
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
2007



Antelope and Buffalo Springs
Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District

Table of Contents

Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

Concurrence Status

Geographic Information and Location Map

Management Information

National Register Information

Chronology & Physical History

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Condition

Treatment

Bibliography & Supplemental Information

Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

Inventory Summary

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory Overview:

CLI General Information:

Purpose and Goals of the CLI

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI), a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the national park system, is one of the most ambitious initiatives of the National Park Service (NPS) Park Cultural Landscapes Program. The CLI is an evaluated inventory of all landscapes having historical significance that are listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources through a public planning process and in which the NPS has or plans to acquire any legal interest. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, condition, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, as well as other valuable information useful to park management. Cultural landscapes become approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into a national database. In addition, for landscapes that are not currently listed on the National Register and/or do not have adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer or the Keeper of the National Register.

The CLI, like the List of Classified Structures, assists the NPS in its efforts to fulfill the identification and management requirements associated with Section 110(a) of the National Historic Preservation Act, National Park Service Management Policies (2006), and Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management. Since launching the CLI nationwide, the NPS, in response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), is required to report information that respond to NPS strategic plan accomplishments. Two GPRA goals are associated with the CLI: bringing certified cultural landscapes into good condition (Goal 1a7) and increasing the number of CLI records that have complete, accurate, and reliable information (Goal 1b2B).

Scope of the CLI

The information contained within the CLI is gathered from existing secondary sources found in park libraries and archives and at NPS regional offices and centers, as well as through on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the site's overall significance. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features, and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's overall integrity and an assessment of the landscape's overall condition. The CLI also provides an illustrative site plan that indicates major features within the inventory unit. Unlike cultural landscape reports, the CLI does not provide management recommendations or

treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

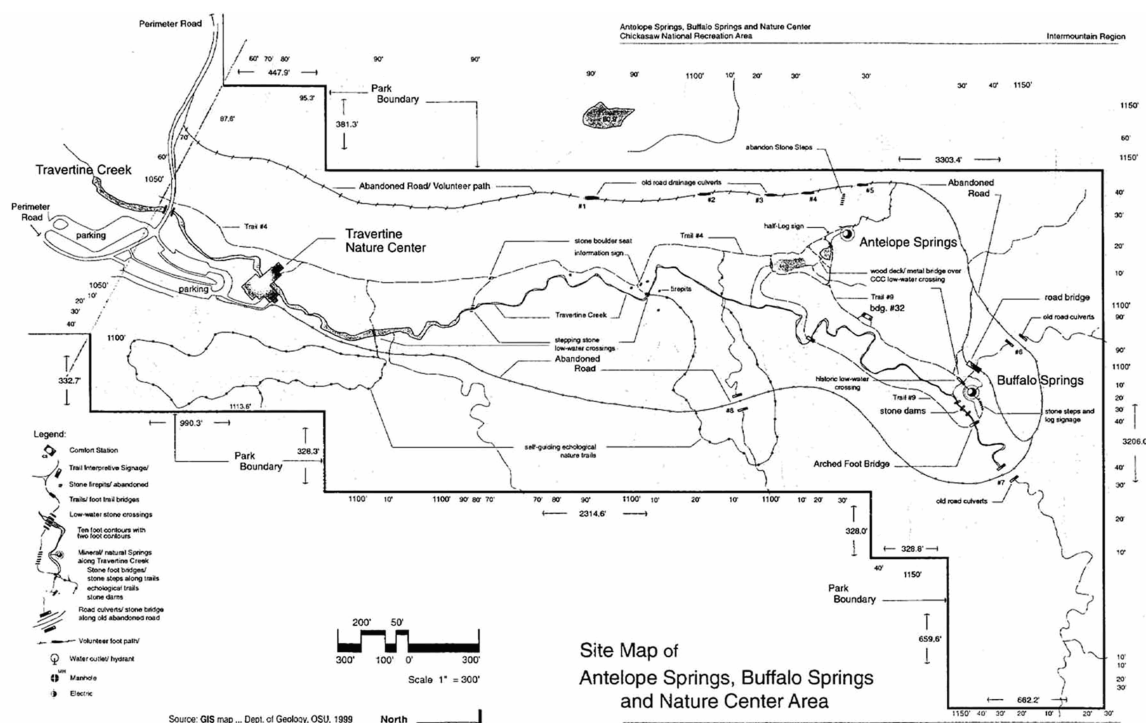
Inventory Unit Description:

The Antelope and Buffalo Springs (and Nature Center) inventory unit is a historic designed landscape, located on the far eastern portion of the Platt Historic District (formerly the Travertine District), in the Chickasaw National Recreation Area, in Murray County, Oklahoma. The Antelope and Buffalo Springs inventory unit is to the east of Travertine Island and Little Niagara Falls. The area is comprised of approximately 142 acres of wooded habitat. Located within the area are Buffalo and Antelope Springs, the two springs which are the source of Travertine Creek. Travertine Creek flows through the component landscape from east to west. Travertine rock outcroppings along the creek are another natural feature of the area. Built elements within the area include the Nature Center and its parking area as well as the extant designed elements of Buffalo Spring.

Once the site of one of the park's major picnic areas, the component landscape today is designated an "Environmental Study Area," a designation conveyed in 1969. The area is therefore primarily used for passive recreation such as hiking, walking, and nature study. Bathing, wading, and drinking of spring water are not permitted in Travertine Creek within the Environmental Study Area. A series of signs interpreting vegetation, for example, line the area's trail. Remnants of the former picnic area exist to the east of Buffalo Springs, and the park's perimeter road, which once ringed the component landscape, has been converted (in part) to a trail known as Trail #4 or the Antelope/Buffalo Springs Trail. Today the realigned perimeter road skirts the western edge of the component landscape at the Nature Center, providing vehicular access.

As a whole, the inventory unit retains integrity, and the landscape is in fair condition as of 2007. The period of significance for the Antelope and Buffalo Springs inventory unit is 1933-1940. For a complete discussion of the landscape characteristics, contributing features, and integrity evaluation please refer to the Analysis and Evaluation Section.

Site Plan



Site plan for Antelope and Buffalo Springs. Source: GIS base map provided by Department of Geology, Oklahoma State University; augmented by Iowa State University.

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name:	Antelope and Buffalo Springs
Property Level:	Component Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	850146
Parent Landscape:	850137

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code:	Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District -CHIC
Park Organization Code:	7516
Subunit/District Name Alpha Code:	Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District - CHIC
Park Administrative Unit:	Chickasaw National Recreation Area

CLI Hierarchy Description

Antelope and Buffalo Springs

Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District

The Platt Historic District of Chickasaw National Recreation Area (CNRA) is the parent landscape for Antelope and Buffalo Springs. The Platt Historic District is a historic designed landscape containing ten component landscapes, each with unique and individual landscape features. A study of these numerous component landscapes contributes to our understanding and appreciation of the district's entire cultural landscape.

The Platt Historic District is an irregularly shaped area extending for about three miles along both sides of two small streams, which flow through it in a generally east to west direction. The width of the district varies from 4,800 feet near the center to about 6,400 feet near the western edge and 2,300 feet along its eastern edge. Connecting the district's component landscapes is a six-mile (once eight-mile) perimeter road. This road provides both access to and opportunities for viewing the district's features.

The ten component landscapes are:

- Rock Creek Campground (not part of Historic District)
- Flower Park and Black Sulphur Springs
- Antelope Springs and Buffalo Springs/ Nature Center
- Bromide Springs/ Bromide Hill
- Central Campground
- Cold Springs Campground
- Pavilion Springs / Hillside Springs/ Headquarters and Maintenance Area
- Walnut Grove
- Travertine Island and Little Niagara Falls
- Buffalo Pasture and Prairie Uplands

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

This CLI was completed by Heidi Hohmann and Katarzyna Grala of Iowa State University (ISU). Previous cultural landscapes documentation for the Platt District was completed in 1997 by UT Arlington, Kay Saltee et al. CLI Database entry was completed by Michele Curran, CLI Coordinator.

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence:	Yes
Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:	09/21/2007
National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Date of Concurrence Determination:	07/06/2007

National Register Concurrence Narrative:

The Oklahoma SHPO concurred with the findings of the CLI on 7/6/2007.

Concurrence Graphic Information:



Oklahoma Historical Society

Founded May 27, 1893

State Historic Preservation Office

Oklahoma History Center • 2401 North Laird Ave. • Oklahoma City, OK 73105-7914
(405) 521-6249 • Fax (405) 522-0816 • www.okhistory.org/shpo/shpom.htm

July 6, 2007

Mr. Bruce Noble, Superintendent
Chickasaw National Recreation Area
1008 West 2nd Street
Sulphur, OK 73086

Dear Mr. Noble:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for the Platt District at Chickasaw National Recreation Area. The Platt District is a significant landscape to both Oklahoma and to the National Park Service.

We concur with the opinion that the Platt District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the national level of significance. We concur with the findings of the CLR as well, specifically that the period of national significance for the Platt District is 1933-1940, and with the CLR's definition of the boundary for the district.

Additionally, we believe that the treatments outlined in the CLR for the overall landscape are generally consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. We look forward to reviewing projects on a case-by-case basis, using the treatments outlined in the CLR as a baseline plan. Should you wish to discuss the creation of a Programmatic Agreement based on the findings of the CLR, we will be happy to work with you.

Please feel free to contact me at (405)522-4484 (or e-mail at mheisch@okhistory.org). Thank you for your interest in Oklahoma's historic and architectural heritage.

Sincerely,

Melvina Heisch
Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer

✓ cc: Jill Cowley, IMR Santa Fe

OK SHPO concurrence on the Platt Historic District CLR, including the Antelope and Buffalo Springs component landscape, 7/6/2007.

