

## WHAT IS RECREATION'S NEXT STEP?

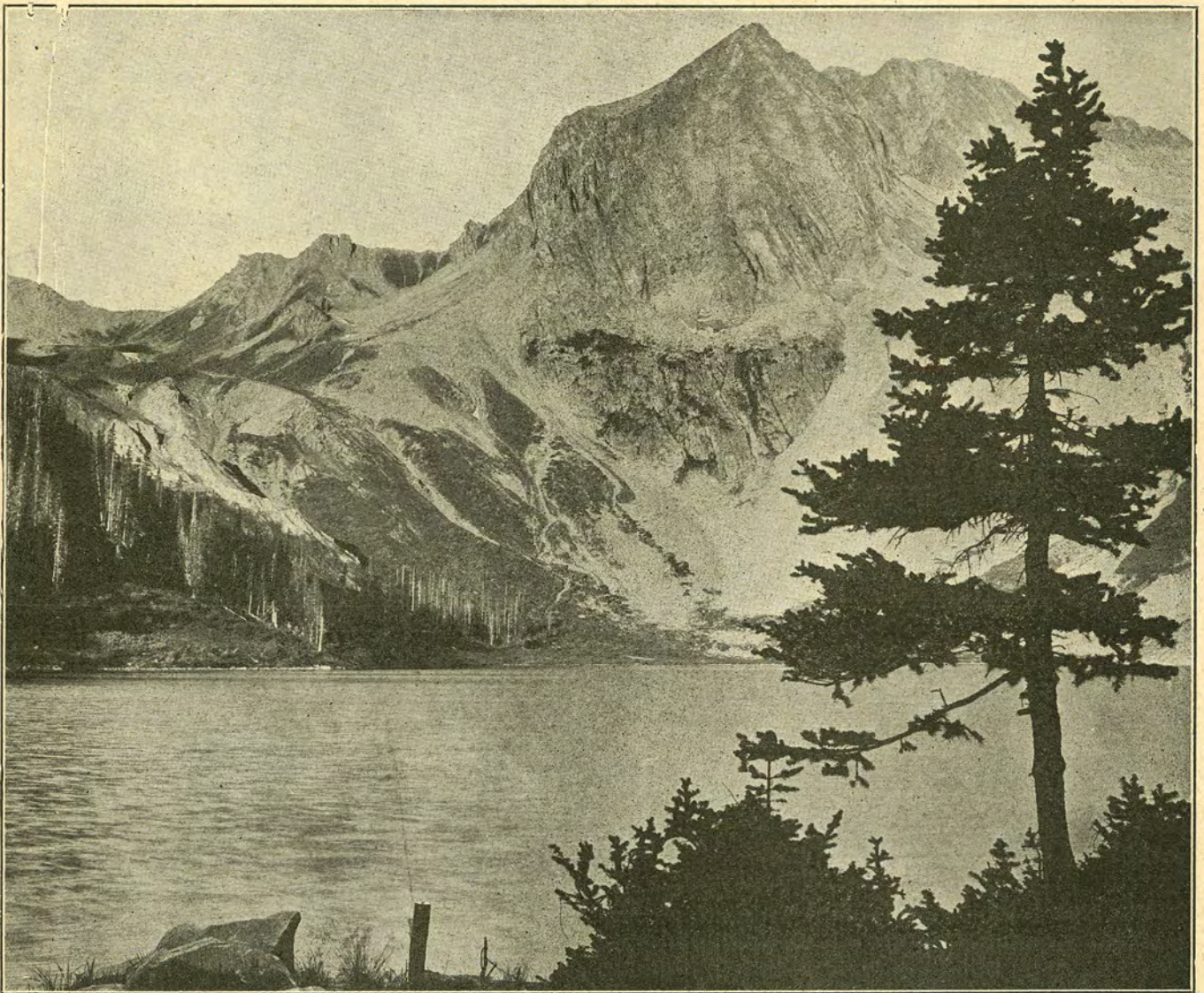
BY ARTHUR H. CARHART

AMERICA is recreation hungry. The appetite of the public seems so whetted for outdoor play that to satiate it has become a Herculean task. Ten years ago going on a pack trip in the mountains was a hardship braved only by bolder spirits, but the taste for the outdoors has so developed among all peoples that girls and women, clad in sensible khaki outfits, are almost as generally present in the vacation camp of a pack outfit as are men. Auto trips of a thousand miles a decade past were material for feature stories in the newspapers. Today Bill Smith packs his wife, children three, tent, dog, skillet, fishing tackle and safety razor in the family gasoline chariot and goes, not one, but several thousand miles, visiting many cities, camps and playgrounds on the way. And the present time is not

