

Silver Falls History: A Chronological Story *(Draft, July 2011)*

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| <p>circa 1811: Donald McKenzie and other members of the Pacific Fur Company were probably the first white men to see the Silverton area. They are believed to have followed the beaver up the creeks and eventually discovered Silver Falls.</p> <p>1865: The Silverton Fire, the largest known in Oregon's history, burned a million acres including the Silver Falls area.</p> <p>1882: April 20: Patent issued to W.T. Eaton, one of the first settlers on record in the Falls area, for 160 acres near South Falls.</p> <p>1886: A forest fire destroyed a large part of the forest on lands that would become Silver Falls State Park.</p> <p>1888: March 16: The plat map for Silver Falls City was filed with Marion County for the Eaton land, which had been purchased by T.C. Smith. Herbert Hoover is believed to have been on the surveying crew.</p> <p>1899: A church was built in Silver Falls City and became the center of community activities.</p> <p>1900: Silverton photographer, June Drake, began advocating for the establishment of Silver Falls as a national park.</p> <p>1925: September: A destructive forest fire raged near and at House Mountain.</p> <p>1926: August 7: The 2,746 acres of Silver Creek Falls was proposed to the National Park Service by Senator McNary for establishment as a National Park. The proposal was rejected and the area was recommended as a state park.</p> <p>1928: July 1: Al Faussett rode a 12-foot homemade canvas-covered canoe filled with 36 inflated inner tubes over the 177-foot South Falls and survived to tell the tale.</p> <p>1928: Summer: South Burn, a forest fire, damaged the Silver Falls area.</p> <p>1931: April 3: First park acquisition was 90 acres from George and Anna Parkhurst at the cost of \$2,000.</p> <p>1931: April 30: North Falls became park property.</p> <p>1931: October 19: South Falls became park property.</p> <p>1931: December 3: The Highway Commission named the area "Silver Creek Falls State Park".</p> <p>1933: July 23: Silver Falls State Park was dedicated. More than 5,000 people attended. At this time, the park was comprised of 1,268 acres.</p> <p>1934: December 15: Emergency Conservation Work Organization crew commenced work at Silver Falls.</p> | <p>1934: December 31: Federal government established a Recreational Demonstration Area near Silver Falls.</p> <p>1935: March: The Oregon State Highway Commission signed an agreement with the National Park Service and the US Army to create a master plan with designs and construction drawings for Silver Creek Falls State Park. They also agreed to establish a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) program at the park.</p> <p>1935: March 30: CCC Camp was established near North Falls.</p> <p>1935: Silver Creek Falls State Park was again reviewed and rejected as a National Park.</p> <p>1935: March: Oregon State Highway Commission signed agreement with NPS and the US Army to create a master plan for Silver Creek Falls State Park and to establish a CCC program at the park.</p> <p>1936: Latrine constructed behind Log Cabin. (Fulton, 1998)</p> <p>1937: CCC Combination Building completed.</p> <p>1938: September 17: Parks purchased 50 acres on which Silver Falls City was located.</p> <p>1938: Silver Creek Youth Camp, a boys' camp, was created.</p> <p>1938: Log Cabin built. (This building is now occupied by the Friends of Silver Falls Nature Store.)</p> <p>1939 – 40: South Falls Lodge was constructed.</p> <p>1940: Smith Creek Camp, for girls, was completed.</p> <p>1940: Myrtlewood furniture of Concession Building (now called the South Falls Lodge) designed by Margery Hoffman Smith, director of Oregon Art Project under the Federal Works Agency. Smith also designed furniture for Timberline Lodge at Mount Hood, Oregon.</p> <p>1942: April: CCC Camp closed.</p> <p>1942: December 5: CCC Camp buildings at North Falls were transferred to the State and remodeled for use as a Youth Camp.</p> <p>1944: Myrtlewood furniture installed in Lodge. This furniture remains.</p> <p>1946: The Salem YMCA was granted an ongoing cooperative agreement to operate Silver Creek Youth Camp by the National Park Service. This agreement continues to the present time. (Armstrong, 1965)</p> <p>1946: May 27: Nohgren's Restaurant opened in the Concession Building (the South Falls Lodge.)</p> |
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