

ADDRESS ONLY
THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON

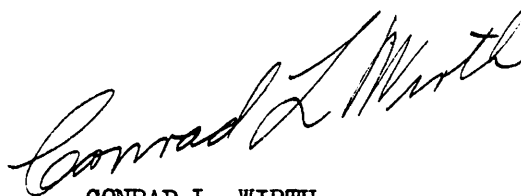
APR 10 1933

Mr. Roger W. Toll,
Supt., Yellowstone National Park,
515 Custom House,
Denver, Colo.

Dear Mr. Toll:

This is to transmit a copy of the action taken on the
proposed Hooker Hammock National Park, Florida, as approved
by the Director on April 4, 1933.

Very truly yours,



CONRAD L. WIRTH.
Assistant Director.

Incl. 266956

1926
Scale: 1 = 12 miles



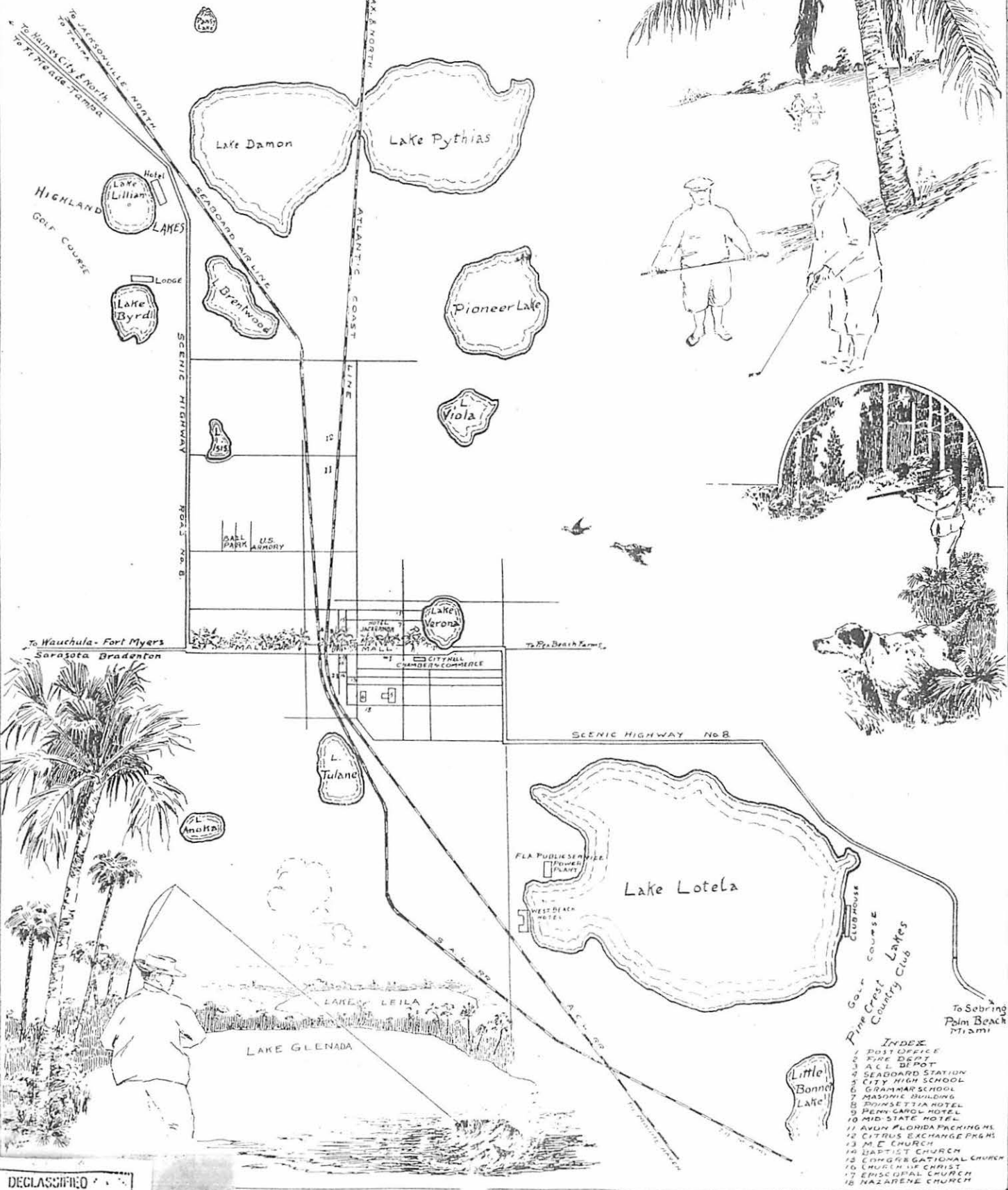
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Authority EO-12958 SEC 3

by IM HNW, Date 1-10

AVON PARK

FLORIDA



- INDEX**
1. POST OFFICE
 2. FIRE DEPT.
 3. A.C.L. DEPT.
 4. SEASIDE STATION
 5. CITY HIGH SCHOOL
 6. GRAMMAR SCHOOL
 7. MACHINE BUILDING
 8. DOWSETT HOTEL
 9. PENNY CROCK HOTEL
 10. MID-STATE HOTEL
 11. AVON FLORIDA PACKING HSE.
 12. CITRUS EXCHANGE PRHS.
 13. M.E. CHURCH
 14. BAPTIST CHURCH
 15. CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
 16. CHURCH OF CHRIST
 17. EPISCOPAL CHURCH
 18. NAZARENE CHURCH

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 Authority RD-1293556CS
 by IM HNUA, Date 1-10

St. Petersburg Praises Avon Park

The Evening Independent

Published Daily Except Sunday
By The Evening Independent, Inc.
From The Independent Building,
Fourth street and First avenue south,
St. Petersburg, Florida.

First Daily Newspaper Published on Pinellas
Peninsula—Oldest Daily Newspaper in St. Peters-
burg or Pinellas County.
Entered at the Postoffice at St. Petersburg,
Fla., as second-class matter.

"THE RAMBLER"

After a very strenuous two weeks of so-called vacation the Rambler is back at work, having started in yesterday. He had a mental rest even if it was not a physical one. He put in two weeks painting porch floors, playing golf and driving a car. That was about all he did except go occasionally to a picture show. It was not entirely satisfactory, as a vacation. To get a real rest one ought to leave town and next summer the Rambler proposes to go away for a month and have odd jobs about the house done by a professional.

The Rambler went to the east coast and is glad that he has seen the famous Miami and Miami Beach, because he is better satisfied with St. Petersburg and more than ever confident it is the best city in Florida. Miami Beach is a very attractive place—for multi-millionaires—but the common people or those of average means, would be rather out of it there.

Of all the places the Rambler saw on a 700-mile tour of southern Florida the prettiest of them all, in the Rambler's opinion, is Avon Park. God made Avon Park and made it a beautiful place with its hills and lakes. Man made Miami and Miami Beach without much help from the Creator but Avon Park is much as it was before man started on the job. Of course, man has planted trees and grass and cleared things up and made it much more attractive but the principal part was finished when man got there. It is a beautiful country all around Avon Park with some attractive residences and a fine clubhouse on a lake with a golf course near.

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WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

NEWCOMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT GEORGE W. E. ATKINS, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

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Received at 21-23 West Flagler Street, Miami, Fla.

QC385 8

STPETERSBURG FLO 306P FEB 16 1930

ROGER W TOLL

13th floor Court House
CARE E F COE COUNTY COURTHOUSE MIAMI FLO

NECESSARY YOU VISIT AVONPARK SEE MAYOR DONALDSON THERE

ALBRIGHT

322P (CY CH 1012A)

Jefferson Hotel

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Authority EO 12958 SEC 3

By IM NMM, Date 1-10-

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

WASHINGTON

February 20, 1930.

Hon. C. S. Donaldson,
Avon Park, Florida.

My dear Mayor:

As it turned out I did not have an opportunity of talking with you about the Hooker Hammock after we had finished the very interesting inspection from the airplane.

As I told you it is my expectation to send to the Director a report of the area together with such photographs as I took or can get elsewhere with the map that you gave me, etc. The decision of course rests with the Director and with the Secretary of the Interior.

I thought you might be interested in the inclosed leaflet entitled "National Park Standards" which has been published by the Camp Fire Club of America. It is my feeling that the Hooker Hammock is not likely to be classed as a national park or monument for the reason that it can hardly be said to be of national interest. Also the area is too small for a national park, many of which run more than 100 square miles in area up to 3400 square miles, which is the area of Yellowstone. Of course size is not a determining factor but it is an incidental factor.

It seemed to me that the adjoining land surrounding the Hammock was primarily of agricultural value rather than of park value, so that very little would be gained by increasing the area to include additional acreage of a different type from the Hammock.

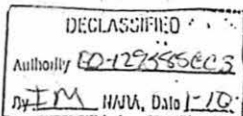
The area would make an ideal State Park but, in case that is not practicable, I hope some other way may be found to preserve the attractive vegetation of that area.

I am deeply appreciative of the kind hospitality that I received from you, Mr. Coen, Dr. Taylor, Colonel Evans and the others who are actively interested in the project. This letter is really just a personal letter to thank you for your kindness and is not an official report regarding the area.

With kindest regards, Sincerely yours,

Roger W. Toll,
Superintendent.

No. 39250



City of Abou Park
HIGHLANDS COUNTY

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LOUISE BROWNE, CLERK, COLLECTOR AND
COMPTROLLER
S. COLQUITT PARDEE, CITY ATTORNEY

CITY COUNCIL
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MEETS FIRST AND THIRD MONDAY
EVENINGS AT 7:30

Abou Park, Florida

March 11, 1930.

National Park Service,
Washington, D. C.

Attention of Mr. Roger W. Toll:

Dear Mr. Toll:-

Your letter of February 20th was received and thoroughly digested. Your points are well taken and we shall be glad to have your co-operation wherever possible.

I am enclosing photographs of Hooker Hammock, as suggested, also a clipping from a local paper showing the formation of the Park Association following out the ideas of J. Horace MacFarland, who was present. Dr. MacFarland thinks through tying together these points of interest in Florida we can get the co-operation and assistance of the National Park Commission.

With kind regards, I am,

Yours very truly,

C S Donaldson
C. S. Donaldson, Mayor.

CSD:v



10-39

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON

3/17/30

Mr. Toll:

Mr. Cammerer asked me to send you
the attached on Avon Park, which he said
you had investigated, and on which he
thought you would doubtless want to make
a report.

M. Madeline M. Hall

Secretary to Mr. Cammerer

Inclosure.

10-23
(May, 1929)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
HOOKER HAMMOCK..... NATIONAL PARK

FILE NO. 0-32

PART 1

NATIONAL PARK
HOOKER HAMMOCK

LAST DATE ON TOP

IMPORTANT

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HORACE M. ALBRIGHT,
Director.

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Authority 10-12945603

By JRM HAVV, Date 1-10-

Files

PROPOSED HOOKER HAMMOCK NATIONAL PARK.

FLORIDA.

REVIEW:


Located in the northwest part of Highlands County in the central part of the state, about seven miles west of Sebring, contains approximately 500 acres, privately owned which consists of sub-tropical vegetation.

Mr. Toll visited this area and submitted an adverse report under date of March 20, 1930, in which he stated - "The area can not be said to have a national interest, nor to justify a visitor in making a considerable trip for that objective alone. It is too small to be considered for a national park. The area surrounding the hammock is more suitable for agricultural purposes than for park use, so that little would be gained by adding any considerable area of adjacent lands to the limited area of the hammock which is only about 500 acres."

"It seems more logical that the area be developed and protected by the State, rather than by Federal Government."

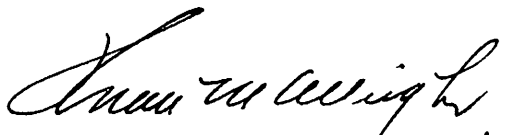
RECOMMENDATION:


It is recommended that this area be disapproved and dropped from our list of proposed parks and monuments.


C. L. WIRTH.

APPROVED:

APR -4 1933



Director. 

HOOKER HAMMOCK NATIONAL PARK, FLORIDA.

LOCATION AND AREA: Northwestern part of Highlands County in central part of State and about 7 miles west of Sebring on the Seaboard Air Line. Approximately 500 acres all privately owned.

HISTORY AND REMARKS: Said to be largest "Hammock" or hummock in State. Dense sub-tropical vegetation. First proposed by Mayor C. S. Donaldson of Avon Park in Dec. 1929 in letter to Mr. E. F. Coe. Examination made by Roger Toll on Feb. 18, 1930, in company with a number of local proponents of project. Adverse report submitted March 20, 1930. Area of purely local interest and not of sufficient size for development on large scale. State or county park recommended.

ACCESSIBILITY: Seaboard Air Line to Sebring thence by motor to Hammock, or by motor via State Highway Route #8 to Sebring thence via State route #54 to Hammock.

PERSONS INTERESTED: Hon. C. S. Donaldson, Mayor of Avon Park, Avon Park, Fla.
Hon. Herbert J. Drane, House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.
Dr. J. Horace McFarland, Harrisburg, Pa.

STATUS: Awaiting final decision

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Authority EO 12958-2

By IM HJW, Date 1-10

FLORIDA STATE PARK NEWS *Loc 114*

Vol. 1, No. 1.

Issued at Intervals at Tallahassee, Florida
FOR THE INFORMATION OF ALL CITIZENS

1936

HIGHLANDS HAMMOCK STATE PARK

If you have visited Florida heretofore, no doubt you have felt the desire to get right into one of the wonderful sub-tropical hammocks which are found in this State. If you have never visited Florida, you will no doubt experience this desire, as you drive or ride through the State. For the information of the uninitiated, a hammock, in the parlance of the native Floridian, is a growth of hardwood trees. This term is used in order to distinguish hardwood growth from pine growth. There are high dry hammocks and low wet ones. The low wet ones usually support sub-tropical growth, and be-

cause of their tangled density and the water are seldom gone into unless one has business there, and then only if suitably clothed. Due to the richness of the soil in these low hammocks they are in great demand for truck garden purposes, and for this reason Florida's hammocks have been gradually disappearing. However, through the foresight of an Association of interested and energetic persons, and through the generosity of the late Mrs. John A. Roebling and her husband, Highlands Hammock was secured and developed into a park, and was then presented to the State.

In this park you can see a laurel oak which is thirty-one feet in girth, and also live oaks which are almost a thousand years old. In order for you to come in intimate contact with the cypress swamps, cat-walks are provided, so that you may walk in safety out among the cypress trees, among their protruding "knees."

You can drive to Highlands Hammock by going to Sebring, Florida, and thence west on the Sebring-Zolfo Springs road, or you may come in from Zolfo Springs over a road which is now being reconstructed.

