

SHENANDOAH AND OTHER NATIONAL PARKS

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

TRANSMITTING

INFORMATION AS TO THE BOUNDARIES AND AREAS OF THE
SHENANDOAH AND OTHER NATIONAL PARKS

APRIL 14, 1926.—Referred to the Committee on the Public Lands and ordered
to be printed with accompanying document only

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, April 14, 1926.

THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

SIR: By act of Congress approved February 21, 1925 (43 Stat. 958) the Secretary of the Interior was authorized and directed—

(1) To determine the boundaries and area of such portion of the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia lying east of the South Fork of the Shenandoah River and between Front Royal on the north and Waynesboro on the south as may be recommended by him to be acquired and administered as a national park, to be known as the Shenandoah National Park; and

(2) Such portion of the Smoky Mountains lying in Tennessee and North Carolina as may be recommended by him to be acquired and administered as a national park, to be known as the Smoky Mountains National Park; and

(3) In the Mammoth Cave regions of Kentucky; and

(4) Also such other lands in the southern Appalachian Mountains as in his judgment should be acquired and administered as national parks; and

(5) To receive definite offers of donations of lands and moneys; and

(6) To secure such options as in his judgment may be considered reasonable and just for the purchase of lands within said boundaries; and

(7) To report to Congress thereon.

In accordance with the provisions of section 1 of said act and for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of said act I appointed a commission of five members, namely, Hon. H. W. Temple, Member of the House of Representatives, United States, from Pennsylvania; Maj. W. A. Welch, chief engineer and general manager of the Palisades Interstate Park of New York and New Jersey; Mr. Harlan P. Kelsey, former president of the Appalachian Mountain Club of Boston, and a well-known landscape architect; Mr. William C. Gregg, a prime mover of the National Arts Club of New York, and a student of recreational development through parks, and Col. Glenn S. Smith, acting chief topographic engineer of the Geological Survey, the representative of the Interior Department on the commission. This commission has made its report to me, dated April 8, 1926, a copy of which is hereto attached and transmitted with this report to Congress.

I recommend for the approximate boundaries and area of the park to be known as the Shenandoah National Park such portions of the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia lying east of the South Fork of the Shenandoah River and between Front Royal on the north and Waynesboro on the south, described as follows:

Beginning at a point about 1 mile west of Front Royal at the highway crossing of the Norfolk & Western Railroad and thence following the railroad right of way in a southwesterly direction to Kimble; thence following public highways via Valleyburg to the intersection of the highway and the Norfolk & Western Railroad at a point about 1 mile west of Marksville; thence again following in a southwesterly direction the Norfolk & Western Railroad right of way to a point about 4 miles north of Shenandoah; thence following public highways along the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and in part along the Norfolk & Western Railroad right of way to a point about one-quarter of a mile east of Waynesboro Junction; thence following the Midland Trail in a southerly and easterly direction to Afton; thence following the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad to an intersection of public highways with the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad about 1 mile west of Crozet; thence following public highways in a northeasterly direction via Whitehall, Nortonville, Standardville, Wolftown, Criglersville, Hughesville, Sperryville, and Washington (Va.), back to the beginning near Front Royal; this area all being in the State of Virginia and containing approximately 521,000 acres, as shown on the accompanying topographic maps of the Geological Survey known as the Luray, Gordonsville, Harrisonburg, and Woodstock sheets.

I recommend for the approximate boundaries and area of the park to be known as the Smoky Mountains National Park such portion of the Smoky Mountains lying in Tennessee and North Carolina described as follows:

Beginning at a point on the south or left bank of the Pigeon River in Cooke County, Tenn., as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey known as the Mount Guyot sheet, opposite Bluffton, and thence following the said south bank of the Pigeon River upstream to the mouth of Cataloochee Creek in Haywood County, N. C.; thence upstream along said Cataloochee Creek to the mouth of Little Cataloochee Creek where the highway crosses said creek; thence in a southerly direction along this highway up the

