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Matt C. Huppuch
February 9, 1971

Interview conducted by S. Herbert Evison
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MATT C. HUPPUCH

An interview conducted by

S. Herbert Evison

February 9, 1971

for the

Oral History Project

National Park Service

U. S. Department of the Interior

Harpers Ferry, West Virginia

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MATT C. HUPPUCH – 1907

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EVISON INTERVIEW WITH MATT HUPPUCH

Penthouse Studio of the Interior Department

Washington, D. C.

February 9, 1971

[START OF INTERVIEW]

- Herbert Evison: This is February 9, 1971. This is Herb Evison in the Penthouse Studio of the Interior Department with a long time ago associate, Matt Huppuch, who has just retired from a position he's held for a good many years with the Corps of Engineers. Before we get through, I'm sure we're going to have some dope on that position but, Matt, let's start off with some of the vital statistics. When were you born? And where? And your parents, education, and so forth?
- Matt C. Huppuch: I was born in Buffalo, New York, on October the 22nd, 1907. My mother died when I was 12 days old and I was desired - let's say - by two uncles that are - one aunt and one uncle - one in Chicago and one in Eden, New York, 18 miles south of Buffalo; and my father finally decided to let my aunt and uncle, the village blacksmith and also owner of two farms, have the privilege of having me for the first six years, 'til my father remarried. So, I had both a farm experience and a city experience, both of which I think are valuable.
- Herbert Evison: ((Added from his letter of September 23, 1976)) Whom did you marry, and when, and where? What children did you have - their names, ages, and present occupations?
- Matt C. Huppuch: ((Added by his letter September 25, 1976)) Married 1928 to Beatrice J. Taylor of Kirkville, New York, a Syracuse University student. Marriage on banks of English Brook, Allegany State Park, New York, September 10, 1928. Civil wedding - evening Indian ceremony by Chief Jesse Cornplanter of the Senecas, author of the "Legends of the Long House". Children: Janice A. (Mrs. Wayne Disley) born 1929; Charles D. born 1934, District Ranger, Lee District, George Washington National Forest, a graduate of Syracuse also; Mary Lou (Bovie) born 1945, housewife graduated from University of Tennessee - husband a lawyer, Stuart, Florida, whose name is George F. Bovie III.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah. Now we've got you up to six years old. Now your schooling and your college?
- Matt C. Huppuch: Well, I had the privilege of going to Maston Park High School, Buffalo, which was a lovely marble - white marble - building, set in the middle of a park; and our principal was Dr. Fosdick, who was president of the High School Principals of America and the father of two or three very distinguished Americans named Harry Emerson Fosdick and his brother and sister, - I don't recall their exact names. This was significant in my estimation because it was the only high school which had what amounted to a liberal education at the high school level.
- Matt C. Huppuch: Also, across the street from this lovely Maston Park and its high school was a large medieval type armory with one of the biggest drill halls in America; and this had been a very historic infantry division turned into a

155 howitzer regiment during World War One. They were short on people with sane intellectual curiosity, I guess, so a number of us joined this regiment even though we were not old enough. In my case I was only 14 but, nevertheless, had a rather interesting experience of learning to fire and observe the fire of large shells at Tobyhanna, Pennsylvania, and at Pine Plains, in New York state.

Matt C. Huppuch: I also had some citizen's military training and was able to qualify as a second lieutenant at 16 and get it at 17. I was so busy while I was with the Park Service that I had to drop out of the reserve for two years. In 1941 I was offered a commission in both the Army of the United States or in the Navy. I went with the Navy and served for four years in World War Two.

Matt C. Huppuch: The first naturalist that the Park Service had in the West was the one who interested me in my major in college, Floyd Schmoe, namely his description of his winter just after he was married, in the hotel at Mount Rainier. I also had an uncle who was a very good naturalist and I decided, notwithstanding the fact that I had a chance to go to West Point with a couple of generals' recommendation, to go to Syracuse University and to major in what was then called Forest Recreation and Park Engineering under Professor Harry Francis and the great coach of the lacrosse team, Laurie Cox.

Matt C. Huppuch: I also had enough extra credits from high school so as to allow me to take many more subjects than my classmates, namely things like money and banking, and sociology, history of art, and a few other courses, because the high school that I went to had had many courses that are normally required of college fresh- men, namely zoology, physics, and trigonometry.

