

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE

The Carolina Mountain Club's Campaign to Create
Shining Rock Wilderness Area

Senior Paper Submitted to the Faculty of the
Department of History in Candidacy for the
Degree of Bachelor of Arts

Department of History

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Asheville, North Carolina

November 2003

As the United States faced the twentieth century, increased attention was placed on the nation's public lands and their preservation. Rising interest in outdoor recreation amongst the American public further encouraged a more active conservation campaign at the federal level. The idea of conservation was addressed at the national level by President Theodore Roosevelt's actions in cooperation with the newly formed U.S. Forest Service led by Gifford Pinchot.¹ The administration developed its conservation agenda based on the utilitarian philosophy. In short, utilitarian conservation combines scientific and economically responsible management of existing public lands.² Though early foresters valued the idea of conservation, the early Forest Service land management was based on efficient resource development through timber production.³ As the issue of conservation came to the forefront of national politics government officials as well as professional foresters predominately believed a utilitarian approach to forest management could effectively guide conservation policies and efficiently secure undeveloped natural landscapes for future generations to enjoy.⁴

The constructs of the utilitarian philosophy did not satisfy all parties concerned with the issues of conservation of within the United States. From the beginning, the issue of conservation and environmentalism was divided into two camps, the "utilitarian" and the "preservationists."⁵ Preservationists believed that allowing any inroads of modernization and commercial influence into natural areas would alter the landscapes

¹ Stephen Fox, *The American Conservation Movement: John Muir and His Legacy* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), 108.

² *Ibid.*, 128.

³ Samuel Hays, *Health, Beauty and Permanence: Environmental Politics in the United States, 1955-1985* (Cambridge University Press, 1987), 15.

⁴ Bryan Norton, *Towards Unity Amongst Environmentalist* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 28.

⁵ Norton, 6.

forever, essentially destroying that wilderness area.⁶ John Muir brought the philosophy of preservationist conservation to the attention of the nation's consciousness through his efforts as leader of the Sierra Club, created in 1892.⁷ Preservationists worked to stop the forces of urbanization and consumer culture occurring in the American wilderness during the early twentieth century. For all intents and purposes, these individuals fought for conservation as an issue of morality and ethics. The preservationists, throughout the early twentieth century, lost ground on the national level due to the growing popularity of the utilitarian outlook in Washington politics.⁸

Frequently, the efforts of the preservationists to assert political influence failed and they became marginalized in their efforts to shape the newly developing conservation agendas in Washington. A basic flaw in the preservationist's argument was its inability to prove to the public and politicians that public land would be aesthetically valuable if it were left alone.⁹ Pinchot and professional foresters winced at words like "aesthetic."¹⁰ In an age of rapid modernity and industrialism, this argument held little weight in Washington and generally amongst the American public.

There is little disagreement among scholars that divisions between utilitarian and preservationist values defined wilderness political struggles in the early twentieth century. On the other hand, there remains considerable debate between scholars on the influence each of these ideologies would have in shaping post World War II wilderness politics.¹¹ Scholars hold opposing views on the subject of whether preservationist

⁶ Ibid., 118.

⁷ Norton, 38.

⁸ Ibid., 31.

⁹ Daniel Pierce, *The Great Smokies: From Natural Habitat to National Park* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2000.), 43.

¹⁰ Fox, 115.

¹¹ Sutter., 17.

ideologies would ever have the same influence on wilderness politics and policies they asserted in the Progressive Era and interwar years.

Scholar Paul Sutter in his book *Driven Wild How the Automobile Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement* is compelled to note that “after World war II as dam builders and timber cutters ran amok, the politics of wilderness politics fell back into the traditional mold of utilitarian conservation versus preservation that defined the Progressive Era”. Sutter claims the preservationist would remain marginalized as the conservation movement headed into the second half of the century.¹²

Fellow scholar Marion Clawson upholds Sutter’s opinion. States in his article featured in the publication *Environment*, “Reassessing Public Land Policy”. Clawson asserts that the post war era was a time when federal lands were being increasingly managed under the intensive management principles of utilitarianism. Clawson notes that as outdoor recreation increased the many other commercial values of federal land also increased. Claiming “in the 1950’s, the Forest Service produced more cash income than total management and investment expenditures combined”.¹³ This reveals the Forest Service’s dedication to commodity and resource development on federally owned lands through utilitarian ideologies.

Yet other scholars view the post war era as a revival of preservation in wilderness politics. Historian Stephen Fox argues that historians not surprisingly tend to slight Muir (preservationist) in favor of Pinchot (utilitarian) in regard to their influence beyond the Progressive Era. In any case, Fox claims in his book *John Muir and His Legacy* that as “the conservation movement of the post war era became immersed in environmental

¹² Ibid., 17-18.

issues they came back to Muir.”¹⁴ Fox cites the rising growth and stability of preservationist groups such as Wilderness Society and the Izaak Walton League as being highly influential wilderness politics in the post World War II era.

