
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
2002



Buck Springs Overlook
Blue Ridge Parkway - Pisgah 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:

The Buck Springs Overlook is a twenty-nine acre component landscape that is located at Milepost 407.6 on the Blue Ridge Parkway. The component landscape is a developed overlook area that has vehicular parking, trailhead access, a view of Mount Pisgah to the north as well as a view of the southern mountains and the Pink Beds to the south. One building exists within the component landscape - a springhouse that dates from the Vanderbilt period of significance. Several stone retaining walls and stone steps remain within the landscape that date to this time as well. Other developments within the landscape boundary date to the 1960s when the overlook was developed as part of the completion of the Blue Ridge Parkway through the vicinity.

This component landscape has two distinct periods of significance. The first period of significance, 1896 - 1959, is associated with the George Vanderbilt ownership of the property. The second period of significance dates to the 1960s, when the present overlook was developed under NPS Mission 66/Post WWII development.

The Buck Springs Overlook is currently in good condition. Integrity of the Vanderbilt-era landscape has been lost due to the demolition of historic structures and the loss of the once open landscape. The Buck Springs Overlook as it exists today, is a Blue Ridge Parkway designed landscape. The once open areas that were cleared during the Vanderbilt era have been allowed to return to a forested state. In general, the landscape is in a natural state with some clearing evident to maintain open views. The landscape has changed little since its development as a parkway overlook. The Buck Springs Overlook landscape retains integrity as a contributing component landscape of the Mount Pisgah Recreation Area.

