
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
1998



Mount Pisgah
Blue Ridge Parkway - Pisgah District

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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 Mount Pisgah Recreation Area is located between Mileposts 407 and 409 on the Blue Ridge Parkway, approximately twenty-two miles south of Asheville, North Carolina. The 147-acre site contains developed recreation areas, a network of hiking trails within and extending beyond the boundary, as well as forested land in a natural state. The Blue Ridge Parkway bisects the landscape, with two component landscapes located on either side of the roadway. The Pisgah National Forest surrounds the landscape on all sides.

Vehicular access to the site is provided by the Blue Ridge Parkway, which runs through the interior of the landscape boundary. Paved access roads and parking areas allow vehicular access to each of the component landscapes. A network of hiking trails allows for pedestrian access within the landscape.

The Mount Pisgah Recreation Area contains four component landscapes: Buck Springs Overlook, Mount Pisgah Campground, Pisgah Inn, and Mount Pisgah Picnic Area. These component landscapes represent the main developed portions of the landscape, with the balance of the site heavily forested.

Significant buildings, structures, and landscape features located within the landscape boundary are limited to the developed portions of the component landscapes. Historic buildings and structures include a springhouse that dates to ca. 1897. Comfort stations and an amphitheater associated with the campground were constructed ca. 1968. Two lodge buildings, a restaurant, gift shop, and camp store constructed after 1965 are located within the Pisgah Inn component landscape. Two cabins that date to a 1919 inn complex are also present within the landscape. Nonhistoric buildings are limited to a comfort station located in the picnic area as well as several buildings utilized for employee and ranger housing.

Extant landscape features range in date from the 1890s up through the 1960s. Remnants of George Vanderbilt's Buck Spring Lodge, which dates to the 1890s, are found in several stone walls, a road trace, and stone steps. Some of the plant material dates to this time period as well. All other landscape features date to the Blue Ridge Parkway period of significance that dates to the mid 1960s. These features include developed overlooks and parking areas with designed plantings as well as natural vegetation that is maintained for views and pedestrian access. Numerous hardscape features within the landscape date to this period as well. The design intent was to incorporate development into the natural landscape, which is clearly evident today, as the line between the developed areas and the natural forest is not clearly defined.

The Mount Pisgah Recreation Area has several periods of significance. The earliest is 1897-1959, that portion of time when the Vanderbilt family owned a 472-acre tract of land that was later incorporated into the Mount Pisgah Recreation Area. 1913-1953 marks the period of significance for the former Pisgah Forest Inn, of which two buildings and a road trace remain in the landscape today. The dominant period of significance, under which a majority of the development falls, is the Blue Ridge Parkway period of significance that begins in the 1960s and extends to the present day.

