Mt. Pisgah
Blue Ridge Parkway

# A Cultural Landscape Report

National Park Service



**2017**

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for submittal to
Blue Ridge Parkway
Southeast Region, National Park Service

**Mount Pisgah**

Blue Ridge Parkway

# Cultural Landscape Report

Approved by: _____ 6/28/17
for Superintendent, Blue Ridge Parkway Date

Recommended by: _____ 7/13/17
Chief, Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science Division, Southeast Regional Office Date

Recommended by: _____ 7/14/17
Deputy Regional Director, Southeast Region Date

Approved by: _____ 7/15/17
Regional Director, Southeast Region Date

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# Chapter One: Introduction and Research Methodology

## Project Background

The Blue Ridge Parkway is one of the most important automobile parkways in the United States and the most visited National Park unit in the nation. The origins of the Parkway date to the Great Depression era projects of the 1930s, conceived and constructed at a time of great national need when unemployment reached unprecedented levels.

At the same time that the country was experiencing great economic turmoil, automobile ownership was on the increase. The route through Virginia and North Carolina created an important infrastructure project linking the Shenandoah Valley and its parkway with the Great Smoky Mountains of Tennessee and provided thousands of jobs in the region.

The section of the Parkway consisting of the Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area (MPRA) was one of the last sections of the Parkway completed — during the Mission 66 period of intensive investment by the National Park Service (NPS). This increase in construction was in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the NPS. It was one of the critical final links in the overall Parkway and one of the most magnificent in terms of scenic beauty.

The portion of the Blue Ridge Parkway traversing Mt. Pisgah between mile markers 407.6 and 409.6 is the study area covered within this Cultural Landscape Report (CLR). The study area contains a campground, a picnic area, the Pisgah Inn, the remnant landscape of the Vanderbilt's Buck Spring Lodge, a water treatment plant, automobile pullover locations, viewing areas, and a rare and sensitive high mountain bog.

Because development of the Parkway has occurred over such a long period — spanning many decades, political administrations, and management regimes — current NPS staff have expressed concerns about a growing lack of continuity among the various built landscape elements. In addition to providing a comprehensive CLR for this section of the parkway, Susan Turner Associates (STA) is specifically tasked with providing a complete photographic inventory of these elements, analyzing their significance and integrity, and providing recommendations for future treatment.

## Early History of Mt. Pisgah

In 1796, the State of North Carolina granted a large tract of land consisting of 250,243 acres to David Allison.[1] In the 1830s, the property was sold to Thomas Lanier Clingman, United States Congressman and Senator from North Carolina. Clingman held the property for the majority of the nineteenth century until it was purchased by George Washington Vanderbilt II. The land tract consisted of forested and agricultural land during most of the nineteenth century during Clingman's tenure.

Beginning in the late 1880s, Vanderbilt began acquiring property for his planned chateau in Asheville and for his extensive estate, including most of Mt. Pisgah which he called "Pisgah Forest."[2] Following the passage of the Weeks Act in 1911 and the untimely death of George Vanderbilt in 1917, his widow, Edith Vanderbilt, sold the majority of the property on the mountain to the National Forest Service (NFS), retaining several hundred acres immediately surrounding the lodge

1 http://alfredwebbparker.tripod.com, accessed November 30, 2011.

2 Quin, Richard. 1997. *Blue Ridge Parkway, HAER Report No. NC-42.* Washington, DC: National Park Service, US Department of the Interior.

she and her husband constructed at Buck Spring Gap in the 1890s.

After the death of Edith Vanderbilt in 1958, her son sold the lodge and the Buck Spring Gap property to the NPS. Final construction and development of the Mt. Pisgah portion of the Parkway occurred in the early 1960s.

Richard Quin, in his extensive work documenting the infrastructure and engineering of the Parkway describes it as follows:

> The Blue Ridge Parkway is many things. It is the longest road planned as a single unit in the United States. It is an elongated park, protecting significant mountain landscapes far beyond the shoulders of the road itself. It is a series of nature preserves replete with high mountain fastnesses, splendid natural gardens of flowering mountain plants, waterfalls and water gaps, deep forests and upland meadows. It is a collection of panoramic views extending into far-off states, making it in one sense the "largest park in the world," as the boundaries of its limited right-of-way are rarely apparent and miles of the adjacent countryside appear to be a part of the protected scene. The parkway is an historic cultural landscape preserving the rough-hewn log cabin of the mountain pioneer, the summer home of a textile magnate, and traces of early industries and transportation networks. It is miles of split-rail fence, moss on a wood shingle roof, broomcorn and flax in a pioneer garden. It is the fleeting glimpse of a deer, a wild turkey or a red fox, or for those who prefer their animal life less wild, a herd of cows lolling in a pasture or horses romping in a field. It is a chain of recreational areas, offering motorists a place to picnic in the woods, a place to sleep overnight in a campground or a charming lodge, to refuel their vehicles, enjoy a meal, or purchase a piece of mountaineer handiwork. It is the product of a series of major public works projects that helped the Appalachian region climb out [of] the depths of the Great Depression. The Blue Ridge Parkway is all these things and much more, therefore it should come as no surprise that this is the most heavily visited unit of the National Park Service.[3]

The all-encompassing description above shows that the original planners of the Parkway thought broadly, yet specifically and in great detail. Their hard work and efforts have provided an important resource for the world and an important recreational park for residents and visitors.

3 Quin, 6.

## Research

There exists a large and extensive body of previous work documenting the origins and development of the Blue Ridge Parkway. This report utilizes that existing information through a summation of the area's history and through recommendations made at the end of the report. Most of this information is more broadly conceived and provides a general backdrop for the overall Parkway.

Missing from the previous work was a detailed inventory of the specific landscape elements of the MPRA and an analysis and recommendations related to these elements. This CLR records details of picnic benches, tent pads, charcoal grills, and similar fine-scale landscape elements in addition to the larger features like comfort stations and other architecture.

The recordation and analysis of these various elements documents the existing conditions of the recreation area, and supports the rationale for treatment. The recommendations vary from broad to extremely specific, and enable park service staff to choose those treatments, upgrades, and improvements that best protect the resources of the park and that increase visitor numbers and improve the visitor experience while using the park. In this time of tight budgets and limited resources, these inventories, analyses, and recommendations are an important resource for making treatment decisions affecting NPS assets and enhancing the public's use of the Parkway.

The basic steps of collecting the information for the development of a CLR are outlined below. The process is dynamic and sometimes cyclical, with research typically occurring while site reconnaissance is also underway. During this process of discovery, scope changes constantly, yet fundamental rules related to the inventory, analysis, and recommendations always apply.

### Primary Documents

#### Manuscripts

The NPS has an extensive collection of manuscript documents related to the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area located in various archives and repositories, including maps, plans,

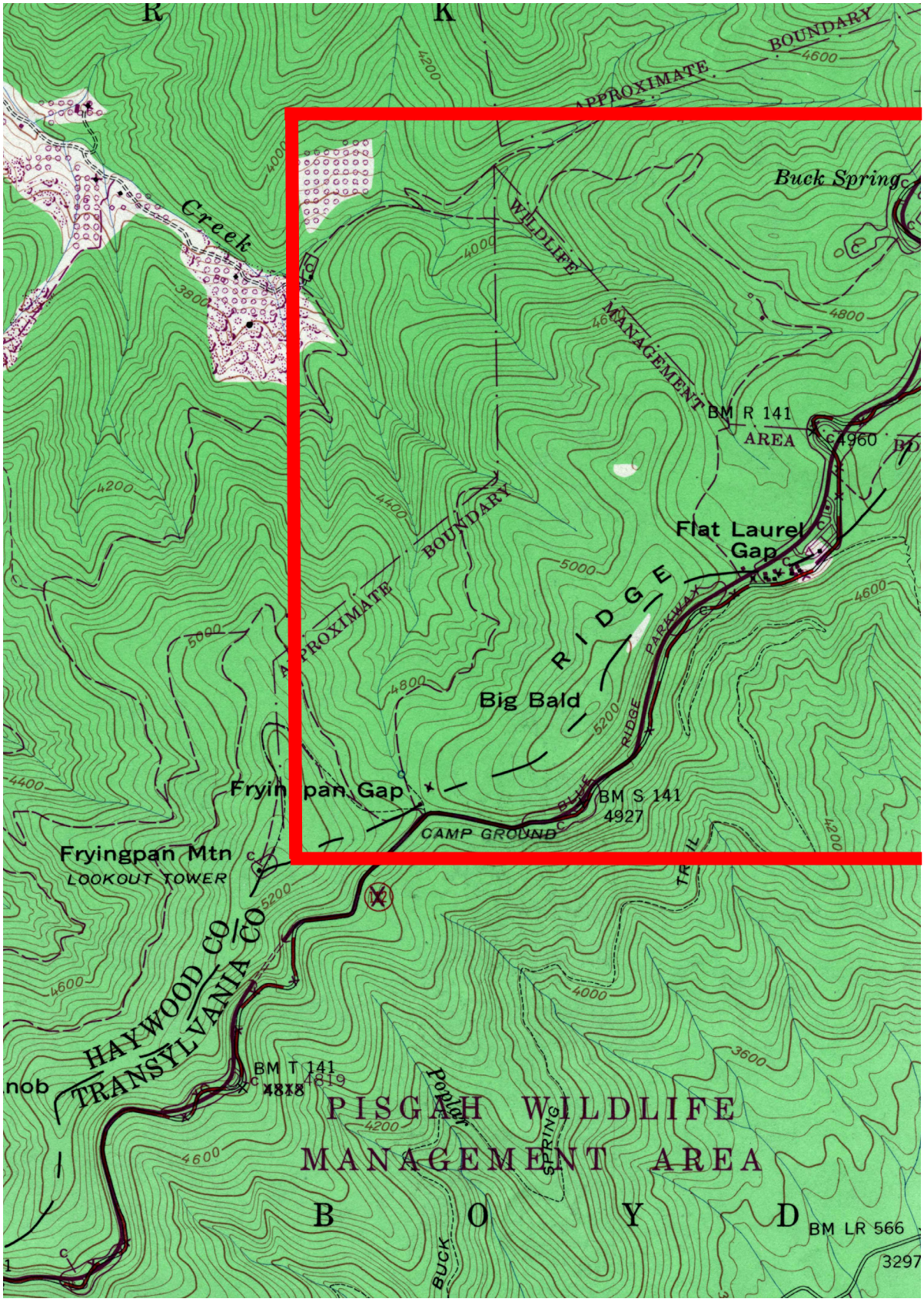



**Figure 1.** U.S. Geological Survey. 1941. Cruso quadrangle, North Carolina: 1:24,000. 7.5 minute series. Washington, D.C.: USGS.

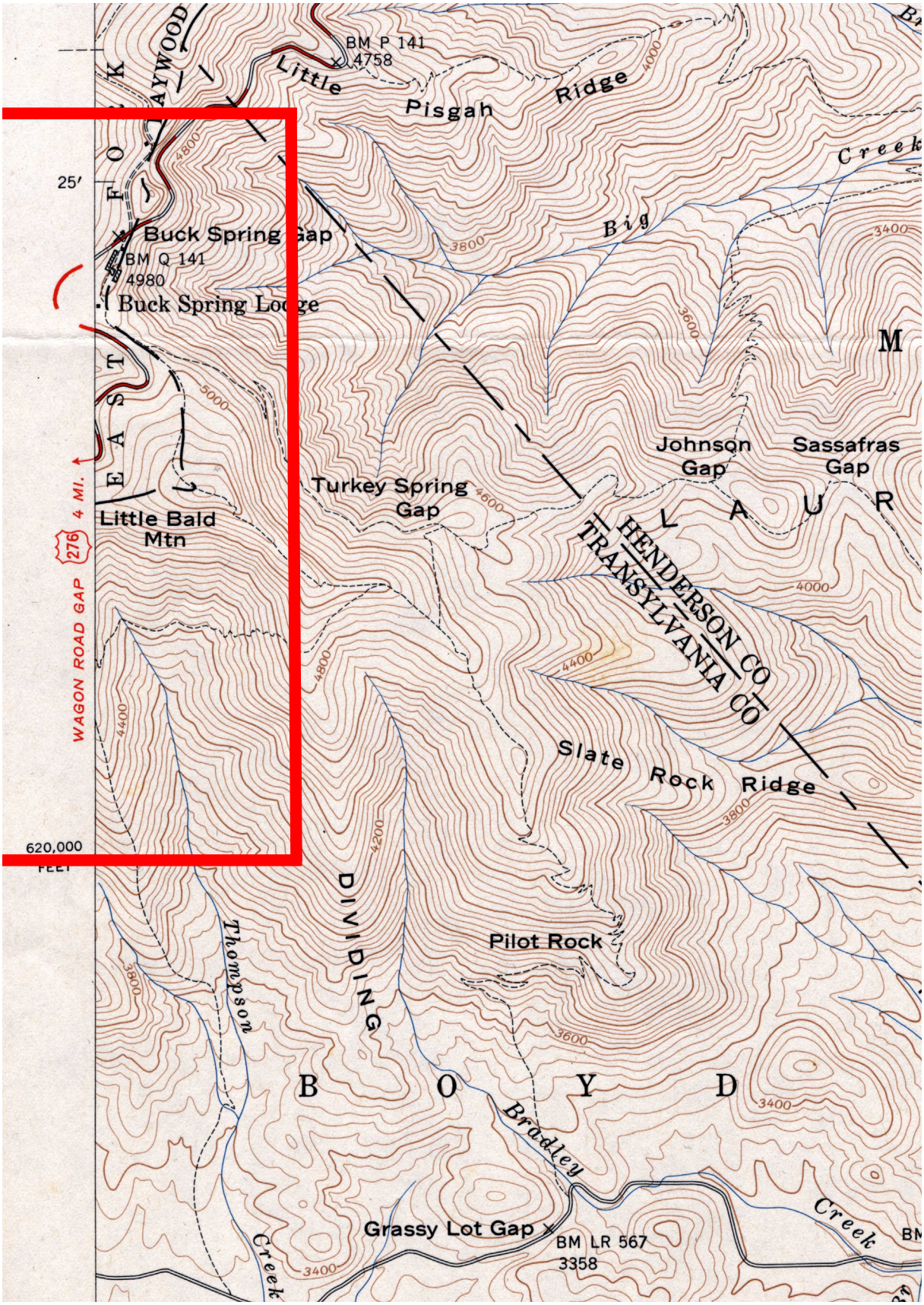



**Figure 2.** U.S. Geological Survey. 1943. *Dunsmore Mountain , North Carolina*: 1:24,000. 7.5 minute series. Washington, D.C.: USGS.

reports, and correspondence. STA visited several of these locations while conducting the research for this CLR. The first archive visited was at the Blue Ridge Parkway (BLRI) headquarters just outside of Asheville, NC, to review the photographs and documents available for duplication and analysis. We also visited the BLRI Museum Collections Storage Facility, managed by Jackie Holt, BLRI Curator. Our consultant Ian Firth also visited the NPS repository in the Northeast Regional Office, Philadelphia, PA.

### Historic Photographs

Photographs are often the most illuminating documents recording historic landscapes, particularly when they are dated, or when their date can be assumed based upon the photographs' content. The largest collections of historic photographs that we were able to survey unfortunately relate to two significant developments that were demolished over fifty years ago — the original Pisgah Inn and the collection of buildings that comprised the Vanderbilt's Buck Spring Lodge. While these images are not essential for an evaluation of existing conditions, they provide perspective on the "rustic" backdrop that was original to many properties of the NPS nationally, and to this region specifically.

### Aerial Photographs

Included in the report are two aerial photographs dated 1941 and 1953. They are important records of the old roadways and structures related to the original Pisgah Inn and Buck Spring Lodge. The analysis of the photographs also shows the progression of the overall landscape character during the period that they cover.

### U.S.G.S. Maps

The two preceding U.S.G.S. maps show the study area in the early 1940s. One can see the new Parkway road, the remnant road to the southeast of Pisgah Inn, the relatively flat area of the high mountain bog, and the steep topographic relief of the area.

## Secondary Documents

As mentioned earlier, a critical component of any CLR is the existence of prior research conducted by the staff of the NPS or by consultants contracted to author reports and studies for the NPS. Richard Quin's comprehensive survey of construction along the Blue Ridge Parkway conducted as part of the Blue Ridge Parkway Recording Project in 1997, resulted in a Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) report that provided background information concerning development of the section of the parkway included in this CLR.[4] As the planners and designers of the Parkway knew when they originally conceived and fought for the scenic route on the uppermost ridge of the Blue Ridge Mountains, engineering and construction was going to be a monumental challenge. Quin documents the difficulties, failures, and successes of this major construction project with a keen eye to both the technical issues and the changing political climate that affected the choices that were made during the period of construction spanning the fifty plus years between 1935 and 1987.[5]

Another important secondary source is the work of Professor Ian Firth (along with Rachel Hildebrandt) that was used by the NPS in the draft nomination of the Parkway for National Historic Landmark status. The report, "Blue Ridge Parkway, Virginia and North Carolina: Historic Resource Study," is an extensive survey of the history and development of the origins, construction, and significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Firth's involvement with our team was integral in our decision to pursue this work, and his participation greatly strengthens our analysis and recommendations.

Steven Kidd, Cultural Resources Specialist and Archeologist with the Blue Ridge Parkway, provided various reports and photographs. He also provided historical drawings from Parkway archives and from the BLRI Museum that illustrate original designs for picnic tables, campsites, and other landscape elements. These are included in the report.

Since the history of Mt. Pisgah and the Buck Spring Lodge are so closely tied to the Vanderbilt family, the researchers visited Biltmore and were assisted there by Bill Alexander (landscape and forest historian) and Jill G. Hawkins (associate archivist). They provided information related to the history

4 Quin, Richard. 1997. "Blue Ridge Parkway, HAER Report No. NC-42." Washington, DC: National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

5 Quin, ii.

of the lodge and also kindly gave us access to the archives at Biltmore House. This added greatly to our and to collaborator Bill Mann's understanding of this important historical development at Mt. Pisgah.

Bill Mann, FASLA and Professor Emeritus at the University of Georgia conducted the research and writing related to Buck Spring Lodge, since its history is such an integral part of the story of Mt. Pisgah and Pisgah Forest. Looking at the development of Pisgah within the context of an extremely large estate complex, with the lodge serving as yet another one of its associated properties, is relevant to the construction of roads, forestry management in the United States in general, and to the recommendations included within the report. Full understanding of the study area at Mt. Pisgah can come about only by looking at Biltmore and the architects, foresters, landscape architects, and engineers who were involved in its construction, and by association, the development and construction of Buck Spring Lodge.

## Contexts

In order to have a frame of reference for the story of the Mt. Pisgah landscape, it is necessary to have an understanding of how the landscape relates to other properties of its type. This contextual placement deepens the understanding of any place, and provides the credibility for making judgments about a landscape's significance. There are very few comparable parkways in the United States or in the world for that matter, so the job of contextual comparison is much more challenging.

For the purposes of this report, the surveyed landscapes of Mt. Pisgah are reviewed in terms of their geographical and natural settings, their relationship to the cultural and historical patterns of NPS development, origins within the political backdrop and planning of NPS properties, and especially the conceptual development of parkways first used by buggies and carriages. Later parkway development included the automobile, extending for much longer distances, and covering broader areas.

Using the various historical documents, a narrative forms the basis for the "Statement of Significance," as well as providing material for the eventual development of interpretive and promotional materials and programs by NPS staff.

## Site Reconnaissance

### Existing conditions

#### Character-defining Features[6]

The National Park Service has prescribed methodologies for creating a CLR. These are articulated in "A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques," by Robert Page, Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan. The following elements are outlined for discussion: natural systems, features, and topography; spatial organization; land use; cultural traditions; cluster arrangements; circulation, auto and pedestrian; vegetation; buildings and structures; views and vistas; constructed water features; small scale features; and archaeological sites.

## Analysis and Evaluation

By comparing the site's history and its existing conditions to similar landscapes of the period, the significance of the Mt. Pisgah parkway landscape can be assessed. Those features and characteristics which contribute to establishing significance are then articulated. The integrity[7] of these elements is evaluated to determine whether enough of the site's historic and cultural fabric survives intact and in a legible form to warrant its preservation and management as a significant landscape. To summarize the evaluation phase, a statement of significance[8] is produced that articulates the compelling reasons that the landscape has been judged as important and worthy of some type of

6 The NPS describes a character-defining feature as "a prominent or distinctive aspect, quality, or characteristic of a cultural landscape that contributes significantly to its physical character. Land use patterns, vegetation, furnishings, decorative details, and materials may be such features."

7 The NPS defines integrity as "the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evinced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's historic or prehistoric period."

8 The NPS defines significance as "the meaning or value ascribed to a cultural landscape based on the National Register criteria for evaluation. It normally stems from a combination of association and integrity."

preservation treatment. Based upon the inventory and analysis, the statement of significance explains why the landscape is important as an exemplar of the history and culture of the area, either local, state, or national. Typically this determination is based upon the use of the standards developed by the Secretary of the Interior for the selection of properties for placement in the National Register of Historic Places.

The statement of significance should serve as a starting point for the development of the master plan—it essentially describes the over-riding character of a landscape, and implies that any planning decision that might work against that character would be a move in the wrong direction. Once the CLR determines that a landscape is significant, and which parts of the landscape actually make it significant, then these determinations guide decisions made during the planning process.

## Treatment

Treatment refers to the preservation strategy that is recommended for long-term management of a cultural landscape based upon its significance, integrity, and the programmatic needs and resources of the client. The National Park Service has described four primary treatment alternatives for historic landscapes. These are summarized in the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes:*

Preservation requires "retention of the greatest amount of historic fabric, including historic form, features, and details as they have evolved over time."

Rehabilitation "acknowledges the need to alter or add to a cultural landscape to meet continuing or new uses while retaining the landscape's historic character."

Restoration allows for "the depiction of a landscape at a particular time in its history by preserving materials from the period of significance and removing materials from other periods."

Reconstruction establishes a framework for "recreating a vanished or non-surviving landscape with new materials, primarily for interpretive purposes"[9]

9 National Park Service, 1993. *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes.* Washington, DC: NPS.

# Chapter Two: The Coming Of The Blue Ridge Parkway, 1933- 1957

## Introduction

The mountains southwest of Asheville, crowned by Mt. Pisgah, figured prominently in the debate over the route of the Blue Ridge Parkway that followed the announcement in 1933 of this ambitious New Deal project. Spectacular scenery and a cool mountain climate were powerful arguments in favor of routing the Parkway through these mountains. Due to land-ownership constraints, it was 30 years before the Parkway road was completed across the Pisgah Range and in this interval there were several debates about what sort of development, if any, should occur on Mt. Pisgah.

In the end, one of the most popular recreation areas on the Parkway was created on the upper slopes of the mountain, but its development gave rise to a number of controversies. These reflect changing attitudes towards the Parkway as a whole and towards its impacts on both natural environments and cultural resources.

In this chapter, the controversy over the route through the Pisgah Range is summarized, and the effect of the final decision on the character of the Parkway as a whole is considered. Then, the evolution of ideas governing the design of recreation areas along the Parkway is discussed, and significant changes to the pattern of development that occurred after the Second World War are identified.

## The route of the Parkway

As soon as the Parkway was approved in November 1933 as a New Deal public works project, a protracted dispute began over the route it should follow between the Shenandoah National Park (SHEN) and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks (GRSM). Virginia was assured of the northern half of the project, so the argument was focused on the southern half and pitted representatives of North Carolina against representatives of Tennessee. The latter argued that the economic benefits of the project should be shared by following a route that ran through both states. The former argued that the best route ran entirely through North Carolina. This route would pass around Asheville and then proceed southwest across the Pisgah Range before swinging northwest through the Plott Balsam Mountains to end at Cherokee on the south side of GRSM.

The Chief Locating and Claim Engineer of the North Carolina Highway Commission, R. Getty Browning, was a persuasive advocate for selecting a route through the mountains around Asheville. He performed a detailed reconnaissance of a potential route, walking through the mountains, compiling maps, and taking photographs. Browning became the main spokesman for the North Carolinians. In a report to the chairman of a committee appointed to investigate the alternatives, he described the attractions of the Pisgah Range in glowing terms:

> From Caney Fork Bald to Buck Springs Gap the country traversed by the Parkway would be, in my opinion, the most unusual and worthwhile of any along the route. The character of the country is such that in many places a road could be built as easily as the one we drove over in the vicinity of Linville Gorge, which no doubt you will recall, while the roughest portions would not, in my opinion, be excessively heavy for mountain work. Generally the cross slopes are resonably (sic) gentle and splendid alignment, with easy grades, can be obtained, while the shrubbery and timber, which include every variety known in this latitude, add greatly to the scenic beauty of the route.
>
> The Pisgah National Forest, which is heavily stocked with deer and other game, extends along the south side of this portion of the route

> and an unbroken wilderness occupies the north side of the line for a width of ten or fifteen miles. There is no State or county road across this range between Balsam Gap and Route 284 near Mount Pisgah, a distance of over twenty miles, and I think this large area of wilderness would be a very great asset to the Parkway. [1]

It is difficult to say what weight had been attached to Browning's arguments when Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes announced his approval of the North Carolina route. In announcing his decision on November 10, 1934, Secretary Ickes listed several factors that he considered in addition to the scenic qualities emphasized by Browning. First, he mentioned that Tennessee was already guaranteed a major share of the tourist industry likely to be generated by the establishment of GRSM because of the strategic location of Gatlinburg. He asserted, therefore, that it was only equitable to improve access on the North Carolina side of the park.[2] Certainly, political pressure exerted by those associated with the tourist industry in Asheville played a significant role in the decision-making process. In particular, a private intervention on behalf of his home state by Josephus Daniels, who was serving as Ambassador to Mexico at the time and was a long time political ally of President Roosevelt, seems to have been very influential.[3]

In deciding in favor of the route around Asheville and over the Pisgah Mountains, Ickes was going against the advice of a committee he had appointed to hear the arguments advanced by the representatives of Virginia, Tennessee, and North Carolina. This committee was chaired by George L. Radcliffe, and it included the heads of the two federal agencies charged with construction of the Parkway, Thomas H. MacDonald of the Bureau of Public Roads and Arno B. Cammerer of the NPS.

The 1939 aerial (Figure 3) shows the existing road before construction of the Parkway. The winding, twisting road closely follows the topography of the mountainside and was certainly not a "parkway" road. Hairpin curves were not in the parkway typology and straightening out this portion of the Parkway into an automobile roadway for visitors would require extensive engineering, grading, and disturbance of plant communities.

The professional staffs of both agencies were concerned about the difficulties of building a modern highway through the Pisgah and Plott Balsam Ranges, and although they were now overruled, they remained deeply skeptical of the wisdom of the decision. The Secretary was also resisting pressure from those who were concerned about the preservation of the few areas of wilderness left in the Southern Appalachians. Their opinions were expressed by Robert Marshall, Director of Forestry in the Department of the Interior, who had been asked by Ickes for his evaluation of the alternative routes.

> There is one matter connected with this proposed parkway which I consider of far greater moment than the choice between the Carolina and the Tennessee routes. That is the necessity of keeping the parkway out of the few important primitive areas which are still left in this region. Recreational planning should consider all the diverse uses which people make of the forests. While it is true that the majority of people using the forests are those who travel by automobile, nevertheless it is equally true that those who desire to wander on foot through woods which are undisturbed by the impact of mechanization use the forests far more intensively and gain a far deeper value from them than do the numerically greater automobilists.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Another primitive area which I feel the road should avoid is the region of the Pisgah and Balsam ranges, southwest of Asheville and southeast of the Great Smokies. Here the cost of road construction would be terrifically high, due to the rugged and wrinkled topography. The danger of windfall on these high slopes would be great following the disturbance of the forest,

1 R. Getty Browning to George L. Radcliffe, June 1, 1934; Folder-June 1934, Box 1; General Correspondence; State Highway Commission, Right-of-Way Department; North Carolina State Archives, (Raleigh N.C.).

2 The Secretary of the Interior to Honorable Hill McAlister, Governor of Tennessee, and Honorable J. C. B. Ehringhaus, Governor of North Carolina, 'In the Matter of the Proposed Shenandoah-Great Smoky Mountains National Parks Scenic Highway.' November 10, 1934; R. Getty Browning Papers; BLRI Library (Oteen, N.C.).

3 For a full discussion of the role of those associated with the tourist industry in Asheville see Chapter Two, 'The Scenic is Political,' in Anne Mitchell Whisnant. *Super-scenic motorway - a Blue Ridge Parkway history*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006, pp. 52-107.

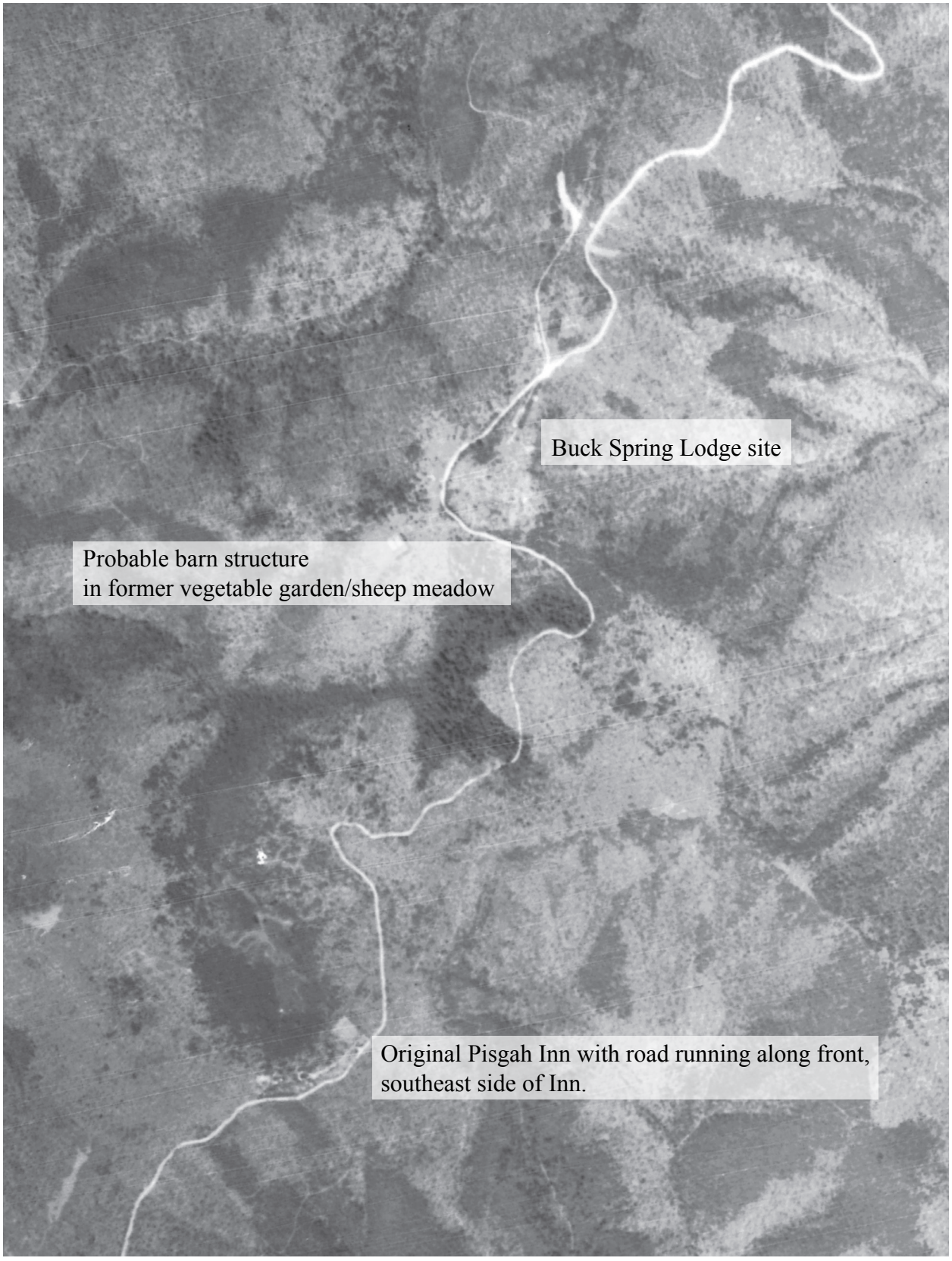



**Figure 3.** 1939 USDA aerial of the Pisgah Ridge showing the Buck Spring Lodge area, the old mountain roads, and the Pisgah Inn on the downslope side of the ridge with the road running in front of it. To the lower left of Buck Spring Lodge is what appears to be a large barn structure. (USDA. 1939.)

> and another area far more valuable to the hiker than to the motorist would be ruined. For those who do want to climb some mountain in these ranges by car there is still the splendid trip from Asheville up Mt. Pisgah, which is much more beautiful on the present narrow dirt road than it would be on a 30-foot wide parkway with its 60-foot gap through the forest.[4]

Secretary Ickes' decision did not end the controversy, which continued for several years. Representatives of the United States Forest Service (USFS) continued to voice concerns about the potential impacts of clearance for road construction on high altitude spruce and balsam fir stands, and the Bureau of Public Roads continued to express doubts about the feasibility of building a modern road in these mountains.[5]

Before construction of the road could begin, location engineers in the Bureau of Public Roads had to reconnoiter an exact line for the road that met the design standards set by the Bureau and the NPS. Once agreement was reached between engineers in the Bureau and landscape architects in the NPS on the best line for the road, it was the responsibility of Browning's office to provide a topographic survey and begin the land acquisition process.

In North Carolina this location process had begun at the Virginia border in 1934 and was proceeding steadily southwards. Browning soon became critical of what he considered to be the slow rate of progress. In particular he was concerned that reconnaissance work southwest of Asheville would come last. He tried to pressure William Austin, the Bureau's Resident Engineer for the Parkway, to accelerate matters, suggesting that reconnaissance work could be carried out at several points on the route simultaneously. Austin demurred arguing that this would produce an "inconsistent, unsatisfactory location."6

Browning grew exasperated and appealed to Ambassador Daniels to once more use his influence with Secretary Ickes to remedy the situation. This intervention seems to have produced results. In September 1935, Browning was able to inform Edwin P. Jeffress, Chair of the North Carolina State Highway and Public Works Commission, that construction was going to proceed in several places simultaneously.

> We have recently received word from Mr. Demaray that they plan to adopt the plan which we have urged them to follow from the beginning, that is to open up three sections of the Parkway for construction and carry them along simultaneously, first from the state line to Blowing Rock, second from Buck Creek Gap to Bull Gap, and third from Wagon Road Gap to Balsam Gap. [7]

But Browning's hopes for an early start to construction in the Pisgah and Plott Balsam Ranges was frustrated by opposition to the passage of the Parkway through the Qualla Reservation of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation.[8] After the tribal council voted in December 1935 against negotiating a right-of-way, the Bureau of Public Roads and the NPS began to investigate alternative ways of approaching GRSM. Early the next year, engineers reconnoitered a line between Asheville and Waynesville through the foothills of the Pisgah Range. Engineers in the Bureau could see advantages to moving the line out of the high mountains, but landscape architects in the NPS were skeptical.

> The principal justification of the Parkway has been largely scenic considerations. In other words, the building of a through pleasure road. The very nature of mountain location does not admit of standards of road design that would

4 Robert Marshall, Director of Forestry, Department of the Interior, 'Memorandum to Secretary Ickes,' August 16, 1934, copy from Harvey Broome, President, Wilderness Society to Weems, November 15, 1960; Folder 97, Box 59; Series 44; RG 5; BLRI Archives (Asheville, N.C.).

5 C. L. Forsling, Acting Chief, USFS, to A. E. Cammerer, Director, NPS, October 10, 1938; Folder 33, Box 4; Series 3; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

6 William Austin to R. Getty Browning, February 19, 1935; Folder 3; Box 47; Series 33; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

7 R. G. Browning to E. B. Jeffress, September 10, 1935; Folder-September 1935, Box 1; General Correspondence; State Highway Commission, Right-of-Way Department; North Carolina State Archives.

8 Mitchell, Chapter Five, 'The Crowning Touch of Interest,' pp. 193-213.

> accommodate through fast traffic, and it is on the basis of a scenic-pleasure route that the present parkway location through the Pisgah and Balsam mountains is justified, as against a more directional short cut through developed foothills. Such a short cut would nearly parallel routes U.S. 19 and 23 and offer nothing as to scenic considerations except a very choppy and broken country. Rather than do this, it would seem much better to stop the parkway at Asheville and improve the present road to Waynesville.[9]

Again Browning thought it necessary to obtain political pressure to preserve his mountain route and called on Ambassador Daniels to exert his influence. This eventually brought results, and in 1937 Secretary Ickes announced that no significant departures from the approved route southwest of Asheville would be made. He added that construction would begin along this route at Wagon Road Gap near Mt. Pisgah in the next fiscal year.[10] In February 1939, Browning wrote to Daniels to let him know that construction work had begun at Wagon Road Gap:

> I think that work on this particular section has resulted from your unremitting efforts in that direction, and I am of the opinion that the opening of this construction is conclusive evidence that the route so long advocated by us and approved by Mr. Ickes will now be followed... .
>
> I have been very much interested in this project from the beginning, and I appreciated very much the tremendous influence which you have exerted towards stabilizing the route. I feel sure that if it had not been for your efficient and timely cooperation that the whole plan would have been ruined. [11]

NPS planners expressed general agreement with the retention of the original route, but some in the Bureau of Public Roads still had misgivings; and engineers' concerns about the difficulties of building a modern highway through these mountains were to prove well founded.

The decision to route the Parkway through the Pisgah and Plott Balsam Ranges had two important consequences. First, it added long stretches at high elevations through landscapes with an apparent wilderness character, whereas many sections of the Parkway built earlier had traversed lower plateaus with a more settled agricultural character. Second, the high costs of construction slowed progress, and completion of the Parkway southwest of Asheville only became possible after the launch of the Mission 66 program in 1956. As a result of this relatively later period of Parkway construction and the different character of the landscape, debates arose within the NPS concerning the relevance of earlier patterns of development related to the design of the Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area.

## The chain of recreation areas

The idea that the Parkway should be widened at intervals to create recreation areas was an integral part of the project from its beginnings. Secretary Ickes in his memorandum of November 19, 1933 authorizing the project indicated that the additional lands would be obtained either through purchase by the federal government or by donation.

> The President has also suggested that the States take options running for a period of one year on such lands as may be indicated by the Office of National Parks, Buildings and Reservations as necessary for recreational purposes. Should these options be exercised Federal funds will be used for their purchase. It is hoped that much of the necessary land can be obtained through donation.[12]

The identification of suitable areas became an important role of the first people hired by the NPS to work on the project. Thomas Vint, head of the NPS Branch of Plans and Design, invited Gilmore Clarke, well known for his work on

9 Edward H. Abbuehl, 'Report on Parkway Location West of Asheville, N.C.', March 24, 1936; Folder 10, Box 47; Series 33; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

10 Browning to Daniels, August 6, 1936; Folder-June 1936, Box 2; General Correspondence; State Highway Commission, Right-of-Way Department; North Carolina State Archives.

11 Browning to Daniels, February 22, 1939; Folder-February 1939, Box 3; General Correspondence; State Highway Commission, Right-of-Way Department; North Carolina State Archives.

12 Memorandum from Secretary Ickes to Director Cammerer, November 18, 1933, quoted in Public Works Administration, Radcliffe Committee, 'The Shenandoah - Smoky Mountain Parkway and Stabilization Project, Hearing of North Carolina Delegation, Baltimore, Maryland, February 6, 1934,' p. 5; BLRI Library.

the Westchester parkways outside New York City, to act as Consulting Landscape Architect. Subsequently, Clarke recommended a young man in the Westchester office, Stanley W. Abbott, for the position of Resident Landscape Architect. Abbott established an NPS office in Roanoke, Virginia, where he was joined early in 1934 by Edward Abbuehl and Henrik van Gelder.[13] Their first task was to work with engineers in the Bureau of Public Roads on the location of the Parkway, and in the course of this reconnaissance work they began to identify lands that might be added to the Parkway to create recreation areas.

> As we traveled through the mountains on general reconnaissance, favorite places came into our thinking and we might say to ourselves or out loud, "We ought to control this," or "A gem." Then 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. 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.[14]

Abbott and Abbuehl produced a preliminary plan in December 1934 that identified thirteen recreation areas; however, this did not include any areas along the disputed route south of Blowing Rock, North Carolina. The plan suggested that development at major areas should include lodges or tourist cabins to provide accommodations for tourists wishing to stay overnight, while at smaller parks there should be coffee shops or small restaurants and gas stations. Most if not all recreation areas should include camping sites, picnic areas, and a network of trails to points of interest.[15]

A more complete list of recreation areas was compiled in 1936 as part of the first Master Plan for the Parkway.[16] A preliminary version listed eighteen recreation areas, of which three were located in the mountains southwest of Asheville: Pigeon River Falls on Sections 2U and 2V, Tennessee Bald on Section 2V, and Richland Balsam on Section 2W.[17] Pigeon River Falls was to be a major park where development was to include a lodge. In addition this version noted that there were two places beside the approved route that already offered overnight accommodations: Bent Creek National Forest Recreation Area on Section 2S at the crossing of the French Broad River provided camping and swimming facilities; and at Mt. Pisgah on Section 2T, the Pisgah National Forest Lodge provided food and accommodation. In the final version of the plan approved by Secretary Ickes in August 1936, both of these areas were added to the list of potential Recreation Areas along the Parkway.

Feasibility of acquisition was an important consideration in the designation of these recreation areas. Since the States of Virginia and North Carolina were only obligated to acquire the right-of-way for the Parkway road, the NPS had to turn to other federal agencies for assistance. In March 1935, a meeting was held in Asheville to solicit the cooperation of the USFS and the Agricultural Adjustment Administration.[18]

The cooperation of the USFS was particularly important as the route of the Parkway passed through National Forests for about one third of its length and eight of the proposed recreation areas were within their designated boundaries, though not all the land was already in federal ownership.

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13 For a discussion of the roles of Clarke, Abbott, Abbuehl, Van Gelder and others and their debt to earlier parkways see Ian J. W. Firth, 'Blue Ridge Parkway, Virginia and North Carolina, Historic Resource Study,' December 2005; NPS Southeast Regional Office, Cultural Resources Planning Division, Atlanta, GA.

14 Stanley Abbott, Interview by S. Herbert Evison, 1958; Transcript pp. 22-23; BLRI Library.

15 Abbott, 'Appalachian National Parkway from Shenandoah National Park to Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Report on Recreation and Service Areas, Type and Scope of Development Proposed,' NPS Branch of Plans and Design, Salem, Virginia, December 15, 1934; Folder 4, Box 57; Series 41; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

16 Abbott and Abbuehl, 'Blue Ridge Parkway, Brief Description of the Recreation Areas Adjacent to the Parkway, to Accompany the Master Plan Thereof, Drawn June 3, 1936,' Folder 1; Box 9; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

17 Construction of the road was organized in sections, each about 10 or 12 miles long - there were to be eight sections beyond the French Broad River south of Asheville, Sections 2S to 2Z; the Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area stands at the southern end of Section 2T and extends into Section 2U.

18 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,' January 19, 1937, p 14; BLRI Library.

In 1936, when Congress named the Parkway and authorized its inclusion in the National Park System, it instructed the USFS and NPS to:

> ... as far as practicable, coordinate and correlate such recreational development as each may plan, construct, or permit to be constructed on lands within their respective jurisdictions ... .[19]

At a second meeting, in April 1938, representatives of the Forest Service suggested their agency should retain control of Parkway recreation areas within National Forest boundaries but would be guided by NPS plans for their development. Representatives of the NPS were not pleased with this arrangement, but accepted the right of the USFS to continue to develop their existing recreation areas beside the Parkway. They were more enthusiastic about an agreement to protect views from the Parkway within National Forests by establishing 'scenic control zones' in which timbering operations would be forbidden.[20]

In 1939, an agreement was signed between the two federal agencies, according to which they would cooperate in the creation of a plan identifying potential recreation areas, and then responsibility for developing individual areas would be decided on a case-by-case basis.[21] At this time it was assumed by both the NPS and USFS that Mt. Pisgah would remain the responsibility of the latter.[22] The Administration then requested Congress to appropriate funds for the USFS to purchase additional lands within designated boundaries of National Forests for eventual transfer to the Parkway, and this began to occur in the early 1940s at Peaks of Otter in Virginia. At the same time the first transfer of Forest Service land to the Parkway for recreational development took place at Crabtree Meadows, Section 2M.

Cooperation with the Agricultural Adjustment Administration produced results much faster. Under its Submarginal Lands Purchase Program, this agency could acquire areas considered no longer suitable for agricultural use and make them available for recreational use. One month after the March 1935 meeting, the Federal Land Bank assigned Samuel P. Weems to appraise lands for transfer to the Parkway. He had already worked on the appraisal of land needed to resettle people displaced by Shenandoah National Park.

> Much thanks is due Sam Weems who didn't mind taking his sleeping bag, rootin' tootin' up the hollows and every place else to see what the corn patch or the potato patch or some other scrawny place would appraise at; trying to draw maps. We had no maps at all of this area.[23]

Weems became highly enthusiastic about the Parkway project and soon acquired an unrivalled knowledge of potential recreation areas. Based on his reports the Resettlement Administration made funds available for the acquisition of several areas in October 1935. The next month Weems transferred to the NPS to become project manager for the Parkway recreation areas.

The first four recreation areas to be developed were at Smart View on Section 1Q, and Rocky Knob on Section 1S in Virginia, and at Cumberland Knob on Section 2A, and The Bluff on Section 2C in North Carolina. Experience gained in the planning and development of these parks established a pattern that influenced the planning of all later recreation areas along the Parkway. However the development of these early recreation areas was made possible by the cooperation of other New Deal agencies, most notably the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). These provided most of the labor force and made possible a labor-intensive approach that was not sustainable after the end of the New Deal.

19 'An Act - To provide for the administration and maintenance of the Blue Ridge Parkway, in the States of Virginia and North Carolina, by the Secretary of the Interior, and for other purposes.' Approved June 30, 1936, Public No. 848, 74th Congress, H. R. 12455; Folder 2, Box 3; Series 3; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

20 Abbott, 'Report on Conference Regarding Blue Ridge Parkway in relation to National Forest Areas, at Roanoke Virginia,' April 8, 1938; Folder 10, Box 57; Series 41; BLRI Archives.

21 Arno B. Cammerer, NPS, to C. M. Granger, USFS, 'Statement of Policy Governing Blue Ridge Parkway Recreational Development Within National Forest or Purchase Unit Boundaries,' November 24, 1939; Folder 20, Box 57; Series 41; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

22 Edward H. Abbuehl, 'Memorandum for Mr. Vint,' March 28, 1939; Folder 15, Box 57; Series 41; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

23 Edward H. Abbuehl, Interview by S. Herbert Evison, April 9, 1971, p. 20; Transcript BLRI Library.

Another factor in their design that did not continue into the postwar years was the insistence of the states of Virginia and North Carolina on conformity to their racial segregation policies. This meant planning for a duplication of many facilities in the early parks.[24]

Abbott classified the work done in the first recreation areas under four headings:

> (1) conservation of natural scenery; (2) facilities for active recreation, augmenting the passive enjoyment of the motorway itself; (3) provision of food, lodging and motor service in an attractive manner where it is not now available and (4) utility buildings for maintenance and operation of the parks and the parkway.[25]

The conservation of natural scenery included some landscape improvements since each area had suffered some damage either by destructive logging or poor farming practices, hence its eligibility for acquisition with Resettlement Administration funds. This landscape improvement work was guided by a manual of policies and guidelines entitled 'Planning the Complete Landscape Development: the Problem and the Program.'[26] This lengthy and very detailed manual was intended to guide landscape improvement work throughout the length of the Parkway, in the right-of-way as well as in recreation areas. It was compiled by Malcolm Bird who transferred from GRSM to join the Parkway staff in 1936.

Influenced by his early experience with the Westchester Parkways, Abbott proposed a wider range of recreational activities in some places, but his ideas led to opposition from those within the NPS who wished to preserve a clear distinction between national parks and urban parks.[27] Abott had worked on Recreation Demonstration Areas (RDAs) in urban areas which were installed on damaged landscapes. RDAs sometimes included ball fields and swimming pools.

National Parks were intended for the appreciation and development of scenic beauty and for recreational trails, campgrounds, and picnic areas, guided by experience accumulated in the NPS during the development of earlier national parks in western states. The paramount consideration was respect for the natural environment, which required a careful reading of the individual character of each place and particularly a good understanding of topography and vegetation.

Trails were the first elements to be constructed. These were designed to lead visitors on foot or horseback to points of interest such as promontories offering panoramic views along routes that provided a variety of experiences. Standards for the construction of foot and bridle trails in National Parks had been published in 1934 by the Engineering Division of the NPS under the leadership of Frank Kitteredge.[28]

The design of campgrounds within National Parks was governed by a philosophy that emphasized back-to-nature simplicity rather than the provision of creature comforts. An early proponent of this philosophy and an NPS consultant was Frank Waugh. Educated at Cornell, in Europe, and finally at the University of Vermont, Waugh was an early proponent of landscape architects as designers of national parks. Waugh espoused the study of plant communities in response to ecological site conditions as part of the design process.[29]

Waugh explains the philosophy he developed for works in the NPS systems as follows:

> Camping is, in fact, primarily a psychological experience. Comfort and convenience need not be neglected; but we must not forget that every one of our guests could have found greater physical comfort and more practical convenience by staying at home in his city flat. It seems clear therefore, that the whole camp setup is to be studied primarily from the standpoint of its appeal to the mind and to the emotions. There is a spiritual refreshment in camping, and this is in fact its essential character. And the park planner who cannot rise to these spiritual levels in

24 Firth, 'Historic Resource Study,' pp. 194-195.

25 Abbott, 'Acting Superintendent's Annual Report, 1939,' p. 17; BLRI Library.

26 Malcolm A. Bird, 'Planning the Complete Landscape Development,' 1939; BLRI Library. This is an incomplete copy, a complete version has not been found.

27 Firth, 'Historic Resource Study,' pp. 193-194.

28 Linda Flint McClelland, Building the National Parks, Historic Landscape Design and Construction, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998, p. 242.

29 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frank_Albert_Waugh, accessed 8/6/2014

> the study of his layout would be better engaged in breaking stone for paving.[30]

Layout of campgrounds was guided by the ideas of Emilio P. Meinecke, a plant pathologist who served as a consultant to both the USFS and the NPS. He recommended a clear organization of vehicular circulation and a strong definition of use areas and pathways to limit the damage to natural settings that would occur if campers were allowed to park, camp, and walk wherever they chose. Campgrounds designed according to his ideas featured one-way service roads with 'garage spurs,' and clearly marked tent sites with fireplaces and tables.[31] His ideas were later elaborated in a series of catalogues edited by Albert H. Good entitled *'Park and Recreation Structures'* published by the NPS in 1938, which illustrated exemplary recreational developments. These were intended to guide the development of the many new recreation areas then under construction both inside and outside National Parks using CCC and WPA workforces.[32] Campgrounds were designed following these ideas at Rocky Knob and The Bluff. There were plans to provide separate road loops for campers using tents, those using trailers, and those using cabins, but neither campground was completed before construction was halted in 1942, due to the onset of World War II.

The layout of picnic areas followed similar patterns, with well-defined circulation routes and use areas. Picnic areas were completed at all four recreation areas. They provide a good illustration of the care taken to respond to the unique characteristics of each place — whether it be an open meadow, a woodland edge, or an area of deep forest shade. An abandoned farmstead with a splendid display of dogwoods at Smart View above the escarpment of the Blue Ridge was Abbott's favorite site.[33]

The first park buildings were the shelters and comfort stations provided along the trails and in the campgrounds and picnic areas. These were designed according to the precepts of NPS rustic architecture that were discussed and illustrated in Good's catalogues. Along the Parkway, inspiration was drawn from the log cabins and humble outbuildings built with frugal ingenuity on mountain farms. None of the Parkway buildings were completed early enough for inclusion in Good's catalogues, but Abbott was pleased with the results.

> This office feels that on the Blue Ridge Parkway we have made a start toward developing a unique and very fitting architectural style in the public buildings which have been constructed and in the plans which have been projected. It is simply an adaptation of the general forms, lines, and materials of the local sheds, barns, and dwellings which adapt remarkably well to Parkway needs. This office feels that the recall of pioneer building methods in the Parkway structures is one of the principal opportunities that we have to preserve something of the backwoods feeling that otherwise may disappear from the mountains.[34]

The most elaborate of these buildings is the combined picnic shelter, sandwich shop, and comfort station at Cumberland Knob, probably designed by Robert G. Hall in the Roanoke office and constructed by WPA crews.

It was recognized by the NPS that the provision of food, lodging, and motor services had the potential to generate controversy since such development would be in competition with tourist facilities in towns near the Parkway. Abbott argued that some stretches of the Parkway were remote from settlements and that it was also necessary to set an example of good design. His superiors in the Service accepted the idea, but it was not seen as a high priority, and until a good portion of the Parkway was open to the public there was no

30 Frank A. Waugh, 'Landscape Conservation, Planning for the Restoration, Conservation, and Utilization of Wild Lands for Park and Forest Recreation, ' p. 8: Washington, D.C., National Park Service, 1935.

31 McClelland, Building the National Parks, Historic Landscape Design and Construction, pp. 272-285.

32 Albert H. Good, ed., Park and Recreation Structures, Part III Overnight and Organized Camp Facilities, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1938; reprint, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999, pp. 5-16.

33 Abbott, 'Acting Superintendent's Annual Report, 1940,' p. 14; BLRI Library.

34 Abbott, 'Confidential Memorandum for Regional Director Taylor,' December 1943, pp. 11-12; Folder 5, Box 48; Series 38; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

way to gauge the demand.[35] Nevertheless plans for Rocky Knob and The Bluff included lodges, coffee shops, and gas stations. Coffee shops and gas stations were planned close to the road where they would be readily seen by passing motorists, but lodges were to be located in places that were screened from the road and offered pleasing views into the distance from lodge windows and porches.

None of these planned developments were realized before work on the Parkway was suspended in 1942 due to the onset of World War II. The exception to this work stoppage was a group of 'trail lodge cabins' at Rocky Knob. These were intended to provide simple accommodations for youth groups. They were constructed by CCC enrollees using materials and building techniques that evoked pioneer log cabins of the region.

The feasibility of supplying water and electrical power and of disposing of sewage and garbage was an important consideration in the site planning of all development in recreation areas. In some areas, natural springs could provide an adequate water supply, but at The Bluff it was necessary to impound a small reservoir. Electricity was to be carried underground in all recreation areas. In the larger parks, several sewage disposal systems had to be planned because of the widely scattered nature of development and the character of the topography. A leaching field was the preferred method of treatment wherever suitable soils could be found. Finally, garbage collection had to be organized, with the garbage taken to maintenance depots for incineration.

Maintenance compounds were constructed at each of the recreation areas. These were to provide bases for the operation of the recreation areas and for the maintenance of the road once responsibility for the latter was handed over by the Bureau of Public Roads. These depots were carefully sited to be out of the view of passing motorists, and they were economically constructed and strictly utilitarian in appearance. Plans also called for the provision of two residences for park employees near each compound. These were also intended to be inaccessible to visitors, but they nevertheless were carefully designed in a rustic style.[36]

## Master plans

In 1940 and 1941, Abbott and his colleagues in the Roanoke office compiled the first comprehensive master plan for the Parkway. According to NPS policies the master plan was to be regularly updated and serve as a guide for all future development.[37] This Master Plan identified a central theme for the Parkway:

> The significant theme of the Parkway is "recreation for the motorist," the project providing a roadway which may be comfortably and safely driven within an elongated and park-like right-of-way protected by Federal ownership against despoliation and commercial encroachments, and located generally high in the Blue Ridge.[38]

The recreational experience was to be enriched by the presentation of items of "historical, geographical, botanical, inspirational, and conservational" interest.[39]

This reference to conservation marks an important departure from the ideas governing the management of other National Parks. The NPS had hitherto been an agency focused on the preservation of scenic wonders as distinct from utilitarian conservation. The latter had been the domain of the USFS, but here along the Parkway, responding to the location and form of the Parkway and strongly influenced by New Deal ideas and programs, the NPS entered the field. Conservation programs had begun with the treatment of scars left by road construction, but had been expanded to include improvement of woodland and farmland within the right-of way damaged before the arrival of the Parkway

35 Abbott, 'Acting Superintendent's Annual Report,' 1939, p. 15; and Ibid, 1940, p. 16; BLRI Library.

36 Two employee residences were constructed before the war at Rocky Knob.

37 The 1941 edition of the Master Plan is the earliest version that has been located.

38 USDI, National Park Service, 'A Master Plan for the Blue Ridge Parkway,' 2nd draft edition, 1941, Folder - Blue Ridge Parkway; Box 2735; Entry 7, National Parkways; RG 79; National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD (hereafter NACP).

39 Ibid

by exploitive logging and unsustainable farming practices. In cooperation with New Deal agencies, such as the CCC and the Soil Conservation Service, projects were undertaken that even extended beyond the Parkway right-of-way.

At the close of 1942, Abbott prepared a new section of the Master Plan setting out an interpretive theme for the Parkway. This theme focused on the "lived-in quality of the highlands."

> The Blue Ridge Parkway will seem to the visitor one of the largest of the National Park Service areas even though the total acreage of the right-of-way plus that of the recreational parks is comparatively small. This is true because much of the Parkway is located high in the mountains and the visitor sees far beyond the federally owned boundaries. The right-of-way is simply the foreground of a much larger picture which is the whole picture of the mountains.
>
> Few persons visit the Blue Ridge without realizing that much of its interest and beauty lies in the lived-in quality of the highlands. The old cabins and farm buildings, the fields of wheat and corn, and the hillside pastures with their sheep are like the design of the patch work quilts and coverlets famous in this section and which, like the land, are woven by human hands. The idea that a scenic parkway can be woven into the fabric of a whole countryside is new. Other parks, county, state, and national, are generally more self-contained. They present the beauty of the wild woods or the majesty of the unbroken wilderness... . Since the Blue Ridge Parkway cannot and should not be entirely closed in, the picture which the visitor will see will be a changing picture, one of a land which is being shaped and reshaped not only by the forces of nature but by the hands of man.[40]

While Abbott believed that much of the change should be welcomed, the NPS had begun to preserve traces of old ways of life in the mountains and particularly those that seemed to represent vestiges of a vanished pioneer America. A program to restore and preserve 'pioneer' structures was initiated in 1941 with work on Mabry Mill and three log cabins. Abbott hoped that a chain of exhibits would be established where visitors could not only learn about the frugal self-sufficiency of mountain life but contribute to the preservation of some aspects of that life by the purchase of handicrafts and other products of mountain farms. In 1943, he summarized his vision for the Parkway as follows:

> To a very real extent the Parkway is inextricably bound up with its community. I think that this should be looked upon as an opportunity to accomplish by means of the parkway idea a new sort of conservation in which the national parkway becomes a museum of managed American countryside.[41]

Abbott's vision was strongly influenced by the importance of settled agricultural landscapes along sections of the Parkway constructed before the Second World War. It was not yet clear how his ideas might apply along sections that would be carved through apparent wilderness, such as those lying southwest of Asheville.

The 1940/41 Master Plan provided plans for most of the proposed recreation areas along the Parkway, however it did not include a plan for Mt. Pisgah because throughout the prewar period it was assumed this area would remain the responsibility of the USFS. In 1938, as part of efforts to cooperate with the NPS, the Supervisor of Pisgah National Forest produced a report on recreational opportunities along, or close to the route of the Parkway, which contained the following paragraphs about the Mt. Pisgah area:

> Mt. Pisgah Parking Area
>
> This site is developed to provide parking area for about fifty cars. Plans have been approved for enlarging the capacity to about one hundred and twenty cars, also a new concession building has been proposed. The trail to the top of Mt. Pisgah is about one and one-quarter mile in length. The Parkway location by this area will influence the length of connecting road needed. Additional study should be given the parking capacity as the use will probably increase more than was planned in the approved enlargement.
>
> Pisgah National Forest Inn
>
> This development, located beside the Parkway has been doing business for a number of years. The Inn has an ideal location and offers extremely fine views. This development would be very popular if improved and more sport

40 A. E .Demaray, Memorandum for Superintendent Abbott, 'Draft of the Interpretive Statement of the Blue Ridge Parkway,' January 2 1943, p. 1; Folder 1, Box 13; Series 10; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

41 Abbott, 'Confidential Memorandum for Regional Director Taylor,' December 3 1943, pp. 8-9.

facilities were provided. A very attractive area in back of the Inn would make a fine recreation development for camping and picnicking. However, this whole area would probably be more important as an addition to the Inn development, giving them opportunity for more sport areas and a high class cabin camp.

Frying Pan Gap Campground

This area, located beside the Parkway, has been partially developed for picnicking and camping. The capacity at present is about one hundred people. By enlarging the area the capacity can be increased to about two hundred and fifty people.[42]

The report concluded that because existing recreational developments in this part of Pisgah National Forest were already crowded during summer weekends, "all areas proposed should be developed to the largest capacity for which there is room available."[43]

In 1939, an agreement between the NPS and the USFS opened the way for the NPS to prepare plans for proposed recreation areas along the Parkway within National Forest boundaries regardless of whether ownership of the land would be transferred.[44] In that year the NPS asked Browning to ascertain whether, in addition to a right-of-way corridor, all or some of the 471 acres within the Vanderbilt tract might be acquired; however, Browning could give no assurance and no further progress was made on drawing up a plan for the area until after the war. [45]

There were major changes in the administration of the Parkway after the Second World War. Abbott was drafted into the army in 1944 and in his absence Sam Weems was appointed to the position of Superintendent. In 1946, Abbott returned to the position of Resident Landscape Architect with responsibility for the planning of the Parkway but not its administration. This arrangement only lasted a few years before Abbott left the Parkway to work on plans for a Mississippi Parkway. His colleague Edward Abbuehl succeeded him as Resident Landscape Architect; however, before Abbott left he supervised the preparation of the first master plan for the Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area (MPRA).

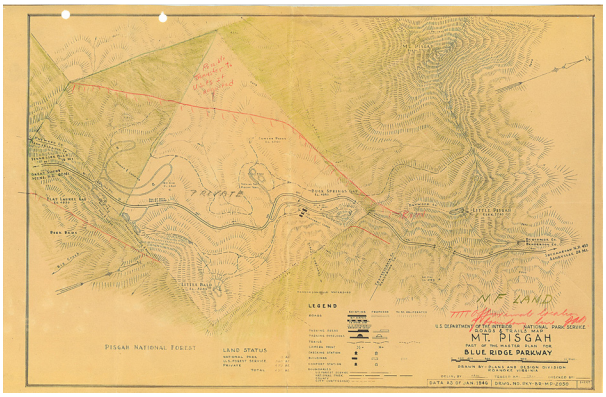



**Figure 4.** 1946 Master Plan (Full size foldout included at end of chapter)

This first master plan envisioned a recreation area that included a range of activities and facilities similar to those found in recreation areas developed along the Parkway before the war. The plan assumed all of the Vanderbilt property on the mountain would be acquired, but even with this acreage, the amount of land suitable for development was very limited, so proposed developments were spaced out along the road in response to the topographic constraints.[46]

At the northern end of the proposed recreation area, motorists driving from Asheville would pass through a tunnel under Little Pisgah Ridge, and, after about 700 yards, there would be a short spur road on the right leading to a knoll where motorists could park if they wished to hike up to the summit of Mt. Pisgah. The summit was to remain in USFS jurisdiction on the assumption

42 H.R. Ochsner, Forest Supervisor, 'Memorandum for the Regional Forester,' April 5, 1938, pp. 4-5; Folder 10, Box 57; Series 41; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

43 Ibid, p. 6.

44 Arno B. Cammerer, Director, NPS, to The Forester, USFS, 'Statement of Policy Governing Blue Ridge Parkway Recreational Development within National Forest or Purchase Unit Boundaries' November 24 1939; Folder 20, Box 57; Series 41; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

45 Dudley C. Bayliss, Acting Chief of Planning, WASO, to H. J. Spelman, District Engineer, Bureau of Public Roads, April 20 1939; Land Files, Section 2T; BLRI HQ (Asheville N.C.).

46 Abbott, 'Memorandum for the Superintendent,' May 10 1946: Folder 37, Box 4; Series 3; RG7; and 'Roads and Trails Map, Mt. Pisgah, part of the Master Plan for Blue Ridge Parkway,' Drawing no. PKY-BR MP 2050, data January 1946; Box 85; Series 58; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

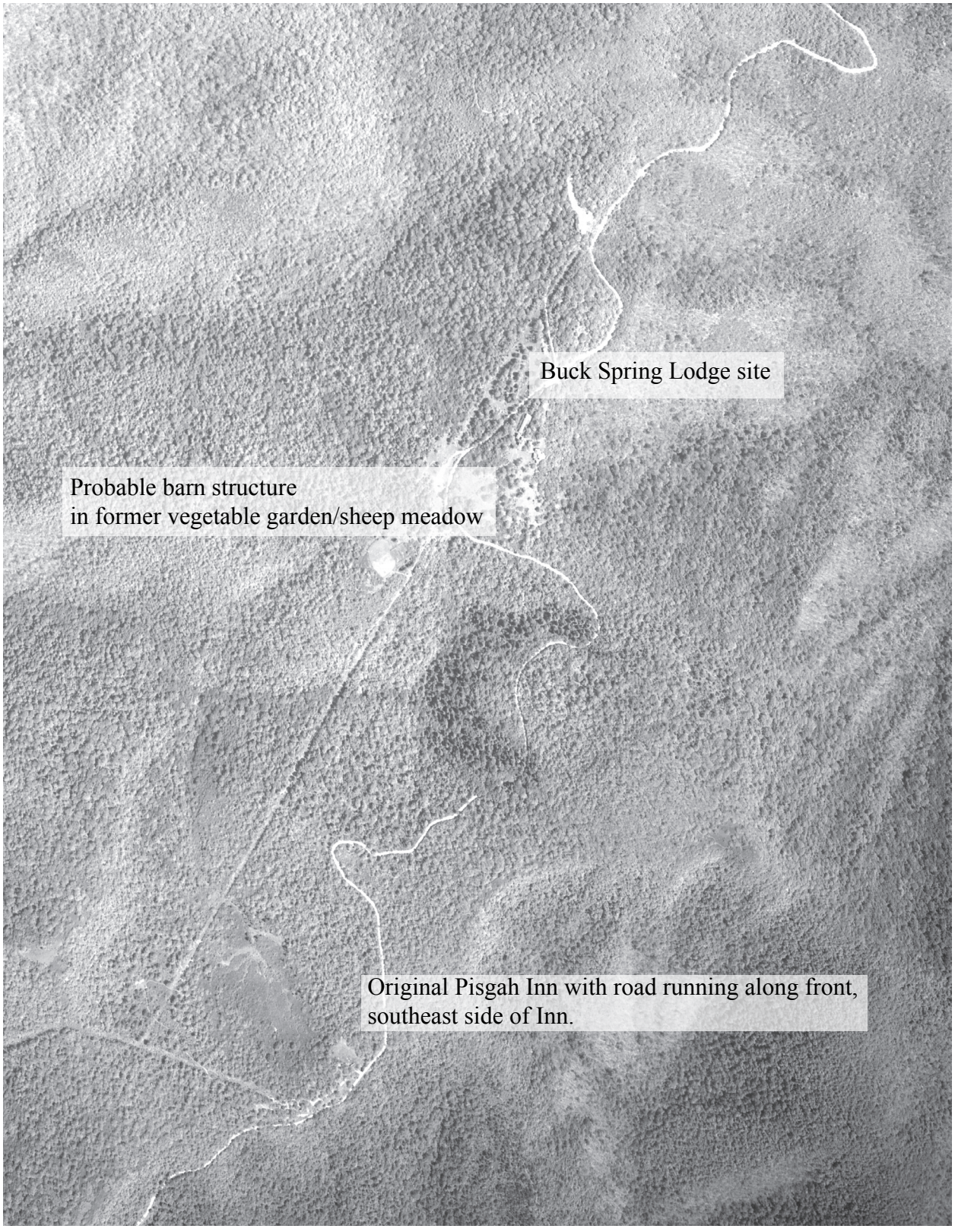



**Figure 5.** 1953 USDA aerial of the Pisgah Ridge showing the Buck Spring Lodge area, the 1950 era road alignment before the construction of the Parkway, and the Pisgah Inn on the downslope side of the ridge with the road running in front of it. The barn has been demolished and a large open area exists where it was located. The forest canopy is much more consistent and extensive in the surrounding viewshed with very little open area except around Buck Spring Lodge and throughout the bog area.

that an existing trail would remain open to the public. Another 100 yards further on the left side of the road, motorists would find a spur leading to the Vanderbilt's Buck Spring Lodge. Although the lodge represented a way of life that was the antithesis of the frugal pioneer existence that was commemorated in the Parkway's first preservation projects, the plan recommended that it should be retained and developed into a museum describing the Vanderbilt's pioneering role in the introduction of scientific forestry to America. Here, Abbott extended his idea of 'a museum of managed American countryside' beyond settled agricultural areas to include forested areas along the Parkway.

Following the Parkway road south along the ridgeline for about two-thirds of a mile, motorists would arrive at another spur on the left, this one leading to an overlook on the edge of an escarpment from which a trail would lead to the summit of Little Bald. A short distance past this, in Flat Laurel Gap, the plan proposed a coffee shop and a small lodge on the site of the existing Pisgah Forest Inn, and, on the other (right hand) side of the road, a gas station would stand at the entrance to two loop roads with facilities for picnicking and camping.

It was anticipated that all the facilities would attract a large number of visitors because of the area's fame and proximity to Asheville, but, given the uncertainty over the acquisition of the Vanderbilt property, there was also uncertainty about the scale of the development. At this time it was thought that a recreation area at Pigeon River Falls, at the junction of Sections 2U and 2V, would be a better place to provide large-scale facilities for recreation, including overnight stays. Superintendent Weems summarized the uncertainty about Mt. Pisgah as follows:

> The development centers around a coffee shop and gas station located in the vicinity of the present Pisgah Motor Inn, with picnicking and camping immediately to the north. There is the possibility that some overnight lodging may also be required in this area. The future of the Vanderbilt lodge development is still rather uncertain. We are asking that the State acquire the entire Vanderbilt tract but we have no assurance at this time that this will be done.[47]

In his response to the plan, Karl Krueger, Supervisor of Pisgah National Forest, focused on the future of the Pisgah Forest Inn. H. H. Nash and Harold Moon had taken over the operation of the Inn in 1937, and were anxious about the future of their Forest Service lease, which would expire in 1949. Krueger had noted that a replacement for the present inn was shown in the plan.[48] He noted that the existing Inn was a popular tourist destination, and he was inclined to renew the special use permit while it remained within Forest Service jurisdiction.

