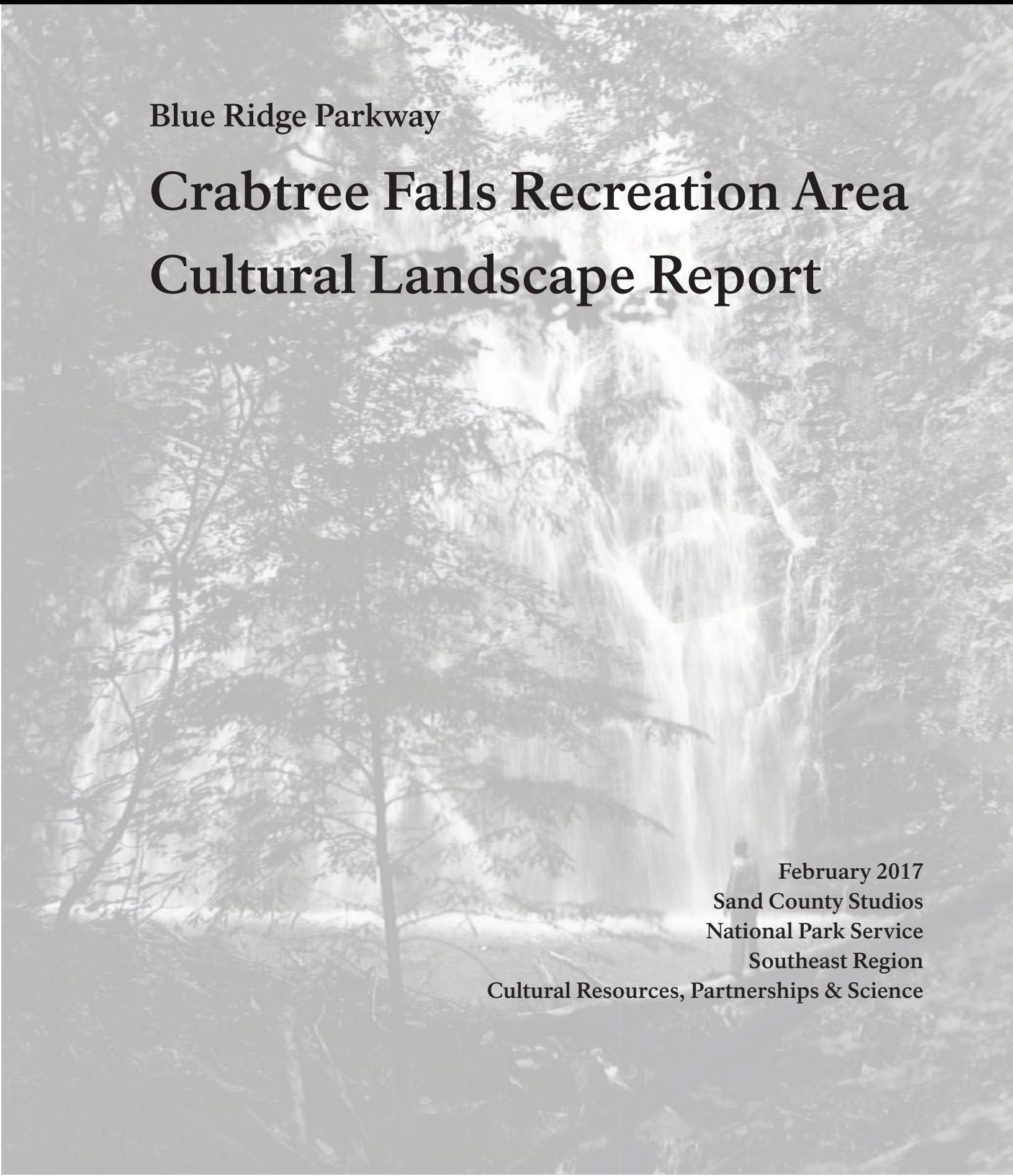
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Crabtree Falls Recreation Area
Blue Ridge Parkway



Blue Ridge Parkway

Crabtree Falls Recreation Area Cultural Landscape Report

February 2017
Sand County Studios
National Park Service
Southeast Region
Cultural Resources, Partnerships & Science

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Crabtree Falls
Blue Ridge Parkway
Cultural Landscape Report

Written by Sand County Studios

Under the direction of

National Park Service

Southeast Regional Office

Cultural Resources Division

2017



This cultural landscape report exists in two formats. A printed version is available for study at the park, at the Southeast Regional Office of the National Park Service, and a variety of other depositories around the United States. For more widespread access, this cultural landscape report also exists in a web-based format through the website of the National Park Service. Please visit www.nps.gov for more information.

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Crabtree Falls

Blue Ridge Parkway

Cultural Landscape Report

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Introduction

Management Summary

The purpose of the Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is to provide an assessment of the cultural landscape and character-defining features and to provide treatment recommendations in an effort to ensure the preservation of these significant resources. Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is a component landscape of Blue Ridge Parkway, which occupies 88,000 acres of land within Virginia and North Carolina. The primary activities are recreational driving, sightseeing, and hiking, but the Parkway also provides naturalist walks and talks, self-guided nature trails, roadside exhibits, picnicking, and camping (Figure 1-1).

Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is located along the Blue Ridge Parkway between Mileposts 339 and 341 in Yancey County, North Carolina. The Crabtree Falls Recreation Area includes two sites—the original campground site located on the west side of the Parkway, and a more recent picnic area just south of the campground on the east side of the Parkway. Crabtree Falls is one of eighteen recreation areas along the Parkway, which is one of the most highly visited unit in the National Park Service (NPS). The study area for the CLR includes both sites of the recreation area and the 2-mile stretch of the Parkway road between the two (Figure 1-2).

The Blue Ridge Parkway was developed at a time when the concept of *driving for pleasure* was a major point of interest. However, perceptions about recreation have changed, and driving for pleasure, family drives, camping, picnicking, and other outdoor recreational activities are not as popular as they once were. This has affected visitation along the Parkway.

Most of the users along the Blue Ridge Parkway are Caucasian, and this group of visitors is getting older. The NPS is interested in increasing the diversity



FIGURE 1–1. This viewpoint is about half way between the campground site and the picnic area. Looking southeast. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

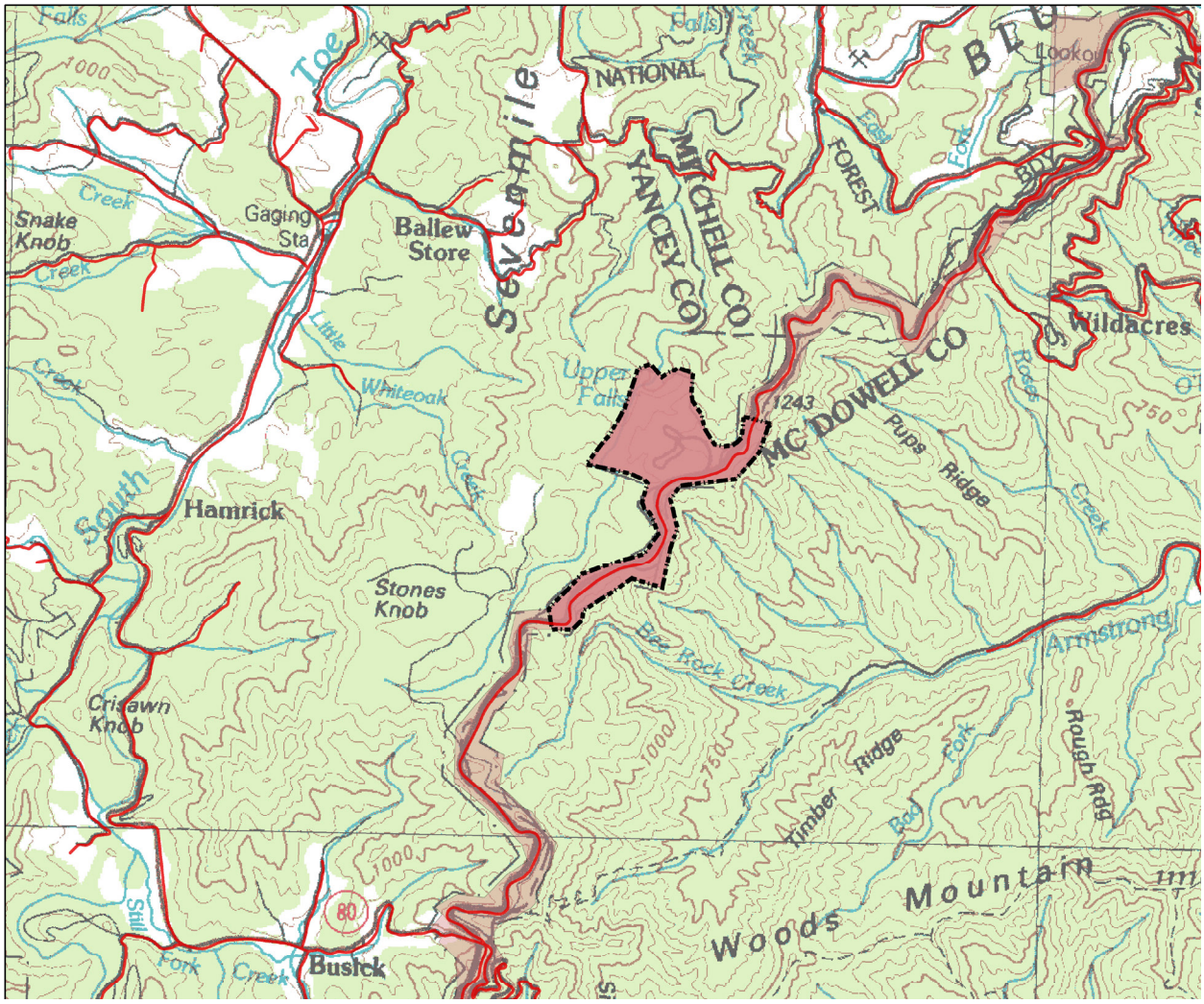


FIGURE 1–2. This map shows Crabtree Falls Recreation study area, shaded in red. (Sand County Studios, May, 2016.)

of visitors coming to the parks, both in age and ethnicity.

According to public input gathered as part of the Parkway's *General Management Plan*, as population has increased adjacent to the Parkway and as visitors' interests have shifted, there is more demand for additional or different day-use recreational opportunities along the Parkway.[1]

There is also increasing demand for more off-season use and access, including keeping more sections of the Parkway open in the off-season. Unlike most national park units, Parkway visitor services are available only during a six-month season. Recreation and interpretation are the primary land use. Visitors traveling the Parkway during the off-season do not have access to even basic amenities, such as restrooms. A lack of wayfinding orientation and interpretive services during the off-season also limits visitors' understanding of Parkway resources and recreational opportunities available to them.[2]

Historical Overview

The purpose of the Blue Ridge Parkway was to provide a 469-mile scenic route for pleasure driving between Shenandoah National Park in the north and Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the south. This route would also provide recreational opportunities, employment in the economically depressed southern Appalachian region, and

1 NPS, *Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement, Blue Ridge Parkway, Virginia and North Carolina,* (January 2013), 23.

2 Ibid.

economic value to the areas through which it passed.[3]

In the mid-1920s, Congress authorized three new eastern national parks, and in 1933 President Roosevelt endorsed the concept of the Blue Ridge Parkway to link the Great Smoky Mountains and Shenandoah National Parks and open up the mountains to recreational traffic. Three years later, on June 30, 1936, Congress authorized the NPS to administer and manage the Parkway.[4] Plans for the Parkway included campgrounds, recreation areas, and other travel services. Several of the existing recreation areas along the Parkway were not part of original concepts for the Parkway, but landscape architect and subsequent park superintendent Stanley Abbott recommended including additional recreation sites along the Parkway, and one of these additional sites was Crabtree Falls.

The Blue Ridge Parkway was designed for recreational driving free from commercial traffic. The Parkway travels the crests, ridges, and valleys of five major mountain ranges, encompassing several geographic and vegetative zones. The changing elevations provide visitors with varied vistas of scenic Appalachian landscapes ranging from forested ridgetops and mountain slopes to rural farmlands and urban areas. The Parkway offers a "ride-a-while, stop-a-while" experience that includes scenic pullouts, recreation areas, historic sites, and visitor contact stations. It is known nationally and internationally for its designed landscape as a scenic motorway.[5]

The Crabtree Falls Recreation Area was previously named Crabtree Meadows because of the crabapple trees and the open areas that were evident on the site. Few of the crabapple trees remain, and in 2010 the recreation area was renamed Crabtree Falls to emphasize the spectacular falls that could attract more visitors.[6]

Although Crabtree Falls was not one of the original recreation areas planned along the Parkway, designers identified the site in the mid-1930s as a desirable location for a campground and other facilities. The series of open meadows present in the landscape would be easy to develop, in contrast to the rugged terrain farther south. In addition, Crabtree Falls is the tallest single waterfall along the Parkway route and was seen as a fine scenic feature that would interest campers and other Parkway visitors.

Prior to construction of the Parkway and development of Crabtree Falls, American Indians, farmers, and loggers occupied the land. A long history of prehistoric occupation ended when the first white trappers and traders moved through the area. Settlers arrived around 1760, and small mountain farms soon dotted the landscape. In 1863, small-scale logging began in the North Carolina mountains, followed by larger logging operations and the construction of a logging railroad. Some of the loggers brought their families and built cabins in the vicinity, and a small community coalesced around the area near Crabtree Falls. Soon a grist mill, woodworking shop, blacksmith shop, store, Baptist church/schoolhouse, and commissary were built. Logging continued at Crabtree Falls until the 1930s, when much of the land was acquired by the U.S. Forest Service. There are still timber sales from the Pisgah National Forest, which is adjacent to the recreation area.

Parkway planners called for acquiring 1,000 acres at "Crabtree Creek" from the U.S. Forest Service in the 1936 Parkway master plan, describing the area as "an attractive grassy meadow with a good water supply available, located in the midst of very rugged country."[7] Proposed Parkway facilities for Crabtree Falls included an inn, a service station, a campground, and a picnic area.

Construction of the Parkway near Crabtree Falls began in January 1937 with grading for the roadway. In 1941, the U.S. Forest Service agreed to transfer 160 acres to the NPS for development of the recreation area. This acreage included the Crabtree Falls area as well as another small area along the Parkway. Development at Crabtree Falls began in

3 Gail D. Stahlecker, *Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina,* (American Society of Landscape Architects, 2001), http://www.asla.org/meetings/awards/awds01/blueridge.html.

4 An Act of June 30, 1936, Pub. L. No. 74-848, 49 Stat. 2041 (1936).

5 NPS, *Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement, Blue Ridge Parkway, Virginia and North Carolina,* (January 2013), 4.

6 Steve King verbal interview, August 2015.

7 Stanley W. Abbott and Edward H. Abbuehl, "Blue Ridge Parkway, Brief Description of the Recreation Areas Adjacent to the Parkway, to Accompany the Master Plan Thereof, Drawn June 3, 1936," (BLRI Archives, RG 5, Series 8, Box 9, Folder 1, 1936), 7.

1941–'42 with grading of the entrance and picnic area roads, construction of trails, and installation of picnic facilities. A proposed swimming pool was eliminated from the plans in August 1942. With the first picnic area and trail system completed, the Parkway opened the area for public use in spring 1948. By June 1950, a concession–gas station was built, and a comfort station was completed in the picnic area the following month.

The NPS acquired additional land for the recreation area from the Forest Service in 1952. About this time, two new campground loops were constructed, a parking area was built at the Crabtree Falls trailhead, trails were improved, and rail fences were installed on campground roads. The campground opened in 1954 and proved so popular that a two-week limit on camping had to be imposed. A temporary campground amphitheater was constructed in 1958 and was replaced in 1963 with a 300-seat facility that is still used today. A new 82-site picnic ground opened in a new location in 1960, and the old picnic area became a loop for tent camping. Improvements to the Crabtree Falls Trail offered a vigorous hike on a steep and rocky 2.6-mile scenic loop from the campground to the 60-foot waterfall.

In 1965, a coffee shop was constructed as part of Mission 66 efforts along the Parkway. When the existing concessionaire's lease to operate the coffee shop expired and no new parties showed interest in operating the establishment, visitation fell. The NPS temporarily closed Crabtree Falls Recreation Area in 2012, but it was later reopened. There have been no major structural changes to the Crabtree Falls area since construction of the coffee shop and improvements to the parking area (Figure 1-3).

Scope of Work and Methodology

The content of this CLR focuses on the development, evolution, and future treatment of primary developed areas of Crabtree Falls, including the campground, picnic area, and hiking trails. The CLR describes the historical development of the recreation area, documents the existing site conditions, provides analysis of the landscape's potential National Register significance, identifies the site's character-defining features, determines an appropriate treatment strategy, and develops treatment recommendations. These are intended to facilitate preservation of these resources, address park management concerns, and inform any imminent development at Crabtree Falls.

The CLR includes a prioritized list of draft NPS Project Management Information System (PMIS) statements for landscape preservation projects. It also includes a digest, abbreviated from sections of the CLR, for park use to convey information to other divisions. An executive summary, overview of historical development, site map, and brief National Register analysis will be produced to complete the CLR.

The first part of the CLR documents the historical development of the landscape characteristics and associated features, materials, and qualities that make the landscape eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The site history, existing conditions, and analysis and evaluation chapters identify the historic values associated with the landscape. The second part of the CLR outlines treatment recommendations that will enable the park to better manage its cultural landscape.

The consultants divided the work for this project into the following phases: (1) Inventory and analysis including historic research and review of background data; (2) Draft report development at 75% and 95%; and (3) Final report submittal. Background data was obtained from NPS through the Library of Congress and Blue Ridge Parkway archives as well as from local public archives at the outset of the project.

The consultants interviewed BLRI staff for details of the history and management practices within Crabtree Falls and adjacent areas.

An initial meeting was held by consultants with BLRI staff members at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area in August, 2015. The team reviewed the study area, discussed applicable information about the site, and reviewed the planned process for the CLR.

A draft review conference call via phone in December, 2015 to review comments to a draft submittal prior to the 75% draft submittal. For all reviews, BLRI staff provided an Excel spreadsheet with comments, and the consultant responded to each comment with the actions taken.

Similar draft review conference calls were conducted prior to the 95% submittal (July, 2016), and at the 95% submittal (September, 2016). Document content and organization, and treatment options were discussed during these conference calls.

Through the CLR, information is provided to the NPS for use in the future development of this property. Several NPS cultural resource documents have been prepared providing broad direction regarding the management goals for Blue Ridge Parkway. These include Ian Firth's "Blue Ridge Parkway Virginia and North Carolina: Historic Resource Study," Firth's *Parkway Profiles: Brief Background Statements on the Major Cultural Resources of the Blue Ridge Parkway* (1993), and Richard Quin and Christopher Marston's *Blue Ridge Parkway, Historic American Engineering Record*. In 2013, a general management plan was prepared for the Parkway to provide the far-reaching, comprehensive management approach for a 15- to 20-year period that is essential to guide the future of the Parkway.[8]

Several recent cultural landscape reports have been completed for parts of the Blue Ridge Parkway, and these were reviewed for this document. The CLRs were produced by architectural/engineering (A/E) consultants under contract with the NPS. They include CLRs for Doughton Park (2006), Moses H. Cone Memorial Park (2014), Peaks of Otter (2012), Humpback Rocks (2012), and Rocky Knob (2014).

Ian Firth conducted extensive research into the development of the Parkway for both of his *Historic Resource Studies* (1993 draft and 2005 draft), as did Quin and Marston for their *Historic American Engineering Record* in 1996-1997. A draft National Historic Landmark nomination was prepared by Firth for the Blue Ridge Parkway in late 2015, which consolidates early work on the Parkway. These studies served as guides for the development of the site history contained in this report.

Terminology

Blue Ridge Parkway is a unit within the NPS, and the official alpha code for the Parkway is BLRI (BLue RIdge Parkway). For this cultural landscape report, the term "Parkway" is used to refer to the Blue Ridge Parkway.[9]

Several terms have been used for the current Crabtree Falls Recreation Area site. The site was referred to as Crabtree Meadows until the NPS changed the name in 2010 to highlight the falls in an effort to attract more visitors. For this report, Crabtree Falls will be used in reference to the site. Crabtree Meadows will be used only if that name is used as part of an historic document or source.[10]

Some BLRI documents include dates to indicate when a project began implementation, and other documents show dates when a project was completed. The dates in this report indicate when a project was constructed, implemented, or opened to the public.

Period of Significance

The period of significance for the Parkway is 1935 to 1987. Congress approved the Parkway in November 1933, and surveying began shortly thereafter. Construction on the Parkway started in 1935 and was completed in 1987.[11] Development of the Parkway is defined in four distinct eras:

(1) New Deal (1935–1945), (2) postwar (1946–1955), (3) Mission 66 (1956–1966), and (4) final phase (1967–1987). The CLR also looks at what has happened to the Parkway and Crabtree Falls since 1987.

About two-thirds of the road and five recreation parks along the Parkway were completed between 1935 and the end of 1942, when construction was halted for World War II. Construction was resumed in 1946, and all the remaining sections of the road except one were completed by 1967. The final section, on Grandfather Mountain in North

8 Ibid.

9 Ian Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway Historic Resource Study and National Historic Landmark Nomination, Prepared for the National Park Service," (draft, October 2015), 5.

10 Ibid.

11 Ian Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway Historic Resource Study and National Historic Landmark Nomination, Prepared for the National Park Service," (final draft, 2015), 36.

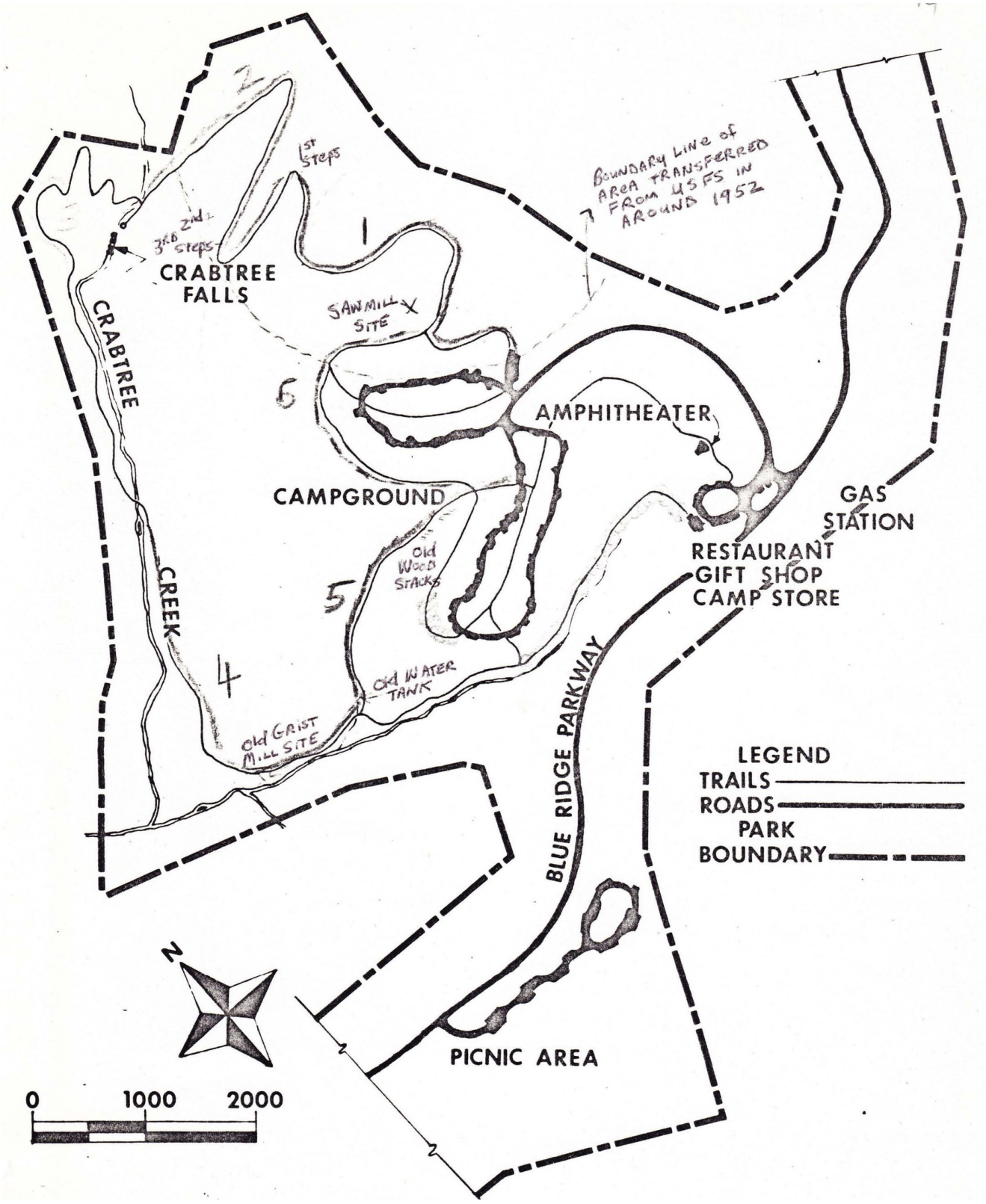


FIGURE 1–3. 1974 Map of Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. (Larry Scott. "What Every Good Naturalist Should Know about Linville Falls and Crabtree Meadows. Summer 1974.)

Carolina, was built between 1968 and 1987 with construction of the Linn Cove Viaduct.[12]

Facilities that were implemented before 1987 and maintain their integrity are contributing resources. Resources that were added after 1987, that have lost their integrity due to either significant deterioration or inappropriate alterations, or that are not considered an important part of park planning and design are noncontributing resources.

Study Boundaries

Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is a 253-acre site[13] located within Section 2-M of the Blue Ridge Parkway between Mileposts 339 and 341.[14] The boundaries for Crabtree Falls are as defined in the early 1950s, when the land was transferred from the U.S. Forest Service to the NPS. The boundaries were established so that the site includes Crabtree Creek, Crabtree Falls, the trails leading to the falls, and the picnic area east of the Parkway. The boundary east of the Parkway allows for maintenance of the surrounding landscape. All boundaries abut U.S. Forest Service lands for the Pisgah National Forest.

The site includes the entry area, coffee shop, amphitheater, campground, trails, falls, separate picnic site on the east side of the road, and approximately two miles of the Parkway.

Summary of Findings

Crabtree Falls is representative of the types of recreation sites envisioned by Blue Ridge Parkway planners. The major components of Crabtree Falls have changed little over the years, and the visitor experience today would be much like it was when the recreation area was opened. One of the reasons Crabtree Falls was identified as a recreation area site was that the openness and relatively level topography would be easier to develop than the adjacent rugged terrain farther south.

Crabtree Falls is a bit different than other recreation areas because of the unique characteristics of the site and the recreation planning that results from its location along the Parkway. Trails lead to Crabtree Falls, which is the natural attraction that many visitors stop to see. The trails and the falls have changed little over the years and are both a significant part of the historic and recreational value of the site. Crabtree Falls continues to be associated with the broader concepts of the Parkway in terms of providing opportunities for recreation sites.

Original planning concepts for Crabtree Falls and other recreation areas along the Blue Ridge Parkway



FIGURE 1–4. Photograph taken from the front of the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area coffee shop looking toward to original gas station building. Looking east. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015)

12 Ian Firth, "Historical Significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway," last modified Sept. 30, 2008, http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/sero/appalachian/sec2.htm#1

13 Based on the *May 1952 plan - Crabtree Meadows, Developed Areas and Utilities Plan,* NPS Design and Construction Division, Roanoke, VA.

14 The Parkway was designed and constructed in 45 sections. They were identified by letters of the alphabet prefixed with the number 1 in Virginia and 2 in North Carolina, starting in the north with Section 1A at the end of Skyline Drive. Most sections are around 10 or 12 miles in length. Crabtree Falls is in section 2M.

were developed during the New Deal Era (1935-1945), with most construction occurring in the Postwar Era (1946-1955). Updates to Crabtree Falls, which include the Mission 66 coffee shop and new picnic area, were constructed during the Mission 66 Era (1956–1966). Since the Mission 66 Era there have not been any major changes at Crabtree Falls.

What makes Crabtree Falls so important is that it is not only an example of the type of recreation area that was an integral part of the Parkway, but it is virtually intact with only minor changes. The core area of Crabtree Falls remains basically unchanged. All existing and contributing historic buildings and landscape features on the site retain their original locations (Figure 1-4). Existing small-scale features from the periods of significance have also retained their original locations. The loop that was originally developed for picnic use was changed to tent camping, but the location and layout of the loop did not change significantly.

All of the features are important at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area, including land use and spatial organization. Land use patterns historically correspond to activities associated with camping, picnic use, hiking, and visitor services. Existing buildings retain their original design schemes and features, including materials, proportion, scale, site placement, and ornamentation. The general arrangement of these activities has not changed since the 1960s, when the coffee shop was built and the picnic area on the east side of the Parkway was developed. In terms of land use and spatial organization, addition of the coffee shop and picnic area fit the framework of existing land use patterns and functions

An assessment was made of character-defining landscape features to inform future management decisions for Crabtree Falls that may impact significant cultural landscape features and contribute to overall cultural integrity.

Recommendations for treatment for Crabtree Falls Recreation Area were made with respect to a much larger context, which considers the overall Parkway and recreation areas along the Parkway.

The treatment recommendations for Crabtree Falls focus on the principles of preservation and rehabilitation, which provide maintenance strategies and appropriate improvements to the site without loss of integrity or original character. There are no recommendations for restoration or reconstruction activities.

Site History

The history of the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is directly tied to that of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Parkway was intended to be the first "purely scenic" national parkway.[1] It differed from other parkways at the time because of its scale, complexity, and rural, mountainous setting.[2] Original concepts for the Parkway included the addition of recreation areas along the road to give visitors opportunities to get out of their car and experience the environment. Crabtree Falls Recreation Area, which was called Crabtree Meadows until 2010, was not one of the original recreation areas during this initial planning, but it was quickly added when concepts for recreation areas started to solidify.

Surrounding Landscape and Human Development

There is limited information available on pre-European era history for Crabtree Falls. The rugged uplands of western North Carolina have been used by human populations for at least 11,000 years. Evidence of early use by Paleo-Indian peoples is rare but indicates more than a transient presence.

The frequency and distribution of projectile points, made largely from local materials, have indicated the use of this mountainous terrain as a staging area by mobile foragers for exploration and adaptation to environments farther east.[3] At least 31 projectile points, including two Clovis points from Yancey County, have been recovered from the region.[4]

As the glaciers retreated northward around 10,000 years ago, warmer, wetter conditions supported a shift to hardwood forests. More diverse plant and animal resources occurred in upland areas. In what is now Yancey County, Archaic groups used mixed plant and animal resources in mountainous areas from temporary camps and later quarried soapstone from the region.[5]

Increased reliance on the cultivation of crops (e.g., squash, gourds, sunflower, maygrass) during the end of the Archaic period (around 5,000–3,000 years ago) led to a shift in settlement patterns to more permanent villages in floodplain areas.[6] Some continuity with Archaic cultural patterns was retained as population increased in size, new technologies such as pottery were incorporated, and sites became more elaborate in floodplain areas, including villages and farms with large mounds in their centers.[7] Mountainous areas remained important for foraging and served as thoroughfares for maintaining external relationships with the Hopewell and Mississippian cultural traditions across the Midwest and Southeast (Figure 2-1).

The earliest known European expedition into the Blue Ridge region occurred between 1539 and 1540, when Hernando de Soto and his expedition crossed the Appalachians.[8] Similarly, Juan Pardo

1 Ian Frith, "Blue Ridge Parkway, Virginia and North Carolina: Historic Resource Study" (working paper, University of Georgia, 2005).

2 Ibid., 25.

3 Burton L. Purrington, "Ancient Mountaineers: An Overview of the Prehistoric Archaeology of North Carolina's Western Mountain Region," in The *Prehistory of North Carolina: An Archaeological Symposium,* ed. Mark A. Mathis and Jeffrey J. Crow (Raleigh: North Carolina Division of Archives and History 1983), 83-160.

4 Paleoindian Database of the Americas, http://www.pidba.utk.edu; H. Trawick Ward and R. P. Stephen Davis Jr., Time Before History: *The Archaeology of North Carolina,* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 29, 46

5 Robert Hellman, *Archeological Investigations Conducted at Blue Ridge Parkway,* (Jacksonville, FL: Southeast Archeological Center, 2005).

6 Ibid., 22.

7 Ibid., 22.

8 NPS, *Doughton Park and Sections 2A, B, and C, Blue Ridge Parkway, Cultural Landscape Report,* (2006), 11; David J. Weber, The Spanish Frontier in North America, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 52.

mounted two expeditions retracing De Soto's route in 1566 and 1568. Although the exact paths of these explorations are debated by scholars, some place their travels west over the Blue Ridge mountains near Yancey County.[9] Subsequent sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century expeditions did not venture to the western reaches of what is now North Carolina.

By the early 1700s, this area was home to a number of American Indian tribes, including the Catawba, Tutelo, Monoacan, Saponi, and Cherokee. During the eighteenth century, the Iroquois defeated smaller tribes in the northern part of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and Cherokee tribes ruled the southern parts of this range. Some Pisgah and the subsequent and more numerous Qualla-phase platform mounds continued to be used in the historic era. Town houses erected on platform mounds served secular and ceremonial purposes, as noted by early travelers such as William Bartram in the 1770s.[10] By the early eighteenth century, European colonists ventured farther into the mountainous regions of the western Carolinas to trade with the tribes.[11] By the latter half of the eighteenth century, tribal ventures into colonial commerce resulted in population losses from hostilities and smallpox epidemics, and ultimately lead to relocation of many Cherokee by 1838.

Until the late nineteenth century, the physical resources of the region were largely left unexploited.[12] Farming became the primary use. Timber was common, but the quantity and quality varied.[13]

Many of the fields still visible at the base of the mountains date back centuries to ancient American



FIGURE 2–1. View of the Black Mountains and Mount Mitchell. Looking south-southwest. The rugged landscape was one reason the landscape was slow to develop. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--159, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print.)

Indian agricultural methods of burning and deadening trees and underbrush to provide needed grazing and crop land. Mountain and river names along the Parkway also reflect the American Indian influence.[14]

The Parkway

Context and Concept (1920-1935)

In 1925 and 1926, Congress authorized three new eastern national parks: the Great Smoky Mountains in North Carolina and Tennessee, the Shenandoah in Virginia, and Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. The next step involved constructing roads to allow visitors to reach these new parks.[15] The Parkway was planned to link the parks and to open up the mountains to recreational motor traffic (Figure 2-2).[16]

There were a number of proposed concepts in the early 1900s for a scenic road through the Blue Ridge Mountains, and these concepts may have influenced thoughts about the ultimate development of the

9 Charles M. Hudson, *The Juan Pardo Expeditions: Spanish Explorers and the Indians of the Carolinas and Tennessee, 1566–1568,* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990); Charles M. Hudson, Marvin T. Smith, and Chester B. DePratter, The Hernando De Soto Expedition: From Apalachee to Chiaha, (Southeastern Archaeology, 1984), 73–75.

10 Ward and Davis, *Time Before History,* 177.

11 NPS, *Doughton Park CLR,* 11; Hellmann, *Archeological Investigations,* 24.

12 NPS, *Doughton Park CLR,* 13; Hellmann, *Archeological Investigations,* 26.

13 Joseph Hyde Patt and J.S. Holmes, "Forest Conditions in Western North Carolina," *The North Carolina Geological and Economic Survey,* Bulletin No. 23 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1911).

14 NPS, *Native American Culture and Influence,* http://www.nps.gov/blri/learn/ historyculture/ native-american-culture-and-influence.htm

15 Anne Mitchell Whisnant, *Routing the Parkway,* 1934. http://docsouth.unc.edu/blueridgeParkway/overlooks/competing_routes/

16 Ian Firth, "Historical Significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway," last modified Sept. 30, 2008, http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/sero/appalachian/sec2.htm#1.

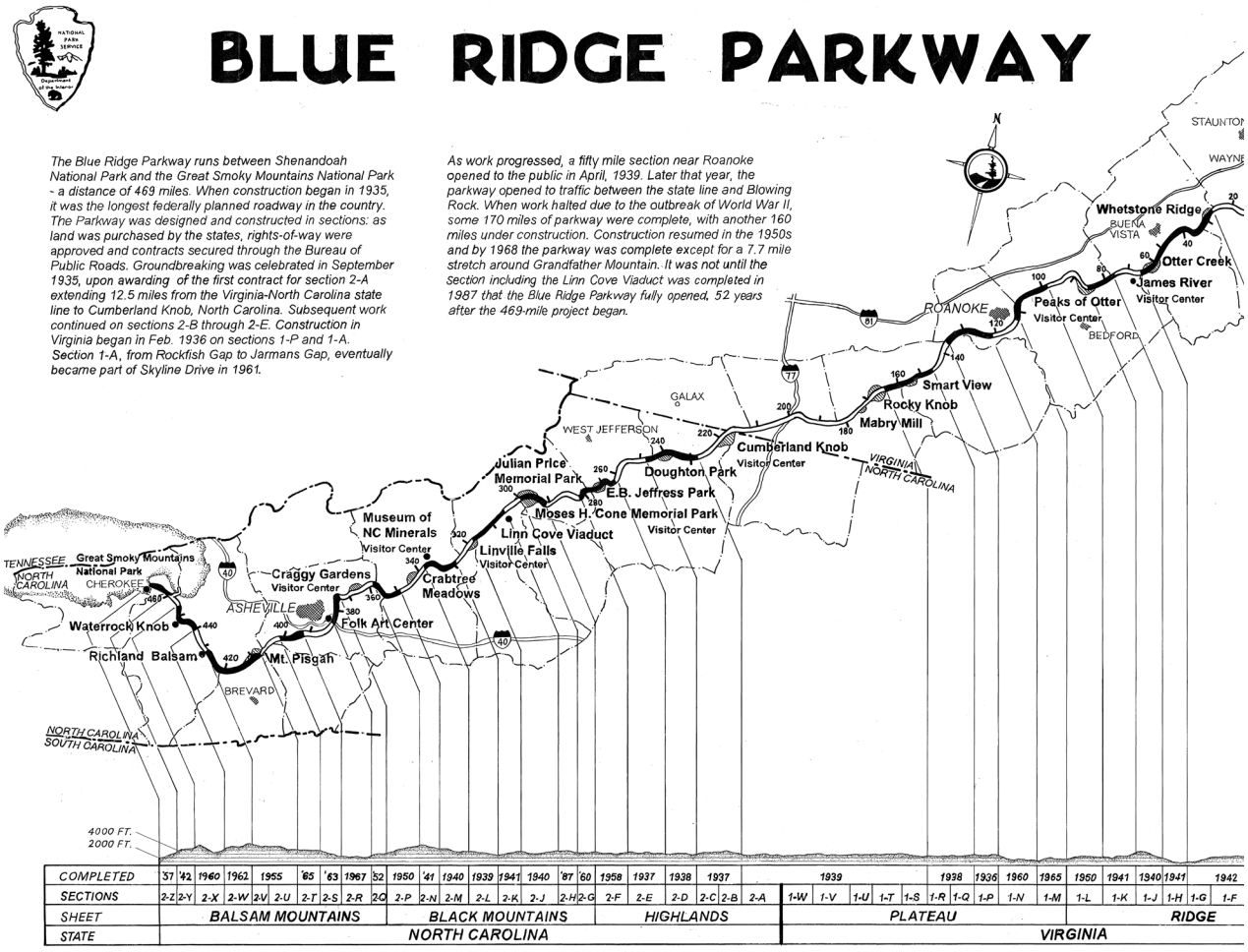


FIGURE 2–2. Illustration showing the Blue Ridge Parkway between Shenandoah National Park & Great Smoky Mountains, Asheville, Buncombe County, NC. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2- (sheet 2 of 28), Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.sheet.00002a/.)

Blue Ridge Parkway. Quin and Marston stated that Senator Harry Flood Byrd was likely the originator of the idea, and he was certainly one of the staunchest political supporters of the Parkway.[17]

In early 1933, Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected president in a landslide victory, bringing in the era of the New Deal, which was a series of experimental projects and programs intended to restore some dignity and prosperity to many Americans. During President Roosevelt's inspection of Shenandoah National Park's Skyline Drive in fall 1933, Senator Byrd, Governor Pollard of Virginia, NPS Director Arno Cammerer, Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads Thomas MacDonald, and others discussed a parkway connecting Shenandoah National Park and Great Smoky Mountains National Park.[18] Constructing a parkway would bring desperately needed economic relief to the Southern Appalachians (Figure 2-3).

President Roosevelt endorsed the concept of a scenic motorway linking the two eastern national parks.[19] On November 16, 1933, Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, informed a delegation of senators, congressmen, and governors that

17 NPS, *Doughton Park CLR,* 17; Richard Quin and Christopher Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway, Historic American Engineering Record* (HAER No. NC-42, 1997), 36.

18 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 34; Stanley W. Abbott, *Blue Ridge Parkway: Historical Report to the Chief Architect, Branch of Plans and Design, for the Years 1934, 1935, and 1936,* by the Resident Landscape Architect, Roanoke, Virginia (BLRI Library 1937), 3.

19 NPS, *Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement,* Blue Ridge Parkway, Virginia and North Carolina, (January 2013), 162.

Roosevelt had approved the road as a federal works project.[20]

Ickes made the decision to route the Parkway along the crest of the southern Appalachian Mountains through western Virginia and North Carolina.[21] The decision followed a prolonged study by federal government officials and discussions with the states of North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.[22] The location selected by Ickes was controversial and upset representatives of Tennessee, who wanted the Parkway in their state.

Once a general route for the Parkway was established, a more specific roadway had to be determined.[23] The first preliminary master plan for the Parkway was completed in 1934. This plan outlined different ideas for the road, including the need for the inclusion of travel services.[24]

The Parkway was funded with an initial allotment of $4 million, and on December 5, 1933, that sum was transferred to the NPS to begin work on the project.[25] The original amount requested was $16,600,000 based on an estimated $40,000 a mile for 414 miles. It was estimated that this would employ 4,000 people for two years.[26] The initial allocation of $4 million was a compromise that worked within the available budget, and with this funding implementation of the Parkway began.

In December 1933, Stanley Abbott was hired to be the first resident landscape architect of the proposed Parkway. Three years later, in 1937, he was appointed as the Parkway's acting superintendent.[27] Abbott wanted to create a series of "parks within parks" strung along the roadway, like "jewels on a string of beads." Abbott also believed that the Parkway should function as "an outdoor museum of rural life, telling the story of the mountain folk, their agricultural pursuits, and the mountain retreats of the wealthy."[28] Abbott's design team included landscape architect Edward Abbuehl, who joined the Parkway design team in April 1934 and became Abbott's right-hand man early in the planning stages.[29]



FIGURE 2–3. View of the Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia. The alignment for the Parkway was identified in the 1934 plan. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--210, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345910p/.)

The early 1930s were marked by the Great Depression. Unemployment and economic hardships were exacerbated in rural portions of the country, where isolation and poverty were the norm for many people. Projects that helped create jobs as part of President Roosevelt's New Deal programs, including the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), were economically beneficial to isolated regions of the country. Private contractors constructed the Parkway, and WPA and CCC worked on landscaping and other support work. Four CCC camps were established along the Parkway route.[30] The WPA

20 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 36.

21 NPS, *Final General Management Plan,* 162.

22 Firth, "Historical Significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway."

23 NPS, *Doughton Park CLR,* 17.

24 Ibid, 18.

25 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 27; A. E. Demaray, "Discussion of Federal Parkways, Council Meeting of the American Planning and Civic Association, January 24, 1936," in *Parkways: A Manual of the Revised Requirements, Instructions, and Information Relating to National Parkways for Use in the National Park Service* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1938), 2.

26 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 35;

27 Ibid, 40.

28 Janiskee, Bob. *Stanley W. Abbott, Wizard of the Blue Ridge Parkway.* National Parks Traveler, October 10, 2008. http://www.nationalparkstraveler.com/2008/10/stanley-w-abbott-wizard-blue-ridge-Parkway

29 *Stanley William Abbott, Landscape Architect during the design of the Blue Ridge Parkway.* In the private collection of Gale Abbott Roberts, Williamsburg, VA. http://www.southerngardenhistory.org/PDF/Magnolia_Spring2013.pdf

30 Stahlecker, Gail D. *Blue Ridge Parkway.* National Park Service, Denver Service Center, Denver, CO. https://www.asla.org/meetings/awards/awds01/blueridge.html

and CCC hired many men for construction projects on the Parkway. The purpose of both programs was to put as many men to work as possible (Figure 2-4). Manual labor was used extensively on the Parkway, even though power equipment might have been more efficient. WPA and CCC crews cleared brush, drilled rock for blasting, and provided other sorts of labor. Labor for roadway construction for the Parkway was largely provided by private contractors.[31]

Although not part of original concepts for the Parkway, Abbott recommended the addition of 10 recreation sites along the road in 1934. This included four major recreation areas—Natural Bridge, Peaks of Otter, Pinnacles of Dan, and The Bluff—and six areas to be acquired for their scenic qualities and held as "undeveloped reservations."[32] Nineteen recreation development areas were shown on the 1936 Parkway master plan, which was considered by park planners to be a flexible guide rather than a rigid plan. Other areas along the Parkways were acquired as opportunities arose. Today 23 sites provide recreation facilities and services along the Parkway. Sixteen of these are similar to the recreation parks proposed in the 1936 plan.[33]

Key concepts for the Parkway were to invite leisurely driving and frequent stops at recreation sites for such activities as camping, picnicking, hiking, horseback and riding.[34]

The idea of adding recreation areas to the Parkway was based in part on the Westchester Parkways north of New York City, where Abbott worked before joining the NPS.[35] The idea was an integral part of the proposal for the Blue Ridge Parkway from the beginning (Figures 2-5, 2-6).

Abbott and Abbuehl selected areas suitable for parks along the Parkway in the course of their reconnaissance along the route during 1934. Abbott wrote, "As we traveled through the mountains on general reconnaissance, favorite places came into



FIGURE 2–4. CCC Camp NP-21 was established at the Bluffs (Doughton Park), located on what is now the Doughton Park Maintenance Area. It opened September 1, 1938 and was abandoned July 17, 1942. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--230, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345930p/.)

our thinking .... We were guided, too, by some sense of need for rhythm or pattern—or a jewel on the string of beads occurring every so often, so there was a comprehensive plan—but not a rigid one."[36]

Abbott also wrote, "Our theory was a major park every sixty miles, and in between two lesser day-use areas, as against night-use, or larger, more rounded development."[37] Recreation areas planned for day use would include only picnic units, gas stations, and lunch counters, while areas planned for overnight stays would have campgrounds and, in four cases, lodges or cabins. But, in fact, campgrounds were planned for fifteen of the recreation areas, so the distinction between major and minor parks was blurred, and the addition of visitor centers disrupted the planned hierarchy even more.[38]

In December 1934, Abbott and Abbuehl produced a preliminary plan that outlined the need for recreation areas and listed thirteen areas extending as far south as Blowing Rock, North Carolina. When the report was submitted in June 1936, it constituted part of the first master plan for the complete Parkway.[39] The number of proposed recreation areas had been expanded to 18 in this version, and one more was added in the final version dated

31 Ibid.

32 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina."

33 Firth, "Historical Significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway."

34 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 84; Samuel P. Weems, Interview by S. Herbert Exison, July 16, 1971, NPS Harpers Ferry Center, tape no. 79, transcript BLRI Library, 2.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

38 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 138.

39 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 85; Abbott and Abbuehl, "Blue Ridge Parkway," BLRI Archives, RG5, Series 8, Box 9, Folder 1 (See intro. Note 14).

August 1936. The plans for the 19 areas called for acquisition of 500—4,000 acres for each. Of the 19 areas proposed for recreation development in the 1936 plan, seven areas were within the boundaries of national forest purchase units and one other area was within the boundary of a national forest.[40,] A national forest purchase unit is an area designated by the Secretary of Agriculture that was purchased for stream-flow protection or to maintain acquired lands as national forests, while national forest land is formally established and set aside for national forest uses.

The plan including recreation parks throughout the entire length of the Parkway was approved in August 1936.[41] This plan included Crabtree Falls, which at that time was referred to as Crabtree Creek.

Plans were prepared for each recreation area, and these were eventually incorporated in a comprehensive master plan for the Parkway. Projected work and development fell into four categories: (i) conservation of natural scenery; (ii) facilities for active recreation, augmenting the passive enjoyment of the motorway itself; (iii) provision of food, lodging, and motor services in an attractive manner where it was not yet available; and (iv) utility buildings for maintenance and operation of the parks and the Parkway.[42]

Drawings illustrated the proposed layout of each recreation area. In every case, picnic sites, campgrounds, and cabin areas were located close to, but screened from, the Parkway road. Gasoline stations and coffee or sandwich shops, on the other hand, were placed where they could be seen from the road. The drawings showed the network of trails proposed for each park, and large areas in each park were to be left undisturbed by development.[43]

Buildings, structures, and other landscape features in the recreation areas were designed and constructed in the NPS rustic style of architecture, a style that incorporates native materials and vernacular building styles with the intent of keeping man-made structures as inconspicuous as possible (Figures 2-7, 2-8). Abbott promoted a "building code" under which concession and park structures were required to adhere to the standard.[44] Abbott stated, "It is the desire of this office that all wood construction along the Parkway and in the parks



FIGURE 2–5. Rocky Knob Recreation area, Belcher's Curve. View of a Parkway scenic easement. These have helped preserve the rural character of the landscape. Facing east-southeast. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--76, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345776p/.)



FIGURE 2–6. Rocky Knob Recreation area, Belcher's Curve. View of a Parkway scenic easement. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--76, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345776p/.)

40 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 86.

41 Firth, "Historical Significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway."

42 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 89; Stanley W. Abbott, *Acting Superintendent's Annual Reports,* 1938-1943, (BLRI Library, 1939), 17.

43 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 101.

44 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 129.

have a driftwood gray color unless you are otherwise advised."[45]

Abbott promoted a "building code" under which concession as well as park structures had to adhere to the standard, with exceptions for interiors of baths and kitchens and other areas where sanitation concerns were paramount.[46] Stone masonry was much used in construction details because the stones were easily available, and the finished products were attractive and consistent with the surrounding context. Stone curbs were used, as were stone parapet walls where necessary. Cast iron grates were placed over stone drop inlets.[47]

There are currently 21 areas along the Parkway that were either part of the original set of planned recreation areas or are attractions that have been developed in more recent years for visitor information, education, and enjoyment.



FIGURE 2–7. Linville Falls Recreation Area. View of Linville Falls from Erwin's view looking west. (Blue Ridge Parkway Journeys. http://www.blueridgeparkwayblog.com/galleries/blue-ridge-parkway-history/rivers-lakes/#jp-carousel-4754.)



FIGURE 2–8. Doughton Park Recreation Area. View of parkway with the road crossing alligator back. Facing southeast. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--111. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print.. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345811p/.)

Design and Construction (1935–1945)

Construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway started in 1935 (Figures 2-9, 2-10). Congress authorized the NPS's construction and administration of the Parkway on June 30, 1936 (Public Law 74-848/ August 25, 1916, and Public Law 39 Stat. 535). Through a cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Public Roads, the NPS used the Bureau's road-building technical assistance and expertise to develop the Parkway.

Once the location of the Parkway had been determined by the NPS and the Bureau of Public Roads, the state highway departments made topographic surveys and mapped property boundaries. The NPS and Bureau of Public Roads then produced Parkway development plans that provided a basis for land acquisition by the states.[48] Most of the line was flagged by Bureau engineers in 1934 and 1935 (Figure 2-11). In 1939, the Bureau was transferred from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to the Federal Works Administration, which renamed the agency the Public Roads Administration.[49]

45 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 129; Stanley Abbott, memorandum for Project and Camp Superintendents, (BLRI Archives, RG 7, Series 41, Box 57, Folder 23, April 14, 1940).

46 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 129; Abbott to Regional Director, (December 3, 1943), 12.

47 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 66; BLRI Drawing, PKY BR GEN 2185A, Standing Parking Details, Van Cleve (BLRI Drawings Collection, March 11, 1942).

48 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 42.

49 Ibid, 9.



FIGURE 2–9. View of the Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--212, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345912p/.)



FIGURE 2–10. View showing a stone wall and snake fence reinforcing the parkway's curvilinear alignment. View from station 150, section 2-C. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--234, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345934p/.)

Acquisition of land for right-of-ways resulted in a number of issues raised by adjacent landowners. Most of these problems were a result of ill feelings, low valuation, mistrust, and poor communications between representatives of the federal government and landowners. The idea of being a good neighbor strongly influenced the development of the land management and conservation programs that became some of the most important and innovative aspects of the Parkway.[50] Abbott worked with NPS planners to streamline and simplify the right-of-way acquisition process, to ensure landowners received a fair deal, and to make it easier for landowners to access their land.[51]

The width of the right-of-way for the Parkway varies, but is based on acquiring an average of one hundred acres in fee simple per mile for the road and fifty acres of scenic easement per mile.[52] This flexible approach allowed right-of-way widths to be adjusted to reflect property boundaries and natural conditions.[53] The land on each side of the road is an essential part of the Parkway: it serves to restrict access and crossings, and it insulates the road from developments that would intrude on its scenic character (Figure 2-12).[54]

Engineers worked with landscape architects in the NPS Roanoke office during the design and construction phases of each project along the Parkway. A final inspection of each project was done jointly by the resident engineer and resident landscape architect. They submitted recommendations for acceptance for each finished project along the Parkway.[55] The designers provided a curvilinear alignment for the Parkway using spiral curves to transition from one curve to another and smooth vertical grades to provide maximum opportunities for scenic views. This approach would also minimize impacts on the terrain. The road was intended to include two lanes of traffic undivided in most places. Each road lane is 10 feet wide with 6-foot shoulders, making a total of 32 feet of roadway within a typical 1,000-foot right-of-way (Figures 2-13, 2-14). [56]

50 Ibid, 54.

51 Ibid, 117.

52 Firth, "Historical Significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway"; Abbott, *Blue Ridge Parkway: Historical Report,* 10

53 Firth, "Historical Significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway"; Edward H. Abbuehl, *History of the Blue Ridge Parkway,* MSS, (BLRI Archives, RG 5, Series 38, Folder 16, February 1948), 10.

54 Firth, "Historical Significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway"; Abbott, *Blue Ridge Parkway: Historical Report,* 9.

55 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 56.

56 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 35; "Meeting Held in the Office of Senator Byrd of Virginia to discuss the proposed parkway connecting two National Parks, the Shenandoah N. P. and the Smoky Mountain N. P." 17 October 1933 BLRI Archives, RG 5, Series 44, Box 54, Folder 11.

The landscape architects and engineers agreed on the importance of arranging a pleasing sequence of views, but they did not always agree on priorities. Engineers focused on building a road to modern standards for grade and curvature, while landscape architects concentrated on fitting the road to the mountainous terrain (Figure 2-15).[57] A preliminary plan was produced by Parkway planners in December 1934 to provide a framework for how to balance decisions about the road.

The 1934 plan determined road alignments and right-of-way strategies; it also listed 13 recreation areas for acquisition along the Parkway. An NPS master plan covering the entire length of the Blue Ridge Parkway was approved in August 1936. The approved 1936 master plan included 19 recreation areas and wayside parks that Abbott referred to as the "rare gems in the necklace.[58] A shortage of labor held back the work for several years until WPA and CCC enrollees were assigned to this work in large numbers.[59]

In March 1935, the NPS held a meeting in Asheville, North Carolina, attended by representatives of the U.S. Forest Service and the Agricultural Adjustment Administration.[60] At that meeting, both federal agencies agreed to cooperate in the acquisition of the recreation areas. Areas outside the national forests would be surveyed to determine whether they could be considered submarginal lands, which meant that they could be acquired if they were no longer suitable for agricultural use but were valuable for recreational use.[61]

The following month, the Federal Land Bank assigned Samuel Weems to appraise land for the recreation areas. Weems was to play a major role in the acquisition and development of the recreation areas.[62] However, in November 1935, Weems was transferred to the NPS and became project manager for the Parkway recreation areas.[63]



FIGURE 2–11. View of a section of the Parkway before it was paved and the shoulders seeded. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--217, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345917p/.)



FIGURE 2–12. Axial Parkway alignment along ridge top. Note the open vistas to either side of the roadway and the wood guardrail. View is to the northeast. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--48, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345748p/.)

Acquisition of the first group of recreation areas was fairly straightforward because many of the tracts were relatively large, and the land in question was of poor quality.[64]

One problem was that funds provided by the Resettlement Administration were fully committed, and an additional $231,000 had to be requested to

57 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 43.

58 NPS, *Final General Management Plan,* 163.

59 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 80.

60 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 87; Abbott, *Blue Ridge Parkway: Historical Report,* 14.

61 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 87.

62 Ibid.; Weems interview, 79.

63 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 87; Weems interview, 11.

64 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 88.



FIGURE 2–13. Laurel Fork Viaduct along the Blue Ridge Parkway. (http://www.blueridgeparkwayblog.com/galleries/blue-ridge-parkway-history/viaducts/#jp-carousel-4799)



FIGURE 2–14. View of the parkway following the course of Otter Creek. Looking southeast. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--24, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345724p/.)

complete the acquisition of recreation areas outside national forest boundaries. In addition, $136,000 was sought to secure areas within national forest purchase units, and negotiations were conducted with the U.S. Forest Service on the development of recreation areas within the national forests.[65]

Cooperation between the NPS and the Forest Service was promoted after World War I by legislation that authorized a transfer of property when it was mutually beneficial.[66] In April 1938, Abbott met with William P. Kramer, assistant regional forester for

65 Ibid

66 Ibid., 118; Samuel P. Weems, *Superintendent's Annual Reports 1944-1963,* (BLRI Library and BLRI Archives, RG 1, Series 3, Box 62, 1951), 4.



FIGURE 2–15. Reconnaissance report photograph, used in the early 1930's, of North Carolina landscape before determination of the roadway alignment. Abbott realized that maps and plan drawings would mean little to his supervisors who were unfamiliar with the region and chose photographs to communicate route alternatives. Abbott would draw dashed white lines on a photograph to indicate the proposed route. Abbott's written reports included a written description of the region and a suggestion of the acreages necessary to create the parkway. (Original image - HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--236, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345936p/. Modified image - NPS 10-30 National Visual Inventory Card, Classification #7196, 8/1968.)

the U.S. Forest Service, to discuss the development of recreation areas on Forest Service land and the possibility of transferring recreation areas operated by the Forest Service to the NPS.[67] Kramer still wanted the Forest Service to develop and administer any recreation areas located on national forest land, but Abbott and other NPS officials insisted that developments along the Parkway should be under NPS control. The Forest Service offered to develop some of the areas according to plans furnished by NPS, but NPS planners considered this an unsatisfactory arrangement.[68] A stalemate ensued, and some planned areas, such as Crabtree Falls, would not be turned over to the NPS for decades.[69]

The landscape and architectural designs along the Parkway were guided by the prevailing design philosophy of the NPS, which sought to fit new

67 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 165.