In his book *The Politics of Wilderness Preservation* Scholar Samuel Hays agrees with Fox’s opinion; however, his conclusion drawn is differently. In Hays’s opinion, “the root cause of this preservationist success is a receptive national mood which was made possible by the increased prosperity the nation enjoyed since the end of World War II”. Hays cites the passage of the Wilderness Bill as overwhelming evidence that preservation politics had reasserted themselves in national politics.¹⁵

One of the intentions of this paper is to show how the CMC faced a unique climate of wilderness politics in the post war era with great pragmatism. It is not clear even among scholar whether there was a genuine preservationist movement in politics during the post war era. It is important to note that there were considerable changes in national sentiment towards the environment and outdoor recreation in the post war era. The strength and pragmatism of the Carolina Mountain Club’s campaign to establish Shining Rock Wilderness was their ability to achieve a wilderness preserve by appealing to the Forest Service utilitarian ideologies in order to achieve preservationist protection federal lands in Western North Carolina.

By the end of the nineteenth century, regional outdoor recreation and conservation groups began establishing themselves around the country.¹⁶ During their early histories, regional outdoor recreation groups were mainly concerned with providing trails and hut

¹³ Marion Clawson, “Reassessing Public Land Policy,” *Environment*, October 1983, 10-11. (Peer reviewed publication)

¹⁴ Fox, 250-251.

¹⁵ Hays, 170-203.

systems within the local natural areas in order to promote outdoor recreation within their respective communities.¹⁷ One organization in particular, the Carolina Mountain Club (CMC) carefully developed its conservation policy over time through practical observation of national trends in conservation and their developments during the turn of the century. By allowing their philosophy of conservation to mature over time, the CMC developed a sensible and pragmatic approach to the issue of land conservation in Western North Carolina. The founding members of the CMC did not address the question of conservation directly as an organization until the early 1930's, Nonetheless, from the beginning they were aware that the forces of modernization were going to drastically alter natural landscapes.¹⁸

By the 1950's, the CMC recognized that, historically, successes in the name of conservation were most effective when an organization could establish a common ground with the U.S. Forest Service in their campaigns to protect and preserve Federally owned lands in the United States. Having understood the development of such early issues at the political level, the CMC began to understand that to effectively pursue their desires for wilderness protection and conservation, they would have to work within the framework of the U.S. Forest Service's principle of utilitarianism. Although not identical, the CMC and the Forest Service seemed to agree on the fundamentals of land conservation and its benefits. This paper will prove how the CMC in the mid 1950's and 60's was able to further its pursuits in land conservation in Western North Carolina by establishing common ground through cooperation and compromise with the Forest Service. In

¹⁶ Fox., 60-61.

¹⁷ Robert Browne, *The Appalachian Trail: History, Humanity and Ecology* (Virginia: Northwoods Press, Inc., 1980), 99.

addition the paper will also show how the CMC used changing national trends in outdoor recreation and conservation attitudes to contribute greatly to the preservation of key wilderness areas in and around Asheville, North Carolina. Between 1955-1964 the CMC effectively lobbied the U.S. Forest Service to establish Waterfall Creek Scenic, Craggy Mountain Scenic Area and Shining Rock Wilderness.¹⁹ Through their efforts in land conservation the CMC established over fourteen thousand acres of protected public land.

The CMC's involvement in developing conservation issues at national and regional levels would be delayed due to the organization's struggles during its early years. It took a decade of growth and several key events at the national and local level before these objectives were realized and adopted fully by CMC. In order to understand the CMC's initial lack of direction and a clear agenda in its concerns for conservation, it is necessary to understand the developments occurring in the nation's capital as the newly adopted policies and agendas towards conservation were created at the national level. As the United States entered the twentieth century, a new era of American politics and environmental leadership was developing. This shift brought conservation into the spotlight of American politics creating significant precedents for national conservation. The evolution of political, social and environmental reforms took place during this period, which historians commonly refer to as the Progressive era.²⁰

Ideas of conservation mirrored the trends of Progressivism.²¹ A shift towards scientific management and planning came to guide the developing conservation

¹⁸ Carolina Mountain Club Archive. Series 9, Box 8 Folder 2 Special Collections at Ramsey Library, University of North Carolina at Asheville.

¹⁹ Steurer, Peter, *History of the Carolina Mountain Club: Commemorating the 70th Anniversary 1923-1993*. Box 14, Folder 5, Carolina Mountain Club Archive, Special Collections, Ramsey Library University of North Carolina at Asheville.

²⁰ Fox, 114.

²¹ Ibid.

movement. The American public and the U.S. government began to reject Victorianism and the constructs of modernity. The nation's emphasis shifted from transforming nature's raw materials through ceaseless labor to viewing nature as a source of relaxation and moral regeneration, which should be conserved.²² However, these new policies of conservation were not an abandonment of the idea that the natural world existed for the uses of man but a shift towards the environmental perspective of utilitarianism.²³ Utilitarians believed conservation and the forces of capitalism and modernity could successfully coexist.²⁴

President Theodore Roosevelt pioneered early efforts to conserve The United States natural landscapes following the ideals of utilitarianism. Roosevelt's assertion of executive power in the name of conservation was monumental; in all, he established seventy five million acres of forest reserves.²⁵ In 1905 in order to better manage these reserves and national forest lands, Roosevelt created the U.S. Forest Service, a bureau of the Agriculture Department. Roosevelt appointed Gifford Pinchot as the first head of this new federal land management agency.²⁶ The U.S. Forest Service's utilitarian criteria were to maximize three variables simultaneously-wealth, democratic distribution of wealth, and sustainability of resources use over an infinite amount of time.²⁷ Pinchot was firm in his view that forestry could be promoted in the United States only if it could be profitable through the production of wood.²⁸ Hence the economic value of wood production was

²² Paul Sutter, *Driven Wild: How the Fight Against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), 21.

