

PROPOSED "SKYLINE" ROAD THROUGH CASCADES' GRANDEUR IS HELD PRACTICAL

Route Is Described as One Continuous Run of Magnificent, Varied Scenery, With Tourist Playground Possibilities Without Limit—Construction Would Greatly Aid Forest Service in Protecting the Timber Areas

IMAGINE an auto road extending 200 miles along the crest of a lofty mountain range at altitudes of 5000 to 6000 feet, skirting mountain lakes of deepest blue, weaving between snow-capped peaks, traversing meadows dotted with alpine flowers, and plunging into sombre forests of fir and hemlock. Would not such a road be marvelous?

This is the plan for the "Oregon Skyline," which will stretch along the backbone of the Cascade mountains from Mount Hood to Crater lake through the Oregon, Santiam, Cascade, Deschutes and Umpqua national forests. Such a road has been declared entirely feasible by competent engineers.

Until the field reconnaissance is finished the location of the road cannot be predicted, but from information and maps of forest service, a practical route can be approximated.

The Mount Hood loop will be utilized, whence the road will extend southward from Government Camp past Clear lake and Olallie lakes, passing Mount Jefferson on the west, thence past Marion lake and Three-Fingered Jack, leaving Mount Washington to the east to Frog Camp, where the route crosses the McKenzie road. Thence passing close to the Three Sisters, it crosses the divide to Sparks lake, Elk lake and Lava lake, passes around Cullis lake and again crosses to the west of the summit to Waldo lake.

Skirting the east shore of Waldo lake, the route once more crosses the divide to Odell lake, and passes along the west shore of this and Crescent lake, where it connects with the old military road to Eugene. Again it crosses to the west of the summit and proceeds to Diamond lake, passing Mount Thielsen, and on to Crater lake. Here it connects with good automobile roads to Klamath Falls and Medford.

Laterals and Connections.

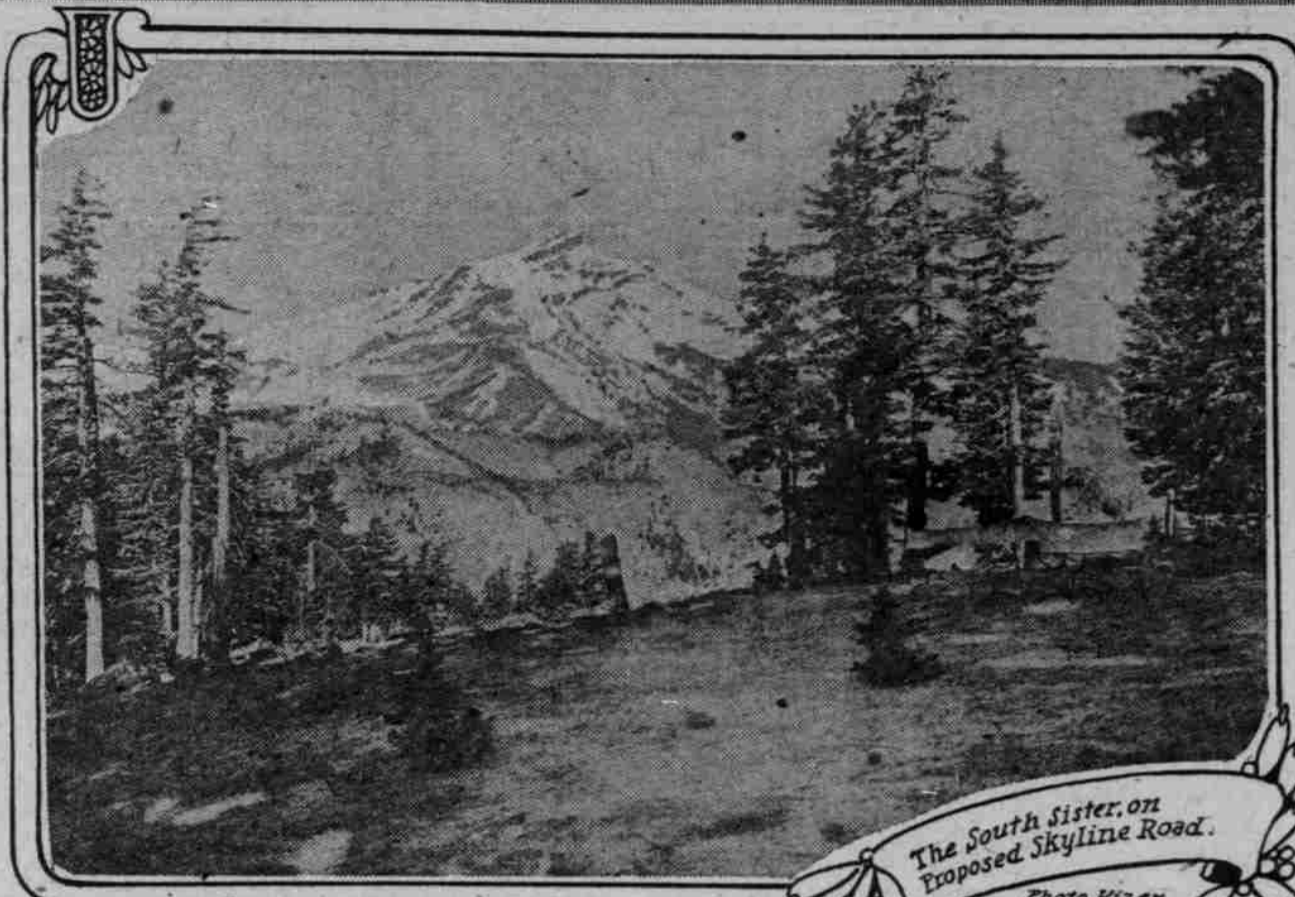
It is estimated that a single track dirt road will cost in the neighborhood of \$2,500,000. Some of the road and several important laterals are already under construction. Thus 14 miles of the Mount Hood loop road, embracing the stretch between the national forest boundary and a point two miles beyond Government Camp, is under contract, the cost to be \$24,000.