68 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 166; Stanley W. Abbott, letter to Kramer, Assistant Regional Forester, U.S. Forest Service, Washington, DC, 4 April 1938, BLRI Archives, RG 7, Series 41, Box 57, Folder 10; Stanley W. Abbott, *Report on Conference Regarding Blue Ridge Parkway in Relation to National Forest Areas,* (BLRJ Archives, RG 7, Series 41, Box 57, Folder 10), 6-7.

69 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 166.

developments into their natural settings (Figure 2-16). This was achieved by protecting natural resources, grading slopes beside the road to achieve rolling terrain, planting and selective cutting programs for vegetation, and using a rustic architectural style for park structures (Figure 2-17). This conservative design philosophy had been developed in western national parks, but was transplanted to the East, where it became part of efforts to preserve historic places. The preservation of pioneer structures along the Parkway was part of the comprehensive program of rural preservation. The resulting landscapes, with well-managed forests and fields and restored mill ponds and pioneer cabins, represented an idealized rural Appalachia.[70]

Architecture along the Parkway after World War II was a simpler, more economical version of the prewar rustic style that reflected the new realities of limited funding. Abbuehl wrote, "The Parkway had built many maintenance buildings with concrete block, which was an excellent and permanent building material that could be handled by either the WPA or CCC and required the minimum of maintenance. The one objection was esthetics." Abbuehl noted that covering the exterior with board and batten siding provided a more pleasing appearance that was reminiscent of the weather-stained look of structures throughout the mountains. Stained concrete shingles were used to create an attractive roof that was more fire-resistant than traditional wood shingles.[71]

This combination of concrete block with board and batten siding was quickly accepted. In 1950, Arthur Demaray, who was the next director of the NPS, gave his approval to this modified rustic architectural style (Figure 2-18).[72] Demaray wrote, "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. Cement shingles, wide siding, boards and battens, or combinations of wood and stone such as have been used on several of the existing buildings, will continue to serve the purpose admirably."[73] After 1950, this model of architectural forms and materials was followed in the design of all parkway buildings accessible to the public.[74]

After World War II, comfort stations and support buildings in the parks were also simpler in design and lacked heavy timber construction. The comfort stations at Crabtree Falls follow this approach. They are simple frame structures clad in vertical boards and battens.[75]

The design of campgrounds throughout the National Park System was based on the work of Emilio P. Meinecke, a plant pathologist who was a consultant to both the NPS and U.S. Forest Service on the design of campgrounds.[76] Meinecke had been hired by the NPS to advise on many problems in Yosemite and other national parks. His ideas and recommendations completely changed camping in the national parks and influenced the design of the many campgrounds built by the CCC in the 1930s.[77]

Meinecke recommended the selection of new campsite locations based on soil type, length of seasonal use, type of vegetation, and type of camper. One of his innovations was the "garage spur," an open space for vehicle parking adjacent to the campsite, cleared of vegetation and marked by heavy rocks or posts. Neutral zones provided privacy between campsites and protected the sites from road dust and noise.[78]

Further, park designers were most likely also aware of the advice provided by another NPS consultant,

70 Firth, "Historical Significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway."

71 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 122; E.H. Abbeuhl, memorandum to Samuel P. Weems, August 4, 1948 (BLRI Archives, RG 3, Series 16, Box 90, Folder 57).

72 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 122.

73 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 122; A.E. Demaray, memorandum to Regional Director, "Rockfish Valley Contact Station, Section 1B, Blue Ridge," December 8, 1950, (BLRI Archives, RG 5, Series 29, Box 35, Folder 6).

74 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 123; Weems, *Superintendent's Annual Reports.*

75 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 93.

76 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 92; Linda Flint McClelland, *Building the National Parks, Historic Landscape Design and Construction,* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 276-85.

77 NPS, *A Sense of Place: Design Guidelines for Yosemite National Park,* (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2012), 225.

78 Ibid, 224.



FIGURE 2–16. Road construction. (Final Construction Report – Project 2-M-2, Blue Ridge Parkway, McDowell and Yancey Counties, North Carolina. Grading, Draining, Construction of Two Tunnels and Traffic Bound Crushed Stone Base. Federal Work Agency, Public Roads Administration. July, 1941.)

Frank Waugh.[79] Waugh's designs focused on the production of a highly natural style of landscape design and incorporated the concept of ecology through the use of plantings characterized by natural associations of plant species, in conjunction with environmental conditions.[80] His book, *Recreation Uses in the National Forests*, influenced many NPS designers.

The Parkway's campgrounds typically do not offer electrical and water hookups, but most have at least some sites that will accommodate sizeable recreation vehicles. All campgrounds offer restrooms, drinking water, picnic tables, and grills. Only the Pisgah Campground offers showers. Group camping is available only at Linville Falls Campground. Limited backcountry camping is available via permit at Basin Cove in Doughton Park and Rock Castle Gorge. Camping outside of designated campgrounds (or without a permit at backcountry sites) is prohibited.

In 1939, Abbott wrote to Thomas C. Vint, the chief of the Branch of Plans and Design, expressing

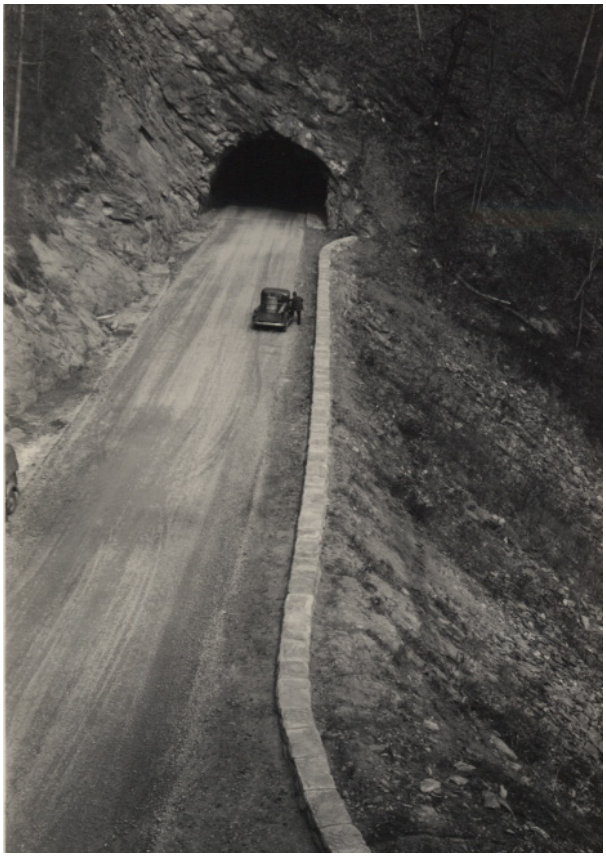


FIGURE 2–17. Guardrail between tunnels. (Final Construction Report – Blue Ridge Parkway, McDowell and Yancey Counties, North Carolina. Bridge over N.C. Route 80 and Vicinity Grading and Surfacing. Federal Work Agency, Public Roads Administration. Final Construction Report – Project 2-M-5. February, 1944.)

79 NPS, *A Sense of Place: Design Guidelines for Yosemite National Park,* (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2012), 225.

80 The Forest History Society, U.S. Forest Service History, *Frank Albert Waugh,* last updated March 31, 2009, http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/People/Waugh/Waugh.aspx.

interest in preserving historic buildings along the Parkway.[81] Abbott also worked with William M. Austin, resident engineer in the Bureau of Public Roads' Roanoke office, to make decisions about the layout of the Parkway.[82] Austin and Abbott agreed on the planning of the Blue Ridge Parkway and made many decisions jointly until Austin left the Roanoke office in 1941.[83]

The first complete master plan for the Parkway was produced in 1940. [84] One year later this plan was revised and expanded. The 1941 master plan provided a detailed picture of the project after its first seven years and offered proposed changes and additions for upcoming years. [85]

Progress on the Parkway was steady during the 1930s, but work was halted in 1942 because of World War II. By then approximately 330 miles of the Parkway had been completed or were under construction (Figure 2-19).[86]

The onset of World War II brought significant changes to the personnel associated with the Parkway. Public Roads Administration staff at Roanoke was reduced by 60 percent, and the NPS office staff dwindled from 44 to 29 persons.[87] Abbott served in the military during this time, so project manager Samuel P. Weems was promoted to superintendent, "with the understanding that when Abbott returned he would resume his [former] position."[88]



FIGURE 2–18. The visitor contact center at Cumberland Knob Recreation Area originally opened in 1941 as a combined sandwich shop, picnic area, and comfort station. Looking north. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--97, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345797p/.)

In 1942, NPS designer Malcolm Bird and his assistants began to prepare drawings to record the developed landscape along the Parkway.[89] These drawings were eventually named "Parkway land use maps" or "PLUMs." They were drawn at a scale of 1 inch to 100 feet, and around twenty were required to map a section of the Parkway.[90]

"The PLUMs primarily recorded features that affected the view from the road with the intent to guide the maintenance of those features.[91] By 1943, PLUMs for six sections had been completed and were ready for approval (Figures 2-20, 2-21).[92] These plans also showed areas along the Parkway within the right-of-way that were leased back to local farmers. The preferred use of each field was identified. Some areas were restricted to use as pastures or hayfields, while others were designated

81 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 96.

82 Firth, "Historical Significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway."

83 Firth, "Historical Significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway"; Edward H. Abbuehl, *History of the Blue Ridge Parkway,* (MSS: BLRI Archives, RG5, Series 38, Folder 16, 1948), 27.

84 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 100.

85 The 1936 plan for the Parkway was the first to include the entire length, but the 1940 plan was the first to include all the major elements for Parkway, so is considered to be the first "complete" plan.

86 NPS, *Final General Management Plan,* 163.

87 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 104; Stanley W. Abbott, *Annual Report of the Blue Ridge Parkway, Roanoke, Virginia, to the Director, National Park Service,* (June 1942), 24; Abbott, Acting Superintendent's Annual Reports, 18.

88 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 104.

89 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 83; Abbott, *Acting Superintendent's Annual Reports, 9.*

90 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 84; Edward H. Abbuehl, *Landscape Program on the Blue Ridge Parkway,* (MSS: BLRI Archives, RG 5, Series 41, Box 52, Folder 35, 1980), 4.

91 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 84.

92 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 106; *Abbott, Acting Superintendent's Annual Reports,* 3, 12.

as suitable for row crops or general agricultural use.[93] The land was still owned by the NPS, but improved economic conditions made many farmers eager to lease land for agricultural uses.[94] The results were economically beneficial to local communities while limiting development and maintaining the scenic quality of the surrounding landscape.

Crews from the newly established Civilian Public Service worked along parts of the Parkway and completed some amenity area improvements during the war years.[95] The Civilian Public Service provided alternative services for conscientious objectors during World War II.[96]

By the end of 1942 approximately two-thirds of the right-of-way for the Parkway had been acquired, and most of the remainder lay within national forests.[97] Although work on the road was halted, the states of Virginia and North Carolina continued to acquire land for the Parkway during World War II.[98]

The NPS provided the utility infrastructure for all developments at recreation areas, campgrounds, picnic areas, and visitor centers. Though providing basic utility services was an expensive undertaking, it would have been a prohibitive cost for concession companies Even for later buildings operated by concessionaires, NPS was responsible for the utilities. Electrical power was delivered to all recreation areas from underground lines, so there is not the visual intrusion associated with overhead lines.[99]

Adequate water was a problem in the mountains, and the supply of potable water and the disposal of waterborne wastes were issues that had to be addressed in the recreation areas. Where pumping stations were required to provide water to the campgrounds and picnic sites, there were either

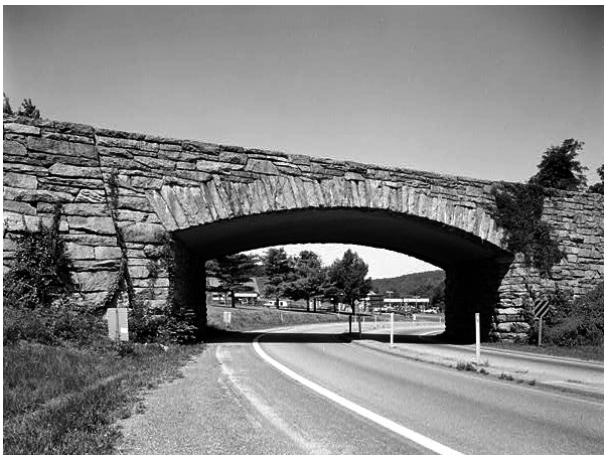


FIGURE 2–19. U.S. Route 250 grade separation structure. This reinforced concrete, rigid frame structure was built in 1941. Its relatively flat arch provided maximum useful clearance in a short span and the physics of the design eliminated the need for extensive abutments to contain the thrust of traditional arches, making it ideally suited as a grade separation structure. BLRI designers made extensive use of theses bridges for crossing small streams and creeks, and for grade separation structures, ornamenting them with a rustic stone facade. View is of the south-southeast elevation. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--1, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print.

timber frame structures, which were similar to larger versions of the spring houses found on mountain farms, or stone structures when stone was naturally available in an area.[100] The NPS dug wells in many areas to provide the necessary water. [101] A pump house was constructed along the Parkway just north of Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. It provides access to water in a 3,000-gallon storage reservoir through a pump that sites on top of the reservoir.[102]

Plans for the recreation areas show locations of sanitary sewer systems at major recreation areas. At Crabtree Falls there are sanitary sewer systems for the comfort stations, the gas station, and the Mission 66 coffee shop.

In 1940, the NPS established a policy for providing publicly operated facilities along the Parkway. According to Abbott, the idea was to "plan conservatively to provide such day use facilities as gasoline filling stations and coffee shops where such are not now available in adjacent tourist or

93 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 106; A. E. Huntoon, "A guide to leasing agricultural land on the Blue Ridge Parkway," (BLRI Archives, RG 5, Series 38, Box 48, Folder 10, 1945).

94 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 84.

95 NPS, *Doughton Park CLR,* 50.

96 Ibid.

97 Firth, "Historical Significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway"; NPS, *Blue Ridge Parkway Land Protection Plan,* (Asheville, N.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1989).

98 NPS, *Final General Management Plan,* 164

99 Ibid.

100 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 93.

101 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 104; Weems, *Superintendent's Annual Reports.*

102 NPS. *Crabtree Meadows – Developed Areas & Utilities Plan,* Sheet 30, May 1952.

resort towns or along public highways reasonably nearby."[103]

Postwar (1946–1955)

During the war years, much of the normal maintenance along the Parkway was neglected, so emphasis early in this period was on addressing these issues and repairing damaged facilities. Following the end of the war, funding from Congress was limited and Parkway construction was slow.

By the beginning of 1947, the majority of the staff members of the Public Roads Administration and NPS had returned to their positions. Weems remained on as superintendent of the Parkway, and Abbott assumed the post of resident landscape architect in 1946. In 1949, Abbott left the Parkway to head an NPS team surveying the feasibility of a parkway along the historic Natchez Trace.[104]

The Parkway attracted three times the number of visitors envisioned in the prewar plans, and in his 1954 report, Weems would boast that it was the most visited unit in the National Park System (Figures 2-22 to 2-24).[105] The high number of visitors put added emphasis on improving existing facilities along the Parkway, adding new facilities to enhance the visitor experience, and continuing construction of the Parway. In particular, there was added interest in developing food, lodging, and motor services along the Parkway.

The 1941 master plan for the Parkway proposed that each major recreation area 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.[106] In 1947, architectural plans were prepared for a gas station and coffee shop at The Bluff (now called Doughton Park), but the construction process was delayed by planning and design controversies.[107]

The following year, designs were prepared for a lodge at The Bluff, and for gas stations at Rocky Knob and Crabtree Falls. The gas stations both opened in 1950.

The rustic style of architecture that was used before the war was modified in part to reduce the costs of both construction and maintenance. Asphalt shingles replaced oak shingles, shakes were replaced with asphalt shingles, and logs were replaced with cinder blocks. However, the basic forms of structures still reflected simple vernacular buildings (Figures 2-25, 2-26).[108]

Due in large part to the increased number of visitors, there was a new focus on interpretation along the Parkway in the mid-1950s.[109] In 1951, NPS formed an interpretive division for the Blue Ridge Parkway and named park naturalist William G. Lord to head the new division. Lord collected information pertinent to Blue Ridge Parkway using a thorough, comprehensive approach that organized material section by section. The information includes flora and fauna, geographic features, place names, early settlement, and the life pattern of the current inhabitants. The intent was for this work to result in a reasonably complete inventory of material with which to bring substance to the interpretive program through the media of topical publications, interpretive signs, bulletin boards, and lectures.[110]

The font used for interpretive and wayfinding signage is unique to the Parkway because the sign text was hand routed and several variations of templates were used to create the signs.

Mission 66 (1956–1966)

In the early 1950s, there was a need to update and expand facilities to meet the needs of the high number of visitors to the parks within the NPS. The program responsible for the updates and expansion of NPS facilities was called Mission 66.

103 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 94; Weems, *Superintendent's Annual Reports,* 16.

104 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 83.

105 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina, 128; Weems, *Superintendent's Annual Reports,* 8. The estimated number of visitors was 4,344,852.

106 NPS, *Doughton Park CLR,* 54.

107 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 120.

108 Ian Firth, NPS, "Blue Ridge Parkway, National Historic Landmark Nomination," (final draft, 2015), 36.

109 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina, 142; Weems, *Superintendent's Annual Reports,* 6.

110 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina, 128; Weems, *Superintendent's Annual Reports,* 8.

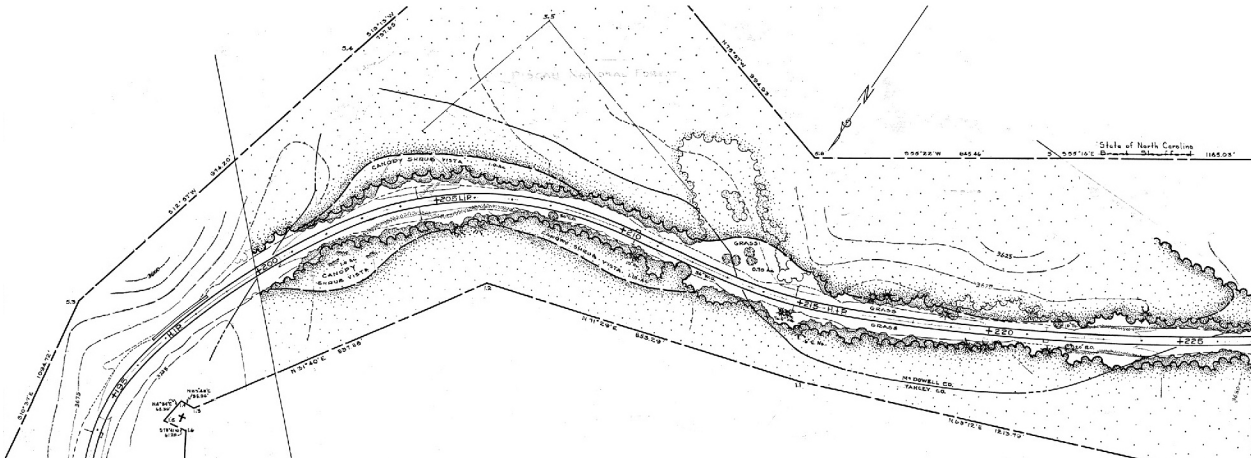


FIGURE 2–20. PLUM for Section 2M-6 - Station 199+80 to 226+92 . Drawing No. PKY-BR, 2M-2054, Page 1 of 19. Drawn by Branch of Plans & Design from National Park Service, August, 1952. Designed by Reid. (BLRI Archives.)

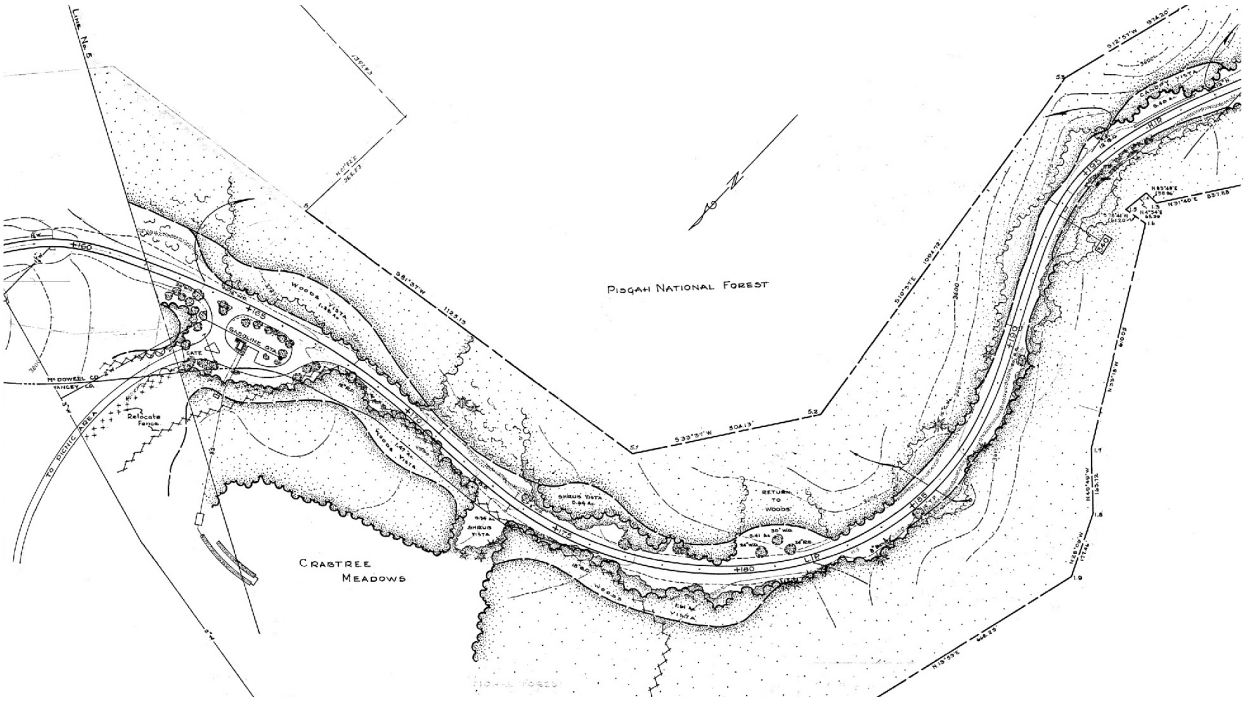


FIGURE 2–21. PLUM for Section 2M-6 - Station 162+08 to 199+80. Drawing No. PKY-BR, 2M-2054, Page 2 of 19. Drawn by Branch of Plans & Design from National Park Service, August, 1952. Designed by Reid. (BLRI Archives.)

Mission 66 was a federally sponsored program aimed to improve visitor services within the NPS system. Projects associated with Mission 66 began in 1956 and ended in 1966, which was the 50th anniversary of the agency. Every superintendent in the NPS was asked to submit a detailed account of the park's needs.[111] For the Blue Ridge Parkway, Mission 66 was looked at as a way to transform the Parkway into a prototype of a new variety of historical park, a site that, according to historian Ethan Carr, "combined new landscape design (the parkway) with the historic house reconstructions, archaeological excavations, and other 'restorations' taking place at various sites along the corridor."[112]

The proposed Mission 66 budget for the Blue Ridge Parkway was $31,600,000.[113] The emphasis was on road construction and providing additional visitor

111 NPS, *Doughton Park CLR,* 58.

112 Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma.* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), 176-77.

113 Daniele Laura, "'Enjoyment Without Impairment': Conrad L. Wirth's MISSION 66 and the Blue Ridge Parkway," *Driving Through Time,* (The University Library: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2010), http://docsouth.unc.edu/blueridgeparkway/overlooks/mission_66/.



FIGURE 2–22. Humpback Rocks Visitor Center. View of the self-guided interpretive mountain farm trail and a post-and-rail fence in the foreground with Humpback Rocks in the background. The view is looking south. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--3, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print.)



FIGURE 2–23. Otter Creek Campground, view of creek side campsite. Looking south-southeast. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--29, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345729p/.)

centers. By the time the Mission 66 program was initiated, only about one-third of the distance of the Parkway was completed. Mission 66 funds helped complete the Parkway.[114] The *Mission 66 Prospectus* prepared by NPS staff in 1957 for the Parkway allocated .approximately ninety percent of the $27 million project budget for road construction. The rest of the budget was allocated to visitor services and accommodations.[115] The program promoted the development of several new recreation facilities, and the prospectus identified 13 new visitor accommodations and improvements to existing sites. These included "recreation and utility areas at Cumberland Knob, Doughton Park, Tompkins Knob, Moses Cone, Julian Price, Linville Falls, Crabtree Meadows, Craggy Gardens, Asheville Headquarters, Balsam Gap, Soco Gap, Mount Pisgah, and Tennessee Bald; the construction of administration buildings at Doughton Park and Asheville; visitor centers at Moses Cone, Soco Gap, and Mount Pisgah, and restoration of visitor center at Tompkins Knob," as well as the installation of "picnic tables to be placed at parking overlooks, and construction of necessary drinking fountains."[116]

Completion of the Parkway road, except for the Asheville and Roanoke links, was a major objective. Parking overlooks, guardrails, bridges, additional camping facilities, and new recreation areas were also part of Mission 66 projects (Figure 2-27).[117] Road work completed as part of Mission 66 brought the roadway to within 7.7 miles of completion. The only section remaining was the rugged terrain across Grandfather Mountain.

The *Mission 66 Prospectus* argued that the dispersal of visitors along the 477 miles of the Parkway gave it an advantage over conventional parks by allowing access to sites while minimizing overcrowding.[118] For the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area, Mission 66 was used to construct the coffee shop, which still exists today.

During the Mission 66 Era, staff of the Parkway was expanded and reorganized. By 1963, the Parkway

114 NPS, *Doughton Park CLR,* 58.

115 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 130.

116 Laura, "Mission 66."

117 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 130.

118 Ibid. 137. The mileage figure reflects the fact that in 1956 Section 1A was still legally part of the Blue Ridge Parkway.



FIGURE 2–24. Swannanoa River bridge is a concrete box girder bridge, built in 1966, crossing the Swannanoa River, Norfolk and Southern Railroad, and Interstate 40. Bridge is significant for its s-shape. View to the south. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--178, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print/. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345878p/.)



FIGURE 2–25. View of the Doughton Park area gas station and sandwich shop. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--232. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, .D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345932p/.)



FIGURE 2–26. Humpback Rocks visitor center was constructed in 1955 and opened 19 May 1956. Destroyed by arson in 1981, it was rebuilt as an expanded facility and opened the following year. In the foreground is a post-and-rail fence and a tower of truth. In the background to the right is a buck or Yankee Fence. The view is west-northwest. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--2, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.photos.345702p/.)

had 160 permanent year-round employees, plus 43 seasonal park rangers and naturalists, and several hundred part-time workers.[119]

Final Section (1967–1987)

The improvements to the Parkway that resulted from Mission 66 projects led to an increased number of visitors. By 1967, visitation along the Blue Ridge Parkway had reached over 9 million per year, and visitation increased to over 20 million by the late 1990s, which was the peak of the Parkway's popularity.[120]

In the early 1960s, Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall placed a greater emphasis on environmental concerns.[121] The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 opened up the planning processes of all federal agencies to public input and provided a forum in environmental impact hearings. The NPS increased the amount of scientific research in parks and hired staff with natural resources management expertise.[122] This greater awareness of ecological and environmental issues was incorporated into NPS policies, including those of the Parkway.

In August 1961, the NPS granted National Parks Concessions, Inc., a twenty-year extension of

119 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 130; Weems, *Superintendent's Annual Reports,* 1.

120 NPS, *Doughton Park CLR,* 60-1; NPS, *BLRI Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1998,* (BLRI Archives, RG1, Series 3, Box 2, 1998), 2.

121 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 153; Stewart Udall, "The Conservation Challenge of the Sixties," in *Conservators of Hope: The Horace M. Albright Conservation Lectures,* (Moscow, ID: University of Idaho Press, 1988), 51.

122 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina," 153; Richard Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 223, 238; Gerald R. Wright, *Wildlife Research and Management in the National Parks,* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 28-9.

its concession contract to operate facilities and provide services in four national parks and on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Under terms of the contract, National Parks Concessions was obligated to undertake capital improvements of facilities.[123] The North Carolina tourist industry and other business interests were opposed to the concessions expansion program, but many of the recommendations in the concessions plan were carried out, including improvements at Crabtree Falls.[124]

The last section of the Parkway to be completed was on Grandfather Mountain. This section was studied more than any other section because of the terrain, scenic quality, and concerns of landowners. An agreement reached in 1968 allowed construction of the road by bridging around, rather than tunneling through, the steep mountain slopes.[125] However, construction was delayed by a funding shortage and environmental concerns that were raised after the passage of NEPA, and an environmental impact statement took five years to complete.[126]

The draft 1976 master plan for the Blue Ridge Parkway set forth an official "architectural theme" to guide construction of facilities. It included the following:

- An architectural theme has been established on the Blue Ridge Parkway that uses native materials in building various Parkway structures.
- The adoption of the pioneer style should be reflected in any new facilities, such as buildings, fences, bridges, walls, fountains, signs, and paved areas.
- Plant materials should be native to the area or should be of historical or cultural significance.
- Colors, in general, should be subdued, present a natural weathered appearance, and harmonize with the background colors of the forest and sky.[127]
- Construction should be rugged and able to withstand the abuses of nature and people with minimal maintenance.[128]

Construction on the last 7.7 miles at Grandfather Mountain began in 1974. The rugged terrain and environmental concerns led to the decision to create a series of bridges divided into eleven projects. Of these, the viaduct over Linn Cove was the most complex (Figure 2-28). Linn Cove was an extremely deep ravine with large boulders, dense vegetation, and environmentally sensitive terrain. To limit disturbance of the land, the structure was basically built from the top of the deck down to the ground. The National Historic Landmark nomination draft for the Blue Ridge Parkway Historic District noted, "Precast concrete segments were cantilevered from one pier to the next. The method allowed labor, construction materials, and equipment to be transported, via one access point, over portions of the bridge that had been completed."[129]

The viaduct, completed in 1983, was an engineering marvel that fit with the landscape in such a way that the environment was protected and aesthetics enhanced. Landscape architect Edward Abbuehl said, "Linn Cove Viaduct is an outstanding example of what can be done when there is a real desire to preserve the roadside in the most difficult of situations."[130]

The Viaduct was dedicated on September 11, 1987, and the Parkway was considered complete.

Beyond 1987

The focus of Parkway management after construction of the Linn Cove Viaduct shifted to ensuring that the Parkway's scenic, natural, cultural,

123 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 176; "Parkway Concession Contract Approved," Asheville (NC) Citizen, August 1961; Weems, Superintendent's Annual Reports, 2.

124 Samuel P. Weems, *Report to North Carolina National Park, Parkway and Forests Development Commission Concerning the National Park Service Concession Plan for North Carolina Sections of Blue Ridge Parkway,* (BLRI Archives, RG 1, Series 28, Box 23, Folder 9, 1957), 173-4.

125 Firth, "Historical Significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway"; Harley E. Jolley, *The Blue Ridge Parkway* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1969), 11.

126 NPS, "Blue Ridge Parkway, National Historic Landmark Nomination," 70.

127 Ibid.

128 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 131; NPS, "Task Directive Package 362," *Blue Ridge Parkway bridge inventory, parts 1 & 2, 1990-1991.*

129 NPS, "Blue Ridge Parkway, National Historic Landmark Nomination," 71.

130 Edward H. Abbuehl, *The Blue Ridge Parkway, Blowing Rock to Linville Falls,* (1986), 4-5.



FIGURE 2–27. View showing the curvilinear alignment of the parkway on a ridge. Looking northeast. (Asheville, Buncombe County, NC. HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--246 (CT), Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print.)

and recreational qualities would be protected into the future.[131]

Many of the visitor facilities, such as coffee shops and gas stations, have closed over the years because these services are readily available in neighboring communities. Some coffee shops are still open, but all gas stations have been closed.

With completion of the road, current efforts focus on maintenance and general improvements, such as tunnel repairs, roadway construction, parking area repairs, and other projects along the Parkway. Improvements occurred at most major recreation areas.

The Blue Ridge Parkway Visitor Center, which is adjacent to park headquarters, is the Parkway's newest visitor center. It opened in 2008 and includes a 70-seat theater, interactive information and orientation services, and a retail shop (Figure 2-29).

The Parkway continues to be one of the most visited places of the National Park System. (It typically has the highest number of visitors, but the Golden Gate National Recreation Area claimed that title in 2013 and 2014. The Parkway reclaimed that honor and had the highest number of visitors in 2015.) The Parkway drew a total of nearly 12.9 million visitors in 2013, which was the lowest number since 1979. Part of the reason for the low numbers was a federal government shutdown in October 2013 that forced the closure of several parkway attractions. A year earlier, in 2012, a total of 15.2 million visitors traveled the Parkway.

Many of the facilities closed along the Parkway have reopened.

Crabtree Falls Recreation Area

Crabtree Falls was one of the areas identified by Abbott and Abbuehl early on as a desirable place for a recreation area. It is located between Mileposts 339 and 341 in North Carolina. In 1936, Abbott noted that Crabtree Falls was "an oasis of restful quiet and charm in the midst of some of the most dramatic scenery in North Carolina." [132] See Figure 2-30 for a map of Crabtree Falls.

This part of the Blue Ridge Mountains was long used by Indians for hunting and a trade route across the mountains, but there is no evidence to prove the existence of any permanent settlement here.[133] Some have speculated that the "meadows" referred to in the name of the site were originally created by the Native American practice of fire clearing.[134] Early European settlers called this area Blue Ridge Meadows. This is unlikely to be a correct observation since the meadow still exists and is not exposed to regular fire clearing.[135] The name 'Crabtree Meadows' came from the southern Crabapple trees (Malus angustifolia) that previously located on the site, but the majority of these trees no longer exist. Originally, the falls were known as Murphy's Falls, but the NPS changed the name to Crabtree Falls when the Parkway was built (Figure 2-30).[136]

Hunters and trappers were the first Europeans to visit the area, with the first settlers likely arriving after the American Revolutionary War. The

131 NPS, *Final General Management Plan,* 7.

132 Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina."

133 Personel interview with Theresa Schober, January 4, 2016.

134 Margaret Thompson, *Research on the Early History of Crabtree Meadows,* (MSS: BLRI Library, 1974), 1-3.

135 Ibid. 1.

136 NPS, *Blue Ridge Parkway: Waterfall Hikes,* https://www.nps.gov/blri/planyourvisit/waterfall-hikes.htm.

first European settler was Will Silverstein, who came to the region from Philadelphia before the Revolutionary War to escape persecution as a German Jew. A hunter and trapper, Silver (after a name change) claimed a broad area on both sides of the Black Mountains, including Mount Mitchell and Crabtree Falls. During this time period, "Crabtree Meadows" was considered to be a large area that the mountain people in the region defined as covering approximately 5 square miles.[137]

Other homesteaders soon moved onto his claims, including the Shuffords, Goods, and Suttles. All built modest cabins and lived largely off the land. They did not build large elaborate farms, but had small holdings carved out of the rugged mountainside.[138] Members of the last three families still occupied their cabins when the Parkway was established, but the Silver place (in the meadows off the tent loop in the present campground) was then owned by the Murphy family.[139]

Before the mid-1800s, Crabtree Falls was predominantly a densely wooded landscape surrounding the open meadows. The landscape changed significantly beginning in 1863 when logging first occurred on the site. Samuel Good, a settler in the area, cut the timber and removed the logs with horse teams to his sawmill, which used a large circular saw. The trees were cut to provide space to build new homesteads, plant crops, and provide grass for livestock.[140] Thompson developed a map that showed the Silver-Murphy cabin site and a gristmill site that were located within the current Crabtree Falls boundary. Part of the old millrace for the gristmill is visible along the sewer line trail.[141]

Some of the loggers brought their families and built cabins in the vicinity, and a small community coalesced around the meadows. Logging continued until the 1930s. Margaret Thompson, who lived in the area, indicated that as late as 1935 her uncle, Harve Harrison, logged the area for chestnut wood.[142] There was a network of logging roads through the area.

In the mid-1930s, it was no longer economically viable to log the land, so it was sold to the U.S. Forest Service as part of the Pisgah National Forest. Some private properties remained inholdings.[143] The lands adjacent to the meadows and falls area remained with the Forest Service until 1952, when it was bought by the NPS (Figure 2-31).[144]

Tracing back the ownership of the Crabtree Falls area (a section of tract 117 of the U.S. Forest Service) shows that the land was purchased in 1918-1919 by H.W. Hossfeld from J. L. Morgan. Morgan's property included all of the meadows and falls area along with some outlying areas to the northwest and southwest. The ownership, and the changes in ownership, are addressed in more detail by Larry J. Scott in his *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know about Linville Falls & Crabtree Meadows*.[145]

Hossfeld built a frame house near the top of the falls (where one of the comfort stations is currently located), sold land to lumber companies, and did some preliminary clearing on the site for a dam to provide electrical power, but that project was abandoned. Hossfeld was known to have had discussions with several logging companies, but it is unclear what, if any, deals were made concerning logging. [146] Apparently the land was obtained by the US Forest Service, but the data on this acquisition is unclear. [147]

Because of the logging operations at Crabtree Falls, 'the land had been stripped of all timber, leaving bare worthless soil. Since becoming acquired for the Parkway, much of the land has been restored over the years. Once logging stopped and the wooded areas were left to succession, becoming denser and more mature over time. Eventually, the site became more natural, reminiscent of what existed prior to European settlement.[148]

When the U.S. Forest Service acquired the site, they continued logging operations, but in a more

137 Thompson, *Crabtree Meadows,* 1-2.

138 Ibid. 2.

139 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 263; Thompson, *Crabtree Meadows,* 1-3.

140 Thompson, *Crabtree Meadows,* 3.

141 Ibid, 10–12.

142 Ibid, 7.

143 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 263; Thompson, *Crabtree Meadows,* 5-7.

144 Larry J. Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know About Linville Falls & Crabtree Meadows,* (MSS, 1974), 2; Ted Pease, Personal communication.

145 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 16.

146 Ibid. 17.

147 Ibid.

148 Thompson, *Crabtree Meadows.*



FIGURE 2–28. Linn Cove Viaduct is the first precast concrete segmental viaduct built with the progressive method. View showing the curvilinear alignment of the parkway on a ridge. Looking northeast. (HAER NC,11-ASHV.V,2--246 (CT), Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/nc0478.color.345946c/.)

responsible way that removed fewer trees. More than a decade passed between the time when talks began with the U.S. Forest Service to when construction began on the Crabtree Falls interior roads, campground, and picnic area. Those years allowed the site to return to a more natural state. In the early 1950s when construction occurred at Crabtree Falls, oak trees up to 36" in diameter were identified on the site surveys.

One of the reasons Abbott and Abbuehl identified Crabtree Falls as a potential recreation area for the Parkway was the openness and relatively level topography, which was easier to develop than the rugged terrain further south of the site. In addition, Crabtree Falls, which is the tallest single waterfall along the Parkway, was thought to be a natural resource that would encourage visitors to stop at the site.[149]



FIGURE 2–29. Blue Ridge Parkway visitor center. (NPS, 2016)

Abbott called for acquiring 1,000 acres at Crabtree Falls (he referred to the site as "Crabtree Creek") from the Forest Service in the 1936 Parkway master plan, describing the area as "an attractive grassy meadow with a good water supply available, located

149 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 262-3.

in the midst of very rugged country" (Figure 2-32). Abbott proposed that the site include an inn, a service station, a campground, and a picnic area.

The Forest Service also had ideas about developing the area, but their ideas differed from the plans of the NPS. In 1938, the Forest Service staff suggested building dams across Crabtree Creek below the falls and constructing cabins for a summer colony to be operated by a concessionaire, with an emphasis on active recreation including tennis, softball, archery, and horseback riding.[150] These plans were never pursued.

The proposed size of the developed area for Crabtree Falls Recreation Area became an issue (Figure 2-33). In meeting notes from a conference held August 8, 1940, Abbuehl wrote, "Assistant Supervisor Squires said that Forest Supervisor Bosworth, who was unavoidably out of town, believed the land area shown on the maps as being larger than necessary. He also pointed out that 7% of the merchantable timber in the Mitchell division was within this park area. After some discussion it was proposed that the Forest Service make a field investigation of the area with a view to establishing a minimum which was roughly sketched on the map. The zone between this minimum area and the boundaries shown on the map might then be considered for limited or controlled timber sale."[151]

On November 26, 1940, at a meeting between Forest Service and NPS staff in Marion, North Carolina, the issue of the size of the recreation area was discussed. NPS designer Robert Hall wrote, "It was agreed that the Forest Service revise the agreement of Parkway right-of-way through National Forest Service lands to include the Park Areas and submit for approval to both Services. It was also agreed that the Park Service could initiate work at Crabtree Falls as soon as it was convenient to do so."[152]

In a Memorandum to Thomas Vint, chief of the NPS Branch of Plans and Design, on February 12, 1941, Abbott clarified his thoughts on the size of the Crabtree Falls area. He stated that the areas desired for the recreation area shown on the 1940 master plan for the Parkway "were boundaries that were considered desirable, even ample ... we put a "frame" well around the development to insure its protection" (Figure 2-33). [153]

There had been several discussions with Forest Service personnel in which the Forest Service thought the amount of land requested was larger, and that if the size was specifically because of the need to protect adjacent land, "the Park Service did not have a monopoly on protecting scenic values."[154]

Abbott stated that if the Forest Service would agree to protect the scenic values of land beyond the immediate Parkway, then less land than the original 1,000 acres would be needed for Crabtree Falls. Abbott wrote, "The 160 acres now proposed for transfer of jurisdiction includes everything we have proposed for the actual development of this area. We have made no reduction either in extent or plans for the development of this park."[155] Abbott thought the 160 acres would be sufficient because the area was naturally bounded by ridges, a third was a steep, heavily wooded slope on the other side of Crabtree Creek, and the fourth boundary was the Parkway.[156]

On December 6, 1941, Acting Secretary of the Interior E. K. Burlew, in a letter to Claude R. Wickard, Secretary of Agriculture, wrote, "It is requested that the jurisdiction of the Crabtree Meadows Area adjacent to the Blue Ridge Parkway be transferred from the Forest Service to the National Park Service .... This action is requested at an early date in order to permit development of the area."[157] The 160 acres of land for Crabtree Falls Recreation Area were officially transferred by the Forest Service on January 30, 1942. The 160 acres also included a small plot near the James River for a utility area (Figure 2-34).[158]

150 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 264; Stanley W. Abbott and Edward H. Abbuehl, "Blue Ridge Parkway, Brief Description of the Recreation Areas Adjacent to the Parkway, to Accompany the Master Plan Thereof, Drawn June 3, 1936," (BLRI Archives, RG 5, Series 8, Box 9, Folder 1, 1936), 7.

151 Edward H. Abbuehl, memorandum for the Resident Landscape Architect, Crabtree Meadows Park area, August 12, 1940.

152 Robert G. Hall, memorandum to Stanley W. Abbott, November 29, 1940.

153 Stanley W. Abbott, memorandum to Thomas Vint, February 12, 1941.

154 Ibid.

155 Ibid.

156 Ibid.

157 E. K. Burlew, memorandum to Secretary of the Interior, December 6, 1941.

158 Stanley W. Abbott, memorandum for the Director, March 27, 1941; Larry J. Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 2; Jolley, *The Blue Ridge Parkway,* 113-4; William Hall, Personal communication.

KEY TO AREA ENLARGEMENT

1. Good Homestead Site
2. Site of Church
3. Good Graveyard
4. Good Cabin
5. Shufford Homestead
6. Bradshaw Graveyard
7. Suttle Homestead Site
8. Site of Commissary
9. McPhlters Cabin Site
10. Wilson Home Site
11. Victor Home Site
12. Bradshaw Cabin Site
13. Harrison Cabin
14. Williams Cabin and Chair Shop Site
15. Grist Mill Site
16. Silver-Murphy Cabin Site
17. Railroad Lines

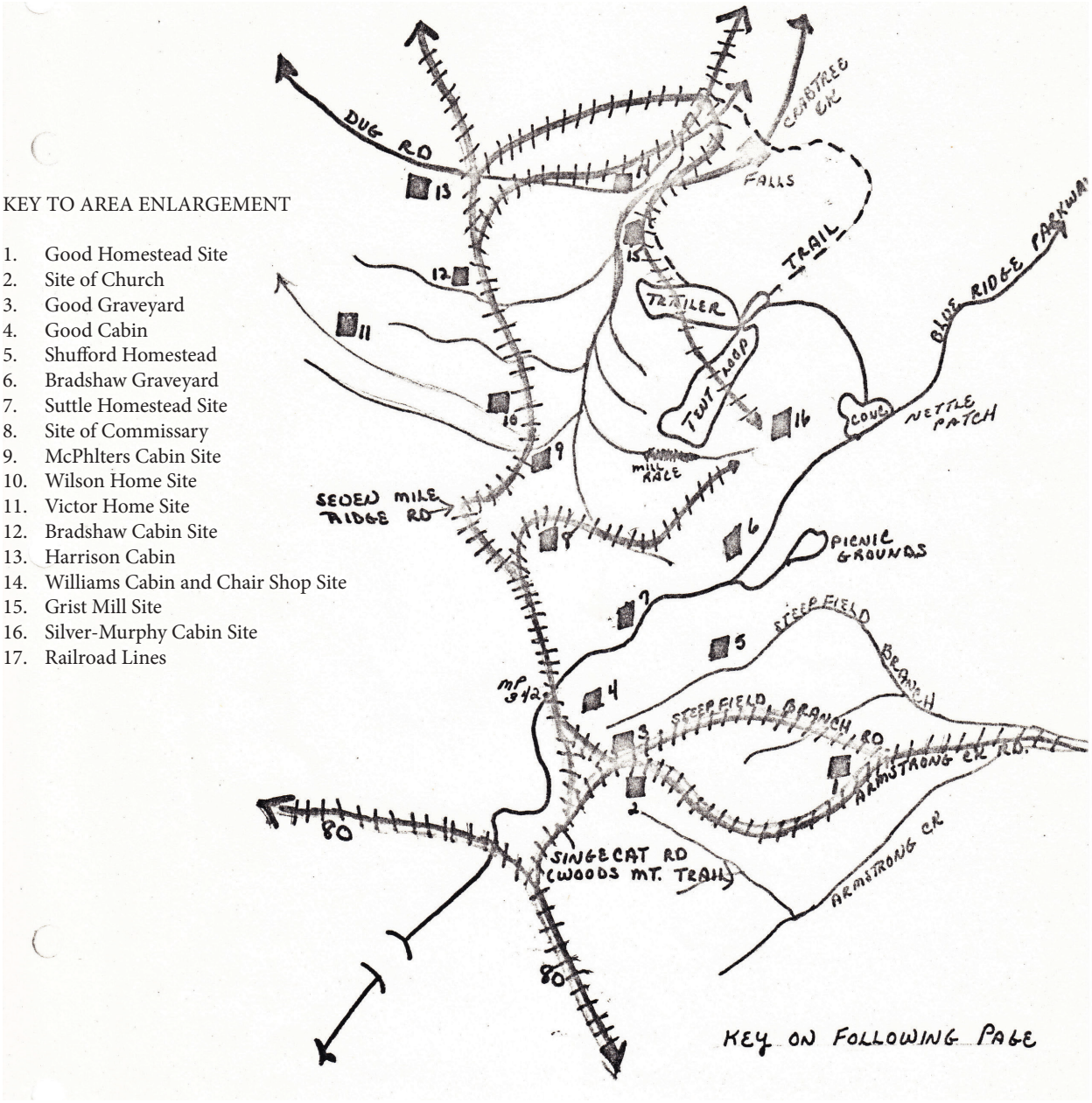


FIGURE 2–30. Hand-drawn map showing ownership and site features. (Thompson, Margaret. "Research on the Early History of Crabtree Meadows," MSS, 1974.)

Construction of the Parkway adjacent to the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area preceded work at the site by several years. By January 1937, work was underway on grading contracts.[159] The Parkway was paved through the Crabtree Falls area by the start of World War II.[160]

Work on the Crabtree Falls site began in 1941 and 1942 with the grading of entrance and picnic area roads, construction of trails, and installation of picnic facilities. The work was carried out by crews from the Civilian Public Service camp, who also conducted selective tree cutting in the area. This primarily involved cutting down blight-killed chestnut trees at Crabtree Falls.[161]

159 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 2; Jolley, *The Blue Ridge Parkway, 113-4.*

160 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 2; Hall, Personal communication.

161 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 264; Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 1.

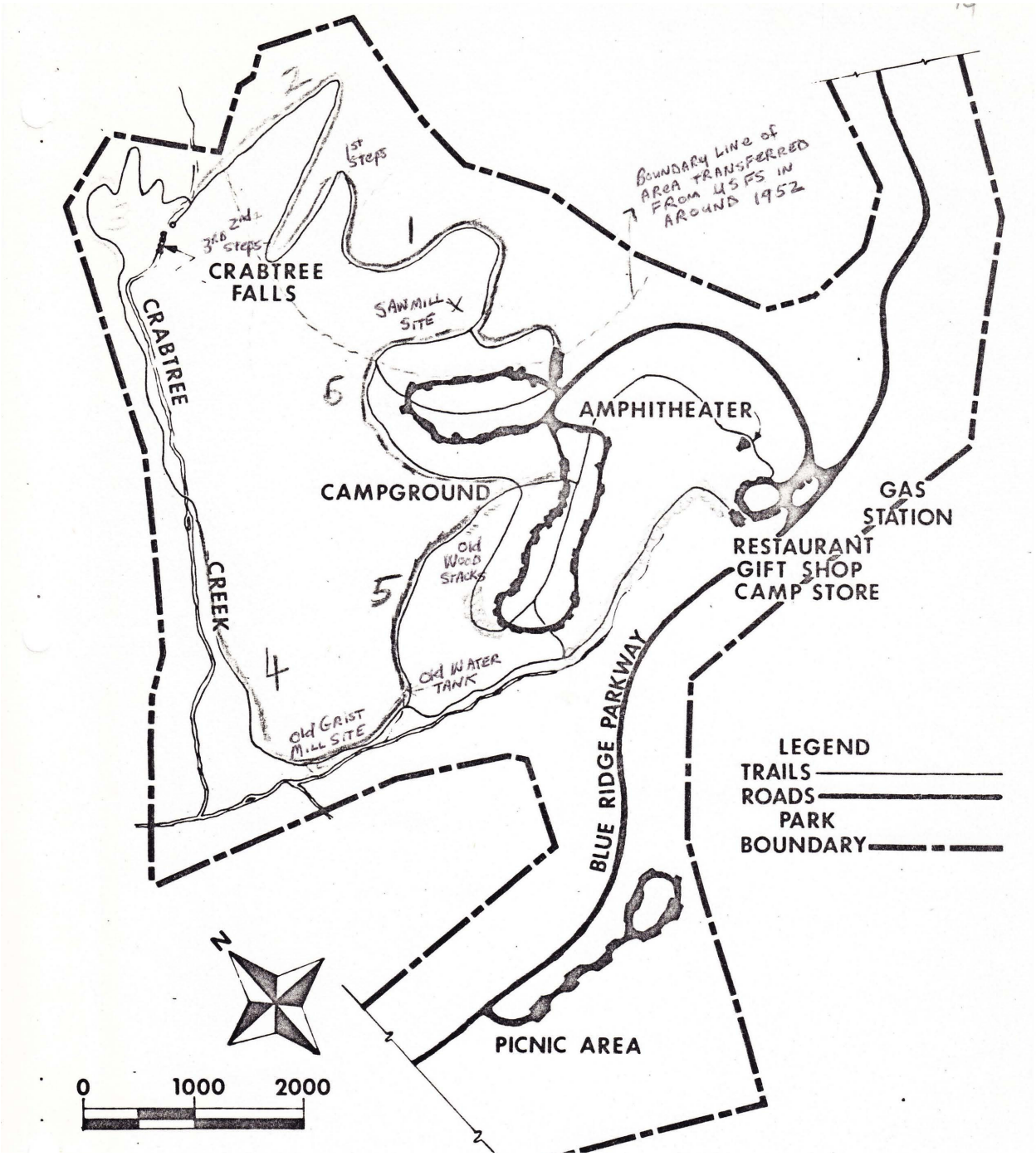


FIGURE 2–31. Map of Crabtree Falls showing site characteristics in 1974. (Scott, Larry J. "What Every Good Naturalist Should Know about Linville Falls & Crabtree Meadows," MSS, 1974,)

Several logging operations occurred on site prior to it coming into NPS ownership, leaving a network of logging roads through the area.[162]

Site Improvements

In earlier years the land use of the Parkway area was part agriculture and part logging, with the majority of the Black Mountains, which are part of the Blue Ridge Province of the Southern Appalachian Mountains, being undeveloped. The Crabtree area was used for logging pre–World War II, but was developed as a recreation area when it was acquired as part of the Parkway. At the entrance to the campground is the coffee shop that was built during Mission 66.

162 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 2.

Most work on the picnic area and trail system was completed in 1943. This picnic area was located in what is now the upper tent loop in the campground.

Work on the original picnic area (Loop B) occurred between 1941 and 1948, and picnic tables were installed during this time (Figure 2-35).

Plans for comfort stations at Crabtree Falls were developed in early 1947, with construction following a few years later.[163] The first comfort station at Crabtree Falls, located in what was then the picnic area (Loop B), was finished in September 1950.[164]

The Parkway opened Crabtree Falls for public use in spring 1948, though visitation was light in early years.[165]

Between 1948 and 1950, much of the site construction consisted of trails, picnic grounds, and campgrounds. At that time, the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area had a small picnic area (Loop B) and a road connecting it to the Parkway. The expansion of the picnic area, construction of the first camping loop and the Falls parking area (Figures 2-36, 2-37, 2-38, 2-39), and layout of the trail system was under the direction of Marvin Stump, who worked at Crabtree Falls for two years.[166]

The gas station at Crabtree Falls was completed by National Parks Concessions in August, 1950 (Figures 2-40, 2-41).[167] Other buildings constructed about this time include a power supply building, which was constructed in 1950, a wood storage shed built near the temporary amphitheater in 1951, and a fee collection building that was constructed at the campground loop entrance in 1951. The power supply building is located in a heavily wooded site and is close to the Crabtree Falls gas station and Crabtree Falls coffee shop. The fee collection building was built upon completion of the camping loops on site.

When the NPS officially obtained Crabtree Falls in 1952, they had only a very narrow right-of-way from the site to the falls, and this did not allow sufficient space for the trail to the falls.[168] A memorandum dated August 3, 1949, went a step further, saying that there was a problem because much of the falls trail was on Forest Service land instead of NPS land. The NPS memo stated, "The USFS has had a timber operation in this vicinity during the past year and I believe it is a good possibility that they would be willing to give us the 42 acres as shown."[169] In 1952, the adjacent land was obtained from the Forest Service.[170] With the additional land, the NPS expanded the facilities to include two new campground loops, a parking area for the Crabtree Falls trailhead, and expanded and improved trails. Rail fences were moved from their original location at the edge of the woods to border the campground road.[171]

PLUMs, which are parkway land use plans for the Parkway, were developed in 1952 for the area adjacent to Crabtree Falls. According to these documents, there are approximately 48 acres of open vistas, 15 acres of woods vistas, and 9 acres of shrub vistas in the area. The PLUMs indicate that some of the fences at the campground site were moved to a different portion of the site. The fence was moved away from the campground entry road and pushed back farther into the woods. The fences outline the parking area at the entry. The fences and fence layout at the Crabtree Falls Picnic Area were constructed in 1960 and still exist today.

The current trail system at Crabtree Falls was built between December 1953 and March 1954. These trails followed the basic trail network originally established in 1941 and 1942. The work involved grading the trails, constructing the stone steps on various sections, and spreading stone over the trails.[172]

163 NPS Print Cards

164 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 3; NPS, *Inactive Monthly Progress Reports,* 1948-55, (Gillespie Gap Maintenance Area).

165 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 264; Abbott, *Acting Superintendent's Annual Reports,* 14; Stanley W. Abbott, Monthly Narrative Report, (1942), 2; J. Carlisle Crouch, *Acting Superintendent's Annual Reports, 1948-1953,* (BLRI Archives, 1948), 7; Edward H. Abbuehl, *Resident Landscape Architect's Monthly Report,* (September 1941), 5; Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 3.

166 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 3; Claude Wiseman, Personal communication.

167 Earl W. Batten, memorandum to Northwest Regional Director, April 25, 1968.

168 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 3.

169 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know;* Pease, personal communication.

