“SO HERE I AM”: A EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT OF THE BEGINNING OF THE WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST IN APPALACHIAN OHIO AS TOLD BY ORA E. ANDERSON

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the faculty of
the College of Arts and Sciences of Ohio University

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of the requirements for the degree
Master of Science

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This thesis entitled

“SO HERE I AM”: AN EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT OF THE BEGINNING OF THE WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST IN APPALACHIAN OHIO AS TOLD BY ORA E. ANDERSON

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This thesis presents a research paper and videotaped production of Ora E. Anderson, a former journalist from the Appalachian Ohio region, about the beginning of the Wayne National Forest in Appalachian Ohio. Anderson offers a significant and authoritative contribution to local knowledge about landscape change and the dynamic processes involved and provides a compelling argument that the management of natural resources in Appalachian Ohio were largely subsumed under the national economic development policies established to deal with the overriding issue of unemployment.

This research demonstrates how oral history can be used as a methodological approach to landscape history. Anderson’s seasoned perspective regarding 20th century environmental alteration together with his own 1930s newspaper reports augmented by documented archival photographs provide the raw material for a vivid portrayal of environmental degradation and economic conditions experienced during the 1930s in Appalachian Ohio.

Approved:

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For Ora Anderson
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CHAPTER ONE
Overview

“Appalachian Ohio”: what is it? Those who view it from outside understand it as a homogeneous region and culture. This external and objective or detached view is inadequate. First, because the region is in fact a composite of many regions and is not so unambiguously demarcated; and second, because it is a culture comprised of many influences from 18th century settlers who migrated to the lush, rugged hills from several states, including Southeastern Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and Virginia; a smaller number from the New England states of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut; 19th century Welsh, African-Americans, Native Americans and others who have intermingled in various ways and times. The external, objective view is an oversimplification that is prone to create caricature.

Ora Anderson playfully represents himself as a “Kentucky hillbilly.” Of course, this hardly captures the whole story: his professional career included leadership positions in the newspaper business and dairy and banking trade associations in Ohio. He is also a bird carver, poet, nature writer, and storyteller who guides his audience down a path paved with local lore and anecdotes. Through it all, he is an Appalachian – one whose identity, personal and collective, is shaped by a sense of place as he has experienced it. If there is a defining element to his sense of place it is the meaning he derives from the landscape – his farm in Athens County and its woodlands and ponds; the surrounding ridges, valleys, and lakes and all the associated wildlife. Included in a collective identity are the surrounding foothills, which include the nearby national forest – a transformed
landscape the genesis of which he witnessed and the subsequent of which development he has studied. How did the Wayne National Forest begin and what were the reasons for it? If the forest hasn’t always been here, then what was here before? Anderson’s personal testimony as an active participant to the events related to the formation of the Wayne National Forest offers a significant and authoritative contribution to local knowledge about landscape change and the dynamic processes involved.

In his book, *Hard Places: Reading the Landscape of America’s Historic Mining Districts*, Richard Francaviglia analyzes the landscape in Appalachian Ohio (and mining landscapes elsewhere) in these terms:

Interpreting landscape is akin to art history, and perhaps art criticism, for landscapes can only be analyzed in terms of the social forces and aesthetic preferences that created them. We interpret landscapes because we are intrinsically interested in their form as well as their content. Thus, we call upon two rich traditions, the artistic and the scientific, that are artificially separated in our culture. Furthermore, when we set out to interpret a particular landscape, or group of landscapes, we become artists ourselves in that we create something, either verbal or diagrammatic, by abstracting the essence of the real world (Francaviglia, 1991).

Using his memories and narrative, Anderson provides a canvas upon which he paints a vivid yet severe portrayal of life in Appalachian Ohio during the Great Depression.

Using oral history video taping, I attempt to capture that representation accurately onto the video screen. In our interview sessions I ask him questions such as: What was it like back then? When did you become aware of this history of the woods? How have you personally influenced the land use in the Wayne National Forest over the years? Why might your viewpoint of the landscape differ then from a young person today? As we will see in Chapter 2, my general research questions lead to an explanation of my oral history approach. I follow with a literature search on what scholars in various disciplines
have to say about oral history. I describe how memory and narrative are integral components of both oral history and a “sense of place.” Next, I explain the interview and video editing methods used to capture Anderson’s recollections. Chapter 3 provides a general history of the region, beginning with what is known about forest cover and farming in the archaeological record at the time of European migration, and subsequent landscape alteration due mainly to farming and extractive timber and mining industries up through the early part of the 20th century. I include a detailed description of events and national forest policies that led to the formation of the Wayne National Forest in the 1930s. Not included in this study is a treatment of subsequent decades (after 1940) which would include an environmental history of natural resource extraction on the Forest, the comprehensive forest management planning, and various controversies that have since emerged. An edited video script and accompanying photographic documentation are found in Chapters 4 and 5; Chapter 6 provides a summary and concludes with further recommendations for continued research.

The principal goals of this video documentary, as well as the thesis, are to: (1) to produce an oral history video that describes the beginning of the Wayne National Forest as remembered by Anderson during the period 1934 – 1937; (2) to offer a visual record of landscape change using archival and present-day photographs; and (3) to provide background context from government documents, 1930s-era newspapers and current scholarly literature. To provide the context for the video, it was desirable to reconstruct the late 1930s as fully as possible by using authentic images and newspaper accounts. As landscape scholars will argue, context implies geographic scale, and I have used various scales purposely to create a context relevant to the account. I include newspaper
accounts from a tiny rural town in Appalachian Ohio written in the 1930s by Anderson, for example, to describe social and environmental conditions of the time. Authentic photographs depicting people and landscapes in federal land rehabilitation programs in neighboring counties within Appalachian Ohio provide a broader view of life in the 1930s from a geographic perspective. The key to attaining these goals has been the willingness on the part of Anderson to be interviewed, the access to various public and private archival photograph collections, as well as the crucial contribution of video editing by Steve Fetsch.

The sole narrator in this video production, Ora E. Anderson, is a former journalist, bank association professional and lobbyist, as well as leader in many conservation organizations including the Ohio Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. The O.E. Anderson Compass Prairie Plant Nature Preserve in Lawrence County, Ohio, bears his name. He is a published nature writer and weekly guest essayist on regional public radio. Taken together with a remarkable memory spanning nine decades, his early experiences as a newspaper reporter and editor in Appalachian Ohio make him an ideal subject for a videotaped eyewitness account of the first land purchases of the Wayne National Forest during the 1930s.

Ora E. Anderson

At the age of 93, Ora Anderson can recall a story he reported and followed throughout the period of 1934 - 1937, when he served as a young reporter and editor for the Jackson Herald newspaper. He describes how he jumped at the chance to interview newly hired forest officials regarding the first land purchases of what was to become the
Wayne National Forest. He penned stories about how this new forest and other New Deal programs would provide jobs and relief from the Great Depression. His writing skills would serve him well as he subsequently moved north to Columbus and worked with the Ohio General Assembly on issues of interest to the dairy industry and edited monthly trade journals. Having accepted an executive position with the Ohio Bankers Association in the early 1950s, Anderson spent the next twenty years working on legislative issues affecting banking both in Ohio and Washington, D.C. Always the outdoor enthusiast, he sometimes encouraged fellow executives to contribute private funds to organizations for wildlife protection and the preservation of natural areas. It was during the 1950s that he and his wife Harriet bought her parents’ farm in Athens County, rekindling his interest in the development of the nearby national forest.

Retiring in the early 1970s to the farm, Anderson began converting its 98 acres into natural areas with woods, ponds, wetlands, and meadows. Years later, he describes the remarkable changes in wildlife there, “Forty-five years ago the farm featured old pastures, corn and hayfields. Bobwhite quail, Ruffed Grouse and rabbits were numerous. Then thirty-five years ago we saw our first White Tailed deer - wanderers from West Virginia and Pennsylvania. Then the first few resident Canada geese came, then coyotes, wild turkeys, nesting great horned owls and beaver. Now the quail and grouse are gone - but geese, turkeys and deer are here every day”.

For many years after his retirement he remained active, serving on several professional boards, including the Ohio Forestry Association and the Ohio Chapter of the Nature Conservancy. He assisted the Nature Conservancy in acquiring at least three of its many preserves in Ohio. A published nature essayist and poet, he remains a regular
contributor to radio broadcasts in Appalachian Ohio and Kentucky. An avid and regionally famous bird-carver for many decades, Anderson has completed over 3,000 bird carvings that have been shipped to patrons in various parts of the world. He actively participated in the original Wayne National Forest collaborative planning management study groups up through the 1988 Forest Plan as well as subsequent plan revision meetings during the 1990s. As a result of this participation, current Forest officials value his perspective.

Geographic Study Area

The Wayne National Forest is located in the Appalachian foothills of southeastern Ohio in the unglaciated region of the state and lies within the Ohio River Basin. Ecologically, the area is considered part of the Southern Allegheny Unglaciated Plateau, which reaches into western Pennsylvania, northern West Virginia, and Kentucky. The Wayne National Forest, which was not officially dedicated until October 1, 1951, is one of the newer national forests in the United States and the only national forest in Ohio (Figure 1). It consists of three separate tracts of land that are known as the Athens, Ironton, and Marietta Units These non-contiguous units are located across twelve Ohio Counties: Athens, Lawrence, Gallia, Hocking, Jackson, Monroe, Morgan, Perry, Pike, Scioto, Vinton, and Washington (Figures 2, 3, and 4).

The Wayne National Forest is a patchwork of public land scattered throughout its boundaries which generally embrace areas less suitable for agricultural or commercial development (U.S.D.A. Forest Service website, 2005). Originally intended to include 1,464,000 acres, the current forest encompasses 833,990 acres. As of May 1, 2005, the
U.S. Forest Service manages approximately 236,665 acres of public land or 28.4% of all land within its boundary, the rest remains privately-owned (Martin, 2005) (Figure 5). The Forest is named after a Revolutionary War hero, Brigadier General Anthony Wayne, whose decisive victory in 1794 over the Northern Native American Confederation, British militia, and volunteers from Detroit at the Battle of Fallen Timbers near the present-day city of Toledo opened up the lands in Ohio to occupation by white settlers (Millet, 1997).
Figure 1
Wayne National Forest (Courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service, 2005)
Figure 2
Wayne National Forest Athens Ranger District, Athens Unit (Courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service, 2005)
Figure 3
Wayne National Forest Ironton Ranger District (Courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service, 2005)
Figure 4
Wayne National Forest Athens Ranger District, Marietta Unit (Courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service, 2005)
All three units of the Wayne National Forest are within Appalachian Ohio, a designation given to the 29 counties in the southeastern portion of Ohio by the federally-mandated Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) (Anderson, Bain, and Buckley, 2000) (Figure 6). Encompassing all of one state and parts of twelve others, Appalachia stretches from southern New York to northern Mississippi and is delineated by the ARC as an area in need of economic development, employment opportunities, and improvements in quality of life (Figure 7). Appalachian Ohio is characterized by predominantly rugged terrain, a history of both rural and industrial identities, and a
treasure trove of relic agrarian and industrial features such as remnants of old canals, railroads, coal tipples, as well as overhanging porches and company houses (Francaviglia, 2003, Palka 1986.) Historical geographers explain that although southeastern Ohio occupies a “fringe” position within this vast area, it has much in common with Appalachia’s “core,” generally recognized as centering on West Virginia and eastern Kentucky. Economic development based on extractive industries, environmental alteration associated with bituminous coal mining and logging activities, and post-industrial economic decline all seem to place southeastern Ohio firmly within the context of the “Appalachian experience” (Anderson, Bain, and Buckley, 2000; Francaviglia, 2003).
Figure 6
Appalachian Regional Commission Counties of Ohio (Courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service, May 2005)
This study focuses on the early experiences of Appalachian native Ora E. Anderson, as an eyewitness to the first land purchases and development of the Wayne National Forest during the period 1934 - 1937. Born and raised in eastern Kentucky, Anderson moved during his teen years with his family to rural Jackson County, Ohio, in 1930, where he became a reporter and editor for the local newspaper, The Jackson...
*Herald.* Anderson is known to lightheartedly tell his friends that it was through persistence, not talent or training, that he got the job as “the” only reporter on the twice-weekly Jackson Herald. “A year later I became editor-thanks to the fact that the publisher, Ed Chapman, could not afford a good, experienced editor.”

The impact of his experiences as a new resident and his first job as a reporter sustained him through seven decades. Moreover, as a result of this profession, Anderson became an engaged, active observer and long-time participant in the development of a new forest in Appalachian Ohio. This study shows that his observations and seasoned perspective impart a unique historical testimony or “living memory of the past,” which can that help enrich our understanding of the dramatic elements of the gradual emergence of a federal forest in Appalachian Ohio.
CHAPTER TWO
An Oral History Approach

Research Questions

This video production and accompanying thesis are descriptive in nature and seek to answer the following questions:

(1) How and why did the federal government establish a national forest in Appalachian Ohio?

(2) How has the landscape in Appalachian Ohio changed because of the existence of Wayne National Forest?

To answer these questions I divided the project into five, somewhat overlapping phases as follows: 1) research - I researched theoretical approaches and surveyed appropriate literature; 2) interviews - I completed four hour-long videotaped oral history interviews with Anderson between 2003 and 2005 at his homes in Athens and The Plains, Ohio; 3) selection of segments and archival photographs - my questions (Appendix A) and his answers (Appendix B) provided the context for reviewing 1930s newspaper reports from regional newspapers and government agency archival photographs; 4) rough-cut - I met with Steve Fetsch who edited the interviews into segments and fashioned a short rough-cut video, and Bruce Dalzell who composed and performed music; and 5) final cut – the script was refined using additional archival photographs and video footage.

Literature Review

Memory and narrative are integral components of oral history and have long been central concerns for a wide range of academic disciplines. From literature and history to ethnology and social and behavioral sciences, each in its different way integrates memory and narrative. To these we may add sense of place. There is, in fact, a growing body of contemporary theory concerned with the multi-layered nature of place: its geographic,
social, moral, and economic qualities; its promise of order, functional and metaphysical
(“to know one’s place”); and its designation of not only a location but also a state of
being (e.g. Hiss, 1990; Jacobson, 2002; Mills, 1995; Ryden, 1993; Thayer, 2003; and
Tuan, 1977).

A sense of place is a consciousness of one’s physical surroundings and is a
fundamental human experience. It seems to be especially strong where people in a region
perceive a collective awareness of place and express it in their cultural forms. Cultural
forms encompass narrative, musical, material, and customary expressions of regional
culture and regional consciousness (Allen, 1990). A place is a site or location which is
first and foremost something that is perceptually bounded but holds
social/cultural/emotional significance or attachment, for an individual, or specific groups
of people in society. The size of the “place” is a function of the practices that define it as
bounded, or determined by a geographic scale (John, 2005). Regarding the present study,
then, the physical surroundings of Appalachian Ohio provide a visible connection with
the past and reveal much about the attitudes and the lifestyles of those who altered the
landscapes. Our impressions and interpretations of what we see in today’s Appalachian
Ohio are aided by oral accounts from people who have lived through these times as well
as early contemporaneous written descriptions, historical maps, and vintage photographs
that show just how change has occurred. Few places provide better laboratories to study
the ongoing effects of society on nature, and vice versa, than coal mining landscapes such
as those found in Appalachian Ohio (Francaviglia, 1991).

Critics of oral history argue that oral history is limited by questions of validity and
reliability wrought by its anecdotal method. In this connection reliability can be defined
as the consistency with which an individual will tell the same story about the same events on a number of different occasions. Validity refers to the degree of conformity between the reports of the event and the event itself as recorded by other primary source material such as documents, photographs, diaries, and letters. While it is conceivable that an oral report might be a true description of an event, its validity cannot really be tested unless it can be measured against some body of evidence. Without such evidence, an isolated description of an event becomes a bit of esoterica, a collage of arcane experiences, the worth of which cannot be properly evaluated (Hoffman, 1984).

Donald Ritchie cautions oral historians in his book, Doing Oral History, to treat oral evidence as carefully as any other form of evidence. For example, an interviewee’s remarks may be self-serving; he may remember events selectively, or recall only events that cast him in a good light, and may seem to get the better of opponents. He may jumble names and dates and confuse people and places. Enough bad oral histories have been done to satisfy the strongest critics. Yet Ritchie argues that enough good interviews have been conducted to validate the process. He writes:

…The skeptics distrust eyewitness accounts as too subjective. When historians describe evidence as “objective,” they mean not only unbiased but also unchanging, such as documents that remain the same over time even if interpretations of them shift. “Subjective” suggests a partial and partisan point of view, less reliable because it is subject to alteration over time. When the oral historian Alessandro Portelli wrote of the need for broad-based interviewing that would “tell us not what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, what they now think they did,” he was criticized for passivity and “unsystematic” reasoning. Some social historians have accused oral historians of swallowing whole the stories that informants tell them. They argue that a truer “people’s history” must be based on statistical analysis and other objective data rather than on subjective individual testimony. The correlated assumption is that the historian, with hindsight and thorough research, perceives past events more clearly than those who lived through them. Or as David Lodge asserted in his autobiographical novel Out of the Shelter (1989), history is the verdict “of those who weren’t there on those who were” (Richtie, 1995, 8).¹

Properly done, an oral history helps to interpret and define written records and makes sense out of the most obscure decisions and events (Ritchie 1995, 94).

Although scholars sometimes denigrate anecdotes as the antithesis of analysis, oral accounts can be actually informative, offering their analysis in a vivid and colorful manner and enlivening a narrative. The interviewer must have an eye and ear for a lively and believable anecdote that can make a narrator’s points both memorable and compact. Mixing anecdotal information with hard data or historical documents, the researcher can re-create a colorful as well as convincing portrait of the past (Ritchie 1995). Those who work with memory in the form of the oral history interviews have come to acknowledge their role in, and contribution to, a sense of place. These memories contain and are contained by a narrative which orders, links, and makes sense of the past, the present, and the future (Chamberlain & Thompson, 1998; Frisch, 1991; Portelli, 1998).

The historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., noted that remembered dialogue helps to “impart immediacy to narrative” but warned that such information should only be used when the remarks are “plausibly supported by context or other evidence.” He added: “I have extended this tolerance to oral history and employed the literary convention with the same critical caution I hope illustrious predecessors have applied to written documents. It remains a convention” (Ritchie 1995, 99-100).

Some oral historians define oral history as simply the living memory of the past (Slim 1995). Morris and Ritchie assert that oral history records both the purposeful and the accidental and offers the interviewee a chance to assess why they did what they did
will most likely capture the peculiarities of the history of our time (Morris 1992, Ritchie 1995). Oral historian Michael Frisch in his book, *A Shared Authority*, argues that what is most compelling about oral and public history is a capacity to redefine and redistribute intellectual authority, so that it might be shared more broadly in historical research and communications. He asks the question: Who, really, is the author of an oral history, whether this is a single interview or an edited book-length narrative? He argues that we need to understand the ways in which authorship is shared, how interviews can actually be historiographical collaborators as distinct from historical data or raw material. The study of history, he believes, is not so much the study of “what happened” as it is the study of “how things change.” He is concerned with the dynamics of cultural power and what oral and public history contribute not only to interpreting our world, but also to changing it (Frisch, 1991, xxiii). He states: “...oral history emerges as a powerful tool for discovering, exploring, and evaluating the nature of the process of historical memory – how people make sense of their past, how they connect individual experience and its social context, how the past becomes part of the present, and how people use it to interpret their lives and the world around them” (Frisch, 1991, 188).

