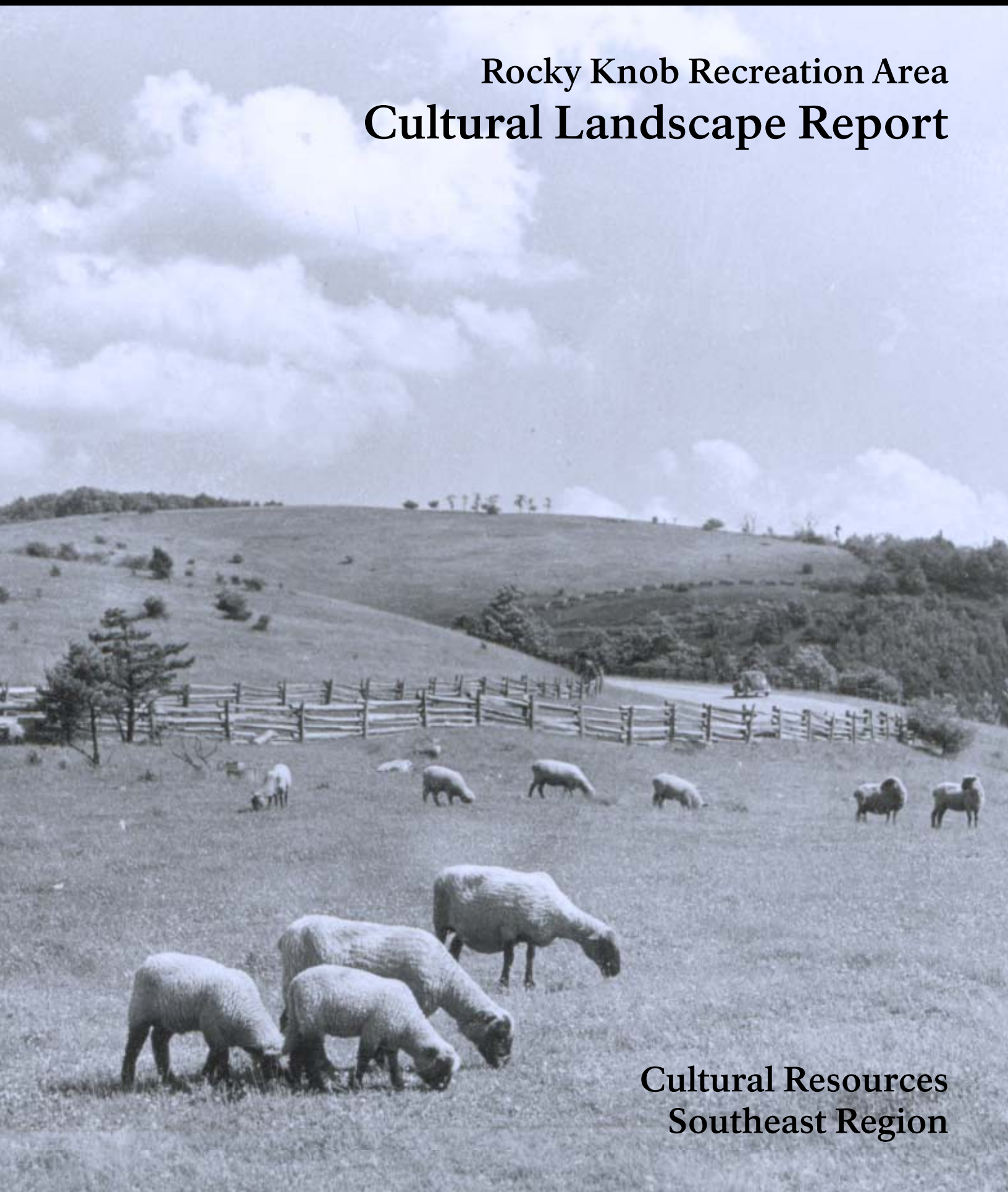
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Cultural Landscape Report



Cultural Resources
Southeast Region

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

April 2014

Prepared by
The Jaeger Company

Under the direction of
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Southeast Regional Office
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About the cover: Sheep grazing an agricultural lease at Rocky Knob Recreation Area circa 1940s, photograph taken by A. Rowe and located in the BLRI archives.

The report presented here exists in two formats. A printed version is available for study at the park, the Southeastern Regional Office of the National Park Service, and at a variety of other repositories. For more widespread access, this report also exists in a web-based format through ParkNet, the website of the National Park Service. Please visit www.nps.gov for more information.

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report

Approved By : _____ 9-24-14
Superintendent, Blue Ridge Parkway — Date

Recommended By : _____ 4/1/14
Chief, Cultural Resource Division, Southeast Region — Date

Recommended By : _____ 4-2-14
Deputy Regional Director, Southeast Region — Date

Approved By : _____ 4/14/14
Regional Director, Southeast Region — Date

Table of Contents

Foreword xxv

Introduction 1

Management Summary 1
Historical Summary 1
Scope of Work and Research Methods 3
Description of Study Boundaries 3
Summary of Findings 7

Site History 9

Introduction 9
Regional Historical Context: Pre-Parkway (prehistory -1933) 9
Paleoindian Period (c. 15,000-8,000 B.C.) 9
Archaic Period (8,000-6,000 B.C.) 10
Woodland Period (1,200 B.C.-A.D. 1,600) 10
European Settlement Period and Pre-Parkway Period (1539-1933) 11
The Idea for the Parkway 14
Prewar Planning and Construction (1933-1942) 16
Overview 16
Parkway Construction (Section 1-S) 20
Landscape Development 23
Rocky Knob Recreation Area 44
Rocky Knob and the Parkway at the close of this Period 65
The War Years (1942-1945) 65
Resumption of Construction (1946-1955) 66
Rocky Knob Recreation Area 69
Parkway Section 1-S 74
Rocky Knob and the Parkway at the close of this Period 79
Mission 66 (1956-1966) 80
Parkway Section 1-S 86
Rocky Knob and the Parkway at the close of this Period 87
Post 'Mission 66' (1967-present) 88
Parkway Section 1-S 92

Existing Conditions 107

Introduction 107
Natural Systems and Features 107
Topography and Hydrology 107
Geomorphology and Geology 107
Soils 108

Vegetation 108
Cultural Features 111
Land Use 111
Buildings and Structures 112
Circulation 112
Utilities 112
Component Landscapes 115
Rocky Knob Campground 115
Rocky Knob Maintenance Area 127
Rocky Knob Picnic Area 137
Rocky Knob Gas Station 151
Parkway Section 1-S 158
Parkway Overlooks 161
The Saddle Overlook 161
Rock Castle Gorge Overlook 168
Twelve O'clock Overlook 171
Other Cultural Resources 175

Analysis and Evaluation 179

Introduction 179
National Register Status 179
Statement of Significance 180
Period of Significance (1937-1962) 181
Contributing Landscape Characteristics and Features 181
Natural Systems and Features 182
Topography and Hydrology 182
Geomorphology and Geology 182
Vegetation 182
Cultural Features 183
Land Use 183
Buildings and Structures 184
Small Scale Features 198
Spatial Organization 220
Circulation 220
Views and Vistas 221
Evaluation of Landscape Integrity 222
Location 222
Setting 222
Design 223
Materials 223
Workmanship 223
Feeling 223
Association 223
Integrity of the Site as a Whole 224

Treatment 225

Introduction 225
Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment 225
Standards for Preservation 225
Standards for Rehabilitation 226
Standards for Restoration 226
Standards for Reconstruction 227
Management Philosophy 227
Treatment Period/Date 228
Treatment Recommendations 229
Vegetation 229
Parkway Section 1-S. 230
Land Use 231
Views and Vistas 233
Buildings and Structures 234
Treatment Recommendations for Specific Resources 234
Campground Area 234
Maintenance Area 235
Picnic Area 236
Gas Station 237
Parkway Section 1-S 238
The Saddle Overlook 239
Rock Castle Gorge Overlook 239
Twelve O'clock Overlook 239
Rocky Knob Treatment Implementation 239
Proposed PMIS Statements: 239

Bibliography 243

Appendix A 247

Historic Comparison Photos 247

Appendix B 289

Cultural Resource Evaluation 289

List of Figures

Site History 9

Figure 2.1: Farmer and oxen team travel along Rock Castle Road in Rock Castle Gorge (Parkway Archives, 1936). 13
Figure 2.2: Mill in Rock Castle Gorge, (Parkway Archives, 1935). 14
Figure 2.3: View of Rock Castle Gorge, (Parkway Archives, 1936). 14
Figure 2.4: Rough grading operations in Rocky Knob c.1938. Note stands of dead American chestnut trees, (Final Construction Report Section 1-S, Parkway Archives). 21
Figure 2.5: Construction of a rubble gutter c.1938, (Final Construction Report Section 1-S, Parkway Archives). 21
Figure 2.6: The Saddle Overlook at Rocky Knob after construction (Parkway Archives, 1940). 22
Figure 2.7: Road leading to the parking area at The Saddle Overlook from the Parkway lined with timber guardrail, (Parkway Archives, 1938). 22
Figure 2.8: Sheep grazing an agricultural lease near the Maintenance Area at Rocky Knob c.1940s, (Parkway Archives). 23
Figure 2.9: Dead American chestnut trees at the Picnic Area prior to construction, (Parkway Archives, 1936). 24
Figure 2.10: Fine grading around rock outcrops at Rocky Knob, (Parkway Archives, 1938). 43
Figure 2.11: The same slope after fine grading and preliminary woods improvements, (Parkway Archives, 1939). 43
Figure 2.12: CCC Camp NP-14 in Rock Castle Gorge, (Parkway Archives, 1938). 44
Figure 2.13: A barn photographed on private property adjacent to the Parkway (left) in 1936 by Parkway Architect, Robert G. Hall, likely served as the inspiration for Comfort Station #9 (right) built in the Picnic Area at Rocky Knob in 1941 and used as a Parkway standard for many years. 46
Figure 2.14: Trail in Rocky Knob near milepost 169, (Parkway Archives, 1936). 46
Figure 2.15: WPA worker constructing the Trail Shelter at Rocky Knob in 1937. Photo taken by Robert G. Hall, (Parkway Archives, 1937). 53
Figure 2.16: Completed Trail Shelter, Photo taken by Robert G. Hall, (Parkway Archives, 1938). 53
Figure 2.17: Stone fireplace in the picnic area, (Parkway Archives, 1938) 53
Figure 2.18: Chestnut picnic table, (Parkway Archives, 1938). 53
Figure 2.19: Stacked stone wall in Picnic Area, (Parkway Archives, 1938). 54
Figure 2.20: Rustic timber guard rail in Picnic Area, (Parkway Archives, 1938). 54
Figure 2.21: Preliminary design for the Gas Station and Coffee Shop at Rocky Knob, (Parkway Archives, 1936). 61
Figure 2.22: Pump House, (Parkway Archives, 1949). 61
Figure 2.23: CCC enrollees building one of the Trail Lodge Cabins, (Parkway Archives, 1941). 61
Figure 2.24: Maintenance Area landscape prior to construction, (Parkway Archives, 1937). 62
Figure 2.25: Maintenance Area several years after construction, (Parkway Archives, 1952). 62

Figure 2.26: Employee Residences after extensive alterations, (Parkway Archives, 1952). 63
Figure 2.27: Parkway entrance sign at Tuggle Gap, (Parkway Archives, 1949). 63
Figure 2.28: The "Lone Pine" photograph taken by Edward H. Abbuehl (EHA) in Rocky Knob Recreation Area, (Parkway Archives, 1938). 64
Figure 2.29: Original "tavern style" Parkway milepost sign, with later concrete milepost in the background, (Parkway Archives, 1952). 64
Figure 2.30: Weathered "gunboard" sign at The Saddle Overlook, (Parkway Archives, 1971). 64
Figure 2.31: Typical early Parkway signs near Tuggle Gap, (Parkway Archives, 1949). 64
Figure 2.32: Trail Lodge Cabin #19 shuttered during World War II, (Parkway Archives, Date Unknown). 66
Figure 2.33: Rocky Knob Gas Station shortly after construction, (Parkway Archives, 1952). 70
Figure 2.34: Comfort Station #84, (Parkway Archives, c.1960). 70
Figure 2.35: Grade-separated interchange at Tuggle Gap under construction, (Parkway Archives, 1955). 70
Figure 2.36: Circulation plan for Tuggle Gap Grade-Separated Interchange (ETS Archives, 1955). 73
Figure 2.37: Upper (left) and lower (right) levels of Building #86 after construction, (Parkway Archives, 1952). 74
Figure 2.38: 1948 aerial photograph of Maintenance Area and Employee Residences, (USGS EarthServer, 1948). 74
Figure 2.39: Wooden trail signs at Rocky Knob, (Parkway Archives, 1947). 79
Figure 2.40: Rocky Knob identification sign, (Parkway Archives, 1971). 79
Figure 2.41: Rustic campground sign, (Parkway Archives, 1962). 85
Figure 2.42: Late Mission 66 comfort station at Julian Price Memorial Park, (Parkway Archives, 1964). 86
Figure 2.43: Rock Castle Overlook, (Parkway Archives, 1959). 87
Figure 2.44: Rocky Knob Nature Trail leaflet c.1960, (Provided by The Jaeger Company, 2011). 87
Figure 2.45: Interpretive easel, (Parkway Archives, c.1960). 87
Figure 2.46: Mission 66 project sign, (Scan from ***Painting with a Comet's Tail***, by Harley E. Jolly, c.1960s.) 88
Figure 2.47: Plan for gas station island alteration, (ETIC Archives, 1973). 91
Figure 2.48: Cattle pasture in an agricultural lease at Rocky Knob, (Parkway Archives, 1974). 92

Existing Conditions 107

Figure 3.1: Physiographic regions of Virginia (U.S. Department of Conservation and Recreation, 2011). 111
Figure 3.2: Rocky Knob trail map (National Park Service, 2011). 115
Figure 3.3: Rocky Knob campground brochure (National Park Service, 2011). 119
Figure 3.4: Comfort Station #450 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 120
Figure 3.5: Comfort Station #451 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 120
Figure 3.6: Comfort Station #439 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 120
Figure 3.7: Comfort Station #438 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 120
Figure 3.8: Registration Kiosk (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 120
Figure 3.9: Fee Collection Building, 1971, Neg. #2497, Class. #717, Parkway Archives. 120

Figure 3.10: Campground Registration Sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 122
Figure 3.11: Firewood Crib (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 122
Figure 3.12: Firewood Crib, c. 1971, Neg. #2510, Class. #796.5, Parkway Archives. 122
Figure 3.13: Campfire Circle (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 122
Figure 3.14: Wood Crib and Utility Shed (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 122
Figure 3.15: Stone curb in need of repair (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 122
Figure 3.16: Stone curb transition into grade (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 122
Figure 3.17: Stone steps (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 122
Figure 3.18: Wooden steps (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 123
Figure 3.19: Stone drinking fountain (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 123
Figure 3.20: Post-Mission 66 drinking fountains (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 123
Figure 3.21: Stone headwall (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 124
Figure 3.22: Entrance gate (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 124
Figure 3.23: Routed wood sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 124
Figure 3.24: Post-Mission 66 recycled plastic sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 124
Figure 3.25: Post-Mission 66 campsite marker (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 124
Figure 3.26: Painted campsite marker (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 125
Figure 3.27: Trail system sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 125
Figure 3.28: Reflective metal sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 125
Figure 3.29: Typical campsite (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 125
Figure 3.30: Typical picnic table and lantern pole (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 126
Figure 3.31: Grill types (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 126
Figure 3.32: Tent pad (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 126
Figure 3.33: Host campsite (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 126
Figure 3.34: Litter deposit area (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 127
Figure 3.35: Sanitary dump station (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 127
Figure 3.36: Sanitary dump station, 1971, Neg. #2509, Class. #796.5, Parkway Archives. 127
Figure 3.37: View from campfire circle (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 127
Figure 3.38: Ornamental plantings in the Maintenance Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 128
Figure 3.39: Plantings at the employee residences, c. 1952, Building File, Parkway Archives. 131
Figure 3.40: Plantings at the employee residences (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 131
Figure 3.41: Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building #2 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 132
Figure 3.42: Damaged window at Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building #2 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 132
Figure 3.43: Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3, c. 1952, Building File, Parkway Archives. 132
Figure 3.44: Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 132
Figure 3.45: Fire safety kit (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 133
Figure 3.46: Office and Tool Storage Building #4, c. 1952, Building File, Parkway Archives. 133
Figure 3.47: Office and Tool Storage Building #4 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 133
Figure 3.48: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5, c. 1952, Building File, Parkway Archives. 133
Figure 3.49: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 133
Figure 3.50: Remnants of the Radio Substation & Antennae Tower Building # 6 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 134

Figure 3.51: Relocated radio antennae (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 134
Figure 3.52: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86, c. 1953, Building File, Parkway Archives. . 134
Figure 3.53: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 134
Figure 3.54: Incinerator #147, c. 1953, Building File, Parkway Archives. 135
Figure 3.55: Employee Residences (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 135
Figure 3.56: Building #346 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 135
Figure 3.57: Building #878 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 136
Figure 3.58: Maintenance Area Fuel Station Building #965 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 136
Figure 3.59: District Office Trailers (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 136
Figure 3.60: Chain link fence (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 136
Figure 3.61: Stone drainage structure (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 137
Figure 3.62: Reflective metal sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 137
Figure 3.63: Regulatory sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 137
Figure 3.64: Building number designation sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 137
Figure 3.65: Concrete retaining wall (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 138
Figure 3.66: Specimen trees in lawn and view of the Parkway from picnic parking area (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 141
Figure 3.67: Comfort Station #9, 1952, Building File, Parkway Archives. 141
Figure 3.68: Comfort Station #9 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 141
Figure 3.69: Barn along Parkway, 1939, Neg. #9202, Class. #728.8, Parkway Archives. 142
Figure 3.70: Barn along Parkway (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 142
Figure 3.71: Comfort Station #84 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 142
Figure 3.72: Comfort Station #84, 1960, Building File, Parkway Archives. 142
Figure 3.73: Picnic Pavilion #964 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 143
Figure 3.74: Stone retaining wall at Picnic Pavilion (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 143
Figure 3.75: Remains of stone grills integrated with retaining wall at Picnic Pavilion (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 143
Figure 3.76: Multi-functional stone structures at Doughton Park (The Jaeger Company, 2005) 143
Figure 3.77: Picnic Pavilion at Smart View (Library of Congress, HAER NC, 11-ASHV.V,2--69) 143
Figure 3.78: Stone grill or fireplace (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 144
Figure 3.79: Plans for Parkway standard fireplace or grill, 1951, Rocky Knob Maintenance Area Flat File. 145
Figure 3.80: Stone grill or fireplace at Rocky Knob Picnic Area, 1938, Neg. #6639, Class. #796.5, Parkway Archives. 145
Figure 3.81: Catalog grills in Picnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 145
Figure 3.82: Picnic table with wooden slat seats (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 146
Figure 3.83: Picnic table with sagging seat slats and exposed footings (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 146
Figure 3.84: Picnic table constructed of chestnut logs and boards in Rocky Knob, 1938, Neg. #6640, Class. #796.5, Parkway Archives. 146
Figure 3.85: Picnic Area retaining wall and road surface, 1938, Neg. #5695, Class. #796.5, Parkway Archives. 146
Figure 3.86: Picnic Area retaining wall and road surface (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 146

Figure 3.87: Stone tree well (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 146
Figure 3.88: Plans for Parkway standard drinking fountain, 1950, Rocky Knob Maintenance Area flat file. 147
Figure 3.89: Stone drinking fountain (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 147
Figure 3.90: Post-Mission 66 drinking fountains in Picnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 147
Figure 3.91: Remnant drinking fountain base (The Jaeger Company, 2011)..... 148
Figure 3.92: Picnic Area gates (The Jaeger Company, 2011)..... 148
Figure 3.93: Remnant eyebolts embedded in rock outcrops at the Picnic Area entrance. (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 148
Figure 3.94: Typical guardrail in Picnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 148
Figure 3.95: Log guardrail, 1938, Neg. #6637, Class. #625, Parkway Archives. 149
Figure 3.96: A variety of stone steps in the Picnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 150
Figure 3.97: Stone curb (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 150
Figure 3.98: Remnant playground structures (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 150
Figure 3.99: Typical drainage structures in Picnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 150
Figure 3.100: Trail system sign at Comfort Station #84 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 150
Figure 3.101: Sign in Picnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 151
Figure 3.102: Signs inPicnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 151
Figure 3.103: Litter Deposit Areas (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 152
Figure 3.104: Post and rail fence along Parkway at the Picnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 152
Figure 3.105: Rocky Knob Gas Station (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 155
Figure 3.106: Pump House at Rocky Knob, c. 1952, Building Files, Parkway Archives. 155
Figure 3.107: Rocky Knob Gas Station, c.1951, Building Files, Parkway Archives. 156
Figure 3.108: Wooden building (The Jaeger Company, 2011)..... 156
Figure 3.109: Wooden building (The Jaeger Company, 2011)..... 156
Figure 3.110: Painted wood sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 156
Figure 3.111: Early Parkway signage at Rocky Knob, 1949, Pakway Archives. 156
Figure 3.112: Concrete curb (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 156
Figure 3.113: Granite curb (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 156
Figure 3.114: Post-Mission 66 drinking fountain (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 157
Figure 3.115: Information station sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011)..... 157
Figure 3.116: Historic sign, c. 1953, Neg. #480, Class. #717, Parkway Archives. 157
Figure 3.117: Historic sign, c. 1953, Neg. #305, Class. #719.3, Parkway Archives. 157
Figure 3.118: Hose reel and fire hydrant (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 157
Figure 3.119: Wooden planters (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 158
Figure 3.120: Grade-separated interchange at Tuggle Gap (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 159
Figure 3.121: Grade-separated interchange at Tuggle Gap, c.1954, Parkway Archives..... 159
Figure 3.122: Typical stone headwall along Parkway (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 159
Figure 3.123: Concrete drop inlet along Parkway (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 159
Figure 3.124: Vegetation encroachment in stone gutter (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 159
Figure 3.125: Stone gutter (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 160
Figure 3.126: Parkway signage (The Jaeger Company, 2011)..... 161

Figure 3.127: Concrete mile marker (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 161
Figure 3.128: Parkway entrance sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 161
Figure 3.129: Fence types along the Parkway (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 162
Figure 3.130: Curvilinear fence along the Parkway (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 162
Figure 3.131: Fence stile at Milepost 170 (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 162
Figure 3.132: Stone spring outlet wall, 1942, Neg. #7779, Class. #551.4, Parkway Archives. 162
Figure 3.133: Collapsed spring outlet wall (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 162
Figure 3.134: Leaflet dispenser at the Saddle Overlook, c. 1953, Neg. #233, Class. #069.6, Parkway Archives. 165
Figure 3.135: The Saddle Overlook, c. 1938, Neg. #2163, Class. #796.55, Parkway Archives. 166
Figure 3.136: The Saddle Overlook (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 166
Figure 3.137: Stone retaining wall (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 166
Figure 3.138: Pink granite curbing (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 166
Figure 3.139: Post-Mission 66 interpretive sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 167
Figure 3.140: Foam gunboard sign (2010). 167
Figure 3.141: Snake fence at the Saddle Overlook parking area, c.1938, Neg. #7177, Class. #625.7, Parkway Archives. 167
Figure 3.142: Saddle Overlook aerial photograph, c. 1966, Parkway Archives. 167
Figure 3.143: Wooden guardrail at The Saddle Overlook, c. 1938, Neg. #7178, Class. #625, Parkway Archives. 168
Figure 3.144: Saddle Overlook (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 168
Figure 3.145: Stone curb transition into grade (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 172
Figure 3.146: Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, c. 1959, Neg. #1372, Class. #717, Parkway Archives. 172
Figure 3.147: Trash receptacle post (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 172
Figure 3.148: Wooden trail steps (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 172
Figure 3.149: Post-Mission 66 interpretive sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 172
Figure 3.150: Granite outcrops at Twelve O'clock Overlook (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 172
Figure 3.151: Trail sign and stone steps at Twelve O'clock Overlook (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 175
Figure 3.152: Stone headwall at Twelve O'clock Overlook (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 176
Figure 3.153: View from Twelve O'clock Overlook (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 176
Figure 3.154: Rocky Knob Trail Shelter (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 176
Figure 3.155: Rocky Knob Pump House (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 176
Figure 3.156: Rocky Knob Trail Cabins (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 178
Figure 3.157: Austin House (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 178
Figure 3.158: CCC Camp in Rock Castle Gorge, 1938, Neg. #8611, Class. #728, Parkway Archives. 178
Figure 3.159: Typical campsite in Primitive Camping Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 178
Figure 3.160: Primitive Camping Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011). 178

Analysis and Evaluation 179

Figure 4.01: Campground entrance, note the Post-Mission 66 kiosk on the left, 2011 186
Figure 4.02: Campground entrance, c.1971 186
Figure 4.03: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86, 2011 187
Figure 4.04: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86, c. 1953 187
Figure 4.05: Office and Tool Storage Building #4, note veneer applied to building exterior, change in roof material, and contemporary wooden ramp, 2011 188
Figure 4.06: Office and Tool Storage Building #4, c. 1952 188
Figure 4.07: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5, 2011 189
Figure 4.08: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5, c. 1952 189
Figure 4.09: Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3, note building veneer, replacement garage doors, and closed in addition at left in photograph, 2011 190
Figure 4.10: Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3, c.1952 190
Figure 4.11: Employee Residences, note mature specimen tree, lack of picket fence, missing shrub plantings, and the contemporary deck on side elevation, 2011 192
Figure 4.12: Employee Residences, c. 1952 192
Figure 4.13: Comfort Station #9 in Picnic Area, note many mature tree plantings, 2011 193
Figure 4.14: Comfort Station #9 in Picnic Area, c.1940s 193
Figure 4.15: Comfort Station #84 in picnic area, note exterior cladding on building, 2011 194
Figure 4.16: Comfort Station #84 in picnic area, c.1960 194
Figure 4.17: Rocky Knob Gas Station, note original specimen tree at left and planting bed, parking area, and median alterations, 2011 196
Figure 4.18: Rocky Knob Gas Station, note planting bed and parking area, c.1952 196
Figure 4.19: Pump house in Rocky Knob, 2011 197
Figure 4.20: Pump house in Rocky Knob, 1952 197
Figure 4.21: Campground registration sign, note the registration card box has moved to the bottom left of the feature, Post-Mission 66 lighting has been added to it, and a metal sign with registration instructions now exists its left, 2011 199
Figure 4.22: Campground registration sign c.1971 199
Figure 4.23: Campground entrance, firewood crib, and sanitary dump station, note original curb still in place, 2011 200
Figure 4.24: Campground entrance, firewood crib, and sanitary dump station c.1971 200
Figure 4.25: Campground entrance, note modern replacement sign and contemporary kiosk, 2011 202
Figure 4.26: Campground entrance, c.1971 202
Figure 4.27: Sanitary dump station, note addition of concrete curb, 2011 204
Figure 4.28: Sanitary dump station, c.1971 204
Figure 4.29: Picnic area road and stacked stone wall, note change in wall height due to paving, 2011 207
Figure 4.30: Picnic area road and stacked stone wall, 1938 207
Figure 4.31: Post-Mission 66 sign in front of Rocky Knob Gas Station, note missing specimen tree in median and mature specimen trees in the distance to the left, 2011 211

Figure 4.32: Original 'tavern style' milepost marker in front of Rocky Knob Gas Station, note early style lower stop sign, and original tree planting, 1952 211
Figure 4.33: Approach to Rocky Knob Gas Station, 1952 212
Figure 4.34: Approach to Rocky Knob Gas Station, note 'Gas Ahead' sign, 1952 212
Figure 4.35: Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, note the Post-Mission 66 split-rail fence along the Parkway, 2011 214
Figure 4.36: Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, note the original snake fence along the Parkway c.1959 214
Figure 4.37: Parkway with Rocky Knob in the background near milepost 170, note the snake fence 2011. 215
Figure 4.38: Parkway with Rocky Knob in the background near milepost 170, note the snake fence, 1974. 215
Figure 4.39: Stone retaining wall at the Saddle Overlook with a view of Rock Castle Gorge, 2011 ... 216
Figure 4.40: Stone retaining wall at the Saddle Overlook with a view of Rock Castle Gorge, 1938 ... 216
Figure 4.41: The Saddle Overlook,note pink granite curb and four (4) mature specimen trees, 2011 217
Figure 4.42: The Saddle Overlook,note slate curb and four (4) specimen trees, 1938 217
Figure 4.43: Entrance drive to the Saddle Overlook, note wood line in right of photo, which expanded according to the direction provided on the PLUMs as intended, 2011 219
Figure 4.44: Entrance drive to the Saddle Overlook,note timber guard rail, 1938 219

Appendix A 247

Figure A.1: Campground entrance, c.1971 249
Figure A.2: Campground entrance, note modern replacement sign and contemporary kiosk, 2011. 249
Figure A.3: Campground entrance, c.1971 250
Figure A.4: Campground entrance, note Post-Mission 66 kiosk, 2011 250
Figure A.5: Campground entrance, firewood crib, and sanitary dump station c.1971 251
Figure A.6: Campground entrance, firewood crib, and sanitary dump station, note original curb still in place, 2011 251
Figure A.7: Sanitary dump station, c.1971 252
Figure A.8: Sanitary dump station, note addition of concrete curb, 2011 252
Figure A.9: Campground entrance, firewood crib, registration kiosk, and registration sign c.1971 ... 253
Figure A.10: Campground entrance, firewood crib, registration kiosk, and registration sign 2011 253
Figure A.11: Registration kiosk and registration sign in campground, c.1971 254
Figure A.12: Registration kiosk and registration sign in campground, note original slate curb, 2011 254
Figure A.13: Campground registration sign c.1971 255
Figure A.14: Campground registration sign, not missing registration card box at bottom left and contemporary lighting, 2011 255
Figure A.15: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building and Office and Tools Storage Building,1952 256
Figure A.16: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building and Office and Tools Storage Building, note veneer applied to build exterior and replacement garage doors, 2011 256
Figure A.17: Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3, c.1952 257

Figure A.18: Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3, note building veneer, replacement garage doors, and closed in addition at left in photograph, c.1952 257
Figure A.19: Addition to the Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3, c.1952 258
Figure A.20: Addition to the Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3, note building veneer, contemporary garage doors, and closed in addition, 2011 258
Figure A.21: Office and Tool Storage Building #4, c. 1952 259
Figure A.22: Office and Tool Storage Building #4, note veneer applied to building exterior, change in roof material, and contemporary wooden ramp, 2011 259
Figure A.23: Office and Tool Storage Building #4, c.1952 260
Figure A.24: Office and Tool Storage Building #4, note original rhododendron foundation plantings in decline, 2011 260
Figure A.25: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5, c. 1952 261
Figure A.26: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5, 2011 261
Figure A.27: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5, c.1952 262
Figure A.28: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5, 2011 262
Figure A.29: Employee Residences, c. 1952 263
Figure A.30: Employee Residences, note mature specimen tree, lack of picket fence, missing shrub plantings, and the contemporary deck on side elevation, 2011 263
Figure A.31: Employee Residences, c.1952 264
Figure A.32: Employee Residences, note mature specimen trees, missing shrubs, missing understory trees, and relocated overhead utility line, 2011 264
Figure A.33: Employee Residences, c.1952 265
Figure A.34: Employee Residences, note mature specimen trees, missing shrub plantings, contemporary deck, and contemporary utility building, 2011 265
Figure A.35: Employee Residences, c.1952 266
Figure A.36: Employee Residences, note mature specimen tree to the right in photograph, 2011 266
Figure A.37: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86, c. 1953 267
Figure A.38: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86, 2011 267
Figure A.39: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86, c. 1953 268
Figure A.40: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86, 2011 268
Figure A.41: Picnic area road and stacked stone wall, 1938 269
Figure A.42: Picnic area road and stacked stone wall, note change in wall height due to paving, 2011 269
Figure A.43: Comfort Station #9 in picnic area, c.1940s 270
Figure A.44: Comfort Station #9 in picnic area, note change in roof material and porch/breezeway enclosure, 2011 270
Figure A.45: Comfort Station #9 in picnic area, c.1940s 271
Figure A.46: Comfort Station #9 in picnic area, note many mature tree plantings, 2011 271
Figure A.47: Comfort Station #84 in picnic area, c.1960 272
Figure A.48: Comfort Station #84 in picnic area, note exterior cladding on building, 2011 272
Figure A.49: Comfort Station #84 in picnic area, c.1960 273
Figure A.50: Comfort Station #84 in picnic area, note mature rhododendron planting at right in photograph, change in path material, and original wooden doors 2011 273

Figure A.51: Rocky Knob Gas Station, 1952 274
Figure A.52: Rocky Knob Gas Station, note island alteration, change in roof material, and loss of planting bed to increased parking area, 2011 274
Figure A.53: Approach to Rocky Knob Gas Station, note 'Gas Ahead' sign, 1952 275
Figure A.54: Approach to Rocky Knob Gas Station, 1952 275
Figure A.55: Original 'tavern style' milepost marker in front of Rocky Knob Gas Station, note early style lower stop sign, and original tree planting, 1952 276
Figure A.56: Post-Mission 66 sign in front of Rocky Knob Gas Station, note missing specimen tree in median and mature specimen trees in the distance to the left, 2011 276
Figure A.57: Rocky Knob Gas Station, note planting bed and parking area, c.1952 277
Figure A.58: Rocky Knob Gas Station, note original specimen tree at left and planting bed, parking area, and median alterations, 2011 277
Figure A.59: The Saddle Overlook,note slate curb and four (4) specimen trees, 1938 278
Figure A.60: The Saddle Overlook,note granite curb and four (4) mature specimen trees, 2011 278
Figure A.61: Entrance drive to the saddle overlook,note timber guard rail, 1938 279
Figure A.62: Entrance drive to the saddle overlook, note wood line in right of photo, which expanded according to the direction provided on the PLUMs as intended, 2011 279
Figure A.63: Stone retaining wall at the saddle overlook with a view of Rock Castle Gorge, 1938 ... 280
Figure A.64: Stone retaining wall at the saddle overlook with a view of Rock Castle Gorge, 2011 ... 280
Figure A.65: Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, c.1959 281
Figure A.66: Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, note change in fence type along the Parkway, 2011 281
Figure A.67: Tuggle Gap Grade-Separated Interchange just after construction, 1955 282
Figure A.68: Tuggle Gap Grade-Separated Interchange, note remnants of original planting plan, 2011 282
Figure A.69: At grade Parkway crossing at Tuggle Gap, c.1940s 283
Figure A.70: Grade-Separated Parkway crossing at Tuggle Gap, 2011. 283
Figure A.71: Parkway with Rocky Knob in the background near milepost 170, 1974. 284
Figure A.72: Parkway with Rocky Knob in the background near milepost 170, 1974. 284
Figure A.73: Parkway with rail fences near the Maintenance Area at Rocky Knob, c.1950s 285
Figure A.74: Parkway with rail fences near the Maintenance Area at Rocky Knob, 2011 285
Figure A.75: Pump house in Rocky Knob, 1952 286
Figure A.76: Pump house in Rocky Knob, 2011 286
Figure A.77: Pump house in Rocky Knob, 1952 287
Figure A.78: Pump house in Rocky Knob, note metal roof and missing side windows, 2011 287
Figure A.79: Barn near Tuggle Gap that likely inspired the architecture of Comfort Station #9 in Rocky Knob, 1939 288
Figure A.80: Barn near Tuggle Gap that likely inspired the architecture of Comfort Station #9 in Rocky Knob, 2011 288

List of Illustrations

Introduction 1

Illustration 1.1: Site Map 5

Site History 9

Illustration 2.1: Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - Index Sheet 25
Illustration 2.2: (Revised 1956) - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 1 27
Illustration 2.3: 1948 - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 2 29
Illustration 2.4: 1948 - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 3 31
Illustration 2.5: 1948 - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 4 33
Illustration 2.6: 1948 - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 5 35
Illustration 2.7: 1948 - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 6 37
Illustration 2.8: 1948 - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 7 39
Illustration 2.9: 1948 - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 8 41
Illustration 2.10: General Development Map 47
Illustration 2.11: Roads and Trails Map - Part of Master Plan 49
Illustration 2.12: Road No. 2 Picnic Area Plan, Profile, and Sections 51
Illustration 2.13: Campground Area No. 1 Sections, Plans, and Profile 55
Illustration 2.14: Cabin Area and Play Field - Camp and Trailer Area Profile, Plan, Sections, and Detail 57
Illustration 2.15: Pump House - Plan, Sections, Elevations, and Details 59
Illustration 2.16: 1943 - Park Entrance and Developed Areas Master Plan 67
Illustration 2.17: 1949 - Planting Plan - Gas Station 71
Illustration 2.18: 1955 - Tuggle Gap Planting Plan 75
Illustration 2.19: Employee's Garage 77
Illustration 2.20: Land Use and Signage Map 81
Illustration 2.21: 1955 - Developed Areas and Utilities Plan - Part of the Master Plan 83
Illustration 2.22: 1965 - Developed Aeas and Utilities Plan 89
Illustration 2.23: Rocky Knob Campground 93
Illustration 2.24: Rocky Knob Maintenance Area and Employee Residences 95
Illustration 2.25: Rocky Knob Picnic Area 97
Illustration 2.26: Rocky Knob Gas Station 99
Illustration 2.27: The Saddle Overlook 101
Illustration 2.28: Rock Castle Gorge Overlook 103
Illustration 2.29: Twelve O'Clock Overlook 105

Existing Conditions 107

Illustration 3.1: Hydrology and Topography Map 109
Illustration 3.2: Agricultural Leases 113
Illustration 3.3: Rocky Knob Campground 117
Illustration 3.4: Rocky Knob Maintenance Area and Employee Residences 129
Illustration 3.5: Rocky Knob Picnic Area 139
Illustration 3.6: Rocky Knob Gas Station 153
Illustration 3.7: The Saddle Overlook 163
Illustration 3.8: Rock Castle Gorge Overlook 169
Illustration 3.9: Twelve O'Clock Overlook 173

Foreword

Rocky Knob Recreation Area provides parkway visitors an opportunity to experience the scenic beauty and historic charm that make the Blue Ridge Parkway the most visited park unit in the National Park Service. From the stunning views of Rock Castle Gorge lying 2,000 feet below the numerous overlooks, to the miles of hiking trails, and historic primitive cabins, the Rocky Knob area offers campers, picnickers, and all Parkway visitors a unique experience. As one of the earliest developed areas along the parkway, the Rocky Knob area possesses beautifully preserved examples of Works Progress Administration (WPA) and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) era architecture and landscaping. As such, careful consideration must be given to the management of this area to ensure that these resources are preserved for future generations. The guidance offered in this report will allow us to accomplish this goal.

We would like to thank the staff of The Jaeger Company, in particular project leader Emmeline Morris and assistant project manager Daniel Lawson, for their thorough research, rigorous existing conditions documentation, and carefully considered recommendations. The parkway would also like to thank former Southeast Regional Office Cultural Landscapes Branch Chief and current Congaree Swamp Superintendent Tracy Stakely for his work as the primary NPS liaison on this report. SERO Acting Cultural Landscape Branch Chiefs David Hasty and Beth Byrd have managed the program wonderfully in Tracey's absence providing thorough reviews and invaluable input on the project at many stages. This study will be a useful tool for the continued management of this outstanding portion of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Monika Mayr

Acting Superintendent

Introduction

Management Summary

The purpose of this Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for Rocky Knob Recreation Area is to provide the Blue Ridge Parkway with a planning document that supports informed decisions for preservation and/or rehabilitation of the Parkway's landscape to a more historically accurate representation of the period setting. Increased visitor use, age, environmental stresses, and other factors are serious threats to the continued preservation of the Parkway's significant cultural resources. The CLR will identify and prioritize actions needed to ensure resource preservation while balancing the goals of historic preservation with contemporary use and management concerns.

As stated in the National Park Service (NPS) Statement of Work, "the CLR will, (1) describe the historical development of Rocky Knob Recreation Area; (2) document the existing site conditions; (3) provide analysis of the landscape's potential National Register significance; (4) identify the site's character defining features; (5) determine an appropriate treatment strategy, and (6) develop treatment recommendations that facilitate preservation of these resources, address management concerns, and inform the imminent development at Rocky Knob."

To date there has been no comprehensive survey and analysis of the Rocky Knob Recreation Area cultural landscape as has been completed for other Parkway sites and associated resources. Uninformed development at Rocky Knob Recreation Area may threaten the historic character of this cultural landscape unless adequate documentation, analysis, and treatment recommendations are completed for this significant site.

The CLR will ultimately provide the overarching framework within which management decisions will be made that fit both the preservation mission of the Parkway and the NPS and the maintenance goals of Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

Historical Summary

The Blue Ridge Parkway is a linear park connecting the Shenandoah National Park to the Great Smokey Mountains National Park, for a distance of 469 miles. NPS began construction of the Parkway in 1935, suspended progress briefly during World War II, and completed all sections of the roadway by 1987. The Parkway is more than just a roadway linking the two parks; it is also a destination in itself.

Due to the lengthy route, the Parkway's designers recognized the importance of providing scenic variety. They appreciated the value of spectacular views afforded along the mountainous sections, while simultaneously understanding the need to provide a diverse driving experience. The designers routed the roadway through mountainous ridges, gently rolling farmland, high meadows, and low stream valleys in an effort to highlight the varied landscape of the Blue Ridge. Designers developed a comprehensive approach to the conservation of rural landscapes encountered along the route and intended the Parkway to reveal the charm and interest contained within this unique stretch of American countryside.

The Parkway's landscape architects and the Bureau of Public Roads engineers, led by Stanley W. Abbott and William M. Austin respectively, realized the importance of establishing design parameters to define themes and to provide context for the Parkway's design. Those that followed them honored these principles, which included: 1) maintaining a broad right-of-way to allow for restoration and preservation of the roadside landscape; 2) scenic control of select areas; 3) rustic simplicity of all structures to harmonize with natural and cultural environments; 4) all design elements relating to each other and complementing the Parkway as a whole; and 5) recreation parks and areas for scenic protection at intervals along the route. A series of "as built" maps produced at the time of construction, referred to as Parkway Land Use Maps or PLUMs, captured

the implementation of these concepts and are used today by Parkway staff as important reference tools.

Today the Parkway comprises approximately 83,000 acres of land plus additional acreage in easements. In addition to the roadway corridor landscape, there are fifteen recreational areas along the Parkway. With over twenty million visitors per year, the Blue Ridge Parkway is one of the most heavily visited units within the National Park System.

The principal recreation area on the southern Virginia section of the Parkway, Rocky Knob was one of the five original recreation areas planned and completed on the Parkway. Rocky Knob itself rises from the Virginia plateau as a virtually independent mountain, offering splendid views in to Rock Castle Gorge 2,000 feet below and west towards the prominent peak of Buffalo Mountain. The route of the Parkway followed the mountain crest to take advantage of the expansive vistas in all directions. The 1936 master plan for the Parkway recommended construction of a lodge, a service station, a lake, a picnic area, campground, and hiking trails at Rocky Knob Recreation Area. This plan was only partially implemented. By 1938, the NPS had acquired more than 3,500 acres and work on the development of the planned facilities at Rocky Knob Recreation Area was underway. By the end of 1937, construction of the Parkway through Rocky Knob was complete along with the picnic area, over ten miles of trails, a rustic trail shelter at the summit of Rocky Knob, and two Parkway overlooks, The Saddle and The Ridge Overlook (now Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook). In 1938, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) established their first camp along the Parkway at Rocky Knob. This camp, identified as NP-14, provided the labor force used for landscape development work along the Parkway and for the construction of many of the buildings at Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

By 1941, the original campground was complete along with the majority of the maintenance area, including two employee residences. The same year, CCC enrollees built a small pump house to supply the water needed for the campground and picnic areas and finished construction of a group of trail lodge cabins near Rock Castle Gap. Parkway planners intended this cabin complex for use as a "rough it" camp for Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and other organized youth groups. Since NPS policy excluded developing facilities for special groups, the NPS considered the trail lodge cabins an experiment. Parkway staff hoped that the Rocky Knob trail lodge cabins would be the first of a chain of such facilities along the Parkway, spaced a hiking distance apart. The onset of World War II disrupted the use of these cabins, and they were never occupied for their intended use. NPS remodeled the cabins for use as family housekeeping units and made them available to the public for the first time through National Park Concessions, Inc. in July of 1950.

Parkway staff also planned a conventional style lodge and coffee shop for Rocky Knob Recreation Area. NPS crews constructed a sewer system for the proposed lodge in 1942 at Ridge Overlook (now Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook), but the lodge was never completed. Staff prepared plans for a gas station in 1948, and construction followed the next year. This building embodied a post-war shift in architecture along the Parkway that embraced modern materials and construction techniques while still being based on vernacular forms. In 1955, the NPS completed construction of a grade-separated interchange near Tuggle Gap. This interchange required the construction of an arched concrete bridge faced with native stone and eliminated an at grade crossing at the intersection of the Parkway and Route 8.

In 1959, Parkway staff submitted a revised master plan for the recreation area that called for the construction of a new campground near the maintenance area. At the campground adjacent to the picnic area, campers had to pass through the picnic area to reach their sites, and picnickers were overflowing into the campground. Staff needed to separate the two uses and expand the campground due to increased visitation. NPS approved the master plan and built a new campground on a knoll north of the maintenance area in 1962.

Today the Rocky Knob Recreation Area remains popular with visitors. While the campground and trail lodge cabins receive considerable summer use, and the extensive trail system remains popular, visitors to Rocky Knob Recreation Area are particularly attracted to the spectacular views of the surrounding countryside from the various overlooks along the Parkway.

Scope of Work and Research Methods

The scope of work for this project was divided into the following phases: (1) inventory and analysis, which includes field inventory of the existing resources, historic research and review of background data at the NPS archive; (2) Draft report development at 75% and 95%; and (3) Final report submittal.

Both archival research and field inventory assessment were pivotal to the project. Team members collected documents from the Parkway Archives in Asheville, North Carolina, the NPS Technical Information Center in Denver, Colorado, the Floyd County Virginia Historical Society, and the Library of Congress. Ian Firth assisted the researchers by providing insight into the organization and location of information within NPS repositories. Mr. Firth also provided the consultants with maps, photos, reports, and administrative documents from his research collection. This provided a historical overview of recreation area development, inventory and analysis of existing conditions, and an assessment of the character-defining features of the Rocky Knob Recreation Area cultural landscape. An understanding of the significance of the cultural resources was developed from the historic research and then compared with the existing conditions of the resources to determine the current level of integrity for the individual resources as well as the recreation area as a whole.

The content of this CLR focuses on the development, evolution, and future treatment of the primary development areas of Rocky Knob Recreation Area. This document will provide specific treatment recommendations based on the conditions assessment and level of integrity of the resources to ensure appropriate preservation of Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

A draft review took place on January 2013 to review comments to the 75% draft submittal. The comments from this review, coupled with further research and analysis, led to the development of a 95% draft submittal, which also included preliminary treatment recommendations. Consolidated comments from the 95% draft submission were addressed for the final document.

This document contains two sections. Part I includes a comprehensive site history, a description of existing conditions, and an analysis section that assesses the existing features of significance and also identifies missing elements important in the history of the property. Part II provides treatment recommendations following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for cultural landscape projects. In addition, this document provides a prioritized list of draft NPS Project Management Information System (PMIS) statements for landscape preservation/rehabilitation projects at Rocky Knob Recreation Area, generated directly from the treatment recommendations developed during the course of the CLR.

Description of Study Boundaries

Rocky Knob Recreation Area and Parkway Section 1-S are located in the southwestern portion of Virginia in the southern Blue Ridge physiographic region. The Rocky Knob Recreation Area landholdings are located between Meadows of Dan and Floyd, Virginia. Rocky Knob Recreation Area and Section 1-S of the Parkway begin at the Parkway's intersection with State Route 8 at Tuggle Gap near Milepost 165.3 and extend south along Parkway, following a mountain crest for nearly 8 miles before reaching Rock Castle Gap near milepost 173.2. The study area for this report focuses on the developed portions of the Rocky Knob Recreation Area located along the Parkway from milepost 165.3 to 169.2, and does not include the entirety of the recreation area or Parkway Section 1-S, which extends to milepost 174 (Figure 1.1).

Rocky Knob Recreation Area contains over 4000 acres of mountainous land running northeast to southwest along the Patrick and Floyd county lines in southwestern Virginia. The Parkway and its associated right-of-way generally make up the northern boundary of the Rocky Knob Recreation Area, though many of the developed areas are found north of the Parkway. Route 8 generally defines the eastern boundary of the recreation area, while the slopes of Rock Castle Gorge comprise the southern and western boundaries. Land adjacent to Rocky Knob Recreation Area consists mostly

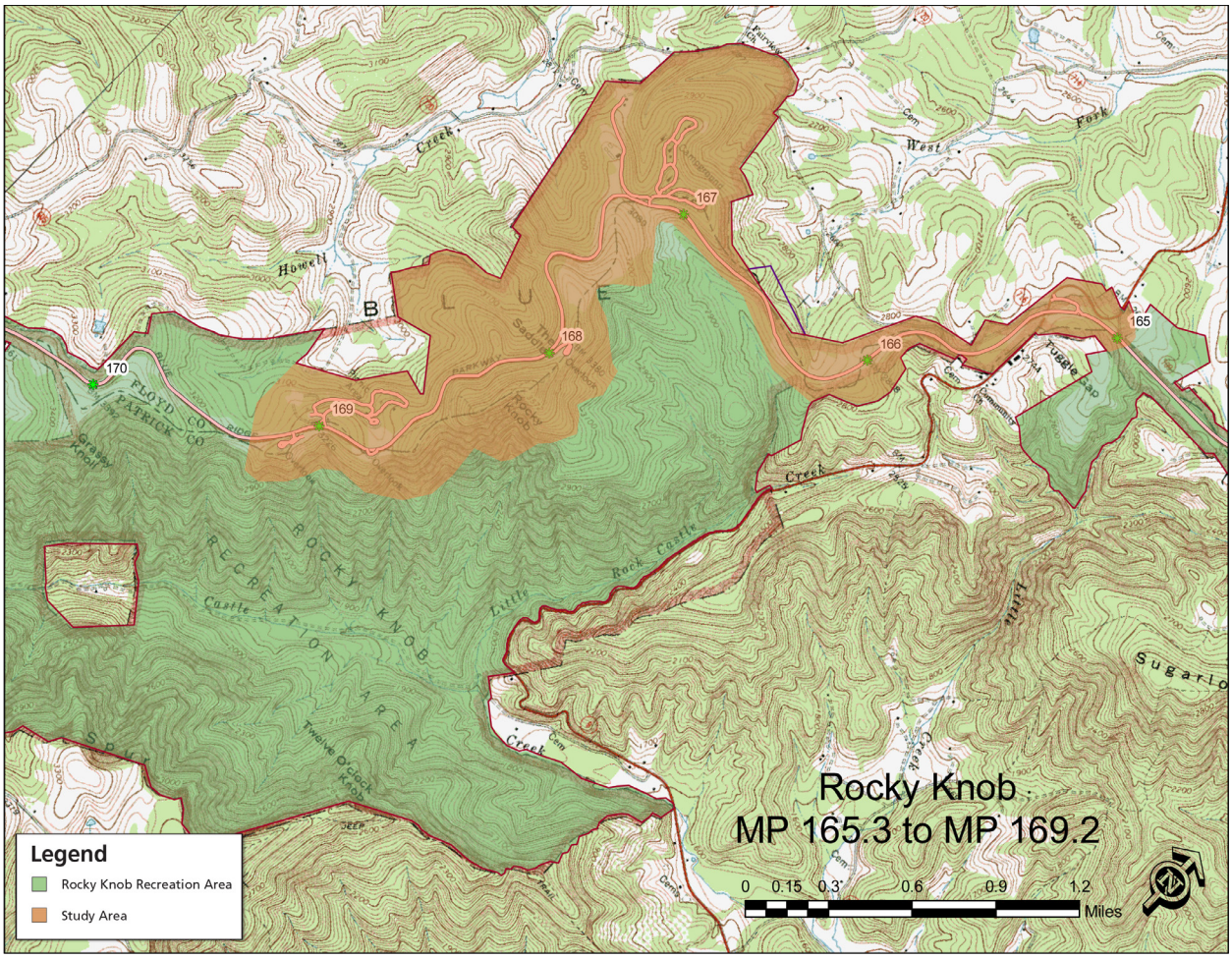


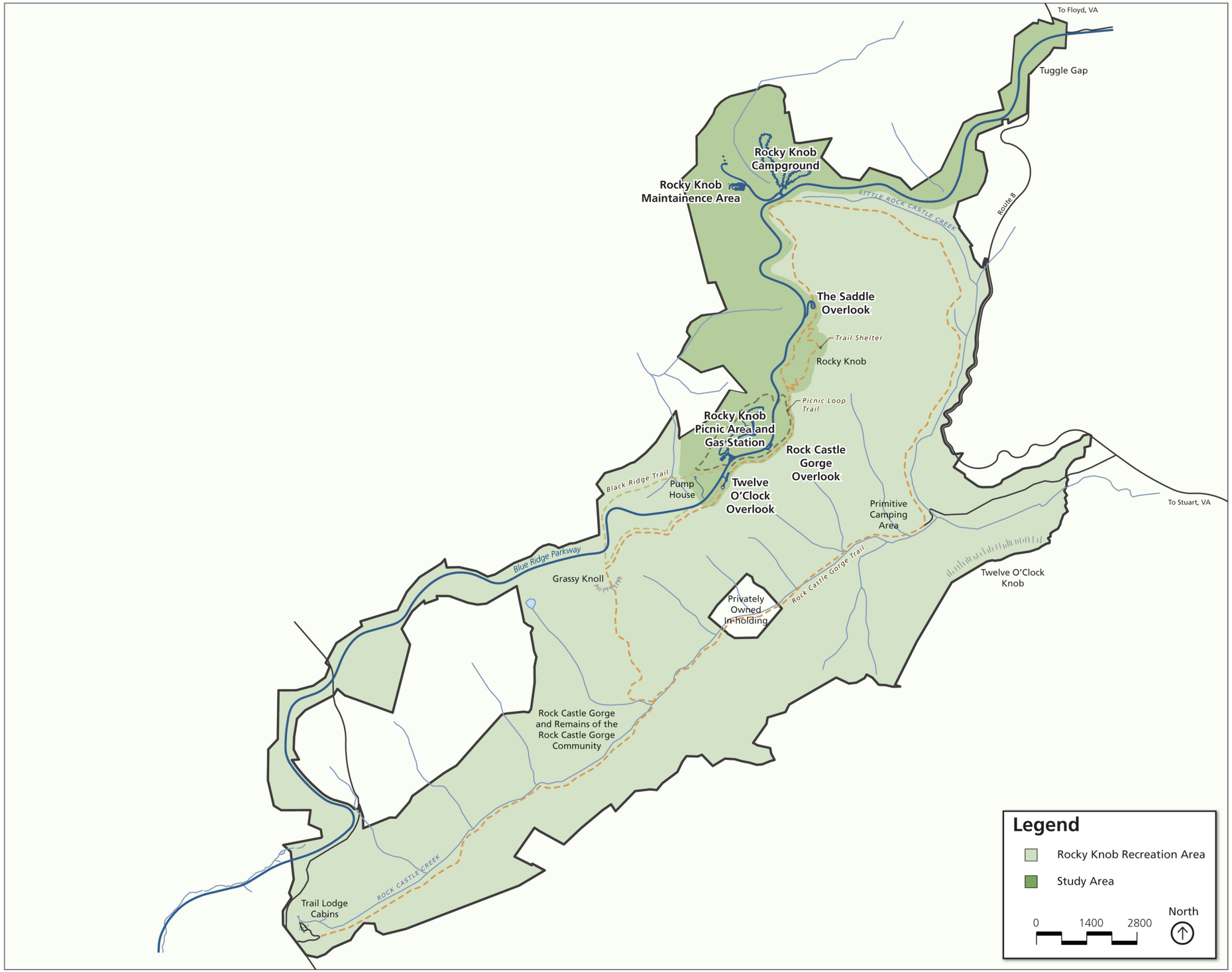
Figure 1.1: Study area, Milepost 165.3 to MP 169.2 (Map produced by NPS and modified by The Jaeger Company, 2013)

of low-density residential and/or agricultural properties. This study identified five component landscapes located within the recreation area and developed by the NPS between the late 1930s and the early 1960s: Rocky Knob Campground, Rocky Knob Maintenance Area, Rocky Knob Picnic Area, Rocky Knob Gas Station, and the Rocky Knob Trail Lodge Cabins.[1]

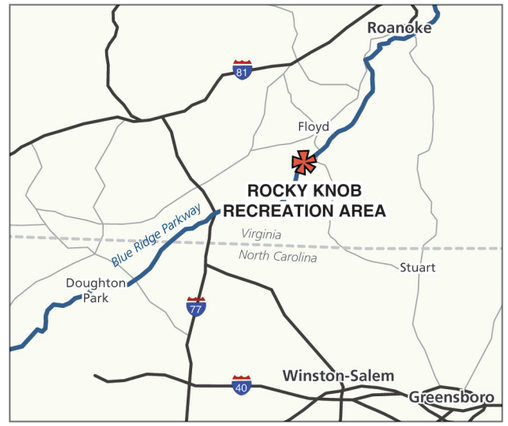
Additional cultural resources within Rocky Knob Recreation Area include Section 1-S of the Parkway, The Saddle Overlook, Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, Twelve O'clock Overlook, Trail Shelter, Pump House, and the Rock Castle Gorge Community. Illustration 1.1 provides an overview of component landscapes, additional cultural resources, and boundaries of Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

This report will use typical Parkway designations of right and left, as well as milepost numbers for orientation. The term, "Parkway right" refers to the right side of the road when a traveler is driving from north to south; likewise, "Parkway left" refers to the left side of the road in this same orientation. Milepost markers become successively higher as motorists travel from north to south along the road. Parkway sections in Virginia are labeled with a "1" and followed by letters of the alphabet running from north to south. Likewise, the NPS labeled sections in North Carolina with a "2" and followed by letters of the alphabet.

1 The Trail Lodge Cabins are a Rocky Knob Component Landscape. A detailed study of this site is not included in the scope of this Cultural Landscape Report.



Site Map



Regional Map

Introduction

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2013

Illustration 1.1

Summary of Findings

Rocky Knob is the principal recreational area on the southern Virginia section of the Parkway, Section 1-S, and was one of the five original parks planned and completed along the Parkway. Including Rock Castle Gorge, Rocky Knob has more than 3,500 acres of mostly rugged, forested terrain. There are three overlooks and many vistas along this section of the Parkway including the dramatic Rock Castle Gorge, an important scenic focal point as well as a source of cultural pre-parkway history. The primary recreational components of Rocky Knob include a campground, picnic area, maintenance area and a visitor contact station that is housed in a converted historic gas station. These components, along with the buildings, structures and small-scale features found within, are intact examples of early parkway design.

During this study, an assessment was made of character-defining landscape features to inform future management decisions for Rocky Knob that may impact significant cultural landscape features that contribute to the integrity of the Park. Treatment recommendations were created to guide future management decisions related to these historic landscape resources. Treatment recommendations have a strong focus on preservation as this Parkway section, and the recreational components of Rocky Knob, are considered by the NPS to be "historic Parkway." However, the pressures of meeting the growing needs of visitors the Parkway have also been acknowledged in the treatment recommendations, allowing for some rehabilitation. The focus of the recommendations is to balance change in a comprehensive manner within Rocky Knob as well as the greater Parkway, without diminishing the integrity of resources and therefore the greater experience of the Parkway. This balance also includes recommendations that relate to consistency of standards that should be Parkway-wide as well as recommendation that preserve the unique qualities related to the developmental period of this portion of the Parkway.

Site History

Introduction

"The Blue Ridge Parkway is many things. It is the longest road planned as a single unit in the United States. It is an elongated park, protecting significant mountain landscapes far beyond the shoulders of the road itself. It is a series of nature preserves replete with high mountain fastness, splendid natural gardens of flowering mountain plants, water falls and water gaps, deep forests and upland meadows. It is a collection of panoramic views extending into far-off states, making it in one sense 'the largest park in the world,' as the boundaries of its limited right-of-way are rarely apparent and miles of adjacent countryside appear to be a part of the protected scene."[1]

Ian Firth conducted extensive research into the development of the entire Parkway in both of his Historic Resource Studies (1993 Draft and 2005 Draft). Richard Quin also prepared a detailed report for the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) in 1996-1997. These studies served as guides for the development of the site history contained in this document. Since the cultural landscape was not the primary feature of these past efforts, this report incorporates supplementary data where appropriate. Site evolution graphics are included at the end of the chapter to represent historical developments in the landscapes of Rocky Knob Recreation Area (Illustrations 2.23-2.29)

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the cultural landscape before Parkway development in a section entitled Regional Historical Context: Pre-Parkway (prehistory–1933). The remaining site history for Parkway Section 1-S and Rocky Knob Recreation Area was developed utilizing the breakdown of the period of significance for the Parkway (1933-1987) as outlined by Ian Firth in his 2005 Draft Historic Resource Study (HRS). These eras are as follows:

Prewar Planning and Construction (1933-1941)
The War Years (1942-1945)
Resumption of Construction (1946-1955)
'Mission 66' (1956-1966)
Post 'Mission 66' (1967-present)

Regional Historical Context: Pre-Parkway (prehistory -1933)

An archeological report prepared by Robert Hellmann in 2005 contains a thorough summary of the earliest history of the Blue Ridge Parkway. In his Cultural Overview of the region, he outlines the following periods of cultural development in the region: Paleo-Indian, Archaic, Woodland, South Appalachian Mississippian and European Settlement. The Floyd County Historical Society provided historic information specific to Floyd and Patrick Counties. Oral histories conducted by NPS staff in the 1970s with residents of the Rock Castle Gorge provide insight into the life of inhabitants prior to Parkway construction.

Paleoindian Period (c. 15,000-8,000 B.C.)

The earliest known inhabitants of the Blue Ridge were Paleoindians. Physical evidence of Paleoindians in the area is rare. Typical physical evidence types include lithic data including the presence of projectile points (prehistoric stone artifacts). Concentrations of this data in certain locations seems to indicate the tendency toward a less nomadic way of life for the Paleoindians and a transition into the period when regional cultural variants became evident during the later phases of this period. Scholars have concluded that this change in lifestyle was due to environmental changes which led to the establishment of mesic oak hickory forests in this area.[2]

1 Quin, Richard. "Blue Ridge Parkway Historic American Engineering Record, HAER No. NC-42" (Washington, DC: US Department of the Interior, NPS, HAER, 1997), 8.

2 Robert Hellmann, "Archeological Investigations Conducted at Blue Ridge Parkway" (Tallahassee, FL: Southeast Archeological Center, 2005), 20.

The hallmark of the Paleoindian culture is the lance-shaped fluted point or "Clovis." Although such points are found across the continent, an especially large number of them are found in Virginia. Other stone tools found with the Clovis point include scrapers, gravers, perforators, wedges, and knives. Evidence uncovered so far in Virginia suggests that these tools were used to spear game, cut up meat, scrape and cut hides, and split and carve bone of deer, bison, and rabbit. Caribou, elk, moose, and possibly mastodon also may have been hunted. Paleoindian culture declined around 8,000 B.C. This decline was due to a period of glaciation that led to the extinction of many large New World mammal species which provided much of the Paleoindian diet.[3]

The effects of the glaciers made for long, hard winters and short, cool summers. In the Appalachian region, the mountain slopes were bare and tundra-like. People in the Shenandoah Valley and northern Virginia lived among grasslands, open forests of conifers, such as pine, fir, spruce, and hemlock, and occasional islands of deciduous trees.[4]

Archaic Period (8,000-6,000 B.C.)

As glaciers retreated northward from what is now the northeastern United States, a new culture of people associated with the Archaic tradition became dominant in what is now the southeastern United States. As with the Paleoindian Period, scholars do not have a wealth of evidence indicating trends in human activities in the mountains of Virginia during the Archaic Period. Populations in these areas likely remained somewhat mobile, with alternate periods of moving seasonally to search for provisions where possible, and periods of more sedentary activity. Evidence from populations which occupied these sites indicates a trend toward more permanent settlements.

As the cold, moist climate of the Pleistocene Age changed to a warmer, drier one, the warming winds melted the glaciers to the north and warmed the ocean water. The sea level rose, spreading water across the Coastal Plain of Virginia creating the Chesapeake Bay. Many of the places where early humans lived were eroded and covered by the rising water. Grassland and open forests of conifers gave way to thick forests of pine, oak, and hickory. As the flora changed, the mastodon, the last of the large Pleistocene animals, became extinct and other animals such as bison, caribou, and moose moved away. People now hunted the widely abundant deer, elk, bear, turkey, and small game such as rabbit and fox. As the vegetation became profuse, they gathered more plant foods such as fruit, acorns, and hickory nuts.[5]

Mountain region archeological sites reveal subsistence on various freshwater fish species and wild game, such as several types of turtles and snakes. Bird remains in the archeological record included wild turkey. Additional game included white-tailed deer, beaver, opossum, squirrels, and rabbits. People of the Archaic Period likely hunted elk and black bear as large game species.

An increased reliance on cultivation of crops during the end of the Archaic Period led to a shift in settlement patterns to the floodplains areas in this region. Lithic data from the end of this period begins to include "soapstone and ceramic vessels" which indicate an "apparent increase in sedentary lifestyle and reliance on cultivation."[6]

Woodland Period (1,200 B.C.-A.D. 1,600)

During the Woodland period, populations grew in Virginia so that diverse tribes now lived in scattered, settled hamlets along major rivers that wound through the mountain valleys and down through the Piedmont and the Coastal Plain.

One example of the great diversity can be found in the Stone Mound Burial culture in the northern Shenandoah Valley. This culture, dating from 400 B.C. to A.D. 200, placed hundreds of low stone mounds in clusters on ancient bluff-like river terraces overlooking the floodplain. Only a few people were buried with great ceremony in each mound.

Additional crops supplemented the subsistence regimen of the inhabitants of the Blue Ridge. Corn

3 "First People: The Early Indians of Virginia," Virginia Department of Historic Resources, http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/arch_NET/timeline/paleo.htm.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Hellmann, 22.

(*Zea mays*) and the common bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris*) were added to the diet.[7] Because cultures were less nomadic, this period is marked by the appearance of more vessel-like storage containers. Ceramics dating from this time period become more commonly found in archeological sites in this area. Evidence from settlement sites indicate that more permanent structures were being constructed for housing during this period and that hunting, fishing, and gathering continued to be an important piece of the subsistence of these cultures.[8] A number of developments point to the beginning of ranked cultures. As the Middle Woodland people created specialized items and increased their trade, status was bestowed on individuals within a tribe. Differential status led to a more complex, ranked social structure.

European Settlement Period and Pre-Parkway Period (1539-1933)

The earliest known European expedition into the Blue Ridge region was led by Hernando de Soto. De Soto's expedition to the New World, known as *La Florida*, included a trek to what are now known as the Appalachian Mountains between 1539-1540. De Soto's expedition from his landing place in the Florida peninsula in search of gold took him north to regions where he encountered American Indian tribes such as the Cofitachequi and Coosa. The Spaniards pillaged several villages in present day South Carolina and "pushed northward…into present North Carolina before turning westward into the Appalachians. De Soto's men became the first Europeans to cross the Appalachians; they crossed the Blue Ridge Mountains through Swannanoa Gap to the French Broad River, which they followed into the Tennessee Valley."[9]

The first English colonists arrived in North America in 1584 at Roanoke Island, in what is now North Carolina. The next year, a group of these settlers explored southeastern Virginia. The Roanoke colony found it difficult to survive and ran out of food and supplies. In 1590, when the colony's leader, John White, returned from England, he found the settlement deserted. What happened to the "lost colony" remains a mystery to this day.[10]

A long period exists between recorded visits by Europeans to the Blue Ridge Mountain area. In 1670, Joseph Lederer explored the region of the upper Yadkin River. In 1673, James Needham and Gabriel Arthur entered the mountain range in Virginia where they encountered Cherokee tribes. Needham and Arthur's contact with American Indian tribes "established trade between Europeans and Native Americans, a situation which, however good it may have been for both parties initially, ultimately benefited only the Europeans."[11] "Throughout the Coastal Plain and Piedmont, increased trade, exposure to disease, and warfare fragmented various [American] Indian tribes, which were pushed farther west into the Appalachian Mountains, or back country."[12]

By early 1700s, this area was home to a number of American Indian tribes including the Canaway Tribe. During the eighteenth century, the Iroquois defeated smaller tribes in the northern part of the Blue Ridge Mountain range. Cherokee tribes ruled the southern portions of this mountain range. Amid numerous acts of violence between Native Americans and settlers, the first white settlements in the area were in the mid-18th century. Settlements beyond the Allegheny watershed were officially prohibited until the Treaty of Fort Stanwix was signed in 1768.[13] Chroniclers of expeditions in 1758 and 1765 along the Little River in present day Floyd County mentioned two settlers living in the area, Francis Eason and Richard Rattlecliff. One of the expeditions was searching for Indians, and the other seeking the safety of a fort along the New River.[14]

7 John F. Scarry and Margaret C. Scarry, "Subsistence Remains from Prehistoric North Carolina Archeological Sites," (Chapel Hill, NC: Research Laboratories of Archaeology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1997), accessed via web 5 December 2005, http://www.arch.dcr.state.nc.us/subsist/subsis.htm#Archaeobotanical.

8 Hellmann, 23.

9 David J. Weber, "The Spanish Frontier in North America," (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 52.

10 "First People: The Early Indians of Virginia," Virginia Department of Historic Resources, http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/arch_NET/timeline/paleo.htm.

11 Ted Olson, "Blue Ridge Folklife," (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1998), 4.

12 Hellmann, 24.

13 Calvert McIlhany, "Phase 1 Identification Survey for Archeological Resource," 2000.

14 Curtis Sumpter. "Beginning of the Present Floyd County," 1951.

"By 1750, European settlers were migrating into the southern part of the Blue Ridge Region, a territory previously established by formal treaty as the property of the Cherokee."[15] The Cherokee Nation owned land in the southwestern part of Floyd County until a treaty ceded that land to the British in 1768.[16]

About two decades passed before the establishment of substantial white communities in present-day Floyd County. By the 1790's, English, German, French, Scottish and Irish immigrants settled in what is now Floyd County. Several of those first settlers came from the vicinity of York, Pennsylvania: Weddles, Bowers, Epperlys, Goodykoontz, Harmans, Kittermans, Morricles, Phlegars, Slushers, Sowers, and Spanglers. Other prominent names of settlers of this period included: Bishop, Cox, Dickerson, Duncan, Gardner, Holms, Howard, Thurman, Wade, Simmons, Smith, Shelor, Lester, Howell, Poff, Hylton, Conner, Reed, and Phillips.[17] [18]One of the first industries, Spangler's Mill, was established in the late 1700's.[19]

Coming onto the crest in what is now Floyd County, the natural beauty often astounded settlers, particularly in the spring when the American chestnut (*Castanea dentate*) blooms made a sea of white. Writing of their new plateau homeland, they often referred to it as "our beautiful mountain."[20]

Most of the settlers stayed in the eastern or central portion of the County. The western portion of the County was settled later, since 25,000 acres in the area had been given as a land grant to Lighthorse Harry Lee. Though he never lived on it, Lee's land stretched from around Buffalo Knob (now Buffalo Mountain) to Willis and into what is now Carroll and Patrick Counties. His son, Charles Carter Lee, brother of Robert E. Lee, moved to Floyd County and penned, *The Maid of the Doe*, believed to be the first book written in the area. It was a book of poetry about the Revolutionary War, and he had it published after he moved to New York. Following the death of Harry Lee's mother, the Lee land in Floyd County, including Spring Camp, was sold to the Burwell family.[21] The Burwell family, of English descent (Lewis Burwell came to America from England in 1640), became a prominent Floyd County family.[22]

Rock Castle Gorge Community.[23] Just south of Floyd County lies Patrick County and within it, Rock Castle Gorge. The gorge composes much of what is now Rocky Knob Recreation Area. Rock Castle Gorge got its name from quartz crystals that occur naturally in the area. The distinctive shape of the crystals reminded early settlers of castle towers. The first settlers of the gorge arrived before the American Revolution to farm the steep hills and the flatter areas surrounding Rock Castle Creek. Early inhabitants grew crops like oats, corn, buckwheat, and sorghum.[24] Later on, people like Era Wade (who lived in the Gorge in the early 1930s), "grew all kind o' vegetables, beans, potatoes, corn, sweet potatoes an' Irish potatoes...tomatoes, cabbage...anything we wanted, you know, to eat, we planted."[25] Many residents also tended apple orchards and kept hogs, chickens, oxen, and other farm animals (Figure 2.1).

Chestnut trees were another valuable commodity in the gorge, surrounding community, and to loggers in the mountain areas of the southeastern United States. The American chestnut (*Castanea*

15 Olson, 4.

16 C. C. Royce , Map of the former territorial limits of the Cherokee "Nation of" Indians, CREATED/PUBLISHED [S.l.], 1884. "Fifth annual report, plate VIII and plate IX."

17 Kitty Houston. "Phase 1 Architectural Survey," 1996.

18 R.L. Humbert. "Industrial Survey of Floyd County," 1930.

19 Dr. Amos Wood. "Floyd County: A History of Its People and Places," 1981.

20 Gino Williams. "The Settlement of Floyd County: the first hundred years" (Speech to Friends of the Library), 21 October 2004.

21 Ibid.

22 Wood. 1981.

23 The Rock Castle Community is a cultural resource within the Rocky Knob Recreation Area. A detailed study of this site is not included in the scope of this Cultural Landscape Report. The NPS commissioned a separate study of the Rock Castle Gorge Community by Anita Puckett, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Director of the Appalachian Studies Program at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia. That study is currently underway.

24 NPS Interpretive Panel at Rock Castle Overlook.

25 Era Wade. Oral History Interview by NPS Seasonal Naturalist Jim Gale, 28 July 1975, 5, transcript in Parkway Archives.



Figure 2.1: Farmer and oxen team travel along Rock Castle Road in Rock Castle Gorge (Parkway Archives, 1936).

dentata) tree grew straight and often branch-free for fifty feet. Loggers tell of loading entire railroad cars with boards cut from just one tree. Straight-grained, lighter in weight than oak, and more easily worked, chestnut was as rot resistant as redwood. It was used for virtually everything - telegraph poles, railroad ties, shingles, paneling, fine furniture, musical instruments, even pulp and plywood.[26] In Rock Castle Gorge before the blight, residents collected chestnuts as a cash crop. Resident Jim Dillon recalled collecting chestnuts in a 1976 interview, "Yeah, they bring a fabulous price...8 or 10 cents a pound. People in this country an' everybody else didn't want no chestnuts to go to waste. Just picked 'em up, took 'em to the store and sold 'em."[27]

Tragically, the chestnut blight severely altered the mountain landscape of that period. A quickly spreading fungus arrived in the United States through the propagation of imported chestnut trees in 1905; the fungus rapidly began to eliminate the American chestnut from the eastern section of the country.[28]

By the 1930s, the chestnut blight had virtually eliminated the American chestnut tree, so highly prized for its timber value and its abundant crop of nuts, used by both man and wildlife. Before the blight, in some parts of the forest, the chestnut was the dominant tree, accounting for up to 70 percent of the total number of trees in some stands.[29] In Rock Castle Gorge prior to the blight, chestnut trees were, "jus' thick as they could be...in some places you jus' have chestnut an' wouldn't be any other trees growin' in there."[30] According to Thomas Belcher, another resident of the gorge, "Oh there used to be chestnuts all over that mountain! Lord, you jus' pick up a pocket full o' chestnuts anywhere' you wanted to in fall o' the year."[31]

Early settlers of the gorge built log cabins. Frame houses replaced these structures when sawmills began operating nearby in the 1880s. Many residents built their own homes and cleared the land themselves. Life in the gorge was not easy. According to gorge resident Era Wade:

> [we] cut down the trees with an axe. Then, then believe it or not, we dug up the land with a hoe...We didn't have no horse, nothin' to plow it with so we, we dug up our garden an' dug up everything with a hoe.[32]

Many of the residents kept to themselves and their isolated community. When asked about the character of the people in the gorge, a man from nearby Tuggle Gap replied , "They were good people, as good a people as growed they was... they'd work for you, they'd do anything for you... they would swap out work with one another... help one another."[33] More than one gristmill and multiple saw mills operated in the gorge up through the 1920s (Figure 2.2). Mills were located on many of the smaller tributaries that flowed into the gorge and fed into Rock Castle Creek. Resident Jim Dillon described a gristmill owned by Henry Hylton years later, "It's a corn mill an' he jus'

26 Quote of the American Chestnut Foundation, Steve Nix, "An American Chestnut Comeback." Website http://forestry.about.com/cs/treeid/a/achestnut.htm

27 Jim Dillon. Oral History Interview by NPS Seasonal Naturalist Jim Gale, n.d., 9, transcript in Parkway Archives.

28 Website of the American Park Network, "Shenandoah History." http://www.americanparknetwork.com/parkinfo/sh/history/index.html. Accessed 13 March 2006.

29 Website of the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, "Cultural History," http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/gwj/cultural. Accessed 13 March 2006.

30 Jim Dillon. Oral History, 23-24.

31 Thomas Belcher. Oral History Interview by NPS Seasonal Naturalist Jim Gale, 2 September 1975, 23, transcript in Parkway Archives.

32 Era Wade. Oral History, 4.

33 Ward Compton. Oral History Interview by NPS Seasonal Naturalist Jim Gale, 17 July 1975, 12, transcript in Parkway Archives.



Figure 2.2: Mill in Rock Castle Gorge, (Parkway Archives, 1935).



Figure 2.3: View of Rock Castle Gorge, (Parkway Archives, 1936).

ground for the local people around the rim of the mountain an' hisself so that 'bout took in all the grinding he did."[34]

Some of the residents of the gorge were quite prosperous. The Conner family "had one of the finest apple orchards in this part of the country" and grew a wide variety of apple varieties for sale outside the gorge including Black Twigs, Ben Davis, Albemarle, and Albemarle Pippins.[35] The Conner's built the finest house in the gorge in 1916, to replace the family's previous home. Residents of the gorge referred to the house as, 'The White House'. Known today as the 'Austin House', this two-story house still stands and remains privately owned. The Whorley family had a small farm near the western entrance to the gorge. They built a cabin around the year 1900, which remains mostly intact in the landscape today.

Photos from the 1930s show a pastoral landscape in Rock Castle Gorge. Small-scale family farming kept the flatter land surrounding Rock Castle Creek and its tributaries open and orchards dotted the hillsides of the surrounding mountains (Figure 2.3). At one time, over 30 families called Rock Castle Gorge home. By 1935, when the federal government began purchasing the land for construction of the Parkway and Rocky Knob Recreation Area, only 12 families remained.

