
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
2007



Walnut Grove
Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District

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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.

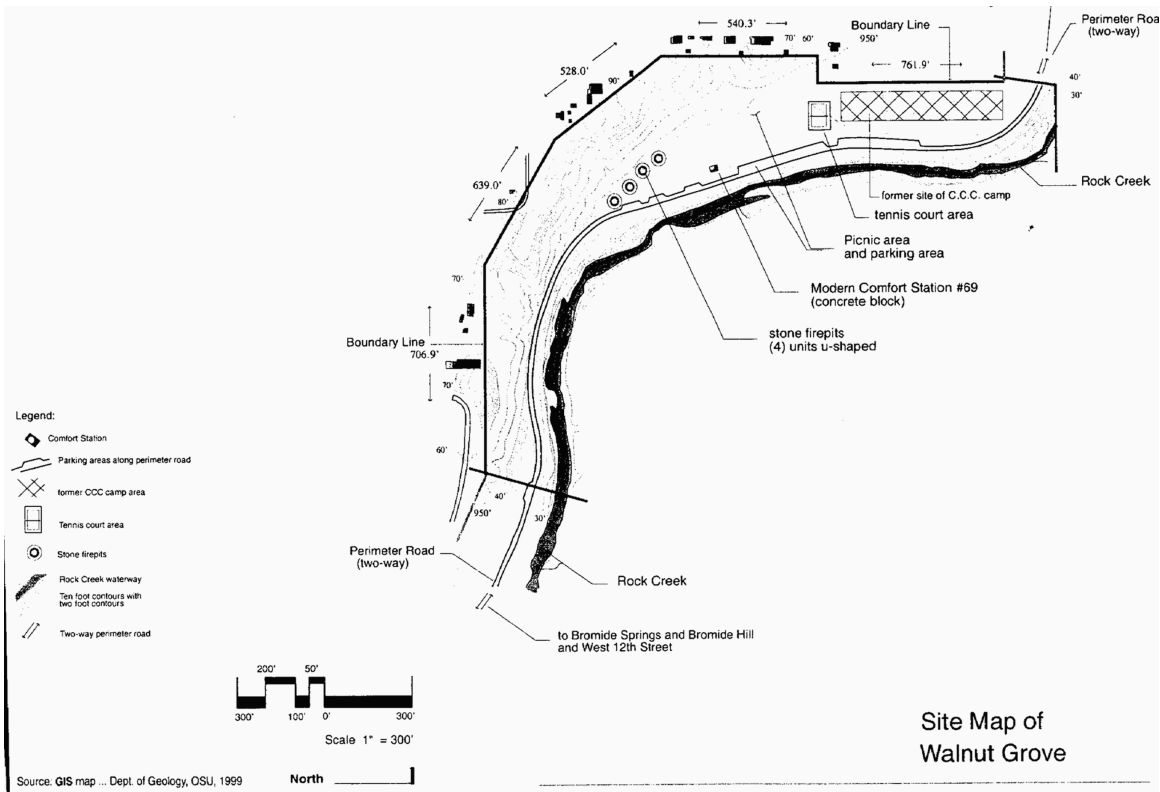
Inventory Unit Description:

Walnut Grove is located in the western half of the Platt Historic District, in the Chickasaw National Recreation Area, Murray County, Oklahoma. It is situated just west of Black Sulphur Springs, along the north side of the park's perimeter road. The landscape is 24.7 acres in size and the area is primarily an open, grassy picnic area. To the north and west, a steep, wooded hillside leads up to a residential part of the town of Sulphur. Access to the area is provided from a few parking areas that are located along the perimeter road.

Walnut Grove is presently used mostly for picnicking, and an open lawn area is occasionally used for volleyball, Frisbee, horseshoes, and other activities such as children's games and an annual Easter egg hunt. The area is used by families and small to large groups. Groups are attracted to the area because of the open play area, good shade in the hot summers, as well as numerous picnic tables and upright grills. A modern comfort station is also located conveniently nearby the picnic areas.

