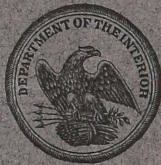


REPORT OF THE
ACTING SUPERINTENDENT
OF THE YOSEMITE
NATIONAL PARK

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

1907



WASHINGTON : GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1907

REPORT

OF THE

ACTING SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK.

YOSEMITE, CAL., *September 30, 1907.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report of the condition of affairs in the Yosemite National Park, and of its management since the fiscal year ending June 30, 1906:

The troops detailed by the War Department, in accordance with General Orders, No. 18, dated March 27, 1907, Headquarters Department of California, for duty in the Yosemite National Park, consisting of Troops I and M, Fourteenth Cavalry, and a detachment of the Hospital Corps, U. S. Army, left the Presidio of San Francisco, Cal., on April 20, 1907, and marched to the Yosemite Valley, arriving on May 3, 1907.

There had been an unprecedented amount of snow during the previous winter, and though snow had been shoveled from the roofs of the buildings on several occasions by the laborers in the valley, several of the buildings in the camp had been damaged by the heavy snow, one building collapsing entirely and others being slightly damaged. With this exception, everything was found in excellent condition. The Yosemite Valley Railroad, running from Merced up the Merced River canyon to a point within 16 miles of the camp, was completed by April 30, enabling the command to receive its freight, forage, etc., by this route, which greatly facilitated the establishment of the camp. All the supplies and equipment which had been shipped from the Presidio of San Francisco on April 20 were received at camp by May 7.

The lack of a full quota of officers with the command was a great drawback, but unfortunately could not be remedied, as neither of the two squadrons stationed at the Presidio had more than half the authorized number of officers on duty with it. There were but three officers on duty with the headquarters and the two troops in the park. This number was augmented in July by the arrival of Capt. Frank R. McCoy, of the Third Cavalry, from Washington, who remained on duty during the next three months, and rendered efficient and valuable services.

PATROLS.

Twelve patrols, varying in size from 2 to 5 men each, were stationed at various points throughout the park at distances varying from 20 to 75 miles from the main camp, for the purpose of preventing trespassing. These patrols were visited and inspected by an officer as often as practicable, and they were invariably found to be

performing their duties in an efficient and satisfactory manner. No sheep whatever crossed the border and only an inconsiderable number of cattle have been found within the park limits, and these few have been on the immediate borders. The owners showed an indisposition to gather up and take off their cattle, which rendered decided action necessary on the part of the acting superintendent. A little toleration seemed to be immediately construed as indifference on the part of the administration and advantage was taken of the leniency that was shown in the early handling of the cattle.

FOREST FIRES.

There have been no forest fires within the limits of the park this year.

GAME.

A large number of deer have been seen during this season, also a number of bear. Smaller game, such as quail and grouse, were infrequently encountered, the numbers being very small indeed as compared with that in former years. This was undoubtedly due to the severe snowstorm which took place during the middle of June. This storm lasted for three days, and the snow did not disappear for a week or ten days. Undoubtedly a majority of the birds were already nesting at this time and all young birds were killed and the eggs destroyed by this cold weather. A few broods of birds, recently hatched, were seen in the latter part of August.

There have been no applications for carrying firearms "for protection" in the park this year, and while it is possible that a few persons may have succeeded in entering the park with guns and hunting in secluded places, their number has been very limited.

FISH HATCHERY.

The fish hatchery at Wawona was, as usual, operated this year by the California fish commission. About 300,000 fry were hatched and distributed in the waters throughout the park, the troops assisting in the distribution. In addition to this, the acting superintendent in person netted, from some of the smaller streams which had been previously stocked by him some years ago, several thousand fish, which were then placed in lakes and streams not previously stocked. The majority of the streams throughout the park are now stocked, and the park is becoming one of the best fishing grounds in the world.

FENCING.