The Idea for the Parkway

At the turn of the century, paved roads were rare in the rural south. According to Parkway scholar Anne Mitchell, "when the twentieth century dawned. . .only slightly over four percent of the South's roads qualified as 'improved' in any way, and most of those were in urban areas. First to set about to change this situation were organizations of farmers, who, in the pre-automobile age, stood to benefit the most from better roads to connect their farms to nearby markets or railroad hubs."[36] Organizations were formed to lobby for road improvements. By the nineteen-teens in North Carolina "there were at least 65 good roads associations, and the movement was growing throughout the South."[37] This movement gained momentum with the advent of the automobile as the groups lobbying for road improvements

34 Jim Dillon. Oral History, 12.

35 Jim Dillon. Oral History, 22, 25.

36 Anne Mitchell. "Parkway Politics." (Chapel Hill, NC: University of NC, 1997), 19.

37 Ibid., 20.

expanded beyond the farming community. New groups began to advocate for the construction of long distance highways including routes for tourists.[38]

The idea of a scenic tourist road in the Blue Ridge Mountains began at the turn of the century. According to Olson, Colonel Joseph Hyde Pratt, director of the North Carolina Geological and Economic Survey, recognized "the growing popularity of automobiles" and "proposed a ridgetop toll road in the North Carolina and Georgia Blue Ridge" called the Crest of the Blue Ridge Highway that was to terminate at Tallulah Gorge.[39] Pratt recognized the potential for attracting tourists to the area and believed this would have a positive economic impact on the region. Pratt estimated that the 350-mile road he proposed would cost $55,000 per mile.[40] Although Pratt stated that the entire route was surveyed over ten years and a small section was constructed between Altapass and Linville in 1912, Pratt's proposal was not fully realized because the economic pressures on the country during World War I made the dedication of labor and resources needed to construct the road impossible.[41]

The advent of the automobile increased the demand for parkway construction throughout the United States. According to Firth, "the speed of automobiles not only made whole expanses of the country accessible to the automobile owner, but introduced new requirements both in the design of roadways and the treatment of adjacent landscapes."[42] The addition of better roads to rural areas in the south and the increased use of automobiles by the traveling public "sparked a boom in tourist travel in North Carolina and the South in the 1920s. This development delighted groups in the North Carolina mountains – particularly business leaders in Asheville – who had worked for decades to encourage tourism."[43]

The proposal of Skyline Drive in Virginia in the 1920s revived the movement to construct a roadway through the Blue Ridge region. The construction of Skyline Drive was an example of a national trend. During the 1920s and early 1930s, government entities funded the construction of scenic roads near East Coast metropolitan areas. These roads included the Bronx River Parkway in New York (1916-1925), the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway (mid-1920s – 1935) in Washington, DC, and Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, in Virginia (1928-1932 with extensions completed in 1966).[44]

The trend of government funding of scenic roads extended to the federal government, and the NPS began to plan for parkways within its system. A proposal for Shenandoah National Park included the construction of a parkway as a key element. Despite an interagency agreement between the NPS and the Bureau of Public Roads in 1926 to establish standards for aesthetic road design, the alignment of the first sections of Skyline Drive "lacked grace" as it did not fit the aesthetics of the adjacent landscape.[45] Unlike the future Blue Ridge Parkway, evidence of all human occupation of the areas adjacent to Skyline Drive, such as houses and settlements, were removed from the viewshed of this road "so that motorists looked out across apparent wilderness."[46]

According to Mitchell, "As the momentum for good roads increased in the 1910s and 20s, organizations popped up all over the United States to promote particular highways. The Eastern National Park-to-Park Highway Association. . .began lobbying about 1928 for a federally-supported highway to join the three eastern national parks [Shenandoah, Great Smoky Mountains, and Mammoth Cave] as well

38 Ibid., 21-22.

39 Olson, 54.

40 Quin 1997, 34.

41 Harley E. Jolley. "The Blue Ridge Parkway," (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1987), 13.

42 Ian Firth. "Historic Resource Study: Blue Ridge Parkway Virginia and North Carolina." (Athens: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, August 1993), 17.

43 Mitchell, 24.

44 Firth, 1993, 17-29.

45 Ibid., 27-28.

46 Ibid., 28.

as Washington, DC and the historic sites being developed at Williamsburg, Jamestown, and Yorktown, Virginia."[47]

In 1930, the NPS established the Colonial National Monument consisting of Historic Jamestown and Yorktown Battlefield and proposed a parkway in conjunction with this site. Louis C. Cramton, an official significant in his support of the park, summarized the aesthetic goals of the Colonial Parkway:

> I would like the visitor to Jamestown to be able to drive on to Williamsburg and to Yorktown, without the impression of the early days being driven from his mind by a succession of hot-dog stands and tire signs, etc., along the highway as part of the new park, on a strip sufficiently wide to protect it by trees shutting out all conflicting modern development, this highway will not be a glaring modern pavement but as much as feasible giving the impression of an old-time road.[48]

The road's primary intention was to link the two historic sites, "but it was carefully routed to take advantage of the scenic features of the Tidewater region through which it passed."[49] Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) workers completed much of the work on the 22-mile road between 1931 and 1937.

The enthusiasm for the parkway driving experience created by the planning and construction of early parkways led to additional federal designation of funding for these scenic roads. An economic collapse in the United States known as The Great Depression marked the early 1930s. Unemployment and economic hardships were exacerbated in rural portions of the country, where isolation and poverty were the norm for many people. Projects that could utilize employees from President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs, including the CCC and the Works Progress Administration (WPA), were seen as economically beneficial to constituents of isolated regions of the country.

47 Mitchell, 31-32.

48 Quoted in Michael G. Bennett, "Historic American Engineering Record: Colonial National Historical Park Roads and Bridges," HAER No. VA-115 (Washington, DC: US Department of the Interior, NPS, HABS/HAER, 1995), 18.

49 Quin 1997, 23.

Parkways were also a recreational amenity for the nation. According to NPS landscape architect Dudley C. Bayliss, parkways were "essentially elongated parks, in which the campgrounds, picnic areas, lodges and other visitor services are planned and developed [and] selected to best fit the topography and requirements of the project."[50] According to Firth, two new parkway proposals—the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Natchez Trace Parkway "were to be very different from their predecessors by virtue of rural location and scale."[51] Both parkways were to be around 500 miles in length with the Blue Ridge Parkway being the "longest road ever to be planned as a single unit in America."[52]

Prewar Planning and Construction (1933-1942)

Overview

The claim to the origination of the idea for the Parkway has been debated for years. Those claiming the idea include Senator Harry Flood Byrd and Governor Jonathan Pollard of Virginia, Bureau of Public Roads Chief Thomas MacDonald, Senator George L. Radcliffe of Maryland and several others. Quin states that Byrd was likely the originator of the idea, and he was certainly one of the staunchest political supporters of the Parkway.[53] In August of 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt visited Shenandoah National Park inspecting a CCC camp at the site. Byrd introduced the idea of extending Skyline Drive to Great Smoky Mountains National Park at this meeting and "Roosevelt showed strong interest in the idea."[54] Interior Secretary Harold L. Ickes announced approval of the project in 1933.

50 Quoted in Quin 1997, 25.

51 Firth, Ian. "Blue Ridge Parkway Virginia and North Carolina Historic Resource Study." (Athens: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, 2005), 56.

52 Ibid.

53 Quin 1997, 36.

54 Ibid., 37.

One of the first steps in planning the Parkway was the establishment of a route. The concept of the Parkway was for it to serve as a scenic connection between Shenandoah National Park (established in December of 1935) and Great Smoky Mountains National Park (established in June of 1934). The federal government approved the project in 1933 as part of the National Industrial Recovery Act, which set up the Public Works Administration (PWA).[55] The three states involved in the routing of the project were Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. Exhaustive and often bitter negotiations occurred between officials from Tennessee and North Carolina before the federal government set the route through the latter state.

Of the personalities recruited to work on the project were Thomas Chalmers Vint, Chief of the Branch of Plans and Design for the NPS, Gilmore D. Clarke, landscape architect for the Westchester County Park Commission (WCPC), and Jay Downer, consulting engineer for the WCPC. At the recommendation of Downer and Clarke, Stanley W. Abbott, resident landscape architect for the project, was also recruited from WCPC, which had overseen the construction of the Bronx River Parkway. The design team for the Parkway was multi-disciplinary and included William M. Austin from the Bureau of Public Roads. Clarke and Downer instructed Abbott to do some of the preliminary reconnaissance work along the Parkway route. Abbott remarked:

> I lone-wolfed for two weeks of winter weather through the mountains; wound along those little mountain roads, sometimes snowdrifted, sometimes frozen, many times thawing in the middle of the day in the southern sun; getting stuck and unstuck; pulled out by horses or mules or a chestnut rail taken from a nearby snake fence. By the end of the first trip with Clark, Downer and Vint, I had some sense of those awesome mountains.[56]

Once the general route through Virginia and North Carolina was established, more specific roadway routing had to be determined. "As the chief beneficiaries of the project, the states of Virginia and North Carolina agreed to acquire the land for the Parkway and transfer it to the federal government."[57] As government entities were determining the general route, Abbot explored the fine-tuning.

Abbott saw the Parkway as an opportunity to showcase different types of scenery throughout the region. Instead of running solely along the crest of the mountains, he suggested adding variety by highlighting valleys and lowlands along the route. [58] Jolley writes:

> Abbott also emphasized that the Parkway would have to include not only a high standard of design but a variety of scenic, historical and native interest features. To achieve this, he stated, 'The location of the road, therefore, in combined woodlands, over rolling hill, along small creeks, in the broader river valley, as well as in varied relationship to the mountains is desirable… Similarly, it will be helpful to introduce historical features and occasional pictures of the native country life'[59]

Abbott also proposed an alternate route primarily through the valley of the mountains which he argued would be less expensive to build and easier to access via existing roadways.[60] Abbott's and Austin's argument for variety won out in the end. The route juxtaposed large expanses of undeveloped land with developed valley settlement areas. Firth states, "As a result, the cultural landscape of the region become one of the main attractions of the journey."[61] Abbott summarized his opinion on the visual interest and the retention of cultural resources within the viewshed of the road: "Anyway, the charm and delight of the Blue Ridge Parkway lies in its ever changing location, in variety. And of course there is the picture it reveals of the Southern Highlands, with miles of split rail fence, with Brinegar cabins and the Mabry Mills, These are evidences of a simple homestead culture and a people whose way of life grew out of the

55 Jolley, 1987, 20.

56 Quoted in Quin 1997, 47.

57 Firth, 2005, 58.

58 Jolley, 1987, 12.

59 Ibid. 12.

60 Ibid.

61 Firth, 2005, 73.

land around them."[62] Abbott's overall goal for the Parkway was to create "a museum of managed American countryside."[63]

The Parkway had an initial funding of $4,000,000 for construction of the roadway.[64] Preparation of comprehensive plans was required since PWA funded the project. The first preliminary master plan for the road was prepared in 1934. This plan outlined different ideas for the parkway including the need for the inclusion of travel services. According to the text accompanying the document, "Since the Parkway will traverse the less developed zones, formerly inaccessible to the average motorist, thru a length of five hundred miles, it will be mandatory to supply facilities for automobile service, food and lodging. . .such facilities have been considered in proposing the Parkway units."[65]

The CCC and other WPA groups provided much of the labor for construction projects and landscape development along the Parkway. The CCC recruited young men from areas near the Parkway to serve in the CCC and set up four camps along the proposed route, three in Virginia and one in North Carolina. The CCC established the first camp, known as NP-14 in July 1938 in Rock Castle Gorge, in what is now Rocky Knob Recreation Area.[66]

The Resettlement Administration (RA) provided funding for land acquisition associated with the recreational areas.[67] In 1934, Abbott and Abbuehl produced a preliminary plan outlining the need for recreation areas along the Parkway. The original plan identified 13 potential areas suited for this type of use. Of those 13, they designated four 'major' recreations areas, three in Virginia and one in North Carolina. Secretary Ickes approved a revised version of the plan in 1936 and that document constituted the first master plan for the entire parkway. This time, the master plan proposed the development of recreations at 18 locations, one of which was Rocky Knob. The brief description of Rocky Knob included in the revised master plan read as follows:

> This is an exception to the prevailing plateau character of the Blue Ridge in southern Virginia and rises as an individual mountain from the high table land. The Parkway has been routed near the crest in order to obtain views in all directions. A hardwood forest of potential magnificence and a rocky east face contribute to the attractiveness of this area.

Each master plan included four supporting components with respect to recreation parks: 1) Conservation of natural scenery; 2) Facilities for active recreation; 3) Provision of food, lodging, and motor service in an attractive manner where it is not available; and 4) Utility buildings for maintenance and operation of the parks and the Parkway.[68] Early plans for Rocky Knob would include all four of these components.

Due to the increased duties incurred by the expanding project, Abbott recruited an old friend to fill the shoes of his chief assistant. Edward H. Abbuehl, of WCPC, joined the Parkway design team in April of 1934.[69] April of 1934 also brought another key player to the Parkway from the WCPC, Hendrick van Gelder. Van Gelder "was a landscape architect by profession, but his specialty was road location, making him an invaluable asset."[70] Abbuehl focused on locating road segments in North Carolina while van Gelder concentrated his efforts on the Virginia portion.

Route survey was the first step in building the Parkway. Survey teams typically contained both location engineers and landscape architects. After flagging an initial line for the road, the teams conducted topographic survey a few hundred feet on either side of the flagged centerline.[71] The flagging teams were not the only multi-disciplinary teams established for the Parkway; design teams consisting of roadway engineers and landscape

62 Quoted in Firth, 2005, 73.

63 Quoted in Jolley, 1987, 12.

64 Firth, 2005, 65.

65 *Appalachian National Parkway from Shenandoah National Park to Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Master Plan*, BLRI Archives, R97, S 34, B 50, F1.

66 Firth, 2005, 172.

67 Firth, 2005, 67.

68 Jolley, 1987, 22.

69 Quin, 55.

70 Ibid., 56.

71 Firth, 2005, 116.

architects worked on the design for the roads in tandem. "In general, the engineers were focused on building a road to modern standards for grade and curvature which would provide for speed and safety, although it was decided that the design speed was to be only 35 miles per hour because of the recreational function and mountain location of the road. On the other hand, the landscape architects were focused on fitting the road to the mountainous terrain in a way that would minimize construction scars."[72]

Acquiring right-of-way was one of the most difficult tasks of planning the Parkway and one of the most essential pieces in its success. From its inception, planners proposed different right-of-way widths for the Parkway. Suggestions ranged from 200 feet to 1,000 feet.[73] In 1935, the NPS proposed that the right-of-way should be more flexible and include 100 acres per mile of actual fee-simple ownership and an additional 50 acres per mile under scenic easement.[74] Scenic easement agreements served as the "landscape architect's device for controlling the visual boundaries of the Parkway without owning them. . . .the scenic easement program was created, whereby, in the land acquisition process, the State made arrangements with the land owner. In return for a one-time financial consideration, said landowners agreed to perpetual restrictions upon the use of their land."[75] The scenic easement agreements provided restrictions on buildings, roads and private drives, plantings and removal thereof, unsightly material, and signs/billboards.[76] As Abbott explained the mentality behind scenic easements in agricultural areas in the *Blue Ridge Parkway News*, "The general idea behind the scenic easement is simple enough. It allows the farmer to use the land for farming and prevents his using it for other business. The reason behind it from our point of view is that we want the farms as part of the picture and we do not want factories or hotdog stands or billboards. It means that the land has been earmarked for farm use. This is like town zoning, which guarantees to a man who has just built a house that a factory will not be built on the next lot."[77]

Right-of-way acquisition processes varied by state and in Virginia, the width of right-of-way remained substantially less than the 100 acres per mile that the NPS requested, due to regulations and legislative resistance. In 1940, Abbott reported that many sections in Virginia only averaged 69 acres per mile.

Once flagging and the acquisition process was underway and a master plan was complete, the detailed work began for designing the undivided two-lane parkway. Landscape architects and engineers worked together to produce a scenic road for low speed "experience" driving through the mountainous region. The goal was to preserve the mountainous scenery and provide an "experience" rather than a high-speed route from one National Park to another. One designer remembered the following about the design process,

> The basic concept was to provide a curvilinear alignment [sic] using spirals to transition from one curve to another and smooth vertical grades to provide maximum opportunity for scenic view yet minimize the impact on the terrain. The 45-mile per hour[78] desired driving speed limited the horizontal curvature to about 8 [degree] curves although numerous exceptions were used to a maximum of 25 [degrees] to match the terrain. In addition, vertical grades were limited to 8 percent with additional compensation (flattening) in horizontal curves to ensure that vehicles of the time could pull the grades without major problems. The cross-section was to be a 20-foot pavement with grass shoulders, 3 feet wide in cuts and 5 feet wide on fills. Again, recognizing that the road would generally be a continuous curve in many areas, it was decided that curve widening to a 5-foot maximum additional width would be necessary to provide for a safe flow of traffic.[79]

72 Ibid. 119.

73 Ibid. 128.

74 Ibid.

75 Jolley, 1987, 28.

76 Firth, 2005, 130.

77 Quoted in Jolley, 1987, 29.

78 There is a discrepancy in design speeds used for the Parkway. In this case, the engineer uses 45 miles per hour. Other designers used 35 miles per hour for a design speed.

79 Quoted in Firth, 2005, 144.

Overall standards were used for the Parkway for details such as drainage structures, masonry walls, and rock embankments, "but considerable variations were also necessary in response to site conditions."[80]

The road and its amenities, including recreational areas, overlooks, and waysides was designed and constructed in 45 sections. Sections in Virginia were labeled with a "1" and followed by letters of the alphabet running from north to south. Likewise, the NPS labeled sections in North Carolina with a "2" and followed by letters of the alphabet. Letters I and O were not used for reasons of clarity. The sections varied in length, but most were around ten miles. The NPS advertised the first two sections of the Parkway for bid in 1935. Section 2-A was the first section constructed in North Carolina. In Virginia, work began with Section 1-P, north of Rocky Knob. Private contractors under supervision from regional offices constructed all sections of the road.

Parkway Construction (Section 1-S)[81]

The Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) "in collaboration with The National Park Service" prepared the construction drawings for Section 1-S of the Parkway in Roanoke, Virginia, in July of 1935.[82] The plans, "provided for a twenty foot surfacing, widened for curvature and consisting of a six-inch loose thickness of crushed stone."[83] In sections where fill was necessary, "five foot road shoulders were planned. Cut sections received a three-foot shoulder with a two-foot ditch."[84] The design speed of the roadway was 35 miles per hour.

The BPR invited bids for the construction of Section 1-S of the Parkway on October 22, 1935. J. Lee and E.A. Vilbig, Inc. of Dallas, Texas won the contract with a low bid of $234,675.50 on December 7, 1935. Work began in March of 1936, and by November 3, 1937, the contractor completed construction. The project included the grading, drainage and crushed stone surfacing of the road from Tuggle Gap in Floyd County to Rock Castle Gap in Patrick County.[85] The route of 1-S followed a high ridgeline overlooking Rock Castle Gorge and provided the variety in scenery desired by the master planners of the Parkway.

According to Firth, "crushed stone was only intended to serve as the road surface for a year or so; a final surface treatment was to be added after the roadbed had time to settle."[86] Section 1-S received final surface treatment some time in 1941 through a separate construction contract.

The contractor began clearing and grubbing operations on March 23, 1936. A team of 20 men progressed from station 33+00 near Tuggle Gap southward cutting, grubbing, and burning timber, stumps and brush within the project area. Next, the contractor stripped and stored the topsoil within the project area before beginning rough grading of the roadway in April (Figure **2.4**). The contractor completed rough grading in August of 1936, before constructing the necessary pipe culverts, box culverts and other drainage features specified on the plans.

Masonry structures are one of the most recognized and iconic features of the Parkway. Stone masonry operations along the route of Section 1-S consisted of constructing pipe culvert headwalls, box culvert head walls, grouted rubble gutter, and tree wells (Figure 2.5). At first, workers used masonry stone secured from roadway excavation and properties adjacent to the project site; however, this source soon ran out. The contractor obtained additional material from outside the project area. A nearby quarry located close to Payne Creek Church in Franklin County, Virginia, supplied the remaining stone needed to complete the project. This quarry also supplied stone for Sections 1-P, 1-Q, and 1-R further north on the Parkway. The contractor completed all masonry work by September 1937.[87] Fine grading and crushed stone

80 Firth, 2005, 147.

81 A detailed study of the entirety of Parkway Section 1-S is not included in the scope of this Cultural Landscape Report. This report focuses on the developed area of Rocky Knob Recreation Area and Parkway Section 1-S from Milepost 165.3 to Milepost 169.2.

82 William M. Austin. "Final Construction Report United States Department of Agriculture" (Parkway Archives, Asheville, NC, 1939), 4.

83 Ibid, 7.

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid, 4.

86 Firth, 2005, 142.

87 Austin, 1939, 13.



Figure 2.4: Rough grading operations in Rocky Knob c.1938. Note stands of dead American chestnut trees, (Final Construction Report Section 1-S, Parkway Archives).

surfacing were complete in late summer and the contractor finished all work on Section 1-S in early November.[88] Abbott and Austin performed the final inspection of Section 1-S together on November 3, 1937.

The NPS and BPR typically completed both parking and overlook areas under the road-grading contract for each section. This mostly held true for Section 1-S, as J. Lee and E.A. Vilbig, Inc. completed two of the four planned overlooks as part of their contract. Designers placed these areas strategically to allow Parkway users to stop and take in panoramic views. Because of their picturesque placement along the roadway, according to Abbott, the local "mountain folk" referred to many of these overlook areas as "balconies" (Figure 2.6).[89]

NPS landscape architects developed the site plans for parking areas and overlooks along the Parkway. Some were widened areas of the roadway with a narrow strip of flagstone between the drive lane and the pull-off area. The Rock Castle Creek Overlook (constructed much later in 1958), is this type of overlook, only instead of a flagstone strip separating the parking area from the roadway a small island of turf is used in place of the



Figure 2.5: Construction of a rubble gutter c.1938, (Final Construction Report Section 1-S, Parkway Archives).

88 Ibid, 4.

89 Stanley W. Abbott. Oral History Interview by S. Herbert Evison, 1958, 16, transcript in Parkway Archives.



Figure 2.6: The Saddle Overlook at Rocky Knob after construction (Parkway Archives, 1940).



Figure 2.7: Road leading to the parking area at The Saddle Overlook from the Parkway lined with timber guardrail, (Parkway Archives, 1938).

stone. Other overlooks were located with more separation from the drive lanes of the Parkway, often with a loop road, parking area and trails to pedestrian overlooks. These areas "encourage[d] motorists to take longer breaks from driving."[90] The Saddle Overlook in Section 1-S is a good example of this type. The overlook consists of a short entrance drive leading to a small parking area and turnaround (Figure 2.6,Figure 2.7). The designers carefully positioned the overlook in a "saddle" or a small ridge between two peaks, in order to take advantage of views in all directions. They also provided a short hiking trail leading to a small trail shelter near the summit of Rocky Knob. From this shelter, pedestrians can take in a breathtaking view of the Rock Castle Gorge below. The designers of the third overlook in Section 1-S, known today as Twelve O'clock Overlook, originally intended for this pull-off to serve as a parking area for a planned lodge development that was not constructed. Designers planned a fourth overlook, called Grassy Knoll that also went unconstructed. Designers added stone curbing to the edges of overlooks and parking areas. Firth states that stone masonry was used in many of the construction details for the overlook and parking areas "because of the close inspection these areas invited."[91]

One of the challenges for the designers was to retain the rural quality of the landscape adjacent to the Parkway. The NPS initiated a master plan "to determine the most fruitful use of all lands within the park boundary."[92] This study resulted in Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMs). These maps are extremely detailed and illustrate both the road alignment and the landscape treatment for each section of the Parkway. The maps also indicate property lines, adjacent landowners, and land use, "and similar data so essential to the architect and planner. The details required much research but Abbott provided it, feeling that prescribed land use was the key to Parkway distinctiveness."[93]

Out of the PLUMs land use study "came a pioneering development which is still providing the rural picture so desired by the landscape architects. This was the land leasing program, whereby the Service, once it had rehabilitated land and restored its fertility, leased portions of it to local farmers who put it to traditional agricultural use. Abbott set forth two values he saw in the program: '(1) It will maintain the open character of the country where it is desirable without any considerable maintenance cost to the Federal Government and (2) It will build up the friendly feeling of the farmer toward the Parkway.'" [94]

According to a NPS report on the agriculture lease program,

> When land was leased back to neighboring farms, they were required to continue to improve land. This involved the requirements for improvement of the land by crop rotation, limiting the period of pasturage or the number of animals per acre, brush hooking weed trees such as locust, sassafras, and briars, and the use of cover crops in the fall, liming fertilizing, re-seeding, and fencing…[PLUMs] depict many locations where agriculture leases were planned along the Parkway. The agriculture leases were

90 Firth, 2005, 143.

91 Ibid.

92 Jolley, 1987, 13.

93 Ibid.

94 Ibid., 36.

> identified by location, reference[d] by milepost, total area of the lease in acreage, and type of lease as being cropland, pasture, or hay leases referenced in the drawings as meadows.[95]

At Rocky Knob, the PLUMs indicate only one type of agricultural lease, pasture. Early on, sheep grazed much of the pastureland within the recreation area, as evidenced in historic photographs (Figure 2.8). Today, cattle graze these areas.

PLUMs not only indicated land use and property information, they also served as 'as-built' records for the Parkway, indicating proposed and existing vegetation, views, small-scale features (such as fences and guardwalls), trail routes, and locations of natural features such as rock outcrops and creek beds. These maps are the best records to date of the condition of the Parkway immediately after construction. The PLUMs for Section 1-S of the Parkway are included herein as Illustrations 2.1-2.9.

Landscape Development

Soon after slope stabilization took place on Section 1-S, the NPS began implementing the landscape improvements called out in the PLUMs. A Landscape Architect named Malcolm Bird assisted in these efforts. His colleagues held him in high regard for his knowledge in the use of plant material and his understanding of the desired views and vistas for the Parkway. Bird was charged not only with improving the appearance of scars left by the road construction process, but also with improving the quality of the views and vistas to the properties within the road right-of-way. The road construction process combined with decades of over-farming, often without the use of erosion control or reforestation areas had damaged much of the farm and pastureland adjacent to the Parkway. The forests through which the Parkway travelled did not fare much better. Mountain farmers and commercial logging companies exploited the woodland for years prior to the development of the Parkway, leaving most of the forest in rough condition. In addition, the forest of Rocky Knob succumbed to chestnut blight, a disease that completely wiped out the American chestnut tree in the southern Appalachians by the 1930s, leaving large stands of dead chestnut trees throughout the forest surrounding the Parkway. According to Firth, the NPS needed, "a program to improve the condition of the forests and woods, to remove unsightly evidence of their recent exploitation, to encourage regeneration, and to reduce the risks of wildfires."[96]



Figure 2.8: Sheep grazing an agricultural lease near the Maintenance Area at Rocky Knob c.1940s, (Parkway Archives).

In 1939, Bird scripted a manual entitled "Planning the Complete Landscape Development: the Problem and the Program" in which he outlined an overall NPS policy for landscape treatment along the Parkway. Included in the manual were plant lists and detailed processes for installation of plant materials. The manual also addressed the treatment of agricultural fields and woods within the Parkway right-of-way.[97] Projects outlined in Bird's manual included selective cutting, planting and seeding of road cut slopes, and improvements to agricultural fields. In developing the manual, Bird built on existing NPS policies. For example, the manual took the established NPS policy of using native plants along park roads and expanded the idea to include various conditions throughout the Parkway, such as overlooks, picnic areas, service areas.[98]

Implementation of Bird's manual began with the first three completed sections of roadway, Sections 1-Q and 1-P in Virginia and Section 2-A in North Carolina in 1938. The NPS referred to the ventures as 'Demonstration Projects' as the methods were considered experimental at the time. After these

95 NPS, "Agriculture Lease: Visual Impact Analysis Action Plan," Draft – 9 January 2002, 6.

96 Firth, 2005, 165-166.

97 Ibid., 166.

98 Ibid., 165.

initial projects were complete, the NPS applied the knowledge and experience gained to other finished sections of the Parkway, including Section 1-S at Rocky Knob.[99]

The first part of the process involved a general clean-up phase, in which workers removed dead trees visible from the Parkway. They also cut down trees that were not visible from the road and left them in the woods laid lying down along the contours. Large stands of dead American chestnut trees were common throughout the Parkway and workers salvaged the timber to make posts and rails for fences, slats for picnic tables, and seats for benches (Figure 2.9). Workers also gave leftover timber to local farmers for use as firewood. The NPS in Washington initially criticized the clean-up process because of the detrimental effects to wildlife habitat. Malcolm Bird responded by changing his procedure to allow some dead trees to be left standing, "particularly if they were picturesque or if they were den trees."[100] The policy changed to allow dead trees to remain in view of the roadway to "avoid a too cleaned-up appearance" and to provide "shelter as well as food, in the form of insects, for wildlife."[101] Bird later revised his manual, referring to the phase as 'preliminary improvement of woods' instead of 'clean-up'.[102]

After completing clean-up operations, selective cutting began. Workers cut trees adjacent to the roadway creating a sequence of views into or through the forest.[103] Upon seeing the first section immediately after selective clearing, Abbott remarked:

> This first work in many respects is one of the most spectacular parts of the whole program. Comparisons before and after the work show how much of the natural beauty of the woods and fields have formerly been hidden by the debris, the slash and especially the sucker or stump growth resulting from careless forestry in the past. Beautiful vistas to the distance, glimpses into the woods and specimen laurel, rhododendron and azalea in the backgrounds are often revealed by a slight cutting under judicious supervision.[104]



Figure 2.9: Dead American chestnut trees at the Picnic Area prior to construction, (Parkway Archives, 1936).

After initial construction of the roadway, NPS landscape architects considered many of the side slopes adjacent to the road too steep, so workers performed additional grading work as part of the landscape development process (Figure 2.10). Workers reduced the overall steepness of slopes through a variety of methods and gave road shoulders a uniform width. This decision was one of the most interesting made by Bird, and proved both an aesthetic and a functional one:

> The greatest difficulty occured [sic] where the road cut was neither rock nor dirt but a mixture of both. Bird solved this problem by giving these cuts a 'dental treatment.' He had the workers comb out the loose material between the hard rock, exposing a rugged and very interesting rock outcropping. . . . With the rock crevices cleaned out there not only was a better esthetic appearance but give nature a chance and in a year or two tiny seeds of rhododendron found their way into the tiny crannies and crevices and today when the rhododendron are in bloom it is a rock garden that is something to behold.[105]

99 Ibid., 166.

100 Quoted in Firth, 2005, 167.

101 Ibid.

102 Malcolm A. Bird, "Planning the Complete Landscape Development," Chapter XIII, Division 2, Section 5, 1939, Parkway Archives.

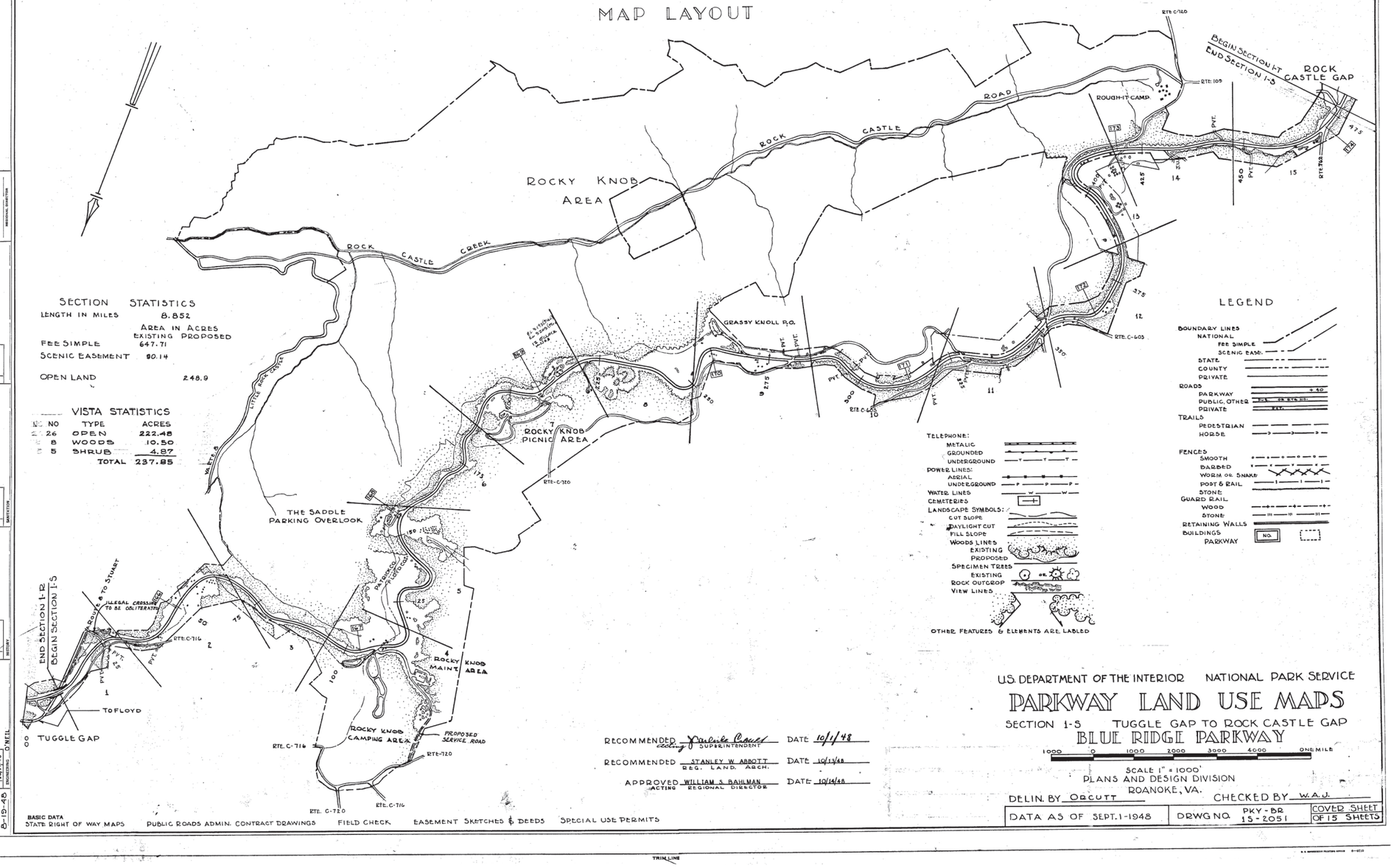
103 Firth, 2005, 167.

104 Stanley W. Abbott "Acting Superintendent's Annual Report," 30 June 1943, Parkway Archives, 15.

105 Abbuehl, Edward H. "Landscape Program on The Blue Ridge Parkway," 12 May 1980, MSS, Parkway Archives, RG 5, Series 41, Box 52, Folder 35.

TRIM LINE

MAP LAYOUT



SECTION STATISTICS

	Area in Acres	
	Existing	Proposed
LENGTH IN MILES	8.852	
FEE SIMPLE	647.71	
SCENIC EASEMENT	90.14	
OPEN LAND	248.9	

VISTA STATISTICS

NO	TYPE	ACRES
26	OPEN	222.48
8	WOODS	10.50
5	SHRUB	4.87
	TOTAL	237.85

LEGEND

BOUNDARY LINES
- NATIONAL
  - FEE SIMPLE
  - SCENIC EASE.
- STATE
- COUNTY
- PRIVATE

ROADS
- PARKWAY
- PUBLIC, OTHER
- PRIVATE

TRAILS
- PEDESTRIAN
- HORSE

FENCES
- SMOOTH
- BARBED
- WORM OR SNAKE
- POST & RAIL
- STONE

GUARD RAIL
- WOOD
- STONE

RETAINING WALLS

BUILDINGS
- PARKWAY

TELEPHONE:
- METALIC
- GROUNDED
- UNDERGROUND

POWER LINES:
- AERIAL
- UNDERGROUND

WATER LINES

CEMETERIES

LANDSCAPE SYMBOLS:
- CUT SLOPE
- DAYLIGHT CUT
- FILL SLOPE
- WOODS LINES
  - EXISTING
  - PROPOSED
- SPECIMEN TREES
  - EXISTING
- ROCK OUTCROP
- VIEW LINES

OTHER FEATURES & ELEMENTS ARE LABLED

RECOMMENDED _____ SUPERINTENDENT DATE 10/1/48

RECOMMENDED STANLEY W. ABBOTT REG. LAND. ARCH. DATE 10/13/48

APPROVED WILLIAM S. BAHLMAN ACTING REGIONAL DIRECTOR DATE 10/14/48

BASIC DATA
STATE RIGHT OF WAY MAPS | PUBLIC ROADS ADMIN. CONTRACT DRAWINGS | FIELD CHECK | EASEMENT SKETCHES & DEEDS | SPECIAL USE PERMITS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PARKWAY LAND USE MAPS

SECTION 1-S TUGGLE GAP TO ROCK CASTLE GAP

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 ONE MILE

SCALE 1" = 1000'

PLANS AND DESIGN DIVISION
ROANOKE, VA.

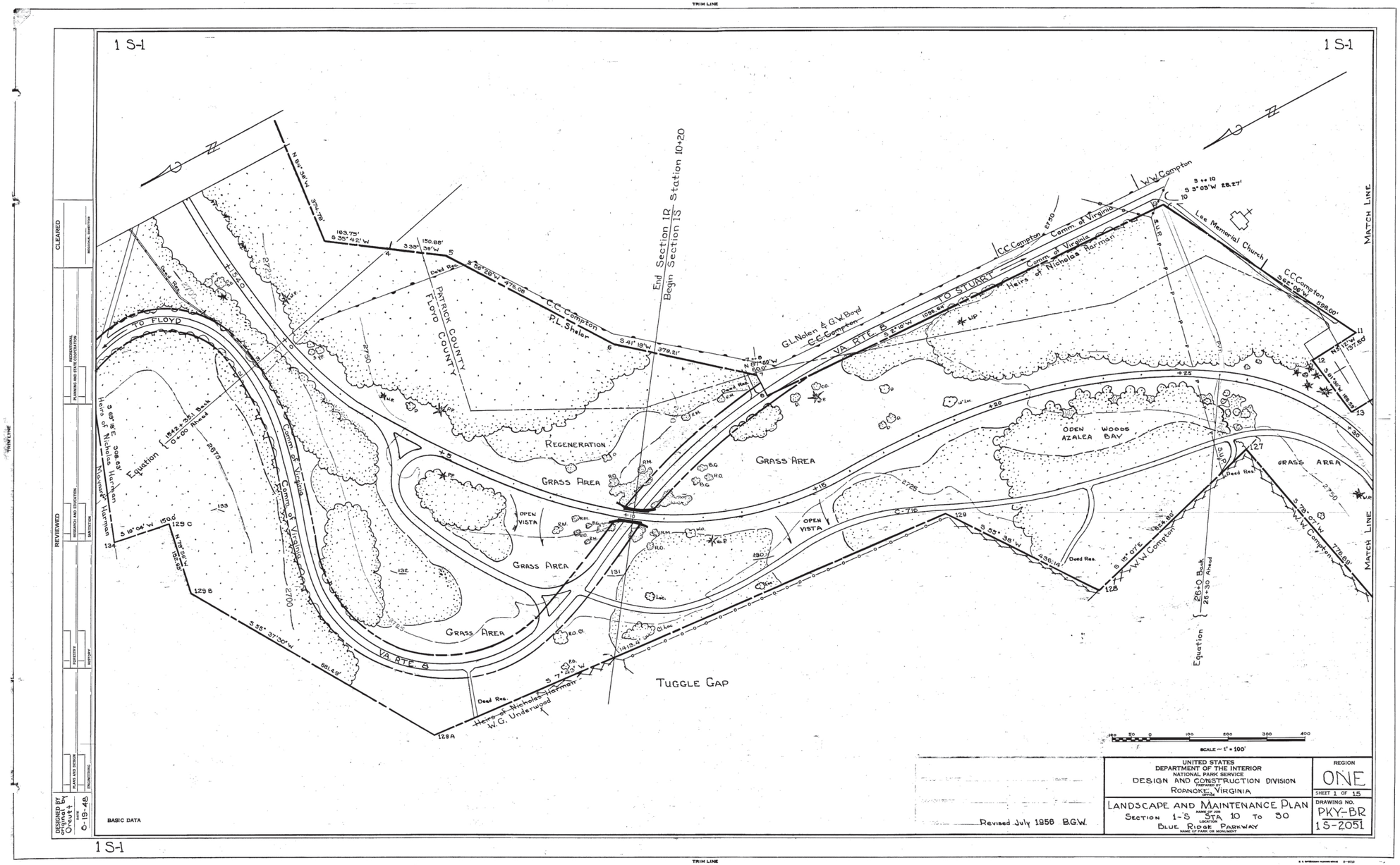
DELIN. BY OBCUTT CHECKED BY W.A.J.

DATA AS OF SEPT. 1-1948	DRWG NO. PKY-BR 1S-2051	COVER SHEET OF 15 SHEETS

CLEARED
REGIONAL DIRECTOR
RECREATIONAL PLANNING AND STATE COORDINATION
REVIEWED
RESEARCH AND EDUCATION
SANITATION
10/9/48 ARNOLD
HISTORY
10/14/48
ENGINEERING O'NEIL
DESIGNED BY OBCUTT
DATE 8-19-48

TRIM LINE

1948 - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - Index Sheet



Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

1948 (Revised 1956) - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 1

Illustration 2.2

Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

1948 - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 2

Illustration 2.3

Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

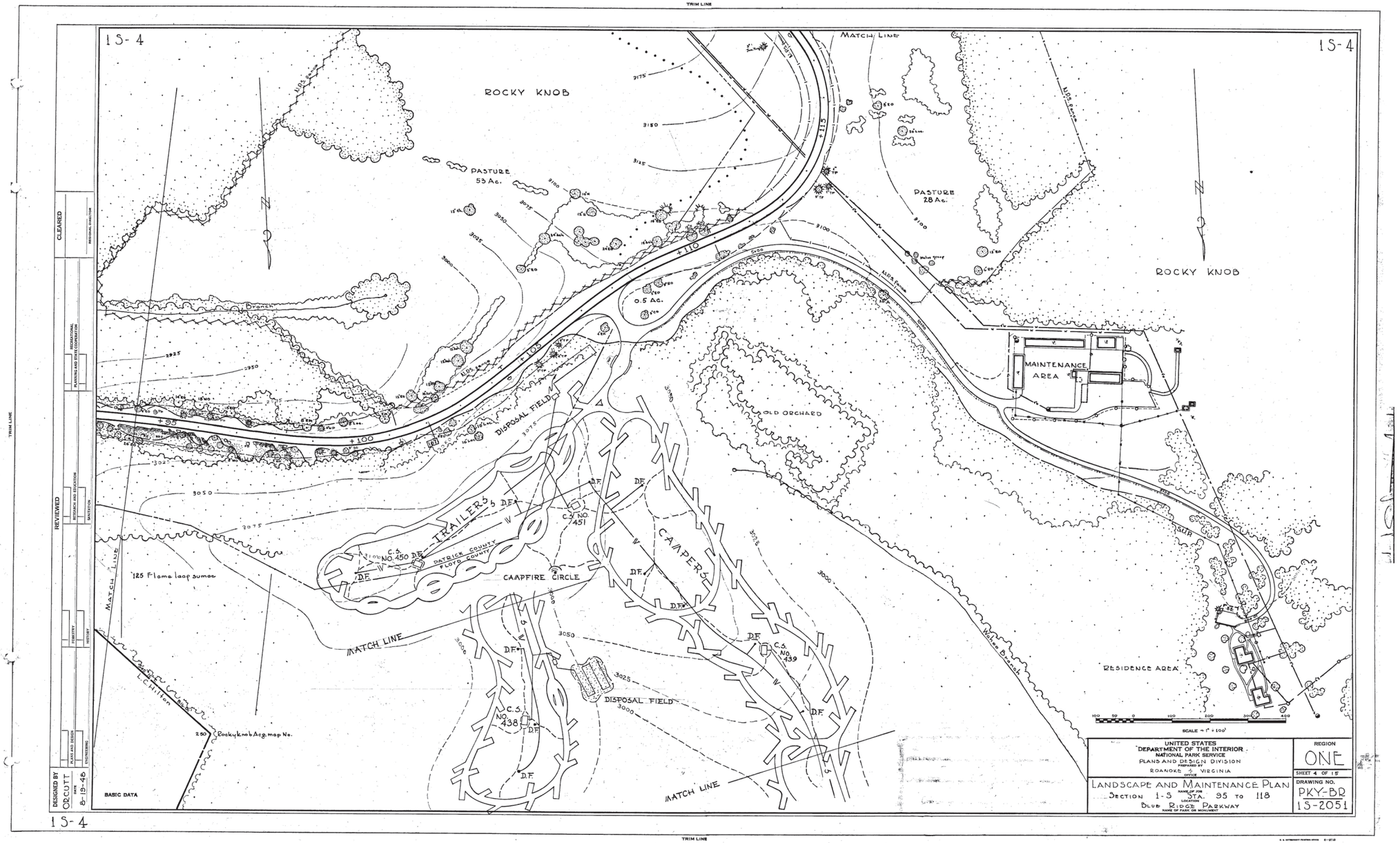
Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

1948 - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 3

Illustration 2.4



Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

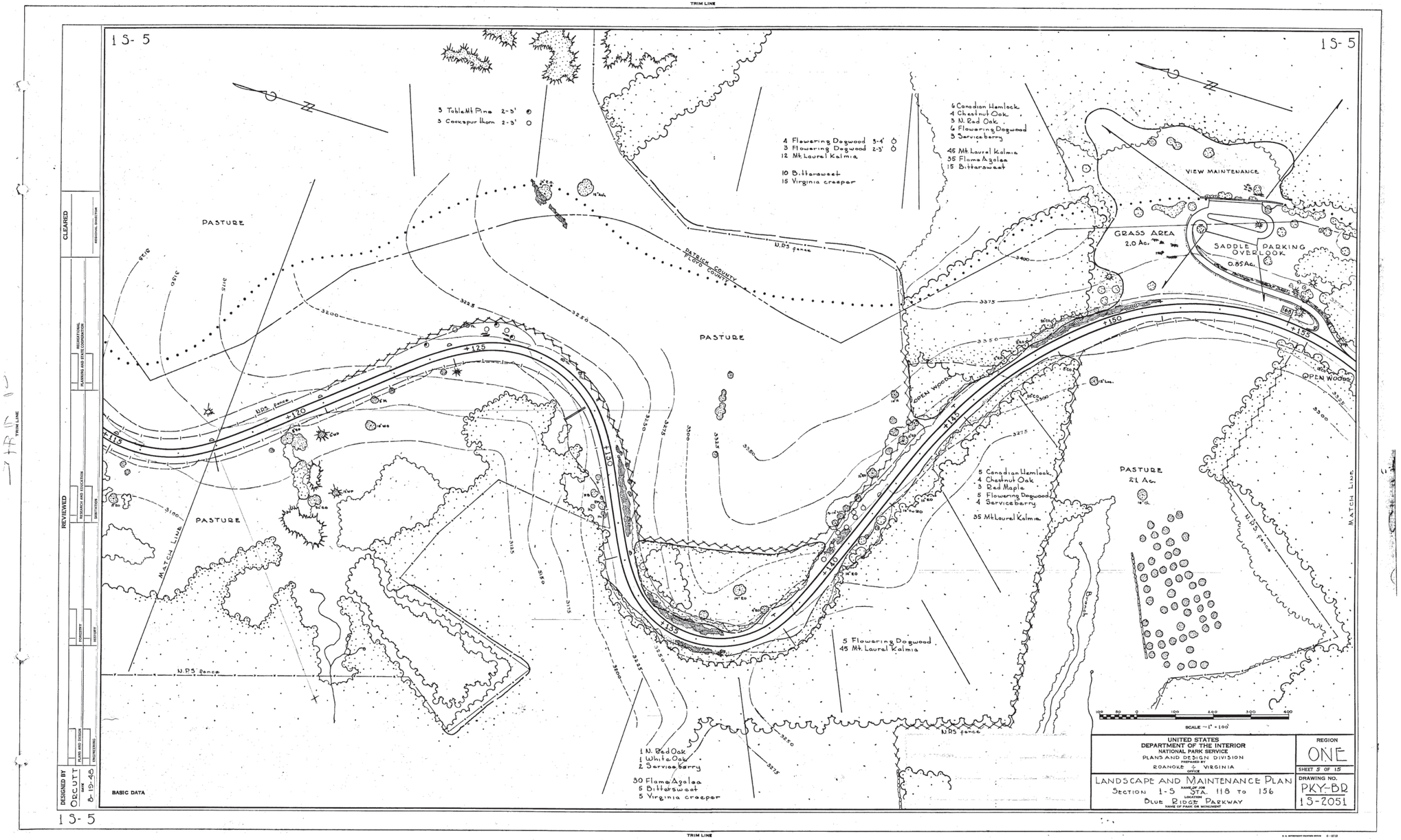
Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

1948 - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 4

Illustration 2.5



1948 - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 5

Site History

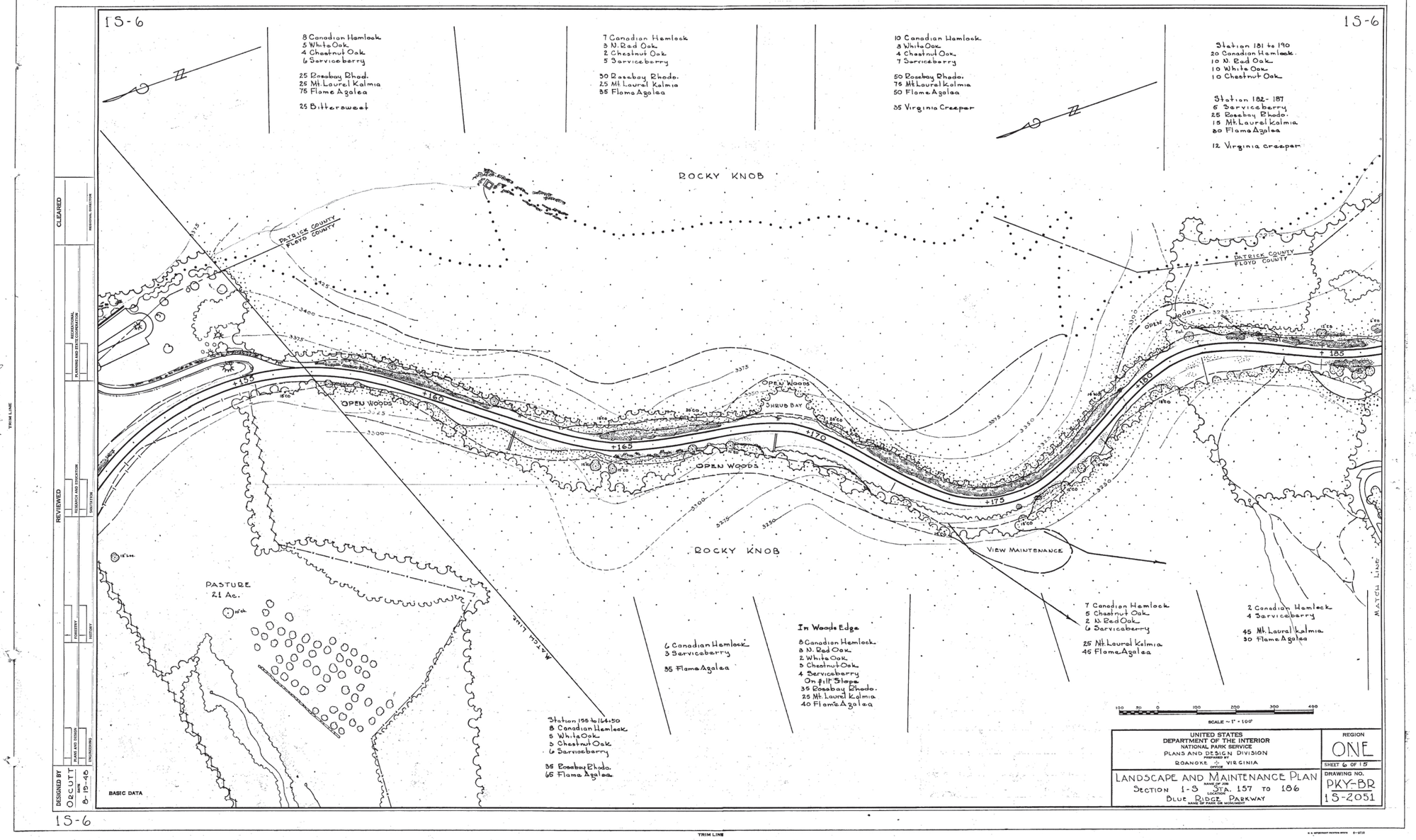
Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

Illustration 2.6



Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

1948 - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 6

Illustration 2.7

TRIM LINE

1S-7

6 Chestnut Oak
5 N. Red Oak
5 White Oak
55 Flame Azalea

20 Rosebay Rhodo
11 Mt. Laurel Kalmia
15 Flame Azalea

7 Flowering Dogwood
2.5 Rosebay Rhodo
2.5 Mt. Laurel Kalmia
2.5 Flame Azalea
5 Virginia creeper

5 Canadian Hemlock
4 N. Red Oak
3 White Oak
2 Chestnut Oak
2.5 Flame Azalea

ROCKY KNOB

GRASS AREA
2.2 Ac.

PATRICK COUNTY
FLOYD COUNTY

+195
+200
+205
+210
+215

GRASS AREA
2.0 Ac.

ROCKY KNOB

12 O'CLOCK KNOB FO

LODGE

1.5 Ac.

LODGE PARKING OVERLOOK

GRASS & SHRUB BAY

GRASS BAY

169

GAS STATION

ROCKY KNOB

PICNIC GROUND

PICNIC GROUND

MATCH LINE

MATCH LINE

12 Canadian Hemlock
7 N. Red Oak
5 White Oak
5 Chestnut Oak

55 Rosebay Rhodo
40 Mt. Laurel Kalmia
60 Flame Azalea
75 Flame Leaf Sumac
28 Virginia creeper

Seedlings
75 Chestnut Oak
50 N. Red Oak
50 White Oak
2.5 Shellbark Hickory
2.5 Red Maple
Shrubs
75 Rosebay Rhodo
50 Mt. Laurel Kalmia
150 Flame Azalea

13 Canadian Hemlock
6 White Oak
8 N. Red Oak
17 Flowering Dogwood

60 Rosebay Rhodo.
35 Mt. Laurel Kalmia
65 Flame Azalea
16 Virginia creeper

10 Pump House

SCALE - 1" = 100'

BASIC DATA

CLEARED
REVIEWED
PLANNING AND DESIGN
PLANNING AND STAFF COORDINATION
RESEARCH AND EDUCATION
INTERPRETATION
FORESTRY
HISTORY
PLANS AND DESIGN
ENGINEERING
DESIGNED BY OSCUTT
DATE 8-19-48

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
PLANS AND DESIGN DIVISION
PREPARED BY
ROANOKE : VIRGINIA
OFFICE

REGION ONE
SHEET 7 OF 15

LANDSCAPE AND MAINTENANCE PLAN
NAME OF PLAN
SECTION 1-S LOCATION STA. 186 TO 219
BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY
NAME OF PARK OR MONUMENT

DRAWING NO. PKY-BR 1S-2051

1S-7

TRIM LINE

Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

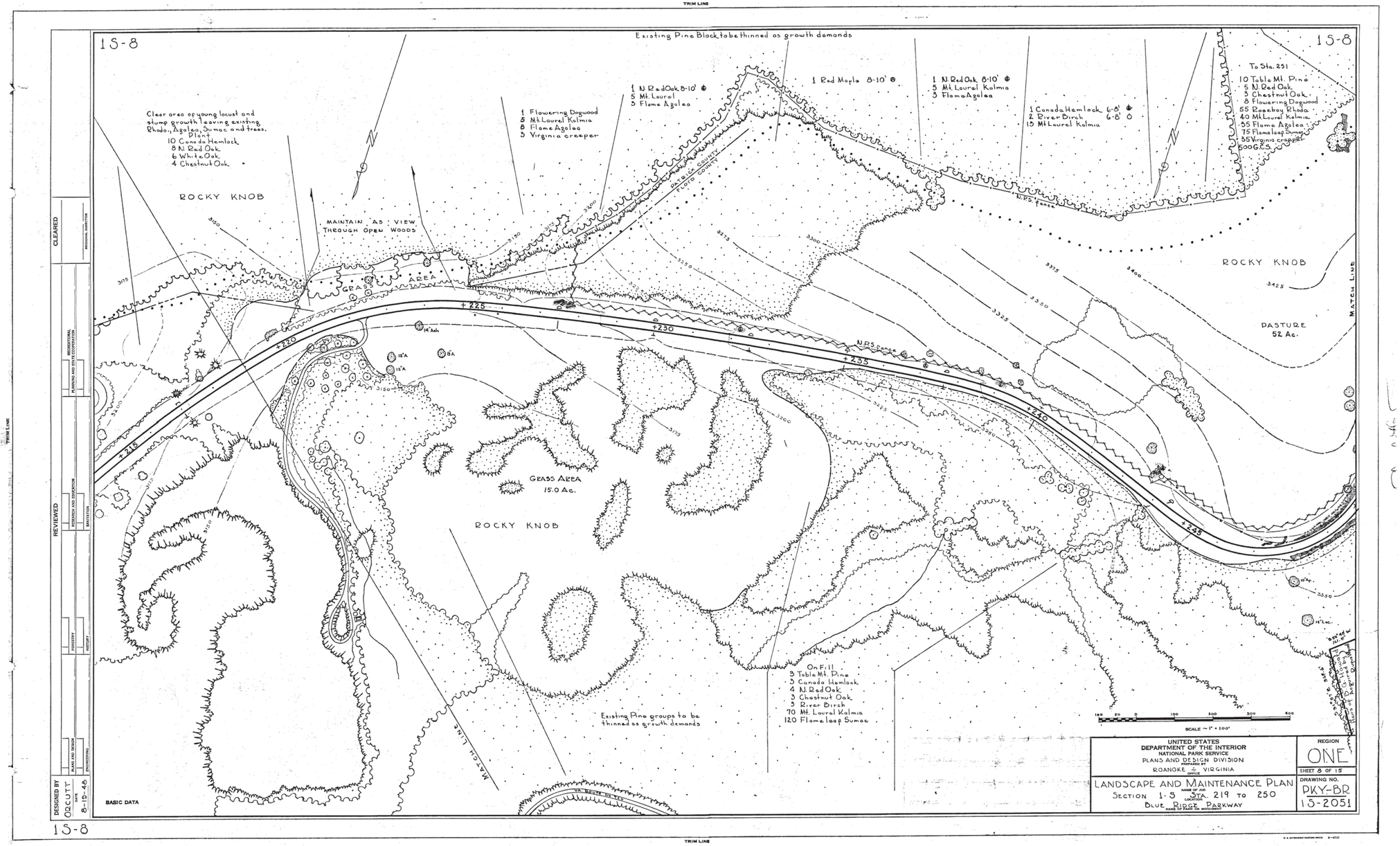
Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

1948 - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 7

Illustration 2.8



1948 - Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMS) - Section 1S - 8

Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

Illustration 2.9



Figure 2.10: Fine grading around rock outcrops at Rocky Knob, (Parkway Archives, 1938).



Figure 2.11: The same slope after fine grading and preliminary woods improvements, (Parkway Archives, 1939).

The result of this method of 'fine grading' is visible in the rock outcroppings just south of the Gas Station in Rocky Knob, where over time a variety of tree and shrub species have made a home within cracks and fissures of the outcrops located there. Figure 2.11 shows a portion of the Parkway in Rocky Knob Recreation Area located at station 1+37 near milepost 167 after preliminary improvement of woods, selective cutting, and fine grading around rock outcrops.

The next step in the process involved planting and revegetation. Workers dug holes for the plants and used an elaborate staking system that Bird devised. Workers obtained trees, shrubs, and groundcover plants from land adjacent to the Parkway and occasionally from commercial nurseries although sourcing native plants from nurseries proved difficult.[106] According to Rock Castle Gorge residents and early development plans for Rocky Knob Recreation Area, workers established a small nursery in Rock Castle Gorge to grow and store native plants prior to installation along the Parkway.

The PLUMs for Section 1-S show a wide variety of plant species used for the varying conditions found along the roadside. The maps feature site-specific lists of plants at intervals varying from 100 to 400 feet. While the exact locations for plantings are not always illustrated, the maps do contain quantity and size information for each plant, creating a remarkably detailed record of the plantings installed within this section of the Parkway.

106 Firth, 2005, 167, 175.

The PLUMs show the following species[107] installed in Section 1-S:

Northern Red Oak (Quercus falcata / Quercus borealis)
White Oak (Quercus alba)
Chestnut Oak (Quercus prinus)
Red Maple (Acer rubrum)
Shagbark Hickory (Carya ovata)
Tulip Tree (Liriodendron tulipifera)
Flowering Dogwood (Cornus florida)
Mountain Winterberry (Ilex montana)
Mountain Laurel (Kalmia latifolia)
Flame Azalea (Rhododendron calendulaceum)
Rosebay Rhododendron (Rhododendron maximum)
Flameleaf Sumac (Rhus copallinum)
Virginia Creeper (Parthenocissus quinquefolia)
Table Mountain Pine (Pinus pungens)
Cockspur Thorn (Crataegus crus-galli)
Canadian Hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)
Serviceberry (Amelanchier canadensis)
Bittersweet (Celastrus scandens)

The process for seeding the road shoulder involved cutting 3 inches below the top of pavement and then adding topsoil. Workers added lime and fertilizer and raked seed into the soil mixture by hand using coarse pine needle rakes. There were two seed mixes specified, one for use in open areas and another for the wooded portions.[108] The policy of using native plant species did not extend to

107 The PLUMS only provide common plant names. The narrative of this report includes inferred botanical names for the sake of clarity; however, they may not be 100% accurate.

108 Abbott, 1943,15-16.

grasses and the mixes included a percentage of rye grass, fescue, and clover. The final step involved mulching the area with hay and straw.[109]

The CCC supplied much of the labor for the landscape development of Section 1-S. The first CCC camp established on the Parkway, identified as NP-14, was located within Rocky Knob at the eastern edge of Rock Castle Gorge, near the confluence of Rock Castle and Little Rock Castle Creeks in July of 1938 (Figure 2.12). The enrollees' split their time between landscape development work and other tasks, including the construction of various buildings within developed areas of Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Planning and Land Acquisition. The planning for the Parkway involved not only the location and construction of the roadway, but also the inclusion of recreation areas. According to Abbott, who had seen these types of additions in the Westchester County system, "In locating the Parkway the effort has been to provide a scenic motorway devoted in an almost complete sense to recreation. It will be a road-type, which will invite leisurely driving, and frequent stops for a period of hours or of days by the vacationer. It is unquestionably desirable, therefore, to set aside certain worthwhile areas at which the motorist may stop and to provide facilities for such activities as camping, picnicking, hiking, horseback riding, fishing, and swimming."[110] Interior Secretary Ickes noted from the initial planning stages of the Parkway that these recreation areas would be included in Parkway construction.[111] The federal government was to be responsible for the land acquisition for the recreation areas.

The December 1934 master plan for the Parkway developed a list of 13 potential recreation areas. In this report, Abbott emphasized the need to protect these areas from "abusive land practices" and for providing visitor services in this region of the country.[112] The 1934 plan proposed four 'major' recreation areas and seven 'minor' recreation areas. Natural Bridge, Peaks of Otter, Pinnacles of Dan, and The Bluff were the planned 'major' recreation areas while Humpback Rocks, Irish Creek, Pine Spur, Cumberland Knob, Gilam Gap, the Cascades, and Rocky Knob were the planned 'minor' recreation areas. The Master Plan proposed that each of these major recreation areas would include overnight accommodations in a lodge, hotel, or cabins. Minor recreation areas spaced between these major centers were to provide gas stations and small restaurants. Trails and campgrounds would also be included in the recreation areas.



Figure 2.12: CCC Camp NP-14 in Rock Castle Gorge, (Parkway Archives, 1938).

Over the next two years, plans for the recreation areas were developed, refined, and approved. The NPS made changes to the initial list of recreation areas, adding some and removing others. By 1936, planners created a revised version of the master plan for Parkway recreation areas that increased the number of proposed recreation areas from 13 to 19.

A key player in the acquisition of property at Rocky Knob was Sam Weems. Weems was employed by the Federal Land Bank in 1935 when he first started working for the NPS "on loan" along the Parkway.[113] Weems worked appraising properties for the land acquisition for the recreation areas. His first project was Rocky Knob and his enthusiasm for the work did not go unnoticed by Abbuehl:

> Much thanks is due Sam Weems who didn't mind taking his sleeping bag, rootin' tootin' up the hollows and every place else to see what the corn patch or the potato patch or some other scrawny place would appraise at; trying to draw maps. We had no maps at all of this area.[114]

109 Firth, 2005, 170.

110 Quoted in Ibid., 201.

111 Ibid., 202.

112 Ibid.

113 Samuel P. Weems. Oral History by S. Herbert Evison, 16 July 1971, 5, transcript in Parkway Archives.

114 Abbuehl, Oral History, 1971, 20.

Abbott also spoke highly of Weems:

> The Resettlement Administration sent down two land appraisers, a man by the name of Sullivan and a man by the name of Weems. Sam Weems had as much enthusiasm then as now and sold himself immediately. He would do very well with the country club people in Roanoke on the weekend and equally well with the hill people during the week—not shaving when he shouldn't but shaving when he should.[115]

Weems was extremely knowledgeable of the areas he worked in and often looked for opportunities overlooked by others. At Rocky Knob, he suggested acquiring Rock Castle Gorge in addition to the 1000 acres recommended by Abbuehl in the master plan. He convinced parkway staff that the gorge and some other "pretty good" tracts should be included in the recreation area, ultimately recommending increasing the park's size to more than 4,000 acres, changing Rocky Knob from a 'minor' recreation area to a 'major' one in the process. By January 1938, more than 3,500 acres had been acquired using Resettlement Administration funds. Planning for the facilities was already underway.[116]

Sam Weems soon became a full time NPS employee with the title of project manager for the recreation areas. In his new role, Weems began to negotiate the acquisition and supervise the development of the recreation areas he had appraised in his previous role, including Rocky Knob.[117] Unlike Abbott and most of the design team in Roanoke, Weems grew up in the south, giving him a slight advantage in his negotiations and dealings with the mountain people.

NPS policy required the preparation of development plans for each recreation area along the route. A 1936 General Development Plan for Rocky Knob was the first of these plans (Illustration 2.10). The plan indicates proposed locations for many of the recreation area elements such as trails, shelters, campground, and picnic facilities. In addition, the plan indicates areas slated for soil improvements, fire hazard reduction, nurseries, and other land development activities. The map also shows buildings slated for demolition within the boundaries of Rocky Knob Recreation Area, offering insight into the configuration of the small homes and farms that made up the Rock Castle Gorge Community prior to Parkway construction.

The first master plan for Rocky Knob found in the archives is dated 1941(Illustration 2.11). This plan was a refinement of the 1936 plan. As stated previously, the goal for the recreation areas was four-fold:

A) Conservation of natural scenery

B) Provision of facilities for active recreation

C) Provision of food, lodging, and motor service

D) Location of utility buildings for maintenance and operation of the parks and Parkway

The 1941 master plan shows how the NPS intended to meet those goals within Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

In 1937, Kenneth McCarter joined the Roanoke office to assist with the planning efforts underway for the Parkway. A trained architect, who had worked for the NPS since 1928, McCarter was especially adept at following the precepts of the NPS rustic architecture aesthetic. In Roanoke, McCarter worked as the main architect for the early buildings on the Parkway.[118] McCarter worked closely with another architect in the Roanoke office, Robert G. Hall, on the designs of trail shelters, comfort stations, and pumping stations in the recreation areas. Firth states, "In order to develop an architecture appropriate to the landscape, [McCarter and Hall] drew inspiration from the log cabins and humble structures built with frugal ingenuity on mountain farms."[119] A simple barn photographed on private property

115 Stanley W. Abbott. Oral History, 15.

116 Samuel P. Weems. Letter to Stanley W. Abbott, 6 January 1938, Parkway Archives. Abbuehl, Oral History, 1971, 18-20; and Samuel P. Weems, interview S. Herbert Evison, 16 July 1971, NPS Harpers Ferry Center, tape no. 79, transcript in Parkway Archives, 5.

117 Firth, 2005, 189.

118 Firth, 2005, 193.

119 Ibid., 201.





Figure 2.13: A barn photographed on private property adjacent to the Parkway (left) in 1936 by Parkway Architect, Robert G. Hall, likely served as the inspiration for Comfort Station #9 (right) built in the Picnic Area at Rocky Knob in 1941 and used as a Parkway standard for many years.

by Hall in 1939, in a location adjacent to the Parkway near Tuggle Gap in Rocky Knob, probably provided the inspiration for an early comfort station standard on the Parkway (Figure 2.13).

Trail System. Trails were often the first items constructed in recreation areas and Rocky Knob was no different. By 1937, the NPS built more than 10 miles of trails within the recreation area (Figure 2.14). Many of the trails at Rocky Knob followed established roads within Rock Castle Gorge and paths from the gorge to the rim of the surrounding mountains. Early on, a section of the Appalachian Trail routed through Rocky Knob[120]. Abbott described the section that passed through the Rocky Knob Recreation Area:

> Portions of the Appalachian Trail are now integrated with the parkway trail system, as for example up Rocky Knob, a superb piece of walking through flame azaleas, which had never existed for the Appalachian Trail before.[121]

Trail Shelter. After completing the majority of the park trail system, attention turned to the construction of a trail shelter near the summit of Rocky Knob. Robert Hall likely designed the shelter, which stands at the edge of the mountain, as he oversaw its construction (Figure 2.15). The building is a variant of the traditional Adirondack shelter and features a native stone chimney, wall, and floor. Heavy timbers with square posts support a roof finished with hand split oak shakes (Figure 2.16). Finished in 1937, this shelter was one of the very first buildings completed on the Parkway.



Figure 2.14: Trail in Rocky Knob near milepost 169, (Parkway Archives, 1936).

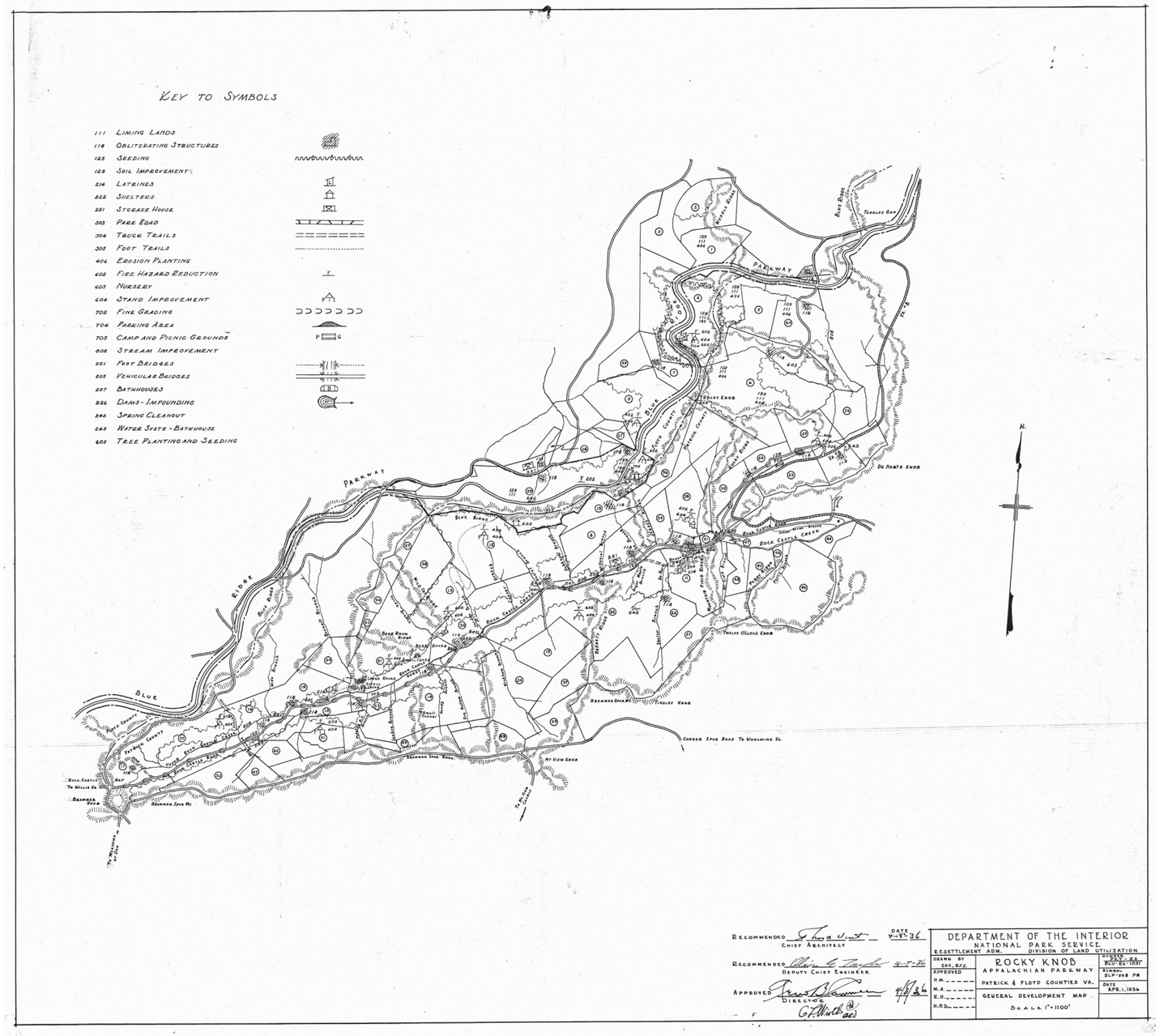
Rocky Knob Picnic Area and Campground. In the 1930s, the NPS based their campground designs on the work of Emilio P. Meinecke, a plant pathologist who worked as a consultant for both the NPS and the United States Forest Service. Meinecke recommended careful site selection for campgrounds based on soil types and clear organization of vehicular access and campsites, in order to limit damage to natural settings and systems. The designers of the campground at Rocky Knob followed these principles when laying out both the campground and picnic area at Rocky Knob.[122]

Parkway staff in Roanoke prepared plans for the picnic area and campground at Rocky Knob and construction was underway on the picnic area by 1937. The plans show two loops set back from the Parkway in a protected cove. The first loop functioned as a picnic area with a variety of parking slip configurations to accommodate a wide range of group sizes (Illustration 2.12). The second loop

120 The Appalachian Trail route changed over time, and it no longer runs through the Rocky Knob.

121 Stanley W. Abbott. Oral History, 36.

122 Firth, 2005, 198.



1936 - General Development Map

Site History

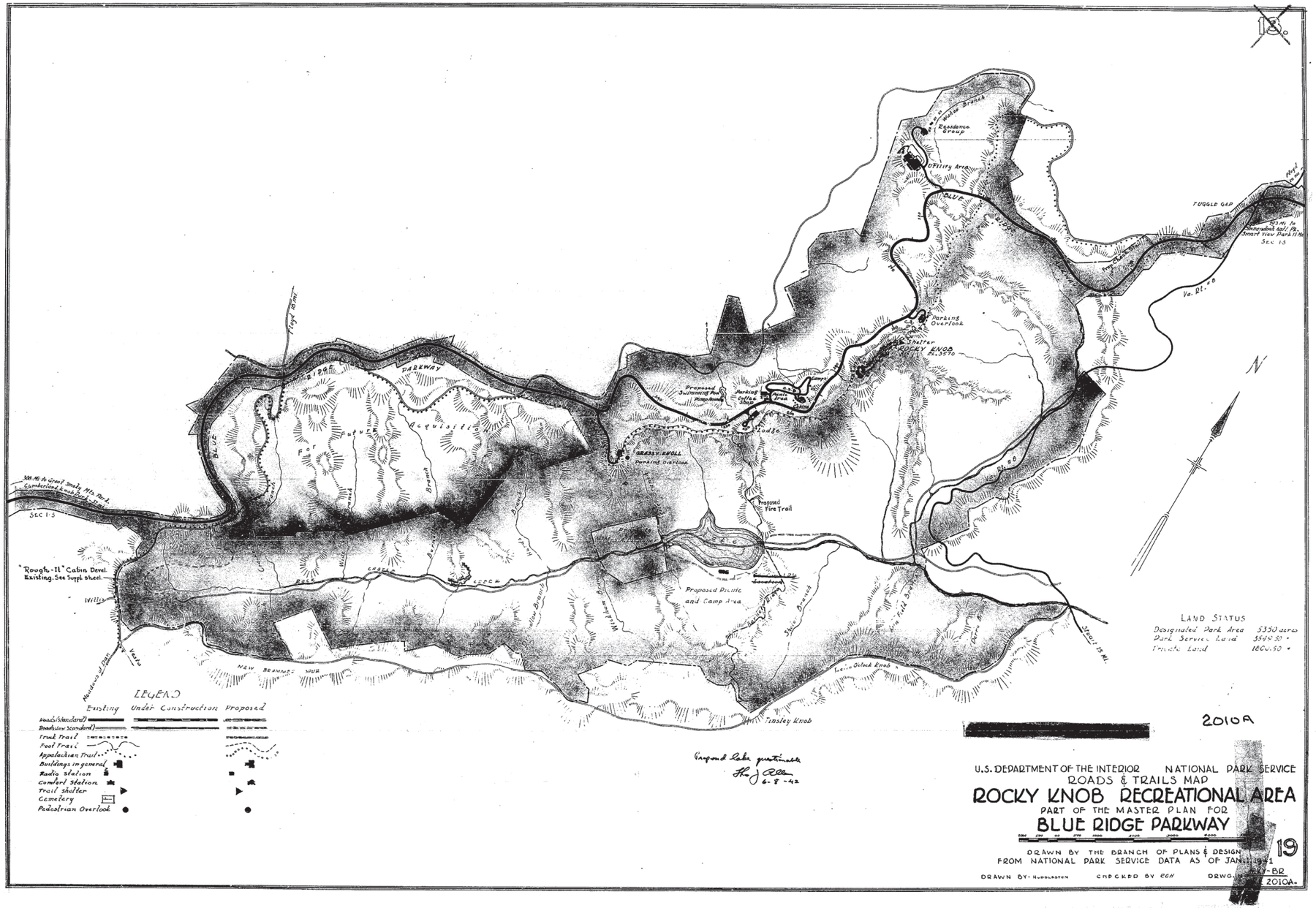
Rocky Knob Recreation Area

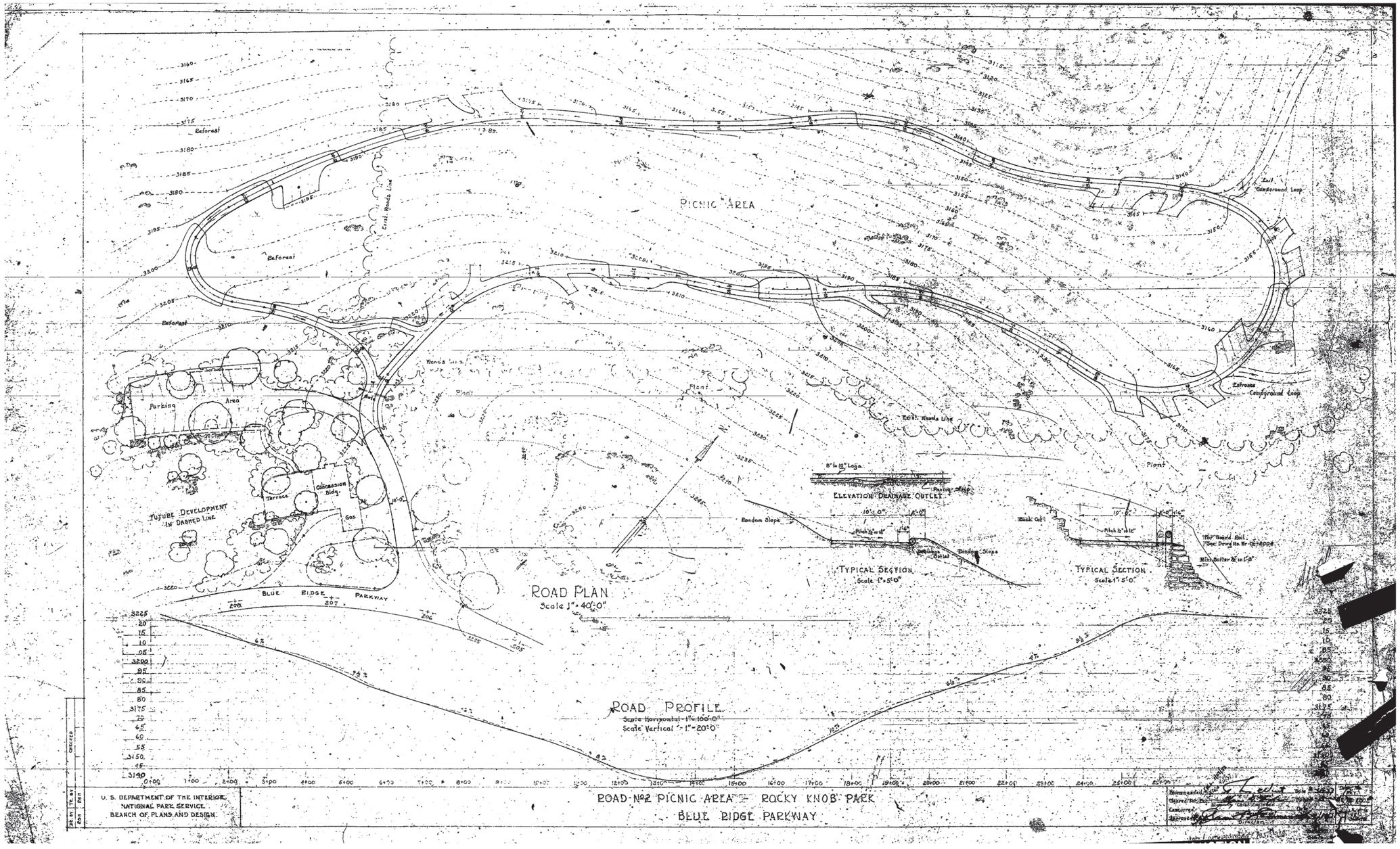
Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

Illustration 2.10


Residence Group
Office Area
Parking Overlook
Shelter
ROCKY KNOB
El. 3570
Proposed Swimming Pool
Parking
Office
Shelter
Lodge
GRASSY KNOLL
Parking Overlook
Proposed Fire Trail
Proposed Picnic and Camp Area
Tanbark Ridge
Skin Branch
Wolf Laurel Branch
Horse Trail Branch
Dora Branch
Stony Fork
Tanbark Ridge
Tanbark Ridge
Wolf Laurel Branch
Skin



1937 - Road No. 2 Picnic Area Plan, Profile, and Sections

Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

Illustration 2.12

acted as the campground, with separate areas for tent and trailer camping, comprising sixteen campsites (Illustration 2.13). Each site contained a fireplace and picnic table. WPA workers built fireplaces designed by the Roanoke office to blend in with nearby rock outcroppings, lining them with a type of locally quarried soapstone (Figure 2.17). According to Firth, "the landscape architects in the Roanoke office gave considerable thought to the design of small items in the picnic and campgrounds...they were guided by the precepts of simplicity, economy, and rustic charter illustrated in National Park Service manuals."[123] Parkway staff designed tables made from salvaged chestnut wood (Figure 2.18). Rock Castle Gorge resident Era Wade recalled her husband working for the CCC on the construction of features within the Picnic Area, "He, he helped makin' tables an ' them rock walls around there, where they have down there in the picnic area."[124] The dry-stack walls, tree wells, stone curbing, and culvert headwalls highlighted the rustic-style stonework typical of early Parkway construction (Figure 2.19). According to Jolly, "Masonry in the early years was used in a manner that would allow the visitor on foot to see its beauty blending into the land."[125] Development plans from 1940 also show six stone drinking fountains located throughout the picnic and campgrounds. It is unclear how many of these fountains were actually constructed. Rustic log guardrails that blended seamlessly into the surrounding forest lined the steeper sections of the vehicular loops (Figure 2.20), and construction drawings called for log curb in some locations.