The rules in this park are very simple, and have mainly to do with the protection of the park from fire, and for the protection of the growth from damage. The employees who look after the property will very courteously show it to you, or if you wish to ramble around unattended, you are at perfect liberty to do so. Comfort facilities are found on the area, and picnicking is encouraged at the picnic areas. During the winter season vesper services are held on Sunday at the beautiful vesper field, which is an outdoor cathedral on the property. Many nationally prominent persons address these meetings.

The dominant idea in developing and maintaining Highlands Hammock is that the area and its wild life shall be undisturbed, insofar as is possible, in making the area accessible and usable. You will thoroughly enjoy and never forget your visit to Highlands Hammock State Park.



AMID HIGHLANDS HAMMOCK PALMS

SERVICE

The Florida Legislature enacted laws creating the Florida Park Service as an agency of the Florida Board of Forestry and provided for the selection of a Director whose qualifications for such service was to be certified by the National Park Service. C. H. Schaeffer, Assistant State Forester, who for some time had been acting as Director of this work, was selected for the position of Director. The Florida Park Service and State Park Emergency Conservation Work offices are at Tallahassee.

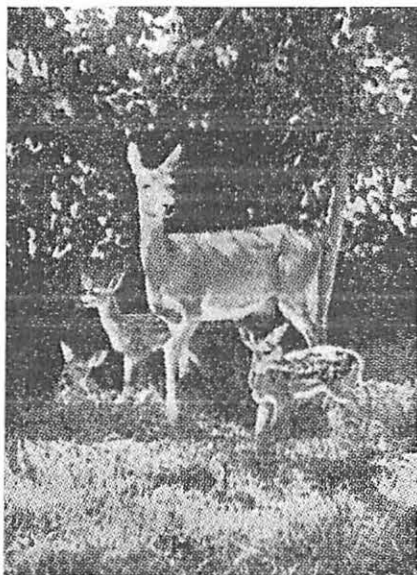
The creation of this Service is the result of many years of effort on the part of public spirited individuals and organizations throughout the State and the hearty cooperation of Governor Sholtz, his Committee on Conservation, the members and officials of both houses of the Legislature, the State Park Division of the National Park Service, State Forester Harry Lee Baker and the Florida Board of Forestry. The membership of the Florida Board of Forestry is Harold S. Foley, President, John B. Glen, Vice President, Stanley S. Sheip, Secretary, S. Bryan Jennings and Mrs. Linwood Jeffreys (Park Member). Highlands Hammock State Park is administered by the Florida Park Service under the direction of the Florida Board of Forestry.



Palms Mingle With Oaks

TREES

The trees, shrubs, and flowers of Highlands Hammock are noted for their vast variety, their great beauty, their profusion and the rankness of their growth. Here you can see what Nature will do when man does not interfere with her efforts. If you are a botanist, forester, horticulturist, nurseryman, farmer, gardner, or just enjoy seeing and being among beautiful and interesting plant life you should ride along the drives, and walk the many trails in this park. The trailside museum, in itself, is an education in plant life. The cat-walks enable you to get intimately acquainted with cypress swamps, and many strange sights found therein—ordinarily a closed book to most people, but an open volume to visitors to Highlands Hammock State Park.



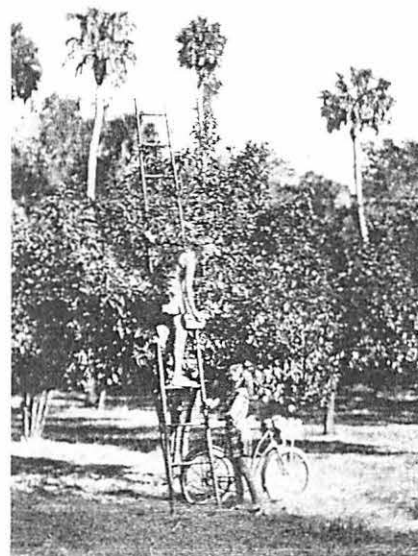
Deer Roam Unafraid*

WILD LIFE AT HOME

The wild deer in Highlands Hammock may be seen at close range roaming unafraid throughout the park. Thousands of tropical and sub-tropical birds as well as winter bird residents from the north are to be found nesting, bathing, rearing their young, quarreling or joyously singing in settings which could not be duplicated by the cleverest human being.

One sees signs of the fox; places where the coon has caught, washed and eaten a fish; the nest of the eagle; the wood duck and her young; the snowy ibis; the scarlet tanager; the melodious mocking bird; and the quarrelsome jays.

*Photo courtesy Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission.



Picking Oranges in the Park

ORANGE GROVES IN PARK

You do not have to own an orange grove or even an orange tree to be able to pick oranges, because in Highlands Hammock State Park you can secure permits to pick oranges from the park guides, and they will even furnish ladders. Many visitors pick and make up small souvenir packages of oranges and grapefruit, and send them to their friends. Others just pick for immediate consumption after learning from the accomodating guide the trick of peeling an orange "cracker style". If all the oranges and grapefruit have been picked in the park, the guides will take you to nearby groves where arrangements have been made for visitors to pick fruit.

Cycling, hiking and picnicking are favorite past-times for young folks in Highlands Hammock State Park. Older folks prefer the drives, walks and the open air vesper services, where nationally known speakers talk with nothing between them and the skies but the ever waving palm trees.

A nine foot 'gator sunning on a log beneath a moss draped cypress can be seen from the bridge across Charley Bow Legs Creek (named for the famous Seminole Indian Chief of this locality), and turtles stud the floating logs in the streams, lakes, and swamps.

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Authority 60-127856-15

by JIM NWA, Date 1-10-

«PARADISE FOUND»

By
MR. W. C. McCORMICK

(Reprinted by Courtesy "American Forests")

When you seek tropical atmosphere and scenery in the future you need not leave the United States to find it. When you wish to turn the pages back eight hundred or a thousand years you can do so right here at home. If you are a scientist, naturalist, or botanist, a real Eden awaits you at Highlands Hammock, near Sebring, Florida.

A great, moss-draped live oak, more than 900 years old, and with a limb fourteen feet in girth, arches over its entrance roadway. A great gnarled monarch of a laurel oak, thirty-one feet in circumference, rears its head high above its jungle growth. It has been there for 800 years, watching the conflicts of nature. You will find a confusion of tropical undergrowth and mighty forest trees intermixed with stately palms, some of which rise into the sunlight for more than a hundred feet; serpentine ferns, from eight to ten feet in length, sway gently in the warm sub-tropical breeze, their root system firmly embedded in the very topmost crown of the lofty palms.

Surrounded by water and tropical growth, this Eden for centuries has been almost inaccessible and therefore able to withstand the ruthless hand of man during the period of colonization and land development in Florida. Through the generosity of the late Margaret Shippen Roebling, however, it is now easily accessible, but as a plant and bird sanctuary dedicated to public enlightenment and enjoyment. It was so proclaimed on March 15, 1931. * * * The work so ably planned and begun by Mrs. Roebling prior to her death, has been carried on by her husband, John A. Roebling, and today Highlands Hammock stands as a living monument to the memory of a wonderful woman.

Roads and foot trails have been built through the hammock to make it accessible. Many beautiful old live oaks, almost covered with the Spanish moss which was gradually smothering them, have been treated and preserved, and much of the moss and other air plants removed to provide air and light. Today, with a new lease on life, these age-old monarchs face life with new vigor.

But with these improvements the natural state of the park has not been violated. The roads are narrow and winding, almost hidden in the jungle. The trails over which nature lovers may travel for miles afoot are not blazed. The whole area is enclosed with a small meshed steel wire fence to exclude stock and predators.

As a single forest fire could destroy this Eden, no expense has been spared in precautionary measures. Inside the fence, completely surrounding the tract, is a wide fire line cleared of all vegetation. Patrolmen are constantly on duty, guarding against fire and predators. * * * A series of concrete dams has been constructed on the several creeks making up the main drainage ditch, thus insuring sufficient moisture at all times of the year for the swamp-growth.

In the heart of the hammock are several small lakes with a luxuriant growth of native water plants. As these lakes dry up during the winter months, a pipe line has been laid along a carefully selected route which has in no way damaged the vegetation. Through these pipes a steady flow of water is carried into the lakes, maintaining them and their water-loving vegetation the year around.

In this Paradise one will find, in addition to the oaks and hickories, the Florida pignut—and there is a giant there

which measures seven feet in circumference. There will be found gums, some measuring eight feet in girth; American elms, twelve feet in circumference; cypress in dense stands; ash, maple, persimmon, and many other sub-tropical and temperate zone trees. Intermixed are stately pines, wild sour oranges, wild limes—a cousin of the lime of commerce—and a grove of prickly ash. And growing in the rich, moist soil, under the canopy of shade, will be found a riot of vines, plants and small shrubs—dogwood, snowballs, wild coffee, wild avocado, and last, but not least, a great number of palms.

Cabbage palms predominate, giving to this wonderland a tropical touch that leaves a lasting impression. * * * One will see the James palmetto, discovered in 1927 by Dr. J. E. Small, head curator of the New York Botanical Garden, and named in honor of Mrs. Arthur Curtiss James, and many * * * saw palmettos. The needle palm, the most beautiful of the native dwarf palms, is present—with its sheath of steel-like needles, eight to ten inches long.

Following the paths one finds much at which to marvel: An oak and a hickory with roots so well ingrown into each other that it is hard to determine where one stops and the other begins; a great oak rises ten feet into the air then abruptly bends at right angles and grows in a semi-circle for nearly seventy feet, while upright limbs have developed into great trees rising to a height of sixty feet. There are hundreds of tons of weight being borne by this old oak as it forms this semi-circle—yet there is no noticeable strain. Clumps of hardwood and palms grow out of the same root mound—fighting for supremacy, each crowding upward to the light, each extracting from the earth its fair share of nourishment.

On the western edge of the hammock is historic Little Charlie Bowlegs Creek, named for a famous Seminole Indian. There will be found great cypress trees, through the branches of which may be seen flocks of white wood ibis, and other water birds as they live and multiply in this sanctuary. In the lagoons may be seen wild duck, and one may leisurely study alligators as they lay basking in the sun.

In the hammock are hundreds of grey squirrels. Wild turkeys strut in their natural haunts. Covies of bob-whites calmly watch one walk or drive by. Nut-hatches, woodpeckers, blue-jays, cardinals, finches, wrens, the titmouse, Florida jays, robins, pine warblers, cat-birds, and many other land and water birds are found in great numbers. Over a hundred different species of birds make the sanctuary their year-long home.

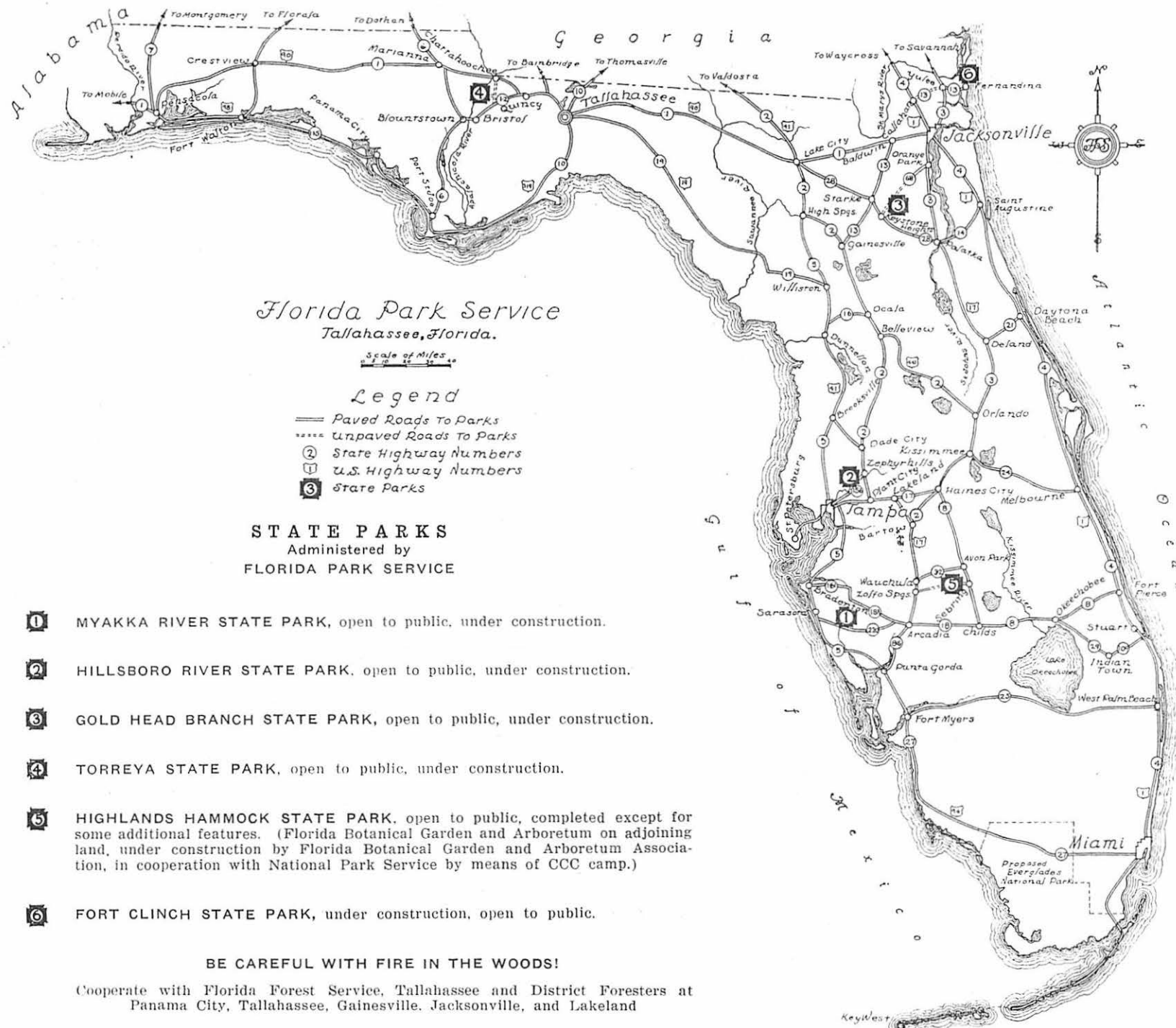
Briefly, this is Highlands Hammock, nature's paradise. Word pictures cannot describe it. One must see it to appreciate its wonder. Nature lovers can spend a week within the enclosure and never "scratch the surface." One may study the forest life and struggle that has taken place there during the hundreds of years nature has reigned supreme. Standing in the shade of those gnarled and ancient oaks, one pictures the conflicts that have taken place between reptiles and mammals, birds and animals, while these monarchs of the forest have majestically stood as silent referees. Here is living history.

Through the generosity of a noble and nature-loving woman, other nature lovers are permitted to have access to America's tropical Garden of Eden.