It is again recommended that the western boundary of the park be fenced, barbed wire and international steel posts to be used. There is no trouble from trespassing of cattle or other stock, except upon a portion of the western and southwestern boundary. It is practically impossible to protect the entire western line with the few outposts that can be established and there results some friction with the owners of cattle that are permitted to graze in the forest reserve immediately up to the line of the park, but are not allowed to graze within the

park. All of this friction could be easily avoided by putting up a fence along the western boundary. It would require about 50 miles of fence, which could readily be put up at a cost not to exceed \$10,000, and it is believed that this would be one of the wisest measures that could be adopted for the preventing of friction and misunderstandings with cattlemen.

PATENTED LANDS.

There is no person now living upon patented land within the limits of the Yosemite National Park, with the exception of Mr. Kibby, at Lake Eleanor. All patented lands within the park upon which people were living were excluded by the joint resolution of June 11, 1906. The only patented lands now in the park are timber claims and a few claims that were taken up under the homestead act and were never occupied as homesteads, but simply used as a pretext for bringing in stock to stray upon the public lands. These private lands are no longer of any value to their owners, as there is not sufficient grazing on them to keep half a dozen animals during summer. The timber claims are valuable and are becoming more so each year. Some of the finest sugar pine timber in California lies within the limits of the park, along the line of the Wawona road from Wawona to Chinquapin station. Lumbermen from Michigan have been in the park this year inspecting this timber and have obtained an option upon its purchase. The large tract of timber land which formerly was in the park, but was excluded by the act of February 7, 1905, has already been purchased by a lumber company, and a railroad is being constructed directly into this timber and active steps are being taken to put the lumber upon the market. The Sugar Pine Lumber Company, which formerly was operating about 40 miles south of the Yosemite National Park, has now completed its logging road (a steam narrow-gauge railroad) to within 2 miles of the former southern limit of the park, and the mountains are rapidly being denuded of all timber. This is what will happen to the timber upon all the patented lands within the limits of the park in a very short time unless these patented lands are purchased by the Government and all private rights within the limits of the park extinguished. This is a matter which needs urgent attention and should no longer be neglected. It would be greatly to the interests of the Government to purchase all private claims within the park and thus extinguish all private rights. This was one of the main points which caused the Congressional Commission of 1904 to recommend the reduction of the park, viz, the necessity of preserving the forest in this portion of the park and of reducing the number of private claims to such an extent as would justify the General Government in purchasing the remaining claims. This Commission, as has every other person who has been charged with the welfare of the park or with making any recommendations with regard to the park, recommended that the Government immediately purchase these claims and extinguish all private rights.

TELEPHONES.

Though numerous estimates have been submitted for the necessary material for establishing telephonic communication between the main camp and the larger of the outlying patrol stations, the Interior

Department has neither secured nor made any allotment looking toward the establishment of these lines of communication. Several of the patrol posts are four days' march from the main camp, and, as the small size of the patrols does not permit of many persons being detached therefrom for courier purposes, information reaches headquarters very slowly. As noncommissioned officers are often at a loss to know exactly what to do, the occasion for action has passed by the time that instructions can be received from the main camp.

The War Department, through the courtesy of the chief signal officer of the Department of California, furnished this command early this spring with material necessary for constructing a telephone line 25 miles in length, and a line was put up between the outpost at Wawona and the headquarters in the valley. During September another supply was received, and it is the intention, early in the spring, to connect the outlying station at Crane Flat with the main camp.

Permission was also given to the Yosemite Transportation Company, the Yosemite Terminal Hotel Company, and Mr. Cook, the proprietor of the Sentinel Hotel, to construct a temporary telephone line from El Portal to the Yosemite Valley to enable them to obtain the necessary information between these points as to the number of visitors who would have to be provided for each day and as to the number of stages which would be required at either end of the line. The Interior Department installed two instruments on this line and the War Department one, so that the Government has decidedly the best of this permit, as the entire cost of the material and the labor in constructing the line was borne by the three persons mentioned. It would be practically impossible for the Government to conduct its business between the terminus of the railroad and its military camp without this line, but the command would be entirely without it were it not for the enterprise of the persons to whom the permission was given to build it. An appropriation should be secured for the extending of the telephone system to the outlying substations, and this at the earliest practical date.

