

Sylamore Park Spruces Up

Three Recreation Centers, Trails and Telephone Lines Have Been Built in Ozark National Forest District.

Gazette 1-2-38
By Tom Shiras.

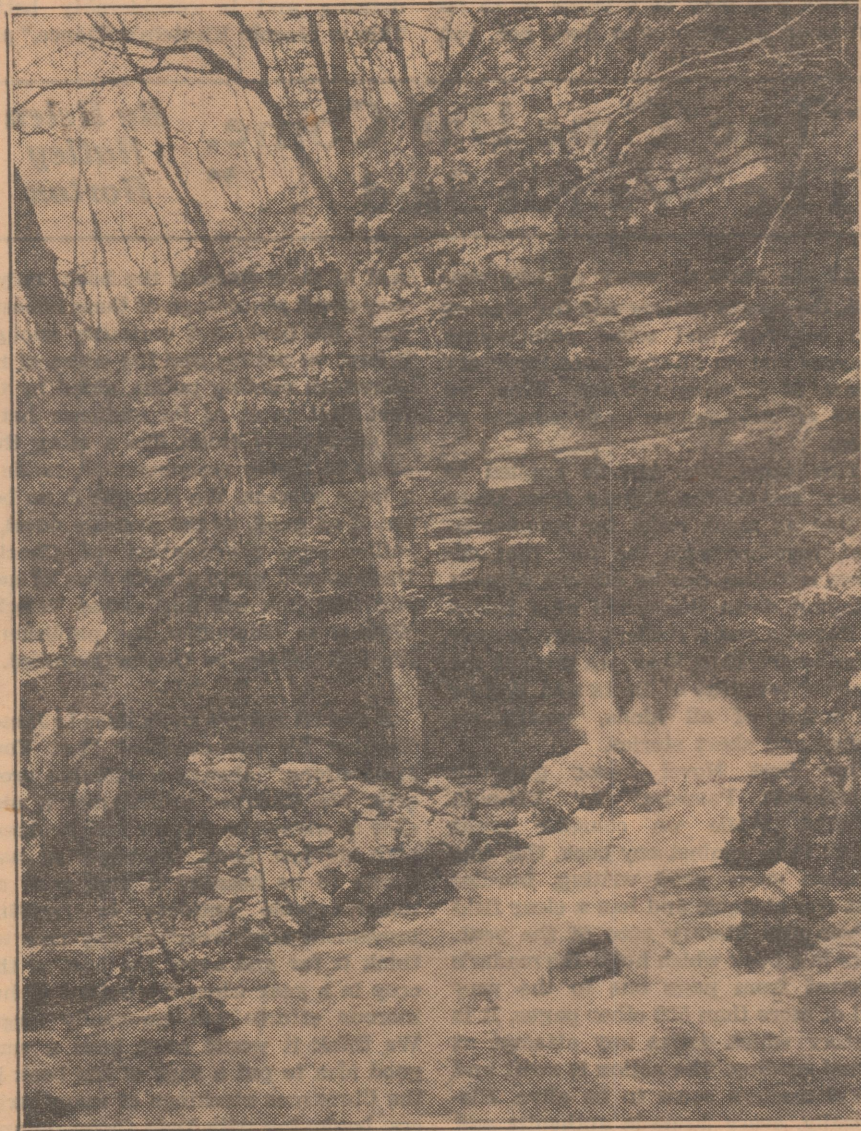
One-third more out-of-state tourists visited the Sylamore district of the Ozark National Forest this year than last. Hundreds of Arkansans found the trails leading into it and mingled with the visitors. Deer hunters from a dozen different states tried for their bucks there this fall.

Ten years ago the Sylamore district was just another rough timbered area in the Arkansas Ozarks. During the last few years, with increased appropriations for forest development, and the CCC, it is taking on the appearance of a national park. More than 100 miles of smooth, hard-surface, all-weather forest trails cross and criss-cross the area, and telephone lines follow the trails. Weed trees have been cut, recreational centers established, brush cleared out of the beauty spots, bridges built, and many other improvements made, all of which have enhanced its natural beauty.

The Sylamore district contains about 1,200 square miles. It lies in broken mountain country, reaching from the mouth of Buffalo river on the north, to the mouth of Sylamore creek on the south, and stretching back in lazy, mountain ridges to Big creek on the west, and with White river on the east. It takes in parts of Stone, Baxter, Marion and Searcy counties.

