

REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEE  
ON  
EDUCATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Following the procedure of last year and in furtherance of the objectives set up at the Gull Lake, Minnesota, meeting last year, we have again published Volume II of Roadsides, A Record of Progress.

State Reports

It is most encouraging to note the greatly accelerated response to our request for material this year. Reports of progress and details of design and construction methods have been coming to us intermittently throughout the year. In contrast to last year when 15 States reported we received substantial contributions and reports from the following 22 States: Arkansas\*, Arizona, Colorado\*, Connecticut, Idaho\*, Indiana\*, Kentucky\*, Louisiana\*, Maryland\*, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota\*, Mississippi\*, New Jersey\*, North Carolina, Ohio\*, Rhode Island\*, South Carolina, Texas\*, Utah, Virginia\*, and Washington\*. Photographs for exhibition at the annual meeting of the Highway Research Board in Washington were received from 21 States\*, 6 of which (California\*, Iowa\*, Missouri\*, Montana\*, Nebraska\*, and West Virginia\*) are not in the above list of contributors. In addition California, Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey and Ohio sent valuable colored "slides".

Unlike last year we have not summarized in the "Record of Progress" the material from the States, but the editor, Mr. Wayne H. Wilson, Graduate Fellow in Landscape Architecture at Iowa State College, has gone through the articles and data very carefully, selecting items applicable and conforming to the main topics in the table of contents as follows:

1. Work accomplished
2. Public relations and educational activities
3. Construction techniques
4. Publications, reports, news, etc.

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\*States which sent photographs for exhibition at the Annual Meeting.

### Higher Standards

The scope of the reports was broader and the techniques in the fields of design, planting and construction seem to be advancing rapidly toward high standards in nearly all States. At least there is definitely an effort in that direction.

### More and Better Publicity

Many States it will be noted in the bulletin have received greater recognition of the roadside development work by the press than ever before. This is probably due to the activities of many local and State-wide organizations such as the Roadside Councils and Federations, Women's and Garden Clubs, and the like, as well as better directed publicity by the highway departments themselves.

Improved though indirect public relations can be noted with encouragement, such as the increasing demand for authentic information for presentation to special groups through State Roadside Councils and Clubs.

### Fourth Roadside and Shade Tree Conference and District Group Meeting of the Coordinating Committee for District 5 of the Public Roads Administration.

This 1940 Conference was held as formerly in the Landscape Studio at Ames on February 22 and 23 with several State organizations cooperating with Iowa State College and the Iowa Roadside Council. We were especially fortunate this year in having the help of Mr. Wilbur H. Simonson, Landscape Architect of the Public Roads Administration, Washington, D. C.

Of special interest and value to the men from the seven States representing this district were the informal panel discussions which really got down to details of construction, operation and maintenance. It was during these technical discussions that the district or regional aspects of mutual problems became evident. All present felt the value of such meetings and hoped for their continuance.

The following program was presented:

"Putting Roadside Improvement into Practice" - J. D. Armstrong, Landscape Contractor, Ames, Iowa.

"Roadside Zoning Report" - Wayne H. Wilson, Iowa State College.

"Wayside Parks of Minnesota" - H. Gordon Bowes, Landscape Engineer, Minnesota Highway Commission, St. Paul, Minnesota.

"Iowa Roadside Council Meeting" - Mrs. Henry Taylor, President, Bloomfield, Iowa, presiding.

- "The Secondary Road Program in Iowa" - John M. Hall, Landscape Engineer, Iowa Highway Commission, Ames, Iowa.
- "National Roadside Improvement" - Wilbur H. Simonson, Senior Landscape Architect, Public Roads Administration, Washington, D. C.
- Summary and Panel Discussion - Highway Landscape Engineers
- "State Roadside Improvement" - State Reports.
- "The Soil in Which Shade Trees Grow" - Professor B. J. Firkins, Soils Department, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa.
- "The Way in Which Shade Trees Grow" - Professor W. E. Loomis, Botany Department, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa.
- "Moving Large Shade Trees" - J. W. Wright, Des Moines.  
Film by Williams & Harvey, Landscape Service, Kansas City, Kansas.
- "The Citizen's Responsibility for a Street Tree Program - Panel Discussion.
- "Tree Surgeons at Work" - Film by Davey Tree Expert Company, Kent, Ohio.
- Resolutions and Election of Officers - Iowa Shade Tree Association.