Historically, the area was the site of the camp for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp 808 from 1934-1940. Few elements remain from this use of the site. They include four open stone fireplaces and remnants of a tennis court.

Site Plan



Site Plan for Walnut Grove. Source: GIS base map data obtained from Department of Geology, Oklahoma State University (1999), augmented by Iowa State University.

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name:	Walnut Grove
Property Level:	Component Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	850467
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

The Platt Historic District of Chickasaw National Recreation Area (CNRA) is the parent landscape for Walnut Grove. 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 written and completed by Heidi Hohmann and Katarzyna Grala of Iowa State University. Previous cultural landscape documentation for the Platt District, which includes the Walnut Grove area, was carried out in 1997 by Kay Saltee et al., of UT Arlington. 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 Walnut Grove 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: Walnut Grove Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI)

I concur with the content and the assessment of the Walnut Grove cultural landscape for the Chickasaw National Recreation Area.

The CLI has identified the Walnut Grove component landscape as a "Historic Designed Landscape."

- 1. The CLI rates the condition as "GOOD" (pg.32) and the Management Category is listed as "Must be Preserved and Maintained" (pg. 8).*
- 2. The period of significance for the Walnut Grove 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. 17-31).*

Bruce Noble
Superintendent, Chickasaw National Recreation Area

9/21/07
Date

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

CHIC Superintendent concurrence on the Walnut Grove CLI, 9/21/2007.

Revisions Impacting Change in Concurrence:

Other

Revision Narrative:

Uploaded CLR to Landscape Documents section and edited text to correct typos, May 2012.

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

To the north and west, the landscape is bounded by the residential section of the town of Sulphur which begins at the top of the slope above Walnut Grove. The slope, with its dense vegetation, provides a distinct and thickened edge between the park and the town. To the east, the boundary is the edge of the Black Sulphur Springs area. To the south, the area is bounded by the waterway of Rock Creek. The boundary of Walnut Grove component landscape is shown on the site plan.

State and County:

State: OK

County: Murray County

Size (Acres): 24.70

Boundary UTMS:

Source: USGS Map 1:24,000

Type of Point: Point

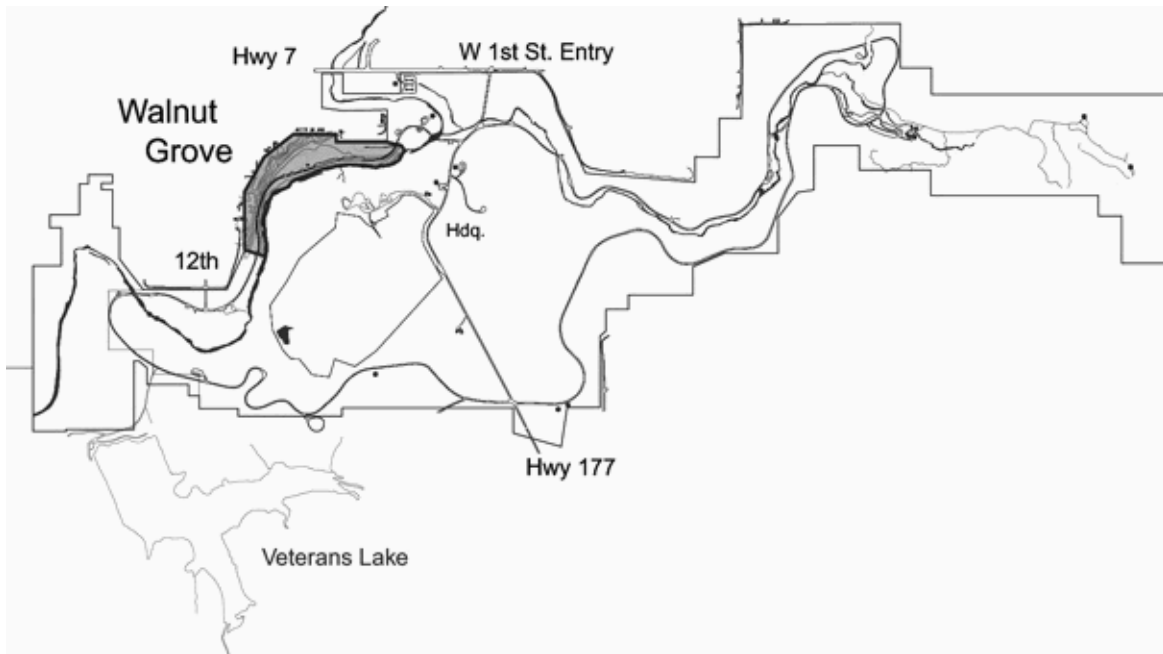
Datum: NAD 27

UTM Zone: 14

UTM Easting: 685,440

UTM Northing: 3,819,465

Location Map:



Location map of Walnut Grove within the Platt District. Source: GIS base map data obtained from Department of Geology, Oklahoma State University (1999), augmented by Iowa State University.

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

The site is today used as a picnic area and park, serving both out-of-town and local visitors. From a cultural standpoint, it might be considered a gathering place. Historically, the area housed CCC camp 808, and in this context, was a home and living space for the men who worked in the CCC.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

Walnut Grove can be characterized as a moderately flat, floodplain terrace located just above Rock Creek. To the north of the terrace are steep, south-facing hillsides. Vegetation is characteristic of the lowland forest association of the Eastern deciduous forest. Overstory genera include *Ulmus* (elm), *Quercus* (oak), *Juglans* (walnut), and *Celtis* (hackberry).

Type of Context: Political

Description:

Since 1902, when lands for Sulphur Springs Reservation were taken by the government, the Walnut Grove 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 1976 as Chickasaw NRA. Lands adjacent to the component landscape boundary consist of both privately owned holdings (mostly residential) and additional park lands.

Management Unit: Chickasaw NRA

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Must be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 07/26/2007

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

The Platt Historic District, which includes the Walnut Grove area, was listed as a National Historic Landmark on 7/7/2011. As a result, the landscape must be preserved and maintained. Park Superintendent concurrence was received on 9/21/2007, prior to the formal NHL listing.

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 Walnut Grove 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 Platt Historic District CLR, the Walnut Grove component landscape has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places by the Oklahoma SHPO. Additionally, the Platt Historic District was listed as a National Historic Landmark 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
	Platt Historic District 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 Historic 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 designed buildings and structures in keeping and in harmony with the natural landscape. In specific terms, this meant using hand craftsmanship, local architectural styles and natural materials such as

stone, wood and native plants in the design of each park structure or element.

The Platt Historic 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.

Walnut Grove comprises one component of this larger significant district landscape, and as such, reflects and contributes to the significance of the entire district. In particular, Walnut Grove is specifically associated with the design and construction of Platt National Park as the site where CCC construction crews actually lived from 1934-1940 while they were constructing the other features of the park. Though few of the elements and features present on the site during the CCC camp's tenure are extant today, the site is still strongly associated with their presence. A few remnants of this era do remain, and include three fireplaces and a tennis court. It should, of course, be noted that the designed elements of the camp were never meant to be permanent features. Rather, the camp facilities were meant to be temporary and ephemeral, lasting only until the CCC crews were finished with their projects. The site of the CCC camp was intended to be redeveloped, and the existing conditions of the area as a picnic grounds reflects that intention. Thus Walnut Grove contributes to the significance of the overall district in a predominantly associative manner. However, these associations with the actual men who built the park, and their tenure for 7 years on this site, greatly aid in conveying the whole district's significance under Criteria A.

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

Walnut Grove

Type of Name

Both Current And Historic

Ethnographic Study Conducted:

No Survey Conducted

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
AD 1904	Platted	Earliest map of the area is the Plat Map/Land Survey of 1904.
AD 1930 - 1940	Developed	Circulation patterns developed.
AD 1933	Established	CCC Camp 808 established on "southeastern edge of Platt District".
AD 1934	Moved	CCC Camp 808 moved to new location near eastern edge of present day Walnut Grove. Description is provided of the general layout of the 808 camp site and facilities such as headquarters building, day room, canteen, shop building, barracks, and flagpole.
AD 1935	Built	Four stone fireplaces built in the west part of Walnut Grove.
AD 1997	Developed	A draft CLI is written for the Platt District by Katherine (Kay) Sallee of the University of Texas at Arlington.
AD 2002	Developed	Walnut Grove 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 Historic District NHL nomination prepared by Heidi Hohmann of Iowa State University. NHL nomination is approved and listed on 7/7/2011.