Residents of the South or Middle West do not have to make the long journey to the Rockies to get into beautiful mountain territory, since the development of the Sylamore district, for they can find all the natural beauty of mountain country in this area, with all its attending natural outdoor recreations. The mountains offer beautiful scenery, hiking and climbing. If you want to climb an Ozark mountain, you can do it in a couple of hours. In the Rockies it takes days or weeks. You can drive a car at top speed over most of the forest trails. Deer and other game abound, the woods are full of birds, and fish are plentiful in the several clear, fast flowing mountain streams in the district. At night you can drop into some convenient recreational center. Or stop on the bank of one of the clear, rippling streams and make camp, take your fly rod and pick up a couple of trout or bass for the evening meal, sit around the camp fire until bed time. There is clean gravel and sand beaches along the streams to swim in, with plenty of shallow places for the children to play in.

Two big game preserves in the Sylamore district have probably done more for conservation of game, especially deer, than anything done before in the state. When the game preserves were created in 1925, it was estimated that there were 25 head of white-tail deer in the area. A conservative estimate now places them at 2,000 head. Several hundred bucks are killed each hunting season. At this season of the year they are wild. During the summer, when the tourists and vacationists visit the area they are more tame, and it is no uncommon sight to see a doe with two fawns, or several of them, with their young in or crossing one of the forest trails. The city or out-of-state visitors get a thrill when they see them. These two game preserves are the Livingston and the Barkshed preserves. One lies

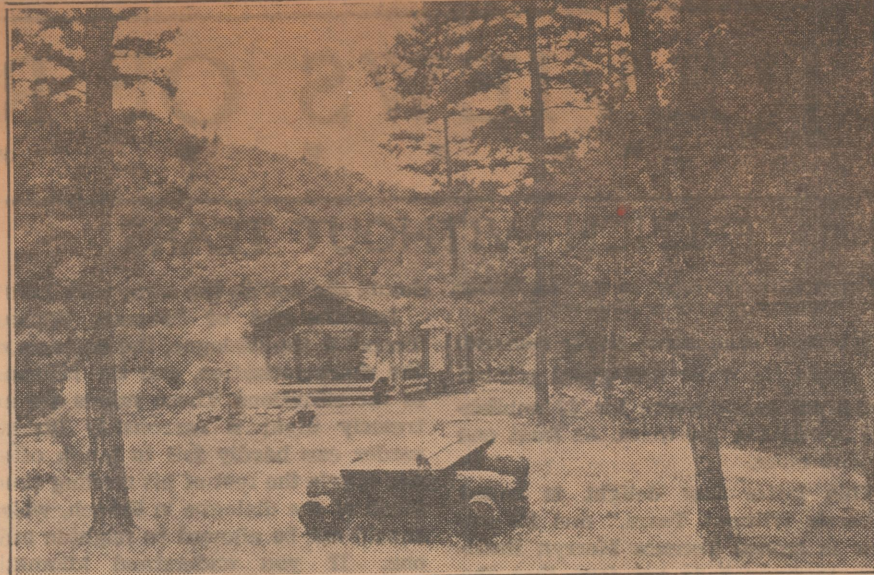


Blanchard Spring, Sylamore Park, Ozark National Forest, site of new recreational center.

in the area. They are known as the Barkshed center, the Blanchard Spring center and the Ashley center. The Barkshed center has been completed, and hundreds have taken advantage of it this season. It is located on North Sylamore creek, a dashing, clear water mountain stream, 13 miles southwest of Calico Rock, 40 miles southwest of Mountain Home, and 26 miles northeast of Mountain View. Two acres have been improved for tourist use at the Barkshed center, and within the confines of the heavy log fence, any tourist or camper will find those things prepared for them that go with outdoor living. The fence keeps out range stock. There are nice shelters to duck into in case of rain, or a storm at night. There are nicely built cooking furnaces on Livingston creek, in Stone county, and the other on Barkshed, part in Baxter and part in Stone counties. They contain about 8,000 acres each, but the Forest Service contemplates enlarging the Barkshed preserve.

When the recreational centers are completed, there will be three big ones on which you can prepare your meals, and rustic benches and tables; things that you can't lug along conveniently in a car. There are two fine springs at this center, and water is piped into the center. There is a parking area that will accommodate trailers as well as cars.

