoid. If this was not irritating enough to NPS officials, Dittmar was suspected of instigating defamatory reports about Collins, alleging that the superintendent wanted to locate the headquarters at Mineral for purely selfish reasons. According to these reports, Collins planned to siphon government procurement moneys to his brother-in-law who had a supply store in Red Bluff. Collins vigorously denied this, calling Dittmar a liar and a tool of certain people in Redding. Indeed, Dittmar's charges against Collins appeared to be an example of the pot calling the kettle black. Although Dittmar was admired for his past role in the campaign to establish the park, he was increasingly viewed as a schemer himself. Superintendent Lewis noted, for example, that Dittmar wanted to develop a tourist camp at Manzanita Lake followed by a chain of other camps that would ring the mountain. This made him rather less than impartial on the issue of locating the

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<sup>5</sup> Board of Directors, Redding Chamber of Commerce, "Administrative Center Location, Lassen Volcanic National Park," May 25, 1928, File 601.01 Part 1: Lassen Administrative Site Lands, Box 355, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>6</sup> B. F. Loomis to Bert H. Burrell, February 15, 1926; Burrell to The Director, March 1, 1926, File 601.01 Part 1: Lassen Administrative Site Lands, Box 355, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

headquarters. Apparently members of the board of the Lassen Volcanic National Park Association were suspicious of Dittmar's motives, too, for they ousted him from his job as manager-secretary of the association and requested Arthur Conard, the Red Bluff businessman and longtime president of the association, to take over his duties. The genteel Conard regarded Dittmar as something of a loose cannon and was relieved to see him removed. In a letter to Mather aimed at reaffirming the association's support for the park administration, Conard explained that Dittmar had an axe to grind since he had coveted the job that Collins held. Moreover, Dittmar took rather too much credit for his role in the park's establishment. Conard commented dryly: "Mr. Dittmar has always thought there was only one man that was fully qualified to administer the affairs of Lassen Volcanic and change the names of all of the mountains and lakes, and that man's name is Mr. M. E. Dittmar."<sup>7</sup>

After Dittmar's ouster, a third individual stepped forward to continue Redding's fight against the location of headquarters at Mineral. J. A. Baker, president of the Redding Chamber of Commerce, was a relative newcomer to park issues but no less energetic than Dittmar in challenging the park administration. Baker brought the matter to the attention of congressional representatives Cramton and Harry L. Englebright (R – Calif.) in May 1928, laying out all of the reasons for the Manzanita Lake site and charging the NPS with rushing into a poor decision. He also sent the same ten-page report to Mather. Although the report made an effective argument, it was too late. Just a month earlier, Congress had passed a bill conveying 80 acres of land from the Forest Service to the Park Service for use as a headquarters site. Still, Cramton was sufficiently impressed by Baker's report that he wrote to Mather that his subcommittee on appropriations would not be "embarrassed" if Mather wanted to reconsider the matter.<sup>8</sup>

Mather duly traveled to Lassen in June to look over the situation himself. At the newly acquired headquarters site, he found construction materials for the administration building already lying on the ground, awaiting the director's final word for the project to go forward. After a few interviews, Mather satisfied himself that the decision to locate headquarters near Mineral was the correct one. What weighed most on his mind was the condition of the roads. The state highway through Mineral would be kept open all winter, he was told, whereas the road between Redding and Viola was quite obviously not yet in a condition to serve the park. This was evident by the fact that road contractors working on the north side of the park actually had materials shipped to their staging area

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<sup>7</sup> B. F. Loomis to Mr. C. E. Randels, February 6, 1926; L. W. Collins, Superintendent, to Mr. Horace M. Albright, Assistant Director (Field), July 3, 1928; W. B. Lewis to The Director, February 25, 1926; A. L. Conard to Stephen T. Mather, August 6, 1928, File 601.01 Part 1: Lassen Administrative Site Lands, Box 355, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>8</sup> J. A. Baker, President, Redding Chamber of Commerce, to Hon. Harry L. Englebright, May 26, 1928; Baker to Stephen T. Mather, May 26, 1928; Louis Cramton to Mather, June 9, 1928, File 601.01 Part 1: Lassen Administrative Site Lands, Box 355, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

by way of Red Bluff and Mineral, from which point they were transported over a Forest Service road to Viola.<sup>9</sup>

As soon as he had settled the question about the headquarters site, Mather turned his attention immediately to mending political fences. “We want these communities all interested alike and work[ing] harmoniously,” he wrote to Albright. “I think the best thing is to bring out clearly that the educational work centering around the Loomis Museum will really give Redding quite an advantage.”<sup>10</sup> Indeed, the gift from Loomis could not have come at a better time.

Construction of the headquarters complex proceeded briskly once the final decision had been made. The administration building and superintendent’s residence were completed by the end of 1928. Collins, who had been moving back and forth between rented quarters in Red Bluff and Mineral since 1925, occupied the new superintendent’s residence beginning in 1929. In two more years, a ranger residence, bunkhouse and mess hall, machine shop, garage, and equipment shed were added to the complex. By the time the park was formally dedicated in July 1931, considerable landscaping had been accomplished and a tidy green lawn gave an air of snap and polish to the handsome administration building. The headquarters location at Mineral proved advantageous in many ways, not least of which was the fact that the switchboard was able to tie into the existing telephone system of the Forest Service.<sup>11</sup>

## **Law Enforcement and Jurisdiction**

In the summer of 1926, Collins had the help of two seasonal rangers. One ranger was stationed at the newly built Summit Lake Ranger Station; the other was based in Warner Valley where a second ranger station was completed that fall. From these two points the rangers patrolled the entire park. By July 1931, this protection force had grown to two permanent and five seasonal rangers. The park had five ranger stations and two “checking stations” (where cars could be “checked” for firearms and other illegal items as they entered and exited the park). In addition, there were three staffed fire lookout stations in the park, one operated by the Park Service and two by the Forest Service. With relatively few visitors entering the park while the main road was still under construction, rangers devoted most of their time to protection of resources. Major activities included patrol (primarily to suppress poaching), posting of boundaries, fire suppression, and cooperation with state fish and game officials, Forest Service officials, and private summer resort owners. Rangers also planted fish fry in lakes, strung

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<sup>9</sup> Stephen T. Mather to Horace M. Albright, July 9, 1928, File 601.01 Part 1: Lassen Administrative Site Lands, Box 355, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>10</sup> Mather to Albright, July 9, 1928.

<sup>11</sup> National Park Service, “Cultural Landscapes Inventory: Mineral Headquarters Historic District, Lassen Volcanic National Park,” 2002, unpublished report, LAVO Files.

telephone line, and worked on trails, although Collins wanted to defer most trail development until such time as the locations of campgrounds were determined.<sup>12</sup>

In 1926, park rangers still lacked jurisdiction to do much about poachers. According to regulations promulgated for Lassen Volcanic National Park on July 26, 1922, wildlife was protected as follows: “The Park is a sanctuary for wild life of every sort, and hunting, killing, wounding, capturing or frightening any bird or wild animal in the Park is prohibited.” However, owing to the fact that California had never ceded exclusive jurisdiction to the United States over the park area, and that the state’s laws permitted hunting during certain seasons, a question arose as to the validity of this regulation and to the right of a Park Service ranger to arrest violators. This question was referred to Interior solicitor John H. Edwards for an opinion. The solicitor’s opinion provided a very narrow basis for enforcement of this regulation. Park rangers could only make arrests for the actual killing of wildlife, not for possession of firearms. In making arrests, all that a ranger could do was expel the violators from the park and confiscate their weapons temporarily, the owners having the right to reclaim the weapons later at their own expense. Collins had exercised this narrow authority several times in his first summer in the park, and while he had successfully ordered a number of hunting parties out of the park, each of the parties had already killed deer before they were arrested.<sup>13</sup>

As the park acquired a ranger force in the mid-1920s, advocates saw it was time for the state of California and Congress to enact legislation seeing to a transfer of jurisdiction so that the Park Service could effectively enforce park regulations. Congressman Raker raised this issue with the Lassen Volcanic National Park Association in 1924, suggesting that it prepare a bill for the state legislature that would cede jurisdiction over the area to the federal government. As manager-secretary of the association, Dittmar requested advice from the Park Service director. Mather responded favorably. Noting that the Park Service had acquired exclusive jurisdiction over the other three national parks in California in 1919, Mather saw “no reason why we should not try at this time to secure exclusive jurisdiction of Lassen Volcanic National Park.” He tasked Albright with drafting the state law.<sup>14</sup>

By this point in time, transfers such as this followed a fairly standard process: the state legislature would enact a law ceding exclusive jurisdiction to the federal government with the stipulation that the law would not go into effect until Congress acted

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<sup>12</sup> L. W. Collins, Chief Ranger, to The Director, enclosing Annual Report, September 21, 1926, File 207-001.4 Part 1: Lassen Reports – Annual; Office of the Superintendent, “Statement of Present Conditions for the Director,” July 13, 1931, File 204, Part 1: Lassen Inspections, Box 353, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>13</sup> Arno B. Cammerer, Acting Director, to The Secretary of the Interior, September 28, 1923; John H. Edwards, Solicitor, to The Secretary of the Interior, November 3, 1923, File 719: Predatory Animals, Box 1316; W. B. Lewis, Superintendent, to The Director, August 10, 1925, File 607 Part 1: Lassen Lands Jurisdiction, Box 355, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>14</sup> M. E. Dittmar, Manager-Secretary, to Stephen T. Mather, December 4, 1924; John E. Raker to Mather, December 9, 1924; Mather to Raker, December 12, 1924, File 607 Part 1: Lassen Lands Jurisdiction, Box 355, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

to accept the cession and assert federal jurisdiction in its place. Congress would then act, accepting the cession and customarily providing for a U.S. commissioner to be stationed in the park so that rangers would not have to travel long distances to obtain a warrant or enter a case in federal court. The process could be expected to take time but it generally did not arouse much controversy. The case of Lassen was no different. The state law, approved April 20, 1927, ceded exclusive jurisdiction within the park with certain exceptions, including the right to tax persons and corporations and the right to fix and collect license fees for fishing. The federal law, enacted April 26, 1928, accepted the cession and made the park a part of the United States judicial district for the northern district of California while providing for the appointment of a commissioner by the district court who would reside in the park. The federal law reiterated that it was an offense to kill wildlife in the park and it provided considerable detail as to what constituted evidence of a violation of the law.<sup>15</sup>

Exclusive jurisdiction constituted an important step forward for the protection of park resources, especially the protection of wildlife. Even before the transfer of jurisdiction was accomplished, however, Collins reported a perceptible change in wildlife conditions. Mule deer and black tail deer were getting both tamer and more numerous. Populations of quail and grouse seemed to be thriving. He estimated there were as many as one hundred black bear and five mountain lions in the park, as well as numerous coyotes. Collins believed the park was succeeding in its function as a wildlife sanctuary in large part because the mere presence of a ranger force made the populace more respectful of park rules.<sup>16</sup>

In the fall of 1927, the Park Service took another significant step in improving its protection of resources. Mather decided the time had come for the park administration to take over from the Forest Service issuance of grazing permits within Lassen Volcanic National Park, with a view to phasing out grazing use. Collins was instructed to cooperate with the forest supervisor of Lassen National Forest in this matter. It was left to Collins' judgment how quickly the number of grazing animals in the park should be reduced; the general directive was simply to implement a decrease in grazing roughly proportional to each year's increase in recreational use.<sup>17</sup>

Once the Park Service acquired exclusive jurisdiction, it took a fresh look at public use of the fisheries resource, too. Prior to the transfer of jurisdiction, the California Department of Fish and Game had closed two of the park's lakes, Snag Lake

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<sup>15</sup> Act of Legislature of California, approved April 20, 1927, ceding to the United States exclusive jurisdiction over Lassen Volcanic National Park, and Act of April 26, 1928, accepting cession by California of exclusive jurisdiction over lands embraced within Lassen Volcanic National Park, in U.S. Department of the Interior, *Laws Relating to the National Park Service, the National Parks and Monuments*, 189-194.

<sup>16</sup> L. W. Collins, Chief Ranger, to The Director, enclosing Annual Report, September 21, 1926, File 207-001.4 Part 1: Lassen Reports – Annual, Box 353, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>17</sup> A. E. Demaray, Acting Director, to Acting Superintendent, September 26, 1927, File 035: A26 Superintendent's General Correspondence, 1931, Box 1, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

and Grassy Lake, to all public fishing for the purpose of retaining these lakes as “fish preserves” from which the department could collect rainbow trout eggs for a large hatchery it planned to establish at Lake Almanor. The state needed to take these measures to contend with increased fishing pressure on lakes and streams throughout northern California, fish and game officials maintained. NPS officials saw it differently, thinking that park visitors should not be denied the pleasure of fishing in these lakes. The park administration opened the two lakes to fishing except during spawning season in the spring, and even then the temporary closures applied only to the lakes’ inlets and outlets.<sup>18</sup>

Some thought the park administration was too lax in enforcing its own fishing regulations. Large crowds of anglers gathered in the spring of 1930 at Butte Lake, where they hauled literally tons of trout from the spawning shallows in open violation of park regulations. This spectacle drew fire from the *San Francisco Chronicle*, which ran a story that July about what it termed the “fish slaughter in Butte Lake.”<sup>19</sup>

Whether too lax or not in enforcing the regulations, the park administration kept a sense of humor about it. In December 1930, it issued a press release about a bizarre discovery made by ranger Arthur Holmes while patrolling a remote section of the park boundary. In thick timber, Holmes had come upon a putt-putt golf course. What first caught the ranger’s eye was a number of signs nailed on trees: “Clubs may be obtained here,” “No Swearing Allowed,” “Not Responsible for Hats, Coats, or Falling Trees,” and “Replace all Turf!” On closer inspection, he found telltale tee markers and holes, such as one at the end of a hollow log. “Civilization is ever encroaching on the wilderness areas of this country,” the park administration wryly observed in its press release. Nothing was done about this particular encroachment, apparently, other than call it out to the public.<sup>20</sup>

## Expansion of Boundaries

Two large additions were made to Lassen Volcanic National Park by acts of Congress of January 19, 1929, and July 3, 1930. The first addition encompassed lands east of Cinder Cone and Juniper Lake, north and west of Lassen Peak including Manzanita Lake and most of the Devastated Area, and south of Lassen Peak including the west flank of Brokeoff Mountain. This first addition increased the area of the park by

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<sup>18</sup> L. W. Collins to Mr. C. H. Lee, May 30, 1928; W. H. Shebley to Collins, June 1, 1928, File 112: N1619 Fishing Regulations, 1928-53, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506 REDW Archives.

<sup>19</sup> Leo K. Wilson, “Fish Slaughter in Butte Lake Stopped for Time,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 11, 1930.

<sup>20</sup> Press Release, December 6, 1930, File 501-03 Part 1: Lassen Publicity Press Notices and Newspaper Articles, Box 354, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

25,192 acres, bringing the total area of the park to 104,362 acres.<sup>21</sup> The second addition adjoined the park on the southeast and included the southern slope of Mount Harkness and Warner Valley. This second addition covered 5,160 acres, mostly in private ownership, and provided authority for the Secretary of the Interior to add these lands to the park little by little.<sup>22</sup>

The impetus to expand the boundaries of the park came originally from the Lassen Volcanic National Park Association and its manager-secretary, Dittmar. Dittmar was the first to draw attention to the fact that the existing boundaries had been drawn too tightly around major geologic features. In particular, the western boundary ran over the summits of Chaos Crags and Brokeoff Mountain, leaving the western flanks of these important features outside the park. On every side, however, there was need for expansion. An extra mile on the north would take in the historic Nobles Emigrant Trail. An extra strip on the east would include Red Cinder Cone. Along the southeast boundary, an addition would protect the south flank of Mount Harkness and the lower Warner Valley, while along the southwest boundary it would cover the approach road to the south entrance. Most significantly, perhaps, an addition on the west would include Manzanita Lake. In September 1924, Dittmar sent photos to Mather and Lewis to illustrate these points, and he asked the USGS, which was preparing a topographic map of the park, to broaden its effort to cover these various features.<sup>23</sup>

Mather appreciated the need to reconsider Lassen's boundaries and dispatched Demaray to meet with Representative Cramton and a congressional party in Lassen in July 1925. Congressional interest in the matter was starting to percolate when Loomis made his significant offer at the beginning of 1926 to donate his 40-acre parcel near Manzanita Lake if the boundaries of the park were redrawn to encompass this singular beauty spot.<sup>24</sup>

Mather wanted to obtain additions to Lassen without roiling the Forest Service too much. He directed his chief landscape architect, Vint, to make an examination of the boundary area jointly with Forest Service representatives. On this return visit to Lassen in August 1927, Vint spent three days in the area with District Forester Stuart B. Show, three other Forest Service officials, and Collins. The party spent the first day at Mineral and on the south entrance road as far as construction allowed them to proceed. On the

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<sup>21</sup> "Bill to include within Lassen Volcanic National Park certain scenic areas and lava beds, mountains and lakes, that were inadvertently left out through misdescription in original survey" (legislative history outline), File H.R. 11719, 70<sup>th</sup> Congress, to revise boundaries of Lassen NP, Box 352, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>22</sup> "To provide for addition to Lassen National Park any or all of the lands within sections 3 and 4, T. 29 N., R. 6 E; and sections 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36, T. 30 N., R. 6 E., Mt. Diablo Meridian" (legislative history outline), File H. R. 10582, 71<sup>st</sup> Congress, Addition to Lassen, Box 352, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>23</sup> M. E. Dittmar, Manager-Secretary, to W. B. Lewis, Superintendent, Yosemite National Park, September 2, 1924, File 602 Part 1, Box 355, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>24</sup> B. F. Loomis to Bert H. Burrell, February 15, 1926; Burrell to The Director, March 1, 1926, File 601.01 Part 1: Lassen Administrative Site Lands, Box 355, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

second day they rode horseback up the east edge of the park from Juniper Lake to Lost Creek. On the last day they toured the Manzanita Lake area. Vint met later with Show in San Francisco and then prepared his 15-page report for the director. Next to Goodwin's report in 1923, this was the most informative report about the park that Mather had yet received.<sup>25</sup>

Vint observed that the existing boundaries had been drawn too narrowly around Lassen's core geologic features – Lassen Peak itself and Cinder Cone – as if it were still a national monument rather than a national park. “A National Park should contain other characteristics of the region, such as types of Alpine scenery, small lakes, general topography, [and] forest types,” Vint wrote. “These are necessary to properly show the volcano as an intrusion into older formations.” With his landscape architect's eye for presenting nature and preserving scenery, Vint emphasized the need to frame Lassen's geologic features with suitable foregrounds and vistas. “A good approach to a park's great features is as valuable to the park as a grand stairway or dome are to a capitol building,” he wrote. Currently, the best views of Lassen Peak and Cinder Cone were obtained from outside the park.

The areas that Vint recommended for park expansion mostly belonged to the Forest Service and he knew that the Forest Service would be reluctant to give them up. Vint characterized the forest in the eastern and northern sections as “alpine” and not of commercial value except around Butte Lake and in the Hat Creek drainage where “alpine” vegetation shaded into “commercial timber growth.” He advised Mather that the Forest Service officials with whom he had made the joint examination saw it differently; they regarded sparsely wooded areas as valuable for grazing and potentially valuable for future timber harvest as well. Intent on realizing “the ultimate in forest utilization,” Vint noted, the Forest Service had even classified some brush-covered areas as potential forest.

Vint was more sanguine about private property owners. For example, the largest landowner in the Manzanita Lake vicinity was the Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E), which he thought would be a willing seller since its plan to develop hydropower there had proven impractical. As for property owners in Warner Valley, Vint thought the NPS must take a long view. “Warner Valley is one of the most desirable areas in the vicinity of the park, being readily accessible and at a low elevation,” he stated. Although the private land ownership presented a challenge, “in the long pull it belongs to the park and will no doubt eventually come in.” Vint wanted to redraw the boundary around this area and then absorb the privately-owned tracts into the park one at a time, a method of expansion that appeared to be working at the entrance to Zion National Park in Utah, he noted.

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<sup>25</sup> Thomas C. Vint, Chief Landscape Engineer, to The Director, January 10, 1928, File 602 Part 1: Lassen Boundaries, Box 355, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

Vint included in his report a “park development scheme” that amplified on the observations he had made earlier in his report on the headquarters location. Reminding Mather that the park area was for the most part too high to allow access except for a short summer season, he proposed that the NPS establish two “high altitude auto camps” near Summit Lake and Kings Creek Meadows, and that all overnight lodging should remain outside the park. Referring to this development scheme as a “wilderness plan,” he suggested that it would be highly desirable to have one park in the national park system operated on this basis.<sup>26</sup> Although Vint’s wilderness plan would later be rejected, in other respects his report was influential. It gave Mather the information he needed to work with members of Congress and the Forest Service on the forthcoming legislation. In particular, Vint’s conception of the importance of Warner Valley was carried into the act of July 3, 1930, the second of the two park addition acts.<sup>27</sup>

The proposed expansion was carried into two separate bills: the first dealing primarily with national forest lands and the second concerned primarily with private lands. Representative Englebright crafted both bills. The major area of contention between the National Park Service and the Forest Service was the upper Hat Creek drainage. The Forest Service proposed to keep it within Lassen National Forest, even going so far as to suggest that part of the existing park in that area should be restored to the Forest Service. Mather held firm against this. To break the impasse, Representative Englebright held a conference in his office with Mather and William Greeley, chief of the Forest Service, on April 22, 1928. A few days after the conference, the Forest Service dropped its demand for land within the park. Reciprocating, the Department of the Interior dropped its demand for certain productive timber lands in the upper Hat Creek drainage. Four days later, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior agreed to amendments to the bill. The bill as amended was passed by the House and referred to the Senate, which passed it in January 1929. Englebright introduced the second bill in the next Congress, in March 1930. It moved through the legislative process without resistance and was passed in July 1930.

This pair of bills vastly improved the boundaries of the park. During the same period, Congress enacted three other measures affecting the land base of Lassen Volcanic National Park. The first of these acts added a 40-acre parcel of state land to the park by

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<sup>26</sup> Thomas C. Vint, Chief Landscape Engineer, to The Director, January 10, 1928, File 602 Part 1: Lassen Boundaries, Box 355, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II. Vint repeated his recommendation that there should be no concessions in Lassen Volcanic National Park in a memorandum to Albright. Albright called it to Mather’s attention with the comment, “I think that this point is something we ought to discuss quite thoroughly when we are all together in Washington.” See Horace M. Albright, Superintendent, to The Director, July 28, 1928, File 02: L14 Land Acquisitions General, 1926-1935, Box 29, LAVO Accession 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>27</sup> Senate, *Addition of Certain Lands to the Lassen Volcanic National Park, Calif.*, 71<sup>st</sup> Cong., 2d sess., 1930, S. Rept. 1127, 2. In a memorandum from Albright to the Secretary of the Interior published in this report, Albright noted that the park was composed entirely of high elevation areas and that the addition of Warner Valley would provide “lands of valley character suitable for the development of hotels, camps, and other tourist facilities.”

allowing California to exchange this tract for an equivalent tract of unclaimed public land elsewhere in California.<sup>28</sup> (Remaining state lands would eventually follow in the same vein.) The second act authorized the Secretary of the Interior to accept title to any land within the exterior boundaries of the park and to exchange for it other land in the park of no more than equal value, or, in lieu of land, the exchange could be made for an equal value of timber. The point of this unusual measure was to eliminate private lands in the park without having to draw on the U.S. Treasury, as well as to consolidate private lands within certain areas until they could be eliminated at a later time.<sup>29</sup> The third of these acts provided for an exchange of ten acres in the park for ten acres of private land adjoining the park, amounting to a minor boundary adjustment.<sup>30</sup>

### **Holding the Line on Concessions**

With the advent of a permanent ranger force, the Park Service began to compile closer estimates of the number of visitors entering the park each year. Collins reported a visitor count of 12,596 in 1925, an increase of about 25 percent over Dittmar's estimate of 10,000 the previous year. Collins reported 15,897 in 1926, again registering an increase of about 25 percent over the previous year. Nearly all of these people came in private automobiles, as there were no railroads bordering the area. Most of the visitors came from within the state and a significant number came to Lassen as part of a circle tour of California's four national parks. It was evident to Collins that as soon as the park was developed with roads, trails, and campgrounds it would receive many more thousands of visitors annually.<sup>31</sup>

Along with growing visitor use came the need for visitor services such as gas stations, camp stores, and overnight lodging. There was no shortage of enterprising individuals interested in establishing these kinds of businesses in the park. Collins received numerous inquiries from such people during his first year on the job as acting superintendent. Typical was the inquiry by a Red Bluff man who proposed to build a tourist camp at Lake Helen. His idea was to "put a few boats on the lake to rent, and [provide] some saddle horses for those that wish to explore the mountain, and perhaps a little store and gas station." Assuring Collins that he aimed "to beautify the place and not

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<sup>28</sup> Senate, *Acquisition of State Land in Lassen Volcanic National Park, Calif.*, 70<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 1928, S. Rept. 1171, 2. See also File 120: Legislation Lassen Volcanic NP, Box 352, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>29</sup> Senate, *Lassen Volcanic National Park, Calif.*, 70<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2d sess., 1929, S. Rept. 1770, 2.

<sup>30</sup> An Act to authorize the exchange of certain land now within the Lassen Volcanic National Park for certain private land adjoining the park and to adjust the park boundary accordingly, and for other purposes, approved April 19, 1930 (46 Stat. 222), in U.S. Department of the Interior, *Laws Relating to the National Park Service, the National Parks and Monuments*, 197-198.

<sup>31</sup> L. W. Collins, Chief Ranger, to The Director, enclosing Annual Report, September 21, 1926, File 207-001.4 Part 1: Lassen Reports – Annual, Box 353, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II. See also "If you are Looking for a Real Automobile Trip, Here's One that You'll Never Forget," *Sunset Magazine* 39 (August 1927): 16-19.

destroy,” this man thought he could start with just a few guest cabins and gradually expand his operation – “what ever seams necesery to please the publick,” he wrote humbly.<sup>32</sup>

Collins gave a standard diplomatic response to these many offers: not yet. Acting on advice from his superiors, Collins generally justified his response to these individuals with a stock explanation that the park was still in its infancy and that the most advantageous locations for visitor services would not be known until the park roads and approach roads were completed.<sup>33</sup> In back of that explanation there was another: the Park Service hoped to find a single, well-financed corporation with whom it could work on a long-term basis to provide most if not all visitor services in Lassen Volcanic National Park. Such a single concession, modeled on other concessions operating in the national park system, would have exclusive rights to operate in the park under a long-term contract, typically a 20-year contract. Mather had developed the single-concession model in order to correct problems found in the older national parks prior to the creation of the National Park Service. In such places as Yellowstone and Mount Rainier, it had become clear before 1916 that competition among many small concessions could create chaotic conditions, with many business owners frequently altering their rates and services and cutting their operating costs at visitors’ expense. Mather’s idea was to establish a single concession in each national park under terms he described as a regulated monopoly: *regulated* so that the NPS could ensure that it was providing good service, a *monopoly* so that the operator could be induced to accept low yearly returns on long-term investments. Mather had already employed this strategy successfully in a number of other national parks and he expected to do the same in Lassen – but not yet. First the park must be developed, then a suitable partner would emerge.<sup>34</sup>

While holding the line on new concessions, Collins asserted control over the few visitor services that already existed within the park. The first of these was the saddle horse business. In 1925, there were four operators who ran saddle horses into the park. All were based in Warner Valley. Collins requested each of these individuals to apply for a permit to continue operating in the park. The first three consented, but the fourth, Roy

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<sup>32</sup> J. D. Shuler to Mr. L. W. Collins, November 5, 1926, File 901 Part 2: Lassen Privileges General, Box 360, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>33</sup> L. W. Collins to the Director, December 6, 1926; Collins to Mr. J. D. Shuler, December 7, 1926, File 901 Part 2: Lassen Privileges General, Box 360, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>34</sup> Albright shared Mather’s vision at the inaugural meeting of the Lassen Volcanic National Park Association in San Francisco on March 1, 1922. He called the desired partner a “semi-public institution like the Yosemite National Park Company, made up of stockholders from all parts of California and particularly the northern part of the state.” Horace M. Albright to Mr. Mather, March 1, 1922, File: Miscellaneous Part 2, Box 95, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II. In 1915, Mather had offered a similar model to investors in the Pacific Northwest who came together to form the Rainier National Park Company, a concession that would serve Mount Rainier National Park from 1916 to 1968. See Theodore Catton, *National Park, City Playground: Mount Rainier in the Twentieth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 62-65. See also Stephen T. Mather, “A Glance Backward at National Park Development,” *Nature Magazine* 10 (August 1927): 113.

Sifford, refused. The issue involved standardization of rates. Collins wanted to establish a standard daily rate of \$3.00 per horse per day, whereas Sifford had always charged just \$2.00 and wanted to continue that way. Moreover, Sifford was loath to request a permit from the government for something his family had been doing for 25 years without any government oversight. Stubborn but civil, as he always was in his dealings with NPS officials, Sifford pressed the issue as far as he could, first with Collins, then Lewis, and finally Mather. The director stood on principle, however, that the owners of the Drakesbad property were in no different position from the other permittees with horse saddle operations in the park. “In the event Mr. Sifford refuses to sign the permit,” he instructed Lewis, “notify him accordingly and advise that he will not be permitted to conduct his business on Government land.”<sup>35</sup> Sifford grudgingly accepted the permit, but that was not the end of Collins’s difficulties.

The park rules and regulations stated that anyone conducting business in the park must have a permit issued by the director. The standard permit required the permittee to report each year on the amount of business received and total revenue collected. After a couple of years, Mather inquired as to why Collins was not obtaining these financial statements from the operators. To get answers, Mather sent his senior auditor and accountant, Charles S. Gable, to Lassen. Gable discovered that Collins, in his eagerness to gain the friendly cooperation of Sifford and the other operators, had been blacking out the reporting requirement on the back of each permit that he issued in the director’s name. Chagrined, Collins promised Gable that he would collect the missing data; however, ten months later he was obliged to inform Gable that despite his several requests the operators had not been forthcoming with the financial data. Possibly the Lassen operators sensed that if they divulged the amount of their revenue, they would start paying fees. Whereas the Lassen operators were issued their yearly permits without charge, smaller saddle horse operators in other national parks had to pay franchise fees.<sup>36</sup>

Collins received better cooperation from C. P. Snell, the landowner on Juniper Lake who ran the Juniper Lake Resort, even though Snell’s intentions as an inholder in the park were much more troubling than those of Warner Valley landowners. Snell obtained permits for his saddle horse and boat rental operations while the tourist camp itself, being on private land, fell outside the park administration’s jurisdiction. The road to Juniper Lake, however, presented a more complex situation. In 1918, Snell had obtained a permit from the National Park Service to extend his road from the park

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<sup>35</sup> Mather quoted in W. B. Lewis to Mr. Sifford, May 31, 1926, File 901 Part 1: Lassen Privileges General, Box 360, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II. In same file, also see L. W. Collins to The Director, July 7, 1925; Lewis to The Director, July 10, 1925; Acting Director to Collins, July 17, 1925; Lewis to The Director, November 10, 1925; Lewis to Sifford, May 20, 1926; Sifford to Lewis, May 24, 1926; Sifford to Mather, May 27, 1926.

<sup>36</sup> Gable to The Director, March 27, 1929, File 900-02: Lassen Public Utility Operators – Charles H. Lee, Permits; L. W. Collins to Mr. Charles S. Gable, Senior Auditor & Accountant, Office of the Director, December 5, 1929, File 901 Part 2: Lassen Privileges General, Box 360, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

boundary across park land a distance of three miles to his property on Juniper Lake provided he would not charge a toll. Thus, Snell obtained a right-of-way through the national park to his property, and visitors enjoyed a right-of-way through Snell's property to the end of the road. But what was the end of the road? Soon some adventurous motorists began driving farther, over to Horseshoe Lake, and as other motorists followed in their wheel tracks a rough road gradually formed between Juniper Lake and Horseshoe Lake. In 1925, Snell posted no-trespassing signs, saying he did not want people driving at random across his inholding. Visitors objected, insisting on the public right-of-way. Investigating the matter, Collins reported to Lewis that he was "positive no authority of any kind was ever granted for this [extended] road." Lewis advised Mather that Snell appeared to be "within his rights in prohibiting travel across his property." Yet the no-trespassing signs were an affront. To resolve the matter, the Washington Office directed Collins, through the chief engineer's office, to do a token amount of work on this road extension so that it would come under the existing right-of-way agreement between Snell and the National Park Service. Snell was satisfied by this remedy as it appeared to nudge the NPS a little closer toward developing the Juniper Lake road as part of the park's official road system. For a time, official park maps showed the road extending all the way to Horseshoe Lake.<sup>37</sup>

Collins was successful in halting another unwelcome development by an inholder. In 1927, Milton T. Supan began building a gas station on his property at the site of today's Sulphur Works. Since the park administration disputed whether the Supan family had a valid claim to this property, Collins ordered the work stopped. Supan agreed to desist for the time being until he proved title to the land.<sup>38</sup>

Transportation services to the park presented another set of questions. It was not so many years earlier that railroads had transported the majority of national park visitors from their homes to the parks, usually with a jitney service covering the short hop from railroad station to park lodge. The meteoric rise of the automobile during the 1920s was changing all that. Indeed, in trying to imagine how the automobile would shape national parks in the future, NPS officials were cognizant that they also stood on the threshold of the age of passenger air travel. When a Sacramento aviator suggested to Collins that a landing field might be built somewhere in the park where passengers could be landed at a place "convenient to the greatest number of attractions," Collins thought this sounded like a good idea. In a letter to Mather, Collins proposed to build a landing field at Kings Creek Meadows, right in the heart of the park, where travelers could "alight" in the morning, ride horseback to such points of interest as Bumpass Hell and Devils Kitchen,

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<sup>37</sup> C. P. Snell to Mr. L. W. Collins, August 12, 1925; Collins to Mr. Lewis, August 14, 1925; W. B. Lewis to Mr. W. N. Ellis, 1925; Lewis to The Director, August 18, 1925; A. E. Demaray, Acting Director, to Mr. Bert H. Burrell, October 3, 1925, File: Roads, Box 95, Entry 6, RG 79, NA II; Strong, *Footprints in Time*, 84.

<sup>38</sup> L. W. Collins to The Director, September 3, 1927, File 108: L1425 Supan Condemnation Suit 1951-1958, Box 34, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

and fly home in the evening. All that he needed to undertake this “experiment,” Collins wrote, was authority to keep some saddle horses at the location and to erect a few tents for commissary and supplies. Responding for the director, Cammerer said he had read the letter “with great interest” but had to inform Collins that the NPS was opposed to allowing airplane service in national parks. “Whatever transportation is needed in the parks to make them available for the pleasure and enjoyment of the people can, it seems, be fully furnished by motor,” Cammerer stated.<sup>39</sup>

It was a measure of how fast Californians were adopting the automobile that the number of passengers per vehicle entering the park fell steadily year by year, from 4.7 persons in the mid-1920s to 3.2 persons just five years later. By the late 1920s, a little over half of American families owned automobiles. With roads being developed and improved to accommodate this burgeoning automobile use, bus companies arose during the decade to transport people over these same highways. One such bus company was the Mt. Lassen Transit Company, which operated buses between Red Bluff and Reno, and made connections with the Southern Pacific and Western Pacific railroads. With its head office in Westwood, California (between Susanville and Chester), the company advertised itself as “The Volcanic Highway Line” and promoted its service to Lassen Volcanic National Park.<sup>40</sup>

For several years the bus company took passengers over the rough road from Chester to Drakesbad Guest Ranch. Around 1928, the park administration began issuing an annual concession permit to the company for its transportation service over park roads. With the main park road still under construction, this service was limited to operating a bus each day into Drakesbad and Juniper Lake. In keeping with the Park Service’s policy of holding the line on new concessions pending the completion of the main park road, Collins advised company officials each year that the permit was an interim measure and did not give the company any vested right to provide this service in the future.<sup>41</sup>

On January 12, 1929, Albright was appointed the second director of the National Park Service, taking over from Mather who had suffered a stroke in the preceding month. Shortly after Albright assumed the directorship, he approved an unusual memorandum stating that no more concessions would be granted in Lassen except for the right to transport passengers over the main park road once it was completed. This memorandum, addressed to the director from assistant directors Demaray and G. A. Moskey and prepared at Albright’s request, was drafted in response to a conference that had occurred with Vint, the agency’s chief landscape architect, the previous summer. In that

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<sup>39</sup> W. N. Woodson to Walker Collins, January 18, 1927; Collins to The Director, January 22, 1927; Arno B. Cammerer, Acting Director, to Collins, January 31, 1927, File 901 Part 2: Lassen Privileges General, Box 360, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>40</sup> Frank E. Graham, Secretary Manager, to The Director, October 24, 1925, File 900-02 Part 1: Public Utility Operators – Mt. Lassen Transit Co. Permits, Box 360, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>41</sup> L. W. Collins to The Director, June 20, 1930, File 900-02 Part 1: Public Utility Operators – Mt. Lassen Transit Co. Permits, Box 360, Entry 7, NA II.

conference, Vint had strongly recommended that the Park Service forego any development of overnight accommodations within Lassen Volcanic National Park, since ample facilities were available just outside the park on all three of its major approaches. Demaray and Moskey stated in the memorandum that they discussed the matter again with Vint and that he strongly reaffirmed his earlier recommendation.<sup>42</sup>

At some point during the next year and a half, however, Albright decided to renege on this commitment. In the fall of 1930, he initiated negotiations with H. M. Adams, president of the Western Pacific Railroad Company, looking to the establishment of a major concession operation in Lassen Volcanic National Park. The plan called for the railroad company to develop all lodges and camps and operate all transportation services in the park. The negotiations continued for more than a year, proceeding so far as a formal application for the franchise by the railroad company and preparation of a draft contract by the Park Service, which was sent to Adams by Secretary of the Interior Ray Lyman Wilbur. By then, the Great Depression was in its second year. Probably owing to the uncertain economy, the railroad company bowed out.<sup>43</sup>

Albright left no clear statement as to what changed his thinking about concession development in Lassen. Two memoranda to the files, which he wrote on September 10, 1931, provide clues. Albright believed the railroad company was the only prospective concession with enough capital to invest in a project that would likely take many years to show a financial return. He wanted the company to build a lodge at Manzanita Lake as well as take over the existing visitor accommodations at Drakesbad and Juniper Lake. Perhaps his change of thinking stemmed from the park's problem with inholdings. Only by partnering with large-scale private capital, Albright may have reasoned, could the Park Service get control of those properties.<sup>44</sup>

## The Loomis Museum

In 1927, Benjamin Loomis built the promised museum on his choice property situated between Manzanita Lake and Reflection Lake. He named it the Mae Loomis Memorial Museum in honor of his only daughter who had died seven years earlier at the age of 21. Loomis described his daughter as a great lover of nature who had been happiest when rambling through forests and among mountains. With no other offspring,

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<sup>42</sup> G. A. Moskey and A. E. Demaray to The Director, February 26, 1929, File 901 Part 2: Lassen Privileges General, Box 360, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>43</sup> Horace M. Albright to H. A. Adams, November 12, 1930; Adams to Honorable Ray Lyman Wilbur, December 10, 1930; Wilbur to Adams, February 13, 1931, File 900-02 Part 1: Public Utility Operators, General Contracts, Box 360, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Strong, *Footprints in Time*, 88. For more details on the Western Pacific Railroad's activities in the Lassen vicinity in this time period, see Purdy, *Lassen Volcanic*, 98-102.

<sup>44</sup> Director to the Files, September 10, 1931 (two memoranda), File 900-02 Part 1, Box 360, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

Loomis and his wife Estella felt it was their duty to the public to build a museum for the preservation of his photograph collection. On February 4, 1929, Benjamin and Estella Loomis signed the deed granting their 40-acre tract together with their museum and seismograph building as a gift to the national park. The donation became possible only after the act of Congress of January 19, 1929, extended the boundaries of the park to include the Manzanita Lake area.<sup>45</sup>

The museum building was constructed of native stone and reinforced concrete, with 20 skylights set into the dome-shaped roof. The interior consisted of a main hall devoted primarily to geologic exhibits, including photographs that Loomis had made of the eruptions, and a smaller wing containing a series of exhibits showing wildlife groups. The small seismograph building, located near the front of the museum, was made of different types of igneous rock. Inside, visitors could watch a seismograph in operation under glass as it recorded the earth's slightest movements, its pendulum-mounted needle inking tremulous lines across a perpetually revolving spool of paper.<sup>46</sup>

The Loomis Museum was an extraordinary gift to the national park. When the land and the buildings were deeded to the government in February 1929, few other national parks had museums and not one of these had been built and donated by private individuals. The gift of the museum vaulted Lassen Volcanic National Park into the first tier of parks with scientific and educational programs. Proudly, Collins turned to the Lassen Volcanic National Park Association for assistance in publishing three treatises on the geology, zoology, and botany of the park, and he requested the addition of a naturalist to the park staff. In further recognition of the park's new status, the superintendent sent his younger brother, George L. Collins, to the first Park Naturalists' Conference, held in November 1929 at the University of California at Berkeley.<sup>47</sup> (George L. Collins, who had been serving on the park staff as an assistant to the superintendent for the past two years, would go on to have an illustrious NPS career in his own right, with a focus on park planning in Alaska.)

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<sup>45</sup> B. F. Loomis and Estella M. Loomis to National Park Service, February 5, 1929, File 900-02: Public Utility Operators – B. F. and Stella M. Loomis Contracts, Box 360, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Strong, *Footprints in Time*, 78-79; “The Story Behind the Mae Loomis Memorial Museum,” *Mt. Lassen Historical Society Newsletter* (September 1990), File H14: Area and Service History 1990-1995, I&E Division Records, LAVO Files.

<sup>46</sup> “Lassen Park Gets Museum and 40 Acres,” *California Stockton-Record*, June 13, 1929. The seismograph was the second of three installed in the park by R. H. Finch of the U.S. Geological Survey's Lassen Volcano Observatory in Mineral. The first was located at Manzanita Lake and the third was placed in the Mount Harkness Lookout. “Seismograph Installed in Lassen Park,” *Oakland Tribune*, August 30, 1930.

<sup>47</sup> Superintendent to Dr. Joseph Grinnell, February 18, 1929; Arno B. Cammerer, Acting Director, to Dr. John C. Merriam, President, Carnegie Institution of Washington, April 18, 1929, File 700 Part 1: Flora, Fauna General, Box 1316, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; C. Frank Brockman, “Park Naturalists and the Evolution of National Park Service Interpretation Through World War II,” *Journal of Forest History* 22, no. 1 (January 1978): 39. There were six park naturalists in the NPS in 1929 and they were located at Yellowstone, Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Glacier, Sequoia, and Mount Rainier.

Shortly after Mr. and Mrs. Loomis deeded their property to the national park, they sold their hotel in Viola and built a small summer residence near the museum overlooking Manzanita Lake. Under the terms of their gift deed, they retained the right to a lifetime lease on the property. The small lease was just big enough to accommodate their home and a photo and art store, in which they sold film, cameras, pictures, and postcards. Mr. Loomis lived until 1935, Estella until 1953.<sup>48</sup>

## **Road Development and Dedication of the Park**

By a 1924 act of Congress, Lassen received an initial appropriation of \$110,000 to get work started on Lassen road development. Mather instructed Goodwin, the NPS chief engineer and author of the park's road plan, to start with the main north-south road around the eastern flank of Lassen Peak, or what Goodwin had termed the "Scenic Boulevard." Goodwin directed his assistant engineer, Frank Hewitt, to prepare contract specifications and invitations for bids for two sections of this road starting from the north and south edges of the park. These contracts had just been let in July 1925 when Goodwin abruptly resigned. Having learned that Mather was involved in discussions with the Bureau of Public Roads about the prospect of that agency taking over all road work in national parks, the chief engineer realized he had lost his boss's confidence. Bert Burrell replaced Goodwin as chief engineer and head of the Portland Field Office until the following spring, when the BPR took over. Mather then transferred the responsibility for preparing contract specifications to the Branch of Plans and Designs in San Francisco, where Vint's staff of landscape architects would provide direction and oversight. Frank Kittredge, a BPR engineer who had been working closely with Mather on national park projects since 1925, transferred to the Park Service as its new chief engineer in 1927.<sup>49</sup>

Mather's shakeup of the NPS engineering division put road design and construction in Lassen on a new footing. Before this time, park roads were built to a modest standard, designed for a type of use that was not far removed from the horse-and-buggy era. With the advent of supervision by the BPR, all park roads, including Lassen's, were built for safe and comfortable pleasure driving. This meant more generous road widths, more gradual curves, lighter gradients, and better surfacing. Sections of the Lassen road going around Diamond Peak and ascending toward Pilot Pinnacle, for example, were resurveyed so as to eliminate blind curves and achieve a maximum five percent grade. At the same time that the BPR upgraded road engineering standards, however, the NPS remained committed to designing all park roads so that they

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<sup>48</sup> Strong, *Footprints in Time*, 78; "The Story Behind the Mae Loomis Memorial Museum."

<sup>49</sup> National Park Service, "Cultural Landscapes Inventory: Lassen Volcanic National Park Highway."

harmonized with the landscape. Much attention was given not just to the road alignment, but to the appearance of cut and fill, guardrails, culverts, bridges, and tunnels.<sup>50</sup>

The difficult section of the Lassen road constructed along Kings Creek Meadows, a seasonal wetland, was characteristic of how the NPS sought to minimize this road's intrusion on the landscape. A borrow pit for the fill material for the roadbed was located well away and out of sight of the roadway. As the roadbed was being prepared, a deep trench was excavated parallel to the centerline of the roadway to drain groundwater flowing out of the meadow, and a series of metal pipe culverts were laid in the base of the roadbed, crossing under the road, each one faced with rubble masonry headwalls. In addition to the small culverts, a large culvert surmounted by a four-foot concrete arch with rubble masonry headwalls was installed where the road crossed Kings Creek. Architectural details on this feature included ring stones and a lintel on either headwall.<sup>51</sup>

During the short construction seasons, which usually ran from early July through mid-October, road construction crews presented an impressive spectacle. One contractor employed as many as 30 workmen with picks and shovels and a 16-horse team for dragging road-grader blades, and used thousands of pounds of explosives for blasting away rock. Another contractor used a variety of heavy equipment: two gasoline-powered shovels, one Ingersoll-Rand compressor, two 30-horsepower Caterpillar tractors, a 12-foot grader, and a scarifier. As the road work advanced up the flanks of the mountain into more and more challenging terrain, contracts were prepared for specific jobs covering short sections. One contract, for example, called for "Type B excavation" of approximately 30,000 cubic yards of material. Under special guidelines prepared by landscape architects Tom Vint and John Wosky, the contractor used small charges of dynamite in order to protect trees along the roadway from being damaged by flying rock from the blasts.<sup>52</sup>

Park promoters looked forward to the completion of the road with huge anticipation. They had always contended that getting a good road through the park was the key to making Lassen Volcanic a success. As that day approached, the California Chamber of Commerce took matters into its own hands and began to plan a grand ceremony that would celebrate the park's "opening." Soon it had fixed on a date, the second to last weekend in July 1931, and was hard at work on preparing an elaborate dedication. There would be a memorial arch built at the south park entrance in commemoration of the late Representative John Raker. There would be speeches by the governors of California and Nevada, Representative Englebright, and Secretary of the Interior Wilbur. There would be an enormous gathering at Kings Creek Meadows to mark the opening of the road, which amidst all the other ballyhoo, became known as the

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

“Lassen Peak Loop Highway.”<sup>53</sup> And for the entertainment of this large crowd, there would be a pyrotechnic display on the summit of Lassen Peak to simulate an eruption. Director Albright tried to talk organizers out of the fireworks show, but California Chamber of Commerce officials were so insistent that he reluctantly consented.<sup>54</sup> Collins, who supported the fireworks show wholeheartedly, also exercised poor judgment in sanctioning an aggressive billboard advertising campaign for the event. When these billboards were brought to Albright’s attention afterwards, he admitted that they were “an embarrassment to the National Park Service.”<sup>55</sup> Park dedications were not an unusual occurrence in the expanding National Park System, but this one got away.

In the run-up to the event, newspapers gave the so-called “artificial eruption” a wide play. Stories appeared in newspapers as far away as Atlanta, Georgia. A number of people tried in vain to get Albright to cancel it. Local writer Henry C. Lind called it a “belittling stunt” that would move national parks in the direction of resembling “Coney Islands.” Alex Sifford thought it a folly and desecration that would mar an otherwise historic event. The board of directors of the Sierra Club considered it “inappropriate.” Most troubling to Collins, R. H. Finch, the federal geologist who had been stationed at Mineral for several years, strongly opposed it. Collins must have had misgivings as he sought to assure skeptics that the simulated eruption would not turn into a “ghastly affair.”<sup>56</sup>

As it turned out, the fireworks were a grand fizzle. A huge plume of smoke was supposed to rise off the summit to form an exciting backdrop for the dignitaries’ speeches given at Kings Creek Meadows, but a strong south wind blew the smoke out of sight over the peak’s opposite shoulder. Then, after nightfall, skyrockets were supposed to light up the sky like the aurora borealis, but from two miles away in Kings Creek Meadows the results were less than impressive.<sup>57</sup>

The whole three-day extravaganza cost a staggering \$15,000 – an amount equal to half the park’s budget for the entire 1931 fiscal year – and left the California Chamber of Commerce scrambling to pay off a \$5,000 debt. The price tag did not include the cost of two additional measures taken by Albright on the eve of the event: one, an eleventh-hour contract for oiling the road so as to keep down dust, and the other, a call for rangers at

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<sup>53</sup> “Lassen Loaded for ‘Eruption,’” *Los Angeles Times*, July 6, 1931; “Unveiling of Monument to Raker Opens 3 Day Fete,” *Redding Searchlight*, July 25, 1931.

<sup>54</sup> Horace M. Albright, Director, to Mr. Duncan McDuffie, President, Sierra Club, May 15, 1931, File 101-01 Part 1: Lassen History Dedications, Box 352, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>55</sup> Director to Mr. Charles G. Dunwoody, Chairman, Division of Conservation, California State Chamber of Commerce, September 7, 1931, File 101-01 Part 2: Lassen History Dedications, Box 352, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>56</sup> Henry C. Lind to The Director, April 15, 1931; A. Sifford to Mr. Harry Albright, April 7, 1931; Albright to Sifford, April 13, 1931; Duncan McDuffie to Albright, May 13, 1931; Albright to McDuffie, May 13, 1931; Collins to Lind, April 28, 1931, File 101-01 Part 1: Lassen History Dedications, Box 352, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; “Federal Volcano Watcher Opposes Faked Eruption,” *Atlanta Constitution*, June 14, 1931.

<sup>57</sup> “Man to Stage Eruption for Lassen Fete,” *Stockton Record*, June 20, 1931; L. W. Collins to The Director, July 29, 1931, File 101-01 Part 2, Lassen History Dedications, Box 352, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

Crater Lake and Yosemite to assist Lassen's small ranger force with the expected throng of people and cars. (Four rangers from Crater Lake and six from Yosemite were assigned to crowd control at Kings Creek Meadows and directing traffic, respectively.)<sup>58</sup>

By other measures, the dedication was a big success and a historic day. Some 15,663 people attended the Saturday events. Even before the weekend began, the park had already received more visitors that June and July than it had recorded during the whole previous summer season. "Lassen's day has arrived," the *Redding Searchlight* announced gleefully on the day of the big show. Following the dedication, it confidently predicted, Lassen would be "elevated to a commanding position among the scenic playgrounds of the nation."<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Mr. Charles G. Dunwoody to Mr. L. W. Collins, August 2, 1931; Collins to Dunwoody, August 27, 1931; Collins to The Director, July 29, 1931, File 101-01 Part 2: Lassen History Dedications, Box 352, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>59</sup> "Dedication of National Park Marks Opening of a New Era," *Redding Searchlight*, July 25, 1931.



Part 2  
Development  
1931-1964



## Chapter Four

### Building the Park, from the CCC to Mission 66

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With the official dedication of Lassen Volcanic National Park and the completion of its Lassen Peak Loop Highway, the park's era of development was well underway in 1931. In January of that year, Congress saw fit to repeal two antiquated provisions of the park's enabling act: those allowing the Secretary to grant railroad and automobile road rights-of-way and to lease park lands for private summer homes.<sup>1</sup> These new restrictions on park development did nothing to hinder the Park Service's existing plans, and the flurry of park construction in the early 1930s continued to move Lassen toward fulfillment of its tourism potential. But over the longer term, Lassen's tourist facilities remained modest compared to many other national parks. Probably the biggest single factor in this was a lack of private investment capital in the region. Lassen Volcanic National Park had no large metropolis nearby, no major railroad company with a line into the region, and no millionaire benefactor. The rural four-county area surrounding the park was left to its own resources.

So visitor facilities were developed on a humble scale. The park's concession company built a thriving summer resort at Manzanita Lake on the park's north side and a popular family ski area at Sulphur Works on the park's south side. The NPS eventually acquired three resort inholdings (Supan, Juniper Lake, and Drakesbad) but sanctioned the continued operation of the only one with a proven track record: Drakesbad Guest Ranch. Federal construction efforts centered on building a network of campgrounds across the park, upkeep of the main park road, expansion of the park's off-site headquarters, and

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpt from "An Act to provide for uniform administration of the national parks by the United States Department of the Interior, and for other purposes, approved January 26, 1931" (46 Stat. 1043) in U.S. Department of the Interior, *Laws Relating to the National Park Service, the National Parks and Monuments*, 199.

renovations of the existing Loomis Museum, which housed the park's interpretation program. As the park's infrastructure developed, so did its administrative capacity.

## **Superintendents and Park Personnel**

Under Mather and Albright, the Park Service developed into a paramilitary organization based on line authority. The responsibility to make and implement policy descended from the director through the regional director to the superintendent, who was given an unusual degree of latitude to recommend policy at the individual park level. Early park superintendents were the ship captains of the Park Service, historian William Everhart has stated; they were powerful figures who practiced a good deal of discretion in implementing Park Service ideals far from home port.<sup>2</sup> From the superintendent, line authority continued on down through the chief ranger to the district ranger, and finally to the park ranger. The central aim of "park protection," as it was called, permeated the organization and even spread to all corners of the park by way of the park's geographic division into ranger districts. The significance of line authority was reflected in the fact that most park superintendents were promoted from the ranger ranks. From 1931 to the mid-1960s, nine park superintendents served Lassen Volcanic National Park. All, like Collins, came from the ranger ranks.

Besides its emphasis on line authority, park administration was based on the seasonality of park use. A small permanent staff worked at the park year-round and was augmented by a large influx of temporary staff during the summer season. In general, the permanent force was gradually built up while the number of temporary positions was subject to much wider variation. From 1933 to 1942, the introduction of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) effectively increased the size of the seasonal park staff considerably. During World War II, the seasonal park staff was practically eliminated and even a few permanent staff positions were temporarily vacated. In the postwar era, the number of seasonal park staff never reached the level it had been in the 1930s, but the smaller postwar roster did not include the park's fire control aids who were kept on standby in the event of forest fires. A comparison of numbers in 1931 and 1955 gives some idea of the changing complexion of the park staff through this period. In 1931, prior to the CCC era, the park staff consisted of just five permanent members together with sixty temporary or seasonal employees. In 1955, Lassen Volcanic had 18 permanent and 37 seasonal employees.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Everhart quoted in Rick Hydrick, "The Genesis of National Park Management: John Roberts White and Sequoia National Park, 1920-1947," *Journal of Forest History* (April 1984): 68.

<sup>3</sup> Statement of Present Conditions for the Director, July 13, 1931, File 204 Part 1: Lassen Inspections, Box 353, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; "Basic Information for the Seasonal Park Ranger and Ranger-Naturalist, Lassen Volcanic National Park, Season of 1955," File A6623: Training Materials, LVNP Box 9,

While numbers changed, the organization of the park staff remained remarkably consistent through this period. There were four staff divisions: administration, protection, construction and maintenance, and interpretation. The administration division was responsible for budget accounts and procurement. The protection division, or ranger force, was responsible for visitor and resource protection, fire control, communications, trail maintenance, and insect control. The construction and maintenance division oversaw all construction together with maintenance of roads, buildings, grounds, vehicles, and water, sewer, and electrical systems. The interpretation division administered the interpretation program, served as liaison to the park's cooperating association, conducted research, and collected seismograph and weather records. Staffing levels of the four divisions reflected the park's orientation to development. In 1955, the 18 permanent employees were distributed as follows: administration (including the superintendent and assistant superintendent) had six permanent employees, protection had five, construction and maintenance had six, and interpretation had one.<sup>4</sup>

Lassen's first superintendent, Lynne Walker Collins, was also the park's youngest and least experienced superintendent. Director Albright once predicted that Collins's tenure at Lassen would not be long. Both Albright and a delegation of congressmen who toured the park just prior to its 1931 dedication thought Collins was not quite superintendent material. They admired the work ethic of this local go-getter but thought Collins a weak promoter of the park. Albright intended to transfer Collins to an assistant superintendent's position elsewhere in the system and fill his position with someone with more experience, a bigger "personality," and better people skills.<sup>5</sup> However, after the hoopla of the park dedication passed, Albright left Collins at his post and the young man continued to oversee Lassen's growth with diligence and efficiency.

All new project construction and most park maintenance soon became dependent upon Public Works Administration (PWA) contractors and CCC enrollees under Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal. Collins welcomed this influx of labor and appropriations into the fledgling park. In 1933, Collins fought to retain his skeletal permanent staff of clerk William Moore and rangers Arthur Holmes and Eugene Barton. Six additional rangers, two ranger naturalists, and an assistant clerk were hired for the summer season. Then, after serving at the helm of Lassen for a decade, Collins was fired in 1935 for mismanagement of government funds. Collins violated Interior regulations when he

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Administrative Files, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, RG 79, National Archives – Southeast Region (hereafter NA – SR), Atlanta, Ga.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> L. W. Collins, Superintendent, to The Director, October 13, 1933, File 201-14: Reorganization, Box 1300, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Director Albright, Memorandum for the Washington Office, July 16, 1931; Albright, to Col. C. G. Thomson, Superintendent, Yosemite National Park, July 16, 1931, File 101-01: Part 2 Lassen History Dedications, Box 352, Entry 7; Collins to Mr. A. B. Cammerer, Associate Director, July 10, 1933, File: Inspections and Investigations – Cammerer 1933, Box 7, Entry 18, Records of Arno B. Cammerer, 1922-40, RG 79, NA II; Superintendent's Annual Report (hereafter SAR), 1933, REDW Archives. All Superintendent's Annual Reports for Lassen Volcanic are found at REDW Archives.

purchased a vehicle for park use that was more expensive than the contract bid, although he paid the difference with his own money. He also unlawfully placed Red Bluff merchants on the payroll as temporary employees to cover the unbudgeted cost of park supplies, and in some cases the payroll amount did exceed the supply cost. The superintendent's integrity and his creative accounting methods – all purportedly in the interest of furthering park development – were defended by Collins's right-hand man Moore, park concessioner Don Hummel, and the local press, which appreciated having a local man in charge. A *Red Bluff Daily News* editor railed that enforcement of technical regulations went too far when Interior officials chose to “literally tear out the heart of an ambitious young man and throw it to the dogs.” Collins's defenders claimed that he sought no personal gain from these minor infractions, but Collins's temporary replacement, Forest Townsley, found “plenty of evidence to show that a closely organized group of relatives and friends have been promoting the whole affair to their own benefit.”<sup>6</sup>

Townsley, Yosemite's chief ranger, was detailed to Lassen Volcanic to serve as acting superintendent from the date of Collins' dismissal until the arrival of a new superintendent three months later. In October 1935, Ernest Leavitt was hired as the park's second superintendent. Unlike Collins, Leavitt brought to the job considerable Park Service experience, including a three-year stint as superintendent of the country's other volcanic national park: Hawaii (later renamed Hawai'i Volcanoes). At Lassen, Leavitt pledged to develop the park as fast as the public demanded and as fast as funding allowed. The park's personnel was expanding by this time. The new permanent naturalist, Dr. Carl Swartzlow, was assisted by three seasonal naturalists in the summer of 1936. Lassen's two permanent rangers were supplemented by six seasonal rangers that summer, plus a fire-lookout observer, a fire dispatcher, and a fire guard. Two new clerical positions were established. But Leavitt's first summer in Lassen would be his only full summer season there. The following winter, a gas explosion at the superintendent's residence killed Leavitt's wife Anna. The night before the tragedy, a heavy snow load had slid off the roof with great force, separating pipes from the propane gas tanks adjacent to the house. Gas built up under the house for several hours before a bathroom heater ignited the escaped propane and blew the house apart at 8:15 am on February 5, 1937. Mrs. Leavitt died from her injuries the next day in a Red Bluff hospital, while the couple's resident nurse, Mrs. Freeman, and Mr. Leavitt recovered

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<sup>6</sup> Comptroller of the United States to the Secretary of the Interior, July 13, 1935; Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, to Mr. L. W. Collins, Superintendent, July 19, 1935; Don Hummel, Lassen National Park Camp, Ltd., to Ickes, July 25, 1935; W. N. Moore to Ickes, July 26, 1935; John G., “Hopping the Headlines,” *Red Bluff Daily News*, August 19, 1935; A. E. Demaray, Acting Director, to The City Editor, *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 3, 1935, File 204.20, Box 1300; F. S. Townsley, Acting Superintendent, to Demaray, September 4, 1935, File 201-06: Adm. Superintendents, Box 1299, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

from their severe burns and, in Mrs. Freeman's case, broken bones. The following August, Leavitt transferred to Crater Lake National Park.<sup>7</sup>

Leavitt's replacement, John Preston, transferred from Rocky Mountain National Park, where he had been assistant superintendent. A keen advocate of the park's interpretation programs and winter use, Preston sought to diversify visitor offerings at Lassen. Under his leadership, all divisions of park personnel grew in numbers through 1941. The permanent ranger force doubled in size: Barton became the park's first chief ranger, a post he would hold for 12 years, and a third permanent ranger was hired. The park's interpretation staff swelled to seven in the summer of 1941. Moore was promoted to chief clerk, and additional clerical and maintenance workers were hired. Preston and his staff moved into a newly renovated headquarters building in April 1940. The bright, spacious new offices "greatly improved the organization and efficiency" of all occupants, Preston reported. CCC workers continued to supplement the park's work force until after the United States entered World War II.<sup>8</sup>

Superintendent James Lloyd took over for Preston in July 1941, just months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. As the park drained of visitors, park personnel joined the military, and the park's operating funds all but disappeared, Lloyd's thankless duty was to simply keep Lassen "on an even keel," as NPS Director Newton B. Drury put it. By 1944, the park's protection force was down to two permanent rangers and two seasonals, and a single naturalist conducted the park's interpretation program. After the war ended, Lloyd transferred to Lake Texoma Recreational Area.<sup>9</sup>

Daniel Tobin became Lassen's superintendent in July 1946 and carried the park through its lean postwar years. The park's infrastructure suffered from wartime neglect, while visitors flocked back to the park in astounding numbers. Tobin's resources were slim, with paltry appropriations and a personnel shortage. In 1949, Tobin still had "much less manpower to perform a much larger job," as compared to prewar conditions. The Korean War further prolonged the park's recovery. Despite the great demands placed upon Tobin and his small staff, the superintendent was popular with his employees and spent a lot of time in the field himself. In 1952, Tobin left Lassen to become the NPS's Southeast regional director in Atlanta.<sup>10</sup>

After Tobin's departure, Fred Johnston served as Lassen's superintendent briefly, from spring 1952 to fall 1953. With postwar funding for Lassen finally materializing

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<sup>7</sup> SARs, 1935-1938; "Leavitt Pledges Development in Assuming Lassen Park Post," news clipping dated October 16, 1935, File 75: K 34 News Clippings 1935, Box 27, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; George W. Reed, Associate Engineer, to Mr. F. A. Kittredge, February 7, 1937; "Excerpt from Superintendent's Monthly Report," March 4, 1937, File 801-01: Part 1 Accidents, Box 1317, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>8</sup> SARs, 1938-1942.

<sup>9</sup> SARs, 1944-1946; Newton B. Drury, Director, to Mr. James V. Lloyd, Superintendent, October 21, 1944, File 201-06: Adm. Superintendents, Box 1299, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>10</sup> Tobin's long and accomplished career in the NPS included serving as superintendent of Mount Rainier National Park in the 1970s and as Pacific Northwest regional director in the 1980s. SARs, 1946-1952; Joe "Rock" McClellan, interview by Diane Krahe, September 12, 2006.

during Johnston's time in office, the park began to make some headway in the acquisition of its major inholdings of private land. Personnel numbers had begun to pick up again as well. By 1952, the park's permanent protection force had increased to five, supplemented by ten seasonal rangers plus 11 fire personnel. One year-round naturalist was assisted by seven seasonals, while the park's fiscal division of five permanent employees hired three more clerks for the summer months. The park's permanent maintenance staff of three foremen, a mechanic, an electrician and a general equipment operator was joined by three additional foremen and 26 skilled and unskilled workers in the summertime. Including the superintendent, a total of 78 employees worked in Lassen in the summer of 1952.<sup>11</sup>

Superintendent Johnston's replacement, Edward Freeland, led Lassen through its postwar recovery. In 1956, the NPS launched Mission 66, a ten-year program to overhaul visitor facilities in all national parks in time for the agency's 50th anniversary in 1966. Burgeoning crowds in parks across the country necessitated the bold initiative. During his eight years in office at Lassen Volcanic National Park, Superintendent Freeland oversaw a string of Mission 66 improvement projects and further growth of the park's work force. As greater demands were placed upon Lassen, park management was delegated among an expanding team of specialists. The park hired its first forester in 1952. Park engineers also joined the park's personnel roster. Supervisory rangers and naturalists were inserted into the protection and interpretation divisions. Maintenance crews were reorganized under foremen of higher government grades. But as of 1957, all staff offices at park headquarters still fit under one roof, that of the administration building. In 1959, Freeland complained that Lassen's protection division was still sorely lacking in manpower: the park had yet to receive the additional protection personnel recommended by Regional Office planners and prescribed in Lassen's Mission 66 plan: a permanent "management and protection" team of 28 individuals. In 1961, the Loomis Museum Association aided in the expansion of the park's clerical force by funding the salary of a full-time clerk/stenographer for the interpretation division.<sup>12</sup>

Although many career professionals transferred in and out of Lassen Volcanic at mid-century, a notable ranger refused to take part. For decades, Lester Bodine declined transfers to other parks and promotions within the park's hierarchy, until he finally assumed the position of chief ranger in 1967, after 34 years at Lassen. Although Superintendent Freeland scorned Bodine's nonparticipation in customary Park Service advancement, Bodine's longevity and loyalty at Lassen won him many fans and

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<sup>11</sup> SARs, 1952-1953; Lassen Volcanic NP, Region 4, Development Outline, Summary, Lassen Volcanic National Park, June 26, 1952, Denver Service Center, Lakewood, Colo.

<sup>12</sup> SARs, 1956-1962; Lassen Park Permanent Employee Roster, 1927 to Present, File H14: Area and Service History 1996, I&E Division Records, LAVO Files; Conrad Wirth, Notice of Approval, Lassen Volcanic National Park Prospectus, April 12, 1957, File A98: Prospectus LAVO, Box 734, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II; John S. Adams, Park Landscape Architect, Lassen Volcanic Master Plan Development Outline: Developed Areas – Mineral Headquarters, August 1, 1957, Denver Service Center.

accolades through the years. Freeland's eight years at Lassen concluded his long NPS career, which had begun in the early 1920s. Freeland was a traditionalist, a quintessential Mission-66 era superintendent who believed whole-heartedly in the revival of park development and other early Park Service ideals. When Freeland retired in 1961, he was awarded the Department of Interior meritorious service award.<sup>13</sup>

Frank Sylvester, a former chief ranger at Lassen in the 1950s, became Lassen's next superintendent. Sylvester transferred from NPS headquarters in Washington, D.C., where he had served as a special assistant to Director Conrad Wirth. During Superintendent Sylvester's brief administration, park personnel continued to diversify and proliferate. The man who decades before shouldered all the park's recordkeeping himself, William Moore, retired from his position as property and procurement clerk in 1962, after 33 years at Lassen. In 1963, Superintendent Sylvester was replaced by Robert Moore, assistant superintendent at Grand Teton National Park. Bill Stephenson was hired to fill the park's new position of chief of park maintenance in 1965. Formerly the park engineer supervised the maintenance division. Like Sylvester, Superintendent Moore's time at Lassen was short: he departed in fall 1965. Such abbreviated terms of leadership proved to be the norm at Lassen until the mid-1970s, when Stephenson was promoted to the office and stayed for over a decade.<sup>14</sup>

## **Snow Removal and Road Maintenance**

The Lassen Peak Loop Highway was Lassen's greatest asset in terms of park development, but from the beginning it proved to be park management's greatest challenge as well. This road provided motorists access to the volcanic curiosities and splendid scenery of the park's western side, but only for a few short summer months and only after the annual Herculean effort to clear the road of eight months of accumulated snow. Most years, Lassen experienced long winters that produced great depths of snow packed to cement-like density by unrelenting winds. Reclaiming the main park road from winter's grasp usually began in early May. Snow removal crews worked three shifts a day, around the clock. When the season's snowpack was below normal, the park sometimes opened the road by Memorial Day weekend. Other years, the road was not passable to tourist traffic until after the Fourth of July. The average opening date for the main park road was June 20.

Lassen's snow removal technology in the 1930s consisted of a gasoline-powered shovel breaking through the hard-packed snow surface and a rotary snowplow called a "Snogo" following behind and launching the chunks of dislodged snow far into the air

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<sup>13</sup> SAR, 1959-1962; Lassen Park Permanent Employee Roster, 1927 to Present, File H14: Area and Service History 1996, I&E Division Records, LAVO Files.

<sup>14</sup> SARs, 1956, 1962-1965.

and away from the roadway. This machinery chiseled through compressed snow typically 20 feet deep, with encrusted drifts near the main park road's 8,500-foot summit sometimes exceeding 30 feet. Initially, the crews created a slender one-way pass through the snow mass. The warmth of spring sunshine melted the exposed walls of snow and aided in the eventual clearing of the full width of the road. This method, "while by far the cheapest," Superintendent Leavitt reported, did not allow for safe public use of the road until the entire process was complete. Most persistent in following on the heels of the snow removal crews were spring skiers itching to reach the park's interior slopes.<sup>15</sup>

In the early 1930s, Superintendent Collins had lobbied for funds to keep the main park road clear all winter long for skiers and sightseers. Collins experimented with continuous snow removal through much of the winter of 1933 and 1934 and boasted that the park experienced a 78 percent increase in winter visitation as a result. But more typical snowfalls and restrictive budgets in subsequent years buried Collins's dream for all-season travel of the main park road. Most years, the park and the California Division of Highways kept the southern end of the main park road clear as far the Sulphur Works Ski Area. By the 1950s, Lassen and the state had entered into a cooperative agreement that exchanged manpower and equipment for the tasks of keeping the park's southwest and northwest access roads passable through the winter and clearing the main park road in late spring. Crews employed the same painstaking method to rid the main park road of its snow cover: "a slow process with layer after layer of hard packed snow literally being peeled off by the bull dozer" and jettisoned skyward by a rotary plow, Superintendent Tobin reported in 1950. By this time, the park permitted the public one-way travel on the main park road several weeks prior to clearing of the road's full width, which was done at nighttime when the route was closed to traffic.<sup>16</sup>

The park's extreme winter climate demanded another high-priority maintenance routine of park employees. All winter long, clearing the rooftops of park buildings of snow was vitally important, at park headquarters, at the ski area, and especially at Manzanita Lake, where many "light, temporary type" structures were especially vulnerable to collapse.<sup>17</sup>

Through the summer months, road crews battled the main park road's chronic erosion problems (owed to the area's steep terrain and abundant precipitation) and scrambled to get the roadway back in shape for the next winter season. Through the 1930s and 1940s, the extent of this summertime road maintenance depended upon how

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<sup>15</sup> SARs, 1932, 1934, 1936, 1937, 1965.

<sup>16</sup> SARs, 1933-1953; NPS Press Release, Nov. 1932; L. W. Collins, Superintendent, to The Director, July 15, 1932, File 630.02.2: Snow Removal, Box 356, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Daniel J. Tobin, Superintendent, Master Plan Development Outline, Lassen Volcanic National Park, July 6, 1950, Denver Service Center; E. J. McCracken, Highway Engineer, Report on Lassen Park Maintenance (Major Roads), June 7, 1951, File 630: Roads, Part IV, Box 62, Records of the Western Regional Director – LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR.

<sup>17</sup> Tobin, Master Plan Development Outline, 1950.

much money remained in the park's road account once snow removal was finished for the year. (Sometimes, very little remained.) After World War II, separate allocations were made for the two types of road work.<sup>18</sup> When funds were available, heavy machinery removed the rock and debris of past slides from the main park road's shoulders and drainage ditches. Laborers shoveled silt and debris from roadside gutters and culverts. Using grading equipment and hand tools, crews reshaped the road's shoulders for maximum drainage. Rock slides were a year-round hazard on the main park road, and through the summer season one-man patrols monitored sections of the road, clearing the roadway of fallen rock by hand or calling in equipment as needed. Patching of pavement was also an incessant job. By 1950, the general foreman's regular inspections of the main park road were augmented by monthly assessments by a Bureau of Public Roads engineer through the summer. Once annually, these two men were joined by a regional NPS road maintenance engineer to evaluate the main park road's maintenance requirements for the coming year. Despite this labor-intensive upkeep, every few years severe winter storms damaged the park's roads (and its structures, utilities, bridges, and trails) to a degree that required repair work above and beyond routine maintenance.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to these seasonal and episodic ravages by the elements, faulty pavement handicapped the main park road from the start. Director Albright's dust-control directive to oil the length of the road just prior to the park dedication ceremony in 1931 resulted in a road surface that after the spring 1932 thaw oozed copious amounts of oil and soiled vehicles. The same season, the road "began to break and buckle in a number of places, while on other sections it became corduroyed," Superintendent Collins reported. Engineers determined the entire roadway required a different type of pavement. Through the 1930s, the BPR returned to Lassen year after year to resurface sections of the main park road. The project was completed just prior to the winter of 1937-38, when storms of unprecedented force walloped Lassen and razed portions of the main park road. Road construction crews once again set to work and by mid-summer 1939, Superintendent Preston proclaimed that the main park road was "in better condition now than ever before." But the repairs did not impress Regional Director John White, who

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<sup>18</sup> In 1938, Superintendent Preston lamented that the park's huge snow removal task gobbled up most of the park's "pitifully small" annual allotment for road maintenance: "The Federal Government has spent to date approximately \$1,000,000 on the Lassen Peak Loop Highway. To protect a million-dollar investment with an annual appropriation of \$4,500 is impossible." In 1944, Superintendent Lloyd proposed separate budget categories for snow removal and highway maintenance. By the early 1950s, road maintenance reports reflected this budgetary change. John Preston, Superintendent, to Mr. Frank A. Kittredge, Regional Director, January 8, 1938, File 630: Roads Part I; James V. Lloyd, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Regional Director, Region Four, December 13, 1944, File 630: Roads Part II, Box 61; Area Summary, Lassen Peak Highway, 1951 Fiscal Year, File 630.02: Roads and Trails, Box 62, Records of the Western Regional Director – LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR.

<sup>19</sup> SARs, 1931-1965; Lloyd, Memorandum for the Regional Director, December 13, 1944; Maintenance Plans and Estimates, Lassen Volcanic National Park, Lassen Peak Highway, 1951 Fiscal Year, File 630.02: Roads and Trails, Box 62, Records of the Western Regional Director – LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR; Tobin, Master Plan Development Outline, 1950.

upon inspecting the road a year later complained of its narrowness, its crumbling shoulders, and its general substandard construction.<sup>20</sup>

During the World War II labor shortage, no heavy equipment operators were available for Lassen's annual snow removal marathon, but the park improvised to clear the main park road for summer visitors. In 1942, CCC enrollees and fire guards were trained for the job. In subsequent years, most park employees had to abandon their regular duties during May and June to take shifts doing snow removal. Summertime maintenance of the main park road also suffered for lack of funds, manpower and equipment. In 1944, Superintendent Lloyd reported that the road was "progressively deteriorating."<sup>21</sup>

Rehabilitation of the neglected main park road proceeded slowly. In 1948, the park began hiring contractors to resurface stretches of it from Summit Lake to Mineral. Four years later, the job was complete, but only for this southern portion of the main park road – and just in time for the devastating storms of January 1952 to damage much of the new road surface. In 1959, as part of the park's Mission 66 program, the Bureau of Public Roads supervised the resurfacing of the northern portion of the main park road, from Summit Lake to Manzanita Lake. Mission 66 funding also enabled Lassen Volcanic to replace some of its aging snow removal equipment with new, more efficient machinery. In October 1962 and December 1964, severe storms once again pummeled the park, requiring extensive repair to roads, utilities and structures. The 1962 windstorm blew down over two million board feet of timber in the park and necessitated a massive cleanup effort of the Summit Lake and Horseshoe Lake campgrounds.<sup>22</sup>

## The CCC Era

Park construction projects surrounding Lassen's formal dedication in 1931 extended beyond the completion of the main park road and additions to park headquarters. Work crews added more telephone lines to the park's communications network and began development of campgrounds at Summit Lake, Kings Creek Meadows, and Manzanita Lake. (By 1931, park visitors were also regularly setting up camp at Dersch Meadows, Butte Lake, Juniper Lake and in Warner Valley, although no formal park campgrounds yet existed at these locations.) Crews also constructed a 50-car parking lot near Bumpass Hell and another lot with twice that capacity just below the main park road's highest point at 8,512 feet. This second lot served as the start of the

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<sup>20</sup> SARs, 1932-1939; John R. White, Regional Director, Memorandum for the Superintendent, October 8, 1940, File 204-20: White, John R., Box 1300, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>21</sup> SARs, 1942-1944.

<sup>22</sup> SARs, 1952, 1959-1965; U.S. Department of Interior, press release, July 11, 1959, contained within Richard G. Prasil and Raymond Nelson, Park Naturalists, Master Plan Narrative for Lassen Volcanic National Park, Chapter 1 – Objectives and Policies, November 30, 1962, Denver Service Center.

Lassen Peak Trail, also completed in time for the dedication festivities. The 2.5-mile route to the crater of Lassen Peak proved immediately popular with park visitors. On busy summer days, a ranger was stationed atop Lassen Peak “to explain the interesting features of this most recently active volcanic mountain,” Collins reported. Through the mid-1930s, about 5,000 hikers signed the Sierra Club’s register book at Lassen’s summit each season; double that number was estimated to have made the climb annually. Cut into the steep, exposed south face of Lassen Peak and taxed by its heavy volume of foot traffic, the trail was prone to erosion, and the park poured most of its annual trail maintenance efforts (and funding) into the Lassen Peak Trail.<sup>23</sup>

With the hubbub of the park dedication over, Collins reported that “the growing pains of a young and rapidly developing park were replaced by a more solid and steady growth” in 1932. In fact, any further park development awaited a new source of federal allocations: Franklin D. Roosevelt’s economic relief programs. Starting in 1933, the park’s allocation of Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) funding and Public Works Administration funding quickly dwarfed Lassen’s annual operating budgets and covered much of the park’s construction and maintenance costs for the coming years. ECW funds supported Lassen’s Civilian Conservation Corps camps, while the PWA paid private contractors hired by the NPS to undertake construction projects in the park.<sup>24</sup>

The CCC presented the National Park Service with an opportunity and a challenge. One purpose of the organization, plainly, was to accomplish valuable conservation work. Its other purpose was to provide emergency relief for enrollees. These were distinct, albeit compatible purposes. Park superintendents were instructed to view each enrollee not just as a source of labor but as a new client, a new type of visitor who could find spiritual renewal in nature through the collective CCC experience. As CCC enrollees from across the country began to arrive at Lassen, Superintendent Collins touted all these virtues of the CCC program, including the opportunity for workers “to become better acquainted with the great outdoors and to better appreciate nature.”<sup>25</sup>

Getting the CCC started proved to be a mammoth task. President Roosevelt’s announced goal was to have a quarter million men enrolled by July 1933. Director Albright, serving out his last months in government service, represented the Interior Department on the CCC’s organizing council in the spring of 1933 as the administration formulated how this goal was to be accomplished. It soon became obvious that conservation agencies like the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service were too small to build and run the camps as originally envisioned; only the U.S. Army could handle that. Therefore, the division of responsibility between government agencies was

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<sup>23</sup> SARs, 1931-1936.

<sup>24</sup> SARs, 1932, 1933; Report of the Season’s Operations for Lassen Volcanic National Park, Season of 1932, File 207: Part 1 Lassen Reports (General), Box 353, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>25</sup> Catton, *National Park, City Playground*, 99-100; Memoranda for the Press, May 23, 1933 and June 3, 1933, File 501-03: Part 1 Lassen Publicity Press Notices and Newspaper Articles, Box 354, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

made as follows. The army would process the enrollees and form them into companies with army commanders, dispatch the companies to their respective camps, build the camps, and maintain discipline in the camps. The conservation agencies such as the NPS and the USFS would select all CCC camp locations, furnish the camps with tools and vehicles, employ the enrollees in useful conservation work, and supervise their efforts.<sup>26</sup>

Lassen was allocated one of California's first CCC camps. The 200-man Old Boundary Springs Camp, located in the Devastated Area, operated each summer from 1933 through 1940. The park was granted a second CCC camp, which was established at Sulphur Works, for the summers of 1934 and 1935.<sup>27</sup> From these two camps, the CCC sometimes dispatched small "spike camps" to various locations throughout the park for specific projects. In autumn 1937, a spike camp of a nearby four-season CCC camp on the national forest was established at park headquarters. This camp evolved into Lassen's third CCC camp, which operated in Mineral year-round – across the highway from the headquarters complex – until 1942.<sup>28</sup>

In the early years, when camp enrollment was high and ECW funding was ample, Lassen's CCC crews engaged in a number of large construction projects. Enrollees built several truck trails: one to the head of Manzanita Creek, another along Hat Creek to Badger Flat, and a third from Summit Lake to Twin Lakes. (Although fire protection was the primary purpose for these secondary roads, the CCC also established small campgrounds at the end of the Manzanita Creek and Hat Creek tracks to encourage visitor use.) Enrollees also built three miles of new roadway into Warner Valley. They constructed the Horseshoe Lake Fire Guard Station and various outbuildings throughout the park. By 1935, CCC crews had completed work on the Manzanita Lake, Summit Lake, Warner Valley, and Butte Lake campgrounds, providing campers with an abundance of "excellent" sites complete with rock stoves and picnic tables. In 1935, men from the Southwest CCC Camp began construction of what became Southwest Campground. The project languished after the closure of that CCC camp, but Mineral CCC enrollees completed the campground later in the decade. Among their trail work accomplishments, CCC men built a track from the Warner Valley Campground to the top of Flatiron Ridge (which later became part of the Pacific Crest Trail). They also constructed a new footpath from the main park road to the Bumpass Hell thermal area and improved various existing trails. They installed toilets at Bumpass Hell and on Lassen Peak. Enrollees also erected fences and engaged in insect control work, fire suppression, fish planting, forest cleanup, landscaping, and roadside cleanup. A major CCC undertaking each spring was erosion abatement along the main park road. The men shoveled by hand silt and debris from the road's gutter lines and reshaped the roadway's

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<sup>26</sup> Harlan D. Unrau and G. Frank Williss, *Administrative History: Expansion of the National Park Service in the 1930s* (Washington: National Park Service, 1987), 77.

<sup>27</sup> The Old Boundary Springs Camp was sometimes referred to as the Lost Creek Camp, while the Sulphur Works Camp was better known as the Southwest Camp.

<sup>28</sup> SARs, 1933-1942.

shoulders and banks. With the CCC's wealth in manpower, this tedious road work was "done to a high standard," noted Acting Superintendent Townsley in 1935, "something not possible under the limited road maintenance funds allotted with the regular appropriation."<sup>29</sup>

Meanwhile, the PWA supplied the BPR with funds to resurface the entire main park road, which had been "bleeding" excess oil and making a grand mess since the spring of 1932. Another notable PWA project was construction of the naturalist residence at Manzanita Lake, which with its "pleasing design" and "particularly good" rockwork was an impressive aesthetic addition to the park, the supervisory landscape architect assessed upon its completion. The PWA funded many other major projects in Lassen Volcanic: construction of the blacksmith shop at headquarters and several comfort stations; installation of hydroelectric plants at Manzanita Lake and park headquarters; installation of permanent electrical, water and sewage systems at the Manzanita Lake complex; enlargement of the headquarters water system; modernization of the headquarters telephone system; and improvement to the park's approach roads. CCC enrollees participated in a number of these projects, while PWA money also paid for contract labor in insect control and other maintenance work in Lassen Volcanic, which was largely the domain of the CCC.<sup>30</sup>

In 1936, CCC contributions to Lassen's development fell off noticeably. Only the Old Boundary Springs Camp remained in operation and it was made up of World War I veterans, many of whom lost interest in CCC work after the federal government finally issued their long-awaited bonus checks in June 1936. Despite low CCC enrollment at Lassen Volcanic in 1936 and 1937, CCC men participated in some new building construction and remodel jobs at Manzanita Lake, park headquarters, and the Old Boundary Springs Camp itself. Otherwise, most enrollees did maintenance work. According to park clerk Moore, Lassen Volcanic had become "entirely dependent upon ECW camps to take care of its annual maintenance problems" by this time. In the summer of 1936, a spike camp at Butte Lake did road maintenance, while another spike camp at headquarters removed downed timber and repaired the sewer system. Through the hard winter of 1937-38, the initial members of the Mineral CCC Camp chopped

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<sup>29</sup> SARs, 1931, 1933-1939; Narrative Report, Emergency Conservation Work, Lassen Volcanic National Park, NP-1, Old Boundary Springs Camp, May-November 1933, File 1: CCC Files ECW General Report, May-November 1933, Box 1, Lassen Volcanic National Park Accession 419 (hereafter LAVO Acc. 419), REDW Archives; comments on final draft report.

<sup>30</sup> SARs, 1932-1940; Erwin M. Dearnor, Associate Landscape Architect, Report to the Chief Architect Through the Superintendent of Lassen Volcanic National Park, Season 1934, Public Works Administration, File 12: Public Works Projects, Chief Architect, 1934; Public Works Projects Narrative Report, undated, File 11: Public Works Projects, Narrative Report January 1934; Final Narrative Report, Southwest Camp, NP-2, Lassen Volcanic National Park, June-October 1934, File 9: CCC Files SW Camp, Box 1, LAVO Acc. 419, REDW Archives.

downed timber into firewood and shoveled snow from headquarters walkways and driveways.<sup>31</sup>

The park administration building grew in size a number of times through the 1930s, with the addition of wings to both the east and west sides of the building. Second-story dormers, rockwork of local stone, and a graceful roofline over the front porch lent greater function and character to headquarters' most prominent structure. Through the decade more employee housing was added to the headquarters complex, including new residences for the superintendent and the chief ranger. After the floods of 1937, the headquarters utility area was relocated from the west to the east side of the Viola Road, a county road that cut through the western portion of the headquarters property. Some of the utilities structures were moved, while others were razed and replaced with new, upgraded maintenance buildings in the new location. CCC enrollees assisted in some of these construction projects, and they also built stone walkways, retaining walls, fences and signs at headquarters. Following the establishment of the Mineral CCC Camp in 1938, resident enrollees undertook several large construction projects at headquarters: a garage for the superintendent, a seismograph station, a 30-by-90-foot equipment shed, and renovation of the bunk house into employee apartments.<sup>32</sup>

On the park's north side, at Manzanita Lake, recreational development boomed during the CCC era but could not keep pace with the tremendous popularity of this corner of the park. In 1933, the park's concessioner, the Lassen National Park Camp, built a lodge, cabins, and service station near the Loomis Museum. The resort was an instant hit, and every year or two through 1941 the concessioner expanded its lodging capacity. Adjacent to the new resort, the CCC completed its 77-site Manzanita Lake Campground in 1934. A proud CCC supervisor boasted that it qualified as one of California's "most modern auto camping areas." Motorists entered the campground from the museum parking area via a 20-foot log bridge across Manzanita Creek. The campground's circular drive provided each site with an individual entrance and the area's proliferation of dense manzanita allowed privacy between sites. Near the creek, CCC enrollees constructed a campfire circle for evening talks by park interpreters, which attracted droves of campers and resort vacationers alike. The campground proved to be as popular as the resort, by 1936 filling to capacity all through the summer season. In 1937, Superintendent Leavitt reported that far too many people were populating the Manzanita Lake Campground and overloading its septic system. In 1938, Superintendent Preston declared the urgent need to enlarge the "overrun" campground. With CCC and PWA help, the park managed to make significant improvements to the entire Manzanita Lake complex in the intervening years before the nation entered World War II. Upgrades to

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<sup>31</sup> SARs, 1936-1938; W. N. Moore, Acting Superintendent, to The Director, March 9, 1937, File: Lassen Volcanic Work Programs, Box 68, Entry 71, Federal Project Reports, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>32</sup> National Park Service, "Cultural Landscapes Inventory: Mineral Headquarters Historic District," Part 2a, pp. 4-8; SAR, 1938-1941; W. N. Moore, Acting Superintendent, Memorandum for the Director, July 2, 1941, File: Lassen 207.01-4 Supt. Annual Reports, Box 1302, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

the infrastructure included the addition of more comfort stations, the completion of utility systems that would accommodate future expansion, and the rerouting of some access roads to relieve congestion. Through the 1930s, temporary maintenance buildings and seasonal employee housing – of regrettably flimsy construction, park staff complained – were also added to the Manzanita Lake complex.<sup>33</sup>

As Lassen's CCC camps shut down, one glaring task remained undone: trail construction and maintenance. The park's slim operating budget left no money for trail work after the park's popular footpaths to Lassen Peak and Bumpas Hell were cleared of snow each year. The remainder of the park's 120 miles of trails, strewn with fallen trees and choked by overgrown brush, were "an embarrassment to the park staff," Superintendent Leavitt lamented in a 1936 plea to the NPS director for more annual appropriations. "If we are to make of this park a wilderness area, accessible to hikers, we must do something to improve the trails we invite people to make use of," he said. Although the CCC engaged in some trail work, it did not rank high on proposed project lists until just before the close of the Lost Creek Camp in 1940. In 1941, Regional Director John White urged Superintendent Lloyd to prioritize trail improvement in his future program for the park, in an effort to encourage visitors to get away from their automobiles and into the park's backcountry.<sup>34</sup>

In the waning years of the CCC at Lassen Volcanic, white pine blister rust control work consumed much of the energy of the reduced number of Old Boundary Springs Camp enrollees. In the summer of 1938, they treated over 5,000 acres of trees infected by the disease. The year-round residents of the Mineral Camp engaged in more varied tasks, at headquarters, in the park, and beyond. In 1940, they took part in emergency flood work in the Sacramento Valley and were credited with saving the town of Gerber by reinforcing a nearby levee. After the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, enrollees manned the 24-hour aircraft warning observation post set up at park headquarters. The Mineral Camp was closed in 1942.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Final Narrative Report, Old Boundary Springs Camp, NP-1, Lassen Volcanic National Park, May-October 1934, File 6: CCC Files Old Boundary Springs Camp, Box 1, LAVO Acc. 419, REDW Archives; SARs, 1936-1941; Benefits of the ECW Program, undated, File 885-01: Part 1 Reports Lassen Silviculture Reforestation Reports, Box 1319; E. P. Leavitt, to The Director, July 17, 1937, File 660-03.4: Part 1 Sanitary Systems, Box 1315; W. N. Moore, Acting Superintendent, Memorandum for the Director, July 2, 1941, File: Lassen 207.01-4 Supt. Annual Reports, Box 1302, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>34</sup> James V. Lloyd, Superintendent, to Mrs. Edward Gage, August 24, 1942; E. P. Leavitt, Superintendent, to The Director, August 5, 1936, File 640.0: Trails – General, Box 1314; W. N. Moore, Acting Superintendent, Memorandum for the Director, July 2, 1941, File: Lassen 207.01-4 Supt. Annual Report, Box 1302; John R. White, Regional Director, Memorandum for the Superintendent, October 8, 1940, File 204-20: White, John R., Box 1300, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; SAR, 1941.

<sup>35</sup> SARs, 1939-1942.

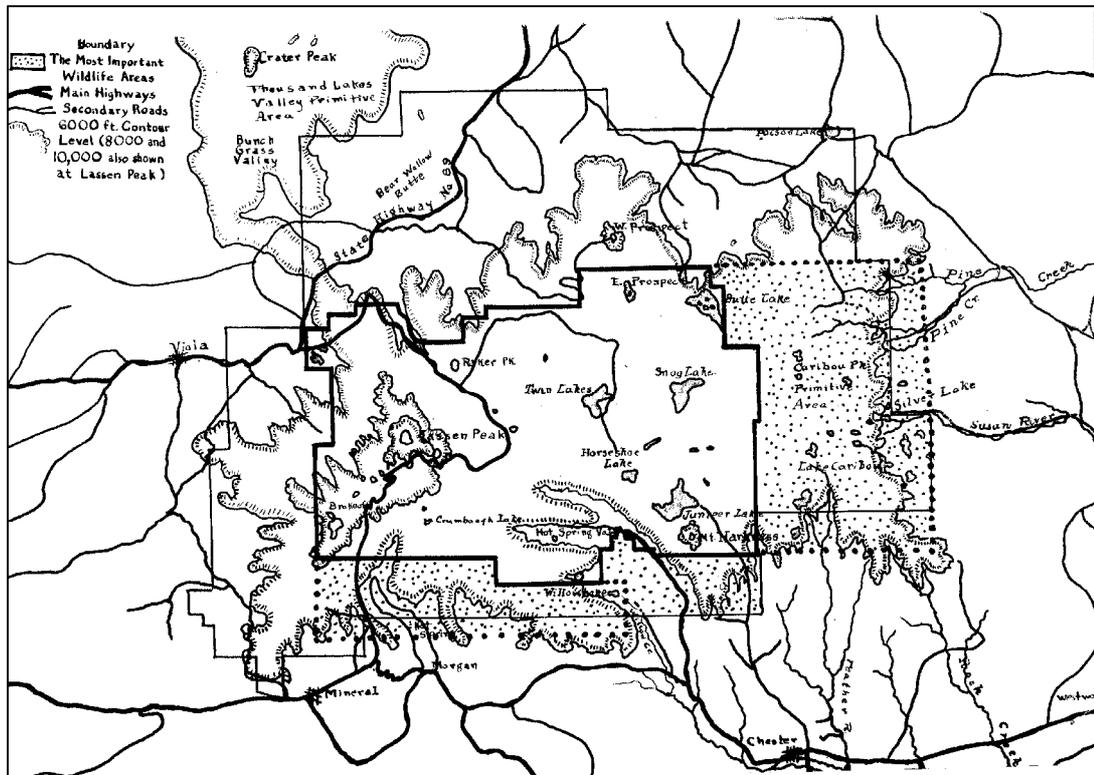
## Efforts to Enlarge the Park

In 1937, Superintendent Leavitt opened discussion about Lassen Volcanic acquiring additional national forest land at Manzanita Lake for more cabin and campsites. This small addition would require an act of Congress, so why not pursue an enlarged perimeter for the entire park, Leavitt's superiors in Washington proposed. The 1929 addition of 25,000 acres to the park had been a good start but more acreage was required before Lassen Volcanic could qualify as "a full scale park," Assistant Director Conrad Wirth believed. So not to rile the Forest Service and national forest users prematurely, NPS Director Arno Cammerer instructed regional staff to reopen the Lassen Volcanic boundary issue via "quiet study of a technical nature": an examination of the park's wildlife needs. Studies conducted by a NPS regional wildlife technician, Lowell Sumner, and Berkeley zoologist Joseph Grinnell revealed that the 104,000-acre park served as a summer sanctuary only for most of its wildlife species. Both scientists recommended huge additions on all sides of Lassen Volcanic to provide year-round protection to wildlife that sought milder climes in lower elevations during the harsh winter months. Grinnell was most concerned about how grazing on national forest lands jeopardized the winter feed of area wildlife populations.<sup>36</sup>

The Washington Office endorsed most of Sumner and Grinnell's proposed park extensions and postulated that a whopping 196,000 acres – mostly national forest – be added to the park. Park staff and Regional Office representatives balked at this overly ambitious plan. Well aware of impending resistance from stockmen, timber interests, private land owners, and hunters, they suggested a more modest 67,000 acres in park extensions: north and west additions would bring into the park exceptional volcanic features that completed the park's "geologic story," while south and east additions contained prime wildlife habitat. In lieu of pursuing these areas as park extensions, Interior toyed with the idea of asking President Roosevelt to grant national monument status to these south-side and east-side wildlife havens. Legal counsel advised against this move because animal habitat did not qualify as scientifically or historically significant as required by the Antiquities Act. On the eve of the United States entering World War II, neither approach to transfer more of the Lassen National Forest to Interior administration found any traction. The Forest Service opposed all proposed Lassen Volcanic additions excepting a few minor boundary adjustments. Lassen National Forest Supervisor Andrew Brenneis was confident the local citizenry would not tolerate losing

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<sup>36</sup> Arno B. Cammerer, Director, Memorandum for Regional Director Kittredge, October 20, 1938; H. C. Bryant, Assistant Director, to Regional Director, January 29, 1938; Conrad L. Wirth, Assistant Director, Memorandum for Vint, Coffman, Bryant, Taylor, Moskey and Tolson, October 22, 1937, File 602.1: Part 1 Lands, Boundaries and Extension; J. Grinnell, University of California, to Perry Gage, Acting Regional Director, January 24, 1939, File 602: Proposed Boundary Adjustments, Box 1309; E. Lowell Sumner, Jr., Regional Wildlife Technician, "Preliminary Wildlife Report on Ultimate Boundary Adjustments for Lassen Volcanic National Park," January 5, 1939, File 720: Protection and Care, Box 1316, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.



