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NATIONAL FORESTS POPULAR AS PLAYGROUND;--
YELLOWSTONE ELK HERDS DWINDLE.

Washington, D. C., December 18, 1920. -- That the use of the National Forests for recreational purposes is increasing rapidly and bids fair to rank third among the major services performed by the National Forests, with only timber production and stream-flow regulation taking precedence over it, is the statement made by Col. W. B. Greeley, head of the Forest Service, in his annual report. Many summer homes are being erected on the National Forests by private individuals, and the use of forests for other forms of out-of-door recreation was greater during the past year than ever before.

The summer home business promises to become an important source of revenue, Col. Greeley points out. On the Angeles Forest in southern California, for example, a total of 1329 permits for summer residences and commercial resorts were, he says, in effect at the close of the past fiscal year. The revenue from this one item amounted to approximately \$22,000. It is believed that within a few years the revenues obtained from the various recreational settlements within the Angeles Forest will pay the entire cost of protection and administration.

Establishing Community Camps.

Many western communities are recognizing the recreational resources of near-by National Forests as one of their greatest assets and privileges, Col. Greeley says, and are establishing community camps under more or less formal organization. These camps take every form from the municipal vacation camps erected on the Angeles National Forest under permit from the Forest Service and maintained and managed by the city of Los Angeles, to the improvement of some favorite picnic ground in the National Forests by local citizens in cooperation with local forest officers. The picnic camps are improved by the construction of fire places, rustic tables and seats, and are made available to the public without any charge. The

vacation camps under municipal direction charge merely the expense of feeding and caring for the successive groups of city people who enjoy their privileges.

The growth of the recreational resources of the National Forests is so rapid that specially-trained men are needed to direct and plan for the most effective development of this service, Col Greeley states. Any expenditure along these lines will be good business for the Government, since the increased receipts will return to the Treasury much more than the total amount expended.

The protection of wild life and the recognition of the National Forests as natural breeding grounds of fish and game is closely related to the development of the recreational resources. To make more effective the work of game protection, in cooperation with the State and local authorities, and to secure better development of the fish and game resources of the National Forests, Col. Greeley believes that Congress should make provision for the establishment of game sanctuaries, within which wild life may find security. These sanctuaries, he says, should be relatively limited in area but should be established in considerable number.

Elks Suffer Hardships.

Special attention is called by Col. Greeley to the necessity of additional protection for the "harassed and decimated herds of elk using the Yellowstone National Park and the surrounding forests. Famine and cold last winter took an unusually heavy toll from their number. Driven out of the high country by starvation and early snows, the northern herd suffered from hunters along the boundary line a percentage loss equal to that of a defeated army. Many that escaped the hunters perished from cold and starvation before spring. The southern herd also lost heavily. As a result, the total number of animals in these two herds is now estimated by the best qualified officers in the Forest Service to equal one-half of their number five years ago.

The addition to the Absaroka and Gallatin Forests of the lands still in Government ownership and under withdrawal along the Yellowstone River north of Gardiner is urged by the Chief Forester. This land, he states, is urgently needed as winter range for the elk, and its addition to the