the end of this chasing of the rainbow of recreation. Unlike the spectrum colored bow with its never-found pot of gold at the end the recreation lure leads one to true treasure. Health, happiness, knowledge, appreciation of God's outdoors, and a love of our own native land are but a few of the rewards for the man or woman who goes into the field of outdoor play to there be re-created.

Each year the numbers thus getting from under roof and outside of brick walls are greater. It is easily explained. Everyone who has once tried the life never quite gets away from its appeal and as a missionary converts others to try it just once. So every season sees the older gypsies on the road with an added number of converts.

Where is this leading us to? As a people, what will be the result? There is little need of speculation. No



THE MORE SPECTACULAR TIMBER-LINE LAKES OFTEN SERVE ADMIRABLY AS CLIMAX POINTS ON PACK TRIPS, AS WELL AS OFFERING EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ANGLER. THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL SPOT ON SNOWMASS LAKE IN THE HOLY CROSS NATIONAL FOREST IN COLORADO



one can make camp among the tall trunks of spruce or fir or stand on the top of a massive mountain peak without being the better for it. The magnificent mountain land, the lakes of the North, the great sweep of the ocean coast whether bordered by rugged cliffs or sandy beach all have some touch of the Infinite in them that, if he be kindred of Nature whatever, calls to man with an irresistible voice and makes him a better citizen, mentally, physically and spiritually for having lived in their presence even if only for a few hours.

Grant that recreation of this type is a thing good for the Nation; that every year will see a greater mass of people leaving their city environs to play in the woods,

especially adapted to outdoor play and right now is not too soon to start taking stock so we may have the greatest return from these areas without loss of effort, funds and scenic values.

Decided steps in advancing the organization of the recreation resources of the country have been made in the last four or five years. And these are the more encouraging because the thing that is most needed today in the field of national recreation is organization of planning, administration and development.

First among these is the organization of the National Park Service which has charge of the administration and development of the great areas within the borders of



A VACATION LAND WHERE YOU CAN UTTERLY LOSE YOURSELF AND FORGET THE WORLD OF MEN IS FOUND IN THE NATIONAL FORESTS. WITH PACK TRAIN AND GUIDE YOU CAN LOAF ALONG THROUGH FORESTS AND MEADOWS AND VISIT SCORES OF PLACES THAT WILL SATISFY YOUR LONGING FOR THE GREAT, UNSPOILED WILDERNESS. THIS IS A SPOT NEAR OBSERVATION POINT ON WHEELER TRAIL, ON THE RIO GRANDE NATIONAL FOREST IN COLORADO

mountains, lake-lands and beach-places. Again comes the question: Where is this leading us to? Are we ever going to face a recreation famine?