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Authority 60-129855-60.3

by JEM HAWA, Date 1-10



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FEB 13 1934

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J. HORACE McFARLAND
Past President (1904-25)
Chairman National Parks Committee
Chairman Roadside Development Committee
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

February 13, 1934

Dear Mr. Cammerer:

Just now I am reading a copy of a letter to you dated February 10 and signed by Raymond W. Greene, referring to Highlands Hammock and the vicinity of Sebring, Florida, all known as the "Ridge Country" of that interesting state.

Of course you know my feeling about the Everglades National Park, delay in the establishment of which is sorrowful. When some years ago I was asked to look over this Highlands Hammock incident I advised the action which has since occurred. The Hammock was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. John A. Roebling, and it was thus saved as a bit of Florida quite as unique in its way as is the Everglades section.

But my Florida dream has gone a good bit further than these two separated items. A few miles to the north the Bok Tower at Lake Wales is near the northern terminal of that lovely Ridge Country. I suggested, and again suggest, the promotion of a parkway from the Everglades to and through the Highlands Hammock, and then to the Bok Tower. Much of the road that would be involved is already improved; some of it has been ornamentally planted. It is as much of a contrast to the average flat Florida road as the contrast between Yellowstone Park and the Everglades.

Mr. Greene writes me that Mr. Olmsted has just been down to the Highlands Hammock. I had suggested that he be asked to look it over and express his frank opinion on it. He is, I presume, now in Washington.

Fervently I hope you can manage to visit this unique

DECLASSIFIED

Authority 60-12345-63

by IM HNU, Date 1-10-

AMERICAN CIVIC ASSOCIATION STANDS FOR THE ENJOYMENT AND CONSERVATION OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES
COUNTRY AND FOR THE INTELLIGENT AND FAR-SEEING USE-PLANNING OF OUR RURAL AND URBAN LAND

Mr. Cammerer--2

locality and to take such action as occurs to you toward its preservation for scenic and recreational purposes.

You know I have not been in the habit of asking for anything from the National Park Service!

Yours truly,

J. Horace McFarland
J. Horace McFarland

Mr. Arno B. Cammerer, Director
National Parks, Buildings and Reservations,
Washington, D. C.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS,
BUILDINGS, AND RESERVATIONS

February 28, 1934.

Mr. J. Horace McFarland,
Chairman, National Parks Committee,
Harrisburg, Pa.

Dear Mr. McFarland:

I am sorry to have delayed in answering your very fine letter of February 18, with reference to a parkway connecting the proposed Everglades National Park, Highlands Hammock and the Bok Tower.

Mr. Olmsted was in the office last week and spoke to Mr. Wirth about the possibility of establishing a State Park Emergency Conservation Work camp at Highlands Hammock in order to develop a botanical garden and arboretum there. We are, of course, very much interested in this area and want to help in every way possible. Final action, however, has not been taken as it will all depend on how many camps will be available. I assure you that we will be glad to make a recommendation to Mr. Fechner that this camp be established.

I have heard a lot about Highlands Hammock, and as you know, our Chief Investigator, Mr. Toll, visited this area at one time and submitted a very fine report in which he said that it was a delightful place but did not compare with the proposed Everglades, which is the main area in which we are interested.

Thank you very much for your letter on this subject.

Very truly yours,

(SGD.) ARNO B. CAMMERER

Arno B. Cammerer.
Director.

CLW:fm

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Authority 60-12986-603

By IM HAWA, Date 1-10

10-23
(June 1941)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

----- NATIONAL PARK

FILE NO.

0-32

Pt. 1

Proposed Parks

Hooker Hammock

IMPORTANT

This file constitutes a part of the official records of the National Park Service and should not be separated or papers withdrawn without express authority of the official in charge.

All Files should be returned promptly to the File Room. Officials and employees will be held responsible for failure to observe these rules, which are necessary to protect the integrity of the official records.

NEWTON B. DRURY,

Director.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 16-22371

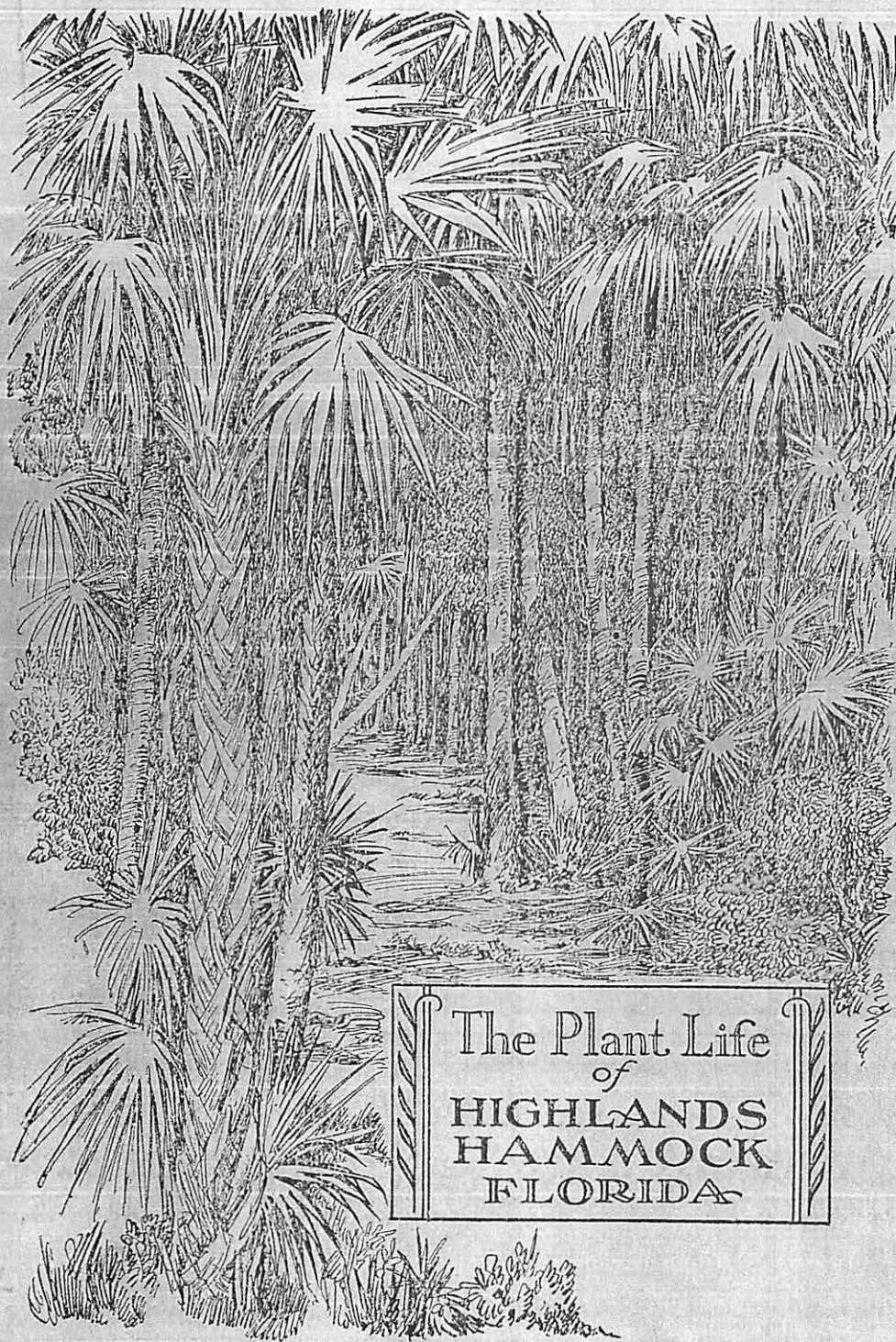
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By IM HNU, Date 1-10-

0-32

Hooker Hammock

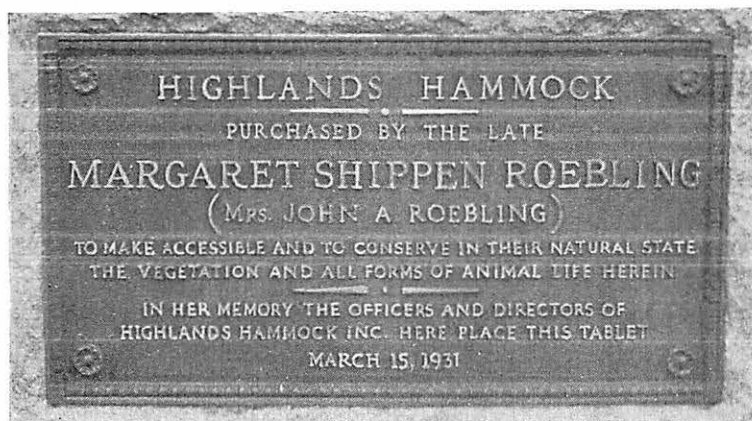


The Plant Life
of
HIGHLANDS
HAMMOCK
FLORIDA

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By IM HAVV, Date 1-10

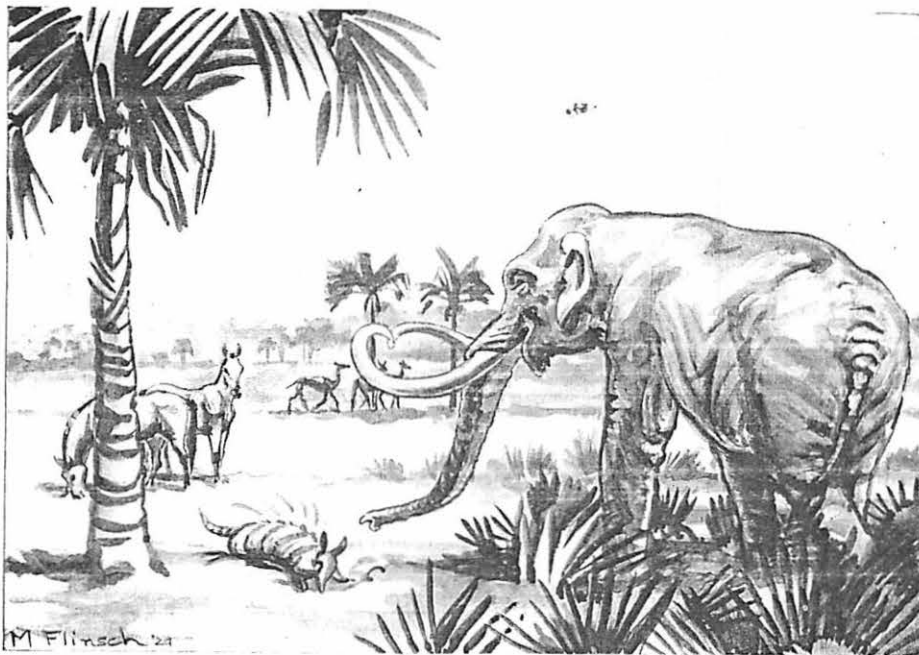


Inscription on the dedicatory tablet to the donor of Highlands Hammock. The memorial stone is under an ancient live oak.

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Authority EO-12958 SEC 3

By IM HAV, Date 1-10



Pictured here from a drawing by M. Flinsch for the American Museum of Natural History, New York, is the type of Elephant whose tusk was unearthed in Highlands Hammock. The artist has also depicted associated early animal residents of Florida, the three-toed Horse, an Armadillo, and the small llama-like Camels. The remains of these and multitudes of other extinct animals no doubt are imbedded in the sub-floor of this Hammock, as many unidentified fossil bones have been dug up.

PAGE TWO

An Introduction to

"THE PLANT LIFE OF
HIGHLANDS HAMMOCK"

By

Rex Beach

FLORIDA has numerous beauty spots, one of the finest of which is located in Highlands County. It consists of a "high hammock," so-called, a jungle of mighty trees of many kinds, growing amid a tangle of tropical undergrowth, some common and some exceedingly rare. Nowhere in the state is there a more natural park.

Highlands Hammock, as this garden of shade has been called, forms an ideal bird and game sanctuary, for it is rich in food bearing plants and shrubs. Nowhere is there a more magnificent assortment or variety of trees. There are huge oaks, some of enormous girth and majestic spread, and stately cabbage palms by the thousands, to say nothing of the pines, cypresses, elms, sweet gums and maples, whose tops form a living canopy nearly a hundred feet above the ground. Beneath this roof of evergreen is a riot of vines, plants and small shrubs, such as dogwood, snowballs, wild coffee, avocado. There are wild orange groves, too, bearing both sweet and sour fruit. The place is a natural arboretum of enchanting beauty.

It took nature centuries to fashion this Garden of Eden. Human hands could never duplicate it. It has long been famous among scientists, naturalists, and botanists, but until very recently, though one of the rarest beauty spots in Florida, the Hammock was a wilderness and all but inaccessible to the nature loving public. It has now, principally through the beneficence of Margaret Shippen Roebling (Mrs. John A. Roebling) a gracious, unselfish woman, to whom beauty breathed in a voice more potent than that of any orator, that the Hammock has been made accessible and set aside for public use as a bird and plant sanctuary. Efforts will be made to present here the

PAGE THREE

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Authority EO-12958-SEC.3

By IM NAW, Date 1-10-

loveliest park in the South, a "Green Mansion" for native birds and animals, without unnecessarily disturbing or adding to what nature has already bestowed.

The opening up, building of roads and trails, and the measures for the protection of the Hammock, by water conservation and other means, have been donated by Mr. John A. Roebling.

Surgical operations for preserving three of the ancient oaks of the Hammock were contributed by Mr. Donald Roebling in memory of his mother.

The following lines from Byron seem a fitting tribute to that woman who made this gracious gift to Highlands County and to America:

*Who doth not feel, until his fading sight
Faints into dimness with its own delight,
His changing cheek, his sinking heart confess
The might—the majesty of Loveliness?*

Highlands Hammock is not intended to be merely a park for today or tomorrow, but for all time, for all of those rich and poor, great and humble, who love beauty in its natural simplicity.

It is the purpose of Mr. Charles Snyder Donaldson in publishing this booklet to classify and describe in brief form some of the beauties contained in this wonderful park.

THE TREES AND SHRUBS
of
HIGHLANDS HAMMOCK
By
Charles Snyder Donaldson

ORIGIN OF HAMMOCKS

FLORIDA'S *One Unique Priceless Heritage*:—The Hammocks of Florida are unique among the World's great natural forest creations. Although in process of formation since the dawn of our modern peninsular history, many thousands of years ago, most of them have been destroyed by man in a moment to plant vegetable gardens and orange groves or to build cities. Their wondrous plant life beauty caused no hesitation in their despoliation and no thought that they are irreplaceable. A great Unseen hand raised these "hummocks" above surrounding areas of marshes and streams, which kept out most of the forest fires while successive growths of vegetation built up steadily during the centuries a larger and richer forest.

