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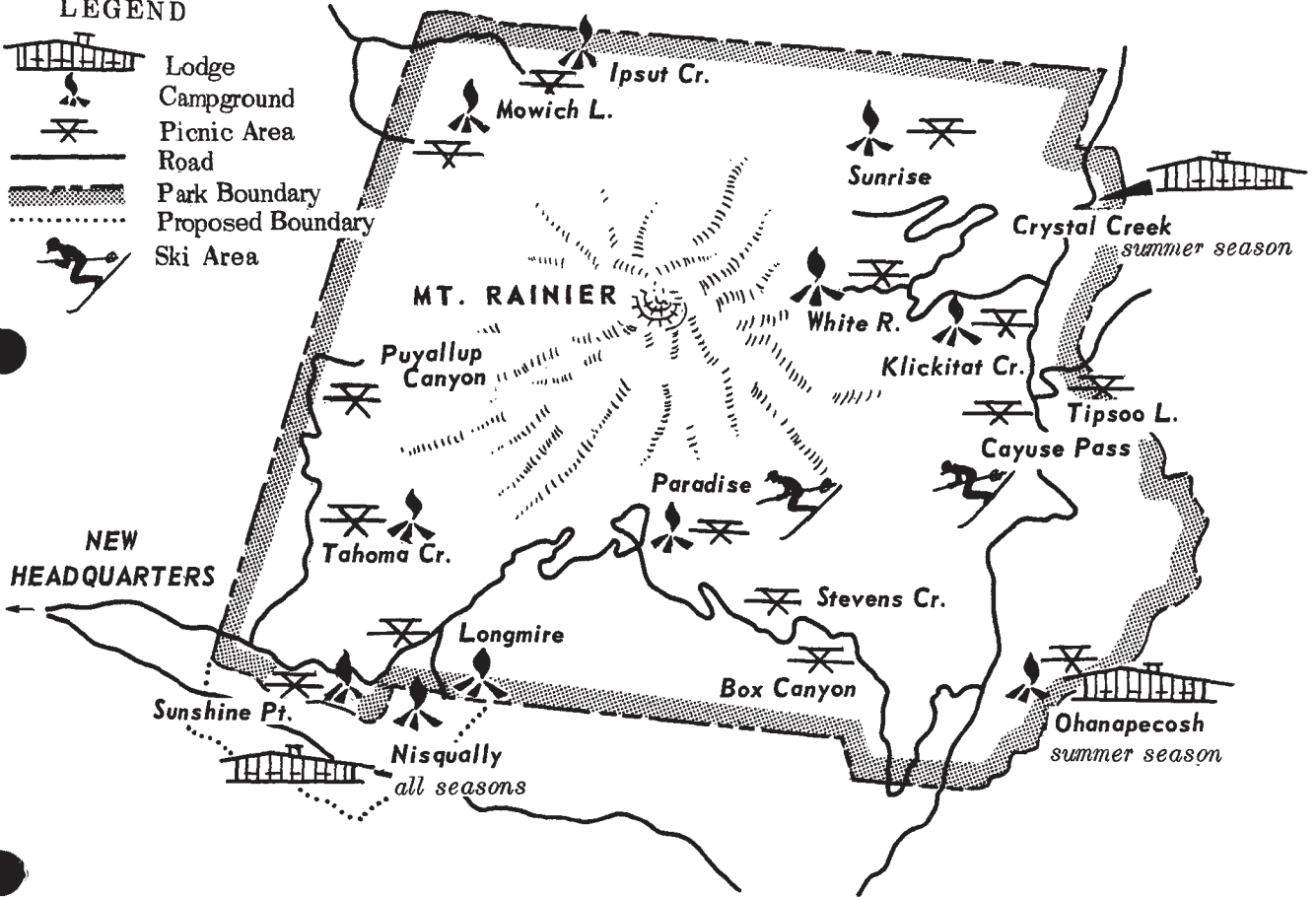
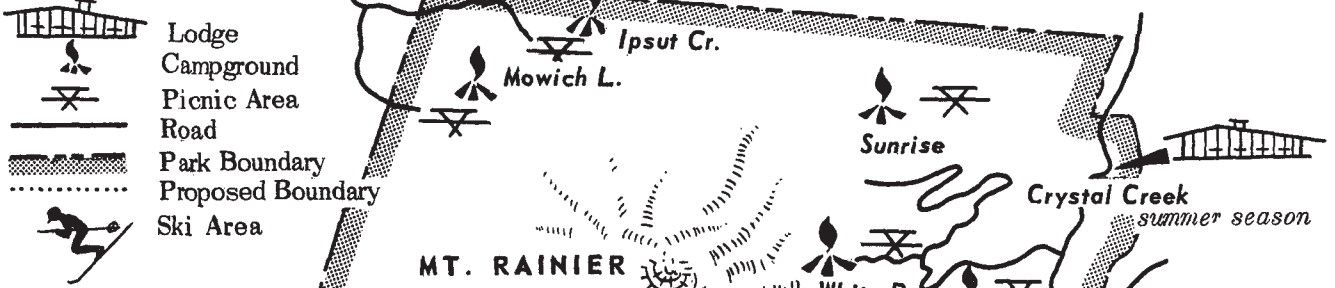
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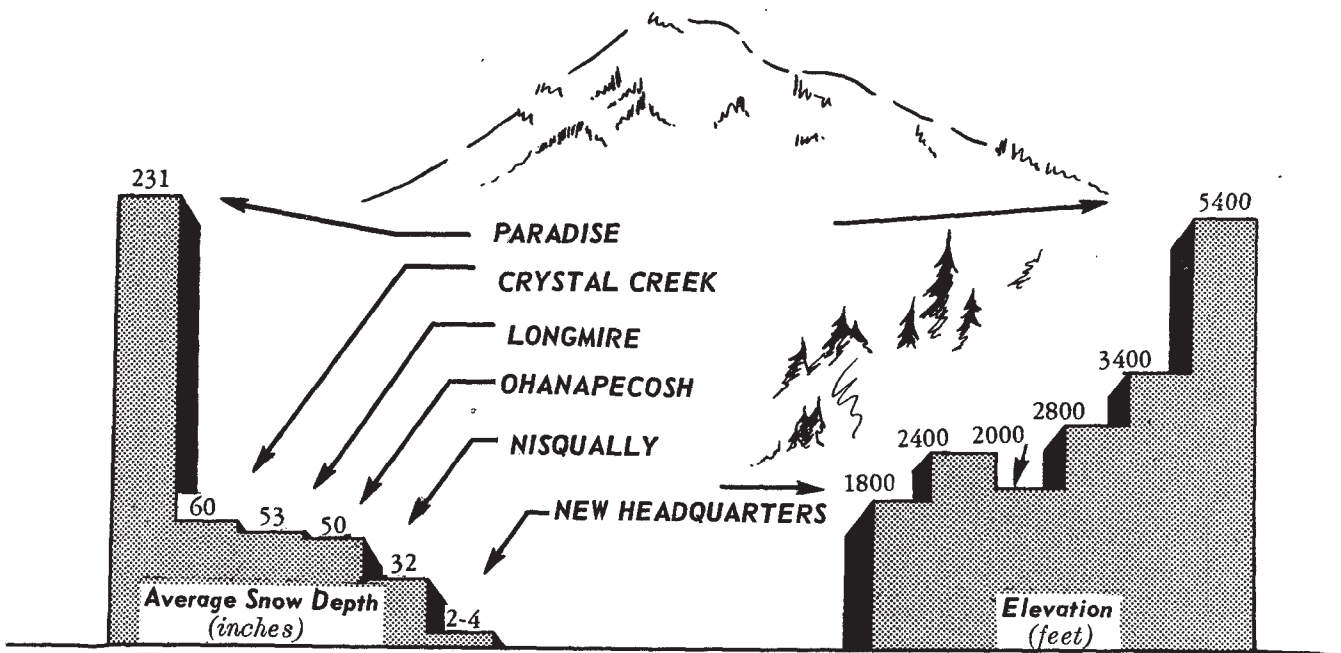
N A T I O N A L P A R K S E R V I C E
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D E P A R T M E N T O F T H E I N T E R I O R

