**Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern Appalachians**

**Southern Appalachian Geographical Areas**

**Accession Number:** GEOA-2014-EX003 -000000-Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Great Smoky Montains National Park

**MAP: <author> <title> <publisher> <copyright date>**

<acquisition information (i.e. website, dealer, mailing address, email address, phones)>

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** <full name>

**ILLUSTRATOR:** <full name>

**COMPILED BY:** <full name>

**Area Summary:**

**National Park**

By 1900, the best forests with the most valuable trees lay in the South. From 1900 to 1920, the South led the nation in timber production. Some timbering was underway in the Southern Appalachians in the 1880s and by 1901, most of the South’s forests had experienced some commercial timbering. The construction of logging railroads led to big-time timber liquidation. Recovery of the expensive costs of building a narrow-gauge railroad line required scalping the mountains. On the steepest slopes, oxen were used to drag the logs to the landings. At the highest reaches, logs were skidded by horses. At times, splash dams were built on small tributaries. Another transportation method was the flume, a narrow wooden aqueduct that carried logs downhill to a mill or river. Spruce from Clingmans Dome was once carried by a flume. By 1909, mill towns along the fringes of the Smokies included Bryson City, Gatlinburg, Townsend, Elkmont, Ravensford, Proctor and Fontana. By the 1920s, an estimated two-thirds of the Smokies had been logged over or burned by fires.

The nation’s first national park, Yellowstone, was created in 1872. Both Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks were established in 1890. As early as the 1880s, state geologist Drayton Smith of Franklin, North Carolina, proposed a national park in the mountains of western North Carolina. IN 1885, Dr. Henry Marcy of Boston suggested putting aside a tract of land under “state control…in the higher range as a park.” In 1893, the North Carolina general assembly passed a resolution urging Congress to create a national park in the region. In 1901, Senator Pritchard of North Carolina introduced two bills in Congress in support of a national park. Between 1911 and 1916, the federal government acquired the option to purchase 61,350 acres from the Little River Lumber Company. By 1935, more than 400,000 acres were in public ownership, and the Great Smoky Mountains qualified for full national park status. In 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt dedicated the park.

**Abrams Creek, Cades Cove down to Chilhowee Lake**

The mountain rimmed Cades Cove valley is the most famous part of the park with a paved loop road that circles the cove. There are a number of restored or maintained cabins, mills, churches and other buildings. The exposed limestone valley produced fertile streams and soil, which attracted John Oliver, the first settler in 1818, a year before the Cherokee actually relinquished control of the Smokies. William Tipton also settled in Cades Cove soon after. By 1821, a number of other families, including the Jobes, Gregorys, Sparks, and Cables settled also. An iron forge and the Cades Cove Baptist Church were both established in 1827. In 1850, there were 132 families totaling 685 people living in the valley. However by 1860, there were only 86 families and 275 people. By 1880, there was a low point of 45 families. By 1900, there were 708 residents in the cove. A logging railroad was constructed one the Big Pigeon River to harvest and move more logs, more efficiently. The east end of the cove was heavily logged by the Little River Lumber Company. Just prior to the creation of the park, there were 100 families and nearly 700 people to be relocated.

**Little River and Little Pigeon River**

Between 1896 and 1900, logs were cut and floated down the Little River to the mill in Lenoir City. Then, one of the first big-time lumber operations was started by Colonel W. B. Townsend. He purchased 86,000 acres on the Little River. He constructed a logging railroad to harvest and move more logs, more efficiently.

Named after the logging camp operated by Little River Lumber Company, the Tremont area lies along the West and Middle Prongs of Little River. Elkmont lies on the Little River. It was originally a logging camp established in 1901 by Little River Lumber Company. Lands surrounding the camp were sold to the government in 1926 as some of the first lands purchased to establish the park. Greenbrier lies on the little Pigeon River. In pre-park days, it was one of the more settled areas, with a school, several churches, and two stores. The Smoky Mountain Hiking Club built a cabin at Greenbrier in 1934.

**Crosby Creek**

The wide basin was once known as the “moonshiner’s capital.” The stream was named after Dr. James Crosby, one of the first doctors to reside in the region.

**Big Creek**

A logging railroad was constructed to harvest and move more logs, more efficiently. The drainage was logged to include one of the largest trees ever cut in the region by the Crestmont Lumber Company between 1909 and 1918. During the 1930s, a Civilian Conservation Corps camp operated in the valley.

**Cataloochee Creek**

A logging railroad was constructed to harvest and move more logs, more efficiently. Once housed the largest community in the Smokies with an estimated 1200 people. Today the area is considered one of the “forgotten’ valleys.

Elk were reintroduced in the valley with the isolation being utilized to give them a good start.

**Deep Creek, Little Tennessee River and Fontana Lake**

After John Mingus settled on the Oconaluftee in 1795, other settlers soon followed, clearing land and farming on Deep Creek. At one time, the Bryson family operated a lodge on Deep Creek with access via wagon road. Splash dams were used to move logs down Deep Creek. During heavy rain, the creek would swell; the dams would then be dynamited to send the logs downstream to the mills.

**Noland and Forney Creeks**

After John Mingus settled on the Oconaluftee in 1795, other settlers soon followed. They cleared land and farmed Forney Creek.

From 1909 to 1920, the Norwood Lumber Company removed virtually all the larger trees. This was followed by a major fire, fueled by the logging slash.

**Hazel Creek**

The Ritter Lumber Company heavily logged the drainage. Proctor, a logging camp on Hazel Creek once had more than 1000 residents.

**Eagle Creek**

Montvale Timer Company operated on Eagle Creek.

**Raven Fork**

Parsons Pulp and Lumber Company put a mill on Raven Fork. Raven Fork is named for Cherokee chief Kalanu, which means “raven.” A loop road that travels up the drainage for easy access but this portion of the park remains one of the least developed areas of the park.

**Oconaluftee River**

The name is a corruption of an Indian term that means “village by the river.” In 1795, John Mingus and Ralph Hughes settled on Oconaluftee. Other settlers, including the Hyatts, Becks, Bradleys and Enloes soon followed, clearing land and farming Raven Fork. Development of the uplands changed in 1917, when Champion Fiber Company acquired 92,000 acres of land in the drainage and logged the basin up to Newfound Gap. A mill was established at Smokemont. By 1909, logging was at its peak.

**Layers:**

Governmental Boundaries

Topographical Area Boundaries

Species Habitat Ranges

Blue-Lines