By 1941, overcrowding at picnic areas throughout the Parkway had become a problem. Church, school and club groups were the most intensive users and Parkway staff developed plans to provide "group size" facilities at all of the recreation areas to accommodate these visitors (Illustration 2.14). At Rocky Knob, workers constructed a new vehicular turnaround and group parking area along with playing fields, a playground, horseshoe courts, and seesaws in a large open field near the intersection of the picnic and camping loops.[126]

123 Firth, 1993, 124.

124 Era Wade. Oral History, 5.

125 Jolley, 1987, 26.

126 Quin, 1997, pp. 168, 214.



Figure 2.15: WPA worker constructing the Trail Shelter at Rocky Knob in 1937. Photo taken by Robert G. Hall, (Parkway Archives, 1937).



Figure 2.16: Completed Trail Shelter, Photo taken by Robert G. Hall, (Parkway Archives, 1938).



Figure 2.17: Stone fireplace in the picnic area, (Parkway Archives, 1938)



Figure 2.18: Chestnut picnic table, (Parkway Archives, 1938).



Figure 2.19: Stacked stone wall in Picnic Area, (Parkway Archives, 1938).



Figure 2.20: Rustic timber guard rail in Picnic Area, (Parkway Archives, 1938).

The same year, an ERA crew built Comfort Station #9 near the intersection of the picnic and camping loops. Plainer in design and lacking the heavy timber construction that characterized the very first buildings on the parkway, this comfort station nonetheless featured rustic and regional touches including a flagstone porch floor, an exterior clad in vertical board and batten, and a shake roof.[127] Hall probably designed this building as well; drawing inspiration and detailing directly from a vernacular barn he photographed along the Parkway near Tuggle Gap, in Rocky Knob (Figure 2.13).

Gas Station. Construction plans for the picnic area and campground included preliminary drawings of a gas station, concession area/coffee shop, and associated parking lot near the entrance to the driving loops. These facilities also appear on the 1941 master plan in a similar configuration (Illustration 2.11). Hall produced the earliest design for the coffee shop and gas station in 1936 (Figure 2.21). Parkway staff proceeded with planning and design of these features during this era of development, and while they never constructed the coffee shop; they did eventually build the gas station and parking area after World War II.

Other Projects. The Roanoke office prepared plans for a variety of projects during this period that were not completed. The 1941 Master Plan shows the following unrealized projects:

- A lake with a second picnic and camp area in Rock Castle Gorge
- A swimming pool located in a low area adjacent west of the picnic area
- A lodge located at Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook
- An parking overlook on the Grassy Knoll near milepost 170
- A series of cabins in the picnic area

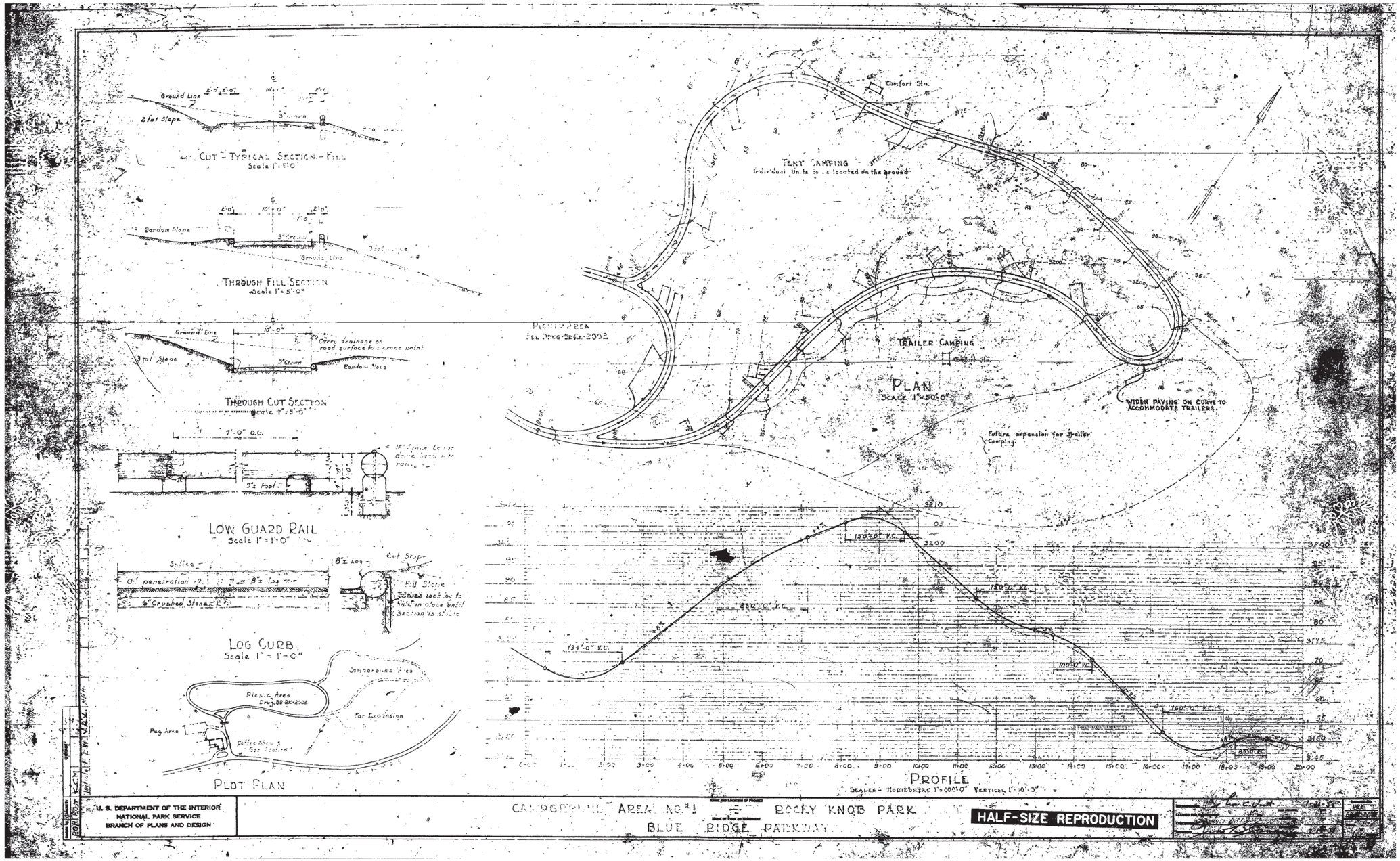
In addition, the NPS made tentative plans to construct a "future negro area" within Rocky Knob, in order to provide separate picnic and camping facilities for African-Americans. The war interrupted these plans and the facilities were never developed.[128]

Pump House. The CCC built a small pump house to supply water needed for the picnic and campground as well as planned future developments at Rocky Knob. Work on the building finished in 1941. According to Firth, the structure, "is a larger version of the springhouses found on mountain farms."[129] Designed by McCarter and Hall in 1940, this structure incorporates many rustic features into its design, including a stone porch, a stacked stone retaining wall, vertical board and batten infill in the front gable, split shake roofing, and rough-hewn siding (Figure 2.22, Illustration 2.15). The NPS completed the water and sewage disposal systems for the campground and picnic area in 1941. Water came from a nearby spring.

127 Firth, 2005, 202.

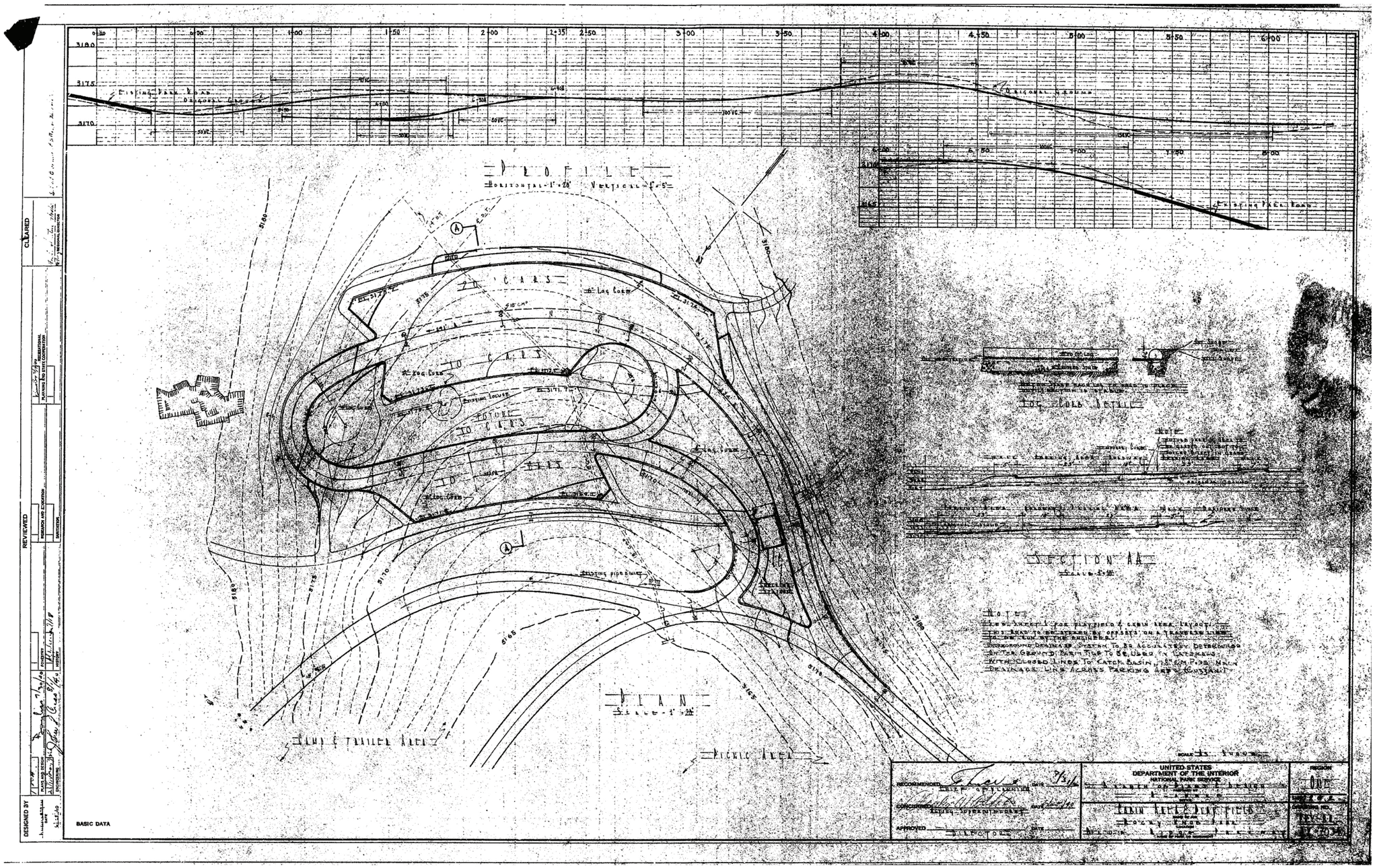
128 Quin, 1997, 214.

129 Firth, 2005, 202.



1938 - Campground Area No. 1 Sections, Plans, and Profile

Illustration 2.13



1940 - Cabin Area and Play Field - Camp and Trailer Area Profile, Plan, Sections, and Detail

Site History

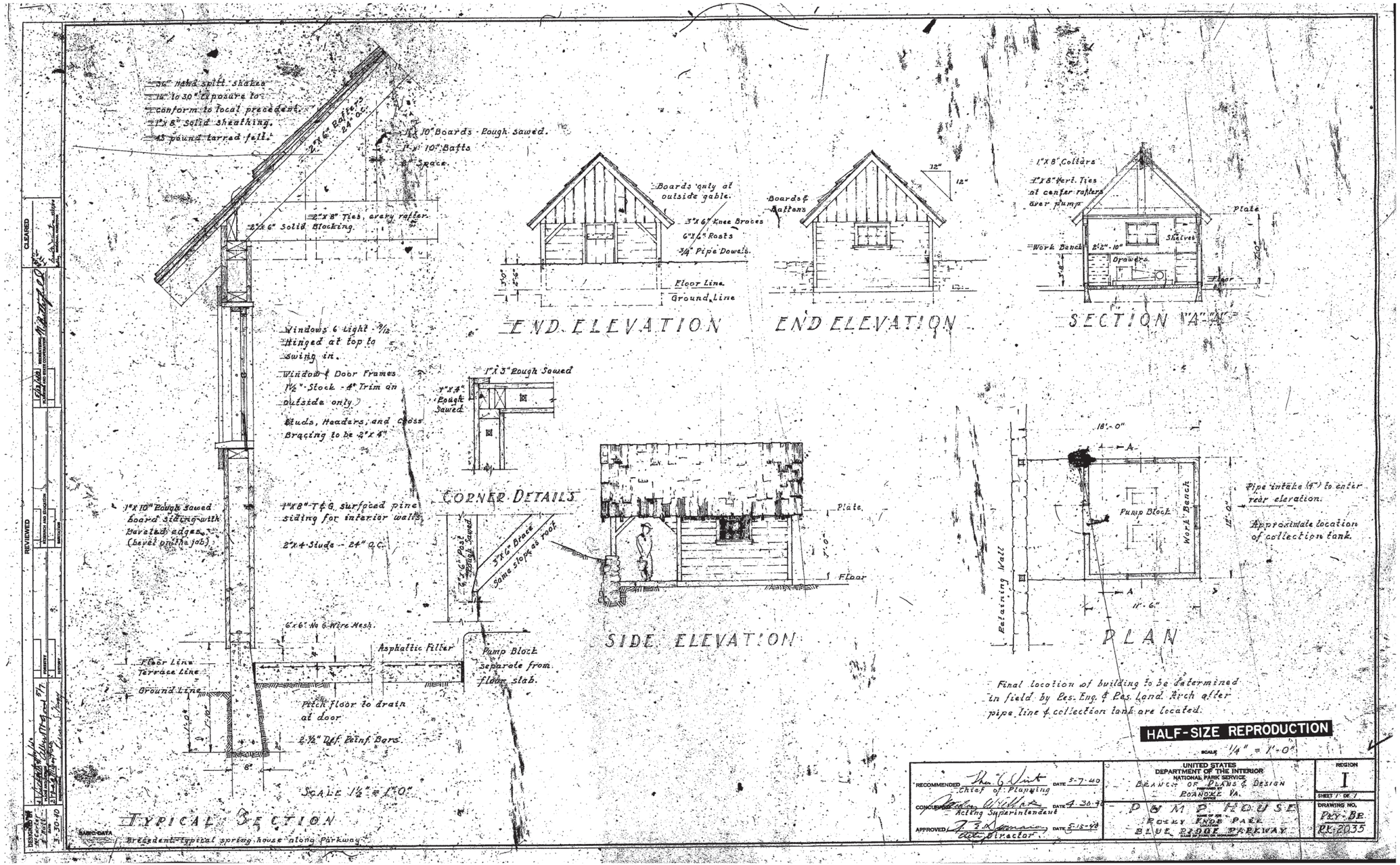
Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

Illustration 2.14



1940 - Pump House - Plan, Sections, Elevations, and Details

Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

Illustration 2.15



Figure 2.21: Preliminary design for the Gas Station and Coffee Shop at Rocky Knob, (Parkway Archives, 1936).



Figure 2.22: Pump House, (Parkway Archives, 1949).



Figure 2.23: CCC enrollees building one of the Trail Lodge Cabins, (Parkway Archives, 1941).

Trail Lodge Cabins.[130] Parkway designers planned to provide unique overnight lodging at Rocky Knob in the form of a group of 'Trail Lodge Cabins' built to offer simple 'rough-it' accommodations for organized youth groups, like the Boy Scouts. McCarter designed the cabins and the CCC funded their construction in Rock Castle Gap adjacent to the old Whorley farmhouse. The CCC camp located in Rock Castle Gorge provided the labor necessary to construct the cabins, and workers built the cabins using low cost materials and building techniques evocative of pioneer construction (Figure 2.23). The walls consist of squared logs with half-dovetail notches at the corners and V-notches at the intersections of interior and exterior walls. The porch floors feature mortared flagstone and the interior floors are concrete. In 1941, workers finished the construction of three small cabins designed to provide bunk space for 12 campers and completed two larger units with space for 16 bunks. The same year, workers completed a recreation building, a washhouse, and a pump house to provide additional amenities to the anticipated campers. Sadly, World War II interrupted plans to construct a chain of similar camps for organized groups of young people along the Parkway and the Trail Lodge Cabins at Rocky Knob are one of a kind. After shuttering the cabins during the war, the NPS

130 The Trail Lodge Cabins are a Rocky Knob Component Landscape. A detailed study of this site is not included in the scope of this Cultural Landscape Report.

later remodeled them for use as housekeeping units.[131] Today a concessionaire operates them seasonally.[132]

Maintenance Area. Early plans called for the establishment of maintenance depots in all of the major recreation areas throughout the Parkway. These areas provided a base for operation and maintenance of both the road and the recreation areas. The designers of the maintenance area at Rocky Knob located the compound a short distance from the Parkway, intentionally hidden from the public's view, on an area of denuded mountain farmland (Figure 2.24). The buildings within the maintenance area were intentionally more utilitarian in appearance than other more visible structures within the recreation area (Figure 2.25).

According to Firth, work began on the maintenance area at Rocky Knob in 1940, using CCC and WPA labor. In most cases, the buildings had concrete foundations and floors, cinder block walls, and metal roofs. The outside walls of each building received a whitewash treatment, creating a consistent look throughout the compound.[133] The NPS constructed identical buildings in the Bluffs (now Doughton Park) Maintenance Area around the same time, altering the design of each as needed to conform to site-specific conditions. The following buildings were complete in the maintenance area at Rocky Knob by 1941:

Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building #2

Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3

Office and Tool Storage Building #4

Radio Substation and Antennae Tower Building # 6

131 A "Housekeeping Unit" is a type of lodging providing overnight facilities for individuals or families at reasonable rates. They are often located on large properties and clustered around common outdoor amenities. No daily maid service is provided in these units and typically the accomodations are basic.

132 Ibid., 205-206.

133 Ibid.



Figure 2.24: Maintenance Area landscape prior to construction, (Parkway Archives, 1937).



Figure 2.25: Maintenance Area several years after construction, (Parkway Archives, 1952).

A 1941, master plan illustrates the completed buildings at the time as well as planned future developments within the maintenance area (Illustration 2.11).

Employee Residences. The NPS intended to build two residences for recreation area employees beside each maintenance area proposed along the Parkway. At Rocky Knob, the CCC constructed two residences adjacent to the maintenance area in 1941, the only two residences built along the Parkway before the war began.[134] McCarter was the architect, and despite locating the buildings outside the public's view, he took great care to design them in a rustic style based on the vernacular buildings he had observed along the proposed route of the Parkway. McCarter even sent a memorandum with 38 photographs of old buildings attached to illustrate the regional forms upon which he based the designs for the residences.[135] Both buildings were frame structures with stone chimneys and wood shake roofs. The NPS remodeled and expanded the two residences in 1952, and much of the original rustic character was lost in the process (Figure 2.26).

134 Firth, 1993, 126.

135 Ibid. 127.



Figure 2.26: Employee Residences after extensive alterations, (Parkway Archives, 1952).

Signage. The same degree of care and attention to detail that went into other small features along the Parkway, applied to the design of signage along the route and within the recreation areas. In 1940, the NPS erected entrance signs along the completed sections of the Parkway, including Section 1-S.[136] The signs featured the Parkway seal, which Abbott, Abbuehl, Lynn Harris and others in the Roanoke office designed collaboratively (Figure 2.27). The logo featured mountain peaks set in an open sky with a lone windswept pine in the foreground.[137] The inspiration for the lone pine logo may have come from a photograph taken by Abbuehl in Rocky Knob in May of 1938. The photo shows a single pine tree at milepost 165.4 in Section 1-S just after construction with the caption, 'The "Lone" Pine', implying a relationship between the photograph and the iconic Parkway logo (Figure 2.28).

In 1941, the NPS erected place name signs at completed overlooks and added milepost markers to recreation areas.[138] The CCC built these signs out of reclaimed chestnut. They featured a wooden signboard surface with routed letters. The first mileposts were hanging signs, "reminiscent of old tavern placards."[139] Once again, the sign's most prominent feature was the symbol of the Parkway, the "lone pine" emblem, routed into the chestnut signboard (Figure 2.29). The support posts indicated the distance to Great Smoky Mountains or Shenandoah national parks on the appropriate side.[140] The NPS located these original mileposts in recreation areas only.



Figure 2.27: Parkway entrance sign at Tuggle Gap, (Parkway Archives, 1949).

Parkway staff began erecting signs that recounted, "tales, legends, and historical lore", at points along the Parkway in 1941.[141] These early interpretive signs featured a pioneer squirrel rifle and powder horn as identifiers, and parkway staff referred to them as "gunboards."[142] NPS staff constructed a sign of this type at The Saddle Overlook to interpret the settlement of the valleys visible from the saddle. Abbott took great care in the design of these signs along the Parkway, describing the color scheme in detail in a 1947 interview:

> The rifle is painted Parkway blue, a color which we mix to simulate the deep blue mountains in the late evening. The powder horn and thong are just off-white or ivory color. The letters in the title are white. All of this is against our standard driftwood gray, a commercial stain made by Cabot.[143]

Abbott noted that after initial painting and staining, he intended for the signs to weather naturally, resulting in a pleasing silver-grey color (Figure 2.30). Abbott and other designers in the Roanoke

136 Firth, 2005, 219.

137 Jolley, 1987, 28.

138 Firth, 2005, 219.

139 Quin, 1997, pp. 168, 139.

140 Ibid, 139.

141 Ibid.

142 Ibid.

143 Quin 1997, 140.



Figure 2.28: The "Lone Pine" photograph taken by Edward H. Abbuehl (EHA) in Rocky Knob Recreation Area, (Parkway Archives, 1938).



Figure 2.29: Original "tavern style" Parkway milepost sign, with later concrete milepost in the background, (Parkway Archives, 1952).

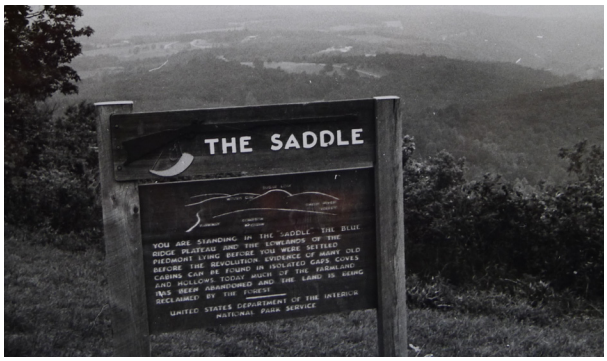


Figure 2.30: Weathered "gunboard" sign at The Saddle Overlook, (Parkway Archives, 1971).

office labored over the seemingly small detail of the style of lettering used on Parkway signage. Abbott wrote of the final sign lettering:

> We mean to attain a strong letter of simple character, which would lend itself to routing and which would be in sympathy with the general character of our signs and their background.

Like the unique milepost markers and interpretive signs, the design of traffic control signs featured rustic wooden construction intended to harmonize with the surrounding landscape and other small-scale features encountered along the roadside



Figure 2.31: Typical early Parkway signs near Tuggle Gap, (Parkway Archives, 1949).

(Figure 2.31). These signs were low to the ground so as not to take away from the scenic countryside, but as a result, they were prone to mud splatter. Eventually new taller signs replaced the older style.[144]

Chestnut Orchard. In 1940, the NPS planted a small orchard of Asian chestnut trees (*Castanea crenata*) between the Maintenance Area and a small knoll near milepost 167. Historic PLUMs show the orchard's exact location. Once the trees began to bear, the NPS planned to distribute chestnuts to local farmers who wished to start chestnut orchards themselves.[145] CCC enrollees tended the experimental orchard, which also included plantings of a special blueberry (*Vaccinium spp.)* cultivar.[146]

Agricultural Leases. Parkway staff was very concerned with maintaining the bucolic appearance of Rocky Knob during this period, pasturing sheep within the Rocky Knob Recreation Area on agricultural leases for many years.

144 Quin, 1997, pp. 141.

145 Ibid, 213.

146 Firth, 1993, 107.

According to Quin, "In 1948 Abbuehl reported that there were problems keeping the sheep confined due to the breakdown of numerous fences. Although he urged that the fences be repaired to maintain the 'pastoral picture' of the landscape, the sheep were eventually removed.[147]

Rocky Knob and the Parkway at the close of this Period

The construction of the majority of the amenity areas at Rocky Knob had begun by the close of this period. The 1941 Master Plan provided a "detailed picture" of the entire Parkway project after the first seven years of development.[148] By 1941, the Parkway extended both north and south of Section 1-S and "By the summer of 1942, 170 miles [of the Parkway] were paved and fully open, while another 123 miles had a crushed stone surface and were open on a temporary basis."[149] A private contractor paved Section 1-S in 1941, according to construction reports.[150]

In 1942, Parkway maintenance crews took over work along the Parkway from CCC and WPA enrollees. "The onset of war halted all contract work on the road in the fall of 1942, by which time the end of CCC and WPA programs had stopped most of the development work in the recreation areas. The CCC Camp in Rocky Knob closed in November 1941.[151] The war also brought a sharp reduction in the staffs of the NPS and PRA (formerly the Bureau of Public Roads or Public Roads Administration) in Roanoke."[152] Administrative Parkway staff lost 15 of 44 positions, for a total reduction of over 34 percent.[153]

Key players in the planning and construction of the Parkway and The Bluff joined the military or were recruited for the war and other agency duties. Austin and van Gelder both departed from the project for employment with other agencies. Abbott, wrote in his last report as Acting Superintendent of the Parkway in 1942,

> It is notable that the Parkway development was arrested by the war just short of that point where invitation without reservation could be extended to the motorist. The Blue Ridge Parkway has pioneered a new recreational conception and may well provide a standard against which to measure the wisdom of including other such scenic parkways within the national park system as are now being projected for development during the post-war period.[154]

The War Years (1942-1945)

The onset of World War II brought further changes to the personnel associated with the Parkway. Abbott Abbuel, and Bird all served in the military, leaving openings in key positions. Weems, who by that time had earned the title of Resident Landscape Architect, took on the position of Acting Superintendent in April of 1944, "with the understanding that when Abbott returned he would resume his [former] position."[155]

Restrictions on construction materials effectively ended construction work on the recreation areas throughout the Parkway. However, at Rocky Knob NPS crews were able to complete a few projects already underway. In 1942, NPS crews built a sewer system for a planned lodge development at what is now Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook. The lodge was never completed. NPS Day Labor also finished construction of the Oil and Paint Storage Building #5 in the maintenance area the same year.

Wartime policy only allowed landscape work that would lead to, "an immediate reduction in maintenance costs" thus halting all landscape development and relating programs along the Parkway.[156] The Parkway expanded the agricultural lease program during the war, as it promised to

147 Quin, 1997, 216.

148 Firth, 2005, 231.

149 Ibid., 235-236.

150 Middleton, E. G. "Final Construction Report Project 1-S4-T7 Blue Ridge Parkway" (Parkway Archives, Asheville, NC), 1 March 1941.

151 Quin, 1997, 77.

152 Ibid., 238.

153 Ibid., 79.

154 Quoted in Firth, 2005, 238.

155 Firth, 2005, 246.

156 Quin, 1997, 79.

reduce maintenance and government expenditures, especially related to roadside mowing. Sheep continued to be pastured in the leases at Rocky Knob during the period.

Virginia imposed a statewide ban on pleasure driving from May 1942 until August 1943, forcing the closure of Rocky Knob and Smart View recreation areas. The Parkway also allowed commercial trucks to use the Parkway to save on tires and gasoline during the war. Truckers paid a small fee to obtain a permit to travel on the road, in order to offset wear and tear on a road surface designed for light duty passenger vehicles.[157] The NPS reduced the speed limit on the Parkway to 40 miles per hour to conserve fuel for the road effort. The NPS also shuttered the Trail Lodge Cabins during the war, never having used them for their intended purpose (Figure 2.32).

Although construction work halted during the war, planning for the Parkway and for additional amenities at Rocky Knob continued, albeit at a slower place. Parkway staff designed and submitted plans for a Shops and Heavy Equipment Storage Building #86 at the maintenance area and continued to refine plans for the Gas Station and Coffee Shop at Rocky Knob. In addition, the NPS developed a preliminary plan for a new parking overlook for an area of Rocky Knob known as the 'Grassy Knoll'. This overlook was never constructed. Staff also prepared a master plan for the core of the developed area at Rocky Knob in 1943 (Illustration 2.16). In addition to the planned Gas Station and Coffee Shop, this plan showed the proposed Lodge development at Twelve o'clock Knob Overlook, which now included a proposed amphitheater. The Picnic Area and Campground plans proposed improved amenities including a second comfort station, a cabin area, ball fields, swings, and seesaws.

During this period, a debate over the planning of recreational activities along the Parkway came to a head. The regional office in Richmond, took issue with the 1942 and 1943 versions of the Master Plan, which proposed the development of several lakes and other active recreation facilities like ball fields in recreation areas including Rocky Knob. In a memorandum to the Regional Director, Abbott adopted a conciliatory tone and agreed that ball

157 Ibid., 80.



Figure 2.32: Trail Lodge Cabin #19 shuttered during World War II, (Parkway Archives, Date Unknown).

fields and playgrounds seemed inappropriate, but argued that there were advantages in concentrating group activities in specific areas. He proposed adopting a policy that no playground, swimming pool, or other active recreation facility intrude on an area of natural beauty and agreed that the proposals to develop recreation facilities beside lakes a distance from the parkway route should be dropped.[158] Thus, future Master Plans for Rocky Knob no longer included a large lake in Rock Castle Gorge, a swimming pool adjacent to the picnic area, or additional ball fields in the picnic area and campground.

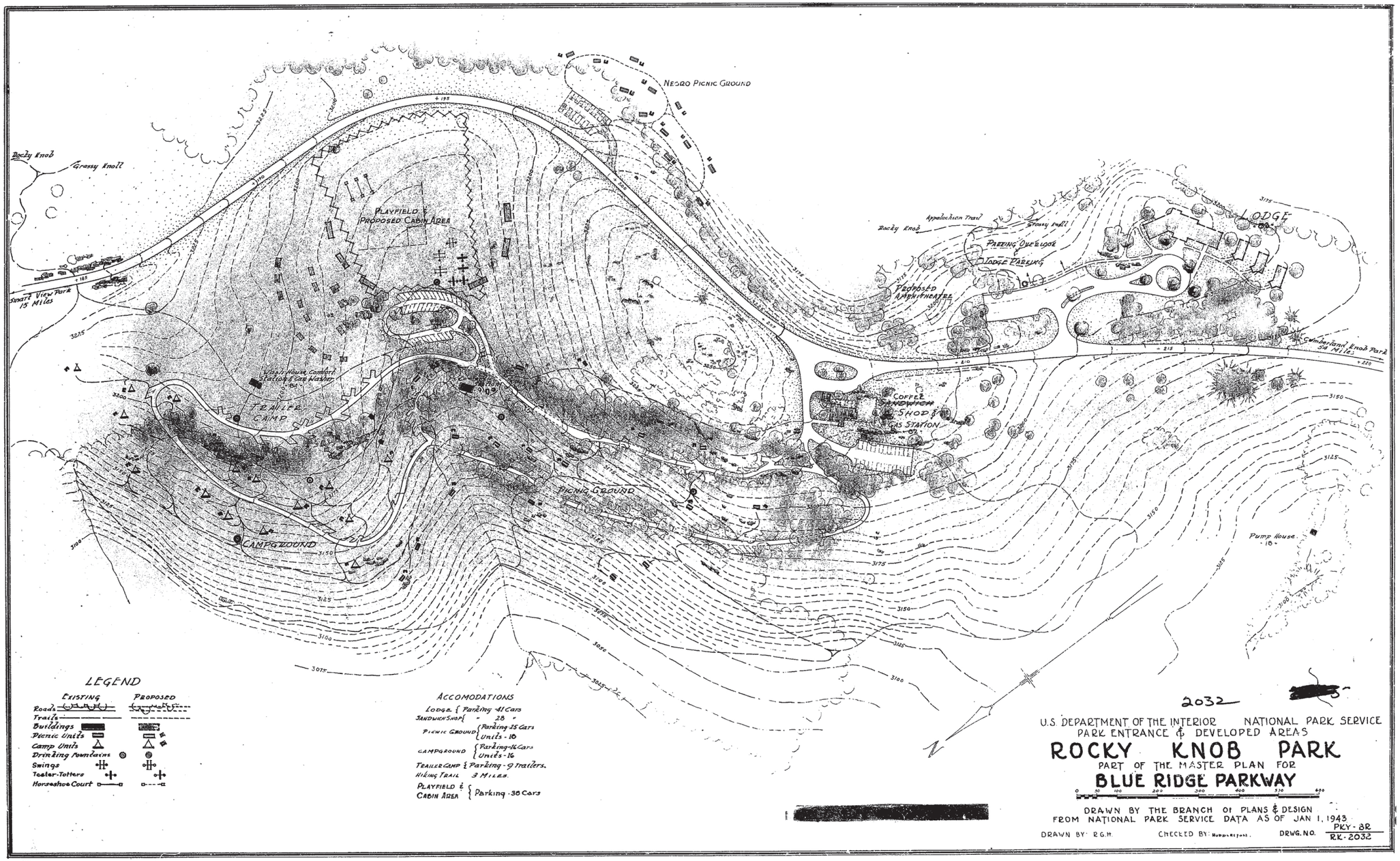
Resumption of Construction (1946-1955)

By the start of 1947, the majority of staff members of the PRA and the NPS returned to their positions and were ready to continue the design process for the Parkway. There were, however, some conflicts and changes in the ranks at the NPS. Despite their understanding before the war, Weems remained Superintendent of the Parkway and Abbott assumed the post of Resident Landscape Architect. This arrangement did not work well for Abbott and he elected to take a new position working on a planning project for the NPS in Mississippi in 1949. Abbuehl accepted the job of Resident Landscape Architect and "continued to respect Abbott's vision for the Parkway, and worked well with Weems."[159]

Deferred maintenance during the war left portions of the Parkway severely deteriorated, making it necessary to devote considerable resources to the sections damaged during the war. As a result, most

158 Firth, 2005, 228-229.

159 Firth, 2005, 255.



1943 - Park Entrance and Developed Areas Master Plan

Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

Illustration 2.16

of the construction contracts at the beginning of the post-war period were for repairs and paving along portions of the Parkway that were already complete. Later, funding priorities shifted and one of the top priorities for Weems after the war was to secure the provision of food, lodging, and motor services along the Parkway as envisioned in the prewar plan, resulting in additional construction projects in recreation areas, including Rocky Knob.

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Trail Lodge Cabins. In July 1950, the NPS remodeled the Trail Lodge Cabins for use as, "family housekeeping units" opening them up to the public for the first time. National Park Concessions, Inc. operated the cabins for the Parkway.[160] This provided a second set of overnight accommodations along the Parkway to compliment the recently completed Bluffs Lodge development in Doughton Park.

Gas Station. In 1950, Weems reported that construction of a Gas Station at Rocky Knob was complete and another nearly identical one at Crabtree Meadows was almost finished.[161] A third gas station was already open for business further south along the Parkway at Doughton Park.

According to Firth, "The design of new park buildings in the post-war period continued to be based on vernacular forms, but there was a new attitude to the selection of materials and employment of pioneer building techniques."[162]

> The split shakes used on the smaller Parkway buildings are very attractive, but maintenance and fire hazard considerations dictated the use of something more durable for larger buildings. The solution: a stained concrete shingle that goes well with native stone masonry, rough-sawn boards, and exposed heavy beams. Rustic-type architecture, frequently associated with parks, was tried in the CCC days; but post-war conditions called for permanence and maintenance-free construction.[163]

The Gas Station is the best example of this post-war shift in the architecture along the Parkway within Rocky Knob (Figure 2.33). Construction plans for the building called for the use of the new shingle type as well as other new construction materials, including concrete block walls faced with vertical board and batten. The modern walls were durable and easier to maintain while continuing the established rustic aesthetic for architecture along the Parkway. Rather than using a flagstone floor, the architect specified modern linoleum with a flagstone pattern, using another modern material that cost less and still appeared rustic.

Designed to emulate a mountain farmhouse that expanded over time with multiple additions and alterations, the Gas Station has more than a few similarities to the Pump House, built eight years earlier by the CCC (Figure 2.22). The two buildings share a roofline and porch overhang, but the Gas Station abandons the rustic timber construction and wooden shakes of the Pump House in favor of more modern materials. The architecture of the Gas Station could be described as a plainer, more economical version of the pre-war rustic style.

A planting plan for the Gas Station developed by the Roanoke office shows the continued use of native plants within the recreation areas, proposing a variety of understory trees and shrubs planted around the new building (Illustration 2.17).

The NPS developed prewar plans for a Coffee Shop at Rocky Knob located behind the Gas Station further during this period, but no construction occurred.

Rocky Knob Picnic Area and Campground. Developments in the Picnic Area and Campground at Rocky Knob were relatively minor. NPS crews likely paved or repaved the trails, driving lanes, and parking slips in this period. In 1953, Parkway staff began replacing the wooden picnic tables with new ones built of concrete and stone.[164] At Rocky Knob, crews executed the tables entirely in concrete, except for the thick planks of chestnut used as seat slats. The Roanoke office also developed a standard for gates along the parkway during this period.

160 Quin, 1997, 216.

161 Firth, 2005, 160.

162 Firth, 1993, 128.

163 Ibid.

164 Samuel P. Weems, "Superintendent's Annual Report," 1953, 4.



Figure 2.33: Rocky Knob Gas Station shortly after construction, (Parkway Archives, 1952).



Figure 2.34: Comfort Station #84, (Parkway Archives, c.1960).



Figure 2.35: Grade-separated interchange at Tuggle Gap under construction, (Parkway Archives, 1955).

Construction drawings dated 1951; show the new heavy timber gate standard approved for use throughout the Parkway.

NPS Day Labor constructed a new comfort station in 1955-1956 along the campground loop (Figure 2.34). The building, Comfort Station #84, shared the same basic floor plan and dimensions as the previous comfort stations along the Parkway, but abandoned the rustic aesthetic in favor of a more modern and standardized approach. Unadorned concrete block punctuated with larger single pane corner windows defined the façade and a nearly flat roof made the exterior appear modern, streamlined, and reflective of 1950s architectural tastes.

Tuggle Gap Grade Separated Interchange. One of the biggest projects undertaken during this period was the construction of a grade-separated interchange at the intersection of the Parkway and Virginia Route 8 near milepost 166 at Tuggle Gap (Figure 2.35). This project eliminated an at-grade crossing along the Parkway, necessitating the construction of an arched concrete bridge faced with natural stone. According to Firth:

> The Parkway ideal was to have no interference with the experience of carefree driving on the parkway, and no distractions from the enjoyment of the scenery were warranted. Grade separated interchanges and crossings were designed to achieve this ideal. Wherever possible the parkway was taken over, rather than under, intersecting roads. This was arranged so that while the motorist on the parkway would be scarcely aware of the crossing, the bridge would serve to announce the presence of the national parkway to motorists on the state and local roads. To further this goal, bridges were built in the distinctive rustic architectural style that characterized National Park developments.[165]

The NPS advertised the project in August of 1954 and awarded the contract to Albert Brother Contractors, Inc. out of Salem, Virginia. Construction finished in October of 1955. Masonry stone for the bridge came from private property located seven miles from Tuggle Gap near parkway station 370. Representatives from both NPS and BPR approved the stone on site. Drainage channels and gutters were lined with asphalt instead of the more expensive stone found elsewhere in Rocky Knob reflecting the post-war interest in minimizing costs.[166] Figure 2.36 provides an understanding of the changes in road alignment that occurred with the completion of this project.

165 Firth, 2005, 147.

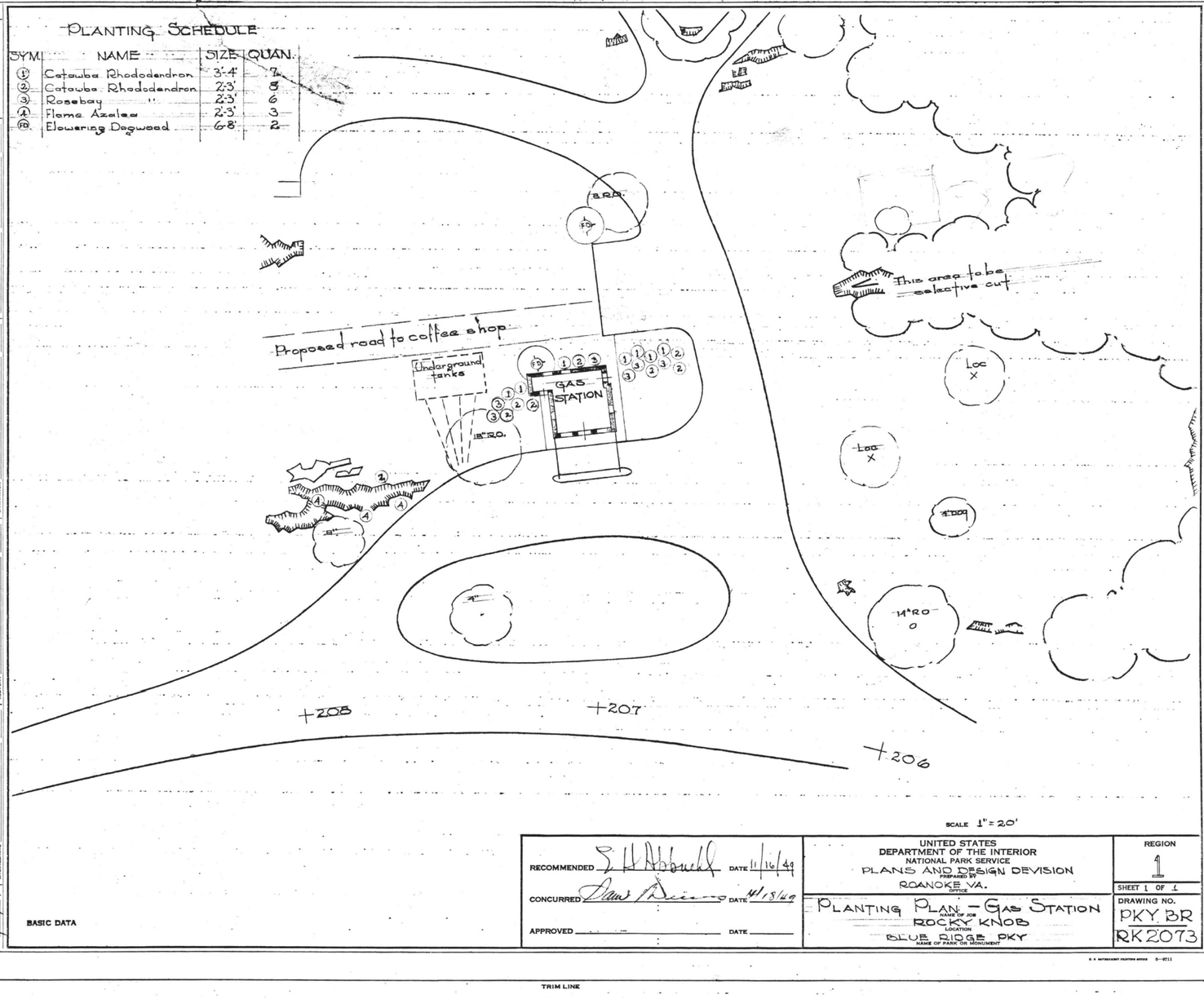
166 Roy M. Crawford. "Final Construction, Report 157, Part B" (Parkway Archives, Asheville, NC), 1965.

TRIM LINE

TRIM LINE

PLANTING SCHEDULE

SYM.	NAME	SIZE	QUAN.
(1)	Catawba Rhododendron	3'-4'	7
(2)	Catawba Rhododendron	2-3'	8
(3)	Rosebay "	2-3'	6
(4)	Flame Azalea	2-3'	3
(FD)	Flowering Dogwood	6-8'	2



SCALE 1" = 20'

BASIC DATA

DESIGNED BY R.E.K. DATE 11/15/49

REVIEWED: RESEARCH AND EDUCATION; PLANNING AND STATE COORDINATION; SANITATION; FORESTRY; PLANS AND DESIGN; HISTORY; ENGINEERING

CLEARED: REGIONAL DIRECTOR

RECOMMENDED S. H. Woodcock DATE 11/16/49

CONCURRED Daw Preis DATE 11/18/49

APPROVED _____ DATE _____

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
PLANS AND DESIGN DEVISION
PREPARED BY
ROANOKE, VA.
OFFICE

PLANTING PLAN - GAS STATION
NAME OF JOB
ROCKY KNOB
LOCATION
BLUE RIDGE PKY
NAME OF PARK OR MONUMENT

REGION 1

SHEET 1 OF 1

DRAWING NO. PKY. BR RK 2073

R. F. REPRODUCIBLE PRINTING OFFICE 0-9711

TRIM LINE

1949 - Planting Plan - Gas Station

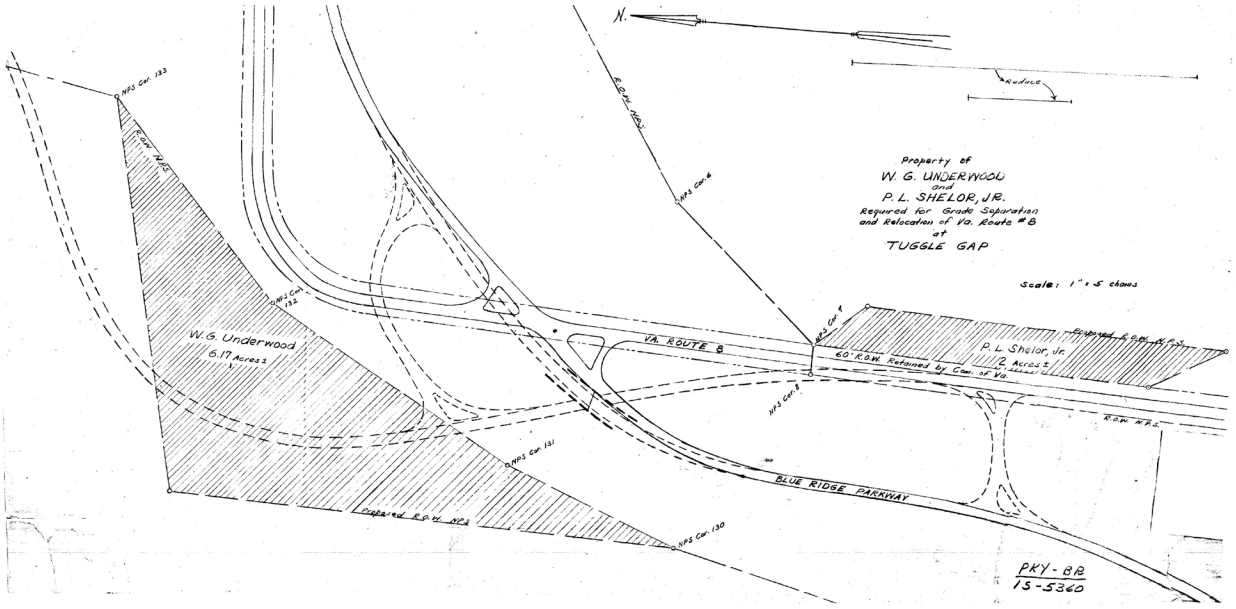


Figure 2.36: Circulation plan for Tuggle Gap Grade-Separated Interchange (ETS Archives, 1955).

A 1955 planting plan shows the design intent for the landscape surrounding the interchange (Illustration 2.18). The plan is in keeping with the Parkway tradition established by Bird in the pre-war period of using native plants for all roadside and recreation area plantings and proposed the following species:

Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*)
Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)
Red Oak (*Quercus falcata* / *Quercus borealis*)
Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvaatica*)
White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*)
Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*)
Flame Azalea (*Rhododendron calendulaceum*)
Rosebay Rhododendron (*Rhododendron maximum*)
Northern Red Oak (*Quercus falcata* / *Quercus borealis*)

Parkway staff at least partially implemented the planting plan, as many of the species occur in the proposed locations today.

Maintenance Area. During this period, NPS crews constructed three new buildings in the Maintenance Area. In 1948, construction of a Radio Substation and Antennae Tower finished. The following year, Parkway staff built a small utility building, referred to as the Hose Reel House Building #346. Then, in 1952, the NPS completed work on the much larger Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86. Like the rest of the buildings in the Maintenance Area, the architecture for this building was plain and functional. For cost reasons, asphalt shingles covered the roof instead of the corrugated metal used on all other buildings in the compound (Figure 2.37). The building featured glass block windows, a first within the Maintenance Area.

Another construction project involved an addition to the Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3. The addition enclosed the space between the Carpenter and Paint Shop and the Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building. Used for additional storage, the addition had a flat roof and unfinished cinderblock walls.

Employee Residences. In 1949, the Roanoke office developed plans for a communal garage building at the employee residences. The proposed building was another example of the post-war shift in Parkway architecture that embraced newer materials while retaining a rustic appearance based on vernacular forms. Plans called for board and batten infill in the eaves, cement block walls, and cement shingles instead of wooden shake on the saltbox roof (Illustration 2.19). Parkway staff scrapped the plans for the building in favor of adding an individual garage to each residence.



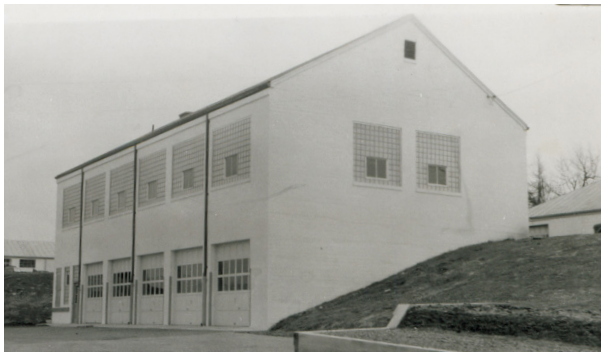


Figure 2.37: Upper (left) and lower (right) levels of Building #86 after construction, (Parkway Archives, 1952).

In 1950, the NPS added asbestos shingles in place of shakes to reduce maintenance costs on the ranger residences .[167] Two years later, a major renovation of each building was completed. Both buildings received a new detached garage connected to the house with a covered breezeway. The houses were clad in siding to unify the addition with the original structure and much of the rustic character was lost (Figure 2.26). Both pedestrian and vehicular circulation changed to accommodate the new garages. The original curved pedestrian paths shown on the PLUMs and in a 1948 aerial were lost along with a shared parking area (Figure 2.38). This aerial also shows the experimental chestnut orchard maturing near the Maintenance Area.

Parkway Section 1-S

In 1947-1948, the NPS repaved Section 1-S of the Parkway with asphalt and added a single center strip the length of the roadway for safety.[168] In later years, the NPS added double striping to the roadway. Parkway staff has successfully resisted efforts to add edge striping to the road shoulders, by arguing that such stripes would disrupt the integration of the road into the surrounding landscape.[169]

Signage. In 1947, NPS began to place concrete mileposts every mile indicating the mileage from the start of the Parkway at Rockfish Gap.[170] This small-scale feature is one of the most iconic along the roadside today. The larger tavern-style signs built before the war remained in the landscape. Staff eventually removed the signs but did not replace them. The new mileposts lacked the rustic character of previous small-scale elements built along the Parkway, but they did provide a way for motorists to know their exact location along the route.[171]



Figure 2.38: 1948 aerial photograph of Maintenance Area and Employee Residences, (USGS EarthServer, 1948).

Sam Weems instituted a formal policy for signs along the Parkway in 1948, in an effort to avoid a proliferation of unnecessary signs along the route. All signs would be subject to approval of the Superintendent. This effort coincided with a change in policy at BPR, which pressured the

167 Firth, 1993, 128.

168 Franklin S. Wise "Final Construction, Report 1S7, Part A" (Parkway Archives, Asheville, NC), 14 April 1967, 1.

169 Quin, 1997, 112.

170 According to Weems the mileposts were unique in the National Park System; Weems, 1947, 3.

171 Firth, 2005, 245.

TRIM LINE

PLANT MATERIAL

TREES

NAME	QUANITY	SIZE	SYMBOL
Sugar Maple	3	14'–16'	Ⓐ
Red Maple	2	14'–16'	Ⓐ
Red Oak	6	12'–14'	⊕
Black Gum	3	5'–6'	Ⓝ
White Ash	1	12'–14'	Ⓕ
Flowering Dogwood	2	6'–8'	Ⓓ
Unspecified	10	2" @ 10'	○

SHRUBS

NAME	QUANITY	SIZE	SYMBOL
Flame Azalea	176	—	
Rosebay Rho.	10	—	

SEC. RT. 716

30 Flame Azalea 7' O.C.

10 Rhamn 7' O.C.

W.O.

TO ASHEVILLE ← BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY → +10

65 Flame Azalea 7' O.C.

R.O.W.

SHOULDER

83 Flame Azalea 7' O.C.

Plant woods edge with 10 Flame Azalea

+5

VIRGINIA RT. 8

Remove Loc.

Dogwood

W. Pl.

R. O. W.

TO ROANOKE →

LEGEND

WOODS EDGE
- EXISTING
- PROPOSED

SPECIMEN TREES
- EXISTING
- PROPOSED

SHRUBS
- PROPOSED

SCALE 1" = 50'

BASIC DATA

DRAWN BY	ARCHITECT	REVIEWED	LANDS — REGIONAL OFFICE, WASHINGTON OFFICE
	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT		NATURAL HISTORY — REGIONAL OFFICE, WASHINGTON OFFICE
CHECKED BY	ENGINEER		CONCESSIONS — REGIONAL OFFICE, WASHINGTON OFFICE
			SAFETY — REGIONAL OFFICE, WASHINGTON OFFICE
			FORESTRY — REGIONAL OFFICE, WASHINGTON OFFICE
			HISTORY — REGIONAL OFFICE, WASHINGTON OFFICE
			U. S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

RECOMMENDED Lewis E. Holcomb, REG. LAND. ARCH. DATE 12/27/54

RECOMMENDED William P. Cooper, AGRONOMIST. DATE 10/31/55

RECOMMENDED [illegible], PARKWAY ENGINEER DATE 11/1/54

APPROVED [illegible], SUPERINTENDENT DATE 11-2-55

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION DIVISION
PREPARED BY ROANOKE OFFICE

TUGGLE GAP PLANTING PLAN
NAME OF DOR
SECTION 15 STA. 10
BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY
LOCATION NAME OF AREA

REGION ONE
PCP No.
SHEET 1 OF 1
DRAWING No. BRP-BR 15-2055
255-20 DATE 155

TRIM LINE

Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

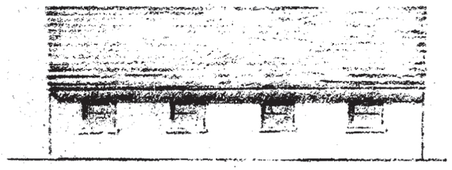
Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

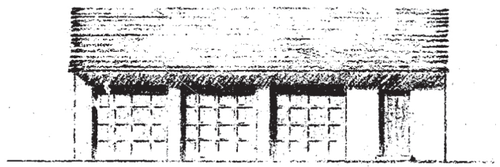
March 2013

1955 - Tuggle Gap Planting Plan

Illustration 2.18



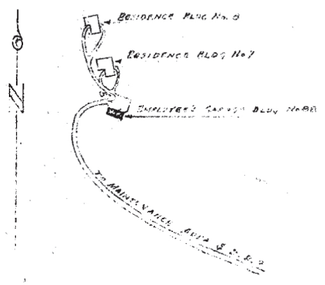
SOUTH ELEVATION



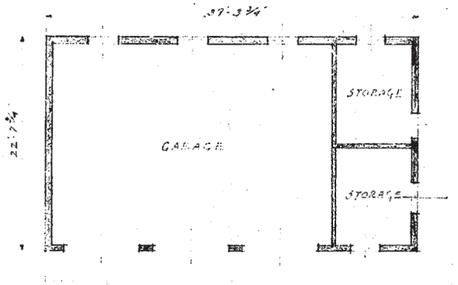
NORTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



PLOT PLAN



PLAN

MATERIALS

FOOTINGS - Concrete
FOUNDATIONS - Concrete
WALLS & PARTITIONS - Cinder block
FLOORS - Concrete slab.
ROOF & GABLES - Frame
ROOF - Cement asbestos shingles.
DOORS - Wood
WINDOWS - Metal

CLEARED
REGIONAL DIRECTOR

REVIEWED
RECREATIONAL PLANNING AND STATE COOPERATION
RESEARCH AND EDUCATION
SANITATION

DESIGNED BY Grossman
CHECKED BY
ENGINEERING Ludgate 2/19/49 TOPOGRAPHY
LANDSCAPE AND DESIGN
ENGINEERING E. Edwards 2/19/49 HISTORY

BASIC DATA PKY-BR-RK-2010-A

RECOMMENDED _____ DATE 1-28-49
SUPERINTENDENT

HALF-SIZE REPRODUCTION

PRELIMINARY

SCALE 1/8"=1'-0"

RECOMMENDED Charles E. Peterson DATE 2/10/49
REGIONAL ARCHITECT

RECOMMENDED CONCURRED Thomas J. Allen DATE 2/14/49
REGIONAL DIRECTOR

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
DIRECTOR

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
PLANS AND DESIGN DIVISION
PREPARED BY
ROANOKE
OFFICE

EMPLOYEE'S GARAGE - BLDG. Nº 88
NAME OF SUB
ROCKY KNOB RESIDENTIAL AREA
LOCATION
BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY
NAME OF PARK OR MONUMENT

REGION ONE
PGP - B - 145-1
SHEET 1 OF 1
DRAWING NO. PKY-BR-RK 2047
DATE 1-27-49

1949 - Employee's Garage

Parkway to adopt provisions of its *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*. Reluctantly, Parkway staff adopted the change and began using metal traffic signs that contributed, "no unique character to the parkway."[172] The old wooden signs designed to harmonize with their surroundings and the interpretive signs along the Parkway were eventually phased out (Figure 2.31).

Parkway staff installed interpretive panels along the trail from the Saddle Overlook to the trail shelter near the summit of Rocky Knob in 1952. The trail interpreted the creation of soils in the forest.[173] A 1947 Land Use Plan for Rocky Knob shows the complexity of and level of consideration given to the signage program within recreation areas during this period (Illustration 2.20). Figure 2.39 shows typical wooden trail signage during this period.

The Roanoke office designed new identification signs for placement along the Parkway at the boundary of Rocky Knob. The signs announced to the motorist their arrival within the recreation area. Construction plans drafted in 1955 show the simplicity of these new signs. Photographs taken nearly twenty years after installation illustrate the durability of their simple wooden construction (Figure 2.40).

Parkway staff added a Parkway standard trail sign to the Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook during this period. Similar in character to the gunboard interpretive signs, this routed wood signs map all of the trails within Rocky Knob. This type of sign dates to the late 1940s. According to Firth, "Rustic wooden signs, using distinctive images, lettering and colors, help to define the picturesque character of the Parkway, its overlooks, and exhibits."[174]

Agricultural Leases. The agricultural leases at Rocky Knob remained active during this period. Lessees continued to pasture sheep within Rocky Knob. In addition, farmers took over the repair of the rustic fences installed in the earlier period. These picturesque roadside elements were highly valued by Parkway staff as part of the rural experience they were trying to portray. Because of lack of suitable fencing material, farmers replaced many split rail fences hidden from view of the road with post and wire fencing. Workers also used chemically treated posts in place of rot-resistant locust or chestnut for the first time.[175]



Figure 2.39: Wooden trail signs at Rocky Knob, (Parkway Archives, 1947).



Figure 2.40: Rocky Knob identification sign, (Parkway Archives, 1971).

Rocky Knob and the Parkway at the close of this Period

A Master Plan for Rocky Knob begun in 1955 and completed in 1959 provides an excellent snapshot of both the current state of Rocky Knob Recreation Area and the plans for the future developments at the close of this period (Illustration 2.21). Plans for a new campground located near the Maintenance Area appear for the first time alongside perpetually unfunded projects like the Lodge and Coffee Shop.

172 Quoted in Quin, 1997, 141.

173 Quin, 1997, 216.

174 Firth, 2005, 360.

175 Ibid., 250-251.

Mission 66 (1956-1966)

The Mission 66 program was a federally sponsored program aimed to improve visitor services within the National Park system. Projects associated with Mission 66 began in 1956 and ended in 1966. One of the top priorities of Mission 66 was to provide additional visitor centers for parks.[176]

The goal of the Mission 66 program, instituted by the National Park Service and funded by the federal government, in 1956 was to introduce "one all-inclusive, long-term program for the entire park system" to make up for years of neglect in maintenance and funding.[177] Frustrated by decreased funding and the crumbling infrastructure of the park system, NPS Director Conrad Wirth galvanized Park Service employees to develop and "pitch" the Mission 66 program to Congress and the Eisenhower Administration in an effort to acquire long-term funding commitment. Projects associated with Mission 66 were to be completed by 1966—the 50th anniversary of the agency.[178]

According to Wirth, "One of the major projects undertaken by Mission 66 was the 469-mile Blue Ridge Parkway. As World War II approached, the government diverted funds to needs related to war. By the time Mission 66 was started, only about one-third of the distance of the parkway had been completed and made usable. Most of the work had been in places where construction was less difficult. Under Mission 66 funds were included to complete the parkway."[179]

For the Blue Ridge Parkway, Mission 66 meant increased budgets to improve visitor services in the post-war era. The mission statement of the Mission 66 program noted that, "Construction is, of course, an important element in the program. Modern roads, well-planned trails, utilities, camp and picnic grounds, and many kinds of structures used for public use or administration, to meet the requirements of an expected 80,000,000 visitors in 1966, are necessary; but they are simply one of the means by which 'enjoyment-without-impairment' is to be provided."[180]

With the perspective of time, Firth observed that "the new thinking was guided by the vision of the Parkway articulated by Abbott. Mission 66 provided the means to achieve that end and additions to the Parkway closely followed prewar design ideas."[181] Further, Firth allows that,

> "While there was no great expansion of recreation areas along the Parkway during Mission 66, the program did promote the development of a large number of new recreation facilities. In the 1957 Mission 66 summary, new 'visitor accommodations' were proposed at 13 locations. In Virginia, new facilities were proposed at Humpback Rocks, Whetstone Ridge, Otter Creek, Peaks of Otter, Pine Spur, Smart View and Fisher Peak…Campgrounds were planned for 15 of the recreation areas, so the distinction between major and minor parks was becoming blurred….Existing master plans had anticipated some, but not all of the proposed developments…In some places the layouts shown in earlier plans were readily adjusted to accommodate the additional facilities, but in a few places new thinking seemed to be required….In general, the changes made to existing plans were in the form of additions or omissions rather than radical reorganization of layouts."[182]

Most of the goals for Mission 66 within the Parkway involved the completion of unfinished portions of the route. According to a 1956 Annual Report, "preparation of Mission 66 for the Parkway was tackled with vim. It was a real opportunity for new thinking about old problems, to re-evaluate development plans in light of today's needs, and to study our present organizational set up."[183] The program also provided additional monies for studies related to expansion. In Rocky Knob, the NPS revisited already developed plans for a

176 "What is Mission '66?'," (C. Madrid French, 2002), accessed via web 11 December 2005 <http://www.mission66.com/mission.html>

177 Wirth, Conrad. "Parks, Politics, and the People" (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 238-239.

178 "What is Mission '66?" 2002.

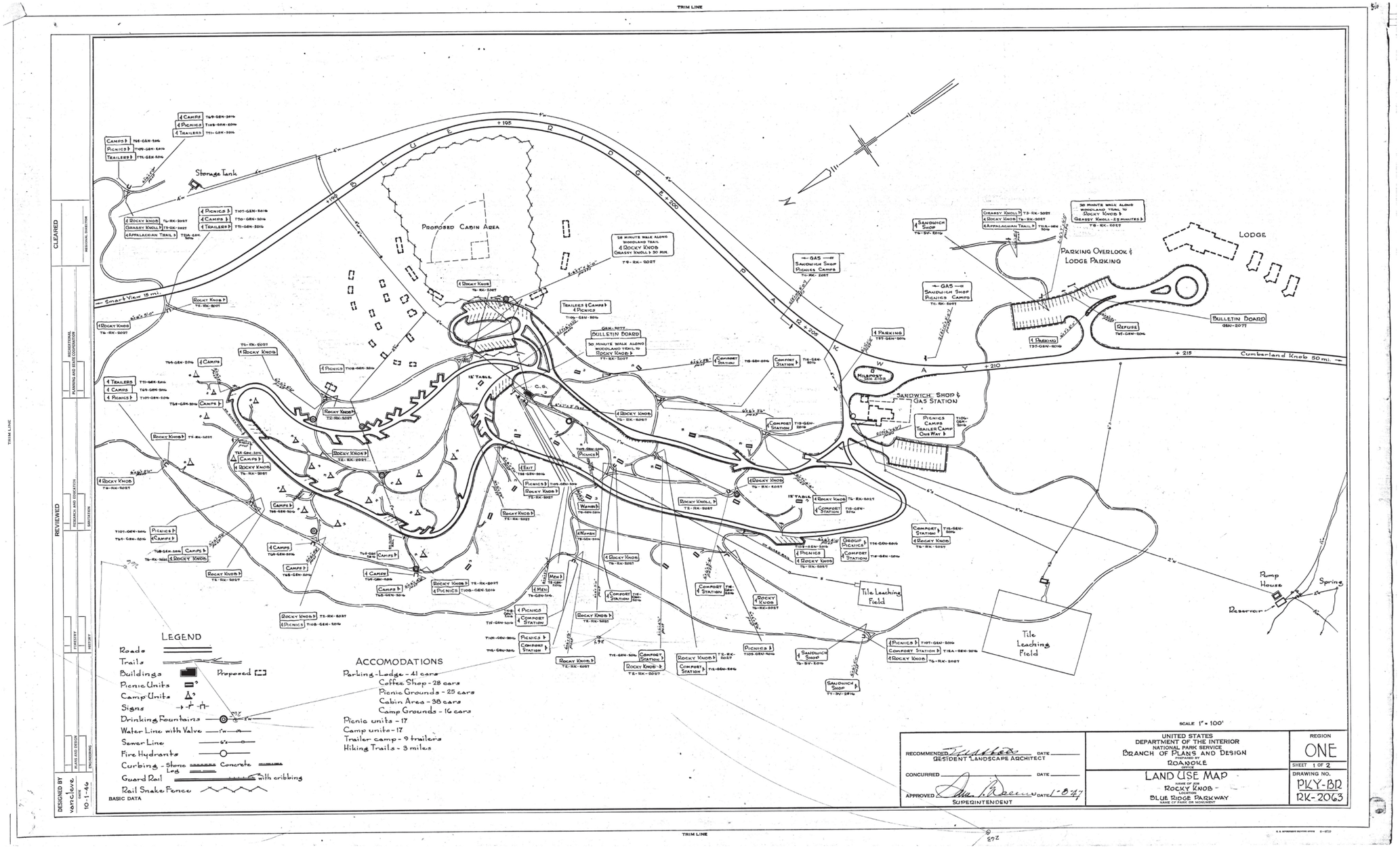
179 Wirth, 1980, 273-274.

180 Quoted in Quin 1997, 136.

181 Firth, 2005, 341.

182 Firth, 2005, 311-313.

183 Samuel P. Weems, "Superintendent's Annual Report," 1956, BLRI Archives, RG 1, Series 3, Box 1 of 2.



1947 - Land Use and Signage Map

Site History

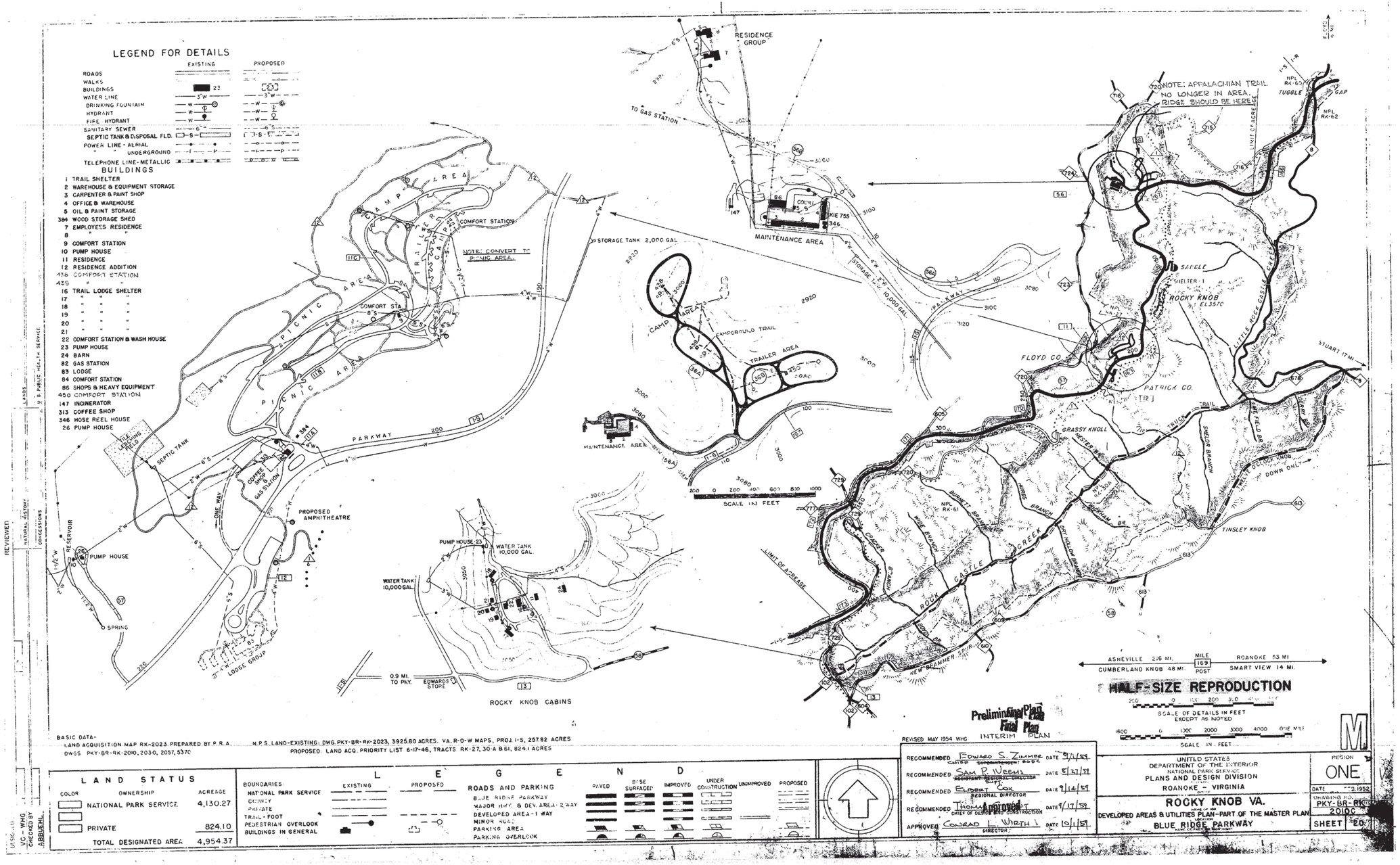
Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

Illustration 2.20



1955 - Developed Areas and Utilities Plan - Part of the Master Plan

Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

Illustration 2.21

lodge and coffee shop; however, the NPS never developed either within the recreation area. Expansion occurred in several areas of heavy use within Rocky Knob. The NPS expanded both the Picnic Area and Campground to accommodate additional visitors to Rocky Knob Recreation Area during this period.

Campground. Superintendent Sam Weems developed a revised master plan for Rocky Knob calling for the construction of a new campground along the Parkway near the maintenance area. In 1959, he submitted the plan and reported that an "unsatisfactory situation" had arisen at the old combination camping and picnic area in which campers had to pass through the picnic area to reach their sites while picnickers were spilling over into the campground (Illustration 2.21). Weems saw the need to separate the two uses of the site and proposed establishing a new and expanded campground on a knoll to the north of the maintenance area. The NPS approved the proposal, and in 1962, the Parkway opened a new 110-unit campground at Rocky Knob. NPS staff converted the old campground loop for picnic use, adding 56 units to the picnic grounds.[184]

The new campground featured four vehicular loops, a campfire circle, four comfort stations, and 12 drinking fountains. The Roanoke office also designed a unique campground registration sign that harkened back to the rustic aesthetic and materials so prevalent in pre-war parkway construction (Figure 2.41). The sign used hand split shakes on the roof overhang, a cost that could be justified for such a small structure. The NPS also installed large wooden trail sign, similar in dimension, character, and construction to a gunboard sign near the campground entrance. This large trail sign features routed wood construction and is a Parkway standard in use at recreation areas along the Parkway since the 1940s.

The construction of the new campground was the most significant development within the recreation area funded by Mission 66. The four comfort stations in the campground were identical to one another. They represent a further refinement of Comfort Station #84, built a few years earlier in the picnic area. The massing remained the same, but the new design did away with the exterior windows



Figure 2.41: Rustic campground sign, (Parkway Archives, 1962).

in favor of skylights in the roof. The design added unfinished board and batten to the upper portions of the exterior walls as modern reference to the vernacular architecture that inspired early Parkway buildings. This style of comfort station became the Parkway standard around this time and identical buildings appear throughout the Parkway at places like Groundhog Mountain, Doughton Park, and Julian Price Memorial Park (Figure 2.42). The Roanoke office designed these comfort stations in response to complaints in Congress about building costs. In 1959, a memo circulated throughout the NPS that required NPS architects to pay close attention to costs. The memo also recommended the use of more modern materials and standardized layouts.[185]

Designers of the campground specified a new type of fireplace/grill for use at all campsites within the new campground. Just like the newly designed comfort stations, this new grill type employed modern materials that were easier to maintain and less expensive than their pre-war counterparts. The earlier rustic fireplaces built of native stone were gone, and the staff at Roanoke replaced them with a standard metal grill mounted on a flat concrete base. The picnic tables received a similar fate. Staff chose to use a standard catalog table built of tubular metal and wood rather than the more substantial concrete tables used in the previous

184 Quin, 1997, 216.

185 Sam P. Weems. Letter to Chief, EODC, "Comfort Station Design and Cost – Blue Ridge Parkway," 17 August 1959, National Archives (Philadelphia), RG 79, Entry 409, Box 9, Folder BRP 1958 - 1960.