170 Ibid.

171 Ibid.

172 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 5; NPS, *Inactive Monthly Progress Reports.*

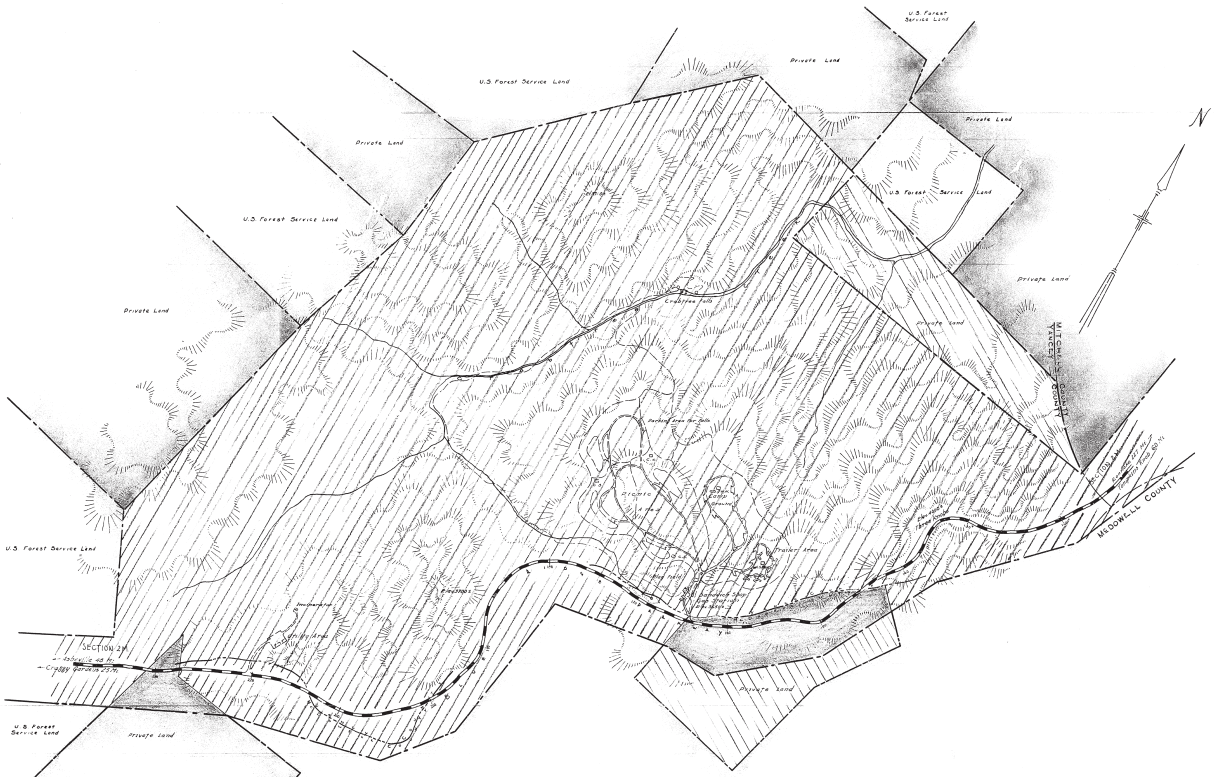


FIGURE 2–32. Original plan for Crabtree Falls boundary showing the site at 1,000 acres. (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Crabtree Meadows Recreation Area - Part of the Master Plan for Blue Ridge Parkway, Drawing No. PKY-BR, CM-2000. Drawn by Branch of Plans & Design from National Park Service, January, 1940.)

The Falls trails consists of a short trail from the Falls parking area to the falls, and a long Falls trail from the tent camping loop to the falls. The long Falls trail proceeds down the side of the knob and soon made a picturesque crossing of Big Crabtree Creek. The trail then bends away from Big Crabtree and over a ridge to return to the creek (Figures 2-42, 2-43).

Originally, there was a "campground loop trail" from the short falls trail to the bottom end of the picnic area (the lower tent loop today).[173] The current campground loop trail extends from the short falls trail to a junction with the long falls trail. There are remnants of other roads and trails along this area, with some more apparent than others. Thompson noted that a logging railroad once came across the Parkway at Milepost 342, and it had several spur lines, at least two of which crossed into the current Crabtree Falls boundary. One spur followed the path of the long trail from the waterfalls, ending in the meadow, and another spur was located in the area near the current coffee shop. There are also miles of skidder trails, which are created by the use of heavy vehicle that pull cut trees out of a forest in a process called "skidding". Loggers used both groundhog skidders and aerial skidders to transport the logs to the railroad lines, and sections of these are still visible.[174] There was a trail that once led from the lower tent loop to the coffee shop, but it no longer exists. There are also several remnant logging trails and road traces on the site..[175]

According to Scott, along the trails the forest gradually changes from the forest of sugar maple, oak (with some hickory), dead chestnut, and dogwood understory at the parking area to a forest of predominantly hemlock, yellow birch, beech, mountain maple, and witch hazel.[176] Along the short trail and before the first set of steps, there are many chestnut stumps and logs throughout the forest. Much of the chestnut remained after the Forest Service finished logging the area, as there was not a high demand for chestnut. Stumps near the trail show that the snags were removed as safety precaution, as timber could have fallen on the trail. Stumps near the trail show that the snags were

173 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 5.

174 Thompson, *Crabtree Meadows,* 5.

175 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 6.

176 Ibid.

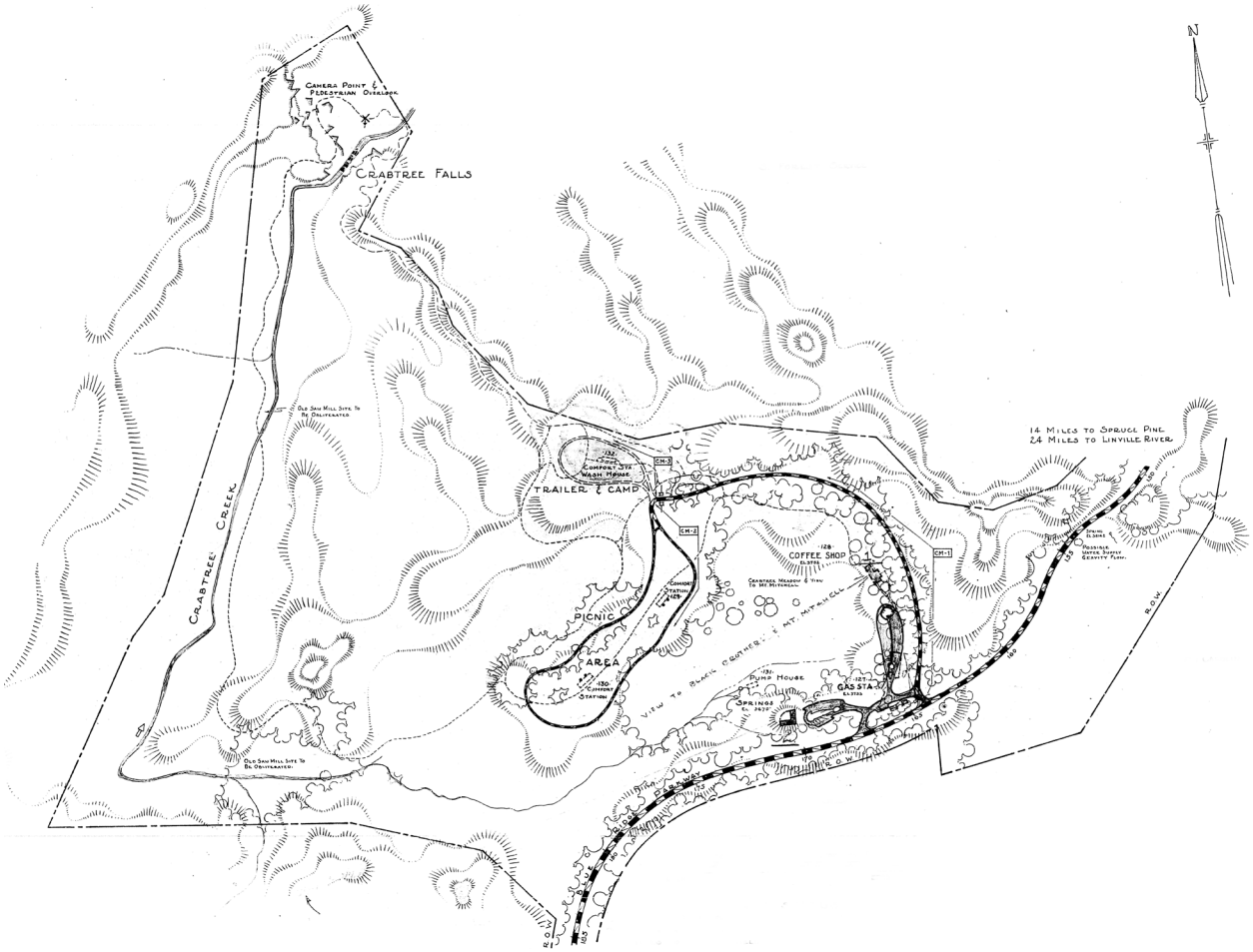


FIGURE 2–33. Revised plan for the Crabtree Falls boundary. (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Crabtree Meadows Recreation Area - Part of the Master Plan for Blue Ridge Parkway, Drawing No. PKY-BR, CM-2000. Drawn by Branch of Plans & Design, January, 1940.)

sawed off as a precaution because the timber could have fallen over the trail. [177]

Two books - *Checklist of Plants—Crabtree Meadows—Blue Ridge Parkway*, by Wayne Thacker, and *Checklist of Vascular Plants of the Blue Ridge Parkway, Milepost 305–355*, by W. L. Bancroft, provide a detailed listing of plants that could be found along the Parkway, including the area near Crabtree Falls.[178] Scott includes a list of 100 or so "common" plants that can found on the Crabtree Falls site. This list is included here as Appendix C—Common Plants at Crabtree Falls.

On February 3, 1953, in a letter to R. Getty Browning of the State Highway and Public Works Commission, Superintendent Weems indicated that the spring that provided water for Crabtree Falls had dried up, and a new water supply was needed. NPS found another spring, but it was about 80 feet beyond the boundary of Crabtree Falls on land owned by the state. Weems requested, "Since it is an isolated tract we thought you might give us the entire tract of about 50 acres."[179] Weems also wrote, "Increased public use of the area makes it mandatory that we improve the water supply immediately; in fact, we have once already this season had to close the comfort stations for a week."[180]

The U.S. Public Health Service had to approve all plans that included toilet facilities and water supplies, and they indicated a concern because the

177 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 7; Pease, personal communication; Wiseman, personal communication.

178 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 9.

179 Samuel P. Weems, memorandum to G. Browning, February 3, 1933.

180 Samuel P. Weems, memorandum to G. Browning, August 18, 1953.



FIGURE 2–34. Boundary status for Crabtree Falls in 1946 showing 160 acres. (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Crabtree Meadows - Part of the Master Plan for Blue Ridge Parkway, Drawing No. PKY-BR, CM-2001-A. Drawn by Branch of Plans & Design, January, 1946. Drawn by S.W.M.)

NPS did not control the water on the adjacent site.[181] Five days after Weems sent the letter requesting ownership of the 50 acres that included the spring, Browning responded by writing, "This will be your authority to proceed with any work that may be necessary to secure this additional water supply for your Crabtree Meadows Recreation area. As soon as we have an opportunity, we will go into this situation more fully and arrange to convey the National Park Service a considerable area surrounding this spring."[182] Soon after, a well was dug on the newly acquired land. Eventually the original spring started flowing again, giving Crabtree Falls two sources of water.[183]

A small sandwich shop (originally shown in a February 1947 plan) near the gas station was constructed in 1954 or 1955 (Figure 2-44).[184] The shop was used to sell sandwiches and gifts, and the Construction Company of Asheville was selected to

181 Samuel P. Weems, memorandum to G. Browning, October 7, 1953.

182 R. Getty Browning, letter to Sam P. Weems, October 12, 1953.

183 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 4.

184 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 265; Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 3-4; Samuel P. Weems, *Monthly Narrative Reports, April 1944-October 1963,* (Asheville, N.C.: BLRI Archives); "Concessionaire-Owned Buildings, Blue Ridge Parkway," attached to *Acting Superintendent, Blue Ridge Parkway, to Regional Director, Southeast Region, National Park Service,* by Earl W. Batten, (BLRI Archives, April 25, 1968).



FIGURE 2–35. Camp area road & falls pavilion area - final plan. (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Crabtree Meadows Recreation Area - Part of the Master Plan for Blue Ridge Parkway, Drawing No. PKY-BR, CM-5382. Drawn by Branch of Plans & Design, August, 1950.)

be the concessionaires for the shop.[185] The sandwich shop was later torn down.

The original fee collection building at the campground loop entrance, constructed in 1951, was demolished and replaced with a building and kiosk in 1974.

In July 1956, the NPS announced $4 million for the construction of additional concession facilities as part of the Mission 66 parks development program. Among other projects, this would include replacement of the temporary coffee shop at Crabtree Falls with a permanent facility.[186]

The proposed coffee shop was shown to be between the current location of the gas station building and the Parkway (drawn by NPS staff on a 1959 map). The successful applicant was required to provide a permanent lunchroom with seating capacity for approximately 60 to replace the temporary government-owned facility. Space for the sale of souvenirs and gifts was to be included in the new coffee shop building. The concessionaire was also to construct a camper's supply store as an addition to the gas station, which was to be assigned to the concessionaire.[187]

Preliminary estimates indicated that the concessionaire was expected to spend $75,000 to build the restaurant, and $5,000 for a camp store addition to the service station.[188] According to landscape architect Dudley C. Bayliss, "The architectural style or character should be based on straight forward use of native stone and wood materials designed to harmonize with similar existing Parkway buildings. Service stations may follow but need not copy exactly the designs now in use on the Parkway."[189]

The concessionaire National Parks Concessions was required to submit plans and specifications for

185 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 7; Pease, personal communication.

186 Quin and Marston, *Blue Ridge Parkway,* 265; North Carolina National Park, *Parkway and Forests Development Commission, Report on the Question of Construction of Concession Facilities on the Blue Ridge Parkway,* (BLRJ Archives, RG 1, Series 28, Box 23, Folder 11, 1957), 2-3.

187 Samuel P. Weems, memorandum to Mr. James E. Rhodes, June 21, 1960.

188 Ibid.

189 Dudley C. Bayliss, memorandum to Chief of Concessions Management, January 28, 1960.



FIGURE 2–36. A trailer used to camp at Crabtree Falls RV camping loop (Loop A). (NPS Index Cards, Catalogue No. 796.5, Negative No. 9842, BLRI Archives. Photo provided by C.E. Westveer, July, 1978.)

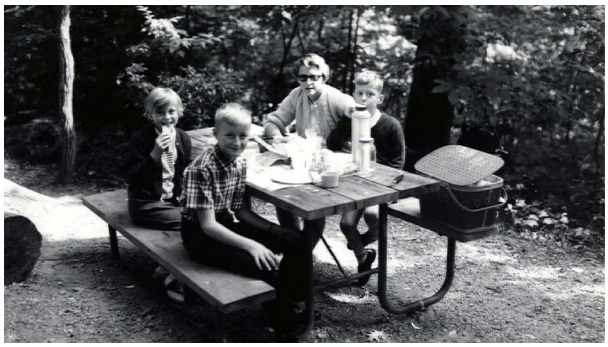


FIGURE 2–37. Family using a picnic table at the Crabtree Falls picnic area. (NPS Index Cards, Catalogue No. 796.5, Negative No. 9842, BLRI Archives. Photo provided by H. Craig Heller, August, 1965.)

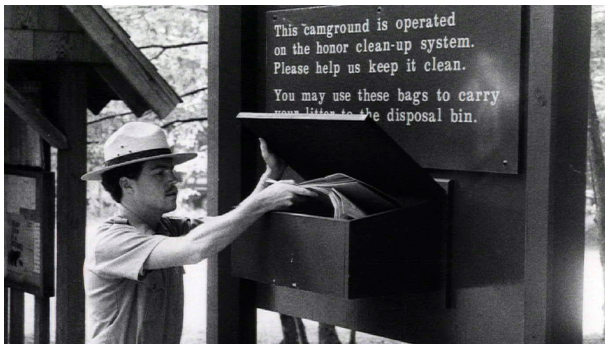


FIGURE 2–38. Crabtree Fee Station (B665). (NPS Index Cards, Catalogue No. 306.17, Negative No. 9843, BLRI Archives. Photo provided by C.E. Westveer, July, 1978.)



FIGURE 2–39. Camping at Crabtree Falls tent camping loop (Loop B). (NPS Index Cards, Catalogue No. 796.5, Negative No. 1404, BLRI Archives. Photo provided by Earl Estes, Jr., 1959.)

the facilities for advanced approval by the NPS.[190] Six Associates, an architectural firm established in Asheville in 1942 was hired to design the structure. Most of their work in the 1950s and 1960s typically expressed the International Style, sometimes employing form and materials with a vernacular leaning and using natural materials, including wood and stone.[191]

The new picnic area, which included 82 picnic sites, was built around 1960. At this time the former picnic area at Crabtree Falls was converted to a campground.[192] "This perpetuated Abbott's idea of keeping picnic facilities separate from campground facilities on the Parkway.[193] Abbott also went on to say, "Separate facilities are necessary to protect the privacy and comfort of campers (Figure 2-45)."[194]

The Mission 66 Crabtree Falls coffee shop was constructed in 1965 by National Parks Concessions. The architecture incorporates modern ideas about the interaction of space between indoors and outdoors. The building still uses wood and stone, but includes more glass and metal than the rustic style of previous Parkway architecture. Water supply and sewage disposal to the coffee shop were provided by the NPS at reasonable rates to the contractor, and roads, walkways, parking areas, and landscaping services were to be provided by NPS (Figures 2-46 to 2-54).[195]

In 1953, the original wooden picnic tables and benches used throughout the Parkway, including Crabtree Falls, were being replaced with ones made with concrete and stone.[196] The picnic tables at

190 Samuel P. Weems, invitation for offers and prospectus, June 14, 1960.

191 Charlotte V. Brown and William B. Bushong, "Biography of Six Associates," (2010), http://ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu/people/P000099.

192 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 4.

193 Acting Superintendent, memorandum to Regional Director, Region One, September 6, 1949.

194 Ibid.

195 Firth, "National Historic Landmark Nomination," 36.

196 Ibid.



FIGURE 2–40. Gas station (B127) at Crabtree Falls. Looking north. (NPS Index Cards, Catalogue No. 729, Negative No. 3648, BLRI Archives. Photo provided by C.E. Westveer, August, 1974.)



FIGURE 2–41. Gas station (B127) at Crabtree Falls. (BLRI Index Sheet - Gas Station. Photo B-127, Page 2. Prepared by WHG.)

Crabtree Falls were originally made of chestnut with locust pegs.

The Crabtree Falls campground opened in 1954 or 1955. In 1958, the Parkway had to institute a two-week limit on camping at Crabtree Falls because of the popularity of the area.[197]

In 1954, fireplaces, rock work, underground garbage cans, two more comfort stations, and tables for the two tent campground loops at Crabtree Falls were installed. In early 1954, tent platforms were built on 18 sites in the current recreational vehicle (RV) loop.[198]

In 1955, Crabtree Falls had 49,628 visitors. The site included picnic sites, camping, a gas station, and trails to the falls, but these facilities were not sufficient to meet visitor needs. "The present lunch-gift shop is entirely inadequate and will be replaced. Expansion of camping and picnicking facilities is planned."[199]

A pump house at the campground was built in 1957. It is situated along the perimeter of a heavily wooded area near the entrance to the campground loops. It is partially hidden by trees and is accessed by a gravel path.

A temporary amphitheater was constructed in 1958, but was replaced in 1963 with the present 300-seat facility (Figures 2-55 to 2-58).[200] The old amphitheater was located in a small clearing between the current amphitheater and the coffee shop parking lot. The benches in the temporary amphitheater were split chestnut logs. There was also a campfire pit and a permanent outdoor screen.[201]



FIGURE 2–42. The trail to Crabtree Falls. (NPS Index Cards, Catalogue No. 371.34, Negative No. 8014, BLRI Archives. Photo provided by Garret Smathers, no date given.)

The 1963 amphitheater included a paved seating area with benches, a fire pit, a raised stage with enclosure, and a storage shed for wood. The amphitheater was located in a wooded area southeast of the campground area. The seating area has multiple rows of bench seating mounted on metal posts set into the ground. The fire pit is made of raised stones and measures approximately 6 feet in diameter (Figure 2-57).

197 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 4.

198 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 4; NPS, Inactive Monthly Progress Reports.

199 NPS, *Blue Ridge Parkway Recreation Areas,* April 25, 1956.

200 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 5.

201 Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know,* 5; Ford Bailey, Personal communication.



FIGURE 2–43. Crabtree Falls. (NPS Index Cards, Catalogue No. 719.7, Negative No. 523, BLRI Archives. September, 1953.)

A new fee collection building was constructed at the campground entrance in 1974 to replace the original building.

A one-story, log-framed residential structure was constructed in 1997 and is approximately 850 square feet. The structure was designed on the NPS rustic style. It houses seasonal park employees. In 2004, a rear deck was constructed, stone veneer installed on the building, and steps and rails were added to the front porch.[202]

A new wood storage building was constructed by the amphitheater in 1999, replacing the original shed.

202 Michael Ford and Leonard Kliwinski, *Blue Ridge Parkway Survey and Inventory,* June 24, 2013.

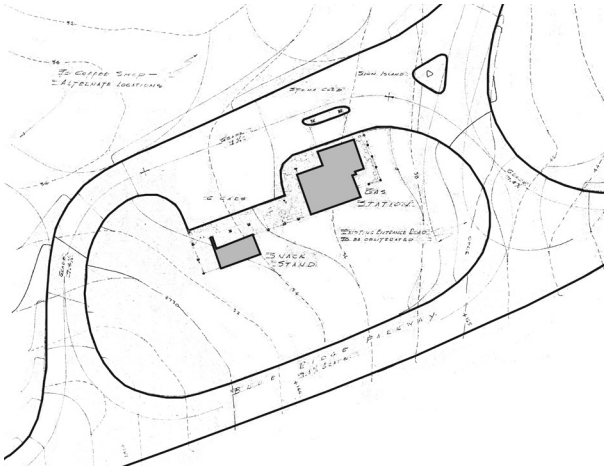


FIGURE 2–44. Gas station area showing the location of a small sandwich shop. (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Crabtree Meadows Recreation Area. Part of the Master Plan for Blue Ridge Parkway, Drawing No. PKY-BR, CM-2055. Drawn by Branch of Plans & Design, February, 1947.)

In 2005, archaeological investigations were conducted for the installation of utilities to campsite 8 in loop A. This survey did not produce evidence of archaeological resources at Crabtree Falls. If there were other utility upgrades through time, they were likely conducted without archaeological assessment or monitoring.

The coffee shop was shut down in 2012 due to budget cuts.

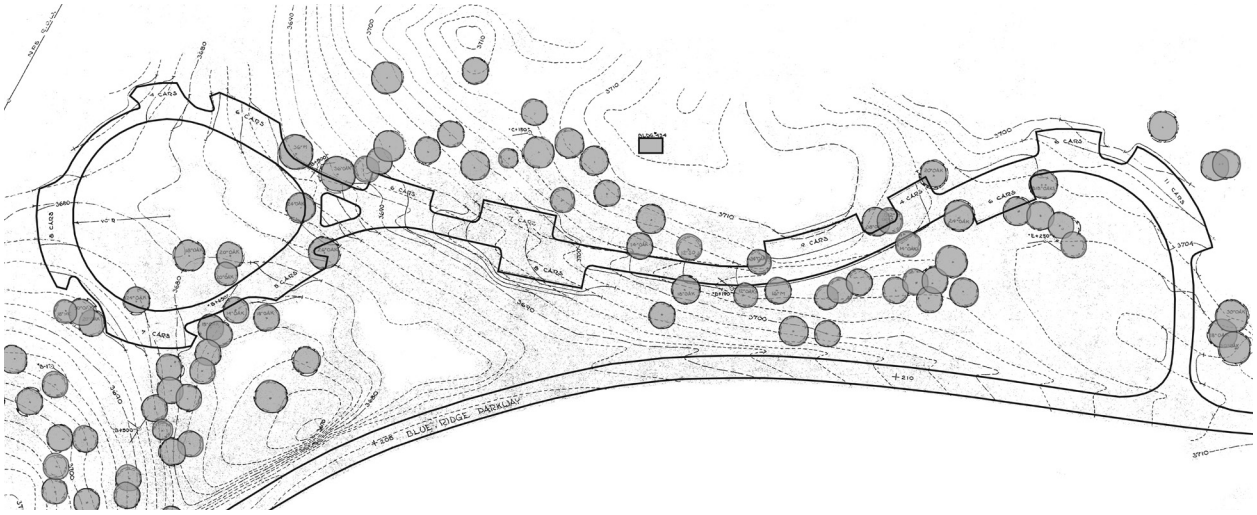


FIGURE 2–45. Crabtree Falls Picnic Area. (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Drawing No. PKY-BR, CM-2068. Drawn by Branch of Plans & Design, May, 1959.)



FIGURE 2–46. Mission 66 coffee shop (B128). Looking northwest. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

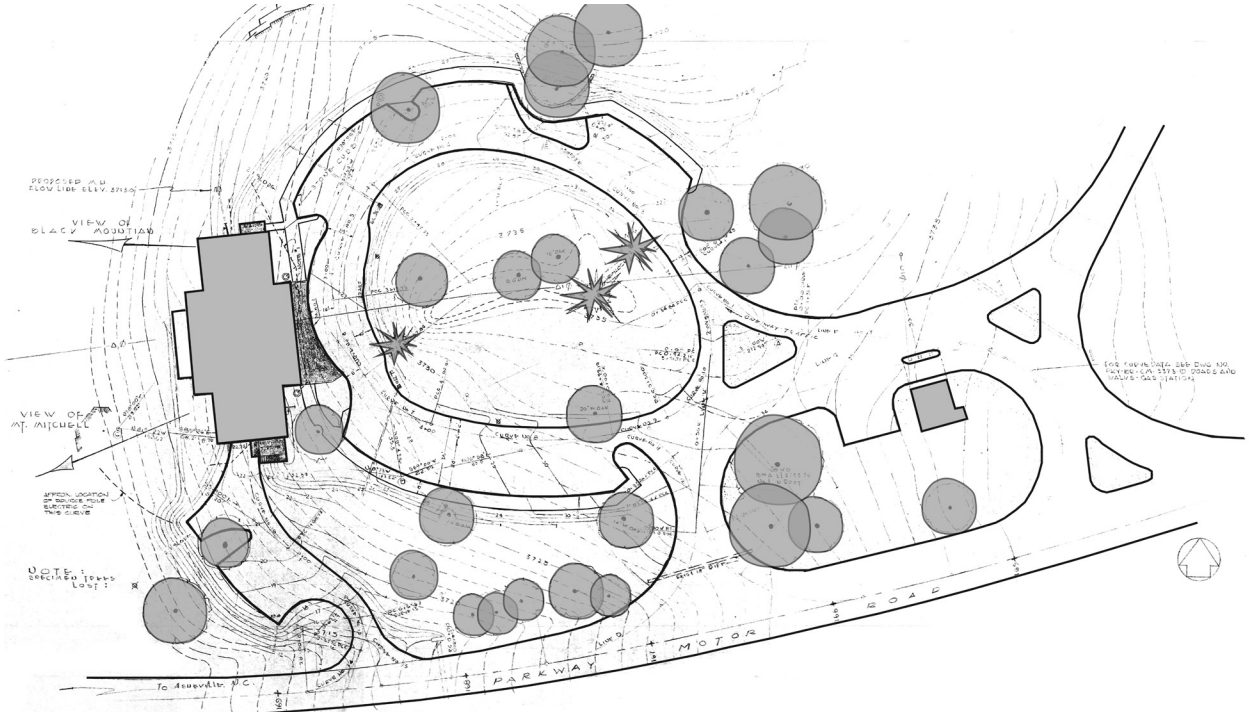


FIGURE 2–47. Crabtree Falls entry area. (Section 2-M, Station 166+50. Drawing No. BKY-BR, CM-3051-B. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Division of Design & Construction. May, 1962.)

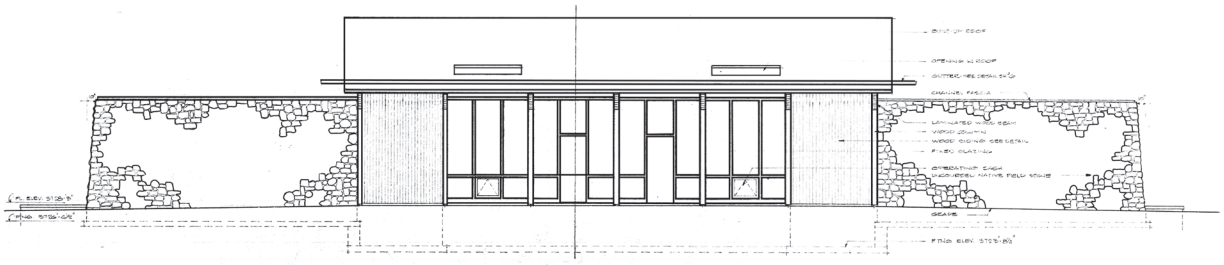


FIGURE 2–48. Crabtree Falls Coffee Shop (B128) for Park Concessions. Sheet 4 of 10. (Six Associates, Incorporated Architects and Engineers. February, 1963.)

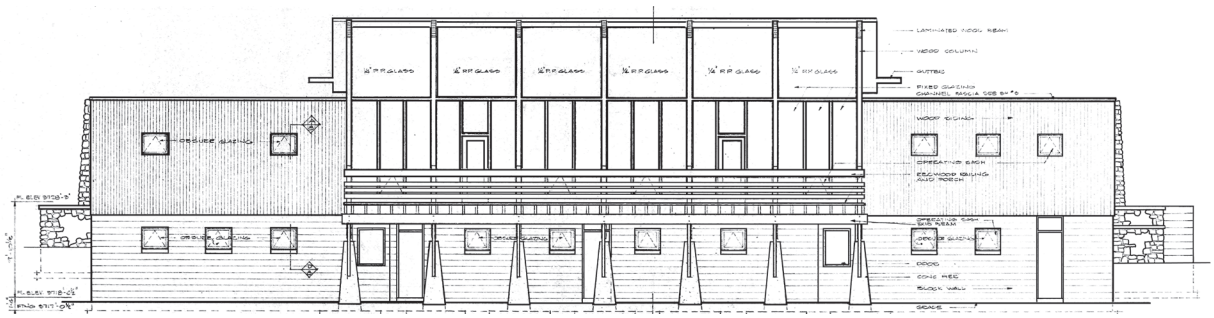


FIGURE 2–49. Crabtree Falls Coffee Shop (B128) for Park Concessions. Sheet 4 of 10. (Six Associates, Incorporated Architects and Engineers. February, 1963.)

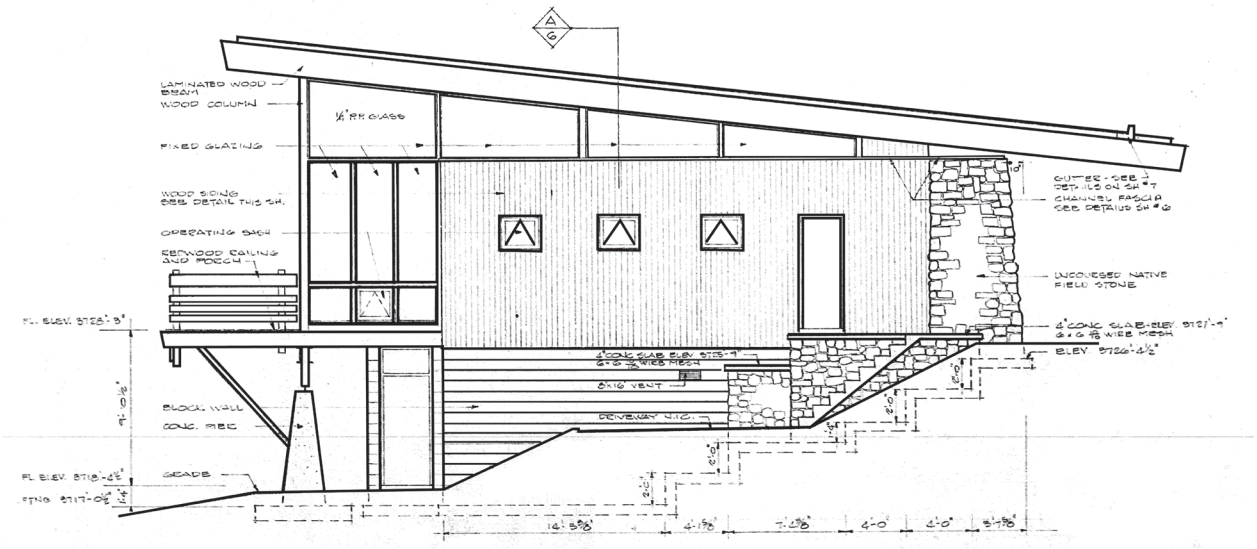


FIGURE 2–50. Crabtree Falls coffee shop (B128) for Park Concessions. Sheet 5 of 10. (Six Associates, Incorporated Architects and Engineers. February, 1963.)



FIGURE 2–51. Interior of the Mission 66 coffee shop (B128) at Crabtree Falls in 1974, looking at the back windows toward the Black Mountains. (Postcard from Cardcow.com, stock no. 51376. https://www.cardcow.com/viewall/65464/.)



FIGURE 2–53. Interior of the Mission 66 coffee shop (B128) at Crabtree Falls in 1974, showing the counter with stools. (NPS Index Cards, Catalogue No. 729, Negative No. 3634, BLRI Archives. Photo provided by C. E. Westveer, August, 1974.)



FIGURE 2–52. Interior of the Mission 66 coffee shop (B128) at Crabtree Falls in 1974, looking south. (NPS Index Cards, Catalogue No. 729, Negative No. 3644, BLRI Archives. Photo provided by C.E. Westveer, August, 1974.)



FIGURE 2–54. Interior of the Mission 66 coffee shop (B128) at Crabtree Falls in 1974. Showing the front of the building to the right. (NPS Index Cards, Catalogue No. 729, Negative No. 3631, BLRI Archives. Photo provided by C. E. Westveer, August, 1974.)



FIGURE 2–55. Amphitheater (942) in the woods. (NPS Index Cards, Catalogue No. 725.4, Negative No. 1057. BLRI Archives. Photo provided by William N. Burgen, June, 1958.)



FIGURE 2–57. Amphitheater (B942) with audience. (NPS Index Cards, Catalogue No. 796.55, Negative No. 3010, BLRI Archives. Photo provided by C.E. Westveer, July, 1973.)

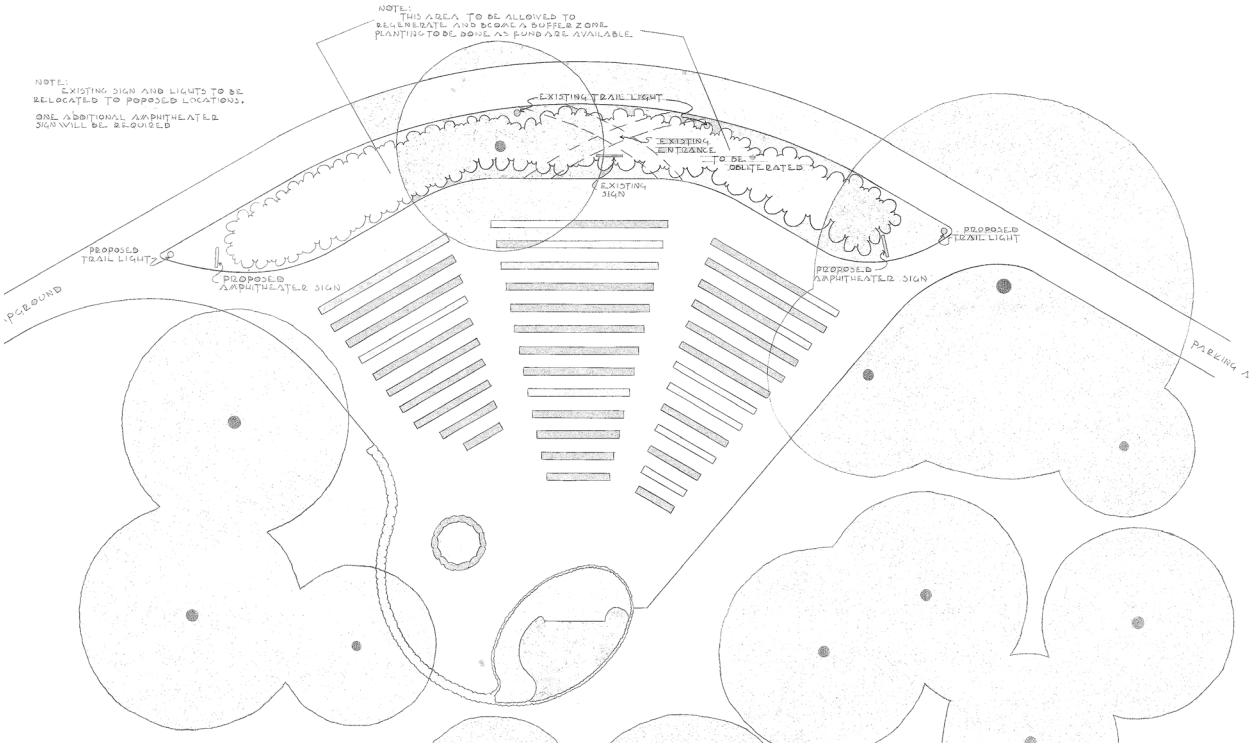


FIGURE 2–56. Layout of the amphitheater (B942) and pedestrian circulation. (Drawing No. BKY-BR, CM-2074. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Division of Design & Construction. July, 1964.)

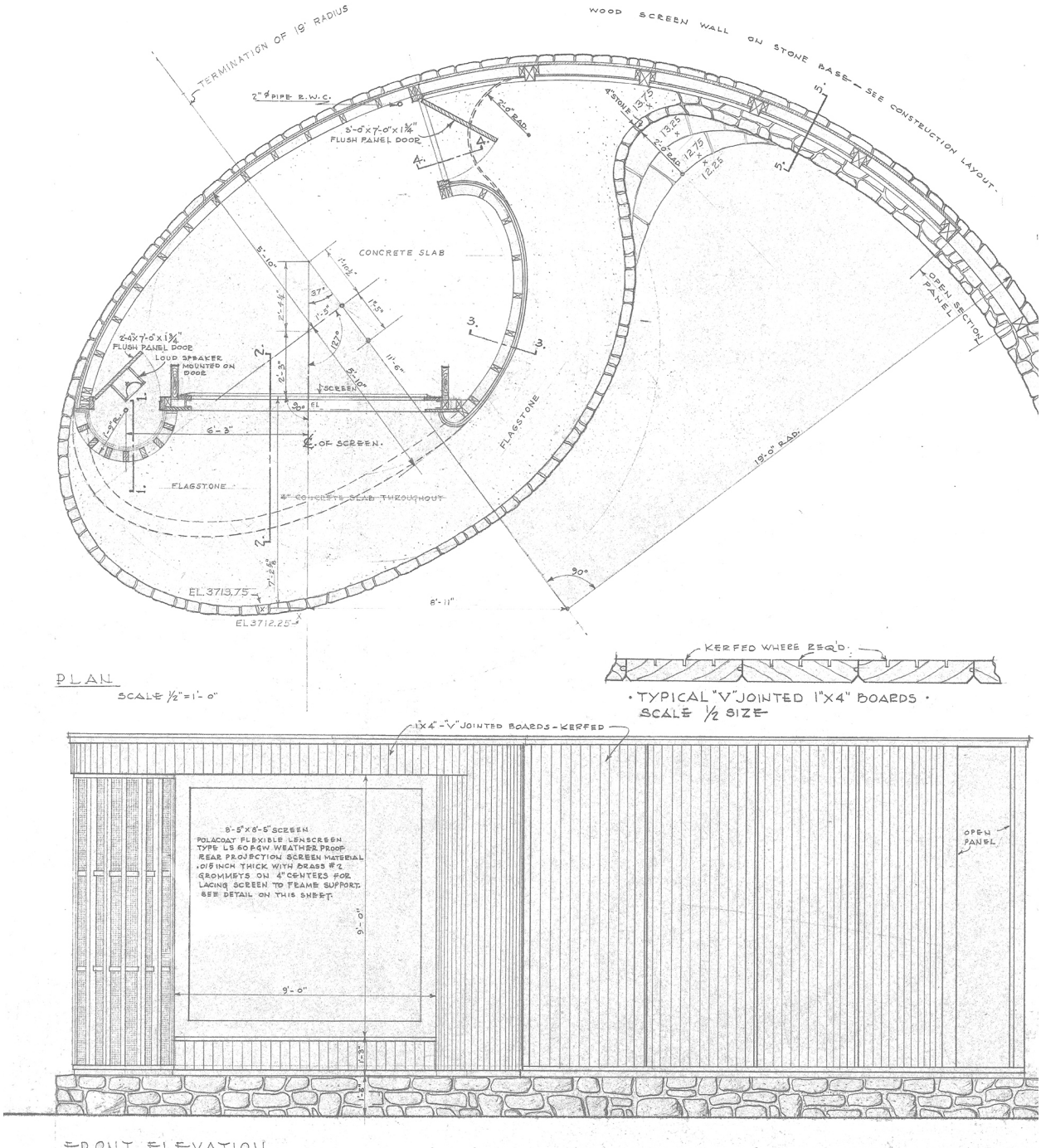


FIGURE 2–58. Campground amphitheater building (B942) at Crabtree Falls Park. Sheet 2 of 4, Drawing No. BKY-BR, CM-3052B. (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Division of Design & Construction. June, 1962.)

Existing Conditions

The Crabtree Falls Recreation Area has undergone a few changes since it was constructed in the 1950s but the majority of the basic layout, infrastructure, and elements are still in place. The coffee shop near the campground and a new picnic area on the east side of the Parkway built in the 1960s are the two most significant additions to Crabtree Falls Recreation Area.[1]

Natural Systems and Features

Topography

The Blue Ridge Parkway runs northeast to southwest along the crest, ridges, and valleys of the Blue Ridge Mountains from Virginia to North Carolina. The lowest point on the Parkway is 650 feet above mean sea level near the James River at MP 60, and the highest point is 6,053 feet above mean sea level at Richland Balsam overlook at MP 431.

Crabtree Falls is located in the southern Blue Ridge Mountain physiographic province that consists of high, intermediate, and low mountains, intermountain hills, coves, terraces, and floodplains. Crabtree Falls is part of the intermediate mountain landscape ranges that are 3,500 to 4,800 feet in elevation. It has moderately steep to very steep elevations on side slopes and gently rolling valleys. The low mountain landscape ranges from 2,000 to 3,500 feet in elevation. It has moderately steep to very steep soils on side slopes and gently sloping to strongly sloping soils on ridgetops. Crabtree Falls has characteristics of both of these mountain landscape ranges (Figure 3-1).[2]

The highest point on the site is along the northeastern portion, where it abuts the Blue Ridge Parkway. Here the elevation is around 3,900 feet. A ridge runs east-west from this high point across the site to the lower western corner of the property, which has an elevation of 3,630 feet. Drainage on the southern part of this ridge runs southwest off the site, while drainage to the north continues north or northwest. The low point on the site is along the small valley to the north, with an elevation of 3,220 feet.

Crabtree Falls is unusual in that the site topography is more gentle than surrounding topography, which makes it easier to develop campgrounds and picnic areas here without major grading (Figure 3-2). The site's topography was a large reason why it was originally identified as a potential site for recreation.

Geology

Most of the rocks that form the Blue Ridge Mountains are ancient granitic charnockites, metamorphosed volcanic formations, and sedimentary limestones. Metamorphic rock is the most abundant class of rock in the area around Crabtree Falls. Igneous rock is also present. Metamorphosed sedimentary rocks are quite common, but true sedimentary rock is not. Many metamorphosed sedimentary rocks have been altered so little that their sedimentary character is still quite obvious. Most of the rocks range in age from 600 million years to more than a billion years. Only the youngest igneous intrusives, the 390-million-year-old alaskites and pegmatites, have escaped metamorphism. The older metamorphosed intrusive rocks vary widely in age and composition.[3]

The following descriptions are of geological units located within the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area.[4]

Amphibolite —Amphibolite is a metamorphic rock composed mostly of an amphibole mineral (usually hornblende) and plagioclase feldspar. Amphibolite is weakly resistant to chemical weathering.

Biotite granitic gneiss—The biotite granitic gneiss, a heterogeneous map unit, is massive to thinly layered biotite-bearing granite to quartz diorite.

1 U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Resources Conservation Service, *Soil Survey of Yancey County, North Carolina,* (1952, updated 1997), 11.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

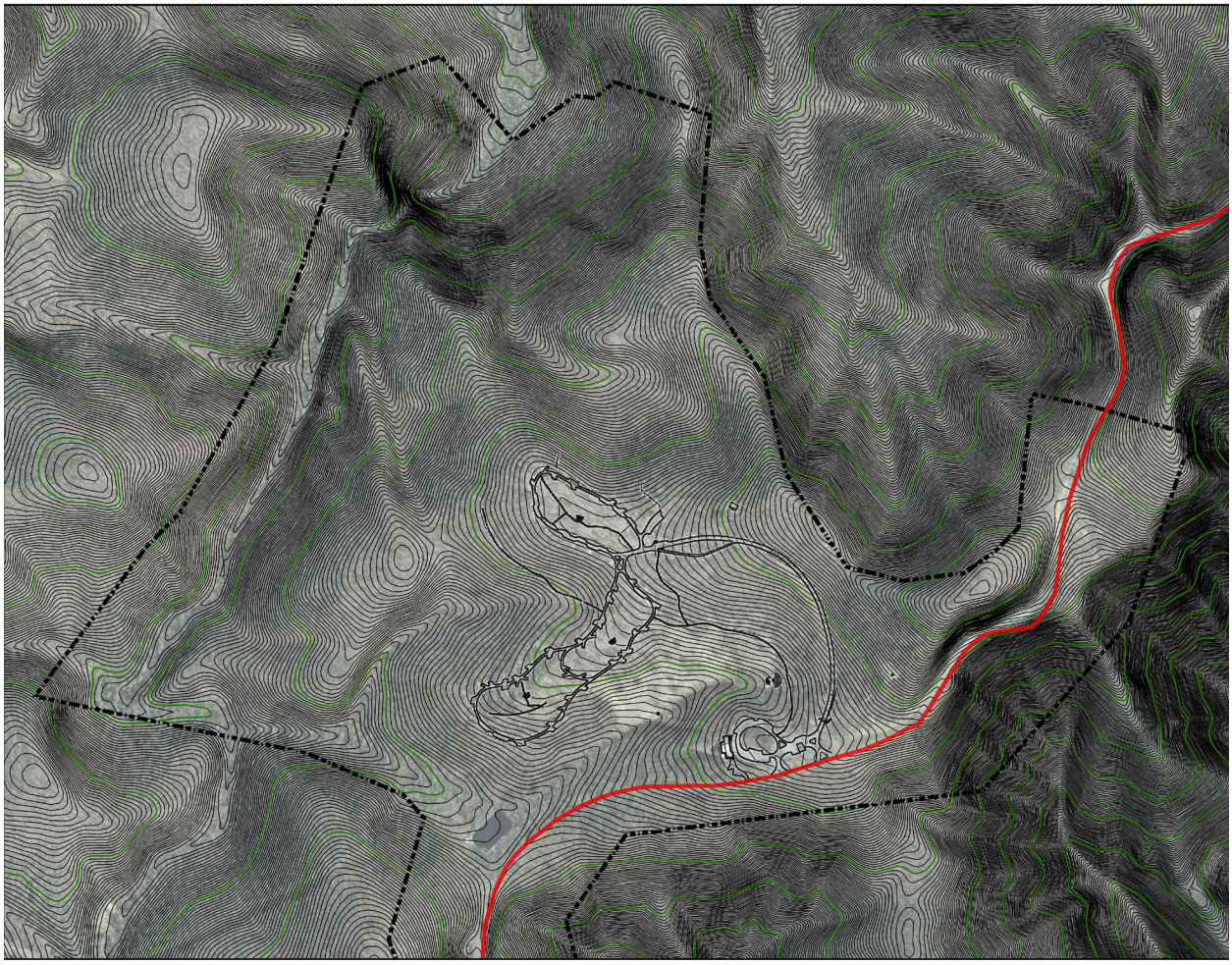


FIGURE 3–1. Topographic map showing contours on and around Crabtree Falls camping site. (Sand County Studios, January, 2015.)

Gneiss —Gneiss is a coarse-grained metamorphic rock in which bands rich in granular minerals alternate with bands of predominantly schistose minerals. It is commonly formed by the metamorphism of granite.

Upper Chilhowee gneiss—The upper unit of the Chilhowee Group is a sequence of quartzite and arkosic quartzite ranging in thickness from 1,300 to perhaps 2,500 feet. The rocks are thin- to thick-bedded, medium- to fine-grained, white, greenish-gray, or bluish-gray quartzite and arkosic quartzite.

Metaultramafic rock—Small, local occurrences of unaltered and altered ultramafic rock are present in several areas around Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. A relatively unaltered ultramafic rock called dunite is mined in the county. In western North Carolina, dunite is composed almost entirely of forsterite olivine that is very rich in magnesium. Iron is also present with trace amounts of nickel and cobalt.

Metagraywacke—Metagraywacke is a metamorphosed, dark gray, firmly indurated, coarse-grained sandstone that consists of poorly sorted, angular to subangular grains of quartz and feldspar with a variety of dark rock and mineral fragments embedded in a complex clayey matrix.

Muscovite-biotite gneiss—Muscovite is a nonferromagnesian rock-forming silicate mineral that has tetrahedra arranged in sheets.

Quartz diorite to granodiorite—Quartz diorite is an igneous, plutonic (intrusive) rock, of felsic composition, with phaneritic texture. Feldspar is present as plagioclase with 10 percent or less potassium feldspar. Quartz is present at between 5 and 20 percent of the rock.

Soils

Soil data for Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's *Soil*

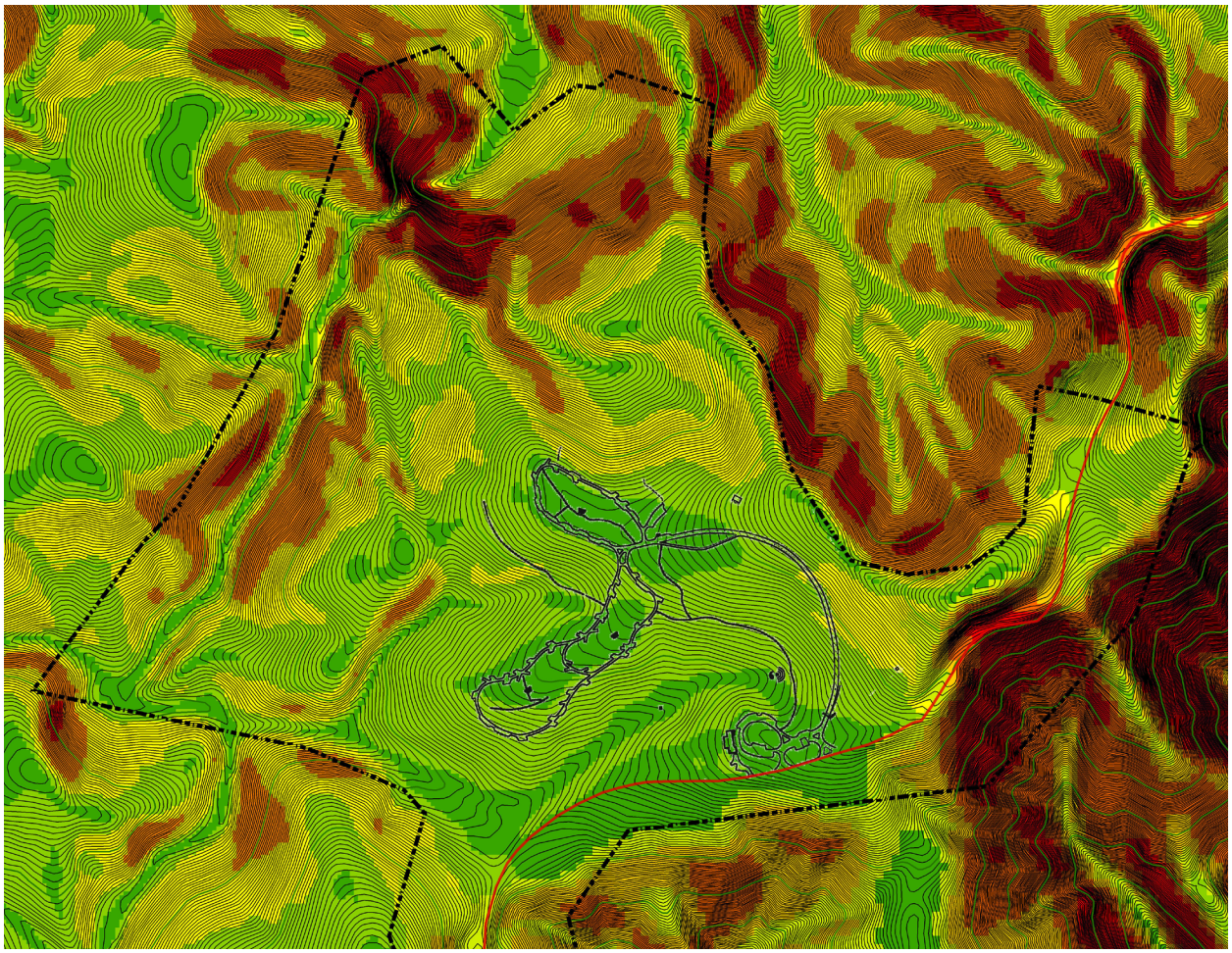


FIGURE 3–2. Slope analysis map showing Crabtree Falls campground area. The camping loops and entry area are located along the flatter parts of the site, as shown in green. Red areas are the steeper slopes. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

Survey of Yancey County, North Carolina.[5] This soil survey is a publication of the National Cooperative Soil Survey, a joint effort of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and other federal agencies; state agencies, including the North Carolina Agricultural Research Service; and local agencies. The original survey was published in 1952. Major fieldwork for the most recent soil survey was completed in 1995, and soil names and descriptions were approved in 1997 (Figure 3-3).

As previous road construction, including clearing, grubbing, grading, and the addition of stone road base, disturbed the soils along the Parkway, it is unlikely that any disturbed native soils exist there.[6] Soils throughout much of the site were disturbed and compressed by logging activities.

Soil type helps define possibilities for how a site is used. Slopes greater than 20 percent are typically viewed as precluding archeological sites because they are inhospitable for human habitation; the selection of flatter areas for modern development has likely resulted in disturbance to Native American resources if they existed.

There is not one dominant soil complex on the Crabtree Falls site; seven or eight different soil types occupy approximately the same percentage of the site. In general, soils found along ridgelines and steep slopes, are typically loam or gravelly loam, and are very well-drained and prone to erosion. This soil type favors forested conditions.[7]

Many of the soils are poorly suited for other uses such as urban development, which could include dwellings, local roads and streets, septic tank absorption fields, and lawns and landscaping,

5 Ibid.

6 NPS, U.S. Department of the Interior, *Guardrail Replacement and Installation Programmatic Environmental Assessment,* (September 2009), 31.

7 Ibid, 301.

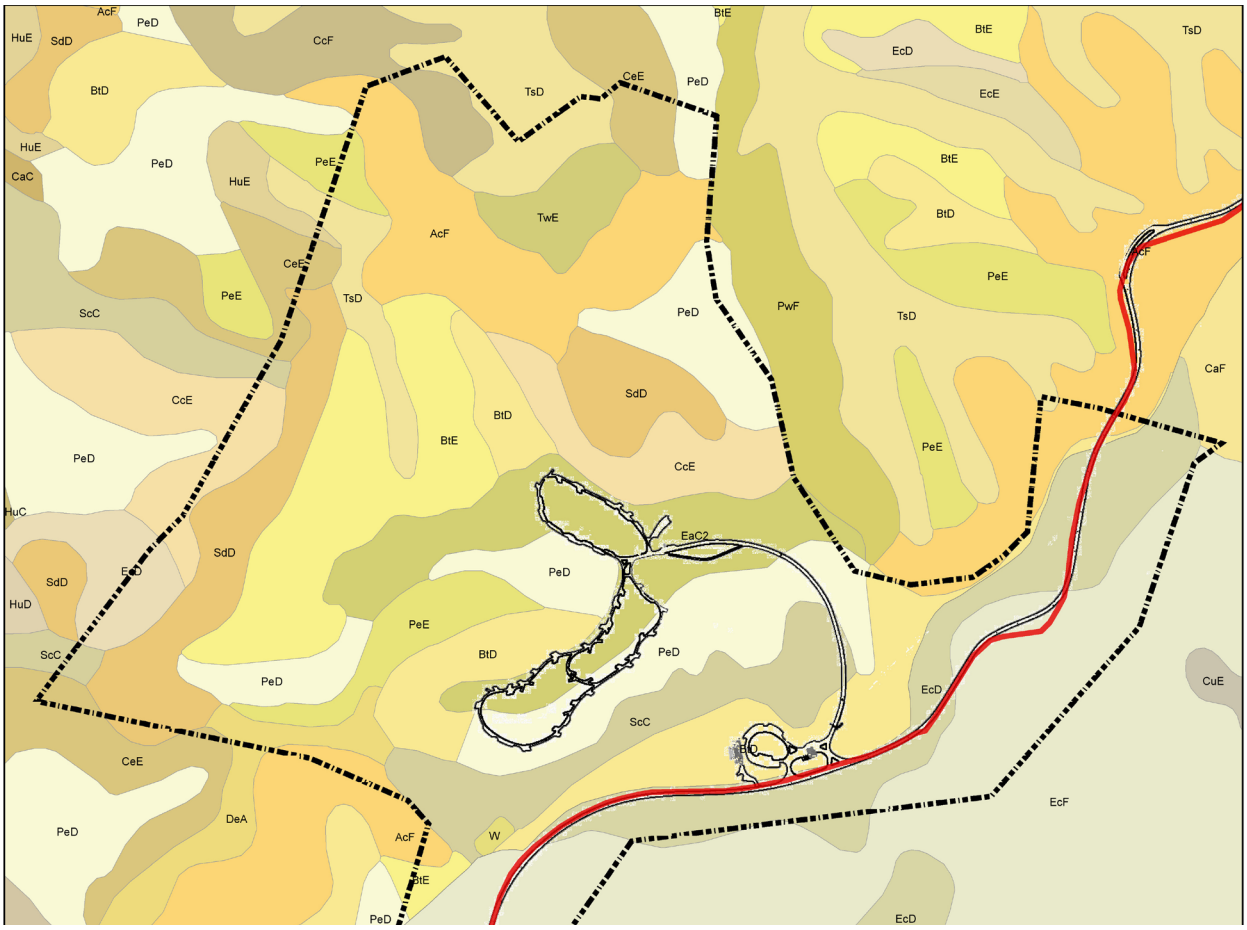


FIGURE 3–3. Soils map for Crabtree Falls. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

because of slope, erodibility, seeps and springs, large stones, depth to bedrock, and corrosivity. The exceptions are CaC—Cashiers fine sandy loam, CeE—Chandler-Micaville complex, and EaC2—Evard-Cowee complex. All three are suited for development, although EaC2 is not good for septic tanks because of restricted permeability and depth to bedrock. It is interesting to note that all three campground loops at Crabtree Falls are along the EaC2 soils type. All soils are discussed in greater detail in Appendix D.

Hydrology

Crabtree Falls is located in the French Broad-Holston basin and is adjacent to the Santee River basin, which drains from the Parkway away from the Crabtree Falls site. At the site level, hydrology includes Crabtree Creek and Crabtree Falls. It appears that the falls are fed from runoff from the surrounding area, but no detailed studies have been conducted. Many springs and wet areas with profusions of ferns, and wildflowers border the steep and rocky trail.

