

Tennessee Trails Association

January 18, 1969

10:00 a.m.

Falls Creek Falls State Park

The third meeting (the first for 1969) of the Tennessee Trails Association was held at Falls Creek Falls State Park. Approximately thirty people gathered in the lodge at Group Camp II, where a glowing fire helped chase the chill from an otherwise gloomy winter day. This was the initial attendance for most of those present and we hope that interest in hiking trails for the Cumberland Mountains (and the state as a whole) is growing.

President Bob Brown reviewed the progress of T.T.A. to this point and discussed the probable routes for the Cumberland Crest Trail along Walden Ridge and Cumberland Mountain, and possible routes in Cumberland County and other areas.

Mr. Herman Baggen^Sstoss discussed some of the problems that we are likely to encounter in locating hiking trails, emphasizing that practically all of the proposed trails will be located on private lands. Therefore the good will and sanctions of the landowners are paramount. Based on his extensive experiences with the U. S. Forestry Department in the western U. S. and with horseback riding groups in Tennessee, Mr. Baggenstoss feels that there is also a great potential for horse trails and the outfitting business in this part of the country.

Mr. Mack Prichard commented that one possible advantage in attempting to gain legislative sanctions for this trail system in the near future might be that the time factor could prohibit opposition from forming. He also reported that a location for the John Muir trail from Pickett State Park to the Emory River had been designated and that the Alvin C. York trail in Pickett is under construction.

Mr. Paul Adams, charter member of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club and the founder of Mt. LeConte Lodge, stated that the Cumberland Mountains are far richer in plant life than the Smoky Mountains. He feels that this area has great potential as an outdoor recreation center.

After a discussion of the various possible ways to mark trails, it was decided that a very acceptable method is by the use of spray-on paint. This method is inexpensive, fast, almost vandal proof, easy to change, does not harm trees, and is highly visible.

After a picnic style lunch, the group enjoyed two fine color-slide presentations. Mr. Baggenstoss showed slides of the Sawtooth-Bitterroot Mountains in Idaho and Montana, taken on a recent horseback trip in this area. He commented that the construction of these trails often cost the U. S. Forestry Service as much as \$1,200 per linear mile, due to the rocky, steep terrain. It is anticipated that hiking trails in the Cumberlands can be realized at no direct cost to anyone, provided that sufficient volunteers assist in marking the trails and clearing certain small segments of weeds, brush, etc.

Mr. Donald Todd of Wartburg, Tennessee, presented slides taken in and around Morgan State Forest in Morgan County. Although many of the mountains in this region have been seriously affected by strip mining, some areas are still unspoiled. He stated that there seems to be growing concern about the effects of strip mining in this area.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m. The next meeting of T.T.A. will be on February 22 at Cumberland Mountains State Park. In the meantime, let's go hiking.