One can pick the Barkshed center as a base for a camp, and stay a week or two, and find plenty of outdoor amusement every day. There is good fishing



Barkshed recreational center.

Some have been caught this year that weighed as much as three pounds, but they are not as plentiful as bass and perch in other nearby streams. If you catch one or two of pan size you can count yourself lucky. Mill creek is one of the few streams in the north part of the state whose waters are cold enough for this species of fish to propagate naturally.

The third center will be Ashley center, but no work has been done on it yet. Its development probably will start next year. It is seven miles northeast of the Barkshed center, and will be equally as beautiful as the latter, and the Blanchard Spring center, when completed.

One of the big road improvements of the district is the road now under construction from the Green tower to Sylamore, on White river. This new road, or forest trail, leaves Highway No. 5 at the Green tower, seven miles south of Calico Rock, runs down Livingston creek and strikes Highway No. 9 at Sylamore on White river.

With the exception of a new bridge across Sylamore creek, near the mouth, the road practically is completed. It will eliminate about 15 miles of narrow mountain road and will cut the distance from Calico Rock to Mountain View about 20 miles. It will shorten the distance between all points north into Little Rock, and give to the north part of the state another scenic highway.

Arkansas Forest Land to Be Part of Federal Purchase. Gazette 3-5-38

Washington, March 4 (AP).—Secretary Woodring, president of the National Forest Reservation Commission, announced today the commission had authorized the Forest Service to purchase 104,778 acres to be added to 32 national forests and purchase units at a net cost of \$331,184.15. The acquisition units, the number of acres to be added and the cost included:

George Washington, Black Warrior (Ala.), 7,645, \$26,859.
Bienville (Miss.) 1,461, \$7,326.
Ouachita, (Ark. and Okla.), 336, \$954.
Ozark (Ark.), 3,313, \$23,876.

215,933 Acres to Be Added To National Forests. Gazette 5-27-38

Washington, May 26 (AP).—Secretary Woodring announced today approval by the National Forest Reservation Commission of plans for purchasing 215,933 acres of forest land in 24 states and Puerto Rico for \$647,790. The land will be added to 48 national forests and existing purchase units and will be administered by the Forest Service.

The forests and purchase units in which land will be acquired, together with the number of acres and cost included.

Arkansas and Oklahoma, Ouachita, 10,477 acres for \$30,739.
Arkansas, Ozark, 8,917 for \$35,999.

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS PREPARES FOR RECORD 1938 TOURIST SEASON

Special to the Gazette. 6-12-38

Mountain Home, June 11.—The tourist season in northwest Arkansas is starting early this year. Out of state cars are numerous on the highways, and tourist camps are beginning to do a lively business.

Mass student tours from other states into this section seem to be becoming popular. Loaded school buses from out of the state are common on the highways now. From all indications it appears that this section will have the biggest tourist business this year in its history. It is better able to take care of it than it has ever been.

Facilities Developed.

A five hundred-mile drive over northwest Arkansas highways disclosed that thousands of dollars have been invested during the last year in the development of tourist camps, and in other facilities to serve tourists. The development of the tourist camps is especially noticeable. First they were camp grounds, then rough cottages, now they are "de luxe."

Northwest Arkansas now has some of the prettiest and most luxurious tourist camps in the South or Midwest. Groups of native stone cottages that resemble villages in Switzerland. Hot and cold water, baths, gas or electric grills to cook on, and furnishings de luxe, are featured.

There is hardly a vacant spot left where a highway touches a stream. A tourist camp by every creek with fishing poles in sight as lure. The promise of catching a few fish, a clean gravel or sand beach, and a boat or two will generally stop any tourist, and these, "by the creek places" are usually filled to capacity.

Forest Especially Attractive.

The Ozark National Forest, which consists of approximately 1,000,000 acres of primitive woods, is one of northwest Arkansas's most attractive tourist centers, and it is becoming more and more popular with out of state visitors. Two-thirds more tourists visited the forest in 1937, than visited it in 1936.

For the last four years eight CCC camps, with an enrollment of about 1,500 men have been busy developing the forest into a recreation ground as well as a conservation project. During that period 500 miles of forest trails have been constructed, constituting literally a highway system within the state highway system, through primitive woods and rough country that contains some of the most beautiful scenery in the United States. Miles and miles of green, undulating ridges, high knobs, rugged, cedar-clad bluffs and beautiful streams. The forest trails are gravel surfaced and smooth, and a car can glide over them comfortably at from 40 to 50 miles an hour.