Santee River basin—The Santee River basin in South and North Carolina extends across parts of three physiographic provinces—the Blue Ridge, the Piedmont, and the Coastal Plain. The headwaters of the Santee River are in the mountains of North Carolina, and the river flows about 413 miles across the Piedmont and Coastal Plain to the Atlantic Ocean. The northwest edge of the Santee River basin follows the Parkway, which serves as the boundary for the watershed at Crabtree Falls. Crabtree Creek is on the other side of the Parkway, so Crabtree Creek is completely out of the Santee basin.[8]

French Broad and Holston—The French Broad-Holston basin is part of the Upper Tennessee basin and includes the French Broad and Holston River

8 U.S. Department of the Interior, *U.S. Geological Survey, National Water Quality Assessment Program (NAWQA): Santee River Basin Study,* Accessed August 26, 2014, http://sc.water.usgs.gov/nawqa/.



FIGURE 3–4. Crabtree Falls. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

basins. The combined basin covers 8,820 square miles in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. The French Broad River basin is characterized by a mountainous topography and includes 2,830 square miles of land in the mountains of North Carolina.[9] Crabtree Falls is located along the western edge of the French Broad basin. The French Broad River is formed by the junction of its north fork and west fork in southern Transylvania County near the town of Rosman. The French Broad flows through the city of Asheville, where it picks up the Swannanoa River and continues north into Tennessee. After leaving North Carolina, the French Broad proceeds west for 102 miles, joins the Holston River to form the Tennessee River near the city of Knoxville, and eventually flows into the Mississippi River. Forests make up 50 percent of all land uses in the watershed. Cultivated land area is decreasing in this basin while urban lands are increasing, although not directly along the Parkway. Near the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area the surrounding landscape is predominantly forested and there is no pressure for development.

Crabtree Creek—The creek, which is referred to as Big Crabtree Creek, runs along the western boundary of the site and into the falls and then continues out the bottom. A raised trail over the creek in front of the falls offers great views, and there are also good views of the falls from the other side of the creek.

Crabtree Falls—Crabtree Falls has been called one of the most distinctive, recognizable, and photogenic waterfalls in the region, and it is one of the major reasons that tourists stop at the recreation site for day use (Figure 3-4). It is also the most dynamic natural feature on the site. NPS changed the name of the site from Crabtree Meadows to Crabtree Falls in 2010 to highlight the falls as a destination point. The falls start out as a narrow cascade but fan out evenly over a steep rock face with countless smaller ledges, cracks, and outcrops before spraying into the pool at the base. The falls are unusual because they do not have a basin or plunge pool at the base. Large boulders litter the stream below the pool, and one supports a picturesque birch tree, with its visible roots spreading out over a small clump of soil on the top. Many types of ferns and wildflowers thrive in the hollow around Crabtree Falls, benefiting from the falls' cool spray.

Climate

The climate of the mountain landscape around Crabtree Falls differs greatly from that of the intermountain hills and floodplains. Climate is influenced by elevation, aspect, and wind direction, which is predominantly from the west. As elevation increases, rainfall amounts increase and temperature decreases. Temperatures are cooler on north- to east-facing aspects. Daily temperatures can fluctuate widely with cold or warm spells possible year-round. There is a chance of frost in the high mountains during the summer months.[10]

In summer, the average temperature is 67.0 degrees Fahrenheit and the average daily maximum temperature is 78.9 degrees. In winter, the average temperature is 34.1 degrees.[11]

Precipitation is heavy and generally evenly distributed throughout the year. In summer, precipitation falls chiefly during thunderstorms.

9 River Link, *French Broad River Facts,* http://riverlink.org/learn/about-riverlink/french-broad-river-facts/.

10 U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Soil Survey of Yancey County,* 14.

11 Ibid, 15.



FIGURE 3–5. Vegetation cover at Crabtree Falls. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

In winter, precipitation in valleys is chiefly rain with occasional snow, with the average seasonal snowfall being 19.3 inches. Snow cover generally does not last at Crabtree Falls. Annual precipitation varies. Estimated annual rainfall is 50–56 inches along the North Carolina-Tennessee state line. Thunderstorms occur on about 45 days each year, and most occur between May and August.[12]

The sun shines 58 percent of the time in summer and 57 percent in winter. The prevailing wind is highly dependent on location in this mountainous county. High mountain ridgetops and side slopes and prominent intermediate mountain ridgetops are windswept. Sustained winds over 25 miles per hour are common.[13]

The climatic conditions make Crabtree Falls desirable for campers and visitors seeking to get away from the hotter temperatures during the summer months. The summer temperatures are consistently cooler, and the elevations prevent extensive snow during late spring or early fall. Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is closed seasonally in the winter months.

Vegetation

Forestland covers about 80 percent of the land of Yancey County, with the majority being timberland or commercial forest cover.

The current vegetation patterns at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is influenced in part by previous logging that removed many of the mature trees on the site, and by development of the camping loops, entry zone, and picnic area (Figure 3-5). The predominantly dense wooded landscape surrounds the open meadows, with common trees including oaks, maples, hemlock, birch, fir, spruce, hickory, dogwood, pine, and mountain laurel (Figure 3.6). [14]

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid., 233.



FIGURE 3–6. Map showing Blue Ridge Parkway alignment in front of Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

At the entry area, which includes the coffee shop, the following major trees, which were identified in the grading plan for the coffee shop in the 1960s, still exist. (Figure 3-7)

- Oak – north side of entry parking area
- Oak – north side of entry parking area
- White oak – north side of entry parking area
- Gum tree – in the median of the entry parking area
- Oak – in the median of the entry parking area
- Hemlocks – in the median of the entry parking area

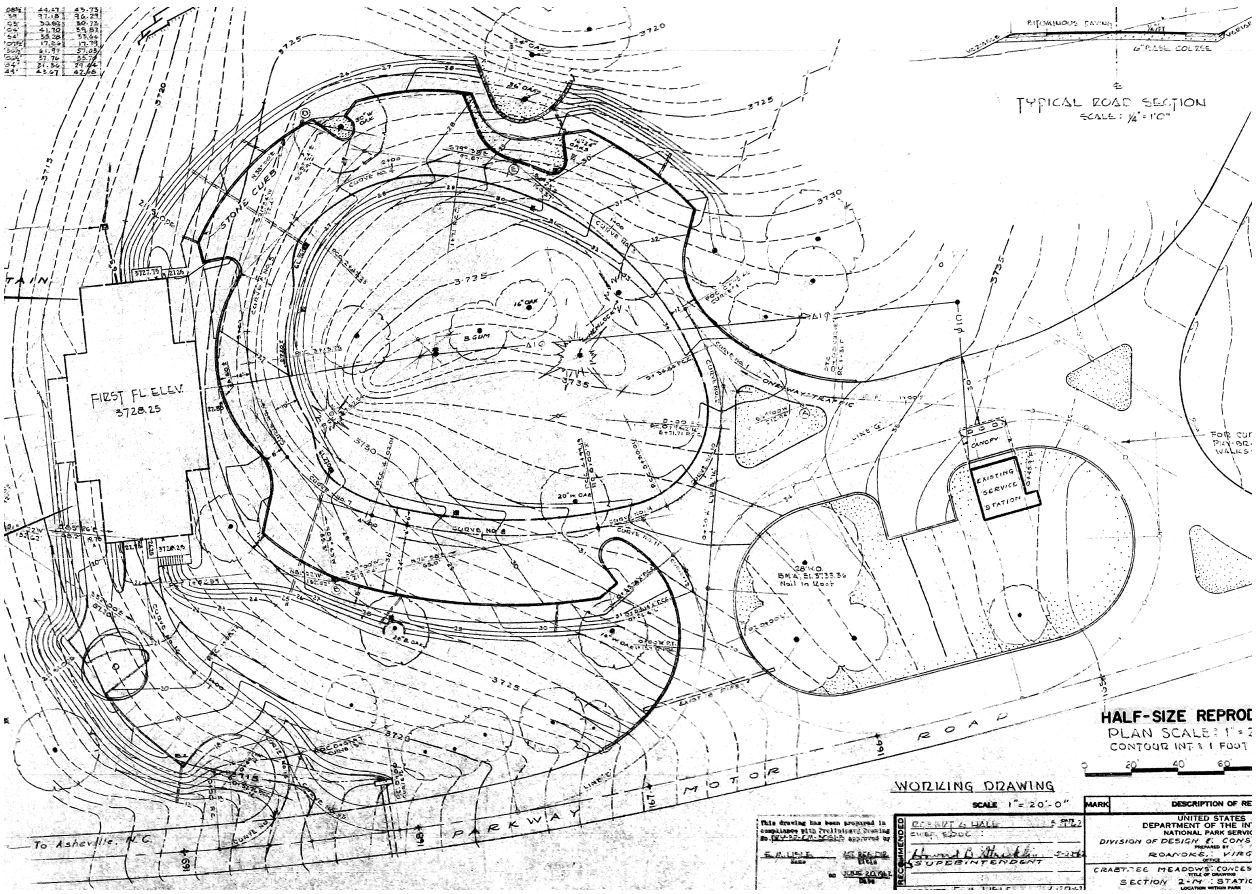


FIGURE 3–7. Major trees near the coffee shop and entry area. (NPS, 1962)

- White oak – in the median of the entry parking area
- Black oak – south side of the entry parking area
- White oak – south side of the entry parking area
- White oak – southwest of the former gas station building

Behind the coffee shop there are also oaks, maples, firs, and hemlocks. A clump of rhododendrons is located in the woods toward the northern edge of the building. Poplar and oaks are located around the service access to the building.

Larger trees in the woodlands are predominantly white oaks, red oaks, and black oaks, with a few hickories, ash, hemlocks, and gum being found. Birch are found in the lower, wetter settings. The understory includes laurel, rhododendrons, and small pines. Trees at the picnic area are primarily oaks, with a few scattered maples and hemlocks.

There is limited site-specific information concerning vegetative species at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. Minimal vegetation was removed to allow for construction of the coffee shop, interior roads, and service areas, and new vegetation would have been planted around the coffee shop, but this information was not documented.

Wildlife

The Parkway supports a variety of wildlife species. Most commonly observed are white-tailed deer, squirrels, rabbits, groundhogs, and songbirds. These species have been observed at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. Native plants generally provide better habitat and food resources to animals. Many migratory songbirds travel along the Blue Ridge Parkway during their spring and fall migrations, and more than 150 species have been identified as breeding here during the summer months. Nesting birds take advantage of the various plant communities, and breeding birds can be found the length of the Parkway in virtually all habitats. Human activities at Crabtree Falls most likely drive away some of the wildlife that would normally be found in such a forested setting, while other wildlife would be attracted to the foods and smells of a campground.

Land Use

Crabtree Falls is used as a recreational site for camping, hiking, and picnic activities. All building support these land uses. The entry area provides access and parking for a coffee shop, trails, and camping loops. The coffee shop provides public restrooms and an area for gift shopping. A 300-person amphitheater (BLRI Structure #B942) located between the coffee shop and tent camping area is used for interpretive programs. The picnic area provides day use and includes a comfort station for public use.

Spatial Organization

The spatial organization is based on the different uses on the site, with the surrounding wooded areas creating a vertical sense of enclosure. Arrangement of elements creating the ground, vertical, and overhead planes help define and create spaces.

The campground consists of one RV loop (Loop A) and two tent-camping loops (Loop B and Loop C) that are located in relatively level areas with scattered trees. The southernmost camping loop (Loop C) has been closed since 2010.

Cluster Arrangement

Buildings at Crabtree Falls are organized by uses provided. Comfort stations are located near the middle of each of the three camping loops, and one is located in the picnic area. The coffee shop is part of the Mission 66 Era that also provided visitor amenities such as a restroom and gift shop. The amphitheater is located so it is easily accessible from both the camping loops and the coffee shop.

Spurs in the tent and RV loops are either parallel, perpendicular, or angled to provide easy access. In the tent camping loads, spurs are used for cars and trucks and are around 10’ x 20’ in size. In the RV loops, the spaces accommodate larger RVs and are sized appropriately.

Tucked away from the main road, the campground is fairly quiet. Individual campsites are surrounded by large trees and are far enough away from neighboring sites for a bit of privacy. There are large meadows and open space and the understory of the

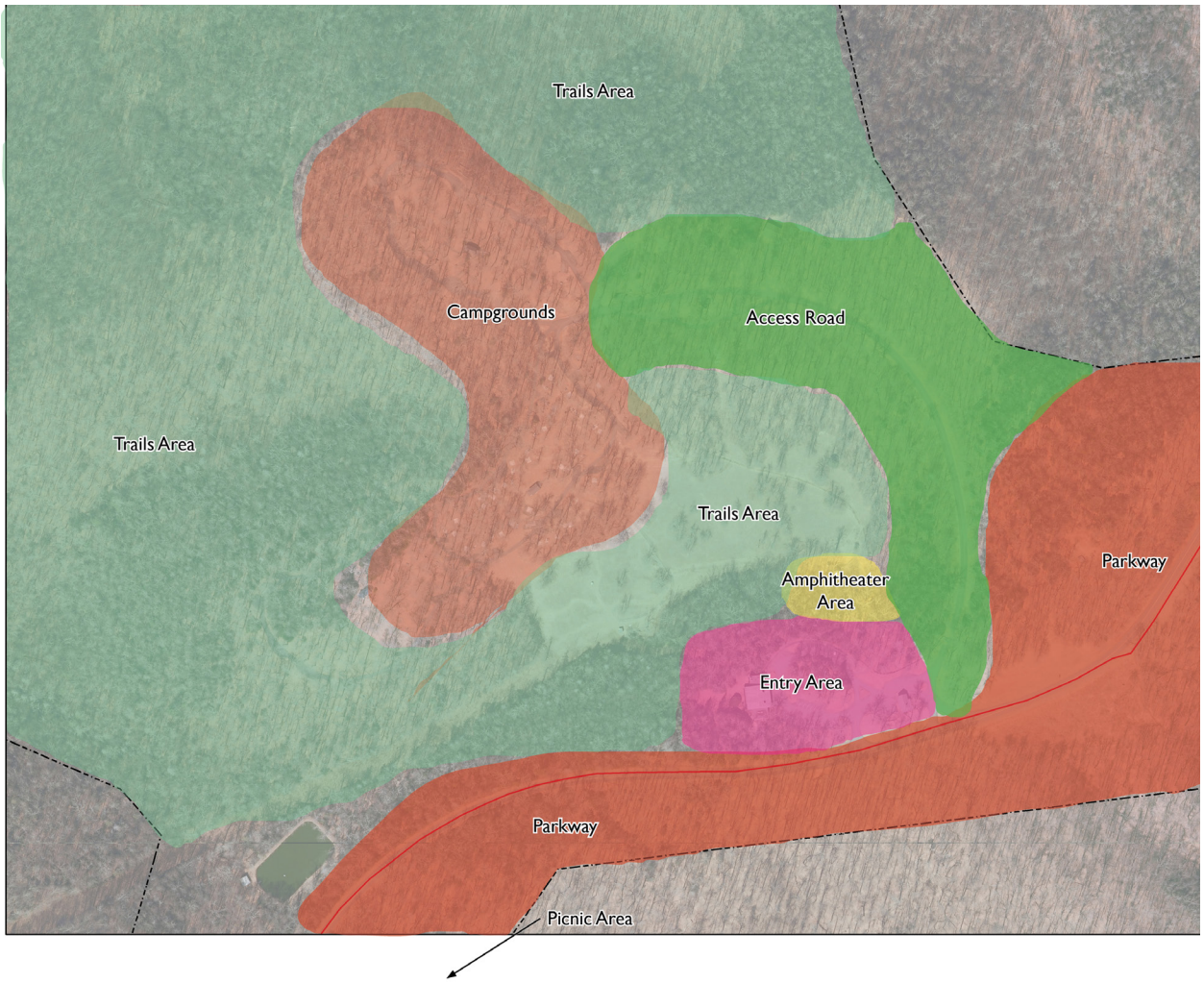


FIGURE 3–8. This map indicated the component landscapes that make up Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. The picnic area is to the lower left and is on the east side of the Parkway. (Sand County Studios, September, 2016.)

woods is scattered, so there is a sense of openness and accessibility to the campground.

Component Landscapes

A component landscape is a discrete portion of the landscape which can be further subdivided into individual features. A large landscape may be broken into component landscapes, which allows each to be documented in more detail.

The Crabtree Falls Recreation area includes the following component landscapes:

- Entry Area / Access Road
- Campground
- Amphitheater Area
- Trails Area
- Picnic Area
- Parkway (Figure 3-8)

Entry Area / Access Road (Figures 3-9, 3-10)

Buildings

The buildings in the entry area include:

- Mission 66 coffee shop (BLRI Structure #B128)
- Gas station / storage building (BLRI Structure #B127)
- Residential building (BLRI Structure #B832)
- Fee collection building at campground entrance (BLRI Structure #B665).

Mission 66 coffee shop (1965)—The most prominent building at Crabtree Falls Recreation

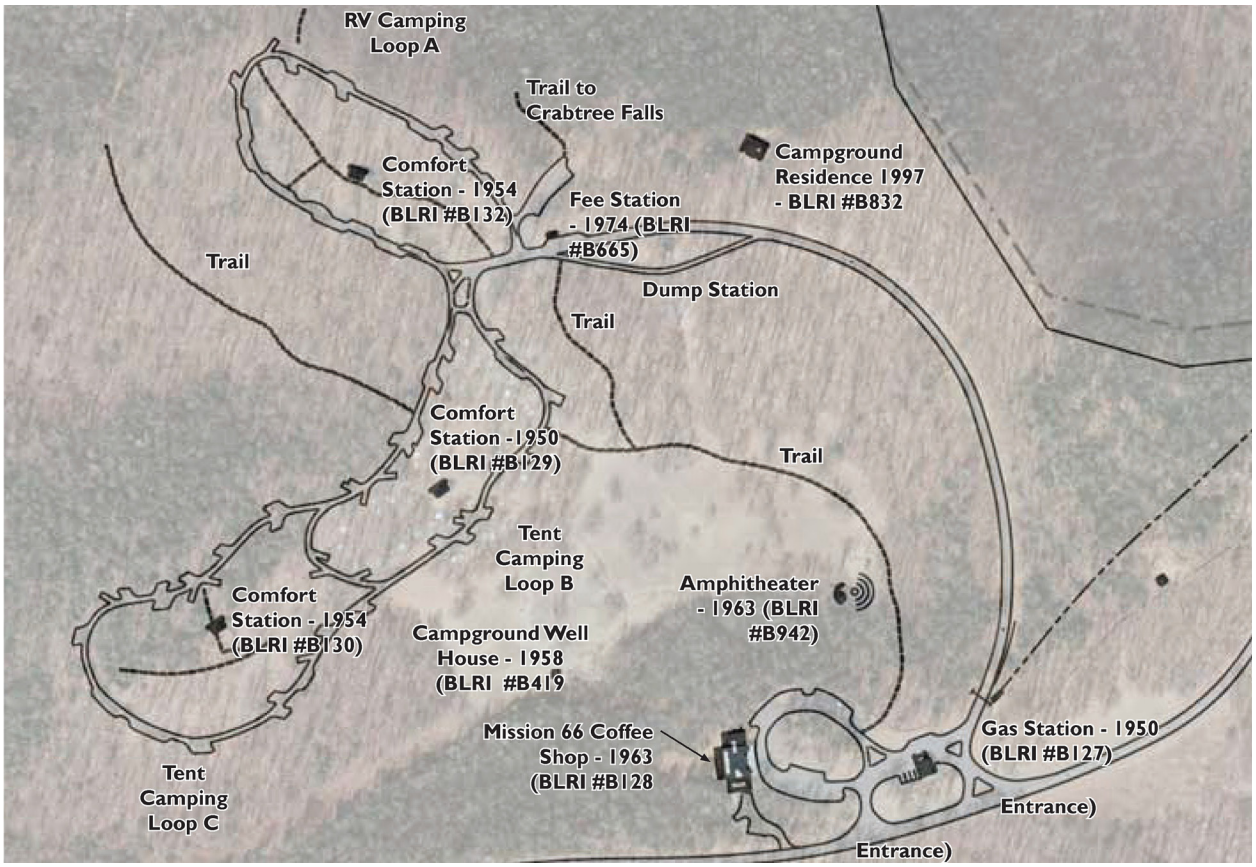


FIGURE 3–9. Map showing existing conditions at main Crabtree Falls Recreation Area site. CAD files from National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway. (Sand County Studios, January, 2015.)

Area is the coffee shop (BLRI Structure #B128). This one-story Modernist style building has a walk-out basement and a center bay with open plan.[15] The building is constructed of glass, exposed steel, and stone with an emphasis on strong horizontal and vertical lines. Materials used were low cost, and construction emphasized affordability. The finished form looks nothing like the traditional, rustic-style prewar building, which is typical of a Mission 66 building. All of this is typical of a Mission 66 building (Figures 3-11 to 3-15). The forms, materials, and construction result in a visually distinct structure. The coffee shop is based on the idea of integrating interior and exterior spaces. Sequestration and a lack of visitation were the major reasons the coffee shop was closed in 2010. Closing the shop resulted in an even bigger loss in visitation at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area.

The coffee shop building is approximately 4,000 square feet, with a 550–square foot deck at the back of the building. [16] The building is divided into four basic areas: (i) an entry area that is about half the width of the building and extends all the way across the front, (ii) a cafeteria/coffee shop on the back side of the building that opens up to the deck and is separated from the front by an interior stone wall, (iii) a kitchen area, and (iv) utility spaces, including restrooms, storage, and offices. A wood-framed deck with wood railing extends the full length on the back side of the building.[17] Many of the materials used have not held up well against the elements and will need to be replaced. Significant repairs will be needed to make the building usable again.

Gas station building —The former gas station (BLRI Structure #B127) is currently used as a storage building. The exterior walls are cinder block with vertical siding. The gable roof is composed of asphalt cement shingles and has a hanging gutter. There is a concrete-paved pass-through at the

15 Ford and Kliwinski, *Blue Ridge Parkway Survey and Inventory.*

16 Square footage is computed in accordance with Section 210 of the Building Construction Handbook.

17 Ford and Kliwinski, *Blue Ridge Parkway Survey and Inventory.*

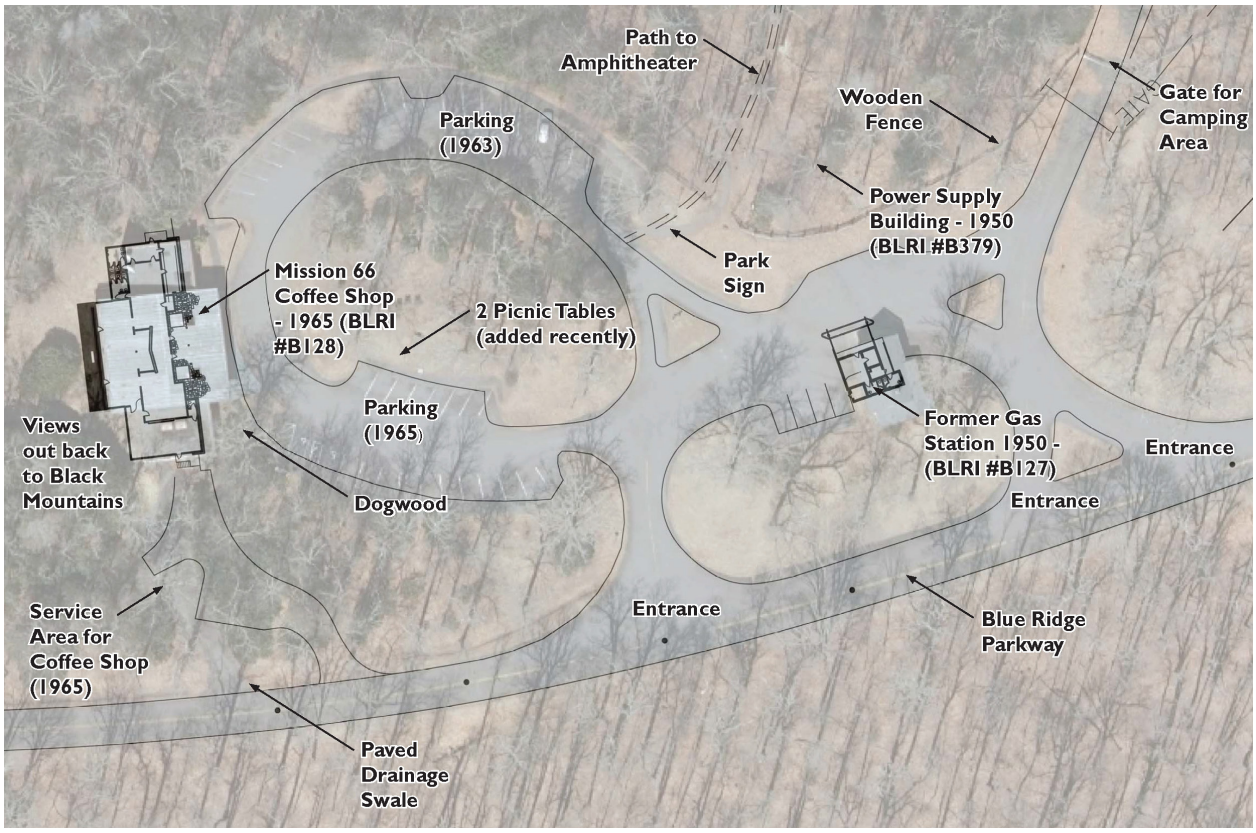


FIGURE 3–10. Entry area leading to the Crabtree Falls campground loops. The plan shows the Mission 66 coffee shop and former gas station. (Sand County Studios, January, 2015.)

front elevation of the building supported by wood-encased steel posts.[18] With its gray color, vertical board siding, and simple shape, the building is consistent with the rustic, pioneer architectural style promoted along the rest of the Parkway The building is divided into a sales area, office, boiler, gas storage, and two restrooms (Figures 3-16 to 3-19).

The men's restroom is accessible from the sales area, but the entrance to the women's restroom is outside around the corner of the building. A paved sidewalk adjacent to the building provides access to the women's restroom. An overhang extends across a pull-up area and the median where gas pumps would have been located. The gas pumps have been removed. The building is no longer used as a gas station, and current NPS policies make it highly unlikely the building will be converted back to its historical use.

Residential structure near campgrounds[19] The building has a concrete block foundation with concrete stone veneer. It also has exposed milled-log framing, and a wood-framed asphalt shingle gable roof with hanging gutters (Figure 3-20). [20]

Although it was likely built in 1997, the building is based on the rustic style of prewar years. It houses seasonal park employees. In 2004 a rear deck was constructed, stone veneer on the building was installed, and steps and rails were added to the front porch.[21]

Fee collection building at campground entrance —(BLRI Structure #B665, also referred to as the Campground Kiosk in the BLRI Survey and Inventory). The current building is a small, one-story wood-framed building. It has a concrete foundation, plywood siding, and a gable roof with

18 Ibid.

19 The Blue Ridge Parkway Survey and Inventory indicates the building was constructed in 1997, but other sources indicate 1993 as the date of construction.

20 Ford and Kliwinski, *Blue Ridge Parkway Survey and Inventory.*

21 Ibid.



FIGURE 3–11. Side elevation of Mission 66 coffee shop (B128). Looking north. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–13. Front view of Mission 66 coffee shop (B128). Looking west. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–12. Back view of Mission 66 coffee shop (B128). Looking east. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–14. South elevation of Mission 66 coffee shop (B128). Looking north. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–15. View of front door for the Mission 66 coffee shop (B128). Looking west. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

exposed beams. The roof has an overhang that is supported by wood-encased metal posts. A large sliding window is used for guest registration. The current building was constructed in 1974 and is in the same approximate location as the original fee collection building (Figure 3-30).

Circulation

There are two entrances to the campground site: a service entrance that accesses the back of the coffee



FIGURE 3–16. View of former gas station as seen from front of Mission 66 coffee stop (B127). Looking north. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–17. Side view of former gas station (B127). Looking southeast. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–18. Crabtree Falls campground kiosk (B665). (Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Blue Ridge Parkway Survey and Inventory, FMSS No. 4772, BLRI Structure No. B665. Photo provided Michael Ford and Leonard Kliwinski. June, 2013.)



FIGURE 3–19. Side view of overhand that is part of the former gas station (B127). Looking northeast. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–20. Residential structure (B832) along the entry road to the Crabtree Falls campgrounds. Looking east. (Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Blue Ridge Parkway Survey and Inventory, FMSS No. 4779, BLRI Structure No. B832. Photo provided Michael Ford and Leonard Kliwinski. June, 2013.)

shop, and one turnoff into the picnic area (Figures 3-21 to 3-23). The northernmost entrance leads directly to the campgrounds on the northern part of the site, but also provides access to the former gas station and a parking lot in front of the coffee shop. The second main entrance provides access to an interior road located between the former gas station and the coffee shop, and leads directly to the loop parking in front of the coffee shop.



FIGURE 3–21. Entry parking lot in front of the Mission 66 coffee shop. Looking north. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–22. Mature trees line the entry roads and parking lot. Looking north. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–23. View of the parking lot in front of the Mission 66 coffee shop. Looking northwest. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–24. View of the parking lot in front of the Mission 66 coffee shop. Looking southwest. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

There are 37 parking spaces in front of the coffee shop, including two wheelchair-accessible spaces (Figure 3-24). There are four parking spaces next to the former gas station, and a parallel pull-off space on the other side of the road in front of the station.

Small-Scale Features

Rail Fences—The fences at Crabtree Falls are of post-and-rail construction. They are constructed of posts that support horizontal rails. One reason that post-and-rail fencing was used is that the soils were not so rocky as to prevent posts from

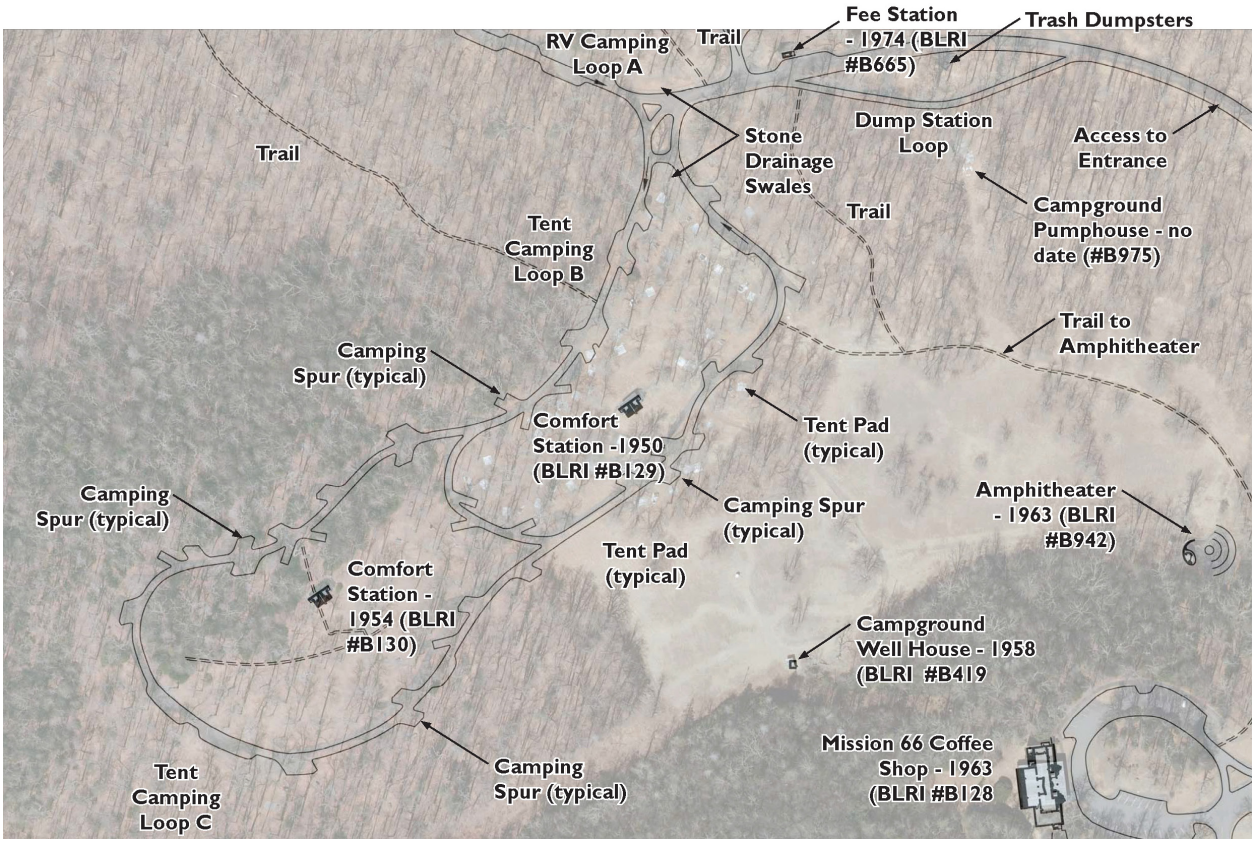


FIGURE 3–25. Tent camping Loop (Loop B and Loop C) at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

being driven into the ground. The post-and-rail fences at Crabtree Falls were built originally with historic chestnut, but many have been replaced with pressure-treated poplar or locust wood over the years.

Signs—Most of the signs at the campground site and the picnic area are general park signs, with directional or informational messages. The style is consistent with the rustic, pioneer style used by the NPS. There are few if any interpretive signs at these locations. There is a map of the Crabtree Falls site on a wooden sign located near the trail leading to the amphitheater and falls. There are also informational signs at the entry station to the campgrounds.

Vegetation

The entry area and road to the camping loops are dominated by oaks, a few hickories and maples, and scattered understory such as rhododendrons and laurels. A large dogwood is located near the coffee shop and serves as a visual specimen tree. A dense hedge of rhododendrons is along the north side of the entry road median.

Campground (Figure 3-25, 3-26)

Buildings

Buildings in the entry area include:

- Three (3) comfort stations (BLRI Structure #B129), #B130, and #B132)
- Pump house (#B975)
- Campground well house (BLRI Structure #B419)

Camping area comfort stations (3) —There are three comfort stations, one in each of the camping loops. All three comfort stations in the camping areas are used on a regular basis during the season when the campground is open. They are intended only for use by campers (and perhaps by hikers who are on the trails to the falls because restroom facilities are not open at the coffee shop). Each comfort station is approximately 300 square feet with restroom facilities for men and women, and a utility room separating the two (Figures 3-27 to 3-30, 3-32, 3-33).

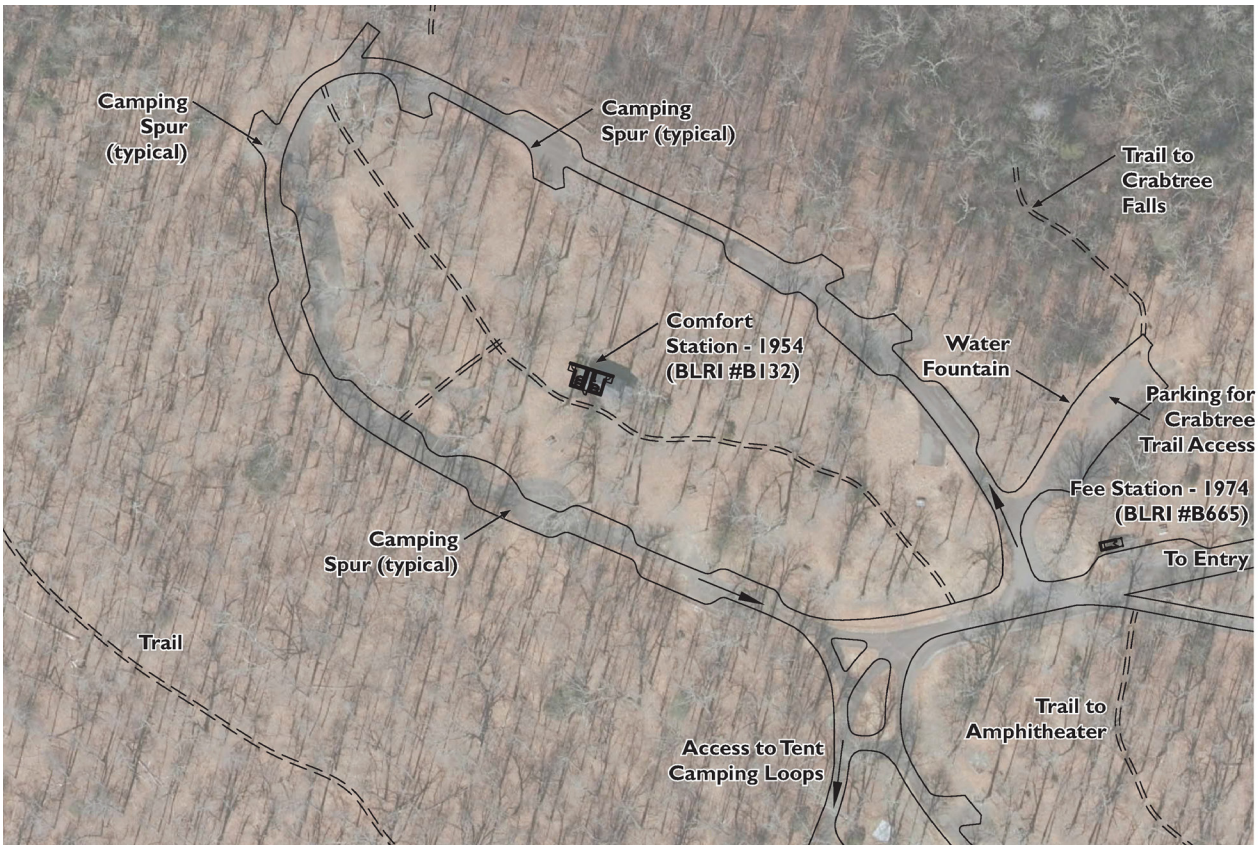


FIGURE 3–26. RV Loop and trailhead at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. (Sand County Studios, January, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–27. Internal road within the campgrounds. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–28. Comfort stations are located in the center of the wooded camping loops. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

All three comfort stations are one-story, framed buildings that have exteriors of vertical board and batten on cinder block, and concrete foundations. The roofs are of asphalt concrete shingles. All three facilities have both water and sewer.

The first (northern) comfort station (BLRI Structure #B129) is located at loop B in the tent camping area. It is located in a clearing within the wooded deciduous forest. The comfort station is accessible from an asphalt-paved walkway that extends from the loop road and the surrounding camping areas.[22] The second (southern) comfort station (#B132) is located at loop A (RV camping loop). The third comfort station (BLRI Structure # 130) is located at the south end in Loop C.

Pump house—The pump house (#B975) has cinder block walls on a concrete foundation (Figure 3-34). It

22 Ibid.



FIGURE 3–29. View of comfort station in Loop A - RV camping (B130). (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–30. Front view of southern comfort station in Loop B - tent camping area. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–31. Crabtree Falls campground well house (B419). (Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Blue Ridge Parkway Survey and Inventory, FMSS No. 4769, BLRI Structure No. B419. Photo provided Michael Ford and Leonard Kliwinski. August, 2013.)

is not on the Crabtree Falls site, but is located on the east side of the road just north of the campground. It is not listed in the Blue Ridge Parkway Survey and Inventory of Crabtree Falls Structures.



FIGURE 3–32. Northern comfort station (B129) in Loop B - tent camping loops. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–33. Southern comfort station (B132) in Loop B - tent camping loops. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–34. Crabtree Falls campground pump house (B975). (Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Blue Ridge Parkway Survey and Inventory, FMSS No. 94430, BLRI Structure No. B975. Photo provided Michael Ford and Leonard Kliwinski. June, 2013.)

access to dump facilities for RVs. Just beyond the fee building, one branch of the road veers to the

23 Data FCR I Individual Building Report, Form 10-768, May 2, 1960.



FIGURE 3–35. Shenandoah-style picnic table. This table is located in the picnic area. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–36. Pedestal-style picnic tables are located in hard-to-access areas. This table is in the tent camping area. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–37. Concrete picnic table with concrete foundations for the benches. This table is in a camping loop. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

right into the RV camping loop (Figure 3-31). A parking area at the entrance to the RV loop is used to access trails leading to the falls. To the left of the fee building are two loops for tent camping. Gates are used to close off the southern loop of the tent camping area.

Small-Scale Features

Small-scale features in the campgrounds at Crabtree Falls include picnic tables and benches, water fountains, tent pads, rail fences, signs, fire rings with grills, raised grills, benches, steps, bollards, bear boxes, lantern poles, litter receptacles, a hand pump, dumpsters, and stone edging.

Picnic Tables and Benches—Three different types of picnic tables are used at Crabtree Falls: concrete tables and benches that replaced the original wood tables and benches, Shenandoah-style steel frames with wood planks for the top and benches, and single pedestal picnic tables with two full-length bench seats (Figures 3-35 to 3-40). All tables are approximately 6 feet in length.



FIGURE 3–38. PIcnic table and fire ring located in the woods at one of the camping loops. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

The first type of table consists of two concrete panels (roughly 4 inches thick, 18 inches wide, and 22 inches tall) supporting a concrete table top (approximately 3 inches thick). Each bench is supported by a similar, but smaller concrete panel. Each bench appears to be a 2-inch thick composite material that is 10 inches wide and has a slightly reddish gray appearance. Because of the materials used, the table and benches convey a sense of sturdiness and permanence. For most of these types of picnic tables, the concrete panels and concrete table top remain, but many of the benches have been replaced.

The majority of the tables in the RV camping loop are the concrete tables that appear to have been constructed at the time of the original loop. There are a few Shenandoah-style tables in some areas, and these seem to be replacements, or were added later. In the tent camping loops, all three types of tables are present. Many of the concrete tables are along the upper loop, with Shenandoah-style tables being scattered throughout the upper and lower loops. The single pedestal picnic tables are located primarily in the wooded areas along the lower loop. These appear to have been used in more difficult-to-access locations. They are the newest tables to be added to Crabtree Falls, although Shenandoah-style tables have also been added.



FIGURE 3–39. Stone-lined swale along a campground road. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–40. Water fountain at picnic area. Looking southeast. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–41. Water fountain at picnic area. Looking east. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

The Shenandoah-style steel frame tables are considerably less expensive than the concrete tables, and appear to have been used at the Crabtree Falls Picnic Area when it was completed in 1960. All of the tables at the picnic area are this style. It is assumed that most, if not all, of the picnic tables and benches are original. The frames are 2-3/8" O.D.

Schedule 40 pipe, hot dip galvanized. The benches and tabletops consist of 2-inch by 10-inch yellow pine wood planks. The wood tabletops and benches are in disrepair at a number of the picnic stations.

The pedestal-style tables have one central post that supports the table top and benches on each side. These were added in areas with steeper topography and in areas harder to access (Figure 2-43).

Water Fountains—The water fountains are all four-sided and have mortared stone veneers to create a more rustic aesthetic (Figures 3-40, 3-41). The water fountains at the campground site all appear to be original.

Each fountain is tapered so that the base is slightly wider than the top. The fountains tie into the existing cast iron water lines running through the site. Most of the water fountains are in good working condition.

One problem with the design of the fountains is that the stone siding is installed on-site, and there is no easy way to access the fountain infrastructure once the fountain is installed. The stone siding has to be torn off, the pipes repaired, and then the veneer has to be reinstalled. This is a timely and difficult process.

Plans for the campground site indicate 10 water fountains within the campground, and at least two at the picnic area. Many fountains need repairs.

There are also water fountains attached to all four comfort stations (three in the camping loops and one in the picnic area) on the side of the building.

Fire Rings with Grills—The fire rings with grills at Crabtree Falls include a metal rack or surface where a pot and pan can be placed above a fire and used for cooking (Figures 3-42 to 3-44). The fire ring is a circular, metal frame that helps keep the fire contained, and includes a grill for cooking. A fire ring with grill is located at each campsite at the campground, and at picnic tables within the picnic area. These vary in condition, but most appear to have had frequent use.

Raised Grills—Raised grills are located at each picnic site at the picnic area, and at wheelchair-accessible campsites within the camping loops (Figure 3-45). These grills are a little worn, but are otherwise in good condition. They are easier to access than fire rings and grills that are located on the ground.



FIGURE 3–42. Fire ring with picnic table and informal seating. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–43. Fire ring and informal seating with rocks. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

Tent Pads—Tent pads are located at all tent spurs (Figure 3-46). They are 20- by 20-foot areas that have 6-foot-wide concrete edges, and most have some type of gravel or earthen base used as fill material within the concrete. Most of the tent pads are raised so that they will be dry even when it rains. The topography around the pads is graded to divert stormwater runoff around the tent pads. An open grassy area at the site does not qualify as a tent pad. The pads are in the same locations where they were constructed. Some of the tent pads need repairs.



FIGURE 3–44. Fire ring at a camp site. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–45. Raised grill. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–46. Tent pad in tent camping loop. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

Bear Boxes—Metal food lockers, called "bear boxes," are available at selected spots throughout the campgrounds (Figure 3-46, 3-47). Although a bear can smell food in a locker, the bear can not get into the locker if it is closed and latched properly. The boxes are brown in order to better blend in with the surroundings. These bear boxes are not historic.

Lantern Posts—These are metal posts, roughly 6–7 feet tall, with brackets that can be used to support lanterns and lamps. They are adjacent to picnic tables in the campgrounds and are intended to allow campers a safe way to add light to their camping experience.



FIGURE 3–47. Bear boxes. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–48. Litter receptacle near the Mission 66 coffee shop. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

Litter Receptacles—The litter receptacles are standard brown, metal containers, roughly 26 inches by 26 inches by 40 inches, that are intended to be used by visitors to throw away trash. Trash is deposited via a slot at the top, which has a small pull-out door. A larger door can be opened so the trash inside can be emptied. The existing litter receptacles are not historic. The litter receptacles are bear-proof .

Hand Water Pump—Hand water pumps are cast metal, mechanical devices used to access water from the water pipes that run through the campgrounds and the picnic area (Figure 3-50). Each faucet is at the end of a roughly 3-foot tall metal pipe. Raising the handle opens up the faucet. Typically, a bucket is used to capture the water. These faucets are shown on original plans for the camping areas and picnic area.

Stone Edging—Natural stones are turned on edge and used to define the edges of many interior



FIGURE 3–50. Hand pump in one of the campground loops. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

roads, parking areas, and paved walkways in the campgrounds, entry area, and picnic area. The same types of stones are also used to create stone swales in selected areas (Figures 3-51).

Dumpsters—Large metal dumpsters located in the picnic area and camping areas are used for trash collection. These dumpsters include wooden screens that are intended to help reduce the negative visual impact of the dumpsters, but they are not of sufficient size and do not provide sufficient coverage to achieve this objective. Recycling services are included at each dumpster. Parks that have onsite trash disposal sites must adhere to the requirements



FIGURE 3–51. Stone-lined camping spur. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–52. Camping spur in one of the camping loops, with woods in the background. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

under 36 CFR Part 6 Sec. 6.5. These regulations are designed to ensure that NPS solid waste disposal sites in continuous operation since September 1, 1984, meet minimum operating standards and do not degrade park resources and values.

Vegetation

Throughout the campgrounds and into the forests, the spring wildflower display includes columbine (*Aquilegia sp.*), yellow lady slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum*), and dwarf iris. In June, speckled wood lily (*Clintonia umbellulata*), goatsbeard (*Aruncus dioicus*), sundrop (*Oenothera fruticosa*), beard tongue (*Penstemon sp.*), and mountain laurel



FIGURE 3–53. Interior road in the campgrounds. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

(*Kalmia latifolia*) appear. According to Silver, in many places the forest floor is literally carpeted by a bed of mountain wood sorrel (*Oxalis montana*). This plant (whose leaves look much like clover) bears its delicate pink and white flowers throughout the summer. Another very common plant, also blooming throughout the summer, is mountain lettuce (*Lactuca perennis*), which can be seen growing on almost any exposed rock (Figures 3-52 to 3-53).

Because of foot traffic and the shaded environment, the ground often has little, if any, grass or other groundcover. Most of the ground plain around picnic tables and grills is a natural surface that occasionally includes a thin layer of gravel.

The camping loops are more open, with scattered trees such as oaks, poplars, maples, and hemlocks providing shade; shrubs such as rhododendrons, laurels, and other understory plants providing visual interest; and grass providing easy access throughout the camping loops.

Amphitheater Area

Buildings

- Amphitheater (BLRI Structure #B942)
- Wood storage building (BLRI Structure #B38)
- Power supply building (BLRI Structure #B379)

Amphitheater—The Crabtree Meadows Amphitheater (BLRI Structure #B942) is located between the coffee shop and the Crabtree Falls tent



FIGURE 3–54. Amphitheater (BLRI Structure No. B942) near the camping loops. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

camping loops. It has been in the same location since it was constructed in the early 1960s.

The amphitheater is situated in a cleared area surrounded by woods and is accessed by an asphalt-paved path extending from the campground area (Figure 3-54). A raised stage includes a framed enclosed with vertical wood plank siding. The east side of the enclosure has an aluminum roll-up door.



FIGURE 3–55. Amphitheater building (B942) and wood storage building (B387). Looking south. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–56. Benches at the amphitheater (B942). Looking east. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

The current amphitheater is used frequently for interpretation programs.

A small wood-framed wood storage shed (BLRI Structure #B387) is located adjacent to the amphitheater site (Figure 3-55).



FIGURE 3–57. Power supply building (B379) near the entry area parking lot. Looking north. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

The seating for the amphitheater includes multiple rows of benches mounted on metal posts set into the ground. The fire pit is a raised feature clad with stone and measuring approximately 6 feet in diameter (Figures 3-56).

Power supply building—This building (BLRI Structure #B379) has cinder block walls, a pitched roof with asphalt shingles, and a concrete foundation (Figure 3-57). It is 33 square feet. It is only about 30 feet from the edge of the coffee shop parking area, and is tucked into the woods, so it is not visible to most visitors. It has undergone alterations over the years.

Wood storage building —The wood storage shed (BLRI Structure #B387) is located behind the amphitheater in the general location of the original shed. It is a one-story wood-framed structure with concrete foundation, grooved plywood siding, and a wood shingle gable roof. [24]

This building is still being used for wood storage for the amphitheater. It is in poor condition, but

24 Ford and Kliwinski, *Blue Ridge Parkway Survey and Inventory.*

considering the use for wood storage, most likely repairing the building is not a priority. The 1999 structure replaced the 1951 building

Circulation

Trails lead from the parking area near the coffee shop and from the camping loops to the amphitheater.

Small-Scale Features

Small-scale features include benches, fire ring, and small retaining walls at the amphitheater. See Campgrounds for additional information.

Vegetation

The amphitheater is in a small clearing surrounded deciduous trees, meadows with native grasses, and mowed grass slopes. A clump of trees serves as a backdrop for the amphitheater stage.

Trails Area

Circulation

Trails lead from the coffee shop parking lot to the amphitheater, and then on to the tent camping loop and the fee station (Figure 3.58). Trails run through the camping area and also connect to the larger trail network on the Crabtree Falls site (Figure 3-59, 3-60). The falls are accessed from the Crabtree Falls Loop Trail, a 2.5-mile hike that leads from the campground to the falls.

Small-Scale Features

Small-scale features along the trails include signage and trail surfaces. See Campgrounds for additional information on small-scale features.

Vegetation

Most of the truly forest wildflowers along the trails and in the wooded areas bloom early in the summer. By late July, the flowers of jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*), twisted stalk (*Streptopus amplexifolius*), purple trillium (*Trillium erectum*), corn lily (*Veratrum californicum*), and most of the other woodland plants have disappeared. As the woodland flowers wane, the blooms of plants of the more open areas become more evident. During July and August, the road is lined by beds of Joe-Pye weed (*Eutrochium purpureum*), white snakeroot



FIGURE 3–58. Trail from the parking area by the coffee shop to the amphitheater. Looking south. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–59. Trail from the campgrounds to the amphitheater. Looking south. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–60. Trail from the parking area by the coffee shop to the amphitheater. Looking south. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

(*Ageratina altissima*), purple turtlehead (*Chelone obliqua*), asters, and others. The waxy white flowers of the parasitic dodder (*Cuscuta sp.*) may be found amidst stands of blackberries (*Rubus*) and other plants.[25] There are more of these wildflowers now than when the recreation facilities were constructed because there is less disturbance of understory areas and open areas.

Picnic Area (Figure 3-62)

Buildings

The only building in the picnic area is a comfort station (BLRI Structure #B434) located near the center of the site. This small comfort station (BLRI Structure #B434) is similar to the three at the Crabtree Falls campgrounds (Figure 3-61, 3-63). It has an exterior of vertical board and batten on cinder block, with a concrete shingle roof. It has water and sewer.

The comfort station at the picnic area is heavily used because there are no public restroom facilities at the primary Crabtree Falls site. Like the comfort stations in the campgrounds, this facility needs to be updated with new toilets, urinals, sinks, and other interior features. The exterior board and batten siding is the same as it was when the comfort station was originally built.

Circulation

Circulation at the picnic area consists of an entry road that runs through the site, ending at a loop that simplifies movement patterns. Parking is located along both sides of the entry road. The entry road, parking lot, and interior road are unchanged from when they were built (Figure 3-64, 3-66).



FIGURE 3–61. Comfort station (B434) at picnic area. Looking east. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

25 Ibid.

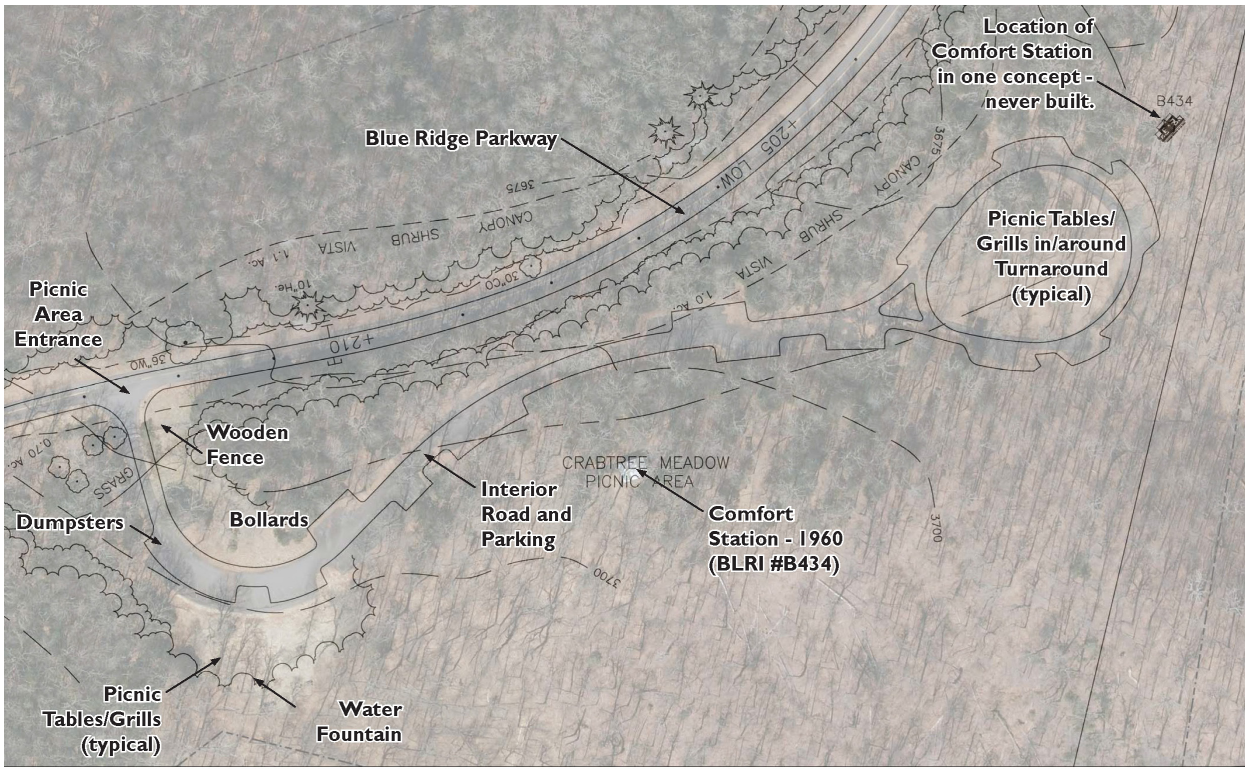


FIGURE 3–62. Picnic area for Crabtree Falls Recreation Area that was constructed in 1960. (Sand County Studios, January, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–63. Side view of comfort station (B434) at picnic area. Looking southeast. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–64. Stone-lined parking and entry road at the picnic area. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

Small-Scale Features

Small-scale features include fire rings with grills, raised grills, steps, bollards, and picnic tables. See Campgrounds for additional information

Steps—Stone steps are used in some locations to help visitors traverse steep slopes. These steps occur at the picnic area and the campgrounds. These are historic and were installed at the time of initial construction.

Bollards—Stone bollards are used along the edge of parking areas in places to help create a stronger sense of separation between the roadway and adjacent natural areas (Figure 3-65). The bollards in the picnic area are rectilinear with round edges,



FIGURE 3–65. Bollards lining the parking lot in the picnic area. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

and the tops are beveled. Each bollard is 12–18 inches tall, and spaced close enough to prevent automobiles from driving between them. The bollards are in good condition and are not likely to be historic.

Vegetation

Vegetation at the picnic area consists primarily of deciduous trees, scattered undergrowth, and areas with turf grass. Trees are scattered throughout the site and provide shade for the comfort station and picnic tables (Figure 3-67).

Parkway

Circulation

Approximately two miles of the Parkway are part of the Crabtree Falls study area (Figure 3-68, 3-69). The Parkway in this area is similar to that of other parts of the Parkway. There are two lanes with striping in the middle, but there is no striping along the outside edges. Adjacent landscaping comes up close to the edge of the Parkway in most places, giving you the feeling of driving though a forest. Swales with stone surfaces in some locations help manage stormwater runoff.

Small-Scale Features

Paved asphalt swales and stone swales are used in specific locations to help control stormwater runoff along roads. The asphalt swales are located along the



FIGURE 3–66. Interior road in the picnic area surrounded by trees. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–67. Vegetation along the edge of an interior road. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–68. The Blue Ridge Parkway in front of Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. (National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway, ***Summary of the General Management Plan***, October, 2013. Page 20.)



FIGURE 3–69. The Blue Ridge Parkway in front of the entry to Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. Note that the sign refers to the site as "Crabtree Meadows." (Photo provided by Doug Bradley Photography, no date given.)

Parkway where there is concern about erosion from runoff. There are asphalt swales along both sides of the road in selected areas along the Parkway just north of the campground site. There is also a paved swale along the Parkway just south of the Crabtree Falls campground for a short distance. There are stone swales along the interior roads traversing the campground loops. Stone swales are along the downhill side of roads near the entrances to the RV camping (Loop A) and tent camping loop (Loop B). See Campgrounds for additional information

Vegetation

The vegetation along the Parkway has not changed significantly since the Parkway was constructed. The wood edges along the Parkway have been maintained to display rhododendrons and laurels. However, this maintenance is minimal. The vegetation is native to the area; there is no evidence that the plants have been added by Parkway designers.