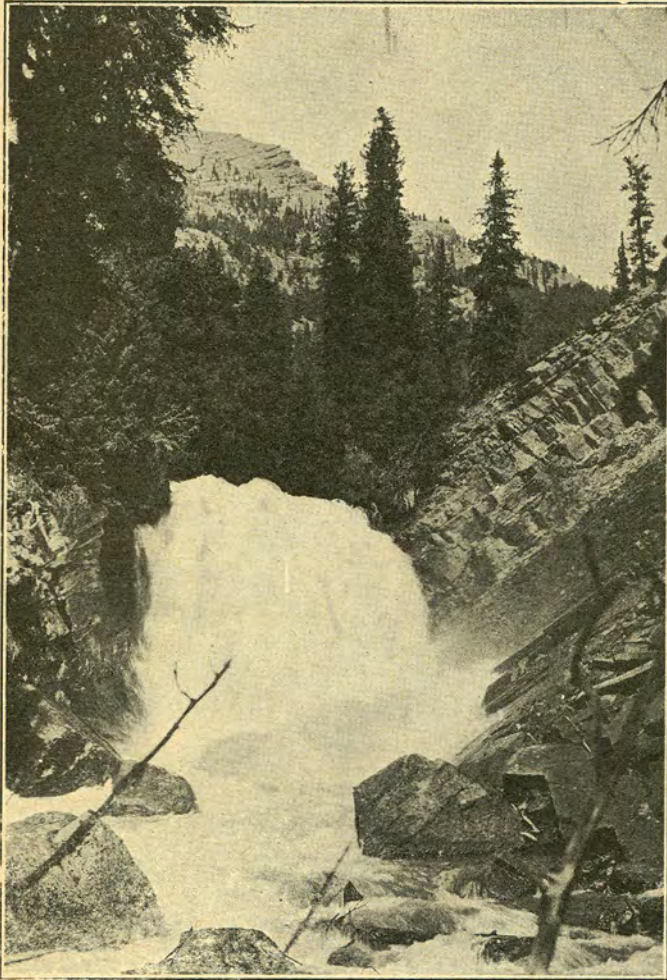
The idea seems absurd. Some would believe it enters the sphere of the ridiculous. Today the putting of such a question would seem unwarranted. But scoffers not long ago said that our timber supply was inexhaustible. It was said also that our farm land was unlimited. Our coal supply was reckoned adequate for every need for scores of years to come. Today recreation stands in the same position that these other great National resources did some few years ago. It seems unlimited. But there is a limit to the recreational use of our great areas,

these national scenic centers. Under this head have been gathered together the many units which at present make up the system of National Parks and which before were without any centralized direction. This new Service is still comparatively young but its creation alone is a step forward.

Of no less importance is the advancement of the recreational use of the forests and its recognition by the United States Forest Service as a major use. Within the National Forests in such isolated tracts of small size as to not merit a separate administration are many spots of beauty equal to any found in other parts of the country. Besides these spots of exceptional beauty there



are many natural wonders such as caves, curious rocks and unusual waterfalls which are of sufficient interest to be preserved and protected so they may be capital stock of the scenic wealth of the nation. Further, there is but little of the great National Forest System which does not lend itself to recreational use. And the best feature of all in the case of the recreational use of forests is,



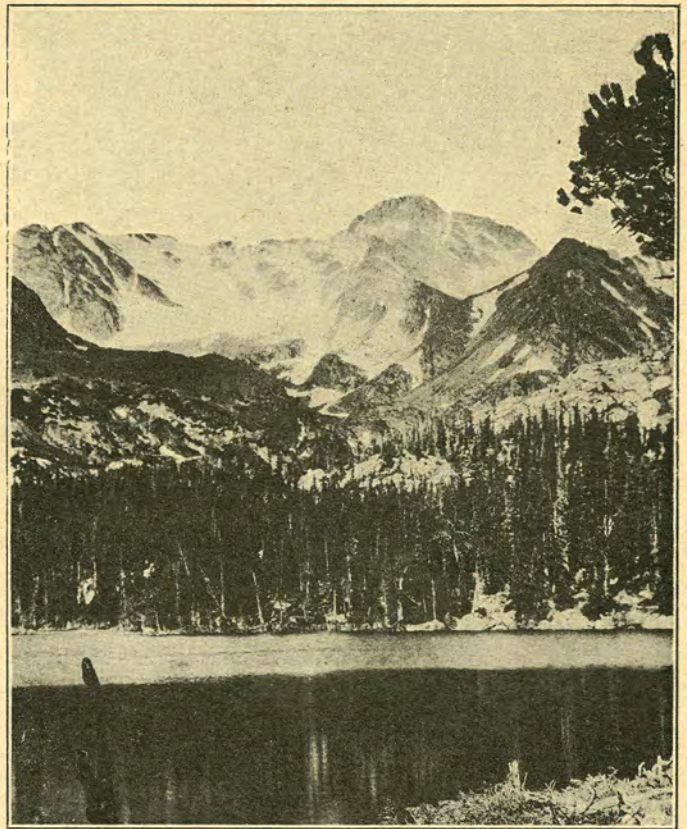
THIS UNUSUAL BIT OF WHITE WATER COMES TUMBLING DOWN WITHIN A QUARTER OF A MILE OF THE CABIN AT GREEN RIVER LAKE IN THE BRIDGER NATIONAL FOREST, WYOMING

there is but slight interference with any of the older established economic uses and the gain through the use is almost pure profit.