The forest service has already completed 14 miles of the skyline on a permanent automobile grade near its northern end, and plans are under way to improve the old Barlow road to the east, making it very fairly passable to autos from Wapinitia, crossing the Cascades via Government Camp to Portland. This, it is estimated will shorten the distance between central Oregon and Portland 70 miles.

The McKenzie highway, crossing the Cascades from Blue river to Sisters, will be another important lateral or feeder. The construction of 15 1/2 miles west from Sisters is under contract at a cost of about \$148,000. Bids were invited on the section between Blue River and Belknap springs, but none were received. The forest service has, however, already spent \$30,000 from its own allotment on this road.

The Willamette highway from Rigdon ranch easterly across the Cascades will be put in fair condition for automobile travel, while the section from Rigdon ranch southwest to Eugene has already been improved.

The Medford-to-Klamath Falls road, crossing the mountains at Crater lake, is also being constructed. A contract has been let covering three miles along Anna creek from the national forest boundary to the



national park boundary, and 22 1/2 miles from Prospect to the national park boundary, the cost of construction to be about \$250,000.

In short, several important highways which cross the Cascades are under contract, the cost involving several hundred thousand dollars. These roads will serve as laterals to the east and west at frequent intervals, and make the scenic highway accessible from all parts of the state. The elevation of some of the lakes along the shores of which the road will pass will give an idea of why the name "Oregon Skyline" was chosen. The rim of Crater lake is about 7000 feet above sea level; Diamond lake, 5200 feet; Crescent lake, 4827 feet; Odell lake, 4900; Waldo lake, 5600; Sparks lake, 5400; while in the neighborhood of Mount Jefferson and Olallie butte the road will mount to elevations of approximately 6000 feet. Owing to the presence of snow during the greater portion of the year, the road will be open to travel only from about the middle of July to the middle of October.

Nature's Flower Gardens. At such altitudes the timber is not so attractive perhaps to a lumberman, but it is none the less impressive and beautiful. The dense stands of straight and ponderous boles of the lower slopes and benches have been supplanted with groups of spiraling alpine trees, clothed with somber foliage, even to the ground.

The contrast between these patches of forest and the riot of color in the alpine meadows in which they often stand is really startling. The delicate beauty of the natural flower gardens is accentuated by the severity of their surroundings, while the impressiveness of towering crag, forbidding glacier and somber, cathedral-like lanes of Alpine forest is emphasized by the contrast of nature's

flower beds across which they are eler from the east. When the scenic road along the summit brings a whole series of them to the attention of the tourist they will prove an irresistible attraction.

Such volumes might be written about the wonderful mountain lakes on the very crest of the range—lakes several square miles in area, down to small lakes hung precariously on the slopes of the mountains in what appear like artificial basins—rems of deepest blue set in dark green.

From Olallie butte may be counted 37 lakes, scattered in the deep forest

Hood. This road, which is tributary to the Oregon Skyline, has been improved by the forest service so that it is fairly passable for automobiles, and there are opened for the pleasure of motorists many mountain meadows, where flowers grow on the edge of the snow fields and many delightful camps sites are made available. This is but one spur, mentioned as an example, of many which will be built, opening up parks and delightful camps off the trunk roads.

The only feasible route for the road is along or close to the crest of the range. Many vistas will greet the traveler, while side trips to innumerable points reached by branch road or trail will reveal wide expanse of distant landscape. To the west lie billows of hills and mountains, the sharpness of their ridges softened by distance and the green verdure of their forests. In contrast to the west slopes, the eastern pine-clad slopes, broken by many lava flows, drop gradually to the distant brown plains of central Oregon, on which only sagebrush, junipers and jackrabbits now grow. Such views are common from many peaks and buttes which will be easily reached from the Oregon Skyline.