Central to oral history theory is the notion that certain history thought to be unavailable can be recovered by interviews (Baum and Dunaway, 1984). Oral historian Renato Rosaldo warned oral historians to avoid assuming that collecting oral source materials is an end in itself, and to recognize it as part of a larger effort to reconstruct the past. He maintains that oral testimony is an indispensable aspect of historical understanding and the study of culture (Dudley, 1998; Rosaldo 1980). Contemporary scholars maintain that many written accounts are based on oral sources and at the core of
oral history is the combination of the prevalence of the narrative form on the one hand, and the search for a connection between biography and history, between individual experience and the transformations of society, on the other (Portelli 1998; Slim 1995). A person’s account of his own life experiences, then, stresses the connections rather than the differences.

**Methodology**

**Video Interview Process**

Guidelines and principles of the Oral History Association were followed and organized in checklist form for conducting, processing, and preserving oral history interviews\(^2\). Records included a life history form, field notes form for record-keeping, and a list of interview questions (Appendix A). Interview questions and answers were transcribed and recorded (Appendix B). The Athens Public Library and the Chauncey Public Library (branches of the Nelsonville Public Library Services) provided equipment including a digital video camcorder, tripod, backdrop cloth and lighting. Once approval from the Ohio University Institutional Review Board was received, a series of interviews and informal sessions with Anderson were videotaped and transcribed.

A documentation search was conducted to provide contextual material to supplement Anderson’s testimony. A variety of resources was videotaped and brought to the video editor, Steve Fetsch: excerpts from area newspapers included *The Jackson Herald* and *The Columbus Dispatch* reports from the 1930s; government documents, government documents,

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\(^2\) I received oral history training at the 2003 Oral History Institute at Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, an annual three-day instructional program sponsored by the Ohio Historical Society, the Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museums, the Ohio Humanities Council, and the Rural Life Center at Kenyon College.
literature, and photographs archived at the Wayne National Forest; Athens Ranger District and photographs from the Robert E. and Jean R. Mahn Center for Archives and Special Collections at Ohio University. Peter Woyar, Forestry Consultant and Retired Professor of Forest Industries at Hocking College, Nelsonville, provided documentation and photographs titled, “Preliminary Report on the Zaleski Rehabilitation and Forest Project of Vinton County Ohio, September, 1934.” Other photographs were retrieved from internet sources including the Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Farm Security Administration – Office of War Information (FSA/OWI) Photograph Collection, The Ohio State University’s Ohio Agricultural Research & Development Center Forestry Image Collection, and the Minnesota Historical Society.

Video Editing Process

Video editor Steve Fetsch carried out editing tasks on a personal computer (PC) using primarily Adobe Premiere 6.5 software and Matrox RT 2500 video capture software. Segments having complex animation were composed in Adobe After Effects 4.0 and/or Macromedia Fireworks MX. Other software was used for various media creation and management purposes.

Twenty-eight videotapes of footage (including three interviews with Anderson), newspaper clips, landscape scenes and archival photographs were reviewed and captured to the PC, and stored in low-quality format. Project themes were sketched out on paper and explored for possible use depending on how well they illustrated thesis objectives. Potentially useful video clips were sorted into categories, such as “Forest Growth,”
“Wildlife,” “Social Mores,” and “Professional Career.” Final themes were identified and video clips were roughly assembled.

After several weeks of review, segments from three interviews were roughly organized as a story focusing on Anderson’s reporting in the 1930s of the forest land purchases and subsequent reforestation of Southeastern Ohio. I conducted a fourth and final videotaped interview with Anderson regarding the Wayne National Forest and integrated footage into the storyline. Music was composed and recorded for the project by Bruce Dalzell and incorporated into the production by Fetsch.

Many story angles were considered until the basic story line was pared down to the most essential elements and interview segments placed in their likely final order. After consulting with Dr. Mould, my thesis director, Fetsch removed unnecessary clips; defined the story sections; “batch captured” (to improve video & sound quality) video clips; developed title screens; and made some After Effects composites. The compositing process included masking techniques and mixed elements from different sources as in the case of maps positioned behind the narrator. Video footage from specific geographic locations and the fourth interview, as well as additional archival photographs, were incorporated. The composited video was refined, the audio improved and music timing adjusted. The final project was then recorded to a VHS tape; video compression to a more efficient format was delivered to me on a CD-ROM.
CHAPTER THREE
Historical Background

A general overview of landscape change in Appalachian Ohio adds further context and meaning to the video production. What kinds of trees used to grow in the woodlands and valleys? What kinds of industry were responsible for large-scale tree removal? Was the region devoid of beaver and deer at one time? How large was the iron-furnace region, when did the industry die out, and why? Why did the federal government want to establish a forest here? Applying an assertion made in the previous chapter, Appalachian Ohio is a place that has social/cultural/emotional significance not only for individuals like Anderson, but for specific groups of people throughout its settlement history. A summary of major changes in landscape history, as well as descriptions of the kinds of people – their attitudes and lifestyles - who occupied this place, will illuminate the past and reveal answers to such questions.

Appalachian Ohio Landscape Change (before 1919)

Intense, widespread clearing of Appalachian Ohio forests during the 19th and 20th centuries profoundly altered a landscape that 18th century land survey reports and early diaries suggest contained a wealth of natural resources, including fertile valley bottoms, extensive forests, and plentiful water (Anderson, Bain, and Buckley, 2000; Dyer, 2001). At the time of Euro-American settlement in the late 1700s, Ohio was 95% forested and many areas were dominated by large individuals of white oak (Quercus alba), hickory (Carya spp.), and beech (Fagus grandifolia) (Dyer, 2001).
Current anthropological and comparative studies of prehistoric tribal formation in the Hocking River Valley in Southern Ohio describe how, by the ninth millennium B.C., descendants of the original prehistoric immigrants migrated about 12,000 years ago to this region for economic and social reasons. They entered and settled next to deep river channels and on remnant terraces caused by major Pleistocene glacial advances from the north that extended into the northwestern section of the valley (Figure 8). Food acquisition centered on hunting and gathering wild sources was widely dispersed across the landscape. Over time a greater permanence of place within specific river valleys was established, and basic economic, social, and political ways of life began to change, predicated on a growing dependence on gardening. By the end of the first millennium A.D., gardening of local species yielded to larger-scale agriculture involving the introduced crops maize and beans (Abrams & Freter, 2005).

Late prehistoric agriculture and land use studies in the Hocking and mid-Ohio Valleys indicate that, beginning ca. A.D. 700, various Native American communities were attracted to floodplain pockets of rich agricultural soil along rivers and their tributaries (Wymer, 2005). According to settlement data specific to the Hocking Valley, the vast majority of communities resided along the main stem of the Hocking River with only sporadic settlement along tributaries (Wakeman, 2005).
Botanical research in Athens County by Richard Rypma, and later by Dee Anne Wymer, provides detailed description of characteristic forest tree species found along floodplain terraces and higher ground throughout the region (Rypma 1961; Wymer 1984, 1990). In the upper floodplain, the beech-sugar maple association was prominent on well-drained terraced hillsides. The oak-hickory forest was composed of white oak, black oak (*Q. velutina*), red oak (*Q. rubra*), and shagbark hickory (*C. ovata*). Associated species included pignut and mockernut hickories (*C. tomentosa*), black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboretum*), and white ash (*Fraxinus americana*). The understory species within this forest were most frequently dogwood, sassafras, redbud, arrowwood, slippery
elm, dwarf sumac, wild grape, greenbrier, black huckleberry, and foxglove (Abrams and Freter, 2005).

Chestnuts (*Castanea dentata*) and chestnut oaks (*Q. prinus*) were found on sandy ridgetops along with other oak species. Areas with oak forests included black oak, chestnut oak, and white oak with sporadic occurrence of scarlet oak (*Q. coccinea*) and chinquapin oak (*Q. muehlenbergii*). Understory species were relatively sparse, dominated by heath family taxa interspersed with the occasional dogwood (*Cornus florida*) or serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*) (Abrams and Freter, 2005)

The Hocking Valley was populated by a wide range of faunal species, although these too have fluctuated through time. In general, rivers supported a diversity of species including fish (e.g., perch, gar, drum, and catfish), shellfish, amphibians (e.g., frogs), reptiles (e.g., turtles and snakes), migratory fowl (ducks and geese), and small river mammals (otters and beavers). The forests of the terraces and hills were populated by large mammals, of which white-tailed deer, bear, elk, and bobcat were most useful to the human population. Smaller mammals – including groundhog, squirrel, opossum, and fox – were also important resources (Abrams and Freter, 2005).

During the 1780s and immediately preceding European-American contact, Native American woodland agriculture of the mid-Ohio Valley remained confined to large streams and river valleys where population density is believed to have been relatively low. Maize agriculture had become significant by this time, and farming was limited principally to bottomlands. Wild food sources supplemented human diets. Although human populations were in a state of flux, the Shawnee, Delaware, and other groups classified by anthropologists as tribes, occupied the area in the late 1700s (Dyer, 2001,
Abrams and Freter, 2005). The landscape is described as having a largely forest mosaic model, in which cleared agricultural fields along terraces and the more level uplands were balanced by forests in the uplands and on ridges (Freter 2005).

Beginning in the late 18th century, farming in Appalachian Ohio, carried out in areas with wide, flat valleys, supported a mostly subsistence, family-based rural economy. Early settlers arriving via the Ohio River and its tributaries or by the overland routes used abandoned Native American clearings to plant their crops. They also cleared trees from the lower slopes. This pattern of wooded upper slopes situated above farmed and pastured lower lands has been common over the last two centuries. The impact of such woodland agriculture farming practices on the soils and vegetation is stark.

According to Annual Reports of the Secretary of State, an eight-county region in Appalachian Ohio (Athens, Gallia, Hocking, Lawrence, Meigs, Morgan, Vinton, and Washington) was about 70% forested in 1850, and only about 50% forested by 1870. This percentage declined steadily, dropping to its lowest point - below 20% - by 1910. Forest cover has been increasing throughout the 20th century for this area: 1942: 34%; 1952, 50%; 1968, 63%; 1979, 62%; and 1991, 68% (See Dyer, 2001 for references).

According to research derived from presettlement conditions and forest inventory and analysis data, geographer James Dyer concludes that although almost 70% of the region is forested today, the second-growth forest has witnessed a decrease in oak and hickory species and an increase in sugar maple, red maple, and many smaller-sized early successional species. Despite the significant shift in forest composition and structure, species in general seem to be occupying similar positions in the present-day landscape compared to the pre-settlement forest (Dyer, 2001).
Because of limited transportation access and continued westward expansion, small-scale woodland agriculture characterized the region until extractive industries gained prominence (Anderson, Bain, and Buckley, 2000; Dyer, 2001). As Anne Kelly Knowles explains in her book about Welsh frontier settlement in Ohio, titled, *Calvinists Incorporated*, one of the first was the iron-making industry, which was centered in the Hanging Rock region of Southern Ohio and Northern Kentucky (Figure 9) (Knowles, 1997). Although a consortium led by early industrialist Richard Deering built the first furnace in this region in 1818, the real growth of the industry occurred in the 1840s and 1850s (Anderson, 2001). In a roughly 2,500-square-mile district extending from Hocking County, Ohio, to Kentucky’s Carter and Boyd counties, all of the necessary natural resources for making iron were available: a large outcropping of ore, limestone, extensive forests for conversion into charcoal, and numerous streams and rivers (Anderson, 2001).
Because charcoal iron production was dependent upon large supplies of timber as a fuel source, the industry brought with it significant environmental alteration. By most historical accounts, the production of charcoal devastated the region’s hardwood forests,
resulting in the clearing of vast amounts of land for other uses, such as farming and strip mining (Anderson, 2001). Geographers estimate, for example, that on average each furnace in the Hanging Rock region consumed about 300 acres of woodland per year. Since there were 43 furnaces that were in continuous operation by 1852, a conservative estimate amounts to 13,000 acres of woodland cut each year over a period of at least 50 years during the industry’s heyday (Anderson, 2001; Knowles, 1997). Clear-cutting of timber for charcoal production left entire hillsides devoid of vegetation, making them less desirable for agricultural pursuits. The continued use of specific sites drastically decreased soil fertility, as well, resulting in the creation of sterile patches of ground, supported by little or no plant life (Davis, 2000). Along with unregulated hunting, one consequence of this destruction was the disappearance of many animals. Beaver that once flourished in Ohio, for example, were hunted so much between 1750 and 1800, that by 1830 they were thought to have been eliminated from Ohio (ODNR, 2005).

By the 1880s, charcoal iron production was in sharp decline as a result of dwindling supplies of raw materials such as ore and timber, and diminishing demand due primarily to competition from other producing areas, such as Minnesota’s Mesabi Range. Historical geographer Tim Anderson asserts that for 130 years, between 1750 and 1880, the manufacture of iron and iron products in charcoal- and coal-fired furnaces and forges in particular locales in (greater) Appalachia as well as along the East Coast, accounted for a significant portion of America’s early industrial output. In the process, the presence of

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More than 100 years later, a lone beaver was found in Belmont County in the northern tip of Appalachian Ohio. The same fate befell the white-tailed deer, perhaps one of Ohio’s best-known wildlife species. By the early 1900s white-tailed deer were extremely rare in the state; becoming absent from the state for twenty years. Between the 1920s and 1930s, limited stocking combined with the natural movement of deer from neighboring states into Ohio, and the establishment and strict enforcement of hunting laws promoted the increase of population to the point that today, deer can be found in all of Ohio’s 88 counties (ODNR, 2005).
the iron industry appreciably, perhaps irrevocably, modified and altered the natural environment and cultural landscapes of such locales (Anderson, 2001). Such was the scale of alteration that environmental historian Donald Edward Davis in his book, *Where There Are Mountains: An Environmental History of the Southern Appalachians*, maintains that the production of charcoal iron was responsible for more environmental destruction than any other industrial activity in the antebellum Southern Appalachians (Anderson 2001; Davis, 2000).

The short-lived boom-and-bust nature of iron production in the Hanging Rock region mirrored coal, another major resource extraction operation in Appalachia (Figure 10) (T. Anderson, 2001, Knowles, 1997). Forests were so lush and wood so plentiful, as well as clean and easy to come by, that early settlers preferred wood over coal. Dug from numerous streambeds, coal was used to heat homes, but was preferred for other uses such as blacksmithing and salt boiling (Beatty and Stone, 1984). In ensuing years, coal was valued as a fuel for iron furnaces, crick and pottery kilns and steam engines. After about 1840, coal gradually began to replace charcoal in the iron-making furnaces. As geographer Geoffrey Buckley explains:

> Opening the Appalachian coalfields was no easy feat. Nor was it achieved overnight. For aspiring “captains of industry,” there were great financial risks involved. Substantial capital investment was required to survey and purchase coal lands, to construct mines and provide for the needs of a large workforce, and to establish a reliable and cost-effective means of delivering this bulky and relatively low-value good to market. For many, the road to success led instead to financial ruin... (Buckley, 2004)
That same year within Appalachian Ohio, the Hocking Canal in Appalachian Ohio linked the city of Nelsonville with the Ohio-Erie Canal and in September of that year the first boatload of coal was shipped north. Historian Robert Daniel points out that the canal “was of limited use to coal mines not adjacent to the canal, for such coal had to be loaded into wagons at the mine, hauled to the canal, then reloaded onto the barges; furthermore, during the winter months, when the demand for coal was at a peak, the canal was often frozen, traffic at a standstill. Although far better than the river route to New Orleans, the Hocking Canal route required repeated loading and unloading as cargoes made their way north and est to New York City” (Daniel, 1997). Describing the decline
of canal use and subsequent rise of coal mining in the region, local historians Beatty and Stone describe:

... [The] coal was hauled from the mines to the canal docks by horses and oxen. In the winter when the canal was frozen, the coal was dumped nearby until there was a thaw. In 1857, 2 million bushels of coal were mined in the Nelsonville area and the output increased almost steadily for sixty years…The decline of the canal and growth of the railroad did not disrupt the coal industry… every time a new rail line entered or was extended into the county, some entrepreneur was there, ready to open a coal mine, lay out a town (probably named after himself) import several hundred miners, and start another operation…Soon after the end of the Civil War the Marietta and Cincinnati Railroad – always ready to encourage development along its line – ran spurs into the undeveloped areas, coal banks were opened by 1867, and new communities started… In 1870, 13,141 tons of coal were shipped from Athens County; in 1871, (after the railroad reached York Township in 1870) 262,000 tons were exported, only 74,000 of those going by canal. This increase in coal exportation continued almost steadily for fifty years, but by rail, not by canal (Beatty and Stone, 1984, 81-82).

The arrival of the railroads and the emergence of coal as a valuable energy source would signal a new domination of the region’s economy. During the post-Civil War era, new railroads connected the coal mining areas in Appalachian Ohio with key cities such as Toledo, Gary, and Chicago on the Great Lakes (Crowell, 1995; Grant 2000).

Between 1800 and 1860, annual coal production increased significantly from 100,000 tons to 20,000,000 tons, as it provided energy to the emerging steel industry and steam engines. But 1900, production topped 243,000,000 tons, making the United States the world’s leading producer (Buckley, 2004). Spurred on by Ohio’s growing industrialism and increased mechanization in the mines, production soared during the last year of World War I, reaching nearly 48,000,000 tons. Prior to World War II, virtually all coal mined in the United States came from the Appalachian fields. Although strip mining was officially reported in the state of Ohio as early as 1914, underground mining was the principal method used during this time. As was the case across the Appalachian
Coal in Appalachian Ohio left its mark on the physical environment from the outset. In addition to abandoned company towns, gob piles, and derelict equipment one often associates with historic mining districts, the coal industry left behind a legacy of environmental alteration (Anderson, Bain, and Buckley, 2000). Little remains today, for example, of San Toy, a mining town in Perry County, auctioned off in 1914 and bought by the Sunday Creek Coal Company. After the auction, the new firm possessed several hundred houses, a large store, two mines, a hospital and theater and property considered the most valuable mine property in Ohio (Daniel, 1997).

The impact on the landscape mirrors the impact on those charged with extracting the “black diamonds” from the earth. There has always been great personal risk for the miners and their families from mine accidents, periodic layoffs and the threat of black lung disease, leading geographers to conclude that coal mining in Appalachia has had as profound an impact on the region’s inhabitants as it has had on the region’s forest and water resources (Buckley, 2004). Richard Francaviglia reminds us that: If every culture needs ruins to emphasize its past accomplishments and its relationship to nature, then our once-prosperous mining towns are among the most powerful of our cultural symbols (Francaviglia, 1991).