Here we have the two great capitular recreation resources of the country. In the case of the parks they are devoted to recreation alone. There is at the present time an unfortunate move in some quarters to reap commercial profit from the economic resources found within these great national areas. This move is diametrically opposed to the fundamental idea of the National Park System. These should be kept from the inroads of commerce for there is little question but that the loss in aesthetic qualities, the detriment to the parks, would far overbalance any gain to the nation from commercial exploitation and no individuals should be allowed to injure the parks for private gain at the expense of the public. The parks should be sanctuaries where nature

will remain supreme and the only development that is a rational one in these areas is a plan which follows good landscape principles in presenting the beauties of the park and that should be established only after a complete and comprehensive scheme has been carefully worked out by a competent artist.

As opposed to the park idea the recreational use of the National Forests is not paramount but coincident. The economic uses progress without interference on the part of recreation except in unusual cases. Actually this added use to the ones established in the forests helps the older ones in many ways. Roads built for recreation also serve in opening new timbered areas, reaching isolated homesteads in the forests in allowing fire patrol to reach hitherto remote fire hazards and in administration of the forests. The reverse is as true. Roads built for any one of the economic uses serves too for recreation. There will be no interference with economic



GOOD PLANNING OF RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WILL UTILIZE ALL RECREATION VALUES SUCH AS ARE FOUND AROUND THIS LITTLE LAKE IN THE COLORADO NATIONAL FOREST WITHOUT LOSS OF ECONOMIC RESOURCES

uses in the forests on the part of recreation except where greed may attempt to destroy beauty and scenic wealth which is of so much greater aesthetic value than commercial value that the loss would be wholly unwarranted.

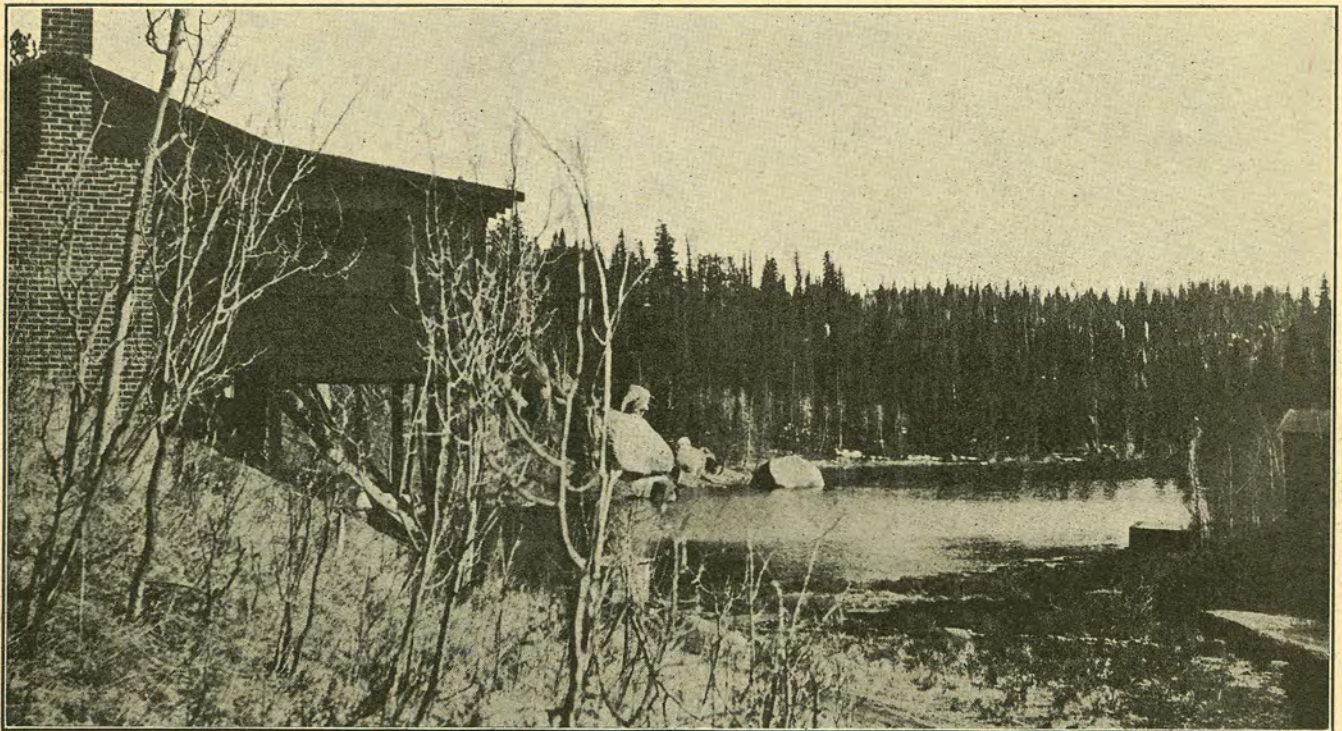
But the recreational use of these two great systems follows almost identical fundamental principles. The recreation found in the forest, that is just without the boundary of a park, is of as great value as that found across the imaginary line. But the forests are in the Department of Agriculture and the parks are in the