²³ Bryan Norton, *Towards Unity amongst Environmentalist* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 7.

²⁴ Hays., 17.

²⁵ Fox, 124.

²⁶ Ibid., 128.

²⁷ Norton., 25.

²⁸ Hays., 17.

emphasized above all else.²⁹ It would take several decades of maturity in the U.S. Forest Service's ideologies before National Forest value as sources of recreation rivaled the economic yield for which they were originally valued.

Pinchot firmly believed that management and conservation could effectively work side by side to protect and preserve natural environments. Believing as well that scientific and economically responsible management would be the wave of the future in conservation, Pinchot was correct in this assumption. Pinchot's utilitarian view of conservation continues to guide government bureaus and dominate professional circles.³⁰ The origins of the CMC arise out of a group of outdoor enthusiasts from Harvard and MIT formed a mountaineering group known as the Appalachian Mountain Club in 1876 (AMC).³¹ This organization was the first of its kind in the United States. Organizers formed the AMC primarily to construct trails and overnight shelters in the mountains of New England.³² After several decades of prosperity, the AMC had grown to include four regional chapters in various parts of the northeastern United States, in addition to the original Boston chapter. On June 11, 1920 a tentative Southern Chapter of the A.M.C. of Boston was formed in Asheville, North Carolina. The Southern Chapter was composed of all members of the parent club living south of Pennsylvania and the Ohio River³³. The Southern Chapter became a formally recognized and permanent organization. This took place on May 11, 1921, in the office of the Board of Trade of

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Fox., 129.

³¹ Ibid., 98.

³² Browne., 99-100.

³³ *Carolina Mountain Club* Circa.

Asheville.³⁴ The formation of the southern chapter reflected growing interest in the southern Appalachians for outdoor recreation.

Shortly after its formation, the Southern Chapter of the AMC began to disagree with the Northern Chapter's policy of distributing its annual dues.³⁵ After lengthy discussions between the parent club and the Southern Chapter over the distribution of annual dues, there was no resolution for this financial issue.³⁶ The officials from the original Northern Chapter in Boston maintained that their constitution required that seventy percent of the dues being sent to the club were to be used on trails in the north, and they could not change the constitution for the benefit of the Southern Chapter in Asheville, North Carolina.³⁷ In addition, the Southern Chapter members felt that their interests would be best served by creating their own localized mountaineering club within the Southern Appalachians separate from the parent club, the AMC. This would allow the newly formed regional club to consolidate its finances, projects and club recreation in the southern Appalachians of Western North Carolina.³⁸

Accordingly, on July 16, 1923 the Carolina Mountain Club was formed, and the Southern Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club ceased to exist. At this point, official ties between the AMC and the CMC were severed.³⁹ Although the split had strained relations, the Northern and the Southern Chapters continued to share common goals and interests and maintain a healthy relationship in the name of outdoor recreation and conservation even into the twenty first century.

³⁴ *History of The Carolina Mountain Club* 1963. Box 14 Folder 5. Carolina Mountain Club Archive, Special Collections, The University of North Carolina at Asheville.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ W. Wilson, "Organize a New Club," *The Asheville Citizen Times*, 17 July 1923, sec.3.

³⁷ *History of The Carolina Mountain Club* 1963.

³⁸ W. Wilson.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

The members of the newly formed CMC decided that, despite disagreement over finances, the CMC believed wholeheartedly in the agenda of the AMC and their new charter would mirror the agenda and principles of the AMC. The purpose and aims of the newly formed CMC are broadly stated in its first distributed pamphlet of 1923, which read,

It is the definite purpose of the Club to provide shelters, huts and lodges in various suitable locations for the use of members for hiking, touring or exploring the mountain region. To conduct walks, mountain climbing and other excursions and tours. To open, mark and maintain trails. To offer information and other facilities for mountain climbing, nature study, fishing, etc.⁴⁰

These objectives came to define the club in its infancy. The club mainly served as an elitist social club, creating a vehicle for outdoor enthusiasts to join others in the passion for outdoor recreation. The idea of wilderness preservation was upon the minds of the early CMC, yet it admittedly lacked a clear conservation agenda in the 1920's. The CMC, within its first distributed pamphlet, asked itself an insightful question; in reference to the remaining public lands of the Southern Appalachians, they asked themselves and the public, "What are we going to do with these priceless possessions?"⁴¹ In answering their own question, the pamphlet sounds much like a government document stating utilitarian argument.

This is a question that the CMC in its infancy cannot answer. But, it is in answer to this question that the CMC exists. The rapid development of commercialism in the region is going to offer some of the strangest problems of our age. It is going to threaten along new lines what it is fast accomplishing in the timber industry.