DEVELOPED SITES for VISITOR ACCOMMODATIONS

LEGEND



SITE CONSIDERATIONS



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

January 1957

MISSION 66 DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR MOUNT RAINIER NATIONAL PARK

FOREWORD

General plans for the development of Mount Rainier National Park, first to be released of the 180 area plans included in the National Park Service MISSION 66 program, were announced March 14, 1956. Since then intensive field studies have been made to test the adequacy of the plan, and to convert its broad objectives into specific, practical proposals.

This program has had the benefit of public opinion expressed at Congressional hearings held in Tacoma, Washington, October 15, 1956, and in hundreds of letters concerning this matter. The plan is a product of Service-wide effort. Its essential elements were developed by the Park staff, the Western Office of the Division of Design and Construction, and the Regional Office staff. It has had critical study at all levels and by all fields of Service responsibility. No other park plan has had so extensive a study. It is now presented with full confidence that it is practical from the standpoints of engineering and economics, adequate for the needs of Mount Rainier's visitors, well adapted to the unique operating conditions that prevail, and appropriate to the purposes of Mount Rainier National Park.

The MISSION 66 program includes the following:

1. Completion and improvement of the road system.
2. Improvement and some extension of the trail system.
3. Expansion and improvement of campgrounds and picnic areas.
4. Development of enlarged overnight lodging for park visitors, transportation service, and other concession facilities and services in several locations designed to better take care of the visitor.
5. Development of two major day use centers.

