

In the Day's News

By FRANK JENKINS

A few days ago I paid a visit, along with an inspection party from Oregon's state parks advisory committee, to California's state parks in the redwoods area of Humboldt and Del Norte counties.

It is a fascinating trip, easily covered in a week-end. There is no better time to make it than these crisp October days. I can unhesitatingly recommend it. These awesome redwood forests, the bulk of their trees varying in age from 1,000 to 2,000 years, are worth a trip across the continent. For us of Southern Oregon, they are only a few hours away.

CALIFORNIA has 134 state parks — somewhat fewer in number than Oregon's. They vary in size from a few acres to some 400,000 acres (the huge ones are in the state's desert areas, where land values are relatively insignificant.) Of all of them, these redwoods parks are by long odds the most fabulously beautiful.

The Humboldt Redwoods park contains some 23,000 acres, including some of the finest redwood groves in California. The present area of Prairie Creek Redwood park includes 11,000 acres, with more acquisitions planned. Small, but spectacular Patrick's Point, hanging above the rugged coastline, has only 400 acres.

An added attraction at Prairie Creek park is a band of elk that inhabits a wide meadow that is a part of the park area. These impressive animals are not "tame," in the sense that city park elk are tame. They come and go from the surrounding forests, but they soon learn that they are safe within the park borders and pay no attention to the throngs of visitors.

OVERNIGHT camping is permitted in all of these parks, and during July and August all of them were filled to capacity every night. The attendants report a steady increase in the number of visitors carrying camp equipment. The same tendency has been noted in Oregon state parks.

Hotel and motel owners in the vicinity of state parks in both states were far from enthusiastic at first over the idea of permitting overnight camping. This attitude, however, is changing. Many of them report that after camping out for several nights visitors tend to go to motels or hotels to clean up and get a

change from their own cooking. In these cases, they are apt to stay two or three nights instead of moving on the next morning.

THE average charge at the California parks is \$1 per night for automobiles and \$1.25 for trailers. The accommodations include camping space, tables and benches and an outdoor stove. Fuel for the stove can be purchased at the camp headquarters. Toilet facilities and showers, with hot and cold water, are provided at most of the camps.

Roughly the same accommodations at about the same prices are provided in Oregon's state parks.

In general, the facilities provided in the Oregon parks are newer and more modern, having been installed more recently. In many of the Oregon parks there are electric stoves, with coin-the-slot attachments.

Laundry facilities are provided in the better parks, along with

tubs for bathing babies. The park people, incidentally, report increasing travel by families with very young babies.

CALIFORNIA estimates the capital value of its state parks system at about \$65,000,000. A little less than 70 per cent of the state's share of this amount has been paid for with royalties from California's offshore oil.

A lot of inland demagogues insist that this offshore oil belongs to ALL THE PEOPLE, and not just to the people of the states whose borders touch the ocean beaches.

I wonder how the people of Oregon would feel about it all if oil should be found under the ocean off Oregon's beaches.

Would they want this oil to belong to ALL THE STATES, inland as well as coastal? Or would they feel that royalties from oil discovered under the surf off Oregon's beaches should belong to the PEOPLE OF OREGON?

Medford (Oregon) Mail Tribune

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