

COPY

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

June 13, 1934

The Honorable

The Secretary of the Interior

My dear Mr. Secretary:

A thorough study has been made of various possible routes for the proposed Parkway to connect the Shenandoah and the Great Smoky Mountains National Parks. Hearings were held in Baltimore at the Regional Office in February at which the three states involved - Tennessee, Virginia, and North Carolina, were given an opportunity to submit such data as they desired. In two complete field examinations the Highway Commissions of these states were given opportunity to point out the relative merits of routes suggested by them. Other examinations in the field, and map studies have been made by the landscape architects of the Park Service and the engineers of the Bureau of Public Roads. Personal field examinations were made by Special Advisers Radcliffe and Straus, as well as the Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads and Mr. Gilmore D. Claris.

The general routes considered are shown on the attached map. All of these routes are feasible from both an engineering and a landscape standpoint. From a landscape standpoint, none may be said to possess characteristics causing it to stand out so well that its selection would be inevitable.

The route lying wholly in Virginia and North Carolina may be said to be dominantly a mountain and plateau route; the route lying in Virginia and principally in Tennessee may be said to be both a mountain and interior valley route.

Our recommendation is that the route to be approved be the Virginia-North Carolina-Tennessee route, which would begin at the south boundary of the Shenandoah Park, pass by the Peaks of Otter, the Pinnacles of Dan, Grandfather Mountain, cross to the Unakas and on through Tennessee to the Great Smokies, continuing to Gatlinburg, on the Tennessee side and to Cherokee on the North Carolina side, as shown on attached map.

This route will provide for the wider variety of topography, scenery, and roadside conditions. It will provide mountain, flat plateau, interior valley, and stream side location. It will permit of much relatively easy road alignment. Its altitude will be generally high, since the interior valleys selected will be largely at elevations of 2500 feet or more, and it will be the most directional in character

Secretary of the Interior

W. B. ...
Director, National Park Service

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Considering the recommended route of the Parkway as a unit in a National Parkway to serve the entire chain of Atlantic States, it is so placed that it may fork at the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, one fork continuing on in Tennessee connecting with the Hatcher Trail toward New Orleans, the other branching toward Atlanta and Florida. The fork might also be placed in the vicinity of Grandfather Mountain utilizing much of the route proposed in North Carolina to the south of Asheville. Likewise to the north of the Shenandoah Park the Parkway could be extended to connect ultimately with the proposed Green Mountain Parkway.

It would seem that a suitable name for this Parkway as now recommended would be the Appalachian Parkway, and we would so recommend.

As to the understanding of construction, it is recommended that this be undertaken in three general areas:

- (1) The section from the south boundary of the Shenandoah Park to the James River.
- (2) The section from near Adney Gap (just south of Roanoke) to Blowing Rock, North Carolina (near Grandfather Mountain).
- (3) The loop around the eastern portion of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the section from this loop northward through Tennessee toward the Cold Spring Mountain.

Drawings showing the right-of-way needed to be acquired for the first section of nine miles in Virginia from the south boundary of the Shenandoah National Park to Rock Fish Gap are not complete and can be certified to the State Highway Commission for the acquisition of rights-of-way.

George L. Radcliffe
Special Advisor to the
Secretary of the Interior
Chm. Coordinating Committee

Thomas H. MacDonald
Chief, Bureau of Public Roads

Approved:

Secretary of the Interior

Arno B. Cammerer,
Director, National Park Service