MEMORANDUM

To: Deputy Associate Regional Director
Cultural Resources
12795 W. Alameda Pkwy.
Lakewood, CO 80228

From: Superintendent
Chickasaw National Recreation Area, 1008
W. 2nd
Sulphur, OK 73086-4814

Subject: Antelope and Buffalo Springs Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI)

I concur with the content and the assessment of the Antelope and Buffalo Springs cultural landscape for the Chickasaw National Recreation Area.

The CLI has identified the Antelope and Buffalo Springs component landscape as a "Historic Designed Landscape."

- 1. The CLI rates the condition as "FAIR" (pg. 62) and the Management Category is listed as "Must be Preserved and Maintained" (pg. 8).*
- 2. The period of significance for the Antelope and Buffalo Springs component landscape is 1933-1940 (pg. 10).*
- 3. The Statement of Significance is located on pgs. 10-11.*
- 4. The contributing features are discussed and listed in the "Analysis and Evaluation" section (pg. 29-61).*

Bruce Noble
Superintendent, Chickasaw National Recreation Area

9/21/07
Date

Cc: Michele Curran, IMR, Landscape Historian, CLI Coordinator

CHIC Superintendent concurrence on the Antelope and Buffalo Springs CLI, 9/21/2007.

Revisions Impacting Change in Concurrence:

Other

Revision Narrative:

Uploaded Platt Historic District CLR to Landscape Documents section, updated NHL information, and edited text for typos, May 2012.

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

The north, south, and east Antelope and Buffalo Springs boundaries match the historic boundaries of Platt National Park and the current boundaries of the Platt District. Beyond the boundary to the north is the City of Sulphur, and to the east and south are private land holdings. To the west, the boundary is essentially a straight line following the edge of the realigned, one-way perimeter road as it runs past the Nature Center parking area. The boundaries of the inventory unit are depicted on the site plan.

State and County:

State: OK

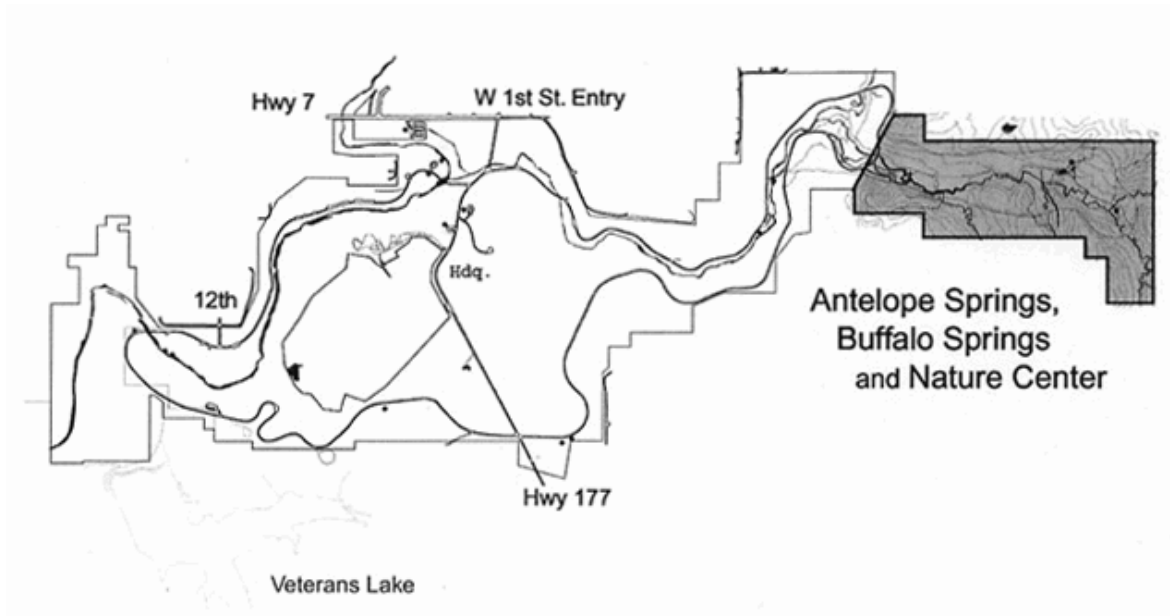
County: Murray County

Size (Acres): 142.07

Boundary UTMS:

Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	14
UTM Easting:	689,270
UTM Northing:	3,819,480
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	14
UTM Easting:	689,125
UTM Northing:	3,819,598
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	14
UTM Easting:	688,290
UTM Northing:	3,819,620

Location Map:



Location of Antelope and Buffalo Springs and Nature Center within the Platt District of CNRA, Murray County, Oklahoma. Source: GIS data compiled by the Department of Geology, Oklahoma State University (1999), augmented by Iowa State University.

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

The Antelope and Buffalo Springs and Nature Center area contains two of the district's most important springs. The area has historically been a source of water for the park and, prior to the park's creation, for the town and for Native American tribes. In addition, the area has been important culturally as a major focus of the park's activities, as a picnic, recreational and natural area.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

The study area is located in the far eastern portion of the Platt District and is primarily a wooded stream valley at the foot slopes of two north- and south-facing ridges. The two artesian springs located in the landscape provide the flow of Travertine Creek, which runs east to west through the component landscape. The vegetation is characteristic of the Eastern deciduous forest, including *Ulmus* (elm), *Quercus* (oak), *Juglans* (walnut), and *Celtis* (hackberry) species of the lowland forest association.

Type of Context: Political

Description:

Since 1902, when the lands for Sulphur Springs Reservation were taken by the government, the Antelope and Buffalo Springs and Nature Center area has been under the jurisdiction of the federal government. Since 1916, the park has been under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, first as Platt National Park and since as Chickasaw NRA. Lands adjacent to the component landscape boundary consist of federally owned park lands to the west and privately owned holdings to the north, east and south.

Management Unit: Chickasaw NRA

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Must be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 09/21/2007

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

The Platt Historic District was listed as a National Historic Landmark on 7/7/2011, and therefore must be preserved and maintained. Park Superintendent concurred on 9/21/2007.

NPS Legal Interest:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Public Access:

Type of Access: Unrestricted

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? Yes

Adjacent Lands Description:

The larger landscape of the Platt Historic District contributes to the integrity of the Antelope and Buffalo Springs component landscape.

National Register Information

Existing National Register Status

National Register Landscape Documentation:

SHPO Documented

National Register Explanatory Narrative:

Based on the findings of the CLR, the Platt Historic District, the parent landscape of the Antelope and Buffalo Springs component landscape, has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places by the Oklahoma SHPO. Subsequently, the Platt Historic District was listed as an NHL on 7/7/2011.

Existing NRIS Information:

Other Names:	Platt Historic District DOE
Primary Certification Date:	12/03/2001
Other Certifications and Date:	Platt Historic District DOE - 7/6/2007
Other Names:	Platt Historic District DOE
Primary Certification Date:	12/03/2001
	NHL Nomination - 7/7/2011

National Register Eligibility

National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Contributing/Individual:	Contributing
National Register Classification:	District
Significance Level:	National
Significance Criteria:	A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history
Significance Criteria:	C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values

Period of Significance:

Time Period:	AD 1933 - 1940
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	Rustic Architecture
Time Period:	AD 1933 - 1940
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Landscape Architecture
Facet:	The 1930's: Era Of Public Works

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category:	Architecture
Area of Significance Subcategory:	None
Area of Significance Category:	Landscape Architecture
Area of Significance Subcategory:	None
Area of Significance Category:	Entertainment - Recreation
Area of Significance Subcategory:	None

Statement of Significance:

The Platt District has been determined eligible under Criteria A (association with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history) and C (design), as an excellent example of National Park recreational design. Under Criterion A, the district is significant for its association with the development of National Park landscapes completed during the depression and funded as part of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "New Deal" programs such as the PWA (Public Works Administration), WPA (Works Progress Administration), and CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps). Under Criterion C, the district is significant as embodying the characteristics of the type, period, and methods of construction typical of the "rustic style" of park design developed by the National Park Service in the years between World War I and World War II (1916-1942) under the leadership of Thomas Vint. In general terms, "rustic" park design limited development to preserve natural scenery and developed park architecture and landscape designs in keeping and in harmony with the natural landscape. In specific terms of constructing buildings, roads, and campgrounds, this meant using hand craftsmanship, local

architectural styles and natural materials such as stone, wood and native plants in the park designs.

The Platt District exemplifies all of these aspects of National Park Service development, planning and design. Most of the district's extant features were designed and constructed between circa 1930 and 1940 (the tentative period of significance for the district, pending further research) during the depression years under the New Deal. Most of the park's construction was undertaken by Company 808 of the CCC, one of the largest CCC camps in Oklahoma. The park's architecture and landscape design also exhibit classic "rustic" style design characteristics. Park development in the 900-odd acres of the park is limited and preserves natural scenery and key features, such as the mineral springs and creeks. The buildings and landscape features constructed in the park by Company 808 of the CCC are made of local stone and wood, emphasize the horizontal lines of the landscape, and merge with their surroundings in color, scale, and appearance. It should be noted that a good number of the NPS-designed and CCC-constructed buildings in the district appeared as examples in the NPS's summary of design techniques, the "handbook" of rustic park design, *Park and Recreation Structures*, compiled by Albert H. Good in 1938.

Antelope and Buffalo Springs and the Nature Center comprise one component of this larger significant district landscape, and as such, reflect and contribute to the significance of the entire district. Although the area contains elements dating to before 1930, the large majority of this component landscape was constructed in the 1930s by CCC crews. In its site planning, architectural style, landscape architectural design and small-scale features, the Buffalo Springs seat walls and comfort station in particular area explicitly reflect the NPS principles of rustic design and construction. The design of the original perimeter road and its associated bridges, the area's water crossings, signage and stone steps are all excellent examples of the CCC-era landscape engineering projects undertaken in Platt National Park and throughout the country. Because of these elements, this component landscape contributes to the significance of the overall district and enables the district to convey its significance. In addition, because this component landscape exists in a predominantly intact state, it contributes to the integrity of the overall district.