Department of the Interior. The simplest manner of bringing these two services under one executive head would seem to be to place them both in the same department. But at present they stand in separate organizations. With all of the good will possible under the circumstances, with all of the desire to co-operate that may be present, the functioning of the recreational work of these two departments cannot be as well correlated as though there were some central policy-making body of single executive group that could organize the recreation of the nation without regard to map lines, with no consideration of imaginary boundaries and which would think primarily of returning the greatest aggregate recreational wealth to the nation and the world that is pos-

sible from our magnificent areas in the National Parks, Forests, Monuments and Reservations. problems extending from the most compact of home grounds to the organic plan of whole cities, park systems and the organization of a schematic development of entire regions. There is no question but that the American Society of Landscape Architects, the official organization of the profession, would lend all aid that is necessary to put the planning and development of our national recreation system on a sound basis.

The foresters as represented in the Society of American Foresters and the American Forestry Association could give inestimable assistance to the forming of a recreation policy and system which is to grow up in the areas which will in most cases be found to have forest cover. There is little question but that the most enthusi-



A LAKESIDE CAMP UNDER PERMIT IN THE PIKE NATIONAL FOREST IN COLORADO. A REALLY SUBSTANTIAL CABIN, WITH A BRICK FIREPLACE, ASSURES COMFORTABLE HOUSEKEEPING AND ONE CAN LOOK FORWARD TO LONG DAYS OF PLEASURE AND NIGHTS OF INVIGORATING REST IN ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL OF THE NATIONAL FORESTS

sible from our magnificent areas in the National Parks, Forests, Monuments and Reservations.

Would it not then be a further step forward if there were to be formed such a body with any power that seems fit to organize this recreation resource of the nation? There are a number of organizations of national scope that would lend their support to any such move. The best talent in the land could thus be brought into consultation on the problems facing the recreation organization insuring the best possible development. And this group could continue to function as an advisory body in the event the two services were at some time placed in the same department.

Foremost of all, the professional landscape architects of the country have a deep interest in the development of our national recreation grounds. Fundamentally the art practiced by this group has to do with the fitting of earth surfaces to human use, the magnitude of their

astic kind of support of a plan for general organization of recreation would come from members of this profession.

Engineers are needed to aid in those problems which are primarily based on engineering. Roads are to be built, sanitary systems are needed at many points to safeguard health and many technical engineering problems will be present. Engineers wherever they may be are ever progressive and their support as represented in the many national societies may be counted on.

The architecture which will be found within these areas serving the public is as much in need of the skill and artistry of the architect as the forests of the forestman or ground surfaces and covers need intelligent planning by landscape architects. By all means there should be architects in such a group as may be formed and the National Society should be counted on for the same strong support as the other professions.



In those professions named are found the principal ones which have to do with the planning and development of the areas which are adapted to recreation. There is another group that should have ample representation. They are the commercial men, who, after a scheme is worked out by competent artists and engineers, take hold of the running of the organization which is to make the plan function.