Herbert Evison: You took trig in high school?

Matt C. Huppuch: Yes. And some of these I had to repeat; and I assure you that they were not as good in college as I had them in high school. (chuckles)

Matt C. Huppuch: ((added by Huppuch letter of September 25, 1976: I was: 1. Assistant Supervisor E.C.W.; 2. Supervisor of Recreation Demonstration Projects; 3. Deputy Assistant Director; 4. Chief Recreation Planner; 5. Four years in U.S. Navy; 6. Recreation Planner Corps of Engineers; and 7. Chief Branch of Recreation and Environmental Management.

On my return from the Pacific on a troop train in January 1946, we had a layover in Chicago. I went to N.P.S. headquarters and met with Mr. Drury. While I had reemployment rights, my wife was ill, and I did not care to move to Chicago. No one knew how long N.P.S. was to remain in Chicago. Connie Wirth and Heler were sharing a house and there were few vacancies in houses or apartments. Mr. Drury after telling me how much he enjoyed my article in the Naval Proceedings suggested that I go to see Mr. Demaray in Washington which I did soon after getting out of

the Navy. Arthur said he would like to have me for Congressional liaison but had money for only three people. He said the Corps had new legislation (1944) and Mr. George Beard (Mr. Flood Control) was looking for a good man. I had known George before the war and went to see him. I was promptly hired as Recreation Planner and Chief of Civil Works wanted to set up a Branch of Recreation and I was to have it. He was retired and that didn't work out for some time. The activity was split into planning and operation but eventually combined and I had a Branch with all related activities. I got Ray Mitchell from Iowa and Roger Hamilton from Ohio.

In January 1946 when I met with George Beard, he showed me a Corps map of existing and authorized reservoir projects. Considering the needs projected in the "Park, Parkway and Recreation Area Study of 1941 I told him he could expect 50,000,000 attendance or as much as the National Parks and Forests combined. This projection proved to be correct in no time and when I retired attendance exceeded 300,000,000; on the drawing power of water close at hand. You will recall the pre-war "Park Use Studies" that showed most stated parks were used only limited hour and months. I soon found that at the reservoir the use 24 hours a day (fishing) and 7 days a week and from 10-12 months a year. In the Southwest U.S.A. people moved out of town and built good homes near the reservoir and used them every day.

This was a real revelation in public use attendance. I tried to bring this out in accurate charts at the National Conference on State Parks but very few listened or cared. For years only a few states woke up to their opportunities to join in (for free).

((End of added material))

Herbert Evison: (chuckling) Well, that's interesting. Now, Matt, before we get away from it I think that we ought to have a little bit more about Harry Francis because he was really a pioneer when it came to teaching this particular subject matter.

Matt C. Huppuch: Yes. That's right, - probably the first professor in America who really foresaw the great evolution that was going to take place in public recreation. Harry Francis was, I believe, the first professor who gave courses in European recreation, the policies of the Park Service, Department of Agriculture, and many other state of New York agencies, and so forth. These consisted of about seven courses, not all of which were mandatory, but I believe six of them were. This was also augmented by courses in the Department of Landscape Engineering which was headed by Laurie Cox.

Matt C. Huppuch: Professor Francis, unfortunately, contracted multiple sclerosis of the spine, which took quite a while to incapacitate him, but he did as well as he could during my freshman, sophomore, and junior years; but in my senior

year he was unable to teach some of his classes and so I had the opportunity of teaching a number of the undergraduate classes along with my senior work. I believe it was the year after I graduated that he was furloughed and moved to New England, after the loss of his wife. He always said that recreation would be one of the greatest activities of the country and I remember later on paraphrasing his projections by telling Sid Kennedy - who reminds me of it from time to time - that about the time in the 30's when the national product was around fifty billion I said that I expected to see recreation at least at that volume, and I guess we've had that situation for a number of years.

Herbert Evison: Yes, I would think so. Well, now, you were there at Syracuse during what period?

Matt C. Huppuch: From 1925 to 1929.

Herbert Evison: Oh. You were already a graduate of several years standing then when you started in with the Park Service.