National Forest Legislation and Outcomes

The beginning of a federal forest in Appalachian Ohio may be traced back as far as the Weeks Act of March 1, 1911 and the Clarke-McNary Act of 1924. The Weeks Act
outlined the federal government’s first major national forest purchase program, and together with the Clarke-McNary Act provided for the protection of navigable streams through the maintenance of forest cover on their watersheds, promoted the cooperation of the federal and state governments in fire protection, and enabled the federal government to purchase and acquire watershed lands (A. G. Hall, G.H. Hieronymus, and Harry H. Kylie, 1937; Lavelle 1985). Before this time, national forests were located in the western United States in the area of public domain. The Weeks Act extended the forest system to the East, causing the federal government to become a landowner and administrator in areas that had previously experienced only private landownership (Dana, 1956; Lavelle, 1985).

Federal Forest Reconnaissance in Appalachian Ohio (1919)

One of the earliest indications of the consideration of land purchase in Ohio for a national forest can be found in a National Forest Reservation Commission official’s letter in the fall of 1919. Acting Assistant Forester, William W. Ashe, the agency’s first secretary, wrote to the State Forester of Ohio that due to the fact that there was a considerable area of very rough land in southern Ohio close to the Ohio River, the purchase of land there was desirable and seemed to come within the scope of the Weeks Act (McConnell, 1963)

As a result of further correspondence during the ensuing four years and the 1923 reconnaissance of a proposed purchase unit by botanist William W. Ashe, approximately 33,000 acres were surveyed along the Ohio River in Scioto and Adams Counties about fifteen miles west of Portsmouth and about ninety miles southeast of Cincinnati. In his
report that summer, Ashe described nearly all the landscape of the proposed purchase unit as “cut-over” forest cover, a third of which was “high forest consisting largely of culled stands mixed with varying amounts of second growth sapling and pole timber, while nearly one-half of the area is heavy old timber at present in process of being cut over.” Soil erosion within the surveyed area was limited to the very steep lands where tobacco was cultivated or places where the forest had been burned several times, and lumbering had been carried out intermittently for many years (McConnell, 1963).

The following spring the matter of a proposed federal unit in southern Ohio was soundly rejected, however, by the Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station. In a letter addressed to the Chief of the Forest Service dated May 1, 1924, the Ohio State Forester wrote, “…inasmuch as Ohio has such small amounts of contiguous idle and waste lands, it should devote these areas to State Forests and State Forest Parks. This feeling is also based upon the fact that the State has now embarked on an established policy of acquisition” (McConnell, 1963). Quashed for now, the proposal was revived a decade later only after the nation experienced a seemingly unstoppable economic depression compounded by what was by now recognized as a monumental environmental disaster: widespread flooding, ruinous soil erosion, an intense drought resulting in a dustbowl in mid-America, and a profusion of forest fires (Cornebise, 2004).

**Federal Purchase Units in Appalachian Ohio (1934)**

The issue of federal purchase units in Ohio was revisited during the early part of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s administration (1933-1945) (McConnell, 1963). In 1933 President Roosevelt took an aggressive political approach to the continuing Great
Depression and transformed the nation with his New Deal, a doctrine in which the government assumed responsibility for insuring economic prosperity and the well-being of all citizens. Proponents of the New Deal sought to solve practical problems of business stagnation, unemployment, and the unequal distribution of economic resources. As Robert Gottlieb writes, Roosevelt was sympathetic to environmental issues but had to give priority to more pressing economic concerns. The management of natural resources and protection of the natural environment were largely subsumed under the economic development policies established to deal with unemployment and the depression (Gottlieb, 1993; Kline, 2000).

Roosevelt seems to have been a lover of nature at heart and expressed this feeling publicly. He combined his support for conservation with the problem of tackling the economic depression, seeking to “…use our natural resources not as a thing apart but as something that is interwoven with industry, labor, finance, taxation, agriculture, homes, recreation, good citizenship. The results of this interweaving will have a greater influence on the future American standard of living than the rest of our economics put together” (Kline, 2000; Nash, 1968). The idea that policies for one predicament could simultaneously solve the problems of another was a major contribution to American politics (Kline, 2000).

During the 1930s the federal government established a program to buy lands and farms that were no longer productive or whose owners could no longer afford to operate them. Falling land prices were a threat to all those who had a mortgage loan on their farms, and many mortgages were foreclosed (Clawson, 1968). In 1934 the federal
government began purchasing farmland in Appalachian Ohio for the purpose of decreasing soil erosion and establishing forests (McConnell, 1963).

The deteriorated conditions which this initiative addressed are well illustrated in a group of letters dated September 1934 and sent to W.S. Bromley, the State Forest Ranger at Zaleski in northeastern Vinton County, where a 10,000-acre rehabilitation and forest project was being considered as part of a federal “submarginal,” (over-exploited) land program. Various community leaders including the county auditor, an erosion specialist, an extension agronomist, and an area businessman, wrote about increasingly high tax delinquency, low property values, and unproductive and shallow soils. Welcoming the rehabilitation project, these community leaders affirmed it would bestow many benefits on the region: savings to the county, restoring the proper condition of the soil, providing jobs, reviving the lumber and sawmill industry as well as bringing fiscal benefits. Even the local school superintendent supported the proposal, which he believed lead to the consolidation of rural one-room schools (Preliminary Report on The Zaleski Rehabilitation and Forest Project of Vinton County Ohio, 1934).

However, it is not clear what effect the relocation project would have on the residents. The proposed project included approximately 14,500 acres of many tax-delinquent properties about 15 miles northeast of McArthur, the county seat (Figure 11) Madison, Knox, and Brown townships were the three under consideration as well as the least populated. It was estimated that there were about 1,550 people or about 300 families living in the area. Revealing cultural prejudice of the era, the project summary describes the kinds of residents as follows:

The racial stock is Scoth-Irish [sic], and German, and there are some Mulattos also in this district. From the standard of living, delinquency,
illegitimacy [sic], and the amount of disease of veneral [sic] origin, one would assume that the character of the stock is much depleted... The conclusion would seem to be that since there are no industries left in this area, and since the larger coal deposits are woked [sic] out and the small mines remaining are unable to compete successfully with others, and since the land is of such a nature that an adequate living can not be taken from it with ordinary agricultural practices that the population in this area will never be self supporting under present conditions (Preliminary Report on The Zaleski Rehabilitation and Forest Project of Vinton County Ohio, 1934).

The report is clear about the poor condition of a landscape and its inability to support farm families adequately, the rising amount of tax delinquencies, outward migration of people to better living conditions elsewhere.

Figure 11
Map of Tax Delinquent Acreage and Percentage of Each Section Used as Farmland (Preliminary Report on The Zaleski Rehabilitation and Forest Project of Vinton County Ohio, 1934).
Besides the Zaleski Forest Rehabilitation Project, two others - the Southeastern Ohio Soil Erosion Control Project and the Ross-Hocking Forest Project - were initiated under the provisions of the 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act, the 1935 Emergency Relief Appropriations Act, and Title III of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act of 1937. Total acreage for each project was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT</th>
<th>ACREAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southeastern Ohio Soil Erosion Control</td>
<td>4,842.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaleski Forest Rehabilitation</td>
<td>18,560.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross-Hocking Forest</td>
<td>14,996.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>38,400.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Ross-Hocking and the southeastern projects were adjacent to what would become the federal forest boundary. The Zaleski project overlapped a portion (parts of four townships) of the Raccoon Creek Division of the McArthur unit. All three projects were covered by a long-term Cooperative and License Agreement between the United States and the Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station. It covered a period of 50 years from 1939, with an automatic renewal for three successive terms of fifteen years. Under the terms of this agreement, the Regional Forester was responsible for carrying out all the functions and activities⁴ (McConnell, 1963).

The first purchases of federal land in Appalachian Ohio, called “the Ohio Purchase Units” for the national forest boundary were initiated in 1935 and headquartered

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⁴ In 1953 the three projects were conveyed to the State of Ohio; original deeds were delivered to the Director of Natural Resources in 1957 (McConnell, 1963).
in Columbus. The State of Ohio, for its part, was willing and anxious to share in the national program of expanding and enlarging the national forests and purchase units on submarginal lands. Part of the original State Consent Bill as introduced in the State Legislature in 1934 reads:

Section 3. This Act is hereby declared to be an emergency measure; its enactment into law is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, safety, and health of the inhabitants of the State of Ohio. The necessity therefore… (Is) set forth herein as follows:

The United States Government has allotted funds for expenditures during this fiscal year on the establishment of National Forests and the utilization of submarginal land for this purpose.

The United States Government is immediately proceeding to consider areas in various States in the Union for this purpose and is now ready to consider various actions in the State of Ohio.

It is necessary that an enabling act be enacted granting this privilege and authorizing the proper authorities of the State to cooperate before the Federal Government can proceed with the expenditure of any funds for such projects within the borders of Ohio (McConnell, 1963)

Field examination covering five proposed purchase units in Ohio was made by S.D. Anderson of the Regional Forester’s staff during early fall of 1934. The original goal of the federal government was to acquire 1,464,000 acres in Southern Ohio. The gross areas and names of the five units were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNIT</th>
<th>ACRES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muskingum Unit</td>
<td>282,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hocking Valley Unit</td>
<td>355,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McArthur Unit</td>
<td>285,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Scioto Unit</td>
<td>287,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symmes Creek Unit</td>
<td>255,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1,464,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A *Jackson Herald* news report dated December 18, 1934, summarized the proposed plan in the Jackson area:

A comprehensive plan to purchase hundreds of acres of Jackson county’s infertile and low-yielding farm land, remove it from agricultural use and move the families there from to [sic] more productive regions was disclosed Monday in press dispatches received from Washington.

A survey is already being made locally with this idea in mind and very little chance of a change in the plans of the Federal government is seen.

The exact location of the tract to be purchased in Jackson county is known but will not be announced at the present time. It comprises 15 square miles of the most barren land in this area, the residents of this area consisting mostly of relief cases.

The proposal, which will affect several Southern Ohio counties, was made in connection with the national resources board’s proposal to President Roosevelt to retire gradually such sub-marginal lands in the United States at the rate of 5,000,000 acres a year for the next 15 years. The southern Ohio area would be one of the first to come under the plan.

Areas recommended for retirement, the board said, are ‘characterized by incredibly low standards of living.” [Sic] The soil generally is deteriorating, most of the areas are sparsely populated so that the cost of providing schools and roads is excessive and relief costs are high (*Jackson Herald*, 1934).

In January 1935, recommendations were submitted and approved by the Chief Forester’s Office as well as the National Forest Reservation Commission. The headquarters for the Wayne Purchase Units was established in Columbus around the same time with Byron Groesbeck as the first Forest Supervisor. In addition, approval of the five purchase units, except the Raccoon Division of the McArthur Unit, was obtained from the Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station in February 1935 and from the Governor in April (Lavelle, 1985; McConnell 1963). The headline dated Friday, March 29, 1935 from the *Columbus Dispatch* reads: “Southeastern Ohio National Park Plan Being Developed: U.S. Embarks on Program of Purchasing 1,464,000 Acres of Timber and Marginal Lands; 14 Counties Involved in Huge Scheme” (*Columbus Dispatch*, 1935).
During the latter part of 1936, federal land purchases greatly diminished due to monetary constraints on a national level, which resulted in the adoption by the National Forest Reservation Commission of a rule limiting the amount of approved purchases. This rule was abrogated two years later, as it became evident that the federal government could not carry out its intention in many states, including Ohio, as long as it was in effect. The Forest Service was instructed to come up with a plan and make recommendations to the Commission for an appropriate future acquisition program. Shortly thereafter, a comprehensive management plan was produced that created priority zones for forest development (McConnell, 1963).

**Priority Zone Plan (1939)**

In 1939, the National Forest Reserve Commission approved a plan for the establishment of priority zones of purchase ‘A’, ‘B’, and ‘C’, explained as follows:

1. Initial purchases in Zone A of the Muskingum, Hocking Valley, Symmes Creek, and Little Scioto Units; also in the McArthur Purchase Unit if area was suitable for Experimental Forest and was needed by Central States Forest Experiment Station.
2. Extension of purchase activity in Zone B in any or all units as local conditions demand and as funds are available after completion of 40 to 50% of acquirable land in Zone A.
3. Extension of purchase activity in Zone C in all or any of the units as local conditions demand and as funds are available (McConnell, 1963).

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5 The 20% limitation rule states that approval would not thereafter be given specific purchases in units in which the acreage under federal control was less than 20% of the total purchasable areas. A further rule that no additional purchase units would be approved by the Commission until the funds available for land purchase were sufficient to finance land purchases in such units without undue retardation of the purchase work in the units previously established. This affected the five Ohio units since fewer than 24,000 acres was approved for purchase at the time the 20% rule was established.
During the ensuing two years it became evident that minor adjustments should be made in the boundaries. Ten years after the Priority Zone Forest management plan was adopted, the Chief’s Office requested the Region to consider grouping the five purchase units into a single National Forest unit for the purpose of administration, accounting, and reporting. Formal approval for the new “Wayne National Forest Purchase Unit” was given by the Forest Reservation Commission in February 1951 and by Administrative Order of the Acting Secretary of Agriculture on September 4, 1951 (McConnell, 1963).

The Civilian Conservation Corps (1933-42)

The Federal Level

One of the many examples of Roosevelt’s value-added approach to national relief policies was the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), one of the New Deal’s most successful agencies and one of the most extensive social relief programs in U.S. history. The CCC was established to combat unemployment by hiring unmarried young men to work on conservation and resource development projects, such as soil conservation, flood control, and wildlife protection, in exchange for food, lodging, other necessities, and a small monthly salary (Kline, 2000). Federal legislation was signed into law on March 31, 1933 to authorize the establishment of the Emergency Conservation Work Program and to give the president broad discretionary powers in implementing the plan (Cornebise 2004; McEntee 1940).

The scope, complexity, and often quite substantial undertakings of CCC projects were striking. The Wall Street Journal, opined that “the CCC is one part of the New Deal that we can all heartily approve” (Cornebise, 2004). More than 3.4 million men, called
“junior enrollees” between the ages of 18 and 25 (later 17 to 23) had been enrolled in 4,500 camps by the time the program ended in 1942. Total enrollment figures include “locally enrolled men,” or “LEMS”, who were also employed in the camps. These were experienced, previously unemployed, and physically fit woodsmen and other professionals residing in the vicinity of the work projects. By using them, the CCC camps better fitted into the local scene and headed off widespread local discontent and possible confrontations that might otherwise have occurred. Often skilled in the use of heavy machinery as well as work in the forests and on the land in general, the LEM’s numbers eventually rose to 35,250, though initially 24,375 were provided for. These men were hired at standard Civil Service rates of pay, and helped make the CCC a success (Cornebise, 2004).

Alfred Emile Cornebise in his book, The CCC Chronicles: Camp Newspapers of the Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933 – 1942, describes the typical work week at many of the camps:

…at six o’clock in the morning, the men were awakened by a bugle call or the whistle of the senior leader. Calisthenics took up 15 minutes before breakfast at 6:45 a.m. The work call came at 7:45 A.M. By the time the men left for work, they had cleaned their rooms and policed the grounds in military fashion. They proceeded to their day’s work, working for eight hours with a half-hour lunch, their food being brought to them in the field if they worked some distance from the camp. If they lost work time because of the weather, they normally made it up on Saturday. The workday ended at four o’clock, and the men returned to camp. They then shed their blue denim work clothes, cleaned up, and donned their dress uniforms. They stood retreat at about five, in observance of the lowering of the flag. They then had an evening meal. Following this, until lights out at 10 P.M., the men had several options: they might attend classes provided by various educational programs, drop in at the recreation hall to play games or sports, or attend a movie screened at the camp.

On one night a week, there was usually a company meeting at which the commanding officer presided. At this time, the medical officer might lecture them on personal hygiene, or they would be instructed about courtesy, etiquette,
or safety. Attendance at these presentations was normally compulsory. On other
nights, a camp truck made a run into a local town or village, the men being
required to return to camp at 9:30 P.M. Not all of the enrollees were free to select
their entertainment, however. Those who were classified as “illiterates” had to
attend classes in the basics of elementary education. The men spent Saturday
mornings working around their camps doing fix-up, paint-up or scrubbing chores,
planting plants and other projects of upkeep and maintenance, prior to the
afternoon’s trips to a nearby town for recreation. On some Saturday nights, the
camp might stage a dance, the company providing buses or trucks to bring in girls
and their chaperones from local areas. Bands or orchestras might also be hired for
the entertainment. Sundays were days of leisure with opportunities to attend
religious services at the camp or in nearby towns.

Cornebise succinctly sums up additional unanticipated benefits and contributions:

The CCC made a timely arrival, helping to pull the nation out of the Depression
years. The men of the CCC additionally drew upon shared experiences, lived in
close-knit groups, (and) rallied to each other in a rough and ready camaraderie.
Often far from home and its comforts, they built their own universe and depended
on each other as they later would on the globe’s far-flung battlefields. These
conditions produced greatly valued and useful attitudes about the country and
themselves, and predisposed responses to the unexpected, often horrific,
challenges of the ensuing conflict, responses which proved to be a prescription for
success in World War II. The CCC also helped resurrect America’s military
forces in the nick of time to begin the exacting of a terrible vengeance on one of
the most massive threats ever posed to Western civilization: the collective power
of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and the militarists of Japan (Cornebise, 2004).

CCC tree planting land rehabilitation project results were immediate and long-
lasting. Their erosion control projects benefited approximately forty million acres of
farmland. In addition, 8,000 state parks were developed; 125,000 miles of roads were
built; 814,000 acres of rangeland were revegetated; 89,000 miles of telephone lines were
laid; between two and three billion trees were planted; more than six million check dams
and almost 50,000 bridges were built. The total value of the CCC’s work to the nation
was estimated to be over two billion dollars (Cornebise, 2004, Merrill, 1981). Enrollees
worked in virtually all the national forests and parks, in state forest and park areas, on
farm lands, in the public domain, in wildlife refuges, along stream beds and in the arid areas of the west (Merrill, 1981).

In Ohio

Figures provided by Perry H. Merrill, a state forester for Vermont for 47 years and Representative of the Secretary of Labor during the 1930s, show that at the outset of the CCC, 18 camps were assigned to Ohio and placed under the direction of the state forester. Seven camps were located on state forests, one on a state park and ten were soil conservation camps on private land. The numbers were increased later to 27, with 13 on state forests and parks and 14 on soil conservation and flood control projects, which were placed under the direction of the Soil Conservation Service (Merrill, 1981).

The six state forests – Hocking County, Scioto Trail, Dean, Shawnee, Mohican, and Zaleski – were increased during the CCC days by a gift and purchase of four more – Waterloo, Findlay, Hocking, and Pike. The work performed by the CCC on these areas was similar in most respects to what was done in other states (Merrill, 1981).

Areas for emergency landing fields on the Zaleski and Scioto State Forests were leveled. Garages and work shops were built. Fences were constructed around the forests and roads, though the forests were the major projects. Timber stand improvements included the cutting of dead trees and the harvesting of overly mature ones. From the cutting operations, logs of chestnut, oak, pine, yellow poplar, gum, maple and other species in sizes ranging from poles to fine saw logs were cut. The better poles were saved and the poorer ones were used for sign posts and firewood. The logs were taken to the mill, sawn, piled, seasoned and used in the construction of facilities on the state forests (Merrill, 1981).
The CCC enrollees were used in the planting of tree seedlings at both the Marietta State Nursery and at a special 35-acre E.C.W. Nursery at Zanesville, from which trees were shipped to Minnesota and Wisconsin for erosion control. Several hundred acres on the state forests were planted to white, red, and Scotch pines. Other work included boundary surveys and marking, topographic surveying and the thinning of trees in immature stands (Merrill, 1981).

