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(May 1929)  
6-7410

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
GOPHERWOOD NATIONAL PARK

FILE NO. 0-55

PART 1

PROPOSED MONUMENTS:

GOPHERWOOD

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LAST DATE ON TOP

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IMPORTANT

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ARNO B. CAMMERER,  
*Director.*

The bluffs of the Apalachicola River have a unique flora, being well drained and at the same time with abundant seepage water. Torreya taxifolia, which is called Torreya, stinking cedar and gopherwood grows there. The trees are not tall, but form a part of the underwood growing all over the slopes from stream bank to rim and in ravines-- anyplace there is shade.

Apparently there is no place where the species is protected in its native environment. Many have been transplanted to arboreta or for ornamental purposes. It is possible that a few of the trees occur in the Apalachicola National Forest.

It seems to me that the U.S. Forest Service might be interested in extending the boundaries of the above mentioned forest to take in a representative patch of the stinking cedar.

As far as is known, the fauna of the area is not of special importance.

Someone who happens to be going down to Santa Rosa Island National Monument could easily stop off to see these trees.

D.B.R.

No mention is made anywhere that the cedar is any more distinctive in appearance than the common red cedar or white cedar. — in other words it is not comparable with organ pipe cactus or Joshua tree for monument values.

W.S.P.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
WASHINGTON

APR 17 1935

Hon. Duncan U. Fletcher,  
United States Senate.

My dear Senator Fletcher:

I have received your letter of March 25, with enclosures, regarding the possibility of establishing a national or state park to preserve the Torreya Tree in Florida. My reply has been delayed pending receipt of information regarding this proposal.

The area referred to has been previously proposed as a national monument. However, authority has been granted for the establishment of a CCC camp in the existing Torreya State Forest Park to be used for development of the area referred to in Mr. Jackson's and Mr. Baker's letters. It is believed that the preservation of the Torreya Tree is now being adequately provided for.

The enclosures referred to are herewith returned as requested.