Physical History:

General Historical Overview

For a more complete narrative history of Walnut Grove, see the 2004 Cultural Landscape Report written by Heidi Hohmann and Katarzyna Grala of Iowa State University.

There are no early drawings or park designs of the Walnut Grove area, and it is unclear when the area received its name, and whether this name was associated with trees in the area. Earliest documentation includes the 1904 plat map, which shows the area platted. Topography or other features are not noted.

Park maps dating to the 1910s and 1920s provide little additional information. A road running along Rock Creek between Lincoln Bridge and Bromide was one feature established early on. A park map from 1933 (NP-PLA-4948) shows Walnut Grove as an open area, its only feature being a tennis court, part of a number of recreational features (including a golf course and exotic animal pens) added to the park in the 1920s.

By 1933, however, plans were being made to relocate CCC Camp 808 to the Walnut Grove area, as shown by the pencil notations on one copy of the 1933 plan, shown below. Walnut Grove was a good site for the CCC camp because it was close to both the town of Sulphur and the core area of the park. Previously, Camp 808 had been located near the southeastern edge of the park, near Veterans Hospital. Due to problems with flies from a nearby farm, the camp, which was composed of large canvas tents, was moved.

In 1934, at the new site in Walnut Grove, barracks-like wooden housing units were built for the enrollees instead of tents. The appearance of the new camp at Walnut Grove is recorded in an aerial photograph taken in 1934. The buildings were arranged in a linear quadrangle, oriented east-west along the perimeter road. At the west end of the quadrangle, a courtyard-like open space was formed.

A CCC "Quarterly Report" from 1934, describes the general layout of the site of Camp 808. The CCC camp facilities included a headquarters building, a day room with ping pong tables, and a little canteen where enrollees could buy cigarettes, gum and candy. In the middle of the camp was a shop building and educational and supply buildings. On the west were two barracks. To the north were additional buildings with the latrine in the middle and the mess hall on the far end. There were three more barracks located on the south side and a flagpole in the parade ground. Also, to the west of the camp were three fireplaces (the only extant built features today). There was also a coal-house located east of the Monkey Tree (also extant).

By 1939, CCC construction within the park was dropping off, and in March 1940, orders were received from Washington to close the camp. It is unclear exactly how long it took to dismantle the camp, but it is clear from Master Plan drawings that the CCC camp was never intended to be a permanent fixture within the park. The Master Plan from 1940, while it indicates the location of the camp, does not show any of the camp structures. Instead, the whole area is shown as an open area with canopy trees scattered throughout.



*First location of CCC Camp 808 near the southeastern edge of the Platt District, 1933.
(CNRA archives, photograph CCC-144)*



*Canvas tents at the first location of CCC Camp 808, 1933.
(CNRA archives, photograph CCC-5)*



*CCC Camp 808, view to the northwest, 1934.
(CNRA archives, photograph CCC-6)*

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

During the district's period of significance (1933-1940), Walnut Grove experienced a good deal of change, evolving first from an open field environment to a bustling CCC camp. When CCC Camp 808 left the site, the temporary camp facilities were removed, and the area became an open picnic grounds. Today, the site reflects this latter condition as a picnic area, which was the intended final use of the area. Thus, for Walnut Grove, as for any component landscape, integrity must be judged to the end of the period of significance, and not to an earlier date. Although the earlier features and history of the CCC camp are interesting and important, particularly from an interpretive standpoint, from a landscape design and preservation standpoint, it is the conditions at the end of the period of significance that are important for evaluation and preservation.