**Map 3. Proposed Boundary Adjustments and Wildlife Areas, 1939.** This map accompanied a report by Lowell Sumner, Wildlife Division, September 1939. *Source: File 602 Proposed Boundary Adjustments, Box 1309, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.*

their accustomed privileges – especially hunting privileges – on forest lands surrounding the park. Personally, he considered all NPS schemes for enlarging Lassen Volcanic “rather ridiculous.”<sup>37</sup>

After the war, Superintendent Tobin expressed no interest in renewing the effort to add significant acreage to the park, but the issue of gaining national forest acreage for

<sup>37</sup> Eugene J. Barton, Chief Ranger, Memorandum for Superintendent Preston, March 16, 1939, Folder 001: N14 Preliminary Wildlife Report on Ultimate Boundary Adjustments for LAVO 1939, Box 39, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Boundary Adjustment Committee, “Proposed Boundary Adjustments for Lassen Volcanic National Park,” September 1, 1939, File 602: Proposed Boundary Adjustments; Chief Counsel, Department of Interior, to Mr. Ben Thompson, Dec. 8, 1939; Victor H. Cahalane, Acting Chief, Wildlife Division, Memorandum for Doctor Russell, September 20, 1939, File 602.1: Part 1 Lands, Boundaries and Extension, Box 1309; John C. Preston, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Regional Director, with “Comments on Report of Wildlife Technician Sumner,” April 3, 1939, File 720: Protection and Care, Box 1316; Chief of Forestry, Memorandum to the Director, May 10, 1939, File 720-04: Wild Life Survey, Box 1619; Secretary of the Interior, to The President, undated draft, File 100: History and Legislation, Box 1299, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; S. B. Show, Regional Forester, to Chief, Forest Service, January 15, 1940; A. G. Brenneis, Forest Supervisor, Memorandum for Regional Forester, September 25, 1939; Brenneis, Memorandum for Regional Forester Show, September 1, 1939, File LP: Boundaries, Lassen Volcanic, Folder 1, Box 25, Records of the Forest Service, Lassen National Forest, Alpha Series 1901-53 (Acc. 93-007), RG 95, NA – PSR.

facilities expansion at Manzanita Lake remained. In 1948, Lassen Volcanic and the Lassen National Forest entered into a cooperative agreement allowing park use of 160 adjacent national forest acres to enlarge the park's Manzanita Lake Campground, but increasing demands on the popular camping mecca required even further expansion. In 1953, Lassen National Forest officials initiated a permanent transfer of a larger tract of its acreage nearest to Manzanita Lake to the Park Service, and a new boundary study for Lassen Volcanic ensued. In 1956, legislation was introduced to transfer a total of 1,040 acres of national forest land to Lassen Volcanic National Park in three parcels. The largest of these, 640 acres in the congested Manzanita Lake area, would provide the park adequate room for a new park campground. In addition, the park would secure ownership of the mile or so of the main park road that doglegged out of the park, north of Chaos Crags. The park would also acquire a strip of national forest land east of Lost Creek that was well within view of the main park road and in danger of unsightly logging while it remained in possession of the Forest Service. In 1961, Congress finally passed legislation sanctioning these administrative boundary adjustments for Lassen Volcanic. The law allowed the USFS to construct and maintain a permanent logging road through the Manzanita Lake tract, to access adjacent national forest lands.<sup>38</sup>

After passage of the 1961 legislation, superintendents Freeland and Sylvester returned to grander proposals for park boundary changes, suggesting park additions of 36,000 acres and 47,000 acres, respectively, to no effect. Freeland also coveted the Lassen National Forest's Thousand Lakes Valley Primitive Area, situated well north of Lassen Volcanic, for a separate NPS-administered recreation area, also to no effect. The park's days of expansion, however humble, were over.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Daniel J. Tobin, Memorandum for the Regional Director, April 30, 1947, File 602: Boundaries, Box 1309, Entry 7; Edward D. Freeland, Boundary Status Report, April 10, 1959, File L1417: 1-1-54 to 12-31-59 LAVO, Box 1639, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II; Memorandum of Agreement between the U. S. Forest Service and the National Park Service, Relating to the Administration of Manzanita Campground Adjacent to Lassen Volcanic National Park, June 25, 1948, contained within Master Plan Development Outline, Lassen Volcanic National Park, July 6, 1950, Denver Service Center; Douglas McKay, Secretary of the Interior, to Sam Rayburn, Speaker of the House of Representatives, April 11, 1956, File 20: L1417 Boundary Change, Manzanita Lake, 1941-1955, Box 29, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; "An Act to add certain federally owned land to the Lassen Volcanic National Park, in the state of California, and for other purposes, approved August 10, 1961" (75 Stat. 319) in U.S. Department of the Interior, *Laws Relating to the National Park Service, Supplement II, May 1944-1963* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1963), 145.

<sup>39</sup> Edward D. Freeland, Superintendent, Memorandum to Regional Director, August 24, 1961; Frank E. Sylvester, Superintendent, Boundary Status Report, Lassen Volcanic National Park, January 18, 1963, File L1417: Boundary Adjustments, Vol. 1, LAVO Central Files.

## The Lean Years: World War II and Beyond

World War II caused an almost complete cessation of development in the national parks. Congress cut appropriations for the National Park Service from \$33 million in fiscal year 1940 to \$5 million in 1943.<sup>40</sup> As NPS Director Drury explained to the American public in an article published in *American Forests* in August 1943, the war forced his agency to alter its program, curtailing development and minimizing visitor services while placing more emphasis on core functions of protection and maintenance. Even routine or “preventive” maintenance was deferred in most parks. This was necessitated by deep cuts in park operations budgets, loss of personnel to the Armed Services, and transfer of heavy equipment to other agencies more directly involved in the war effort. Deferment of preventive maintenance led to rapid deterioration of park buildings and roads, often to a point beyond repair.<sup>41</sup>

Once the United States entered World War II in December 1941, further development of Lassen Volcanic National Park soon ground to a halt. In 1942, the park managed to conclude a few construction projects before labor and funding all but disappeared. The new maintenance yard at headquarters was nearly finished and one more employee cottage was completed to a “useable” condition. Contractors wrapped up construction of the park’s new protection building, which provided storage for the park’s fire equipment, garage space for the park’s two fire trucks, and housing for the fire dispatcher. Oil furnaces were installed in employee housing formerly heated by wood, and a filtration system for the headquarters’ drinking water was completed. Otherwise, the park embarked on a bare-bones maintenance program, largely carried out by park rangers for the duration of the war and beyond. In 1943, Superintendent Lloyd echoed the national directive in describing Lassen Volcanic’s war-time management this way: “the park has adopted a policy of curtailment of new developments and the economically sound policy of maintaining existing improvements in good condition, within available funds.” That season, the park’s budget covered a supply of preservative stain that rangers and fire guards brushed on all headquarters and Manzanita Lake government buildings and the Warner Valley and Butte Lake ranger stations. Rangers also finished the concrete and stone foundation of the Butte Lake Ranger Station. In lieu of new building construction during the war years, the park made new use of some of its remaining CCC structures, moving them to Manzanita Lake and headquarters as needed, usually for employee housing. Maintenance work at headquarters amounted to little more than snow

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<sup>40</sup> Conrad L. Wirth, *Parks, Politics, and the People* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 227; Ise, *Our National Park Policy*, 454. Wirth states that the NPS budget, including the cost of CCC camps in national parks, amounted to \$33,577,000 in 1940 and reached a low of \$4,740,000 in 1945. Ise reports that appropriations declined from \$21 million in 1940 to \$5 million in 1943 and remained near that level until 1947.

<sup>41</sup> Newton B. Drury, “The National Parks in Wartime,” *American Forests* 49, no. 8 (August 1943): 375; Wirth, *Parks, Politics, and the People*, 234.

removal, clearing of downed trees, and lawn mowing. In the field, the park's few rangers repaired telephone lines, cleared trails, tended to outpost stations, and maintained the park's minor roads as best they could.<sup>42</sup>

Lassen's visitation plummeted during the war. Gasoline rationing and the difficulty in obtaining replacement parts for automobiles greatly hindered all recreational travel in northern California and across the country. After experiencing a record number of 108,000 visitors in 1941, Lassen Volcanic's annual visitation dropped 58 percent from 1941 to 1942 and another 50 percent from 1942 to 1943. In 1944, only 18,000 people visited the park, including a good number of military men from area training centers. Superintendent Lloyd considered the park's "greatest accomplishment" that year to be hosting this new demographic of park visitor. As did many national parks, especially those near military bases, Lassen Volcanic provided soldiers with a much needed recreational outlet. In Lassen's case, a number of military units conducted training exercises and overnight bivouacs in the park. These troop operations in Lassen also allowed trainees some free time to explore the park and enjoy its serenity.<sup>43</sup>

Upon his appointment to Lassen soon after the war's end, Superintendent Tobin assessed the condition of the park as one of "general cumulative deterioration." Its roads, trails, buildings, utilities and campgrounds all suffered from inadequate maintenance during the underfunded, understaffed years of the war. Nonetheless, people were flocking back to Lassen. Visitation in 1946 approached the prewar record; in 1947, that record was shattered with an overwhelming 150,000 people visiting the park. Lassen was back in business, Tobin reported after the 1946 tourist season: "It was a return to normal plus many increases in practically everything except funds and personnel." More winter use, greater demand for accommodations, and larger groups such as scouts, churches, schools, were among Lassen's growing visitor pressures. But recovery of the park's built environment from its wartime neglect faced many obstacles, not the least of which was its typical succession of damaging storms in the decade following the war. Economic and political hindrances were more numerous. Reliable labor was hard to find. Postwar dollars bought less than prewar dollars did, because inflation had hiked both labor and supply costs. The Korean War created shortages of certain construction materials. Most seasonal employees were hired only for the park's busiest months of July and August, leaving few workers during the shoulder seasons when most of the park's construction and maintenance work was routinely done. But most critically, park appropriations and staffing remained at or near spartan wartime levels until the early 1950s. As park visitation climbed ever higher, Lassen had to continue to make do with less. For example, the park could not spare a ranger to stay the winter at Manzanita Lake, so it had

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<sup>42</sup> SARs, 1942-1944; NPS, "Cultural Landscapes Inventory: Mineral Headquarters Historic District," Part 2b, p. 1; James V. Lloyd, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Regional Director, Region Four, August 7, 1942, File 600-01: Lassen Master Plan, Part II, Box 55, Records of the Western Regional Director - LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA - PSR.

<sup>43</sup> SARs, 1943-1944; "It's Hard on Parks," *Business Week* (June 19, 1943): 33-34.

to rely upon the concessioner's caretaker to serve as "an unofficial watchman of the government interests" there, Tobin lamented. The remainder of the park's north side went without patrol through the winter season.<sup>44</sup>

The former Lassen National Park Camp, now called the Lassen National Park Company, wasted no time in expanding its Manzanita Lake facility after the war, first with temporary tent cabins and later with multiple-unit deluxe cabins. After securing a cooperative land-use agreement with the U.S. Forest Service in 1948, the park followed suit with an extension of its campground onto an adjacent tract of the Lassen National Forest. Once modest construction appropriations for Lassen finally materialized in the early 1950s, most of these monies were used to upgrade the woefully inadequate utilities of the burgeoning Manzanita Lake complex: water, sewer, telephone, and electric lines. The area's hydroelectric plant had been supplemented with a war surplus diesel generator in 1946, but the generator frequently broke down and even when both power sources were operational, their combined supply of electricity fell short of demand. In 1953, the park finally connected with the commercial power grid when the Pacific Gas and Electric Company extended its transmission lines into Manzanita Lake and also provided service to park headquarters for the first time.<sup>45</sup>

## **Geologic Monitoring**

The park's world-famous internal energy – its mysterious and potentially hazardous volcanic power – held the attention of scientists and vigilant park officials through the middle decades of the twentieth century. Superintendent Collins reported "no outward change" in the park's thermal areas in 1931, while Lassen Peak itself remained "quiescent with only intermittent jets of steam serving notice that it is not yet entirely dead." In addition to field observations, park staff monitored Lassen's geologic temperament on USGS equipment, as did the Forest Service at its Mineral District Ranger Station. Dr. T. A. Jaggard, inventor of the horizontal-pendulum seismograph, installed two of his instruments at Manzanita Lake and Mineral in 1927, and in 1930 a third was placed in the newly constructed Mount Harkness Fire Lookout. Recordings of small earthquakes on the Lassen seismographs were common, although the sporadic clusters of these disturbances or larger quakes often excited local residents and drew media attention to the park.<sup>46</sup> In June 1934, the park seismographs recorded an

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<sup>44</sup> SARs, 1945-1956.

<sup>45</sup> Construction appropriations in the early 1950s also paid for work on the main park road and reconstruction of the dam that impounded the headquarters' domestic water supply. National Park Service, "Cultural Landscapes Inventory: Mineral Headquarters Historic District," Part 2b, p. 1; SARs, 1947-1953.

<sup>46</sup> The occasional appearance of sizable steam clouds above Lassen Peak also raised alarm among tourists and locals. Park personnel rarely detected an actual increase in the modest amount of steam which still vented from Lassen's crater through the 1930s, although naturalists reported 200-foot steam jets spewing

earthquake with an epicenter far beneath the park's surface. USGS volcanologist R. H. Finch, who oversaw the Lassen Volcano Observatory at Mineral year round, believed this type of quake could be the telltale indicator of Lassen erupting again: "any increase of activity of the volcano would probably be preceded by such deep seated adjustments." Finch also kept an eye on his instruments' tilt measurements, which indicated an increase or decrease in Lassen Peak's subterranean pressure.<sup>47</sup>

After the USGS closed its Mineral observatory in 1935, park operation of the Manzanita and Mount Harkness seismographs continued intermittently, subject to limited staffing and funding for supplies. Following a run of regional earthquakes in 1936, the cauldrons of Bumpass Hell and Sulphur Works bubbled more intensely, and Sulphur Works' largest mudpot expanded into the shoulder of the main park road. For the protection of motorists and pedestrians, park maintenance constructed a heavy-duty guardrail around the enlarged mudpot. In 1938, park headquarters acquired its own seismograph, a Wood-Anderson model, from the Seismological Society of America. The University of California provided radio equipment and supplies in lieu of access the seismograph's recordings, and the CCC built a small station to house the equipment. Significant earthquake events occurred in 1946, with several "swarms" of small but sometimes jolting shocks. In 1950, 10,000 quakes were recorded and some 800 were felt by local residents over a three-week period. In 1956, Lassen received a new USGS seismograph for its museum at Manzanita Lake, and shortly thereafter naturalists added to the seismograph station an interpretive exhibit explaining the instrument's functions. At this same time, Lassen Volcanic and the University of California entered into a formal cooperative agreement to operate the Manzanita Lake and headquarters seismographs, and the university received all data generated by the Lassen equipment.<sup>48</sup>

By the 1960s, volcanology had evolved beyond its "classical" information-gathering phase to become a more interpretive "modern" science. Specialists were using volcanic data to make deductions about a range of geologic processes far beneath the earth's surface. Practical applications of modern volcanology included prediction of

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from atop Lassen in 1936. More often, certain atmospheric conditions caused Lassen's normal steam emissions "to condense and hover over the peak in great clouds," a 1934 NPS press release read. Department of the Interior, Memorandums for the Press, June 23, 1934 and June 27, 1934; F. P. Leavitt, to The Director, telegram, May 8, 1936, File 732: 06.8 Vulcanism, Box 1317, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>47</sup> Lester E. Lafferty, "This Famous Scientist Knows his Volcanoes," *Sunset* 60 (January 1928): 47; Arthur Holmes, "When Will Lassen Peak Again Erupt?," *The Scientific Monthly* 40 (Jan. 1935): 27-28; "Seismograph Installed in Lassen Park," *Oakland Tribune*, August 30, 1930, File 732: 06.7 Earth Movements, Box 1316, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; SARs, 1931-1935.

<sup>48</sup> L.W. Collins, Superintendent, to The Director, July 13, 1935; Newton B. Drury, Director, to The Supervisor, Lassen National Forest, February 11, 1942, File 732: 06.7 Earth Movements, Box 1316; Harry B. Robinson, Park Naturalist, "Recent Earthquakes in Lassen Volcanic National Park"; John C. Preston, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Director, September 29, 1938; Perry Byerly, University of California, Department of Geological Sciences, Seismographic Station, Berkeley, September 16, 1938, File 732: 06.8 Vulcanism, Box 1317, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; SARs, 1936, 1938, 1946, 1950, 1956-1958.

future volcanic events and risk assessment in terms of human life and property damage.<sup>49</sup> Such scientific inference would soon alter the direction of Lassen Volcanic National Park's management and public use in a monumental way.

## **Mission 66**

Between Lassen Volcanic's formal dedication in 1931 and the nation's entry into World War II a decade later, the park's visitation grew steadily each year. Improved access roads, the development of park facilities, and increased publicity efforts about Lassen's recreational virtues all contributed to this upward trend in the park's popularity. In 1939, the park's annual visitation exceeded 100,000 for the first time, owed in part to the region's increased tourist numbers during the Golden Gate International Expedition in San Francisco.<sup>50</sup> After a slump during World War II, annual increases in visitation resumed. The postwar economic boom, California's massive in-migration, and the nation's renewed enthusiasm for auto touring accounted for Lassen's crowds after the war. The park's annual visitation exceeded 200,000 in 1951 and 300,000 in 1955. Numbers of campers increased "in even greater proportion," Superintendent Freeland reported, often overflowing campgrounds and spilling into the surrounding forest. In an attempt to alleviate the congestion, the park imposed a 30-day camping limit at the park's two most popular campgrounds, at Manzanita Lake and Summit Lake, in 1955. In 1958, that 30-day limit was extended to all park campgrounds. The Lassen National Park Company faced a similar dilemma in constantly having to turn away visitors wishing to stay at their Manzanita Lake resort, and the concessioner scrambled to add more cabins at every opportunity.<sup>51</sup>

Lassen's worrisome overuse was typical of national parks across the country in the postwar era. So was the poor condition of its buildings and infrastructure. In 1955, NPS Director Wirth conceived of an ambitious, well-publicized spending program to rehabilitate and develop the national parks. Wirth's idea was to submit a comprehensive ten-year plan for the renovation of the national park system, thereby eliminating the need to go to Congress and the Bureau of the Budget for development funds in two- and three-year dribbles. The program would begin in 1956 and end in 1966, coinciding with the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the National Park Service. He called it "Mission 66." Wirth persuaded President Dwight Eisenhower and the key committees in Congress to support Mission 66 because it would rectify nearly 15 years of neglect resulting from budget cutbacks made during World War II and the Korean War. It would restore the

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<sup>49</sup> Gordon A. MacDonald, "Volcanology: Volcanoes Furnish Some of our Best Clues to the Nature of the Earth's Interior," *Science* 133 (March 10, 1961): 673-679.

<sup>50</sup> SARs, 1931-1941.

<sup>51</sup> SARs, 1954, 1955, 1958; Edward Freeland, "Mission 66 for Lassen Volcanic National Park," April 20, 1956, File A98, Prospectus LAVO, Box 734, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II, pp. 2, 5.

parks to a condition capable of satisfying the growing millions of Americans who used them each year.<sup>52</sup>

In his Mission 66 prospectus for Lassen, Superintendent Freeland proposed the following physical improvements for the park: more employee housing and equipment storage at headquarters; enlarged camping and picnic areas with better sanitation facilities, plus a new campground at Lost Creek to accommodate trailers; proper maintenance of park road and trail systems that would distribute visitors over a wider area of the park; a bigger warming hut at the Sulphur Works Ski Area; upgraded utility systems as needed; and expanded interpretive offerings, including personnel-staffed visitor centers located at the park's strategic points of Manzanita Lake, Summit Lake and Juniper Lake. Most of these developments involved modernizing existing facilities, not building new ones. On top of the \$1.8-million price tag Freeland estimated for this facelift, the park needed more funding to hire additional personnel in all divisions, most critically in the protection division. Wirth and his division chiefs in Washington looked favorably upon most of Freeland's proposals, boosted the park's tentative Mission 66 allocation to \$1.9 million, and suggested Freeland aim higher in some of his planning. Associate Director E. T. Scoyen suggested that the Sulphur Works Ski Area be closed (once the new Mount Shasta area was opened) and a new family ski area for Lassen be developed near Manzanita Lake instead, an idea some skiers and promotional groups had been toying with for some time. Scoyen also favored building a new visitor center at Manzanita Lake instead of enlarging the existing museum. In response, Freeland defended Sulphur Works as the park's best terrain for skiing, but he could not agree more with the assessment that Manzanita Lake needed a new visitor center.<sup>53</sup>

By spring 1957, the park's Mission 66 program was "off to a good start," Freeland reported, with the addition of several employee residences and the funding of overdue road work at headquarters. The shortage of employee housing remained critical in 1958, when Freeland explained that a number of permanent staff still lived year round in trailers at headquarters, an arrangement that employees with children, especially, found most intolerable. Between 1957 and 1970, upwards of a dozen residential buildings – both single-family houses and duplexes – were added to the headquarters complex. In 1965, the Viola Road was rerouted outside headquarters boundaries, a long-anticipated

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<sup>52</sup> Wirth, *Parks, Politics, and the People*, 242.

<sup>53</sup> Freeland, "Mission 66 for Lassen Volcanic National Park" (prospectus); Advance Copy, Summary of Mission 66 Objectives and Program for Lassen Volcanic National Park, May 7, 1956; Conrad Wirth, Director, Notice of Approval, Lassen Volcanic National Park Prospectus, April 12, 1957; various memoranda from Washington division chiefs; E. T. Scoyen, Associate Director, Memorandum to Superintendent, March 5, 1956, File A98: Prospectus LAVO, Box 734, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II; Freeland, Memorandum to Regional Director, April 10, 1956, File L-3427: Winter Sports 1954-1962, Box 1, Western Region: LAVO Central Files, 1954-1965 (Acc. 95-003), RG 79, NA – PSR; Tobin, Master Plan Development Outline, 1950.

improvement that eliminated non-NPS traffic through portions of the headquarters' residential and maintenance areas.<sup>54</sup>

Early Mission 66 funding was also earmarked for expansion of the two Summit Lake campgrounds. At Summit Lake, work crews installed a new water system, built new comfort stations, outfitted 90 campsites with new tables and fireplaces (the old ones were moved to the park's lesser used "outpost camps"), and paved the roads by 1960. Working amidst the park's summertime crowds on such extensive projects was no easy task. Progress on the Summit Lake improvements "was hampered somewhat by campers clambering for space," Freeland reported in 1959. Repaving the entire north half of the main park road that summer also tested the patience of road crews and motorists alike.<sup>55</sup>

Meanwhile, Freeland and his staff rethought the park's visitor center needs. Their 1958 interpretive prospectus for Lassen called for razing the Loomis Museum and constructing a new building at Manzanita Lake to house the park's geological exhibits and the northern district ranger's office. The prospectus also proposed a "relatively modest" visitor center at Summit Lake, which would focus on biological interpretation, and another small visitor center at Sulphur Works, which would replace the primitive information booth there (attended by a ranger through the summer) and contain exhibits detailing the area's thermal activity. (Freeland rescinded his earlier idea about a visitor center at Juniper Lake.) The Washington Office shot down the Summit Lake visitor center proposal immediately, although it did sanction a small exhibit kiosk for Summit Lake instead.<sup>56</sup>

In 1959, Director Wirth denied Freeland's proposal for a new Manzanita Lake visitor center. He believed the museum "should serve its purpose" as the park's northside interpretation center for many years to come. But within months, Freeland asked Wirth to reconsider the park's wish to have the antiquated structure leveled and build anew. Despite recent renovations to the museum's interior, the facility was still too small to properly accommodate the park's ever-growing crowds. Expansion of the museum was not a viable option, given its unique construction. And it stunk. The walls and ceiling of the concrete and rock structure seeped moisture and its cramped, poorly-ventilated interior had "the atmosphere of a locker room, both in odor and noise," Freeland lamented. Both Western Regional Director Lawrence Merriam and Robert Hall, a landscape architect in the Washington Office, sided with Freeland: Lassen needed a new visitor center at Manzanita Lake as soon as possible. But Wirth reaffirmed his earlier

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<sup>54</sup> SARs, 1957, 1961; Edward D. Freeland, Superintendent, Memorandum to Regional Director, July 2, 1958, File: D-3415 Buildings – Construction and Maintenance, Box 1, Western Region: LAVO Central Files, 1954-1965 (Acc. 95-003), RG 79, NA – PSR; National Park Service, "Cultural Landscapes Inventory: Mineral Headquarters Historic District," Part 2b, p. 3.

<sup>55</sup> SARs, 1957-1960.

<sup>56</sup> Richard G. Prasil, Chief Park Naturalist, Master Plan Development Outline, Lassen Volcanic National Park, Interpretation, March 1958, Denver Service Center; Merel S. Sager, Acting Chief of Design and Construction, Memorandum to Chief, Western Office, Division of Design and Construction, September 18, 1958, File D18: LAVO, Box 998, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II.

decision and the NPS's chief architect, Merel Sager, agreed. The museum was still sound, they determined, therefore, the NPS could not yet "justify its replacement" despite its "many shortcomings."<sup>57</sup>

The park fared no better with its proposed Sulphur Works visitor center, although this final option for a Mission 66 visitor center for Lassen remained on the planning table for a very long time before it, too, was shelved. The Sulphur Works facility was to contain interpretive exhibits, a comfort station in the basement, a small lunch counter and souvenir shop to be run by the concessioner, and apartment quarters for a seasonal interpreter and the concessioner's staff. Initially, the project was slated for completion by 1964. But Regional Director Merriam wanted to move it forward three years on the park's construction schedule when a 1958 fire destroyed the old Supan building at Sulphur Works that park rangers used as a visitor contact station and summer quarters. Superintendent Freeland was more than happy to bump other projects to hasten the construction of the Sulphur Works visitor center. But by 1960, Freeland and Director Wirth were disagreeing about the degree of development that was appropriate for the delicate thermal area. In early 1963, Superintendent Sylvester was still discussing with NPS museum planners the content of the Sulphur Works visitor center exhibits, yet construction of the building never commenced. Meanwhile, the park's interpretation staff continued to assert the need for an "adequate" replacement visitor center at Manzanita Lake and "modest Information Centers" elsewhere in the park, as stated in the park's 1963 master plan narrative.<sup>58</sup>

Although no new visitor center was in the cards for Manzanita Lake, the park's bustling summertime metropolis saw plenty of other development during the Mission 66 era. Money was poured into road and utility upgrades to allow for the continued growth of the area's camping capacity, lodging facilities, and the park's maintenance and residential complex known as "Summertown." As proposed in the 1959 Manzanita Lake

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<sup>57</sup> Merel S. Sager, Acting Chief of Design and Construction, Memorandum to Chief, Western Office, Division of Design and Construction, December 18, 1959, File D18: LAVO; Edward D. Freeland, Memorandum to Director, May 3, 1960; Sager to Chief, WODC, May 23, 1960, File D18: 1-1-60 LAVO, Box 998, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II; Lawrence C. Merriam, Regional Director, Memorandum to Director, March 8, 1960; Robert G. Hall, Supervisory Landscape Architect, Memorandum to Chief, Division of Design and Construction, File D-18: Master Plan Transf. FRC 3 Years, Box 1, Western Region: LAVO Central Files, 1954-1965 (Acc. 95-003), RG 79, NA – PSR.

<sup>58</sup> Edward D. Freeland, Superintendent, Memorandum to Chief, Western Office, Division of Design and Construction, December 18, 1958; Lawrence C. Merriam, Regional Director, Memorandum to Superintendent, Lassen Volcanic, November 14, 1958; Freeland, Memorandum to Regional Director, Region Four, November 5, 1958, File D-3415: Buildings – Construction and Maintenance; Freeland, Memorandum to Regional Director, September 26, 1960; Frank E. Sylvester, Superintendent, to Dallas Dort, President, Lassen National Park Company, January 4, 1963, File D-18: Master Plan Transf. FRC 3 Years; Sylvester, Memorandum to Chief, Western Museum Laboratory, January 2, 1963, File D-6215: Museum and Exhibit Activities, 1961-1963, Box 1, Western Region: LAVO Central Files, 1954-1965 (Acc. 95-003), RG 79, NA – PSR; Richard G. Prasil and Raymond Nelson, Park Naturalists, Master Plan Narrative for Lassen Volcanic National Park, Chapter 1 – Objectives and Policies, November 30, 1962, Denver Service Center.

master plan, a new enormous campground was built at Manzanita Lake in 1961 to accommodate the park's escalating numbers of camping enthusiasts. Complete with its own ranger station and modern washhouses, the 280-site campground extended southeast of the lake in six separate loops. In 1962, construction was completed on a new Manzanita amphitheater, with a seating capacity of 750. Other development dilemmas at Manzanita Lake, including moving maintenance buildings closer to the main park road, focusing day use in the area to Reflection Lake and alleviating the area's traffic congestion, remained unresolved. Park administrators were relieved of some degree of their maintenance burden at Manzanita Lake when the Lassen National Park Company agreed to assume responsibility for its resort's electrical system in 1962.<sup>59</sup>

Two more remote corners of the park that Freeland wanted to develop with Mission 66 funds were Warner Valley and Butte Lake. Once the park acquired the Drakesbad Guest Ranch inholding in Warner Valley in 1958, water and sewer systems were installed and a few new cabins were added, but otherwise the rustic character of the guest ranch was preserved. Freeland sought to increase day use in Warner Valley by constructing a picnic area (and trailhead to Devils Kitchen and Boiling Springs Lake) near the existing primitive campground.<sup>60</sup>

Redevelopment of the Butte Lake facilities came late in the Mission 66 era but followed Freeland's directive to pull the existing campsites back from the lakeshore. This was necessary to protect the area's fine cinder soil and the dramatic view across the lake to the black lava flow that forms the lake's long, jagged southwest shoreline. In 1963 and 1964, contractors built a new ranger station, four new comfort stations, a 100-site campground, a new network of access roads, and a lakeside picnic area at Butte Lake.<sup>61</sup> By the mid-1960s, major redevelopment of the Southwest Entrance and the ski area was also underway. Improvements included a permanent winter-use building, an enlarged parking area, and a new entrance station.<sup>62</sup>

Even so, the sum total of Lassen's Mission 66 upgrades paled in comparison to that bestowed upon many other national parks. When Louis Hallock replaced Robert Moore in late 1965, Lassen Volcanic's new superintendent was surprised to find "how little this park has benefited from the Mission 66 construction program." Lassen had

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<sup>59</sup> SARs, 1959-1962; George E. Fogg, Landscape Architect, Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of Lassen Volcanic National Park, Chapter 5, Design Analysis – Manzanita Lake Vicinity, October 1959, Denver Service Center; Louis W. Hallock, Memorandum to Regional Director, Western Region, June 13, 1966, Folder 58: D18 GMP: Manzanita Lake 1964-1974, Box 8, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>60</sup> SARs, 1959-1962; George E. Fogg, Landscape Architect, Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of Lassen Volcanic National Park, Chapter 5, Design Analysis – Warner Valley, October 1959, Denver Service Center.

<sup>61</sup> George E. Fogg, Landscape Architect, Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of Lassen Volcanic National Park, Chapter 5, Design Analysis – Butte Lake, January 11, 1960, Denver Service Center; SARs, 1963-1965.

<sup>62</sup> SARs, 1964-1966; David E. Clark, Landscape Architect, Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of Lassen Volcanic National Park, Chapter 5, Design Analysis – Southwest Developed Areas, April 1961, Denver Service Center.

emerged from the decade-long, service-wide spending spree holding the short end of the stick, Hallock believed, considering Lassen's unresolved development problems, most notably at Manzanita Lake. Hallock and his successors had their work cut out for them. Yet the volume of visitors taxing Lassen had fallen short of Superintendent Freeland's prediction at the start of the Mission 66 era: half a million annually by 1966. The park's annual visitation surpassed 400,000 in 1960, but after peaking at 460,000 in 1961, visitation figures remained in the neighborhood of 400,000 through 1965. In 1966, 456,000 people visited the park, nearly breaking its existing annual visitation record. It was a festive summer that year: Lassen Volcanic National Park celebrated its own 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and that of the Park Service on separate days at the height of the tourist season in August.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Hallock, Memorandum to Regional Director, June 13, 1966; Freeland, "Mission 66 for Lassen Volcanic National Park" (prospectus), 2; Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report for Lassen Volcanic National Park, January-December, 1966, REDW Archives.

## Chapter Five

### The Dilemma of Inholdings

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Like many other national parks, Lassen Volcanic was not created as a perfect public entity. Within the park's boundaries, private lands that predated Lassen Volcanic's establishment were permitted to remain, unencumbered by the 1916 law that defined – and protected – the surrounding park. This was not to be a permanent arrangement. The Park Service anticipated future purchase of these “inholdings” from willing sellers, when federal budgets allowed. Lassen Volcanic's expansion outward in 1929 did nothing to consolidate ownership of the park's interior. In 1930, Lassen Volcanic contained 18 separate blocks of private lands, totaling just over 3,000 acres, less than 3 percent of the park. Although not overly daunting in size, these inholdings nonetheless vexed the NPS because they were scattered throughout Lassen Volcanic and were located among the park's most desirable locations in terms of human habitation, business potential, and recreational value. Over the years, ownership of several of the park's inholdings grew more complex, as some properties became shared among multiple heirs and portions of others were subdivided into cabin lots and sold to numerous individuals. These inholdings proved to be among the most challenging acquisitions for the park.

Park administrators endured the constant dread that while they awaited federal funds to buy Lassen's inholdings, owners were developing or damaging their properties to a point incongruous with national park standards. Sometimes this apprehension was based only on unsubstantiated rumor, while in other cases, ground inspections of inholdings confirmed their fears. Known activities on inholdings that threatened the park's integrity were quite varied: subdivision into summer home lots, cabin construction, development of tourist resorts and motorist services, maintenance of crude hunting camps, removal of timber, road building, geothermal exploration, and defacement of volcanic formations. A number of inholders also grazed cattle on their

parcels, often to excess, which resulted in erosion and denuding of the private land, as well as cattle trespass onto park lands. All these land uses scarred the park as a whole, and protracted private ownership of these prime pockets of Lassen Volcanic stymied comprehensive park planning through the decades. In 1947, Superintendent Tobin lamented that several key inholdings “control some of the finest exhibits of thermal activity in the park or lie squarely in the path of logical physical development” by the NPS. He was also dismayed over acquisition prices of these properties climbing ever higher. Rising costs were based on wartime inflation, the public’s postwar enthusiasm for recreation in general, the Lassen area’s increasing popularity as a winter sports haven, and the booming timber market.<sup>1</sup> In light of these increasing land values, park officials worried that certain inholders would not agree to sell to the NPS, but in the end, the NPS pursued condemnation of only a few private properties within Lassen Volcanic.

### **Awaiting Funds**

In the late 1920s, Congress instituted a requirement that any use of annual appropriations for the purchase of inholdings in national parks had to be matched dollar for dollar by private sources. In practical terms, this usually meant that the Park Service asked landowners to sell their inholdings at half their appraised value. Corporations might stand to gain from a public relations angle by parting with their lands in this way, but small land owners had less incentive. At Lassen Volcanic, NPS Special Assistant Frank Solinsky began negotiations with the park’s various private property owners and soon discovered that they wanted far more money for their lands than the federal government was willing to pay, especially in light of the matching funds requirement. “We had intended to make some purchases there,” Associate Director Arno Cammerer reported, “but the prices asked were so exorbitantly high and unreasonable” that the \$25,000 held for Lassen Volcanic acquisitions in 1931 was transferred to Rocky Mountain National Park. As the Great Depression further constricted the national treasury, both President Hoover and President Roosevelt impounded most of the NPS’s land acquisition funds indefinitely, and Lassen Volcanic’s long drought between inholdings purchases began.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel J. Tobin, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Director, May 27, 1947, with SAR, 1947; SAR, 1951.

<sup>2</sup> A. E. Demaray, Acting Director, to Mr. M. E. Dittmar, Manager-Secretary, Lassen Volcanic National Park Association of California, February 7, 1928; Horace Albright, Director, Memorandum to the Washington Office, September 1, 1931, File 610: Part I Lassen Land Private Holdings; Arno B. Cammerer, Associate Director, to Mr. James Kelly, November 27, 1931, File 610: Lassen Lands Private Holdings Kelly, Box 355; Cammerer, Director, to Board of Supervisors of Plumas County, August 6, 1935, File 601: Lands – General, Box 1308, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

In the mid-1930s, long-time Lassen Volcanic champion Arthur Conard and the Lassen Volcanic National Park Committee of the Sacramento Valley Council of the California State Chamber of Commerce pressed for Congressional action to resolve the park's inholdings dilemma. Congressman Harry Englebright heeded their call, proposing legislation that would exchange private lands within Lassen Volcanic for tracts in Lassen National Forest. The Department of Agriculture hated the idea and Englebright's House bill went nowhere.<sup>3</sup>

Englebright tried again, in 1940 and 1941, introducing legislation that would appropriate a quarter million dollars toward the purchase of Lassen Volcanic's remaining 2,686 acres of private lands. After the United States entered World War II, Englebright's bill stood no chance. In light of the war, Conard, the Red Bluff Chamber of Commerce, and California Governor Culbert Olson devised an alternative, scaled-down plan: ask Congress only for enough funding to buy the park's most problematic inholdings, the two Supan properties, which totaled only 260 acres. Conard emphasized that these two tracts contained the park's best skiing terrain, which could be used by the War Department for training ski troops. He hoped this potential use of new park acreage would "add weight" to their proposal but it did not. In April 1942, President Roosevelt responded personally to Governor Olson that, regrettably, the nation's wartime budget precluded funding for even such a modest land purchase.<sup>4</sup>

At the conclusion of World War II, the Lassen National Park Development Committee tried to revive the late Congressman Englebright's efforts to secure funding to purchase Lassen Volcanic's private lands in one fell swoop. Congressman Clair Engle (D – Calif.) was on board, as were many government officials in the four counties surrounding the park. But the Park Service could not find the money to update the standing appraisals for the properties, made in the early 1930s, and the movement languished. Congress never did pass appropriations legislation for this purpose, and only through piecemeal acquisition did Lassen Volcanic begin to eliminate its inholdings.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Resolution of the Sacramento Valley Council of the California State Chamber of Commerce, June 24, 1935, File 2: L14 Land Acquisitions General 1926-1935, Box 29, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Arno B. Cammerer, Director, to Hon. Harry L. Englebright, House of Representatives, March 11, 1937, File 610: Part 1 – Private Holders, Box 1309, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>4</sup> Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, to Hon. J.W. Robinson, Chairman, Committee on the Public Lands, House of Representatives, March 14, 1941; Regional Director, Memorandum for the Director, March 24, 1942; A. L. Conard, to Hon. Harry L. Englebright, March 14, 1942; Culbert L. Olson, Governor of California, to Hon. Franklin D. Roosevelt, March 3, 1942; Roosevelt to Olson, undated, File 4: L14 Land Acquisition General 1940-1942, Box 29, LAVO Acc. 506, REW Archives.

<sup>5</sup> "Park Committee to Meet Aug. 19," *Red Bluff Daily News*, August 10, 1945; "Shasta Asks U.S. to Buy Private Lands in Park," *The Sacramento Bee*, October 3, 1945, File 5: L14 Land Acquisitions General 1944-1966, Box 29, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Minutes, Lassen National Park Development Committee, Mineral, California, August 19, 1945; Newton B. Drury, Director, to Hon. Clair Engle, House of Representatives, September 28, 1945; Clair Engle, M.C., to Drury, September 18, 1945, File 610: Part 1 Lands – Private Holders, Box 1309, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

## Small Gains

A few important land transfers in the park had predated this appropriations moratorium. On the heels of Lassen Volcanic's 1929 expansion, park officials made two critical purchases of inholdings before acquisition funds disappeared for two decades. Immediately after park boundaries were redrawn to include the Manzanita Lake area, Benjamin and Estella Loomis donated to the park their museum and 40-acre inholding, as promised. Director Albright suggested that the Pacific Gas and Electric Company do the same with its 280-acre property that encompassed both Manzanita Lake and Reflection Lake. In a San Francisco meeting on this matter, PG&E officials informed Albright that they had received three separate offers to sell to resort developers but they assured him the lakes would be reserved for park acquisition. The company proposed trading the property for right-of-way privileges for transmission lines on other federal lands, but the NPS could not deliver. Instead, early in 1931 Pacific Gas and Electric sold the inholding to Lassen Volcanic for \$15,000, only half of the negotiated price (effectively donating the other half to satisfy the requirement of Congress). Secretary of the Interior Ray Wilbur duly applauded the company for its demonstration of "public-spirited" generosity.<sup>6</sup>

In the same corner of the park, Superintendent Collins negotiated the purchase of an 80-acre property that stood directly in the path of the Lassen Peak Loop Highway. Owner Emma Krikava would not grant the park a right-of-way without a sizable down payment that would ensure the park's timely purchase of her land. Krikava's strategy worked: she received her full asking price of \$2,000 in 1930, and highway construction proceeded towards Lassen Peak.<sup>7</sup>

Park planners' vision to eventually incorporate into Lassen Volcanic several thousand acres of private ranch lands in Warner Valley – a scheme Congress sanctioned with legislation in 1930 – never came to pass. This failure was not due to disinterest by the key land owners, the Lees and the Kellys, whose scenic properties protruded into the park's southeast corner. Each family ran cattle and operated small primitive resorts on their lands, with little monetary success, according to a park report. Cattle trespass onto park lands was a problem, especially with Kellys' stock. Both families were serious about relinquishing their ranches to the park, but not for free. In 1930, the Kellys offered their Wonderland Camp to the park's prospective concessioner, the Western Pacific

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<sup>6</sup> Strong, "Lassen Volcanic National Park's Manzanita Lake: A Brief History," 77-78; Carl Bachem, Memorandum to the Director, May 20, 1929; Demaray, Assistant Director, to Horace M. Albright, Director, June 25, 1930; Ray Lyman Wilbur, Secretary, to Mr. A. F. Hockenbeamer, President, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, November 14, 1930; Manager, Land Department, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, to Field Headquarters, National Park Service, April 22, 1931, File 610: Lands – Private Holdings – Pacific Gas and Electric Co., Box 356, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>7</sup> Arno Cammerer, Associate Director, Memorandum for the Assistant Secretary, February 4, 1931; L. W. Collins, Superintendent, to the Director, March 11, 1930; Horace M. Albright, Director, to Mrs. Emma A. Krikava, February 26, 1930, File 610: Part 1 Lands – Private Holdings – Krikava, Box 356, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

Railroad Company, as a future hotel site. The following year, Superintendent Collins solicited both families for asking prices on their lands. The Lees responded with a \$300,000 price tag for their 1,200-acre spread. The Kellys set their sights higher, initially asking for over \$1 million for their 480 acres, but they later lowered their price to \$144,000 and then to \$60,000. But the NPS allocated no more land acquisition money to Lassen Volcanic after the Manzanita Lake buyout. In 1931, the Washington Office remained optimistic that the dismal appropriations situation would improve in a few years, but by 1934 Acting Director Demaray foresaw no future day when Lassen Volcanic could afford to buy Warner Valley ranches. He advised the Lees to contact the State of California about its interest in their land as a state park.<sup>8</sup>

While their ranch never became part of Lassen Volcanic, the Lee family entered into several real estate ventures within park boundaries by other means. Through tax delinquent land sales, the Lees purchased small inholdings at several locations in the park and later sold these lands to other private parties. They exchanged ownership of park inholdings with Lena Gernon several times. A shrewd speculator, Joe Lee nonetheless offered his properties first to the park – although with prohibitive prices – when he was ready to sell. The Lees sold their 80-acre tract of Jeffrey pine along Hat Creek to T. B. Walker’s Red River Lumber Company (later renamed the Shasta Forest Company), which sold to the park sometime in the 1950s or early 1960s. Charles Hust purchased two Lee inholdings: a 40-acre tract of sparsely vegetated, rocky terrain near the park’s eastern edge and another 40 acres of hot springs and sulphur deposits adjacent to the Supan property and the main park road. The Lees originally hoped to sell off this latter property in one-acre plots for recreational use, but instead settled for \$2,500 from Hust for all 40 acres. In 1950, Hust sold both inholdings to the park for only \$250 each. “Mr. Lee is quite a hustler when it comes to land deals,” remarked B. F. Manbey, regional NPS lands chief, but Lee did sell his last remaining inholding to the park in 1954. Lassen Volcanic acquired Lee’s prime parcel of 40 timbered acres near Bench Lake for \$2,500, a bargain price even by Manbey’s standards.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> “Privately Owned Lands Within and Adjoining Lassen Volcanic National Park, Which Should be Acquired by the Government to Correct Maladjustments in Land Use,” xvi, undated, File 610: Private Lands, Box 57, Records of the Western Regional Director – LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR; Horace M. Albright, Director, to Mr. H. N. Adams, President, Western Pacific Railroad Company, January 6, 1931, File 901: Part 3 Public Utility Operators Privileges, Box 361; G. A. Moskey, Acting Associate Director, to Mr. L. W. Collins, undated; Arno B. Cammerer, Associate Director, to Mr. James Kelly, November 1931; Collins, to The Director, May 5, 1931, File 610: Lassen lands Private Holdings Kelly; A. E. Demaray, Acting Director, to Mrs. C. H. Lee, June 12, 1934, File 610: Part 1 Lassen Lands Private holdings – Lee, Box 355, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; E. P. Leavitt, Superintendent, to S. B. Show, Regional Forester, March 18, 1936, File 109: L1425 Warner Valley, Kelly, Lee, etc. 1929-1947, Box 34, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>9</sup> May Lee to Mr. L. W. Collins, Superintendent, April 1, 1929; Joe N. Lee and Winfred H. Lee, to Collins, April 3, 1929; B. F. Manbey, Acting Assistant Regional Director, to Director, Jan. 14, 1954; B. F. Manbey, Regional Chief of Lands, to Director, May 11, 1954; Attorney General to Honorable Douglas McKay, Secretary of Interior, February 4, 1955, File 87: L1425 Lee, Joe N. 1928-1955, Box 33; “Private Lands Within the Park,” ca. 1939, File 3: L14 Lands, Acquisitions, External 1931-1935, Box 29; Daniel J. Tobin,

Modest funds for Lassen Volcanic land purchases had resurfaced in 1949, when the park finally relieved the Herbert brothers of their 160-acre Badger Flat inholding. A portion of the Nobles Emigrant Trail ran through this parcel, located along the park's northern boundary. Grazing cattle on this land was not profitable, and through many years of financial hardship the Herberts considered subdividing the property for summer home lots or selling the whole tract to a hunting club. Horace Herbert did not live to see his family's long-anticipated property sale to the park, which was made at a price "very favorable" to the NPS, Superintendent Tobin reported.<sup>10</sup>

Other purchases of small inholdings followed in the early 1950s. Eric and Ruby Childs parted with their 151 acres that extended into the park from its southern boundary at Twin Meadows. They had grazed cattle and kept a hunters' camp on this land. The Childs fetched the handsome sum of \$10,000 because of the property's abundance of good home sites, which by 1953 were in high demand in the Mineral vicinity.<sup>11</sup>

In 1952, R. W. and May R. Hanna sold to the park their 40-acre inholding along Lassen Volcanic's southern boundary for \$1,200. Through the 1940s, Hanna had repeatedly offered to sell to the NPS his entire 3,000-acre Circle S Ranch just south of the park, which included Morgan Springs. Superintendents Preston, Lloyd and Tobin all pondered the increased wildlife protection, the superior camping sites, the breathtaking park entry, and even the alternative park headquarters location this property could provide Lassen Volcanic. Yet with the limited funding they had available, park officials were obligated to buy first private lands *inside* park boundaries. For this same reason, the Kelly family's continued interest in selling its Wonderland Resort to the park was politely dismissed also.<sup>12</sup> By mid-century, the largest and most important of Lassen

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Superintendent, to Mr. R. W. Hanna, March 9, 1951, File 58: L1425 Hanna – South Boundary 1932-1952, Box 31, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; E. P. Leavitt, Superintendent, to The Director, National Park Service, April 23, 1936, File 610: Part 1 Lassen Lands Private Holdings – Lee, Box 355, Entry 7; Lawrence C. Merriam, Regional Director, to The Director, Memorandum, May 21, 1953, File: L1425 Siffords Part 2, Box 1746, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>10</sup> "Privately Owned Lands Within and Adjoining Lassen Volcanic National Park," viii; L. W. Collins, Superintendent, to The Director, December 9, 1932, with "Private Land Status Report," November 15, 1932, File 901: Part 4 Public Utility Operators Privileges, Box 361, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; SAR, 1949.

<sup>11</sup> "Privately Owned Lands Within and Adjoining Lassen Volcanic National Park," ix; Fred T. Johnston, Superintendent, to Regional Director, Region Four, Memorandum, February 18, 1953; Attorney General to Honorable Douglas McKay, Secretary of the Interior, December 2, 1953, File 45: L1425 Childs, Rice Creek 1929-1953, Box 31, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>12</sup> Jackson E. Price, Chief Counsel, to Mr. Neilson, Memorandum, February 28, 1952, File L1425: Hanna LAVO, Box 1745, Entry 7a; James V. Lloyd, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Regional Director, Region Four, June 20, 1944, with Hanna property proposal, File 600-03: Boundary Extension Proposal, R. W. Hanna Property; Lloyd, Memorandum for the Regional Director, November 6, 1946, File 600-03: Development Outline, Box 1308; Daniel J. Tobin, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Regional Director, August 30, 1947, File 610: Private Holdings, Box 1310, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II. In a three-way swap with a local timber company and the USFS, Hanna transferred about half of his ranch to the Lassen National Forest in 1956, which Lassen Volcanic officials strongly supported. Hanna received \$172,000 in compensation. The Hanna family retained the hot springs and 1,500 acres nearest the park. Daniel J. Tobin, Superintendent, to Mr. W. G. Brainerd, June 20, 1950; "Supervisors Okay Hanna Ranch Deal in

Volcanic's interior inholdings still eluded park administrators: the Supan properties, Drakesbad and the Juniper Lake Resort.

### **Sulphur Works and Little Hot Springs Valley**

Through the park's southwest corner, engineers and road crews had painstakingly threaded the main park road along the caldera walls of Brokeoff Volcano (previously called Mount Tehama), a massive volcano that predated Lassen Peak by hundreds of millennia and whose rim in time became punctuated by the lava domes of Brokeoff Mountain, Mount Diller and Mount Conard. The road provided motorists with splendid views of this precipitous landscape and proximity to hydrothermal sites where the innards of Brokeoff Volcano still simmered: at Bumpass Hell, at Sulphur Works and in the Little Hot Springs Valley. The Supan family's claim to these two later sites sometimes limited public access to the popular volcanic phenomena, and for this reason, the Supan inholdings always topped park administrators' acquisition wish list. Acquisition proved more difficult as ownership of the Supan properties fragmented. The senior Supans, Mathias and Angeline, died before the park was established, but several of their nine offspring and numerous grandchildren retained interest in Sulphur Works. Among the most involved second-generation Supans was Milton, who owned the 160-acre homestead in Little Hot Springs Valley and had ten children of his own. Both the Supans and park officials pondered the development potential of these two properties and their abundant thermal features. In 1929 Milton counted 204 hot springs on his homestead alone. The steep terrain of the inholdings contained few practical building sites but the topography was perfect for skiing.<sup>13</sup>

The Supans' lawful possession of Sulphur Works was up in the air for a number of years. In 1927, when Milton proposed building a gas station there, on the very site Collins coveted for the park's southwest ranger station, the superintendent questioned the validity of the Supans' mining claim. Collins could locate no public record of assessment work done to the site, a prerequisite for a claimant to acquire a patent to the land. Undaunted by this lack of documentation, the Supans applied for patents on two separate mining claims at Sulphur Works in 1929. When the General Land Office commissioner declared their 120-acre Little Giant placer mining claim null and void in 1930, the family did not dispute the ruling and this land reverted to federal ownership. The Supans did

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Land Transfer," news article dated January 1956, File 110: L1425 Land Exchange – Circle S. Ranch 1938-1956, Box 34, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>13</sup> Kathy Young, "The Supan Family," unpublished manuscript, I &CR Library, LAVO Headquarters; M. C. Supan and Mrs. Nellie J. Supan to Mr. L. W. Collins, March 29, 1929, File 105: L1425 Supan Tracts #2, 14, 1927-1947, Box 34, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

fight to retain their 160-acre Yellow Ochre claim, which contained a tight hairpin of the park parkway, and the case of *United States v. Stella Jones et al.* proceeded.<sup>14</sup>

Several government engineers investigated the Yellow Ochre claim, and each offered a different opinion on whether or not its mineral deposits were of “commercially paying quantities,” which became the crux of the case, Collins explained. Although some GLO personnel doubted the park could reclaim this property, Director Albright urged Collins to press on with hearing preparations: “I am very anxious to secure the cancellation of this claim . . . . We simply must win the case.” After numerous delays, the Supans finally had their day in court – actually three days – in January 1933, when both sides testified. Airing their grievances against the park, family members contended that government officials burned down their Sulphur Works storehouse in 1926, as the park road was constructed through their claim. Federal testimony included chemical soil sample analysis aimed at minimizing the site’s mineral value. John Ing, register of the GLO in Sacramento, sorted through all the submitted evidence, finding “much of it . . . irrelevant, some incompetent,” before submitting a recommendation to the GLO commissioner. Ing wanted to grant the Supans a patent for the 100 acres at Sulphur Works that contained “a considerable deposit of sulphur and clay,” and he classified the site’s southern 60 acres as non-mineral in character and therefore the property of Lassen Volcanic. The commissioner agreed.<sup>15</sup>

After the Supans won their patent, the family made little use of Sulphur Works through the remainder of the Depression years, although park officials still worried that the Supans might revive their mining operations or subdivide part of the inholding for summer homes. The Supans occasionally ran cattle on this tract, while they regularly summered cattle on the Little Hot Springs Valley inholding. (The family’s right to graze cattle on nearby park lands was phased out in 1929.) Rangers claimed the Supans “made a miserable living” from this enterprise, the land was so ill-suited for grazing – and the livestock subjected the park to “a progressive process of defacement and destruction.” With the park’s permission, the Supans drove their cattle to and from this summer range over park lands but not without damage to park vegetation. In the mid-1930s, rangers reported that the Supans’ herd of 75 cattle seriously overgrazed the Little Hot Springs inholding and marred its volcanic formations. The inholding was not properly fenced, so

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<sup>14</sup> Stella Jones was Milton Supan’s niece. L. W. Collins, Acting Superintendent, to The Director, September 3, 1927; Superintendent to Horace M. Albright, Director, April 10, 1931, File 104: L1425 Supan Mining Claim, 1927-1940, Box 34, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; E. C. Galbraith, Yellow Ochre Placer Adverse Report, February 14, 1930, File 609.1: Part I Lassen Mining Claims, Box 355; Collins to The Director, May 20, 1933, File 609.1: Mining Claims, Box 1309, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>15</sup> J. H. Favorite, Chief of Field Division, General Land Office, to Captain A. D. Hathaway, Chief of Field Service, General Land Office, March 26, 1932; Horace M. Albright, Director, to The Superintendent, March 31, 1932; Albright to The Superintendent, undated; L. W. Collins, Superintendent, to Albright, December 6, 1932, File 609.1: Part I Lassen Mining Claims, Box 355; John C. Ing, Register, United States, Contestant, vs. Stella Jones, et al, Contestee, May 11, 1933; Collins to The Director, Jan. 9, 1933, File 609.1 Mining Claims, Box 1309, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Galbraith, Yellow Ochre Placer Adverse Report.

cows often wandered onto adjacent park lands throughout the summer, tromping park flora and “annoying campers.” To earn a few more dollars from their inholdings, the Supans also harvested treetops from both the Sulphur Works and the Little Hot Springs Valley tracts to sell as Christmas trees each year, leaving behind “mutilated” trees for motorists to view as they drove through the properties on the main park road.<sup>16</sup>

By the late 1930s, tensions between the Supans and park officials began to mount. After repeated warnings about their cattle trespass, the Supans were prosecuted for the offense before the park’s U.S. commissioner, and grazing of the Little Hot Springs Valley inholding ended. In 1937, Milton’s sons Delbert and Lowell inquired about permission to build an access road across park lands into the Little Hot Springs Valley, to a site where the Supans hoped to build cabins for personal and commercial use. Milton placed an ad in the *Red Bluff Daily News* for the sale of summer home plots on the Little Hot Spring Valley inholding, but no such sales were made. When Superintendent Leavitt expressed opposition to both the road and cabins, the Supans questioned the legality of the park road right-of-way through their inholdings. They also threatened to surround Sulphur Works with a high fence and demand an admission fee of visitors wishing to see the fumaroles. Superintendent Leavitt dismissed the Supans’ rhetoric as a simple tactic to jack up the government’s eventual purchase price of their inholdings.<sup>17</sup>

In 1940, the Supans erected large signs on their Sulphur Works property declaring the family’s proud ownership since 1865 and warning that visitors’ “permission to trespass [was] revocable at any time.” Superintendent Preston acknowledged that the Supans could legally deny public access or charge admission to their private lands if they chose. He worried more that the Supans would sell out to a well-financed developer. Instead, Milton Supan’s son and daughter, Adlai and Ada, developed a humble Sulphur Works resort on their own, as dismayed park officials looked on.<sup>18</sup>

In 1941, the Supans constructed a gas station and a lunch room on the Sulphur Works property and opened for business. The proprietors lured motorists from the park highway with “glaring” advertisements they tacked on their new structures and nearby trees, Superintendent Lloyd lamented. When Adlai applied for a state license to sell alcohol on the Sulphur Works inholding, Lloyd consulted NPS Director Drury about any possible legal grounds to stop this. The previous year, the state attorney general had

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<sup>16</sup> “Privately Owned Lands Within and Adjoining Lassen Volcanic National Park,” I, ii; F. S. Townsley, Acting Superintendent, to Mr. Delbert Supan, August 17, 1935; Permit to Drive Stock Over Park Lands, August 19, 1936, File 105: L1425 Supan Tracts #2, 14, 1927-1947, Box 34, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>17</sup> E. P. Leavitt, Superintendent, to The Director, June 2, 1937, File 610 Supan, Box 1311; L. W. Collins, Superintendent, to Mr. M. C. Supan, October 5, 1929, File 901-1: Part 2 Privileges Grazing, Box 361, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Daniel J. Tobin, Superintendent, to Everett J. Jensen, U.S. Forest Service, February 9, 1949, File 106: L1425 Supan Tracts #2, 14, 1948-1949, Box 34, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>18</sup> Merlin K. Potts, Park Ranger, Memorandum for the Superintendent, August 15, 1940; John C. Preston, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Director, September 10, 1940, File 105: L1425 Supan Tracts #2, 14, 1927-1947, Box 34, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

declared that all private lands within all California national parks were subject to the state's liquor laws, in response to a similar license request made in Yosemite National Park. Drury disagreed with the state's sweeping jurisdictional claim, but he believed that because no federal regulation prohibited the sale of alcohol on Lassen Volcanic's inholdings, the park could not contest it from the start. If Supan's liquor sales proved to be "objectionable from the standpoint of park administration," Drury said, then the NPS could protest. Through the decade, the Supans enlarged their Sulphur Works enterprise with a curio shop, guest cabins, bath houses, a hydroelectric power plant, more cabins, and eventually a restroom with flush toilets. On the Little Hot Springs Valley inholding, the Supans began work on a similar tourist facility, leveling two acres of land and laying water pipes underground.<sup>19</sup>

In 1947, Adlai Supan opened his own bare-bones skiing operation on the Sulphur Works inholding. Skiers had to propel themselves about a mile beyond the government's Sulphur Works Ski Area, on the snowed-in park highway, to reach Supan's new cable ski lift. Supan provided no warming hut or food service but access to Lassen's best slopes. Superintendent Tobin deflected criticisms of the park's modest ski area with the reasoning that further improvements must await acquisition of the Supans' superior skiing terrain. In 1948, Ada Supan's request for a special-use permit to run a water pipeline under the main park road exposed the awkward fact that the federal government had never obtained an official right-of-way through Sulphur Works for the road. Adlai's ski resort, which straddled the main park road, further complicated matters. Associate Director Demaray advised that park officials issue the Supans a free permit for the time being, "avoid any controversy with the landowners with regard to the use of the highway," and patiently await federal acquisition of the Supan lands.<sup>20</sup>

Although family representatives repeatedly offered the Supan inholdings to the park for \$100,000 during the Depression years, they wanted more as the economic climate improved. At a 1945 meeting between park officials and park inholders, a crowd of 25 people represented the Supan interests. Displaying samples of their curative waters and patented ink derived from Sulphur Works, family members testified one by one of

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<sup>19</sup> John C. Preston, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Director, June 30, 1941; James V. Lloyd, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Director, July 29, 1941, File 105: L1425 Supan Tracts #2, 14, 1927-1947; Answer, No. 6259, *United States v. Ada M. Herrick et al.*, submitted by Eva Tarr, March 14, 1950, File 107: L1425 Supan Condemnation Suit 1949-1950; Daniel J. Tobin, Memorandum to Regional Director, October 9, 1951, File 108: L1425 Supan Condemnation 1951-1958, Box 34, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; R. E. Collins, Chairman, State Board of Equalization, to Lloyd, August 5, 1941; Lloyd, Memorandum for the Director, August 6, 1941; Director Newton B. Drury, Memorandum for the Superintendent, Lassen Volcanic National Park, August 25, 1941, File 601.0: Lands – General, Box 1308, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>20</sup> SAR, 1948; Daniel Tobin, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Director, January 6, 1948, File 900-08: Complaints Lassen National Park, Box 1323; O. A. Tomlinson, Regional Director, Memorandum for the Director, April 9, 1948; Tobin, Memorandum for the Regional Director, July 26, 1948; A. E. Demaray, Associate Director, Memorandum for the Regional Director, September 7, 1948, File 901: Privileges Miscellaneous, Box 1324, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

their land's great worth. Giving "good natured and humorous talks," each successive Supan speaker declared a higher and higher value of the inholdings, until a final figure of \$1 million was pronounced by meeting's end.<sup>21</sup>

With the death of Milton Supan's widow Nellie in 1949, ownership of the Little Hot Springs Valley property fractured into ten interests. Now both Supan inholdings were held by multiple owners. By this time, the Supan family members had divided evenly into two camps: one that wanted to sell to the park for what Superintendent Tobin qualified as a "conservative" price, and one that wanted to retain the land or at least be well rewarded for relinquishing it. Stella Jones McCleod and Judge Ernest Klett lead the willing Supan contingent, while Ada Herrick and Adlai Supan, the only family members earning income from the inholdings, led the hold-out camp. This split in the family made acquisition negotiations futile, Tobin said, leaving court action "the only effective way of settling these disagreements." A number of Supans agreed. With acquisition funds finally available, the federal government filed a complaint in condemnation for the two Supan properties in December 1949.<sup>22</sup>

The Supans submitted an answer to the complaint that placed a value of \$552,500 on the two inholdings, inclusive of the standing timber, medicinal waters and muds, and year-round resort potential of both properties, in addition to the existing improvements at Sulphur Works. Mining potential no longer figured into the family's assessment of their inholdings. The government's final appraisal of the Sulphur Works inholding placed the property's worth at \$43,080, most of which was tied up in recent improvements made by Ada and Adlai. The Little Hot Springs Valley tract was valued at much less: \$2,500. Neither property contained springs suitable for human use as mineral baths, federal officials determined. With such a huge disparity between the Supans' asking price and the government's appraisal of the inholdings, settlement was not an option and the case of *The United States v. Ada M. Herrick et al.* proceeded to court.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> M. C. Supan and Mrs. Nellie J. Supan, to Mr. L. W. Collins, March 29, 1929, File 105: L1425 Supan Tracts #2, 14, 1927-1947, Box 34, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Ernest Klette, to Mr. A. E. Demaray, Associate Director, National Park Service, January 8, 1936; Klette to Arno B. Cammerer, Director of National Parks, January 29, 1936, File 609.1: Mining Claims, Box 1309; James. V. Lloyd, Superintendent, Memorandum to the Regional Director, Region Four, November 6, 1945, File 600-03: Development Outline, Box 1308, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>22</sup> Daniel J. Tobin, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Files, April 12, May 7, and May 19, 1949, File 106: L1425 Supan Tracts #2, 14 1948-1949; Tobin, Memorandum to Region Director, September 29, 1950; M. Mitchell Bourquin, Special Assistant to the Attorney General, to Mr. H. L. Crowley, Acting Associate Regional Director, National Park Service, File 107: L1425 Supan Condemnation Suit 1949-1950, Box 34, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Tobin, Memorandum of Conversation with Roy Sifford, June 15, 1950, Sifford Collection.

<sup>23</sup> Everett Jensen, U.S. Forest Service, "Sulphur Works Tract Valuation Report, Lassen National Park," November 28, 1951, File 610: Supan, Box 60, Records of the Western Regional Director – LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR; Herbert Maier, Associate Regional Director, Memorandum for the Director, March 9, 1949, File 610 Supan, Box 1311, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Daniel J. Tobin, Superintendent, to Everett J. Jensen, U.S. Forest Service, February 9, 1949, File 106: L1425 Supan Tracts #2, 14, 1948-1949; Answer, No. 6259, *United States v. Ada M. Herrick et al.*, submitted by Eva Tarr, March 14, 1950;

In June 1951, the Interior Solicitor submitted a declaration of taking of the two Supan inholdings to the Department of Justice. In July, a U.S. District Court judge granted the federal government immediate possession of the Supan lands in exchange for only \$31,000. The Supans were understandably dismayed at the paltry amount, far below even the government's assessed value of the properties. Adlai Supan's son Donald published a plea for public outcry in the *Red Bluff Daily News*. Settlement talks ensued about payment of additional compensation to the Supans, but the case returned to court. In the November 1952 jury trial, the Supans were awarded a deficiency of \$17,950, raising the total amount paid for their properties to \$48,950. Of the total award, Ada and Adlai reportedly claimed \$20,000 for their investments made to the Sulphur Works tract, leaving very small shares to be distributed among the remaining interest holders. NPS officials were quite pleased with the trial's outcome and the final acquisition price of the Supan lands, which kept an unexpected reserve in the NPS coffers for other vital Lassen Volcanic purchases.<sup>24</sup>

## Drakesbad Guest Ranch

From the time of the Lassen Peak eruptions until the 1950s when the NPS assumed control of Drakesbad, the rustic guest ranch proved to be a busy and modestly rewarding enterprise for proprietors Alex and Ida Sifford and their offspring Roy and Pearl. By 1930, Roy's profits from his off-season real estate sales in San Francisco had nearly paid off the mortgage on the 440-acre inholding, and the resort weathered the Great Depression without major financial setbacks. New cabins provided guests with an upgrade from tent accommodations, but the brutal winter of 1937-38 severely damaged these structures as well as Drake's Lodge, which had to be torn down. At this point, Roy considered giving up the resort, selling the property's timber, and running cattle on the land. Instead, the family rebuilt the following summer and, with an army of 30 workers

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Assistant Director, to Regional Director, April 5, 1950, File 107: L1425 Supan Condemnation Suit 1949-1950, Box 34, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>24</sup> Hillory A. Tolson, Acting Director, Memorandum to Regional Director, July 2, 1951; Franklin A. Dill, Special Attorney to NPS, July 13, 1951; Dal M. Lemmon, Judge, United States District Court, Judgment, No. 6259 (U.S. v. Ada M. Herrick), July 6, 1951; Daniel J. Tobin, Memorandum to Regional Director, Oct. 9, 1951; B. F. Manbey, Acting Regional Director, Memorandum to Director, Sept. 4, 1952; Lawrence C. Merriam, Regional Director, to M. Mitchell Bourquin, Special Assistant to the Attorney General, November 3, 1952; Fred T. Johnston, Superintendent, to Bourquin, November 3, 1952; File 108: L1425 Supan Condemnation 1951-1958, Box 34, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Jackson E. Price, Chief Counsel, to Finance Officer, December 11, 1952, File L1425 Supan, Box 1748; Herbert Maier, Acting Regional Director, to Director, February 5, 1953, File L1425: Juniper Lake LAVO, Box 1745, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II. Park acquisition of the Supan lands was not completely laid to rest until 1956, when the Attorney General reaffirmed that the 1952 proceedings and judgement of the case stood. Herbert Brownell, Jr., Attorney General, to Honorable Douglas McKay, Secretary of Interior, May 22, 1956, File L1425 Herrick LAVO, Box 1745, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II.

and the help of the Red River Lumber Company, raised the resort's renowned two-story lodge in just ten days. Through World War II, gas rationing kept some Drakesbad clientele at home, but the resort remained open and business was adequate. To supplement their income, the Siffords added 100 head of cattle to their Drakesbad operations, which lent a "dude ranch" atmosphere to the resort. Ranching remained lucrative in the post-war years, so the Siffords continued to summer cattle at Drakesbad, with their two dozen saddle horses, for the duration of their ownership of the property.<sup>25</sup>

Drakesbad guests returned year after year to swim in the resort's hot springs pool, explore the park by foot or horseback, enjoy hearty meals, and pass long summer evenings with bonfires and folk music. But at times the Siffords' business of entertaining patrons clashed with the policies of Lassen Volcanic. For instance, Roy Sifford still hated the park's insistence that all guide and horse rental services utilizing park lands acquire a permit and pay a small fee. He considered this annual procedure an insult to his neighborliness, "a complete surrender of one's manhood...one man putting the shackles of serfdom upon another." Sifford also was incensed at the closure of the Lassen Peak Trail to horses, which he claimed cost him \$2,000 in revenue each season. The park disapproved of much of Sifford's high-impact trail development on his property, such as his widening of trails "so two people could ride abreast." In 1938, Superintendent Preston vetoed Sifford's plan to accommodate hunters at Drakesbad and shuttle them back and forth to national forest lands to hunt. Transport of game on park roads, which included a portion of the access road to Drakesbad, was against park rules.<sup>26</sup>

In addition, rangers detected a definite class divide between the Siffords' overnight guests (which the rangers classified en masse as "well-to-do") and the general public that utilized that portion of the park. While Drakesbad clientele wandered Warner Valley freely, Sifford would "tolerate" park visitors on his lands only after they paid an admission fee of 25 cents a head. Sifford insisted the day-use fee was necessary for road and trail maintenance. But combined with the Siffords' air of exclusivity, this cost rendered Devil's Kitchen and Boiling Lake "practically closed" to non-guests, park officials complained in the mid-1930s.<sup>27</sup>

Among the most stunning thermal features within park boundaries, these two tourist attractions were indeed the legal property of the Siffords. The State of California also owned a 40-acre tract adjacent to Boiling Lake for many years. In 1937, the state legislature sanctioned the transfer of this tract to federal ownership free of charge, but the governor vetoed the measure, advised by his aids that state lands could not be donated to

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<sup>25</sup> Sifford, *Sixty Years of Siffords at Drakesbad*, 77-120; Hoke and Warner, *Cultural Landscape Report for Drakesbad*, 12-13; comments on final draft report.

<sup>26</sup> John Preston, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Director, February 5, 1940, File 901-4: Lassen Public Utility Operators Privileges, Box 1324, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; R. D. Sifford, to Mr. Preston, September 2, 1938, Sifford Collection; Sifford, *Sixty Years of Siffords at Drakesbad*, 87, 105.

<sup>27</sup> "Privately Owned Lands Within and Adjoining Lassen Volcanic National Park," xiv; Sifford, *Sixty Years of Siffords at Drakesbad*, 80.

anyone. In 1942, Superintendent Lloyd proposed an exchange of this state land for five acres that the state highway department had been leasing from the NPS at park headquarters. Given the recreational value of the Boiling Lake parcel, the state doubted the trade was equitable and declined the offer. Eventually, this land did come under park ownership.<sup>28</sup>

The Siffords also owned an 80-acre tract in the Devastated Area, still a very popular destination for park visitors who were fascinated with its violent origins. In the early 1930s, the former owner of this tract, J. E. Stewart, claimed he was seriously considering building a resort here, with the parcel's commanding view of Lassen Peak and its proximity to the main park road. Stewart instead sold it to Hanna, who made no use of the land and soon sold it to the Siffords. In addition, the Siffords owned an isolated 40-acre timbered tract near Twin Lakes and several cabin lots at Juniper Lake. Although the Siffords developed none of these lands, the NPS still wanted legal possession of them. According to park administrators, the Siffords' minor properties in Lassen Volcanic were "subject to the usual misuse, defacement and friction with national park principles" that was rampant on park inholdings system-wide. Of course park administrators also coveted Drakesbad itself, with its beautiful meadow and its pure hot water, the only thermal springs conducive to human bathing in Lassen Volcanic.<sup>29</sup>

Since Superintendent Collins' earliest inquiries about a selling price for Drakesbad, the Siffords intended for their property to one day transfer to park ownership. For over two decades, the Siffords and park officials pondered this future scenario but took no action, due to the dearth of federal acquisition funds, the Siffords' high price tag, and the family's desire to return to Drakesbad season after season.<sup>30</sup> Meanwhile, the

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<sup>28</sup> It is likely the Siffords acquired this parcel, which as part of the Drakesbad property was sold to the park in the 1950s. Superintendent Lloyd indicated Alex Sifford was interested in buying the state land in the 1930s. H. Maier, Associate Regional Manager, Memorandum for the Director, December 17, 1942; Acting Regional Director, Memorandum for Superintendent Lloyd, June 22, 1942; James V. Lloyd, Memorandum for the Regional Director, June 16, 1942, File: LNP – 605-01 Exchanges, Box 56, Records of the Western Regional Director – LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR.

<sup>29</sup> "Privately Owned Lands Within and Adjoining Lassen Volcanic National Park," v, xi, xiv; "Private Lands Within the Park," ca. 1939; Collins to Director, December 9, 1932, with "Private Land Status Report;" Sifford, *Sixty Years of Siffords at Drakesbad*, 87.

<sup>30</sup> In a note to the authors, local historian Tim Purdy contributed the following commentary on early efforts to acquire the Drakesbad property: "In 1917, Alex Sifford offered Drakesbad to the Park, either for sale or lease to the Park. However, since Congress never appropriated any money for the Park, nothing materialized. In 1919, Alex gave Drakesbad to Roy upon his return from World War I, with a stipulation. While Roy was designated owner/manager, Alex was still a principal figure, especially during the Park negotiations of the 1920s. In 1923 discussions ensued between the Park and Alex Sifford. In 1925, it appeared that a sale would go through, but things fell apart with Raker's untimely death in January 1926. California Congressman Clarence Lea introduced Raker's proposed legislation, yet it did not pass. Negotiations continued while the Park sought funding. In 1929 Alex Sifford offered Drakesbad to the Park for \$200,000 and option penned, with an expiration date of June 1. \$100,000 in federal funds were set aside, and California, whether via the State or private resources were to provide the matching \$100,000, which was not successful. Albright, again, stated after the failed purchase that no more developments would occur at Lassen until all private lands inside the Park were purchased."

Siffords turned down other interested buyers with cash in hand. The Siffords were in no hurry to give up their successful resort and felt that a privately-owned Drakesbad in no way hindered the NPS's development of Lassen Volcanic to its full potential. "They may want it, but they do not need it," Alex wrote to his son in 1932. "I might WANT Collins' wife, but God knows I don't need her," he quipped. In 1939, Superintendent Preston offered the Siffords a life lease option to remain at Drakesbad, should they decide to sell sooner than later. But the Siffords were not yet interested. When they did sell, the family wanted to fetch a price that would support all four family members for the duration of their lives. By the late 1940s, Roy Sifford was discussing park acquisition of his land with Superintendent Tobin on a regular basis.<sup>31</sup>

Ida's death, Pearl's cancer diagnosis, and another destructive winter that wiped out the Drakesbad dining room all contributed to Roy's final decision in early 1952 to retire from Drakesbad and sell to the park. "It seemed the devil himself was after us," Sifford wrote of his circumstances – the devil and the Park Service, whose takeover of Drakesbad was "still looming overhead like a dark cloud," Sifford added. The NPS cringed at the initial half-million-dollar value Sifford placed on his family's inholdings but feared that a purchase delay would force Sifford to sell to timber or subdivision interests. The park's concession company leased Sifford's land and managed the resort starting that summer, as Sifford and the NPS settled into serious negotiations.<sup>32</sup>

In 1953, Roy and his sister Pearl offered their lands to Lassen Volcanic for \$325,000, which was \$40,000 above what appraisers thought the property was worth.<sup>33</sup> By the close of 1953, the NPS had purchased the Sifford's two minor inholdings, in the Devastated Area and near Twin Lakes, plus 40 acres of the Drakesbad tract that contained Boiling Springs Lake, for \$55,560. The NPS obtained this money from a sale of hazardous timber in Mount Rainier National Park. Another timber exchange, this one with Olympic National Park, was contemplated for the remainder of the Drakesbad tract. Sifford was enthusiastic about this arrangement, but it did not materialize. As the Park Service scrambled to find acquisition funds, the Siffords grew impatient. In 1954, the 93-year-old Alex Sifford wrote the Secretary of the Interior. His family wanted the park to

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<sup>31</sup> Sifford, *Sixty Years of Siffords at Drakesbad*, 85; Hoke and Warner, *Cultural Landscape Report for Drakesbad*, 11; Director, Memorandum to the Washington Office, September 1, 1931, File 2: L14 Land Acquisitions General 1926-1935, Box 29, LAVO Acc. 506, REW Archives; Pa to My Dear Son, December 26, 1932; John C. Preston, Superintendent, to Mr. R. D. Sifford, December 20, 1939; Confidential Memorandum, April 12, 1949, Sifford Collection; B. F. Manbey, Regional Chief of Lands, Memorandum, January 10, 1952, File 610: Sifford Tract (Drakesbad), Box 59, Records of the Western Regional Director – LAVAO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR.

<sup>32</sup> Sifford, *Sixty Years of Siffords at Drakesbad*, 122-132; Manbey, Memorandum, January 10, 1952; Herbert Maier, Assistant Regional Director, to Regional Director, June 27, 1952, File 204: Lassen Inspections, Box 45, Records of the Western Regional Director – LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR; SAR, 1952.

<sup>33</sup> Hoke and Warner, *Cultural Landscape Report for Drakesbad*, 14; B. F. Manbey, Regional Chief of Lands, to Director, November 16, 1954, File: L1425 Siffords Part 2, Box 1746, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II.

have Drakesbad, but time was running out and logging companies were “shaking the money right under my nose,” he said.<sup>34</sup>

With other potential buyers vying for Drakesbad, Roy Sifford and Park Service officials finally hammered out a three-installment purchase agreement for the remaining 400 acres of the property. In the summer of 1956, the NPS paid Roy and his wife Amanda \$130,000 for 240 acres of Drakesbad. The next year, the park acquired another 80 acres of the property for \$70,000. In 1958, the Siffords received a final payment of \$79,350 for the last 80 acres of the ranch, which included all the Drakesbad buildings and improvements. Altogether, the Siffords received \$335,000 for their inholdings. Throughout this transitional period, Roy continued to summer at Drakesbad, tending to the horses and cattle, leading trail rides, and battling the colony of beavers that threatened the resort’s picturesque Dream Lake, which the Siffords had built in the early 1930s.<sup>35</sup>

## Juniper Lake Resort

Unlike Drakesbad, Juniper Lake Resort never qualified as a “credible” tourist accommodation in the eyes of Lassen Volcanic officials. On the contrary, park rangers in the mid-1930s considered C. P. and Cora Snell’s enterprise along Juniper Lake a “disgrace” and public health hazard, with its “open, stinking pit toilets” and stagnant cistern that served as the resort and campground’s drinking water supply. Guests complained to park officials of theft by the Snells’ “low class,” poorly paid work force. The Juniper Lake Lodge had just burned to the ground and the resort’s remaining buildings suffered from recent storm damage. Commercial firewood and Christmas tree cutting defaced the lakeshore and had extended on to park property.<sup>36</sup>

The majority of the Snells’ original 475-acre inholding remained undeveloped. Activities worrisome to the Park Service were concentrated within the Snells’ infamous subdivision: 75 acres nearest the lake that had been partitioned into 1500 tiny cabin lots in the mid-1910s. County records revealed plans for a high-density neighborhood of two dozen residential streets, most named for California cities, including Fresno, San

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<sup>34</sup> SAR, 1954; B. F. Manbey, Acting Assistant Regional Director, to Director, January 25, 1954; Alexander Sifford, to Sec’y Interior, August 16, 1954, Sifford Collection; Lawrence C. Merriam, Regional Director, to The Director, Memorandum, May 21, 1953, B. F. Manbey, Regional Chief of Lands, to Mr. Roy Sifford, June 23, 1958, File: L1425 Siffords Part 2, Box 1746, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II; Lawrence C. Merriam, Regional Director, to Director, January 31, 1956, File: L54 Water Matters 2002-2004, LAVO Central Files; Sifford, *Sixty Years of Siffords at Drakesbad*, 132-138.

<sup>35</sup> Lawrence C. Merriam, Regional Director, to Director, January 31, 1956, File: L54 Water Matters 2002-2004, LAVO Central Files; B. F. Manbey, Regional Chief of Lands, Status of Acquisition of Sifford Lands – Lassen, August 21, 1956; Donald E. Lee, Chief of Lands, to Finance Officer, Memorandum, September 4, 1956; Manbey, to Mr. Roy Sifford, June 23, 1958; Lee to Finance Officer, Memorandum, September 11, 1958, File: L1425 Siffords Part 2, Box 1746, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II; Sifford, *Sixty Years of Siffords at Drakesbad*, 87, 127-145.

<sup>36</sup> “Privately Owned Lands Within and Adjoining Lassen Volcanic National Park,” iv.

Francisco, and Los Angeles. A wide avenue called “The Bund” was to run along the lakeside, providing water access to all property owners. By the 1930s, the Snells’ limited success in selling cabin lots had not resulted in a budding metropolis but rather a small number of summer homes popping up near the lakeshore, on crude roadways that did not follow the Snells’ platted street design. Rangers complained about cabin owners firing guns and allowing their dogs free rein to harass wildlife, but not all Juniper Lake cabin owners defied national park ideals. It was cabin owner Ben Curler’s duty to uphold them. He served as Lassen Volcanic’s U.S. Commissioner and offered his summer home to Superintendent Collins and visiting Interior dignitaries when inspection tours called for an overnight stay at Juniper Lake. Regardless of inholder-park relations, Lassen Volcanic’s acquisition of the entire Juniper Lake tract would be all the more difficult now that its legal ownership was divided among Cora Snell (to whom C. P. Snell deeded the property immediately after buying it in 1914) and dozens of other private parties.<sup>37</sup>

The Snells’ willingness to sell their remaining acreage to the park dated back to 1929, when Director Albright toured Juniper Lake Resort (and later declared it “of great nuisance value” to the NPS). The Snells would accept nothing short of \$200,000, a “preposterous” price, Collins lamented. Mr. Snell often harangued Collins on the delay of park acquisition, while continuing to peddle his cabin lots. Collins refuted Snell’s claims of brisk cabin lot sales and an exceptional resort season in 1932. He also complained of Snell’s nasty disposition, and he relayed to Albright county officials’ suspicions that Snell’s real estate transactions were “shady.” Condemnation was “the only way to deal with him,” Collins insisted. There was no love lost between these two men. Through the 1930s, several resort development companies expressed interest in Snell’s property, including the park’s concessioner, the Lassen National Park Company. Acting Director Demaray suggested this ownership transfer. He thought the Lassen National Park Company’s purchase of both the Snell and Supan properties was “the most feasible way” to oust these troublesome inholders and protect the areas until the NPS could afford to buy them. Yet none of these potential private buyers persevered.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> “Privately Owned Lands Within and Adjoining Lassen Volcanic National Park,” iv; “Private Lands Within the Park,” ca. 1939; “Appraisal on Private Property in Lassen Volcanic National Park (Juniper Lake Resort) August 1939,” File: Lassen – Snell Property Appraisal, Box 58, Western Regional Director – LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR; L. W. Collins, Superintendent, to Mr. F. J. Solinsky, Special Assistant, National Park Service, March 20, 1931, File 610: Part 1, Lassen Lands, Private Holdings, Juniper Lake Property, Box 355, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>38</sup> L. W. Collins, Superintendent, to The Director, Feb. 1, 1930; Solinsky to The Director, March 19, 1931, File 610: Part 1, Lassen Lands, Private Holdings, Juniper Lake Property; H. M. Albright, Director, Memorandum to Mr. Bachem, September 4, 1929; C. P. Snell to L. W. Collins, Superintendent, Dec. 14, 1932; Superintendent to The Director, December 21, 1932, File 600: Lands, F. J. Solinsky’s File 1929-1933, Box 355, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; A. E. Demaray, Acting Director, to Mr. Dallas Dort, President, Lassen National Park Company, September 21, 1938, File: Lassen Volcanic National Park Prior to 1939, Box 3, Western Region – Central Files of the Regional Wildlife Technician 1929-1941; Donald Lee, Chief Counsel, Memorandum for the Regional Director, June 2, 1939, File 610: Lassen, Juniper Lake Lands – Snell, Box 59, Records of the Western Regional Director – LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR;

The one trump card park officials held concerning the Juniper Lake inholdings was Snell's 14-mile access road, which linked his resort to Chester. In the 1930s, the road was still a bone-jarring, hazardous experience to navigate by motorcar. Snell demanded that the park help maintain the portion of the road that traversed park lands – and claimed that the NPS director assured him of such assistance – but superintendents Collins and Leavitt refused. Snell was already charging a toll of motorists who traveled the road across his property and beyond to Horseshoe Lake, and he threatened to cut more trees on his property for road maintenance cash if the park did not pitch in. Juniper Lake cabin owners, too, called on the park to help with the access road, offering a 50-50 split of the \$2,500 necessary to get the road in “a passable condition.” But the park administration did not budge. Neither the Lassen National Forest nor Lassen Volcanic was under any legal obligation to improve or maintain this privately built road on federal lands, and the park had absolutely no incentive to do so until it acquired Juniper Lake Resort. “In other words,” Leavitt explained, “the Park Service will do nothing to interfere with Mr. Snell's legal use of his privately owned lands, but will do nothing to help him increase the value of his property or develop his business.” For this very reason, park planners gave little consideration to proposals to improve or extend (to Summit Lake) the Juniper Lake road as an official part of an expanded park road system.<sup>39</sup>

By 1939, recorded sales of cabin lots by the Snells numbered 251, less than 20 percent of their subdivided acreage. Interior appraisers criticized Snell on his community planning. With an average of 14.5 cabin lots per acre and a hypothetical three residents per cabin, the Juniper Lake Resort's supposed capacity was around 4,500 people, they calculated, an absurd number considering the area's limited water supply and lack of sanitation facilities. Interior assessed the entire conglomerate of Juniper Lake private properties at only \$65,000, a modest figure because the land contained no mineral resources and no commercial timber, and much of the subdivided land was judged too steep for practical residential development. Although most of the resort buildings and

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Superintendent, Memorandum for Associate Regional Attorney Johnson, September 7, 1940, File 79: L1425 Juniper Lake – Snell 1929-1949, Box 32, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>39</sup> “Appraisal on Private Property in Lassen Volcanic National Park (Juniper Lake Resort), August 1939;” C. H. Dewaide to E. P. Levitt, Superintendent, April 24, 1936; Superintendent to Dewaide, May 8, 1936; Dewaide to Mr. Tatton, District Manager, January 26, 1938, File 79: L1425 Juniper Lake – Snell 1929-1949, Box 32, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; L. W. Collins, Superintendent, to The Director, Dec. 20, 1934; Collins to The Director, January 9, 1935; F. J. Solinsky, Jr., to Mr. A. E. Demaray, Associate Director, National Park Service, December 20, 1934, File 610: Juniper Lake Property; T. C. Vint, Chief Architect, Memorandum for the Director, August 13, 1937; F. A. Kittredge to The Director, June 29, 1937, File 610: Snell, Box 1310; Dewaide to Mr. E. P. Leavitt, Superintendent, October 13, 1936; Charles G. Dunwoody, Director, Conservation Department, California State Chamber of Commerce, October 30, 1936; Leavitt to Dunwoody, December 17, 1936, File 900-05: Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 1324, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Kittredge, Regional Director, Memorandum of Conference with Director Cammerer, August 12, 1937, File 610: Lassen, Juniper Lake Lands – Snell, Box 59, Records of the Western Regional Director – LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR.

private cabins were rough frame structures, the appraisal report read, a few of the summer homes “appear to be very well kept and of better-than-average construction.”<sup>40</sup>

C. P. Snell retired from daily operations of his Juniper Lake enterprise, and after World War II, he hired Charles Simpson as manager of the Juniper Lake Resort Company. As it did with Snell, the park issued Simpson permits to rent saddle horses, row boats, and motor boats. The park also allowed for the sale of alcohol at the Juniper Lake club house, in accordance with state law, but the Washington Office denied Simpson’s appeal to install slot machines at the resort. Business did not thrive under the new management, largely because of Snell’s continued presence. Simpson lasted only two seasons, and Superintendent Tobin speculated that the cause for the resort’s drastic drop in income from 1946 to 1947 was owed to C. P. Snell’s residence there throughout the 1947 season. Snell reportedly “had annoyed, insulted and driven away the patrons” that summer. The 80-year-old Snell’s eccentric ways continued, often leaving NPS officials guessing about his motives. In 1948, Snell claimed to be purchasing the Supan properties acre by acre, adding to the small interest (about three percent) of Sulphur Works the Snells indeed owned. The same year, ranger Lester Bodine caught wind of Snell’s plans to host a hunting party on his inholding, an unlawful event that apparently never materialized after the leak to Bodine.<sup>41</sup>

The ongoing drought of acquisition funds left park officials with no choice but continued tolerance of Snell and other Juniper Lake property owners, which numbered over 100 by mid-century. In 1950, Lassen Volcanic had to turn down George and Ruth Pancera’s offer to sell their 28 Juniper Lake lots for only \$660, less than half of the 1939 assessed value. Superintendent Tobin originally had high hopes for this purchase, which would support NPS Director Wirth’s strategy of “nibbling away” at the Juniper Lake properties until funds materialized “for wiping out the entire holding.” Yet even such

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<sup>40</sup> “Appraisal on Private Property in Lassen Volcanic National Park (Juniper Lake Resort), August 1939;” “Supplement to August 1939 Appraisal of Private Property in Lassen Volcanic National Park (Juniper Lake Resort Subdivision), August 1940,” File: Lassen – Snell Property Appraisal, Box 58, Western Regional Director – LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR. This appraisers report revealed that land ownership of the Juniper Lake properties was indeed complex by this time. The holdings of the Snell family made up one category. Other land classifications included the properties of other owners with clear title and taxes paid, the properties of other owners who were tax delinquent, lands that had been sold to the state for taxes, and lots Cora claimed to have sold “either by unrecorded deed or contract.”

<sup>41</sup> James V. Lloyd, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Regional Director, June 6, 1946; Herbert Maier, Acting Regional Director, Memorandum for the Files, June 17, 1946; Hillory A. Tolson, Acting Director, Memorandum for the Regional Director, July 19, 1946; Daniel J. Tobin, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Regional Director, October 23, 1947, File 900: Juniper Lake Resort Company, Box 1320, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; O. A. Tomlinson, Regional Director, Memorandum for the Superintendent, Lassen, Jan. 2, 1948; Tobin, Memorandum for the Regional Director, January 5, 1948; Lester D. Bodine, Park Ranger, Memorandum for the Superintendent, September 20, 1948, File 610: Lassen, Juniper Lake Lands – Snell, Box 59, Records of the Western Regional Director – LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR.

“nibbling” funds for Juniper Lake proved to be beyond the reach of Lassen Volcanic administrators at this time.<sup>42</sup>

In 1953, urgency for Lassen to acquire the remaining Snell lands at Juniper Lake mounted. C. P. Snell had died, and the aged and ailing Cora Snell was still agreeable to sell to the park, as were her two daughters Lois Knowles and Vera Lyon, who now shared ownership of the property. But other heirs, including Raymond Hanson, the husband of Cora’s granddaughter and current manager of the Juniper Lake facility, wanted to take full advantage of the booming vacation home market by continuing to sell off the family land in small pieces. Park acquisition of the Snell property before Cora’s death was vitally important, but funding eluded park officials until 1955. Luckily, Cora’s health held. In contract negotiations, Cora and her daughters agreed to part with their 400 unsubdivided acres and 1,177 cabin lots (some of which Cora had recently bought back through tax delinquent land sales) for \$100,000. Because proof of title to some of these lots was deficient, the Snells also consented to condemnation of these questionable bits of their declared property, if necessary. This major park acquisition in 1955 left about two dozen cabins and 300-odd cabin lots in private hands at Juniper Lake.<sup>43</sup>

In 1957, park officials appealed to the civic consciousness of the owners of the remaining unimproved properties at Juniper Lake and urged them to sell to the park. The campaign resulted in the park’s purchase of all but 64 of these lots. The Mission 66 initiative to provide Lassen Volcanic visitors with more camp sites – including a new and vastly improved campground at Juniper Lake – motivated park officials to go one step further in 1959. They pursued the last of these undeveloped Juniper Lake properties, valued at only \$16,000, through condemnation proceedings. A number of the owners did not want to relinquish their lots. After five years of legal process, all these lands had come under park ownership. In the meantime, the Park Service strongly discouraged owners of the few remaining improved properties at Juniper Lake from further construction on their lands, because ultimately the park would seek acquisition of Juniper Lake’s handful of cabins and the lands beneath them, as well. By 1964, only 14 private parties retained ownership of small land parcels and cabins at Juniper Lake, including one

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<sup>42</sup> SAR, 1950; Daniel J. Tobin, Superintendent, to Regional Director, Memorandum, December 20, 1949, File 610: Lassen, Juniper Lake Lands – Snell, Box 59, Records of the Western Regional Director – LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR.

<sup>43</sup> Herbert Maier, Acting Regional Director, to Director, Memorandum, February 5, 1953; B. F. Manbey, Regional Chief of Lands, to Regional Director, Memorandum, October 1, 1953; Conrad L. Wirth, Director, to Regional Director, Memorandum, October 23, 1953; Lawrence C. Merriam, Regional Director, to Director, Memorandum, October 30, 1953, File L1425: Juniper Lake LAVO; Manbey to Mr. George D. Pancera, Manager, Lassen Country Title Guaranty Company, January 28, 1955; Jackson E. Price, Acting Assistant Director, to Acting Assistant Solicitor, June 16, 1955, File L1425: Juniper Lake Pt. 2, Box 1745, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II; Edward D. Freeland, Superintendent, to Honorable H.T. Johnson, House of Representatives, January 2, 1959, File 65: L1425 Juniper Lake (not Snell) 1957-1959, Box 32, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

property retained by the Snell family. Altogether, these inholdings totaled a little over three acres.<sup>44</sup>

### **Lingering Irritants**

J. W. Long's 160-acre inholding in the Hat Creek drainage had lain idle since 1915, when the infamous mudflow and volcanic blast from Lassen Peak scoured this former pasture into a barren wasteland. By the 1930s, the land was recovering and an aged Long subdivided a small portion of his property and successfully sold a handful of summer home plots totaling eight acres. Several of the lot buyers built cabins and moved in, much to the chagrin of park rangers. The new Hat Creek residents hunted deer, cut timber and burned brush, ruined interesting features of the Devastated Area, were repeatedly rude to park officials, and kept "vicious dogs which attack fishermen and park visitors." Rangers favored condemnation proceedings for these obnoxious inholders who "have attempted to thwart and defeat National Park ideals in every possible way."<sup>45</sup>

The primary troublemakers were the Dobrowsky brothers, Jack and Baird, who Long had enlisted to take over the business of selling off his land in small pieces. Among their affronts to the park, the Dobrowskys boasted about their right to shoot deer that wandered across their property lines from park lands. This assertion ignited legal debate in 1936 over whose laws apply – the state's or the federal government's – on private lands within Lassen Volcanic. U.S. Commissioner Albert Wahl ruled that all hunting was prohibited on inholdings, as in the rest of the park. The California Attorney General and a Department of Justice attorney disagreed. They asserted that the park's establishing act and the 1928 legislation that transferred jurisdiction of Lassen Volcanic from the state to the federal government actually retained California jurisdiction – including state-regulated hunting and fishing – on private parcels within the park. But ultimately Wahl's ruling was upheld by Frederick L. Kirgis, Interior's acting solicitor,

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<sup>44</sup> B. F. Manbey, Regional Chief of Lands, to Adolf O. Rustad, April 18, 1957, File L1425: Juniper Lake Pt. 2; Regional Director to Director, Memorandum, November 10, 1958; E. T. Scoyen, Acting Director, to Hon. Clair Engle, May 8, 1959, File L1425 LAVO, Box 1745, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II; Freeland to Johnson, January 2, 1959; Acting Director to Hon. Clair Engle, United States Senate, File 66: L1425 Juniper Lake 1935-1962, Box 32; R. B. Moore, Superintendent, to Regional Director, Western Region, Memorandum, October 14, 1964, with "1964 Land Acquisition Program Priority List, Lassen Volcanic National Park;" Donald Lee, Chief, Division of Land and Water Rights, to Accounts, Memorandum, April 7, 1964, File 6: L14 Land Acquisition Program, Misc. 1957-73, Box 29, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Purdy, *Lassen Volcanic*, 161-162.