Site Plan

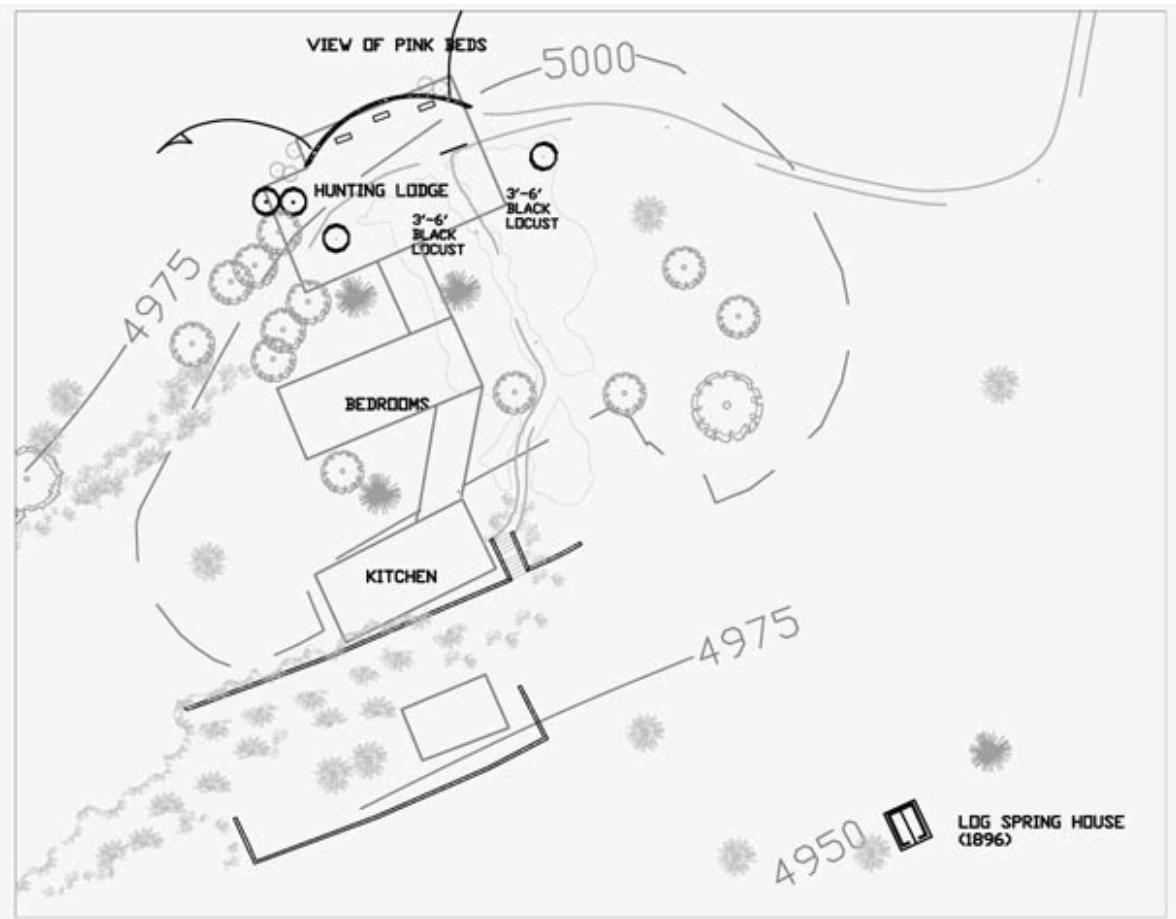


Figure 4: Site plan detail showing the former Buck Spring Lodge buildings. Extant stone walls are indicated in dark gray while former buildings are indicated by lighter gray lines. (See attached full-size drawing of complete component landscape.)

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name:	Buck Springs Overlook
Property Level:	Component Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	550222
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 nineteenth 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 from the 1960s.

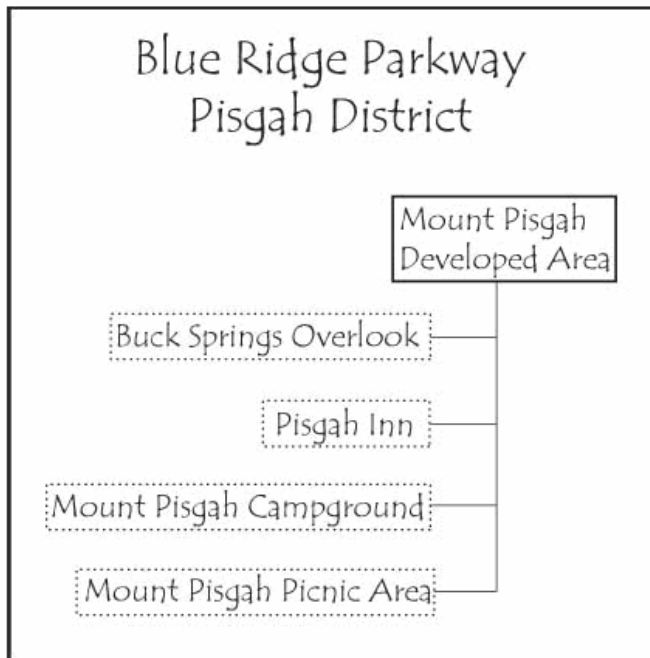


Figure 1: Mount Pisgah Developed Area Cultural Landscape Hierarchy (Mount Pisgah represents five out of over two dozen cultural landscape along the Blue Ridge Parkway - see the Blue Ridge Parkway landscape entry for a more complete hierarchy graphic.)

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

The CLI was begun in 2002, with Louisiana State University MLA students Peggy McClain and Mary Fernandez, spending the summer 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 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:

Buck Springs Overlook
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

Buck Springs Overlook
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

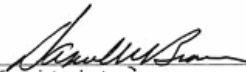
Inventory Name	CLI Id #	Condition	Management Category*
Mount Pisgah Developed Area	550145	Good	Must Be Preserved and Maintained
Buck Springs Overlook	550222	Fair	Must Be Preserved and Maintained
Mount Pisgah Campground	550220	Fair	Must Be Preserved and Maintained
Mount Pisgah Picnic Area	550223	Good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

Buck Springs Overlook
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

Buck Springs Overlook
Blue Ridge Parkway - Pisgah District

10/12/2004 10:48 FAX

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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

Buck Springs Overlook
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	<i>GW</i> 8/20
	LAND RESOURCES SPEC.	
	LAND RESOURCES SPEC.	
☒	CULTURAL RESOURCES SPEC.	
☒	ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE SPEC.	
	COMMUNITY PLANNER	
	RESIDENT LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT	
	CURATOR	
	GEOGRAPHIC INFO. SPEC.	
	ENGINEERING DRAFTSMAN	
	ADMIN. ASSISTANT	
☒	FILE: <i>ALIZETTE - FILED</i>	
	<i>COMPLIANCE FILE</i>	

NC SHPO Signature

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

The Buck Springs Overlook boundary runs northeastward 100' west of the overlook driveway. At the driveway terminus, the boundary turns and parallels the eastern side of the overlook, roughly following the 4960' contour - encompassing the site of the Buck Spring Lodge – and turning west to close at the intersection of the parkway and the overlook driveway.

