



Colorado's Trail Ridge Road is the highest continuous automobile road in America. More than 4 miles of it are above 12,000 feet. State of Colorado photo by O. Roach.

Promoting **Colorful Colorado**

By Lewis R. Cobb

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Colorful Colorado—the Nation's seventh State in area, thirty-third in population—played host in 1948 to an estimated two and a half million out-of-State recreational travelers who left behind some \$125,000,000. That this number of guests and their spending was fully double that of 1941 must be attributed at least in part to the promotional efforts of the Colorado State Advertising and Publicity Department, now in its eighth year of existence.

The department was created in 1941 by an act of the State legislature which appropriated \$50,000 per year for the operation of the office under an unpaid, bipartisan, three-man committee. The budget (set biennially at \$100,000) covers not only all administrative expenses, but also those of space advertising, radio time, billboard, motion pictures, publicity, literature, and postage in the promotion of (1) tourist travel, (2) industrial opportunities, and (3) agricultural products.

The division of funds among the three subjects to be promoted varies from year to year, but in the main, couponed magazine and newspaper advertising, literature and publicity is the major feature. During the biennial ending June 30, 1943, 1947, and 1949 (1943-45 excluded due to war-imposed curtailments) travel promotion received respectively \$68,500, \$49,400 and \$49,000. Agricultural products and industrial promotion combined received during those same 2-year periods, \$7,000, \$19,000 and \$20,000.

"The State that Tops the Nation"—so dubbed because it has the highest mean elevation—is a natural to pro-

mote. It bases 54 of the country's 81 mountain peaks over 14,000 feet in altitude; it is nearly 50 percent public domain with its two national parks (Rocky Mountain and Mesa Verde), its 8 national monuments and 11 national forests; the climate is dry and cool in summer—dry, crisp and sunshiny in winter; there are more than 2,000 alpine lakes and some 15,000 miles of mountain streams, 8,000 miles of which are easily accessible and teeming with a variety of trout. Autumn, with its big-game hunting and riot of forest colors is rapidly becoming a popular touring season in Colorado, as are winter and early spring when 34 skiing areas, nearly all equipped with modern uphill facilities, play host to increasing thousands of winter sports enthusiasts.

July and August traditionally continue to be capacity months in cool Colorado and at present the efforts of the State Advertising and Publicity Department are being concentrated on pulling the off-season visitor—or rather on dispelling the idea that there is such a thing as an "off season."

The Colorado legislature seems amply satisfied with the program and results of the department, as evidenced by its four past endorsements in the form of appropriations. When the General Assembly meets to consider appropriations for the biennium July 1, 1949, to June 30, 1951, the publicity committee and its proponents will present a strong case for an increase in the annual budget to \$150,000 to place Colorado promotion substantially closer to the national average.