Twelve steel forest fire towers were erected and 65 miles of telephone lines were built in these areas. About 90% of the forest fire suppression was accomplished by the CCC. Public use areas, both large and small (where the public could picnic, hike, have shelter, water, and sanitary systems) were built in state forests and parks. The construction of impounding reservoirs with concrete spillways served recreational needs as well as fire protection purposes. The state forest parks, Rock House, Old Man’s Cave, and Ash Cave were improved. Other parks included Nelson Ledges, Cantwell Cliffs, and Cedar Falls (Merrill, 1981).

In Jackson County

In early October 1933, 200 Civilian Conservation Corps recruits were stationed near Jackson, Ohio, at a camp to be constructed on county land on the east side of the county infirmary (Ervin, 1999). CCC alumni records indicate that the camp was officially established on December 2, 1933, three miles southeast of the Jackson post office, for the purpose of soil conservation (NACCCA website, 2005). Plans called for the construction of ten to twelve buildings each 20 x 120 feet in size. By early November, five barracks, a mess hall, administration building, officers’ quarters, and
other small buildings, including a bath house with fifteen or twenty showers were under construction. A crew of 20 workmen under the supervision of Fred Scott of Coalton worked 40 hours per week. The men assigned to the camp worked to correct erosion on farmland, but the main purpose was to provide employment. Each man received $30 per month, with $25 of that amount sent home to his parents. The federal government provided all camp requirements and food supplies (Ervin, 1999).

The headline “Those CCC Results” in a *Jackson Herald* article dated April 13, 1934 sums up the sentiment that year regarding the planting of thousands of trees on private land where, “in years to come when the thousands of trees which have been set ou [sic], reach maturity; we will see the ultimate resulut [sic] of a movement that has touched the homes of thousands of American families.” The article ends with a commentary on the benefits of the CCC:

> When we pick up these youngsters from the congested cities and put them out into the fields and woods, and when we can lead them through a more or less forced discipline into recognizing the true value of natural things and of how to replace nature, where we have destroyed it, we are doing constructive work of the highest order.

> True, hundreds of dollars are being spent on land that is at the present time almost valueless, but from every angle the values of the movement far out weigh the draw-backs (*Jackson Herald*, 1934).

The positive imprint on the landscape left from CCC efforts to reforest the eroded hills of Appalachian Ohio is an extraordinary reversal from the stark environmental devastation caused by the previous two centuries of intensive land use. Humans have manipulated the land since prehistoric times, yet the activities of the previous two centuries had a particularly devastating effect on the area. Yet it was not until the Great
Depression in America, when deep economic woes and unmitigated hardship for many people, set the stage for the creation of federal programs that would eventually lessen the burden on human and natural resources everywhere.
CHAPTER FOUR
Video Script and Images

Video Clip (Windows Media file)

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“So Here I Am…” an Eyewitness Account of the Beginning of the Wayne National Forest in Appalachian Ohio as told by Ora E. Anderson</td>
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Ah, it was a wonderful period, it was an exciting period. Here we were still in the middle of the biggest depression that anybody had ever experienced in their lifetime that was then alive. It was a terrible time.

1. “All these programs”

All these programs started coming out of Washington, one right after another. So that here I am, editor of one of the three newspapers in Jackson, all of us are starving to death.

Nevertheless, it was the three newspapers and all of us were young; the oldest editor was 25; the next was 24 and I was 22 when I became editor of the Jackson Herald.
All kinds of new programs were coming in. PWA, WPA Works Progress Administration, Public Works Administration.

You name it; it was coming out of Washington, to provide jobs – jobs; as fast as they could.

They had little offices everywhere for these various and sundry agencies.

And among them, of course, was this idea of starting a national forest in southeastern Ohio. Well, we didn’t have any forests. But that didn’t bother them – we didn’t!
About four months ago I went back to Jackson and reviewed deliberately, (I was looking for another story, you understand), but I ran across the beginning of the Wayne National Forest, and I wrote it, I was covering that story, a big story then, big story. And the headline: “U.S. to buy more than one million acres of land for forests.”

And then the story went on to say that their actual goal was a million, two hundred thousand acres which would eventually become forest in southeastern Ohio.

I covered this story as a newspaper man, not because I was necessarily in love with woods at that time. Because I wasn’t really conscious of what had happened over the previous 75 – 150 years, you see, of what the woods were.

When you drive from here to Ironton, for instance, today - you’re looking constantly at beautiful forests that didn’t exist sixty years ago, seventy years ago – didn’t exist! They were old bare hills.
You would see old cornfields on top of the hills and down in the creek bottoms.

There would be pasture around the hills –

old barbed-wire fences – even remnants now and then of old rail fences.

We never saw deer – I can guarantee there wasn’t a deer in Ohio, not a single deer.

There wasn’t a single beaver in Ohio.
It had gone through a hundred years of destruction. When you look back, in fact a little more than a hundred years, you look back into the middle 1800s – everybody was farming - everybody was cutting down timber for wood for lumber. We were shipping trainloads of lumber out of Ohio, mind you – out of southeastern Ohio to New York and Philadelphia and the East, or as in southeastern Ohio everybody was cutting down timber for charcoal-making for the iron furnaces.
That lasted for about forty years. And they were burning up about on an average of three acres of woods a day for each furnace.

The two charcoal furnaces that I actually saw operating were located just south of McArthur. As I remember the procedure, they would pile up a pile of hard wood until they had created this mound that was probably thirty feet tall. And once it was absolutely crammed full, then they would start a slow fire underneath and
they would control that fire very, very slowly so as to instead of burning up the wood it would turn it into charcoal. Now the charcoal was in various and sundry size pieces – shapes. So that it wasn’t “baggable” back in those days; it was used for other purposes, it was used for industrial purposes.

The remnants of the charcoal industry were dying out.

The iron furnaces were all dead except the two in Jackson and they were the two biggest that had existed. They made a high silicone iron because of the use of charcoal and limestone in the furnaces;
then sold that iron to the steel mills in Detroit, Youngstown and Pittsburgh.

The Hope Furnace was just one of about twenty iron furnaces in southern Ohio and there’s even a scattering two or three of them in

Northern Kentucky where there was a thin range of iron ore that encouraged the Welsh people to come from Wales, because they were experienced in this kind of iron smelting – these little furnaces that they could build on the edge of the iron ore veins. So that was how it developed in Ohio and it developed for probably forty, fifty years as a profitable industry even though nobody was getting rich because it wasn’t a real rich vein. And then all of a sudden, all of a sudden, the Mesabi Range was discovered up in Minnesota and heavens, it was ten times richer, easier to mine, it was right there on the edge of the Great Lakes so it could be shipped in big boats anywhere. So Cleveland and Pittsburgh and Chicago benefited directly - instantly - from the Mesabi Range and it just killed the iron mines in southern Ohio.

You’ve got to keep in mind that coal mining was already well under way at the turn of the last century.

Mining in any sense of the word is a mixed bag; it has a very temporary,

prosperous impact on a community and particularly on the owners of the mine itself, the operation itself.
But once it’s gone, it leaves a scar; it leaves every kind of a scar in the form of acid water in all the creeks, of barren landscapes that have no top soil whatsoever on them, or ancient veins left by interior mines or canyons left by strip mining.

Once the resource is gone, the communities that were established because of the coal resources – they have to change or they die – and many of them have died. Many of them have faded away into nothing little villages.
There was this whole century, actually more than a century of wiping our hills and river valleys clean of trees.

4. “Let’s start something”

But they started the Wayne National Forest because it was actually a relief program. What the government proposed to do was to buy land from farmers who were starving to death – literally.
Delinquencies were mounting everywhere – in every rural county. The landowners couldn’t pay their taxes; they didn’t have the money to pay the taxes. And yet the counties couldn’t sell the land at public sale because nobody would buy it.
I went to Lawrence County with the two young foresters that had been assigned to our district to buy land. The reason I was with them was they had rented the offices right upstairs over my office at the newspaper, the building where our newspaper office was. I went with them down into Lawrence County to actually buy the first acreage of the Wayne National Forest. It was just a little worn-out hill farm.

The landowner that would sell its land to the Wayne was told from the very beginning you may live free of charge in your house, you may have a garden, but the rest of the land you are to allow to go back to nature, leave it alone and let it grow back to dogwood and sumac and redbud and blackberry briars.
because eventually it will be trees.

But if you moved off the farm, if you left your home and moved to town or anywhere else,

then immediately that farm was demolished – that farmhouse and barns were demolished.
When the federal government began buying land for the Wayne National Forest, ah, what was their program? They didn’t have a program of management. They just bought it and let it stand there.

And over the next twenty years trees began to grow back.

The terrain here lent itself – it had been forested, it wasn’t like the great prairie counties of western and central Ohio. It was simply already a denuded forestland and they thought that it might be... and of course, poverty also was concentrated in this part of the state more than it was in the better farming areas of the state. So, why was anything started? It was started because somebody said, “Let’s start something.” It was just that simple.

5. “Bashful citizens”

If there was a management program for the land that was bought for the Wayne National Forest, it probably should be credited to the CCC camps – the Civilian Conservation Corps – where the boys from poor families - all the big cities around in Ohio and elsewhere – were sent off to camps to build roads in the country, to clear ditches, to build little dams and streams to prevent erosion – anything in the world that you could dream up for them to do.

The biggest job for the 3C boys, or at least for their superiors,
was to dream up projects for them to do.

They planted millions of trees, for instance, on the land that the Wayne National Forest was beginning to buy.

And they planted trees everywhere –

Anywhere - without any particular knowledge about how to do it. But that didn’t make any difference, if you plant trees at the right time of the year, they’re going to grow. It may take them five years before they show up above the green briars and the other stuff that grows in those old fields. But they planted trees.
They tried to correct erosion. Farming practices for a hundred years had encouraged erosion of the old hills so that they were literally open ditches draining down out of these old corn fields and places of that kind. And they would go in and design and build a whole series of little wooden dams. They built roads into areas of the land they needed to service – all sorts of things. But it was all done; it was all done by hand. It wasn’t done by huge equipment because the whole idea was to keep these boys busy – keep them employed because they had no jobs available at home.

These were kids from 19 to 26, in that general range, so they’re full of energy.
And there was a camp established near Jackson, for instance, that housed perhaps 300 young men from Cleveland and elsewhere in Ohio – and they were wonderful. The camp was established out near the county home, which had been established to take care of poor people who got so aged and infirm that they couldn’t take care of themselves. Every county used to have a county home. But that’s where the camp was built and it was built in an open area – you could see it for half a mile away. Looked like an army barracks – army camp.

And yet it was within a half mile of town. The boys were accepted as a new exciting thing.

And they would participate in things - as almost as bashful citizens.

It was - some of them found some dates among the girls in town.

I remember they came into my little newspaper office and wanted to establish a camp newspaper. They’d come in once a month and edit a little newspaper and we’d print it for them and they were great guys – they were good kids.

These were not kids that were in trouble, these were kids who didn’t even have an opportunity to even to go to school back home.
It was that kind of exciting scramble to rescue a real distressed population.

6. “I love big dreamers”

We look out now and we see woods everywhere, everywhere but back just fifty years ago that wasn’t true and so I’m almost ecstatic about what has happened on my watch.

Because I planted over 30,000 trees and old Mother Nature planted 300,000 trees on my farm. Now I fight to keep open areas. That’s nature and it’s hard for young people to realize this enormous change that has taken place in just fifty years.
But if old Mother Nature, frankly, if she wasn’t determined to
grow trees everywhere on these old hills, we wouldn’t have one
tenth of the woods we’ve got now.

But she’s determined to restore them and she’s succeeding now,
isn’t she?
The 3C boys were just one small part of reforesting Ohio. Their impact was real but it wasn’t predominant. Alright, what was the predominant thing in restoring the forestlands of the Appalachians through Ohio? Neglect! Quit farming - quit farming! It wasn’t a positive thing; it wasn’t something that was deliberate from the standpoint of reforestation. And yet it resulted in reforestation of all of eastern Ohio.

Generally speaking, the Wayne National Forest was just a means of creating jobs – and it worked. It didn’t work perfectly, of course. For instance, the announced goal at that time was to establish a national forest in southeastern Ohio of a million, two-thousand acres.

And had the money and the effort been put into it at that time, they might have achieved a half million acres, but after sixty years, the Wayne National Forest is just a little over 230,000 acres - a tiny fraction of what they expected to have. But, you know, the dream was big. But, I love big dreamers.

And it has a very ragged boundary; it even has pockets of inholdings by private owners.
And while it may have looked as though they’d be able to buy land everywhere, the price of land began to go up particularly as the war ended and people began to change their whole concept of living in the hill country.

They no longer wanted to be farmers but they still wanted to live in the country.

And now we’re getting more maturing forests as a result of the mere existence of the Wayne.

The Wayne is subject, of course,

to external pressures from groups and organizations.
just like any governmental agency is subjected to those pressures.

But nevertheless, all these contributions are very real, and if you live long enough you begin to realize, hey there’s a balance here that’s advantageous to all of us and so you roll with the things that you don’t quite agree with or you wish weren’t quite as damaging or quite as short-sighted because there’s so much good coming out of the Wayne and the examples that it set.

If I have an influence at all on the Wayne from time to time it is based on my long years of perspective and my vocally emotional approach to saving as much of that as we can. I preach this sort of thing. I’m an evangelist!
Ora E. Anderson at age 93 spent over 30 years as a lobbyist for the dairy products and banking trade associations before retiring in 1972.

For five decades, his voice in public meetings has helped shape the ongoing management of the Wayne National Forest.

He has been a leader in many conservation organizations including the Ohio Chapter of The Nature Conservancy.

O. E. Anderson Compass Prairie Plant Nature Preserve in Lawrence County, Ohio bears his name.

He is a accomplished nature essayist, poet, and bird carver.

For over 50 years he has developed a nature preserve on his 98-acre tree farm in Athens, Ohio.
Athens County Library Services
Nelsonville, Ohio

Selected Photographs Courtesy of

The U.S. Forest Service
Wayne National Forest Headquarters
Athens Ranger District
Nelsonville, Ohio

Mary Reddan,
Supervisor

Sean Lowery,
GIS Specialist

Phil Sammon, Public Affairs Officer
Heather Stachler, Student Photographer

Teena Ligman, Public Affairs Specialist
Wayne National Forest
Hoosier National Forest
Bedford, Indiana

‘Iron Furnace’
Ohio’s Iron Age
Ohio State Parks Magazine Spring/Summer 1998
Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Columbus, Ohio

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection
Farm Security Administration/Office of War Information Photograph Collection
Washington, D.C

Robert E. and Jean R. Mahn Center for Archives and Special Collections
Ohio University
Athens, Ohio
Janet Carleton,
Digital Projects Librarian
Judy Connick,
Special Collections Librarian

“Zaleski Rehabilitation and Forest Project of Vinton County,
Ohio”
From the private collection of
Peter Woyar,
Athens, Ohio

‘Open pit mine at Biwabik’
Minnesota Historical Society
HD3.112 r23, Negative: 3081

‘Workers in mess hall, looking at camera’
Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station Forestry Image Collection
Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio

“Jackson County: Its History and Its People”
Compiled by Robert E. Erwin, Jackson, Ohio

“Jackson County: Its History and Its People Since 1865”
By Robert E. Erwin, Jackson, Ohio

“A History of Industry in Jackson County, Ohio”
By Frank C. Morrow, Wellston, Ohio
Lillian E. Jones Museum and Carriage House Genealogy Center
Jackson, Ohio

Newspaper Excerpts from:
The Jackson Herald, 1934 – 1935
The Columbus Dispatch, March 16, 1935

Special Thanks to the Faculty of the
Master’s of Environmental Studies Program
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### CHAPTER FIVE
Photographs and Documentation

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#### Series I


| “Forest Service Planting Silviculture System CCC Enrollee Planting tree WNF (1934) #362245” [Video Ref. #5-08] |
| “Recreation Bridge Tinker Cave Rec. Area Wayne PU 7/23/37 #351296” [Video Ref. #5-13] |
| ‘Side hill planting of 3-0 red pine on hill planted in oats in 1933. Gullies 4 ft. deep before worked on. Off Rt. 50N of Prattsville, 5 ½ miles east of McArthur. Camp Vinton PE-77. Wayne PU. 4/25/34 #289785 Wayne Hoosier” [Video Ref. #2-04] |
| “Nov 1933, Miller Tract. Decatur twp. Washington County showing tract before being dynamited (see No 2 after treatment) Wayne PU 4/25/34 #289792” [Video Ref. #3-30] |
| “Chas. Law farm, Decatur Twp, Washington Co., east field structure built and seeding completed, but planting not completed. Camp Washington PE-57 4/25/34 Wayne PU #289790. Flood and Erosion Control Wayne-Hoosier” [Video Ref. #2-11] |
| “Oxen being used in Vinton County. Camp Vinton PE-77. Wayne PU 4/25/34 #289787 Land Use” [Video Ref. #3-35] |
| “Preparing a new charcoal pit for firing. Using a ladder, the collier climbs to the top of the cordwood pile (already covered with its layer of lapwood) and is shown putting on a layer of wet leaves. There are about 35 cords of wood in this pit. It takes about two days
to set the pit (prepare it for firing) and from 7 to 12 days of constant watching to fire it. (Prater) 5/11/42 Wayne NF #419981” [Video Ref. #3-12]

“C.A. Masie, Collier, preparing new charcoal pit for coaling. Here he is shown placing lapwood (small dry branches) over cordwood so the latter will coal when pit is fired. Wayne NF (Prater) 5/11/42 #19977” [Video Ref. #3-11]

“Sawmill showing yard with 60,000 bd. Ft. of lumber saved out from dead chestnut trees. Camp Zaleski OH 7/28/34 Wayne NF #298814” [Video Ref. #3-06]

“#433673 Products of selective cutting in mixed hardwood stands on the Flagg Estate in southern Ohio. WNF (Chapman) Sept 1944” [Video Ref. #3-10]

“Plantation Clearing on Gordon tract. Camp Gordon S-68 Wayne NF 4/25/34 #289797” [Video Ref. #5-07]

“Abandoned field with natural reproduction of shortleaf pine coming in. Note the seed trees in the upper right. This field was pastured lightly this year by 1 cow and 2 horses, which do not feed on pines. Formerly mowed and unmowed for the past 3 years. Note the lack of hardwood reproduction on the field which was formerly a hardwood site. Pine comes in strongly on old fields in this particular area. Portsmouth R.D. Wayne NF (Prater) 10/14/40” [Video Ref. #4-25]

“Vesuvius Dam Spillway and channel from below. Enrollees from Camp Dean going to work on picnic grounds developments. Wayne P.U. 8/8/39 #385466” [Video Ref. #5-17]