Another, somewhat lesser, concern was the location of the parking area for the use of those who wished to climb to the summit of Mt. Pisgah. Krueger recommended continuing the use of an existing parking area that was located a half-mile closer to the summit.[49] The NPS refined its plan, and in January 1948, the USFS agreed in principle to transfer land necessary for the development of the recreation area.[50]

The refinements made by the Parkway planners can be seen in the 1952 version of the Master Plan.[51] By this time Edward Abbuehl had replaced Abbott as the Parkway's Resident Landscape Architect, but he admired Abbott's vision and his appointment ensured a remarkable degree of continuity in the planning of the Parkway.

47 Sam P. Weems, Superintendent, to Carl G. Krueger, Forest Supervisor, Pisgah - Croatan National Forests, August 30, 1946; Folder 3, Box 9; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

48 Weems, 'Memorandum for the Files,' October 4 1945; and Weems to Krueger, December 4 1945; Lands Files, Section 2U; BLRI HQ.

49 Krueger to Weems, September 6 1946; and Krueger to Weems, June 30 1947; Folder 38, Box 4; Series 3; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

50 J. Herbert Stone, Regional Forester, USFS Southern Region, to Weems, January 15 1948; Folder 38, Box 4; Series 3; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

51 USDI, NPS, 'The Master Plan, Blue Ridge Parkway, Virginia and North Carolina, Developed Areas,' June 1952; Drawing no. PKY-BR GEN-2386 C, Sheet 39, Box 85; Series 58; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

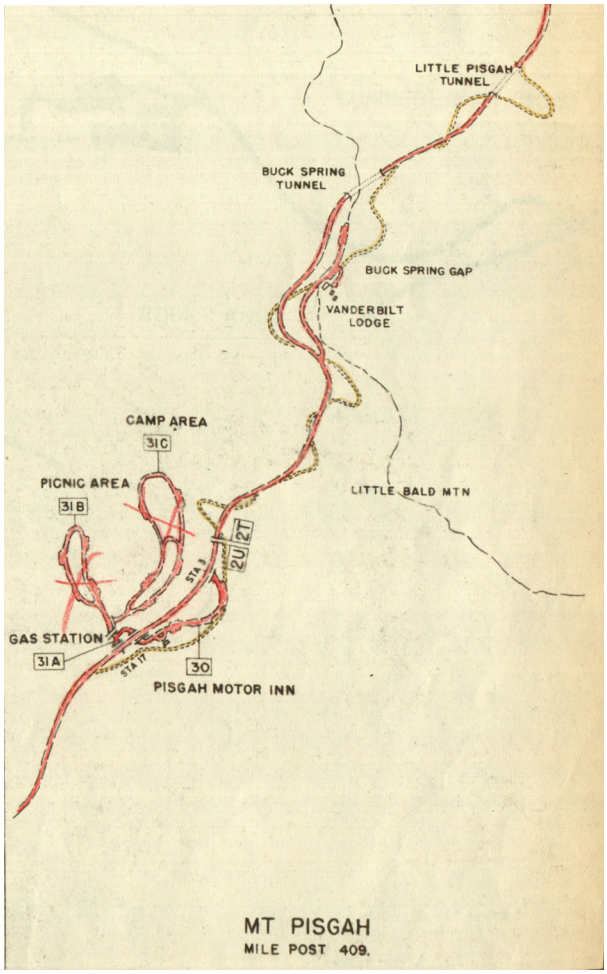



**Figure 6.** Figure 6. 1952 Master Plan

In the 1952 plan, the proposed parking area for the Mt. Pisgah Trail on the right side of the Parkway has been eliminated. Instead, the spur road to the Vanderbilt Lodge has been extended over the Parkway road at Buck Spring Tunnel to reach the existing trail to the summit. The Development Outline that accompanies the plan states that "plans have not been made for the disposition of the Vanderbilt Lodge," but the lodge buildings are still shown on the plan.[52] Further south, the parking overlook on the edge of the escarpment has been linked to the parking area at the 'Pisgah Motor Inn'. Across the road the larger of two road loops had been designated as a picnic area, while the smaller loop was to be a campground.

Facilities for overnight stays at Mt. Pisgah were by now assuming greater importance, since the 1952 version of the Master Plan included no proposal for a recreation area at Pigeon River Falls and developments planned for Tennessee Bald were for day-use facilities only. The provision of lodges, coffee shops, and gas stations along the Parkway had become controversial when developments were opened at The Bluffs in 1949. In part, this was due to the refusal of the NPS to allow signs along the Parkway advertising local businesses. Superintendent Weems tried to defuse the issue by agreeing to the distribution of advertising brochures that were to be created by a Blue Ridge Parkway Association of Chambers of Commerce.[53] The fact that the Pisgah Motor Inn was replacing an existing lodge may have been seen as an opportunity to sidestep this controversy. What was still left unresolved at this time was the exact character of the new Motor Inn and who would operate it.

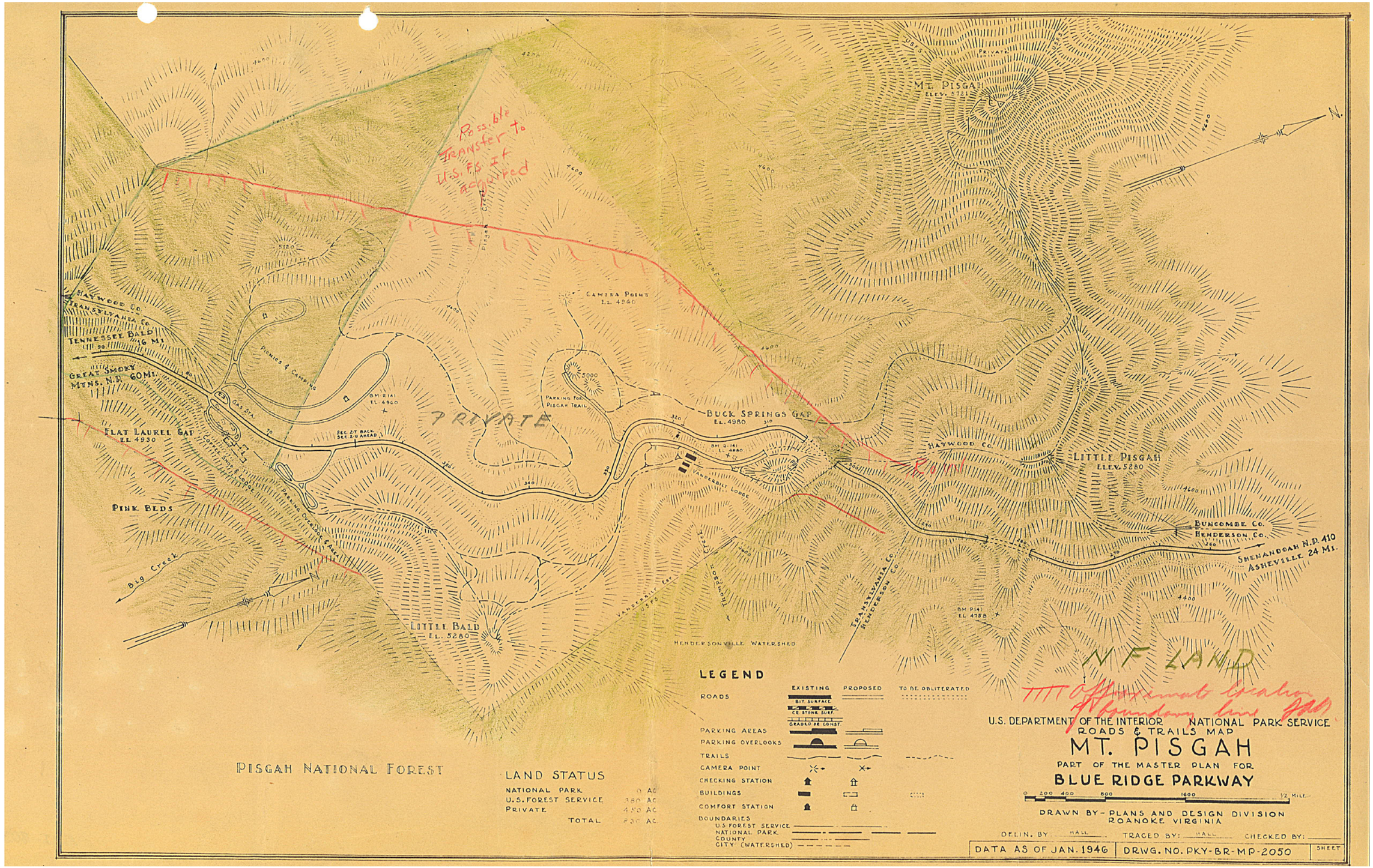
In its comments on this plan, the NPS Regional Office pointed out that the future status of the Vanderbilt lodge remained unclear, but stated that: "because of other uncertainties involved in this plan" - referring no doubt to the question of land acquisition - "no further action be taken on it at this time."[54] And, in a letter to Harold Spelman, Division Engineer in the Bureau of Public Roads, about the maintenance of the existing Forest Service road to Mt. Pisgah, the Assistant Regional Director admitted it would probably be many years before Section 2T of the Parkway road would be built.[55] This comment would prove especially prescient in light of the much later development of this section during the Mission 66 period.

52 USDI, NPS, 'The Master Plan, Blue Ridge Parkway, Virginia and North Carolina, Development Outline, Mt. Pisgah,' June 1952; Folder 9, Box 9; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

53 Weems, 'Superintendent's Annual Report, 1949,' p. 2; BLRI Library.

54 Edward S. Zimmer, Assistant Regional Director, to Superintendent, BLRI, 'Master Plan, Developed Areas and Utilities Plan, Mt. Pisgah, Blue Ridge Parkway', August 13 1952; Folder 9, Box 9; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

55 Edward S. Zimmer to H. J. Spelman, Division Engineer, Bureau of Public Roads, July 25 1952; Folder 82, Box 89; Series 61; RG 7; BLRI Archives.


Possible Transfer to U.S.F.S. if Acquired
MT. PISGAH
ELEV. 5721
PRIVATE
LOCUST
N.
HAYWOOD CO.
TRANSYLVANIA CO.
TENNESSEE BALD
16 MI
GREAT SMOKY MTNS. N.P. 60 MI.
PICNICS & CAMPING
GAS STA.
CAMERA POINT EL. 4960
PARKING FOR PISGAH TRAIL
BUCK SPRINGS GAP
EL. 4980
FLAT LAUREL GAP
EL. 4930
CONTACT STA. & LODGE
PARKING OVERLOOK & TRAIL
PINK BEDS
BIG CREEK
LITTLE BALD
EL. 5280
VANDERBILT LODGE
HENDERSONVILLE WATERSHED
TRANSYLVANIA CO.
HENDERSON CO.
LITTLE PISGAH
ELEV. 5280
BUNCOMBE CO.
HENDERSON CO.
SHENANDOAH N.P. 410
ASHEVILLE 24 MI.
BM 2141 EL. 4960
BM 2141 EL. 4880
BM 2141 EL. 4788
PISGAH NATIONAL FOREST
LAND STATUS
NATIONAL PARK 0 AC
U.S. FOREST SERVICE 380 AC
PRIVATE 450 AC
TOTAL 830 AC
LEGEND
EXISTING
PROPOSED
TO BE OBLITERATED
ROADS
BIT. SURFACE
CR. STONE. SURF.
GRADED & DRAINED
PARKING AREAS
PARKING OVERLOOKS
TRAILS
CAMERA POINT
CHECKING STATION
BUILDINGS
COMFORT STATION
BOUNDARIES
U.S. FOREST SERVICE
NATIONAL PARK
COUNTY
CITY (WATERSHED)
N.F. LAND
Approximate Location of Boundary Line
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
ROADS & TRAILS MAP
MT. PISGAH
PART OF THE MASTER PLAN FOR
BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY
0 200 400 800 1600 ½ MILE
DRAWN BY - PLANS AND DESIGN DIVISION
ROANOKE VIRGINIA
DELIN. BY HALL
TRACED BY: HALL
CHECKED BY:
DATA AS OF JAN. 1946
DRWG. NO. PKY-BR-MP-2050
SHEET

# Chapter Three: Buck Spring Lodge

## Introduction

At the same time that George Washington Vanderbilt II was planning his North Carolina estate from his sumptuous Beaux-Arts mansion in New York City, he was developing another place that would promise more relaxation, solitude, and connection with nature. As his palatial Biltmore chateau was being created, he anticipated the tiresome throngs of staff and visitors and yearned for a place where he could further retreat into the Appalachian Mountain Eden he was creating.

Whereas the spectacular views from the Chateau toward Mt. Pisgah and the Blue Ridge Mountains originally lured Vanderbilt to the setting of the chateau, he wanted an even closer connection with Mt. Pisgah. In the winter of 1895, he envisioned Buck Spring Lodge as a small rustic hunting retreat in what he called Pisgah Forest.[1]

Buck Spring Gap, the site of the future lodge, was approximately seventeen miles southwest of Biltmore House and was located at 4,975 feet above sea level. Therefore, it was a cooler and breezier summer climate than the mansion at 2,200 feet. Vanderbilt was also attracted to the locale by the scenery, the plentiful game, and the migratory and native birds. Two of his favorite pastimes were hiking and bird watching. Sharing an equal love of the outdoors, Mrs. Vanderbilt was an avid gardener and spent many summers experimenting with various vegetable and fruit crops and also bird watched with her husband at the lodge.

This chapter summarizes the development of Buck Spring Lodge and points out the differing scales, architectural styles, and usage of the lodge in contrast with Biltmore Mansion. While distinctly different, many of the same designers and managers were involved in the development of both properties, and the link between the two becomes part of the story of Buck Spring Lodge and Mt. Pisgah as a recreation area. A 1953 aerial and diagram is included at the end of this chapter as Figure 10.

## George Washington Vanderbilt II and his family

At age fifteen, George Washington Vanderbilt II (1862-1914) inherited one million dollars from his grandfather, Cornelius "Commodore" Vanderbilt (1794-1877). On his 21st birthday George received another million from his father, William Henry Vanderbilt I (1821-1885), who was reputed to be the richest man alive at the time. Three years later, in 1885, he inherited $5 million more from his father's will, plus the income from a $5 million trust fund.[2]

The Vanderbilt men were merchant princes of America, prominent in the business world and major patrons of the arts. Their businesses were managed by George's three older brothers, which left the frail and introverted younger Vanderbilt to spend his time in intellectual pursuits; philosophy, literature, architecture, gardening, and art, including the paintings in his family's large collection. He traveled extensively and made

1 The estate was comprised of about 110,000 acres of woodlands that were divided into two distinct units. On the east side of the French Broad River, surrounding the mansion was the 10,000-acre Biltmore Forest. The second part lay entirely in the mountains to the south, and was known as Pisgah Forest, comprised of nearly 100,000 acres. Before Vanderbilt bought Biltmore Forest, most of the indigenous oak and pine trees had been cut, so he chose to grow trees for firewood to market to the fast-growing Asheville population. Pisgah Forest's old growth timber was to be harvested primarily for lumber since the distance to Asheville was too great to transport for use as firewood. (North Carolina Board of Agriculture. *North Carolina and Its Resources.* Raleigh, NC: M. I. & J. C. Stewart, 1896, p. 53)

2 The Commodore amassed his wealth in shipping and railroads.

several visits to Paris, where the Vanderbilts owned a home; he was also said to have been fluent in eight languages.

On June 1, 1898, George Vanderbilt II married Edith Stuyvesant Dresser (1873-1958) at the American Cathedral in Paris. She was a descendant of Peter Stuyvesant, the first governor of the colony of New Netherland (which would become the State of New York) from 1647 until 1664, at which time it was surrendered to England.

## Purchase of Biltmore Estate Landholding

Biltmore Estate, today comprising 6,949.48 acres, is a small remnant of the vast property that was amassed by George Vanderbilt between 1888 and 1903. The year after Vanderbilt's townhouse on West 53rd Street in New York City was completed in 1887, he made a trip to North Carolina with his mother. It was there and then that the twenty-six-year-old Vanderbilt decided to build a country home in the Blue Ridge Mountains near Asheville.

In 1889, with the assistance of his lawyer, Charles McNamee, he surreptitiously purchased 143 contiguous parcels of farmland of marginal value (approximately 18,000 acres) that formed the core of the original estate.[3] Most of the rolling Blue Ridge land had been depleted by poor farmers with small properties who had clear cut the land and used unsustainable farming practices for multiple generations.

Over the next fifteen years Vanderbilt accumulated an additional 107,000 acres, bringing his holdings to 125,000 acres (195.3 square miles). Whereas his older siblings built lavish summer homes in Newport, Rhode Island and Hyde Park, New York, George chose the higher elevations of western North Carolina, which was already established as a retreat for wealthy east coast and southern elites escaping summer heat. He referred to Biltmore as his "little mountain escape."[4]

The majority of his land lay southwest and south of Asheville, approximately a quarter of which was on the west side of the French Broad River. The land-holding sprawled across parts of Henderson, Haywood, Transylvania, and Buncombe counties. The Mansion and Estate are in Buncombe County; the Lodge was in Transylvania County, at the intersection of the four counties. Mt. Pisgah lies on the line between Buncombe and Haywood Counties.[5]

Even though Vanderbilt referred to Biltmore as his little mountain escape, the area had a long history of resort development, due to its elevation in the Blue Ridge Mountain range. The mild summers and beautiful scenery resulted in the development of a social milieu of Easterners and well-to-do Southerners who escaped not only the oppressive heat of the North American summers, but also fled the major metropolitan cities, where yellow fever outbreaks were still a common occurrence in the late nineteenth century. Communities like Highlands and Cashiers, NC are examples of older enclaves were the well-heeled congregated and spent parts of their summers.

## Biltmore Estate Grounds and Mansion

The creation of the Biltmore Estate demonstrates the exemplary collaboration between an extraordinary patron, his architect, and his landscape architect — George Washington Vanderbilt II, Richard Morris Hunt, and Frederick Law Olmsted (the father of landscape architecture in America). It took place in the years between

3 Charles McNamee (1856-1923), a Vanderbilt in-law, oversaw all day-to-day operations of the mansion, the pleasure grounds, the forest, the farms, and the Biltmore Dairy, one of the largest in the country. (Rickman, p. 7).

4 National Historic Landmark Nomination, Biltmore Estate. NPS Form 10-900 USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86) OMB No. 1024-0018. United States Department of the Interior, 2003, pp 26,112. "Practitioner's Forum on Governance Issues," Information Governance Maturity Workshop, Biltmore Estate, Asheville, North Carolina, March 22-23, 2011, p. 6.

5 Mt. Pisgah was named in 1808 by Reverend George Newton after the biblical mount of the same name; the Cherokees had their own names—the mountain was Elseetoss and the ridge was Warwasseeta.

1888 and 1895, the year in which Hunt died and Olmsted retired. It was also the last great project for both of these noted designers.

While neither Hunt nor Olmsted lived to play a direct role in the development of Buck Spring Lodge, their roles were significant because of the individuals who worked for them or due to the family members who continued each of their practices, as these professionals continued to work for Vanderbilt once he planned the creation of his rustic retreat.

In the autumn of 1888, Vanderbilt invited Olmsted to Asheville to see the primary property he had acquired for his new home. Olmsted had worked with Vanderbilt on his summer residence, Pointe d'Acadie, in Bar Harbor, Maine (remodeled by Hunt) and on the landscape design for the family mausoleum on Staten Island, New York.[6]

After months of analyzing the site from horseback and then designing the grounds from his office in Brookline, Massachusetts, the frail and aging Olmsted sent his landscape master plan for the development of the Biltmore estate to Vanderbilt on July 12, 1889. Olmsted's plan combined a palatial manor house together with his ambitious program of agriculture and scientific forestry. The pleasure grounds around the mansion are a fusion of the English Formal, the French Grand Style, the Italianate, and the English Landscape Garden styles.[7]

A major component of the design was the further development of the forest lands surrounding the property. Charles Sprague Sargent, Director of the Arnold Arboretum, recommended to Olmsted that he hire Robert J. Douglas (1813-1897), a native tree expert from Waukegan, Illinois, to assess the reforestation possibilities of the Biltmore lands. Douglas' recommendations comprised half of the thirty-six-page forest management report that Olmsted sent to Vanderbilt in 1889.

Following the precepts that Olmsted used on all properties, that of scientific management along with a keen eye for aesthetics, Olmsted made the following comment when he submitted his report to Vanderbilt:

> The scientific management [plan] now to be entered upon at Biltmore will be the first plan [for private reforestation] in the [United States] to be carried on methodically, upon an extensive scale ... [and] directed systematically and with clearly defined purposes.

Olmsted further advised the Biltmore foresters to apply landscape aesthetics to practical silviculture: "look ahead ... for opportunities of forming points of special landscape interest by the development and exhibition of particular trees and groups."

Aware that the direction of an experienced forester was essential to the success of his forest management scheme, Olmsted wrote to Vanderbilt in 1891, advising him to hire Gifford Pinchot as his consultant. Olmsted advised:

> If you are to have the benefit of Mr. Pinchot's service ... it would be desirable ... that nothing be done except under his advice. I am satisfied that he would be glad to be identified with the undertaking, look to make his reputation upon it, and serve you with a degree of zeal that you could not expect to obtain from anyone else.

Because Pinchot was positioning himself to become director of the newly formed Division of Forestry in the United States Department of Agriculture, he knew that Biltmore needed a professional forester on-site year round. He recommended that Vanderbilt retain the services of Carl Alwin Schenck, a young man from Germany

6 George's father, William Henry Vanderbilt I was Olmsted's neighbor on Staten Island, NY.

7 In close proximity to the mansion were the French Grand Style Esplanade, Ramp Deuce, and Vista. Italianate sections included the South/Library Terrace, pergola, and Italian Terrace. Southeast of the formal sections were the English Landscape Garden Style Ramble and the Azalea Garden. South of the Ramble was the four-acre English Formal Style Walled Garden and Conservatory (designed by Hunt). The South Terrace included a bowling green; turf on the Italian Terrace served as a croquet lawn; elsewhere were tennis courts. Italian terra cotta planters, French stone statuary, limestone benches, and fountains further ornamented the grounds. West of the mansion, toward the French Broad River, Olmsted planned an undulating 250-acre English-style meadow park dotted with sheep, cattle, and domestic deer. The three-mile Approach Road to the house was designed as a picturesque display of native flowering plants and trees.

just completing his PhD at the University of Giessen. Vanderbilt offered the position of forester to Dr. Schenck in January of 1895.[8]

Olmsted first met Richard Morris Hunt in 1860 when the latter proposed monumental entrance gates for New York's Central Park. While Olmsted regarded Hunt's design as too ostentatious for Central Park, he obviously considered him the proper architect for such a large and grand home for Vanderbilt, and personally recommended him for the project in North Carolina.

Hunt's design for the Estate comprised more than fifty-six (contributing) buildings – and many lesser structures. Much like the grand eighteenth-century English country houses, the mansion and other buildings were important visual elements in the landscape – meant to be viewed from many distant and nearby points and angles.[9]

The Biltmore mansion was the first French chateau-style house in the United States. It was modeled after several 16th-century Loire Valley chateau, including Blois, Chambord, and Chantilly. Mostly notably, the French chateau of Chateau de Chenonceau is provided by Vanderbilt's grandson, George Cecil, as the probable inspiration for Biltmore. Built between 1889 and 1895, it is the largest privately-owned mansion in the United States; its 250 rooms comprise 135,000 square feet.[10]

Olmsted employed the young Boston landscape designer and native plant expert, Warren H. Manning (1860–1938) to serve as his horticultural assistant to specify most of the native plantings used at Biltmore. Manning worked for Olmsted from 1888 until opening his own office in 1896.

Olmsted and Manning planned picturesque masses along the three-mile Approach Road to the house; as well as several miles of pleasure drives around the estate; the reforesting of large abandoned pastures and woodland; and the planting of the proposed Biltmore Arboretum which would be criss-crossed by nine miles of pleasure roads.

The ultimate dream of the aging genius, Olmsted envisioned the Arboretum as the finest arboretum in existence, to be comprised of 4,200 tree species from every part of the world that "... will thrive unprotected in the soil and climate of the locality." He intended it to be a "museum of trees" to be used for research and for its scenic pleasure. He foresaw "... naturalists ... from all parts of the world ..." coming to study there.[11]

Based on the space and soil conditions that Manning calculated were needed for each family, genus and species, the Arboretum was to:

> ... appear as a line of road traversing the valleys and slopes for a total distance, including several loop roads, of about twelve miles. On either side, and extending back for two hundred feet or more, will be planted the trees and shrubs it is intended to exhibit ... .

Dr. Carl Alwin Schenck (see below) estimated that to "provide a living blanket to ... cover the ground and space beneath the ... trees, it will require possibly more than ten million plants." The winding road was to blend distant scenery with plantings in closer proximity to the road. He further envisioned that when the Arboretum reached its full "characteristic peculiarities" both students of plants and artists would find the beauty appealing for study and to the senses.[12]

During several months of 1894, Olmsted and Manning adjusted the alignment to the existing ground forms and site conditions and installed seven picturesque stone bridges. The two of them anticipated that if they overplanted and any particular species became unsuitable, they could have it culled out.

8 National Historic Landmark Nomination, Biltmore Estate. NPS Form 10-900 USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86) OMB No. 1024-0018. United States Department of the Interior, 2003.

9 Other structures included the Estate Office, the Horse Barn and Stable, the Incubator House, the Truck Farm Building, the Sheep Barn, the Shepherd's Cottage, River Cliff Cottage (often used by Olmsted on his visits to the estate), and Eastcote, the long-time residence of Chauncey Beadle, the Biltmore Nursery manager for sixty years.

10 The limestone-veneered house was built by stone masons, carpenters, cabinetmakers, and electricians brought from the North or newly-arrived Italian and Spanish artisans.

11 Alexander, Bill. 2007. *The Biltmore nursery: A botanical legacy.* Charleston, SC: Natural History Press.

12 Schenck. 1896. *Forestry on the Biltmore Estate.* p 3.

Olmsted's Biltmore Estate master plan combined a palatial country house with a substantial program of forestry and agriculture intended to restore the depleted Blue Ridge landscape. Ever mindful of his finances, George Vanderbilt realized a return on his investment in the form of milk, beef, lamb, wool, and leather. Plants propagated on the estate for reforestation and for the development of the arboretum were also sold all over the country in a commercial venture (The Biltmore Nursery) that lasted from 1889 until 1916. Orders were sent by mail or freight.

Although sections of the Approach Road were finished, the Arboretum was never completed as envisioned. Vanderbilt's finances were temporarily depleted, and in May 1895 Olmsted retired and left Biltmore in the hands of his son, Rick Olmsted. This was probably for the best. Schenck later wrote "At this point, old and venerable F. L. Olmsted ... was butting in ... ." Although the father continued to correspond from his home in Boston about his advice on the Arboretum, his mind was failing (presumably Alzheimer's disease) and he was soon institutionalized. When Manning left the firm the following year, the Arboretum languished for lack of a dedicated mentor.

For over six years between 1888 and 1895, Olmsted traveled from Boston to Biltmore two or three times a year (the train trip from Boston took a week). He often stayed for several weeks in the River Cliff Cottage, designed by the Hunt office. Olmsted also lodged in the Brick Farm House, an existing dwelling that was remodeled and used by Mr. Vanderbilt, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Olmsted, and other distinguished visitors to the estate while the mansion was under construction. One such visitor was the Viscounte d'Osmoys [Frenchman, Henri Le Boeuf, Comte d'Osmoy]. Other later Mansion visitors were Edith Wharton, novelist Henry James, and Presidents William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson.[13]

## Designers and Managers Most Closely Associated With the Estate

Richard Morris Hunt (1827-1895), scion of a prominent New England family, was the first American to attend the L'École des Beaux Arts in Paris (1845-48). Returning to the United States in 1855, he opened an office in New York City the following year. Hunt was a leader in the establishment of the profession of architecture in the United States. In 1857, he was a founder of the American Institute of Architects, serving as its president (1888-1891). While Hunt designed numerous public, private, and institutional buildings, he was the favorite architect of the tycoons of the Gilded Age, designing summer "cottages" at Newport, Rhode Island and also New York mansions for the Astors, Goelets, Griswolds, Gerrys, members of the Vanderbilt family, and many others. Hunt was the architect for Vanderbilt's New York townhouse, completed in 1887.

The two École des Beaux-Arts trained sons of R. M. Hunt, Richard Howland Hunt (1862-1931) and Joseph Howland Hunt (1870-1924), assumed the practice following their father's death in 1895. They continued as Hunt and Hunt, Architects, and for several years produced designs for George Vanderbilt and many others. They closed the firm in 1924 upon Joseph's death. Joseph was one of five groomsmen at George and Edith's wedding in Paris in 1898. Older brother "Howland" was the on-site supervisor of construction for the Hunt office from 1890 to 1896. He designed the handsome Biltmore Dairy Barn and Buildings (1900-02), the Horse Barn and Stable (1900), and the Truck Farmer's Cottage, all in the estate vocabulary.

The estate used a motif comprised of brick, "pebbledash" (stucco), and half-timbering that mimicked the traditional architecture of England and northern France. The Hunts used a similar scheme in creating the enclave known as Biltmore Village (1893-1897). Olmsted designed the village layout and the Hunts and Smith designed the buildings, including the estate office, railroad station, village stores, the Episcopalian Cathedral of All Souls, and numerous houses.[14]

### Other Designers and Managers

The vision of the above men could not have been achieved without the important group of talented individuals who were directly responsible for the daily on-site developments

13 Bellotto, Kimm, Katie Kubesh, and Niki McNeil. 2007. *The Biltmore House.* Coloma, MI: In the Hands of a Child. p. 16.

14 Alexander, Bill. 2008. *Around Biltmore Village: images of America.* Mount Pleasant, SC: Arcadia Publishing. pp. 27-48.

of the estate, who executed their designs. These men included: Charles McNamee; Richard Sharp Smith; Warrington Gillette Lawrence; William A. Thompson; James G. Gall, Jr.; Gifford Pinchot; Dr. Carl Alwin Schenck; Chauncey Delos Beadle; F. L. "Rick" Olmsted, Jr.; and Warren H. Manning.

Charles McNamee (1856-1923), a Vanderbilt in-law and attorney, traveled to Asheville with George Vanderbilt in 1888 to broker the purchase of 143 parcels of land that were to be the core of the estate. Until 1904, he oversaw all day-to-day operations.[15]

Richard Sharp Smith (1852-1924), an English architect, immigrated to the United States in 1882 and joined the office of Richard Morris Hunt in 1886. Until its completion in 1896, he was Hunt's "resident architect," supervising the construction of the mansion and designing a number of structures on the estate, including Eastcote (1899). Most importantly, he also had a hand in designing some of the structures at Buck Spring Lodge. Smith worked for Howland Hunt until at least 1906, when he opened his own practice in Asheville. He designed a number of prominent Asheville public, commercial, and residential buildings.[16]

Warrington Gillette Lawrence (1861-1938), a staff architect in Hunt's New York office, designed several buildings including the entrance lodge and the Italian-French manorial-style truck farm building.[17]

W. A. Thompson and James G. Gall, Jr. were hired by Olmsted in 1889 to lead his engineering and landscape departments. They prepared the initial plats and site maps, laid out roads, sited buildings, and drafted the planting schemes designed by Olmsted. Gall had worked for Olmsted on Central Park, where he earned the latter's trust in all aspects of site work. He carried out Olmsted's vision for the subtle grading of the meandering approach road as it ascended through the newly-planted forest from the entrance gate lodge to the esplanade.

Chauncey Beadle managed the nursery associated with Biltmore, and also handled the management of maintenance issues at Buck Spring Lodge, the construction of roads from Biltmore to the lodge, the establishment and management of the vegetable garden under the auspices of Mrs. Vanderbilt, and seemed to be involved in multiple aspects of the estate and outlying properties. At some point, he became the manager of the entire Vanderbilt property, overseeing all aspects of the operation for decades.

## Gifford Pinchot and Dr. Carl Alwin Schenck

Two other major Biltmore and Pisgah Forest figures were Gifford Pinchot and Dr. Carl Alwin Schenck. These two pioneers in forestry came to the estate in 1892 and 1895 respectively. This was a time of clear-cut logging, and the resultant soil erosion, siltation of streams, loss of wildlife habitat, and the degraded scenic aspect that resulted from what are now widely recognized as bad forestry practices. Schenck reported: "At the time when forest management was begun on the Estate the condition of a large part of the forest was deplorable in the extreme." He noted that the land had been cleared for many decades for crops and livestock, and to provide timber for houses, barns, fences, and firewood.

The practice of frequent burning to beat back the forest was devastating, and thousands of trees were girdled to die in place so sunlight could reach crops planted below and between them. Much of the cleared land was steep and the soil highly erodible: many of the farms wore out quickly due to the slopes and lack of professional silviculture management and techniques. Allowing livestock, particularly hogs, to trample over young saplings and cause erosion of the steep slopes further degraded the mountainous landscapes and the regeneration of young trees. In a letter to his friend Fred Kingsbury, Olmsted wrote (January, 1891), "[T]he Vanderbilt property ... is in ... a generally poor and vagabondish region but there are potentialities in parts of it, especially in the valleys, of which we can make something."[18]

15 Rickman, p. 7.

16 Chase, Nan K. 2007. *Asheville: a history.* Jefferson, NC: McFarland.

17 National Historic Landmark Nomination, Biltmore Estate. p. 11.

18 http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1016/is_2_111/ai_n14844000.

### Gifford Pinchot

Gifford Pinchot (1865-1946) was the oldest son of a wealthy New York merchant who made a fortune in lumbering and land speculation. Pinchot graduated from Yale in 1889, and the following year went to Germany, where he met Sir Dietrich Brandis (1824-1907), the acknowledged "father of scientific forestry" whom Pinchot called "the grandfather of American forestry." Brandis mentored Pinchot until the former's death in 1907. Pinchot later spent eighteen months studying at the École Nationale Forestière (the French Forest School) in Nancy, France. While there, he examined model forests in France, Germany, and Switzerland and gathered the knowledge to enable him to introduce forest management into the United States.[19]

Pinchot was recommended to Vanderbilt by Olmsted and Charles Sprague Sargent (1841-1927), the Director of Harvard's Arnold Arboretum. Pinchot initiated the forest management program that established Biltmore Estate as America's "cradle of forestry."

Dr. Schenck (see below), however, regarded Pinchot as belonging to the "upper 400" of New York. "Biltmore was too small an affair. He was ambitious ... he wanted to be ... the leader of national forestry, replacing ... C. S. Sargent ... ." Pinchot's successes at Biltmore earned him the national acclaim that launched him into a career as a consulting forester and then the post of first chief of the federal government's Division of Forestry, the forerunner of the United States Forest Service (1905-1910). He was a founding member of the Society of American Foresters, established in 1900. Pinchot continued to visit Biltmore — as the "oberforstmeister" — to consult with Dr. Schenck. Later Pinchot was twice elected Governor of Pennsylvania (1923–1927 and 1931–1935).[20]

### Carl Alwin Schenck

Pinchot's successor at Biltmore was Dr. Carl Alwin Schenck (1868-1955), a 26-year-old graduate of the forestry department at the University of Giessen in Germany. During his fourteen-year tenure (1895-1909), Schenck lived in the old pre-Vanderbilt farmhouse, Woodcote, enjoying one of the choicest sites in the Biltmore landscape. He characterized it as "the "swellest country place in the USA." In 1898, Schenck devised a selective tree harvesting system for Pisgah Forest which was followed for the next ten years. Oak, poplar, and pine were selectively cut for use as construction lumber, cord-wood (for fuel wood and the production of wood-alcohol), railroads ties, fence posts, and roofing shingles. Waste was all but eliminated. Even oak bark (tanbark) was marketed for making tannic acid, used in the leather tanning process.[21]

Schenck was forever mindful of the fact that landscape aesthetics were uppermost in the larger scheme for the estate. He opined that the "juvenile enthusiasm of a multimillionaire" drove this enterprise; "forestry at Biltmore was nothing more than a rich man's fancy and fad: not economics but aesthetics were dominant."[22]

> The treatment of Biltmore Forest must be somewhat influenced by the character of the Estate as a country residence, with its gardens, farms, deer-park, and roads carefully planned and planted. The forest management is consequently subject to occasional checks in cases where silvicultural measures would conflict somewhat with the immediate purpose of the landscape architect. These cases are fortunately rare, and the loss of interest in the forest management which they occasion is more than offset by the arboretum and forest planting experiments. [23]

Schenck declared that his agenda for the Forest was an "elastic outline rather than a definite scheme." His general objectives were to achieve profitable production and direct utility. "If this were absent," he wrote, "the existence of the Forest would be justified only as it lends beauty and interest to the Estate." He was also determined to obtain "a nearly constant annual yield, which will give steady occupation to a trained force ... [thereby making] regular operations possible." Lastly, he hoped to

19 Pinchot, Gifford. 1947. *Breaking new ground.* New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace and Company.

20 Pinchot, 1947.

21 Schenck, Carl Alwin. 1998. *Cradle of forestry in America: the Biltmore Forest School, 1898-1913.* Edited by Ovid Butler. Durham, NC: Forest History Society.

22 Schenck, 1955. p. 7, 22.

23 Pinchot, 1893a. p. 44.

bring about ... "an improvement in the present very mediocre condition of the Forest, without which its future would be nearly hopeless."[24]

His “elastic working plan” called for the subdivision of the Forest into ninety-two “Compartments” of approximately forty-two acres each. The delineation of each parcel was based on natural features, such as ridges, streams, and hollows. In several places, the old logging roads which crisscrossed the Forest were used as outlines of Compartments. For “silvicultural reasons,” Schenck further parceled the Forest into blocks “of an acre or more” in order to “... restrict the annual cuttings to smaller areas, and to reduce the dangers from insects and other enemies.” He called the trees to be harvested each year the “sanctioned annual yield.”[25]

In 1896 Schenck began to tutor a small group of students, and in 1898 this educational program became the first school of forestry in the United States.[26] The school was located near the Pink Beds area. The curriculum required twelve months of classroom lectures on silviculture and "practical forestry" held in the mornings in Schenck’s office. Hands-on field work consisted of visits onto the estate in the afternoon, together with extended field visits into Pisgah Forest to experience forest management in practice. These were followed by a six-month internship in the forest industry and a written thesis.[27]

Graduates were awarded a Bachelor's of Science in Forest Engineering. Among the guest lecturers of the School were Charles Sprague Sargent (1841-1927), the director of Harvard’s Arnold Arboretum; John Muir (1838 – 1914), America’s pre-eminent naturalist; and faculty from the University of Pennsylvania and University of North Carolina. Schenck also was “compelled to concoct ‘textbooks’ on every branch ... of Forestry.”

In 1901 the school and the forestry department had grown to the extent that Mr. Vanderbilt commissioned Richard Sharp Smith to design a combination office and classroom building. Completed in 1902, it was a one-story, four-room building in the prescribed estate fashion with brick trimmed, pebble-dash elevations, and a tile roof; it stood on the north side of the Swannanoa River just north of the entrance lodge.

The school operated through the summer of 1909, when, following several disagreements with Vanderbilt and another manager, Schenck was dismissed. “Doc,” as the students called him, continued the school through 1913, taking forty of his students on excursions through various parts of the United States and studying in several national forests in Germany. The returning students were sent to the Little River Lumber Company in Townsend, Tennessee for their field work training. Following that, the entire school moved to Tomah, Wisconsin to do further hands-on study at the C. A. Goodyear Lumber Company. Schenck recorded the following about the transcontinental train tour of 1911-1913: "... we traveled in comfort, with two Pullmans and a dining car for our private use. Our Schoolhouse [was] a Pullman Car!"[28]

For many of the excursions into commercial forests they traveled by a one-Pullman-car and locomotive train. Places they toured included: the Manistee National Forest near Cadillac, Michigan; an iron works and the Chippewa National Forest near Duluth, Minnesota; Glacier National Park (Montana); Kaniksu National Forest in Idaho; the Columbia River in Washington State; logging near Portland, Oregon; and the Siuslaw National Forest near Coos Bay, Oregon. These site visits focused on forest management and the variety of issues relative to various sections of the country.

More than 400 men studied at the Biltmore Forest School, of which 300 completed the course of study, and half of that number were employed in forestry work. Several graduates of the school, whose fathers owned logging companies, worked for their family’s lumber companies. Other graduates found positions of leadership in forestry in state and federal government and in education

24 Pinchot, 1893a. p. 45.

25 Pinchot, 1893a. p. 46.

26 "Scientific Forestry," was a principle that held that portions of proceeds from timber sales should be devoted to replanting, fire protection, and forest improvement. Quin, 1997, p. 274.

27 Schenk, 1955. p. 17.

28 Carl Alwin Schenck Collection, Special Collections Research Center, North Carolina State University Libraries, Raleigh, NC, 1990, 2009.

throughout the United States (including Syracuse, Cornell, and Yale Universities). By 1913, schools of forestry were established at several American universities.[29]

Between 1908 and 1910, Schenck also ran the C. A. Schenck and Company, a private forest engineering consulting business. One of his employees was Homer Taft Read (1855-1911), an engineer who graduated from Harvard in 1906.[30]

At the request of the editor, C. S. Sargent, Schenck wrote a few articles for the popular journal *Garden and Forest*. Among his other duties, Schenck prepared an exhibit on forest management for the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago and he authored a twenty-three-page report, "Forestry on the Biltmore Estate" (1896).

In 1954, Schenck wrote "A Loving Fare-Well Letter" to all of his former pupils, in which he stated the school was “a queer masquerade of a school: the course was comprised of only one year; there was no endowment; there was no school-building ... [until 1902].” Instead, students worked in their “laboratories,” the forests, “laboring" - performing the full range of manual tasks that helped to bring the Biltmore Forest into a healthy and economically viable forest.[31]

The Biltmore Forest School was soon joined in 1898 by the New York State College of Forestry (Syracuse), and in 1900 by a school of forestry at Yale University established by a gift of $150,000 by the Pinchot family.[32]

The Biltmore Forest School might have continued longer were it not for financial reverses suffered by Mr. Vanderbilt in 1902-1903 and again in 1907, when a national depression forced timber prices to decline. The competition from the other forestry schools at accredited academic institutions further challenged the school, and it did not have the academic status afforded by the school at Yale which offered a master’s degree in forestry. Gifford Pinchot, whose academic philosophy differed from that of Schenck, encouraged Mr. Vanderbilt to close the school. The other schools, however, could not provide nearby Pisgah Forest as a living laboratory for field study.

In February 1908, Schenck returned from Austria where he and six students had spent a month studying forest management in the Carpathian Mountains. He observed a difference in Mr. Vanderbilt’s demeanor. He was told: “sell Pisgah Forest for me. I will pay you the usual agent’s commission on the purchase price.” Schenck did not sell the forest and, in his memoir, "Cradle of Forestry: The Biltmore Forest School, 1898-1913," wrote that the situation improved later that year, enabling him to replace his assistant forester, Dr. Clifton Durant Howe, who went to the University of Toronto, with Dr. Homer D. House.[33]

He was also able to stage the Biltmore Forest Festival to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the school and the 20th anniversary of forest management on the estate. Held over Thanksgiving weekend in 1908, Thursday and Friday were filled with tours of the forest plantations and farms on the estate; a train excursion to Pisgah Forest was held on Saturday. The Sunday afternoon “Farewell,” however, was a painfully poignant event. The Festival was the climax of Dr. Schenck’s achievements at Biltmore.

By April 1909, simmering disagreements erupted between Schenck and the manager of the estate, Chauncey Beadle. Schenck was charged and found guilty of assault and battery of Beadle. Schenck’s termination in May 1909 followed Mr. Vanderbilt’s discovery that the former had leased the hunting and fishing rights in Pisgah Forest to a Chicago hunting club. The lease constrained Vanderbilt from selling the property for the ten-year term of the contract.[34]

In autumn 1909, Dr. Schenck and his Biltmore Forest School disassociated themselves from the Biltmore Estate. In each of the next four years

29 Carl Alwin Schenck Collection, Special Collections Research Center, North Carolina State University Libraries, Raleigh, NC, 1990, 2009.

30 Correspondence regarding Dr. Schenck's services for estimating the values of timber lands, 1899-1907. Biltmore Estate Forestry Department Manager's Records, Series M., 1895-1909, Box. Folder 22.0015.

31 Schenck, 1954. p. 1.

32 Brinkley, Douglas. 2009.

33 Schenck, 1998.

34 *The New York Times,* July 2, 1908; April 28, 1909; June 2, 1909.

Schenck led a class of forty students to Europe. These odysseys ended in 1913 and the next year Dr. Schenck returned to Germany. His lawsuit against George Vanderbilt over his dismissal was settled out of court for an estimated $15,000.[35]

### Chauncey Delos Beadle

In 1890, Olmsted hired the young Canadian botanist and horticulturist, Chauncey Delos Beadle (1866-1950) to direct the nursery department at Biltmore. Beadle was educated in engineering and landscape gardening at Ontario Agricultural College (Toronto) and at Cornell University. Beadle was responsible for the fields and greenhouses where trees, shrubs, and other plants were grown for eventual planting on the grounds. He also was given charge of the retail plant nursery that flourished into one of the top nurseries in the United States. From 1889 until 1916, the Biltmore Nursery mailed or shipped a wide variety of ornamental plants nationwide. Schenck states that the nursery shipped "over two millions of plants" in his "Forestry on the Biltmore Estate."[36]

The nursery's "descriptive catalog" of 1912 claimed that it had:

> ... one of the largest and most complete collections of ornamentals in the world ... conifers, deciduous trees, broad-leafed evergreen trees and shrubs, deciduous shrubs, roses, vines, ornamental grasses, bamboos, hardy ferns, aquatic and bog plants, and herbaceous perennials.[37]

In his 1893 "Report for the Columbian World's Exposition," Pinchot wrote:

> There are already in the Nursery more kinds of trees and shrubs than there are in the Botanical Gardens at Kew, near London, and the number is being steadily increased. The number of seedlings now being raised in the Nursery for forest planting includes twenty species, with an estimated total of 1,867,000 individuals.

In his "Forestry on the Biltmore Estate," Schenck mentioned "... between three and four millions of forest trees and shrubs ... ." In his conclusion to the exposition report, Pinchot closed by stating:

> The continuation of the work at Biltmore along the lines already defined may be expected to yield much information of general value. The Arboretum, from its situation and extent, will aid powerfully in determining the value of very many kinds of trees for a large part of the country, and will offer admirable opportunities for their study. The forest planting may add new species to our list of commercially valuable trees, and discover new uses for those already known. It will add greatly to our scanty silvicultural knowledge of the trees which it will contain. For the Forest a still larger field of usefulness may be anticipated. The value of the methods already used in its treatment will be determined, new adaptations of the principles of forestry to American conditions will be developed, and information as to the business side of forest management will be gained. But above all, it will be useful in defining and helping to solve the problems with which American forestry must deal, and in awakening an interest in those practical details upon which its success in the future must so largely depend.[38]

Perhaps Beadle's greatest accomplishment was the accumulation of one of the world's most complete azalea collections.

Beadle worked for the Biltmore Estate longer than any other individual – from 1890 to 1945. During much of that time he occupied Eastcote — until his death on July 4, 1950. Olmsted respected Beadle enough that he sent his son, F. L. "Rick" Olmsted, Jr. to work under him in 1894. With his stepbrother, John Charles Olmsted, the younger Olmsted took over the business upon their father's retirement in 1895. They carried on with the Biltmore portfolio into the 1920s.[39]

## Architecture of the mansion

The Biltmore Mansion was the first eclectic French chateau-style architecture in the US. It was a palatial Beaux-Arts Grand Style house. The Mansion was built of steel and brick veneered with limestone. Finish work by cabinetmakers continued on in the mansion until mid-1897. The renowned Spanish tile artist, Rafael Guastavino, installed much of the finest tile-work at Biltmore (1900-1908).

35 *The New York Times,* August 9, 1910.

36 Schenck, 1896, p. 3.

37 Anderson, 2007. p. 12.

38 Pinchot, 1893a. p. 49.

39 Roper, Laura Wood. 1973. *FLO: a biography of Frederick Law Olmsted.* Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

The overall asymmetry of the chateau lent a striking picturesque character to the landscape. Its dark gray slate roof's cape, with green-patinated copper detailing, was a varied array of pitches, turrets, dormers and chimneys. Its three-story Indiana limestone facades were a convoluted play of advancing and receding planes, comprised of octagonal projections, spires, arched loggias, balconies, and a blend of square and arched windows. The entrance elevation was the most dramatic with its twin-turreted tower and grand arched portal, flanked by the glass encased domed conservatory. The most striking feature of the façade was the grand stairway that was expressed by three upwardly inclined bands of stone and glass – a la the Chateau de Blois. Cornices featured fanciful gargoyles; heraldic statuary abounded; and above every doorway was intricately-carved tracery. The battered foundation-basement walls were rough-hewn stone, lending a fortress-like appearance to the meeting of the mansion and the ground.[40]

## Buck Spring Lodge

In early 1895, George Vanderbilt first formulated plans for Buck Spring Lodge as a rustic hunting retreat in Pisgah Forest, at Buck Spring Gap – about seventeen miles southwest of Biltmore House. He was attracted by the scenery and the plentiful game of his new property. Buck Spring Lodge offered an exceptional diversity of flora, including maple, beech, pine, hemlock, chestnut, and oak — ideal habitat for watching resident and migratory birds.

From the lodge site, there are views of Mt. Pisgah as shown in Figure 1 (5,721 feet), Little Mt. Pisgah (5,320 feet), Looking Glass Rock (3,969 feet), and Little Bald (5,285 feet). From the top of Mt. Pisgah, Vanderbilt had a 360-degree panorama that provided views of Cold Mountain (6,030 feet), Shining Rock (6,010 feet), Clingman's Dome (6,643 feet, on the Tennessee border), Mt. Mitchell (6,684 feet, the highest point east of the Rockies), Asheville, and glimpses into South Carolina (30 miles south) and Tennessee (35 miles northwest).[41]



**Figure 1.** View of Mt. Pisgah from Buck Spring Lodge site.

Vanderbilt commissioned Richard Morris Hunt to design the rustic retreat or lodge prior to actually holding title to the new property. Drawings for the lodge in the Hunt office date to January and February 1895 (Biltmore Archives). Due to their father's sudden death in August 1895, the commodious rambling cluster of cabins was actually designed by the sons, Joseph Howland Hunt and Richard Howland Hunt. In March 1895 Olmsted had a survey made for the 471.69-acre lodge site. This was one of Olmsted's last tasks before his retirement two months later.

In contrast to the mansion, Buck Spring Lodge was conceived as a rustic Tyrolean/Black Forest/ Adirondack/Carolina Mountain vernacular-style retreat. The term "rustic" chiefly characterizes the exterior of the original portion of the hunting lodge – its hand-hewn timbers, oak wood shingle roofs, and hefty fieldstone foundation walls and chimneys. Figure 3 shows the kinds of materials used for construction of the various architectural features at the lodge. Bark-covered logs served as posts and siding. The interiors of the guest units may have had a more finished character as mentioned below.

40 Description by W. A. Mann after examination of photographs of the structure.

41 For relative location of each of these features, see Figure 2 map on following page.

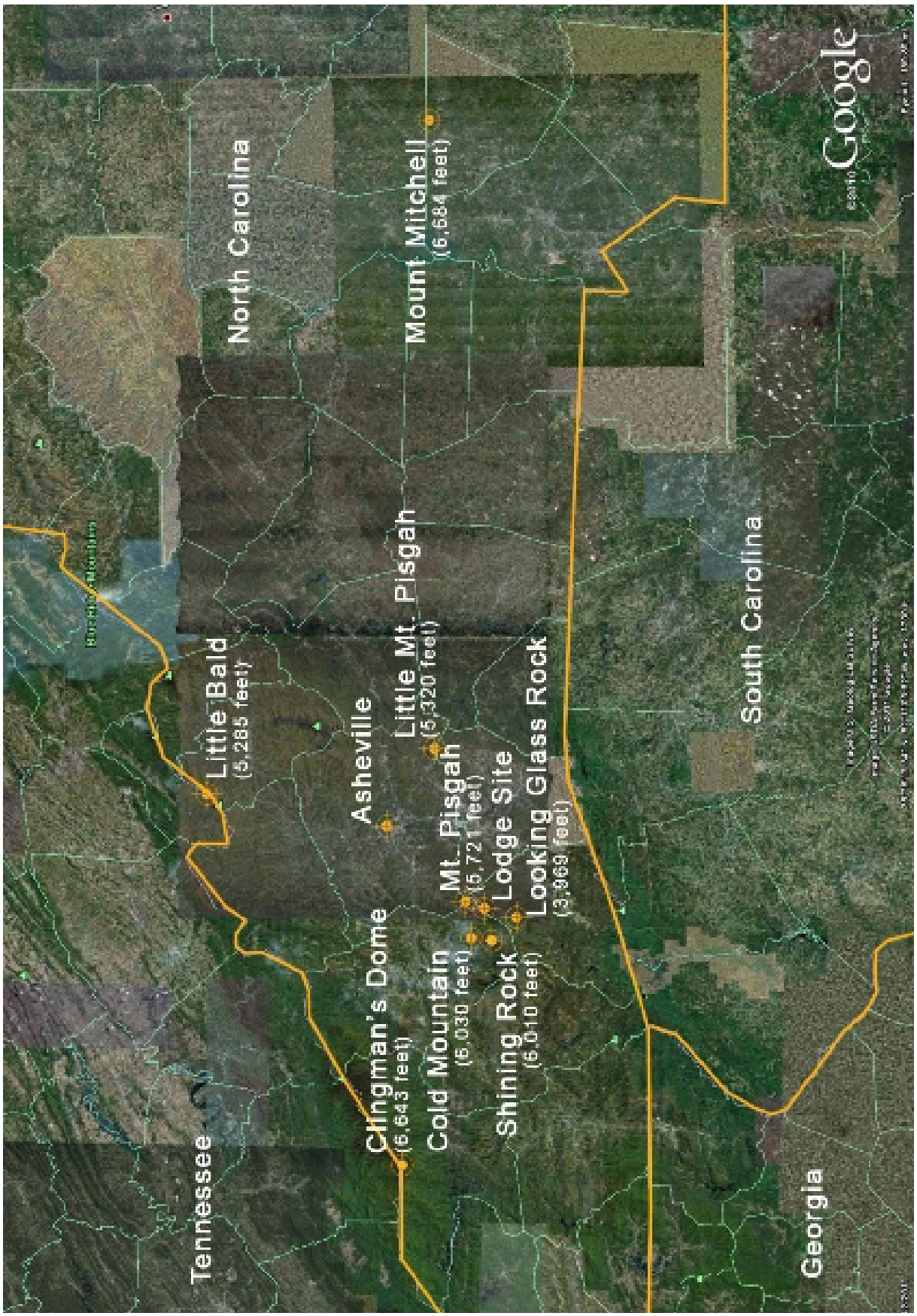



**Figure 2.** This aerial image shows the different features visible from the Buck Spring Lodge site.



**Figure 3.** Rustic architectural style of the main lodge at Buck Spring. (Negative in possession of BLRI headquarters, Asheville, NC. United States Department of the Interior, NPS. Neg No. 1664. Buck Spring Lodge, MP 407.5. Photograph by Earl W. Estes, August 1, 1961).

Most of the cedar logs used on the lodge were floated down the Pigeon River and then hauled by teams of oxen or mules up to the site along the Pisgah Creek (wagon) Road from the village of Cruso. In March 1903 Vanderbilt purchased (tulip or yellow) poplar, chestnut and black locust lumber (presumably for interior paneling, flooring, trim and other usage). Logs, lumber, and several outbuildings were salvaged during the dismantling of the nearby houses for Fletcher, Fyrd, and Brock. Vanderbilt chose to have some of the rooms painted and selected the colors himself. James Cornelius Lipe and his brother, Daniel Baker Lipe were the main contractors for Biltmore and Buck Spring Lodge. Gordon Shroat also worked on the Lodge.[42]

At the lodge, Vanderbilt entertained family and guests in his cluster of about twelve buildings, centered around the main four-bedroom cabin, whose interior walls were made of rough-sawn logs. Appended to it were two other buildings comprised of two two-bedroom suites (referred to by Beadle as the North End Cottage or North End House and the Half-Way House or Midway House). A fourth building housed the kitchen and dining hall. The shingle-roofed passageways were inclined and stair-stepped open-air corridors that linked the main units, each of which was at a different ground level.[43] (Figures 4 and 5).



**Figure 4.** Open-air corridors which linked the buildings. Left to right are the kitchen-dining room, arcade, bedrooms. (Negative in possession of BLRI, U.S. Department of the Interior. NPS. Neg. No. 1666. Photo by Earl W. Estes, August 1, 1961).

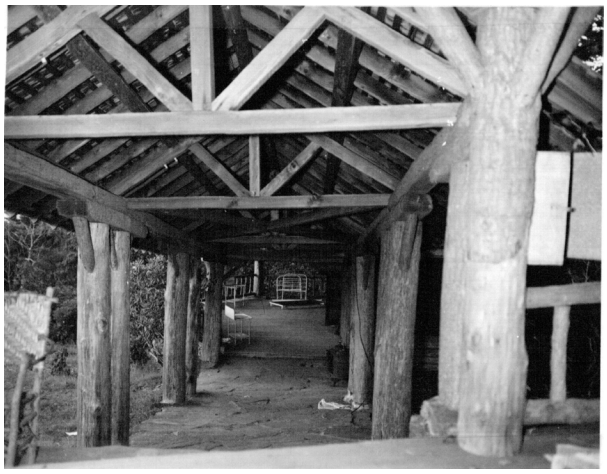


**Figure 5.** Stair-stepped corridor leading to dining pavillion. (Negative in possession of the BLRI, U.S. Department of the Interior. NPS. Neg. No. 1667. Photo by Earl W. Estes, August 1, 1961).

The lodge had early versions of the most modern amenities: a telephone was installed in 1901; electric lights powered by a generator by 1904; hot and cold running water by 1910 accompanied by indoor "water closets" (flush toilets). Located a half-mile (downhill) from the lodge (on Pisgah Creek) was a "rife dam," reservoir and a stone pump house to furnish a steady supply of fresh

42 Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, Vol. 38, Oct. 1912 - Jan. 1913.

43 Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, Vol. 55, Jan. - Oct. 1917, p. 722. Memoranda Book, vol. 14, 1901-03.

water for the lodge and ancillary buildings. The one-quarter-acre reservoir was located approximately 1,300 feet beyond (southwest of) the vegetable garden at an elevation of 4,800 feet.[44] [45]

Despite its many state-of-the-art amenities, the lodge and ancillary buildings were not centrally heated, but then — the lodge was primarily for summertime use, as the mountain roads were impassable in the coldest part of winter. Nevertheless, several fireplaces served that function (their chimneys added a suitable picturesque aspect to the roofline of the various units of the rambling lodge - Figure 6 below).

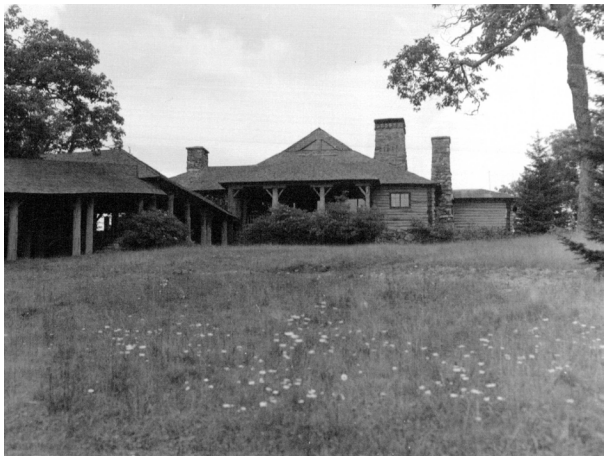


**Figure 6.** Arcade, bedrooms, and hunting lodge. (Negative in possession of BLRI, U.S. Department of the Interior, NPS, # 1650. Photo by Earl W. Estes, August 1,1961).

44 The generator system could produce about five horse power, or 3.5 kilowatts, enough to operate about fifty sixteen-candle-power lamps. In times of reduced flow in the streams, a gasoline-powered system was in place near the Lodge. George ordered the switch from direct to indirect electrical current in 1912 because it required less than half as much electricity. Hot water was produced by a wood-fired Jacket-stove located in the Kitchen building. Later in 1913, Charles E. Waddell, an Asheville engineer, advised George to incorporate an additional improved hot water system beneath or behind the Cogburn cabin near the dining hall (Memoranda Book). Fresh water was obtained from the creek at Flat Laurel Gap and Ram Creek, at a "difference in elevation of a little over two hundred feet in a lineal distance of about one thousand feet, and a normal flow of 0.2 cubic feet per second." (Memoranda Book, vol. 16, 1903-1904). A rife pump is a system for pumping stream water. It operates without electricity or fuel. The power to lift water is provided by the current. (Memoranda Book, vol. 16, 1903-1904).

45 The reservoir is today the sewage treatment facility for the Pisgah Inn, the Mt. Pisgah Picnic Area (at mile 407.8), and the campground facility.

In the main living room, the massive rough stone arched fireplace opening stood approximately seven feet high. The room had a very casual, almost cluttered appearance, with a bizarre admixture of handmade vernacular furniture and Windsor chairs, huge hand-hewn ceiling beams, hewn log wall paneling and an eclectic assortment of exotic and mundane objets d'art as shown in Figure 7 below. The stairway and balcony railings were formed of large rough logs. Hung above the living room chimney was a set of immense elk antlers and other hunting trophies were displayed here and there about the room. Dark heavy drapes hung over all windows.[46]



**Figure 7.** Main living room. (Undated photograph from Biltmore Archives, from Walt Weber report included as appendix to this CLR).

The balcony housed a sizable library — for pleasure reading during long months at the lodge. Vanderbilt was a bibliophile no matter which residence he was inhabitating, and he wanted reading material available for he and his guests. George and Edith loved history and literature, including religion, philosophy, poetry and plays.

46 Description by W. A. Mann after examination of several interior photographs.

Music and art were among Vanderbilt's favorite topics. He also had a substantial collection on architecture, landscape architecture, and forestry — favorite titles that Hunt, Olmsted and Pinchot had each suggested. He became known for his architectural sensibilities due to his extensive reading and research.

An anonymous early twentieth-century New York journalist characterized Vanderbilt as "... a bookworm ... . He was not graduated from any college, and his education ... had not been carried beyond ... high school ... ." Vanderbilt kept a list of "Books I have Read" from the age of 12 until his untimely death in 1914 at the age of 51. The last entry was #3159, the third volume of Henry Adams' *History of the United States*. Thus, between 1875 and 1914, George Vanderbilt read an average of eighty-one books per year. This is a staggering total, even when taking into account that Vanderbilt was a man of leisure. He often entertained his guests by reading his favorite stories or poems.[47]

## Ancillary structures

In addition to the main lodge and surrounding cabins, there was a servants' quarters, and a caretaker's house (to the right in Figure 8). A modest stone and log assistant ranger's house was built by Rankin and Judson Watts in January, 1900 (it measured 20.5 by 30.5 feet). Nearby were a playhouse/school for Vanderbilt's daughter, Cornelia, a stable, and a large ten-car garage for automobiles and carriages.[48] Cornelia occasionally also had a tent set up on the lawn for camping and play.[49]

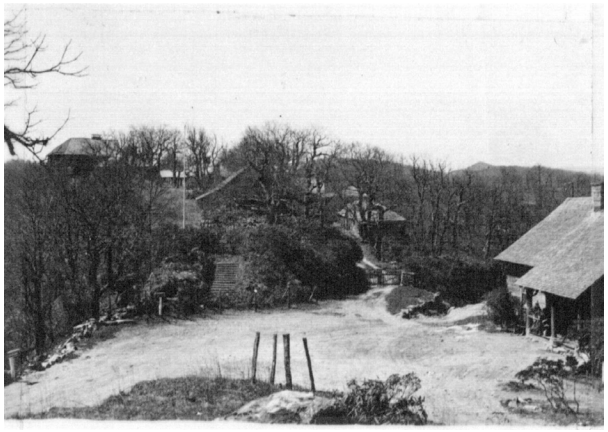


**Figure 8.** Entrance to Buck Spring Lodge compound showing various buildings on the site. Caretakers home in the foreground to the right, honeymoon suite in mid ground and lodge in the background. (Negative in possession of BLRI, # 6806. Attribution to "EHA," May 1, 1935).

The trail from the mansion to the lodge passed through Hominy Valley, where the Stony Fork Meeting House stood, a Methodist Church, and a schoolhouse. Vanderbilt purchased the schoolhouse in 1910 and had it moved to the Buck Spring compound, renaming it the "Honeymoon Cottage," due to its remote distance from the other Buck Spring Lodge structures.[50]The compound also included a bath house; a root cellar (to prevent produce from spoiling by maintaining a constant humidity, and from freezing during the winter, yet cool during the summer); a springhouse (for the storage of meat and dairy products refrigerated by an icy spring flowing beneath it); and an ice house (1912, stocked with ice from either of two ponds uphill from the electric generator). Chickens were kept in a "simple poultry house" and pen near the barn. Mrs. Vanderbilt instructed her yardman to feed raisins to the pheasants that came near the lodge.[51]

Paths on the grounds were paved in flagstone, and Beadle referred to the "plaza-like concourse," on which sat a tall flagpole requested by Edith. She ordered her yardman to: "... always be sure to have the flag flying." According to Beadle, around the plaza were planted "prickly plants ... on the slopes

47 http://www.biltmore.com/our_story/stories/gwv.asp

48 Biltmore Estate Forestry Department Manager's Records, 1895 - 1909, Box. Folder 40.0007, Correspondence between C. A. Schenck and Charles McNamee, Feb.-March 1900. Measurements taken from National Park Service Design and Construction Survey Map, 1956.

49 Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, Vol. 55, Jan.-Oct. 1917, Chauncey Beadle to Edith Vanderbilt.

50 Personal interview between Stephen Kidd and George Cecil. (nd)

51 Biltmore Estate Forestry Department Office, Manager's Records. Correspondence from Edward Harding to Dr. C. A. Schenck, 1895-1905, Box. Folder 16.0028. Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, vol. 38, Oct. 1912-Jan. 1913.

above and surrounding." The thorny hedge was needed because Merino sheep were grazed on the lawn around the lodge, lending a pastoral air to the place. They are seen nibbling the turf right at the front porch in many photographs, such as the one in Figure 9 below. Sheep were wintered by D. H. Pless of the nearby village of Cruso. Vanderbilt leased his nearby pastures to his neighbors for their milk cattle (and at the mansion). Near the main lodge was a massive low rock outcrop (ledge) and there were a number of dry-stack stone retaining walls (built by Gordon Shroat).

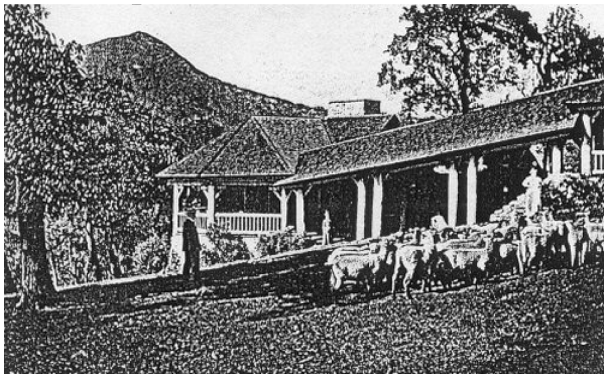


**Figure 9.** Sheep grazing on lawn in front of lodge. (Undated photo from Biltmore Archives. From Walt Weber report included as appendix to this CLR).

In 1900 George purchased more land in order to build Cascade Lodge in the Davidson River Valley, just across from what is now the Pisgah Forest Ranger's Station and approximately 20 miles from the Vanderbilt lodge. He built Looking Glass Lodge (1903, designed by Howland Hunt) near Looking Glass Rock and Looking Glass Falls. The Looking Glass Rock Trail led to the 3,969-foot granitic pluton (intrusive igneous rock). It can be seen from all over the area; its summit provides spectacular views of the surrounding mountains. The monolith was named for the way its granite face reflected the sunshine; when water freezes on its vertical surface, it glistens in the sun like a mirror. Looking Glass Falls Road was built by 1910.[52] These later additions to his holdings are important as they set the "tone" for his use of Pisgah Forest as an enclave and retreat for his guests and family.

52 Biltmore Estate Forestry Department Manager's Records, Series H, 1895 -1909. Box. Folder 18.0028, Correspondence from Howland Hunt of Hunt & Hunt Architects to George Vanderbilt, March 18, 1903.

## Life at the lodge

Vanderbilt's guests and personal servants initially arrived at the lodge after a several-hour horse ride from the mansion or train depot. Mules transported their sizable amounts of luggage. Later, Edith convinced her husband to construct a motor road from the main Biltmore House to the Lodge. These "Gilded Age" Victorians often dressed in formal wear for dinners of newly-shot game, fresh-caught trout, and homegrown produce. As they explored the grounds and took in the view, lady guests strolled around the grounds and gardens in fancy dress; men frequently took horseback expeditions for hunting, fishing and camping.

Vanderbilt stocked the woods with deer, elk, buffalo, and wild turkey; he also stocked his favorite streams with trout. Mr. H. Hilder, a guest of Mrs. Vanderbilt in September 1918, camped on the property "for the purpose of making some paintings." In the summer of 1933, John Philip Hill and his family spent the entire summer at the lodge. Letter writing consumed a good part of most days or evenings for the family as well as guests.[53]

In various years the Vanderbilts were present at the lodge at some time in each of the twelve months of the year. Edith stayed most of the summer there, especially in the closing years of her life.[54]

## Continued maintenance and improvements

Through 1903, "Doc" Schenck was in charge of the construction and development of the Buck Spring Lodge together with its farm and outbuildings. In November 1899, Schenck contracted for the making of several rustic straight back chairs for the lodge. James Cornelius Lipe and Daniel Baker Lipe also built some of the furniture. In October

53 John Philip Hill (1879-1941) of Baltimore, Maryland, was a Republican U.S. Attorney for Maryland from 1910 to 1915, and a candidate for mayor of Baltimore in 1915. Anderson, 2007, p 27.