<sup>45</sup> "Privately Owned Lands Within and Adjoining Lassen Volcanic National Park," viii; "Private Lands Within the Park," ca. 1939; Eugene Barton, Memorandum to the Superintendent on the Activities of the Dobrowsky Family, May 26, 1936, File 49: L 1425 Dobrowski, Jack 1936-1981, Box 31, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

who determined that U. S. law applied “over all the park, including privately owned lands.” Thereafter, hunting on inholdings qualified as poaching, no matter the season.<sup>46</sup>

Park administrators found other Hat Creek inholders more cooperative than the Dobrowskys. In negotiating his use of the park’s Hat Creek fire road to access his property in 1942, University of California professor Burle Jones regretted that his tiny tract had cost Superintendent Lloyd “so much time and thought.” But apparently even the Dobrowskys managed a somewhat peaceful coexistence with park officials through the years. Troubled by an impending divorce, Jack Dobrowsky sought a buyer for his one-acre inholding in 1961. The park purchased his property for \$6,000 in 1963, leaving 11 small tracts of private land, totaling 7 acres, clustered along Hat Creek. By September 1964, the park had acquired a five-sixth interest in the 152-acre Long property, paying \$50,000 to the living heirs of J. W. Long. Park acquisition of this inholding was completed soon thereafter, with another payment of \$10,000 to a deceased heir’s estate.<sup>47</sup>

In addition to the private properties along Hat Creek and Juniper Lake, one large and especially irksome inholding remained in Lassen Volcanic in the mid-1960s. The Shasta Forest Company, owned by the Walker family of Redding, still retained most of “Section 36” (of Township 30 north, Range 5 east), located just west of Warner Valley along the park’s southern boundary. Dating back to 1928, the Walkers expressed their determination to keep this land, which was leased to local stockmen as grazing range. The tract contained an estimated 3 million board feet of merchantable timber. In 1955, the Park Service opened negotiations with the timber company and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to exchange this 556-acre inholding for a parcel of the public domain of equal timber value. The BLM was never more than lukewarm about the idea. Neither were the Walkers, who chose not to file an exchange application. They had other plans for Section 36.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Barton, Memorandum on the Dobrowsky Family, May 26, 1936; U.S. Webb, Attorney General, State of California, to Honorable E. L. Macaulay, Chief of Patrol, Division of Fish and Game, May 19, 1936; E. P. Leavitt, Superintendent, to The Director, June 29, 1936; H. H. Pike, U. S. Attorney, to Hon. Albert Wahl, U.S. Commissioner, September 3, 1936; Pike to The Attorney General, Washington, D.C., September 4, 1936, File 607: Lands – Jurisdiction, Box 1309, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; “Private Lands in the Lassen Volcanic National Park,” *Science* 88 (November 4, 1938): 421-422.

<sup>47</sup> O. A. Tomlinson, Regional Director, Memorandum for Superintendent Lloyd, September 16, 1942; Burle J. Jones, to Mr. James V. Lloyd, October 6, 1942, File 901-4: Lassen Public Utility Operators Privileges, Box 1324, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Lester D. Bodine, to Merle Stitt, Memorandum, June 24, 1961; Donald E. Lee, Chief, Division of Land and Water Rights, to Accounts, Memorandum, April 7, 1964, File 49: L 1425 Dobrowski, Jack 1936-1981, Box 31; Lee to Regional Director, Western Region, Memorandum January 28, 1963; Gunnar O. Fagerlund, Operations, Western Region, to Director, Memorandum, September 30, 1964; James. M Siler, Regional Chief, Division of Land and Water Rights, to Mr. Daniel M. Fadenrecht, December 8, 1964, File 93: L1425 Long – Hat Creek, 1963-1969, Box 33, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>48</sup> Superintendent, to The Director, October 4, 1928, File 2: L14 Land Acquisitions General 1926-1935, Box 29, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Merle E. Stitt, Acting Superintendent, to Regional Director, Region Four, Memorandum, November 3, 1961, File: L1425 1-1-60 to LAVO; Robert S. Luntley, Acting Assistant Regional Director, Western Region, to Director, Memorandum, June 24, 1963, with Mr. Thompson’s Statement on Shasta Forest Company Property, June 24, 1963, File: L1425 Pt. 1, 1-1-62 to 12-

Unbeknownst to the Park Service, the Walkers contracted with Pacific Gas and Electric to sink an exploratory steam well on their inholding at Terminal Geyser, the most remote fumarole in the park. Not a true geyser, which is defined by intermittent eruptions, Terminal Geyser spewed a constant stream of hot water skyward. The Walkers hoped that a similarly steady supply of steam lay beneath the ground's surface nearby. In 1961, the drilling crew cut an access road across Lassen National Forest lands and most of Section 36 to Terminal Geyser, a one-mile penetration beyond the Lassen Volcanic boundary into the park. On Halloween Day, park rangers discovered the road, which cut deep into hillsides of this rugged corner of the park. Inquiries made to the Forest Service, which had issued a permit for the road construction, revealed the Walkers' plan to install a 5,000-kilowatt power plant at Terminal Geyser, but the park had no authority to immediately halt the project.<sup>49</sup>

The following summer, a drilling rig was trucked to the site and the contractors drilled 1,300 feet into the ground before capping the well: the 200-degree water at this depth was not commercially viable. Deeper prospecting would await further funding from the Walkers. By January 1963, the drilling site was badly eroded from severe rain storms, reported Philip Hyde, who wrote an exposé of this national park indignity in *National Parks Magazine*. Imminent logging of the now roaded Section 36 worried both Hyde and Superintendent Sylvester, who through 1962 had continued to pursue a land exchange deal for the tract, albeit with low expectations and no results. The Walkers preferred that the park redraw its southern boundary to exclude their property.<sup>50</sup>

In October 1964, Superintendent Moore indicated that despite Section 36's recent roading and drilling assaults, he wanted to pursue acquisition of the park's other remaining inholdings at Hat Creek and Juniper Lake first. Public popularity of these two areas motivated Moore to prioritize these properties over Section 36, as did the financial outlook. Altogether, the 25 cabin lots, totaling 10 acres, were valued at \$100,000, compared to Section 36's appraisal of half a million dollars.<sup>51</sup>

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31-63 LAVO, Box 1745, Entry 7a; J. V. Lloyd, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Director, November 7, 1941, File 901-1: Lassen Privileges Grazing, Box 1324, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>49</sup> Stitt to Regional Director, November 3, 1961; Mr. Thompson's Statement on Shasta Forest Company Property, June 24, 1963.

<sup>50</sup> Philip Hyde, "Steam Means Trouble in Lassen's 'Section Thirty-Six'," *National Parks Magazine* 37 (June 1963): 4-6; Mr. Thompson's Statement on Shasta Forest Company Property, June 24, 1963; Moore to Regional Director, October 14, 1964.

<sup>51</sup> Moore to Regional Director, October 14, 1964.



## Chapter Six

### Serving the Visitor

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At the first conference of park naturalists held in Berkeley, California, in November 1929, Yellowstone's Dorr Yeager observed that when a park had a museum, the museum became the hub of the park naturalist's operations.<sup>1</sup> So it was at Lassen Volcanic National Park, where the Loomis Museum made the Manzanita Lake area into a hub not only for the interpretation program but for other visitor services as well. By the time of the park's dedication in 1931, the Loomis Museum was attracting a few thousand visitors each summer. Visitors often arrived at this remote location with their cars nearly out of gas, and had to beg a little gas from Mr. and Mrs. Loomis to get themselves and their cars back to civilization.<sup>2</sup> The need for a gas station near the museum became one of the pressing arguments for establishing a concession at Manzanita Lake. With the development of a gas station, grocery store, lodge, cabins, and boat rentals at Manzanita Lake in the following year, the area began to attract still more people.

Over the course of the next 30 years, visitor services were steadily expanded to other areas of the park, creating other visitor concentration areas even as Manzanita Lake remained the hub of visitor activity. This was accomplished through a partnership of the Park Service and the park concession, the Lassen National Park Company. The Park Service, through its interpretation program, offered a variety of educational opportunities to visitors at campfire talks in campgrounds, on naturalist-led excursions, on self-guiding nature trails, at wayside exhibits, and at information stations. The concession,

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<sup>1</sup> Dorr quoted in Matthew E. Beatty, "The Place of Museums and Exhibits in the Interpretive Program," in National Park Service, *Proceedings of the Second Park Naturalists Conference held at Grand Canyon National Park, November 13-17, 1940*, unpublished typescript, U.S. Department of the Interior Library, Washington, D.C.

<sup>2</sup> B. F. Loomis to L. W. Collins, July 31, 1932, File 036: A26 Superintendent's General Correspondence 1932, Box 1, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

meanwhile, introduced trail rides and boat rentals at Summit Lake and Butte Lake, and eventually took over operation of the Drakesbad Guest Ranch.

Winter activities, especially skiing, grew increasingly popular from the 1930s through the 1960s. Winter use created its own unique demands for park development. At first the Park Service responded enthusiastically to the call for winter-use development. By the 1940s, the Park Service began to question the appropriateness of winter sports activity in national parks, including Lassen Volcanic. Despite those service-wide qualms, however, Lassen continued catering to this type of visitor use for several more decades.

### **Establishing an Interpretation Program**

The park's interpretation program began with Mr. and Mrs. Loomis and their museum. On busy summer days, the retired couple took turns greeting visitors in their art studio or in the museum, where they sometimes gave lectures based on the mounted photo collection. Apart from earning a little income from sales of postcards and Benjamin's 1926 book, *Pictorial History of the Lassen Volcano*, the couple's sole interest in residing at Manzanita Lake each summer was to make the visitor experience more educational. Yet Mr. Loomis was the first to admit that he and his wife could not do it alone. Many visitors said they were confused by the photos and did not know what they meant unless someone was there "to tell the story."<sup>3</sup>

The Loomis Museum was a classic overstuffed museum when it first opened, with some 200 photos mounted on the walls from floor to ceiling, dozens of geologic specimens arrayed in glass cases, and assorted biological specimens sealed in glass jars smelling of formaldehyde. In the back room was a collection of stuffed and mounted animals, placed in a series of groups, each group backed by a mural of a natural scene found in the park. Mrs. Loomis painted the murals from Mr. Loomis's photos, and each one was a close reproduction of an actual view – "nothing gaudy, but real life, as nearly as we can make them," Mr. Loomis wrote.<sup>4</sup>

In the summer of 1931, the Park Service employed the park's first naturalist, a professor named Frederick J. Herman. Not much is known about him except that he did not know how to communicate the story of the eruption and he did not impress Loomis. Herman removed about a fourth of the photos from the walls of the museum, taking down all those that featured lumbering scenes in the Lassen National Forest (much to the chagrin of the forest supervisor, W. G. Durbin). Then he rearranged the remainder so as to break up groups of photos that seemed repetitive. To Loomis, this made no sense as

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<sup>3</sup> B. F. Loomis to Horace M. Albright, December 12, 1931, File 900-05: Public Utility Operators, B.F. Loomis, Misc. Corres., Box 360, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

the groupings had been intentional to aid in telling the story of the eruption. After Herman's three-month appointment was over, Albright acknowledged to Loomis that hiring him had been a mistake, and that the Park Service had found a much more promising candidate who would make a fresh start. His name was Norman W. Scherer, and he came from Yellowstone where he had worked under Dorr Yeager.<sup>5</sup>

Scherer joined the Lassen Volcanic staff for a little more than one year, long enough to develop a fledgling program for what was then called the Educational Department. In the summer of 1932 the ranger naturalist staff consisted of Scherer, whose title was assistant park naturalist, and Charles E. Keathley, a ranger naturalist. Scherer kept his family at Mineral while he and Keathley bunked together in a pine-board shanty at Manzanita Lake that was barely big enough to accommodate the two of them. It was a temporary arrangement until a park naturalist's quarters could be built in the museum area.<sup>6</sup>

The interpretation program continued to focus on the museum, where approximately 85 percent of all visitor contacts were made. Scherer thinned out the exhibits, reducing the number of photos by a third, taking out all but a few of the lava rocks and fossil snails, and removing all the formaldehyde-filled jars. Noting that the average museum visitor stayed in the building for just 23 minutes, he sought to tailor the displays so as to tell a concise story. Sometimes museum visitors were given short talks and sometimes they were left to their own resources.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to his museum duties, Scherer gave campfire talks in the public campground at Manzanita Lake. Benjamin Loomis occasionally joined in. These were well attended. After the main park road opened to traffic on July 6, 1932, Scherer and Keathley began offering guided trips. Most popular was the hike to the summit of Lassen Peak. Sometimes Keathley remained on the summit all afternoon, greeting hikers and doing what would later be termed "roving interpretation." Scherer tried to offer "auto caravans" but got few comers, which he attributed to the lack of a gas station at Manzanita Lake. A few guided trips were made to Bumpass Hell, and a few lectures were given at Summit Lake and Sulphur Works.<sup>8</sup>

Scherer transferred out of Lassen Volcanic in June 1933, and for the next two and a half years the Educational Department was under the direction of seasonal ranger naturalists: first Clyde C. Searl, then Russell E. Farmer, each one assisted by another ranger naturalist. Searl rearranged the museum exhibits again, displaying the photos in

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<sup>5</sup> Horace M. Albright to B. F. Loomis, January 7, 1932, File 900-05: Public Utility Operators, B. F. Loomis, Misc. Corres., Box 360, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>6</sup> B. F. Loomis to The Director, May 28, 1932, File 620 Part 1: Buildings, Box 1312, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>7</sup> B. F. Loomis to Gentlemen, November 16, 1932, File 900-05: Public Utility Operators, B. F. Loomis, Misc. Corres., Box 360, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Report of the Educational Department for July 1932, File 28: K2615 Naturalist's Monthly Reports 1932, Box 26, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>8</sup> Report of the Educational Department for July 1932.

approximate chronological order in logical panels with headings, and giving each photo a number label. He then produced a museum guide, keyed to the numbered photos, which was mimeographed and made available to all museum visitors. Campfire talks at Manzanita Lake Campground became a nightly affair, weather permitting, drawing practically 100 percent attendance among campers. By 1934, campfire talks exceeded museum contacts as the most effective way of educating visitors. The ranger naturalists also gave lectures at the two CCC camps in the park.<sup>9</sup>

In time, auto caravans became a success. Scherer attributed the change to improvement of the park road and the addition of a gas station at Manzanita Lake. Most popular was an auto caravan to the lava tubes on Hat Creek. The enormous tubes, resembling subway tunnels, were easily accessible by road and could be entered on foot. Although this particular trip led outside the park to a geologic feature located on the Lassen National Forest, it was thought to be in keeping with the Park Service's mission to interpret the volcanic story of the area. Another auto caravan to Cinder Cone did not have a large attendance because of the difficulty of negotiating roads to that other corner of the park, but those who went found the trip "distinctly worthwhile." A third auto caravan led to the trailhead below Lassen Peak, and this trip included a naturalist-led hike up the peak.<sup>10</sup>

In the fall of 1935, Lassen Volcanic once again acquired funding for a permanent park naturalist position, and Carl R. Swartzlow was selected for the job. An educator by background, having taught at both the high school and college levels, Swartzlow held a Ph.D. in geology from the University of Missouri. In the previous year, he had taken a six-week summer job with the Park Service conducting a geological reconnaissance of Lava Beds National Monument, an experience that prompted him to pursue a new career in the National Park Service. Arriving at Lassen Volcanic in October 1935, Swartzlow made his permanent home at Mineral and resided with his wife and daughter at Manzanita Lake each summer.

The following six years saw the Educational Department flourish. Swartzlow was a strong administrator, eager to build a larger program. John Preston, the park's superintendent from 1937 to 1941, was also keen to improve and expand the interpretation program, and Swartzlow and Preston worked well together. In March 1937, Swartzlow spent two weeks at the Western Museum Laboratories, where he received technical assistance in producing a development plan for the Loomis Museum. During the winter of 1938-39, Swartzlow did a tour of duty in the Park Service's Washington Office, where he worked for Assistant Director Hillory Tolson on the *Administrative Manual of the National Park Service*, a tome that eventually filled six

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<sup>9</sup> Naturalist's Report, Month of June, 1933, File 29: K2615 Naturalist's Monthly Narrative, 1933, Box 26; Annual Report of the Educational Department for 1934, File 65: K2621 Naturalist's Annual Reports, 1934, 1937, 1939, 1940, Box 27, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

volumes. Meanwhile, the Educational Department's seasonal staff grew from one ranger naturalist to three, plus a museum assistant. The park's second museum assistant was Paul Ernest Schulz, a talented and scholarly understudy to Swartzlow, who would later serve in Swartzlow's position from 1947 to 1955.<sup>11</sup>

The work of the educational staff included basic research on the park's natural and cultural history. The decade of the 1930s saw a significant increase in NPS research generally, with much of it focused on wildlife population studies and habitat requirements that often had important implications for park management. At Lassen Volcanic, research by park staff focused primarily on the geologic story, which, for the time being, did not pose any challenges to management and development of the park. Two ranger naturalists made a study of reforestation of the Devastated Area. Russell Farmer researched the customs and basketry of the Hat Creek Indians. Swartzlow conducted research on the age of Chaos Crags, among other subjects, and published articles in *The Journal of Geology* and other scholarly publications.<sup>12</sup>

By 1941, Swartzlow had increased his staff to five seasonal ranger naturalists and a museum assistant. Shortly thereafter, wartime conditions led to a virtual suspension of the park's interpretation program for the duration of the war. On August 1, 1942, Swartzlow was called to service in the Air Corps, and the following month Harry B. Robinson, a ranger naturalist, was promoted to park naturalist in Swartzlow's place. For the next three summers, Robinson conducted the entire interpretation program on his own, without any seasonal ranger naturalists. Swartzlow returned to Lassen Volcanic after the war, briefly resuming his post as park naturalist. In October 1946, he left the park to become regional naturalist for the Midwest Office in Omaha, leaving Robinson in charge of the program once again. In April 1947, Robinson transferred out and Paul Schulz was appointed park naturalist.<sup>13</sup>

## **Interpretation in the Postwar Era**

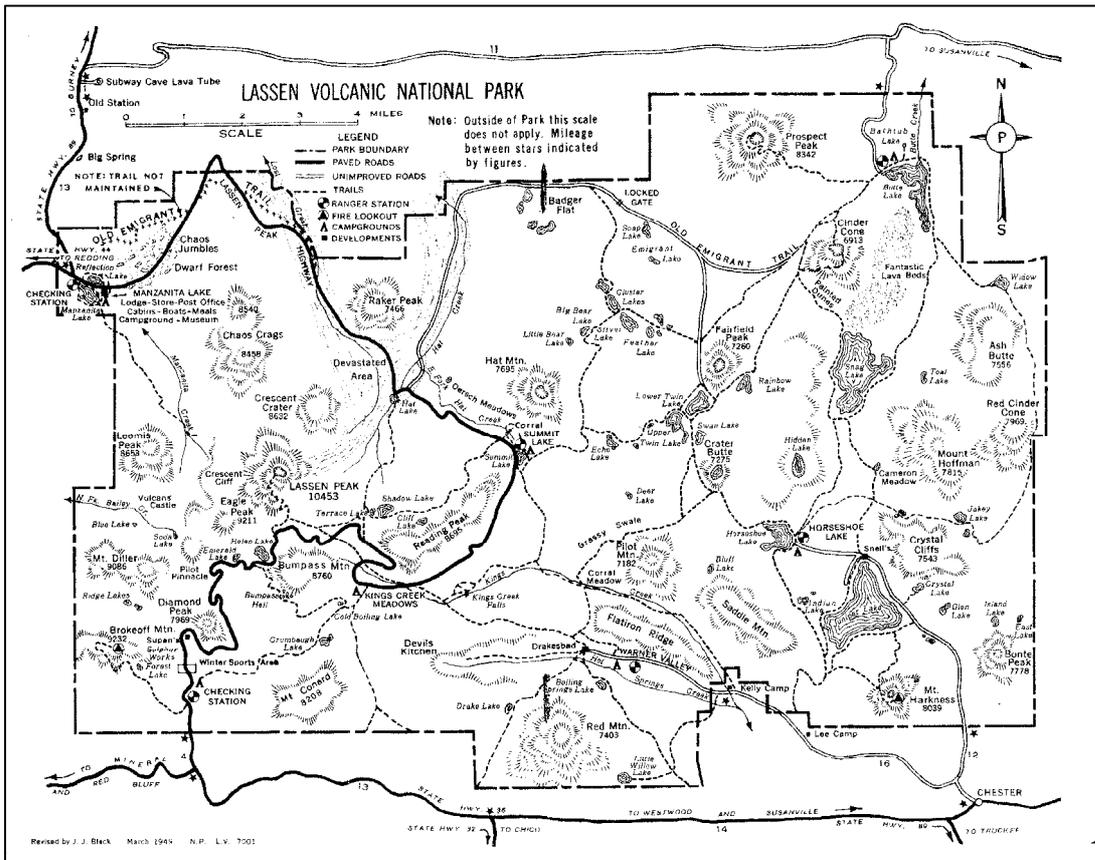
The Park Service measured the success of a park's interpretation program by tallying the number of "visitor contacts" made. For each campfire talk, guided walk, or auto caravan, the ranger naturalist recorded the number of persons attending, each of whom was considered a visitor contact. At the end of the year the attendance figures were tallied and the totals were used to help evaluate the relative effectiveness of one type of activity versus another. If numbers were up, more staff time might be devoted to that activity. If numbers were down, the activity might be modified or discontinued. The

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<sup>11</sup> Carl Robert Swartzlow, "Biographical Data," undated typescript, File H14: Area and Service History, I&E Division Records, LAVO Files; Annual Report of the Educational Department for the Fiscal Year 1937, File 207-01.4: Superintendent's Annual Report, Box 1302, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>12</sup> Annual Report of the Educational Department for the Fiscal Year 1937.

<sup>13</sup> SARs 1943, 1944, 1945; Swartzlow, "Biographical Data."



**Map 4. Visitor Map of Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1949. Source: National Park Service.**

numbers were also used to disclose visitor-use trends, justify staff increases, and guide construction design such as the seating capacity in a campground amphitheater. Finally, the totals recorded for all activities were combined into a grand total of visitor contacts for the year. In most years, the interpretation staff was pleased to report an increase in visitor contacts compared to the previous year – a management indicator that the interpretation program was doing well.

Remarkably, the interpretation program at Lassen Volcanic was able to raise the number of visitor contacts from about 20,000 per year in the 1930s to about 400,000 per year in the 1960s. Some of the increase was accomplished by enlarging the interpretation staff. In 1965, the interpretation program was staffed by three permanent personnel (two naturalists and one clerk-stenographer) and nine seasonal interpreters, more than double the number of personnel in Swartzlow's time.<sup>14</sup> Park staff reached more visitors, too, with the help of larger venues, such as the giant Manzanita Lake Amphitheater, which accommodated nightly gatherings of several hundred people after the Manzanita Lake

<sup>14</sup> Annual Narrative Report of Interpretive and Informational Services for 1965, File 4: K1815 Interpretive Services Activity Reports, Box 26, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

Campground was rebuilt and expanded in 1961. Another part of the increase was attributable to the overall growth in park visitation. For example, one seasonal interpreter stationed in the Loomis Museum in 1967 served a total of 128,184 visitors – more than eight times the total museum attendance in 1934.<sup>15</sup> But all of these factors combined could not account for the enormous, 20-fold increase in visitor contacts made over the course of these four decades. The interpretation program was able to contact so many people chiefly as a result of automation.

Automation took several forms. Self-guiding nature trails were one example of automation. In place of an interpreter, trail markers and a booklet called attention to interesting features beside the trail and provided information that would give the visitor an educational experience. The first such trail was the Lily Pond Self-Guiding Nature Trail in the Manzanita Lake area. By 1950, the park had developed a number of these, such as the popular Butte Lake and Cinder Cone Self-Guiding Nature Trail in the remote northeast corner of the park, formerly served by an occasional auto caravan and naturalist-led walk.<sup>16</sup> Applying the same idea to visitor use of the main park road, Schulz wrote *Road Guide to Lassen Volcanic National Park*. Information in the 45-page book was keyed to numbered markers along the road. Schulz instructed his readers to drive slowly and always pull off the pavement when stopping at a marker or other point of interest. Over time, these designated pull-offs became known as “waysides and road markers.”<sup>17</sup>

Signage was another form of automation. In the Mission 66 era, the NPS began installing a new generation of interpretive signs at waysides, which it called “wayside exhibits.” More than just words on a wooden sign, these were museum-quality panels with photos, diagrams, maps, and text. Taken out of storage and mounted outdoors at the beginning of each summer season, they were made to withstand the weathering effects of sun, rain, hail, and sleet. In 1957, an extensive wayside exhibit was installed at Sulphur Works consisting of seven panels constructed of wood-grain laminated plastic. The experimental material had to withstand constant exposure to heat, moisture, and acids

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<sup>15</sup> Annual Narrative Report of Interpretive and Informational Services for 1967, File 4: K1815 Interpretive Services Activity Reports, Box 26, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives: Annual Report of the Educational Department for 1934.

<sup>16</sup> Park Naturalist to Superintendent, July 1, 1950, File 46: K2615 Naturalist’s Monthly Narrative 1950, Box 26, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives. The interpretation section of the Master Plan Development Outline (1958) listed six existing self-guiding nature trails (Lily Pond, Lassen Peak, Bumpass Hell, Cinder Cone, Boiling Springs Lake, and Sulphur Works) and it recommended a seventh at Devils Kitchen. File D18: Development Outline and Master Plan 1953-59, Box 1, Western Region LAVO Central Files 1954-65 (Acc. 95-003), RG 79, NA – PSR. Three trail guides – Lily Pond, Cinder Cone, and Lassen Peak – are still being produced by the Lassen Association. (Note to authors by Cari Kreshak.)

<sup>17</sup> The road markers were reference points for both staff and visitors. These were removed before 1997 when a new version of the *Road Guide* was published with no marker numbers. New wayside exhibits were installed. Later, these exhibits were replaced with other, fewer waysides and a limited number of markers along the road referenced in another update of the *Road Guide*, published in 2007. (Note to authors by Nancy Bailey and Cari Kreshak; comments on final draft report.)

coming from the thermal features. After four years, the park administration was happy to report that these signs were still in good shape.<sup>18</sup> The wayside exhibits' semi-permanence made them a good investment as the Park Service sought ways to reach more visitors with finite resources.

Audiovisual aids, introduced as a way to improve lectures, gradually came to stand alone as another means of increasing visitor contacts through automation. Beginning with the acquisition of a slide projector and movie projector in 1950, the park made steady advances in its visitor orientation program at the Loomis Museum. In 1956, the interior of the Loomis Museum was renovated and the back room was made into a combination auditorium and exhibit room. The following year, an automatic film projector and projection booth were installed.<sup>19</sup> In 1961, a new ceiling was built in the auditorium to improve the room's poor acoustics, and a new slide program, "Lassen: Land of Contrast," with taped narration, was initiated. That same year, the Park Service installed three roadside audio stations at the Devastated Area and Chaos Jumbles waysides and at the start of the Lassen Peak Trail. With the help of these automated devices, the interpretation program more than doubled its visitor contacts over the previous year. "Faced with a small interpretive staff," the chief naturalist reported, "we must lean heavily on self-guiding devices if we are to reach an appreciable number of visitors."<sup>20</sup>

Park staff wanted to expand or replace the Loomis Museum but their plans never materialized. Superintendent Freeland found the building's architecture "unattractive and not in keeping with the rustic nature of the developed area" and proposed a major expansion of it, including a lecture hall with a seating capacity of 250 to 300. He commented that in its present use, about three-quarters of visitors had to stand to watch the slide presentation.<sup>21</sup> When Mission 66 commenced, the park administration made a bid to get a new visitor center at Manzanita Lake as well as a smaller visitor center at Summit Lake.<sup>22</sup> Instead, the Loomis Museum was renamed the Manzanita Lake Visitor Center and an "information center" was installed at Summit Lake. The information center was no more than a ranger booth with a welcome counter. After one summer, this little facility was moved to Sulphur Works, where it remained until 1963. Its function

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<sup>18</sup> Annual Report of Informational and Interpretive Services, 1960, File K1819: Interpretive Activities Annual Statistical Tabulation of Interpretive Services, Box 2, Western Region LAVO Central Files 1954-1965 (Acc. 95-003), RG 79, NA – PSR.

<sup>19</sup> Annual Report of Informational and Interpretive Services, 1957, File K1819: Interpretive Activities Annual Statistical Tabulation of Interpretive Services, Box 2, Western Region LAVO Central Files, 1954-1965 (Acc. 95-003), RG 79, NA – PSR.

<sup>20</sup> Annual Report of Informational and Interpretive Services, 1961, File K1815: Interpretive Services Activity Reports, Box 26, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>21</sup> Park Naturalist to Superintendent, August 30, 1954, File D-18: Development Outline and Master Plan 1953-59, Box 1, Western Region LAVO Central Files 1954-65 (Acc. 95-003), RG 79, NA – PSR; Superintendent to Regional Director, September 10, 1954, File K1815, Box 1500, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>22</sup> Park Naturalist to Superintendent, September 6, 1956, File 53: K2615 Naturalist's Monthly Narrative, Box 27, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

was less to provide interpretation than to answer visitors' mundane questions, such as "How far is it to a gas station?" Nevertheless, rangers' responses counted toward the total number of visitor contacts.<sup>23</sup>

By the mid-1960s, it was clear that the push to reach more and more visitors each year was causing some dilution of the interpretation program's content. For one thing, the interpretation division leaned heavily on the protection division for much of its personal contact activity, such as staffing information centers, and those rangers were not trained as interpreters. For another, it received growing numbers of complaints from visitors demanding better quality interpretation. A major problem was that seasonal interpreters were kept so busy working in areas of visitor concentration that they had little time to explore and learn about the park. "Schedules are so tight," Chief Park Naturalist James A. Richardson lamented, "that the time necessary to get seasonal interpreters out into the Park to experience the wonders they must talk about is practically nil."<sup>24</sup>

One casualty of the interpretation program's heavy emphasis on visitor contacts was research. Paul Schulz, last of the old-time park naturalists, managed to administer the program and still produce an impressive body of scholarly work for Lassen Volcanic. In addition to multiple editions of *Road Guide to Lassen Volcanic National Park*, Schulz wrote *Stories of Lassen's Place Names* (1949), *Geology of Lassen's Landscape* (1952), and *Indians of Lassen Volcanic National Park and Vicinity* (1954). Robert Badaracco, assistant park naturalist from 1959 to 1961, wrote *Amphibians and Reptiles of Lassen Volcanic National Park*, and Raymond L. Nelson, chief park naturalist from 1961 to 1963, produced *Field Guide to the Trees and Shrubs of Lassen Volcanic National Park*. Both field guides were published in 1962. In general, interpretation staff became too busy serving Lassen Volcanic's burgeoning number of visitors to conduct research and writing. By the 1960s, an effort was slowly underway to involve college and university professors with research projects in the park.

Schulz's research on local Native American tribes introduced him to Selena LaMarr, an Atsugewi woman. Schulz invited LaMarr to demonstrate her people's traditional cultural activities for park visitors, and in June 1952 an "Indian lore" program was initiated at Manzanita Lake, where LaMarr demonstrated basket weaving and acorn pounding for 30 minutes per session. The program proved to be especially popular, drawing crowds of several dozen visitors each session. Two years later, LaMarr was joined by another cultural demonstrator, Dessie Snooks, also known as Karr-ah-taht-me-noo, or "Grasshopper Woman." When Freeland became superintendent he did not like this program, finding the elderly Mrs. LaMarr "feeble" and her performance "listless," and recommending that a seasonal interpreter could demonstrate the traditional Indian

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<sup>23</sup> District Ranger to Chief Ranger, August 19, 1956, File K1815 Interpretive Activities Services, Box 2, Western Region LAVO Central Files 1954-1965 (Acc. 95-003), RG 79, NA – PSR; Annual Narrative Report of Interpretive and Informational Services for 1964, File 4: K1815 Interpretive Services Activity Reports, Box 26, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW.

<sup>24</sup> Annual Narrative Report of Interpretive and Informational Services for 1967.

practices more effectively. Freeland also objected strongly to the way a ranger naturalist solicited tips from the audience at the end of the program – an unusual procedure that stemmed from the fact that LaMarr was compensated by the Lassen National Park Company, not the Park Service. Schulz convinced Freeland to allow the program to continue, and it became a beloved and enduring feature of Lassen Volcanic’s interpretation program. In 1967, LaMarr, then nearly 80 years old, was described by the chief park naturalist as “still bright and charming as she has always been.”<sup>25</sup>

### **The Park’s Cooperating Association**

The Interior Department appropriation act for the fiscal year 1939, approved May 9, 1938, contained a provision that permitted Park Service field personnel to serve in nonprofit scientific and historical societies engaged in educational work in the various national parks. The law spurred the creation of the Loomis Museum Association (later renamed the Lassen Loomis Museum Association, then the Lassen Association). Park Naturalist Carl Swartzlow performed the preliminary tasks of drafting a constitution and by-laws, getting these documents approved by Washington officials, and organizing a meeting of friends of the park. At this meeting, on April 22, 1939, attendees formed the Loomis Museum Association, adopted the constitution and by-laws, and elected officers. Swartzlow was elected executive secretary, Chief Ranger Eugene Barton was elected treasurer, and Superintendent Preston was elected to the board of directors together with two friends of the park, Judge H. S. Gans and Mrs. John E. Raker, wife of the late congressman.<sup>26</sup> On May 18, 1939, the Loomis Museum Association was officially designated a cooperating association under the authority of the 1938 act.<sup>27</sup>

The fledgling organization’s operating expenses were minimal, since it was run out of government buildings using government employees’ paid time. As years passed, other park naturalists stepped up to guide the organization, and wives of park staff sometimes contributed their time as well. If this arrangement was somewhat incestuous – with park officials largely controlling an organization whose purpose was to serve the park – it was typical nonetheless of national park cooperating associations in this era.

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<sup>25</sup> Park Naturalist to Superintendent, July 1, 1952, File 49: K2615 Naturalist’s Monthly Narrative; Park Naturalist to Superintendent, August 2, 1954, File 51: K2615 Naturalist’s Monthly Narrative, Box 27, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Superintendent to Park Naturalist, August 10, 1954, File K1815 Interpretive Activities Services, Box 2, Western Region LAVO Central Files 1954-1965 (Acc. 95-003), RG 79, NA – PSR.

<sup>26</sup> John C. Preston to The Director, April 24, 1939, File 871: Lassen Associations, Clubs, and Committees, Box 69, Records of the Western Regional Director – LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR. The May 9, 1938 act of Congress is enclosed in this file. See also Brockman, “Park Naturalists and the Evolution of National Park Service Interpretation through World War II,” 41. Brockman asserts that congressional authority for the associations came earlier.

<sup>27</sup> A. E. Demaray to Acting Secretary, May 18, 1939, File 871: Lassen Loomis Museum Association, Box 1318, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

(The Park Service essentially ran the cooperating associations until the 1980s, when an opinion by the Interior Department solicitor called for new guidelines that made park employees ineligible to serve as cooperating association officers.)<sup>28</sup>

For the first four decades of its existence, the Loomis Museum Association served mostly as a publisher of park literature. As such it was a valuable arm of the park's interpretation program. It published everything from mimeographed pamphlets to full-color books, including a full-color edition of the ever popular *Road Guide to Lassen Volcanic National Park*. Following the death of Estella Loomis in 1953, the association acquired the copyright to Benjamin Loomis's *Pictorial History of the Lassen Volcano*. By this time, revenue from its various sales items had raised the association's net worth to \$5,271.09, and it was on its way to assisting the park through purchases of myriad goods and services relating to its educational mission.<sup>29</sup>

## Lassen National Park Company

In the fall of 1932, two seasonal park rangers, Don Hummel and Charles Keathley, proposed to establish a concession at Manzanita Lake consisting of cabins, grocery store, boat rentals, and gas station. Hummel, age 25, had just completed a summer at Summit Lake, following four summer seasons at Grand Canyon. Keathley, age 27, had worked one season as a ranger naturalist at Manzanita Lake. The third member of their team was Dallas W. Dort, a wealthy college classmate of Hummel's who had a passing familiarity with national parks and the necessary start-up capital. Hummel emphasized his familiarity with Park Service policies, while Keathley pledged that if granted the concession they would "cooperate in every way possible to promote the educational work." Despite the men's youth, Superintendent Collins heartily endorsed their proposal.<sup>30</sup>

NPS Director Albright still desired a larger company to come into the park, one with enough capital to acquire Drakesbad or Juniper Lake Resort when the time was right. However, he had been unable to secure the Western Pacific Railroad Company for this role, and he agreed with Collins that visitor services at Manzanita Lake were needed. When the railroad company finally withdrew its application for the concession contract in the spring of 1933, Albright decided to give Hummel and Keathley a try. Rather than the

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<sup>28</sup> Terry Maddox, interview by Theodore Catton, April 25, 2007.

<sup>29</sup> Paul E. Schulz, "Accomplishments and Activities of the Association for the Year 1952," January 1, 1953, File 871: Lassen Associations, Clubs, and Committees, Box 69, Records of the Western Regional Director LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PRS.

<sup>30</sup> Don Hummel and Charles Keathley to L. W. Collins, November 16, 1932; Hummel to Charles L. Gable, September 8, 1932; Keathley to H. C. Bryant, October 19, 1932; Collins to The Director, October 22, 1932, File 900-02: Lassen Public Utility Operators Privileges, Box 360, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II. See also Don Hummel, *Stealing the National Parks: The Destruction of Concessions and Park Access* (Bellevue, Wash.: A Free Enterprise Battle Book, 1987), 75-76.

usual ten- or twenty-year concession contract, however, Albright would only allow a three-year contract. Furthermore, he wanted their written agreement that if the facilities provided were not satisfactory at the end of three years, then the Park Service would be free to grant the concession to another party after providing reasonable reimbursement to Hummel and Keathley for their initial investment.<sup>31</sup> Hummel and Keathley agreed to these terms. The company was incorporated as Lassen National Park Camp, Ltd., in 1933; later, the name was changed to Lassen National Park Company.<sup>32</sup>

In the summer of 1933, the company built a small lodge of native lava stone and nine guest cabins, together with a grocery store, gas station, and boat rental facility. By the end of the season, the park concession was open for business and doing well. Visitors were grateful to have these services available inside the park. The service center made the long drive over the main park road less daunting, and day trips to Lassen Peak or Bumpass Hell less grueling.<sup>33</sup>

The dynamic of the company's triumvirate quickly emerged. Dort, the financier, was content to watch the operation from afar and remain practically invisible to the Park Service. Keathley, the man on the ground, managed operations at Manzanita Lake, supervised employees, and dealt with the Park Service's field personnel. Hummel, the entrepreneur, was the company's true leader although he was seldom in the park after the company's first season of operation. Aggressive, ambitious, and committed, Hummel stamped his personality on the Lassen National Park Company. In July 1934, Hummel sent Collins an application for an extension of the company's three-year contract, explaining that the company needed to expand the lodge and the number of cabins in order to meet demand and that it must have a ten-year contract to ensure its investment. In addition, Hummel proposed to build a lunch counter and gas station at Lake Helen, followed by more visitor services at Summit Lake and Horseshoe Lake.<sup>34</sup> The company had not yet been open for business one full season and already it wanted to establish itself as the concession for the whole park.

The Park Service entered a new contract with the company on January 18, 1935. The new contract gave the company its coveted "first preferential right" to provide visitor facilities in the park (not an exclusive or monopolistic right, but a competitive edge that amounted to nearly the same thing). The contract was for a ten-year term, commencing at the expiration of the existing three-year contract in May 1936, which gave the company some insurance for its capital investment. The company acquired a lease of the

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<sup>31</sup> W. W. Blossom to Mr. Moskey, March 30, 1933; L. W. Collins to Don Hummel and Charles Keathley, April 4, 1933, File 900-02: Contracts Part I, Box 1320, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>32</sup> G. A. Moskey to Superintendent, September 27, 1937, File 900-02: Contracts Part I, Box 1320, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>33</sup> SAR 1933. Before the gas station was built, Collins informed Albright that "by far our biggest car trouble in the Park is a result of motorists running out of gasoline." Collins to Albright, November 10, 1932, File 900-02: Lassen Public Utility Operators Privileges, Box 360, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>34</sup> L. W. Collins to The Director, August 1, 1934, File 900-02: Contracts Part I, Box 1320, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

ground for its facilities, and it agreed to develop buildings and structures according to plans approved by the Secretary of the Interior. The franchise fee was a nominal \$100 per year, plus 22½ percent of profits over and above an annual 6 percent return on investment. There was no mention in the contract of whether the company would hold a possessory interest in the buildings at the end of the ten-year term – an issue that would confound national park concession policy after World War II.<sup>35</sup>

With the contract signed, the company moved swiftly ahead with expansion of facilities at Manzanita Lake, completing a new dining room in the lodge and adding ten double guest cabins before the opening of the 1935 summer season. After another strong season of business, the company proposed a third expansion of facilities at Manzanita Lake together with facilities for day hikers at Lake Helen and a boat rental operation at Horseshoe Lake. This proposal was the subject of a meeting in the park in August 1936 with Superintendent Leavitt, NPS Assistant Director Hillory A. Tolson, and NPS Associate Director Harold C. Bryant. Leavitt thought additional cabins at Manzanita Lake were an “urgent necessity,” since the public campgrounds at Manzanita Lake and Summit Lake had been completely filled on every weekend since the opening of the road in June. But Leavitt did not want new development at Lake Helen or Horseshoe Lake. In particular, he had concerns about potable water at Lake Helen. In a letter to NPS Director Cammerer, he wrote: “I feel that commercial development should be kept to a minimum in Lassen Park, and, therefore, recommend that this matter be first referred to the Branch of Plans & Design, for study, and, second, that even if their reaction is favorable, it be postponed to some future time.”<sup>36</sup> The company received permission to build ten more cabins at Manzanita Lake.<sup>37</sup> The company went forward with this expansion in the spring of 1937, and still it had to turn away visitors the following summer as its facilities were filled to capacity.<sup>38</sup>

The Lassen National Park Company thrived during the Great Depression while many concessions in national parks struggled. From 1936 through 1940, it averaged a 17 percent rate of return on investment. In 1941, profits fell by more than half. On examining the company’s books, Hummel found that the profits mostly derived from lodgings, while other visitor services such as the dining room, gas station, and saddle horse business were marginal at best or lost money. Keathley, the general manager, pointed out in his own defense that most national park concessions were required to offer a variety of services, some more profitable than others. But Hummel thought the

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<sup>35</sup> Agreement, January 18, 1935, File 900-02: Contracts Part 1, Box 1320, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II. See also Hummel, *Stealing the National Parks*, 132-133. Hummel maintains that possessory interest was implicit in Article IX of the standard concession contract, until after World War II when a solicitor’s opinion reversed 30 years of Interior policy.

<sup>36</sup> E. P. Leavitt to The Director, August 25, 1936, File 900-01: Buildings, Box 1320, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.  
<sup>37</sup> E. P. Leavitt to Charles E. Keathley, August 25, 1936, File 900-01: Buildings, Box 1320, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>38</sup> SAR 1937.

company should have a higher overall rate of return. With Dort's concurrence, Hummel asked Keathley to tender his one-third share in the company. Abruptly, in May 1942, Keathley left Lassen Volcanic and Hummel's younger brother Gail arrived to take over as manager. All of this came as a surprise to Superintendent Lloyd, who found the new man young, inexperienced, and unfamiliar with the park.<sup>39</sup>

The summer of 1942 saw a significant drop in visitation as wartime rationing of gasoline and rubber tires restricted travel. Practically all use of the park was by local people, a pattern that continued through the remaining war years. Gail Hummel cut visitor services, closing the saddle horse business and the grocery store and cutting the gas station's hours to a few per day, ostensibly in response to wartime conditions, although he admitted to Superintendent Lloyd that he was acting on instructions from his brother Don "to make every unit pay." Lloyd reported that the Park Service received many complaints about the poor service given by the concession that summer. But a poor manager was better than none, and Lloyd faced an even bigger problem when Don and Gail Hummel both went into the military at the end of the year. Before leaving, Gail Hummel requested permission to discontinue the winter sports operation at Sulphur Works, claiming that it, too, was a financial loser.<sup>40</sup>

The Park Service scrambled to keep the concession open and functioning. NPS Associate Director Demaray negotiated an agreement whereby National Park Concessions, Inc., would take over the concession on a year-to-year contract for the duration of the war. The following summer of 1943, Manzanita Lake Lodge opened a month behind schedule. Wartime conditions depressed visitor use even further – to less than a fifth of the record visitation set in 1941. These circumstances led to a financial loss for the season. When National Park Concessions, Inc. threatened to pull out after just one year, the Park Service had to cajole and compromise to get the company to stay. Among the compromises, the NPS allowed National Park Concessions, Inc. to defer maintenance on the lodge and cabins.<sup>41</sup>

When Don Hummel returned after the war and Lassen National Park Company resumed operation of the concession, he faced two pressing issues: rehabilitation of buildings and renewal of the contract, which was due to expire in May 1946. Inevitably, these two problems became entangled. Ironically, the need to reinvest in the buildings was not solely a result of deferred maintenance during the war; Hummel's company had neglected some maintenance items for several years prior to the war. Notably, it had postponed retrofitting all guest cabins with different heating systems to replace hazardous propane tanks that were similar to the one that blew up the superintendent's residence in

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<sup>39</sup> Superintendent to The Director, May 21, 1942 and June 2, 1942, File 900-02: Contracts Part 2, Box 1321, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Hummel, *Stealing the National Parks*, 119.

<sup>40</sup> Superintendent to The Director, July 17, 1945, File 900-02: Contracts Part 2, Box 1321, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>41</sup> Charles L. Gable to The Director, September 10, 1943; James V. Lloyd to The Director, July 17, 1945, File 900-02: Contracts Part 2, Box 1321, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

1937. Superintendent Leavitt first raised this issue just months after the tragedy that took his wife's life, and the company found one excuse after another to put off dealing with it. Now these expenses could be put off no longer, especially in view of the fact that visitor use of the park was expected to increase quickly in the postwar era. But as Hummel and Park Service officials tried to agree on a new contract, the question arose: who owned the buildings and who should pay for their rehabilitation?

A similar concession crisis affected many other national parks after World War II. The issues were bigger than any one park's concession problem, and as a result Lassen National Park Company, like numerous other national park concessions, limped along on one-year contracts year after year through the end of the 1940s. While Director Drury tried repeatedly to craft a compromise between Hummel and the Secretary of the Interior in order to get the long-overdue rehabilitation effort at Lassen Volcanic started, the problem was out of his hands. National park concession policy was under review at higher levels – in the Office of the Solicitor, the Office of the Secretary, and finally, by committees of Congress. All the solicitor's opinions, white papers, commissioned studies, and congressional hearings finally resulted in a new statement of national park concession policy in October 1950. The core issue of who owned the buildings was finessed with abstruse legal language that finally satisfied the Western Conference of National Park Concessioners. In essence, the government retained the right to do what it wanted with the buildings, while the concessioners were assured certain protections for their capital investment in the buildings. Soon thereafter, Lassen National Park Company obtained a 20-year contract. Its major provisions included a new compensation plan, involving a franchise fee of \$400 per year plus a small sliding percentage on all gross receipts, together with a detailed rehabilitation program, which the company was to conduct during the first three years of the contract. Items covered in the first year of the rehabilitation program included converting all cabins from propane gas to electric heat – a safety measure by then 13 years overdue.<sup>42</sup>

## **Acquiring Drakesbad**

In the early 1950s, Don Hummel managed the Manzanita Lake Lodge with his nephew Al Donau each summer and worked at his law practice in Tucson, Arizona, the rest of the year. In May 1952, Hummel received a phone call from Roy Sifford, inviting him to take over operation of Drakesbad under lease. The Sifford family had decided it was time to negotiate a sale of the property to the Park Service, and furthermore, the

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<sup>42</sup> Acting Chief of Public Services to The Director, November 2, 1950, File: Lassen Volcanic National Park, Box 12, Entry 19, Records of Newton B. Drury, RG 79, NA II; A. E. Demaray to Don Hummel, April 6, 1951, enclosing contract, File: Concessions 1936-1953 Part 1 of 2, Unaccessioned LAVO Concession Files, REDW Archives.

place needed repairs after the past hard winter. Hummel was interested, even though his nephew Donau suggested it would be “crazy” to act on Sifford’s offer since the Drakesbad operation was so different from Manzanita Lake Lodge – more like a dude ranch than the usual national park inn. But Drakesbad was also comparatively primitive, a facet that Hummel found intriguing. Cabins were lit by oil lamps and the dining room and lobby were illuminated by Coleman lanterns. Refrigeration consisted of a small propane-operated domestic unit. Drakesbad’s exceptionally loyal clientele obviously liked it that way.<sup>43</sup>

With Superintendent Johnston’s concurrence, Hummel entered into a five-year lease to run the Drakesbad Guest Ranch pending the property’s sale to the government. Lassen National Park Company would handle the work and cost of repairs and conduct the whole operation except for the saddle horse business. Sifford would manage the saddle horse business and receive a percentage of the net revenue. Lassen National Park Company was permitted to add a few more tent cabins but no more.<sup>44</sup> In a separate agreement between Hummel and the Park Service, it was understood that Lassen National Park Company would do nothing to raise the price of the property while the Park Service was negotiating its purchase.<sup>45</sup>

Hummel left Donau in charge of the Manzanita Lake Lodge operation while he went to Drakesbad with his master carpenter to make repairs. Twenty feet of snow in the previous winter had collapsed the dining room roof. All of the dining room furniture was wrecked. Hummel had the building completely rebuilt on its original footprint. Hummel’s wife Genee found hickory tables and chairs in Arkansas that harmonized with the new dining room’s rustic interior décor. By the end of June they were open for business. On July 1, Gail Hummel and his wife returned to Lassen Volcanic to manage Drakesbad, and Don and Genee went back to Manzanita Lake.

Meanwhile, as the first guests began to arrive, Superintendent Johnston visited Drakesbad with NPS Assistant Regional Director Herbert Maier. Neither of them had seen it before. Maier wrote in his inspection report, “the pioneer atmosphere of the development is appealing and many people could well be attracted to it for this reason.” Looking ahead to its acquisition, he saw two possible lines of development. One option would be to make it a “first class resort” accessed by the present road up Warner Valley. In this case, Maier predicted, Drakesbad would attract a local clientele, the road would likely get paved, and over time the rustic lodge might acquire the character of a country club. The second option, which he found more attractive, would be to tie Drakesbad into the park’s existing visitor hub at Manzanita Lake. He envisioned a relationship similar to that between Yosemite Valley and the High Sierra camps. The access road up Warner Valley would remain unpaved and visitation by that approach would not be encouraged.

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<sup>43</sup> Hummel, *Stealing the National Parks*, 164-166.

<sup>44</sup> Superintendent to Regional Director, June 13, 1952, Sifford Collection.

<sup>45</sup> Sifford, *Sixty Years of Siffords at Drakesbad*, 131.

Rather, the principal access would be by saddle horse from a staging point along the Lassen Peak Highway. In Maier's view, this plan would enable the Park Service to retain Drakesbad's primitive character. It would be a base for pack and saddle trips.<sup>46</sup>

What did eventuate for Drakesbad was something in between these two alternatives. Access to the resort continued to be up Warner Valley from the southeast corner of the park. The resort continued to emphasize saddle trips and other group activities, making it a popular vacation spot for families with children. With its small, loyal clientele (augmented, as time went on, by a regular dinner crowd from nearby Chester) the resort did acquire a touch of the exclusivity that Maier predicted would happen if the operation remained relatively isolated from the park's visitor services hub at Manzanita Lake. However, Drakesbad retained its backwoods charm. The access road was not paved and the Park Service kept the lodge's guest capacity small.

When the park finally acquired the full property in 1958, some of Drakesbad's faithful patrons feared that the new managers would change it beyond recognition. Three generations of the Albert family of San Francisco co-signed an impassioned letter to the Secretary of the Interior which began, "I write you concerning a 'coming atrocity' in the Drakesbad area of Lassen Volcanic National Park here in California." The Albert family had been going to Drakesbad each summer for 18 years. The Alberts objected to Park Service plans to relocate the hot pool, rebuild the bathhouse, eliminate tent cabins, and remodel the kitchen and dining room.<sup>47</sup>

Most of these changes were required by the U.S. Public Health Service. As anticipated, the rustic lodge fared poorly in a health inspection report by that agency in 1959. The hot pool did not meet modern health standards, particularly in view of its increasing popularity among campers who were not staying at the lodge. Drakesbad's kitchen and sewer system were in "very poor condition" according to the report. The Park Service addressed these problems within the overall framework of maintaining the lodge's primitive feeling. In the early 1960s, the pool and bathhouse were rebuilt, and the latter was expanded to include changing rooms, showers, and restrooms for men and women. Three duplex cabins were added southeast of the dining room where tent cabins had stood in the past, bringing the resort's capacity to 75-100 guests. An upgrade of the utility plant included the addition of a 40,000-gallon water storage tank.<sup>48</sup> However, plans to add a new dining hall to the lodge and to convert the old dining room to employee quarters were shelved.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Assistant Regional Director to Regional Director, June 27, 1952, File 204: Lassen Inspections, Box 45, Records of the Western Regional Director – Lassen Volcanic National Park 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR.

<sup>47</sup> Dr. Henry C. Albert, Jr., et al., to The Secretary of the Interior, August 8, 1960, File C58: 1-1-60 to 12-31-61 LAVO, Box 969, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>48</sup> Hoke and Warner, *Cultural Landscape Report for Drakesbad Guest Ranch*, 15-16.

<sup>49</sup> E. T. Scoyen to Harold T. Johnson, July 28, 1960; Dr. Henry C. Albert, Jr. et al to Secretary of the Interior, August 8, 1960, File C58: 1-1-60 to 12-31-61, Box 969, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II.

## Skiers in the Park

During the Great Depression, Americans discovered the European sport of skiing. Social historian Frederick Lewis Allen saw the “skiing craze” as part of a “democratization of sports,” a time of transition when Americans took up sports for themselves instead of simply paying to watch others play sports.<sup>50</sup> In the beginning, downhill skiing did not involve much expense other than the cost of transportation to the ski slopes. People improvised their equipment and walked uphill between making ski runs. Thousands of skiing enthusiasts were already plying slopes from New England to California when the first mechanical rope tow in the United States appeared. Reported out of Woodstock, Vermont, in 1934, the new-fangled contraption was powered by the rear wheel of a jacked-up Model T Ford.<sup>51</sup>

Skiers in the Mineral area organized the Mt. Lassen Ski Club about 1930. The club held tournaments at Mineral in January and February, and a few people made ski trips into the park. The club’s membership rapidly grew to include residents of Red Bluff and other towns in the Sacramento Valley. In January 1934, the club approached Superintendent Collins about the possibility of holding a large event in the park. The club would establish a ski run and build a jump out of snow, but all of this would “leave no trace” when the snow melted. What made the club’s request problematic was that it wanted to collect fees at the site to pay for ski rentals, advertising, and other club expenses. Collins wrote to the NPS director for instructions, suggesting that a fee for the event might be collected at the park entrance station and applied only to those visitors attending the event.<sup>52</sup>

Director Cammerer would not allow the club to erect a ticket booth in the park, nor would he authorize Collins to collect a fee for the event at the park entrance, but he did not oppose the event itself and the club somehow got around the problem. The Mt. Lassen Ski Club’s first “Annual Amateur Ski Tournament” occurred on April 10, 1934, a crystal clear day, and drew a number of nationally known ski jumpers and racers as well as some 1,100 spectators. Collins considered the event a great success and an indication of “the future possibilities for all-year use of this National Park.”<sup>53</sup>

In his remaining two years as superintendent, Collins heartily encouraged more winter use. He sought publicity for Lassen Volcanic’s superb snow conditions in

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<sup>50</sup> Frederick Lewis Allen, *Since Yesterday: The Nineteen-Thirties in America*, September 3, 1929 – September 3, 1939 (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1939), 121.

<sup>51</sup> Raymond Flower, *The History of Skiing and Other Winter Sports* (New York: Methuen, 1977), 120.

<sup>52</sup> L. W. Collins to The Director, January 8, 1934 and February 8, 1934, File 868 Part 1: Lassen – Protection, Service to Public, Forestry, and Winter Sports, Box 1318, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>53</sup> Arno B. Cammerer to Superintendent, March 3, 1934, File 868 Part 1: Lassen – Protection, Service to Public, Forestry, and Winter Sports, Box 1318, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; “Lassen Peak Wins Praise As Ski Sport Spot,” *Sacramento Bee*, April 11, 1934; SAR, 1934.

northern California's leading newspapers.<sup>54</sup> He encouraged efforts by the State Division of Highways to keep park approach roads open through the winter. For the Park Service's part, Collins tried to keep the main park road open from the south entrance as far as Lake Helen, an ambitious undertaking that finally proved to be foolhardy. Each winter, heavy snows forced abandonment of the project somewhere short of its goal, and in 1935 avalanches near Diamond Point trapped all of the park's snow removal equipment, including the Snogo, power shovel, and truck plows, high on the mountain road, where they rested for several more weeks until they could be dug out in the spring.<sup>55</sup> Nonetheless, Collins's enthusiasm for winter use helped establish a winter sports presence in the southwest corner of the park. Beginning in 1935, a portable rope tow and warming hut were erected each winter near the Sulphur Works (sometimes a little above, sometimes a little below the awkwardly situated Supan property). In April 1936, favorable spring weather allowed the Mt. Lassen Ski Club to hold its fourth annual ski meet at what had become known as the Sulphur Works Ski Area.<sup>56</sup>

Spring skiing became increasingly popular into higher terrain as well, into the Lake Helen Basin and beyond, especially as the park road was cleared. For a time, organizers held an "Inferno Race," starting from the summit of Lassen Peak, each July Fourth. (To the present day, a number of local skiers maintain an annual tradition, most commonly in late spring or early summer, of ascending the Lassen Peak with their skis strapped to their backs and skiing down its slopes.)<sup>57</sup>

Superintendent Leavitt continued his predecessor's policy of boosting winter use of the park, assisting the local ski club in whatever way he could, and allowing ski events to be held at Sulphur Works. Not everyone in the NPS shared Collins's and Leavitt's enthusiasm for winter sports activity, however. With the ski clubs' growing emphasis on speed, technique, athletic competition, and amenities, some in the Park Service began to view downhill skiers as an unwelcome user group, or at least to question the appropriateness of holding ski tournaments in national parks. Such qualms led Director Cammerer to issue the Park Service's first official statement of winter use policy in 1936. Cammerer stated that winter sports should be encouraged in the parks as long as they did not produce a carnival-like atmosphere or involve the construction of artificial jumps, grandstands, or other features that would mar the natural scenery. Leavitt acknowledged receipt of Cammerer's Office Order 319 and replied that he thought the "policy is along the right line." Reporting to Cammerer that Lassen Volcanic had hosted three ski meets in 1936 (in January, April, and on July Fourth), Leavitt assured him that athletic

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<sup>54</sup> Superintendent to Chester Rowell, January 6, 1935, File 868 Part 1: Lassen – Protection, Service to Public, Forestry, and Winter Sports, Box 1318, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>55</sup> John C. Preston to Regional Director, January 19, 1940, File 868 Part 1: Lassen – Protection, Service to Public, Forestry, and Winter Sports, Box 1318, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>56</sup> SARs, 1935, 1936.

<sup>57</sup> Strong, *Footprints in Time*, 90-91; Will Henry, interview by Theodore Catton, September 13, 2006.

competition was “almost a minor part of the activity of those days” and that scores of people were playing on the slopes even as the athletic events were happening.<sup>58</sup>

Cammerer’s statement of policy bespoke a subtle but important shift in attitudes within the Park Service. Park Service officials hoped that by welcoming skiers and downplaying competitive ski events, the national parks would attract a type of ski activity befitting their role as inspirational preserves of nature. Superintendent Preston, who embraced the ski scene at Lassen Volcanic as much as Leavitt and Collins did, appeared to share this hope and expectation when he described winter use in the park in his first annual report in 1938. He thought Lassen’s ski activity was diverging in important ways from ski resorts elsewhere. He noted an increase in “ski-hiking” (what later became known as ski touring) and believed that both cross-country and downhill skiers at Lassen were there primarily to enjoy the beauty of the park in winter. Lassen Volcanic’s glittering mantle of snow and frost and its huge steam clouds rising from thermal areas, on account of the cold air, were features unique to the winter season and formerly off limits to visitors. “It seems that the old term, ‘winter sports,’ as applied to skiing in the park, might well be changed to ‘winter use’ or ‘winter enjoyment,’” he wrote sanguinely in 1938.<sup>59</sup>

After a few years at Lassen Volcanic, however, Preston’s ideas about the ski area changed. He wanted to develop the ski area for the enjoyment of downhill skiers. Demurring from Cammerer’s assessment that skiers in national parks were trending toward the cross-country type of ski activity, Preston found that the majority of the park’s winter sports visitors were “social skiers” who preferred to stay with the crowd where the rope tow and warming hut were available. The Park Service had marked two cross-country ski trails, one to Lake Helen and the other to Ridge Lakes, both starting from the plowed road at Sulphur Works. These trails received very light use, mainly because the long uphill climb was so physically demanding. Preston argued that future development of the ski area “should encourage the average skier rather than the expert.”<sup>60</sup>

Preston proposed to install a chairlift in addition to the existing rope tow. Installing a lift was a big step, since it involved permanent fixtures. The superintendent justified it on the grounds that it would open up steeper, more exciting terrain for winter visitors. The lift could be of the demountable kind, largely dismantled each spring. Permanent footings for the poles and a permanent structure for housing the lift’s power plant would be practically out of view from the road, invisible to summer visitors, he said.<sup>61</sup> For Preston, this met the litmus test of the Park Service’s dual mission to conserve scenery while providing for the public’s enjoyment of the same, because a demountable

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<sup>58</sup> E. P. Leavitt to The Director, July 18, 1936, File 868 Part 1: Lassen – Protection, Service to Public, Forestry, and Winter Sports, Box 1318, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>59</sup> SAR 1938.

<sup>60</sup> John C. Preston, “Report on Winter Sports – Lassen Volcanic National Park,” no date, File: Report on Winter Sports, Season of 1939-40, Box 1318, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

chairlift would not impair the natural scene for the summertime, road-bound automobile tourist.

While the chairlift development would remain pending until after World War II, Preston oversaw other changes to the Sulphur Works Ski Area. In the winter of 1939-40, he moved the location of the rope tow and warming hut to a site about a quarter mile above the Supan property on the south slope of Diamond Peak. Preston considered this site superior to the one below the Supan property; however, plowing the road through the Supan property appeared to increase the risk that the Supans would develop some kind of enterprise to exploit the winter-use crowd. Consequently, the ski area was moved back to the lower location again in 1941, leaving the Supan property safely snowbound.<sup>62</sup> The warming hut came from a CCC camp and was moved out of the park at the end of each ski season. It contained a warming room, lunch counter, ski repair and rental shop, and first aid room. The lunch counter and shop were operated by the Lassen National Park Company. When the number of winter visitors fell sharply in the winter of 1941-42 – a disorienting time for people as the nation girded for war – the concession took a financial loss on the ski area operation and requested permission to shut it down.<sup>63</sup>

The Second World War brought a four-year hiatus to winter use of Lassen Volcanic. Budget cuts for non-emergency services meant an end to snow removal operations, which rendered the park inaccessible from fall until early summer each year, beginning in the fall of 1942. Wartime austerity measures did not ease until the fall of 1945, too late to revive snow removal operations for the winter of 1945-46. The Park Service used this time to study the evolving winter recreation phenomenon and plan for appropriate winter use of the parks after the war. At Lassen Volcanic, Superintendent Lloyd directed three members of his staff to make a thorough study of ski areas in the surrounding region and to make recommendations for Lassen Volcanic based on future need. At the national level, Director Drury issued two statements on winter use policy in office orders of August 13, 1945, and March 21, 1946. Of particular concern, ski clubs increasingly demanded big chairlifts and lodges at ski areas. Drury insisted that tows and jumps had to be completely removable at the end of the ski season, and that warming facilities would be strictly oriented to day use. Overall, he hoped to develop winter use of national parks for the casual skier while encouraging competitive and resort skiers to go elsewhere.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Harry B. Robinson, Merlin K. Potts, and Theodore S. Rex, "Report of the Committee on Winter Sports Opportunities and Possibilities in the Northern Sierra and Southern Cascade Areas," no date, File 207 Part IV: 1-1-44 – 1-1-50, Box 46, Records of the Western Regional Director – Lassen Volcanic National Park 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR.

<sup>63</sup> Preston, "Report on Winter Sports – Lassen Volcanic National Park."

<sup>64</sup> Catton, *National Park, City Playground: Mount Rainier in the Twentieth Century*, 122.

## The Sulphur Works Ski Area in the Postwar Era

After the war, downhill skiers began to organize and demand renewed access to ski areas. Since most ski areas in California and the West were in national parks or on national forests, ski organizations turned to the federal government for help. In northern California, the Mt. Lassen Ski Club came back to life in Mineral, as did ski clubs in Red Bluff, Redding, Chico, Oroville, Orland, Willows, and Westwood. Skiers also organized at a higher level. The Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs and the National Ski Association began lobbying members of Congress and federal officials to support new development of ski areas all over the West. Fred H. McNeil, president of the National Ski Association, wanted to know what Lassen Volcanic could do to meet the growing demand.<sup>65</sup>

The NPS's response to the ski lobby was to promise a return to the status quo at the beginning of the war years and to insist on a fair test of the adequacy of those winter sports facilities before taking any further action.<sup>66</sup> While this stance frustrated some ski groups, it made good sense. In contrast to so many other visitor-use pressures on national parks, in this case the Park Service actually had time on its side. With the growth of other ski areas on national forests, pressure for this type of use in Lassen Volcanic would ease. As the park's own winter-use study during the war had made clear, there were no fewer than ten ski areas on the Lassen National Forest and Shasta National Forest in 1942. Although most of these slopes were inferior to what Lassen Volcanic offered, still more areas, including some on private land, were in the planning stages. In particular, Mount Shasta held promise as an outstanding ski area. Its only disadvantage was its remoteness from the state's large population centers.<sup>67</sup>

After the Sulphur Works Ski Area was back in business in the winter of 1946-47, Superintendent Tobin successfully deflected ski clubs' requests for various new developments, including a chair lift, a jump, a permanent ski lodge, an emergency medical facility, and more road plowing.<sup>68</sup> On one occasion, in August 1947, the president of the Red Bluff Ski Club, Elk Kern, arranged a meeting between Tobin, the park staff, Hummel, and Representative Clair Engle in Mineral, to talk about Kern's ideas for making Sulphur Works Ski Area into a big attraction. Kern arrived with the congressman two hours late, at 8 o'clock in the evening, and as no one had yet eaten, the meeting was moved from park headquarters to the Mineral Lodge where they could all

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<sup>65</sup> Elk Kern to Clair Engle, February 4, 1947; James V. Lloyd to The Director, May 24, 1946, File 868 Part 1: Lassen – Protection, Service to Public, Forestry, and Winter Sports, Box 1318, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>66</sup> Newton B. Drury to Clair Engle, December 28, 1945, File 868 Part 1: Lassen – Protection, Service to Public, Forestry, and Winter Sports, Box 1318, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>67</sup> Robinson, Potts, and Rex, "Report of the Committee on Winter Sports Opportunities and Possibilities in the Northern Sierra and Southern Cascade Areas."

<sup>68</sup> SAR, 1947; Gordon H. Casamajor to Dan Tobin, December 31, 1947, File 900-08: Complaints Lassen National Park, Box 1323, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

dine while they talked, and the conversation continued around the table until nearly midnight. A critical point in the meeting came when Hummel backed up Tobin in his go-slow approach, stating that from a practical businessman's standpoint he would not want to invest in facilities at Sulphur Works when there were better sites on private land that might soon be developed. After this meeting, Tobin felt confident that he did not have a problem with the local representative on this issue.<sup>69</sup>

Hummel did not always see eye-to-eye with the Park Service on winter use development. The Supan property, situated smack in the middle of the Sulphur Works Ski Area, caused a flap between Tobin and Hummel when the government finally acquired the property in the summer of 1951. A few years earlier, the Supans had installed a cable ski lift near their existing gas station and curio shop. Hummel thought he had a commitment from Tobin that when the property became part of the park the Lassen National Park Company would take over operation of these buildings for purposes of the ski area until such time as a more substantial winter-use facility could be built there. Indeed, if the Sulphur Works Ski Area was ever to have a permanent ski lodge or day-use facility, this was the prime location for it. Once the property was acquired, however, Tobin was noncommittal, suggesting that the buildings might simply be removed and the natural setting restored. Hummel felt betrayed and took up the matter with NPS Director Conrad Wirth. The Park Service allowed Hummel to operate the former Supan store and gas station for a short time and then it took the structures out. After that, Hummel had little interest in the ski area and began looking for ways to pull out of it.<sup>70</sup>

In 1956, the Park Service finally authorized the long-sought chairlift. H. K. Beresford of Mineral obtained a subcontract under the Lassen National Park Company to operate the winter sports facilities at Sulphur Works. The lift consisted of demountable overhead towers, with disks or platters (rather than bench seats) suspended from overhead cables, which the skiers tucked between their legs to lift them up the slope. The ski tow machinery was not demountable, but was housed in a wooden building at the top of the slope that was painted to blend into the slope in summertime. Skiers were happy. Beresford reported that the number of visitors during the winter of 1956-57 more than doubled over the previous season, even though the lift only became operational midway through the winter.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Memorandum for Files, August 25, 1947, File 868 Part 1: Lassen – Protection, Service to Public, Forestry, and Winter Sports, Box 1318, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>70</sup> Don Hummel to Daniel J. Tobin, January 23, 1950; Tobin to Hummel, August 16, 1951; Hummel to Tobin, August 20, 1951; Superintendent to Regional Director, August 29, 1951; Edward Nash to Sanford Hill, November 15, 1951; Harold G. Fowler to Hill, November 16, 1951; Hummel to Conrad Wirth, March 20, 1952; Lawrence C. Merriam to Hummel, April 4, 1952, File 003: C34 Lassen National Park Company Development of Sulphur Works Area, 1950-1957, Box 5, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>71</sup> H. K. Beresford to William F. Knowland, February 18, 1958, File C58 Part 2: LAVO, Box 969, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II.

Conservationists gave the lift at Lassen surprisingly little notice, considering the attention they had focused on Mount Rainier's chairlift controversy just two years earlier.<sup>72</sup> But letters protesting the Lassen chairlift did appear in *National Parks Magazine* the following summer, and NPS officials prepared for fallout at the upcoming meeting of the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs. In October of 1957, Devereux Butcher, the vitriolic editor of *National Parks Magazine* and former president of National Parks Association (NPA), visited Lassen Volcanic to inspect the chairlift for himself. Driving over the park road in his signature station wagon with the NPA logo displayed prominently on the car door, he stopped at park headquarters for an interview with the superintendent. Freeland expected a rant but received something more like a stern lecture. In Freeland's words, Devereux was not too concerned about the present setup, but "feared for the future" because the Park Service had "no firm policy" concerning winter use. "The bars were down," the conservationist reportedly said, and he wondered "where was it going to end."<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Catton, *National Park, City Playground: Mount Rainier in the Twentieth Century*, 128-130.

<sup>73</sup> Edward D. Freeland to Regional Director, October 31, 1957, File C58 Part 2: LAVO, Box 969, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II.

## Chapter Seven

### Park Protection: The Rangers' Domain

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In 1931, when visitors entered the park on the main park road, they stopped at a booth just inside the boundary called a “checking station.” Greeted by a ranger, they received a 19-page *Circular of General Information Regarding Lassen Volcanic National Park*. Included in the booklet were four pages of rules and regulations, commencing with “1. *Preservation of natural features and curiosities.*—It is forbidden to throw any object or substance into any crater, spring, or steam vent; or to injure or disturb in any manner or to carry off any mineral deposit, specimen, natural curiosity, or wonder within the park; or to deface the same with written inscriptions or otherwise.”<sup>1</sup> The rules and regulations went on to address campground procedures, use of campfires, prohibition of hunting, regulation of fishing, and use of motor vehicles. The ranger’s job began with this effort to acquaint visitors with what they were permitted or not permitted to do in the park, and as the booklet made clear, the park administration placed considerable emphasis on *protection* – protection of natural resources, government property, and visitor safety.

Rangers constituted the park administration’s “protection force,” later its “protection department” or “protection division.” As with the interpretation personnel, the ranger force was made up of a small cadre of “permanent” (year-round) personnel plus a larger contingent of “temporary” (seasonal) personnel. The ranger force roughly tripled in size during the months of June, July, and August. While the size of the force fluctuated seasonally, it grew fairly steadily across the years. From the early 1930s to the early 1970s, the ranger force grew from two permanent and four seasonal rangers to eight permanent and sixteen seasonal rangers.<sup>2</sup> At full strength, the protection division usually

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Circular of General Information Regarding Lassen Volcanic National Park, California* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1931), 14.

<sup>2</sup> SARs, 1931, 1972.

comprised about half of all personnel in the park administration during these four decades.

The park rangers' job was highly diverse; they had to be "generalists," competent in many different areas. They needed to have good people skills for dealing with the public and they had to possess outdoor skills for negotiating the backcountry. One chief ranger at Lassen Volcanic said that he looked for men who were experienced with horses and could handle stray livestock (or a problem bear, as the case might be) – a farm background was useful for this.<sup>3</sup> Rangers had to be physically strong for hefting fire tools to a remote location or slogging through snow on search and rescue. The job also entailed writing reports and maintaining accurate records. A college education was required.

Protection work was so varied it defied easy categorization. Sometimes ranger duties were divided into "visitor protection" and "resource protection," but these categories overlapped more often than not. Wherever people and nature were in contact a specific ranger activity involved some of both. For example, in the late 1940s the park administration tried to station a seasonal ranger at Bumpass Hell to supervise the "ever increasing visitors tramping through the thermal basin."<sup>4</sup> Not only did people expose themselves to injury when they stepped too close to the bubbling mudpots, all too often they inadvertently damaged the resource by making footprints in the thin, bleached crust or by thoughtlessly tossing coins into a hot spring as if it were a wishing well. The ranger at Bumpass Hell performed a double duty, protecting visitors and the resource. Most ranger patrols, like the ranger duty station at Bumpass Hell, could involve protecting a visitor one moment and protecting a resource the next. The ranger's job of posting and maintaining signs in the backcountry likewise straddled the line between visitor and resource protection. Signs informed people of where they were and what sorts of hazards to watch out for; signs also reminded people of what things they were prohibited from doing that would harm the park. In the final analysis, park protection was mostly about managing people.

### **Visitor Education and Safety**

As noted above, the first line of park protection was the checking station, which gave the park administration a way to inform a large majority of visitors about park rules and regulations. (The term "checking station" was replaced by the more friendly term "entrance station" in the mid-1950s.) The mandatory stop for visitors also gave rangers an opportunity to check each vehicle leaving the park for the presence of illegal firearms or dead animals, the latter being "prima facie evidence" that the people in the car had

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<sup>3</sup> Al Schneider, interview by Theodore Catton, September 14, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> SAR, 1947.

violated the law by hunting inside the park. Firearms could only be taken into the park legally if they were sealed in proper cases and the owner had a permit from the superintendent – a narrow exception for the benefit of inholders traveling to and from their inholdings.<sup>5</sup> Superintendent Collins thought the checking stations were so important that he took two rangers off of patrol and assigned them to the two checking stations on a full-time basis during the summer travel season even though that necessarily left other parts of the park unsupervised.<sup>6</sup>

Rangers used other opportunities to inform visitors about what they could and could not do in the park. In the 1930s, seasonal rangers were assigned to the two major campgrounds at Manzanita Lake and Summit Lake, where they established a friendly rapport with campers and told them about clean camping practices. This kind of information could be worked into campfire talks. Rangers who were duty-stationed at the campgrounds often gave campfire talks that were technically part of the interpretation program, while ranger-naturalists on the interpretation staff reciprocated by including information about park rules and regulations in their educational material.

Beginning in 1931, one or two rangers were assigned to road patrol. On the winding, mountainous road, breakdowns were more common than traffic violations. People often ran out of gas. Reckless driving was a relatively uncommon occurrence and when rangers stopped speeders they usually let them go with a warning, being loath to issue traffic tickets. In 1965, out of a total of 71 reported vehicular offenses in the park, just 14 involved moving violations.<sup>7</sup>

Rangers occasionally administered first aid to accident victims. Serious vehicle accidents were rare; skiing accidents and minor injuries from snow play were more common. During the winter and spring skiing seasons, a ranger was assigned to supervise the ski area and be on hand in case of an injury or medical emergency. An eight-foot toboggan and emergency medical supplies were stored in the warming house. In 1940, Superintendent Preston reported two accidents in the park, both in the ski area. The first involved a skier who broke his arm in a fall, the other involved two people on a toboggan, one of whom sustained a broken shoulder and the other a fractured spine. In a year that saw 100,780 people visit the park, this was a good safety record.<sup>8</sup>

Law enforcement activity focused primarily on suppression of poaching. While most local residents supported the park's no-hunting policy, the law was not universally respected, especially in light of the park administration's tiff with Hat Creek residents who insisted on their right to hunt deer on private property within the park. When a solicitor's opinion in 1938 finally closed that loophole, affirming the Park Service's

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<sup>5</sup> C. J. Wolfe to Superintendent, January 4, 1930; L. W. Collins to The Director, January 18, 1930, File 208 Part 1: Lassen Rules and Regulations, Box 353, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>6</sup> SAR 1931.

<sup>7</sup> Summary of Offenses Known, 1965, File 8: W2621 Reports, Annual, 1964-1973, Box 43, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>8</sup> SAR 1940.

position that the prohibition against hunting did apply to private lands embraced within the exterior limits of the park, poachers faced an increasingly unsympathetic climate for hunting anywhere in the park.<sup>9</sup> Rangers made two arrests of poachers in 1942 and 1943 and obtained convictions in both cases. Local friends of the park claimed that poaching activity continued undetected and they criticized the Park Service for not “doing something about it.” When the Park Service stepped up boundary patrols in 1944 and 1945, it found no evidence of this activity.<sup>10</sup>

The national parks were long thought to be places where violent crime rarely if ever occurred, but by the 1960s that assumption began to erode. As the sheer number of people staying in the park rose, Lassen Volcanic’s ranger force had to deal with occasional cases of burglary and aggravated assault. Professional thieves discovered that cars parked for long periods at trailhead parking areas made easy targets, and Lassen Volcanic, like other national parks, began to experience “car clouts.” Gradually, rangers cultivated their image as law enforcement officers in order to deter crime and enhance visitor security. This institutional change, which many individual rangers found wrenching or even potentially career-ending, continued for another decade.<sup>11</sup>

In 1963, the ranger force helped provide security for a rare national park visit by a sitting U.S. president. Touring the West to promote his conservation agenda, John F. Kennedy visited Lassen Volcanic on September 27 and 28 accompanied by Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall, Press Secretary Pierre Salinger, and California’s Governor Pat Brown. The party arrived by helicopter from Redding Airport at the Devastated Area parking lot and rode in cars to Manzanita Lake shortly before sundown. While a park naturalist led Udall and members of the press corps on the nature trail around the lake, Kennedy retired to the Manzanita Lake Lodge manager’s residence for a much needed rest. As the visit was only an overnight stop on the president’s western tour, the party did not tarry long at Manzanita Lake the next morning before leaving the park the same way it had come. The press quoted Kennedy as saying that the superintendent had “the best job in the world” and photographed him feeding a deer. Despite the dubious message contained in this image of the president feeding the park’s wildlife, it was a golden photo opportunity for the Park Service and Lassen Volcanic in particular. To ensure Kennedy’s safety throughout his short visit, the Park Service sent a total of 34 uniformed personnel from seven other units of the National Park System to assist the rangers at Lassen Volcanic.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Frederic L. Kirgis to The Secretary of the Interior, July 22, 1938, File 17: W30 Jurisdiction/Disputation/Police Powers, Box 43, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>10</sup> SARs, 1942-1945.

<sup>11</sup> Schneider interview.

<sup>12</sup> SAR, 1963; Thomas G. Smith, “John Kennedy, Stewart Udall, and New Frontier Conservation,” *Pacific Historical Review* 64, no. 3 (August 1995): 356.

## Forest Protection

In its founding years, the Park Service did not ponder too much what it meant to conserve natural conditions in a forest. It assumed that a green forest was the ideal, and it sought to suppress all fire in order to keep the forest as green as possible, regardless of the role that fire played in forest ecology. In this endeavor the NPS advanced in lock step with the U.S. Forest Service. Both agencies attacked fire like a public enemy and by the mid-1930s both agencies had become remarkably successful at suppressing it. The policy of full-scale fire suppression was not seriously questioned for the next thirty years. Ironically, the success of fire suppression in the middle third of the twentieth century effectively altered natural conditions by interrupting the natural fire regime, allowing a build-up of fire fuel, and impeding natural forest succession, all of which combined to put forest health in jeopardy toward the end of the century.

In 1931, Superintendent Collins described a “dangerous fire belt” extending through the eastern half of the park. The mixed conifer forest of ponderosa, Jeffrey, and lodgepole pine burned often. With all six rangers on duty in the western half of the park or at headquarters, Collins posted two fire guards in the eastern half of the park: one at the new fire lookout on Mount Harkness and the other at Horseshoe Lake. For the next two fire seasons, this two-man force was able to reach fires in that vulnerable section of the park shortly after they were detected and all fires were suppressed.<sup>13</sup>

The advent of the CCC in 1933 brought crucial changes for NPS fire suppression efforts nationwide, and developments at Lassen Volcanic were no exception. CCC camps provided a ready pool of manpower for responding to fires. CCC crews built truck trails as a preventative measure, allowing fire crews to reach fires that much quicker. The presence of the CCC in the national parks during the 1930s enabled the Park Service to implement a full-scale fire suppression policy, even as a prolonged drought made fire conditions more serious.<sup>14</sup> At Lassen Volcanic, an unusually warm winter in 1932-33 led to tinder-dry conditions during the CCC’s first summer in the park. The 200-man CCC camp located in the Devastated Area commenced work on two truck trails at the beginning of the summer (one leading down Hat Creek to Badger Flat, the other from Summit Lake to Twin Lakes) indicating the high priority that the Park Service gave to fire suppression. By September, no fewer than fifteen fires had been reported in the park, and all were suppressed with the help of the CCC, with “negligible damage” to the forest. The following year, the impressive record was repeated. Fifteen fires were reported and all were quickly suppressed.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> SARs, 1931, 1932.

<sup>14</sup> Hal K. Rothman, *A Test of Adversity and Strength: Wildland Fire in the National Park System* (Washington: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2005), 54.

<sup>15</sup> SARs, 1933, 1934.

In the NPS organization the chief ranger served as a park's fire marshal, coordinating fire suppression efforts by the ranger force and the CCC. Forest protection – that is, implementing the Park Service policy of full-scale fire suppression – was one of the most compelling justifications for expanding parks' protection departments, perhaps on par with visitor protection when a park's level of visitation rose substantially. At Lassen Volcanic, the ranger force grew up around these two primary responsibilities of forest protection and visitor protection. By 1937, the summer ranger force had increased to eight, plus a fire lookout observer, a fire guard, and a fire dispatcher. In 1939, an additional seasonal ranger and an additional fire guard were hired. During the 1942 fire season (a summer of concern that Japanese saboteurs might ignite forest fires all over the West Coast states), Lassen's protection division grew to ten rangers, four of which were permanent employees.<sup>16</sup>

With the termination of the CCC in 1942, some people expected that the Park Service's full-scale fire suppression policy would be set back a decade. This did not happen. The NPS employed fire control aids (local persons who were put on standby and required to stay in the area during periods of bad fire weather) who, together with the ranger force, were considered "first call" responders. Behind this group were "second call" firefighters who were on the maintenance crew and had attended one day of fire school. If needed the park had "third call" firefighters available from the Lassen National Park Company.<sup>17</sup> Aerial fire detection augmented and eventually replaced fire detection from staffed lookouts. A campaign of public education by the Forest Service taught campers and backcountry users to be more careful about putting out campfires and cigarette butts. The Forest Service's message, "Only YOU can prevent forest fires," struck home with park visitors and brought a significant decline in human-ignited fires in the national parks.<sup>18</sup> For all of these reasons, the ranger force at Lassen Volcanic continued to meet with amazing success in suppressing fire through the 1940s and 1950s. Its successful record was highlighted in the superintendent's annual report of 1961, which reported the park's fire statistics at the end of a third consecutive year of heightened fire danger. Of a record-setting 43 total fires in that season, all lightning-caused, just two had attained "Class B" status before being suppressed, resulting in a total burn area of only 1.56 acres.<sup>19</sup>

Another threat to the forest at Lassen Volcanic came from insect infestations. Even though these were considered endemic to the area, the Park Service regarded them as something to combat in order to maintain a green forest. The ranger force conducted a small amount of control work against the pine bark beetle in 1932 in "areas of visitor

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<sup>16</sup> SARs, 1937, 1939, 1942.

<sup>17</sup> Lassen Volcanic National Park, Annual Forestry Report – 1947; Annual Forestry Report, Lassen Volcanic National Park – 1960, File Y-2621; Annual Forestry Report 1940-54, Box 2, Western Region LAVO Central Files, 1927-65 (Acc. 95-004), RG 79, NA – PSR.

<sup>18</sup> Rothman, *A Test of Adversity and Strength*, 89.

<sup>19</sup> SAR, 1961.

concentration,” probably around Manzanita Lake.<sup>20</sup> A six-person crew detailed from Sequoia National Park performed control work against the western pine beetle in 1945 in the Manzanita Lake and Lost Creek areas, treating 72 infested trees.<sup>21</sup> In the postwar era, the ranger force stepped up efforts to control infestations, treating or felling insect-infested trees as soon as an infestation was detected. Aerial detection aided in this work.<sup>22</sup>

White pine blister rust posed a somewhat different problem since it was an exotic disease, thought to have spread from Asia to Europe and from Europe to eastern North America at the beginning of the twentieth century. The fungus responsible for white pine blister rust spends part of its life cycle on another host plant, *Ribes* (gooseberry). It was discovered that if *Ribes* could be eradicated for a distance of about 300 yards around the infected tree then the fungus could not reproduce and the blighted white pine would recover. The discovery led to a white pine blister rust control program of enormous size and scope around the nation. *Ribes* eradication was done by hand, and had to be repeated approximately every five years. Hundreds of person-days were required for it, and finding labor was always a challenge. In the 1930s, the park accomplished this work with the help of the CCC. After a hiatus in blister rust control work at Lassen Volcanic during World War II, it took a crew of 50 high school students four months (July and August of 1945 and 1946) to eradicate *Ribes* in three locations at Summit Lake, Lassen Peak, and Reading Peak.<sup>23</sup> In 1951, the effort was repeated, and in 1955, it was extended to the Juniper Lake area under a five-year program using contract labor. By the mid-1960s, the park administration had seven seasonal rangers engaged in blister rust control, and it was studying options for a reduction in the number and size of the park’s several “permanent control units.”<sup>24</sup>

Lassen Volcanic was fortunate that it did not have a significant exotic weed problem at mid-century – at least as far as the park administration was aware. In response to a questionnaire about exotic weeds sent to all superintendents in the western region, Superintendent Tobin noted that the park naturalist had observed mullein, a type of figwort, as well as a few Scotch broom plants along the roadside near Chaos Jumbles.<sup>25</sup> Such casual observances and reporting marked the Park Service’s first steps toward inventory and monitoring of rare and noxious plants.

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<sup>20</sup> SAR, 1932.

<sup>21</sup> SAR, 1945.

<sup>22</sup> Lassen Volcanic National Park Annual Forestry Report – 1950, File Y2621 Annual Forestry Report 1940-54, Box 2, Western Region LAVO Central Files 1927-65 (Acc. 95-004), RG 79, NA – PSR.

<sup>23</sup> SARs, 1945, 1946. Reading Peak was formerly called White Mountain. (Nancy Bailey note to authors.)

<sup>24</sup> SAR, 1951; “Five-Year Blister Rust Control Plan,” no date, File 57: Y2621 Blister Rust Control Plan 1959; R. B. Moore to Homer J. Dixon, December 13, 1963, File 61: Y2621 Blister Rust Control 1963; Moore to Dixon, January 6, 1965, File 63: Y2621 Blister Rust Control 1965, Box 44, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>25</sup> Daniel J. Tobin to the Regional Director, November 13, 1948, File 701: Lassen Flora, Box 67, Records of the Western Regional Director LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR.

## Livestock Management

Forest protection in the middle decades of the twentieth century included the rather anomalous matter of livestock grazing, a holdover from the park's founding years. Charged with the "ticklish" task of phasing out the park's seven remaining grazing leases in 1927, Superintendent Collins had successfully eliminated all but one by 1931, without much complaint from local stockmen. Collins commended local Forest Service personnel in finding alternative national forest range for the park's former permittees. He also reported that park meadows no longer subjected to cattle recovered quickly to "a thriving normal state." In 1931, Collins did advocate for the renewal of Winfred Lee's permit to graze 67 cattle on the Juniper Lake allotment, because this remote eastern portion of the park was little used by the public and not yet undergoing park development. The possibility of Lee's cattle interfering with the enjoyment of C. P. Snell's patrons at Juniper Lake Resort was of no concern to Collins. The NPS continued to grant Lee an annual grazing permit for the Juniper Lake allotment through 1934, after which he did not reapply.<sup>26</sup>

After permitted grazing within Lassen Volcanic ended, livestock trespass from adjoining national forest ranges, private ranches and park inholdings continued. The park boundaries were unfenced except for short lengths of drift fences erected by cattle owners and the Forest Service across some of the most problematic livestock entry points. In a few spots where old drift fences existed a short distance within park boundaries, cattle could legally graze to these fencelines but no further. The Park Service initially refused to shoulder any responsibility in keeping cattle out of Lassen Volcanic, but eventually park personnel did construct drift fences along the two boundary sections most conspicuous to park visitors: at the Manzanita Lake checking station and the Sulphur Works checking station.<sup>27</sup>

A rash of blatant trespass violations in 1941 motivated park officials to take definite action by providing better education and greater cooperation with stockmen and the Forest Service, and by threatening to prosecute repeat offenders. The effort was long overdue. Some areas of the park still suffered from heavy domestic grazing, yet only two cases of livestock trespass had been brought before the U.S. commissioner since the park's establishment. But the timing of the crackdown could not have been worse. Livestock organizations, the local press, and the California State Senate condemned the

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<sup>26</sup> L. W. Collins, Superintendent, to The Director, May 14, 1930; Collins to Mr. C. P. Snell, February 6, 1931; Collins to The Director, October 12, 1931; Collins to The Director, May 25, 1932, File 901-1: Part 2 Privileges Grazing, Box 361; R. M. Holmes, Chief Clerk, to The Superintendent, May 25, 1934; F. S. Townsley, Acting Superintendent, to The Director, September 19, 1935, File 901-1: Lassen Privileges Grazing, Box 1324, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>27</sup> E. P. Leavitt, Superintendent, to Mr. Mike Kelly, September 22, 1936; Lloyd, Memorandum for the Director, November 7, 1941; Grazing Summary, Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1942; James V. Lloyd, Superintendent, to William V. Jones, Forest Supervisor, August 25, 1942; Stock Trespass Map, Lassen Volcanic National Park, undated, File 901-1: Lassen Privileges Grazing, Box 1324, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

park's new get-tough stance on livestock trespass as unpatriotic, given the wartime urgency to boost the nation's meat and wool production. In the spring of 1943, Donald Smith, a Tehama County extension agent of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, spearheaded a campaign to open all of the California national parks to grazing. At the very least, Smith advocated, the NPS should allow drifting cattle to "eat the sacred grass" of Lassen Volcanic.<sup>28</sup>

The National Park Service responded that it would not sanction a grazing "invasion" of California's national parks. This would result in landscape damage "out of all proportion" to any increase in the state's sheep and cattle production, a miniscule one fiftieth of one percent, Interior officials calculated. The Park Service advised its California park superintendents to simply "sit tight" until the wartime fervor blew over, and it did. Despite this highly publicized controversy, Lassen Volcanic did make headway in reducing its cattle trespass during the war years, owed in large part to better maintenance of existing drift fences and the construction of several new ones. In the years to come, long hours in the saddle by patrolling rangers, as well as the "careful attention" of Forest Service personnel, kept the problem in check. Drifting cattle still populated the park landscape episodically, while a few dozen pack and saddle horses comprised Lassen Volcanic's legitimate domestic grazing stock. Seven ranger mounts, 18 concession horses, and 12 privately owned horses consumed 2,408 equine days worth of park vegetation during the summer of 1950. Starting that year, grazing in Summit Lake meadow was eliminated: the Lassen National Park Company's horses were moved to nearby meadows, while a new pasture for spring and fall use of park horses was established in Badger Flat.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> E. J. Barton, Chief Ranger, Memorandum for Superintendent Lloyd, September 27, 1941; Grazing Summary, 1942; B. F. Manbey, Regional Director, Memorandum for Superintendent Lloyd, April 2, 1942; Secretary, California Wool Growers Association, to James B. Lloyd, Superintendent, March 16, 1942; E. L. McKenzie, Chairman, Lassen National Forest Grazing Advisory Board, to Lloyd, March 10, 1942; John G. Miller, "Hopping the Headline," *Red Bluff Daily News*, June 4, 1942; W. V. Jones, Forest Supervisor, Memo for Lord, Campbell, Crone, Brokenshire and Box, July 15, 1942; "Use the Park," *Red Bluff Daily News*, March 27, 1943; Lloyd, Memorandum to the Regional Director, March 27, 1943, "Senate Resolution Seeking Park Lands for Stock Grazing," undated; O. A. Tomlinson, Regional Director, Memorandum for the Director, April 28, 1943; Lloyd, Memorandum for the Regional Director, May 27, 1944, File 901-1: Lassen Privileges Grazing, Box 1324, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>29</sup> United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Chicago, "Statement Regarding California State Senate Resolution Number 104 Relating to Grazing on or Adjacent to National Park Areas," April 27, 1943; O. A. Tomlinson, Regional Director, Memorandum for the Director, April 28, 1943, File 901-1: Lassen Privileges Grazing, Box 1324; Report of Accomplishments in the Field of Wildlife Conservation, Lassen Volcanic National Park, October 8, 1945, File 720-04: Wild Life Survey, Box 1619, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; SAR, 1944; Grazing of Pack and Saddle Stock, Report 6a5, December 6, 1950, File L-3019: Summary of Livestock Grazing 1954, Box 1; Annual Forestry Reports, 1950 and 1952, File Y-2621, Annual Forestry Report 1940-1954, Western Region: Lassen Volcanic NP Central Files, 1927-1965 (Acc. 95-004), RG 79, NA – PSR.

## Wildlife Protection

In his annual report for 1933, Superintendent Collins expressed a quaint idea that was basic to the Park Service's early wildlife management objectives. "Years of adequate protection to wildlife of this area have given beneficial results in that animals found here are losing their native shyness," he wrote. "Deer, in particular, are being constantly seen and no longer shy from the passing automobiles or the inquisitive stares of visitors."<sup>30</sup> The objective, as reflected in this statement, was simply to enhance the public's opportunity for observing animals in the wild. In the early years, that NPS objective led to such misguided practices as allowing bears to feed on garbage in front of viewing stands, and destroying predators so that deer and other charismatic species would become more abundant and therefore more observable.<sup>31</sup>

By 1933, the Park Service was moving toward a more enlightened wildlife policy based on ecological perspectives, field surveys, and scientific research. An important step in this direction had occurred in 1931 when Director Albright issued a ban on predator control, giving predators full protection in the national parks.<sup>32</sup> This move stirred controversy in sections of the country where ranchers complained that predators were killing their livestock; in Shasta County, for example, ranchers alleged that Lassen Volcanic was becoming a breeding ground for mountain lions. The upset ranchers wrote to Senator Hiram Johnson (R-Calif.), who wrote to Albright, who wrote to Collins. Collins wrote to the "state lion hunter," an employee of the California Fish and Game Commission, to get his thoughts on whether Lassen Volcanic had a problem. The state lion hunter, Jay Bruce, offered to make a field investigation of the park, and Collins relayed his offer back to Albright.<sup>33</sup>

It was symbolic of the change in direction in Park Service policy that Albright passed over Collins' suggestion to use the services of the state lion hunter and acted instead on the advice of one of his new wildlife experts, Ben H. Thompson. Thompson advised Albright that Lassen Volcanic was simply too small of an area to protect a roving carnivore such as the mountain lion, that the animal needed to follow its prey to lower elevations outside of the park in winter, where it was not protected. Albright relayed this information to Senator Johnson and let the matter drop.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> SAR, 1933.

<sup>31</sup> Thomas R. Dunlap, "Wildlife, Science, and the National Parks, 1920-1940," *Pacific Historical Review*, 59, no. 2 (May 1990): 188-89.

<sup>32</sup> Victor H. Cahalane, "The Evolution of Predator Control Policy in the National Parks," *Journal of Wildlife Management* 3, no. 3 (July 1939): 235-36.

<sup>33</sup> Hiram Johnson to Horace M. Albright, January 21, 1933; Albright to Johnson, January 27, 1933; Alex Thatcher to L. W. Collins, January 30, 1933; Collins to The Director, February 8 and February 13, 1933; Collins to Jay C. Bruce, March 8, 1933; Bruce to Collins, March 21, 1933, File 719 Predatory Animals, Box 1316, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>34</sup> Ben H. Thompson to The Director, February 2, 1933; Horace M. Albright to Hiram Johnson, February 18, 1933, File 719 Predatory Animals, Box 1316, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

In 1933, Albright created the Wildlife Division (spelled Wild Life in that era), under the direction of George M. Wright. Thompson was one of the Wildlife Division's senior staff, as was Joseph Dixon. Wright, Thompson, and Dixon were all former students of Joseph Grinnell, director of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at the University of California, Berkeley. Grinnell had long enjoyed a position of great influence with the Park Service leadership through his extensive work in Yosemite. (In the 1920s and 1930s, Grinnell conducted wildlife studies in Lassen Volcanic, as well.) As early as 1916, in a *Science* article entitled "Animal Life as an Asset of National Parks," Grinnell had stressed the inspirational value of national parks as outdoor museums, boldly stating: "they furnish samples of the earth as it was before the advent of the white man."<sup>35</sup> While this concept would eventually attract notice for its blatant ethnocentrism, it also had great potency. Fifteen years later, Wright, Thompson, and Dixon conducted a two-year wildlife survey of the national park system, and developed Grinnell's concept more fully in their seminal report, *Fauna of the National Parks*. Declaring that the goal of biological management in national parks should be to preserve, or even *restore*, faunal conditions to their original state, they posed the question: precisely what original state should biological management try to attain? Their answer to the question came straight from Grinnell: "The rate of alteration in the faunal structure has been so rapid since, and relatively so slow before, the introduction of European culture, that the situation which obtained on the arrival of the settlers may well be considered as representing the original or primitive condition that it is desired to maintain."<sup>36</sup> Grinnell's concept would find a still more distant echo in the famous Leopold Report of 1963, which recommended that national park management maintain or reestablish biotic conditions that existed before Euro-American influence. Leopold advocated that each national park "represent a vignette of primitive America."<sup>37</sup>

The NPS Wildlife Division had scant opportunity to accomplish scientific research, which the division's staff considered as the most basic need for proper biological management of the national parks. Biologist Lowell Sumner made a survey of the deer range at Lassen Volcanic in 1935, but there was no follow-up on this baseline study. When the Wildlife Division made its ambitious proposal in 1939 to enlarge Lassen Volcanic National Park so that it would encompass a year-round range for deer and other large mammals, it based its proposal on the ten-year-old study by Joseph Grinnell, Joseph Dixon, and Jean M. Linsdale, *Vertebrate Natural History of a Section of*

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<sup>35</sup> Joseph Grinnell and Tracy L. Storer, "Animal Life as an Asset of National Parks," *Science* 44, no. 1133 (September 15, 1916): 377.