Preserved by Generosity of Nature Lovers:—This Hammock of a thousand acres was being cut up and sold piecemeal for destruction when some big-hearted lovers of nature organized and took measures to save it. A noble woman came to the rescue and gave generously, thus by its purchase creating one of her greatest monuments for all time. Highlands Hammock has been termed South Florida's finest forest. From further large gifts and from the dollars of wage earners, and from County help, means have been provided to open it up to all who will come and enjoy it, particularly students of botany whom the donor wished to encourage. Others, seeing the progress, will be inspired to contribute for carrying on, and for saving more of the ancient trees that were growing here before the New World was discovered.

PAGE FIVE

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By IM HWV, Date 1-10

NATURE never ceases working, so the Park is still in the making. The elements bring in new vegetation, and there is constant plant family adjustment of which shall predominate. Man will work with Nature and contribute his part in dressing and tending this Garden of Eden that it may ever become more beautiful, inspiring and educational.

Mingling of Tropic and Temperate Zones:—Two outstanding features characterize the flora of Highlands Hammock. One is the happy blending of trees, shrubs and vines from the Temperate Zone with those from the Tropics, all sharing equally and in pleasing confusion, the kindly soil and climate, and the mutual protective warmth that a great hammock creates. Scientists say that the oaks, hickories, elms, maples, the ash, as well as small plant life from the North were brought down during the Glacial Period, and remained when the ice pack began to recede from about the 40th parallel (Missouri to Delaware) some 25,000 years ago. Plant life strives as earnestly as animal life for self preservation. The progeny of this refugee vegetation then crept slowly back Northward to reclothe the face of the North American continent, as milder climate followed the retreat of the glaciers. Florida has always acted the saving and restoring host for plant and animal life, including humans.

Tropic Vegetation Returning:—The centuries of chill atmosphere, however, during the Pleistocene Era had driven from the metamorphosing Florida peninsula most of the very tender Tropic life, which in turn was preserved in the West India islands and the north coast of South America. In the slowly warming up period of the past two hundred centuries Tropic vegetation has been coming back to Florida, much evidence of which may be seen in our Highlands Hammock. How long this march northward of the Tropics will continue, with occasional setbacks, until the Royal Palm again flourishes wild in the Jacksonville region and beyond, no one can foretell. In the present period we are happily rejoicing in having here so much of the best in Tropical trees and shrubs. This marching back of Tropic life is measured not in years but centuries, and comes through the agency of birds, man, the Gulf Stream, and the winds, particularly the hurricanes, the last performing at least some benefit. There is also the tendency of Tropical plants to gain the ascendancy over Temperate Zone plants where they find equal opportunity.

PAGE SIX

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By IM HNW, Date 1-10-

S *KY Climbing Trees:*—The second marked feature of Highlands Hammock is the loftiness of the trees, which is the repeated comment of visitors, the general height of palms, oaks and other larger trees being 60 to nearly 100 feet. Another generation should see many of them towering over 100 feet.

The Native Vegetation:—Foreign plants and trees are not being added to the Hammock, which is being kept as a natural exhibit. A few selected specimens of the most interesting trees and shrubs native to South Florida that were once probably indigenous to the Hammock have been added for their educational value and for the creation of a larger supply of bird food. This does not comprise an arboretum or Botanic Garden, the starting of which on adjoining land east of the Hammock presented by Highlands Hammock, Inc., under the Florida Forestry Association and the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs is planned.

Classification of the Hammock's plant life is presented in family and natural groups as nearly as possible for the benefit of the novice, and the facts given in each case that would seem to be the most valuable to the public. The relation which this flora bears to avifauna and human life is given that we may more appreciate their worth, and to afford a better acquaintance with our trees and plants. Space does not permit going into greater details such as structural and botanic features of the vegetation, the silent but relentless warfare going on constantly in this plant kingdom, and the harmonizing efforts of the park management to secure the most desirable groupings.

Ancient Animals Uphold the Trees;—Fleeing for safety during the Pleistocene or Glacial Period came animal life along with plants, and thus a crowded circus medley of fauna constituted Florida's earliest "winter residents." The subsoil of Highlands Hammock reveals a dense population of ancient animals, their remains helping to create a great bed only a couple of feet 'neath the present surface, where the thick strata of marl analyzes 65 to 70% lime. Extensive digging to reveal these old-timers is not feasible, but digging a short trench for a water pipe unearthed a giant land turtle which weighed probably 600 pounds, and immediately below it an elephant's tusk of the ex-

tinct Archidiskodon. Lying in peace under the Hammock, after constant warring in the Pleistocene and previous Periods of thousands of years in an animal crowded Florida are no doubt saber-toothed tigers (*Smilodon*) three-toed horses (*Merychippus*) small, long-legged camels (*Tanupolama*) related to the present day llama of South America, and multitudes of other beasts. They are reliving today in nourishing the roots of the giant trees of our Hammock.

THE PINE FAMILY

Order of Pinales

SLASH and Long Leaf Species:—A stately and picturesque sight on the borders of the Hammock is the Caribbean or Slash Pine forest (*Pinus Caribaea*). From the east entrance northward along the canal drive these trees form a sturdy young forest of their own, of even size and in sentinel masses, contrasting strongly with the inside jungle of mixed growth. They are vigorous children of some monster parents that one may see along the north Hammock drive. One of these old-timers is 9½ feet in girth and many centuries old. Caribbean Pine seems more resistant to destructive borers than does the Long Leaf Pine (*Pinus Palustris*) some of which the lumbermen left in the park uplands. They are also unmolested by range hogs who eat vast quantities of the sugary feeder roots of the Long Leaf Pine. Slash Pine produces crude gum in such large amounts and at such early ages that Florida turpentine operators have heavily tapped such trees down to saplings.

Christmas Pines:—On the northeast uplands of the park area is a group of Sand or Spruce Pine (*Pinus Clausa*) the type preferred for Christmas trees. This variety grows rapidly, but is more easily destroyed by forest fires. It would thus have disappeared from the country were it not for its usual self-preservation habit of sealing most of its seed in its cones until released by forest fires which may destroy the parent and start the offspring to growing. The replanting characteristics of the other two pines is also unique. The Long Leaf Pine makes seed only about once in seven years, the seed being very meaty and sought by animals, birds and children. Being heavy it does not travel over 100 feet, but quickly penetrates a mat of low vegetation to start its growth. The Caribbean Pine seed, light of weight, will blow for miles seeking moist lands for germination, which it prefers to avoid fires. Happily the Florida State government is concerning itself with reforestation and fire protection. Where such protection is afforded the Slash Pine thrives also on upland soils.

"TROPICAL PARK TRACT NEARLY ALL ACQUIRED"

JUNE 15, 1930

Tropical Park Tract Nearly All Acquired

J. W. June 15, 1930
Over 1,700 of 2,000 Acres
Needed Near Avon Park.
Already Purchased.

Special to Times-Union
AVON PARK, June 14.—Purchase of more than 1,700 acres of the needed 2,000 acres for Hooker Hammock tropical park was completed today, Mayor C. S. Donaldson of Avon Park, secretary of the Florida Tropical Parks Association announced. The outlay was approximately \$26,000.

The transactions are the culmination of negotiations stretching over several months with more than 200 individuals and corporations interested in various tracts included in the area needed for the tropical park, which lies south of Avon Park and west of Sebring.

Only three tracts remain to be secured, and of these only one small block of six acres is in the hammock itself. The remainder is part of the contiguous lands sought to block up the tract to make for economical fencing and control of the tract which is to be developed with the aim of eventual inclusion in a system of national parks stretching from Mountain Lake sanctuary to the new proposed tropical park near Cape Sable.

The hammock area, which includes approximately 700 acres of magnificent virgin tropical hammock, was inspected by representatives of Secretary Lyman Wilbur of the department of the interior last winter and proclaimed to be one of the most beautiful pieces of tropical tracts left in the state available for park purposes.

Hooker Hammock
0-321

DECLASSIFIED

Authority *EO 12958 SEC 3*

By *IRM* HAVV, Date *1-10*

-9237

THE ORANGE BLOSSOM CITY



Highlands Hammock

SEBRING - FLORIDA

DECLASSIFIED

Authority 60-12955-603

By IM HVA, Date 1-10-



Hammock entrance, lined with Royal, Cocanut and Cabbage Palms and other varied Plant Life.

FLORIDA has numerous beauty spots, one of the finest of which is located in Highlands County. It consists of a "high hammock," so-called, a jungle of delightful confusion, a densely compacted forest of mighty trees of many kinds, growing amid a tangle of tropical undergrowth, some common and some exceedingly rare. Nowhere in the state is there a more perfect paradise, a more natural park.

At one time, Florida boasted of many similar beauty spots but few remain. They were destroyed by fires, or by colonists and land developers. When they stood in the path of progress, they were cleared away and they can never be replaced. It took Nature centuries to fashion the Garden of Eden which lies close to Sebring. Human hands could never duplicate it. Happily it is to be preserved for posterity to enjoy.

Highlands Hammock, as this garden of shade has been called, is no low-lying, miasmatic swamp; it lies on the Scenic Highlands, that splendid ridge which

forms the backbone of South Florida. It forms an ideal bird and game sanctuary for it is rich in food bearing plants and shrubs. As for trees, nowhere is there a more magnificent assortment or variety. There are huge oaks, some of enormous girth and majestic spread, and stately cabbage palms by the thousand, to say nothing of the pines, cypresses, elms, sweet gums and maples whose tops form a living canopy a hundred feet above the ground. Beneath this roof of evergreen is a riot of vines, plants and small shrubs, such as dogwood, snowballs, wild coffee, avocado, etc. There are wild orange groves, too, bearing both sweet and sour fruit. The place is a natural arboretum of enchanting beauty.

R. B. O'Connell

Highlands Hammock

HERE the Temperate Zone touches the Tropic. A Jumble of Jungle Land.

Here is a Bird and Animal Sanctuary, protected day and night from marauding disturbance.

Here are the largest trees of their kind known in the country.

Here will be found a forestry trio of perfect proportions the "Triangle" of Oak, Hickory and Palm.

Here the Intelligence of Man has been directed to Preserve Nature's Beauty for all Posterity, with the extraordinary accomplishments of Tree Surgery.

Here roads and paths give access to nature's secrets surprising and innumerable.

Here exists an Amphitheatre sufficiently spacious for 8000 people midst surroundings altogether unique.

Here see the nest of America's national bird — the majestic eagle.

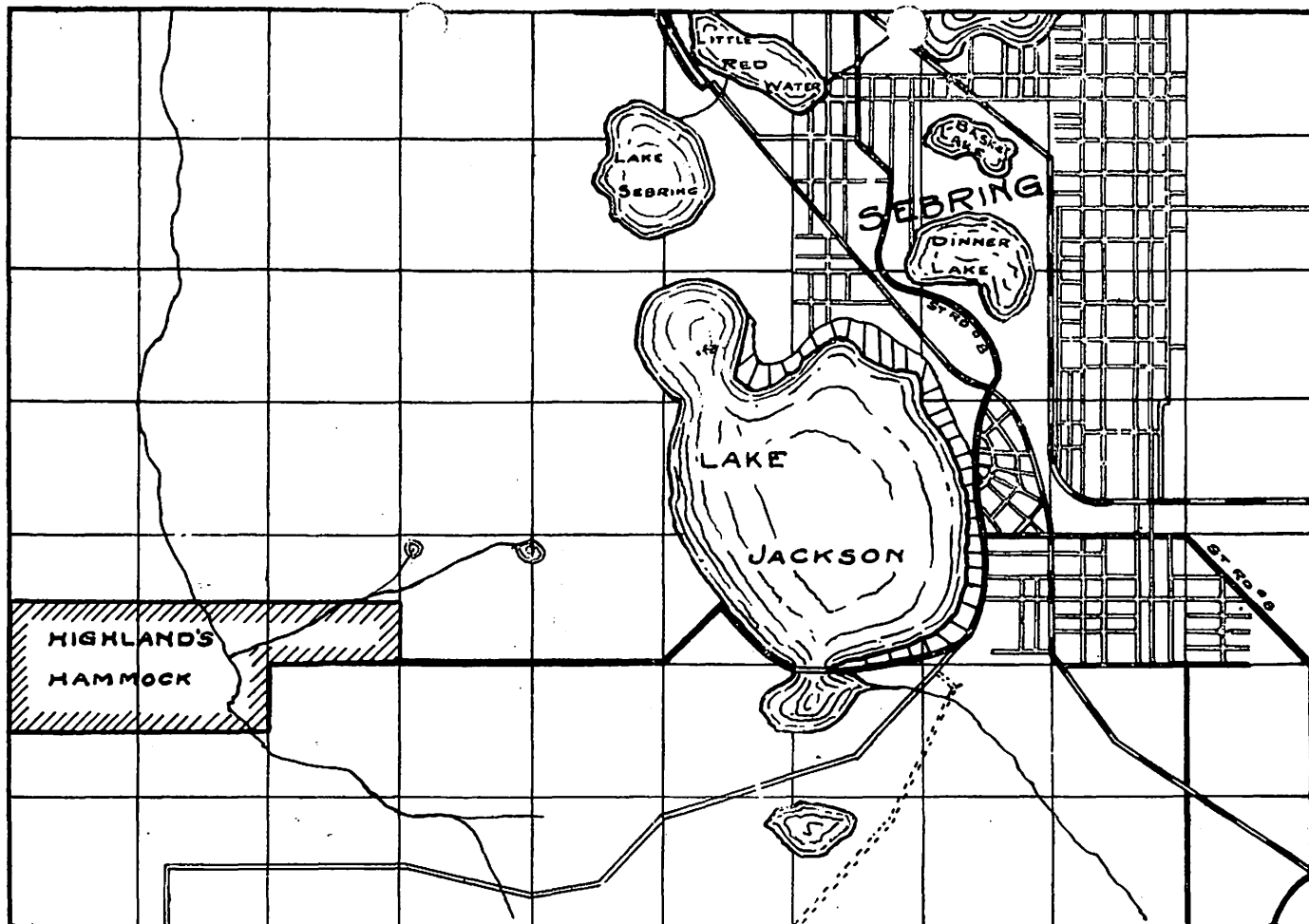
Here is the most perfect specimen of Nature Unspoiled.

Here is Nature in Sublime Retreat; The Host for Millions yet to meet.

Here You are welcome for observation and meditation. There is no Entrance Charge, no Parking Fee.



WATER BIRD RENDEZVOUS WHERE LIVE HERONS, CRANES, IBIS, WATER TURKEY, ETC.



Highlands Hammock is one of the outstanding natural attractions of Florida and is as beautiful as Silver Springs and the Bok Singing Tower. It is a wilderness of tropical and sub-tropical vegetation preserved in its native state.

Highlands Hammock is only forty-five miles, by good road, from the famous Bok Singing Tower at Lake Wales.

To reach Highlands Hammock over best roads from north or south, travel State Road 8 to Sebring, then follow direction signs.

The park is owned by Highlands Hammock Inc., a non-profit organization, of which Rex Beach is president, and has been dedicated to public use.