valley of Cataloochee Creek and Caldwell Fork to the end of said highway; thence up said Caldwell Fork to its head on the boundary line between the counties of Haywood and Swain in North Carolina; thence in a southerly direction along said county boundary line to Soco Bald to corner of Jackson, Swain, and Haywood Counties; thence along county line to Balsam Gap as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey known as the Cowee sheet, where the Appalachian Scenic Highway intersects the said county line; thence southwesterly along said highway to a point where this highway intersects the right of way line of the Asheville and Murphy branch of the Southern Railroad; thence along the northern boundary of said right of way to a point near Sylva where a highway crosses said right of way; thence along the said highway southerly and westerly down the Tuckasegee River Valley to the forks of the highway north of Wilmot and at the southwestern foot of the Plott Balsams; thence northeasterly along this highway to Saco Creek; thence westerly along this highway to the boundary line between Jackson and Swain Counties, N. C., where this boundary joins the Oconalufy River; thence along this highway across the said river and westerly down said river valley through Birdtown and to Coopers Creek near its junction with the Tuckasegee River; thence along this highway westerly down the valley of said river to its junction with the Little Tennessee River; thence westerly along the highway down the valley of the Little Tennessee River, as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey known as the Nantahala sheet; thence along said highway across the boundary between Swain County, N. C., and Blount County, Tenn., and along said highway as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey known as the Knoxville sheet, down the valley of the said river across Abram Creek and to the point where such highway bears northerly and easterly up Happy Valley and to Montvale Springs; thence along the highway northerly to Sixmile Creek, then northeasterly to Seaton; thence along highway to Little River at Gamble Store; thence along the highway which follows approximately the northeasterly base of the Chilhowee Mountains to the Blount-Sevier County line; thence to the forks of said highway on Bridge Creek; thence along the highway easterly to Guess Creek and along said highway southerly up the valley of Guess Creek to its head; thence southerly to Walden Creek and easterly down the valley of this creek to the valley of the West Fork of the Little Pigeon River; thence along the highway southerly up the valley of the West Fork of Little Pigeon River to Gatlinburg, and along the western and southern limits of Gatlinburg along the highway easterly across Roaring Fork up Dudley Creek and to the Right Prong of Little Pigeon River; thence along the highway down the valley of this river through Emerts Cove, as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey known as the Mount Guyot sheet; thence along highway northerly down the valley of said river to the forks of said highway at the west end of Webb Mountain; thence along the highway easterly between Chestnut Ridge and Webb Mountain to Dunn Creek and along the highway up Dunn Creek to junction of highway one-half mile west of Sevier and Cooke County line; thence easterly along this highway through Sutton to the Appalachian Scenic Highway, opposite Bluffton, the point of

beginning, and containing approximately 704,000 acres. The maps referred to are attached.

The statute authorizes and directs me to determine the boundaries and area of such other lands in the southern Appalachian Mountains for recommendation to Congress as in my judgment should be acquired and administered as national parks. It is my present judgment that no areas other than the above-described areas recommended for the Shenandoah National Park and for the Smoky Mountains National Park should be designated for a national park at this time in the southern Appalachian Mountains, and I therefore make no recommendation for any national park or national parks in the southern Appalachian Mountains except said Shenandoah National Park and said Smoky Mountains National Park.

The report of the commission to me shows a minimum net sum of \$1,200,000 has been raised in the way and manner set forth in that report toward the purchase of the Shenandoah National Park area, and shows the sum of \$1,066,693.91 has been raised in the way and manner set forth in that report toward the purchase of the Smoky Mountains National Park area. I am unable to report because I do not have the information necessary for such report, how much acreage within the designated areas can be purchased with these sums.

Offers of donations of land and moneys have been made for the areas to be included within the Shenandoah National Park and the Smoky Mountains National Park as shown in the accompanying report of the commission and in the way and manner set forth in that report.

The commission states that the organizations active in the campaign have "reported that they have obtained many signed options covering considerable acreage."

The report of the commission states among other things:

The Mammoth Cave National Park Association reported April 1, 1926, two donations of property aggregating 3,629.13 acres, of which 1,324.10 acres are to be covered by fee simple title and 2,305.03 acres by cave rights. Included in this area are the caves exhibited by the Colossal Cavern and by the New Entrance Co., but not including Mammoth Cave.

No other offers of donations of lands and moneys for the acquisition of an area in the Mammoth Cave region of Kentucky have been made. Manifestly, this acreage is not sufficient to constitute an area for a national park, and it is to be noted that this acreage does not include the Mammoth Cave section. I express no opinion and make no recommendation at this time as to the desirability of the inclusion of the Mammoth Cave area within a national park.

Very truly yours,

HUBERT WORK.