Figure 2.42: Late Mission 66 comfort station at Julian Price Memorial Park, (Parkway Archives, 1964).

period. The design of the rustic stone drinking fountains and wooden entrance gates remained unchanged during this period.

The newly constructed campground also contained a campfire circle. Ranger led talks in the evening had proven popular at other campgrounds along the Parkway, and with the newly constructed facilities at Rocky Knob these talks could now be incorporated into the recreation area's interpretive program.[186] The campfire circle at Rocky Knob is less elaborate than others along the Parkway, consisting of simple wooden seat slats mounted atop precast concrete bases.

Picnic Area. With the construction of the new campground near the Maintenance Area, Parkway staff repurposed the original camping loop for use as additional picnic grounds. Picnicking was quite popular at the time and with Americans' love affair of their automobiles arguably at its heyday during this period, Parkway visitors embraced the expansion of the Picnic Area. Parkway staff built new picnic tables, using the same concrete and wood design already in use in the original picnic area. Workers left original fireplaces in place and added new grills where needed. In addition, the NPS likely replaced the original round timber guardrails lining portions of the roadway and select parking slips with modern squared off versions by the close of this period.

186 Firth, 2005, 320-321.

Vegetation management had allowed the surrounding forest to fill in the picnic area vicinity to the proposed wood line indicated on the PLUMS.

Gas Station. At some point prior to 1966, NPS staff altered the parking area located along the side of the Gas Station. The change expanded the parking area, eliminating a planting bed and adding a few spaces to accommodate additional visitors. Crews likely installed the pink granite curb that exists here today along the perimeter of the new and old spaces.

Parkway Section 1-S

Since Section 1-S of the Parkway was complete, little change occurred during this period. Routine maintenance of the roadway, continued vista clearing at overlooks, and general upkeep prevailed. In addition, Mission 66 provided the additional funding required for the construction of a new overlook within Rock Knob.

Rock Castle Gorge Overlook. The NPS developed construction plans for this pull-off style overlook in 1958, though the original PLUMs proposed an overlook in this location prior to the war. Located along a dramatic curve in the roadway across from the picnic area, this overlook takes full advantage of a spectacular view of the gorge below. Slate curbing lined the parking area at the overlook and plans specified that the stone transition back into grade at the terminus of the curb – a characteristic of all curbing throughout the Parkway. Historic photographs show the slate curbing and wooden signage after construction (Figure 2.43).

The Saddle Overlook. Parkway staff had removed the rounded timber guardrail that originally lined the entrance road leading to the overlook parking area by this time.

Signage. Parkway staff updated the interpretive panels along the trail from the Saddle Overlook to the trail shelter near the summit of Rocky Knob in the 1960s. The trail interpreted the creation of soils in the forest in previous years, but the focus shifted to a "Nature Trail", complete with leaflets describing the surrounding forest (Figure 2.44). The leaflets provided detailed descriptions of plants encountered along the trail. Numbered posts placed along the path corresponded to the

plant species described in the leaflet. The NPS stored the leaflets in sleek metal easels near the beginning of the trail (Figure 2.45). The NPS also used special Mission 66 signs throughout the Parkway to identify new projects created under the program (Figure 2.46).

Agricultural Leases. The lease program continued at Rocky Knob during this period. No known changes occurred, although at some point cattle replaced sheep as the preferred livestock species in the pastures.

Rocky Knob and the Parkway at the close of this Period

A 1965 Master Plan for Rocky Knob provides insight into the future plans for the recreation area at the close of this period and the current state of Rocky Knob Recreation Area at that time (Illustration 2.22). Planning projects included the construction of additional staff lodging between the Maintenance Area and the existing employee residences, the conversion of the Gas Station into a Visitor Contact Station, and the construction of a 48-unit lodge and restaurant on the Grassy Knoll, a location previously planned to be a Parkway overlook. The plan also called for the obliteration of the Trail Lodge Cabins, describing them as, "beyond repair". Finally, the master plan recommended purchasing the in-holding property within Rock Castle Gorge for the first time. None of these ambitious plans came to fruition except for the conversion of the Gas Station into a Visitor Contact Station years later.[187]

According to Firth, Weems had welcomed Mission 66 as a real opportunity "for new thinking about old problems," but the new thinking was guided by the vision of the Parkway as articulated by Abbott in the early days of planning. As a result, most additions to the Parkway during this period closely followed pre-war design ideas.[188]

187 Quin, 1997, pp. 216-217.

188 Firth, 2005, 329.



Figure 2.43: Rock Castle Overlook, (Parkway Archives, 1959).



Figure 2.44: Rocky Knob Nature Trail leaflet c.1960, (Provided by The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 2.45: Interpretive easel, (Parkway Archives, c.1960).



Figure 2.46: Mission 66 project sign, (Scan from *Painting with a Comet's Tail*, by Harley E. Jolly, c.1960s.)

Post 'Mission 66' (1967-present)

Trail Shelter. The relative isolation of this small shelter near the summit of Rocky Knob, made it difficult to repair and easy to overlook in the contemporary period. As a result, by 2004 the shelter had fallen into disrepair. The NPS carried out an extensive rehabilitation of the structure in 2010-2011.

Picnic Area. Playfields and other active recreation activities ceased during this period. Parkway staff built a large group picnic pavilion during this period. Smart View contains an identical pavilion in its picnic area, indicating that this structure was a Parkway standard building at one time. Parkway staff made some changes to Comfort Station #9, including the installation of an asphalt roof and some alterations to the entrance enclosures. NPS staff replaced most of the original fireplaces with newer catalog grills and many of the drinking fountains have either been lost or replaced with contemporary versions. NPS staff no longer uses wood for the picnic table seats; instead, they installed thinner slats constructed of recycled plastic on all of the picnic area tables.

Gas Station. In 1973, Parkway staff sketched a plan to alter the circulation around the Gas Station. The plan called for the enlargement of the curbed median that held the gasoline pumps (Figure 2.47). NPS crews reworked the island according to the plan in the same year.

In 1978, Parkway superintendent Gary Everhardt notified National Park Concessions, Inc. that it was to cease operating the gas station at Rocky Knob. Everhardt explained that commercial service stations were now available both four miles north at Tuggle Gap and eight miles south at Meadows of Dan. These stations not only provided more services and longer hours, but also provided them to the motorist at a lower cost. The Parkway converted the building to a visitor contact station.[189] The NPS likely removed the gasoline pumps the same year.

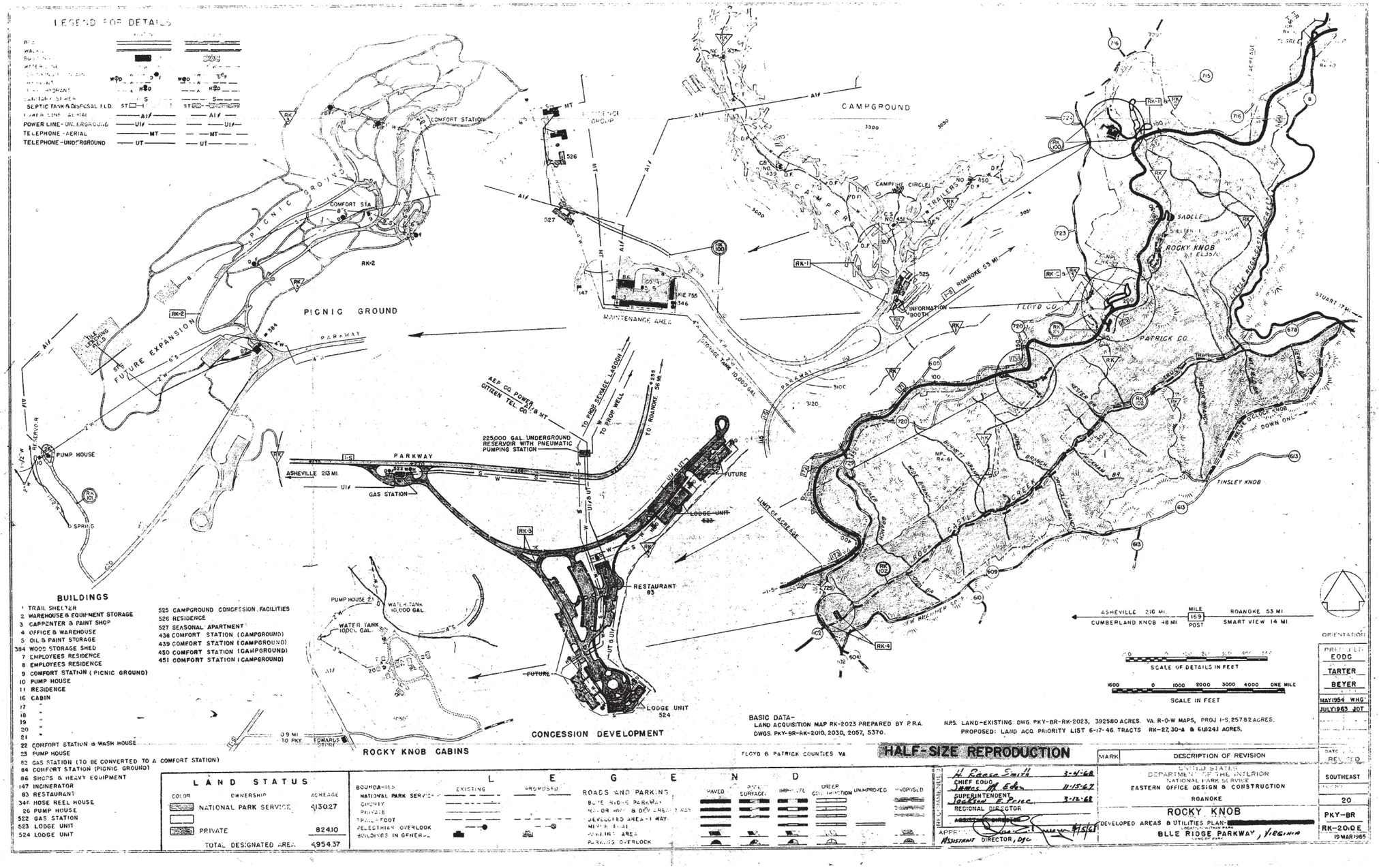
In the late 2000s, the NPS reset the stone walkways surrounding the station and constructed a new stone drinking fountain alongside the building. A large specimen tree located in the grass median between the Gas Station and the Parkway died during this period and NPS staff did not replace it.

Pump House. The NPS removed windows from the side elevations of the Pump House and replaced its original shake roof with a galvanized metal one. The date of these alterations is unknown.

Trail Lodge Cabins. The cabins remained in use as "housekeeping units" operated by a concessionaire during this period.

Maintenance Area. As the buildings within the maintenance area were utilitarian structures, the NPS has made little attempt to retain their original character over the years. In 2000, the addition between the Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building #3 and the Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3 was enclosed and an A line roof was added to unify the façade, effectively combining the two buildings into one. The NPS added an overhead door to the building and faced all of the buildings in the Maintenance Area with a thin veneer of reverse batten pine siding painted a blue color during this period. Parkway staff used a similar veneer on the maintenance buildings located at Doughton Park.

189 Quin, 1997, 217.



1965 - Developed Areas and Utilities Plan

Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2013

Illustration 2.22

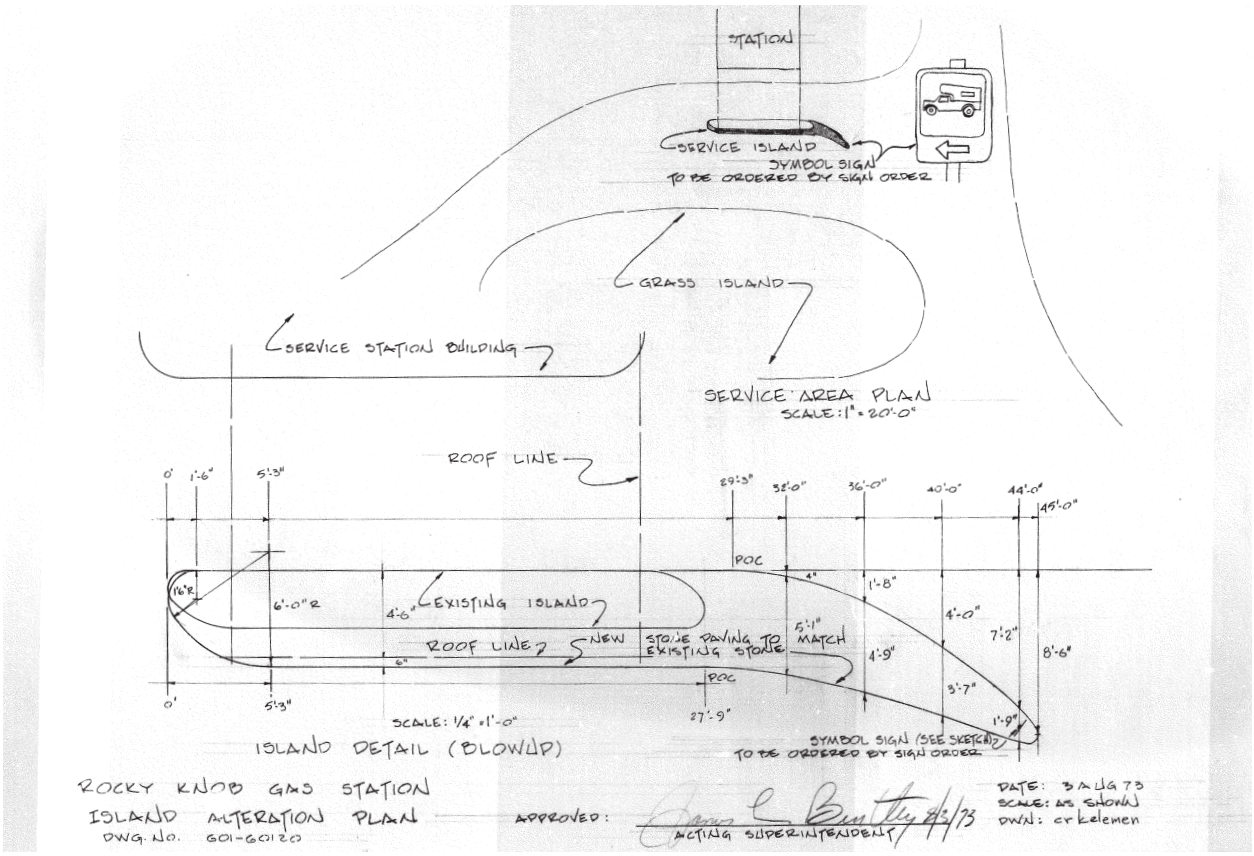


Figure 2.47: Plan for gas station island alteration, (ETIC Archives, 1973).

Employee Residences. The landscape surrounding the Maintenance Area and Employee Residences changed somewhat during this period. Native ornamental shrub and tree plantings declined and staff did not replace them in kind. The biggest change occurred in the late 1990s and early 2000s when the NPS approved the relocation of two large trailers to a site halfway up the hill between the Maintenance Area and the Employee Residences. In the 1970s, the NPS located a camper pad in the same area for use by volunteers and seasonal campground hosts complete with utilities. Rocky Knob Recreation Area staff use the two trailers as district and seasonal offices.

Campground. The campground experienced little change during this period. The NPS built a sanitary dump station near the campground entrance in 1967. The construction of this structure resulted in the loss of a few campsites in its vicinity. A severe ice storm in the late 2000s resulted in the loss of many trees in the campground and elsewhere in the recreation area. The storm decimated the experimental chestnut orchard located near the campground.

NPS staff identified a need for a registration kiosk building after completing construction of the campground in 1962. Rather than design and build a new building for this purpose, staff chose to relocate a visitor contact kiosk from an area south of Asheville for use at the new campground in 1968. The small kiosk was originally part of a failed program to provide information stations along the Parkway. According to NPS Associate Director Demaray, the design of these kiosks, "had the appearance of the type of structure usually associated with metropolitan developments rather than mountain parkways such as the Blue Ridge."[190] Demaray requested that the Parkway submit a new design, based on earlier versions of the kiosk inspired by vernacular mountain structures. Weems objected, arguing that buildings based on traditional mountain architecture were too expensive to maintain. In the end, Weems prevailed and the NPS built the kiosks as planned. Eventually, the kiosks were removed, damaged, or repurposed for new uses along the Parkway.[191] Sometime after 1997, the NPS replaced the

190 Quoted in Quin, 1997, 133.

191 Ibid., 137.

registration kiosk at the campground with the current one. The current building features a pitched roof that is more in keeping with the rest of the architecture along the Parkway than the original. Identical buildings appear elsewhere at campgrounds throughout the Parkway, indicating that the current building was once a Parkway standard.

Parkway Section 1-S

The NPS repaved section 1-S of the Parkway in 1971. NPS staff probably replaced the original slate curbing at Rock Castle Gorge and The Saddle Overlooks with pink colored granite during this period.

Signage. The NPS began installing modern interpretive signage designed by the NPS Interpretive Center at Harpers Ferry throughout the Parkway in 1984.[192] Parkway staff installed one of these signs at The Saddle Overlook in Rocky Knob. The sign interprets nearby Buffalo Mountain, visible in the distance from this overlook.

More recently, the Parkway switched from routed wood signs to recycled plastic signs or in some cases pressed foam signs for everything from trail and gunboard signs, to park identification signs. These new materials attempt to retain the rustic character of the original signage, by employing the same lettering style and dimensions of the originals, but they lack the rustic, hand-hewn appeal of the wooden signs they replaced. At Rocky Knob, Parkway staff replaced the gunboard sign at The Saddle Overlook with a pressed foam sign in the 2000s. The sign did not weather well and staff had to replace the sign again quickly.

Agricultural Leases. Research failed to uncover any changes in the agricultural lease program at Rocky Knob during this period. Today cattle graze the pasture areas (Figure 2.48).



Figure 2.48: Cattle pasture in an agricultural lease at Rocky Knob, (Parkway Archives, 1974).

192 Ibid., 145.

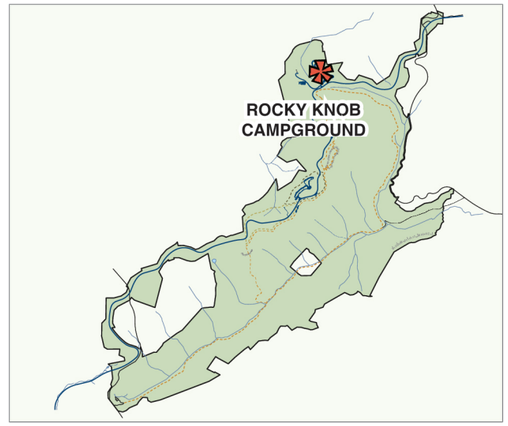
Wooden Trail System Sign
Campground Registration Sign *(1962)*
Registration Kiosk *(Original structure installed in 1968 Current Structure installed post 1997)*
Firewood Crib *(Original structure installed in 1962. Date of current structure unknown.)*
Sanitary Dump Station *(1967)*
Litter Deposit Area *(c.1962)*
Maintenance Area (c.1941)
Comfort Station #451 *(1962)*
Remnant Chestnut Orchard *(1940)*
Stone Gutter *(1937-1943)*
Comfort Station #450 *(1962)*
Loop T
Loop A
Loop B
Loop C
VIEW
Comfort Station #239 *(1962)*
Wood Crib and Utility Shed *(1962)*
Campfire Circle *(1962)*
Water Line *(1962)*
Comfort Station #238 *(1962)*
Large Clearing
Wahoo Branch
N.P.S. fence

Legend

- Rock Outcrop
- Trail
- Stone Steps *(1962)*
- Deciduous Specimen Tree
- Evergreen Specimen Tree
- Stone Drinking Fountain *(c.1962)*
- Contemporary Drinking Fountain *(Exact date unknown)*
- Entrance Gate *(1962)*
- Entrance Gate *(1967)*

0 100 200 North

Rocky Knob Campground



Location Map

Periods of Development

- Pre-Parkway (Pre-History - 1933)
- Pre-War Planning and Construction (1933 - 1941)
- War Years (1942 - 1945)
- Resumption of Construction (1946 - 1955)
- Mission 66 (1956 - 1966)
- Post-Mission 66 (1967 - present)

Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2013

Illustration 2.23

Water Line
(c.1941)

Antennae Tower
(c.1948)

Overhead Power Line
(Date unknown)

Chain Link Fence
(Date unknown)

MAINTENANCE AREA

Unimproved Road
(Date unknown)

Fenced Storage Yard
(Date unknown)

Remnant Chestnut Orchard
(1940)

Specimen Tree
(Date unknown)

Timber Guard Rail
(Missing. Removed post-1948)

Original Entrance Drive Configuration
(Missing. Removed during remodelof the employee residences in 1950)

Unimproved Road
(Pre-1952. Exact date unknown)

Entrance Drive Circulation at Employee Residences
(Pre-1952. Exact date unknown)

RESIDENCE AREA

Original Pedestrian Circulation
(Missing. Removed during remodel of the employee residences in 1950)

To State Route 720

N.P.S. fence

Wahoo Branch

10+00

3050

3000

5+00

Building Key

A. Office and Tool Storage Building #4 *(1941)*
B. Building #346 *(Date unknown)*
C. Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building #2 *(1940)*
D. Carpenter and Paint Shop #3 (Built in *1940). Expanded in 1952)*
E. Building #878 *(Date unknown)*
F. Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86 *(1952)*
G. Maintenance Area Fuel Station Building #965 *(Date unknown)*
H. Oil and Paint Storage Building #5 *(1942)*
I. Incinerator Remnant #147 *(1941)*
J. Radio Substation and Antennae Tower Remnant #6 *(1948)*
K. District Office Trailer *(Date unknown)*
L. Trailer *(Date unknown)*
M. Employee Residence #7 *(Built in 1941. Remodeled in 1950)*
N. Employee Residence #8 *(Built in 1941. Remodeled in 1950)*
O. Utility Shed *(Date unknown)*

Legend

Unimproved Road
Deciduous Specimen Tree
Evergreen Specimen Tree

0 75 150

North

Rocky Knob Maintenance Area and Employee Residences



Location Map

Periods of Development

- Pre-Parkway (Pre-History - 1933)
- Pre-War Planning and Construction (1933 - 1941)
- War Years (1942 - 1945)
- Resumption of Construction (1946 - 1955)
- Mission 66 (1956 - 1966)
- Post-Mission 66 (1967 - present)

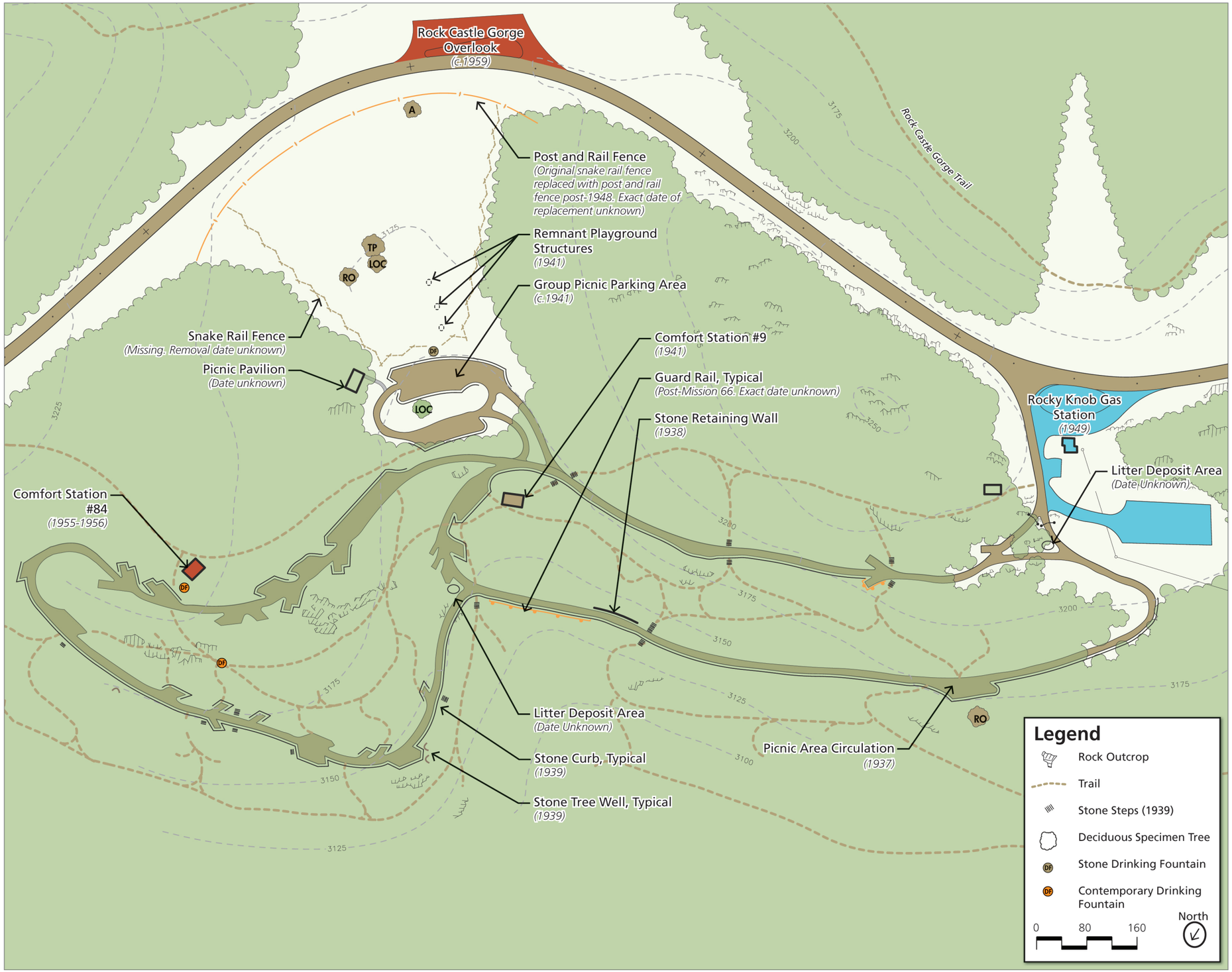
Plant Key

A	Ash	Faxinus spp.
DW	Dogwood	Cornus florida
HEM	Hemlock	Tsuga canadensis
RO	Red Oak	Quercus borealis / Quercus rubra
RM	Red Maple	Acer rubra
TP	Tulip Poplar	Liriodendron tulipifera
U	Unknown	

Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2013

Illustration 2.24



Rocky Knob Picnic Area



Location Map

Periods of Development

- Pre-Parkway (Pre-History - 1933)
- Pre-War Planning and Construction (1933 - 1941)
- War Years (1942 - 1945)
- Resumption of Construction (1946 - 1955)
- Mission 66 (1956 - 1966)
- Post-Mission 66 (1967 - present)

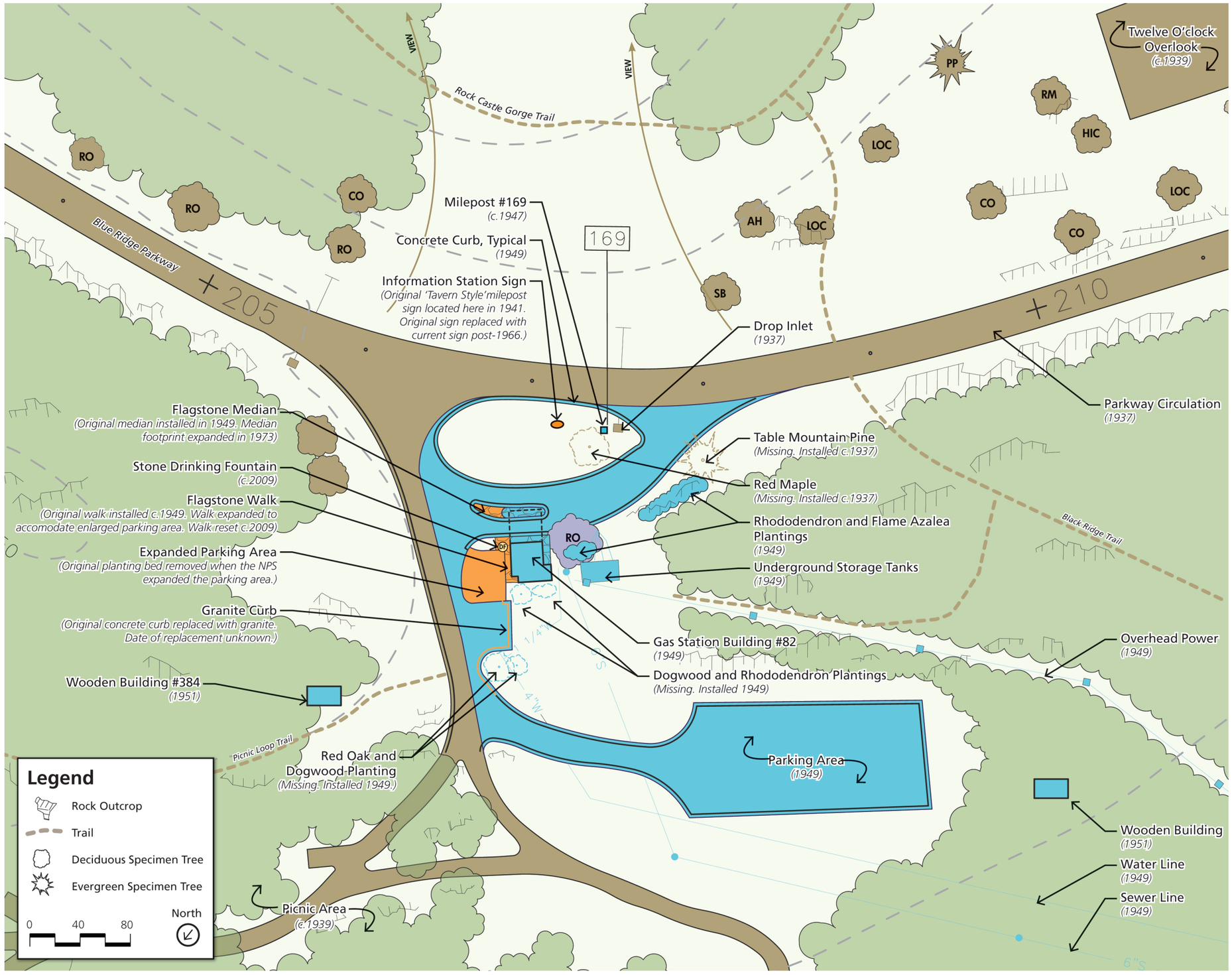
Plant Key

A	Ash	Fraxinus spp.
LOC	Black Locust	Robinia pseudoacacia
RO	Red Oak	Quercus borealis / Quercus rubra
TP	Tulip Poplar	Liriodendron tulipifera

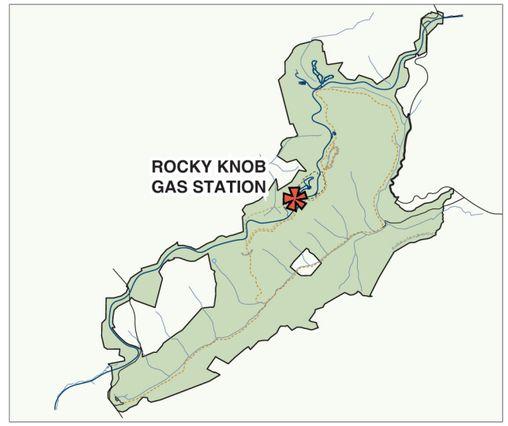
Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2013

Illustration 2.25



Rocky Knob Gas Station



Location Map

Periods of Development

- Pre-Parkway (Pre-History - 1933)
- Pre-War Planning and Construction (1933 - 1941)
- War Years (1942 - 1945)
- Resumption of Construction (1946 - 1955)
- Mission 66 (1956 - 1966)
- Post-Mission 66 (1967 - present)

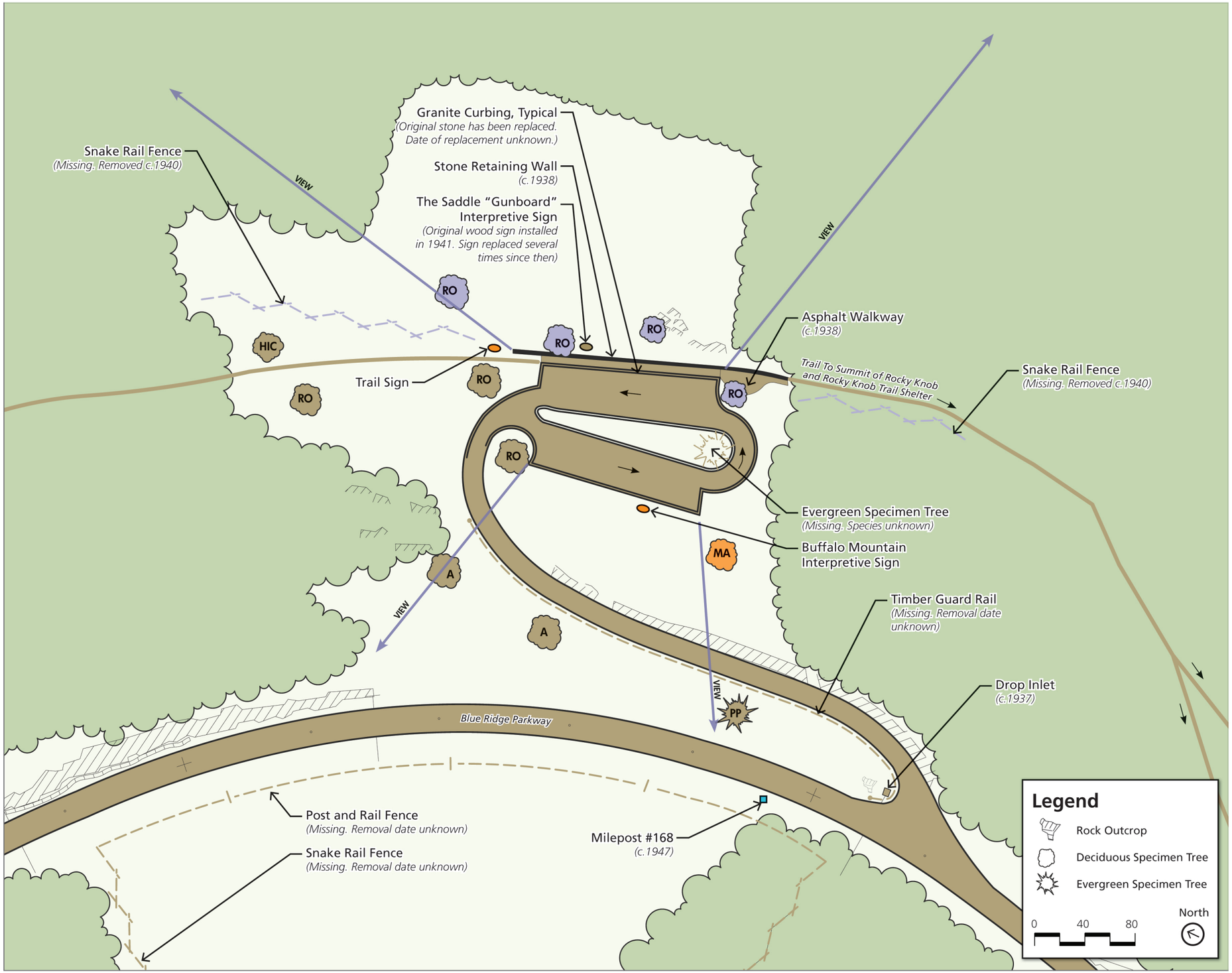
Plant Key

AH	Hornbeam	Carpinus caroliniana
CO	Chestnut Oak	Quercus prinus
HIC	Hickory	Carya spp.
LOC	Black Locust	Robinia pseudoacacia
PP	Table Mtn Pine	Pinus pungens
RO	Red Oak	Quercus borealis / Quercus rubra
RM	Red Maple	Acer rubra
SB	Sweet Birch	Betula lenta

Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2013

Illustration 2.26



The Saddle Overlook



Location Map

Periods of Development

- Pre-Parkway (Pre-History - 1933)
- Pre-War Planning and Construction (1933 - 1941)
- War Years (1942 - 1945)
- Resumption of Construction (1946 - 1955)
- Mission 66 (1956 - 1966)
- Post-Mission 66 (1967 - present)

Plant Key

A	Ash	Fraxinus spp.
HIC	Hickory	Carya spp.
MA	Crab Apple	Malus spp.
PP	Table Mtn Pine	Pinus pungens
RO	Red Oak	Quercus borealis / Quercus rubra

Site History

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2013

Illustration 2.27

VIEW

VIEW

Asphalt Walkway
(c.1959)

Granite Curbing
(Original slate replaced with granite. Date of replacement unknown.)

Rock Castle Gorge Interpretive Sign
(Contemporary Sign. Date unknown)

HIC

HIC

Wooden Trail Steps
(Contemporary Steps. Date Unknown)

Trash Receptacle Post
(c.1959)

Rock Castle Gorge Trail

Blue Ridge Parkway

A

Post and Rail Fence
(Original snake rail fence replaced with post and rail fence post-1948. Exact date of replacement unknown)

Snake Rail Fence
(Missing. Removal date unknown)

(2) Specimen Trees
(Missing. Species unknown)

Legend

- Trail
- Deciduous Specimen Tree
- Evergreen Specimen Tree

0 30 60

North

Rock Castle Gorge Overlook



Location Map

Periods of Development

- Pre-Parkway (Pre-History - 1933)
- Pre-War Planning and Construction (1933 - 1941)
- War Years (1942 - 1945)
- Resumption of Construction (1946 - 1955)
- Mission 66 (1956 - 1966)
- Post-Mission 66 (1967 - present)

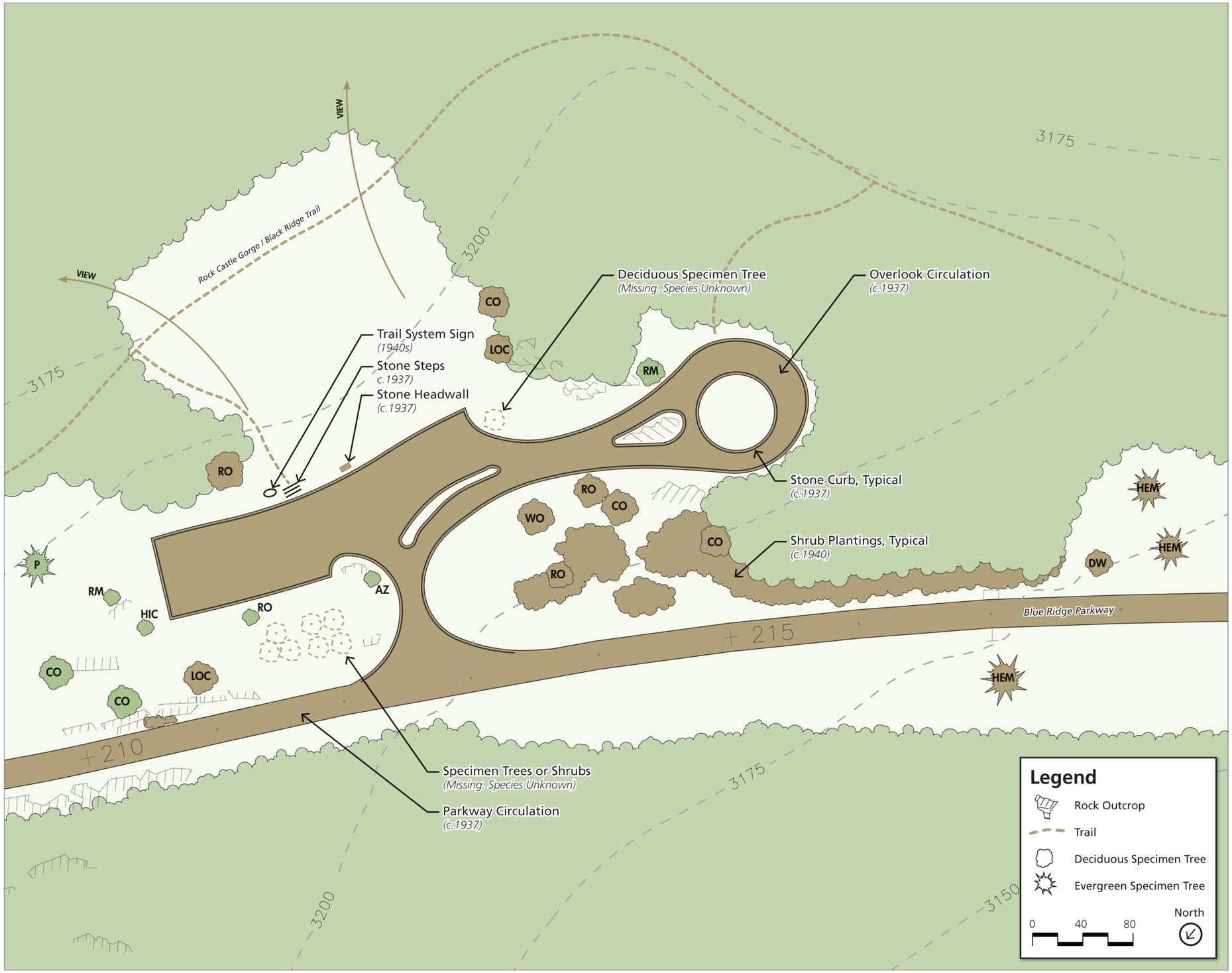
Plant Key

A	Ash	Fraxinus spp.
HIC	Hickory	Carya spp.

Existing Conditions

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2013

Illustration 2.28



Twelve O'Clock Overlook



Location Map

Periods of Development

- Pre-Parkway (Pre-History - 1933)
- Pre-War Planning and Construction (1933 - 1941)
- War Years (1942 - 1945)
- Resumption of Construction (1946 - 1955)
- Mission 66 (1956 - 1966)
- Post-Mission 66 (1967 - present)

Plant Key

AZ	Flame Azalea	Rhododendron calendulaceum
CO	Chestnut Oak	Quercus prinus
DW	Dogwood	Cornus florida
HEM	Hemlock	Tsuga canadensis
HIC	Hickory	Carya spp.
LOC	Black Locust	Robinia pseudoacacia
PP	Table Mtn Pine	Pinus pungens
RO	Red Oak	Quercus borealis / Quercus rubra
RM	Red Maple	Acer rubra
WO	White Oak	Quercus alba

Existing Conditions

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2013

Illustration 2.29

Existing Conditions

Introduction

The Rocky Knob Recreation Area is located in west central Virginia, 18 miles north of the North Carolina State Line. Floyd, Virginia is located 10 miles north of the recreation area, and Roanoke, Virginia is 38 miles to the northeast. This mountainous recreation area is comprised of over 4,000 acres located in both Floyd and Patrick counties. The terrain is a mix of forest and open pasture and elevations range from 1,700 to 3,572 feet above sea level. This study defines five component landscapes developed as part of the Blue Ridge Parkway between the late 1930s and the early 1960s. Located adjacent to the Parkway, these areas constitute approximately 80 developed acres within the Rocky Knob Recreation Area. The component landscapes are Rocky Knob Campground, Rocky Knob Maintenance Area, Rocky Knob Picnic Area, Rocky Knob Gas Station, and the Rocky Knob Trail Lodge Cabins[1].

In addition to the component landscapes, other cultural resources were identified including; Section 1.S of the Parkway from Milepost 165.3 to Milepost 169.2, The Saddle Overlook, Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, Twelve O'clock Overlook, Trail Shelter, Pump House, and The Rock Castle Gorge Community.

Illustration 1.1 provides an overview of the Rocky Knob Recreation Area, its component landscapes and additional cultural resources. This section describes the existing conditions of these landscapes in detail, presenting each component landscape in the order it is encountered along the Parkway route from north to south, following an overview of the natural systems and features of Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

1 The Trail Lodge Cabins are a Rocky Knob Component Landscape. A detailed study of this site is not included in the scope of this Cultural Landscape Report.

Natural Systems and Features

Topography and Hydrology

The Blue Ridge Parkway runs northeast to southwest along the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The majority of Rocky Knob Recreation Area is undeveloped and located on the southern side of the Parkway between Milepost 165.3 and Milepost 173.2[2]. The roadway is consistently located above 3,000 feet in elevation as it travels through the recreation area. Rock Castle Creek and Rock Castle Gorge divide Rocky Knob Recreation Area from the northeast to the southwest. Additional ridges and creeks, which form valleys and coves, further partition the interior of the recreation area. The lowest elevations are near the confluence of Rock Castle Creek and Little Rock Castle Creek along the western boundary of the recreation area. These two waterways are the only named streams that appear on the United States Geological Survey's (USGS) topographic map of the area, although the names of several other smaller waterways appear on early NPS planning documents. Rock Castle Creek begins in the Rock Castle Gorge before leaving the project area and rushing down to the piedmont, where is flows into the Smith River, which eventually empties into the Atlantic Ocean at Albemarle Sound in North Carolina. The summit of Rocky Knob is the highest elevation within the Rocky Knob Recreation Area. Illustration 3.1 shows the system of watercourses and associated topography that compose Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

Geomorphology and Geology

The relative elevation, relief, geologic structure, and lithology define the physiographic provinces withinVirginia. Differences in climate, soils, and overall habitat conditions in each province greatly influence the distribution of individual plant species and the assemblages of natural plant

2 The boundaries of this study do not include the entirety of Rocky Knob Recreation Area; instead, the focus of this report is the developed portions of the park located between MP 165.3 and 169.2.

communities[3]. Three physiographic provinces intersect in western and central Virginia and are part of the Appalachian Mountain region: The Appalachian Plateau, The Ridge and Valley Province, and The Blue Ridge Province. The Blue Ridge Province forms the eastern portion the Appalachian Mountain region and contains the entirety of Rocky Knob Recreation Area. Figure 3.1 illustrates the physiographic provinces and subregions of Virginia in detail.

Ancient (pre-Cambrian) continental basement rocks that were faulted, uplifted, and deformed during three discrete Appalachian orogenies underlie the Blue Ridge Province. This province is split into two distinct subregions, the Northern Blue Ridge and Southern Blue Ridge. Roanoke Gap defines the boundary between these two subregions. South of Roanoke Gap, the Southern Blue Ridge consists of a gently rolling plateau up to 50 miles wide, bordered on the southeast by a pronounced escarpment abruptly descending to the Piedmont. The Southern Blue Ridge is underlain by a variety of ancient igneous and metamorphic rocks including granite and quartz[4]. The Rocky Knob Recreation Area falls within the Southern Blue Ridge subregion, however, Rocky Knob itself is an exception to the prevailing plateau character of the Blue Ridge in Southern Virginia, rising as an individual mountain from the surrounding land.

Soils

The dominant soil types that occur within the recreation area are as follows: Cowee-Rock Outcrop complex, Bellspur-Kibler complex, Cliffield-Evard complex, Saunook-Thunder complex, Evard-Cowee complex and Peaks-Rock Outcrop complex. Almost all of these soils contain high concentrations of stone and are classified as either: extremely rocky, rocky, or stony. Slopes are variable but generally fall between 15 and 40 percent. Rock outcroppings and rock "fins" are visible from the Rock Castle Gorge Trail, the Parkway itself and throughout the interior of Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

Vegetation

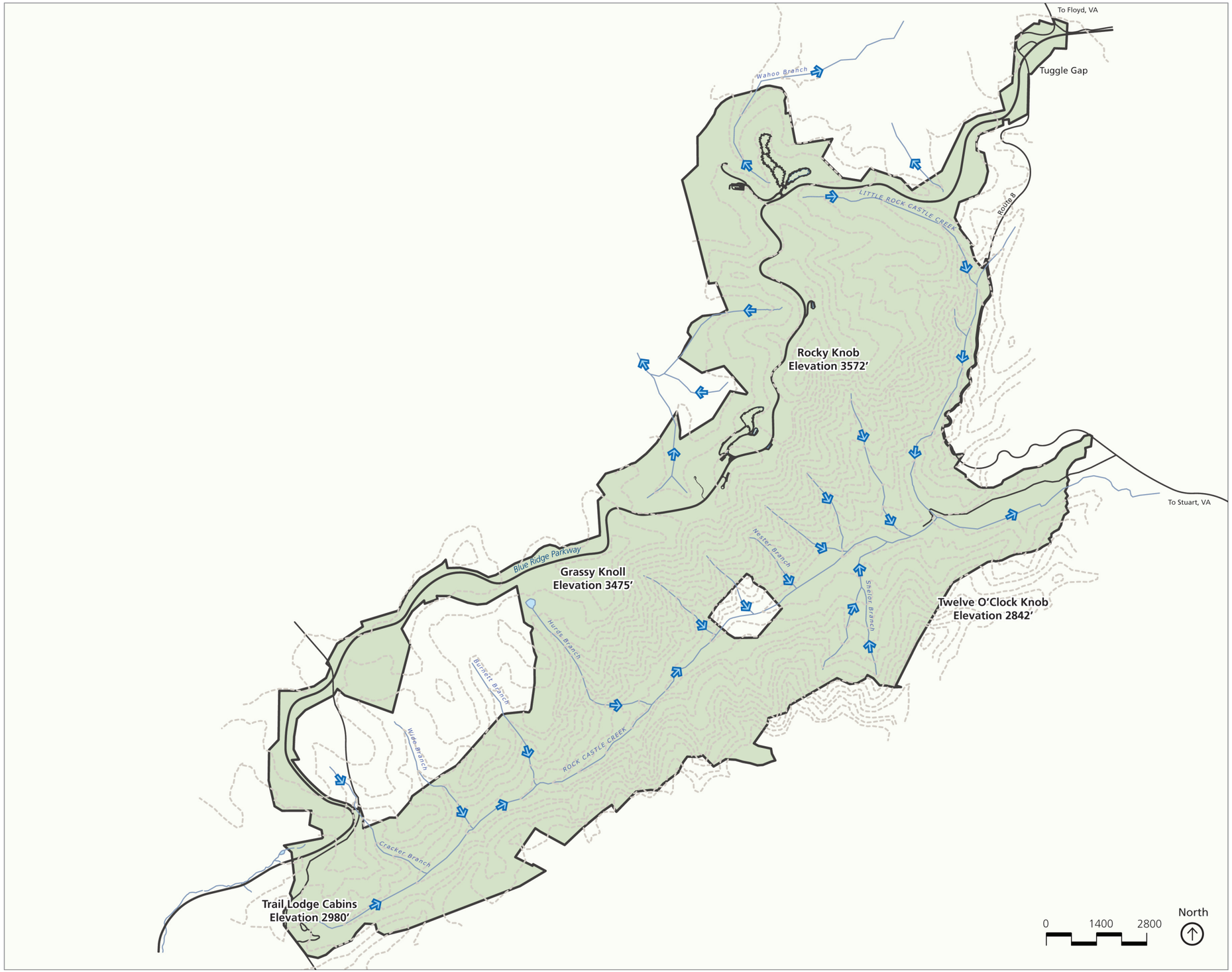
Surveying the recreation area from any of the Parkway overlooks, one can see that Rocky Knob Recreation Area is composed of nearly all forested slopes. The managed landscapes surrounding the aforementioned component landscapes are the exception. The majority of these areas are meadows and lawns kept open by either a mowing regime or grazing. The meadows and pastures feature meadow grasses and forbes with scattered bays of trees and shrubs, while the lawns feature turf and a variety of specimen trees and flowering shrubs native to the region. Two forest types dominate the forested portions of the recreation area, Southern Appalachian Oak Forest on the ridges and upland slopes, and Cove Forest along the lowland streams of the Rock Castle Gorge.

The Southern Appalachian Oak Forest is a subset of the abundant eastern forest community, the Oak-Hickory forest. The American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) once dominated these forests. Since the decline of the American chestnut in this region, stands of chestnut have been replaced by a variety of tree species, including chestnut oak (*Quercus prinus*), northern red oak (*Quercus falcata / Quercus borealis*), hickory (*Carya spp.*), and sweet birch (*Betula lenta*). The upland forests within the recreation area contain a smaller proportion of oak trees than many of the forests along the Parkway, making the forests of Rocky Knob unique. Another characteristic of the upland forests at Rocky Knob Recreation Area is the stunted and wind-blasted appearance of many of the trees located at higher elevations. Severe winter storms attack the crest of Rocky Knob each year, and the violence of these storms is obvious in the landscape. Common understory and shrub species include flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*), flame azalea (*Rhododendron calendulaceum*), winterberry (*Ilex montana*), and mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*).

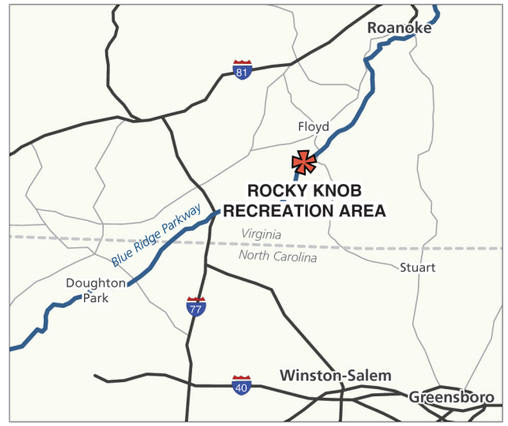
The Cove Forest is characterized by its diversity of species. Common tree and shrub species of this community include: cucumber magnolia (*Magnolia accuminata*), flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*), tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*) and rosebay rhododendron (*Rhododendron maximum*). Unusual species such as black maple (*Acer nigrum*) are also found here. A stand of bigtooth aspen (*Populus grandidentata*)

3 "Overview of the Physiography & Vegetation of Virginia" U.S. Department of Conservation and Recreation, http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/ncoverview.shtml, accessed 1 August 2011.

4 Ibid.



Hydrology and Topography Map



Regional Map

Existing Conditions

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report

May 2013
Illustration 3.1

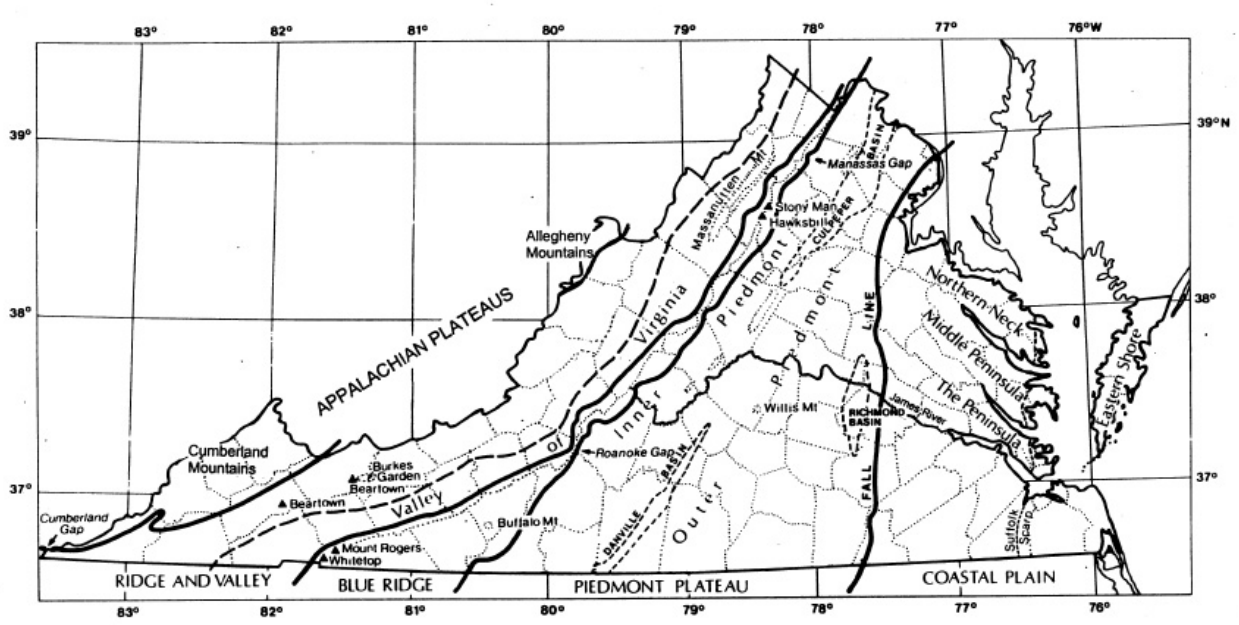


Figure 3.1: Physiographic regions of Virginia (U.S. Department of Conservation and Recreation, 2011).

is visible from the Rock Castle Gorge Trail as are large groupings of catawba rhododendron (*Rhododendron catawbiense*) and mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*). The character of this forest is of dense canopy, understory and ground layer along the base of protected slopes.

Invasive species found within the recreation area include: multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculata*) and tree of heaven (*ailanthus spp.*).

Cultural Features

Land Use

Rocky Knob Recreation Area exhibits nearly all of the varied types of land use found along the Blue Ridge Parkway. Recreation is certainly the major activity associated with this recreation area. In addition to the Parkway and associated automobile touring, this recreation area features a picnic area, campground, and over 10 miles of hiking trails to facilitate the Parkway recreational experience. The recreational facilities are described in detail later in this chapter in the Component Landscapes section.

Interpretation is another important endeavor at Rocky Knob. Wayside interpretive signs, evening programs provided by NPS staff, and a monthly ranger-led hike through Rock Castle Gorge are some of the interpretive methods employed by Rocky Knob Recreation Area. Additionally, the NPS provides lodging facilities within the recreation area. A concession seasonally operates a cluster of trail cabins within Rocky Knob Recreation Area, offering overnight visitors an alternative to outdoor camping.

Generally, land use in Rocky Knob Recreation Area favors automobile and outdoor recreation along the Parkway. An exception to this is Parkway land leased for agriculture. Throughout the history of the Parkway, the NPS has issued agricultural leases to provide pastoral scenery along the route. This land use is evident in the recreation area with grazing livestock being the most common lease type. Illustration 3.2 provides additional information on the agricultural lease program at Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

Lands adjacent to the recreation area are primarily devoted to private residential and agricultural properties. There is a single privately owned in-holding within the Rocky Knob Recreation Area. The parcel boundary, and the structures contained within it predate Parkway construction. NPS grants access to the owner of this landlocked parcel through a fire road easement that is part of the Rocky Knob Recreation Area trail system.

Buildings and Structures

Rocky Knob contains over twenty buildings and structures. The majority of these buildings and structures occur within the developed areas of the park. Three eras of buildings are represented in the recreation area. During the Prewar Planning and Construction of the Parkway), many buildings were constructed in a rustic style that reflected local vernacular materials and forms. During the Resumption of Construction, buildings were executed in a variation of the previously established rustic style, which began to incorporate new building materials and forms. Rocky Knob Recreation Area also contains several Mission 66 buildings, which abandoned the rustic style in favor of a more economical and utilitarian aesthetic. Structures in Rocky Knob Recreation Area follow a similar trajectory. Early structures tend to exhibit rustic materials and character, while later structures took on a utilitarian character. All buildings and structures are described in detail later in this chapter.

Circulation

Rocky Knob Recreation Area contains nearly eight miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway stretching from Milepost 165.3 to Milepost 173.2. This study focuses on the developed areas of Rocky Knob Recreation Area, which are located from Milepost 165.3 to Milepost 169.2. The Parkway is a two-lane corridor, which runs along the high elevation portions of the site found along northern boundary of Rocky Knob Recreation Area. Each component landscape contains automotive circulation routes described in detail in each component landscape section.

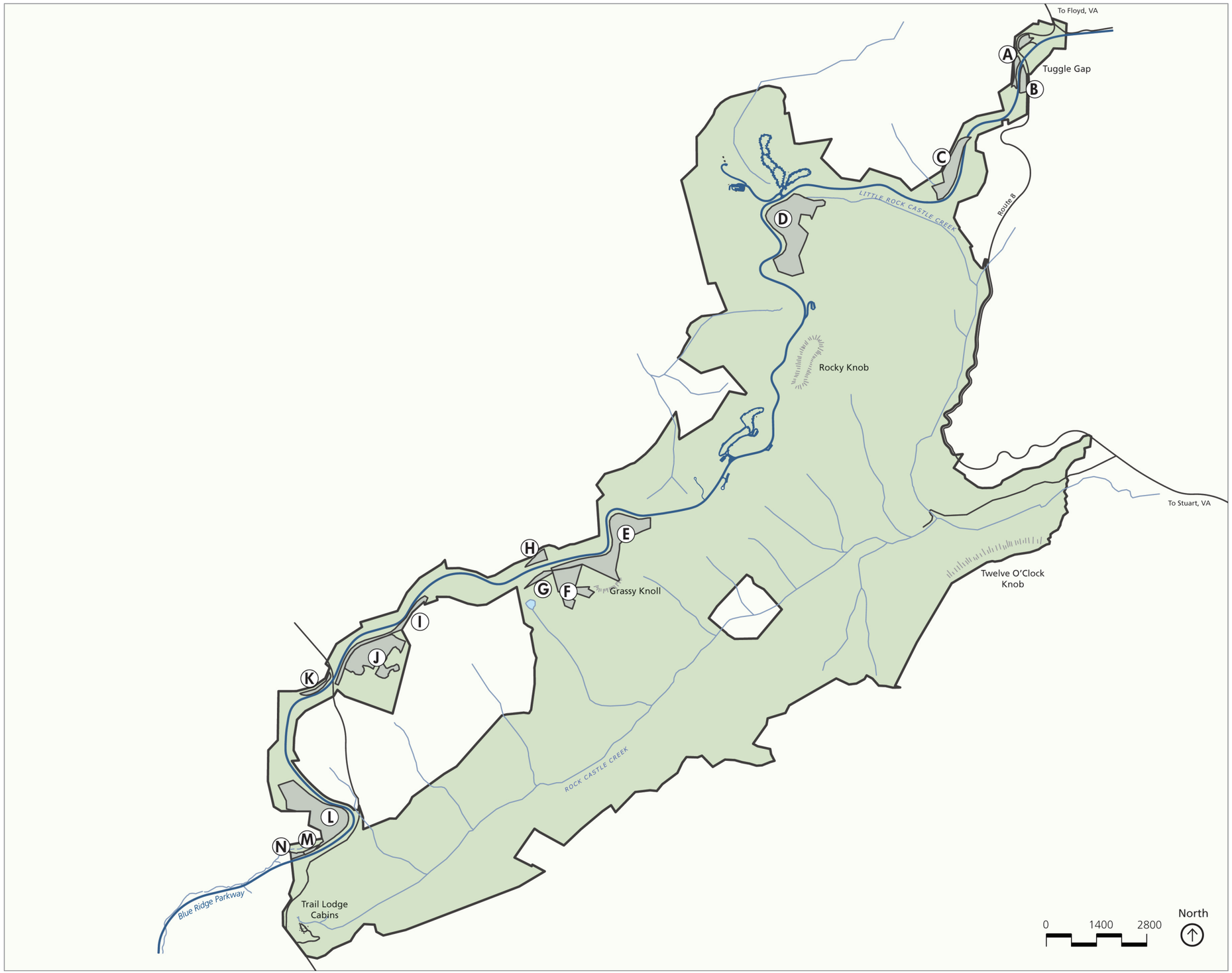
Over 10 miles of hiking trails traverse the recreation area. Figure 3.2 illustrates this extensive trail network. The longest and most used trail, Rock Castle Gorge Trail, is a 10.8-mile loop, which stretches from the Rocky Knob Campground in the north all the way to the Trail Lodge Cabins in the south. This trail parallels the Parkway for a portion of the route, winding through many of the developed areas of the recreation area as well as through meadows and forest. Outstanding views of the Rock Castle Gorge, the piedmont, and the countryside surrounding Floyd, Virginia are visible from this section of the trail. This trail also routes through the interior of the recreation area, encountering many landmarks along the way, including the primitive campsite located on the former site of a CCC camp, the Rock Castle Cascades, a large boulder field known as Bear Rocks,[5] the Grassy Knoll and the summit of Rocky Knob. A considerable portion of this trail is located on a historic road trace formerly known as Rock Castle Road. NPS maintains this part of the trail as an unimproved, single lane, gated fire road. The three-mile Black Ridge Trail begins and ends at the Rocky Knob Gas Station. This trail passes through forest and offers views of Rock Castle Gorge and the piedmont. The trail joins with a portion of the Rock Castle Gorge Trail on the return route to the Gas Station. A short one-mile loop trail winds through the Rocky Knob Picnic Area. This easy loop travels through mature forest canopy and is a favorite among bird watchers. The trail system at Rocky Knob was one of the first amenities constructed at Rocky Knob, with over 10 miles completed by 1937 by the ERA.[6] The system is in good condition.

Utilities

Electricity is provided to Rocky Knob Recreation Area in three locations. One electric line provides power to the Gas Station and Picnic Area, another provides power to the Rocky Knob Trail Cabins, and a third line connects the Maintenance Area, Campground, and Employee Residences. Lines run to NPS property from adjacent properties located off the Parkway. Most electric lines located within the developed areas are buried; however, overhead lines are visible in the Maintenance Area, the Employee Residence Area, and at the Rocky Knob Gas Station. Each building or group of buildings has an independent septic system. Septic systems are located near each comfort station, the Gas Station, the Maintenance Area, and at the Employee Residences. These systems make use of septic tanks, which overflow into nearby disposal fields. Three separate well water systems supply water to the recreation area. Water is pumped from these wells to underground storage reservoirs. The first water system serves the Picnic Area and Gas Station, the second serves The Trail Lodge Cabins, and a third provides water to the Maintenance Area and Staff Residences.

5 Oral history transcriptions indicate the name as "Bare" Rocks. Other documentation (Illustration 2.10) shows "Bear" Rocks, suggesting an error in the transcriptions.

6 Firth, 2005, 198.



Agricultural Leases

Agricultural Lease Key

ACTIVE LEASES:

	Type	*Acreage*	*Parcel #*
A	Hay	6.35	1S-106
B	Hay	3.47	1S-101
C	Pasture	15.46	1S-107
D	Pasture	47.679	1S-105
E	Pasture	34.428	1S-102
F	Pasture	17.798	1S-108
G	Hay	1.935	1S-110*
H	*Not an Active Lease*		1S-109**
I	Hay/Crops	8.367	1S-112
J	Hay/Crops	28.974	1S-103
K	*Not an Active Lease*		1S-113***
L	Hay/Pasture	40.182	1S-104
M	Hay/Pasture	0.96	1S-114
N	Hay/Pasture	2.037	1S-115

* 1S-110: The Parkway is currently reviewing a proposal by the Plateau District Management Team and Landscape Architect David Anderson to cancel this lease in order to screen adjacent development from the Parkway motor road.

** 1S-109: This is not an active lease. This field as removed from the agricultural leasing program approximately 15 years ago. The field is too small to be a pasture and it's too rocky for productive hay or crops. It is currently maintained by the Parkway as a wildflower meadow/ grassy bay through annual Fall mowing.

*** 1S-113: This is not an active agricultural lease. Lease was removed from the leasing program approximately 15+ years ago after the adjacent landowner got out of the cattle business. Lease is very small and too rocky for productive hay or crops. Field is being allowed to grow up through natural succession.

Information on Agricultural Leases within Rocky Knob Recreation Area provided by:

Tom Davis 540-745-9663

G_Tom_Davis@nps.gov

Existing Conditions

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
March 2013

Illustration 3.2

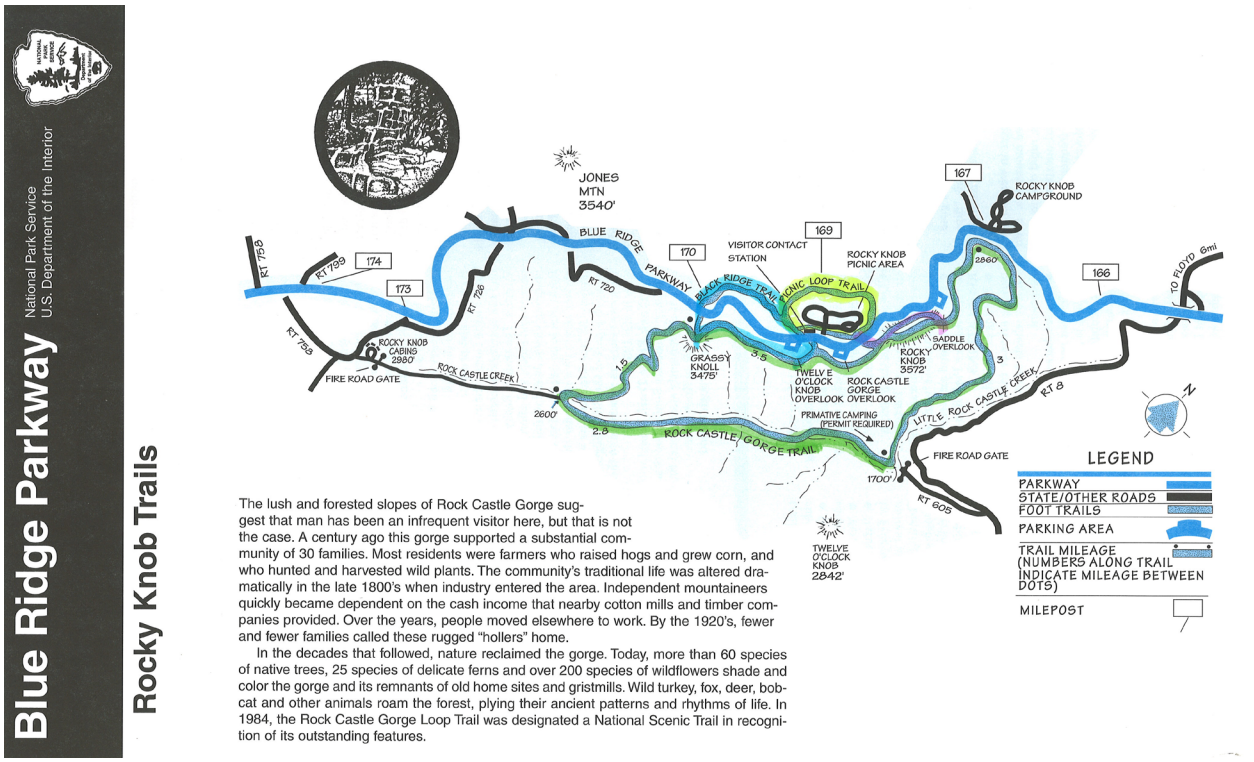


Figure 3.2: Rocky Knob trail map (National Park Service, 2011).

Component Landscapes

Rocky Knob Campground

The Rocky Knob Campground is comprised of approximately 30 acres located immediately north of Milepost 167 on Parkway right. Completed in 1962, the Campground is divided into two sections: the tent campground and the trailer campground. These sections are further subdivided into four distinct loop roads, three in the tent campground and one in the trailer area. Illustration 3.3 shows the layout of the Campground in detail.

Loop T provides parking and campsites for the trailer campground and is accessed by traveling northwest along the campground entrance road. The trailer camping loop consists of an approximately 1,800 foot long, single lane vehicular loop with parking areas and pull-offs for individual campsites occurring at regular intervals throughout the length of the drive.[7] Each parking slip is lined with mortared slate curbing. Loop T consists of 28 campsites, none is ADA accessible. Tent camping is currently not permitted at Loop T.

Loops A, B and C are accessible by turning left along the Campground entrance drive and traveling north. All three loops carefully wind around Weddle Ridge, which descends in elevation as you travel north. Each individual loop forms a fully enclosed ring, with the next loop beginning near the halfway point of the previous one. In plan view, Loops A, B, C resemble links in a chain. All three loops feature a gently winding, single lane roadway with regularly spaced campsites and associated parking slips located on either side of the drive. All parking areas within the tent campground are lined with mortared slate curb. Loops A and B are both approximately 1,350 feet long and contains 26 campsites each. Loop C contains 28 campsites and is slightly longer than the other two loops, measuring 1,400 in length. No ADA accessible sites are located in the tent campground.

Land Use. Currently all sections of the Rocky Knob Campground are still providing their intended recreational role along the Parkway. Ranger programs are provided for the campers with ranger-led interpretive activities conducted at the campfire circle located between Loops T and A. The four driving loops feature parking, picnic, and campsites situated around each of the loops. Each

7 All roadway lengths are scaled measurements from the PLUMs.

loop contains a comfort station and at least one drinking fountain, making toilet facilities and water available to all campers. A sanitary dump station as well as a trash disposal and recycling area are also located on site.

Vegetation. The general character of the Campground is woodland with a few open lawn areas containing specimen trees. The understory is composed of flowering trees and shrubs, primarily rhododendrons, with flame azalea (*Rhododendron calendulaceum*) and mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) present in considerable numbers. The trees are mostly deciduous; however, white pine (*Pinus strobus*) and Virginia pine (*Pinus virginiana*) do occur within the Campground. Loop C contains the greatest concentration of evergreen canopy trees, with white pine dominating the overstory. As a result, the character of Loop C is unique among the camping loops.

The PLUMs do not list specific tree species for use in reforestation efforts at the Campground and no planting plans for the Campground were located in the Parkway Archives, so it is difficult to be certain of the exact plant palette used by the designers. However, based on the PLUMs it is clear that the designers intended to return the entire Campground to canopy. This is mostly the case today; however, some small pockets of open lawn area remain, most notably in the Trailer Camping Loop. In the Trailer Camping Loop there is a large clearing located at the northern end of the loop, which contains campsites C-12 through C-14.

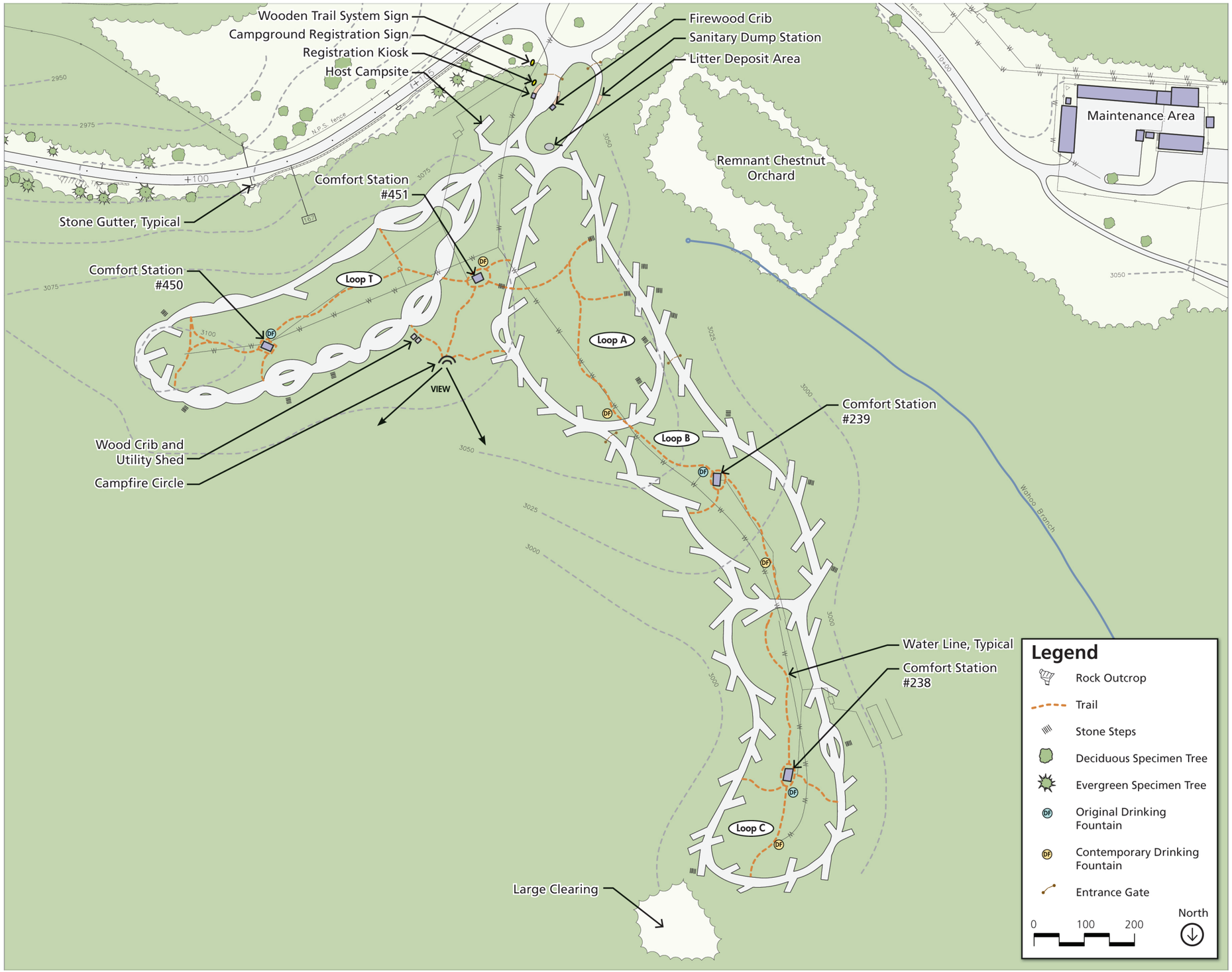
The general condition of the Campground vegetation is good, though some plants show signs of stress related to the high winds and winter storms this area is known for. A severe ice storm occurred in the winter of 2010, and according to NPS staff, many trees in the Campground and throughout the Rocky Knob Recreation Area were lost or damaged. The storm was especially devastating to the Chinese chestnut (*Castanea mollissima*) orchard that the NPS planted in 1940 as a test orchard.[8] The remnants of the orchard can be found on the knoll between the Campground and the Maintenance Area. Additionally, there are exposed tree roots in some of the campsites, but the affected trees appear to be in good health.

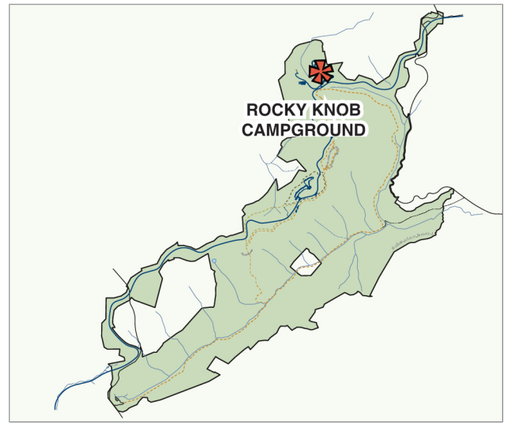
8 Quin 1997, 213.

Circulation. The Rocky Knob Campground accommodates both pedestrian and vehicular circulation. The primary vehicular circulation features are associated with the campground Loops A through T and are described in detail earlier in this chapter. An internal campground trail system handles the pedestrian circulation, connecting users to amenities like comfort stations, drinking fountains and the campfire circle. Figure 3.3 and Illustration 3.3 show a detailed maps of the campground system. Most trails within the Campground are asphalt and approximately 4-5 feet wide. Some trails are simple unpaved, mulch paths. In general, the trails are well marked and in fair condition. No trails are ADA accessible and some portions are in poor condition with signs of erosion and asphalt deterioration.