This response shed light on the founders' approach to the budding issue of conservation. The club recognized the complexity of these issues as they welcomed the

⁴⁰ *Carolina Mountain Club Circa.*

developments of the twentieth century, yet understood the very real changes these developments would have upon the region. They were aware that the inroads of modernization would alter the region's natural landscapes. The club goes on to state,

These commercial and recreational developments hint at the responsibility that lays on the conscientious public-opportunities for an organization to exert a moral influence interwoven with fascinating possibilities for development. In the system of forest reserves being developed by the Federal Government taken in connection with the state's highway system we have valuable allies in settling the question. Curiously, enough of these great allies link together the serious features of conservation and the lighter personal opportunities for wholesome recreation. In a short time none of our vast reaches of wilderness and none of our great mountain ranges will be inaccessible.⁴²

There are several important and revealing statements included in this original pamphlet. First is there the reference the CMC made concerning the newly formed federal agency, the Forest Service. The CMC considered the Forest Service a great ally in answering these mutual environmental concerns. It is this attitude of mutual cooperation and aid that would come to define the CMC relationship with the Forest Service in its desire to address developing conservation issues within the region. By embracing the Forest Service as an ally, the CMC established significant forest reserves within Western North Carolina in coming years and decades.

Secondly, the club understood that an environmental consciousness amongst members and the community is necessary in order to address the issues of modernity, growth as well as preservation in an effective manner. As the popularity of outdoor recreation grew amongst the public and gained support at the national level in the 1950's,

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

the CMC used these opportunities and their alliances with the U.S. Forest Service to shape the region's recreational growth and conservation efforts.

Unfortunately, interest in the club waned after severing ties with Northern Chapter. By the middle of the 1920's CMC membership was limited to twenty-one members and less than ten of those individuals took part in the club's affairs.⁴³ The club's main objective in the twenties centered around the maintenance of cabins in the Pink Beds region of Mount Pisgah, which is located south of Asheville, North Carolina, in Pisgah National Forest.⁴⁴ Despite its intentions, the CMC in its first years functioned mainly as an elitist social group for wealthier residents of Western North Carolina.

A major boost to the CMC came when a committee was appointed to confer with the Carolina Appalachian Trail Club to consider the affiliation of the two clubs. The CATC was an active and strong organization working in the forests of Western North Carolina. The CATC played a vital role in the completion of unfinished segments of the Appalachian Trail in western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee. The two clubs shared goals and objectives but the CATC focused mainly on trail maintenance and construction rather than social aspects or maintaining cabins for members. After limited talks between club officials, the two clubs agreed to merge on December 9, 1931. The newly expanded CMC adopted all the by-laws of the CATC. Following the merger, CATC goals and objectives took over the CMC.⁴⁵ This is a very important development in the CMC history. In essence, the CMC of the thirties and beyond existed as an amalgamation of the agendas of the AMC and primarily the CATC. The old CMC would

⁴³ Steurer., 2.

⁴⁴ Mark Lane, "*Cabin in the Pink Beds is the New Camp of The Carolina Mountain Club,*" Asheville Citizen Times, 19 April 1924, sec.3

⁴⁵ Steurer, 3,4.

only continue to exist through the name. This merger helped to revitalize the group as well as bring the club back to its early intentions when splitting from AMC, which was the promotion of outdoor recreation. The combination of the two groups also helped to create a less elitist CMC, as most members of the former CATC were of middle class standing.⁴⁶

It was during the 1930's the CMC became a strong and stable organization with over fifty active members.⁴⁷ With active membership maintained, the CMC began to have a sense of permanence and purpose in its pursuits. The club began to exert its interest in conservation during this period by becoming directly involved in land management issues, which threatened wilderness areas in Western North Carolina.⁴⁸

The CMC of the 1950's began incorporating more local environmental and conservation issues into its agenda. Several factors helped to define the CMC's concern and interest in local conservation. More direct efforts at conservation by CMC members in the area were succeeding. The CMC had witnessed the successful petition for the creation Smokey Mountain National Park. CMC member George Masa played a vital role in this campaign through his astonishing photographs of the proposed Smoky Mountain National Park which helped to convey to officials in Washington D.C. the truly unique beauty this area possessed.⁴⁹ Also in the late 1930's CMC president George Tennent successfully led a campaign to save a large virgin poplar stand in Graham County, North Carolina. This area eventually helped create The Joyce Kilmer National Forest.⁵⁰ The

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ CMC Early History, Box 14, Folder 5. Carolina Mountain Club Archive. Carolina Mountain Club Archive. The University of North Carolina at Asheville Special Collections.

⁵⁰ Steurer 5,6.

U.S. Forest Service commended the CMC for assisting in establishing protection for this land.⁵¹ Developments at the national level in conjunction with increasing local successes, led the young CMC to believe their involvement was necessary and vital to the recreational developments and conservation efforts in Western North Carolina. Early successes in working with the U.S. Forest Service to preserve wilderness for outdoor recreation and protection further supported the founding notion of the CMC that the Forest Service was an ally in their goals for conservation in the area.