6. The development of six visitor centers and other facilities to enhance public enjoyment and understanding of the Park.

7. Construction and improvement of utility systems and of facilities for park protection.

8. The relocation of Park Headquarters.

Based upon 1955 costs, the entire improvement program is estimated to cost \$14,000,000 over the next 10 years. Of this \$497,900 is now under contract, and an additional \$400,900 is available for additional work out of this year's funds. Approximately \$1,500,000 is in the budget request for the next fiscal year.

SUMMARY OF VISITOR FACILITIES

	<u>Existing in 1956</u>	<u>Goal by 1966</u>
Roads.....	60 poor 25 good	105 miles of good road
Trails.....	290	Little change--all improved, some relocated.
Campsites.....	310	1500 (at 11 locations)
Picnic Sites.....	300	900 (at 15 locations)
Lodge and Cabin capacity...	407	1000 plus or minus, depending on demand and available private capital (at 3 locations)
Visitor Centers.....	3	6
Wayside Exhibits.....	6	20 or more
Campfire Circles.....	1	5 or more
Ski Tows.....	Rope Tows	Bar Type and Rope Tows
	- - - - -	
Park Visitation.....	850,747	1,000,000 or more

GENERAL GUIDELINES IN PLANNING

By law, any plan for the development of this or any National Park must accomplish two things:

1. Preserve the scenic, natural, and historic values of the Park unimpaired for the benefit of this and future generations, and
2. Provide for the use and enjoyment of the Park by the people.

In meeting these two basic requirements the plan must take into account the topography, climate, weather, and other local factors, and allow for increased visitation, changing travel patterns, and the needs of all significant types of visitors.

The MISSION 66 plan, therefore, is a practical plan to make the scenic, recreational, and inspirational values of Mount Rainier available to its visitors in ways that will result in the minimum impact on the natural scene.

The Purpose of a National Park Guides its Development for Use

The basic purpose of a National Park, firmly established by the laws under which the National Parks are administered, is to provide recreational, educational, and esthetic enjoyment of an unimpaired natural scene. It is important to keep this fact clearly in mind, for it gives direction to almost everything that is done in a National Park. It is the basis for National Park conservation. It determines the practices, the services, and the facilities required so that the visitors may realize the benefits of the natural scene.

In a National Park, interest centers, not in a hotel or lodge, but in the scenic and natural recreation areas beyond it. Lodges, campgrounds, and other facilities are necessary in many parks, not as the things to attract visitors, but as a base of operations--a place from which the visitor moves outward for his enjoyment of the natural scene. The purposes of a National Park are best served when the significant features of the park are reserved for recreational, educational, and inspirational enjoyment, dedicating the less vital areas to development for accommodations and related services. This essential principle was all too often overlooked in the past. The results clearly indicate that such errors, revealed by time and experience, need not and should not be repeated.

To exploit and expend the most valuable resource of a park merely as a backdrop for man's structures, is too high a price to pay when there are other and better ways open to us.

MISSION 66 Plan Based on Modern Use Patterns

Basic changes in the travel of Mount Rainier have evolved since the first visitor facilities were developed 40 years ago. In earlier days a visit to Mount Rainier was a slow and arduous trip, and nearly every visitor required dining and overnight services. There could have been very little travel to Mount Rainier without a place to stay overnight very close to the main center of interest.

The development of better highways, better and more automobiles, increased leisure time, and an expanding prosperity have changed this picture. Today, rapid and frequent travel from the population centers around Puget Sound is the rule. An easy two or three hour drive brings visitors to the Park from Seattle or Tacoma, and most visitors make the round trip in a single day. Preponderantly, Mount Rainier is a day use, week-end Park. Of the 800,000 annual visitors, 90% come for the day only, and 40% of the travel is on week-end days.

This changing use pattern places less dependence upon concession facilities. This is borne out by the record. Concessions business reached a peak in 1928, and has declined consistently since. For example, in 1928 park visitors spent \$521,646 for concessions services. In 1940, the last year of operation with maximum facilities, spending declined to \$317,246 in spite of the fact that visitation more than doubled during this period. Postwar income, averaging about \$400,000 a year, is not directly comparable because of the decline in purchasing power of the dollar, and because the capacities of accommodations were reduced during the war. By contrast, Park visitation increased from 219,531 in 1928, to 456,637 in 1940, and to 839,214 in 1955. In spite of a 382% increase in travel, concessions business has declined steadily. The average expenditure per visitor dropped from \$6.40 in 1928 to 55¢ last year.

Good and adequate lodges and cabins would, without question, alter this situation. It is reasonable to expect that overnight use could be tripled or quadrupled if satisfactory and economically feasible sites for this volume of use could be found. Even so, 80% or more of the visitors to Mount Rainier do not want, do not need, and will have no occasion to use overnight lodgings.