For further information address either Rex Beach, president, or Sebring Chamber of Commerce.

For Further Particulars About the Park Address
The Sebring Chamber of Commerce
 Sebring, Highlands County, Florida

-9237

Highlands Hammock

ONE OF
FLORIDA'S FINEST FEATURES

HIGHLANDS COUNTY
HARDWARE COMPANY

HIGHLANDS COUNTY, FLORIDA.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority 60-122866-5

By IM HAWA, Date 1-10-

DECLASSIFIED
Authority EO 12958
DATE 11/10/01



MEMORIAL OAK

MR. BEACH IS
PRESIDENT OF
THE TRUSTEES
OF
Highlands
Hammock



REX BEACH

Highlands Hammock is a natural, tropical park of 2,000 acres. It has been dedicated to the public use.

In the park will be found some rare specimens of tree, plant and animal life and, as Rex Beach so aptly states, "The place is a natural arboretum of enchanting beauty".

The Hammock has been recognized by leading authorities, as the only park of its kind which has been made accessible to the general public.

Reset your speedometer at the entrance gate. At this point you can see a part of the fence which surrounds the entire Hammock, a distance of six miles.

0.3 FIRE GUARD

To the right is the canal one and one-half miles long which prevents fire from entering the Hammock.

0.6 LAUREL OAK AND WILD ORANGE GROVE

Stop car here and take sawdust trail to the right 400 feet to Laurel Oak which is 31 feet in circumference and is estimated to be 820 years old. This tree has been reconstructed at a cost of several thousand dollars. It is thought that this is the largest tree of its kind in the United States. Just beyond the Oak is an American Elm, 12 feet in circumference. Return to entrance road and cross to the wild orange grove. The origin of this grove is unknown. On the west edge of the grove is a peculiar tree root formation, those of the hickory and oak having naturally inarched so that the same roots feed both trees.

0.7 ORANGE GROVE

Take right hand fork. There is a flock of wild turkeys that feed around this grove and may be seen at almost any time.

0.9 RECONSTRUCTED LIVE OAK

Probably the oldest tree in the park and estimated to be 960 years old.

1.2 DEDICATION GROUND

At this point Highlands Hammock was dedicated to the public, March 15, 1931.

1.3 Road on left, keep straight ahead.

1.7 Road on right, take left fork.

1.9 FOOT BRIDGE

Leave car on turnout and take foot bridge over Little Charlie Bowlegs Creek. The cypress knees (short stumpy growth among cypress trees) which are seen from the bridge is a provision made by nature for cypress tree roots to breathe in high water.

2.0 Road on right, bear left.

2.1 MEMORIAL OAK

Dedicated to the memory of Margaret Shippin Roebling, donor of the Hammock to the public.

2.3 Side road on left, sawdust trail on right.

2.7 Sawdust trail on right.

2.7 Turn right to leave park.



DECLASSIFIED
Authority EO 12958
DATE 11-10-12

Each Sunday during the months of January, February and March, Vesper Services have been arranged featuring the nations most prominent speakers.

Each day during the week, men are on duty in the Hammock and they will be pleased to explain all points of interest.

The park is a bird and animal sanctuary. All species of birds, native to Florida, find a haven here and hundreds of squirrels, several flocks of Florida wild turkeys and other wild life are increasing rapidly under the park protection.

Only a very few of the items of interest are mentioned in this folder. There are many more to be seen, the number depending upon the amount of time the visitor wishes to spend on the numerous trails and paths.

The Hammock is maintained by voluntary subscription. There is no admission or parking fee.

A quarter million dollars have been spent to provide protection for the natural beauties found in the Hammock and to build the excellent roads leading to and through the park.

By modern tree surgery methods three of the gigantic oaks have been restored. They had been diseased, covered with parasites and fungous growth. Within a few years these would have died. The operations of restoration are the largest known in the history of the science.

The Hammock was given to the public by the late Mrs. Margaret S. Roebling and was dedicated on March 15th, 1931. During the first two months of 1932 more than 8000 people visited this natural tropical jungle.

It is a rendezvous for lovers of nature. It is rich in the flora and fauna of the tropics and sub-tropics. Here will be found nature unspoiled, with nothing taken away and no with effort made to improve upon it.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
address

The Chamber of Commerce at

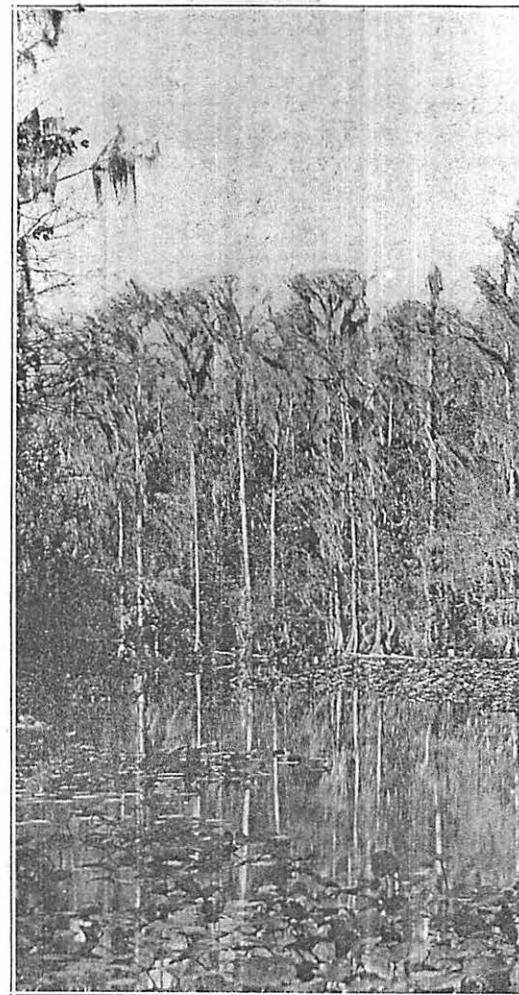
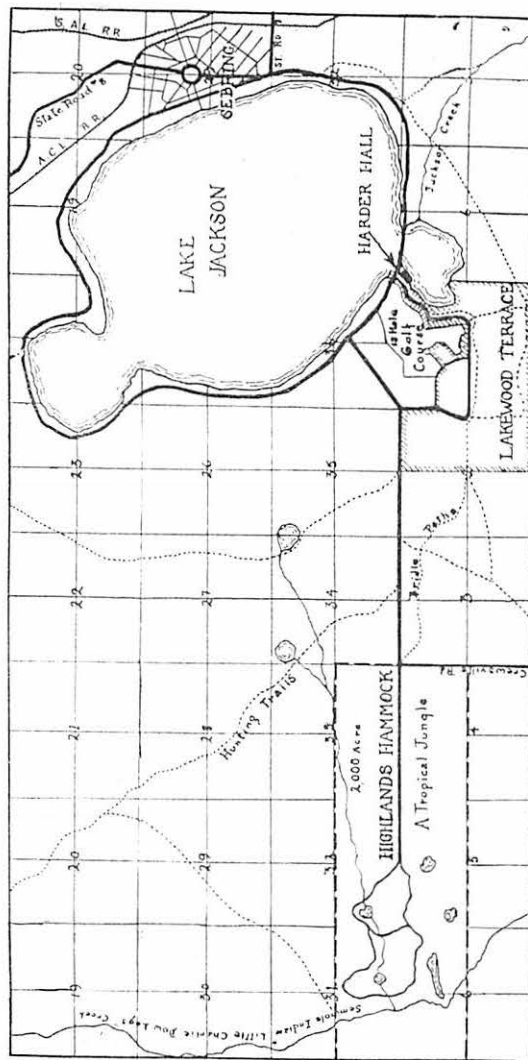
Avon Park, Lake Placid, Sebring
or

Highlands Hammock
Sebring, Florida.

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Authority EO-12858/CC3

by IM NNA, Date 1-10



Water Bird Rendezvous



Highlands Hammock

Avon Park ♦ Sebring
FLORIDA

A 2000-Acre Natural Tropical
PALM FOREST PARK

Highlands Hammock

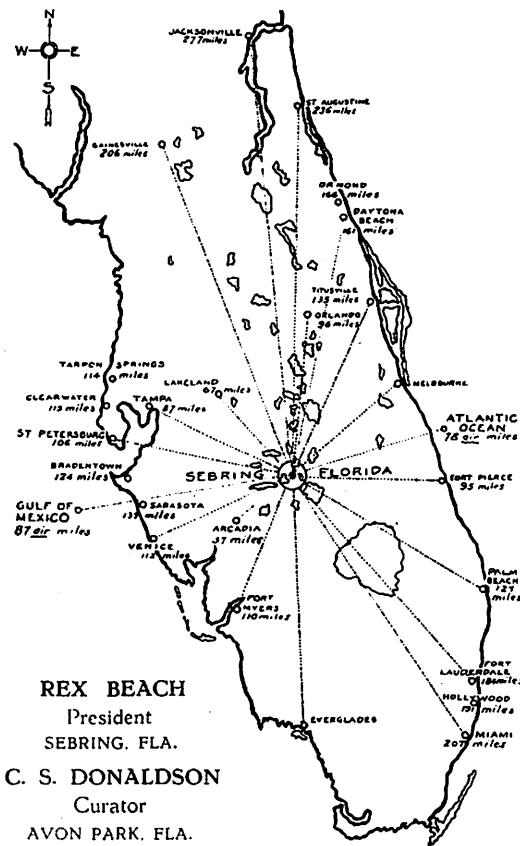
By REX BEACH

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REX BEACH

President
SEBRING, FLA.

C. S. DONALDSON

Curator
AVON PARK, FLA.

Highlands Hammock

Here the Temperate Zone touches the Tropics.
Jungle of Jungle Land.

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CONTENTS

Letter of transmittal	1
Portion of U.S. G.S. relief map of the United States	4
Portion of General Land Office map of Florida, showing counties	5
Soil map, Florida State Geological Survey	6
Geologic map	7
Itinerary	8
Location	9
Map showing Hooker Hammock and adjacent territory	10
General character	11
Photographs	12
Area	14
Accessibility	14
Present use	15
Need of protection	15
Private land status	16
Origin of the proposal	16
Possibilities of development	17
Letters from Hon. G. S. Donaldson, Mayor of Avon Park	19
Photographs	23
Data regarding Avon Park	24
National Park Standards as stated by the Camp Fire Club of America	25
Supplemental data - The Climate of Florida, by A. J. Mitchell and M. R. Ensign (In envelope)	

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

YELLOWSTONE PARK, WYO.
436 Post Office Building
Denver, Colorado
March 20, 1930

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. E. M. Albright,
Director, National Park Service,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

In accordance with your instructions I visited the Hooker Hammock, in Highlands County, Florida, which has been proposed as a national park. Opportunity was afforded to see the region both from the ground and from the air.

The Hammock covers some five hundred acres. It is said to be one of the largest and most luxuriant of the remaining upland hammocks in central Florida.

The vegetation is of a subtropical character, and is undoubtedly of considerable interest and importance to scientists in several branches of natural history. It should be protected from destruction by fire and from vandalism.

The area can be developed so as to be a place of beauty and interest to the average citizen. It could be made an asset to the local residents, and with publicity would attract the interest of passing motorists and other visitors.

The citizens of Avon Park and of Sebring, who propose the area as a national park, are public spirited men who desire to protect the area from destruction, and to aid in the upbuilding of their communities.

The area, however, can not be said to have a national interest, nor to justify a visitor in making a considerable trip for that objective alone. It is too small to be considered for a national park. The area surrounding the hammock is more suitable for agricultural purposes than for park use, so that little would be gained by adding any considerable area of adjacent lands to the limited area of the hammock, which is only about 500 acres. The land is all in private ownership.

Designation of the area as a national monument would be of little benefit unless funds were made available to protect it from fire and from vandalism.

It seems more logical that the area should be developed and protected by the state, rather than by the federal government. If the state is unwilling to act, then the county might become interested. The project is not so large but that the two enterprising communities of Aven Park and Sebring could handle it. In any event, the raising of funds for the purchase of the land would have to be accomplished by the local communities.

If the land can be purchased, then the protection of the area would require only a small annual expenditure. The employment of one man would seem adequate. The area requires little in the way of development. The approach road could be improved and a few attractive foot paths could be laid out. The charm of the area lies in its primitive vegetation, and this should be retained with as little "improvement" as possible.

If the local communities and their interested friends can secure

and protect this tract, it would prove an important asset to the region.

The friendly and hospitable courtesies that were accorded to me in Avon Park and in Sebring could not fail to produce a sympathetic interest in the project and I trust that the leading citizens of that region will find a way to protect the area, even though it is not done under federal control.

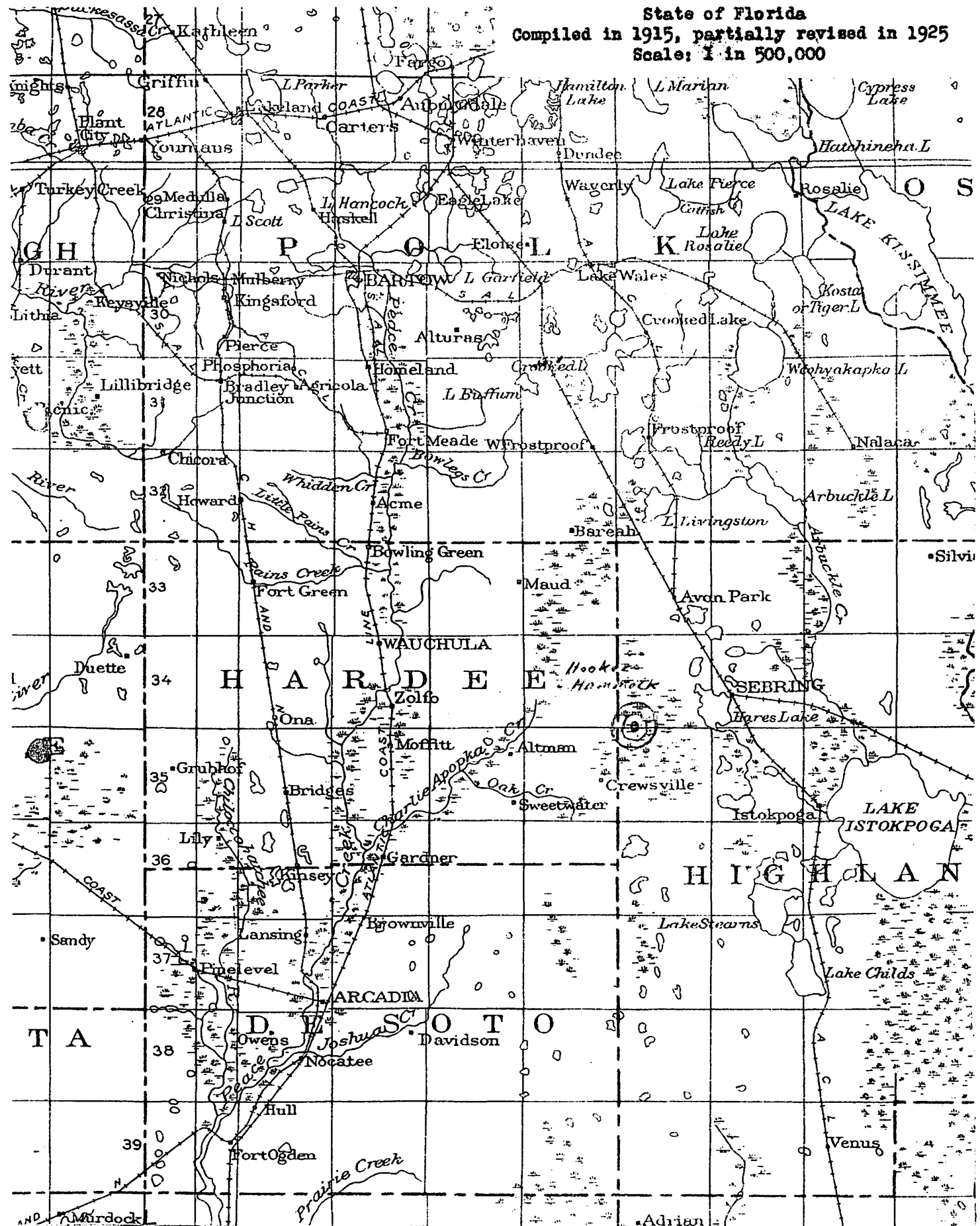
Attached are notes relative to the area and the inspection trip.

