

DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL MONUMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 1935

John R. White, Acting Superintendent

The popularity of Death Valley National Monument increased during the past year in direct ratio to the improvement of the roads. 14,100 cars and 42,061 visitors were registered, and at least 25% more entered by unchecked routes. This increase of \_\_\_\_\_% over the 1933-1934 winter season may be expected to show an even larger increase in future years. A notable fact was that 87 airplanes, carrying 238 passengers, landed at the monument airport at Furnace Creek during the season.

Public accommodations other than free auto camps are furnished by the Pacific Coast Borax Company at Furnace Creek Inn and Ranch, and at Ryan; while at Stove Pipe Wells there is a small resort owned by Mrs. West (formerly Eichbaum). All operations are on private land within the monument, and while the Pacific Coast Borax Company has more than doubled its accommodations and is making further enlargements this summer for the 1935-1936 season, further expansions are needed, particularly at the higher levels in the mountains overlooking Death Valley where visitors may come during the summer months.

Mr. T. R. Goodwin, the engineer in charge, has been untiring in his administrative work and to him must go all credit for the really remarkable improvements of roads, trails, public camps and other facilities. It is the first step that counts, and we are fortunate that it has been taken with care in Death Valley.

Perhaps the principal needs of Death Valley National Monument in order of importance are:

1. Provision of a permanent administrative, protection and maintenance organization.
2. Acquisition of private holdings, particularly that at Cow Creek.
3. Extension of boundaries to include the southern part of Death Valley itself with other scenic or administrative appendages now outside the monument.

Death Valley has been operated since its opening almost entirely by means of members of the Civilian Conservation Corps, there have been no Park Service organization yet set up for its administration except the temporary services of one ranger. With the increasing popular interest in this scenic and historical area it has become immediately necessary to carry on all the functions of a National Park. In addition, mining is permitted and encouraged within the monument, and there are many problems not ordinarily encountered, and a great volume of administrative work exceeding that of many national parks.

In the short space of two seasons of E.C.W. operation, more than 300 miles of roadway were improved and 45 miles of highway oiled. A residence area of nine small dwellings was constructed, a machine shop and warehouse and other necessary buildings for operation were completed, several public campgrounds laid out, and innumerable minor improvements for the safety and comfort of visitors were finished by C.C.C. men.

It is an established fact that Death Valley with its winter season filling a much needed gap and being located so close to Boulder Dam is destined to become one of the most popular of the National Park group. The states of California and Nevada have recognized this fact and already have planned or completed fine oiled highways into the monument.