APRIL 8, 1926.

Hon. HUBERT WORK,
Secretary of the Interior.

MY DEAR MR. SECRETARY: The members of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission, appointed in accordance with the act of February 21, 1925 (Public, No. 437—68th Cong.), have complied with the requirements of the act and with your instructions, and desire to report as follows:

We suggest that reference be made to the report of your special committee submitted December 12, 1924, which gave the reasons for

definitely recommending the Shenandoah National Park area and the Smoky Mountains National Park area as worthy of being acquired as national parks. In conformity with the requirements of the above cited act of Congress, members of the commission have during the past year made a more careful study and investigation of these and other areas and have found much additional evidence of the eminent worthiness of these two areas for acquisition as national parks. Your commission has also made a careful examination of the Mammoth Cave region of Kentucky and believes sufficient reasons exist to warrant its acceptance as a national park if requirements are met as outlined in this report. Below are briefly outlined some of these reasons.

Mammoth Cave is the best known and probably the largest of a remarkable group of limestone caverns, 20 or more of which have been opened up and explored to a greater or less extent. Included in this group are Colossal Cavern, Great Onyx Cave, new entrance to Mammoth Cave, Salts Cave, Procter Cave, Long Avenue Cave, Great Crystal Cave, Cave of the Hundred Domes, Diamond Cave, Mammoth Onyx Cave, Dixon Cave, and others, all of which contain beautiful and wonderful formations. There is good evidence that many more caverns yet to be discovered exist in this immediate territory, and it seems likely that most, if not all, of this entire group of caverns eventually will be found to be connected by passageways forming a great underground labyrinth of remarkable geological and recreational interest perhaps unparalleled elsewhere. The territory which embraces this network of caverns consists of about 15,000 acres, or an area approximately 4 miles wide and 6 miles long. Another geological feature of much interest is found in the thousands of curious sink holes of varying sizes through which much of the drainage is carried to underground streams, there being few surface brooks or creeks.

The Mammoth Cave area is situated in one of the most rugged portions of the great Mississippi Valley and contains areas of apparently original forests which, though comparatively small in extent, are of prime value from an ecological and scientific standpoint and should be preserved for all time in its virgin state for study and enjoyment. Much of the proposed area is now clothed in forest through which flows the beautiful and navigable Green River and its branch the Nolin River.

All this offers exceptional opportunity for developing a great national recreational park of outstanding service in the very heart of our Nation's densest population and at a time when the need is increasingly urgent and most inadequately provided for.

Your commission has carefully investigated the above-recommended areas with a view of selecting on the ground the most suitable boundaries or limits of purchase area for the proposed parks. Your commission, through the cooperation of the Army Air Service, obtained airplane photographs of the Shenandoah and Smoky Mountains park areas, and these photographs proved to be a great help in determining suitable boundaries.

In accordance with your instructions, the associations and organizations in the States in which these national-park areas are located were informed that the lands within the areas must be presented to the United States Government in fee simple before such areas could

become national parks. On May 27, 1925, identical letters were addressed by the commission to the leading groups in these States, suggesting that they definitely organize to carry out the requirements of the commission and stating further that "to facilitate this work the commission considers it necessary that an organization State-wide in scope be incorporated to act for the citizens and organizations of such State for the purpose of centralizing their efforts; * * * and in order that it may be custodian of moneys, lands, and options for the purchase of lands within the proposed park areas to be held in trust for park purposes." In compliance with the suggestions of the commission the following organizations were incorporated: In Virginia the Shenandoah National Park Association (Inc.), in Tennessee the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association, in North Carolina the Great Smoky Mountains (Inc.), and in Kentucky the Mammoth Cave National Park Association. These organizations have been engaged in obtaining donations, both of money and land, and options, with the following results.

The Shenandoah National Park Association (Inc.) reported April 3, 1926, that the total amount raised in donations is \$1,249,154, and a minimum net sum of \$1,200,000 for the purchase of the proposed Shenandoah National Park. The Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association and the Great Smoky Mountains (Inc.) reported April 1, 1926, that Tennessee and North Carolina have raised jointly the total sum of \$1,066,693.91. The Mammoth Cave National Park Association reported April 1, 1926, two donations of property aggregating 3,629.13 acres, of which 1,324.10 acres are to be covered by fee-simple title and 2,305.03 acres by cave rights. Included in this area are the caves exhibited by the Colossal Cavern and by the New Entrance Co., but not including Mammoth Cave.