State and County:

State: NC

County: Haywood County

State: NC

County: Transylvania County

Size (Acres): 29.00

Boundary UTMS:

Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	17
UTM Easting:	341,311
UTM Northing:	3,920,763
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	17
UTM Easting:	341,221
UTM Northing:	3,920,186
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	17
UTM Easting:	341,000
UTM Northing:	3,920,083
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	17
UTM Easting:	341,000
UTM Northing:	3,920,597

Location Map:

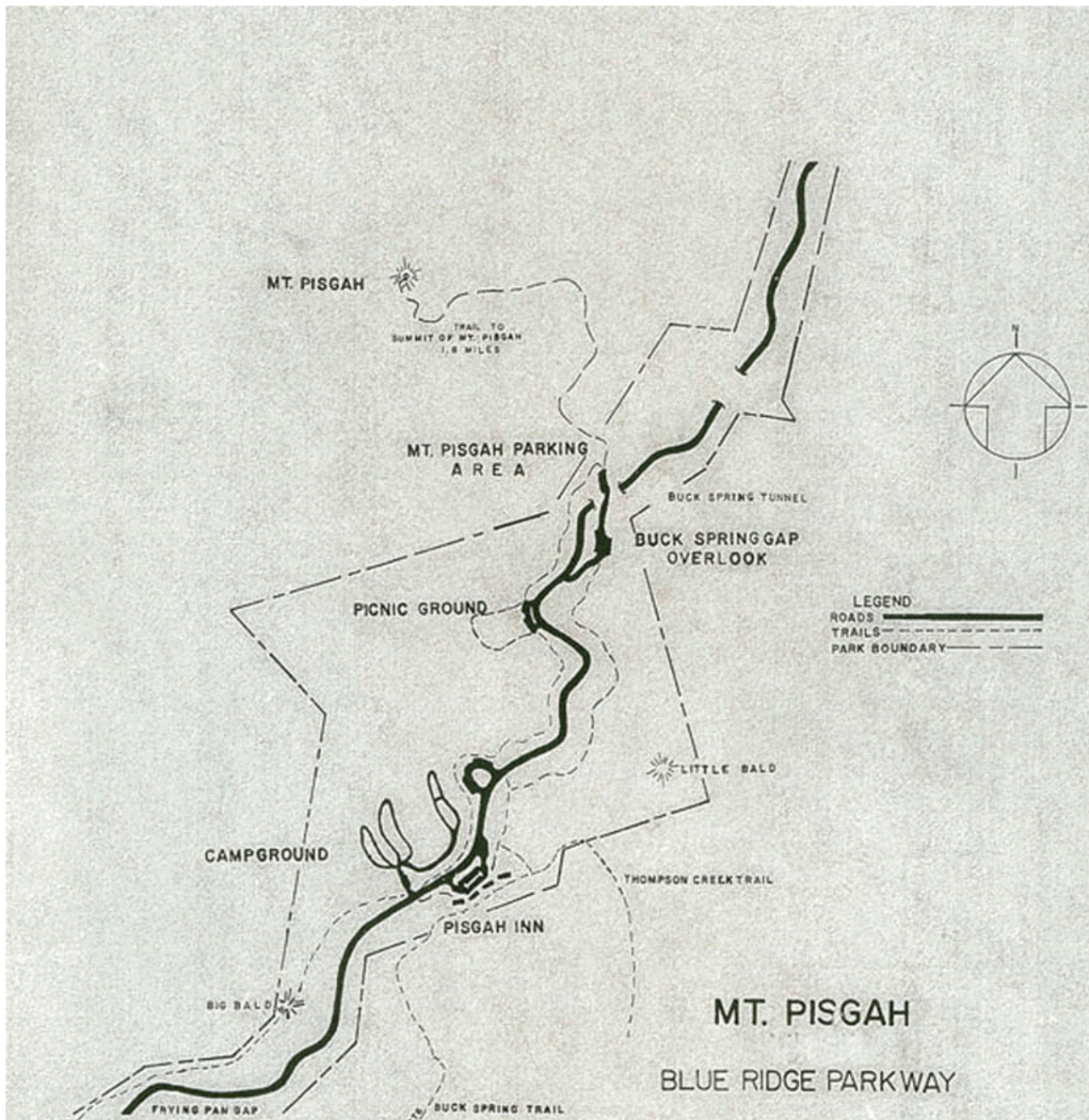


Figure 3: Mount Pisgah Recreation Area landscape.

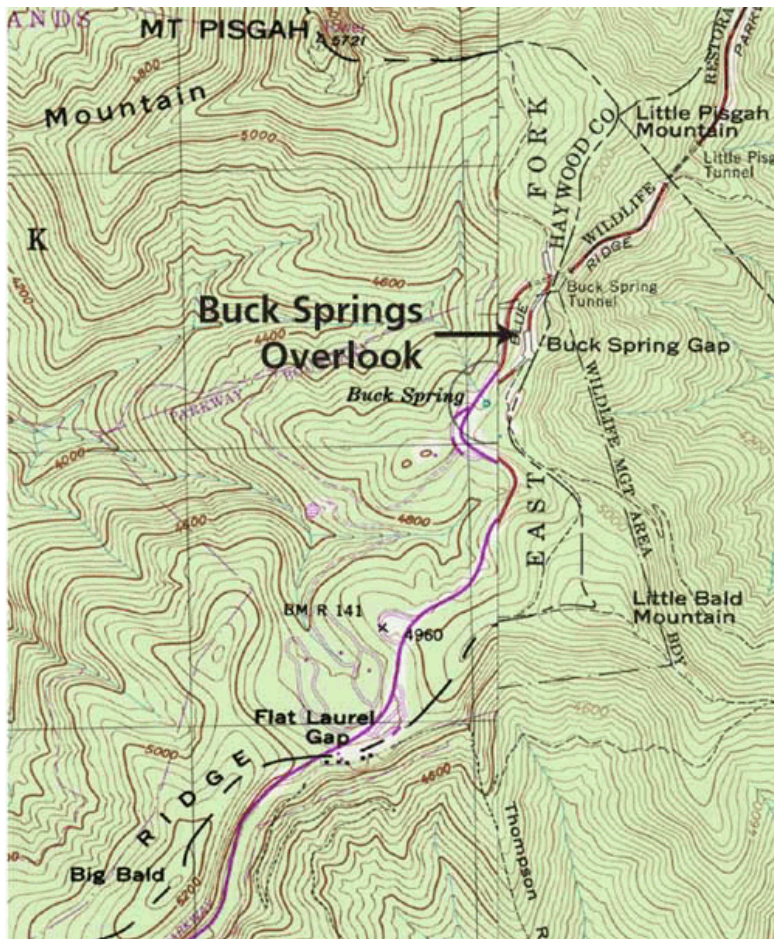


Figure 1: Buck Springs Overlook (USGS 1:24,000 quadrangles - Cruso, 1987 [east], and Dunsmore Mountain, 1967 [west]).

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 the land near Buck Spring in the late 1880s brought the first formal development to 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 Recreation 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 NRCS website).

Type of Context: Political

Description:

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

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

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.'

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:

Land adjacent to the Buck Springs Overlook component landscape is contributing for its views as well as for its interconnectedness of the network of hiking trails that extends beyond the landscape boundary.

Views of two major features that lie outside of the BLRI park boundary, Mount Pisgah and the Pink Beds, are visible from the Buck Springs overlook. The Pink Beds, located to the south of the overlook, is a unique upland bog area that figured prominently in George Vanderbilt's site selection for his Buck Spring Lodge retreat. The area is named for the pink blooms of rhododendron and mountain laurel that are visible in late spring and early summer. Mount Pisgah, the mountain for which the recreation area is named, is a major peak in the area and is visible to the north.