54 George Cecil notes that Edith actually last visited Biltmore and Buck Spring Lodge in 1955 on the occassion of his wedding to Nancy Owen. He also states that she rarely visited after her marriage to Peter Gerry, preferring to devote her energies to his political career and social life in Washington, DC. (Interview with George Cecil by Stephen Kidd, nd).

1902, Edith requested green denim seat cushions. Schenck was also responsible for procuring paintings for display at the lodge (1901). Mr. and Mrs. Vanderbilt even designed the uniforms that were worn by their forest rangers.[55]

Richard Sharp Smith, the English architect who was Howland Hunt's overseer for the construction of the mansion, had a hand in designing some of the structures at Buck Spring Lodge. He opened his own practice in Asheville in 1906 but continued to design for the Vanderbilts.[56]

Soon after construction on Buck Spring Lodge began, Howland Hunt noted that settling had already appeared and that the main chimney needed rebuilding three times along with other re-pointing that was already necessary. The lodge was constantly being repaired due to irregular settlement, causing stone foundation wall collapses (1904), roof leaks, chimney cracks (1910), and doors not hanging properly. In 1928, the irregular settlement of the place necessitated re-chinking of the exterior logs with oakum (hemp fibers impregnated with pine tar). Insects and rodents were a constant problem.[57]

The buildings and grounds of the lodge were still being improved as late as 1911: plumbing upgraded; floors refinished; a croquet court and a tennis court constructed.[58] Beadle noted that Vanderbilt proposed to:

> ... screen the openings in the stable buildings as seen from the lower road by a group of Rhododendrons (Laurels) placed a little below the foundations. We also wish to plant right at the base of the steps leading from the kitchen in the dining hall, in order to eventually block the old road that leads past that part in a manner that would preclude the use of the opening from wagons, and yet not do away with the path that leads to the spring and nearly parallels the trail.[59]

In 1912, a 200-foot-long stone wall was built by Ranger C. T. Rankin, along the road by the assistant ranger's house (designed by Hunt and Hunt). Vanderbilt requested "... placing a few low dense bushes along the wood-yard ... stone retaining walls."[60]

## Mrs. Vanderbilt's Garden

In April 1909, Beadle first mentioned to Mr. Vanderbilt the feasibility of establishing a vegetable garden near the lodge in the area where the picnic grounds are now located. From that point on, Mrs. Vanderbilt oversaw all aspects of her impressive 80 by 110-foot (0.2 acre) plot. The garden was approximately 1,000 feet southwest of the lodge at an elevation of 5,000 feet. To lengthen the growing season, seeds were planted in the greenhouse at the estate, and then transported to the lodge, where they were then transplanted into the garden. Edith also purchased cold-hardy seeds and plants from Maine, because of its similar climate. This seems especially appropriate in light of the elevation and microclimate on the mountain. There were two dry stone retaining walls, both parallel to the southeastern side of the vegetable garden, and these are still visible along the edge of the picnic grounds.[61]

Beadle noted in March 1918 that "Mrs. Vanderbilt ... asks that before we plant anything we submit a plan to her for approval." She inspected and approved the planting plan each year thereafter. Over time, Edith tried tomatoes, lettuce, spinach, peas, beans, turnips, rutabagas, parsnips, asparagus, carrots, radishes, cabbage, cauliflower, onions, celery, and potatoes. She also had raspberry, currant, and gooseberry fruiting plants, and a few medicinal herbs. Beadle wrote that Mrs. Vanderbilt sometimes wanted the best of

55 Memoranda Book, Vol. 11, 1899-1900.

56 Ryan, Joseph and Markus Wust. *North Carolina architects and builders: a biographical dictionary,* 2009.

57 Hunt, Richard Howland, Box 37, Folder 231 November-December 1896.

58 Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, Vol. 31, 1911 April-July.

59 Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, Vol. 31, 1911 April-July.

60 Outdoing Nursery Correspondence, Vol. 31, 1911 April-July., pp 797-798.

61 Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, vol. 23, 1909 March-July. Anderson, 2007, p. 2. Gwyn, Walter B., Box 32, Folder 192, 1890-1900.

the produce from the garden sent to her residence in Washington, DC, after she established a home there.[62]

Nearer the lodge, in the "Wall Garden," Edith cultivated flowers, bulbs, butterfly weed, vines, and ground covers. Beadle reported about the need to "... plant grass seed around the grounds of the Buck Spring Lodge ... at the end of March or early April." In February 1913, Beadle ordered boxes of fruit trees from Stark Brothers Nursery in Louisiana, Missouri. The gardens and grounds of the lodge were irrigated by a sprinkler system.[63]

## Trails and roads

To bring his new bride from Biltmore House to the lodge, in the summer of 1898 Vanderbilt built a seventeen-mile horse trail, called the "Shut-In Trail." He reputedly named it for the "tunnels" or thickets of mountain laurel and rhododendrons that gave it a "shut in" feeling for much of its length. At its terminus, the trail generally followed the Pisgah Ridge. Travel by horseback was slow and uncomfortable. Women rode side-saddle and often had to follow pack mules hauling provisions for the workers, the Vanderbilts, and their guests. Pinchot noted that soon after it was completed his trip from the lodge to the mansion took six hours.[64]

Next, a gravel wagon road was constructed between Biltmore and Buck Spring Gap. Construction of the road was slowed by the steep gradients (in excess of seven percent) and the need to blast out bedrock and re-grade hollows due to drainage problems. The gravel road was subject to occasional washout during storms and required frequent trimming of shrubs along the road to maintain a clear passageway. In 1903, Schenck (who was in charge of construction), recommended the construction of a bridge at a thirty-six-foot bluff near a stream along the route.[65]

Between 1908 and 1912, a one-lane automobile road was built to the lodge. The alignments and gradients of the Shut-In Trail were too steep for automobiles of the early 1900s, so an entirely different route was taken. The automobile route from mansion to lodge was extremely circuitous and added about half a day and seventeen miles to the total travel distance. Even though it was significantly longer, the gentler gradients and wider clearances over its entire length caused it to become the preferred means of access to the lodge. It wound its way from the mansion to a crossing of the French Broad River near the village of Bent Creek (approximately ten miles), then zigzagged southwest and south through the towns of Venable, Enka, Candler, Glady, South Hominy, Stony Fork, and Stony Bald to merge with the Shut-In Trail (today's Blue Ridge Parkway) about one and a half miles north of the lodge (total travel distance by car was twenty-seven miles). Much of the auto road established the route of today's NC Highway 151.[66]

This road was further improved in 1913, the year after Vanderbilt bought a Stevens-Duryea seven-passenger touring car; that year, he also bought a "motor truck." Beadle wrote that "The lineal distance of the Automobile Road is about seventeen miles, and the average cost of construction [is] $3,000 per mile."

The long journey, while rigorous, was not without its pleasurable segments. Beadle wrote to Vanderbilt in October 1910 about a newly-built road: "... near the gap ... we viewed the majestic scenery ... wonderful scenic effects ... ."[67] Again, in May 1911, Beadle mentioned the new Big Bald

62 Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, vol. 56, Oct, 1917-Jan, 1919, p. 316; Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, vol. 55, Jan.-Oct. 1917.

63 Anderson, 2007, p. 27.

64 While portions of the trail were obliterated to construct the Blue Ridge Parkway, segments still follow the original route and can be hiked as the federally-maintained 1,000-mile Mountains-to-Sea Trail, which passes by the lodge site. Today's Shut-In Hiking Trail is the original route for much of the distance from Biltmore Mansion to the Buck Spring Lodge site.

65 Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, vol. 28, Correspondence from C. Beadle, 14 September 1910, p. 366; 7 December 1910, p. 253; 27 May 1911, pp. 864-865; 17 July 1912, p. 791, 912-913.

66 In 1911 Edith and Beadle deliberated about suitable cars whose horsepower could handle the freight and luggage to be transported from the Mansion to the Lodge (Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, vol. 33, Oct. 1911-Jan. 1912).

67 Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, vol. 28, 1910 Aug.-Nov.

Mountain Road: "In scenic effect the portion from Big Bald to Pigeon Gap is far superior to anything along the [prior] road ... ."[68]

In late November 1910, Beadle reported to Vanderbilt about his "... endeavor to locate a practical, scenic and attractive profile of a line of road between ... Flat Laurel Gap, Bad Branch Gap, Wagon Road Gap ... Buck Spring Lodge and the Pink Beds ... ." That same year, the Bennett Gap Road was repaired by blasting out rock; the Yellow Gap, Looking Glass Falls, and Bentley Creek Roads were improved for auto travel. Beadle commented on the "... time record you have made en route between Biltmore and the gate on the Stony Fork."[69]

Buck Spring Trail follows the Pisgah Ridge between the Pink Beds and the Lodge. It continues north one fifth of a mile to near the side of Little Bald Mountain to Mt. Pisgah. The Mountains-to-Sea Trail shares this path up to Mt. Pisgah. Connecting to the Buck Spring Trail are the Laurel Mountain and Pilot Rock trails. Along the Buck Spring Trail were stands of American chestnut trees, some of which reached 40 feet in height. The understory abounded with their saplings.

Beadle wrote that by 1910 the Bennett Gap Road from Pink Beds down Avery Creek Road to the Davidson River was opened, the Creek Road and bridges required occasional repairs, and the "Mills River Road and one or more bridges ... have been washed away." In December 1911, the Israel Store Road to the Israel homestead was in poor condition and the bridge was out in the South Hominy Valley.[70]

After Vanderbilt purchased several automobiles, he ordered that as many of his foot trails as feasible be re-engineered for motorized travel. Where automobile roads were impractical, Vanderbilt carved out hiking trails to places of interest; such as Laurel Mountain Trail, Big Creek Trail (4.9 miles), and Pilot Rock Trail (two miles to Yellow Gap Road). Beadle was responsible for the development and constant maintenance of several additional automobile roads between points of interest that Vanderbilt identified: Beaverdam Creek; Turkey Creek; Mills River; Big Creek; Pisgah Creek; and Head-water Road. Whether for foot travel or automobile, perennial chores along all of these routes were re-grading, replenishment of rock, trimming of shrubs and clearing of drainage-ways.[71]

Vanderbilt employed Ida Davis of Candler, NC, to monitor the use of the auto road and required permission in writing from all "pleasure parties" intending to use it. Vanderbilt had a gate erected near Mrs. Davis' home to enable her to better control access to "his" road. Vanderbilt had to constantly evict "conveyances going up the road to the lodge."[72]

The Mt. Pisgah Trail extended off the Shut-In Trail (today's Blue Ridge Parkway) and was a 1.6-mile hike through oak forest to the heath bald at the summit of Mt. Pisgah (5,721 feet above sea level). By 1913, hiking up Mt. Pisgah became a fashionable outing from Asheville. Vanderbilt began to allow tourists to travel over his road to Mt. Pisgah "upon special application in writing." However, when he was at the lodge, no permissions were granted. In all cases, his special "rules of use" were to be obeyed. Tourists hired motorcar drivers in Asheville to drive them to near the top of Mt. Pisgah. From there, they had to hike the short distance to the summit.

The auto road was so circuitous and narrow that only one vehicle could travel in either direction at a time. Vanderbilt's rangers allowed motorists to start up the two-hour drive from eight until eleven o'clock in the morning. Then the road was gated. When the last car arrived at the top, the road was opened to downhill traffic until four o'clock in the afternoon.[73]

68 Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, vol. 31, 1911 Apr.-July.

69 Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, vol. 28, Correspondence from C. Beadle to GWV, 30 November 1910, pp. 173-176.

70 Alexander, 2007, p. 13. Nursery Correspondence, vol. 29, Nov. 1910-Feb.1911.

71 Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, vol. 28, Correspondence from C. Beadle to GWV, 1 September 1910, pp. 215-217.

72 Anderson, notes, p. 17 / Nursery Correspondence, vol. 36, May-July 1912.

73 Anderson, notes, p. 17. Nursery Correspondence, vol. 36, 1 July 1912, p. 791.

Permission was not granted to “tourists” who wished to see the lodge and its grounds. A few persons were allowed to visit in the daytime but no overnight stays were granted. Such requests came from one Edgar B. Moore, and another time from six members of the Westfeldt family. They had camped in the Smoky Mountains, ate bear meat, and were interested in leasing hunting and fishing rights on Vanderbilt's lands.[74]

Beadle reported that he made the first trip over the Pink Beds Road in August 1912, noting that some “soft places” needed further repairs. Chester Cogburn was a laborer on the road gang, and from 1912 to 1925 he was a ranger at the foot of Mt. Pisgah. Poachers were sometimes a problem in the Pisgah Forest, and Cogburn's predecessor had been killed by a poacher while patrolling the area. Cogburn and his wife lived in a cabin on the mountain and only rarely had visits from the Vanderbilts or other guests.[75]

## Vanderbilt's death — Pisgah National Forest

In 1911, Congress passed the Weeks Act, which permitted the U.S. Forest Service to purchase forest land for development into federally managed forests under the auspices of the United States Department of Agriculture. In October 1912, Vanderbilt was considering the “possibilities of Pisgah Forest as a National Reserve.” Six months later, a contingent of National Forest Commissioners stayed at the lodge, presumably to discuss such a plan.[76]

Vanderbilt enjoyed his estate and lodge in the mountains of North Carolina for only seventeen years. He inexplicably died from complications following an appendectomy in Washington, DC in 1914.[77]

The actual sale occurred three years after Vanderbilt's death in 1917, and consisted of an initial transfer of 80,248 acres of Pisgah Forest to the National Forest Reservation Commission. This purchase formed the nucleus of the Pisgah National Forest, the first federal forest in North Carolina.[78] It is assumed that due to the eventual sale of the 471 acre parcel surrounding Buck Spring Lodge in 1959, that Edith retained the property and rights associated with the lodge. She continued to visit the lodge, update and upgrade it's infrastructure, and was also involved with the vegetable garden for years to come.

After her husband's sudden death, Edith assumed many more of the duties related to maintenance and management of all of their residences, including the mansion and lodge. In 1918, Beadle sent her “... sketches drawn to scale of the Half-Way or Guest House ... showing the two plans of alterations you made to me. [The] octagonal plan [will cost] about one hundred dollars more than the [square plan]. [P]erhaps you can devise or suggest an alternative selection ... ." Even when traveling, she was in charge of all architectural modifications — through an exchange of design drawings with Beadle — about such matters as remodeling (modernizing) bathrooms, wall paneling, floor covering, plumbing, wiring, and many other details. In March, 1921, Beadle reported that Edith had designed an “awning for the main porch at Buck Spring Lodge.” It was made of “the special orange-red duck or canvas.”[79]

## Cornelia Stuyvesant Vanderbilt and the Cecils

Cornelia Stuyvesant Vanderbilt (1900-1976), the only child of George and Edith, inherited the Estate in the form of a trust at her father's death when she was only fourteen. Ten years later, she married John Francis Amherst Cecil (1890–1954) of the United Kingdom. When he moved into the mansion, Edith moved out and built a home for

74 Memoranda Book, vol. 10, 1898-1899.

75 Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, vol. 37, 16 August 1912, p. 200.

76 Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, vol. 37, 1912 July-October. Appalachian National Park Association: General Records, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, NC.

77 “G.W. Vanderbilt Dies Suddenly.” The New York Times. March 7, 1914, p. 1.

78 HAER, p. 275.

79 Outgoing Nursery Correspondence, vol. 58, March 1920-March 1921, p. 996.

herself in the newly-developed Biltmore Forest community. She said: "Even Biltmore House is not big enough for a mother-in-law."[80]

Cornelia and John began spending a good deal of time at the lodge. They took over for Edith when she remarried in London in October of 1925. She married Peter Goelet Gerry (1879 –1957), United States Senator from Rhode Island. According to George Cecil, the grandson of George and Edith Vanderbilt, Edith and the Senator spent less and less time at the lodge as she grew older.[81] Most of her efforts were involved in his two Senatorial campaigns and their lives in Washington, DC and then in Rhode Island upon Senator Gerry's retirement from political life

On 21 December 1958, Edith Stuyvesant Dresser (Vanderbilt) Gerry died in Providence, RI at the age of eighty-five. She bequethed Buck Spring Lodge and its surrounding acreage to her grandson, George H. V. Cecil. The following year, Cecil sold the 471 acre parcel of land to the State of North Carolina for $143,488 for inclusion in the segment of the parkway traversing the former lodge landholding.

There was much discussion as to the eventual use and survival of the lodge.

> The parkway informed the state that it had no use for the buildings. A year later, NPS Director Wirth indicated he would like to have a special study prepared with a view toward preserving at least the main lodge for an exhibit on the historic use of the area [with special emphasis on the Vanderbilt's contribution to forestry and the founding of Pisgah Forest]. Parkway Assistant Superintendent Howard Stricklin protested that the sixty-year-old building would be difficult to maintain. ... Stricklin also believed the lodge could not easily be adapted without either diminishing its original charm or sacrificing its functionality as a visitor center. Stricklin reported the state had been instructed to remove the building, though the foundations were to be preserved in case the parkway wanted to use them to make a terrace for an overlook.[82]

The following drawings figures 11-13 are from the National Park Service and show the road alignments through the newly acquired Vanderbilt/ Cecil land. These are important documents that show the locations of the buildings and features at that point in time.

When that portion of the Parkway was completed in 1961, the National Park Service dismantled all of the buildings. Unfortunately, they also removed the foundations of the lodge.[83]

In order to retain a small legacy of the lodge, George Cecil had the Honeymoon Cottage dismantled in 1962 and later rebuilt it at his vacation home forty miles south, near Lake Toxaway, North Carolina in 1965. Cecil sold the property at Toxaway in the 1970s, and there it remained until 2004, when it was dismantled and relocated once again as part of the development of the Rambles at the Biltmore Estate, serving as a garden house beside Dingle Creek. The cabin has been furnished with period furniture and photos of Buck Spring Lodge. Among the native plantings near its front door is a stone with the initials G.W.V. They are believed to have been carved by Vanderbilt himself. [84]

80 http://www.tripadvisor.com/Travel-g60742-c6061/Asheville:North Carolina:Biltmore.Estate.A.Family.Legacy.html

81 Gerry was Senator from Rhode Island (1916-1929 and 1934-1947). He was the great grandson of Elbridge Gerry (1744–1814) fifth Vice President of the United States (who had given his name to the term gerrymandering). Encyclopædia Britannica. Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2011.

82 Quin, p. 277.

83 "Blue Ridge Parkway," HAER Number VA-NC-42, Historic American Engineering Record, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1997, p 277.

84 http://www.ramblebiltmoreforest.com/established-community/buckspring-cabin.html

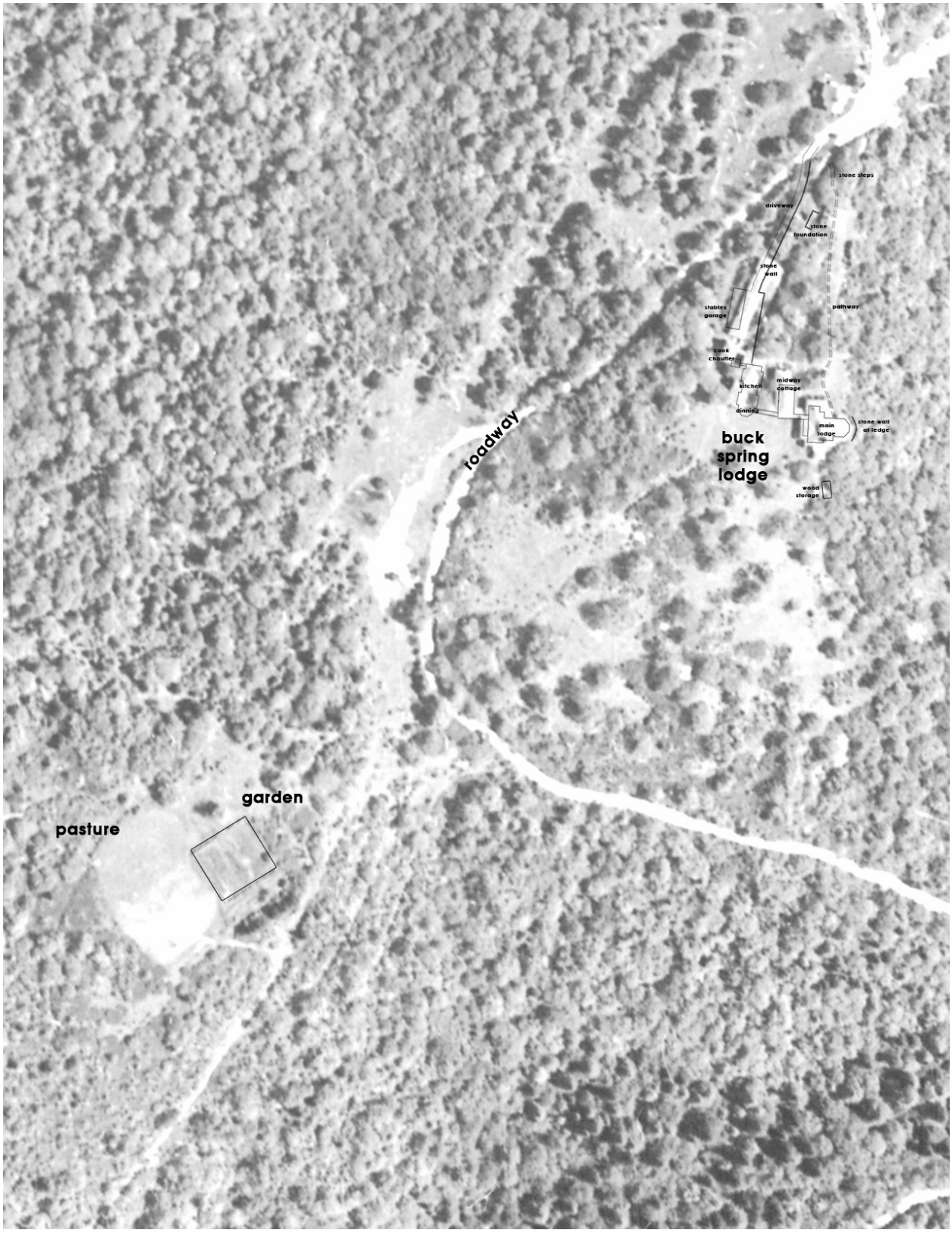



**Figure 10.** 1953 USDA aerial photograph of Buck Spring Lodge and vegetable garden complex.

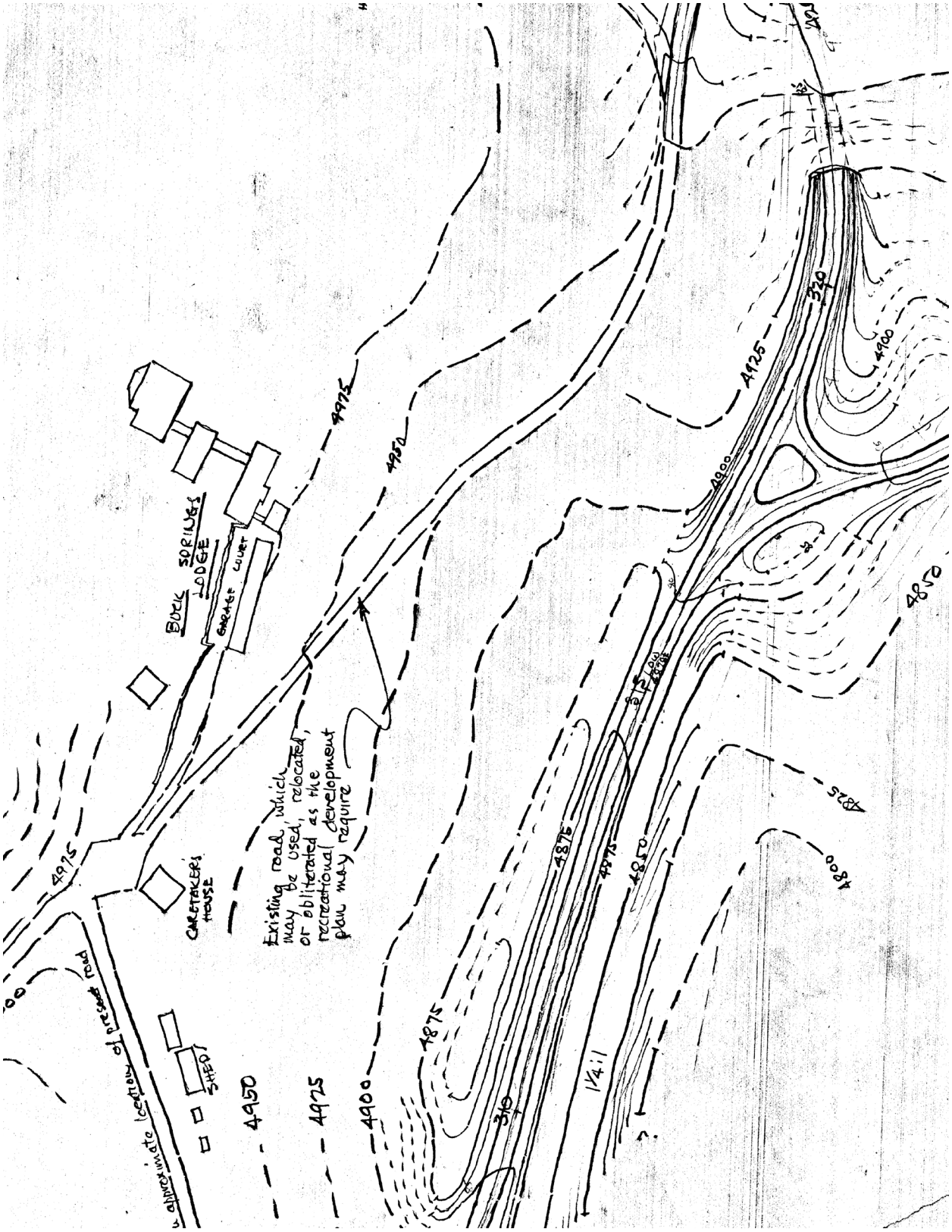



**Figure 11.** Excert from Exhibit 24, Appendix C of the road alignment of the BLRI Parkway showing the existing buildings in the Vanderbilt's tract of land at Buck Spring Lodge




**Figure 12.** Excert from Exhibit 22, Appendix C of the road alignment of the BLRI Parkway showing the existing buildings in the Vanderbilt's tract of land at Buck Spring Lodge

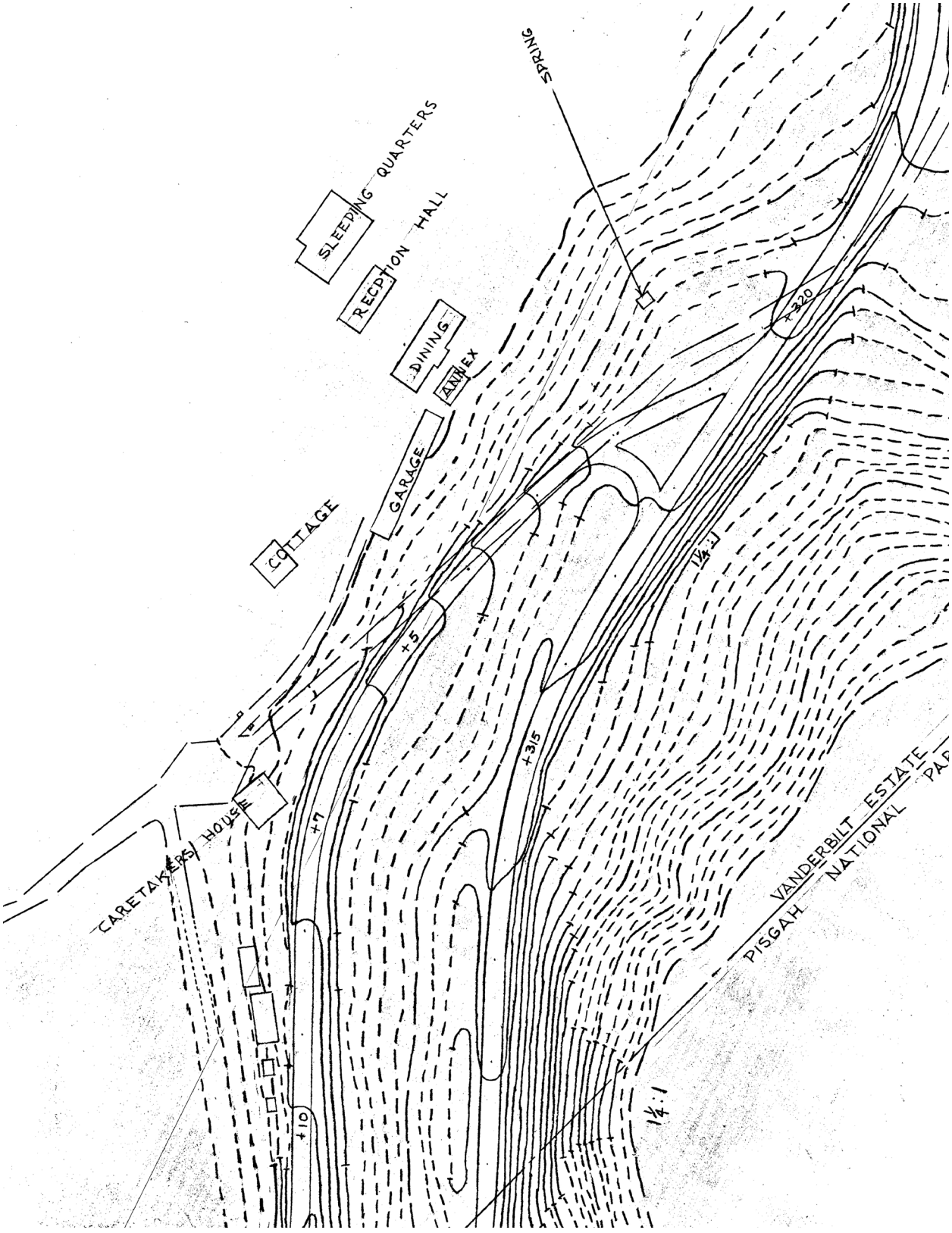



**Figure 13.** Excert from Exhibit 23, Appendix C of the road alignment of the BLRI Parkway showing the existing buildings in the Vanderbilt's tract of land at Buck Spring Lodge

# Chapter Four: Mission 66 and the Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area

## Introduction

The following quote comes from a press release provided by the NPS as plans came together for $31.6 million in improvements to the parkway:

> Mission 66 proposes a multimillion dollar program for improvement of the Blue Ridge Parkway
>
> Blue Ridge Parkway, whose 477 miles of scenic beauty connect Shenandoah National Park, Virginia, and Great Smoky Mountains National Park, North Carolina-Tennessee, is scheduled for development and improvement entailing the expenditure of about $31,600,000 under proposals in the National Park Service MISSION 66 program, Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton announced today. Tentative plans of MISSION 66, Seaton added, call for the outlay of approximately $26,470,000 to extend and improve the Parkway, and $5,130,000 for construction and improvement of minor roads, trails, buildings, and utilities. Seaton pointed out that the Parkway is the most heavily used of all the areas of the National Park System. Last year the Parkway was visited by more than 4,500,000 persons. The 20th anniversary of legislation establishing the Parkway was observed June 30.
>
> National Park Service Director Conrad L. Wirth explained that MISSION 66 is the long-range comprehensive national park program scheduled for completion in 1966 when the National Park Service observes the golden anniversary of its establishment.[1]

The slow pace of Parkway construction that characterized the late 1940s and early 1950s came to an end when Congress agreed to greatly increase funding of the NPS under the 'Mission 66' program. It was this program and the concurrent death of Edith Stuyvesant Vanderbilt Gerry that finally made possible the construction of the Parkway road across the slopes of Mt. Pisgah and the development of the Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area. Once it was clear that funds would be available to construct the road, negotiations to acquire the Vanderbilt tract from her heirs were brought to a successful conclusion. While the road was under construction, plans were finalized for the development of the recreation area.

In this chapter — Mission 66 — the acquisition of the land, and the drawing up of a master plan are discussed as a preamble to a description of the development of the recreation area. This development included the design and construction of a new inn, the renovation and additions to the campground, a large picnic area , and the organization of a network of trails; but it omitted an important component of the master plan — a visitor center that would have interpreted the vast contributions that the Vanderbilt family made to the origins and history of professional forestry in America.

## Mission 66

By the mid-1950s, as post-war prosperity encouraged the national love affair with automobiles, a rapid increase in the numbers of visitors to national parks was creating severe problems, with dilapidated facilities and many parks hopelessly overcrowded.[2] Taking advantage of growing complaints in the press, NPS Director

1 NPS Information Service, Press Release, 'Mission 66 Proposes Multimillion Dollar Program for Improvement of Blue Ridge Parkway,' July 23 1956; Folder A 98, Blue Ridge Parkway; Box 25, Mission 66, 1956-66; NPS Regional Office, Richmond, VA; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region (Philadelphia, PA.).

2 Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma,* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007, pp. 4-8.

Conrad Wirth devised the Mission 66 program to secure an increase in funding over a ten-year period. In doing this he was modeling NPS funding on the multi-year requests made by federal agencies involved in large-scale construction projects such as the Bureau of Public Roads and the Army Corps of Engineers. In preparation for a unified funding request a detailed account of the needs of each park — a 'Mission 66 Prospectus' — was compiled. Park prospectuses were submitted to the Washington Office, which then prepared a unified proposal to modernize and expand the entire national park system.

> The name of the program (Wirth's inspiration) captured the desired sense of crisis, but it did so by evoking the wartime urgency of a "mission," not a return to New Deal social programs. In any case, the name and image proved effective. Eisenhower personally endorsed Mission 66 after Wirth presented the program at a cabinet meeting in January 1956. That spring Congress indicated a willingness to go along with the request for over $700 million for the ten-year program by increasing the agency's budget for fiscal year 1957 to $68 million, up from $32 million in 1955. Further increases led to annual budgets in excess of $100 million by 1962. The planning and policy initiative of Mission 66 proved to be the most effective means of increasing Park Service appropriations since the New Deal emergency spending legislation of the 1930s.[3]

When preparing a prospectus for each park, managing superintendents were instructed to take a broad and comprehensive view.

> The purpose of Mission 66 is to make an intensive study of the problems of protection, public use, interpretation, development, staffing, legislation, financing, and all other phases of park operation, and to produce a comprehensive and integrated program of use and protection that is in harmony with the obligations of the National Park Service under the Act of 1916.[4]

Wirth called for new thinking about park management, but his program soon came under fire from the growing environmental movement for failing to give greater weight to new ecological research into the vulnerability of natural systems to disturbances, and a resulting belief that Mission 66 did not strike the right balance between use and protection.[5] If you will think back to this period of time, it was in 1962 that Rachel Carson published "*Silent Spring*," which generated a firestorm of controversy over the use of chemical pesticides and effectively brought about the ban on DDT for use in agriculture.

Wirth believed that proper management of use would bring adequate protection of park resources, and the focus of most Mission 66 initiatives was on park visitors and the measures necessary to improve their experiences in parks and address problems associated with congestion. Many of these measures involved new construction: building new roads and trails, campgrounds, picnic areas, comfort stations, and visitor centers to increase the capacity of parks to handle large numbers of visitors.

The basic premise was that if new construction was well planned and carefully located, it would help protect areas whose natural systems were vulnerable to intrusion by large numbers of people. New visitor centers were to play a particularly important role, since they would concentrate visitor services in central locations, where before they were widely scattered; but centers would also give prominence to new interpretation programs that would help visitors better appreciate the overall environment, and therefore protect natural resources, as well as cultural and historic assets.[6]

The Mission 66 prospectus for the Blue Ridge Parkway opened with a description of the peculiar linear form and design characteristics that make it so different from most other national parks. These had spared it from many of the problems normally associated with a large numbers of visitors, but had brought other problems instead.

> The Problem
>
> The Blue Ridge Parkway does not have the usual problems resulting from overuse, for an obvious and outstanding characteristic is its capacity to absorb an astounding number of people without creating great concentrations. Nor does it have fragile formations, wilderness areas, great forests that must forever be alertly protected if they are to survive for the enjoy-

3 Carr, p. 10.

4 Conrad L. Wirth. 1980. *Parks, Politics, and the People.* Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980, p. 242.

5 Carr, pp. 12-15, 113-114, 227-228.

6 Carr, p. 188.

> ment of future generations. It is no oversimplification to state that a big problem is to develop an understanding of what the Parkway is as a basis for good public relations with the thousands of neighbors, dozens of towns, the tourist industry, state agencies, and local organizations who consider the Blue Ridge Parkway their very own. This problem is intensified by the nature of the Parkway—an elongated park, averaging 800 feet wide, and extending nearly 500 miles through a lived-in region.
>
> A consideration in Parkway planning is the extreme mobility of visitors. Factors stimulating visitor movement and dispersal are the length of the Parkway and its physical developments, the dependence on private enterprise to provide the great majority of visitor services and accommodations outside but nearby, and a series of climaxes rather than one climactic feature.[7]

The main proposal in the prospectus was to complete the Parkway road and thereby continue to facilitate a wide dispersal of visitors.

> The Program
>
> Completion of the Parkway road, except for the Asheville and Roanoke links, is the major MISSION 66 objective for Blue Ridge Parkway. Parking overlooks, guard rail[s], bridges, additional camping facilities, new recreation areas, are complementary developments to meet the requirements of millions on the move. The pattern of development has been set—MISSION 66 provides an orderly method of accomplishment.[8]

The program therefore proposed to complete the parkway road through the Pisgah and Plott Balsam Ranges, which remained at this time the portion of the approved route with the most gaps. Omission of the stretches around Asheville and Roanoke was largely the result of land acquisition problems (which were resolved shortly thereafter), but in any event, the sections around Asheville were also scheduled for addition into the program.

The prospectus placed considerable emphasis on expanding interpretation programs, but because of the length of the Parkway, there was to be a chain of visitor centers rather than one centrally located building. This would also allow for the various visitor centers to focus on a different aspect of the natural, cultural, and historical history of the Parkway corridor.

> In nine visitor centers, which are kind of wayside museums, exhibits, displays, audio visual devices, and related facilities will reveal the human and natural history of the Southern Highlands. Additional self-guiding trails to features of particular interest will be installed.[9]

One of the nine planned visitor centers would be located at Mt. Pisgah.[10]

The expansion of accommodations for visitors was the most controversial part of the prospectus. Proposals to build lodges, gas stations, and lunch counters in recreation areas along the Parkway had aroused debate within the NPS before the war, but with the opening of the first such facilities at Doughton Park in 1949, it began to arouse public controversy. This controversy was fueled by the refusal of the NPS to allow advertisements on its land for commercial enterprises off the Parkway. It had reached its height at the time the prospectus was being written, and, no doubt, it was one of the issues the authors of the prospectus had in mind when they identified public relations as the major problem for the Parkway. In his annual report for 1957, Weems summarized the current situation.

> A group of Parkway neighbors in the tourist accommodations business in and near Blowing Rock, NC, caused several public hearings to be held, the latest one taking place on May 21, at which complaints were made that the National Park Service should not have accommodations on the Parkway. Resolutions to this effect were also passed by the N. C. legislature. The Parkway's plans were stoutly defended on these

7 USDI, NPS, 'Mission 66 for Blue Ridge Parkway,' March 1957, pp. 2-3; Folder A 98, Blue Ridge Parkway; Box 25, Mission 66, 1956-66; NPS Regional Office, Richmond, VA; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region (Philadelphia, PA.). This version of the prospectus followed an earlier, much longer version prepared in April 1956 that had been approved in September of that year.

8 Ibid, pp. 5-6.

9 Ibid, p. 6.

10 USDI, NPS, 'Mission 66 Prospectus, Blue Ridge Parkway,' Development Schedule, April 20, 1956, p. 42. Folder A96, Blue Ridge Parkway; Box 21, Mission 66, NPS Philadelphia District General Correspondence Files, 1954-1956; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region (Philadelphia PA.).

> occasions by the Superintendent, Chief of Concessions Management, and Regional Director and are expected to prevail, ultimately.[11]

There was an attempt in the prospectus to calm the controversy by emphasizing a need for additional accommodations outside as well as inside park boundaries, but, nevertheless, the need for some additional services in recreation areas was emphasized.

> Visitors will expect to find service for their cars and food. Some will expect lodging in order to obtain the fullest enjoyment from a visit in the Blue Ridge Parkway. For them a comfortable, quiet place to spend the night away from television, movies, and the ordinary pleasures of the city is looked forward to. They want for entertainment an evening program by a ranger or naturalist, or perhaps just to be left alone to enjoy the tranquility of the southern mountains. A beginning has been made, and in MISSION 66 it is proposed that private enterprise construct, equip, and operate the additional accommodations which will be required by the eight to ten million visitors expected annually by 1966.[12]

According to the prospectus, new lodges and coffee shops were to be provided at two recreation areas along the Parkway — Peaks of Otter in Virginia and Mt. Pisgah in North Carolina. Private enterprises would provide these services, operating within park boundaries. Development scheduled for Mt. Pisgah included — in addition to the lodge and coffee shop — a gas station and gift shop to be provided, and a government provided campground.[13] Measured by the range of visitors services envisioned, Mt. Pisgah would become one of the three most important recreation areas along the Parkway. Probably because of the long existence of the Pisgah Inn, this particular lodging development never engendered the kind of controversy encountered in other locations.

## Land acquisition and road construction

With the launch of Mission 66, negotiations began in earnest for the acquisition of the remaining Vanderbilt property on Mt. Pisgah. In November 1956, Weems wrote to Browning restating the desire of the NPS to secure the entire tract.

> I am glad to note in your letter of October 29 that you plan to start negotiations for the Vanderbilt lodge on Section 2-T at an early date.
>
> Our right-of-way requirements are still the same as stated in my letter to you dated June 15, 1949, and that is acquisition of the entire Vanderbilt tract as we see no practical way of providing access other than the Parkway motor road which is not permitted, as you know.
>
> We realize there may be some complications in the acquisition and if it will help the State in materially reducing damage claims we are willing to recommend a life tenancy for young Cecil with right of access over the Parkway to the nearest public road. We would also recommend establishing a memorial park similar to what was done with the Moses H. Cone and Julian Price estates. [14]

Browning's response was cautious. Knowing that Mrs. Gerry, the widow of George Vanderbilt, had a strong emotional attachment to the property, he suggested the Parkway be content with a narrow right-of-way in order to avoid a bitter fight "in which we might lose."[15] However, in December 1958, the death of Mrs. Gerry changed the situation. Her grandson George Cecil inherited the property, and, fearing that the construction of the Parkway would destroy its value as an isolated retreat, decided to sell it.[16]

Browning now turned to State Highway Commissioner Babcock for permission to acquire the entire tract even though the State was only obligated to acquire a right-of-way across it.

11 Weems, '1957 Annual Report of Blue Ridge Parkway Activities for Director NPS,' p. 2; BLRI Library.

12 USDI, NPS, 'Mission 66 for Blue Ridge Parkway,' March 1957, pp. 6-7.

13 Ibid p. 7.

14 Weems to Browning, November 6 1956; BLRI Lands Files, Section 2T; BLRI HQ.

15 Browning to Weems, October 17 1958; BLRI Lands Files, Section 2T; BLRI HQ.

16 Browning, Memorandum to Mr. Babcock, 'Buck Spring Lodge Property,' June 22 1959; BLRI Lands Files, Section 2T; BLRI HQ.

Babcock appealed to the NPS for assistance in funding the purchase, and various possibilities were discussed by Superintendent Weems, Elbert Cox, the Regional Director, and Director Wirth, including an appeal to John D. Rockefeller who had already helped with the acquisition of land elsewhere along the Parkway. However, urged by Browning to move swiftly so that road construction costs could be met from Mission 66 funds, Babcock authorized Browning to proceed with the acquisition without waiting for an outcome from these deliberations.

At the beginning of August 1959, an agreement was reached whereby North Carolina acquired the property for $143,488.00. Browning in particular was pleased with the outcome since it removed the last major impediment to the building of the Parkway along the route he had recommended twenty-five years earlier, and he told colleagues in the NPS that he was now ready to retire.[17]

Transfer of USFS land on either side of this tract to the NPS involved another set of negotiations, but a procedure that avoided delays to the road-building program had been devised for transferring land between the two federal agencies. The NPS was authorized by legislation to acquire a 200-feet right-of-way, and negotiations about how much additional land would be transferred would take place after a section of road was graded. The final determination involved questions such as access for timber sales to areas near the Parkway since the Parkway road could not be used for this purpose and the NPS wished to protect the scenic character of areas visible from the road.[18] Following this procedure USFS lands southwest of the Vanderbilt tract, along Section 2U, were transferred in 1962, and lands to the northeast, along Section 2T, were transferred in 1966.[19]

Road construction in the Mt. Pisgah area began in July 1960. Project 2U1 extended from Flat Laurel Gap, the site of the existing Pisgah Inn, southwestwards to Wagon Road Gap where U.S. Route 276 intersected the Parkway, a distance of 3.419 miles. When this project was completed in October 1962, all sections of the Parkway road between Pisgah Inn and GRSM were completed and opened to tourist traffic.[20]

North of Flat Laurel Gap, construction began on Project 2T2 in July 1962. This stretch of road would meet Project 2T1 at Cutthroat Gap, 2.729 miles to the northeast, and when it was completed in September 1964, all sections of the Parkway road through the Pisgah and Plott Balsam Ranges southwest of Asheville opened to the public.[21]

Although construction of these sections of the road came 25 years and more after construction of the first sections of the Parkway, there were no significant changes in design standards. The projects were designed by engineers in the Gatlinburg office of the Bureau of Public Roads, some of whom had years of experience working on the Parkway, and their designs closely followed the standards established by the Bureau of Public Roads and the NPS from the period before the Second World War.[22]

The design speed used for calculating the horizontal alignment was kept low so that the road would fit the rugged mountain topography. On Project 2U1 the design speed was 30 miles per

17 Office Memorandum, HBS to SPW, EHA, and AHB, 'Vanderbilt Estate Settlement' August 5 1959; BLRI Lands Files, Section 2T; BLRI HQ. The transfer of the property from the State of North Carolina to the NPS took place in 1961.

18 Abbuehl to Project Supervisor Wilhelm, GSMNP, 'Procedure for Land Acquisition,' May 5 1960; Folder 17; Box 3; Series 3; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

19 'USFS Lands Transferred to NPS, Section 2U N.C.' Drawing no. PKY 2U 2064, November 27 1962; and 'USFS Lands Transferred to NPS, Section 2T N.C.' Drawing no. PKY 2T 2054, September 3 1966; BLRI Drawings Collection, (Asheville, N.C.). Legal problems arising from conditions that were attached to the transfer of some of this land surfaced years later and were not resolved until 1997; BLRI Lands Files, Section 2T; BLRI HQ.

20 Lloyd M. Middleton, 'Final Construction Report, Blue Ridge Parkway, Project 2U1,' August 16 1963; Federal Highways Administration, Sterling, VA; and Weems, '1963 Annual Report of Blue Ridge Parkway Activities for Director, NPS,' July 2 1963, p.4; BLRI Library.

21 Middleton, 'Final Construction Report, Blue Ridge Parkway, Project 2T2,' February 4 1965, p. 1; Federal Highways Administration, Sterling, VA.

22 Lloyd M. Middleton was the Resident Engineer for both projects and J. A. Todd the District Engineer; for a discussion of prewar design standards and their continuation after the war and during Mission 66 see Firth, 'Blue Ridge Parkway, Historic Resource Study,' December 2005, pp. 119-123, 240-245, and 283-287.

hour; in Project 2T2, it ranged between 35 and 50 miles per hour, the higher figure possible at the ridge top location. Grades were kept below 7%, except on the steep ascent to the ridge from the north where there is an 8% grade. Both projects involved tunneling, and one of the tunnels on Section 2T — Buck Spring Tunnel — lies within the boundaries of the recreation area.

The stone masonry that characterized earlier sections of the Parkway was very expensive by this time, but nevertheless continued to be used in tunnel portals, culvert headwalls, and curbing. The work was performed by the firm of Troitino and Brown Inc. of Asheville, who had worked on many earlier sections of the Parkway.[23]

As along earlier sections, close attention was paid by NPS landscape architects to the stability and appearance of side-slopes, and, along Project 2U1, a considerable amount of additional slope flattening was required. This was now paid for as an extra to the contract sum, whereas in the prewar period it had been possible to use Civilian Conservation Corps and Works Progress Administration workforces to do this type of necessary grading. In the prewar period these agencies had also done much of the planting of trees and shrubs along roadsides, but now slopes were hydroseeded and then natural processes of recolonization by trees and shrubs prevailed, with additional plantings confined to parking areas.[24]

In some stages of the construction process, advances in technology since the New Deal years offset sharp increases in labor costs, nevertheless these projects were amongst the most expensive per mile of any in the 30 year history of the Parkway. While this reflected a general inflation in prices over this period, it also reflected the difficulties of constructing a modern road in these mountains, difficulties that the Bureau of Public Roads had foreseen when the route was first debated in 1934.

Project 2T2, which involved two tunnels, was the more expensive of the two projects: the final cost for 2.729 miles of road was $1,300,437.41[25] And, while comparisons are oversimplifications and can be misleading, it is interesting to note that grading Sections 2T and 2S cost nearly five times the cost per mile of the most expensive prewar sections of the Parkway.[26]

## Master plans for the recreation area

While development of a new master plan for the Mt. Pisgah recreation area was underway in 1958, it would be June 1961 before the plan was approved by Conrad Wirth, Director of the NPS. Even then, approval would come with a proviso that two issues be given further study.[27]

There were several reasons for this protracted planning process. In 1958 there was still uncertainty about how much of the Vanderbilt property could be acquired. When this issue was resolved in August 1959, with agreement that North Carolina would purchase the entire 471 acres, there remained the question of what use to make of Buck Spring Lodge.

There was also a question about what to do with the existing Pisgah Inn about a mile to the south. Indeed all aspects of the program for the recreation area were subjects of debate, including what size a new Parkway lodge would be, whether a campground and picnic area would be provided,

23 Troitino and Brown Inc. worked as a subcontractor on both projects; the main contractor for Project 2U1 was Macon Construction Co., Franklin, N.C., and the main contractor for Project 2T2 was Blythe Brothers Co., Charlotte, N. C.

24 Middleton, 'Final Construction Report, Blue Ridge Parkway, Project 2U1,' August 16 1963; and 'Final Construction Report, Blue Ridge Parkway, Project 2T2,' February 4 1965. No record of additional plantings outside parking areas has been found in the BLRI Archives; the PLUMS (Parkway Land Use Maps) for these sections are incomplete and show no planting details.

25 Middleton, 'Final Construction Report, Blue Ridge Parkway, Project 2T2,' February 4 1965, p. 5.

26 The most expensive prewar sections were 2M and 2N; 'List of Construction Contracts,' BLRI Resident Landscape Architect's Files; BLRI HQ. Sections 2T and 2U have also proved to be among the most expensive to maintain because of geological problems.

27 Dudley C. Bayliss, Acting Chief Landscape Architect, to Regional Director, Region One, 'Master Plan, Mount Pisgah Development, Blue Ridge Parkway,' June 28 1961; Folder 22; Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

and whether this was an appropriate location along the Parkway for a proposed visitor center.

By the time Mission 66 was launched, the NPS had a great deal of experience in the planning and development of recreation areas along the Parkway, so it might have been expected that the planning process would be straightforward. One reason for the uncertainty and debate was the topographic limitations of this ridge-top site where there were few areas of level ground suitable for development. There were other areas not far away along the Parkway, such as Tennessee Bald, that were considered equally, if not more suited for development, so the planning of the Mt. Pisgah area was affected by uncertainties about acquisition and development of these other areas. But, in addition, the protracted debates resulted from administrative changes within the NPS.

In the 1950s, park planning had come to involve a much more hierarchical administrative process than had been followed in the prewar years, and, in the opinion of some who remembered the early days, more time-consuming. Before the war, a great deal of authority to initiate programs and make plans had been delegated by Vint and his colleagues in the Washington Office to Abbott and his colleagues in Roanoke; after the war there was much more involvement by the Regional Office in Richmond, Virginia, and closer supervision by the Washington Support Office (WASO). And with the establishment in 1954 of the Eastern Office of Design and Construction, (EODC), in Philadelphia, much of the planning and design work was done in that office.

In 1957, Weems reported the transfer of nine landscape architects and engineers from the Parkway's Roanoke office to Philadelphia.[28] Abbuehl remained in Roanoke for several years, where, as Supervising Park Landscape Architect, he continued to play a leading role in the planning process, but he too moved to Philadelphia in 1963. Remembering the amount of autonomy allowed the Roanoke office before the war, he found it particularly difficult to adjust to new administrative oversight and made various complaints to no effect.[29]

Perhaps some of the additional oversight from the Washington Office was to be expected given that the Parkway had become one of the most visited units in the National Park System, but it also stemmed from the close involvement of Director Wirth. Wirth — a landscape architect by training — devoted a remarkable amount of personal attention to the planning process for the Parkway and issued directions on many design details.[30]

In January 1959, Abbuehl in the Parkway's Roanoke office submitted a preliminary draft of the master plan for Mt. Pisgah to Edward Zimmer, Chief of the EODC. With Mission 66 underway, it was anticipated that road construction would begin in the area in 1961, but a more immediate concern was the future of Pisgah Forest Inn — now usually referred to as Pisgah Motor Inn or simply Pisgah Inn.

> We have a peculiar problem at Mount Pisgah which approval of a preliminary plan will help solve. Not knowing what to look for in the future has been a big handicap to the Kirschners who operate Pisgah Inn. This matter was thoroughly discussed with Clark Stratton and Tom Vint on their visits last summer. The Kirschners appear to be doing a nice job, but they have little capital of their own. Before they can raise any money they will need to know what the Park Service has in mind for the Pisgah

28 Weems, '1957 Annual Report of Blue Ridge Parkway Activities for Director NPS,' p. 11; BLRI Library.

29 In 1957, for example, Abbuehl protested a requirement that the location and design of Parkway overlooks should be approved in advance rather than be determined on site in the course of the road-building contract. Abbuehl to Chief, EODC, 'Parkway Overlook Plan - Blue Ridge Parkway,' March 26 1957; Folder BLRI Project Correspondence 1957; Box 23, EODC, General Correspondence, 1954-60; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region (Philadelphia PA.).

30 For example, in 1957, Wirth provided critiques of the design of bridges and overlooks and instituted new policies on the use of stone masonry along the Parkway. Merel S. Sager to Chief, EODC, 'Grade Separation, Slings Gap, Blue Ridge Parkway,' April 25 1957; and Thomas C. Vint to Chief, EODC, 'Parking Overlook, Station 707, Section 1G, Blue Ridge Parkway,' July 25 1957; Folder BLRI Project Correspondence 1957; Box 23, EODC, General Correspondence, 1954-60; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region (Philadelphia, PA.).

> development, and if it appears they can swing it they would like to negotiate a concession contract for the operation.[31]

On his visit in the summer of 1958, Vint suggested that a new lodge and restaurant be combined in one building to save space. Abbuehl's plan located this building close to the existing inn, so that the Kirschners could gradually replace their existing buildings as business conditions warranted. A large parking area would be provided between the new lodge and the Parkway road; this would accommodate the vehicles of visitors stopping for a meal and those wishing to stay overnight. The new lodge building would provide thirty rooms for guests, but, if additional accommodations were needed, small motel units could be added at the northeastern end of the parking area. A gas station would be built on a loop road connected to the main parking area, and a visitor center would be built a short distance to the north. The plan did not include a campground or a picnic area.

> The area has been studied thoroughly for camping and picnic sites. There is no adequate space in which to develop camping facilities. They will be provided at Tennessee Bald, which is only 16 miles to the southwest. Limited picnicking might be provided on the little knob west of the Vanderbilt lodge, but we think it best not to show anything there until settlement is made for the Vanderbilt tract.[32]

Over the next three months, questions, suggestions, and criticisms from the Regional Office and the Washington Office left Abbuehl "with a perplexed as well as discouraged feeling."[33] The Regional Office was uncertain whether one or two visitor centers should be built between Asheville and the southern end of the Parkway, and, if only one was required, whether Mt. Pisgah was the best location.[34]

The Washington Office criticized the layout of the main concession area, particularly the separation of the motel units from the main restaurant and lodge building, and requested a restudy of the layout. In response, Abbuehl changed the location of the motel units and gas station. He also removed the visitor center from the plan, but retained its parking area as an overlook since the location offered a particularly fine view of the summit of Mt. Pisgah.[35]

Director Wirth then recommended moving the restaurant and lodge building to the northeast end of the parking lot and away from the existing inn, but Abbuehl resisted this idea and suggested consulting the Kirschners.[36] The Washington Office then suggested reinstating the visitor center but moving it to the same general area as the restaurant and lodge building to avoid a duplication of utility services and comfort stations. With the support of Weems, Abbuehl responded by referring to lessons learned at Doughton Park, where there were problems of congestion, and Peaks of Otter, where a single comfort station serving several visitor facilities soon proved inadequate. Abbuehl conceded that water supply to the separate developments may prove to be a problem but appealed to WASO to send someone to review the plan on the ground with the Parkway staff.[37]

The EODC now took the lead in resolving the situation. Abbuehl was asked to provide "a clear-cut statement of the problem" for approval by all

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31 Superintendent, BLRI, to Chief, EODC, 'Master Plan for Mount Pisgah - Blue Ridge Parkway,' January 27 1959; Folder 18; Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

32 Ibid.

33 Abbuehl, Supervising Landscape Architect, and Bayer, Resident Landscape Architect, to Superintendent, BLRI, 'Mount Pisgah Master Plan - Blue Ridge Parkway,' May 11 1959; Folder 18; Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

34 Regional Director to The Director, 'Master Plan, Mount Pisgah, Blue Ridge Parkway,' February 18 1959; Folder 18; Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

35 Superintendent, BLRI, to Chief, EODC, 'Mount Pisgah, General Development Master Plan - Blue Ridge Parkway,' March 9 1959; Folder 18; Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

36 Chief of Design and Construction, WASO, to Chief, EODC, 'Blue Ridge Parkway Master Plan, Mount Pisgah,' April 10 1959; and Superintendent, BLRI, to Chief, EODC, 'Blue Ridge Parkway Master Plan, Mount Pisgah,' April 16 1959; Folder 18; Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

37 Abbuehl, Supervising Landscape Architect, and Bayer, Resident Landscape Architect, to Superintendent, BLRI, 'Mount Pisgah Master Plan - Blue Ridge Parkway,' May 11 1959; and Superintendent, BLRI, to Chief, EODC, 'Mount Pisgah Master Plan - Blue Ridge Parkway,' June 11 1959; Folder 18; Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

offices.[38] The resulting statement focused on the concession development.

> We have at Pisgah the problem of transforming a development located on a very low standard road that has been in existence over 25 years into a modern type of facility on a high standard road. Due to the inaccessibility of the Pisgah Motor Inn and also the custom of the period, many of the guests would spend a week or two and some probably spent most of the summer. They did not care too much if the place was fogged in for two or three days; the food was good, they were well removed from the busy world and enjoying a quiet retreat. Once the Blue Ridge Parkway is completed and the Pisgah development can be reached from Asheville in 35 minutes rather than 1-1/2 to 2 hours the picture will change. A well operated dining room will be a most popular place for tourists stopping in Asheville as well as the Parkway visitor. We are not so sure about requirements for overnight accommodations. We are hesitant to say that we will need 50 or 75 rooms. We do believe we should make plans for at least 75 but think we should let the concessioner add the new units as conditions warrant. The plan we have proposed will permit the present operation to continue and at the same time add new units or replace existing ones. This gives about the maximum flexibility in planning and will give us an opportunity to let the development grow with the needs of the Parkway, rather than trying to pin it down too rigidly now.[39]

Abbuehl maintained that the visitor center was a separate issue. There was consensus in the Parkway's Roanoke office that there should be one at this recreation area, and, as originally suggested, that it should be located at the site that offered the best view of Mt. Pisgah; however a decision on the visitor center was not required at this time.[40]

In early August, the EODC sent their draft master plan to Roanoke for review. The scheme closely followed ideas for the development of the concession area advanced by Abbuehl several months earlier, and it was readily accepted by Weems and Abbuehl in the Roanoke office. It was subsequently approved as a preliminary master plan by the Regional Office and the Washington Office.[41] But by this time the North Carolina Highway Commission had agreed to acquire the entire Vanderbilt tract, so attention shifted from the concession area to the question of what to do with Buck Spring Lodge.

In October 1959, Abbuehl and Weems met with representatives from the Washington, Richmond, and Philadelphia offices of the NPS to inspect the Vanderbilt lodge and to try to determine an appropriate use for it.

> We concluded that either of two things could be done with the hunting lodge buildings: (1) assign them to the present operator of Pisgah Motor Inn for overnight accommodations, with no food to be provided in the lodge, or (2) demolish the buildings and clean up the site. These log buildings which were constructed some 60 years ago are in fair condition only, and we agreed it would not be economical to convert them for use by the Park Service as quarters or for maintenance or interpretive purposes.
>
> The garage and storage buildings and the 2-story building formerly used by the chauffeur and cook are in the way of construction of the spur road to the Pisgah Mountain parking overlook, and will be removed in any event.
>
> The three remaining buildings consisting of the dining room-kitchen building, the mid-building, and the main lodge are connected by covered porch. The main lodge and mid-building were used by the Vanderbilts and their guests and contain 5 baths and 8 bedrooms heated by fireplaces. With some alterations the kitchen-dining room building could be converted to 6 bedrooms and a large lobby. There are 3 attic rooms that might be used by the concessioner to house his help provided a fire escape is constructed. There is no central heat in the buildings.[42]

38 Acting Chief, EODC, to Superintendent, BLRI, 'Preliminary Master Plan Drawing No. PKY-BR-MP 2050C, Mount Pisgah, General Development, Blue Ridge Parkway,' June 16 1959; Folder 18; Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

39 Superintendent, BLRI, to Chief, EODC, 'Preliminary Master Plan Drawing No. PKY-BR-MP-2050-C, Mount Pisgah, General Development, Blue Ridge Parkway,' June 29 1959; Folder 18; Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

40 Ibid.

41 Superintendent, BLRI, to Chief, EODC, August 17 1959, and Chief, EODC, to Chief of Design and Construction, 'Drawing PKY-BR-MP-2050D, General Development, Mount Pisgah,' August 28 1959; Folder 21; Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

42 Superintendent, BLRI, to Regional Director, 'Inspection of Vanderbilt Lodge and Other Buildings, Mt. Pisgah,' October 23 1959; Folder BLRI; Box 9 Master Plans 1957-61; NPS Southeast Region, Richmond VA; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region (Philadelphia PA.).

In addition to the heating system, the existing water supply and sewage disposal systems were considered inadequate.

Uncertainty about what to do with Buck Spring Lodge delayed the transfer of the Vanderbilt property from the State of North Carolina to the NPS. The Roanoke office soon abandoned the idea of using the lodge as an annex to the Pisgah Inn, and reexamined other options including demolition. In April 1961, Weems and Abbuehl attended a meeting with Babcock, Director of the North Carolina State Highway Commission, and representatives of the Bureau of Public Roads to discuss issues affecting the completion of the Parkway in North Carolina, and the situation at Mt. Pisgah was high on the agenda.

> The State paid $143,488 for the 500-acre tract. North Carolina had hoped it would be possible for the Park Service to make use of the old hunting lodge and at least partially reimburse the State for some of the high cost. (This problem was given very serious study for over a year by Park Service officials, and the only realistic conclusion was to raze the buildings.) We advised Mr. Babcock that we have no use for the buildings and that we have no money to reimburse the State. Mr. Babcock then admitted that the State was unable to find any use for the buildings and agreed to transfer the entire tract to the Park Service at an early date.[43]

With agreement on the transfer of the Vanderbilt tract in place, efforts were renewed to finalize a master plan for the Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area. The 1961 master plan was produced by Abbuehl in the Roanoke office. It addressed the entire area and the program included in addition to the concession development near the existing Pisgah Inn, a visitor center, picnic area, and campground. [44]

The text of the 'design analysis' that accompanies the plan opens with a summary of the importance of this recreation area.

> Mount Pisgah, located 24 miles southwest of Asheville, elevation 5,721 feet, has long been a destination for tourists and North Carolinians. Its attraction has been both scenery and the opportunity to either stay or dine at the Pisgah Inn. ... Mount Pisgah bears the same general relationship to Asheville that the Peaks of Otter area does to Roanoke. Both were resort developments long before the Parkway. They are both approximately the same distance from the metropolitan areas and, therefore, make attractive developments for the communities. Pisgah Inn has been particularly popular as a place for fine food and a cool, invigorating climate. The National Park Service development of the area will make Mount Pisgah one of the major attractions in the Blue Ridge Parkway. [45]

The description of the concession development is brief, presumably because this area had been so thoroughly discussed in 1959.

> Lodging and Meals. A 50-unit motel is proposed with possible expansion to 75 units. There is room for additional units if conditions should warrant. A restaurant with 15 units in the same building is to occupy the site of the present Pisgah Inn. Additional motel units will be added as required.
>
> Gas and Stores. A small gas station, with campers' supplies, will be located on the main motor road in the concession area.[46]

The visitor center was to be located in the place that Abbuehl had identified as ideal in his 1959 draft, and it was to be connected to a network of trails.

> Interpretation. A visitor center with information and ranger offices, rest rooms, and a museum with exhibits will be the focal point for interpretation. A site has been selected on the motor road near the concession area and campground, with a fine view of Mount Pisgah. ... There will be a general trail system along the ridge from Big Bald, Flat Laurel Gap, across Little Bald Mountain, through the Vanderbilt hunting lodge area, Buck Spring Gap and Little Pisgah. Nature walks from the visitor center will

43 Superintendent BLRI, to Regional Director, Region One, 'Report on Conference in Raleigh, North Carolina, April 5, 1961, in the office of Mr. W. F. Babcock, Director of North Carolina State Highway Commission,' April 10 1961; Lands Files, Section 2T; BLRI HQ.

44 'Mt. Pisgah, General Development - Part of the Master Plan, Blue Ridge Parkway' (Designed E. H. Abbuehl, Approved C. L. Wirth, Director, 6-20-61.); Box 85; Series 58; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

45 E. H. Abbuehl, 'Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of Blue Ridge Parkway, Volume 1, Chapter 5, Design Analysis, Mount Pisgah,' May 1961, p. 17; Folder BLRI Master Plan 1960-61; Box 9 Master Plans 1957-61; NPS Southeast Region, Richmond VA; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region (Philadelphia PA.).

46 Ibid, p. 17A.

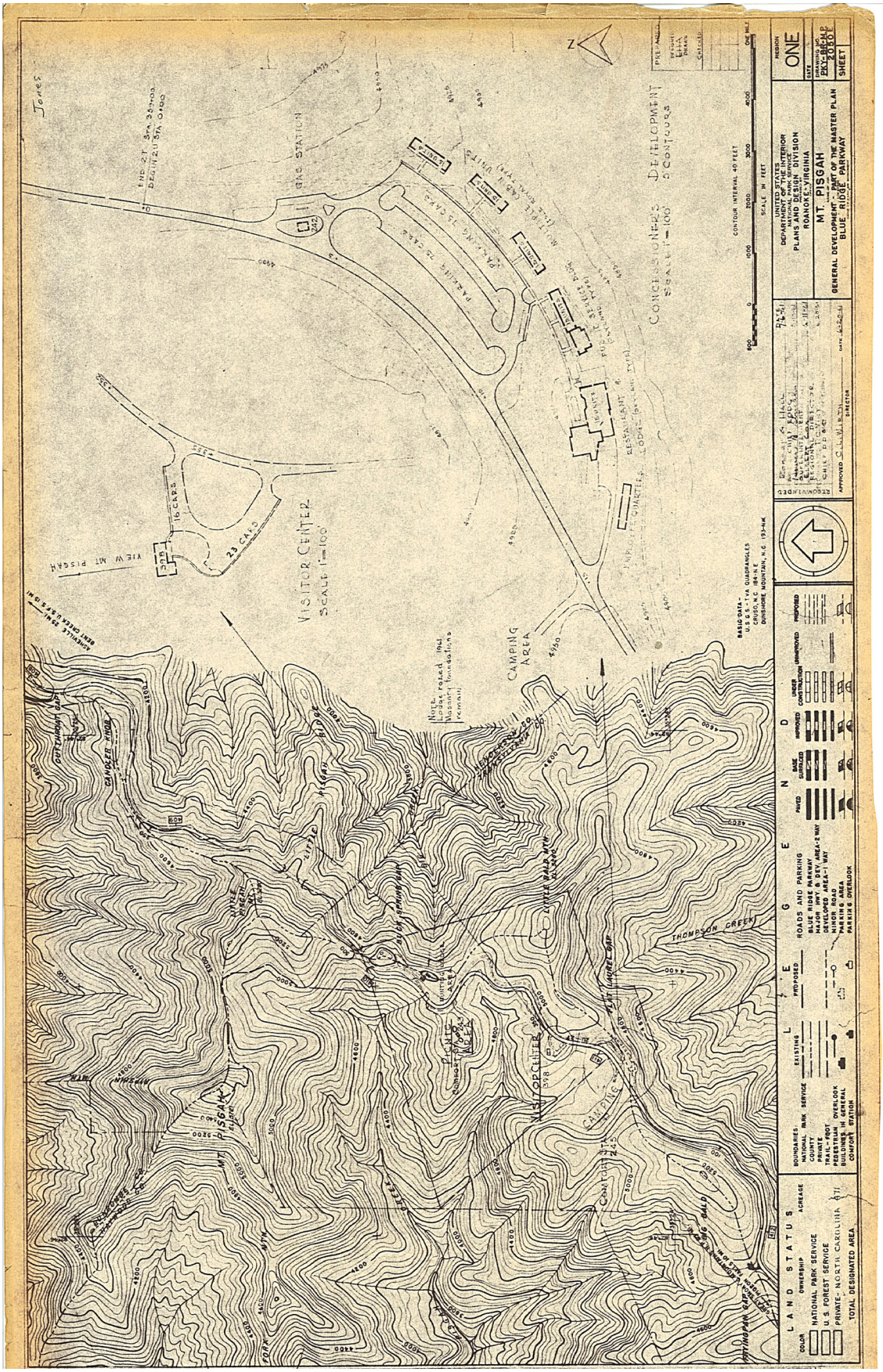



**Figure 1.** 1961 Master Plan

> tie into the main trail. The trail to Mount Pisgah over U.S. Forest Service land will be maintained by the Forest Service.[47]

The picnic area was also to be sited in the place Abbuehl had mentioned in 1959.