ROADS.

As is well known, all wagon roads leading into the Yosemite Valley are toll roads, the control over them as toll roads reaching, in the case of each of the three roads, to a point about a mile beyond the old State grant line. Another road, the Tioga road, starts from Sequoia, a station on the Big Oak Flat road, runs through the mountains to the headwaters of Tuolumne River, and terminates at Tioga, an abandoned mining camp. Full reports concerning the condition of this road have been made in several annual reports of the acting superintendent, and the subject was fully gone into in the reports of 1905 and 1906. Any further reference to the subject, might be considered unnecessary, but as this road leads through one of the most beautiful parts of the park, and is one of the most accessible, it should be put in a proper state of repair. Either the alleged owners of this road should be required to put it in a state of repair which will permit the passage of wagons, or it should be recognized that the alleged owners have no claim whatever to the road, as they certainly have

not, no title ever having been acquired to the road except under the general law authorizing the construction of highways over public lands. After this road was built and the mine salted and sold together with the road, no work was done on it for many years, and no tolls were ever collected; therefore, the franchise as a toll road lapsed many years ago. It is recommended that the Government put this road in a condition for travel.

The roads on the floor of the valley are in a deplorable condition. For the most part they consist simply of clearings over the natural ground without any attempt to furnish a surface or smooth running road. In places where they are not rough the sand varies in depth from 4 to 8 inches, making it impossible to do much more than walk over roads which are practically level. All of these roads should be macadamized or carefully oiled. The oiled roads would be the cheapest in the original outlay and would also, I believe, be cheaper in maintaining, as it will be impossible to keep macadamized roads in proper shape without constant watering. No macadamized road can be prevented from raveling unless it is watered occasionally, either by natural rains or artificially by sprinkling. In this climate, where there is often a period of four or five months in which no rain falls, the use of sprinkling carts on the road is absolutely essential, both to keep down the dust and to keep the road from breaking up. Sprinkled roads are, of course, very much more pleasant to travel than any other, but the cost of the maintenance of the teams, the hire of teamsters, and the construction of the necessary water tanks renders this method rather an expensive one. It is believed, however, to be much more satisfactory in the long run. The roads should be carefully laid out with a view to having them placed in the best locations for artistic effects, and a general plan for the location of these roads should be adopted at once before any great amount of work is put upon any of them. There is ample material of easy access for the construction of excellent roads throughout the valley, so that there is every reason why roads of the highest class should be built.

The following trails have been constructed this season, all the work being done in a satisfactory manner by Thomas H. Carter, of Yosemite, Cal.: From Tilden Lake into the Jack Mains Canyon, 4 miles; from the Hog Ranch to Hetch Hetchy Valley; and along north side of Hetch Hetchy Valley. The trail constructed into Hetch Hetchy Valley is one of excellent grade and replaces the old trail which was very steep and rocky and badly located.

HETCH HETCHY.

Attention is again invited to this beautiful valley, which is similar in many respects to the Yosemite Valley, and which is considered by some even more attractive than Yosemite. This valley lies about 20 miles northwest of the Yosemite in the Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne. This valley being one of the most interesting features of the park, should be made easy of access by a wagon road, which could be built at a reasonable cost, say not to exceed \$10,000 per mile, and it is believed that such an expenditure would be a wise one, as

a beautiful place would be opened to the general public. From this valley numerous side trips by easy trail can be taken. Lake Eleanor, Lake Vernon, Rancheria Mountain, and Tiltill Valley are all within an easy day's ride and return from the valley. Jack Mains Canyon, Tilden Lake, and Pleasant Valley are within an easy day's ride, the return trip being made the following day.

HOTELS.

One of the crying needs of the valley is proper accommodations for the visiting public. There is but one hotel within the limits of the park, and this is entirely inadequate for the accommodation of the visitors. This hotel was built many years ago, when it was very difficult to bring material into the valley, and consequently it is not a modern one nor supplied with modern conveniences. It is well managed and the very best service given that can be expected under the conditions, but a new hotel, equipped in a first-class manner in every respect, is very necessary, and steps looking toward its construction should be taken at the earliest practicable date. It is understood that permission has been granted for the construction of such a building, but no work has yet been undertaken nor are there any indications of any immediate action on the part of the concessioner.

