

The original documents are located in Box C46, folder “Presidential Handwriting, 8/12/1976” of the Presidential Handwriting File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 12, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR:

JIM CANNON

FROM:

JIM CONNOR *JEC*

The attached article from the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR dated August 12 was returned in the President's outbox with the request that it be forwarded to you for your information.

cc: Dick Cheney

Attachment:

Article entitled:

Crowding threatens Forest Preserves

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Jim Cannon
info.

threatens forest preserves

By Clayton Jones
Staff correspondent of
The Christian Science Monitor
Monongahela National Forest,
West Virginia

A wave of campers and hikers has found a last frontier in U.S. wilderness preserves and threatens to turn it into a crowded, trailer-clogged, "facility"-laden jungle.

The same troubles of overcrowding that hit the 30 million acres of the U.S. Park Service a decade ago are cropping up on the 186 million acres of the U.S. Forest Service's wild timber and grazing lands.

"People are banging on the trees to get into the forest," says Ranger Whit Lerer of the Monongahela Forest in West Virginia's high timber and grazing territory.

"Once we designate a forest a wilderness area, it becomes a major attraction," he said. "We thought backpacking was a fad but it hasn't leveled off - it keeps increasing."

Many campsites have had to be closed, hiking permits issued, no-littering signs put up, camping seasons shortened, and for the first time, criminal activity rose right along with the mounting popularity and expense of America's "hidden" parks.

But unlike the National Park System, the U.S. Forest Service under the Department of Agriculture poses few restrictions on visitors.

No entrance fees are required, campsites can usually be chosen anywhere, open fires are generally permitted, as is chopping firewood, and dogs are allowed on trails. Conveniences such as electricity, flush toilets, paved paths, and treated water are hard to find.

The Forest Service is more concerned with providing such "primitive" outdoor experiences than with packing campers trailer to trailer near scenic and historic spots, as the Department of Interior has had to do in most of its 37 national parks from Shenandoah to Yellowstone.



En route to White Mountain National Forest, Gorham, New Hampshire.

By Barth J. Falkenberg, staff photo

Wilderness areas threatened: hikers and campers discover uncluttered primitive forests

Few natural wonders such as Old Faithful can be found in national forests - 155 of them in 43 states. Still, the attractions of solitude on Forest Service land brought a 7 percent increase in visitors last year and more are expected in 1976. Four wilderness areas now have limits on use.

For the first time, a master plan for the future use of all the Forest Service's holdings was finished this spring, after Congress asked for one in 1974.

"But we are still agonizing over the balance of recreation and industry on forest land," says Zane G. Smith, Forest Service director of recreation.

Half of the 186 million acres are "commercially attractive timberland," but the other

half holds 6,434 campground and picnic areas, 174 ski areas, 878 boating sites, 368 resorts, 550 organized camps, and 323 swimming sites - the largest single supply of outdoor recreation.

"Every bit will be covered by land-use plans," says Mr. Smith. Hiking trails will be increased from 97,000 to 120,000 miles to meet the new demand.

Congress hiked the Forest Service recreation budget 15 percent from \$51.5 million this year to \$59.1 million in 1977. The Park Service received only an 11 percent increase.

The new plan shifts the agency's priorities:

- Wilderness recreation areas will be dispersed rather than concentrated. Campers will be given guidelines on taking care of the forest, diverted to areas that meet their needs,

and more and more asked to take out the trash they take in.

- The 12.3 million acres now designated as wilderness areas will increase to 15.2 million by 1980 and perhaps double - especially near urban areas. This land is fragile, untouched land from roads and development.

- Timber cutting would increase only 1 percent by 1980 as the lumber production is shifted from public lands to private state forests, timber imports, and substitutes. A backlog of 2 million acres on Forest Service land needs replanting. Timber companies sustained a setback last August when a court ruling limited timber sales in the Monongahela National Forest.

visitors' guide to CHICAGO

Chicago's

Swiss Cottage

there with ...

how far from here to