The executive phase of this work should be represented by men that have had experience in the work. Hotel men, transportation men, advertising men and those pioneer spirits who have been in charge of the first "tourist bureaus" of the country should be heard in this national recreation organization.

One is as necessary as the other of these two groups. If the professional men would not turn out a good working plan there would be little use of the commercial group taking charge of it. And if there were not the men to take over the organization and running of a scheme so that it would properly function there would be little use of making a scheme.

The discussion of the organization of our recreational resources could go on and take up the developments which some states have been able to accomplish in their parks and forests. This system within the states, secondary in magnitude only to the great areas of the nation

and equal or surpassing them in use is as potent a factor in national life as those great systems mentioned earlier. And more than ever is there needed here some guiding light for the men who are trying in the several commonwealths to organize the best recreational territory there is in the state for the use of their citizens. A national commission would serve as an inspiration and model for the state organizations and the good council of the national advisory body could be extended to aid the states.

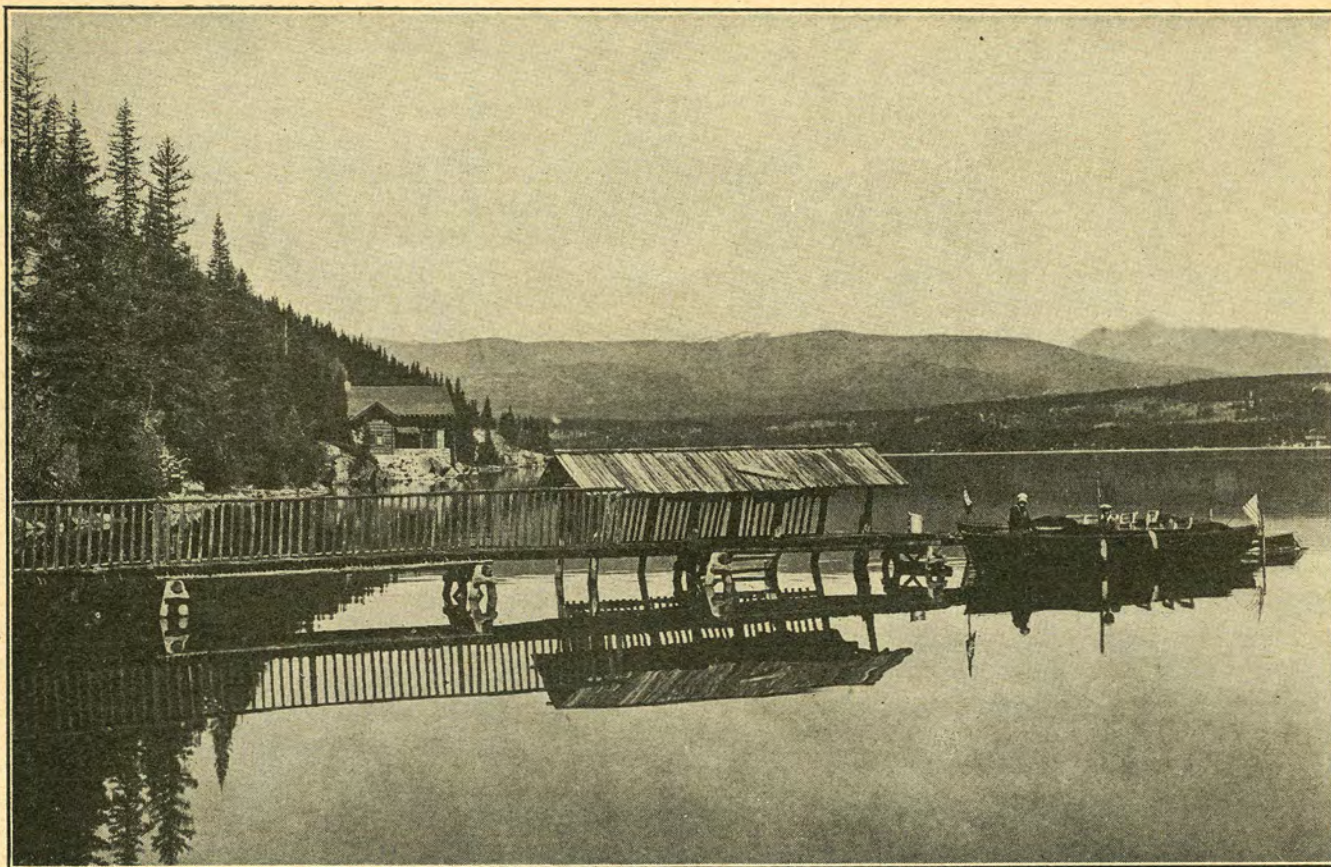
Of equal importance although of lesser size are the county parks. So far the county system has been established in but few localities but where such has been the case the development has justified its existence. This group of public grounds rounds out what might be termed the national recreation system.