Finally, the Nature Center is a Mission 66-era structure. The development of this structure and indeed, the entire creation of the Nature Center and its surrounds in the 1960s should be explored and evaluated under this area of significance after completion of the Mission 66 theme study or as the need to better understand and protect these resources develops.

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Designed

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Primary Historic Function: Recreation/Culture-Other

Primary Current Use:

Recreation/Culture-Other

Current and Historic Names:

Name

Antelope and Buffalo Springs

Type of Name

Both Current And Historic

Ethnographic Study Conducted:

No Survey Conducted

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
AD 1908	Established	Sulphur Creek's name changed to Travertine Creek by Superintendent Greene.
AD 1910	Altered	Antelope Springs dried up; Buffalo stopped flowing in June. First time since founding of the reservation that springs ceased flowing. Remained dry until April 1912, went dry again in September (Boeger, 87).
AD 1912	Altered	Buffalo/Antelope began flowing again in April, and dried up again in September.
AD 1913	Altered	Interior stops city from removing water supply from Travertine Creek (Boeger, 79). In November, Antelope Springs began flowing again.
AD 1914	Built	Road along Travertine Creek extended to Buffalo/Antelope Springs ("Head of Springs"). Gravel and 20 culverts installed as far as Cold Spring; new road beyond had no gravel surface (Boeger, 91).
AD 1918	Altered	Antelope Springs stopped flowing; Buffalo ceased in March (Boeger, 101). Hot, dry spring and summer.
AD 1919 - 1918	Altered	Antelope, Buffalo Springs began flowing again (Boeger, 104).
AD 1926	Altered	Buffalo, Antelope Springs dry up (Boeger, 120). Unclear when they start up again.
AD 1931	Paved	Road work: Road to Buffalo, Antelope Springs graveled.
AD 1933	Built	Retaining Wall built to keep automobiles out of the area. Also construction of barbeque pit and stone tables and seats.

Antelope and Buffalo Springs
Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District

AD 1934	Altered	Buffalo, Antelope Springs dry up.
AD 1936	Altered	Buffalo Antelope Springs dry up (again), but rain in September starts them up (Boeger, 146).
AD 1937	Altered	Buffalo, Antelope Springs dry up (Boeger, 147).
AD 1938	Built	Work on comfort stations and water and sewer line extensions at Buffalo Springs and Travertine Island (Boeger, 149).
AD 1940	Altered	Springs come back to life after 20-month hiatus (Boeger, 149).
AD 1945 - 1946	Destroyed	Large barbeque pit at Buffalo Springs dismantled after WW II. (Boeger, 160).
AD 1952	Altered	Antelope Springs quit; Buffalo followed in February.
AD 1953	Altered	Buffalo Springs flowed for a few days; Antelope remained dry. Flow returned feebly starting in May 1954, then springs dried up again in August 1954 (Boeger, 173, 178).
AD 1955	Built	“Special” water well drilled by community group on land adjacent to park to try and pump water into Travertine Creek. Not particularly successful (Boeger, 175-76).
AD 1957	Altered	Water returned to Buffalo and Antelope Springs.
AD 1959	Altered	Springs dried up; in March the city pumped water into Travertine Creek from the special” well; 24 hours/day from May to Labor Day (Boeger, 181).
	Altered	Christmas Day 1959 springs began to flow again after good fall rains.
AD 1963	Altered	Buffalo and Antelope Springs quit (Boeger, 184).

Antelope and Buffalo Springs
Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District

AD 1968	Built	Work began on Nature Center; McKee and Kamrath was the architectural firm, out of Houston (Boeger, 193). Loop road also closed in 1968 (Boeger, 193).
AD 1969	Memorialized	Nature Center dedicated (Boeger, 193).
AD 1970	Damaged	Severe flood hit Platt (Boeger, 195-96). Damage to new Nature Center.
AD 1997	Developed	Draft CLI for the Platt District completed by Katherine Sallee, of the University of Texas at Arlington.
AD 2002	Developed	Antelope and Buffalo Springs (and Nature Center) CLI completed by Heidi Hohmann and Katarzyna Grala of Iowa State University.
AD 2003 - 2004	Developed	Platt Historic District CLR completed by Heidi Hohmann and Katarzyna Grala of Iowa State University.
AD 2006 - 2011	Developed	Platt District NHL Nomination prepared by Heidi Hohmann of Iowa State University. NHL nomination formally accepted and listed on 7/7/2011.

Physical History:

General Historical Overview

For a complete history of this component landscape, refer to the Cultural Landscape Report for the Platt Historic District (see Landscape Documents), written by Heidi Hohmann and Katarzyna Grala of Iowa State University.

Antelope and Buffalo Springs, the headwaters of Travertine Creek, were a well-known feature of the area even prior to park development. It is not fully clear where the names of these two springs come from; however, according to tradition, Buffalo Springs was originally known as “Buffalo Suck” because it was a wide, muddy area where animals could wade in to access drinking water. Earliest photographic documentation of the area is contained within an Oklahoma State Historical Society collection of “blue” photographs (cyanotypes) taken by Superintendent Swords in the early 1900s. A photograph of Antelope Springs reveals the area to be an open, rocky hillside. The two springs fed Travertine Creek, which was then known as Sulphur Creek, a name which lasted until 1908, when Superintendent Greene changed it.

Because of the water features, the area was also known as the “Head of the Springs.” During the early years of Sulphur Springs Reservation, the eastern section of the park was the least developed and Antelope and Buffalo Springs were a destination for day excursions. The springs, however, went dry a number of times in the early years of the park, including parts of 1910, 1911, 1912, and 1913. Other areas along the creek were also destinations. For example, the area where the Nature Center is located was called Lake Placid and was featured on maps and in post cards (Platt National Park Plan 107/41902, 1909).

Road patterns in the area chart the development and use of the area. The earliest plan is of the area is a 1909 plan of the park, showing early roads which run along Travertine Creek, crossing it a number of times, and end at Buffalo Springs.

In 1914, the government engineer (A.E. Keys) extended a road to the springs from Cold Springs Campground. Because funds were short, the section from Cold Springs Camp east to Buffalo Springs was graded, but without a gravel surface. It seems that this 1914 alignment is the road shown in the 1931 Utilities Layout of the park. In this plan, the road is shown crossing Travertine Creek in new and different locations than seen in the 1909 plan. In addition, the road is now shown looping around the Buffalo Springs area.

CCC-era construction, however, greatly changed the area. Soon after the CCC Camp 808 arrived in Platt National Park, design development plans were in process for the area. By 1933, “the area was by then in deplorable condition” and needed an overhaul (CCC Report, May 1933 –March 1934). The re-construction of Antelope and Buffalo Springs proceeded through the 3rd, 4th and 5th periods of enrollment.

Perhaps most notable were changes to the park’s road system in this area. By 1935, the “out and back” road to the springs had been incorporated into the park’s perimeter road, which looped around the whole area of Buffalo and Antelope Springs. Many of the alterations made

as part of the Perimeter Road construction eliminated sharp curves and widened the road. As shown on the 1935 construction progress plan, portions of the old road were incorporated into foot trails, and footbridges were built along these trails. December 1935 saw the completion of the Travertine Trail system, which began in the Central section near Travertine Bridge and ended at Buffalo and Antelope Springs. A major addition within the component landscape was the addition of a box culvert crossing across Travertine Creek, just immediately north of the planned circular spring enclosure at Buffalo Spring.

But plans went beyond road construction. In addition to noting the area's "deplorable condition," designers in the Planning Office in San Francisco highlighted thirteen actions to be undertaken to enhance the condition of this highly used area (CCC Report, May 1933 –March 1934). These included: 1) creating a circular stone structure to enclose Buffalo Spring; 2) straightening the meandering stream channel of Travertine Creek using small dams; 3) constructing stone and wood guard rails to keep cars within bounds and provide an entrance; 4) providing areas for parking and areas for unloading; 5) providing a service area with entry gates; 6) raising the grade fifteen to eighteen inches at the Spring and picnic area; 7) removing dead and unsightly vegetation; 8) planting trees, shrubs and evergreens; 9) protecting stream banks with rip-rap stone walls; 10) establishing picnic areas with firepits, tables and benches using native stone materials; 11) rehabilitating existing road drainage structures and bridges with stone veneer; 12) raising the existing road two feet; and 13) establishing flagstone and gravel walks at both Antelope and Buffalo Springs. All of these actions were undertaken to some degree. Prior to construction, CCC crews spent numerous days cleaning up the area.

The new picnic area at Buffalo Springs was located just off the Perimeter Road off an inner loop road northwest (and just out of sight) of the springs. It was accessed from a small parking area. The 1940 Buffalo and Antelope Springs development Plan (part of Master Plan NP-PLA-3022-F) shows this design layout with connection to the outer Perimeter Road. The parking area was designed to keep wayward auto traffic away from the springs and to control erosion and vegetation damage near the stream valley. A fifteen-foot long stone masonry wall with steps was constructed to define the parking and unloading area. Like Travertine Island, the picnic facility provided for both large and small groups and for privacy. The area was cleared though large trees were left for shade within the central part of the area. Trees were also left along the perimeter for the smaller groups. Two large barbecue grills were constructed of massive boulders (22 x 30 inches in size and varying in length). The barbecue grills had inside dimensions of 2 ½ x 2 ½ x 10 feet. Picnic tables with stone seats constructed of boulders 16 x 18 inches were also implemented in the area. Smaller stone firepits were scattered throughout the area (mainly along trails).