“1930s era small scale timber operation” [Video Ref. #3-01]

“District Ranger contacting Family living upon the land in #385449. #385450 8/5/39” [Video Ref. #4-16]

“District Ranger making special use inspection Wayne PU 8/4/39 #385442” [Video Ref. #4-15]
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<td><img src="image1.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>“Submarginal home (nearest road is 2 miles) 7/6/36 Wayne PU #324732” [Video Ref. #4-08]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>“Ranger D.W. Smith showing growth of white ash seedling Coop. plantation – Garden Clubs of Cincinnati and vicinity Sec 21, T2 R18 L.P. Neff, Ironton R.D. Wayne PU 10/31/45 #437717” [Video Ref. #4-26 and 6-10] For 2005 image of same location see Video Ref. #6-11</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image3.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>“Three yoke of oxen skidding logs down a steep embankment on the trail to the sawmill on the Wm. Arbaugh logging operation. I.J. Prater 10/10/40 Athens R.D. Wayne PU #401590” [Video Ref. #3-09]</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image4.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>“A yoke of oxen skidding an oak log onto the log deck of the portable sawmill on the Wm. Arbaugh logging operation L.J. Prater 10/10/40 Athens RD-Wayne PU #401591” [Video Ref. 3-08]</td>
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<td><img src="image5.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>“Sawing a white oak log on the portable sawmill, Wm. Arbaugh logging operation. L.J. Prater 10/10/40 Athens R.D. Wayne PU #401594” [Video Ref. #3-04]</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image6.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>“Workers on the Wm. Arbaugh logging operation loading short #2 and better oak lumber on a truck for hauling to Malta, Ohio. L.J. Prater 10/10/40 Athens R.D. Wayne PU #401601” [Video Ref. #3-05]</td>
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<td><img src="image7.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>“Typical portable sawmill – powered by tractor in extremely poor conditions. Note small logs on deck and haphazard piling of sawed lumber. 7/6/36 #324743 Wayne PU” [Video Ref. #3-03]</td>
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<td><img src="image8.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>“CCC Camp Superintendent Penner putting up one of the signs marking the boundary of the game propagation area around Vesuvius Lake 10/18/40 #401632 L.J. Prater” [Video Ref. #5-02]</td>
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<td><img src="image9.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>“Small check dams placed in intermittent streams to provide permanent water for small game animals near town of McArthur, Wayne PU 1937 #349913” [Video Ref. #5-01]</td>
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<td><img src="image10.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>“Enrollees from F-11 constructing log bridge at Locust Heights recreation area. H.C. Cook Athens R.D. 6/9/40 S.O. 6517-2” [Video Ref. #12]</td>
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</table>
“Enrollees from CCC Camp F-11 repairing telephone line.  H.C. Cook Athens R.D. 6/9/40 S.O. 6517-4” [Video Ref. #5-14]

“Rock quarry, Ellisonville, Ohio. 4/1/37 SO 2036-2” [Video Ref. #5-27]

“Enrollees from CCC Camp F-12 operating a rock crusher. 6/10/40” [Video Ref. #5-28]

“CCC Enrollees from Camp Nelson constructing an outdoor fireplace at Locust Heights picnic grounds 7/30/40” [Video Ref. #5-15]

“Enrollees from CCC Camp F-12 pouring cement for construction of septic tank and filter bed for disposal of sewage from Vesuvius bath house.  The bath house in the background was also constructed by enrollees.  H.C. Cook Ironton R.D. 6/10/40 S.O. 6517-6” [Video Ref. #5-16]

Close up “The aerial view of coal mine stripping area showing how the surface layer of the soil and the slack and bone coal is stripped back to expose the coal which is then surface mined.  10/13/40 Athens Ranger District #401555” [Video Ref. #3-31]

“’Gob pile’ from coal mining bone coal on the outskirts of Murray City.  Note mine “tipple” in background.  L.J. Prater 10/12/40 Athens R.D. Wayne PU #401563” [Video Ref. #3-29]

“Hillside view of V.A. Linn farm on Sillery Rd. in McArthur.  Planting of red pine on erosion in early stages.  4/24/34 #289784” [Video Ref. #2-14]

“Simpson farm Decatur Township, Washington County, east of farm buildings, structure built but not planted.  Camp Washington P-57 4/25/34 #289791 [Video Ref. #2-05]

“Bucking beech trees into logs.  #437704.  8/31/45” [Video Ref. #3-36]

“Wood cut and piled for manufacture of charcoal – Lawrence County, 1916.  Even here there is an indication that the quality of wood is a waste of natural resource” [Video Ref. #3-37]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>“Picture of buildings of special use area buildings after repair by CCC crews #401572” [Video Ref. #2-13]</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image2.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>“Aerial Map BCJ-4-29 dated 10-22-38 in the area of Gore” [Video Ref. #6-01]</td>
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<td><img src="image3.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>“Aerial Map 794-71 dated 10-11-94 in the area of Gore” [Video Ref. #6-02]</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image4.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>View of an area north of Athens in the Raccoon Creek area that was heavily strip-mined 1958 [Video Ref. #6-03]</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image5.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>View of an area north of Athens in the Raccoon Creek area after reclamation 1994 [Video Ref. #6-04]</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image6.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Hune Bridge on the Scenic Covered Bridge Byway in Washington County show how the abandoned farmlands, 1930, Wayne National Forest website [online] URL: <a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/wayne/history/rehab_the_land.html">http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/wayne/history/rehab_the_land.html</a> [Video Ref. #6-05]</td>
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<td><img src="image7.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Hune Bridge on the Scenic Covered Bridge Byway in Washington County, 1999 Wayne National Forest website: <a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/wayne/history/rehab_the_land.html">http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/wayne/history/rehab_the_land.html</a> [Video Ref. #6-06]</td>
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<td><img src="image8.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Shawnee Fire [tower] Wayne National Forest collection [Video Ref. #6-07]</td>
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<td><img src="image9.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Shawnee Fire [tower] Wayne National Forest collection [Video Ref. #6-08]</td>
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<td><img src="image10.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Shawnee Fire tower at 8 AM Wayne National Forest collection [Video Ref. # Credit-14]</td>
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<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Sand Run pines Wayne National Forest collection [Video Ref. #6-09]</td>
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<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Sailing Burr Oak; Wayne National Forest collection [Video Ref. #6-17]</td>
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<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Entrance; Wayne National Forest collection [Video Ref. #6-18]</td>
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<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Geese Big Bailey Wayne National Forest collection [Video Ref. #6-19]</td>
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<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>WNF #22022 Wayne National Forest collection [Video Ref. #6-21]</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image6.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Wayne National Forest collection [Video Ref. #6-22]</td>
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<td><img src="image7.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>WNF #22022 Wayne National Forest collection [Video Ref. #6-23]</td>
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<td><img src="image8.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>WNF #27027 Wayne National Forest collection [Video Ref. #6-24]</td>
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<td><img src="image9.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>ORV Rider Wayne National Forest collection [Video Ref. #6-25]</td>
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**Series II**

From *Jackson Herald* Newspaper Reports, from the Jackson City Library, 21 Broadway St., Jackson OH 45640; voice: 740-286-4111. Retrieved by Jean Andrews on February 1, 2005

*Jackson Herald*, Jackson OH, Jan. 25, 1935. “REVEAL PLANS TO PURCHASE HUGE ACREAGE County Is in Center of Conservancy Area REFORESTATION PROGRAM GIVEN Government Plans Buying of Millions of Acres” [Video Ref. # 2-01]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jackson Herald, Jackson OH</td>
<td>Feb. 15, 1935</td>
<td>“FORESTRY OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT TO LOCATE HERE G.B. Adams Assigned to Make Preliminary Survey DETAILS GIVEN”</td>
<td>[Video Ref. # 1-09, 1-10]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jackson Herald, Jackson OH</td>
<td>Feb. 15, 1935</td>
<td>“AS WE SEE IT By O.E.A.”</td>
<td>[Ora Eaton Anderson, Video Ref. # 1-04]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jackson Herald, Jackson OH</td>
<td>Dec. 18, 1934</td>
<td>“FEDERAL PLAN TO BUY LAND IS REVEALED Large Local Tract Is Now Under Survey RELIEF CASES TO BE REMOVED Land is Rates as Practically Valueless”</td>
<td>[Video Ref. # 4-05]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jackson Herald, Jackson OH</td>
<td>Dec. 18, 1934</td>
<td>“The proposal, which will affect several Southern Ohio counties, was made in connection with the national resources board’s proposal to President Roosevelt to retire gradually such sub-marginal lands in the United States at the rate of 5,000,000 acres a year for the next 15 years. The southern Ohio area would be one of the first to come under the plan.”</td>
<td>[Video Ref. # 4-05]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson Herald, Jackson OH</td>
<td>Dec. 18, 1934</td>
<td>“A comprehensive plan to purchase hundreds of acres of Jackson county’s infertile and low-yielding farm land, remove it from agriculture use and move the families there from to more productive regions was disclosed Monday in press dispatches received from Washington.”</td>
<td>[Video Ref. # 4-06]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson Herald, Jackson OH</td>
<td>Dec. 18, 1934</td>
<td>“Areas recommended for retirement, the board said, are ‘characterized by incredibly low standards of living.’ The soil generally is deteriorating, most of the areas are sparsely populated so that the cost of providing schools and roads is excessive and relief costs are high.”</td>
<td>[Video Ref. # 4-07, 4-12]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jackson Herald, Jackson OH</td>
<td>Feb. 9, 1934</td>
<td>“YOUNG EDITORS OF JACKSON”</td>
<td>[Video Ref. #1-03]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jackson Herald, Jackson OH</td>
<td>Nov. 27, 1934</td>
<td>“AS TVA AND PWA GET PRESIDENT’S OK”</td>
<td>[Video Ref. # 1-08]</td>
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<td>Old County Home Journal-Herald</td>
<td>Wed., March 5, 1980</td>
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<td>[Video Ref. #5-18]</td>
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<td>Globe Iron Co., Jackson OH circa 1930s-1940s [Video Ref. #3-17]</td>
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<td>Wellston Twin Furnace [Video Ref. #3-15]</td>
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<td>Madison Furnace 1855-1900 [Video Ref. #3-20]</td>
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<td>“The Pigs” [Video Ref. #3-16]</td>
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<td>“Ore drift mine” [Video Ref. #3-25]</td>
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<td>![Image](108x660 to 183x717)</td>
<td>Another view of the Jackson Iron and Steel Co., Furnace (JISCO) [Video Ref. #3-14]</td>
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<td>![Image](108x454 to 183x503)</td>
<td>Series VI</td>
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| ![Image](108x401 to 180x450) | LC-USF33-004093-M2  
**TITLE:** Rehabilitation client worrying over his accounts, Jackson County, Ohio, 1936 [Video Ref. #4-03] |
| ![Image](108x348 to 180x396) | LC-USF33-004142-M2  
**TITLE:** Part of family of ten to be resettled on Ross-Hocking Land Project near Chillicothe, Ohio 1936 [Video Ref. #4-01] |
| ![Image](108x294 to 180x343) | LC-USF331-004100-M1  
**TITLE:** Rehabilitation client's wife, Jackson County, Ohio 1936 [Video Ref. #4-02] |
| ![Image](108x237 to 183x286) | **TITLE:** Resettlement Administration representative at door of rehabilitation client's house, Jackson County, Ohio 1936 [Video Ref. #4-22] |
| ![Image](108x179 to 183x230) | LC-USF33-004105-M1  
**TITLE:** Part of family of rehabilitation client, Jackson County, Ohio [Video Ref. #4-04] |
| ![Image](108x124 to 183x175) | LC-USF33-004145-M1  
**TITLE:** [Untitled]; neighboring image titled: Mother of family of five to be resettled on Ross-Hocking Land Project near Chillicothe, Ohio 1936 [Video Ref. #4-19] |
| ![Image](528x745) | LC-USF33-004098-M2  
**TITLE:** Interior of rehabilitation client's house, Jackson, Ohio 1936 [Video Ref. #4-10] |
| ![Image](197x692) | LC-USF3301-004099-M3  
**TITLE:** Interior of rehabilitation client's cabin, Jackson, Ohio [Video Ref. #4-11] |
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<td>LC-USF33-004102-M1</td>
<td>[Untitled] between 1935 and 1942; neighboring image titled: Resettlement Administration representative at door of rehabilitation client's house, Jackson County, Ohio 1936 [Video Ref. # Credit-11]</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="108x108.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>LC-USF33-004117-M1</td>
<td>Young fellows in front of pool hall, Jackson, Ohio [Video Ref. #5-20]</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="108x108.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>LC-USF34-013026-C</td>
<td>Home of family to be resettled. Ross-Hocking land project, Ohio [Video Ref. #4-21]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="108x108.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>LC-USF34-013025-C</td>
<td>Property optioned by Resettlement Administration. Ross-Hocking land project, Ohio [Video Ref. #4-20]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="108x108.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>LC-USW3-015395-D</td>
<td>Rio Grande, Gallia County, Ohio. Bailey, FSA (Farm Security Administration) county supervisor, visiting Reed Hall on his unproductive farm in the hill section of this county. Bailey is attempting to recruit men from this type of farm for farm labor training and relocation in more productive farming areas [Video Ref. #4-17]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="108x108.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>LC-USF33-004134-M5</td>
<td>[Untitled] between 1935 and 1942; neighboring image titled: Eighty-three year old settler to be resettled, near Chillicothe, Ohio [Video Ref. #3-02]</td>
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<td><img src="108x108.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>LC-USF34-061441-D</td>
<td>CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) boy building charcoal burner at picnic grounds of recreation area. Ross County, Ohio</td>
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<td><img src="108x108.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>LC-USF33-004080-M1</td>
<td>[Untitled] A neighboring image is listed as: Kitchen table seen through window of rehabilitation client's home, Jackson County, Ohio [Video Ref. # Credit-12 ]</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="108x108.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>LC-USF33-004118-M5</td>
<td>Sunday dinner, Jackson, Ohio [Video Ref. #5-21]</td>
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</table>
LC-USF33-004113-M1
TITLE: Iron furnace in Jackson, Ohio 1936 [Video Ref. #3-18]

LC-USF33-004112-M2
TITLE: Iron furnace in Jackson, Ohio 1936 [Video Ref. #3-19]

LC-USF33-004134-M3
TITLE: [Untitled] between 1935 and 1942; neighboring image titled: Eighty-three year old settler to be resettled, near Chillicothe, Ohio 1936 [Video Ref. #4-23]

LC-USF33-004137-M1
TITLE: [Untitled] between 1935 and 1942; neighboring image titled: Eighty-three year old settler to be resettled, near Chillicothe, Ohio 1936 [Video Ref. #4-23]

LC-USF33-004139-M3
TITLE: Eighty-three year old settler to be resettled, near Chillicothe, Ohio 1936 [Video Ref. #4-24]

LC-USF34-061437-D
TITLE: CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) boy chopping stone for use in building charcoal burners at picnic grounds. Ross County, Ohio, recreation area [Video Ref. #5-03]

LC-USF34-061441-D
TITLE: CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) boy building charcoal burner at picnic grounds of recreation area. Ross County, Ohio 1940 [Video Ref. #5-04]

LC-USF34-061421-D
TITLE: CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) boys building charcoal burner at picnic grounds of recreation area. Ross County, Ohio 1940 [Video Ref. #5-25]

LC-USF33-004125-M2
TITLE: [Untitled] between 1935 and 1942; neighboring image is titled: Planting trees at Zaleski Forest Project, Vinton County, Ohio [Video Ref. #5-06]

LC-USF33-004125-M1
TITLE: Planting trees at Zaleski Forest Project, Vinton County, Ohio [Video Ref. #5-09 and Credit-13]
From Peter Woyar, Consulting Forester (and Retired Professor, Forest Industries at Hocking College), Athens OH. Images and documentation were received by Woyar from Jerry Perry, a timberman formerly with Adelmann and Clark, McArthur OH. Photographs and documentation found in “Preliminary Report on the Zaleski Rehabilitation and Forest Project of Vinton County Ohio, September, 1934” appear to have been at one time in the possession of W.S. Bromley, Former Director, Camp Zaleski; the report cover lists an address as: W.S. Bromley, 53 Faneuil Pl. New Rochelle NY 10801. All images are believed to be from State sources. Retrieved by Jean Andrews on Jan. 25, 2005.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Series VII</th>
<th>From Peter Woyar, Consulting Forester (and Retired Professor, Forest Industries at Hocking College), Athens OH. Images and documentation were received by Woyar from Jerry Perry, a timberman formerly with Adelmann and Clark, McArthur OH. Photographs and documentation found in “Preliminary Report on the Zaleski Rehabilitation and Forest Project of Vinton County Ohio, September, 1934” appear to have been at one time in the possession of W.S. Bromley, Former Director, Camp Zaleski; the report cover lists an address as: W.S. Bromley, 53 Faneuil Pl. New Rochelle NY 10801. All images are believed to be from State sources. Retrieved by Jean Andrews on Jan. 25, 2005.</th>
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</table>

**Exhibit 22** Subject: View Showing Pastured and eroded land in the Project Area. Within the Project Area, more than 50% of the farmland is being utilized for pasture. A good portion of the pasture land is on land too steep to hold the soil. This has resulted in erosion of the type seen in the background of this picture.” [Video Ref. #2-09]

**Exhibit 24** Subject: A corn field in the Project Area: Corn represents one of the most important corps in the Project Area. Attempts to raise crops of the nature on hillsides as steep as this has been one of the important factors in downfall of agriculture in Vinton County as well as in this area.