The completion of the Yosemite Valley Railroad, which runs from Merced to El Portal, the latter place being at the boundary of the park, has made the valley very accessible, there being but a short stage ride of about 14 miles from the railroad to the hotel. This drive, which is in the park, is an exceedingly beautiful one, and a portion of this drive was one of the main features of the park before the opening of this new road. This reduction in time and ease with which the valley can be reached has resulted in a large increase in the number of visitors, which number will be greatly increased in future as soon as the public learns how easy it is to get into the valley.

The capacity of the hotel and the hotel camps has already been overtaxed, and there is an absolute necessity for more and better accommodations. The camp hotels have been enlarged and improved and are very comfortable and pleasant, but do not meet the requirements of many tourists.

GENERAL PLAN.

Some definite general plan should be devised for the beautifying of the valley and making it the most beautiful park in the world. All bridges and buildings constructed in the future should conform to a definite plan, suited to the existing conditions. All roads should be laid out according to a plan fully worked out by a competent landscape gardener, and nothing should be done in the way of expending money which does not tend to carry out these ideas.

All small buildings, practically shacks, should be torn down and replaced by stone buildings. All the larger buildings should eventually be replaced by stone buildings, and all bridges, when replaced, should be either of stone or concrete.

During the past fifteen years the underbrush and young trees have taken complete possession of the floor of the valley, necessitating a general clearing. This, however, should be done intelligently, only those trees being cut out which are of least value, the whole work being under the charge of some competent forester.

The water system should be enlarged and improved. During the past season there have been 1,500 campers who have driven into the park in their own vehicles, brought their own tents or hired tents after they arrived here, and done their own cooking and general work. All of these people have been obliged to take their water directly from the river. This necessitates their camping above the Sentinel Hotel site to insure their getting pure water. Were all the camps provided with water by pipes running from the main reservoir, a large amount of ground would be added to that available for camping purposes, and it would also be very much more convenient for the people interested.

VISITORS.

It is quite evident that previous reports furnished by the guardian of the Yosemite Valley, a State officer, as to the number of people who visited the valley each summer have been decidedly exaggerated. An accurate count has been kept this year of the total number of visitors, and it is known to be in excess of the number that has visited the valley in any previous year, yet it falls considerably below the number heretofore reported. The number of tourists has been 5,610 and the number of campers 1,492, making a total of 7,102. This number will probably be at least doubled next year as a result of the existence of the new railroad, which enables one to reach the park within twelve hours from San Francisco.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

The following recommendations are made:

1. That all patented lands lying within the present limits of the park be condemned and purchased by the Government, especially the timber claims, on which the timber is likely to be soon destroyed if they are not purchased.
2. That the western boundary be fenced.
3. That immediate attention be given to the roads lying within the valley with a view to putting them in a proper state of repair; that after being widened and repaired they be either macadamized or oiled.
4. That ample hotel accommodations be provided.
5. That a permanent military post be established.

Very respectfully,

H. C. BENSON,
Major, Fourteenth Cavalry,
Acting Superintendent Yosemite National Park.

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

RULES AND REGULATIONS.

GENERAL REGULATIONS.