Connecting the picnic area adjacent to the water feature of Buffalo Springs was a low water crossing of stone stairs and stepping stones. The stone stairs (approximately four feet wide) were located on both sides of the creek bank. Four stone stepping stones between the stairs crossed the waterway. Large stones, rising 15 inches high were located on both sides of the native stone stairs. These flanking stones functioned both as a railing and as a seat. To secure the lower first two steps, the stones were set in concrete (18 inches deep) while others progressing up the stairs used a clay with mortar for joints.

The design and construction of the circular enclosure and stone walls at Buffalo Springs area was perhaps the most complex undertaking. A circle 47 feet in diameter and three feet deep was excavated in the muddy wallow. In the excavation process, it was apparent that design alterations were needed because of the unstable subsoil conditions (gravel and fine sand). This unforeseen condition required a design change. Instead of using standard wall footings, 32 pilings of white pine logs were driven eight to nine feet deep to solid rock in two concentric circles. This construction technique provided the base for the ten-foot wide concrete ring (which was eight feet thick with reinforcing bars). CCC workers built the ‘piling driver’ mechanism on site.

The work created a round pool eighteen inches deep and twenty-five feet across. The walls of the pool were made of native yellow-brown limestone of stones of medium size. The pool was surrounded by a circular area paved in flagstone, backed by an outer seat wall, also constructed of limestone. The outer seat wall is broken in two places to provide access via stone steps flanked by stone piers. The craftsmanship was excellent. The landscape foreman, Edmund B. Walkowiak, remarked “The embryonic stone masons of the CCC surpassed all our expectations in producing this excellent piece of work” (CCC Report, May 1933 to March 1934).

Other structures followed. A comfort station was built northwest of the picnic area. This comfort station was more or less identical to those built at Cold Springs Campground. Other small scale features included dams along Travertine Creek, rip-rapped stream walls, and a curved, arched footbridge just south of Buffalo Spring. This delicate bridge was constructed of native stone of similar size to stones used elsewhere around Buffalo Spring. The stones and concrete arch were formed atop a corrugated steel culvert. The bridge was constructed quickly: A CCC report noted that prior to construction, the crews hoped that only ten days would be required to complete it (CCC Report, July 26 – August 26, 1934).

In contrast to Buffalo Springs, Antelope Springs saw the least development during the CCC era. At Antelope Springs, NPS designers changed their design focus—instead of a landscape structure they performed landscape improvements. According to a CCC mason, Mr. Weaver, who worked on Pavilion Springs and Bromide Springs Pavilion, soil and rock was removed from the front of Antelope Springs to reveal the fresh water spring emerging from an opening in the rock formation below. They used the flow to create two reflecting pools or lily ponds close to the spring. These were created by constructing two gravity dams, in sequence, along the stream emerging from the spring. Water flowed from one tranquil pond into the next. Two trails adjacent to the ponds and springs crossed the stream.

CCC projects were not just limited to construction. Tree planting was another major focus of the work. In 1933 and 1934, 131 trees, 1040 shrubs and 25 evergreens were planted within the Buffalo Springs area. Small trees were extensively planted in open spaces, large trees in special locations, shrubs in masses as screens or borders and evergreens were planted in masses or as specimens (CCC Report, May 27, 1933–March 31, 1934). While further research and comparisons of plans and historic photographs will be required to determine the full intent and scope of such plantings, it seems that one of the goals of planting was to provide enclosure

and shade in an area which was much more open historically than it is today.

It appears that most of the construction of the Buffalo and Antelope Springs area was completed by 1935 or 1936. In 1938, work on the comfort station and extensions of water and sewer lines were undertaken at Buffalo Springs. Throughout the 1940s, revisions and improvements in planning for the area continued to be made, as shown in the 1940 Master Plan, though funding throughout the NPS was limited due to the war effort. In 1945 and 46, a large barbeque at the picnic area was dismantled.

The 1950s were plagued by drought, and the two springs and Travertine Creek dried up for varied lengths of time in 1953, 1954, 1955, and 1959. In 1955, the town, worried about the impact of the dry creek on park (and town) visitorship, drilled a special well adjacent to the park in hopes of pumping water from this well to Travertine Creek. The technique was not particularly successful in creating the park's usual flowing waters and deep swimming holes. Water returned in December of 1959, but the springs dried up again in 1963.

By the late 1960s, the plans for a Nature Center within the park had been made, and in 1968, the perimeter road was closed in preparation for construction of the Nature Center. This building was completed and dedicated in September of 1969, but was damaged in a flood a little more than a year later. Also in 1970, most of the features of the former picnic area had been removed or destroyed. Little major change has occurred in the area since the 1970s.



Stone wall at Buffalo Springs parking area, above picnic area, circa 1934. (CNRA archives, photograph fac27)



*Native stone benches (16 x 18 inches) and picnic table near Buffalo Springs, circa 1934.
(CNRA archives, photograph ABS-03)*



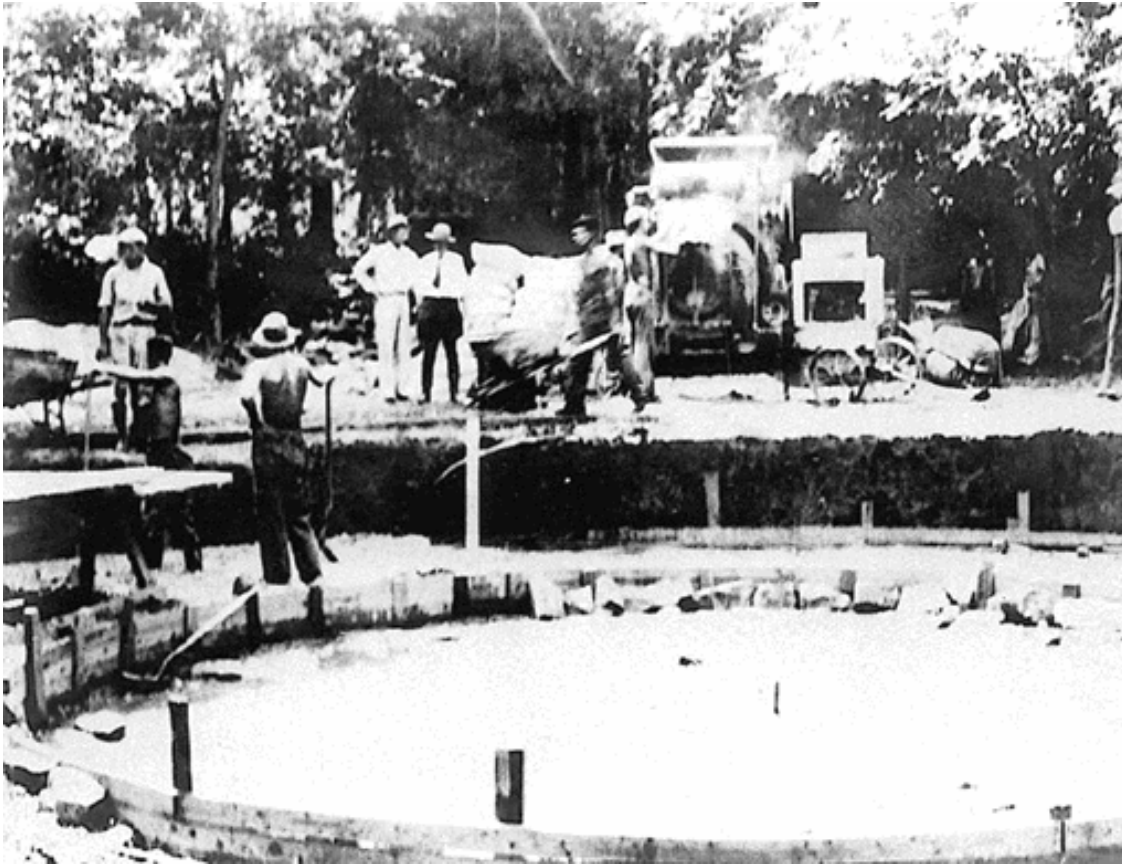
*Stone barbecue near Buffalo Springs, circa 1934
(CNRA archives, photograph fac.15)*



*Picnic Area at Buffalo Springs, 1935. Note masonry wall and steps from parking area in the background. Note also low water stone crossing of Travertine Creek in foreground.
(CNRA archives, portion of panoramic photograph by Wakefield Photo)*



*Pile driver for white pine log pilings for foundation of Buffalo Springs circular pool platform, circa 1934.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)*



*Forming outer walkway at Buffalo Springs circular pool, circa 1934.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)*