Site Plan

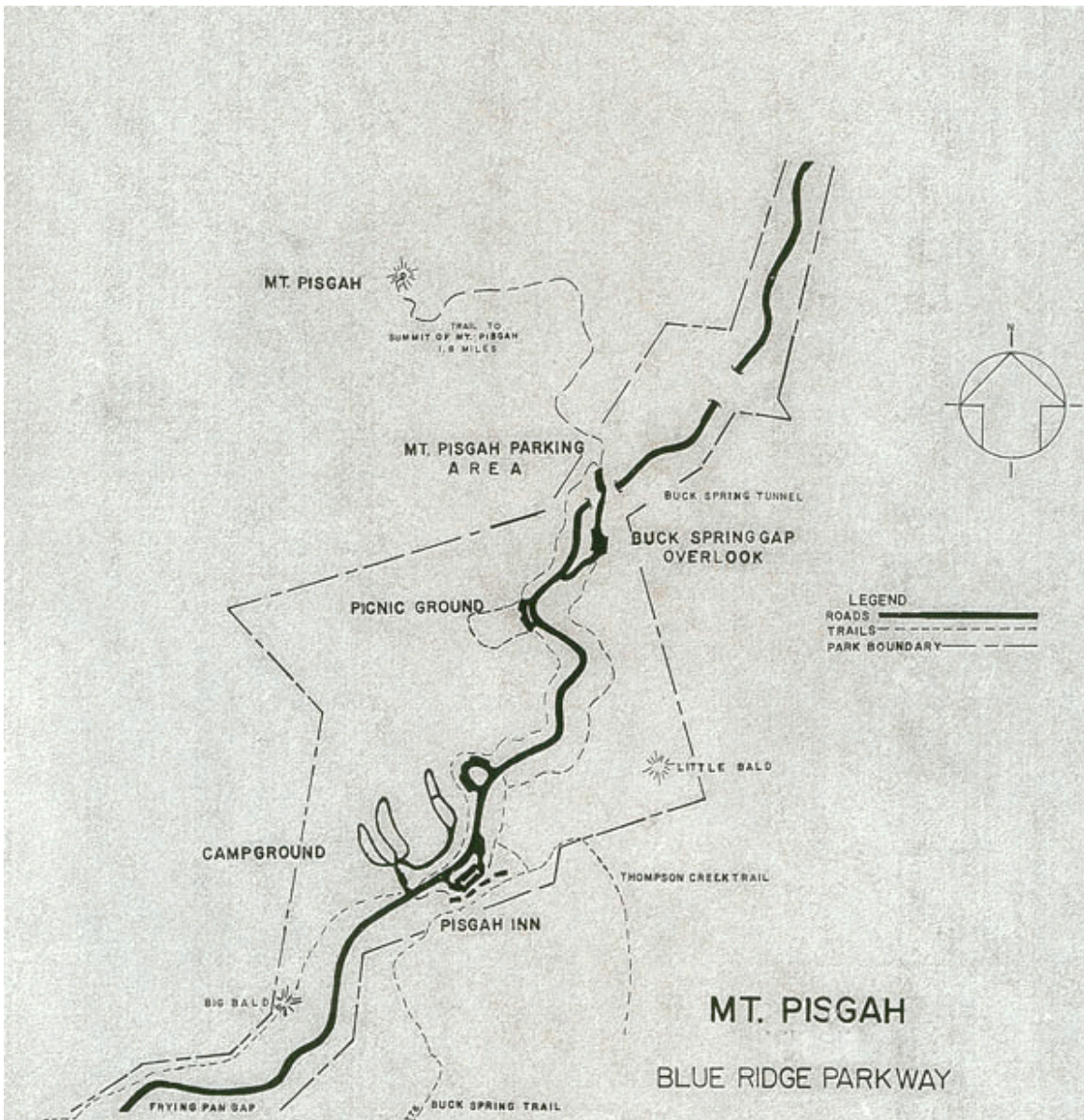


Figure 3: Mount Pisgah Recreation Area. (BLRI Archives)

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name:	Mount Pisgah
Property Level:	Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	550145
Parent Landscape:	550145

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code:	Blue Ridge Parkway - Pisgah District -BLRI
Park Organization Code:	5159
Subunit/District Name Alpha Code:	Blue Ridge Parkway - Pisgah District - BLRI
Park Administrative Unit:	Blue Ridge Parkway

CLI Hierarchy Description

Mount Pisgah contains one landscape - Mount Pisgah Developed Area - and four component landscapes - Buck Springs Overlook, Pisgah Inn, Mount Pisgah Campground, and Mount Pisgah Picnic Area. Buck Springs Overlook contains the remnants of the late 19th century hunting lodge built by George Vanderbilt. Pisgah Inn encompasses the new inn built in 1965, park residence area, restaurant, and remnant buildings and landscape features from the Pisgah Forest Inn (1919). The Mount Pisgah Campground and Mount Pisgah Picnic Area date to the 1960s.

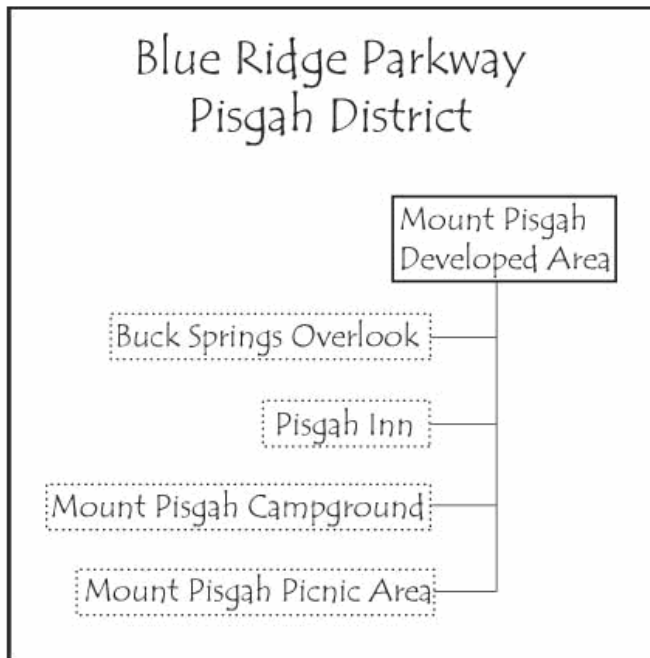


Figure 1: Mount Pisgah Developed Area Cultural Landscape Hierarchy (Mount Pisgah represents five out of over two dozen cultural landscapes along the Blue Ridge Parkway - see the Blue Ridge Parkway landscape entry for a more complete hierarchy graphic.)

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

The CLI was begun in summer 2002 with Louisiana State University MLA students Peggy McClain and Mary Fernandez working at the site. They completed much of the primary documentation collection, and they produced site maps for all of the Pisgah landscape inventory units in Autocad. The Jaeger Company (TJC) has been contracted through an IDIQ with Pond and Company (Prime) to complete the inventory.

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence:	Yes
Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:	08/01/2005
National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Date of Concurrence Determination:	09/08/2004

National Register Concurrence Narrative:

Through BLRI consultation with North Carolina SHPO, the entire parkway property within the state of North Carolina was deemed eligible for listing on the National Register. A National Historic Landmark nomination is also being written for the Parkway by Ian Firth. The period of significance for the parkway is 1936 – 1987. All roadway features from this period are considered nationally significant and contributing features to the NHL nomination. Associated features – such as campgrounds, inns, and picnic sites – dating from before 1956 are also considered contributing features. Associated features from 1956 – 1987 may also be significant at regional or local levels.

