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Interview no. 866

Thomas W. Stovall

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UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE: Thomas W. Stovall

INTERVIEWER: John R. Moore

PROJECT: Big Bend National Park Oral History Project

DATE OF INTERVIEW: July 6, 1994

TERMS OF USE: Unrestricted

TAPE NO: 866

TRANSCRIPT NO: _____

TRANSCRIBER: _____

BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:

Please see attached.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW:

Please see attached.

Length of Interview: 40 minutes Length of Transcript

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
ORAL HISTORY INSTITUTE

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK ORAL HISTORY PROJECT, 1994

INTERVIEWEE/ADDRESS: Thomas W. Stovall, 1500 Pacheco Road, No. 47, Bakersfield, Calif., 93307

INTERVIEW BY: John R. Moore

DATE: JULY 6, 1994

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW: 40 minutes/English

SUMMARY: Stovall is a native of Durant, Okla., born there in 1914. At age five, he and his family moved to Mineral Wells, Tx., where at age 18, in 1933, he enlisted in the Civilian Conservation Corps. His first six months in the CCC were spent at Lampasas, Tx. In January 1934, his 200-man company was transferred to Big Bend.

Stovall recalls that his company was the first stationed at the Chisos Basin in what is now Big Bend National Park, although a temporary dirt road to basin had already been constructed and several structures had been built for CCC use. Stovall lived in a tent camp at the basin, where he worked as a cook. He eventually became "first cook" at the Chisos camp, earning \$45 a month. Stovall's duties as a cook kept him confined largely to the Chisos Basin camp, yet he provides a perspective on the role the CCC played both in the park and in the lives of individuals who served in the corps.

He recalls a cadre of regular U.S. Army officers in charge of the camp. He remembers three CCC members getting lost for three days while hiking. He recalls seeing NO wildlife in the Basin in 1934 (he said he saw more wildlife when he returned to the park for the first time in 1992).

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