Besides building these trails the Forest Service is developing recreation centers. These consist of shelters, benches, cooking furnaces and other conveniences. Water from nearby springs is piped to them. Most of them lie adjacent to creeks, with clean sand and gravel beaches for bathing. The streams also afford good fly casting for bass and goggle-eye.

Using one of these recreation centers as a base, one can spend a vacation of a few days or a few weeks, fishing, bathing, driving, hiking, kodaking, picture taking and the like, in one of the most beautiful, isolated sections of North America. If the tourist is of a scientific turn of mind he can find a new cave to explore, or potter around in some rock house that was inhabited during the end of the ice age by the bluff dwellers. There is plenty to interest a tourist in the forest, and the Forest Service is preparing to take care of a lot of them this summer.

A CCC company has recently moved into the Buffalo River State park in Marion county, to develop it. The work will take several years. Tourists already are interested in it though. Already they are beginning to stop in Yellville, and ask how to reach it.

Roadside Merchants Busy.

Roadside merchants already have their wares on display to catch the eye of the visitor. Nearly every farm on the principal highways has a rough shelter outside the yard fence with displays of merchandise. Now they are selling vegetables to tourists who use the tourist camps and do their own cooking.

Radishes, lettuce, spinach and green onions sell well. Strawberries are in season now in the northwest part of the state, and hundreds of quarts are sold direct from the farm to the tourist every day. Blackberries will be next, then plums, apples, melons.

Besides the products of the farm that are sold to tourists, native Ozark crafts-making a

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at a blow
which was a
loss to a number of boat companies
who furnish boats, guides and camping
equipment on the upper White river
and its tributaries. This is one feature
of the tourist business that has grown
enormously during the last few years.
Fly casters and plug casters from all
over the United States visit the White

river country to fish its fast mountain streams for black bass. Up until a few years ago one concern handled all of this business. Now there are a dozen in the business and they keep their equipment busy from the time the season opens until cold weather. Few anglers who make one float trip on the North-fork, Buffalo or White rivers fail to return for another. The head of one boat company reported before the season opened that he had over 50 parties booked for the first day.

New Recreational Area Planned In Ozark National Forest.

Gazette 6-23-38
Fort Smith, Ark., June 22 (AP).—Construction will start about July 10 on a recreation area in the Ozark National Forest, 14 miles north of Mulberry, H. R. Koen, forest supervisor, announced today.

A CCC camp of about 200 youths will work on the project which calls for a 100-acre artificial lake and a \$60,000 dam across Hurricane creek. The dam will require approximately 10 months.

Forest Service To Take Over Mt. Magazine

6-30-39

Special to the Gazette.

Paris, June 29.—Operation of the Mt. Magazine project will pass to the National Forest Service Saturday, A. L. Nelson of Hot Springs, supervisor of the Ouachita National Forest, announced today. The area became a part of the Ouachita National Forest last July, with all supervision and protection placed under the Forest Service, but the development work remained under direction of the Soil Conservation Service.

Mr. Nelson said that the Forest Service would continue to use the local organization so far as funds were made available to carry on the work. Only two changes are contemplated in the personnel. Lee Savage and Harry Cheyne will continue with the SCS and will be transferred to other projects. Offices and shop of the SCS will remain here.

Howard Payne, who has been manager of the development work since December 1, will continue as superintendent. All equipment on the project is being turned over to the Forest Service.

Would Spend \$310,000 In Year.

Mr. Nelson said that his organization had asked for \$310,000 to carry on the development work for the fiscal year starting Saturday. Of this amount \$180,000 was asked from the WPA and \$130,000 from the PWA. If this amount is granted, in addition to completing several jobs already started, the 22 miles of highway running from the north side of the project to the south side, which goes over the top of the mountain, will be blacktopped.

The principal project now under way in the area is the \$35,000 lodge on top of the mountain. All the stone work on this building has been finished. Mr. Nelson said that it would be completed by October 1.

Much work also is being done around Cove lake, eight miles southeast of Paris, and Spring lake, four miles north of Belleville. This includes building additional roads and picnic areas.