Concurrence Graphic Information:

Mount Pisgah
Blue Ridge Parkway - Pisgah District



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Southeast Regional Office
Atlanta Federal Center
1924 Building
100 Alabama St., S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303



H22(SERO-CRD)

08 July 2005

Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Blue Ridge Parkway
From: Chief, Cultural Resource Division, Southeast Region
Subject: Cultural Landscape Inventory

We are pleased to transmit the Cultural Landscape Inventories (CLI) for the Mount Pisgah Developed Area, and its four component cultural landscapes: Buck Springs Overlook, Mount Pisgah Campground, Mount Pisgah Picnic Area, and Pisgah Inn. The CLI is an evaluated list of landscape properties in the National Park System eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NR) or that contribute to an existing historic property. In order for the CLIs to be certified and counted under goals 1a7 and 1b2B in PMDS, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) or Keeper of the NR needs to concur on the eligibility of the property for listing. The North Carolina SHPO concurred on the National Register eligibility of all Blue Ridge Parkway land in North Carolina on 8 September 2004.

The Park Superintendent also needs to concur on the condition assessment and management category provided within the inventory. A signature page is enclosed for Park Superintendent approval. The assessment form needs to be signed and returned to the Regional Office for final certification and listing in PMDS goals 1a7 and 1b2B. If the condition assessment and management category are agreed upon, please sign the attached approval forms and return to our office to the attention of David Hasty.

Enclosures



Letter to the Superintendent

Mount Pisgah
Blue Ridge Parkway - Pisgah District

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE INVENTORY
CONDITION ASSESSMENT CONCURRENCE SHEET – 6 June 2005

Park Information

Park: Blue Ridge Parkway
District: Pisgah
State: North Carolina
Counties: Transylvania, Haywood

Cultural Landscape Information

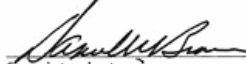
Inventory Name	CLI Id #	Condition	Management Category*
Mount Pisgah Developed Area	550145	Good	Must Be Preserved and Maintained
Buck Springs Overlook	550222	Fair	Must Be Preserved and Maintained
Mount Pisgah Campground	550220	Fair	Must Be Preserved and Maintained
Mount Pisgah Picnic Area	550223	Good	Must Be Preserved and Maintained
Pisgah Inn	550221	Good	Must Be Preserved and Maintained

*Note: As a potential National Historic Landmark, the entire Blue Ridge Parkway receives a category of 'Must Be Preserved And Maintained.' For the Mount Pisgah Developed Area, where many of the associated landscape features post-date the period of NHL significance, the category of 'Must Be Preserved and Maintained' pertains more to the function of the property as a parkway recreational area, rather than to the preservation of individual buildings, structures and landscape features. A Mount Pisgah feature dating to the 1960s, for instance, may have Regional or Local significance – rather than National, and an individual management category of 'Should Be . . .' or 'May Be . . .' rather than 'Must Be Preserved and Maintained.'

Park Superintendent Concurrence

Concur ☒

Do Not Concur ☐


Superintendent

8/1/05
Date

Superintendent Signature of Concurrence

Mount Pisgah
Blue Ridge Parkway - Pisgah District

**CULTURAL LANDSCAPE INVENTORY
CONDITION ASSESSMENT CONCURRENCE SHEET – 31 August 2011**

Park Information

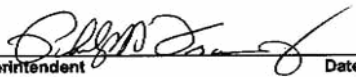
Park: Blue Ridge Parkway
District: Pisgah
State: North Carolina
Counties: Transylvania, Haywood

Cultural Landscape Information

Inventory Name	CLI Id #	Condition	Previous Condition & Date
Mount Pisgah Developed Area	550145	Good	8/1/2005 (Good)
Buck Springs Overlook	550222	Fair	8/1/2005 (Fair)
Mount Pisgah Campground	550220	Fair	8/1/2005 (Fair)
Mount Pisgah Picnic Area	550223	Good	8/1/2005 (Good)
Pisgah Inn	550221	Good	8/1/2005 (Good)

Park Superintendent Concurrence

Concur ☒ Do Not Concur ☐



Superintendent Date 9/23/11

Superintendent condition recertification, 2011

Mount Pisgah
Blue Ridge Parkway - Pisgah District

10/12/2004 10:48 FAX

0002



H32

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Blue Ridge Parkway
199 Hemphill Knob Road
Asheville, North Carolina 28803

MMB
8/17/04

JUL 21 2004

Dr. Jeffrey J. Crow, State Historic Preservation Officer
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
Division of Archives and History
4610 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4610

Dear Dr. Crow:

As you know the National Register of Historic Places is the official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture. These contribute to an understanding of the historical and cultural foundations of the Nation. The National Register includes:

- * All prehistoric and historic units of the National Park System;
- * National Historic Landmarks, which are properties recognized by the Secretary of the Interior as possessing national significance; and
- * Properties significant in American, State, or local prehistory and history that have been nominated by State Historic Preservation Officers, Federal agencies, Tribal Preservation Officers, and others, and have been approved for listing by the National Park Service.

The Historic Sites Act of 1935 (Public Law 74-292) established the National Historic Landmark Survey. The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665) authorized the National Register of Historic Places, expanding Federal recognition to historic properties of local and State significance. The National Park Service in the U. S. Department of the Interior administers both programs. Regulations for these programs are contained in 36 CFR Part 60, "National Register of Historic Places", and 36 CFR Part 65, "National Historic Landmarks Program".