Based on a comparison of existing and 1940 conditions, it appears that Walnut Grove has not changed greatly over the years since the departure of the CCC in either function or appearance. All major landscape features dating to 1940 (topography, vegetation, and land use) are extant. Additions have been minor, primarily new picnic tables and a modern comfort station. Changes have likewise been minor, and have included the addition of barrier stones, reconfiguration of parking areas, and vegetative growth.

Below is a list of the landscape's contributing and non-contributing elements.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

- Natural System Features (Rock Creek)
- Spatial Organization (open areas along perimeter road)
- Cultural Traditions (use as picnic area)
- Land Use (use as picnic area)
- Topography (level, floodplain terrain and steep slopes)
- Vegetation (Eastern deciduous forest and understory and canopy plantings)
- Circulation (perimeter road)
- Small Scale Features (fireplaces)
- Views and Vistas

NONCONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

- Circulation (Parking areas along perimeter road)
- Buildings and Structures (Comfort Station)

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,

Walnut Grove

Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District

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 Walnut Grove area.

Location

The Walnut Grove picnic area is in its original location. Integrity of location is high.

Design

The design of Walnut Grove as a picnic area seems to be essentially intact. In part this is due to the simplicity of the design. Following the removal of the CCC camp, few new features were added, and the area was intended to be a simple design of open grassy areas dotted with canopy trees. As a result of little change since

1940, integrity of design is high. Topography, circulation, and vegetation patterns remain essentially unchanged. In particular, vegetation patterns do not appear to have changed significantly since 1933, although a recent ice storm (2001) damaged numerous trees and many were removed. The one significant specimen tree—the Monkey Tree—is still in existence, as are the four stone fireplaces dating to the CCC era.

Additions to the area are minor, and include a comfort station dating to the Mission 66 era. While this building does not contribute to the landscape's current significance and actually detracts from the 1940s design, the building may itself at a later date be determined significant as part of a layer of Mission 66 design within the park. Other changes are relatively minor and include surface changes to parking area and the addition of a short stretch of concrete walkway. Thus, integrity of design is high.

Setting

Integrity of setting is high. Few changes have occurred in the area surrounding Walnut Grove, particularly in the lands owned by the park. To the north, the residential area of Sulphur has expanded somewhat since the 1940s. However, this change does not impinge on Walnut Grove, in part because the grade change between these two areas prevents significant interchange of noise, people or views between the two areas. Vegetation on the slope also serves to buffer Walnut Grove from changes in setting occurring to the north.

Materials

Materials within this landscape are simply grass and trees; these retain high integrity. Materials of individual historic features such as the stone fireplaces also retain their integrity to a moderate degree. The only major change in materials is the change in the materials used in the construction of picnic tables and grills. As these features are somewhat ephemeral, their lack of material integrity does not have a large impact on the overall landscape. Integrity of materials is high.

Workmanship

Because Walnut Grove is a simple landscape, few elements within it show great workmanship or craft. Workmanship would primarily apply to the masonry of the fireplaces, and they retain a relatively good

level of workmanship. To the degree that workmanship exists within the site, it can be judged to be high.

Feeling

Walnut Grove exhibits the peaceful and relaxed feeling of a park landscape used for family recreation. It seems reasonable that this condition also prevailed in the 1940s. Hence integrity of feeling is high.

Association

Although little evidence of the 1930s CCC Camp exists within the landscape, the site retains its association with CCC Camp 808 and the history of the CCC enrollees who built many of the features of the park. Many of the CCC enrollees were local Oklahoma youth, and as a result, the community has a strong memory of the work done by the CCC in the park. Integrity of association is therefore high.

Overall Rating

Walnut Grove has high integrity, as demonstrated by its retaining high integrity in all seven aspects of integrity.

Landscape Characteristic:

Archeological Sites

N/A

Buildings and Structures

No buildings remain from Camp 808 of the CCC. East of the Monkey Tree, foundation patterns (grading) of the old CCC coal-house can be seen, however.

The only structure on the site is a modern comfort station, built in 1966.