Sincerely yours,

Ray W. Tole
Superintendent.

BWT:WMS
enclosure

State of Florida
Compiled in 1915, partially revised in 1925
Scale: 1 in 500,000



DECLASSIFIED

Authority 60-127355-13

By JIM NAVA, Date 1-10

ITINERARY

February 17, 1930. Left Miami at 8:00 P.M. by Seaboard Air Line. Was accompanied by Mr. E. F. Coe, of Miami, who was interested in seeing the area.

February 18. Arrived at Avon Park, 12:47 A.M. Jacaranda Hotel. At 9 A.M., ^{Mayor} Major C. S. Donaldson and Mr. J. B. Coen called for us, and we visited the Mayor's office and the Chamber of Commerce of Avon Park; then motored to Sebring, about 10 miles distant. Here we were joined by ^{Dr. Fisher} Dr. J. A. Taylor, Col. William Evans, Mr. W. B. Crawford, Mayor of Sebring, Messrs. H. O. Sebring, Edward Bailey, L. C. Pierce, A. E. Withers, E. W. Harschman, R. B. Rood, J. F. Robb, C. Markley, Wm. F. Caspar, and a few others.

We then motored to the Hooker Hammock and made short excursions on foot in several parts of the area.

Six of the party were entertained at lunch at Harder Hall, a splendid, modern hotel, completed a year or so ago, which offers excellent accommodations to visitors. It is located between the town of Sebring and the Hooker Hammock.

We then went by motor to the air port between Sebring and Avon Park, where a Bellanca monoplane took Dr. Taylor, Mr. R. R. Rhudy (an attorney of Sebring), Mr. Coe and myself on an inspection of the region from the air. Mr. Wesley Raymond piloted the plane. We first circled the Hooker Hammock at an elevation of 1,800 feet, then dropped to 900 feet and circled it again, then dropped to 400 feet and flew directly above the hammock. The many lakes in the vicinity, the extensive

groves of orange and grapefruit trees, and the two towns of Sebring and Avon Park made an interesting panorama. The maximum height reached on the trip was 2,200 feet, and an extensive view was obtained of this part of Florida. After 45 minutes in the air, and covering some 60 miles of distance, we landed, and went by auto to Avon Park.

Mr. Coe and I then went by bus to Lake Wales, and visited the Bok Singing Tower.

I left Lake Wales at 9:29 P.M. (February 18) and arrived in Washington at 6:50 A.M., February 20.

LOCATION

The Hooker Hammock is located in the S.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 31, the S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 32 (T. 34 S.), the N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 5 and the N.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 6 (T. 35 S.), in Range 28 East.

The hammock lies 4 or 5 miles west of Lake Jackson and 6 or 7 miles west of the town of Sebring.

The Hooker Hammock, as well as the towns of Avon Park and Sebring, are in Highlands County.

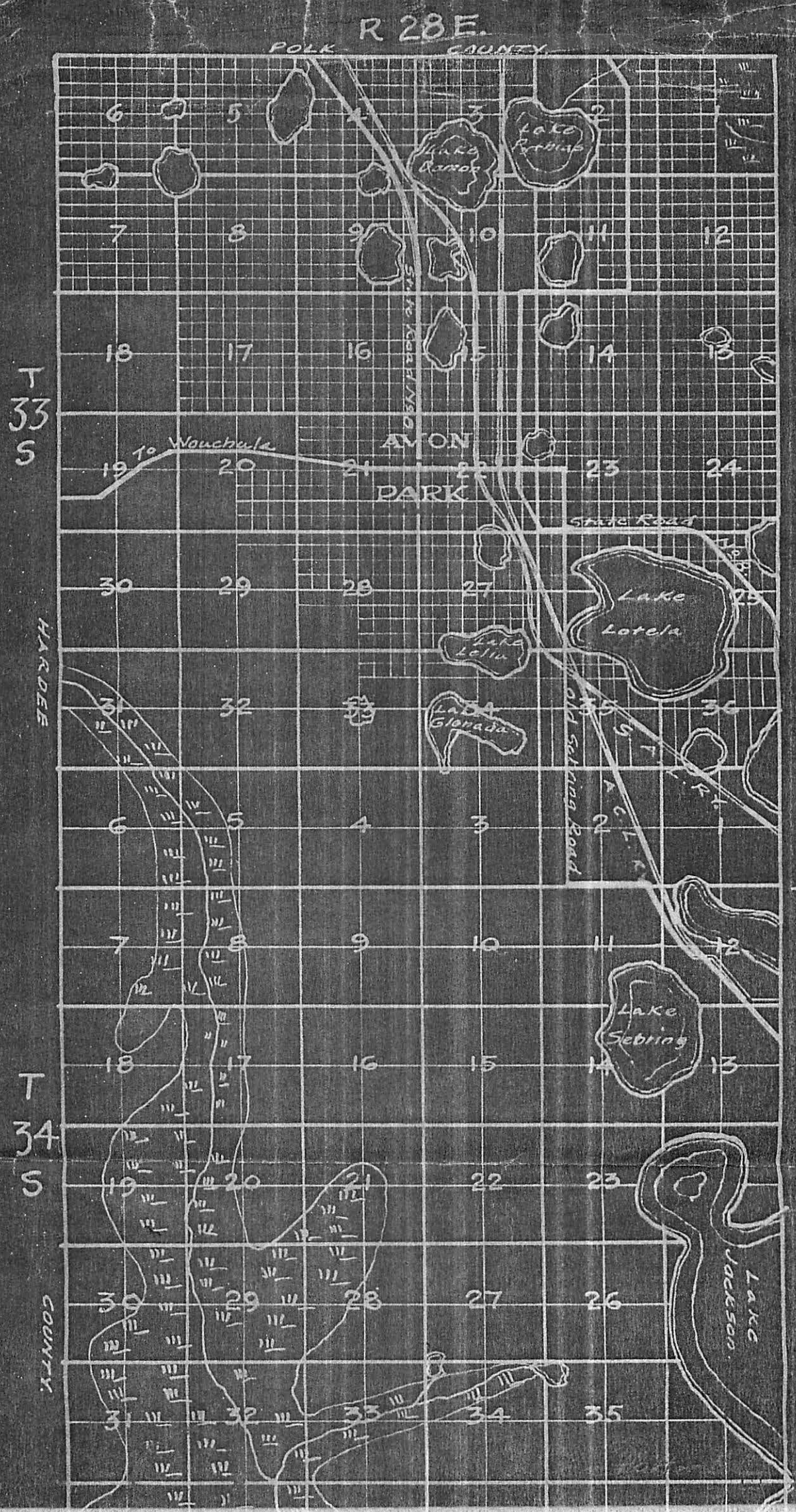
I was told that the elevation of Avon Park is about 250 feet, Sebring about 210 to 250 feet, and the elevation of the hammock is about 200 feet above sea level. The region is on the crest of the Florida peninsula. The U. S. G. S. relief map of the United States indicates the elevation as about 100 feet.

The population of Avon Park is given as 1,534 and that of Sebring as 1,841.

The area is not covered by a U. S. Geological Survey quadrangle map, but the accompanying blueprint, furnished by Mayor Donaldson,

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DATE 11/10/00 BY 1041

MAP SHOWING
HOOKER HAMMOCK AND TERRITORY ADJACENT THERE
SCALE 1 INCH = 1 MILE
JAN. 1930.
B. LACEY, C.E.



shows the location of the hammock.

GENERAL CHARACTER

The Hocker Hammock is said to be one of the largest, if not the largest, remaining hammock in this part of Florida, and to contain vegetation of an unusually luxuriant character.

In recent years many hammocks have been destroyed by fire, or have been cleared and put into cultivation. As this destruction continues, the need of preserving some of the best hammocks becomes more apparent.

A hammock, or hummock, is a tract of land at a somewhat higher elevation than the surrounding country, and of great fertility. A hammock is usually surrounded by land that is wet or marshy at certain times of the year. Professor Chas. Torrey Simpson says "The word 'hammock' is generally applied in Florida to the forests of broad-leaved trees as distinguished from pine woods. There are several kinds of hammock in the state."

In the Hocker Hammock the vegetation is of a sub-tropical type, and less tropical than corresponding areas in southern Florida, such as the Royal Palm State Park.

The hammock contains large live oak trees, some of whose trunks probably exceed six feet in diameter. There are also palmetto palm, needle palm, sweet gum, black gum, wild poncianna, elm (*ulmus alta*), water oak, and many other varieties of trees and plants. There are oranges and a few grapefruit growing wild. These are probably not strictly wild varieties, but their origin is not known. The oranges have a more acid flavor than the cultivated fruit. Wild coffee, many



Hooker Hammock



A marshy portion
of the hammock



Wild oranges
and palms

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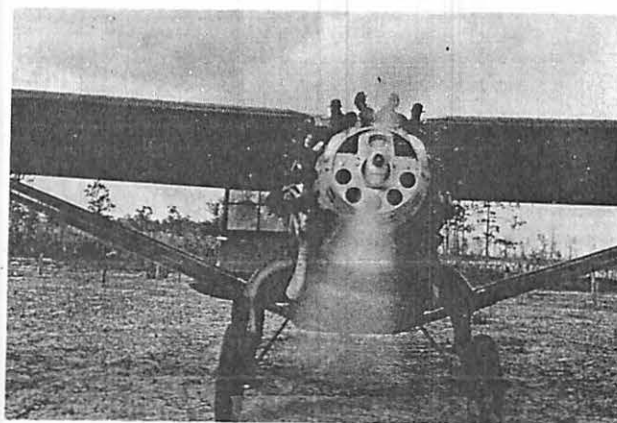
By IM NAVA, Date 1-10-



Inspection party at Hooker Hammock



Dr. J. B. Taylor?
R.W.T., Dr. Fisher and Mayor Donaldson



Bellanca plane used for aerial
view of Hooker Hammock

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Authority EO-12958/SEC3

By IM HWA, Date 1-10

vine and thorns, some poison ivy, many air plants and a few orchids are among the varieties of vegetation. For data on vegetation of Florida, reference is made to the works of Dr. John R. Small.

The soil of the hammock has a marl base, with a rich humus. The soil is high in lime, and very fertile.

The central part of the hammock is probably some six feet higher than the surrounding country, and is dry and readily traversed on foot.

Two or three small clearings have been made in the hammock and an orange grove planted in one of them, but it is not now cultivated.

AREA

The hammock covers an area of about 500 acres. Those interested suggest that a larger area might be considered by including several thousand acres of adjoining lands. The adjacent lands, however, are not of the hammock type, but are either swampy or are of an agricultural type and do not represent any unusual vegetation. It would seem that there is little to be gained by adding additional acreage, outside of the hammock.

ACCESSIBILITY

The hammock is reached from Sebring, by a road some 6 or 7 miles in length. The road skirts Lake Jackson and passes Harder Hall. The last part of the road is unimproved, and is wet at some times of the year.

At present the route from Avon Park to the Hammock is by way of Sebring, the total distance being about 17 miles. It is suggested that a more direct road could be built, making the distance about 10 miles. The air-line distance from Avon Park to the hammock is about 9 miles.

PRESENT USE

There is practically no use being made of the hammock at the present time, except that it is occasionally visited by those who are interested in its sub-tropical vegetation.

NEED OF PROTECTION

The cabbage palmettos are sometimes cut down by trespassers, in order to get the edible "cabbage" that the palm contains. The value of the cabbage is only about ten cents, and the palms, one or more generations old, are ruthlessly destroyed for this small incentive. At the time of our visit there was evidence of some recent cutting of palmettos.

The neighboring lands are usually burnt over nearly every year, and there is some danger that the hammock will be destroyed by fire, though it has not been injured as yet. The wet lands immediately surrounding the hammock probably act as a fire guard.

Dr. Taylor said that unless fires in the neighboring lands could be absolutely prevented, that it is perhaps better to burn them every year rather than to allow the debris from the dwarf palmettos and other growth to accumulate for several years, since the resulting fire would then be much more destructive.

PRIVATE LAND STATUS

I was told that the land is owned by the Hooker Hammock Farms Company, a corporation in which some of the local men are interested. If the land were purchased for park purposes, it is said that it could be bought for \$50 per acre, which represents about the original cost of the land, to the company. Its present value is said to be several times that value, perhaps \$250 per acre.

Some 16,000 acres of adjoining land could be purchased at about \$20 per acre.

On the above basis, the 500 acres of hammock could be purchased for about \$25,000, and if a larger area of adjacent lands were added, the additional cost would be about \$320,000 for 16,000 acres.

So far as I learned, no plan has been worked out regarding a method of raising funds with which to purchase the land. The project is in tentative form and public interest has not yet crystallized on any definite plan.

ORIGIN OF THE PROPOSAL

Under date of December 11, 1929, Mayor C. S. Donaldson wrote a letter, copy of which is enclosed herewith, to Mr. E. F. Coe, suggesting that the Hooker Hammock be included in the proposed Tropic Everglades National Park. He sent a copy of the letter to Secretary Wilbur, who requested Director Albright to have the area inspected.

The air-line distance from the Hooker Hammock to the nearest part of the proposed Tropic Everglades National Park is more than 100 miles. On account of this intervening distance, it does not seem practicable

to consider the two areas as a unit, but each should be considered as separate, detached and independent areas.