Buildings and Structures.

Comfort Stations– All four comfort stations found within the Campground are of identical design and in remarkably similar condition. This type of comfort station is common throughout the Parkway, and matching stations occur at Julian Price Memorial Park, Doughton Park, and Groundhog Mountain. The design is simple and utilitarian, with a slight nod to the rustic aesthetic that defined early Parkway buildings. The comfort stations consist of concrete block walls set on a poured concrete foundation with upper walls constructed of board and batten. Each comfort station also features exposed wooden rafters and joists with wide overhanging eaves that protect users from the elements. The roof of each building consists of corrugated panels, some of which are translucent to allow sunlight to enter the building. The roofs are generally in fair condition, and appear to be original. The original metal and concrete ridge cover still runs along the entirety of each roof seam, a feature that is often lost when this type of roof is replaced, as is the case with comfort stations of this type at Julian Price Memorial Park, none of which retain this feature. All of the comfort station doors appear to be original. Minor modifications to the exterior of each building have occurred over time, including the addition of a thin layer of painted wood veneer over the concrete block walls, and the painting of the board and batten upper portions, which were originally left natural or stained. The differences between individual comfort stations are discussed below.





Location Map

Rocky Knob Campground

Existing Conditions

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2013

Illustration 3.3

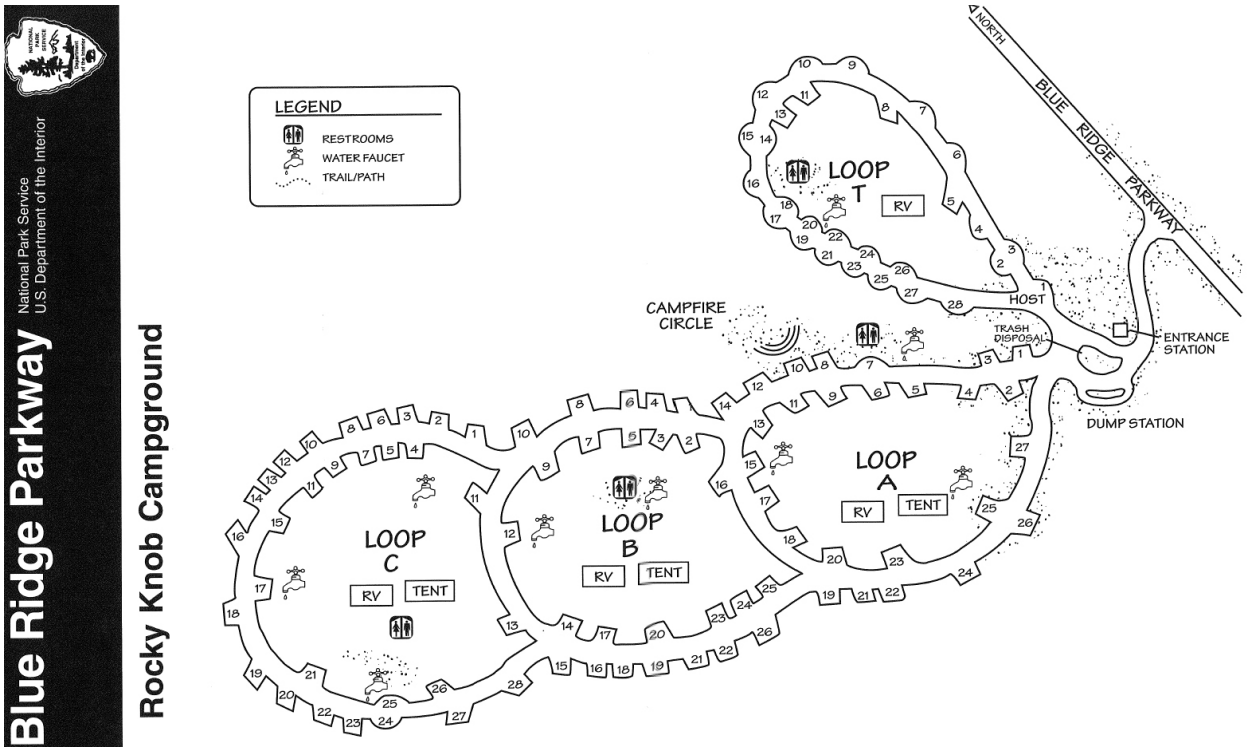


Figure 3.3: Rocky Knob campground brochure (National Park Service, 2011).

Comfort Station # 450– Constructed in 1962, this comfort station serves the trailer campground known as Loop T (Figure 3.4). The building faces northeast and is accessible by narrow asphalt paths on all sides. In addition, it appears that an original shrub planting still exists on the eastern side of the building.

Comfort Station # 451– This comfort station is located between Loops A and T, south of the campfire circle (Figure 3.5). It was also built in 1962 and faces northwest. The NPS removed a section of the original asphalt path located on the northern side of the building and replaced it with gravel.

Comfort Station # 439– Built in 1962 and located adjacent to campsites B-5 and B-23 this comfort station provides restroom facilities to the entirety of Loop B (Figure 3.6). The building faces east. A few mature mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) shrubs are located adjacent to the building, and are likely remnants or progeny of the original shrub plantings. Since no planting plans for the comfort stations or Campground could be located, it is impossible to tell with certainty the location of the original plantings.

Comfort Station # 438– Located in the center of Loop C, this comfort station sits atop a high point in the center of the loop (Figure 3.7). It was constructed in 1962 and faces east. In addition, a mature mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) is located near the southeastern corner of the building. Based on its apparent age, this shrub is likely an original planting.

Registration Kiosk– Located on the right along the entry road to the Campground, this Post-Mission 66 structure serves as the information, registration and fee collection center for the Campground (Figure 3.8). The NPS removed the original fee collection station in 1968 (Figure 3.9). It is worth noting that the NPS relocated the original fee collection station for the Campground to Rocky Knob from a location on the Parkway south of Asheville near U.S. 25, where it originally served as one of nine identical visitor contact kiosks along the Parkway.[9]

The current registration kiosk at the Rocky Knob Campground is almost identical to a fee collection building that once existed at Otter Creek,[10] in

9 Ibid. 133, 216.

10 The NPS recently replaced this fee collection building with one of a different style and materials.



Figure 3.4: Comfort Station #450 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.7: Comfort Station #438 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.5: Comfort Station #451 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.8: Registration Kiosk (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.6: Comfort Station #439 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.9: Fee Collection Building, 1971, Neg. #2497, Class. #717, Parkway Archives.

addition one currently located at Doughton Park Campgrounds. Accordingly, the Rocky Knob registration kiosk was probably a Parkway standard building at one time. Its exact date of construction, however, is unknown. Rectangular in plan, the building consists of painted board and batten wood siding with a gabled roof covered in rustic shake shingles. The pitch of the roof is similar to the adjacent Campground Registration Sign. Various additional regulatory and information signs are located here along with posted information related to campground policies, visitor activities, and campground registration. An asphalt path system surrounds the kiosk and Campground Registration Sign, and an original slate curb separates this area from the entrance drive. The kiosk building is in good condition.

Small-scale Features.

Campground Registration Sign- This rustic wooden structure is the first feature encountered at the entrance to the Campground (Figure 3.10). It was designed by the Division of Design and Construction at the Roanoke NPS Office and features a routed wood sign mounted between two six-by-six posts. One side of the sign features a detailed map of the Campground, and the other contains interpretive information related to the Campground and Parkway. A gabled roof covered in rustic shake shingles offers protection from the elements. This roofing material was once common throughout the Parkway. The original wooden registration card box no longer exists and the NPS added lighting Post-Mission 66 to both sides of the sign. Despite these minor alterations, this sign is in good condition.

Firewood Crib– This small wooden feature is located directly across from the Registration Kiosk at the entrance to the Campground. It contains bundles of firewood that campers can purchase for $3.00 a piece (Figure 3.11). The crib is constructed almost entirely of evenly spaced two-by-four slats that surround a simple two-by-four frame. Considerable open space exists between the vertical slats to allow for ventilation. The simple shed roof, covered in asphalt shingles, overhangs the structure slightly to protect the contents from the elements. A similar structure was located here historically. The original structure was smaller, did not contain a front gate, and was elevated above the ground plane (Figure 3.12). In addition, the price of a bundle of firewood was considerably less at that time. The current crib is in good condition.

Campfire Circle– A 150-person capacity amphitheater is located near the center of the Campground between Loop T and Loop A (Figure 3.13). This area is composed of three bays of angled benches. Two circulation aisles separate the bays, and each bay is composed of six rows of benches, which radiate around a central open area and fire pit. The bench seats are made of a single two-by-twelve board laid over top of a series of cast concrete supports. These supports occur at regular intervals and are chamfered slightly on all corners. Several of the bench seats are in disrepair and in need of replacement. Because of this, the condition of the campfire circle is fair. A small podium with electrical outlets attached to the support post is located in the center of the middle bay. A nice view of the adjacent countryside provides the backdrop for the campfire circle during the winter. In summer, vegetation partially encloses this vista. A wood crib and small utility shed are located slightly south of the circle near the driving lane of Loop T (Figure 3.14). This campground amenity is the site for interpretive programs throughout the season.

Stone Curb- Original split face stone curb lines all of the parking slips within the Campground. The stone used is a likely a type of slate called, “Rocky Knob Black Stone” that is used at other Parkway sites including many of the overlooks at Otter Creek.[11] The curbing is in generally fair condition, though some sections are in poor condition, missing, or in need of repair at specific locations (Figure 3.15). The stone gradually transitions back into the existing grade at the terminus of each section of curbing (Figure 3.16). This detail is character defining and occurs throughout the Rocky Knob Recreation Area and the Parkway.

Steps- Several campsites contain stone steps. These steps are rough-cut slate slabs that have been stacked and held in place with mortar (Figure 3.17). The stone used in stair construction is identical to the stone used for curbing throughout the Campground. Typically, the stone risers have a thicker vertical dimension than the tread, which

11 Jaeger, Dale. “Otter Creek Recreation Area: Cultural Landscape Report.” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, 2006, 170.



Figure 3.10: Campground Registration Sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.11: Firewood Crib (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.12: Firewood Crib, c. 1971, Neg. #2510, Class. #796.5, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.13: Campfire Circle (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.14: Wood Crib and Utility Shed (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.15: Stone curb in need of repair (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.16: Stone curb transition into grade (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.17: Stone steps (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

is usually cut from a thinner piece of stone. The vast majority of stairs located in the Campground are stone; however, a single set of Post-Mission 66 wooden steps is located at campsite A-20. These steps consist of six-by-six pieces of finished lumber set directly into the earth (Figure 3.18). The condition of the steps found within the Campground varies from good to fair.

Drinking Fountains– According to the PLUMs, the NPS originally installed twelve drinking fountains in the Campground. Seven drinking fountains are located here today. Three of the seven are excellent examples of the second-generation Parkway drinking fountains (Figure 3.19). These fountains are made of stacked native stone set on mortared stone bases. A stone stair elevates small visitors to the appropriate height to access the fountain. The top of the fountain contains an inset metal bowl with a central drain and stainless steel fountainhead. A stainless steel spigot protrudes from one side of the fountain. A small metal drain is located directly below the side spigot and set directly in the stone base. The remaining four drinking fountains are Post-Mission 66 replacement fixtures placed in original locations. In some cases, portions of the stone bases for the original fountains are still present in the landscape adjacent to these Post-Mission 66 fixtures. Three of the four Post-Mission 66 fountains consist of a single metal cylinder with a central drinking basin and bubbler located on top, while the fourth features a basin protruding out to one side for accessibility (Figure 3.20). All seven of the fountains appear to be in good condition, but none was tested at the time of this report, as the water system for the Campground had been shuttered for the winter season.

Drainage Structures- Original stone culverts and headwalls exist throughout the Campground. The majority of these structures are located along the return side of Loops A and B. The headwalls are constructed of mortared stacked stone surrounding a concrete pipe (Figure 3.21). The stone matches the type and color of stone used throughout the Campground for curbing, drinking fountains, and steps. In general, these structures are in good condition; however, almost all of them need to be cleaned of leaf litter, organic material, and other debris.



Figure 3.18: Wooden steps (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.19: Stone drinking fountain (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.20: Post-Mission 66 drinking fountains (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.21: Stone headwall (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.22: Entrance gate (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Entrance Gates- There are four entrance gates located within the Rocky Knob Campground. The first one is positioned at the entrance to the Campground. The next two can be found at the entrance and exit to Loop B, which allows NPS staff to restrict vehicular access to Loops B and C if necessary. The final gate is located at the exit to the Campground, just past the Sanitary Dump Station. All four are Parkway standard entrance gates constructed of solid wood timbers that have been painted dark grey, with painted steel structural elements that provide support and allow the gate to open and close (Figure 3.22). The two gates located near the Campground entrance feature routed wood signs that read, "Closed" in standard Parkway lettering. All of the gates are in good condition.



Figure 3.23: Routed wood sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Signage- A variety of sign types exist on the site. Predominately the signs function to direct users to various campground amenities like the camping loops, the campfire circle, the campground host and comfort stations. These signs are typically redwood with routed lettering mounted on wood or metal posts (Figure 3.23). Over the years, NPS has replaced many of these wooden signs with Post-Mission 66 recycled plastic signs, which from a distance appear to be similar to the original signs (Figure 3.24), but upon closer inspection they lack the rustic character of the originals. It seems that this replacement practice is becoming the standard on the Parkway, as examples of this type of contemporary sign are common in other recreation areas. In general, the remaining redwood signs are in good condition.



Figure 3.24: Post-Mission 66 recycled plastic sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

The most prevalent type of sign within the Campground serves to mark each campsite with a number. These markers are Post-Mission 66 and constructed of recycled plastic (Figure 3.25). These newly installed signs will eventually



Figure 3.25: Post-Mission 66 campsite marker (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

contain engraved lettering similar to that found on the wooden signs and the concrete milepost markers found along the Parkway. Originally, campsite numbers were simply painted on the corresponding parking slip (Figure 3.26).

Additionally, there is also a wooden trail system sign located near the registration kiosk at the entrance to the Campground. This sign is similar in character and construction to the gunboard signs found elsewhere on the Parkway (Figure 3.27). The Campground also contains several standard reflective metal signs, which direct vehicular traffic to the various site features and loop roads. The majority of these signs are dark brown with white lettering (Figure 3.28).

Campsites– A typical campsite is composed of four elements: a picnic table, lantern post, grill, and a level area to set up a small tent (Figure 3.29). Unlike other camping areas located along the Parkway, a remarkable consistency of style exists among campsite elements within the Rocky Knob Campground. For instance, a single type of picnic table is used throughout the Campground. This table type is wood with metal frame supports (Figure 3.30). The wooden portions of each table have been painted a reddish brown color and the supports are painted off-white. The end of each metal table support is usually affixed to a precast concrete rail in order to secure the table into place. The majority of picnic tables in the Campground are in good condition; however, a few require minor repairs and all of them are in need of a fresh coat of paint. According to NPS, the current tables replaced the Mission 66 era originals in the 1990s. The existing replacement tables were used as a standard on the Parkway at that time, as additional examples appear at Groundhog Mountain and Smart View further south on the Parkway. A single type of metal lantern pole exists in the Campground (Figure 3.30). Most of the lantern poles are in good condition, though some are leaning slightly and need resetting. The lantern poles are not original features.

There are a few different grill configurations present within the Campground (Figure 3.31). The original grills were square with slats and a continuous metal griddle surface to accommodate a variety of cooking methods. This type of grill was a standard on the Parkway during Mission 66, as other examples of grills of this type exist at



Figure 3.26: Painted campsite marker (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.27: Trail system sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.28: Reflective metal sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.29: Typical campsite (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.30: Typical picnic table and lantern pole (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.32: Tent pad (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.31: Grill types (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.33: Host campsite (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Julian Price Memorial Park. Intact original grills are located on all campground loops. Grills were originally set on concrete bases, however, over time some of the bases have degraded or been removed completely Post-Mission 66 in order to accommodate new ones. All of the replacement grills are circular shaped catalog items from the Jamestown Advance Products Corporation.

All of the campsites on loops A, B and C provide an open, level area for users to use as a tent pad. The materials used in these areas vary from site to site, including fine gray gravel in most places, a white sandy substance in others, and in some sites, untreated lawn or leaf litter. Campsite B-2 is the only site that contains a formal tent pad (Figure 3.32). The pad consists of six-by-six timbers that surround an approximately fifteen-by-fifteen pad, graded flat and in-filled with a mixture of white gravel and clay. No formal areas for tents exist in the trailer campground. No original concrete or stone tent pads exist in the Rocky Knob Campground today.

Host Campsite– A large campsite with an expanded parking slip is located immediately north of the Campground entrance (Figure 3.33). This area contains typical campsite amenities including a picnic table, grill, and lantern pole. In addition, an electrical transformer is located at this site, as well as electrical hookups, buried telephone lines, and a water spigot. A 2,000-gallon septic tank and associated leaching field is also located nearby. This utility serves comfort stations #450, #451 and the host campsite. According to historic plans, a host trailer had been located here previously. There is no evidence of a host trailer in the landscape today.

Litter Deposit Area- A fenced space for the collection of trash and recyclables from campground users is located near the exit to the Campground (Figure 3.34). A weathered wooden fence surrounds two separate dumpsters for trash and recycling on all sides except the one adjacent to the drive lane. A brown metal reflective sign directing visitors back to the Parkway is also present at this location. The fence is in good condition.



Figure 3.34: Litter deposit area (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.35: Sanitary dump station (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Sanitary Dump Station- Located at the entrance to the Campground west of the Registration Kiosk, this area consists of a single lane asphalt drive, concrete dump pad, and potable water tower (Figure 3.35). Original slate curb lines a portion of the drive lane, and a short asphalt sidewalk surrounds the potable water tower. The dumping facilities are located on a concrete pad bound by concrete curb on one corner. According to working drawings, the NPS constructed this drive lane and associated facilities in 1967, five years after the rest of the Campground construction was complete. One of the Loop A campsites was obliterated in order to accommodate the addition of the Sanitary Dump Station. Two painted metal signs instruct users on proper operation of the dump station and water tower. Historic photographs show routed wood signs in this location originally (Figure 3.36). The dump station is in good condition overall.

Views and Vistas. No planned views or vistas exist on the PLUMs, however the Campfire Circle is oriented to take advantage of a particularly pleasant view of the surrounding countryside. NPS staff currently maintains this view in a semi-open condition (Figure 3.37).



Figure 3.36: Sanitary dump station, 1971, Neg. #2509, Class. #796.5, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.37: View from campfire circle (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Rocky Knob Maintenance Area

The Rocky Knob Maintenance Area is located at Milepost 167.2 on Parkway right and consists of approximately 25 acres. This site provides offices and shops for the Parkway maintenance division, the District Ranger and two Parkway employee residences. The Rocky Knob Maintenance Area is composed of 13 buildings and multiple maintenance yards. Illustration 3.4 describes the site in detail.

Land Use. This planned utilitarian landscape continues to operate in that capacity. NPS intended the area to serve as a functional element necessary for running and constructing the Parkway. The addition of staff residential units and the offices of the rangers have done little to change that utilitarian nature. Visitors to the Parkway do not see this area from the roadway and rarely have a need to enter the site. This area acts as a core of Parkway administrative offices, supplies storage area, and employee housing site.

Vegetation. The Rocky Knob Maintenance Area features several types of vegetation. Along the entry road near the Parkway is a large open pasture dotted with specimen trees. According

to the PLUMs, Parkway designers intended this pasture to consist of 28 acres and contain trees of the following species: red oak (*Quercus falcata / Quercus borealis),* table mountain pine (*Pinus pungens*) and a small group of apple trees (*Malus spp*). Some of the large specimen trees shown on the PLUMs remain and are in good condition, though the apple trees no longer exist. Historic photographs show that this area being used as pasture for the grazing of sheep (Figure 2.8). NPS staff currently maintains it in an open condition, but sheep no longer graze here.

The maintenance compound is located in a large cleared area surrounded by woodland. Vegetation is sparse, consisting primarily of mown turf interspersed with the occasional specimen tree. Because the Maintenance Area is located down slope from the Parkway and tucked behind a small knoll, a vegetated buffer was not necessary to screen this area from view from the Parkway. True to the utilitarian programming of the area, very little ornamental plantings exist in the Maintenance Area. A few ornamental rhododendron plantings exist near the Office and Tool Storage Building (Figure 3.38). Based on historic photographs of this area, these plantings appear to be original. No landscape plans for the Maintenance Area could be located. These remnant plantings are in poor condition.

Vegetation associated with the employee residences is also minimal, consisting of mown lawn surrounded by woodland with large specimen oak trees planted at semi-regular intervals to provide shade for the residents. These red oaks (*Quercus falcate / Quercus borealis*) appear on the PLUMs and on preliminary construction plans for this area. Several of these oaks remain and are in good condition. Preliminary plans and historic photographs also show a single flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) planted at the front elevation of Employee Residence #7 as well as rhododendrons planted at the foundations of both employee residences (Figure 3.39). Neither the dogwood nor the shrub plantings exist in the landscape today (Figure 3.40).

Circulation. The Rocky Knob Maintenance Area contains very few formalized pedestrian paths. Two short concrete sidewalks are located at each staff residence to connect each parking area with the main entrance to each house. A concrete staircase

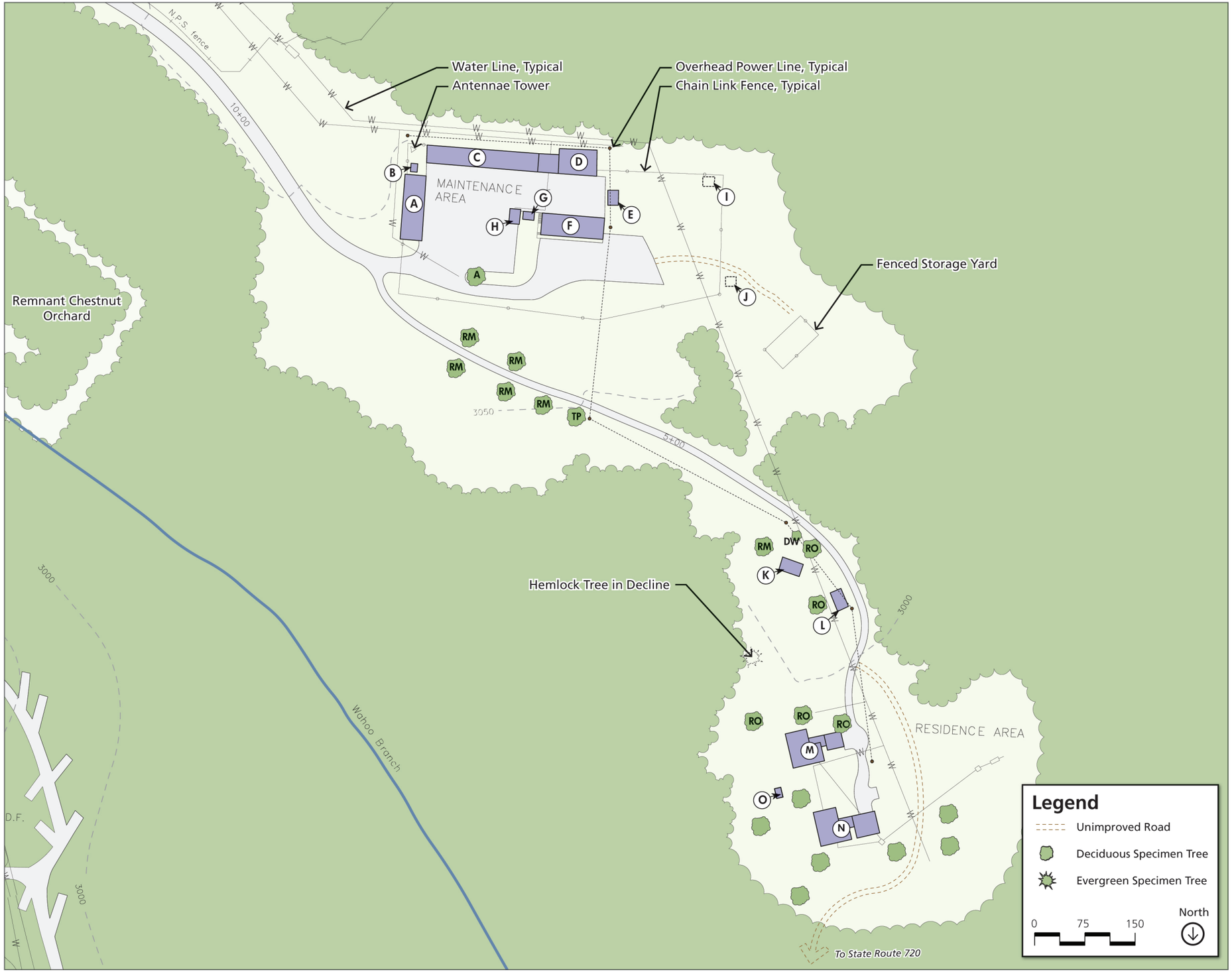


Figure 3.38: Ornamental plantings in the Maintenance Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

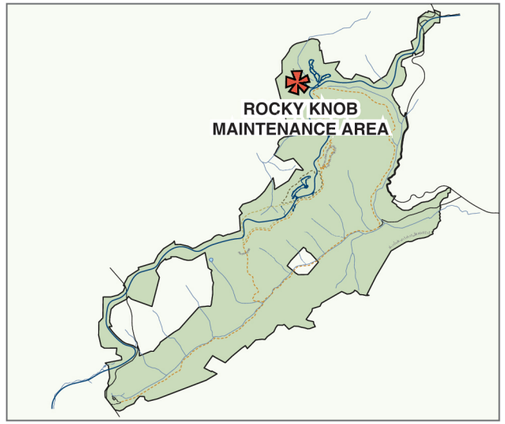
runs along the length of the eastern elevation of the Shops and Heavy Equipment Building, and a raised concrete loading platform is located on the northern side of the Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building. In addition, a wooden ramp provides access to the southern entrance of the Office and Tool Storage Building. Otherwise, pedestrians use vehicular lanes and parking areas to enter and navigate between various maintenance buildings and structures.

Vehicular circulation is primarily accomplished with the 1/2 mile long entrance road. This two-lane asphalt thoroughfare stops at the entrance gate of the Maintenance Area before transitioning into a single lane road, which continues on and provides access to both the district office trailers and staff residences. An unimproved road branches away from the entrance drive just before reaching the employee residences. This gravel and dirt road continues behind the residences before traveling offsite and out of the study area, eventually intersecting with Route 720. The date of construction of this spur road is unknown. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation at the employee residences differs from what the original PLUMs for the area illustrate. The PLUMs show a different vehicular turnaround (Illustration 2.5) that ended at a small parking area for residents, as well as a complicated system of curvilinear pedestrian paths connecting the residences to one another. It is likely that the NPS removed these features when they remodeled the employee residence buildings in the early 1950s and added garages to both residences.

The Maintenance Area features a large paved courtyard immediately after passing through the entrance gate. This area is composed of a central parking area designed to accommodate



Rocky Knob Maintenance Area and Employee Residences



Location Map

Building Key

A. Office and Tool Storage Building #4
B. Building #346
C. Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building #2
D. Carpenter and Paint Shop #3
E. Building #878
F. Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86
G. Maintenance Area Fuel Station Building #965
H. Oil and Paint Storage Building #5
I. Incinerator Remnant #147
J. Radio Substation and Antennae Tower Remnant #6
K. District Office Trailer
L. Trailer
M. Employee Residence #7
N. Employee Residence #8
O. Utility Shed

Plant Key

A	Ash	Faxinus spp.
DW	Dogwood	Cornus florida
HEM	Hemlock	Tsuga canadensis
RO	Red Oak	Quercus borealis / Quercus rubra
RM	Red Maple	Acer rubra
TP	Tulip Poplar	Liriodendron tulipifera

Existing Conditions

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2013

Illustration 3.4



Figure 3.39: Plantings at the employee residences, c. 1952, Building File, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.40: Plantings at the employee residences (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

approximately 14 cars with additional parking for six cars located on the western side of the court. A separate asphalt drive extends west from the Maintenance Area entrance to provide vehicular access to the lower level of the Shops and Heavy Equipment Building. This paved drive continues past the building to the edge of the fenced maintenance compound before becoming a dirt road, which leads to an additional fenced storage yard located in a small clearing further down slope. The circulation lanes and paths in the Maintenance Area are in fair condition showing some signs of wear and asphalt cracking. Vehicular circulation within the maintenance compound is informal with no striped lanes or curbs.

Buildings and Structures.

Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building #2– The Warehouse and Equipment Storage building was the first building to be constructed at the maintenance complex and one of the first buildings to be finished along the Parkway. Built by the CCC in1940, the NPS remodeled the building in 1952. The building is composed of cinderblock walls set on a concrete foundation and protected from the elements by an asphalt-shingled roof (Figure 3.41). A single open room occupies the eastern end of the structure. Ten garage bays with overhead doors make up the western portion. Twenty-one metal-framed, three-over-three awning windows are located on the building's front and rear façades. The windows appear to be original. NPS covered the cinderblock exterior building walls with sheets of plywood veneer at some point in the recent past. Historic photographs show the concrete block walls exposed. The asphalt roof is also a Post-Mission 66 replacement. The original roof was metal. Post-Mission 66, the NPS added a set of precast concrete steps and a section of metal handrail to the loading dock on the front elevation. Additionally, all 10 of the garage doors are Post-Mission 66 replacements. Overall, the building is in good condition; however, the windows are in poor condition with cracked glazing, panes, and damaged sills (Figure 3.42).

Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3– Located on the western side of the Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building, the Carpenter and Paint Shop is one of the five originally constructed buildings on this site (Figure 3.43). It was also built in 1940 by



Figure 3.41: Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building #2 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.42: Damaged window at Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building #2 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.43: Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3, c. 1952, Building File, Parkway Archives.

the CCC and remodeled by NPS in 1952. During the 1952 renovation, the NPS added walls to the north and south elevations, and expanded the building footprint to meet the Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building located approximately 30 feet away. This additional storage area featured a flat roof. In 2000, the NPS carried out additional renovations to the building. The NPS removed a flat roof section of the additional storage area and constructed an A-Line roof in its place, giving the appearance of single unified façade



Figure 3.44: Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

across the Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building and the Carpenter and Paint Shop (Figure 3.44). As with most of the other buildings in the maintenance compound, plywood siding, Post-Mission 66 garage doors and a replacement asphalt shingle roof cover this building. The south and west façades feature three large sixteen light, metal-clad windows. The center four panes of each window can be opened and function as awning windows. These windows are original. The building retains its original entrance doors as well as the original exterior fire safety kit; although the latter is no longer in its original location (Figure 3.45). The building is in good condition, with a few exceptions, most notably the windows, which contain cracked glazing.

Office and Tool Storage Building #4– When constructed by the CCC in 1941, the Office and Tool Storage building was a simple concrete block building set on a concrete foundation with a standing seam metal roof (Figure 3.46). The front façade originally featured two pairs of four-over-four factory windows located on either side of a central core made up of a recessed entry door, elevated garage door and a single four-over -two factory window. Today the original windows remain, but NPS replaced the original garage door with a set of double doors Post-Mission 66. The NPS also added a wooden ramp to provide access to these double doors. The rear and side façades still retain their original windows and doors, but as with the other two previously described buildings in the Maintenance Area, Post-Mission 66 plywood siding and an asphalt shingle roof currently cover this entire building (Figure 3.47). The building is in good condition overall, but is plagued with



Figure 3.45: Fire safety kit (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

deteriorating windows. A nearly identical building exists at the Maintenance Area for Doughton Park, further south along the Parkway.

Oil and Paint Storage Building #5– The fifth of the original five buildings in this compound is the Oil and Paint Storage Building, built by the CCC in 1942. The building is a small 17 foot by 12 foot building located directly across the parking courtyard from the Office and Tool Storage Building. Originally constructed of concrete block, the NPS remodeled this building in the same manner as the previously described buildings (Figure 3.48). The Oil and Paint Storage Building retains both of its original three-over-three windows, but the original door has been replaced. The original fire safety kit is mounted on the exterior of the front façade, but the fire axe has been removed. The building is in good condition overall (Figure 3.49). The Doughton Park Maintenance Area further south on the Parkway contains a building identical to this one.

Radio Substation and Antennae Tower Building # 6– The 1943 Utility Area Development Plan shows this substation located to the northwest of the maintenance compound and a 1941 photo shows it under construction. This concrete block building featured a gabled, standing-seam metal roof. A large metal radio tower was located adjacent to the building mounted on a separate concrete slab. NPS demolished the building, though remnants of the concrete footer for the antennae remain in the landscape today (Figure 3.50). The NPS moved the original metal radio antennae tower to the southeast corner of the maintenance compound between the Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building and the Office and Tool Storage Building (Figure 3.51).



Figure 3.46: Office and Tool Storage Building #4, c. 1952, Building File, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.47: Office and Tool Storage Building #4 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.48: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5, c. 1952, Building File, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.49: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.50: Remnants of the Radio Substation & Antennae Tower Building # 6 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.52: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86, c. 1953, Building File, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.51: Relocated radio antennae (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.53: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86– The Shops and Heavy Equipment Building continues to serve its intended function. The upper level contains the auto repair shop, oil room, locker room and storage room. The lower story contains the fire equipment room, the boiler room and storage for heavy equipment. The NPS completed construction of this two-story cement block building in 1952 (Figure 3.52). The building features a gable roof and is similar in character to the other buildings within the maintenance compound (Figure 3.53). The exterior building walls consisted of untreated cinder block originally; however, the shop is now sided with the same T1-11 plywood veneer that the NPS used to cover the exterior walls of all the other buildings in the maintenance compound. The NPS replaced the original cement asbestos shingle roof with asphalt shingles. The southern façade features five garage bays and two entrance doors. The garage doors are Post-Mission 66 replacements and only one of the entrance doors appears to be original. The ground level of the northern façade also contains five garage bays with replacement garage doors. Two original entry doors and a single window constructed of semi-transparent glass block are located on the eastern end of the building. One of these doors is elevated slightly to facilitate equipment loading and unloading. The upper story of the building features six large semi-transparent glass block panels. Each panel contains an inset operable sliding window of clear glass. The remaining two façades feature these glass block panels on the upper level as well. The eastern wall contains three panels while the western wall only contains two. There is a concrete staircase with a custom metal handrail located along the eastern elevation of the building. The building also retains portions of the original copper gutter system. The building is in good condition.

Incinerator #147– Originally, a simple brick structure used to burn waste was located at the western edge of the maintenance compound (Figure 3.54). The NPS demolished this building and little evidence of it remains in the landscape today.



Figure 3.54: Incinerator #147, c. 1953, Building File, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.55: Employee Residences (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Employee Residence #7 and #8- Built by the CCC in 1941 to provide housing for the District Ranger, the Maintenance Foreman, and their families, the CCC constructed these two staff residences on property located to the northwest of the Maintenance Area. Compared to the rest of the buildings in the Maintenance Area, these residences are much less utilitarian in nature. The original form and materials used for the residences is more akin to Comfort Station #9 and the Pump House, which were under construction at the same time within Rocky Knob Recreation Area.[12] NPS remodeled and expanded both residences in 1950, and as a result, the buildings lost much of their original character. The two residences are nearly identical to each other today (Figure 3.55). Each is faced with Post-Mission 66 vinyl siding and retains an original battered stone chimney. The NPS replaced each building's original wood shake roof with asbestos shingles in the 1950s and then later replaced the asbestos shingles with asphalt shingles. The current windows are Post-Mission 66 replacements and retain the general appearance of the original six-over-six double-hung sash windows. Each home features a garage addition attached to the house with a breezeway. Residence #8 features a two-car garage, while Residence #7 has a single car garage. Post-Mission 66, the NPS added a wooden deck to the eastern elevation of each residence. The NPS has significantly altered the exterior appearance of each residence, but both are in good condition.

Building #346– This small utility structure is located in the southeast corner of the maintenance compound between the Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building and the Office and Tool Storage Building, adjacent to the metal radio



Figure 3.56: Building #346 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

tower (Figure 3.56). It consists of a simple concrete block structure that is covered in plywood siding. Two rusted metal doors provide access to the interior and a metal shed roof provides protection from the elements. The building is in good condition. The year of its construction is unknown.

Building #878– This Post-Mission 66 gabled roof structure is located at the far western end of paved maintenance court between the Shops and Heavy Equipment Building and the Carpenter and Paint Shop (Figure 3.57). A single door is located on the eastern elevation along with a solitary skylight. The building matches the general aesthetic of the other maintenance buildings with plywood siding on the exterior walls and asphalt shingles on the roof. The function of the building and its date of construction are unknown. It appears to be in good condition.

Maintenance Area Fuel Station Building #965– This Post-Mission 66 addition to the Maintenance Area protects a single gasoline pump from the elements. It is located immediately west of the Oil and Paint Storage Building and its date of construction is not known. The building is concrete block laid

12 The latter portion of this chapter describes Comfort Station #9 and the Pump House in detail.



Figure 3.57: Building #878 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.58: Maintenance Area Fuel Station Building #965 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

on a concrete slab foundation. Like many of the buildings in the maintenance compound, the Fuel Station Building is covered in plywood siding and features a gabled roof clad with asphalt shingles (Figure 3.58). Several metal safety bollards surround the building and its associated fuel tanks. The building is in good condition.

District Office Trailers– Two Post-Mission 66 double-wide trailers were moved from elsewhere along the Parkway to a portion of NPS property located between the Maintenance Area and the Employee Residences in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The trailer nearest to the maintenance compound currently serves as the District Office for the Rocky Knob Recreation Area. The other trailer serves as interpretive and seasonal staff office space. Both of these buildings are in good condition; however, neither is in keeping with the rest of the buildings and structures located within the Maintenance Area (Figure 3.59).



Figure 3.59: District Office Trailers (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Small-scale Features.

Fence– Both the PLUMS and multiple master plans dating from the 1940s show a "Bear Fence" along the perimeter of the Maintenance Area. A metal chain link fence exists in approximately the same location today, however the existing fence extends further to the west than was originally planned (Figure 3.60). It is likely that portions of the existing fence could date to the time of construction, but since neither the PLUMs or the master plans call out a material for the "Bear Fence" it is difficult to be definitive. Historic photographs do show chain link fence in many locations within the Maintenance Area. The existing fence is in good condition overall, though some sections are more oxidized than others.



Figure 3.60: Chain link fence (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Drainage Structures– Two stone drainage structures exist near the entrance to the Maintenance Area. These culverts consist of mortared stone headwalls that surround a corrugated metal pipe. They are likely original features. Both appear to be serving their intended function and are good condition (Figure 3.61).



Figure 3.61: Stone drainage structure (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.62: Reflective metal sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Signage– Signage in the Maintenance Area is primarily of the regulatory type. A standard brown and white reflective metal sign is located near the gated entrance to the Maintenance Area. This sign directs visitors to the District Office and Maintenance Area (Figure 3.62). A faded metal "Do Not Enter" sign is located along the entrance road, directly in front of one of the District Office Trailers (Figure 3.63). Additionally, most buildings located within the maintenance compound have a small sign that denotes the official Parkway building number (Figure 3.64). The NPS has replaced many of the original wood signs with Post-Mission 66 recycled plastic versions.



Figure 3.63: Regulatory sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Concrete Retaining Wall– A stepped concrete retaining wall is located to the west of the Shops and Heavy Equipment Building (Figure 3.65). It holds the toe of the slope and creates a flat area for outdoor storage of heavy equipment and vehicles. The wall is in poor condition and is in need of repair.

Timber Guard Rail– A section of timber guardrail appears on the PLUMs along the northern side of the entry road. No sections of this guardrail exist in the landscape today.

Views and Vistas. No planned vistas appear on the PLUMs for this site; however, all of the maintenance buildings are oriented to the north to take advantage of a particularly pleasant long-range view of the pastoral landscape in the distance.



Figure 3.64: Building number designation sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Rocky Knob Picnic Area

Primary access to the Rocky Knob Picnic Area is via a shared entrance drive located at Milepost 169 on Parkway right. The entrance drive also provides access to the Rocky Knob Gas Station, before continuing northwest to the Picnic Area. The site consists of roughly 20 acres and contains two comfort stations, a picnic pavilion, a group parking area, individual parking slips and approximately



Figure 3.65: Concrete retaining wall (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

100 picnic locations with associated tables and grills. Illustration 3.5 provides a detailed plan showing the existing conditions of this component landscape.

Land Use. The NPS created the Rocky Knob Picnic Area to facilitate recreation along the Parkway in the form of picnicking. This use continues today as a one-mile stretch of picnic sites, two comfort stations, and many parking spaces provide visitors with ample area for dining outdoors. To a lesser extent, visitors use this area for hiking, as the recreation area's trail system is accessible here.

When the Emergency Relief Administration (ERA) finished construction of the area in 1939, the Picnic Area served as both the picnic and camping area for the park. The first loop was designated for picnicking, while the second loop was devoted to trailer and tent camping. This combination of uses continued for over 20 years until a new and greatly expanded Campground opened in 1962, on a knoll to the north. At that time, the NPS converted the second loop in the Picnic Area from trailer and tent camping to an additional picnic-only loop.

Vegetation. The majority of the Picnic Area is located in a shady, protected hardwood grove located adjacent to the Parkway. The forest composition is similar to many of the other component landscapes within Rocky Knob. Northern red oak (*Quercus borealis* / *Quercus rubra*), hickory (*Carya spp.),* chestnut oak (*Quercus prinus*) and tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) make up the canopy layer with a variety of flowering shrubs such as flame azalea *(Rhododendron calendulaceum)*, mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) and rosebay rhododendron (*Rhododendron maximum*) are common throughout the understory. These observed species are consistent with the list of species included on the PLUMs for this area.

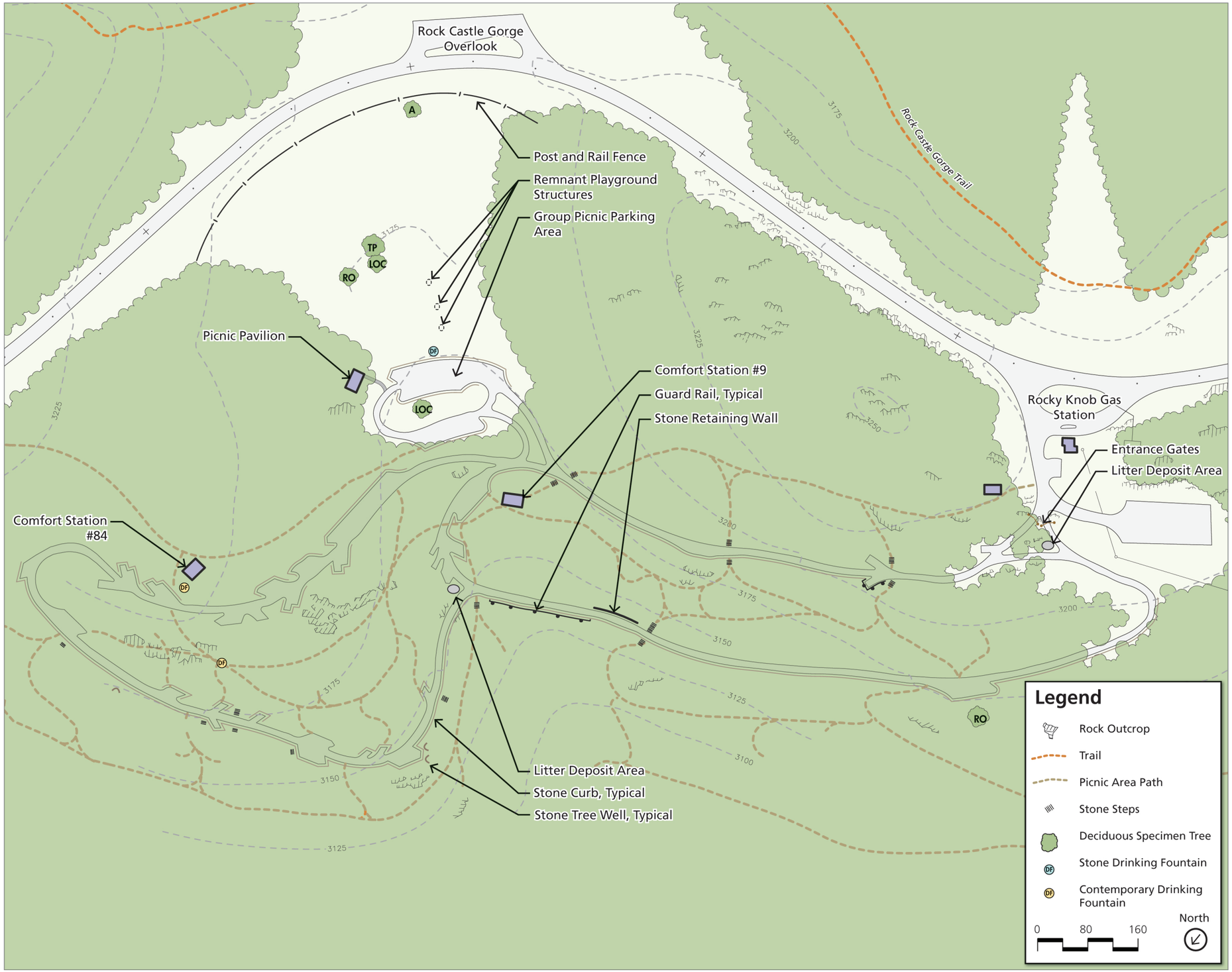
In addition to the prevailing woodland character of the Picnic Area, there is a large open area consisting of mown grass with specimen trees (Figure 3.66). This open field is located near the group picnic area, adjacent to the Picnic Pavilion. The locations of the specimen trees here are consistent with the locations shown on the PLUMs, however, many of the trees shown on the PLUMs no longer exist. The species of the remaining trees include black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), ash (*Fraxinus spp.*), tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), and red oak (*Quercus borealis* / *Quercus rubra*).

Overall, the vegetation in the Picnic Area is in good condition, with a few of the specimen trees showing signs of decline.

Circulation. Vehicular circulation at the Picnic Area consists of two single-lane loop roads that wind through the site, creating a distorted figure eight pattern in plan view. The designers took great care to work with, and take advantage of, the existing topography when laying out the road system for the Picnic Area. An elegant turnaround and expanded parking area were added to the two loops in the early 1940s, near Comfort Station #9. This parking area provides 33 spaces in close proximity to one another, and facilitates the use of this location for group picnicking. In addition to the large parking area, both of the vehicular loops contain numerous parking slips that accommodate from one to six cars.

Narrow asphalt or dirt paths permit pedestrian access to Picnic Area amenities like comfort stations, drinking fountains and picnic sites. The one-mile, Picnic Loop Trail encircles the entire Picnic Area, providing an easy hike for visitors. The Picnic Loop Trail ties into both the Black Ridge and Rock Castle Gorge Trails, allowing users of the Picnic Area complete access to the entirety of the Rocky Knob trail system.

Buildings and Structures.
Comfort Station #9- Constructed by the ERA in 1941 for a total cost of $2,600, this building was one of the first comfort stations built along the Parkway (Figure 3.67). The building is identical to Comfort Stations #97, #98 and #100, which are



Rocky Knob Picnic Area



Location Map

Plant Key

A	Ash	Fraxinus spp.
LOC	Black Locust	Robinia pseudoacacia
RO	Red Oak	Quercus borealis / Quercus rubra
TP	Tulip Poplar	Liriodendron tulipifera

Existing Conditions

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2013

Illustration 3.5



Figure 3.66: Specimen trees in lawn and view of the Parkway from picnic parking area (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.67: Comfort Station #9, 1952, Building File, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.68: Comfort Station #9 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

located in Doughton Park, further south along the Parkway. The regional, rustic aesthetic of early Parkway design character is evident in the materials, massing, and rooflines of this building. The materials used to construct this building include a stone foundation, vertical board siding, and paned wood frame windows. The NPS replaced the original wood shake shingle roof with a Post-Mission 66 asphalt shingle roof and opened up the enclosed breezeways that lead to the restroom doors on either side of the building. Despite these Post-Mission 66 alterations, the building is in good condition and is an excellent example of early parkway construction based on vernacular architectural forms (Figure 3.68). Note that a section of snake rail fence is visible in the historic photograph, but no fence is present in the landscape today. The inspiration for the design of this building probably came from a nearby barn located near Tuggle Gap on private property adjacent to the Parkway. A historic photo from 1939 taken by the designer of Comfort Station #9, illustrates the similarities between the two structures (Figure 3.69). This barn is still standing today, though it too has been subjected to alterations over the years. (Figure 3.70).

Comfort Station #84- Built in 1956 along the second loop in the Picnic Area, Comfort Station #84 is a departure from the other comfort station in the Picnic Area (Figure 3.71). Having adopted a more utilitarian design aesthetic, this building makes use of Post-Mission 66 materials such as concrete block, and takes on new detailing. The materials and rooflines reflect the architectural tastes of the 1950s and are typical of Mission 66 design along the Blue Ridge Parkway. This building retains its original doors and windows and the only exterior alteration is the addition of a thin layer of painted wood veneer applied to the exterior block walls (Figure 3.72). The building is in good condition and it is worth noting that Comfort Station #396 in Doughton Park and Comfort Stations #361, #390 and #445 at Julian Price Memorial Park are



Figure 3.69: Barn along Parkway, 1939, Neg. #9202, Class. #728.8, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.70: Barn along Parkway (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.71: Comfort Station #84 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.72: Comfort Station #84, 1960, Building File, Parkway Archives.

identical to this comfort station, though not as well preserved. Rocky Knob Recreation Area contains no other comfort stations of this design. This type of comfort station is an important intermediate step in the evolution of comfort station design throughout the Parkway, acting as a bridge between the early rustic type and the later type found in the Rocky Knob Campground and elsewhere along the Parkway. A network of asphalt paths provides access to this comfort station from nearby parking slips. A Post-Mission 66 drinking fountain is located nearby, along with a wooden trail system sign. In addition, an original rhododendron planting exists today and is visible in the historic photo (Figure 3.72).

Picnic Pavilion #964- The NPS constructed this 25 feet by 40 feet log building in 1977. Built in a rustic style that is in keeping with early Parkway design character, this building features exposed log construction set on a mortared stone foundation (Figure 3.73). The pavilion is nestled into the woodland edge at the northeastern corner of the Picnic Area's main parking lot and is accessible to pedestrians via a mortared stone walkway. A low retaining wall built of the same native stone used for the floor of the building and the walkway that leads to it; surrounds the pavilion on three sides (Figure 3.74). The open-air building is rectangular in plan, offers shelter from the weather, and provides adequate gathering space for large groups of picnickers. There are two metal grills provided adjacent to the building for visitor use and six picnic tables are dispersed throughout the building's interior. The tables are identical to the ones found in the Rocky Knob Campground, described earlier in this chapter. The two grills are catalog replacements set in front of the remains of two original stone grills that are integrated into the surrounding stone retaining wall (Figure 3.75). Many wall elements along the Parkway serve multiple functions like this; including the parking lot retaining wall at Brinegar Cabin, which features an integrated drinking fountain, and the Robert Doughton Memorial, which features a drinking fountain and bench integrated a small retaining wall. Both of these examples exist in Doughton Park (Figure 3.76). The pavilion is in good condition. The retaining wall is in fair condition due to the damaged grills and some failed mortar joints. The mortared stone walkway leading to the pavilion is also in fair condition, due to failing mortar. An identical pavilion occurs at



Figure 3.73: Picnic Pavilion #964 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.74: Stone retaining wall at Picnic Pavilion (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.75: Remains of stone grills integrated with retaining wall at Picnic Pavilion (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.76: Multi-functional stone structures at Doughton Park (The Jaeger Company, 2005)



Figure 3.77: Picnic Pavilion at Smart View (Library of Congress, HAER NC, 11-ASHV.V,2--69).

the Smart View Picnic Area, further south along the Parkway, suggesting that this pavilion structure was a Parkway standard at the time of its construction (Figure 3.77).

Small-scale Features. The landscape architects in the Roanoke office gave considerable thought to the design of small-scale features in the Picnic Area of Rocky Knob, as evidenced in the surviving plans and drawings. According to Firth, they were influenced by the rustic character illustrated in National Park Service manuals and, "guided by the precepts of simplicity and economy and rustic character" contained within them.[13] Many of these original elements still exist in the Picnic Area and are described in detail below.

Grills- Three types of grills are present in the Picnic Area today, reflecting changes in replacement and maintenance practices over time. A few remaining original stone grills or fireplaces are sprinkled throughout the first vehicular loop in the area that comprised the historic Picnic Area. Approximately five of these grills exist today. Most are incomplete or in poor condition (Figure 3.78). Original drawings for these grills show the method of construction (Figure 3.79). The grills consist of a small concrete slab set on a crushed stone base, surrounded by native boulders to give the appearance that the fireplace was carved out of the surrounding natural rock outcrops (Figure 3.80). Builders lined the concrete base with fireproof bricks coated in a special fire clay to eliminate cracking and failed mortar caused by multiple fires. The bricks also provided a rigid base

13 Firth, 1993, 124.



Figure 3.78: Stone grill or fireplace (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

upon which a trapezoidal metal grill surface could rest evenly. Doughton Park contains examples of similar, u-shaped stone grills, making them an early Parkway standard. The two other grill types in the Picnic Area are catalog items from either the Jamestown Advance Products Corporation or Pilot Rock. These metal replacements are in good condition overall, though some show obvious signs of age and oxidation (Figure 3.81).

Picnic Tables- Except for the six aluminum and wood picnic tables associated with the Picnic Pavilion that were discussed earlier in this chapter, all of the picnic tables that remain at the site are constructed of concrete with either recycled plastic or wooden seats. Only one table was documented that still retains wooden seats, both of which had deteriorated severely (Figure 3.82). Recycled plastic bench seats are much more common, and while the material is sustainable, it does not work well in this application. The distance spanned by the seats is simply too great and as a result the plastic seats sag dramatically in the middle (Figure 3.83). In addition to sagging, the recycled plastic boards are not as thick as the original wooden boards were, altering the proportions of the original design. The tables vary in condition from fair to poor. The concrete tabletops are broken in some cases and the concrete seat supports have often settled or suffered from erosion at their bases (Figure 3.83). These tables are not original to the Picnic Area as historic photographs show wooden tables located here (Figure 3.84). These tables were constructed of chestnut planks and logs.[14] The current tables are likely 1950s or 1960s replacements, as they are identical to picnic tables found in Julian Price Memorial Park built during that period.

14 Ibid.

Stone Retaining Wall- ERA crews built a dry stack stone retaining wall along the return portion of the first loop, to the west of Comfort Station #9. This wall holds back a cut slope and is approximately 75 feet long. The wall varies in height from two to four feet, with the tallest portion located in the center and both end sections tapering back into grade, creating an organic, slightly arching form. The wall is visible in a historic photograph dated 1938 (Figure 3.85) and has not changed considerably to date (Figure 3.86). The addition of asphalt paving has raised the height of the drive lane, thus reducing the current wall height a few inches, but despite this minor alteration, the wall remains in good condition.

Stone Tree Wells- The Picnic Area contains three stone tree wells. Varying slightly in size and shape, each well was intended to retain soil around an existing tree. These tree wells do not appear on planning documents for the Picnic Area or on the PLUMs, but are presumably original due to their apparent age and their similarity to original stone tree wells located at Doughton Park. All three wells occur on the outer edge of the second vehicular loop of the Picnic Area, in the area that originally served as the recreation area's campground (Figure 3.87). Two of the three tree wells contain specimen trees of considerable size that are likely the original trees dating to the late 1930s. The third well no longer surrounds a tree and instead functions as a small retaining wall. All three of the tree wells are in good condition.

Drinking Fountains- An 'As Built' drawing dated 1962 shows that the Picnic Area had six drinking fountains originally. Three drinking fountains are located within the Picnic Area today. Two of these are Post-Mission 66 replacement fixtures, while one historic stone drinking fountain remains intact. Situated in the open grass area, near the group picnic pavilion is the historic stone fountain. It is in fair condition overall, as many of the mortar joints have been reset sloppily over the years and the drain for the lower spigot has been replaced. The original design of these fountains did not take into account the eventual need for repairs on the internal plumbing system, as there is no way to access the internal components once constructed (Figure 3.88). Because of this oversight, drinking fountains of this type are difficult to maintain or repair without partial or full disassembly. This fountain is identical to the other three second-

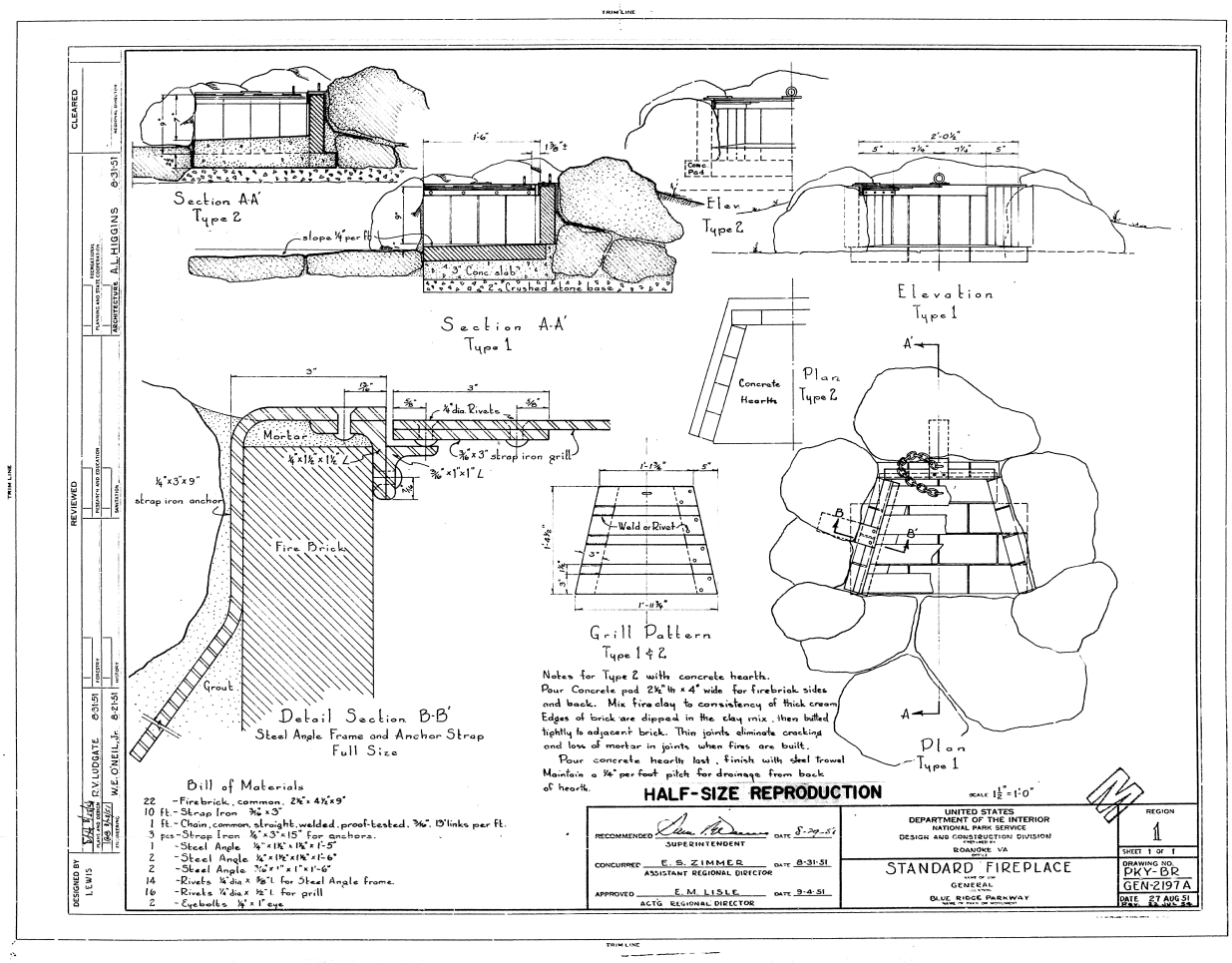


Figure 3.79: Plans for Parkway standard fireplace or grill, 1951, Rocky Knob Maintenance Area Flat File.



Figure 3.80: Stone grill or fireplace at Rocky Knob Picnic Area, 1938, Neg. #6639, Class. #796.5, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.81: Catalog grills in Picnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.82: Picnic table with wooden slat seats (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.85: Picnic Area retaining wall and road surface, 1938, Neg. #5695, Class. #796.5, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.83: Picnic table with sagging seat slats and exposed footings (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.86: Picnic Area retaining wall and road surface (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.84: Picnic table constructed of chestnut logs and boards in Rocky Knob, 1938, Neg. #6640, Class. #796.5, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.87: Stone tree well (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

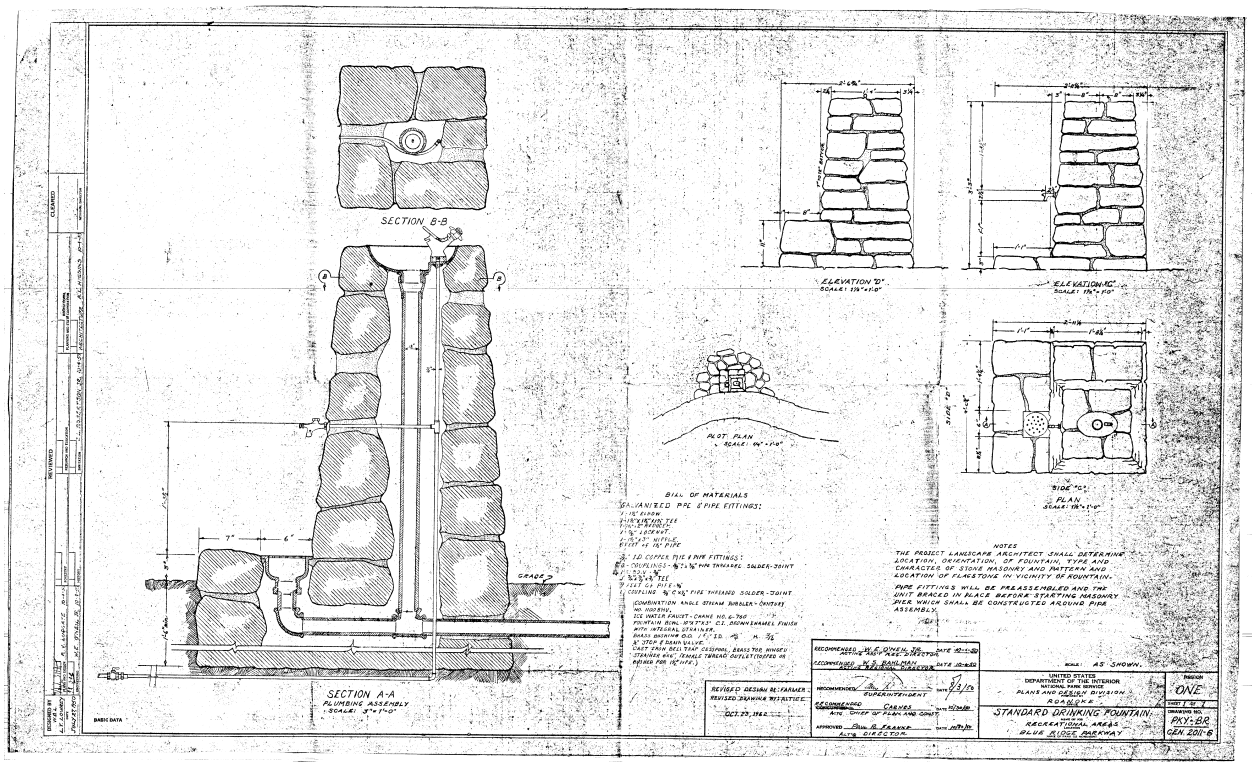


Figure 3.88: Plans for Parkway standard drinking fountain, 1950, Rocky Knob Maintenance Area flat file.

generation Parkway drinking fountains that remain in the Rocky Knob Campground (Figure 3.89). The other two fountains at the Picnic Area are Post-Mission 66 replacements for original stone fountains (Figure 3.90). These two Post-Mission 66 fountains are in the same approximate location as the originals and are in good condition. In addition to the three functioning fountains, there is evidence of a fourth stone drinking fountain in the form of a stone base, located in the woods located in the woods near Comfort Station #9 (Figure 3.91).



Figure 3.89: Stone drinking fountain (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.90: Post-Mission 66 drinking fountains in Picnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Entrance Gates- There are two entrance gates located at the Rocky Knob Picnic Area. Both are Parkway standard entrance gates constructed of solid wood timbers painted dark grey, with painted steel structural elements that provide support and allow the gate to open and close. The two gates feature routed wood signs that read, "Closed" in standard Parkway lettering. Both of the gates are in good condition and do not show signs of rot or decay (Figure 3.92). They are identical to the gates found at the Rocky Knob Campground and at other recreation areas throughout the Parkway.

It is worth mentioning that the wooden gates found today are not the original type of entrance gate used at the Picnic Area. Two remnant metal



Figure 3.91: Remnant drinking fountain base (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.93: Remnant eyebolts embedded in rock outcrops at the Picnic Area entrance. (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.92: Picnic Area gates (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.94: Typical guardrail in Picnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

eyebolts embedded into rock outcroppings on either side of the entrance to Picnic Area are all that remains of the original gate system today (Figure 3.93). These bolts were part of the original gate, which likely consisted of a simple chain strung through the two eyebolts. Research failed to uncover a photograph of the original gate; though a construction plan for the Picnic Area dated 1937 (Illustration 2.10), clearly shows the location of the gate between these two rock outcrops. The bolts are in good condition today.

Guardrail- Two sections of Post-Mission 66 guardrail exist within the Picnic Area. This rail consists of large square timbers set atop precast concrete blocks. The timbers are secured with metal bolts that pass through an interesting saw cut joint before attaching to the concrete blocks (Figure 3.94). The condition of these guardrails is generally good, although there are a few places where the timbers have detached from their concrete bases.

Historically, there were sections of wooden guardrail of a different type located throughout the Picnic Area. Plans from the late 1930s include construction details that illustrate how to build two different types of wooden rails for the varying conditions within the Picnic Area (Illustration 2.13). One version of the rail consisted of 8 inch rounded logs set on wooden posts, while the other type was a log curb set directly into a recently cut slope. Photographs from the 1930s show that log guardrail was installed in the Picnic Area; however, the exact locations could not be determined as no planning documents or construction drawings illustrate proposed or installed locations (Figure 3.95).

Stone Steps- Many sets of stone steps are located throughout the trail system that serves the Picnic Area. The steps vary in construction and size from simple stones set into the earth consisting of only a few treads, to longer, more complex runs of stone that feature intricate stone cheek walls (Figure 3.96). The steps vary in condition from good to



Figure 3.95: Log guardrail, 1938, Neg. #6637, Class. #625, Parkway Archives.

poor. Stones have come loose and need resetting in places and some treads have settled to the point of being useless.

Stone Curb- Many of the vehicular loops and parking slips within the Picnic Area feature sections of native stone curbing. The downslope side of the driving surface is the most likely place to find this type of curb. An estimated fifty percent of the vehicular lanes and parking slips are lined with stone curb. The type of stone is, "Rocky Knob Black Stone", a type of slate used for curbing throughout the Virginia sections of the Parkway. The curb condition varies from good to poor, with some sections needing to be reset (Figure 3.97).

Remnant Playground Structures- By 1941, the NPS constructed playing fields, a playground with swings, horseshoe courts and seesaws in what is now a large open area adjacent to the Picnic Pavilion.[15] Little remains of this use in the landscape today except for some concrete footings visible in the open fields, presumably associated with these recreational structures (Figure 3.98).

Drainage Structures- Original stone culverts and headwalls exist throughout the Picnic Area. Typically consisting of a mortared stone headwall surrounding a concrete pipe, these original features vary in condition from good to poor (Figure 3.99). One of the headwall capstones needs resetting, and most of the pipes are in need of cleaning and debris removal. The stone used matches the type and color of stone used throughout the picnic area on nearby curbing, retaining walls, tree wells and steps.

15 Quin 1997, 214.

Signage- A wooden trail system sign is located near Comfort Station #84. An identical sign is located near the entrance to the Rocky Knob Campground. It is similar in character and construction to the gunboard signs found elsewhere on the Parkway, and features a routed wood map of the Rocky Knob Recreation Area trail system (Figure 3.100). This sign is in good condition and shows no signs of rot or decay.

A wooden signboard is located near the entrance to the Picnic Area that encourages visitors to clean up after themselves in the Picnic Area. A wooden box containing litterbags is mounted to the sign, and visitors are invited to take a bag for use while picnicking. This sign is Post-Mission 66 and in good condition (Figure 3.101).

Other signs in the area deal with issues such as picnic area policies, picnic site locations, and directions to facilities. Typically, reflective metal signs serve to direct vehicular traffic around the one-way loops and smaller wooden and/or recycled plastic signs provide information to pedestrians about the trail routes that pass through this area (Figure 3.102). These smaller wooden and/or recycled plastic signs feature recessed lettering and the standard Parkway font, typical of this type of signage throughout the Parkway.

Litter Deposit Areas- There are two locations within the Picnic Area for visitors to dispose of their refuse and recycling. Positioned between the entrance and exit gates to the Picnic Area, the first litter deposit area consists of a three-sided wooden fence surrounding a metal dumpster with a bear-proof metal container for recyclables. The fence and its pickets slope with the topography, helping the structure blend into the landscape. The fence is unpainted and in good condition. An identical litter deposit area is located at the intersection of the two vehicular loops. The fence that surrounds this area also responds to the surrounding grade, making this detail character defining (Figure 3.103).

Fences- No fences are located within the Picnic Area, however, an attractive expanse of post and rail fence is visible from the group picnic area. This section of fence follows a sweeping curve in the Parkway and serves to enhance both the view of the Parkway from the Picnic Area and the view of the Picnic Area from the Parkway. The PLUMS show this fencing as a different type and



Figure 3.96: A variety of stone steps in the Picnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.97: Stone curb (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.99: Typical drainage structures in Picnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.98: Remnant playground structures (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.100: Trail system sign at Comfort Station #84 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.101: Sign in Picnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.102: Signs inPicnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

configuration than what exists today. The PLUMs show the fence type as snake rail, and in addition to following the curve in the Parkway, two sections of fence extend into the Picnic Area, defining the woodland edge that surrounds the open grass area. These two sections of fence were removed by 1966, as aerial photographs from that year show the fence in the same location that exists today. The current fence is in fair condition, with some leaning posts and damaged rails (Figure 3.104).

Views and Vistas. The PLUMs do not indicate any planned views of vistas for the Picnic Area; however, there is a striking view of the Parkway visible from the large parking area located adjacent to the pavilion. This view contains a large mown field in the foreground with a post and rail fence line following a dramatic curve in the Parkway in the distance. Beyond the Parkway, NPS staff maintains a planned vista at the Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, adding to the openness of the scene from the parking area (Figure 3.66).

Rocky Knob Gas Station

Located at Milepost 169 on Parkway right, the NPS operates the Rocky Knob Gas Station as an information station for the Rocky Knob Recreation Area. The site consists of approximately five acres and includes the Rocky Knob Gas Station, two small storage buildings, two parking areas, and associated circulation routes. In addition, the Rocky Knob Picnic Area is accessible at this site via a shared entry drive. The elevation at this location is 3,226 feet. Illustration 3.6 provides a detailed overview of this component landscape.

Land Use. The intended uses of this landscape are two-fold. Originally, this site was to contain an area for recreation and an area for roadside service and supply procurement. The NPS planned a coffee and sandwich shop in this location for visitor recreation, similar to the one located in Doughton Park. The NPS did not complete the coffee shop building. They did construct a small parking area designed to accommodate 28 cars, intended to serve the proposed coffee shop.

The gas station provided gasoline, supplies, and services. This use continued until 1978, at which time the NPS converted the service station into the Rocky Knob Visitor Information Station. The NPS staffs the information station seasonally. The information station is the only location within the recreation area that provides information about Rocky Knob, trail maps, and souvenirs. The NPS removed the original gas pumps located on the stone median in front of the building, when they converted the Gas Station to a Visitor Information Station in 1978.

Though not an originally planned recreational use, a horseback riding concession was operated at this location at one time according to NPS staff. This use of the site was discontinued in the late 1950s or early 1960s according to NPS staff. Two wooden frame buildings likely associated with this use remain in the landscape. The NPS uses both of these buildings for storage today.

Vegetation. Like many of the developed areas of Rocky Knob Recreation Area, the vegetation associated with the Gas Station consists primarily of mown turf with specimen trees and the occasional shrub planting. A planting plan dated November 1949 illustrates the proposed locations of several understory trees and shrubs at the Gas Station site as well as the existing trees to remain



Figure 3.103: Litter Deposit Areas (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.104: Post and rail fence along Parkway at the Picnic Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

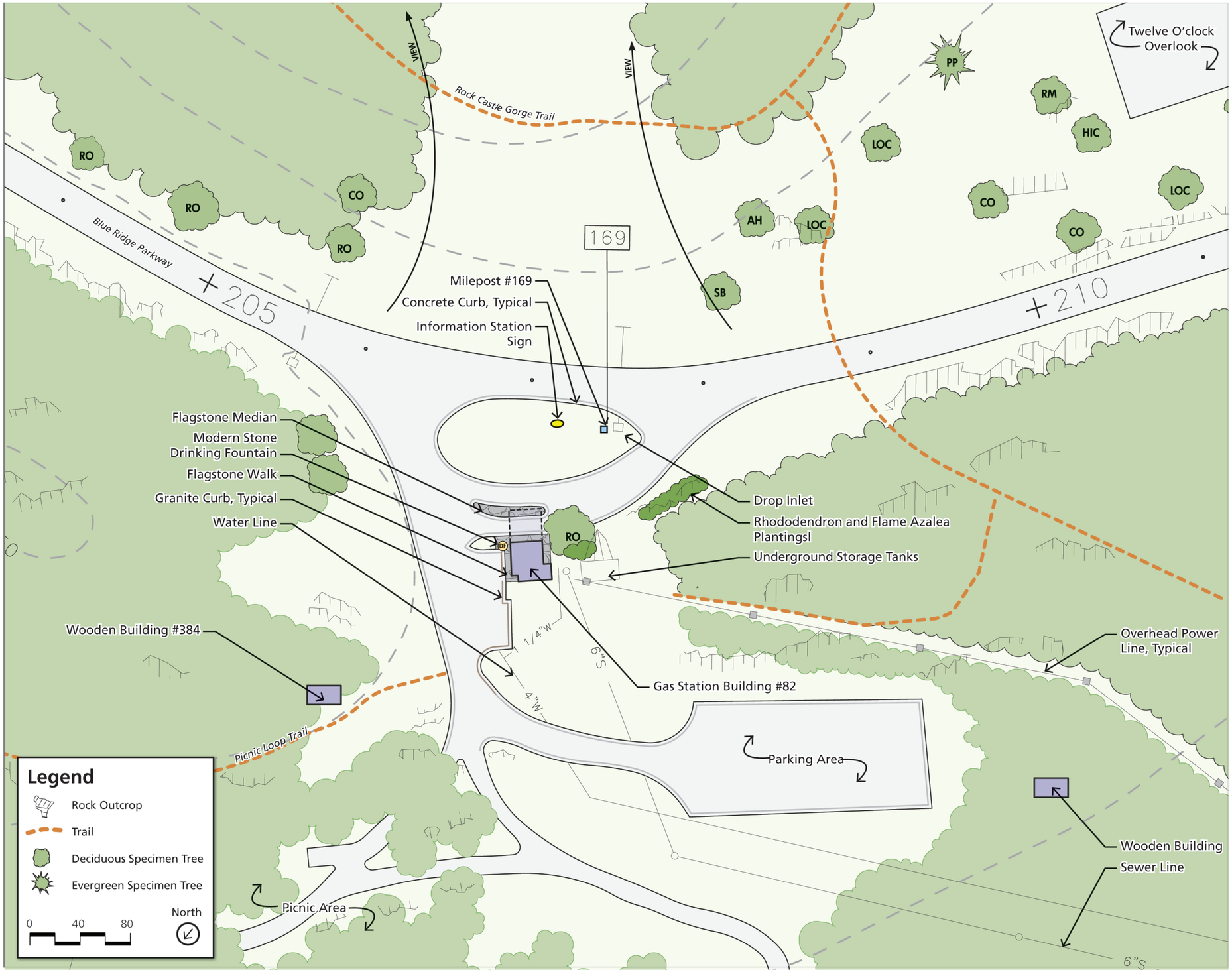
(Illustration 2.17). The existing trees are labeled "R.O" which is assumed to refer to red oak (*Quercus falcata* / *Quercus borealis*). The proposed plant list includes the following species:

Catawba Rhododendron (*Rhododendron catawbiense*)
Rosebay Rhododendron (*Rhododendron maximum*)
Flame Azalea (*Rhododendron calendulaceum*)
Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*)

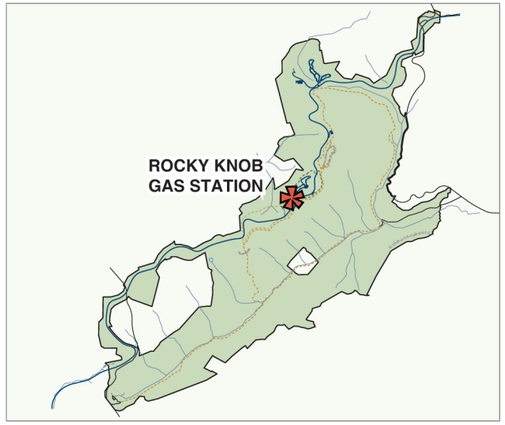
None of the dogwoods remain in the landscape and only two small clusters of original rhododendrons are apparent today. In addition, a single red oak that predates the construction of the Gas Station exists in its original location slightly southwest of the service station. The remaining rhododendrons and the existing oak tree appear to be in good health as does the rest of the landscape associated with the Gas Station.

Circulation. Automotive traffic enters this site from the Parkway from two entrances. These entrances form a loop in front of the Gas Station. The original design allowed two vehicles to access the gas pumps simultaneously, one on each side of the curbed stone median that historically contained the gasoline pumps. On the side of the median nearest to the service station, an extension of the front building façade overhangs the travel lane protecting users and attendants from the elements. This circulation is still present in the landscape today, but vehicular use is discouraged by strategically placed wooden planter boxes. A small parking lot located to the northeast of the Gas Station provides space for seven cars. Immediately after this parking lot, a fork in the entrance road occurs with one branch leading to the picnic area and the other continuing on to a larger parking lot. This additional parking area provides space for 28 cars in two opposing bays. The NPS built this lot to serve a coffee and sandwich shop planned for this site, but never constructed.