Matt C. Huppuch: Yes.

Herbert Evison: What did you do in the meantime?

Matt C. Huppuch: There again, - I had to give a speech in 1929 in which I predicted that most of us would be walking the streets due to the stock market speculation; and this came about, and the employment was not too hopeful at the time we graduated. The result was that the head of the silviculture department gave me a job, for the summer of 1929, as the manager of the Salamanca Forest Experiment Station. In this I was assisted by a number of undergraduates and engaged in inventory and a certain amount of forest thinning. This experiment station by the way was later turned over and became a part of the Allegany State Park.

Matt C. Huppuch: Then I was in the market for a job and found that there was a very fine firm in Orchard Park, a professional suburb of Buffalo, called Jerry Brookings and Sons, who were florist nurserymen and landscape architects. I went with them and worked very closely with a man by the name of Earl C. Grever who headed up the landscape department; and for a while I headed up the nursery department and later was their general sales manager. I had a very enjoyable experience working in county parks and private estates. We had a number of very fine jobs in Bradford, Pennsylvania, and with a couple of millionaire sisters who did some very large estates in our vicinity and for which we had part of the work. I also had a, did quite a bit of work on the Chestnut Ridge County Park in the vicinity of Orchard Park.

Matt C. Huppuch: When the C. C. C.'s started, one of the commissioners of the Allegany State Park Commission called me and said that he would like to recommend me for superintendent of one of the C. C. C. camps, and I enjoyed very much this opportunity. In fact, for part of the time, I handled

both C. C. C. camps in the state park, first in a tent camp on one part of the park and then in permanent quarters in another part of the park. We built a substantial amount of parkway roads and built buildings and bridges and just about every type of park structure.

Matt C. Huppuch: On the recommendation of the landscape architect inspector, I was recommended to Connie Wirth and brought into Washington as a technician, where I associated with Herb Evison, who was the supervisor of E.C.W.; and for the first while did all kinds of things like worked on some of the National Park planning in the winter, with some of the superintendents who came in for the winter; and I worked with Don Alexandar on the budget for E.C.W. and had the opportunity of being a representative of Interior on the origination of the so-called Land Program, which was a series of projects to take submarginal land out of agricultural production and find an effective way of utilizing it.

Matt C. Huppuch: We developed a program aimed at meeting the needs of the large cities and attempted to find areas that would qualify under the program and at the same time offer an opportunity for the eleemosynary agencies of the cities to project a camping program out on to these areas. In addition to that, we augmented the acreage of a number of the National Parks, Monuments and purchased the bulges along the Blue Ridge Parkway. We ended up with 46 major areas and initiated a program of waysides along the highways either by direct purchase or by cooperation with the highway departments of a number of states. South Carolina and Virginia were particularly cooperative in this either regard and it, I think, stimulated other states to do likewise.

Herbert Evison: Matt, do you know who originated that designation - wayside?

Matt C. Huppuch: Yes, we debated a long time what to call these areas along the highways and well, Pete DeGelleke, who was brought in from Vermont, suggested the word "wayside" because there were wayside places up in Massachusetts; and we thought this was a good idea and adopted it as what we would call these highway rest stops.

Herbert Evison: Always seemed to me an especially good name.

Matt C. Huppuch: To give you some idea of what this program of Recreation Demonstration Projects was - it consisted of not only land acquisition but the planning and the actual development of these areas. We employed up to somewhere in the vicinity of 70,000 people at the maximum and these consisted of both C. C. C. camps and relief workers who were employed under projects referred to as E.R.A. Projects.

Herbert Evison: Emergency Relief Administration?

Matt C. Huppuch: Well, this was to distinguish them from W.P.A. Projects, which were usually under local control; but the same type of projects that were handled by the federal agencies were referred to as E.R.A. just for that

distinction. The pay - and it was a very different from a construction standpoint, was that all workers got a security wage which was, for the type of work they were doing, they got a certain amount per month. I don't remember exactly what the hours were, but they were of course less than 160. I think they were somewhere around 100 or 120.