> Picnic Areas. Picnicking will be very popular and there is an ideal place on the small knoll southwest of Station 325 for this. The area is quite open, with a scattering of rhododendron and a few trees. The Vanderbilts had their garden at this location. A large parking area (50 - 60 cars) is proposed adjacent to the motor road, and an 8' walk-service road on the contour will provide the principal circulation for the picnic area. The view of nearby Mount Pisgah is particularly good.[48]

The strong demand for camping facilities experienced elsewhere along the Parkway had probably brought about the change of mind with regard to a campground, but the development was to be kept small.[49]

> Campgrounds. The high elevation and unfavorable topography limit camping. There will be a demand for camping, and a site west and across the motor road from the concession area has been designated for the campers. A 30 to 50-unit campground can be developed at this location.[50]

Each of these developments would have to be supplied with electricity and linked to water supply and sewage disposal systems. The design analysis noted that electric power was already available in the concession area, but that water supply and sewage disposal would need further study.

A large part of the 'design analysis' was devoted to a discussion of the Vanderbilt lodge and its surroundings, but no clear-cut recommendation was made. Although a consensus had been reached that most, if not all, of the buildings would have to be demolished, there were still hopes of preserving some parts of the complex.

> Hunting Lodge Area. There are no strings attached to the use of the Vanderbilt hunting lodge group of buildings and the consensus has been to tear them down. It is an interesting group, rustic log construction in a very attractive setting, but the buildings are more than 60 years old. This area is the most attractive spot in the Pisgah area and should be preserved and made available to visitors. Much of the charm is in the fine vegetation, the open spaces, and the walls that have weathered for many years. The problem is to let visitors see the area without spoiling it with roads and parking. . . .
>
> It would be nice if a portion of the main hunting lodge with its enormous fireplace could be preserved. When the buildings are razed it may be possible to preserve a portion of the building as an open shelter. There is also the possibility that the central building (labeled bedrooms) might be converted to public restrooms. This phase will require more investigation. If none of the buildings can be salvaged it is possible the foundations can be used to develop a series of terraces.[51]

The only building in the group for which an after-use was proposed with any confidence was the caretaker's house. It was in good condition and considered suitable to accommodate a caretaker or to provide seasonal quarters for park rangers. Unfortunately, it was also very close, perhaps too close, to the road and parking area proposed for Buck Spring Gap.

Abbuehl's 1961 plan was recommended for approval by the EODC, the Regional Office, and by Vint in the Washington office, but Director Wirth had reservations. In June, he approved sections dealing with the concession development, and the locations of the campground and the picnic area, but withheld approval of sections dealing with the visitor center and the Vanderbilt lodge. He was reluctant to approve demolition of the lodge and instead requested further study, suggesting that it might serve as a visitor center.[52] The Roanoke office responded by pointing out that Vint,

47 Ibid, p. 17.

48 Ibid, p. 17A.

49 See for example, Weems, '1961 Annual Report of Blue Ridge Parkway Activities for Director NPS,' p. 4; BLRI Library.

50 Abbuehl, 'Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of Blue Ridge Parkway, Chapter 5, Design Analysis, Mount Pisgah,' May 1961, p.17.

51 Ibid, p. 17A.

52 Dudley C. Bayliss, Acting Chief Landscape Architect, to Regional Director, Region One, 'Master Plan, Mount Pisgah Development, Blue Ridge Parkway,' June 28 1961; Folder 22; Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

representatives from the Regional Office, and the EODC had already been involved in studying the problem.

> We have all been interested in the charm and general character of the buildings and the style of living they represent. It is the sort of thing one would like to preserve were it not for the practical aspects of the matter. The buildings of heavy log construction are over 60 years old and present serious maintenance problems. The furnishings have been taken, and with them went a great deal of the charm. We have literally racked our brains trying to find some good use for the buildings, and so has the State. Superintendent Weems was interested to learn from Mr. Babcock this spring that they had made an investigation but had to come up with the same answer that we did — raze the buildings. It was then that we advised the State we had no further use for the buildings, and the State has initiated proceedings to dispose of them.
>
> A visitor center was one of the possible uses considered, but our park naturalist wants visitor centers on the main road, convenient to Parkway visitors. It is his belief that many visitors will not stop if the center is located away from the main road. A second objection is it would be difficult to adapt the building to a visitor center; that either the original charm or the visitor center itself would suffer in such a transformation.[53]

Assured by the heads of the other offices that they agreed with the Roanoke office, Director Wirth finally agreed to the demolition of the Buck Spring Lodge buildings and to the location of the visitor center as proposed in Abbuehl's master plan.[54]

## Pisgah Inn

While the Parkway road was under construction the operators of the existing Pisgah Inn sought financial backing to build the new inn planned by the NPS. There appears to have been little or no public controversy associated with the proposal to build a lodge here, which may have been because it was a replacement of an existing enterprise or because of the remoteness of the location. In his Annual Report for 1961, Weems summarized the situation.

> At Mount Pisgah, 18 miles beyond Asheville, North Carolina, the Pisgah Inn is presently operated by Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Kirschner under a permit from the U. S. Forest Service which expires in October, 1961. The buildings are old and ramshackle and an investment of $300,000 to $400,000 will be required to build adequate lodging and restaurant facilities to be available for public use when the Parkway is completed through that section in 1964 or 1965. The Kirschners have approached a group of Waynesville businessmen to assume the financing of the necessary improvements. This group, including the Kirschners, is in process of forming a corporation to make an offer to the National Park Service for a concessions contract to develop and operate the new Mount Pisgah facilities after the right-of-way has been transferred from the Forest Service. We propose to issue a revocable concessions permit to the Kirschners to continue their present operations beyond this fall, to continue until a contract is concluded with the proposed corporation on January 1, 1963.[55]

The next year, Weems reported that negotiations with the new corporation would begin as soon as the land was transferred by the USFS; and in 1963, he was able to report that a contract had been signed.

> The most significant development of 1963 fiscal year in concessions was the addition of a new concessioner to the Parkway. Pisgah Inn, Inc. was authorized by Contract No. NPS-WASO-IX-63-1 executed on March 20, 1963 to provide lodgings, food and beverage services, automobile service stations, and sale of souvenirs and gift items between Miles 340 and 456 for a period of 20 years.[56]

The concessionaires hired Foy and Lee, Associates, of Waynesville, North Carolina, as their architects for the new inn, but the NPS kept a close watch on

53 Howard B. Stricklin, Acting Superintendent, to Regional Director, Region One, 'Master Plan, Mount Pisgah Development, Blue Ridge Parkway,' July 5 1961; Folder 22, Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

54 A. Clark Stratton, Acting Chief of Design and Construction, to Regional Director, Region One, 'Mount Pisgah Developed Area, Blue Ridge Parkway,' July 27 1961; Folder 22; Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

55 Weems, '1961 Annual Report of Blue Ridge Parkway Activities for Director, NPS,' p. 3. BLRI Library.

56 Weems, '1963 Annual Report of Blue Ridge Parkway Activities for Director, NPS,' July 2 1963, p. 3. BLRI Library.

design decisions, particularly with regard to the site plan and external appearance of the inn.

The site plan closely followed ideas presented in the 1959 and 1961 Master Plans. In accordance with those plans the new inn was to be located immediately to the northeast of the existing inn, at the edge of level ground in Flat Laurel Gap. This location had several advantages: it commanded a magnificent view to the southeast across the Pink Beds to foothill ranges beyond, it left a large expanse of relatively level ground beside the Parkway road available for parking, it enabled the operators to continue to make use of the original inn buildings until they were ready to move out of them, and it left space for expansion to the northeast.

In his brief on master planning issues at Mt. Pisgah written for the EODC in June 1959, Abbuehl suggested that the design of the new inn might follow examples in other national parks.

> One of the possibilities that we have thought about for overnight units is the two-storey, one-room deep type at Isle Royale that we believe could be adapted very nicely to the site. Eventually a large dining room and lunch counter on the order of the ones at Skyland are indicated.[57]

Rock Harbor Lodge is the only lodge on Isle Royale, an island in Lake Superior located near the Canadian border. Sleeping accommodation at the lodge is provided in two-story motel units arranged in a row along a rocky shoreline, each unit being one-room deep so that views across the lake can be obtained from all rooms. Skyland is one of the concession areas in Shenandoah National Park. There the dining room has windows extending almost from floor to ceiling so that patrons can enjoy fine views from the elevated site.

Both these places were examples of a new emphasis in park architecture on responding to a site primarily through the organization of space, an idea espoused by modern architecture, rather than through evocation of vernacular building forms and use of materials native to the site that was characteristic of prewar rustic architecture.

57 Superintendent, BLRI, to Chief, EODC, 'Preliminary Master Plan Drawing No. PKY-BR-MP-2050-C, Mount Pisgah, General Development, Blue Ridge Parkway,' June 29 1959; Folder 18; Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

The Skyland dining room, which was completed in 1952, had been an early source of controversy over whether modern architectural ideas were appropriate in National Parks.[58] This controversy gathered steam during the building programs carried out with Mission 66 funds.



**Figure 2.** HABS photo of Main entrance to the old Pisgah Inn (Post 1933)

The case for following modern ideas was presented by leading architects in the EODC including John B. 'Bill' Cabot, who argued that the adoption of modern spatial concepts and materials did not represent a departure from the NPS ideal of respectful subordination to a natural setting. "Building must be *of* the ground and growing out of it, *not* dissonances or structures boldly placed upon it."[59] He preferred to regard the adoption of modern ideas as a shift in approach rather than a change in concept.

> It may be that there is a new method of expression, but the term concept indicates something very fundamental in park work. Though it may be that concepts cannot change, possibly the approach to design is different. There has been some restriction in the application of the more familiar hand-crafted materials; the increased acceptance and use of cast materials and machine-made products; and, perhaps most importantly, the realization by the designers that space, spacial values and the psychologi-

58 Carr, 'Mission 66" Modernism and the National Park Dilemma,' p. 133.

59 John B. Cabot, 'Architecture in Parks, Only Changes in Expression,' Parks and Recreation, vol. 42, no. 4 (April 1959), p. 155.

cal effect of buildings on people are important design considerations. Basic to all is the ever-present question of economic value.[60]



**Figure 3.** HABS photo of Pisgah Inn dining porch (Post 1933)

Others within the NPS including Wirth were less committed to a modern architectural aesthetic, and Weems and Abbuehl were decidedly skeptical, preferring designs that continued to use the vocabulary of a modified form of rustic architecture.

> We have no wish to ape the native structures exactly in our buildings but merely to use similar roof pitches and shapes, building material combinations, and other characteristics well known to all which make these buildings fit into the Blue Ridge Mountain country in a very satisfactory manner. It should be a relatively simple matter for a good designer to produce a combination of the right mass and materials to suggest the mountain type of architecture even
>
> with more modern materials than were generally used in these buildings. 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.[61]

The Bluff Lodge in Doughton Park, which opened in 1949, had provided a model for this more economical version of prewar rustic architecture, and it was closely followed in the design of other buildings along the Parkway throughout the 1950s. This conservatism earned praise from opponents of modern architecture in national parks, but it drew criticism from Cabot and others in the EODC, with Cabot dismissing the rustic Parkway style as obsolete "cow-barn architecture."[62] However, both Wirth and Vint supported the continued use of a modified form of rustic architecture along the Parkway, and, in 1960, Dudley Bayliss, the person in Vint's office with special responsibility for parkways, recommended that any prospectus for concession facilities along the Blue Ridge Parkway should require that all buildings conform to the established Parkway style.

> The architectural style or character should be based on straightforward use of native stone and wood materials designed to harmonize with similar existing Parkway buildings.[63]

The EODC protested that such a requirement would bind the NPS to a "traditionalism based not on sound architectural thinking but upon emotional response."[64] Meanwhile, pressure to control the cost of park buildings was already operating in favor of the adoption of modern building techniques and materials and against a continuation of traditional craftsmanship in wood and stone, and, as Mission 66 progressed, designs for new buildings along the Parkway began to conform more closely to Cabot's ideas.

60 Ibid.

61 A. E. Demaray to Regional Director, 'Rockfish Valley Contact Station, Section 1B, Blue Ridge,' 8 December 1950; Folder 6; Box 35; Series 29; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

62 John B. Cabot to Supervising Park Landscape Architect Blue Ridge, 'James River Interpretive Shelter, Dwg no. PKY-BR-1G-2088A' July 12 1960; Folder BLRI 1958-60; Box 9, General Correspondence, EODC, 1946-63; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region (Philadelphia PA.). For other examples of the architectural debate see Firth, 'Blue Ridge Parkway, Historic Resource Study,' December 2005, pp. 303-305.

63 Dudley C. Bayliss to Chief of Concessions Management, 'Draft of Prospectus, Blue Ridge Parkway,' January 28 1960; Folder C - BLRI; Box 2, General Correspondence, EODC, 1954-62; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region (Philadelphia PA.).

64 John B. Cabot to Chief, EODC, 'WASO Directive, Blue Ridge Architecture,' February 8 1960; Folder C - BLRI; Box 2; General Correspondence, EODC, 1954-62; RG 79.

Economy was an important factor in the design of the new Pisgah Inn, given the limited time the Inn could remain open during the year because of impassable roads during the brutal, winter months at the high altitude. Accordingly, the design produced by Foy and Lee is more modern than traditional in character.[65] The use of a steel framework is readily apparent and there are large areas of glass in the main building housing the restaurant and gift shop. Concrete block walls are clad in board and batten siding, but rustic stonework is confined to a chimneystack, foundations, and a few retaining walls near the main entrance. In comments on the design of the main building, Weems appealed for a more conspicuous use of stone and wood, while the EODC complemented the architects on a fine design.[66] The Regional Office approved the design with the comment:

> We agree with Superintendent Weems that a flagstone surface would be preferable to concrete for the entry way, however this is a matter of economics as well as aesthetics and we do not feel it proper to make a stipulation in this regard.[67]

The construction of the new Inn began in spring 1965 as work on Section 2T was being completed. The new Inn buildings would provide 30 motel rooms, a restaurant, coffee shop, and kitchen, plus a gift shop, and manager's quarters.[68] A gas station and camp store to be operated by the innkeepers was built at the other end of the parking area at the same time. Construction of the motel rooms and gas station was completed in 1965, but the main building containing the restaurant was not finished until May 1966.[69]

The retention of the original Inn buildings helped smooth the transition to the new building. For a while, the original buildings continued to be used as overflow accommodation, housing both guests and employees, but in 1968 the NPS requested that the practice of housing guests there be discontinued. In that year, work began on the expansion of the new Inn with the design and construction of a second motel block to the northeast of the existing block, and, thereafter, the original Inn buildings were used only as a dormitory for employees.[70]

The original Inn had been reached by a road cut into the steep slope beneath it, and, before the construction of the Parkway, Flat Laurel Gap had been covered with stands of oak trees with thickets of rhododendron and mountain laurel.[71] Judging from the evidence of vegetation communities surviving nearby, northern red oak, *Quercus rubra var. borealis* was the main overstory tree with Catawba rhododendron, *Rhododendron catawbiense* and mountain-laurek, *Kalmia latifolia* prominent in the understory.

With the arrival of the Parkway, some of the trees were preserved but most of the understory vegetation was cleared to make way for the large parking area that was built beside the new Inn.[72] About 150 parking spaces were provided in anticipation of a brisk trade at the Inn's restaurant and additions to the motel accommodations.

65 Foy and Lee, Associates, Architects, 'Proposed Buildings for Mt. Pisgah Inn, Blue Ridge Parkway, N.C.' December 23 1963; Mt Pisgah Drawings 8001-8001B; BLRI Drawings Collection (Asheville, N.C.).

66 Superintendent, Blue Ridge Parkway, to Regional Director, Southeast Region, 'Preliminary Drawing, Proposed Buildings, Mt. Pisgah Inn, Blue Ridge,' January 7 1964; and Chief Architect, EODC, to Regional Director, Southeast Region, January 8 1964; Folder BLRI; Box 33, General Correspondence Files, Records of the NPS Field Office, Philadelphia PA; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region, (Philadelphia PA.).

67 Acting Regional Director, to Director, 'Concessioner's Working Drawing no. PKY-BR-MP-8001B, Proposed Lodge, Mount Pisgah, Blue Ridge,' June 9 1964; Folder BLRI; Box 33, General Correspondence Files, Records of the NPS Field Office, Philadelphia PA; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region, (Philadelphia PA.).

68 '30 Unit Motel Will Be Built on BR Parkway,' The Waynesville Mountaineer, Waynesville, N.C. April 26 1965, p. 1.

69 James M. Eden, Acting Superintendent, 'Annual Narrative Report for Fiscal Year 1966 of Blue Ridge Parkway Activities for Director, NPS' June 14 1966, p. 7; BLRI Library.

70 Page Pless, 'Pisgah National Forest Inn, An Historic Review,' April 27 1982, p. 6; BLRI Library.

71 'Pisgah Inn Survey,' no date; Mount Pisgah Drawings 601-60752; BLRI Drawings Collection.

72 James M. Eden, Acting Superintendent, 'Annual Narrative Report for Fiscal Year 1966 of Blue Ridge Parkway Activities for Director, NPS' June 14 1966, p. 7; BLRI Library.

The parking area occupies nearly all the ground between the Parkway road and the motel buildings, and in this respect the site plan of the Pisgah Inn is less picturesque than the arrangement at Peaks of Otter, the other lodge built during Mission 66, where the lodge is seen at a distance across the waters of Abbott Lake. The parking area at Mt. Pisgah was constructed as part of Project 2U1, which included grass seeding but no additional tree or shrub planting. No record of a separate planting contract has been found, but some shrub planting at the entrance of the restaurant building was done, perhaps in association with completion of the building contract.

The 1961 Master Plan had noted that there were water supply, power supply, and sewage disposal systems in place at the Inn — and at the now demolished Vanderbilt lodge — but that they would need upgrading.[73] The water supply was of particular concern here and elsewhere along the Parkway given the high elevations, and so in 1961 there began a concerted search for water. This was successful at Mt. Pisgah and led to the sinking of two wells with a combined flow adequate to supply water to all development in the recreation area.[74]

The opening of the new Pisgah Inn in the summer of 1965 did not go smoothly. It had to be closed after a few weeks because of problems with its water supply. Unfortunately, the contract to install the necessary lines was mismanaged and when the Inn opened for business it remained dependent on an old spring-fed system that soon proved inadequate. The new system involved piping water from wells on the campground side of the Parkway to an holding tank reservoir on the summit of the rise to the north of the concession area parking lot. The work was completed late in 1965.[75]

73 Abbuehl, 'Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of Blue Ridge Parkway, Chapter 5, Design Analysis, Mount Pisgah,' May 1961; p. 17B.

74 Weems, '1962 Annual Report of Blue Ridge Parkway Activities for Director, NPS,' p. 6. BLRI Library. There are two wells, number one is located at the north end of Loop B, and number two at the south end of Loop A in the campground.

75 Weems to Regional Director, Southeast, 'Construction Program and Contract Compliance - Pisgah Inn, Inc.' April 8 1966; Folder BLRI - Pisgah Inn Inc. 1962-1969; Box 0833, Concessions Contracts and Permits, General Records Administration Files 1949 - 1971; RG 79; NACP.

Work to upgrade the other utilities went more smoothly. In accordance with NPS policy, power lines were rerouted below ground alongside the Parkway so they would not be visible. However, an existing line in the area of the new campground was to remain above the surface. It seems likely this decision was influenced by the problems associated with burying lines in the marshy ground found in this particular location at the head of Pisgah Creek, and this is fortunate in light of the later research documenting the bog's distinct character and plant communities.

A new sewage treatment plant was constructed a short distance to the north in a basin below the knoll designated for the new picnic area. This plant was designed to receive and treat effluent from the campground and picnic area as well as the Inn. Its location was probably selected because of its relatively low elevation, its distance from areas accessible to the public, and perhaps because the trace of an abandoned road — the Buck Creek Road — provided a ready means of access. Currently, a gated service road to the treatment plant originates at the parking area built to serve the picnic area.

## Campground and picnic area

Both camping and picnicking were regarded as essential ingredients in a major recreation area, but the shortage of level ground at Mt. Pisgah presented difficulties. Early plans showed two loop roads at Flat Laurel Gap across the road from the Pisgah Inn, with the larger loop allocated to camping and the smaller to picnicking.

The Mission 66 prospectus included the development of a campground but omitted mention of a picnic area, probably because the planners were awaiting the outcome of negotiations to acquire the Vanderbilt tract. In 1959, while these negotiations were still in progress, it was suggested that because of a shortage of ground suitable for camping, this activity might be eliminated from the program and instead provided at Tennessee Bald. But by 1961, plans to provide camping at Flat Laurel Gap had been revived, and a picnic area was planned

further north on the former site of the Vanderbilt's vegetable garden.[76]

Although the 1961 plan included this campground, there was still concern about the suitability of the site in Flat Laurel Gap so the campground was kept fairly small, with only 30 to 50 individual proposed campsites. But in the next few years this caution was abandoned, and the program was increased to 120 units and then upwards to 150 units before construction started.[77] This change in policy appears to have been a response to the popularity of camping along the Parkway. In September 1963, under the heading 'Campers, A Promising New Crop For Mountain Farms,' *The Asheville Times* reported:

> A report given at this week's meeting of the North Carolina National Park, Parkway, and Forest Development Commission points up the tremendous boom in camping. More than one and a half million campers literally swamped recreational facilities in Pisgah and Nantahala National Forest, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Blue Ridge Parkway this past summer. Another 35,000 were turned away from Nantahala and Pisgah alone.
>
> The Federal agencies are expanding facilities as rapidly as funds will permit, but they are the first to admit the end is not in sight. The demand is increasing far more rapidly than facilities.[78]

Picnicking was also highly popular, but this was accommodated in a wider range of settings and was not necessarily restricted to fairly level ground. The main requirements were ease of access, a combination of sunlit and shady areas, and an attractive setting — preferably with a good view. The 1961 plan noted that the site of the Vanderbilt garden was ideal and the view to the summit of Mt. Pisgah was particularly good.[79] This attraction was important since one of the main motives in providing picnic areas was to reduce the amount of ad hoc picnicking at overlooks and along the sides of the road.

> Picnicking along the road shoulders is permitted but not encouraged. Cars must be parked in a safe manner and no open fires are allowed. Expansion of picnic facilities as proposed should help to reduce roadside picnicking except on peak weekends during the fall color season. Of course, there will always be those who prefer to picnic along the roadside, and they should be permitted to do so if it does not create a hazard or damage the landscape.[80]

Designs for the campground and picnic area were prepared in the EODC in 1965, and a contract for their construction was let the following year.[81] The 'back-to-nature' attitude guiding these designs had not changed since the New Deal era, but there were some differences in policy and design details that mark these developments as part of the Mission 66 era.

During Mission 66, campgrounds grew in size to meet the burgeoning demands of a mobile society, but at the same time there was greater emphasis on locating them away from environmentally sensitive areas. The design of campgrounds to provide an experience of living without urban amenities in close contact with the 'great outdoors' continued to be the preferred approach throughout the NPS in the 1950s.

After becoming Director in 1951, Wirth distributed a memorandum from the Superintendent of Joshua Tree National Monument in which the simplicity

76 Abbuehl, 'Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of Blue Ridge Parkway, Chapter 5, Design Analysis, Mount Pisgah,' May 1961.

77 Superintendent Blue Ridge, to Chief EODC, 'Preliminary Drawing of Mount Pisgah Campground - Blue Ridge,' October 1 1965; Folder BLRI; Box 22 General Correspondence 1952-1966; NPS Philadelphia Service Center EODC; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region (Philadelphia PA.).

78 The Asheville Times, September 12, 1963.

79 E. H. Abbuehl, 'Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of Blue Ridge Parkway, Volume 1, Chapter 5, Mount Pisgah Design Analysis,' May 1961, p. 17A.

80 'Master Plan of Blue Ridge Parkway, Chapter Three, Management Programs - The Land,' September 14 1964, p. 24; Folder 8; Box 3; Series 7; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

81 This contract was awarded the W. B. Dillard Construction Company. 'Monthly Progress Reports, Blue Ridge Parkway.' December 1966; Folder BLRI 1965-1966; Box 049, General Correspondence of the Assistant Director EODC, 1965-1968; RG 79; NACP.

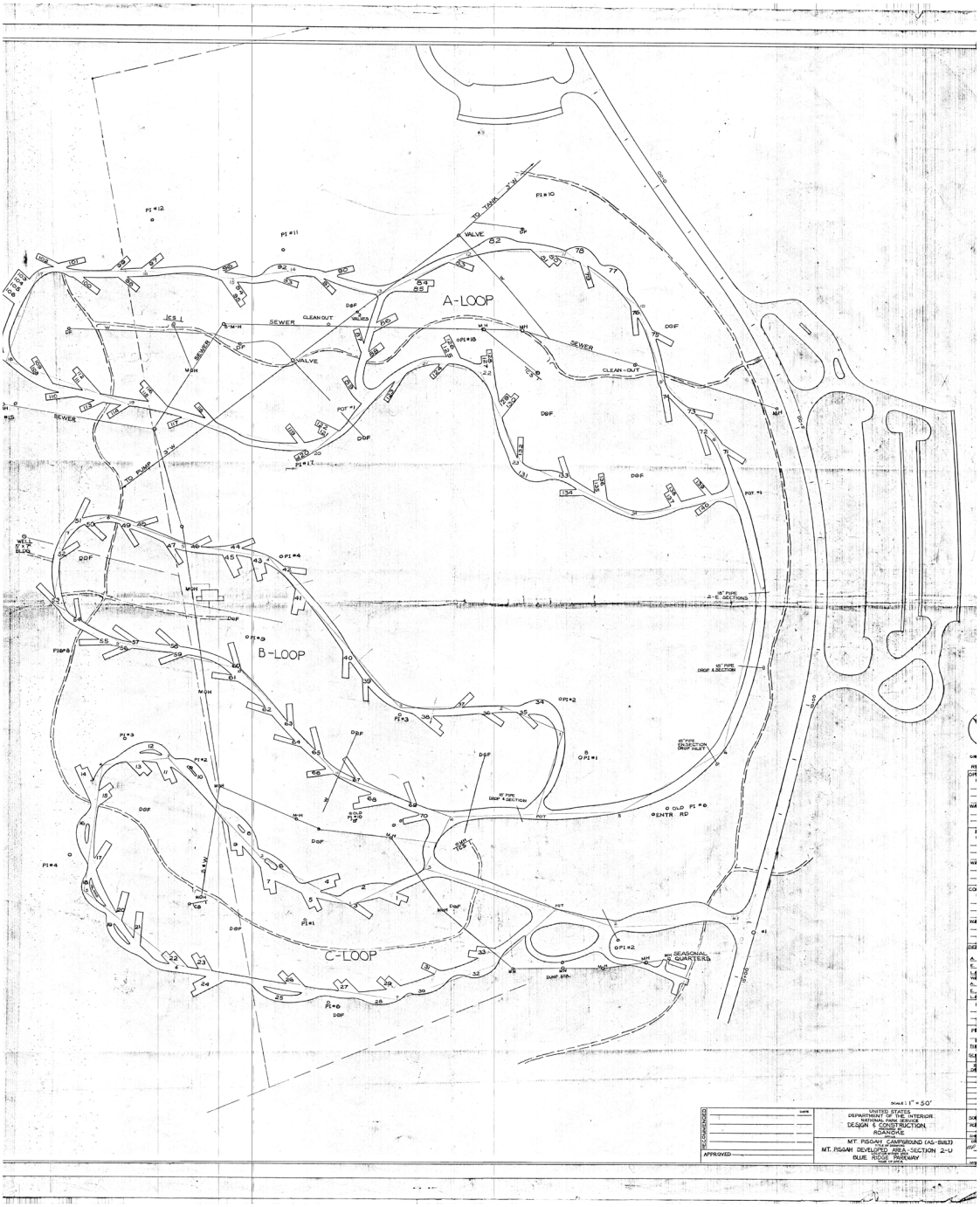



**Figure 4.** Map of Campground (See full page in Appendix C, Exhibit 28)

of campgrounds in his park was justified with arguments similar to those used by Waugh in 1935.[82]

However, the character of many campgrounds changed, with areas devoted to trailers greatly expanded as travel trailers effectively replaced cabins among those who loved the outdoors but preferred not to sleep under canvas.[83]

82 Superintendent, Joshua Tree, to The Director, 'Desert Campground Operation,' November 28 1952; and E. M. Lisle, Acting Regional Director, to Superintendent BLRI, 'Campgrounds,' December 23 1952; Folder 27; Box 57; Series 41; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

83 Carr, 'Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma,' pp. 84, 128, 200-201. The NPS produced a manual to guide the design of facilities for travel trailers in 1954: Wallace Johnson, Division of Design and Construction, WASO, 'Trailer Coach Facilities', June 1954; Folder -Camping; Box 124, General Correspondence 1952-1966, NPS Region One, Richmond VA.; RG 79; NACP.

Campsites along the Parkway generally conformed to the back-to-nature ideal; indeed a photograph of the campground at Rocky Knob was used as an illustration for the NPS publication 'Mission 66 in Action.'[84] The policies governing the design of campgrounds along the Parkway were summarized in the 1964 Master Plan as follows:

> Campgrounds are provided at most of the larger developed areas along the Parkway. Tent campers are separated from trailer campers whenever possible.
>
> Camp sites are spaced 75 to 100 feet apart to conserve soil and vegetation. Properly designed, these facilities will probably never need rehabilitation, an important consideration in the Parkway where topography suitable for development is relatively scarce.
>
> No provision is made by the government for electricity, hot water, sewage hookup, and dumping stations which are considered camping luxuries.[85]

This lack of 'luxuries' was justified by an assumption that most campers would be touring the Parkway and staying only a night or two at any one place; however, it was hoped that in the larger recreation areas concessioners would find it worthwhile to provide some of the missing amenities, including showers, laundry facilities, and dumping stations.[86]

The campground at Mt. Pisgah was organized into three areas each served by a road taking the form of a loop: 'Loop A' was designated for campers bringing tents, 'Loop B' for those using tent trailers, and 'Loop C' for those with travel trailers. These roads skirt the edges of a high mountain bog in a shallow basin at the head of Pisgah Creek. Slopes traversed by the roads have gradients of between 8% and 10%. These slopes are occupied by oak woods with an understory of mountain laurel and purple rhododendron. The marshy ground is generally open and occupied by grass and sedge communities. These communities are home to many species of rare plants, including cotton grass and bog asphodel, but their ecological significance was not fully appreciated at the time the campground was designed.[87]

Drawings were prepared indicating the curving alignment of the roads and the placement of each parking space, but a NPS landscape architect adjusted the design on-site before construction took place, to ensure a close fit to topography and minimal loss of trees.[88] Although the program called for a total of 150 campsites, in the end, sites for 70 tents were provided along Loop A, while Loops B and C together were constructed to accommodate a total of 70 trailers.[89]

Parking spaces at individual campsites took several forms. Along Loop A, most of them are simple slips — 20 to 25 feet in length — designed to accommodate one vehicle, but a few are placed side by side. All parking slips are arranged to allow drivers to back into them from the one-way road. In addition, there are a few bays forming 'pull-through' units, and at the far end of the loop there are four parking stalls placed side-by-side to allow group use.

Along Loop B, parking slips are generally 10 feet longer to accommodate tent trailers. Most are designed to allow a trailer to remain attached to the vehicle towing it, but a few require a trailer to be unhitched and parked beside the car or truck. The loop for travel trailers — Loop C — has the greatest variety of parking spaces: 16 are designed for a trailer to be parked beside the towing vehicle, 5 are simple slips, and 12 are 'pull-through' units, some of which are separated from the loop road by islands. All parking slips and bays were paved with bituminous concrete and given concrete

84 Carr, p. 202. The photograph of Rocky Knob campground was taken in 1952.

85 Blue Ridge Parkway Master Plan, Chapter Three, Management Programs - The Land, September 14 1964; p. 22.

86 Ibid, pp. 22-23.

87 J. Dan Patillo and Thomas E. Govas, 'Flat Laurel Gap Bog' in 'Important Plant Habitats of the Blue Ridge Parkway from the Great Smoky Mountain National Park to Roanoke, Virginia,' March 1978; BLRI Library.

88 This was the usual practice in the design of Parkway campgrounds: Edward S. Zimmer, Chief EODC, to Superintendent BLRI, 'Preliminary Plan PKY ER RK 2087, Road Layout for New Campground Rocky Knob,' May 3 1960; Folder - Blue Ridge Parkway; Box 1045, Recreation Activities - Camping, General Records Administration Files 1949-1971; RG 79; NACP.

89 'Mount Pisgah Campground (As Built),' Drawing no. PKY BR MP 3056, June 11 1968; BLRI Drawings Collection.

curbs to protect adjacent slopes and vegetation from damage by inaccurate parking, although this has great increased runoff quantity and velocity within the campground area, which is a continuing problem related to the ecosystem of the adjoining bog which receives the runoff.

The campground has a network of footpaths, some giving access to comfort stations located inside the loops, and others linking the loops to each other and to the Pisgah Inn area across the Parkway road, where the camp store is located. At the entrance to the campground the design included space for a ranger's kiosk and a trailer to serve as a ranger's quarters. In 1968, a kiosk originally constructed by the CCC was obtained from GRSM and installed at the entrance.[90]

In 1966, while the campground was under construction, Howard Chapman, the Chief Ranger, wrote a report voicing some concerns about the design of campgrounds along the Parkway.[91] Many of his recommendations were intended to provide more flexibility in the way the campgrounds were used and thereby reduce the need for close supervision by park rangers. For example, he recommended that all campsites be designed to accommodate any type of camping equipment, and that the place where a tent might be pitched should be defined by the presence of open level ground with a table and fireplace and not by the provision of a tent pad. Other recommendations were intended to enhance the ease with which campsites could be used and to address safety concerns: so, for example, one recommendation was that all parking slips be large enough to accommodate two vehicles, and another that all 'pull-throughs' should have island barriers.

The report emphasized that the Parkway's campgrounds as currently designed were expensive to operate.

> On the Blue Ridge Parkway we have some of the most attractive campgrounds to be found anywhere in the National Park System. But, we also spend more for campground management than any other area in the System when we consider employing 22 seasonal rangers to handle 9 campgrounds with only 965 sites. One reason the Blue Ridge campgrounds are as attractive as they are is the attention maintenance gives to these units and the untiring efforts of rangers in managing use. I believe the burden of cost can be reduced by following the criteria advanced above and at the same time the visitor's enjoyment will be enhanced.[92]

It is not known how much debate was sparked by this report. Some of the recommendations aimed at increasing operational flexibility were in conflict with ideas about how to protect soils and vegetation advanced by Meinecke in the 1930s; others would have been difficult to implement without a considerable reduction in the capacity of the campgrounds, particularly on sloping sites.

His appeal that staff assigned to manage campgrounds should have a greater say in their design may have been stymied by the fact that much of the design work was no longer being done in Roanoke but at the EODC in Philadelphia. In any case, the recommendations came too late to affect the design of the Mt. Pisgah campground, and the Parkway administration seems to have accepted the need to continue a policy of close supervision and accept its costs.

The picnic area was built a mile north of the campground close to the site of the Vanderbilt's lodge. A large parking area was formed from a bend in the old road serving the lodge, now cut off by the construction of the Parkway. This area can accommodate 52 vehicles, more than enough to serve the picnic area, but people can also use it to gain access to the Mt. Pisgah trail.

A paved footpath leads to the picnic area in a clearing at the top of a knoll about 100 yards from the parking area. Most picnic areas along the Parkway have roads looping through them, but there are a few like Pisgah accessible only on foot.[93] The contractor was allowed to build a haul road up to the knoll to facilitate construction work but this was removed when the contract was completed.

90 Superintendent BLRI to Superintendent GRSM, 'Campground Kiosks,' May 24 1968; Folder 10; Box 35; Series 29; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

91 Howard H. Chapman, Chief Ranger, to Superintendent, 'Memorandum - Campground Design and Management Criteria,' November 23 1966; Folder 10; Box 4; Series 7; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

92 Ibid, p. 3.

93 One of the other picnic areas reached by a short walk is at Cumberland Knob, the first picnic area to be completed on the Parkway before the war, and one of the most popular.

In the early years of the Parkway, the layout of picnic areas was the subject of some controversy, with debates over the range of facilities that would be provided. Abbott wanted to include provision for organized activities and games such as horseshoes, but this was opposed by some in the Regional Office as inappropriate in a National Park.

Another problem was the requirement that separate facilities had to be provided for African Americans in accordance with the states' racial segregation policies. But these issues had been resolved by the early 1950s, and the main challenges in the planning of picnic areas were no longer social issues but how to respond to the distinctive characteristics of each site and how to protect vulnerable natural features from damage.[94]

The distinctive characteristics of this site included the view to the summit of Mt. Pisgah, the open grassy knoll surrounded by oak woods with an understory of rhododendrons and mountain laurels, and its history as the site of the Vanderbilt's vegetable garden. Most of the picnic tables and benches are situated around the edges of the clearing where people can find a mixture of sunshine and shade and varying degrees of seclusion, but there are a few in the woods offering more seclusion, and a few in the central open space offering a better view.

No drawing has been found to indicate the original location of the tables, but one may not have been prepared as it was normal practice to determine placement in the field, in the same way that campsite locations were determined during construction. Some picnic tables may have been moved since the area was first laid out to allow areas to rest, particularly if damage began to occur through overuse, but it seems likely that most of those that are fixed stand in their original locations.[95]

While the design responded well to the natural features of the place, it made no acknowledgment of its history as the site of the Vanderbilt's vegetable garden. The garden was situated on the east side of the knoll and occupied about one third of the open space. It was initially fenced, but the fence was later removed, and the only remnant of its presence is two low parallel walls of fieldstone that followed the fenceline along the south side of the garden — presumably to retain soil.

The design of site furniture in the campground and picnic area is one of the clues that these areas are products of Mission 66. Before the Second World War, designs conformed to the tenets of NPS rustic architecture; tables and benches were crafted from stone and wood for example, and stone was also prominently featured in the design of fireplaces and drinking fountains. Some questioned this aesthetic, and even Good in his catalogues of rustic park structures admitted there was a case for using tables and fireplaces made of modern materials by assembly line methods.[96]

This case became much stronger with the end of the New Deal and, in particular, the end of the WPA and CCC programs, so after the war a number of modifications were made to rustic designs to reduce the costs of initial construction and maintenance. However, along the Parkway there was no sharp break with the rustic aesthetic but rather a carefully calibrated modification that attempted to retain some of the rustic character while addressing the practicalities of construction and maintenance.

In 1950, designs for a new set of standard picnic tables were produced in the Roanoke office.[97] These provided three alternatives, but in all cases a concrete slab was used for the tabletop in place of wooden planks, and in one version concrete was also used in the supporting piers instead of stone. In 1953, Weems noted in his annual report: "the wooden table and bench combinations in the several picnic areas are being replaced with concrete and stone units." [98]

94 Firth, 'Blue Ridge Parkway, Historic Resource Study,' December 2005, pp. 193-195.

95 Some tables now in the picnic area are meant to be moveable - these are of more recent design. It is not known if there were portable tables when the site was first opened.

96 Albert H. Good, ed., Park and Recreation Structures, Part II Recreational and Cultural Facilities, pp. 1-3.

97 'Standard Picnic Tables, Blue Ridge Parkway,' Drawing no. PKY-BR GEN-2051F, April 18 1950, BLRI Drawings Collection.

98 Weems, '1953 Annual Report of Blue Ridge Parkway Activities for Director NPS,' p. 4; BLRI Library.

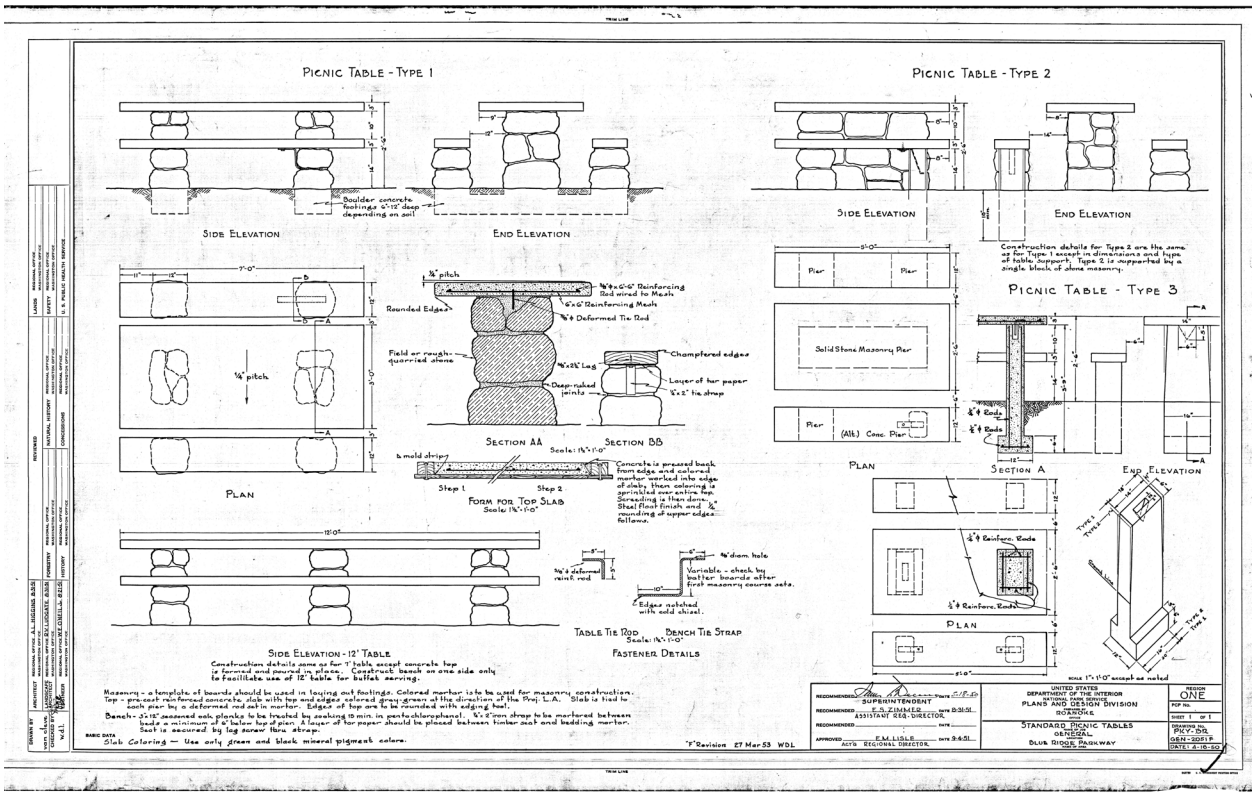



**Figure 5.** 1950s picnic table detail. (See full page in Appendix C, Exhibit 4)

Ten years later, a new design became the standard, and this time only one type of picnic table and bench combination were recommended.[99] This used reinforced concrete for all parts of the table and benches except the bench seats for which oak was still the preferred material. This is the design that was installed at the Mt. Pisgah picnic area and in the campground. It differs from the 1953 concrete picnic table unit in a number of ways; most noticeably the table top is now divided into two slabs laid lengthwise with a narrow gap running down the center of the table from one end to the other.[100] Supporting piers are flared at the top to give additional support to the two slabs. As before, all tables and benches are anchored by burying supporting piers at least 18 inches in the ground, but now a special lightweight concrete is recommended, presumably to facilitate transportation and erection of the units. The main gestures towards the traditional rustic aesthetic are the continued use of green and black mineral pigments to give a grey-green color to the concrete table-tops, and, at least in some cases, the use of a black pebble aggregate to give a noticeable texture.

99 'Standard Picnic Tables, Blue Ridge Parkway,' Drawing no. PKY-BR GEN-2051G, September 1963, BLRI Drawings Collection.

100 This was not a new idea; Good discussed it in his manual: Good, ed., Park and Recreation Structures, Part II Recreational and Cultural Facilities, p. 8.

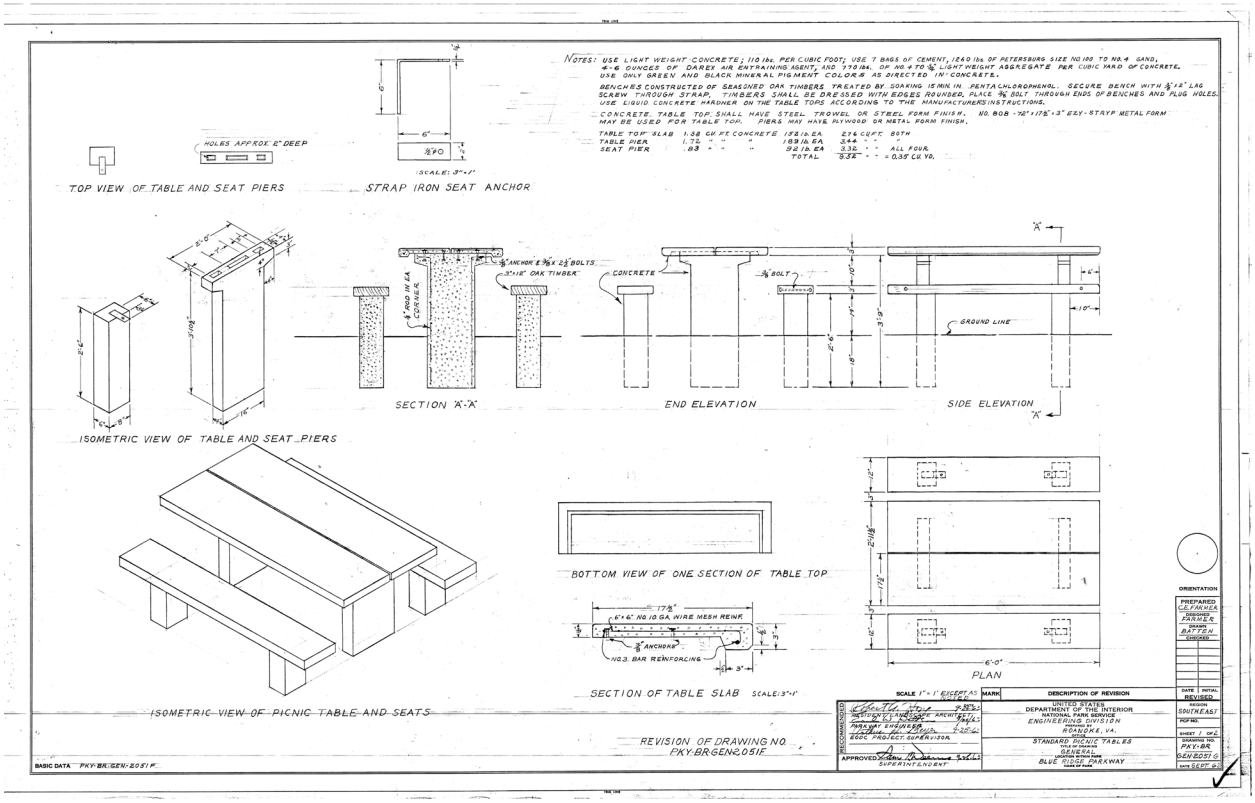



**Figure 6.** Circa 1963 picnic table detail (See full page in Appendix C, Exhibit 3)

Rustic designs for fireplaces in campgrounds and picnic areas had to confront practical and aesthetic issues. Stone fireplaces were usually short-lived even when firebricks protected the stones, and it was difficult to attach steel grilles to them with any hope of permanence. Good admitted that even when stone fireplaces were appropriate to a particular setting, they usually looked incongruous when grouped together in large numbers, so he recommended using fireboxes of sheet steel as an alternative. Illustrating examples from Cook County Forest Preserve in Illinois and a state park in Minnesota he noted:

> Among the advantages of this "cheese box" type are low cost, suitability for quantity production, simplicity of installation, and range of orientation in adaption to prevailing winds. . . .
>
> Chief disadvantage of all units of this basic type in heavily wooded areas would seem to be a greater hazard for spread of ground fire than exists in connection with the usual picnic fireplace of stone.[101]

Along the Parkway in the early 1950s, the standard design for fireplaces continued to feature stone but included a lining of firebrick and a concrete hearth. This rustic stone fireplace was not replaced as the preferred design until the late 1950s, when concrete fireplaces, and steel fireboxes and grilles became standard solutions.[102] At Mt. Pisgah, each campsite was provided with sheet steel fireboxes fitted with hinged bar grilles. To reduce the risk of fire and make them more convenient to tend, these two-sided rectangular boxes are raised on stands about one foot above the ground.

In the picnic area, steel barbeque grills were provided. These three-sided boxes are mounted on steel pipes about 30 inches off the ground and are designed for use with charcoal rather than wood.

101 Good, ed., Park and Recreation Structures, Part II - Recreational and Cultural Facilities, pp. 36-37.

102 'Standard Fireplace, Blue Ridge Parkway,' Drawing no. PKY-BR GEN-2197A, August 27 1951; and 'Concrete Fireplace, Blue Ridge Parkway,' Drawing no. PKY-BR GEN-2197B, November 7 1959; BLRI Drawings Collection.

Obviously, if picnickers bring their own fuel it reduces the likelihood of damage to site vegetation. The grills take several forms, but each allows for adjustment of the height of the grilling surface, and most provide plate as well as bar grilles.

Drinking fountains also raised practical and aesthetic issues that Good had hoped to resolve within the vocabulary of rustic design.

> The ungarnished rendering of a facility for the dispensing of drinking water is a vertical pipe terminating with a tap, the tap perhaps inverted to serve as a simple, but far from sanitary, "bubbler." Such a contrivance set out in the open will satisfy thirst, but certainly not the eye. If it is decided to mask its gaunt utilitarianism by locating it amongst low growth of planting, it is not readily discoverable, and a sign must point out its location. If provision is not made for disposing of drip and overflow, the tap is soon the center of a muddy wallow, and only accessible if planks or stepping stones are provided. All of which soon demonstrates that the utterly simple facility suffers from very real disadvantages, and leads logically and necessarily to its being accepted as something of a feature, its functionalism neither so starkly naked as to offend the eye nor so elaborately draped as to fail to declare itself.[103]

The solution adopted for the Parkway was to house the supply and drain pipes in a masonry pedestal. The stone was to be obtained in the locality and the type and character of the masonry was to be determined by the project landscape architect once the stone was selected. Each fountain provided a bubbler at a convenient height for adults to use, with a step for children, and a low tap for filling buckets and other containers. Fountains were connected to drains to prevent the formation of the "muddy wallow" condemned by Good.

This design had one major disadvantage; no provision was made to access the internal pipes without taking apart the stonework. Nevertheless, it continued in use with only minor changes in fittings into the Mission 66 period.[104] At Mt. Pisgah, drinking fountains in the campground and picnic area are housed in pedestals made of a rough dressed stone. The grey-green stone appears to be the same as that used in curbs and steps throughout the recreation area, and it is probably of local origin but no record of the exact source has been located in the archives.[105]

Stone curbs had been installed in all parking areas — including overlooks — as part of the road building contracts, but the campground contract specified concrete curbs around parking slips and tent platforms. The curbs around parking slips were formed in place, but the edging for tent platforms employed pre-cast units. The latter had exposed surfaces colored with black and green pigment in the same manner as the tops of the picnic tables.[106]

Materials used for tent platforms changed over time: the first campgrounds along the Parkway had platforms made of split logs, but, by the early 1950s, a sand, gravel, and soil mixture was standard, and by the 1960s crushed stone was in general use. However, the size of the platforms does not seem to have varied much, at least after the war: the standard remained between 12 to 14 feet long by 9 to 12 feet wide, and as Howard Chapman, the Chief Ranger, pointed out, by the 1960s many campers were finding this size inadequate for modern tents.[107]

Refuse receptacles were a problematic element in both campgrounds and picnic areas in most National Parks.

103 Good, ed., Park and Recreation Structures, Part I - Administration and Basic Service Facilities, p. 103.

104 'Standard Drinking Fountain, Blue Ridge Parkway,' Drawing no. PKY-BR GEN-2011G, Revised October 23 1962; BLRI Drawings Collection.

105 Stone used for rubble masonry in road construction along Section 2T came from an unspecified quarry, stone for masonry in road construction along Section 2U was obtained from cuts on the project. Lloyd M. Middleton, 'Final Construction Report, Blue Ridge Parkway, Project 2U1,' August 16 1963, p. 3; and 'Final Construction Report, Blue Ridge Parkway, Project 2T2,' February 4 1965, p. 3; Federal Highways Administration, Sterling, VA.

106 'Typical Tent Platform, Blue Ridge Parkway,' Drawing no. PKY-BR GEN-2287C, October 27 1953; and 'Mount Pisgah Campground - Details,' Drawing no. PKY-BR MP-3056A, April 20 1966; BLRI Drawings Collection.

107 Chief Ranger to Superintendent, 'Campground Design and Management Criteria,' November 23 1966, pp. 6-7; Folder 19; Box 4; Series 7; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

> Refuse receptacles may be of several kinds. It is possible, of course, to distribute throughout the picnic area garbage cans of commercial type, or oil drums converted to that purpose. However these may be painted, they are unsightly and subject to abuses by picnickers whose ideas of fun have perpetually a Hallowe'en tinge. They attract vermin and animals and are not proof against their depredations. They are tolerable only if regular and frequent collections of their accumulation are made.
>
> If these facilities are placed underground, certain features may be adopted which overcome many of the deficiencies of the surface type. They are hidden from view. They can be more positively flyproof. They are less an invitation to the pranksters and can be made safe from the raids of animals.[108]

Buried refuse receptacles with foot-lever operated covers were installed at campgrounds and picnic areas along the Parkway before and after the war, and they continued in use into the 1960s. However, above ground trash cans also came into use at an early date, the problem of their unsightly appearance being addressed by enclosing them in a housing of wooden boards.[109] In his 1966 memorandum on campground design, the Chief Ranger recommended the placement of above ground garbage cans along campground loop roads rather than the installation of buried receptacles. Bears were a problem at a number of campgrounds and picnic areas along the Parkway, and he argued that above ground receptacles could be made bear-proof by the installation of mailbox type covers.[110] This advice was heeded at Pisgah in both the campground and picnic areas, but no record has been found to indicate whether previous garbage cans were screened by wooden or metal housings.

In addition to the types of site furniture, the architecture of the comfort stations in the campground and picnic area is an indication that these areas were designed during Mission 66. Guided by the tenets of NPS rustic architecture, early comfort stations featured board and batten walls, wooden shake roofs, and flagstone entries. In the 1950s, more modern materials were introduced, but there continued to be an insistence that each building be carefully situated on its site.

> It is certainly desirable to make a minor structure blend or flow into the general earth contour and not become a unit merely placed upon a site. A philosophy we always struggle to attain is to create the visual impression that buildings are of the ground not on it.[111]

But, in 1959, following complaints in Congress about building costs in National Parks, Wirth circulated a memorandum concerning comfort stations requiring closer attention to costs and recommending the development of standard designs using modern materials. As a result, the Parkway's Roanoke Office entered into a series of discussions with the EODC about the number and size of comfort stations provided in recreation areas, and the use of modern materials in both the exterior and interior of each building. The aim was to develop a standard design for Parkway comfort stations that could be built within the recommended price limit of $11,000.00.[112] The result was a series of designs employing concrete blocks for walls, and corrugated asbestos and fiberglass for roofs. These designs were regularly updated to take advantage of new materials—particularly for interior fittings; and in a further effort to save costs, some of the construction was done by day labor rather than by contract.[113]

At Mt. Pisgah, four comfort stations were built in the campground and one in the picnic area, some of the work done by contract and some by day labor.[114] The standard design featured walls of

108 Good, ed., Park and Recreation Structures, Part II - Recreational and Cultural Facilities, p. 41.

109 'Housing for Garbage Cans,' Drawing no. PKY-BR GEN 2198, May 16 1942; BLRI Drawings Collection.

110 Chief Ranger to Superintendent, 'Campground Design and Management Criteria,' November 23 1966, p. 7.

111 J. B. Cabot, EODC, to Superintendent BLRI, 'Drawing no. PKY-BR-DP 2097 Doughton Park Comfort Station,' July 1 1955; Folder Blue Ridge Parkway 1954-1957; Box 8, EODC, General Correspondence 1946-1963; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region (Philadelphia PA.).

112 Superintendent BLRI, to Chief EODC, 'Comfort Station Design and Cost - Blue Ridge Parkway,' August 17 1959 and August 21 1959; Folder Blue Ridge Parkway 1958-1960; Box 9, EODC, General Correspondence 1946-1963; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region (Philadelphia PA.).

113 Ibid.

114 'Monthly Progress Report, Blue Ridge Parkway,' December 1966, p. 10; Folder BLRI 1965-1966; Box 049, EODC General Correspondence of

concrete block to about shoulder height, where there was a prominent sill, above which walls were of board and batten. On the roofs, the shallow pitch on each side of the central ridge was covered with corrugated sheets probably of asbestos with panels of fiberglass to act as skylights.[115] At the ends of the building, each entrance had a threshold of concrete and a wing wall of concrete block to provide a screen. The sills dividing the different wall materials and the large roof overhangs give the buildings strong horizontal lines. These were probably intended, in Cabot's words "to make a minor structure blend or flow into the general earth contour;" however, these buildings have a modern utilitarian appearance quite different from that of earlier, more rustic comfort stations.

## Trails and interpretive programs

At the same time as the campground and picnic area were being developed, a network of trails was constructed within the recreation area. These trails were intended primarily to connect new recreation facilities on either side of the Parkway road, but they would also be linked to some existing trails, most notably the one to the summit of Mt. Pisgah.

On the southeastern side of the Parkway road (Parkway Left), the 1946 master plan proposed a trail that would follow the line of an existing trail connecting the Pisgah Forest Inn at Flat Laurel Gap with the Vanderbilt Lodge at Buck Spring Gap. About half way between the Inn and the lodge the plan showed a spur leading to the summit of Little Bald from which excellent views could be enjoyed.[116] On the other side of the road (Parkway Right), the plan showed a new trail running from the campground and picnic area to the knob where the Vanderbilts had their vegetable garden, after which it joined the trail to the summit of Mt. Pisgah. Both trails were to run approximately parallel to the road but would stay some distance away so that walkers would be screened from vehicular traffic by oak woods and thickets of rhododendron and mountain laurel.

The 1965 master plan followed this scheme but incorporated some extensions and refinements that reflected changes in the arrangement of recreational facilities.[117] On the northwestern side of the Parkway, the trail was to run from Big Bald, at the southern edge of the recreation area, past the campground and the site of the proposed visitor center to the picnic area, which was now located on the site of the Vanderbilts' vegetable garden, and from there a path would lead to the trailhead for the ascent of Mt. Pisgah, located in the parking area above Buck Spring Tunnel at the northern limit of the recreation area.

On the southeastern side of the Parkway the planned trail was now named the Buck Spring Trail; it still followed the line of the old trail, but there were to be new connections across the Parkway road leading to the visitor center and the picnic area. This 1965 scheme was the one constructed in 1966 and 1967, with the exception of the connection across the road to the visitor center site. In accordance with established practice, most of the construction was done by crews of day laborers rather than by contractors, which allowed for field adjustment of designs as work progressed, without the need for revisions to drawing details.[118]

the Assistant Director, 1965-1968; RG 79; NACP.

115 'Comfort Station Mount Pisgah,' Westveer, August 1974; Negative #3582; BLRI Photograph Collection, BLRI HQ Asheville N.C. (Roof materials have been changed - the description is based on the photograph.)

116 'Roads and Trails Map, Mt. Pisgah, Part of the Master Plan for Blue Ridge Parkway,' Drawing no. PKY-BR-MP-2O5O, January 1946; BLRI Drawings Collection.

117 'Mt. Pisgah - General Development, Part of the Master Plan for Blue Ridge Parkway,' Drawing no. PKY-BR-MP-2O5O-F, February 3 1965; BLRI Drawings Collection.

118 'Monthly Progress Report, Blue Ridge Parkway,' December 1966, p. 6; Folder BLRI 1965-1966; Box 049, EODC General Correspondence of the Assistant Director, 1965-1968; RG 79; NACP.

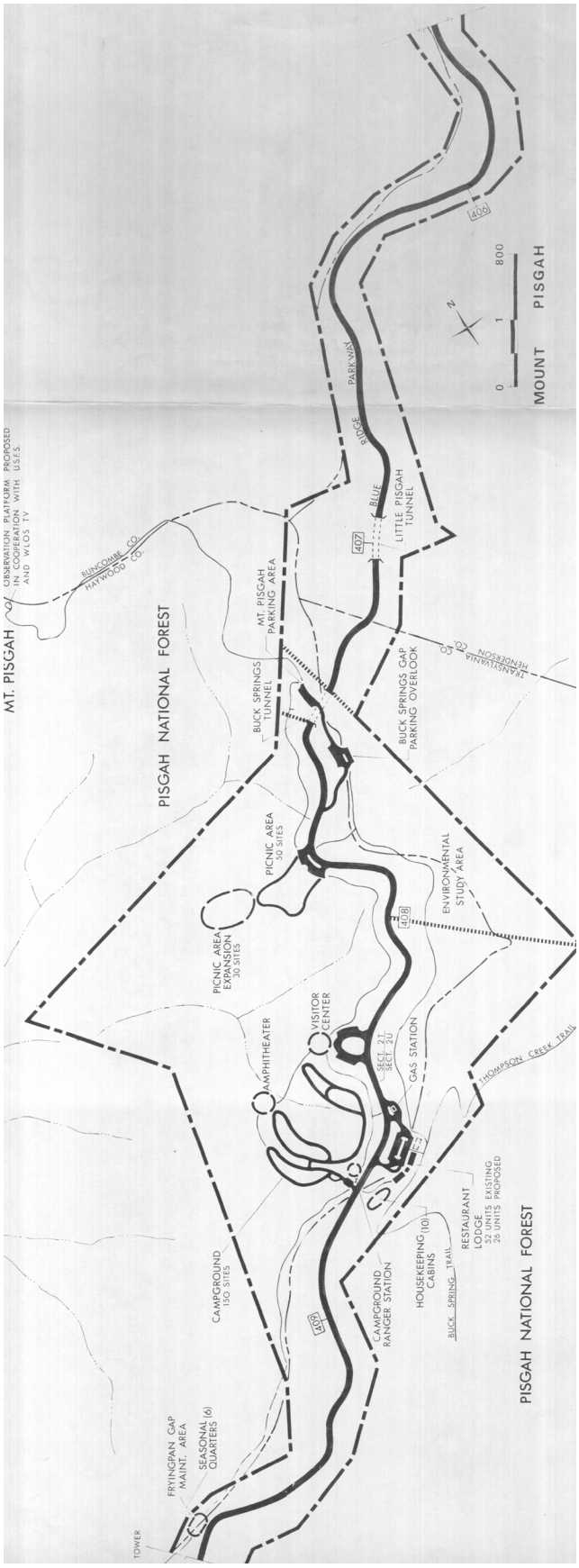



**Figure 7.** 1965 Master Plan

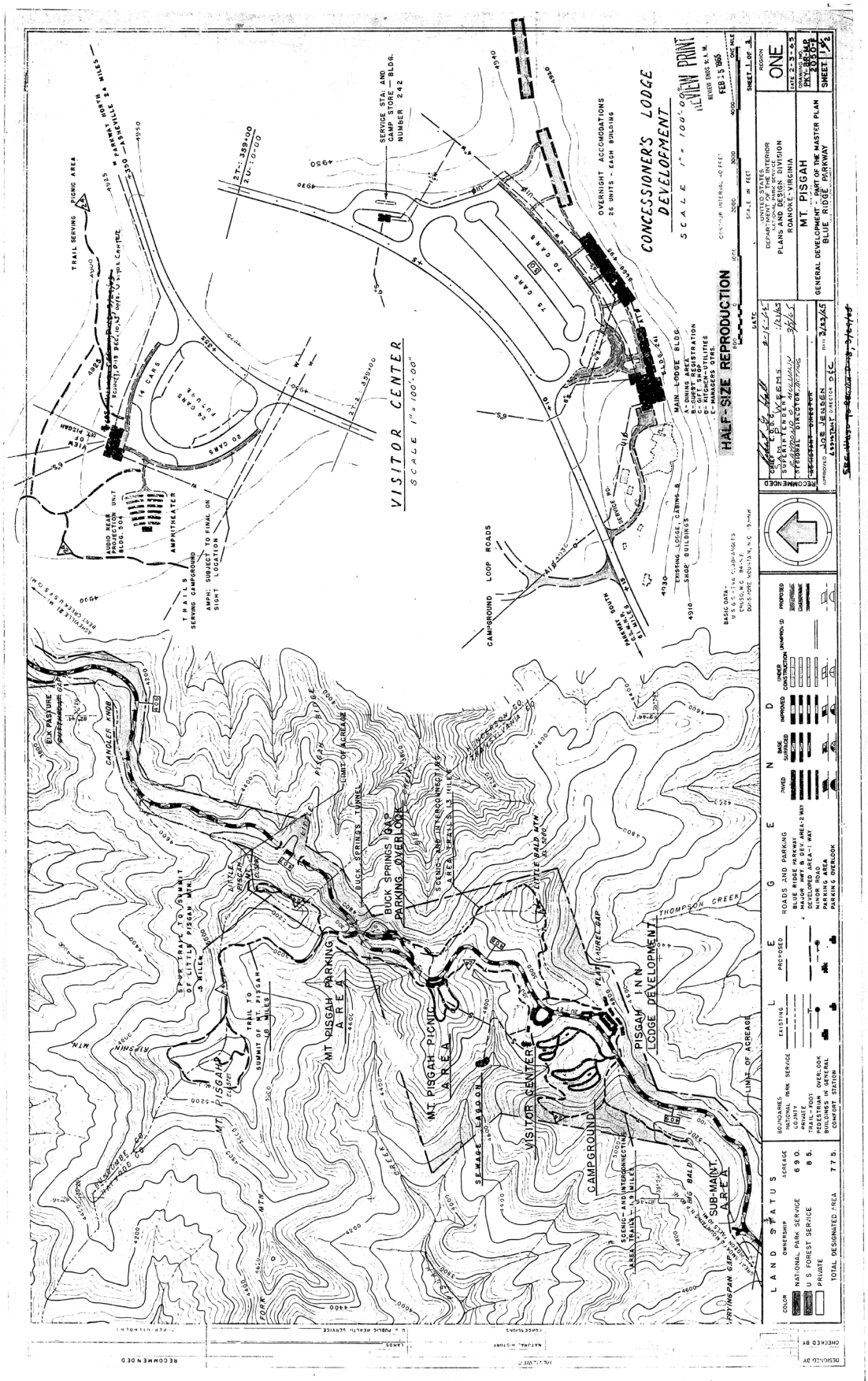



**Figure 8.** 1965 Master Plan with details of proposed Visitors Center and Concessioner's Lodge Development. (See full page in Appendix C, Exhibit26)

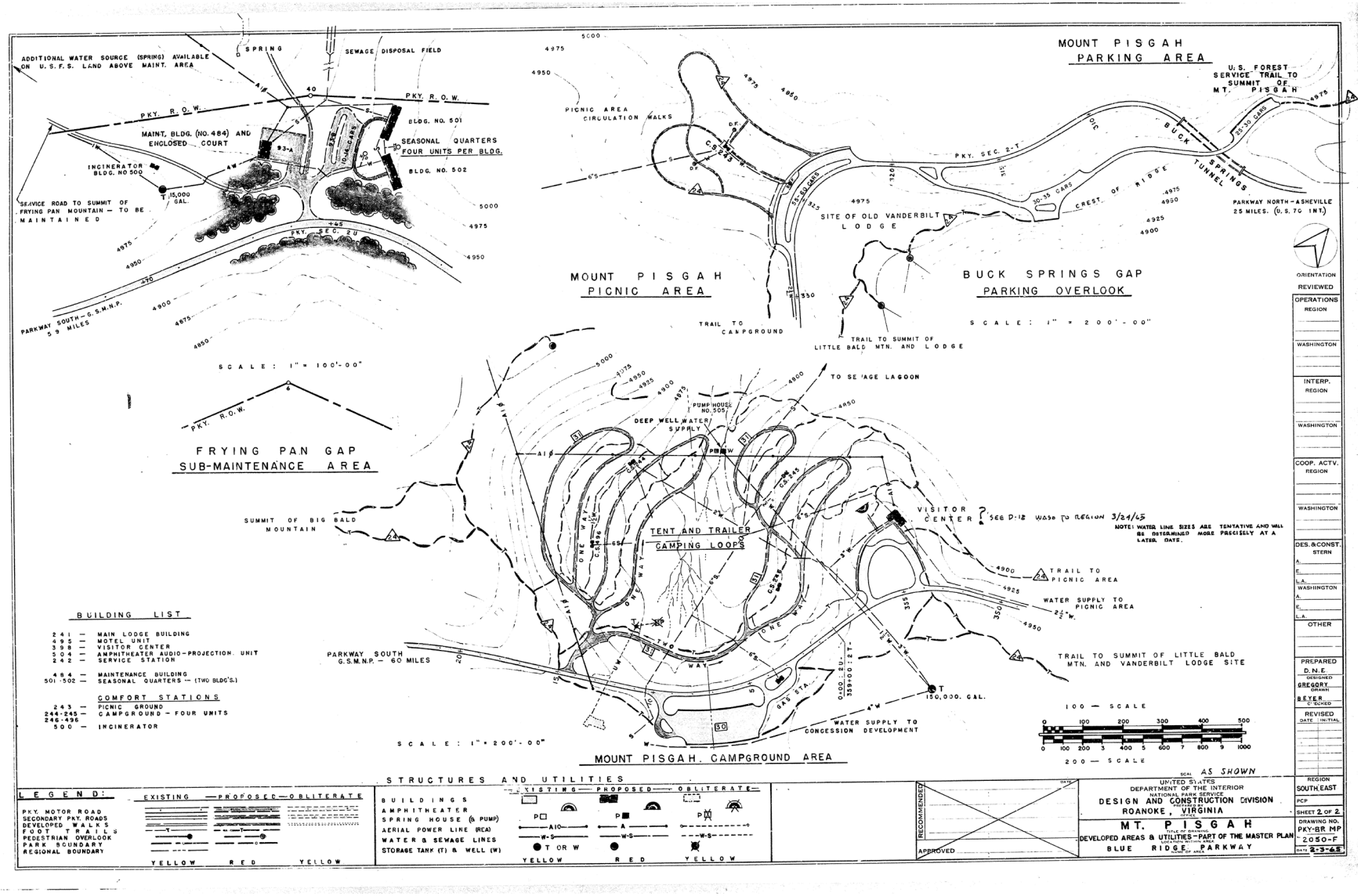



**Figure 9.** 1965 Master Plan Details of Frying Pan Gap Sub-Maintenance Area, Mount Pisgah Picnic Area, Mount Pisgah Campground Area, Buck Spring Gap Parking Overlook, and Mount Pisgah Parking Area.