1. By act of Congress approved February 7, 1905, the tracts of land in the State of California described as follows: Beginning at the point where the middle of the channel of the South Fork of the Merced River intersects the line between sections three and four, township four south, range twenty east, Mount Diablo base and meridian; thence northerly along section lines through the middle of townships three and four south, range twenty east, to the northwest corner of section three, township three south, range twenty east; thence westerly along township line to the southwest corner of section thirty-three, township two south, range twenty east; thence northerly along section lines to the northwest corner of section twenty-one, said township; thence westerly along section lines to the southwest corner of section eighteen, said township; thence southerly along range line to the southeast corner of the northeast quarter of section twenty-four township two south, range nineteen east; thence westerly to the southwest corner of the northeast quarter of section twenty-four, said township; thence southerly to the southeast corner of the southwest quarter of section twenty-four, said township; thence westerly along section lines to the southwest corner of section twenty-three, said township; thence northerly along section lines to the northwest corner of the southwest quarter of section fourteen, said township; thence easterly to the northeast corner of the southeast quarter of section fourteen, said township; thence northerly along section line to the northwest corner of section thirteen, said township; thence easterly along section line to the northeast corner of section thirteen, said township; thence northerly along range line to the northwest corner of the southwest quarter of section seven, township two south, range twenty east; thence easterly to the northeast corner of the southeast quarter of section seven, said township; thence southerly along section line to the northwest corner of section seventeen, said township; thence easterly along section lines to the northeast corner of section sixteen, said township; thence northerly along section lines to the northwest corner of section three, said township; thence westerly along township line to the southwest corner of section thirty-three, township one south, range twenty east; thence northerly along section lines to the northwest corner of section twenty-one, said township; thence westerly along section lines to the southwest corner of section eighteen, said township; thence northerly along range line to the northwest corner of section six, said township; thence westerly along Mount Diablo base line to the southwest corner of section thirty-four, township one north, range nineteen east; thence northerly along section lines through the middle of townships one and two north, range nineteen east, to the point of intersection with the summit of the divide between Cherry Creek on the west and Eleanor and Fall creeks on the east; thence along the summit of said divide in a northeasterly direction to the summit of the Sierra Nevada Mountains; thence southeasterly along the summit of the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the divide between the Merced and San Joaquin rivers; thence southwesterly along said divide to the point of intersection with the south boundary of township four south, range twenty-three east, Mount Diablo base and meridian; thence westerly along township line to the point of intersection with the middle of the channel of the South Fork of the Merced River; thence westerly down the middle of said river to the place of beginning, are hereby reserved and withdrawn from settlement, occupancy, or sale under the laws of the United States, and set apart as reserved forest lands, subject to all the provisions of the act of Congress approved October first, eighteen hundred and ninety, entitled "An act to set apart certain tracts of land in the State of California as forest reservations," and shall be known as the "Yosemite National Park."

2. The park by said act is placed under the exclusive control of the Secretary of the Interior, and these rules and regulations are made and published in pursuance of the duty imposed on him in regard thereto.

3. It is forbidden to injure or disturb in any manner any of the mineral deposits, natural curiosities, or wonders on the Government lands within the park.

4. It is forbidden to cut or injure any timber growing on the park lands. Camping parties will be allowed to use dead or fallen timber for fuel.

5. Fires should be lighted only when necessary and completely extinguished when not longer required. The utmost care must be exercised at all times to avoid setting fire to the timber and grass.

6. Hunting or killing, wounding or capturing any bird or wild animal on the park lands, except dangerous animals when necessary to prevent them from destroying life or inflicting an injury, is prohibited. The outfits, including guns, traps, teams, horses, or means of transportation used by persons engaged in hunting, killing, trapping, ensnaring or capturing such birds or wild animals, or in possession of game killed on the park lands under other circumstances than prescribed above, will be taken up by the superintendent and held subject to order of the Secretary of the Interior, except in cases where it is shown by satisfactory evidence that the outfit is not the property of the person, or persons, violating this regulation and the actual owner thereof was not a party to such violation. Firearms will only be permitted in the park on written permission from the superintendent thereof.

7. Fishing with nets, seines, traps, or by the use of drugs or explosives, or in any other way than with hook and line, is prohibited. Fishing for purposes of merchandise or profit is forbidden. Fishing may be prohibited by order of the superintendent of the park in any of the waters of the park, or limited therein to any specified season of the year, until otherwise ordered by the Secretary of the Interior.

8. No person will be permitted to reside permanently or to engage in any business on the Government lands in the park without permission, in writing, from the Secretary of the Interior. The superintendent may grant authority to competent persons to act as guides and revoke the same in his discretion, and no pack trains will be allowed in the park unless in charge of a duly registered guide.