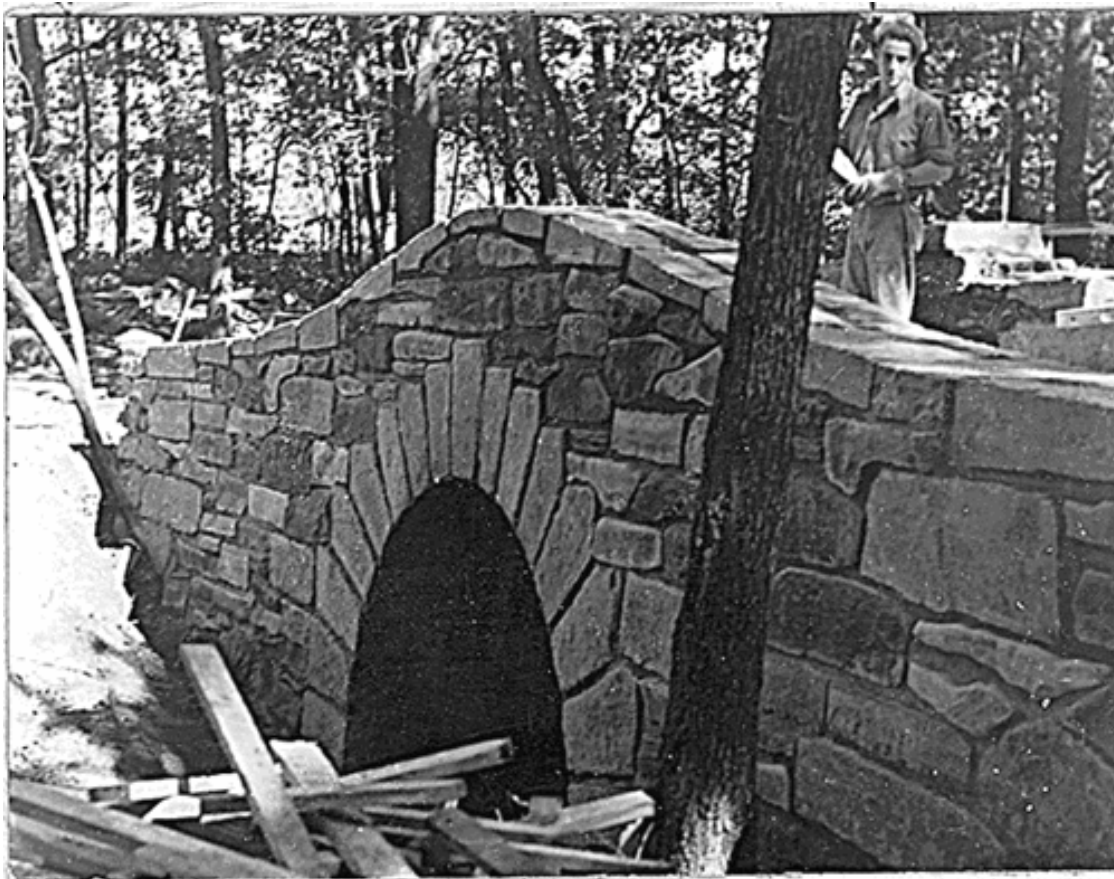
*Pouring concrete at Buffalo Springs, circa 1934.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)*



*"Lotus" ponds below Buffalo Spring spillway, just after construction, circa 1935.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)*



*Construction of stone arched footbridge in Buffalo Springs area, circa 1934.
(CNRA archives, photograph fac.05)*



*Completed stone arched footbridge in Buffalo Springs area, circa 1934.
(CNRA archives, photograph fac.06)*

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

The Antelope and Buffalo Springs and Nature Center area has exhibited a moderate amount of change since the end of the period of significance in both function and appearance. Although major designed elements and structures such as topography, the comfort station, the circular Buffalo Springs pool and walls, the stone arched footbridge, and Antelope Springs pools and dams, are extant, other features have been lost. These major losses include the perimeter road around the component landscape and the former picnic area and its stone features. More influential, perhaps, is the addition to the area, which was the construction of the Nature Center and its parking area in 1969. This building changed the appearance, function, and use of the area, since it also heralded the designation of the entire component as the park's Environmental Study Area a few years later. Thus, this landscape changed from being one of simple outdoor recreation to one of nature interpretation and study.

While some of the changes to the area, such as both increased vegetation growth and changes to pedestrian circulation may to varying degrees be reversible, given adequate reason, research, and funding, others, such as the construction of the Nature Center, clearly are not. And these later changes may accrue historic significance in their own right, as time passes, research is conducted, and perspective is gained. Thus all aspects of significance, and not just change and integrity, must be considered as landscape analysis moves toward landscape treatment.

Below is a list of contributing and non-contributing elements. In addition, there is a listing of LCS structures to clarify which LCS listings are located within this component landscape. Non contributing LCS features are marked with an asterisk in this list.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

- Natural System Features (Travertine Creek and associated rock outcroppings)
- Spatial Organization (original perimeter road and layout of springs)
- Cultural Traditions (Significance as headwaters)
- Land Use (passive recreation)
- Topography (existing natural topography)
- Vegetation (Eastern deciduous forest canopy and understory)
- Circulation (perimeter road/trail)
- Built structures (comfort station, circular walls and seats at Buffalo Spring, perimeter road bridge)
- Small-scale features (stone water crossings, remnant picnic area elements, fire pits, steps, stone boulder dams, road culverts and associated headwalls, arched trail bridge, signage, gauge box)
- Views and Vistas: (enclosed views of Travertine Creek)
- Archaeological sites: pre-historic and historic sites

NONCONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

- Structures Travertine Nature Center and Bridge

- Circulation (perimeter road realignment and parking area)
- Small Scale Features Metal pipe and steel/ wood plank bridge

Analysis of Integrity

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its historical significance. Integrity is based on the presence of physical features dating to the historic period, and is further defined by seven aspects, which are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A property, to convey its significance, must have integrity in several if not all of the aspects. Below is a preliminary analysis of the integrity of the Antelope and Buffalo Springs area.

Location

Although some features within this landscape, (for example, the perimeter road and small-scale picnic elements) have been lost to nature and human agency, the remaining cultural resources of this portion of the Platt District are in their original locations. Extant elements have not been moved. As a result, this landscape retains high integrity of location.

Design

The designed aspects of this landscape are many and include topography, structures, circulation systems, overall layout and spatial organization, and small scale features. Topography and geological features retain high integrity due to little human change. However, many other features have changed over time, so that the design of this landscape is no longer as it was at the end of the current period of significance, 1933-1940. As described above, the changes which have had the greatest impact on the integrity of design are the addition of the Nature Center and its parking area, the loss of the perimeter road and the picnic and parking areas around Buffalo Springs and the reconfiguration of pedestrian circulation in the area to accommodate the changes. Vegetation growth within the area has been extensive, as well, beyond what might be considered the original intent of these “naturalized” CCC plantings. These alterations all have a negative impact on the original CCC design of the area dating to 1933-35. Both appearance and function of the area have changed significantly. As a result, integrity of design in the period of significance of 1933-1940 is being judged to be relatively low. However, it should be noted that the Platt District has not been evaluated for significance as part of the Mission 66 design movement within the NPS, an area of significance currently being investigated in a National Register theme study. Were the Nature Center and other features within the park deemed to be significant under this area of significance, then integrity of this area, with the extant Nature Center, might actually be considered high for this later period.

Setting

The integrity of setting at both Antelope Springs and Buffalo Springs is relatively high. The area’s remote location in the wooded, eastern portion of the park has, to some degree, ensured this. Little new development has occurred around this area of the park. Though private lands about the park in this area, they remain mostly undeveloped. However, the addition of the Nature Center (’69) no development has taken place in the vicinity of either area, and this has changed the original setting a bit, with a shift in use and access. Therefore, integrity is high, although perhaps compromised slightly.

Materials

The integrity of extant buildings and structures, and small-scale features within the area is high, and these features maintain their materiality. Some new structures, such as the Nature Center, while non-contributing to significance, are made of materials which are compatible with existing historic materials, and do not severely detract from the integrity of materials. However, many features, such as the picnic area tables, benches, and walls have been lost, and this loss of historic fabric lowers the integrity of materials somewhat. Similarly, changes in vegetative patterning and additions of new materials, such as plank and pipe-rail bridges, that are not compatible with the existing, historic materials, also lessen the integrity of materials. Therefore, integrity of materials may be considered medium-high.

Workmanship

The original masonry and craftsmanship of the Comfort Station, open-air structures, footbridges and low-water stone crossings and creek dams, which emphasized NPS Rustic design principles, exhibited very high levels of workmanship. This workmanship is generally intact in extant features. Some new, non-contributing features, such as the Nature Center, are constructed with equally high workmanship and do not detract from integrity of workmanship. Other new features, however, such as the wood and plank bridges detract from their surroundings, and are not compatible with their surroundings. Integrity of workmanship is therefore generally high, though perhaps slightly compromised by additions.

Feeling

The relatively high integrity of both setting and location contribute to the integrity of feeling in this component landscape. The peaceful feeling and sight and sound of flowing waters and the passive recreational pleasures of seating near the captured pools at Antelope Springs and Buffalo Springs are part of the sensory impact of this part of the district. Prior to the removal of the Perimeter Road and picnic area at Buffalo Springs this area was one of the park's most popular sites. It seems possible that with the removal of the perimeter road and picnic area that the use of this area has declined somewhat, perhaps lessening the feeling of activity in this area. The area's designation as an Environmental Study Area may have also had a similar impact. Thus, it seems likely that this decline in recreational use has made the feeling of the area, if anything, more secluded, isolated, and natural than it was during the period of significance. Though this change is not necessarily a negative one, it is a change, and impacts integrity to some degree. Thus, integrity of feeling is judged to be high, though compromised slightly.

Association

Evidence of 1930s and CCC-era park development remains prominent. The spatial organization retains good historic association, but the association is much compromised by. Evidence of the area's original design and development are retained, as are its use as a passive recreational landscape. However, the loss of the Perimeter Road and picnic area and the addition of the Nature Center do compromise the integrity of association of the area with NPS recreational park development and rustic landscape design of the years 1916-1942, the major years of this type of landscape architectural design. The prominence of the Mission 66-era Nature Center, for example, shifts the association of the area to a

later period of park design. However, the design of Buffalo Springs, in particular, still evokes the earlier era of traditional NPS principles of design and park recreation. In addition, the loss of designed features removed has not greatly weakened the area's ability to accommodate these traditional park uses. Integrity of association is therefore medium.

Overall Rating

The overall integrity of the Antelope and Buffalo Springs and Nature Center area is medium to low. Significant modifications to this designed environment that occurred after 1940 are the primary reason for this lowered rating. Though integrity of location, workmanship, and association are quite high, integrity of design, setting materials, and association have all been reduced, and contribute to low overall integrity. While some changes (such as increased vegetation) are reversible, others are not. Other changes may contribute to later periods of significance not yet evaluated. For example, if the Platt District is in the future determined to be significant for its association with the Mission 66 era of design, due to elements created within the park during this time period, then the changes made to the Antelope and Buffalo Springs and Nature Center area during this period could be considered to contribute to the integrity of this additional potential period of significance. Thus, it is important to fully evaluate and consider all areas of significance prior to formulating a treatment plan.