The trail to the summit of Mt. Pisgah ran outside the boundaries of the recreation area, on land owned by the USFS. In 1946, Abbott explained the situation as follows:

> It may seem strange that we are not asking the USFS for Mt. Pisgah, the principal topographic feature and name of the area. Our only use of Pisgah is its scenic value and the trail to the top which already exists. It, therefore, appears unnecessary to ask for transfer of Pisgah proper.[119]

Pisgah's scenic value was compromised somewhat when a television tower was constructed on the summit in 1954; nevertheless, as the highest peak within the Pisgah range, it remained an attractive destination for hikers. The 1963 request for the transfer of USFS land to the Parkway did not include the summit of Pisgah, but there was an informal understanding that the NPS would assume responsibility for the management and maintenance of this Forest Service trail. This understanding was formalized in 1971.[120]

Other trails across USFS land that reached the Parkway on the ridgeline were not mentioned in any of the early master plans and do not appear to have played a significant role in the formulation of plans for the recreation area; nevertheless, they were to be of importance since connections to USFS trails provided more opportunities for challenging hikes than were available within the boundaries of the recreation area. One of the advantages of using the historic alignment of Buck Spring Trail was that it connected with several such trails on the southeast side of the ridge, including Laurel Mountain Trail and Pilot Rock Trail, both of which met Buck Spring Trail on or near Little Bald Mountain.

Buck Spring Trail also extended outside the boundaries of the recreation area, winding down into the forest south of Flat Laurel Gap. Not all potential connections to forest trails were retained however: on the northwest side of the Parkway there had been a Vanderbilt era wagon road that followed the course of Pisgah Creek down to Cruso in the valley of the Pigeon River, but the traces that remained of this old road within the recreation area were abandoned when the sewage treatment plant was developed beside the headwaters of the creek.

Trails within the recreation area were intended to play an important role in the interpretation program planned for the area. The 1965 Master Plan recommended the development of nature walks and a self-guided trail linked to the visitor center.

> Nature walks of one to three hours duration will be initiated in the vicinity, starting from the campground or visitor center. Existing trails will be used at first, but future trails should be planned to areas that will afford visitors the greatest appreciation of the natural scene being interpreted in the area. A self-guiding trail is needed, preferably starting at or near the visitor center, looping through the forests typical of the story being told in the center, and designed to carry the central theme from the visitor center to the actual site, allowing visitors to see and experience the things they read about in the center.[121]

Unfortunately, the centerpiece of the program — the visitor center — was never built and so these interpretive trails were never developed. However, this is not readily apparent to the visitor and does not detract appreciably from the overall integrity of the recreation area.The failure to build the visitor center may be attributed to the late date at which agreement was reached on the need for, and location of the center, for by that time it was too late to tap into Mission 66 funds.

During Mission 66, education and orientation programs — now referred to as 'interpretation' — enjoyed a new importance, justified as a way to enable visitors to better appreciate the value of park landscapes and resources and thereby to encourage more responsible use and protection.[122] Interpretation could take a variety of forms and occur in a variety of settings, but in most parks a new type of building — the visitor center — was

119 Abbott, 'Memorandum for the Superintendent,' May 10 1946; Folder 37; Box 4; Series 3; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

120 Granville B. Liles, Superintendent, to Del W. Thorsen, Forest Supervisor, August 6 1971; Folder 31; Box 4; Series 3; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

121 James M. Eden et al, 'Master Plan of Blue Ridge Parkway' Chapter 3, Management Programs Narrative, p. 48; Box 82; Series 57; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

122 Carr, pp. 184-190.

constructed to catch the attention of visitors upon arrival.

> Mission 66 studies indicated that the museums that existed in the parks were not adequately serving the public. The Park Service decided to change its visitor facilities from small, museum-type buildings to structures of open design that would include information and interpretive facilities, exhibits, and rest areas. The resulting 'visitor center' concept is being used widely in the parks ... . The more elaborate centers in larger parks have souvenir sales, food services, and complex audiovisual equipment; a few have small auditoriums.[123]

The Mission 66 "Prospectus for the Parkway" proposed a chain of nine visitor centers, each with its own particular educational focus. Although some of them would still explain aspects of the 'pioneer culture of the mountain people,' there was to be a new effort to widen the range of stories about the region; in particular more attention was to be given to its natural resources.

In 1958, Donald Robinson, the Park Naturalist, elaborating on an idea contained in the 1946 Master Plan, recommended that the visitor center planned for Mt. Pisgah should focus on 'Appalachian Forests.' Under this heading, the primary subjects would be; forest types and associated ecological features, plant succession and the climax forest, plant geography, ecological 'islands,' tree flowers and fruits, 'Know your trees,' and the establishment of the first National Forest. Additional subjects would include plant explorers and the story of 'Shortia - the lost flower.' [124]

Unfortunately, until the Vanderbilt tract was acquired there remained some uncertainty as to whether Mt. Pisgah was the right location for a visitor center, and once that tract was secured there was debate about where the best site was within the recreation area, with Wirth suggesting the possibility of using the Vanderbilt's lodge. The decision to demolish the lodge ended that uncertainty and the location recommended by Abbuehl in the 1961 Master Plan became the designated site.

> The visitor center will be relatively small, comparable to the one at Peaks of Otter, including a lobby, naturalist and ranger offices, a 150-seat auditorium, work and study collection room, visitor rest rooms, a sales and information counter, and an exhibit room containing exhibits ... centered around the theme of the Appalachian forests (this should be coordinated with the U. S. Forest Service visitor center in Pink Beds prior to final planning).[125]

Coordination with the USFS became an issue when the Washington Office withheld approval of the visitor center pending exploration of the possibility of combining it with the one being planned at the 'Cradle of Forestry.' Robinson protested that the USFS visitor center had already been planned and programmed without reference to the Parkway, that the stories to be told were quite distinct, and that the location of the 'Cradle of Forestry' was too far removed to expect most visitors to the Parkway to include it in their tour.[126] Nevertheless, a meeting was held with representatives of the USFS to discuss this and other areas of potential cooperation. A brief discussion of Mt. Pisgah confirmed Robinson's points, and most of the meeting was devoted to other issues including the proposed extension of the Parkway into Georgia.[127]

In December 1965, the Washington Office withdrew its objections to the building of a visitor center at Mt. Pisgah. The visitor center was placed at the top of the list of buildings in the Parkway's funding priorities for 1968; however, it was too late to take advantage of Mission 66 funds and it was never built.[128] The proposed site is marked by a 'no

123 Wirth, Parks, Politics and the People, 1980, pp. 269-270.

124 'Blue Ridge Parkway Museum Prospectus,' January 17 1958, pp. 21-22; Folder BLRI; Box 21 Mission 66, NPS Philadelphia District General Correspondence Files, 1954-1956; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region (Philadelphia PA.).

125 Donald H. Robinson, 'Blue Ridge Parkway Interpretive Plan' April 1964, p. 33; Folder 6; Box 51; Series 36; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

126 Superintendent, BLRI, to Regional Director, 'Deletion of Mt. Pisgah Visitor Center from Master Plan, Blue Ridge,' April 26 1965; Folder 28; Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

127 Orrie W. Hanson, USFS, to The Record, 'Co-operation - National Park Service,' August 2 1965; Folder 21; Box 13; Series 10; RG 5; and Regional Director, Southeast Region, to Director, 'Master Plan, Blue Ridge Parkway,' November 2 1965; Folder 30; Box 10; Series 8; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

128 The cost of the Visitor Center was estimated in 1964 at over $119,000: Weems to Regional Director, 'Project Construction Program - Priority

name' parking area on the right hand side of the Parkway road midway between the picnic area and the campground.

Although Mt. Pisgah lacks a visitor center, one part of the interpretative program was eventually realized, though not at the scale originally envisioned. The 1964 Interpretive Plan called for a 250-seat amphitheater, located beside the visitor center and close to the campground. Amphitheaters were planned for areas along the Parkway where the potential use was so large that campfire programs would lose the proper atmosphere and where amplification of a speaker's voice would be necessary.[129]

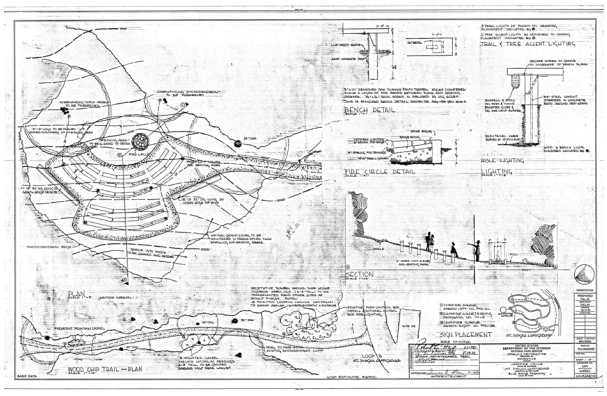



**Figure 10.** 1972 amphitheater plan. (See full page in Appendix C, Exhibit 18)

In 1971, a master plan called for an even larger amphitheater, but the next year drawings were prepared for a modest campfire circle with seating for not more than 100 persons, and no elaborate audio-visual equipment.[130] The reduction in scale reduced the cost considerably and funds were found to allow the campfire circle to be built next to Loop B of the campground in a clearing in the oak woodland surrounded by rhododendrons. With its modest scale, simple stone fire circle, and oak plank seats, the design closely resembles some of the circles illustrated by Good in his 1938 catalog of rustic park structures, with the exception of the asphalt ground-cover over the entire area.[131]

## Changes to the recreation area in the 1970s and 1980s

Master Plans continued to call for the construction of a visitor center to complete the development envisioned in Mission 66, but, after construction of the campfire circle, few changes occurred in the recreation area in the years leading up to the completion of the Parkway in 1987.

The one important addition was the recreation of the Vanderbilt's Shut-In Trail as part of a long-distance trail system. In 1977 a State Scenic Trail Study recommended the establishment of a Mount Mitchell-Asheville-Shining Rock Wilderness Trail, as part of an effort to establish new long-distance trails and take some of the pressure off the Appalachian Trail.

The following year, the NPS and USFS agreed to cooperate in the development of this trail. Youth Conservation Corps enrollees and volunteer groups including Carolina Mountain Club members were to do most of the clearance and construction.[132] It was agreed that the stretch southwest of Asheville would follow the historic line of the Shut-In Trail wherever possible, and old rock retaining walls and built up grades would be preserved. Although the Vanderbilts rode horses on their trail, it was decided that it would now be for walkers only, and since many people would not want to walk all the way up the mountain, there would be multiple connections to parking areas along the Parkway. The parking area at the start of the trail to the summit of Mt. Pisgah became the trailhead for the recreated Shut-In Trail, which

Lists - Blue Ridge - 1968 Priority List,' September 3 1964; Folder Blue Ridge Parkway, 07/1964 - 12/1964; Box 64, EODC, General Correspondence, 1952-1966; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region (Philadelphia PA.).

129 Donald H. Robinson, 'Blue Ridge Parkway Interpretive Plan,' April 1964, pp. 5 and 34; Folder 6; Box 51; Series 36; RG 7; BLRI Archives.

130 'Campfire Circle, Mt. Pisgah Campground,' Drawing no. 601-60090, August 23 1972; BLRI Drawings Collection.

131 Good, ed., Park and Recreation Structures, Part II - Recreational and Cultural Facilities, pp. 199-200.

132 'Mount Mitchell - Shining Rock State Scenic Trail Study,' January 24 1977; Folder 1; Box 28; Series 21; RG 5; and USFS and NPS, Interim Report and Agreement on a Proposed Mount Mitchell to Mount Pisgah Foot Trail System, September 1978; Folder 2; Box 28; Series 21; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

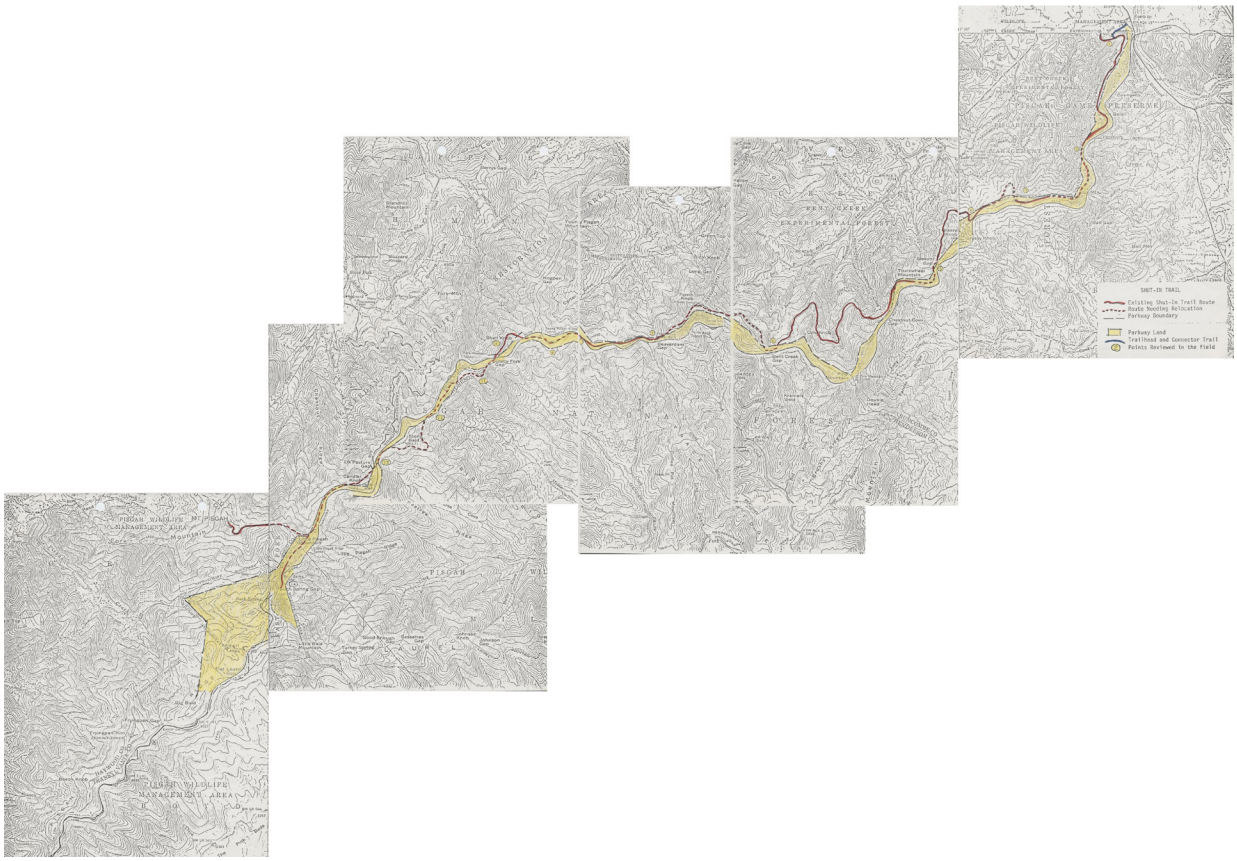


**Figure 11.** Shut in trail. (See full page in Appendix C, Exhibit 29)

eventually became part of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail, a National Recreation Trail.[133]

The most controversial change in the recreation area was the demolition of the original buildings at the Pisgah Inn. Superintendent Gary Everhardt announced his decision to remove the buildings in 1986, but controversy delayed demolition for several years. The decision was in line with NPS thinking during Mission 66, but the controversy showed that public attitudes towards the preservation of original buildings had changed.

The concession contract awarded in 1963 had called for the construction of new buildings and stated that these were intended to replace the original ones. The original buildings — the main lodge, four cottages, and some outbuildings — were to be removed at the discretion of the Secretary of the Interior, but with due regard for the operational requirements of the business. When the new Inn opened in 1966, the concessioners were granted permission to use the original buildings as employee lodging on a temporary basis. This arrangement was eventually extended for the 20-year duration of the concession contract; however, when a new contract was negotiated in 1983, it was specified that the use of the original buildings as employee quarters was to end in 1986 because the condition of the structures had deteriorated to a point where safety was a concern.[134]

There followed prolonged discussions between Parkway managers, the NPS Southeastern Regional Office in Atlanta, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the concessioners over the fate of the buildings.[135] There were sharp differences of

133 Gary Everhardt, 'Blue Ridge Parkway 1984 Report,' p. 8; BLRI Library.

134 Page Pless, 'Pisgah National Forest Inn: An Historic Overview,' April 27 1982, p. 6; BLRI Library; and NPS Press Release, 'Environmental Assessment to Construct Pisgah Inn Employee Quarters Available,' 1986; Folder 47; Box 63; Series 46; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

135 See for example: Gary Everhardt to William S. Price Jr., Director Division of Archives and History, 'Options for Action at The Old Pisgah Inn,' September 3 1986; Folder 47; Box 63; Series 46; RG 5; BLRI Archives.

opinion, and considerable interest in the debate amongst the general public, which was reflected in local newspapers. In January 1986, the State Historic Preservation Officer recommended listing of the buildings on the National Register. The argument for eligibility rested on two criteria:

> A. The Pisgah National Forest Inn is uniquely associated with the early history of the Pisgah National Forest and, later, the development of the Blue Ridge Parkway.
>
> C. The rustic architecture of the inn is significant both as an extremely successful wedding of site and structure and as a rare western North Carolina example of a style popular across America early in this century.[136]

Nevertheless, later the same year, with the backing of the Regional Office, Everhardt decided the buildings would have to be removed, arguing that 70 to 80% of the existing fabric would have to be replaced because the structures were so deteriorated.[137] Because of public opposition, the decision was tabled to allow further discussion, but after a reexamination of alternatives, and a fruitless search for sources of funding for the preservation of at least parts of the main building, the buildings were removed.[138]

Meanwhile, new employee quarters were constructed in the woods on the slope above the gas station and campers' shop at the northern end of the parking lot beside the new inn. Although largely hidden from public view by vegetation, the dormitories were designed in a style compatible with the motel units of the inn, by the same firm of architects. Construction began in 1987 and was completed in time for the opening of the 1988 summer season.[139]



**Figure 12.** Employee dormitories

136 Regional Director, SERO, to Associate Director, Cultural Resources, WASO, 'Request for Determination of Eligibility on Pisgah Inn, Blue Ridge Parkway,' May 27 1986; Folder 48; Box 63, Series 46, RG 5; BLRI Archives.

137 Regional Director, SERO, to Associate Director, Cultural Resources, WASO, 'Proposal to Remove Old Pisgah Inn,' November 21 1986; Folder 49; Box 63, Series 46, RG 5; BLRI Archives; and 'Superintendent's Annual Narrative Report, 1987,' p. 17; BLRI Library.

138 See for example of discussion: Everhardt to Judge Cecil J. Hill, February 23 1987; Folder 50; Box 64, Series 46, RG 5; and Regional Historian, to Associate Regional Director, SERO, 'Memorandum - Trip to Blue Ridge Parkway for Meeting on Pisgah Inn,' April 23 1987; Folder 52; Box 64, Series 46, RG 5; BLRI Archives.

139 Foy and Lee Associates, 'Dormitories for the Pisgah Inn, Blue Ridge Parkway (As Built)' Drawing no. MP 601-70015C; BLRI Drawing Collection.

# Chapter Five: Existing Conditions

## Introduction and Methodology

This chapter describes the existing conditions of the cultural landscape within Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area (MPRA) study boundaries from mile marker 407.6 to 409.6. To aid in the description of various site features and their locations along the corridor, an overall site map is included as a reference at the end of the chapter. Also included are diagrams that show the Buck Spring Lodge Overlook and site and the Pisgah Inn area.

The study area was visited numerous times during the course of this contract. Photographs and field notes were taken and compiled which served as the source for the baseline record included in this report. These photographs and notes also create a resource for the systematic mapping of the landscape from 2010-2011 going forward. Record keeping is a process in landscape preservation that ensures that changes to a cultural landscape are documented in a consistent and timely manner, so that historians, planners, and park managers of the future will have the benefit of the existing record at a given point in time.

The existing conditions of the site are described in terms of thirteen character-defining features where applicable; natural systems and features, spatial organization, land use, cultural traditions, cluster arrangement, circulation, topography, vegetation, buildings and structures, views and vistas, constructed water features, small-scale features, and archeological sites. Photographs are used to illustrate the conditions as they existed at the time the photographs were taken in 2010 and 2011. The Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area (MPRA) is considered as a whole, and then broken down into four separate units: campground, Pisgah Inn complex, picnic grounds, and Buck Spring Gap overlook.

## Mt Pisgah Recreation Area

The MPRA of the Blue Ridge Parkway has a variety of amenities that appeal to a broad range of visitors. Driving along the area that is the subject of this Cultural Landscape Report, the road is consistent with the overall Parkway's gently curving automobile circulation character.

Developed in an era when the use of motorcars was on the increase, the formative concepts for the Parkway were seen as a way to increase tourism, give aid to an area of the country that had typically experienced high poverty rates, and allow travelers in larger numbers to experience the great outdoors. As the visitor drives, there are periodic overlooks to park, stretch their legs, and take in the scenery highlighted by the designers at the National Park Service.



**Figure 1.** View from Parkway over Pisgah National Forest.

When visitors enter the MPRA, the first choice they have is the option of camping. If that is not the way they like to recreate, they can continue to the Pisgah Inn, along with its restaurant, rooms, and a small convenience store with ice and snacks. If the visitor has packed lunch, the picnic area provides a place to spread out their bounty or cook the items they are serving. Lastly, one of the more iconic overlooks at Buck Spring Gap provides plenty of parking and a trail that leads up to the lodge ruins with yet another large overlook to view the scenery out over Pisgah National Forest with Asheville in the far distance.

Each of these areas fulfills a different mode of recreation or rest for visitors, and they are all connected by a system of trails that provides further recreation and reconnection with nature.

## Natural systems and features

Mt. Pisgah is a mountain within the Blue Ridge Mountain Range, in western North Carolina southwest of Asheville, NC. The Blue Ridge Mountains are located within the Appalachian Mountains, part of the larger physiographic province which is the primary mountain range in the eastern United States. They serve as the major dividing line between the drainage regime to the east that flows to the Atlantic Ocean and the drainage regime to the west that flows to the Mississippi River and ultimately to the Gulf of Mexico.

The range extends from north Georgia at its southernmost origin, and ends in Pennsylvania to the northeast. Historically, the Appalachian Mountains were the initial limiting factor in westward expansion of the United States, acting as a physical and legal barrier to settlers who chose to stay within the piedmont and coastal plains of the eastern United States during most of the colonial and early American period. Only later—as treaties were signed with Native American tribes and as the US government purchased substantial areas west of the Appalachians, such as the Louisiana Purchase, did settlers stream over the mountains to the inland areas of the country and on to the Midwest and West.

The most prominent natural feature of the recreation area is the ridge on the side of the mountain which forms the spine of the Parkway. High relative altitude provides the perspective for the scenic views to the east and southeast that are the reason the designers chose the mountain route for the Parkway location. The recreation area's topography provides a variety of experiences consisting mostly of steep, sloping terrain with a few relatively flat meadow-like areas that are utilized for development.



**Figure 2.** View from Mt Pisgah east over Pisgah National Forest.

## Spatial organization

The recreation area is located along a linear corridor running southwest to northeast from the overlook and trail head at Frying Pan Gap to the Buck Spring Lodge overlook and finally on through Buck Spring tunnel to Asheville. See foldout at end of chapter for overall layout of the recreation area.

The first recreational opportunity within the study area is Funnel Top parking area, located at approximately mile marker 409.6. This parking area and overlook provides a panoramic view of area mountains, as well as a view of the Pisgah Inn, positioned on the edge of the ridge to the left as the visitor stands at the overlook.

The next recreational site is on the west side of the parkway road - Mt. Pisgah Campground. The campground is laid out in four loops: A and B have been set up for travel trailers, and loops C and D are designated strictly for tents. Each site at the campground has several common features; a fire pit, a picnic table, and a lantern pole. In each loop of the campground there are comfort stations in central locations which house restrooms. The campground is also nestled on two sides of a high mountain bog. There are several trails that are

accessible from this area—a trail back up to the Pisgah camp store, the Frying Pan Gap trail, and the trail to the picnic area.




**Figure 3.** Trail head for Frying Pan hike located at entrance to the campground.

Traveling north from the campground entrance, the next development on parkway land is the camp store and Pisgah Inn. The driver turns east into the parking lot serving the Inn and up to the registration desk. There is also a large restaurant at the Inn cantilevered on the side of the mountain with large windows to view the scenery to the east. The Inn has several buildings which will be discussed in the section in this chapter on Pisgah Inn. The buildings which make up the Pisgah Inn are constructed along the edge of the mountain facing the French Broad River Valley and look out towards the various mountain ranges in the distance. Hidden at the southern end of the restaurant complex is a maintenance area with sheds for equipment, employee parking, and a delivery drive for restaurant and hotel supplies.

From the parking lot one can access trails back north to Buck Spring or go south on the Buck Spring Trail, which traverses the side of the mountain down to Highway 276. At the northern end of the parking lot is a convenience store where campers and visitors can purchase ice and sundry items. Additionally, there is a private gravel drive just past the convenience store that serves the dormitory cabins for employees of the Pisgah Inn.

Traveling north from the Pisgah Inn complex and convenience store, there is another turnoff and two large parking areas. This was originally intended to be the location of a visitor center planned during the Mission 66 era, but it was never constructed. As of January of 2010, this overlook is called "Flat Laurel Gap Overlook." From here, visitors can access the trail that runs parallel to the Parkway that connects the campground to the picnic area.

Driving further north, the next area available to the visitor is the picnic area. The parking lot for this area is just off the Parkway to the west. From this parking lot visitors can access the picnic area as well as trails to the campground and Mt. Pisgah. The picnic area is located at a higher elevation from the parking lot and Parkway, and therefore is not visible from either. The visitor must walk up a small paved trail a distance of roughly 100 yards to arrive at this more secluded location. The walk is also handicapped accessible. The narrow paved trail to the site broadens once you reach the actual picnic grounds.

Driving from southwest to northeast along the Parkway, the last major area of interest is Buck Spring Gap, at mile marker 407.6. This area has a spur road to the east that enters a parking lot containing approximately 36 spaces, overlooking Asheville to the northeast and up to the Mt. Pisgah Summit to the northwest. From this parking area the visitor can access trails to the peak of Mt. Pisgah, Little Bald, Laurel Mountain, Pilot Rock, and the former site of the Buck Spring lodge. The trail southwest leads past the Buck Spring site to the Pisgah Inn. There are a few significant remnant features of Buck Spring lodge remaining, especially the foundations and retaining walls that enclosed the Vanderbilt's parking/garage complex, and some stone retaining walls outlining distinct areas of cabins associated with the original lodge.

## Land Use

The land within the recreation area is divided into each of the features that visitors can access during their stay: the campground, Pisgah Inn, picnic area, Buck Spring Overlook, and the trails that connect all of these features.

Outside of the recreation units, land use along the parkway is scenic in nature, taking advantage of the high elevations of the parkway road, alternating between mountains and valleys, with forested lands on each side of the parkway. The immediate viewshed is primarily forested lands that are part of Pisgah National Forest and distant viewsheds consisting of mountain ranges to the south and east.



**Figure 4.** Funnel Top parking area.



**Figure 5.** View from Funnel Top looking east.

## Cultural Traditions

The different components of the recreation area comprise an overall experience that exemplifies the goals of the NPS in its parkways. Scenic overlooks, views and vistas for the driver, picnic grounds, sleeping accomodations at the campground and Inn, and hiking along the trails all combine to provide a range of options for the typical visitor. While some of the other units along the Parkway highlight a particular aspect of Appalachian rural life, the MPRA concentrates on rest and recreation.

## Cluster Arrangement

The different recreation and sleeping choices within the MPRA form a recreational cluster that approximates many of the choices that visitors seek to experience at NPS properties.

## Circulation

### Auto

The circulation is primarily linear with an overlay of flowing curves that hug the side of the mountains along the ridge and provide views to the east across the gaps and valleys to various mountains in the distance. The Parkway serves as the main access road that connects the individual elements that make up the MPRA; the campground, Inn, overlooks, the picnic grounds, and the Buck Spring Gap parking area and overlook. Each element has parking and interior circulation for auto access.



**Figure 6.** Parkway with a view of Mt. Pisgah on the far left.

### Pedestrian

Each unit or element within the recreation area provides adequate internal pedestrian paths to serve each of the amenities within the unit.

The trails connect the different units, so it is difficult to choose one element and assign a trail to that unit, since the trails go between units. Therefore, the authors chose to include all of the

trails in the section of existing conditions that covers the overall MPRA. The primary named trails are Buck Spring Trail, Campground to Picnic Trail, Frying Pan Trail, Shut-In Trail, and Mt. Pisgah Trail.




**Figure 7.** Trail system map located in the campground area.

With all of the trails in the study area, many of the surfacing materials used for the trails and stairs are used repeatedly and create a sense of continuity throughout the system.

### Buck Spring Trail

Located between the Pisgah Inn and the Buck Spring overlook, the Buck Spring Trail faces east looking out over the valleys, gaps, and mountains in the distance. Along the location of the Inn, the trail is relatively level, with a slight rise as the visitor moves north along the edge of the ridge. After the last of the Inn buildings, the trail enters a wooded area and begins a change in elevation with the worker's housing visible to the left. Just past the dormitories, the trail levels off and maintains a consistent elevation for most of the rest of the distance to the Buck Spring site.



**Figure 8.** Buck Spring Trail Head downslope to the east from the back of Pisgah Inn.

The views along the trail vary from inward views framed by the native vegetation and overarching branches of rhododendron, to openings along the edge that reveal distant features and mountains. Various wildflowers are seen along the trail in the spring, summer, and fall, and add greatly to the interest of hiking the trail.



**Figure 9.** View from Buck Spring Trail



**Figure 10.** Wildflowers along Buck Spring Trail in the fall.



**Figure 11.** Butterfly on wildflowers along trail in early fall

The trail surface is paved with various materials, including mulch, rock, and grass. Elevation change is handled through stone steps and small timbers, typically of cedar or spruce, placed in the face of the path to stabilize soil and provide secure footing.



**Figure 12.** Grassy trail surface



**Figure 13.** Wood step along trail to help control erosion.



**Figure 14.** Wood step along trail to help control erosion and provide footing.

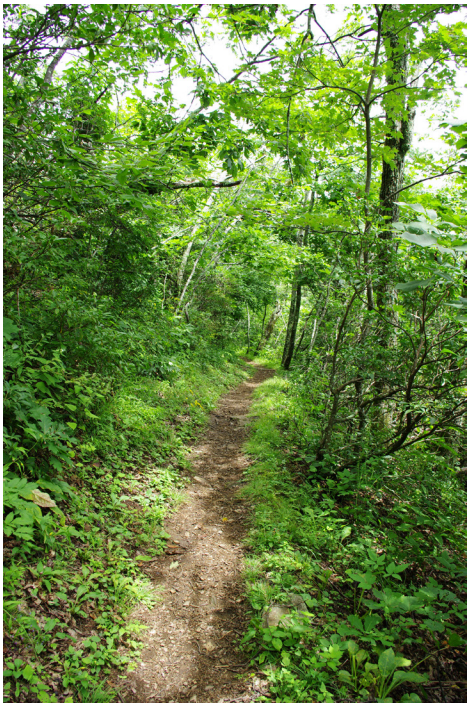


**Figure 15.** Typical dirt trail surface



**Figure 16.** Natural Stone arranged as stairs in a steeper area along the trail.

The trail opens up once it reaches the area where George Vanderbilt constructed Buck Spring Lodge with large open views to the east. After pausing to admire the scenery, the hiker then begins a steady descent down to the parking area at Buck Spring Gap Overlook.



**Figure 17.** View from Buck Spring Trail into distance.



**Figure 18.** View near Buck Spring Lodge site

### Campground to Picnic Area Trail

This trail begins on the northern edge of the campground area and is framed on each side by a low overstory of rhododendron punctuated with a few large trees. Just as with other trails in the MPRA, the surface materials are dirt, mulch, fallen leaves and twigs, steps made with small cedar logs, and stone.



**Figure 19.** Trail head at campground

A spur departs from the trail up to the side of the Blue Ridge Parkway and crosses over to the store at the northern end of the parking lot at Pisgah Inn. The stairs here are cut stone.



**Figure 20.** Stone steps that lead to the Pisgah Inn convenience store.

The trail continues beyond the steps with undulating topography before entering a section completely framed on the sides and directly overhead with rhododendron. Small intermittent creeks are crossed by simple wooden bridges and many areas are criss-crossed with the exposed upper portion of tree roots which serve to stabilize

the pathways. The trail daylights at the edge of the parking lot that serves the picnic area, adjacent to the Parkway.



**Figure 21.** Wooden bridge over small intermittent creek.



**Figure 22.** Moss covered tree roots along trail

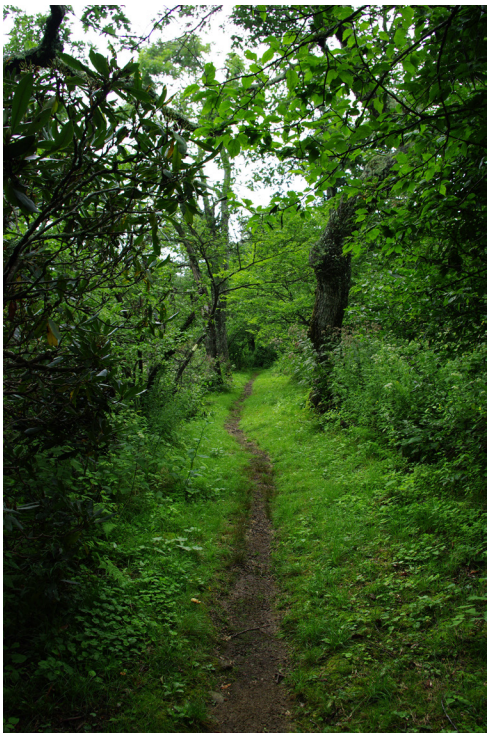


**Figure 23.** Dirt and grass path trail

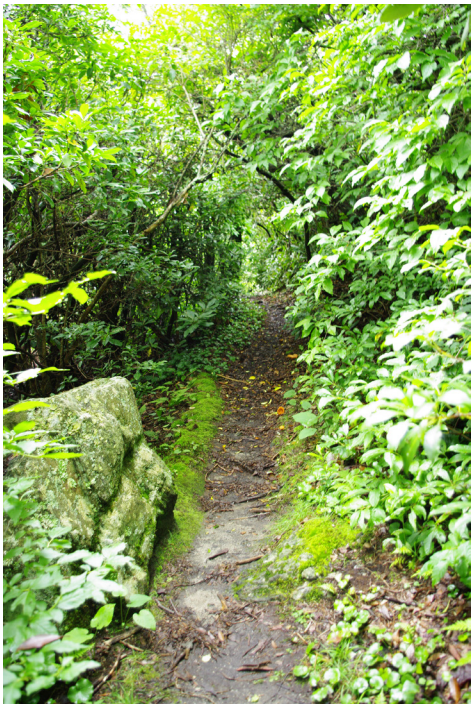


**Figure 24.** Trail narrows and goes under and through low canopy of the rhododendron

### Frying Pan Trail

This trail runs from the southern edge of the campground to a spur that crosses the Parkway to a parking area and overlook called Funnel Top, and then turns northwest up to the Frying Pan Fire Tower. The character of the surrounding landscape is open meadow, wildflowers, woodland ferns, with the over story more dense and shadier as the trail progresses. As the trail turns up to the fire tower, it becomes much more enclosed. The rest of this trail is outside of the study boundaries as it rises topographically to the base of the fire tower.

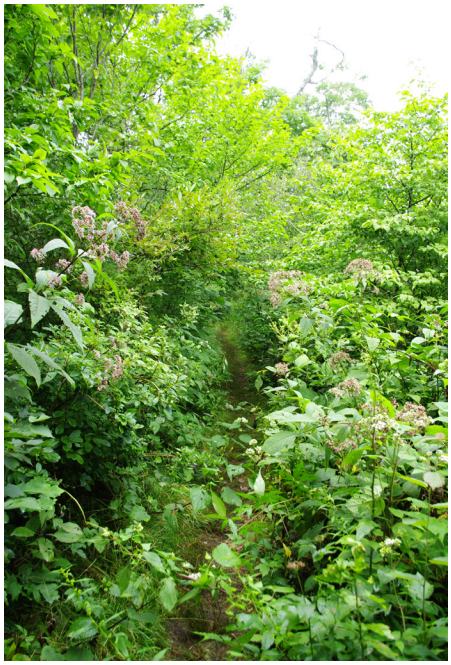


**Figure 25.** Dense understory vegetation and high canopy along the trail

### Shut-In Trail

The Shut-In Trail is part of a larger NPS trail called the "Mountains-To-Sea" trail. According to the web site of the Friends of the Mountain-To-Sea Trail, the trail "stretches 1,150 miles from the Great Smoky Mountains to the Outer Banks" (http://www.ncmst.org/). This elevates the importance of this trail because of its connections between the mountains to the west and the Atlantic Ocean to the east. The trail follows a route similar to the one Vanderbilt used to transport people and materials from his home outside Asheville to Buck Spring Lodge, his hunting camp.




**Figure 26.** Trail marker

The Shut-In-Trail has the most varied topography and scenery of all the trails, partly due to its length within the MPRA. It is the oldest trail within the system, developed in the 1890s. It is not known whether or not it was constructed along the same route as trails developed by Native-Americans.

Steps of stone, small cedar logs and dimensional square timbers serve to provide stabilization and footing on stretches of the trail that have varied topography.



**Figure 27.** Stone used to create stair case to traverse steep elevations.



**Figure 28.** Cedar logs used for less severe terrain along the trail.



**Figure 29.** Bench near Buck Spring Gap at the top of the trail.



**Figure 30.** View out from the bench in the image above.

### Mt Pisgah Trail

This trail begins at the northern edge of the Buck Spring Gap Overlook parking lot. Most of the trail is on Forest Service land. Since this trail goes to the top of Mt. Pisgah, it is the steepest of the trails in the recreation area.




**Figure 31.** Mount Pisgah Trail marker.

The trail first crosses the top of the Buck Spring Tunnel and then begins a rapid ascent up the side of the mountain. At the top is an overlook and a large television tower visible from many directions.



**Figure 32.** Steep topography with distant views along the trail.



**Figure 33.** View from the top of Mt. Pisgah

## Topography

The topography of the Parkway itself is relatively level, with gentle rises and falls as the driver traverses this section of the Parkway. Each side of the roadway varies from steep rock faces to flat areas that provide the setting for the Inn, the Buck Spring Gap site, picnic grounds, and various overlooks.

The study boundaries of this project are located in the Balsam Mountains along the Pisgah Ridge with an elevation at or exceeding 5,000 feet above sea level. The topography is typical for the ridge of a mountain–steep, rocky terrain with deep valleys, and periodic but infrequent flat meadows. Most of this section still retains its natural topography with few exceptions. The major areas that have been modified by topographic changes are the paved surfaces (road ways, turnouts, and parking), Pisgah Inn Buildings, the picnic area and the Buck Spring Gap area. Most of the surrounding terrain is believed to be at its late nineteenth and early twentieth century topography and the form it had after its purchase by the Vanderbilts. Following acquisition of the Pisgah lands by the Vanderbilts, the forests and open areas were actively managed to prevent the severe erosion that occurred earlier in the nineteenth century during timber operations. The degradation of the land was caused by poor management by both farmers and by timber interests.

## Vegetation

Plant life along this section of the Parkway is diverse and unique. Within the two-mile corridor, the plant communities range from hardwoods, hemlock, and spruce, to those of the Flat Laurel Bog, which is mostly shrubs and grass wetlands.

The forested area around Buck Spring is:

> ...an unusual mixture of hardwoods, hemlock, and spruce. Red Spruce and Canadian hemlock are rather prominent along the stream and Yellow birch, Beech, and Red maple become more prominent on the higher sites. Shrubs include Purple rhododendron, Mountain holly, and Willow.[1]

Frying Pan Gap presents another unique forested area. Located around mile post 409.3, which is just south of the Pisgah campground, this forested area of the Appalachians is thought to be one of the most diverse plant communities in southern Appalachia. Northern Red Oaks are prominent in this section, along with more than 80 other species of plant life. The study area contains a stand of Roan rattlesnake-root, listed on the national list of endangered species.[2] An especially interesting factor affecting the diversity of plant species is the frequency of fog and cloud cover at ground level. "Fogs are frequent and cloud-forest terminology might apply to the site."[3] The shroud of frequent fogs contributes approximately 40% of the annual precipitation for the area.

## Buildings and Structures

The buildings and structures are covered in the sections that follow according to their locations within the recreation area.

1 Govus and Pittilo, 407.9a.

2 Govus and Pittillo, 409.3a.

3 Govus and Pittillo, 409.3a.

## Views and Vistas

Most views and vistas are covered within the sections that follow, but the general views to the east are across the gaps and valleys to distant mountains, and most to the west look up to mountain sides or down into the high mountain bog within the picnic area.

## Constructed Water Features

There are no constructed water features that serve as visitor destinations.

## Small-Scale Features

A central charge given the authors at the beginning of the project was to document in detail small-scale elements within the MPRA. These are recorded in the appendices at the end of the report in Appendices A and B. Most of these small-scale features are located in the picnic area and the campground.

Other than the picnic area and campground, there are a variety of small scale features that appear along the Parkway. These features include signage, site furnishings, and pathway elements.
There is an excellent level of consistency exhibited among the signs both along the Parkway and throughout the trail systems. The typical brown NPS metal road signs locate the various sites, while carved wooden signage marks the trail systems.
The small-scale features in the trail systems utilize local materials - usually stone or wooden steps. Stone stairs are used in steeper and narrower pathways. The wooden stair types are constructed mostly of natural wood and this method is used in those areas that are less steep, with wider and deeper treads between each step. However, both possess a rustic quality, blending in with the surrounding forest landscape and adding to the visitor's experience as they traverse the trails. Sometimes steps are made from square timbers, but this is the exception.

## Archeological Sites

The entire recreation area has the potential to yield artifacts that relate to Native American occupation and use, but there is no evidence of any particular concentrations within the recreation area.

Most of the land had been harvested for timber prior to the Vanderbilt occupation. While archaeology would have been valuable during the construction of the Parkway, there are no existing reports at NPS headquarters that the authors are aware of that point to this type of research and recordation. Any work conducted by the NPS is subject to archeological investigation to comply with Section 106 rules and regulations.

# Campground

## Natural systems and features

The campground is located on the north and south of a high mountain bog known as Flat Laurel Gap Bog. An elevated bridge crosses the creek and edges of the bog between two of the campground loops. This relatively flat topography—compared to the rest of the surrounding terrain—contains rare plant life and is an unusual and sensitive ecosystem.



**Figure 34.** Wetland creek running through Flat Laurel Gap Bog in the campground area.




**Figure 35.** Sign in the Flat Laurel Gap Bog area within the campground, used to prevent visitor access.

## Spatial Organization

The camp sites are organized in large, sweeping loops which concentrate the camping activities along each side of the loop roads, while providing internal and external native vegetation as screening and to provide some sense of privacy.

## Land Use

Campground land use is for trailers on loops A and B and tent pads on loops C and D. Each camp site has an area for cooking, eating, a light pole, and places to sit.

## Cultural Traditions

Camping is one way that people reconnect with nature, and the character of the campgrounds is maintained with plenty of understory native plant material to separate campsites and provide privacy.

## Cluster Arrangement

The campground is organized in loops, that generally provide one-way traffic with pull-overs for parking to unload tents and equipment, or travel trailer parking.

## Circulation

Initial entry into the campground area is by a central road, with a fee building used to collect rental revenue from campers. The four campgrounds are organized into loops titled A, B, C, and D, with a connecting road. A map of the campground and loops is included along with each of the appendices.

## Topography

Compared to much of the rest of the MPRA, the campgrounds are relatively flat, with topography that is not as steep as most of the trails that connect the various elements within the MPRA. Certainly the trailer parking areas and tent pads are flat by necessity.

## Vegetation

There is a variety of vegetation within the campground. Due to the nature of a campground, the vegetation has to be managed to some degree to provide access for campers and for pitching tents.

Flat Laurel Gap Bog, a high mountain bog located within the Pisgah Campground, serves as home to a variety of plant species. The upper areas of the bog contain shrubs such as purple rhododendron and mountain laurel. The lower sections of the bog are characterized by grasses and sedge communities such as bog asphodel, while the upper areas are home to herb communities such as Turtlehead and cotton grass.[4]

## Buildings and Structures

The first building in the campground at the entrance is the Fee Collection Booth, a few hundred feet off of the Parkway road. It also serves as an information kiosk for all the activities going on in and around the campground.



**Figure 36.** Entrance to the campground with fee collection building.

4 Govus and Pittillo, 408.8a.




**Figure 37.** Fee Collection Building

Another individual building is the amphitheatre. Located in this small area are benches laid out in a semi circular fashion facing a small structure that serves as storage and which also houses a screen for image projection. The Amphitheatre also has a large pit for campfires. The entire area is paved with an asphalt surface and is accessible by a wide pathway off campground loop B.

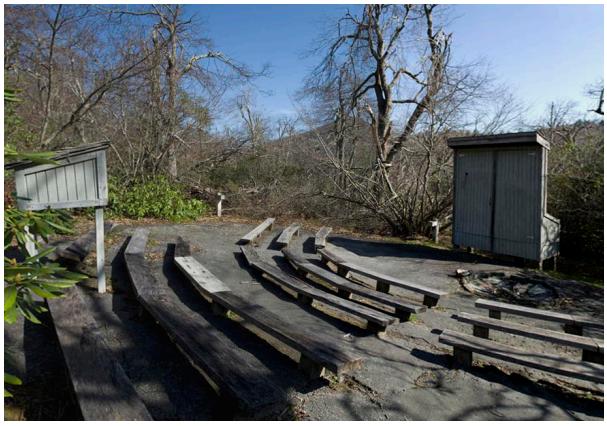


**Figure 38.** Amphitheatre

Four of the structures in the campground are comfort stations and house amenities such as restrooms, showers, and wash stations, most with attached drinking fountains on the exterior of the buildings. These comfort stations are located within each loop of the campground. They are all similar in design, form, size, and function.

Near the campground entrance off of the Parkway there is also a private drive and residence for the park ranger. This area is not open to the public and appears to date to the Mission 66 era.



**Figure 39.** Comfort Station

## Views and Vistas

Within the campground itself, there are no long views or vistas. If the visitor wants to experience those, they must hike the surrounding trails or dine at the Pisgah Inn.

## Constructed Water Features

There are no constructed water features in the campground.

## Small-Scale Features

This section covers all the individual small-scale site features located in the campground. There are several features that are found throughout the campsites. Each campsite has a picnic table, a fire pit, a tent pad, a lantern pole and a campsite marker.



**Figure 40.** Example of composite picnic table that detracts from the overall visitor experience.

### Tent Pad Types

Located within the campground, each campsite has its own constructed tent pad. The first image below – Figure 41 – is of a plan for a tent pad, designed in 1947 but evidently not constructed or no longer extant, as we were not able to find any campsites with this original design. The design was of an Irregular Stone Pad (ISP) and was to be constructed from rough cut local granite used as curbing, with a layer of crushed stone within the granite outline.

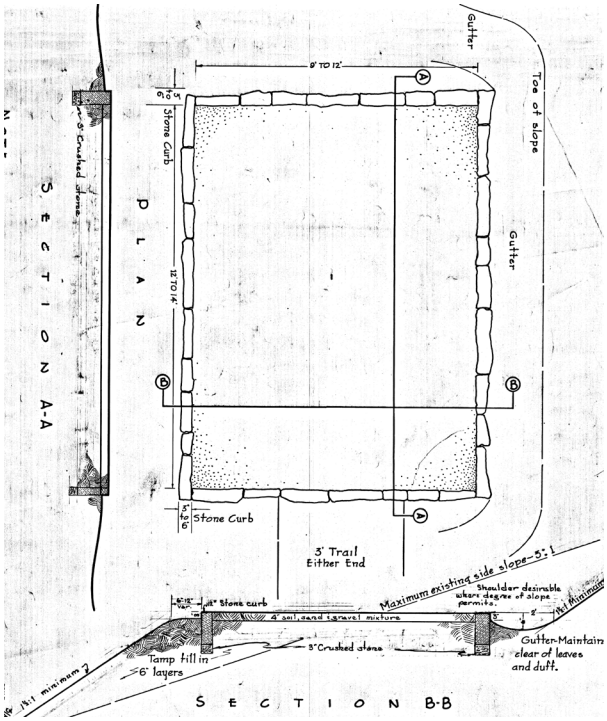



**Figure 41.** ISP: Irregular Stone Pad (See full page in Appendix C, Exhibit 1)

The predominant tent pad type found in the campground is outlined with pieces of concrete curbing, and labeled Concrete Tent Pad (CTP). Figure 42 shows the detail drawing from 1953 with associated section drawings that illustrate construction of this type of tent pad. As noted in the detail, the concrete is formed with integral small green and black pebble or stone and colored using a green pigment, as noted in the picnic tables design earlier.

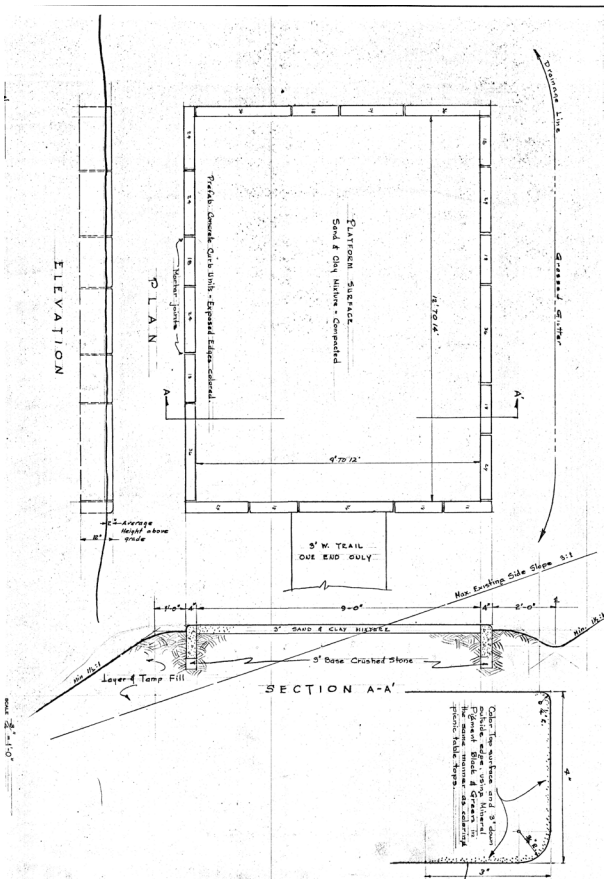



**Figure 42.** CTP: Concrete Tent Pad (See full page in Appendix C, Exhibit 2)

The next type of tent pad found in the campground is a Cut Stone Pad (CSP). It is one of the older pads found, and is made of local cut granite to give the pad a uniform edge.



**Figure 43.** CSP: Cut Stone Pad

The last type of tent pad found in the campground is the most modern. It is constructed of treated

wood used as an outline and is filled with crushed limestone. The acronym for this pad is Wood Tent Pad or WTP.



**Figure 44.** WTP: Wood Tent Pad

The concrete and cut stone pads are the most commonly found types of pads throughout all loops of the campground. The wooden pads, by definition, are not as permanent and contrast significantly from the existing landscape.

### Picnic Table Types

Picnic tables are found throughout both the campground and the picnic areas. There are however, several varieties of tables and benches that differ from the original design, developed during the Mission 66 era. Many of the original picnic tables have been replaced or repaired with alternative materials. The first style of picnic table that can be seen is a Solid Concrete Table and Bench (SCTB).



**Figure 45.** Solid Concrete Table and Bench (SCTB)



**Figure 46.** Solid Concrete Table and Bench, with repaired seat on right, (SCTB-R)

Since the original design and installation dates to the 1960 era, by necessity, there have been various repairs to table tops and seat benches. For example Figure 46 shows one of the concrete benches; in this case repaired with wooden seat. Later repairs use recycled plastic lumber, with a light tan color.

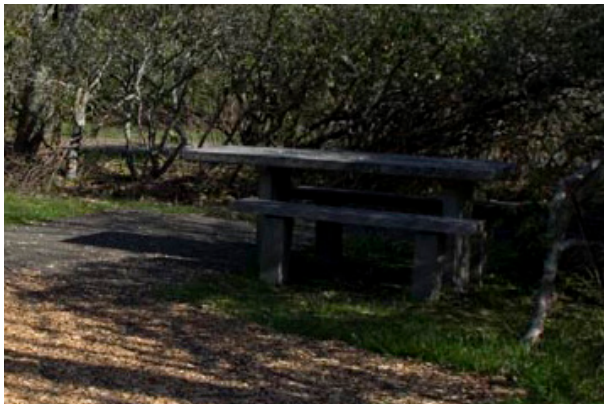


**Figure 47.** SCTB-H: Solid Concrete Table and Bench with Handicap accessibility

These picnic tables are generally located near comfort stations and are designed with handicap accessibility in mind - utilizing hard, paved surfaces leading to and surrounding the picnic table for wheel chair access. This type of picnic table is the same in form as the SCTB with an extended table top as seen in Figure 47 above, in order to accommodate handicapped access on one end.

The Concrete Table with Wood Bench (CTWB) has a table top that is made from two separate slabs of concrete set on a concrete base with bench seats that consist of thick wood planks placed on concrete pedestal bases. Figure 48 below is the standard detail for picnic benches from 1963, some of these still exist in the park today.

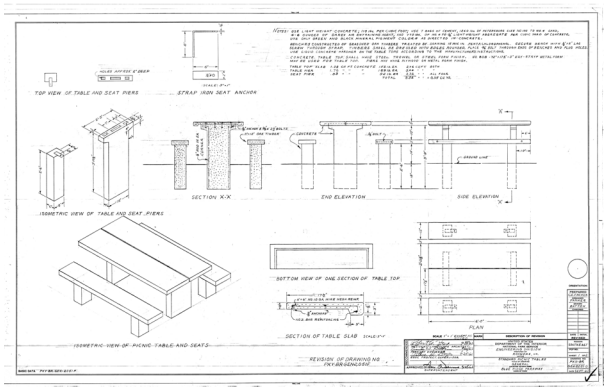


**Figure 48.** 1963 Standard picnic table detail (See full page in Appendix C, Exhibit 3)



**Figure 49.** CTWB: Concrete Table with Wood Benches

As many of these older tables and benches have been damaged or have deteriorated, they have been replaced either with the solid concrete top slab with no integral black and green minerals, or with plastic lumber.



**Figure 50.** CTWB-R: Concrete Table with Wood Benches Repaired

As such, the next two picnic table types are drastically different then the previous two styles. They are Natural Recycled Plastic Lumber (NRPL) and Gray Recycled Plastic Lumber (GRPL). The tops and benches are made of a recycled plastic product, with the structure made of metal, usually aluminum.

There are many variations of this picnic table. Throughout the campground and picnic site there are two colors of the recycled plastic lumber; gray and a natural beige/tan color. Both colored tables also have a range of styles; some have extended tables for handicapped access, some were made with thick galvanized metal frames, while others have a slim black metal frame. Figures 51-56 demonstrate the range of recycled plastic lumber picnic tables that are found in the picnic area and campground.



**Figure 51.** NRPL: Natural Recycled Plastic Lumber with galvanized metal base



**Figure 52.** NRPL-H: Natural Recycled Plastic Lumber with Handicap access



**Figure 53.** GRPL: Grey Recycled Plastic Lumber



**Figure 54.** Grey Recycled Plastic Lumber with Handicap access (GRPL-H)



**Figure 55.** GRPL-S: Grey Recycled Plastic Lumber with Slim metal frame



**Figure 56.** NRPL-S: Natural Recycled Plastic Lumber with Slim metal frame

### Fire Pit Types

In the campground, four types of fire pits are found. Each campsite has its own individual fire pit.

The first type in the campground is a four legged fire pit. It is the most common of the four types. It has two open sides and a top grill that can be adjusted or flipped over so that it can be above the fire. This fire pit has a bottom plate made of metal and is often stablized by pushing the four legs into the ground beneath. The height of this fire pit varies depending on how the user sets it up for cooking or grilling.



**Figure 57.** FLFP: Four Legged Fire Pit

The next fire pit that is located in the campground is a Simple Circular Fire Pit (SCFP). It consists of a circular metal frame with an open bottom. It also has a grill top that can be flipped over the fire area for cooking or grilling. This fire pit sits directly on the ground over the charcoal or wood.



**Figure 58.** SCFP: Simple Circular Fire Pit

The third fire pit is a cast iron, three-sided fire pit with an open bottom. This In Ground Fire Pit (IGFP) is usually pressed into the ground to stabilize it and prevent it from turning over. This fire pit also has a grill top for cooking that can be adjusted for cooking over the fire or the top can be flipped back away from the fire itself as a holding platform.



**Figure 59.** IGFP: In Ground Fire Pit

The last fire pit is one that is not often seen and somewhat rare. The Concrete Pad Fire Pit (CPFP) has a grill surface as well as a flat area that looks like it could be used as a griddle. The grill top, similar to the previous three, is adjustable and can be placed over the fire or left off, however, this fire pit is attached directly to the slab that it rests on by a hinge system, allowing the user to flip it back for cleaning or for replenishing the charcoal or wood supply.



**Figure 60.** CPFP: Concrete Pad Fire Pit

### Stair Types

One of the site features that appears in many places along the Pisgah section of the parkway are stairs. Stairs are used in various locations — from individual campsites within the campground to steps along each of the trails.

The stair configuration that appears to be the oldest of the three types is made from blocks of solid granite, or Solid Granite Steps (SGS). This type blends in with the topography of the campsites or trails, and most closely approximates

the natural appearance of the surrounding landscape.



**Figure 61.** SGS: Solid Granite Steps

Another variety of stairs found around the campsite, trails, and picnic area are Natural Wood Steps (NWS). The steps are constructed from treated timber, and vary in width from three to five feet with a two foot tread. These stairs work well in areas with a smaller rise, and allow for a more gradual climb for the visitor.



**Figure 62.** NWS: Natural Wood Steps

The third type of stairs are Wood Block Steps (WBS). These wooden blocks are made from uniformly cut, treated timbers. The stairs appear more recent, and as with picnic tables, benches, and tent pads, do not feel as permanent as the previous two types of stairs. As seen in Figure 63 below, the wood block steps are not necessarily inserted into the existing grade, and seem more random, temporary, and moveable.



**Figure 63.** WBS: Wood Block Steps

Of the three types of steps and stairs located in the park, the Wood Block Steps do not have the same rustic feel as the previous two materials. Both the Solid Granite Steps and the Natural Wood Steps appear to be locally sourced, possibly from the Pisgah Ridge itself, and add to the overall visitor experience of the Parkway as an area apart from the modern world.

### Miscellaneous Small-Scale Features

The following features are devices to contain food and waste and keep out animals. The first is a "Bear Box," where campers store food items. These metal boxes are designed to prevent bears and other wildlife around and within the campgrounds from getting into camper's supplies, primarily food. The other is a Litter Box. Much like the bear box, this waste receptacle is designed to keep animals from rummaging through refuse and food scraps that campers have discarded.




**Figure 64.** Bear Box




**Figure 65.** Litter Box



**Figure 67.** Water Pump

The campground also has several water pumps located around the various loops. These pumps provide fresh, potable drinking water for campers and for washing dishes. The individual campsites do not have their own running water source, so these are located sporadically to provide campers with water for drinking and cooking. There are two types of water pumps seen in the campground.




**Figure 66.** Water Pump



**Figure 68.** Pedestrian foot bridge over the bog. Connects campground loop B to loop D.

This pedestrian foot bridge is from a later period than Mission 66, and was constructed to provide access across the bog located within the boundaries of the campground. The material is wood with CorTen steel railings on each side. The bog is a sensitive ecosystem, and it is important to keep pedestrian traffic out of and above the bog itself.

The Dump Station is another small-scale site feature within the campground. This area is located near the entrance/exit to the campground. Recreational Vehicles pull through this area and dispose of waste, and can also obtain potable water and water for showering and toilet use.



**Figure 69.** Dump Station

The lantern pole is generally located in close proximity to the picnic table on the interior of the campsite. Figure 70 shows the standard lantern pole constructed of CorTen steel that is installed at each campsites



**Figure 70.** Lantern Pole

Also found at each individual campsite is a site marker. The marker is labeled by the letter of the loop first, and then by the campsite number. The campground has four road loops lettered A-D. Each loop has a different number of campsites.

These markers, like many of the picnic tables, are made of recycled plastic lumber. Figure 71 shows the standard site marker found beside the road and parking spot for each campsite.




**Figure 71.** Site Marker

The last small scale feature can be found in several places around both the campground and picnic area. The stone water fountain with a copper bowl. Figure 72 shows the 1950 design/detail drawing for the construction of these fountains.

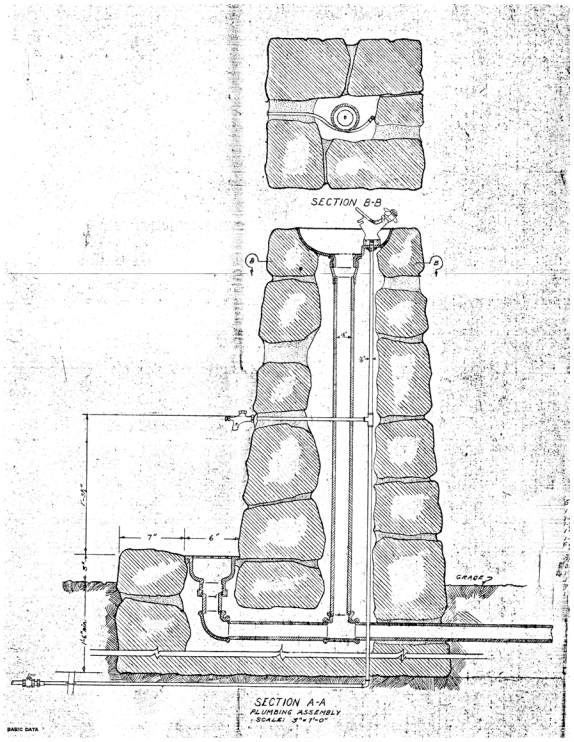



**Figure 72.** 1950 water fountain detail (See full page in Appendix C, Exhibit 5)

### Archeological Sites

The campground was constructed during the Great Depression to serve the Forest Service. As such, there could be archeological remains from that era that would provide information related to that occupational regime. All contractors should be cognizant of that possibility and alert park service personnel if they locate any artifacts. Any work conducted by the NPS is subject to archeological investigation to comply with Section 106 rules and regulations. Unsurveyed areas are to be treated as eligible National Register historic sites.

## Pisgah Inn + Store

### Natural systems and features

Located on the edge of the Pisgah Ridge, the Inn takes advantage of the scenic opportunity provided by its mountain-side location.

### Spatial Organization

The Inn is constructed in a location fashion, following the ridge line in order to maximize the viewing opportunities for visitors. The restaurant and visitor rooms all face east and have viewing platforms or balconies. Parking is to the west away from the edge of the ridge toward the Parkway.

### Land Use

Land use it typical of a rural inn within the National Park Service. The Inn is serviced by a long parking lot which provides easy access between the lot, the Inn rooms, and the restaurant.

### Cultural Traditions

As a retreat for the East Coast elite, the Inn extracts the cultural tradition of summers in the mountains for the visitor to the Blue Ridge Parkway. Heat in the cities encouraged many people on the East Coast to visit the mountains. The fears associated with yellow fever in the South caused those who could afford the trip and accommodations to leave their homes and move to higher altitudes to avoid what was a common cause of death in the nineteenth century.

### Cluster Arrangement

The Inn, Restaurant, convenience store, and parking all comprise a cluster arrangement for NPS visitors. The organization is linear, with the Inn rooms facing the views and vistas to the east and northeast.

### Circulation

Just like the Parkway itself, circulation at the Inn follows a linear progression along the side of the ridge/mountain. Connecting trails allow the visitor to leave the complex and explore other areas within the MPRA.

### Topography

The topography at the Inn and store is mostly flat. The exception is the edge that drops off and affords the scenic views and vistas for the visitor.

### Vegetation

The vegetation at the Inn is mostly turf and native trees, with some modern plantings at the entrance to the restaurant.

### Buildings and Structures

The first building that the visitor sees upon arrival at the Inn is the registration building and attached visitor rooms. The buildings associated with the current Inn were constructed at the end of the Mission 66 era, circa 1969. They exhibit period characteristics and are simple in construction and ornamentation.




**Figure 73.** Registration building

The restaurant building also dates to the same era and has an expansive sheet of windows for diners to view the scenery to the south and east. The central Inn building, named Chewink is similar in construction, with simple details and basic ornamentation.



**Figure 74.** Restaurant and Gift Shop building at the Pisgah Inn.

Only the northernmost Inn building, Treetops, exhibits more rustic design and ornamentation, using timber beams and native stone.

The Mt. Pisgah Country Store and the dormitory buildings are of similar construction to the registration building, restaurant, and other hotel buildings, with low ceilings and basic ornamentation. They are discreet, functional, and simple.



**Figure 75.** View of the camp store from the Pisgah Inn parking lot.




**Figure 76.** Pisgah Inn "Tree Tops" building and guest suites.




**Figure 77.** "Chewink" building at the Pisgah Inn.

An extensive inventory of architectural elements within the MPRA was conducted in May of 2013 by surveyors Michael Ford and Jamie Morris. That report serves as the baseline recordation

of the existing conditions and location of each constructed architecutral feature.

### Views and Vistas

Views and vistas exist for each of the rooms at the Inn and for diners in the restaurant. The advantage for the visitor is the ability to stay for a longer period of time, sitting on a balcony, viewing platform, or bench overlooking the forest and mountains.



**Figure 78.** Panoramic view from the Pisgah Inn.

### Archeological Sites

While the site of the current Inn would probably yield limited artifacts for examination, the location of the old Pisgah Inn to the south, has the potential to yield artifacts related to the early occupation by visitors dating to circa 1915 until the late 1960s when the old Inn was demolished and the new Inn was constructed.

## Picnic Area + Waste Water

### Natural systems and features

There are no significant natural systems or features within the picnic area.

### Spatial Organization

The picnic area is centered by a large, open lawn area, with picnic benches and cooking areas along the perimeter of the lawn. There are no trees on the lawn, but the surrounding area is punctuated with tree and shrub hammocks, with the understory typically native laurel and rhododendron. The area feels enclosed from the edges.



**Figure 79.** View of Mt. Pisgah from the Picnic Area parking lot.



**Figure 80.** Entrance path into the picnic grounds.



**Figure 81.** Panoramic view of picnic area with comfort station and picnic tables around the central grass lawn.

### Land Use

The grounds are for picnics and active and passive recreation. The large open lawn allows for organized team sports, with the edges utilized for cooking and eating.

### Cultural Traditions

A picnic in the mountains or woods has always been a way to escape from the rigors of urban life or to enjoy a day outside in fresh air. There are many historical paintings and photographs of families and groups eating al fresco, and this has

been a time-honored way to celebrate, recreate, and relax.

## Cluster Arrangement

The cluster arrangement was discussed above in land use, with a central open lawn with a perimeter of small-scale elements used by picnickers.

## Circulation

The picnic area is accessed by a wide walkway that leads from its associated parking overlook up to the picnic grounds. Once in the picnic area, circulation is not prescribed by pathways, but is more organic, as the visitor chooses to traverse the lawn and choose their favored picnic site.

## Topography

The topography of the picnic grounds is mostly flat dropping off at the edges into the gaps on each surrounding perimeter.

## Vegetation

Vegetation is more open than at the campgrounds, as there is less concern with privacy, with more need to move freely while cooking or recreating. The edges are primarily native plants similar to those throughout the MPRA.

## Buildings and Structures

One comfort station serves the picnic area, and is located on the southern edge of the grounds.

## Views and Vistas

Within the boundaries of the picnic area, surrounding views are of Mt. Pisgah, the Blue Ridge Mountains, and Asheville. The picnic area is relatively flat with a large lawn area and three to four dozen picnic tables, bar-b-que pits, and waste receptacles spread around the perimeter of the lawn area.

## Constructed Water Features

There are no constructed water features at the picnic grounds.

The water and sewage treatment plant is a utilitarian feature west of the picnic grounds and is not open to the public.

## Small-Scale Features

Small scale features within the picnic grounds are inventoried in Appendix B.

## Archeological Sites

Retaining walls along the eastern side of the picnic grounds remain from the Vanderbilt occupation of the site. Archival documents state that the original picnic area was a clearing for a vegetable garden and animal husbandry - specifically cows for milk and sheep used for the production of wool.

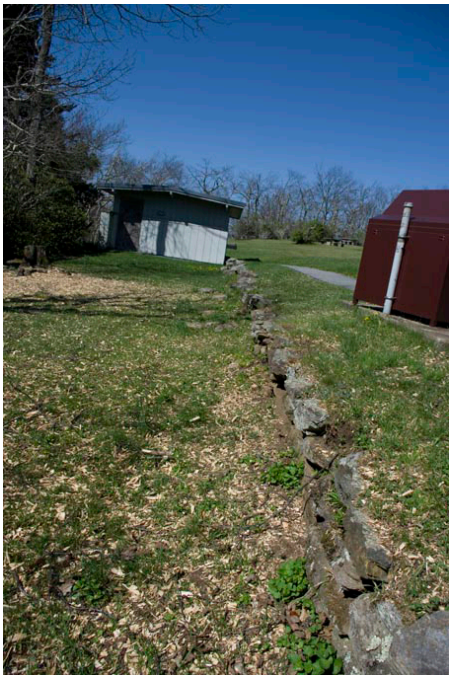


**Figure 82.** Remnant stone retaining wall in picnic area. Other retaining wall runs parallel to this one to the left of the photo at the edge of the tree line.

