

Winning National Park Status

As tourist numbers rose, travel links to Lake Towada improved. In 1920, the Akita Railway was extended to Kemanai (now Towada-Minami Station), and a bus began carrying visitors directly from the station via Hakka Pass to Nenokuchi on the lake's eastern shore. The next year, Wainai petitioned for Lake Towada to be considered for national park status, and Emperor Taisho's two younger sons stayed at the Wainai Towada Hotel. In 1927, Lake Towada was nominated as one of the "Eight New Views" of Japan in a competition organized jointly by the Railway Ministry and two national newspapers. Wainai died at age 65 in May 1922, but his promotional efforts were rewarded when the lake and its surroundings were officially awarded national park status in 1936. [126]

[Caption (top right)]

Lake Towada Tourist Guide Map, 1928