Today what is needed most is good sound judgment and true artistry in planning and an organization which will back up that judgment and artistry so that it becomes living facts. The general recreational use of the great outdoors is upon us and the first wave has but touched the great areas of nation, state and county. Far in the future may come a time when there will be no place which will offer the type of recreation we can now offer in our national system. Are we then truly facing a future famine in recreation? The answer lies in what happens in this field within the next decade. With



GOOD ROADS AND A UNIFIED TRAFFIC SYSTEM ARE NEEDED IN ANY RECREATION SCHEME. ROADS BUILT FOR RECREATION ALSO SERVE IN OPENING NEW TIMBERED AREAS, REACHING ISOLATED HOMESTEADS IN THE FORESTS AND ALLOWING FIRE PATROLS READY ACCESS TO REACH REMOTE SPOTS QUICKLY AND EASILY. THIS ROAD OVER COCHETOPA PASS IN COLORADO IS A GOOD EXAMPLE





MANY DELIGHTFUL TRIPS MAY BE TAKEN BY MOTOR BOAT—TO THE INDIAN CAMPS ALONG THE BANKS DURING THE BERRY SEASON, TO BEACHES WHICH LURE ONE TO TAKE A DIP IN THE CLEAR WATERS OF THE LAKE, OR TO FISHING GROUNDS THAT HOLD FIGHTING GAME FISH OF LARGE SIZE, ADDING ZEST TO THE LIFE OF THE SPORTSMAN

proper planning and far-sighted policies established we will be able to meet the oncoming years without any chance of not satisfying our demands for recreation. Only through unorganized conditions and ill founded plans can we lose our great heritage in the scenic wealth of our land. But this wealth is so easily dissipated through what is often believed to be and mis-named development that the time may easily come when there will be no last wilderness where one may go to view God's handiwork without the chance of viewing also a hideous structure or the marring of scenic beauty by the grossest commercialism.

Now is the time for the beginning of an amply organized, properly planned, well executed system of national recreation. Today we are but partly organized. There is a lack of correlation of all agencies working toward the development of this resource. There is a lamentable lack of competent artistry in these developments.

Never again will there be the opportunity to start with so few mistakes made as at present. The great untouched wealth of many areas but remains to be planned and developed to offer recreation, health and joy to thousands. The movement to the outdoors has no more than started and ten years hence will see all forces scrambling frantically to stay ahead of the tide unless count of the future is taken today.

Are we facing a new kind of a famine—that of available recreation? Yes and no. Yes! If we do not now start to fully organize and adequately plan for the

future developments and now systematize our present efforts. No! If we can start now to look far into the future when the population of our country has perhaps doubled and people demand governmentally owned open spaces where they may go each year to live their vacation time. No! If we can but see the vision and now start a really comprehensive plan for each unit within the national system and as well an ordered plan for the whole.

Many men of great vision and ability stand ready to help in any plan for the betterment of our recreation system. Today we have unexcelled material for such a system based on the great National Forests, Parks, Monuments and Reservations. State and county parks are being developed in widely separated regions heralding a day when they will be universal. The future promises a use of these areas that today can be but conjectured. Are we going to make the most of this opportunity and meet the coming demand? Will our recreation areas meet the exacting requirements in the future or will people longing for outdoor life have to continue to live hungering? Correlation, organization, well founded and artistic planning and vision can solve the problem and the foundation stands today waiting for master builders to rear thereon a structure of splendid proportions which will give our land for all time a truly national recreational system. Proper action now assures the future of such a system that will be more than ever in the coming years a national asset of inestimable value.