Landscape Characteristic:

Archeological Sites

n/a

Buildings and Structures

The buildings and structures at the Antelope and Buffalo Springs and the Nature Center area represent NPS rustic design principles. The buildings harmonize with the area due to their low, horizontal lines and use of native materials. Even later buildings, not built during the CCC era, exhibit these qualities and are compatible with the natural setting and with the historic structures.

Comfort Station: The Buffalo Springs Comfort Station is a replica of the two comfort stations built at Cold Springs Camp. The building is approximately 32 by 28 feet and utilizes large rough-sawn rafters and beams and large limestone boulders in its design. The building is not presently being used and its windows and entries are boarded up.

Travertine Nature Center: The Travertine Nature Center was built in 1970. Although it does not contribute to the current significance of the area, it may be significant as part of the Mission 66 era design within the district.

Buffalo Springs Area: This structure has not changed significantly since the period of significance. The interior, central pool (25 feet across) is constructed of native yellow-brown limestone, with stones of medium size. Water bubbles up through a funnel in the center of the pool and is channeled off through a stone spillway leading north into small lotus ponds. Here, the stone-lined creek bank and the small stone falls form a picturesque stream. Around the pool is a circular stone wall also constructed of native stone. The wall surrounds the flagstone

platform that surrounds the pool. The wall and its integrated seat has stone piers regularly spaced around it. A seat wall is integrated with stone piers acts as the backrest for the integral seat-walls. Two entry points are stone steps leading down into the circle; these entries are flanked by stone piers. An outer flagstone walk complements the open-air structure as it sits in a low, quiescent area.

Antelope Springs Area: Antelope Springs emerges out of a high stone outcropping of Conglomerate formation. The setting around the Springs, including the two ponds, remain much as they did at the end of the period of significance. Minor changes have occurred, particularly in the circulation. A new path and stone bridge has been added below the second (downstream) pond. It is speculated that this stone was added circa 1970, and the stone was a former top to a picnic table removed from the Buffalo Springs picnic area. The middle wood bridge appears to have been added over a former stone crossing, and the upper stone crossing may have earlier been simple stepping stones. Otherwise the peaceful pond setting seems much as it was historically. A USGS water gauge enclosure is located next to the spring area, but is no longer used. It is constructed of stone.

Buffalo Springs Road Bridge and Road Box Culvert: Of the few structural elements remaining at Buffalo Springs are the two vehicular road features: the vehicular bridge and a road box culvert. The box culvert was located along the perimeter road, while the road bridge was located on the road which accessed the old picnic area parking lot. The bridge is visible from the Buffalo Springs area. The road box culvert can be seen from trails in the area. Both features' walls were veneered with native stone in keeping with the rustic style of the other area features. Today, trees are growing within the prism of both former roads and threaten the features' integrity.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Buffalo Springs Comfort Station

Feature Identification Number: 117960

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 62909

LCS Structure Name: Buffalo Springs Comfort Station

LCS Structure Number: B-032

Feature: Buffalo Springs

Feature Identification Number: 117966

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 62910

LCS Structure Name: Buffalo Springs

LCS Structure Number: BS.A

Feature: Antelope Springs and Stream

Feature Identification Number: 117986

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 64281

LCS Structure Name: Antelope Springs and Stream

LCS Structure Number: AS.A

Feature: PR Abandoned Section

Feature Identification Number: 118364

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 323749

LCS Structure Name: Perimeter Road Abandoned Section

LCS Structure Number: P-Rd.N

Feature: PR Abandoned Section Bridge

Feature Identification Number: 118368

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 62914

LCS Structure Name: Perimeter Road Abandoned Section Bridge

LCS Structure Number: P-Rd.Q

Feature: PR Abandoned Section Box Culverts

Feature Identification Number: 118366

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 422849

LCS Structure Name: Perimeter Road Abandoned Section Box Culverts

LCS Structure Number: P-Rd.P

Feature: Travertine Nature Center

Feature Identification Number: 118370

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Buffalo Springs Comfort Station, 1992.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)



*Buffalo Springs pool, walkway and wall, 1992.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)*

Circulation

During the 1930s, a distinct circulation design was created. This design was based on the perimeter road encircling the features of the area, with an access road leading to the springs and parking and unloading areas. A major parking area was located northwest of Buffalo Springs and southeast of Antelope Springs, and a few smaller parking and unloading areas were provided in close proximity to the two springs and the comfort station. Individual features within the area were then accessed on foot via trails, some of which were aligned along traces of earlier roads. The state of circulation at the end of the period of significance is seen below.

With the addition of the Nature Center in the 1960s, the vehicular circulation pattern shown in the drawing above was obliterated, drastically changing this landscape feature. Today, only a few remnants of the road and parking and unloading areas are found in this landscape. Some of the old road grading can, for example, still be seen in the larger landscape. A few traces of the old perimeter road are visible along volunteer trails in the underbrush, and a number of minor, old road structures such as drainage features, are listed on the Platt District's List of Classified Structures. These elements are still intact, though neglect has had a high impact.

Two major road structures still remaining from the CCC-era—the road bridge and the box culvert visible from the Buffalo Springs area—give tribute to the workmanship and design philosophy of the CCC-era construction crews and designers. These are described in greater

detail below under structures.

The current vehicular circulation pattern is much different. The perimeter road now only extends to the western edge of this component landscape. Parking is located there, just west of the Travertine Nature. The parking lot generally follows traditional NPS rustic design principles. The parking lot is asphalt-paved, and has flagstone walks and stone curb edging. Parking islands have trees. It should be noted that near the parking area access the alignment of the perimeter road is a one-way system, not a two-way system as it was historically.

Pedestrian circulation was similarly altered, though to a lesser extent. Footpaths are still a clay gravel base with fine aggregate crushed rock topping. Probably the greatest change is the increased importance or emphasis put along the portion of the Travertine Trail, which leads from the Nature Center area to the springs, since it provides the only access to the headwaters. Though the alignment of Antelope and Buffalo Trail (#4) changed slightly to accommodate the new building, pedestrian circulation throughout the area is concentrated in close proximity to Travertine Creek. Nature trails were also added in this area. Closer near the springs, circulation connecting Buffalo and Antelope Springs and the comfort station seem to be close to the original design. One change, however, is the addition of a path and footbridge across the second (downstream) dam of the pools near Antelope Springs. Also added were two pedestrian low-water stone crossings near Buffalo Springs. These metal pipe and wood plank decking bridge the picturesque stream and provide access for differently-abled visitors. As noted above, the layout of the trail system linking the Nature Center (west, Trail #4) to Antelope and Buffalo Springs (east, Trail #9) are built over old early park loop roads and have changed little since the period of significance. Trail #9 mimics the road known as the "Head of the Springs." At Antelope Springs a trail branches off forming Trail #9 that loops around Buffalo Springs and ends back at Antelope Springs. There are also some volunteer foot trails within the area.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Antelope Springs Trail

Feature Identification Number: 117976

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 62993

LCS Structure Name: Antelope Springs Trail #4

LCS Structure Number: TR-004

Feature: Buffalo Springs Trail

Feature Identification Number: 117978

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 62998

LCS Structure Name: Buffalo Springs Trail #9

LCS Structure Number: TR-009

Feature: Perimeter Road Abandoned Section

Feature Identification Number: 118372

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 323749

LCS Structure Name: Perimeter Road Abandoned Section

LCS Structure Number: P-Rd.N

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Buffalo and Antelope Springs Trail (Trail #4), looking north along early pre-park old loop road, 1999.

(Photograph by harlen Groe)



*Parking area at Travertine Nature Center, looking northeast from entry, 1999.
(Photograph by harlen Groe)*



*Volunteer foot trail along old perimeter road near Antelope Springs, 1999.
(Photograph by harlen Groe)*



*Traces of old perimeter road in area above Antelope Springs, 1999.
(CNRA archives, GIS photo)*



*Trail #9 south of Travertine Creek near Buffalo Springs area, no date.
(CNRA archives, GIS photograph)*

Cluster Arrangement

n/a

Constructed Water Features

Buffalo Springs Area: This structure has not changed significantly since the period of significance. The interior, central pool (25 feet across) is constructed of native yellow-brown limestone, with stones of medium size. Water bubbles up through a funnel in the center of the pool and is channeled off through a stone spillway leading north into small lotus ponds. Here, the stone-lined creek bank and the small stone falls form a picturesque stream. Around the pool is a circular stone wall also constructed of native stone. The wall surrounds the flagstone platform that surrounds the pool. The wall and its integrated seat has stones piers regularly spaced around it. A seat wall is integrated with stone piers acts as the backrest for the integral seat-walls. Two entry points are stone steps leading down into the circle; these entries are flanked by stone piers. An outer flagstone walk complements the open-air structure as it sits in a low, quiescent area.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Buffalo Springs Pool

Feature Identification Number: 119168

Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	62910
LCS Structure Name:	Buffalo Springs
LCS Structure Number:	BS.A

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*Buffalo Springs pool, walkway and wall, 1992.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)*

Cultural Traditions

The major cultural traditions associated with this component landscape are recreational day use and viewing the headwaters of Travertine Creek. Both of these traditions remain, though are perhaps somewhat altered, since the area is now an Environmental Study area and picnicking uses are no longer present.

Land Use

One of the most forested and “natural” areas of the park, Antelope Springs and Buffalo Springs has continuously served as a place for recreational experiences and for quiet leisure outings near the fresh-water springs. This use remains. In the 1970s, the area was also designated an Environmental Study Area. This designation has restricted recreational uses somewhat, and today the area is used not for picnicking, but for nature study.