To recognize this fact is not to deny that a very important body of park visitors does require overnight accommodations and related

concession services. This includes not only those who travel by rail or air, and arrive in the Park by bus, but many auto tourists as well. Accommodations are required, and they need to be in attractive surroundings affording good views, and conveniently accessible to the scenic attractions and recreational areas of the Park.

Both day use and overnight use, in proportion to respective needs, are provided for in the MISSION 66 plan.

Too many people crowd into too few areas, for too many purposes today. The present sites, developed for overnight use, designed for conditions that no longer exist, and called upon to serve every need of the visitor, have far exceeded their capacity to adjust to the needs of today, not to mention the future. A rapidly expanding travel--tripled since 1930, and doubled since World War II--only compounds the problem. Fortunately, the prime cause of the dilemma--good cars and good roads--also opens the way to the solution--a better distribution of park use throughout the Park.

Topography and Climate Are Important Factors

Mount Rainier is a rugged mountainous area ranging from about 1500 to 14,410 feet in elevation. Sites with topography suitable for development of tourist facilities are confined to subalpine parks, between 5000' and 6500' elevation, and to flats and benches within the canyons, between 1500' and 3000' above sea level.

Space is nowhere abundant, but in general the low elevation sites afford the most room for development. The Paradise development, half of which is parking area and road, already occupies all land that properly can be developed. On the other hand, one site along the Nisqually River is capable of almost unlimited development.

Climate, a very important factor, becomes increasingly severe the higher the elevation. Longmire, at an elevation of 2760 feet, in fact, has 20% less precipitation, only one-fourth as much snow, and nearly twice as long a snow-free season as Paradise at an elevation of 5400 feet.

Snow packs to depths of from 15 to 25 feet at Paradise, and remains through June and often well into July and August. This requires costly construction, and expensive maintenance and operation. Favorable weather occurs only from June into September, with frequent and severe storms the rest of the year. Snow and bad weather preclude the extension of the season of profitable use beyond 60 to 75 days in summer and 15 to 18 week ends when operated in the winter.

The advantages of the low elevation sites are: lower construction and maintenance costs, shorter distance to sources of supply, proximity to existing or proposed all-year highways, longer operating season, and more favorable situation with regard to water supply and public power.

Forty years' experience demonstrates the folly of trying to operate in defiance of adverse operating conditions and changing travel patterns. Accommodations at Paradise, while profitable for the first 14 years, have suffered increasing difficulties since 1931. The results are reflected in operating deficits, failure to modernize, failure to attract additional investment capital, reduction of accommodations capacities, and gradual deterioration of facilities.^{1/}

In 1951, the concession properties were purchased by the Government for \$300,000, clearing the way for a new start. Attempts to secure new capital, and negotiations for a concessions operator failed. The previous operator did not submit an offer. When no offer was received from any source the old Rainier Park Company was requested to continue the management of the business under a new contract terminating December 31, 1958. Some public service had to be provided.

^{1/} The situation at Paradise was well summarized by the operating company in testimony before the House Committee on Public Lands, September 15, 1947, and November 12, 1949, significant excerpts of which are cited below:

"There isn't anything, gentlemen, that we haven't tried honorably to do to make a satisfactory service here, and make it so we could come out on the right end financially. We have come to the end of our rope. ***** We are in the black, not because of profits, but because of selling assets and because of reducing par value of stocks. ***** We do not believe you can put investment capital in here, permanent buildings, and operate it 60 days in the summer time, and pay out for 12 months investment. ***** After our operating experience over these long years we are unwilling to keep pouring money into a losing proposition."

THE MISSION 66 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The MISSION 66 development plan is an integrated plan. All elements of it--roads, overnight accommodations, campgrounds, day use areas, visitor services, etc.,--work together to the success of the whole. The newest aspect of the plan is the separation of day use and overnight use areas, and the spreading of recreational use more evenly and more widely throughout the Park. Dispersion of use is a logical consequence of increased travel, changing use patterns, and the mobility of the modern visitor. Completion of this plan will enable the Park to absorb two or three times its present travel, satisfy more fully the needs of all visitors, and do so without further encroachment upon or impairment of the primary scenic areas.

Roads

With the opening of the Stevens Canyon Road in 1957, the Park road system will be essentially complete. Motorists can then, for the first time, make the entire circuit from the Northeast to Tipsoo Lake, Ohanapecosh, Stevens Canyon, Longmire, and out the Nisqually entrance, with side trips to Sunrise, Paradise, and Puyallup Canyon. The West Side Road will be improved to its present terminus. The Paradise spur will be converted into a loop road from Narada Falls, improving the flow of traffic in the summer, and providing a winter route free from avalanche danger. Minor roads, including Carbon River and Mowich Lake Roads and White River Road will be improved.

When the proposed Skate Creek State Highway becomes a reality, the southwest approach to the Park will be along the south side of the Nisqually River, through the areas proposed for concession development, joining the present Longmire-to-Paradise road at Longmire. This factor further emphasizes the Nisqually River and Longmire sites as strategic locations for overnight accommodations, campgrounds, and picnic areas.