The network of established hiking trails that extend beyond the Buck Springs component landscape also makes the adjacent land contributing. The Mount Pisgah trail terminus is located within the landscape boundary. In addition, the Buck Spring Trail, Laurel Mountain Trail, and Pilot Rock Trail extend southward through the Pink Beds. The 16.5 mile Shut-In Trail is the route of the former Vanderbilt access road from this site down to Asheville.

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

Period of Significance:

Time Period:	AD 1896 - 1959
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	Rustic Architecture
Other Facet:	None
Time Period:	AD 1962 - 1987
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Landscape Architecture
Facet:	NPS Mission 66--Landscape Architecture
Other Facet:	None

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category: Entertainment - Recreation

Area of Significance Subcategory: None

Area of Significance Category: Landscape Architecture

Area of Significance Subcategory: None

Area of Significance Category: Transportation

Area of Significance Subcategory: None

Statement of Significance:

This component landscape has two distinct periods of significance. The first period of significance, 1896 - 1959, is associated with the George Vanderbilt ownership of the property. Remnant hardscape features and a stone springhouse survive from this timeperiod.

The second period of significance relates to the modern Buck Springs Overlook landscape, which dates to the 1960s. At this time, the Blue Ridge Parkway was opened to automobile travel through the area, and the current site improvements at the overlook were constructed. This component landscape is part of NPS Mission 66/Post WWII development, which can be considered historically significant despite the fact that it has not yet reached fifty years of age.

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Designed
Vernacular

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Primary Historic Function: Camp

Primary Current Use: Automobile

Other Use/Function

Outdoor Recreation

Overlook

Other Type of Use or Function

Both Current And Historic

Both Current And Historic

Current and Historic Names:

Name

Buck Spring Lodge

Buck Springs Overlook

Type of Name

Historic

Current

Ethnographic Study Conducted:

No Survey Conducted

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
AD 1797	Purchased/Sold	David Allison purchases a tract of land totaling over 250,000 acres and including Mount Pisgah from the State of North Carolina.
AD 1896 - 1898	Built	George Vanderbilt purchases Mount Pisgah and the surrounding lands and constructs Buck Spring Lodge.
AD 1917	Purchased/Sold	Vanderbilt's wife sells 80,248 acres of the Mount Pisgah land to the National Forest Reservation Commission, creating Pisgah National Forest, excepting a 471-acre parcel containing Buck Spring Lodge.
AD 1959 - 1960	Designed	NPS Eastern Office of Design and Construction approves a preliminary development plan for the Mount Pisgah area. The State of North Carolina purchases the Buck Spring Lodge tract and transfers the land to the US Government for the Parkway.
AD 1961	Demolished	Buck Spring Lodge and its associated outbuildings are razed.

Physical History:

Vanderbilt Ownership (1896 - 1959)

George Washington Vanderbilt had explored the area around Mount Pisgah on hiking and camping trips prior to the completion of the Biltmore House, his Asheville estate, in 1895. Vanderbilt, the youngest son of railway magnate "Commodore" Cornelius Vanderbilt, first visited Asheville in 1888 with his mother and began to purchase land for his vast estate in 1889. In order to provide more sophistication than a tent for his guests, Vanderbilt had Richard Morris Hunt, who designed the Biltmore House, design a mountain lodge as well (Buck Spring Lodge Folder/Construction, Biltmore Estate Archives).

In 1897, former US Congressman and Senator Thomas Lanier Clingman sold Mount Pisgah and some adjoining lands to Vanderbilt. Vanderbilt chose to site his mountain retreat below the summit of Mount Pisgah overlooking the French Broad Valley to the east and directly above the Pink Beds, an area known for its magnificent displays of rhododendron blooms in the spring. The name Buck Spring Lodge came from a nearby spring of the same name that most likely supplied water for the lodge (Quin 435-436).