Matt C. Huppuch: This was perfectly all right from the scheduling of work, but then they changed it to say that that they would be employed at local prevailing rates. This meant that it was extremely difficult to handle because a carpenter would work certain hours and his carpenter helper would work a lot more hours. This, along with the problem of picking up these workers at central points with trucks, became a nightmare from the standpoint of a superintendent in charge of work, but notwithstanding all of this a great deal of excellent work was accomplished.

Matt C. Huppuch: The same was true in these Recreation Demonstration Areas where, in the C. C. C., we were allowed to put on some 12 to 20 local enrollees and this helped a great deal, too. Along with this program we inherited what was called the Veteran's Camps which, as a result of the so-called Bonus March and eviction from Washington, were set up to simply provide housing and a minimum of money per month. This did not work out very well and they turned these camps over to the Park Service; and I had the pleasure of changing them from one type of camp to a real work camp in which they received the same security wages that our E.R.A. project workers did, the only difference being that we housed them and fed them, and in most cases they had to spend most of their earnings on their subsistence, but at least we gave them - and most of 'em were up in years - a secure place and they turned out excellent work.

Matt C. Huppuch: I had letters from a number of judges who were highly in favor of these. They said that many of these same people used to spend their winters in jail but now they were up in front of the fireplace and doing constructive work in the parks such as Letchworth Park in New York and the barrier beach from Manteo south, which is now the National Seashore in North Carolina.

Herbert Evison: Now Matt, let me get clear, - weren't these in many cases referred to as transient camps?

Matt C. Huppuch: Yes.

Herbert Evison: I know that those on the seashore at Hatteras were transient.

Matt C. Huppuch: Yes.

Herbert Evison: I mention that because of the fact that at the start, or very close to the start, of the C. C. C., 25,000 of these veterans were actually enrolled in the C. C. C. as Veteran Camps.

Matt C. Huppuch: That's right.

- Herbert Evison: Getting the same pay as the boys did in the other camps.
- Matt C. Huppuch: The camps I referred to are not the same as the Veterans Camps in the C. C. C. They were inherited from the Works Progress Administration and turned into work camps on an entirely different basis than the Veterans Camps in the C. C. C. program. The Recreation Demonstration Area, of course, had all three types of work on them. C. C. C. and these transient camps and E.R.A. I might try to straighten out this money business. The Land Program and the Recreation Demonstration Areas were financed initially under the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933; subsequently they were financed from the Works Projects and the Works Progress Administration money, which was usually a two-year appropriation of Congress for all phases of emergency relief, and that was broken down into different categories of work.
- Herbert Evison: Do you remember what Rex Tugwell's connection was with this?
- Matt C. Huppuch: Yes. Well, the original Land Program was sponsored by Agriculture in which Rex Tugwell was an Assistant Secretary. Later on, there was established the Resettlement Administration, and Rex Tugwell was made the Administrator. The personnel of these Recreation Demonstration Areas were temporarily transferred from the Park Service to the Resettlement Administration, but they did not change offices or location. They simply had to change their procedure somewhat. Later on, this was transferred back to the Park Service by Executive Order.
- Herbert Evison: That must have been about August of 1936 or thereabouts, wasn't it?
- Matt C. Huppuch: About that, yes.
- Herbert Evison: Now let me also get this clear: within Connie Wirth's overall set up of supervision of various emergency activities - when you came in you were the head of this particular phase of the emergency activities having to do primarily with the acquisition and development of Recreation Demonstration Areas?
- Matt C. Huppuch: That is right. I had been Assistant Supervisor of E.C.W., then supervisor of Recreation Demonstration Areas. About that time, though, the Park Service emergency activities, which had been divided between National Park, E.C.W., and State Park E.C.W., were consolidated into one unit and all of the various programs were put on a functional basis, - namely planning and administration; and I was made a deputy assistant director for the administration of all the emergency activities and the director of administration of the Recreation Demonstration Areas. The other division was the development division under Charlie Gerner, who had been my assistant in the Recreation Demonstration Areas; and the Planning Division was headed up by a series of people, the last being Ben Thompson, who had been a special assistant to the Director.