In the background of this picture will be noted a total failure on the part of this farmer to bring his crop to harvest. Heavy washing of the soil (sic) combined with a short dry spell and undue exposure of the steep slope has resulted in more than a third of this farmer’s efforts being wasted.” [Video Ref. #2-07]

**Exhibit 25** Subject: A cattle farm in the Project Area: The use of land for pasture purposes taken up more than 50% of the farmland in the Project Area. Continued overstocking, lack of proper care and improper use of steep hillsides in the first place has resulted in erosion such as is illustrated on many farms in this area.” [Video Ref. #2-06]

**Exhibit 32** Subject: Abandoned Homesite in the Project Area

Here is a house with a good roof, formerly painted and in general good repair. More than the average amount of level land surround (sic) this former home, but apparently the land did not yield sufficient income to maintain the family which probably moved out of the county.” [Video Ref. #4-18]
“Exhibit 37 Subject: View of Resettlement Area
A comparison of the yields from this field of corn with the very best cornfield in the Project Area would offer convincing evidence of the possibilities of this area for a rehabilitation project.” [Video Ref. #2-10]

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<tr>
<th>Series VIII</th>
<th>From the private slide collection of Peter Woyar, Consulting Forester (and Retired Professor, Forest Industries at Hocking College), Athens OH. Retrieved by Jean Andrews on Jan. 25, 2005.</th>
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<td>“Park tables built at Camp Hocking – 1933” [Video Ref. #5-05]</td>
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<td>“CCC Company street, Shawnee Camp #1 – April 1934” [Video Ref. #5-19]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“Mess Hall Camp Stoney Creek – August, 1933” [Video Ref. #5-23] [Also courtesy of Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station Forestry Image Collection at <a href="http://dmc.ohiolink.edu/Science/Details?oid=4348199">http://dmc.ohiolink.edu/Science/Details?oid=4348199</a>]</td>
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<td>“Squatter’s Cabin on Shawnee State Forest, Adams County – Sept, 1928 – Cut state timber, stole chickens, made moonshine – named Rose!” [Video Ref. #4-09]</td>
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<td>“Tar Hollow, Land Use Land, Division of Resettlement Administration, 1938. Girl is of high school age, but unable to attend due to isolated conditions. [Video Ref. #4-13]</td>
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<td>“Charcoal stack” (no date) [Video Ref. #3-13]</td>
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<td>“Logging with cattle – 1907” [Video Ref. # Credit-10]</td>
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<td>Mack Truck hauling elm for heading. Oak Harbor, Ohio, 1917 [Video Ref. #3-07]</td>
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<td>“Wood cut and piled for manufacture of charcoal – Lawrence County, 1916. Even here there is an indication that the quality of wood is a waste of natural resource” [Video Ref. #3-37]</td>
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<td>1937 [Video Ref. #5-22]</td>
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<th>From <em>Columbus Dispatch</em> newspaper reports, Ohio University Microforms, Athens, Ohio. Retrieved April 18, 2005.</th>
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<tr>
<td>3/16/35 “P.W.A. AID IS SOUGHT TO FINANCE TEXAS PIPE LINE TO CARRY GAS INTO OHIO” [Video Ref. #1-06]</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/12/35 “Definite Rise In Building Credited To P.W.A. Program” [Video Ref. #1-07]</td>
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<td>Planting crew gullies [Video Ref. #5-10]</td>
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<td>Series XII</td>
<td>From the Robert E. and Jean R. Mahn Center for Archives and Special Collections at Ohio University. Buhla Collection. Retrieved May 2005</td>
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<td>Southeastern Ohio, Athens County, Chauncey, date unknown, photographer unknown. Number 575 crossing the bridge. [Video Ref. #3-21]</td>
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<td>Sunday Creek Coal Co. Mine No. 2.[Video Ref. #3-27]</td>
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<td>No. 3 B – O Mine, Perry County, near New Straitsville, Ohio. [Video Ref. #3-28]</td>
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<td>San Toy, Sunday Creek Coal Co. [Video Ref. #3-32]</td>
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<td>Southeastern Ohio, Athens County, Chauncey. Date unknown, Photographer Unknown, train yard and town [Video Ref. #3-33]</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/14/02</td>
<td>Visit to Limestone Iron Furnace (Limestone, Madison, Hope)</td>
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<td>11/14/02</td>
<td>Visit to Limestone Iron Furnace (Limestone, Madison, Hope)</td>
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<td>11/14/02</td>
<td>Visit to Iron Furnaces (Limestone, Madison, Hope)The Hope Furnace</td>
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<td>5/12/04</td>
<td>Near Pedro, Ironton Ranger District, Sec 21, T2 R18; “now” to Video</td>
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<td>5/12/04</td>
<td>Video Ref. # 4-26, 5/05 [Video Ref. #6-11]</td>
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<td>5/12/04</td>
<td>5/12/04 [Video Ref. # Credit-05]</td>
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CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

Summary

This thesis presents a fresh investigation grounded in a citizen’s sophisticated understanding of his environment. Anderson not only provides a convincing portrait of life in Appalachian Ohio during the Depression, but offers a compelling argument that the main reason for land acquisition for the formation of a national forest in Appalachian Ohio was economic - to decrease unemployment and poverty throughout the region during the Great Depression. The State of Ohio had already rejected the proposal for a federal forest in the early 1920s and had begun a program of reforestation during the following fifteen years in the creation of state forests and parks. This reforestation effort proved inadequate, however, given the history and extent of environmental alteration caused by past farming practices and natural resource extraction. Therefore, the resulting employment of thousands of young laborers through the Civilian Conservation Corps in Ohio and elsewhere during the 1930s to relieve economic distress had the concurrent benefit of mitigating these conditions.

The principal goals of this study have been to produce a video documentary that describes the beginning of the Wayne National Forest as remembered by Anderson during the period 1934 – 37; to offer a visual record of landscape change using archival and present-day photographs; and to provide background context from government documents, 1930s-era newspapers, and current scholarly literature. This study answers questions about how and why the federal government established a forest in Appalachian Ohio and how the landscape has changed because of its existence.
The visual testimony captured on videotape portrays a sense of place in Appalachian Ohio and an awareness of the specific events unique to the formation of the Wayne National Forest. Although an enormous amount of regional oral history has been lost because of the time lapse between the 1930s and the present, this thesis ensures that the account of an active participant in this history is recorded and accessible. This study may also aid in portraying an accurate regional identity where landscape alteration has been so dramatic as to dispel any notion that the current array of forest species in the forest has been in existence for hundreds of years.

More importantly for the benefit of Wayne National Forest managers and users, this thesis provides an important piece of “local knowledge” about the beginning of the Forest. Researchers who study public involvement issues advocate incorporating citizens’ “local knowledge” and experiences in decisions as a way to build trust in natural resource institutions. Forest service managers are part of a larger institutional culture that influences their ability to provide effective leadership on the local level. Trust in individual forest managers is complicated by the public’s view of the large federal bureaucracies for which they work. Adaptive management researchers have shown that although community members want to trust forest officials to do the right thing on the local forest, they may not trust the agency on the federal level to allow the official to do it (Shindler and Cheek, 1999).

Advocates for the use of civic science in the field of adaptive management believe that there is a strengthening relationship between the public and forest management agencies where citizen-agency interactions are more effective and the quality of agency decisions is improved when citizens are given the opportunity to provide relevant “local
knowledge” (Shindler and Cheek, 1999). Local knowledge includes sharing the history of a particular area and circumstances surrounding its development. Understanding the processes of the past that have shaped the local landscape and affected communities surrounding the Forest boundary may assist Wayne National Forest managers to arrive at decisions that better achieve resource management objectives and alternatives.

Also important to the fields of environmental and landscape history, this research demonstrates how oral history can be used as a methodological approach to provide fresh insight into past land use practices of a particular region as well as social and economic circumstances. Anderson’s seasoned perspective regarding 20th century environmental alteration, together with his own 1930s newspaper reports augmented by documented archival photographs, provides the raw material for a vivid portrayal of landscape alteration and economic conditions during the 1930s in Appalachian Ohio.

Recommendations for Further Research

Recommendations for further research on this topic include video projects documenting points of view at various times in recent history: individuals and/or their descendants who sold their farms to the federal government in the late 1930s; private landowners who sell their property for forest acquisition; or those who live within the Forest boundary but do not sell their land; people who own mineral rights under the Wayne National Forest but will not sell them; long-time or former Wayne National Forest officials for their perspective on the adoption of various management plans; as well as local community members for historical topics related to land use such as the

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Underground Railroad, iron-making furnaces, immigration, or natural resource extraction, its landscape alteration, and the formation of cooperative partnerships in mitigation efforts.

Contemporary themes for research could include oral histories of AmeriCorps*Vista volunteers as contemporary counterparts to the CCC. Interviews could highlight their role in working to fight illiteracy, improve health services, create businesses, increase housing opportunities, or bridge the digital divide, among the rural communities in and around the Wayne National Forest.

A survey, catalog, and subsequent digitization of archival photograph collections from private individuals across Ohio and elsewhere may provide invaluable documentation for future studies related to environmental alteration in Appalachian Ohio. The various professional forestry and land preservation organizations may be of help in this regard. Photographs in private collections could be duplicated, copies housed at various libraries, and made accessible to the general public.

Appalachian Ohio shares much in common with the rest of Appalachia in terms of economy and land use. A history of economies based on extractive industries and large-scale environmental alteration and degradation reflect as much. A further investigation of other federal forests within the Appalachian region may provide fresh perspective for a history of reforestation efforts throughout the region.

And last, this thesis focused on one aspect of Anderson’s experiences and perspective. I also interviewed him about his leadership role in the Ohio Chapter of The Nature Conservancy before the mainstream environmental movement became a political force in American politics; about his instrumental role in the acquisition of more than 600
acres of former state mental health center grounds for Ohio University; his contribution to the creation of a regional arts center; the development of his 98-acre farm into a nature preserve; the ODNR nature preserve named in his honor; and the hundreds of essays that cover a wide variety of topics from medicinal uses of plants in rural Kentucky mountain culture to the meaning of nature. As Charles Ping, President Emeritus of Ohio University described a walk in the woods with Anderson: “You walk the land with Andy and you see things that you only see when he helps you see them. And this rich sense of this precious heritage that we’re given has been, I think, a constant legacy of Andy Anderson.”
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APPENDIX A
Interview Questions

Edited Interview on August 11, 2003 in Athens, Ohio

1) When you were a reporter and the Wayne National Forest was being created in the mid-1930s, we were hoping you could share some stories about what it was like then.

2) Could you tell us what the land looked like – you said old worn-out farms – what would we see if we were there at that time?

3) What kind of wildlife would you see before the Wayne was established – you said it was worn out old farms?

4) I wanted to know a little more about the early years in the 1930s – you said you went with some people to Lawrence County for the first sale (purchase) – so can you tell us some more about this time – if you recall other stories of what you did during that time?

5) When did you become aware (conscious) of this history of the woods that you weren’t aware of before?

6) Do you remember what decade that was?

7) Originally they were going to try to acquire many tracts of land – five tracts of land – in the early days, in the ‘30s. Can you tell us about that?

8) Could you talk a little bit more about - you said that a problem developed as they were trying to acquire this land?

Edited Interview on September 4, 2003 in Athens, Ohio

1) What other reasons do you think there might have been besides job creation to begin a national forest here in southeastern Ohio?

2) Why do you think they chose southeastern Ohio for a forest?

3) You mentioned starving farmers and old worn out farmland in southeastern Ohio during the 1930s in your last interview. What else do you remember about the economic health or state of the lands that were first purchased to create the Wayne National Forest, given the extractive industries and real estate tax situation?

4) Would they build these things (CCC Camps)?

5) What would they see around the Jackson area, looking at the landscape – considering the different industries that were going on?
6) Tell me more about how the CCC boys were really accepted by the community. This is something out of the question, the answer you just gave – what was it like to have the CCC boys in the community? You said they were very well accepted and so on – how could you tell?

7) What did they do during the day mostly?

8) What is your perspective about a related idea, that is of the contiguous forest cover?

9) OK, another question is how have YOU influenced the land use in the Wayne National Forest over the years?

10) What would you say to the people who want a certain portion of the national forest to be set aside to remain untouched - left alone forever?

11) In perpetuity?

12) Did you want to touch on any sort of land ethic now in the general public?

Edited Interview August 6, 2003 in Athens, Ohio

1) What were some of the reasons why you thought it was important to actually acquire land for preservation?

2) What was it in Ohio that you saw that caused you to think that this was the place that you wanted to be working with The Nature Conservancy?

Edited Interview February 11, 2005 in The Plains, Ohio

1) How old were you in the late 1930s, what were you doing?

2) So what do you mean when you say that your farm is a microcosm of your viewpoint about Nature?

3) How might your viewpoint of the landscape differ then from a young person today?

4) Could you repeat that please, where did you move when you first came here?

5) Can you describe the types of mining that have been in southeastern Ohio?

6) So what impacts have the underground mining and strip mining had in this region throughout your life?
7) You recently have joked about suggesting that somebody should come up with some sort of commercial value to clean up this acid mine drainage problem. Could you talk about that?

8) Well, I’m wondering about the streams, though. We still have dead streams.

9) Now we’re talking about the CCC boys right now?

10) The heyday of the Hope Furnace in Vinton County was in the 1860s - so what killed industry here in Ohio after that?

11) Now you mentioned earlier that you would drive by an area in Jackson where you saw charcoal being made. Could you describe that for me how that was done?
APPENDIX B
Interview Excerpts

Interview on August 11, 2003 in Athens, Ohio

JEAN ANDREWS:  When you were a reporter and the Wayne National Forest was being created in the mid-1930s, we were hoping you could share some stories about what it was like then.

ORA ANDERSON:  It was a wonderful period, it was an exciting period.  Here we were still in the middle of the biggest Depression that anybody had ever experienced in their lifetime that was then alive.  It was a terrible time.  Unemployment was running around 22%, as compared to our 6% today.  Anyway, all these programs started coming out of Washington one right after another.  So that here I am, editor of one of the three newspapers in Jackson, all of us starving to death.  Nevertheless, it was the three newspapers and all of us were young; the oldest editor was 25; the next was 24 and I was 22 when I became editor of the Jackson Herald.  Oh, we were getting rich; I was making $29 a month.  It was something.

Anyway, all kinds of programs were coming in.  The CCC boys established a big camp down by the county home, just south and east of Jackson.  Immediately the boys wanted to start a camp newspaper.  So I said, come on in, work with me, sit in my desk, use my typewriter.  I’d sit there on one night a week and help them put their paper together.  That was exciting because these boys were from all over the big cities.  These were not country boys; these were from Cleveland and Chicago and Detroit and other places, because they had no jobs available at all.  These were kids from 19 to 26, in that general range – so they’re full of energy.  And it was a big story for me to cover as the editor of a paper.  Then they began to produce all the other programs:  WPA Work Progress Administration, Public Works Administration.  You name it; it was coming out of Washington, to provide jobs – jobs - as fast as they could.  They built a new city hall in Jackson for free; and of course, that was a big story.  They had little offices everywhere for these various sundry agencies.  And among them, of course, was this idea of starting a national forest in southeastern Ohio.

Well, we didn’t have any forests.  But that didn’t bother them – we didn’t!  After all, we had gone through a hundred years of clearing the land for farming, for timber production and charcoal manufacturing.  Those three things literally denuded this whole section of the country.  We were probably lucky if there was 10% still wooded acreage down in the deep hollows where they couldn’t get their horses and mules and stuff into to haul out the logs.

But they started the Wayne National Forest, because it was actually a relief program.  What the government proposed to do was to buy land from farmers who were starving to death – literally.  They couldn’t sell what they produced; they’d already worn their land out.  And so they thought well, what we’ll do is establish a program where we’ll by their land, they can live in their house and have a garden all the rest of their life.
if they stay there and don’t do anything else but garden. They paid on an average of $16 an acre for the first two thousand acres they bought.

I went to Lawrence County with the two young foresters that had been assigned to our district to buy land. The reason I was with them was they had rented the offices right upstairs over my office at the newspaper, the building where our newspaper was. I went with them down into Lawrence County to actually buy the first acreage of the Wayne National Forest. It was just a little worn-out hill farm. They probably bought about 60 acres for as low as $9 an acre. I don’t remember the exact price but it was certainly under $25 an acre. But $25 then would buy as much as $300 will buy today – easily. So, everything was relative. People can’t understand that today, that, suppose you make a million dollars. What difference does that make? You’ll go out and spend $100,000 this evening, won’t you? (Laugh)

I went with these guys – and it was a story. That was the only reason I went – it was a story, just like all the other things that I covered – the CCC camp, whatever. They bought this old hill farm down at the edge of Lawrence County below Oak Hill. That was a big deal.

But all kinds of programs – there were programs that were literally nothing more than pure welfare things. They set up a crew in the basement of the courthouse – an office in the basement of the courthouse there in Jackson - to hire people to go out and clean out ditches along the highway along all the county roads.

JA: Could you tell us what the land looked like – you said old worn-out farms – what would we see if we were there at that time?

OA: At that time you would see old cornfields on top of the hills and down in the creek bottoms. There would be pasture around the hills – old barbed-wire fences – even remnants now and then of old rail fences. The fences, of course, just wandered. They went the easy way that the farmer could tack them. Usually half of the posts were not posts - they were trees. You might set in three posts then you’d tack in the next two to trees that were growing roughly in line. You didn’t worry about survey lines or you didn’t worry about being to accurate at following the contours. It was just being practical – what difference did one more row of corn make?

It was an interesting time to be alive. The remnants of the charcoal industry were dying out. The iron furnaces were all dead except the two in Jackson and they were the two biggest that had existed. They made a high silicone iron because of the use of charcoal and limestone in the furnaces; then sold that iron to the steel mills in Detroit, Youngstown and Pittsburgh.

JA: What kind of wildlife would you see before the Wayne was established – you said it was worn out old farms?
OA: We never saw a deer – I can guarantee there wasn’t a deer in Ohio, not a single deer. There wasn’t a single beaver in Ohio. Down along the rivers and creeks you could find some muskrats; there were plenty of skunks and opossums, of course. There weren’t many squirrels because there was a five-month open season on hunting squirrels. We had a few quail – bobwhite quail- but that was it. I remember when they introduced pheasants into Ohio – ring-neck pheasants into Ohio – out in the, of course, glaciated areas west and south and north of Columbus – all the flat lands and on into Indiana and clear out through the Dakotas. They introduced all kinds of pheasants from Asia – it wasn’t just the ring-necks. But the ring-necks were the only ones that adapted quickly. Within five years after they introduced them, Ohio was one of the greatest ring-neck hunting states in the country. It was nothing to go out in the field and get your limit of four ring-neck cocks a day. That was easy. But like everything else, as the farming changed, the game changed.

JA: *I wanted to know a little more about the early years in the 1930s – you said you went with some people to Lawrence County for the first sale (purchase) – so can you tell us some more about this time – if you recall other stories of what you did during that time?*

OA: Well, I covered this story as a newspaper man, not because I was necessarily in love with woods at that time. Because I wasn’t really conscious of what had happened over the previous 75 – 150 years, you see, of what the woods were. I can remember the disappearance of the chestnuts, the chestnut trees and a few other things of that kind. But for the most part, when I was growing up, we didn’t have any woods. I drove my, our cow to pasture every day for years along with the cows of a couple of my neighbors. And even then the pastures had a few trees here and there and most of them short leaf pine and a few of the other scrubby maples and things of that kind, but there were no big woods. Now I do have a story to tell you, to read to you, about the big opossum hunt, about the big raccoon hunt that went on in what was called the “big woods.” But for the most part, we didn’t have big woods; we didn’t have woods at all.

JA: *When did you become aware (conscious) of this history of the woods that you weren’t aware of before?*

It wasn’t until they started the Wayne and we moved back to Columbus from northern Ohio, from Salem Ohio, to Columbus, and we would come down here frequently. Since I had this background of the beginning of the Wayne, I got involved in a series of studies of the Wayne, as they began to plan. See, the first twenty years they didn’t have to plan, all they had to do was get out of the way. There weren’t any woods - they were buying land and letting the land restore itself. The CCC boys planted trees for about five to ten years during the Roosevelt administration but most of that were pine trees – white pine and Virginia shortleaf pine and things of that kind. But the Wayne, when it was established was just to buy land that someday would be undoubtedly forest. So after about some 20 to 25 years they began to think now – now we’ve got to begin to
think of management plans. So they began to hold a series of conferences here at the Wayne offices - which then were down here on Columbus Road right close in. And anybody could go and make comments. Anybody could go and hear their review of what the situation was and what they were thinking about doing about managing it. And it was interesting. To me it was fascinating.