The effect of the completed road system, together with interpretive developments, and camping and picnicking facilities described below, will be to make the road system bear a much greater part of the use load than is the case today.

Trails

Two major trail projects are proposed: the development of a new trail between Paradise and Cowlitz Divide to replace that section of the Wonderland Trail absorbed by the Stevens Canyon Road, and the

completion of the Tatoosh Trail between Eagle Peak and Pinnacle Peak. The latter, opening up some of the most spectacular views of Mount Rainier and the mountains and Alpine Meadows around it, will provide a very scenic route for hikers between Reflection Lake and the new Nisqually River overnight center.

Many short trails, from overlooks and parking areas along the road system to nearby points of interest, will be developed. Back-country trails will be improved.

Campgrounds and Picnic Areas

The campground capacity of the Park will be increased from 310 to over 1500 sites during the ten-year period. With the development of low elevation campgrounds, camping at Paradise will, with some adjustments, be continued. More favorable weather, longer camping season, economy of construction, utility installations and maintenance, and availability of space favor greatest expansion at low elevation sites. Whether increased Park travel will require further adjustments at the Paradise area will have to be decided at a later time.

Following are the more important campgrounds included in the MISSION 66 program:

Longmire Area: The existing campground south of Nisqually River will be modernized and expanded to the south and east, and reserved for camping only, a new picnic area to be developed. This campground is excellently situated near an area of scenic, biologic, and historic interest, and most conveniently located as a low elevation base for those wishing to spend protracted periods enjoying the country around Paradise, hiking the Tatoosh Trail, or making excursions into the Van Trump Park and Indian Henry's Hunting Ground areas. It is also convenient to the proposed new lodge and visitor center developments near this location.

Sunshine Point: This undeveloped area, just inside the Nisqually entrance, already receives heavy use. It is most convenient to the Park entrance, enjoys the best climate, and will be especially popular in early season and in the fall when higher campgrounds are snowbound. It will be fully developed for both picnicking and camping.

Tahoma Creek: This area, located approximately three miles up the West Side Road, now serves chiefly as an overflow campground. Its value will increase with the improvement of the West Side Road, and it will be the principal base for those who hike into the Sunset

Park, Klapatche Park, and Indian Henry's Hunting Ground areas, or whose chief recreational interest focuses in the low elevation forests and streams.

Ohanapecosh Campground has always been very popular because of its beautiful low elevation forest and river setting, and its favorable climate. Space is somewhat limited here, but replanning of the entire Ohanapecosh layout will permit the addition of approximately 100 units, doubling present capacity.

White River: The present White River campground will be greatly expanded along the bench above White River to serve as the main base for campers using the Sunrise-White River-Tipsoo Lake section of the Park.

Smaller campgrounds will be improved and expanded at Ipsut Creek on Carbon River, at the terminus of the Mowich Lake Road, and on Klickitat Creek. An excellent site for campground development is available in the vicinity of Cowlitz River on the Stevens Canyon Road. This is not included in the present program, but consideration of it will be deferred until the effects of the new road upon travel and use, and the need for more campground capacity can be more accurately assessed.

Trailside camping sites will be designated in the wilderness sections of the Park where indiscriminate use would seriously damage the natural landscape. To facilitate and to encourage trail use, and to localize the impact of camping, the system of trailside shelters will be rehabilitated and completed.

Picnic Areas: To meet the needs of the modern, mobile, day use visitor, picnic area capacity will be increased from 300 to a total of 900, principally by developments at Stevens Creek, Box Canyon, Tipsoo Lake, Cayuse Pass, Sunrise, Paradise, and Sunshine Point.

Overnight Lodging and Other Concession Services

It is a long-standing National Park policy--a policy in which Congress has repeatedly manifested its concurrence--that the construction and operation of concessions are proper functions of private enterprise.

The volume of travel to Mount Rainier is large enough now, and it will continue to grow, to support all of the necessary services of this kind, provided they are properly located, and economically

constructed, maintained, and operated. The sites designated in this report most fully meet these requirements.

While this section of the report deals primarily with developments to be operated as a park concession, independently operated tourist facilities outside the Park are both desirable and necessary. The trend toward the use of neighborhood accommodations as a base for a park visit is a growing one, noticeable in many park areas. This is to be encouraged, not only as a stimulus to private initiative and enterprise and as a benefit to local economy, but as a needed service benefiting the park and its visitors. In addition to those described in this report, it is expected that accommodations of various types will be expanded in nearby communities and along the approaches to Mount Rainier.