<sup>36</sup> Quoted in Alfred Runte, *Yosemite: The Embattled Wilderness* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 162.

<sup>37</sup> A. S. Leopold, et al., "Wildlife Management in the National Parks," in Lary M. Dilsaver, ed., *America's National Park System: The Critical Documents* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1994), 239.

*Northern California Through the Lassen Peak Region*.<sup>38</sup> Before its termination in 1940, the Wildlife Division recommended four areas within Lassen Volcanic to be set aside as “Research Areas.” These special areas were selected in order to preserve small, pristine sections of national parks from development and maintain them for study. Usually they were selected with the help of the park naturalist. The research areas were designated administratively and marked on the park’s master plan.<sup>39</sup>

Because its thinking was so advanced, the Wildlife Division enjoyed a certain prestige within the Park Service in the 1930s. But its influence on park management was more apparent than real. The Wildlife Division’s small staff could only advise park managers, and in most cases they had to advise from afar without a visit to the field. While some national parks were assigned a wildlife technician who reported to the Wildlife Division, no such position was allotted to Lassen Volcanic. The park’s requests for advice from the wildlife experts tended to involve rather arcane or freakish concerns. Would fencing the Western Pacific Railroad’s right-of-way interfere with the seasonal migration of deer? Should an albino fawn be captured for study?<sup>40</sup> The park administration handled most wildlife matters internally, and as a result it gave them little priority. The park’s annual wildlife census was no more than a compilation of observations by the rangers and ranger naturalists, and yet the superintendent could write sanguinely, “The annual wildlife census revealed little change in wildlife conditions, indicating a relatively stable deer population, no range problem, and a slight increase in the marten population.”<sup>41</sup> In 1945, Chief Ranger Merlin K. Potts prepared a “Report of Accomplishments in the Field of Wildlife Conservation.” With three and a half pages devoted to livestock grazing, fish stocking, and the status of certain wildlife species, Potts gave just two lines to wildlife management: “No management measures have been taken during the past year, other than the complete protection of birds and mammals.”<sup>42</sup> In 1953, Regional Director Lawrence Merriam requested that Lassen Volcanic assign one ranger to wildlife management activity on a third-time-basis. Superintendent Johnston resisted. “We feel that there are no major wildlife management problems in Lassen Volcanic at present. The protection afforded with basic policy seems to be sufficient management at present,” he said. “There is no bear problem; deer remain wild and are

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<sup>38</sup> Boundary Adjustment Committee, “Proposed Boundary Adjustments for Lassen Volcanic National Park,” September 1, 1939; Joseph Grinnell, Joseph Dixon, and Jean M. Linsdale, *Vertebrate Natural History of a Section of Northern California Through the Lassen Peak Region* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1930).

<sup>39</sup> The location, size, elevation, and general features of the four areas are described in S. Charles Kendeigh, “Research Areas in the National Parks, January 1942,” *Ecology* 23, no. 2 (April 1942): 236-238.

<sup>40</sup> Regional Director to Superintendent, December 20, 1937; Perry R. Gage to The Director, March 16, 1939; Gage to Superintendent, August 12, 1939, File 715-04 Deer, Box 1316, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>41</sup> SAR, 1942.

<sup>42</sup> Merlin K. Potts, “Report of Accomplishments in the Field of Wildlife Conservation, Lassen Volcanic National Park, California,” October 8, 1945, File 700-01: Lassen Nature Study, Box 67, Records of the Western Regional Director LAVO 1929-53, RG 79, NA – PSR.

not hand-fed by visitors; pure protection has not created over-population of major species, and there is no apparent threat of extinction of any species.”<sup>43</sup>

In the mid-1950s, this picture of tranquility began to crack. For years the park administration had maintained that it had “no bear problem,” but now there were bears in the campgrounds.<sup>44</sup> Warner Valley residents complained about beaver damage.<sup>45</sup> Most worrisome, there were reports that the deer population was declining. In 1957, NPS biologist Lowell Sumner was detailed to the park to make another survey of the deer range, his first since 1935. Sumner confirmed that the deer range was in trouble. Although the occurrence of over-browsing was spotty, the instances that he observed were more severe than anything he had seen in other national parks. Worst hit was the low ridge between Manzanita and Reflection lakes, where alders were “completely highlined” and deer trails “abundant.” Sumner recommended a state-set, either-sex hunt of the deer herd during its seasonal migration out of the park, and the establishment of small deer exclosures (sample plots surrounded by deer-proof fencing) to monitor range conditions.<sup>46</sup>

Despite Sumner’s report, the park administration still gave wildlife management low priority. Four years later, several deer exclosures that rangers had erected around Manzanita Lake were broken down and useless, a “disgrace” according to one Regional Office report. The exclosures were rebuilt with stronger material.<sup>47</sup> Gradually, funds were put toward researching the problem. Gary B. Donart, a professor of range management at Humboldt State College, was contracted to make a study of deer browse conditions and ecological relationships in the park. Funding was provided by the Park Service with help from the Forest Service and the California Department of Fish and Game.<sup>48</sup>

## **Lakes and Streams: From Fisheries to Aquatic Resources**

The middle decades of the twentieth century saw a gradual shift in fish policy at Lassen Volcanic as ecological attitudes vied with the more traditional view that the park’s lakes and streams should be stocked for the pleasure of anglers. Fisheries experts

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<sup>43</sup> Superintendent to Regional Director, October 10, 1953, File N16 Wildlife Management, Box 2, Western Region LAVO Central Files 1954-65 (Acc. 95-003), RG 79, NA – PSR.

<sup>44</sup> John C. Preston to The Director, November 1, 1937; Eugene J. Barton to Regional Director, October 4, 1948, File 715.02: Mammals – Bears, Box 1316, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>45</sup> Lester D. Bodine to Superintendent, September 18, 1955, File N16: Wildlife Management, Box 2, Western Region LAVO Central Files 1954-65 (Acc. 95-003), RG 79, NA – PSR.

<sup>46</sup> Biologist to Superintendent, October 17, 1957, File 189: N36 Pollution/Environmental Quality, Misc. 1957-85, Box 42, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>47</sup> Chief Naturalist to Chief Ranger, August 3, 1961; Superintendent to Regional Director, May 15, 1961, File 082: N1427 Mammals – Deer, Misc. 1961-1975, Box 40, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>48</sup> Gary B. Donart, “Analysis of Deer Browse Conditions and Ecological Relationships in Lassen Volcanic National Park,” no date, mimeographed report, U.S. Department of the Interior Library.

in the California Fish and Game Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) pushed for continued management of the park's lakes and streams for sport fishing, while the NPS Wildlife Division called for a different approach that gave more protection to native species. Park superintendents leaned toward the traditional view until the mid-1950s, largely because they were lacking advice from fish biologists in the Park Service. This changed after NPS aquatic biologist Orthello L. Wallis went to Lassen Volcanic on a detail in 1954-55 and produced a report, "Lassen Trout Investigations," which provided the park administration with a preliminary foundation for ecological management of the park's aquatic resources.

In the early 1930s, the park administration treated park waters as practically an extension of California's inland sport fishery. Anglers were required to have a state fishing license and creel limits were set to match the state's.<sup>49</sup> The California Fish and Game Commission developed a long-term fish stocking program for the park with the wholehearted support of the Park Service. Each summer, the state provided several hundred thousand trout fry and fingerlings, delivered to the park by the truckload in milk cans, which rangers hauled to selected lakes and streams for stocking. Park officials worked closely with state officials in determining which waters should be stocked. Superintendent Collins even complied with a request by state officials in the early 1930s to close Butte Lake to all fishing for two seasons so that state officials could use it as a source of fish eggs for nearby state fish hatcheries.<sup>50</sup>

Park officials balked, however, when the state proposed to introduce silver salmon in Juniper Lake in 1934. The Wildlife Division's supervisor of fish culture, David H. Madsen, raised concerns because the silver salmon was not native to the lake, although he left it to NPS Director Cammerer to quash the proposal. "There is no reason why fish should be considered differently from other vertebrate animals in view of the results obtained through the introduction of carp and other undesirable exotic fishes," Cammerer wrote to the superintendent. "You are directed, therefore, to inform the California Fish and Game Commission that it is against general policy to introduce fish not commonly found in inland waters and that the Service is opposed to the introduction of silver salmon in Juniper Lake."<sup>51</sup> Cammerer's statement marked the first assertion of an independent course by the Park Service in managing the waters of Lassen Volcanic, although the park and the state would continue to cooperate on fish stocking for several more decades.

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<sup>49</sup> L. W. Collins to The Director, May 16, 1932, File 208-06: Fishing, Box 1305, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>50</sup> SARs, 1931-1933, 1935, 1936; 1938; 1942; E. Lowell Sumner to Regional Director, March 11, 1941; L. W. Collins to John L. Farley, October 22, 1930; Collins to R. O. North, March 7, 1931, File 714 Part 1: Fish, Box 1316, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>51</sup> A. E. Burghduff to David H. Madsen, May 21, 1934; Madsen to L. W. Collins, June 1, 1934; Collins to The Director, June 7, 1934; Arno B. Cammerer to the Superintendent, June 18, 1934, File 714 Part 1: Fish, Box 1316, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

Cammerer's statement did not completely settle the matter, however. One year later, the state commissioner renewed this proposal and Madsen, still equivocating, recommended that the Park Service grant the request. Again Cammerer overruled him. As the Park Service faced similar issues about fish stocking in other national parks, Cammerer issued a full written statement on fish policy in 1936. Up front and most importantly, the policy declared: "no introduction of exotic species of fish shall be made in national park or monument waters now containing only native species." It went on to circumscribe the stocking of exotic species in waters where they were already present, and to circumscribe the stocking and taking of native species in waters where only native species were found. While the policy allowed for a continuation of stocking programs as well as sport fishing, and in that sense perpetuated tradition, it also provided the first definitive statement of the NPS's mission to protect aquatic resources in their natural state.<sup>52</sup>

Still, the statement of policy was only a beginning. Park managers continued to think about aquatic resources in markedly different ways than they thought about terrestrial wildlife and habitat. The unusual management of Emerald Lake, situated beside the main park road, was a case in point. This small, mountain lake was naturally barren of fish. Sometime in the early 1930s, rangers began stocking it year after year with mature rainbow trout – "huge post-spawners" collected from state hatcheries – for visitors to enjoy by observation.<sup>53</sup> No fishing was allowed, since the few dozen fish would be quickly wiped out. Rather, people were encouraged to feed and observe these trout in their "native habitat." Park staff referred to Emerald Lake as a "natural aquarium," "out-door aquarium," and "fishery museum." Visitors liked the exhibit so well that at any given time during the summer several people could usually be seen watching and feeding the fish.<sup>54</sup>

Stocking of other park waters continued unabated, subject to the Park Service's restrictions concerning native and non-native species. Three species of non-native trout (brown, eastern brook, and Loch Leven) were planted in lakes and streams where populations of these non-native fish were already established (Manzanita Lake, Reflection Lake, Hat Creek, Summit Lake, Upper Kings Creek, and others). Overall, the great majority of fish plants consisted of native rainbow trout, and most of the waters in the eastern part of the park were preserved for native species only. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service made a survey of Lassen Volcanic's fishery looking to the improvement

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<sup>52</sup> "Office Order No. 323 Fish Policy," April 13, 1936, in Dilsaver, *America's National Park System: The Critical Documents*, 149-50. Also see Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, 124-25. Sellars takes a more critical view, emphasizing that the policy "allowed continued alteration of national park aquatic habitats for the promotion of sportfishing and the enhancement of public enjoyment."

<sup>53</sup> Al Denniston, interview by Theodore Catton, September 14, 2006.

<sup>54</sup> E. P. Leavitt to The Director, May 21, 1936, File 208-06: Fishery, Box 1305, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Fred T. Johnston to Regional Director, December 10, 1952, File 208-06: Lassen Fishing, Hunting, Trapping, Box 47, Records of the Western Regional Director – Lassen Volcanic NP 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR.

of sport fishing opportunities. Although supportive of the study's objective, NPS Director Drury rejected the USFWS recommendations for improving fish habitat by artificial means, citing the Park Service's "obligation to preserve the national parks unimpaired." He also rejected the study's proposal to stock "small lots of catchable trout during the summer tourist season" (temporarily increasing the fish population to a level above what would occur naturally), as that, too, would alter natural conditions.<sup>55</sup>

A more complicated issue was whether to attempt poisoning of non-native fish in order to restore native fish populations. Chemical treatment options were discussed for Manzanita Lake, Butte Lake, and Juniper Lake, among others. A marked decline in the Manzanita Lake fishery in the early 1950s finally led to the park's first major study by a NPS aquatic biologist.<sup>56</sup> Orthello Wallis was park naturalist at Lake Mead National Recreation Area. In 1954, he was detailed to Lassen Volcanic to investigate its trout waters and make recommendations for management. The first of two reports, "1954 Investigations of Special Fishery Problems, Lassen Volcanic National Park, California," focused on Manzanita Lake and provided a very thorough analysis together with four management options. Wallis's recommendation, and the option that Park Service and state officials agreed to follow, was to leave the non-native brown trout population for the present, suspending fish plants and foregoing any effort to change the fish composition with poison. Wallis's second report, "Lassen Trout Investigations," provided management prescriptions for other waters in the park. Wallis's major finding was that managers simply did not have sufficient data to determine the effectiveness of the fish stocking program, and more research was needed.<sup>57</sup>

From 1955 to 1965, while fish planting continued (some of it now accomplished by aerial fish drops), the Park Service began to step up research on the park's aquatic resources. Much of the effort was directed toward managing the sport fishery to maximize benefits for anglers – its traditional orientation. Rangers undertook a multi-year creel census of anglers, fishes were marked by fin-clipping and planted in specific waters to investigate fish movements, and certain park waters were experimentally closed

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<sup>55</sup> Report on Fish Planting, 1942, 1943, 1945; Newton B. Drury to Regional Director, December 4, 1943, File 714 Part 1: Fish, Box 1316, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>56</sup> Acting Regional Director to Director, February 11, 1953; Acting Director to Regional Director, March 27, 1953; Regional Naturalist to Superintendent, August 3, 1953; Park Naturalist to Superintendent, August 6, 1953; James D. Stokes to Edward D. Freeland, November 16, 1953; Regional Director to Superintendent, December 3, 1953, File 015: N1423 Fishing at Lassen 1942-53, Box 39, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives. Apparently only one lake was chemically treated. The California Department of Fish and Game, through a cooperative agreement with the Park Service, used a chemical in Butte Lake to kill rough fish. The chemical was allegedly non toxic to humans, birds, or mammals. News release, August 24, 1962, File 021: N1423 Fish Stocking Policy, 1962-1963, Box 39, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>57</sup> O. L. Wallis, "1954 Investigations of Special Fishery Problems, Lassen Volcanic National Park, California," File 41: N1423 1954 Investigations of Special Fishery Problems LVNP by Wallis; Chief Ranger to Superintendent, June 16, 1955, File 017: N1423 Fish Stocking Policy 1951-1955, Box 39, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Bennett T. Gale to Regional Director, May 4, 1955, File 1423 Part 2: LAVO, Box 2304, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II.

to fishing. Other research, meanwhile, was aimed at improving the park's knowledge base concerning lake and stream ecology. In the early 1960s, the Park Service contracted with the Humboldt State College Foundation for ecological studies of several lakes. Paul Hubbell of Humboldt State College made surveys of Manzanita Lake and Reflection Lake, while Fred Everest of the same institution completed studies of Snag Lake, Horseshoe Lake, and Juniper Lake in 1964. The studies were used by park staff during a week-long scoping meeting with Regional Naturalist Richard Prasil in August 1965, aimed at preparation of the park's first aquatic resources management plan. As the underlying studies sought to reframe the Park Service's understanding of each fishery in terms of the physical, chemical, and biological conditions of each lake, including aquatic plants and invertebrates as well as its fish, they were harbingers of a paradigm shift that would significantly change how Lassen Volcanic was managed in the last third of the twentieth century.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> O. L. Wallis, "Interpretation, Research, and Management of the Fishery Resources, Lassen Volcanic National Park, California," February 24, 1959, Natural Resources Library, LAVO Headquarters; Acting Superintendent to Regional Director, January 14, 1965; Superintendent to Regional Director, January 13, 1961, File 138: N2621 Annual Aquatic Resources Report, 1960-69, Box 41; Fred H. Everest, "A Survey of Juniper Lake, Lassen Volcanic National Park, June-August 1964," November 27, 1964, File 185: N3045, Box 42, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Acting Assistant Director to Director, December 23, 1964; Acting Assistant Director to Regional Director, November 2, 1965; Regional Director to Director, December 20, 1965, File N1423 Part 3: LAVO, Box 2304, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II.



Part 3  
Naturalization  
1964-2007



## Chapter Eight

### From Backcountry to Big “W” Wilderness

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As Ruby Swartzlow informed readers of *Nature Magazine* in 1937, Lassen Volcanic National Park was “More than Just a Volcano.” Beyond its roadside geologic wonders lay a serene expanse of forest, alpine lakes, and wildflower meadows, accessible only by footpath. Swartzlow recommended Twin Lakes as a perfect hiking destination for park visitors wishing to get “away from the glare of headlights and the blare of automobile horns.” As park visitation picked up in the postwar years, more people became acquainted with the park’s lovely backcountry. Relative solitude remained an added bonus to those who ventured off the main park road and onto the park’s 150 miles of trails. A 1957 *Sunset Magazine* article featured the eastern, roadless portion of Lassen Volcanic as “wilderness with an intimate, almost friendly quality,” offering a variety of destinations well worth the extra mile – or two – or five – to reach by foot or horseback.<sup>1</sup>

After passage of the Wilderness Act in 1964, local fans of the park’s backcountry joined national wilderness advocacy groups in pushing for legal wilderness protection for all but the existing developed areas of Lassen Volcanic. The Lassen Volcanic Wilderness, designated by Congress in 1972, fell short of the full acreage these proponents desired but also far exceeded the Park Service’s initial vision for a modest park wilderness. As the political spotlight turned toward this lesser-known, unroaded portion of Lassen Volcanic in the 1960s, park managers began to focus more of their attention on the ecological health of the entire park and a new era in natural resource protection dawned.

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<sup>1</sup> Ruby Johnson Swartzlow, “More than Just a Volcano,” *Nature* 30 (July 1937): 25; “California Cascades . . . If You Like Your Wilderness Friendly,” *Sunset* 119 (July 1957): 40-43.

## Early Measures to Preserve the Park's Backcountry

In the years preceding passage of the Wilderness Act, only one development scheme seriously threatened the integrity of Lassen Volcanic's large percentage of roadless acreage. At issue for several decades was a proposed automobile road that would extend northwest from Juniper Lake, bisect the park's eastern wilderness, and meet up with the main park road at Summit Lake. NPS Chief Engineer George Goodwin first suggested this connector road in 1922, but Superintendent Lewis of Yosemite and NPS Director Mather cut it from Lassen Volcanic's road development plan. They both wished to keep the park's center free of roads. As early as 1923, the Westwood Auto Club advocated for a southeast approach road for the park, one that would supersede and extend beyond either Alex Sifford's or C. P. Snell's private roads into their respective inholdings. NPS Director Albright was noncommittal to construction of such a park road, but did sanction a bit of preliminary survey work.<sup>2</sup>

In 1934, the Bureau of Public Roads began a location survey for an automobile route that would connect the park's southeast corner with the main park road, apparently without the Park Service's blessing. In short order, Regional Director Frank Kittredge voiced his strong opposition to road construction through the park's central wilderness and halted the survey. In doing so, Kittredge alienated the park's "pro-highway people," which included county officials, local business interests, and Superintendent Collins. Collins believed the park's single best resort location was the expansive and stunning Juniper Lake, where visitors could spend "a good long healthful vacation with plenty to do," as long as convenient access to the rest of the park's attractions (along the main park road) was afforded them. Building this connector road would "add more to public enjoyment of the park than any other improvement we might make," Collins attested, while it would still leave one-third of the park – its northeast portion – as wilderness.<sup>3</sup>

Washington officials were far more cautious about further highway development in Lassen. A CCC project proposal to construct a truck trail from Horseshoe Lake to Twin Lakes, which would all but complete the route proposed for a southeast link to the main park road, was shot down by the NPS Wildlife Division in 1935. While the proposed truck trail was not intended to be open to automobile traffic, "the road would be already there and outside pressure would almost certainly be exerted to widen it into more than a truck road," declared Assistant Wildlife Chief Ben Thompson. In 1936, NPS

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<sup>2</sup> Horace M. Albright, Director, to Mr. Charles G. Dunwoody, Director, Department of Conservation, California State Chamber of Commerce, June 16, 1930, File 610: Part I Lassen Land – Private Holdings, Box 355, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>3</sup> L. W. Collins, Superintendent, to Mr. H. C. Flourney, Chairman, Plumas County Chamber of Commerce, January 7, 1935, File 610: Part I, Lands – Private Holders, Box 1309; Frank A. Kittredge, Regional Director, to The Director, September 8, 1937, File 201-06: Adm. Superintendents, Box 1299, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Collins to The Director, April 29, 1935, File: Lassen Volcanic National Park, Prior to 1939, Box 3, Western Region – Central Files of the Regional Wildlife Technician, 1929-1941, RG 79, NA – PSR.

Director Cammerer went a step further in securing the park's remaining wilderness. He instructed Superintendent Leavitt to ban automobile traffic from the existing truck trails that connected Juniper Lake with Horseshoe Lake and Summit Lake with Twin Lakes, thereby widening the area of non-motorized use between Juniper Lake and the main park road. (The NPS eventually reversed Cammerer's closure of the Horseshoe Lake road, which remained open to motorists until the early 1970s.) In the years preceding the nation's entry into World War II, regional and community business groups, long-time park advocate Arthur Conard, and other locals pushed hard for a southeast connector road, but Regional Director Kittredge and Superintendent Preston stood firm against it. NPS Chief Architect Thomas Vint also advised against the construction of a new road in this portion of the park. Park Service officials stressed that deliberations about such a road were pointless until the government could obtain the sizable Juniper Lake and Drakesbad inholdings. Any federal road development through or near these private properties would only drive up their market values and render their acquisition all the more difficult. Even with resolution of the inholdings dilemma, a southeast connector road would likely not come to pass. Preston repeatedly emphasized the "earnest desire" he shared with his superiors "to keep the eastern section of this park in its wilderness state."<sup>4</sup>

In the 1950s, once acquisition of the Juniper Lake and Drakesbad properties was well underway, the idea of a southeast connector road was revisited one more time. Superintendent Freeland proposed construction of a road from Juniper Lake to Summit Lake in his initial Mission 66 plan, but NPS Director Wirth deleted it from the park's development prospectus. Wirth's chief of interpretation and associate director, Ronald F. Lee, wanted no part of the road, which would "cut through the heart of Lassen's small roadless area." Wirth did reserve the option to reconsider the road after completion of the park's other Mission 66 projects, but the long-contested connector road proposal did not resurface.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ben H. Thompson, Assistant Chief, Wildlife Division, Memorandum for Mr. Demaray, March 28, 1935, File: Lassen Volcanic National Park, Prior to 1939, Box 3, Western Region – Central Files of the Regional Wildlife Technician, 1929-1941; Minutes of the Sacramento Valley Council of the California State Chamber of Commerce, May 28, 1940, File 610 Private Lands Part 1, Box 57, Records of the Western Regional Director – LAVO 1929-1953, RG 79, NA – PSR; E. P. Leavitt, Superintendent, Memorandum to Park Staff, October 15, 1936, File 640.0: Trails – General, Box 1314; T. C. Vint, Chief Architect, Memorandum for the Director, August 13, 1937, File 610: Snell, Box 1310; John C. Preston, Superintendent, Memorandum for the Director, June 6, 1940, File 630.0 Roads General, Box 1313, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; Kittredge to Cammerer, September 8, 1937; Notes on the Meeting of the District Committee of the California State Chamber of Commerce, Red Bluff, May 28, 1940, File 4: L14 Land Acquisition General 1940-1942, Box 29, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>5</sup> Conrad Wirth, Notice of Approval, Lassen Volcanic National Park Prospectus, April 12, 1957; Ronald F. Lee, Chief, Division of Interpretation, Memorandum to Chief, Mission 66 Staff, November 26, 1956; E. T. Scoyen, Associate Director, Memorandum to Superintendent, March 5, 1956, File A98: Prospectus LAVO, Box 734, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II.

Otherwise, postwar development plans for Lassen Volcanic guarded against intrusions into the park's remaining roadless areas. Because of the park's small size (only 16 miles east-to-west and ten miles north-to-south), Superintendent Tobin wanted to retain all of Lassen's undeveloped acreage as wilderness in 1950. With a few minor exceptions, future development of the park should proceed by improving existing roads and facilities, not building new ones in new locations, Tobin wrote in the park's master plan. While preserving the park's wilderness, this general planning approach would take advantage of established routes and sites that showcased the park's geological features. Later in the decade, George Fogg, a NPS landscape architect, echoed Tobin's sentiments to focus park improvement projects in areas of existing development and leave the rest of the park "in a primitive state." The park's 1963 master plan narrative expressed the same objective to keep new park development within the bounds of existing development. Any improvements made to the park's small, remote campgrounds should be minor, the plan dictated, so as not to detract from the no-frills camping experience the more adventuresome park visitors chose by venturing into the backcountry.<sup>6</sup>

During Mission 66 renovations of the park's major campgrounds, old camp tables and fireplaces were relocated to the park's "outpost" camps, but in 1959, Superintendent Freeland received a number of letters from backcountry campers who wanted no more improvements to the park's remote campgrounds. "There seems to be definite desire on the part of a lot of people to find and use primitive camping areas," Freeland wrote. That year the park hired a highly experienced trail maintenance foreman, whom Freeland credited with improved trail conditions and heavier use of the park's backcountry. In 1960, the year Lassen Volcanic's annual visitation exceeded 400,000 for the first time, backcountry campers constituted the park's fastest growing user group.<sup>7</sup>

## **Ecology and Wilderness Come of Age**

The modern environmental movement emerged in the 1960s, reshaping Americans' perceptions of ecology, wilderness, and humans' place in nature. This was fundamentally an urban, middle-class movement, with environmental concerns ranging from urban sprawl to nuclear fallout, DDT, and endangered species protection. Tying it all together was a renewed sense that technological civilization could not isolate itself from ecological change. Nature was far more fragile than previously thought. The Sierra

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<sup>6</sup> Daniel J. Tobin, Superintendent, Master Plan Development Outline, Lassen Volcanic National Park, July 6, 1950; George E. Fogg, Landscape Architect, Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of Lassen Volcanic National Park, Chapter 5, Design Analysis – General Development, December 23, 1959; Richard G. Prasil and Raymond Nelson, Park Naturalists, Master Plan Narrative for Lassen Volcanic National Park, Chapter 1 – Objectives and Policies, November 30, 1962, Denver Service Center.

<sup>7</sup> SARs, 1959, 1961.

Club's director, Michael McCloskey, said that aesthetic and ecological values animated the environmental movement and wilderness preservation lay near the heart of it.<sup>8</sup>

There was debate about what qualities made "wilderness." For some it was primarily a matter of inaccessibility, an area only the hardiest and most determined people could get into and enjoy. For others it was primitiveness, or the absence of human influences. For still others it was solitude, or the absence of other humans. In Park Service idiom, wilderness was the backcountry – the country beyond the roads and development. Congress gave wilderness areas a legal definition in the Wilderness Act of 1964. Wilderness was "where the earth and its community of life are untrammled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." The act mandated that federal lands deemed worthy of legal wilderness status by the U.S. Congress would remain free of roads, mechanical transportation devices, and motorized equipment (except in cases of emergency or "as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area"). The act established an initial National Wilderness Preservation System made up of well-defined units called "wilderness areas" in the national forests and prescribed a process to add to this system areas managed by other federal land management agencies, including the National Park Service. The act gave the Park Service ten years to complete wilderness reviews of all roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more within the National Park System and advise Congress (through formal secretarial and presidential recommendations) on the "suitability" of each area for wilderness designation.<sup>9</sup>

Throughout the intensive, eight-year legislative saga that birthed the Wilderness Act, the Park Service resisted inclusion of its lands in a national wilderness system. In a 1958 publication designed for everyday citizens, Director Wirth defended his agency's tried-and-true record in managing "the superlative wild lands" found in national parks and monuments and explained how the agency's own brand of wilderness management fit into the Mission 66 program.<sup>10</sup> Once the Wilderness Act became law, the Park Service continued to regard the national wilderness system as a distraction from its own mission of preserving examples of nature in the National Park System, and moved reluctantly to review roadless areas within national parks and monuments as required by the act. Director George B. Hartzog, Jr. told a gathering of wilderness enthusiasts in 1969 that the Park Service welcomed the added strength in wilderness protection provided by the Wilderness Act. However, wilderness advocates found the Park Service's land

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<sup>8</sup> Michael McCloskey, "Wilderness Movement at the Crossroads, 1945-1970," *Pacific Historical Review* 41 (1972): 347.

<sup>9</sup> NPS recommendations for one-third of potential wilderness areas in parks and monuments were due to Congress by 1967, two-thirds by 1970, and the remainder by 1974. The NPS came nowhere near meeting this schedule. The Wilderness Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 890).

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, *The National Park Wilderness*, undated, U.S. Department of the Interior Library. Also see John C. Miles, *Wilderness in National Parks: Playground or Preserve* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009), 147-148.

classification scheme to be overly detailed and rigorous, with the result that the agency's wilderness recommendations to Congress were slow and disappointingly narrow.<sup>11</sup>

On the other hand, the wilderness preservation movement was no doubt a spur to the agency's serious introspection during the 1960s. Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall, whose book *The Quiet Crisis* (1964) considered environmental degradation to be the most serious threat to humankind, also demanded it. Udall initiated three influential studies that reoriented NPS policy in light of the new values embraced by the environmental movement.

The first of these studies produced the Leopold Report (1963), which reinvigorated the biological approach to management developed by the NPS Wildlife Division of the 1930s. As a primary goal, it recommended that "biotic associations within each park be maintained, or where necessary recreated, as nearly as possible in the condition that prevailed when the area was first visited by the white man." Park managers could, if given adequate support for ecological research, strive to obtain "a reasonable illusion of primitive America."<sup>12</sup> The second report, by the Robbins committee (1963), aided the first by pointing out the low status of research in the Park Service. The third study, conceived in 1961 as a "socioecological analysis" of internal threats to the National Park System posed by too much use and development, yielded an extended meditation by F. F. Darling and N. D. Eichhorn in *Man and Nature in the National Parks* (1967). Even more than the Leopold Report, this book sought to imbue NPS policy with a higher regard for wilderness preservation.

Darling and Eichhorn lamented that Mission 66 had tended to make the Park Service use visitor statistics as "valuable weapons in getting larger appropriations." Funds secured this way inevitably went to development that would encourage more visitation. Despite Mission 66's achievement, it had done "comparatively little for the plants and animals." The authors also warned that the Leopold Committee's desire to see parks and monuments managed as "vignettes of primitive America" could be misconstrued to mean that natural ecological changes should be resisted and the parks be maintained as "static museum exhibits." Instead, the authors wanted "the wilderness character of the parks . . . preserved by permitting natural processes to continue." In finding that elusive balance between visitor use and preservation, park managers must recognize that "the national parks cannot be wholly a wilderness system in a modern world, but the national parks of the roads, the museums, visitor centers, campsites, and scenic outlooks are in effect a staging point to the wilderness."<sup>13</sup> The necessary – or

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<sup>11</sup> Compare George B. Hartzog, Jr., "The Wilderness Act and the National Parks and Monuments," in Maxine E. McCloskey and James P. Gilligan, eds., *Wilderness and the Quality of Life* (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1969), 13-24, and McCloskey, "Wilderness Movement at the Crossroads," 347-358.

<sup>12</sup> A. Starker Leopold et al., "Wildlife Management in the National Parks," *Audubon Magazine* 65, no. 3 (May-June 1963): 168.

<sup>13</sup> F. F. Darling and N. D. Eichhorn, *Man and Nature in the National Parks* (Washington: The Conservation Foundation, 1967), 10-11, 18-19, 27-28, 54, 63, 70.

desirable – extent of this staging area for wilderness within Lassen Volcanic proved to be the primary debate in the park’s bureaucratic journey to wilderness designation.

### **A Wilderness Plan for Lassen Volcanic**

The National Park Service chose Lassen Volcanic as one of its first units to review for wilderness consideration. The NPS’s preliminary wilderness proposal for the park called for 48,587 acres of wilderness, split between two areas on either side of the main park road. The Lassen Peak Wilderness, located west of the road, would contain much of the park’s high-elevation terrain but would exclude the summits of Lassen Peak, Mount Diller, and Brokeoff Mountain. NPS officials touted the scientific significance of this proposed designation as “the timberline-alpine zone ecosystem” disturbed by Lassen Peak’s eruptions 50 years prior and its subsequent secondary plant succession. East of the park road, the proposed Cinder Cone Wilderness stretched across the park’s undulating east central interior but included only the southeast portion of Cinder Cone itself. This park wilderness would adjoin the new 19,000-acre Caribou Wilderness, designated in the Wilderness Act of 1964, on the Lassen National Forest.<sup>14</sup>

As required by the Wilderness Act, the Park Service held a public hearing on its wilderness proposal for Lassen Volcanic on September 27, 1966 in Red Bluff. John Preston, the former Lassen Volcanic superintendent who over 25 years earlier fought to preserve the roadless character of the park’s interior, had become a leading official in the wilderness designation process for the national parks and presided over the Red Bluff meeting. Preston shared the head table with Regional Director Edward Hummel, who presented the NPS’s wilderness plan for Lassen to the gathering, and Superintendent Louis Hallock. One reporter, from the *Redding Searchlight*, was present. The hearing commenced at 9 a.m. and concluded before lunchtime. Of the 60 people in attendance, only eleven testified. The bulk of public response to Lassen Volcanic’s proposed wilderness came in the form of written statements: the Park Service collected 269 such documents from area citizens, organizations, and agencies. At issue was not *if* wilderness should be designated within Lassen Volcanic but *how much*. The combined written and oral testimony yielded a flimsy 13 percent approval rating for the NPS’s wilderness proposal for Lassen Volcanic. Nearly everyone else demanded more wilderness for the park. Only two parties objected to any wilderness designations within Lassen Volcanic.

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<sup>14</sup> National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, “Wilderness Recommendations for Lassen Volcanic National Park, California,” August 1967, LAVO Library Vertical Files, I&E Division, LAVO Headquarters, pp. 21-22, 34, maps. Later legislation increased the size of the Caribou Wilderness slightly to 20,546 acres. The Caribou Wilderness was one of 54 original wilderness areas (all located on national forest lands) designated in the Wilderness Act of 1964. Since that time, the National Wilderness Preservation System has grown from 54 units totaling 9 million acres to 702 units totaling over 107 million acres. Wilderness.net, [www.wilderness.net](http://www.wilderness.net) (January 4, 2008).

Several sportsmen's groups used the platform to lobby for hunting within the proposed Cinder Cone Wilderness.<sup>15</sup>

The Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club, and the National Parks Association each submitted alternative proposals, all of which mapped out more than 100,000 acres of designated wilderness within the 107,000-acre park. The three alternatives offered slightly different boundary setbacks from the park's existing development areas and roads and recommended that all remaining park acreage become wilderness. To further expand the park's wilderness potential, the Sierra Club and The Wilderness Society suggested the closure of some park roads: the tract between Juniper Lake and Horseshoe Lake, and the truck trail along Hat Creek to Badger Flat. The National Parks Association proposed "a blanket wilderness classification" for Lassen Volcanic as part of a larger regional plan for northeastern California, northwestern Nevada, and southern Oregon. This plan sought to distribute recreational use of public lands over a broad area of seven national forests and other federal and state acreage, which would reduce visitation pressure on Lassen Volcanic and its wilderness resources. Upon review of all the public comment on Lassen's wilderness future, NPS officials calculated that the majority of testimony "generally supported" the ambitious objective of these three alternative plans: to designate 94 percent of Lassen Volcanic National Park as wilderness.<sup>16</sup>

The Park Service decided to meet proponents of expanded wilderness for Lassen Volcanic halfway. In August 1967, Director Hartzog approved new wilderness recommendations for the park that totaled 73,333 acres – nearly 70 percent of the park. Each of the park's two preliminary wilderness areas was enlarged significantly. The wilderness boundaries were redrawn along topographic lines nearer to the main park road, and major blocks of park acreage were added: the Horseshoe Lake, Devils Kitchen, and Mount Conard areas east of the road, and Mount Diller and Brokeoff Mountain west of the road. Interpretive signs along the immensely popular Lassen Peak Trail, which park officials had no interest in removing, disqualified the summit and south face of the renowned volcano from wilderness designation. Yet the northern boundary of the park's eastern wilderness was altered to include the entire Cinder Cone. The revised plan also proposed creation of a third wilderness area in the park's northwest corner. This small designation encompassed Prospect Peak and was separated from the rest of the park's eastern wilderness by the Nobles Emigrant Trail, which the Park Service wanted to retain as non-wilderness to allow for future interpretive development or perhaps even

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<sup>15</sup> National Park Service, "Wilderness Recommendations for Lassen Volcanic," 1, 23, 40, 42; John C. Preston, Memorandum to the Director, September 28, 1966, File L48: Part 1 LAVO, Box 1951, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>16</sup> National Park Service, "Wilderness Recommendations for Lassen Volcanic," 40-41; Anthony Wayne Smith and William J. Hart, "A Wilderness Plan for Lassen Volcanic National Park and the Surrounding Region," *National Parks Magazine* 40 (December 1966): 12-17.

construction of a “one-way motor trail” along side the historic route, connecting Badger Flat and Butte Lake.<sup>17</sup>

The Park Service wanted all three park wilderness areas to be buffered from park boundaries – and multiple-use activities, such as logging and grazing, allowed in the surrounding national forest – with a one-eighth-mile strip of non-wilderness, except along Lassen Volcanic’s eastern edge where park wilderness would adjoin the Lassen National Forest’s Caribou Wilderness. Lastly, the new recommendations called for the repeal of the provision in the Lassen Volcanic’s establishing act that allowed for federal reclamation projects within park boundaries. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation agreed to surrender this long-standing but unexercised right to the park’s water.<sup>18</sup>

On March 29, 1968, the Department of the Interior sent to Congress (through President Lyndon B. Johnson) its final recommendations for a Lassen Volcanic wilderness designation. Early wilderness bills for Lassen Volcanic were introduced to the Senate in April 1968, by Thomas Kuchel (R – Calif.), and again in January 1969, by Henry Jackson (D – Wash.). Neither bill yielded further action.<sup>19</sup>

By the close of the decade, no lands administered by the National Park Service had yet been added to the National Wilderness Preservation System. Congress was in small part responsible for the delay, wrote Ernest Dickerman of The Wilderness Society in 1970, but the Park Service itself was largely to blame. The agency had made little headway with its required studies of its roadless areas and submission of wilderness proposals to Congress. With less than five years to go in the wilderness review period prescribed by the Wilderness Act, the “foot-dragging” NPS had conducted field studies for only 17 of its 57 units with sizable roadless areas. The NPS had supplied Congress with wilderness proposals for only 5 units: Lassen Volcanic and Petrified Forest national parks, together with Lava Beds, Pinnacles, and Craters of the Moon national monuments. Wilderness legislation for all five of these units was introduced, but all of these bills stalled. The stalwart efforts of key individuals in the NPS to move the wilderness designation process forward had yet to triumph over the agency’s institutional penchant for parkland development, lamented Dickerman. The entanglement of wilderness reviews in NPS master planning procedures also hindered progress.<sup>20</sup> In 1970, the Park Service finally codified, in its handbook on administrative policies, its interpretation of the requirements of the Wilderness Act. A NPS land classification scheme developed around the concept of a staging area or “threshold” on the periphery of wilderness. Real

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<sup>17</sup> National Park Service, “Wilderness Recommendations for Lassen Volcanic,” 1, 23-27, maps.

<sup>18</sup> National Park Service, “Wilderness Recommendations for Lassen Volcanic,” 1, 26; E.V. Buschman, Memorandum to Legislative Counsel, Office of the Solicitor, January 4, 1968, File L48: Part 2 LAVO, Box 1951, Entry 7a, RG 79, NA II.

<sup>19</sup> Ernest M. Dickerman, “The National Park Wilderness Reviews (Lost in the Wilderness),” *The Living Wilderness* 34 (Spring 1970): 46; House Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Designation of Wilderness Areas, Part II, Lassen Volcanic National Park as Wilderness Area: Hearing on H.R. 10655*, 92d Cong., 2d sess., April 27, 1972, 6.

<sup>20</sup> Dickerman, “The National Park Wilderness Reviews,” 40-43.

progress toward the designation of national park wilderness areas began to make some headway.<sup>21</sup>

### **Congress Designates the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness**

President Richard M. Nixon reinvigorated the campaign for Lassen Volcanic's wilderness on April 28, 1971, when he urged Congress to act on the NPS's 1968 wilderness proposal for the park. Congressman Harold "Bizz" Johnson (D – Calif.) consulted with "many people," including NPS field staff, before introducing the park's third wilderness bill to the House of Representatives on September 14, 1971. H. R. 10655 called for a "Lassen Volcanic Wilderness" composed of the same three areas as before, but its boundaries differed slightly from the NPS's proposal and the two previous Senate bills. With the NPS's blessing, Johnson carved acreage from the proposed wilderness adjacent to the Sulphur Works Ski Area to allow for its future expansion into higher terrain, a cause the congressman would continue to champion through the 1970s. Elsewhere in the park's southwest corner, Johnson expanded the wilderness boundaries by the same number of acres, retaining the total wilderness acreage that the NPS had wanted for the park: 73,333. In the Senate, Alan Cranston (D – Calif.) introduced a similar bill for Lassen Volcanic, S. 667.<sup>22</sup>

A House subcommittee conducted a hearing on the Lassen Volcanic wilderness legislation the morning of April 27, 1972. Subcommittee Chairman Roy Taylor (D – N.C.) opened the session by expressing his relief that serious consideration of national park wilderness was underway and that he hoped the Lassen Volcanic hearing was a harbinger of more to come. Testimony began with input from Interior. Assistant Secretary Nathaniel Reed informed the subcommittee that the NPS recently saw fit to add the area surrounding Mount Harkness, in the park's southeast corner, to its wilderness recommendations. The Park Service had abandoned its ponderings about developing a road that would encircle Juniper Lake and traverse along the base of Mount Harkness on the southern lakeshore, the initial reason this area was excluded from the NPS's wilderness recommendations several years earlier. The Mount Harkness addition increased the acreage total for the proposed wilderness to 78,825. Reed also requested that language repealing the park's provision for federal reclamation projects be added to H.R. 10655. Johnson agreed to both amendments. Otherwise, discussion between subcommittee members and Interior personnel was brief. Reed defended the park's wilderness buffer zones along park boundaries as necessary for possible fence construction to combat cattle trespass, but he assured the congressmen that otherwise the

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<sup>21</sup> National Park Service, U.S. Department of Interior, *Administrative Policies for Natural Areas of the National Park System* (Washington: National Park Service, 1970), 13-14, 23, 32.

<sup>22</sup> House, *Hearing on H.R. 10655*, 2, 4, 6, 12.

NPS would manage these areas no differently than the adjacent wilderness. Congressman Johnson took advantage of the forum to voice his constituents' concern about the recent geothermal exploration on the Section 36 inholding, but until the NPS acquired this land, the Wilderness Act could do nothing to protect this portion of the park.<sup>23</sup>

All but one of the eight citizen witnesses who spoke at the congressional hearing advocated for a much larger wilderness for Lassen Volcanic than H.R. 10655 prescribed. Four of these were northern Californians, members of the Siskiyou County Environmental Health Committee, the Audubon Society, and local chapters of the Sierra Club. Staff of The Wilderness Society, the National Parks and Conservation Association, and Friends of the Earth – all headquartered in Washington, D.C. – also testified. These men were united in their desire to create a Lassen Volcanic Wilderness of 100,000 acres or more. They stressed that much qualified wilderness acreage remained outside H. R. 10655's proposed wilderness boundaries, including 1) the wilderness buffer zones along the park's edges, 2) the wilderness "thresholds" (sizable areas that the NPS thought necessary to separate the wilderness from existing roads and developments), and 3) the undeveloped portion of the Nobles Emigrant Trail in the park's northwest corner. "Developed areas should and can stay," said Redding attorney Stephen Birdlebough, to be enjoyed by the motorized public as it was accustomed, but the park's wilderness boundaries should extend to the park's boundaries and very near to its roads and developed areas so that no new construction is permitted on pristine lands. George Alderson of Friends of the Earth claimed that preserving the wilderness fringe in this way would most benefit those visitors who never set foot in the wilderness itself but enjoyed viewing it from the park road or Manzanita Lake. All these wilderness advocates were adamant about protecting the Nobles Emigrant Trail from road development. School teacher Jon Eckman of Yreka pleaded for the NPS to "preserve this trail in its wilderness state for the park visitor to walk and harken back and reflect upon his pioneer ancestors." NPS Director Hartzog, who attended the hearing but did not officially testify, did relay that the NPS planned to sanction only horse-drawn wagon travel (by living-history actors) on the trail; it had no plans to pave a road for motorized vehicles in the historic trail's corridor. A perfect primitive use for wilderness then, Eckman interjected.<sup>24</sup>

These witnesses also urged the federal government to purchase or condemn the park's remaining inholdings, especially Section 36 and the cabin sites along Hat Creek, as soon as possible. After the Hat Creek properties were acquired, the Badger Flat road could be closed to traffic and the wilderness designation expanded to include Raker Peak, a number of witnesses advised. Douglas Scott of The Wilderness Society sparred with a testy Congressman Keith Sebelius (R – Kans.) over the accessibility of wilderness to the casual weekend park visitor. Don Hummel, who had been Lassen Volcanic's

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<sup>23</sup> House, *Hearing on H.R. 10655*, 1-12, 23.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 13-58. Quotes and direct reference to individual testimony: pp. 13, 21, 27, 55.

concessioner for many years, shared Sebelius' sentiments that wilderness pleased only a small "country club" of backpackers who had too much time on their hands. Hummel testified that wilderness designations in national parks deprived the NPS flexibility in managing its lands to best serve the nation's increasing population. He chastised the preceding witnesses as elite purists "who would wrap up the park in a nice vacuum package and deny the people its use." He also bemoaned the NPS's decision to abandon the idea of a loop road around Juniper Lake and its addition of Mount Harkness to its wilderness recommendation, which would all but prohibit any future concession development at Juniper Lake. Hummel, who had become a national leader in national park concessions by this time, would do battle against environmentalists and the NPS many times in the years to come over the rise of preservation priorities in the national parks. Hummel capped his long career of doing business in the national parks with a scathing treatise on the issue entitled *Stealing the National Parks: The Destruction of Concessions and Park Access*, published in 1987.<sup>25</sup>

As Hummel lamented in his book, the wilderness lobby was highly motivated, organized, and quite vocal; the case of the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness demonstrated these virtues well. Conservation groups as distant of the Florida Audubon Society and the Kenai Peninsula Chapter of the Alaska Conservation Society submitted written testimony supporting The Wilderness Society's 101,000-acre wilderness plan for Lassen Volcanic. A number of private citizens from around the state and beyond wrote letters to the same effect, including a seasonal ranger at Lassen Volcanic, Peter Bonnell, who criticized the current legislation as a "token" wilderness proposal that left far too much park acreage vulnerable to future development. Senator John Tunney (D – Calif.) also submitted a statement favoring the enlargement of the park's wilderness designation to 101,000 acres. A few letters supported the legislation as is, including one from Juniper Lake cabin owner Philip Langley, who wanted wilderness designated within the park "but not to the point of absurdity," which he considered the 101,000-acre alternative plan. The National Forest Products Association voiced its displeasure over any new wilderness designations in California, which it felt hindered natural resource development, fish and wildlife management, and many popular forms of recreation on federal lands. Association representative John Hall conceded that he could live with a 73,000-acre wilderness within Lassen Volcanic, but "most certainly it should not be any larger."<sup>26</sup>

Five months after the hearing, in September, both the Senate and House committees on interior and insular affairs reported favorably on identically amended bills that increased the total acreage of the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness a final time to 78,982 acres, nearly 75 percent of the park. The committees granted the NPS its desired Mount Harkness addition and the repeal of the antiquated allowance for reclamation projects

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<sup>25</sup> House, *Hearing on H.R. 10655*, 30, 55-61; Hummel, *Stealing the National Parks: The Destruction of Concessions and Park Access*.

<sup>26</sup> House, *Hearing on H.R. 10655*, 4-5, 61-72.

within the park. To The Wilderness Society and its allies, the committee members conceded the wilderness designation's exterior buffer zones and the Nobles Emigrant Trail, both of which were now enclosed within the revised wilderness boundaries. The inclusion of the Nobles Trail merged the Prospect Peak area with the park's eastside wilderness. The first week in October, both the House and the Senate passed the legislation. On October 19, 1972, President Nixon signed the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness Act into law.<sup>27</sup>

The Lassen Volcanic Wilderness was the fourth wilderness to be designated by Congress on NPS lands. Wilderness areas in Arizona's Petrified Forest National Park and Idaho's Craters of the Moon National Monument were legislated in 1970. The Park Service's generous wilderness proposals for these two rocky, arid landscapes went uncontested by conservation groups and therefore translated into successful legislation with relative ease. The NPS wilderness proposals for Lassen Volcanic National Park and Lava Beds National Monument, located 80 miles to the north near the California-Oregon state line, proved more controversial and therefore took longer to become law. Congressional proceedings for these two wilderness bills progressed at the same time, with the Lava Beds Wilderness Act passing one week prior to that for Lassen Volcanic. Wilderness proposals for other NPS units met much greater resistance, from both anti-wilderness forces and wilderness advocates, in the years to come. Congress did not designate more national park and monument wilderness areas until 1976. Many NPS units – including the renowned parks of Yellowstone, Glacier and Great Smoky Mountains – still contain no official wilderness designations.<sup>28</sup>

### **Defining Wilderness Management and Use at Lassen Volcanic**

After the designation of the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness, park officials wasted no time implementing basic wilderness management standards on the ground. They eliminated automobile access into the wilderness with closures of the Horseshoe Lake and Badger Flat roads. The Horseshoe Lake campground was converted into a walk-in facility. As recently as 1965, Lassen Volcanic had kept a handful of horses for backcountry patrol, maintenance of the lookouts, and hauling supplies to trail crews, but

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<sup>27</sup> House, *Designating Certain Lands in the Lassen Volcanic National Park, Calif., as Wilderness*, 92d Cong., 2d sess., 1972, H. Rept. 92-1422; Senate, *Designating Certain Lands in the Lassen Volcanic National Park, Calif., as Wilderness*, 92d Cong., 2d sess., 1972, S. Rept. 92-1248; *Congressional Record*, 92d Cong., 2d sess., 1972, 118, pts. 25, 26, 28: 33047, 33182-33183, 33920, 37200-37201; "An Act to designate certain lands in the Lassen Volcanic National Park, California" (86 Stat. 918) in U.S. Department of Interior, *Laws Relating to the National Park Service, Supplement III, February 1963-December 1972* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1974), 169-170.

<sup>28</sup> Wilderness.net, [www.wilderness.net](http://www.wilderness.net) (January 4, 2008); Dickerman, "The National Park Wilderness Reviews," 46, 48.

by the early 1970s, these horses were gone.<sup>29</sup> With the passage of the Lassen Wilderness Act, horses once again joined the work force as mounts for two seasonal rangers assigned wilderness patrol duties, one based at Horseshoe Lake and the other at Butte Lake. All fish planting in water bodies contained within the wilderness boundaries was phased out. Five miles of old telephone line within the wilderness was removed. Workers constructed public horse corrals at Juniper Lake, Butte Lake, and Summit Lake (stock would not be permitted to overnight in the wilderness) and installed informational and regulatory signs at 26 trailheads. The southern end of Lassen Volcanic's 17-mile section of the Pacific Crest Trail was finished. Official tree markers were placed at intervals along the Pacific Crest Trail, and replacement and updating of existing signs along other wilderness trails began. The park accomplished all this work by 1975, drawing on its operating budget and personnel on hand. Designation of the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness came with no additional funding or management resources of any kind.<sup>30</sup>

Park staff also devised a management plan for the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness in short order. The writers of this plan were beholden to laws that created the park in 1916 and its wilderness in 1972, Lassen's current master plan, a park wilderness directive from the Regional Office, various other NPS policies, and the 1964 Wilderness Act. During the 1973 summer season, wilderness users were already required to abide by the most rudimentary regulation of the park's preliminary wilderness plan: to obtain a permit before any overnight excursion into the wilderness. To hikers, campers, and horseback riders bound for the park wilderness, rangers distributed a recently revised "Backcountry Manners" informational pamphlet. Chief Park Ranger Al Schneider conferred with Forest Service officials, as well as other NPS personnel in the region, in refining Lassen's wilderness permit system. After several rounds of reviews (by the Regional Office) and revisions, the park's final "Backcountry Management Plan" was approved by Regional Director Howard Chapman in March 1974. Lassen Volcanic also established its first backcountry winter-use safety procedures at this time. Park officials retained the right to temporarily prohibit entry to the backcountry when extreme weather conditions, at any time of the year, threatened human safety or heightened resource vulnerability. Both wintertime avalanche hazard and summertime fire danger prompted short closures of the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness in the mid-1970s.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Gary E. Bunney, Ranger, Forestry, Memorandum to Superintendent, November 23, 1965, File 208: N50 Pest and Weed Control, 1965-1987, Box 42, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>30</sup> SARs, 1972-1974; "Summary of Backcountry Management Activities, Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1973-1975," Folder 118: N1623 – Wilderness and Backcountry Management Plan, 1976-1990; "Lassen Volcanic National Park Backcountry Management Plan," approved March 15, 1974, Folder 120: N1623 Backcountry/Wilderness Management: Backcountry Management Plan, 1974, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives. The Pacific Crest Trail, established in 1968 under the National Trails System Act, was not completed until 1993. It extends 2,650 miles along the Sierra Nevada and the Cascade Range, from the Mexican border to the Canadian border. Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail website, [www.fs.fed.us/pct](http://www.fs.fed.us/pct) (January 21, 2008).

<sup>31</sup> SARs, 1972-1974; "Summary of Backcountry Management Activities"; "Backcountry Management Plan."

The park's 1974 backcountry management plan sought "to establish current and long-range guidelines for active backcountry management in order to preserve the wilderness and to provide for a quality experience for the visitor." The plan's most ambitious objectives awaited future funding and additional manpower to be implemented. These objectives included regulation of foot travel into the wilderness at seven major trailheads, helicopter placement of eleven pit toilets, installation of fire rings and inconspicuous signage at 73 designated backcountry campsites, and operation of a reservation system for those designated sites. Park managers would continue to utilize the three structures within the wilderness – the Mount Harkness Fire Lookout and the ranger cabins at Horseshoe Lake and Upper Twin Lake – and possibly construct additional A-frame ranger cabins in the wilderness, as needed. Park staff would maintain directional signs (but not interpretive signs) within the wilderness and use chainsaws for trail maintenance and boardwalk construction at thermal areas.<sup>32</sup> No routine insect or disease control would be practiced in the wilderness areas. A "cautious or conservative" fire control policy would continue in the park's backcountry, pending study of the feasibility of permitting naturally ignited fires "to run their course" in the park wilderness. Park interpretive rangers would integrate wilderness philosophy and proper wilderness use into their guided walks, evening programs, exhibits, and other offerings to the public.<sup>33</sup>

Once equipped with their wilderness permit, backcountry users could camp in either designated sites or in general camping areas – never in meadows and at least 100 feet from lakes, streams, or trails – for up to seven days during the summer season. Campfires were allowed only in the fire rings of designated sites. Camping parties were limited to six people (ten if a designated group campsite was used), and day hikers could not exceed groups of 20. Fishing was allowed with a state license, but motorboats were prohibited in wilderness lakes. Due to the park's small size and limited grazing resources, no stock could overnight in the wilderness, but anyone could stable animals in the new corrals at Summit, Butte, and Juniper lakes. Park officials wanted no more than 75 pack or saddle horses in the park at one time, and all were required to return to the trailheads by nightfall. Park staff calculated the recreational carrying capacity for the park's backcountry as well: 618 campers per night, bedded down at 91 hypothetical campsites across the wilderness.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> While the NPS customarily permitted the use of chainsaws for maintenance purposes within designated wilderness areas in the national parks, the U.S. Forest Service required its workers to use non-motorized maintenance equipment within USFS wilderness areas.

<sup>33</sup> "Backcountry Management Plan," quotes from pp. 1, 9.

<sup>34</sup> "Backcountry Management Plan." An overnight permit for the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness was also good for the adjacent Caribou Wilderness on the Lassen National Forest. In a practice that has since lapsed, the Park Service and the Forest Service provided each other with copies of permits when the holder indicated he or she intended to travel in both wilderness areas. Use regulations for the two wilderness areas differed.

## An Evolving Wilderness Ethos

The initial rules and management objectives governing the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness appeared to set well with the park's backcountry users. In January 1976, park officials called a public meeting to discuss revisions to the wilderness management plan, but the forum drew just a handful of participants who suggested only minor changes to user regulations. The park's intention to place pit toilets in the wilderness was the only part of the management plan that met strong opposition from the attendees.<sup>35</sup>

In the latter 1970s, work crews removed hazard trees from the Horseshoe Lake campground and "pulled in" the old road between Juniper Lake and Horseshoe Lake to trail width. Lassen Volcanic's fire policy was evolving to allow more natural fires to burn in the park's high-elevation forests. In 1979, park staff began monitoring the impacts of campers in the backcountry and found significant degradation of certain areas. After gathering data for several seasons, managers began prohibiting overnight use of these hard-hit camping destinations in 1982.<sup>36</sup> The camping restrictions may have accounted, in part, for a decrease in the number of park visitors opting to overnight in the backcountry after 1982. From 1977 to 1982, wilderness permit data accounted for 10,000 to 14,000 overnight stays in the park backcountry per year, but after 1982 that annual figure fell to about 8,000. Issuance of winter-use wilderness permits also declined somewhat during the same time period. Wintertime overnight totals dropped from well over 1,000 annually (peaking at 1,316 in 1981) to around 1,000 or less, although this specialized use of the wilderness was largely dependent on the severity of winter weather. In 1985, wilderness day use was highlighted in a week-long fall seminar provided by park interpreter Steve Zachary about the east side wilderness and autumn bird migration.<sup>37</sup>

A comprehensive revision of the park's "Wilderness and Backcountry Management Plan" in 1985 revealed a more minimalist, scaled-down approach to protecting the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness and regulating its use, compared to the long-term objectives of the park's original wilderness management plan of 1974. A reservation system for designated backcountry campsites never materialized. Instead, wilderness users chose their own campsites on a first-come, first-served basis, in any of the park's 17 "travel zones" or drainage basins. Park staff tried to gauge the overnight use of these zones through the wilderness permitting process. In certain heavy-use areas, campers had to utilize designated sites, while other localities were closed to overnight use altogether "due to the area's fragile nature, high visitor use, past overuse, or proximity to auto access." Instead of developing more designated campsites in the wilderness,

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<sup>35</sup> Albert C. Schneider, Chief Park Ranger, Memorandum to Superintendent, January 27, 1976, Folder 121: N1623 Backcountry/Wilderness Management 1975-1976, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>36</sup> SARs, 1976, 1979-1982.

<sup>37</sup> SARs, 1981-1986.

“restoration” of the backcountry through the obliteration of many established sites and fire rings was the new goal. The earlier intention to place pit toilets in the wilderness was also abandoned, while stricter sanitation regulations were written into the wilderness plan. Some user regulations were relaxed, while others were tightened: maximum camping party size increased from six people to ten, while maximum stock party size decreased from 25 animals to 15, with a total of only 45 saddle and pack animals allowed in the park at one time. Administrators reserved the option to implement “a trailhead quota system” at the five most popular wilderness trailheads, should ongoing monitoring of use patterns and impacts on the landscape reveal a need to limit numbers of people entering the wilderness.<sup>38</sup>

To abate cattle trespass into the park’s wilderness, the revised plan called for construction of drift fences at trouble spots along the park boundary. (The following year, the Park Service collaborated with the U.S. Forest Service, the state forestry division, and the Circle S Ranch in building a new section of drift fence near the park’s Southwest Entrance to keep cattle out of the meadows at the Brokeoff Mountain trailhead.<sup>39</sup>) The wilderness management plan dictated that all such work projects within the wilderness, including trail maintenance, would be done “with the minimum tools necessary,” now an agency-wide wilderness management ideal.<sup>40</sup> Use of motorized or mechanized equipment was limited to emergency or other rare circumstances. Implementation of this wilderness plan was the responsibility of all park’s division chiefs; Al Denniston, the park’s first resource management chief as of 1982, would coordinate this joint effort.<sup>41</sup>

The park’s wilderness management plan continued to be updated every few years. The most notable wilderness regulation change in the late 1980s concerned the prohibition of all campfires in the backcountry. A decade earlier, park officials temporarily banned the use of open fires in the backcountry when vegetation was parched and the fire danger was extreme. In the early 1980s, campfires were intermittently prohibited in the especially fire-prone area of Twin Lakes, sometimes for the duration of the summer. The 1985 wilderness management plan placed a permanent ban on open fires around Twin Lakes and encouraged all wilderness users to cook on backpacking stoves instead of building wood fires.<sup>42</sup> In 1987, all ground fires were prohibited in the

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<sup>38</sup> “Wilderness and Backcountry Management Plan,” revised March 1985, LAVO Library Vertical Files, I&E Division.

<sup>39</sup> SAR, 1986.

<sup>40</sup> Beginning in the 1970s, the Park Service subscribed to the concept of the “minimum tool” in wilderness management, in which managers selected the least mechanized equipment possible in order to accomplish their objectives safely, economically, and most importantly, in a manner that did not degrade wilderness values. “Departmental Guidelines for Wilderness Proposals, June 24, 1972,” in U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Wilderness Recommendation, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, North Carolina – Tennessee* (Denver: National Park Service, 1974), 6-7.

<sup>41</sup> “Wilderness and Backcountry Management Plan,” revised March 1985.

<sup>42</sup> SARs, 1977, 1979, 1982, 1984; “Wilderness and Backcountry Management Plan,” revised March 1985.

backcountry all summer long on a trial basis. Once the main park road closed that season, a permanent year-round campfire ban was instituted throughout the park's backcountry. The 1990 revised wilderness plan detailed this new regulation that applied to everyone, including backcountry skiers and snowshoers in the wintertime: "A portable stove with a self-contained source of fuel must be used for cooking and warmth."<sup>43</sup> Chief Ranger Schneider did not favor the ban, which he thought denied backcountry campers an integral part of their outdoor experience. The park did not have a history of trouble surrounding backcountry campfires, he said, and a number of wilderness users continued to have small fires at their camps despite the ban, he believed.<sup>44</sup>

In 1990, budget cuts ended the park's decade-long program of monitoring wilderness use levels and impacts. Without such a systematic measurement of changing wilderness conditions, park officials admitted that restrictions placed on wilderness users were "somewhat arbitrary." In 1993, the park allocated \$40,000 to maintenance work in the park wilderness, but no other funds were earmarked specifically for wilderness management, including any percentage of any employee's time. Staffing shortages defeated effective wilderness patrolling and intentions to implement a quota system at certain wilderness trailheads. The duties of seasonal rangers and trail crew members did take them into the park wilderness, where they served as the primary points of contact between wilderness users and the park administration. The park used its volunteer workforce to accomplish many of its wilderness-associated tasks, including administration of its continuing wilderness permit program, winter ski patrol, litter collection, and site rehabilitation. In the mid-1990s, park officials considered the primary management concerns of the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness to be wildlife poaching, cattle trespass, snowmobile trespass, aircraft overflights, and the habitual degradation of trails and campsites from wilderness users. They also considered restoration of natural fire cycles to be a pressing need in the park's wilderness, as was improved trail maintenance. Trail work and other maintenance done within the wilderness in 1993 included helicopter transport of supplies on ten occasions and chainsaw use 40 times, a seemingly lenient application of the minimum-tool rule.<sup>45</sup>

Based on wilderness permit data, the volume of wilderness camping in the 1990s held steady from the previous decade: annual overnight stay totals rarely exceeded 8,000. Still, park officials qualified this number as "considerable" overnight use of the wilderness. In 1994, summer season camping parties in the wilderness averaged 2.8

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<sup>43</sup> SAR, 1987; "Wilderness and Backcountry Management Plan, Lassen Volcanic National Park," May 1990, File 124: N1623 Backcountry/Wilderness Mgt. – Wilderness and Backcountry Mgt. Plan 1990, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>44</sup> Schneider interview.

<sup>45</sup> SARs, 1990, 1992; National Park Service, "Wilderness Survey for the Annual Report to Congress on Wilderness Management, Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1993," File N26: Reports 1993-1995; National Park Service, "Lassen Volcanic Statement for Management," July 1994, File D18: Planning Programs 1999-2001, LAVO Central Files.

people and lasted for 2.5 days; in winter, an average of 2.1 people camped together in the wilderness for only 1.9 days.<sup>46</sup> By 1996, the park's annual "Compendium of Special Regulations" specified exactly where wilderness campers could *not* pitch their tents: within a quarter of a mile of several dozen natural features, such as Soda Lake, Cinder Cone, Devils Kitchen and the Mount Harkness summit. Near the wilderness edge, camping was prohibited within sight or within one mile of roads and developed areas. Wintertime camping in the backcountry was much less restrictive.<sup>47</sup>

By the mid-1990s, the Park Service had classified all but 950 acres of Lassen Volcanic National Park as a "natural zone," in which "conservation of natural resources" ranked first among management objectives. Yet strict conformity to wilderness standards even within the boundaries of the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness remained a work in progress: interpretive signs from Boiling Springs Lake and Devils Kitchen were not removed until 1997. Much of the park's natural zone that extended beyond the wilderness proper was managed as if it were wilderness, Superintendent Marilyn Parris attested in 1999. Because of this fact, Parris asked park personnel to ponder an expansion of the wilderness boundaries, as they devised the park's next general management plan. Early versions of the California Wilderness Act of 1984 had contained proposed additions to the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness, but these lands were cut from the final legislation (which, among dozens of new designations and enlargements of existing areas, increased the Caribou Wilderness by 1,800 acres). Parris wanted to revisit the possibility of designating more park acreage as official wilderness to "ensure against development in future years and provide for the best protection of park resources." Although little serious effort has been made toward this legislative end, the park's new zoning system, as outlined in the 2001 general management plan, includes a sizable "wilderness zone" that contains both the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness and "lands considered for proposed designation." The entire zone is managed as if it were legal wilderness.<sup>48</sup>

In recent years, mechanized intrusions – in the form of snowmobiles, motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, and even bicycles – have posed the biggest threat to the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness. Because the park wilderness abuts national forest lands where these activities are permitted, "it is quite easy for people to enter into the

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<sup>46</sup> SARs, 1992-1996; "Lassen Volcanic Statement for Management," July 1994.

<sup>47</sup> "Compendium of Special Regulations for Lassen Volcanic National Park," June 1, 1996 through May 31, 1997, May 17, 1996, File W46: General Regulations 1996-1998, Title 36, CFR, Chapter 1, Parts 1-6, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>48</sup> "Lassen Volcanic Statement for Management," July 1994, 18; Marilyn H. Parris, Memorandum to All Employees, July 14, 1999, File N1623: Backcountry/Wilderness Mgmt. 1996-1998, LAVO Central Files, LAVO; Senate, *California Wilderness Act*, 98th Cong., 2d sess., 1984, S. Rept. 98-582, 19; "California Act of 1984" (98 Stat. 1619); General Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement, Lassen Volcanic National Park, August 2001, U.S. Department of the Interior Library, p. 18; Parris to Nancy Trolson, Sept. 1, 2000, File N16: Management of Natural Resources 1996-1998, LAVO Central Files; comments on final draft report.

designated wilderness rather quickly on their machines,” explained Chief Ranger John Roth. One motorcycle wreaked havoc on the delicately sculpted soils of the Painted Dunes in a single foray in the late 1990s. According to Roth, snowmobile trespass has worsened in the past decade, due to too few permanent rangers on staff to patrol adequately. The protection division is thankful for tips they receive from local people that increase the rangers’ chances of catching offenders; otherwise, intercepting an illegal snowmobiler in the wilderness is “very coincidental.” While past wilderness affronts of timber theft and poaching have abated, cattle trespass remains a problem. Lately, the park has been “fairly successful” in curbing cattle entry into the wilderness, “but I will stop short of saying we have solved it,” Roth admitted. The persistent personnel shortage at Lassen Volcanic prohibits assessments of impacts to the wilderness resource from season to season. The park lacks any “comprehensive overview” of the state of its wilderness, but the protection division makes time for occasional survey work when it can.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> SARs, 1998-2001; John Roth, interview by Diane Krahe, January 26, 2007.

## Chapter Nine

### Park Administration in an Era of Retrenchment

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The last few decades of the twentieth century proved to be trying times for Lassen Volcanic National Park as popular park facilities were shut down, park visitation peaked and ebbed, and budgetary hardship remained a constant. While the phenomenal yearly increases in visitor use of all national parks finally leveled off and even turned into slight decreases at the end of the twentieth century, the peak in visitor use came artificially early and abruptly at Lassen as a result of the sudden closure and removal of visitor facilities at Mazanita Lake in response to a perceived geologic hazard. Lassen's annual visitation topped 500,000 for the first and only time in 1972; it hovered mostly between 400,000 and 500,000 for the next two decades; and it seldom went above 400,000 after 1993, the last year of downhill skiing in the park. As it drew just a small fraction of the people who swarmed into California's other national parks, Lassen Volcanic solidified its standing as something of a backwater area despite its outstanding natural attractions – a “friendly wilderness” in *Sunset Magazine's* homey phrase.

Many fans of Lassen appreciated the park's low-key character. Indeed, many park staff agreed with them and loved working in the park for that very reason. As a place to work, Lassen Volcanic seemed to provide an ideal compromise, for it satisfied the popular desire of NPS employees to serve in one of the western national parks at the same time that it offered a less stressful work environment than a bustling park such as Yosemite or Grand Teton. Many park employees found Lassen Volcanic a choice NPS unit in which to work for a number of years, while raising teenage children or approaching their own retirement age. Frequently these people made their homes in Red Bluff, a full-service community with an attractive climate, and commuted each day to Mineral. This pattern developed in the late 1970s after the Park Service dropped its

requirement that park staff, or at least those in supervisory positions, had to have residences nearby their duty stations.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the many blessings of relatively low visitation, however, this important facet of Lassen Volcanic came at a cost for park administration. In an era of retrenchment for Park Service budget and staffing levels, Lassen Volcanic struggled to compete with other units. At times, the park did not do well in getting its share of attention from the Regional Office. The precipitous removal of visitor facilities at Manzanita Lake appeared to some people to have left the park maimed. Decades passed as successive superintendents sought to develop a modern visitor center. Local supporters grumbled that Lassen Volcanic was where the Park Service sent its old superintendents who were winding down their careers.<sup>2</sup>

In other respects, Lassen Volcanic's administration reflected broader trends occurring throughout the National Park System. The planning process grew more formalized and involved a much greater level of public input than in prior years. Lassen's first general management plan (GMP) was completed in 1981, and a second one was approved in 2001. Management decisions usually conformed to guidance laid out in the park's GMP. In a related development, the park administration forged more varied and complex relations with outside entities. The park deepened its cooperation with Lassen National Forest and developed new relationships with a number of other partner organizations. These relationships touched on everything from resource management to publicity and funding. Meanwhile, the park administration devoted a large share of its overall budget and staff resources to maintenance operations, particularly the monumental tasks of snow removal and repairs on the main park road. Like so many other parks with significant infrastructure, Lassen Volcanic struggled over how to perform the maintenance job safely and efficiently in the face of rising labor and fuel costs.

### **Park Leadership, Staff Development, and the Changing Face of the NPS**

A number of superintendents cycled in and out of the park during these trying times. Half of these officials remained at Lassen Volcanic for only a short time, while the others served terms of five years or more. Half of these superintendents retired at the conclusion of their Lassen Volcanic years, while the others moved on to higher-ranking NPS positions. Park staff diversified into many professional niches, especially within the new resource management division. The park's total workforce grew incrementally, but the interpretation division shrank as ranger naturalists were all but supplanted by wayside

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Lake, interview by Theodore Catton, September 14, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Marilyn Parris, interview by Theodore Catton, July 5, 2007; Judd Hanna, interview by Diane Krahe, September 12, 2006.

exhibits and other forms of self-service interpretation. As national attitudes about gender and racial equality evolved, more women and minorities joined the Lassen workforce, particularly in the seasonal staff. The successive male superintendents who headed the park through the 1960s might have been surprised to know that female leadership of Lassen Volcanic would come to pass within a few short decades.

Short-timer Robert Moore left his position as Lassen Volcanic superintendent in 1965 to become assistant regional director for the Western Region. His successor, Louis Hallock, transferred from Bryce Canyon National Park. Hallock's tenure at Lassen Volcanic was also brief, indicative of what had become established agency culture: career advancement via geographic mobility among park units. NPS employees of all kinds participated in this migration from park to park and even to parks in foreign lands. In 1966, Lassen Volcanic naturalist Robert Milne accepted a position at Nairobi National Park in Kenya.<sup>3</sup>

In 1967, Superintendent Hallock was replaced by Richard Boyer, who remained at the park for nearly five years before transferring to the NPS's Washington Office. Boyer saw Lassen Volcanic through its peak of visitor volume in the early 1970s. Boyer did not advocate for additional visitor facilities to accommodate the park's near-capacity crowds but bemoaned the lack of appropriations to properly maintain its existing facilities, roads and trails and to protect park resources from overuse. A familiar challenge to past superintendents at Lassen, stretching the park's available dollars would continue to pose a daunting task to all subsequent superintendents straight into the twenty-first century. Boyer navigated the initial turmoil over geologists' distressing report of a rockfall threat to the Manzanita Lake resort area. He also thwarted an Indian protest for ancestral land reclamation within the park.<sup>4</sup>

Robert Murphy, with a background in wildlife and range management, transferred from Death Valley National Monument to become Lassen Volcanic's next superintendent in 1972. Revision of the park's master plan was initiated during Murphy's brief administration. Chief Park Naturalist Richard Vance and Chief Ranger Al Schneider also joined the park staff in 1972; both men remained at Lassen Volcanic for two decades, retiring in 1991 and 1992, respectively. In 1973, Lewis Albert was hired as the park's only assistant superintendent, who among other duties coordinated the park's new energy conservation program. The assistant superintendent position lasted only as long as Albert's two years at Lassen Volcanic. Superintendent Murphy's tenure lasted only 20 months. He retired in May 1974 just after the NPS announced its controversial decision to close the Manzanita Lake facilities permanently. Albert served as acting superintendent for five months until Murphy's successor was hired.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> SAR, 1966.

<sup>4</sup> SAR, 1972; Terry Miller, "Money Lack: Lassen Park Chief Leaves, Has One Regret," *The Sacramento Bee*, File 79: K34 News Clippings 1972, Box 27, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>5</sup> SARs, 1972-1975; "Lassen Park Official to Retire On May 11," *Red Bluff Daily News*, May 7, 1974, p. 3, File 81: K34 News Clippings 1974, Box 27, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

Bill Stephenson, who had served as Lassen Volcanic's maintenance chief a decade earlier, transferred from Lake Mead National Recreation Area in October 1974 to fill the vacant superintendent's seat. Stephenson started in the Park Service as a plumber and advanced through the ranks before concluding his career at the helm of Lassen Volcanic during the park's most difficult years. He arrived in the wake of the contentious Manzanita Lake closure, which required a tireless public relations effort to educate and appease park visitors. During his administration, Stephenson also faced debates over expansion of the ski area, opposing views on a trial run of snowmobiling in the park, and escalating beaver troubles at Drakesbad. After nearly a decade of retooling, the park's new general management plan was completed in 1981. Stephenson regularly left his desk and ventured into the field to talk with employees and learn about the park firsthand, recalled ranger George Giddings. Stephenson's management style and career of accomplishments earned him a meritorious service citation in 1984. He retired the following year.<sup>6</sup>

During the Stephenson administration, the size of Lassen Volcanic's permanent staff increased steadily from 32 to 39. The most significant addition to park personnel during this era was the hiring of Lassen Volcanic's first resource management specialist, Alan Denniston, in 1975. In the early 1980s, Denniston was promoted to chief of the new resource management division, which, however, consisted of just him for several more years. The park's largest personnel division, maintenance, numbered 17 permanent employees in 1984. Ten permanent employees worked in the protection division, four in interpretation, and seven in administration, including the superintendent. Of course the park's personnel swelled each summer. Seasonal staff outnumbered the park's permanent staff at least two-to-one. The total number of seasonal hires varied significantly year to year, topping out at 108 in 1982. In the early 1970s, superintendents began reporting on the park's success in recruiting minority and women employees. In 1977, 34 percent of Lassen Volcanic's seasonal workforce was minority and 31 percent was female. These numbers exceeded the agency averages of 18 percent for minorities and 25 percent for women. In subsequent years, Lassen Volcanic recruited fewer minorities but more women (approaching 50 percent some years) for its seasonal staff.<sup>7</sup>

In June 1985, Gilbert Blinn transferred from Badlands National Park to become Lassen Volcanic's longest-serving superintendent. Blinn's twelve-year administration included celebrations of the park's 70<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> anniversaries, reassessment of the geologic hazard at Manzanita Lake, the reopening of the Loomis Museum, the closure of the ski area, the growth of the Lassen Park Foundation, and a renewed quest for a full-fledged visitor center. Through the 1980s and 1990s, Lassen Volcanic's operating budget

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<sup>6</sup> SARs, 1974-1985; George Giddings, interview by Diane Krahe, March 9, 2007; John Crowe, "Stephenson: From Plumber to Park Chief," File 89: K34 News Clippings 1983, Box 27; "Superintendent at Lassen Honored," *Red Bluff Daily News*, May 30, 1984, p. 3, File 90: K34 News Clippings 1984, Box 28, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>7</sup> SARs, 1975-1985.

remained flat, and the park became increasingly reliant upon supplemental federal funding, from such sources as the Park Restoration and Improvement Program, to stay afloat. Nonetheless, fiscal shortfalls accounted for a good deal of fluctuation in the size of Lassen Volcanic's staff (permanent and seasonal) and some of Superintendent Blinn's more unpopular management decisions. To cut costs, the park closed its Juniper Lake and Butte Lake campgrounds and its Southwest Visitor Information Station in 1993. The Butte Lake Campground remained out of commission for five years. Late in 1995, the entire park closed down twice – for five days in November and for two weeks over the Christmas holiday – for lack of a federal budget. The resource management division saw some intermittent growth during this time, and the park hired Dean Clark as its first fire management officer and promoted Karen Stoll from park administrator to chief of administration, but otherwise staffing suffered the budgetary woes of Blinn's administration. Between 1990 and 1993, permanent employees actually increased a bit, from 42 to 44, but seasonal hires dropped from 85 to 64, with the seasonal ranger force taking the biggest hit. When Chief Naturalist Betty Knight left the park in 1995, Blinn did not fill her vacancy and combined the interpretation and resource management divisions into one division under Resource Management Chief Russ Lesko. Based solely on budgetary limitations, this reorganization did not support the professional needs of the park's naturalists. However, it did allow for the hiring of additional seasonal staff for the newly reopened Loomis Museum. The divisional consolidation, intended to be temporary, was still in place when Blinn retired in March 1997.<sup>8</sup>

Blinn's replacement, Marilyn H. Parris, arrived in August 1997. Parris had worked in many NPS units in the southeastern U.S. before serving as superintendent of a cluster of four NPS sites in southwestern Pennsylvania prior to her move to Lassen Volcanic. The park's first female superintendent, Parris was credited with rebuilding employee morale through a team approach to management, effectively publicizing the park, and strengthening Lassen Volcanic's partnerships with county supervisors, local business organizations, and the park foundation. As one example of her advocacy for the park, Parris convinced county and state officials to replace northern California's road signs that used the shorthand "Lassen Park" with new signs that properly identified Lassen Volcanic as a *national* park. To secure more park funding, she enrolled Lassen Volcanic in the NPS's fee demonstration program, by which 80 percent of all monies collected in entrance and campground fees came back to the park for backlog maintenance projects and resource management. In 2000, Parris named one traditional task and one new initiative as the park's top management priorities: spring clearing of the main park road and the establishment of an inventory and monitoring program of the park's natural resources. In 2001, the Lassen Volcanic staff and the regional office completed a revised general management plan for the park. The Lassen Crossroads

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<sup>8</sup> SARs, 1985-1996; Gilbert Blinn, interview by Theodore Catton, July 20, 2007; Interpretation's Monthly Report, April 1, 1996, I&E Division Records, LAVO Files.

Information Pavilion was constructed near the park's north entrance, and plans for a southwest visitor center advanced through Parris's administration. By 2005, fee demonstration returns averaged about half a million dollars annually, despite a slight decline in visitation numbers in recent years.<sup>9</sup>

In 1998, Parris split resource management and interpretation into separate divisions once again and added a cultural resources management component to the interpretation division. Karen Haner was hired as chief of the new interpretation and cultural resources division, and in 2001 Cari Kreshak was hired as the park first full-time cultural resources program manager. Funds from the Natural Resource Challenge and base increases to the park's annual operating budget in the early 2000s allowed for the considerable expansion of the park's natural resources management division. In 2001, the number of permanent park employees jumped from 48 to 55, which included several new natural resource specialists and the park's first full-time informational technology specialist.<sup>10</sup> That year, the park's seasonal staff had rebounded to 82 employees, 17 percent of which were students hired through the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP). The seasonal interpretive staff did not recover to its previous size but remained small. By this time, Lassen Volcanic had become dependent on project-specific funds – “soft money” – for many of its maintenance needs. After a staff inventory of park facilities, the superintendent assessed that the park's aging infrastructure in 2005 was “in need of capital injection in order to curb the current accelerated decline in condition.”<sup>11</sup>

In the summer of 2005, Parris left Lassen Volcanic to become superintendent of another volcanic unit: Haleakala National Park in Hawaii. She was replaced by Mary Martin, who transferred from Mojave National Preserve. During her two-year stint at Lassen Volcanic, Martin's two primary challenges were increasing park visitation and operating within ongoing budget constraints. Awaiting another base increase in the park's operating budget, Martin relied upon Project Management Information System (PMIS) funding for specific park projects and salaries for a significant portion of her seasonal personnel, which otherwise could not be hired. Vacancies of permanent positions across park divisions remained unfilled. Before her retirement in July 2007, Martin advanced the visitor center project past the final design phase to the contracting phase and reopened discussion of new overnight facilities at Manzanita Lake.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> SARs, 1998-2001, 2005; “From One Volcano to Another: Lassen Super Moves to Hawaii,” *Chester Progressive*, June 22, 2005; Parris interview; Karen Haner, interview by Theodore Catton, September 15, 2006; Louise Johnson, interview by Diane Krahe, September 12, 2006; Hanna interview; Henry interview.

<sup>10</sup> The new full-time computer specialist provided technical support to the park's 60-plus computer workstations and laptops. Other evidence of Lassen Volcanic's entrenchment in computer technology included the introduction of credit card machines at the park's primary entrance stations and its most popular campgrounds in 2000. In 2005, most of the park's campgrounds were listed on ReserveAmerica, an online reservation system for campgrounds across the country. SARs, 2000-2001, 2005.

<sup>11</sup> SARs, 1998-2001, 2005; Scott Isaacson, interview by Diane Krahe, September 13, 2006.

<sup>12</sup> Mary Martin, interview by Theodore Catton and Diane Krahe, September 15, 2006.

Although their management styles differed, both Parris and Martin espoused team building and consensus decision making in their administrations. Both sought creative means to meet the longstanding challenge of elevating Lassen Volcanic from obscurity. Their successor, Lassen Volcanic's third consecutive female superintendent, took office in October 2007. Darlene Koontz transferred from Bandelier National Monument to replace Martin. Under Koontz, three female division chiefs and two male division chiefs share responsibilities for managing the park. At Lassen Volcanic, as is evident throughout the Park Service in the early twenty-first century, the days of male-dominated management are fading fast.

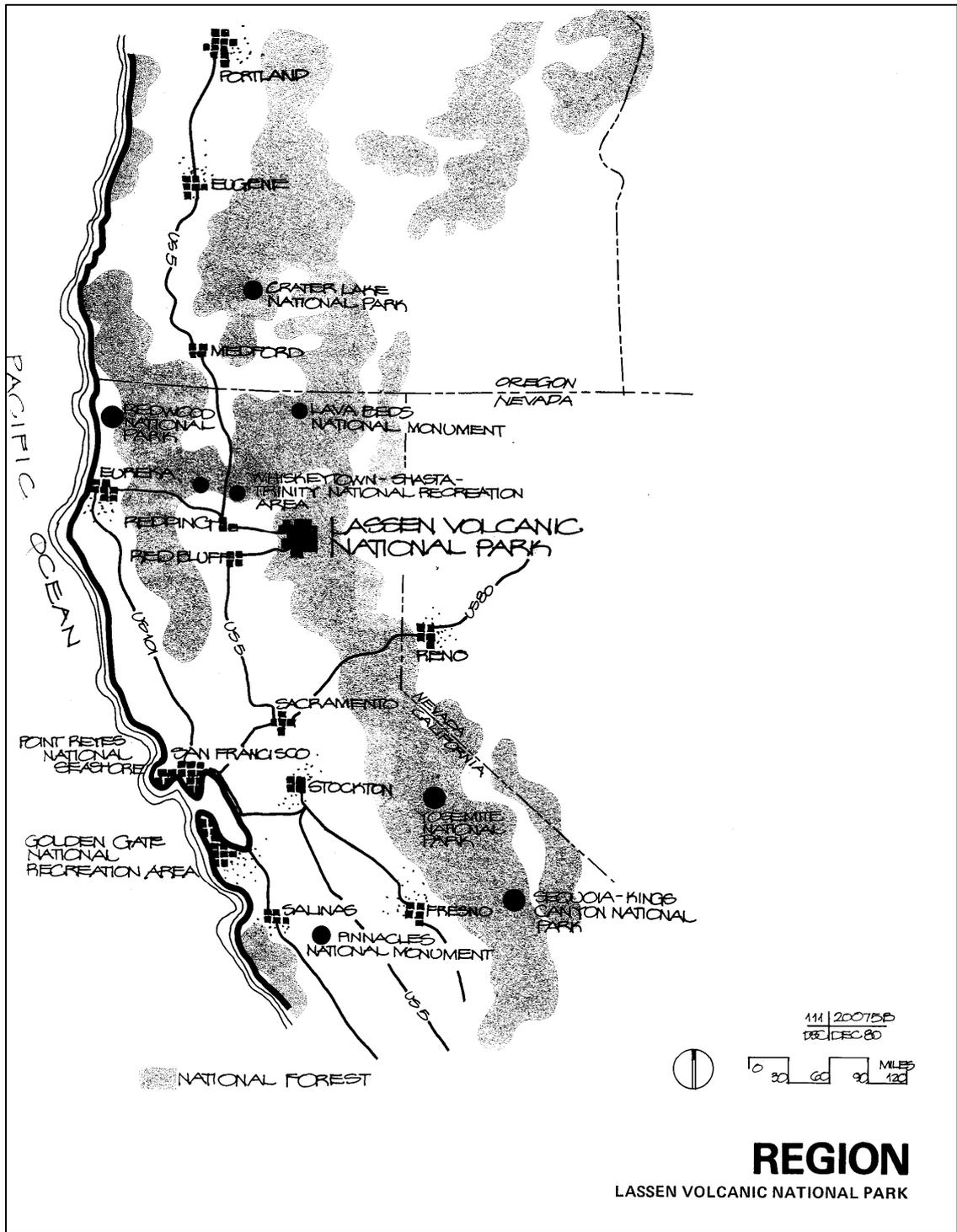
### **The Planning Process**

Comprehensive park planning periodically consumed much of the administrative energies of Lassen Volcanic personnel through the last decades of the twentieth century. Through the 1960s, park master plans were internal documents, devised by park personnel and NPS planners without much citizen input. But the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and other environmental legislation pulled the planning process for national parks into the public arena. NEPA called for more deliberation in all government actions affecting federal lands. If an action – a construction project, a restoration effort, the long-range management plan for an entire NPS unit – was deemed significant enough to require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), then the federal agency had to conduct a study based on research and data analysis before taking the action. Furthermore, the proposed action and the EIS had to be submitted to a public review process. While the Wilderness Act of 1964 had already caused the Park Service to involve the public more rigorously in its decision-making process, NEPA took the Park Service much farther in that direction.

Another significant influence on the Park Service was the growing interest in land-use planning. Land-use planning aimed to empower local governments to encourage private development that was in the public interest and to control private development that was not in the public interest. At the beginning of the 1970s, land-use planning became a key component of the Nixon administration's environmental legislative program. In the U.S. Senate, Henry Jackson led a bipartisan legislative effort aimed at enhancing the federal role in land-use planning. However, support for the federal legislation steadily eroded as a coalition of home builders, farmers, and business groups lobbied vigorously to defeat it. Eventually the Nixon administration withdrew its support for the bill and when Gerald R. Ford became president he refused to support it as well.<sup>13</sup> This cresting wave of public support for land-use planning formed the context for

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<sup>13</sup> Sidney Plokin, "Policy Fragmentation and Capitalist Reform: The Defeat of National Land-Use Policy," *Politics & Society* 9, no. 4 (1980): 409-446.



Map 5. Lassen Region. Source: National Park Service, Lassen Volcanic National Park, General Management Plan, 1981.

the Park Service's launch of a new generation of master plan studies in the 1970s. The new master plans – renamed general management plans near the end of the decade – were to reflect a more comprehensive planning effort involving more interagency coordination, greater emphasis on integration of the park with the region, increased opportunity for citizen participation, and a new level of sophistication in data processing with the aid of computer technology.

Lassen Volcanic's master plan of 1965 quickly became outdated as new park issues arose: the 1972 designation of the park wilderness, public pressures to expand the ski area and allow snowmobile use, and most critically the Chaos Crags geologic hazard and the fate of the Manzanita Lake facilities. In 1972, the park set out to formulate a new master plan. Draft after draft was debated and revised before the park's GMP was finalized in 1981. In the ensuing years, notable provisions of this plan did not come to pass, including the proposed relocation of the headquarters maintenance yard to the south side of Highway 36. The GMP's permanent closure of the Manzanita Lake hazard zone was reversed in the early 1990s with the reopening of Loomis Museum, an action that followed rounds of public comment and its own EIS.<sup>14</sup>

Upon her arrival at Lassen Volcanic in 1997, Superintendent Parris found the GMP so outdated as to be almost useless. She and the park staff set to work with the Regional Office in revising the park plan, which was approved in 2001. This plan sought to “enhance” the visitor experience at Lassen Volcanic through modest improvements to facilities and services, with the notable exception of construction of the long-anticipated Southwest Visitor Services Facility, the park's most ambitious undertaking to date. The Lassen Volcanic's GMP provided a “long-term direction for resource preservation and visitor use” and “a vision for the future,” but it offered little detail on how to pursue those directions and accomplish that vision. Divisional tasking and operational specifics was left to writers of the park's many other planning documents. Strategic plans for Lassen Volcanic, devised in 1994 and again in 2000, outlined the park's mission and listed concrete goals “to guide daily actions and expenditures” in the vein of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993. The Vail Agenda, the NPS's overt self-assessment and attempt at agency reform, also influenced the Lassen Volcanic's strategic plans. The park's program-specific plans have proliferated in recent decades and also direct the day-to-day workings of Lassen Volcanic. They include the park's land protection plan, backcountry management plan, fire management plan, natural resource plan, and interpretive prospectus, among others.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Blinn interview; Notes on General Management Plan, LAVO, July 13, 1977, File 38: D18 GMP Drafts, Proposals, 1977, Box 7, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; “General Management Plan, Lassen Volcanic National Park,” March 1981, LAVO Files.

<sup>15</sup> Parris interview; “Lassen Volcanic National Park, General Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement,” August 2001, U.S. Department of the Interior Library; “Lassen Volcanic National Park Strategic Plan, Final Draft,” August 11, 1994, File A2623: Reports – Briefing Statements 1993-1995;

Park planning was derailed repeatedly in the closing decades of the twentieth century by protracted controversies that surrounded Lassen Volcanic's two areas of high visitor concentration: Manzanita Lake in the summertime and the Lassen Park Ski Area in the winter. Closures of these areas radically altered visitor use of Lassen Volcanic and temporarily clouded everyone's vision of the park's future. But the park's geologic significance and natural beauty remained, as did its ecological integrity, which in fact benefited from the reduced human footprint within park boundaries. By necessity and design, visitor use of the park dispersed, and park planning focused increasingly on preserving the park's ecological values.

### **Partners Old and New**

Toward the end of the twentieth century, one of the most conspicuous changes in NPS culture was a rejection of insularity in favor of a commitment toward "partnering." Rather than being "islands of hope," national parks came to be seen as having a great deal of interdependence with surrounding communities and land uses. As part of this change in agency culture, a new type of administrator moved up through the ranks, gradually taking charge of park after park. The new style of superintendent had a natural ability to engage the public and an eagerness to cultivate external relationships as well as professional relationships within the Park Service bureaucracy. Some of this new emphasis on external relationships came from the need to look beyond park boundaries in addressing such concerns as regional growth, air pollution, natural fire management, and visitor transportation systems. Another impetus came from the budget squeeze, which forced everyone from senior administrators down to program managers to become more "entrepreneurial" in their pursuit of soft money, cost-sharing agreements, and volunteer services in order to get their work done. Parks leaned more heavily on the support of nonprofit cooperating associations for help in fundraising and even staffing.

Lassen Volcanic National Park's first superintendent who was truly at home in this new agency culture was Marilyn Parris. Selected in 1997 to replace the retiring Gil Blinn, who had managed the park for the previous twelve years, Parris was chosen in large part for her skill in improving community relations. One of her first actions was to bring the Regional Office's public affairs officer, Holly Bundock, to the park to develop a media plan. Nearly all local press coverage of Lassen's issues was negative: the park road was not yet open, the ski area was closing, visitor numbers were down. To counter this, the park administration began producing press releases twice per month, informing local media of what was happening in the park. That winter, the park experienced unusually heavy snowfall (a result of El Niño) and the following summer, the park road

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"Strategic Plan for Lassen Volcanic National Park, Fiscal Year 2001-2005," May 11, 2000, File A26: Reports 1999-2001, LAVO Central Files.

did not open until mid-July. It was of the latest openings on record. Northern Californians unfairly maligned the park, Parris believed, because they simply had no understanding of the snow depths that park maintenance crews dealt with. Instead of visualizing forty feet of standing snow, they pictured Caltrans snowplows pushing four or five inches of snowdrift off the road. Parris turned the park's challenging circumstances into a national media story. "Before that road was open we were on Dateline News, CBS, CNN, FOX," she recalled. "An article by the *L.A. Times* was picked up the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*. We were trying to put the park on the map."<sup>16</sup>

Parris began giving talks at civic organizations like the Red Bluff Rotary Club, meeting with local chambers of commerce, and attending council meetings in all four surrounding counties. She got on the advisory council of the hospital in Red Bluff. Doctors cared and had influence, Parris reasoned. Furthermore, whenever the park hired people, the first thing new hires wanted to know about was the local schools and hospitals.<sup>17</sup> By getting involved in the local community, Parris was setting an example for her staff and challenging the old agency culture. Better community relations won local respect for park resources and the park staff and soon brought more tangible rewards as well. For instance, Parris instigated an effort to replace scores of highway directional signs in northern California so that they read "Lassen Volcanic National Park" or "Lassen National Park" rather than simply "Lassen Park," which could be misconstrued as the name of a town or a state park. In the end, county supervisors got behind the effort and invested some \$3 to \$4 million in new signage.<sup>18</sup>

Superintendent Mary Martin followed in Parris's footsteps – sometimes literally. When she made her first appearance at the Red Bluff Rotary Club, the club gave her a standing ovation. Martin discovered that nearby communities, especially Red Bluff, were anxious to continue the relationships developed by Parris over the previous seven years. During Martin's short tenure the park worked closely with other partners: the Lassen Park Foundation, the Lassen Loomis Museum Association, the Forest Service, and Caltrans, with whom it cooperated on snow removal and road repairs, occasionally exchanging heavy equipment.<sup>19</sup>

Although Parris and Martin reflected a new style of superintendent, both being much more attentive to public relations and more personally involved with local communities than their predecessors had been, Bill Stephenson and Gil Blinn before them had initiated the process of improving the park's external relationships. The change was especially evident in how park officials interacted with Forest Service officials on the Lassen National Forest. The two staffs worked together at various levels on a host of issues including boundary marking, fire management, grazing allotments, timber sales,

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<sup>16</sup> Parris interview.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Martin interview.

and an interagency interpretive center. One of the seminal accomplishments in bringing the two agency staffs together occurred in 1975 with the opening of the Susanville Interagency Dispatch Center for fire control.<sup>20</sup>

The last boundary adjustment between the park and Lassen National Forest was made in 1972. An area of 482 acres on the north edge of the park was transferred from the park to the national forest. This parcel was traversed by an access road to the Forest Service's lookout on the summit of West Prospect Peak. As hunters used this road, it was impractical for the park administration to enforce its prohibition against hunting or possession of firearms on this remote parcel of land. The Park Service first recommended the deletion in 1962 and it continued to support the change over the years. Congress passed a law on April 11, 1972 that made the boundary change effective.<sup>21</sup>

Blinn, Parris, and Martin all stated that the park's most important partners were the Lassen Association and the Lassen Park Foundation.<sup>22</sup> The Lassen Association (formerly known as the Lassen Loomis Museum Association) continued in its role of producing interpretive products and assisting the park's educational mission through publishing and grants in aid. During the 1980s, it evolved into a more independent organization with its business office no longer located in the administration building. Under the leadership of Judd Hanna since the early 1990s, the association's revenue gradually increased so that it was able to donate up to \$20,000 per year to park projects.<sup>23</sup>

The Lassen Park Foundation was organized in 1985 for the specific purpose of fundraising for park projects. The original slate of officers consisted of John Koeberer (chairperson), Susan J. Watson (vice-chairperson), Bill Stephenson (secretary), and Lester Bodine (financial officer).<sup>24</sup> Koeberer, who also owned the concession, would stay at the helm of the foundation for many years. As Koeberer's business and political connections broadened to other parts of California, he was able to boost membership and build the foundation into an exceptionally strong fundraiser. The foundation soon focused its energy on assisting in the development of a visitor center.<sup>25</sup> Those efforts are discussed in a later chapter.