Natural Systems and Features

The Antelope and Buffalo Springs and Nature Center area is set along the wooded fresh-water stream valley of Travertine Creek and is located at the foot-slopes of two north and south-facing ridges in the extreme eastern portion of the Platt District. The area is characterized by its rock outcroppings, particularly along the ridge to the northeast, near Antelope Springs.

The two springs that supply Travertine Creek are the area's dominant natural features. These two springs flow from geological/soil conditions which vary from gravel and fine sand to mucky subsoil to Conglomerate rock outcroppings. The rate of water flow from Buffalo Springs is approximately 5,000,000 gallons daily, though this may fluctuate due to seasonal or climatic conditions. Rainfall is about 34" per year within the park, but periodic droughts have caused the flow of freshwater from Antelope and Buffalo Springs to stop, resulting in no flow conditions in Travertine Creek. Periods of no flow have been recorded in 1911, 1913, 1918-19, 1927, 1938-40, 1951-52 and 1956. The organization of the springs was reconfigured somewhat in the 1930s with the construction of the circular setting for Buffalo Springs in particular, which eliminated the once mucky low-lying area and created a large structure around it. Since then, however, no known changes to the natural features have been made. Vegetation systems will be discussed in the section on "Vegetation."

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*Typical Travertine formations and outcropping at Antelope Springs Area, date unknown.
Photograph from A Guide to the National Parks: Their Landscape and Geology, Volume II,
1968, page 203.*

Small Scale Features

Many small-scale features contribute to the character of the Antelope and Buffalo Springs and Nature Center area. These numerous small-scale features are scattered throughout the site, giving a human scale and interest.

Buffalo Springs Arched Trail Bridge: Along the pedestrian footpath (Trail #9) just east of the Buffalo Springs water feature, sits a stone-arched bridge of native stone. Construction of this arched bridge consists of a heavy gauge corrugated steel vault bolted to a concrete base. A flagstone walkway and granite and gravel trail connects this arched stone footbridge to the open air-water structure of Buffalo Springs. This feature exists as it did during the period of significance.

Stone Fire Pits/ Barbecue Pits: A few of the original fire pits from the Buffalo Springs picnic area still exist today. These are scattered throughout the area and are hidden by underbrush.

Stone Dams: Just downstream from the arched stone footbridge near Buffalo Springs are three small stone dams spaced approximately ten feet apart. Based on documentation, it seems that originally four dams were constructed or perhaps only planned, since today only evidence of three dams is seen in the field. Further research will be needed to determine the exact number originally; today there are three. As a design element in a landscape setting, these dams acted as grade stabilization structures to prevent stream bank erosion and to prevent erosion from undercutting the arched stone footbridge. They may also have been intended to add noise and interest. Each stone dam is built of rock and stone (6 to 9 inches in height), and stretches from bank edge to bank edge. All three need some form of reconstruction.

Signs: These structural features, roughly 15 x 43 inches in length, are a few of the last examples of the original, rustic type of signage to be found in the Platt District. The signs are single faced half-logs mounted on two ten to twelve inch posts (dimensions from Sign and Wayside Exhibit Plan, Drawing NP-PLA-2302, 1967). Letters are incised and painted white to contrast with the brown painted background. Based on the appearance of the two signs, and their difference in lettering, it is believed that the Antelope Springs signs clearly date to the period of significance, while the Buffalo Springs sign may have been replaced at a later date. Further examination of the signs and historic photographs may help confirm this.

Abandoned Culverts: There are a total of 7 abandoned perimeter road culverts within this component landscape, located on both the south and north portions of the perimeter road.

Abandoned Stairs to Parking Area: This feature is left near the former Antelope Springs parking area.

Low Water Stepping Stones/Crossings: Connecting the trails as they ford water features are

low water stepping stone crossings. Some of these are extant, while others have been replaced. There four within the area. One is located near Antelope Springs and the two ponds. These may or may not be replacement features. These are described above under Antelope Springs. Other crossings are located throughout the area and are illustrated below.

Rip-Rap Construction of Creek and Stream: Throughout the area of Buffalo Springs, NPS designers and CCC work crews manipulated Travertine Creek with a series of natural rock dams and bank stabilization efforts using stone rip-rap in preventing erosion. Many of these rip-rapped areas are extant today, but are less visible today as they've become covered with vegetation.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Buffalo Springs Water Crossing

Feature Identification Number: 118434

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 62911

LCS Structure Name: Buffalo Springs Water Crossing, Steps, Step Stones

LCS Structure Number: BS.D

Feature: Antelope Springs Dam and Upper Falls

Feature Identification Number: 118440

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 62912

LCS Structure Name: Antelope Springs Dam and Upper Falls

LCS Structure Number: AS.F

Feature: Buffalo Springs Trail Arched Bridge

Feature Identification Number: 118442

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 62913

LCS Structure Name: Buffalo Springs Trail Arched Bridge

LCS Structure Number: TR-009.A

Feature: Buffalo Springs Lower Dam

Feature Identification Number: 118444

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Antelope and Buffalo Springs
Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District

IDLCS Number: 62917
LCS Structure Name: Buffalo Springs Lower Dam
LCS Structure Number: BS.F

Feature: Lower Water Crossing
Feature Identification Number: 118446
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 64132
LCS Structure Name: Low Water Crossing on Trail to Abandoned Road
LCS Structure Number: P-Rd.S

Feature: Antelope Springs Stone Fireplaces
Feature Identification Number: 118450
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 64266
LCS Structure Name: Antelope Springs Stone Fireplaces
LCS Structure Number: AS.C

Feature: Buffalo Springs Stone Fireplaces
Feature Identification Number: 118452
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 64277
LCS Structure Name: Buffalo Springs Stone Fireplaces
LCS Structure Number: BS.B

Feature: Travertine Creek Water Crossing
Feature Identification Number: 118454
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 64280
LCS Structure Name: Travertine Creek Water Crossing, Steps, Step Stone
LCS Structure Number: BS.C

Feature: Antelope Springs Steps
Feature Identification Number: 118456

Antelope and Buffalo Springs
Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 64283
LCS Structure Name: Antelope Springs Steps to Abandoned Parking Area
LCS Structure Number: AS.B

Feature: Buffalo Springs Stream Bank

Feature Identification Number: 118458

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 254301

LCS Structure Name: Buffalo Springs Stream Bank Stabilizations

LCS Structure Number: BS.E

Feature: Antelope Springs Sign

Feature Identification Number: 118460

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 255606

LCS Structure Name: Antelope Springs Sign

LCS Structure Number: AS.E

Feature: Antelope Springs Middle Dam

Feature Identification Number: 118462

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 255607

LCS Structure Name: Antelope Springs Middle Dam, Falls and Pond

LCS Structure Number: AS.G

Feature: Antelope Springs Lower Dam

Feature Identification Number: 118464

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 255608

LCS Structure Name: Antelope Springs Lower Dam, Falls and Pond

LCS Structure Number: AS.H

Feature: Perimeter Road Abandoned Section Tree

Antelope and Buffalo Springs
Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District

Feature Identification Number: 118466
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 255615
LCS Structure Name: Perimeter Road Abandoned Section Tree Well
LCS Structure Number: P-Rd.R

Feature: Buffalo Springs Trail Concrete Culvert
Feature Identification Number: 118468
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 256310
LCS Structure Name: Buffalo Springs Trail Concrete Culvert
LCS Structure Number: TR-009.B

Feature: Perimeter Road Abandoned Section Culvert
Feature Identification Number: 118470
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 413345
LCS Structure Name: Perimeter Road Abandoned Section Culverts w/CMP
LCS Structure Number: P-Rd.O

Feature: Antelope Springs Trail Concrete Culvert
Feature Identification Number: 118472
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 425687
LCS Structure Name: Antelope Springs Trail Concrete Culvert w/CMP
LCS Structure Number: TR-004.B

Feature: Buffalo Springs Middle Dam
Feature Identification Number: 118474
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 426382
LCS Structure Name: Buffalo Springs Middle Dam
LCS Structure Number: BS.G