The Park concessions operations can be a financial success if geared to the actual needs of the visitors. The present Inn at Paradise still operates in the "package tour" tradition, and does not meet the needs of the day use visitor or most of the motorists. These latter, however, constitute the largest potential source of revenue. The "take" from each may be small, but the potential gross is substantial. Modest but comfortable cabin type or multiple cabin accommodations, and lunchroom and coffee shop operations, will be emphasized, supported by rental service, sale of supplies and souvenirs, etc. Day use concession facilities in the public use buildings at Paradise will place the concessioner in a much more favorable position with respect to the mass, day use visitor than is now the case.

Without exception, all of the buildings at Paradise have outlived their useful life. Continuous repair and expensive maintenance keep them in service pending replacement. Now is the logical time to raze them and to replace them at locations where the opportunity for success is most favorable. These worn-out buildings are Government-owned, purchased to extinguish the concessioner's equity, and to clear the way for their replacement elsewhere.

Two sites for the development of overnight accommodations have been selected. Of over a dozen areas considered, these appear to offer greatest promise from the standpoint of economics, engineering, park operation, and visitor use needs. These are the Nisqually River area on the southwest, and the Crystal Creek area on the northeast side of the Park.

Nisqually River Development Site: A good development site within or adjacent to the Park lies along the south side of the Nisqually

River, extending from a point opposite the present Nisqually entrance to and including the present Longmire campground. Within a zone some five miles long and from one-fourth to one-half mile wide are numerous sites where the topography lends itself to extensive development. These sites afford open and expansive views along the river, and across it to Mount Rainier. It appears certain that the State will develop a cross-mountain road through this area from near Ashford via Skate Creek to Packwood, near the Ohanapecosh entrance to Mount Rainier. The advantages of locating the concessions services on an all-year, through route are apparent.

This road will become the main approach to the Park from the Southwest, crossing the Nisqually River immediately above the Longmire to join the present Paradise road. Travel time to Paradise will be from 30 to 45 minutes.

Average snow depths range from two to three feet at the lower end of this zone, to as much as five to eight feet at Longmire, with a snow-free season of from six to nine months.

The area can be developed along either or both of two lines. The campground area is within the Park, but the remaining portion is in the Snoqualmie National Forest. In the first instance, the Forest Service may make individual sites within this area available for long-term lease to a number of private operators, each developing his site independently. This would result in a number of cabin and lodge developments within this zone, each operated as a separate, privately-owned and operated enterprise. Rates and quality of service would be controlled largely by competition among the several independent operators.

On the other hand, if necessary, or if such a course would facilitate these needed developments, the development zone can be handled as a Park concession. If desirable, the Park boundary may be extended to include these sites. In this case, the development would be handled like any other concession operation and development in a national park, the concessioners operating under the usual national park concessions permit. The National Park Service would provide the roads and trails, and bring the utilities to the area. The concessioners would build in the designated, prepared sites, and extend the utilities into their facilities.

Under either plan, the Nisqually-Longmire area offers the best possibility of development as the major overnight use development for the Park. Complementing the lodge, cabins, and related services as described above, the Longmire campground will be enlarged by extension to the south and west. The clearing of obsolete structures from the

present Longmire area will permit its development as a picnic area, and for recreation and interpretive use. The existing headquarters building will be converted for use as a visitor center.

Crystal Creek Development Site: In the northeast section of the Park, the best development site borders the lower portion of Crystal Creek on the hillside well above the Mather Memorial Parkway, State Highway 410. This site, several acres on each side of Crystal Creek, is excellently situated with respect to cross-mountain travel on Highway 410. It would serve summer visitors entering from Yakima, Spokane and other points east of the Park. The site is convenient to Sunrise, the Tipsoo Lake-Cayuse Pass area, and to the proposed Corral Pass ski area northeast of the Park. Travel time to Sunrise and to Tipsoo Lake is approximately 40 minutes and 15 minutes, respectively. The area is wooded but affords an excellent view of the Emmons Glacier side of Mount Rainier. Maximum snow depths average five feet.

Since this area is within the Park boundary, it would be developed by private enterprise under a concession permit, the National Park Service developing access roads and bringing utilities to the site. This area would be developed as a lodge and cabin area only, with the major campgrounds for this side of the Park being provided by extension of the present White River campground.

Ohanapecosh: A small lodge and cabin development now exists at Ohanapecosh Hot Springs, and must soon be considered for replacement. The entire Ohanapecosh area will be studied to determine the most effective layout for campground and picnic area expansion as well as possible sites for new lodge and cabin developments.

Transportation Service: The rail, air, and bus "package tour" business will be enhanced, once adequate accommodations are provided. In this regard, the exact location of the accommodation is of less importance than the quality of the accommodation and the adequacy of service. The environment of lodge or cabin developments must be pleasant, scenic, in character with the Park, and convenient to its major features. This last requirement will be satisfied by an expanded bus transportation service within the Park. Sightseeing tours, rental car service, and a commuter service connecting all points on the Park road system are an essential part of the MISSION 66 plan. The "package" tourist, once he arrives at the accommodations center, may, if he desires, use the Park to the same degree and in the same way as the motorist, using any of these transportation services to move from place to place. Dependable transportation service makes the MISSION 66 plan equally advantageous for motorist or "package" tourist.