Increasing involvement of CMC members in local conservation issues brought these land conservation issues to the forefront of the CMC's agenda. The CMC's efforts for land conservation were significantly aided by two key social and political developments occurring during the 1950's. Firstly, growing interest in outdoor recreation in the nation's public lands helped shape Americans growing concern for natural environments.⁵² Secondly, were the Federal government's increasing willingness to support recreational developments in National Forests. In 1958, Congress created the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission (ORRRC).⁵³ The ORRRC was formed to explore present trends in, and future needs for, outdoor recreation in America.⁵⁴ In 1959 the professional foresters from the ORRRC would begin a year-long survey of National Forests in Western North Carolina in order to suggest areas suitable for recreational development.⁵⁵ Though the increase in interest in outdoor recreation

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Hays, 2-4.

⁵³ Sutter 258

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Bob Seymour, "National Forest Recreational Development Target of Year- Long Survey Opening Soon," Asheville Citizen Times, 27 May 1959.

was a national trend, Western North Carolina National Forests were seeing greater than average increases in visitation.

Between 1949-1959 Western North Carolina National Forests saw a 300 percent increase in use of recreational facilities.⁵⁶ In addition, government statistics showed that WNC national forests were over used by 574 percent, compared to the national over use average of 39 percent.⁵⁷ Officials at the Forest Service in WNC realized that growth of recreation in WNC had not kept pace with the growth of use. When regional reports were completed they were presented to Congress with a request for appropriation of funds for development of the proposed recreation areas. Funding for the projects was vital due to the fact that the Forest Service's inability to keep pace with growth was due to lack of federal funding. The CMC was aware of the ORCCC survey and pending report and maintained close contact with the Forest Service during the report's completion. Members of the CMC became concerned as they received word that the recreation and lands assistant at the North Carolina National Forest was quoted as saying that "in order to accommodate all these people we must develop every suitable area".⁵⁸ The CMC was particularly interested to know which areas were going to be developed and under what F.S. regulation. The CMC understood that in a desire to better accommodate visitors the NCFS might inadvertently jeopardize natural scenery and beauty of areas in their desire to provide more recreation facilities. In the winter of 1961, the CMC received news from the NCFS supervisor Hugh Redding that an the area of over 10,000 acres in Haywood County was recommended for high population density recreational development as a Scenic Area. The Forest Service's plan for the Shining

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

Rock included the construction of parking areas, roads and the addition of numerous recreational facilities.⁵⁹ The CMC felt that the area should not be developed to such an extent and should remain a primitive area.⁶⁰

The uniqueness of this area made the CMC's push for its protection even more passionate. The charm of this wilderness area lies in its high elevation; the proposed area contains six mountain peaks over 6,000 feet, one of which is the snow white quartz peak of Shining Rock.⁶¹ The CMC was pragmatic in their approach to their dealing with the NCFS during the Shining Rock campaign. On January 24, 1962 the CMC unanimously endorsed a formal petition to the NCFS Supervisor Hugh Redding for the establishment of a Wild Area⁶² in accordance with Regulation U-2.⁶³ The CMC concisely and diplomatically stated their reasoning behind the petition.

The CMC quotes the club's charter, explaining their objectives as an organization which intends to promote enjoyment of the outdoors and to encourage the conservation of natural scenery. Within the petition the CMC related their sentiments that the preservation of this spectacular country under Regulation U-2 offers the greatest possibilities of scenic and natural beauty for future generations to enjoy. Under this classification the area would be protected from recreational developments. In addition

⁵⁸ Bob, Seymour.

⁵⁹ NCFS supervisor Peter Hanlon, letter to Arch Nichols, 4 January 1961

⁶⁰ CMC President Dr. Edgar Lyngholm, letter to NCFS Supervisor Peter Hanlon, 12 March 1962.

⁶¹ CMC President Dr. Edgar Lyngholm, letter to NCFS Supervisor Peter Hanlon, 24 January 1962.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Regulation U-2 states Suitable area of National Forest land in a single tract of less than 100,000 acres but not less than 5,000 acres may be designated by the Chief of Forest Service as a "Wild Area"-within which no roads or other ⁶³ CMC President Dr. Edgar Lyngholm, letter to NCFS Supervisor Peter Hanlon, 12 March 1962.

⁶³ CMC President Dr. Edgar Lyngholm, letter to NCFS Supervisor Peter Hanlon, 24 January 1962.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶³ Regulation U-2 states Suitable area of National Forest land in a single tract of less than 100,000 acres but not less than 5,000 acres may be designated by the Chief of Forest Service as a "Wild

this classification would prohibit any road construction.⁶⁴ Road construction became more and more of an issue in National Forests as outdoor recreation increased in years following World War II. By 1959, there was roughly one mile of road for every two square miles of national forest.⁶⁵

These actions created a double-edged sword for outdoor and conservation groups. The increased access encouraged the immediate goal of the clubs such as the CMC, which was promotion of outdoor recreation, yet an overeager federal government was developing public lands at alarming rates. Shining Rock Area was in fact the last remaining U.S.F.S. range in the Southern states of 6,000 feet without a highway atop its summits. The CMC felt preserving this area in its natural state was important to future generations.⁶⁶

Forest Service felt that establishing the proposed Shining Rock Scenic Area would best satisfy the recreational demands being placed on region. The N.C. F.S. were under pressure to expand recreation facilities in Western North Carolina to meet growing public demands. Classification of a Scenic Area allowed the F.S. to develop more recreational facilities and access roads in the area.⁶⁷

The CMC strongly opposed the development of roads and parking lots in the Shining Rock area; this is why they chose this classification.⁶⁸ This classification is important because it essentially protects the area from any significant developments and most importantly the construction of access roads. Petitioning the F.S. for the creation of

Area"-within which no roads or other provisions for motorized transportation, no commercial timber cutting and no occupancy under special use permit for hotels, resorts, stores, lodges

⁶⁴ CMC President Dr. Edgar Lyngholm, letter to NCFS Supervisor Peter Hanlon, 24 January 1962.