- Herbert Evison: The two people I'd like to ask you about that you've mentioned up to now, - Earl Grever's name was a very familiar one to me; and you also mentioned without naming the inspector who was somewhat responsible for getting you transferred into Washington.
- Matt C. Huppuch: Yes.
- Herbert Evison: I wish you would talk a little about both of these.
- Matt C. Huppuch: Well, Earl Grever, whom I worked with in private practice, later on came as a Regional Supervisor of Recreation Demonstration Areas at our Indianapolis office and later as an Assistant Regional Officer at Omaha. He went back, however, after a few years, into private practice in New York; however, his interest in the Park Service has always remained.
- Herbert Evison: Do you remember the inspector? Was it Markley Stevenson?
- Matt C. Huppuch: Yes. Markley Stevenson was our inspector back in '33 and '34, or at least in '33, and he was the one who recommended me to Mr. Wirth, and I come into Washington in December of 1933.
- Herbert Evison: You know, I suspect one thing, Matt, and that is that you were the first professionally trained recreation planner that the Park Service ever hired in any central office. You know, - you probably remember that during the C.C.C. a lot of people were hired under the title of recreation planner who knew about as much about recreation planning as our cat.
- Matt C. Huppuch: That's right.
- Herbert Evison: Quite a number of recreation planners, - I mean people were hired under that title who were really publicity people.
- Matt C. Huppuch: That's right. Well, this is the peculiar thing; Connie gave me quite a bit of rope and I proposed a series, a new series of jobs, to the Civil Service Commission, namely recreation planner, park planner, economist, recreation economist, and something else, but, as you say, Herb, allotted money to our regional offices to hire qualified recreation planners. And this was after Connie and I had gone to New York to consult the records of the N.R.A. and had carefully picked some 10 or 12 real good men; but unfortunately our regional offices sometimes picked publicity people instead, and in the case of Omaha I had to allot 'em money twice in order to get the person we wanted hired as a recreation planner; and incidentally he later became the president of the American Institute of Park Executives.
- Matt C. Huppuch: Of all things, in the early days there was a considerable animosity over the word "recreation" even in the Park Service. In fact, Ben Thompson and I used to have big arguments on that thing, and I maintained all along that we had three different kinds of people. We had the playground people, we had what I called the pansy-planters in the main cities, and we had the wilderness-naturalist type and to me they were all important, and the

sooner they got together, the better because they all had something to contribute, but this wasn't accepted readily.

Matt C. Huppuch: I had petty people who did not want the word recreation mixed up with parks; included among those were Ben Thompson and even Herb Evison who had the Recreation Demonstration Areas so named because Herb Evison didn't want the word "park" used. But all of 'em are now named parks across the country, and some of 'em are mighty good (chuckling) areas as to location; they are within 50 miles of major population centers which is a godsend.

Herbert Evison: I'll say. They're extremely valuable properties.

Matt C. Huppuch: I don't know whether you remembered that or not—

Herbert Evison: No, I—

Matt C. Huppuch: —you were all out very adamantly. I was not to have any word “park” in it. (chuckle)

Herbert Evison: (chuckles) I had forgotten completely that error of mine.

Matt C. Huppuch: Well, the funny thing was that you know Chopawamsic Recreation Area Ira Lykes didn't like it that we didn't give the Chopawamsic part of the area in World War Two to the Marines. He wanted to gain favor with the county, and so the area is now called the Prince William Forest Park but administered by the National Capital Parks.

Herbert Evison: Forest Park.

Matt C. Huppuch: Forest Park, which is another argument; Herb Evison wanted to get rid of the word "forest" out of all these park names, - and then only to have it come back again at Chopawamsic.

Herbert Evison: I still would want to get rid of 'em because of a mix-up with state forests.

Matt C. Huppuch: I know; and it sounds like a county park, you know, which is probably what it might have been.

Herbert Evison: Okay.

Matt C. Huppuch: During the administration of the emergency programs I became well aware of the need for communication between the three different groups concerned with city parks, playgrounds, state parks, and national parks and felt that all of them could contribute to the solutions if we could bring them together; so I worked very closely with various people in the National Recreation Association including Miss Lee and Howard Braucher who was, I think, a giant of a man as a philosopher, in the class of Stevenson and some of our best thinkers; and so I talked with him and with Connie Wirth about the necessity for having an agency in the Federal Government which would be concerned not with administering lands, but with fact finding and getting guidance to all levels of recreation. Connie

gave me some support in this, but also felt that it, of course, all should be under the Park Service. It was for no lack of loyalty to the Park Service that I felt that this type of agency could not succeed except if it were divorced from its own land administering policies.