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 authorizes State Historic Preservation Officers to nominate properties to the National Register of Historic Places and to carry out other preservation activities. Federal Preservation Officers have been designated in Federal agencies to nominate Federal properties and to fulfill other responsibilities of the Act. The Blue Ridge Parkway leadership, acting in concert with the leadership of the National Park Service Southeast Regional Office, are working energetically and enthusiastically to nominate the Blue Ridge Parkway for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as a National Historic Landmark. We would highly value your support and concurrence on the signature line below. We look

Memo to NC SHPO

Mount Pisgah
Blue Ridge Parkway - Pisgah District

10/12/2004 10:49 PAA

forward to working closely with your office as we strive to protect the resources and enhance the integrity of the fabulous Blue Ridge Parkway. Please sign on the line below on both copies of this document and return one copy to Parkway Headquarters.

Thanks so much for your assistance and willing cooperation.

Sincerely,



Daniel W. Brown
Superintendent

The Blue Ridge Parkway clearly meets the eligibility requirements for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as a National Historic Landmark. The Office of the State Historic Preservation Officer, State of North Carolina, supports and endorses the National Park Service efforts with regards to this listing of the Blue Ridge Parkway in the National Register of Historic Places.

I Concur: Jeffrey Brown, SHPO Date 9 Aug 04

	DIVISION CHIEF, RP & PS	
	LAND RESOURCES SPEC.	
	LAND RESOURCES SPEC.	
X	CULTURAL RESOURCES SPEC.	
	ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE SPEC.	
	COMMUNITY PLANNER	
	RESIDENT LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT	
	CURATOR	
	GEOGRAPHIC INFO. SPEC.	
	ENGINEERING DRAFTSMAN	
	ADMIN. ASSISTANT	
X	FILE: <u>SHIZETTE - FILED</u>	
	<u>COMPLIANCE FILE</u>	

GWB 8/20

NC SHPO Signature

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

The Mount Pisgah Developed Area follows the boundaries of all four of its component landscapes. In addition, this boundary includes the parking area north of the campground, and adds a 100' zone on either side of the parkway from Pisgah Inn to Buck Spring Overlook. Even though tracts 57-102 and 57-103 represent land purchased from the US Forest Service and formally owned by the Vanderbilts (472 acres), much of it remains unaffected by human impact. Only the areas developed by the Vanderbilts, subsequent owners, and the NPS are included in the cultural landscape boundary.

Mount Pisgah
Blue Ridge Parkway - Pisgah District

State and County:

State: NC

County: Haywood County

State: NC

County: Transylvania County

Size (Acres): 147.00

Boundary UTMS:

Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	17
UTM Easting:	340,181
UTM Northing:	3,919,337
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	17
UTM Easting:	341,049
UTM Northing:	3,920,910
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	17
UTM Easting:	341,818
UTM Northing:	3,920,870
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	17
UTM Easting:	340,475
UTM Northing:	3,918,702

Location Map:

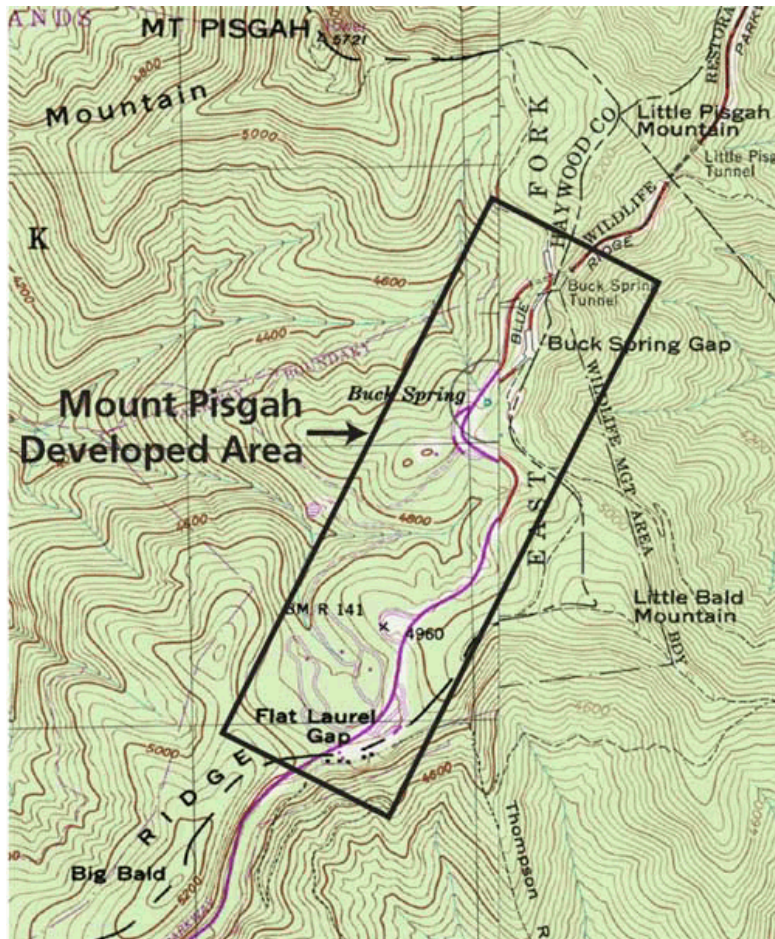


Figure 2: Mount Pisgah Developed Area (USGS 1:24,000 quadrangles - Cruso, 1987 [east], and Dunsmore Mountain, 1967 [west])