⁶⁵ Sutter., 259.

⁶⁶ Arch Nichols, letter to Regional Forester James Vessey, 12 March 1962.

⁶⁷ Carolina Mountain Club Conservation Efforts, Box15, No. 2, Folder 1 Carolina Mountain Club Archive Special Collections, The University of North Carolina at Asheville.

a Wilderness Area puts the CMC a better bargaining position when it comes to future public demands for better access.⁶⁹ The CMC also felt that the area was best suited for classification as a wild area because of its size, high elevation and outstanding natural beauty.⁷⁰ A National Forest land under the classification of Wild Area is largely a Western phenomenon. At the time there were only two wilderness areas east of the Mississippi, containing approximately 25,000 acres in comparison to the west where within the Rocky Mountains states there were over 100 wilderness areas protecting over 25,000 square miles.⁷¹ The CMC felt the Southern Appalachians needed a small counterpart to wilderness areas of the west. The CMC forwarded copies of the petition to the NCFS Supervisor and the F.S. Regional Forester.⁷²

NCFS Supervisor Hugh Redding agreed to meet with the club at his office to discuss the proposal. The representatives of the CMC were unable to convince Redding that the Wild Area was most sensible. The CMC urged the FS to consider how hastily constructed improvements would destroy the natural beauty of the area for future generations.⁷³ However, following the meeting, Redding stated his position that increased pressure for recreational development made the Scenic Area classification necessary.⁷⁴

Following the unsuccessful meeting with NCFS supervisor Redding, the CMC made the decision to appeal to the Forest Service Chief in Washington D.C., Richard

⁶⁸ CMC President Dr. Edgar Lyngholm, letter to NCFS Supervisor Peter Hanlon, 12 March 1962.

⁶⁹ Harvey Broome, letter to Roger Morrow, 18 May 1962.

⁷⁰ CMC President Dr. Edgar Lyngholm, letter to NCFS Supervisor Peter Hanlon, 24 January 1962.

⁷¹ John Mitchell, "In the Line Of Fire: Our National Forest," Supplement, "The Rocky Mountain States," National Geographic, March 1997, Vol. 191, No.3.

⁷² CMC President Dr. Edgar Lyngholm, letter to NCFS Supervisor Peter Hanlon, 24 January 1962.

⁷³ Arch Nichols, letter to Regional Forester James Vessey, 12 March 1962.

⁷⁴ Carolina Mountain Club Conservation Efforts, Box 15, No. 2, Folder 1 Carolina Mountain Club Archive Special Collections, The University of North Carolina at Asheville.

McArdle. McArdle would make the ultimate decision in the matter.⁷⁵ In this correspondence the CMC related the original reasons the club favored the Wilderness Area classification in addition to some new points of view intended to persuade forestry officials. One of the main rationales the CMC pointed out was the fact that the area had suffered from extensive logging in 1920's and was slowly restoring itself. During that same decade the area fell victim to fire that burned significant acreage. In order to appeal to the recreation concerns of the F.S. the CMC pointed out that the area's proximity to the Blue Ridge Parkway allowed motorists driving or parking on the Parkway to visually enjoy the area without adding additional roads. The letter also makes the point that recreational opportunities will still exist under the new classification however would will be limited to travelers on foot.⁷⁶

It is apparent that the CMC treated the concerns of the F.S. with the great sensitivity. They are always careful to be respectful in their request and always worked to establish commonalities in opinions rather than differences. For example, in an additional letter to Chief McArdle the CMC made the point to tell the Chief that they have always admired the F.S. for its utilitarian philosophy of multiple use.⁷⁷ They also make it clear that they understand the F.S.'s dilemma of trying to bring the area up to speed with recreation demands. Above all they stressed that they in no way were trying to interfere with the activities of the F.S.⁷⁸ This sort of diplomacy encouraged a respectful dialogue and amicable relations between the two parties which was vital in these situations.

⁷⁵ Arch Nichols, letter to Regional Forester James Vessey, 12 March 1962.

⁷⁶ CMC President Dr. Edgar Lyngholm, letter to McArdle, 12 March 1962.