In addition, these organizations reported that they have obtained many signed options covering considerable acreage. The Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association, the Great Smoky Mountains (Inc.), and the Shenandoah National Park Association (Inc.) have entered into an agreement to carry on a national campaign to procure additional and sufficient funds to purchase substantially all the lands within the purchase areas of the designated Shenandoah National Park and the Smoky Mountains National Park.

As the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association (Tenn.) and the Great Smoky Mountains (Inc.) (N. C.), jointly, and the Shenandoah National Park Association (Inc.) have complied with the requirements submitted to them by your commission, we therefore recommend that the two areas designated as above indicated be made national parks and administered as such when 250,000 acres in each of them have been transferred in fee simple to the United States. We also recommend that the Mammoth Cave National Park be established when the Mammoth Cave National Park Association can transfer to the United States in fee simple one-third of the proposed area (approximately 20,000 acres), including all the caves, and can assure you that steps will be taken to obtain additional and sufficient funds to purchase substantially all the lands within the designated boundaries.

Boundaries.—The boundaries recommended in this report being largely natural and easily determined, are such as to include all the area that the commission hopes will ultimately be acquired as national parks, it being well understood that there may be holdings within the recommended areas near these boundaries which may on further inspection be found impracticable or not economical to include.

(a) Description of approximate boundaries of the Shenandoah National Park area (all in Virginia).

Beginning at a point about 1 mile west of Front Royal at the highway crossing of the Norfolk & Western Railroad and thence following the railroad right of way in a southwesterly direction to Kimble; thence following public highways via Valleyburg to the intersection of the highway and the Norfolk & Western Railroad at a point about 1 mile west of Marksville; thence again following in a southwesterly direction the Norfolk & Western Railroad right of way to a point about 4 miles north of Shenandoah; thence following public highways along the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and in part along the Norfolk & Western Railroad right of way to a point about one-quarter of a mile east of Waynesboro Junction; thence following the Midland Trail in a southerly and easterly direction to Afton; thence following the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad to an intersection of public highways with the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad about 1 mile west of Crozet; thence following public highways in a northeasterly direction, via Whitehall, Nortonville, Stanardsville, Wolfstown, Criglersville, Hughesville, Sperryville, and Washington (Va.), back to the beginning near Front Royal; this area all being in the State of Virginia and containing approximately 521,000 acres, as shown on the accompanying topographic maps of the Geological Survey known as the Luray, Gordonsville, Harrisonburg, and Woodstock sheets.

(b) Description of approximate boundaries of the Smoky Mountains National Park area (all in North Carolina and Tennessee).

Beginning at a point on the south or left bank of the Pigeon River, in Cocke County, Tenn., as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey, known as the Mount Guyot sheet, opposite Bluffton, and thence following the said south bank of the Pigeon River upstream to the mouth of Cataloochee Creek, in Haywood County, N. C.; thence upstream along said Cataloochee Creek to the mouth of Little Cataloochee Creek, where the highway crosses said creek; thence in a southerly direction along this highway up the valley of Cataloochee Creek and Caldwell Fork to the end of said highway; thence up said Caldwell Fork to its head, on the boundary line between the counties of Haywood and Swain in North Carolina; thence in a southerly direction along said county boundary line to Soco Bald to corner of Jackson, Swain, and Haywood Counties; thence along county line to Balsam Gap, as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey known as the Cowee sheet, where the Appalachian Scenic Highway intersects the said county line; thence southwesterly along said highway to a point where this highway intersects the right of way line of the Asheville and Murphy Branch of the Southern Railroad; thence along the northern boundary of said right of way to a point near Sylva, where a highway crosses said right of way; thence along the said highway southerly and westerly down the Tuckasegee River Valley to the forks of the highway

