

## FEDERAL HIGHWAY PUBLIC HEARING NORTH SHORE ROAD

We all know the story about the 1943 agreement how the Federal Government promise the citizen of Swain County a road as soon as the war was over and when funds were made available, by Congress this is true but let me tell you the rest of the story.

### HISTORICAL GRIEF AND TRAUMA IS LOSS OF

LAND----6000 people removed from the North Shore, 44,170 acres lost.

LANGUAGE----Our Heritage,

IDENTITY----The National Park attempted to erase our very existence.

CULTURE----The way we lived.

SPIRITUAL BELIEF----Trust.

FAMILY VALUES----Park Service moved family away and attempted to erase family roots.

On Nov: 15 1949 President H.S. Truman approved the transfer of 44,170 acres. This was in keeping with an agreement between T.V.A. State of North Carolina, Swain County and the National Park Service dated July 30, 1943.

In a letter from U.S. Department of Interior (N.P.S.) in 1942 said the Deals Gap Bryson City section is a important link in the around the park road and is part of the master plan for the development of the Smoky Mountain National Park.

Memorandum for the director Newton Drury September 15, 1942 U.S. Department of the Interior the addition of the Park Road would be of considerable help to Fire Protection Superintendent of the Park.

U.S. Department of Interior 10-5-42, the Deal Gap Bryson City section is an important link in the round the Park Road and is part of the Great Smoky Mountain National Park. The National Park will agree to use all diligent efforts after the war to secure funds and Authority from Congress to built a Park Road and will agree that this Road will be one of the earliest Park project.

U.S. Department of Interior 1942, from the Director of the National Park. I visited the Fontana Dam site my conclusion are as follow the land offered by T.V.A. is within the old "cammerer" line of the Park the lake with its shore line would be an attractive addition to the Park Road.

In 1953 Congress appropriated \$392,800.00 for the commencement of the Park Road. In 1959 Congress appropriated \$725,000.00 this money was appropriated by Congress then frozen for a while by the Park Service then diverted to other National Park. This action was taken even though this Road was assigned # 1 priority as late as 1954 by the Park Service.

In 1945 Judge Yates Webb in Federal District Court has held that the T.V.A. has no legal authority to condemn land for the T.V.A. addition to the Park. I say we the people of Swain County still lost.

At one time there was 600 family and over 6000 people who lived on the North Shore of the Tenn. River known as the North Shore. Over half of Swain County tax was lost, over half of Swain County population and half of Swain County Job lost, because of this project by T.V.A. and Park Service.

In 1967 U.S. department of the Interior Secretary Steward Udall said the N.P.S. to construct the North Shore Road to Monteith Branch. Udall said we have three million dollars appropriated by Congress for construction and planning. There is inadequate access he noted to the southern portion of

the Park most of which is in Swain County. Rich potential for outdoor recreation and at the same time provide important economic benefits to Swain County and Bryson City, with the Monteith Branch marina facilities as an attraction many visitors from the eastern side of the mountain will be encouraged to come to Swain County and Bryson City the secretary said.

Let's talk about Anakeista Rock this was a Park ploy to stop the road. North Carolina D.O.T. has built roads on the other side of the lake they have come up with ways to neutralize the acid in the rock, which does not harm the water or Fish.

Asheville Citizen Times Nov; 17 2002—"Gale Norton Secretary of Interior said we need to take care of our responsibilities"—I SAY the Park has a responsibility called the 1943 agreement to Swain County.

November 8, 1997 a statement was made by Bob Miller of the National Park that the Anakeista Rock used to stop the North Shore Road was just a ploy the Park used. This statement was made at a meeting sponsored by Duke University, and the National Park Service at Swain County.

Congress has appropriated 16 million dollars for the construction of and improvement to the North Shore Road. The 16 million dollars will build the North Shore Road to Bushnell and do the study needed. Their we could construct a Heritage Center put in a Campground equal to Cades Cove, also at Frog Town exist two roads now, which would provide access to Fontana Lake. As secretary Udall said this would be a tremendous economic benefit to Swain County. This would make the road go somewhere just like Cades Cove Road does. Remember all this is on the way to Dill Gap where the 1943 agreement said the road will go.