# Buck Spring Lodge + Overlook + Spring House

## Natural systems and features

The natural spring that occurs near Buck Spring Gap is a very important natural system within the landscape. Because the spring was located in proximity to a significant overlook and at such a high elevation, George Vanderbilt was able to build his hunting lodge—Buck Spring Lodge—slightly upslope from the spring. The spring still runs today, albeit at a lower rate, but it was a key resource utilized for the day to day functions of the lodge's operation at the time of construction.



**Figure 83.** Interior of spring house at Buck Spring.

## Spatial Organization

This area has a spur road to the east that enters a substantial parking lot overlooking Asheville and the Mt. Pisgah Summit. From this parking area, the visitor can enter trails to Pisgah, Little Bald, Laurel Mountain, Pilot Rock, and the site of the Buck Spring lodge. The trail southeast passes the Buck Spring Lodge site and continues to Pisgah Inn. Overall land use is USFS land and is heavily forested. Some areas in the distance are privately owned, with some clearings, there are no jarring intrusions of commercial buildings or open fields.

## Land Use

The land is used for a large parking overlook, with connecting trails that radiate south, north, and east.

## Cultural Traditions

Scenic overlooks are one of the touchstones of parkways, and Buck Spring Gap overlook is no exception. Plentiful parking and broad, long views provide the visitor with the scenic enjoyment that the Parkway is known for.

## Circulation

Circulation is mostly internal, with the visitor parking, standing along the ridge/mountain edge to enjoy the views, and pedestrian pathways for hiking connecting to other parks of the MPRA.

## Topography

Gently sloping topography exists within the parking area, with a steep drop-off at the scenic overlook.

## Vegetation

Typical native woods with some plantings of rhododendrons along the entrance road edge outlining the edges of the natural areas.

## Views and Vistas

Because of the very open nature of this overlook, the views and vistas are plentiful for the visitor. From each perspective, there are distant views in each direction to the east, northeast, and southeast, with a view back to Mt. Pisgah to the west.



**Figure 84.** View of Pisgah summit from Buck Spring parking area.



**Figure 85.** View across the site of the Buck Spring Lodge with Mt. Pisgah summit in the distance.



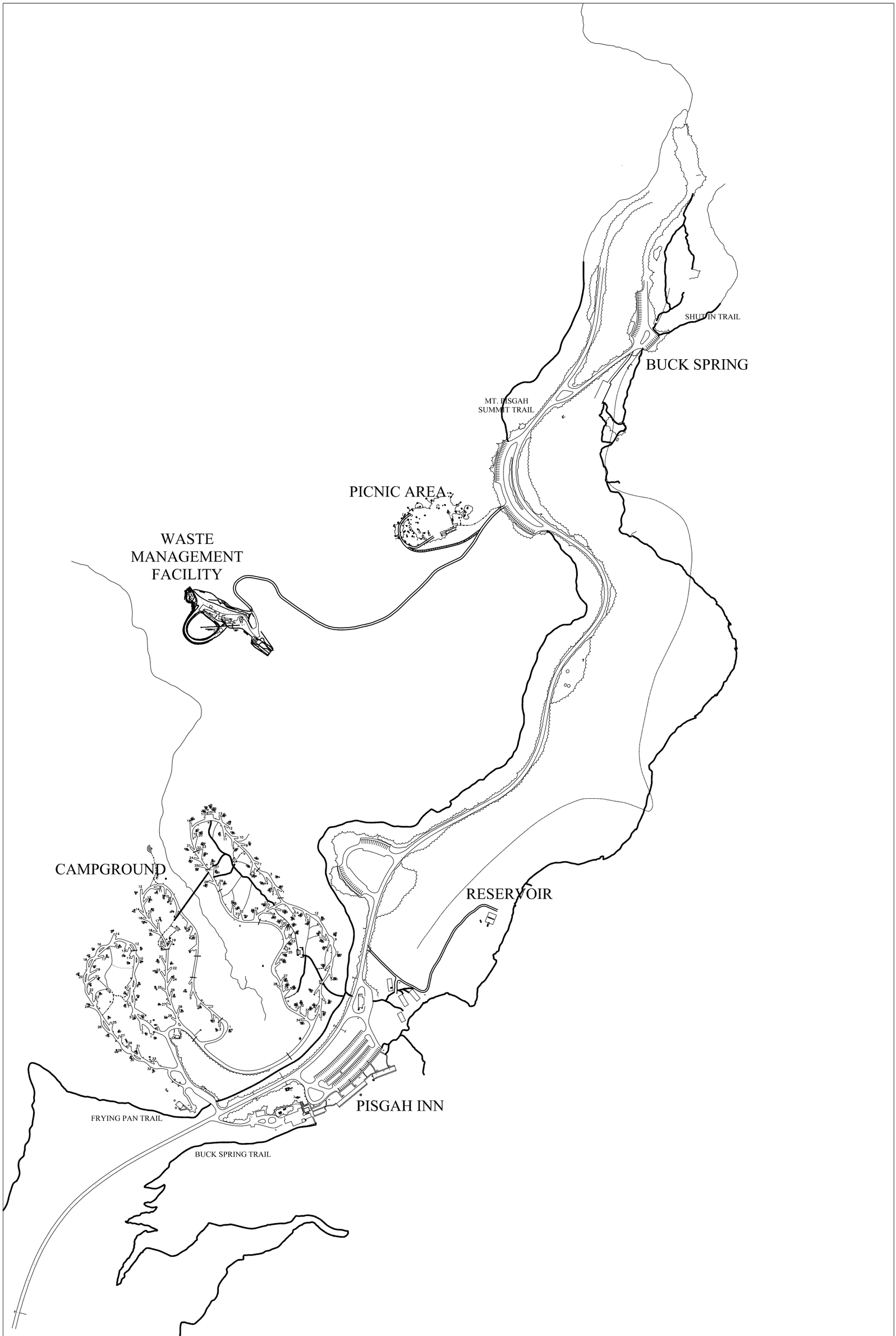
**Figure 86.** Panoramic view from Buck Spring Lodge site looking northeast.



**Figure 87.** Remnant of retaining wall and driveway of Buck Spring Lodge.

## Archeological Sites

The Buck Spring Lodge site has the potential to yield a rich array of archaeological artifacts, due to the fairly recent use of the site and the fact that many of the foundations and wall features are still extant. This site could be explored extensively to locate artifacts that could be used in exhibits about the Vanderbilt period of use, and to expand the understanding of mountain retreats as used by American elites during the Gilded Age, Great Depression, up through the post WWII-era.



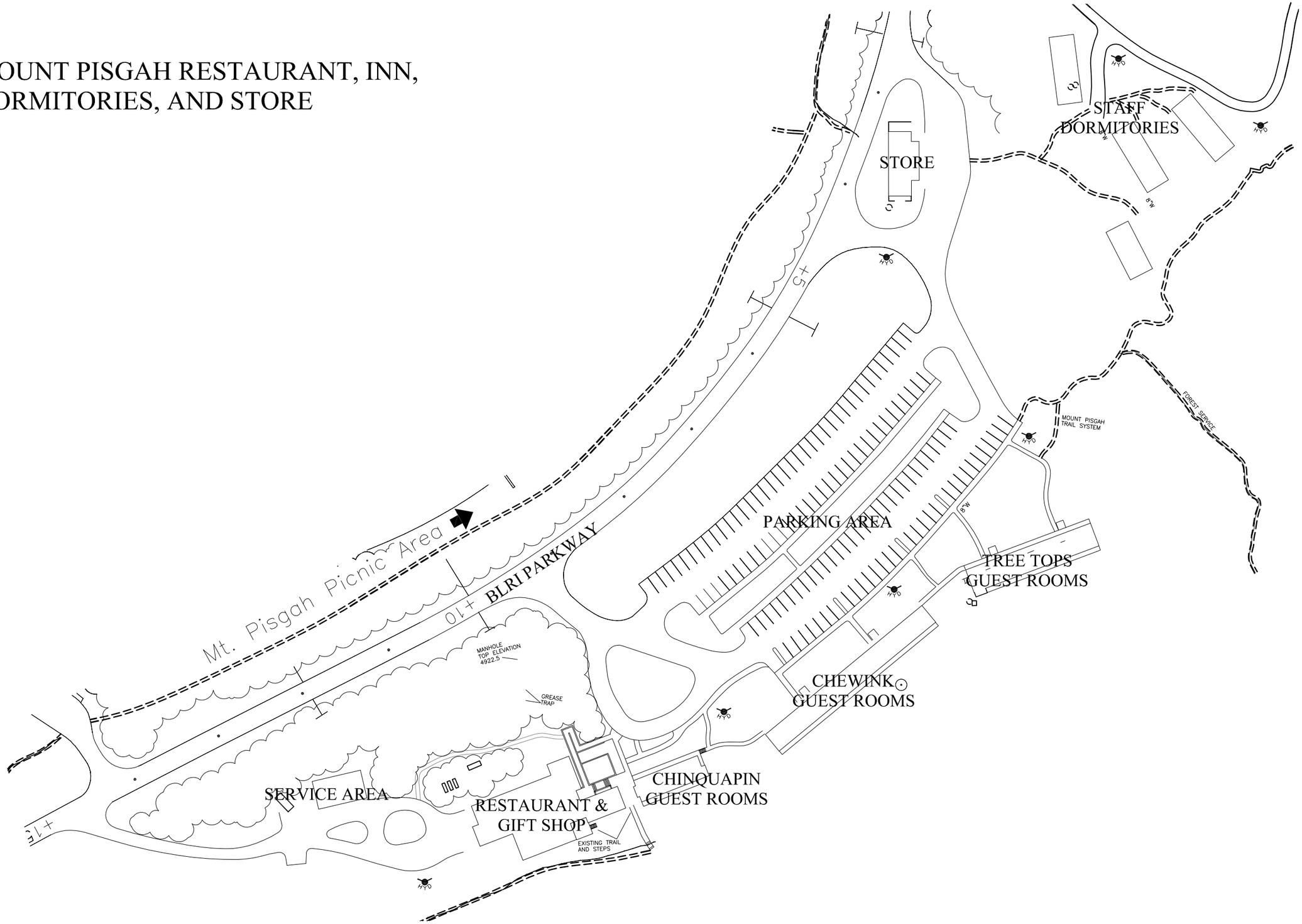

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landscape architecture
historic landscape preservation

Mt. Pisgah

overall plan

date : 11-12-2011
scale : 1" = 500'-0"
drawing : L1.00

# MOUNT PISGAH RESTAURANT, INN, DORMITORIES, AND STORE




NOTES:

1. Amenity locations are approximate. Verify exact locations in field.

date : 11-12-2011
scale : 1" = 100'-0"
drawing : L1.05

Pisgah Inn

Mt. Pisgah

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BUCK SPRING
PARKING
OVERLOOK

STAIRS

STAIRS

STONE
FOUNDATION

ORIGINAL
ROADBED

PATH

STONE RETAINING
WALL

TERRACE

STAIRS

RIDGE LINE

OVERLOOK

MAIN LODGE
SITE

STONE
FOUNDATION

SPRING
HOUSE

HENDERSONVILLE WATERSHED

HENDERSONVILLE WATERSHED

+315

## LEGEND

- ASPHALT PATH
- GRASS AND/OR DIRT PATH
- GRAVEL PATH
- GRASS-PAVE PATH (CONCRETE UNIT PAVERS)

## NOTES:

1. Amenity locations are approximate. Verify exact locations in field.
2. Vehicular roadway surfacing is asphalt unless otherwise noted.

date : 11-12-2011
scale : 1" = 100'-0"
drawing : L1.04

buck spring
lodge site

Mt. Pisgah

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suzanne turner associates
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historic landscape preservation

# Chapter 6: Analysis and Evaluation

## Introduction

The upper slopes of Mt. Pisgah had a long history of use first by Native Americans and then by pioneer settlers, before acquisition by George Vanderbilt. Traces of this early history survive, but most features of the present cultural landscape are associated with the later arrival of the Vanderbilts and with federal agencies during the twentieth century; first George Washington Vanderbilt and the construction of his hunting lodge, then the USFS in 1916 with the establishment of Pisgah National Forest, and finally the NPS during the 1960s with the development of the Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area as part of remaining connecting link within the Blue Ridge Parkway.

This chapter analyzes the historical significance of the various layers, summarizes the historical contexts, identifies character-defining features, and evaluates the historical integrity of those features. Finally, the historical significance of the entire landscape is summarized with reference to National Register criteria and the period of significance is defined.

## The Vanderbilt Landscape

One of the keys to Mt. Pisgah as a recreation area was the early use of the landscape by the Vanderbilts. Seeking a way to escape from the busy daily life of Biltmore and to enjoy the pastimes of the elite, such as recreational hunting and bird-watching, George Vanderbilt built Buck Spring Lodge as as summber retreat first for himself, and then for his wife and family.

Choosing a prominent plateau along one of the ridges circling Mt. Pisgah, the view across the lands that he owned was of particular importance, as a steward of the land and his long-term goals of scientific forest management, an idea instilled as a program element by Frederick Olmsted.

It is not likely that the Inn at Mt. Pisgah would have been constructed in the mid 1910s, if not for the precedent established by Vanderbilt.

## The USFS Landscape

As the location of the establishment of the United States Forest Service, Mt. Pisgah and its surrounding forests were the original laboratory and school where the pioneers of the field came to learn their craft from early European experts in the field of scientific forestry management.

Led by Gifford Pinchot and Dr. Carl Alwin Schenk, these two fathers of the United States forestry movement educated the early workers and experts who were the cornerstone of the profession in its early years.

Without the vision of Olmsted and the stewardship of Vanderbilt, it would have probably been two or three decades before the development of the forestry profession as a career and a source of scientific study occurred. They were the leaders who accelerated the development of the modern forestry service. These early professionals were then available when the National Park Service was founded, and often worked hand in hand with early designers as the Park Service designated lands for public protection and development.

The advocacy of President Theodore Roosevelt and passage of the Weeks Act in 1911 furthered the cause and tied forestry management to water quality.

## Mission 66 and the Mt. Pisgah Landscape

The Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area is a small part of the Blue Ridge Parkway, one of the most ambitious projects ever undertaken by the NPS, so its

historical significance should be considered within the context of the significance of the Parkway as a whole. In 2005 a Historic Resource Study of the Parkway, prepared in association with a draft National Historic Landmark nomination, summarized its significance as follows:

> The Parkway should be nominated as a National Historic Landmark [NHL]. It meets NHL Criteria One and Four and possesses the extraordinary national importance and high degree of integrity required for landmark status; the Parkway also possesses the exceptional significance necessary for including parts of the Parkway road that are less than 50 years old.
>
> The Blue Ridge Parkway meets NHL Criterion Four because it is America's first long-distance, scenic national parkway, and it embodies the distinguishing characteristics of this uniquely American type of park, one designed for recreational motoring. As a parkway designed to encourage an appreciation of the distinctive characteristics of a region, it is an important expression of cultural values (NHL Theme III); and, at the same time, it is an example of the application of road-building technology in a difficult mountain environment on an unprecedented scale (NHL Theme VI).
>
> The Blue Ridge Parkway is associated with several important events in the nation's history, so it is also nationally significant under NHL Criterion One. It is associated with the growth of recreational motoring as the nation's favorite pastime (a topic within NHL Theme II). It was initiated in 1933 to relieve unemployment during the Great Depression, and its construction was made possible by the participation of several important New Deal agencies (topics within NHL Themes IV and V). And, it became a new type of national park, one that was created by design around the theme of recreational motoring, and one that marked the entry of the National Park Service into the field of rural landscape preservation (topics within NHL theme VII).[1]

According to this Historic Resource Study, the period of national significance extends from the year 1935, when construction began, to 1987, when the Parkway road was completed. Within that time frame, the Study focuses on two stories, first the development of the ideas governing the design and construction of the Parkway, and second the struggle to complete the project. The achievements of Mission 66 were recognized within the framework of the story of the completion of the road rather than the story of the development of the ideas governing its design and construction. Accordingly, the Study concluded that the road is the most important historic resource at Mt. Pisgah, while developments within the recreation area are of lesser importance. However, since the Historic Resource Study was completed there has been an increased appreciation of the significance of Mission 66 projects in the design of national parks, and the publication in 2007 of Ethan Carr's *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma* provides a context within which the significance of projects from this period can be evaluated more fully.

> Mission 66 was the last major period of intense activity and profoundly new ideas to find expression in a system wide program of national park development. Regardless of how one judges the legacy of Mission 66, a close examination of the era is warranted. We would not recognize the developed areas of the national parks today without the visitor centers, roads, housing, and other facilities acquired and built during these years.[2]

It is appropriate and timely, therefore, to reexamine the significance of the recreational developments along the Parkway built after 1955, including those at Mt. Pisgah, within the context of Mission 66 and its impact on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

---

1 Firth, 'Blue Ridge Parkway, Virginia and North Carolina, Historic Resource Study,' December 2005, pp. 361-362; NPS Southeast Regional Office, Cultural Resources Division, Atlanta, GA. (NHL Criterion One: Properties that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to, and are identified with, or outstandingly represent, the broad national patterns of U.S. history and from which and understanding and appreciation of those patterns may be gained. NHL Criterion Four: Properties that embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen exceptionally valuable for a study of a period, style, or method of construction, or that represent a significant, distinctive and exceptional entity whose components may lack individual distinction. National Park Service, '*National Register Bulletin: How to Prepare National Historic Landmark Nominations*'; U.S.D.I., NPS, National Register, History and Education - National Historic Landmarks Survey, 1999).

2 Ethan Carr. 2007. *Mission 66: modernism and the National Park dilemma.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press. p. 15.

According to Carr, during Mission 66 a new type of development took place in National Parks:

> The new ideal, or model, of park planning both revised and extended traditional goals for national parks. The fundamental principles of Mission 66 could be found in the Progressive Era policies and documents that Wirth venerated, but Park Service landscape architects had profoundly altered the basic premises governing how those principles should be implemented. New ideas and tools were used to reassert the viability of long established ideology. The Mission 66 national park affirmed these priorities while developing new strategies for implementing them. These new planning strategies, together with modernist architectural design, created an overall ideal of national park development that differed from the prewar model for park master planning. The result can be described as the modernist national park.[3]

In accordance with this analysis, the significance of NPS developments at Mt. Pisgah will be evaluated under two headings; Park Planning, and Modernist Design.

## Park Planning at Mt. Pisgah

The steady increase in the number of visitors to national parks caused the NPS to make a careful assessment of the capacity of park landscapes to absorb recreational use without damage to natural and cultural resources, in short, to try to determine the "carrying capacity" of the park landscape and infrastructure. Carr highlights Director Wirth's instruction to the planners of the Mission 66 program, in which he exhorts them to bring new thinking to the task:

> The "steering committee and staff" Wirth announced, had three basic instructions for those who would be participating in Mission 66 planning: "Disregard precedents... . Be imaginative... . Bring up something effective in achieving the twin objectives of protection and optimum use." If Wirth venerated the documents that described the original mandate of his agency, he was also completely open to finding new ways to achieve that mandate. "The lid is off," he declared."Only by giving full play to the imagination will we find solutions that will meet the problems of continuously increasing use of the parks by the American people."[4]

This new thinking developed a number of strategies to optimize the capacity of parks and three of these had general application: expansion of road networks to permit more efficient circulation; a shift of emphasis towards providing for day visitors, with overnight accommodations and administrative buildings moved away from crowded areas and in some cases outside park boundaries altogether; and construction of new visitor centers strategically placed to provide a range of services including interpretation programs that were designed to enhance visitors' appreciation of the importance and fragility of park resources. [5]

These strategies served to reinforce rather than change policies in place along the Parkway. The main thrust of Mission 66 along the Parkway was to complete the road and expand the chain of recreation areas. This was a fulfillment of—rather than a departure from—earlier plans, which had proven remarkably effective in meeting challenges posed by rapidly increasing numbers of visitors.

Although the Parkway was by that time the most visited unit in the National Park System, according to the Parkway's Mission 66 prospectus, it did not suffer from the problems of congestion experienced in many other parks. Its design encouraged dispersal rather than concentration of visitors, and a controlled dispersal was thought to protect rather than threaten areas containing valued natural and cultural resources.[6]

From the beginning, much of the use of the Parkway had been by day visitors who motored relatively short distances rather than its entire length, and the provision of facilities for these visitors had always been a priority. Mission 66 made possible the expansion of these facilities including more picnic areas, lunch counters, and gift shops. The building of lodges and inns to provide overnight accommodations along the

3 Carr, p. 219.

4 Carr, p. 71, quoting Wirth, 'Informational Memorandum No. 2, Mission 66 - Policies and procedures,' March 17, 1955; Box A8213, NPS History Collection Harpers Ferry Center.

5 Carr, pp. 219-221.

6 USDI, NPS, 'Mission 66 for Blue Ridge Parkway,' March 1957, pp. 2-3; Folder A 98, Blue Ridge Parkway; Box 25, Mission 66, 1956-66; NPS Regional Office, Richmond, VA; RG 79; NARA-Mid Atlantic Region (Philadelphia, PA.).

Parkway had always been somewhat controversial. Abbott had argued that a chain of lodges was necessary; locally available accommodations were poor or nonexistent along many stretches of the Parkway in the 1930s. However, the Washington Office adopted a wait-and-see attitude, and the first lodge, at the Bluff in Doughton Park, did not open till 1949.

The 1952 Master Plan envisioned lodges at five points along the Parkway, but this number was further reduced in the Mission 66 prospectus, which called for the addition of only two more—one at Peaks of Otter and one at Mt. Pisgah. Private establishments now springing up outside parkway boundaries would provide most overnight lodgings. In the case of the Parkway this change in policy was related more to local politics than to resource protection issues, and in contrast, a large increase was planned in the number and size of campgrounds, to which there was no organized opposition from competing enterprises off the Parkway. [7]

Finally, the most innovative of the ideas advanced by Mission 66—the building of visitor centers—can be seen in the context of the Parkway as a logical development from the idea of centers for the interpretation of pioneer culture. These centers had been taking shape along the Parkway since the early 1940s, and were proving to be major attractions at places like Humpback Rocks and Mabry Mill. The linear form of the Parkway suggested the provision of a chain of visitor centers rather than one central facility, and this gave further impetus to the idea of widening the interpretive possibilities and stories that could be told about the region.

Mission 66 therefore reinforced and refined rather than overturned existing planning policies for the Parkway, and the plans for the Mt. Pisgah area did not depart from the general pattern of development established at earlier recreation areas. The completion of the road southwest of Asheville provided the link to GRSM envisioned at the start of the entire Parkway project and allowed motorists to enjoy the highest and, as Browning had argued, most spectacular stretch of the 469-mile route. Mt. Pisgah was expected to attract large numbers of day visitors from Asheville, and so the plans made ample provision for them with large parking areas, a spacious picnic area, a network of trails including one to the summit of the mountain, and a large dining room at the new Inn. The existence of the old Pisgah Motor Inn was a strong factor in the decision to locate a new lodge here, and that decision does not seem to have aroused the sort of political controversy stirred up by competing business interests elsewhere.

The campground and visitor center proved to be the two most problematic parts of the plan. The steep mountain slopes narrowly restricted the number and size of areas suitable for development, and in 1959 Abbuehl concluded that there was no adequate space for a campground. The 1961 master plan reversed this decision and located the campground near the headwaters of Pisgah Creek across the road from the lodge, but cautioned that its development should be restricted to only 30 to 50 campsites. Pressure to meet the large demand for campgrounds in these mountains seems to have led to the abandonment of this cautionary note, and by the time construction started in 1966 the number of sites had been increased to 150. In the end, 140 spaces were provided for campers. Moreover, half of these spaces were designated for campers using trailers, a higher proportion than at any other campground on the Parkway.

It proved to be a controversial decision. It was questioned at the time by the Chief Ranger, who worried about parking trailers on the sloping site and a variety of other management problems associated with the design. Then in 1978, Pitillo and Govas identified the marsh area between Loops A and B as an important plant habitat and recommended the relocation of the campground. The result has been that the location and size of the campground has exposed the Parkway to the complaint that, in this case, it gave priority to recreation over protection, a criticism leveled by many environmental groups toward the Mission 66 program in general.

A new visitor center should have been the centerpiece of the Mission 66 development. Abbuehl had designated an ideal site for it, a shoulder on the northern approach to Flat Laurel Gap with a good view of the summit of Pisgah and close to both the lodge and the campground. If it

7 USDI, p. 7. An additional 11 campgrounds were proposed.

had been built, it would have played a useful role in widening the scope of the stories told along the Parkway and provided an opportunity to make visitors aware of the distinctive natural and cultural history of the area. The failure to implement the plan meant that Pisgah remained an incomplete example of the 'new thinking' advanced by Mission 66. The parking lot and entrance roads for a visitor center were constructed, resulting in a disconnected area along the parkway.

## Modernist Design at Mt. Pisgah

Whereas park planning ideas advanced during Mission 66 tended to confirm the validity of established Parkway policies, new architectural thinking challenged the status quo. In the early 1950s, opponents of modern architecture in National Parks had hailed the Parkway for retaining its rustic style of architecture, albeit with a more economical version of the prewar style. And although architects in the EODC criticized the design of some new buildings along the Parkway as obsolete "cow barn architecture," conformity to this architectural style remained a Parkway policy. [8] But as pressures mounted to use modern materials and construction techniques in order to control rising construction and maintenance costs, the views of adherents of modern architecture gained more weight and park buildings began to reflect a modernist aesthetic.

> Rustic-era park construction had reflected an aesthetic conception of the national park in which associative architectural imagery helped "harmonize" development with its setting. Rustic buildings and villages were sited to serve as elements of larger landscape compositions that included nearby scenic features. By contrast, in the modernist park such associative imagery was useless, and siting large visitor center buildings near "sensitive" areas was potentially destructive. Landscape architects conceived of the visitor center as a viewing pavilion, not a picturesque element of a landscape scene. It was a building to see from more than to be seen, a composition of volumes and views, not of evocative facades and architectural mass.
>
> This modernist building type also exhibited a modernist relationship between structure and site, and between visitor and landscape. As Hitchcock and Tunnard had suggested in the 1930s, the building and its terraces formed a discrete unit, set in an "untouched" landscape. This put the surrounding park in a new position conceptually; it was now seen less as a picturesque composition in which architecture and figures composed visual elements than as an abstraction, a pure, untouched "dream" that would only be degraded by the presence of any evidence of human activity. [9]

In the absence of a visitor center, it is the new inn at Mt. Pisgah that illustrates this modernist approach to architecture and landscape. The planning and design of the dining room building and the motel units was clearly governed by the idea of a viewing pavilion overlooking an "untouched" landscape. The siting of the buildings, the linear arrangement of the motel units, and the extensive use of glass in the dining room were designed to take full advantage of the spectacular view across mountain ranges in the Pisgah National Forest. It is significant that as a model for the main building, Abbuehl cited the Skyland dining room, which had aroused the wrath of Devereux Butcher, one of the outspoken opponents of modernist architecture in parks.[10] Economic considerations supported the modernist approach taken in the design of the new inn since its owners had limited resources and the inn would only generate revenue during a short summer season. The buildings themselves when seen from the parking lot are remarkably plain, and this was particularly noticeable while the old inn buildings still stood and provided a contrasting rusticity.

The new inn with its exposed steel frame, glass walls, and limited references to vernacular building forms and materials comes as close as any major building on the Parkway erected in this period to departing from the rustic architectural aesthetic.[11] And, a less controversial but equally important change occurred in the treatment of the landscape. Whereas the landscape beside the road along earlier sections of the Parkway had been carefully manipulated to create picturesque effects, the roadside picture in the mountain sections southwest of Asheville was largely left to natural regeneration. Parkway Land Use Maps,

8 Firth, Historic Resource Study, pp. 303-305.

9 Carr, p. 220.

10 Carr, p. 133.

11 The rustic aesthetic had been applied only to buildings that would be seen by the public; it was not applied to buildings in maintenance compounds.

(PLUMS) were not drawn up for Sections 2T and 2U because there were no picturesque effects to be maintained;[12] instead the roadsides assumed a wild character as they were reclaimed by the adjacent oak woods with their stands of rhododendron and mountain laurel. Economy was no doubt an important factor in this change of policy, but it also reflected the desire to portray these stretches of the Parkway as a passage through a high mountain wilderness in contrast to settled landscapes further north.

Economy and a modernist respect for function also had a strong influence on the design of the smaller buildings in the recreation area. The campstore and gas station has a plainer, more utilitarian appearance than similar buildings constructed during earlier periods at Doughton Park and Peaks of Otter, and the standard design used for comfort stations in the campground and picnic area is even more clearly governed by a frugal honesty. In its original form with walls of concrete blocks, and roofs of corrugated asbestos and fiberglass, the design was almost completely purged of rustic character.

A desire to reduce the costs of installation and maintenance also exerted a strong influence on designs for site furniture and site details in the campground and picnic area. The Parkway had been experimenting with alternatives to pre-war rustic designs for each of the main items of furniture, giving particular attention to picnic tables and grills, which were the most noticeable items at the individual campsites and in the picnic area. Good had warned about the difficulty of retaining a rustic character in such areas when trying to accommodate large numbers of users in close proximity, and aesthetic concerns were reinforced by problems of maintaining items made of stone and wood.[13]

The design for the picnic tables adopted in 1963 used concrete for everything but the bench seats; the addition of color and texture to the concrete tabletops modified their machine-made character somewhat, but the overall appearance was no longer rustic. And certainly, no attempt was made to give the steel fireboxes and barbecue grills anything other than a modern, industrial character.

Most of the other site furnishings were also constructed of modern materials. It is not clear whether any attempt was made to modify the "gaunt utilitarianism," to use Good's words, of the metal refuse receptacles since all original ones have been replaced, but the major concern was to make them noticeable enough to ensure use, and if possible keep them bear-proof. About the only elements in the campground and picnic area that retained a strongly rustic character were the drinking fountains with their stone pedestals, which were constructed according to a design that had changed little since the 1930s.

Even the design of small site details such as steps and curbs began to assume a modern character. The picnic area is reached on foot and the paths have stone steps, but in the campground all curbs around parking slips and tent pads are formed of concrete rather than stone (excepting the area around the fee collection booth and the potable water and dumping pullover).

## Significance of the Mission 66 Landscape

The significance of the Mission 66 landscape at Mt. Pisgah has recently taken on added importance. The overall MPRA is reaching its fifth decade and 50 years is increasingly becoming the point at which landscapes are assessed related to historical standards of documentation and then determination of significance and relative integrity. The recent (2013) survey of the achitecture of the MPRA by Ford and Morris is an important step in this process.

## Integrity of the Mission 66 Landscape

The landscape created at Mt. Pisgah by the NPS during Mission 66 was planned with close reference to the mountain topography, since there were only limited areas where slopes were gentle enough to permit development. The parkway road follows the ridge line and developments are located on both sides of it and concentrated into the two gaps with extensions onto adjacent

12 Some PLUMS were eventually produced later, but these did not show any details of vegetation beside the road.

13 Good, Park and Recreation Structures, Part II - Recreational and Cultural Facilities, pp. 27-29.

shoulders of land, while trails paralleling the road link the various developments together. This layout remains unaltered and provides a framework within which to summarize the changes that have occurred over the past 40 years.

### Flat Laurel Gap

At Flat Laurel Gap, there are three areas of development: the concessioner's lodge stands at the edge of the steep drop on the southeastern side of the road, while, on the opposite side of the road the campground occupies slopes around the basin drained by Pisgah Creek, and just to the north at a bend in the road lies the Flat Laurel Gap overlook that was intended to serve the visitor center.

There have been some changes around the Pisgah Inn since 1966, but most of these were anticipated in the 1961 and 1965 master plans. A second motel unit was added at the end of the 1960s, and the old inn buildings were finally removed about twenty years later. The site of the old Inn and its outbuildings is now occupied by a service road and storage area leading to the main lodge building. At the other end of the parking lot, the gas station has been closed but the camp store building has not been changed. The quarters for employees—built when the old inn was demolished on the wooded slopes above the store—remain well hidden throughout the summer.

The view from the new Inn over mountains and forests retains a somewhat pristine, mostly undeveloped character, any changes being barely discernable because of the distances involved, so the concept of a pavilion overlooking a wild landscape can still be fully appreciated. There was a proposal in the 1990s to give the Inn buildings a more rustic appearance by disguising their steel frames but this was never implemented and the buildings retain a character, that despite some rustic details, is essentially modern.

Across the road, there have been some alterations at the entrance to the campground including the addition of a house for a park ranger, but within the campground the layout and organization of campsites around the three loop roads remains the same. The most noticeable changes have come as the result of its popularity and intensive use, which have led to the deterioration and replacement of site furniture and some minimal damage to vegetation, particularly in the shrub and ground layers.

The appearance of the comfort stations has changed also with the addition of wooden cladding to hide concrete block walls and replacement of the original roof materials. The most important additions to the campground are the foot bridge on the trail that crosses the marsh to link Loops A and B in the campground, and the new comfort stations on loop B and C in the early 2000s. It is hoped that this will address the threat to the vegetation in the marsh and obviate the need for a more drastic reworking, or perhaps removal of some part, or all of the campground. The campfire circle added in the early 1970s beside Loop B retains much of its original character, although the original design is somewhat utilitarian and slopes are addressed through ramps as opposed to steps.

The Flat Laurel Gap overlook northeast of the campground was used during 2010 as a storage area by contractors repairing rock slides that temporarily closed the Parkway road north of Mt. Pisgah in 2010. The work is now complete.

### Buck Spring Gap

This gap is developed less intensively but it has three areas that were designed during Mission 66: in the center of the gap a parking overlook stands near the site of the Vanderbilt's lodge; to the north of this the Mt. Pisgah parking area provides access to the trail to the summit and to the Shut-In Trail; and on a shoulder of the ridge southwest of the gap the picnic area occupies the former site of the Vanderbilt's garden.

The Buck Spring Gap parking overlook offers a splendid platform for views to the east over the Pisgah National Forest, and, as with the view from the Pisgah Inn, any changes in the landscape are rendered insignificant by distance. The clearing in the woods where the Vanderbilt's lodge stood is no doubt more overgrown than it was fifty years ago when the lodge was demolished, but the retaining walls and steps indicating the location of the garage court are still visible. Motorists driving the Parkway can still occasionally catch a glimpse of the Vanderbilt's springhouse in the edge of the woods near the main Parkway during the winter months when deciduous trees and shrubs have lost their leaves.

The Mt. Pisgah parking area stands in the same place as a parking area developed by the Forest Service. It is located just outside the boundaries of the property retained by the Vanderbilts after the establishment of the National Forest, but now it is reached via a road from Buck Spring Gap overlook. The parking area has not changed since the 1960s, but it acquired additional importance in the 1970s as the terminus of the Shut-in-Trail.

The most noticeable change in the picnic area on the site of the Vanderbilt's vegetable garden is the deterioration and replacement of site furniture. Many of the original picnic tables have been replaced, and, where an original unit survives, the oak bench seat has usually been replaced with a concrete slab or now even plastic wood. The replacement tables are an eclectic mix of fixed and portable units made of concrete, steel and plastic, most of which were not specifically designed for the Parkway.

Near the main entrance to the picnic area from the parking lot, some asphalt paths have been added to create handicapped accessibility to picnic tables with extended table-tops that allow a wheelchair to roll up to and underneath the edge. Some of the steel barbecue stands are disintegrating and need replacement, and almost certainly, some replacements have already been made as indicated by variations in design; likewise, in the campground, fireboxes and grills need replacement.

Condition and maintenance problems are noticeable at many of the stone drinking fountains but these have not yet led to their replacement. In contrast, all the refuse receptacles are replacements; the new ones are designed for maximum visibility for visitors and also to resist bears, raccoons, and other animals that would break into them. These garbage receptacles are utilitarian in design, and the brown color fits in with other NPS signage and site furnishings. The comfort station in the picnic area has undergone the same alterations as the ones in the campground.

### The Network of Trails

The trail system designed to link the various recreational facilities within the Recreation Area also ties them to trails leading into the National Forest. These connections were greatly extended in the 1970s when the Mountains-to-Sea Trail was inaugurated, and the Shut-In Trail was re-established in approximately the same location of its historical route. Within the recreation area, the trails have retained much of their historic character, though trail maintenance is needed, particularly on the ascent to the summit of Pisgah. (This trail lies outside the Parkway boundary but is maintained by the NPS). Maintenance of old stone steps along all trails is an ongoing issue and where repairs have been made there is now a considerable variation in materials.

## The Mission 66 Landscape

The National Register defines seven aspects of integrity that should be assessed to determine if the historic characteristics of a cultural landscape are still present in recognizable form.[14] The degree of integrity of the Mission 66 landscape at Mt. Pisgah is summarized under each of the sub-headings listed below.

### Location

The boundaries of the recreation area are unchanged. The disposition of recreation facilities was a careful response to the mountain topography and it remains unaltered.

### Design

The Mission 66 program sought to fully realize the potential of the area to attract both day visitors and those wishing to stay overnight. One important part of the original program - the visitor center - was never constructed, but the parts that were realized remain operational apart from the gas station that was attached to the camp store. The buildings of the Pisgah Inn provide a notable example of the introduction of a modern architectural aesthetic to the Parkway; however, the demolition of the rustic buildings of the old Inn has made the modernity of the buildings erected in the 1960s less obvious to visitors. The layout of the campground and picnic area remain essentially unaltered, but repairs and replacements over time have changed the character of the comfort stations,

14 Robert R. Page, Cathy A. Gilbert, Susan A. Dolan, *A guide to cultural landscape reports: contents, process, and techniques.* Washington, DC: USDI NPS Cultural Resources, 1998, pp. 71-72.

much of the furniture, and some of the site details. The number of trails has grown with the revival of the Shut-In Trail, but the Mission 66 network is otherwise unchanged.

**Setting**
Forests on the high mountain slopes are exposed to periodic winter storms and there was considerable damage in 2010; this is the result of natural processes and is therefore a part of the historic character of the place. During the summer, the high altitude brings cooler, more moderate temperatures than at lower altitudes in Asheville and points further away. The high elevation also provides the magnificent views that the Parkway has become famous for. Vista management practices continue to keep those views open at Buck Spring Gap and at Pisgah Inn. There have been some changes in the landscapes seen from these vantage points, but most of the foreground and middle ground is controlled by the USFS, and changes in the far distance are not material, are insignificant, and do not detract from the view-sheds.

**Materials**
Important vegetation communities at Buck Spring Gap and Flat Laurel Gap identified by Pittillo and Govus in 1978 appear to remain healthy, but the impact of the campground on the marsh community is a subject of concern. Changes in construction materials introduced in the repair and replacement of furniture such as picnic tables and site details such as paths and steps are altering the Mission 66 character of the campground and picnic area, but the overall integrity is still extant.

**Workmanship**
While most of the original furniture in the campground and picnic area was designed and made specifically for the Parkway, many of the replacements have a mass-produced character. The differences are particularly noticeable in the case of the picnic tables. The effects of reduced park maintenance budgets are also noticeable in some areas. Major vistas are being maintained, but elsewhere some clearings are overgrown, for example around the edges of the picnic area and at the site of Buck Spring Lodge. At the same time, other areas appear worn and threadbare, particularly in the campground where vegetation has thinned and soil erosion is particularly evident on slopes.

**Feeling**
The recreation area continues to be a popular mountain retreat. Its cool summer climate, spectacular views, and colorful roadside displays of rhododendrons and mountain laurels in the spring, and vibrant color in the fall attract large numbers of day visitors from Asheville and overnight visitors from further points. It remains one of the most popular destinations on the Parkway and in that respect has fulfilled the hopes of the Mission 66 planners.

**Association**
This recreation area is a good example of the character of Mission 66 developments along the Parkway. Although the visitor center that was to tell the story of the forest history of this section of the Parkway was never built, all the other components of the Mission 66 plans were realized and nearly all remain operational; however threats to the association of the area with Mission 66 are evident due to a combination of intensive use and reduced maintenance budgets.

## Conclusion: Criteria for Significance

The cultural landscape of the Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area is an important example of NPS Mission 66 planning and design and illustrates the contribution of that program to the completion of the Parkway. The landscape has historical significance under National Register criteria A and C.

**Criterion A : Association with events that have made significant contributions to the broad patterns of our history**

Most of the present landscape of the recreation area was developed under the impetus of Mission 66, an important episode in the history of America's National Parks. During this ten year program, many national parks were enlarged and modernized and came to assume the form in which we find them today. The program was a response to the pressures placed on national parks by a great increase in numbers of visitors that was associated with postwar prosperity, the postwar population boom, an increase in leisure time, and widespread automobile ownership. When the Mission 66 program was launched in 1956, the Parkway was

already the most visited park in the entire National Park System and there was a clear need to increase its capacity to accommodate visitors. This was done by filling in gaps in the designated route between the Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks, and by adding and expanding recreational opportunities along its route.

The construction of the road across Mt. Pisgah completed the Parkway between Asheville and the Great Smoky Mountains, a stretch that was generally acknowledged to include the most spectacular sections, although for many years it had also been the most controversial portion of the entire route of the Parkway. The addition of the recreation area at Mt. Pisgah provided a replacement lodge and restaurant, campground and picnic areas, overlooks and trails to accommodate both day visitors and those wishing to stay overnight, and it soon became one of the most popular destinations on the Parkway.

This represents a continuation of the mountain's earlier popularity as a resort, which began in 1895 with the selection of the site for his Buck Spring Hunting Lodge by George Vanderbilt. With the establishment of the Pisgah National Forest, and building of the Pisgah Forest Inn in 1920, the mountain became a popular summer retreat. Some traces remain from the Vanderbilt period along with minimal interpretation to allow visitors to understand this continuity of use and appreciate the evolution of the place from a private resort for the famously rich to a public resort open to all.

**Criterion C : Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction**

The development of national parks during Mission 66 was guided by Director Wirth's call for new thinking to achieve "the twin objectives of protection and optimum use."[15] The resulting development strategies focused on the improvement and expansion of road networks, the provision of facilities for day visitors, and the construction of new visitor centers.

Plans for Mt. Pisgah followed all three strategies, but taking advantage of the area's established reputation as a resort added overnight accommodations in the form of a new replacement inn and renovated campground. Unfortunately, the impetus provided by Mission 66 was exhausted before construction was complete, and the planned visitor center was never built. Nevertheless, the resulting pattern of development at Mt. Pisgah is a good example of Mission 66 planning, design, and construction.

The completion of the road between Asheville and GRSM involved difficult and expensive construction projects through the Pisgah and Plott Balsam ranges, and added to the continuity of the parkway, designed to take advantage of the high altitude and mountain views and vistas to the Parkway. Within the Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area, provision was made for large numbers of visitors despite the constraints imposed by high altitude and steep slopes. Large numbers of day visitors were anticipated in the design of the Pisgah Inn with its spacious restaurant, and in the layout of the picnic area surrounding its broad grassy clearing. A considerable number of overnight visitors were to be accommodated not only at the new Inn but also at the large campground. Within the campground, two-thirds of the area was set aside to meet the growing demand for spaces for campers using trailers. Finally, the influence of a simple architectural aesthetic, based on modernism and economy is evident in the design of buildings, site furniture, and site details.

Before Mission 66, architects and landscape architects working on Parkway projects had resisted modernist ideas, but now these began to exert a stronger influence. This change can be attributed to several factors including the increasing role of the EODC, the rising costs associated with construction and maintenance of rustic architecture and furniture, and a landscape setting more resembling wilderness, rather than the managed landscape that the Native Americans had maintained and the farms of the pioneer and post colonial period.

The influence of modernist ideas is particularly noticeable in the main building at the new Pisgah Inn, which is designed as a steel and glass pavilion overlooking wilderness. Some influence is also evident in the architecture of the other buildings at the Inn, plus the camp store, and the comfort

15 Carr, p. 71.

stations, though the latter have undergone a number of alterations.

Much of the furniture in the campground and picnic area is also less rustic than equivalent items installed at earlier recreation areas. This is particularly noticeable in the design of the concrete picnic tables, steel fireboxes, and barbeque grills. At the same time, there remain some rustic pieces, particularly the stone-pedestal drinking fountains.

The results illustrate a park in transition, still guided by ideas espoused by Abbott and his associates in the early years of the project, but also open to new ideas if these provided the means to expand the capacity of the Parkway and bring it to completion under the auspices of Mission 66.

**Period of Significance**

The historic period associated with the Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area should be defined as the years during which the Mission 66 program for the area was realized. The period opens in July, 1960 with the start of road construction at Flat Laurel Gap, part of Project 2U1, and it extends till 1972, when the amphitheatre (the last component of the plans drawn up during Mission 66) was constructed.

Traces from earlier periods in the history of the mountain do not retain enough integrity to be included within the historic period; however a few traces of the Vanderbilt period - including the spring house, clearings at Buck Spring Gap, retaining walls along the picnic area, and several extant trails - were incorporated into the Mission 66 landscape, and these traces can provide a basis for interpretation of these earlier periods by the NPS and possibly provide a catalyst for new investment within the recreation area.

# Chapter 7: Recommendations

## Recommendations for Treatment of the Mt. Pisgah Recreation Area

Many cultural landscape reports include detailed preservation recommendations and plans. Since this was not the purpose of this contract, nor our charge as researchers and authors, the recommendations instead focus on the small-scale features that were the purpose of this report.

### Approach

The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties* identifies four possible treatments: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Landscapes, by their very nature are complicated and rarely fit within one particular treatment regime. Plants and trees grow, erosion changes topography, and in a project as large as the Blue Ridge Parkway, construction occurred over a period of years and decades. There is no clearly defined "point" in time that cleanly fits the parameters of the Secretary's four standards.

The recommended treatment is a combination of restoration and reconstruction. Where documentation exists to return small-scale elements to the simple designs that are still extant in the campground and picnic areas, this approach will create the degree of continuity and uniformity that park managers believe elevates the experience for visitors.

There is adequate documentation for designs that were installed during the Mission 66 period included in Appendix C of the report. These documents detail materials, patinas, and finishes, and dimensions.

### Recommendations

#### A. Parkway roadsides (Mile marker 409.6 to 407.6)

The consistency of the parkway roadsides is apparent and appropriate for the overall parkway. Shoulders are maintained at a width in keeping with safe travel for automobiles and motorcycles. Any treatment of guardrails - whether existing or added in the future - should refer to the Jaeger Company's report, *Roadside Cultural Resources Preservation: A Guide to Assessing the Effects of Roadside Safety Implementation Projects on the Blue Ridge Parkway,* completed in 2008. This study was conducted as a collaborative effort between Jaeger Company and NPS staff and won an ASLA Honor Award in 2009.

#### B. Buck Spring Gap: Parking overlook and site of the Vanderbilt lodge.

Signage to the Vanderbilt Lodge area is almost nonexistent, and needs to be studied and improved in significant ways. Visitors to the parking overlook are barely aware that they are in close proximity to the area where the Vanderbilt Lodge once stood, not so long ago.

Considering that the Vanderbilt legacy is one of the major reasons that Pisgah Mountain has developed into one of the most scenic portions of the parkway, the connection with the foundations of the National Forest Service, and the connections with the resort milieu that made the area an important tourism destination, this is an opportunity for interpretation to the public.

Even though there is a remnant foundation of a small building downslope from the site of the lodge, some stone stairways, and the retaining walls that defined the carriage and automobile garage area, the actual size and location of the other buildings, covered passageways, and walks is not currently interpreted. The complex was just that - an extensive complex of buildings that

housed the Vanderbilt family and their guests, and also the extensive support staff required even at the informal mountain location of the lodge, as opposed to the formal site of their home on the outskirts of Asheville.

**C. Picnic Area**

This Picnic Area, developed during the Mission 66 phase, is an excellent example of secluded recreation grounds, separated from the noise of the parkway road, with a fully adequate comfort station and a substantial lawn area for play and organized games.

The largest number of small-scale features associated with the picnic area are the tables and benches, originally designed in 1963. (See Exhibit 3 in appendix C). Some of the original table tops and bench seats with integral stone and dye that have aged and weathered are still extant, and create a sense of permanence and history.

As some of these original small-scale features have deteriorated or been damaged, they have been replaced with an increasingly disparate collection of aluminum, one-piece units with no regional character. Also, some of the seating has been replaced with plastic wood seating which is not of sufficient strength to hold up visitors without sagging in the middle. These recycled plastic wood planks require reinforcement in order to maintain structural stability for seating.

The one-piece cast concrete table with wood bench has become the new standard replacement due to its availability, ease of maintenance and harmony with the cultural landscape. See Figure 49 in Chapter 5 Existing Conditions for reference.

The original pinic table drawings are available and included in this report for reference when need for repairs is necessary.

**D. Pisgah Inn: restaurant/gift shop and lodge, parking area, camp store, and employees' quarters.**

As noted in the assessment in the previous chapter, the development of the Inn as a component of the Mission 66 upgrades establishes the modern nature of the Inn facility, especially the middle hotel area and the restaurant, with notable rustic flourishes at the "Tree Tops" portion of the hotel and some of the foundation structures of the restaurant and gift shop.

While this development works well overall, there are several areas where upgrades could add to the overall scheme, and align it more closely with the larger parkway goals.

The parking lot is effectively screened in portions, but, completely open to the parkway in other portions. These gaps should be closed, and the screening should form a continuous barrier between the parkway corridor and the extensive parking area for the hotel and restaurant.

Islands within the parking area need additional planting materials, including trees and understory to provide shade, delineate and scale the areas to a more rustic/human scale, and to further screen the area from the parkway. We did not locate any PLUMS drawings that offered designs for these areas. Adding plant materials would not affect historic integrity.

**E. Flat Laurel Gap Overlook**

This area was originally designated for the Visitor Center that was never realized during the period of Mission 66 improvements made to the MPRA. A possible use for this area is for redevelopment into a campground area to serve larger motor homes, which was an agenda item discussed with STA during its initial site visit in April/May of 2010 with Tracy Stakely and Steven Kidd.

The parking area is relatively flat, undeveloped, and would require minimal removal of extant material to convert it into an area for larger motor homes. The position is away from but not remote from the existing campground loops, and lends itself to installation of parking pads, electrical connections, and landscape improvements, such as the planting of a dense screening of trees and accompanying understory layer. Without a dense screen, this parking area for larger motor homes would be a distraction as visitors traveled along the Parkway.

**F. Campground**

(i) Campsites

Included in this report is a comprehensive and detailed inventory of each campsite, with photographs of each tent pad, cooking grill, light pole, set of steps, and any other elements unique to

that site.

A major complaint we heard from visitors and maintenance staff alike was that the pads had deteriorated over time, that the drainage swales on the upslope side of the pads filled with soil, rendering the swales completely ineffectual. Originally, each pad had a six inch deep swale surrounding the pad that directed runoff around the pad and then out at the lowest topographic point; this kept the pads on high ground, and the campers dry in their tents. This is no longer the case.

Water flows downslope, onto and across the pads, and in some cases is trapped on the pads within the surrounding outline of stone or concrete, creating "pools" of water under the campers. This is obviously a major issue and will require that each campsite be regraded to establish the correct drainage on each pad. The maintenance department stated that some of the camping pads are famous for flooding, and are no longer rented to visitors. Each campsite will need to be re engineered, looking at the erosion patterns and regrading and reseeding  all areas where soil is disturbed.

There are no electrical hookups at the camping pads. In this day and age of widespread electronic communications, it is important that this amenity is provided for visitors. Cell phone and Wi-Fi coverage is extremely spotty, and is a major concern, especially with younger campers, which is a demographic important to long-term sustainability of any park or site that depends on visitors for usage and revenue streams. With electrical hookups, there would be no need for campers to use generators, which would greatly reduce that amount of noise pollution from larger campers and motor homes. Also, this would reduce fumes settling and spreading across the campground, creating air pollution and environmental issues within the campground.  Any new underground electrical instillation should comply with the recommendation outlined in the Blue Rige Parkway Virginia and North Carolina Final General Management Plan/Enviromental Impact Statement, Januray 2013. See page 489 of the General Management Plan for reference.

With the installation of much more hardscape on the campsites for parking and drives, it is important to institute management regimes that reduce or eliminate runoff. Dry wells located at any area where runoff is concentrated would do much towards capturing excessive flow, recharging the underlying aquifers, and can be utilized as an important teaching tool for visitors to the park. Attached in Appendix D is an extensive inventory of treatment examples that can be used to reduce runoff within the campground, to reduce the impact of runoff into the adjacent bog ecosystem.

(ii) Amphitheater

The amphitheater area is showing significant signs of age and wear, and recent replacements of seating using modular plastic wood have not been effective. In fact, the distance between supports for the benches has required the use of cinder blocks to "prop up" the plastic wood replacement slats, as they do not have the structural strength to prevent significant sagging.

All of that being said, this area is in dire need of redesign. The slope of the seating area greatly exceeds handicapped standards, so conversion to step pads held in place by concrete or stone would do much to improve the appearance of the asphalt surface that currently covers the entire area, with broader ramps graded and installed for handicapped access.

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# Appendix A

**Campground Loop A, B, C & D**

# Loop A Campground Sites

MATCHLINE A (LOOP C & D)

TO LOOP D

WELL NO.1

WELL NO.2

FLAT LAUREL
BOG

COMFORT
STATION

LOOP B

LOOP A

COMFORT
STATION

COMFORT
STATION

FEE COLLECTION

TRAIL TO
PICNIC AREA

FRYING PAN
GAP TRAIL

DUMP STATION

RANGER HOUSING

BLRI-PARKWAY 215

N/A

HC

## LEGEND

- ASPHALT PATH
- GRASS AND/OR DIRT PATH
- GRAVEL PATH
- GRASS-PAVE PATH (CONCRETE UNIT PAVERS)
- PICNIC TABLE
- LITTER RECEPTACLE
- (W) WATER FOUNTAIN
- (F) FIRE PIT
- (L) LANTERN STAND
- [B] BEAR BOX
- [T] TENT PAD
- N/A SPACE UNUSED / UNMARKED
- HC HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE SPACE

## NOTES:

1. Amenity locations are approximate. Verify exact locations in field.
2. Vehicular roadway surfacing is asphalt unless otherwise noted.

date : 11-12-2011

scale : 1" = 100'-0"

drawing : L1.02

loop a + b

Mt. Pisgah Campground

sta
suzanne turner associates
landscape architecture
historic landscape preservation

| Loop A | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| site # | | fire pit | picnic table | stairs | lantern pole | tent pad | bear box | notes |
| 1 | | IGFP | GRPL | NWS | YES | N/A | N/A | Concrete bench on ground |
| HOST | | SCFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | originally A2 |
| 3 | | IGFP | NRPL-S | SGS | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 4 | | FLFP | STCB-R | SGS | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 5 | | IGFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 6 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 7 | | IGFP | NRPL-H | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | Handicap site |
| 8 | | FLFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 9 | | FLFP | NRPL-H | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | Handicap site Asphalt pad for table |
| 10 | | FLFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 11 | | FLFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 12 | | CPFP | CTWB | SGS | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 13 | | FLFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | Gravel |
| 14 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | SGS | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 15 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 16 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | SGS | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 17 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 18 | | FLFP | GRPL | SGS | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 19 | | IGFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 20 | | FLFP | CTWB-R | SGS | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 21 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 22 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 23 | | IGFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 24 | | FLFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 25 | | IGFP | SCTB | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 26 | | FLFP | NRPL | SGS | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 27 | | SCFP | CTWB | NWS | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 28 | | IGFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 29 | | IGFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 30 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 31 | | IGFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 32 | | FLFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 33 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |

## A1








## A2/HOST








## A3











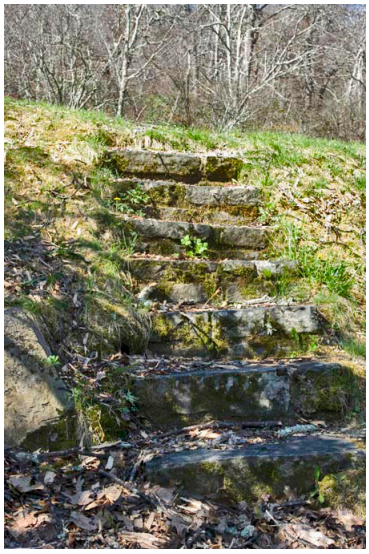

## A4











## A5








## A6







## A7



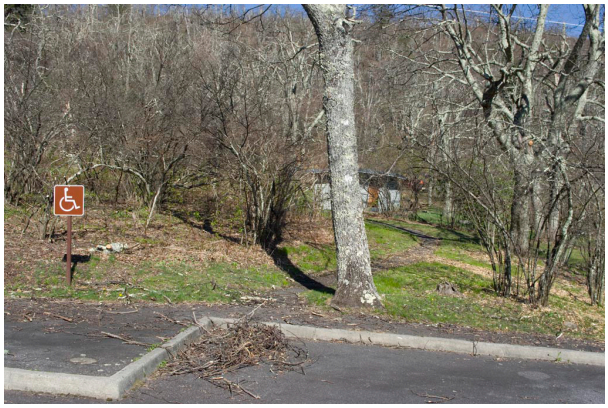
















**A8**




**A9**









**A10**












## A11





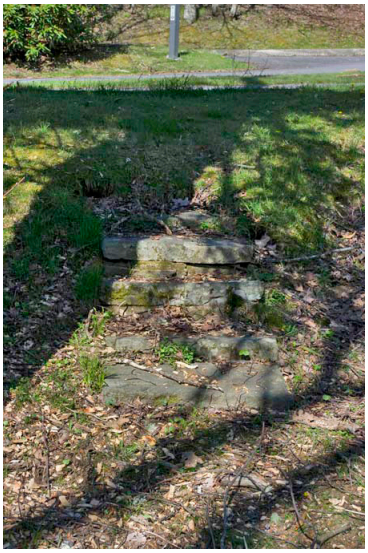



## A12

















## A13








A14







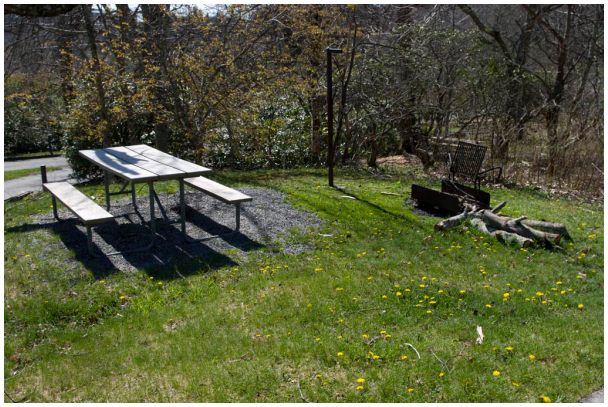







## A15



## A16











## A17












## A18










## A19




## A20


















## A21
















**A22**




**A23**







## A24






## A25










## A26









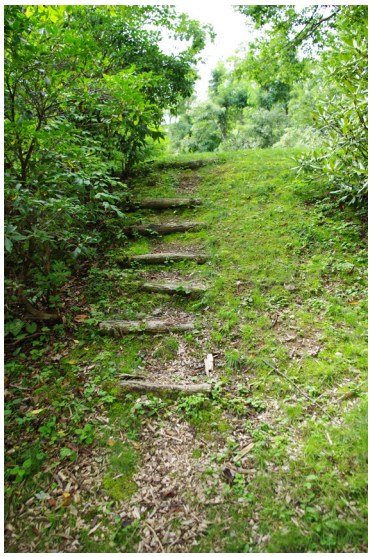
## A27











## A28









## A29










## A30




## A31










## A33




## A32










## A Comfort Station










# Loop B Campground Sites

MATCHLINE A (LOOP C & D)

TO LOOP D

WELL NO.1

WELL NO.2

FLAT LAUREL
BOG

COMFORT
STATION

LOOP B

LOOP A

COMFORT
STATION

COMFORT
STATION

FEE COLLECTION

TRAIL TO
PICNIC AREA

FRYING PAN
GAP TRAIL

DUMP STATION

RANGER HOUSING

BLRI-PARKWAY 215

N/A

HC

## LEGEND

- ASPHALT PATH
- GRASS AND/OR DIRT PATH
- GRAVEL PATH
- GRASS-PAVE PATH (CONCRETE UNIT PAVERS)
- PICNIC TABLE
- LITTER RECEPTACLE
- (W) WATER FOUNTAIN
- (F) FIRE PIT
- (L) LANTERN STAND
- [B] BEAR BOX
- [T] TENT PAD
- N/A SPACE UNUSED / UNMARKED
- HC HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE SPACE

## NOTES:

1. Amenity locations are approximate. Verify exact locations in field.
2. Vehicular roadway surfacing is asphalt unless otherwise noted.

date : 11-12-2011

scale : 1" = 100'-0"

drawing : L1.02

loop a + b

Mt. Pisgah Campground

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suzanne turner associates
landscape architecture
historic landscape preservation

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Loop B** | | | | | | | | |
| **site #** | | **fire pit** | **picnic table** | **stairs** | **lantern pole** | **tent pad** | **bear box** | **notes** |
| 1 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | NWS | YES | WTP | N/A | Gravel |
| 2 | | IGFP | NRPL-S | WBS | YES | N/A | N/A | Gravel |
| 3 | | IGFP | NRPL-S | SGS | YES | N/A | N/A | Gravel - water fountain visable |
| 4 | | IGFP | NRPL | SGS | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 5 | | IGFP | NRPL | SGS | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 6 | | FLFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | WTP | N/A | Gravel |
| 7 | | IGFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | WTP | N/A | Gravel |
| 8 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | Gravel |
| 9 | | FLFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | WTP | N/A | Gravel |
| 10 | | IGFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | WTP | N/A | Gravel |
| 11 | | IGFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | WTP | N/A | Gravel |
| 12 | | FLFP | GRPL | SGS+NWS | YES | N/A | N/A | Gravel |
| 13 | | IGFP | GRPL | WBS | YES | WTP | N/A | Gravel |
| 14 | | FLFP | NRPL | SGS | YES | N/A | N/A | Gravel - erosion |
| 15 | | FLFP | GRPL | NWS | YES | N/A | N/A | Gravel |
| 16 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | WTP | N/A | |
| 17 | | FLFP | NRPL | WBS | YES | N/A | N/A | Gravel |
| 18 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | NWS | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 19 | | FLFP | CTWB-H | N/A | YES | CSP | N/A | Handicap - concrete paving and tent pad |
| 20 | | FLFP | NRPL-H | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | Handicap - asphalt pad |
| 21 | | FLFP | CTWB-R | N/A | YES | WTP | N/A | Gravel |
| 22 | | IGFP | NRPL | NWS | YES | N/A | N/A | Gravel |
| 23 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | WTP | N/A | |
| 24 | | IGFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 25 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | Gravel |
| 26 | | FLFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | Gravel |
| 27 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 28 | | FLFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |
| 29 | | FLFP | CTWB | N/A | YES | N/A | N/A | |

## B1














**B2**








**B3**

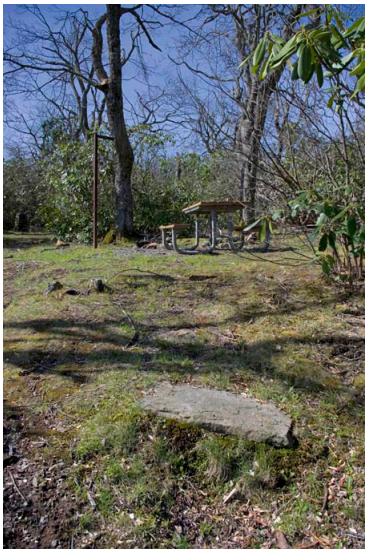


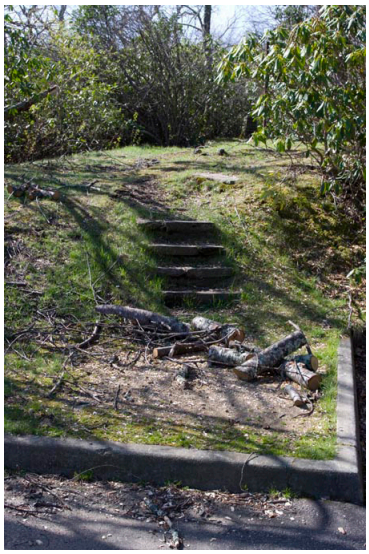


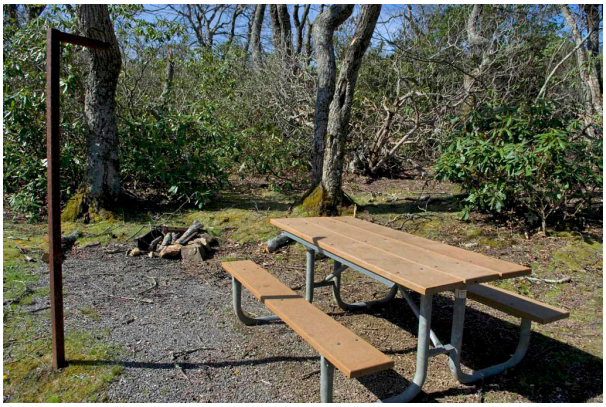



**B4**







**B5**









**B6**






**B7**









**B8**






**B9**









**B10**








## B11








## B12








## B13









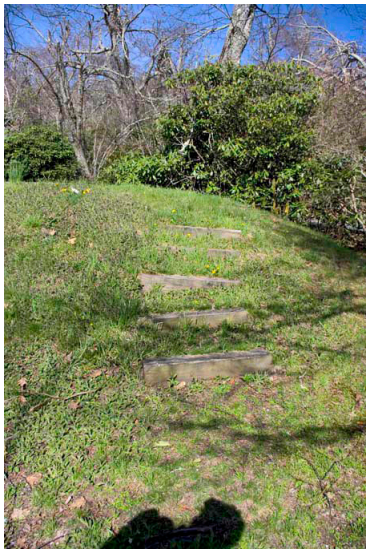








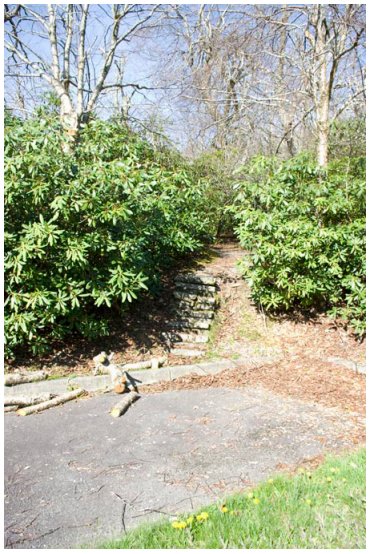


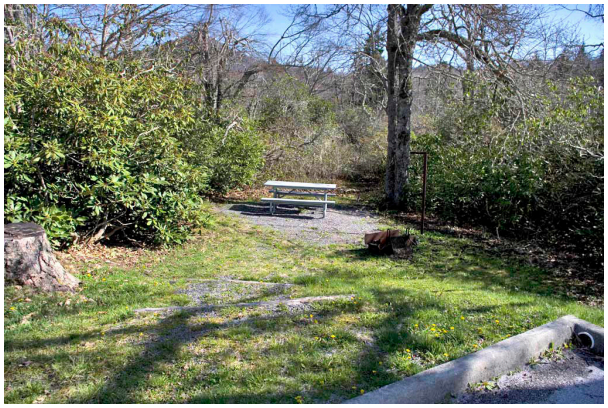




**B14**











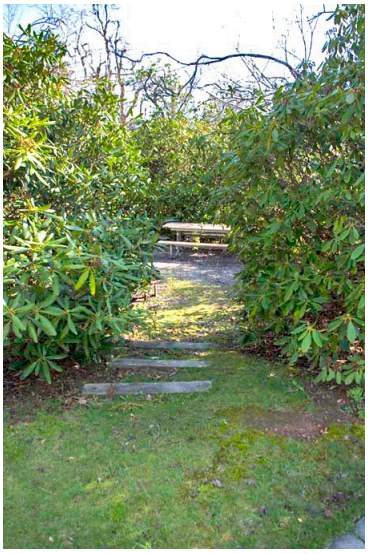
## B16




## B15







## B17
















**B18**

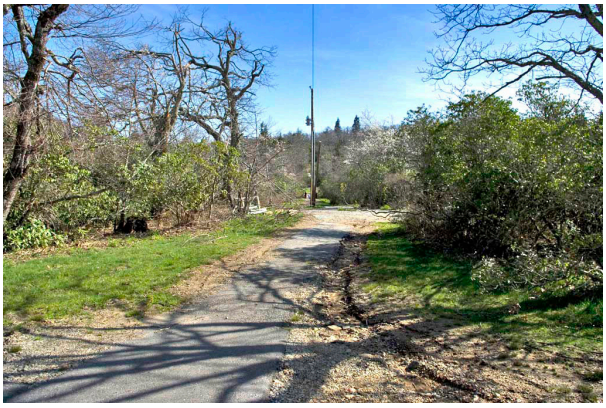





**B19**





















**B20**
















**B21**










**B22**




**B23**










B24






B25









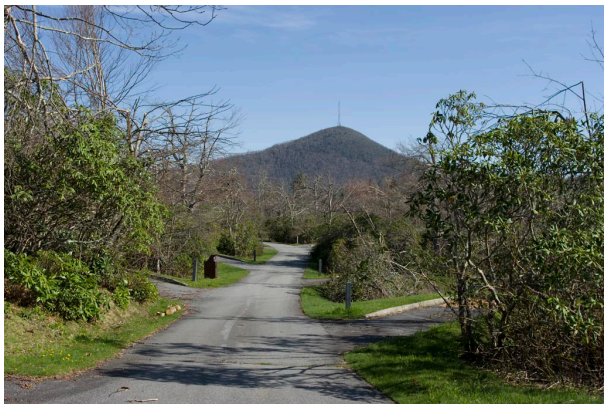







## B26



**B27**




**B28**















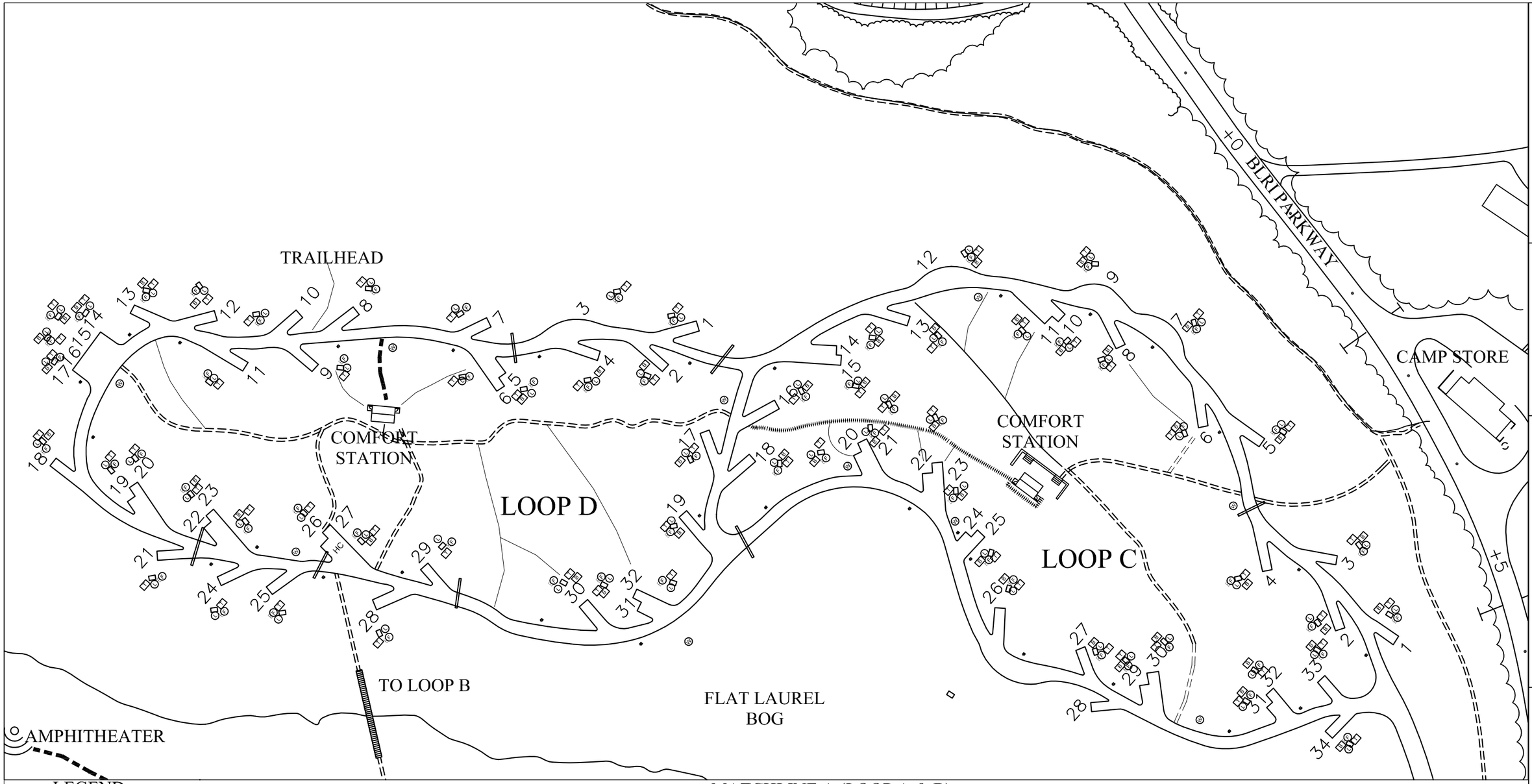

**B29**








# Loop C Campground Sites




LEGEND

- ASPHALT PATH
- GRASS AND/OR DIRT PATH
- GRAVEL PATH
- GRASS-PAVE PATH (CONCRETE UNIT PAVERS)
- PICNIC TABLE
- LITTER RECEPTACLE
- (W) WATER FOUNTAIN
- (F) FIRE PIT
- (L) LANTERN STAND
- (B) BEAR BOX
- (T) TENT PAD
- HC HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE SPACE