DeFord Smith, Forest Service architect of Atlanta, Ga., will remain on the project until the lodge is completed, Mr. Nelson said.

There are 18 cabins on top of Mt. Magazine now available to the public.

Succeeds Former Chief As Head of Forest



PHILIP H. BRYAN.

P. H. Bryan New Forest Supervisor

10-1-39

Special to the Gazette.

Russellville, Sept. 30. — Philip H. Bryan, supervisor of the Kisatchie National Forest with headquarters at Alexandria, La., has been named to succeed Henry R. Koen as supervisor of the Ozark National Forest with Russellville headquarters.

Mr. Koen has been appointed regional forest inspector of operations for all United States forests in the Southern region, with headquarters in Atlanta, Ga.

Mr. Bryan was notified of his transfer today after he arrived here to attend a banquet at Arkansas Polytechnic College honoring Mr. Koen. He was located here with the local forest personnel from 1928 to 1935.

Native of Minnesota.

A native of St. Paul, Minn., Mr. Bryan was graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1924. He has been in the United States Forest Service since July, 1924, when he became field assistant with the Lake States Forest Experiment Station in St. Paul. He was transferred as junior forester to the Ouachita National Forest, Hot Springs, on March 1, 1926, and was sent here on a six-week detail for a land taxation study in the fall of 1927.

Mr. Bryan was transferred here in November, 1928, as forest ranger and was promoted to assistant supervisor of the Ozark National Forest in 1932. He was transferred in the spring of 1935 to Pisgah National Forest, Asheville, N. C., as assistant forest supervisor. He was made supervisor of the Nantahala National Forest, Franklin, N. C., in September, 1935, and was transferred to a corresponding position with the Kisatchie National Forest, Alexandria, La., in May, 1936.

Compliments Exchanged.

Of his successor, Mr. Koen said: "I commend him to the public. I expect the public to give him the same hearty support and co-operation in carrying on the work in the forest as it has given me. Mr. Bryan stands for everything that is right, as a citizen. He knows forestry and forestry problems on the Ozark better than any other man in the United States Forest Service who is in line for the position."

Mr. Bryan responded: "Whatever success I have attained is due to the training I received while associated with Mr. Koen. This is the biggest assignment I have ever received. I feel sure that I shall receive the co-operation from the people and I shall do my best to carry on the great work Mr. Koen has started."

U. S. Parks Service Maintains Scenic Roads, Bridle and Foot Paths for Benefit of Visitors

DEMOCRAT 6-9-40

Within walking distance of downtown Hot Springs are all the recreation spots of Hot Springs National park. These include paved scenic roads and bridle and foot paths over Hot Springs and West mountains, open hot springs, lookout towers and the free government swimming pool and tourist camp in the Gorge, bordering Hot Springs mountain on the east.

The park, a track of 1,011 acres created as a reservation by the federal government in 1832, is small in comparison with other national parks in the country, but was discovered 40 years before the wonders of Yellowstone were known to man.

Annually thousands of dollars are spent by the United States in maintenance, improvement and the purchase of additional acreage.

A feature with the sightseeing visitor is the \$1,000,000 Bath House Row, where most of the city's commercial bath houses are located. The Row is located on the east side of downtown Central avenue, the city's only cross-town thoroughfare.

Many New Improvements.

Next in popularity are the winding scenic highways and trails over the two mountains. During the current fiscal year the park service is spending \$43,000 on a program to revise roads on trails on West mountain and to modernize the Gorge swimming pool and camp.

On West mountain the roads and trails have been rerouted to some extent, embankments have been cribbed to prevent erosion, old roads and trails have been obliterated, and "scars" caused by cutting of new embankments have been sodded.

Present developments include piping of water to the summit of West mountain for drinking fountains at lookout stands. This and other work in the forest is being done by CCC crews supervised by Park Supt. P. P. Patraw and his staff.

Recently completed improvements at the Gorge swimming pool include the addition of concrete surfacing over most of the pool, a sand beach on the east side of the pool, construction of a life guard stand and the moving of the diving board to the deepest section of the lake.

Other projects contemplated and under way include continued construction of the promenade in the rear of Bath House Row, addition of hot water fountains and drinking stands on the promenade, other drainage improvements and some fencing.

More Land Wanted.

