

Vogel State Park, established in 1931, is the second oldest state park in Georgia. Located at 2500 feet above sea level, Vogel sits at the base of Blood Mountain, the highest summit on the Appalachian Trail in Georgia, and is surrounded by Chattahoochee National Forest. The North Georgia Mountains around Vogel were linked to Native American people for generations before European settlement. They were said to be the home of the immortal spirit people known as “Nunnehi,” translated as – “the people who live forever.” Legend states that the names of Blood Mountain and nearby Slaughter Mountain, have their origins in warfare between competing Cherokee and Creek tribes. Another story tells of treasure placed on Blood Mountain in the days leading up to the infamous Trail of Tears, when Cherokee warriors supposedly buried tribal treasure, including weapons and gold, in a cave on Blood Mountain. Many searches have been made over the years, however, and the location of the hidden treasure, if it ever existed except in the minds of storytellers, remains a mystery. Whether these legends are based in fact, no one knows, but the influence and enduring legacy of Native American culture on the region is without question.



*Hikers on Blood Mountain in the 1930's*

In the years following European settlement of the area, a lumber mill was established and run for several years on property owned by August and Fred Vogel. After the closure of the mill in 1927, the land was donated to the government and named in the Vogel family's honor. In June, 1933, Company 431 (SP-2) of the Civilian Conservation Corps, also known as Camp Enotah, arrived and began work on the park's infrastructure. The Civilian Conservation Corps, commonly called the “CCC,” was a public work relief program during the Great Depression put in place by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The program employed young, unmarried “boys” between the ages of 18 – 25. This program provided

manual labor jobs related to conservation and development of natural resources. Company 431 was responsible for building the dam on Wolf Creek, impounding the water and creating the 22 acre Lake Trahlyta. The CCC boys also built cabins, picnic areas, and campgrounds at Vogel. Other CCC companies worked around the state and developed several Georgia State Parks such as Indian Springs and Hard Labor Creek. Their impact is still felt today, and artifacts from the CCC era are on display at the park's CCC museum.



*CCC Boys working at Vogel*

In 1937, the CCC completed the restoration of a building atop Neel Gap just south of Vogel State Park. This building became the Walasiyi Inn and served as a hotel and restaurant to visitors of the park. The inn operated until 1965, and was slated for demolition until local residents lobbied for it to be saved. In 1977, the building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places and has since been restored. Today, the building is now known as the Walasi-Yi Interpretive Center and acts as a hostel by a privately run outfitter, providing supplies for hikers on the Appalachian Trail.