According to Timothy Silver, author of *Mount Mitchell and the Black Mountains: An Environmental History of the Highest Peaks in Eastern America*[26] (2003), several shrubs are common in the park, especially on the borders of disturbed areas. Perhaps the most visible is purple rhododendron (*Rhododendron sp.*), whose flowers may be seen in June and early July. During late July and August, the berries of red elder (*Sambucus racemosa*) and the red leaves and berries of hobblebush (*Viburnum lantanoides*) lend their brilliance to the green of the forest.[27]

Views and Vistas

The Parkway is a highly designed landscape with planted grass, shrub, and tree bays aesthetically displayed along the Parkway with the design intent

26 Timothy Silver, *Mount Mitchell and the Black Mountains: An Environmental History of the Highest Peaks in Eastern American,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

27 Ibid.



FIGURE 3–70. View of mountains in the background as seen from the Parkway between the Crabtree Falls camping site and the picnic area. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

to provide foreground interest to the panoramic background of the Appalachian Mountains (Figure 3-66).

The wooded edges along the Parkway are maintained to create the appearance of driving through woodlands. These include a series of shrub vistas, canopy shrub vistas, and woods vistas along the Parkway. The general definition of a vista is "a pleasing view, especially one seen through a long, narrow opening." Along the Parkway, these vistas are created via a series of open and closed views that change based upon topography and vegetation patterns.

Vistas are part of meandering landscapes on both sides of the Parkway. There are grass areas along the Parkway near Crabtree Falls where the edge of the woods is pulled back to create a more open feeling for visitors. There is a canopy vista just south of MP 340 that provides views of surrounding mountain landscapes in the background. This view looks over a stone retaining wall that is used to stabilize slopes, and there are no trees or landforms to block views of the distant landscape. There is no place to stop or park at this point, so the views are fleeting (Figure 3-70 to 3-73).

Views and vistas are of particular importance when the fall leaf color is displayed. Driving to see the fall colors historically accounts for the highest visitation time on the Parkway, with October being the peak of the fall display.



FIGURE 3–71. Retaining wall along Parkway between Crabtree Falls camping site and picnic area. The change in elevation at this location provides outstanding vistas of distant mountains. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–72. View from the Three Knobs Overlook. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 3–73. View along the Parkway. Looking north. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

One of the best vistas near Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is from the Three Knobs Overlook, which is located just north of the campground site (Figure 3-68). There is a pull-off area so that visitors can park, get out of their cars, and enjoy the view.

The setting of Crabtree Falls is one of its primary attractions to visitors. It is located along a section of the Parkway that is fairly isolated and difficult to get to. This is a site to come and escape from a hectic world and enjoy the quiet, private setting of a recreation area nestled in the woods. The campgrounds are located away from the road, so noise is kept to a minimum. The views from within the campgrounds are limited because of vegetation that functions as visual barriers, but there are views within the site of the meadows and open areas.

The coffee shop is located so there are outstanding views toward the mountains in the background.

Archeological Resources

The Blue Ridge Parkway has archeological remnants from more than 200 sites representing five broad cultural periods: Paleo-Indian, Archaic, Woodland, Mississippian, and historic. Most archeological sites known in the park are from the Archaic period. The Paleo-Indian and late Mississippian periods are

known in the park but are not well represented.[28] At least an additional 44 historic resources have been documented.[29]

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act (16 USC 470a et seq.) ensures the protection and preservation of archeological resources on federal lands, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 USC 3001 et seq.) protects Native American human remains, burials, and associated burial goods.[30] There are also Euro-American remains within the boundary of Crabtree Falls. Because there is no ground disturbance associated with this project, there is little likelihood of affecting intact archeological resources or any Native American human remains or burials.[31]

Installation of utilities to campsite 8 in loop A was monitored for archeological resources. No cultural resources were identified. This appears to be the only archeological assessment at Crabtree Falls, but other utilities may have been upgraded.

28 NPS, U.S. Department of the Interior, *Blue Ridge Parkway Exotic Plant Management Plan Environmental Assessment,* (August 2006), 31.

29 Robert Hellman, *Archeological Investigations Conducted at Blue Ridge Parkway*, (Jacksonville, FL: Southeast Archeological Center, 2005).

30 NPS, *Blue Ridge Parkway Exotic Plan Management Plan,* 9.

31 Ibid, 31.

Analysis & Evaluation

National Register Status

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is the official federal list of properties with local, state, or national prehistoric or historic significance. To achieve National Register status, a property must possess a combination of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association and meet at least one of the following NRHP criteria:

A. Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

B. Association with the lives of persons significant in our past

C. Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose landscape features may lack individual distinction

D. Yielding or potential to yield information important in prehistory or history.[1]

Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is eligible for the NRHP, but has never been nominated and therefore is not included on the federal list.

The Crabtree Falls Recreation Area would be considered significant under Criterion C: Design/ Construction. Most properties eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C are for distinctive characteristics of type, period, and method of construction.

To be listed in the NRHP, a property not only must show significance under one of the four criteria, but also it must retain a degree of its historic integrity. The cultural landscape at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area retains much of its integrity as a contributing component to the Parkway.

National Historic Landmark

A National Historic Landmark nomination for the Blue Ridge Parkway Historic District was submitted October, 2015. The boundaries of the historic district are coterminous with the boundaries of the Parkway. Principal components of the Parkway are the roadway with its supporting structures and constructed landforms, scenic corridor provided by a broad right-of-way, chain of recreation areas, and exhibits and signs interpreting the natural and cultural histories of the region. [2]

The 900+ structures along the parkway are documenting and evaluating the as part of the NHL nomination process.

Statement of Significance

As stated in the Introduction, the period of significance for the Parkway is 1935 to 1987, which are the dates when construction of the Parkway started and was completed.

Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is significant as a representation of the types of recreation sites envisioned by Blue Ridge Parkway planners, and include in the National Historic Landmark nomination for the Parkway. The major components of Crabtree Falls have changed little over the years, and the visitor experience today would be much like it was when the recreation area was opened in the 1950s.

The section of Blue Ridge Parkway in front of Crabtree Falls (from MP 320–350) is a historic parkway with an emphasis on scenic character.

1 NPS, National Register Bulletin, "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation," in *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation,* (1990), http://www.nps.gov/nR/publications/bulletins/nrb15/nrb15_6.htm.

2 Ian Firth, "Blue Ridge Parkway Historic Resource Study and National Historic Landmark Nomination, Prepared for the National Park Service," (draft, December 2015), 5.



FIGURE 4–1. The view of the Blue Ridge Mountains from the Parkway in front of the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area remains largely unchanged and has a high degree of integrity. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

The Parkway is relatively unchanged from when it was originally built in the 1950s, except for minor changes in vegetation due to plant growth and maintenance practices (Figure 4-1). The only major addition is a road cut for access to Crabtree Falls Picnic Area, which was constructed in 1960.

The design solutions and subsequent construction of facilities at Crabtree Falls are consistent with the similar features developed at other recreation areas along the Parkway. All of the recreation areas along the Parkway are based on the same essential design philosophy and have many of the same features. However, Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is a bit different than other recreation areas because of the unique characteristics of the site and its location along the Parkway. Trails lead to Crabtree Falls, which is the natural attraction that many visitors stop to see. The trails and the falls have changed little over the years and both are a significant part of the historic and cultural value of the site.

Analysis of Landscape Characteristics

Crabtree Falls Recreation Area retains the original location and geometric design intended to encourage leisure activities, and although some of its supporting landscape features have been modified and few replaced, the great majority have been preserved."[3] The PLUMs for the area that includes Crabtree Falls are a historical record of the intent of Parkway designers. Although conditions have changed, the PLUMs are valuable references for identifying design features that retain significance and a baseline for determining integrity. The PLUMs show the Parkway alignment, identify views and vegetation, and links to Crabtree Falls Recreation Area.

Land Use

The spatial organization and land use patterns are as important as individual features at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. Land use patterns at Crabtree Falls historically correspond to recreation activities and visitor services. Existing land use includes the entry area, campgrounds, trails area, picnic areas, amphitheater, and the Parkway. The general arrangement of these activities has not changed since the 1960s, when the Mission 66 coffee shop was built and the picnic area on the east side of the Parkway was developed.

3 Ibid.

In terms of land use, addition of the coffee shop and picnic area fits the framework of existing land use patterns and functions. The land use is ***contributing*** to the historic character of Crabtree Falls Recreation Area.

Spatial Organization

The organization of the features at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area defines and creates spaces in the landscape and is closely related to land use. Spatial organization is created by the landscape's cultural and natural features. At Crabtree Falls Recreation Area, this organization is determined by the buildings in the entry area, the campground loops that help outline those spaces, the amphitheater that is enclosed by trees, the entry road that defines the spatial organization of the picnic area. The forest encloses the spaces for picnicking and camping and that the visitor uses are separated.

Utilities

Electricity and water lines extend to the buildings and some additional site features at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. Electric lines extend to most buildings on site. Lines are run to NPS property from adjacent properties off the Parkway. All electric lines located within the developed areas are buried.

Well water is used to supply Crabtree Falls. Water comes from a 3,000 underground storage tank with pumphouse east of the Parkway, and a 30,000 and two 10,000 underground tanks just north of the Crabtree Falls entry area. Sanitary sewer extends from most buildings and from the sanitary dump station off the campground entry road to a sewage lagoon west of the coffee shop. Comfort stations are connected to concrete septic tanks.

Assessment of Integrity

The National Register of Historic Places has identified seven aspects, or qualities, that define integrity. These include location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Analysis of the aspects of integrity is a subjective measure that varies from site to site, but the determination is always based on a thorough knowledge of the historical significance of the property and how well its current features convey that significance.

The cultural landscape at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area retains much of its integrity as a contributing component to the Blue Ridge Parkway. The landscape retains a large number of landscape features from the 1935-1987 period of significance. Major changes in the Mission 66 Era (1956–1966) include construction of the Mission 66 coffee shop, conversion of the picnic area at the main site to tent camping loops, and development of a new picnic area on the east side of the Parkway. All three of these changes are consistent with original planning concepts for Crabtree Falls.

Location

Location aspect of integrity refers to the place where the landscape was constructed or where a historic event occurred. Crabtree Falls Recreation Area remains largely unchanged. All extant contributing landscape features on the site retain their original locations. The loop that was originally developed for picnic use was changed to tent camping, but the location and layout of the loop did not change significantly. Therefore, the site retains high integrity of location.

All existing and contributing historic buildings, landscape features, and small-scale features at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area area retain their original locations. Therefore, the landscape retains high integrity of location.

Design

Design refers to the combination of elements that creates the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a cultural landscape or historic property. Crabtree Falls maintains high integrity of design for the landscape. The section of Blue Ridge Parkway that is included in the study area has remained largely unchanged since it was constructed in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Existing buildings retain their original design schemes and features, including materials, proportion, scale, site placement, and ornamentation. The former gas station no longer serves this function, but the structure is basically the same as it was when it was constructed in 1950.

The addition of the Mission 66 coffee shop in 1965 was consistent with long-term plans to provide that functionality at Crabtree Falls. The parking area for the coffee shop is also consistent with original planning for the site.

The overall primary characteristic for the landscape, which is a combination of open meadows and mature trees as part of a wooded setting, remains unaltered. Therefore, there is a high level of integrity for design.

Setting

Setting is the physical environment of the cultural landscape. Most of the natural systems within the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area are intact, and surrounding systems are managed as part of the Pisgah National Forest, which helps preserve views and vistas and retains the integrity of the historic setting. The land use for Crabtree Falls is largely unchanged, with the two exceptions being converting the picnic loop to tent camping and the construction of the new picnic area on the other side of the Parkway. However, these changes occurred within the period of significance so they do not affect integrity.

Overall, the setting is similar to that during the periods of significance. Therefore, the site retains a high level of integrity of setting.

Materials

Materials include the physical elements that were combined or deposited during the particular periods of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form the cultural landscape. The materials used during original construction have largely remained unchanged. The asphalt used for roads has been maintained over the years. New layers of asphalt have been added over the years, and patches have been implemented to fill potholes. Stone edging and stone drainage ways along the roads have also been maintained.

Most buildings and features (such as the amphitheater) were constructed primarily of wood. In most situations, this wood has been repaired as needed, but the materials are consistent with those at the time of construction. The wood benches at the amphitheater are also original, but are in need of repair. Overall, the site retains a high level of integrity for materials.

Workmanship

The workmanship 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. Crabtree Falls currently maintains high integrity of workmanship that is consistent with the NPS approach to designing and constructing structures, campgrounds, roads, and site features.

Feeling

Integrity of Feeling is defined as a cultural landscape's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular time period is evaluated under the feeling part of integrity. The overall character of Crabtree Falls is largely unchanged. Construction of the Mission 66 coffee shop and the picnic area on the other side of the Parkway are integrated into the forested setting. The canopy created by the wooded setting is consistent with the setting originally established for the site. The Crabtree Falls site retains integrity of feeling since the original recreational use (picnicking, camping, hiking, etc) remain unchanged.

Association

Association refers to the direct link between the significant historic event or person and the cultural landscape. The Crabtree Falls recreation area was built during the period of significance for the Parkway and is representative of the recreation areas implemented along the Parkway. It maintains high integrity of association with the Parkway. Crabtree Falls is directly associated with development of the Parkway and is an example of a recreation area in keeping with early planning for the Parkway.

Summary of Integrity

Crabtree Falls Recreation Area has a high integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association integrity. Materials have high integrity despite degradation over the years. What makes Crabtree Falls so important is that it is not only an example of the recreation area that was an integral part of the Parkway, but it is virtually intact with only minor changes. As a result, Crabtree Falls Recreation Area retains a high overall integrity.

Component Landscape

The Crabtree Falls Recreation area includes the following component landscapes:

- Entry Area / Access Road
- Campgrounds

- Amphitheater Area
- Trails Area
- Picnic Area
- Parkway

Entry Area / Access Road

Buildings

The majority of the buildings and structures at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area are either original to the site, or have been reconstructed in the general location of the original. The buildings have the same forms, materials, and uses still in place (Figure 4-2 to 4-5).

Mission 66 coffee shop (BLRI #B128)—The coffee shop is an example of Mission 66 architecture along the Parkway. The building is showing signs of



FIGURE 4–2. Side view of the Mission 66 coffee shop (B128). Looking northeast. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 4–3. Front door of the Mission 66 coffee shop. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 4–4. Back of the Mission 66 coffee shop (BLRI #B128). Looking east. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 4–5. Vegetation around the Mission 66 coffee shop helps create the feeling that the building is located in the woods. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 4–6. Front door of Mission 66 coffee shop (B128). (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

neglect and repairs are needed (Figure 4-6). The building is a ***contributing resource***.

The building is eligible for the National Register and has a high degree of significance.[4] The historic integrity is based on retaining the building's use, basic forms, spaces, and materials. The historic use of the building has not changed, except for it being closed. A more definitive study of the building will need to be conducted to determine if the necessary changes will compromise its historical integrity.

Closing of the coffee shop and supporting restrooms likely has led to a reduction in the number of visitors to the entry area and an increase in the number of people stopping at Crabtree Falls Picnic Area to use the comfort station.

Gas station building (BLRI #B127)—The existing gas station is no longer used for its original purpose. It is the first structure that visitors see when they



FIGURE 4–7. View of fencing along the entry parking area, with the former gas station building (B127) in the background. Looking northeast. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 4–8. Side view of the former gas station building (B127). Looking north. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

4 Michael Ford and Leonard Kliwinski, *Blue Ridge Parkway Survey and Inventory,* June 24, 2013.



FIGURE 4–9. View of former gas station building (B127). The gas pumps have been removed. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 4–10. Historic photo of the gas station (B127). (BLRI Archives. Photo provided by C.E. Westveer, August, 1974.)

arrive at Crabtree Falls. (Figure 4-7 to 4-10). The structure is a ***contributing*** resource that was built within the period of significance. Integrity of the gas station building is high, although integrity for workmanship and materials is medium. It is eligible for the National Register. *The Blue Ridge Parkway Survey and Inventory* states, "It is a highly characteristic and intact example of its building type in the Parkway."[5]

Changes to the original structure are minor. The building is in good condition, although it does need minor repairs. NPS policies make it highly unlikely the building will be converted back to its historical use.

The building, roads, and parking area remain on the site in their original locations and contribute to the site's historic integrity (Figure 4-11).

Residential building near campgrounds (BLRI #B832)—This building appears to be used for the same purpose for which it was intended, which was to provide housing for seasonal park employees. The building is in good condition and has an overall high integrity. The structure is ***noncontributing*** because it was constructed after the period of significance.



FIGURE 4–11. View of vegetation in the campgrounds. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

5 Ibid.



FIGURE 4–12. Entry road to the campgrounds. The roads within Crabtree Falls Recreation Area have not changed significantly over the years. The loop road in front of the coffee shop was added in the 1950s, and the road and parking were constructed at the picnic area in 1960. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

Fee collection building at campground entrance (BLRI #B665)—This building is still being used as was originally intended. It is ***noncontributing*** because it is not an important part of Parkway planning. It has an overall high integrity. The building may need minor repairs, but in general it appears to be in good condition.

Pump house (BLRI #B975)—This pump house is not accessible to the public. It is not a significant part of Parkway planning and is ***noncontributing*** because of it is not an important part of the plans for Crabtree Falls.

Views and Vistas

An important view at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is looking out the back windows of the Mission 66 coffee shop to mountains in the distance.

Small-Scale Features

Other small-scale features such as hand pumps, stone-lined swales, stone-line edging, rail fences, tent pads, and original signage all are part of the overall historic character of the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. As a result they are ***contributing*** if they were built before 1987. These features include the Shenandoah-style picnic tables.

At one time there were about 100 historic water fountains along the Parkway, but today only 25 or 30 still remain, or still function. There is one in the picnic area and one at the trailhead in the campground area, and they are ***contributing***.

Circulation

The loop road and adjacent parking were constructed as part of the Mission 66 coffee shop, and has not been altered (Figure 4-12).

In places the existing geometry of the roadway is a problem for newer, larger RVs because of turning radii. This can especially be a problem in the campground loops, where some of the turns are tight, roadways are narrow, and existing natural features along the edge of the loop roads can be obstacles. Vehicles are to be parked only on designated parking areas.[6] There is no indication that additional parking is needed.

Cluster Arrangement

The clustering of buildings in the landscape is dependent upon several factors, including proximity

6 Mark H. Woods, *Blue Ridge Parkway: Superintendent's Compendium of Designations, Closures, Permit Requirements and Other Restrictions Imposed Under Discretionary Authority,* (2015).



FIGURE 4–13. Typical layout of tent pad, grill, picnic table, and lantern pole in one of the camping loops. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

to the road, topography, soils, and vegetation. The primary place where clustering occurs is at the Crabtree Falls entry since it is the only place that has a sufficient number of the buildings to create a cluster. The camping areas are located on relatively level slopes near the center of the site and are not densely vegetated. The camping areas are located on Evard-Cowee soils, which are loamy, well drained soils. The emphasis on topography, soils, and vegetation is consistent with planning concepts developed by Emilio P. Meinecke in his original concepts for NPS camping sites. (See Site History for additional information.)

The gas station was located near the road where it would be visible and accessible to motorists. In the mid-1960s, the Mission 66 coffee shop was also located near the road. The cluster arrangement remains as it was originally planned and implemented and has a high level of integrity.

Campgrounds

Buildings

Camping area comfort stations (3) (BLRI #B129, #B132, B130**)—** All three comfort stations are ***contributing*** resources (Figures 4-13 to 4-15). Overall integrity is high, but integrity for materials, workmanship, and design is medium. There have been no significant changes in the historic use



FIGURE 4–14. Comfort station in a camping loop. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

of the structures, or in their physical form. All three comfort stations need repairs to retain the character-defining feature of the buildings. These



FIGURE 4–15. Front door looking into comfort station. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

updates could be done without altering the original size or visual character of the buildings.

The comfort stations remain on the site in their original locations and contribute to the site's historic significance.

Power supply building (BLRI #B379) **and campground well house** (BLRI #B419)—Both buildings are small, utilitarian structures that are still used the way they were originally intended. Both are in sufficient condition to continue to function as is. They are typically not visited by the public. They are ***noncontributing*** due to extensive alteration and/or deterioration, which compromise integrity and historic character. In addition, neither building is an important part of Parkway planning. Overall integrity of the power supply building is medium, while that of the well house is high.

Small-Scale Features

Small-scale features at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area are an important part of the cultural landscape. Most of the picnic tables and benches at Crabtree Falls Campground are replacements for earlier



FIGURE 4–16. Vegetation in the campgrounds is mature, with the ground plane being predominantly open. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

wood picnic tables and benches. In 1954, the tables in the picnic area at Crabtree Falls campground site were replaced with concrete tables.[7] Concrete tables and benches replaced original wood tables and benches throughout the park, including the ones installed at Crabtree Falls in the early 1940s. None of these wood picnic tables are still located at Crabtree Falls. Concrete picnic tables and benches (and supporting elements such as fire rings, lantern poles, and grills) that were installed prior to 1987 are ***contributing***.

Vegetation

The vegetation at Crabtree Falls has undergone significant changes since construction began in the early 1940s. Before the site was acquired by the NPS, it was logged up until the mid-1930s. Mature trees were removed, undergrowth was cleared in areas to provide access for logging activities, and the site lacked the visual characteristics that it has now. The land had been completely stripped of all marketable timber, leaving bare soil.[8]

Since the site was acquired by the NPS, the vegetation has been allowed to grow and mature. The vegetation creates an overhead plane that is similar to the character when the site was originally developed. The Crabtree Falls Campground currently hosts a combination of mature woods, open understory with scattered shrubs and groundcover, and open grass areas that are consistent with the meadows that were originally found on the site (Figure 4-16).

7 Larry J. Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know About Linville Falls & Crabtree Meadows*, (MSS, 1974), 3-4.

8 Margaret Thompson, *Research on the Early History of Crabtree Meadows*, (MSS: BLRI Library, 1974), 8.



FIGURE 4–17. Wood storage building (B387) adjacent to the amphitheater. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

Land Use and Spatial Organization

The campground at Crabtree Falls was extremely popular when the final two loops were added to the original campground loop in the late 1950s. There was much heavier use when the original camping loop was opened, and the two additional loops were intended to help meet public demand. The camping areas are contributing, and they have a high degree of integrity. The basic layout of the camping loops has undergone just minor changes since the mid-1950s, and the current uses were established in 1960, so the historic uses have not changed.

Amphitheater Area

Buildings

Amphitheater (BLRI #B942)—The amphitheater is in the same location as when it was originally constructed. The wood storage building behind the amphitheater stage (Figure 4-17) has been replaced, but the new structure still has the same use (see #B387). The benches at the amphitheater are composite bench surfaces on a metal frame, and many of the bench surfaces are in poor condition. The amphitheater is ***contributing*** because the majority of it is original and it is a significant part of Crabtree Falls Recreation Area.

Wood storage building (BLRI #B387)—*The Blue Ridge Parkway Survey and Inventory* indicates the building has an overall high integrity.[9] It is ***noncontributing*** because it was constructed after the period of significance.

Trails Area

Vegetation

Larger, mature trees had been logged in previous years, so the native wooded areas were a lot thinner than they are today. The site consisted of open areas with surrounding woods, but removal of large trees and the destruction of the understory by logging activities made the site much more open, so the meadows were less prominent. Ending the logging has enabled vegetation to fill in, understory plants to reestablish, and natural succession of the forest to continue.

Though the southern crabapple (*Malus angustifolia*) that gave Crabtree Falls its name no longer fills meadow orchards (it seems that many of these trees have died of old age without reseeding themselves), pink and red blossoms still dot the landscape in isolated patches in late spring, and small sour apples appear in late summer. The mature forests that shelter the camping area include oaks, tulip trees (*Liriodendron*), maples, eastern hemlocks (*Tsuga canadensis*), and patches of Carolina hemlock (*Tsuga caroliniana*), and these forests are denser and more mature than when the campgrounds were constructed. Habitat diversity provided by the forests, the abutting field, and the forest edge in between makes the recreation area a good spot for observing birds not often seen in other areas of the Parkway.

Picnic Area

Buildings

Picnic area comfort station (BLRI #B434)—Unless restroom facilities open again at the entry area to Crabtree, there may be a problem with the facilities at the picnic area being overused. It is the smallest of the four comfort stations at Crabtree Falls (the other three are located in the campground). The comfort station is ***non-contributing*** due to extensive alteration and/or deterioration, which compromise its integrity and historic character. Integrity for materials, workmanship, and design is medium.[10] There have been no significant changes in the historic use of the structure, or in its physical form.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.



FIGURE 4–18. View from the Parkway. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

The picnic area comfort station remains in its original location and contributes to the site's historic integrity.

Parkway

Views and Vistas

The views and vistas along the Parkway are identified in the PLUMs for this area, and they are still applicable. The vistas along the Parkway have not changed appreciably near Crabtree Falls (Figure 4-18).

All existing historic views and vistas along this section of Parkway contribute to the integrity of this historic resource. While there are no modern intrusions visible a view or vista, vegetation impacted several key vistas and views. Views from the Three Knobs Overlook retain their significance, and the gas station is still visible near the entrance.

Circulation

Crabtree Falls Recreation Area would not exist if were not for the Parkway. Existing circulation for Crabtree Falls is consistent with the site plan that was in place after construction of the Mission 66 coffee shop, so it maintains its historic use. The alignment of the Parkway in front of Crabtree Falls remains unchanged, as does the alignment of interior roads. Alignment of parking in front of the gas station is also unchanged.

Treatment Recommendations

Recommendations for treatment for Crabtree Falls Recreation Area were made with respect to a much larger context, which considers the overall Parkway and recreation areas along the Parkway. Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is basically intact from when it was constructed in the early 1950s, with the construction for most contributing features occurring over a decade.

Climate Change

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges the NPS is facing. Climate change is the warming of the Earth's atmosphere due to emissions of greenhouse gases, deriving largely from the burning of fossil fuels and changes in land use. These changes are having an impact on natural and cultural resources in national parks, and these changes are expected to increase over time. Treatment options for addressing climate change should be in keeping with the NPS's *Cultural Resources Climate Change Strategy* (*CRCC Strategy*), which provides a strategy that connects cultural resources and climate change. The *CRCC Strategy* defines the impacts of a changing climate on different cultural resources. It also presents methods for evaluating these resources, assessing vulnerabilities, and prioritizing responses.[1]

The *CRCC Strategy* connects cultural resources to the four pillars of climate change response identified in the *CRCC Climate Change Response Strategy* released in 2010: science, adaptation, mitigation, and communication. The *CRCC Strategy* also presents four major goals:

- Connect Impacts and Information: assess effects of climate change on cultural resources and engage with the stories and meaning of cultural resources
- Understand the Scope: increase efforts to understand climate change impacts on cultural resources
- Integrate Practice: adapt climate data and related information for the specific needs of cultural resources and cultural resources management
- Learn and Share: share and collaboration with partners to meet the threats of climate change

The *CRCC Strategy* addresses overarching issues faced by the NPS, and climate change is being incorporated into park planning documents and regional climate change action plans and a range of park-level assessments and projects. The *CRCC Strategy* can provide a framework for climate changes, and this framework could be used to understand possible climate change impacts at Crabtree Falls.[2]

Treatment Possibilities

The *CRCC Strategy* includes a table that is intended to serve as a first step in identifying the broad range of climate impacts to cultural resources. This table is not intended to be exhaustive list of impacts, but it can be used as a guide to start the process. The table is organized according to major trends of climate change. These impacts were identified through a literature review and consultation with the NPS cultural resource management specialists.[3] The trends that are more likely to impact Crabtree Falls Recreation Area are included:

1 National Park Service (NPS). 2010. National Park Service Climate Change Response Strategy. Fort Collins, CO: Climate Change Response Program, National Park Service.

2 Ibid.

3 Rockman, Marcy, Marissa Morgan, Sonya Ziaja, George Hambrecht, and Alison Meadow. 2016. Cultural Resources Climate Change Strategy. Washington, DC: Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science and Climate Change Response Program, National Park Service.

Temperature Change [4]

Increased Global Temperature

- Decline/disappearance of some vegetation species, other species favored
- Heat stress on culturally significant vegetation
- Increased stress on constructed landscape features

Increase Freeze/Thaw Cycles

- Decline/disappearance of some vegetation species due to recurrent freezing
- More rapid deterioration of constructed materials of landscape features

Higher Relative Humidity

- Decline/disappearance of critical vegetation species, other species favored
- Increased desiccation, warping, and cracking of constructed landscape features

Increased Wind

- Damage or loss of culturally significant plants
- Change in historic/culturally significant vegetation patterns
- Increase in need for protective structures that shelter landscapes
- Direct wind damage
- Scouring/abrasion of exterior surfaces
- Increased cracking, spalling, splintering, weathering of buildings due to accelerated drying
- Damage from wind borne debris

Increased Wildfire

- Loss or damage of associated structures
- Change in vegetation density and composition
- Bedrock and border spalls
- Increased susceptibility to erosion and flooding
- Loss of soil fertility due to high heat
- Damage to structure and/or associated cultural landscape from fire retardants

During Fire

- Damage or loss of whole structures, or combustible components
- Cracking, physical damage of masonry components from extreme thermal stress
- Discoloration caused by smoke and/or heat
- Damage from fire-killed tree fall
- Damage to structure and/or associated cultural landscape from fire retardants

Post-Fire

- Buildings may shift or settle due to associated erosion
- Pressure to change character defining features such as wood shake roofing to fire resistant alternatives

Changes in Seasonality and Phenology

- Loss of synchronicity between species
- Altered landscapes due to shifts in blooming times
- Loss of pollinators reduces plant fertility in historic agricultural landscapes
- Longer growing seasons lead to increased growth of invasive vegetation

Species Shift

- Physical damage, loss of integrity, and spatial coherence from new/increased plant growth
- Physical impacts from associated adaptive behavior of animals following plant species movements
- Disruption from new foraging or nesting animals, including insects
- Changes in soil chemistry due to root penetration of new vegetation
- Possible reductions in site visibility
- Increased growth of destructive organisms as temperatures warm (e.g. mold, algae)
- Spread of destructive vegetative species (like kudzu) farther north into new areas

Invasive Species/Pests

- Physical damage, loss of integrity and spatial coherence from altered habitat structure
- Data loss, subsidence, feature collapse, structural damage from invasive consuming organics
- Damage from new and increased number of burrowing animals

4 Ibid, 20.

- Possible reductions in site visibility
- New threats to wood structures and wooden architectural features as termites and other pests expand territory due to warmer, longer summers
- Spread of destructive vegetative species (like kudzu) farther north into new areas

Precipitation Change

Less Precipitation/Drought

- Water stress may inhibit growth of some species
- Decline/disappearance of some vegetation species; other species favored
- Soil infertility due to decreased microbial activity
- Limited water supply inhibits established maintenance practices
- Increased soil erosion
- Challenges to current irrigation practices
- Cracking and splitting of wooden/organic features due to complete drying

More Precipitation and/or Heavier Precipitation

- Increased tree fall due to waterlogging
- Limited ability to plant in waterlogged soil
- Loss of historical integrity with improved drainage systems
- Decline/disappearance of some vegetation species
- Decreased soil fertility from erosion, waterlogging, leaching
- Loss of landscape features
- Increased susceptibility to destructive fungi
- Erosion of earthworks
- Disruption or delay of traditional maintenance practices
- Swelling/distortion of wooden building materials and architecture features due to wetness and damp
- Increased risk of rot and fungal/insect attack
- Historic building drainage systems unable to cope with downpours
- Erosion of supporting ground around structure
- Sewage backup and overflow
- Accelerated decay of masonry units and mortars due to increased extremes of wetting and drying
- Corrosion of external masonry from agricultural runoff
- Increased pressure to relocate or elevate structures, and/or surrounding structures

Combined Stressors

Extreme Weather Events

- Immediate alteration/destruction of historic landscape, particularly trees
- Decline/disappearance of some vegetation species, other species favored, particularly colonizing species in disturbed areas
- Reduction in or loss of access due to washing out or damage to roads, trails, and landscape features

Adaptation Options

Adaptation Options defined in the *CRCC Strategy* can be applied depending upon the specific impacts of climate change at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. Adaptation options are management approaches to address identified climate vulnerability of cultural resources.[5] The following options may be considered for Crabtree Falls.

1. No Active Intervention

This may be an appropriate decision in situations of low vulnerability (no action warranted) or when no action can be taken.

2. Offset Stress

Remove or deflect stress to reduce or remove force(s) acting on the resource. The goal is to enhance survival while minimizing changes to the resource.

3. Improve Resilience/Resistance

Improving resilience/resistance changes the nature of a resource to make the resource better able to withstand or be recovered from forces.

5 Ibid, 36.

4. Manage Change

Manage change to maintain character-defining features of a resource.

5. Relocate/ Facilitate Movement

Relocate/facilitate movement includes two types of action: (a) moving a resource, and (b) allowing movement to happen. Moving a resource involves relocating all or part of a resource. Allowing movement involves action(s) to enable movement of resources to less vulnerable locations.

6. Document and Prepare for Loss

Implement "Document and Prepare for Loss" that is a set of actions to record a resource and allow forces that are likely to destroy or damage the resource.

7. Interpret the Change

Interpret climate change and acknowledge and engage people on the effects of climate change on a resource.

Treatment Recommendations

Treatment options include the following:[6]

- Preservation focuses on the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials and retention of a property's form as it has evolved over time.
- Rehabilitation acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property's historic character.
- Restoration depicts a property at a particular period of time in its history, while removing evidence of other periods.
- Reconstruction recreates vanished or nonsurviving portions of a property for interpretive purposes.

These are prescribed approaches. Rehabilitation is the treatment option recommended for Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. There are no recommendations for Restoration or Reconstruction.

Original planning concepts for Crabtree Falls and other recreation areas along the Blue Ridge Parkway were developed during the New Deal Era (1935-1945), with most construction occurring in the Postwar Era (1946-1955). Updates to Crabtree Falls, which include the Mission 66 coffee shop and new picnic area, were constructed during the Mission 66 Era (1956–1966). Since the Mission 66 Era there have not been any major changes at Crabtree Falls.

The treatments for Crabtree Falls Recreation Area are developed from the analysis in this CLR, but also take into consideration recommendations in the *2013 GMP*.

Primary Treatment - Rehabilitation

The primary treatment recommendations for Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is **rehabilitation**. Rehabilitation is defined by the Secretary of the Interior as "the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations and additions while preserving those portions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values." The Secretary of the Interior went on to define preservation as "the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity and material of a historic property. This includes initial stabilization work, where necessary, as well as ongoing preservation maintenance and repair of historic materials and features."[7] Preservation and rehabilitation of cultural landscapes will be undertaken in accordance with the *Secretary of the interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*.[8]

The Primary Treatment of Rehabilitation at Crabtree Falls has four primary goals:

- Continue to operate Crabtree Falls to provide recreation opportunities in the form of camping, picnicking, hiking, and enjoying nature.
- Retain the original management emphasis on traditional recreation pursuits while enhancing the visitor experience.

6 Robert R. Page, Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan, *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques,* (Washington, D.C.: NPS, 1998).

7 Page et al., *Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports*, 82.

8 Ibid.



FIGURE 5–1. Rehabilitate the Mission 66 coffee shop (B128) while maintaining the form, materials, and architectural character of the structure. Looking west. (Sand County Studios, May, 2016.)

- Update and maintain existing facilities (structural and nonstructural) to better fit the changing trends in recreation use along the Parkway and to better accommodate visitors (Figure 5-1, 5-2).
- Take a more sustainable environmental approach to ensure that the existing recreation area continues to function as originally constructed.
- Rehabilitate the current camping loops to better address recreation trends and upgrade facilities so they better meet visitor expectations. When repairs and replacement are needed, use contemporary furnishings of compatible materials (concrete, wood, or stone).



FIGURE 5–2. Front view of the Mission 66 coffee shop. Looking west. (Sand County Studios, May, 2016.)

Secondary Treatment - Preservation

The secondary treatment recommendation for Crabtree Falls Recreation Area is preservation. Preservation is defined by the *Secretary of the Interior* as, "the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property."[9]

The Secondary Treatment of Preservation at Crabtree Falls has six primary goals:

- Preserve the existing land use patterns for Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. These include the entry area, camping areas, picnic area, and hiking areas.
- Preserve the existing historic fabric of Crabtree Falls Recreation Area by maintaining the overall site layout, structures, and landscape characteristics.
- Preserve the basic form, function, and details of the area while rehabilitating selected features to improve the visitor experience.
- Conduct archeological mitigation or monitoring of improvements to determine if any such archeological resources exist. Prehistoric resources have not previously been identified at Crabtree Falls due to limited archeological assessment associated with early periods of site preparation and construction.
- Preserve alignment, width, and material of pedestrian routes according to historic patterns.
- The precise locations of non-extant historic structures from pre-1930s use of Crabtree Falls may be determined through archeological survey to better enable their interpretation and protection.

There are no features or facilities within Crabtree Falls that are appropriate for restoration because all changes and updates that have occurred have been consistent with the original intent of the recreation area.

The site theme identified in the *2002 Blue Ridge Parkway Long-Range Interpretive Plan* states, "The meadows, adjoining forest, and spectacular Crabtree Falls provide a cool and delightful summer retreat within the shadow of the massive Black Mountain Range."[10] The interpretive plan indicates that visitors to Crabtree Falls will have opportunities to participate in a variety of recreation activities, appreciate the natural significance of and understand the ecosystem, and immerse themselves in the massive Black Mountain Range.[11]

Uses

One of the primary reasons visitors give for not using some of these facilities is the lack of modern amenities. The campgrounds have not had significant upgrades since they were constructed. The tent camping sites do not have water or electricity, and only a handful of RV sites have water, electricity, and sewer hookups. Loop roads, parking areas, and campsites were designed to earlier standards that do not adequately accommodate modern RVs. In addition, there is limited access to visitor service facilities in the off-season when the road is open but most of the visitor facilities are closed. Many visitors have noted that they would stay on the Parkway if the campgrounds provided more updated services, such as showers, electrical hookups, and better accommodation of large RVs. Other park designers feel that such changes are not necessary and would alter the rustic character of the campgrounds.[12]

Many visitors turn to lodging options outside of the Parkway in nearby communities. Based on a 2002 visitor study, 66 percent of visitors stayed overnight outside the boundaries of the Parkway in hotels, motels, inns, bed and breakfasts, other campgrounds, or at the homes of friends and relatives.

Treatment Recommendations

Entry Area / Access Road (Figure 5-3)

Buildings

- Maintain the character of existing contributing buildings that are part of Crabtree Falls

9 NPS. Rehabilitation as a Treatment. https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments/treatment-rehabilitation.htm

10 NPS. *Blue Ridge Parkway Long-Range Interpretive Plan,* 2002, 121.

11 Ibid, 182.

12 Larry J. Scott, *What Every Good Naturalist Should Know About Linville Falls & Crabtree Meadows,* (MSS, 1974), 3-4.

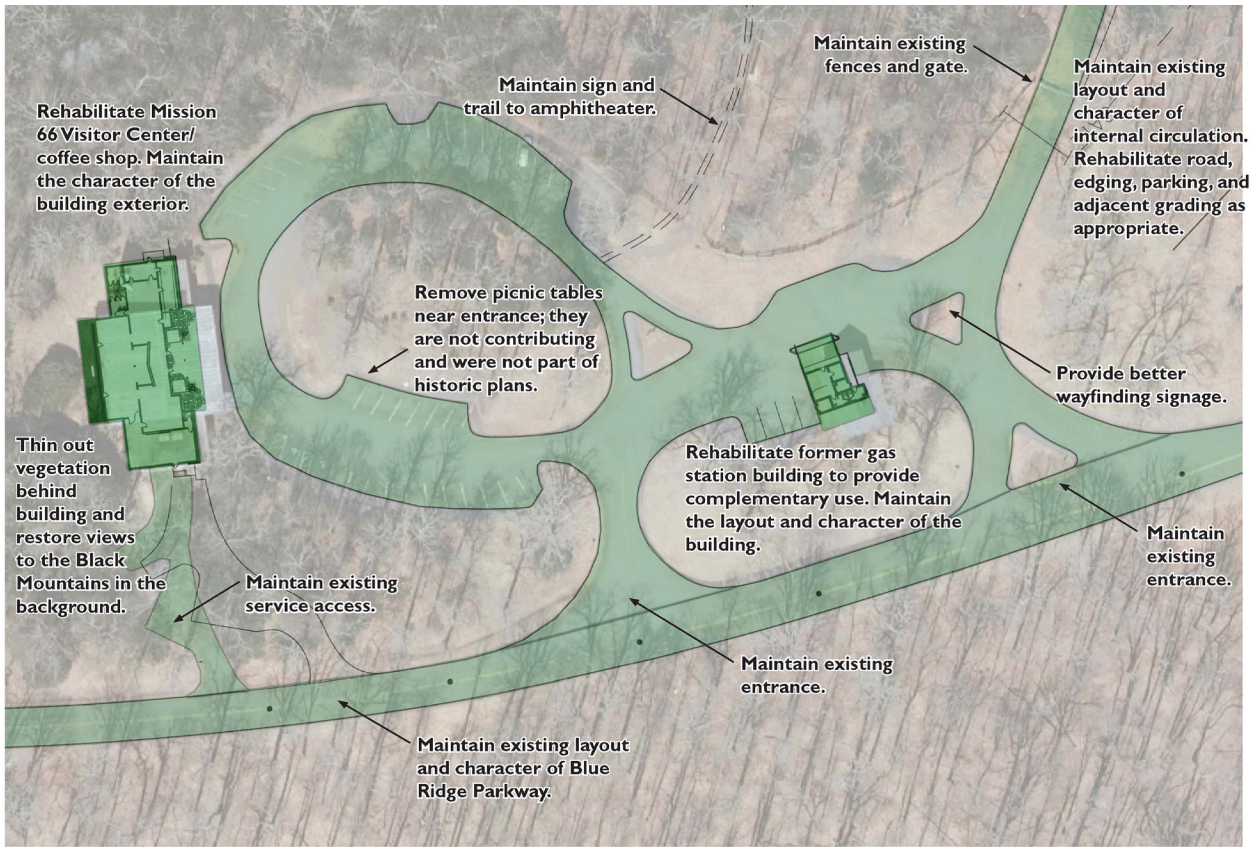


FIGURE 5–3. Treatments for the entry area at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. (Sand County Studios, January, 2016.)

Recreation Area. Emphasize rehabilitation of the Mission 66 coffee shop (BLRI #128), gas station building (BLRI #127), amphitheater (BLRI #B942), and three comfort stations (BLRI #129, #130, and #132).

- Rehabilitate the coffee shop building and reopen the facility to allow for food, shopping, and public restrooms. One option is to scale back the facilities being offered but make restroom facilities open to the public. If the facility is not used on a daily basis for food services, retail facilities, or other services, it may be viable to use it for special events during the day, or events associated with campground and trail activities (Figures 5-4).
- Minimize alterations to the building's historic fabric and any undertakings must follow Section 106 procedures to mitigate any adverse effects. All alterations are subject to the Section 106 review process.
- Continue to implement future repairs and rehabilitations needed to meet backlog maintenance needs. Exteriors should be rehabilitated in a style consistent to original



FIGURE 5–4. Maintain the historic character of the coffee shop. Looking south. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 5–5. Provide services at the coffee shop (B128). Looking west. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 5–6. Landscape character with rhododendrons and canopy trees in front of the coffee shop. (Sand County Studios, May, 2016.)

construction, and all material will need concurrence with SHPO if not replaced in-kind.

- Maintain the historic character of the coffee shop building and gas station. The interiors of the two buildings can be altered to better accommodate needs. It is important to retain the relationship of interior and exterior spaces. and the sequencing of views and vistas. The stone wall just inside the door of the coffee shop needs to remain because it is a major part of the overall building design (Figure 5-5). All Mission 66 coffee shop repairs should follow the Secretary of Interior's Standards.

- Preserve the historic gas station building and repurpose the structure for a different use.

Circulation

- Replace chipped, cracked, broken, or missing stone curbing throughout Crabtree Falls. This



FIGURE 5–7. Roads in the entry area. Looking east. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

includes along parking areas near the coffee shop, spurs in the camping loops, trailhead parking, and parking and interior park roads in the picnic area (Figure 5-6 to 5-8).

- Introduce universal access to amenity areas where appropriate.

Small-scale Features

- Continue efforts to repair fountains and restore the stone facades of fountains.

Vegetation

- Thin trees in the back of the Mission 66 coffee shop in order to restore historic views from the deck and interior of the building.

Campgrounds (Figure 5-9, 5-10)

Buildings

- Consider exploring accommodations for group activities. Encourage more group activities by considering adding open-air shelters both in the campgrounds and at the picnic area.

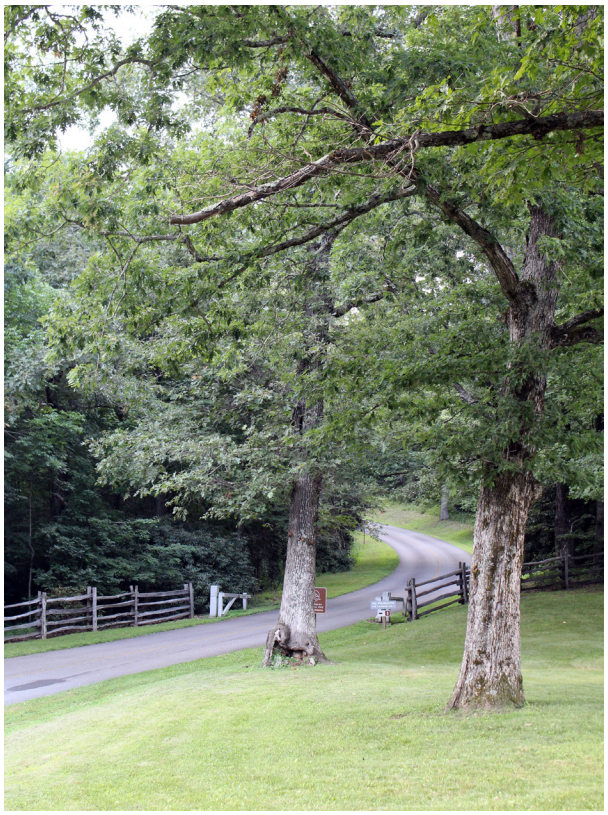


FIGURE 5–8. Entry road leading to the camping areas. Looking north. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

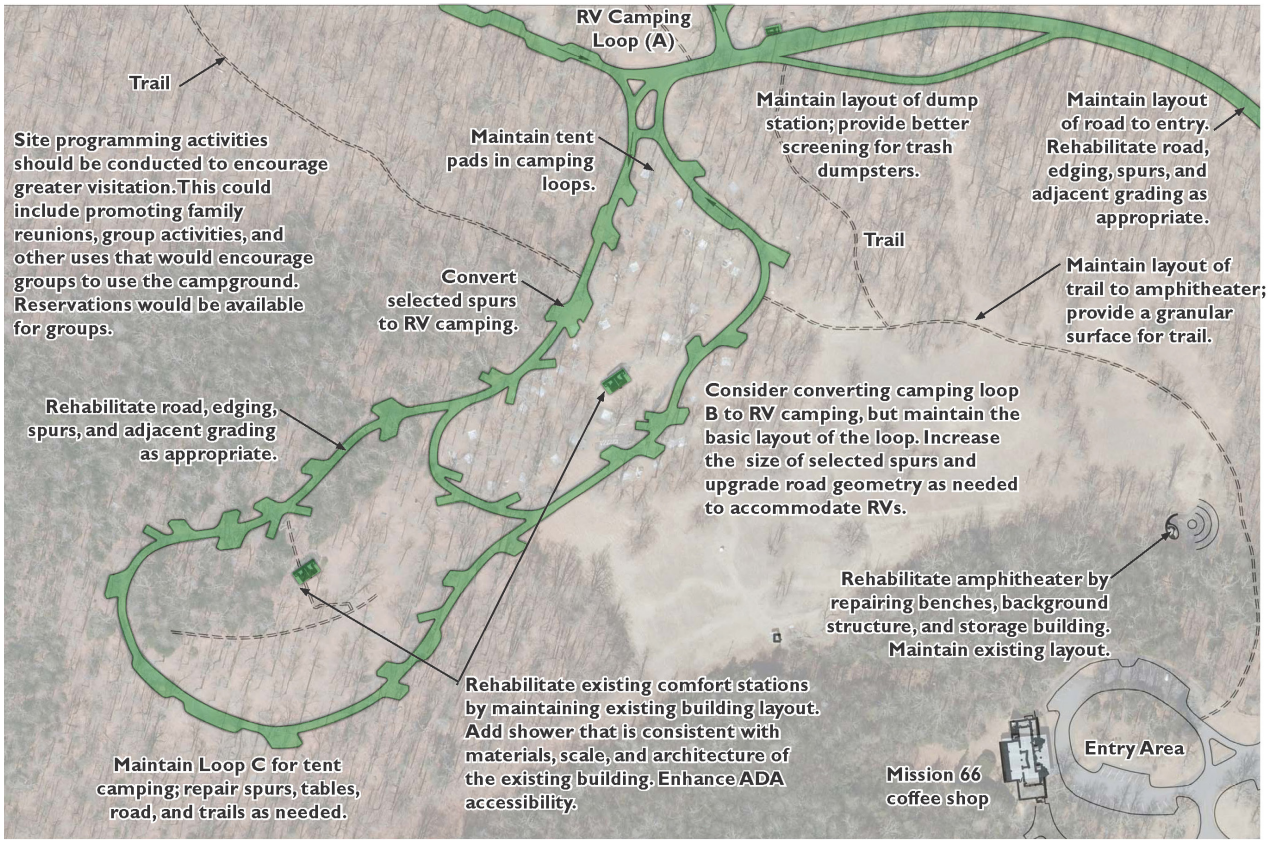


FIGURE 5–9. Treatments for the tent camping area at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. (Sand County Studios, January, 2016.)

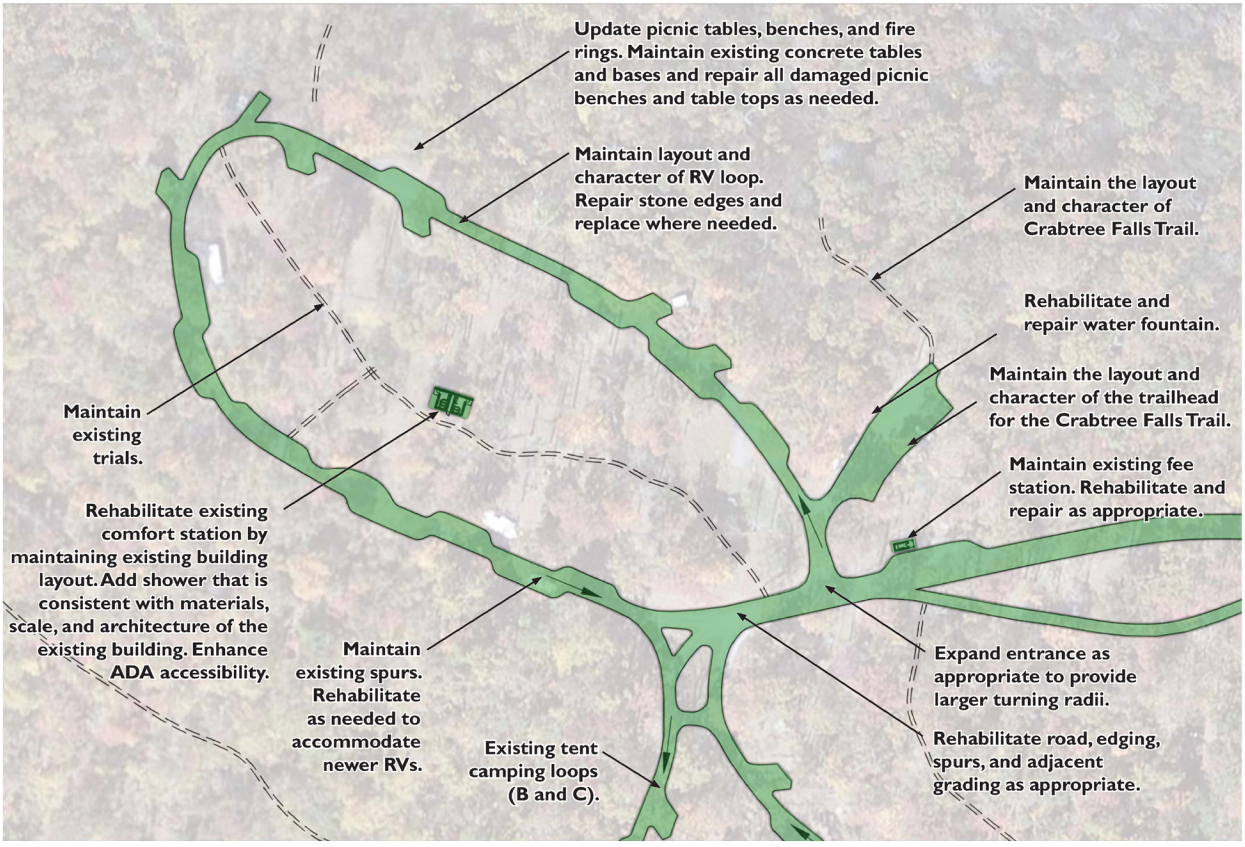


FIGURE 5–10. Treatments for the RV camping loop at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. (Sand County Studios, January, 2016.)



FIGURE 5–11. Open area by the comfort station in Loop B. (Sand County Studios, May, 2016.)



FIGURE 5–12. Comfort station in the tent camping loops. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 5–13. Comfort station in Loop C. (Sand County Studios, May, 2016.)



FIGURE 5–14. Comfort station in RV camping area (Loop A). (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)



FIGURE 5–15. Comfort station in the RV area (Loop A). (Sand County Studios, May, 2016.)



FIGURE 5–16. Comfort station (B132) in a campground (Loop B south) could be modified to include showers while retaining historic materials and features that date to the period of significance. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

Currently there is no place where a group of more than six or seven people could gather for a picnic because tables are separated. The addition of shelters would be inconsistent within the context of the historic setting, but the pedestrian scale, visual character, and perceived fit with the surrounding landscape will help ensure a reduced impact.

- Enlarge selected tent sites in camping loops to better accommodate family-sized tents. Existing tent pads are too small for many of the larger, more modern tents.



FIGURE 5–17. Entrance road into tent camping loop (Loop B). Looking west. (National Park Service, no date given.)

- Update all three comfort stations in the camping loops to include showers in order to better meet visitor expectations (Figure 5-11 to 5-16). Showers can be accommodated without changing the existing floor plans by a new addition to the sides of the existing buildings. The shower building would include four shower stalls (two for women, two for men, with half of the showers being ADA accessible). Each shower stall would have its own door. Using the same board and batten style for the exterior, and a gable roof that is consistent with the pitch (steepness) of the existing roof will ensure that the addition is visually consistent with the architectural style of the existing comfort stations. Ensure that any new utility lines that need to be run are installed in such a way as to minimize impacts on existing cultural and natural resources.

- Facilities should be updated with new toilets, urinals, sinks, and other interior features. Providing more substantial upgrades, such as adding showers, would require a significant change in the size of a comfort station. The exterior walls of board and batten siding are visually consistent with the original architectural character of the buildings.



FIGURE 5–18. Parking area in the tent camping area (Loop B). (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

Circulation

- Continue to operate existing campgrounds and upgrade them to be universally accessible. Introduce universal access to amenity areas where appropriate. Refer to Preservation Brief 32 about accessibility in Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes.
- Upgrade existing RV sites with water and electrical hookups at all campsites in Loop A, and enlarge selected tent sites to better accommodate family-sized tents.
- Expand the RV camping loop road at Crabtree Falls by increasing turning radii and enlarging existing RV parking spaces to better accommodate newer recreational vehicles. Take steps to retain any historic stone curbing and other features during this process.
- Open all loops in the campground area). Currently two loops are open—one for RVs (Loop A) and one for tent camping (Loop B). One tent camping loop (Loop C) is closed.
- For Loop B, conserve tent sites. If part of this loop is converted to RV camping, the tent sites should still be preserved because they are part of the historic character of the site and they can still be used by RV campers (Figure 5-17, 5-18).
- Improve RV camping spurs in Loop A to include full hookups. These include electric, water, and sewer connections that will help attract visitors and meet expectations. These can be added without changing the historic layout of the camping loops. Providing sites where several RVs can park together, and also providing group facilities such as pavilions and grouped picnic tables and grills can also increase the variety of camping options. Ensure that any new utility lines that need to be run are installed in such a way as to minimize impacts on existing cultural and natural resources.
- Increase the turning radii at camping loops (Loop A and Loop B) to better accommodate newer, larger RVs.
- Preserve all stone-lined drainage swales along the interior Crabtree Falls Recreation Area roads, and paved asphalt swales along the Parkway (Figure 5-19).



FIGURE 5–19. Stone drainage swale along an entry road to the campground. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

- Maintain the existing layout of the camping loops, including the location of the comfort stations, but consider converting tent camping Loop B to RV camping and increase the size of camping spurs as appropriate to accommodate this change (Figure 5-20). This loop was originally used for picnicking, but was converted to tent camping in the late 1950s to meet demands. The change from tent camping to RV camping will reflect current recreation trends.
- Replace chipped, cracked, broken, or missing stone curbing throughout Crabtree Falls. This includes spurs in the camping loops.
- In places, the existing asphalt roads and parking areas need to be milled down before being replaced to maintain proper drainage to stone-lined gutters and other drainage structures.

Small-scale Features

- Repair small-scale features that are contributing. Many of the original small-scale features at



FIGURE 5–20. Tent camping spots in Loop B. (National Park Service, no date given.)

Crabtree Falls Recreation Area are badly in need of repair. More than half of the picnic tables have benches that have been replaced over the years, and the vast majority of these are in very poor condition. These can be repaired without changing the integrity of the site. The concrete picnic tables and concrete bases for benches, and the Shenandoah style tables are contributing and should be preserved. The same is true of the fire rings and grills that need to be repaired or replaced. Repairing the small-scale features in the camping loops is expected to greatly improve the visitor experience.

Vegetation

- Rehabilitate groundcover in campground area and picnic area to eliminate erosion problems.

Archeology

- Ensure that there are no adverse impacts on cultural landscapes in the area that would possibly result from some of the potential upgrades or additions of new facilities at the campground and in relation to concession operations.

