

Happy Hunting Grounds Fast Becoming Reality

Cooperative Game Areas Call Hunters And Fishermen

Definite areas have been set aside within the Nantahala National Forest for the intensive propagation of fish and game. These areas are co-operatively managed by the United States Forest Service and the North Carolina Fish and Game Commission.

Old residents of this section tell stories of the woods replete with wild life. It was a practise of early settlers to figure as a part of their subsistence the wild life that was theirs for the taking. But increase of population, forest fires and logging soon reduced the numbers of wild life to the vanishing point.

It became evident years ago that the normal administration of National Forest lands would not result in a satisfactory increase of fish and game. Also, through the years the thinly spread administrative forces of the State Fish and Game Commission were unable to cope with the situation. Finally the idea was conceived that by concentrating forces of both organizations on certain areas satisfactory progress could be made.

A meeting was held at which U. S. Forest Service and State Fish and Game officials were present. It was decided that well consolidated areas of National Forest lands be designated as Cooperative Game management areas. The Forest Service furnished the physical equipment necessary for the operation of the area, while the State Fish and Game furnished the warden and enforced the state fish and game laws.

Game Areas Formed

With this understanding arrived at by the two agencies within the state who were vitally interested in the promotion of Fish and Game activities, there was set aside approximately ten miles west of Franklin the first of these areas within the Nantahala National Forest. This area was called the Wayah Game Refuge and covered an area of more than 10,000 acres of National Forest lands.

There rapidly followed the establishment of other areas as the operation of this fish and game refuge proved such a success. In rapid succession there was established the Standing Indian co-operative area, also in Macon county, and covering 30,000 acres, the Fires Creek area in Clay county, and the most recent of all areas, the Santeetlah co-operative game area in Graham county. This last mentioned, the largest of all, includes some 40,000 acres.

Sportsmen are unanimous in their acclamation of the Santeetlah Game Area which they claim comes nearest to meeting the specifications of the Indians mythical Happy Hunting Grounds.

Deer Distributed

All these areas as they are created must go through a biological adjustment period. Starting from a scratch the fish and game must have time to repopulate themselves. There must be a period during which certain species, which have vanished must be replanted. For example, last winter the Forest Service transplanted 40 deer from the Pisgah game refuge and distributed these among the various co-operative game areas within the Nantahala National Forest as dictated by the game specialists who had made their determinations by observations on the ground and by actual count of the deer population.

Fish Restocked

An extensive program of fish planting has been carried out over a period of years. Franklin residents are well acquainted with the Arrowwood fish rearing pools where there are annually raised between 50,000 and 75,000 trout which are planted within the cooperative game areas. Franklin residents will also recall that the Wayah Game Area was closed to fishing for a number of years. Then, the restocking program completed, that satisfactory point was reached when ardent fishermen could again satisfy that Isaac Walton urge and, casting a fly upon the rippling waters of Camp Branch and Rough Fork, be assured of the thrill that comes with that swirl of water and disappearance of the lure that tells a man he has hooked another speckled beauty of the Appalachian mountains.

The fish restocking within the cooperative game areas has progressed to the point where the streams are open regularly each weekend of the summer. Now fishermen from all parts of the state as well as many from far distant points congregate to avail themselves of a sport such as cannot be found anywhere else in this section of the country.

Bear And Boar

Bear and boar hunts have already been inaugurated on the Santeetlah Game area in Graham county. There is but one other

Angel Museum

Preserves Priceless Relics Of Macon History

"That coverlet," said Tommy Angel, "was on the loom when the Civil War started". He was showing the museum articles that line the walls of the balcony in his drug store, and was raising glimpses through the windows of the past that recalled old customs and events.

"My grandmother, Mrs. William Berry, and her sister lived on Rabbit Creek then and were working on the coverlet together, my mother says. The yarn was dyed with walnut dye."

The soft color and lovely intricate patterns were repeated with variations in other old coverlets that he showed.

My eyes wandered and he laughed when I said, "What under the sun is that?" He picked up a black iron tong-like object and opening it placed inside an old pewter spoon which fitted exactly. "It's an old spoon mold," he answered. "Folks in the old days had to make a lot of their own equipment you know. They made their own gun shot, too."

From a wall hung with old guns of all sizes and fashions he took a leather pouch and an old powder horn. From the pouch he extracted a bullet mold and a handful of largt round shot. "Bullets had to be made to fit individual guns."

Cherokee Curios

He hung the horn and pouch back on the wall and showed a box full of shot. "That was plowed up," he said, "by Gilmer Jones on the old Hall farm, the one time location of a Cherokee Indian village. They were probably left by General Rutherford's army when he made a raid and destroyed the village. Last year the North Carolina Historical Society placed an historical marker there you can see. Broken pieces of pottery,—like these—were also found on the field covering the old town site."

Cases of gems, minerals, Indian relics, pottery bits, quaint pipes, and rows and rows of arrow heads of all sizes range along the walls. One oddly-shaped pipe with queer tubular copper beads was found together with a skeleton beyond the Cozad roller mill when the foundation was being dug for a house.