Vanderbilt specified that the lodge be built in the style of a German Black Forest hunting lodge. He originally requested that the walls be built of chestnut logs ten feet in diameter and up to forty feet long. Timber fitting that description does not grow at elevations over 5,000 feet. Contracts let to farmers in the Pigeon River Valley were still unable to fill the entire order, so architects consented to accept poplar logs, provided that they were the specified size (Buck Spring Lodge Folder/Construction, Biltmore Estate Archives).

A four mile wagon road was constructed from Cruso in the valley below up to the construction site at Buck Spring Gap. The completed lodge complex consisted of three main buildings. The largest of the three structures, the main lodge, had a lobby, dining room, four bedrooms, and two baths. A smaller building housing two bedrooms and a bath was connected to the main lodge via a breezeway. A kitchen/dining room complex was accessed via another breezeway from the smaller building. Other structures on the property included a springhouse, a stable, and a two-story building near the lodge for storing automobiles that also had lodgings for the cook and chauffeur (Buck Spring Lodge Folder/History, Biltmore Estate Archives).

In order to access his mountain retreat from the Biltmore House in Asheville, Vanderbilt created an access road that linked the two homes together by automobile. This approximately sixteen and a half mile route parallels the present Blue Ridge Parkway and is currently used as the Shut-In Hiking Trail.

When George 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. A 471.65 acre tract including Buck Spring Lodge was retained by the Vanderbilt family and continued to be used as a mountain retreat (Quin 436).



Figure 5: Buck Spring Lodge developed area (date unknown). Area in left foreground is the present day Buck Springs Overlook (NPS).



Figure 6: Kitchen and dining area of Buck Spring Lodge, date unknown. Note cleared area and rhododendron foundation plantings (NPS).



Figure 7: View of dining area and arcade to sleeping area with cleared grassed area in foreground, date unknown (NPS).

1959 - (the Blue Ridge Parkway)

As early as 1946, Parkway designers consulted with the US Forest Service (USFS) about possible developments at Mount Pisgah, even though the Parkway would not be constructed through the area for several more years. George Cecil, Vanderbilt's grandson and then owner of the Buck Spring Lodge had previously been approached about selling the land but had declined. The State of North Carolina purchased the 471-acre tract from Cecil in 1959 for \$143,488 with the intent of transferring a 7,000 foot right-of-way to the National Park Service for the Blue Ridge Parkway alignment (Quin 438).

By 1959, R. Getty Browing, Federal Parkway Engineer, had begun correspondence with Leslie G. and Leda D. Kirschner, owners of the Pisgah Inn, about the possibility of operating the Buck Spring Lodge complex in conjunction with the inn. A Parkway engineer estimated that it would cost over \$12,000 to improve the water and sewer systems for public use. Using the buildings for a visitor center or interpretative museum was also considered. Both options were deemed impractical because of financial considerations. NPS decided to raze the buildings in 1960 and the complex was demolished in 1961 (RG 5, Series 8, Box 10, BLRI Archives).

In 1963, the remaining portion of the 471-acre tract that had not been transferred for Parkway right-of-way came under NPS ownership. Construction of the road through the Buck Spring/Mount Pisgah area was completed under Mission 66. Developments included two parking areas, trail head access, and two overlook viewing areas - one from the parking area and another at the site of the former Buck Spring Lodge site.

Today all that remains of the Buck Spring Lodge is a series of stone retaining walls and the springhouse. The springhouse most likely survived demolition because of the surrounding dense vegetation.

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

The Buck Springs Overlook no longer retains integrity as a landscape from the Vanderbilt era, as few landscape elements remain from that time period. The loss of the lodge buildings, cleared landscape, foundation plantings, and former circulation patterns no longer allows the design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association of the Vanderbilt-era landscape to be conveyed.

The Buck Springs Overlook retains integrity as a contributing component landscape of the Mount Pisgah Recreation Area of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Landscape planning from the 1960s, when the area was formally developed as part of BLRI, is clearly evident today and the landscape has experienced few changes since that time. The component landscape retains integrity as a developed portion of the recreation area with trailhead parking, maintained views, and hiking trails that evoke the parkway planners' design intent. Relating to the Blue Ridge Parkway development in the 1960s, the component landscape retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Landscape Characteristic:

Buildings And Structures

One stone springhouse and several stone walls date to the Vanderbilt period of significance. The ca. 1896 springhouse is located northwest of where the main lodge once stood. Its stone foundation and notched log walls are typical of vernacular farmstead springhouses from this time period. The extant ca. 1896 stone walls were constructed as retaining walls since the lodge complex was constructed on a sloping site.