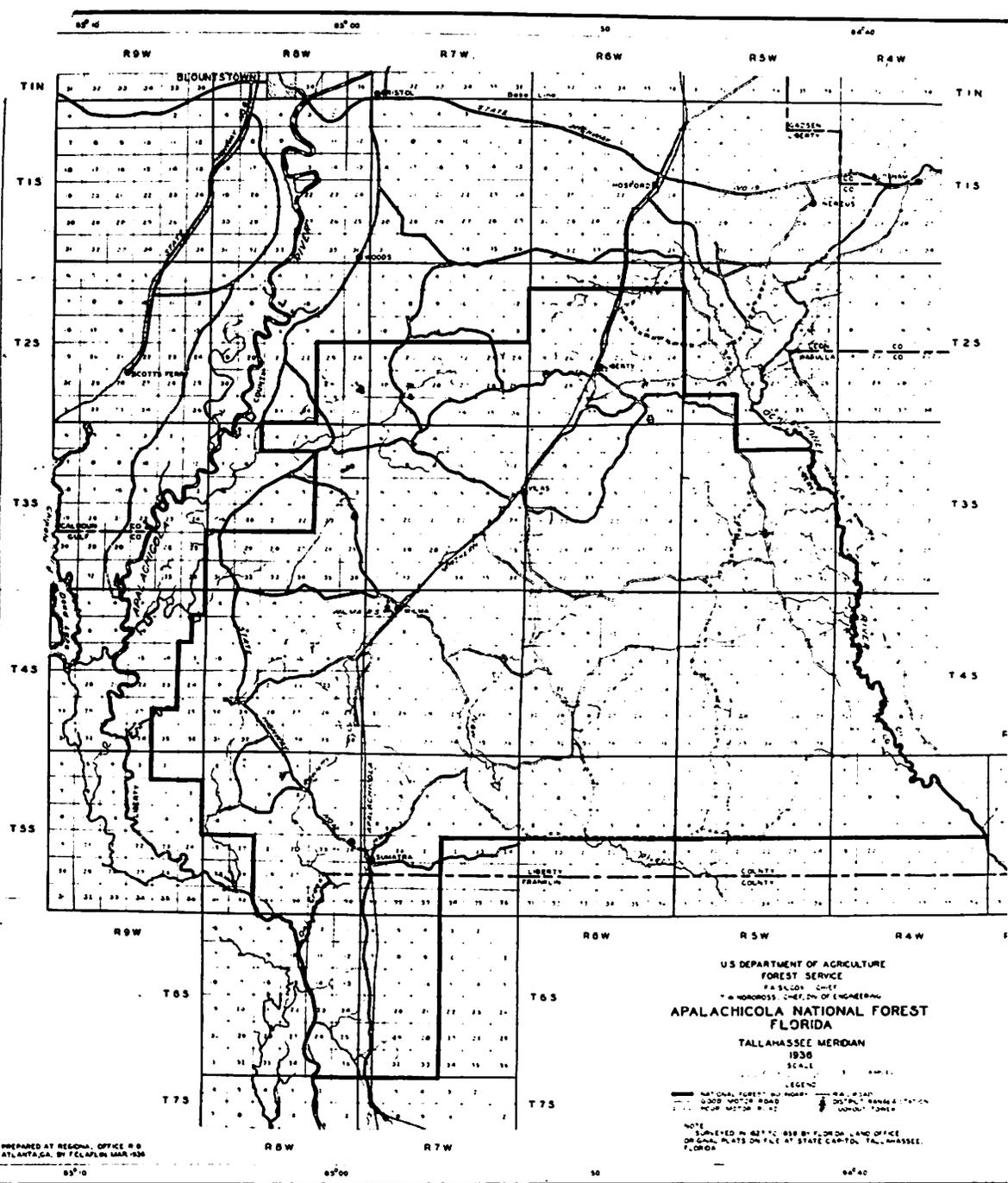
Cordially yours,

(SGB.) ARNO B. GAMMORER

Arno B. Gammorer,  
Director.

JLB:fm  
Encl. 617629

*0-35*  
*Gammorer*  
*Waltton*  
*Evans*  
*Jennings*  
*Amman*



Miss Franklin  
may have the  
Gofferswood N.M.  
file?

*[Handwritten signature]*  
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WASHINGTON  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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*Mr. [Signature]*  
*Mr. [Signature]*  
United States Senate  
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WILLIAM L. HILL, CLERK



March 25, 1935

Honorable Arno B. Cammerer, Director  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Cammerer:

These enclosures from Mr. A. C. Jackson, Bristol, Florida, are submitted with the request that every possible consideration be given the matter referred to and that, with their return, you advise me what reply may be made to him.

Thanking you in advance, I am

Very truly yours,

*Duncan U. Fletcher*

F/H

Enclosures

*B. Prof. Th...*

University, Ala.,

Nov. 9, 1934.

Mr. Conrad L. Wirth,  
Assistant Director National Park Service,  
Washington, D.C.,

Dear Sir:-

I have your letter of the 5th, asking for information about the Apalachicola River region in Florida. You doubtless have in mind the bluff country near the Georgia line. Nearly everything I know about that region is summed up in the 6th Annual Report of the Florida Geological Survey (1914), pages 210-216. I published some notes on the lower part of the same river in Torrey, 11:225-234, November, 1911, and a note on the occurrence of the "Torreya" tree just over the line in Georgia in the same magazine for June, 1919.

The desirability of making the bluff region a state or national park was suggested several years ago, when I was working in Florida, but I was not very enthusiastic about it. For in these days of and vandalism, universal childishness, as soon as an area is thus set aside the public demands good roads to and through it, and crowds of thoughtless pleasure-seekers will flock there and commit depredations, unless the area is constantly patrolled by armed guards, which would be rather expensive. Between that and leaving the area open to exploitation by any one who thinks he can make something by logging or farming, or digging up the rare trees, is just a choice of two evils. The let-alone policy at least has the advantage of costing nothing.

My views on this subject are set forth briefly in an article published about five years ago, of which a copy is enclosed herewith. The other publications ~~was~~ referred to ~~was~~ can be found in several libraries in Washington, most conveniently in that of the Geological Survey, if you are in the same building with that. If you are interested in the South Florida national park project too, you can find my description of that <sup>area</sup> in the 18th annual report of the Florida Geological Survey.

Very truly yours,

*R. M. Harper.*

R. M. Harper.

(See next page)

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### A SOUTHERN OUTPOST FOR POTENTILLA TRIDENTATA

ROLAND M. HARPER

IN September, 1898, the writer found *Potentilla tridentata* Ait. (*Sibbaldiopsis tridentata* Rydb.) on the summits of Wachusett and Little Wachusett Mountains in Worcester County, Massachusetts, the latter station, with an altitude of only 1560 feet, being a rather low record for it, for latitude and altitude combined; and it was so reported in RHODORA (1: 90-91) for May, 1899.

Although I had been on top of several of the higher mountains of southern New England, southern New York, New Jersey and western North Carolina in the meanwhile, I do not recall meeting this characteristic mountain plant again, outside of cultivation,<sup>1</sup> for more than thirty years. On Oct. 14, 1928, I climbed Blood Mountain, in the southern edge of Union County, Georgia, in latitude 34° 44', and found this species fairly common in crevices of rocks at the summit, 4463 feet above sea-level according to the topographic maps. The rock was not studied scientifically, but is highly siliceous, as on most other mountain summits in the South, of whatever geological age. As there are no higher peaks anywhere farther south in the eastern United States, it may be that this is the extreme southern limit of the species.