Proposed acquisition of approximately 5,000 more acres of land when money for the purchase is available will increase the park's area five times and make possible construction of a skyline drive which will almost surround the city itself.

The altitude of the park varies from 600 feet above sea level in the valleys to more than 1,200 feet at the summits of the mountains.

The park and its roads and recreational facilities are open throughout the year. The winters are mild, permitting outdoor recreation in comfort except at infrequent intervals, and the summers are free from excessive humidity with temperatures moderate.

It is estimated that more than 300,000 persons visit the park annually, and the hotel, tourist court and apartment facilities of the city can handle 27,000 persons at one time without crowding.

When only 26 of the present 48 states in the present American union had been admitted, the United States realized the future national health value of Hot Springs National park and realized it must be saved from private and company exploitation.

Centennial in 1932.

The government proceeded to take control and that action was commemorated in the summer of 1932, the centennial of the oldest national park in the United States. Since, Hot Springs has enjoyed the reputation of being the only government-controlled spa in the country.

While the city has the regular municipal form of government, the national park section is completely controlled by the park service and park service police.

At the time it took charge the government, taking notice of the 851,308 gallons of curative waters produced daily, could not have dreamed of the eventual monetary values of these waters, but acted only on the strength of the known health giving powers of the thermal waters.

The United States had made scientific tests, knew somewhat of the potential values, and resulting exploitation values of the waters, but also took into value that the American Indian, virtually warlike in all races, considered the hot springs as a benefit put there for use of all. Before the white man, the hot springs of the present Arkansas spa was a primitive Geneva where no claim was to be made by force or money means.

When the centennial celebration was observed eight years ago, before Arkansas itself observed its centennial, a group of thousands of school children, directed by School Supt. H. H. Haley, enacted a pageant depicting the days since the great explorer, Hernando DeSoto, who thought the springs was the fabulous Fountain of Youth, first arrived there to find peace among the savage Indians, until the present day it is a modern city of about 35,000 population.

Ouachita National Forest Near Hot Springs Offers Many Sites For Camping, Outings, Picnics

DEMOCRAT 6-9-40

For the Hot Springs visitor seeking recreation in the woodlands, the Ouachita National forest borders the resort to the west and north and the United States government has spent millions to keep it as primitive and picturesque as it was hundreds of years ago when the Caddo Indians called it home.

The forest offers varied opportunities for recreation and pleasure for visitors of all ages. It has playgrounds and shaded camps for picnics and camping, streams and lakes which delight the fisherman, trails for the horseman and hiker, and abundant wildlife in many cases as tame and curious as the animals of famed Western parks.

While constructed primarily to speed fire fighting crews to the most remote points in the forest, the maze of roads in the reserve offer the motorist easy accessibility to all the beauty spots of the Ouachitas.

Innumerable springs and clear mountain streams make motoring and camping in the forest ideal. Camp and picnic grounds have been developed in suitable locations and they include shelters, tables, benches, fireplaces, drinking water and sanitary facilities.

Two Camps Close.

Two of these sites, the Charleton and Ouachita camps, are in the immediate vicinity of Hot Springs.

The Charleton camp is located on Highway 270 west, 18 miles from Hot Springs. The camp site is dotted with shelters, equipped with fireplaces and the forest service even provides firewood and kindling. A dam constructed of native stone backs up a spring-fed mountain stream for swimming. The forest service has provided a dock and diving board, as well as a roped-off shallow area for wading.

Camp Ouachita is much nearer the city, being a few miles off 270 west, about 12 miles out. It is located on Lake Hamilton and offers much the same in camping and picnic facilities as does Camp Charleton. Roads to both camps are well marked as are turnoffs from 270.

Regularly Forest Supervisor A. L. Nelson issues invitations through newspapers and Chambers of Commerce requesting Arkansans and visitors to the state to make use of these and other Ouachita camp sites.

Strict Fire Regulations.

His only demand is that they observe fire regulations carefully and leave the camp sites clean. In the forest all camp fires must be completely extinguished, with no coals left burning, and all cigarettes must be extinguished by hand.

Motorists must use the ash trays in their automobiles and cigarettes must not be tossed from cars. For that reason, while the driver may never know it, each car traveling through the forest is checked several times as to license plate, make of automobile and general description of the occupants.

The latter also serves to show the government how much of a cross-section of the American people are taking advantage of the forest preserve.