Matt C. Huppuch: I noticed in our emergency work - our state park work - that there was a tendency on the part of our inspectors, and even regional officers, to impose what they thought were National Park policies on the state parks in a manner which was not really appropriate. And so, I discussed with Mr. Braucher the necessity for getting Harold Ickes to understand that there was a need in the government for such an organization, comparable to the Bureau of the Biological Survey, or some of the forest experiment stations work, and he agreed and arranged for an appointment with us in New York City. Unfortunately, the day that we were to have the meeting the big row about giving the Germans helium came up and Mr. Ickes overrode the President and refused to give the Germans the helium and we did not have the meeting.

Matt C. Huppuch: However, I might have said before that I was as anxious as Connie to get an inventory and I had gotten an idea of what was needed by having worked with Charles Eliot the Second on his first survey, when the National Resources Planning Agency was established. They did not have much of a staff and they called upon the Park Service to help them. It was my privilege to obtain for our emergency outfit the first maps of the states showing all state publicly owned land and probably a reasonably accurate inventory. We then tried to do the same thing at the county level only to find out that there is no such animal, as many of the 3,000 counties had no records of what they owned at all; and it was appalling to find that the county clerks who took office from their predecessors found only empty desks and empty files. And so, it was practically impossible to get a picture of county ownership during the 30's. But I did have the privilege of working with Eliot in some of these other needed areas, and it was quite evident that there was a great need for a national survey of all recreation potentials. We drafted up some legislation and got it introduced. It was a bill that, if I remember right, had eight paragraphs and after diligent work on the Hill on the part of a number of us we got it to the point where it was feasible to get its enactment, but the Department of Agriculture had enough votes on the floor to become exempt from this survey.

Matt C. Huppuch: They also were influential eliminating some other paragraphs; and I remember I was working the House side and Connie was working the Senate side and he was getting very disturbed because of the slicing off of various sections of this bill, and I told him as long as we kept the first and second sections, the hell with the rest of 'em; and that's the way it finally passed; but rather curiously, in the enrollment process, somebody conveniently chucked it, I guess, because it did not get to the White House under its original enrollment. It had to be enrolled a second time and

therefore it is - I forget the exact number - but it ends up with a one-half on the public law.

Herbert Evison: Now, that's the Park, Parkway and Recreation Area Study Act.

Matt C. Huppuch: That's right. Connie was very disturbed because of Agriculture's large holdings that would not be included in it. I suggested that there might be another way to skin the cat, namely, to write an Executive Order requiring the Department of Agriculture to cooperate in it; and I had the privilege of writing that and it was signed, and as a result Agriculture did cooperate in giving us factual data for inclusion in the survey. As a result of some other developments which I won't go into and on so-called Stitely affair I was changed from Deputy Assistant Director to Chief Recreation Planner and with a group carried on this national survey. The only trouble with it was that while we I think got out a very good report, considering that we had no regular money and had to do all this with emergency money we had the luck of the Irish, I guess, in that we had arranged for copies of the Park, Parkway and Recreation Area Study to be placed on the desks of every Congressman and every Senator on Monday morning, December the 8th, 1941. This was just a beautiful day, after Pearl Harbor, to get real attention in the Congress of the United States.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. What happened?

Matt C. Huppuch: My original idea, which Mr. Braucher fully supported was really carried out, supposedly, by enactment of legislation setting up the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, but unfortunately I think that agency has not accomplished what I originally envisioned, - an agency to which all of us could look with pride and support, namely, an agency which got the facts and made those facts available to county, state, and federal agencies.

Herbert Evison: Matt, how do you feel that the B.O.R. has fallen short of expectations?

Matt C. Huppuch: Well, I think B.O.R. had a wonderful opportunity, but first, in order to have it in Interior, it had to take somebody from Agriculture; and I think it was a mistake to appoint Dr. Crafts, even though he's reputable forester who had done a lot of things. He was inexperienced in the field of recreation and in setting up his staff he got very few people who had any previous training or experience in the field.