Circulation

There is little formal circulation within Walnut Grove. The park's perimeter road, which provides access to the area, has existed in its current location along Rock Creek since at least the 1930s. Old circulation patterns from the CCC Camp (roads and paths) are perceivable in remnant grading in the picnic area, but this is not noticeable to the lay person. Parking is provided along the perimeter road in narrow parking lots which parallel the perimeter road. These parking areas are defined by barrier stones and are now paved. Earlier, they were simply surfaced with aggregate. Vehicular congestion in these lots can be a problem on busy weekend.

Pedestrian circulation throughout Walnut Grove is concentrated along perimeter road and the parking lots. Visitors otherwise generally move through the park-like setting freely. A recently constructed concrete sidewalk is located between the comfort station and the adjacent parking area along the perimeter road.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: WG Parking Pullout
Feature Identification Number: 120370
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 397409
LCS Structure Name: Walnut Grove Parking Pullouts and Walkway
LCS Structure Number: WG.D

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Walnut Grove picnic area and parking area; note gravel surface on parking area, date unknown.

(CNRA archives, photograph WG-517)

Cluster Arrangement

N/A

Constructed Water Features

N/A

Cultural Traditions

Cultural traditions at Walnut Grove include small and large group picnic activities. The site was also the location of CCC Camp 808, and as such, the memory of this use might also be considered a “cultural tradition.”

Land Use

Walnut Grove has been a picnic and recreational activity site since the early 1940s. Prior to this it was the site of CCC Camp 808 and was used to house CCC enrollees and administer their activities throughout the park. CCC Camp use ended in 1940.

Natural Systems and Features

The most important natural feature of the Walnut Grove area is Rock Creek. The northern bank of Rock Creek is steeply sloped and vegetated. Above the creek is a moderately flat, south-facing floodplain terrace, where the picnic area is located. To the north of the picnic area, steep slopes lead up to the residential area of Sulphur. These densely wooded side slopes enclose the picnic area, acting as a backdrop to picnic activities. The wooded slopes also act as a buffer between the park and the adjacent residential lots of Sulphur.

Small Scale Features

The only small-scale features remaining from the CCC period at Walnut Grove are the four stone fireplaces, located near the western edge of Walnut Grove. These small stone features are similar to other fireplaces that were designed for Cold Spring Campground and other sites within the park. Remnants of similar stone fireplaces have been found in the nature study area near Buffalo and Antelope Springs. Other small scale features within the area include contemporary picnic tables and upright grills.

Character-defining Features:

Feature:	WG Fireplaces
Feature Identification Number:	120364
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	62950
LCS Structure Name:	Walnut Grove Fireplaces
LCS Structure Number:	WG.A

Feature:	WG Stone Masonry Culvert
Feature Identification Number:	120366
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	397364
LCS Structure Name:	Walnut Grove Stone Masonry Culvert

LCS Structure Number: WG.B

Feature: WG Abandoned Trail Bed, Swale, & Culvert

Feature Identification Number: 120368

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 397389

LCS Structure Name: Walnut Grove Abandoned Trail Bed, Swale & Culvert

LCS Structure Number: WG.C

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*CCC fireplace at Walnut Grove (WG.A1), circa 2000.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)*



*CCC fireplace at Walnut Grove (WG.A2), circa 2000.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)*



*CCC fireplace at Walnut Grove (WG.A3), circa 2000.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)*



*CCC fireplace at Walnut Grove (WG.A4), circa 2000.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)*

Spatial Organization

Walnut Grove is divided spatially into two areas by topography. The north section is the flat, open picnic area, which is spatially defined by the steep slopes to the north and a strong overhead canopy. The south section is the narrow strip of creek bank and Rock Creek itself. This zone serves no particular park or visitor function per se.

The perimeter road within the flat terrace is a key spatial feature as well, making Walnut Grove something of a linking or transitional space between Bromide Springs and Black Sulphur Springs. The linear parking areas along the north side of the road expand the circulation space within the flat terrace as well.