An odd spinning machine told of the inventiveness of one pioneer and stood together with spinning wheels and other weaving equipment. Nearby was a hand-made toll measure used by a miller to take his portion of the grain he milled. It was a small wooden basket held together not by nails, but only a few tiny wooden pegs and cleverly arranged pieces of wood.

Records Of Old Days

A ragged bullet-shot flag with thirteen stars told of long past struggles, and old documents told more tales of the past. One of the latter is a marriage license written in 1866 to Adam and Lettie Angel, free colored persons owned prior to emancipation of slavery by J. D. Watson of Knoxville, Miss., and S. Enloe of Jackson county, N. C., who had "acknowledged they were married according to the custom of the African race on September 12, 1824.

Another document yellowed with age was a receipt issued in 1833 to Thomas Angel by James Angel who had received as part of an estate, "one negro boy called Adam, valued at \$405."

place in the country where the ferocious and hard charging Russian boar can be found. That is in the adjacent mountain country of East Tennessee.

So successful has been the initial hunt that another bear and boar hunt has been planned for late this fall. The genial C. N. Mease, state game supervisor located in Asheville will be taking applications for these parties shortly after the fishing season closes in September. It is anticipated that with the coloring of the fall leaves hunters will again be gathering up their dogs and trekking to that one and only section of North Carolina where bear and boar may be hunted.

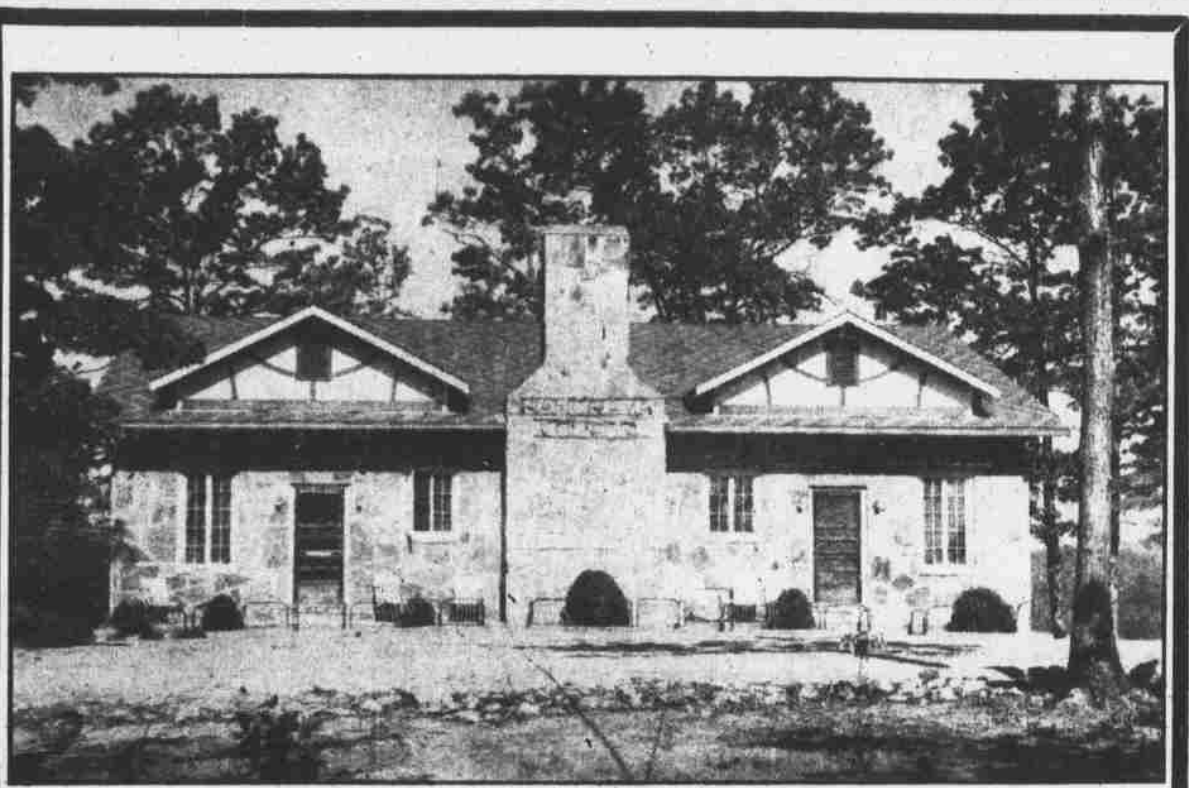
Visitors Attracted

Sportsmen continue to visit these areas in increasing numbers, and it is most satisfying to officials of the Nantahala National Forest and the State Fish and Game Commission that the general public has received their efforts with such unanimous acclamation.

It is hoped that in the near future the deer population in these co-operative areas will have so adjusted itself that deer hunts may be arranged. Moreover, the day is not far off when hunts for small game, for turkey and for grouse will be held.

As the years go by these areas will be increasingly valuable not only to the sportsman for his recreation, but also to the general public as a means of attracting tourists to this section. Local residents will also be able to find employment as guides while business men of adjacent towns will profit from the sales of sporting goods, lodging, meals, gasoline, etc.

These game areas are in line with the Forest Service multiple use policy of the lands it administers.



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