Mayor Donaldson said that he and the others who are interested had made the suggestion in order to ascertain if the plan were practicable, in which case they would be glad to cooperate. They realize the desirability of protecting the hammock, and would welcome help from any source.

The feeling seemed to be general that no assistance is to be expected from the state legislature in the establishment and operation of a state park that would include the Hooker Hammock.

POSSIBILITIES OF DEVELOPMENT

The area has no outstanding features sufficient to make it of national interest. It is not large enough to be considered for a national park.

It would make a desirable state or county park, or it could be administered by joint action of the towns of Avon Park and Sebring.

The most difficult problem would probably be the raising of the funds to purchase the land. It is estimated that \$25,000 would be required, for the 500 acre hammock. There seems to be no reason for enlarging the area by including adjacent agricultural lands.

The minimum amount of development seems desirable. The present approach road, leading into the hammock could be improved and raised so as to be passable for automobiles at any time of year. The control of the area will be facilitated if there is but one approach road.

A few attractive foot-paths could be cleared and constructed so that the beauty of the vegetation could be fully seen and appreciated. Little else is needed in the way of development.

The chief attraction of the area lies in the primitive condition of its vegetation. The planting of royal palms, as is suggested, or of any other plants not native to the area, would seem unfortunate.

The purchase of the land would have to be arranged for by the public spirited citizens of the community, whether the hammock were to be a national park, a state park or a county or community park. The protection and maintenance of the hammock would involve little more than a resident guard or caretaker, equipped with portable pump or other protection against fire. A telephone line could be built to the entrance to the hammock.

On the whole, if the community can handle the purchase of the land, there seems to be no reason why it cannot handle the operation of the area as a county or community park. If proper publicity were given to the area it could be made one of the notable attractions of the state to motorists and other visitors. The proximity of the Singing Tower, some 28 miles distant, is a decided advantage. The thousands of visitors that go out of their way to visit this man-made attraction, give an indication of the results that could be accomplished with publicity.

If the Hooker Hammock were made into a county or community park, it would not only afford an attractive recreational area for the residents of the vicinity, but it could be made such an attraction to visitors that it would prove to be a decided asset to the local communities. The hammock is well worth preserving, and it should repay the communities for the effort and expense involved.

The problem of saving and protecting the hammock seems to be a local one, rather than a national problem.

RWT:MMS

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
AVON PARK FLORIDA

DECEMBER 11, 1929.

Hon. Ray Lyman Wilbur,
Secretary of the Interior,
Washington, D.C.,

My dear Sir:

I am sending to you, herewith, copy of a letter addressed
to the Tropic Everglades National Park Commission, Tallahassee,
Florida, and would be glad to have you give it some consideration.

Yours very truly,

C. S. Donaldson,
Mayor.

December 11,
1929.

Tropic Everglades National Park Commission,
Tallahassee, Florida.

Gentlemen:

I note in the Washington Post of December 1, that your commission was created to cooperate with the Federal Government in the establishment of a National Park in the Everglades. This is a natural and desirable object and all parts of Florida, I think, will be glad to assist you in furthering the project.

It occurs to me, however, that it would be desirable to broaden the scope of such an enterprise, taking in a few other outlying larger hammocks that have not yet been despoiled by man in crop production.

The trouble with the Everglades as a big National Park is that its use would be considerably limited to a few people, because of its swampy nature. It would, therefore, seem advisable to include a few rich hammocks where the country is somewhat higher, and where there is more altitude. For example, I would call your attention to Hooker Hammock, 5000 acres some five miles West of Sebring, which is open and accessible even in the greatest rainy season.

There is in that hammock more tropical luxuriance than any spot I have found in the Everglades. The lofty trees run over 100 feet high, and there are millions of plants of several varieties. The hammock is full of Rapanea, Octoteas, Hollies, Crataegus, and many other beautiful trees, some massed with berries. In fact it is more beautiful than the Royal Palm Park ever was.

The Hammock is owned by private parties who will naturally have it cleared and put into agriculture but it would be a great pity to destroy one of the most beautiful and most tropical spots in America.

I hope that you will give some thought to saving this handsome National park.

Yours very truly,

C. S. Donaldson, Mayor.

cc Hon. Fletcher, Nye, Sec. of Interior.

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J. HORACE MCFARLAND
Past President (1904-25)
Chairman National Parks Committee
Chairman Roadside Development Committee
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

March 10, 1930

Dear Mr. Albright:

As of course you realize, I am old and lazy, and that is why, instead of writing a separate letter to you as I ought to have done, I am imposing on you by asking you to read the enclosed copy of a letter just sent to Mr. F. L. Olmsted. You will know, of course, what Mr. Toll found in Hooker Hammock, but I think the main matter of real importance is to have your consideration of the possibility of such an enterprise, provided the reports on it make it proper. These Florida folks have not been left under any misapprehension as to the power and function of the National Park Service, and they do not expect the Federal Government to go in and buy the lands. They know they must get after them at their own cost, and the conditions are such that a state-wide movement could, I think, be organized in Florida to real advantage if the enterprise commends itself as worthy.

With best wishes, including one for myself that I might soon get to see you for something better than a mere handshake, I am

Yours truly,

J. Horace McFarland
J. Horace McFarland

Hon. Horace M. Albright,
Director, National Park Service,
Washington, D. C.

It is a sort of Florida Parkway I am hunting at.

March 10, 1930

Dear Mr. Olmsted:

I am always bothering you about something which pulls upon your enormous reserve of public spirit. This is another of those occasions.

Part of the treatment after an operation I endured last October was convalescence in Florida. I have just returned from Sebring, about 40 miles from where you have immortalized yourself again in the design and planning of that most impressive Bok Singing Tower. It was an immense satisfaction to see that the permanent inscriptions recognized the men who had carried out Mr. Bok's intention. That the place is visited you know, but you may not know that the gardener told me a bare week ago that the automobiles now average from 1,100 to 1,400 per day. What I was commenting upon was the condition of the carpet grass on the main approach under such tramping.

While at Harder Hall I was induced to go to Hooker Hammock something like six or seven miles south of Sebring. It seems that by reason of certain official action, the superintendent of the Yellowstone National Park, Mr. Toll, has recently visited the site of a proposed national park in the Florida Everglades, not very many miles from Cape Sable. Further, it seems he was diverted at Mr. Albright's direction to see this Hooker Hammock, near Sebring, also planned for a national park.

I was able promptly to convince the gentlemen who took me to see this magnificent bit of sub-tropical hammock with its tremendous live oaks, columnar cabbage palmettos, and the like, that as a national park possibility by itself it was inappropriate and hopeless. It was necessary to explain to these gentlemen that the Federal government did not buy national parks, and that when areas fell within the national park status were taken over it was always because the land had been donated by the states or citizens of the states.

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Authority 60-129355-603

By IM HAWA, Date 1-10

Mr. Olmsted - 2

It occurred to me, however, in view of several features well known to you, that there was here a matter worth investigation. The site of the proposed Everglades National Park would be something like 100 miles south of Hooker Hammock. Less than 50 miles north is the Bok Singing Tower. For all of 60 miles between these termini there is the superb ridge country which you know very well and which is unique in Florida, and I suspect in the United States. It has a good state road, and is bordered by most impressive and flourishing citrus plantations. Along this line are the communities started by Roger W. Babson and Dr. Dewey of Lake Placid, in both places with a distinct attempt at highway beautification and dignity. Hooker Hammock is not on this highway, but is only a short distance from it.

It therefore occurred to me to propose that these gentlemen interest themselves in looking over the possibilities of a Florida National Park, including the Everglades hammock and the Uplands hammock, with a possible touch upon the Seminole reservation in the Everglades, with some sort of a visiting but not a controlling contact with the Bok Tower, and otherwise taking into account this hammock, lake and ridge country which I think you will agree is unique.

Looking into the future, it might easily occur that these peculiar features of ridge and numerous lakes (there are at least a half-hundred of them) would be so changed by the progress of development as to lose all their natural qualities. It is certain, of course, that these hammocks, with their primeval growth, will be cleared and the ground used unless something is done to preserve the conditions.

Mr. Stabler, of Mountain Lake, who of course is known to you, and Mayor Donaldson of Avon Park, a man who seems to be exceedingly well acquainted with plants and to be a fine citizen, participated in a journey to Hooker Hammock, along with probably 30 other citizens of the vicinity, on March 3, where I told the group the facts as to national park conditions and suggested that they make a simple organization and arrange to have you or someone from your office look over the territory with a view to a candid statement as to the propriety of considering the scheme from the national park basis. I did not want to bother Mr. Albright with this until there was some sort of backing for anything he might care to do, if anything is to be done. I have made no promises whatever, save to bring the matter to your attention and that of Mr. Albright, believing as I do that the opportunity merits respectful consideration.

With best wishes, I am

Yours truly,

Mr. Frederick Law, Olmsted,
Brookline, Mass.

J. Horace McFarland

DECLASSIFIED

Authority 60-12755-10

By JRM HAVU, Date 1-10-

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON

March 11, 1950.

Dr. J. Horace McFarland,
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Dear Dr. McFarland:

I was greatly interested in your letter of March 10, and enclosed copy of your letter to Mr. F. L. Olmsted.

It is true that I sent Mr. Roger W. Toll, Superintendent of Yellowstone Park, to look over Hooker Hammock. Mr. Cammerer and I could not find quite enough time to visit this Hammock so had Mr. Toll represent us. For our own part, we visited St. Petersburg and looked into the proposed national monument there, Weedon's Island, and on to St. Augustine and the Bok Singing Tower, so we got a good glimpse of the Uplands, one of the projects mentioned in your letter to Mr. Olmsted.

It looks as though we have a national park project in the Everglades and the first time you are down I would like to have an opportunity to discuss it with you. I shall also talk it over with Mr. Olmsted when he is here next week.

I hope that you are steadily gaining and that it won't be long before you are in your former health. I keep in touch with you all the time through Miss James who in our work is always sympathetic and helpful.

With best regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

(Sd.) HORACE M. ALBRIGHT

Horace M. Albright
Director.

BMA-EG
CC Miss Harlean James.

(COPY)

CITY OF AVON PARK
Highlands County
Avon Park, Florida

March 11, 1930

National Park Service,
Washington, D. C.

Attention of Mr. Roger W. Toll:

Dear Mr. Toll:-

* * * * *

I am enclosing photographs of Hooker
Hammock, as suggested, also a clipping from a local
paper showing the formation of the Park Association
following out the ideas of J. Horace MacFarland, who
was present. Dr. MacFarland thinks through tying
together these points of interest in Florida we can
get the co-operation and assistance of the National
Park Commission.

With kind regards, I am,

Yours very truly,

(Signed) C. S. Donaldson
Mayor.

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Authority EO-12958-SEC3

By IM HAW, Date 1-10

DATA OF HIGHLANDS COUNTY

Issued by State Department of Agriculture, 1925.

Area: 668,160 acres.

Population, 1925: 6,752.

Total assessed valuation: \$3,151,878.

Tax assessment: county, 31 $\frac{1}{2}$ mills; state, 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ mills.

Railroads: Atlantic Coast Line; Seaboard Air Line.

Educational Institutions: High Schools, 2; Elementary Schools, 8.

Crop Values: \$1,151,197.

Minerals: Clay, sand, peat.

Incorporated towns: 3.

Number of post offices: 7.

County Seat: Sebring, population (1925), 1,841.

Population of Avon Park (1925): 1,534.

Highlands County was created from De Soto County in 1921.

The World's Citrus Center

Avon Park has nearly one million citrus trees—mainly orange, grapefruit and tangerine, with a few lemons, limes, kumquats, tangelos and satsumas. This constitutes the largest citrus fruit area in the world. The crop for the 1929-30 season is about 300,000 boxes. When our trees come into full bearing the annual yield should be three million boxes. The grove operations and packing and shipping this fruit here will require an army of workmen. This alone will cause the steady growth of Avon Park and create a prosperous city. The wise man will buy property in a community with a great future. In addition to the fruit packing houses at Avon Park, there is a large fruit cannery. Another canning concern will establish a plant here this fall.

Farming, Dairying, Poultry, Cattle
Avon Park is surrounded by some of the most fertile soil in all Florida. Vegetable farming is well established. Commercial bulb growing—narcissus, gladiolus, etc.—is becoming popular. Chicken ranches are multiplying here, and there is a 25,000 egg capacity hatchery, with more chick orders than can be filled.

Model dairies at Avon Park invite visitors to see their modern sheds, sanitary barns, electric milking and aerating machinery.

Range cattle and hogs continue as annual revenue producers in surrounding areas. In addition to shipping out of live stock the Avon Park market is supplied with over 100 head of fattened hogs and beefs monthly, duly inspected by a city meat inspector. This is a good location for a meat packing establishment, as there are several hundred thousand cattle and hogs within driving distance.

Industrial Life and Resources

Lumber and veneer mills at Avon Park are producing ten million feet B. M., also over four million orange crates annually. The thirty million pine stumps now on cut-over land here await a distillation and wall board plant. Our chief mineral resource is calcareous clay for making high grade sand lime brick. Cull fruit supplies offer increasing opportunities for canners and bottlers of fruit and juices.

Light and power are furnished at low rates by a service concern which has a mammoth electric power plant at Avon Park. Current is sold to Tampa and 70 other cities in Mid-Florida. The company is planning to double the size of its modern plant here. The advantage of cheap local power is bound to bring more industries to Avon Park. This company is also about to construct a big ice factory and pre-cooling plant here.

"An Old Man's Paradise"

Said a white-haired chap in Avon Park. He and his wife are typical of many elderly folks here who are lengthening out their autumn days in cottages and mansions, embowered in winter blooming poinsettias, roses and flame vine, and with abundance of oranges, lemons, avocados, pawpaws (papayas), Japanese persimmons, guavas, and other fruit in their yards, and plenty to spare for gift boxes back to relatives in the North who are not so fortunate as they.

Churches, Schools, Fraternities

Pastors of the churches, Baptist, Episcopal, Methodist, Congregational, Church of Christ, Adventist, Nazarene and Christian Scientist welcome inquiries about their church work.

Public schools, with free tuition to tourists, are of the highest standard. Free text books through elementary grades. Music instruction includes piano, violin, brass band and expression. Full athletic training. High school offers bookkeeping and stenography, full commercial course, two years Spanish, Home Economics Course, High school full nine months term. Graduates enter colleges without examination.

Fraternal Orders, etc., at Avon Park, include Odd Fellows and Rebekahs, Masons, Blue Lodge, Chapter, Commandery and Eastern Star, Rotary Club (Wednesdays), Avon Civic Club, Woman's Club, American Legion, and Business and Professional Women's

In the Scenic Highlands FLORIDA'S SKYLINE AVON PARK LIFE



Avon Park is in the center of the Florida Peninsula. Ninety per cent. of the state's population lives within a 200-mile radius of Avon Park. With headquarters here at the "Cross Roads" of South Florida, one can make daily motor trips over perfect highways to various points of interest and avoid overnight hotel expense.