Superintendents Stephenson and Blinn also oversaw the early development of a volunteer program at Lassen Volcanic. Most years the park utilized a crew of high school students who were enrolled in the Student Conservation Association (SCA) and who performed such tasks as trail maintenance and cleanup including, one year, removal

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<sup>20</sup> SAR, 1975; Schneider interview.

<sup>21</sup> Superintendent to Regional Director, August 8, 1962; LeRoy C. Brock, Boundary Status Report, August 22, 1969; Dick Boyer to Forest Supervisor, May 11, 1970; Paul D. Reiling to Superintendent, May 15, 1970; Boyer to Forest Supervisor, August 25, 1970, File L1417: Boundary Adjustments Vol. 1, LAVO Central Files; SAR, 1972.

<sup>22</sup> Blinn interview; Parris interview; Martin interview.

<sup>23</sup> Hanna interview. Also see SARs for 1985-2005.

<sup>24</sup> SAR, 1985.

<sup>25</sup> John Koeberer and Pam Koeberer-Pitts, interview by Theodore Catton, September 14, 2006; Hanna interview; Martin interview.

of debris from an old crash site where wreckage of a DC-3 was strewn over an area within the wilderness boundary.<sup>26</sup> The park also worked with a contingent of young people from the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC). Both the SCA and YCC were federally funded programs aimed at introducing young people to employment opportunities in conservation. By the 1990s, the park had also developed its own Interpretive Intern Program with the help of a yearly grant from the Lassen Park Foundation. This program involved high school students who came to the park for two-week stints, camping at Manzanita Lake Campground and working under the supervision of Education Specialist Steve Zachary.<sup>27</sup> Additional assistance came to the park from state-run programs such as the Summer Youth Training and Employment Program and the California Conservation Corps.<sup>28</sup>

The most important volunteer program for Lassen, in terms of numbers, was the Volunteers in Parks (VIP) Program, which Congress authorized in 1970. It provided a framework for the park to utilize volunteers in a variety of functions in all divisions. While volunteers were not federal employees, they could be provided with volunteer uniforms and they did have some legal rights of employees. The program prohibited use of volunteers in positions involving law enforcement or policy decisions. Volunteers in Parks placed no age limitations on its participants, and VIP workers included many retirees.<sup>29</sup>

This program took many years to prove itself, but with each passing decade the park was able to build on its prior engagement with volunteers. By the twenty-first century there were anywhere from 100 to 170 “VIPs” donating their time to Lassen Volcanic any given year, contributing from 15,000 to 20,000 hours of labor. These volunteer labor hours augmented total paid staff time by as much as ten or fifteen percent, and perhaps more importantly, these many hours gave VIPs a keen sense of personal investment in the park. VIPs worked in administration providing clerical and computer support and serving as campground hosts. In the interpretation and cultural resources division, they worked at visitor contact stations and assisted with winter and summer visitor activities, educational projects, exhibits, website development, historical research, and library collections. They assisted the maintenance division with various projects. They served as field research assistants for the natural resources management division, and they helped the visitor protection division with trail patrol, winter operations, search and rescue, and emergency medical services.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Bob Love, Coordinator’s Report, September 8, 1986, File 171: A 98, Conservation and Preservation – SCA 1984-1986, Box 5, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>27</sup> Karen A. Stoll to Jane Ziad, July 10, 1997, File A22: Associations, Foundation, 1996-1998, LAVO Central Files; Nancy Bailey, interview by Theodore Catton, September 11, 2006.

<sup>28</sup> SARs, 1992, 1993.

<sup>29</sup> William C. Everhart, *The National Park Service* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972), 55; comments on final draft report.

<sup>30</sup> VIP Coordinator to Files, November 29, 2005, copy provided to authors by Nancy Bailey. Bailey is Lassen’s VIP coordinator.

## Maintaining the Infrastructure

Lassen Volcanic's Mission 66 construction projects, as modest as they were, concluded the park's twentieth-century building era. Thereafter, upkeep of the park's existing facilities occupied Lassen's work crews and NPS contractors. Improvements made to the Manzanita Lake complex and the downhill ski area, as well as the subsequent removal of defunct structures from these areas once they were closed, will be discussed in detail in subsequent chapters. Many of the utility systems throughout the park and at park headquarters in Mineral were upgraded in the closing decades of the twentieth century. According to Bob Lake, the park's maintenance chief from 1978 to 1992, these costly yet inconspicuous projects – because the new installations lie underground – received little notice by the typical park visitor.<sup>31</sup>

More visible maintenance projects through these years included restoration work on the park's historic buildings, an initiative prompted by passage of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966 and the park's inventory of its historic structures, some of which earned National Register status. In the late 1990s, preservation efforts at headquarters involved the pouring of new concrete foundations under historic (and several non-historic) structures temporarily suspended on jacks. The modest expansion of Lassen Volcanic's network of campgrounds in the early 1970s was another notable park improvement. To replace the camping capacity lost with the closure of Manzanita Lake Campground, the park opened Crags Campground three miles further along the main park road, with group camping facilities provided in the adjacent Lost Creek Organizational Campground, itself a replacement for the group camp at Hat Creek, which was obliterated. Crews also rehabilitated the Kings Creek Picnic Area and demolished a large portion of the old campground there. In the late 1970s, maintenance personnel began installing bear-proof garbage cans in the park's campgrounds. After its closure through much of the 1990s, the Butte Lake Campground was refurbished with a new water treatment plant that finally resolved the area's long-standing water quality problem. The Butte Lake water treatment plant was Lassen Volcanic's first major project paid for with fee demonstration dollars.<sup>32</sup>

Trail maintenance in Lassen Volcanic has been most challenging in the park's thermal areas. Before these popular trails are opened to visitors each spring, they must be cleared of snow and the elevated boardwalks are inspected for damage caused by snow loads or shifting thermal activity. Since 1975, the Bumpass Hell boardwalk has been rebuilt three times, due to migrating mudpots. Old boardwalks are disassembled plank by plank, working backward toward the trailhead, and materials for rebuilding the walkways are delivered by helicopter. Two new trails were added to the park in the late 1980s. Yielding to the demands of horseback riders for a trail link between the park's eastside

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<sup>31</sup> Bob Lake, interview by Theodore Catton, September 14, 2006.

<sup>32</sup> SARs, 1973-2001.

wilderness and the adjacent Caribou Wilderness on the Lassen National Forest, Superintendent Blinn sanctioned the building of a new trail in the park's most remote northeast corner. A short loop trail in the Devastated Area – paved with asphalt and accessible to wheelchairs – was built by volunteers, the California Pacific Telephone Pioneers of Chico, on weekends over the course of two summers. In the 1970s, a trail crew constructed some new concrete retaining walls along the Lassen Peak Trail. After another two decades of heavy use and no major maintenance work, the trail was overhauled by the California Conservation Corps, who spent the summer of 1998 reconstructing the walls and clearing the route of rockfall. That same summer, a new radio repeater tower was installed on Lassen Peak, which linked the park to Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and Global Imaging Systems (GIS) technology for the first time. The park's protection division shouldered most of this laborious and protracted installation project.<sup>33</sup>

Lassen Volcanic's hazardous tree reduction program, launched in 1963, became a major maintenance task in time. Between 1963 and 1966, crews removed from developed areas about 500 trees that were deemed vulnerable to the park's notoriously severe wind, rain, and snow conditions. Once the backlog of hazard trees were cut, annual removal amounted to only a dozen or so trees until recent years, when the number has once again risen to several hundred. Maturation and root disease accounts for the increasing numbers of potentially dangerous trees in the park's populous areas. Local milling operations haul the trees away and utilize the salvage timber as payment for their removal services.<sup>34</sup>

Despite technological advances, road maintenance and snow removal continued to be daunting duties for Lassen Volcanic personnel. The NPS hired contractors for major repairs to the main park road, while resurfacing and most other work on the park's secondary roads was done by the maintenance division. Park maintenance employees also shouldered the brunt of the massive springtime snow removal effort, although the state highway department usually lent a hand, as did private contractors in some years. In 1973, reconstruction of the main park road's bridge over Sulphur Creek was completed and the intersection of routes 89 and 44 near Manzanita Lake was reconfigured and moved just outside the park boundary. In 1974, a vigorous spring runoff from a near-record snowpack contributed to the collapse of the park road near the Southwest Entrance twice that summer. In 1983 and again in 1986, rockslides buried the park road near Diamond Point and required emergency repairs to the roadway. Permanent road reconstruction – made necessary by these types of events, episodic washouts and slumping, cumulative erosion, and automotive wear-and-tear – usually was delayed for

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<sup>33</sup> SARs, 1988, 1998; Tim Miranda, interview by Theodore Catton, September 18, 2006; Dennis Haag, interview by Theodore Catton and Diane Krahe, September 11, 2006.

<sup>34</sup> Edward T. Davies, Acting Superintendent, to Mr. Lee A. Paine, U.S. Forest Service, February 1, 1966, Folder 46: Y1815 Trees and Forests – Reports for Tree Failure 1969-1978, Box 44, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Miranda interview.

years, if not decades. In 1996, 26 new culverts were installed along the main park road. The following year, the roadway required emergency repairs totaling half a million dollars. By 2001, the NPS was spending \$50,000 annually to patch potholes and cracks in the park road's asphalt, which was anywhere from 25 to 50 years old, depending on the location. Major rehabilitation of the southern end of the road (from the Southwest Entrance to Bumpass Hell) was done in 2002 and 2003. Restoration of the remaining 22 miles of the park road awaited increased congressional funding, which came to pass a few years later.<sup>35</sup> In 2006, Lassen Volcanic launched a \$6.5 million effort to complete the repaving of the main park road and make other road improvements, including the installation of new culverts and the obliteration of gravel pullouts that were no longer used.<sup>36</sup>

The annual ritual of clearing the main park road for motorists remained as arduous as the year's snowpack was deep. Dennis Haag, Lassen's foreman of road and trail maintenance from the early 1970s to the late 1990s, claimed the process could take as little as a week or as much as three months, with crews working twelve hours a day, seven days a week. In Haag's early days at Lassen Volcanic, charcoal was spread on the snow surface above the road to expedite melting before plowing commenced. Plowing methods remained much the same over the years: two NPS bulldozers outfitted with rotary snow plows moved most of the snowpack, while a massive snow blower cleared the bottom four feet of snow and exposed the pavement. Caltrans and private contractors often joined in the effort. In the 1970s, Congressman Bizz Johnson provided the park with ad hoc funds to clear the park road by Memorial Day if at all possible, for the benefit of the local tourist industry and its clientele. In 1983, following Lassen's snowiest winter to date, the park road was not cleared for public use until July 2. A sustained period of drought followed for nearly a decade, but then Lassen Volcanic weathered a number of brutal winters through the 1990s, which delayed openings of the main park road and taxed all the park's roads, trails, and buildings. In 1995, snow removal crews had to cut through drifts over 40 feet deep at Lake Helen before opening the main park road to traffic on July 21. The Bumpass Hell Trail did not open until Labor Day weekend that year. The following December, an intense storm damaged many park structures and destroyed the Juniper Lake Ranger Station, which was not rebuilt for five years. Through these exceptionally wet years, local business

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<sup>35</sup> Lassen Volcanic's major road restoration was funded with federal motor vehicle fuel tax revenue appropriated by Congress to the NPS and Federal Highway Administration's joint Park Roads and Parkways Program, part of the Federal Lands Highway Program, which was enacted by Congress in 1983. National Park Service, "Federal Lands Highways Program, Park Roads and Parkways, Revised Funding Allocation and Project Prioritization Criteria," January 1998, File D 30: Roads and Trails 1996-1998, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>36</sup> SARs, 1972-2001; Marilyn H. Parris, Superintendent, "Finding of No Significant Impact: Repair and Rehabilitate Main Park Road and Manzanita Lake Campground Entrance Road," August 18, 2001, File D30: Roads and Trails 1999-2001, LAVO Central Files; Alex Breitler, "Scenic Route to Improve: Lassen Park Plans \$6.5 Million Road Renovation Project," *Redding Record Searchlight*, August 25, 2005, p. B-3.

organizations lobbied for a greater federal investment in the timely opening of the main park road. At the same time, the park stepped up its efforts to better educate the public about this monumental and dangerous task at hand: carving a channel through the park's massive and dense snowpack along a narrow, precipitous route that in places left no room for navigational error of the heavy snow removal equipment.<sup>37</sup>

No lives have been lost in the eight decades crews have been clearing the main park road each spring, but a number of bulldozers have pitched over the roadside in the process. In all cases but one, equipment operators have escaped harm. In 1974, a Caltrans bulldozer and driver fell hundreds of feet into the Little Hot Springs Valley from the Diamond Point sidehill. The state employee sustained head injuries and took a medical early retirement. Although avalanche danger, unexpected snow caverns (created by runoff or thermal heat), harsh weather conditions, and snow blindness taxed the clearing crews, "going over the edge" remained the biggest worry. The mix of physical hazards and the constant pressure to finish the job as fast as possible placed tremendous stress on the snow removal workers. Tim Miranda, lead heavy equipment operator, recalled that "from about half way through the spring" Dennis Haag would sport "this white ring around his mouth from drinking Maalox right out of the bottle."<sup>38</sup>

But the job did get easier. In the 1970s, the park replaced its Mission-66-vintage Walter Sicard rotary plow equipment with the state-of-the-art Snowblast, another bulldozer attachment that could move 1800 tons of snow an hour. In the 1990s, the park upgraded its snow removal equipment again, acquiring two six-way Kodiak rotary blades, which reduced the need for constant back-and-forth movement of the bulldozers to approach the snow at different angles. The park's snow blowers have also been replaced with more efficient models. Over the years, the park has opted to utilize a smaller D-7 model of Caterpillar bulldozers for snow removal as larger machines were hard to maneuver on the narrow roadway and impossible to retrieve if they plunged over the mountainside. Until the dozers were outfitted with cabs, operators worked exposed to the elements and often had to retreat to their pickup trucks for warmth. The addition of dozer cabs, with tinted windows that cut the intense glare of the snow, increased the productivity of the snow removal crews considerably, Haag said. Traditionally, the edges of the main park road were staked out each spring on foot, with the use of a locator device that read electromagnetic impulses from a wire buried beneath the roadway. In 1999, the park began using GPS equipment to map out the road's contours beneath the snow. From within their cabs, bulldozer operators now read on computer screens the

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<sup>37</sup> SARs, 1973-2005; Haag interview; Parris interview; Bob Warren General Manager, Shasta Cascade Wonderland Association, to Congressman Wally Herger, May 4, 1995, File A 3615: #4 Congressional Correspondence 1993-1995; Marshall W. Pike, Chairman, Red Bluff-Tehama County Convention and Visitors Bureau, to the Tehama County Board of Supervisors, April 2, 1998, File A22: Associations, Foundation . . . 1996-1998, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>38</sup> Mark Thalman, "Going Over the Hill: Lassen Park Road Crews Still Battling Winter's Legacy," *Chico News and Review*, June 3, 1993; Haag interview; Miranda interview.

delineations of the buried road before them, accurate to within a centimeter. In 2005, in yet another application of technology in the computer age, the park began to put frequent postings about the progress of the snow clearing operation on the Lassen Volcanic website.<sup>39</sup> All these technological innovations enable Lassen Volcanic to open its main road with less fuel consumption and fewer man hours.

## The Last of the Inholdings

By the 1960s, the federal government had acquired nearly all private land within Lassen Volcanic National Park. Aside from a few scattered cabin lots at Juniper Lake and Hat Creek, only the elusive Section 36 inholding remained. After Pacific Gas and Electric drilled and promptly capped its exploratory steam well on Section 36 in 1962, all remained quiet on the property for a number of years. The NPS made no headway in purchase negotiations with the inholding's expanding pool of owners. In 1971, Superintendent Boyer moved Section 36 to the top of the park's acquisition priority list. The property's logging potential worried Boyer, as did talk of more geothermal testing near Terminal Geyser, which, if successful, would drive the inholding's market value through the roof. Donald White of the USGS was called in to inspect the thermal features in this portion of the park and assess how further drilling on Section 36 might influence them. White believed Terminal Geyser to be part of "a single vapor-dominated geothermal reservoir" that extended to Boiling Springs Lake, the Drakesbad hot springs, Devils Kitchen, and perhaps onward to Bumpass Hell, but geothermal production on Section 36 would not likely impact any of these, at least not for some time, he speculated. White was more certain that such activity would mar the site's natural beauty and shatter the area's tranquility with intense noise pollution. He urged the park to buy the property as soon as possible.<sup>40</sup>

Five years into the nation's energy crisis, the threat of renewed geothermal exploration on Section 36 intensified. In 1977, Plumas County granted the property's new lessee, Phillips Petroleum, a permit to deepen the existing well, known as the "Walker O," to 4,000 feet. At a prior public meeting on the matter, Superintendent Stephenson had questioned the county's authority to issue such a permit for land within national park boundaries but he stopped short of protesting the permit application outright, as he was directed by the Regional Office. Immediately after the permit was

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<sup>39</sup> SARs, 1972-2000; Lake interview; Haag interview; Miranda interview; Thalman, "Going Over the Hill"; "Lassen Park Road Progress on Web," *Red Bluff Daily News*, May 3, 2005.

<sup>40</sup> Stephen Halsey Matteson, "Boiling Point At Lassen," *National Parks and Conservation Magazine* 53 (October 1979): 6; Dick Boyer, Superintendent, Memorandum to Director, Western Region, August 10, 1971, File 75: L1425 Juniper Lake – Langley 1955-1985, Box 32; Donald E. White, USGS, to Mr. Fred Novack, Acting Director, Western Region, April 6, 1971; White to Novack, August 4, 1971, File 179: N3039 Thermal Features 1970-79, Box 42, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

issued, the Park Service asked the Section 36 landowners to consent to an appraisal of the property, the first step in reopening purchase negotiations. When they refused consent – and would not deny that exploratory drilling on Section 36 was imminent – the Park Service took action to condemn the property. Early in 1978, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources gave the action a nod, but formal congressional approval, a requirement for all federal condemnation suits, was not forthcoming so Section 36 remained vulnerable.<sup>41</sup>

In late August 1978, a park trail crew discovered that Phillips Petroleum had commenced resurfacing the old access road into Terminal Geyser. Superintendent Stephenson awaited word from the Regional Office on how to respond, the long Labor Day weekend came and went, and in the three-day interim, Phillips bulldozed tremendous volumes of earth surrounding the Walker O well to enlarge the platform area. To the dismay of park personnel and park advocates, no Park Service authority intervened while the work continued unabated for another month. Regional Director Howard Chapman initially believed that Phillips' brazen actions on Section 36 would cinch the NPS's appeal for condemnation, but they did not. A new USGS on-site investigation concluded that the sinking and plugging of test wells would probably not affect Terminal Geyser or other nearby thermal features, although sustained geothermal production in the vicinity probably would. Because Phillips claimed it intended to test drill only on Section 36 (using the data in bidding for leases on BLM and Forest Service lands close by), the Regional Office determined that the Park Service had no grounds for immediate condemnation of the inholding. The surface scarring of Section 36 could not justify condemnation either, because it was no longer a potential threat but a done deal.<sup>42</sup>

Park personnel regularly visited the Phillips operation, photographing its work and often exchanging tense words with its field staff. Given the Park Service's "strangely indecisive" reaction to the environmental defacement in process, south district ranger Larry Feser advised his rangers to lay off enforcement of park regulations at the Walker O and avoid confrontations. By October, when Phillips capped the well and moved out its drilling rig for the season, its work area had expanded to the size of a football field that cut deep into the hillside. Fill dirt had diverted Willow Creek below Terminal Geyser, creating "hazardous hot pools and unstable soils" that endangered the public. (The improved access road and all the publicity surrounding the drilling were

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<sup>41</sup> Acting Regional Director, Memorandum to Superintendent, October 7, 1977; A. W. Gray, Chief, Division of Land Acquisition, to Bill Beatty, Beatty and Associates, Inc., October 17, 1977; Daniel J. Tobin, Jr., Acting Deputy Director, to Honorable Henry M. Jackson, December 23, 1977; Gray to Beatty, January 6, 1978; Jackson to William J. Whalen, Director, NPS, January 9, 1978, File: N3039 Terminal Geyser Sec. 36, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>42</sup> Larry Feser, interview by Theodore Catton, September 15, 2006; Stephenson, Memorandum of Telephone Call, Placed by Art Rolds, Phillips Petroleum, August 31, 1978; Howard Chapman, Regional Director, to Associate Director, September 7, 1989; John H. Davis, Regional Director, September 14, 1978, File N3039: Terminal Geyser Sec. 36, LAVO Central Files.

responsible for increasing numbers of curiosity-seekers venturing to this remote corner of the park.) The site suffered rapid erosion through the following winter and spring.<sup>43</sup>

This affront to Lassen Volcanic National Park was covered in detail by the local press and national publications as well. A *Duke Law Journal* critique on NPS land acquisition policy showcased Phillips' drilling on Section 36 as a tragic example of deferred condemnation resulting in damage to park resources. The *San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle* reported on the Lassen Volcanic case together with the controversial call for geothermal development adjacent to Yellowstone Park, which threatened the magnificent hourly displays of the Old Faithful geyser. The National Parks and Conservation Association asked, "If Lassen is sacrificed in a mindless rush for speculative energy resources, can Yellowstone and other parks be far behind?" In the same vein, angry letters of protest from conservation groups and concerned individuals – Drakebad patrons among them – piled up on Superintendent Stephenson's desk.<sup>44</sup>

In September 1979, Phillips Petroleum returned to the Walker O well site, again unbeknownst to park officials. It dug a trench 200 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 10 feet deep, to stabilize the drilling pad and prevent further erosion, Phillips insisted. The company also divulged plans for more road improvements, to accommodate easier access for future site development. Potential threats to the landscape were back on the table, and Regional Director Chapman wanted these activities "stopped once and for all" by a condemnation action. Congress finally concurred.<sup>45</sup>

After official review and approval by a congressional committee, a declaration of taking was filed April 21, 1980, effectively halting further geothermal development on Section 36. (This action negated the only resource threat the NPS listed for Lassen Volcanic in its first-ever "State of the Parks" report, published in May 1980.) The federal government deposited to the court an initial compensation sum of \$992,000, to be distributed among the inholding's ownership of 27 separate parties. Legal wrangling over the fair market value of Section 36's geothermal resources continued for years. The federal government poured nearly half a million dollars into subsurface testing and appraisals, and the defendants of *U.S. v. 566 Acres (Andrus Trust et al.)* invested hefty sums in the case as well. (In November 1982, the U.S. and Phillips Petroleum settled for

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<sup>43</sup> Larry Feser, Incident Record for Terminal Geyser Area, September 25, 1978; W. Stephenson, Superintendent, to Regional Director, October 27, 1978; Stephenson, Briefing Statement for Geothermal Exploration in Section 36; Feser, Incident Record, July 31, 1979; Stephenson, Memorandum to Director, July 27, 1979; John H. Davis, Memorandum to Director, September 20, 1979, File N3039: Terminal Geyser Sec. 36, LAVO Central Files; Feser interview; Matteson, "Boiling Point at Lassen," 6; SAR, 1978.

<sup>44</sup> Stephenson to the Director, July 27, 1979; Joseph L. Sax, "Buying Scenery: Land Acquisitions for the National Park Service," *Duke Law Journal* 4 (September 1980): 709-740; Carl Irving, "Lassen Park's Sinking Feeling: U.S. Steamed Up Over Geothermal Power," *San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle*, September 22, 1978, File: N 3039 Terminal Geyser Sec. 36, LAVO Central Files; Matteson, "Boiling Point at Lassen," 7; Susan Watson, interview by Diane Krahe, February 1, 2007.

<sup>45</sup> "Lassen: New Scars on Geothermal Site Intensify Controversy," *National Parks and Conservation Magazine* 53 (November 1979): 17, 26; Howard H. Chapman, Associate Director, Management and Operations, September 26, 1979, File N3039: Terminal Geyser Sec. 36, LAVO Central Files.

the company's potential lease earnings.) By early 1985, the government's appraisals limited the property's geothermal worth to a quarter of a million dollars, but the inholders insisted on at least \$12 million for the property's geothermal assets alone. Not anticipating an easy victory in a jury trial, government attorneys were seriously considering the defendants' \$10 million settlement offer for geothermal compensation, until one minority interest holder, a disgruntled Brooks Walker, balked at the compromise and the deal was off. A November 1985 settlement conference split the marginal difference between the inholders' opinions on the land and timber values of Section 36 and set this combined amount at just under \$5 million. The sticky issue of the property's commercial geothermal potential remained unresolved. In August 1986, the Federal Land Commission recommended \$1.5 million for geothermal compensation and defendants did not object. A 1987 ruling on interest payments finally laid the case to rest.<sup>46</sup>

In 1997, the NPS permanently plugged the Walker O well. Shortly thereafter, the maintenance division rehabilitated the entire area, removing the access road, recontouring and revegetating the drill site, and restoring the stream channels.<sup>47</sup>

The NPS's awkward handling of the Section 36 travesty in the late 1970s was owed largely to bad timing. The agency had just unveiled its new, untested land acquisition policy in 1977, which cited new construction, expansion of existing structures, and conversion to commercial activity on inholdings as grounds for condemnation. Lassen Volcanic's first land acquisition plan, which was based on the more stringent NPS policy, did not materialize until after the worst of the Phillips defacement had occurred. Although this plan had little direct impact on the Section 36 case, it did dictate the future of the park's few remaining inholdings at Juniper Lake and Hat Creek.<sup>48</sup>

The 1979 draft plan called for continuation of the NPS's long-standing "willing seller concept" and included the option for sellers to retain a 25-year or lifetime occupancy right to improved properties. Condemnation of inholdings would be pursued only when "a threat of a new or expanded incompatible use" was evident and the

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<sup>46</sup> "Lassen is Bright Spot in Gloomy Parks Report," *Redding Record Searchlight*, May 10, 1980, p. 15; Acting Regional Director, Memorandum to Director, August 5, 1981; Ross E. Putnam, Attorney, Land Acquisition Section, Memorandum to Mr. William J. Kollins, Chief, Land Acquisition Section, December 9, 1985; Putnam to Willis Kriz, Chief, Land Acquisition Resources Division, January 10, 1986; Federal Land Commission Report to the Honorable Philip C. Wilkins, August 26, 1986; Field Solicitor, Memorandum to Regional Director, November 3, 1986, File: N3039 Terminal Geyser Sec. 36, LAVO Central Files; Putnam, Memorandum to Kollins, April 25, 1985; Acting Chief, Land Resources Division, Memorandum to Chief, Land Resources Division, Western Region, November 23, 1987, File 39: L1425 Holdings (other than Federal) Andrus Trust (Section 36) Vol. X, 11/84-1987, Box 30, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>47</sup> Environmental Assessment, Rehabilitation of Walker "O" Well Pad and Access Road, June 1999, File N16: Management of Natural Resources 1996-1998, LAVO Central Files; SAR, 2001; Johnson interview.

<sup>48</sup> "Policy of Land Acquisition in Parks Revised by NPS," news release, October 4, 1977, File N3039: Terminal Geyser Sec. 36, LAVO Central Files; Sax, "Buying Scenery," 718.

property owner still refused to sell, which was the case with Section 36. Incompatible uses of inholdings included subdivision and any impairment to the area's scenic, natural or cultural integrity.<sup>49</sup>

Response to the proposed land acquisition plan by Hat Creek and Juniper Lake property owners was mixed. While everyone favored the willing-seller concept, a number of inholders expressed resentment over use restrictions, the NPS's view of inholders as "undesirable," and pressure to sell to the government. Park officials clarified the plan's list of incompatible uses, as suggested, but otherwise the plan was finalized with no changes.<sup>50</sup>

In 1984, the park revised its inholdings acquisition program as part of its land protection plan. Compatible and incompatible uses of inholdings remained much the same as before. With the troublesome Section 36 property finally in federal control, park officials considered none of the park's remaining inholdings at Hat Creek and Juniper Lake high priority acquisitions. Nonetheless, rangers would monitor these properties to guard against resource damage until individual owners were ready to sell. In the long term, the NPS intended to acquire all these inholdings, remove all their structures, allow their access roads to revert to trails, and restore the natural landscape of both the Hat Creek and Juniper Lake areas.<sup>51</sup>

Since the park's establishment in 1916, the federal government had acquired 4,576.58 acres of Lassen Volcanic inholdings, leaving only 5.89 acres of private lands remaining within park boundaries by 1984. In the 1970s, the NPS acquired the last of the Hat Creek cabins. (In the same decade, the park's maintenance division made improvements to the Hat Creek Truck Trail, which terminated at the cluster of inholdings.) In the 1980s, all of the acquired cabins were demolished, except for one, which the former owner retained with an occupancy permit until the year 2000. Five undeveloped properties along Hat Creek, totaling 3.61 acres, remained in private

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<sup>49</sup> This plan cited the park's establishing act and several recent pieces of legislation as authorization for acquisition of Lassen Volcanic's last inholdings. Congress bolstered federal purchase of private lands in national parks with the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, which authorized the use of federal oil and gas revenues for public land purchases and recreational improvements. In 1978, Congress amended the act to allocate \$900 million annually toward this end. The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 required federal agencies to offer land purchase prices based on appraised fair-market values, although inholders were still free to donate a portion or all of their property's purchase price to the federal government. "Land Acquisition Plan, Lassen Volcanic National Park," August 1979, File 8: L1415 Land Acquisition Plan 1979, Box 29, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>50</sup> "Land Acquisition Plan;" Superintendent, Memorandum to the Regional Director, November 14, 1979; Superintendent, Memorandum to the Regional Director, March 25, 1980; W. Stephenson, Memorandum to the Regional Director, April 23, 1980, File 8: L1415 Land Acquisition Plan, 1979, Box 29, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>51</sup> "Draft Lassen Volcanic National Park Land Protection Plan," March 8, 1984, File 9: L1415: Policies and Procedures, Land Protection Plan 1984, Box 29, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; "General Management Plan, Lassen Volcanic National Park," March 1981, LAVO Central Files, pp. 29, 40.

ownership. Located about three miles from the main park road, these properties received “very light” owner use.<sup>52</sup>

At Juniper Lake, the park had also made some headway in acquiring private property in the 1970s.<sup>53</sup> Among other transactions, the Ferris family sold their cabin to the park for \$19,000 and the Cooks parted with their property for \$35,500. In the early 1980s, park personnel razed all these acquired structures but one, which held a lease until 2001. In 1984, private parties retained eight cabins scattered along the northwest shore of Juniper Lake. These properties, totaling 2.28 acres, were used “almost exclusively” during the summertime. Inholders’ winter access to the cabins via snowmobile required a special-use permit after snowmobile use in the park was banned in 1975. The Juniper Lake cabins suffered vandalism at the hands of trespassing snowmobilers; rangers had little recourse in curbing this law enforcement problem given the cabins’ remote location.<sup>54</sup>

The pall of eventual federal acquisition often strained relations between the park’s few remaining inholders and park administrators. More specific tensions sometimes arose between the two disparate parties. For example, issues of water usage and sustaining water quality, inholders’ access to their properties, and construction projects large and small complicated matters at both Hat Creek and Juniper Lake. The most blatant infraction of “incompatible” construction occurred on two separate Hat Creek inholdings in 1988, when rangers discovered a new outhouse on one property and a tiny log structure – apparently a children’s playhouse – on another. Park officials confirmed that owners Bonnie Edwards and Robert Ingram held much greater development aspirations for their as-yet undeveloped properties but both parties elected to abandon their plans to avoid condemnation of their lands. On the issue of access, the NPS was released from legal obligations to maintain vehicular access to the Hat Creek inholdings in the late 1990s, so administrators decided not to await acquisition of the last of these properties to convert the Hat Creek Truck Trail to a foot trail. Inholders could apply for a special-use permit to construct and maintain a vehicular route to their lands if they wished.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> “Draft Land Protection Plan;” Report of Survey for Hat Creek Properties, April 15, 1981, File 47: L1425 Clayton – Hat Creek, 1935-1981 (2 of 2), Box 31, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Haag interview.

<sup>53</sup> After the designation of the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness, Superintendent Murphy hoped to fast track acquisition of the Juniper Lake inholdings, as the park launched its backcountry management program and focused more attention on its outlying facilities, including Juniper Lake. Robert J. Murphy, Superintendent, Memorandum to Director, Western Region, June 27, 1973, File 75: L1425 Juniper Lake – Langley 1955-1985, Box 32, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>54</sup> “Draft Land Protection Plan;” SARs, 1978-1980; Report of Survey for Juniper Lake Properties, June 29, 1980; Schedule A, Tract No. 04-128, File 72: L1425 Juniper Lake – Cook, 1957-1980, Box 32; Negotiator’s Progress Record, Tract No. 04-136, December 4, 1974, File L1425: Juniper Lake – Ferris 1957-1980, Box 32, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>55</sup> Baird Dobrowsky to Park Service, June 26, 1978, File 48: L1425 Dobrowsky, Baird 1959-1989; Gilbert E. Blinn, Superintendent, Memorandum to Regional Director, July 22, 1988; Edward R. Haberlin, Chief, Division of Land Resources, Western Region, to Ms. Eileen Edwards, July 29, 1988, File 56: L1425

Progress in eliminating the remaining inholdings in the park has been very limited in recent decades. In 1991, the park bought the Kellys' Juniper Lake property with a 20-year occupancy permit granted to the family. In 2005, the park demolished the two cabins whose occupancy permits had recently expired. As of 2006, the park had acquired all but one of the Hat Creek properties, while the remaining inholder families at Juniper Lake gave no indication of selling any time soon.<sup>56</sup> In 2008, the total acreage in private ownership in the park stood at 4.22 acres.<sup>57</sup>

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Edwards – Hat Creek 1959-1988; Haberlin to Mr. Robert G. Ingram, August 1, 1988, File 60: L1425  
Ingram – Hat Creek, 1959-1988, Box, 31; Walter A. Williams, Realty Specialist, Lassen Volcanic, to Park Manager, Lassen Volcanic, September 10, 1971; Williams, Memorandum to Superintendent, August 8, 1973, File 75: L1425 Juniper Lake – Langley, 1955-1985, Box 32, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Emmons et al., *Lassen Volcanic National Park Historic Resources Study*, 162.

<sup>56</sup> SARs, 1990, 1991, 2005; Martin interview.

<sup>57</sup> National Park Service listing of acreage as of September 30, 2008. See NPS Stats, [www.nature.nps.gov/stats](http://www.nature.nps.gov/stats).

## Chapter Ten

### The Incredible Shrinking Ranger Division

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If the ranger force was once considered practically the embodiment of park administration, it was transformed during the last third of the twentieth century into an elite unit with more specialized responsibilities. In the process the ranger division shrank in size and function relative to the overall park staff organization, which grew both in absolute numbers and in the number of organizational divisions. Still, the ranger force maintained a high status in the organization. The chief ranger was usually designated acting superintendent in the superintendent's absence, and nearly every one of Lassen Volcanic's superintendents in this era (with the exception of Bill Stephenson) came up through the ranger ranks in the Park Service.

The ranger division (usually called the resource and visitor protection division) had responsibility for resource management until 1982, when the park established a separate division of resource management. From that point forward the rangers focused on the law enforcement aspect of protecting resources while others on staff (often assisted by Regional Office personnel) took the lead in resource management. The rangers retained responsibility for fire suppression but as this program developed it eventually became a separate branch within the ranger division. What remained at the end of all of this was called the "branch of ranger operations." After sloughing one function and then another to other parts of the park organization, "ranger operations" in the first decade of the twenty-first century focused primarily on law enforcement, search and rescue, and resource protection. From six permanent rangers and sixteen seasonal rangers in 1972, this force shrank to just four permanent rangers and around five seasonal rangers some 35 years later. During this period, the ranger force became more professionalized, anchored by a small cadre of permanent rangers who were highly

trained in various aspects of law enforcement as well as emergency medical services and search and rescue operations.<sup>1</sup>

## **A New Era in Law Enforcement**

In April 1970, Superintendent Boyer received reports that Indian activists were planning to stage a “take over” of the Manzanita Lake area that coming summer. Their purpose was to draw attention to a \$29 million land claim settlement that the federal government had never paid to Pit River Indians and other bands in northern California. Indian activists from the Bay Area were visiting Pit River and Hat Creek Indians who resided north of the park, organizing a demonstration similar to the occupation of Alcatraz Island by the American Indian Movement (AIM) the previous November. NPS officials took the threat of a civil disturbance at Lassen Volcanic seriously; they assumed that the activists would use physical force and violence if necessary, and they noted that the park’s law enforcement staff of six rangers could easily be overwhelmed. In the following weeks, Boyer consulted with the Shasta County sheriff’s office and the U.S. Attorney and U.S. Marshal in Sacramento. On June 2, AIM activist Richard Oakes, a leading organizer of the occupation of Alcatraz Island, which was still continuing at that time, visited park headquarters with a request to look at land records. Four days later, in the early morning hours of June 6, a group of mostly Pit River Indians, including men, women, and children, tried to enter the park through the closed north entrance gate. Apparently the Park Service had received a tip, because the demonstrators were met by a line of U.S. marshals in riot gear. Deterred by this show of force, the party then went to a wilderness camp owned by Pacific Gas & Electric near Big Bend in Shasta County and occupied that land instead. Boyer delayed opening the park through the following weekend, anxious not to invite trouble. A few days later, a force of 80 Shasta County deputies and police officers confronted the Indian demonstrators at the PG&E camp and evicted them.<sup>2</sup>

But this did not end the Indians’ agitation. Later that summer the group established another illegal camp on national forest land at Four Corners, near Burney. By fall, the group had established all-season living quarters in a Quonset hut and was preparing for a siege. That October, law enforcement officers again teamed up to evict the group. Boyer, together with three park rangers, was asked to participate in the operation. This time there were about 75 activists, including women and children, who faced off against 36 federal marshals, NPS law enforcement officers, and county

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<sup>1</sup> Roth interview.

<sup>2</sup> Superintendent to Regional Director, April 24, 1970; Regional Director to Director, April 27, 1970; Superintendent to Regional Director, May 19, 1970; Paul D. Reiling to Files, June 3, 1970; Press Release, June 8, 1970; “A Luckless People,” *This World*, June 14, 1970, File 29: W34 Law Enforcement, Indians, 1970-72, Box 43, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

deputies. Negotiations reached an impasse and the situation became very tense, with one activist even displaying a gun and saying that someone would get shot. Suddenly all the officers went into action, using mace and riot clubs to suppress all the activists. Boyer himself subdued a number of individuals with mace. When it was over a few people were injured, several were under arrest, and the group was evicted from the site.<sup>3</sup>

As serious as this episode was, it received much less attention than the riot that occurred in Yosemite National Park on July 4 of that year. In that event, park rangers aimed to evict a large encampment of war protestors and anti-establishment youth who had illegally pitched their tents in Stoneman's Meadow. The confrontation erupted in a riot, which spilled into the nearby public campground. Rangers mounted on horseback and wielding clubs fought with angry young activists who far outnumbered them, in a picture-postcard setting normally associated with peace and tranquility. Coming just two months after the shooting deaths of four student protestors at Kent State University, this incident captured the attention of the national media and Congress. Bill Stephenson, the long-serving superintendent at Lassen Volcanic from 1974 to 1985, was a district manager at Yosemite that summer of 1970. Reflecting on the episode many years later, Stephenson observed that it had "triggered the start of law enforcement training in the Park Service" and had "changed the Park Service dramatically."<sup>4</sup>

The Stoneman's Meadow riot underscored the very point that Regional Director Tobin had made to NPS Director Hartzog less than three months earlier with regard to the threatened civil disturbance at Lassen Volcanic. The park's six rangers, "together with emergent Park Ranger assistance we could provide from other Western Regional Parks, would be inadequate to cope with a disturbance of any size," Tobin had written to Hartzog.<sup>5</sup> This was one lesson that Park Service leadership drew from the unfortunate incident at Yosemite: it needed more law enforcement personnel. The other lesson was that park rangers needed specialized training to deal with such situations. Indeed, a year and a half after the Stoneman's Meadow riot, Boyer and his staff conducted a law enforcement management seminar in Washington in which they used the Pit River Indians' threatened take over of the Manzanita Lake area as a case study for how to deal with an attempted "overthrow" of a park administration.<sup>6</sup>

The social unrest of the era was one impetus for more law enforcement. The nation's rising crime rate was another. Although violent crime was still rare in the national parks, the number of cases doubled between 1966 and 1970. More significantly, property crimes (especially stripping of automobiles), narcotics, traffic violations, and

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<sup>3</sup> Richard Boyer, "Events Near Four Corners – October 27, 1970," November 6, 1970, File 29: W34 Law Enforcement, Indians, 1970-72, Box 43, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>4</sup> Judy Hotchkin, "Stephenson Retiring from Park Helm," *Red Bluff Daily News*, December 7, 1984, p. 1, File 90: K34 News Clippings 1984, Box 28, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>5</sup> Regional Director to Director, April 27, 1970.

<sup>6</sup> Law Enforcement Management Seminar, December 12-17, 1971, File 29: W34 Law Enforcement, Indians, 1970-72, Box 43, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

poaching were all increasing. The parks were not the havens from urban crime that they had once been. Indeed, contrary to what one might expect, the Park Service's need for more law enforcement capability was most acute in the "rural" units of the national park system – places like Lassen – because these units were located far from urban police departments. Hartzog began requesting that Congress make larger appropriations for NPS law enforcement staffing and training as early as 1968; after the Stoneman's Meadow incident, the money was finally forthcoming.<sup>7</sup>

Superintendent Boyer did not wait for direction from Washington to establish a new tone in the park's law enforcement work. After the tense spring and summer of 1970, which included not only the standoff with Indian activists but also some "hippie trouble," Boyer and his ranger staff drafted a new weapons policy for the park. The policy outlined qualifications and training requirements for law enforcement personnel and it stipulated that only qualified park staff would have law enforcement authority. Those officers would be issued a standardized weapon and a weapon belt. In a departure from past protocol, the weapons policy stated that each law enforcement ranger would wear his equipment as he saw fit. "There will be no limitation as to the time of day they may be worn, nor as to any other circumstances such as varied enforcement situations, when it is the considered opinion of the individual that wearing the weapon is in the best interest of safety of the law enforcement officer or the park visitor," the policy read. Boyer sent the weapons policy to the regional director with the comment that although some administrators might find it "distasteful," it was a "necessity" and a "positive deterrent action."<sup>8</sup>

Not all national parks moved toward the get-tough posture that Boyer advocated. As Boyer acknowledged, the new ranger image provoked conflicting responses both from the general public and within the ranks of the Park Service. Some visitors appreciated the sense of security the "police presence" afforded, while others found it regrettable, distracting, or even oppressive. Some in the NPS supported the move to strengthen the agency's law enforcement capabilities, while others believed that too much emphasis on law enforcement would tarnish the agency's high standing in the public's mind. Inevitably, this impassioned debate within the Park Service got into the fine points of how the ranger should do his job, such as whether the ranger should don his sidearm or leave it in the glove box of his patrol car when he stopped to assist a vehicle. To sort this out, the Park Service promulgated NPS-9 law enforcement guidelines in 1975, and the following year Congress revamped the Park Service's law enforcement authority in the

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<sup>7</sup> House Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *National Park Service Briefing and Hearing*, 90<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2d sess., January 18, 1968, 17; Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, 208.

<sup>8</sup> Superintendent to Regional Director, October 22, 1970, enclosing "Weapons Policy – Lassen Volcanic National Park," File 22: W34 Law Enforcement, 1970, Box 43, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives. See also "Lassen Volcanic National Park Defensive Equipment Policy," revised January 1987, File 31: W48 Procedure, Policy, 1989-1991, Box 43, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

General Authorities Act of October 7, 1976. The act directed the Secretary of the Interior to designate specific NPS personnel to maintain law and order in the national parks. It repealed a law of 1905 that authorized all park personnel, regardless of their position in the organization, to make arrests. Most parks had already gone the same way as Lassen Volcanic by entrusting only the ranger protection force with law enforcement responsibility, but the law strengthened that policy and made it consistent throughout the national park system. Rangers in the protection force henceforth enjoyed a special status as “law enforcement officers” or “commissioned officers” within the NPS organization. Pursuant to this act, the Park Service developed new professional standards for its law enforcement rangers, including twice-per-year weapons training.<sup>9</sup>

The changing professional standards for law enforcement rangers in the 1970s led to significant consequences at Lassen Volcanic. In keeping with a service-wide trend, the park administration put more emphasis on visitor protection and gave law enforcement a higher profile. Rangers patrolled the roads more and maintained a presence in the chalet parking lot near the park’s Southwest Entrance. By 1984, Part 1 offenses (larceny, burglary, arson) fell to the lowest level in more than a decade. As rangers strictly enforced speed limits, the number of motor vehicle accidents dropped as well.<sup>10</sup> But these positive results came at a cost. The ranger staff devoted considerable time to training in first aid, search and rescue, traffic radar, and traffic accident investigation. As ranger George Giddings observed, if rangers did not already have experience in winter survival, rescue in blizzard conditions, and things of that nature, it was hard to gain that experience with so much time given to police work. By the time they did acquire it, they were apt to transfer to another park. The classical era of the “generalist ranger” was drawing to a close. The ranger’s job still required a great deal of versatility but it did not allow as much time for protecting the resources.<sup>11</sup>

## Resource Protection

Resource violations were still a problem. Grazing trespass topped the list. Cattle strayed into the park from numerous grazing allotments on the Lassen National Forest. The most troublesome area was Warner Valley until most of that area became fenced. In the 1990s, the biggest problem area was in the Rice Creek drainage near the park’s southwest corner. Cattle wandered up the creek past Crumbaugh Lake to Kings Creek Meadows in the very heart of the park where they were occasionally seen by the road. Trespassing cattle were a menace as they trampled riparian habitat, brought invasive

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<sup>9</sup> Schneider interview; Park Public Law 94-458, October 7, 1976 (90 Stat. 1939); Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, 208-09.

<sup>10</sup> Tom Nash to Superintendent, May 3, 1984; Nash to Superintendent, October 25, 1984, File 5: W26217 Law Enforcement Quarterly Reports, 1984, Box 43, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>11</sup> Giddings interview.

plant species into the park in their droppings, and marred the visitor experience by their anomalous presence in the wilderness.<sup>12</sup>

The park tried several approaches to control grazing trespass, none completely successful. Park rangers sometimes issued citations to the stockowner. Although the stockowner was clearly liable for cattle trespass under the law, courts were lenient. Usually the courts let the offender go with a warning or required the offender to build fences in lieu of paying a fine. The park's case against one repeat offender, Richard Paul O'Sullivan, dragged on indecisively for more than a decade. Finally, in 2005, as part of a deferred prosecution agreement, the Rice Creek allotment was removed from O'Sullivan's grazing permit to establish a buffer zone between his cattle operation and the southern park boundary.<sup>13</sup>

The park found it more fruitful to work with the Forest Service than to work through the legal system. District rangers on the Lassen National Forest had a number of strategies at their disposal if only they could be convinced to use them. First, they could require whoever held the grazing allotment to build more drift fences. Unfortunately, fences were constantly in need of repair and neither the park nor the forest rangers had time to inspect them all. Second, the Forest Service could select who received the grazing allotments, giving preference to those who diligently rounded up their strays. This worked better, but there were always exceptions. Finally, Lassen National Forest could pull back on its grazing allotments, creating a no-grazing buffer zone around the park. This was the solution the NPS favored ultimately but park officials acknowledged that it would take time to implement, as the Forest Service did not want to take away grazing privileges from stockowners who had been enjoying them for many years.<sup>14</sup>

Poaching continued in the park. The level of poaching was unknown, but Giddings thought his superiors were too quick to dismiss it as negligible. After transferring to Lassen Volcanic from Yosemite in 1976, Giddings began patrolling the backcountry during hunting season and he ran into hunters everywhere he went – “right on the park boundary and some inside the park.” Giddings stumbled upon an undercover operation by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agents to infiltrate a poaching ring in northern California that was taking bears for the value of certain bear parts in Asian markets. Giddings learned that the average age of bears in the park was only four and a

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<sup>12</sup> Roth interview; Schneider interview; Gilbert E. Blinn to Lawrence Crabtree, June 16, 1993, File W46: General Regulations 1993-95, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>13</sup> Gilbert E. Blinn to Matthew McGlynn, February 13, 1991, File 21: W32 Civil Litigation/Court Procedures, 1985-1991, Box 43, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Richard Paul O'Sullivan, William Thomas, and Samantha S. Spangler to William J. Thomas, August 20, 2004, File W18: Decisions 2002-2004, LAVO Central Files; Hanna interview.

<sup>14</sup> Gilbert E. Blinn to Leslie Brown, January 13, 1992, File A3015: Congressional Correspondence 1993-1995; Questions from Congressman John Doolittle (memorandum), no date, File A3616: Congressional Correspondence 2005-2007, LAVO Central Files; Roth interview.

half to five years – just past the age when they start to breed – evidence to him that park bears were indeed being taken. Over the years, Giddings caught a number of poachers.<sup>15</sup>

Besides grazing trespass, poaching, and a small amount of timber theft, another threat to park resources came from illegal use of off-road vehicles such as snowmobiles, motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, and mountain bikes. Since the wilderness boundaries came close to the road edge in many areas of the park, it was relatively easy for people to enter into designated wilderness fairly quickly and discreetly on their machines. Like trespassing cattle, off-road vehicles were inappropriate and out of place in the wilderness and could seriously mar the experience of other visitors. Moreover, off-road vehicles caused serious soil erosion problems and harm to vegetation and wildlife. Even snowmobiles, in their over-the-snow travels, caused significant impacts. Ranger Giddings photographed snowmobile tracks in the winter and inspected those same areas in the spring as the snow melted out. He found that if the mantle of snow was thin, then the snowmobiles caused soil compaction, collapsing tunnels that rodents had engineered in the snow-covered earth. Furthermore, the compacted ribbons of snow where the snowmobiles had driven sometimes turned to ice and lingered after all the other snow had melted, altering drainage patterns and inhibiting plants from germinating.<sup>16</sup>

Snowmobile violators were hard to catch. If rangers went out on patrol, they trusted to luck to be in the right place at the right time. Snowmobiles, with their loud engines, gasoline fumes, and conspicuous tracks, were anything but stealthy. But as rangers needed to ride on snowmobiles, too, to catch violators, they lost any element of surprise in pursuit. Working in pairs, rangers caught three people riding snowmobiles illegally in the southeast corner of the park in 1994. One of the persons belonged to a snowmobile club in Chester, which caused some excitement in the community. After these three arrests were made, rangers gave up the chase. It was far too labor intensive. Usually the violators rode bigger, faster machines and had more skill and experience than the rangers, so if they wanted to elude capture they could do it.<sup>17</sup>

Because of its remoteness, the Butte Lake area was especially vulnerable to illegal mechanized intrusions. With its small protection force, the park administration rarely posted a law enforcement ranger there. In October 2000, two off-duty park employees were hiking in the Cinder Cone area when they observed motorcyclists riding off-road at a distance, raising great plumes of dust as they tore through the Painted Dunes. Few features in the park are more susceptible to defacement by foot or tire tracks than Cinder Cone and the Painted Dunes. As longtime park supporter Will Henry remarked ruefully about the defacement on Cinder Cone, “It’s like a scratch on a Rolls Royce.” Park rangers and special agents investigated the motorcycle incident, contacting a number of

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<sup>15</sup> Giddings interview.

<sup>16</sup> Roth interview; Giddings interview.

<sup>17</sup> SARs, 1994, 1995; Roth interview; Giddings interview.

individuals. After four years no suspects had been identified but the case was still considered active.<sup>18</sup>

Rangers spent much more time dealing with minor infractions, which, in their cumulative impacts, could pose significant threats to park resources. These included such things as failure to keep pets on a leash, improper food storage, feeding of wildlife, illegal campfires, other camping violations, and fishing violations. In one summer, rangers issued 129 violation notices and 656 warnings. Two-thirds of these infractions related to the protection of park resources, while the remaining one third related to motor vehicle use or intoxicants.<sup>19</sup>

## Visitor Safety

In addition to preventing crime and protecting resources, the ranger protection force had primary responsibility for keeping visitors safe. Rangers shared that general responsibility with all other park staff, but rangers received specialized training in emergency medical aid and search and rescue operations. Much of their training was geared to the unique environmental hazards found at Lassen Volcanic, such as backcountry and high-angle rescue and treatment of burns received in a geothermal area.<sup>20</sup> Most injuries and fatalities in the park, however, occurred along the main park road corridor and were automobile related. As noted in a 1981 interpretation report, “Driving on a mountainous road is a new experience for many visitors. Blind curves, snow, and steep drop-offs cause hazards.”<sup>21</sup> The most important thing rangers did for visitor safety was simply to patrol the road, enforce the speed limit, and discourage reckless driving.

While cars occasionally went off the road, fatal accidents were extremely rare. Fatal accidents had significance beyond the regrettable loss of life, because they were a big factor in determining reasonable levels for visitor safety measures, such as placement of road hazard signs, which could actually detract from the park experience of visitors. This concern was evident in Superintendent Blinn’s response to a rare traffic fatality in October 1995, when an individual drove his Jeep Comanche over a cliff at the Diamond Point turnout. The day after the accident was discovered, Superintendent Blinn convened a board of inquiry consisting of the chief ranger, another ranger, the chief of

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<sup>18</sup> John Roth to Don Trent, April 5, 2004, File W34: Law Enforcement 2002-2004, LAVO Central Files; Henry interview.

<sup>19</sup> Nash to Superintendent, October 25, 1984. Nash broke the numbers down into three categories: traffic (252), visitor use violations (463), and resource violations (71). Out of a total of 785 citations, 367 were for failure to pay recreation fees – an item that is lumped with “protection of park resources” above and which Nash classified under “visitor use violations.”

<sup>20</sup> Roth interview.

<sup>21</sup> Annual Statement for Interpretation and Visitor Services, 1981, File K1817: Interpretative Planning Annual Statement for Interpretation, 1982, Box 26, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

maintenance, the contracting specialist, and himself. An autopsy report found that the man had been legally intoxicated and there was no evidence that the death was a suicide. (The only other vehicle accident to have occurred in this area in the previous decade was a suicide.) The section of road had been recently chipped and sealed and the road surface had been swept clean of loose gravel. The sharp curve where the vehicle left the road was unmarked, and indeed the nearest road hazard sign was 14.5 miles back from the scene of the accident at the park entrance station, where a large yellow sign stated “Caution Hazardous Mountain Roads Ahead.” Considering all of the evidence, the board of inquiry found that the roadway was adequate and did not pose undue risk to visitor safety.<sup>22</sup> This conclusion supported the Park Service’s longstanding contention that national park roads did not have to conform to Federal Highway Administration road safety standards because visitors generally drove at slower speeds through national parks. The low incidence of fatal accidents on the main park road was not only a credit to the effectiveness of ranger patrols but also to the diligent efforts of the road maintenance crew, whose job it was to maintain safe road conditions.

If the park was understandably reluctant to pepper the road with yellow hazard signs, it did place more warning signs in other hazard areas, particularly around geothermal areas. These signs served a dual purpose of protecting visitors and protecting the resource as they discouraged people from stepping off boardwalks and making footprints. In addition, they were aimed at protecting the government from tort claims. This was clear from the park’s response to an incident in June 1984, in which a boy fell into a hot pool at Bumpass Hell, receiving burns. The boy was flown by helicopter to Mercy Hospital in Redding and later recovered from his injuries. In the following weeks, Ranger Tom Nash investigated the incident and prepared a case incident record. These reports became critical evidence when the boy’s father sued the government for damages. The question before the court was whether the father and son had received adequate warning about the hazard. Citing the case incident records as well as a declaration about park signage by Chief Ranger Schneider, the court found that the plaintiffs had received ample warning from park brochures given to them at the park entrance as well as from signage at the trailhead and near the pool itself. The suit was dismissed.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, the case was a catalyst in causing the park to improve the warning signs placed around geothermal areas. Essentially the messages were made shorter and more direct to get people’s attention.<sup>24</sup>

Search and rescue operations were perhaps the most visible aspect of the park’s efforts to ensure visitor safety. Depending on duration and cost, these operations were

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<sup>22</sup> Superintendent to Field Director, April 3, 1996, File A7623: Bruce E. Bettey – 1995, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>23</sup> Case Incident Record, July 1, 1984; Declaration of Albert Schneider, June 14, 1988; Judgment, David Regan et al. v. United States of America, November 8, 1988, File: Regan Tort Claim 1984, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>24</sup> Giddings interview.

classed as “major” or “minor.” Typically the park conducted about a dozen minor and one or two major search and rescue operations each year. Most incidents involved children getting lost in the backcountry during the busy summer season. Always tense, these incidents usually ended benignly. Less common search and rescue operations involved people stranded in the backcountry by winter storms, skiing accidents, or the rare plane crash. Search and rescue operations frequently involved other agencies. Rangers sometimes called on the service of a helicopter that was based in Redding and operated by the Northern Division Office of the California Highway Patrol.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> D. E. Lanzing to Albert C. Schneider, January 31, 1980; Schneider to Lanzing, February 4, 1980, File 24: W34 Law Enforcement 1980, Box 43, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

## Chapter Eleven

### Assessing Geologic Hazards at Manzanita Lake

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The 1974 closure of Manzanita Lake stands as the most controversial and transformative management decision in the history of Lassen Volcanic National Park. On the eve of a new summer season, the National Park Service relegated Lassen Volcanic's primary development area to a ghost town. The once-bustling resort sat abandoned for over a decade while agency officials pondered the area's future and public anger over the condemnation smoldered. The Park Service cited public safety as the singular cause for the shutdown, but a more complex story underlay this simple reasoning. A liability dilemma forced the abrupt closure of Manzanita Lake, while the NPS's evolving ecological priorities provided a germane backdrop for this particular policy call.

System-wide, the agency had begun to consider relocating overnight accommodations beyond park boundaries, to diminish human impact on park lands and natural resources. The seed of this idea originated some 25 years prior, when NPS Director Newton Drury advocated that new NPS units be designed to promote "day use," with most visitors driving in and out of a given park each day, staying overnight in accommodations in nearby communities. Drury's goal was to curtail development within national park boundaries. The following decade, the agency's very first Mission 66 development plan, for Mount Rainier National Park, called for relocating all of that park's overnight guest facilities, as well as employee housing, beyond park boundaries. Local politicians and business interests effectively scuttled this unpopular plan, but many of the Mission 66 projects that were carried out agency-wide focused on visitors' day use of parks, as Drury had advocated. Soon after the completion of Mission 66, the Park Service officially announced its preference to keep its natural-area parks free of lodging facilities wherever possible. The 1970 revision of the agency's *Administrative Policies for Natural Areas* read that authorization for concession facilities within natural-area

parcs would be granted only when public need could be balanced with “preservation and conservation” of the park’s natural setting. “Where adequate facilities and services exist or can be developed by private enterprise outside such areas, such shall not be provided within the natural areas,” the policy stated.<sup>1</sup>

At Lassen Volcanic National Park, Superintendent Richard Boyer cited the NPS’s *Administrative Policies for Natural Areas* as his guide in devising the park’s management objectives in the early 1970s. Up front, he proposed to “coordinate research and management efforts to restore and maintain appropriate environmental conditions, as contemplated” by this national directive. Amidst the bureaucratic tap dancing and protracted indecision that preceded the Manzanita Lake closure, Boyer did not recommend removal of either of the park’s two lodging facilities, at Manzanita Lake and Drakesbad, in the short term. He did cap their combined capacity at “500 pillows” and placed a moratorium on any expansion of concession facilities or services. Boyer’s more general and longer term objectives for Lassen included the relocation of “management and visitor use facilities outside the main park boundary whenever possible, to conserve park values.” He also encouraged the development of “campgrounds, trailer courts, and overnight visitor accommodations, and associated recreation facilities” outside the park.<sup>2</sup>

Boyer’s successor, Superintendent Murphy, would revise Lassen’s internal management objectives in 1973 to blatantly incorporate the NPS aim to reduce concession development in the national parks: he called for the elimination of both Manzanita Lake Lodge and Drakesbad Guest Ranch.<sup>3</sup> It was during Murphy’s brief tenure at Lassen Volcanic that the closure of the Manzanita Lake facilities occurred. This chapter outlines in detail the intricate web of circumstances that led to that closure. The NPS policy initiative to lessen the concession footprint across its parks nationwide was but one of these circumstantial factors. The Manzanita Lake closure was sudden and absolute. Once the scientific, legal, and political firestorms had swept over Manzanita Lake, new life – in the form of visitor amenities – eventually emerged from the proverbial ashes, beginning with the reopening of the Loomis Museum in the early 1990s.

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<sup>1</sup> Newton B. Drury, “National Park Service,” in *Report of the Secretary of the Interior for 1944* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1944), 218-219; Catton, *National Park, City Playground*, 132; Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), ch. 3; National Park Service, *Administrative Policies for Natural Areas of the National Park System*, 50.

<sup>2</sup> Statement for Management and Planning (Planning Objectives), undated, File 4: D18 GMP 1972, Box 7, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>3</sup> Excerpts of Superintendent Robert Murphy’s management objectives for Lassen Volcanic National Park, approved by Regional Director Howard Chapman May 17, 1973, quoted in Glenn Hassenpflug, “Lassen ‘Hazard’: Only an Excuse to Close Park?,” *Redding Record Searchlight*, December 4, 1975, p. 9, File 84: D18 Planning – Newspaper Clippings 1975, Box 9, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

## The Heyday of Manzanita Lake

Through the 1960s and into the early 1970s, Lassen Volcanic proved to be a favorite destination for campers and lodgers, and the park's limited overnight accommodations often could not keep pace with demands of park visitors. Manzanita Lake, with its sprawling new campground, its expanding resort facility, and its wealth of interpretive offerings, was the park's biggest draw. Manzanita Lake was "a very busy place," recalled Mike Lafkas, who at the time managed the lodge restaurant and bar at \$1.40 an hour (and later joined the NPS, eventually becoming maintenance supervisor for the Manzanita Lake area). It was also a very crowded place, a congested hive of humanity during the peak season, with tour buses coming and going, and station wagon after station wagon spilling forth fun-seeking families with suitcases or camping gear in hand. Once resort guests settled into their cabins and campers pitched their tents, the real business of recreation began: hikers took to the trails, anglers fished the lake, children surfed the Manzanita inlet "rapids," couples lazed in rowboat rentals, and teenagers flirted in the parking lots.<sup>4</sup>

Such density of vacationers required a sizeable service staff. The Lassen National Park Company employed over a hundred people, most of whom worked and lived at Manzanita Lake. The concessioner's other park operations, Drakesbad Guest Ranch and Lassen Park Ski Area, were also thriving but did not require nearly the workforce that Manzanita Lake Lodge did each summer. Seasonal NPS employees further inflated Manzanita Lake's population each summer. Seasonal rangers, interpreters, and maintenance workers assigned to Lassen Volcanic's north side lived in the aptly-named Summertown, found at the end of a half-mile dirt road that branched off from the main park road at the Northwest Entrance Station. Although at one time the park intended to develop this residential and maintenance complex into a year-round "sub-base" for park operations, Summertown never did rise far above its humble beginnings as an improvised facility to be used only a few months out of the year. Many Summertown residents lived in tents. In 1968, Superintendent Boyer described the facilities as "spartan" and of "a low standard" but could not foresee room in the park's budget to upgrade Summertown housing anytime soon. The North District Ranger Station, housed in the Loomis residence, was the only Manzanita Lake facility that remained open through the winter, with a skeleton staff. Most of Lassen Volcanic's summertime interpretation programs were concentrated at Manzanita Lake, where resort guests, campers, and day visitors enjoyed the Loomis Museum exhibits and audiovisual presentations, the Indian craft demonstrations, guided walks, and evening campfire programs. The new Manzanita Lake Amphitheater seated 750; in its first season, the summer of 1963, nearly 30,000 people attended nature programs at the new venue. Through the 1960s, the Lassen

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<sup>4</sup> SARs, 1961-1966; Schneider interview; Giddings interview; Mike Lafkas, interview by Theodore Catton, Sept. 11, 2006.

National Park Company constructed more new guest cabins at Manzanita Lake and renovated its older ones. The concessioner also built new employee housing including a dormitory, a camper service center with laundry and bathing facilities, and a new warehouse to replace one lost to fire in 1962. The stone lodge remained the resort's focal point.<sup>5</sup>

Don Hummel, founder of the Lassen National Park Company, served as the company's vice president and treasurer in the 1960s before President Lyndon Johnson appointed him assistant secretary of housing and urban renewal. During his few years in Washington, D.C., Hummel had no connection to concession operations in Lassen Volcanic, but upon his return to the private sector, he reengaged in the business. In 1968, the Lassen National Park Company negotiated a new 20-year contract with the NPS. In 1970, Hummel sold the company (and his McKinley and Yosemite concessions) to U.S. Natural Resources, Inc. (USNR). After the transfer of ownership, the Lassen Volcanic branch of this conglomerate concession company was often referred to as the Lassen Volcanic National Park Company. Hummel served as vice president of operations in USNR's Recreational Resources Division.<sup>6</sup>

The new 20-year contract obligated the concessioner to expend \$308,000 in specified improvements to its Lassen Volcanic facilities (mostly at Manzanita Lake) within a few years time. Prior to the change in ownership, the Lassen National Park Company had modernized the Manzanita restaurant's kitchen, but the bulk of the contractual building obligations remained, namely the construction of 22 new cabins and a coffee shop at Manzanita Lake. Because occupancy rates at the resort were falling off a bit, USNR saw no urgent need for more cabins. The company requested and was granted a series of extensions to the construction deadlines. In 1973, the Park Service excused USNR of these commitments indefinitely, pending resolution of the sticky geologic hazard issue and completion of the park's new master plan. Despite its reluctance to increase its 410-bed capacity at Manzanita Lake, USNR invested in number of notable enhancements of its existing facilities in the early 1970s. The company added takeout and cafeteria options to its food service, replaced all guest cabin beds, upgraded cabin kitchens and bathrooms, spiffed up its general store and gas station, and built a new cocktail lounge extension onto the lodge. Just prior to the announcement of a building moratorium at Manzanita Lake, the Park Service granted the concessioner permission to enlarge its gift shop. By 1973, the Lassen Volcanic National Park Company also had

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<sup>5</sup> SARs, 1961-1966; Daniel J. Tobin, Superintendent, Master Plan Development Outline, Lassen Volcanic National Park, July 6, 1950; Richard G. Prasil and Raymond Nelson, Park Naturalists, Master Plan Narrative for Lassen Volcanic National Park, Chapter 1 – Objectives and Policies, November 30, 1962, Denver Service Center; Dick Boyer, Superintendent, to Dr. Dwight R. Crandell, Engineering Geology Branch, June 5, 1968, File 156: N30 Geological Features and Studies – Geological Hazards 1967-69, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>6</sup> SAR, 1966; Koeberer and Koeberer-Pitts interview; Don Hummel, Director, National Parks Operations, USNR, to NPS Office of Concession Management, October 10, 1971, File: Manzanita Lake Closure, LAVO Desk Files (uncataloged, unaccessioned), REDW Archives.

extended the resort's operations well into the park's shoulder seasons, and the new ownership exhibited no misgivings about its Manzanita Lake enterprise. While only ten percent of all park visitors stayed overnight at the resort, this small minority enjoyed a "quality experience," park planner Al Hagood acknowledged. But the future of Manzanita Lake – and the future of Lassen Volcanic – was about to take an abrupt turn. The Manzanita Lake Lodge Resort closed its doors for the season on October 5, 1973, never to be reopened.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Chaos Crags Geologic Hazard**

In July 1967, the U.S. Geological Survey notified Lassen Volcanic that two of its scientists would soon embark on an assessment of geologic hazards surrounding northern California's two most prominent volcanoes, Mount Shasta and Lassen Peak. Project leader Dwight ("Rocky") Crandell and his associate Donal Mullineaux intended to study the geologic history of both volcanoes and evaluate any risks that future eruptions could have on area populations. Crandell and Mullineaux had just completed such an assessment for Mount Rainier National Park. There is no indication that the NPS played any role in the genesis of this project, but Superintendent Boyer responded to the upcoming study with enthusiasm.<sup>8</sup>

Crandell and Mullineaux began their field research at Lassen Volcanic in August 1968 and focused on potential geologic hazards in the Manzanita Lake area, where the majority of park visitors congregated. At the conclusion of their first field season, Superintendent Boyer asked the geologists for a written report of their initial findings, for use in the Park Service's upcoming review of the Lassen Volcanic master plan. Crandell obliged with a four-page evaluation the USGS submitted to NPS Director George Hartzog. The report revealed that the Manzanita Lake area had been "repeatedly

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<sup>7</sup> Hummel to NPS Office of Concession Management, October 10, 1971; SARs, 1972-1974; U.S. Natural Resources, Inc., to Mr. George B. Hartzog, Jr., Director, National Park Service, June 15, 1970; Assistant Director to Director, Western Region, April 13, 1971; Daniel J. Tobin, Jr., Acting Director, Western Region, to Superintendent, May 4, 1971; Don Hummel, Vice President Operations, Recreational Resources Division, to NPS Director, October 13, 1971; Dick Boyer, Superintendent, to Director, Western Region, October 19, 1971; Director, Western Region, to Associate Director, Operations, NPS, June 26, 1973, File: Concession 1936-1953 [Part 2 of 2], Unaccessioned LAVO Concession Files; "Lassen Overview from the Lassen Volcanic National Park Company Perspective," August 1972; Terrence Cullinan, President, Lassen Volcanic National Park Company, to Mr. Lawrence C. Hadley, Assistant Director, NPS, August 13, 1972, File 60: D18 GMP Visitor Services Correspondence 1974-1979, Box 8; Al Hagood, "A Master Plan for Lassen Volcanic National Park, California, revised draft, November 12, 1973, File 6: D18 General Management Plan 1973 Draft, Box 7, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>8</sup> John T. McGill, Chief, Engineering Geology Branch, U.S. Geological Survey, July 18, 1967; Richard H. Boyer, Superintendent, to Dwight R. Crandell, Geologist, November 27, 1967, File 156: N30 Geological Features and Studies – Geologic Hazards 1967-1969, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506; "A Synopsis of Correspondence and Other Communications Regarding Geologic Hazards at Manzanita Lake, Lassen Volcanic National Park," File: Manzanita Lake Closure, LAVO Desk Files, REDW Archives.

devastated by two kinds of catastrophic phenomena within recent geologic time.” First, the area was buried by a series of expansive volcanic mudflows spawned from a nascent Chaos Crags about 1,000 years ago. Since then, three massive rockfall avalanches had calved from Chaos Crags and hurled downhill at speeds up to 100 miles an hour, Crandell believed. The rock-strewn remains of these avalanches constituted Chaos Jumbles, upon which Summertown and a good portion of the Manzanita Lake visitor facilities had been built. The most recent avalanche occurred about 300 years ago, dammed Manzanita Creek and formed the lake. Crandell thought either steam explosions at Chaos Crags or earthquakes could cause similar rockfall avalanches in the future, and renewed volcanic activity of Lassen Peak could also threaten Manzanita Lake. In light of these possibilities, Crandell recommended that the NPS consider moving its visitor facilities at Manzanita Lake to higher ground, out of the probable path of future avalanche and mudflow events.<sup>9</sup>

In March 1969, Crandell and Mullineaux provided the NPS with a more detailed “preliminary appraisal” of the Manzanita Lake geologic hazards, based on their first season of research. In this report, the geologists identified Chaos Jumbles as a high risk area for rockfall. They judged the Manzanita Creek fan – the area between the lodge and the campground – to be at high risk for “nuees ardentes,” eruption materials both gaseous and solid, which posed a moderate risk to the campground as well. Robert Rose, a Park Service geology consultant, concurred with most of Crandell and Mullineaux’s findings and believed the NPS must choose one of four management alternatives for each separate locality in the Manzanita Lake area: 1) immediately abandon and relocate facilities, 2) freeze development and phase out, 3) freeze development and maintain, or 4) continue operations as usual. He recommended the NPS close the facilities in Chaos Jumbles and the Manzanita Creek fan, and phase out the campground. Considering Manzanita Lake’s recent geologic history, “complete disregard of the hazards recognized by Crandell and Mullineaux would seem unwise,” Rose concluded.<sup>10</sup>

In response to Rose’s “rather alarming review” of the already unnerving USGS report, Assistant Regional Director Joseph Rumburg and other NPS officials in San Francisco and Washington pursued Rose’s idea of gathering USGS and NPS personnel at Lassen Volcanic to assess the issue. But Superintendent Boyer dragged his feet. Contrary to Rose’s more nuanced management options for the Manzanita Lake facilities, Boyer saw “only two alternatives, ‘Do we go?’ or ‘Do we stay?’” And Boyer wanted to

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<sup>9</sup> Dwight R. Crandell to Mr. Richard Boyer, Superintendent, May 29, 1968; Director, USGS, to George B. Hartzog, Jr., Director, NPS, September 9, 1968; Dwight R. Crandell, U.S. Geological Survey, “Preliminary Evaluation of Geologic Hazards in the Manzanita Lake Area, Lassen Volcanic National Park, California,” August 30, 1968, File 156: N30 Geological Features and Studies – Geologic Hazards 1967-1969, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>10</sup> Acting Director, U.S. Geological Survey, to Director, National Park Service, March 14, 1969; Robert H. Rose, Chief Geologist (Consultant), National Park Service, “Potential Geologic Hazards, Manzanita Lake Area, Lassen Volcanic National Park, April 16, 1969, File 156: N30 Geological Features and Studies – Geologic Hazards 1967-69, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

stay. He felt the best approach was simply to acknowledge the report, much like Mount Rainer National Park had done with its less-than-perfect hazard assessment, and “continue with use of the area.” Instead of wasting the park’s dollars on Rose’s proposed meeting, Boyer said he would use the money to hire another seasonal worker for the summer. When a tentative meeting date was set for September, after Crandell’s second season of field work in Lassen Volcanic, Boyer balked again. He saw no need for such a collaborative effort until the USGS submitted “something considerably more substantial than [their] *preliminary* findings.” Boyer got his way and the meeting was postponed a full year.<sup>11</sup>

Crandell and Mullineaux submitted the final draft of their administrative report on Lassen Volcanic’s potential geologic hazards in July 1970. In it the authors admitted that their preliminary reports overestimated both the frequency of some types of volcanic activity in the park in recent millennia and the likelihood of future catastrophic events. For example, Chaos Jumbles was formed by one episode of rockfall avalanches, they now believed, not three. The odds of another such episode occurring anytime soon were slim, but the potential remained. Crandell and Mullineaux concluded that eruptions and lava flows did not pose much threat to visitors in any of the park’s developed areas, but rockfall avalanches and mudflows (like the 1915 event) could bury valley floors in the park’s northwest corner, including Manzanita Lake. They ranked rockfall avalanches from Chaos Crags as the greatest hazard to human life primarily because if triggered by an unpredicted earthquake, its destruction would be almost immediate, with no warning and no time for evacuation. The geologists recommended that the park expand its seismic monitoring program and have field personnel visually inspect Lassen Peak and Chaos Crags on a daily basis for signs of impending eruption, but there would be no way to anticipate the nonvolcanic causes of another Chaos Crags slide, Crandell and Mullineaux wrote. Despite their final analysis that Manzanita Lake was at lower risk than they previously thought, Crandell and Mullineaux maintained “that the risk is relatively high and that the Chaos Jumbles is the least suitable place in the Manzanita Lake area for visitor facilities or park residences.” The authors stood by their earlier recommendation that all development in the Chaos Jumbles be relocated. The report addressed two other geologic hazards elsewhere in the park. Crandell and Mullineaux suggested that the NPS either remove or secure large boulders above the park highway on

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<sup>11</sup> Robert M. Linn, Chief Scientist, to Associate Director, Mgt. and Programming, April 17, 1969; Joseph C. Rumburg, Jr., Assistant Regional Director, to Superintendent, April 24, 1969; Dick Boyer, Superintendent, to Regional Director, April 29, 1969; Boyer to Regional Director, September 12, 1969; Dwight R. Crandell to John S. Mohlhenrich, September 25, 1969, File 156: N30 Geological Features and Studies – Geological Hazards 1967-69; William L. Bowen, Regional Director, to Director, September 9, 1969; Robert Rose to Associate Director (DAP), September 9, 1969; Rose to Mr. Jensen, DAP, September 12, 1969, File 158: N30 Geological Hazards 1969-1070, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

Diamond Peak and improve visitor safety at Bumpass Hell with more warning signs and more elevated walkways.<sup>12</sup>

### **The Decision to Close the Manzanita Lake Facilities**

Dr. Mullineaux met with NPS officials in Lassen Volcanic National Park for a three-day field conference in September 1970. In attendance with geologists Mullineaux and Rose were: Norman Herkenham, interpretive specialist of the Western Regional Office; Gerald Patten, landscape architect of the Western Service Center; Stanley Albright, assistant director of the Pacific Northwest Regional Office; and Robert Sigafos, environmental ecologist, who was conducting ecological studies in Lassen for the USGS. John Mohlhenrich, Lassen's chief interpreter, and several rangers hosted the gathering. Superintendent Boyer did not participate. The party toured each area of the park covered in the administrative report, and Mullineaux was pleased with the group's "lively" discussions. "By the time I got well into descriptions of deposits and how they were formed, the rest were with or ahead of me on the hazards represented and how they might affect Park planning," Mullineaux said.<sup>13</sup>

Collectively, the NPS officials rated Mullineaux's field presentation of Lassen's geology and related hazards as "superb." Patten believed Mullineaux and Crandell's administrative report to be "an invaluable tool" in future planning for the park. "I wish we had reports like this for other areas of geologic instability such as Katmai," he added. The Western Regional Office reported that "the consensus" of Park Service representatives at the September meeting was to phase out all facilities located on the Chaos Jumbles formation according to a definite time table, as Mullineaux and Crandell recommended. "Their advice to relocate these developments to safer zones may not meet with unanimous acceptance in the Service and the affected concessioner interests, but we intend at the very least to incorporate this study in the park's basic data" and use it in the upcoming revision of the park's master plan, Acting Regional Director Daniel Tobin informed Director Hartzog in November. "At a minimum, it would seem indefensible to place any new facilities in [the Jumbles area]," Tobin added. The Manzanita Lake Campground, on the other hand, was located outside of what the geologists considered the high hazard zone, where no warning would likely precede an earthquake-triggered

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<sup>12</sup> Dwight R. Crandell and Donal R. Mullineaux, U.S. Department of Interior, Geological Survey, "Potential Geologic Hazards in Lassen Volcanic National Park, California," Administrative Report for National Park Service, 1970, File 157: N30 "Potential Geologic Hazards in Lassen Volcanic National Park" 1968-1970; Crandell, Memorandum to Superintendent, July 13, 1970, File 159: N30 Geological Features and Studies – Geological Hazards 1970-74, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>13</sup> Dick Boyer, Memorandum to Director, Western Region, September 10, 1970, File 60: D18 GMP Visitor Services Correspondance 1974-1979 [Part 2], Box 8; D. R. Mullineaux, Memorandum to John T. McGill, Engineering Geology Branch, September 25, 1970, File 159: N30 Geological Features and Studies – Geological Hazards 1970-74, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

avalanche. Threats to the campground were related to volcanic activity only, which monitoring would portend and allow for evacuation of campers, the geologists believed. Therefore, Tobin wanted to keep the campground open but urged Superintendent Boyer to formulate an effective emergency procedure plan for the entire Manzanita Lake area, as outlined by Crandell and Mullineaux. The Washington Office was appreciative of the interagency effort thus far. NPS Assistant Director Edward Hummel lauded both the USGS report and Tobin's "translation" of the geologists' findings into "reasonable action programs."<sup>14</sup>

As a first step, the NPS placed a "de facto moratorium" on new development at Manzanita Lake, which irked Boyer. The superintendent was "faced with the field problem of an out-dated and out-moded physical plant." What would become of maintenance projects and structure rehabilitation, Boyer wanted to know. In the spring of 1971, Boyer proceeded with the reconstruction of a chlorinator building that had been crushed by a fallen tree the previous winter, hoping he was not violating the Manzanita Lake building ban. Meanwhile, the NPS continued to issue the concessioner annual extensions on its contractual obligations to add new cabins to the Manzanita Lake Resort. The concessioner inquired about permission to pour its money into more improvements at the ski area instead. Boyer could not accept a phase-out for Manzanita Lake but wanted to proceed with business as usual. He still believed "a calculated risk should be taken in this area in spite of the report of potential hazards." For a time he challenged the science behind the USGS assessment by advocating for Dr. James Heath of San Jose State College, who believed Chaos Jumbles to be much older than 300 years. How Heath's dissenting opinion on the age of Chaos Jumble would translate into a dismissal or reduction of the hazard risk, Lassen Volcanic file documents do not make clear.<sup>15</sup>

In 1972, Boyer transferred to the Washington Office, Superintendent Murphy assumed his post at Lassen Volcanic, and the revision of the park's master plan got underway. Lassen Volcanic's master plan study team, made up of Denver Service Center personnel and park staff, faced three pressing issues: wilderness use regulations, ski area expansion, and the decision to either "eliminate or upgrade" the Manzanita Lake

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<sup>14</sup> Gerald D. Patten, Landscape Architect, to Director, Western Service Center, September 24, 1970; Edward Hummel, Assistant Director, Memorandum to Director, Western Region, November 6, 1970; Acting Director, Western Region, to NPS Director, November 9, 1970; Edward Hummel, Assistant Director, to Director, Western Region, December 2, 1970, File 159: N30 Geological Features and Studies – Geological Hazards 1970-74, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506; Robert H. Rose, Chief Geologist, Special Planning Studies, Memorandum to Assistant Director, Park Management, September 28, 1970, File: Manzanita Lake Closure, LAVO Desk Files, REDW Archives.

<sup>15</sup> Raymond L. Freeman, Acting Director, to Don Hummel, U.S. Natural Resources, Inc., December 17, 1971, File 60: D18 GMP Visitor Services Correspondence 1974-1979 [Part 2], Box 8; Dick Boyer, Memorandum to Director, Western Region, May 12, 1971; Boyer to Dr. Robert S. Sigafos, Botanist, Geological Survey, November 9, 1970; Sigafos to Boyer, January 12, 1971; James P. Heath to Boyer, January 25, 1971; Bobby H. Hensley, Acting Superintendent, to Heath, February 8, 1971, File 159: N30 Geological Features and Studies – Geological Hazards 1970-74, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

facilities. The gravity of this third planning challenge was spelled out in the park's "planning directive":

We simply cannot afford to be wrong in the decision to either leave – or remain and develop further – the Manzanita Lake area. Competent geologists from the USGS have clearly spelled out the kinds of severe hazards that threaten various portions of the Manzanita Lake development, and should we ignore this report, and disaster strikes – especially with loss of life – the position of the National Park Service would be absolutely indefensible.<sup>16</sup>

Shortly after his arrival in August 1972, Superintendent Murphy began to discuss the hazard issue with concession management. This communication was crucial, Murphy said, as the Park Service began "to move in some direction from the former status-quo attitude apparently voiced by the Service" and blatantly opined by his predecessor, Superintendent Boyer. The concessioner repeatedly reviewed the 1970 USGS report but "did not give any appreciable credence to its significance," Murphy said. In formal statements submitted to the NPS, both Don Hummel and Terrence Cullinan, president of the Lassen National Park Company, voiced their opposition to the rumored removal of the Manzanita Lake facilities. Cullinan felt "any move made because of a speculative report . . . would be unfortunate" and demolition of the concession facilities would be "pointless." Hummel, too, put no stock in the USGS report. Dismantling the Manzanita Lake Lodge Resort based on the report's theories was "too speculative and too expensive," he said. Hummel envisioned continued expansion of the resort once visitor demand warranted it again. "There are roads in place which can support additional lodging development and should be maintained pending developing visitor requirements," Hummel stated. And Cullinan welcomed the possibility of new concessioner enterprises at Manzanita Lake: his company was "ready and eager" to assume management of the Manzanita Lake Campground, should Lassen Volcanic be chosen for a NPS pilot program of concession-run campgrounds. The two men had no interest in the relocation of the Manzanita Lake Lodge and cabins.<sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile, the USGS findings did not impress the general public either. Early in the planning process, the master plan team gathered input on Lassen Volcanic from state and county officials, representatives of other federal agencies, various organizations, and

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<sup>16</sup> Denver Service Center, Planning Directive for Master Plan, Lassen Volcanic National Park, June 5, 1972, File 4: D18 GMP 1972, Box 7, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives, pp. 4-5.

<sup>17</sup> Terrence Cullinan, President, Lassen Volcanic National Park Company, Memorandum to Superintendent Murphy, August 22, 1972; "Lassen Overview from the Lassen Volcanic National Park Company Perspective," August 1972; Superintendent, Memorandum to File, May 2, 1974, File: Manzanita Lake Closure, LAVO Desk Files; Statement by Don Hummel, Vice President, U.S. Natural Resources, Inc., and General Manager, USNR Recreational Resources Division, File 60: D18 GMP Visitor Service Correspondence 1974-1979 [Part 2], Box 8, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

individual citizens at public meetings held in Mineral, Red Bluff, Susanville, and Redding, in late October 1972. Although NPS officials addressed Manzanita Lake's geologic hazards at each of these meetings, citizens had little to say on the topic. Instead, they spoke about winter use, camping concerns, and how to guard against overcrowding in the park. A news article on the Redding meeting did not mention the geologic hazard at all. Only in Susanville did a handful of people discuss the subject at any length. At the Susanville meeting informal votes were cast for no facilities removal, a gradual relocation plan, and relocation only if probable loss of life were at stake. One Forest Service employee admitted he would now feel uneasy at Manzanita Lake. Another recommended the NPS keep a closer eye on the park's temperamental topography.<sup>18</sup>

The USGS had improved volcanic monitoring at Lassen Volcanic that summer, with the installation of a tiltmeter, which was linked to the National Earthquake Center in Berkeley, and a thermistor that the USGS would oversee. Rangers began daily visual inspections of Lassen Peak and Chaos Crags. The park's Mineral seismograph was still in operation, although the Manzanita Lake seismograph was not. Crandell applauded the park's new equipment and reported to park naturalist Hank Warren that the latest round of aerial infrared imagery of Lassen Volcanic revealed no new thermal abnormalities. Chaos Crags showed "nothing," Crandell said. "You are safe for a while!" he added a little cavalierly.<sup>19</sup>

By 1973, other geologists who had studied Lassen Volcanic began to refute the USGS recommendations for removal of the Manzanita Lake facilities, but without any great fanfare. Howel Williams of the University of California, Berkeley believed the USGS team had "over emphasized" the geologic threats to Manzanita Lake for two reasons. In relation to earthquake potential elsewhere in the state, the risk at Manzanita was "so minimal as to be almost uncomparable." Secondly, Williams believed the park's next round of volcanic activity would occur in Warner Valley. John Tomblin of the University of the West Indies also thought Crandell and Mullineaux's analysis was overblown. He stated flatly that there was no need to remove facilities from Chaos Jumbles. Out of respect for their colleagues, Williams and Tomblin did not wish to document their dissenting views on paper but instead spoke informally to Hank Warren.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Preplanning Master Plan Meeting Notes, Mineral (October 25, 1972), Red Bluff (October 26, 1972), Susanville (October 27, 1972), Redding (October 28, 1972); "U.S. Park Service Ponders Lassen's Future," *Redding Record Searchlight*, October 30, 1972, File 3: D18 GMP Preplanning Correspondence 1972, Box 7, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>19</sup> Richard S. Fiske, Assistant Chief Geologist, Geochemistry and Geophysics, to Dr. Charles W. Chesterman, Senior Geological Scientist, Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology, May 8, 1972; Dr. R. Crandell, Memorandum to Hank Warren, May 10, 1972; Robert J. Murphy, Superintendent, Memorandum to Regional Director, January 23, 1974, File 159: N30 Geological Features and Studies – Geological Hazards 1970-74, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>20</sup> Howel Williams, to Dr. Dwight Crandell, September 30, 1970, File: Manzanita Lake Closure, LAVO Desk Files; Hank Warren, Jr., Interpretive Specialist, LAVO, to Superintendent, March 2, 1973, File 5: D18 GMP Meetings and Minutes 1973, Box 7, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

In the summer of 1973, the NPS relieved the Lassen National Park Company and U.S. Natural Resources, Inc. of all its contractual construction commitments at Manzanita Lake “until such time as we and the concessioner had a new good look at the needs for this park,” the regional director said. Superintendent Murphy had just revised the park’s management objectives to include the eventual closures of both the Manzanita and the Drakesbad accommodations; in the meantime, neither resort could expand its capacity. Murphy proposed to “relocate the services and concession operations from Manzanita Lake to a less geologically hazardous area.” But a November 1973 draft of the master plan, authored by Al Hagood of the Denver Service Center, called for phasing out all cabins at Manzanita Lake with no relocation strategy, due to the lack of “suitable” sites nearby. Private enterprise would fill the accommodation void, the plan read, and the Manzanita Lake Campground would continue to operate. The park’s north side administrative facilities would be removed from Chaos Jumbles and most likely be relocated to Manzanita Chutes, just beyond the park boundary on Forest Service land. An open area with nice views of Lassen Peak and Chaos Crags, this site would also be the probable home of the park’s future visitor center, the plan indicated. Only the historic Loomis Museum and perhaps the picnic area would remain open in the Jumbles, thereby “reducing human exposure to the avalanche hazard by restricting it to limited numbers of mobile, transient visitors.”<sup>21</sup>

Upon review of this draft, the planning team decided to compile a full spectrum of alternatives for the Manzanita Lake facilities – via an environmental impact statement with public input – before proceeding further with this most vital component of the master plan. Concession representatives insisted the moderate alternative of relocating the resort somewhere in the vicinity was cost prohibitive. Instead, the company’s new president, John Del Favero, together with Geryl Smith, general manager, suggested that authorities “treat the cause of the hazard – blast the rock away before it is ignited by natural causes” – and they were not laughed out of the room. The most vocal advocate for considering every possible option was Regional Director Howard Chapman, although he admitted his mind was all but made up. “Frankly, I’m ready to say we move out. But . . . what if another alternative surfaces later?” Planning team members could not escape the question of government liability in pondering the various alternatives. With the

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<sup>21</sup> “A Synopsis of Correspondence;” Keith E. Abbott, Secretary/General Counsel, U.S. Natural Resources, Inc., to Mr. Robert Murphy, Superintendent, May 1, 1973; Director, Western Region, Memorandum to Associate Director, Operations, NPS, June 26, 1973; Acting Regional Director, Memorandum to Superintendent, August 30, 1973, File: Concession 1936-1953 [Part 2 of 2], Unaccessioned LAVO Concession Files; excerpts from 1973 Lassen Volcanic management objectives quoted in Glenn Hassenpflug, “Lassen ‘Hazard’: Only an Excuse to Close Park?,” *Redding Record Searchlight*, December 4, 1975; Hagood, “A Master Plan for Lassen Volcanic National Park, California, revised draft, November 12, 1973, File 6: D18 General Management Plan 1973 Draft, Box 7, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

USGS report now part of the park's base data, could the NPS afford the risk of a tort claim should even one visitor fall victim to a rockfall event?<sup>22</sup>

In short order, the liability issue derailed the planning team's intentions to prepare a full EIS specifically for the Manzanita Lake situation. Although concession representatives continued to downplay Crandell and Mullineaux's risk assessment at a meeting of the NPS's Western Regional Advisory Board in San Francisco on January 19, 1974, soon thereafter Lassen National Park Company changed its tune. A week later, Superintendent Murphy spoke of "the concessioner's ultimatum" that the NPS provide it with "some assurance of limited liability" for a rockfall disaster or it would not open for the 1974 summer season. Murphy hoped a comprehensive monitoring program at Lassen Volcanic could provide this assurance and avert the concession's self-imposed closure, at least for the 1974 season. The Park Service could no longer sit on its hands, Murphy stated: "The lack of an action plan appears long overdue and any attempt to further defer positive solutions, in view of long standing recommendations, could prove embarrassing to the Service." Park management wanted the concession to operate for the 1974 season – the alternative would create a public relations nightmare – but Murphy conceded that a legal review of government liability in continued operations would be wise.<sup>23</sup>

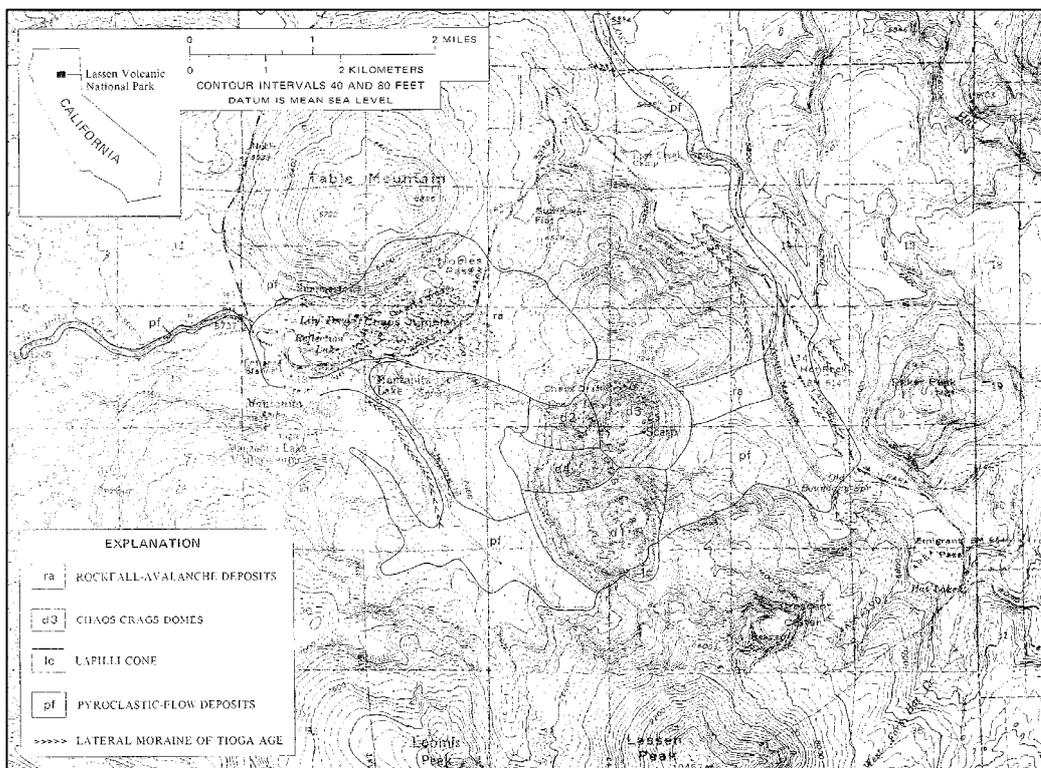
Meanwhile, Crandell and Mullineaux's findings finally reached a public audience with publication in the January/February issue of the U.S. Geological Survey's *Journal of Research*. The article covered the violent geologic history of Chaos Crags and Chaos Jumbles as well as the geologists' assessment that more "high-velocity, air-cushioned avalanches of rock debris" could crash into the Manzanita Lake area. The magnitude of human activity within the path of this potential destruction was illuminated by figures compiled by park personnel for the Denver Service Center. An estimated 1.2 million "human hours" were spent by visitors, concession workers and park employees within the "hazard area" of Chaos Jumbles in 1973. Nearly as many human hours were spent in the adjacent campground area. In more tangible terms, a population of up to 3,000 people sometimes assembled in the Jumbles during the peak season. Imagining the worst case scenario of another massive avalanche on such a high-volume day, the human stakes were very high.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Minutes of November 26-28, 1973 Planning and Design Review Meeting, DSC, File 5: D18 GMP Meetings and Minutes 1973, Box 7, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; SAR, 1974.

<sup>23</sup> "A Synopsis of Correspondence;" Robert J. Murphy, Superintendent, Memorandum to Regional Director, January 23, 1974, File 60: D18 Visitor Services Correspondence 1974-1979 [Part 2], Box 8, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>24</sup> Dwight R. Crandell, Donal R. Mullineaux, Robert S. Sigafos, and Meyer Rubin, "Chaos Crags Eruptions and Rockfall-Avalanches, Lassen Volcanic National Park, California," *U.S. Geological Survey Journal of Research* 2, no. 1 (January/February 1974): 49-59; Robert Murphy, Superintendent, Memorandum to Geologist (Planner) Western Team, Denver Service Center, February 11, 1974, File 45: D18 GMP Inquiries 1974-1978, Box 8, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Robert Holt, "Lassen's Silent Threat," *National Parks and Conservation Magazine* 50, no. 6 (June 1976): 6.