NOTES:

1. Amenity locations are approximate. Verify exact locations in field.
2. Vehicular roadway surfacing is asphalt unless otherwise noted.

date : 11-12-2011
scale : 1" = 100'-0"
drawing : L1.01

loop c + d

Mt. Pisgah Campground

sta
suzanne turner associates
landscape architecture
historic landscape preservation

| Loop C | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| site # | | fire pit | picnic table | stairs | lantern pole | tent pad | bear box | notes |
| 1 | | SCFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | WTP | YES | Gravel |
| 2 | | SCFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel - concrete tent pad |
| 3 | | SCFP | GRPL | SGS | YES | WTP | Yes | concrete table top used as steps |
| 4 | | FLFP | GRPL | NWS+SGS | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel |
| 5 | | SCFP | NRPL | WBS | YES | WTP | YES | concrete benches as steps to tent pad |
| 6 | | SCFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | WTP | YES | Gravel slope |
| 7 | | FLFP | NRPL | SGS+NWS | YES | CTP | YES | erosion/gravel |
| 8 | | SCFP | NRPL-S | SGS+NWS | YES | WTP | YES | Gravel |
| 9 | | FLFP | NRPL | NWS | YES | CSP | YES | concrete table top to stop erosion |
| 10 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | SGS | YES | CSP | YES | |
| 11 | | SCFP | CTWB-R | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | |
| 12 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | SGS+NWS | YES | CSP | YES | |
| 13 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | concrete bench on groun in front of FP |
| 14 | | FLFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | |
| 15 | | N/A | NRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel - shares parking w/ 14 |
| 16 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel |
| 17 | | SCFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel |
| 18 | | FLFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel |
| 19 | | FLFP | SCTB-R | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel- original wood benches on ground @ site |
| 20 | | FLFP | NRPL-SH | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel / open |
| 21 | | FLFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel |
| 22 | | SCFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | |
| 23 | | | | | | | | shower parking no site/maintenance access |
| 24 | | IGFP | NRPL-H | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel |
| 25 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | WBS | YES | WTP | YES | Gravel |
| 26 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | WTP | YES | Gravel |
| 27 | | SCFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | WTP | YES | Gravel |
| 28 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | CSP | N/A | Gravel |
| 29 | | FLFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel |
| 30 | | FLFP | GRPL | NWS | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel - table top melted by pot |
| 31 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | WTP | YES | Gravel |
| 32 | | SCFP | GRPL | NWS | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel |
| 33 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | WTP | YES | Gravel |
| 34 | | SCFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel |

**C1**




**C2**












## C3












## C4



## C5














## C6


















## C7








## C8









## C9














**C10**














## C11
















## C12










## C13






## C14





## C15


















## C16



















**C17**








## C18








## C19


















## C20












## C21



## C22






















C23




C24









## C25
















## C26










**C27**






**C28**


















**C29**

## C30












## C31









## C32








## C33














## C34



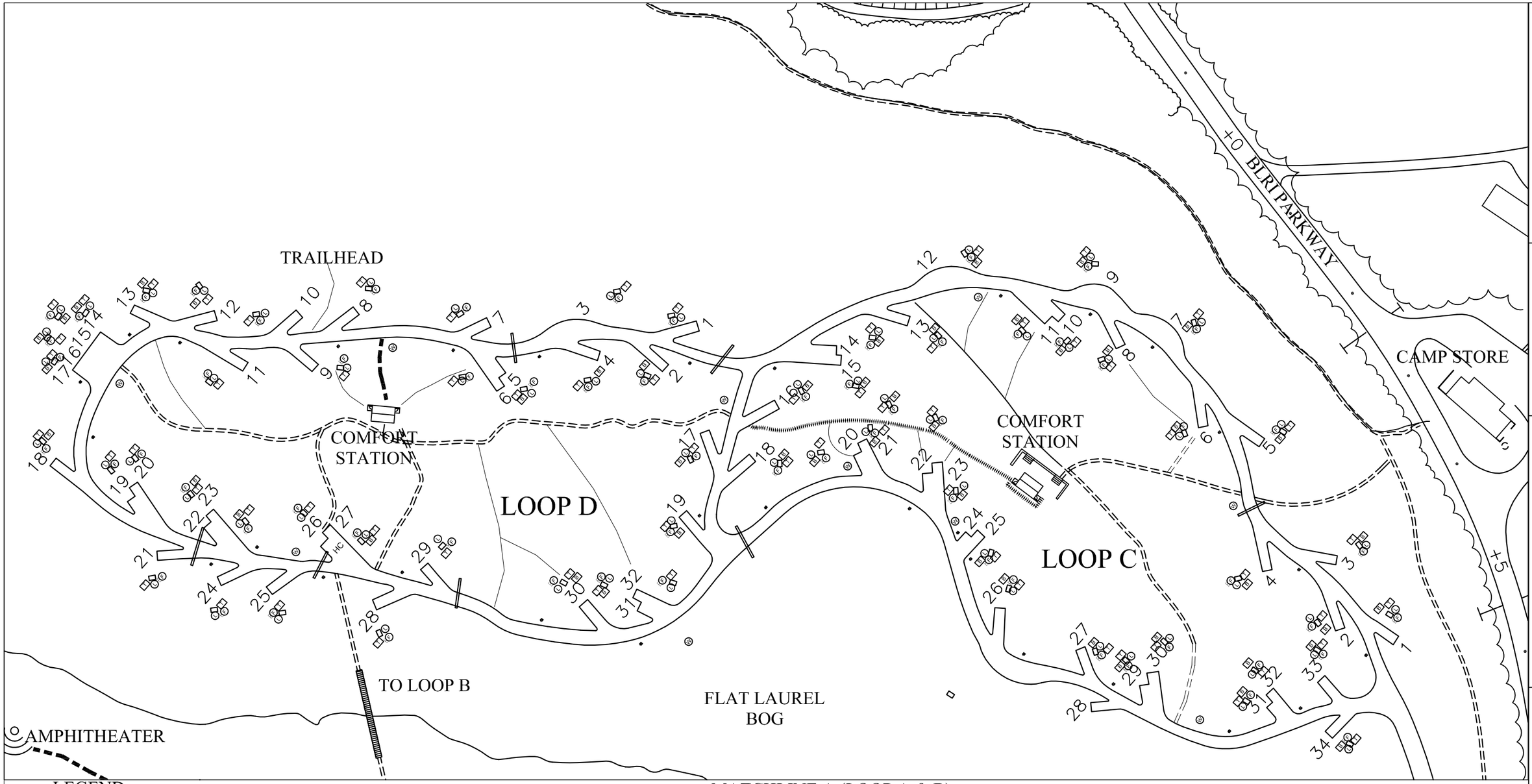









# Loop D Campground Sites




LEGEND

- ASPHALT PATH
- GRASS AND/OR DIRT PATH
- GRAVEL PATH
- GRASS-PAVE PATH (CONCRETE UNIT PAVERS)
- PICNIC TABLE
- LITTER RECEPTACLE
- (W) WATER FOUNTAIN
- (F) FIRE PIT
- (L) LANTERN STAND
- (B) BEAR BOX
- (T) TENT PAD
- HC HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE SPACE

NOTES:

1. Amenity locations are approximate. Verify exact locations in field.
2. Vehicular roadway surfacing is asphalt unless otherwise noted.

date : 11-12-2011
scale : 1" = 100'-0"
drawing : L1.01

loop c + d

Mt. Pisgah Campground

sta
suzanne turner associates
landscape architecture
historic landscape preservation

| Loop D | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| site # | | fire pit | picnic table | stairs | lantern pole | tent pad | bear box | notes |
| 1 | | FLFP | GRPL | SGS | YES | CSP | N/A | Gravel |
| 2 | | FLFP | GRPL | SGS | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel |
| 3 | | SCFP | GRPL | SGS | YES | CSP | N/A | erosion |
| 4 | | FLFP | GRPL | SGS | YES | CSP | YES | |
| 5 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | erosion/visible drain pipes |
| 6 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | CSP | N/A | |
| 7 | | FLFP | GRPL | SGS | YES | CSP | N/A | Gravel - concrete table top reused for eroison control other half under table |
| 8 | | SCFP | GRPL | NWS | YES | CSP | N/A | Gravel - concrete bench under table |
| 9 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | N/A | |
| 10 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | SGS | YES | CSP | N/A | Gravel - erosion |
| 11 | | FLFP | GRPL | WBS | NO | CSP | N/A | concrete table used as steps |
| 12 | | SCFP | STCB | NWS | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel - erosion |
| 13 | | FLFP | GRPL | NWS | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel - erosion |
| 14 | | FLFP | CTWB | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel |
| 15 | | SCFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel - concrete table top |
| 16 | | SCFP | NRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel - concrete table top |
| 17 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | NWS | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel |
| 18 | | FLFP | SCTB-R | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel |
| 19 | | FLFP | GRPL | NWS | YES | CSP | N/A | Gravel |
| 20 | | FLFP | GRPL | SGS | YES | CSP | N/A | Gravel - erosion |
| 21 | | SCFP | NRPL-S | SGS | YES | WTP | N/A | Gravel - both concrete benches used as steps |
| 22 | | FLFP | SCTB-R | WBS | YES | CSP | N/A | Gravel |
| 23 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | concrete table tops reused |
| 24 | | SCFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | CSP | N/A | Gravel |
| 25 | | IGFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | WTP | N/A | Gravel |
| 26 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | N/A | asphalt paved |
| 27 | | FLFP | NRPL-SH | N/A | YES | CSP | N/A | Handicap - asphalt paved |
| 28 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | WTP | N/A | Gravel |
| 29 | | SCFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | WTP | N/A | Gravel |
| 30 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel |
| 31 | | FLFP | GRPL | N/A | YES | CSP | YES | Gravel - concrete bench |
| 32 | | FLFP | NRPL-S | N/A | YES | CSP | N/A | Gravel |

## D1















## D2








## D3

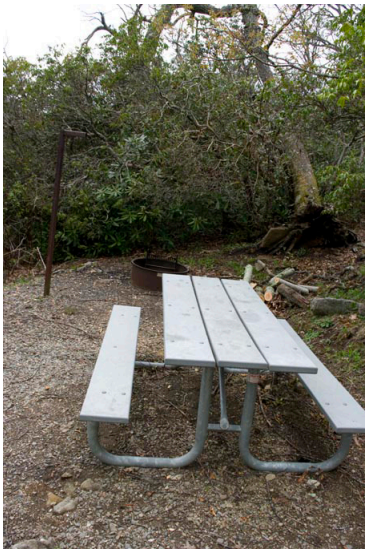
















## D4















**D5**






**D6**














**D7**















**D8**











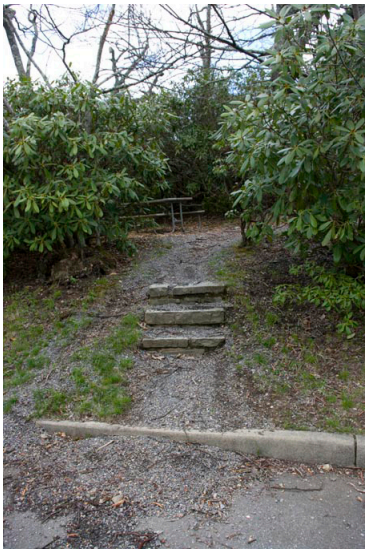

**D9**















**D10**










## D11




















**D12**










**D13**






**D14**















**D15**















## D16
















**D17**



## D18





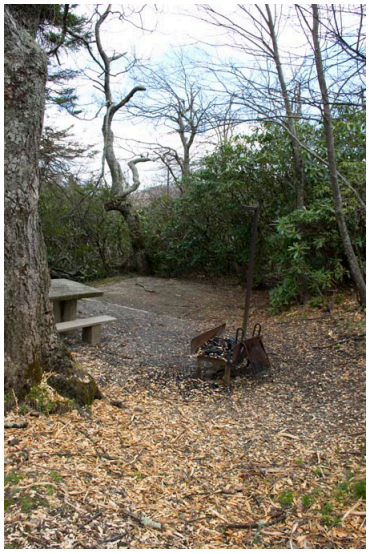












**D19**










## D20























## D21















## D22










## D23




## D24








## D25








## D26




## D27






## D28














## D29








## D31




## D30











**D32**

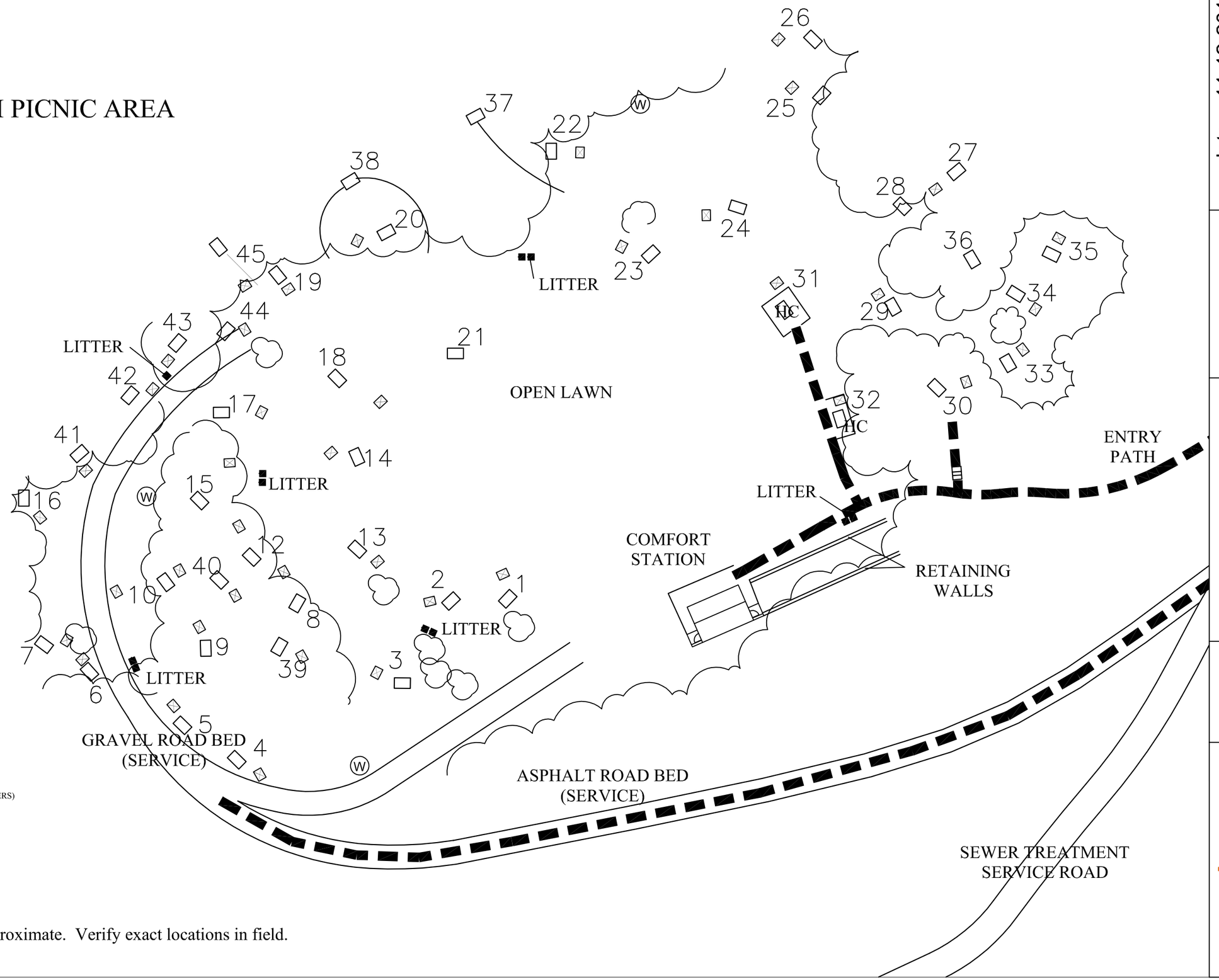





# Appendix B

**Picnic Area**

# MOUNT PISGAH PICNIC AREA




LEGEND

- ASPHALT PATH
- GRASS AND/OR DIRT PATH
- GRAVEL PATH
- GRASS-PAVE PATH (CONCRETE UNIT PAVERS)
- PICNIC TABLE
- LITTER RECEPTACLE
- (W) WATER FOUNTAIN
- BBQ PIT
- TREE/VEGETATION DRIPLINE
- HC HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE SPACE

NOTES:

1. Amenity locations are approximate. Verify exact locations in field.

date : 11-12-2011
scale : 1" = 40'-0"
drawing : L1.03

picnic area

Mt. Pisgah

sta
suzanne turner associates
landscape architecture
historic landscape preservation

| Picnic Area | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| site # | | fire pit | picnic table | notes |
| 1 | | BBQ | CTWB-R | |
| 2 | | BBQ | SCTB | concrete benches |
| 3 | | BBQ | GRPL | |
| 4 | | BBQ | GRPL | |
| 5 | | BBQ | SCTB | |
| 6 | | BBQ | CTWB-R | concrete benches |
| 7 | | BBQ | CTWB-R | concrete benches |
| 8 | | BBQ | CTWB-R | concrete benches |
| 9 | | BBQ | CTWB-R | concrete benches |
| 10 | | BBQ w/ 11 | GRPL | |
| 11 | | BBQ w/ 10 | SCTB | |
| 12 | | BBQ | CTWB-R | concrete benches |
| 13 | | BBQ | SCTB | |
| 14 | | BBQ | SCTB | |
| 15 | | BBQ | SCTB | |
| 16 | | BBQ | SCTB | |
| 17 | | BBQ | CTWB-R | |
| 18 | | BBQ | GRPL | |
| 19 | | BBQ | GRPL | |
| 20 | | BBQ | SCTB | |
| 21 | | BBQ | GRPL | |
| 22 | | BBQ | SCTB | |
| 23 | | BBQ | NRPL | |
| 24 | | BBQ | NRPL | |

**PA1**







**PA2**











**PA3**





**PA4**













**PA5**

**PA6**













**PA7**



**PA8**



**PA9**













## PA10







## PA11

**no longer exist**

## PA12









**PA13**



**PA14**













**PA15**



**PA16**















**PA17**

**PA18**





## PA19











## PA20



**PA21**

















**PA22**









**PA23**







**PA24**









**PA25**



**PA26**

















**PA27**





**PA28**







**PA29**















**PA30**





## PA31













## PA32











## PA33



## PA34

















**PA35**





**PA36**





## PA37















PA39



PA38













**PA40**





**PA41**





## PA42













## PA43







## PA 44











**PA 45**









# Appendix C

**Drawings from the Blue Ridge Parkway archives.**

**Exhibit 1: Typical Tent Platform, circa 1947**
**Exhibit 2: Typical Tent Platform, circa 1953**
**Exhibit 3: Standard Picnic Tables, circa 1963**
**Exhibit 4: Standard Picnic Tables, circa 1950**
**Exhibit 5: Standard Drinking Fountain, circa 1962**
**Exhibit 6: Campground & Picnic Area: Roads and Comfort Station, Picnic Area, circa 1965**
**Exhibit 7: Campground & Picnic Area: Roads and Comfort Station, Loop A, circa 1965**
**Exhibit 8: Campground & Picnic Area: Roads and Comfort Station,Loop B & C, circa 1965**
**Exhibit 9: Campground & Picnic Area: Roads and Comfort Station, Loop B & C, circa 1966**
**Exhibit 10: Campground & Picnic Area: Roads and Comfort Station, Loop A, circa 1966**
**Exhibit 11: Campground Details, circa 1966**
**Exhibit 12: Proposed Building for Mt. Pisgah Inn, circa 1963**
**Exhibit 13: Pisgah Inn, circa 1968**
**Exhibit 14: Original Pisgah Inn survey**
**Exhibit 15: Pisgah Inn Site Plan, circa 1969**
**Exhibit 16: Mt. Pisgah Employee Quarters, Preliminary Site Plan, circa 1986**
**Exhibit 17: Dormitories for the Pisgah Inn, circa 1987**
**Exhibit 18: Mt. Pisgah Campground: Campfire Circle, circa 1972**
**Exhibit 19: Planting Plan for Mt. Pisgah Inn, circa 1986**
**Exhibit 20: Mt. Pisgah Water/Sewer System Rehabilitation: Phasing Map and Key Sheet, circa 1997**
**Exhibit 21: Topo Pisgah**
**Exhibit 22: Mt. Pisgah PA Connection: Vanderbilt Estate, circa 1956**
**Exhibit 23: Mt. Pisgah PA Connection: Vanderbilt Estate, circa 1958**
**Exhibit 24: BLRI Parkway Road Alignment around Buck Spring Lodge Site**
**Exhibit 25: BLRI Parkway Road Alignment near Pisgah Inn**
**Exhibit 26: Concessioner's Lodge Development & Visitor Center, circa 1965**
**Exhibit 27: Developed Areas: Proposed Visitor Center, circa 1961**
**Exhibit 28: Mt. Pisgah Campground (As Built)**
**Exhibit 29: Shut in Trail**
**Exhibit 30: 1946 Master Plan**
**Exhibit 31: Historic American Engineering Record, NPS, Ian Shanklin 1997**

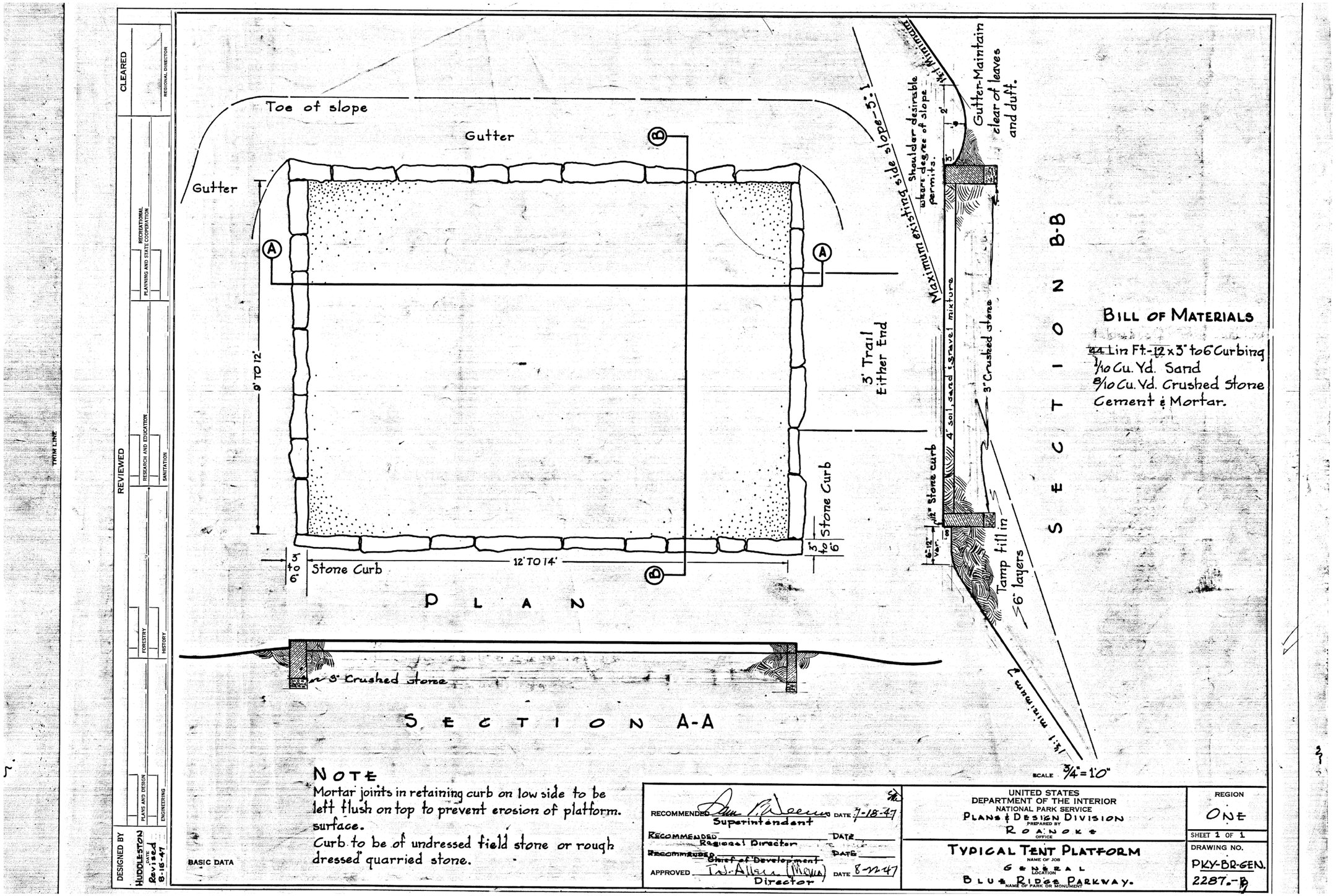



**Exhibit 1: Typical Tent Platform, circa 1947**

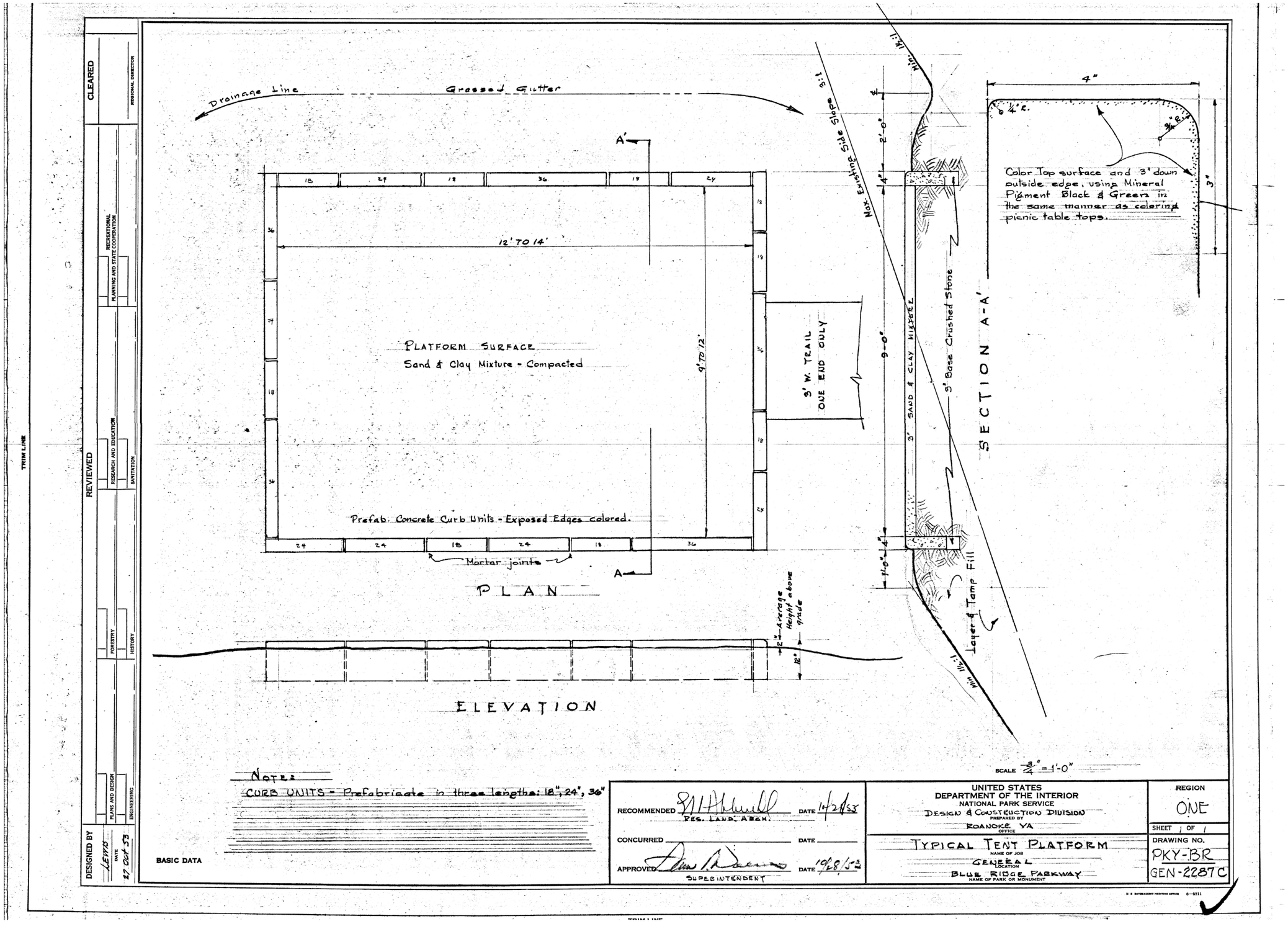



**Exhibit 2: Typical Tent Platform, circa 1953**

TRIM LINE

NOTES: USE LIGHT WEIGHT CONCRETE; 110 lbs. PER CUBIC FOOT; USE 7 BAGS OF CEMENT, 1260 lbs. OF PETERSBURG SIZE NO. 100 TO NO. 4 SAND, 4-6 OUNCES OF DAREX AIR ENTRAINING AGENT, AND 770 lbs. OF NO. 4 TO ¾" LIGHT WEIGHT AGGREGATE PER CUBIC YARD OF CONCRETE. USE ONLY GREEN AND BLACK MINERAL PIGMENT COLORS AS DIRECTED IN CONCRETE.

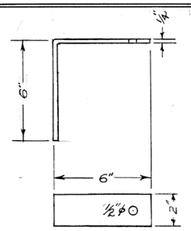
BENCHES CONSTRUCTED OF SEASONED OAK TIMBERS TREATED BY SOAKING 15 MIN. IN PENTACHLOROPHENOL. SECURE BENCH WITH ⅜" x 2" LAG SCREW THROUGH STRAP. TIMBERS SHALL BE DRESSED WITH EDGES ROUNDED. PLACE ⅜" BOLT THROUGH ENDS OF BENCHES AND PLUG HOLES. USE LIQUID CONCRETE HARDNER ON THE TABLE TOPS ACCORDING TO THE MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS.

CONCRETE TABLE TOP SHALL HAVE STEEL TROWEL OR STEEL FORM FINISH. NO. 808 - 72" x 17½" x 3" EZY-STRYP METAL FORM MAY BE USED FOR TABLE TOP. PIERS MAY HAVE PLYWOOD OR METAL FORM FINISH.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| TABLE TOP SLAB | 1.38 CU. FT. CONCRETE | 152 lb. EA. | 2.76 CU.FT. | BOTH |
| TABLE PIER | 1.72 " " " | 189 lb. EA. | 3.44 " " | " |
| SEAT PIER | .83 " " " | 92 lb. EA | 3.32 " " | ALL FOUR |
| | | TOTAL | 9.52 " " | = 0.35 CU. YD. |

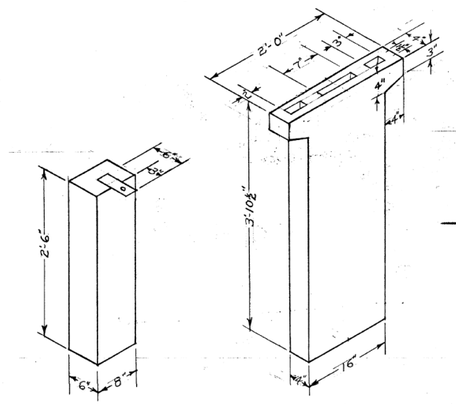



TOP VIEW OF TABLE AND SEAT PIERS

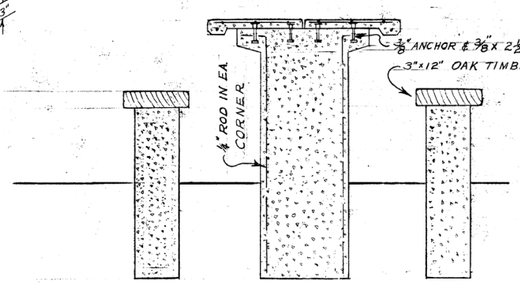



SCALE: 3"=1'

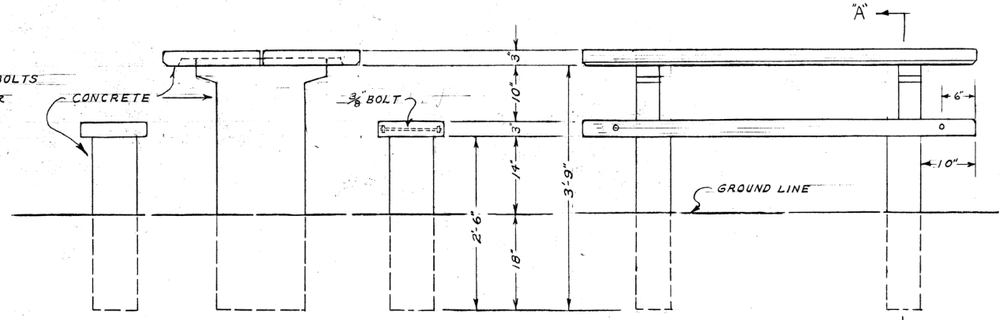
STRAP IRON SEAT ANCHOR




ISOMETRIC VIEW OF TABLE AND SEAT PIERS



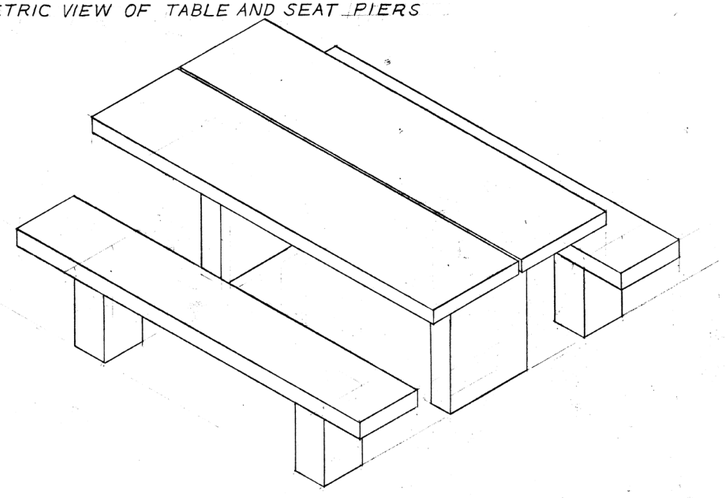

SECTION "A"-"A"



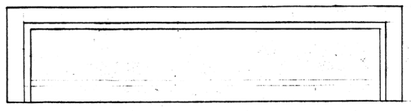

END ELEVATION



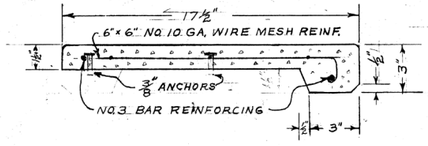

SIDE ELEVATION



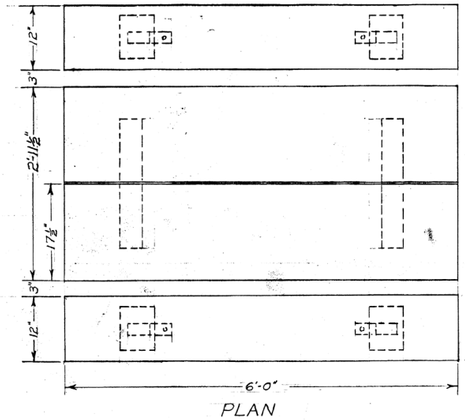
ISOMETRIC VIEW OF PICNIC TABLE AND SEATS



BOTTOM VIEW OF ONE SECTION OF TABLE TOP




SECTION OF TABLE SLAB SCALE: 3"=1'




PLAN

REVISION OF DRAWING NO. PKY-BR-GEN-2051F

BASIC DATA PKY-BR-GEN-2051F

SCALE 1" = 1' EXCEPT AS NOTED

RECOMMENDED
RESIDENT LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT 9-25-63
PARKWAY ENGINEER 9-25-63
EODC PROJECT SUPERVISOR 9-25-63

APPROVED 9-26-63
SUPERINTENDENT

| MARK | DESCRIPTION OF REVISION | DATE | INITIAL |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
ENGINEERING DIVISION
PREPARED BY ROANOKE, VA. OFFICE

TITLE OF DRAWING: STANDARD PICNIC TABLES
GENERAL
LOCATION WITHIN PARK
BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY
NAME OF PARK

ORIENTATION

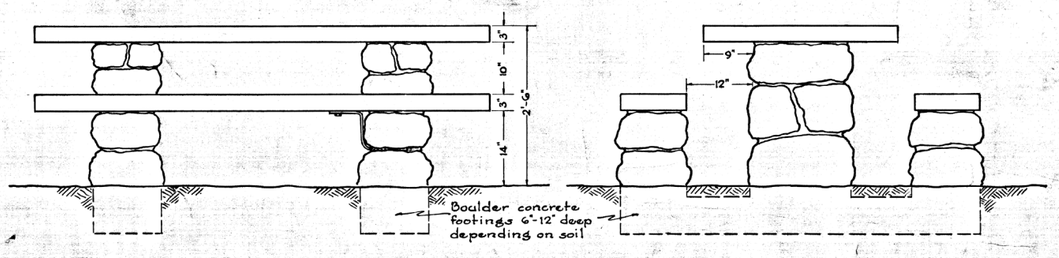
PREPARED C.E. FARMER
DESIGNED FARMER
DRAWN BATTEN
CHECKED

REVISED

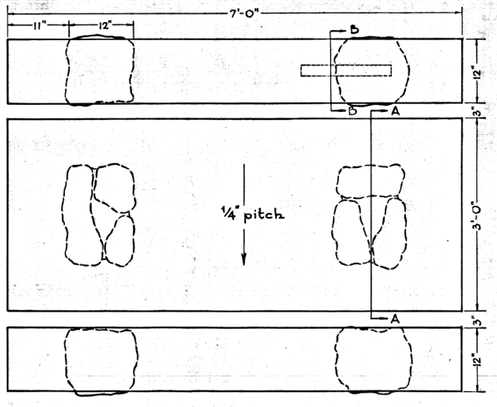
REGION SOUTHEAST
PCP NO.
SHEET 1 OF 2
DRAWING NO. PKY-BR GEN-2051 G
DATE SEPT. 63

**Exhibit 3: Standard Picnic Tables, circa 1963**

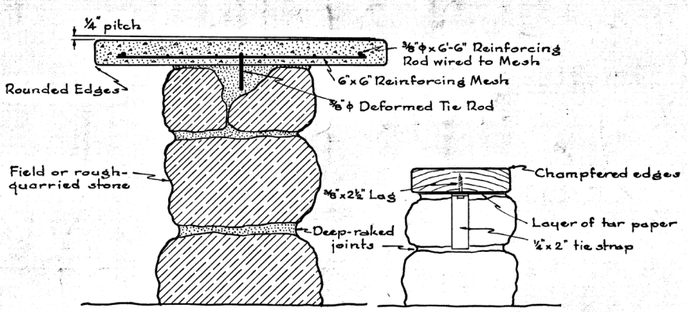
# PICNIC TABLE - TYPE 1




SIDE ELEVATION — END ELEVATION

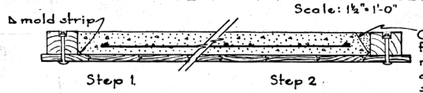



PLAN



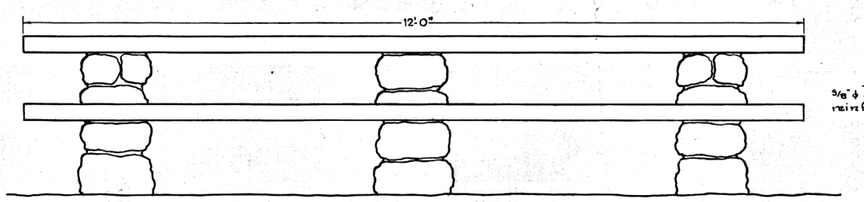

SECTION AA — SECTION BB

Scale: 1½"=1'-0"




FORM FOR TOP SLAB
Scale 1½"=1'-0"

Concrete is pressed back from edge and colored mortar worked into edge of slab, then coloring is sprinkled over entire top. Screeding is then done. Steel float finish and ¼" rounding of upper edges follows.




SIDE ELEVATION - 12' TABLE

Construction details same as for 7' table except concrete top is formed and poured in place. Construct bench on one side only to facilitate use of 12' table for buffet serving.

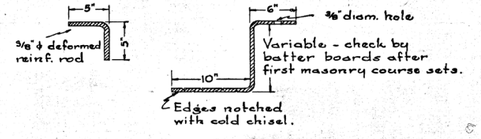



TABLE TIE ROD — BENCH TIE STRAP
Scale: 1½"=1'-0"

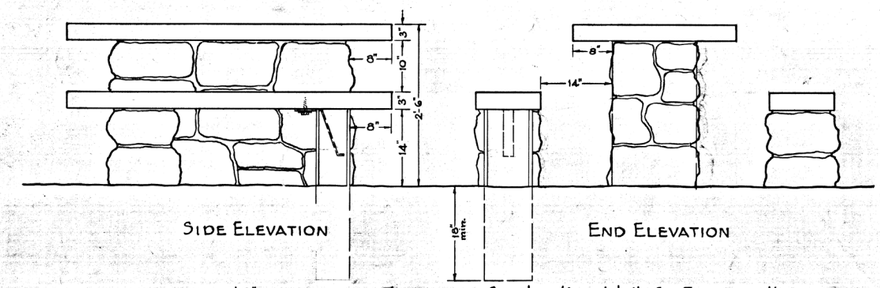
FASTENER DETAILS

Masonry - a template of boards should be used in laying out footings. Colored mortar is to be used for masonry construction.
Top - pre-cast reinforced concrete slab with top and edges colored gray-green at the direction of the Proj. L.A. Slab is tied to each pier by a deformed rod set in mortar. Edges of top are to be rounded with edging tool.
Bench - 3"x12" seasoned oak planks to be treated by soaking 15 min. in pentachlorophenol. ¾"x 2" iron strap to be mortared between beds a minimum of 6" below top of pier. A layer of tar paper should be placed between timber seat and bedding mortar. Seat is secured by lag screw thru strap.

BASIC DATA
Slab Coloring — Use only green and black mineral pigment colors.

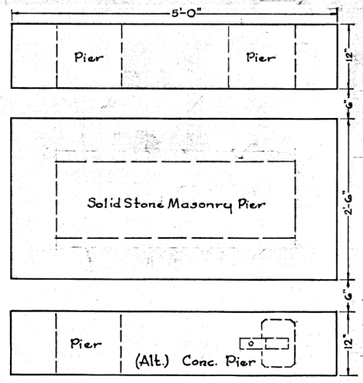
"F" Revision 27 Mar 53 WDL

# PICNIC TABLE - TYPE 2



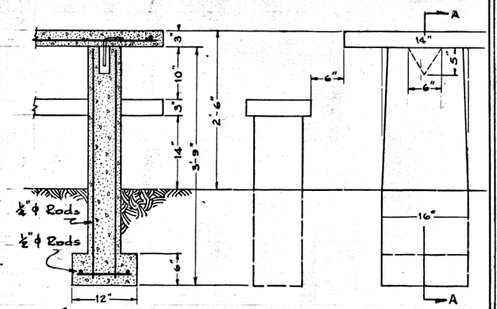

SIDE ELEVATION — END ELEVATION

Construction details for Type 2 are the same as for Type 1 except in dimensions and type of table support. Type 2 is supported by a single block of stone masonry.

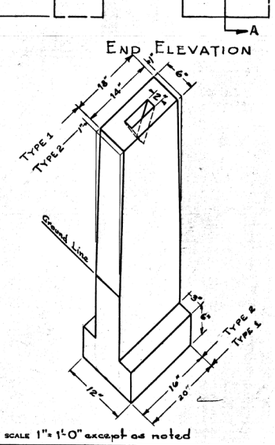


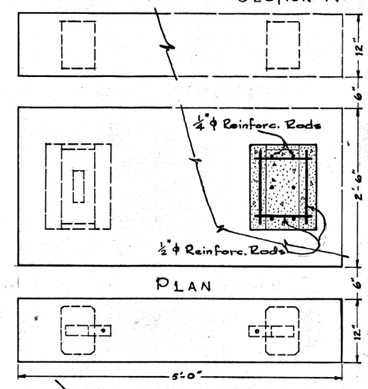

PLAN

# PICNIC TABLE - TYPE 3




SECTION A




PLAN

SCALE 1"=1'-0" except as noted

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| DRAWN BY | van cleve. | ARCHITECT | REGIONAL OFFICE A.L. HIGGINS 8.31.51 |
| CHECKED BY | W.d.l. | LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT | REGIONAL OFFICE R.V. LUDGATE 8.31.51 |
| | | FORESTRY | REGIONAL OFFICE W.E. O'NEIL Jr. 8.21.51 |
| | | HISTORY | WASHINGTON OFFICE |
| | | ENGINEER | WASHINGTON OFFICE |
| REVIEWED | | LANDS | REGIONAL OFFICE WASHINGTON OFFICE |
| | | NATURAL HISTORY | REGIONAL OFFICE WASHINGTON OFFICE |
| | | SAFETY | WASHINGTON OFFICE |
| | | CONCESSIONS | REGIONAL OFFICE WASHINGTON OFFICE |
| | | | U. S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE |

RECOMMENDED _____ DATE 5-18-50
SUPERINTENDENT

RECOMMENDED E.S. ZIMMER DATE 8-31-51
ASSISTANT REG. DIRECTOR

RECOMMENDED _____ DATE _____

APPROVED E.M. LISLE DATE 9-4-51
ACT'G REGIONAL DIRECTOR

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

STANDARD PICNIC TABLES
STATE OR GENERAL LOCATION
BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY
NAME OF AREA

| | |
|---|---|
| REGION | ONE |
| PCP No. | |
| SHEET | 1 OF 1 |
| DRAWING No. | PKY-BR GEN-2051F |
| DATE: | 4-16-50 |

TRIM LINE

**Exhibit 4: Standard Picnic Tables, circa 1950**

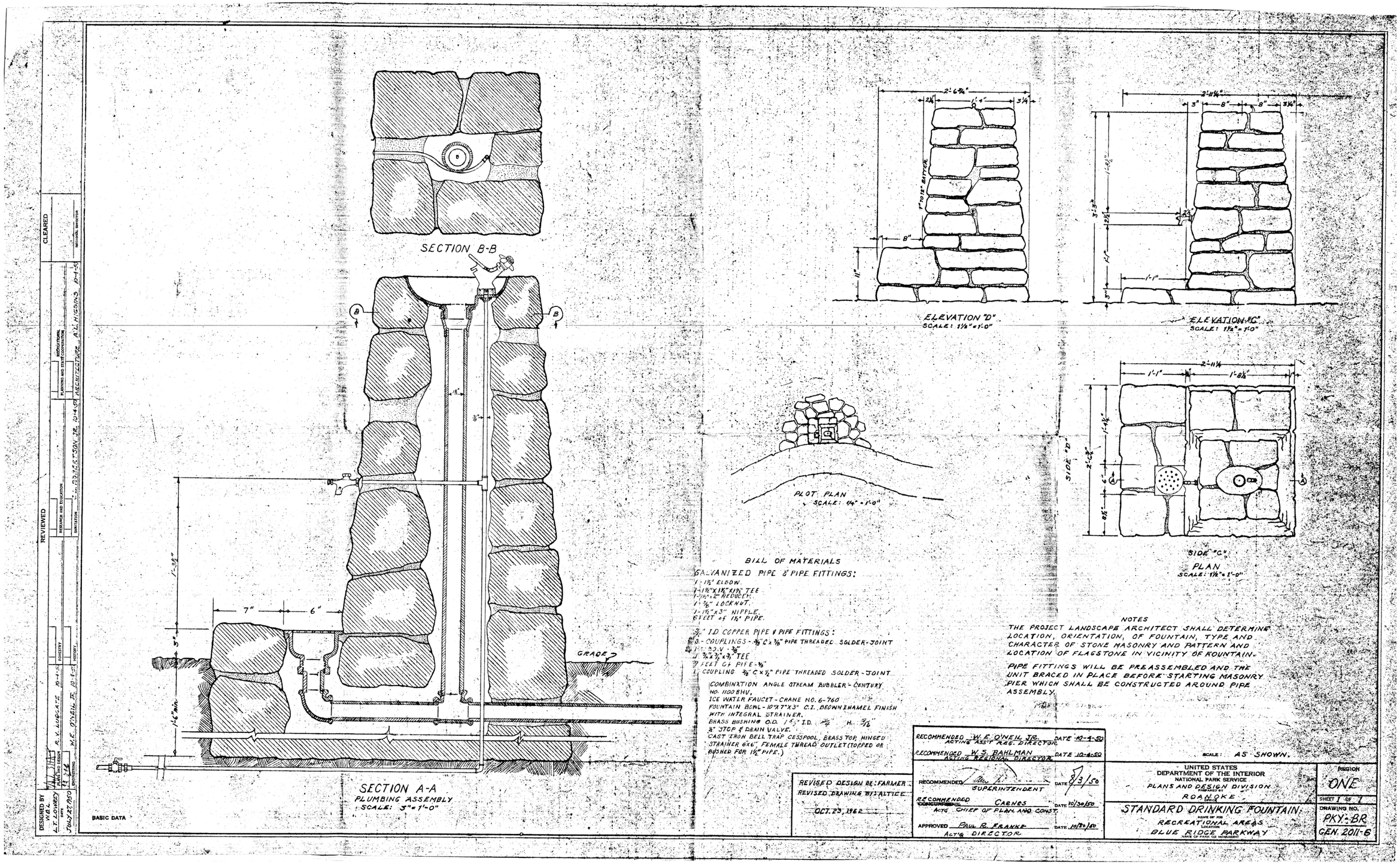



**Exhibit 5: Standard Drinking Fountain, circa 1962**

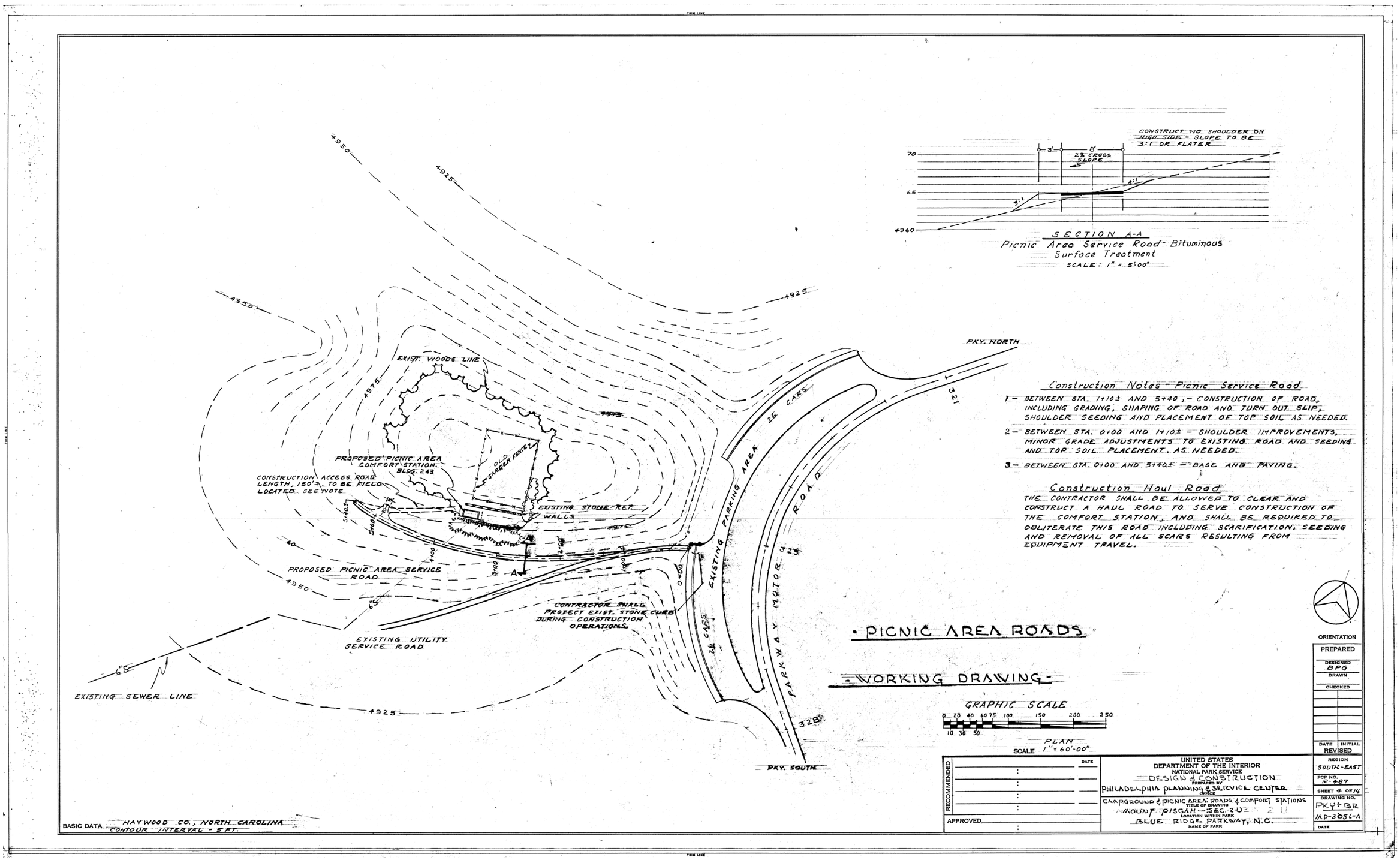



**Exhibit 6: Campground & Picnic Area: Roads and Comfort Station, Picnic Area, circa 1965**

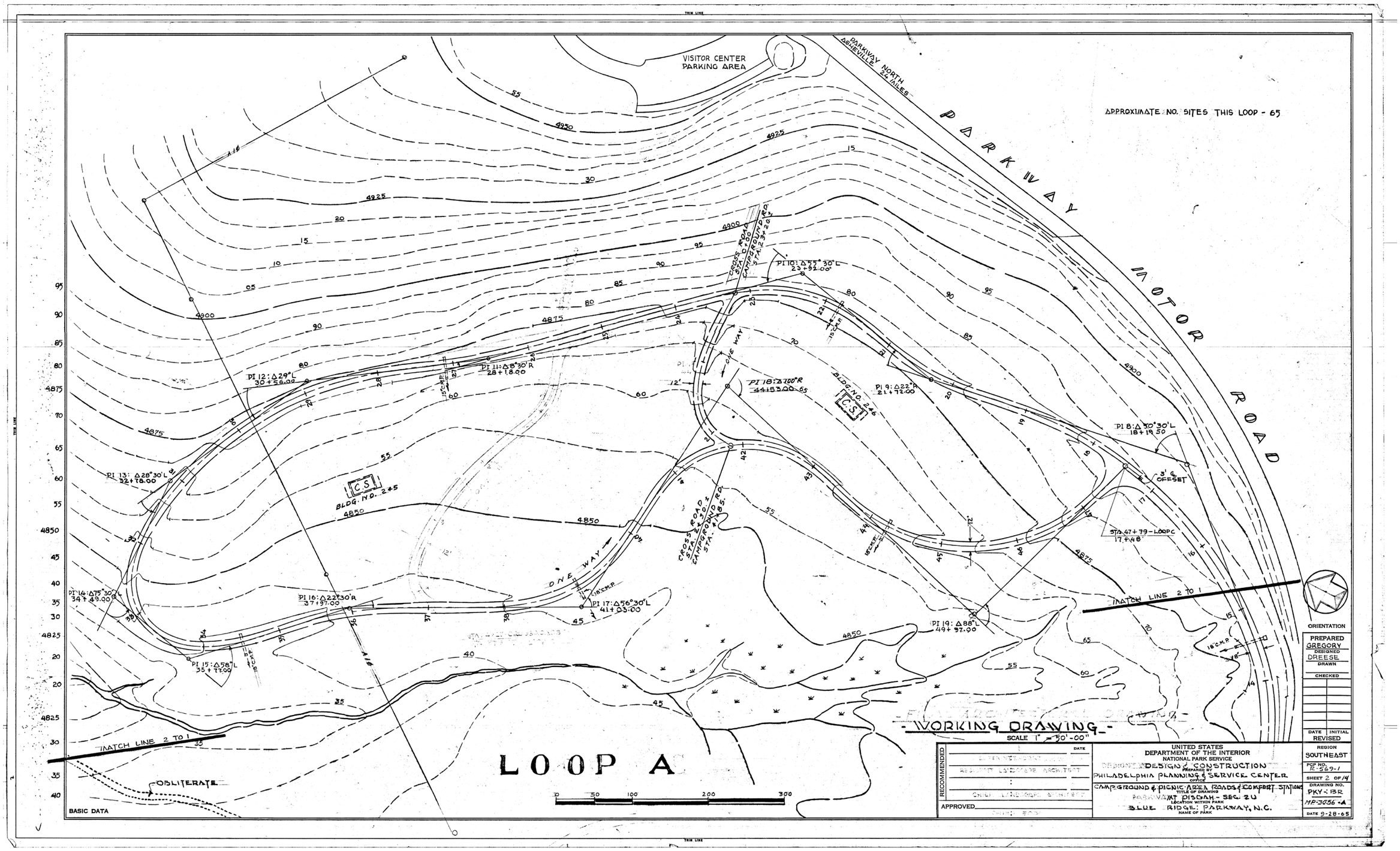



**Exhibit 7: Campground & Picnic Area: Roads and Comfort Station, Loop A, circa 1965**

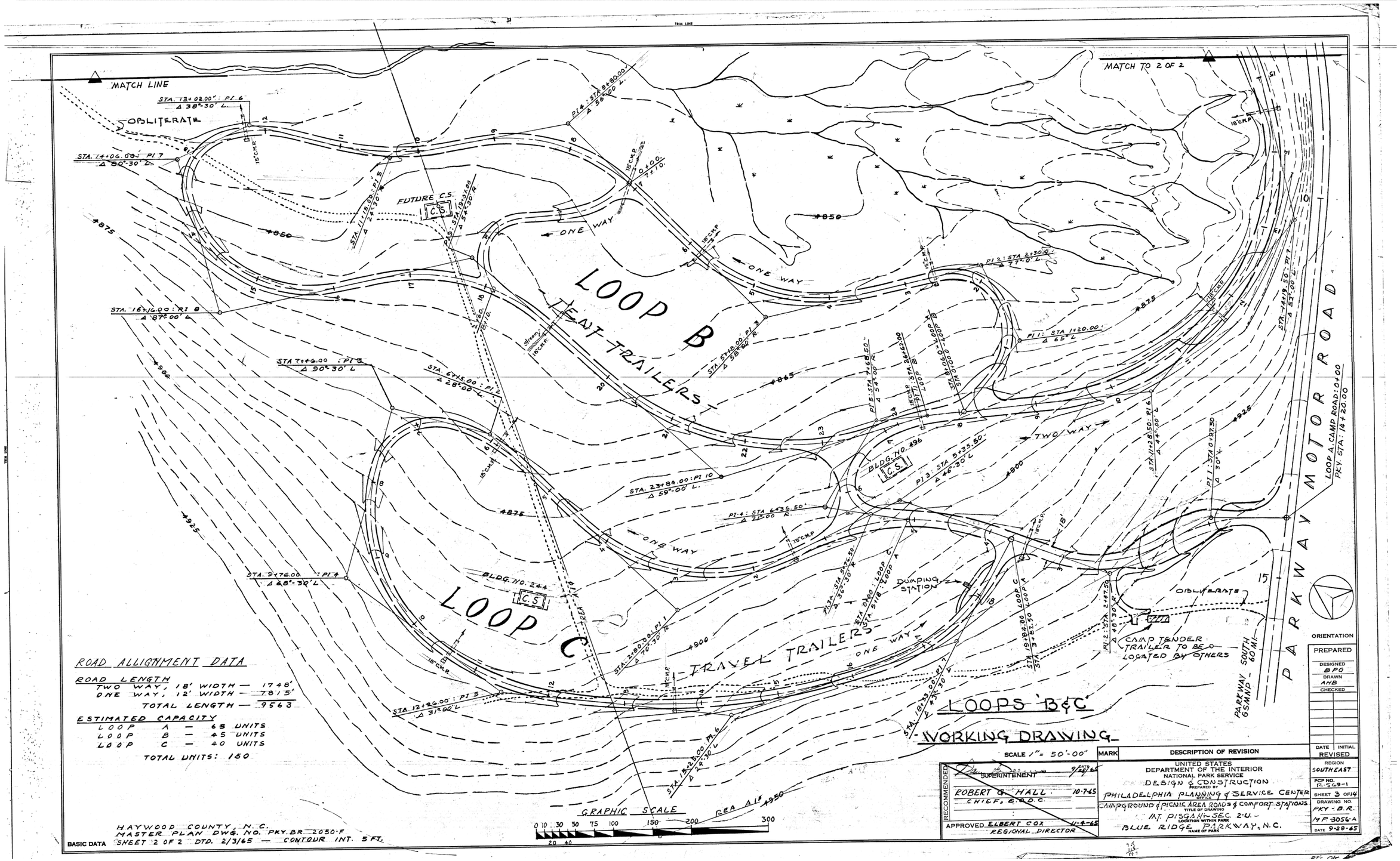



**Exhibit 8: Campground & Picnic Area: Roads and Comfort Station, Loop B & C, circa 1965**

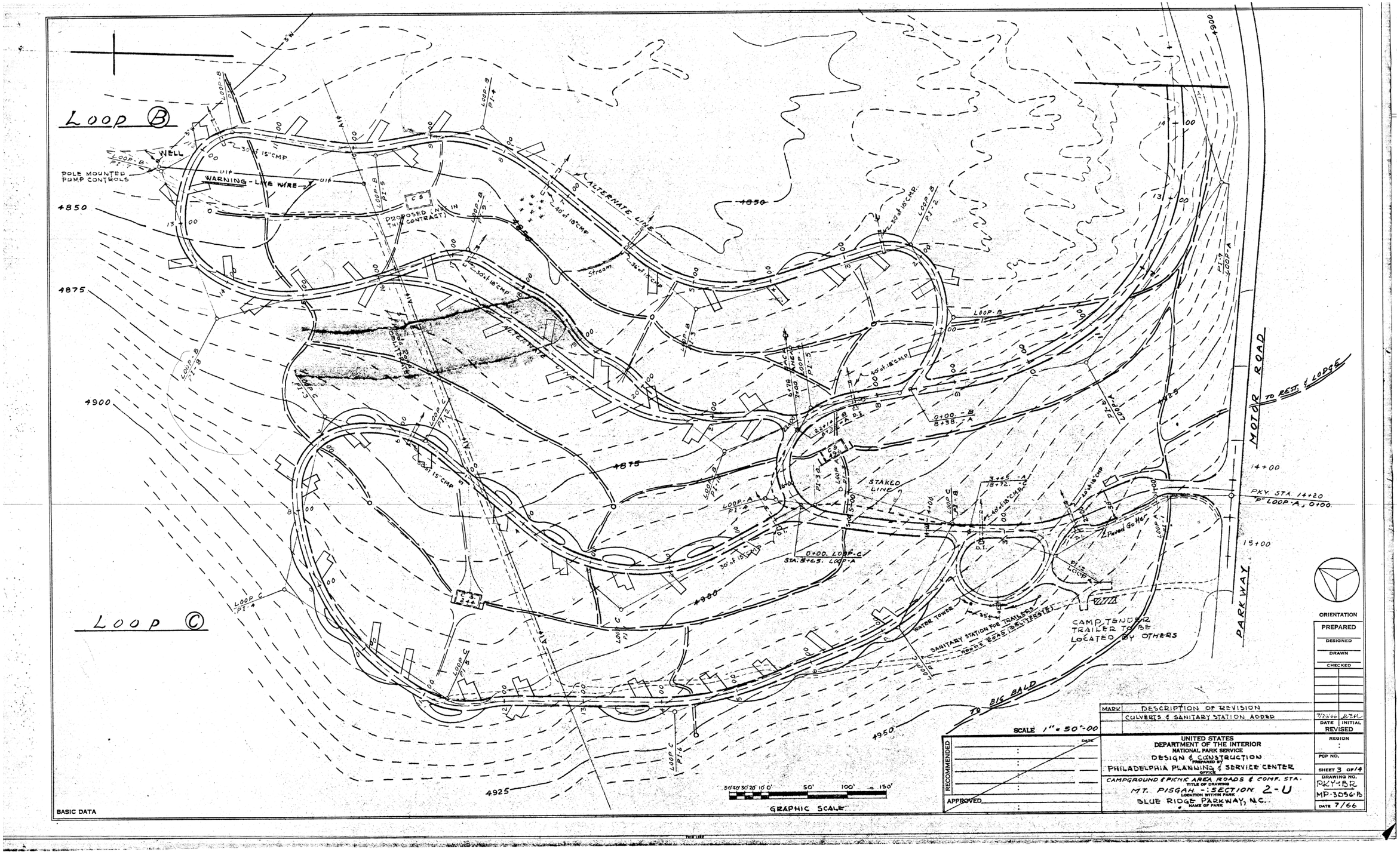



**Exhibit 9: Campground & Picnic Area: Roads and Comfort Station, Loop B & C, circa 1966**

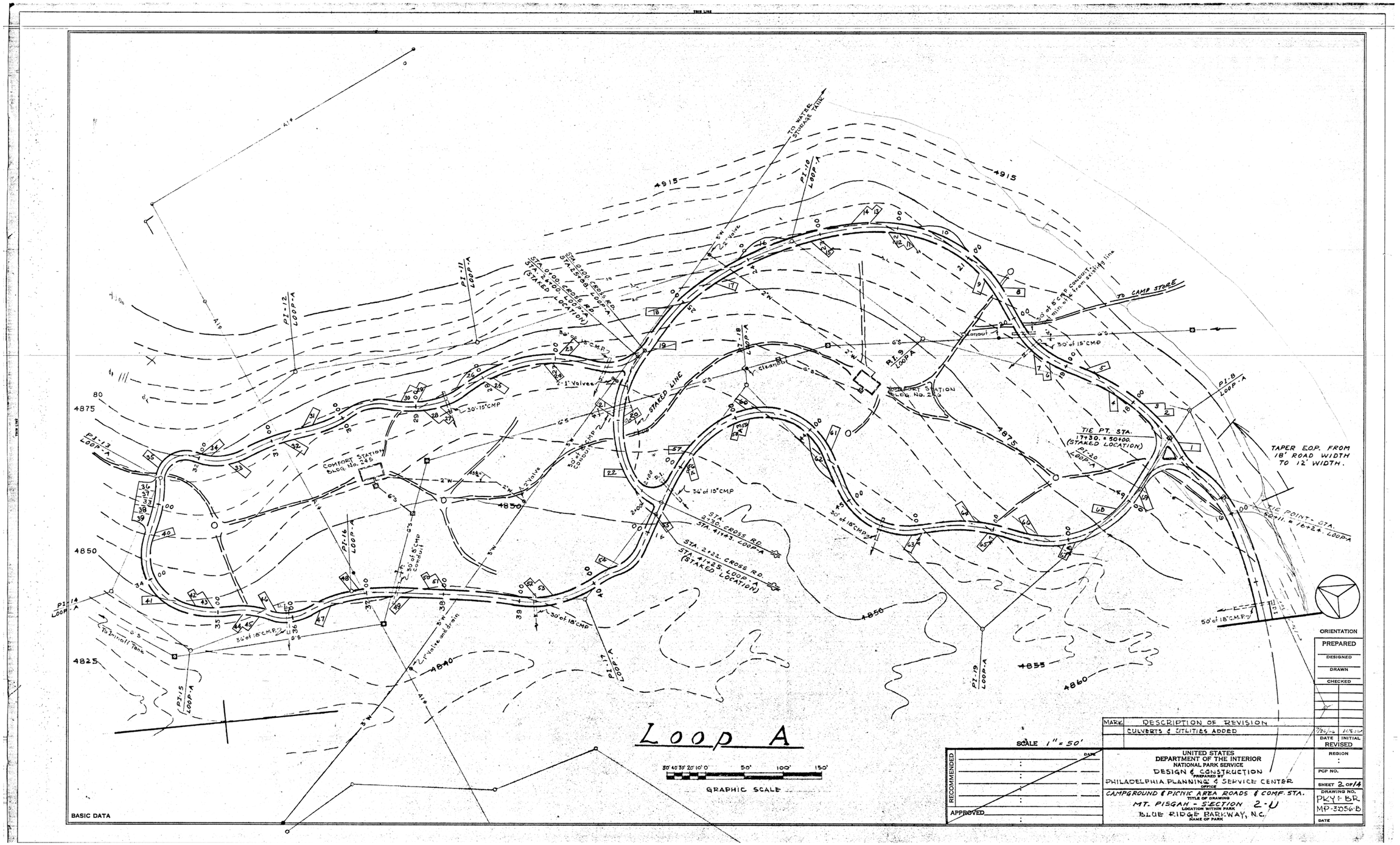



**Exhibit 10: Campground & Picnic Area: Roads and Comfort Station, Loop A, circa 1966**

# - DETAILS -

TRIM LINE

TYPE 'A'
• PULL THROUGH TRAILER UNIT •
SCALE 1"=10'-0"

TYPE 'B'
• PULL THROUGH TENT UNIT •
SCALE—1"=10'-0"

TYPE 'C'
• SINGLE TRAVEL TRAILER, TENT TRAILER •
SCALE—1"=10'-0"

TYPE 'D'
• SINGLE TENT UNIT •
SCALE—1"=10'-0"

TYPE 'E'
• TENT TRAILER SITE •
SCALE—1"=10'-0"

TYPE 'F'
• SPECIAL SITE CONDITION UNIT •
SCALE—1"=10'-0"

• TYPICAL SECTION THROUGH FILL •
No Scale

• TYPICAL SECTION THROUGH SLIP •
No Scale

• TYPICAL SECTION IN CUT AND FILL •
No Scale

• BITUMINOUS PAVED WATERWAY •
No Scale

• TYPICAL SECTION FOR ENTRANCE ROAD •
IN CUT AND FILL
No Scale

• CONCRETE CURB DETAIL •
SCALE—1½"=1'-0"

• DROP INLET DETAIL •
(WITH PRECAST CONCRETE COVERS)
No Scale

SLAB 'A'

SLAB 'B'

• DETAIL OF CONCRETE COVERS •
No Scale

| HIGHT OF SLOPE | CUT SLOPES | FILL SLOPES |
|---|---|---|
| 0'— 2' | 3:1 | 3:1 |
| 2'— 4' | 2:1 | 2:1 |
| Over 4' | 1/2:1 | 2:1 |

Slopes in rock to vary from ¼:1 to ¾:1 ratio depending on the type of rock.