The built environment in this component landscape has changed dramatically since the removal of the Vanderbilt lodge complex in 1961. Individually, these extant structures retain integrity in the areas of location, design, materials, and workmanship as they have experienced little change since being constructed. However the springhouse and stone walls do not accurately convey the historic character of the built environment of which they were once contributing components. Thus they no longer retain integrity of setting, feeling, and association as the extent of the historic built environment is no longer suggested by these few surviving features.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 8: 2002 view of the front facade of the springhouse (NPS).



Figure 9: Portion of a stone wall that dates to the Vanderbilt era. These walls are now currently obscured by dense vegetation (NPS).

Topography

The Buck Springs Overlook is located at an elevation of 4,960 feet or higher. The Buck Spring Lodge was located at or above 5,000 feet with buildings that were designed to accommodate the sloping ground. The only major change to the topography has been the construction of retaining walls in the 1890s to create level access roads to the lodge as well as some leveling of the landscape in the 1960s to create parking/overlook areas. This component landscape retains integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association because it has changed little from its natural state.

Vegetation

The Buck Springs Overlook is heavily wooded in all areas except those that have been improved for vehicular circulation and the maintained clearing at the pedestrian Pink Beds overlook. In general, the vegetation within the landscape boundary is a mature forest with Spruce (*Picea* sp.), Carolina Hemlock (*Tsuga caroliniana*), Oak (*Quercus* sp.), Maple (*Acer* sp.), Birch (*Betula* sp.), Dogwood (*Cornus* sp.), and Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), with *Rhododendron* (*Rhododendron* sp.) and Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) as understory.

When the Buck Spring Lodge was constructed ca. 1896, the area around the buildings was cleared. *Rhododendron* was used as a foundation planting and can be seen on historic photographs. (See Figure 4?). The balance of the space consisted of a grassed area with scattered mature trees left in the open landscape. This open space no longer exists causing a loss of integrity for the Vanderbilt era in the area of vegetation.

Blue Ridge Parkway plans for the component landscape that date to the 1960s show proposed road alignments, parking areas, and the lodge site, but do not specifically address vegetation. Vegetation bordering the parking lots and overlooks is maintained so that the viewshed does not become overgrown. Other than these maintained clearings, it appears that NPS policy is to allow this component landscape to return to forest, although no documentation to support this field observation has been uncovered. If this is the case, vegetation in the former cleared areas reflects NPS management strategy and integrity of vegetation is retained for the NPS period of significance.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 10: 2003 view of the Shut-In Trail near the former site of the Buck Spring Lodge showing successional forest.

Views And Vistas

The Buck Springs Overlook has views outside the component landscape boundary to both the north and the south. From the parking lot looking north, a view of Mount Pisgah is visible. Views to the south are of the Pink Beds, which can be seen from both the parking area as well as the manmade terrace at former site of the Buck Spring Lodge. The Pink Beds contain mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) and rhododendron (*Rhododendron* sp.) and were so named by early settlers who observed the large expanses of pink and white flowers on the mountainsides. Views from this component landscape are considered to be contributing to both the Vanderbilt and the NPS periods of significance. Views retain integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association. The view of Mount Pisgah from the overlook parking area is becoming obscured by dense, tall rhododendron that line the parking area sidewalk on the north side.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 11: View of Mount Pisgah from Buck Springs Overlook parking area in 2002 (NPS).



Figure 12: View looking southeast from Buck Springs Overlook parking area in 2002 (NPS).



Figure 13: Maintained vista at the former lodge site from which the Pink Beds are visible.