Copies of the minutes of these meetings, including full transcript of papers presented, will be sent upon request addressed to the Department of Landscape Architecture, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa. This was the first roadside coordinator meeting held in Public Roads Administration District 5 and was the second district group meeting in the Nation-wide program sponsored by the Coordinating Committee on Roadside Development.

Other Public Roads Administration district coordinators meetings were held in ten administrative districts to discuss and consider the roadside problems. The date, place and attendance of these meetings are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

SUMMARY-REPORT OF DISTRICT GROUP MEETINGS HELD DURING 1940 BY THE COORDINATORS FOR THE COMMITTEES ON ROADSIDE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AASHO AND HRB. (Sponsored by the Coordinating Executive Committee)

Group Meeting	PRA District No.	Date (1940)	Held at (Place)	Representatives in Attendance						Total
				State High-way Depts	PRA W.O.	PRA Distr.	SCS	USF	Colleges	
1st	14	Feb 16 Feb 17	Richmond, Virginia	3 (3)*	2	5	-	-	-	10
2nd	5	Feb 22 Feb 23	Ames, Iowa	8 (7)*	1	1	-	-	3	13
3rd	7	Mar 4 Mar 5	Indianapolis, Indiana	4 (3)*	1	2	-	-	-	7
4th	7** (2nd Meeting)	Jul 29 Jul 30	Lansing, Michigan	6 (3)**	1	1	-	-	-	8
5th	6	Aug 6	Fort Worth Texas	3 (3)*	-	2	-	-	-	5
6th	4	Aug 8 Aug 9	St. Paul, Minnesota	5 (4)*	-	3	-	-	-	8
7th	12	Aug 12 Aug 13	Preston, Idaho	12 (2)*	-	4	2	2	2	22
8th	8	Aug 12 Aug 13	Gulfport, Mississippi	5 (5)*	-	3	-	-	-	8
9th	9	Aug 14 Aug 15	Boston, Massachusetts	12 (8)*	1	1	-	-	HRB 1	15
10th	1 (AASHO)	Sep 16 to 19	Seattle, Washington	A.A.S.H.O. Annual Committee Meetings						
11th	3	Nov 26	Denver, Colorado	11 (3)*	-	12	-	-	-	23
(11)	(10)	<u>Total No.</u>	(11)	(69) (38)*	(6)	(34)	(2)	(2)	(6)	119

Group meetings during 1940 (including Annual Meeting AASHO) ..... 11  
 Administrative Districts represented ..... 10  
 States represented at the group meetings ..... 38  
 State Highway Department representatives attending ..... 69  
 P.R.A. Representatives attending (District Engineer Offices, including Washington office) ..... 40  
 Representatives from other agencies (S.C.S., U. S. Forest Service, Colleges, etc.) ..... 10  
 Attendance all group meetings (all cooperating agencies) ..... 119

(-)\* Figures in parenthesis thus, indicate number of States represented at meeting.  
 (-)\*\* District No. 7 only district to hold more than one meeting.

## Wisconsin Roadside Institute

Three important meetings were held at Madison and Wausau and led to organization of the Wisconsin Roadside Council. This Council is represented by American Legion, the Legion Auxiliary, Federated Women's Garden, Business and Professional Clubs, and Friends of our native landscape. One of the immediate problems is the introduction of a State enabling act to authorize State highway commissions to acquire land for park purposes. Several agencies have offered to undertake certain problems or projects.

## Publications

American Automobile Association has taken up roadside zoning vigorously and is publishing a "Roadside Zoning Legislative Guide" by Mr. Bettman.

The Maryland Legislative Council has issued a very concise research report on "Roadside Development Control" by Robert R. Bowie as a guide for formulating legislation. It presents a comprehensive study of the effect of unrestricted roadside development of private property on traffic congestion, accidents, rural scenery, and property values. No student of this subject can afford to miss this report.

Vol. 7, No. 4 of "Pennsylvania Planning", a publication of the Pennsylvania State Planning Board was issued December, 1940, to inform those who are interested in this subject as well as to interest others in the roadside legislative problem.