Character-defining Features:

Feature:	Open, informal arrangement
Feature Identification Number:	120362
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing

Topography

Walnut Grove can be characterized as a moderately flat, floodplain terrace located just above Rock Creek. To the north of the terrace are steep, south-facing hillsides. The slopes between

Rock Creek and the perimeter road are also quite steep. A section taken through the site perpendicular to the river and the northern slopes near the park boundary reveals that the elevation change across Walnut Grove is approximately 60 feet, from 930 feet of elevation at the creek to 991 feet at the top of the hill at the boundary between park and town.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Natural, existing topo
Feature Identification Number: 120360
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Vegetation

Walnut Grove is predominantly a mesic community of floodplain and lower hillsides with a typical association of American elm, sycamore, and sugarberry. This classification was first made by Dale in 1965 on the map by Dale, 1965; see map in the Iowa State CLI hardcopy or park files. Overstory species within Walnut Grove consist of *Ulmus americana*, *Platanus occidentalis*, *Juglans nigra*, and *Celtis laevigata*. Understory species are *Quercus muhlenbergii*, *Quercus texana*, and *Cornus drummondii*. Shrub layers are a mixture of *Celastrus scandens*, *Smilax bona-nox*, *Rhus toxicodendron* and *Elephantopus carolinianus*.

Throughout its early development years, the original vegetation of the Platt District was altered by the planting of trees, shrubs, and turf grasses by many early CCC projects. Walnut Grove escaped much of this planting, and as a result has retained much of its original natural vegetation. In his vegetation study, Dale notes that several areas within the park are useful for interpreting the pre-development natural vegetation of the park, which consists of four forest types and prairie. He notes that the creek banks between Walnut Grove and Bromide Pavilion are one such area. Thus, this component landscape may be particularly important in understanding the original vegetation of the Platt District.

If the slopes of the Walnut Grove area represent the natural vegetation of the area, then the open picnic area of Walnut Groves represent a somewhat more manipulated type of vegetation. In general, the vegetation of the picnic zones is characterized by canopy trees in turf. The canopy trees are mature and provide shade. The turf is composed of native grasses such as buffalo grass, grama, and little bluestem in sunny areas. Elsewhere, however, exotic Bermuda grass has invaded most of the mowed areas.

One specimen tree of note in the area is an osage orange known as the "Monkey Tree." This tree was described in CCC quarterly reports of the 1930s, and earned its name because its low-hanging branches are excellent for climbing. Historically, children have enjoyed and continue to enjoy hanging and climbing on the tree. It is something of a local landmark for multiple generations of Sulphur children.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Canopy trees in lawn

Feature Identification Number: 120356
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
Feature: Monkey Tree
Feature Identification Number: 120358
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*Monkey Tree located in the Walnut Grove picnic areas, date unknown.
(CNRA archives, photograph WG-2012)*



*Monkey Tree on the edge of the open picnic area, west of the old CCC Camp site, no date.
(CNRA archives, no photograph number)*

Views and Vistas

Walnut Grove is a long, linear space and as a result, long, linear views across the picnic area are a character-defining element of the landscape. Other views include views of Rock Creek's valley floor from the perimeter road, views most noticed by motorists. Views into the park are also provided from the perimeter road; these views are terminated by the wooded slopes to the north.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*Linear view to the east from western edge of Walnut Grove, circa 1995.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)*

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Good

Assessment Date: 07/26/2007

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The landscape was assessed in good condition in 2007. The park superintendent concurred on 9/21/2007.

Impacts

Type of Impact: Deferred Maintenance

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Description: Fireplaces and Mission 66 buildings

Type of Impact: Vegetation/Invasive Plants

External or Internal: Both Internal and External

Impact Description: Non-native shrub species invade understory areas when on-checked or cleared.

Type of Impact: Visitation

External or Internal: External

Impact Description: High usage from visitations/ picnic areas

Type of Impact: Flooding

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Description: High damage to vegetation and small scale features

Treatment

Treatment

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

Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:

The approved treatment recommendations are outlined within the Cultural Landscape Report for the Platt Historic District, written by Iowa State University.

Approved Treatment Completed: No

Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Date: 01/01/2004

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Supplemental Information

Title: Cultural Landscapes Inventory of Platt District (Katherine Sallee), 1997 (NPS).
Description: Document located in IMR Cultural Landscapes Program files.