Small Scale Features

Features dating from the Vanderbilt era (ca. 1896) include stone retaining walls along the former driveway entrance and two sets of stone steps - one located within the stone retaining wall near the site of the former kitchen and the other at the south end of the Buck Springs Overlook parking lot. The second set of steps is used as part of the Shut-In Trail. These features have lost integrity of setting because the Buck Spring Lodge complex has been demolished and vegetation has obscured these features that were once highly visible (excepting the Shut-In Trail set of steps). Location, design, materials, and workmanship of the features has not been altered. However, given the loss of setting, these features are no longer able to convey the time in which they were constructed or their original use. For this reason, small scale features no longer retain integrity of feeling or association.

Small scale features dating to the Blue Ridge Parkway period of significance include trail signs, an interpretive sign at the site of the former Buck Spring Lodge, and stone benches at the Pink Beds overlook. These features date to ca. 1960s or later, although exact dates of installation are unknown. These later features are clearly a product of their own time and integrity is intact. The addition of these features to the component landscape has not adversely impacted the landscape itself, as the landscape only retains integrity from the Blue Ridge Parkway era, of which these features are contributing.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 14: Stone steps from the Vanderbilt era and directional sign at trailhead (NPS).



Figure 15: Stone wall and steps from the Vanderbilt period of significance.



Figure 16: Interpretative sign found in the component landscape.



Figure 17: Stone benches at Pink Beds overlook area (NPS).

Circulation

During the Vanderbilt period of significance, access to the area was achieved by an access road that essentially followed the present-day route of the Blue Ridge Parkway from Bent Creek south of Asheville up to the lodge site. This access road is now the Shut-In Trail hiking trail. The trail is the only circulation pattern that dates to the earlier period of significance. The change in use from automobiles to pedestrians has only slightly impacted integrity since the path is not as wide as it was originally. Location and setting have not been compromised as the route is on the same location and traverses through an undeveloped forest. Design has been compromised by the narrow form it now holds. Despite this, integrity of feeling and association of the trail as an access route is still clearly evident.

All other circulation patterns are part of the Mission 66 impetus to complete the Blue Ridge Parkway route and developed recreation areas along the roadway. At the Buck Springs Overlook this included a vehicular access road from the Parkway, parking areas, and hiking trails. An unlabeled, undated site plan ca. late 1950s shows two parking areas to the west of the current overlook parking area and closer to the Vanderbilt lodge buildings. These two parking lots were never constructed, most likely because the lodge buildings were razed and additional parking at that site was no longer needed. Pedestrian hiking trails that extend beyond the component landscape boundary include the Shut-In Trail (former Vanderbilt access road), the Mount Pisgah Trail, the Laurel Mountain Trail, Buck Springs Trail, and the Pilot Rock Trail.

These circulation improvements were completed in the 1960s and have changed little since their initial construction. Integrity in terms of location, setting, design, materials, feeling, and association for NPS-era circulation improvements is retained.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 17: View of pedestrian trailhead and vehicular access road. Note former Buck Spring Lodge road trace just right of center (NPS).

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

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

Impacts

Type of Impact:	Release To Succession
External or Internal:	Internal
Impact Description:	The former open lands around the Buck Spring Lodge have not been maintained as cleared areas and now contain mature trees and understory consisting mainly of rhododendron. This vegetation alters the historic character of the property and obscures the remaining Vanderbilt-era features (walls, steps, and spring house).

Landscape Stabilization Cost Explanatory Description:

No CLI or LCS stabilization costs exist for Buck Springs Overlook.

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Undetermined

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 Buck Springs Overlook.

Bibliography and Supplemental Information

Bibliography

Citation Author:	Richard Quin
Citation Title:	Blue Ridge Parkway HAER No. NC-42
Year of Publication:	1997
Source Name:	HAER
Citation Title:	Buck Spring Lodge Folders
Source Name:	Other
Citation Type:	Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location:	Biltmore Company, Asheville, NC
Citation Title:	Old Pisgah Inn
Year of Publication:	1988
Source Name:	HABS
Citation Type:	Graphic
Citation Location:	SERO
Citation Title:	Mount Pisgah Files
Source Name:	Other
Citation Number:	RG 5, Series 8, Box 10
Citation Type:	Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location:	Asheville, NC
Citation Title:	MP 3050A (E.H.A.) 5-1-81
Source Name:	DSC/TIC