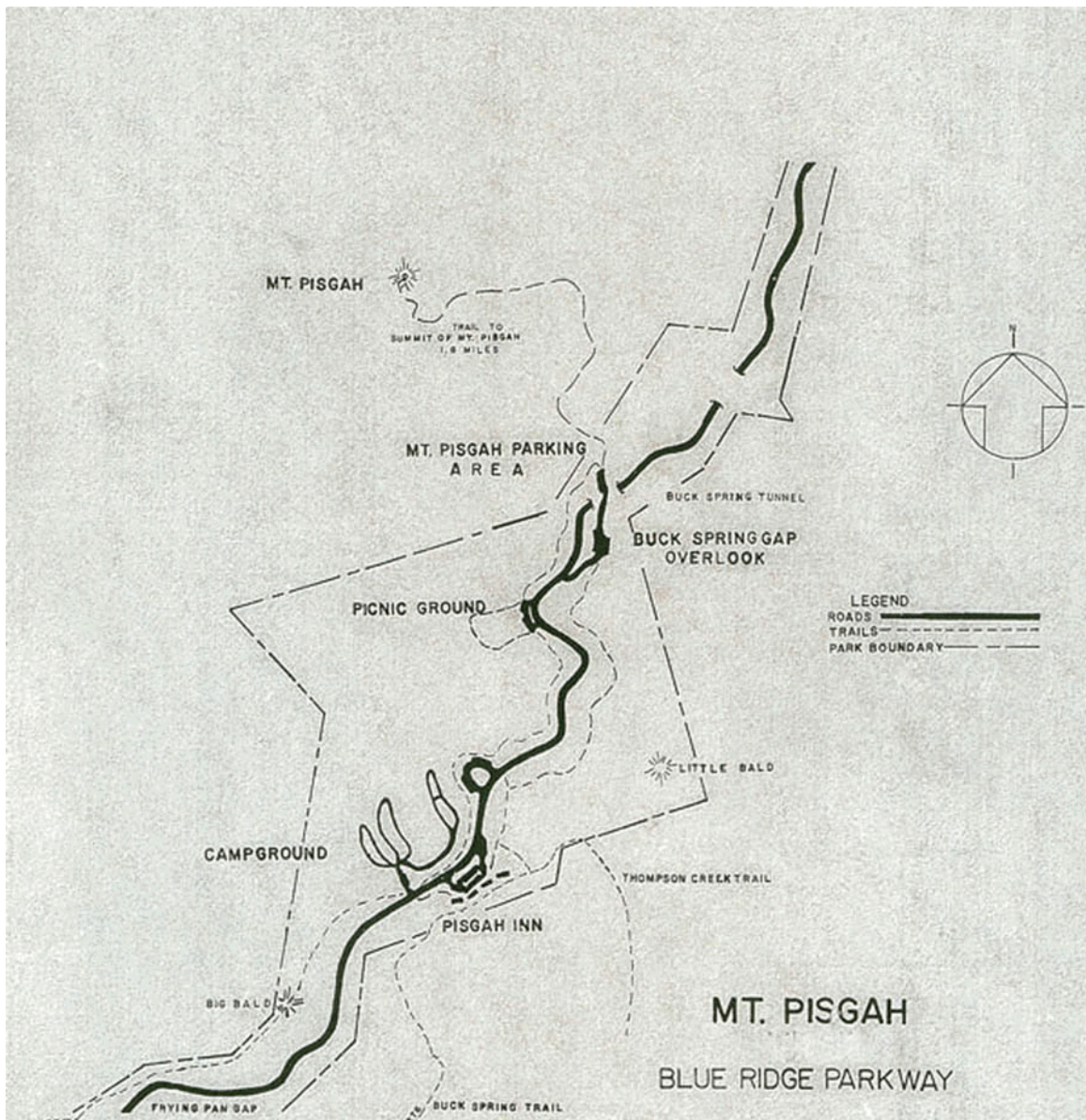


Figure 3: Mount Pisgah Recreation Area landscape.

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

Ancestors of the Cherokee Nation were the first inhabitants in the region and named Mount Pisgah "Elseetoss" and the Pisgah Ridge "Warwassetta." The area was purchased by David Allison in 1797, but little development took place. George Vanderbilt's purchase of land near Buck Spring in the late 1880s brought the first formal development into the area. The US Forest Service purchased the Mount Pisgah area from the Vanderbilt Estate in 1917 which limited development. The Blue Ridge Parkway through the Mount Pisgah area was opened to visitors in 1955 with the Pisgah Forest Inn, built in 1919, continuing to operate through a concessions lease with NPS. An existing campground was expanded, a picnic area developed, and a new inn constructed in the 1960s. Today the Mount Pisgah Recreation Area is the most popular attraction on the Parkway south of Asheville.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

The Mount Pisgah Developed Area lies along the Pisgah Ridge in the Balsam Mountains of western North Carolina. The elevation of Mount Pisgah is 5,721 feet. The recreation area is bounded on all sides by the Pisgah National Forest. The mountain soils have slopes ranging from strongly sloping to very steep. The dominant soils are loamy soils that range in depth from shallow to very deep. Stones or boulders are commonly scattered across the surface of most soils. The major mountain landform positions include long narrow summits, irregularly shaped side slopes, and bouldery colluvial fans. Most mountain landforms and soils are at elevations above 1,200 feet (USDA NRDC Website).

Type of Context: Political

Description:

The Mount Pisgah Recreation Area is located in the 11th Congressional District of North Carolina.