The trees near the summit are very stunted, on account of the cold winds and ice storms in winter, thin soil, and perhaps other

<sup>1</sup> On March 16, 1915, I saw it in a most unexpected place, namely, in a rock garden on a new private estate in Sebring, Florida, in latitude 27° 30' (less than 300 miles from the Tropic of Cancer). I did not visit Sebring again for several years, and by that time the town had grown so prodigiously that I could not identify the spot; and I never learned whether the *Potentilla* survived the summers there.

factors, and an acre or two at the summit is practically treeless, affording an unobstructed view in all directions.

The most intimate associate of the *Potentilla* there was *Paronychia argyrocoma*, another characteristic plant of mountain summits from Virginia to Georgia.

Other plants noted in the immediate vicinity (listing them in approximate order of size) were *Castanea dentata*, *Quercus alba*, *Robinia Pseudo-acacia*, *Amelanchier* sp., *Kalmia latifolia*, *Hamamelis Virginiana*, *Rhododendron maximum*, *Corylus* sp., *Salix humilis*, *Diervilla trifida*, *Andropogon scoparius*, *Polypodium vulgare*, *Selaginella rupestris*, a moss, *Polytrichum* sp., and a lichen, *Umbilicaria* sp. (All but one or two of these are common also in New England.) *Juncus tenuis* grew along the path, as it does in innumerable other places in the eastern United States.

It so happens that just before my visit a two-mile foot trail had been completed from the summit of Blood Mountain to Neel's Gap (3108 feet above sea-level), the nearest point on the Appalachian Scenic Highway, a new paved road (said to extend from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf), already much frequented by tourists; and other visitors than myself and companions were taking advantage of the trail on that beautiful autumn day. Worse still, it is planned to erect a stone observation tower on the summit of the mountain in the near future. The stone for it will naturally be taken from the immediate vicinity, with more or less damage to the *Potentilla* and other rock-loving plants, and the inevitable increase in number of visitors is bound to cause still further damage to the vegetation (even though the *Potentilla* offers little attraction to flower-picking vandals), and the introduction of more weeds.<sup>1</sup>

All this is in line with a nation-wide movement in recent years to make places of scenic and scientific interest more accessible to thoughtless hordes of pleasure-seekers, to whom the scientific features mean nothing, or less than nothing. Several such places have already been made national or state parks (the spot in question, with two acres surrounding the summit, is Georgia's first state park), and when that is done many people who never gave it a thought before seem to be seized with a desire to go and trample over the landscape

<sup>1</sup> Since this went into type an article by Raymond H. Torrey, in *Torreya*, 29: 72, 73, emphasizes the danger of destruction of the only New Jersey station (High Point on Kittatinny Mountain) for *Potentilla tridentata* through a similar erection of a monument, without any apparent thought that in the process one of Nature's monuments is being destroyed.

or commit other depredations, and considerable damage has already been done in that way in other states, it is said.

It is a debatable question whether such interesting places would better be left to the chance of falling a prey to the exploiters of stone, timber, etc. (some of them have nothing of imaginable economic value anyway), and let scientists and nature-lovers endure a few hardships to reach them, or be made more accessible and attractive to the masses as well as to scientists, with inevitable progressive deterioration. The average person does not grasp the distinction between a state or national park, designed to preserve natural conditions, and a city park, which is purely ornamental and recreational; and the tendency is to obliterate such distinctions.<sup>1</sup> Even if the possibility of vandalism and other damage could be eliminated by constant patrolling, a botanist would not get much satisfaction from following a beaten path, where he knew that several others had preceded him and recorded everything worth observing.

ATHENS, GEORGIA.

<sup>1</sup> In this connection see Charles C. Adams, The importance of preserving wilderness conditions. (In 22nd Report of the Director) N. Y. State Mus. Bull. 279: 37-46, figs. 6-9. 1929.

October 27, 1934.

Dr. Francis Harper,  
Swarthmore, Pa.

*0-25  
Appalachicola  
Nat. Mon.*

My dear Dr. Harper:

It has been recommended that this Service investigate an area located in the Appalachicola Valley, Florida, in Gadsden, Calhoun and Liberty Counties, between Blountown and the Georgia State line.

Reports have come to us that this area contains stands of Gopherwood or Torreya Tree as well as the Florida yew. If you have had any contact with this region, we would like to have you give us whatever information you may have as to the importance of these species there, as well as other characteristics of the region which you think may be of interest to this Service.

For the Director:

Sincerely yours,

(SGD) CONRAD L. WIRTH

Conrad L. Wirth.  
Assistant Director.

JLB-fnd