**Map 6. Geologic Map of the Manzanita Lake Area.** *Source: Dwight R. Crandell, et al., "Chaos Crags Eruptions and Rockfall-Avalanches, Lassen Volcanic National Park, California," U.S. Geological Survey Journal of Research 2, no. 1 (January/February 1974): 49-59.*

In early March 1974, Field Solicitor Ralph Mihan advised Regional Director Chapman that the NPS's leanings towards a gradual elimination of the Manzanita Lake facilities carried significant risk. If a rockfall event were to occur during the phase-out, anyone injured "could and probably would file suit" against the government and perhaps the concessioner. After reviewing related case law, Mihan concluded that if such a suit were filed "the United States would probably be held liable because of its knowledge of the danger and [allowance of] continued operation" of the resort. Mihan believed that the instigator of a facilities closure – the government or the concessioner – would suffer less financial setbacks. He recommended that the NPS seize that advantage and close Manzanita Lake. William Werrell, of the Regional Office's water resources division, shared Mihan's sentiment that the NPS's only sure-fire guarantee against rockfall injury or loss of life at Manzanita Lake during the upcoming season was "to prevent operation" of the resort.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Ralph G. Mihan, Field Solicitor, San Francisco, Memorandum to Regional Director, Western Region, NPS, March 4, 1974, File 60: D18 GMP Visitor Services Correspondence 1974-1979; William L. Werrell, Acting Chief, Water Resource, Western Region, Memorandum to Associate Regional Director,

On April 5, Lassen National Park Company President Del Favero formalized the company's Manzanita Lake ultimatum with a letter to Secretary of Interior Rogers Morton. Upon advice from outside counsel, the company would not open the "endangered" resort for the season unless the NPS immediately initiated programs "to insure the physical safety of our employees and of the public" in the hazard zone. On April 10, Crandell and Mullineaux conferred with Chief Naturalist Richard Vance at Lassen Volcanic about upgrading the park's volcanic monitoring system further, which might have appeased the concessioner's attorneys, but more radical solutions to the problem were about to be finalized in the Western Regional Office.<sup>26</sup>

On April 12, Regional Director Chapman met with Assistant Solicitor Dave Watts and representatives of the NPS's Division of Concessions Management to discuss two possible "courses of action." The NPS could stand firm and handle the concessioner's refusal to open as a breach of contract, Chapman said, wherein the resort would shut down via contract termination. During this process, park personnel would post hazard signs all over the Manzanita Lake area and hope for the best, in terms of possible rockfall events, human harm, and government liability. Or, the NPS could initiate the permanent closure of the facilities, as Mihan and Werrell recently recommended, and compensate the concessioner for its possessory interest. (Watts doubted the concessioner could win additional compensation for the contract's remaining term, because the geologic hazard study came about after the concession contract was executed in 1968.) Because Chapman felt Lassen Volcanic had exhausted its monitoring options and the threat of unpredictable rockfall remained, he wanted to pursue this second option. Chapman proposed that the NPS immediately buy out all the concessioner's park operations, including Drakesbad and the ski area. But Manzanita Lake was, of course, the only critical acquisition. Both public safety and the future park management were "best served by the immediate discontinuance of the concession operation at Manzanita Lake," Chapman concluded on April 25.<sup>27</sup>

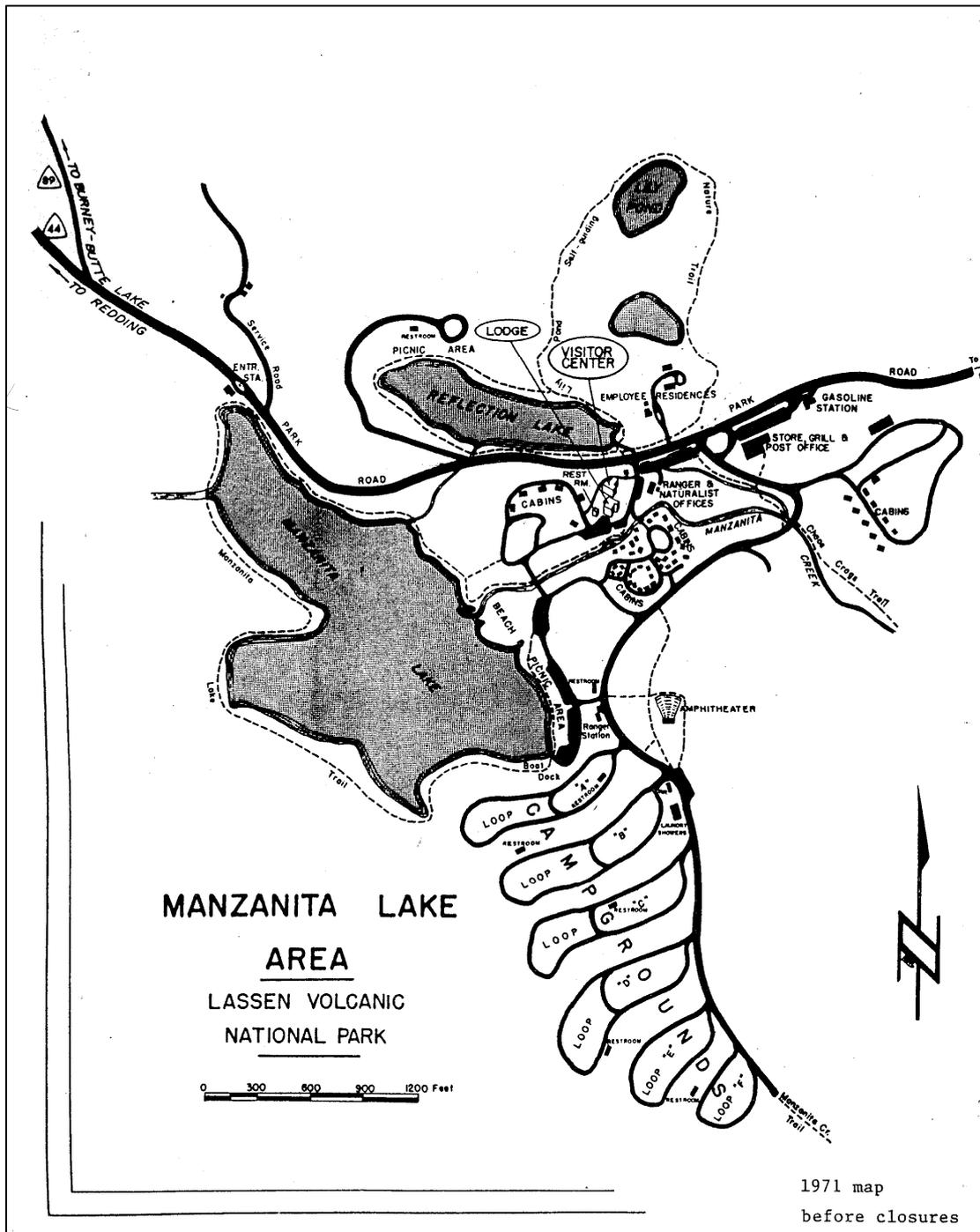
NPS Director Ron Walker agreed with Chapman's call and wired Del Favero of the Lassen Volcanic National Park Company the same day. Walker instructed Del Favero to "discontinue (eliminate)" the company's Manzanita Lake facilities, "effective immediately." The NPS would compensate the company for its possessory interest in the

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Professional Services, Western Region, January 25, 1974, File 60: D18 Visitor Services Correspondence 1974-1979 [Part 2], Box 8, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>26</sup> John P. Del Favero, Lassen Volcanic National Park Company, to The Honorable Roger C. B. Morton, Secretary of the Interior, April 5, 1974, File: Manzanita Lake Closure, LAVO Desk Files; Richard L. Vance, Chief Park Naturalist, to Superintendent, April 16, 1974, File 159: N30 Geological Features and Studies – Geological Hazards 1970-74, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>27</sup> Howard H. Chapman, Regional Director, Memorandum to Director, April 25, 1974, File 60: D18 GMP Visitor Services Correspondence 1974-1979, Box 8, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.



Map 7. The Manzanita Lake Development Area in 1971. Source: National Park Service.

buildings, plus the costs of any NPS-required demolition and transportation of its mobile property to Redding for sale.<sup>28</sup>

On April 26, 1974, the NPS announced the permanent closure of the Manzanita Lake Lodge Resort. The Loomis Museum, the Reflection Lake Picnic Area, Summertown, and even the Manzanita Lake Campground, would also be closed. The north end of the main park road remained open, but day use of Manzanita Lake area – now devoid of visitor amenities – was frowned upon by the NPS. Overnight, the visitor experience at Manzanita Lake was reduced from a leisurely lakeside vacation to perhaps only a fleeting glance out the car window.<sup>29</sup>

## The Fallout

Avalanche warning signs were erected along the main park road at both ends of Chaos Jumbles, with instructions that drivers do not stop or stand along the roadway. At the defunct resort, concession employees extracted all movable property. No company personnel stayed on site overnight, so park rangers patrolled the abandoned grounds until midnight to guard against theft and vandalism. Although park visitors were not encouraged to linger within the hazard zone, neither did rangers forbid day use of the Jumbles area. Over the 1974 Memorial Day weekend, an estimated 2,000 people visited Manzanita Lake. Park-wide, visitation dropped nearly 18 percent from 1973 to 1974, but this decrease was owed in part to heavy spring snows and late openings of the park road and campgrounds. Lassen Volcanic's visitation figures rebounded by the early 1980s but never again topped half a million, which happened only once, in 1972.<sup>30</sup>

Through the summer of 1974, park personnel scrambled to assemble temporary visitor services, as well as administrative and housing facilities, beyond the hazard boundaries at Manzanita Lake. Lassen Volcanic's maintenance division devoted nearly all its resources to this endeavor through the summer season. The North District Ranger Station was housed in an office trailer placed next to a new 55-car parking lot constructed just inside the park boundary. The trailer also served as the visitor contact station until the fall, when the U.S. Forest Service donated an A-frame information building for this purpose. Sharing the same parking lot, the "temporary" ranger station and interagency visitor center would remain in operation for two decades. With the shutdown of Summertown, seasonal housing was the North District's other crucial development need. The maintenance division punched more roads into the Manzanita Chutes area and house

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<sup>28</sup> Winge, Kilgore and Foust, WRO, Memorandum of Telephone Call to Superintendent, April 25, 1974, File 60: D18 GMP Visitor Services Correspondence 1974-1979, Box 8, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>29</sup> "Manzanita Lake Facilities at Lassen National Park to be Closed," NPS Press Release, April 26, 1974, File 60: D18 GMP Visitor Services Correspondence 1974-1979, Box 8, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; SAR, 1974.

<sup>30</sup> Schneider interview; SAR, 1974.

trailers were hauled to the expanding maintenance complex to accommodate seasonal employees. Even so, through the 1974 season about half of the park's north-side workforce had to commute every day from the park's only other available quarters: at headquarters in Mineral.<sup>31</sup>

The Park Service kept the Manzanita Lake Campground closed for two seasons before determining that all but its two lower loops, which were closest to the lake, were safe for overnight use. Area campers had rallied for this policy reversal. Loops C through F reopened for camping in 1976, while picnickers often utilized the closed loops A and B. (In time, loops C through F were renamed A through D.) The reopening was intended to be temporary, pending completion of the park's master plan. After 1973, many of Lassen Volcanic's interpretation offerings were dispersed from Manzanita Lake to other parts of the park. But personnel continued to lead walks and give presentations, including the ever-popular Indian demonstrations and a new "living history" program, on the park's north side. Venues for these events included the temporary visitor center, the Manzanita Lake Amphitheater (once the campground reopened), and Sunflower Flat, located northwest of the Jumbles along the Nobles Emigrant Trail.<sup>32</sup>

For a number of years, interpreters and rangers spent much time talking to disgruntled visitors about the Manzanita Lake closure and the geology behind the policy decision. Most people eventually accepted the closure as prudent but others were still angry about it a decade or more later. Some would literally turn their back on ranger George Giddings as he explained the reasoning behind the closure. Giddings also tried to impart to visitors the importance of Lassen Volcanic's natural values over concession services. He stressed that national parks had more to offer than luxuries commonly found elsewhere, like "sitting down with a martini and watching deer eat the planted lawn," a typical Manzanita Lake Lodge experience that was now a thing of the past.<sup>33</sup>

The Manzanita Lake closure had shocked nearly everyone, including park personnel. Many people were outraged. Among them was Judy Smith, wife of the general manager of the Manzanita Lake concession, who collected over 7,000 signatures on a petition calling for a congressional investigation into the NPS's motives for shutting down the resort so precipitously. Congressman Bizz Johnson advocated for the cause but could not convince his fellow members of the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee to follow through with a hearing. Don Hummel thought the closure had been a colossal mistake. He proposed to remedy the whole mess by reopening the resort himself and shouldering all liability for the "alleged dangers," which he dismissed as miniscule. The Park Service did not entertain his offer. The Shasta County Board of Supervisors accused the Park Service of skewing the findings of the USGS geologists and feeding the public "phony" reasons for the closure. The county officials' most scathing

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<sup>31</sup> Haag interview; SAR, 1974.

<sup>32</sup> SARs, 1974-1986.

<sup>33</sup> SARs, 1974-1986; Giddings interview.

criticism of the NPS stemmed from their own confusion over the various drafts the USGS prepared on the Manzanita Lake hazards. The supervisors' tireless crusade to reopen the resort continued even after the park's new superintendent, Bill Stephenson, met with them in May 1975 to report that visitor facilities at Manzanita Lake were indeed closed for good. The board kept churning out resolutions to restore the Manzanita complex to its former glory, to no avail.<sup>34</sup>

An incredulous public kept pressing for answers. If safety was the only issue, why did the agency wait nearly six years, after Rocky Crandell's initial report in 1968, to proceed with the closure? "Why did the park service REALLY close Manzanita Lake?," asked reporter Glenn Hassenpflug. His five-part exposé, which appeared in the *Redding Record Searchlight* in December 1975, faulted the NPS with poor public relations, at best, and "coverup and deception," at worst, over the closure. "Between 1968 and 1975, [the NPS] reacted to local expressions of puzzlement and outrage with all the patient paternalism a colonial government would summon for a native uprising in some backwater province," Hassenpflug wrote. Regional Director Chapman was the target of much of the Hassenpflug's criticism. But in the early 1970s, the NPS was just entering into its new era of land-use planning that incorporated major public input. Opening agency planning and decision making to the general public did not occur overnight. At the time of the Manzanita Lake closure, the NPS "did not involve the public in planning nearly as much as we have in the last two years," Chapman told Hassenpflug in late 1975. Perhaps that earlier deficiency was perceived "as secretiveness," Chapman admitted. The publication of the peer-reviewed USGS hazard report in early 1974 finally gave the NPS a seemingly objective, unassailable reason to close Manzanita Lake Lodge, wrote Hassenpflug. This result fell in line nicely with the agency's ecologically driven, but little-known, "desire" or "intention" to remove concession facilities from parks wherever possible, Hassenpflug informed his readers. The Park Service was "able to plan silently for closure, then cover its motivations when a more serviceable reason was ready for use," he concluded.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Schneider interview; "Lassen Park Closure . . . Congressional Hearing Urged," *Intermountain News*, August 15, 1974; "Lassen Petition has 7,000 Names," *Redding Record Searchlight*, October 5, 1974, File 81: K34 News Clippings 1974, Box 27; Don Hummel to Harold T. Johnson, House of Representatives, March 11, 1975, File 60: Part 2, D18 Visitor Services Correspondence 1974-1979, Box 8; "Congressional Committee Lassen Hearing Expected," *Redding Record Searchlight*, January 4, 1975; Tony Shultz, "Lassen Report is Disputed," *Redding Record Searchlight*, December 24, 1974; "'Phony' Reasons Close Lassen Park, Say County Officials," *Intermountain News*, January 2, 1975; "Manzanita Lake Area Facilities Closure is Final," *Red Bluff Daily News*, May 8, 1975, p. 2; "Shasta Backs Park Concessionaire," *The Sacramento Bee*, August 20, 1975; File 84: D18 Planning-Newspaper Clippings 1975, Box 9, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>35</sup> Glenn Hassenpflug, "Volcanic Hazard Study Leads to Shasta," December 1, 1975; Hassenpflug, "Lassen: Fear of Lawsuits Ended Foot-dragging," December 2, 1975; Hassenpflug, "Lassen Not Alone: Many National Parks Closing Concessions," December 3, 1975; Hassenpflug, "Lassen 'Hazard': Only an Excuse to Close Park?," December 4, 1975; Hassenpflug, "Park Service Vows to Change its Ways," December 5, 1975, all in *Redding Record Searchlight*.

Earlier that year, NPS Director Gary Everhardt insisted that instead of a blanket policy to close down park concessions, his agency examined possible closures “on a case-by-case basis” when comparable accommodations were found to exist outside park boundaries. To date, the Park Service had designated only a handful of facilities for closure. In addition to Lassen, the other park units impacted were Zion, Bryce Canyon, Everglades, and Great Smoky Mountains national parks, as well as Lake Mead National Recreation Area. “This represents the total of all facilities which have been either closed, phased out, or which may be affected in the foreseeable future,” Everhardt tried to reassure Congressman Gunn McKay (D – Utah), who was among a contingent of politicians who feared that the NPS aspired to oust concession lodging from all national parks.<sup>36</sup> In fact, the closure of Manzanita Lake Lodge within Lassen Volcanic would serve as one of the very few instances of lodge removal across the National Park System, although the NPS was far more successful at limiting the installation of new overnight accommodations in park units.

In hindsight, Chapman conceded that the closure of Manzanita Lake “could be interpreted as the realization of a previously expressed objective to do so,” as outlined in the agency’s administrative policies and Lassen Volcanic’s own internal management objectives. “I can unequivocally tell you this was not the case,” he said. “The sole consideration was visitor safety.” As for the timing of the closure, nearly six years after USGS geologists brought this public safety hazard to the attention of the NPS, Chapman insisted a key element was the rigorous peer review process that the study underwent preceding its appearance in the USGS *Journal of Research*. “Our action was based on the conclusions stated in the final report which had undergone professional review,” he said.<sup>37</sup> While peer review was undoubtedly crucial in legitimizing the report and its recommendation for facilities removal, surely Chapman also appreciated the gravity of having this document released from the confines of the governmental bureaucracy. It was now a published piece of scholarship available to all.

Lastly, Chief Ranger Schneider believed Chapman’s ultimate decision to close Manzanita Lake was influenced in part by a recent disaster in the Lake Mead National Recreational Area, where a ranger, his wife, and their small child were killed in a flashflood. Not long before the incident, the USGS had issued a hazard report for the area, warning that a flashflood could endanger a ranger station and small concession facility nearby. A local member of Congress insisted on maintaining the status quo at

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<sup>36</sup> Gary Everhardt, Director, to Honorable Gunn McKay, House of Representatives, May 15, 1975, File 60: D18 GMP Visitor Services Correspondence 1974-1979, Box 8, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Hassenpflug, “Lassen Not Alone: Many National Parks Closing Concessions.”

<sup>37</sup> Howard C. Chapman, Regional Director, Western Region, to Mr. Henry F. Keefer, Chairman, Board of Supervisors, Shasta County Courthouse, January 3, 1975, File 60: D18 GMP Visitor Services Correspondence 1974-1979, Box 8, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

Lake Mead, the NPS took no action, and tragedy ensued. Chapman did not want to take that chance again at Lassen Volcanic.<sup>38</sup>

In contrast to the Manzanita Lake closure, public pressure to keep Drakesbad from meeting a similar fate did pay off. Because USNR had no interest in continuing its satellite operations at Drakesbad and the ski area after the Manzanita buyout, park planners considered a permanent closure of Drakesbad as a viable option in the latest version of the park's evolving master plan. The park's standing management objectives already called for phasing out the guest ranch and naturalizing the site. Drakesbad devotees – Rush Blodget, Susan Watson, and many others – would have none of it. They wrote letters of protest and testified at master plan public meetings held in the summer of 1974. Although Watson would never advocate for new lodging within the park, she insisted that Drakebad deserved to stay. “I said that it was historic and it had grown generations of people who would defend that park with their lives,” Watson recalled. The outpouring of support for Drakesbad worked. Although the guest ranch stayed closed through the summer of 1974 – an unavoidable result of the untimely departure of USNR from the park, the NPS claimed – Drakesbad was back in business in 1975 and its continued operations were incorporated into the park's master plan. The final GMP of 1981 called for retaining Drakesbad at its existing capacity and without “altering its style of architecture so as to continue as a low-impact facility.” Through the concessioner shakeup the ski area did not miss a season. It opened on time in December 1974.<sup>39</sup>

USNR's Lassen National Park Company vacated their three concession operations in the park and departed with over \$700,000 in compensation. The NPS then contracted with the Government Services Administration to assist in the transition to a new park concessioner. In 1975, the NPS awarded a temporary concessions contract to John Koeberer, former manager of the ski area under USNR, to operate both Drakesbad and the ski area under the name Lassen Guest Services. (Koeberer and his wife Pam renamed their company California Guest Services in the late 1970s and expanded their business to the San Francisco Bay area in the 1980s.) When the Manzanita Lake Campground reopened in 1976, operation of the Manzanita Lake Camper Service Store was added to the Koeberers' contract. To upgrade the Manzanita camp store, the concession installed gasoline pumps and eventually reopened the facility's hot showers and laundry. In 1977, the NPS awarded the Koeberers a five-year contract for the Manzanita store, Drakesbad and the ski area. In 1982, the two parties negotiated a 20-year contract for the same. In 1983, California Guest Services also assumed operation of the Manzanita Lake Campground, as part of a multiple-park pilot program designed to

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<sup>38</sup> Schneider interview.

<sup>39</sup> Watson interview; SARs, 1974, 1975; Glenn Hassenpflug, “Lassen ‘Hazard’: Only an Excuse to Close Park?,” *Redding Record Searchlight*, December 4, 1975, including excerpts from 1973 Lassen Volcanic management objectives; Lassen Volcanic National Park General Management Plan, March 1981, LAVO Central Files; “Lassen Ski Lift to Reopen,” *Chester Progressive*, September 5, 1974, File 81: K34 New Clippings 1974, Box 27, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

test private management of campgrounds with savings of federal dollars being directed to other vital park activities. The concession ran the campground for five years until Superintendent Blinn decided park personnel could better maintain the campground and serve campers' needs and the NPS resumed its management.<sup>40</sup>

The 1974 closure of the Manzanita Lake complex threw a huge monkey wrench into the park's planning process. By 1976, the planning team devised a new draft of the master plan, which called for rerouting the north end of the main park road to bypass Chaos Jumbles and Manzanita Lake, and proposed construction of permanent interpretation and administrative facilities somewhere along the new route. In this draft, the NPS was noncommittal about replacement accommodations somewhere near the park's northwest entrance. The NPS decided to delay release of this draft to the public until an economic feasibility study was done on the hypothetical relocation of the Manzanita Lake Resort and a proposed expansion of the ski area. The Denver Service Center study team concluded that a demand for overnight accommodations did exist on the park's north side. It judged Manzanita Chutes – on national forest land – to be the best location for new lodging and interagency facilities, although it questioned whether or not a new development in this tree-less location would attract as loyal a clientele as did the former beauty spot, set in a mature forest. The park road was unaffected, and day use of Manzanita and Reflection lakes would be allowed. The study placed a \$14-million price tag on the complete revamping of the park's northwest facilities, which included building demolition and grounds restoration of the Manzanita Lake area. A 1977 supplement to the latest GMP draft incorporated the findings of the economic feasibility study. After securing a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Forest Service, the NPS proposed to relocate 24 cabins from Manzanita Lake to Manzanita Chutes as a start to the new development and gradually expand with more cabins, a lodge and dining room, and a general store in time. "Ultimately, the level of service will equal those previously provided at Manzanita Lake," the plan read.<sup>41</sup>

The Greater Redding Chamber of Commerce endorsed this plan. The National Parks and Conservation Association did as well, lauding Lassen Volcanic's intent to

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<sup>40</sup> Howard H. Chapman, Regional Director, to Henry F. Keefer, Chairman, Board of Supervisors, Shasta County Courthouse, May 3, 1975, File 60: D18 GMP Visitor Services Correspondence 1974-1979, Box 8, LAVO Acc. 506; Concessioner Operated Campgrounds Report on the 1983-1984 Pilot Program, June 1985, File C3823: Concession-operated Campground Analysis; Gilbert E. Blinn, Memorandum to Regional Director, October 13, 1987, File C3823: Concession Campground 1987-1989, Unaccessioned LAVO Concession Files, REDW Archives; SARs, 1974-1988; Koeberer and Koeberer-Pitts interview; Blinn interview.

<sup>41</sup> SAR, 1976; Lassen Volcanic National Park, Draft General Management Plan, August 1976; Supplement, Draft General Management Plan and Draft Environmental Statement, Lassen Volcanic National Park, May 1977, U.S. Department of the Interior Library; Supplement to the Draft General Management Plan and Draft Environmental Statement, Lassen Volcanic National Park, April 1977, File 38: D18 GMP Drafts, Proposals 1977, Box 7; William J. Whalen, Director, to Honorable Harold T. (Bizz) Johnson, February 22, 1978, File 51: D18 General Planning – Ski Area and Snowmobiles 1977-1978, Box 8, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

work with Lassen National Forest in developing new visitor facilities *outside* park boundaries. But at six public meetings held around the region in the summer of 1977, citizens expressed more interest in the park's snowmobile issue and the expansion of the ski area than they did in the Manzanita Chutes development. The public, still mourning the loss of the Manzanita Lake Lodge, showed little enthusiasm about its replacement.<sup>42</sup>

After visiting Lassen Volcanic in 1978, NPS Director William Whalen decided to reconsider opening the Manzanita Lake facilities. He asked Denver Service Center personnel to estimate the cost of revitalizing the buildings where they stood, and he asked a subcommittee of Secretary of Interior Cecil Andrus's advisory board to assess the option of breathing new life into the defunct resort. This was the turn of events the park's new concessioner had been hoping for. "A positive decision to reenter would delight us," Koeberer told Superintendent Stephenson. In light of these new government studies, Koeberer took the initiative to sponsor one of his own. He hired the engineering firm of Woodward-Clyde to reexamine the area's geologic hazards. Koeberer acknowledged a new geological assessment could "backfire" on his hopes to reopen Manzanita Lake Lodge, by confirming the USGS findings, but he was "ready to take that risk based on our own and many others' 'gut' feeling about the validity of the original report." After studying all the existing literature on the issue and spending two days in the park, the Woodward-Clyde geologists concluded that Chaos Crags no longer held a mass of rock large enough to produce an avalanche that would extend as far as Manzanita Lake. They also had more faith than their USGS counterparts that state-of-the-art volcanic monitoring would provide adequate warning of all types of potential geologic events in the Manzanita Lake area. The chance of loss of life from natural hazards was no greater at Manzanita Lake than elsewhere in the park, they believed.<sup>43</sup>

The Interior subcommittee visited Lassen Volcanic in August 1979, shortly after Woodward-Clyde submitted its report to Koeberer. Apparently the subcommittee was privy to Koeberer's independent geological inquest. It advised Whalen to reopen all the Manzanita Lake facilities, based on the theory that future rockfall from Chaos Crags could not reach that far. Whalen pondered the recommendation to reopen, and he assigned a five-member NPS advisory committee to further investigate the idea.

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<sup>42</sup> John R. Mathena, President, Greater Redding Chamber of Commerce, to Mr. Bill Stephenson, August 3, 1977, File 18: D18 GMP Comments from City and County Agencies 1977; T. Destry Jarvis, National Parks and Conservation Association, to William Stephenson, August 12, 1977, File 12: D18 GMP Comments by Environmental Groups 1975-1977, Box 7; Marjie Lambert, "No Expansion: Hearing Rips Lassen Plans," *The Sacramento Bee*, August 5, 1977, File 86: D18 Planning – Newspaper Clippings 1977, Box 9, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>43</sup> SARs, 1978, 1979; Koeberer and Koeberer-Pitts interview; John W. Koeberer, President, California Guest Services, Inc., to Mr. W. Stephenson, Superintendent, June 19, 1979, File 39: D18 General Mgt. Plan Drafts, Proposals 1978-79, Box 7; Charles L. Taylor, Senior Project Engineering Geologist, Woodward-Clyde Consultants, to Koeberer, July 9, 1979, File 60: D18 GMP Visitors Services Correspondence 1974-1979 [Part 1], Box 8; "Lassen Park Committee Seeks Reopening of Some Facilities," *Chico Enterprise-Record*, July 8, 1980, p. A5, File 87: K34 News Clippings 1980, Box 27, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

Superintendent Stephenson, having no faith that funds would materialize for the proposed Manzanita Chutes report, also wanted to reopen the Manzanita Lake Lodge. Then the eruption of Mount St. Helens on May 18, 1980 halted all Park Service ruminations about Manzanita Lake lodging facilities – either restoration of the original resort or construction of a new one nearby. In July 1980, Whalen’s five-member committee recommended that all facilities at Manzanita Lake remain closed except the Loomis Museum, which could be reopened for day use. Their report stated that “the recent loss of life and property caused by the awesome eruptions of Mount St. Helens reinforces the merits of this decision.”<sup>44</sup>

The Mount St. Helens eruption also thwarted the Park Service’s interest in investing in new overnight facilities at Manzanita Chutes. Although loss of life in the event of a volcanic event was unlikely in the Manzanita Chutes area, the potential for property damage remained. The NPS claimed it was not interested in taking that financial risk. In Lassen Volcanic’s final general management plan of 1981, the Park Service declared it would not reposition the Manzanita Lake Lodge and cabins after all, although it vowed to cooperate with other government entities and local businesses “to encourage development of these facilities outside the park.” The plan called for the removal of all remaining buildings in the hazard zone. Removal of the Loomis Museum would await completion of a new visitor center in the Manzanita Chutes – recently renamed Manzanita Meadows – to be operated jointly by the Park Service and the Forest Service year round. The existing maintenance and housing facilities at this location would be relocated to an area northwest of Chaos Jumbles. The plan prescribed the reopening of loops A and B in the Manzanita Lake Campground but indicated an eventual closing of the entire campground once new campgrounds were developed on national forest land nearby. Limited day use of Manzanita Lake’s hazard zone would continue to be permitted but “not encouraged.” Lassen Volcanic’s GMP was nearly a decade in the making. Now the NPS finally had a direction for Manzanita Lake’s future. But aside from some building removal and the abandonment of proposed lodging facilities in Manzanita Meadows, the Manzanita Lake portion of Lassen Volcanic’s 1981 GMP was never carried out.<sup>45</sup>

Although the Bureau of Indian Affairs removed a number of the Summertown residences in the late 1970s for use by the local Hat Creek Indians, the Manzanita Lake concession buildings stood empty into the 1980s, until after the park’s general management plan was finalized. After a 1983 survey of all the concession facilities, the removal process began. The NPS negotiated salvage contracts for the wooden structures, while the park’s maintenance division demolished the lodge and other stone buildings.

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<sup>44</sup> SAR, 1979; Marjie Lambert, “National Park Service Trims Lassen Expansion Plans,” *Sacramento Bee*, May 25, 1980, p. B3, File 87: K34 News Clippings 1980, Box 27, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives. National Park Service advisory committee report quoted in “Lassen Park Committee Seeks Reopening.”

<sup>45</sup> SAR, 1979; Lassen Volcanic National Park General Management Plan, March 1981, LAVO Central Files.

The Loomis Museum was slated for demolition as well but last-minute talks between park officials and preservationists halted the wrecking ball – in this case a park bulldozer “parked right there next to it, waiting till Monday,” Tim Miranda recalled. In 1985, the park hired Buckley’s Construction of Chico to move 15 of the resort’s newest cabins to the new Manzanita Meadows complex to replace a number of the trailers the NPS had been renting for seasonal housing. The \$250,000 investment to relocate the cabins paid off in five years, Maintenance Chief Robert Lake said. “We killed two birds with one stone.” The maintenance division’s cleanup efforts at Manzanita Lake and Summertown after the salvage work was done included burning some buildings, ripping out cement foundations, removing asphalt roads, and some landscape rehabilitation. It was a massive job spanning several years.<sup>46</sup>

## **Hazard Reassessment**

In the wake of the 1974 Manzanita Lake closure, the park’s volcanic monitoring program evolved considerably, as did its preparedness for a volcanic event. Lassen Volcanic’s emergency procedures, originally devised in 1974 at the USGS’s urging, were updated after the 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens. The park’s new volcanic activity emergency operations plan enlisted a host of local, state, and federal agencies in the event of a sizable eruption in the park and outlined evacuation plans for each section of the park. In terms of monitoring improvements, by 1978 geologists had installed two accelerometers and one tiltmeter on Chaos Crags and a network of seismometers in the Lassen Peak-Crescent Cliffs area, with relay links to USGS offices in Menlo Park, California. Long-term sampling and monitoring of the park’s hydrothermal system was also initiated in the 1970s. Manzanita Lake’s defunct smoke-drum seismograph was revived in 1994 by Dr. Jerry Eaton, who installed the machine nearly 40 years earlier. By the mid-1990s, USGS scientists had completed a digital-format geologic map of the park. Aside from the occasional minor earthquake in the area, Lassen Volcanic’s only significant geologic event in the closing decades of the twentieth century was a 1993 rockslide on the northeast flank of Lassen Peak. The slide measured approximately 10,000 cubic meters and traveled almost 2,000 vertical feet. It was likely triggered by “normal freeze-thaw mechanisms,” the USGS said, since the park’s monitoring equipment did not record any seismic activity prior to the rockfall. In 2002, Superintendent Parris reported that Lassen Volcanic’s thermal areas were “bubbling bigger” than normal. In November of that year, the park’s southwest corner experienced an unusual swarm of small earthquakes. The capricious terrain of Lassen Volcanic never fails to fascinate. Of all the post-1974 geologic research conducted at Lassen Volcanic,

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<sup>46</sup> SARs, 1977-1988; Miranda interview; Lake interview; Haag interview.

one project attracted the immediate attention of NPS officials and set a new direction for Manzanita Lake once again.<sup>47</sup>

In April 1987, the *Journal of Geophysical Research* published the results of a new study on Chaos Crags and Chaos Jumbles. The two-year investigation by Dean Eppler and Jonathan Fink of Arizona State University and Raymond Fletcher of Texas A&M University was narrower in scope than Crandell and Mullineaux's work in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Eppler and his cohorts focused on only one of Chaos Crags multiple domes, the one that had calved Chaos Jumbles 300 years ago. But their conclusions were similar to what the Woodward-Clyde consultants told Koeberer in 1979. If that singular dome gave way again, Eppler speculated, its rockfall would not extend as far as Manzanita Lake. In this scenario, the rockfall would most probably stop short of the park road, Eppler thought. Renewed volcanic activity of the Crags, which could impact a larger area, would be detected in advance by monitoring equipment now in place.<sup>48</sup>

Superintendent Blinn and others believed this interpretation lowered Manzanita Lake's hazard level considerably. Therefore, Blinn proposed retaining the historic buildings still standing in the hazard zone – the Loomis Museum and seismograph building, the Loomis residence, the Northwest Entrance Station and ranger residence, and the naturalist's residence – for adaptive use by park personnel and day use by visitors. The 1981 GMP called for their eventual demolition. The Regional Office did not relish the thought of amending the GMP and opening the future of Manzanita Lake to public debate once again – certainly the issue of overnight accommodations would resurface – but it saw advantages in Blinn's plan. In October 1987, Blinn and his staff met with Regional Office personnel and USGS representatives to discuss Eppler's report and to weigh the benefits of yet another round of park planning.<sup>49</sup>

Robert Christiansen of the USGS stressed that the new Chaos Crags assessment in no way discredited Crandell and Mullineaux's findings and recommendations to close the Manzanita Lake Lodge. The two investigations “are not contradictory but, rather, stress

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<sup>47</sup> “Volcanic Activity Emergency Operation Plan, Lassen Volcanic National Park,” 1982, LAVO Files; Howard Chapman, Regional Director, to Dr. Dwight Crandell, April 21, 1978, File 51: D18 General Planning – Ski Area and Snowmobiles 1977-1978, Box 8; L. J. Patrick Muffler, USGS, to Elizabeth Knight, Chief Naturalist, September 6, 1993, File 172: N3021 Seismology 1993, Box 42, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Gilbert E. Blinn, Memorandum to Natural Resource Management Specialist, Western Region, March 16, 1995, File: N30 Geological Features and Studies 1993-1995, LAVO Central Files; Roger H. Aylworth, “Lassen Peak Quake Swarm No Reason to Run for Cover,” *Chico Enterprise-Record*, November 22, 2002, p. A1.

<sup>48</sup> Dean B. Eppler, Jonathan Fink, and Raymond Fletcher, “Rheologic Properties and Kinematics of Emplacement of the Chaos Jumbles Rockfall Avalanche, Lassen Volcanic National Park, California,” *Journal of Geophysical Research* 92, no. B5 (April 10, 1987): 3623-3633; Robert L. Christiansen, Chief, Branch of Igneous and Geothermal Processes, USGS, to Gilbert E. Blinn, Superintendent, October 6, 1987, File 176: N3027 Volcanology 1969-1983, Box 42, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>49</sup> Gilbert E. Blinn, Memorandum to Regional Director, May 29, 1987, with “Assessment and Recommendations for the Management of the Manzanita Lake Facilities”; John D. Cherry, Associate Regional Director, Resource Management and Planning, Western Region, to Regional Director, July 14, 1987, File 171: N3021 Seismology 1987-88, Box 42, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; SAR, 1987.

different conclusions because they have different intentions and are based on different assumptions.” For example, Crandell and Mullineaux’s study considered possible rockfall from several of “the steep-sided . . . sufficiently unstable” domes of Chaos Crags, while Eppler’s study considered only the one. The earlier study was more comprehensive than the later, Christiansen said. He could not deliver a documented guarantee that the Manzanita Lake area was now considered safe, as the NPS hoped he would. The Park Service was left on its own to decide whether or not to formally reopen Manzanita Lake to day use. Regional Director Stanley Albright informed Blinn early in 1988 that budget constraints would prohibit anything but “low cost” planning on this front and a “low key bare bones interim operation” at Manzanita Lake, should the reopening take place. But running with the rationale that reopening the area was “a calculated, but reasonable, gamble,” the Park Service did proceed.<sup>50</sup>

Both the park and concessioner upgraded existing services at Manzanita Lake in 1988 by enlarging the camper store, building a new gas station, and instituting bicycle rentals for the first time. Park personnel met with the media and local organizations to explain why the proposed reopening was “reasonable.” The NPS did not claim Manzanita Lake to be hazard free, only that “the extent of that danger” was better understood. In November 1989, Lassen Volcanic released its GMP supplement for public review. The following year, the new plan was approved and the Reflection Lake Picnic Area and surrounding nature trails officially reopened.<sup>51</sup>

The park’s rehabilitation energies at Manzanita Lake focused squarely on the Loomis Museum. Ironically, the museum had been placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975, soon after it was boarded up and abandoned. In the late 1970s, Maintenance Chief Lake initiated the rescue of artifacts and exhibits from the concrete structure’s moldy interior. In the late 1980s, Lake enlisted the assistance of Alvin Arbuckle, a local man who had participated in the original construction of the museum 60 years prior, in assessing its structural integrity. Arbuckle assured Lake that Loomis built the steel-reinforced museum to withstand the abuse of the area’s geologic instability, which engineers verified. But everything besides the building’s unshakable skeleton was in need of repair. Lake eagerly tackled the challenge and considered the reestablishment of the Loomis Museum the crowning accomplishment of his NPS career.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Robert L. Christiansen, Chief, Branch of Igneous and Geothermal Processes, USGS, to Mr. Gilbert E. Blinn, Superintendent, February 8, 1988; Stanley Albright, Regional Director, Memorandum to Superintendent, February 5, 1988; Superintendent, Memorandum to Regional Director, February 12, 1988; “Agenda for Manzanita Lake Planning Meeting,” April 21, 1988, with “Rational [sic] for Decision,” File 102: D18 GMP Manzanita Lake Facilities, 1989, Box 9, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; SAR, 1988.

<sup>51</sup> SARs, 1988-1990; Stanley T. Albright, Regional Director, to Honorable Wally Herger, July 5, 1989, File 103: D18 Letters re: Manzanita Lake Facilities 1989, Box 9, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>52</sup> SARs, 1975, 1993; Lake interview.

## The Humble Resurrection of Manzanita Lake

As part of Lassen Volcanic's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, the Loomis Museum was reopened for ten days only in August 1991. Following Regional Director Albright's rededication of the museum, some 4,000 people stopped by the partially renovated building to view a refurbished collection of B. F. Loomis photographs, newly rematted and framed by the Lassen Loomis Museum Association. The Manzanita Lake Visitor Center, the small A-frame structure located at the park boundary, continued to serve summertime park visitors for two more years. The anniversary festivities also included former NPS Director William Penn Mott, Jr.'s dedication of the park's environmental education center, to be housed near the Loomis Museum in the CCC-era chief naturalist's residence, although more than a decade would pass before this center opened.<sup>53</sup>

As any progress toward a new visitor center somewhere near the park's northwest entrance continued to elude its proponents, Superintendent Blinn proclaimed in 1992 that he and his staff were "taking a new look" at the existing facilities and potential visitor use in the Manzanita Lake area. The Loomis Museum, once reopened, would most likely be the park's *only* north-side interpretation center for some time to come. The park had already invested heavily in the renovation of both the museum and the education center with new roofing, asbestos removal, new furnaces, skylight and window replacements, underground power lines, and sewer improvements. In 1992, the Lassen Park Foundation secured a \$40,000 grant from the McConnell Foundation of Redding to finish the restoration of the museum's interior. This money was used for plaster work, painting, carpet, lighting, and auditorium chairs. Another grant, from the Murdy Foundation of Santa Ana, bought the museum a USGS touch-screen computer that enabled visitors to view live seismic activity around the state. The Lassen Park Foundation and the Lassen Loomis Museum Association funded other exhibit materials. On September 19, 1993, the Loomis Museum resumed its traditional seasonal operations, Memorial Day into September. The museum was rededicated a second time. Alvin Arbuckle joined Congressman Vic Fazio (D – Calif.) and former Lassen Historical Society President Mazie Sanders in cutting the ceremonial ribbon that reopened the museum. Harry Robinson, park naturalist in the 1940s, was among the VIPs who spoke at the dedication. A barbeque and program by the Pit River Indian Dancers followed.<sup>54</sup>

Further restoration work on the environmental education center was halted while an environmental assessment was completed for its renovation and, more critically, its year-round use. An identical assessment was done for the ranger station – the former Loomis residence – which the park wanted to utilize once again. Whereas the Loomis Museum operated only during the summer months, reopening these two structures for

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<sup>53</sup> SAR, 1991.

<sup>54</sup> SARs, 1991-1993; "Celebrating Partnerships," September 19, 1993, File 169: A8215 Loomis Museum Reopening 1991-1993, Box 5, LAVO Acc. 506, RED Archives.

these new purposes would increase human activity in the Manzanita Lake vicinity throughout the year. Some people were worried that vehicle noise, especially heavy equipment for snow removal through the winter, might stress bald eagles known to forage at the lake. Because of the eagles' endangered status, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service weighed in on the issue. In 1995, that agency approved the restoration of the buildings for winter use on the condition that Lassen Volcanic institute an eagle monitoring program at Manzanita Lake to gauge potential impacts on the birds. Weekly monitoring did confirm some eagle foraging at the Manzanita Lake, but biologists did not judge the increased visitor and personnel activity near the lake to be detrimental to the birds. (The park's one known nesting pair of bald eagles in the 1990s resided at Snag Lake.)<sup>55</sup>

At the ranger station, workers uncovered major structural flaws. The installation of additional reinforcements delayed the completion of the renovation, but in December 1997 park personnel threw a grand reopening party of the North District (Loomis) Ranger Station and the rangers settled into their new digs. Among other utility upgrades at Manzanita Lake, a new winter water treatment plant was also up and running by the end of 1997, so the Manzanita winter staff enjoyed "a semblance of normalcy for the first time in years," Superintendent Parris reported. In 2000, fee demonstration funds paid for the construction of a new parking area and landscaping at the ranger station and museum. Most of the buildings at Manzanita Lake weathered the severe storms of the 1990s without major damage, although a warehouse and the Loomis garage were destroyed and were rebuilt. In 1993, the Manzanita summer housing units were outfitted with metal roofs, and in 1996, other buildings in the Manzanita Chutes residential/maintenance complex received metal roofs, which completed the conversion of all structures in this area from temporary to "long-life." Through the 1990s, plans to construct a new visitor center in the Manzanita Chutes area were replaced with designs for a scaled-down, nonstaffed information pavilion at the intersection of routes 44 and 89. The Lassen Crossroads Information Pavilion was dedicated in 2000, and its final panel and benches were installed in 2009.<sup>56</sup>

Stalled restoration efforts on the chief naturalist's residence were revived in 1998, when Lassen Volcanic was selected as one of twelve national parks to receive funding for the creation of "discovery centers" dedicated to environmental education. The Coca Cola Foundation donated \$1.5 million to the National Parks Foundation for this service-wide initiative. The McConnell Foundation contributed \$50,000 toward exhibits and the science laboratory of the Lassen facility. On August 10, 2002, the Discovery Center was opened as part of Lassen Volcanic's seventh annual Day-in-the-Park celebration. The historic home now serves as a field station and learning center.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> SARs, 1993-1995; Blinn interview; Denniston interview.

<sup>56</sup> SARs, 1993-2000; Watson interview; comments on final draft report.

<sup>57</sup> Robert Stanton, Director, National Park Service, to Ms. Marilyn Parris, Superintendent, October 8, 1998, File H32: National Register of Historic Places 1996-1998, LAVO Central Files; SAR, 2001; "New

In addition to building restoration, Lassen Volcanic was still in the business of landscape restoration at Manzanita Lake, here and there. In 1998, the office trailer that had served as the North District Ranger Station (until the restoration of the Loomis residence) was sold. Two years later, the trailer's pad and parking lot were removed and the surrounding landscape recontoured. A 2000 landscape restoration project at Manzanita was precipitated by natural – not human – causes. Just upstream from the lake, workers rerouted Manzanita Creek to the channel it had previously occupied, prior to a torrential flood that occurred in January 1997. This storm event had clogged the creek's culverts under the campground access road and forced the creek to seek a new channel, which exposed an unsightly – and forgotten – asphalt road and parking area.<sup>58</sup>

This same storm capped off several years of controversy surrounding the soundness of the earthen Manzanita Lake dam. Manzanita Lake is part natural, part manmade. Formed by a rockslide three centuries ago, the lake expanded modestly in 1911 after the Northern California Power Company plugged its natural outlet with one embankment and constructed a lower dam with a spillway near the lake's northern end. (In the late 1930s, residents who lived downstream from Manzanita Lake lobbied the NPS to reopen the lake's original outlet, which would provide them with better stream flow to water their livestock, but the restoration effort was never pursued.) After the 1976 flash flood of Colorado's Big Thompson Canyon, which claimed the lives of 145 people, the NPS began systematic inspections of its dams and impoundments. At issue at Manzanita Lake was the safety of drivers on Highway 44, outside of the park, should the dam give way all at once. In 1985, the Soil Conservation Service elevated the dam's downstream hazard rating from "low" to "significant." In 1987, the Bureau of Reclamation judged the dam's spillway as incapable of accommodating the runoff of a big catastrophic storm, which could cause the dam to collapse. In 1994, in response to these reports, Superintendent Blinn proposed to stabilize and enlarge the dam and its outlet channel with concrete structures, a \$260,000 expenditure. The proposal, which also removed vegetation and burrowing rodents from the area and sacrificed wetlands habitat, elicited heated public debate. Some citizens supported an alternative plan of removing the dam altogether and restoring the natural lake level, which Natural Resources Chief Al Denniston advocated. But most people did not believe the flooding hazard was significant and wanted the dam, the lake, and its wildlife left alone. Keep this last vestige of our Manzanita Lake experience – the lake's traditional, if not wholly natural, beauty – intact, they said. After studying the dam anew, the Bureau of Reclamation found that clearing debris from the spillway regularly as part of a larger dam maintenance program would reduce the flooding hazard. Based on this finding, the park

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Discovery Center Open House Featured at 'Day in the Park' at Lassen Volcanic National Park," press release, August 6, 2002, I&E Division Records, LAVO Files.

<sup>58</sup> SARs, 1998-2000; Environmental Assessment: Manzanita Creek Channel Realignment, August 1999, File L54: Water Matters 1999-2001, LAVO Central Files; Blinn interview; Johnson interview.

abandoned its plans to alter the dam in 1996 and cleared out the spillway and outlet channel as instructed. The very next year, the dam was tested with a 100-year storm event. Flood waters exceeded the capacity of the spillway and washed over the dam, but the earthen embankment emerged intact, which validated the park's decision to leave it be. Several years later, park staff began to rethink the safety issue should the dam fail, and a new study of the lake's hydrology was initiated. In terms of the dam and its potential hazard, "we are definitely getting back to a management mode," said Johnson in 2006.<sup>59</sup>

Concession operations at Manzanita Lake – and elsewhere in the park – remained small scale. After the ski area closed in 1993, California Guest Services continued summertime sales of food and souvenirs at the ski chalet and then in a double-wide trailer parked at the Lassen Peak Trailhead or near the park's southwest entrance, once the chalet was condemned and demolished in 2005. The "Peak Necessities" trailer served as an interim concession facility while the Southwest Visitor Services Facility was being built. The Drakesbad Guest Ranch continued operations with little change to its rustic character, as federal compliance required and as its clientele insisted, although its list of guest activities was updated to include massage services, yoga classes, and fly fishing instruction. The Manzanita Lake Camper Service Store continued to serve a sizable campground population through the summer months. With the 1974 buyout of the Manzanita Lake Resort, the last of Lassen Volcanic's concession buildings became federal property, and thereafter the NPS shouldered major maintenance costs to all concession facilities in the park. New concession legislation passed in 1998 returned to Lassen Volcanic 80 percent of franchise fees collected from California Guest Services for improvements to concession facilities, which supplemented funds from the NPS's existing Major Maintenance and Improvement Program for this purpose. After California Guest Service's 20-year contract expired in 2002, the NPS offered the company only annual contracts for its Lassen Volcanic operations, awaiting the park's new concession prospectus that would incorporate food and souvenir sales at the Southwest Visitor Services Facility. California Guest Services operated on a year-to-year basis at Lassen Volcanic for several years, and finally a concession prospectus was issued in January 2007. The new long-term concession contract was awarded to the incumbent.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Andrew T. Jessen and others, to John C. Preston, Superintendent, undated; Preston, Memorandum for the Director, May 20, 1939, File 650.01: Lakes, Box 1314; Superintendent, Memorandum to the Regional Director, April 1941, File 600-01: Master Plan, Box 1308, Entry 7, RG 79, NA II; SARs, 1994-1996; Blinn interview; Denniston interview; Lassen Volcanic National Park Environmental Assessment for Modifications of the Embankments and Outlet Structures of Manzanita Lake, January 14, 1994, File L7617: ML Dam Reports – Masters and Copies; Jane Braxton Little, "Critics Say Lassen Projects Will Disturb Natural Habitats," File L 7617 #2: EA – Manzanita Lake Dam and Comments 1993-1995, LAVO Central Files; Johnson interview.

<sup>60</sup> California Guest Services and Lassen Volcanic National Park Maintenance Agreement; Gilbert Blinn, Superintendent, to Marshall Pike, General Manager, California Guest Services, October 26, 1992, File C38: Concessions Administration 1993-1995; California Guest Services, Inc., 2000 Annual Narrative, File C62: Concessions Review Program 1999-2001; Kris Koeberer, Vice President, California Guest Service, to Supt.

Throughout the last two decades, the Manzanita Lake Campground has remained very popular with park visitors and often has filled to capacity on weekends. Despite the closure of two of its six loops in 1974, Manzanita Lake still provides more sites (179) than any other campground in the park and is the location of choice for “social” campers who wish to commune with both nature and fellow vacationers, a time-honored tradition at Manzanita Lake. Coming full circle, at least in planning, the idea of rebuilding overnight accommodations at Manzanita Lake was hatched by Superintendent Martin. The park’s commercial service plan, issued in early 2007 for public comment, called for the construction of several dozen cabins – either canvas-walled units, wooden structures, or four-season yurts – near the lakeshore but no central lodge. The plan also proposed rentals of canoes, rowboats, and perhaps kayaks at Manzanita Lake once again. For over a decade, Lassen Volcanic’s annual visitation had remained below 400,000, a reduced level of usership the park had not consistently known since the 1950s. Martin wanted to draw more people to Lassen Volcanic and was hopeful a revival of the traditional cabin experience at Manzanita Lake would be just the ticket. Under the leadership of Martin’s successor, Superintendent Koontz, renovation of the lower loops of the Manzanita Lake Campground (old A and B), which had never reopened, was finally completed. The loop closest to the lake (A) was totally removed and restored to a natural condition, while the other loop (B) was revamped to receive “temporary” guest cabins. In 2009, plans were still on the table to “roll in” small rental structures to this location and to keep the cabins in place year-round.<sup>61</sup>

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Marilyn Parris, April 29, 2005; Parris to Koeberer, May 26, 2005, File C38: Concessions Administration 2005-2007, LAVO Central Files; Koeberer and Koeberer-Pitts interview; Kris Koeberer, interview by Ted Catton, September 14, 2006; Leigh Lisak, interview by Diane Krahe, September 11, 2006.

<sup>61</sup> SAR, 1976; Dylan Darling, “Cabin by the Lake: Popular Rentals Could be Revived at Manzanita Lake in Lassen Park,” *Redding Record Searchlight*, January 25, 2007, [www.redding.com/news/2007/jan/25/cabin-lake](http://www.redding.com/news/2007/jan/25/cabin-lake) (January 29, 2007).

## **Chapter Twelve**

### **Assessing Appropriate Winter Use**

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In close competition with its volcanic wonders, Lassen Volcanic National Park's other claim to fame has been its tremendous snowfall. The park has served generations of visitors as both a summer and winter playground. Known as the Sulphur Works Ski Area in its early decades, the Lassen Park Ski Area was among the nation's oldest downhill ski developments and remained humble through its long history. Its closure in 1993 proved to be nearly as controversial as the closure of Manzanita Lake. Once again, the concessioner instigated this shutdown but the NPS did not pursue alternative means to keep the facility running. Eventual removal of this developed area was also in the Park Service's long-term plans for Lassen Volcanic.

#### **Winter Recreation in the 1960s and 1970s**

In February 1960, the Winter Olympics were held in Squaw Valley, California, just 120 miles southeast of Lassen. The proximity of this celebrated competition of the world's best athletes of winter sports was largely responsible for the Lassen Park Ski Area's record number of skiers (nearly 9,000) that season, Superintendent Freeland believed, and this upward trend in winter use of the park continued. By 1965, the park's winter visitation topped 44,000, which included over 17,000 downhill skiers and over 11,000 visitors to Manzanita Lake, where people could ice skate, sled, toboggan, cross-country ski or simply enjoy the snowy scenery.<sup>1</sup> In 1965, park staff launched a pilot

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<sup>1</sup> Ice skating was usually limited to Reflection Lake early in the winter, before the snow piled up. "Basic Information for the Seasonal Park Ranger and Ranger-Naturalist, Lassen Volcanic National Park, Season of 1955," File A6623: Training Materials, LVNP, Box 9, Administrative Files, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, RG 79, NA – SR.

winter interpretive program in a trailer in the ski area parking lot. By the close of the decade, the last of the park's major Mission 66 projects – redevelopment of the southwest entrance and the ski area – was complete. The overhaul included a new entrance station located closer to the ski area, realignment of the roadway, more parking space, utility upgrades, a new comfort station, and the park's first permanent winter-use building: a two-story A-frame featuring a tall glass wall that provided warming skiers with an expansive view of the lower ski hill. The "Lassen Chalet" was used by both the concessioner and park rangers, who handled ski patrol and first aid at the facility.<sup>2</sup>

After subcontracting the operation of the Lassen Park Ski Area for some years, the Lassen National Park Company resumed its management in the 1960s. In 1970, U.S. Natural Resources bought out all the Lassen Volcanic concession operations. USNR hired John Koeberer as the ski area manager in the early 1970s, and in 1975 Koeberer's Lassen Guest Services (soon renamed California Guest Services) took over the ski area concession, as well as Drakesbad, following the closure of the Manzanita Lake facility and the USNR's departure. Each season the ski area opened in November or December (sometimes as late as January, depending on snow conditions) and usually closed in April. In 1973, the ski area's days of operation increased from just weekends and holidays to a three-day schedule, Friday through Sunday. Starting in 1978, the poma lift and two rope tows ran five days a week, Wednesday through Sunday. (The closure of the Mount Shasta Ski Bowl, which suffered extensive, irreparable avalanche damage that year, increased skier volume at Lassen Park Ski Area considerably.) The concessioner provided skiers with motorized propulsion up the slopes, six marked ski runs, rental equipment, a ski school, food service, and a ski shop. During the 1978-79 ski season, lift tickets cost \$5.50 and ski rentals were \$7. Beginner lessons were free. Further instruction was a bargain: \$5 in a class group or \$9 for a private lesson. The "attitude" of the Lassen Park Ski Area was low key and family oriented: the Koeberers strove to make "each and every one of our winter guests feel completely at ease and at home in our winter environment," their rates pamphlet read. Through the 1970s, the concessioner and other private parties also catered to cross-country skiers in Lassen Volcanic, with rentals (at the chalet), instruction, day tours, moonlight tours, and even overnight trips to Lake Helen. Some of these services were based at Manzanita Lake and Childs Meadow Resort just south of the park. At the Lassen Chalet, the concession business was almost a year-round venture. After a brief hiatus each spring, the concessioner reopened the chalet for summertime visitors, offering lunches and souvenirs, usually from May to October.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> SARs, 1960-1966.

<sup>3</sup> SARs, 1972-1978; Koeberer and Koeberer-Pitts interview; Mount Shasta Ski Park website, 2008, [www.skipark.com/history](http://www.skipark.com/history) (January 31, 2008); Lassen Park Ski Area – 1978-1979 Ski Season Rates, pamphlet, File 017: H14 Lassen Park Ski Area – History, Box 21; "Lassen Ski Scene: Family Fun on the Slopes," *Red Bluff Daily News*, December 19, 1975, p. 5, File 82: K34 News Clipping 1975, Box 27, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

In 1972, the park's interpretive staff began its guided snowshoe tours from the chalet, a winter environmental education program that proved enormously popular among both the general public and school groups. The park provided participants with snowshoes free of charge for the two-mile roundtrip excursion to the Sulphur Works hydrothermal area. Later in the decade, as the snowshoeing tours attracted more people, the assistance of park volunteers was vital to the continued success of the program. Daily tours were offered Wednesday through Sunday, and park naturalists had led over 2,000 snowshoers into Sulphur Works by each season's end. Interpretive rangers also led cross-country ski tours from Manzanita Lake into the snowbound park, although visitors had to come equipped with their own skis for this north-side activity. By 1980, park staff had established a network of cross-country ski trails in the park. Interpreters became increasingly invested in Lassen Volcanic's winter recreation of the low-impact, solitude-seeking variety. Meanwhile the ranger force remained dedicated to visitor safety both at the bustling ski area and in the backcountry, monitoring the avalanche hazard and staying prepared for search and rescue. The growing popularity of Lassen Volcanic during the winter months showed no signs of abating. Between the mid-1960s and the early 1980s, the park's wintertime visitation more than doubled. During the 1980-81 winter season, the park hosted over 102,000 visitors, including over 32,000 downhill skiers, 1,300 snow campers, and 9,600 day-use cross-country skiers and snowshoers.<sup>4</sup>

From the start, the ski chalet was a massive headache for park personnel to maintain. Its poor design, inefficient heating system, troublesome roof, and myriad other problems combined to earn the chalet "a reputation of being one of the worst [NPS] structures in the Pacific West Region," park officials would bemoan on the eve of its destruction three decades later. In 1973, Superintendent Murphy compiled a long list of deficiencies with the still relatively new building, which based on size alone was inadequate for the increasing crowds of the ski area. As one relatively minor example, its fireplace had never been operable and required significant modifications to become anything more than "ornamental." Because of the building's odd design, expansion of floor space was not an option. Meanwhile, the unpopular building continued to suck funding for minor improvements: expansion of the its sewer system, laying of indoor-outdoor carpeting on its upper level for better ski boot traction, installation of phone service, and remodeling of the rental shop. Other "rehabilitation" work throughout the ski area included installation of a 3,000-gallon diesel fuel tank for the poma lift, new ropes for the tows, repair and reconditioning of the lift and tow equipment, overhauling the power generators, and adding a small separate structure for the ski school.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> SARs, 1972-1981; "Rangers Lead Cross-Country Snow Tours at Lassen," *Sunset* 156 (January 1976): 32.

<sup>5</sup> Project Agreement: Replace Dilapidated Ski Chalet, February 2002, File D18: Planning Programs 2002-2004, LAVO Central Files; Superintendent Robert J. Murphy, Memorandum to Ross Hopkins, March 14, 1973, File C58: Ski Area/Lassen Chalet 1966; Narrative statement of Work Order "Rehabilitation Ski Chalet Facilities," completed May 1976, File C58: Rehab Lassen Chalet 1975, Unaccessioned LAVO Concession Files, REDW Archives; SARs, 1973-1975.

By the end of the decade, overcrowding became a big problem on prime skiing days when weather and snow conditions were ideal. Before the slopes could fill to capacity, the ski area parking lot did. On these few days a season, both concession workers and rangers were pulled from other duties to direct traffic, maximize the available parking space, and prevent motorists from parking illegally on the park road. A shuttle bus service from outside the park was instituted to help alleviate the parking dilemma. Another ski area concern by the late 1970s was the soundness of the aging lift and tow equipment. On a routine inspection, Gordon Linbaugh of the U.S. Forest Service recommended that more safety devices be installed on the machinery, should it be not be replaced in the near future. Several weeks later, the haul cable of the poma lift jumped off the bullwheel and hit several people, but all escaped serious injury. By the start of the following ski season, the park had contracted with Poma Aerial Tramway to modify the poma lift to meet new safety standards.<sup>6</sup>

### **Ski Area Expansion: Yea or Nay**

When the NPS began revising Lassen Volcanic's master plan in 1972, the movement to expand the Lassen Park Ski Area was already well underway. Since its 1970 purchase of the ski area concession, U.S. Natural Resources had argued that existing facilities could no longer handle growing crowds, and the company had proposed improvements to the area that would in no way change its "family-oriented" atmosphere, Don Hummel stressed. The new concessioner asked the park for an EIS and an administrative decision to allow installation of a bona fide chairlift to carry skiers to higher terrain, and park personnel obliged. But because the proposed expansion met with opposition from conservation groups, a "minor" EIS would not suffice and the NPS saw fit to roll this singular issue into the park's comprehensive planning process. The concessioner, well aware of how long this larger process could take, was "very, very disappointed" with the news. On the brighter side for USNR, Congressman Johnson had successfully adjusted the park's proposed wilderness boundaries to accommodate the concessioner's idea for an additional lift, and these modified boundaries became law with the passage of the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness Act in October 1972. In terms of the ski area, the challenge before Lassen Volcanic's planning team was to evaluate these initiatives already in motion and set "development limits" for the Sulphur Creek drainage, the Denver Service Center directive stated. The park's management objectives at the time echoed this sentiment for the ski area: "Firm limits must be set to eliminate any possible site degradation through over-extended visitor capacity or over-development

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<sup>6</sup> Larry Feser, South District Ranger, Memorandum to Chief Park Ranger, January 23, 1979; Bill Stephenson, Memorandum, January 26, 1979, File C3823: Ski Area Chairlift 1972, Unaccessioned LAVO Concession Files, REDW Archives; SAR, 1979.

of facilities.” These objectives called for careful study of expansion proposals as well as the ski area’s current conditions “to determine if such use can be continued in the limited space available there, without danger to the visitors.” The precipitous topography that thrilled downhill skiers also left precious little level ground for the necessities of parking, sanitation systems, concession services, and the like. Here, where visitor use was concentrated in a small area, both environmental deterioration and visitor safety were already concerns.<sup>7</sup>

Superintendent Murphy favored “optimum development” of the ski area, as had his predecessor Superintendent Boyer. Congressman Johnson repeatedly met with NPS officials to promote the cause. The first round of public meetings on the park’s new master plan revealed the full spectrum of views on the proposed ski area expansion. A number of citizens supported the addition of one chairlift. The Sierra Ski Areas Association and the Far West Ski Association supported this call for “limited expansion” of the ski area with formal statements submitted to the NPS. Other people did not want the ski area to grow any larger, and some expressed their desire to see the area phased out altogether once the Forest Service carried through with its proposed Carter Bowl Ski Area, to be built about 20 miles southeast of the park. One man at the public hearing in Redding voiced his regret that the Lassen Ski Area had ever been built in the first place.<sup>8</sup>

The first draft of the master plan outlined only vague guidelines for improvements to the ski area but did declare the NPS position to keep it in operation. This judgment was based on a Forest Service feasibility study that concluded that the Lassen Park Ski Area was indeed viable in terms of snow conditions, suitable terrain, and concessioner profits. The draft master plan indicated that any expansion of the area would be restricted by the wilderness boundary and the existing parking capacity of the park’s southwest

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<sup>7</sup> Terrence Cullinan, President, Lassen Volcanic National Park Company, Memo to All Parties, April 28, 1972, File C3823: Ski Area Chairlift 1972, Unaccessioned LAVO Concession Files, REDW Archives; Statement by Don Hummel, Vice President, U. S. Natural Resources, Inc. and General Manager, USNR Recreational Resources Division, Preliminary Lassen Volcanic National Park Master Plan Hearings, File 3: D18 GMP Preplanning Correspondence 1972; Robert J. Murphy, Superintendent, to The Honorable Harold T. (“Bizz”) Johnson, March 9, 1973; Cullinan to Murphy, March 13, 1973; Wesley H. Dempsey, Professor of Biology, to Murphy, June 5, 1973, File 5: D18 GMP Meetings and Minutes 1973; Denver Service Center, Planning Directive for Master Plan, Lassen Volcanic National Park, June 5, 1972; Statement for Management and Planning (Planning Objectives), undated, File 4: D18 GMP 1972, Box 7, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; SAR, 1972.

<sup>8</sup> SARs, 1972, 1973; Dick Boyer, Superintendent, to Director, Western Region, March 27, 1972, File C3823: Ski Area Chairlift 1972, Unaccessioned LAVO Concession Files; Robert J. Murphy, Superintendent, to The Honorable Harold T. (“Bizz”) Johnson, February 15, 1973, File 5: D18 GMP Meetings and Minutes 1973; Dave Garretson, Executive Director, Statement Concerning Lassen Volcanic National Park Master Plan by the Far West Ski Association, December 7, 1972; Jay Price, President, Statement Concerning Lassen Volcanic National Park Master Plan by the Sierra Ski Areas Association, undated; Preplanning Master Plan Meeting Notes, Mineral (October 25, 1972), Red Bluff (October 26, 1972), Susanville (October 27, 1972), Redding (October 28, 1972); File 3: D18 GMP Preplanning Correspondence 1972, Box 7, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

entrance.<sup>9</sup> In late 1973, NPS officials examined an expansion scenario that would double the area's existing capacity of 800 skiers. Regional Director Chapman confirmed that the NPS had promised the public that the Lassen Park Ski Area would, at a minimum, continue its current operations but even this most basic promise had to pass the rigors of the master planning process. The vital work of assessing the ski area's environmental impacts still lay before the planning team.<sup>10</sup>

Lassen Volcanic's concession upheaval in 1974 with the closure of Manzanita Lake did nothing to derail the proposed ski area expansion. Koeberer, the park's new concessioner who had managed the ski area under USNR, shared his former boss's vision for a bigger and better ski area. More planning meetings and public meetings came and went. As park planners became more comfortable with including the ski area expansion in the master plan, the National Parks and Conservation Association (NPCA) emerged as chief opponent. The installation of more conveyance machinery to deposit greater numbers of skiers higher on Brokeoff Mountain flew in the face of the Park Service's resource protection mandate, the NPCA argued. The watchdog group advocated for an agency-wide policy that would phase out all national park ski areas instead of allowing these areas to grow. Authors of the 1963 Leopold Report had shared this belief. They called for the "liquidation" of all ski lifts in national parks, among other "extraneous" recreational facilities that contradicted their number one goal of maintaining natural conditions in parks. As it stood, the Park Service did not have a consistent policy on ski areas. The agency was phasing out Hidden Valley in Rocky Mountain National Park at the same time it was expanding Badger Pass in Yosemite – and now perhaps the Lassen Park Ski Area. In 1975, NPS Director Everhardt was not ready to make the policy leap the Leopold Report and the NPCA demanded, but he did admit he was "wary" of the Lassen Volcanic proposal.<sup>11</sup>

The 1976 draft of Lassen Volcanic's GMP was the high-water mark for elaborate slope redesign posed by the NPS for the Lassen Park Ski Area. This plan sought to replace the poma lift with a chairlift. The poma lift would then be relocated above the chairlift and lengthened considerably "to take full advantage of new skiable terrain in the upper basin area." The beginner tow would also be lengthened, but the intermediate tow would be truncated short of the park road, allowing usage to continue into the spring after

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<sup>9</sup> Hagood, "A Master Plan for Lassen Volcanic National Park, California, revised draft, November 12, 1973, File 6: D18 General Management Plan 1973 Draft; Minutes of November 26-28, 1973 Planning and Design Review Meeting, File 5: D18 GMP Meetings and Minutes, 1973, Box 7, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>10</sup> Minutes of November 26-28, 1973 Planning and Design Review Meeting.

<sup>11</sup> Toby Cooper, National Parks and Conservation Association, to William Stevenson, Superintendent, May 15, 1975; Stephenson to Cooper, May 22, 1975; Cooper to The Honorable Gary E. Everhardt, June 10, 1975; Everhardt to Cooper, Jun 25, 1975, File 12: D18 GMP Comments by Environmental Groups 1975-1977, Box 7, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Koeberer and Koeberer-Pitts interview; Leopold et al., "Wildlife Management in the National Parks," in Dilsaver, ed., *America's National Park System: The Critical Documents*, 242.

the road was plowed. Altogether this slope redesign would increase the area's skier capacity to 1,250 at one time. The plan's parking proposal was also ambitious, packing twice the number of existing parking spaces into the existing parking lot. A total of 530 spaces would also accommodate cross-country skiers, snowshoers, and snow-play participants, which in total comprised about a third of visitors to the southwest entrance area. The plan's remaining provisions for the ski area were not so grand: installing portable visitor services facilities to supplement the inadequate chalet and piping the area's sewage onto national forest lands for treatment.<sup>12</sup>

Because this draft contained no fiscal analysis of any kind, the NPS decided to withhold the plan from public review until the completion of an economic feasibility study on both the ski area and the Manzanita Lake area. For the ski area, this study estimated costs and assessed the viability of two scenarios: the expansion plan contained within the 1976 GMP draft, and a scaled-down plan of some basic improvements to base facilities only, namely a new on-site sewage treatment plant. (This status-quo option for the ski area reflected the view of some NPS officials who agreed with the NPCA that any expansion of the ski area would violate NPS resource management policy.) The full expansion of the ski area would cost the NPS \$2.6 million, which would raise the concessioner's user fee considerably, the study found. To cover this added expenditure and still make a profit, the concessioner would have to sell *five times* as many lift tickets each year or increase lift ticket prices accordingly. Neither option was feasible, the study concluded. In light of these findings, Lassen Volcanic's planning team produced a supplement to the 1976 draft GMP that adopted the alternative \$1.2-million minimal improvements package for the ski area. This alternative retained the ski area's existing capacity and included no new conveyance equipment.<sup>13</sup>

Many skiing enthusiasts did not take kindly to the change in plans. At local public meetings held in the summer of 1977, crowds "ripped" into the NPS's new ski area plans, newspapers reported. At these meetings, Superintendent Stephenson tried to explain the agency's increasing emphasis on resource protection and the repercussions this trend had on recreation facilities such as the Lassen Park Ski Area. But some people felt a larger ski area would not cause environmental damage, and the most zealous expansion advocates attempted to take matters into their own hands. The Friends of Lassen Ski Area, made up of 20 Chico residents, formulated their own "alternative comprehensive plan" for the ski area, which borrowed heavily from previous NPS proposals for upgrades to base facilities. The centerpiece of the Friends' proposal was

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<sup>12</sup> Lassen Volcanic National Park, Draft General Management Plan, August 1976, U.S. Department of the Interior Library.

<sup>13</sup> "Supplement to the Draft General Management Plan and Draft Environmental Statement, Lassen Volcanic National Park," April 1977; Presentation Narrative on General Management Plan, July 13, 1977, File 38: D18 GMP Drafts, Proposals, 1977; Allen D. Heubner, Assistant Manager, Pacific Northwest/Western Team, DSC, to Regional Director, March 26, 1976, File 37: D18 GMP Drafts, Proposals 1975-1976, Box 7, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

the installation of a double or triple chairlift that would extend 3,400 linear feet and over 1,000 vertical feet from the ski area base to Ridge R, beyond the upper point for conveyances proposed in the 1976 draft GMP. The Friends also called for adding new slopes lower on the mountain for intermediate and beginner skiers, which the relocated poma lift would serve. This redesign of the ski area would increase its skier capacity to 2,650, more than twice the number the 1976 draft GMP proposed. The Tehama County Board of Supervisors endorsed the imposing plan, as did many local skiers disgruntled with the NPS's new anti-expansion stance. The Friends' plan had harsh critics as well, both citizens and park personnel. Schneider and Denniston considered the Friends' scheme an insult to the ski area's intimate, family-oriented tradition. They also considered it an ecological travesty. The Friends' expansion would threaten the park's prime deer summer range and fawning grounds, Denniston said, as well as the hunting territory for many raptors, including the endangered peregrine falcon. The NPS did not give the Friends' proposal serious consideration. The Friends' viewpoint was not the majority among concerned citizens. Analysis of public comment showed that the opinions over the Lassen Park Ski Area were split quite evenly three ways: in favor of ski area expansion, in favor of continued operations, and in favor of removing the area.<sup>14</sup>

When NPS Director William J. Whalen visited Lassen Volcanic in 1978, he could see "no problem" with the installation of a chairlift at the ski area, as the 1976 draft GMP had prescribed. Whalen assigned a task force – the same group that was reassessing the Manzanita Lake situation – to have a look at the ski area, with the hope that the anti-expansion plans currently on the table would be reversed yet again. In 1979, this Interior advisory board subcommittee told Whalen the exact opposite of what he wanted to hear: the ski area should be closed within five years because its continued operation was incompatible with the NPS's mission to preserve park lands. In addition, the "unsightly" ski area did not greet visitors entering the park with a suitable vista, the subcommittee thought. Superintendent Stephenson firmly disagreed with the closure recommendation. The recent closure of Mount Shasta placed more demands on the Lassen Park Ski Area than ever before, he pointed out. If Whalen's decision "goes in favor of the phase-out, all hell will break loose with skiers" throughout northern California, Stephenson predicted. Not surprisingly, Whalen rejected the subcommittee's recommendation to close the Lassen Ski Area, but the park's planning team retained its anti-expansion position. But even this position and the modest upgrades for the ski area the planning team now

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<sup>14</sup> SAR, 1977; Marjie Lambert, "No Expansion: Hearing Rips Lassen Plans," *The Sacramento Bee*, August 5, 1977; Ben Webster, "Lassen Volcanic Park: Future is on the Line," *Red Bluff Daily News*, August 4, 1977, File 86: D18 Planning – Newspaper Clippings 1977, Box 9; Friends of Lassen Ski Area, "Lassen Park Ski Area Comprehensive Plan," August 1, 1977, File 47: D18 Lassen Public Ski Area 1977 Comprehensive Plan; W. Stephenson, Superintendent, Memorandum to Regional Director, September 20, 1979, File 54: D18 GMP-Ski Area Expansion Letters, Park Responses 1979, Box 8; Al Denniston, Resources Management Specialist, Memorandum to Superintendent, September 9, 1977; Al Schneider, Chief Park Ranger, Memorandum to Superintendent, September 19, 1977, File 38: D18 GMP Drafts, Proposals, 1977; Box 7, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

advocated was growing increasingly distasteful to the local conservation community. When Superintendent Stephenson met with this contingent in Chico in July 1979, every person in attendance opposed the park's standing plan for the ski area. Many wanted the ski area removed; several recommended improvements to the park's cross-country skiing offerings instead of any future investments in the downhill ski area.<sup>15</sup>

The once-grandiose expansion plans for the ski area were dead in the water, but Superintendent Stephenson still wanted a chairlift to replace the aged poma lift. This \$800,000 investment would improve skier circulation on the existing slopes without enlarging the ski area, Stephenson argued. As Lassen Volcanic's GMP inched toward completion, Congress appropriated funds to Lassen Volcanic to replace the ski area's sewage system, which had become a health hazard. And at long last, on March 10, 1981, Regional Director Chapman approved Lassen Volcanic's new general management plan.<sup>16</sup>

The plan forecast an eventual closure of the Lassen Park Ski Area, but in the interim it called for "minimal improvements" to the facility. These improvements would be designed to relieve skier congestion but not increase skier capacity. As Stephenson wished, the GMP allowed for a new chairlift to replace the poma lift. The new conveyance would not carry skiers higher on the mountain nor would it increase skier volume. The intermediate rope tow would be repositioned to further relieve congestion on the slopes. The 250-space parking lot would not be enlarged. The small, 20-site campground adjacent to the ski area would also remain unaltered. A new southwest entrance sewer system, to be located just outside the park, was already in the budget. The plan also called for the installation of commercial power and a new year-round, interagency visitor center to replace the troublesome chalet. The NPS clearly stated its intention to close the ski area altogether in 20 years or so, once "comparable or better facilities are developed in the vicinity." By 1981, the NPS had formulated a winter-use policy that prohibited the construction of new ski areas in national parks but allowed for the further development of existing ski areas. Under this policy the ski area in Lassen Volcanic would eventually be removed, but the NPS would not try to hasten the day by barring any upgrade of existing facilities.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> SARs, 1978, 1979; Stephenson to Regional Director, September 20, 1979; Lambert, "Expansion Plans"; "Park to Phase Out Lassen Ski Area?," *Chester Progressive*, November 1, 1979, File 86: K34 News Clippings and Press Releases 1979, Box 27, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>16</sup> Marjie Lambert, "National Park Service Trims Lassen Expansion Plans," *The Sacramento Bee*, May 25, 1980, p. B3, File 87: K34 News Clippings 1980, Box 27, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; SARs, 1980, 1981.

<sup>17</sup> Lassen Volcanic National Park General Management Plan, March 1981, LAVO Headquarters.

## Snowmobiles in the Park

Snowmobiles, like downhill skiing, tested the limits of what might be considered appropriate winter use within a national park. Unlike downhill skiing, snowmobile use did not require new development. Snowmobiles could travel over Lassen's existing park road. But snowmobiles, even more than downhill skiing, violated some people's notion of aesthetics and a proper wintertime ambiance. The public became polarized over this issue. While an overwhelming majority of people opposed the presence of snowmobiles in Lassen Volcanic, a small but vocal minority of snowmobile enthusiasts argued that they should be admitted. The Park Service vacillated, and Lassen Volcanic was caught in the middle. For a time, the superintendent wanted to lean one direction and the regional director made him lean the other. Snowmobile use was a controversial issue for many years at Lassen until it was banned in 1985.

Snowmobiles became popular for recreation in the 1960s. The first recreational use of snowmobiles in Lassen Volcanic occurred in the winter of 1964-65.<sup>18</sup> The machines began to appear in other national parks about the same time. Immediately, some people objected to their presence, pointing out that the noise and fumes they generated put them in the same class as motor scooters. Indeed, they were potentially much more intrusive since there was nothing in existing regulations to prevent them from going off road and using the trail system. Initially, park managers did not want to deny access to snowmobile users. It was pointed out that the amount of use was minor, and that snowmobiling could introduce the vehicle operator to other outdoor winter activities, such as cross-country skiing. But as snowmobile use increased, it soon became apparent that this activity impinged on other people's enjoyment of winter recreation pursuits. Not only were the snowmobiles' noise and fumes intrusive, their wide tracks could obliterate the useful parallel tracks laid down by cross-country skiers, and in some areas the presence of snowmobiles was correlated with an increase in litter. Furthermore, it was suggested that snowmobiles stressed wildlife at a time of year when most animals were already struggling to survive.<sup>19</sup>

The public outcry over snowmobiles prompted Senator Alan Bible (D – Nev.), chairman of the Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation, to hold a hearing on the issue in December 1971. A number of environmental organizations testified at this hearing on the need for more restriction of snowmobile use on public lands. Still, the NPS declined to institute a system-wide ban or even a service-wide restrictive policy, leaving this matter entirely to the discretion of park superintendents. At Lassen Volcanic, Superintendent Murphy restricted snowmobile use to the north side of the park in the early 1970s. Snowmobiles were only allowed on the unplowed road and could only be in the park

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<sup>18</sup> John Roth, "Snowmobile Use Survey – Lassen Volcanic N. P. Responses," February 2, 2000, File W42: Special Regulations 1999-2001, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>19</sup> Malcolm F. Baldwin, "The Snowmobile & Environmental Quality," *Trends* 6, no. 2 (April 1970): 15-17.

during daylight hours. Even this limited use was controversial. Park staff were divided about it. The district ranger heartily supported snowmobile use of the Manzanita Lake area, whereas the chief ranger wanted to have it eliminated. While park managers around the U.S. perceived a groundswell of public opposition to snowmobile use in national parks generally, it was difficult for them to ban the activity in their own park when Yellowstone seemed to welcome it with open arms. Yellowstone drew literally thousands of snowmobiles each winter. Lassen Volcanic attracted a tiny fraction of that number. Finally, Superintendent Stephenson instituted a total ban on snowmobiles in Lassen Volcanic National Park beginning in the winter of 1975-76. The Yahi Group of the Sierra Club endorsed this policy. It sent Stephenson twenty petitions in support of the ban in 1977.<sup>20</sup>

Snowmobile clubs pushed back. Probably emboldened by the election of President Ronald Reagan, whose campaign in 1980 had spoken to the desire for less government regulation and greater access to public lands, snowmobile clubs in California requested access to Lassen Volcanic, Yosemite, and Sequoia-Kings Canyon national parks, all of which had banned their use. On March 21, 1981, snowmobile users entered Sequoia-Kings Canyon under a special one-day permit for a “Ride for Our Rights” protest demonstration. The following month, the Park Service held a meeting with disgruntled snowmobile club representatives in Yosemite. In May the NPS held meetings with representatives of cross-country skiers in Chico and Redding. Superintendent Stephenson held a meeting with local representatives of both user groups at park headquarters in June. As political pressure over the snowmobile issue mounted, Stephenson had his staff prepare an environmental assessment for a proposal to lift the ban on snowmobiles in Lassen. Yosemite and Sequoia-Kings Canyon did the same. The NPS held public meetings at Redding, Fresno, and San Francisco in September. In the three weeks following the public meetings, the NPS received more than 3,000 written comments. The comments ran ten to one against lifting the ban. Partly on the basis of those comments, Stephenson recommended against lifting Lassen ban at a meeting held in the Regional Office on October 28. But Regional Director Chapman remained unconvinced. On December 15, Chapman decided to initiate a test of snowmobile use in Lassen Volcanic National Park only, while maintaining the ban in Yosemite and Sequoia-Kings Canyon. In an attempt to reconcile differences between snowmobile users and cross-country skiers, snowmobiles would only be admitted in the park on a trial basis, for the first seven days only of the months of January, February, March, and April of 1982, after which time the NPS would reevaluate. As before, snowmobile use was restricted to

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<sup>20</sup> “Snowmobiles and the National Parks,” *American Forests* 78 (June 1972): 28-31, 46-49; Lassen Volcanic National Park, Backcountry Management Plan, March 1974, File 120: N1623 Backcountry/Wilderness Management, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Schneider interview; “NPS Proposes to Open Parks to More Snowmobiling,” *National Parks & Conservation Magazine* 53 (April 1979): 26-27.

the north side of the park on a 19-mile length of the unplowed main park road from Manzanita Lake to Kings Creek Meadows.<sup>21</sup>

Environmental groups reacted to this announcement with suspicion. It seemed that newly appointed Secretary of the Interior James Watt had found a backdoor way to get snowmobiles into all national parks by forcing this experiment on the relatively obscure park in northern California. As one state official who was opposed to the action stated, "The camel's nose is in the tent. Today Lassen, tomorrow Yosemite."<sup>22</sup>

As January 1, 1982 approached, both snowmobile and cross-country ski enthusiasts vowed to show up in force at the Manzanita Lake entrance to demonstrate. The Yahi Group of the Sierra Club and other environmental organizations rallied their members to make a peaceful protest, while snowmobile riders sought to make a show of their legitimate place in the park setting. "We're going to get our point across that we're not Hell's Angels," said Al Petty of Shasta County Sno-Riders, Inc. "We're just people who love a winter sport." Park officials tried to get both sides to hold down their numbers, noting that the Manzanita Lake entrance had parking space for only 40 to 50 vehicles. In preparation for the event, the NPS sent rangers from parks in Nevada and Arizona, while the California Highway Patrol sent a helicopter. The day dawned cold and clear following a fresh dump of 20 inches of snow on New Years Eve. Treacherous road conditions probably kept many people away. Rangers expected to see perhaps 60 snowmobiles and up to 500 demonstrating skiers, but they made an actual count of just 23 snowmobile enthusiasts on 15 machines and about 50 cross-country skiers. In the frigid air, the demonstrations were short and civil.<sup>23</sup>

The local snowmobile clubs aimed to keep political pressure on the park. Two petitions were circulated among club members, one calling for the NPS to extend the period each month when snowmobiles would be allowed in the park, the second calling for Stephenson's removal. Club members were still angry with the superintendent for banning snowmobiles in 1975, and some felt that he now stood behind a policy of harassment. For example, park rangers required each snowmobile operator to have a driver's license, prompting Al Petty to assert that Stephenson was interfering with snowmobilers' legal rights.<sup>24</sup>

Despite the heightened emotions surrounding the opening day, the test of snowmobile use in Lassen Volcanic never provoked the kind of confrontation that some feared. Actual snowmobile use was lower than anticipated. A total of 84 machines were recorded for the season. While park rangers were tasked to compile a record of "ecological and sociological impacts," there was very little to report. At the end of the season the data were summarized and sent to the regional director. On December 1,

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<sup>21</sup> SAR, 1981; "Snowmobiles Ride Again in Lassen Park," *Los Angeles Times*, January 3, 1982.

<sup>22</sup> "Watt Gets Snowmobiles into Lassen Volcanic," *National Parks* 56 (March/April 1982): 34.

<sup>23</sup> "Confrontation at Park Quiet," *Redding Record Searchlight*, January 1, 1982.

<sup>24</sup> "Snowmobile Club Takes Action," *Redding Record Searchlight*, January 7, 1982.

1982, the park was informed that there were not enough data to make a decision so the test would be extended for another year. During the winter of 1982-83, a total of 62 snowmobiles entered the park. All but 16 of these snowmobiles came on a single day, January 1, 1983, for an event organized by the Bay Area Snowmobile Club. For those in the snowmobile community who were anxious to open the California national parks to snowmobiling, the event was their last hurrah; all but a few turned to other recreational areas to pursue their sport. Still, the NPS was reluctant to act. Quietly, it extended the test for two more years, during which a total of 23 snowmobiles entered the park. When Regional Director Chapman appointed Gil Blinn to replace the retiring Stephenson, he directed the new superintendent to evaluate this park use. Given the low numbers, Blinn recommended that the use be terminated. Chapman agreed and signed a Finding of No Significant Impact on September 20, 1985.<sup>25</sup>

### **Lassen Park Ski Area's Final Years**

In 1982, California Guest Services secured a 20-year contract with the NPS which called for expansion of the ski area and installation of a triple chairlift. Only two other national parks – Yosemite and Rocky Mountain – had comparable facilities, so the ski area expansion was an unusual plan in the National Park System. Concession owners John and Pam Koeberer recognized that the plan would likely raise opposition, but they also sensed that the current political climate would favor it. The Reagan administration warmly supported private capital investment on public lands. Regional Director Chapman and Superintendent Stephenson both considered the 20-year contract to be consistent with objectives stated in the park's new GMP. The Koeberers calculated that they could not only push past environmental groups, but that strong local demand for better skiing opportunities together with the long term of the contract would ultimately bring a good return on their investment.<sup>26</sup>

Shortly after the plan was made public, the National Parks and Conservation Association brought suit to try to prevent it. In its complaint, the NPCA alleged that the NPS needed to prepare an EIS for the ski area development beyond what had already been done for the GMP, and that the proposed development could be harmful for peregrine falcons, which were protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973. The court issued a 60-day injunction. A logging company was scheduled to begin cutting 130 trees in preparation of installing the new lift. Park managers were anxious for this work to go forward before snow cover melted off the area, since the operation called for the cut

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<sup>25</sup> SARs, 1983-1985; Blinn interview.

<sup>26</sup> Koeberer and Koeberer-Pitts interview; W. Stephenson to Richard Heinrich, May 14, 1982; Howard Chapman to Destry Jarvis, April 14, 1982, File C38: Chairlift (Injunction), Unaccessioned LAVO Concession Files, REDW Archives.

logs to be skidded over a layer of snow so the skidding would not damage the vegetation. NPS and NPCA representatives met at the park on June 11 to negotiate a settlement of the lawsuit. The NPS agreed to 13 stipulations, including a survey of endangered plants, measures to protect archeological sites and to prevent soil erosion, and a study of potential impacts on the peregrine falcons. Tree removal began at the expiration of the injunction in late July. Due to the lateness of the season, a helicopter was used for the construction effort.<sup>27</sup>

The Park Service put together a peregrine falcon task force to study that issue, the most vexing of the several issues that the NPCA had raised. The concern was that the birds might fly into the new cable system and injure themselves. The task force considered several alternatives and recommended that bright streamers should be attached to the cables at intervals of ten feet to alert the birds to their presence. Stephenson was unhappy with this proposal, pointing out it would result in “600 streamers fluttering in the breeze along the chairlift alignment” – a tremendous eyesore to summertime visitors. Degradation of the scenery would far outweigh the benefit of the mitigation measure, he argued. The regional directorate discussed the problem, including the potential that the mitigation measure would set a precedent that the NPS would need to follow at other ski areas in Yosemite and Sequoia-Kings Canyon. It was decided not to put up the streamers but to implement a two-year peregrine falcon monitoring program instead. In addition, during the first summer only, lift chairs would not be demounted from the cables so as to make the cables more conspicuous to the birds.<sup>28</sup>

With the new lift in place, the concessioner increased its operations to seven days a week. For three years, the Lassen Park Ski Area experienced record attendance. On busy days, the concessioner sold more lift tickets than the 800 daily maximum stated in the GMP. Superintendent Blinn believed the 800-person limit was unrealistic and outmoded, as it was based on the old poma lift, which operated at a slower speed. Blinn was concerned that to ignore the GMP maximum was to expose the park and the concession to a potential tort claim, should an injury occur that could be attributed to overcrowding. On the other hand, Blinn did not want to invite public input on amending the GMP, in part because California Guest Services had indicated that it would “fight strongly” any effort to put a cap on lift ticket sales. Blinn’s remedy, with permission from the regional director, was to write a memorandum to the files that dropped the 800-person limit and made available parking the limiting factor instead.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Michael Freund, “Complaint for Injunction, Declaratory Relief, and/or Mandamus,” May 19, 1982, in Civil No. S-82-394 MLS, *National Parks and Conservation Association vs. James Watt*, File C38: Chairlift (Injunction), Unaccessioned LAVO Concession Files, REDW Archives; “Ski Expansion in Lassen Park Halted by Judge,” *Sacramento Bee*, May 20, 1982; SAR 1982.

<sup>28</sup> Superintendent to Regional Director, September 24, 1982, File C38: Chairlift (Injunction) Vol. 2; Assistant Regional Director to Regional Director, October 5, 1982 and December 16, 1982, File C38: Chairlift (Injunction) Vol. 3, Unaccessioned LAVO Concession Files, REDW Archives.

<sup>29</sup> Superintendent to Regional Director, November 3, 1986; Superintendent to Files, November 18, 1986, File 109: GMP Amendments 1984-1986, Box 9, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

In the latter half of the decade, the Lassen Park Ski Area saw declining use. The first factor contributing to this trend was the opening in the winter of 1985-86 of a new ski area on Mount Shasta. Both the NPS and the concessioner had anticipated that demand for skiing in Lassen Volcanic would eventually wane as other ski areas were developed; it was only a question of time. That year, California Guest Services reported a \$250,000 net loss resulting from its poor ski season. After a second straight winter of diminished business, the concession requested a decreased operating schedule of three days rather than seven days per week. The park consented to the reduced schedule.<sup>30</sup> By the end of the decade, lack of snowfall was another factor weighing against the Lassen Park Ski Area. Lack of snowfall meant a shorter season and fewer skiers. Moreover, when snow conditions were marginal, competing ski areas on national forest lands resorted to making snow, whereas the Lassen Ski Area did not have that option.<sup>31</sup> By 1990, annual downhill skier totals at Lassen had dropped to less than 17,000, a third of what they had been five years earlier. Inadequate snow limited operation of the ski area to only half of its scheduled 75 days that year.

After the winter of 1990-91, John Koeberer indicated to park officials that he wanted to get out of the ski business. Following a meeting with the concessioner, Blinn explained the park's position to the regional director:

The park is willing to see the deletion of downhill skiing as a requirement in the concession contract. The skiing business is having a negative effect on the finances of the concessioner, but is actually the least important of the services being provided to park visitors. From our point of view, having a financially sound concessioner to conduct the operations other than downhill skiing that are being provided in the park is more important than risking the financial soundness of the business so as to retain the downhill ski activity. In fact, removal of the downhill facilities is a long-range objective of the park as stated on page 32 of the March 1981 General Management Plan.<sup>32</sup>

Still ambivalent and hoping for a return to snowier winters, Koeberer kept the operation going for another two years. Finally, in April 1993, he announced his decision that he would not reopen in the following winter. Either he would sell the business to a subcontractor or he would sell the equipment to another ski area. Although park officials were neither surprised nor particularly disappointed by this announcement, it struck many local ski enthusiasts like a bombshell. The Friends of Lassen Ski Area regrouped to offer

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<sup>30</sup> John W. Koeberer to Gil Blinn, June 18, 1987; Blinn to Koeberer, June 30, 1987, File C3823: Concessions Administration, Unaccessioned LAVO Concession Files, REDW Archives.

<sup>31</sup> "Ski Industry Sliding Downhill, Looking for a Lift with Snow," *Redding Record Searchlight*, December 22, 1989.

<sup>32</sup> Superintendent to Regional Director, August 5, 1991, File: Ski Facilities, Unaccessioned LAVO Concession Files, REDW Archives.

their services to keep the ski area going. The NPS did not find their offer viable. The Friends sought intervention by local congressmen, and Representative Wally Herger (R – Calif.) requested that the Park Service prepare a concession prospectus that would allow a new buyer to operate the ski lift. Since the long-term plan for Lassen Volcanic called for a phase-out of the ski area, however, the NPS had little difficulty deflecting this political pressure.<sup>33</sup>

## **New Directions in Winter Use and Southwest Development**

Ironically, the region's seven-year drought concluded in early 1993, just in time to deliver numerous snowstorms to the park in the final months of the Lassen Park Ski Area's operations. On five separate occasions, excessive weekend snowfalls necessitated temporary closures of the ski area before its permanent closure in April. The remainder of the 1990s brought year after year of plentiful snow to the park, and people continued to come to Lassen Volcanic for winter recreation. The NPS decided to keep the park road clear to the former ski area through the winter months. By the opening of the 1993-94 winter season, the park had converted the ski area's lower slopes, below the road, to a snow-play area that accommodated sledders, tobogganers, and inner tube riders. The terrain above the road was the intended domain of telemark skiers and snowboarders. The lift towers were gone, but their concrete footings remained and would pose a collision hazard to snow-play revelers for a full decade. In 2003, the park's road crew and natural resource staff joined forces to restore the former ski area to its pre-development condition. Over fifty concrete structures were removed, and some access roads were decompacted and recontoured (others had already melded back into the landscape on their own). The slopes were mulched and revegetated by hand with seeds collected from nearby plants. The revegetation portion of this project continued for several years. One further restoration project in the Sulphur Creek drainage awaits: the removal of underground water and septic tanks plus a diversion dam at Sulphur Works. These structures date back to the Mission 66 era and were never utilized because development plans at that location were scrapped.<sup>34</sup>

Lassen Volcanic's winter visitation did not plummet after the closure of the ski area. In fact, more people made use of the southwest entrance area in 1993-94 than the previous few years, due in large part to improved snow conditions. During this first post-

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<sup>33</sup> Larry Hazard to Wally Herger, July 30, 1993, Herger to Hazard, August 5, 1993; Herger to Stanley T. Albright, July 29, 1993, File A3615: Congressional Correspondence 1993-1995; Albright to Herger, August 13, 1993, File C34: Ski Area Removal 1993, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>34</sup> SARs, 1993-2000; Southwest Entrance Winter Visitor Use Plan, Draft, September 1994, File C34: Concessioner's Organizations 1993-1995, LAVO Central Files; "Lassen Volcanic National Park, A Summary of Monitoring Activities for 2005," April 2006, pp. 56-61, Natural Resources Division, LAVO Headquarters; Johnson interview.

closure winter season, the concessioner sold food and beverages at the chalet on weekends and holidays, but slim business did not warrant continuation of this service in subsequent years. Thereafter, the concession operated the chalet only during the summer. In 1995, the park reopened its mobile Southwest Visitor Information Station adjacent to the chalet for summer use, following a three-year closure owed to budget cuts. Through the ensuing winter seasons, the chalet provided visitors with heated restrooms and a first aid station. A highly trained volunteer ski patrol assisted park personnel in backcountry patrol, search and rescue, avalanche assessment, and avalanche education for the public. By 2005, the volunteer ski patrol had grown to two dozen members, who clocked nearly 2,000 patrol hours in a single season. Volunteer interpreters continued to assist with snowshoe and snow shelter/winter survival programs.<sup>35</sup>

Into the new century, the former ski area's popularity held. On sunny weekend afternoons, when snow conditions were good, the former ski area could attract hundreds of people, creating a spirited family scene that at times bordered on mayhem. With all conveyances gone, chaotic two-way traffic was now the norm, and with lots of visitors on the hill at once, "people tend to run into each other," said Chief Ranger Roth. Accidents have been common: broken limbs, even back injuries, but no deaths to date. A "uniformed presence" reduced irresponsible behavior and the likelihood of collisions and crashes, said former ranger Giddings, but snow play in such concentration remained a potentially dangerous activity. When injuries exceeded the on-site medical capabilities of the park rangers and ski patrol, local ambulances – sometimes helicopters – were called in. In 2001, the park established new activity restrictions for the snow-play area to reduce injuries. Construction of snow jumps became prohibited anywhere in the play area, as were glass containers.<sup>36</sup>

Long after the ski area shut down, the Lassen Chalet – a source of ceaseless grief for the maintenance division – remained a fixture at the southwest entrance area. In 1998, it was given a "facelift": new deck railings, exterior paint, and roof repairs. These improvements did little to overcome the structure's "poor physical condition." In 2003, the chalet's interior was finally condemned. Temporary restrooms were installed nearby, and California Guest Services began to provide food and souvenirs to summertime visitors from its "Peak Necessities" trailer, parked either at the Lassen Peak Trailhead or in the southwest entrance parking lot. Each summer, park management continued to set up its information booth here as well. In 2005, the chalet was demolished in preparation for the park's long-anticipated Southwest Visitor Services Facility. As construction of

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<sup>35</sup> SARs, 1993-2005; Southwest Entrance Winter Visitor Use Plan, Draft, September 1994; Sean Murphy, "On Patrol at Lassen: Volunteer Skiers Help Park Rangers," *Chico Enterprise Record*, May 20, 2005.