9. Owners of patented lands within the park limits are entitled to the full use and enjoyment thereof; such lands, however, shall have the metes and bounds thereof so marked and defined as that they may be readily distinguished from the park lands. Stock may be taken over the park lands to patented lands with the written permission and under the supervision of the superintendent.

10. The herding or grazing of loose stock or cattle of any kind on the Government lands in the park, as well as the driving of such stock or cattle over the same, is strictly forbidden, except in such cases where authority therefor is granted by the superintendent.

11. The sale or use of intoxicating liquors on the Government lands in the park is strictly forbidden.

12. Private notices or advertisements shall not be posted or displayed on the Government lands within the reservation, except such as may be necessary for the convenience and guidance of the public.

13. Persons who render themselves obnoxious by disorderly conduct or bad behavior or who may violate any of the foregoing rules will be summarily removed from the park and will not be allowed to return without permission, in writing, from the Secretary of the Interior or the superintendent of the park.

14. The superintendent designated by the Secretary is hereby authorized and directed to remove all trespassers from the Government lands in the park and enforce these rules and regulations and all the provisions of the act of Congress aforesaid.

REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE IMPOUNDING AND DISPOSITION OF LOOSE LIVE STOCK.

Horses, cattle, or other domestic live stock running at large or being herded or grazed on the Government lands in the Yosemite National Park without authority from the superintendent of the park, will be taken up and impounded by the superintendent, who will at once give notice thereof to the owner, if known. If the owner is not known, notices of such impounding, giving a description of the animal or animals, with the brands thereon, will be posted in six public places inside the park and in two public places outside the park. Any owner of an animal thus impounded may, at any time before the sale thereof, reclaim the same upon proving ownership and paying the cost of notice and all expenses incident to the taking up and detention of such animal, including the cost of feeding and caring for the same. If any animal thus impounded should not be reclaimed within thirty days from notice to the owner or from the date of posting notices, it shall be sold at public auction at such time

and place as may be fixed by the superintendent after ten days' notice, to be given by posting notices in six public places in the park and two public places outside the park, and by mailing to the owner, if known, a copy thereof.

All money received from the sale of such animals and remaining after the payment of all expenses incident to the taking up, impounding, and selling thereof shall be carefully retained by the superintendent in a separate fund for a period of six months, during which time the net proceeds from the sale of any animal may be claimed by and paid to the owner upon the presentation of satisfactory proof of ownership; and if not so claimed within six months from the date of sale such proceeds shall be turned into the Yosemite National Park fund.

The superintendent shall keep a record in which shall be set down a description of all animals impounded, giving the brands found on them, the date and locality of the taking up, the date of all notices and manner in which they were given, the date of sale, the name and address of the purchaser, the amount for which each animal was sold and the cost incurred in connection therewith, and the disposition of the proceeds.

The superintendent shall in each instance make every reasonable effort to ascertain the owner of animals impounded and give actual notice thereof to such owner.

T.4N.

T.3N.

T.2N.

T.1N.

T.1S.

T.2S.

T.3S.

T.4S.

R.19E.

R.20E.

R.21E.

R.22E. SIERRA

R.23E. FOREST

R.24E. RESERVE R.25E.

R.26E.

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

SHOWING BOUNDARIES

ESTABLISHED BY ACT OF CONGRESS

APPROVED JUNE 11, 1906

AND LANDS ELIMINATED

THEREFROM AND PLACED

IN THE SIERRA FOREST RESERVATION.

- Legend
- Limits of park - Act of 1890
 - Tract eliminated - Act of June 11, 1906
 - New Boundaries.
 - Existing roads.
 - Roads suggested for adequate system.
 - Existing trails.
 - Trails suggested for adequate system.
 - Boundaries - Act of Feb. 7, 1905

Recommended in Report of
Yosemite Park Commission
dated Aug. 31, 1904

- Permanent patrol stations suggested.
- Permanent patrol sub-stations suggested.
- Permanent military post suggested.

Scale, 1 inch 2 miles.

Big Tree Grant
Mariposa Grove