JA: *Do you remember what decade that was?*

OA: Let’s see, I moved down here in ’73 and I was already involved so it was in the 60’s that they started. So you can see how long it was that they could ignore planning – management planning, that is. So they just let it grow and then in the 60’s and early 70’s they began to actually hold meetings to plan how they would manage various sections of the forest, because everyone differed.

JA: *Originally they were going to try to acquire many tracts of land – five tracts of land – in the early days, in the ’30s. Can you tell us about that?*

Let me tell you about. About four months ago I went back to Jackson and reviewed deliberately (I was looking for another story, you understand) but I ran across the beginning of the Wayne National Forest, and I wrote it, I was covering that story, a big story then, big story. And the headline: “U.S. to buy more than 1 million acres of land for forest.” And then the story went on to say that their actual goal was a million, two hundred thousand acres. There actual goal of buying land which would eventually become forest in southeastern Ohio. And I thought to myself here after fifty, sixty years they have managed to buy a little more than two hundred and thirty thousand acres. And it has a very ragged boundary of the land they bought. It even has pockets of in-holdings by private owners that love the idea that “I’ve got a hundred acres completely surrounded by five thousand acres of the Wayne National Forest. In fact there are only two sections of the Wayne that have single blocks of land exceeding 5,000 acres. Most of them are in the nature of 1,000 to 2,000 acres with very, very ragged boundaries. Anyway, I can’t object because the problem that developed was, as the Wayne became experienced in buying land and in thinking about the future management of that land in southeastern Ohio, it was then under the management of the Indiana office of the U.S. Forest Service. And it wasn’t until the Wayne was way along, some fifteen years ago that it was permitted to establish its own identity as managed from the Ohio offices. And we now have, as you know, an office here and in Ironton, or at least in Lawrence County, and in Washington County near Marietta. It’s a great story, it’s a great story, there’s no question about it.

JA: *Could you talk a little bit more about - you said that a problem developed as they were trying to acquire this land?*
OA: As they slowly developed the Wayne and the purchase end of it, out of the Depression that lasted from the very late 1900s clear through until World War II started in 1939-1940 – during that whole entire period it was a Depression, it was Depression. And while it may have looked as though they’d be able to buy land everywhere, it was a program based on the willingness to sell. The Wayne National Forest was never given the right of eminent domain where they could go to court and acquire land at an appraised price; that is, appraised by independent appraisers. They were never given that, and they still don’t have that power. So they could only buy land when the landowner was willing to sell it. As evidenced now... well let me finish that side of the story. Once the big Depression ended with World War II, the price of land began to go up, particularly as the war ended and people began to change their whole concept of living in the hill country. They no longer wanted to be farmers, but they loved to live in the country. And people who would buy a little tract of land, maybe 100 acres maybe 200 acres, they would build their home down along the highway. But they no longer farmed. By that time the woods were beginning to grow, and they didn’t want to milk cows, they didn’t want to raise wheat or corn on those bare hillsides. And so they just wanted to live there and enjoy the fact that they could live in the country.

So the whole concept of ownership changed and gradually the land prices went up. And sometimes they went up pretty fast. But it’s been an interesting history of land values. And today it’s astounding what the cost of land is today. It’s absolutely astounding. I’ve got lots on this road on which I live - that in the past three years have sold for as much as $30,000 an acre. And nobody objects because they’re building $300,000 homes on them. It’s in proportion. I can remember when I first came to Athens I was on the Board of the bank here - simply a recognition of my previous connection with the Ohio’s Banker’s Association, not because I was doing about banking. Because running a trade association is definitely not banking. Anyway, I can remember when the first house sold in Athens for over $100,000. And we sat around the board room, and that was less than 30 years ago. And we sat around the board room and talked about it - $100,000 for a house? Now, I’m not going to name it, but it was one of the finest houses in Athens and probably was worth $100,000. But now you read the Sunday newspaper or real estate, and very ordinary houses, no better than mine are selling for $190,000 or at least priced at that. And so that’s inflation, not value.

Interview on September 4, 2003 in Athens, Ohio

JA: What other reasons do you think there might have been besides job creation to begin a national forest here in southeastern Ohio?

OA: Quite frankly, there were practically no other reasons other than job creation because it was a period of great distress economically. There were 16-18 % of people without jobs. We think now that 6% unemployment is a horrible thing. Back then, half the population almost, the working population was without jobs. So this was one more multi-faceted outpouring from Washington under the Franklin D. Roosevelt
administration to create jobs to rescue people and a lot of good things came out of it, of course, in the way of a permanent structure of programs. But generally speaking, the Wayne National Forest was just a means of creating jobs – and it worked. It didn’t work perfectly, of course. For instance, the announced goal at that time was to establish a national forest in southeastern Ohio of 1,200,000 acres. And had the money and the effort been put into it at that time, they might have achieved a half million acres, but after sixty years, the Wayne National Forest is just a little over 230,000 acres, a tiny fraction of what they expected to have. But, you know, the dream was big. But, I love big dreamers.

It was an exciting period of time, here I am, an editor of a little, tiny newspaper in Jackson, Ohio. And this kind of story was just one of many federal programs that was just brought into and started from scratch – into every little county – every county in the country, for that matter, that had a dreamer that wanted a program. It was that kind of exciting scramble to rescue a real distressed population.

JA: Why do you think they chose southeastern Ohio for a forest?

OA: Well, I suppose because it was generally recognized as being a hill country similar to the southern part of Indiana where the Hoosier National Forest already existed. And when they established the program in southeastern Ohio, it was to be a branch of the Hoosier National Forest out in Indiana. And so the management structure was already in existence over there. But the terrain here lent itself – it had been forested, it wasn’t like the great prairie counties of western and central Ohio. It was simply already a denuded forestland and they thought that it might be... of course, poverty also was concentrated in this part of the state more than it was in the better farming areas of the state. So, why was anything started? It was started because somebody said, “Let’s start something.” It was just that simple.

JA: You mentioned starving farmers and old worn out farmland in southeastern Ohio during the 1930s in your last interview. What else do you remember about the economic health or state of the lands that were first purchased to create the Wayne National Forest, given the extractive industries and real estate tax situation?

OA: Yeah, take the real estate taxes for instance. Delinquencies were mounting everywhere – in every rural county. The landowners couldn’t pay their taxes; they didn’t have the money to pay the taxes. And yet the counties couldn’t sell the land at public sale because nobody would buy it – there was no market, and so the taxes just mounted. And that’s why we still have delinquent taxes on land that goes back many, many, many years. That was just one of the problems - the tax situation. But the rest of the problems were - oh obvious to most of us. For instance, when the federal government began buying land for the Wayne National Forest, ah, what was their program? They didn’t have a program of management. They just bought it and let it stand there. And over the next twenty years trees began to grow back. The landowner that would sell its land to the Wayne –sell the farmland to the Wayne for the forest – was told from the very beginning you may live free of charge in your house, you may have a garden, but the rest of the land you are to allow to go back to nature, leave it alone and let it grow back to dogwood and
sumac and redbud and blackberry briars because eventually it will be trees. At least that was the evolutionary approach that proved to be true. But if you moved off the farm, if you left your home and moved to town or anywhere else, then immediately that farm was demolished – that farmhouse and barns were demolished.

And yet as people moved back to the country in recent years - they built nicer homes or put their trailers down along the highway. They no longer were farmers; they didn’t clear any fields even when they bought the land privately. They didn’t clear the fields and go back to farming because you can’t farm this land - this hill land – economically in today’s markets. We’ve got some good farms in our area, but they’re river bottom farms.

If there was a management program for the land that was bought for the Wayne National Forest, it probably should be credited to the CCC camps – the Civilian Conservation Corps – where the boys from poor families - all the big cities around in Ohio and elsewhere - where sent off to camps to build roads in the country, to clear ditches, to build little dams and streams to prevent erosion – anything in the world that you could dream up for them to do. It wasn’t a great dream of welfare or service, it was just something to give these young men something to do and pay them. And there was a camp established near Jackson, for instance, that housed 300 men from Cleveland and elsewhere in Ohio – and they were wonderful. This was a brand new experience for them – to move into the hill country and to live in a camp that had barracks and sleeping areas and kitchens and storage area - garages for their equipment, and all that sort of thing.

JA: *Would they build these things?*

OA: Yeah, that was the very first thing they did. The very first ones – they lived in tents when they first came and then these camps were built. They were built all over in the United States – CCC camps were built everywhere. And probably – I hate to guess but – I would say at least a million young men went through those camps and had an experience. I remember they came into my little newspaper office and wanted to establish a camp newspaper. And I worked with them for weeks. They’d come in once a month and edited the little newspaper we printed for them. They were great guys – they were good kids. These were not kids that were in trouble, these were kids that didn’t have an opportunity to go to school back home.

JA: *What would they see around the Jackson area, looking at the landscape – considering the different industries that were going on?*

Well they didn’t see any forests, because we didn’t have any forests, really. We didn’t. The camp was established out near the county home – which had been established to take care of poor people who got so aged and infirm they couldn’t take care of themselves. Every county used to have a county home. But that’s where the camp was built. And it was built in open area – you could see it for half a mile away. Looked like an army barracks – army camp. And yet it was in a half mile of town. The boys were accepted as a new exciting thing.

Actually it was one of the more acceptable programs because so many of the other programs literally involved families that were in trouble. Ah, gee, I can remember some of those situations – I hate to think back to a period when people were so desperately in need. And yet I saw psychological changes occur in those same people as they became...
accustomed to welfare. And they became expectant and in some cases demanding, they no longer were just somebody that – kind of ashamedly accepted a handout. They began to realize, “I’ve got a right to be helped,” and then they would – I saw one guy pound on the desk that I had seen, oh – maybe three months earlier – come in and beg for some help. Three months later he pounded on the desk at the welfare office and said, “I’m not getting enough money!” It’s a sad commentary that humanity – that the human being can become adjusted to things that...conditions...oh, I don’t know. Let’s forget that - because so many good things came out that period.

JA: Tell me more about how the CCC boys were really accepted by the community. This is something out of the question, the answer you just gave – what was it like to have the CCC boys in the community? You said they were very well accepted and so on – how could you tell?

OA: Well, I could tell simply because of my occupation. Here I am, a young man not more than two or three years older than these kids were. And, ah, this was a big story; this was one of a series of big stories coming out of Washington, D.C. So I was very acutely aware of these young men and their activities. I would go out to the camp occasionally just to visit with them, to get acquainted with their superior officers. It was run almost like a little army. And then they would come in town on their days off or some of their evenings and they would participate in things - as almost as bashful citizens. It was - some of them found some dates among the girls in town. It was simply an influx of good kids; it wasn’t a criminal element. This in no way was punitive. These were not kids that were in trouble back home except economically, and they reacted accordingly.

JA: What did they do during the day mostly?

OA: Oh, they worked anywhere – the biggest job for the CCC boys, at least for their superiors, was to dream up projects for them to do. They planted millions of trees, for instance, on the land that the Wayne National Forest was beginning to buy because they could get their trees over at the Marietta State Nursery or from other nurseries that were then started. And they planted trees everywhere – anywhere; without any particular knowledge about how to do it. But that didn’t make any difference, if you plant trees at the right time of the year, they’re going to grow. It may take them five years before they show up above the green briars and the other stuff that grows in those old fields. But they planted trees. They tried to correct erosion. Farming practices for a hundred years had encouraged erosion of the old hills so that they were literally open ditches draining down out of these old corn fields and places of that kind. And they would go in and design and build a whole series of little wooden dams starting up near the headwaters of these little – these ravines and going down about every forty or fifty feet and build another one, and forty or fifty feet and build another one, clear down to the flatland. And over a period of five or six years those little dams would fill up with dirt from additional erosion - and when they filled up with dirt that was a restoration in process. And then as the leaves and other debris would gather it would literally repair the damage that had
done by unwise farming practices. That was just one of the many things – two of the many things – the tree planting and the erosion control.

They built roads into areas of the land they needed to service – all sorts of things. But it was all done; it was all done by hand. It wasn’t done by huge equipment because the whole idea was to keep these boys busy – keep them employed. And the same thing was true of other programs. I remember a program wherein grants where given to the county to repair highways, including little township roads. And there would be as many as fifty men working with picks and shovels, digging ditches that are now done by heavy equipment along every little road, putting in culverts and this sort of thing – by hand. The whole idea was to give employment rather than just plain handouts – the handouts came later, of course.

JA: What is your perspective about a related idea - that is of the contiguous forest cover?

OA: Oh, this is one of the beauty spots, in my opinion. While the Wayne was attempting to put together over a million acres and failed to do so, but they did a good job with what they’ve done – at the same time the rest of the landowners - the rest of the farmers - quit farming. Sure, strip mining continued for a while, and still does in Ohio – southeastern Ohio. But not on the enormous, vast, destructive scale that it once did. And when you move away from a farm or you build a farmhouse down by the highway, and move into it and don’t intend to farm, if you just get out of the way, the forests come back. And they have. In addition to the millions of trees that the CCC boys planted and in addition, nuts like me planted thousands and thousands of trees over the last fifty years, old Mother Nature beat us fifty times more, Nature never stops planting. As a result, we have forests today all over southeastern Ohio – all over southeastern Ohio – that simply didn’t exist. But most of it came on its own - and is still coming on. I have to look at my woods and think, “I’ve got to get busy and cut some trees out of here, they’re too thick.” See, it never stops, Mother Nature doesn’t. And that’s one of the most encouraging things. It prevents me from being a pessimist. I can’t get excited about clear-cutting here and there – I can’t, because here in the eastern half of the United States, it doesn’t amount to a great deal. It really doesn’t. Oh, there are a few counties where it’s making an impact. But for the most part, from Adams County down near Cincinnati, clear up to East Liverpool in northeastern Ohio, we’ve got forests, we’ve got several million acres of forests that are there simply because farming quit. And they do come back, the woods do come back.

JA: OK, another question is how have YOU influenced the land use in the Wayne National Forest over the years?

OA: Probably very little, other than the fact that I have participated in conference after conference after conference sponsored by the Wayne to discuss all facets of their program – purchasing, roading, timbering – anything that had to do with the programmatic management of the Wayne. I have been involved in it certainly for the last twenty-five years on a regular basis. Now I’ve had no more influence than a lot of other people and less influence than some. For instance, my idea of my personal contribution was toward the preservation of natural features- plant life, trees, river corridors, stream
corridors and things of that kind. That’s something that the Wayne just assumes is going
to happen; that they will protect those sorts of things. While at the same time they open
up mile after mile of new trails for off-road vehicle operators who then, on their own,
create new trails – extensions. And nothing is ever done about it. And yet every time
they go through the forest and create a new trail for the off-road vehicle people, or they
create one of their own, they destroy more than I can save in a lifetime.

So that’s an unbalanced...and it’s understandable. The Wayne’s proposal to use
fire as a control device for certain types of undesirable underbrush sounds great, it sounds
great and it’s effective for certain types of specific needs the forest may have. But I say
to myself and I say to them, “What do you destroy in the meantime that I’m interested in
the way of trillium and bloodroot and all the other ground level things that..” I don’t
know and they don’t know. So it’s always an unbalanced problem. But you learn to live
with it, because the mere existence of the Wayne is a good thing for all of us.

If I have any influence at all on the Wayne from time to time, it’s based on my
long years of perspective and my vocally emotional approach to saving as much of that as
we can. I preach this sort of thing (laugh) – I’m an evangelist! And as a result I do have
some influence in a generalized way. I think, at least I hope that a lot of the people
respect me. I love the Wayne people; they’ve always had good staff people. But their
programmatic approach is somewhat timid and somewhat bureaucratically slow. But I’ve
learned to live with that sort of thing in government. OK? I’m not sure I should say that,
but that’s your paper – it’s my neck (smile).

The Wayne is subject, of course, to external pressures from groups and
organizations - just like any governmental agency is subject to those pressures. For
instance, the sawmill operators are constantly wanting in on the Wayne, to harvest
timber. And the Wayne is reluctant to give it to them, and yet they feel pressure to make
accommodations of that kind where it is logical to do so.

Another group that has a great deal of influence - not always for the good - are the
off-road vehicle operators. They love to wander around and have rallies and that sort of
thing in the Wayne. They have resulted in the creation of well over forty miles of trails
just built especially for them regardless of the terrain. And of course, they love it that
way.

There are lots of other public relations problems that crop up. A good example is
a botany student can literally be arrested for removing one plant if it’s semi-rare or
otherwise. It doesn’t make any difference whether it’s rare, but if you remove one plant
from the Wayne you can be arrested for it. But if you drive a motor vehicle all over it
and destroy 1,700 of those plants, so? No problem, no problem. It’s that imbalance that
bothers me, but that’s true of almost any enterprise in any governmental agency. You
learn to roll with it and measure it against the total benefits and the total advantages.

Obviously there are great advantages generally speaking to the presence of the
Wayne in the area, there’s no question about it. It provides recreational opportunities, it
provides a source of income, and it has resulted in the establishment of a fine
headquarters for the Wayne located halfway between Athens and Nelsonville on Route
33 – a beautiful headquarters. And they welcome visitors. It has resulted in protecting
the annual growth of timber in areas where there really was no timber when they bought
the land. And now we’re getting more maturing forests as a result of the mere existence
of the Wayne.
They also have been rather timid in permitting the exploitation of timber for commercial purposes. They don’t go out of the way to find a market, in other words, for timber. And they’re reluctant and bureauerocratically slow to grant a timber harvest to anybody. They also do a pretty fair job in preparing and protecting against wildfires, which we fortunately don’t have in the eastern Appalachians they way they do out in the dry West. But nevertheless, all these contributions are very real and if you live long enough (chuckle) you begin to realize, hey there’s a balance here that’s advantageous to all of us. And so you roll with the things that you don’t quite agree with or you wish weren’t quite as damaging or quite as short-sighted because there’s so much good coming out of the Wayne and the examples that it sets in management.

JA: *What would you say to the people who want a certain portion of the national forest to be set aside to remain untouched; left alone forever?*

OA: Quiet frankly, I would love it. I would actually love it and I think it’s something we should work towards. But it’s a very difficult problem because throughout the Appalachian area there are little township roads and county roads everywhere. There are people living out in the areas everywhere. And it’s very difficult to find major areas of at least five thousand acres; that’s the minimum that can be set aside under federal law as something to be preserved, unchanged, unmanaged, for -- I forget the term for that type of...

JA: *In perpetuity?

OA: In perpetuity! But there’s a term that designates that kind of land; that kind of public land – I forget now what it is, but it’s unimportant. There is a five thousand acre minimum that’s established by Congress for “roadless areas” – that was it – “roadless areas.” Well, we don’t have any. We have at least two areas in the Wayne where they own over five thousand acres in contiguous fashion where they could establish it, but there are county and township roads all through there. And there are a few people living in those areas. But they’re almost entirely owned – all of the surrounding areas in two instances are entirely owned by the Wayne.

I tried to persuade them to do that one time and they said, “Well even if we declared it, it wouldn’t quite meet the term of ‘roadless areas’ because the roads are there and they are maintained by the township and the county. So even though we owned all the land –owned the five thousand acres or more – we can’t designate it as a roadless area because nobody’s going to close those roads. They go somewhere; they’re used every day by somebody.”