Among Lakes and Glaciers. Scattered along the main summit rise the many lowering glacier-clad peaks, which, seen at a distance, are known to every Oregonian, but which are intimately known at present but to a relatively few outdoor people—forest rangers, shepherders, trappers, miners and the more zealous mountain climbers. Few today are acquainted with the steel grays, blues and crystal whites of the glaciers of the Oregon peaks which, though not comparable in magnitude to the famous glaciers of the north, are yet no less true glaciers.

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in a bewildering profusion. Some of those mountain lakes have no outlet and are in fact but snow water, and become dry in a hot summer. Others, however, are fed by perennial springs and are stocked with rainbow trout and other game fish and, as every fisherman knows, the most isolated fishing "grounds" yield the best catches.

To reach many of these wonderful mountain regions is not easy under present conditions and only the more enthusiastic attempt it. For example, to reach the Olallie country one outfits at Estacada and travels on horseback with a pack train two or three days, a distance of 50 miles. The Oregon Skyline, with its lateral roads, will make the glories of the Cascades available to motorists and bring them nearer to the town dwellers.

The use of airplanes is revolutionizing fire protection and patrol, but the broken slopes and heavy timber of the western Cascade slope afford no safe landings, nor can they be provided on routes of communication now existing in the forest, except at a prohibitive cost. Here on the broad back of the Cascades above the conyons and ridges nature has placed open, level spots which it is planned to utilize as airplane landings.

Naturally adapted to this use, the cost of their improvement and utilization will be nominal; and, until they are provided, this greatly advanced method of fire detection will not be usable in this region.

Landing Sites Plentiful.

From present information it appears that grounds naturally adapted to airplane landings will be found at the Summit House, at Dry Meadows, Clackamas lake, Lemitt, Jefferson Park, Duffy Prairie, Fish lake, Summit, Crane Prairie, Waldo lake, Big Marsh, Kelsey valley, Diamond lake, Crater lake and Woodruff Meadows. Only a few of these places are now accessible by road, and then only by round-about routes. It is planned that the skyline road pass through these spots, making them directly available for convenient use as reporting and supply stations in the airplane patrol.

It will then be possible to map out

airplane routes from the crest of the Cascades to the coast itself, making possible an efficient detection system on all the watersheds of Oregon on which timber is found. The large and immensely valuable yellow pine forests of central and eastern Oregon can be patrolled daily and efficiently from these same bases. The establishment of such a system in co-operation with the state forest organization, private timber owners and the federal fire fighting organization, will be the greatest advance ever made in fire protection in Oregon.

Oregon contains one-fifth of the standing timber of the United States, much of which lies on the slopes of the Cascade range. The interior of

1910.....	165	1915.....	417
1911.....	255	1916.....	417
1912.....	297	1917.....	363
1913.....	359	1918.....	470
1914.....	313	1919.....	470

the range is now relatively inaccessible. The projected road will traverse lengthwise the center of this heavily timbered region.

The standing timber is Oregon's greatest material asset. Annually thousands of dollars, in bad years, even hundreds of thousands, are spent in this state in the fighting of fire, which, with the advent of each new dry season, threatens destruction to the forests.

In every "bad" fire there has been an element of delay—loss of time, due often to the necessity of equipping pack trains, following long, indirect routes, and even the cutting of new trails. Time is a most important factor in the fighting of fire. The economy of quick suppression is felt not only in the saving of valuable stuff burned, but even more in the labor and expense involved in the extinguishing.

One man can, with a bucket of water, put out a small campfire, but hundreds of men often labor for weeks in the suppression of a fire

whose proportions have grown in a few days, given a few hours. From a tiny puff of smoke to whole canyons and mountains of raging furnaces, often threatening the destruction of entire watersheds of valuable timber. The proposed highway will enormously increase the accessibility of every part of the Cascade range. From it can run convenient side roads, reaching every part of the forests, and over it can go quickly by automobile the men and supplies necessary for the suppression of the fire before it has reached undue proportions.

Economic Advantages of Road. The road will facilitate further utilization of the natural resources of the national forests. Grazing areas now inaccessible will be made available, and the laterals from eastern Oregon will be used as driveways to the summer range of high mountains. The road unquestionably will be an enormous asset to the state and develop a tremendous playground for all America.

The road and its main connections, which are even now being constructed, will furnish several trans-cascade routes, binding heretofore separated sections of the state, overcoming the barrier of the high mountain range and bringing the market nearer to the producer.

As soon as the road is assured recreation and landscape engineers of the forest service will co-operate with the road engineers in locating it where it will serve the best interests from a scenic and recreation standpoint.

A complete recreation reconnaissance and working plan will be formulated. Sites will be reserved for summer homes, for hotel purposes, for automobile service stations and for stores. Public camp grounds will be laid out and improved, and grazing trails. Time is a most important factor in the fighting of fire. The economy of quick suppression is felt not only in the saving of valuable stuff burned, but even more in the labor and expense involved in the extinguishing.

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feasible without exorbitant cost. Plans are being made for a field reconnaissance the coming season to lay out the most feasible route.

Tear this out, as it contains reference information of value in emergencies.

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