

(The War Chief later explained that he was told that the permit was for camping at the Bear Lake; he did not think that he had signed a permit for anyone to go into the Blue Lake. He said that he would never have signed the permit had he known its true purpose.)

Mr. Freeman and another Forest Service official attended the meeting at 7:00 P.M. on the evening of the 27th at the War Chief's office. After the Council had explained the purpose of the meeting, Freeman indicated that he could not go on the inspection trip on the 28th because, he said, he had already made some other commitments. Further, Mr. Freeman told the Council that he was not given enough notice of the trip, and he felt that the tribe did not really want him to go. The Council told him that they themselves had other commitments, but that this was very, very important that the inspection tour should be made together. They advised him that they did not want to go in there alone without a Forest Service official, because after the testimony at the hearing, anything to be done should be done in the presence of the proper officials.

Freeman replied that he definitely could not make the tour, but suggested that he could arrange another date for the following week for a joint inspection. He said that he would be ready to go whenever the tribal officials let him know the following week. He gave me his home telephone number, for me to call him over the weekend and advise him of the day.

Due to Taos Pueblo's annual San Geronimo Festival on Monday, September 30, and the requirement for me to participate in preparations for the festival, I was unable to get to a telephone over the weekend. I called Ranger Freeman in the afternoon on San Geronimo over Day, as soon as I could get away, telling him that the tribe planned to go into the Blue Lake on inspection with him on the following day, October 1. Mr. Freeman immediately questioned me why I had not called him over the weekend or left a message with his wife. After explaining to him why I had been unable to call before, we discussed arrangements for meeting the next morning. I told him that there would be a question which way we would go in. He made an implication that we did not really want him to go with us on the inspection tour. I said that if he started in before us, we would meet him at the Bull of the Woods and join with him. I assured him again that we considered it very important to have him come along.

In the meantime, a free-lance reporter from Denver, who was sent by a friend of the Pueblo's, asked to accompany us and arranged for her own permit from the Forest Service.

In the morning of our departure to Blue Lake, coming out from my corral, Mr. Freeman and the War Chief came by in a Forest Service pickup with a horse trailer and there was room for one more horse in the trailer. He had learned from Frank Marcus that we were short transportation for one horse, and he offered to take the horse in his trailer. I told him that we would appreciate it very much.

The party, consisting of Frank Marcus, Charlotte Trego (the reporter), Duane Freeman and I arrived at the Blue Lake at about 1:30 on Tuesday, the 1st of October. On the way up, we observed three signs on the trail, all three giving distances to Blue Lake, Bear Lake and Wheeler Peak. One was approximately 8 miles from Blue Lake, the other 6 miles, the last 1 mile.

As we were approaching Bear Lake and the Rio Lucero drainage from the north, we saw a new trail which looked like it was built by machinery. Freeman said that it was built by a caterpillar. It was about eight feet wide, easily wide enough for a jeep trail. This as in the wilderness area, running east-west. Freeman admitted that it was a new trail.

We also observed that the sign just before the ceremonial grounds, "No camping permitted—area behind this sign reserved for Taos Pueblo Indians," is old, has not been repainted and is not clearly legible except at close range.

Arriving at the ceremonial ground at Blue Lake, we had lunch and I found the tree cut by a power saw which was shown in the photograph used in Mr. Little's testimony at the hearing. The location was not at the Indian ceremonial ground, but on the slope of a hill between the Indian ceremonial ground and the Forest Service administrative cabin site. I showed Freeman the photograph, which he said he had not seen before. He agreed that the location was correct. Upon questioning, he stated that the tree was obviously not freshly cut, as stated in the caption. He estimated that the tree could not have been cut within the last three or four years. He admitted that it must have been cut by a power saw, but insisted that it must have been done by Indians. At that point Charlotte Trego asked him if the Forest Service trail riders carried such equipment, but he was evasive.