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PROFITS IN SCENERY AND WILDLIFE

(These Wildlife Articles Written by William  
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The interest of many Oregon businessmen is centered in the search for new industrial plants that are willing to move in and buy the electric power to be developed at Bonneville. In this hunt for new industry, many merchants have overlooked Oregon's largest money maker, the nature and make-up of the State itself, the forests, mountains, rivers, coastline, the various kinds of wildlife, and the combined scenic and recreational attractions.

California knew how to play the game. The growth and development of this State came through the wide advertising of climate and winter sunshine, a recreational retreat for health and happiness. The best classes of citizens are looking for attractive and healthful home sites, and the appeal was to a wealthy class that had money to spend and money to invest. In one decade the population jumped over two million. Anyone knows that industry follows population.

Exploiting our natural resources for quick returns has built up many private fortunes, but often the public loses. You can't take more out of a bank than you put in. A grove of fine trees may be turned into money if they are cut for lumber. It takes a hundred years for a second crop. Some forests bring a larger profit to the public if they are left standing, especially along a public highway. Rivers that are turned into public sewers may save expenses for a few, but the people



as a whole have their health menaced. Food fishes are killed and recreational values are destroyed. The preservation of scenery, building attractive highways and creating beautiful park areas bring returns that are not yet recognized by some businessmen. They are too absorbed in rail rates, port charges, exploiting natural resources and promotion schemes to gain wealth along old-fashioned lines.

The State Highway Commission is engaged in the pay-as-you-go industry of bringing tourists from all parts of the country into Oregon. Last year the tourist traffic brought in more than \$55,000,000 which was scattered in many parts of the State. From the tourist's dollar, twenty-five cents was dropped into the cash registers of hotels and auto camps. Thirty-five cents was expended on food and farm products. Fifteen cents went for gasoline and oil. The balance of the hundred cents rolled into all sorts of tills, pockets and bank accounts. These were all new dollars from outside states left by departing tourists.

The Highway Commission has made a business of checking up on the visitors who come to Oregon. In 1935, people who motored here in their private cars staid an average of 12.3 days. They spent an average of \$2.76 per person per day, or a total of \$102.42 per car.

All branches of business are of importance in Oregon. In 1935, Oregonians spent about \$25,000,000 on new automobiles. A part of this covering the sales transactions remained here, but a large portion of this money floated off to the East.

The mills, factories and industrial plants that are filled with machines and workers are mainly in the centers of population. What is more important than a state-wide industry that scatters wealth to thousands of small farmers and home owners living along our streams, at the edge of a forest or among the hills and mountains, also that provides a good living for those who build auto camps, have lunch counters, stores and gas stations along hundreds of the highways in the State?

Since the funds of the Highway Commission are built up by gasoline tax collections, all those who visit Oregon and motor along our highways are increasing the wealth of the State and its citizens. By advertising the scenic attractions, angling and other outdoor resources, increase in tax collections jumped nearly forty percent in 1936 above 1935. The first nine months of 1936, \$8,020,034 came in from the gasoline tax, which was a gain of \$1,153,403 over the first nine months of 1935.

If the State is to build up and profit by its tourist industry, we must conserve our woods, waters and wildlife. A national summer playground dedicated to the health and happiness of all the people will bring more dividends than certain industrial plants that exploit a natural resource and fill our rivers with filth.