Economic benefit to Swain County-----Blue Ridge Park Way

The average travel party spent nearly \$1,100.00 per visit----Nearly \$375.00 Per person per visit.

2002 Park way trip travel 32%

Stayed in motel 66%

Had four to their party

15% stayed in bed and breakfast

81% goes shopping

73% visited historical sites

Total tourism dollars impact in a 23 county in W.N.C. \$1.6 Billion 2001.

More than 880 jobs in Swain County to tourism dollars, State and local Tax revenues from Tourism to 5.1 Million Dollars. This study was done by the Blue Ridge Park in 2000. Heritage Tourism Spends more than 2 ½ times more than regular tourism.

Tourism dollars circulator an average seven times.---Look on the web. Page of the Park Service 1.2 Billion dollars in economic impact the Park has on Western North Carolina and Eastern Tenn.

Let's talk about cost, D.O.T. is building four lane roads in Swain County and Graham County less than two miles from where the North Shore Road will be built at around Five Million a mile. In Forest Service land just across Fontana Lake in 2002 a twenty foot dustless surface road just like the 1943 agreement calls for was built for just over HALF MILLION DOLLARE FOR 1.3 MILES. I am tired of hearing the Park Service say ----ONE HUNDARD FIFTY MILLION DOLLARS FOR THE NORTH SHORE ROAD this is another PARK PLOY against Swain County. THE NORTH SHORE ROAD WILL COST AROUND TWO MILLION DOLLARS A MILE.

IN 1943 A NEWS PAPER ARTICAL

## **Future for Bryson City as Tourist Center Bright.**

Under this agreement signed last week by Swain County, State of North Carolina, and the Tennessee Valley Authority Swain County will be paid in trust \$44,000 to be applied on outstanding bound indebtedness, the landowners will be paid for there property and the Smoke Mountains National Park will be increased by some 44,000 acres of land. If these were the only factors to be considered in the transaction it would appear that Swain County came out on the losing end of the deal. But happily, this isn't the case. The potentialities for the greatest era of development and progress for Bryson City and vicinity are also written in the agreement.

The National Park Service says that as soon as money is made available after the war it will build a modern highway along the Shores of Fontana lake connecting Bryson City with the T.V.A. access highway at Fontana Dam, making it a through highway to Deal's Gap 50 miles west of here. Anyone with the smallest amount of imagination can visualize what a road of this kind will mean to Bryson City. The State Highway commission has said, definitely, that it will build the same type of road from Bryson City to connect the Park road. Park Service officials have not made public any plan for recreational development along Fontana Lake and this new scenic highway, but we do know that they have rather ambitious plans in mine.

When this highway is built by the Park Service, the development inaugurated, and we feel confidently they will be soon after the war, then there is nothing that can keep Bryson City from becoming the tourist center of Eastern America, unless it is possible we who live here. There is great danger in the fact that we will not awaken to our opportunities, grasp them with a firm determination to make something of them and then go ahead and make Bryson City just as great as the future developments indicate that she should be.

In signing the contract with T.V.A. regarding State Highway No. 288 and the purchase of 44,000 acres of land by T.V.A to be deeded to the National Park Service the Swain County Board of Commissioners did so in the best interest of the county and taxpayers. The board did not sign the contract however, until after many months of negotiation and working for the best deal they could possible get for the county.

This newspaper feels that the board got as good a deal for the county as anyone could possibly get under the circumstances. There were other alternatives for T.V.A. to acquire this property. The Authority could have traded with the state and the property owners and left the county out entirely. We are glad it did not take this drastic method, but did consider the county's interest to the extent of \$400,000, although this is not enough to repay the county for building of the original 288. But with the prospects good for a modern highway through this area to be built after the war by the Park Service will compensate to some extent for the difference.

When President Roosevelt came to Swain County to dedicate the Park in 1934, a statement was made by Roosevelt, "Swain County and North Carolina have given enough to the Park no more shall be added to the Park" but in 1943 another 44,000 acres was added. Was this a broken promise to Swain County? This was heard by Preacher Clyde Johnson of Bryson City.

Sincerely,

David P.Monteith