⁷⁷ CMC member Samuel Robinsons, letter to Chief Forester McArdle, 10 March 1962.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

After contacting the necessary officials in the F.S., the CMC worked to encourage fellow outdoor clubs and conservation groups to joined their campaign to create Shining Rock Wilderness Area.⁷⁹ Clubs such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Smoky Mountain Hiking Club and the American Camping Association wrote letters appealing to the Supervisor of NCFS Hugh Redding and Regional Forester James Vessey in Atlanta.⁸⁰ Two key conservation groups join the camp again in 1962 The Nature Conservancy and The Wilderness Society. Both of these organizations lent support to the CMC earlier project of establishing Craggy Mountain Scenic Area north of Asheville in 1959.⁸¹ Support from these two nationally recognized organizations aided the campaign just in the fact that they were endorsing the project. Formal petitions from both organizations were sent to local, regional and Washington offices.

Current Wilderness Society president Harvey Broome was a veteran of wilderness politics as well as one of the eight founding members of the Wilderness Society.⁸² Broome was also involved in local conservation campaigns such as creating Great Smokey Mountain National Park as a leading member of the Smokey Mountain Hiking Club.⁸³ Broome's experience and reputation in wilderness politics made him a trusted advisor of the CMC in this campaign. Over the next year CMC encouraged any individuals concerned about area to write the F.S. Officials at the F.S. are sensitive to public opinion and community support for the Wilderness Area only worked to further the CMC goals. The CMC saw their relationships with local and national groups as a

⁷⁹ Arch Nichols, Carolina Mountain Club Quarterly News Bulletin, "Lets Go!" 12 March 1962.

⁸⁰ Carolina Mountain Club Conservation Efforts, Box15, No. 2, Folder 1 Carolina Mountain Club Archive Special Collections, The University of North Carolina at Asheville.

⁸¹ Jerome Dykeman Papers 1923-1964, Box 1, Folder 3, Special Collections, University of North Carolina at Asheville.

⁸² Sutter, 3.

⁸³ Ibid.

vital aspect of their campaign and worked in cooperation with these individuals to establish long lasting alliances in the name of conservation.

However, the CMC code of conduct with the officials of the Forest Service was valued by the CMC above all. It was extremely important to the representative body of the CMC that organizations joining the effort for Shining Rock Wilderness understood their philosophy of cooperation and compromise with the F.S. In April of 1962 Charles Wharton, the Georgia representative of the Nature Conservancy wrote F.S. Chief McArdle a critical letter that was later reviewed with overwhelming disapproval by the CMC committee.⁸⁴ Arch Nichols, a senior member of the CMC and one of the three persons heading the Shining Rock Wilderness committee was quick to write Wharton to make it clear that criticizing or using threatening language with the F.S. was not a tolerated tactic of the CMC. Nichols relates to Wharton that his letter acted very unfavorable to their cause. Particularly Nichols was concerned about the comment that Wharton made to the F.S. Chief that members of the committee to create Shining Rock Wilderness “liked the prospect of entrenching for a long struggle with F.S. over this issue.”⁸⁵ Nichols valued the Nature Conservancy’s support and encouraged them to write supporting letters. However he carefully pointed out that they must be written constructively to encourage compromise and cooperation.⁸⁶

Over the next year the campaign was largely a waiting game. The F.S. was a large bureaucracy and decision-making takes a long time. Over all prospects were favorable for the CMC desire to protect Shining Rock under Wilderness classification.

⁸⁴ Arch Nichols, letter to Nature Conservancy Georgia Representative Charles Wharton, 3 April 1962.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

Officials at the F.S. seemed generally sympathetic to the proposal.⁸⁷ The main stumbling point for both parties was agreeing on the boundaries included in area and the prospect of including parking lot in area.⁸⁸

At the national level the newly proposed bill in Congress known as The Wilderness Act slowed the campaign down.⁸⁹ At the time, the Wilderness Society was one of many conservation groups involved a campaign to pass this monumental conservation legislation.⁹⁰ The Wilderness Act set criteria for preservation of wild country on a variety of federally managed lands.⁹¹ In addition the legislation would establish a system of congressionally designated areas. The bill intentions were to provide greater protection for wilderness areas granting them special regulations when it came to their management and use.⁹² Harvey Broome of Wilderness Society related this important development to the Club. He explains the decision Congress made to suspend all activity in connection with enlarging or reducing primitive areas or establishing new ones during the bill's consideration in Congress.⁹³

Considerations on the Wilderness Bill in Congress would last into the early years of 1964.⁹⁴ Despite set back the CMC continued to correspond with local, regional and national officials in the F.S. reminding them of their dedication to project. The CMC within these correspondences also is careful to reaffirm its desire to cooperate and work

⁸⁷ Harvey Broome, letter to Roger Morrow, 18 May 1962.

⁸⁸ Carolina Mountain Club Conservation Efforts, Box 15, Folder 4, Carolina Mountain Club Archive, Special Collections, The University of North Carolina at Asheville.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Allin, Craig, *The Politics of Wilderness Preservation*, (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1982), 105-110.

⁹¹ John Mitchell, "In the Line Of Fire: Our National Forest," Supplement, "The Rocky Mountain States," National Geographic, March 1997, Vol. 191, No.3

⁹² Hays., 118-119.