Tract Numbers: 57-101, 57-102, 57-103, 57-104, 58-101, and 58-102

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Must Be Preserved And Maintained

Management Category Date: 05/04/2005

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

As a potential National Historic Landmark, the entire Blue Ridge Parkway receives a category of 'Must Be Preserved And Maintained.' For the Mount Pisgah Developed Area, where many of the associated landscape features post-date the period of NHL significance, the category of 'Must Be Preserved and Maintained' pertains more to the function of the property as a parkway recreational area, rather than to the preservation of individual buildings, structures and landscape features. A Mount Pisgah feature dating to the 1960s, for instance, may have Regional or Local significance – rather than National, and an individual management category of 'Should Be . . .' or 'May Be . . .' rather than 'Must Be Preserved and Maintained.'

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? Yes

Adjacent Lands Description:

Land adjacent to the Mount Pisgah Recreation Area is part of the Pisgah National Forest. Views from within the landscape boundary encompass portions of this US Forest Service land. Two significant views on USFS land are integral parts of the Mount Pisgah Recreation Area landscape. The mountain Mount Pisgah lies outside of the BLRI boundary, but is highly visible from three of the four component landscapes (excepting the Mount Pisgah Campground) as well as from the Parkway road within the recreation area boundary. Another significant landscape feature, the Pink Beds, is visible when looking south from both the Buck Springs Overlook and the Pisgah Inn component landscapes. The Pink Beds area is a unique upland bog and is so named for the pink blooms of rhododendron and mountain laurel that are seen in late spring and early summer. The proximity of the Pink Beds also figured prominently in George Vanderbilt's decision on where to locate his Buck Spring Lodge retreat.

Another way in which adjacent lands contribute is through the network of hiking trails that extend beyond the recreation area boundaries and onto USFS land. The Mount Pisgah Trail begins at the Buck Springs Overlook and extends to the mountain summit. The Buck Spring Trail, Laurel Mountain Trail, and Pilot Rock Trail extend southward from the recreation area through the Pink Beds, while the Frying Pan Mountain Trail traverses USFS land to the northwest. The 17-mile Shut In Trail generally follows the route of the former Vanderbilt access road from the former lodge site in the Buck Springs Overlook component landscape through USFS land to its terminus at the USFS Bent Creek Recreation Area.

National Register Information

Existing National Register Status

National Register Explanatory Narrative:

A National Historic Landmark (NHL) nomination for the entire Blue Ridge Parkway is in the process of being developed which will include the Mount Pisgah Recreation Area and its component landscapes.

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
Criteria Considerations:	G -- A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance

Area of Significance:

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

The Mount Pisgah Recreation Area is a designed recreation area with four component landscapes based in a natural setting. Existing vegetation and the area's natural topography were taken into account as the recreation area was developed. The Blue Ridge Parkway was first opened for travel through the area in 1955. The Mount Pisgah Recreation Area landscape predominantly dates to the 1960s, when Mission 66 provided NPS with the impetus to complete unfinished sections of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The landscape includes a scenic overlook (Buck Springs Overlook), a picnic area, a campground, and an inn and restaurant with a formally designed landscape.

The Mount Pisgah Recreation Area has several periods of significance. The earliest period is 1897-1959, that portion of time when the Vanderbilt family owned a 472-acre tract that was later incorporated into the recreation area. 1913-1953 marks the period of significance for the former Pisgah Forest Inn, of which two buildings and a road trace remain in the landscape today. The dominant period of significance, under which a majority of the developed area falls, is the Blue Ridge Parkway period of significance that begins in the mid 1960s and extends to the present day. A majority of this landscape is part of NPS Mission66/Post WWII development, which can be considered historically significant despite the fact that it has not yet reached fifty years in age.

The Blue Ridge Parkway through the Mount Pisgah Recreation Area was completed under the impetus of Mission 66. Through increased federal funding, incomplete segments of the Blue Ridge Parkway were planned and constructed. For the Mount Pisgah Recreation Area this included creating scenic overlooks, hiking trails, a picnic area, a campground, and lodging facilities to replace the existing inn that was operated through a concessions agreement with the US Forest Service. While the landscape has matured since its initial opening to automobile travel, the overall layout, hardscape, and views remains much as they have since the area was developed by NPS.

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Designed

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Primary Current Use: Outdoor Recreation

Other Use/Function

Lodge (Inn, Cabin)
Restaurant (Bar, Lounge)
Government-Other
Campground/Picnic Area
Alpine Meadow
Automobile

Other Type of Use or Function

Both Current And Historic
Current
Current
Current
Both Current And Historic
Current

Current and Historic Names:

Name

Mount Pisgah Recreation Area
Mount Pisgah

Type of Name

Current
Both Current And Historic

Ethnographic Study Conducted:

No Survey Conducted

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
AD 1797	Purchased/Sold	David Allison purchases a tract of land totalling over 250,000 acres and including Mount Pisgah from the State of North Carolina.
AD 1897	Built	George Vanderbilt purchases Mount Pisgah and the surrounding lands and constructs Buck Spring Lodge as a rustic hunting camp.
AD 1917	Purchased/Sold	George Vanderbilt's wife sells 80,248 acres of their Mount Pisgah land holdings which creates Pisgah National Forest.
AD 1919 - 1920	Altered	US Forest Service grants George Farrington Weston a 30-year lease and concessions permit for his newly constructed Pisgah Forest Inn.
AD 1959 - 1960	Designed	NPS Eastern Office of Design and Construction approves a preliminary development plan for the Mount Pisgah area.
AD 1960 - 1968	Expanded	The recreation area expands its developed areas by expanding the campground, creating a picnic area, constructing a new lodge, and demolishing the Buck Spring Lodge.