north of Wilmot and at the southwestern foot of the Plott Balsams; thence northeasterly along this highway to Saco Creek; thence westerly along this highway to the boundary line between Jackson and Swain Counties, N. C., where this boundary joins the Oconalufly River; thence along this highway across the said river and westerly down said river valley, through Birdtown, and to Coopers Creek near its junction with the Tuckasegee River; thence along this highway westerly down the valley of said river to its junction with the Little Tennessee River; thence westerly along the highway down the valley of the Little Tennessee River, as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey known as the Nantahala sheet; thence along said highway across the boundary between Swain County, N. C., and Blount County, Tenn., and along said highway as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey known as the Knoxville sheet, down the valley of the said river, across Abram Creek and to the point where such highway bears northerly and easterly up Happy Valley and to Montvale Springs; thence along the highway northerly to Sixmile Creek, then northeasterly to Seaton; thence along highway to Little River at Gamble Store; thence along the highway which follows approximately the northeasterly base of the Chilhowee Mountains to the Blount-Sevier County line; thence to the forks of said highway on Bridge Creek; thence along the highway easterly to Guess Creek and along said highway southerly, up the valley of Guess Creek to its head; thence southerly to Walden Creek and easterly down the valley of this creek to the valley of the West Fork of the Little Pigeon River; thence along the highway southerly up the valley of the West Fork of Little Pigeon River to Gatlinburg, and along the western and southern limits of Gatlinburg along the highway easterly across Roaring Fork, up Dudley Creek, and to the Right Prong of Little Pigeon River; thence along the highway down the valley of this river, through Emerts Cove, as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey known as the Mount Guyot sheet; thence along highway northerly down the valley of said river to the forks of said highway at the west end of Webb Mountain; thence along the highway, easterly between Chestnut Ridge and Webb Mountain to Dunn Creek and along the highway up Dunn Creek to junction of highway one-half mile west of Sevier and Cocke County line; thence easterly along this highway through Sutton to the Appalachian Scenic Highway opposite Bluffton, the point of beginning. This area contains approximately 704,000 acres.

(c) Description of approximate boundaries of the Mammoth Cave National Park area (all in Kentucky).

Beginning at a point on the Brownsville Pike at Liberty, Ky., as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey known as the Mammoth Cave sheet, thence following said Brownsville Pike to Pig; thence leaving said pike and following highways in a northerly direction to a point about one-fourth mile west of Turnhole Ferry on Green River; thence westerly following highways via Sitent Grove School and Arthur to a point on the Brownsville Pike near Brownsville, as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey known as the Brownsville sheet; thence northerly following roadways via Indian Hill to Indian Creek Landing on Green River; thence crossing Green River and continuing in a northerly direction following highways and roads via Poplar Springs

School, Sweeden, and Woodside, as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey known as the Leitchfield sheet, to a point on Nolin River opposite Whistle Mountain; thence following Nolin River to Ky Rock; thence northerly following roadways to Washington Meredith Ford on Nolin River, as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey known as the Cub Run sheet; thence crossing Nolin River easterly following roads and highways via Cove Hollow School, Straw, Sanders store, Cox Store, Denison, and Big Woods School to a point on highway about one-half mile south of Dry Run School; thence in a southerly direction following Dry Run to a point where it joins Green River; thence following Green River about one-half mile to a small island; thence leaving Green River, southerly following roads and highways via Lick Log School and Iron Springs School to Highland Springs; thence westerly following the highway via Chaumont and Cedar Hill School to the beginning. This area contains approximately 70,618 acres.

Respectfully submitted.

H. W. TEMPLE, *Chairman.*

WILLIAM C. GREGG, *Vice Chairman.*

GLENN S. SMITH, *Secretary.*

W. A. WELCH, *Member.*

HARLAN P. KELSEY, *Member.*

School, Graham, and Woodville, as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey known as the benchland sheet, to a point on John River opposite Middle Mountain; thence following John River to its head, thence northerly following towards Washington Mitchell Ford on John River, as shown on the standard topographic map of the Geological Survey known as the benchland sheet, thence crossing John River easterly following towards and between the Cove Hollow School, Straw, Sanders store, Cove Hollow School, and Big Woods School to a point on highway about one-half mile south of Big Run School, thence in a southerly direction following Big Run to a point where it joins Green River; thence following Green River about one-half mile to a small island, thence leaving Green River southerly following ridge and highway to Little Run School and Iron Springs School to Highland Springs, thence westerly following the highway via Commons and Cedar Hill School to the beginning. This area contains approximately 70,000 acres.

Respectfully submitted,

H. W. TAYLOR, Chairman
 WILLIAM G. KERR, Vice Chairman
 GEORGE S. SMITH, Secretary
 W. A. WILSON, Treasurer
 HARRY T. KIRBY, Member