Development of Paradise and Sunrise for Day Use

Paradise and Sunrise, the most important high elevation visitor use areas, will be fully developed for day use. The most important facility will be a public use building including under one roof most of the services required by the visitors during their day-time excursions into these areas--coffee shop and snack bar, museum, information center, ranger station, and a large lobby for shelter during bad weather.

When new accommodations are developed elsewhere, the lodge, inn, and other buildings associated with them, will be removed from Paradise and the landscape restored. The present road will be extended as a loop back to Narada Falls. Its location through a portion of the present campground favors placing the new visitor center on Barn Flat on the bench immediately below the present lodge buildings. This location will also permit better use of terrain for ski slopes during the winter. The present campground will be revamped and a picnic area developed. More parking capacity will be provided adjacent to the new road and visitor center, but a considerable part of the increase can be taken care of by utilizing one or two levels on the downhill side of the visitor center for this purpose. The visitor center will also be designed for use as a day use ski lodge, with demountable ski tows extending from this location to slopes on Canyon Rim above Paradise and below Panorama Point.

The MISSION 66 plan also contemplates the installation of demountable ski tows and other day use facilities to improve the winter use of the Cayuse Pass area, accommodations services being provided at the new Crystal Creek development.

No new developments are required at Sunrise; the basic facilities needed for day use now exist and require only completion and improvement. Trail and picnic area improvement, completion of water and power systems, completion of interpretive facilities including wayside exhibits and exhibits and furnishings for the visitor center, and the improvement of dining and other concessions services are planned.

The following factors make this day use plan practical, in full accord with the highest objectives of the Park, and with advantageous use by the visitors:

Overnight visitors will be fully provided for in lodges or campgrounds in and adjacent to the Park, in sites providing good views of the Mountain, and in a park atmosphere.

By car or by scenic tour bus, overnight visitors will be only 30 to 45 minutes from the most scenic alpine meadows. This is no burden in this day of easy mobility, and is no farther than many people today commute to and from work.

Use will be distributed more widely over all of the Park, encouraging more attention to the many scenic, interpretive, and recreational spots found along the roads.

This plan will emphasize the Mountain and the natural scene as the source of enjoyment.

With the development of adequate transportation service within the Park, the "package tour" visitor will be adequately served and, in fact, the transportation business of the concessioner should increase.

The dispersal of use will enable the Park to take care of double today's travel, or more, and without damage. To attempt to concentrate all developments at Paradise and Sunrise would soon prove a bottleneck, limiting the use of the Park to little more than today's levels.

Visitor Services

The park visitor expects adequate and accurate information and interpretation of the things he sees. MISSION 66 will fill this need through a variety of services and facilities, as follows:

Visitor Centers: The hub of the Park information and interpretive program is the visitor center, where trained personnel help the visitor start his trip, and, with the aid of exhibits, dioramas, maps, models, recorded slide talks, or other graphic devices, help him understand the meaning of the Park and its features, and how best to protect, use, and enjoy them. Most visitors will stop first at a visitor center to get the background to make the trip an understandable and enjoyable experience, and to get help in planning excursions so as to make the best use of their time and of the Park's facilities. The visitor center will also serve as the focal point for conducted trips through the flower fields, or along routes that best reveal the story of this volcanic peak and its glaciers.

Major visitor centers will be developed at Paradise, Sunrise, and Longmire, supplemented by smaller establishments at Ohanapecosh, Crystal Creek overnight center, and the Nisqually overnight center.

At Paradise, the visitor center will be in the Public Use Building, and will, in addition to serving as a general information center, emphasize the glacier story of Mount Rainier, with supplemental exhibits devoted to the flora and fauna of the Park.

The visitor center at Sunrise is now nearing completion. It emphasizes the story of volcanism as exhibited by Mount Rainier, and additional exhibits will summarize the story of the flora, fauna, and glaciers.

A new visitor center will replace the present temporary structure at Ohanapecosh, dealing primarily with the story of the lowland forests.

The Longmire administration building will be converted to a visitor center. It will serve as the introduction to the entire Park, treating in summary all of the important features of the Park, and will present Mount Rainier as an example of a typical National Park as it illustrates the application and results of national park conservation and use.

Wayside Exhibits: The road system will be given full interpretive treatment, with integrated roadside exhibits, informational signs, and markers. The idea behind this is to use the natural scene, interpreted by roadside exhibits and markers, to reveal a progressive story of the Mountain, its features, and their origin. This method of interpretation is well adapted to the characteristic day use pattern and to the mobility of visitors to this Park. The trip around the Mountain will become a continuous experience in seeing, understanding, and appreciating the natural scene. This development, too, will play its part in dispersing use, taking some of the load from Paradise and Sunrise, holding the visitor for a longer period along the road and in roadside developments, and making more of the Park interesting, appealing, and meaningful.