⁹³ Harvey Broome, letter to Roger Morrow, 18 May 1962.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

through compromise with the F.S. On May 21, 1963 CMC president Edgar Lyngholm writes Regional Forester Vessey to congratulate Vessey on behalf of the CMC for receiving the superior service award from the F.S. Within the letter Lyngholm also expresses his gratitude for his cooperation with the CMC on past land conservation campaigns such as the Craggy Mountain Scenic Area.⁹⁵ Vessey proved over the years to be a valued ally within the F.S. as the CMC pushed for conservation in the region. During the Craggy Mountain Scenic Area campaign Vessey increased the requested acreage the CMC had requested an action, which certainly was remembered and admired by the CMC.⁹⁶ Lyngholm thanks Vessey and Supervisor Hanlon for their foresight in acknowledging the need for more Wilderness Area's in the east, assuring Vessey that his support of the proposal will benefit not only the region but also generations to come. Finally, Lyngholm relates to Vessey the CMC have always been proud to work together with the F.S. in service of their fellow man.⁹⁷

Supervisor of North Carolina National Forester Peter Hanlon released the F.S.'s proposal for the creation of Shining Rock Wilderness Area sometime in August of 1963. Besides all but a few exceptions the F.S. proposal matched the proposal of the CMC. The CMC expresses their disappointment in the addition of a small parking area near Sam's Knob and the exclusion of Black Balsam Mountain from the Shining Rock

⁹⁵ CMC president Dr. Edgar Lyngholm's letter to Regional Forester James Vessey, 21 May 1963.

⁹⁶ Jerome Dykeman Papers 1923-1964, Box 1, Folder 3, Special Collections University of North Carolina at Asheville,.

⁹⁷ CMC president Edgar Lyngholm's, letter to Regional Forester James Vessey, 21 May 1963.

Wilderness boundary.⁹⁸ However, the CMC was by no means going to jeopardize the 13,400-acre proposal over these details and were complimentary of the proposal.⁹⁹

Most importantly under the provisions of Secretary of Agriculture Regulation U-2 this area would prohibit motorized vehicles, access roads. These regulations would ensure the areas protection from usage other foot travel and horseback. In addition the area would prohibit commercial uses such as timber harvesting, mining, power withdrawals, collection of plants. The F.S. logic behind their decision to create Shining Rock Wilderness Area is summarized within the proposal. The F.S.states that, “The proposed area has high wilderness values in comparison with its known commodity values, it is therefore considered predominately valuable for wilderness and necessary for this purpose both nationally and locally”.¹⁰⁰ This language conveys well the long-standing utilitarian philosophy of multiple use. The value that a national forest area as a resource commodity versus it asethic value is a guiding principle for F.S. in decisions like these. The CMC deserves a large part of the credit in providing evidence, which convinced the F.S. officials that the Shining Rock Area had exceptional aesthetic value. Chief U.S. Forest Service Edward P. Cliff authorized the official classification of the Shining Rock as a Wilderness Area on January 10, 1964.¹⁰¹ A Shining Rock representative committee would be nominated from CMC members to stay abreast the of the proposals development in 1964.

⁹⁸ Carolina Mountain Club Conservation Efforts, Box 15, No. 2, Folder 2. Carolina Mountain Club Archive, Special Collections, The University of North Carolina at Asheville.

⁹⁹ CMC president Edgar Lyngholm’s, letter to Peter Hanlon, 3 October 1963.

¹⁰⁰ U.S. Forest Service, Shining Rock Wilderness- North Carolina Proposal, (Atlanta, Ga.: U.S. Department of Agriculture Southern Region, 1963), 1-3.

¹⁰¹ John Parris, “New Wilderness Area Established”, The Asheville Citizen Times, 14 January 1964.

CMC following this announcement the club remains consistent in its approach to F.S. Letters of appreciation were sent all parties concerned at the F.S. thanking them for their cooperation and foresight.¹⁰² Of course, the CMC is genuine in their sentiments yet one gets the feeling that they are preparing the stage for another campaign. In fact, this would be one of the CMC's last major land conservation efforts by the CMC. The CMC dedication to this area would continue to the present day. The CMC remains active in trail restoration and maintenance in Shining Rock Wilderness Area working with F.S. officials to protect the area.

During the period of 1955- 1964 the CMC successfully lobbied the F.S. to create three separate protected areas establishing over 14,000 acres of protected land in Western North Carolina. It could easily be argued that this time period marked the CMC's greatest success in conservation efforts in region. The CMC of the 1950's and 1960's used the unique national and political trends to further their conservation efforts. The issue of land conservation has been a divided since its birth. With their foresight the CMC avoid the failures that other conservation organizations faced in their efforts. Working through cooperation and compromise rather than confrontation with government officials and the F.S. With this strength and pragmatism of the Carolina Mountain Club's campaign to establish Shining Rock Wilderness Area was their ability to achieve wilderness preserve by appealing to the Forest Service utilitarian ideologies in order to achieve preservationist protection federal lands in Western North Carolina. Unfortunately, the CMC of the present day is for the most part withdrawn from conservation issues in WNC. However,

¹⁰² Carolina Mountain Club Conservation Effort, Box 15, No. 2, Folder 2. Carolina Mountain Club Archive, Special Collections, The University of North Carolina.

residences of region as well as its visitors will continue to appreciate the legacy of the CMC's conservation efforts.

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