Mortared flagstone walks surround the Gas Station providing the primary pedestrian circulation route for most visitors. Later sections of this chapter describe these walks in detail. In addition, portions of both the Picnic Loop Trail and the Black Ridge Trail pass through here. The PLUMs show a sidewalk to be located along the southwestern



Rocky Knob Gas Station



Location Map

Plant Key

AH	Hornbeam	Carpinus caroliniana
CO	Chestnut Oak	Quercus prinus
HIC	Hickory	Carya spp.
LOC	Black Locust	Robinia pseudoacacia
PP	Table Mtn Pine	Pinus pungens
RO	Red Oak	Quercus borealis / Quercus rubra
RM	Red Maple	Acer rubra
SB	Sweet Birch	Betula lenta

Existing Conditions

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2013

Illustration 3.6

parking bay in the large parking area behind the service station. It is not known if this sidewalk was ever built. No evidence of its existence is visible in the landscape today.

Buildings and Structures.
Gas Station Building #82– Planning and design for the Gas Station at Rocky Knob began in 1936. The building went through several different conceptual iterations before the NPS chose and built the final design in 1949. The early concepts show the service station building combined with a coffee and sandwich shop, while later versions show the station and sandwich shop with separate footprints. The NPS eventually chose the separate footprint version and the gas station was built first along with circulation and parking for the coffee and sandwich shop. The coffee and sandwich shop building was never completed. The NPS built the gas station in a simple, rustic vernacular that is in keeping with the general design aesthetic of early Parkway construction (Figure 3.105). The form of the building has much in common with the Pump House (Figure 3.106), which the CCC built eight years earlier. Both buildings contain a steeply pitched front gabled roof overhang, which extends outward from the core of the building to provide a covered area for visitors near the main entrance. The gas station is constructed of cinder block overlaid with vertical wood siding set on a masonry foundation. Asphalt shingles replaced the original cement roof shingles. An original stone chimney remains. The front façade features a central original door, with two original double hung six-over-six windows located on either side. The rear of the building is intended to look like a later addition and features a shed roof with two smaller six-over-six windows. One side elevation contains a single original six-over-six window, while the other features a short breezeway that leads to the women's restroom. The breezeway, front entrance walk, and median are all finished in irregular flagstone lined with a rolled concrete curb. The front median historically contained two identical gas pumps, but both were removed. NPS staff recently reset the flagstone walkways and they appear to be in good condition. The NPS altered and expanded the perimeter of the gas pump median in 1973 and it is no longer symmetrical in plan. Also, a flagstone path has been added to connect the parking area to the building entrance. Additionally, the small parking area located on the northeast side of the station was expanded



Figure 3.105: Rocky Knob Gas Station (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.106: Pump House at Rocky Knob, c. 1952, Building Files, Parkway Archives.

at some point prior to 1966, resulting in the loss of an original planting bed in the process. These alterations are all visible in historic photos (Figure 3.107). The interior of the building contains many of its original features, including the service desk, restroom fixtures, wall treatments and concrete floor covered in linoleum designed to look like mortared slate. The building is good condition and the best example in Rocky Knob of post-war Parkway architecture that employed the use of Post-Mission 66 materials and construction techniques, while still being based on vernacular forms.

Wooden Buildings– Two identical buildings remain possibly designed to serve a horseback riding concession that operated at this site until the late 1950s or early 1960s according to park staff. These rustic wooden frame structures may have functioned as either ticket booths or hay storage. One building is located to the north of the gas station near a small rock outcropping (Figure 3.108). The other is located in an area of woodland to the southeast of the larger parking lot (Figure 3.109). One of the buildings retains a Parkway building inventory number of 384. NPS Day Labor constructed this building in 1951, and a building file in the Parkway Archives notes the use of the building as, "Wood Storage Shed" in 1953. It is likely that the function of this building evolved over



Figure 3.107: Rocky Knob Gas Station, c.1951, Building Files, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.108: Wooden building (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.109: Wooden building (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

time. The NPS currently uses both of the buildings for storage. Both are in poor condition. The building located near the parking area contains an original painted wood sign from the earliest days of the Parkway (Figure 3.110). Similar signs appear in historic photographs taken in the 1930s within Rocky Knob Recreation Area (Figure 3.111).

Small-scale Features.

Curbs– Original rolled concrete curb surrounds the large grassed median, which separates the Gas Station from the Parkway. This type of curb is also located along the northern side of the picnic entrance road and the perimeter of the large parking area behind the Gas Station (Figure 3.112). Pink granite curb lines the smaller parking area and was likely added when this parking area was expanded(Figure 3.113).



Figure 3.110: Painted wood sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.111: Early Parkway signage at Rocky Knob, 1949, Pakway Archives.



Figure 3.112: Concrete curb (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.113: Granite curb (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Drinking Fountain– A Post-Mission 66 stone drinking fountain is located within the flagstone path that connects the building entrance with the adjacent parking area (Figure 3.114). This fountain is similar in construction, style, and material to the original stone drinking fountains that still exist in both the Rocky Knob Camping and Picnic Areas;



Figure 3.114: Post-Mission 66 drinking fountain (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

however, it lacks the refinement and proportions of the originals. The fountain is functional and in good condition. Historically, there was no drinking fountain at this location.

Signage– A Post-Mission 66 recycled plastic sign, mounted on wooden posts is located in the grassed median that separates the Gas Station from the Parkway (Figure 3.115). This sign directs users to the Rocky Knob Information Station, which refers to the gas station building's current use. This signboard is made to look like earlier routed wood signs, sharing the same font and color palate employed previously. A historic photograph shows a much larger sign in this location that contained a routed wood Blue Ridge Parkway logo panel suspended from a timber sign post that indicated the distance remaining to "Great Smokies Park" on a timber cross beam (Figure 3.116). A different historic photo from the same era shows a less elaborate sign along the Parkway that indicated the presence of the gas station ahead (Figure 3.117). The larger sign was one of the original mileposts that were located at the recreation areas along the Parkway in 1941.[16] The smaller "gas" sign dates from the same year. Neither of these original signs exists at the site today. Reflective metal traffic and directional signs are located adjacent to the Gas Station. These Post-Mission 66 signs direct users to the picnic area and the Parkway. In addition, a concrete milepost is located in the grass median adjacent to the Parkway. Mileposts are discussed in detail in the Parkway component landscape section later in this chapter.

Fire Hydrant and Hose Reel– A fire hydrant and hose reel is located in the grassy area behind the service station (Figure 3.118). Both of these items are in good condition.

16 Quin 1997, 139.



Figure 3.115: Information station sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011)



Figure 3.116: Historic sign, c. 1953, Neg. #480, Class. #717, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.117: Historic sign, c. 1953, Neg. #305, Class. #719.3, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.118: Hose reel and fire hydrant (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Wooden Planters– Painted wooden planter boxes currently surround the entrance to the Gas Station (Figure 3.119). These Post-Mission 66 additions are painted to match the existing building and are used to prevent motorcycles and other vehicles



Figure 3.119: Wooden planters (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

from parking in the drive lane that travels beneath the building overhang. These planters are in good condition.

Concrete Drainage Structure– A grated metal drop inlet is located in the grassed median, adjacent to the concrete milepost. This original feature is in good condition (Figure 3.115).

Views and Vistas. The PLUMS show a planned vista for the area immediately across the Parkway from the Gas Station. NPS staff actively maintain this view.

Parkway Section 1-S[17]

This section of the Parkway consists of nearly four miles of gently winding roadway following a high ridgeline, which overlooks Rock Castle Gorge below. The roadway connects the developed areas of the recreation area to one another along its sinuous route, providing an engaging driving experience for users. The asphalt roadway surface is 22 feet wide and consists of two driving lanes separated by a painted centerline. No painted shoulders are present and in general, the roadway is in good condition and appears as intended by the Parkway designers.

Land Use. The Parkway functions primarily as a scenic motor road with adjacent recreational, interpretive and agricultural uses.

Vegetation. The vegetation along the Parkway consists of a mixture of hardwood and evergreen tree species that are generally in mature stages of growth. Understory conditions also vary, from being relatively open to dense stands of rhododendron, flame azalea, and other shrub species. These are noted as canopied shrub bays on the original PLUMs. Open pastures and fields are also visible from the roadway. The PLUMs list intended species composition for areas along the Parkway at variable intervals ranging between 250-500 feet. These plant lists are composed entirely of native species appropriate to the area. The PLUMS for the entire project area are included in this report in Illustrations 2.1 – 2.9 for reference, and some of the more frequently occurring species from the plant lists are recorded below:

Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia)*
Rosebay Rhododendron (*Rhododendron maximum)*
Flame Azalea (*Rhododendron calendulaceum)*
Flameleaf Sumac (*Rhus copallina)*
Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia)*
Table Mountain Pine (*Pinus pungens)*
Northern Red Oak (*Quercus falcata / Quercus borealis)*
Chestnut Oak (*Quercus prinus)*
White Oak (*Quercus alba)*
Serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis)*
Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida)*

In 1950, Myrl Brooks took several photos of natural vegetation in Rocky Knob. The NPS has these photos in the Blue Ridge Parkway Archives at Parkway Headquarters in Asheville, NC. A list of the species photographed is included here:

Tulip Poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera)*
Cinnamon Fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea)*
Triplet Stonecrop (*Sedum glaucophyllum)*
Daisy Fleabane (*Erigeron philadelphicus)*
Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium)*

Circulation. The primary circulation route is the 3.9 miles of Parkway included in the study area, from Milepost 165.3 at the Tuggle Gap Grade Separated Interchange to Milepost 169.2 near Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook. In general, the asphalt paved Parkway is in good condition.

Buildings and Structures. An impressive arched bridge is located at the Tuggle Gap Grade Separated Interchange. This single span bridge is a good example of a stone-faced Parkway bridge constructed over a state route. Built by NPS in 1955, this bridge is constructed of poured reinforced concrete faced in masonry stone (Figure

17 A detailed study of the entirety of Parkway Section 1-S is not included in the scope of this Cultural Landscape Report. This report focuses on the developed area of Rocky Knob Recreation Area and Parkway Section 1-S from Milepost 165.3 to Milepost 169.2.

3.120). It features a stepped stone parapet wall, and is in good condition. A historic photo of the bridge under construction shows that the bridge has changed little since its construction in the 1950s (Figure 3.121).

Constructed Water Features. There are no constructed water features located within the Rocky Knob Recreation Area. Both the 1941 and 1943 master plans for Rocky Knob Recreation Area show a potential site for a lake along Rock Castle Creek immediately east of the in-holding property; however, this proposed development never occurred (Illustration 2.11).

Small-scale Features.
Drainage Structures- There are numerous pipe culverts with original small stone headwalls along this portion of the Parkway. These culverts are often at intersections with drives or at the terminus of a grass swale or stone gutter (Figure 3.122). A few concrete drop inlets are located along this section of the Parkway as well (Figure 3.123). All of these original drainage structures appear on the PLUMs, are functional and appear to be in good condition.

Stone Gutters- Stone gutters are located alongside the Parkway within the project area. The PLUMs illustrate the exact locations of the gutters and are included for reference in Illustrations 2.1-2.9. Rustic stone cobbles are mortared to form an approximately one foot deep gutter. The overall condition of the gutter system is fair due to encroaching vegetation in the mortar joints of some sections of gutter (Figure 3.124). However, the NPS appears to have maintained some sections better than others over the years, and there is evidence that some sections were reset recently (Figure 3.125). No asphalt gutters occur in this section, which is uncommon along the Parkway route. The CCC constructed the stone gutters at Rocky Knob from 1937-1943.

Signage- A variety of sign types exist along the Parkway. The majority of these signs function as site identification signs, regulatory signs or directional signs (Figure 3.126). Most are brown metal with white reflective lettering typical to the Parkway. Concrete mile markers are also present at Rocky Knob and are consistent with others found throughout the Parkway (Figure 3.127). These markers are precast concrete with recessed letters.



Figure 3.120: Grade-separated interchange at Tuggle Gap (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.121: Grade-separated interchange at Tuggle Gap, c.1954, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.122: Typical stone headwall along Parkway (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.123: Concrete drop inlet along Parkway (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.124: Vegetation encroachment in stone gutter (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

At every mile, the markers are located 5 feet from the roadway pavement. This type of mile marker became the parkway standard in 1947, and is still used today. At the Tuggle Gap Grade-Separated Interchange, the Parkway access drive contains a large wooden Parkway entrance sign. These signs are found throughout the Parkway, feature the Parkway logo, and serve to announce to the visitor that they are now entering NPS property (Figure 3.128). The sign is in good condition. The design of this sign dates to 1949.

Fences- Different fence types exist along the Parkway including split rail, barbed wire and post and wire (Figure 3.129). Fences typically separate pastures and/or agricultural land, or visitor use areas from the roadway. Fence types and locations are indicated on the original PLUMs (Illustrations 2.1-2.9). Existing fence locations appear to be consistent with the PLUMs; however, some of the fence types have been altered. For example, both the PLUMs and historic photographs show the use of "snake" or "worm" fencing along sections of the roadway that are now lined with split rail fence. These alterations likely occurred for maintenance reasons and probably took place when agricultural leases changed from raising livestock to hay production. Sheep and cattle are able to maintain vegetation around complicated fence lines more easily than modern maintenance equipment can. Due to a shortage of suitable fence material during the Resumption of Construction Era, Parkway staff and agricultural lessees replaced many of the split rail fences located out of direct view from the roadway with post and wire fences. The fences in Rocky Knob were originally constructed of chestnut, but are now built from poplar and locust. The condition of the fences varies, but they appear to be good to fair overall. Of particular note is a section of three rail fence that parallels a dramatic curve in the Parkway between the Rock Castle Gorge Overlook and the Picnic Area (Figure 3.130). This fence visually reinforces the curvilinear alignment of the Parkway and is cited as evidence of the early Parkway designer's willingness to locate fencing for aesthetic reasons alone, as this fence was never part of an agricultural lease.[18] A fence crossing or "stile" is located on the Rocky Knob Recreation Area trail system; just outside the project area near MP 170 (Figure 3.131).

18 Abbott, Carlton. "Visual Character of the Blue Ridge Parkway." U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1997, 234.



Figure 3.125: Stone gutter (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Spring Outlet Wall- By 1942, a stone wall surrounding a spring outlet was constructed in a pasture adjacent to the roadway near milepost 169.6, just outside the project area. This simple stone feature surrounds a small spring outlet and was likely used as a water source for livestock as part of the agricultural lease program (Figure 3.132). The structure collapsed and only portions of the stone and mortar remain in the landscape today, leaving this resource in poor condition (Figure 3.133).

Views and Vistas. Canopy shrub vistas and open pastureland comprise much of the intended vistas along this stretch of Parkway. The open pastures appear to be similar to their original configuration as shown on the historic PLUMs, as are the shrub and grass bays. As is the case along much of the Parkway, NPS no longer maintains many of the views described as, "open woods" on the PLUMs, resulting in a less varied experience for drivers than originally intended. Many of the more impressive views of the surrounding mountains, piedmont, and Rock Castle Gorge are associated with the component landscapes or Parkway overlooks, which this chapter describes in detail separately.



Figure 3.126: Parkway signage (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.127: Concrete mile marker (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.128: Parkway entrance sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Parkway Overlooks

The Saddle Overlook

The Saddle Overlook was one of the first parking overlooks constructed along the Parkway in the 1930s. "The Saddle" is a ridge connecting two high points on Rocky Knob. The NPS built the overlook in the middle of "The Saddle" and it offers spectacular views of the Blue Ridge in both directions. Very few overlooks along the Parkway feature views of the surrounding countryside from both Parkway left and Parkway right, making this overlook unique. The elevation at this location is 3,380 feet. Illustration 3.7 describes the site in more detail.

Land Use. Its designers referred the Parkway to a "viewing platform" and the overlooks contained along the route are used as such to this day.[19] In addition to providing a platform from which to view the surrounding scenery, this overlook also serves as a trailhead. From the overlook, it is only a short hike to the summit of Rocky Knob, which contains a trail shelter built by the CCC in 1937. This shelter was one of the first structures built along the Parkway. The other was a similar trail shelter at Cumberland Knob further south on the Parkway, which was built at the same time as the shelter at Rocky Knob. This document discusses the trail shelter in detail in the Other Cultural Resources section at the end of this chapter. Interpretation occurs at the overlook in the form of interpretive signage. In the late 1950s

19 Ibid, 63.



Figure 3.129: Fence types along the Parkway (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.130: Curvilinear fence along the Parkway (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



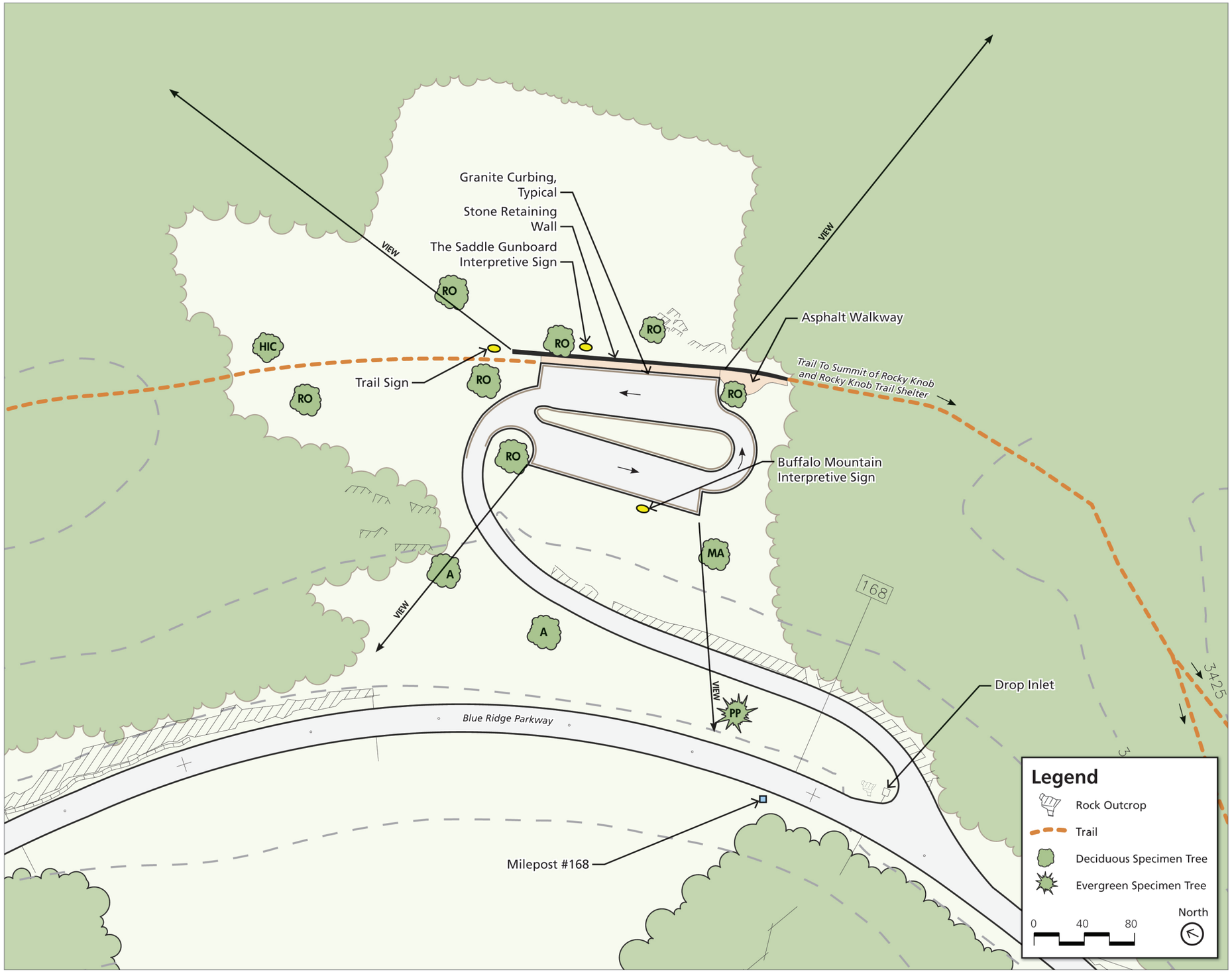
Figure 3.132: Stone spring outlet wall, 1942, Neg. #7779, Class. #551.4, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.131: Fence stile at Milepost 170 (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.133: Collapsed spring outlet wall (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



The Saddle Overlook



Location Map

Plant Key

A	Ash	Fraxinus spp.
HIC	Hickory	Carya spp.
MA	Crab Apple	Malus spp.
PP	Table Mtn Pine	Pinus pungens
RO	Red Oak	Quercus borealis / Quercus rubra

Existing Conditions

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2013

Illustration 3.7

and early 1960s, a leaflet dispenser was located at this overlook (Figure 3.134). This metal structure contained a nine page "Guide to Rocky Knob Nature Trail", which provided descriptions of the various tree and shrub species located along the trail to the summit of Rocky Knob. This feature no longer exists in the landscape.

Vegetation. Parkway designers situated The Saddle Overlook in large clearing consisting of mown grasses dotted with specimen trees and bordered by woodland. Specimen tree species include: red oak (*Quercus falcata* / *Quercus borealis*), American beech (*Fagus grandiolia*) and table mountain pine (*Pinus pungens*). The extent of the maintained open area has decreased over time, as portions of the original cleared area shown on the PLUMS have been allowed to return to woodland. For the most part though, the original design intent for the wood line at this overlook has been realized.

High winds common to the exposed location near the top of Rocky Knob have battered and twisted the trees here. As a result, it is difficult to tell with certainty whether or not the existing specimen trees are the same ones that appear in historic photographs and on the PLUMS. However, based on the historic photos and the current condition of the trees, it is likely that they are original (Figure 3.135, Figure 3.136). If these specimens are in fact replacements, they appear to be in their original locations.

The PLUMs show a small orchard consisting of approximately fifty trees to the west of the overlook, near an unnamed spring and associated creek. The PLUMs do not list species information for this orchard and no evidence of this orchard remains in the landscape today.

Circulation. Circulation for the overlook consists of a simple asphalt-paved pull-off drive loop separated from the Parkway by a large open grassed area. The drive loop accommodates two-way traffic and is approximately 950 feet long. At the end of the loop, the drive lane splits into a one way traffic loop divided by a grassed median lined with granite curb. The median separates two distinct parking bays situated to take full advantage of the surrounding views from both sides of the mountain. The overlook provides parking for 26 cars. A narrow asphalt sidewalk located on the



Figure 3.134: Leaflet dispenser at the Saddle Overlook, c. 1953, Neg. #233, Class. #069.6, Parkway Archives.

edge of the western parking bay handles pedestrian circulation. In addition, a portion of the recreation area's trail system travels through this overlook providing access to the Rocky Knob Trail Shelter and the summit of Rocky Knob.

Small-scale Features.

Stone Retaining Wall– A 220-foot long stone masonry wall runs along the eastern edge of the east parking bay. This wall is approximately six feet tall and two feet wide and was built to create a level parking area on a sloping site (Figure 3.137). This wall is one of the oldest structures on the site, being part of the early phases of construction for this overlook. Both ends of the wall gradually step down to meet the existing grade. A stone drop inlet captures water run-off from the parking area and sends it through a stone-lined hole integrated into the wall construction. This feature is in good condition, as is the rest of the wall, although there are some areas where stones are missing and recent mortar repairs are obvious.

Stone Curbs– Split face granite curb exists around the perimeter of the parking area at the Saddle Overlook. The same type of curbing surrounds the center median. The type of granite used contains a considerable amount of quartz, which gives each section of curbing a distinct pinkish hue (Figure 3.138). Granite was not the original curbing material at this location. According to historic photographs, it the original curb at this overlook was likely made from a type of slate called, "Rocky Knob Black Stone", which was used for curbing in many of the sections of the Parkway that pass through Virginia (Figure 3.135). Examples of this



Figure 3.135: The Saddle Overlook, c. 1938, Neg. #2163, Class. #796.55, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.136: The Saddle Overlook (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.137: Stone retaining wall (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.138: Pink granite curbing (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

kind of slate stone curbing are located at other sites within the study area, including the Camping and Picnic Areas. Examples of the pink granite curbing type exist at the Rock Castle Gorge Overlook and the parking area adjacent to the Gas Station. All curbs at this location are in good condition and feature the characteristic gradual transition into grade at the starting point of each section, which is common design detail present throughout the Parkway.

Signage– Two interpretive signs are located at the Saddle Overlook. The first sign is located on the edge of the western parking area. This sign focuses on the history of Buffalo Mountain, which is visible in the distance from this location. This sign is constructed of metal posts that hold a vandal-proof integrated graphic board, which is consistent with the new interpretive signs found along the Parkway (Figure 3.139).

The second interpretive sign is a traditional gunboard sign, which interprets The Saddle and the settlements in the valleys below. Constructed of 2-inch thick redwood signboards mounted to locust posts, original gunboard signs are unique to



Figure 3.139: Post-Mission 66 interpretive sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.140: Foam gunboard sign (2010).

the Parkway. Over time, the NPS replaced many of the original wooden signboards with Post-Mission 66 signboards made from either recycled plastic or foam. At the time of this report, the Saddle gunboard sign was missing and only the mounting posts were visible. Through research, a recent photograph of this particular sign was discovered that shows a badly deteriorated replacement foam sign at this location (Figure 3.140). This damaged foam sign was likely in the process of being replaced at the time fieldwork was conducted by the project team.

In addition to the interpretive signage, a concrete milepost is located near the beginning of the overlook entrance drive in a grassed area adjacent to the Parkway. A Post-Mission 66 wooden directional trail sign also exists at the site located at the northern end of the stone retaining wall. Both of these signs are in good condition.

Fences– According to the PLUMS, Parkway designers did not plan to install fences at this overlook. However, two separate historic photographs from the late 1930s show a section of wooden snake fencing located along the northern edge of the tree line that extended from the low point of the saddle to the stone retaining wall (Figure 3.141). The NPS removed this fence ca. 1940, as no evidence of the fence appears in aerial photographs from that year, despite the fact that identical fences are clearly visible in nearby locations on these photographs (Figure 3.142). The portions of fence visible in 1930s photos were probably remnant agricultural fences in place prior to construction of the overlook and the NPS removed and repurposed them once construction of the overlook was complete. The PLUMS also

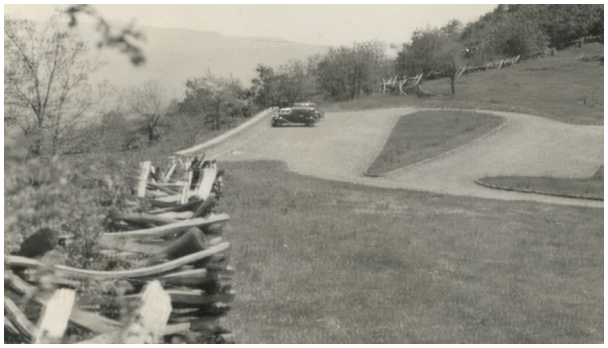


Figure 3.141: Snake fence at the Saddle Overlook parking area, c.1938, Neg. #7177, Class. #625.7, Parkway Archives.

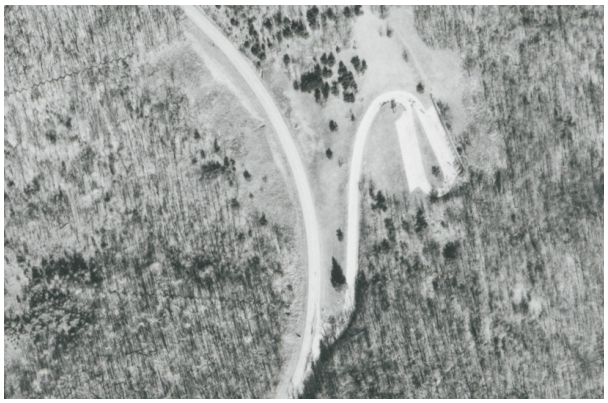


Figure 3.142: Saddle Overlook aerial photograph, c. 1966, Parkway Archives.

show snake, post, and rail fencing in the pasture area located to the west of the overlook on the opposite side of the Parkway. This fencing is visible in historic aerial photography from 1966. No evidence of any of these fences exists in the landscape today.

Guardrail– Historically, a low wooden guardrail lined the entrance road leading to the overlook parking area (Figure 3.143). This elegant, curving

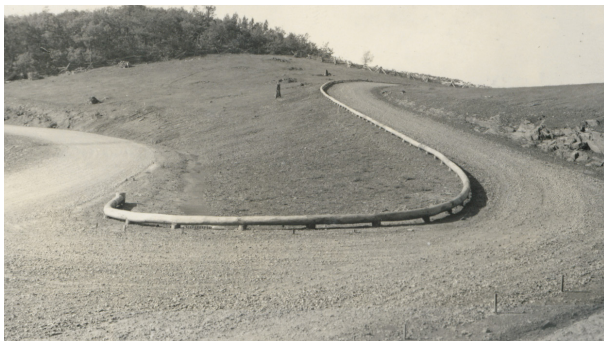


Figure 3.143: Wooden guardrail at The Saddle Overlook, c. 1938, Neg. #7178, Class. #625, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.144: Saddle Overlook (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

rail also appears on the PLUMS at this location. No evidence of this feature exists in the landscape today (Figure 3.144).

Drainage Structures– An original grated metal drop inlet is located in a low point where the overlook entrance drive meets the Parkway. This structure consists of a metal grate surrounded by mortared stone. This inlet collects water from a grass-lined swale that runs along the Parkway. It is in good condition and visible in multiple historic photographs from the period of significance.

Views and Vistas. The PLUMs indicate the presence of two 175-foot vistas located on the perimeter of each parking bay. As stated above, there are very few overlooks constructed along the Parkway that allow for views of the surrounding landscape in all directions making this one particularly unique. The NPS maintains both of the original planned views at this site.

Rock Castle Gorge Overlook

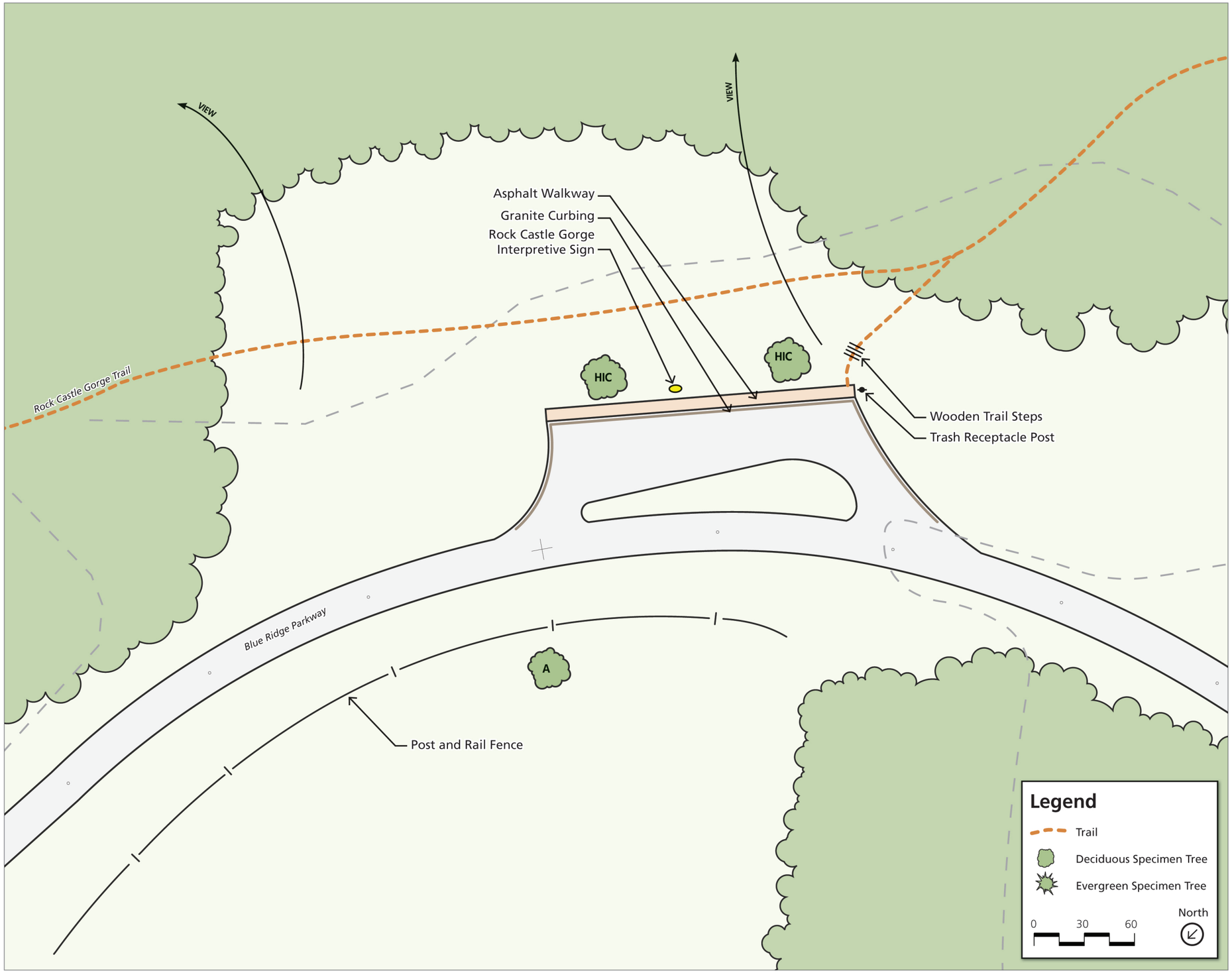
The Rock Castle Gorge Overlook was the last overlook built within the Rocky Knob Recreation Area. The final layout of the overlook differs slightly from the one proposed on the PLUMs, though the general location is the same. The overlook consists of a single bay of parking separated from the Parkway by a tear-shaped grassed island. The overlook provides parking spaces for 17 vehicles. Pink granite curb lines the parking bay, but not the grassed median. An asphalt-paved walkway is located at the back of the curb for the length of the parking bay. The elevation at this overlook is 3,195 feet. Illustration 3.8 provides detailed information related to this site.

Land Use. The NPS created this overlook to facilitate recreation along the Parkway primarily in the form of viewing the surrounding rural landscape. To a lesser extent, this area is used for hiking, as the Rock Castle Gorge Trail is accessible from the parking area. Other uses at this site include picnicking and interpretation. In recent years, it is a popular place for locals to take engagement photos. A 1943 Master Plan shows that this location was originally intended to be used as a 'negro picnic ground', but the facilities were never developed.[20]

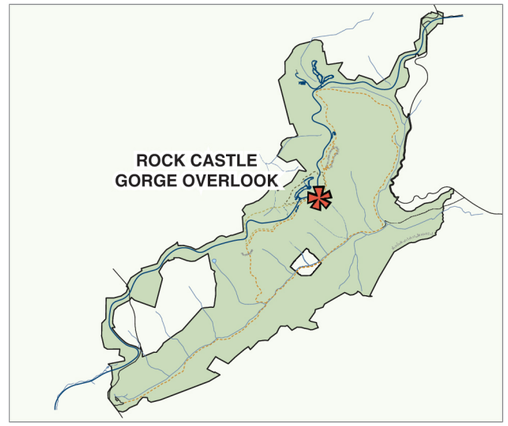
Vegetation. Designers sited this overlook in a maintained clearing approximately two acres in size. The ground plane is composed almost entirely of turf and the over story layer is limited to three large specimen trees. Several successional species exist down slope from the parking bay in the vista clearing. Drawings dated 1958 show two large specimen trees in the same locations that two existing trees occupy currently. The PLUMS also illustrate two specimen hickory trees (*Carya spp.)* in these locations. It is very likely that these two trees are the original plantings. All three of the trees are in good condition, as is the rest of the vegetation at the overlook, except for a patches of eroding turf.

Circulation. Vehicular circulation is handled by a single asphalt pull off and parking bay described above. The asphalt is in good condition overall. Pedestrian circulation at the overlook is accommodated by a 7 foot wide asphalt walkway that is also described above. This asphalt is in generally fair condition, although a section of the walkway adjacent to the interpretive panel has

20 Quin 1997, 214.



Rock Castle Gorge Overlook



Location Map

Plant Key

A	Ash	Fraxinus spp.
HIC	Hickory	Carya spp.

Existing Conditions

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2013

Illustration 3.8

eroded away completely. A portion of the Rocky Knob Recreation Area trail system passes through this location as well.

Small-scale Features.
Stone Curb– Split face, pink granite curb lines the parking bay and a portion of the asphalt pull-off. Identical granite curb exists at the Saddle Overlook and the Gas Station parking area. Construction plans dated 1958 show a 30 foot 6 inch taper from the finished grade to the top of the 6 inch curb at the terminus of each curb section. This detail is common throughout the Parkway; however, the tapering of the curb at this overlook is particularly well executed and documented (Figure 3.145). Historic photos dating from 1959 show a curb of a different stone material at this location (Figure 3.146). The original stone that appears in the photograph was likely a type of slate called, "Rocky Knob Black Stone", which the NPS used in many other locations within the park and the Parkway. According to park staff, due to the large sizes needed for replacement curbing, acquiring in-kind replacement pieces of slate proved too costly and the NPS used pink granite as a replacement curb material instead.

Trash Receptacle Post– A precast concrete post used to mount a trash receptacle, is located at the far western corner of the parking bay (Figure 3.147). No trash receptacle was present at the time of this study. It is not known whether this trashcan was removed for the winter season, or in the process of being replaced with a Post-Mission 66 bear-proof model.

Wooden Steps– A set of Post-Mission 66 wooden trail steps is located at the western end of the parking bay (Figure 3.148). These steps provide access to the Rock Castle Gorge Trail from the parking area. The stairs are in fair condition; however, the adjacent turf is compacted and eroding away due to heavy foot traffic.

Signage– A single interpretive sign is located near the center of the parking area. This sign provides information about the Rock Castle Gorge and associated community below. This sign features metal posts, which hold a vandal-proof integrated graphic board that is consistent with the new interpretive signs found along the Parkway, and identical in construction to others found in the Rocky Knob Recreation Area (Figure 3.149).

Views and Vistas. According to the PLUMs, designers planned a single 300-foot long vista at this site. NPS staff maintain the majority of this viewshed in an open condition, however, approximately 75 feet of the original vista shown on the PLUMs has been lost. The vista takes in a portion of the Rock Castle Gorge below and provides an excellent view of the piedmont further in the distance.

Twelve O'clock Overlook

The Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook was originally planned to serve as a parking and drop off area for a proposed lodge development that was never built. It now acts as an expanded parking area, overlook, and trailhead. Parking for 41 cars is provided in two parking bays at this location and the elevation here is 3,200 feet. Several attractive rock outcropping are visible here and the designers took great care to incorporate these features into the parking layout (Figure 3.150). Illustration 3.9 provides detailed information about this site and the natural and cultural resources present here.

Land Use. Similar to the other two overlooks located within the project area, this one was created to facilitate recreation in the form of viewing the surrounding landscape. The overlook also provides parking for users who wish to access the Rocky Knob Recreation Area trail system from this location.

Vegetation. Approximately one and a half acres of maintained landscape surrounds the Twelve O'clock Overlook. Like the other overlooks within the Park, this landscape consists primarily of mown turf interspersed with specimen trees. The difference here is the presence of mature mountain laurel and rhododendron thickets. These thickets are likely original plantings, planted shortly after the NPS constructed this overlook. Tree species include chestnut oak (*Quercus prinus*), red oak (*Quercus falcata* / *Quercus borealis)*, white oak (*Quercus alba*) and black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*).

Circulation. Circulation at this overlook consists of a two-way entrance/exit to the Parkway with a parking area for 41 vehicles located to the north of the entrance/exit and a single lane, circular turnaround located to the south. The circulation is ingenious and intuitive at the same time; with a



Figure 3.145: Stone curb transition into grade (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.146: Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, c. 1959, Neg. #1372, Class. #717, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.147: Trash receptacle post (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



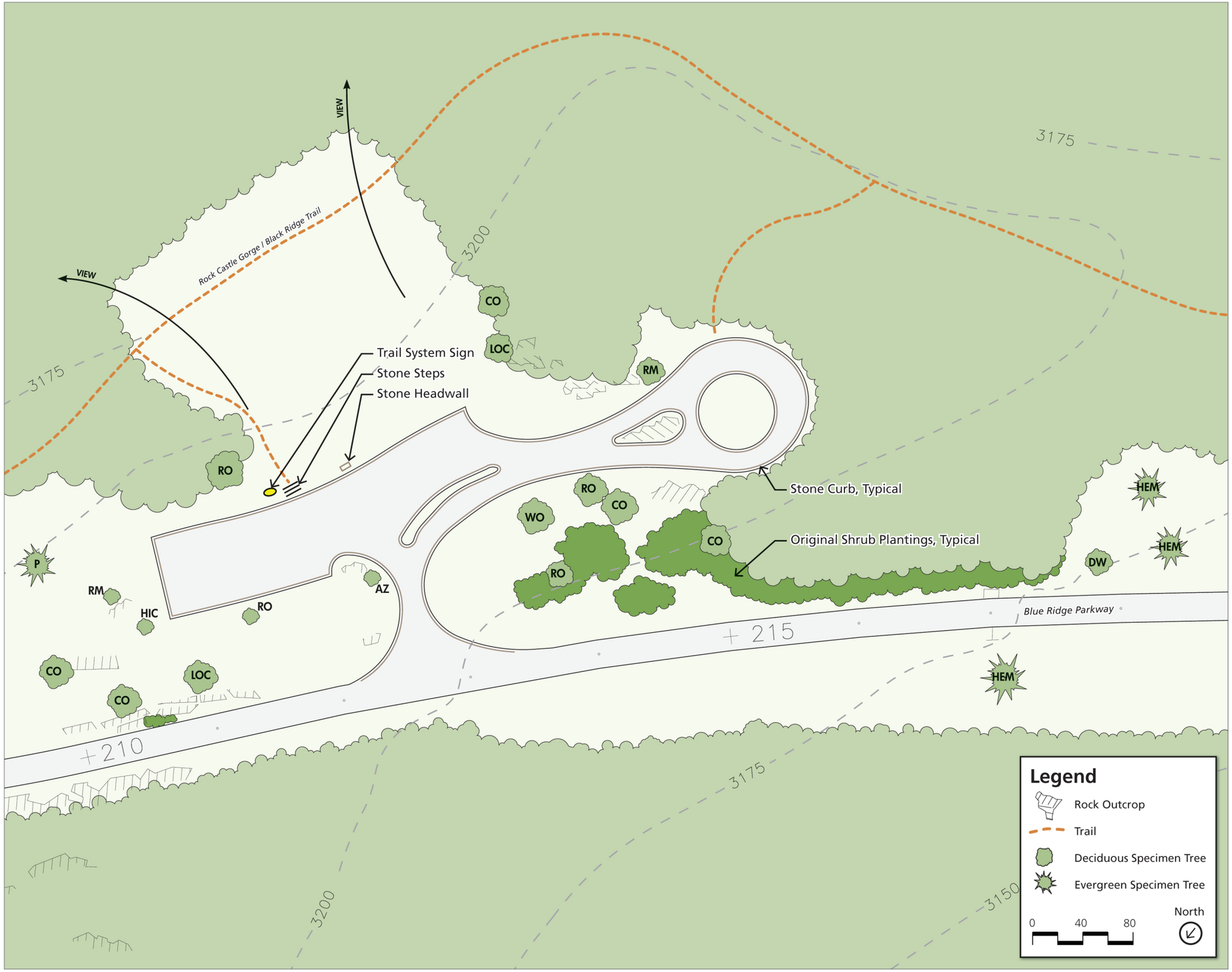
Figure 3.149: Post-Mission 66 interpretive sign (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.148: Wooden trail steps (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.150: Granite outcrops at Twelve O'clock Overlook (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Twelve O'Clock Overlook



Location Map

Plant Key

AZ	Flame Azalea	Rhododendron calendulaceum
CO	Chestnut Oak	Quercus prinus
DW	Dogwood	Cornus florida
HEM	Hemlock	Tsuga canadensis
HIC	Hickory	Carya spp.
LOC	Black Locust	Robinia pseudoacacia
PP	Table Mtn Pine	Pinus pungens
RO	Red Oak	Quercus borealis / Quercus rubra
RM	Red Maple	Acer rubra
WO	White Oak	Quercus alba

Existing Conditions

Rocky Knob Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2013

Illustration 3.9

series of curbed medians that help drivers navigate the overlook and separate the lanes of travel. The designers originally intended the circular turnaround to serve as the drop-off and check-in area for a future lodge development, but since the lodge was never completed, the turnaround makes little sense in the landscape today. Bituminous asphalt covers all of the driving lanes, which are in good condition. Construction of the overlook occurred concurrently with Parkway construction and was complete by 1940.

Buildings and Structures. No buildings or structures exist at this overlook; however, both the PLUMs and various master plans for Rocky Knob Recreation Area show that the NPS originally intended to develop an overnight lodging facility and amphitheater at this location. The planned lodge and amphitheater were never constructed and no evidence of either is present in the landscape today.

Small-scale Features.
Stone Curb- Stone curbing is installed along the edge of the parking area, circular turnaround, and all internal medians. The stone used appears different from the pink granite and slate curbing found elsewhere in the Rocky Knob Recreation Area, and has more in common with the rock outcrops that surround the overlook. It is likely that workers used stone secured from roadway excavation within the boundaries of Rocky Knob Recreation Area to construct the curb of this overlook. According to the Final Construction Report for this Parkway section, the contractor used stone quarried within the park until they ran out. Because the stone at this overlook differs from the slate used elsewhere, the curbing at Twelve O'clock Overlook was likely the first curb constructed along this Parkway section and the only curb that utilized stone quarried within the recreation area.This original native stone curb is in good condition.

Trail Sign- A routed wood trail system sign is located near the middle of the eastern parking bay. The sign is in good condition and is identical to others throughout the recreation area and the Parkway (Figure 3.151).



Figure 3.151: Trail sign and stone steps at Twelve O'clock Overlook (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Trash Receptacle Post- A precast concrete post used to mount a trash receptacle is located adjacent to the trail sign. This post is identical to the one located at Rock Castle Gorge Overlook (Figure 3.147).

Stone Steps- Several large, native stone steps are set into a gently sloping section of lawn south of the trail system sign (Figure 3.151). These steps are in fair condition, with some erosion occurring near the edge of each stone. The steps connect the Rocky Knob Recreation Area trail system to the overlook parking area.

Stone Headwall- A Parkway standard stone headwall is located adjacent to the parking area. This headwall surrounds a corrugated metal pipe and is in good condition (Figure 3.152).

Views and Vistas. The PLUMs show two maintained vistas at this overlook. Park staff currently maintains one view that consists of an opening in the woodland equal to the length of the eastern parking bay. This vista provides a view of Twelve O'clock Knob in the distance with Rock Castle Gorge in the foreground below (Figure 3.153). The remaining view was intended as part of the lodge development that never occurred. NPS has allowed this area to return to forest canopy.

Other Cultural Resources

Trail Shelter. A Prewar Planning and Construction Era log and stone trail shelter is located near the summit of Rocky Knob (Figure 3.154). A brief but steep fifteen-minute hike along the Rock Castle Gorge Trail permits access to this building, which has the distinction of being one of the first



Figure 3.152: Stone headwall at Twelve O'clock Overlook (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.154: Rocky Knob Trail Shelter (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.153: View from Twelve O'clock Overlook (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.155: Rocky Knob Pump House (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

buildings constructed on the Parkway. Designed in the rustic style that was prevalent during its era of Parkway construction, the form of the building is a variant of the traditional Adirondack shelter.[21] The ERA constructed the shelter in 1937. The shelter is a three-sided building with a side gabled roof of wood shake shingles. The open side of the building contains a low timber wall at handrail height. The southern elevation is constructed entirely of stacked stone and features a stacked flagstone fireplace. The NPS filled in the fireplace with flagstone and mortar and it is no longer operable. Integral wooden benches line the interior of the shelter, providing seating for users. The floor consists of large flagstone blocks and the ceiling rafters are intentionally exposed. A maintained vista of distant mountains and the piedmont is visible from the open side of the building. The NPS rehabilitated the shelter in 2010-2011. It is in good condition.

Pump House. The form of this rustic building was based on vernacular springhouses found on mountain farms throughout the Blue Ridge and many of its details are shared with Comfort Station #9 and the Trail Shelter, both of which were built around the same time.[22] The CCC completed construction of the Pump House in 1941. This simple wooden frame building sits atop a masonry foundation (Figure 3.155). The exterior walls are constructed of horizontal timber siding and the front gable is in-filled with flush mounted vertical wood boards. The original wood shake roof has been replaced with a Post-Mission 66 standing seam metal roof. Originally, each side of the pump house featured a single three-over-three awning window; however, these have been removed. Beneath the front gable is a flagstone porch bounded on three sides by a stacked stone wall. This detail is similar to the porches found at both entrances to Comfort Station #9. This building houses a pump, which serves the water system for the Rocky Knob Recreation Area. The pump house is located in an isolated portion of the recreation area accessible from the Parkway via an unimproved single lane service loop at Milepost 169.4. The building is not visible from the Parkway and is in good condition.

21 Firth, 1993, 122.

22 Firth, 1993, 123.

Trail Lodge Cabins.[23] Located at the southwestern edge of Rocky Knob Recreation Area, this collection of buildings is also referred to as the "Rough-it Camp" in many NPS planning documents. Intended to be the first in a chain of similar camps for organized young people along the Parkway, these buildings are seasonally operated as a short stay rental facility by an NPS concession. This area consists of six rental cabins, a communal bathhouse, a small pump house and an unoccupied cabin that predates the Parkway and the Trail Lodge Cabin development. The area is accessible from the Parkway from State Route 109, which ends at the entrance to the Trail Lodge Cabins after travelling through privately owned property for approximately three quarters of a mile. A stacked fieldstone entrance sign, metal gate and wooden snake fence demark the entrance to the cabin area. A single lane paved entrance road winds through a section of woodland before reaching a small clearing that contains the buildings and a one-way vehicular loop, which provides access to each individual cabin and its associated parking slip. The CCC built the cabins in 1941, and each features sawn log construction on concrete foundations with asphalt shingle roofs (Figure 3.156). Each cabin contains a mortared flagstone porch covered by a section of the roof overhang. The cabins were intentionally austere in appearance and function when first constructed, and remain so to this day, providing only the essentials to visitors.

Rock Castle Gorge Community.[24] According to current NPS interpretation of the site, the first settlers in the Rock Castle Gorge arrived before the American Revolution and came to the gorge to farm the steep hillsides. Inhabitants of the gorge tended apple orchards, and grew crops like sorghum, corn and buckwheat. The settlers also harvested chestnuts as a cash crop and raised hogs. Approximately 12 families were living here in the 1930s when NPS began purchasing the land for the development of Rocky Knob Recreation Area. At its peak, Rock Castle was home to over 30 families. Little evidence of the community remains in the landscape today, aside from the occasional stone chimney encountered along the recreation area's trail system, and the historic trace of Rock Castle Road, which makes up a significant portion of the Rock Castle Gorge Trail. A single privately owned home built in 1916, exists near the center of the gorge and is visible from the park trail system (Figure 3.157). Known as the Austin House, it is the only remaining home from the Rock Castle Gorge Community and the only privately owned parcel located within Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

Primitive Camping Area.[25] A small camping area containing approximately 10 campsites, is located within the Rock Castle Gorge, near the confluence of Rock Castle and Little Rock Castle Creeks. The site was used as a CCC Camp from 1937 to 1943 (Figure 3.158). The camp was designated NP-14 and was assigned to landscape development work along the Parkway, which included fine grading, gutter construction and the planting of trees, shrubs and groundcover material along the roadway.[26] Evidence of the use of this area as a CCC Camp persists in the landscape today in the form of concrete rubble and ruins. Each campsite is composed of a fire pit, a wooden bench, and a bear proof storage locker (Figure 3.159). The camping area landscape is attractive, with specimen trees dotted throughout a large flat space kept clear of underbrush by the NPS (Figure 3.160). A single portable toilet is located along the outer edge of the camping area. This amenity is screened on two sides by a wooden picket fence.

23 The Trail Lodge Cabins are a Rocky Knob Component Landscape. A detailed study of this site is not included in the scope of this Cultural Landscape Report.

24 The Rock Castle Community is a cultural resource within the Rocky Knob Recreation Area. A detailed study of this site is not included in the scope of this Cultural Landscape Report.

25 The Primitive Camping Area is a cultural resource within the Rocky Knob Recreation Area. A detailed study of this site is not included in the scope of this Cultural Landscape Report.

26 Quin 1997, 76.



Figure 3.156: Rocky Knob Trail Cabins (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.157: Austin House (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.158: CCC Camp in Rock Castle Gorge, 1938, Neg. #8611, Class. #728, Parkway Archives.



Figure 3.159: Typical campsite in Primitive Camping Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011).



Figure 3.160: Primitive Camping Area (The Jaeger Company, 2011).

Analysis and Evaluation

Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis and evaluation of the integrity and physical character of the historic landscape associated with Rocky Knob Recreation Area. The analysis and evaluation utilizes the methodology and criteria developed in the National Register of Historic Places and by the National Park Service. The evaluation of integrity compares the history of the site with its existing conditions, discussed in previous sections, to identify which landscape features retain their physical and historic integrity. Evaluation of a landscape feature is determined by that feature's continued ability to convey its historic significance and to be a contributing feature in the cultural landscape. The evaluation of a cultural landscape benefits from considering a landscape as a continuum through history. A cultural landscape is the accumulation of features, often over long periods, which individually or in combination contribute to the historic significance of the property. Appendix A includes photo comparisons of many resources, where historic photos are available through archives, and compares them to current photos to show changes over time.

To aid in this assessment, landscape features are categorized based on their contribution to our understanding of the historic character of the landscape during the period or periods of significance. These categories are:

- Contributing (C)
- Noncontributing (NC)
- Missing (M)
- Undetermined (U)

The process to identify landscape elements follows a National Park Service methodology that categorizes all landscape elements as one of 13 landscape characteristics:

A. Archeological Sites
B. Buildings and Structures
C. Circulation
D. Arrangement of Buildings
E. Constructed Water Features
F. Cultural Traditions
G. Land Use
H. Natural Systems and Features
I. Other
J. Small-Scale Features
K. Spatial Organization
L. Topography
M. Vegetation
N. Views and Vistas

National Register Status

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 authorized the creation of the National Register of Historic Places as the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. The National Park Service is responsible for maintaining the list and coordinating with public and private entities to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources. The National Park Service has developed criteria for evaluating historic resources to determine their eligibility for listing on the National Register. The National Register Criteria for Evaluation examines a property's age, integrity, and significance. To be considered historic, a property typically needs to be at least 50 years old. To possess integrity, a historic landscape needs to look the way it did in the past. The categories of integrity used to evaluate a property include: location, design, setting, material, workmanship, and feeling or association. The property must also be associated with historical events, activities, or developments

that were important in the past. The National Register evaluates a property's significance based on the following criteria:

A) Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
B) Association with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
C) Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
D) Yielding or potential to yield information in history or prehistory.

The NPS maintains the List of Classified Structures, which is an inventory of all historic and prehistoric structures having historical, architectural, or engineering significance. The list includes structures that individually met the criteria of the National Register or are contributing resources of sites and districts that meet National Register evaluation criteria. It also includes other structures that have been moved, reconstructed or created for commemoration, in addition to ones achieving significance within the last fifty years. Presently, the only historic property in the Blue Ridge Parkway that is individually listed in the National Register is the Brinegar Cabin, located at Doughton Park in Alleghany County, North Carolina. It was listed on January 20, 1972, under National Register criterion C. The cultural resources staff of the NPS Southeast Regional Office is currently updating the List of Classified Structures for the Parkway to include revised significance statements and recommendations for treatment and management of resources that contribute to a proposed parkway national historic landmark designation.[1]

1 United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service. "Blue Ridge Parkway Virginia and North Carolina Final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement." January 2013.

In June 1992, Ian J. W. Firth of the School of Environmental Design at the University of Georgia prepared a draft historic resource study and National Register nomination form for the Parkway. Firth proposed nominating the Parkway to the National Register as a historic district having national significance and developed a list of contributing resources for the potential district. In the 1992 Historic Resource Study, Firth recommended establishing the Blue Ridge Parkway's period of significance to cover the years 1935-42. Firth later extended the Parkway's period of significance to 1955 in his 2005 draft historic resource study and national historic landmark nomination. The final nomination likely will extend this period to include post-1955 resources that contribute to the exceptional significance of the Parkway.[2]

While comprehensive surveys and analyses have been completed for other Parkway sites and associated resources, this report is the first to examine the Rocky Knob Recreation Area cultural landscape. Thus, the Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR will enhance the various efforts toward designating the Parkway as a national historic landmark by shedding light on the creation, evolution, integrity, and significance of this distinct area within the Parkway.

Statement of Significance

Rocky Knob Recreation Area is situated along Section 1-S, from Milepost 165.3 to 169.2, of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The roadway and the Recreation Area are part of the Parkway system. The Parkway in its entirety is significant under Criteria A and C, according to the *Draft Historic Resource Study*,[3] commissioned to evaluate National Historic Landmark eligibility, which follows similar criteria to the National Register.

The Blue Ridge Parkway is significant under Criterion A, "because of its association with the history of American parkways—an important part

2 Ibid.

3 Firth, 2005.

of the American Parks movement and the history of transportation. It is the premier example of a national parkway designed for long distance motoring through rural scenery." The Parkway developed in several phases that were associated with events that made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of NPS and United States history. Beginning with the pre-war phase, associated with the public works program initiated under Roosevelt's New Deal that helped build many parks and roadways, and later followed by the post-war Mission 66 program that addressed recreational pressures on National Parks and facilitated the completion of the Parkway. Section 1-S, as well as Rocky Knob Recreation Area, were among the earliest developments of the parkway. In 1938, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) established their first camp along the Parkway at Rocky Knob.

The Blue Ridge Parkway meets Criterion C, "as an exceptionally important work of design in the fields of landscape architecture and civil engineering; as a combination of scenic road and linear park, it represents a fusion of modern engineering with scenic landscape design. It was a recreational project of unprecedented scale and complexity, focused on the needs of motorists, and it illustrates a high point in the history of American parkways. As the first long distance, scenic national parkway, the intention of the Parkway was to provide a model for others. Its design is particularly notable for presenting a sequence of carefully framed and composed pictures of the Southern Appalachians, in the spirit of the Regionalist Movement of the 1930s. After the Second World War, it became clear that there would be no national network of long distance, scenic parkways, but redoubled efforts to complete this Parkway as one of only two examples of its kind. Therefore the significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway arises from its role as the first long distance, scenic national parkway." The period of significance includes design styles that are representative of Pre-war and Construction, Resumption of Construction, and Mission 66.

Period of Significance (1937-1962)[4]

The following periods have been determined for the development of the Rocky Knob Recreation Area:

- Prewar Planning and Construction (1933-1941)
- The War Years (1942-1945)
- Resumption of Construction (1946-1955)
- 'Mission 66' (1956-1966)
- Post 'Mission 66' (1967-present)

The NPS began construction of the Parkway in 1935, suspended progress briefly during World War II, and completed all sections of the roadway by 1987. Planning for Section 1-S of the Parkway began in July 1935 and construction began later in March of 1936. The work was complete by November 1937. A December 1934 master plan for the Parkway developed a list of 13 potential recreation areas, including Rocky Knob. The NPS approved the master plan and constructed the campground as the final component to the Rocky Knob Recreation Area in 1962.

The period of significance for the Rocky Knob Recreation Area has been determined to be 1937-1962 based on the completion of this portion of the Parkway, Section 1-S in 1937 and the completion of the final component landscape of the recreation area in 1962.

Contributing Landscape Characteristics and Features

This section evaluates the physical integrity of existing landscape characteristics and features by comparing the historic condition of features dating to the proposed period of significance (1937-1962) with the current condition of these features. Evaluation of integrity is based on the ability of the features to convey the historic significance of the property as defined in the Statement of Significance. Each feature is classified as either contributing or non-contributing to the over-all historic significance.

4 This period of significance is for Rocky Knob, and not for the Parkway as a whole.

In order to determine whether a landscape feature contributes to the historic significance of the landscape, this chapter compares the existing conditions of landscape features to its understood historic character. The object of this analysis and evaluation is to identify the specific features associated with the historic periods and assess to what degree they continue to convey their historic significance. An analysis and evaluation table at the end of this document compares existing conditions to historic scenes (Appendix B). To aid in this assessment, landscape features are categorized based on their contribution to our understanding of the historic character of the landscape during the period or periods of significance. These categories are:

- Contributing
- Noncontributing
- Missing
- Undetermined

Contributing landscape features survive from the periods of significance and continue to reflect their historic appearance and function. Non-contributing landscape features include those added to the site since the periods of significance or that no longer retain enough physical integrity to convey their historic appearance or function. Missing features existed during the period of significance but have been removed, destroyed, or cannot be recognized in their current condition. Undetermined includes features whose age cannot be determined or whose contribution to the historic landscape is unknown. Please refer to the table in Appendix B: Cultural Resource Evaluation chart, for a summary of this information.

Natural Systems and Features

Topography and Hydrology

These are the most important natural systems influencing the initial development of the Parkway, Section 1-S, and Rocky Knob Recreation Area. This section of the Parkway is consistently above 3,000 feet in elevation. The elevations ascend to surrounding knobs and descend to Rock Castle Creek and Rock Castle Gorge. The NPS landscape architects and engineers artfully designed the roadway to capitalize on the various aspects of the rolling topography. The design of the road took advantage of close-range and distant views, from bottom land creeks, panoramic pastures, to overlook vistas. The design around these natural features in Rocky Knob Recreation Area is in keeping with the aesthetics of naturalistic landscape design of the Parkway.

The natural topography and hydrology of Rocky Knob Recreation Area are largely unchanged from the initial development of the Parkway period and continue to retain integrity as a contributing aspect of the historic landscape.

Geomorphology and Geology

The geology of Rocky Knob Recreation Area contributes to the historic character of the property because of the use of local stone in the construction of steps, curbs, headwalls, drinking fountains, grills, fireplaces, retaining walls and roads. These natural formations also appear as roadside boulders and outcroppings. The geology of the recreation area is a contributing feature that retains historic integrity.

Soils

Similar to the geology, the high concentration of stone and rock outcroppings contribute to the historic character of the property through use of the native stone and the general aesthetic of the natural stone left in place. The soil composition also affects plant species and ecology of the site, which in turn affects the character and aesthetic quality of the area. The soil composition of the recreation area is a contributing feature that retains historic integrity.

Vegetation

The natural vegetation of Rocky Knob Recreation Area has evolved and matured since the period of significance. The forested areas and meadows remain in their original locations; however, the management lines have shifted in lands with agricultural leases. Encroachment of surrounding vegetation and changes in maintenance has reduced some mown or grazed areas, thus affecting the view shed. The primary view of the reduced agricultural lease areas is from the trail systems. The American chestnut (*Castanea dentate*) trees, once the climax species in the local woodland, suffered blight thus affecting the composition of the forests. Other hardwood trees replaced the

chestnut trees through natural processes. Human activity has introduced a few invasive species of vines and understory plantings, in what appears to be a natural way, within the recreation area.

Rocky Knob Campground. The vegetative character of the Campground as planned on the PLUMs remains largely intact. Winter storms have damaged some trees in the campground. Damage from an ice storm in 2010 has resulted in an overall thinning of the forested areas. The ice storm decimated an experimental Chinese chestnut (*Castanea mollissima*) orchard, planted in the 1940s in the campground area. Plantings around the comfort stations consist of mature mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) and appear to be original based on location and apparent age. The vegetation in the Campground is a contributing resource and maintains a moderate degree of integrity.

Rocky Knob Maintenance Area. The general landscape aesthetic of the Maintenance Area is one of open rolling hills with a concentration of development. This vegetative character is in keeping with landscape plans for this area included on the PLUMs. A few strategic shrubs planned around building foundations are in place, while others are in decline or missing. There are some strategic ornamental trees as well, however a few are missing near the employee residence. The vegetation that appears on the PLUMs and remains in the landscape contributes to the historic significance. Because some planned vegetation is missing, the degree of integrity is somewhat compromised.

Rocky Knob Picnic Area. The vegetative character of the shady hardwood grove dominating the Picnic Area remains as intended on the PLUMs. The surrounding forest has filled in as intended by the PLUMs. Original ornamental shrub plantings exist at both comfort stations. Original specimen trees exist in the open field near the Picnic Pavilion, however some are missing. The vegetation that appears on the PLUMs and remains in the landscape contributes to the historic significance. Some planned vegetation is missing, but overall the degree of integrity is good.

Rocky Knob Gas Station. The vegetation immediately surrounding the Gas Station generally remains as intended on the PLUMs as mown turf with specimen trees. A specimen tree of unknown species, likely a red maple *(Acer rubrum),* in landscape the median in front of Gas Station died sometime Post-Mission 66, according to aerial photographs. Several ornamental trees that appear on the PLUMs, such as a table mountain pine (*Pinus pungens*), a red oak (*Quercus borealis* / *Quercus rubra*), dogwoods, and rhododendrons are missing. The vegetation that appears on the PLUMs and remains in the landscape contributes to the historic significance. Some planned vegetation is missing thus compromising the integrity.

Parkway Section 1-S. Individual trees along the Parkway are not labeled on the PLUMs; however, the design intent is indicated on the PLUMs as 'open' or 'wooded' and locations of specimen trees are shown. 'Wooded' areas are comprised of mature hardwoods and evergreens in the overstory and dense stands of shrub bays in the understory. The general species composition appears to be intact according to plant lists included on the PLUMs. These plantings are contributing resources that retain a high degree of historic integrity.

Parkway Overlooks. The landscape character in these areas generally consists of an open clearing planted with lawn and dotted with a few specimen trees. In comparing the PLUMs to the existing conditions, the extent of maintained area seems to have reduced over time. Overall, the intended plantings are intact and contribute to a high degree of historic integrity.

Cultural Features

Land Use

Passive recreation, tourism, interpretation, agriculture and utilitarian are the primary land uses associated with the period of significance of Rocky Knob. While these land uses have shifted in their degree of use, they all remain the primary land uses of the Rocky Knob Recreation Area today. There has been a shift in camping activity in that the volume of visitors that overnight in the park has lessened, but there is more of a focus on day-use recreation of the park, such as hiking, picnicking and interest in interpretive programs. Tent camping has decreased in recent years; while a concomitant rise in RV camping has been witnessed. In terms of

the individual components of the recreation area: the Campground, the Maintenance Area, the Picnic Area, and the Overlooks and Parkway associated with Section 1-S, these areas all retain their original land uses. Grazing animals have changed in agricultural lands from sheep to cattle. Because the original land uses of the recreation area remain intact, they remain a contributing aspect of the historic landscape with a high degree of integrity.

Buildings and Structures

Three eras of buildings in the Rocky Knob Recreation Area represent three overall styles: Pre-War Planning and Construction rustic/vernacular from 1933-1941; Resumption of Construction variation on vernacular forms from 1946-1955; and Mission 66 modern/utilitarian from 1956-1966.

Buildings dating to Pre-War Planning and Construction were "an adaptation of the general forms, lines, and materials of the local sheds, barns, and dwellings which adapt remarkably well to Parkway needs."[5] Early Parkway designers, such as Stanley Abbott, felt "that the recall of pioneer building methods in the Parkway structures is one of the principal opportunities … to preserve something of the backwoods feeling that otherwise may disappear from the mountains."[6]

While the design of new park buildings during Resumption of Construction continued to reflect vernacular forms, Parkway designers adopted a new attitude when selecting materials and employing pioneer building techniques. Influenced by maintenance and fire hazard considerations, their designs "called for permanence and maintenance-free construction."[7] In 1950, Demaray, who was about to become Director of the NPS, gave his approval to this modified rustic architectural style. He wrote

> "We have no wish to ape the native structures exactly in our buildings but merely to use similar roof pitches and shapes, building material combinations, and other characteristics well known to all which make these buildings fit into the Blue Ridge Mountain country in a very satisfactory manner. It should be a relatively simple matter for a good designer to produce a combination of the right mass and materials to suggest the mountain type of architecture even with more modern materials than were generally used in these buildings."[8]

Another shift in attitude towards the architecture along the Parkway occurred with the advent of Mission 66. Due to a strong emphasis on cost savings, Parkway architects paid close attention to construction costs and recommended the use of modern materials and standardized layouts for buildings.[9] Parkway Superintendent Sam Weems continued to favor the established modified rustic style. He was, however, often at odds with the newly established NPS Eastern Office of Design and Construction in Philadelphia, which preferred a more modern, universal, and utilitarian approach to new buildings. For the most part Weems preferences prevailed and Parkway architects adapted standardized building plans with rustic vernacular touches, such as board and batten siding. Nevertheless, many Parkway buildings exhibited a more modern and utilitarian appearance during this period.

Rocky Knob Campground. The four buildings within the Campground are comfort stations built in 1962. These buildings reflect the utilitarian Mission 66-style and are common throughout the Parkway. Some alterations have occurred to the comfort stations Post-Mission 66. For example, NPS staff altered the exterior materials by adding a thin wood veneer over the original concrete block walls, as well as painting over the stained board and batten upper portion of the exterior. The architectural style and craftsmanship of these buildings remain intact. The buildings retain their original doors, roofs and ridge caps. The buildings are significant contributing resources to Rocky Knob Recreation Area. The buildings retain a moderate to high degree of integrity, as their exterior modifications are reversible.

The Campground also contains a registration kiosk (Figure 4.01). While the exact date of this structure is unknown, NPS added it sometime

5 Firth, 2005, 206.

6 Ibid, 203.

7 Firth, 1993, 128.

8 Firth, 2005, 263-264.

9 Sam P. Weems to Chief, EODC, "Comfort Station Design and Cost – Blue Ridge Parkway," 17 August 1959, National Archives (Philadelphia), RG 79, Entry 409, Box 9, Folder BRP 1958 – 1960.

Post-Mission 66. Despite being of more recent construction, its wooden materials and rustic craftsmanship, particularly its wooden shake roof, recall the feeling of early Parkway designs. The kiosk is a Post-Mission 66 Parkway standard and a similar structure exists at Doughton Park.[10] The registration kiosk at the Rocky Knob Campground is noncontributing. A c. 1971 photograph reveals a registration kiosk of different design and craftsmanship in the location of the current one (Figure 4.02). While this earlier kiosk originated in 1968, its date of removal is unknown.

Rocky Knob Maintenance Area. This area contains multiple utilitarian buildings and structures in a cluster arrangement. Many of these date to the early 1940s during Pre-War Planning and Construction and underwent remodeling in 1952 during Resumption of Construction. It is undetermined to what extent the buildings and structures were altered in 1952. Post-Mission 66 alterations, however, include covering the concrete block exterior walls with plywood siding, replacing metal roofs with shingles and replacing original doors and windows as needed. Others alterations consisted of adding ramps and porches to facilitate access to some buildings. Still, the general architectural form of the buildings and structures remains. While the function and setting are mostly unchanged, the material changes affect the overall feeling. For example, the earlier painted white cinder block gives a much different visual effect than the current multi-colored siding. This can be seen in comparative photos of the Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86 (Figures 4.03 and 4.04), the Office and Tool Storage Building #4 (Figures 4.05 and 4.06), and the Oil and Paint Storage Building #5 (Figures 4.07 and 4.08). The buildings retain a moderate to high degree of integrity because most of the modifications are reversible.

Several other buildings in the Maintenance Area, however, have undergone significant alterations and thus retain a lower degree of integrity. For example, NPS staff constructed the Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3 (Figures 4.09 and 4.10) in 1940 during Pre-War Planning and Construction. They expanded the building in 1952 during Resumption of Construction with an addition centered between it and the Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building #2, which dates to 1940. In 2000, the NPS built a roof onto the addition that seamlessly connected with the roofs of Buildings #2 and #3. This changed the overall feeling, as the previously separated buildings became one entity. The buildings also have undergone exterior alterations similar to other buildings in the Maintenance Area, with plywood siding covering the concrete block exterior walls, metal roofs replacing shingles and newer doors and windows replacing originals. Many of these changes, however, are reversible and the underlying architecture of the buildings remains. The Post-Mission 66 roof alteration diminishes the overall integrity of the buildings. They retain greater integrity for the Resumption of Construction period than the Pre-War Planning and Construction. They are in good condition and are contributing features.

NPS built Employee Residences #7 and #8 at the End of Pre-War Planning and Construction. Unfortunately, no pictures exist of the original buildings in 1941. Historic documents, such as memorandums, explain how NPS designers carefully patterned the Employee Residences after local precedents. The documents also provide justifications for many of their decisions about the overall designs, floor plans, and details. Around the same time, the NPS also constructed employee residences at Doughton Park. The difference in the designs at Rocky Knob and Doughton indicates how the NPS had not yet standardized residences. Consequently, the original design for employee residences at Rocky Knob was fairly site specific, with many elements handcrafted by CCC workers.

Early Parkway designers intended for a garage to serve Employee Residences #7 and #8, but World War II prevented its construction. The NPS revisited the garage idea for this area in 1949. A preliminary plan indicates a shared employee garage building adjacent to the parking area that reflected the rustic feeling applied to Employee Residences #7 and #8 and other buildings throughout the Parkway. In the 1949 plan, the garage architecture resembled that of a rustic, vernacular barn (Illustration 2.19). Additional plans from later in 1949, however, indicate a drastic shift in thinking. For example, the latter plans called for asbestos siding and roofing materials to replace wood shake roofs and drop

10 A similar structure also existed at Otter Creek, but the NPS recently replaced it with a large concrete building.



Figure 4.01: Campground entrance, note the Post-Mission 66 kiosk on the left, 2011



Figure 4.02: Campground entrance, c.1971



Figure 4.03: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86, 2011



Figure 4.04: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86, c. 1953



Figure 4.05: Office and Tool Storage Building #4, note veneer applied to building exterior, change in roof material, and contemporary wooden ramp, 2011

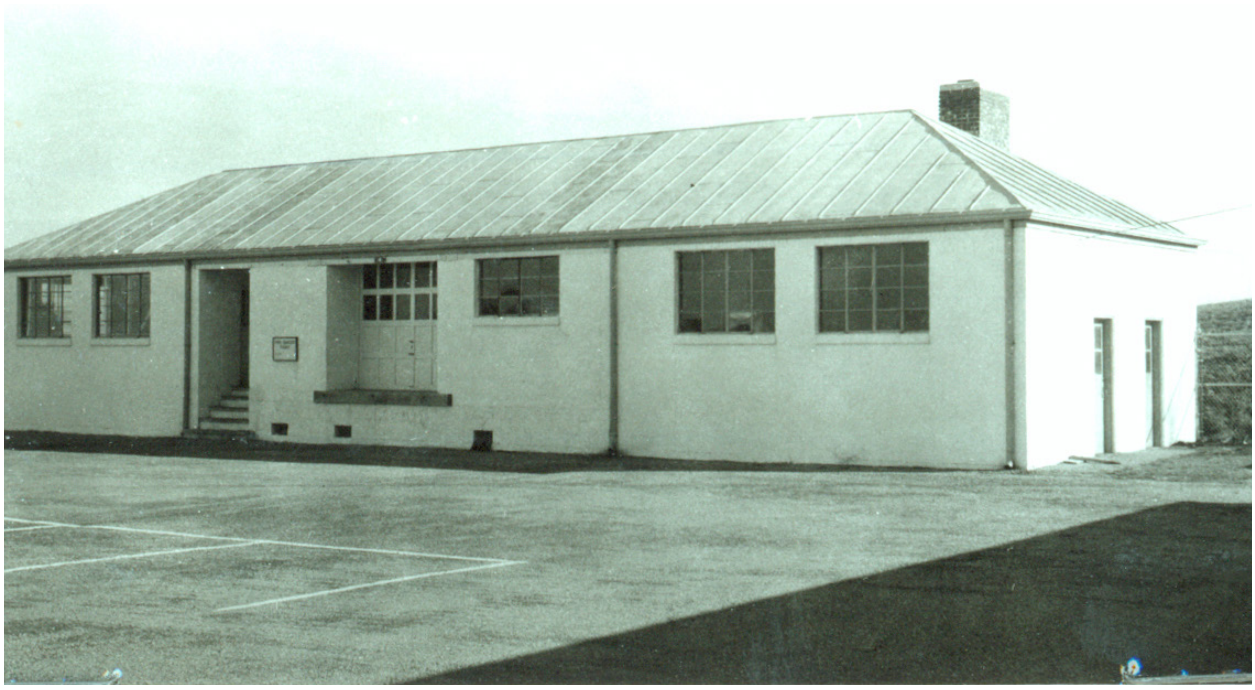


Figure 4.06: Office and Tool Storage Building #4, c. 1952



Figure 4.07: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5, 2011



Figure 4.08: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5, c. 1952



Figure 4.09: Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3, note building veneer, replacement garage doors, and closed in addition at left in photograph, 2011



Figure 4.10: Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3, c.1952

siding on the employee residences. The plans also called for garages attached to the employee residences, also constructed of newer materials. This significantly changed the delicate pedestrian circulation patterns early Parkway designers intended to connect the shared parking space with the Employee Residences. The attached garages also affected the interior flow of the original floor plans as plans called for the conversion of the back porch into a breezeway between the garage and residence. Designers further modified the floor plans by converting the back porches to closed-in dining rooms and the old dining room into a bedroom. The NPS followed these latter plans when remodeling the employee residences in 1950, during Resumption of Construction, perhaps to better suit the needs of the residents.

Today the buildings remain mostly unchanged since their Resumption of Construction remodeling (Figures 4.11 and 4.12). Minor changes Post-Mission 66 include the addition of porches and stairs, while previous shrub plantings are missing. Integrity of the Employee Residences in comparison to Pre-War Planning and Construction has greatly diminished. Because the alterations on these buildings occurred during Resumption of Construction, they are part of the evolution of the structures. They are in good condition, retain a high degree of integrity in comparison to the Resumption of Construction period, and, therefore, are contributing features. The employee residences, however, retain a low degree of integrity with respect to Pre-War Planning and Construction, which perhaps is the period for which they are most significant.

The Maintenance Area contains several Post-Mission 66 buildings. These include Building #878 (exact date unknown), Maintenance Area Fuel Station Building #965 (exact date unknown), a District Office Trailer (1996), and a Seasonal Trailer (2005). Overall, these buildings exhibit the general aesthetic of the other maintenance buildings with plywood siding on the exterior walls and asphalt shingles on the roof. While these buildings are in good condition, they are noncontributing. In addition, it is unknown as to what period Building #346 and the Utility Shed date.

In the Maintenance Area, NPS workers constructed Incinerator #147 out of simple brick to burn waste in 1941. The NPS probably removed the structure sometime Post-Mission 66. It remains missing from the landscape today.

Post-Mission 66, NPS staff demolished radio Substation and Antennae Tower #6, which originated in the 1940s. The foundation remains as a ruin in the landscape.

Rocky Knob Picnic Area. The comfort stations in the Picnic Area were developed over two different periods. Comfort Station #9, was built in 1941 during Pre-War Planning and Construction in the rustic vernacular style. The Post-Mission 66 period included opening the once enclosed breezeway and the change from a wooden shake roof to asphalt (Figures 4.13 and 4.14). These alterations are easily reversible and do not threaten the underlying structure. Overall, the building is in good condition and is an excellent example of early Parkway construction based on vernacular architectural forms. The building retains a moderate to high degree of integrity because its location, setting, and overall feeling are largely unchanged.