Amphitheater Area

Buildings

- Preserve and rehabilitate the amphitheater area as needed (Figure 5-21). It is contributing, and has historically been used for interpretive programming offered by the NPS. It also provides for group gatherings. Rehabilitate benches at the amphitheater that are in poor condition.



FIGURE 5–21. Amphitheater. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

- Maintain amphitheater to provide ongoing interpretive programs for visitors.

Trails Area

Circulation

- Preserve and rehabilitate existing trails; no new trails are anticipated. The existing trails provide access to the cultural and natural features that should be highlighted on the site (Figure 5-22).



FIGURE 5–22. Trail from the tent camping area (Loop B) to the amphitheater. (Sand County Studios, August, 2015.)

- Rehabilitate trail from the tent camping loop to the amphitheater by converting the grass trail to a natural surface trail with an aggregate surface.

Vegetation

- Monitor areas along trails that experience high pedestrian traffic for signs of native vegetation disturbance. Rehabilitate vegetation as needed. Develop revegetation plans for disturbed areas. Revegetation plans should specify seed/plant source, seed/plant mixes, soil preparation, etc., and should use salvage vegetation to the extent possible.
- Control potential impacts on vegetation by increasing public education, revegetation of disturbed areas using native plant species, erosion control, and barriers that minimize trail erosion or shortcut trails.
- Apply an integrated pest management approach to comprehensively address invasive, nonnative plants on Parkway lands.
- Preserve landscape character of existing vegetation. Rehabilitate mature planting areas by underplanting with native species.
- Restore and monitor plans for implementation, performance standards, monitoring criteria, and adaptive management techniques.

Picnic Area

Buildings

- Update the comfort station and picnic facilities (Figure 5-23, 5-24). According to NPS staff, usage of the picnic area has steadily decreased over the past decade or two, due in part to the poor condition of the site and facilities. Much of the recent usage of the site is visitors stopping to use the comfort station since the coffee shop at Crabtree Falls has been closed.
- Encourage more group activities by adding open-air shelters at the picnic area. Currently there is no place where a group of more than six or seven people could gather for a picnic because tables are separated. The addition of shelters would be inconsistent within the context of the historic setting, but the pedestrian scale, visual character, and perceived fit with the surrounding landscape will help ensure a reduced impact.

Circulation

- Preserve the basic layout of the picnic area, including the roads, parking areas, Shenandoah



FIGURE 5–23. Comfort station at the picnic area. (Sand County Studios, May, 2016.)

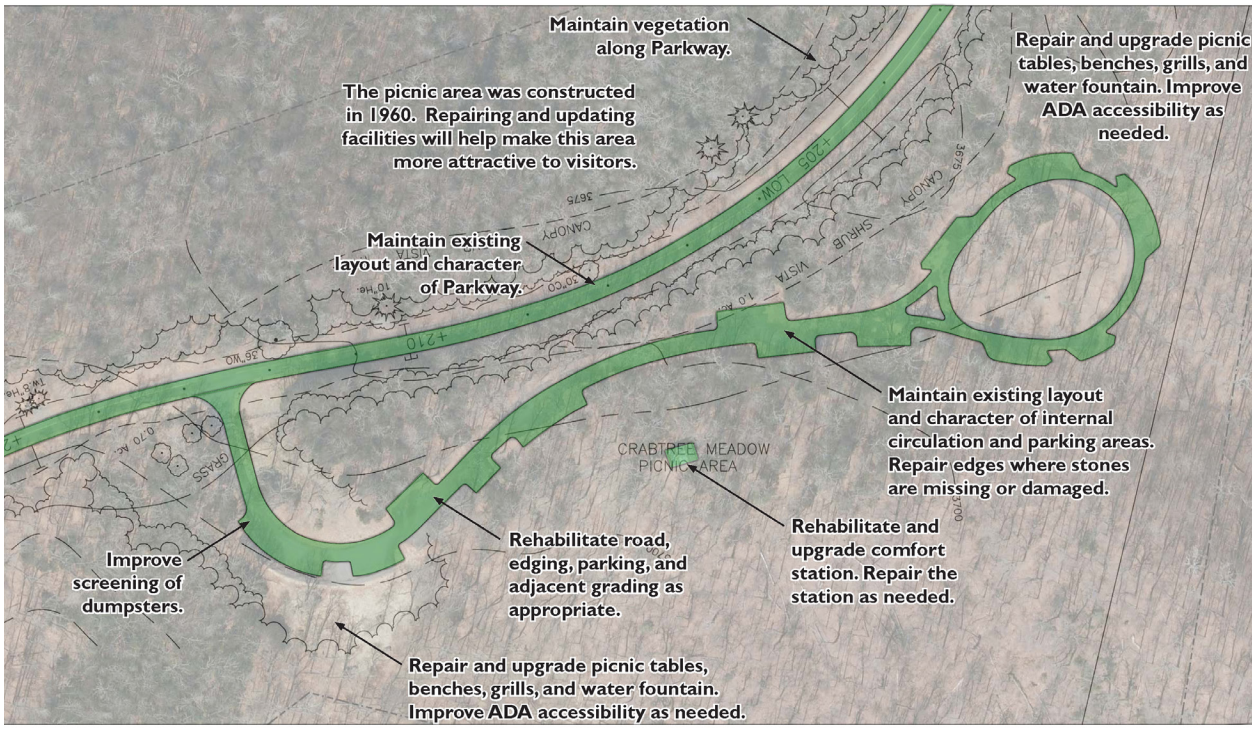


FIGURE 5–24. Treatments at the picnic area at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. (Sand County Studios, January, 2016.)

picnic stations, and location of the comfort station.

- Rehabilitate pedestrian trails at the picnic area to provide better access to the comfort station, picnic stations, and water fountains. Picnic tables also need to be improved, and wheelchair accessibility should be included where appropriate.

Small-scale Features

- Rehabilitate existing picnic tables in the picnic area. Many of the picnic tables are badly in need of repair. The Shenandoah type tables are contributing and should be repaired using materials that are consistent with historic tables. If appropriate, tables should be replaced with a style that is consistent with those used during the period of significance.
- Replace chipped, cracked, broken, or missing stone curbing throughout Crabtree Falls. This includes roads in the picnic area.
- Continue efforts to repair fountains and restore the stone facades of fountains.

Vegetation

- Rehabilitate groundcover in picnic area to eliminate erosion problems.

Parkway

Circulation

- Preserve all original stone-lined drainage swales along the roads. Repair damaged swales and replace missing or damaged stones and mortar. Replace missing stones as needed and continue to maintain vegetation in a manner that allows positive drainage to this structure.
- Preserve basic circulation pattern. When resurfacing asphalt paving, old asphalt should be milled down to prevent obscuring stone curbing. Rehabilitate concrete and asphalt curbing where it has been chipped or damaged and replace if appropriate.
- Preserve the basic roadway layout and historic views and vistas, vegetation patterns, and roadway details of the Parkway as defined in the 1952 PLUMs. Maintain current striping patterns (middle stripe only, no shoulder striping) along the Parkway in keeping with original historic design details.

Vegetation

- Implement measures to reduce adverse effects of non-native plants and wildlife on rare,



FIGURE 5–25. View from Three Knobs Overlook. Looking north. (Sand County Studios, May, 2016.)

threatened, and endangered species. This starts with a long-term commitment to control an exotic plant species To help reduce the spread of non-native plants and animals, NPS recommends buying firewood locally for camping, and cleaning boot treads to remove hitchhiking seeds. NPS also recommends local landowners use native plants instead of non-native plants. [13]

- Conduct a detailed survey for rare, threatened, and endangered species. There is no documented rare, threatened, or endangered species on the Crabtree Falls site, but a detailed survey has not been conducted.

Views and Vistas

- Maintain views and vistas using appropriate maintenance regime. The *Blue Ridge Parkway Scenic Vista Cutting Management Plan* (which needs to be updated) provides details on such a maintenance program. Compliance is also a key component of rehabilitating overgrown vistas. Restore the vista from the coffee shop to the mountains in the background by selectively clearing existing vegetation.
- Preserve views and vistas along the Parkway as identified in the PLUMs for this section of the road. This includes the view from the Three Knobs Overlook (Figure 5-25).

Implementation Plan

This section presents a series of implementation projects that outline how to address specific treatment recommendations in this report. The format of each implementation project is consistent with the Project Management Information System and Facility Management Software System forms utilized by the National Park Service to request funding as part of the park's annual funding requests.

Information provided for each implementation project includes the following:

- Description
- Location
- Considerations

These projects address resource protection, care, and rehabilitation, as well as life safety considerations and visitor accessibility and interpretation needs.

Recommended implementation projects include the following:

13 National Park Service. Blue Ridge Parkway, NC. https://www.nps.gov/blri/learn/nature/nonnativespecies.htm

1. Rehabilitate historic water fountains (Entry Area/ Access Road, and Picnic Area)
2. Rehabilitate Mission 66 coffee shop (Entry Area / Access Road)
3. Rehabilitate comfort stations in the campground to provide showers and ADA accessibility (Campground)
4. Convert tent camping Loop (B) to RV camping (Campground)
5. Rehabilitate small-scale features (Entire Recreation Area)
6. Rehabilitate historic interior roads, parking areas, and associated features (Entire Recreation Area)

1. Rehabilitate Historic Water Fountains

Description. The original water fountains throughout the parkway were designed with battered stone surfaces on all four sides of the fountain.

Location. There are estimated to be 20-30 fountains along the Parkway, with two of these being at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. One is located at the trailhead leading to the falls, and the other is at the edge of the woods in the picnic area.

Considerations. NPS has initiated discussions to rehabilitate the remaining historic water fountains. These discussions should continue, and plans should be developed for rehabilitating the fountains. (Figures 5-26 to 5-28).

2. Rehabilitate Mission 66 coffee shop

Description. The Mission 66 coffee shop is the largest and most iconic building at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. It has been shut down in recent years, and this closing likely had an impact on visitation at the site.

Location. The coffee shop is located along the western edge of the entry area of Crabtree Falls Recreation Area.



FIGURE 5–26. Water fountain near the Crabtree Falls trailhead at the entrance to the campground. (Sand County Studios, May, 2016.)



FIGURE 5–27. Water fountain near the Crabtree Falls trailhead at the entrance to the campground. (Sand County Studios, May, 2016.)



FIGURE 5–28. Water fountain in the center of the turnaround at the picnic area. Looking south. (Sand County Studios, May, 2016.)

Considerations. The coffee shop is a contributing feature for Crabtree Falls and is one of the more significant buildings from the Mission 66 Era along the Parkway. The structure is intact in terms of use, materials, location, and historic importance. Over time, the building has shown signs of disrepair.

3. Rehabilitate comfort stations in the campground to provide showers and ADA accessibility

Description. The three comfort stations in the campground need to be rehabilitated to include improvements, ADA accessibility, and showers. Upgrades to the comfort stations will help address visitor expectations, especially the addition of showers.

Location. A comfort station is located near the middle of each of the three camping loops (A, B, and C). The locations of the comfort stations are original and from the period of significance, so they are to be maintained.

Considerations. Upgrades to the comfort stations must be done in such a way as to preserve the historic character of the structures. All alterations are subject to the Section 106 review process.

All three comfort stations were built in the 1950s and are contributing. The addition of showers,

in particular, must reflect the form, architectural style, and materials used in the original comfort stations. The roofs of the existing comfort stations are all gable, so new additions would visually fit the existing structures if they were also gable, even if perpendicular. Siding should be board and batten like the existing comfort stations, and the scale of the building should be in keeping with that of the existing comfort stations.

4. Consider Converting Tent Camping Loop (B) to RV Camping

Description. Treatments in this document are based in large part on the premise that one of the primary reasons that camping facilities at Crabtree Falls Recreation area is that the facilities are outdated and lacking in modern comforts. Upgrading facilities, adding showers, and offering other amenities is expected to increase the number of visitors using the campgrounds.

If the number of visitors using the campgrounds does not increase sufficiently, NPS may considering converting tent camping loop B to RV camping since the national trend is moving toward more RV camping and less tent camping. Camping Loop B was originally a picnic area but was then converted to tent camping when the picnic area was relocated to its current location east of the Parkway. At the time, this change was made to accommodate the demands of visitors interested in tent camping. Converting Loop B from tent camping to RV camping is consistent with historic decisions about modifying the uses to meet demands. However, this change from tent camping to RV camping should be pursued only if improved, more modern facilities are not sufficiently increasing the number of visitors to the campgrounds.

Location. This camping loop is located on the main Crabtree Falls site and is accessible from the northern entrance road. The road extends to the campground entrance, and Loop B is the first camping area to the left of the camping entrance.

Considerations. To accommodate RVs, camping spurs (where the vehicles park) will have to be expanded in size while still preserving the historic character and features of the previous campground. Existing spurs are designed specifically for passenger vehicles and are typically between 16 to 20 feet in length. To accommodate RVs, the spurs need to be between 30’ and 40’.

As noted earlier, this is an option that should be considered only if the increased number of people using the campgrounds are less than expected. The impact of converting from tent camping to RV camping is potentially significant and should only be pursued if necessary.

5. Rehabilitate Small-scale Features

These can be repaired without changing the cultural integrity of the site. The concrete picnic tables and concrete bases for the benches and the Shenandoah style tables are **contributing** and should be preserved. The same is true of the fire rings and grills that need to be repaired or replaced.

Description. Small-scale features are a significant part of the historic character of Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. Almost all of the small-scale features are contributing, but most are in need of repair.

Location. Small-scale features are located through the campgrounds, entry area, amphitheater, picnic area, and trails at Crabtree Falls.

Considerations. Small-scale features that are contributing should be rehabilitated using similar materials as used during the period of significance.

6. Rehabilitate Historic Interior Roads, Parking Areas, and Associated Features

Description. Almost all of the pavement within the Crabtree Falls campground site and picnic site area is historic in terms of layout, alignment, width, and materials. Over time, the asphalt has become broken and chipped, and has suffered from deterioration due to wear and weather. It has also been patched several times, resulting in layers of material that has begun to obscure the stone curbing. Stone edging associated with parking pull-offs is often broken, dislodged, and/or constitutes a trip hazard. The stone curbing along the parking bays has also been partially obscured by repaving efforts. The asphalt pavement currently requires replacement to present a tidy, well cared for, and safe environment for visitors, while associated historic features are in need of repair. These efforts must be conducted in such a way as to avoid affecting the historic integrity of the developed area.

Location. This project applies to all roads, parking areas, and other paving at Crabtree Falls Recreation

Area. These include entry roads, camping loops, camping spurs, trailhead parking, roads and parking for the entry area, and roads and parking for the picnic site.

Considerations. The targeted pavements should be replaced in kind to match the original design intent for this part of the area. Repair of grading problems resulting from subsidence, compaction, and damage from vehicular parking and other access to the shoulders should be coordinated with resurfacing to ensure a seamless grade between the paved surface and the adjacent shoulders, paths, and slopes.

Grading should also allow for the establishment of turf along the edges of the road, paths, and parking areas. Ditches, drainage culverts, paved walkways, fencing, and signs associated with the road corridors to be rehabilitated should also be repaired as needed, taking into consideration the original design specifications for the parkway.

Plantings that interfere with paved areas should be evaluated on an individual basis to determine the need for their removal. Drainage swales may need to be relocated because of changes to pavement layout. Consideration should be paid to the rehabilitation of campground access roads and parking pull-off areas by enlarging some of these spaces. In particular, increase radii at entrances to the campgrounds to provide a larger turning radius for bigger vehicles.

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Appendix A
Acronyms and Abbreviations

BLRI	Blue Ridge Parkway
CCC	Civilian Conservation Corps
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CLI	cultural landscape inventory
CLR	cultural landscape report
EA	environmental assessment
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
GMP	general management plan
HAER	Historic American Engineering Record
LCS	list of classified structures
MP	Milepost
NC	North Carolina
NCDOT	North Carolina Department of Transportation
NCHRP	National Cooperative Highway Research Program
NHL	National Historic Landmark
NPS	National Park Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
PD&D	project development and design
PLUMs	Parkway land use maps
RCRP	Roadside Cultural Resources Preservation
RV	recreational vehicle
SERO	Southeast Regional Offi ce of the National Park Service
T&E	threatened and/or endangered species

USC	United States Code
USFS	United States Forest Service
VA	Virginia
WPA	Works Progress Administration

Appendix B

Site Features Evaluation

Parkway

Resource #	*Resource Name*	*Date*	*Existing*	*Condition*	*Contributing*
n/a	Paved roadway	1948	Yes	Good	Yes
n/a	No striping along roadway edges	1948	Yes	Good	Yes
n/a	Grass shoulders	1948	Yes	Very good	Yes
n/a	Stone ditches	1948	Yes	Good	Yes
n/a	Views	1948	Yes	Very good	Yes
n/a	Directional signage	1948	No, original signs have been replaced	N/A	No
n/a	Landscape plantings	1948	Yes	Good	Yes
#B88	Pumphouse	1955	Yes	Fair	No

Crabtree Falls Campground and Entry Area

Resource #	***Resource Name***	***Date***	***Existing***	***Condition***	***Contributing***
BLRI #B127	Gas station	1950	Yes	Good	Yes
BLRI #B379	Power supply building	1950	Yes	Fair	No
n/a	Small sandwich shop	1954–1955	No	N/A	No
n/a	Entry roads	Varies	Yes	Good	Yes

Resource #	*Resource Name*	*Date*	*Existing*	*Condition*	*Contributing*
n/a	Small Picnic area	1943	No	N/A	No
	Picnic area expansion	1951–1952	No	N/A	No
	Trail system	1943	Yes	Good	Yes
	Expanded trail system	1953–1954	Yes	Good	Yes
	Original camping loop	1951–1952	Yes	Good	Yes
	Additional camping loops	1954	Yes	Good	Yes
	Parking area for trailhead	1952	Yes	Good	Yes
	Rail fences	1943	Yes	Good	Yes
	Picnic tables	1943	No	N/A	No
	Fire rings, underground trash cans, tables	1954	Yes	Fair	Yes
	Concrete picnic tables	1954	Yes	Fair	Yes
	Temporary amphitheater	1958	No	N/A	No
	Entry area parking	1965	Yes	Good	Yes
	Crabtree Falls	N/A	Yes	Good	Yes
	Crabtree Creek	N/A	Yes	Good	Yes
BLRI #B665	Fee collection building at campground entrance	1955	No	N/A	No
BLRI #B832	Residential building near campgrounds	1997	Yes	Good	No

Resource #	*Resource Name*	*Date*	*Existing*	*Condition*	*Contributing*
BLRI #B387	Wood storage building	1951	No	N/A	No
BLRI #B419	Campground well house	1958	Yes	Good	No
n/a	Water fountains	Varies	Yes	Fair	Yes
n/a	Tent pads	1954	Yes	Good to Fair	Yes
n/a	Bear boxes	Varies	Yes	Good	No
BLRI #B129	Comfort station - Loop B	1950	Yes	Good	Yes
BLRI #B132	Comfort station - Loop A	1954	Yes	Good	Yes
BLRI #B130	Comfort station - Loop C	1954	Yes	Good	Yes
BLRI #B665	Fee Station / Kiosk	1974	Yes	Fair	No
BLRI #B942	Amphitheater	1963	Yes	Fair	Yes
BLRI #B975	Campground pumphouse	1957/1958	Yes	Fair	No
n/a	Dumpsters	Varies	Yes	Good	No
BLRI #B128	Mission 66 coffee shop	1965	Yes	Fair	Yes
n/a	Original wood storage shed at amphitheater	1951	No	n/a	No
BLRI #B387	Wood storage shed at amphitheater	1999	Yes	Good	No

Picnic Area

Resource #	*Resource Name*	*Date*	*Existing*	*Condition*	*Contributing*
n/a	Entry road	1960	Yes	Fair	Yes
n/a	Parking area	1960	Yes	Good	Yes
BLRI #B434	Comfort station	1960	Yes	Fair	No
n/a	Picnic tables	1960	Yes	Fair to Poor	Yes
n/a	Fire rings, trash cans, tables	1960	Yes	Fair to poor	Yes
n/a	Water fountains	1960	Yes	Fair	Yes

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Appendix C

Common Plants at Crabtree Falls Recreation Area

Larry Scott's list of Common Plants at Crabtree Fall includes a number, or numbers, which refer to that part of the trail where these plants were most corn only seen (see map that is part of this appendix). An asterisk refers to plants that were not seen in flower and were recognized by their leaves. Two asterisks refer to plants that tended to occur only in specific areas and were somewhat rarer than the others. [1] Also, it should be noted that Scott did not include genus and species for the plants on this list.

Wildflowers of the forest- early summer:

- Azalea
- Catawba Rhododendron
- Rosebay Rhododendron
- Mountain Laurel
- Galax
- Bluets (2 species)
- Goatsbeard
- Squawroot
- Solomon's Seal
- *False Solomon's Seal
- *Wood Betony
- Bowman's Root
- Dutchman's Pipe
- **Indian Cucumber Root
- **Tall Milkweed
- **Four-leafed Milkweed
- Indian Pipe
- **Whorled Loosestrife
- *Dwarf Crested Iris
- *Bellwort
- Blackberry
- Jack-in-the-Pulpit
- **Fly Poison
- Catbriar
- **Purple-flowering Raspberry
- *Wild Grape
- Fire Pink
- *Speckled Wood Lily
- Flowering Spurge
- Columbine
- *Mayapple
- Cinquefoil
- *Bloodroot

Wildflowers of the Forest- Late Summer

- Wild Bergamot
- Heart-leaved Skullcap
- Mountain Mint
- Heal-All
- **False Foxglove
- **Carolina Lily
- Joe Pye Weed

1 Source: Scott, Larry J. "What Every Good Naturalist Should Know about Linville Falls & Crabtree Meadows." MSS, 1974. BLRI Library

- Black Cohosh
- *Poison Ivy
- *Virginia Creeper
- Hairy Alumroot
- Sun drop
- Spiderwort
- **Rattlesnake Plantain
- Bee Balm
- Jewelweed
- Spotted Jewellweed
- **White Hellebore
- St. John's Wort
- Evening Primrose
- White Wood Aster (several varieties)
- White Snakeroot
- Turtlehead
- Southern Harebell
- Panicled Hawksweed
- Goldenrod (many species)
- Starry Campion

Wildflowers of the Meadow-

- Butterfly Weed
- Mullein
- Horse Nettle
- Wild Phlox
- Deptford Pink- early summer
- Red Clover
- Black-eyed Susan
- Daisy- early summer
- Coneflower
- Sunflower
- Daisy Fleabane
- Pale Indian Plantain
- Strawberry
- Blue-eyed Grass- early summer
- Yarrow
- Queen Anne's Lace- early summer
- Sourgrass
- Beard's Tongue- early summer
- Virgin's Bower

Trees of the Crabtree Meadows Area

- Apple- meadow
- Hawthorne meadow
- Carolina Hemlock
- Canada Hemlock
- Chestnut
- Witch Hazel
- Dogwood
- Sugar mapIe
- Red Maple
- Mountain Maple
- Fraser Magnolia
- Cucumber Tree
- American Beech
- Sassafras
- Black Locust
- Buckeye (Yellow)
- Tulip tree
- White Oak
- Black Oak
- Chestnut Oak
- Shagbark Hickory

- Sourwood
- Flowering Crab
- Ferns of the Crabtree Meadows Area
- Christmas Fern
- Hay-scented Fern
- Cinnamon Fern
- New York Fern (Scott, 1974)

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Appendix D

Soils

The following are all of the soils that are found in, or adjacent to the Crabtree Falls site. [1]

BtE—Buladean-Chestnut complex, 30 to 50 percent slopes, stony *Setting*

This soil is found along low and intermediate mountains dominantly in the western and southern parts of Yancey County on ridges and south- to west-facing slopes. They often have long, narrow shapes on summits and are irregular on side slopes. About 50% of this soil type is Buladean soil and similar inclusions, with 40% being Chestnut soil and similar inclusions.

The soils have a tendency to be well drained, have moderately rapid permeability, and a loamy texture. The soils are deep to moderately deep with depth to seasonal high water table being more than 6 feet. The hazard of water erosion is very severe and potential frost action is moderate. The organic matter content varies from low to high. The soil is extremely to moderately acidic.

The dominant uses for this soil are woodlands and wildlife habitat. It has also been used for pasture, building site development, and ornamental crops in the county, but not on the Crabtree Falls site. The soils are generally unsuited or poorly suited for cropland, pasture and hayland, and orchards and ornamental crops.

AcF—Ashe-Cleveland-Rock outcrop complex, 30 to 95 percent slopes, very bouldery

This soil is located along ridges and south- to west-facing mountain slopes on low and intermediate mountains. It is composed of 40% Ashe soil and similar inclusions, and 20% each of Cleveland soil and similar inclusions, rock outcrops, and dissimilar inclusions.

The soil has a loamy texture, is somewhat excessively drained, has low shrink-swell potential, and very severe hazard of water erosion. The soil has not experienced much erosion in the county, with less than 25 percent of the original surface layer having been removed. The organic matter content varies from low to high depending upon location. The soil is also extremely to moderately acidic, while the depth to bedrock is 20 to 40 inches to hard bedrock for Ashe, and 10 to 20 inches for Cleveland.

Dominant uses for this soil type are woodland and wildlife habitat.

The Ashe-Cleveland-Rock soils are unsuited for cropland, pasture and hayland, orchards and ornamental crops, and woodland management and productivity. Limitations of the soil for these uses are because of the slope, credibility, extent of rock outcrops, and the very bouldery surface. A site on better suited soils should be selected.

BtE—Buladean-Chestnut complex, 30 to 50 percent slopes, stony

This solid is along ridges and south- to west-facing mountain slopes in western and southern parts of Yancey County. It is well drained, loamy, with moderately rapid permeability, and very severe water erosion hazard. The organic matter content is low to high, potential frost action is moderate, and the soil is extremely to moderately acidic. Depth to bedrock of Buladean is 40 to 60 inches to soft bedrock, while Chestnut is 20 to 40 inches to bedrock.

The soil is found mostly along woodlands and wildlife habitat and is moderately high suited for upland hardwoods and highly suited for eastern white pine. It is not suited for agricultural uses such as cropland, pasture, hayland, and orchards and ornamental crops. (Yancey Soils)

1 Soil Survey of Yancey County, North Carolina

CaC—Cashiers fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes

The Cashiers soil is found along low and intermediate mountains dominantly in the central, southeastern, and southwestern parts of Yancey County on north- to east-facing ridges and those shaded by higher mountains. These soils have long, narrow shapes when located along summits.

The loamy soil is very deep, well drained, and has moderately rapid permeability. It has a severe hazard of water erosion. The organic matter content is high or very high, making it a fairly good growing media. There is often high soil moisture content due to north- to east-facing aspects and shading on higher mountains. The soils are subject to cooler annual air temperatures, which allow late spring and early fall frosts. The soils are also extremely to moderately acidic. The subsoil has high mica content, making the soil subject to down slope movement when lateral support is removed and to differential settling when used as fill material.

Dominant uses on the Crabtree Falls site are woodlands and wildlife habitat. Because of the high organic content of the soil, it is well suited for agricultural uses.

CcD—Cashiers fine sandy loam, 15 to 30 percent slopes, stony

This soil is found along low and intermediate mountains dominantly in the central, southeastern, and southwestern parts of the county on north- to east-facing ridges and those shaded by the higher mountains. It is commonly located on summits and along upper side slopes.

The soil depth is very deep, with underlying multicolored loamy sand saporlite extending down to more than 6 feet. It has a loamy texture, is well drained with moderately rapid permeability, and has moderate available water capacity. There is a very severe hazard of water erosion.

Organic matter content is high to very high. The soil is subject to cooler annual air temperatures, which allow late spring and early fall frosts. It also has higher soil moisture content due to north- to east-facing aspects and shading by the higher mountains.

Dominant uses are for woodlands and wildlife habitat, but the soil is also used for ornamental crops in other parts of the region. Despite the high organic content, it is poorly suited for many agricultural uses because of steeper slopes than CaC—Cashiers fine sandy loam. It is suited for pasture and hayland, although slopes limit equipment use in steeper areas. It is also well suited for woodland management and productivity, and has been used for commercial species such as cove hardwoods and northern hardwoods. The soil is highly erodible, difficult to compact, and unstable due to the high mica content in the subsoil and underlying material.

CcE—Cashiers fine sandy loam, 30 to 50 percent slopes, stony

This Cashiers soil is found along low and intermediate mountains dominantly in the central, southeastern, and southwestern parts of the county on north- to east-facing mountain slopes and those shaded by the higher mountains.

The soils have a loamy texture, are very deep and well drained, with moderately rapid permeability. Available water capacity is moderate and shrink-swell potential is low. Organic matter content is high to very high.

Dominant uses are woodlands and wildlife habitat, although this soil is used for ornamental crops, pasture, and building site development in other parts of the region. It is not suited for cropland or pasture and hayland, and the steep slopes limit used for orchards and ornamental crops in most places. It is suited for woodland management and productivity, although the soil is highly erodible, difficult to compact, and unstable due to the high mica content in the subsoil and underlying material.

CeE—Chandler-Micaville complex, 30 to 50 percent slopes, stony

This soil is found along low and intermediate mountains dominantly in the central, southeastern, and southwestern parts of the county on ridges and south- to west-facing hill slopes and mountain slopes. It is frequently located on summits and alongside slopes. The composition of this soil is 40% Chandler soil and similar inclusions, 35% Micaville soil and similar inclusions: and 25% dissimilar inclusions.

Dominant Uses are woodlands and wildlife habitat. It is unsuited for cropland and hayland, and is poorly suited for pasture, orchards, and

ornamental crops. It has moderate or low potential for woodland management and productivity of commercial species such as upland hardwoods, and high potential for eastern white pine.

DrB—Dillard loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes, rarely flooded

These soils are found in mountain valleys along low stream terraces and colluvial fans. They typically are located in concave to planar toe slopes. The soils have a loamy texture, are very deep, are moderate to well drained, with moderate to slow permeability. Available water capacity is moderate or high, with depth to seasonal high water table being 2.0 to 3.0 feet from December through May. The hazard of water erosion is moderate, as is potential frost action. The soils are strongly acid to moderately acid in the A horizon, except in limed areas, and very strongly acid to moderately acid in the B and C horizons. The organic matter content is moderate or high.

The Dillard loam is well suited for agricultural uses including cropland as well as pasture and hayland, and for woodland management productivity. It is also suited for orchards and ornamental crops. Some management concerns are credibility, climate, flooding, and soil fertility.

EaC2—Evard-Cowee complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, eroded

The Evard-Cowee soils are found along intermountain hills and low mountains dominantly in the central and eastern parts of the county along ridges and summits. Evard soils are very deep, while Cowee soils are moderately deep. The soils have a loamy texture, are well drained with moderate permeability, and have moderate to low water capacity. Hazard of water erosion is severe.

The extent of erosion is moderate, with about 25 to 75 percent of the original surface layer in the Yancey County having been removed. Organic matter content is low or moderate. The soils are very strongly acid to moderately acid throughout the profile.

Dominant uses for this soil are cropland, pasture, and hayland in other parts of the county. In general, uses vary depending upon the primary soil. For cropland, Evard is suited by Cowee is poorly suited. The same is true for orchards and ornamental crops Areas of the Cowee soil are difficult to manage for orchards and ornamental crops because of the low available water capacity and windthrow hazard caused by the moderately deep rooting depth. Both soils are well suited for pasture and hayland, and for woodland management and productivity. Productivity is limited in areas of the Cowee soil because of the limited rooting depth.

EcD—Evard-Cowee complex, 15 to 30 percent slopes, stony

This slope type is found along intermountain hills and low and intermediate mountains dominantly in the northern, eastern, and central parts of the county on ridges and south- to west-facing and mountain slopes. They are often on summits and alongside slopes. This soil type is made of up 50% Evard soil and similar inclusions, 30% Cowee soil and similar inclusions, and the rest dissimilar inclusions.

Evard soils are very deep while Cowee soils are moderately deep. Both have a loamy texture, are well drained, and have moderate permeability.

Available water capacity for Evard soils is moderate, while Cowee slopes are low. Both have a very severe hazard of water erosion, and both have low to high organic matter content. They are very strongly acid to moderately acid throughout the profile. Depth to bedrock for Evard soils is more than 60 inches, while Cowee soils are 20 to 40 inches to soft bedrock.

Dominant uses are woodlands, wildlife habitat, pasture, and hayland. Evard soils are suited for orchards and ornamental crops, while Cowee is poorly suited. Both are poorly suited for cropland.

EcE—Evard-Cowee complex, 30 to 50 percent slopes, stony

This soil type is found along intermountain hills and low and intermediate mountains dominantly in the northern, eastern, and central parts of the county. They are on ridges and south- to west-facing hill slopes and mountain slopes, especially summits and side slopes.

Evard soils are very deep while Cowee soils are moderately deep. Both have a loamy texture, are well drained, and have moderate permeability.

Available water capacity for Evard soils is moderate, while Cowee soils are low. Both have a very severe hazard of water erosion, and both have low to high

organic matter content. They are very strongly to moderately acidic throughout the profile. Depth to bedrock for Evard soils is more than 60 inches, while Cowee soils are 20 to 40 inches to soft bedrock.

Dominant uses are woodlands, wildlife habitat, and pasture. Evard soils are suited for orchards and ornamental crops, while Cowee is poorly suited. Both are unsuited for cropland and hayland, and poorly suited for pasture as well as orchards and ornamental crops.

HuD—Huntdale clay loam, 15 to 30 percent slopes, stony

Huntdale clay loam is located along intermountain hills and low and intermediate mountains on north- to east-facing ridges, hill slopes, and mountain slopes and those shaded by the higher mountains. It is frequently on summits and alongside slopes.

These soils are very deep and well drained, with moderate permeability. They have a loamy texture, have moderate available water capacity, and have a very severe hazard of water erosion. The organic matter content is high to very high. The soil is subject to cooler annual air temperatures, which allow late spring and early fall frosts. It also has higher soil moisture content due to north- to east-facing aspects and shading by the higher mountains. The soil is extremely acid to moderately acid throughout the profile. Depth to bedrock is more than 60 inches.

Dominant uses are woodlands and wildlife habitat. These soils are poorly suited for cropland, but are suited for pasture and hayland, orchards and ornamental crops, and woodland management and productivity.

HuE—Huntdale clay loam, 30 to 50 percent slopes, stony

This Huntdale clay loam is along Intermountain hills and low and intermediate mountains on north- to east-facing hill slopes and mountain slopes and those shaded by the higher mountains. It is commonly on side slopes and has an irregular shape.

This soil type has a loamy texture, is very deep and well drained, and has moderate permeability. Available water capacity is moderate to high, with a depth to seasonal high water table being more than 6 feet. Hazard of water erosion is very severe, and potential forts action is moderate. It has extreme to moderately acidic soil throughout the profile. Organic matter content is high to very high. The soil is subject to cooler annual air temperatures, which allow late spring and early fall frosts. It also has higher soil moisture content due to north- to east-facing aspects and shading by the higher mountains.

Dominant uses are woodlands and wildlife habitat. The soil is unsuitable for cropland because of steep slopes and credibility. It is poorly suited for pasture and hayland as well as orchards and ornamental crops. It is suited for woodland management and productivity, with moderately high potential for commercial species such as cove hardwoods and northern hardwoods.

PeD—Pigeonroost-Edneytown complex, 15 to 30 percent slopes, stony

The PeD soil type is found along low and intermediate mountains dominantly in the western and northwestern parts of the county on ridges, summits, and upper side slopes. The soil is composed of 50% Pigeonroost soil and similar inclusions, 45% Edneytown soil and similar inclusions, and the rest being dissimilar inclusions.

The Pigeonroost soil is moderately deep, while the Edneytown soil is very deep. Both have a loamy texture, are well drained, and have moderate permeability. The depth to seasonal high water table is more than 6 feet. Hazard of water erosion is very severe, with potential frost action being moderate. Pigeonroost soils are extremely acid to moderately acid throughout the profile, and Edneytown soils are extremely acid to moderately acid in the A horizon, except in limed areas, and very strongly acid or strongly acid in the B and C horizons. Both soils have low to high organic matter content. Depth to bedrock for Pigeonroost soils is 20 to 40 inches to soft bedrock, while Edneytown soils are more than 60 inches.

Dominant uses are woodlands and wildlife habitat. The soils are poorly suited for cropland and suited for pasture and hayland. Pigeonroost soils are poorly suited for orchards and ornamental crops, with Edneytown soils being suited.

PeE—Pigeonroost-Edneytown complex, 30 to 50 percent slopes, stony

This soil is along low and intermediate mountains dominantly in the western and northwestern parts of the county on south- to west-facing mountain slopes, especially side slopes. The soil type is composed of 60% Pigeonroost soil and similar inclusions, 30% Edneytown soil and similar inclusions, with the rest being dissimilar inclusions.

The Pigeonroost soils are moderately deep and the Edneytown soils are very deep. Both have a loamy texture, are well drained, and have moderate permeability. Available water capacity is moderate, with depth to seasonal high water table being more than 6 feet. It has a very severe hazard of water erosion and a moderate potential frost action. Organic matter content ranges from low to high. Depth to bedrock for Pigeonroost soils is 20 to 40 inches to soft bedrock, while Edneytown soils are more than 60 inches.

The Pigeonroost soils are extremely acid to moderately acid throughout the profile. Edneytown soils are extremely acid to moderately acid in the A horizon, except in limed areas, and very strongly acid or strongly acid in the B and C horizons. Dominant uses are woodlands and wildlife habitat. It is unsuited for cropland or hayland, and poorly suited for orchards and ornamental crops. It is suited for pasture.

ScC—Saunook sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, stony

Saunook sandy loam soil is found along intermountain hills and low and intermediate mountains on colluvial fans, drainage ways, and benches. It is also foot slopes and toe slopes. This soil type is very deep and well drained, has a loamy texture, and has moderate permeability in the surface layer and subsoil and moderately rapid in the underlying material. Available water capacity is moderate, and depth to seasonal high water table is more than 6.0 feet. The hazard of water erosion is severe, and potential frost action is moderate. Depth to bedrock is more than 60 inches, and there are random areas of seeps and springs in this soil type.

Organic matter content is moderate to very high. The soils are subject to slow air drainage, which allows late spring and early fall frosts. Soils are very strongly acid to moderately acid in the A horizon, except in limed areas, and very strongly acid to slightly acid in the B and C horizons. Dominant uses are cropland, pasture, hayland, and ornamental crops. This soil type is well suited for all of those uses.

SdD—Saunook-Thunder complex, 15 to 30 percent slopes, stony

The Saunook-Thunder soil type is found along intermountain hills and low and intermediate mountains throughout on coves, colluvial fans, drainage ways, and benches. In particular it is also on head slopes, side slopes, foot slopes, and toe slopes. 65% of this soil type is Saunook soil and similar inclusions, 25% is Thunder soil and similar inclusions, and the rest is dissimilar inclusions.

These soils are very deep and well drained, with moderate permeability in the surface layer and subsoil and moderately rapid in the underlying material. Saunook soils have a loamy texture, while Thunder soils are loamy with many rock fragments. Available water capacity is moderate, and depth to seasonal high water table is more than 6.0 feet. Hazard of water erosion is very severe. Organic matter content varies from moderate to very high.

The soils are subject to slow air drainage, which allows late spring and early fall frosts. Saunook soils are very strongly acid to moderately acid in the A horizon, except in limed areas, and very strongly acid to slightly acid in the B and C horizons. Thunder soils are very strongly acid to slightly acid throughout the profile. Within this soil type there are random areas of seeps and springs, and the subsoil has a high content of rock fragments in areas of the Thunder soil. Depth to bedrock is more than 60 inches.

Dominant uses are pasture and hayland. These soils are poorly suited for cropland. Saunook soils are suited for orchards and ornamental crops, but Thunder soils are poorly suited. The potential for commercial species is moderately high for cove hardwoods and northern hardwoods.

TsD—Thunder-Saunook complex, 15 to 30 percent slopes, very bouldery

This soil type is found along intermountain hills and low and intermediate mountains throughout the county on coves, colluvial fans, drainage ways,

and benches. It is specifically along head slopes, side slopes, foot slopes, and toe slopes. The composition of this soil is 60% Thunder soil and similar inclusions, 35 percent Saunook soil and similar inclusions, with the rest being dissimilar inclusions.

The soils are very deep and well drained, with moderate permeability in the surface layer and subsoil and moderately rapid in the underlying material. Thunder soils have a loamy texture with many rock fragments; while Saunook soils have a loamy texture.

Available water capacity is moderate, and the depth to seasonal high water table is more than 6 feet. Hazard of water erosion is very severe. Organic matter content is moderate to very high. Potential frost action is moderate. The soils are subject to slow air drainage, which allows late spring and early fall frosts.

Thunder soils are very strongly acid to slightly acid throughout the profile, and Saunook soils are very strongly acid to moderately acid in the A horizon, except in limed areas, and very strongly acid to slightly acid in the B and C horizons. Depth to bedrock is more than 60 inches. There are random areas of seeps and springs throughout these soils, and the subsoil that has a high content of rock fragments in areas of the Thunder soil.

Dominant uses are woodland and wildlife habitat. Cropland is unsuited in Thunder soils, and poorly suited in Saunook soils. Pasture is poorly suited and hayland is unsuited. Orchards and ornamental crops are unsuited in Thunder soils, but suited in Saunook soils.

TwE—Toecane-Tusquitee complex, 30 to 50 percent slopes, very bouldery

This soil is found along low and intermediate mountains dominantly in the western and southern parts of the county on coves, colluvial fans, drainage ways, and benches. In particular, these slopes are along head slopes, side slopes, foot slopes, and toe slopes.

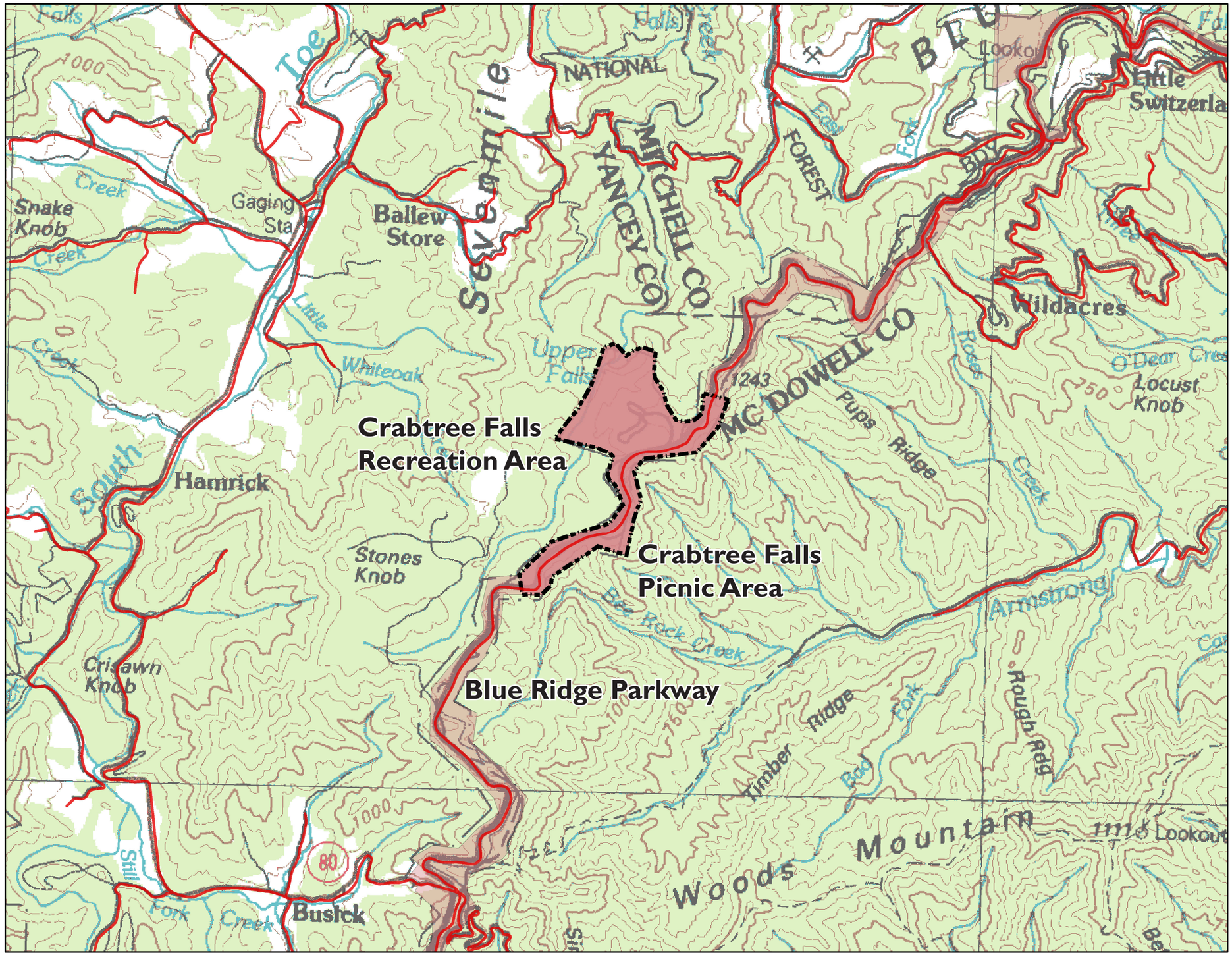
Toecane soils have a loamy texture with many rock fragments, while Tusquitee soils are loamy. The soils are very deep and well drained, and permeability is moderately rapid. Available water capacity for Toecane soils is low, while capacity for Tusquitee soils is moderate. Depth to seasonal high water table for both is more than 6 feet. Hazard of water erosion is very severe. Potential frost action for Toecane soils is low and for Tusquitee soils it is moderate. Organic matter content is high to very high. The soils are subject to slow air drainage, which allows late spring and early fall frosts.

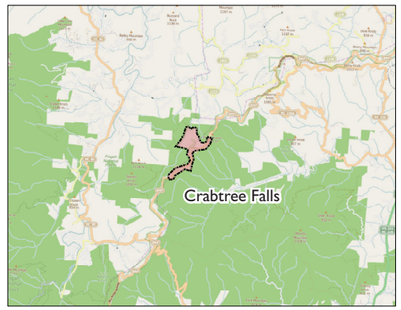
Toecane soils are extremely to moderately acidic throughout the profile, while Tusquitee soils are very strongly to moderately acidic throughout the profile. Depth to bedrock is more than 60 inches. There are random areas of seeps and springs throughout these soils, and the subsoil that has a high content of rock fragments in areas of the Toecane soil.

Dominant uses are woodlands and wildlife habitat. Croplands are unsuited because of the slope, credibility, and very bouldery surface. Pasture is poorly suited and hayland is unsuited. Orchards and ornamental crops are also unsuited.

Appendix E

Maps, Drawings, and Illustrations





Key Map (NTS)

Legend

- Blue Ridge Parkway
- Recreation Area Boundary

0' 2,500' 5,000' 10,000'

North

Notes:

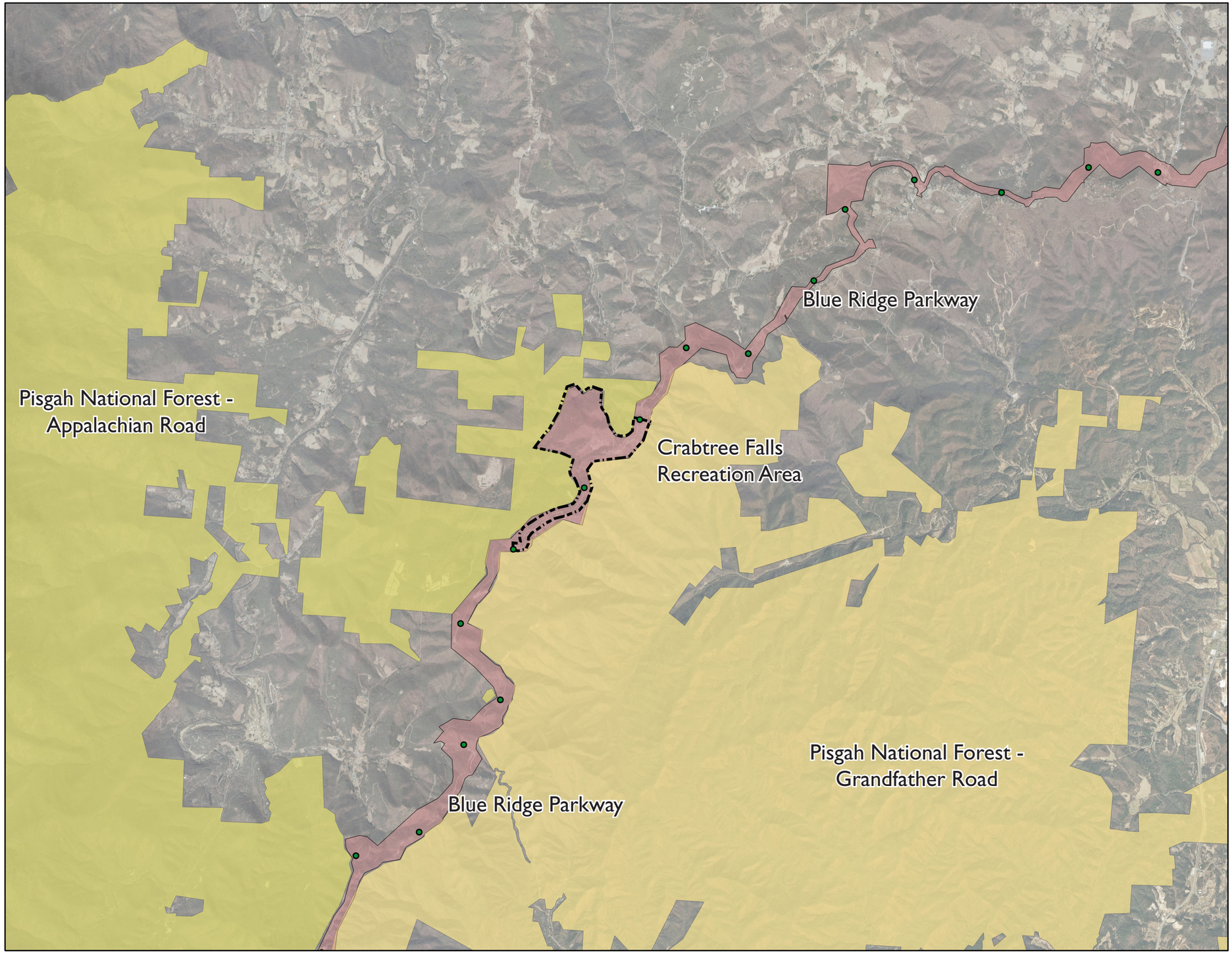
This map shows the regional context for the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area.

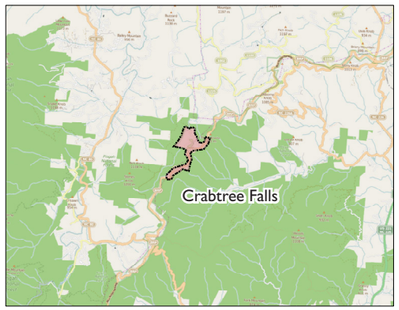
Sources:

This layer contains tiled map data from OpenStreetMap (OSM), which is available from ESRI data sources.

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FIGURE 11–1. Context for Crabtree Falls Recreation Area





Key Map (NTS)

Legend

- Blue Ridge Parkway
- Recreation Area Boundary

0' 2,500' 5,000' 10,000'

North

Notes:

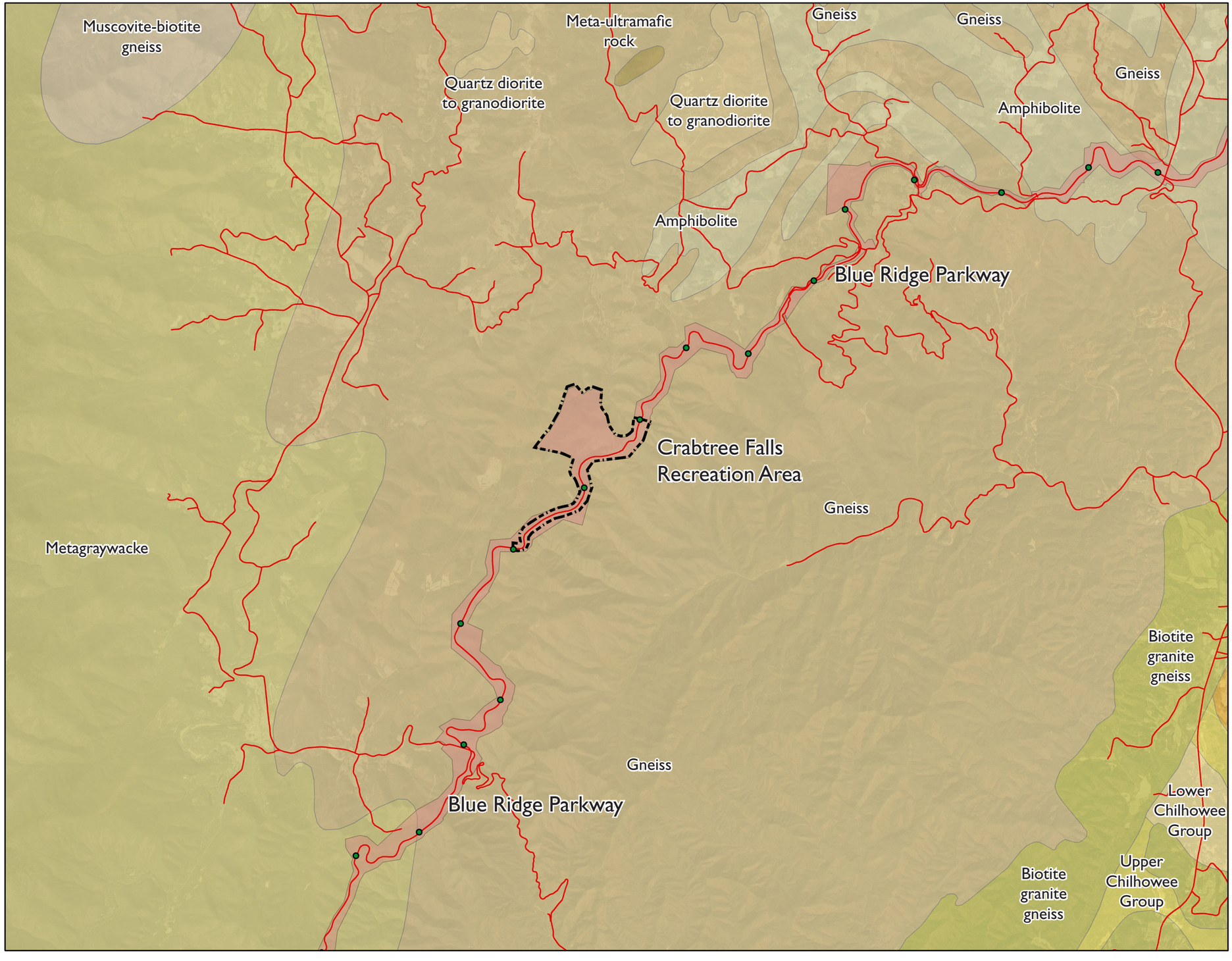
This map shows Federal land surrounding the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area.

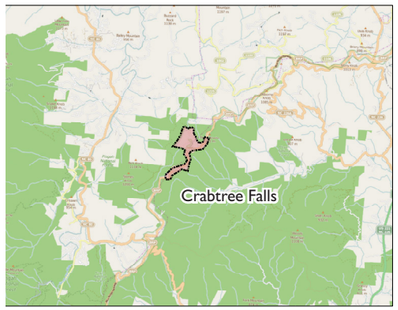
Sources:

Aerial photograph and shapefiles for Federal land is from ESRI data sources.

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FIGURE 11–2. Federal Land around Crabtree Falls Recreation Area





Key Map (NTS)

Legend

- Roads
- Recreation Area Boundary

0' 2,500' 5,000' 10,000'

North

Notes:

This data was created to assist governmental agencies and others in making resource management decisions through use of GIS.

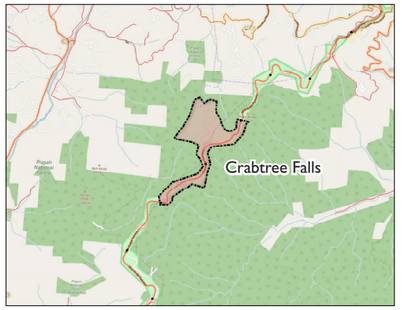
Sources:

North Carolina Geological Survey (NCGS).

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FIGURE 11–3. Geology around Crabtree Falls Recreation Area





Key Map (NTS)

Legend

- Blue Ridge Parkway
- Roads
- Recreation Area Boundary

0' 1,250' 2,500' 5,000'

North

Notes:

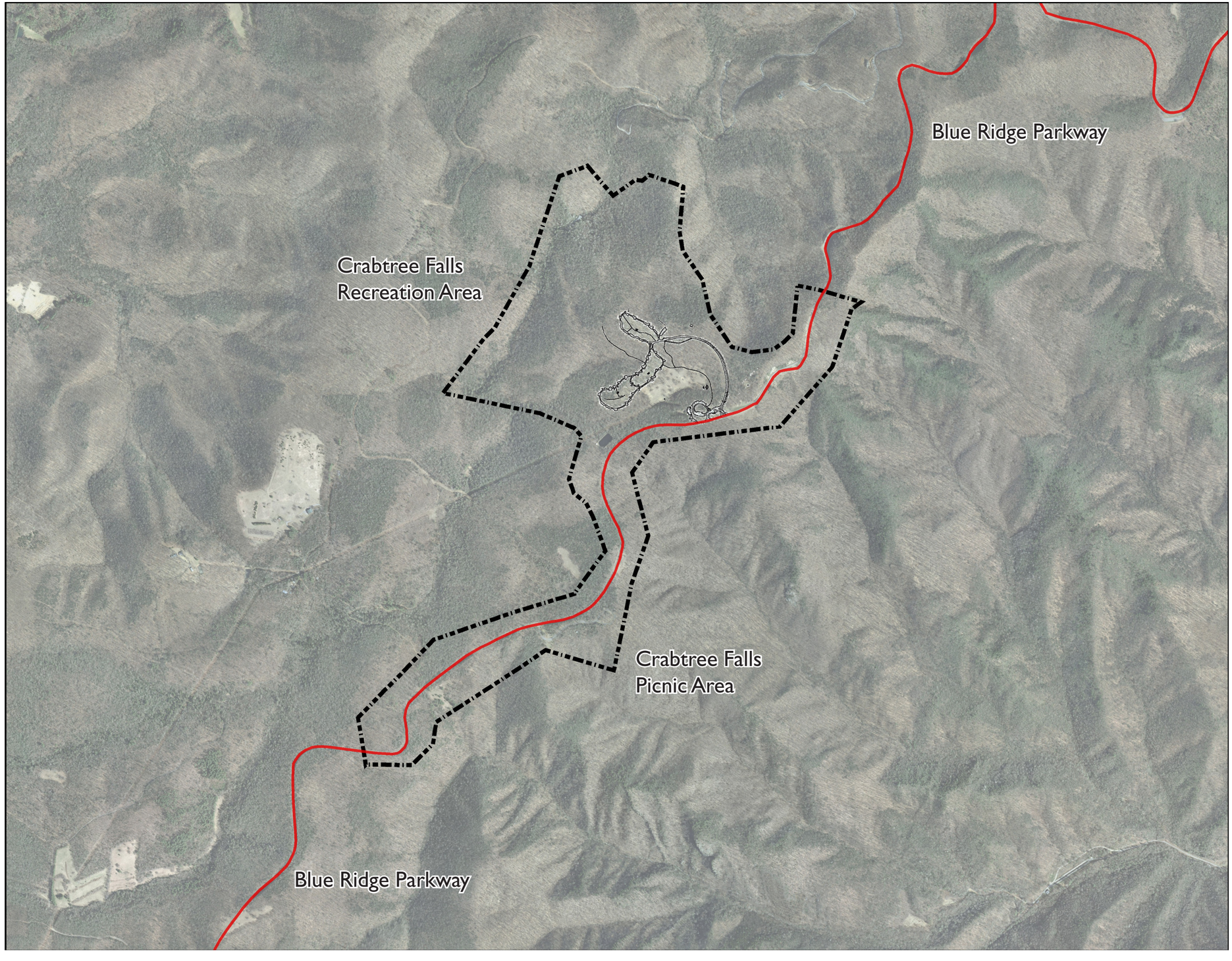
Aerial photograph draped over a hillshade model of the terrain provides an image of the landscape surrounding the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area.