Other Interpretive Services: The program of conducted trips will be expanded, primarily for the benefit of overnight visitors in the campgrounds and lodges. During periods of heavy travel, the day use visitor will find a ranger or ranger-naturalist on duty at each of the more important and most visited scenic overlooks to provide information and interpretive services. At each of the larger campgrounds, campfire programs will be offered during the summer season, and, where feasible, illustrated talks on the Park will be given in the lodge areas. Of equal importance, the day use visitor centers will be equipped for

illustrated talks during the day to serve two important needs: to give the new visitor a quick orientation on the main features and services of the Park, and to provide a comprehensive pictorial story so that those who come to the Park when every view is obscured by storm or fog will still be able to get some satisfaction from their visit. These visitor center programs will be in more or less continuous operation during the travel period, summer and winter.

Utilities and Other Developments

Expansion and modernization of water, sewer, and power systems are required to support the new developments proposed under MISSION 66. It is not necessary in this report to discuss this phase of MISSION 66 in detail, for it will be recognized that a lodge, a public use building, a campground, a park ranger station or maintenance area cannot operate without these utilities. Communications service and some electrical power are provided by public utility companies. In those areas remote from established utility lines, the Park or the concessioner must generate power. Water systems and sewer systems are installed and operated by the National Park Service.

It will be recognized, too, that the installation and operation of utility systems in a mountainous park are a costly matter. Cold weather and deep snows add greatly to maintenance and operation costs, and the relative costs are further increased by the fact that a park requires not one large, efficient system, but many small ones.

To bring the utility systems of the Park to the required standard will require at least \$1,300,000 over the next ten years.

The MISSION 66 program also provides for the construction of necessary fire lookouts, patrol cabins, ranger stations, and other facilities required for the protection of the Park. These constitute a very small but important part of the over-all program.

Most Favorable Location for Park Headquarters Sought

Under the MISSION 66 program, a new headquarters will be developed outside the Park, near Ashford, Washington. The following summarizes the important facts in this regard:

A headquarters development includes no public use facilities. It is the administrative center, and the service center for the Park, and includes offices, shops, warehouses,

garage, and storage facilities, and the residential area for headquarters employees--behind-the-scenes facilities which the visitor seldom needs to see or use.

The present headquarters is at Longmire, which is also a public use area. The present Longmire area is needed for campgrounds, picnic area, and public recreational use (during the flood-free summer and autumn), a part of the Nisqually River development.

Periodic floods of the Nisqually River repeatedly threaten the present headquarters area. In the last ten years this area has been twice isolated, and the residents evacuated once because of late fall and winter floods.

Flood control at this point would be costly, unsightly, and of questionable permanent value.

Except for a few residences and one office building, which are on safe ground and will be retained, all buildings and the utility system now need extensive modernization or complete replacement.

An excellent site for a new headquarters development is available in the vicinity of Ashford, some six miles from the Park boundary, at reasonable cost.

This new site can be developed at a cost no greater than would be required to rehabilitate the Longmire headquarters and to protect it from flood.

More favorable climate; proximity to railway, sources of supply, schools, churches, and medical service; opportunity for those employees who so desire to provide their own housing in the neighborhood; and a location near the junction of all-year highways to other areas of the Park; indicate a more efficient operation and better living conditions at this site.

SUMMARY

Experience has shown that the operation of accommodations at higher elevations in Mount Rainier is impractical and economically unsound, partly because of severe weather and short season, and partly because it is incompatible with the volume of travel and modern pattern of park use. All needs for accommodations can be met, at lower elevations to the advantage of all visitors, including the rail and bus traveler, reserving the primary scenic areas for day use. Such a plan is economically feasible, will reduce congestion, allow for greatly increased travel, and preserve the scenic features that distinguish this National Park. The Crystal Creek area, and the Longmire-Nisqually River areas will be developed as the chief overnight accommodations centers. The relocation of accommodations, completion of road system, full development of Paradise and Sunrise for day use, the installation and operation of a park-wide interpretive plan, improvement of utilities and administrative facilities, and the relocation of Park Headquarters near Ashford, are part of this integrated plan.

The accomplishment of this plan should result in many tourist dollar benefits to nearby communities, and to the State. The out-of-state visitor who drives his own car to Mount Rainier leaves more money across the State than he spends within the Park. His number will greatly increase. Furthermore, the development of a substantial and profitable tourist business in communities near the Park will be required in the future, supplementing the similar developments on Park lands.

In brief, the MISSION 66 plan will result in greatly improved use and enjoyment of the resources of all the Park. Rather than depriving visitors of any of the experiences they now enjoy, it will give all a better and more varied experience than today. This is a plan capable of serving greatly increased visitation, with no danger of impairment of the qualities that make Mount Rainier one of America's greatest attractions.