So the idea is beautiful but the best we can hope for is large, contiguous areas owned by the Wayne that are kept relatively inviolate. So, for the standpoint of roadless areas we don’t have any and we’re not about to get any.

JA: *Did you want to touch on any sort of land ethic now in the general public?

OA: The land ethic has changed, there’s no question about it. More people are demonstrating it all the time. More communities are demonstrating it all the time. The
existence - I think I mentioned it earlier – the existence of great, metropolitan parks; the existence of so many manmade lakes in Ohio that didn’t exist a hundred years ago both for flood control and recreational purposes and for water supplies. All those, there were only... four or five little glacier bottle lakes plus three major bog areas that are now lakes. But in addition we probably have five thousand farm ponds in Ohio that didn’t exist sixty years ago. Things of that kind are part of changing ethics. Ohio has over 40,000 acres of state forest that it didn’t have and it’s managed for multiple uses. And of course, the Wayne now has – as we mentioned – over 230,000 acres of land in Ohio that it owns and operates. Those lodges – I talked about all that.

This is part of an ethic; this is part of recognition. It has to be! How else can you explain – why would we spend all this money buying and managing and developing these tracts if it wasn’t a changing attitude on the part of the general public and the government? It’s encouraging. I refuse to be a pessimist about all this – I really refuse to be. I read in the paper just this week that our worldwide population growth worldwide has slowed down – that is, almost stabilized. Well, that depends on where you’re living, see. But most of our growth is from that influx of new citizens from Mexico and Europe and other places in the world. It’s not based upon our birthrate.

So there are many, many reasons to be optimistic while at the same time you wonder about our ability to destroy at least a thousand acres – and I mean destroy a thousand acres, maybe five thousand acres - building a highway between here and the Ohio River and that will never be a park (chuckle) again. So we fight ourselves with our theories and our practices but I still say we’re making progress – ethic-wise, recognition, buying and building parks – all that sort of good stuff. I refuse to be a pessimist.

Interview August 6, 2003 in Athens, Ohio

JA: What were some of the reasons why you thought it was important to actually acquire land for preservation?

OA: Simply - because it had gone through a hundred years of destruction. When you look back, in fact a little more than a hundred years, you look back into the middle 1800s – everybody was farming, everybody was cutting down timber for wood for lumber. Or as in southeastern Ohio, everybody was cutting down timber for charcoal-making for the iron furnaces. That lasted for about forty years. And they were burning up about on an average of three acres of woods a day for each furnace. So there were many, many things - we were shipping trainloads of lumber out of southeastern Ohio to New York and Philadelphia and the East, because every big city was growing rapidly, whereas - our little towns were not. So there was this whole century – actually more than a century - of wiping our hills and river valleys clean of trees. Yet the very minute it stopped it wasn’t due to a vast change of conscience. There was a change in conscience – for instance, if there hadn’t been a change of conscience why would President Roosevelt have adopted the idea – accepted the idea from somebody – that there out to be a CCC programs. And that in itself resulted in a million acres being planted to pine trees of all kinds - evergreen trees of all kinds – in Ohio alone. That was a nationwide program – thousands, hundreds
of thousands of young men were sent to the hills to build dams, to repair eroded ditches, to plant trees, do all that sort of good stuff.

JA: *What was it in Ohio that you saw that caused you to think that this was the place that you wanted to be working with The Nature Conservancy?*

OA: Oh, I was already in the mood for it – I’d take on any job that had to do with the outdoors. That goes clear back to my childhood, it really does. I already had such a deep interest in birds, for instance; it was just ingrained in me. You know, I’ve got members of my family who couldn’t care less about the outdoors. And I weep inside – because they’re different from me. But I understand the difference – we’re not all alike by any manner of means. Conservation even in Ohio – and old Mother Nature is our biggest asset – but conservation of natural resources in Ohio is far from being complete, far from being the standard, (don’t touch the microphone) far from being a standard in the population.

In other words, for every a nut like me who loves the outdoors and wants to preserve and improve it – there are fifty who couldn’t care less. And there are another two or three that are out to destroy it because, “it’s a waste of time to have those trees out there to channelize that river properly and protect it” and all that sort of business. This is human nature and once you learn to accept that then you know what your problem is and how you can go about maybe solving parts of it. But if old Mother Nature wasn’t determined to grow trees everywhere on these old hills we wouldn’t have one tenth of the woods we have now. But she’s determined to restore them and she’s succeeding, isn’t she? Every fence row spread, every old pasture field is now reverting forest, and so forth.

Interview February 11, 2005 in The Plains, Ohio

JA: *How old were you in the late 1930s, what were you doing?*

OA: Well, I was beginning to mature, actually. I was in my late 20s in the late 1930s and I was the editor of the Jackson Herald, down in Jackson, Ohio in the little old hill country that I loved. There were so many stories happening at that particular time because it was in the heart of the Roosevelt Administration in which new programs were being invented every month in Washington and then fanned out across the country and they even touched in Jackson County, particularly in the rural areas. Like starting new forests and having CCC camps, all that exciting stuff I can remember it so well because I had to write about it.

I frequently get amused when I read articles by young men in their thirties and forties attempting to portray what has happened in our country and in particular our states here in the last 75 years because the difference is enormous, enormous. And that’s particularly true in the woodlands of Ohio because in the 1930s we had just finished a century of trying to farm these hills and we had cut all of the trees practically. You had a hard time finding forests even little patches of forest in southern Ohio in the 1920s and 30s because it had been cleared for pasture, it had been cleared for lumber, it had been
cleared for wheat fields on the old hillsides; everything of that kind and it was different. And here it was coming back. And throughout the 40s and 50s and 60s and 70s not only did the 3C boys and some farmers plant hundreds of thousands of trees but old Mother Nature planted millions of trees during that same period. And the forests we now have – and they’re luxurious now, they really are by comparison, they’re luxurious – we have forests everywhere that now that are anywhere from 30 to 50 years old and it’s a different atmosphere out here, it’s great! I love it.

JA: So what do you mean when you say that your farm is a microcosm of your viewpoint about Nature?

OA: When I bought that wonderful little farm of 98 acres back in 1956, it had been farmed for at least 125 years and as a result there was one little tiny corner of woods maybe an acre or two at the most back in one corner. And then there were a few trees along a cliff. The rest of it had been farmed, and I mean farmed; not just for pasture, but for cornfields and hayfields and oats and wheat. And so it was worn out but it was typical of all the other land in this whole area. We look out now and we see woods everywhere, everywhere. But back just 50 years ago that wasn’t true. So I’m almost ecstatic about what has happened on my watch I planted over 30,000 trees on my farm. Now I fight to keep open areas. That’s nature and it’s hard for young people to realize this enormous change that has taken place in just fifty years. Fifty years is nothing – nothing.

JA: How might your viewpoint of the landscape differ then from a young person today?

OA: (Chuckle) That’s an easy question to answer because my perspective can hone in on this particular farm. See I started going with a beautiful girl who lived on this farm when I was in my 20s and we got married. That was way back, way back, because in 1956 I bought this farm. It had been farmed to death for about a hundred years. And yet I was familiar with it when it was supporting a family as a farm, as a productive farm – with about five cows, two or three pigs, a bunch of chickens and things of that kind; little corn fields here or there.

So it makes a difference when you think in terms of not only my first acquaintance with this land through my wife-to-be but my purchase of this wonderful, little hill country farm fifty years ago, as I said in 1956. Now, that’s not quite fifty years ago but it’s within three years of it as of this particular moment. So I’ve been able to see this land here develop under my jurisdiction, really. But at the same time all the rest of the land through southeastern Ohio was being abandoned from farming except for the rich areas of the river valleys and it was reverting back on its own in most cases. Now we have forests everywhere.

Then I could drive from here to Ironton, Ohio and just occasionally see a patch of woods up a deep hollow somewhere or up across a ridge that you couldn’t farm on; so those images, augmented by the fact that I was interested as a newspaper writer in what was happening to government programs. Many of them in this part of the country involved what was happening to farmland – the reforestation by the 3C boys; all that sort of thing. So the emphasis was not only in my vision but in my responsibility to report it.
In Ohio, we’ve got to remember that the whole State of Ohio there are only eight little patches of what is known as virgin forests and they’re set aside today, fortunately, so that theoretically they’ll be protected. One of them, of course, is being mined out from under it and I hope it doesn’t result in the killing of these ancient trees. But eight little patches of virgin forest exist in Ohio. Now that’s becoming less obvious as many of our woodlands age we’ve got now a lot more woods that are 75 years old that we didn’t have 75 years ago (chuckle) they were open fields or pastures or cut over woodlands. But now we’re beginning to get mature trees; mature patches.

Even on my farm I’ve got trees that I planted when they were a foot high as seedlings that now I can’t even reach around their bowls. And this is happening all over the State except in heavily farmed country of the flat west, of course.

People themselves move around more than trees do, I guarantee you. I’m a classic example. When I came to Ohio I moved to Jackson then I moved to Salem, Ohio, then I moved to - -

JA: Could you repeat that please, where did you move when you first came here?

OA: Well I came to Jackson County, then I moved into Jackson city, then I moved to Salem, Ohio then I moved to Columbus, Ohio after buying a farm in northern Ohio that I intended to move to but couldn’t move to because of a change in jobs. And then in Columbus I moved twice and then I came to Athens. This is typical of people; we move around, we’re a migrant soul – bunch of people. Any one who lives their entire lifetime on one farm in one site, they’re unique - they really are unique. And in some ways I envy them and in some ways I think, “Oh, look what you’ve missed,” because moving around does acquaint you. Yet all my moves have been within two states. I moved out of Kentucky as a kid into Ohio, but I’ve spent 90% of my life in Ohio but that didn’t keep me still, maybe the sheriff was after me (chuckle).

I think a classic example of what affects your vision of a given area is whether or not you come back to it after living somewhere else and somewhere else and somewhere else. We are a mobile society, there’s no question about it. Our families do move us around because jobs and opportunities, this or that, or whatever we want to do or love to do or think we love to do – keeps us on the go. It’s nothing for us to have connections in California or Columbus, Ohio or even Athens, Ohio. And that’s certainly true.

But sometimes you have a unique opportunity like I had, to get acquainted with the hill country of southeastern Ohio, for instance, as I did when I first lived here and married a wonderful woman from here – then took off to Salem, Ohio; to Columbus to engage in furthering my journalism occupation as well as getting into trade association management and then thankfully coming back to the hills – coming back to my beloved hills. Oh gosh, I don’t know what I would do if I didn’t end up my twenty years or more right here in the hills. I love it, I love it.

JA: Can you describe the types of mining that have been in southeastern Ohio?

OA: Easily - because first, it was all underground mining. There were no strip mining because there was no big machinery to work; I’ll touch on that in a minute. You take a
town like Jackson or Wellston. You’ve got to keep in mind that coal mining was well under way at the turn of the last century.

JA: So what impacts have the underground mining and strip mining had in this region throughout your life?

OA: Mining has been a very mixed blessing in this area, very mixed. For instance, the owners of great leases of coal resources underground have been able to capitalize on them and have recovered millions of tons of coal shipped out then to industrial centers. In the process that has resulted in some very wealthy people, wealthy estates, and some good other benefits through the railroads and through the development of other communities around the mines.

On the other hand, from a bad point of view, once the resource is gone, the communities that were established because of the coal resources – they have to change or else they die. And many of them have died; many of them have faded away into nothing little villages because coal is an exhaustible resource. And regardless of how you mine it whether it’s underground or strip mining, it’s gone one of these days. It’s gone either in twenty five years or fifty years then where do you turn? The only mines today that are profitable are great big operations that through modern techniques are able to remove large amounts of coal at any one time. There aren’t many of those left. But when you think of the fact that Nelsonville was established because of coal mining and lots of other small communities; some communities like Luhrig – once the scene of a huge mine that even drew tourists up from Cincinnati on the railroads. It’s dead, it’s no longer there. Luhrig is a place not a community anymore, not a town. So it’s a mixed bag.

Then it also has its good and bad points from the standpoint of what it does to our hill country. If you go into strip mining – and for the first twenty-five years strip mines were not recovered. I mean not improved; there was no law required of them. They could just leave the great channels of canyons up and down the valleys which filled up with acid mine drainage and so forth. So it’s a mixed bag. Now even with recovery required on the part of the strip mines, its still has changed the nature of the soil enormously. Because when you go back and push that soil back, you’re mixing up all acid soil with the top soil that was created by centuries of woodlands. So you don’t have – we’re going to have to wait another 10,000 years at least before that particular type of soil has returned to the tops of the great spoiled banks even if they’re leveled out nicely with beautiful curves.

So mining in any sense of the word is a mixed bag. It has a very temporary, prosperous impact on a community and in particularly on the owners – if they’re good managers – owners of the mine itself, the operation itself. But once it’s gone, it leaves a scar; it leaves every kind of a scar in the form of acid water in all the creeks, of barren landscapes that have no top soil whatsoever on them, or ancient veins left by interior mines or ancient canyons left by strip mining. It’s not something that has any perfect result in the long run. Even the people who made big money out of it we’ll say 75 years ago? Where are they now? They’re not in mining, probably. If they had millions, they left it to their relatives who are now enjoying it in Florida now, I hope (chuckle).
JA: You recently have joked about suggesting that somebody should come up with some sort of commercial value to clean up this acid mine drainage problem. Could you talk about that?

OA: I’ve thought about it many times because if there was some way of completely recovering our earth’s surface from strip mining as well as deep mining, I would certainly be preaching it all the time. But again, it’s a mixed bag because there are certain areas where there are just no recoverable things. Even when you close up an underground mine from which there is a steady stream of acid water coming out of it before you close it, if it is continually going to be fed by rainfalls down through the future, that water is going to find some other hole of its own – a ground hog even (chuckle) to come out of. And so it’s almost impossible to completely cut off acid drainage. We used to try – particularly in Pennsylvania and certainly to some degree in southern Ohio – installing little wire filled containers across streams – filling them with limestone so as to neutralize that acid drainage. Well it works temporarily, but how long – five years, six years, ten years, fifteen years? And then the fence rusts out and the limestone has by then has completely melted away in the acid water. So if you don’t replace it, you’ve still got the same acid soil coming out of the same line. So all of the answers we have found to date have two problems: one, they’re temporary; two, they’re very costly. And those two things everybody – especially politicians – avoid even considering them.

The best things I can say is that the return of forests to eastern Ohio has reduced acid drainage considerably by providing a cover of humus from the leaves of trees that were not there a hundred years ago but they’re there now and they’re growing old and they’re putting down an inch of new topsoil every hundred years. That’s about what it takes is about one inch of topsoil can be created by forests about every hundred years. So it’s improving because we now have hundreds of times more forests than we had just a hundred years ago. We’ve almost got as many forests as we had two hundred years ago – not quite.

JA: Well, I’m wondering about the streams, though. We still have dead streams.

OA: I don’t know the answer to the mine drainage, other than the fact we slowly learn to live with them and nature, itself provides some degree of relief. Because I’ve watched the puny little efforts made to close off lots of old mines. And that’s true right here in Athens County – they’ve closed off a lot of old mines. Various sundry methods have been used and yet you can go out here and test Sunday Creek and Monday Creek and a dozen other small creeks where mines used to exist and the water is still acid except right after a heavy rain.

JA: Now we’re talking about the CCC boys right now?

OA: I’m going to touch on several things right now so that you see a balance here; or my vision of a balance because you may not accept it. The CCC boys were just one small part of reforesting Ohio yet they were in the spotlight for about ten years. I mean you couldn’t ignore them. They were on the streets, they were in the fields. They were in the camps – big camps, they were obvious. They were coming here from Chicago and
Cleveland and Cincinnati – the big cities. They weren’t coming from Coalton and Ironton, and Jackson – they were coming from the big cities. So there impact was real but it wasn’t predominant. All right, what was the predominate thing in restoring the forest lands of the Appalachians through Ohio? Neglect! Quit farming! Quit farming! It wasn’t a positive thing; it wasn’t something that was deliberate from the standpoint of reforestation. And yet it resulted in reforestation of all of eastern Ohio. Neglect! You quit farming because you couldn’t make a living on these old hills. If you didn’t own at least a hundred acres of bottom land, forget it. You’d starve to death; you’re family would starve to death. So down through the years as our rural areas became residential – not farming – you built a house down by the road, by the creek, by the foot of a hill or on a knoll to live in. It wasn’t part of a farming plan. So that has to be taken into account.

In other words, what created the forests of Ohio? Was it the CCC boys? No! They created their part of them. And I can drive through southern Ohio today and I can point out CCC forests. You know why? - Because they’re all evergreen. They didn’t plant anything but evergreen trees. They loved it because it showed up a hillside instantly. When you planted a hundred acres of white pine, the next spring you can see. If you planted maples, it’d look like a wheat field up there. You couldn’t tell what the boys had done and what they didn’t. Plus the fact that many nurseries were available to grow pine trees of all kinds; evergreen trees of all kinds. But they weren’t growing the other kinds of trees in quantity. So, the CCC boys made an impact, don’t get me wrong. But the demise of farming made a ten times bigger impact; and the fact that people moved into other kinds of jobs instead of farming these old hills – that was the big impact of changing it. And you’ve got to have a few years under your belt in order to realize that.

JA: The heyday of the Hope Furnace in Vinton County was in the 1860s - so what killed industry here in Ohio after that?

OA: First, you have to consider the fact that the Hope Furnace was just one of about twenty iron furnaces in southern Ohio and there’s even a scattering two or three of them in northern Kentucky where there was a thin range of iron ore that encouraged the Welsh people to come from Wales, because they were experienced in this kind of iron smelting – these little furnaces that they could build on the edge of the iron ore veins.

So that was how it developed in Ohio and it developed for probably forty, fifty years as a profitable industry even though nobody was getting rich because it wasn’t a real rich vein. And then all of a sudden, all of a sudden, the Mesabi Range was discovered up in Minnesota and heavens, it was ten times richer, easier to mine, it was right there on the edge of the Great Lakes so it could be shipped in big boats anywhere. So Cleveland and Pittsburg and Chicago benefited directly -instantly - from the Mesabi Range and it just killed the iron mines in southern Ohio. The same thing had happened earlier over in New Jersey where they literally, I think, discovered the first iron range in the United States, in North America.

JA: Now you mentioned earlier that you would drive by an area in Jackson where you saw charcoal being made. Could you describe that for me how that was done?
OA: The two charcoal furnaces that I actually saw operating were located just south of McArthur. In fact, right on the very edge of McArthur within 200 yards of the highway. As I remember the procedure, they would pile up a pile of hard wood. And as they would pile it up they would build this wall around it of clay and whatever - sticks and rocks, until they had created this mound that was probably thirty feet tall. It looked like an Eskimo hut and once it was absolutely crammed full, then they would start a slow fire underneath and they discouraged flames and there was one outlet, of course for the smoke and the exhausted heat at the top. And they would control that fire - very, very slowly so as to instead of burning up the wood it would turn it into charcoal. Now the charcoal was in various and sundry size pieces – shapes. So that it wasn’t “baggable” back in those days; it was used for other purposes, it was used for industrial purposes. But the last two that existed, to my personal knowledge, was there at the edge of McArthur.