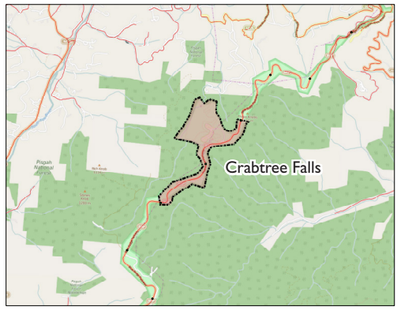
Sources:

Aerial photograph and terrain model for the hillshade mapping is from ESRI data sources.

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FIGURE 11–4. Topography around Crabtree Falls Recreation Area





Key Map (NTS)

Legend

- Blue Ridge Parkway
- Recreation Area Boundary

0' 700' 1,400' 2,800'

North

Notes:

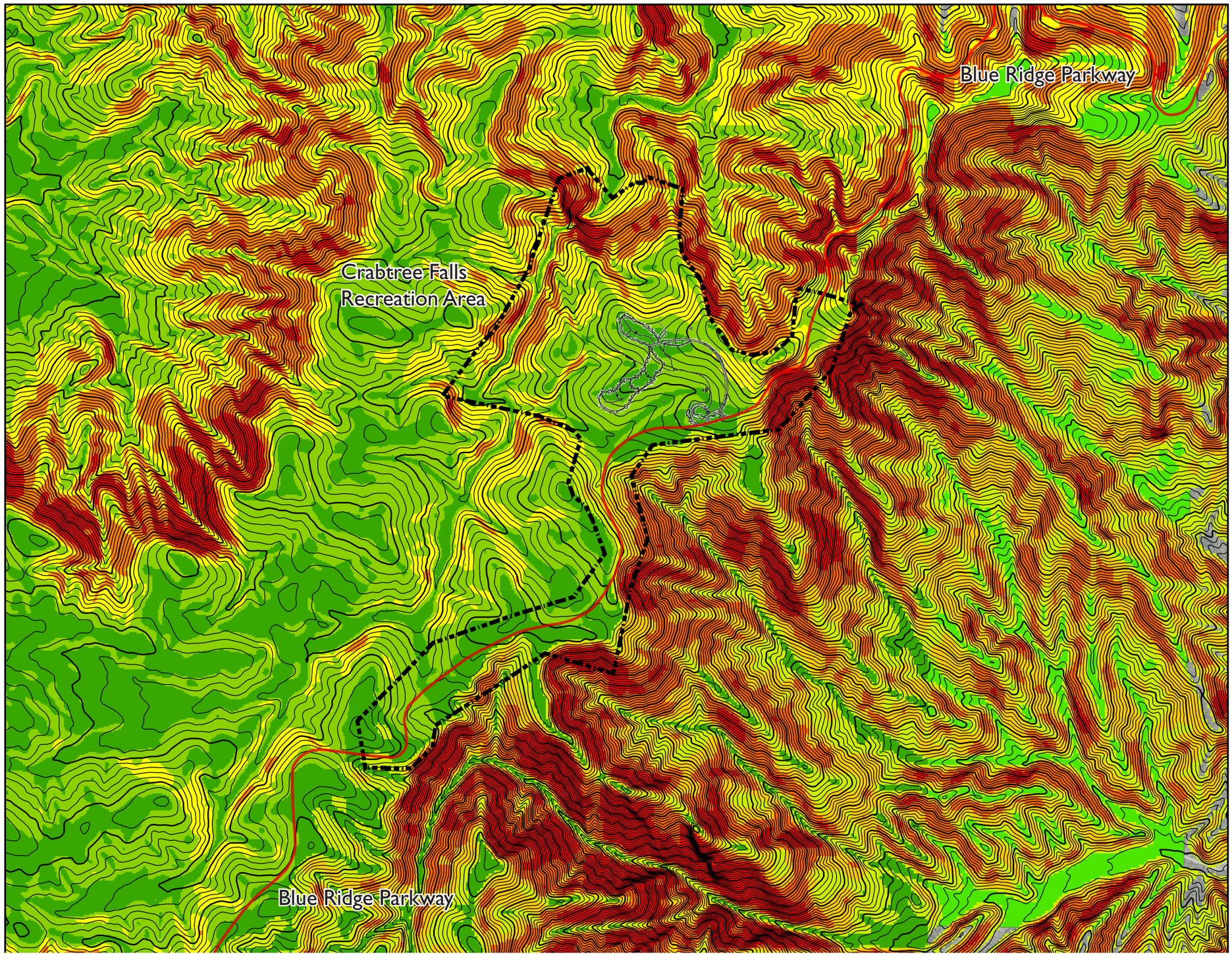
This map shows a 2015 aerial photo of the vegetation patterns overlaid on a hillshade model of the terrain surrounding the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area.

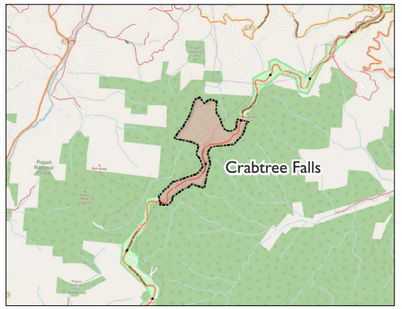
Sources:

The aerial photograph and terrain model for the hillshade mapping is from ESRI data sources.

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FIGURE 11–5. Vegetation and Hillshade around Crabtree Falls





Key Map (NTS)

Legend

- 4' Contours
- 0 - 5% Slope (Easy to Develop)
- 5 - 12 % Slope (Fairly Easy to Develop)
- 12 - 20 % Slope (Moderately Easy to Develop)
- 20 - 30 % Slope (Fairly Difficult to Develop)
- › 30% Slope (Difficult to Develop)

0' 700' 1,400' 2,800'

North

Notes:

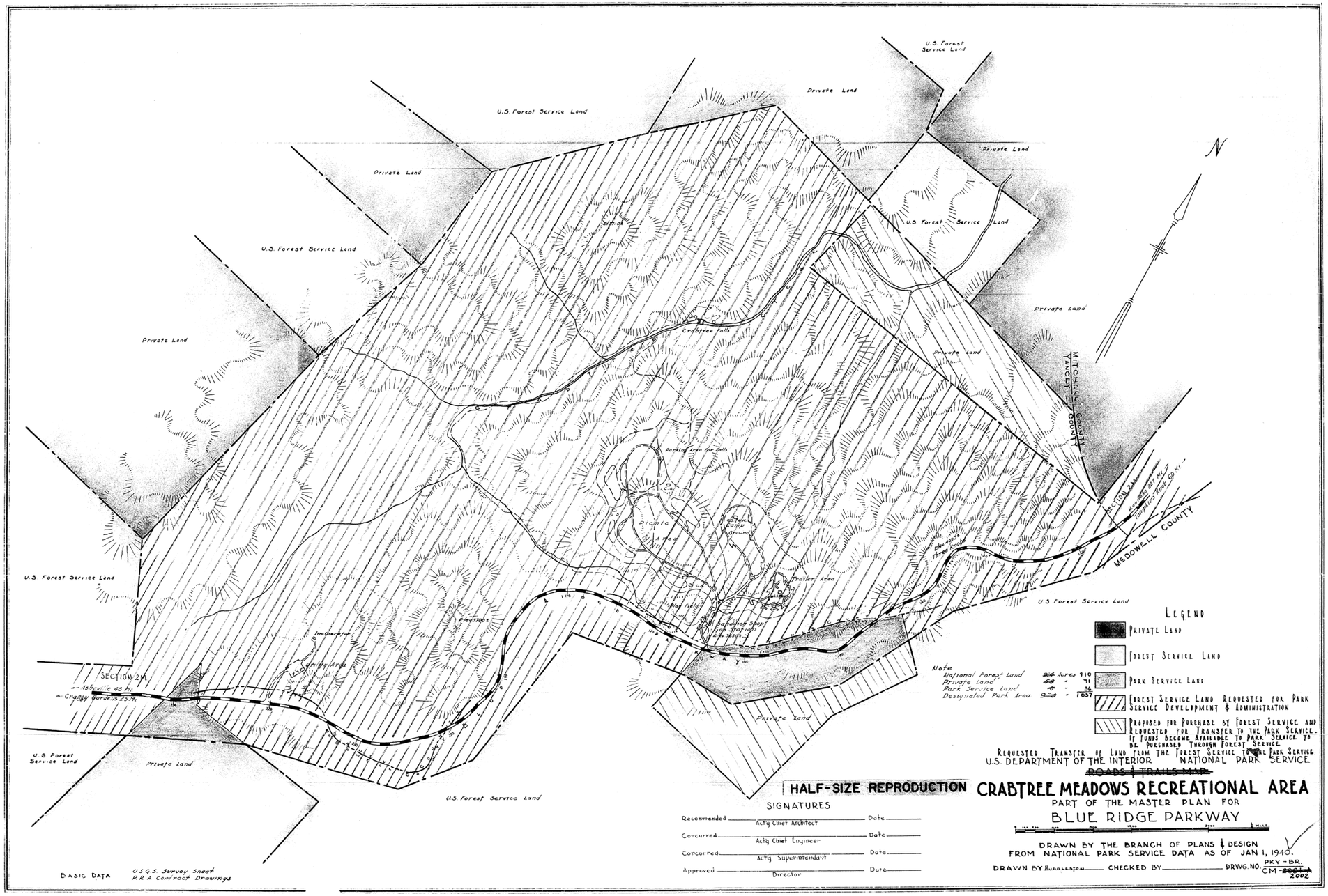
This map shows the topography and a 2014 aerial photo of the landscape surrounding the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area. Crabtree Falls campgrounds and entry area on the slopes easiest to develop.

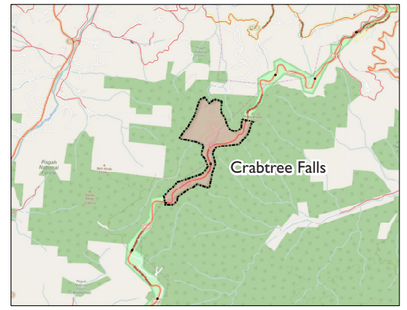
Sources:

The aerial photograph and topography is from ESRI data sources.

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FIGURE 11–6. Slope Analysis of Crabtree Falls Recreation Area





Key Map (NTS)

0' 500' 1,000' 2,000'

North

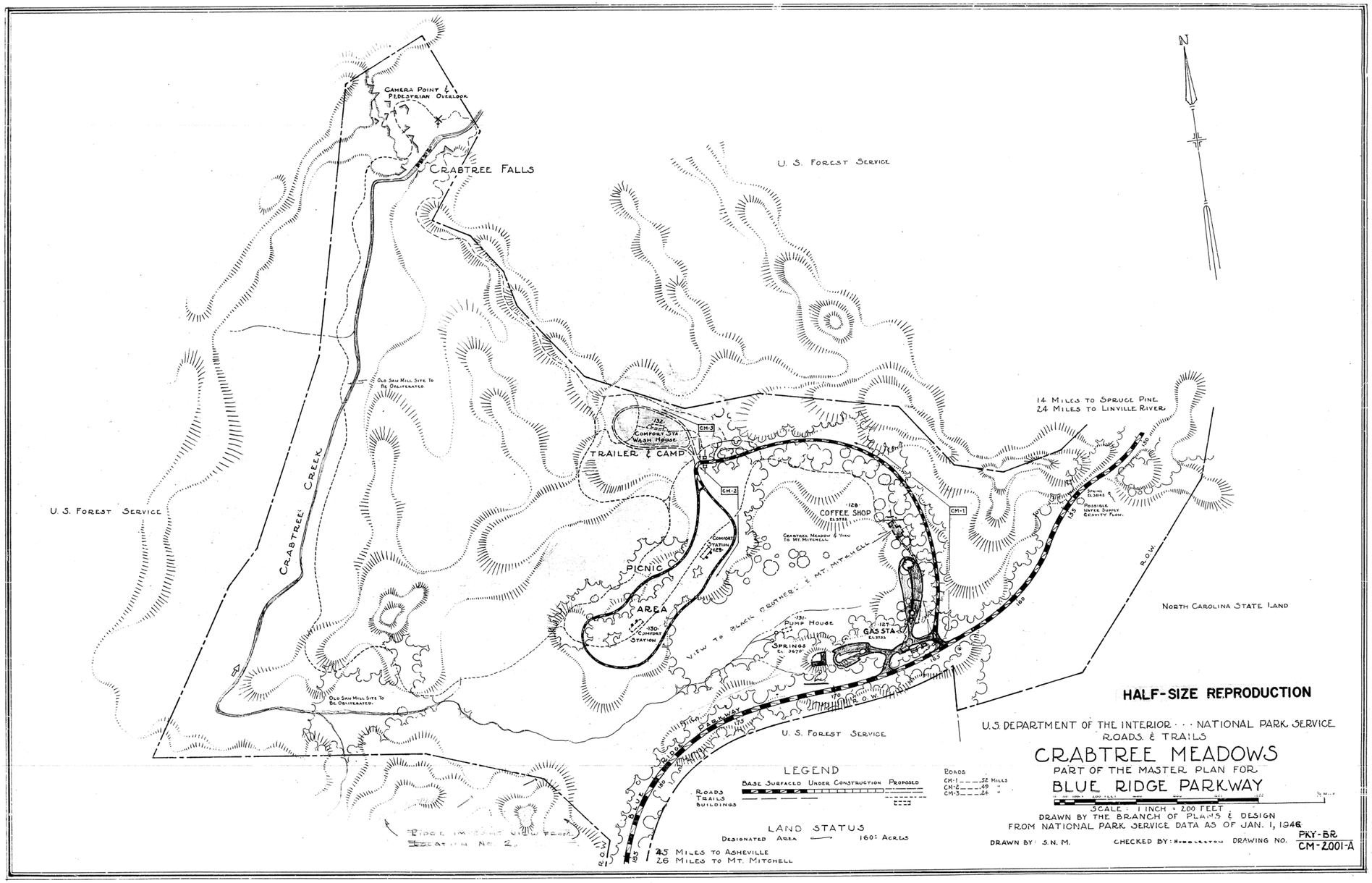
Notes:
This 1940 plan shows an alternative for Crabtree Meadows that included 1037 acres. Of this acreage, 910 acres were National Forest Land, 91 acres were private land, and 36 acres were Park Service land.

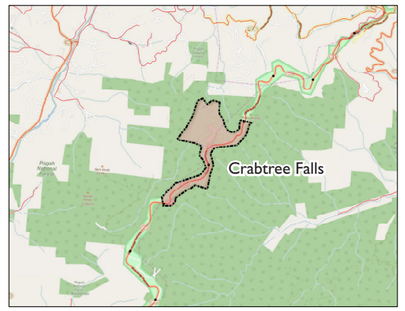
Sources:

Drawn by the Branch of Plans & Design from National Park Service Data, January 1, 1940.

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FIGURE 11–7. Original Plan of Land Status in 1940





Key Map (NTS)

0' 100' 200' 400'

North

Notes:

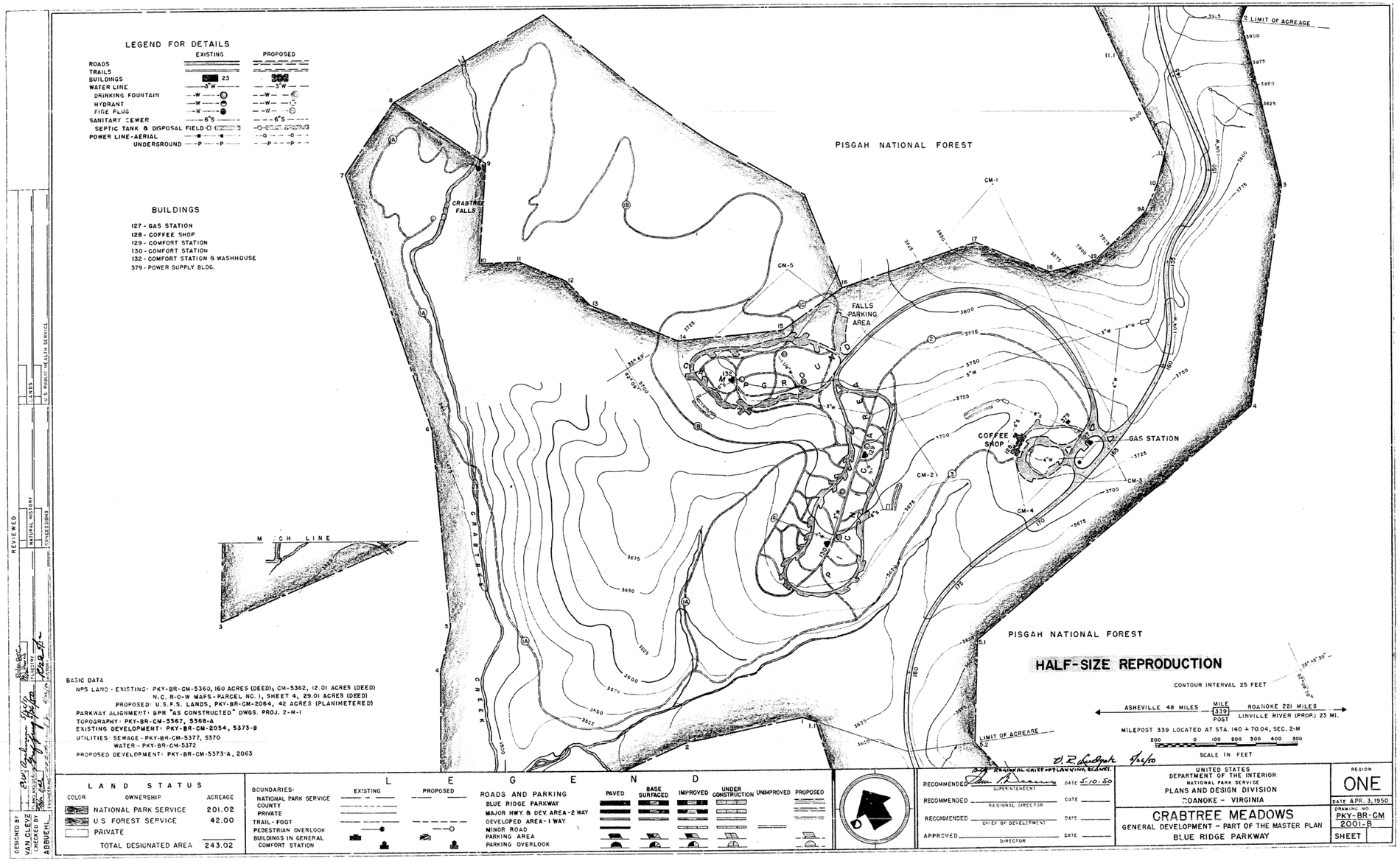
Map showing land status of Crabtree Falls based on a 160-acre site.

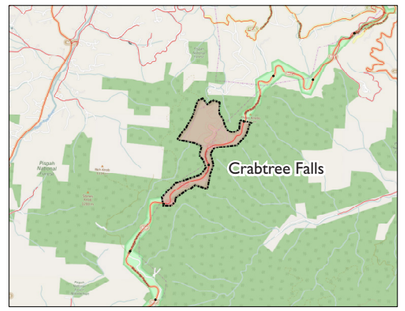
Sources:

Drawn by the Branch of Plans & Design from National Park Service Data, January 1, 1946

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FIGURE 11–8. Original Plan of Land Status in 1946





Key Map (NTS)

0' 200' 400' 800'

North

Notes:

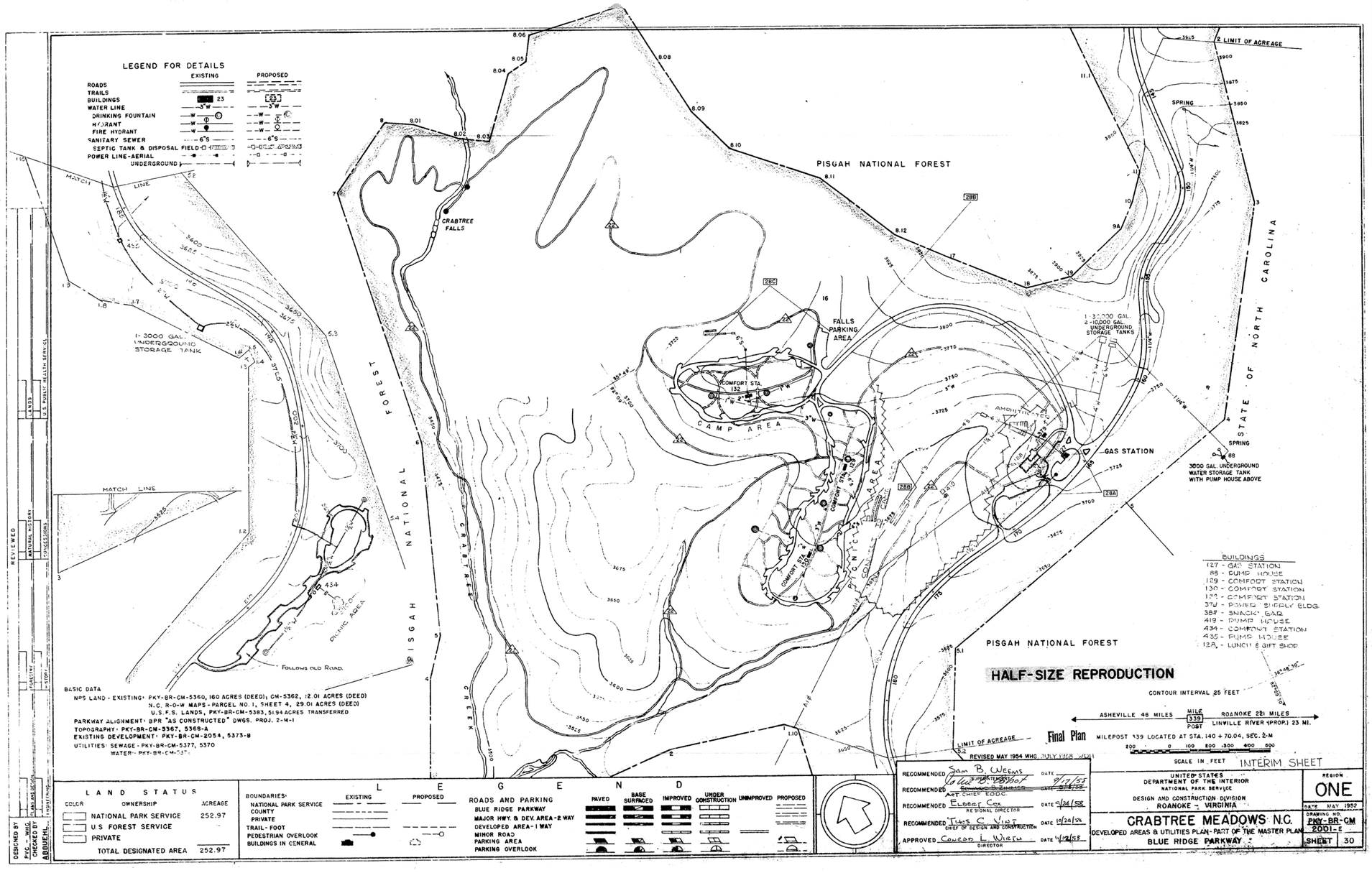
Map showing land status of Crabtree Falls based on a 243.2-acre site when land was added to the original 160 acres in order to include existing trails.

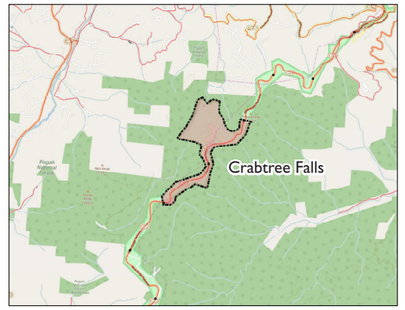
Sources:

Drawing No. PKY-BR-CM, developed by the Plans and Design Division, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Roanoke, VA. April, 1950.

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FIGURE 11–9. 1950 Map Showing 242-Acre Site





Key Map (NTS)

0' 200' 400' 800'

North

Notes:

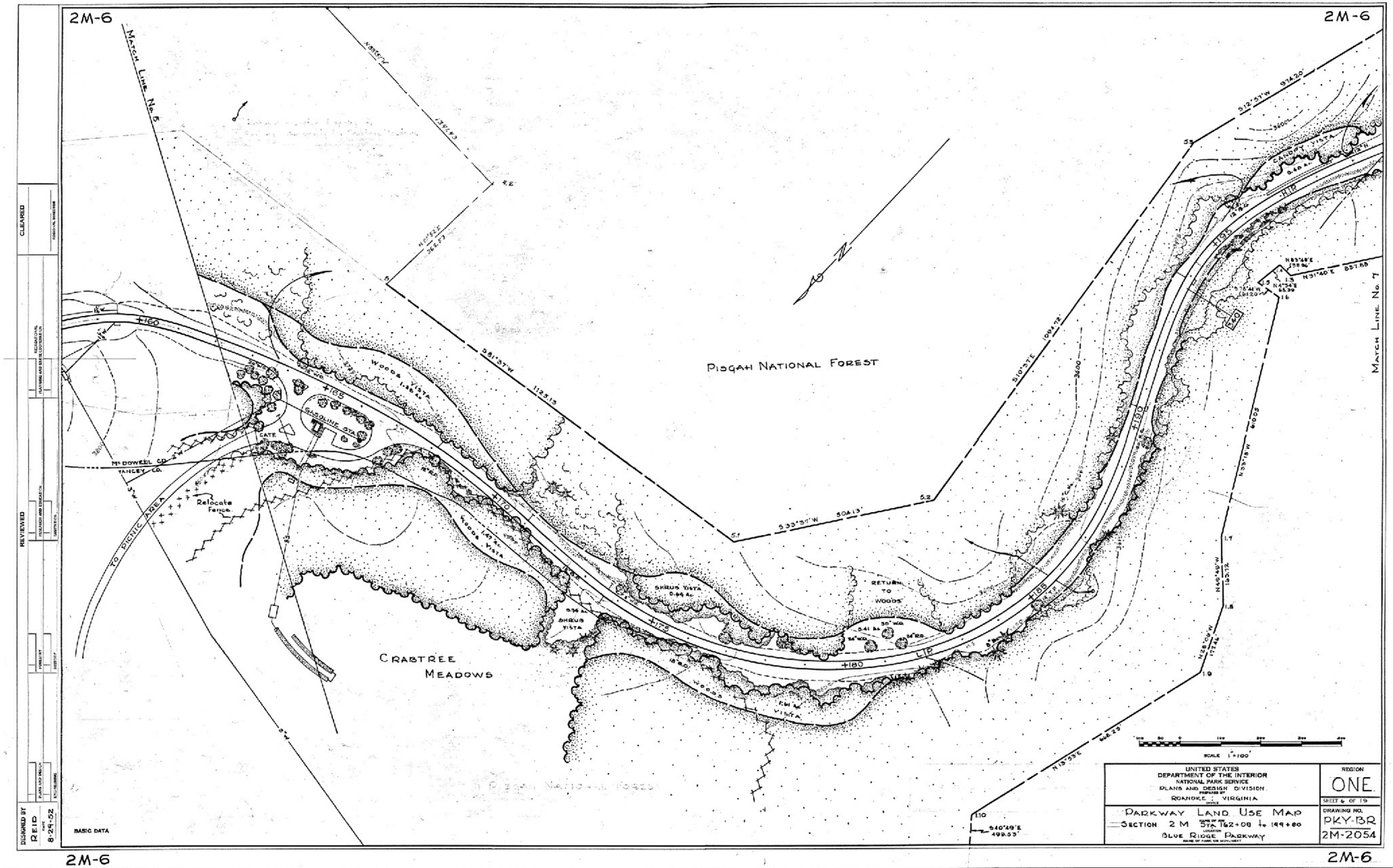
Map showing developed areas and utilities of Crabtree Falls based on a 252.97-acre site that is indicated as being under the ownership of NPS. The plans were drawn in 1952, but not approved until 1958.

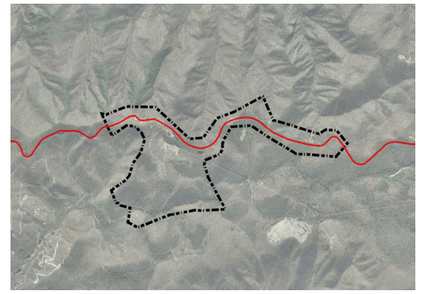
Sources:

Drawing No. PKY-BR-CM, developed by the Design and Construction Division, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Roanoke, VA. May, 1952.

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FIGURE 11–10. Developed Areas in 1952





Key Map (NTS)

0' 100' 200' 300' 500'

North

Notes:

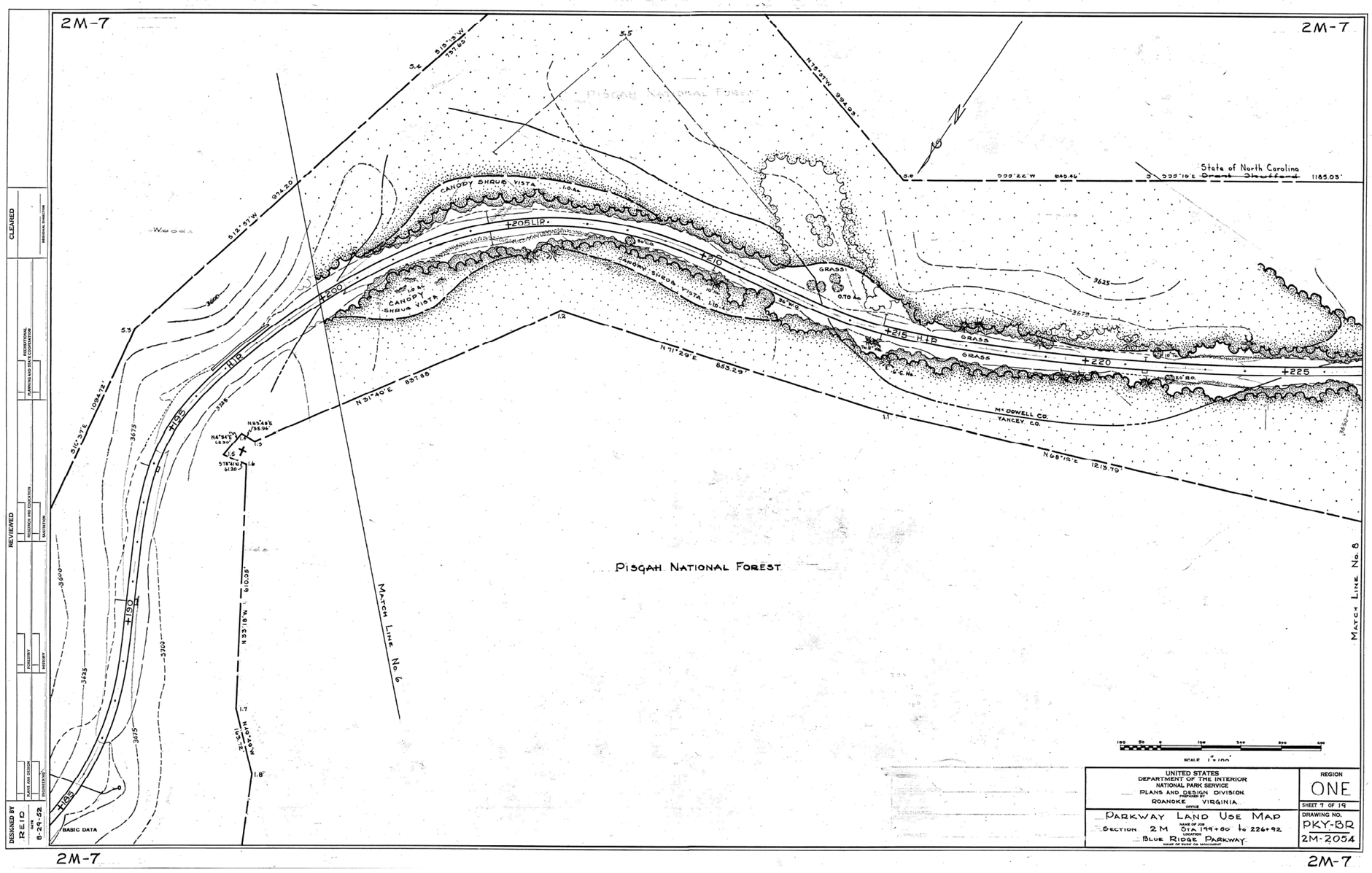
PLUM for Section 2M-6 includes the section of the Parkway in front of the Crabtree campground site. The plans were prepared before the Mission 66 Visitor Center/Restaurant was implemented.

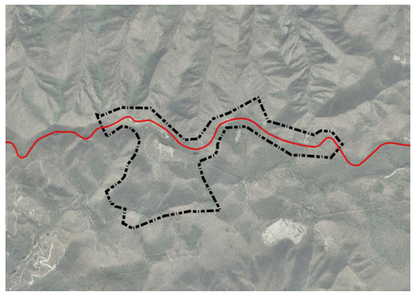
Sources:

Parkway Land Use Map (PLUM) for Section 2M, Station 162+08 to 199+80. Drawing No. PKY-BR, 2M-2054. Developed by the Design and Construction Division, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Roanoke, VA. May, 1952.

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FIGURE 11–11. Parkway Land Use Map (PLUM) for Section 2M-6





Key Map (NTS)

0' 100' 300' 500'

North

Notes:

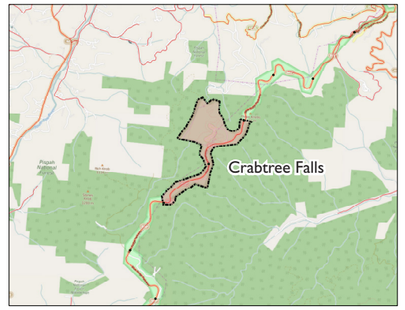
PLUM for Section 2M-7, which extends south from MP339 and stops at the edge of the Crabtree campground. This is one of two PLUMs that makes up the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area.

Sources:

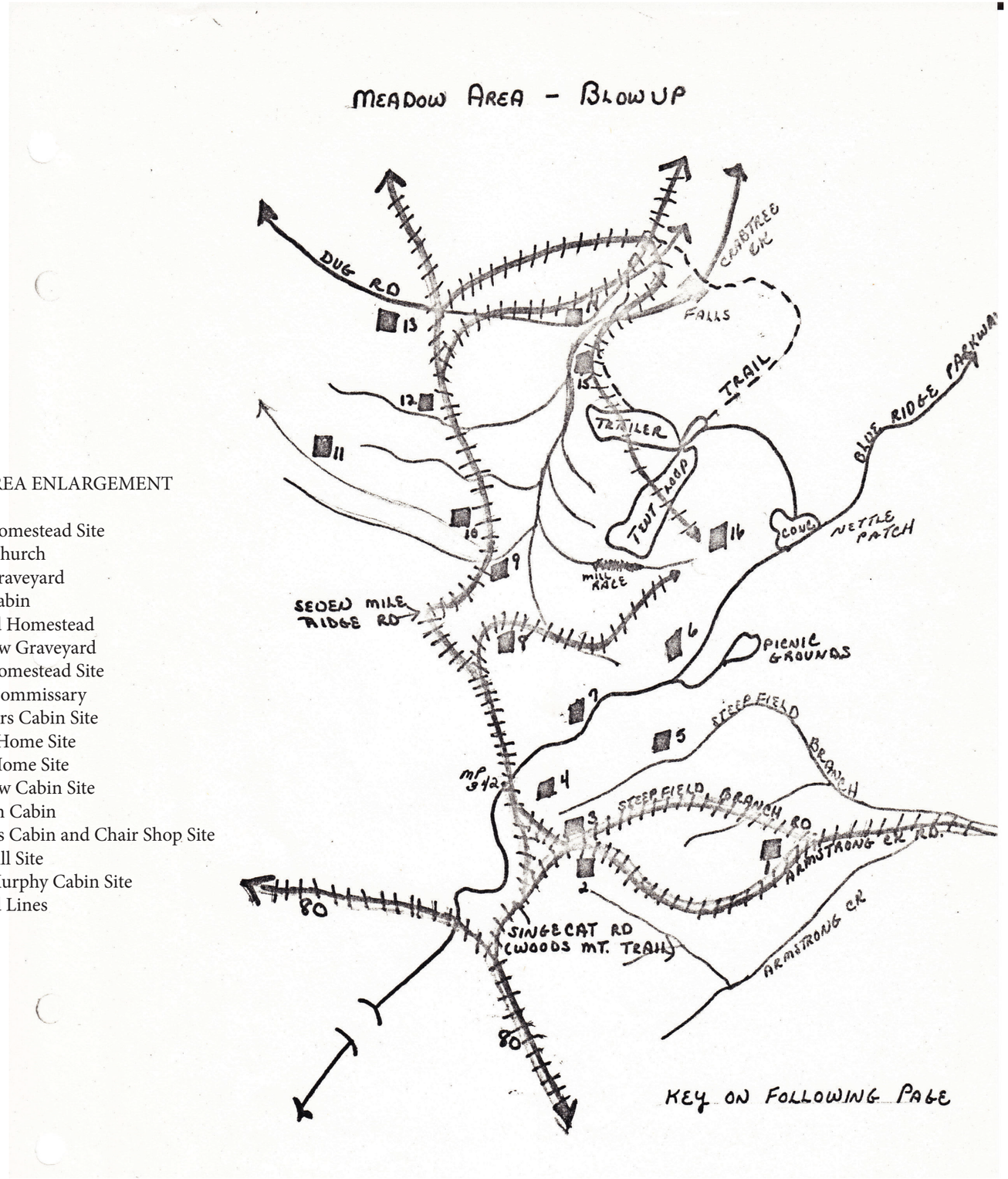
Parkway Land Use Map (PLUM) for Section 2M, Station 199+80 to 226+92. Drawing No. PKY-BR, 2M-2054. Developed by the Design and Construction Division, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Roanoke, VA. May, 1952.

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FIGURE 11–12. Parkway Land Use Map (PLUM) for Section 2M-7



Key Map (NTS)



KEY TO AREA ENLARGEMENT

1. Good Homestead Site
2. Site of Church
3. Good Graveyard
4. Good Cabin
5. Shufford Homestead
6. Bradshaw Graveyard
7. Suttle Homestead Site
8. Site of Commissary
9. McPhlters Cabin Site
10. Wilson Home Site
11. Victor Home Site
12. Bradshaw Cabin Site
13. Harrison Cabin
14. Williams Cabin and Chair Shop Site
15. Grist Mill Site
16. Silver-Murphy Cabin Site
17. Railroad Lines

Not to Scale

North

Notes:

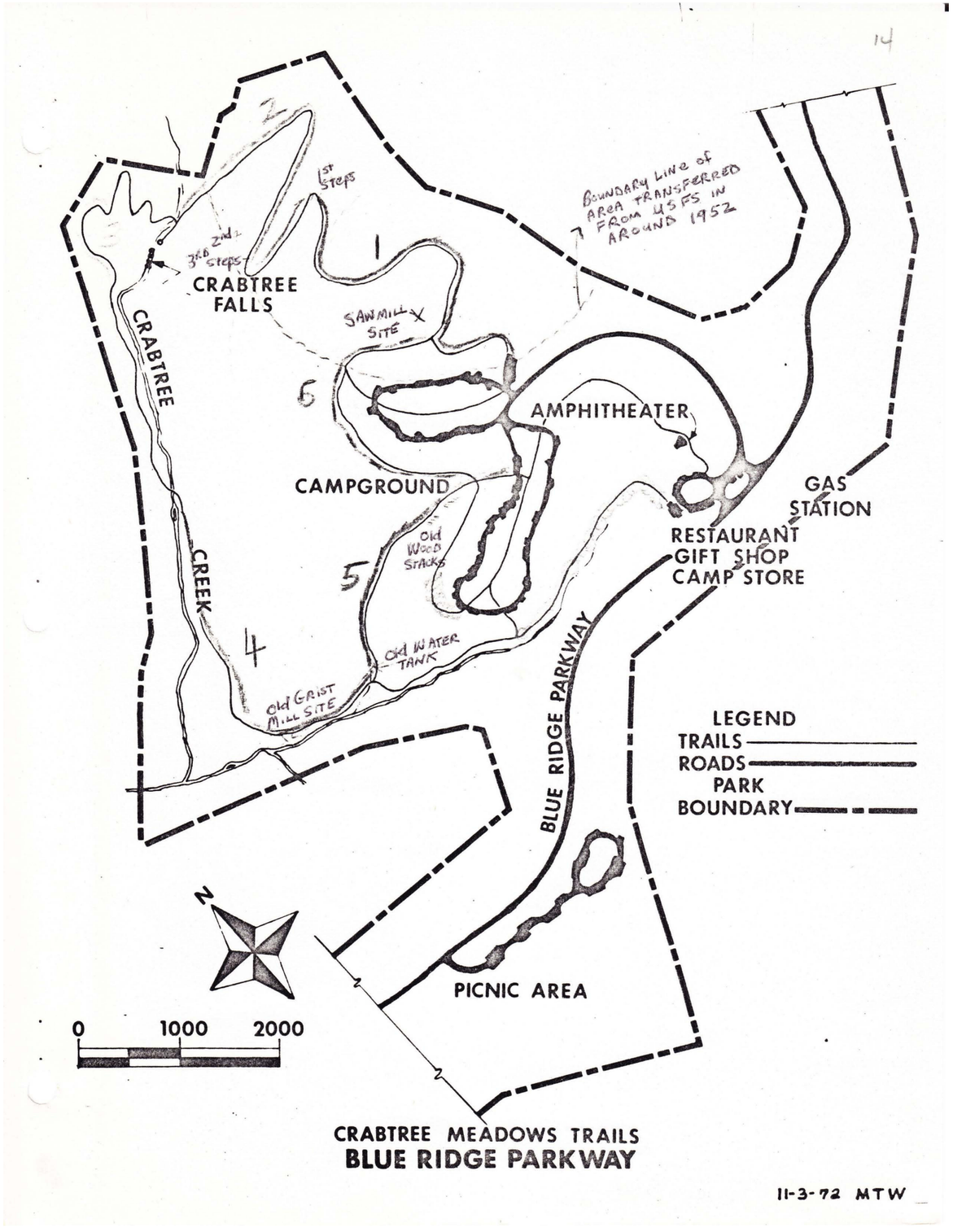
This hand-drawn map is a graphic representation of Margaret Thompson's narrative about early Crabtree Meadows. The map is her recollection of what was on the site and in surrounding areas.

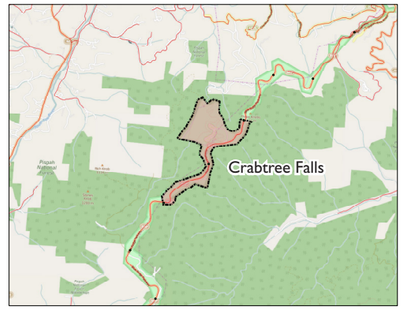
Sources:

Map from Margaret Thompson's "Research on the Early History of Crabtree Meadows," 1974.

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FIGURE 11–13. 1974 Map showing Blowup of Crabtree Meadows





Key Map (NTS)

0' 500' 1,000' 2,000'

North

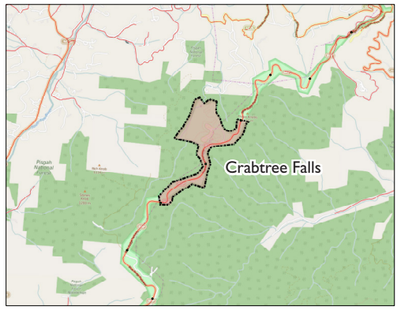
Notes:
This map shows the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area the way it was in 1974. There have been no major changes to the site or park boundary since the map was developed.

Sources:
Map from Larry Scott's "What Every Good Naturalist Should Know about Linville Falls and Crabtree Meadows. Summer 1974.

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FIGURE 11–14. 1974 Map of Crabtree Falls





Key Map (NTS)

Legend

- Blue Ridge Parkway
- Recreation Area Boundary

0' 250' 500' 1,000'

North

Notes:

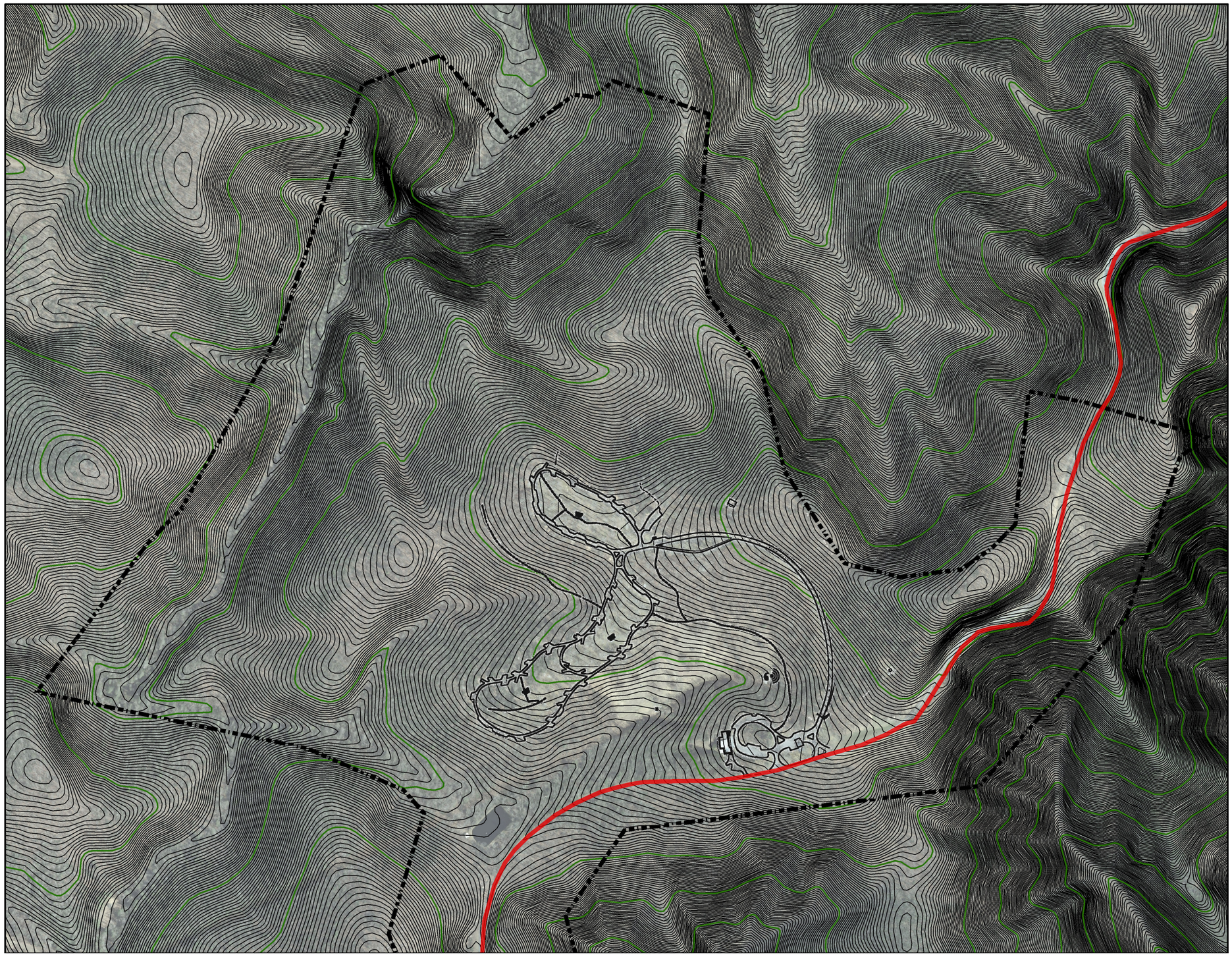
This map shows a 2014 aerial photo of the landscape surrounding the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area and developed elements of the site.

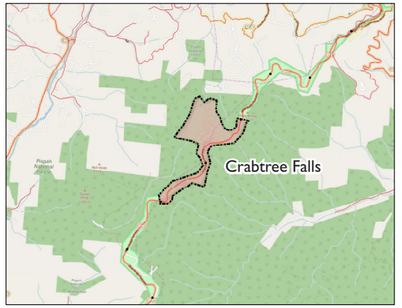
Sources:

The aerial photograph is from ESRI data sources. The line drawings are from a CAD file provide by NPS staff.

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FIGURE 11–15. 2014 Map of Crabtree Falls





Key Map (NTS)

Legend

- Blue Ridge Parkway
- Recreation Area Boundary
- 4' Contours
- 100' Contours

0' 250' 500' 1,000'

North

Notes:

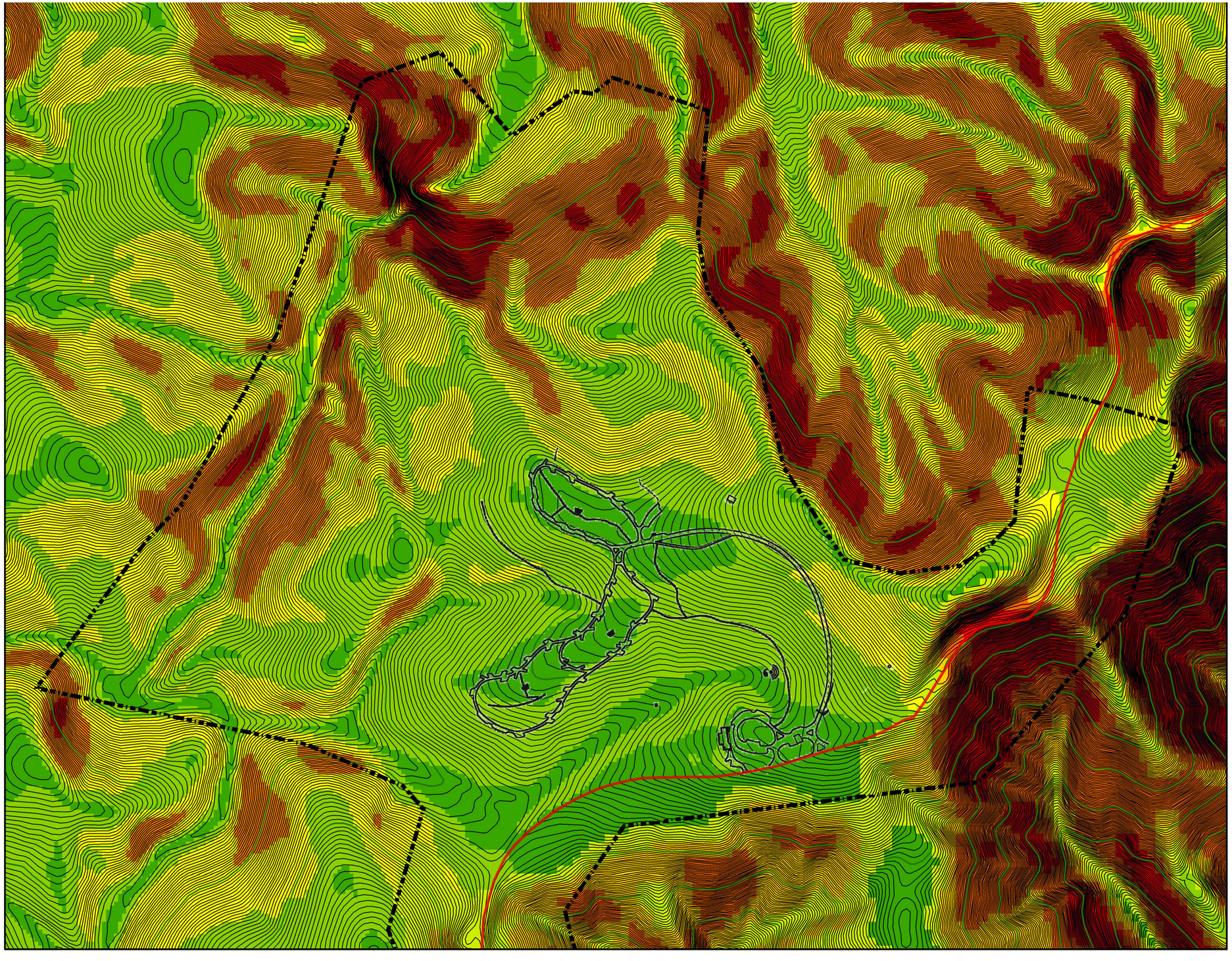
This map shows the topography and a 2014 aerial photo of the landscape surrounding the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area.

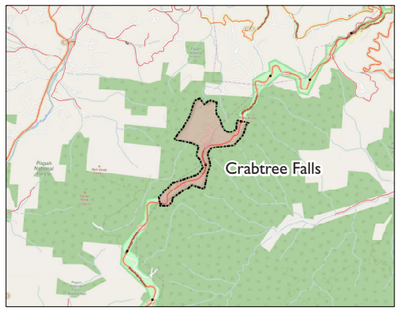
Sources:

The aerial photograph and topography is from ESRI data sources.

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FIGURE 11–16. Topography and Aerial Photo of Crabtree Falls Recreation Area





Key Map (NTS)

Legend

- 4' Contours
- 0 - 5% Slope (Easy to Develop)
- 5 - 12 % Slope (Fairly Easy to Develop)
- 12 - 20 % Slope (Moderately Easy to Develop)
- 20 - 30 % Slope (Fairly Difficult to Develop)
- › 30% Slope (Difficult to Develop)

0' 250' 500' 1,000'

North

Notes:

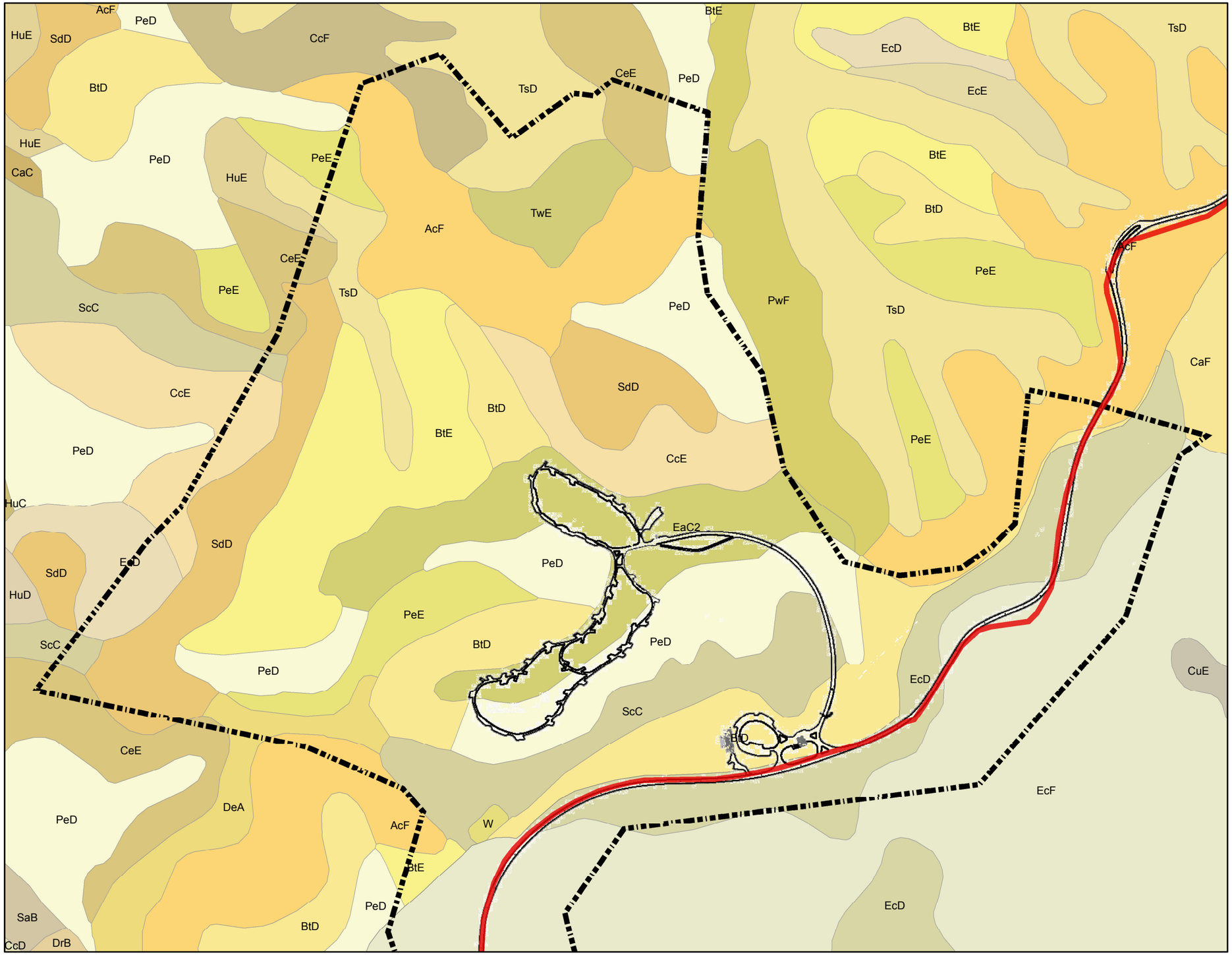
This map shows the topography and a 2014 aerial photo of the landscape surrounding the Crabtree Falls Recreation Area.