<sup>36</sup> Roth interview; Giddings interview; Compendium of Special Regulations for Lassen Volcanic National Park, June 1, 2001 through May 31, 2002, File W42: Special Regulations 1999-2001, LAVO Central Files.

the new visitor center met continued delays, the park's interim facilities at the southwest entrance were reemployed a while longer.<sup>37</sup>

Lassen's winter ecology program, which featured snowshoe excursions from the southwest entrance into Sulphur Works, remained a hit with both the general public and school groups into the 1990s. Snowshoe walks were also led into the red fir forest, and the park developed a snow shelter/winter survival program as well. By 1993, snowshoe walks for the general public were offered only on Saturdays, due to the park's high volume of school groups on weekdays. The Saturday guided walks continued to have good participation. With the demise of the Lassen Park Ski Area, some of the park's concentration of winter use activity diverted to Manzanita Lake, where rangers offered both cross-country ski and snowshoe tours intermittently. Lassen Volcanic hosted a "Winterfest" at Manzanita Lake in 2000. About 250 visitors took part in the event that included snowshoe tours, cross-country ski clinics, talks on avalanche safety and low-impact winter camping techniques, winter rescue and survival demonstrations, and a snow sculpture contest. Winter use patterns in the twenty-first century so far reflect earlier patterns. Although day users – including many self-guided cross-country skiers and snowshoers – continue to make up the vast majority of the park's winter visitation, backcountry trekking and camping through the winter months remain popular among the park's most adventuresome patrons.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> SARs, 1998, 2005; Pacific West Regional Support Office, "Food and Retail Services, Lassen Volcanic National Park, Feasibility Analysis Draft," May 23, 2003, File C2621: Reports Annual 2002-2004, LAVO Central Files; "Going, Going, Gone: Chalet Replaced Soon," *Chester Progressive*, April 20, 2005, p. A4; Roth interview.

<sup>38</sup> SARs, 1994-2000; Regional Chief of Interpretation to Superintendent, July 29, 1987, enclosing Statement for Interpretation, File 19: K1817 Interpretive Planning Annual Statement for Interpretive Planning 1987, Box 26, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Chief Park Naturalist to Superintendent, January 13, 1995; Assistant Chief Park Naturalist to Files, April 24, 1998, File A2615: Interpretation & Cultural Resources Monthly Reports 1994-2002, I&E Division Records, LAVO Files; Roth interview.

## Chapter Thirteen

### Restoring a Healthy Ecosystem

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In 1963, Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall appointed an advisory board of five scientists to review wildlife management in the national parks and make recommendations. Serving as chairman of the committee was A. Starker Leopold, professor of zoology at the University of California, Berkeley and son of renowned environmental philosopher Aldo Leopold. The committee's report, which soon became known as the Leopold Report after its principal author, signaled a new direction in natural resources management in the National Park System. It proposed that the primary goal of park management should be to maintain, or where necessary *recreate*, the conditions that prevailed when the area was first visited by nonnative people. "A national park should represent a vignette of primitive America," the report stated. In pursuit of this ideal, the Park Service needed to take active measures to manipulate the environment, such as reintroducing species that had been extirpated from the area, controlling the spread of "exotic" or invasive species, and making use of fire, among other tools, to restore habitat conditions that had been altered by logging, grazing, and fire suppression. In support of this program, the Park Service needed to develop a stronger research capability. Up to this point, research in the parks had been oriented to interpretive functions rather than to management. "We urge the expansion of the research activity in the Service to prepare for future management and restoration programs," the Leopold Report stated.<sup>1</sup>

The Leopold Report is recognized as one of the critical influences in tipping the Park Service toward a greater emphasis on preservation in its mission to balance preservation and visitor enjoyment of national parks. Appearing one year before the Wilderness Act of 1964, it was hailed by conservation organizations and reprinted in full

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<sup>1</sup> Leopold et al., "Wildlife Management in the National Parks," in Dilsaver, ed., *America's National Park System: The Critical Documents*, 237-252.

by the *Sierra Club Bulletin* and other nature magazines. Director Conrad Wirth called it a “good perspective” on “the immediate, as well as the distant view.”<sup>2</sup> While its identification of a pristine environment at the advent of “white men” would seem ethnocentric and perhaps naïve as the years passed, it did serve as a useful benchmark for defining desired natural conditions. The Park Service soon changed the phrase from “white men” to “technological man.” As historian Richard West Sellars points out, while the concept ignored “Native American perceptions of landscapes and wilderness and the possibility of ecological change resulting from Native American use of lands, this New World imagery suggested a kind of wilderness *pastorale* that had enormous appeal to many in the Park Service.”<sup>3</sup>

Despite its broad-brush, conceptual bent, the Leopold Report did contain prescient remarks about Lassen Volcanic National Park and the three other existing national parks in California. As with Yosemite, Sequoia, and Kings Canyon, Lassen Volcanic’s forests had grown thick from the unnatural absence of wildfire for sixty years. “Today much of the west slope is a dog-hair thicket of young pines, white fir, incense cedar, and mature brush – a direct function of overprotection from natural ground fires,” the report observed. “Not only is this accumulation of fuel dangerous to the giant sequoias and other mature trees but the animal life is meager, wildflowers are sparse, and to some at least the vegetative tangle is depressing, not uplifting.” The Leopold Report then posed the question: “Is it possible that the primitive open forest could be restored, at least on a local scale? And if so, how?”<sup>4</sup> This was the central problem that would occupy the Lassen Volcanic’s natural resources management staff for the next forty years.

## A New Perspective on Forest Health

In the 1950s and 1960s, Lassen Volcanic National Park had a park forester on staff who had responsibility for forest health. The forester’s job was to plan, program, and administer forest pest control, white pine blister rust control, hazardous tree reduction, and maintenance of trails and telephone lines. He managed a forestry crew of about 16 seasonal employees who worked from late April until mid-autumn.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, 214.

<sup>3</sup> Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, 214. It should be noted, too, that the use of this benchmark for resetting “biotic associations” or environmental conditions was not original to the Leopold Report. Joseph Grinnell suggested it in 1916, and George Wright, Joseph Dixon, and Ben Thompson used it again in *Fauna in the National Parks*. See Grinnell and Storer, “Animal Life as an Asset of National Parks” and George Wright, Joseph Dixon, and Ben Thompson, *Fauna of the National Parks of the United States*, National Park Service Fauna Series No. 1 (Washington: National Park Service, 1932).

<sup>4</sup> Leopold et al., “Wildlife Management in the National Parks,” 33.

<sup>5</sup> Gary E. Bunney to Superintendent, November 23, 1965, File 208: N50 Pest and Weed Control, 1965-1987, Box 42, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

In these years, the forester looked at the forest resource much the same way as foresters in the Forest Service did, minus the commercial logging activity. That is, the Park Service judged the health of the forest by the health of individual trees, and it followed conventional forestry practices in combating forest tree diseases. When individual trees were attacked by insect populations, they were culled to protect the healthy trees around them. By combating beetle infestations, which were endemic to the area, the Park Service altered the composition and structure of the forest; nevertheless, the Park Service did so in the belief that a green forest was more aesthetic and pleasing for national park visitors. Park forester Gary E. Bunney described how beetle-infested trees were removed in 1965. “If possible, we attempt to salvage, or contract, trees killed from insect infestations,” he wrote. “When the trees are unmerchantable, or the volume does not warrant a sale, we attempt to leave the control area in the most undisturbed condition possible.” In campground areas, this entailed chipping the tops and limbs of downed trees, flushing the stumps, and cutting the trunks into firewood lengths that were hauled away to a public woodpile. Alongside roads and trails, the limbs were scattered or chipped and the cut log ends were feathered with explosives to make the down trees appear wind thrown.<sup>6</sup> The emphasis was on aesthetics and creating a façade that the forest was unmanaged.

The park’s next forester, Clay E. Peters, took a new look at the insect control program in light of the Leopold Report. Peters instituted an experiment in which the park continued to remove beetle-infested trees in campgrounds while leaving alone all infested trees alongside roads and trails as well as in the backcountry. After three years of this practice, Peters observed that there was no significant difference in insect populations and tree mortality between the two types of developed areas, nor, in fact, was there an appreciable difference between the front country and the backcountry. Peters proposed that the Park Service designate this “hands-off approach” as an experiment and potential model for other parks to emulate. In recognition of this model’s experimental status, Peters hoped the park would obtain technical staff support for conducting surveys and gathering data. Peters’ proposal was sent through the superintendent and regional director to the director. In reply, the Washington Office declined to provide support for research but it did wholeheartedly approve the change in practice. “We do not believe the new approach at Lassen should be considered an experiment, but instead it should be recognized as a realignment of this activity to conform with the philosophies contained in the ‘Leopold Report,’” wrote Assistant Director R. B. Moore. Furthermore, he urged Superintendent Boyer to step up monitoring of insect populations (perhaps with Forest Service participation) and he emphasized that the park should not characterize this approach as “hands off” or “do nothing” but rather one of “monitoring” natural insect

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

activity.<sup>7</sup> Peters, meanwhile, was rewarded for his progressive thinking with a transfer to the Washington Office, while the forester position at Lassen Volcanic was allowed to lapse.

In a parallel development, the Park Service scrapped the white pine blister rust control program at about this same time. By the mid-1960s, the longstanding program at Lassen Volcanic had shrunk to six control areas where blister rust crews occasionally moved in to eradicate *Ribes*, a host plant for the disease-causing fungus, within a generous radius of each affected white pine tree. In the latter years of blister rust control, the Park Service used chemical spray to kill *Ribes*. With the western white pine gradually becoming more resistant to this introduced disease, and in view of mounting concerns about chemical treatments, the Park Service discontinued the program in all of California's national parks in the late 1960s.

The change in forestry practice was not as complete as it first seemed. In 1969, Lassen Volcanic prepared an "ecological justification for bark beetle control" to explain its continuing need for insect control in campground areas. It would no longer do to say that the park was preserving "scenic values," however, as this contradicted the Park Service's policy on insect and forest disease control as articulated in the new publication, *Administrative Policies for the Management of Natural Areas*. Rather, the limited insect control work was justified because it was doubtful whether the forest would regenerate naturally in campgrounds, where human foot traffic heavily impacted low vegetation. Furthermore, beetle-infested trees, if not treated or removed, soon turned into hazard trees that had to be removed anyway. For these reasons, the park continued to conduct pine beetle control in the Manzanita Lake Campground and occasionally in other campgrounds.<sup>8</sup> Still, it was clear that the Leopold Report had advanced a new perspective on forest health. The new perspective was more holistic, embracing forest blights as part of a functioning ecosystem. The next step was to reexamine the role of fire in the ecosystem.

## Fire Management

In 1971, Chief Naturalist John S. Mohlhenrich prepared a brief, three-page resources management plan for Lassen Volcanic National Park in which he listed eight objectives, the last one being to preserve *and restore* the environment's natural conditions. A critical component of that effort, Mohlhenrich wrote, would be "to restore

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<sup>7</sup> Assistant Director to Regional Director, December 13, 1968, File 208: N50 Pest and Weed Control, 1965-1987, Box 42, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>8</sup> "Ecological Justification for Bark Beetle Control – Lassen Volcanic National Park," no date; Assistant Director to Regional Director, April 11, 1969, File 53: Y2619 Forest Insects & Disease and White Pine Blister Rust, 1965-1974, Box 44, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives. Also see sections on insect control in SARs, 1972-1980.

fire to the park ecosystems.”<sup>9</sup> This appears to have been the first statement of its kind for Lassen. In the next few years, some other parks, notably Sequoia and Yosemite, began to experiment with use of natural fire as a management tool, but this revolutionary change in fire policy remained in its infancy in the early to mid-1970s. The national media called the Park Service’s experimental actions a “let burn policy” – a misnomer that would stick and come to irritate later fire managers because of its unfair connotation of passivity. In fact, the Park Service’s use of natural fire was anything but passive. Owing to the high risk, significant labor cost, and considerable public skepticism surrounding the use of natural fire, this new management approach would be many years in the making.<sup>10</sup>

The first stage in this long process for Lassen Volcanic was to recognize that some sixty to seventy years of fire suppression had created a resource management problem. Research in the 1970s indicated that under natural conditions the ponderosa, Jeffrey, and lodge pole pine forests found in the park were normally swept by fire about once every six to ten years. One researcher compared photos of forest conditions in the 1920s with what the forests looked like fifty years later and described “dog hair stands” where the pines had become unnaturally dense. Other, anecdotal evidence pointed to very different past conditions. John Muir’s writings, for example, contained a reference to galloping on a horse through this type of forest, an image that strongly suggested a much more open forest had once prevailed in the area. As a result of these altered conditions, some plant communities were disappearing and in some areas fuels had accumulated to dangerous levels. The fuel buildup created the potential for unnaturally explosive and destructive fires. Rangers noted the extensive fuel buildup in many parts of the park, such as east of the Devastated Area. When Superintendent Boyer transferred out of the park, he said: “Watch out for Flatiron Ridge.”<sup>11</sup>

Park managers saw that they needed a specialist on staff to address the issue of forest health. In 1975, the park obtained a natural resources specialist position and hired Al Denniston. With a degree in forestry and experience as both a ranger and a superintendent (of a small national historical site in Kansas), Denniston was brought into the park’s protection division where he served for seven years until his position was changed from the ranger series to the biologist series and he was put in charge of his own natural resources division. During this time, he worked in the field a lot, taking inventory

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<sup>9</sup> Chief Park Naturalist to Superintendent, December 8, 1971, enclosing Draft Resource Management Plan, File 92: N16 Natural Resources Management Plan, Misc., Box 40, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>10</sup> Mike Lewelling, interview by Diane Krahe, September 14, 2006; “Let ’Em Burn,” *Time* (October 28, 1974); National Park Service and USDA Forest Service, “Huffer Fire, Review of Management Actions, Lassen Volcanic National Park and Lassen National Forest,” December 11, 1998, File Y1449 Fire Management Plan 1999-2001, 2002-2004, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>11</sup> Lassen Volcanic National Park, “Natural Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment,” July 1979, File 094: N16 Natural Resources Management Plan/Program 1979, Box 40, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Denniston interview; Isaacson interview; Schneider interview. Fire history research shows that effective fire suppression in the area dates to around 1910. The photo research was conducted by Alan Taylor, geography professor at Penn State University. See Alex Breitler, “Planned Blaze Creeps along at Lassen,” *Redding Record Searchlight*, September 4, 2004.

of the resources. As part of this effort, he compiled a fire history and inventoried fuel loadings in each section of the park. In 1979, he wrote the park's first natural resources management plan. With encouragement from the superintendent and chief ranger as well as the regional director, Denniston outlined in this plan the park's bold new approach to fire.<sup>12</sup>

Denniston recognized fire as a "dynamic element" in the forest ecology that had not been allowed to "function naturally" since the imposition of fire suppression in the early twentieth century. The goal was to "restore the natural role of fire." This was to be accomplished by a combination of three management practices: natural fire, prescribed fire, and fire suppression. Initially, the plan stated, the park would focus on natural fire. The plan defined eleven areas of variable size as "natural fire units." These units generally covered the higher elevations of the park where the timber was not as dense. All combined, the units covered about one third of the total park area. When a lightning-strike fire began in one of the units, park staff would monitor it, allowing the fire to run its course only so long as it stayed within the limits of what the park's fire team and its cooperators could suppress at any time and only so long as the fire did not threaten human life, cultural resources or physical facilities, or endangered species.<sup>13</sup>

Starting in that summer of 1979, the park began to experiment with allowing such "prescribed natural fires" to burn. "Basically, if there was a lightning strike in the park we'd go out and see where it was and see if it was a danger to anybody," former Chief Ranger Al Schneider explained. If conditions were right, they would let the fire go. These actions made the Forest Service nervous. "At the time it was a little scary," Schneider recalled. "The Forest Service would call up and say, 'what the hell are you guys doing?'"<sup>14</sup> The Forest Service, long accustomed to exercising leadership in wildland fire policy, was now a step behind the Park Service in embracing natural fire as a management tool and thought the Park Service was moving too fast. Local forest officials worried that the park's relatively small resources management staff was getting out of its depth.

The USFS attitude was important because in the 1970s it had a far stronger firefighting capability than the NPS, and Lassen Volcanic relied on the Forest Service for backup in fire suppression. During the 1970s, Lassen Volcanic National Park and the Lassen National Forest made great strides in developing closer cooperation. The Susanville Interagency Fire Center, a unit that combined the fire detection capabilities and firefighting resources of the Forest Service, Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and California Department of Forestry, was the first of its kind in the nation when it opened in 1975. Cooperation also included sharing of equipment and joint

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<sup>12</sup> Lassen Volcanic National Park, "Natural Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment," July 1979; Denniston interview; Schneider interview.

<sup>13</sup> Lassen Volcanic National Park, "Natural Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment," July 1979.

<sup>14</sup> Schneider interview.

training exercises. Under a separate cost-sharing agreement, the park staffed the Mount Harkness Lookout and the Lassen National Forest staffed the West Prospect Peak Lookout for the mutual benefit of both areas.<sup>15</sup>

Despite the Forest Service's initial skepticism toward the park's use of natural fire, in 1980 it cooperated with the park in developing a joint fire management plan for Lassen Volcanic National Park and the adjoining 14,000-acre Caribou Wilderness on the Lassen National Forest. Still, the Forest Service continued to take a more conservative posture. In the summer of 1984, the joint fire management plan was put to the test. An early spring thaw and hot temperatures in July led to exceptionally dry conditions in the forest. Under the circumstances, the Forest Service was leery when the Park Service decided to designate a lightning-caused fire in the Badger Flat area a natural prescribed fire rather than suppress it. The fire stayed within prescription for two weeks, but on the morning of August 23 it escaped and was declared a wildfire. Suppression efforts brought the Badger Fire under control by 6 p.m. on August 26, but only after it had spread across the park boundary into a stand of commercial timber on the Lassen National Forest. The fire burned approximately 1,432 acres of park land and 464 acres of the national forest. The total cost of suppression was about \$463,000, while the estimated value of the timber loss was \$142,000. "They gave me hell for that one," Denniston remembered. "I was reckless and I'll admit that now." The day after the fire was suppressed, a team made up of two people from each agency's regional office was appointed to review the joint fire management plan. Awaiting the team's report, Denniston took a copy of the plan, singed all its edges with a cigarette lighter, and bravely told his colleagues, "This plan looks like it survived the Badger Fire." The review team came back with a list of recommendations that would make the plan more like a procedure manual, but in spirit the plan was vindicated.<sup>16</sup>

Still, the Badger Fire made the park gun-shy to take the next step and experiment with prescribed fire. Among the revisions made to the fire management plan was a requirement that the park employ a qualified fire manager (soon to be known as a fire management officer or FMO). With no such person on staff, the park cobbled together a burn unit composed of Denniston, rangers Ken Kelley and Larry Feser, and sign maker Michael Schneegas, who was designated the prescribed burn boss trainee, to conduct its first exercise with prescribed fire. In May 1985, this team ignited a prescribed burn in the headquarters area. The prescribed fire covered not quite five acres and was aimed at

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<sup>15</sup> Schneider interview; SAR, 1976; W. Stephenson to Jim Berlin, December 11, 1975, File 003: Y14 Forest Fire Control, 1966-1986; R. C. Johnson to Al Schneider, October 14, 1986; Chief Ranger to Chris Cameron, February 11, 1988, File 14: Y14 Wildland Fire Management – FIREPRO Program Authorization, 1989, Box 44, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>16</sup> National Park Service, Western Region, and U.S. Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, "Review Report: Lassen Volcanic National Park – Caribou Wilderness Fire Management Plan," August 1984, File 13: Y14 Wildland Fire Management – FIREPRO Programs 1988, Box 44, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Denniston interview.

reducing hazard fuel in the ponderosa pine forest understory. The exercise went off without a hitch. The fire was ignited with drip torches. The ignition was done over a four-hour period, the fire was allowed to burn overnight, and mop-up was accomplished the following morning.<sup>17</sup> This was followed by a second prescribed burn at headquarters the following winter. In the meantime, Schneegas had transferred out of Lassen Volcanic and ranger George Giddings was appointed burn boss in his place. The second burn, too, was uneventful.<sup>18</sup>

In 1986, Superintendent Blinn applied for an increase in the park's base funding to provide for a new fire manager position. Dean Clark, a ranger with extensive training in fire management, transferred to Lassen Volcanic in 1987 and served in an unofficial capacity as head of prescribed burning until the FMO position was finally funded in 1991. In the meantime, lacking a full-fledged fire management team, the park remained somewhat tentative in applying fire to the landscape despite its progressive stand on fire management proclaimed more than a decade earlier. Compounding the park's difficulties, the park's fire management plan came under high-level review again in the aftermath of the controversial Yellowstone fires of 1988 (as did all fire management plans in the National Park System). Use of natural and prescribed fire was actually put on the shelf in 1991 and 1992 while the joint Lassen Volcanic National Park – Caribou Wilderness fire management plan was revised yet another time.<sup>19</sup>

The park's fire management program finally emerged from these doldrums in the mid-1990s, when it achieved the level of fiscal resources and expertise necessary to manage a greater number of natural and prescribed fires. Funding for the program took off, largely in response to better funding for fire at the national level. Since the 1980s, when NPS Director Russell Dickenson initiated a separate budget analysis system for fire needs called FIREPRO, funding of Lassen's fire management program has been largely independent of park operating funds. From 1994 to 1999, FIREPRO funding at Lassen Volcanic climbed from about \$150,000 to over \$600,000 per year. The FMO position was raised from GS-9 to GS-12, and the fire staff was transferred from the natural resources division back to the protection division, where it grew into a separate branch of fire and aviation management. By 2000, this branch rivaled the other park divisions in

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<sup>17</sup> Michael Schneegas, "Case Incident Record," no date, File 32, Y1421 Prescribed Burns 1985, Box 44, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>18</sup> L. Dean Clark to Superintendent, December 9, 1985; Gilbert E. Blinn to Clark, December 19, 1985, File 32: Y1421 Prescribed Burns 1985, Box 44, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>19</sup> Superintendent to Regional Director, April 24, 1986, enclosing Natural Resources Project Statement, File 33: Y1421 Prescribed Burns 1986; Acting NPS Fire Director to Regional Director, May 2, 1989; Al Denniston to Superintendent et al., July 17, 1989, File 36: Y1421 Prescribed Burns 1989, Box 44, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; SAR, 1991; Gilbert E. Blinn, "Scoping Letter," April 20, 1990, File Y14: Wildland Fire Management 1993-1995, LAVO Central Files.

size with six permanent and twelve seasonal employees, including one permanent and one seasonal employee who were actually in the Forest Service.<sup>20</sup>

Another wildfire, the Huffer Fire, tested the mettle of this fire management team just as the Badger Fire had tested the resolve of key staff at an earlier point in the evolution of the park's fire policy. On July 29, 1997, a lightning strike ignited a fire near the east edge of the park and was detected by the lookout on Mount Harkness. On inspection, the fire was found to meet the park policy's parameters for a prescribed natural fire and was allowed to burn. The Forest Service concurred in that decision. Over the next seven days, a team monitored the fire while a high-pressure weather system built over the area, making conditions steadily more hazardous. On August 7, winds blew up and the fire began running north, with spot fires developing up to a mile ahead of the main fire front as the blaze grew in extent from 58 to 198 acres. At that point it became a wildfire and the fire management team called for backup. On August 8, the fire grew rapidly to 1,300 acres and smokejumpers arrived late in the day. On August 9, the fire was fifty percent contained, and three days later it was fully contained. It burned for another six days, finally covering about 2,290 acres – roughly the area east of Snag Lake from Mount Hoffman to Ash Butte.<sup>21</sup>

The Huffer Fire provoked a strong public backlash against the fire policy. Local people voiced two principal concerns. One concern was over the perceived destruction of forest. Some people would not accept the ecological perspective that a burnt forest gave new life to the ecosystem. They actually mourned the deaths of so many trees. "I feel sickened, as if I've lost a loved one," a Chester resident wrote in a letter to the editor of the *Chester Progressive*. The Yellowstone fires were still fresh in people's memories and they mistrusted the Park Service's judgment. They might accept the idea that fuel loads had to be reduced, but they feared the effort would get out of control, allowing fire to lay waste to the park.<sup>22</sup>

The other concern was over smoke. People worried about the effect that smoky skies had on their health and on the local tourism-based economy. Many local people, having moved to the area from other parts of California to get away from overpopulation, congestion, and smog, were particularly sensitive to air pollution. They had powerful allies in the regional and county regulatory agencies that were charged with enforcing air quality standards. The Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District, representing Plumas, Nevada, and Sierra counties, complained that the Huffer Fire produced quantities of particulate matter in the atmosphere over Chester and Quincy that exceeded

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<sup>20</sup> Rothman, *A Test of Adversity and Strength*, 169-70, 221-23; Fire and Aviation Management Staff, Lassen Volcanic National Park, "2000 Annual Fire Program Review and Summary," File Y1449: Fire Management Plan 1999-2001, 2002-2004, LAVO Central Files; Schneider interview.

<sup>21</sup> National Park Service, USDA Forest Service, "Huffer Fire: Review of Management Actions, Lassen Volcanic National Park and Lassen National Forest," December 11, 1998.

<sup>22</sup> "Concerned About Fire," *Chester Progressive*, August 12, 1997; William E. Sundahl to Marilyn Parris, September 2, 1997, File Y14: Wildland Fire Management 1996-1998, LAVO Central Files.

California's ambient air quality standard. More broadly, the district's air pollution control officer, Rodney A. Hill, questioned the viability of the park's fire policy in the face of increasingly stringent federal air quality standards. Those standards included new regional haze regulations for the protection of visibility in national parks and wilderness areas. On this point, Hill was joined by Plumas County Supervisor Bill Dennison, who noted that a conflict existed between federal wildland fire policy, which called for a five-fold increase in prescribed burning over the next few years, and the federal government's efforts to reduce air pollution.<sup>23</sup>

The Park Service responded to these criticisms by insisting that the fire policy was sound and necessary. A prescribed natural fire that turned into a wildfire did not represent a failure of fire management, NPS officials explained, for this potential outcome was built into the prescription in the first place. Park Service officials reminded critics that fire was a part of the ecosystem. "To perpetuate natural processes and allow fire to play its role in ecosystem maintenance," Superintendent Parris answered one critic, "it is necessary for fire to burn (under certain constraints) under natural conditions, when it naturally occurs." Regional Director John J. Reynolds made the case for use of managed fire to Congressman Wally Herger this way: "It is important to note that these fire programs have been developed over the years, incorporating the best science, to allow a national park to meet the mission of the National Park Service and the enabling congressional legislation which created the park."<sup>24</sup>

Responding to the issue of air pollution was more complicated. In the first place, park officials questioned the data. The particulate counts reported by Plumas County during the Huffer Fire appeared to be implausibly high considering that the prevailing wind blew the smoke north. But that technical issue aside, park officials recognized they had a problem. Air quality concerns had to be weighed alongside resource benefits for each prescribed natural fire. In large part, the conflict between air quality and prescribed fire was to play out at a higher level between EPA and the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture as the federal agencies renegotiated ambient air standards. In the meantime, the biggest contribution that the park could make was through education at the local level. As part of a national wildland fire plan adopted by all federal land management agencies in 1995, the Park Service created 20 new positions nationwide dedicated to educating the local public about fire. One of these positions was assigned to serve Lassen Volcanic, Lava Beds National Monument, and Whiskeytown National Recreation Area. The fire education information specialist sought to inform the public about the ecological benefits of fire on the landscape. One thrust of the education program was to break down public intolerance for smoke. As one fire ecologist remarked

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<sup>23</sup> Rodney A. Hill to Marilyn Parris, August 19, 1997, File Y14: Wildland Fire Management 1996-1998, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>24</sup> Marilyn Parris to Rodney A. Hill, September 19, 1997; Parris to William E. Sundahl, October 2, 1997; John J. Reynolds to Wally Herger, October 7, 1997, File Y14: Wildland Fire Management 1996-1998, LAVO Central Files.

– perhaps with a little exasperation – clear air in the summers was unnatural. Westerners had grown accustomed to clear air as an incidental amenity of fire suppression, and now they needed to adjust their expectations as total fire suppression became a thing of the past.<sup>25</sup>

The Huffer Fire marked the new fire policy’s coming of age. In its aftermath the fire management program went “under the microscope,” as the park’s former FMO Mike Lewelling remembered, and it finally emerged in a stronger position. In still another revision of the fire management plan, the park and the national forest parted ways, enabling the Park Service to adopt more aggressive prescriptions. As the Lassen Volcanic fire team gained confidence, it increased both the number and size of prescribed burns. The park made aggressive strides in all the preparations required for prescribed burns – such as conducting archeological and biological surveys in advance of the burn units, preparing fire lines, and thinning along a project’s boundaries. “At Lassen, we’re way ahead of the game on those sorts of things,” Lewelling stated. These advance preparations, combined with favorable weather conditions, made 2004 a banner year. In the spring, the park conducted two prescribed burns near Manzanita Lake and Butte Lake, and that summer, it managed ten prescribed natural fires, including one at Bluff Lake that was discovered on July 4 and burned for two months, eventually covering 3,400 acres. In 2005, the park conducted its largest prescribed burn to date, which covered 4,090 acres on Prospect Peak. After forty years of experimentation and preparation, the Park Service was effectively implementing the Leopold Report’s single most important recommendation for Lassen Volcanic National Park: it had returned natural fire to the landscape.<sup>26</sup>

## **Wildlife Management**

With its small size and high elevations, Lassen Volcanic National Park never did have an abundance of large fauna, and without those wildlife populations it did not have major wildlife management issues compared to many other national parks in the last third of the twentieth century. The park’s small population of black bears did not pose major problems. The relatively secretive bears did not turn into roadside panhandlers or regularly feed at large garbage dumps (although they occasionally raided garbage cans), and the park maintained a record of never having had a bear mauling incident. Black-tailed deer, the park’s only ungulate, caused some concern as the herd was sometimes overabundant, sometimes depleted. But since the deer only moved into the park area for

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<sup>25</sup> Marilyn H. Parris to R. Michael Kussow, October 2, 1997, File Y14: Wildland Fire Management 1996-1998, LAVO Central Files; Isaacson interview; Lewelling interview.

<sup>26</sup> Lewelling interview; “Lassen Volcanic National Park Program a Success,” *Red Bluff Daily News*, February 2, 2006.

summer range, its management was primarily a matter for officials in the California Department of Fish and Game, who regulated the fall hunting season. The park's rodents were a concern insofar as they sometimes became vectors for bubonic plague, posing a potential public health threat; however, officials of the California Department of Public Health generally took the lead in managing that problem. The park had no large mammals on the endangered species list, no exotic nuisance animals, and it did not attempt to reintroduce any extirpated species. (The Leopold Report recommended reintroducing bighorn sheep at both Lassen Volcanic and Lava Beds; the Park Service did reintroduce the animal at Lava Beds but the reintroduction ultimately failed.) In short, the park got by without needing to devote much staff time to wildlife management.

In the wake of the Leopold Report, the park's meager staff resources for wildlife management were plain to see. Year after year, the superintendent was required to submit an annual report on wildlife conditions in the park. In 1967, Superintendent Hallock began his report with the blunt statement, "We find this a very difficult report to write in that we have very limited data on wildlife from observations or any other activity." Wildlife population estimates merely came from observations by rangers on patrol, Hallock noted. There was no formal census and no person on staff with a wildlife biology background. Population counts were no more than best guesses. "We want this situation to be recognized so that our figures will not be taken too seriously," Hallock wrote.<sup>27</sup>

The situation improved after the park hired Denniston as its first resources management specialist in 1975. Denniston spent most of his time in the field. Even after his position was reclassified in the biological series and he was promoted to chief of natural resources, he was given special dispensation to spend up to two-thirds of his time in the field – an unusual feature for a division chief position by that time. Still, he was spread very thin. Not only was he the only person on staff to oversee wildlife management, his position also covered forestry, rare and exotic plants, and aquatic resources.<sup>28</sup>

When Denniston came on board, the park had long been concerned that it had too many deer. The park's deer belonged to what the California Department of Fish and Game called the East Tehama Deer Herd, the largest migratory herd in California. Each year, a part of the herd spent the summer in the high country within the park. A study by Gary B. Donart, professor of range management at Humboldt State University, confirmed that the summer deer range in the park was degraded by too much browsing by deer. Evidence of "high lining" – the effect on forage plants when starving deer ate everything they could reach while standing on their hind legs – could be found throughout the park. Willow plants were especially hard hit. The overabundance of deer caused concern not

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<sup>27</sup> Superintendent to Regional Director, May 1, 1967, File 144: N2621 Wildlife Reports, 1965-1975, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>28</sup> Denniston interview.

only about the long-term health of the deer population, but also the potential effects the deer herd might have on plant communities.<sup>29</sup>

By the mid-1970s, wildlife managers had a new concern. State wildlife officials believed the population of the East Tehama Deer Herd was plummeting. Denniston collected data on the age of deer found in the park and shared his data with wildlife biologist Tom E. Ramsey of the California Department of Fish and Game. By matching the two data sets, they could estimate the winter kill of fawns as the herd moved between summer range in the park and winter range outside the park. According to Ramsey, annual mortality of fawns ran to 77 percent, with nearly two out of three fawn deaths occurring on the winter range. That satisfied Ramsey that the deer's short range, the portion of the deer's habitat in which its food supply was limiting growth of the herd, lay outside the park. These findings led Ramsey to reduce the number of deer tags issued to hunters so as to grow the number of young bucks and increase hunter success in the future. Of course, this did not relieve pressure on the deer's summer range in the park. Inasmuch as the park relied on the state's regulation of the fall hunt to control the size of the deer herd, the park's interests were only imperfectly aligned with the state's interests.<sup>30</sup>

Later, the decline of the deer herd was attributed to summer droughts in the 1970s, which made the herd's summer range its short range. The California Department of Fish and Game estimated that the herd went from a high of around 100,000 head in the early 1960s to a low of around 35,000, from which it rebounded to around 70,000 by the mid-1980s. While the reduction of the herd brought relief to plant communities in the park, it posed another concern: a scarcity of deer could spell trouble for predators, especially the park's miniscule population of cougars.<sup>31</sup> Maintaining the predator population was crucial in part because the predator population was already too small to keep the deer herd in check. The fewer the predators, the more dependent the park was on public hunting for holding down the number of deer.

Park officials maintained that Lassen Volcanic did not have a significant bear problem. The black bear population was small – an estimated ten to twenty bears – and problem bears were rare. Still, individual bears occasionally grew habituated to human food sources and became nuisances around one of the campgrounds. One “garbage bear” known as “Humphrey,” who had become habituated to human food sources elsewhere and was captured and released on the Lassen National Forest, turned up in the park in July 1972 and began making nighttime raids on Manzanita Lake Campground. Other

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<sup>29</sup> Gary B. Donart, “Analysis of Deer Browse Conditions and Ecological Relationships in Lassen Volcanic National Park,” 1968, U.S. Department of the Interior Library.

<sup>30</sup> Tom E. Ramsey to Alan E. Denniston, August 19, 1980, File 86: N1427 Tehama Deer Herd 1980-86, Box 40, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>31</sup> Statement on Black-Tailed Deer Monitoring in Division of Natural Resources Management, Lassen Volcanic National Park, “Lassen Volcanic National Park, A Summary of Monitoring Activities for 1998,” April 1999, Natural Resources Division Records, LAVO Files.

“garbage bears,” however, were home grown; a number plagued Butte Lake Campground during the summers of 1976 through 1978. Nuisance bears often turned up around Drakesbad as well. During the 1970s, such bears were trapped, taken to remote areas 50 miles outside the park, and released.<sup>32</sup>

Starting in the late 1970s, Denniston oversaw a change in the park’s approach to problem bears. Denniston and others, including ranger George Giddings, grew concerned that relocating troublesome bears put undue stress on the bears and did not really get to the root of the problem, which was the availability of human food. Instead, they argued, management needed to focus on replacing garbage cans and dumpsters with bear-proof garbage receptacles and educating visitors on the importance of keeping food sealed away.<sup>33</sup>

“Bear-proofing” the entire park took many years. Starting in the 1980s, the park installed bear-proof garbage receptacles, first in the Butte Lake and Warner Valley campgrounds, then in the Kings Creek Picnic Area and the Summit Lake area. The concession followed the park’s lead, but slowly. As long as old garbage cans remained anywhere in the park, there were occasional bear incidents. In 1995, a bear got into an old-style garbage can still in use outside the Manzanita Lake Camper Store. Finally, in the early 2000s, the park installed bear-proof food lockers in every campsite within each campground. But bear-proof trash receptacles and food lockers were not the whole answer. Maintenance crews had to step up garbage collection as bears could be attracted to jam-packed receptacles where thoughtless people had simply deposited their garbage on the ground beside them. And once in a while a bear broke into an ice chest or raided a campsite. Invariably, the bears were attracted by food smells. These incidents pointed to the need for public education along with bear-proofing. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the park still experienced a few bear incidents each year but the number was kept to a minimum.<sup>34</sup>

Rodent control took the form of monitoring rodent populations in campgrounds and staying alert for potential outbreaks of the bubonic plague, as such an incident could pose a public health risk. Ordinarily one or two biologists from the California Department of Health Services conducted an annual census in the park, which generally included chipmunks and ground squirrels and sometimes other rodents as well. The census was made in early summer before the campgrounds became busy. Individual

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<sup>32</sup> Survey of Current Bear Problems and Related Management Activities in the National Park System, January 20, 1975, File 75: N1927 Bears (Misc. data) 1967-78, Box 40, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; “Humphrey Bear Moves to Lassen,” *Redding Record Searchlight*, July 15, 1972; “Lassen Faces Bear Problem,” *Redding Record Searchlight*, July 20, 1978.

<sup>33</sup> Butte Lake Technician to Chief Ranger, July 6, 1978, File 108: N1615 Bear Management Correspondence 1970-92, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>34</sup> Chief, Resources Management, to Superintendent, August 18, 1986, August 22, 1986, and July 21, 1988, File 77: N1427 Bear Reports, 1986, 1988, Box 40, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Chris Schmidt, Case/Incident Report, July 13, 1994; Chief, Resources Management, to Superintendent, July 7, 1995, File N1427: Mammals 1993-1995, LAVO Central Files; Johnson interview.

rodents were trapped and tested for plague bacteria by taking blood samples as well as by combing each animal for fleas and testing the fleas. Captured rodents were released after testing. In addition to this yearly activity, sometimes park staff collected rodent carcasses and submitted them for testing.<sup>35</sup>

When rodent populations were up, the potential grew for an epizootic plague die-off. Monitoring the plague hazard, biologists from the California Department of Health Services worked with the superintendent and district rangers in implementing the proper level of precaution. Sometimes the park posted signs in campgrounds alerting the public to the fact that plague bacteria were present in the rodent population. More rarely, it closed campgrounds for the protection of visitors.<sup>36</sup> The California Department of Health Services reserved the option to recommend a “control effort.” As prescribed in the park’s natural resources management plan, the control effort normally consisted of attacking the flea population by spraying pesticides directly into rodent burrows or by placing baited dusting boxes in the affected area.<sup>37</sup>

Another rodent, the beaver, presented the park with its only problem of an exotic animal – although park officials debated whether it was indeed exotic. Beaver occurred naturally in the northern part of the park within the upper Hat Creek drainage, but the status of this animal in Warner Valley was anything but clear. Old timers in Warner Valley insisted that the beavers were newcomers (descended from reintroduced beaver on the Lassen National Forest) and unwelcome. As these beavers made dams on Hot Springs Creek, they threatened to wreak havoc on the hot pool at Drakesbad Guest Ranch as well as other landscape features of value to the resort. In 1980, if not before, beavers went to work on damming the outlet of Dream Lake, an artificial trout pond located just half a mile from the lodge. The beaver structure threatened to raise the water level and destroy the manmade dam that had formed Dream Lake in the first place. Wranglers employed by the concession took measures to thwart the beavers until a park ranger stopped them.<sup>38</sup> The beaver activity at Dream Lake lay at the heart of a long-running debate over park management of this animal in Warner Valley. Was the beaver a former native deserving of protection, or was it an exotic – and a varmint – that needed to be controlled?

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<sup>35</sup> Charles R. Smith to Wilbur Stephenson, October 30, 1979, File 214: N50 Pest & Weed Control Vector Control 1979-89, Box 42, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>36</sup> Crag Campground was closed two weeks early in 1976. Manzanita Lake Campground was closed for two weeks in August 1977 and then reopened. For news releases and correspondence on these episodes, see File 213: N50 Pest & Weed Control Vector Control, 1976-78, Box 42, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>37</sup> Charles R. Smith to Ken Kelley, September 3, 1985, File 214: N50 Pest & Weed Control Vector Control 1979-89, Box 42, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Lassen Volcanic National Park, “Natural Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment,” July 1979.

<sup>38</sup> Resources Management Specialist to Superintendent, September 18, 1980, File 30: N1423 Fish Stocking Policy, 1980-81, Box 39, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

Determining the beaver's status proved to be exceedingly difficult. Historical research confirmed that beaver had occurred in the Lassen area before 1850 – the year that park officials took as their benchmark for a pristine state of nature in the area – but historical records were too scant and imprecise to confirm whether beaver had occurred in Warner Valley itself or to indicate when, if ever, they had been extirpated. In the absence of historical certainty about these things, two theories developed about the origins of the present beaver population. One theory held that the beaver moved into the area from points south of the park in the Feather River drainage. This source population consisted of various nonnative subspecies of beaver (mostly *Castor Canadensis taylori*) that had been transplanted into the Feather River drainage by state game wardens between 1923 and 1949. According to this theory, without solid evidence that beaver had once occupied the Feather River drainage it was necessary to assume that the present beaver population in Warner Valley had only arrived there through human action and was therefore exotic. The rival theory held that if beaver thrived in Warner Valley under present conditions then they surely colonized this same habitat at an earlier time as well. Moreover, it was likely that some beaver had entered Warner Valley in recent decades from the north via the divide at Summit Lake; this source population was the native subspecies *Castor canadensis shastensis*. Therefore, this theory suggested, beaver were indigenous to Warner Valley and the matter of subspecies was not significant.<sup>39</sup>

As these two theories offered conflicting direction for management, park policy on the beaver vacillated back and forth. In 1959, Superintendent Freeland called for efforts to control the beaver. Snippets of evidence in the park records suggest that rangers removed some beavers in the 1960s.<sup>40</sup> These control efforts ceased in the 1970s. Assistant Chief Naturalist Henry C. Warren, Jr. made a review of park files in 1973 and recommended that park managers “accept beaver as a part of the natural scene” and give them protection.<sup>41</sup> Superintendent Stephenson continued this policy even though he received conflicting advice from two subsequent reports made in 1977 and 1981. In the first of these two reports, Guy Anderson, the park's assistant chief naturalist, made a thorough review of the historical literature and argued that the historical record was

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<sup>39</sup> The Park Service has produced at least four reports on the history and status of beaver in Warner Valley. See: Assistant Chief Park Naturalist to Superintendent, April 25, 1973, File 109: N1615 Wildlife Management – Beavers, 1959-86, Box 41; Guy Anderson, “Summary of Research on the Status of Beaver in Lassen Volcanic National Park,” March 7, 1977, File 78: N1427; G. M. Fellers, “Historical Evaluation and Management Recommendations for Beavers at Lassen Volcanic National Park,” March 31, 1981, File 80: N1427; Paul Beier, “Assessment of Beaver (*Castor canadensis*) Habitat in Lassen Volcanic National Park,” August 27, 1998, File 81: N1427, Box 40, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives. The report by Fellers lists the transplants by date, location, number of beaver, and type of subspecies. The first was in 1923, the remaining nine were from 1945 to 1949. A total of 60 beaver were transplanted: 12 “Shasta,” 23 “Sonora” (native to the Colorado River area), and 25 “Idaho.”

<sup>40</sup> Johnson interview; Edward D. Freeland to Don C. Hummel, March 25, 1959, File 109: N1615 Wildlife Management – Beavers, 1959-86, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>41</sup> Assistant Chief Park Naturalist to Superintendent, April 25, 1973, File 109: N1615 Wildlife Management – Beavers, 1959-86, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

simply too scant to provide a definitive answer. But in the second report, NPS biologist Gary M. Fellers concluded from historical evidence that the beavers were indeed an exotic animal that should be controlled. As Denniston and his staff disagreed with Fellers's findings, Stephenson simply ignored the report.<sup>42</sup>

In 1986, Superintendent Blinn reversed course, announcing that the park would take measures to control the beaver.<sup>43</sup> As Denniston explained his boss's decision, "They were always giving us hell about doing research and then ignoring the research findings."<sup>44</sup> Denniston duly acquired some heavy, lethal traps and took one of these traps to the beaver dam at Dream Lake, busted a hole in the dam, and placed the trap in the hole. When he returned a few days later, the trap was untouched. Miraculously, the beavers had managed to repair the hole without tripping the mechanism. This ended the park's reluctant campaign against the beaver, although the traps still hung menacingly in the garage at park headquarters for many more years.<sup>45</sup>

In 1998, the Park Service contracted for yet another study, hoping to lay the matter to rest. The study's author, Paul Beier, a Ph.D. student at Northern Arizona University, examined topographical and environmental conditions in an effort to provide new, diagnostic perspective on the scant and ambiguous historical record. His findings, however, only offered a little more grist for both points of view. On the one hand, Beier's analysis seemed to give more credibility to the hypothesis that the upper Feather River drainage (including Warner Valley) had been devoid of beaver in 1850, an idea that some people had heretofore found highly implausible. On the other hand, his analysis also substantiated the contention that there was no geographic barrier preventing beaver on the north side of the park from colonizing the Warner Valley area. In the final analysis, Beier seemed to suggest, it did not really matter if all of the beaver in Warner Valley had moved into the area from a non-indigenous source population in the Feather River drainage, for if it had not been those beaver it would have been other beaver instead. "I suspect that, if humans had not intervened, Shasta beaver would have extended their range southward over a few decades or centuries," Beier concluded. "Indeed it is possible (but unlikely) that Warner Valley beaver are a natural southward colonization of Shasta beaver. If this were the case, genetic analysis could almost certainly confirm this fact, although at considerable expense."<sup>46</sup> This was good enough for Superintendent Parris, who declared the beaver would be protected. Louise Johnson, the park's chief of natural resources, agreed. After forty years of contention over whether the beavers in Warner Valley were of the wrong subspecies, the Park Service waved

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<sup>42</sup> Denniston interview.

<sup>43</sup> Gilbert E. Blinn to John Koeberer, August 18, 1986, File 109: N1615 Wildlife Management – Beavers, 1959-86, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>44</sup> Denniston interview.

<sup>45</sup> Johnson interview.

<sup>46</sup> Beier, "Assessment of Beaver (*Castor canadensis*) Habitat in Lassen Volcanic National Park," August 27, 1998.

these objections aside. “They are all North American beavers,” Johnson said. “I’m sure prehistorically they were out there – there’s fantastic beaver habitat all over the place.”<sup>47</sup>

The problem remained of how, or indeed whether, to protect the manmade dam that formed the artificial pond near Drakesbad known as Dream Lake. Rather than enter into a full-blown public debate over ripping out the dam and obliterating the artificial pond, which many loyal patrons of Drakesbad deemed to be an integral part of the cultural landscape, the park tried to discourage beaver activity at this site with an experimental device called a “beaver deceiver.” A siphon was buried below the water surface at the outlet so that, try as they might, beavers could not successfully plug the outlet and raise the level of the pond. With both ends of the siphon under water, there was no babbling sound to attract the beavers and lead them to plug the siphon itself. The beaver deceiver was installed in 2003, with the hopes that in time the beavers would get discouraged and leave Dream Lake alone.<sup>48</sup>

## Aquatic Resources Management

Whenever ecological restoration ran up against a traditional use like sport fishing, it encountered public resistance. No group fought to maintain its traditional use so tenaciously as did anglers. In 1975, the Park Service announced its intention to phase out stocking of fish in all waters of California’s four national parks. In the face of strong opposition by anglers and the California Department of Fish and Game, the Park Service waffled on its implementation of this policy and did not completely eliminate the stocking program at Lassen Volcanic until the early 1990s. Even then, anglers and state officials haggled with the NPS over the imposition of catch-and-release fishing at Manzanita Lake.

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<sup>47</sup> “Lassen Park Tries ‘Beaver Deceivers,’ *Sacramento Bee*, September 8, 2003; Johnson interview.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. Susan Watson believes that the cultural significance of the Drakesbad area and the park’s recognition that wilderness values did not apply here heavily influenced Parris’s resolution of Lassen’s beaver saga. “The basic issue here was not the natural or exotic status of the beaver, but the interpretation and enforcement of the concept of wilderness. Superintendent Parris was strongly in support of the aims of the Leopold Report, a worthy cause indeed. She had the educational signage and nature trail posts removed from trails, as well as any metal trail indicators in trees. She strongly encouraged a greatly expanded designated wilderness area in the Park’s forming new General Management Plan. Both the beaver and the Drakesbad meadow were exciting tools to overcome the influence of the Drakesbad guests, who were historically used to semi-developed areas within the Warner Valley. In one circulated official map of proposed wilderness areas, the line went up the south side of the Warner Valley Road and encircled a tightly drawn Drakesbad camp. In this try for carrying the Leopold Plan to its logical conclusion, she drew the ire of the Drakesbad guests, and fireworks erupted. The long history of mistrust between the park and Drakesbad finally culminated (if it can be said to be culminated) with the inclusion of Drakesbad and, indeed, the entire former holdings of the Sifford family, into the National Register for Historic Places. The beavers remain “natural” to the park, in spite of the greater evidence to the contrary, but the installation of the so-called Beaver Deceivers has rescued Dream Lake from further destruction at this point.” Comments on final draft report.

The gradual phasing out of artificial stocking in the national parks already had a long history dating back to the 1930s, when biologists first raised concerns about exotics. Its modern phase began in 1968 when the Park Service carried the Leopold Report's recommendation to restore natural conditions into its first general publication of NPS policies, *Administrative Policies for the Management of Natural Areas*. This document included the statement, "nonnative species (plants and animals) may not be introduced into natural areas." Since the policy referred to "nonnative species," officials in the Park Service construed the policy two ways. Some in the Park Service wanted to eliminate all artificial stocking of lakes and streams, arguing that stocking introduced unnaturally large fish populations into aquatic ecosystems. Others contended that stocking of *native* species was justified in order to sustain recreational fishing, a traditional use. Generally the argument tipped on another issue, whether or not stocking resulted in overuse of a lake or stream. Usually the mark of overuse was when the lake shore or stream banks became so heavily trampled by foot traffic that they were denuded of vegetation. In fact, some parks such as Mount Rainier stopped planting fish in the early 1960s in an effort to help vegetation recover along lake shores.<sup>49</sup>

In February 1972, Superintendent Boyer recommended phasing out fish stocking at Lassen Volcanic based on ecological principles as well as the problem of overuse. Boyer argued that it was time to attempt "to return many of the park waters back to what we would consider to be a natural aquatic environment." For some park waters this would mean no fish populations, and for others it would mean smaller fish populations that would not sustain current fishing levels. In addition, he called for the immediate cessation of fish stocking in certain backcountry lakes where shore lines were being "trampled and littered literally to death."<sup>50</sup>

The Regional Office responded to Boyer's memorandum by insisting that the phase-out of fish stocking must be gradual. If existing fish populations were rapidly depleted, the result could be "excessively destructive," one official wrote ambiguously. More to the point, if fishing opportunities were rapidly taken away there might be a public backlash. "The socioeconomic considerations of immediate and total elimination of this form of park use should not occur in our fervor to restore native ecosystems," this official cautioned.<sup>51</sup> However, official thinking on the issue was in flux and the Regional Office and the park soon swapped positions. By 1973, the Regional Office took the position that all fish stocking in the four parks in California should be phased out within a few years. Thereafter, as public opposition to the NPS fish policy mounted, the Regional Office's position hardened while the park, going through two changes of superintendents in 1972 and 1974, took the more moderate view. By the spring of 1975, Superintendent

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<sup>49</sup> Superintendent to Regional Director, February 17, 1972, File 25: N1423 Fish Stocking Policy, 1972-1973, Box 39, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Acting Assistant Regional Director to Superintendent, February 29, 1972, File 25: N1423 Fish Stocking Policy 1972-1973, Box 39, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

Stephenson was proposing that the phase-out of fish stocking ought to be limited initially to lakes and streams within the new wilderness area, while fish stocking should be allowed to continue in the front country until the park obtained more data on fishing pressure. To this suggestion, the Regional Office responded that the NPS objective of restoring natural conditions in lakes and streams should be carried out throughout the park. Finally, in a memo dated April 30, 1975, Regional Director Howard Chapman clarified how Lassen Volcanic would proceed. The park would continue stocking rainbow trout in Butte and Summit lakes; it would cease stocking in Manzanita and Reflection lakes owing to the geologic hazard. "We realize the political repercussions concerning phasing out fish planting," Chapman wrote to Stephenson. "We would hope that aquatic research can soon be undertaken which will provide a firm foundation for management of park resources."<sup>52</sup>

Anglers, anglers' clubs, and newspaper editors stormed over the NPS policy. The *Northern California Fishing and Hunting News* ran a headline over its editorial on the subject: "WE SAY NUTS TO YOU."<sup>53</sup> The California Department of Fish and Game, upset over the policy as well, fed these critics ammunition. As the department's director, E. C. Fullerton, informed a staff writer of the *Chester Progressive*, the number of lakes and streams in Lassen Volcanic National Park designated for trout plants had dropped from 27 in 1961 to just two in 1975. The number of fish planted in the park had declined from 200,000 per year to just 19,000 scheduled for the coming year. "It's a shame that the opportunity to enjoy fishing...is being eroded through the park policy," Fullerton said.<sup>54</sup> Other state officials asserted that the Park Service policy was rash and uninformed.

In direct response to the media barrage, the NPS called a series of meetings with representatives of the California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Forest Service, and anglers' groups, and at the end of the year it relented. On December 16, 1975, the Park Service announced that the fish stocking program would be resumed in all four California national parks at levels that prevailed in 1974. After a one-year hiatus, stocking of Manzanita Lake would be resumed. Crystal Lake would be stocked in lieu of Reflection Lake since the latter was located within the hazard zone below Chaos Crags. The moratorium on the phase-out would continue for two years while the Park Service and the California Department of Fish and Game carried out a joint study of the aquatic

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<sup>52</sup> Acting Regional Director to Superintendent, March 19, 1975; Regional Director to Superintendent, April 30, 1975, File 139: N2621 Annual Aquatic Resources Report 1970-1975, Box 41, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives. On the 1973 decision, see California Department of Fish and Game, "National Park Service Fisheries Management Policies," April 16, 1982, File 031: N142 Fish Stocking Policy 1982-1983, Box 39, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>53</sup> Cited in John A. Maciolek, "Aquatic Resources of Lassen Volcanic, Sequoia-Kings Canyon, and Yosemite National Parks," report prepared for California Department of Fish and Game and National Park Service-Western Region, August 1978, File 30: N1423 Fish Stocking Policy 1980-81, Box 39, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>54</sup> "Only Two Lakes at Lassen to be Planted," *Chester Progressive*, May 22, 1975.

resources in each park. A major goal of the study would be to evaluate fishing pressure and the ability of existing fish populations to sustain themselves through natural reproduction.<sup>55</sup>

In support of the study, Denniston hired two fisheries biology students in the summer of 1976 to survey the park's lakes. The survey included data collection of lake conditions, analysis of creel census data, and historical research on fish plants going back to 1928. The survey covered a total of 131 lakes. Of these, 17 contained fish populations and all but two of these contained trout. Only seven of these lakes were thought to have self-sustaining populations of trout. Denniston prepared a summary of the study in February 1977.<sup>56</sup>

What Denniston and the park staff learned from the 1976 survey only reinforced their sense that the stocking program was continuing to effect natural processes and that the park needed to pursue an end to stocking in order to fulfill the larger NPS management goal of working toward ecological restoration. For example, the survey found that wherever fish were planted, other vertebrates such as frogs were absent. Based on the survey results, Denniston was reasonably sure that most lakes in the park were originally barren of fish.<sup>57</sup>

The joint study by the Park Service and the California Department of Fish and Game had a rather different focus. Its primary concern was with the effect a no-stocking policy would have on fishing opportunities. After much delay in getting started, the joint study was completed in early 1978. The Park Service then gave the report to an independent reviewer, John A. Maciolek of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, who produced another report in August 1978. Despite the different focus of the joint study, Maciolek reached similar conclusions to Denniston. Most lakes with fish in Lassen Volcanic contained marginal fish habitat, and fish populations only survived in them through artificial stocking. If stocking were terminated at Lassen Volcanic, trout waters would soon be confined to just six lakes covering about nine percent of the total water surface area in the park. Some of these trout lakes might get fished out before their populations had a chance to stabilize, Maciolek predicted.<sup>58</sup>

The Park Service's effort to phase out fish stocking in the four national parks in California ran out of steam at the end of the decade. In essence, the change of

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<sup>55</sup> Howard H. Chapman to Mike Hayden, January 28, 1977, File 28: N1423 Fish Stocking Policy 1977; Superintendent to Regional Director, January 14, 1976, File 27: N1423 Fish Stocking Policy 1976-1977; W. Stephenson to A. E. Naylor, March 14, 1979, File 29: N1423 Fish Stocking Policy 1978-1979, Box 39, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>56</sup> Al Denniston, "Summary of 1976 Lake Survey Data Relating to the Status of Trout Fisheries in Lassen Volcanic National Park," February 1977, File 52: N1423 Fish Stocking Policy, Box 40, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>57</sup> Superintendent to Regional Director, October 23, 1986, File 32: N1423 Fish Stocking Policy 1985-1986, Box 39, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>58</sup> Maciolek, "Aquatic Resources of Lassen Volcanic, Sequoia-Kings Canyon, and Yosemite National Parks," August 1978.

administration in Washington in 1980 created a political climate in which the Park Service had to work more cooperatively with state officials and meet the state half way.<sup>59</sup> NPS officials recognized that public attitudes must evolve before the agency could phase out Lassen's fish stocking program entirely, and it saw that Manzanita Lake was key since public sentiment about the value of recreational fishing in the park centered on Manzanita Lake. Once known for its trophy-sized trout, Manzanita Lake had become harder and harder to fish over the years. Angler surveys from this period indicated that it took an average of four hours to catch a fish. In cooperation with the California Fish and Game Commission, the park took the unusual step of introducing catch-and-release fishing regulations at Manzanita Lake. Starting in 1986, anglers could keep just two trout of no more than ten inches in length (larger fish had to be put back in the lake), and tackle was restricted to artificial lures with a single barbless hook. At the same time, stocking was discontinued on an experimental basis. The idea was to gain public acceptance that Manzanita Lake would offer anglers a more challenging fishing experience. That way, fishing pressure might be reduced to the point that it would not destroy the fish population if stocking were permanently terminated. Indeed, it was hoped that by returning the lake to a natural population of fish, anglers might someday be able to catch trophy-sized "wild trout" in the lake.<sup>60</sup>

The experiment met with success and the catch-and-release fishing regulations and no-stocking policy were made permanent under a Manzanita Lake fisheries management plan completed in 1995.<sup>61</sup> Two years later, a project review boasted that the lake "provides anglers one of the best opportunities in California to catch-and-release

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<sup>59</sup> In 1979, the park produced a draft natural resources management plan and environmental assessment in which the fish stocking program was discussed. The discussion concluded with the statement: "The Superintendent looks for guidance to the Regional Director and the National Park Service Director for future policy guidelines." However, neither the regional director nor the director wanted to provide such guidance. In a memorandum dated July 8, 1982, Director Russell Dickenson explained the background of this controversy to the assistant secretary for fish and wildlife and parks, Ray Arnett. Dickenson indicated that the Park Service was reevaluating its fisheries resources on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with the effort currently underway to revise each park's natural resources management plan. Three years later, when Lassen Volcanic duly revised its plan, the park indicated that it was still awaiting the outcome of discussions at a higher level. "The National Park Service's Washington Office will consult on the matter with State fish and game agencies represented by the Western Association," the report stated. It went on to predict that the issue would not be resolved anytime soon, considering how polarized people had become over it. Meanwhile, annual stocking of rainbow trout would continue at the 1974 level. Lassen Volcanic National Park, "Natural Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment," July 1979; Director to Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, July 8, 1982, File 31: N1423 Fish Stocking Policy 1982-83, Box 39; Lassen Volcanic National Park, "Natural Resources Management Plan," July 1979, revised January 1985, File 99: N16 Natural Resources Management Plan, 1985, Box 40, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>60</sup> Howard H. Chapman to Harold C. Cribbs, March 21, 1985, File 32: N1423 Fish Stocking Policy 1985-1986, Box 39, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>61</sup> John M. Deinstadt, Glenn F. Sibbald, and Al Denniston, "Manzanita Lake (Lassen Volcanic National Park) Fisheries Management Plan," California Department of Fish and Game report, January 1995, File N1619: Water Life 1993-1995, LAVO Central Files.

large wild trout.”<sup>62</sup> In the meantime, stocking of other park waters finally ended in the early 1990s. Predictably, natural trout populations declined in several lakes where they had been maintained for so many years by artificial stocking. A decade and a half later, however, fishing remained a popular activity at Butte, Juniper, and Horseshoe lakes.

## **Biological Inventory and Monitoring**

Next to the return of fire to the landscape, biological inventory and monitoring (I&M) was probably the most significant development in natural resources management in Lassen Volcanic National Park’s first one hundred years. Like fire management, the I&M program had a long gestation in the park (and elsewhere in the National Park System) before it finally emerged in the late 1990s. In 2008, a decade into the formal I&M process, the natural resources management staff could claim that it had laid a new foundation for effective, long-term management of natural resources through systematic monitoring of selected indicators of the park’s ecological integrity.<sup>63</sup>

Biological inventory (without monitoring) had a long history in the park, beginning with nature studies in the 1930s. In the early years, however, biological inventory was driven less by resource management concerns than it was by the park’s educational function. Its aim was not so much to establish baseline data for monitoring changes in the environment as it was to learn about the biota for purposes of interpretation. For this reason, inventorying fell to the chief naturalist or to university professors who were issued collecting permits, and the effort focused on collection of specimens. Still, these efforts gave park managers a better understanding of the variety of resources the park contained.

The modern push for inventory and monitoring began in the 1970s. The Park Service developed the “natural resource management plan” as the key instrument for improving a park staff’s ecological knowledge about a park’s natural resources. When Al Denniston was hired as resources management specialist for Lassen, one of his immediate tasks was to prepare a natural resources management plan for the park. Recalling the strong support he received from the regional scientist at that time, Denniston noted that there were burning questions. “We needed to define the resource. What do you have? We needed to do inventory and monitoring.”<sup>64</sup> The park was only dimly aware of what threatened and endangered species existed within the park

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<sup>62</sup> John M. Deinstadt and Russell P. Lesko, “Status of the Rainbow Trout Fishery in Manzanita Lake (Lassen Volcanic National Park) based on Reports from Angler Survey Boxes in 1996,” Wild Trout Project File Report 97-1, January 1997, File 48: N1423 Wild Trout Project 1997, Box 40, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>63</sup> National Park Service, “Inventory and Monitoring of Park Natural Resources,” 2006, [www.nature.nps.gov/protectingrestoring/IM/inventoryandmonitoring.cfm](http://www.nature.nps.gov/protectingrestoring/IM/inventoryandmonitoring.cfm) (April 16, 2008).

<sup>64</sup> Denniston interview.

boundaries, or what rare plants occurred in the area. In 1976, Denniston employed two biology students to inventory fish populations in all park waters. In 1980, the park conducted an endangered raptors survey and learned that it had one nesting pair of bald eagles at Snag Lake. This discovery prompted the first example of systematic monitoring in the park.<sup>65</sup>

As Denniston mostly worked alone through the 1980s, biological inventory and monitoring remained in its infancy. In the late 1980s, the natural resources division began getting more seasonal staff and “started to grow up,” in Denniston’s words. In 1990, it had four permanent positions: the chief, a resources management specialist, a biological technician, and a clerk. But near the end of Denniston’s long tenure (he retired in January 1995), the division entered a brief time of turmoil for biologists in the Park Service. Amidst growing interest in ecosystem management, Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt established the National Biological Survey (NBS) in 1993, and all research grade biologists in the Park Service (and in other Interior Department agencies) were transferred to the new agency. Babbitt’s intent in creating the NBS was to foster an interagency ecosystem management approach and address land management issues on a national, regional, and local scale. His initiative was hampered from the outset, however, by suspicion on the part of private landowners, lack of support by Congress, and resistance from the federal agencies that had to give up their biologists. After a name change to National Biological Service, the fledgling agency was incorporated into the U.S. Geological Survey in 1996.<sup>66</sup>

Although Lassen Volcanic did not directly lose any staff in this reorganization, it stymied the natural resources division’s growth. Biological technician Steven Mitchelson was promoted to resources management specialist (to fill a vacancy left by Sharon Fedorchak, who had transferred to Zion the previous year), and the biological technician position was left vacant. Meanwhile, a major reorganization of the Park Service, spurred by the Clinton administration’s effort to “downsize” the federal bureaucracy, resulted in more uncertainty and retrenchment. On September 30, 1995, the Western Regional Office was replaced by the Pacific West Field Director’s Office (later renamed the Pacific West Regional Office), and Lassen Volcanic became part of the Pacific Great Basin Cluster, with support services provided by a “systems support office” in San Francisco. An important goal of the reorganization was to encourage more sharing of staff specialists between parks.<sup>67</sup>

These unsettling changes set the stage for Superintendent Blinn’s decision at the end of 1995 to combine Lassen’s interpretation division with the natural resources division. Russell Lesko, who had replaced Denniston as division chief only the year

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<sup>65</sup> Division of Natural Resources Management, Lassen Volcanic National Park, “Lassen Volcanic National Park, A Summary of Monitoring Activities for 1998,” April 1999, Natural Resources Division Records, LAVO Files.

<sup>66</sup> Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, 188-89.

<sup>67</sup> SARs, 1994, 1995.

before, was put in charge of interpretation following the departure of Lassen's chief of interpretation, Betty Knight. Blinn convinced his program managers that it was a necessary austerity measure; the money for Knight's GS-12 position would be reallocated for the hiring of seasonal interpreters whose numbers had been diminishing from year to year. These changes demoralized park staff, especially those in the former interpretation division. Compounding the problem, Lassen's sole resources management specialist had transferred out of the park in October 1995. Blinn noted in his annual report for 1996, "The branch of Resources Management continues to recover from the loss of over 30 years of 'institutional memory' which resulted when Al Denniston retired and Steve Mitchelson transferred." The division had begun to give "major emphasis" to biological inventory and monitoring, Blinn continued, despite these challenging circumstances.<sup>68</sup>

While Superintendent Blinn recognized the strong commitment to I&M then taking shape in the Park Service, it was his successor, Marilyn Parris, who facilitated this new direction in natural resources management at Lassen Volcanic. There was a critical moment, soon after her arrival, when she and her management team began scoping the park's new general management plan and someone asked about the condition of the natural resources. Lesko replied that the natural resources were in excellent condition. Parris turned to him and said, "Based on what? You know nothing about them." Pointing out that the park had "nothing" to measure the condition of its natural resources, Parris made it clear that she wanted to get the park to a new level of resource protection based on I&M. It was about this time that funding for I&M began to appear as a line item in each year's appropriations act for the Department of the Interior, and as Parris related, "we built on a great natural resource staff and started getting money in." In September 1997, the park held a "Vital Signs Workshop" aimed at scoping and directing the I&M effort at Lassen Volcanic. It was among the first parks to do so.<sup>69</sup>

By this time, the Park Service's I&M program was fully taking shape. I&M was to form the basis for ecosystem management in the National Park System. Vital signs were "selected physical, chemical, and biological elements and processes of park ecosystems that represent the overall health or condition of the park," a Park Service webpage explained. "Park vital signs monitoring is designed to inform managers of the condition of water, air, geologic resources, plants and animals, and the various ecological, biological, and physical processes that act on those resources."<sup>70</sup> The I&M program would unfold in two phases: an initial inventory phase in which the NPS compiled extensive information about park environments, ecological processes, threats, and management concerns, and a second phase in which vital signs were selected for

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<sup>68</sup> SARs, 1995, 1996; Blinn interview.

<sup>69</sup> Parris interview; Division of Natural Resources Management, "Lassen Volcanic National Park, A Summary of Monitoring Activities for 1998."

<sup>70</sup> National Park Service, "Park Vital Signs Monitoring: Taking the Pulse of the National Parks," [www.nature.nps.gov/challenge/brochures/vital\\_signs\\_monitoring\\_Mar\\_2004\\_screen.pdf](http://www.nature.nps.gov/challenge/brochures/vital_signs_monitoring_Mar_2004_screen.pdf) (April 16, 2008).

long-term monitoring.<sup>71</sup> The idea behind monitoring was that the I&M team would develop a conceptual model for the various ecosystems and based on that model they would hypothesize change or stasis for each element or function being monitored. When monitoring results deviated from what was predicted, the I&M team would revise its hypothesis and step up monitoring of that particular element or function. Vital signs monitoring was like preventative medicine; when I&M detected a significant problem, then resource managers could prescribe a treatment of one kind or another.

In 1999, NPS Director Bob Stanton announced Natural Resource Challenge, a five-year program to strengthen natural resources management, especially through enhanced funding for I&M. Soon the entire National Park System was organized into 32 monitoring networks. Each network contained units in geographic proximity to one another that possessed similar environments. Lassen Volcanic was designated part of the Klamath Network, which encompassed six units. In addition to Lassen Volcanic, these were Crater Lake National Park, Lava Beds National Monument, Oregon Caves National Monument, Redwood National and State Parks, and Whiskeytown National Recreation Area. Starting in 2001, the network began to receive an annual appropriation of \$800,000, considerably more than Lassen's natural resources division received as part of the park's base funding.<sup>72</sup> The Klamath Network completed its monitoring plan in 2005.

In contrast to the previous ninety years of resources management at Lassen Volcanic, I&M shifted the park's focus from black-tailed deer, bears, and trout to diverse organisms as well as abiotic elements (notably air quality). Starting in 1998, the program steadily added more components to I&M: peregrine falcon, bald eagle, songbirds, California spotted owl, rare plants, nonnative plants, amphibians, and others. Lassen's natural resources staff grew as well, once Superintendent Parris separated the park's natural resources and interpretation personnel into two distinct divisions once again in 1998. In 1999, Russell Lesko retired as chief of resources management and Louise Johnson, formerly at Yosemite, was hired in his place. At that time, the natural resources management division had three permanent staff, all generalists. Over the next decade, it grew to encompass six programs, each with a program manager. All specialists, some program managers worked alone while others supervised as many as five or six (mostly seasonal) employees. The six programs were wildlife management, vegetation management, compliance, I&M, forestry, and Geographic Information System (GIS) data management.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Dennis Odion et al., *Vital Signs Monitoring Plan for the Klamath Network: Phase II Report*, August 24, 2005, National Park Service – Klamath Network, Inventory and Monitoring Program, [www.science.nature.nps.gov/im/units/klmn/monitoring/documents/PhaseII/KLMN\\_Phase\\_II\\_monitoring\\_report.pdf](http://www.science.nature.nps.gov/im/units/klmn/monitoring/documents/PhaseII/KLMN_Phase_II_monitoring_report.pdf) (April 16, 2008).

<sup>72</sup> Johnson interview.

<sup>73</sup> Division of Natural Resources Management, Lassen Volcanic National Park, "Lassen Volcanic National Park, A Summary of Monitoring Activities for 2005," April 2006, Natural Resources Division Records, LAVO Files; Johnson interview.

The natural resources management division's proliferating activities in recent years are too numerous to be described individually here; they are amply recorded in the division's annual reports starting in 1999. The monitoring plan of 2005 provided a clear summary of the park's major natural resources management concerns at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Air and water pollution topped the list, followed by the park's ongoing efforts to restore disturbed areas such as the former downhill ski slope near the park's southwest entrance. Concerns about the park's peripheral areas included livestock trespass, snowmobile and other off-road vehicle use, and poaching. Logging on national forest lands had potential adverse effects for several sensitive species, including fisher, marten, northern goshawk, Sierra red fox, and California spotted owl. Some 53 exotic plant species were presumed to exist in or near the park, and a few of these (bull thistle, yellow star thistle, Scotch broom, knapweed) posed significant threats. The park had a number of rare plants, especially at high altitudes, that warranted special attention, and several bird species were under consideration for endangered listing.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Odion et al., *Vital Signs Monitoring Plan for the Klamath Network*. In addition, Lassen Volcanic National Park is included in an ongoing regional inventory effort that is providing data to compare to similar studies conducted nearly a century ago. The Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at the University of California, Berkeley, is "resurveying" the same geographic areas that Joseph Grinnell, the museum's founder, focused on in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 2006, biologist John Perrine initiated the resurvey of the same 3,000-square-mile "Lassen Transect" that Grinnell, Joseph Dixon, and Jean Linsdale reported on in their 1930 publication *Vertebrate Natural History of a Section of Northern California Through the Lassen Peak Region*. Perrine's multiple-year study examines populations of bird, mammal, reptile, and amphibian species and their habitats across a swath of northern California that extends from the Sacramento River to the Nevada border. "The surveys in the Lassen Transect will be important for determining whether the species range shifts recently documented in the Yosemite Transect [another Grinnell study area] are occurring through the state," the project's website reads. Grinnell Resurvey Project website, <http://mvz.berkeley.edu/Grinnell/lassen/index.html> (June 11, 2010).



## **Chapter Fourteen**

### **Preserving the Human Story**

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In 1966, just three years after the Leopold Report set a new course for Park Service policy on natural resources management, Congress passed the National Historic Preservation Act, which set a new course for Park Service policy on cultural resources management. At Lassen Volcanic, as in other parks, the full force of the legislation was not apparent until President Nixon signed Executive Order 11593 on May 13, 1971, directing all federal agencies to exercise leadership in preserving, restoring, and maintaining cultural properties under their stewardship. Between 1972 and 1975, the Park Service stepped up archeological surveys and initiated assessment of historic properties in response to the order. Henceforward, cultural resources management became a companion to natural resources management at Lassen Volcanic National Park just as it did throughout the National Park System.

The Park Service's commitment to cultural resources management contributed to a growing awareness of the interrelatedness between human culture and the natural environment. Lassen Volcanic's interpretation program displayed that changing perspective as it placed increasing emphasis on the human factor in the park story. This was evident in the burgeoning interest in Indian cultures, the park's experiments with "living history," and Lassen Volcanic's attention to community outreach as the park embarked on fire education. In view of the close alignment of cultural resources management and interpretation, those two programs were combined under one division from 1998 to 2008.

## Archeology

Archeological investigation began at Lassen Volcanic in 1962 under the direction of Adan E. Treganza, professor of anthropology at San Francisco State College, with surveys in the upper Hat Creek drainage and around Mineral. The Park Service contracted for more archeological surveys between 1970 and 1975, primarily in the main park road corridor from the southwest entrance to Sulphur Works, the ski area, Warner Valley, and the upper Hat Creek drainage. These surveys were carried out by Jerald Jay Johnson, professor of anthropology at California State University, Sacramento, and Johnson's graduate student, Alfred Journey. In general, the latter surveys represented a progression from lower to higher elevations, where prehistoric use of the area was likely to have been merely seasonal. Altogether, the surveys identified approximately 50 archeological sites within the park. Most sites were shallow, consisting of a thin scatter of artifacts spread over a considerable horizontal distance. However, some sites featured depressions or culturally-modified soils, which were interpreted as evidence of earthen-covered shelters. In the high-elevation locations within the park, these sites were almost certainly seasonal hunting camps rather than year-round village sites. A grouping of ten sites near the park's southwest entrance were designated as the Sulphur Creek Archeological District.<sup>1</sup>

Lassen Volcanic's first cultural resources management plan, produced in 1981, offered a somewhat critical evaluation of the park's progress in this reconnaissance of archeological resources. Most of the surveys had been funded as part of the effort to develop the park's general management plan. As the archeologists worked ahead of the bulldozers, their coverage of the park was spotty at best. "This approach has produced voids in the existing information," the report noted. Not only were the surveys deficient in coverage, the recorded information was uneven. Data were not in the same format from one site to the next, and the Park Service did not have a way to update the current conditions of each site. "A number of prehistoric sites have been identified in a number of surveys, but the site records are confusing," the report bluntly stated.<sup>2</sup> These deficiencies were not unique to Lassen Volcanic National Park. The entire program of "public" archeology in the 1970s, which took form in response to new federal responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act, tended to yield linear surveys that were located in the path of

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<sup>1</sup> Alfred E. Journey to National Park Service, August 29, 1971; Journey to George T. Yardic, October 3, 1972, File 94: H26 Archeological Study – January 1972; Jerald Jay Johnson, "Proposed Archeological Investigation of Areas 1, 2, and 3 in Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1975," File 90: H2215 Archeological Study – Johnson, 1975; Lassen Volcanic National Park, National Park Service, "Cultural Resources Management Plan," December 1981, File 86: H2215 Cultural Resources Plan 1981, Box 22, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>2</sup> Lassen Volcanic National Park, National Park Service, "Cultural Resources Management Plan," December 1981, File 86: H2215 Cultural Resources Plan 1981, Box 22, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

impending development projects. As such, the investigations were located rather arbitrarily in relation to the prehistoric environment. Moreover, the National Register of Historic Places (administered by the Park Service) needed time to develop uniform professional standards for recording information on site forms. Much of this new “cultural resource management” (CRM) work accomplished during the decade would be redone in later years.

In the 1980s, the Western Region acquired archeologists on staff to conduct archeological surveys. From the mid-1980s through the mid-1990s, Ann King Smith, archeologist at Redwood National Park, provided archeological services for Lassen Volcanic along with Lava Beds National Monument and Whiskeytown National Recreation Area. Smith and her assistants conducted numerous surveys in advance of various maintenance projects – many of which involved underground installation of water pipes and electrical cables (more linear surveys) – and by the mid-1990s she also made numerous surveys on prescribed burn units. Usually these surveys, called “archeological clearances” because they were required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act before a project could go forward, resulted in no significant findings. Smith also resurveyed the many sites previously recorded in the 1960s and 70s. She served the park until her retirement in the late 1990s, at which time her assistant, Nelson Siefkin, took over her role.<sup>3</sup>

As the NPS emphasized preservation of cultural resources, few archeological sites in Lassen Volcanic were subsurface tested. Some sites, such as those at Manzanita Lake Campground and Drakesbad, were known to have been destroyed by previous development. Two other sites, listed on the National Register, had been heavily disturbed when ski area’s chairlift was built in 1982. Those and other sites were threatened by ongoing maintenance operations. In 1987, Smith announced that she would seek funding to salvage any data still forthcoming from the pair of damaged National Register sites at the base of the ski area, but apparently she was unsuccessful.<sup>4</sup> The Western Region did secure funding for test excavations at Drakesbad in 1994 and 1995 prior to renovations by the concession. The Park Service contracted with Mountain Anthropological Research, a company specializing in CRM archeology, for this work. Owing to the amount of past disturbance to the archeological site at Drakesbad, the consultants recommended that it was ineligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Archeologist to Superintendent, September 8, 1987; Archeologist to Acting Superintendent, October 2, 1989; Archeologist to Superintendent, June 13, 1990, File 108: H3015 Trip Reports by Redwood Archeologist at LAVO 1987-1990; Archeologist to Superintendent, June 25, 1992, File 109: H3015 Historic Sites & Structures – Management, Preservation, and Maintenance, Trip Report 1989-1992, Box 22, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives; Assistant Archeologist to Superintendent, June 25, 1996, and August 13, 1996, File H2623: Reports – Situation 1996-98, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>4</sup> Archeologist to Superintendent, September 8, 1987.

<sup>5</sup> Assistant Archeologist to Superintendent, August 13, 1996, File H2623: Reports – Situation 1996-98, LAVO Central Files.

In 1999, the Park Service contracted with California State University, Chico to prepare an archeological overview and assessment of Lassen Volcanic National Park. Directed by Dr. Greg White, the study entailed a comprehensive review of known archeological resources and previous archeological research conducted in the park. The project began with a CSU, Chico archeological field school in Warner Valley area during the summer of 2000, which documented a number of new sites. This project was finally completed in 2006. Unfortunately, the NPS found that many of the report's recorded site locations within the park were inaccurate and would have to be revisited. The NPS also thought the report fell short of its intended purpose to provide direction for future research and archeological site management.<sup>6</sup>

### **Preservation of Tribal Culture**

In the 1970s, American Indians embarked on a long quest to recover cultural and religious ties with their people's ancestral lands, including national park lands. The attempted occupation of Manzanita Lake by a group of Pit River Indian activists, discussed in Chapter Ten, was an early manifestation of this movement. Tensions between the Pit River Indian community and federal officials lingered for some time after that episode. Federal charges were brought against several Indians who were arrested during the fracas of October 27, 1970, culminating in two trials of the accused. After the trials, the Pit River Indian community sued the federal government, charging certain officials with giving false testimony before federal and state grand juries. Superintendent Boyer was among the officials named in the lawsuit.<sup>7</sup>

As other California Indian tribes pressed for rights and protections associated with ancestral lands, the California state legislature came to their aid, passing the California Native American Cultural, Historical and Sacred Sites Act of 1976. The law called for protections that would soon be spelled out on a nationwide basis in the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, or AIRFA. Meanwhile, the state law posed legal questions for national park managers in California, and the Western Regional Office of the NPS sought policy guidance from the Washington Office. After several months of policy review, with input provided by all regional offices, the NPS issued Special Directive 78-1 on February 6, 1978, which recognized the need to provide Native Americans special privileges in national parks for the purpose of practicing their traditional religions. Hard-liners in the NPS objected that the policy could put resources at risk, while the assistant solicitor for national parks worried that the policy might conflict with the First Amendment's prohibition against the federal government supporting any one religion. The NPS appointed a task force to consider the policy

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<sup>6</sup> Haner interview; Cari Kreshak, personal communication with authors, April 24, 2008.

<sup>7</sup> "Indians Charge Conspiracy of False Testimony," *Sacramento Bee*, May 17, 1982.

further. The task force came back with an even stronger position in support of allowing Indians special access to ceremonial sacred sites. Among its provisions, new NPS policy would allow gathering of natural materials for ceremonial purposes as long as the activity did not adversely impact park resources, and it would require NPS consultation with Indian groups on interpretive materials and programs pertaining to their cultures. At the same time, the policy would affirm that the NPS must retain full responsibility over its resource protection and interpretive programs. The task force report was still in review when Congress passed AIRFA on August 11, 1978.<sup>8</sup>

In AIRFA, Congress found that the United States had enacted conservation laws without due regard for traditional American Indian religions and that some federal laws and policies inadvertently infringed on Indians' abilities to practice their traditional religions. The act directed the U.S. president to coordinate a review of administrative policies by all pertinent federal agencies so that these infringements could be rectified.<sup>9</sup>

Armed with these statutes, local Indian groups took renewed interest in making traditional use of Lassen Volcanic National Park – or else they chose to be more overt in carrying on traditional use practices that had largely gone undetected by the Park Service before. Traditional use typically consisted of harvesting wild plants in upper-elevation areas within the park that had formed a part of their people's seasonal rounds in aboriginal times. While the Park Service had once discouraged such practices, it crept cautiously toward a more accommodating position in the 1970s and 1980s. One reason for the official change in attitude was the sense that the Park Service should encourage Indians' traditional use of the park as a way of helping local Indian groups to preserve their native cultures. Gil Blinn recalled that during his tenure as superintendent from 1985 to 1997, the park had good relations with the small Indian communities in the area. On several occasions, groups came to the park and got a permit to stay in one of the group campsites and do traditional gathering. "That worked out just fine, worked out well," Blinn stated. "We recognized their desire to carry out traditional activities, and they recognized our need to provide for other public uses."<sup>10</sup>

Ann King Smith urged the superintendent to be even more attentive to tribal relationships. "Since quite a few Native Americans live in the vicinity of the park," she wrote to Blinn in 1987, "I would recommend that the park begin to contact these groups regarding employment, knowledge of traditional uses of park lands, and contemporary concerns which involve the park."<sup>11</sup> In fact, Lassen Volcanic already employed two Atsugewi women, Lillian Snooks and LaVerna Jenkins, as seasonal interpreters at Manzanita Lake at this time, but Smith thought the park could do more. There was no question that local native cultures were vulnerable. In 1988, Snooks told a *Los Angeles*

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<sup>8</sup> Jackson W. Moore, "The National Park Service's Native American Policy: A Status Report," *CRM Bulletin* 1, no. 3 (September 1978): 1-3.

<sup>9</sup> Public Law 95-341 (92 Stat. 469).

<sup>10</sup> Blinn interview.

<sup>11</sup> Archaeologist to Superintendent, September 8, 1987.

*Times* reporter, “The old Indian ways of the Atsugewis are dying fast. That is why I give the programs about my people, a little-known Indian tribe, to help perpetuate what is still known about them before all is lost.” Snooks’ aunt, Medie Webster, who lived in Montgomery Creek, was the last living Atsugewi language speaker and she was 87-years-old and in frail health in 1988.<sup>12</sup> It was unclear to what extent the Park Service could or should get involved in preserving the cultures of the resident tribes in the area.

One item of mutual concern between the park and the tribes was the park’s archeological collections. One collection contained human remains, which had been found outside the park and donated to the Park Service in 1938. Recognizing that tribes were expressing growing interest in repatriation of burial remains, Smith took the collection to Redwood National Park and informed Blinn that she would attempt to contact the Pit River Tribe about it, since the remains had been found in their traditional territory. If the tribe wanted to rebury the remains, Smith said, then the material would be de-accessioned. Smith then sent the remains to Dr. Robert Jurmain of San Jose State University for osteological analysis. Jurmain found the remains too fragmentary to yield any useful data and recommended that their continued curation would serve no scientific purpose. Smith, with help from Scott Isaacson of Lassen Volcanic, then turned to ascertaining the cultural affiliation of the remains. They consulted Snooks and Jenkins, contacted the California Native American Heritage Commission, and discussed the matter with the Pit River Tribal Council. Following a presentation to the tribal council by Smith and Isaacson, the tribal council decided that one of the Pit River Nation spiritual leaders should conduct the reburial. Attempts by the park to transfer the remains to the designated person stretched over a year and a half and were finally unsuccessful. In the meantime, Congress had enacted the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) in 1990, and as required under the law, the Park Service published a notice in the *Federal Register* in December 1992 and turned over the remains to members of the Atsugewi Tribe the following month. The remains were reinterred on March 21, 1993.<sup>13</sup>

In the fall of 2000, the park cooperated with local Indian groups in a reburial ceremony involving remains of the famous Ishi. After Ishi’s death in 1916 his brain had been sent to the Smithsonian, contrary to his wishes. When this fact surfaced in the 1990s, a question arose as to what tribe could claim Ishi’s remains under NAGPRA, since Ishi was the last of his tribe. A Maidu woman stepped forward with the claim that she had some Yahi blood, and a delegation of ten Maidu and Atsugewi elders traveled to Washington, D.C. to retrieve Ishi’s brain and ashes from the Smithsonian. Upon their return to California, the Maidu and Atsugewi tribal members buried Ishi’s remains at an

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<sup>12</sup> “Indian Woman is Last Word on Language of the Atsugewi,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 23, 1988.

<sup>13</sup> Archeologist to Acting Superintendent, October 2, 1989; Archeologist to Superintendent and Chief Naturalist, December 14, 1993, File H2015: LAVO Museum Accession Files, Lassen Volcanic National Park Accession 0071, REDW Archives; Cari Kreshak to Harvey Orcutt, April 26, 2004, email correspondence provided to authors by Cari Kreshak.

undisclosed location on the Lassen National Forest and then held a homecoming ceremony in the park at Summit Lake a few weeks later. The ceremony, which was open to the public, included speeches and a bear dance. The park provided logistical support.<sup>14</sup>

The Maidu and Atsugewi have asserted their ancestral ties to the park by another ceremonial event known as the Ancestral Spiritual Run. Starting in the late 1990s, the annual event was scheduled for the first full weekend in August and it has continued to the present. It begins with a relay run that goes from Mount Shasta to Lassen Peak and ends with ceremonies at Lost Creek Campground. The relay signifies coming home to a place that remains sacred to these Indians. The gathering at Lost Creek includes the use of a sweat lodge. Unlike the Ishi homecoming event, the Ancestral Spiritual Run is not open to the general public. To accommodate participants, the park turns all of Lost Creek Campground into a group site for this event and waives the campground fee, reserving the entire area for the Indians' exclusive use.<sup>15</sup>

During her tenure at Lassen Volcanic, Superintendent Parris visited a number of Indian groups in northern California, seeking to develop more positive working relationships. In March 2005, she informed the Pit River Tribal Council that Indian baskets and other objects in the park collections would be moved to a new facility located in Redwood National Park until such time as an equivalent facility was built in Lassen Volcanic National Park.<sup>16</sup>

Superintendent Martin tried to build on the improved level of trust. One practical measure of that trust was the degree to which tribal members were willing to help the Park Service when the park prepared a traditional use study in the early 2000s. Some 19 individuals participated in the study as ethnographic consultants, and nearly a dozen tribal governments or organizations were asked to comment on the study while it was in draft. Not all groups were pleased with the study, but the fact that the Park Service could record oral information on traditional Indian uses of lands and resources now within the park was testament to a level of trust and communication that had not existed before. Karen Haner, the park's chief of interpretation and cultural resources, thought in 2006 that the park had made considerable progress in this vein but still had more work to do. "We've tried to make tribal people feel more welcome," she said, adding, "I don't think they do. The younger generation hasn't spent much time here."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Haner interview.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Superintendent, LAVO, to Superintendent, REDW, March 29, 2005; Marilyn H. Parris, Superintendent, to Pit River Tribal Council, March 21, 2005, File H20: Collections Management, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>17</sup> Mailing List – Lassen VNP Traditional Use Study, undated; Marilyn Parris to Ron Morales, July 6, 2005, File H22: Cultural Resources Study 2005-07, LAVO Central Files; Haner interview.

## Historic Preservation

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 was primarily intended to preserve historic structures from thoughtless demolition in the name of new development, but in the national park setting, historic preservation could have a somewhat different thrust. What if the Park Service wanted to take out old structures and restore an area to its natural conditions? Under the law, all park infrastructure that was more than fifty years old – roads, ranger stations, visitor facilities, campgrounds – needed to be evaluated for historical significance and considered for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The legislation caused cultural resources management to be elevated alongside natural resources management as a vital part of the National Park Service’s mission, and it forced park managers, often against their own strong preferences, to regard national parks as cultural landscapes rather than strictly the “vignettes of primitive America” envisioned by the Leopold Report.<sup>18</sup>

President Nixon’s Executive Order 11593, which reinforced the law’s mandate and prompted the Park Service to move ahead expeditiously with historic resource surveys, coincided with a new wave of development planning in the early to mid-1970s. When Lassen Volcanic embarked in 1971 on the preparation of a new master plan (the eventual general management plan of 1981), the Park Service entertained a general idea of moving visitor services out of the park. What should be done with historic structures in an area that the Park Service wanted to restore to natural conditions? This question soon came into bold relief, first in the public reaction to a proposal to eliminate the Drakesbad Guest Ranch, and again following the sudden closure of the Manzanita Lake development area in April 1974. Almost at the same time, the park initiated a number of historic property assessments, which found that some of the buildings in the Manzanita Lake area, at least, were eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The attention given to historic preservation in the mid-1970s complicated the GMP planning process and in the long run contributed to decisions resulting in the preservation of visitor facilities both at Manzanita Lake and Drakesbad.<sup>19</sup>

The park moved swiftly in getting three historic resources listed by 1975. These were the Loomis Museum, its adjacent seismograph station, and the Nobles Emigrant Trail. The latter consists of a 24-mile segment of the pioneer trail established in the early 1850s by William Nobles. Historically, the trail had provided a shorter route into northern California than the Applegate/Lassen Trail. The portion that traverses the park served a number of overland travelers until 1855, when a detour was made and traffic

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<sup>18</sup> Stephanie S. Toothman, “Cultural Resource Management in Natural Areas of the National Park System,” *Public Historian* 9, no. 2 (Spring 1987): 65.

<sup>19</sup> National Park Service, Western Regional Office, “Preliminary Case Report: Executive Order 11593 and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, General Management Plan, Lassen Volcanic National Park, California,” File 154: H4217 Compliance Documentation Preliminary Case Report General Management Plan 1978, Box 22, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

was rerouted via Hat Creek Rim. Use of the Nobles Trail east of the park continued until the Central Pacific Railroad was completed in 1869. The National Register site stretches across the northern section of the park from Butte Lake to Manzanita Lake. At the time of its listing in 1975, traces of the trail were continuous except for a three-mile segment that had been buried in the 1915 eruption.<sup>20</sup>

Three years after these initial listings, five more historic properties within Lassen Volcanic were entered on the National Register. These were the Prospect Peak Lookout, the Horseshoe Lake Ranger Station, the Summit Lake Ranger Station, the Warner Valley Ranger Station, and the administration building at park headquarters. As was evident by these listings, the Park Service overcame an initial reluctance to treat its own administrative buildings as historically significant, fearing that to do so could be seen as “unwarranted self-memorialization.”<sup>21</sup> Indeed, six other park administrative buildings were “determined eligible,” an official status usually leading to nomination for listing on the National Register. These included the Mount Harkness Lookout, the service station at Mineral, and the naturalist’s residence, comfort station, entrance station, and ranger’s residence at Manzanita Lake. Meanwhile, two historic properties predating the establishment of the park were determined ineligible because of their deteriorated condition: the Lost Creek (Sunflower) flume and ditch, and the Manzanita Lake Dam.<sup>22</sup>

Historic preservation placed significant new constraints on the park’s development plans. There had to be compelling reasons to demolish a building listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Park Service believed that the threat of a major rockfall spilling into the Manzanita Lake development area constituted just such a compelling reason. In 1977 it recorded a number of structures for the Historic American Buildings Survey and transmitted the data to Washington, D.C., for placement in the National Archives, preparatory to demolishing those buildings. Regional Director Chapman explained the geologic hazard to California’s state historic preservation officer, Herbert Rhodes, in stark terms. “Such a rockfall could easily destroy all buildings and kill all people present,” he wrote. “Were it not for this extreme safety hazard, the Manzanita Lake structures would continue to be used.” Even so, the Park Service elected to preserve the Loomis Museum, the seismograph station, the Loomis residence, and the chief naturalist’s residence, simply closing them and boarding up the windows and doors.<sup>23</sup>

In Warner Valley, meanwhile, the Park Service yielded to popular sentiment and retained the Drakesbad lodge, dining room, guest cabins, and bath house, even though a

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<sup>20</sup> National Park Service, “Nobles’ Trail Entered on Historic Register,” news release, November 10, 1975, File 113: H32 Nobles Emigrant Trail, 1975-77, Box 22, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>21</sup> Catton, *National Park, City Playground*, 140.

<sup>22</sup> Howard H. Chapman, Regional Director, to Herbert Rhodes, State Historic Preservation Officer, August 26, 1977, File 111: H32 National Register of Historic Places 1980, Box 22, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

historical evaluation in 1975 found that none of these buildings were of “sufficient historical significance to merit nomination to the National Register.”<sup>24</sup> But park officials did decide to remove the Drakesbad hay barn and cook’s house, both of which predated the park and had been determined eligible for National Register listing. Superintendent Stephenson insisted on the removal of these two deteriorated structures, arguing that it would be too costly to stabilize them. To mitigate the removal, the Park Service recorded both structures for the Historic American Buildings Survey.<sup>25</sup>

As with CRM archeology, the first wave of historic property evaluations left much to be desired by later standards. At Lassen Volcanic, as in other units in the National Park System, these assessments in the 1970s were overly discriminating and ignored many historic resources that would later be found eligible for listing on the National Register. Without a park historian or cultural resources specialist on staff, the park’s historic preservation program languished. Superintendent Blinn, facing budget woes, saw no compelling need to update the park’s historic resources survey. When Superintendent Parris began her tenure at Lassen Volcanic, she found cultural resources management in a state of neglect. In 1998, Parris separated the park’s interpretation personnel from the resource management division, where it had been temporarily placed for three years, and Parris hired Karen Haner to serve as chief of Lassen’s new interpretation and cultural resources division. Scott Isaacson, the park’s assistant chief naturalist, agreed to take on Lassen’s cultural resources duties, although a considerable portion of his time was still devoted to interpretation. In 2001, Isaacson changed hats again, to become the park’s fire information education specialist, and Cari Kreshak was hired as his replacement. Kreshak served as Lassen Volcanic’s first official whose sole responsibility was cultural resources work. Kreshak transferred out of Lassen in 2008. Cultural resources management was then combined with natural resources management, forming the resources management division, with Louise Johnson at the helm. Haner’s realm became the interpretation and education division.

