In 1925 the National Park Service signed an agreement with the Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) under which the BPR would take responsibility for the maintenance and reconstruction of the park roads. Mather had spearheaded the plan to preserve a "National Memorial Parkway" in 1926 that would extend from Park Entrance at the Chinook Pass to park from eastern boundary to Cayuse Pass before swinging east to Yakima Park. The new road, now designated State Route 123, was completed in 1940. The road to Yakima Park was completed in 1945.

The last major park road development was the opening of the "Sunrise" development in 1931. At 6,400' elevation, Yakima Park is the highest park area and was marketed as an "Alpine Park" rivaling Paradise as a popular destination. Subalpine flowers, the new Sunrise development quickly rivaled Paradise as a popular destination. Starting in the late 1920s and continuing into the 1930s, the National Park Service completed the construction of a great number of bridges and roads throughout the park. Even smaller bridges and roads were generally designed to be functional and simple. Many of the park roads are paved, enabling visitors to reach Paradise in greater safety and comfort.

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Modern Roads for Modern Times

Modern roads featured a design and construction that matched the period. The Fryingpan Creek Bridge (1931) on White River Road is another example of the NPS Rustic masonry. Actually, these arch bridges are built of concrete and hewn timbers. The bridge originally built in 1924 of logs and merely faced in stone, characteristic of the NPS Rustic masonry. The bridge was reconstructed in 1926 at the entrance to Yakima Park. The proposed West Side Road was completed in 1927. The bridge is approximately at the same location as the White River crossing, at which point it would connect the Ohanapecosh Hot Springs area (then outside the park) with the new state road at Cayuse Pass. Construction of the southern section of the park road to Yakima Park began in 1931. At 6,400' elevation, Yakima Park is the highest park area and was marketed as an "Alpine Park" rivaling Paradise as a popular destination. Subalpine flowers, the new Sunrise development quickly rivaled Paradise as a popular destination. Starting in the late 1920s and continuing into the 1930s, the National Park Service completed the construction of a great number of bridges and roads throughout the park. Even smaller bridges and roads were generally designed to be functional and simple. Many of the park roads are paved, enabling visitors to reach Paradise in greater safety and comfort.

The construction of new roads on the west and east sides of the park and for a spur road to Yakima Park was completed in 1934. The road to the summit! These were never built, however, and any trip along the park roads is a memorable one.

The new White River Road was completed in 1931. The road is a paved, two-lane road that provides easy access to many of the most spectacular areas of the park, and any trip along the park roads is a memorable one.

A rough private road was built through the Nisqually River Valley in 1918 to the Paradise area of the park, yet it was unimproved and such an undertaking was considered too remote. In 1925 the road was reconstructed and such an undertaking was considered too remote. The road was extended beyond Klapatche Point has been abandoned, providing access to the creek. Such landscape details are documented by NPS Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), a division of the National Park Service. Department of the Interior, US/ICOMOS, 1992.

Notice the variety and craftsmanship of the masonry and bridges. Placing stones for a retaining wall.
Some of this work was carried out by the Emergency Conservation Works program, the parent organization of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Great Depression. The landscape work related to the roads and bridges of Mount Rainier had a precedent in the development of the National Park Service (NPS) in 1916. The NPS, with its design and architecture guidelines, sought to create a sense of harmony between the new constructions and the natural features of the land. Most built components were designed to blend into the system as a whole, in harmony with the natural landscape. Great Depression, the establishment of the National Park Service (NPS) in 1916, and the desire to gain access to the mountain domain. During the early national park years, pre-1916, the U.S. military was the main force on Mount Rainier. In 1890-91, aided by five Native Americans, opened the first road to Longmire Springs. This was a toll road, suitable for mules. Considerable improvements had to be made, giving the impression to visitors that the road was in terrible condition. By the early 1920s, the park roads were in terrible condition. Superintendent O. A. Tomlinson estimated that no sooner is one rough place repaired than some other becomes more troublesome... Gradual deterioration of the old road demands the first work must be done for its complete removal. The road is now considerably improved and serviceable at its present cost. The new road immediately proved practical and useful as an experiment in mules. President Taff’s car, the President of the National Park Transportation Company, was pulled by mules through the unpaved road. This style is well received by the public and serves to promote the cause of stage lines in the West. The creation of the National Park Service prompted surveys and reports which demonstrated the extent of various environmental risks. By the early 1930s, the National Park Service was established, and the park staff began to focus on the conservation of natural resources. A new stage route was constructed, which allowed for the transportation of visitors to the park visitors, taking advantage of the glorious views and providing access for millions of visitors. Without this carefully-designed infrastructure, the national park experience would become markedly different. The National Park Transportation Company operated stage routes from Ashford to Paradise Valley. During the early 1920s, the park roads were in terrible condition. Superintendent O. A. Tomlinson estimated that... Gradual deterioration of the old road demands the first work must be done for its complete removal. The road is now considerably improved and serviceable at its present cost. The new road immediately proved practical and useful as an experiment in mules. President Taff’s car, the President of the National Park Transportation Company, was pulled by mules through the unpaved road. This style is well received by the public and serves to promote the cause of stage lines in the West. The creation of the National Park Service prompted surveys and reports which demonstrated the extent of various environmental risks. A new stage route was constructed, which allowed for the transportation of visitors to the park visitors, taking advantage of the glorious views and providing access for millions of visitors. Without this carefully-designed infrastructure, the national park experience would become markedly different. The National Park Transportation Company operated stage routes from Ashford to Paradise Valley.