Surf bathing and deep sea fishing reached in 2 1/2 hours, either to Bradenton Beach on the Gulf, or Fort Pierce on Atlantic Ocean. Avon Park is the most convenient residential center in Florida. Some road distances are as follows:

	Miles		Miles
Tampa	76	Palm Beach	138
St. Petersburg	94	Miami	200
Orlando	87	Daytona Beach	153
Fort Myers	93	Jacksonville	255
Bradenton Beach	87	Lake City	245
Ft. Pierce Beach	104	Valdosta, Ga.	307

A Cozy Home in South Florida

A young Pennsylvania business man said recently in Avon Park: "It looks like my best plan is to buy a nice bungalow here, and keep my wife and children there for the winter away from the sleet and slush, where they can bask in the sunshine, keep outdoors, and get a healthy tan. Of course, I cannot remain all winter myself, but can run down and join the family a few weeks at a time. The cost will not exceed running the furnace to heat the house back in Pennsylvania." Whisper—this man is a Scotchman. Now, figure it out for yourself. Others have already bought cottages and done it.

For Further Information Address

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

AVON PARK, FLA.

Florida Winter Pleasures

Two superb golf courses at Avon Park. To the Pine Crest course, with seven water hazards in nine holes, is being added nine more holes. Sporty golfing on the hilly 18-hole Highland Lakes course.

A lively canter on U. S. Government military horses, hired from the 56th Brigade Headquarters in Avon Park, will bring back that health glow to the cheeks.

The Aviation field in Avon Park's suburbs, sponsored by American Legion, has frequent interesting events. Plenty chances for an air ride.

Lok's Singing Tower is only 23 miles from Avon Park—a pleasant evening drive to hear the bells.

The Music Club of Avon Park welcomes all lovers of music. Schumann, Rostrom and McDowell now given most attention. The Girls and Boys High School Band is doing well.

The Woman's Club of Avon Park works for civic progress, and has splendid lectures from traveled Americans.

Public Library open to everybody.

Wild turkeys, deer, quail, duck, foxes, all in abundance await the hunter. Avon Park offers thousands of acres of open shooting. An 11-pound black bass is the biggest trophy thus far in the 1930 season at Avon Park. A huge 25-lb. bass residing in Lake Lotella is baffling the fishing skill of local anglers. Plenty of smaller fry in the meantime. One hundred lakes within 20 miles. Salt water fishing in Gulf or Ocean less than three hours distant. Avon Park is the best South Florida headquarters for all sports.

Fraternal games for visitors and home folks—Shuffle board, quarts, diamond ball, miniature golf, clock golf. Bathing beaches and boating.

Avon Park has a municipal athletic field with concrete grand stand.

Accommodations, Facilities, Health
Furnished apartments and bungalows, some on lakes, at \$15 to \$75 per month. Nine hotels, including Club Houses de luxe, with rates from \$12.50 down to \$3 per day, American plan. Boarding houses and rooming houses at reasonable rates. Fresh vegetables, eggs, poultry, and certified milk from nearby farms. We are strong on good cooking and eating at Avon Park, and our visitors have never complained about the price.

Avon Park's new National Bank affords all money facilities. Bon ton stores provide every necessity and luxury. Three newspapers spread the news, two bottling works and pure soft city drinking water (no sulphur) keep everyone refreshed.

Avon Park is served by main lines of Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line Railways. Direct rail service to all points in Florida and the North, 30 hours (direct Pullman service) to New York.

Avon Park has direct bus connections with all points in the state.

Mosquitoes and sand flies do not live here. Malaria is unknown. Avon Park is a Natural Sanitarium for pulmonary, rheumatic and nervous troubles. Our citizens from many states aver that they have lengthened out their lives by locating here. The winter sunshine is equalled by the delightful summers. Mid-summer temperatures average no higher, and frequently lower, than the North, while constant breezes make it ever pleasant. Thus an all-year home at Avon Park among the palms, the orange groves, the lakes and hills, gives longer happy years. This storehouse of health is inexhaustible and free to all who wish to come, get well and keep well.

Floral Life at Avon Park

Watch the growth of the new Public Parks at Avon Park—the central Mall, the parkings in Pine Crest Lakes and Highland Lakes developments, etc. Mark K. Wilson, president of Chattanooga Rotary Club, recently told folks in Tennessee: "The finest piece of work I have seen in Florida is the Mall at Avon Park." C. D. Pringle, department store owner of Lawrence, Mass., states on his arrival here in February, 1930: "Why, these parks are the most beautiful I have seen." The steamship ticket agent at Havana recently told some Florida visitors: "I remember driving through Avon Park. It was such a pretty place. In fact, the Mall was the prettiest thing I saw in all Florida."

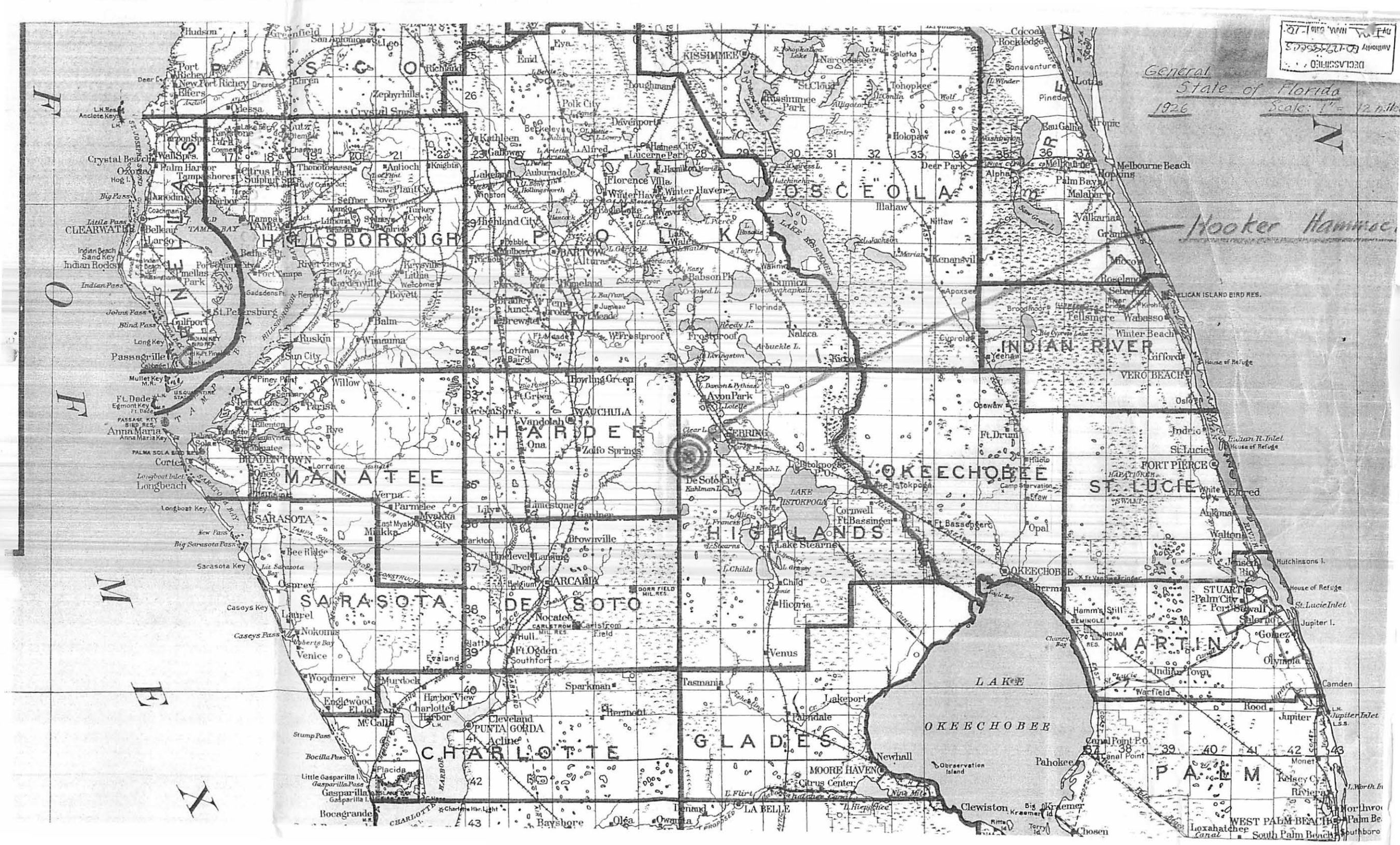
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By EM HAWA, Date 1-10-

General
State of Florida
1926
Scale: 1" = 12 miles

Hooker Hammer



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HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

October 19, 1931

Mr. Werth

Dear Mr. Albright:

Since I saw you I have had a conference with the people who were interested in that Hooker Hammock enterprise in south central Florida, on the ridge. It seems that Mrs. Roebling, who lives at Sebring, bought the Hammock, added largely to its area by other purchases, and created what seems to be really a first class park basis, approached by usable roads.

What I am inquiring about is your candid opinion as to the possibility of any development in the direction of a parkway connecting the possible Evergladed National Park through the Hooker Hammock with some point north, say at the Bok Tower? This may be a star to which one's park wagon can be hitched that is too far off, but at least you won't mind telling me what you think about the possibility.

Yours with best wishes,

J. Horace McFarland
J. Horace McFarland

Hon. Horace M. Albright
National Park Service,
Washington, D. C.



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Authority 60-127485-003

DATE 11/11/00 BY 10

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

WASHINGTON

October 21, 1931.

Dr. J. Horace McFarland,
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

*0-32
Hooker
Hammock*

My dear Dr. McFarland:

I have received your letter of October 19, in regard to Hooker Hammock, and the possibility of a parkway from the Everglades National Park to the Hammock and possibly on north to Bok Tower.

It would be a great act of supererogation for me to express any opinion on the parkway idea because I know absolutely nothing about the country between the Everglades and Hooker Hammock. As a matter of fact, I have not even seen the Hammock. I have seen Bok Tower. I had the Hooker Hammock investigated last year by the Superintendent of Yellowstone, who travels around the country during the winter months checking up on new park projects. The attached report which I am glad to send you to look over tells Mr. Toll's opinion of the place. I am enclosing a franked envelope in which the report can be returned to our office. I doubt whether anything further can be said about the parkway until after we are sure that the Everglades Park project has gone through and there is a good reason for our going down there and giving more study to the conservation projects of southern Florida.

I had a little visit with Governor Pinchot at the Yorktown Sesqui-centennial Celebration on Monday and he told me about the new park that the State has acquired including the canal along the Delaware River. He seemed to be very enthusiastic about it.

With best regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

HORACE M. ALBRIGHT

Horace M. Albright
Director.

Inc 75627

P.S. I noticed in this morning's paper that a branch of the American Rose Society has been organized in Washington. It would be wonderful if this organization could extend its influence throughout the country, and, of course, it will be done.

CC Miss Harlean James.

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HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA



October 26, 1931

PERSONAL

Dear Mr. Albright:

I am thankful for your prompt response to my letter upon the Hooker Hammock situation, and will, after I have looked it over, return the report you have so kindly sent. It is only fair, however, to say that since the report was made, very large changes have occurred in the neighborhood, and favorable changes at that, because of the interest of Mrs. Roebling and her willingness to spend money.

Probably it is best by all means to delay any further action until there is an assurance that the Everglades National Park comes through as it ought to. If and when it does, then the scheme of a parkway is at least worth dreaming about.

I am glad you had a little visit with Governor Pinchot and that he expressed satisfaction at the acquisition under peculiar circumstances of that Delaware river canal state park. He very seriously needs park cultivation, for as a matter of fact he has as yet no real park conception or park interest.

Last week, at the suggestion of the Secretary of Forests and Waters, I spent a day going with the park authority in his Department and his Chief Fire Warden to look over a proposition to give the State a scenic point near Altoona provided the State would develop the owner's real estate enterprise. Naturally I have had to make a report to Mr. Staley, Secretary of Forests and Waters, and I have made that the occasion for an urgent demand that he hold a state park conference.



Mr. Albright - 2

We do not, however, blind ourselves to the fact that this is hopeless unless Mr. Pinchot becomes somewhat interested in parks in an effective way. Three weeks ago Frederick Law Olmsted was here and we dined with Mr. Pinchot. Most of the time, however, was spent in listening to his very delightful story of his South Sea trip, and there was no opportunity to get the real education that could come his way started.

We are really despairing here as to how we can best interest him. Mr. Evison can do something. I had hoped that Judge Payne might manage to tramp on his toes, and I think your visit with him at Yorktown was all to the good. He is right now head over ears in an unemployment relief proposition, but no plans are announced. There is a possibility that if he should announce a scheme for taking suitable lands for state parks and using otherwise unoccupied labor to develop these parks, the Legislature which he may convene could be converted toward the necessary bond issue. I do not know what will happen, but I am very dubious about anything worth while unless and until Mr. Pinchot becomes more of a park man and less of a devoted forester. You are probably aware that the National Park Service did not come into existence until he had been licked in his preventive endeavors because he did not believe in national parks as such apart from the Forest Service.

All this, of course, is confidential.

The American Rose Society is a national organization now, with about 4,000 members in every state and province of America. Something like one hundred municipal rose gardens have been established, and many more are in prospect. During the depression the Society has managed to hold its level rather than lose membership, which is a fairly good evidence that it is alive.

Yours truly,

Hon. Horace M. Albright,
National Park Service,
Washington, D.C.

J. Horace McFarland
J. Horace McFarland

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By IM HAW, Date 1-10

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0-2 ✓
Hooker
Hammock
D. C. B.
Thurs
OCT 26, 1931.
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
RECEIVED
OCT 2 1931
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Dear Mr. Albright:

I have now had opportunity to look over with interested care the report by Mr. Toll on the Hooker Hammock situation in Florida.

Reading Mr. Toll's admirable report, I am impressed by the fact that the large ownership and physical changes that have occurred since he made his survey need to be added to the situation, in order properly to consider it.

I have, therefore, asked some of these Sebring folks to get busy and let me have the data, which I will in due time then with pleasure transmit to you.

Should the Everglades Park enterprise come through as it surely ought to do, then the improved status of Hooker Hammock, and the possibility of the parkway I have mentioned, might get into the picture.

Certainly the state of Florida ought to do it all, that state having nothing whatever to sell or live on but climate, scenery and agricultural products, the first two items of which can best be promoted by a sanely managed state park establishment which could easily interrelate with the national park status established for the unique Everglades National Park.

With hearty thanks for your kindness in permitting me to see this report, which I am herein returning, and with all sorts of best wishes in other directions, I am

Yours truly,

JHMcF/LN

Horace M. Albright, Director,
National Park Service,
Washington, D. C.

J. Horace McFarland

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