As cultural resources program manager, Kreshak was responsible for clearing the park’s backlog of work in the five major CRM disciplines: archeology, historic preservation, cultural landscapes, collections management, and administrative history. Starting with historic preservation, Kreshak worked aggressively to secure “soft money” project funding and accomplish the work under contracts or cooperative agreements. In the resulting second wave of historic property evaluations, the park requested use of the National Register’s newer “Multiple Property Documentation Form” for the nomination

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<sup>24</sup> Howard H. Chapman, Regional Director, to Superintendent, August 18, 1975, enclosing report, “Evaluation of Structures at Drakesbad, Lassen Volcanic National Park,” June 18, 1975, File 152: H4217 Drakesbad 1973-1977, Box 22, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

<sup>25</sup> Howard H. Chapman, Regional Director, to Knox Mellon, State Historic Preservation Officer, February 16, 1978, enclosing “Lassen Volcanic National Park – California, General Management Plan & Environmental Statement, A Proposal for Cultural Resources,” File 44: D18 Historic Preservation Impact of General Management Plan 1977-78, Box 8, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

of whole historic districts or cultural landscapes rather than individual buildings. In 2002, a cultural landscape inventory report was completed for the Mineral Headquarters Historic District. By 2004, Kreshak had seen three nominations to completion covering the Manzanita Lake Naturalist's Services Historic District, the Warner Valley Major Developed Area Historic District, and the Lassen Volcanic National Park Highway Historic District. Not only did the historic district formula supersede the previous listings of individual buildings by including grounds and associated structures, it also broadened the scope of historic preservation to include such features as the designed landscape of the main park road – as well as the previously rejected Drakesbad Guest Ranch. In contrast to the Park Service's earlier finding that the Drakesbad Guest Ranch lacked historical significance, the newer survey found Drakesbad eligible for listing because of its "direct and significant association with regional conservation [and] the development of the northern California tourism industry as it evolved near and within Lassen Volcanic National Park."<sup>26</sup>

## **Collections Management**

Another area of cultural resources management in need of attention at the end of the twentieth century was collections management. Throughout the park's history to that point, the staff had considered the management of the museum collection to be a collateral duty. Some accessions dated back to the late 1920s. A portion of the Loomis photograph collection had come into the park's possession in the 1940s. A substantial Indian basket collection had been acquired in the 1950s. The park's administrative records constituted another valuable collection. In 1989, the park made its first formal inventory of all collections, and in 1993 it drafted a scope of collections statement. In 2000, the total number of items in all collections amounted to 256,800 individual items. The vast bulk of the material consisted of park administrative records, while it also included plant specimens and other collections in biology (2,090 items), history (1,791 items), geology (495 items), ethnography (317 items), and archeology (167 items). It was believed that additional artifacts from archeological surveys in the park in the 1960s and 1970s were curated at the University of California, Davis.<sup>27</sup>

For many years the entire collection (except what was at UC Davis) was stored in the basement of the science center building at park headquarters. In this location it lacked proper security, pest control, fire suppression features, humidity control, and adequate space. Despite efforts to make the area flood proof, the collection was

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<sup>26</sup> Marilyn H. Parris to Knox Mellon, State Historic Preservation Officer, November 20, 2002, and March 22, 2004, File H32: National Register of Historic Places 2002-04, LAVO Central Files; Haner interview.

<sup>27</sup> National Park Service, Pacific West Region, Cultural Resources, "Museum Management Plan, Lassen Volcanic National Park," 2000, File D62: Museum Activities 1999-2001, LAVO Central Files.

subjected to a flood in 1995. After the flood, the park relocated museum collections to the second floor of the science center, and it sent the archival collections (primarily park administrative records) to San Francisco for immediate preservation treatment. The archival collections were briefly returned to the park and then sent to the Western Archeological and Conservation Center in Tucson for archival processing, where the material remained into the early 2000s. Neither arrangement was satisfactory. The room in the upper story of the science center containing the museum collections was too small and lacked proper temperature control, especially during the heat of the summer.<sup>28</sup>

In March 2005, both the museum collections and the archival collections were transferred to a new state-of-the-art curatorial facility in Orick, California, under an agreement with Redwood National and State Parks, and here they remain. This move placed the entire park collection under the care of a full-time museum curator, James O'Barr, for the first time in its history. The transfer was consistent with a system-wide push to consolidate collections in fewer, better facilities, but the distance between this repository and Lassen Volcanic naturally posed some logistical problems. Of most concern was the collection of American Indian baskets and ethnographic objects, which had come from the tribal communities around Lassen Volcanic. The arrangement was intended to be temporary, until a new storage facility could be built at park headquarters. Prior to entering into the agreement, Superintendent Parris informed the Pit River Tribal Council of the move, assuring the council that "the Park intends to work diligently toward establishing this facility to house the collections so they can eventually come back to Lassen Volcanic National Park."<sup>29</sup>

## **The Interpretation Program**

Perhaps no other staff division in the park experienced so much dislocation from the closure of the Manzanita Lake area as did the interpretation division. Since the early days of the park, the interpretation program had centered around the Loomis Museum and an array of campground programs and guided walks presented in the Manzanita Lake area. After the closure the interpretation program dispersed through the park, changed its mix of visitor programs, and rebuilt. By the late 1980s, it had come to be recognized as one of the best interpretation programs in the Western Region. But over the next two decades it again lost ground, mainly as a result of the overall tightening of the park's budget and the gradual reallocation of the park's base funding from interpretation to other administrative functions, particularly resource management. One stark measure of the program's declining profile in the park could be seen in the dwindling number of

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Superintendent, LAVO, to Superintendent, REDW, March 29, 2005; Parris to Pit River Tribal Council, March 21, 2005.

seasonal interpreters. In the early 1970s, the park had from 20 to 25 seasonal interpreters; in 1982, it had 13; in 2006, it had a mere five.<sup>30</sup> Still, as in the aftermath of the Manzanita Lake closure, the interpretation division in the 2000s was reinventing itself, exploring new avenues for public contact such as environmental education. Although much smaller than it had been in its salad days, the interpretation staff continued to have extraordinary talent. In 2001, Education Specialist Steven W. Zachary was recognized with the Pacific West Region Freeman Tilden Award for his outstanding leadership on an interagency team that spent two months each year for four years providing technical assistance to Shey Phoksundo National Park in Nepal.<sup>31</sup> Lassen Volcanic continued to draw high-caliber people to its interpretation staff because the park had a reputation as being a wonderful place to work.

At the start of this era, the interpretation division consisted of three permanent employees – chief naturalist, assistant chief naturalist, and full-time clerk – together with a fluctuating but always sizable number of seasonal interpreters. The chief naturalist was often the go-to person on the park staff for questions about natural resource management. John S. Mohlhenrich, chief naturalist from 1968 to 1972, wrote the park’s first resource management plan. Richard L. Vance, who became the park’s next chief naturalist in 1972 and stayed for nearly twenty years until he retired in 1991, got heavily involved in the geologic hazard and geothermal issues surrounding the park, conducting numerous public hearings on these matters as part of his duties. Most of the seasonal interpreters had academic or professional backgrounds in one of the natural sciences or in history; many were teachers.

Prior to the Manzanita Lake closure, interpretation operations during the summer season centered around the Loomis Museum, where the park had an audiovisual program and displays. Interpreters also conducted nature walks, hikes, and evening campfire programs. Selena LaMarr, an Atsugewi woman whose given name was Boonookoo-ee-menorra, and who was affectionately called “Boonie” by park staff, gave basket-weaving demonstrations each summer until 1972, when she fell ill in the spring and passed away that September.<sup>32</sup> After a while, LaMarr’s nieces, Laverna Jenkins and Lillian Snooks, took her place. The interpretation staff also gave evening programs at the Butte Lake and Summit Lake campgrounds, and it staffed an information station near the park’s southwest entrance.

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<sup>30</sup> Bailey interview.

<sup>31</sup> Marilyn H. Parris, “National Park Service, Freeman Tilden Award 2001 Nomination Form,” July 13, 2001, File: Tilden 2001, I&E Division Records, LAVO Files. Zachary won the award at the regional level and competed at the national level in 2001. He had also won the award at the regional level in 1995 for his development and coordination of Lassen’s annual Interpretation Intern Program that brings high school students to the park for three weeks of immersion training in the field of interpretation.

<sup>32</sup> “Indian Carries Tribe’s Heritage to her Grave,” unidentified newspaper clipping, September 7, 1972, File 79: K34 News Clippings 1972, Box 27, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

After the Manzanita Lake closure, the interpretation program shifted to a day-use mode around Manzanita Lake and developed walks and other activities away from the hazard area, such as an environmental education walk in the Devastated Area. The park put a temporary information station just inside the park's north entrance, which was outside the hazard zone. The park moved its cultural demonstration venue from the Loomis Museum to Sunflower Flat, located just outside the hazard zone. Park naturalists offered a small number of evening campfire programs at the Manzanita Lake Campground after the campground was partially reopened. The interpretation program also branched into three new kinds of activity: living history, winter interpretation, and environmental education.

Lassen Volcanic's venture into living history revolved around the story of the pioneers who traveled overland to northern California in the 1850s and 1860s. The park obtained a covered wagon and period supplies and rented an ox team. Interpreters dressed in period costume and demonstrated such pioneer arts as how to use a muzzle-loading rifle. The program was popular with visitors and continued for many years.<sup>33</sup> In the late 1970s, interpreters began leading snowshoe walks from the southwest entrance to Sulphur Works. These were conducted as much as four times per week, most often with school groups. Annual attendance reached 1,000 or more per year for both the guided snowshoe walks and pioneer living history program and 2,000 or more per year for the "Indian Ways" cultural demonstrations. In the area of environmental education, meanwhile, interpreters led school groups on outings and conducted a junior ranger program. As concerns over human safety in the Manzanita Lake area eased somewhat, the NPS adapted the former chief park naturalist's residence into an environmental education facility that hosts school groups. After many years of protracted restoration work, the Discovery Center was finally opened in 2002.<sup>34</sup>

Over the years, Richard Vance and others took pride in the number of visitor contacts made through these various programs. Yet without a large visitor center to corral visitors as they entered the park, annual visitor-contact totals of the latter 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s could not compare to those of the 1960s. In 1991, for example, 46,206 visitors were counted at the temporary A-frame visitor center near Manzanita Lake and 18,264 visitors were counted at the makeshift chalet visitor center at the park's southwest entrance, modest tallies compared to permanent visitor centers in other national parks. Yet in the same year, an impressive 26,862 visitors attended programs and guided walks provided by the interpretation staff.<sup>35</sup> The latter number, sometimes

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<sup>33</sup> SAR, 1980.

<sup>34</sup> SARs, 1976-1989; Haner interview; Chief Park Naturalist to Superintendent, January 30, 1992, File A2615: Interpretation Significant Events 1980-93, I&E Division Records, LAVO Files; "New Discovery Center Open House Featured at 'Day in the Park' at Lassen Volcanic National Park," August 6, 2002, copy of news release provided to authors by Nancy Bailey, LAVO Headquarters.

<sup>35</sup> Chief Park Naturalist to Superintendent, January 30, 1992.

called “personal service” contacts, obviously counted for much more in a qualitative sense.

Even if the park lacked a permanent visitor center to replace the closed Loomis Museum, other conditions helped to make the interpretation program highly successful in these years. One facet of Lassen Volcanic National Park that interpreters appreciated was the park’s relatively small size. Lassen was a little jewel, interpreters liked to point out, with its remarkable concentration of unique geologic features packed into such a small area. Moreover, its volcanic features were on a scale that visitors found easier to comprehend than those in other volcanic parks such as Yellowstone, Mount Rainier, and Crater Lake. How mind-boggling it was, for example, to learn that the recent eruption of Mount St. Helens was one-thousand-fold greater than the eruption of Lassen Peak in 1915, and that the eruption of ancient Mount Mazama, which created the caldera now filled by Crater Lake, was one-thousand-fold greater than the eruption of Mount St. Helens.

Interpreters at Lassen Volcanic also found that two natural catastrophes in other parts of the West in the 1980s heightened the public’s interest in the park’s story of devastation and renewal. The first major event of this kind was the eruption of Mount St. Helens in 1980, which made the public more aware of volcanoes than it had been in decades. In the Devastated Area, visitors had the opportunity to observe how the landscape had recovered some three-quarters of a century after Lassen Peak’s 1915 eruption. The recent devastation wrought by the eruption of Mount St. Helens gave that part of the park story new meaning. The second natural event to spark greater public interest in the park’s story was the Yellowstone fires of 1988. Interpreters took advantage of this teaching moment to increase public understanding of the role of fire in forest ecology. The Park Service built further on that opportunity by creating a fire information education specialist position at Lassen Volcanic in 1995.<sup>36</sup>

Lassen Volcanic also had a favorable visitor-use pattern for making the interpretation program a success. Visitor-use studies in the 1970s showed that a remarkable 45 percent of visitors came for an extended stay (more than one night in the park). Another 31 percent were “through visitors” who either made day use of the park while staying in some sort of lodging outside the park or spent just one night in the park. The remaining 24 percent were “home-based day users.” As the interpretive prospectus stated, “Approximately 2/3’s of Lassen visitors spend at least one night in the park, and almost half extend their stay beyond that. Lassen appears to attract people who are seeking in-depth park visits.” Fully 29 percent of visitors, the prospectus claimed, participated in personal service programs or activities conducted by park staff. This was an unusually high percentage in the National Park System.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Isaacson interview.

<sup>37</sup> Interpretive Prospectus, Lassen Volcanic National Park, 1981, File 12: K1817 Interpretive Prospectus 1981, Box 26, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

## The Long-Sought Visitor Center

The interpretive prospectus of 1981 declared that the park's most critical visitor service need was to develop new visitor centers at both Manzanita Lake and the park's southwest entrance. Existing facilities at both these locations were completely inadequate. The A-frame building at Manzanita Lake had been intended as a temporary substitute for the Loomis Museum after the sudden closure, while the Lassen Chalet had been "constructed to only one-half the size needed" as a dubious budget-saving measure and it had no room for any interpretive media. Unfortunately, these substandard facilities placed the park in the same bind it had been in during the Mission 66 era, when the superintendent's requests for a new visitor center were repeatedly shot down because higher officials saw the Loomis Museum as being able to suffice. Lassen Volcanic's 1981 GMP called for new visitor centers at both park entrances, but both were to be developed in cooperation with the Forest Service. Since the park would have fierce competition from many newer units in the National Park System that had no visitor centers at all, the GMP's call for interagency visitor centers at each entrance seemed like the kiss of death. The interpretive prospectus of that same year gloomily predicted that these facilities would be a long time coming.<sup>38</sup>

Local park boosters did not want to wait. In 1983, they began talking about forming a fundraising organization to raise seed money for a visitor center near Manzanita Lake. In July 1984, interested people held an initial planning meeting in Red Bluff. A professional fundraising firm, which was assisting in efforts to establish foundations for Yosemite National Park, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and Channel Islands National Park, presented ideas to an audience that included Superintendent Stephenson, Chief Park Naturalist Vance, and John Koeberer, among others. Stephenson nominated Koeberer to serve as head of the proposed foundation. Koeberer later accepted this role, and the foundation was organized the following year. Although the Lassen Park Foundation's mission was to provide financial support for a variety of park needs, it immediately focused on raising money for a new visitor center.<sup>39</sup>

The Lassen Park Foundation soon faced a number of challenges. In the first place, it needed to unify public support behind a single visitor center location. It started by endorsing the site described in the GMP known as Manzanita Meadows, located immediately outside the park (on Forest Service land) below Manzanita Lake. The site had a glorious view of Lassen Peak and was well beyond the reach of a threatened rockslide off Chaos Crags. But some park supporters objected that it did not make sense to proceed with the north-side visitor center first when the future of the Manzanita Lake development area remained uncertain. Why not start with the south-side visitor center

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Lester D. Bodine to Files, July 19, 1984, File 130: A42 LAVO Foundation Meeting Minutes 1984-86, Box 4, LAVO Acc. 506, REDW Archives.

instead? The question threatened to reopen the competition that had pitted Redding against Red Bluff back in the days when the Park Service had to select a location for park headquarters. The Lassen Park Foundation thought it had finally laid this matter to rest (opting for a visitor center site somewhere in the Manzanita Lake area), only to have the southwest entrance location foisted upon it by Superintendent Blinn in 1994. As Blinn explained to an astonished meeting of the board in May, Congressman Vic Fazio had approached him with an offer to get the park the money for planning and designing a visitor center as long as Blinn would support the southwest entrance location. Fazio's recently redrawn congressional district included the southwest corner of the park and its nearby communities. Fazio did get \$384,000 for this project into the Interior appropriations bill that was passed in the fall, but Congressman Wally Herger, whose district took in Redding, was not content to see the north-side location nixed in favor of the southwest entrance location. As the two congressmen lined up on either side of the issue, some Lassen Park Foundation board members worried that their ten-year effort to build consensus for the north-side location would be undone.<sup>40</sup>

The second challenge facing the Lassen Park Foundation was that it had formed to serve the park but it needed to work with the Forest Service, too, on what was supposed to be an interagency project located on Forest Service land. Forest Service interest in a shared visitor center was not the issue. Early on, Lassen National Forest officials proposed the idea of a "crossroads" theme – explaining how the region was a meeting place of native cultures, ecological communities, and geologic formations – for the interagency facility. And, some board members believed that the Forest Service would be more likely than the Park Service to receive generous funding for the project. But getting Forest Service concurrence was not simple; like Redding and Red Bluff, the two federal agencies had a history of competition to live down. The Forest Service did not favor the proposed Manzanita Meadows location, questioning whether a facility located virtually on the park's doorstep would really serve Lassen National Forest visitors. But the Forest Service was more resistant to moving the visitor center location to the park's south side. In the early 1990s, a new north-side location was placed on the negotiation table: at the junction of highways 44 and 89, just inside the park boundary. When Congressman Fazio insisted on the southwest entrance location instead, Forest Supervisor Leonard Atencio indicated that the Forest Service would reduce its level of involvement in the project.<sup>41</sup>

The Lassen Park Foundation's third challenge was most surprising of all: it lost the support of the park itself. In July 1994, Blinn addressed an open letter to the members of the board. First he reminded them that Congressman Fazio wanted to have

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<sup>40</sup> Susan Watson to Chuck Berwick, no date; Wally Herger to Roger Kennedy, December 8, 1994, File A3615-3: Congressional Correspondence 1993-95, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>41</sup> Leonard Atencio, Forest Supervisor, to Susan Watson, May 20, 1994; Atencio to John Koeberer, August 8, 1994; Atencio to Mark DeSio, Office of Congressman Vic Fazio, October 21, 1994, File A3615-3: Congressional Correspondence 1993-95, LAVO Central Files; comments on final draft report.

the visitor center built within his district in Tehama County. Then Blinn told the foundation that it was his professional opinion, as well as that of Regional Director Albright and his staff, that the southwest entrance location was most appropriate. Two intervening circumstances made this so. In the previous year, the Loomis Museum had reopened, once again serving the interpretation needs of visitors on the park's north side, but the ski area had closed, which did not bode well for the already scant visitor offerings on the park's south side in the summertime.<sup>42</sup> The Lassen Park Foundation could not accept the Park Service's new position at face value; it seemed politically motivated. One thing was clear: the \$384,000 appropriation for "a visitor center at Lassen Volcanic National Park" was money in the bank for the NPS, making cooperation with the USFS that much less attractive to park officials.<sup>43</sup>

In January 1996, Forest Supervisor Atencio announced that recent budget cuts would prevent the Forest Service from paying its half of maintenance costs for a full-service interagency visitor center. This "put the nail in the coffin" of the Lassen Park Foundation's initial vision, board member Susan Watson recalled. Meanwhile, both the Forest Service and the Park Service were redirecting certain functions that a large new visitor center would house to other locations. And, the foundation realized it simply could not build a full-fledged visitor center – a multi-million-dollar project – and donate it to the park, as its founders had originally hoped. After a decade of fundraising experience, the foundation was forced to scale back expectations. The donor base for Lassen Volcanic National Park was simply too small. The foundation re-envisioned its visitor center project so that the entire thing could be designed and built for about a fifth of the original cost estimate. It conceived of a modest facility at the junction of highways 44 and 89, with the same crossroads theme that the NPS and the USFS had agreed upon earlier. The foundation proposed to provide half of the funding for the project, under a federal cost-share plan. Susan Watson had been impressed with the "extraordinary appearance and function" of an open-air interpretive pavilion on the Copper River Delta in Alaska, so the foundation drew up plans for a similar structure for its scaled-down endeavor. Featuring sets of interpretive panels, the facility would require no staffing and only limited maintenance under a cooperative agreement between the Park Service and the Forest Service. As Blinn was unable to bring the Lassen Park Foundation around to his point of view for a south-side visitor center, in the summer of 1996 he agreed to the

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<sup>42</sup> Gilbert E. Blinn to Board Members of the Lassen Park Foundation, July 29, 1994, File D3415: LAVO Visitor Center Construction 1993-95, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>43</sup> The House report on the appropriations bill stated: "The Committee has included \$384,000 for planning for a visitor center at Lassen Volcanic National Park. This appropriation is contingent upon a commitment of a 50% match from the Lassen Volcanic National Park Foundation [sic]. The current estimate for the facility is \$3,600,000 with the Federal share to be \$1,800,000. The Committee will not support a facility beyond the scope developed by the consultant to the Lassen Volcanic National Park Foundation." House, *Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 1995*, 103d Cong., 2d sess., 1994, H. Rept. 103-551.

foundation's chosen site for its pavilion project: on park land just outside of the northwest entrance at the highway junction.<sup>44</sup>

When Superintendent Parris first arrived at Lassen Volcanic the following year, she found the Crossroads Pavilion scheme to be a “cuckoo idea” and the tensions between the park and the foundation to be rather perplexing. When she recognized that the foundation was determined to build the pavilion but that the project was still adrift, she got everyone together (park representatives, forest representatives, and foundation board members) and announced in her no-nonsense manner, “We’re not leaving till we make some decisions.” In Parris’s view, that got the project on track and steered it toward completion. In the view of Susan Watson, it cleared the way for Parris to turn her attention toward the park’s main visitor center now planned for the southwest entrance, a project she much preferred.<sup>45</sup> Plans for the Crossroads Pavilion were finalized in 1998, and the project received the Park Service directorate’s approval in the spring of 1999. The facility was officially dedicated in the summer of 2000, but installation of the last of its three dozen interpretive panels did not occur until 2009. Total cost of the Lassen Crossroads Information Pavilion was about \$700,000, of which the Lassen Park Foundation contributed over \$370,000.<sup>46</sup>

Meanwhile, Parris moved the plans for the Southwest Visitor Services Facility steadily nearer to fruition. With completion of the park’s new GMP in 2001, there was no more threat of controversy but only a question of getting the money. Soon thereafter, the project was placed on the NPS line-item construction schedule for Fiscal Year 2004, promising that it would be funded primarily through congressional appropriations. In April 2002, the park entered into a project agreement with the Regional Office for preliminary design, even as the project got bumped back one year to the FY 2005 schedule. One important decision that occurred at this planning stage was that the building would have a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating, meaning that it would meet new national standards for environmentally sound construction and operations.<sup>47</sup> In 2003, the NPS allocated Lassen Volcanic \$10 million for the design, construction, and interior exhibits of its long-anticipated visitor center. While an architectural firm worked on the building design, the Park Service went forward with plans to remove the old chalet from the former ski area and prepare the site for new

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<sup>44</sup> Watson interview; comments on final draft report.

<sup>45</sup> Parris interview; Watson interview.

<sup>46</sup> Steve Ferretti, USDA Design Center, to All Planning Committee Members, November 3, 1997, File D3415: Visitor Center Construction 1996-98; Superintendent to Regional Director, March 23, 1999, enclosing Director’s Project Approval, March 21, 1999, File D3415: LAVO Visitor Center Construction 1999-2001, LAVO Central Files; Watson interview.

<sup>47</sup> Regional Director to Project Manager, December 10, 2002, File D22: Construction and Preservation Program 2002-04, LAVO Central Files.

construction. At that time, it was hoped that building crews could begin work on the new visitor center in 2005.<sup>48</sup>

When Mary Martin replaced Parris as superintendent in the summer of 2005, construction of the visitor center project had just been put out for bid. Construction costs in California had recently gone very high and the bids came back for around \$12 million, or around 50 percent more than what the NPS had available. Martin had to act quickly to get the project redesigned so that it could come in on budget. She felt she needed the new plans in hand in order to convince her superiors not to reprogram the money elsewhere. “We had to convince them we wouldn’t be coming back for more money,” Martin said. “We knew it would be one of the last visitor center projects funded for some time.” The Park Service came up with a new visitor center design in record time.<sup>49</sup>

Essentially, the new design called for a one-story rectangular building instead of a two-story curved building, of approximately 8,000 square feet instead of 11,700 square feet. In addition, the new plan eliminated a second structure that would have housed ranger offices and emergency equipment storage.<sup>50</sup> As the Park Service looked for ways to save costs and extend its budget, the park’s partners played an important role. The Lassen Park Foundation pledged to raise \$500,000 toward the total cost of the project. Eventually, this money was put toward development of a new film, audio-visual equipment, exhibits, and concept design. The Lassen Association raised an additional \$50,000.<sup>51</sup>

During the planning of the new facility, members of the Mountain Maidu tribal community had approached Superintendent Parris with a proposal to name the visitor center, which was to stand on their ancestral lands, with the Maidu name for Lassen Peak: “Kohm Yah-mah-nee” (meaning “snow mountain”). Parris liked the idea and followed through on the proposal. Tribal members Allen Lowry and Marvena Harris offered the blessing of the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center two days prior to its grand opening on October 4, 2008. This marked the first official use of an American Indian name in Lassen Volcanic National Park.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Superintendent to Regional Director, September 16, 2002, File D18: Planning Programs 2002-04, LAVO Central Files.

<sup>49</sup> Martin interview.

<sup>50</sup> “Lassen Scraps Building Design,” *Redding Record Searchlight*, February 26, 2006.

<sup>51</sup> Laura Urseny, “Visitor Center Under Construction at Lassen Park,” *Chico Enterprise-Record*, April 20, 2008.

<sup>52</sup> Karen Haner, personal communications with authors, November 2009.

## Conclusion

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Lassen Volcanic National Park in remote northeastern California has never been a “destination” national park, as have nearby Crater Lake and Yosemite. Through much of its century-long history, this little-known park has been a treasure of nearby residents, both as a refuge from the Central Valley’s summertime heat and as a family-oriented ski playground through the winter months. But in the latter decades of the twentieth century, recreational options for Lassen visitors changed dramatically when the National Park Service decided to shut down two long-standing uses of the park. These two separate judgments on the part of the NPS disappointed many park regulars but at the same time bolstered resource protection within Lassen Volcanic.

The 1974 closure of the park’s tremendously popular Manzanita Lake Lodge and cabins followed the final assessment by USGS geologists that potential rockfall from Chaos Crags posed a significant threat to the resort population of Manzanita Lake. Yet this closure also reflected an agency-wide initiative to relocate overnight accommodations beyond park boundaries, to diminish human impact on park lands and natural resources. The National Park Service was only nominally successful in this endeavor in other parks, where no such public safety concerns have existed. Lassen’s other overnight facility, Drakesbad Guest Ranch, continued operations but remained small scale and rustic, as its loyal clientele demanded. When drought and poor financial returns prompted Lassen’s ski area concessioner to call it quits in 1993, the NPS sought no replacement operator and one of the nation’s oldest downhill ski developments was terminated. This closure was in line with a more successful policy, system wide, to remove developed sport facilities from national parks.

At Lassen Volcanic, an unusual set of circumstances created a “perfect storm” – twice – that resulted in the abrupt cessation of the park’s two visitor focal points. Although talk of phasing out both the Manzanita Lake resort and the ski area predated their termination by several years, their respective concession companies, and not the NPS, were responsible for the swiftness of their closures. In both cases, “natural causes”

underlay the demise of these two facilities: the geological hazard at Manzanita Lake, and inadequate snowfall year after year at the ski area. In the early 1970s at Manzanita Lake and again in the early 1990s with the ski area, the National Park Service took advantage of a unique alignment of scientific, economic, and legal factors to “naturalize” park lands with the removal of facilities, an ambition that proved to be politically challenging, if not impossible, nearly everywhere else. Lassen Volcanic provided the National Park Service with convenient windows of opportunity to institute big changes in how visitors could enjoy this little gem of a park, changes reflective of the agency’s shift in priorities in how it balanced preservation and use. Lassen Volcanic National Park weathered the initial public outcry against both of these painful, transformative closures. In both instances, park visitation dropped but it did not disappear. The visitor experience at Lassen Volcanic National Park continued to evolve toward lower-impact activities, more dispersed usage across the park, and greater appreciation for resource protection.

In contrast to the closures of the Manzanita Lake facilities and the ski area, other “naturalization” measures in Lassen Volcanic proved to be more gradual in their implementation, as was typical across the National Park System. For instance, the legislative process that resulted in the designation of the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness took six years, although by NPS standards this was speedy: the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness was only one of four NPS wilderness areas created in the National Park System during the decade following passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964.

Other trends toward naturalization at Lassen took much longer. Park managers stated their intention to restore fire to park forestlands in the early 1970s but rarely did they set prescribed fires or allow natural fires to burn until the mid-1990s, when increased funding finally enabled the park to hire a full-fledged fire management team. Once assembled, the Lassen fire team undertook several years of forest preparation before they could confidently manage increasing numbers (and increasing sizes) of natural and prescribed fires without resorting to the traditional tool of suppression. Similarly, Lassen Volcanic’s fish stocking program was not completely phased out until the early 1990s, although calls to end the planting of nonnative fish in the park’s waters originated in the 1930s and Superintendent Boyer first proposed to discontinue all fish stocking in the early 1970s. Several examples in wildlife management also illustrate the slow pace at which ecological concepts came to infuse park operations. In 1978, Natural Resources Chief Al Denniston recognized the need to ensure separation of the park’s bear population from all human food and garbage, but not until the early 2000s was the entire park outfitted with bear-proof garbage receptacles and a food locker for every campsite. After numerous studies and decades of indecision over what to do about the beavers of Dream Lake, Superintendent Parris ruled they would not be treated as exotics but protected on par with the rest of Lassen’s wildlife. Furthermore, the implementation of biological inventory and monitoring within Lassen Volcanic – and across the National Park System – was a long time coming. Beginning with nature studies in the 1930s

aimed primarily at interpretation, Lassen's piecemeal inventory and monitoring efforts grew in magnitude as the park's natural resources division grew in capacity through the 1980s and into the 1990s, until the formation of the National Biological Survey hobbled the park's in-house scientific capabilities. In the late 1990s, the NPS instituted its formal I&M program system wide and Lassen Volcanic was designated part of the Klamath Network.

Ecological consciousness has also influenced Lassen Volcanic's long-anticipated redevelopment phase of late. The park's new Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center is a "green" LEED-rated facility of modest proportions. Lassen Volcanic's rather humble plans to install temporary guest cabins within one loop of defunct campsites at Manzanita Lake also attest to park administrators' restraint in development, despite unceasing demands to reinstate visitor amenities now absent from the park for decades. At Lassen Volcanic, the NPS has continued in the vein of minimizing human impacts and letting nature take its course.

It has been nearly one hundred years since Lassen Peak's "natural course" was violent and awe-inspiring, its fiery displays capturing the attention of the nation. For now, the namesake mountain, its surrounding volcanic oddities, and the meadows and forests of Lassen Volcanic National Park constitute nearly the same "friendly wilderness" Congressman John Raker so treasured prior to the sensational eruptions of 1914 and 1915. Long after the ash of Lassen Peak settled and forest succession began anew on its devastated slopes, Lassen Volcanic National Park has remained a fascinating and beautiful landscape, and a valuable preserve for science and nature.



Lassen Volcanic National Park  
Photo Essay

## Born of Fire

Lassen Peak's eruptions in 1914 and 1915 brought the area national attention and propelled the national park campaign to success.



**Figure 1.** Two men and two boys at Manzanita Lake, with steam rising from Lassen Peak, circa 1914. *Lassen Volcanic National Park Photograph Collection (hereafter LAVO PH Coll.) 2 (William S. Valentine Photograph Collection) – Item 16.* With the exception of Figure 8, all photos in this essay are part of the Lassen Volcanic National Park Photograph Archives, housed at the Redwood National Park Archives in Orick, Calif.



**Figure 2.** Two men amid ruins of Lassen Peak Fire Lookout with new crater nearby, still steaming, 1914. *LAVO PH Coll. 27 (George Olsen Panoramic Photographs of Lassen Peak Crater) – Item 6.*

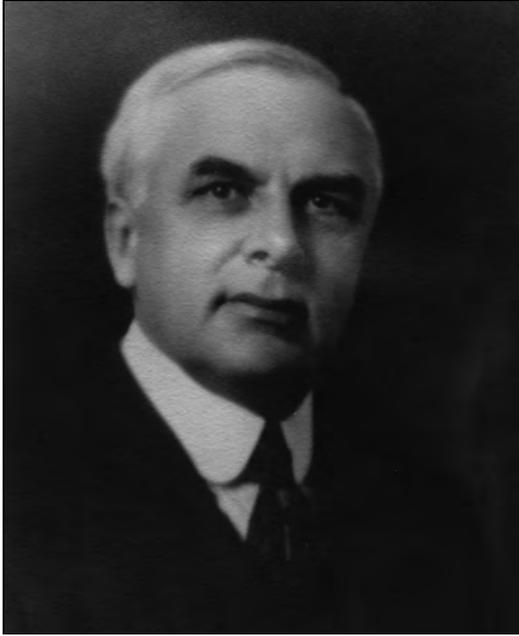


Figure 3. Rep. John E. Raker of California.  
*LAVO PH Coll. P (Portraits).*



Figure 4. Michael E. Dittmar of Redding.  
*LAVO PH Coll. P.*



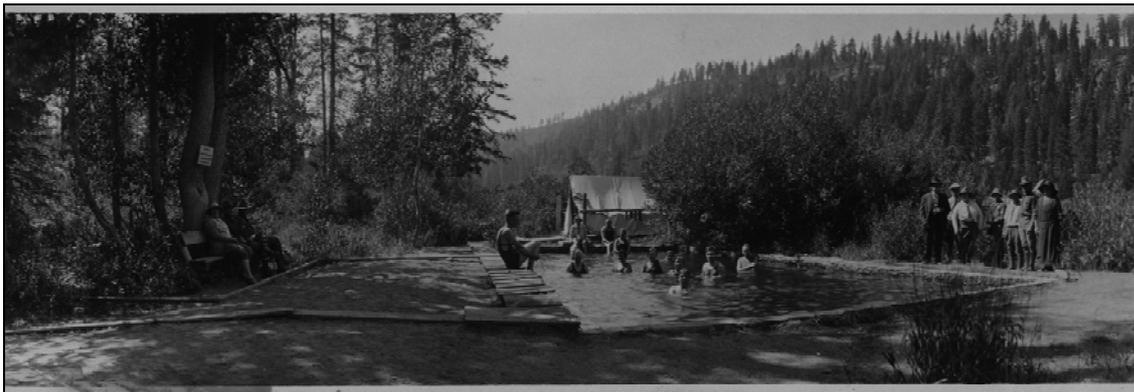
Figure 5. B. F. Loomis photograph of the Devastated Area, 1915. *LAVO PH Coll. 22 (Lassen Volcanic National Park Association Annotated Photograph Collection) – Item 16.*

## Drakesbad

Predating the park, the popular resort was owned and operated by the Sifford family until the government finally acquired the property in 1958. Over the next half century, the concession and the park administration sought to preserve Drakesbad's old-time charms and family orientation.



**Figure 6.** Group posed at Drakesbad Guest Ranch, circa 1920s. Congressman Raker is seated in center and resort owner Alex Sifford is standing on far right. *LAVO PH Coll. 7 (Michael E. Dittmar Panoramic Photographs) – Item 24.*



**Figure 7.** Guests in and around the Drakesbad swimming pool fed by hot springs, circa 1920s. *LAVO PH Coll. 7 – Item 25.*



**Figure 8.** Roy Sifford (far left) and wrangler (far right) with Drakesbad guests, circa 1931. *Sifford Private Collection, digital image on file at Lassen Volcanic National Park headquarters.*



**Figure 9.** Drakesbad lodge, 1992. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 (LAVO Administrative Photograph Collection) -- Series: General Collections, Item G5.22.*

## Loomis Museum

Built by Benjamin and Estella Loomis and donated to the park in 1929, the museum served as a focal point for Lassen's interpretive program through most of the park's history.



Figure 10. Members of the Pomona Grange pose in front of the Loomis Museum, at their summer picnic, August 1932. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Series: Albums, Album 1.*



Figure 11. Loomis seismograph station adjacent to the Loomis Museum, undated. *LAVO PH Coll. 1 (B. F. Loomis Photo Collection) – Item 46.*



**Figure 12.** Loomis Museum interior, 1937. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Misc. Unprocessed Photos.*



**Figure 13.** Interpretive staff at Loomis Museum for the summer of 1999.  
L-R: Lisa Chang, Michelle D'Ulisse, Dave Ashcraft, Megan Meehan, LaVerna Jenkins. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Subject Series: Employees, Group 5.*

## Building the Park

The “Lassen Peak Loop Highway,” centerpiece of the park’s master plan, was opened in 1931. The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-42, contributed much to the road’s landscaping and built numerous trails and campgrounds.



**Figure 14.** Workers install park entrance sign, circa 1930. *LAVO PH Coll. 19 (Richard N. Book Photograph Collection) – Item 13.*



**Figure 15.** Construction of the main park road, circa 1930. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Series: Albums, Album 1.*



**Figure 16.** Arthur Conard and NPS Director Horace Albright during a visit to Lassen Volcanic National Park by the House Committee on Appropriations, July 13, 1931. *LAVO PH Coll. 4 (Arthur G. Holmes Photograph Collection) – Album 2, p. 36.*



**Figure 17.** Civilian Conservation Corps road crew equipped with shovels, summer 1933. This crew was housed at the Old Boundary Springs CCC Camp. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Series: Albums, Album 5.*

## Geologic and Scenic Features



Figure 18. Painted Dunes and Lassen Peak from the south base of Cinder Cone, circa 1890. Photo by Joseph Diller, first geologist to study Cinder Cone. *LAVO PH Coll. 14 (Joseph Silas Diller Photographs of Cinder Cone) – Item 4.*



Figure 19. Aerial view of Cinder Cone, Snag Lake, and lava flows, 1967. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Subject Series: Aerial, Aerial 3.*



**Figure 20. Kings Creek Falls. Note ranger at base of falls. Circa 1932. LAVO PH Coll. 4 – Album 3, p. 104.**

## Summer Recreation



**Figure 21.** Superintendent Ernest Leavitt and Mrs. Leavitt with guests at Bumpass Hell, 1935. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Print File Collection, Card # 1072.*



**Figure 22.** School group at the Lassen Peak Trailhead, undated. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Misc. Unprocessed Photos.*



**Figure 23.** Lloyd Costar and Avis Wilson fishing and relaxing in a rowboat on Manzanita Lake, July 1941. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Series: Albums, Album 4, p. 1.*



**Figure 24.** Backpackers ascend Cinder Cone, undated. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Subject Series: Park Activities, Item PA 10.*

## Winter Recreation



Figure 25. Skiers at Bumpass Hell, June 1941. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Series: Albums, Album 4, p. 27.*



Figure 26. Tourists aboard motorized snow sleds, circa 1930s. *LAVO PH Coll. 4 – Loose Unprocessed Prints.*



**Figure 27. Skier jumping across the road cut at summer ski tournament grounds near the highway summit, circa 1937. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Series: Albums, Album 9.***



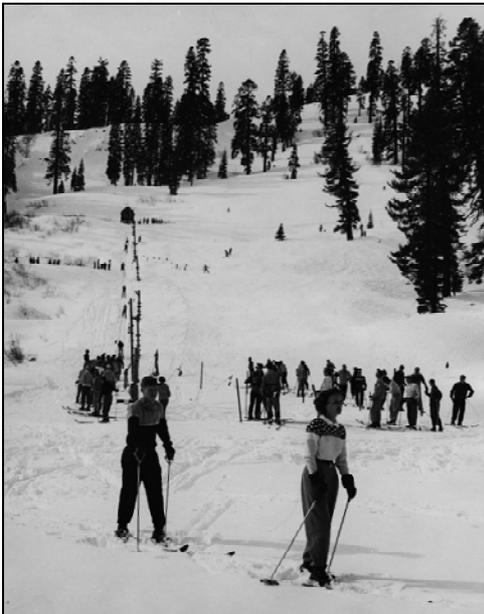
**Figure 28. Interpreter Scott Isaacson leads visitors on a snowshoe hike during Winterfest 2000. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Subject Series: Park Activities, Item PA 9.***

## Sulphur Works/Lassen Park Ski Area

The park was host to downhill skiing from 1934 to 1993. Centered in the southwest corner of the park, the ski area moved back and forth, above and below Sulphur Works, until a permanent lift was installed in 1956 near the park's Southwest Entrance Station.



**Figure 29.** Sulphur Works Ski Area with warming hut in the foreground, circa 1940. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Print File Collection, Card #975.*



**Figure 30.** Waiting in line for the tow, 1951. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Subject Series: Park Activities, Item PA 16.17.*



**Figure 31.** Red Bluff Chamber of Commerce members at ski area, undated. L-R: Curley Walker (Marian), Husky Beresford, Jack Armstrong, Lee LeBarron, Andy Gow, Mr. Kunkle. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Print File Collection, Card #1057.*



**Figure 32.** Postcard of Lassen Ski Chalet with ski slopes and Brokeoff Mountain in the background, undated. *LAVO PH Coll. L* (Photographic Postcard Collections) – Item 8.3.

## Snow Removal

The Herculean task of clearing the park road of snow usually began in early May and lasted until late June. Maintenance crews worked around the clock, three shifts per day, through fair weather and foul.



**Figure 33.** Snow removal, Lassen Peak Highway, 1930s. *LAVO PH Coll. 26* (Henry Lind Photographic Postcards) – Item 132.



**Figure 34.** Ranger Richard Wilburn poses with California snow stake near the park's boundary, January 1965. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Subject Series: Park Activities, Item PA 13.*



**Figure 35. Crowded Lassen highway parking scene at Lake Helen during a skiing event, 1934. Keeping the road plowed all year proved to be impossible. *LAVO PH Coll. 4 – Loose Unprocessed Prints.***



**Figure 36. Cultural Resources Program Manager Cari Kreshak (front row left) with visiting Redding Rancheria tribal representatives in front of Bombardier snowplow, February 2003. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Subject Series: Park Activities, Item PA 9.***

## Inholdings

Many private land holdings existed within the exterior park boundaries at the time of the park's establishment. Some of these inholdings remained in private ownership for decades as the Park Service awaited funds or a willing seller or a threatened land use that would precipitate condemnation.



**Figure 37.** Juniper Lake Resort owner C. P. Snell (left) with Superintendent Ernest Leavitt (center) and camp supervisor Parker at Juniper Lake, 1936. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Print File Collection, Card #1062.*



**Figure 38.** Fire guard Grissom, Mrs. Grissom, and Superintendent Leavitt at a Juniper Lake cabin. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Print File Collection, Card #1063.*



**Figure 39.** The Supans' gas station at Sulphur Works, circa 1950. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Subject Series: Buildings and Facilities, Item BF3.*



**Figure 40.** Sign on Supan property at Sulphur Works, 1940. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Series: Albums, Album 8, p. 39.*



**Figure 41.** Dave Kilbourne stands next to capped and locked well adjacent to Terminal Geyser on Section 36, August 28, 1968. The threat of geothermal development at this site lasted for more than a decade. The exploratory well was drilled in September 1962, and the temperature measured 200 degrees at a depth of 1,300 feet. *LAVO PH Coll. 23 (John M. Mahoney Photographs) – Item 12.*

## Manzanita Lake Development Area

Beautiful Manzanita Lake and the cluster of visitor facilities there – museum, lodge, cabins, store, gas station, campground, picnic area, and nature trail – formed a busy hub of activity until a perceived geologic hazard caused a sudden closure of the development area in 1974.



Figure 42. The Redding-Manzanita “limousine,” run by the Lassen National Park Company, parked in front of the Manzanita Lodge, 1948. *LAVO PH Coll. 10* (Edward W. Smith Photographs) –Item 62.



Figure 43. Cabin housekeeping crew at Manzanita Lake, 1950. *LAVO PH Coll. 20* (Connie N. Kinsel Photograph Collection) – Item 3.



Figure 44. Overflow camping into day-use picnic area at Manzanita Lake, 1967. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Series: General Collections, Item G1.*



Figure 45. Aerial view of the northeast flank of Lassen Peak, Chaos Crags to left, Chaos Jumbles in left center, and Manzanita Lake development area in center. USDA Forest Service reforestation project is visible in lower right. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Subject Series: Aerial.*

## Superintendents

In 2007, Darlene Koontz became Lassen Volcanic's seventeenth superintendent and the park's third female superintendent in a row. The superintendents have exerted considerable influence in determining the proper use and development of the park.



**Figure 46. Superintendent L. Walker Collins, circa 1931. LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Series: Albums, Album 3, p. 95.**



**Figure 47. Superintendent Dick Boyer (right) presents a meritorious service award to Ray Ludwig, August 1970. LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Print File Collection, Card #1908.**



**Figure 48.** Superintendent John Preston ice skating on Lake Helen, 1940. *LAVO PH Coll. 13 (Marshall W. Keathley Photograph Collection) – Item 23.*



**Figure 49.** Superintendent Marilyn Parris flanked by two friends of the park, John Koeberer, concessioner and chairperson of the Lassen Park Foundation, and Judd Hanna, park neighbor and board chairperson of the Lassen Loomis Museum Association, at Lassen's Day-in-the-Park 2000, with the former Loomis residence in the background. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Subject Services: Park Activities, Item PA 30.*

## The Ranger Force



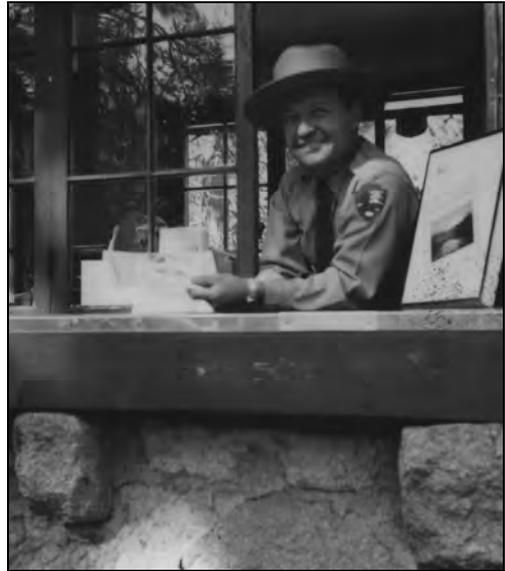
Figure 50. Superintendent John Preston (far right) and Naturalist Carl Swartzlow (far left) join other park staff in front of the administration building at park headquarters, circa 1938. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Series: Albums, Album 9, p. 94.*



Figure 51. "Ranger Dave" with his horse at the Lassen Peak Trailhead, 1931. *LAVO PH Coll. 4 – Album 2.*



**Figure 52.** Ranger Lester Bodine, longest serving ranger in the history of the park. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Series: Albums, Album 9, p. 94.*



**Figure 53.** Seasonal ranger Richard Marlow at park entrance station, 1966. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Unprocessed Fred Mang Photograph Collection.*



**Figure 54.** Chief Ranger Eugene Barton with first aid toboggan at ski area, 1941. *LAVO PH Coll. 13 – Item 26.*

## Interpretation



**Figure 55.** Ranger naturalist and visitors observe hot pots at close range. *LAVO PH Coll. 4 – Loose Unprocessed Prints.*



**Figure 56.** Interpreter Steve Zachary shows young visitors a volcano model, 1992. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Series: General Collections, Item G.4.*



**Figure 57.** Atsugewi Indian Selena LaMarr demonstrates for park visitors how to sift acorn meal in her handmade coiled or “awl” basketry at the Indian Program at Manzanita Lake, July 1952. *LAVO PH Coll. 31 (Selena LaMarr Basket Weaving Demonstration Photographs) – Item 8.*



**Figure 58.** John Koeberer addresses attendees of the Lassen Crossroads Pavilion dedication in 2000. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Subject Series: Park Activities, Item PA 30.*

## Natural Resources Management



Figure 59. Ranger Richard Book planting fish in either Snag or Butte Lake, circa 1930. *LAVO PH Coll. 19 – Item 22.*



Figure 60. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist with bald eagle at Manzanita Lake, 1973. The planned reintroduction was postponed and then cancelled. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Subject Series: Park Activities, Item PA 18.*



**Figure 61. Resources Management Chief Al Denniston and Student Conservation Association worker Rolf Stempel from Germany conducting a deer forage survey on Loomis Peak, 1989. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Series: General Collections, Item G5.24.***



**Figure 62. Nicole Tancreto at the Toll Road Fire at Lost Creek, October 1994. *LAVO PH Coll. 5 – Series: General Collections, Item G6.23.***



# Appendices

## Appendix 1

### Annual Visitation to Lassen Volcanic National Park

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1925	12,596	1967	358,286
1926	15,897	1968	442,785
1927	18,213	1969	435,710
1928	26,057	1970	466,551
1929	26,106	1971	447,421
1930	31,755	1972	505,851
1931	56,833	1973	496,590
1932	41,723	1974	408,676
1933	45,577	1975	445,659
1934	51,906	1976	461,419
1935	52,294	1977	381,157
1936	76,971	1978	442,192
1937	86,757	1979	380,014
1938	73,005	1980	394,425
1939	100,780	1981	414,865
1940	104,619	1982	414,859
1941	108,663	1983	429,867
1942	53,443	1984	463,275
1943	20,571	1985	451,497
1944	18,724	1986	439,723
1945	41,092	1987	472,431
1946	99,067	1988	495,628
1947	149,848	1989	466,115
1948	160,707	1990	460,917
1949	172,496	1991	463,290
1950	183,815	1992	468,011
1951	203,609	1993	434,264
1952	212,550	1994	385,489
1953	225,328	1995	351,001
1954	282,443	1996	351,632
1955	304,371	1997	391,816
1956	303,767	1998	318,049
1957	327,282	1999	353,756
1958	346,659	2000	374,911
1959	379,937	2001	376,695
1960	401,849	2002	388,149
1961	460,008	2003	404,384
1962	399,006	2004	379,667
1963	369,335	2005	365,535
1964	407,705	2006	388,741
1965	400,282	2007	395,057
1966	462,508	2008	377,361

## Appendix 2

### Lassen Volcanic National Park Staff: Superintendents, Division Chiefs, and Key Personnel

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#### Superintendents

L. Walker Collins	1928-1935
Ernest P. Leavitt	1935-1937
John C. Preston	1937-1941
James V. Lloyd	1941-1946
Daniel J. Tobin	1946-1952
Fred T. Johnson	1952-1953
Edward D. Freeland	1953-1961
Frank E. Sylvester	1961-1963
Robert B. Moore	1963-1965
Louis W. Hallock	1965-1967
Richard H. Boyer	1967-1972
Robert J. Murphy	1972-1974
Wilbur (Bill) Stephenson	1974-1985
Gilbert E. Blinn	1985-1997
Marilyn H. Parris	1997-2005
Mary G. Martin	2005-2007
Darlene M. Koontz	2007-

#### Assistant Superintendent

Lewis S. Albert	1973-1975
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#### Chief Park Rangers

L. Walker Collins	1927-1928
Eugene J. Barton	1937-1949
John A. Rutter	1949-1951
Nelson Murdock	1951-1953
J. Leonard Volz	1953-1955
Frank E. Sylvester	1956-1957
Merle E. Stitt	1957-1962
Richard H. Boyer	1962-1963
Don S. Squire	1963-1967
Lester D. Bodine	1967-1969
LeeRoy C. Brock	1969-1972
Albert C. Schneider	1972-1992
Bryan J. Swift	1992-1999
John A. Roth	1999-

#### District Park Rangers

Eugene J. Barton	1931-1937
Sterling W. Vaughn	1939-1941
Merlin E. Potts	1939-1946
John A. Rutter	1942-1948
Lester D. Bodine	1949-1967
William R. Holloman	1949-1957
James R. Randall	1957-1961
William H. Clemons	1961-1972
Edward H. Christian	1968-1971
Richard A. Newgren	1971-1976
Andrew T. Ringgold	1972-1976
James E. Fox	1976-1984
Lawrence H. Feser	1976-1995
Kenneth R. Kelley	1984-1991
Mark McCutcheon	1992-2001
Michael D. LaLone	1996-2001

#### Ranger Operations Supervisors

Michael D. LaLone	2001-2003
Ronald P. Martin	2004-

#### Park Rangers

Arthur G. Holmes	1930-1935
Joseph B. Fordyce	1935-1938
Merlin E. Potts	1938-1939
Louis W. Hallock	1941-1942
John A. Rutter	1941-1942
John G. Reynolds	1945-1947
Lester D. Bodine	1947-1949
William R. Holloman	1947-1949
Jack R. Young	1949-1950
Roby (Slim) R. Mabery	1949-1956
William C. Jorgenson	1950-1951
Jack R. Williams	1956-1958
Armand (Herby) B. Sansum	1958-1962
Gary E. Bunney	1960-1963

**Park Rangers (continued)**

Richard L. Wilburn	1960-1965
Robert R. Mead	1962-1966
William H. Ehorn	1963-1967
Edward H. Christian	1965-1968
Paul E. Crawford	1966-1970
Lee E. Anderson	1967-1969
Vern E. Hurt	1968-1969
Henry C. Warren, Jr.	1968-1969
Norman J. Riegle	1969-1972
Guy W. Anderson	1972-1975
James E. Fox	1973-1976
Dallas G. Koehn	1975-1982
John N. Lounsbury	1976-1980
Charles V. Lundy	1977-1979
Thomas C. Nash	1980-1984
Douglas G. Ridley	1981-1985
Peter C. Fitzmaurice	1982-1988
Michael J. Meyer	1985-1987
George R. Giddings	1985-2003
Jennifer L. Sypher	1985-1990
Guy D. Whitmer	1987-1993
Everett G. Ackart, II	1988-2002
Kenneth Castro	1988-1992
Kurt E. Veeck	1990-2002
Marie Tuxhorn	1991-1994
Karen L. Ball	1993-2001
Nate Inouye	1995-1997
Michael D. LaLone	1996-2001
Kelly Roche	2002-2008
Bill Stoner	2002-2004
Kerry Buck	2002-2004
Scott Larson	2003-2007
Mary King	2003-2007
Gab Asarian	2004-2006
Tim Havens	2007-
Kimberly McCrary	2008-

**Park Foresters**

Eslie H. Lampe	1952-1957
Marian W. Meyers	1957-1960
George S. Briggs, Jr.	1960-1963
Gary E. Bunney	1963-1966
Clay E. Peters	1966-1968

**Park Technicians**

George S. Phillips	1969-1972
Mervin (Lee) L. Randall	1972-1976
Gertrude L. Ratledge	1974-1980
George R. Giddings	1976-1985
Michael M. Wilson	1980-1984
Jennifer L. Sypher	1984-1985

**Fire Management Officers**

L. Dean Clark	1990-1991
Kenneth A. Castro	1992-2001
Ross Wilmore	2002-2003
Michael Lewelling	2003-2006
Eric Hensel	2007-

**Chiefs of Resources Management**

Alan E. Denniston	1982-1995
Russell T. Lesko	1995-1999
Louise Johnson	1999-

**Resource Management Specialists**

Alan E. Denniston	1975-1982
L. Dean Clark	1987-1992
Sheri Fedorchak	1990-1992
Jonathan Arnold	1996-1999
Biologist	1999-2005
Forester	2005-

**Chief Naturalists/****Chiefs of Interpretation**

Carl R. Swartzlow	1935-1942
Harry B. Robinson	1942-1947
Paul E. Schulz	1947-1955
Vern (Ross) Bender	1955-1956
Richard G. Prasil	1957-1960
Raymond L. Nelson	1961-1963
Robert W. Carpenter	1963-1966
James A. Richardson	1966-1968
John S. Mohlhenrich	1968-1972
Richard L. Vance	1972-1990
Elizabeth H. Knight	1991-1995
Russell T. Lesko	1996-1998
Karen J. Haner	1998-

**Park Naturalists**

Frederick J. Herman	1931
Norman W. Scherer	1932-1933
Clyde C. Searl	1933
Russell E. Farmer	1934-1935
Robert J. Badaracco	1959-1961
Earl B. Baysinger	1961-1962
Robert C. Milne	1963-1965
Leonard W. McKenzie	1966-1967
Glen F. Kaye	1967-1968
Henry C. Warren, Jr.	1969-1973
Glenn O. Clark	1973-1975
Guy W. Anderson	1975-1978
Ronald G. Warfield	1978-1981
Ellis E. Richard	1981-1988
Scott W. Isaacson	1989-1998

Assistant Chief of  
Interpretation and  
Cultural Resources 1998-2001  
Fire Information  
Education Specialist 2001-

**Interpretation Rangers**

Lora Anderson	1983-1988
James Shives	1989
Steven Zachary	1990-
Quinn M. Rankin	1993-2000
Narissa K. Willever	2001-2004
Russell S. Virgilio	2005

**Cultural Resources Program Manager**

Cari Kreshak	2001-2008
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**Chiefs of Maintenance**

Robert D. Lake	1978-1992
Daniel N. Jones	1992-2010

**Buildings and Utilities Foremen**

Eugene C. Paul	1979-1986
Loren L. Long, Jr.	1987-2007

**Roads and Trails Foremen**

Dennis W. Haag	1972-1997
Stuart Nuss	1997-2004
Lane Slover	2004-2007

**Administrative Officers**

Linda L. Like	1977-1980
Ida J. Crawford	1980-1986
Marcia Blaszak	1987-1990
Donna K. Lowin	1990-1994
Karen A. Stoll	1995-1999

**Chiefs of Administration**

Karen A. Stoll	1999-2005
Leigh Lisak	2005-2009
Janet Rogers	2010-

## Appendix 3

# Legislation Relating to Lassen Volcanic National Park

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### 9. Lassen Volcanic National Park

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Cinder Cone National Monument established: Proclamation (No. 753) of May 6, 1907.....	33
Lassen Peak National Monument established: Proclamation (No. 754) of May 6, 1907.....	34

#### CINDER CONE NATIONAL MONUMENT,<sup>1</sup> CALIFORNIA BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

#### A PROCLAMATION

[No. 753—May 6, 1907—35 Stat. 2131]

WHEREAS, the elevation in the State of California, within the Lassen Peak National Forest, known as "Cinder Cone", and the adjacent area embracing a lava field and Snag Lake and Lake Bidwell, comprising chiefly public lands, are of great scientific interest, as illustrations of volcanic activity which are of special importance in tracing the history of the volcanic phenomena of that vicinity;

AND WHEREAS, it is provided by section two of the Act of Congress, approved June eighth, nineteen hundred and six, entitled, "An Act for the preservation of American antiquities," "That the President of the United States is hereby authorized, in his discretion, to declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest that are situated upon the lands owned or controlled by the Government of the United States to be national monuments, and may reserve as a part thereof parcels of land, the limits of which in all cases shall be confined to the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected;"

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the power in me vested by section two of the aforesaid act of Congress, do proclaim that there are hereby reserved from appropriation and use of all kinds under all of the public land laws, subject to all prior valid adverse claims, and set apart as a National Monument, all the tracts of land, in the State of California, shown as the Cinder Cone National Monument on the diagram forming a part hereof.

The reservation made by this proclamation is not intended to prevent the use of the lands for forest purposes under the proclamation establishing the Lassen Peak National Forest, but so far as the two reservations are consistent they are equally effective. In all respects in which they may be inconsistent the National Monument hereby established shall be the dominant reservation.

Warning is hereby given to all unauthorized persons not to appropriate, injure or destroy any feature of this National Monument or to locate or settle upon any of the lands reserved by this proclamation.

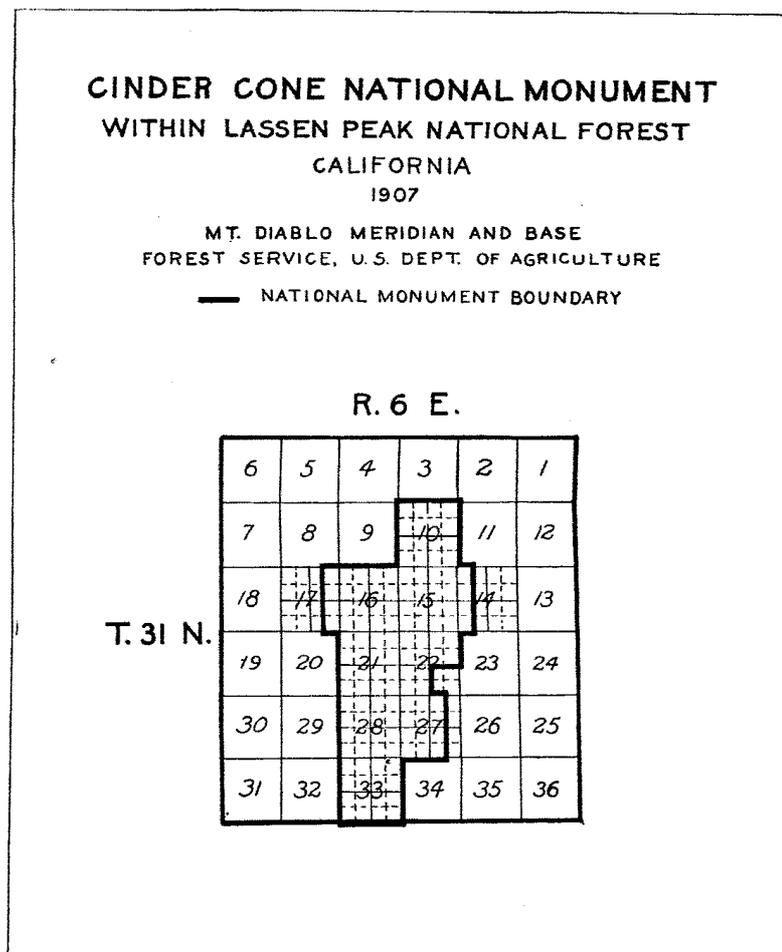
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

DONE at the City of Washington this 6th day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and seven, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and thirty-first.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

By the President:  
ROBERT BACON,  
*Acting Secretary of State.*

<sup>1</sup> Monument lands were included within Lassen Volcanic National Park by act of August 9, 1916 (39 Stat. 442), Vol. 1, p. 186.



LASSEN PEAK NATIONAL MONUMENT,<sup>2</sup> CALIFORNIA  
 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

[No. 754—May 6, 1907—35 Stat. 2132]

WHEREAS, Lassen Peak, which is situated upon public land in the State of California, within the Lassen Peak National Forest, marks the southern terminus of the long line of extinct volcanoes in the Cascade Range from which one of the greatest volcanic fields in the world extends, and is of

<sup>2</sup> Monument lands were included within Lassen Volcanic National Park by act of August 9, 1916 (39 Stat. 442), Vol. I, p. 186.

special importance in tracing the history of the volcanic phenomena of that vicinity,

AND WHEREAS, it is provided by section two of the Act of Congress, approved June eighth, nineteen hundred and six, entitled, "An Act For the preservation of American antiquities," "That the President of the United States is hereby authorized, in his discretion, to declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest that are situated upon the lands owned or controlled by the Government of the United States to be national monuments, and may reserve as a part thereof parcels of land, the limits of

**LASSEN PEAK NATIONAL MONUMENT  
WITHIN LASSEN PEAK NATIONAL FOREST  
CALIFORNIA  
1907**

MT. DIABLO MERIDIAN AND BASE  
FOREST SERVICE, U. S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

— NATIONAL MONUMENT BOUNDARY

R. 4 E.

T.31 N.

6	5	4	3	2	1
7	8	9	10	11	12
18	17	16	15	14	13
19	20	21	22	23	24
30	29	28	27	26	25
31	32	33	34	35	36

[DIAGRAM FORMING A PART OF PROCLAMATION  
DATED MAY 6, 1907.]

which in all cases shall be confined to the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected;”

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the power in me vested by section two of the aforesaid act of Congress, do proclaim that there are hereby reserved from appropriation and use of all kinds under all of the public land laws, subject to all prior valid adverse claims, and set apart as a National Monument, all the tracts of land, in the State of California, shown as the Lassen Peak National Monument on the diagram forming a part hereof.

The reservation made by this proclamation is not intended to prevent the use of the lands for forest purposes under the proclamation establishing the Lassen Peak National Forest, but so far as the two reservations are consistent they are equally effective. In all respects in which they may be inconsistent the National Monument hereby established shall be the dominant reservation.

Warning is hereby given to all unauthorized persons not to appropriate, injure or destroy any feature of this National Monument or to locate or settle upon any of the lands reserved by this proclamation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

DONE at the City of Washington this 6th day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and seven, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and thirty-first.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

By the President:

ROBERT BACON,

*Acting Secretary of State.*

13. Lassen Volcanic National Park

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An Act To establish the Lassen Volcanic National Park in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in the State of California, and for other purposes, approved August 9, 1916 (39 Stat. 442)

Lassen Volcanic National Park, Calif. Established.

Description.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That all those certain tracts, pieces, or parcels of land lying and being situate in the State of California and within the boundaries particularly described as follows, to wit: Beginning at the northeast corner of section three, township thirty-one, range six east, Mount Diablo meridian, California; thence southerly to the southeast corner of said section; thence easterly to the northeast corner of the northwest quarter of section eleven, said township; thence southerly to the southeast corner of the southwest quarter of section fourteen, said township; thence easterly to the northeast corner of the northwest quarter of section twenty-four, said township; thence southerly to the southeast corner of the southwest quarter of section twenty-five, said township; thence westerly to the southwest corner of section twenty-six,

said township; thence southerly to the southeast corner of section thirty-four, said township; thence westerly along the sixth standard parallel north, allowing for the proper offsets, to the northeast corner of section three, township thirty north, range six east; thence southerly to the southeast corner of section twenty-seven, said township; thence westerly to the southwest corner of the southeast quarter of section twenty-eight, said township; thence northerly to the northwest corner of the southeast quarter of said section; thence westerly to the southwest corner of the northwest quarter of said section; thence northerly to the northwest corner of said section; thence westerly to the southwest corner of the southeast quarter of section twenty, said township; thence northerly to the northwest corner of the southeast quarter of said section; thence westerly to the range line between ranges five and six east; thence southerly along said range line to the southeast corner of township thirty north, range five east; thence westerly along the township line between townships twenty-nine and thirty north to the southwest corner of section thirty-three, township thirty north, range five east; thence northerly to the northwest corner of said section; thence westerly to the southwest corner of the southeast quarter of section twenty-nine, said township; thence northerly to the northwest corner of the southeast quarter of said section; thence westerly to the southwest corner of the northwest quarter of said section; thence northerly to the northwest corner of said section; thence westerly to the southwest corner of the southeast quarter of section twenty, township thirty north, range four east; thence northerly to the northwest corner of the southeast quarter of section eight, said township; thence easterly to the northeast corner of the southwest quarter of section nine, said township; thence northerly to the township line between townships thirty and thirty-one north; thence easterly along the sixth standard parallel north, allowing for the proper offsets, to the southwest corner of section thirty-three, township thirty-one north, range four east; thence northerly to the northwest corner of section twenty-one, said township; thence easterly to the range line between ranges four and five east; thence northerly along said range line to the northwest corner of fractional section eighteen, township thirty-one north, range five east; thence easterly to the southwest corner of section twelve, said township; thence northerly to the northwest corner of section one, said township; thence easterly along the township line between townships thirty-one and thirty-two north to the northeast corner of section three, township thirty-one north, range six east, the place of beginning, are hereby reserved and withdrawn from settlement, occupancy, disposal, or sale, under the laws of the United

Trespassing forbidden.

*Provisos.*  
Valid claims not affected.

Rights of way.  
(Repealed by 46 Stat. 1043. See p. 199.)

Reclamation Service use.

Present ownership not affected.  
Indemnity selections.

Regulations of control, etc.

States, and said tracts are dedicated and set apart as a public park or pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of the United States under the name and to be known and designated as the Lassen Volcanic National Park; and all persons who shall locate or settle upon or occupy the same, or any part thereof, except as hereinafter provided, shall be considered trespassers and be removed therefrom: *Provided*, That nothing herein contained shall affect any valid existing claim, location, or entry under the land laws of the United States or the rights of any such claimant, locator, or entryman to the full use and enjoyment of his land: *Provided further*, That rights of way for steam or electric railways, automobiles, or wagon roads may be acquired within said Lassen Volcanic National Park under filings or proceedings hereafter made or instituted under the laws applicable to the acquisition of such rights over or upon the national forest lands of the United States when the construction of such roads will not interfere with the objects of the national park, and that the United States Reclamation Service may enter upon and utilize for flowage or other purposes any area within said park which may be necessary for the development and maintenance of a Government reclamation project; that no lands located within the park boundaries now held in private, municipal, or State ownership shall be affected by or subject to the provisions of this Act: *And provided further*, That no lands within the limits of said park hereby created belonging to or claimed by any railroad or other corporation now having or claiming the right of indemnity selection by virtue of any law or contract whatsoever shall be used as a basis for indemnity selection in any State or Territory whatsoever for any loss sustained by reason of the creation of said park. (U.S.C., title 16, sec. 201.)

SEC. 2. That said park shall be under the exclusive control of the Secretary of the Interior, whose duty it shall be, as soon as practicable, to make and publish such rules and regulations not inconsistent with the laws of the United States as he may deem necessary or proper for the care, protection, management, and improvement of the same. Such regulations being primarily aimed at the freest use of the said park for recreation purposes by the public and for the preservation from injury or spoliation of all timber, mineral deposits, and natural curiosities or wonders within said park and their retention in their natural condition as far as practicable and for the preservation of the park in a state of nature so far as is consistent with the purposes of this Act. He shall provide against the wanton destruction of the fish and game found within said park and against their capture or destruction for purposes of merchandise or profit, and generally shall be authorized to take all such measures as

shall be necessary to fully carry out the objects and purposes of this Act. Said Secretary may, in his discretion, execute leases to parcels of ground not exceeding ten acres in extent at any one place to any one person or persons or company for not to exceed twenty years when such ground is necessary for the erection of buildings for the accommodation of visitors and to parcels of ground not exceeding one acre in extent and for not to exceed twenty years to persons who have heretofore erected, or whom he may hereafter authorize to erect, summer homes or cottages. Such leases or privileges may be renewed or extended at the expiration of the terms thereof. No exclusive privilege, however, shall be granted within the park except upon the ground leased. The regulations governing the park shall include provisions for the use of automobiles therein and the reasonable grazing of stock. (U.S.C., title 16, sec. 202.)

Leases to accommodate visitors, etc. (This section so far as it relates to summer cottages repealed by 46 Stat. 1048. See p. 199.)

SEC. 3. That the Secretary of the Interior may also sell and permit the removal of such matured or dead or down timber as he may deem necessary or advisable for the protection or improvement of the park. (U.S.C., title 16, sec. 203.)

Timber disposal.

SEC. 4. That the Secretary of the Interior may exact such charges as he deems proper for leases and all other privileges granted hereunder. (U.S.C., title 16, sec. 203.)

Charges.

SEC. 5. That no appropriation for the maintenance, supervision, or improvement of said park in excess of \$5,000 annually shall be made unless the same shall have first been expressly authorized by law.

Limit on appropriations. Repealed by 42 Stat. 603. See p. 189 below.

An Act To repeal section 5 of an Act entitled "An Act to establish the Lassen Volcanic National Park in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, in the State of California, and for other purposes," approved August 9, 1916, approved April 29, 1922 (42 Stat. 503)

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That section 5 of an Act entitled "An Act to establish the Lassen Volcanic National Park in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, in the State of California, and for other purposes," approved August 9, 1916 (Thirty-ninth Statutes at Large, page 442), be, and the same is hereby, repealed.

Lassen Volcanic National Park, Calif. Limit on appropriations repealed. Vol. 39, p. 444. (Repeals sec. 5, 39 Stat. 442. See p. 189 above.)

Act of Legislature of California, approved April 20, 1927, ceding to the United States exclusive jurisdiction over Lassen Volcanic National Park in the State of California. (Codes and General Laws of California, Deering Consolidated Supplement, 1925-27, p. 1449)

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows,* Exclusive jurisdiction shall be and the same is hereby ceded to the United States over and within all of the territory which is now or may hereafter be included in that tract of land in the State of California set aside and dedicated for park purposes by the United

States as "Lassen Volcanic National Park," saving, however, to the State of California the right to serve civil or criminal process within the limits of the aforesaid park in suits or prosecutions for or on account of rights acquired, obligations incurred or crimes committed in said state outside of said park; and saving further to the said state the right to tax persons and corporations and their property on the lands included in said park and the right to fix and collect license fees for fishing in said park, and saving also to the persons residing in said park now or hereafter the right to vote at all elections held within the county or counties in which said park is situated: *Provided, however*, That jurisdiction shall not vest until the United States through the proper office notifies the State of California that they assume police jurisdiction over said park, and that the laws of the State of California and the jurisdiction of its courts shall remain in full effect in said park, insofar as they are not inconsistent with the laws of the United States, until congress shall specifically supersede them.

An Act To accept the cession by the State of California of exclusive jurisdiction over the lands embraced within the Lassen Volcanic National Park, and for other purposes, approved April 26, 1928 (45 Stat. 463)

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That the provisions of the Act of the legislature of the State of California (approved April 20, 1927) ceding to the United States exclusive jurisdiction over and within the territory which is now or may hereafter be included within the Lassen Volcanic National Park are hereby accepted and sole and exclusive jurisdiction is hereby assumed by the United States over such territory, saving, however, to the State of California the right to serve civil or criminal process within the limits of the aforesaid park in suits or prosecutions for or on account of rights acquired, obligations incurred, or crimes committed in said State outside of said park; and saving further to the said State the right to tax persons and corporations, their franchises and property on the lands included in said park, and the right to fix and collect license fees for fishing in said park; and saving also to the persons residing in said park now, or hereafter, the right to vote at all elections held within the county or counties in which said park is situated. All the laws applicable to places under sole and exclusive jurisdiction of the United States shall have force and effect in said park. All fugitives from justice taking refuge in said park shall be subject to the same laws as refugees from justice found in the State of California. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 204.)

Lassen Volcanic National Park. Acceptance of jurisdiction of California over territory included in. Rights reserved to the State.

Application of United States laws.

Extradition of criminals.

Assigned to California northern judicial district.

Sec. 2. That said park shall constitute a part of the United States judicial district for the northern district

of California, and the district court of the United States in and for said northern district shall have jurisdiction of all offenses committed within the boundaries of the said park. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 204a.)

Sec. 3. That if any offense shall be committed in the said park, which offense is not prohibited or the punishment is not specifically provided for by any law of the United States, the offender shall be subject to the same punishment as the laws of the State of California in force at the time of the commission of the offense may provide for a like offense in said State; and no subsequent repeal of any such law of the State of California shall affect any prosecution for said offense committed within said park. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 204b.)

Punishment for offenses against State laws.

Sec. 4. That all hunting or the killing, wounding, or capturing at any time of any wild bird or animal, except dangerous animals, when it is necessary to prevent them from destroying human lives or inflicting personal injury, is prohibited within the limits of said park; nor shall any fish be taken out of any of the waters of the said park, in any other way than by hook and line, and then only at such seasons and at such times and in such manner as may be directed by the Secretary of the Interior. That the Secretary of the Interior shall make and publish such general rules and regulations as he may deem necessary and proper for the management and care of the park and for the protection of the property therein, especially for the preservation from injury or spoliation of all timber, mineral deposits other than those legally located prior to the passage of the Act creating and establishing said park, natural curiosities or wonderful objects within said park, and for the protection of the animals in the park from capture or destruction, and to prevent their being frightened or driven from the said park; and he shall make rules and regulations governing the taking of fish from the streams or lakes in the said park. Possession within said park of the dead bodies or any part thereof of any wild bird or animal shall be prima facie evidence that the person or persons having same are guilty of violating this Act. Any person or persons, or stage or express company, or railway company, who knows or has reason to believe that they were taken or killed contrary to the provisions of this Act, and who receives for transportation any of said animals, birds, or fish so killed, caught, or taken, or who shall violate any of the other provisions of this Act, or any rule or regulation that may be promulgated by the Secretary of the Interior, with reference to the management and care of the said park, or for the protection of the property therein for the preservation from injury or spoliation of timber, mineral deposits other than those legally located prior to the passage of the Act creating and establishing said park, natural curiosities, or won-

Hunting, fishing, etc., prohibitions.

Regulations, etc., to be prescribed.

Evidence of violations.

Punishment for violating provisions hereof, etc.

derful objects within said park, or for the protection of the animals, birds, or fish in the said park, or who shall within said park commit any damage, injury, or spoliation to or upon any building, fence, hedge, gate, guidepost, tree, wood, underwood, timber, garden, crops, vegetables, plants, land, springs, mineral deposits other than those legally located prior to the passage of the Act creating and establishing said park, natural curiosities, or other matter or thing growing or being thereon, or situated therein, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$500 or imprisonment not exceeding six months, or both, and be adjudged to pay all the costs of the proceedings. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 204c.)

Forfeiture of guns, traps, etc., illegally used.

SEC. 5. That all guns, traps, teams, horses, or means of transportation of every nature or description used by any person or persons within the limits of said park when engaged in killing, trapping, ensnaring, or capturing such wild beasts, birds, or animals, shall be forfeited to the United States and may be seized by the officers in said park, and held pending prosecution of any person or persons arrested under the charge of violating the provisions of this Act, and upon conviction under this Act of such person or persons using said guns, traps, teams, horses, or other means of transportation, such forfeiture shall be adjudicated as a penalty in addition to the other punishment prescribed in this Act. Such forfeited property shall be disposed of and accounted for by and under the authority of the Secretary of the Interior. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 204d.)

Commissioner for. Appointment, authority, etc.

SEC. 6. That the United States district court for the northern district of California shall appoint a commissioner who shall reside in the park and who shall have jurisdiction to hear and act upon all complaints made of any violations of law, or of the rules and regulations made by the Secretary of the Interior for the government of said park and for the protection of the animals, birds, and fish and objects of interest therein, and for other purposes authorized by this Act. Such commissioner shall have power, upon sworn information, to issue process in the name of the United States for the arrest of any person charged with the commission of any misdemeanor, or charged with a violation of the rules and regulations, or with a violation of any of the provisions of this Act prescribed for the government of said park, and for the protection of the animals, birds, and fish in said park, and to try persons so charged, and if found guilty to impose punishment and to adjudge the forfeiture prescribed. In all cases of conviction an appeal shall lie from the judgment of said commissioner to the United States district court for the northern district of California and the United States district court in said district shall prescribe the rules of procedure and prac-

Judicial powers in violations of rules, etc.

Appeals to district court.

tice for said commissioner in the trial of cases and for appeals to said United States district court. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 204e.)

SEC. 7. That such commissioner shall also have power to issue process as hereinbefore provided for the arrest of any person charged with the commission within said park of any criminal offense not covered by the provisions of section 4 of this Act, to hear the evidence introduced, and if he is of the opinion that probable cause is shown for holding the person so charged for trial, shall cause such person to be safely conveyed to a secure place of confinement within the jurisdiction of the United States District Court for the Northern District of California and certify a transcript of the record of his proceedings and the testimony in such case to said court, which court shall have jurisdiction of the case: *Provided*, That the said commissioner shall grant bail in all cases bailable under the laws of the United States or of said State. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 204f.)

Procedure in criminal cases.

Proviso.

Bail.

SEC. 8. That all process issued by the commissioner shall be directed to the marshal of the United States for the northern district of California, but nothing herein contained shall be so construed as to prevent the arrest by any officer or employee of the Government or any person employed by the United States in the policing of said reservation within said park without process of any person taken in the act of violating the law or this Act or the regulations prescribed by the said Secretary as aforesaid. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 204g.)

Service of process.

Summary arrests.

SEC. 9. That the commissioner provided for in this Act shall be paid an annual salary as appropriated for by Congress, payable quarterly: *Provided*, That the said commissioner shall reside within the exterior boundaries of said Lassen Volcanic National Park at a place to be designated by the court making such appointment: *And provided further*, That all fees, costs, and expenses collected by the commissioner shall be disposed of as provided in section 11 of this Act. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 204h.)

Pay of commissioner.

Provisos.

Residence required.

Disposal of fees, etc.

SEC. 10. That all fees, costs, and expenses arising in cases under this Act and properly chargeable to the United States shall be certified, approved, and paid as are like fees, costs, and expenses in the courts of the United States. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 204i.)

United States fees.

SEC. 11. That all fines and costs imposed and collected shall be deposited by said commissioner of the United States, or the marshal of the United States collecting the same with the clerk of the United States district court for the northern district of California. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 204j.)

Deposit of fines and costs.

SEC. 12. That the Secretary of the Interior shall notify in writing the Governor of the State of California of the passage and approval of this Act, and of the fact that the

Acceptance of cession.

United States assumes police jurisdiction over said park as specified in said Act of the State of California.

**An Act To provide for the naming of a mountain or peak within the boundaries of the Lassen Volcanic National Park, California, in honor of Honorable John E. Raker, deceased, approved March 27, 1928 (45 Stat. 371)**

Lassen Volcanic National Park, Calif.

Mountain within to be named in honor of John E. Raker, deceased Member of Congress.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the United States Geographic Board is hereby authorized to name permanently a prominent mountain or peak within the boundaries of the Lassen Volcanic National Park, California, in honor of the late John E. Raker, deceased, a former Member of Congress of the United States.

**An Act To add certain lands to the Lassen Volcanic National Park in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of the State of California, approved April 26, 1928 (45 Stat. 466)**

Lassen Volcanic National Park, Calif.  
Lands added to.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the lands hereafter described, to wit: The southwest quarter of the northwest quarter, section 25, and the southeast quarter of the northeast quarter, section 26, township 29 north, range 3 east, Mount Diablo meridian, in the State of California, are hereby added to and made a part of the Lassen Volcanic National Park for use as an administrative headquarters site. (U.S.C., 5th supp., title 16, sec. 205.)

Park provisions applicable.

Vol. 39, p. 442.  
See p. 186.

Vol. 39, p. 535.  
See p. 9.

*Provido.*  
Water Power Act not applicable.

Vol. 41, p. 1063.

SEC. 2. That the provisions of the Act of August 9, 1916, entitled "An Act to establish the Lassen Volcanic National Park in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in the State of California, and for other purposes," the Act of August 25, 1916, entitled "An Act to establish a National Park Service, and for other purposes," and all Acts supplementary to and amendatory of said Acts are made applicable to and extended over the lands hereby added to the park: *Provided,* That the provisions of the Act of June 10, 1920, entitled "An act to create a Federal Power Commission, to provide for the improvement of navigation, the development of water power, the use of the public lands in relation thereto, and to repeal section 18 of the Rivers and Harbors Appropriation Act, approved August 8, 1917, and for other purposes," shall not apply to or extend over such lands. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 205a.)

**An Act To acquire an area of State land situate in Lassen Volcanic National Park, State of California, by exchange, approved May 21, 1928 (45 Stat. 644)**

Lassen Volcanic National Park.

Acceptance of designated land from California.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the Secretary of the Interior be, and he is hereby, authorized to accept on behalf of the United States, title to the northeast quarter northeast quarter

section 27, township 30 north, range 5 east, Mount Diablo base and meridian, situate within the exterior boundaries of Lassen Volcanic National Park, from the State of California, and in exchange therefor may patent an area of unreserved, vacant, nonmineral public land of equal value situate in the same State. The land which may be acquired by the United States under this Act shall, upon acceptance of title, become a part of Lassen Volcanic National Park. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 201.)

Land given in exchange.  
Acquired land added to the park.

An Act To revise the boundaries of the Lassen Volcanic National Park, in the State of California, and for other purposes, approved January 19, 1929 (45 Stat. 1081)

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the boundaries of the Lassen Volcanic National Park are hereby changed to read as follows:

Lassen Volcanic National Park, Calif. Boundaries modified.

“Beginning at the southwest corner of the southeast quarter of section 29, township 30 north, range 5 east, Mount Diablo meridian, on the present south boundary line; thence west on the section line between sections 29 and 32 and 30 and 31, township 30 north, range 5 east, and between sections 25 and 36 and 26 and 35 and 27 and 34 and 28 and 33 and 29 and 32 to the southwest corner of section 29, township 30 north, range 4 east; thence north on the section line between sections 29 and 30 and 19 and 20 and 18 and 17 and 7 and 8 and 6 and 5 to the northwest corner of fractional section 5, township 30 north, range 4 east; thence east on the township line to the southwest corner of section 32, township 31 north, range 4 east; thence north on the section line between sections 31 and 32, 29 and 30, and 19 and 20, to the northwest corner of section 20, same township and range; thence west to the southwest corner of section 18, same township and range; thence north on township line to the northwest corner of the southwest quarter of section 7, same township and range; thence east on the quarter section line to the northwest corner of the southwest quarter of section 8, same township and range; thence north to the northwest corner of said section 8; thence east to the northeast corner of said section 8; thence north to the northwest corner of the southwest quarter of section 4, same township and range; thence east on the quarter section line to the point where it intersects Lost Creek; thence following Lost Creek in a southerly direction to a point where it intersects the north line of section 14, township 31 north, range 4 east; thence east on said section line and along the section line between sections 12 and 13, said township and range, to intersection with the present park boundary; and

Description.

“Beginning at a point on the present north boundary which is the southwest corner of the southeast quarter section 8, township 31 north, range 5 east; thence north to

the northwest corner of the southeast quarter, same section, township, and range; thence east on quarter section line to a point on the present park boundary which is the northwest corner of the southwest quarter of section 12, same township and range; and

"Beginning at the northeast corner of the northwest quarter of section 24, township 31 north, range 6 east, a point on the present east boundary line; thence east between sections 13 and 24 to the northeast corner of section 24, said township; thence south on the range line three miles to the southeast corner of section 36, said township; thence west on the township line to the northeast corner of section 1, township 30 north, range 6 east; thence south on the range line to the southeast corner of section 25, said township; thence west along the section line to the southwest corner of section 26 on the present south boundary line; thence along the present boundary line and continuing on the section line to the southwest corner of section 28; thence north on the section line to the northwest corner of the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of said section 28; thence west to the southwest corner of the northeast quarter of the southwest quarter of section 29; thence north to the northwest corner of the southeast quarter of the northwest quarter of said section 29; thence west to the southwest corner of the northeast quarter of the northeast quarter of section 30; thence north to the northwest corner of the northeast quarter of the northeast quarter of said section 30; thence west to the northeast corner of the northeast quarter of the northwest quarter of said section 30; thence south to the southeast corner of the northeast quarter of the northwest quarter of said section 30; thence west to the southeast corner of the northwest quarter of the northwest quarter of said section 30; thence south to the southeast corner of the northwest quarter of the southwest quarter of said section 30; thence west to the southwest corner of the northwest quarter of the southwest quarter of said section 30, township 30 north, range 6 east, which is a point on the present boundary line.

"All of those lands lying within the boundary lines above described and the present boundary lines are hereby included in and made a part of the Lassen Volcanic National Park." (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 201a.)

SEC. 2. That the provisions of the Act of August 9, 1916, entitled "An Act to establish the Lassen Volcanic National Park in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in the State of California, and for other purposes," the Act of August 25, 1916, entitled "An Act to establish a National Park Service, and for other purposes," and all Acts supplementary to and amendatory of said Acts are made applicable to and extended over the lands hereby added to the park: *Provided*, That the provisions of the Act of June 10, 1920, entitled "An Act to create a Federal Power

Former laws applicable.  
Vol. 30, pp. 442, 535. See pp. 189, 9.

*Proviso.*  
Water Power Act not applicable.  
Vol. 41, p. 1063.

Commission, to provide for the improvement of navigation, the development of water power, the use of the public lands in relation thereto, and to repeal section 18 of the River and Harbor Appropriation Act, approved August 8, 1917, and for other purposes," shall not apply to or extend over such lands. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 201b.)

An Act To consolidate or acquire alienated lands in Lassen Volcanic National Park, in the State of California, by exchange, approved March 1, 1929 (45 Stat. 1443)

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That, when the public interests will be benefited thereby, the Secretary of the Interior be and he is hereby authorized, in his discretion, to accept, on behalf of the United States, title to any land within exterior boundaries of Lassen Volcanic National Park which, in the opinion of the Director of the National Park Service, are chiefly valuable for forest or recreational and national-park purposes, and in exchange therefor may patent not to exceed an equal value of such national-park land within the exterior boundaries of said national park; or the Secretary of the Interior may authorize the grantor to cut and remove an equal value of timber in exchange therefor from certain designated areas within the exterior boundaries of said national park: *Provided*, That such timber shall be cut and removed from such designated area in a manner that will not injure the national park for recreational purposes and under such forestry regulations as shall be stipulated, the values in each case to be determined by the Secretary of the Interior. Lands conveyed to the United States under this Act shall, upon acceptance of title, become a part of Lassen Volcanic National Park. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 206.)

Lassen Volcanic National Park, Calif.  
Acceptance of lands in, by exchange.

Timber allowed in exchange.

*Provido.*

Conditions. Accepted lands added to the park.

An Act To authorize the exchange of certain land now within the Lassen Volcanic National Park for certain private land adjoining the park and to adjust the park boundary accordingly, and for other purposes, approved April 19, 1930 (46 Stat. 222)

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the Secretary of the Interior be, and he is hereby, authorized to accept on behalf of the United States, for inclusion in the Lassen Volcanic National Park, fee simple title to the tract of land containing ten acres, now adjoining said park, and described as the west half west half northwest quarter northeast quarter section 30, township 30 north, range 6 east, Mount Diablo base and meridian, and in exchange therefor is authorized and empowered to patent to the owner of said land ten acres of land now within said park and described as the southwest quarter northeast quarter northeast quarter section 30, township 30 north, range 6 east, Mount Diablo

Lassen Volcanic National Park, Calif.  
Acceptance of tract of land for inclusion in.

Land in park in exchange therefor.

*Proviso.*  
Accepted land  
added to park  
and exchanged  
land excluded.

base and meridian: *Provided*, That the land acquired by the United States under this Act shall, upon acceptance of title, become and be a part of the Lassen Volcanic National Park and subject to all laws and regulations relating to the lands therein, and the land exchanged therefor shall, upon issuance of patent, be excluded from the park. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 207.)

Water Power Act  
not applicable.  
Vol. 41, p. 1063.  
U.S.C., p. 441.

SEC. 2. The provisions of the Act of June 10, 1920, entitled "An Act to create a Federal Power Commission, to provide for the improvement of navigation, the development of water power, the use of the public lands in relation thereto, and to repeal section 18 of the River and Harbors Appropriation Act, approved August 8, 1917, and for other purposes," shall not apply to or extend over the land acquired for inclusion in the Lassen Volcanic National Park in accordance with the provisions of this Act. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 207a.)

An Act To provide for the addition of certain lands to the Lassen Volcanic National Park in the State of California, approved July 3, 1930 (46 Stat. 853)

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That the President of the United States is hereby authorized, upon the joint recommendation of the Secretaries of the Interior and of Agriculture, to add to the Lassen Volcanic National Park, in the State of California, by Executive proclamation, any or all of the lands within sections 3 and 4, township 29 north, range 6 east; and sections 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36, township 30 north, range 6 east, Mount Diablo meridian, not now included within the boundaries of the park: *Provided*, That no privately owned lands shall be added to the park prior to the vesting in the United States of title thereto. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 204k.)

Lassen Volcanic  
National Park,  
Calif.  
Land addition  
to, authorized.

Description.

*Proviso.*  
Privately owned  
lands excepted.

Water Power Act  
not applicable.  
Vol. 41, p. 1063.

SEC. 2. That the provisions of the Act of June 10, 1920, known as the Federal Water Power Act, shall not apply to any lands added to the Lassen Volcanic National Park under the authority of this Act. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 204l.)

Prior rights not  
prejudiced.

SEC. 3. That nothing herein contained shall affect any vested and accrued rights of ownership of lands or any valid existing claim, location, or entry existing under the land laws of the United States at the date of passage of this Act, whether for homestead, mineral, rights of way, or any other purposes whatsoever, or any water rights and/or rights of way connected therewith, including reservoirs, conduits, and ditches, as may be recognized by local customs, laws, and decisions of courts, or shall affect the right of any such owner, claimant, locator, or entryman to the full use and enjoyment of his land. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 204m.)

Excerpt from "An Act To provide for uniform administration of the national parks by the United States Department of the Interior, and for other purposes," approved January 26, 1931 (46 Stat. 1043)

SEC. 3. That hereafter no permit, license, lease, or other authorization for the use of land within the \* \* \* Lassen Volcanic National Park, California, for the erection and maintenance of summer homes or cottages shall be granted or made: *Provided, however,* That the Secretary of the Interior may, in his discretion, renew any permit, license, lease, or other authorization for such purpose heretofore granted or made. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 202a.)

Permits for summer homes, etc., prohibited. (Repeals sec. 2, 39 Stat. 442, insofar as it relates to summer cottages. See p. 188.)

*Provided.* Renewal of present leases, etc.

SEC. 4. That hereafter the acquisition of rights of way for steam or electric railways, automobile or wagon roads, within the Lassen Volcanic National Park, California, under filings or proceedings under laws applicable to the acquisition of such rights over or upon the national-forest lands of the United States is prohibited. (U.S.C., 6th supp., title 16, sec. 201.)

Acquisition of rights of way forbidden. (Repeals right-of-way provision of sec. 1, 39 Stat. 442. See p. 189.)

14. Lassen Volcanic National Park<sup>1</sup>

Lands added; boundaries revised.....Act of August 10, 1961 Page 145

An Act To add certain federally owned land to the Lassen Volcanic National Park, in the State of California, and for other purposes, approved August 10, 1961 (75 Stat. 319)

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the following described lands of the Lassen National Forest are hereby excluded from the forest and added to the Lassen Volcanic National Park:

Lassen Volcanic National Park, Calif. Lands, addition.

Lots 1, 2, and 3, south half northeast quarter, and southeast quarter northwest quarter section 4; west half southeast quarter and those parts of the south half northwest quarter and of the southwest quarter of section 11 lying east of Lost Creek; and section 19, township 31 north, range 4 east, Mount Diablo meridian: *Provided*, That the aforesaid lands in section 19 are included within the national park subject to the right of the Secretary of Agriculture to construct and maintain a permanent road through such section in order to permit the use, protection, and administration of adjacent national forest lands and the removal of timber from the national forest. (16 U.S.C. § 207c.)

<sup>1</sup> See also General Legislation, pp. 16-17.

13. Lassen Volcanic (wilderness and excerpt from Omnibus bill)

An Act to provide for increases in appropriation ceilings and boundary changes in certain units of the national park system, and for other purposes. (86 Stat. 120)

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

\* \* \* \* \*

TITLE III—BOUNDARY CHANGES

SEC. 301. The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to revise the boundaries of the following units of the national park system:

\* \* \* \* \*

(8) Lassen Volcanic National Park, California: to exclude approximately 482 acres;

\* \* \* \* \*

SEC. 302. The boundary revisions authorized in section 301 shall become effective upon publication in the Federal Register of a map or other description of the lands added or excluded by the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 303. Within the boundaries of the areas as revised in accordance with section 301, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to acquire lands and interests therein by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, exchange, or transfer from any other Federal agency. Lands and interests therein so acquired shall become part of the area to which they are added, and shall be subject to all laws, rules, and regulations applicable thereto. When acquiring any land pursuant to this Act, the Secretary (i) may tender, to the owner or owners of record on the date of enactment of this Act, a revocable permit for the continued use and occupancy of such land or any portion thereof subject to such terms and conditions as he deems necessary or (ii) may acquire any land pursuant to this Act subject to the retention of a right of use and occupancy for a term not to exceed 25 years or for the life of the owner or owners. Lands and interests therein excluded from the areas pursuant to section 301 may be exchanged for non-Federal lands within the boundaries as revised, or they may be transferred to the jurisdiction of any other Federal agency or to a State or political subdivision thereof, without monetary consideration, as the Secretary of the Interior may deem appropriate. In exercising the authority in this section with respect to lands and interests therein excluded from the areas, the Secretary of the Interior may, on behalf of the

United States, retrocede to the appropriate State exclusive or concurrent legislative jurisdiction subject to such terms and conditions as he may deem appropriate, over such lands, to be effective upon acceptance thereof by the State. Any such lands not so exchanged or transferred may be disposed of in accordance with the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended.

SEC. 305. The authorities in this title are supplementary to any other authorities available to the Secretary of the Interior with respect to the acquisition, development, and administration of the areas referred to in section 301.

\* \* \* \* \*

Approved April 11, 1972.

**An Act to designate certain lands in the Lassen Volcanic National Park, California, as wilderness. (86 Stat. 918)**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That, in accordance with section 3(c) of the Wilderness Act (78 Stat. 892; 16 U.S.C. 1132(c)), certain lands in the Lassen Volcanic National Park, which comprise about seventy-eight thousand nine hundred and eighty-two acres, and which are depicted on the map entitled "Recommended Wilderness, Lassen Volcanic National Park, California" numbered NP-LV-9013C and dated August 1972, are hereby designated as wilderness. The map and the description of the boundaries of such lands shall be on file and available for public inspection in the offices of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

SEC. 2. As soon as practicable after this Act takes effect, a map of the wilderness area and a description of its boundaries shall be filed with the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee of the United States Senate and House of Representatives, and such map and description shall have the same force and effect as if included in this Act: *Provided, however,* That correction of clerical and typographical errors in such legal description and map may be made.

SEC. 3. The wilderness area designated by this Act shall be known as the "Lassen Volcanic Wilderness" and shall be administered by the Secretary of the Interior in accordance with the provisions of the Wilderness Act governing areas designated by that Act as wilderness areas, except that any reference in such provisions to the effective date of the Wilderness Act shall be deemed to be a reference to the effective date of this Act, and any reference to the Secretary of Agriculture shall be deemed to be a reference to the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 4. Section 1 of the Act of August 9, 1916 (39 Stat. 443; 16 U.S.C. 201) is amended by deleting the words "that the United States Reclamation Service may enter upon and utilize for flowage or other purposes any area

within said park which may be necessary for the development and maintenance of a Government reclamation project” and the semicolon appearing thereafter.

Approved October 19, 1972.

*Legislative History*

House Report No. 92-1422 (Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs),  
Senate Report No. 92-1248 accompanying S. 667 (Committee on Interior  
and Insular Affairs).

Congressional Record, Vol. 118 (1972):

Oct. 2, considered and passed House.

Oct. 5, considered and passed Senate.



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Record Group 79 – Records of the National Park Service.

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