Comfort station # 84, on the other hand, dates to Mission 66. Post-Mission 66, the structure underwent modifications similar to the comfort stations in the Campground, which included adding a thin wood veneer over the original concrete block walls (Figures 4.15 and 4.16). This material change only slightly diminishes the integrity as it is reversible and the underlying structure remains. In addition, the location, setting, and overall feeling are largely unchanged. This building contributes to the historic integrity of Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

Picnic Pavilion #964 was constructed in 1977. It is in good condition. Because the building originated Post-Mission 66, it is noncontributing. While it is newer structure, its style reflects the rustic vernacular aesthetic characteristic of older buildings throughout the Parkway.

Rocky Knob Gas Station. Buildings along the Parkway include Gas Station Building #82 and two small wooden buildings. The Gas Station, completed in 1949 during Resumption of Construction, was a simple rustic vernacular



Figure 4.11: Employee Residences, note mature specimen tree, lack of picket fence, missing shrub plantings, and the contemporary deck on side elevation, 2011

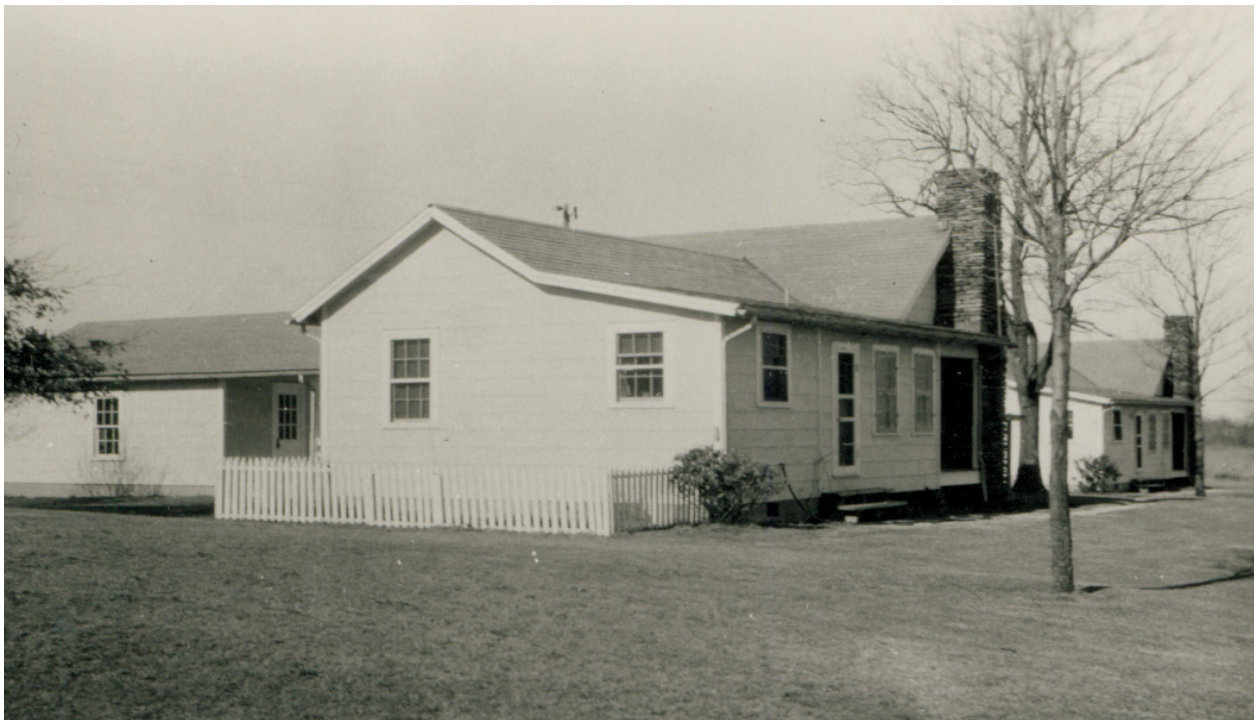


Figure 4.12: Employee Residences, c. 1952



Figure 4.13: Comfort Station #9 in Picnic Area, note many mature tree plantings, 2011



Figure 4.14: Comfort Station #9 in Picnic Area, c.1940s



Figure 4.15: Comfort Station #84 in picnic area, note exterior cladding on building, 2011



Figure 4.16: Comfort Station #84 in picnic area, c.1960

design, in keeping with the general aesthetic of the Parkway and the region. The Gas Station is a prime example of the post-war shift in the architecture along the Parkway within Rocky Knob. For example, the Gas Station shares a roofline and porch overhang with the Pump House the CCC built eight years earlier. The Gas Station, however, abandons the rustic timber construction and wooden shakes of the Pump House in favor of more modern materials. Construction plans for the building called for the use of the new shingle type as well as other new construction materials, including concrete block walls faced with vertical board and batten. Such materials were durable and easier to maintain while continuing the established rustic aesthetic for architecture along the Parkway. It is worth noting that Gas Station Building #82 at Rocky Knob is similar in design to the gas station at Crabtree Meadows, which dates to 1950. As Parkway designers moved towards standardization of buildings and features throughout the Parkway, they likely modeled the plan for the gas station at Crabtree Meadows after the one at Rocky Knob.

While the original windows, doors, and stone chimney remain, some notable alterations have occurred to the Gas Station at Rocky Knob Post-Mission 66 (Figures 4.17 and 4.18). For example, NPS staff has replaced the original cement shingle roof with asphalt shingle and removed the two original gas pumps that stood at the edge of the gabled roof overhang. Accordingly, the function of the building has shifted as NPS staff predominantly uses it as an information station. An intangible aspect has been lost with this change in function, as the smell of gas no longer permeates the air around the Gas Station and the bustle of attendants pumping gas for travelers is no longer experienced. The feeling also has changed as NPS staff has placed wooden planters around the overhang to prevent vehicles from driving beneath the structure as originally intended. The changes in function, materials, and feeling slightly diminish the integrity of the Gas Station, which contributes greatly to the historic integrity of the Rocky Knob Recreation Area and the historic significance of the Parkway.

The two small wooden buildings that exist near the Gas Station are associated with concessions. They likely date to the 1940s and no alterations are evident. Due to their deteriorating condition, they retain a low to moderate degree of integrity. They are contributing features.

Parkway Section 1-S. The trail shelter, built in 1937, during Pre-War Planning and Construction, was rehabilitated in 2010-2011 by the NPS. Original plans, measured drawings and historic photos guided the shelter's rehabilitation. The original shelter, dating to 1937, was one of the first structures built along the Parkway. Thus, the rehabilitated shelter holds historic significance and interpretive importance. It is in good condition and is a contributing resource.

The pump house, built in 1941 by the CCC, exhibits similar details and construction as the Gas Station. Designers likely derived its form from vernacular springhouses found on mountain farms throughout the Blue Ridge Parkway. Post-Mission 66 alterations to this building include a change in roof material from wood shake to metal and windows added to the side (Figures 4.19-4.20). Early Parkway designers did not intend for this structure to be visible by most visitors and it remains hidden from the view. Structures like this one illustrate the level of thought, care, and detail early Parkway designers placed on every feature built along the Parkway, even those that were to be located of view of the public. The pump house is in good condition and contributes greatly to the overall historic integrity of Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

In addition to the trail shelter and pump house, Parkway Section 1-S contains Trail Lodge Cabins. The area consists of six rental cabins, a communal bathhouse, a small pump house and an unoccupied cabin that predates the Parkway. The CCC built the Trail Lodge Cabins in 1941. Each building features sawn log construction on concrete foundations with asphalt shingle roofs. Each cabin contains a mortared flagstone porch covered by a section of the roof overhang. The cabins were intentionally austere in appearance and function when first constructed, and remain so to this day. Although outside of the scope of this project, the Trail Lodge Cabins are perhaps the most important cultural resource located within the Rocky Knob Recreation Area because of their unique history.

Parkway Overlooks. There are no buildings or structures located within the overlook areas.



Figure 4.17: Rocky Knob Gas Station, note original specimen tree at left and planting bed, parking area, and median alterations, 2011



Figure 4.18: Rocky Knob Gas Station, note planting bed and parking area, c.1952



Figure 4.19: Pump house in Rocky Knob, 2011



Figure 4.20: Pump house in Rocky Knob, 1952

Small Scale Features

Rocky Knob Campground. Prior to Mission 66, the NPS dedicated the Rocky Knob Picnic Area to both camping and picnicking activities. By 1959, Superintendent Sam Weems realized that the area had become overcrowded and there was a conflict of interests so he suggested separating the two uses of the site. Accordingly, Weems submitted a revised master plan for Rocky Knob that called for the construction of a new campground. The NPS approved the proposal and the Parkway opened a new Campground in 1962 during Mission 66. The Campground has undergone various modifications Post-Mission 66. The small-scale features that exist in the Campground include a registration sign, firewood crib, campfire circle, stone curb, stairs, drinking fountains, drainage structures, entrance gates, signage, grills, picnic tables, tent pads, lantern poles, and a sanitary dump station.

Campground Registration Sign- The large registration sign has undergone slight alterations since its origination date in 1962, during Mission 66 (Figures 4.21 and 4.22). For example, NPS staff added lighting to both sides of the sign Post-Mission 66. In addition, a metal box replaced a wooden registration box that previously existed on the right side of the sign. The replacement box is located on the left side of the registration sign and is painted a shade of brown that blends with the wooden sign. Overall, these alterations are minor in scale and do not affect the rustic character of this feature intended by Parkway designers. For example, hand-split shakes on the roof remain a predominant element. In addition, the sign retains its original font and map. The feature is in good condition, has a high degree of integrity and is contributing.

Firewood Crib- NPS staff erected a firewood crib at the campground entrance in 1962 during Mission 66. They replaced this original firewood crib sometime Post-Mission 66. Historical photographs confirm that the materials, form, and size of the present crib are similar to the original (Figures 4.23 and 4.24). The design, however, differs as wooden legs elevated the original slightly above the ground. In addition, the front of the original crib was open while the current one has locked doors. Accordingly, this variation in design alters the feeling of the firewood crib, as a sign on the front of the original crib suggests a time when visitors respected the honor system. While the function, setting, and location of the replacement fire crib remain the same, it is noncontributing. It is in good condition.

Campfire Circle- The NPS installed the campfire circle with other elements of the Campground during Mission 66. The campfire circle retains its historic use as an interpretive space for ranger-led talks. Post-Mission 66, the design of the campfire circle has remained mostly unchanged, consisting of simple wooden seat slats mounted atop precast concrete bases arranged in a semicircular, amphitheater form. This craftsmanship and design appears to be a Parkway standard from Mission 66 as a similar campfire circle exists at Doughton Park and standardized plans exist in the Parkway Archives. Presently, some elements of the campfire circle at Rocky Knob Recreational Area are not original. For example, a 1960s plan from the Rocky Knob Maintenance Area flat file shows a detail for a fire pit constructed of stone. This documentation suggests NPS staff originally built the feature of native materials. Today, the fire pit is a Post-Mission 66 metal replacement. NPS staff also has modified other elements of the campfire circle, such as the amphitheater, where they have replaced wooden seat slats in kind. The location, setting, and feeling of the campfire circle mostly have stayed the same, with a countryside vista maintained as the backdrop. Although the campfire circle is in fair condition, it retains a high degree of integrity with minor alterations Post-Mission 66. Overall, the campfire circle is a contributing resource.

Stone Curb- Original split-face stone curb lines all of the parking slips within the Campground and dates to Mission 66. The material is “Rocky Knob Black Stone,” a type of slate used at other Parkway overlooks, and recreation areas including Otter Creek. The NPS obtained “Rocky Knob Black Stone” slate from a nearby quarry in Franklin, Virginia. They used this type of slate to replace the native stone they had quarried within the park during the 1930s. They only were able to use the native stone at the Twelve O’clock Overlook because the source ran out. Some sections of the “Rocky Knob Black Stone” slate in the Campground are missing and others need resetting. The slate curb is a contributing resource as it reflects early Parkway designers’ intents for the materials to complement the native landscape.



Figure 4.21: Campground registration sign, note the registration card box has moved to the bottom left of the feature, Post-Mission 66 lighting has been added to it, and a metal sign with registration instructions now exists its left, 2011

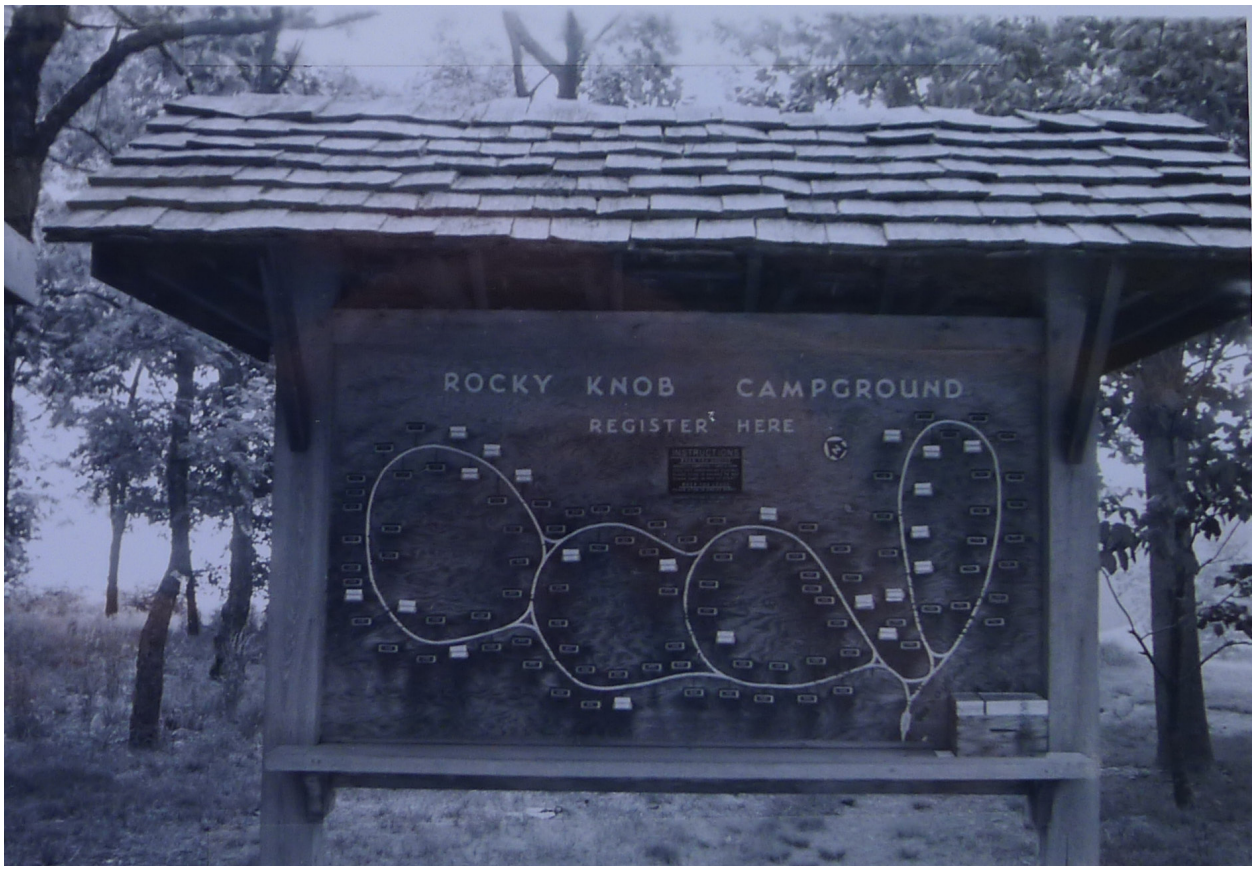


Figure 4.22: Campground registration sign c.1971



Figure 4.23: Campground entrance, firewood crib, and sanitary dump station, note original curb still in place, 2011



Figure 4.24: Campground entrance, firewood crib, and sanitary dump station c.1971

Steps- NPS staff added stone steps to many of the campsites during Mission 66, as part of the original design of the campground. The material recalls the stone curbing that appears throughout the campground. The stairs are in various states of repair, but most are intact. The steps exude a rustic, vernacular feeling intended by early Parkway designers and thus retain a high degree of integrity. They are contributing resources. In addition to the stone steps, NPS staff later constructed a single set of wooden steps to campsite A-20 Post-Mission 66. The wooden steps are noncontributing because of its stark difference in material, craftsmanship, and feeling compared to the stone. Their conditions vary from good to fair.

Drinking Fountains- Three fountains are original stone Parkway drinking fountains that date to Mission 66; four fountains are Post-Mission 66 replacements; and five additional Mission 66 stone fountains no longer exist. The Mission 66 fountains are contributing resources as they retain their original materials and rustic craftsmanship of stacked native stone set on mortared stone bases. The Post-Mission 66 replacements, however, differ greatly in material and craftsmanship. Although they are in good condition, they are not contributing.

Drainage Structures- Stone culverts and headwalls exist throughout the campground and date to Mission 66. The type of stone matches the other stone used throughout the campground for curbing, drinking fountains, and steps. The drainage structures are intact, in good condition, and contributing.

Entrance Gates- The gates are original Parkway standard gates from Mission 66. NPS staff, however, have repaired or replaced portions as needed over time (Figures 4.25 and 4.26). Because the gates have undergone only minor material alterations and are in good condition, they retain a high degree of integrity and are contributing.

Signage- Various types of signs exist in the Rocky Knob Campground and direct visitors to specific points, such as the campground, ranger offices, registration, and trail systems.

A large wooden entrance sign with painted lettering originated during Mission 66 and existed on the left hand side of the drive before the entrance gates. The sign marked the direction toward the campground, in addition to the maintenance and ranger offices. NPS staff replaced the sign sometime Post-Mission 66. The replacement sign only directs visitors toward the maintenance shop and ranger office. Although the location and setting remain similar, the new sign exhibits distinct changes in design, craftsmanship, and materials. For example, it appears much smaller and its shape is narrower than the original. In addition, NPS staff constructed the sign from painted metal rather than wood (Figures 4.25 and 4.26). The new sign reflects a more recent NPS standard applied to many of their parks. Because the original sign from 1962 remains absent from the landscape and its replacement occurred Post-Mission 66, this feature is noncontributing.

Beyond the entrance gates, a small wooden registration sign, dating to 1962, existed beside the registration kiosk. Another sign replaced it sometime Post-Mission 66 (Figures 4.01 and 4.02). The replacement is similar in size but slightly different in content and material. It is a noncontributing feature. A historical photograph (Figure 4.02) indicates two additional signs, including one that denoted the speed limit, once existed near the registration sign. NPS staff replaced these Post-Mission 66 signs with different types (Figure 4.01). In addition, a new sign exists between the registration kiosk and the large registration sign (Figures 4.21 and 4.22). It provides instructions regarding how to register. The instructions originally were located centrally on the large registration sign, beneath the title. While the new sign is in good condition, it is noncontributing.

Presently, a trail sign of recycled plastic exists in the campground area and informs visitors of the "Rocky Knob Trail System." This type of map is a recent Parkway standard and often appears at access points within each park. A similar example at the Rocky Knob Recreational Area exists at the 12 O'clock Overlook. It is likely that the recycled plastic sign at the campground replaced a routed wooden sign dating from 1962; photo documentation confirms wooden originals at other access points throughout the park. The material change from routed wood to smooth plastic gives a less rustic feeling than intended by early Parkway designers. The plastic material indicates a loss of integrity and makes the sign a noncontributing



Figure 4.25: Campground entrance, note modern replacement sign and contemporary kiosk, 2011



Figure 4.26: Campground entrance, c.1971

feature. The plan duplicated on the sign, however, dates to the 1940s, is in good condition and contributes to the historical significance of the property.

Historical photographs show two wooden signs located beside a sanitary dump station that likely originated in 1962. NPS staff removed these wooden signs Post-Mission 66. Today, a tall, painted metal sign exists to the right of the sanitary dump station (Figures 4.27 and 4.28). This type of sign reflects a more recent NPS standard used throughout its parks. The new sign is noncontributing.

In 1962, NPS staff painted campsite numbers in white on corresponding parking slips. Many have faded and become less visible Post-Mission 66. Accordingly, NPS staff has placed vertical markers made of recycled plastic to mark campsites rather than repainting the numbers. Although these markers are the most prevalent type of sign within the campground, they are noncontributing features that diminish the integrity of the campground. Aside from the differences in material, craftsmanship and location, the strong vertical markers give a very different visual feeling than the original markers simply painted on the ground.

Additional signs exist throughout the campground. Some of these, such as the campground host sign constructed from routed wood appears original from Mission 66. Others, such as the campfire circle sign are Post-Mission 66 replacements constructed from recycled plastic. The font, colors, shape, and size of the recycled plastic signs make them appear similar to the original wooden ones. Upon closer inspection, however, the difference in material changes the overall feeling of the signs. For example, the recycled plastic signs will weather in a different manner than the wood. This seemingly minor detail is important to consider when determining integrity as early Parkway designers, such as Abbott, intended for signs to weather naturally. Thus, the routed wooden signs dating from 1962 are contributing features whereas their recycled plastic replacements are not.

Throughout the Rocky Knob Campground, the change in materials and craftsmanship of the signage individually does not diminish a great amount of integrity. The sum of these altered features, however, amounts to a greater loss of integrity throughout the Rocky Knob Recreational Area.

Campsites- Multiple campsites that originated during Mission 66 exist in the Rocky Knob Campground. They are comprised of four small-scale features, including grills, picnic tables, tent pads, and lantern poles. All campsites are intact with the exception of one lost in 1967 due to construction of the Sanitary Dump Station.

Grills- Presently, several different grill configurations exist around the campsites. Grills dating to Mission 66 were square with slats and had a continuous metal griddle surface to accommodate a variety of cooking methods. Post-Mission 66, NPS staff replaced some of the original grills with ones ordered from contemporary catalogs. In some instances, original concrete bases are deteriorating or absent. Replacement grills are circular-shaped and only slightly larger than the original square-shaped ones. Mission 66 grills are contributing, while the Post-Mission 66 replacements are not.

Picnic Tables- Existing picnic tables around the campsites are Post-Mission 66 Parkway standard replacements dating to the 1990s. NPS staff has painted the wooden tabletops a reddish-brown color, and the metal bases are off-white. Although most of the picnic tables are in good condition, many would benefit from repainting. The current picnic tables likely replaced earlier ones that originated during Mission 66. Although the design and craftsmanship of the original Mission 66 picnic tables in this area is unknown, it is likely they were similar to the concrete and stone ones NPS staff added to the Campground in 1953. Although the current picnic tables are in good condition, they are noncontributing.

Tent Pads- All of the campsites provide an open, level area originally intended for tent-use during Mission 66. Today, visitors use the spaces less frequently for tents as most people remain inside their RVs parked nearby. Plans from the 1960s located in the Rocky Knob Maintenance Area flat file show the layout of the tent pads across the entire Campground. Historical documents suggest that the tent pads were comprised of concrete or stone. Although there is no evidence



Figure 4.27: Sanitary dump station, note addition of concrete curb, 2011

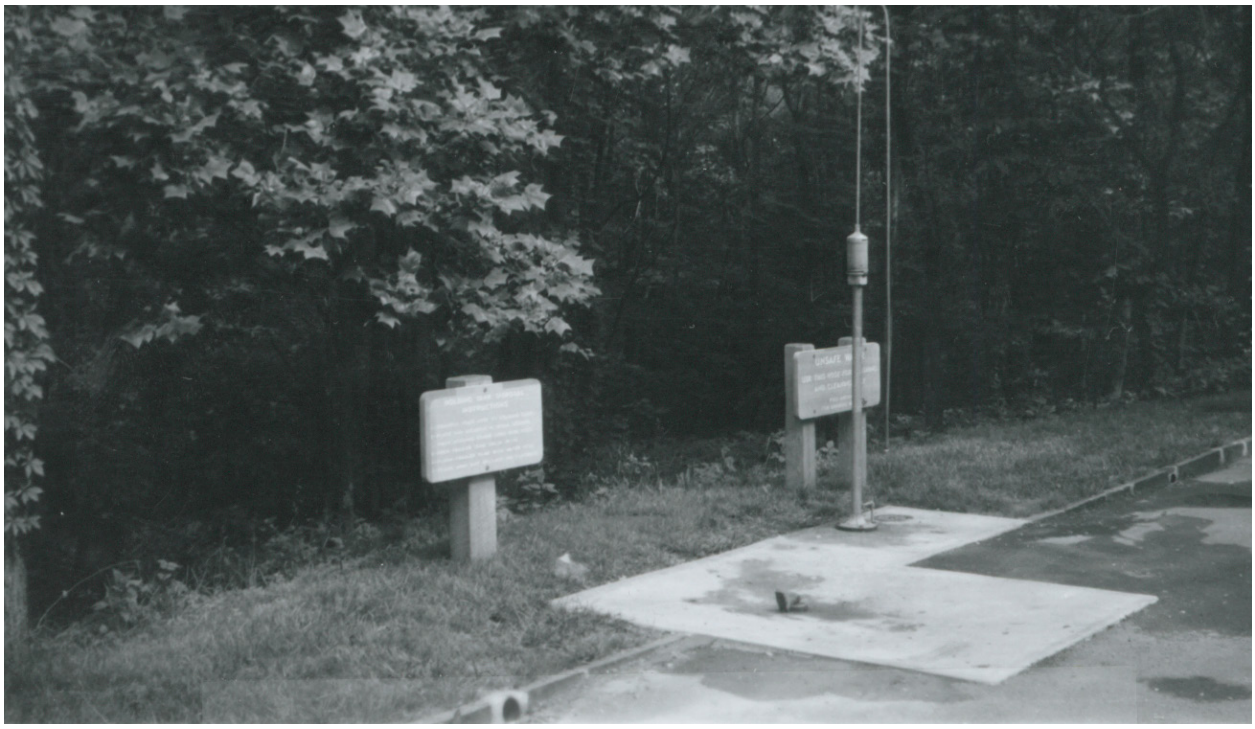


Figure 4.28: Sanitary dump station, c.1971

of these materials today, it is likely that NPS staff implemented the design during Mission 66 and altered it sometime thereafter. A Post-Mission 66 replacement tent pad constructed of wood exists and is a noncontributing feature.

Lantern Poles- NPS staff added standard lantern poles to the campsites, Post-Mission 66. The lantern poles are in good condition overall, though some need to be straightened and/or reset. These are noncontributing features.

Host Campsite- A large campsite with an expanded parking slip is located immediately north of the campground entrance. Parkway designers planned for the host campsite during Mission 66. The area contains typical campsite amenities, such as a picnic table, a grill, and a lantern pole. The types and conditions of these amenities are similar to those listed above in the campsite area. In addition, an electrical transformer, electrical hookups, buried telephone lines, and a water spigot are located at this site. A 2,000-gallon septic tank and associated leaching field is located nearby. According to historic plans, NPS staff previously located a host trailer in this location. The host trailer is missing from the landscape today. Overall, the host campsite is in good condition. It has a high degree of integrity as the location, setting, and use remains unchanged. It is a contributing feature.

Litter Deposit Area- A fenced space for the collection of trash and recyclables from campground users is located near the campground exit. A weathered wooden fence surrounds two separate dumpsters for trash and recycling on all sides except the one adjacent to the drive lane. A brown metal reflective sign directing visitors back to the Parkway also exists at this location. The Litter Deposit Area dates to ca. 1962 during Mission 66 and remains in good condition. Its setting, location and use are unchanged and therefore it is a contributing feature.

Sanitary Dump Station- This area consists of a single lane asphalt drive, concrete dump pad, and potable water tower. Slate curb dating to Mission 66 lines a portion of the drive lane. In addition, a short asphalt sidewalk dating to Post-Mission 66 surrounds the potable water tower (Figures 4.27 and 4.28). The dumping facilities are located on a concrete pad bound by concrete curb on one corner. According to working drawings, the NPS constructed this drive lane and associated facilities in 1967, five years after the rest of the campground construction was complete. Historic photographs show routed wood signs in this location originally. Overall, the dump station is in good condition but is noncontributing.

Rocky Knob Maintenance Area. Parkway designers intended the Rocky Knob Maintenance Area to provide a base for operation and maintenance of both the road and recreation areas. Construction of the Maintenance Area commenced in 1940, toward the end of Pre-War Planning and Construction (1933-1941). The following small-scale features exist in the Maintenance Area: fencing, drainage structures, signage and a concrete retaining wall.

Fence- The PLUMS and several master plans from Pre-War Planning and Construction indicate a "Bear Fence" along the perimeter of the Maintenance Area. Presently, a metal chain link fence exists in the approximate location of the "Bear Fence," yet extends further westward than shown on early plans. The date of the existing chain link fence is undetermined, as the early plans do not indicate any materials. Accordingly, whether or not the fence is a contributing factor is undetermined. Overall, it is in good condition.

Drainage Structures- The two existing stone headwalls date the end of the Pre-War Planning and Construction. Their materials and craftsmanship are representative of the period. One of the stone headwalls is visible in a ca. 1952 photograph. The intended function of the stone headwalls to convey storm water is unchanged. Although the structures appear in good condition, the degree of integrity remains undetermined without detailed documentation. Still, both features are in good condition and are contributing resources.

Signage- Multiple signs exist in the Maintenance Area, many of which orient visitors and inform them about park regulations. Often NPS staff constructed these signs of brown and white reflective metal, typical of park-wide standards established Post-Mission 66. These signs are in good condition but are noncontributing resources.

Buildings in the Maintenance Area, however, contain small signs that denote official Parkway building numbers. The use of these signs probably dates to the end of Pre-War Planning and Construction. It is likely that the existing wooden signs are replacements that reflect the original design, materials, and craftsmanship. Post-Mission 66, NPS staff has replaced many wooden signs with recycled plastic ones. The font, colors, shape, and size of the recycled plastic signs are similar to the wooden ones. The difference in material, however, changes the overall feeling of the signs; early Parkway designers intended the wood and paint to weather and mellow over time. Consequently, the material change diminishes the integrity of this resource; building signs of wooden construction therefore are contributing, while those made of recycled plastic are not.

Concrete Retaining Wall- NPS staff likely built a stepped concrete retaining wall along with the Shops and Heavy Equipment Building in 1952 during Resumption of Construction. The concrete is failing in some areas, but the wall is largely intact. Few changes in materials, craftsmanship, and design are evident. The wall is contributing.

Timber Guard Rail- A section of rustic timber guardrail appears on the PLUMS and suggests that NPS staff built it along with other portions of the Maintenance Area at the end of Pre-War Planning and Construction. NPS staff removed this feature post-1948 and it remains missing from the landscape today.

Rocky Knob Picnic Area. Parkway designers began planning for the Picnic Area in the early 1930s and construction commenced in 1937. Most elements were in place by 1941, at the end of Pre-War Planning and Construction. Later, during Mission 66, the Picnic Area transitioned from mixed use with picnicking and camping to a space dedicated solely for picnics. Accordingly, NPS staff responded to this change by adding grills and tables during the latter period. The following small-scale features exist in the Picnic Area: grills, stone fireplaces, picnic tables, stone retaining wall, stone tree wells, drinking fountains, entrance gates, guardrail, stairs, stone curb, playground structures, signage, fencing and litter deposit area.

Grills- Five fireplaces or grills, built from native stone, date to Pre-War Planning and Construction. Early Parkway designers intended for this material to mimic surrounding rock outcrops characteristic of the landscape. Doughton Park contains examples of similarly crafted grills, as the design was an early Parkway standard. Although the early grills are in poor condition, they retain some integrity and are contributing features. NPS staff added other grills in the Picnic Area Post-Mission 66. The newer grills are catalog items from the Jamestown Advance Products Corporation or Pilot Rock. They are in good condition but are noncontributing because their designs, materials, and craftsmanship differ greatly from early stone ones.

Picnic Tables- Original picnic tables during the Pre-War Planning and Construction were wooden and constructed of chestnut logs and sawn boards. By 1953, during Resumption of Construction, NPS staff began replacing the wooden picnic tables with more substantial, concrete ones. No original wooden tables remain today as they likely deteriorated over time. The concrete replacements are in poor to fair condition with exposed footings and incorrectly sized recycled plastic seats that NPS staff added Post-Mission 66. The concrete replacements from the 1950s retain integrity of that period with the main modification being a change in seat material. These replacements are contributing features of the Resumption of Construction period.

Stone Retaining Wall- Dry stack stone retaining walls in the Picnic Area date to 1937 during Prewar Planning and Construction. Early Parkway designers intended small-scale features such as this one to blend with the natural surroundings. The wall remains today but has undergone minor alterations Post-Mission 66 (Figures 4.29 and 4.30). For example, the layering of the adjacent asphalt paving over the years has reduced the wall height. The stone retaining wall has a high degree of integrity as its setting, feeling, and materials, among other aspects, have remained relatively unchanged. It is a contributing resource.

Stone Tree Wells- Stone tree wells do not appear on planning documents for the Picnic Area or on the PLUMS. Similar stone tree wells exist at Doughton Park. The tree wells at the Rocky Knob Picnic Area date to 1937, during Pre-War Planning



Figure 4.29: Picnic area road and stacked stone wall, note change in wall height due to paving, 2011



Figure 4.30: Picnic area road and stacked stone wall, 1938

and Construction. Presently, three of these features exist today. Two of the features contain specimen trees of considerable size and age. The third one, however, is missing a tree, which likely died. Because this tree well no longer surrounds a tree, its function has changed to a retaining wall. Overall, the three tree wells are in good condition. They continue to add to the rustic feeling intended by early Parkway designers and are contributing resources.

Drinking Fountains- An 'As Built' drawing dated 1962 shows six drinking fountains located in the Picnic Area. Only three complete drinking fountains exist within the Picnic Area today. Two of these are replacement fixtures constructed of metal and dating to Post-Mission 66, while one historic stone drinking fountain from the Pre-War Planning and Construction period remains intact. The remains of a second original stone fountain also exist near Comfort Station #9. Maintenance over the years has diminished the integrity of the functioning historic fountain. Specifically, its craftsmanship has changed as workers have reset mortar joints sloppily over the years and replaced the drain for the lower spigot. The original design of the stone drinking fountains did not take into account the eventual need for repairs of the internal plumbing system, making them difficult to maintain or repair without partial or full disassembly. The two Post-Mission 66 metal replacement fountains are in the approximate location as the originals and are in good condition. These replacements, however, are noncontributing. The original intact stone fountain, on the other hand, retains a high degree of integrity and is contributing.

Entrance Gates- Two wooden entrance gates exist in the Picnic Area. The gates were a Parkway standard constructed of solid wood timbers and painted dark grey. The two gates feature routed wood signs that read, "Closed" in standard Parkway lettering. Both of the gates are in good condition and do not show signs of rot or decay. They are identical to the gates found at the Rocky Knob Campground and at other recreation areas throughout the Parkway. While NPS staff has replaced elements of the gates as needed over time, they retain a high degree of integrity with similar materials, design, craftsmanship, location, and so forth. The gates are a contributing feature.

The wooden gates found today probably are not the original type of entrance gate used at the Picnic Area. Two remnant metal eyebolts embedded into rock outcroppings on either side of the entrance to Picnic Area suggest the original gate system likely consisted of a simple chain strung through the two eyebolts. Research failed to uncover a photograph of the original gate; though a construction plan for the Picnic Area dated 1937 (Illustration 2.10), clearly shows the location of the gate between these two rock outcrops. The bolts are in good condition today.

Guardrail- Historically, sections of wooden guardrail existed throughout the Picnic Area during Pre-War Planning and Construction. Plans from the late 1930s include construction details that instruct how to build two different types of wooden rails for the varying conditions within the Picnic Area (Illustration 2.13). One version of the rail consisted of eight inch rounded logs set on wooden posts, while the other type was a log curb set directly into a recently cut slope. While photographs from the 1930s confirm the installation of these guardrails, the exact locations are indeterminate. NPS staff removed the original guardrails at an unknown date and replaced them Post-Mission 66. The replacement guardrails differ in craftsmanship and materials from the originals. For example, the replacements consist of large square timbers set atop concrete blocks. The change in form from rounded to squared timbers slightly changes the feeling (Figures 3.93 and 3.94). The replacement guardrails are in good condition, but are noncontributing.

Stone Steps- Many types of stone steps exist throughout the trail system and provide access to the Picnic Area. They vary in construction and size from individual stones set into the earth, consisting of only a few treads, to longer and more complex runs of stone that feature intricate stone cheek walls. The various types of stone steps date to 1939 during Pre-War Planning and Construction. There are no visible alterations Post-Mission 66 and therefore the stone steps are contributing.

Stone Curb- A 1938 plan of the Picnic Area (Illustration 2.13) shows a detail for a log curb. Because the plan does not indicate the placement of the log curb, it is likely that early Parkway designers intended workers to construct it as needed. There are no historical photographs and

no visible evidence today to substantiate whether or not NPS staff installed log curbs in 1939 during Pre-War Planning and Construction. Still, it is probable that NPS staff installed them because dead American chestnut trees in the area would have provided the necessary materials. Presently, about half of the vehicular loops and parking slips within the Picnic Area feature sections of "Rocky Knob Black Stone" slate curbing. During the period of significance, the NPS used "Rocky Knob Black Stone" slate, which they obtained from a nearby quarry in Franklin, Virginia. The slate replaced native stone quarried within the park during the 1930s and used at the Twelve O'clock Overlook until the source ran out. The slate reflects early Parkway designers' intents to use native materials and may have replaced log curbs that deteriorated over time. The condition of the stone curbs varies from good to poor. They are contributing resources.

Remnant Playground Structures- At the end of Pre-War Planning and Construction, the NPS constructed various types of play structures in what is now a large open area adjacent to the Picnic Pavilion. At an unknown date, the NPS discontinued this use and removed all structures. This action followed a memorandum to the Regional Director where Abbott agreed that playgrounds and other types of active recreational facilities were inappropriate because they intruded on the natural beauty of the area. This area retains no integrity as only the concrete supports remain in the landscape. These are noncontributing.

Drainage Structures- Original stone culverts and headwalls dating to the end of Pre-War Planning and Construction exist throughout the Picnic Area. Generally, they consist of a mortared stone headwalls that surround concrete pipes. They vary in condition from good to poor. For example, one of the headwall capstones needs resetting and most of the pipes would benefit from cleaning and debris removal. The stone material matches the type and color of that used throughout the Picnic Area for other elements, such as curbing and retaining walls. The drainage structures retain a high degree of integrity and are contributing features.

Signage- A wooden trail system sign is located near Comfort Station #84. It is similar in character and construction to the gunboard signs found elsewhere on the Parkway, and features a routed wooden map of the Rocky Knob Recreation Area trail system. This sign is in good condition and shows no signs of rot or decay. NPS staff has replaced wood in kind over the years. Still, the sign is contributing because it remains constructed of the wood material similar to its original design. It is unlike other trail systems signs throughout the Parkway where NPS staff has replaced wooden materials with recycled plastic.

In addition, a wooden signboard is located near the entrance to the Picnic Area. A wooden box containing litterbags is mounted to the sign, and visitors are invited to take a bag for use while picnicking. NPS staff added this sign sometime Post-Mission 66. It is noncontributing.

Litter Deposit Areas- There are two locations within the Picnic Area for visitors to dispose of their refuse and recycling. Both litter deposit areas consist of a three-sided wooden fence surrounding a metal dumpster with a bear-proof metal container for recyclables. The fences and pickets slope with the topography in both locations, helping the structures to blend with the landscape. The fences are unpainted and in good condition. The date of construction for the litter deposit areas is undetermined.

Fences- PLUMS dating to 1948 document a snake rail fence that enclosed an open, trapezoidal grassy area east of the Group Picnic Parking Area and west of the Parkway. In 1966, NPS staff removed the lines of fencing that extended perpendicular from the Parkway and parallel along the Group Picnic Parking Area from the Picnic Area. Aerial photographs indicate this change occurred before the end of Mission 66. The photographs also confirm that a post and rail fence replaced the line of snake fence that extended parallel alongside the Parkway. This post and rail fence remains today and is in fair condition with missing and/or deteriorating sections. The fencing is a contributing feature because it remains largely intact since Mission 66.

Rocky Knob Gas Station. Construction plans for the Campground and Picnic Area during Pre-War Planning and Construction included preliminary drawings of the Gas Station. The area also appears on the 1941 master plan. The NPS, however, did not construct the Gas Station until 1949 during

Resumption of Construction. The following small-scale features found in the area of the Rocky Knob Gas Station: curbing, drinking fountain, signage, fire hydrant, planters, and drainage structures.

Curbs- Most of the concrete curbs added to the Gas Station area in 1949 during Resumption of Construction are intact and contributing. The curbing on the northeastern side of Gas Station Building #82 has changed location to accommodate an expanded parking area added Post-Mission 66 (Figures 4.17 and 4.18). Pink granite curbing adjacent to the expanded parking area is a Post-Mission 66 addition. NPS staff used the pink granite to replace rolled concrete curb originally installed here. The granite curb is in good condition, but is noncontributing because its stark difference in color and texture feels out of place adjacent to the remaining sections of concrete curb.

Drinking Fountain- While NPS staff added the stone drinking fountain ca. 2009, its design is similar in construction, style, and material to the original stone drinking fountains that still exist in both the Rocky Knob Camping and Picnic Areas. The fountain, however, lacks the refinement and proportions of the originals. It is functional and in good condition. It is noncontributing because there is no historical evidence of a fountain at the Rocky Knob Gas Station. A historical photograph, however, shows a drinking fountain of similar craftsmanship and placement adjacent to the gas station at Crabtree Meadows.

Signage- NPS staff added a recycled plastic informative station sign, mounted on wooden posts, to this area Post-Mission 66 (Figure 4.31). The signboard is made to look like earlier routed wood signs as it shares the same font and color palette. A historic photograph shows a much larger sign that previously occupied this location (Figure 4.32). This earlier sign contained a routed wood Blue Ridge Parkway logo panel suspended from a timber post and indicated the distance remaining to "Great Smokies Park" on a timber cross beam. The wooden sign was one of the original mileposts that NPS staff located at the recreation areas along the Parkway in 1941. Due to changes in materials, size, and design, the recycled plastic sign from Post-Mission 66 retains a low degree of integrity and is a noncontributing feature.

Another historic photo shows a smaller, less elaborate sign along the Parkway that indicated the presence of the gas station ahead. This sign probably was removed sometime Post-Mission 66 when the Gas Station changed functions (Figures 4.33 and 4.34). It remains missing from the landscape.

In addition, reflective metal traffic and directional signs are located adjacent to the Gas Station. NPS staff added these signs Post-Mission 66, which makes them noncontributing. Finally, a concrete milepost is located in the grass median adjacent to the Parkway. The milepost dates to 1947 during Resumption of Construction and is contributing.

Fire Hydrant and Hose Reel- The 1949 fire hydrant and reel are intact, in good condition, and contributing.

Wooden Planters- The painted wooden planters are Post-Mission 66 additions used to prevent motorcycles and other vehicles from parking in the driveline that travels beneath the overhang (Figures 4.17 and 4.18). They are in good condition but are noncontributing.

Concrete Drainage Structure- NPS staff constructed the grated metal drop inlet in 1937 during Pre-War Planning and Construction. The inlet predates the Gas Station, which NPS staff did not construct until1949, during Resumption of Construction. The inlet is in good condition and is a contributing resource.

Parkway Section 1-S.

Drainage Structures- Parkway Section 1-S contains numerous pipe culverts with small stone head walls and concrete drop inlets that are in good condition. They date to Pre-War Planning and Construction, remain intact, and are contributing resources.

Stone Gutters- The stone gutters, constructed from 1937-1943, during Pre-War Planning and Construction and the War Years, are intact. The PLUMs illustrate their exact locations (Illustrations 2.1-2.9). NPS staff mortared the rustic stone cobbles to form an approximately one foot deep gutter. The staff has maintained some sections better than other sections over the years. There is evidence that NPS staff recently reset some sections of stone. Still, the stone gutters maintain a high degree of integrity and are contributing



Figure 4.31: Post-Mission 66 sign in front of Rocky Knob Gas Station, note missing specimen tree in median and mature specimen trees in the distance to the left, 2011



Figure 4.32: Original 'tavern style' milepost marker in front of Rocky Knob Gas Station, note early style lower stop sign, and original tree planting, 1952



Figure 4.33: Approach to Rocky Knob Gas Station, 1952



Figure 4.34: Approach to Rocky Knob Gas Station, note 'Gas Ahead' sign, 1952

resources. It appears that the NPS originally installed asphalt gutters at the Tuggle Gap Grade Separated Interchange in 1955 based on information contained within Final Construction Reports for that project. Today, these gutters are stone rubble. According to Park staff, the material change likely occurred during the last repaving project in 1991. Due to the material change, this small section of gutter is non-contributing.

Signage- A variety of signs exists along Section 1-S. The majority function as site identification signs, regulator signs, or directional signs.

NPS replaced the original low rustic wooden regulatory and traffic signs dating to Pre-War Planning and Construction sometime Post-Mission 66. Most of the Post-Mission 66 replacements are brown metal with white reflective lettering, typical of recent Parkway standards. Due to the changes in material and craftsmanship, the replacement signs are noncontributing.

In addition, NPS staff replaced the original Parkway entrance sign dating to Pre-War Planning and Construction with the current sign sometime in the 1950s. Because this change occurred during Resumption of Construction, the sign is contributing. Lastly, the 1947 concrete mile markers are intact and contributing features.

Fences- Different fence types exist along the Parkway including split rail, barbed wire, and post and wire. Fences typically separate pastures and/or agricultural land, or visitor use areas from the roadway. The original PLUMs indicate fence types and locations (Illustrations 2.1-2.9). While existing fence locations appear consistent with the PLUMs, NPS staff has altered some of the fence types over the years. For example, both the PLUMs and historic photographs reveal the use of "snake" or "worm" fencing along sections of the roadway that are now lined with split-rail fence (Figures 4.35 and 4.36). These alterations likely occurred for maintenance reasons and probably took place when agricultural leases changed from raising livestock to hay production. Due to a shortage of suitable fence material during the Resumption of Construction, Parkway staff and agricultural lessees replaced many of the split rail fences located out of direct view from the roadway with post and wire fences. NPS staff originally constructed the fences in Rocky Knob of chestnut. Today, staff constructs them from poplar and locust. Some fences along the Parkway, such as one near Milepost 170, retain their original design (Figures 4.37 and 4.38). The condition of the fences along the Parkway varies, but, overall, their conditions appear to range from good to fair. While their dates of construction also vary, the fences are contributing resources. They are character-defining features of the Parkway.

Spring Outlet Wall- By 1942, at the beginning of the War Years, NPS staff constructed a stone wall surrounding a spring outlet in a pasture adjacent to the roadway near milepost 169.6. The NPS likely used this feature as a water source for livestock as part of the agricultural lease program. The structure has since collapsed and only portions of the stone and mortar remain in the landscape today. Due to its poor condition, the feature retains a low degree of integrity. It still, however, is a contributing feature.

Parkway Overlooks.
The Parkway Overlooks include the following: the Saddle Overlook, constructed in the 1930s during Pre-War Planning and Construction; Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, dating to Mission 66 (1956-1966); and Twelve O'clock Overlook, also constructed during Pre-War Planning and Construction.

Stone Retaining Wall- This small-scale feature is located in the Saddle Overlook and dates to Pre-War Planning and Construction. NPS staff has repointed the mortar and asphalt paving Post-Mission 66. This maintenance has reduced the current wall height (Figures 4.39 and 4.40). In addition, it appears that NPS staff has replaced some stones since 1938. Overall, the wall retains a high degree of integrity as it is in the same location and exudes the same rustic feeling. The wall is contributing.

Stone Curbs- A pink split-face granite curb exists at the Saddle Overlook, Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, and the parking area adjacent to the Gas Station. Pink granite, however, was not an original curb material on the Parkway or at Rocky Knob (Figures 4.41 and 4.42). For example, during the early 1930s, NPS staff quarried stone within the park. They used this native stone for curbing at the Twelve O'clock Overlook until they depleted the source. According to the final construction report for



Figure 4.35: Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, note the Post-Mission 66 split-rail fence along the Parkway, 2011



Figure 4.36: Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, note the original snake fence along the Parkway c.1959



Figure 4.37: Parkway with Rocky Knob in the background near milepost 170, note the snake fence 2011.



Figure 4.38: Parkway with Rocky Knob in the background near milepost 170, note the snake fence, 1974.



Figure 4.39: Stone retaining wall at the Saddle Overlook with a view of Rock Castle Gorge, 2011



Figure 4.40: Stone retaining wall at the Saddle Overlook with a view of Rock Castle Gorge, 1938



Figure 4.41: The Saddle Overlook,note pink granite curb and four (4) mature specimen trees, 2011



Figure 4.42: The Saddle Overlook,note slate curb and four (4) specimen trees, 1938

section 1-S, the contractor switched to a nearby quarry in Franklin County, Virginia for additional stone that still complemented the native landscape at Rocky Knob. The quarry provided a type of slate known as "Rocky Knob Black Stone." There was enough slate for NPS staff to use throughout the remainder of the Parkway, including Sections 1-P, 1-Q, and 1-R. Thus, "Rocky Knob Black Stone" slate originally lined all of the overlooks, the Picnic Area, and even the Campground at Rocky Knob.

Sometime Post-Mission 66, NPS began using pink granite to replace slate curb that had deteriorated since 1937 at Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, The Saddle Overlook, and portions of the Gas Station parking area. Cost perhaps guided this decision, as new slate was expensive to obtain at the time. The pink granite curbing at Rocky Knob is in good condition. Because it differs in color and texture from the native stone quarried at Rocky Knob and the local "Rocky Knob Black Stone" slate, the pink granite feels out of place among native stone outcrops in the Parkway. The pink granite is noncontributing.

The curbing at Twelve O'clock Overlook, however, remains of original native stone quarried within the park and is in good condition. It is a contributing feature. In addition, "Rocky Knob Black Stone" slate remains in all other sections of Rocky Knob Recreation Area. Overall, the slate is in good condition and is contributing.

Signage- The gunboard interpretive sign installed at the Saddle Overlook in 1941 during Pre-War Planning and Construction was originally constructed of wood. NPS staff has replaced it several times Post-Mission 66. More recently, NPS staff used foam for the sign, but the material deteriorated quickly. At the time of this report, only the posts were present. It is likely NPS staff will replace the sign with a recycled plastic one. If this occurs, the change in material will make it a noncontributing feature.

A second interpretive sign exists in the Saddle Overlook and is constructed of metal posts that hold a vandal-proof graphic board. This sign is similar in design and materials to the new interpretive signs found along the Parkway and identical to others found along the Parkway. Because NPS staff added it post-Mission 66, it is noncontributing. In addition, a wooden directional trail sign exists at the Saddle Overlook. It dates to Post-Mission 66 and is noncontributing. In addition to the interpretive and directional signage, a concrete milepost is located near the Saddle Overlook's entrance. NPS staff added it ca. 1947 during Resumption of Construction. Therefore, it is a contributing feature.

Rock Castle Gorge Overlook contains an interpretive sign with metal posts that hold a vandal-proof graphic board. It is similar to the one at the Saddle Overlook. Its exact date is unknown but it originated Post-Mission 66. It is a noncontributing feature.

The Twelve O'clock Overlook contains a routed wood trail system sign that likely dates to the 1940s. NPS staff has replaced the wood in kind, as it has deteriorated over time. Aside from the replacement of wood, the sign retains the original design and craftsmanship, and remains in the same location. It retains a high degree of integrity and therefore is a contributing feature.

Fences- North and south of the Saddle Overlook parking area, sections of snake rail fence that predated the Parkway were removed ca. 1940. The fence is absent from PLUMs, which suggests it was not planned by early Parkway designers and likely was a remnant agricultural fence in place prior to the construction of the overlook.

Guardrail- A rustic timber guardrail dating to Pre-War Planning and Construction once existed in the Saddle Overlook. The PLUMs provides documentation of this feature but NPS staff removed it at an unknown date (Figures 4.43 and 4.44).

Drainage Structures- The drop inlet in the Saddle Overlook dates to 1937 during Pre-War Planning and Construction. It is visible in multiple historic photographs from the periods of significance and appears to retain integrity. It is in good condition and is a contributing resource.

Trash Receptacle Posts- Precast concrete posts used to mount trash receptacles are located in the Rock Castle Gorge and Twelve O'clock Overlooks. No trash receptacles were present at the time of this study. Although the exact date is unknown, the concrete material of the posts suggests they likely date to Mission 66 improvements.



Figure 4.43: Entrance drive to the Saddle Overlook, note wood line in right of photo, which expanded according to the direction provided on the PLUMs as intended, 2011

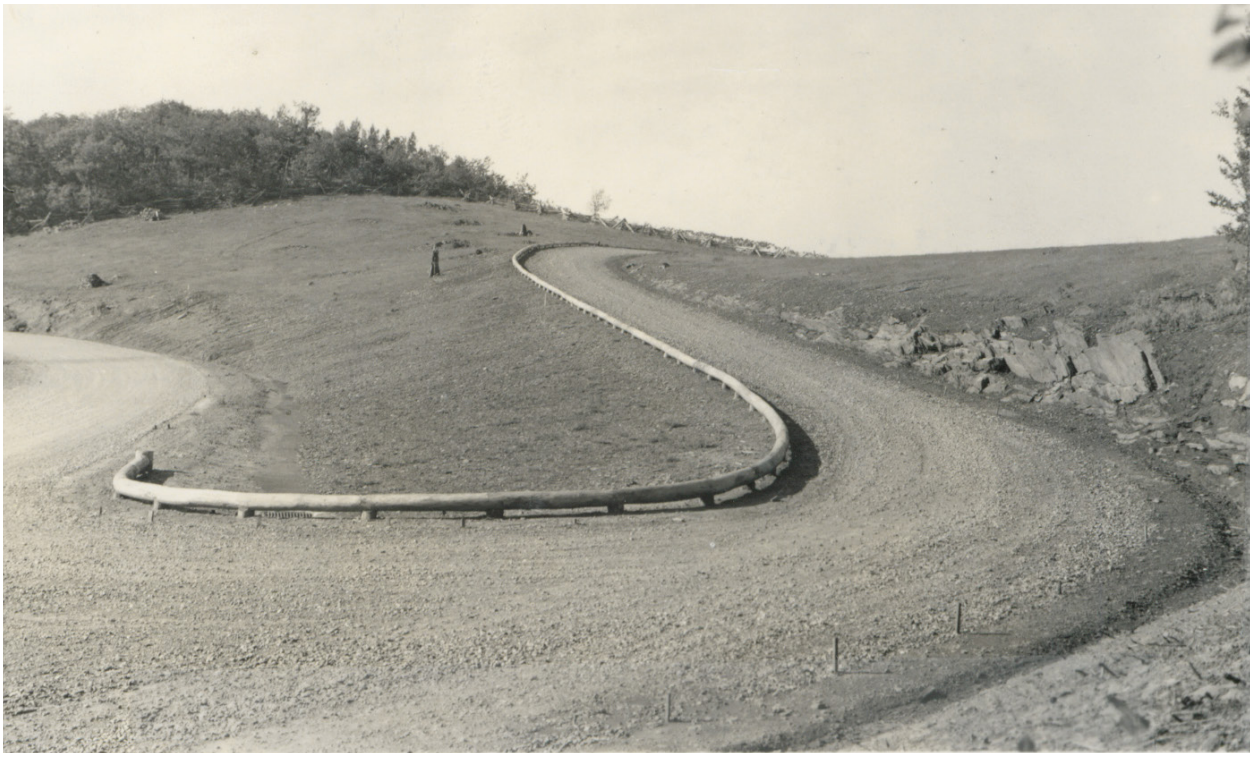


Figure 4.44: Entrance drive to the Saddle Overlook,note timber guard rail, 1938

Stone Steps- Several large, native stone steps are set into a gently sloping section of the lawn in the Saddle Overlook. The steps date to ca. 1937 during Pre-War Planning and Construction. They are in fair condition but likely retain a moderate degree of integrity and are a contributing feature.

The stone steps at the Twelve O-Clock Overlook date to Pre-War Planning and Construction. They are in fair condition, retain a moderate to high degree of integrity and are contributing.

Wooden Steps- The wooden stairs at Rock Castle Gorge Overlook are Post-Mission 66 additions of an unknown date and are noncontributing, as they are not comprised of stone materials used by Parkway designers during the periods of significance and intended to blend with the native landscape.

Spatial Organization

The overall spatial organization of Rocky Knob Recreation Area was shaped by the natural systems (topography, hydrology and vegetation), the alignment of the Parkway and proximity to natural and developed areas. The linear road alignment of the Parkway follows the contours of the existing topography that was part of the original design of the roadway and remains in the landscape today as a contributing resource. The spatial organization of the recreation area amenities clustered along the Parkway remains intact as originally planned and therefore retains integrity. The layouts of the individual components: Rocky Knob Campground, Rocky Knob Maintenance Area, Rocky Knob Picnic Area, The Gas Station, Section 1-S of the Parkway, The Saddle Overlook, Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, Twelve O-Clock Overlook exist spatially as they were originally design, planned and documented on the PLUMs. Therefore, the spatial organization of Rocky Knob Recreation Area is a contributing resource and retains a high degree of integrity.

Circulation

Rocky Knob Campground.

Vehicular Circulation- The campground roads are a contributing resource. The circulation, originally completed in 1962, was altered slightly to accommodate the Sanitary Dump Station in 1967. The existing asphalt is in poor condition, but the alignment is intact and therefore retains integrity.

Pedestrian circulation- The asphalt path system varies from fair to poor condition but the alignment is intact with the exception of minor areas where erosion and asphalt deterioration have occurred. The circulation is a contributing resource and retains integrity.

Rocky Knob Maintenance Area. Both vehicular and pedestrian circulation changed when the NPS remodeled the Employee Residences and added garages in the early 1950s during Resumption of Construction. The curvilinear pedestrian paths surrounding the residences were lost and the entrance drive was altered. NPS staff also added a ramp to the garage door on Office and Tool Storage Building #4 to facilitate access (Figures 4.05 and 4.06). In addition, vehicular circulation was added to accommodate parking around the district office trailers in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Because the major changes occurred during the period of significance, the circulation is considered contributing.

Rocky Knob Picnic Area.

Vehicular Circulation- The two single lane loop roads are a contributing resource. Built in 1937, the original road material was gravel/earth and later paved with asphalt. In the early 1940s, Parkway designers integrated a turnaround and an expanded the parking area to the two loops near Comfort Station #9. The expanded parking area provides 33 spaces in close proximity to one another, and facilitates the use of this location for group picnicking. In addition to the expanded parking area, both of the vehicular loops contain numerous parking slips that accommodate one to six cars. The alignment of the two single lane loop roads is intact and retains integrity.

Pedestrian circulation- The paths are a contributing resource. Built in 1941, the original road material was gravel/earth and later paved with asphalt. The alignment is intact and retains integrity.

Rocky Knob Gas Station.

Vehicular Circulation- The entrance drive to the Picnic Area, which begins at the Gas Station, was built in 1937. The Gas Station turnaround, landscape median, and two parking areas were built later in 1949 during Resumption of Construction. The original design allowed two vehicles to access the gas pumps simultaneously, one on each side of the curbed stone median

that historically contained gas pumps (4.18). This circulation is still evident in the landscape today, but vehicular use is discouraged by strategically placed wooden planter boxes Post-Mission 66 (Figure 4.17). The NPS extended the footprint of the landscape median and expanded the smaller of the two parking areas located adjacent to the Gas Station, Post-Mission 66. The smaller parking area replaced a planting bed that was part of the original design. The various changes in vehicular circulation that have occurred Post-Mission 66 diminishes the integrity of the Gas Station. While the majority of the circulation in the area retains its original alignment, it is a contributing feature.

Pedestrian Circulation- Mortared flagstone walks that surround the gas station provide the primary pedestrian circulation route for most visitors. The PLUMs show a sidewalk to be located along the southwestern parking bay in the large parking area behind the service station. It is not known if this sidewalk was ever built. No evidence of its existence is visible in the landscape today.

Parkway Section 1-S.
Vehicular Circulation- The Parkway is contributing resource. Constructed in 1937, the original alignment is still intact today. A center stripe was added c.1948. Double striping was added sometime later. The road surface has been repaved several times, but retains a high level of integrity.

Pedestrian circulation- The pedestrian trail system: Rock Castle Gorge Trail, Black Ridge Trail and Picnic Area Loop trail are contributing features. Rock Castle Gorge Trail features 10 miles of trail and was completed in 1937. Sections that follow Rock Castle Road predate the Parkway and retain a high degree of integrity, along with the Black Ridge Trail that was built about the same time. The Picnic Area Loop surface changed from earth/gravel to asphalt and therefore the integrity is slightly compromised.

Parkway Overlooks. The circulation at all three overlook areas retain original alignment as shown on the PLUMs. At some point, however, the material changed to asphalt. The circulation is in good condition and retains a high level of integrity.

Views and Vistas

All intended views and vistas, indicated on the PLUMs, are considered contributing resources. Based on evolutionary changes to vegetation described below, some views have been diminished and therefore retain a moderate level of integrity.

Rocky Knob Campground. The view from the campfire circle, developed in 1962, is a contributing feature.

Rocky Knob Maintenance Area. No views are indicated on the PLUMs for the Maintenance Area.

Rocky Knob Picnic Area. There is a striking view of the Parkway from the group parking area. Although the 1949 PLUM does not indicate this view with arrows, a close inspection of the document suggests that early Parkway designers closely considered this view (Illustration 2.8). For example, the PLUM documents sparse vegetation on either side of the fenced area in 1949. A solid line symbol indicates the designers' plans to re-vegetate those sparse areas up to the northern and southern sides of a trapezoidal fence enclosure, adjacent to the picnic parking area. The PLUM indicates the fenced area as it is today: open and grassy. The wooded vegetation along the fence thus frames the view of the Parkway though the fenced area. The view is a contributing resource.

Rocky Knob Gas Station. The planned vista that appears on the PLUMs continues to be maintained and is a contributing resource.

Parkway Section 1-S. NPS staff maintains the majority of views specified on PLUMs. The views denoted as 'open woods' on the PLUMs are no longer maintained, reducing the variety of scenery intended by Parkway designers. All existing views indicated on the PLUMs are contributing resources.

Parkway Overlooks. The views from the Saddle Overlook pre-date the Parkway and are contributing. These include the view of Buffalo Mountain and the view of Rock Castle Gorge. The views and vistas from Rock Castle Gorge overlook are contributing, however the 75' of

vista as planned on the PLUMs is no longer maintained. Two views were originally planned for The Twelve O'clock Overlook. One is no longer maintained, the other is in good condition and is contributing.

Evaluation of Landscape Integrity

Landscape integrity refers to a cultural landscape's ability to convey its historic significance. National Register Bulletin 16A defines historic integrity as "the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's prehistoric or historic period." In National Register Bulletin 15, the National Register defines seven aspects of integrity to use when evaluating a historic property:

- Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred;
- Setting is the physical environment within and surrounding a property;
- Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property;
- Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property;
- Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory;
- Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time; and
- Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

In order to retain historic integrity, a property must possess several, and usually most, of these seven aspects. Evaluating historic integrity involves first determining the historic significance of a property and then identifying the existing features that contribute to our ability to recognize and understand this significance. Character-defining features are those distinctive features or qualities that make a property unique. They are the individual parts that make the whole place special and worthy of our recognition as a historic property.

Location

Rocky Knob Recreation Area demonstrates a high level of integrity of location due to its continual use as a recreational area within the Parkway and its associated development within the rocky knobs and gorges of Virginia. For the most part, the boundaries of the NPS property through this section of the Parkway have remained consistent since initial planning and land acquisition. The locations of the components: Rocky Knob Campground, Rocky Knob Maintenance Area, Rocky Knob Picnic Area, the Gas Station, Section 1-S of the Parkway, The Saddle Overlook, Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, Twelve O-Clock Overlook, have remained in the same locations since the final completion of the area in 1962 and therefore retain a high level of integrity.

Setting

Setting is the physical environment within and surrounding a property. Influences to the setting of a site include natural systems and land uses. Rocky Knob has retained a high integrity of setting. This Parkway section displays the variety of settings found throughout the Parkway ranging from stream gorges, cove forests, open mature hardwoods, to traditional agricultural scenery, to views and vistas along the road. Of particular note are views from the three overlook areas: The Saddle Overlook, Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, and Twelve O-Clock Overlook. The elevation is consistent, but it allows for a variety of vegetation and scenery, and juxtaposition of enclosed spaces with broad open views across ridges and rolling hills all contribute to the setting of these sections of Parkway. Unlike some portions of the Parkway, Section 1-S is not compromised by modern visual intrusions such as buildings and signs on private land owners that are visible from the Parkway. The experience of Rocky Knob Recreation Area via trail offers another perspective on the setting as the experience is equally varied and scenic. Views throughout the recreation area remain largely intact with the exception of a few that are no longer maintained. Overall, they are consistent with historic planned views and contribute to the high level of integrity for setting.

Design

The combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, and style of a cultural landscape or historic property fall under this category. Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMs) document the design of the Parkway including Section 1-S and the Rocky Knob Recreation Area by landscape architects and engineers. The PLUMs show detailed information on the implementation of these areas. The current roadway alignments, parking lot layouts, overlook configurations, overall vegetative patterns, and detailing of small-scale features match those drawn on the PLUMs. Some designed landscape characteristics such as "open woods views" and adjacent agricultural areas have changed in character since the original designs for the Parkway were created. These changes are due to different maintenance regimes or the addition of buffer areas. However, the design of this section of the Parkway is still legible and largely intact. The developed portions of this section as a designed recreational area reads as its own "district" within the property in that it features architecture and construction from three distinct period in parkway development: Pre-war and Construction rustic/ vernacular; Resumption of Construction variation on vernacular forms; and Mission 66 modern/ utilitarian. Vernacular agricultural buildings found in the immediate area inspired many of the early planned structures for this area. Rocky Knob Recreation Area retains a high level of integrity for design.

Materials

Materials include physical elements combined or deposited during particular periods of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form the cultural landscape. Construction materials considered in this evaluation include paving, plantings, landscape features, building fabric, walls and circulation. The materials for Rocky Knob Recreation Area are largely intact, however many replacement materials have been used for key historic resources such as comfort station and stone curbing. Some materials are in need of repair such as stairs, circulation and retaining walls. Therefore, Rocky Knob Recreation Area retains moderate integrity of materials.

Workmanship

This aspect of integrity refers to the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. The workmanship of the original construction throughout Rocky Knob Recreation Area includes roads, drainage structures, and buildings exhibit quality construction following NPS standards. The CCC accomplished much of this workmanship, leaving a distinct mark on the final product. Therefore, the workmanship of Rocky Knob Recreation retains a high level of integrity.

Feeling

A cultural landscape's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period is evaluated under this aspect of integrity. The majority of current land use practices along Section 1-S are similar to those envisioned by Parkway planners. There is a distinct feeling associated with the Parkway as a whole that is consistent with this Parkway section. The Recreation Area itself has a unique expression as through its elevation, terrain and rocky nature of the landscape. The Picnic Area and Campground also have a unique feeling. Rocky Knob Recreation Area also exhibits a distinct aesthetic and historic sense associated with the local vernacular.

Association

This aspect of integrity refers to the direct link between the significant historic event or person and the cultural landscape. Section 1-S of the Parkway and Rocky Knob Recreation Area were among the early construction period for the Parkway. Many of the construction methods, design and engineering represented in the buildings and structures are important examples of the three eras of style implemented during the full development of Rocky Knob Recreation Area. This section of Parkway is clearly associated with the rest of the Parkway in its history, appearance, design, and significance. Therefore, Rocky Knob Recreation Area and the corresponding Parkway section retain a high level of integrity for the association to the early and on-going development of the Parkway.

Integrity of the Site as a Whole

In assessing Rocky Knob Recreation Area as a whole, three significant factors rise to the surface:

1) the significance of the Parkway itself and the continuation of the scenic motor road experience through the early development of Section 1-S. This includes the engineering and design of the Parkway as well as the scenic quality experienced from the Parkway throughout the recreation area.

2) The significance of the Development period exhibited in this section of the Parkway, from early 1937 construction through Mission 66 completion.

3) The intact nature of the component landscapes: Rocky Knob Campground, Rocky Knob Maintenance Area, Rocky Knob Picnic Area, the Gas Station, Section 1-S of the Parkway, The Saddle Overlook, Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, Twelve O-Clock Overlook, all of which contribute to the overall high level of integrity Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

Treatment

Introduction

Recommendations for treatment and use of the cultural resources within Rocky Knob follow National Park Service policy, including the Director's Orders No. 28: *Cultural Resource Management Guidelines, and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*. These documents identify four types of treatment: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Each treatment ranges by level of physical intervention and includes specific guidelines and standards.

Preservation is the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of a historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the on-going maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project.

Rehabilitation is the act or process of making possible a compatible use of a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

Restoration is the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period by means of the removal of features from other historic periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make the property functional is appropriate within a restoration project.

Reconstruction is the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, or objects for replicating its appearance at a specific period in its historic location.[1]

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment

Standards for Preservation

A property will be used as it was historically, or be given a new use that maximizes the retention of distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships. Where a treatment and use have not been identified, a property will be protected and, if necessary, stabilized until additional work may be undertaken.

The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The replacement of intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate, and conserve existing historic materials and features will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection, and properly documented for future research.

Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

1 Charles A. Birnbaum, ed. *The Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*. (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1996, 9.18, 48, 90, 128.)

The existing condition of historic features will be evaluated to determine the appropriate level of intervention needed. Where the severity of deterioration requires repair or limited replacement of a distinctive feature, the new material will match the old in composition, design, color, and texture.

Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

Standards for Rehabilitation

A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.

The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Standards for Restoration

A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use, which reflects the property's restoration period.

Materials and features from the restoration period will be retained and preserved. The removal of materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize the period will not be undertaken.

Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate and conserve materials and features from the restoration period will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection, and properly documented for future research.

Materials, features, spaces, and finishes that characterize other historical periods will be documented prior to their alteration or removal.

Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the restoration period will be preserved.

Deteriorated features from the restoration period will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials.

Replacement of missing features from the restoration period will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence. A false sense of history will not be created by adding conjectural features, features from other properties, or by combining features that never existed together historically.

Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

Archeological resources affected by a project will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.

Standards for Reconstruction

Reconstruction will be used to depict vanished or non-surviving portions of a property when documentary and physical evidence is available to permit accurate reconstruction with minimal conjecture, and such reconstruction is essential to the public understanding of the property.

Reconstruction of a landscape, building, structure, or object in its historic location will be preceded by a thorough archeological investigation to identify and evaluate those features and artifacts, which are essential to an accurate reconstruction. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

Reconstruction will include measures to preserve any remaining historic materials, features, and spatial relationships.

Reconstruction will be based on the accurate duplication of historic features and elements substantiated by documentary or physical evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different features from other historic properties. A reconstructed property will re-create the appearance of the non-surviving historic property in materials, design, color, and texture.

A reconstruction will be clearly identified as a contemporary re-creation.

Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.

Management Philosophy

A General Management Plan (GMP) and Environmental Impact Statement combined document was finalized for the Blue Ridge Parkway Virginia and North Carolina in January 2013. Since authorization to construct the Blue Ridge Parkway by an act of Congress on June 30, 1936 (Public Law 74-848/ August 25, 1916 and Public Law 39 Stat. 535), the Parkway has never had a general management plan. The NPS developed visitor facilities and has operated the Parkway since establishment using the master plan and Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMs) for guidance. The master plan and the maps served the Parkway well during the period of development, Parkway road completion, and through on-going maintenance. However, the master plan is long outdated and the Parkway is now facing an increasing array of issues that require the level of guidance of a general management plan. It has been identified that a new plan is needed to do the following:

Clearly define resource conditions and visitor experiences to be achieved at the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Provide a framework for National Park Service managers to use when making decisions about how to protect Parkway resources, how to provide a diverse range of visitor experience opportunities, how to manage visitor use, and what kinds of facilities, if any, to develop in the national park system unit.

Ensure that this foundation for decision-making has been developed in consultation with interested stakeholders and adopted by NPS leadership after an adequate analysis of the benefits, impacts, and economic costs of alternative courses of action.

The GMP presents three alternatives for the future management of Blue Ridge Parkway. The alternatives, which are based on the Parkway's purpose, significance, and special mandates, present different ways to manage resources and visitor use and improve facilities and infrastructure. The three alternatives are the no-action alternative (continue current management), alternative B (preferred), and alternative C.

Alternative B has been identified as the National Park Service's preferred alternative. The GMP states the following for Alternate B, "under alternative B, the parkway would be actively managed as a traditional, self-contained, scenic recreational driving experience and designed landscape. To support that experience, many of the parkway's recreation areas would provide enhanced opportunities for dispersed outdoor recreation activities. Although similar to alternative A, this alternative would more proactively blend newer law and policy requirements and operational constraints with the traditional parkway concept developed during the parkway's historic period of significance, which is 1935 to at least 1955… As a result, this alternative would provide a better balance between traditional parkway experiences and modern-day management realities. For example, some areas would be managed differently to address natural and cultural resource concerns and visitor experiences or to achieve critical operational efficiencies. This alternative would provide a comprehensive parkway-wide approach to resource and visitor use management. Specific management zones detailing acceptable resource conditions, visitor experience and use levels, and appropriate activities and development would be applied to parkway lands consistent with this concept. This alternative would also seek to enhance resource protection, regional natural resource connectivity, and build stronger connections with adjacent communities." [2]

Under alternative C, "parkway management would be more integrated with the larger region's resources and economy. More emphasis would be placed on reaching out to communities and linking to regional natural, recreational, and cultural heritage resources and experiences. The parkway would continue to be managed to retain the fundamental character of the traditional designed landscape and scenic driving experience. However, a variety of more modern recreational and visitor service amenities would be provided, primarily concentrated in visitor services areas. As a result, portions of some recreation areas would be redesigned." [3]

Additional actions and alternatives were considered. However, these actions and alternatives were dismissed from further analysis. These dismissed actions and alternatives are presented, along with rationale, in "Chapter 2: Alternatives" in the final General Management Plan.[4] Recommendations for Rocky Knob included in the GMP as the preferred alternative have been addressed in this CLR.

In June 1992, Ian J. W. Firth of the School of Environmental Design, University of Georgia, prepared a draft historic resource study and National Historic Landmark nomination for the Parkway. Firth proposed nominating the Parkway as a historic district having national significance and developed a list of contributing resources for the proposed district. Of the 15 major recreation areas along the Parkway, Firth recommended that the 11 included in the NPS pre-World War II master plans should be included in the proposed historic district, including Rocky Knob. Due to inclusion in the proposed historic district, special considerations have been made in the treatment recommendations within this CLR.

Treatment Period/Date

The period of significance for Rocky Knob Recreation Area has been determined to be 1937-1962 based on the completion of this portion of the Parkway, Section 1-S in 1937 and the completion of the final component landscape of the recreation area in 1962.

2 U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. *Blue Ridge Parkway Virginia and North Carolina Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement.* (January 2013), GMP Summary, pp. iv.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid, Introduction.

Treatment Recommendations

The following treatment recommendations are provided by the authors to guide long-term management of the cultural landscape at Rocky Knob. As funding becomes available the recommendations should be considered to facilitate the preservation and rehabilitation of the cultural landscape thus ensuring the integrity of the resources as per the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes and Director's Order No. 28: Cultural Resource Management Guidelines*. The preferred treatment for Rocky Knob Recreation Area is preservation to ensure that the cultural resources remain intact and and the visitor experience remains uncompromised. While preservation is the overarching treatment, exceptions have been made for the rehabilitation of specific resources to accommodate current visitor use.

Vegetation

General. Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMs) provide direction for the implementation and management of vegetation. This includes reestablishment of vegetation, removal of vegetation, preservation of existing specimen species, framing of views and vistas with vegetation and highlighting native plant material both with clearing and supplementary plantings. Specific recommendations are provided on the PLUMs for maintaining views. Canopy lines drawn on the PLUMs designate canopy and open areas and individual trees are indicated along with species.

- Preserve and restore landscape and amenity areas to reflect the original design intent as indicated on the historic PLUMs to the extent possible.
- Replace historic specimen trees shown on PLUMs in kind.
- Rehabilitate areas that are suffering from wear and tear with appropriate improvements.
- Rehabilitate areas damaged from recent ice storms.

Pruning- Properly prune and remove any damaged, dead, or diseased plant material, especially in high use areas where safety, accessibility, and views may be compromised. Pruning should be performed during the dormant season.

Pest Control- Continue to monitor vegetation for disease and insect infestation, treat using Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices. NPS has already begun to combat the woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*) in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park with "systematic injections of pesticides, insecticidal oils and soaps, and biological control."[5] According to Saveourhemlocks.org, "pesticide-based methods work best on individual trees and small stands, but are impossible to apply in backwoods areas, where the most promising treatment option is biological control."[6] This section of Parkway should be monitored for invasion by the pest and appropriate approved pest control applications should be used when it is encountered. Monitor pines along this section of Parkway for pine beetle invasion. If pine beetle infestation is found, it should be treated using NPS approved methods.

Invasive Plants- Japanese stilt grass (*Microstegium vimineum*)—also known as Nepalese browntop—is known to be a problem along some portions of the Parkway. This low grass is well adapted to low light conditions and threatens the viability of native groundcovers and grasses. According to the NPS Plant Conservation Alliance, "Stilt grass can be mowed in late summer (i.e., August through September) when the plants are flowering but preferably before seed is produced. This can be done using a lawn mower or "Weed Whacker" type machine or a scythe. Because stilt grass is primarily an annual plant, cutting late in the season before the plants would die back naturally avoids the possibility of regrowth. Recent information suggests that stilt grass plants cut early in the summer respond by regrowing and flowering soon after cutting, much earlier than they would

5 "Saving our Hemlocks from the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid," http://www.saveourhemlocks.org/; accessed via internet 7/6/06.

6 Ibid.

normally flower."[7] Invasive species predominant in the Rocky Knob Recreation Area include multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculata*) and tree of heaven (*ailanthus spp.*). These are woody species, which can be cut. It may be necessary to use an approved herbicide on the cut stems of vines and shrubs.

Natural Resource Protection- The GMP states that under current management, long-term moderate adverse local impacts on wetlands would continue. This is due in part to a lack of active vegetation management to prevent the succession of these rare habitats. With the absence of natural fires and native herbivores to inhibit the spread of encroaching woody plants, many wetlands scattered throughout this recreation area would gradually disappear. There are adverse impacts on Rock Castle Creek at the bottom of the gorge, possibly the result of a leaky septic system at the Rocky Knob cabins and the latrine at the backcountry campsite further downstream. Under this alternative, long-term moderate adverse local impacts on water quality would continue.[8]

Campground Area. The Chestnut Orchard is a unique resource to Rocky Knob and therefore worthy of interpretation. There is potential to collaborate with a university interested in American chestnut research or an agricultural outreach program. Interpretation should reference the original intent to experiment with plants that hold potential to supplement or replace native varieties threatened by invasive species.

The building files for the comfort stations are needed in order to assess changes in the Comfort Station plantings. Preserve and restore landscape to reflect the original design intent as indicated on the historic PLUMs to the extent possible.