Matt C. Huppuch: In fact, to illustrate, - I had a call one day from a so-called recreation specialist from his office and his questions were, what you might say, elementary; and I told him that I was surprised that he didn't know the answers; that they were readily available from the National Recreation Association at the time, or the American Institute of Park Executives, the National Parks Association and so forth. Well, none of these meant anything to him at all and I said: "Well, what what grade or what is your job?" He says: "Recreation Specialist, at GS-13." Well, it was this type of

people who were hired, who had no background and too many of them had had purely a wildlife-management type experience.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Well, don't you think really that it was unfortunate that a bureau set up with the objectives that were set up for this should have been placed in any department instead of being an independent agency?

Matt C. Huppuch: Well, I think there were a lot of people who recognized - those who had been on the ORRRC Report - recognized that it should not be, but the President is confronted with so many hundreds of independent agencies that it's more or less necessary to place these activities in a department. I think that the nature of the bargain was bad. That is, there were some people in the Park, in the Forest Service who would probably have been a better selection. Then the impatience of Crafts was a second thing; that is, he took on hundreds of jobs that he was not qualified to take on, unfortunately all the emphasis was placed on fee collection, and this has been a nightmare of misadministration that could have readily been avoided.

Matt C. Huppuch: For one thing he should have anticipated the Executive Order to be signed in December and it was not signed until April; and there should not have been a charge program initiated the first year at all and this would have avoided a lot of trouble that came about because those who prescribed the rules had no idea of the on-ground problem of any one agency, including any of 'em in Interior, and were totally ignorant of the Forest Service and the Corps of Engineers problems. This has been finally recognized by some of 'em, but it took five years to do so.

Matt C. Huppuch: The second big mistake was made by the arbitrary abolishment of the Federal Inter-Agency Committee on Recreation, which had been in being for over ten years. This was done without even a "thank you" note to the National Recreation Association, who had paid the salary of the Executive Director of this for at least ten years, I believe, or longer.

Herbert Evison: Who was that? J. B. Williams?

Matt C. Huppuch: No, not J. B. Williams. George Dickey.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Matt C. Huppuch: George Dickey, who is now retired in Florida, was a - he had been previously retired and brought back and he had a nature ideal for the job of getting communications between the federal agencies and getting a fine spirit of cooperation going. Nobody, the federal agencies, nor the N.R.A. was consulted when this committee was abolished. This was an arbitrary action on the part of Dr. Crafts and was very unfortunate. The council that was set up again was unfortunate, being composed of departmental heads such as Department of Defense; and these people were confronted with decisions which, if they went along with them, had the force of law - or didn't have the force of law, but which said right in them that each agency

would carry out these so-called policies. It was only the head of the Housing Office who finally said that he would not come to any meetings to rubberstamp somebody's ideas without full coordination. In other words, the people who knew what the problems were were not represented and the heads of the agencies were asked to make decisions in which they had no basis for making a decision.

Matt C. Huppuch: The thing that was most neglected was the original idea that this would be a fact-finding agency who would come up with results that were based on the facts and not on political decisions. This is unfortunate and still could be corrected, however.

Herbert Evison: Well, yes, I remember very early emphasis, in everything that they said, on the preparation of this national plan for recreation on which of course you and others had made a start many years before. Now, I never have heard that the bureau has gotten anywhere beyond, even to first base.

Matt C. Huppuch: Well, first they got an extension. They were given, I believe, I'd have to check that out, two years to do it. They had another extension of a year. I understand the plan has been completed over a year but has not been - still reposes in the Secretary of Interior and has not been coordinated with any of the federal agencies, so I don't know how they're going to get along with Congress because Congress was supposed to get that plan along with the President's recommendation two years ago. Of course, first, the moneys were to be allocated only to states based on having a satisfactory plan. This again fell through the floor, because some states like Arkansas packed up a bunch of files and sent them in. They had no relationship to being a plan at all; but in order to get the money out they gave a tentative approval and gave each state from six months to two or three years to get their plan in shape, but I have seen no evidence of a good plan yet.

Herbert Evison: And yet all of these allocations of funds have been based on the assumption that the state had a satisfactory plan. Is that correct?

Matt C. Huppuch: That is right, that is right, yeah.

[END OF INTERVIEW]