

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

REFERENCE SERIES

HARRIMAN STATE PARK: RAILROAD RANCH

Number 956

January 1993

Historically important both as an early twentieth-century recreational ranch and as a key element in developing Idaho's state park system, this treasure possesses many attractions. Governor Averell Harriman of New York (noted as Ambassador to Russia and as founder and developer of Sun Valley Lodge) concurred with his brother, Rolland, who suggested in 1959 that they donate their Island Park ranch to make it an Idaho state park. A prominent feature in a large volcanic double-caldera, it had great geological as well as historic interest. Governor Robert E. Smylie also concurred in that transaction, providing that completion be conditional upon creation of a professionally administered and operated state park system. (Idaho had a number of state parks, but no professional management for them.) After a few years of preparation, that requirement was met, and Harriman State Park became a reality in 1965.

(This information has not been edited.)

Publications--450 N. 4th Street, Boise, ID 83702--208-334-3428