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March 25, 1929.

Mr. A. S. Hill, Executive Sec'y.,
Park Department,
City of San Diego.

My dear Mr. Hill:-

I am very glad to send you a copy of Mr. White's letter, together with copies of ^{Cornell's} ~~Colonel White's~~ reports.

I anticipate that you noticed in yesterday's paper the article concerning Mr. Nolen's views on Torrey Pines Road and the additional paragraph supposed to have come from Mr. Lockwood. I am wondering whether this actually came from Mr. Lockwood or whether it is simply a carry-over on the part of the reporters from previous information that they have published.

Very sincerely yours,



Encl.

W. C. Crandall

(C O P Y)

REPORT ON VISIT TO TORREY PINES PARK,
3rd April 1922.

By:- Ralph D. Cornell, Landscape Architect.

To: Mr. J. C. Harper,
La Jolla, California.

In my tramping thru the Torrey Pines tract for the consideration of the best methods for its development, and in both its first hand and lasting appeal to the public at large, I believe there is one impression that stands out eminently above all others, - that is the distinctiveness of this one spot and its difference from any other spot that one may have visited in his world wandering. In a small way such a place as Torrey Pines ranks among the natural phenomena and should hold its small, the proud place among our national monuments to nature's ability as a temperamental artist who now and then exceeds even her own hopes in the creation of something unusually attractive. Torrey Pines is not a place of typical scenery; it is not representative of the primitive, natural landscape of San Diego County, or of any other place in the world. It is itself, alone, un-imitated, - with precipitous cliffs carved and sculptured by the erosions of time; it is picturesque, unique, colorful and beautiful, with a combination of nearby sea and distant mountains that delights the eye and soothes the soul; it bears as adornment botanical species of plants that occur no where else as indigenous species. I think all agree that it should be so kept, - true to itself, typical of nothing, for it requires many more than one of a thing to establish a type.

If Torrey Pines is to be preserved and held in trust for the generations which will follow ours, and if the tract is to escape the commonplace appearance, the exploitations and the encroachments that become the heritage of so many public lands, it must be very zealously guarded. As a watchword to guide in its development; I feel that one cannot too loudly state nor too often repeat the slogan of "RESTRAINT". Do not forget that this is "TORREY PINES", - not typical scenery. Do not permit the love of plants and the zeal of the collector to make this into a botanical garden or plant museum which will leave no semblance to the original landscape. Do not introduce features nor plants foreign to the spirit and feeling of this area as it now exists. Do not permit acts of forestation to clothe the slopes densely with pines to the exclusion and concealment of the open spaces of yellow earth against which the gray-green pines now show so beautifully. Remember that open spaces are necessary for the proper sight and enjoyment of the vegetation which shows in relief against the ground forms. Remember that Torrey Pines' fame was won without man's creative aid, and that preservation rather than change should be sought.

EAST CANYON

To briefly remark upon the different units of area as Mr. Fleming and I visited them I shall start with the east canyon which has been considered as a possible site for an arboretum or botanical garden, should such a feature be introduced into the park. Obviously, are we to have

a plant museum, this canyon is the logical site, for reasons of isolation, soil, exposure and protection from winds. But, personally, I should regret the introduction of even an oak tree into the chaparral covered floor of this canyon.

Oaks we have everywhere. They are typical of California, but not even suggestive of Torrey Pines. Let the bottom of this canyon be kept free and open, with plant cover of low relief, such as now exists. Introduction of added varieties of Geonothus or other chaparral would not be objectionable so long as it did not alter the general appearance of the canyon. The mere adding of plant species neither implies nor necessitates a change in landscape character, -- so long as these added species bear the same general qualities of size and appearance as those plants already existing, or so long as they appear only as details of the composite which makes up the larger picture.

A few old pines now cling to the rim of the wall which encloses this canyon, but few, if any, are found in the canyon bottom. I feel that efforts towards forestation should be directed towards and confined to these canyon walls and the encircling rim of skyline; that the bottom of the canyon should be kept flat and low as it now appears. It is a beautiful spot now; and its beauty lies in the picture it presents as seen from the canyon rim (at almost any point), not in the individual interest of its plants at close range. Torrey Pines on the walls and skyline with low chaparral on the canyon floor, will tend to accentuate the present ruggedness of topography and increase the apparent depth of perspective and distance. Such treatment would not destroy the present feeling of distinctive character, but would tend to strengthen and accentuate this feeling. The pine plantations should not be made densely, but after the fashion in which they naturally grow.

THE WINDWARD SLOPES

Crossing the highway to the area between the road and the ocean there seems to be little that should be done other than a very careful and conservative work of gradual forestation. In areas where the trees are old, with apparent signs of the infirmities of age, young pines should be set to replace those which soon must die. This planting should all be done thoughtfully, with an eye to the picturesque as well exemplified on all sides. The trees should be irregularly and thinly spotted, placed in crevices, on ledges and pinnacles where they can be so established, and generally handled in thoughtful consideration for their natural appearance. Do not heavily clothe the slopes; retain the bare, open spaces; remember, that to be enjoyed, both trees and views must be visible. A decided factor in the interest of this spot is that of the land forms which exist and which should not be concealed.