## Recent Legislation in Aid of Roadside Improvement in the Federal Highway Program.

The Federal Highway Act of 1940 includes one or two items of particular interest to all persons concerned with roadside conservation and right-of-way improvement.<sup>1</sup> In this legislation, up to 3 per cent

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<sup>1</sup> - H.R. 9575 - Approved September 5, 1940 - Sec. 11, Subsection (c) of Section 1 of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1938 (52 Stat. 633) is hereby amended as follows:

"Hereafter the construction of highways by the States with the aid of Federal funds may include such roadside and landscape development, including such sanitary and other facilities as may be deemed reasonably necessary to provide for the suitable accomodation of the public, all within the highway right-of-way and adjacent publicly owned or controlled recreational areas of limited size and with provision for convenient and safe access thereto by pedestrian and vehicular traffic, as may be approved by the Public Roads Administration. Such construction likewise may include the purchase of such adjacent strips of land of limited width and primary importance for the preservation of the natural beauty through which highways are constructed, as may be approved by the Public Roads Administration: Provided, That not to exceed 3 per centum of the Federal-Aid funds apportioned to and matched by any State under this Act may be used for the purchase of such adjacent strips of land without being matched by the States."

of the Federal-aid funds apportioned to and matched by any State under this Act can each year be devoted to the acquisition of limited roadside strips of varying width as determined by the character and topography of the adjoining landscape. Where it is the opinion of the State highway authorities and the Public Roads Administration that it is desirable to protect vital stretches of roadside through the preservation of the natural beauty of areas through which highways are constructed, the purchase of such approved strips adjacent to the highway may be made with Federal-aid funds to the amount stated without being matched by the States.

This will permit the acquisition of selected limited areas of bordering woodlands or other fine existing trees and tree groups, special points for turnouts and overlooks, spring sites, stream and shore frontages, and other areas of outstanding scenic and recreational value. It is the intention of the Act to encourage the preparation and control of a series of areas in order of priority over the State highway system carefully selected on the basis of complete technical landscape design analysis by each State highway department. These specially selected widenings in roadside areas are in addition to the more or less standard widths of right-of-way normally required for general highway construction purposes provided by the State as heretofore. A means is thus provided for the acquisition of areas of outstanding landscape and traffic service to supplement the normal widths of right-of-way required for regular construction and maintenance purposes.

This is a very significant step in Federal highway legislation, for Federal-aid funds have been heretofore limited to highway construction purposes and were not available for the purchase of land. Much has been written during recent years relative to the importance of providing adequate widths of right-of-way for modern traffic needs and for the protection of the roadsides of our highways. In this legislation the Federal Congress has given tangible recognition of the importance of protecting selected portions of highway frontage where analysis of existing landscape and traffic conditions render such protection desirable.

#### Parkways for Peace and Defense

The Mississippi River Parkway project is progressing. It is hoped that it will be possible to use some of the 3 per cent authorized for land acquisition for the Parkway, as this will be additional right-of-way needed for scenic purposes.

#### Five County Parkway in Detroit Area

The favorable vote of the people in the Detroit area last fall authorizing the establishment of a five county park and parkway project is most encouraging.

### Fluctuating Public Interest

A great variation in public demand is noted from the States. Some highway departments, such as in Michigan where recreation and protection of scenic areas are generally recognized, cannot keep up with the demand; and, on the other extreme, Iowa has experienced lack of public demand and support, and recognition is slowly forthcoming of the good work accomplished. With renewed activity of the Roadside Councils this situation undoubtedly will change. These councils will be able to help educate or inform the public and the highway organization itself often times on the value of such things as wild life, native plants and the economy of its protection.

### Summary and Recommendations

Special mention should be made of the work of the American Automobile Association which is issuing a Roadside Zoning Guide and the Research Division of the Maryland Legislative Council which has issued a comprehensive bulletin on Roadside Control. This is a thoroughly impartial treatise on a comparative basis. We hope that the A.A.S.H.O. can follow up its excellent booklet, "Policy on Highway Types", by a similar treatise on the Principles, Techniques and Procedures of Roadside Development.

The outstanding educational work of the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S.D.A. deserves especial mention and commendation as illustrated by the film now nearly ready for release. This sound film shows many demonstrations of cooperative effort to conserve soil and the landscape of the road and countrysides throughout the Nation. There is also in preparation by the Soil Conservation Service cooperating with this committee, a pictorial bulletin on the same subject which promises to be a major educational contribution.

The education subcommittee presents the following suggestions: (1) a thorough up-to-date annotated bibliography on Roadside Development should be assembled and published; (2) a cooperative research project concerning the economic effect of zoning along improved highways on adjacent property values should be set up for study and report probably by the American Institute of Planners; (3) a yearly or semi-yearly technical bulletin is needed; (4) and finally that the States take advantage of the authority granted them in the September 5, 1940 Amendment to the Federal Highway Act of 1940 which provides that 3 per cent of regular Federal-aid funds apportioned to the States may be used for purchase of additional adjoining land for conservation protection and use of special selected scenic areas. This act may be a great impetus to the wayside, parkway and defense highway planning program.