Mount Pisgah
Blue Ridge Parkway - Pisgah District

AD 1987	Demolished	The old Pisgah Forest Inn (built 1920) is demolished due to its deteriorated state.
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Physical History:

Early History (- 1897)

Note: A detailed history of the Mount Pisgah Recreation Area does not exist. For the CLI-Level I, a general overview of the entire Mount Pisgah landscape is presented here. More detailed histories for each of the four component landscapes can be found in their respective CLI component landscape reports.

Prior to European exploration and settlement in the area, the Cherokee Indians made use of both the mountains and valleys surrounding Mount Pisgah. The Cherokee named Mount Pisgah "Elseetoss" and the Pisgah Ridge was known as "Warwasseeta." The area was well known as a rich source of game. (Quin)

The name Mount Pisgah first appears in the record books in 1808 when Haywood County was created from Buncombe County with the boundary line referred to as "Mount Pisgah." The name comes from the Bible; early settlers believed that standing on the peak of the mountain, one viewed something similar to Moses' s Mount Pisgah. Who actually first named the North Carolina peak Mount Pisgah remains a source of debate. (Quin)

Until 1797, the land remained in the unreserved domain of the State of North Carolina. That year David Allison purchased land totalling over 250,000 acres that included Mount Pisgah and its surrounds. This large tract was parceled out over the next 100 years. Thomas Lanier Clingman, United States Congressman, United States Senator, and Confederate General owned approximately 300 acres on and around Mount Pisgah by the 1830s. He sold the land shortly before his death to George W. Vanderbilt in 1897. (Quin)

Vanderbilt Era (1897 - 1917)

George Washington Vanderbilt had explored the area around Mount Pisgah on hiking and camping trips prior to the completion of his Asheville estate in 1895. Vanderbilt had a mountain lodge built near Mount Pisgah about the same time. In 1897, Vanderbilt purchased the land on which he would build Buck Spring Lodge. He chose to locate his mountain retreat below the summit of Mount Pisgah and directly above the Pink Beds, an area known for magnificent rhododendron blooms in the spring. (Biltmore Estate Archives)

Vanderbilt specified that the lodge be built in the style of a German Black Forest hunting lodge. A four mile road was carved out of the mountainside from Cruso in the valley below the future lodge site. The completed lodge at Buck Spring Gap consisted of three main buildings that were connected via breezeways. A spinghouse, a stable, and an automobile garage were also located on the property. (Biltmore Estate Archives)

When Vanderbilt died in 1917, his widow sold 80,248 acres of land to the National Forest Reservation Commission, which became the nucleus of Pisgah National Forest. The Vanderbilt family retained 472 acres in Buck Spring Gap, about a mile from the present day Pisgah Inn, on which the Buck Spring Lodge was located.

Pisgah National Forest (1917 - 1940s)

Soon after the Pisgah National Forest was created, George Farrington Weston acquired a concession permit from the United States Forest Service (USFS) to construct and own an inn on 2.91 acres of leased USFS land. The Pisgah Forest Inn was open for business by the 1920 season. (BLRI Archives)

The Pisgah Forest Inn complex was centered on the main lodge which featured restaurant facilities, a gift shop, and eleven bedrooms with baths. Four free-standing overnight cabins were built adjacent to the lodge. The complex was reached by the access road created during the construction of Vanderbilt's Buck Spring Lodge. (Quin)

As early as 1946, Parkway designers consulted with the USFS about possible developments at Mount Pisgah, even though the road would not be constructed through the area for several more years. Initially, designers did not desire to develop a recreation area adjacent to Mount Pisgah. Instead, they recommended a collaborative planning effort for the area where their main focus would be the road and the USFS would develop recreational facilities. (Quin)

the Parkway Era (1950s -)

By 1952 a preliminary development plan had been created for Mount Pisgah. Parkway Superintendent Samuel Weems suggested building a coffee shop and a gas station, with a picnic area and improved camping facilities north of the road and the replacement of the Pisgah Forest Inn with more modern facilities. A parking area would be provided for the Mount Pisgah Trail trailhead, but the mountain itself would remain under USFS ownership. (BLRI Archives)

Most of the Blue Ridge Parkway would be built on land acquired from the USFS. The exception was the 472-acre Vanderbilt tract that was still privately owned. In 1959, the State of North Carolina purchased the Vanderbilt land, including the lodge, which came under NPS ownership in 1963.

The Parkway through the Mount Pisgah area was completed under the impetus of Mission 66. Through increased federal funding, remaining sections of the Blue Ridge Parkway were designed and constructed. In the Mount Pisgah Recreation Area this included acquiring the Vanderbilt land; and developing overlooks; hiking trails; a new lodge, restaurant, and camp store; expanding the campground, and developing a picnic area. The area is the most popular attraction on the Parkway south of Asheville. (BLRI Archives)



View from Mount Pisgah Developed Area

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

The Mount Pisgah Recreation Area retains integrity as a contributing landscape of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Although some features within the landscape boundary date to earlier periods of significance, the dominant period of significance dates to the 1960s, at which time the Blue Ridge Parkway was opened for automobile travel through the area. Overall, the recreation area retains integrity of location and setting as the recreation area remains in its original location and the setting remains a natural forest setting with limited development. Landscape planning and design from the 1960s is clearly evident throughout the component landscapes and few changes have been made over time. The developed portions of the recreation area retain integrity of design, materials, and workmanship because the original design intent is intact. Given that the recreation area as a whole has experienced few changes since its development as a recreation area along the Blue Ridge Parkway, integrity of feeling and association are present.