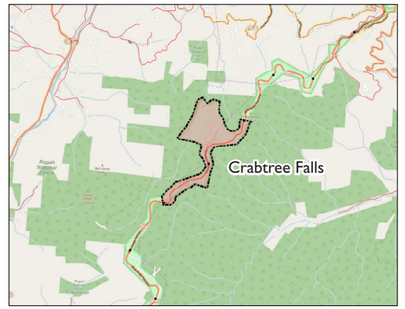
Sources:

The aerial photograph and topography is from ESRI data sources.

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FIGURE 11–17. Slope Analysis of Crabtree Falls Recreation Area





Key Map (NTS)

Legend

- Blue Ridge Parkway
- Recreation Area Boundary

0' 250' 500' 1,000'

North

Notes:

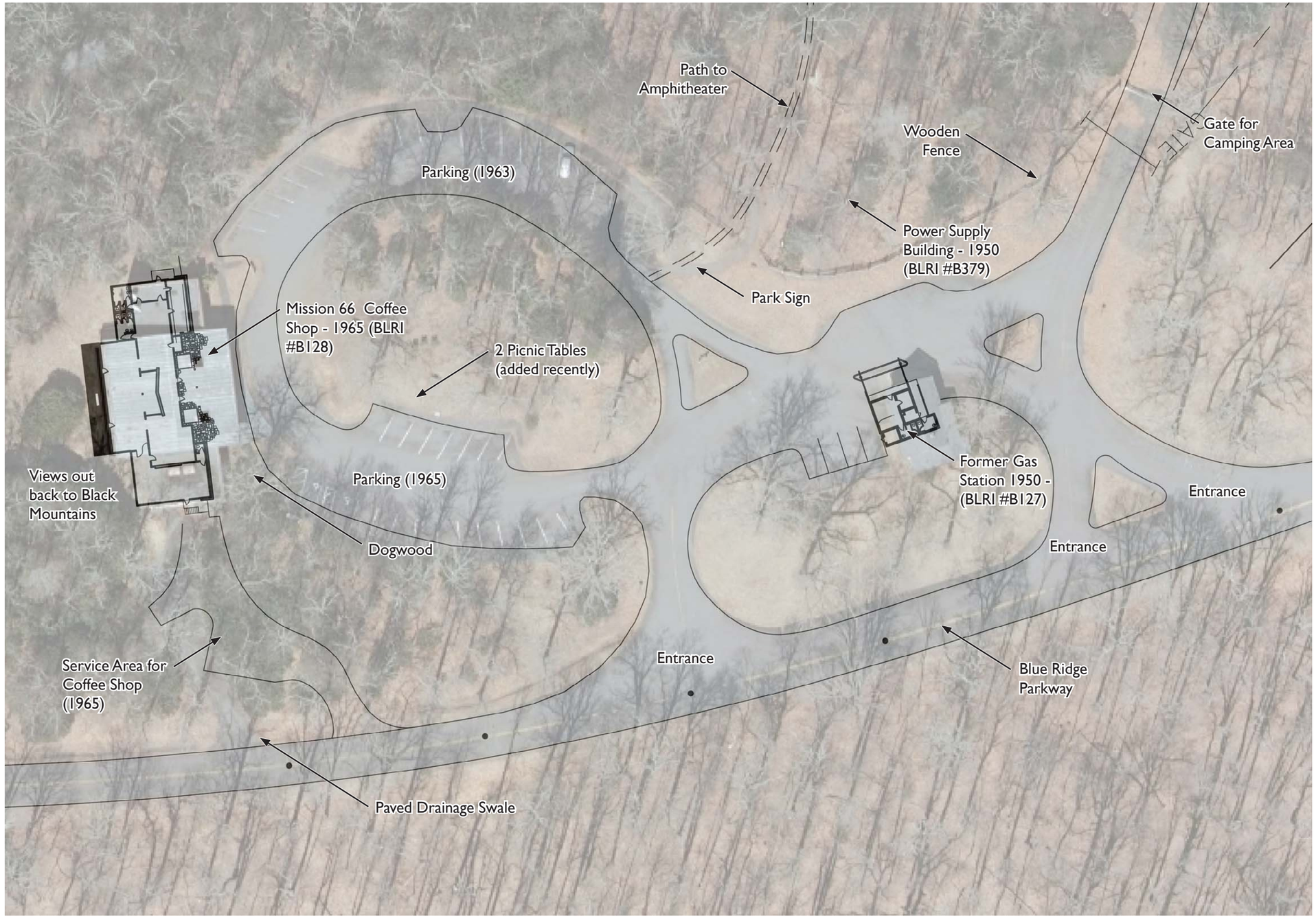
This map is from a data set that is a digital soil survey and generally is the most detailed level of soil geographic data developed by the National Cooperative Soil Survey.

Sources:

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Soil Survey of Yancey County, North Carolina.

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FIGURE 11–18. Soils Map of Crabtree Falls Recreation Area





Key Map (NTS)

Legend

0' 25' 60' 100'

North

Notes:

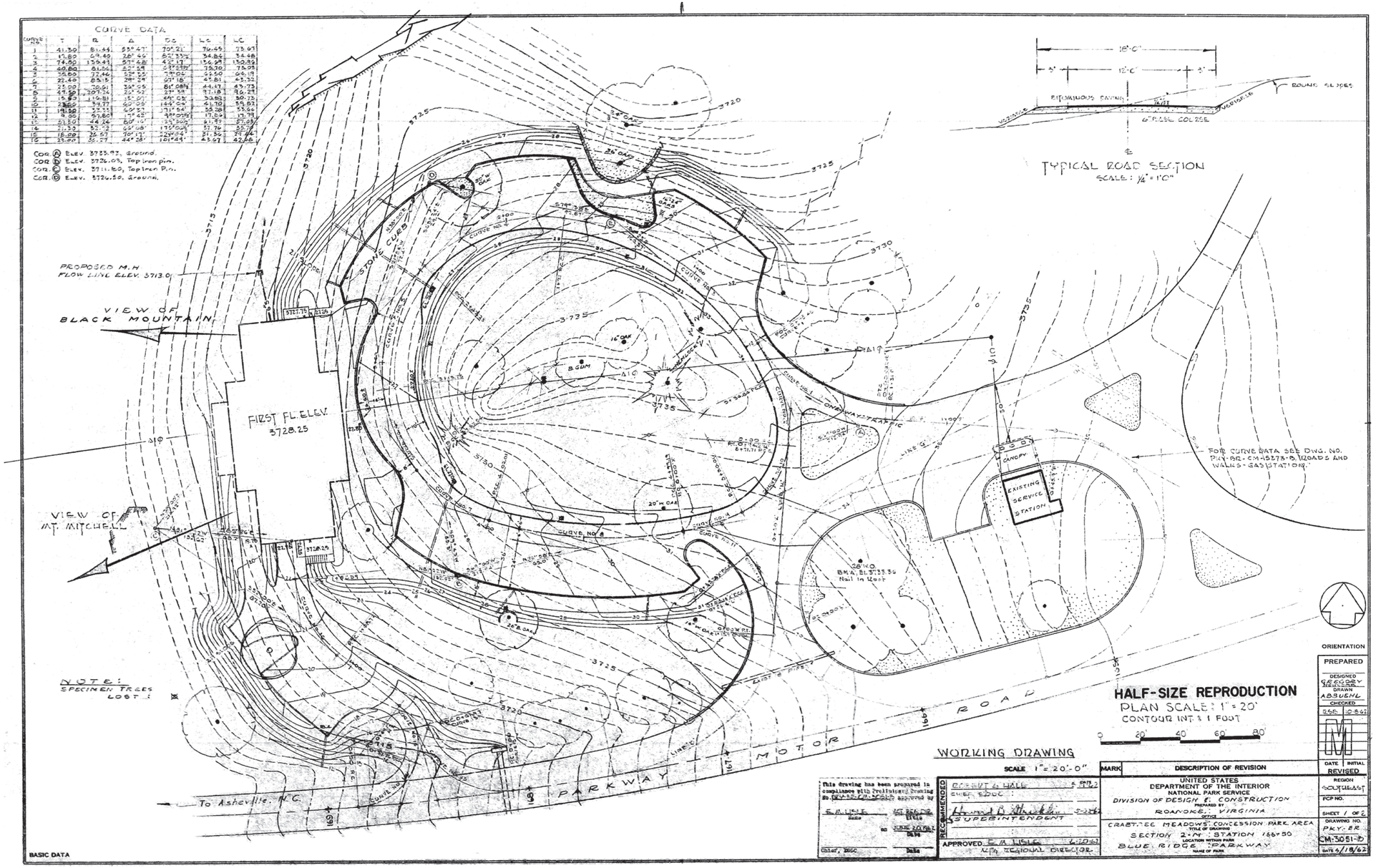
Drawn by the Branch of Plans & Design from National Park Service Data, August, 1952.

Sources:

Layout plan from NPS CAD files created in 2015. The aerial photograph is from ESRI's Image Server, Imagery/Orthoimagery_All.

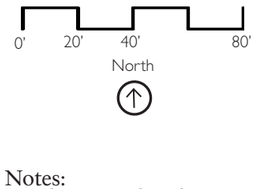
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FIGURE 11–19. Aerial Photo and CAD Plan of Entry Area





Key Map (NTS)



Notes:
Map showing working drawings of the Crabtree Falls entry area.

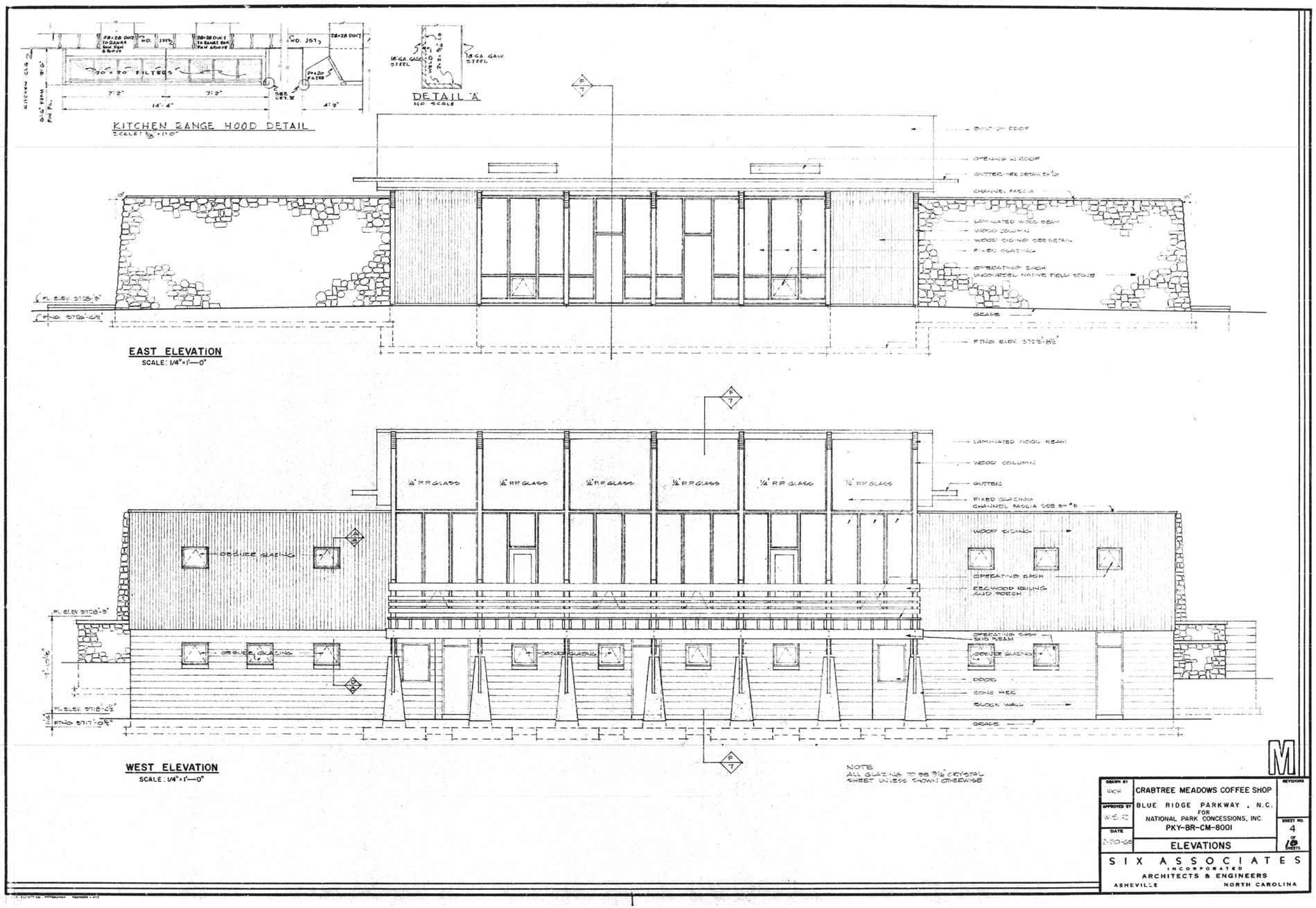
Sources:
Drawing No. PKY-BR, developed by the Design and Construction Division, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Roanoke, VA. 1962.

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FIGURE 11–20. 1962 Map showing Park Entrance Area



Key Map (NTS)



Notes:
Architectural plans showing the front on back elevations for the Mission 66 Coffee Shop at Crabtree Falls. The front of the building faces north and the back faces south. The plans were developed in 1963 and the building was constructed in 1965.

Sources:
Drawings prepared by Six Associates Architects & Engineers, Asheville, NC. 1963 for National Parks Concessions, Inc. Drawing No. PKY-BR-CM-8001, Sheet Number 4 of 10.

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FIGURE 11–21. 1963 Elevations of Mission 66 Visitor Center/Coffee Shop



Key Map (NTS)

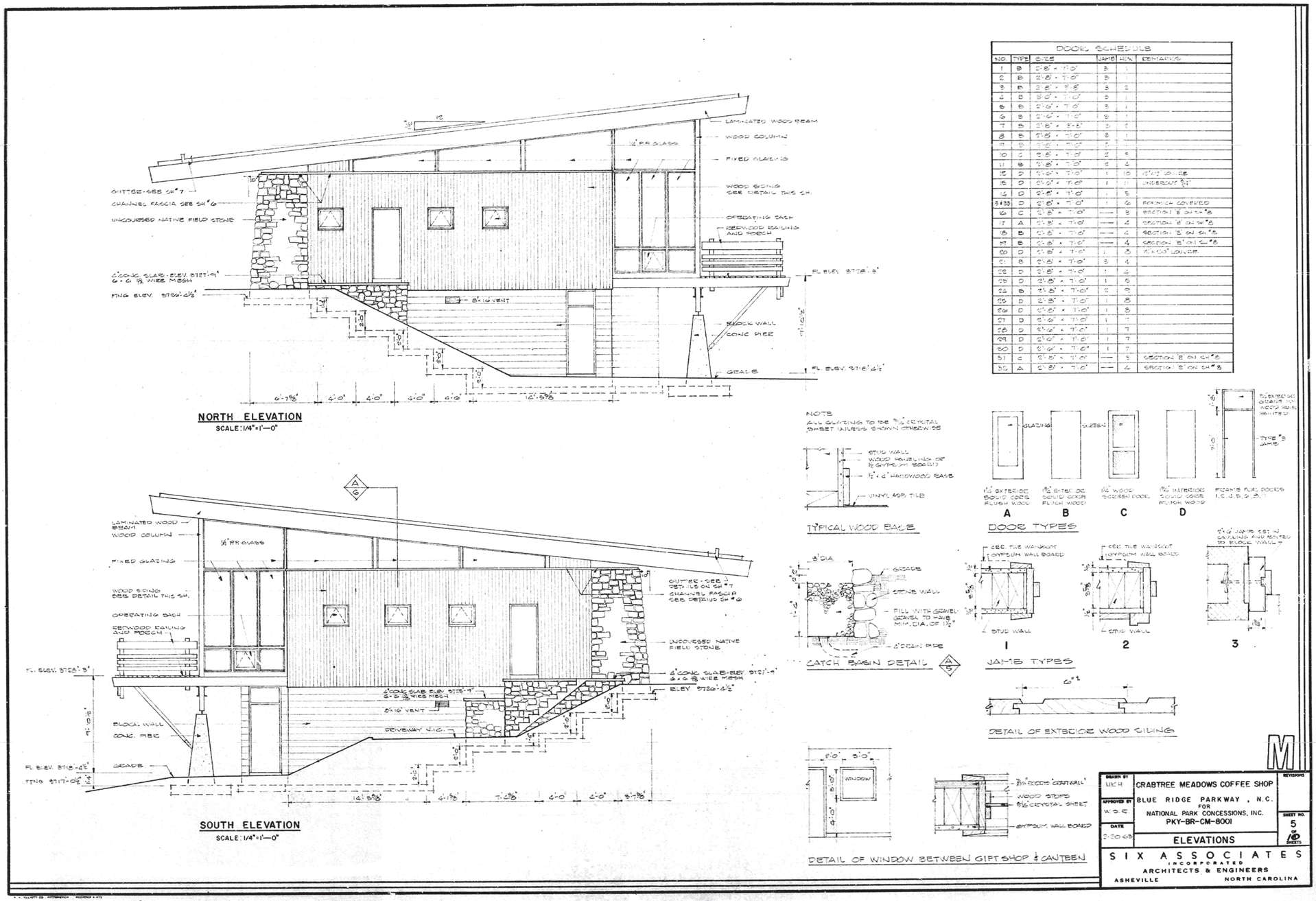
Notes:

Architectural plans showing the side elevations and selected details for the Mission 66 Coffee Shop at Crabtree Falls. The tall part of the building is at the back, and includes floor to ceiling windows to provide views to mountains in the background. The plans were developed in 1963 and the building was constructed in 1965.

Sources:

Drawings prepared by Six Associates Architects & Engineers, Asheville, NC. 1963 for National Parks Concessions, Inc. Drawing No. PKY-BR-CM-8001, Sheet Number 4 of 10.

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DOOR SCHEDULE

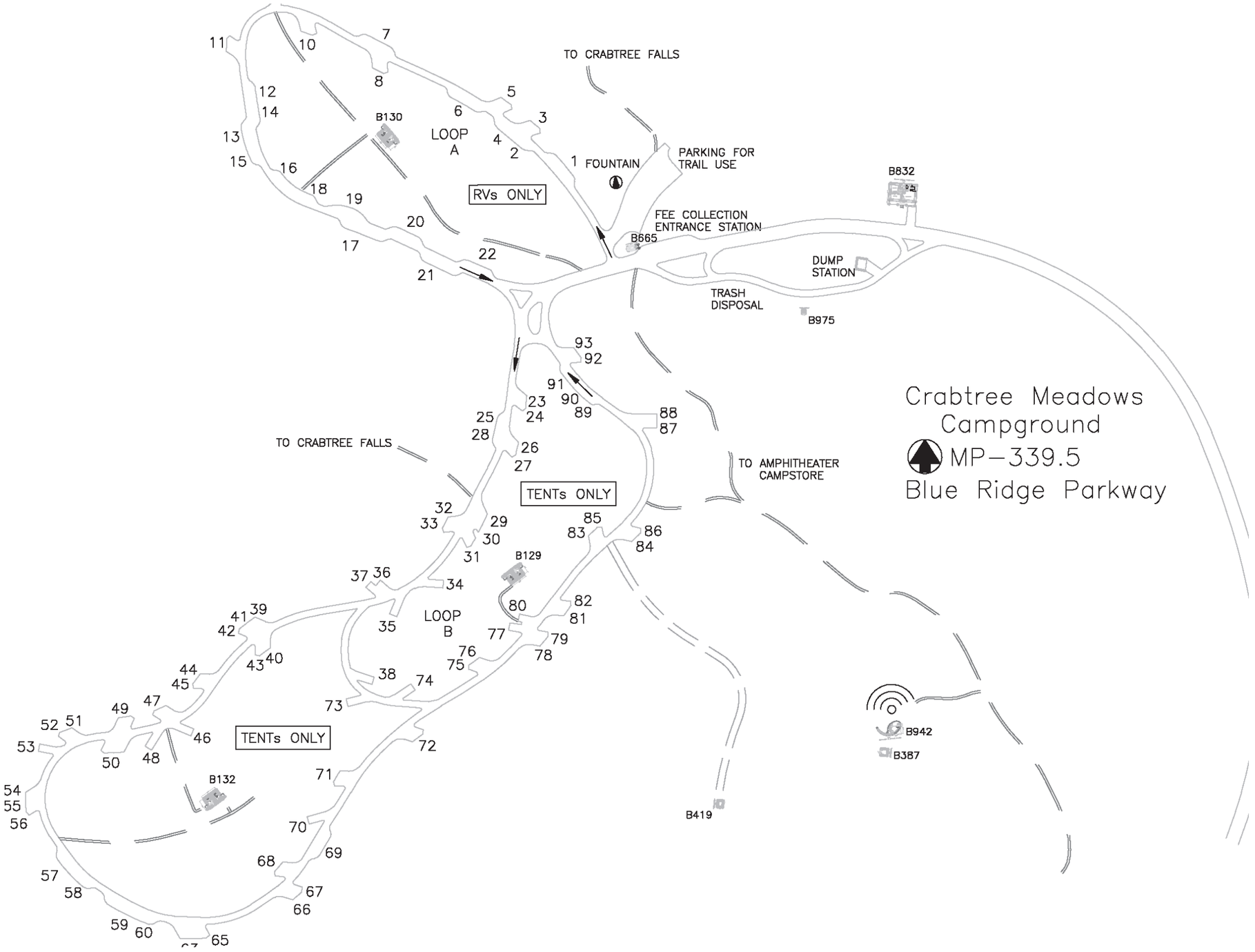
NO.	TYPE	SIZE	JAMB	MIN.	REMARKS
1	B	2'-8" x 7'-0"	B	1	
2	B	2'-8" x 7'-0"	B	1	
3	B	2'-8" x 7'-8"	B	2	
4	B	3'-0" x 7'-0"	B	1	
5	B	2'-6" x 7'-0"	B	1	
6	B	2'-6" x 7'-0"	B	1	
7	B	2'-8" x 8'-8"	B	2	
8	B	2'-8" x 7'-0"	B	1	
9	B	2'-8" x 7'-0"	B	1	
10	C	2'-8" x 7'-0"	2	3	
11	B	2'-8" x 7'-0"	B	4	
12	D	2'-6" x 7'-0"	1	10	10'x12' LOUNGE
13	D	2'-6" x 7'-0"	1	11	UNDERCUT 2"
14	D	2'-8" x 7'-0"	1	5	
5133	D	2'-8" x 7'-0"	1	6	FORMICA COVERED
16	C	2'-8" x 7'-0"	——	3	SECTION E ON SH "8
17	A	2'-8" x 7'-0"	——	4	SECTION E ON SH "8
18	B	2'-8" x 7'-0"	——	4	SECTION E ON SH "8
19	B	2'-8" x 7'-0"	——	4	SECTION E ON SH "8
20	D	2'-8" x 7'-0"	1	3	10'x10' LOUNGE
21	B	2'-8" x 7'-0"	B	1	
22	D	2'-8" x 7'-0"	1	4	
23	D	2'-8" x 7'-0"	1	5	
24	B	2'-8" x 7'-0"	B	3	
25	D	2'-8" x 7'-0"	1	8	
26	D	2'-8" x 7'-0"	1	8	
27	D	2'-6" x 7'-0"	1	7	
28	D	2'-6" x 7'-0"	1	7	
29	D	2'-6" x 7'-0"	1	7	
30	D	2'-6" x 7'-0"	1	7	
31	C	2'-8" x 7'-0"	——	3	SECTION E ON SH "8
32	A	2'-8" x 7'-0"	——	4	SECTION E ON SH "8

DESIGN BY LHH	CRABTREE MEADOWS COFFEE SHOP		REVISIONS
APPROVED BY W.O.S.	BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY, N.C. FOR NATIONAL PARK CONCESSIONS, INC. PKY-BR-CM-8001		SHEET NO. 5 OF 10 SHEETS
DATE 2-20-63	ELEVATIONS		
SIX ASSOCIATES INCORPORATED ARCHITECTS & ENGINEERS ASHEVILLE NORTH CAROLINA			

FIGURE 11–22. 1963 Cross-sections & Details of Mission 66 Visitor Center/Coffee Shop



Key Map (NTS)



North

Notes:

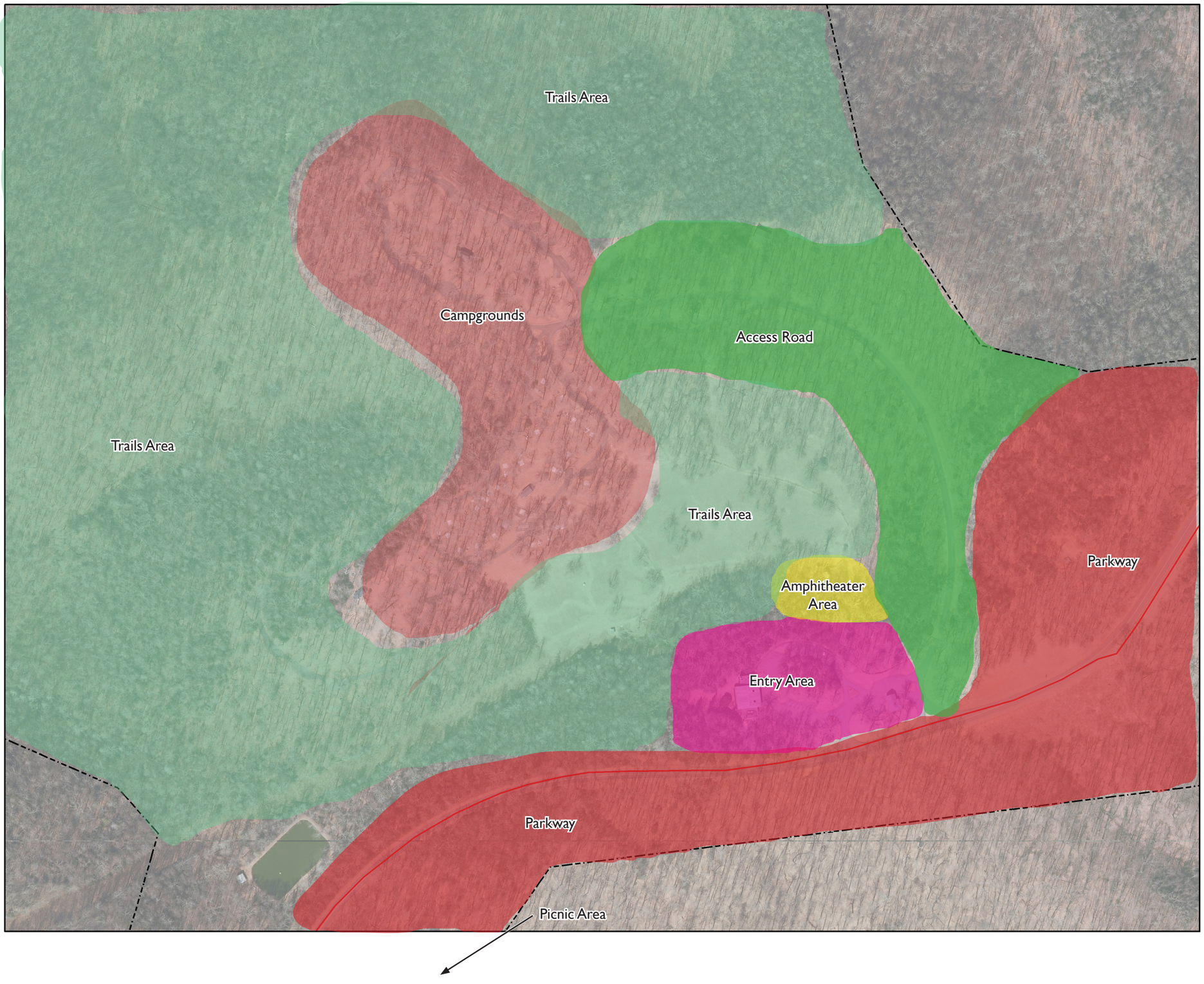
Map showing the number of camping spurs along each camping loop. These spurs are labeled.

Sources:

Drawing prepared by National Park Service. No date given.

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FIGURE 11–23. Map showing Numbered Camp Sites for Camping Loops





Key Map (NTS)

North

Notes:

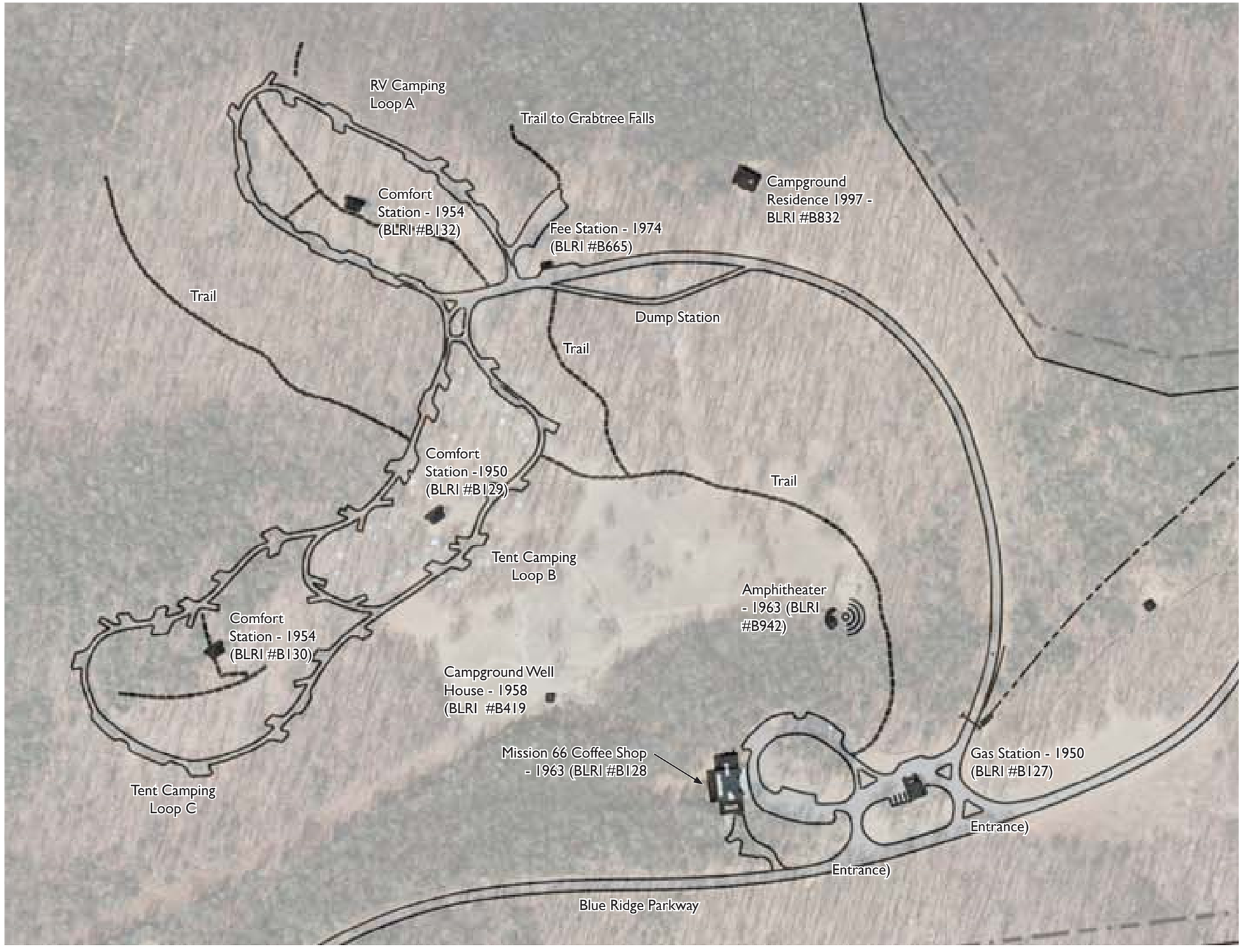
Map showing land uses at Crabtree Falls.

Sources:

Drawing prepared by National Park Service. No date given.

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FIGURE 11–24. Map showing Numbered Camp Sites for Camping Loops





Key Map (NTS)

0' 250' 500' 1,000'

North

Notes:

Drawn by the Branch of Plans & Design from National Park Service Data, August, 1952.

Sources:

Layout plan from NPS CAD files created in 2015. The aerial photograph is from ESRI's Image Server, Imagery/ Orthoimagery_All.

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FIGURE 11–25. Aerial Photo and CAD Plan of Crabtree Falls Recreation Area





Key Map (NTS)

0' 50' 100' 200'

North

Notes:

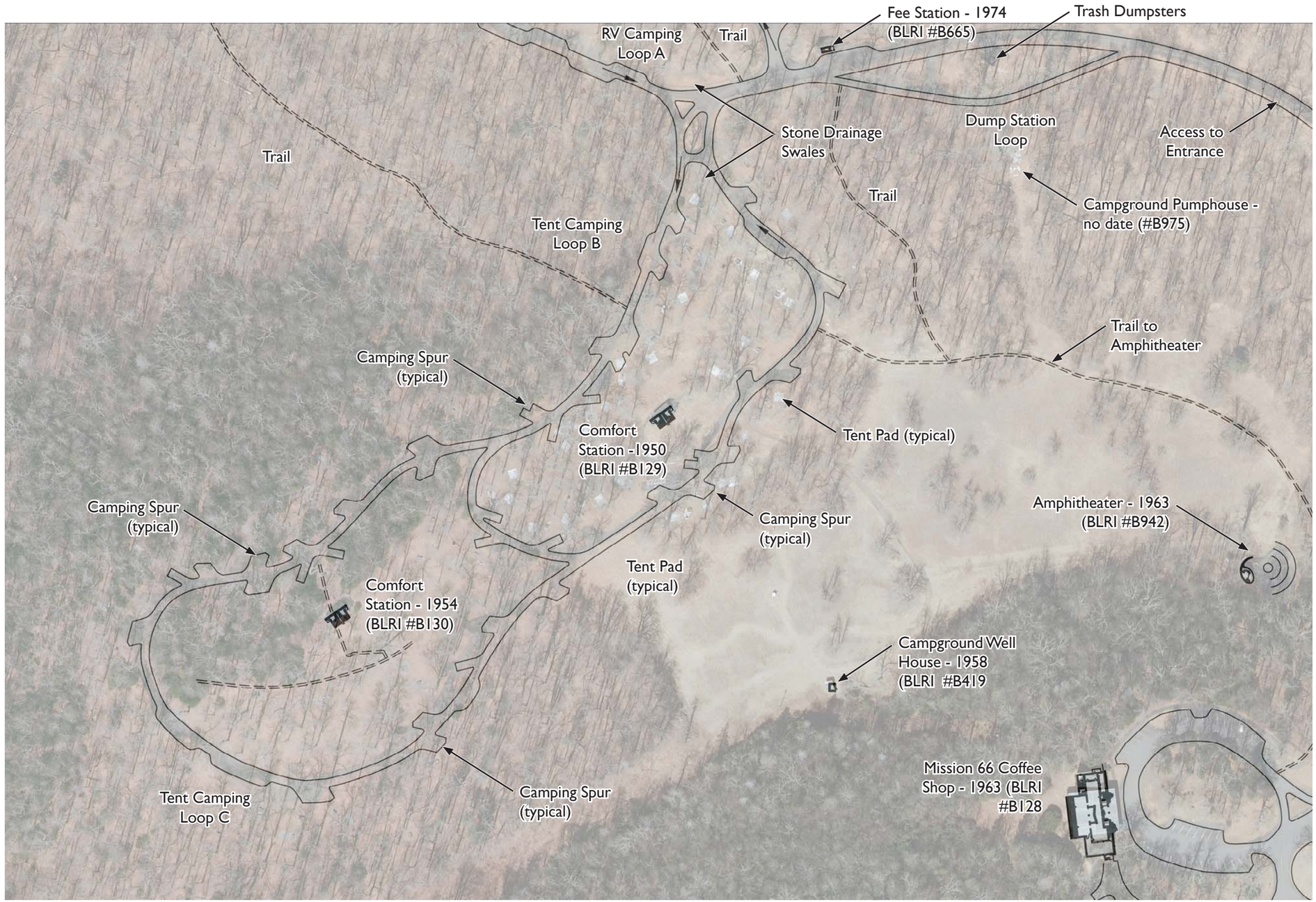
Drawn by the Branch of Plans & Design from National Park Service Data, August, 1952.

Sources:

Layout plan from NPS CAD files created in 2015. The aerial photograph is from ESRI's Image Server, Imagery/ Orthoimagery_All.

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FIGURE 11–26. Aerial Photo and CAD Plan of RV Camping Loop





Key Map (NTS)

0' 50' 100' 200'

North

Notes:

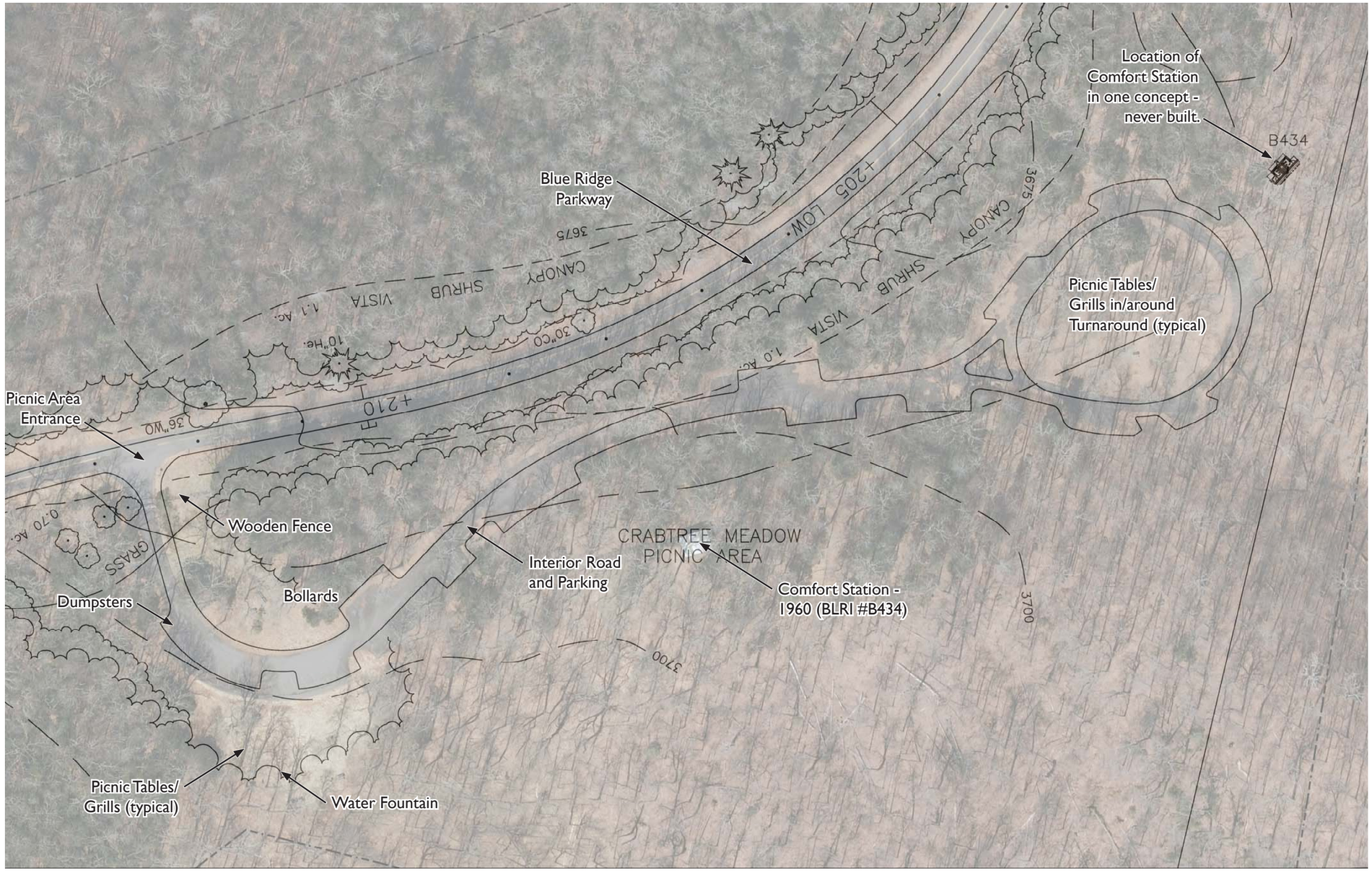
Drawn by the Branch of Plans & Design from National Park Service Data, August, 1952.

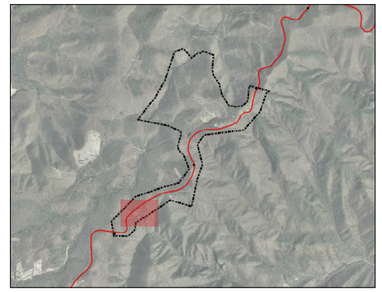
Sources:

Layout plan from NPS CAD files created in 2015. The aerial photograph is from ESRI's Image Server, Imagery/ Orthoimagery_All.

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FIGURE 11–27. Aerial Photo and CAD Plan of Tent Camping Loops





Key Map (NTS)

0' 50' 100' 200'

North

Notes:

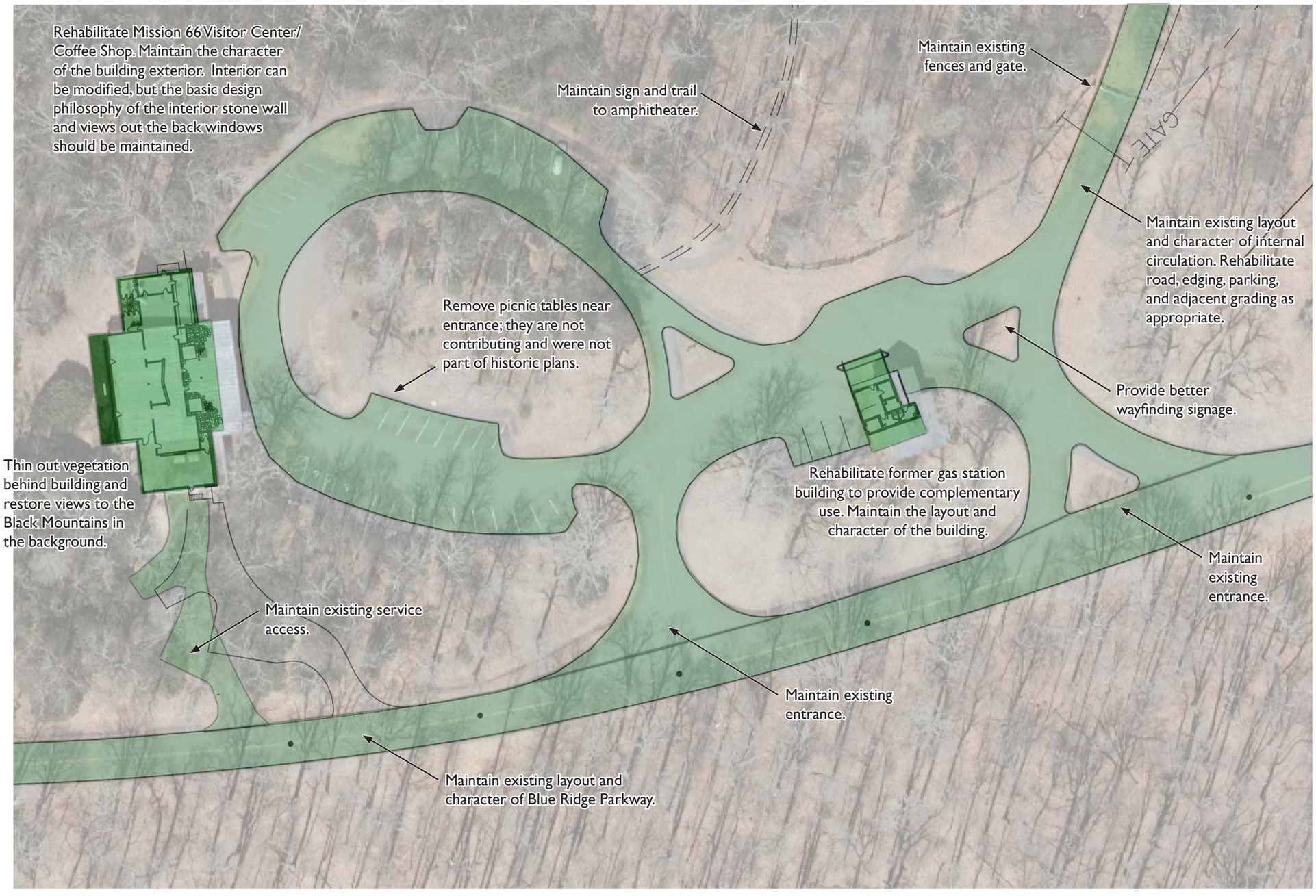
Drawn by the Branch of Plans & Design from National Park Service Data, August, 1952.

Sources:

Layout plan from NPS CAD files created in 2015. The aerial photograph is from ESRI's Image Server, Imagery/ Orthoimagery_All.

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FIGURE 11–28. Aerial Photo and CAD Plan of Picnic Area





Key Map (NTS)

0' 25' 50' 100'

North

Notes:

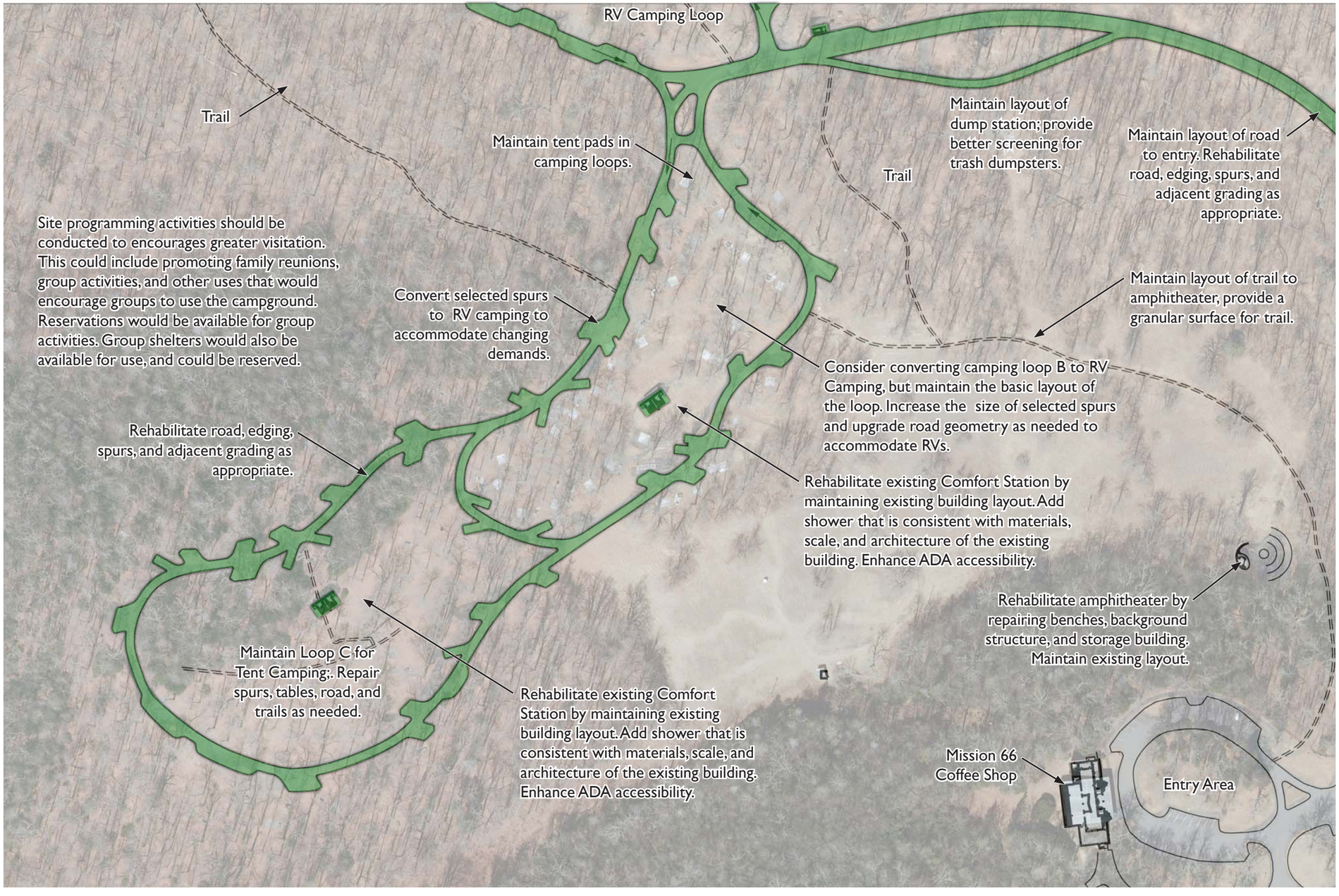
Drawn by the Branch of Plans & Design from National Park Service Data, August, 1952.

Sources:

Layout plan from NPS CAD files created in 2015. The aerial photograph is from ESRI's Image Server, Imagery/ Orthoimagery_All.

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FIGURE 11–29. Treatment Plan for Entry Area





Key Map (NTS)

0' 50' 100' 200'

North

Notes:

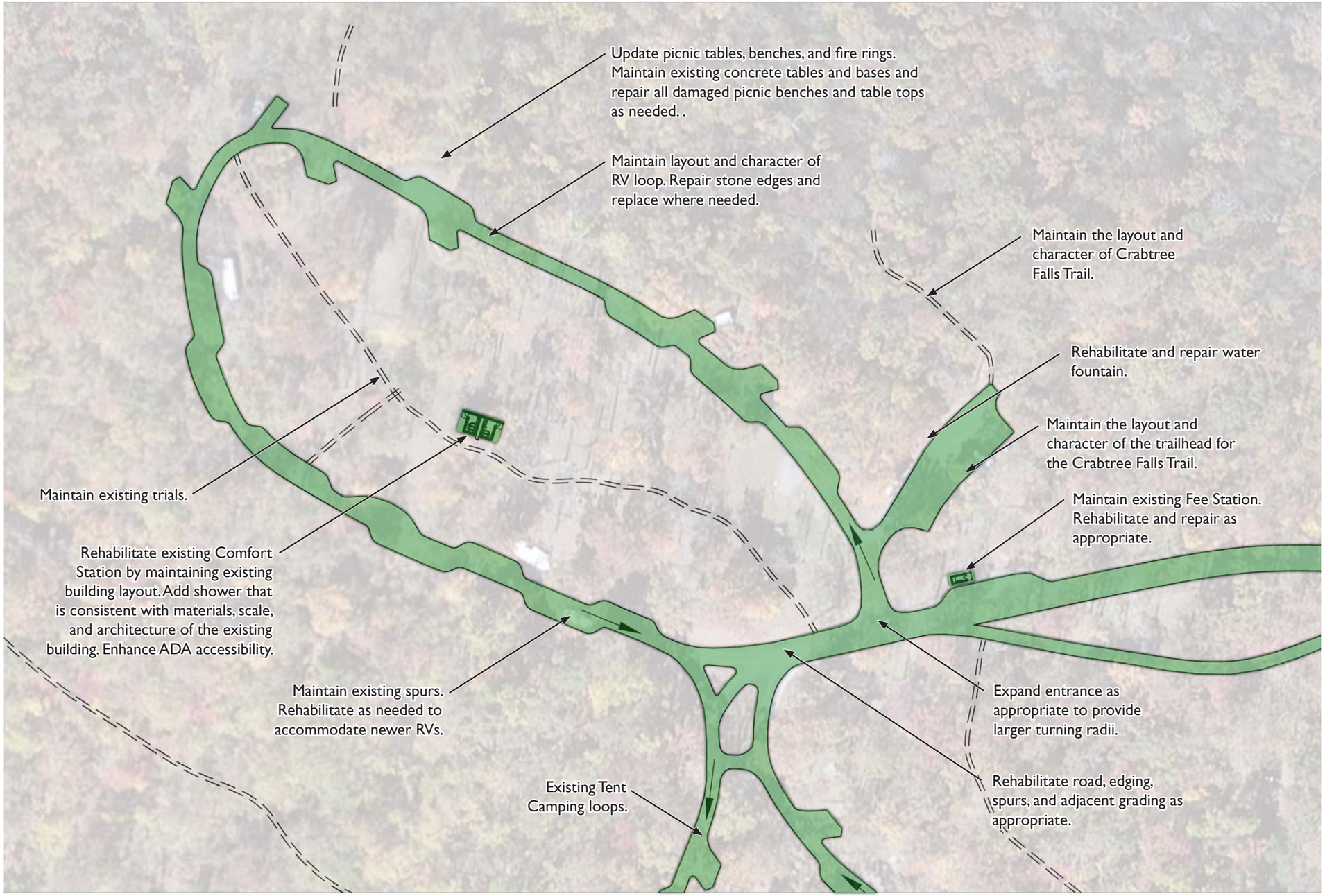
Drawn by the Branch of Plans & Design from National Park Service Data, August, 1952.

Sources:

Layout plan from NPS CAD files created in 2015. The aerial photograph is from ESRI's Image Server, Imagery/ Orthoimagery_All.

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FIGURE 11–30. Treatment Plan for Camping Loops





Key Map (NTS)

0' 50' 100' 200'

North

Notes:

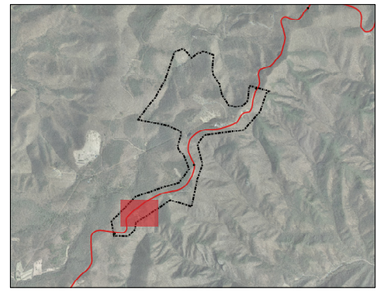
Drawn by the Branch of Plans & Design from National Park Service Data, August, 1952.

Sources:

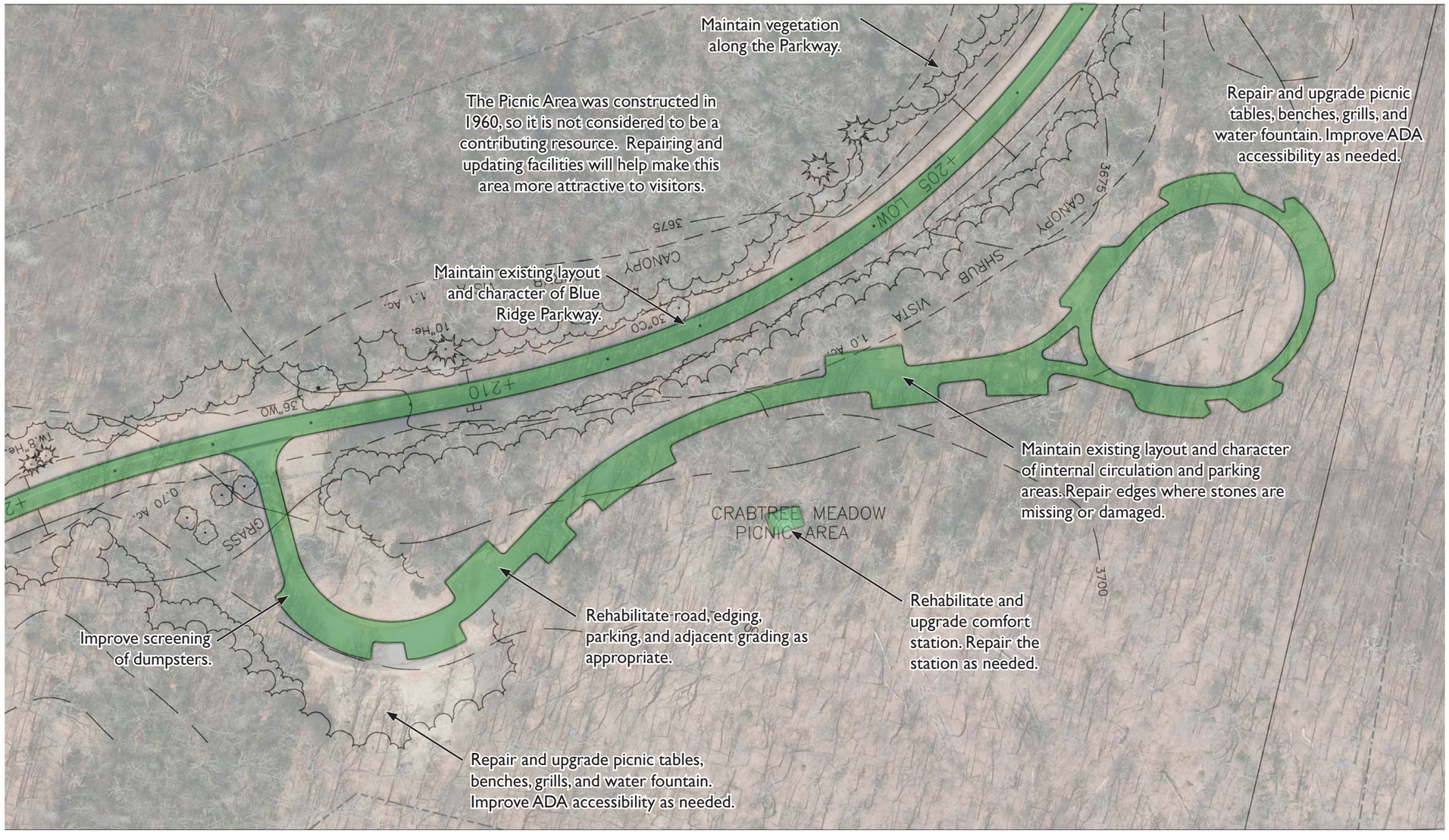
Layout plan from NPS CAD files created in 2015. The aerial photograph is from ESRI's Image Server, Imagery/ Orthoimagery_All.

CRABTREE FALLS
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FIGURE 11–31. Treatment Plan for RV Loop (Loop A)



Key Map (NTS)



0' 50' 100' 200'

North

Notes:

Drawn by the Branch of Plans & Design from National Park Service Data, August, 1952.

Sources:

Layout plan from NPS CAD files created in 2015. The aerial photograph is from ESRI's Image Server, Imagery/Orthoimagery_All.

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FIGURE 11–32. Treatment Plan for Picnic Area



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