Feature: Buffalo Springs Upper Dam

Feature Identification Number: 119450

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 426385

LCS Structure Name: Buffalo Springs Upper Dam

LCS Structure Number: BS.H

Feature: Buffalo Springs Flagstone Walkway & Step

Feature Identification Number: 118478

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 482698

LCS Structure Name: Buffalo Springs Flagstone Walkway & Steps

LCS Structure Number: BS.I

Feature: Antelope Springs Trail Stone Benches

Feature Identification Number: 118480

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 482699

LCS Structure Name: Antelope Springs Trail Stone Benches

LCS Structure Number: TR-004.A

Feature: Buffalo Springs Sewer Manhole & Cover

Feature Identification Number: 118482

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 482700

LCS Structure Name: Buffalo Springs Sewer Manhole & Cover

LCS Structure Number: BS.K

Feature: Buffalo Springs Stream Stabilization

Feature Identification Number: 118484

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 491666

LCS Structure Name: Buffalo Springs Stream Stabilization Structures

LCS Structure Number: BS.J

Feature: Antelope Springs Trail #4 Pre CCC Culvrt

Feature Identification Number: 118486

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 507822

LCS Structure Name: Antelope Springs Trail #4 Pre-CCC Culvert w/CMP

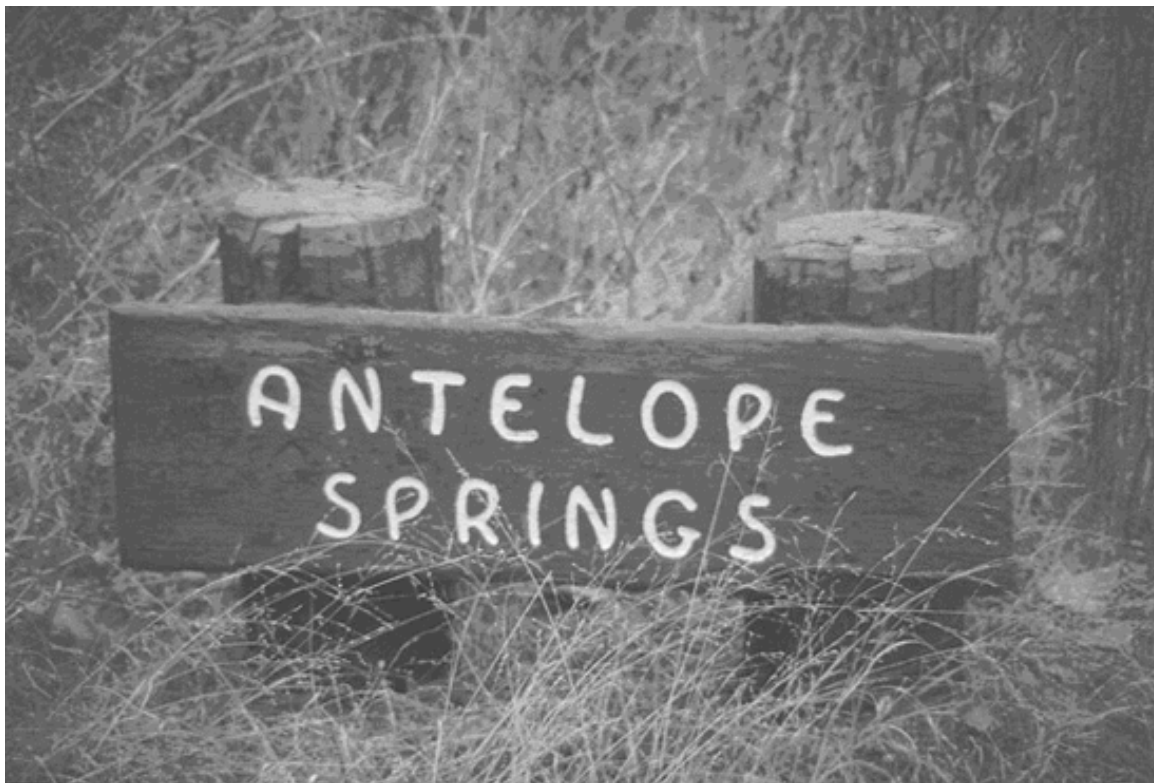
LCS Structure Number: TR-004.C

Feature: Rock Falls

Feature Identification Number: 119502

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*Antelope Springs half-log sign, 1999.
(Photograph by harlen Groe)*



*Stone arched footbridge near Buffalo Springs, 1999.
(Photograph by harlen Groe)*



*Stone arched footbridge near Buffalo Springs, 1999.
(Photograph by harlen Groe)*



*Remains of stone masonry firepits, 1999.
(Photograph by harlen Groe)*



*Stone stream dam (first of three), no date.
(CNRA archives, GIS photograph)*



*Stone stream dam (second of three), no date.
(CNRA archives, GIS photograph)*



*Stone stream dam (third of three), no date.
(CNRA archives, GIS photograph)*



*Wood footbridge crossing Travertine Creek near Antelope Springs (middle bridge); likely replacement.
(photograph by harlen Groe)*



*Low Water stepping stone crossing, no date.
(CNRA archives, GIS photographF064275*



*Low water stepping stone crossing, no date.
(CNRA archives, GIS photograph Lwc F064376)*



*Bridge spanning former low water crossing, providing access to Buffalo Springs, 1999.
(Photograph by harlen Groe)*



*Rip-rap of Travertine Creek bank near Antelope and Buffalo Springs area, no date.
(CNRA archives, GIS photograph)*



*Rip-rap of Travertine Creek bank near Antelope and Buffalo Springs area, no date.
(CNRA archives, GIS photograph)*

Spatial Organization

Spatial organization within this component landscape has changed significantly since the end of the period of significance (1933-1940). After the completion of work by CCC crews in the park, the area was a picnic area and spring area encompassed and accessed by the park's perimeter road. The picnic area stepped down from the perimeter road to the east, and Buffalo Springs formed a central focal point or node around which both activities and circulation were organized.

Today this essential spatial organization has changed. The area is now divided into two spatial clusters, with Antelope and Buffalo Springs at one end and the Nature Center area at the other end of an elongated ellipse and connected by a thin thread-like circulation route of pedestrian foot-trails. With the loss of the perimeter road looping around the outer eastern portion of the district, instead of being embraced by the vehicular circulation route, Buffalo Springs is more of a pedestrian endpoint destination, with visitors walking out and back to this feature from the Nature Center. In other words, the Nature Center now becomes the dividing line between the "developed" portion of the park, and the "wild" or "natural" portion of the park. Previously, with the original picnic area and loop road, the entire area might have been considered as "developed." These are all significant changes from the 1940 conditions.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Existing layout of trails and features

Feature Identification Number: 118008

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Antelope Springs area

Feature Identification Number: 118010

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Topography

The relationship of Antelope Springs and Buffalo Springs and Travertine Creek's streamside, wooded environment, and topography that provide much of this area's interest. Buffalo and Antelope Springs are enclosed by a ridgeline that provides a backdrop for the scenic area. The district's landforms vary from stream bank dotted with and Travertine rock outcroppings to the wooded valley floor and the high ridge lines and draws (Horner's Bluff) to the south of Travertine Creek. The overall elevation of the area falls from the east to west. The elevations of 1158 feet at the boundary line south of Buffalo Spring area and 1154 feet at the northeast corner of the park are the highest points within the Platt District. The elevation of both Antelope and Buffalo Springs is 1080 feet, and the elevation of Travertine Nature Center is 1044 feet. Little change in the overall topography of the entire area has occurred since the end of the period of significance. Some localized topographic change and grading occurred in the area around the Nature Center, which was required for construction of this element in the late 1960s.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Rolling topography

Feature Identification Number: 119170

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Travertine outcroppings

Feature Identification Number: 117962

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Stream course

Feature Identification Number: 117964

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Vegetation

The vegetation of the Antelope and Buffalo Springs and the Nature Center area is predominantly Texas-Chinkapin Oak, and is characteristic of the xeric community found on

the lower hillsides and drier parts of the floodplain. This vegetation is shown as areas 3, 4, and 11 on the study map by Dale, Jr.; see vegetation map in hard copy Iowa State CLI or park files. Overstory species consist of *Quercus texana*, *Quercus muhlenbergi*, *Ulmus americana*, and *Ulmus alata*. Understory species include *Ulmus americana*, *Ulmus alata*, *Celtis laevigata*, *Prunus mexicana* and *Cercis canadensis*. Shrub layers are a mixture of *Ulmus americana*, *Ulmus alata* and *Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*. Plants species differing near the Nature Center area consist of *Carya cordiformis* (overstory) and *Cornus drummundi* and *Fraxinus texensis* (understory). The shrub layer in this area contains *Smilax bona-nox* and *Celastrus scandens*. According to the Dale study, the vegetation cover at unit #4 (American Elm–Southern Hackberry) is 47.6% ground cover with 52.4% bare ground. At unit #11 (Texas–Chinkapin Oak) the vegetation cover is 27% ground cover with 73% bare ground.

The vegetation of the Platt District landscape was generally altered by the planting of trees, shrubs, and turf grasses by many CCC projects, and the Buffalo and Antelope Springs area also received plantings. Plants throughout the Buffalo Springs and areas in the vicinity were planted during the first and second periods CCC enrollment periods. More research is needed to determine the design intent, effect, and as-built conditions of these plantings. Today, the effects of these plantings are not immediately evident, except as naturalized forest, which was likely one of the goals of park designers and arborists. In general, over time vegetation in both understory and in canopy cover has increased in the area, as can be seen in a comparison of the 1940 and 1969 aerial photographs, above.

Character-defining Features:

Feature:	Forested area
Feature Identification Number:	118012
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
Feature:	BS Designed Plantings
Feature Identification Number:	118014
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing

Views and Vistas

Like other component elements of the Platt District, views are very much oriented inwardly within the Antelope/ Buffalo Springs and the Nature Center area. Users or visitors are exposed to experiences of an enclosed natural environment including water, vegetation and geology.

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 07/11/2007

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The Antelope and Buffalo Springs landscapes was assessed in fair condition. Park Superintendent concurrence received 9/21/2007.

Impacts

Type of Impact:	Vegetation/Invasive Plants
External or Internal:	Both Internal and External
Impact Description:	Non-native shrub species invade understory areas when not monitored or cleared, esp., honeysuckle and poison ivy
Type of Impact:	Visitation
External or Internal:	External
Impact Description:	High usage from visitors along footpaths/trails
Type of Impact:	Structural Deterioration
External or Internal:	Both Internal and External
Impact Description:	High deterioration of walls, building materials and construction methods when not monitored
Type of Impact:	Exposure To Elements
External or Internal:	Both Internal and External
Impact Description:	High deterioration of walls, building materials and construction methods when not monitored
Type of Impact:	Erosion
External or Internal:	Both Internal and External
Impact Description:	High deterioration of small-scale features along footpaths and low water-crossings, caused by water runoff

Type of Impact:	Neglect
External or Internal:	Internal
Impact Description:	Small scale features along footpaths/trails and low water crossings show deterioration when not maintained
Type of Impact:	Impending Development
External or Internal:	External
Impact Description:	Overgrowth of footpaths along abandoned road section
Type of Impact:	Release To Succession
External or Internal:	External
Impact Description:	Invasive expansion of Eastern Red Cedar along the abandoned road section

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment:	Preservation
Approved Treatment Document:	Cultural Landscape Report
Document Date:	01/01/2004

Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:

Approved treatment recommendations are outlined in the Cultural Landscape Report, written by Iowa State University.

Approved Treatment Completed:	No
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Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Date:	01/01/2004
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Landscape Approved Treatment Cost Explanatory Description:

Landscape treatment costs have not been determined.

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