Maintenance Area. The vegetative character of open rolling hills with a concentration of development and enhancement is in keeping with landscape character indicated on the PLUMS. Some plant material is missing. The intact landscape of this area should be preserved and what has been lost should be restored to reflect the original design intent as indicated on the historic PLUMs to the extent possible.

Picnic Area. The landscape in this area is intact according to the PLUMs. Missing or aged species should be replaced to reflect the original design intent as indicated on the historic PLUMs to the extent possible.

Gas Station. Many ornamental trees that are indicated on the PLUMs are missing in this area. The PLUMs and historic planting plan (Illustration 2.17) should be used to restore the historic landscape.

Parkway Section 1-S.

Rehabilitate canopied shrub vista through selective pruning and replanting with native species. Preserve or replant specimen trees indicated on the PLUMs. Where plantings are missing at entrances, overlooks, and in planting islands, replant using PLUMs for location. Species information is included on the PLUMs for this section of the Parkway, but neighboring sections or sections of Parkway may also be consulted for appropriate species information.

Mowing- Mowing adjacent to Parkway should be performed per *Superintendent's Order #12: 2005 Roadside Mowing Standards*. Maintain diversity in mowing regime to encourage variety along Parkway in types of vegetative edges (mown edges and meadow edges). Maintain consistent mown road shoulder.

Overlooks- Restore median and roadside plantings per original PLUMs where indicated at overlooks.

Shoulder Condition- Maintain with mowing regime of grass swales as outlined in *Superintendent's Order #12: Mowing Standards*. Regrade to maintain positive drainage as needed. If the grass edge condition of the Parkway is such that the grass has built-up along the road so that it is above pavement grade and therefore impeding flow of positive drainage, the grass in these areas should be removed (1'-3' wide strip or as needed) and the shoulder fine graded to accept new sod that is below road grade.

7 "Japanese Stilt Grass", Jil M. Swearingen, National Park Service, Washington, DC http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/mivi1.htm, accessed via internet 7/6/06.

8 U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Blue Ridge Parkway Virginia and North Carolina Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement. (January 2013), GMP pp 296.

Trails. Vegetation should be pruned as necessary to maintain planned trail routes.

Natural Features. Natural features such as rock outcroppings, streams and wetlands should be preserved and protected. According to the GMP's preferred Alternate B, the upper portion of Rock Castle Gorge would be zoned recreation, which allows for increased visitor use of the area. Additionally, this alternative proposes to improve the Rocky Knob cabins, the lower trailhead parking area, the backcountry camping area, and the trail system. These additional amenities, along with potential increase in use of that area, could degrade water quality, damage riparian vegetation, and disrupt natural processes. Adverse impact to natural features should be carefully considered prior to any new construction.

Rock Castle Creek has already shown signs of water quality degradation, possibly the result of a leaky septic system at the Rocky Knob cabins and the latrine at the backcountry campsite. In addition, the size of the lower trailhead parking lot is already constrained by the steep topography and close proximity to the stream in the bottom of the Gorge. However, future projects designed to improve or expand these facilities could address these ongoing impacts (i.e., upgrade the septic system at the cabins). Considering these combined effects, there would likely be short and long-term minor to moderate adverse local impacts on water quality of the stream and its riparian areas.[9]

Land Use

Recreation. Land use at Rocky Knob is primarily focused on recreation, which should continue, as it is appropriate to the period of significance and the original design intent. Likewise, NPS should continue to manage the Parkway primarily as a scenic recreational driving experience and designed landscape, with Rocky Knob as a significant NPS pre-World War II master planned recreation area. Recreational activities at Rocky Knob include camping (Campground Area), picnicking (Picnic Area), viewing (Overlooks), hiking (over 10 miles of trails), and automobile touring (Parkway). These specific recreational uses should be preserved.

As per the GMP, a rezoning of a portion of Rocky Knob recreation area in the bottom of Rock Castle Gorge has been proposed as special cultural resources to provide greater protection of sensitive cultural resources in the area. Consideration should be given to the added protection of this area as a sensitive cultural and natural resource area.

If new park developments are needed, consideration should be given to improving or expanding the Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook and the Grassy Knoll Overlook to accommodate new uses. The original master planning of these overlooks should be consulted/evaluated if any new development is planned at Rocky Knob.

Interpretation. This important use facilitates the understanding of the significance of the park. Wayside interpretive signs can broaden the understanding of the development of the Parkway and the historic context. Evening programs provided by NPS staff in the Campground and a monthly ranger-led hike through Rock Castle Gorge are some of the interpretive methods employed by Rocky Knob Recreation Area that should continue.

Current interpretation of the old Rock Castle Gorge settlement area is limited to monthly interpretive hikes through the gorge. There is opportunity for additional information and interpretation at Rock Castle Gorge. If acquired, the now privately owned Austin House could be used to interpret the Gorge community. As a result, visitors have limited access to information and interpretation about this area. The Worley House could also be repurposed for this use. The historic Civilian Conservation Corps campsite in Rock Castle Gorge would be zoned Special Cultural Resource, according to the GMP. Consideration should be given to interpreting the CCC camp at the primitive camping area. Increased emphasis on this area and interpretation at the site would result in a slight increase in overall visitation and should be sensitive to adverse impacts.

Other suggested waysides include: 1) the interpretation of the Parkway designer's use of vernacular buildings for inspiration, such as the barn off Parkway at Tuggle Gap as inspiration for early comfort station, 2) the "lone pine" as

9 U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. *Blue Ridge Parkway Virginia and North Carolina Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement.* (January 2013), page 299.

inspiration for Parkway logo, and 3) interpretation of the design and construction of small-scale features.

Agricultural Leases. Lands adjacent to the recreation area are primarily devoted to private residential and agricultural properties. This land use is valuable to the scenic quality and experience of the Parkway and trails. Those leases that are visible from the Parkway, Recreation Area, and trails should be retained in order to maintain views without intrusion. The scenic quality of the leased land contributes greatly to the visitor experience and should be maintained, where feasible. Many predate the Parkway, and some may have Native American origins. This resource contributes significantly to maintaining the integrity of the entire Parkway and Rocky Knob.

If maintenance of these areas becomes too great, the NPS should consider diversifying the agricultural lease program beyond cattle and hay production. Introducing a mobile unit of grazing animals for Parkway-wide management of agricultural lands is also an alternative. Cattle can be a water resource management issue, as they cause erosion and contaminate waterways. Livestock species that have less impact on the ground and are easier to transport, such as sheep or goats, may be an alternative. Sheep have been well documented in historic photos within Rocky Knob Recreation Area's agricultural leases and would therefore be an appropriate choice as well as a lower-impact option.

Private In-holding. A single privately owned home built in 1916, exists near the center of the gorge and is visible from the park trail system. Known as the Austin House, it is the only remaining home from the Rock Castle Gorge Community and the only privately owned parcel located within Rocky Knob Recreation Area. Consideration should be given to acquiring the life estate of the in holding parcel and potentially producing a Historic Structure Report for the Austin House if acquired. If acquired, the Austin house could be used to interpret life in Rock Castle Gorge community. The property's apple orchard and history of apple production in the Gorge is of particular interest.

Utilitarian.

Maintenance Area- This planned utilitarian landscape continues to operate in that capacity for park support. NPS intended the area to serve as a functional element necessary for running and constructing the Parkway. The addition of staff residential units and the offices of the rangers have done little to change that utilitarian nature. Visitors to the Parkway do not see this area from the roadway and rarely have a need to enter the site. This area acts as a core of Parkway administrative offices, supplies storage area, and employee housing site.

Circulation

Parkway Section 1-S. Preserve the original Parkway road alignment, width and material as a historic resource. Maintain surface treatments as needed with same materials by doing the following:

- Mill down asphalt along Parkway road before replacing to maintain proper drainage to stone gutters and other drainage structures.
- Maintain current striping patterns (middle stripe only, no shoulder striping.)
- Maintain consistent grassed shoulder between road edge and walls, gutters, bridges, etc.
- Repair and regrade eroded roadside areas for positive drainage to existing drainage structures.
- Mill down old asphalt paving in overlook parking areas and replace using a method that does not obscure the stone curbing materials and maintains original drainage design.
- Replace chipped, cracked, broken, or missing stone curbing at overlooks (see specific recommendations for curbing at overlooks).

Campground Area- Rehabilitate by remilling and resurfacing asphalt roads throughout camping area. All camping loops should remain intact. The GMP explores RV access for existing campgrounds, however the NPS preferred alternative is to continue to provide access as it exists by retaining the historic width and alignment, as part of the historic Parkway. This means maintaining the existing narrow roads, tight turns, and small

parking spaces that limit access for larger RVs. A portion of the trailer only parking spaces at the Campground could be redesigned to better accommodate larger RVs for camping.

Maintenance Area- Rehabilitate by remilling and resurfacing as needed to maintain the surface. Retain the historic road width and alignment as part of the historic Parkway.

Picnic Area- Rehabilitate by remilling and resurfacing asphalt roads and parking. Consider returning to the historic condition of an unpaved gravel surface. Maintain existing road width and alignment as well as parking configuration. Maintain surface elevation along stacked the stone wall so that historic wall heights are not compromised.

Gas Station- Rehabilitate by remilling, resurfacing and restriping as needed for maintenance. Retain the historic road width and alignment of drive and parking configuration as part of the historic Parkway. Consider removing the non-historic expanded parking area nearest to the building and returning the parking to the historic footprint as shown in Illustration 2.17.

Rock Castle Gorge- Rehabilitate and improve parking near backcountry campsites. These improvements will likely cause visitation to this area to increase. Minor adverse impacts on traffic volumes, level of service, and parking are expected. Impacts to buildings and building remnants associated with the CCC camp and the Rock Castle Gorge Community must be considered.

Pedestrian and General- Maintain alignment, width, and material of pedestrian routes according to historic patterns. Introduce universal access to amenity areas where appropriate. Consider alternate routes for ADA access if adverse affect on historic resources and integrity is possible (i.e. retain historic stepping stone paths, etc. to greatest extent possible). Evaluate options through cost/benefit analysis as to impact to the cultural resource. When replacing asphalt sidewalks at overlooks, remove accumulations of asphalt paving and replace in a manner which does not obscure stone curbing an maintains original drainage design.

Overlooks- Preserve historic alignment, width and material of overlook paths except where ADA accessibility is needed. Provide universal access ramp to sidewalk level at all overlooks.

Campground Area- Rehabilitate paths in need of repair. Consider use of permeable material in place of asphalt such as stabilized granite or slate. Maintain historic width and alignment of paths. Edge restraint should not be added.

Maintenance Area- Rehabilitate paths in need of repair and retain paved surfaces as necessary to accommodate maintenance activities.

Picnic Area- Rehabilitate paths in need of repair. Consider use of permeable material in place of asphalt such as stabilized granite or slate. Maintain historic width and alignment of paths. Edge restraint should not be added.

Rock Castle Gorge and other trails- Rehabilitate trails in need repair. Per GMP, upgrade Rock Castle Gorge trail system and enhance primitive camping area. Provide trailhead for group staging. Provide better signage for trails. Upgrading the trail does have the potential to affect historic buildings, the cultural landscape, and natural resources. Sensitivity of this area should be carefully considered prior to improvements.

Views and Vistas

Parkway Section 1-S.

General- Preserve/rehabilitate views indicated on PLUMs through selective clearing.

Overlooks- According to the *2005 Blue Ridge Parkway Scenic Vista Cutting Management Plan*, "Most overlooks are cyclically cleared of vegetation to maintain scenic vistas and provide the visitor with the opportunity to enjoy a scene for a long duration of time."[10] Maintain views and vistas using appropriate maintenance regime as outlined in the *Blue Ridge Parkway Scenic Vista Cutting Management Plan*.

Roadway Vistas- According to the 2005 Blue Ridge Parkway Scenic Vista Cutting Management Plan, "Along the roadway, cleared scenic vistas provide

10 Hultquist, Larry and Dott Abernathy, *Blue Ridge Parkway Scenic Vista Cutting Management Plan*, (US Department of the Interior, NPS, March 08, 2005), 1.

the greatest duration of viewing opportunity to the motorist who is traveling along the Parkway at an average speed of 45 miles per hour."[11] Maintain diversity in types of views and vistas along the Parkway including canopy.

Mapping Vistas- As stated in the Scenic Vista Cutting Management Plan, "Survey nails and washers have been set into the pavement to mark the extents of the cut but these are often lost or difficult to find. . .new GPS technology and digital photographic documentation must be implemented so that the footprint area of each vista cut can be mapped in detail."[12]

Trails- All scenic resources within the viewshed of the trails add to the quality of the trail experience, including cultural resources, natural resources and agricultural leases. Views of these resources that contribute to the viewshed of the trails should be preserved.

Buildings and Structures

General. Establish (or return to) a Parkway wide color/stain for all Parkway buildings. The Rocky Knob buildings/signs/ etc. are a uniform grey color whereas further south (Doughton Park, Julian Price) the buildings are much more blue. Return to the use of the stain that Stanley Abbot mentions in early reports Parkway-wide for consistency.

Treatment Recommendations for Specific Resources

Campground Area

Buildings and Structures. Modern campground amenities such as showers, as well as universal accessibility, may need to be accommodated to increase visitation to the campground. Adverse impacts on the historic buildings in the area would possibly result from some of the planned conversions, facility upgrades, and additions. Ideally, the historic structures will be preserved to the greatest extent possible and a new facility would be constructed that provides modern amenities, such as shower facilities. A recent example of a new comfort station exists at Otter Creek, where historic comfort stations are being replaced with modern facilities that are vernacular in appearance. Since Rocky Knob is classified as historic Parkway in the GMP, every effort should be made to preserve the comfort stations at Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

An inventory and integrity study is currently being conducted study Parkway-wide that will inform the preservation and treatment of the historic structures along the Parkway. This study should be consulted prior to any changes to buildings and structures. If changes to structures are undertaken, they shall be in accordance with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (1995). Ground disturbing activities for utility lines shall avoid loss of integrity to archeological resource.

Preservation of structures and on-going maintenance may have to be balanced with established Parkway-wide standards. For example, the standard color of stain used predominately throughout the Parkway should become the standard, while still preserving the historic material and style of the individual resource. Consideration may also be given to removing veneer from all Mission 66 comfort stations and returning to original concrete block exteriors. Consider a return to original unpainted (stained) board and batten upper portions when veneer is removed.

Original features should be preserved. Retain original roof features when roofing is replaced, including the ornamental ridge covers and skylights. The original design of doors should be preserved/restored. It has been noted that these details are often lost when improvements are made to Parkway comfort stations.

Comfort Station #450– Preserve comfort station to the greatest extent possible.

Comfort Station #451– Preserve comfort station to the greatest extent possible.

Comfort Station #439 – Preserve comfort station to the greatest extent possible.

Comfort Station #438 – Preserve comfort station to the greatest extent possible.

11 Hultquist and Abernathy, 1-2.

12 Hultquist and Abernathy, 2.

Small-scale Features. Parkway standard details for many small-scale features are held at Rocky Knob archives and at Parkway archives in Asheville, NC. Drawings for features such as drinking fountains, tent pads, entrance gate and comfort stations are among those found in the archives. Details for other small-scale features such as signage can be found at Parkway archives.

Campground Registration Sign– Preserve registration sign of unique Mission 66 design. Repair and replace wood as needed.

Campfire Circle– Preserve the land use and location of the campfire circle. Rehabilitate other components as they have been altered.

Stone Curb– Preserve existing curb and reset disturbed stone. Replace missing sections of curb with original Rocky Knob Black Stone. Consider full removal of original curb if sites are altered for RVs and salvage material for replacement for use elsewhere in the campground.

Stairs– Preserve existing stairs and rehabilitate where repairs are needed.

Drinking Fountains– Preserve existing drinking fountains, as they contribute greatly to the character of the campground and the Parkway as a whole and few small-scale features exist from the period of significance. The original design for the fountains does not allow for access to internal plumbing. Consider rehabilitation of existing original stone drinking fountains that will allow for perpetual maintenance. Consider replacing missing stone fountains in their original locations. Parkway staff recently partnered with a university engineering class to design new interior fixtures that allow the replacement fountains to be maintained, and Parkway staff retains much of the original stone material used to build the fountains. In addition, original plans for the fountains exist at the Rocky Knob archives and at the Parkway Archives in Asheville, NC.

Drainage Structures– Preserve existing drainage structures, such as stone headwalls, as they contribute greatly to the character of the campground, Rocky Knob Recreation Area, and the entire Parkway.

Entrance Gates– Preserve entry gates, as they are original Parkway standard gates. Repair/paint as necessary for upkeep. Consult historic detail plans on file at Parkway archives for original dimensions and detailing when repairs are needed.

Signage General– Preserve historic signage and rehabilitate as repairs are needed. Consider removal of plastic signs and replace with routed stained wood in keeping with the historic character of the Parkway.

Trail Sign– Replace recycled plastic trail system sign with routed wood.

Campsite Markers– Consider removal of non-historic campsite markers and consider returning to historic practice of marking campsites with painted site numbers.

Tent Campsites– Preserve tent sites. Consider rehabilitation of a few selected tent sites by enlarging to better accommodate family-sized tents.

RV/Trailer Only Campsites– Consider rehabilitation of selected RV sites by upgrading with water and electrical hookups to increase visitor use of the campground. Ground disturbing activities should be undertaken to avoid loss of integrity to archeological resources in this area, as trenching may be required for utilities.

Original Grills– Preserve original Mission 66 grills and repair as necessary. These features contribute to the character of the campground.

Host Campsite– Preserve.

Litter Deposit Area– Preserve. Continue the use of wood fence to screen dumpsters and recycling.

Maintenance Area

Buildings and Structures. The Rocky Knob Maintenance complex, while altered, is one of the more intact maintenance areas along the Parkway. Post Mission 66 period changes by NPS; include T1-11 plywood siding covers original cinder block exterior walls; replacement of metal roof with asphalt shingles; and replacement of original garage doors.

Consider conducting an HSR for the maintenance area buildings. Consider removing veneer on one of the buildings, possibly building #86, to reveal and interpret original utilitarian design features. Because this area is not in the public view, treatment recommendations for buildings and structures in this area are a low priority.

Warehouse and Equipment Storage #2 – Preserve and rehabilitate as needed.

Carpenter and Paint Shop #3– Preserve and rehabilitate as needed. NPS renovated the building adding a new roof effectively combining the Carpenter and Paint Shop, its 1952 Cinderblock addition, and the Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building into a single structure.

Office and Tool Storage #4– Preserve and rehabilitate as needed. Original garage doors replaced with contemporary double doors. Wooden ramp added to main façade.

Oil and Paint Storage #5– Preserve and rehabilitate as needed.

Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86– Preserve and rehabilitate as needed. Consider removing veneer to reveal and interpret original utilitarian design features.

Employee Residences– Preserve and rehabilitate as needed to maintain their Resumption of Construction period exterior appearance. Consider additional research into Pre-Parkway Planning and Construction period appearance for possible restoration in the future.

Hose Reel House– Preserve.

District Office Trailer– Consider removing trailers from Maintenance Area or replacing them with a more appropriate building type.

Small-scale Features.

Drainage Structures– Preserve existing drainage structures, as they contribute greatly to the character of the historic Parkway.

Signage– Replace plastic/foam signs with a routed wood, such as Redwood.

Concrete Retaining Wall– Rehabilitate failing retaining wall with same materials, height and configuration.

Guardrail– Consider replacing missing rustic timber guardrail along drive lane between maintenance area and employee residences using the PLUMs for the exact location. Timber guardrail was likely identical to the rail visible in historic photos of the Picnic Area and The Saddle Overlook. Detail of 'Low Guard Rail' on Illustration 2.13 should be used as a basis for new rail in this location.

Picnic Area

As visitation to the Rocky Knob Picnic Area has declined, the GMP suggests reducing the size o the Picnic Area and therefore the number of picnic spaces and associated small-scale features. The GMP suggests reducing the picnic area to the footprint of the original picnic only loop. This loop currently contains the highest concentration of picnic spaces and features a knoll with rock outcrop, some original grills, a few Mission 66 period picnic tables, and is adjacent to the large parking lot and grass area.

If the northeastern loop (near the entrance) is no longer maintained as a picnic area, the road alignment should be retained, as a number of resources exist along the road and the road itself serves as part of the informal (unmarked) trail system in the picnic area. This trail appears to get frequent use by day visitors stopping for exercise and dog walking. The two loops provide a varied setting for picnickers as the northeastern loop is more secluded. The planned campground loop (southwest) is densely populated with picnic sites, which could be reduced if maintenance is an issue.

Consider selecting one highly visible original picnic site that retains original small-scale features for preservation/restoration. The preserved site could be used for interpretation of early Parkway small-scale features designed to blend seamlessly into the surrounding landscape.

Buildings and Structures.
Comfort Station #9– Preserve the historic features of the comfort station and restore/replace the asphalt roof with split wood shake as per original design, when the current roof requires replacement.

Comfort Station #84– Preserve. Consider removing plywood veneer and exposing original concrete block walls.

Picnic Pavilion #964– Retain non-historic pavilion for use by large groups. Preserve the stone retaining wall enclosure, grills and picnic tables.

Small-scale Features.
Stone Fireplaces– Preserve and restore where possible using original details. Use original grates and stones from other picnic areas if available. Consider identifying a few sites to restore to historic small-scale features. Choose one site within public view, possibly near Comfort Station #9, and in close proximity with the stone retaining wall and historic drinking fountain to be interpreted.

Picnic Tables–Replace recycled plastic picnic table slats in picnic area with rot resistant wood (i.e. Red Cedar) cut to the historic thickness appropriate to Mission 66 period tables. Note that concrete tables with wooden seat slats are not the original table type used in the Picnic Area. The original tables featured all wood (American chestnut) construction and none remain in the landscape today. Consider restoring one wooden picnic table using historic photographs for interpretation.

Stone Retaining Wall– Preserve and repair as needed. Protect during any road surface improvements.

Stone Tree Wells– Preserve the stone structure. Replace trees that have been lost only if no adverse affect to the stone well.

Drinking Fountains– Preserve existing historic stone drinking fountains, as they contribute greatly to the character of the campground and the Parkway and few small-scale features exist from the period of significance. Rehabilitate as needed for perpetual maintenance. Utilize original plans on file at the Parkway Archives in Asheville, NC.

Entrance Gates– Preserve existing Parkway standard timber gates. Replace components as needed over time. Preserve remnant metal eyebolts that served as the original gates to the Picnic Area.

Guardrail– Original rustic timber guardrail details exist if replacement of existing Post-Mission 66 guardrails is needed. See Illustration 2.13.

Stairs– Preserve existing stairs and rehabilitate where repairs are needed.

Stone Curb– Preserve existing curb and reset disturbed stone. Replace missing sections of curb with original Rocky Knob Black Stone.

Drainage Structures– Preserve drainage structures. Clean original stone headwalls and remove debris. Reset stones as needed. Document stone configuration prior to resetting to insure that the original design is retained.

Signage (Trail Signs)– Preservation of the two large routed wood trail signs that are similar in character to the Parkway Gunboard signs. Reset signs as needed.

Signage (general)– Replace plastic/foam signs with a durable wood, such as Redwood with routed lettering. Preserve any concrete trail markers.

Litter Deposit Areas– Preserve and repair as needed.

Fences– Preserve and repair as needed. Rocky Knob wooden fences are very accurate to the PLUMs. The older wooden type fences should be used along the roadway while the post and wire for the less visible sections is historically appropriate and may provide cost savings. Maintain the rustic vernacular appearance close to the roadway, but may deviate in less visible spaces. This is in keeping with the Parkway policy that was established early on as the chestnut fence rails became scarce.

Gas Station

Buildings and Structures.
Gas Station #82– The historic gas station structure currently serves as the visitor contact station. In order to maintain the visitor contact function it would continue to require operating and maintenance expenditures as well as the time of cultural resource, maintenance and

engineering staff. In order to reduce the number of interpretation and education staff and maintenance resources needed at this location, the GMP recommends converting the gas station from visitor contact station to a trailhead shelter, in conjunction with development of a visitor contact facility at Mabry Mill. This could reduce demands on Parkway staff and concurrently improve the parking availability for day use.

Rehabilitation is the recommended treatment for the Gas Station to allow for the change in use. When the existing asphalt Gas Station roof needs repair and replacement, the replacement shingles should be cement as recently used in the rehabilitation of Bluffs Lodge and Coffee Shop at Doughton Park.

Wooden Buildings– The two wooden buildings associated with the Gas Station should be preserved. Any contents of the buildings (i.e. signage, building materials) should be carefully removed from the building and transported to the Parkway headquarters for archiving.

Small-scale Features.
Curbing– Preserve the original concrete curbing. Remove all pink granite (not original) and replace with rolled concrete curb.

Signage– Consideration should be given to reconstructing the original Tavern-style sign for the Gas Station as it contributes to the character and understanding of the original use of the building. An interpretive sign featuring a historic photo of the Gas Station with Tavern-style sign would also be affective. The new sign should feature a breakaway base to meet FHWA standards for roadway signage.

Fire Hydrant and Hose Reel– Preserve this small-scale feature.

Concrete Drainage Structure– Preserve this small-scale feature.

Parkway Section 1-S

Buildings and Structures.
Tuggle Gap Grade Separation/Interchange– Preserve this interchange structure (bridge, abutments) and roadway as historic Parkway.

Trail Lodge Cabins– Preserve the cabins and their current use as important and unique resources to the Parkway. Continue to find ways to provide cabin concession services. Preserve the primitive experience of the cabins by retaining original furnishings and amenities, including the central bathhouse. The primitive nature contributes greatly to the visitor experience and is a visitor expectation that appears to be appreciated by Parkway users. Any changes to these structures would likely be an adverse affect. Consider undertaking a CLR and HSR for the Trail Lodge Cabins in the future. Preserve the unique lodging experience, including: communal bathhouse; rustic interiors; no television; retain original furnishings, etc.

Whorley House– Stabilize and further evaluate structurally. Include in the CLR and HSR efforts if undertaken for the Trail Lodge Cabins. If the structure is determined to be unsound and a hazard to visitors, then consideration should be given to interpreting the original framing of the house along with historic photos and history of the house prior to Parkway construction. Also, consider use as interpretive point for the Trail Lodge Cabins.

A Cultural Landscape Report for the Trail Lodge Cabins should be undertaken prior to any alterations to the Trail Lodge Cabins and their cultural landscape. The cabins are a one of a kind resource on the Parkway and must be understood in order to be managed effectively.

Trail Shelter– Preserve.

Pump House– Preserve. Consider replacement of metal roof with original concrete shingle roof.

Small-scale Features.
Drainage Structures– Preserve drainage structures. These small-scale features contribute greatly to the character of the Parkway.

Stone gutters– Preserve stone gutters. These small-scale features contribute greatly to the character of the Parkway.

Signage (Concrete Mileposts)– Preserve concrete mile marker posts as consistent small-scale feature throughout the Parkway.

Signage (Parkway Entrance Sign)– Preservation. The design of this sign dates to 1949 and this example should be preserved.

Fence– Preserve and repair as needed. Existing Rocky Knob Recreation Area fences are remarkably consistent with the PLUMs. The older wooden type fences should be used along the roadway while the post and wire is appropriate for the rest to minimize cost. Maintain the rustic vernacular appearance close to the roadway, but may deviate in less visible spaces. This is in keeping with the Parkway policy established early on as the chestnut fence rails became scarce.

Spring Outlet Wall– Rehabilitate the collapsed stone structure. Consult PLUMs and photos if available. Since this resource is not visible to the majority of visitors, the recommendation is a low priority.

The Saddle Overlook

Small-scale Features.

Stone Retaining Wall– Rehabilitate stone retaining wall. Some repointing of mortar is needed. The asphalt paving has reduced current wall height. Consideration should be given in future paving improvements to milling and repaving to prevent further height reduction.

Granite Curb– Original Rocky Knob Black Stone curbs have been replaced with split faced granite curb, which is not appropriate for this section of the Parkway. Remove the existing pink granite and replace with Rocky Knob Black Stone. Pink granite may be salvaged for repairs in areas of the Parkway where the pink granite was originally quarried.

Signage (Gunboard)– The original Gunboard sign was installed in 1941 and replaced several times since. Current sign material is unknown, as signboard was missing when fieldwork was conducted. If sign is foam or recycled plastic, it should be replaced with a routed wood sign.

Signage (trail sign)– Preservation existing sign. Rustic wood trail sign replaced in kind over the years.

Drainage Structures– Preserve stone drainage structures. These small-scale features contribute greatly to the character of the Parkway.

Rock Castle Gorge Overlook

Small-scale Features.

Granite Curb– Remove pink granite and replace with Rocky Knob Black Stone.

Stairs– Consider replacing contemporary wooden stairs with a Parkway standard detail.

Signage (Overlook Identification)– The original sign is missing and should be replaced with Parkway standard wooden overlook sign identifying the name and elevation of the overlook.

Twelve O'clock Overlook

Small-scale Features.

Stone Curb– Preserve stone curbing at Twelve O'clock Overlook. The original curb here is unique in the use of stone that was likely quarried within Rocky Knob Area.

Trail Sign– Preserve wooden trail sign. Do not replace signboard with recycled plastic or foam.

Stone Steps– Preserve stone steps.

Stone Headwall– Preserve stone headwall.

Rocky Knob Treatment Implementation

The Project Management Information System (PMIS) is used by the NPS to plan schedules, budget and execute work to be accomplished in project management. The following are proposed PMIS statements for the Blue Ridge Parkway park/unit, specifically for Rocky Knob, as an outcome of the Treatment Recommendations made in this report. Cost provided is an estimate.

Proposed PMIS Statements:

Research and Prototype for Cement Replacement Roof Shingles

Estimated Project Total Cost: $60,000

Description: Conduct research and a develop a prototype for historic cement roof shingles for repair and replacement on Rocky Knob structures, such as the Gas Station and the Pump House. The research could then be applied to structures elsewhere within the BLRI.

Recommendations: Provide a study of the existing historic cement shingles for reproduction to be

use in roof replacement and repair. Consult with Harper's Ferry Center to determine original material mixture based on existing historic examples. Include detailed information such as: dimensions of shingle; material content and ratio of mix; original craftsmen; process of curing and conditions; method of installation and repair, etc. Develop a prototype for the replacement shingles and field test for durability, historic accuracy and method of installation and repair.

Rehabilitate Gas Station #82 for Trailhead Shelter
Estimated Project Total Cost: $600,000

Description: Restore the landscape around the Gas Station and rehabilitate the building for use as a trailhead shelter.

Recommendations: Consult PLUMs and the historic planting plan for original vegetation. Missing or aged species should be replaced. Restore the landscape around the Gas Station and rehabilitate the building for use as a trailhead shelter. Rehabilitate vehicular circulation by milling, resurfacing and restriping as necessary. Retain historic road alignment and restore historic footprint of parking by removing non-historic expanded parking. This would also remove the pink granite curbing that is not original, as well as the stone drinking fountain added in 2009. This is not a historic location for the fountain and the newly constructed version lacks the refinement and proportions of the originals found in the picnic and camping areas. Replace asphalt roof shingles with cement as used historically. Reconstruct the original tavern-style sign for the Gas Station.

Repave/Repair Rocky Knob Campground Roads
Estimated Project Cost: $500,000

Description: Repave and repair Rocky Knob Campground roads. This contract work will repair areas of damage and/or wear and renew the entire surface. Completing this work will ensure visitor safety and prolong the life as part of a cost-effective plan.

Recommendations: Rehabilitate campground roads by remilling and resurfacing asphalt throughout campground area. Maintain historic road configuration/alignment. If it is necessary to expand any area in order to accommodate visitor use, the approach should be conservative. All camping loops should remain intact. A portion of the existing "trailer only" camping loops could be rehabilitated by expanding parking slips and turning radii and to accommodate larger trailers. Other existing narrow roads, tight turning radii, and smaller parking spaces should be left intact.

Drinking Fountain Rehabilitation
Project Total Cost: $6,000-$100,000 ($6,000 per fountain)

Description: Rehabilitate stone drinking fountains to provide access to internal plumbing for maintenance and repairs

Recommendations: Using the recently completed fountain rehabilitation plans—, which are based on the 'as built' drawings, dated 1962—rehabilitate the stone drinking fountains located in the Picnic Area and the Campground. Several historic fountains were replaced with contemporary models. In total, there were twelve original stone fountains on the PLUMs for the campground and three remain in the landscape. For the picnic area, there were originally six on the "as built" drawings and one remains. Pieces of the historic fountains are currently being stored for future use (i.e. metal bowl, spigot, and stone). These pieces should be used if possible.

Interpretation of the Chestnut Orchard
Project Total Cost: $20,000

Description: The Chestnut Orchard is a unique resource to Rocky Knob and therefore worthy of interpretation.

Recommendations: There is potential to collaborate with a university interested in American chestnut research or an agricultural outreach program. Interpretation should reference the original intent to experiment with plants that hold potential to supplement or replace native varieties threatened by invasive species.

Preservation Planning Documents for Trail Lodge Cabin Area and Worley House
Project Total Cost: $100,000

Description: Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) and Historic Structures Report (HSR) for the Trail Lodge Cabin area component landscape.

Recommendations: Compile a CLR and HSR to guide future planning for this portion of the Rocky Knob Recreation Area with special focus preserving the unique lodging experience of the cabins and to determine future treatment and interpretation of the adjacent Worley House.

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Appendix A

Historic Comparison Photos



Figure A.1: Campground entrance, c.1971



Figure A.2: Campground entrance, note modern replacement sign and contemporary kiosk, 2011



Figure A.3: Campground entrance, c.1971



Figure A.4: Campground entrance, note Post-Mission 66 kiosk, 2011



Figure A.5: Campground entrance, firewood crib, and sanitary dump station c.1971



Figure A.6: Campground entrance, firewood crib, and sanitary dump station, note original curb still in place, 2011

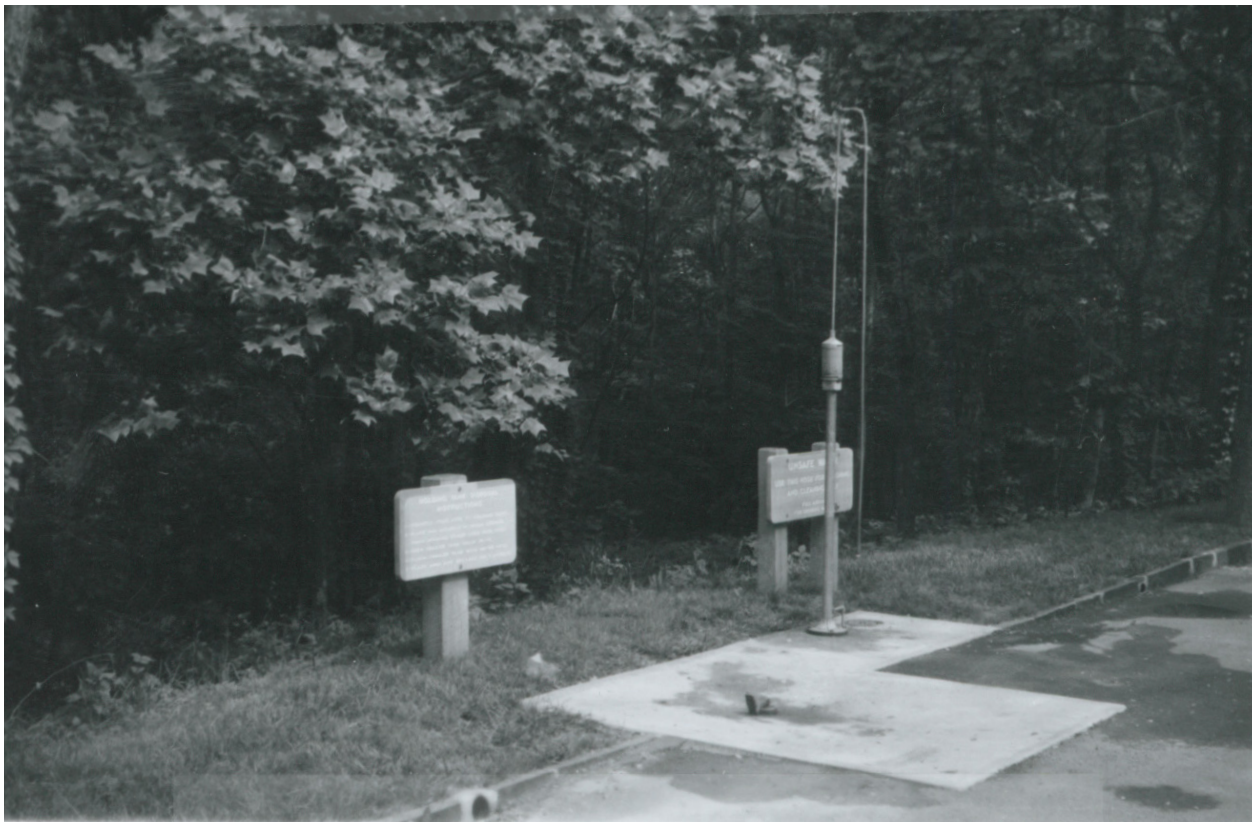


Figure A.7: Sanitary dump station, c.1971



Figure A.8: Sanitary dump station, note addition of concrete curb, 2011



Figure A.9: Campground entrance, firewood crib, registration kiosk, and registration sign c.1971



Figure A.10: Campground entrance, firewood crib, registration kiosk, and registration sign 2011



Figure A.11: Registration kiosk and registration sign in campground, c.1971



Figure A.12: Registration kiosk and registration sign in campground, note original slate curb, 2011

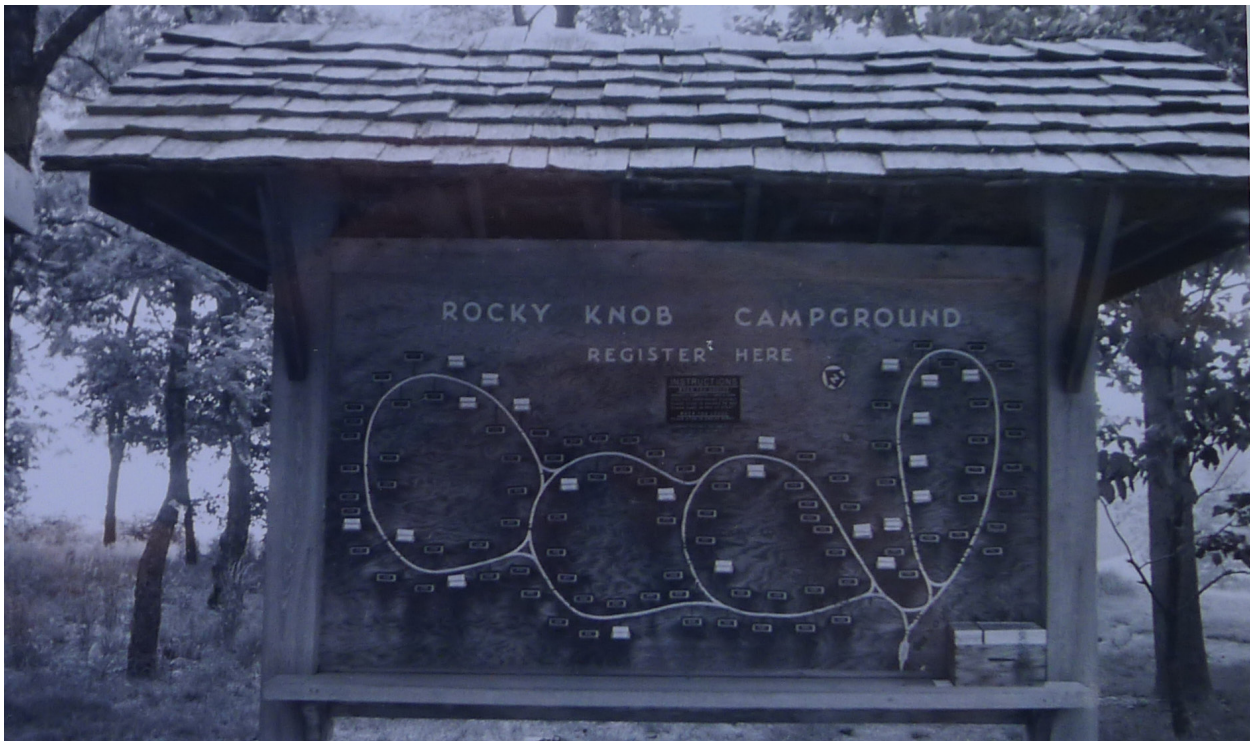


Figure A.13: Campground registration sign c.1971



Figure A.14: Campground registration sign, not missing registration card box at bottom left and contemporary lighting, 2011



Figure A.15: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building and Office and Tools Storage Building, 1952



Figure A.16: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building and Office and Tools Storage Building, note veneer applied to build exterior and replacement garage doors, 2011



Figure A.17: Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3, c.1952



Figure A.18: Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3, note building veneer, replacement garage doors, and closed in addition at left in photograph, c.1952



Figure A.19: Addition to the Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3, c.1952



Figure A.20: Addition to the Carpenter and Paint Shop Building #3, note building veneer, contemporary garage doors, and closed in addition, 2011

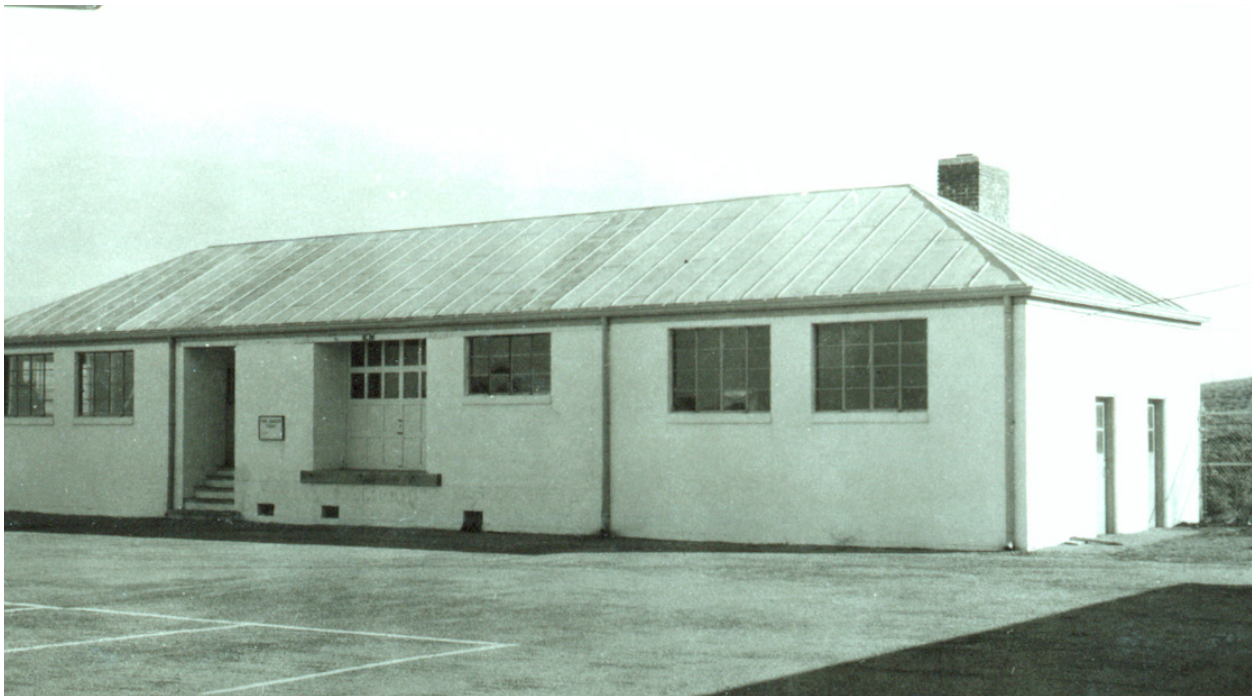


Figure A.21: Office and Tool Storage Building #4, c. 1952



Figure A.22: Office and Tool Storage Building #4, note veneer applied to building exterior, change in roof material, and contemporary wooden ramp, 2011



Figure A.23: Office and Tool Storage Building #4, c.1952



Figure A.24: Office and Tool Storage Building #4, note original rhododendron foundation plantings in decline, 2011



Figure A.25: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5, c. 1952



Figure A.26: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5, 2011



Figure A.27: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5, c.1952



Figure A.28: Oil and Paint Storage Building #5, 2011

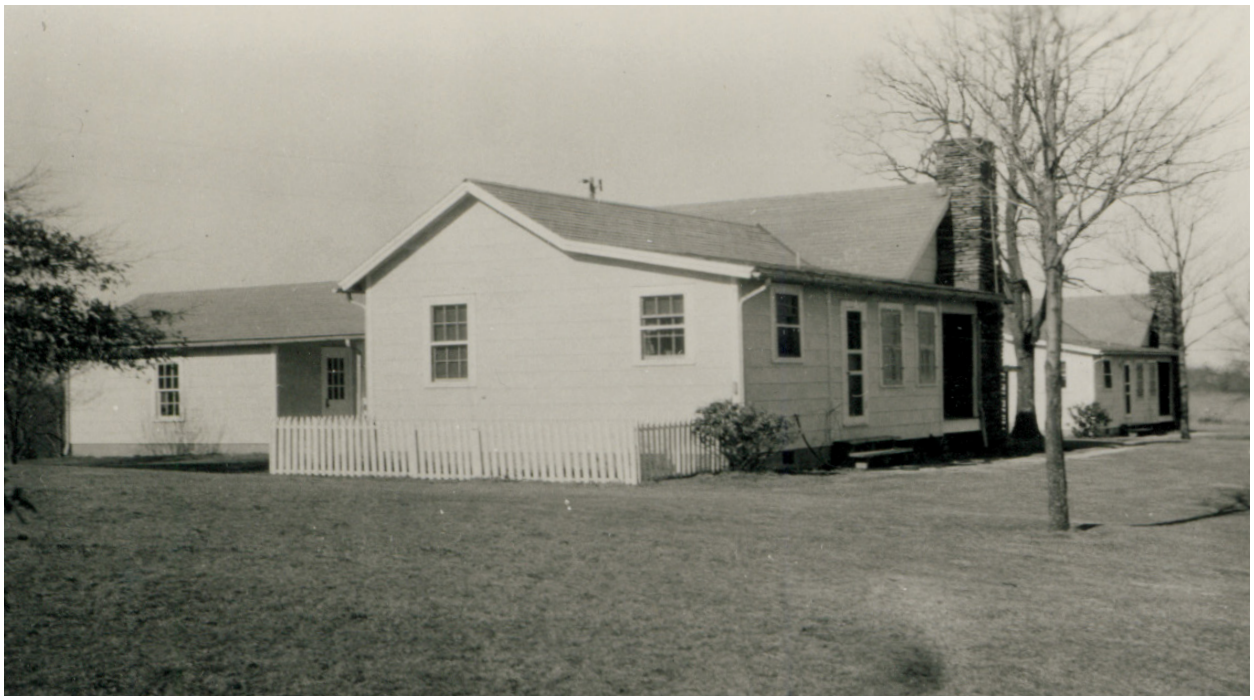


Figure A.29: Employee Residences, c. 1952



Figure A.30: Employee Residences, note mature specimen tree, lack of picket fence, missing shrub plantings, and the contemporary deck on side elevation, 2011



Figure A.31: Employee Residences, c.1952



Figure A.32: Employee Residences, note mature specimen trees, missing shrubs, missing understory trees, and relocated overhead utility line, 2011

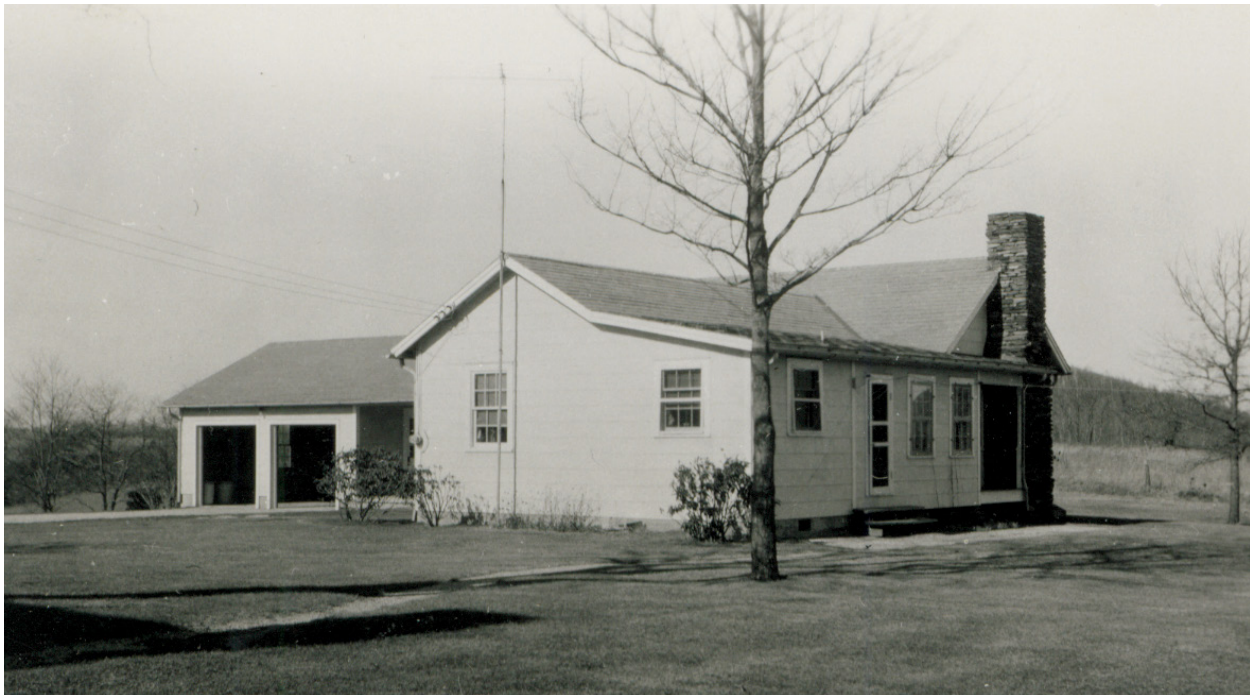


Figure A.33: Employee Residences, c.1952



Figure A.34: Employee Residences, note mature specimen trees, missing shrub plantings, contemporary deck, and contemporary utility building, 2011



Figure A.35: Employee Residences, c.1952



Figure A.36: Employee Residences, note mature specimen tree to the right in photograph, 2011



Figure A.37: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86, c. 1953



Figure A.38: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86, 2011

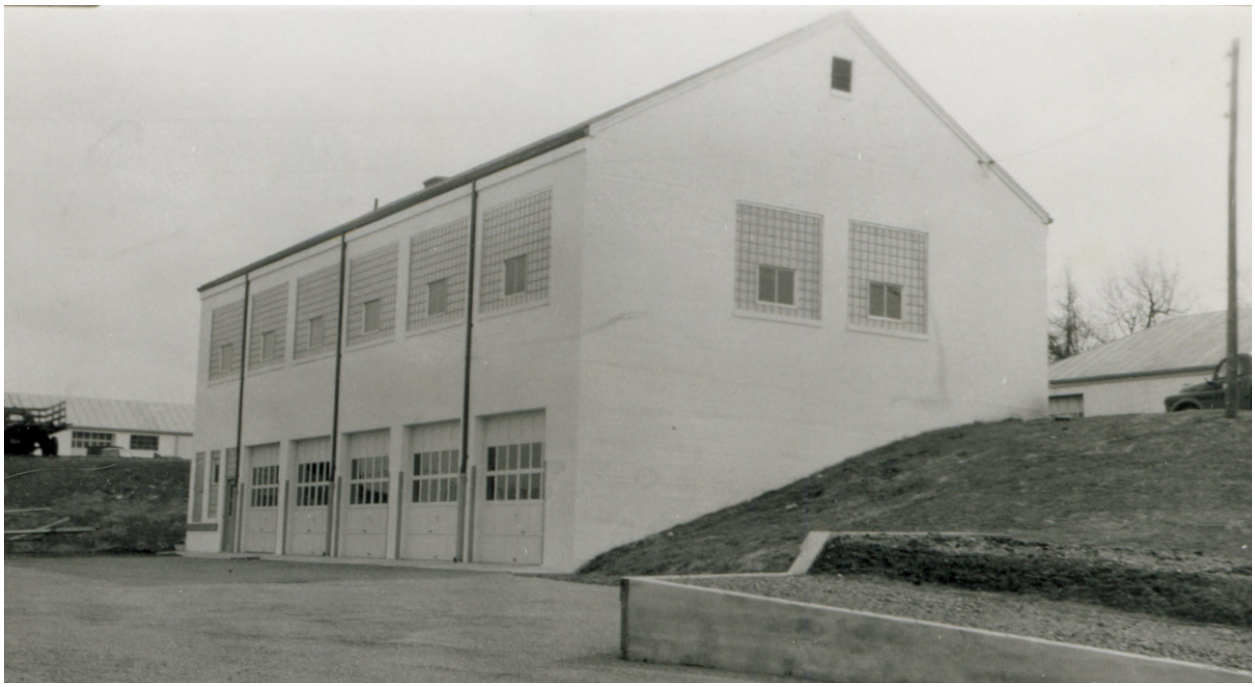


Figure A.39: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86, c. 1953



Figure A.40: Shops and Heavy Equipment Building #86, 2011



Figure A.41: Picnic area road and stacked stone wall, 1938



Figure A.42: Picnic area road and stacked stone wall, note change in wall height due to paving, 2011



Figure A.43: Comfort Station #9 in picnic area, c.1940s



Figure A.44: Comfort Station #9 in picnic area, note change in roof material and porch/breezeway enclosure, 2011



Figure A.45: Comfort Station #9 in picnic area, c.1940s



Figure A.46: Comfort Station #9 in picnic area, note many mature tree plantings, 2011



Figure A.47: Comfort Station #84 in picnic area, c.1960



Figure A.48: Comfort Station #84 in picnic area, note exterior cladding on building, 2011



Figure A.49: Comfort Station #84 in picnic area, c.1960



Figure A.50: Comfort Station #84 in picnic area, note mature rhododendron planting at right in photograph, change in path material, and original wooden doors 2011



Figure A.51: Rocky Knob Gas Station, 1952



Figure A.52: Rocky Knob Gas Station, note island alteration, change in roof material, and loss of planting bed to increased parking area, 2011



Figure A.53: Approach to Rocky Knob Gas Station, note 'Gas Ahead' sign, 1952



Figure A.54: Approach to Rocky Knob Gas Station, 1952



Figure A.55: Original 'tavern style' milepost marker in front of Rocky Knob Gas Station, note early style lower stop sign, and original tree planting, 1952



Figure A.56: Post-Mission 66 sign in front of Rocky Knob Gas Station, note missing specimen tree in median and mature specimen trees in the distance to the left, 2011



Figure A.57: Rocky Knob Gas Station, note planting bed and parking area, c.1952



Figure A.58: Rocky Knob Gas Station, note original specimen tree at left and planting bed, parking area, and median alterations, 2011



Figure A.59: The Saddle Overlook,note slate curb and four (4) specimen trees, 1938



Figure A.60: The Saddle Overlook,note granite curb and four (4) mature specimen trees, 2011



Figure A.61: Entrance drive to the saddle overlook,note timber guard rail, 1938



Figure A.62: Entrance drive to the saddle overlook, note wood line in right of photo, which expanded according to the direction provided on the PLUMs as intended, 2011



Figure A.63: Stone retaining wall at the saddle overlook with a view of Rock Castle Gorge, 1938



Figure A.64: Stone retaining wall at the saddle overlook with a view of Rock Castle Gorge, 2011



Figure A.65: Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, c.1959



Figure A.66: Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, note change in fence type along the Parkway, 2011



Figure A.67: Tuggle Gap Grade-Separated Interchange just after construction, 1955



Figure A.68: Tuggle Gap Grade-Separated Interchange, note remnants of original planting plan, 2011



Figure A.69: At grade Parkway crossing at Tuggle Gap, c.1940s.



Figure A.70: Grade-Separated Parkway crossing at Tuggle Gap, 2011.



Figure A.71: Parkway with Rocky Knob in the background near milepost 170, 1974.



Figure A.72: Parkway with Rocky Knob in the background near milepost 170, 1974.



Figure A.73: Parkway with rail fences near the Maintenance Area at Rocky Knob, c.1950s



Figure A.74: Parkway with rail fences near the Maintenance Area at Rocky Knob, 2011



Figure A.75: Pump house in Rocky Knob, 1952



Figure A.76: Pump house in Rocky Knob, 2011



Figure A.77: Pump house in Rocky Knob, 1952



Figure A.78: Pump house in Rocky Knob, note metal roof and missing side windows, 2011



Figure A.79: Barn near Tuggle Gap that likely inspired the architecture of Comfort Station #9 in Rocky Knob, 1939



Figure A.80: Barn near Tuggle Gap that likely inspired the architecture of Comfort Station #9 in Rocky Knob, 2011

Appendix B

Cultural Resource Evaluation

Rocky Knob Recreation Area - Cultural Resource Evaluation							
	Bldg. No.	**Resource Name**	**Date**	**Condition**	**Contributing**	**Alterations after POS**	**Treatment**
General							
		Natural Systems and Features					Preservation
		Topography and Hydrology	Pre-Parkway		Contributing		Preservation
		Geomorphology and Geology	Pre-Parkway		Contributing		Preservation
		Soils	Pre-Parkway and Prewar Planning and Construction		Contributing		Preservation
		Vegetation	Pre-Parkway and Prewar Planning and Construction		Contributing		Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Land Use					
		Passive Recreation					Preservation
		Interpretation					Preservation
		Agricultural Leases	1930s-1940s	Good	Contributing	Type of pasture animal changed from sheep to cattle	Preserve / Restore?
		Utilitarian					Preservation
		Circulation					
		Parkway Section 1.S	1937	Good	Contributing	Center stripe added c.1948. Double striping added sometime later. Road surface repaved several times.	Preservation
		Rock Castle Gorge Trail	1937	Good	Contributing	10 miles of trail completed in 1937. Sections that follow Rock Castle Road predate the Parkway.	Rehabilitation
		Black Ridge Trail	1937	Good	Contributing		Rehabilitation
		Picnic Area Loop trail	c.1941	Good	Contributing	Surface changed from earth/gravel to asphalt	Rehabilitation
Rocky Knob Campground Area							
		Land Use					
		Recreation & Interpretation				Unchanged from date of construction	Preservation
		Vegetation					
		General	Varies	Good	Contributing	Vegetation character in campground remains as intended on the PLUMs. An ice storm in 2010 damaged many trees in 2010, resulting in an overall thinning of the forest.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Chestnut Orchard	1940	Poor	Contributing	2010 ice storm decimated the experimental orchard.	Interpretation
		Comfort Station Plantings	1962	Good	Contributing	Each comfort station features mature mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) plantings near the foundation. These are likely original plantings based on location and apparent age.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Circulation					
		Vehicular Circulation	1962	Poor	Contributing	Circulation altered slightly to accommodate the Sanitary Dump Station in 1967. Asphalt in poor condition.	Rehabilitation
		Pedestrian Circulation	1962	Varies	Contributing	Asphalt path system varies from fair to poor. In some places erosion and asphalt deterioration are obvious.	Preservation / Rehabilitation

Rocky Knob Recreation Area - Cultural Resource Evaluation							
	Bldg. No.	**Resource Name**	**Date**	**Condition**	**Contributing**	**Alterations after POS**	**Treatment**
		Buildings and Structures					
	450	Comfort Station # 450	1962	Good	Contributing	Thin layer of painted wood veneer added over concrete block walls; board and batten upper portions painted; alterations occurred Post-Mission 66.	Preservation
	451	Comfort Station # 451	1962	Good	Contributing	Thin layer of painted wood veneer added over concrete block walls; board and batten upper portions painted. Section of asphalt path located on the northern side of the building removed and replaced with gravel; alterations occurred Post-Mission 66.	Preservation
	439	Comfort Station # 439	1962	Good	Contributing	Thin layer of painted wood veneer added over concrete block walls; board and batten upper portions painted; alterations occurred Post-Mission 66.	Preservation
	438	Comfort Station # 438	1962	Good	Contributing	Thin layer of painted wood veneer added over concrete block walls; board and batten upper portions painted	Preservation
		Registration Kiosk	Post-1997	Good	Non-Contributing	Contemporary Parkway standard kiosk replaced original kiosk post 1997. Original kiosk originated in 1968, but its date of removal is unknown.	Non-contributing Resource
		Small-scale Features					
		Campground Registration Sign	1962	Good	Contributing	Minor alterations Post-Mission 66. Original wooden registration card box no longer exists; contemporary lighting added to both sides of sign.	Preservation
		Firewood Crib	Unknown	Good	Noncontributing	Current structure replaced original. Replacement is very similar in character and dimensions to original.	Non-Contributing
		Campfire Circle	1962	Fair	Contributing	Replacement wood seat slats, contemporary metal fire pit	Rehabilitation
		Stone Curb	1962	Fair	Contributing	All curb is original 'Rocky Knob Black Stone', a type of slate obtained from a local quarry in Franklin, VA. Some sections missing and need to be reset.	Preservation
		Steps	1962	Varies	Contributing	Condition varies from poor to good. Overall condition is fair; NPS added a set of wooden steps to campsite A-20 Post-Mission 66.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Drinking fountains	Varies	Good	Varies	3 fountains are original stone Parkway drinking fountains that date to 1962; 3 fountains are contemporary replacements; 6 no longer exist. Original fountains are contributing, replacements are not.	Preserve Existing; Consider Restoration
		Drainage Structures	1962	Good	Contributing	All need to be cleaned of debris	Preservation
		Entrance Gates	1962	Good	Contributing	Gates are original Parkway standard gates, portions of which have been repaired and/or painted as needed over time.	Preservation
		Signage - General	Varies	Good	Varies	Staff replaced the original routed wood signs as needed over the years; Post-Mission 66 replacement signs are made of recycled plastic signs instead of wood.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Signage - Trail Sign	c.1962	Good	Contributing	Design of trail system signs dates to the 1940s. This one was probably installed in 1962, when NPS constructed the campground	Preservation
		Signage - Camp Site Markers	2011	Good	Noncontributing	Recycled plastic camp site markers added to each camp site. Previously camp site numbers were painted in white on each asphalt parking slip.	Non-contributing Resource
		Campsites	Varies	Good	Contributing	One camp site lost in 1967 due to construction of the Sanitary Dump Station	Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Original Grills	1962	Fair	Contributing	Some original Mission 66 Era grills have been replaced with Post-Mission 66 grills. Remaining original grills are in fair condition overall, though condition ranges from poor to good.	Preservation

Rocky Knob Recreation Area - Cultural Resource Evaluation							
	Bldg. No.	**Resource Name**	**Date**	**Condition**	**Contributing**	**Alterations after POS**	**Treatment**
		Replacement Grills	Post-Mission 66	Good	Noncontributing	Parkway staff have replaced some original grills with contemporary catalog items.	Noncontributing Resource
		Original Picnic Tables	1962	Missing	Missing	Date of removal is unknown.	Missing
		Replacement Picnic Tables	1990s	Good	Noncontributing	NPS replaced original picnic tables during the 1990s.	Noncontributing Resource
		Original Tent Pads	1962	missing	missing	No original concrete or stone tent pads remain in the campground.	Missing
		Replacement Tent Pads	Contemporary	Good	Noncontributing	One replacement wooden tent pad exists	Non-contributing Resource
		Lantern Poles	c.1980s	Good	Noncontributing	Parkway standard lantern poles are in good condition overall, though some need to be straightened and/or reset	Non-contributing Resource
		Host Campsite	1962	Good	Contributing		Preservation
		Litter Deposit Area	1962	Good	Contributing		Preservation
		Sanitary Dump Station	1967	Fair	Noncontributing	Concrete curb added to perimeter. Drainage pipe collapsed, needs replacement	Noncontributing Resource
		Views and Vistas					
		View from the Campfire Circle	1962	Fair	Contributing		Preservation / Rehabilitation
Rocky Knob Maintenance Area							
		Land Use					
		Utilitarian				Land use unchanged since construction	Preservation
		Vegetation					
		General	Varies	Good	Contributing	Vegetation character in Maintenance Area remains as intended on the PLUMs.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Remnant Foundation Plantings at the Office and Tool Storage Building	c.1940s	Fair	Contributing	A few shrubs are missing, some are in decline.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Specimen Trees	c.1940s	Fair	Contributing		Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Ornamental Plantings at Employee Residences	1941	missing	Missing	No evidence of Dogwood (*Cornus florid* a) or rhododendron (*rhododendron spp.*) plantings associated with the Employee Residences exists today.	Replace?
		Circulation	Varies	Good	Contributing	Both vehicular and pedestrian circulation changed when NPS remodeled the Employee Residences and added garages in the early 1950s. The curvilinear paths surrounding the residences were lost and the entrance drive was altered. Also, vehicular circulation was added to accommodate parking around the district office trailers in the 1970s.	Rehabilitation
		Buildings and Structures					
	2	Warehouse & Equipment Storage	1940	Good	Contributing	Remodeled in 1952 by NPS. Extent of 1952 alterations unknown. Remodeled again Post-Mission 66.T1-11 plywood siding covers original cinder block exterior walls; metal roof replaced with asphalt shingles, original garage doors replaced. Original windows are in poor condition.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
	3	Carpenter & Paint Shop	1940	Good	Contributing	Remodeled in 1952 by NPS. Extent of 1952 alterations unknown. Remodeled again Post-Mission 66. T1-11 plywood siding covers original cinder block exterior walls; metal roof replaced with asphalt shingles, original garage doors replaced. Cinderblock building addition constructed in 1952. In 2000, NPS renovated the building adding a new roof effectively combining the Carpenter and Paint Shop, its 1952 addition, and the Warehouse and Equipment Storage Building into a single structure.	Preservation / Rehabilitation

Rocky Knob Recreation Area - Cultural Resource Evaluation							
	Bldg. No.	**Resource Name**	**Date**	**Condition**	**Contributing**	**Alterations after POS**	**Treatment**
	4	Office & Tool Storage	1941	Good	Contributing	Remodeled in 1952 by NPS. Extent of 1952 alterations unknown. Remodeled again Post-Mission 66.T1-11 plywood siding covers original untreated cinder block exterior walls; metal roof replaced with asphalt shingles, original garage doors replaced with contemporary double doors. Wooden ramp added to main façade.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
	5	Oil & Paint Storage	1942	Good	Contributing	Remodeled in 1952 by NPS. Extent of 1952 alterations unknown. Remodeled again Post-Mission 66.T1-11 plywood siding covers original untreated cinder block exterior walls; metal roof replaced with asphalt shingles.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
	6	Radio Substation & Antennae Tower	1940s	Removed	Removed	NPS demolished building. Building foundation remains in the landscape as a ruin. Antennae relocated elsewhere within Maintenance Area.	Removed
	86	Shops & Heavy Equipment Building	1951-52	Good	Contributing	T1-11 plywood siding now covers original cinder block exterior walls; original cement asbestos shingle roof replaced with asphalt shingles; garage doors replaced.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
	147	Incinerator	1941	Removed	Removed	Building demolished by NPS	Removed
	7	Employee Residence	1941	Good	Contributing	Remodeled in 1950 and 1952 by NPS. The building lost much of their original rustic character in the process. Garage and breezeway added during remodel.	Non-contributing
	8	Employee Residence	1941	Good	Contributing	Remodeled in 1950 and 1952 by NPS. The building lost much of their original rustic character in the process. Garage and breezeway added during remodel.	Non-contributing
	346	Hose Reel House	1949	Good	Contributing		Preservation
	878	*Building name not identified*	Contemporary	Good	Non-Contributing		Non-contributing Resource
	965	Maintenance Area Fuel Station	Contemporary	Good	Non-Contributing		Non-contributing Resource
		District Office Trailer	1996	Good	Non-contributing		Non-contributing Resource
		Seasonal Office Trailer	2005	Good	Non-contributing		Non-contributing Resource
		Small-scale Features					
		Fence - Chain Link	Unknown	Good	Undetermined	Original materials unknown	Undetermined
		Drainage Structures	c.1940s	Good	Contributing	Two original stone headwalls	Preservation
		Signage	Varies	Good	Varies	Parkway standard building number signs mounted on all buildings in Maintenance Area are either original wood or contemporary recycled plastic. These signs are contributing features. Remaining signs are contemporary regulatory signs that are non-contributing.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Concrete Retaining Wall	1952	Poor	Contributing	Concrete failing in some locations	Rehabilitation
		Guardrail - Rustic Timber	c.1940s	Missing	Missing	Removed Post-1948. No guard rail exists today.	Replace?

Rocky Knob Recreation Area - Cultural Resource Evaluation							
	Bldg. No.	**Resource Name**	**Date**	**Condition**	**Contributing**	**Alterations after POS**	**Treatment**
Rocky Knob Picnic Area							
		Land Use					
		Passive Recreation & Interpretation			Contributing	Originally, this area served as both the campground and picnic area for the park. Use of the site for camping was discontinued in 1962 and the camp sites were converted for use as additional picnic sites. Active recreation/playground use discontinued by the 1960s.	Preservation
		Vegetation					
		General	Varies	Good	Contributing	Vegetation character in the Picnic Area remains as intended on the PLUMs. The forest surrounding the picnic area has filled in as intended by the PLUMs. Original ornamental plantings exist at both comfort stations. Original specimen trees exist in the open field near the Picnic Pavilion, however some are missing.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Circulation					
		Pedestrian Circulation	c.1941	Poor	Contributing	Path material changed from gravel/earth to asphalt	Restoration
		Vehicular Circulation	c.1937	Poor	Contributing	Road material changed from gravel/earth to asphalt	Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Buildings and Structures					
	9	Comfort Station # 9	1941	Good	Contributing	Wood shake roof replaced with asphalt shingles; enclosed breezeways altered Post-Mission 66.	Restoration
	84	Comfort Station # 84	1955-1956	Good	Contributing	Thin layer of painted wood veneer added to concrete block walls Post-Mission 66. Original roof and doors intact.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
	964	Picnic Pavilion	1977	Good			
		Small-scale Features					
		Stone Fireplaces	c.1941	Varies	Contributing	A few original stone fireplaces remain in poor to fair condition	Preservation / Restoration
		Replacement Grills	Post-Mission 66	Good	Non-Contributing	Most are Jamestown Advance Products Corporation or Pilot Rock catalog replacements	Noncontributing Resource
		Picnic Tables	c.1950s	Varies	Contributing	No original wooden tables remain today. 1950s concrete replacements are in poor to fair condition with exposed footings and incorrectly sized recycled plastic seats.	Remove plastic and replace as noted
		Stone Retaining Wall	1937	Good	Contributing	Minor Post-Mission 66 alterations; asphalt paving has reduced current wall height	Preservation
		Stone Tree Wells (3)	1937	Good	Contributing	A tree died in one of the tree wells and has gone unreplaced.	Preservation
		Drinking Fountains - stone (1)	c.1940s	Good	Contributing	Drain for lower spigot replaced, evidence of mortar repair	Preservation
		Drinking Fountains - metal (2)	Post-Mission 66	Good	Noncontributing		Noncontributing Resource
		Entrance Gates	c.1940s	Good	Contributing	Parkway standard timber gates have had components replaced as needed over time; eyebolts embedded in rocks on either side of the gate suggest earlier use of a different type of gate, perhaps a chaink linked to the eyebolts	Preservation
		Guardrail	Post-Mission 66	Good	Noncontributing	Replacement guardrails consist of large square timbers set atop concrete blocks whereas the originals were rounded and set on wooden posts.	Noncontributing Resource
		Guardrail - Rustic Timber	1937	Missing	Missing	No sections of original log guardrail exist	Missing
		Stone Steps	1941	Varies	Contributing	Original stone steps vary in condition from poor to good. No visible alterations.	Preservation / Rehabilitation

Rocky Knob Recreation Area - Cultural Resource Evaluation							
	Bldg. No.	**Resource Name**	**Date**	**Condition**	**Contributing**	**Alterations after POS**	**Treatment**
		Stone Curb	c.1937	Varies	Contributing	Original 'Rocky Knob Black Stone' slate curb needs to be reset or replaced in some sections. Condition varies from poor to good.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Remnant Playground Structures	c.1941	Removed	Noncontributing	NPS discontinued this use and removed all structures. Remnant concrete supports remain in the landscape.	Noncontributing Resource
		Drainage Structures	1937	Varies	Contributing	Original stone headwalls in need of cleaning and debris removal. Condition varies from fair to poor. Some have stones that need to be reset.	Preservation
		Signage - Trail Signs (2)	1940s	Good	Contributing	Two large routed wood trail signs similar in character to 'gunboard' signs are exist in the picnic area.	Preservation
		Signage - General	Varies	Good	Varies	Some of the original routed wood signs replaced with recycled plastic versions	Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Litter Deposit Areas (2)	Unknown	Good	Undetermined		Preservation
		Fences	c. 1966	Fair	Contributing	PLUMS suggest a snake rail fence in this area during 1948. Two sections that extended from the Parkway into picnic area were removed by 1966. Also, the fence type changed from 'snake rail' to 'post and rail' around the same time. Current fence is in fair condition with missing and/or deteriorating sections.	Preserve / Repair as needed
		Views and Vistas	1937	Good	Contributing	While not indicated on the PLUMs as a planned view there is a view of the Parkway from the group parking area.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
Rocky Knob Gas Station							
		Land Use					
		Utilitarian				Use changed from service/gasoline station to Visitor Information Station.	Preservation
		Vegetation					
		General	Varies	Good	Contributing	Vegetation surrounding the Gas Station generally remains as intended on the PLUMs.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Specimen red maple (*Acer rubrum*) in landscape median in front of Gas Station	c.1937	Missing	Missing	Species not suited to this location. Tree died sometime after 1966 according to aerial photographs.	Missing
		Specimen table mountain pine (*Pinus pungens*) west of Gas Station	c.1937	Missing	Missing		Missing
		Specimen red oak (*Quercus borealis* / *Quercus rubra*)behind Gas Station	c.1937	Missing	Missing		Missing
		Specimen red oak (*Quercus borealis* / *Quercus rubra*) west of Gas Station	pre-parkway	Good	Contributing		
		Specimen dogwoods (2) behind Gas Station	1949	Missing	Missing		Missing
		Rhododendron plantings at rear of building	1949	Missing	Missing		Missing
		Planting bed adjacent to parking area	1949	Removed	Removed	Removed when NPS expanded the parking area.	
		Remnant ornamental plantings	1949	Good	Contributing	Remaining rhododendron plantings (though incomplete) are in good condition.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Circulation	Varies	Good	Contributing	Entrance drive to Picnic Area built in 1937. Gas Station turnaround, landscape median, and two parking areas built in 1949. NPS expanded the smaller of the two parking areas located adjacent to Gas Station prior to 1966.	Preservation
		Buildings and Structures					
	82	Gas Station	1949	Good	Contributing	Altered Post-Mission 66. Original cement shingle roof replaced with asphalt shingle roof; two gas pumps removed; flagstone path added to connect parking with building entrance; service parking area expanded eliminating a planting area, gas pump median expanded.	Rehabilitation
		Wooden Buildings (2)	c.1940s	Poor	Contributing		Preservation

Rocky Knob Recreation Area - Cultural Resource Evaluation							
	Bldg. No.	**Resource Name**	**Date**	**Condition**	**Contributing**	**Alterations after POS**	**Treatment**
		Small-scale Features					
		Original Concrete Curb	1949	Good	Contributing		Preservation
		Pink Granite Curb	Post-Mission 66	Good	Noncontributing		Noncontributing Resource
		Drinking Fountain	c. 2009	Good	Noncontributing		Noncontributing Resource
		Signage - 'Tavern Style' sign	1941	Missing	Missing	Removed sometime after 1966	Reconstruction?
		Signage - Concrete Milepost	1947	Good	Contributing		Preservation
		Signage - Information Station Sign	Post-Mission 66	Good	Noncontributing	Sign was originally constructed of wood. Signboard is recycled plastic today.	Non-contributing Resource
		Signage - Stop Sign	Post-Mission 66	Good	Noncontributing	Original 1940s low wooden stop sign replaced with modern version.	Non-contributing Resource
		Fire Hydrant and Hose Reel	1949	Good	Contributing		Preservation
		Wooden Planters	Post-Mission 66	Good	Noncontributing		Non-contributing Resource
		Concrete Drainage Structure	1937	Good	Contributing		Preservation
		Views and Vistas	1937	Good	Contributing	Planned vista that appears on the PLUMs continues to be maintained	Preservation / Rehabilitation
Parkway Section 1 - S Milepost 165.3 - Milepost 169.2							
		Land Use					
		Passive Recreation, Interpretation, Agricultural Leases					Preservation
		Vegetation					Preservation / Rehabilitation
		General	Varies	Good	Contributing		
		Circulation					Preservation
		Buildings and Structures					
		Tuggle Gap Grade Separated Interchange	1955	Good	Contributing		Preservation
		Small-scale Features					
		Drainage Structures	1937	Good	Contributing		Preservation
		Stone Gutters	1937-1943	Fair	Contributing	Some sections reset recently	Preservation
		Signage - General	varies	Good	Noncontributing	Original low rustic wooden regulatory and traffic signs replaced Post-Mission 66 with modern versions.	Noncontributing Resource
		Signage - Concrete Mileposts	1947	Good	Contributing		Preservation
		Signage - Parkway Entrance Sign	c.1950s	Good	Contributing	Original sign replaced with current sign sometime in the 1950s. Design of current sign dates to 1949.	Preservation
		Fence	Varies	Varies	Contributing	Many rustic rail fences not directly visible from the Parkway have been replaced with post and wire.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
		Spring Outlet Wall	c.1942	Poor	Contributing	Stone structure has collapsed.	Rehabilitation
		Views and Vistas					
		General	c.1937	Varies	Contributing	Staff maintains the majority of views specified on PLUMs. The views denoted as 'open woods' on the PLUMs are no longer maintained, reducing the variety of scenery intended by Parkway designers.	Preservation / Rehabilitation
The Saddle Overlook							
		Land Use					
		Passive Recreation and Interpretation				Unchanged since construction	Preservation
		Vegetation					
		Pre-Parkway Specimen Trees (4)	Pre-Parkway	Good	Contributing		Preservation
		Parkway Specimen Trees	c.1940	Good	Contributing		Preservation
		Circulation					
		Vehicular Circulation	1938	Good	Contributing	Material changed to asphalt	Preservation
		Pedestrian circulation	1938	Good	Contributing	Material changed to asphalt	Preservation
		Small-scale Features					
		Stone Retaining Wall	c.1938	Good	Contributing	Some repointing of mortar. Asphalt paving has reduced current wall height	Preservation
		Granite Curb	Unknown	Good	Non-Contributing	Original Rocky Knob Black Stone curbs replaced with split faced granite curb.	Non-contributing Resource
		Signage - Gunboard	1941	Good	Contributing	Gunboard sign installed in 1941 and replaced several times since.	Preservation
		Signage - Trail Sign	c.1950	Good	Contributing	Rustic wood trail sign replaced in kind over the years.	Preservation





As the nation's prinicpal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U. S. administration.

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