Where erosion is alarmingly rapid, or should be checked for any reason, the establishment of the apparently indigenous "ice plant" on the threatened surfaces would, if successfully rooted, check the damage. This same treatment would apply to any part of the preserve. Another herbaceous plant suitable for cover of the driest of spots in the most exposed places is the Australian Salt bush which is already growing in the park and which is more at home there than some of the native plants. It

is very attractive in appearance and in no way objectionable.

CACTUS GARDEN

One spot exists where I would make exceptions to the discouragement of introducing outside plant species. This spot comprises the arid, basin-like canyon at what I recall as the north-west corner of the preserve, -- the canyon where the cacti and yuccas already flourish in abundance. This is an isolated, enclosed, natural garden that features as a distinctive unit, related to the tract but not intruding itself upon the other units of the park. Its existence is scarcely realized before one is within its bounds. Once within, its difference from the rest of the park and its own unified completeness are at once realized. Here I feel that it would be very appropriate to add to the indigenous collection of cacti and dry land plants, such things as other species of cacti, yuccas (particularly the Spanish Bayonet), agaves, aloes, duddeleys and like fleshes. Here however, as always, employ RESTRAINT in order that this canyon may not become a hodge-podge mess of plant bric-a-brac which takes on the unrelated appearance of a museum collection. A very few things wisely handled will give a far better effect than would many things strewn about with garish abandon.

THE SALT MARSH

Perhaps the salt marsh and slough which lie back of this park do not bear a very direct relation to the preservation of Torrey Pines; but they do bear a most vital relation to the panoramic view that unfolds from the foot of these hills which rise above tide-level and the tide-lands. One beautiful picture is that to the north, with the marsh at the foot of the pine-clad hills and the broken line of white surf behind the marsh pools, and the hills of the coast line farther beyond. Anything which would change the natural setting and might convert the now beautiful into the ugly. We are here seeking preservations of a beauty already established and recognized. The marsh lands are indispensable to that which we would perpetuate and their sanctity should be assured.

WILD FLOWERS

Wild flowers already cover the slopes in prodigal abundance and wide variety altho many kinds, which would undoubtedly thrive here, are not represented. I see no reason at all why annual wild flowers and herbaceous perennials of native habitat might not be introduced, -- always thoughtfully and restrainedly. Scarlet and blue larkspur, mariposa lillies, lupines, memophila, many, many flowers might be added to increase the beauty and interest of the spot without in any way altering the scenic character. The seed of these things should be cultivated into the soil in autumn in open spots where they would not disturb the existing shrub growths. There might even be places where shrubs could be advantageously removed to make space for more wild flowers. But any such procedure should be followed cautiously, without haste. Study well all changes before it is too late to effectively alter the opinion. Wild flowers serve as decorations, not as a motif to the picture we seek at Torrey Pines. Other spots are known for their wild flowers alone, for they have naught else.

THE NURSERY

A small lath house, a very few cold frames, some potting soil and a water supply are all that are needed for a simple little nursery that will care for all the propagating and nursery needs of this small park. There is no reason why such things cannot be economically grown on the property, their age and vigor thus assured. Grow only the things needed for the planned development. Plant only what is needed. Never plant a tree because it is on hand and perhaps is passing the age when it should be planted. It is better to destroy all plants than to fall into the habits of the park department that clutters its park spaces with wierdly strange and grotesquely heterogeneous species, simply because these plants were growing in the nursery and should be planted. Have the little nursery but propagate thotfully, plant from it restrainedly. One hundred trees a year for ten years would increase your present grove of pines by more than fifty percent. The area is probably sufficiently large to bear this increase with benefit. It might even carry twice or three times its present number of family members without any apparent need for birth control. But the time will undoubtedly come, if this work goes on, when no more pines should be added except as the aged die and go back to the soil. Enthusiasm of plant lovers should not be permitted to carry the park work past the point that exemplifies the character of plant life, topography and scenic beauty that now exists.

TRAILS

As the human use of the park increases in intensity it will become essential to open adequate trails along the routes of travel on which it is desired to confine the pedestrian traffic. If such use is not influenced by inviting paths the foot travel will seek its own routes, tending to follow the washed strips and other lines of least resistance and thus increase existing tendencies towards erosions. These trails should avoid, so far as possible, routes along which water would naturally gravitate unless it is obvious that such use of dry water-ways will not increase tendencies to wash. Scenically considered, the trails are best anyway, along the side walls and ridges of the canyons. Here the water can easily be diverted from the trails and spread over the slopes as frequently as it is necessary to prevent its accumulations in dangerous quantities. It will be hard, at best, to control foot travel, particularly as the popularity and use of the park increases, for the average human "Wants what he wants when he wants it".

Inviting trails along easy gradients, to points of obvious interest will, by their hospitable suggestiveness, greatly help in directing the routes of travel in paths that have been thotfully laid out by the directors of the park in their effort to at once conserve and make available the natural beauties of this wonder spot.

GENERAL

Some few oaks have already been planted on this and adjoining city property. I begrudge them the very space they occupy even in their juvenile state.

Nothing is finer nor more majestic than our natural live oaks, but they do not belong here. We have many reserves particularly for the oak. Here it is inappropriate.

Let Torrey Pines Park be a monument to all that is characteristically beautiful, let its present feeling be preserved, and leave the extraneous, outside things to other uses.

(Signed) Ralph D. Cornell.