Landscape Characteristic:

Circulation

The main means of circulation is the Blue Ridge Parkway which stretches the length of the landscape. The former road to the Buck Spring Lodge is now merely a road trace, yet it is still visible as part of the Buck Spring Trail located behind the Pisgah Inn. Hiking trails are located within the Mount Pisgah landscape boundary with most of them extending beyond the NPS boundary onto adjacent USFS land. Four pull-off parking areas are located within the landscape. Circulation patterns, with the exception of the road trace now used as the Buck Spring Trail, all date to the 1960s when the area was formally developed by parkway designers. Circulation patterns do not negatively impact the landscape.

Vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns retain integrity of location and setting since the mountain setting has remained relatively unchanged. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship is retained due to unaltered original design patterns. The original circulation design is evident keeping integrity of feeling and association intact.

Topography

As with most development along the Blue Ridge Parkway, topography was taken into account during the design and construction of the Mount Pisgah Recreation Area. Development of the Pisgah Inn occurred at the edge of a shelf. The Parkway follows curves in the mountain slopes. The campground was designed with topography taken into account as final construction occurred in the field. The picnic area was developed without changing the existing topography of the area. These patterns of topography remain unaltered since the period of development. The Mount Pisgah Recreation Area retains integrity of topography in terms of location, setting, feeling, and association.

Views And Vistas

Design of the recreation area incorporated views and vistas of both Mount Pisgah and the mountains to the south. Views of the southern mountains are visible from the Pisgah Inn as well as the Buck Springs Overlook. Mount Pisgah vistas are numerous throughout the recreation area. In some areas, such as the picnic area and the Mount Pisgah trailhead parking area, mature vegetation partially obscures the views and vistas. Views retain integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association.

Vegetation

Most of the Mount Pisgah Recreation Area is located above 4,500 feet. Its high elevation and its association with the Blue Ridge Parkway dictated that the area be left in as natural state as possible. Naturalistic principles applied to landscape design called for leaving as much vegetation undisturbed as possible and native trees and shrubs are abundant throughout the landscape boundary. Vegetation is mature and there is no obvious attempts at landscape design, with the exception of the area around the Pisgah Inn which contains some designed planting beds. The natural forest vegetation has been maintained despite limited development.

Vegetation found within the Mount Pisgah Recreation Area includes:

Carolina Rhododendron (*Rhododendron caroliniana*)

Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*)

Flame Azalea (*Rhododendron calendulacea*)

Red Oak (*Quercus borealis*)

Carolina Hemlock (*Tsuga caroliniana*)

Maple (*Acer* sp.)

Spruce (*Picea* sp.)

Birch (*Betula* sp.)

Fazier Fir (*Abies fraseri*)

Mountain Ash (*Sorbus americana*)

Vegetation in the landscape that was planted in the 1960s as the area was developed as a recreation area has matured. Overall, the landscape remains much as it had prior to the Blue Ridge Parkway associated developments. Because of its popularity as a recreation area, some vegetation is threatened as a result of visitor use, especially in the campground. In other areas, mature growth is in danger of obscuring once open views and vistas. Because the natural landscape has been altered only slightly, the Mount Pisgah Recreation Area vegetation retains integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association.

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment:	Good
Assessment Date:	08/01/2005
Condition Assessment:	Good
Assessment Date:	09/23/2011

Landscape Stabilization Cost Explanatory Description:

No CLI or LCS stabilization costs exist for Mount Pisgah Developed Area.

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment:	Undetermined
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Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:

No approved treatment exists for the Mount Pisgah Developed Area. A park-approved CLR proposal is in PMIS for Mount Pisgah, and a GMP is underway for the entire parkway.

Approved Treatment Costs

Landscape Approved Treatment Cost Explanatory Description:

No LCS or landscape approved treatment costs exist for Mount Pisgah Developed Area.

Bibliography and Supplemental Information

Bibliography

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Citation Title:	Old Pisgah Inn
Year of Publication:	1988
Source Name:	HABS
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Citation Title:	Mount Pisgah Files
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Citation Number:	RG 5, Series 8
Citation Type:	Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location:	Asheville, NC
Citation Title:	Mount Pisgah General Development Plan
Year of Publication:	1961
Source Name:	Other
Citation Number:	PKY-BR-MP-2050E
Citation Type:	Graphic
Citation Location:	Asheville, NC

Citation Title:	Development Plan, Mount Pisgah
Year of Publication:	1952
Source Name:	Other
Citation Number:	RG 5, Series 8, Box 9, Folder 9
Citation Type:	Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location:	Asheville, NC
Citation Title:	Roads and Trails Map, Mount Pisgah, Part of the Master Plan for the Blue Ridge Parkway
Year of Publication:	1946
Source Name:	Other
Citation Number:	PKY-BR-MP-2050