SEEDING SCHEDULE

| TYPE | AMOUNT | PERCENT |
|---|---|---|
| Chewings red fescue | 1½ lb. | 63 |
| Redtop | ⅝ lb | 31 |
| White clover | ⅛ lb | 6 |

Fertilizer-Nitrogen Phosphoric Acid Potash - 10-10-10
Seeding rate - 2 lb/1000 sq.ft.
Fertilizing rate - 20 lb/1000 sq.ft.
Mulching rate - 90 lb/1000 sq.ft.
Limestone (Ground) rate 100 lb/1000 sq.ft.
Applies to all areas disturbed by construction

NOTES:
Inlets to be of depth directed by project supervisor.
Inlets to be parallel to roadway centerline and grade unless otherwise directed by project supervisor.
Shape floors to drain.
All bars to be #5 placed 1½" clear from face of concrete in inlet.
No bars required in walls where depth 4'-0" or less in inlet.
Road to be constructed as close to existing ground as possible, with centerline cuts and fills rarely to exceed 4'
It is intended that material excavated for slips in cut should serve to balance slips constructed in fill.
An estimated 120 unit campground is proposed with 30 additional units as alternate.
Units A, C, D & E will comprise a majority of the sites to be constructed.
Units B & F are used where terrain limit cut & fill.
Units C, D & E are ideally constructed as backin slips. As existing terrain may dictate, these units shall be adapted as head-in slips as required.
All proposed utilities within the road perimeter will be incased in conduit. Conduit will be installed alongside of existing utility crossings.

BASIC DATA

PREPARED — TAITER, DEIGNES — TAITER, DRAWN — BEYER, CHECKED
REGION SOUTHEAST
PCP NO. 5-5629-1
SHEET 5 OF 14
DRAWING NO. PKY-BR MP-3056-A
DATE 4-20-66

**Exhibit 11: Campground Details, circa 1966**

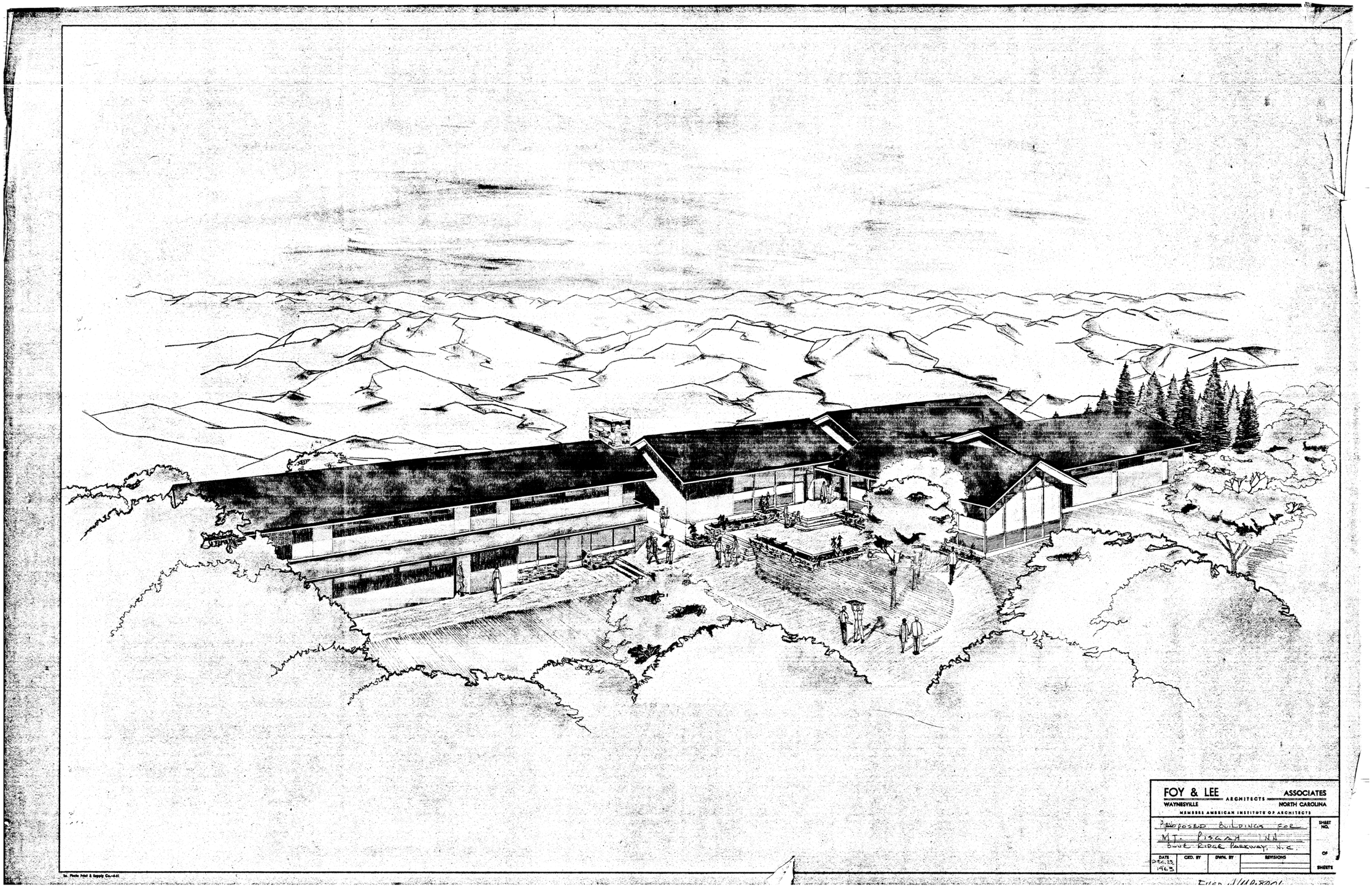



**Exhibit 12: Proposed Building for Mt. Pisgah Inn, circa 1963**

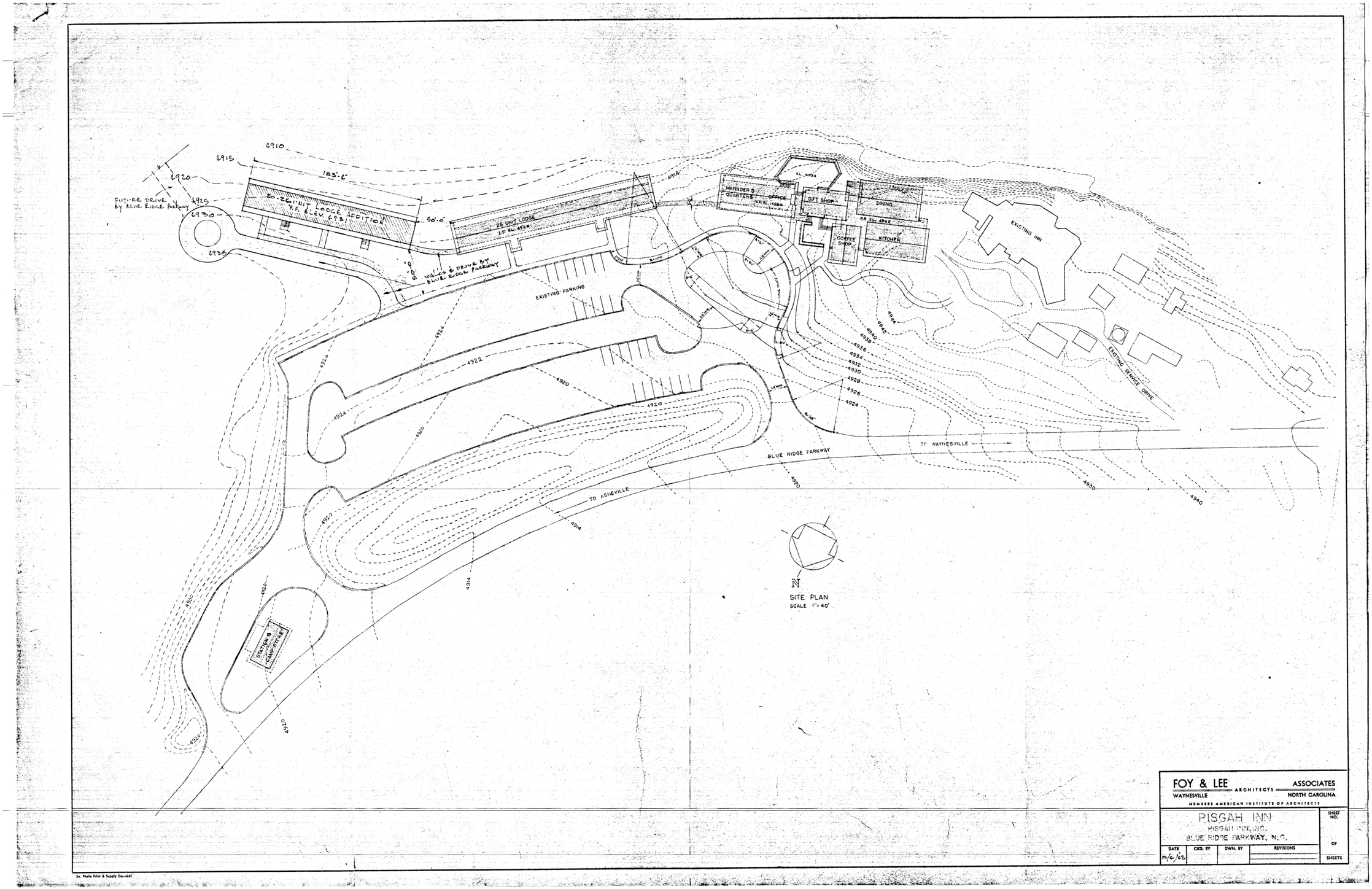



**Exhibit 13: Pisgah Inn, circa 1968**

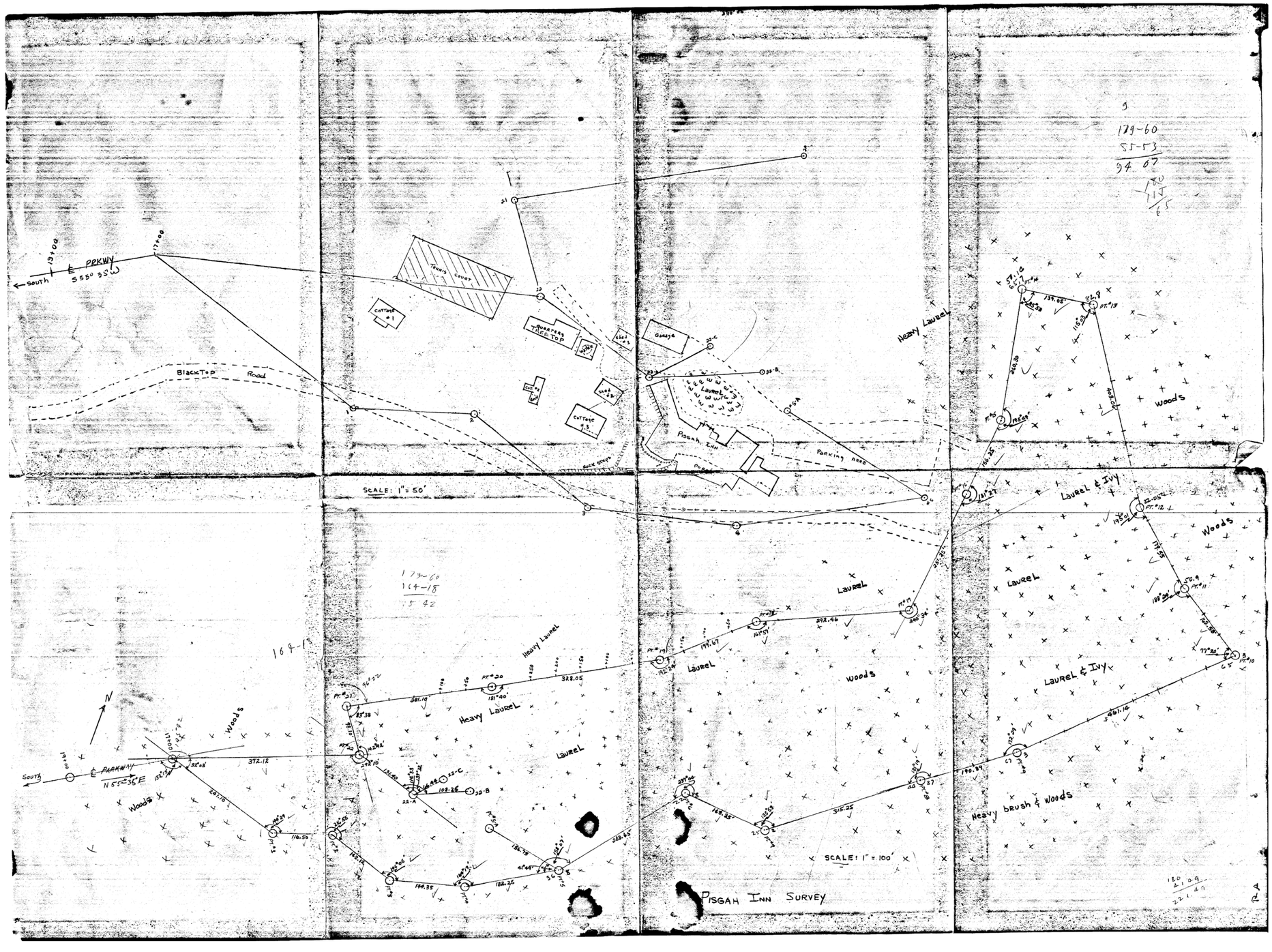



**Exhibit 14: Original Pisgah Inn Survey**

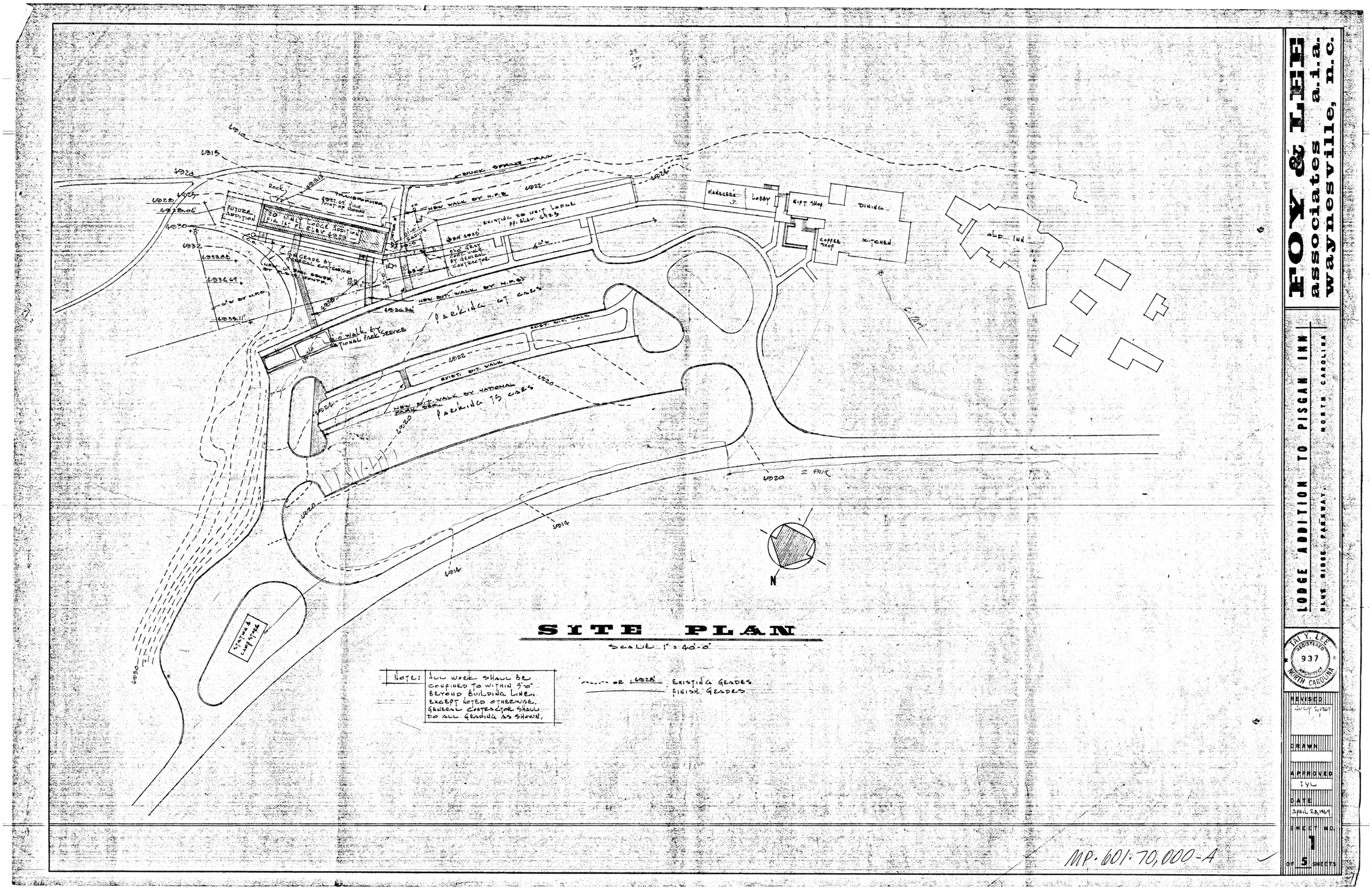



**Exhibit 15: Pisgah Inn Site Plan, circa 1969**

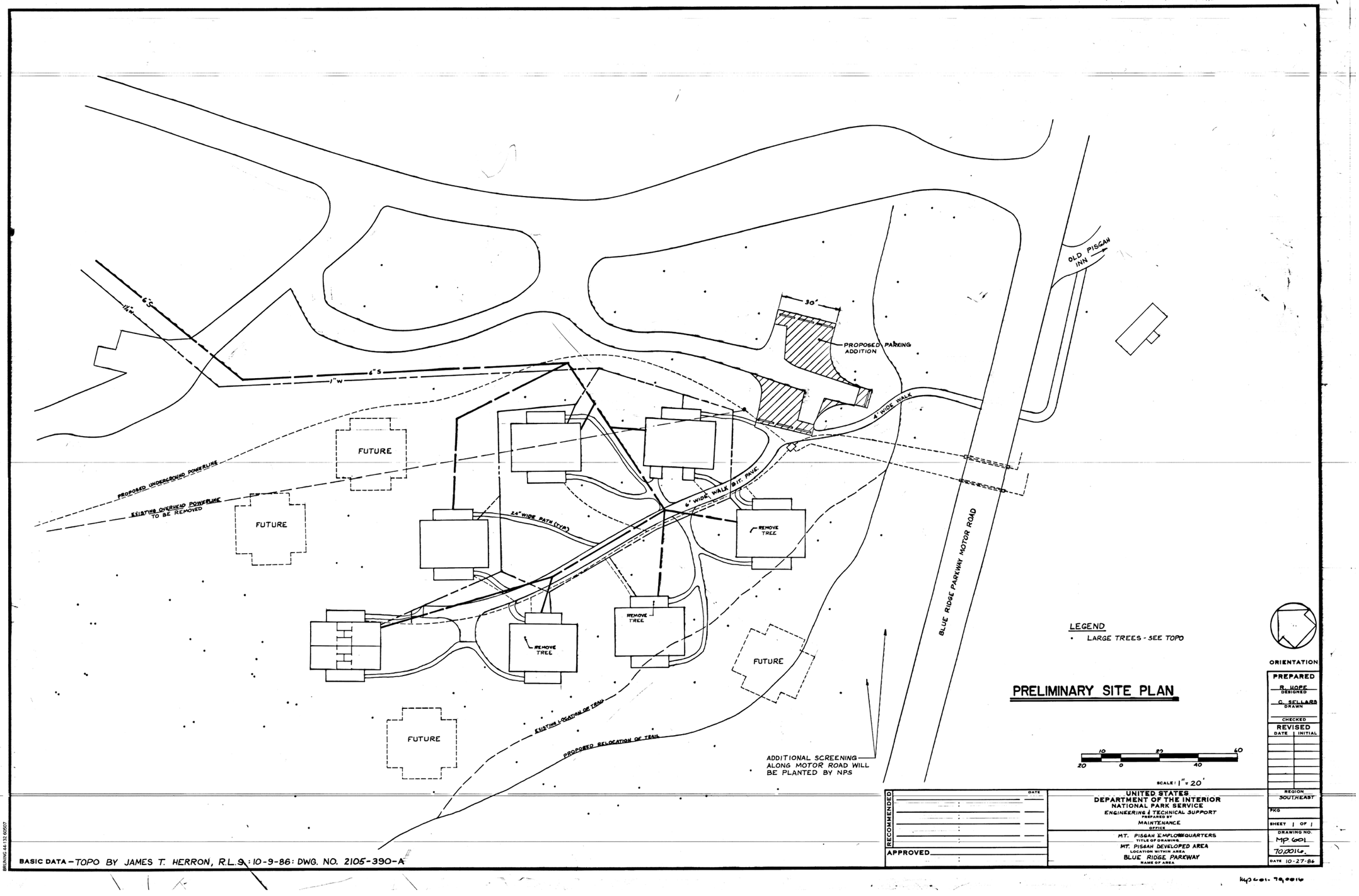
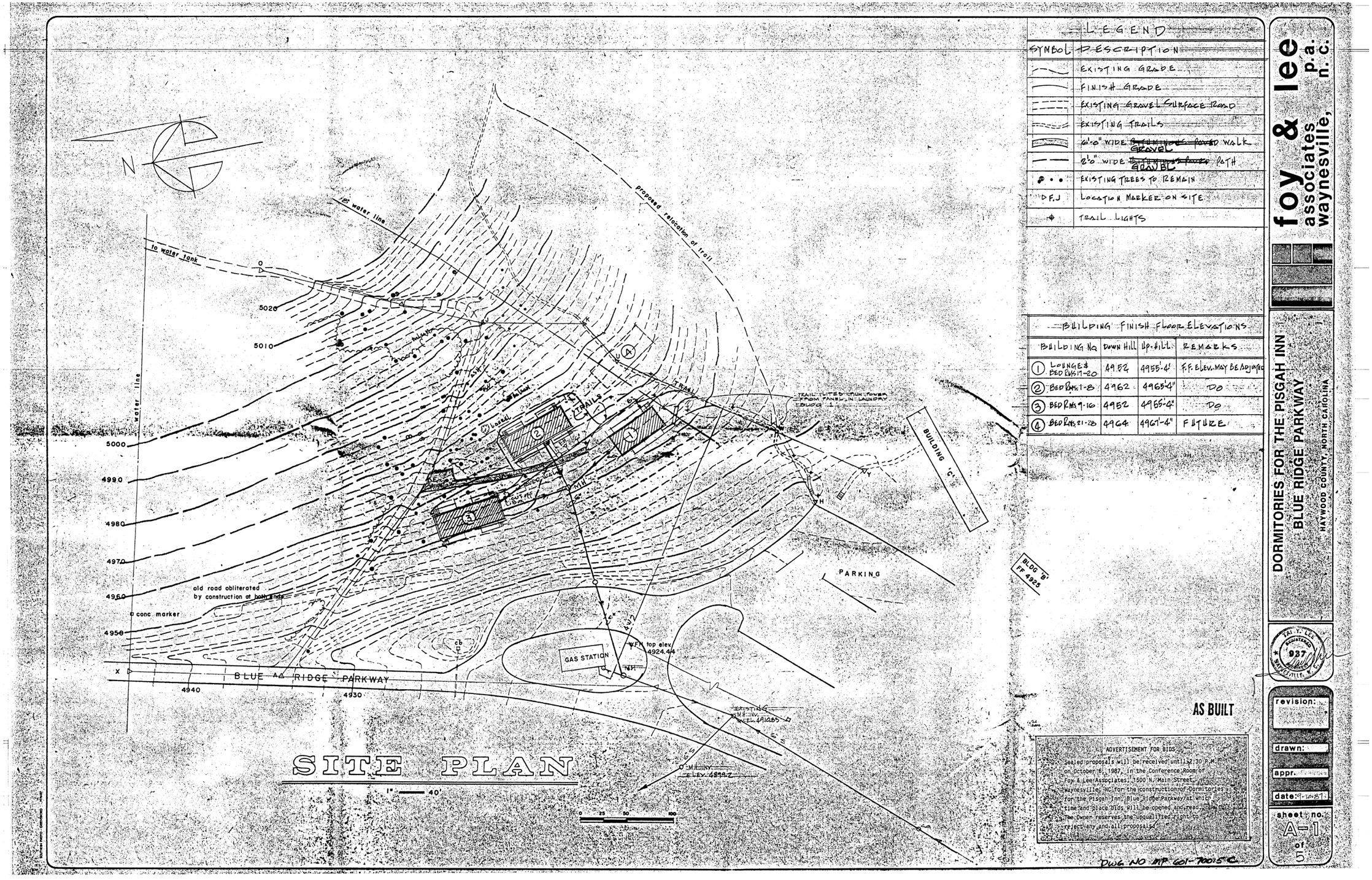



**Exhibit 16: Mt. Pisgah Employee Quarters, Preliminary Site Plan, circa 1986 (unbuilt)**




LEGEND

| SYMBOL | DESCRIPTION |
|---|---|
| | EXISTING GRADE |
| | FINISH GRADE |
| | EXISTING GRAVEL SURFACE ROAD |
| | EXISTING TRAILS |
| | 6'-0" WIDE ~~BITUMINOUS PAVED~~ GRAVEL WALK |
| | 2'-0" WIDE ~~BITUMINOUS PAVED~~ GRAVEL PATH |
| | EXISTING TREES TO REMAIN |
| D.F.J | LOCATION MARKER ON SITE |
| | TRAIL LIGHTS |

BUILDING FINISH FLOOR ELEVATIONS

| BUILDING NO | DOWN HILL | UP-HILL | REMARKS |
|---|---|---|---|
| (1) LOUNGE & BEDRMS 17-20 | 4952 | 4955'-4" | F.F. ELEV. MAY BE ADJUSTED |
| (2) BEDRMS 1-8 | 4962 | 4965'-4" | DO |
| (3) BEDRMS 9-16 | 4952 | 4955'-4" | DO |
| (4) BEDRMS 21-28 | 4964 | 4967'-4" | FUTURE |

AS BUILT

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed proposals will be received until 2:30 P.M. on October 6, 1987, in the Conference Room of Foy & Lee Associates, 1500 N. Main Street, Waynesville, NC for the construction of Dormitories for the Pisgah Inn, Blue Ridge Parkway at which time and place bids will be opened and read. The Owner reserves the unqualified right to reject any and all proposals.

DWG NO MP 601-70015 C

foy & lee associates p.a. waynesville, n.c.

DORMITORIES FOR THE PISGAH INN
BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY
HAYWOOD COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

TAI Y. LEE REGISTERED 937 WAYNESVILLE, N.C.

revision:
drawn:
appr.
date: 9-10-87

sheet no. A-1 of STS

**Exhibit 17: Dormitories for the Pisgah Inn, circa 1987**

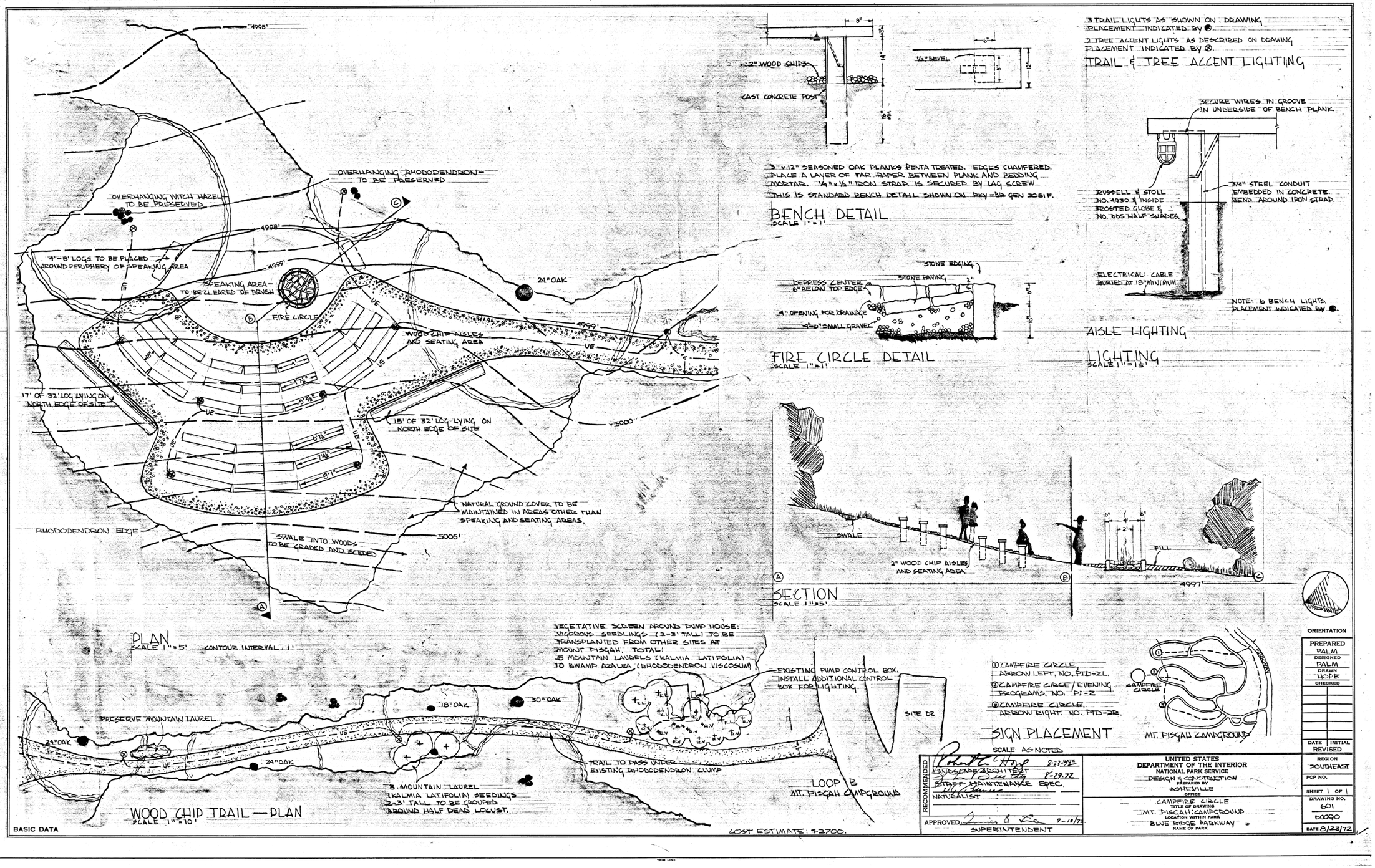
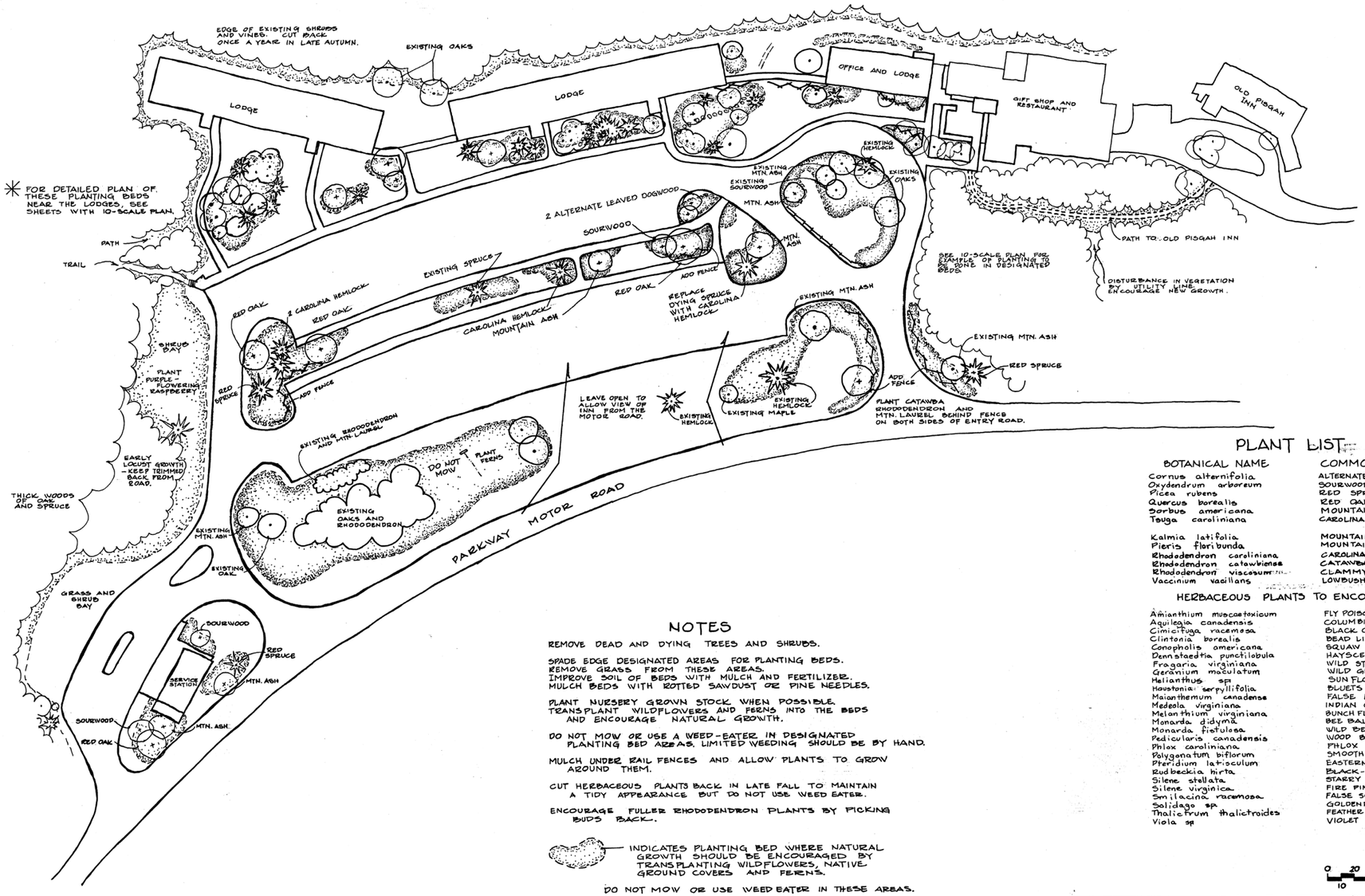



**Exhibit 18: Mt. Pisgah Campground: Campfire Circle, circa 1972**




## NOTES

REMOVE DEAD AND DYING TREES AND SHRUBS.

SPADE EDGE DESIGNATED AREAS FOR PLANTING BEDS. REMOVE GRASS FROM THESE AREAS. IMPROVE SOIL OF BEDS WITH MULCH AND FERTILIZER. MULCH BEDS WITH ROTTED SAWDUST OR PINE NEEDLES.

PLANT NURSERY GROWN STOCK WHEN POSSIBLE. TRANSPLANT WILDFLOWERS AND FERNS INTO THE BEDS AND ENCOURAGE NATURAL GROWTH.

DO NOT MOW OR USE A WEED-EATER IN DESIGNATED PLANTING BED AREAS. LIMITED WEEDING SHOULD BE BY HAND.

MULCH UNDER RAIL FENCES AND ALLOW PLANTS TO GROW AROUND THEM.

CUT HERBACEOUS PLANTS BACK IN LATE FALL TO MAINTAIN A TIDY APPEARANCE BUT DO NOT USE WEED EATER.

ENCOURAGE FULLER RHODODENDRON PLANTS BY PICKING BUDS BACK.

INDICATES PLANTING BED WHERE NATURAL GROWTH SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED BY TRANSPLANTING WILDFLOWERS, NATIVE GROUND COVERS AND FERNS.

DO NOT MOW OR USE WEED EATER IN THESE AREAS.

## PLANT LIST

| BOTANICAL NAME | COMMON NAME |
|---|---|
| Cornus alternifolia | ALTERNATE-LEAVED DOGWOOD |
| Oxydendrum arboreum | SOURWOOD |
| Picea rubens | RED SPRUCE |
| Quercus borealis | RED OAK |
| Sorbus americana | MOUNTAIN ASH |
| Tsuga caroliniana | CAROLINA HEMLOCK |
| Kalmia latifolia | MOUNTAIN LAUREL |
| Pieris floribunda | MOUNTAIN ANDROMEDA |
| Rhododendron carliniana | CAROLINA RHODODENDRON |
| Rhododendron catawbiense | CATAWBA RHODODENDRON |
| Rhododendron viscosum | CLAMMY AZALEA |
| Vaccinium vacillans | LOWBUSH BLUEBERRY |

### HERBACEOUS PLANTS TO ENCOURAGE

| | |
|---|---|
| Amianthium muscaetoxicum | FLY POISON |
| Aquilegia canadensis | COLUMBINE |
| Cimicifuga racemosa | BLACK COHOSH |
| Clintonia borealis | BEAD LILY |
| Conopholis americana | SQUAW ROOT |
| Dennstaedtia punctilobula | HAYSCENTED FERN |
| Fragaria virginiana | WILD STRAWBERRY |
| Geranium maculatum | WILD GERANIUM |
| Helianthus sp. | SUN FLOWER |
| Houstonia serpyllifolia | BLUETS |
| Maianthemum canadense | FALSE LILY-OF-THE-VALLEY |
| Medeola virginiana | INDIAN CUCUMBER |
| Melanthium virginiana | BUNCH FLOWER |
| Monarda didyma | BEE BALM |
| Monarda fistulosa | WILD BERGAMOT |
| Pedicularis canadensis | WOOD BETONY |
| Phlox caroliniana | PHLOX |
| Polygonatum biflorum | SMOOTH SOLOMON'S SEAL |
| Pteridium latiusculum | EASTERN BRACKEN |
| Rudbeckia hirta | BLACK-EYED SUSAN |
| Silene stellata | STARRY CAMPION |
| Silene virginica | FIRE PINK |
| Smilacina racemosa | FALSE SOLOMON'S SEAL |
| Solidago sp. | GOLDENROD |
| Thalictrum thalictroides | FEATHER BELLS |
| Viola sp. | VIOLET |

0 20 60
10 40
SCALE 1" = 40'

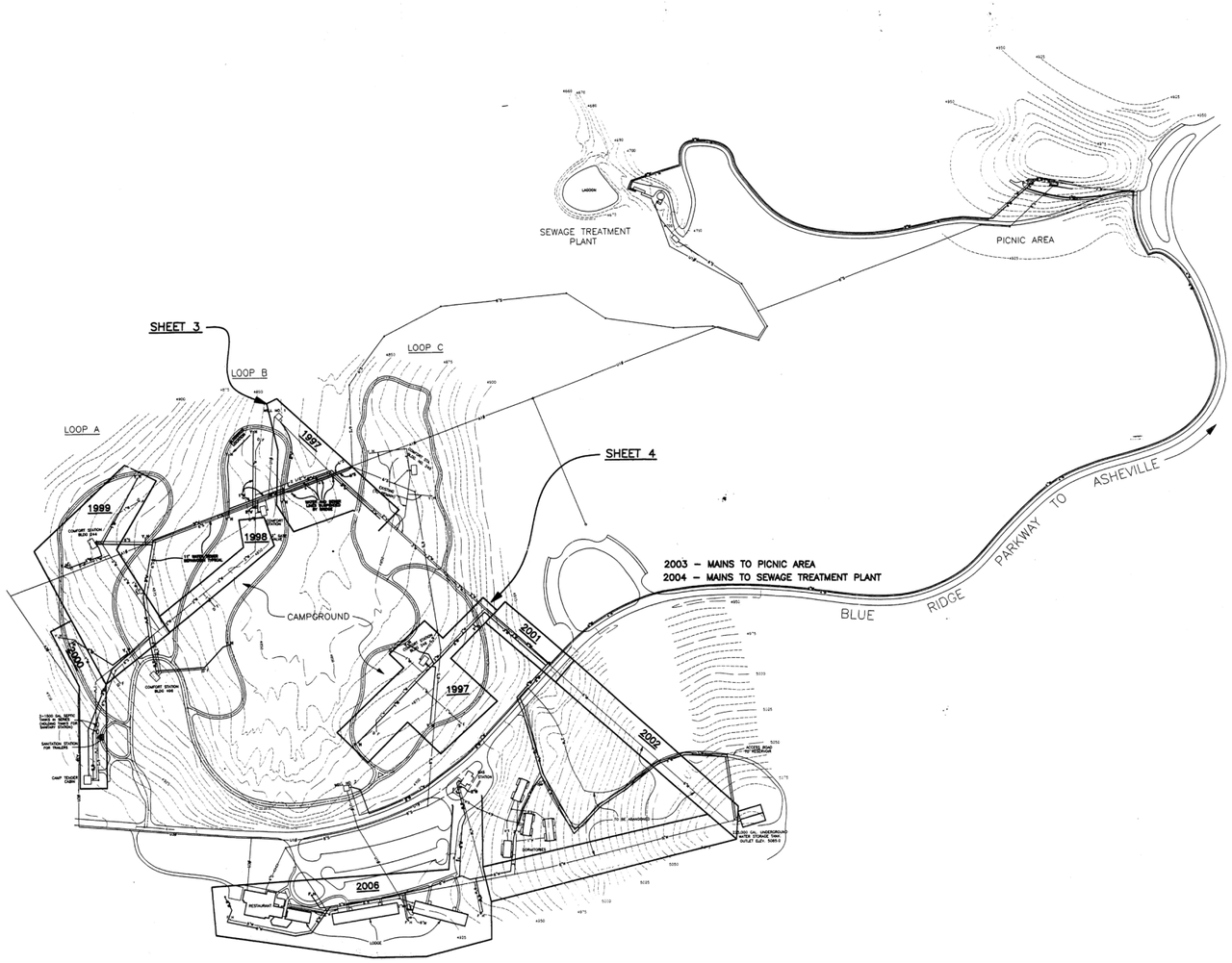
BASIC DATA

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR<br>NATIONAL PARK SERVICE | PREPARED<br>C. GOODMAN<br>DESIGNED<br>C. GOODMAN<br>DRAWN<br>CHECKED<br>8-11-86<br>DATE | TITLE OF DRAWING<br>PLANTING PLAN FOR MOUNT PISGAH INN<br>LOCATION WITHIN PARK<br>MOUNT PISGAH DEVELOPED AREA<br>NAME OF PARK<br>BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY<br>SOUTHEAST REGION · HAYWOOD COUNTY · NORTH CAROLINA STATE | DRAWING NO.<br>MP-601-60411<br>PKG. NO. ___<br>SHEET 1 OF 4 |

GPO-1974-678-711

TRIM LINE

**Exhibit 19: Planting Plan for Mt. Pisgah Inn, circa 1986**




LEGEND

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| CONTOURS – MAJOR | | 4850 |
| CONTOURS – MINOR | | |
| POWER LINE AERIAL SINGLE PHASE | | A1ϕ |
| POWER LINE AERIAL THREE PHASE | | A3ϕ |
| POWER LINE UNDERGROUND SINGLE PHASE | | U1ϕ |
| POWER LINE UNDERGROUND THREE PHASE | | U3ϕ |
| WATER LINE | (EXISTING) 3"W | (PROPOSED) 3"W |
| SEWER LINE/MANHOLE | (EXISTING) 6"S | (PROPOSED) 6"S |
| DRINKING FOUNTAIN | (EXISTING TO BE REMOVED) | |
| YARD HYDRANT | (PROPOSED) | |
| FIRE HYDRANT | (EXISTING) | |
| THRUST BLOCK | | |

WELL DATA

| | WELL NO. 1 | WELL NO. 2 |
|---|---|---|
| DEPTH | 100' | 400' |
| YIELD | 52 GPM @ 17' | 34 GPM @ 84' |
| PUMP | 5 HP (EST) | 3 HP JACUZZI |
| STATIC LEVEL | 7' | 6' |

# PHASING MAP & KEY SHEET

200 0 200 400

BASIC DATA:
PKY–BR MP–3056–A "CAMPGROUND & PICNIC AREA: ROADS AND COMFORT STATIONS" (NO DATE), MP–601–60402 "LOCATION MAP – MT. PISGAH WATER & SEWER MODIFICATIONS" DATED 2–12–88
MP–601–3050 (NO TITLE) TOPO OF MT. PISGAH DEVELOPED AREA DATED "1960'S", PKY–BR MP–3054 "WATER SYSTEM PISGAH RECREATION AREA" (NO DATE)

RECOMMENDED _____ DATE
APPROVED _____

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
MAINTENANCE AND ENGINEERING
ADMINISTERED BY
ENGINEERING AND TECHNICAL SERVICES
OFFICE
MT. PISGAH WATER/SEWER SYSTEM REHABILITATION
NAME OF SYSTEM
MOUNT PISGAH
LOCATION WITHIN THE PARK
BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY
NAME OF AREA

PREPARED C. NORTHROP
DESIGNED S. HAYNES
DRAWN C. NORTHROP
CHECKED
REVISED

| DATE | INITIAL |
|---|---|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

REGION SOUTHEAST
SHEET 2 OF 6
DRAWING NO. MP 601 / 60407
DATE 3–17–97

**Exhibit 20: Mt. Pisgah Water/Sewer System Rehabilitation: Phasing Map and Key Sheet, circa 1997**

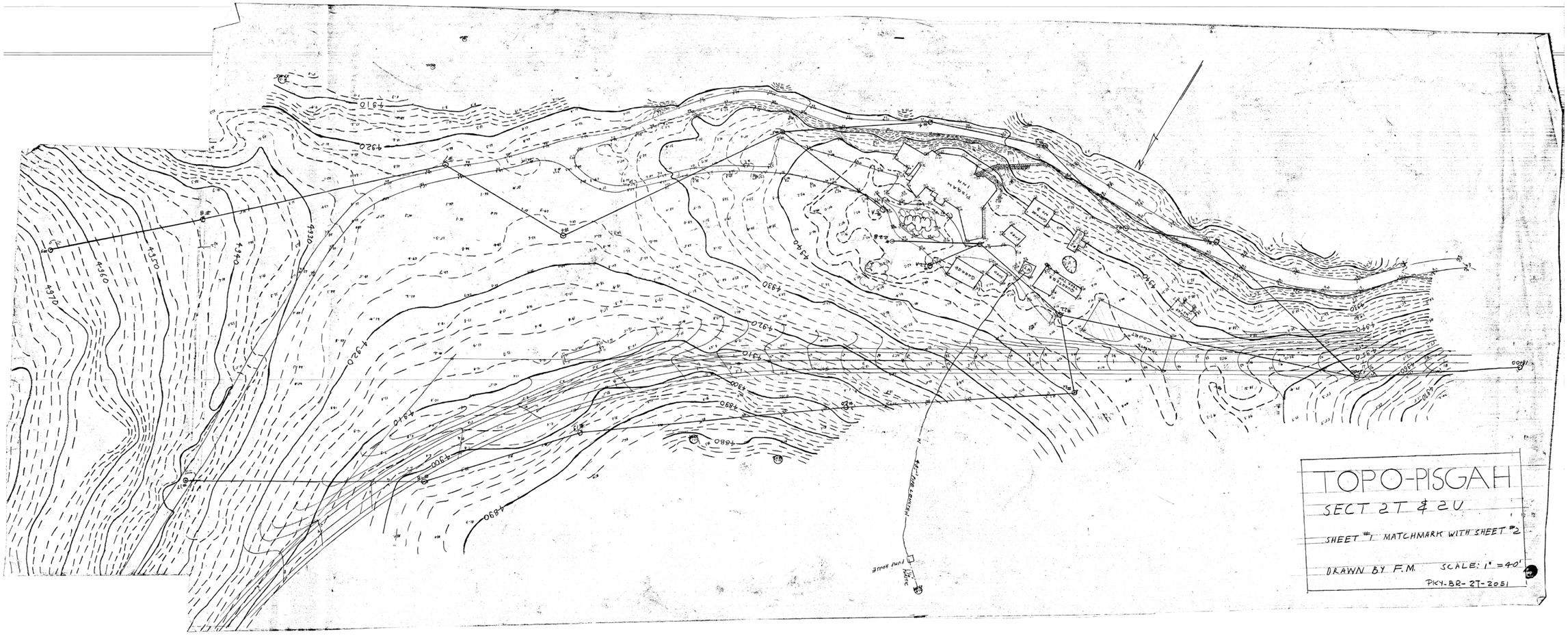
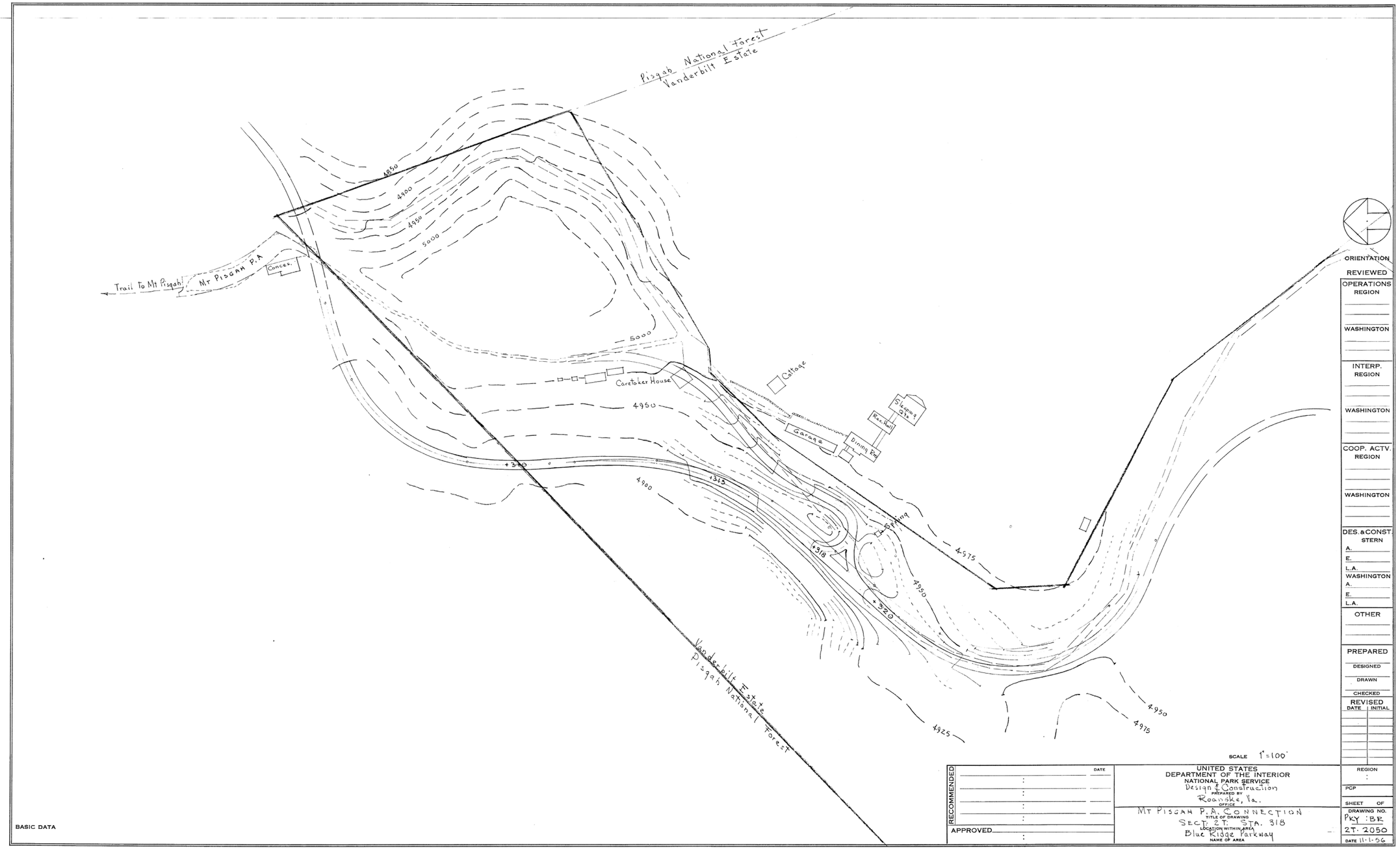



**Exhibit 21: Topo Pisgah**

TRIM LINE




TRIM LINE

HUNTING LODGE SITE

**Exhibit 22: Mt. Pisgah PA Connection: Vanderbilt Estate, circa 1956**

TRIM LINE

PISGAH NATIONAL FOREST
VANDERBILT ESTATE
EXISTING ROAD
TIE INTO EXISTING ROAD
5000
CARETAKER'S HOUSE
COTTAGE
SLEEPING QUARTERS
RECEPTION HALL
DINING
GARAGE
ANNEX
SPRING
WOODS
ICE HOUSE
4950
4925
4900
4875
4850
4825
4975
+320
+315
+310
+305
+300
+295
+290
+285
+280
+275
+270
+265
+260
+255
+250
+245
+240
+235
+230
+225
+220
+215
+210
+205
+200
+195
+190
+185
+180
+175
+170
+165
+160
+155
+150
+145
+140
+135
+130
+125
+120
+115
+110
+105
+100
+95
+90
+85
+80
+75
+70
+65
+60
+55
+50
+45
+40
+35
+30
+25
+20
+15
+10
+5
+0
1¼:1
1½:1
1¾:1
1:1
PARKING AREA
ASPHALT ROAD
TRAIL TO MT. PISGAH
VANDERBILT ESTATE
PISGAH NATIONAL PARK
BUCK SPRING TUNNEL
BASIC DATA

ORIENTATION REVIEWED

| | |
|---|---|
| OPERATIONS REGION | |
| WASHINGTON | |
| INTERP. REGION | |
| WASHINGTON | |
| COOP. ACTV. REGION | |
| WASHINGTON | |
| DES. & CONST. STERN | A. E. L. A. |
| WASHINGTON | A. E. L. A. |
| OTHER | |
| PREPARED | JOHNSON |
| DESIGNED | JOHNSON |
| DRAWN | |
| CHECKED | |
| REVISED DATE / INITIAL | |
| REGION | 1 |
| PCP | |
| SHEET OF | |
| DRAWING NO. | PKY: BR 2T-2050A |
| DATE | 7-23-58 |

PRELIMINARY

SCALE 1" = 100'

RECOMMENDED
CHIEF EODC — DATE

APPROVED — SUPERINTENDENT — 9/10/58

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

MT. PISGAH P.A. CONNECTION
TITLE OF DRAWING
SECTION 2T STATION 318
LOCATION WITHIN AREA
BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY
NAME OF AREA

188. INC., BROOKLYN 17, N. Y.

TRIM LINE

**Exhibit 23: Mt. Pisgah PA Connection: Vanderbilt Estate, circa 1958**

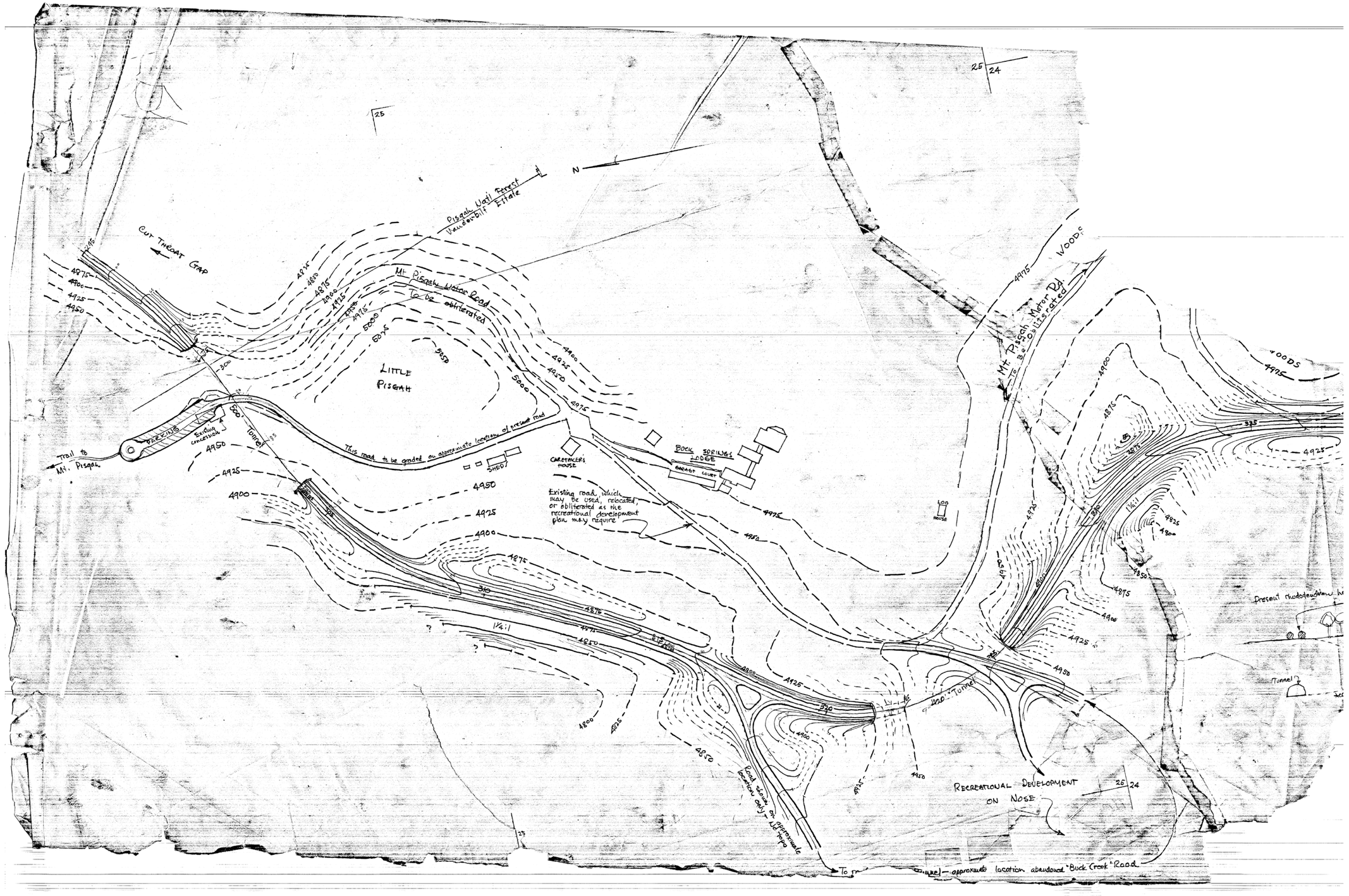



**Exhibit 24: BLRI Parkway Road Alignment around Buck Spring Lodge Site**

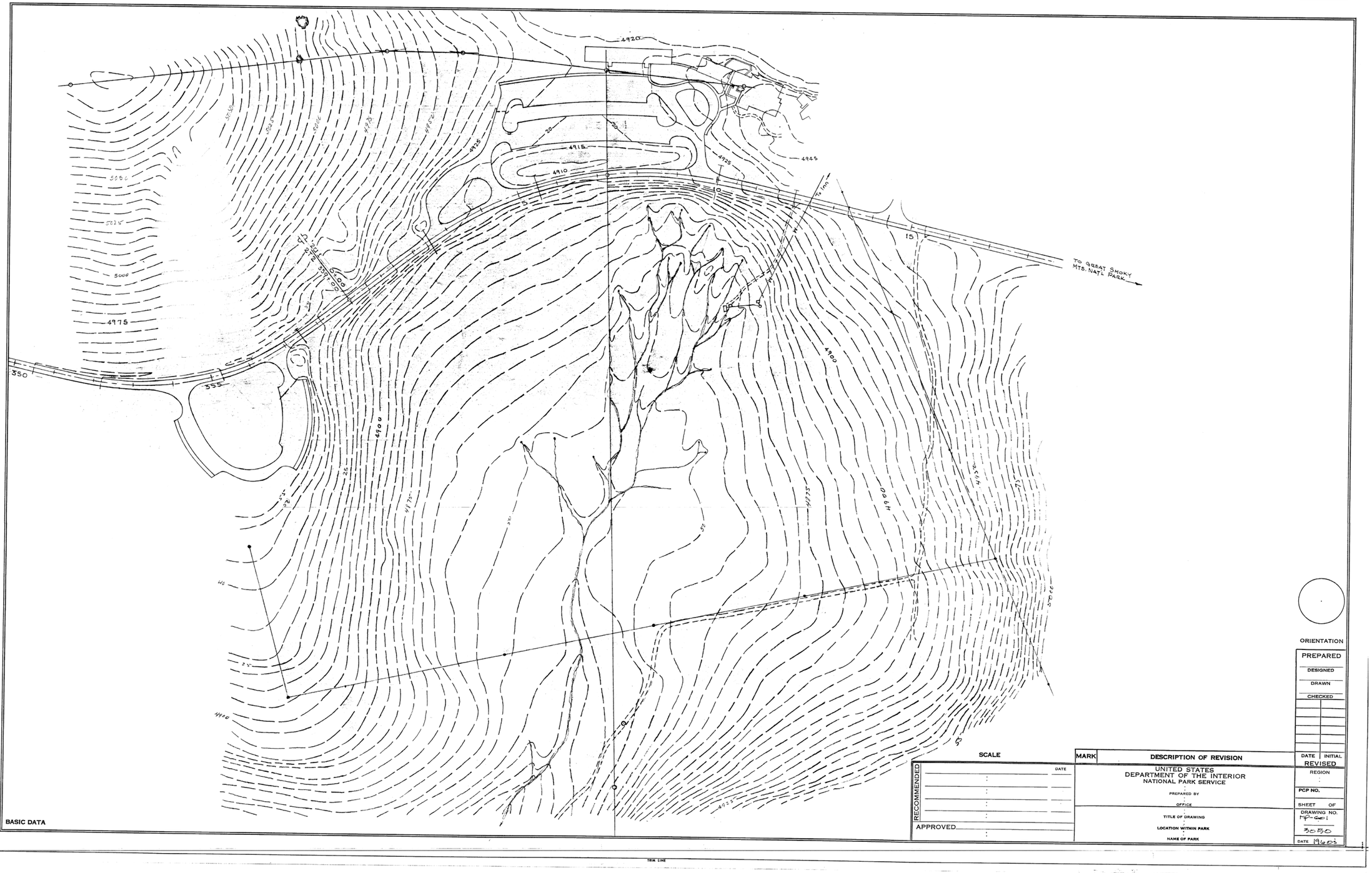



**Exhibit 25: BLRI Parkway Road Alignment near Pisgah Inn**

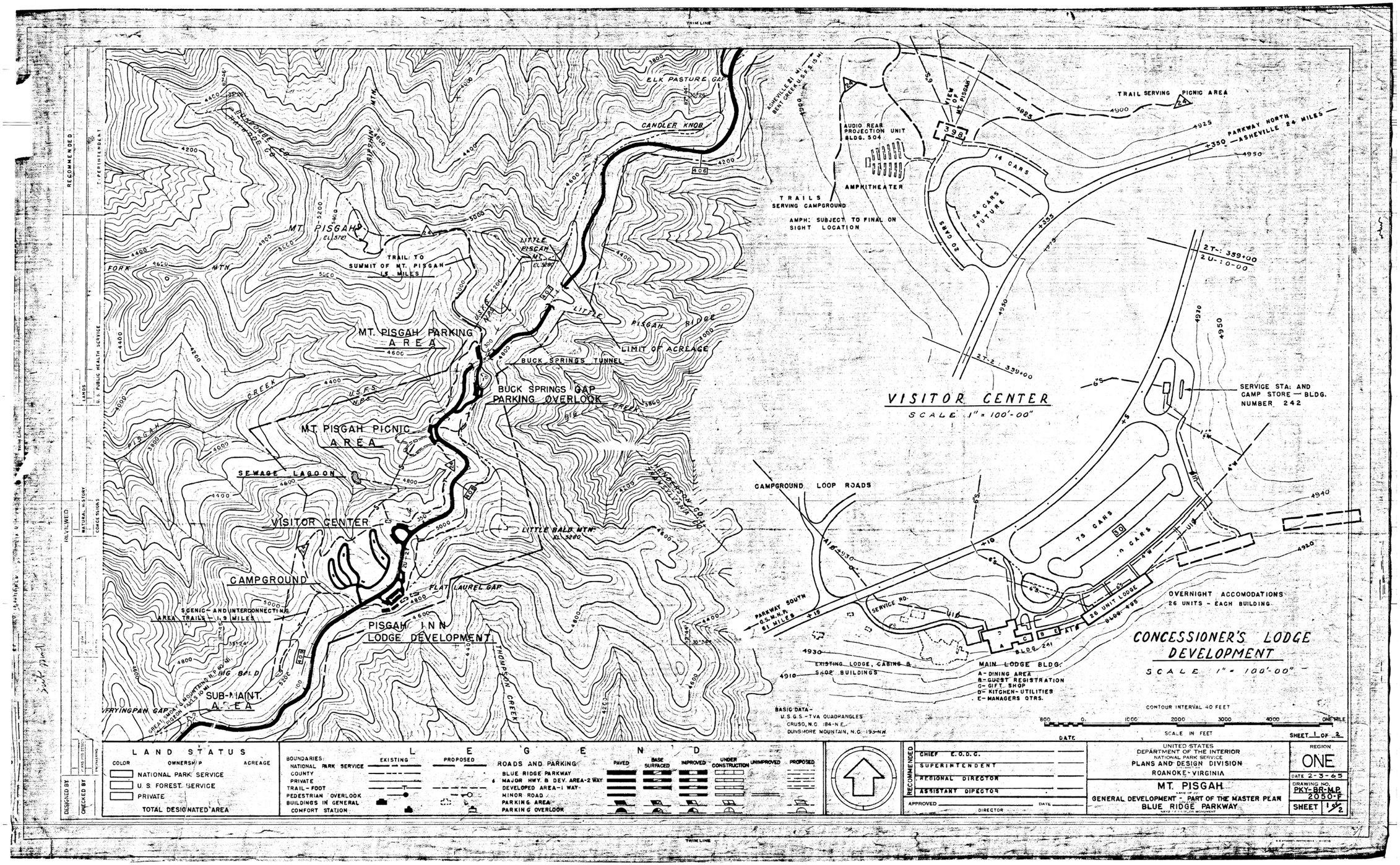



**Exhibit 26: Concessioner's Lodge Development & Visitor Center, circa 1965**

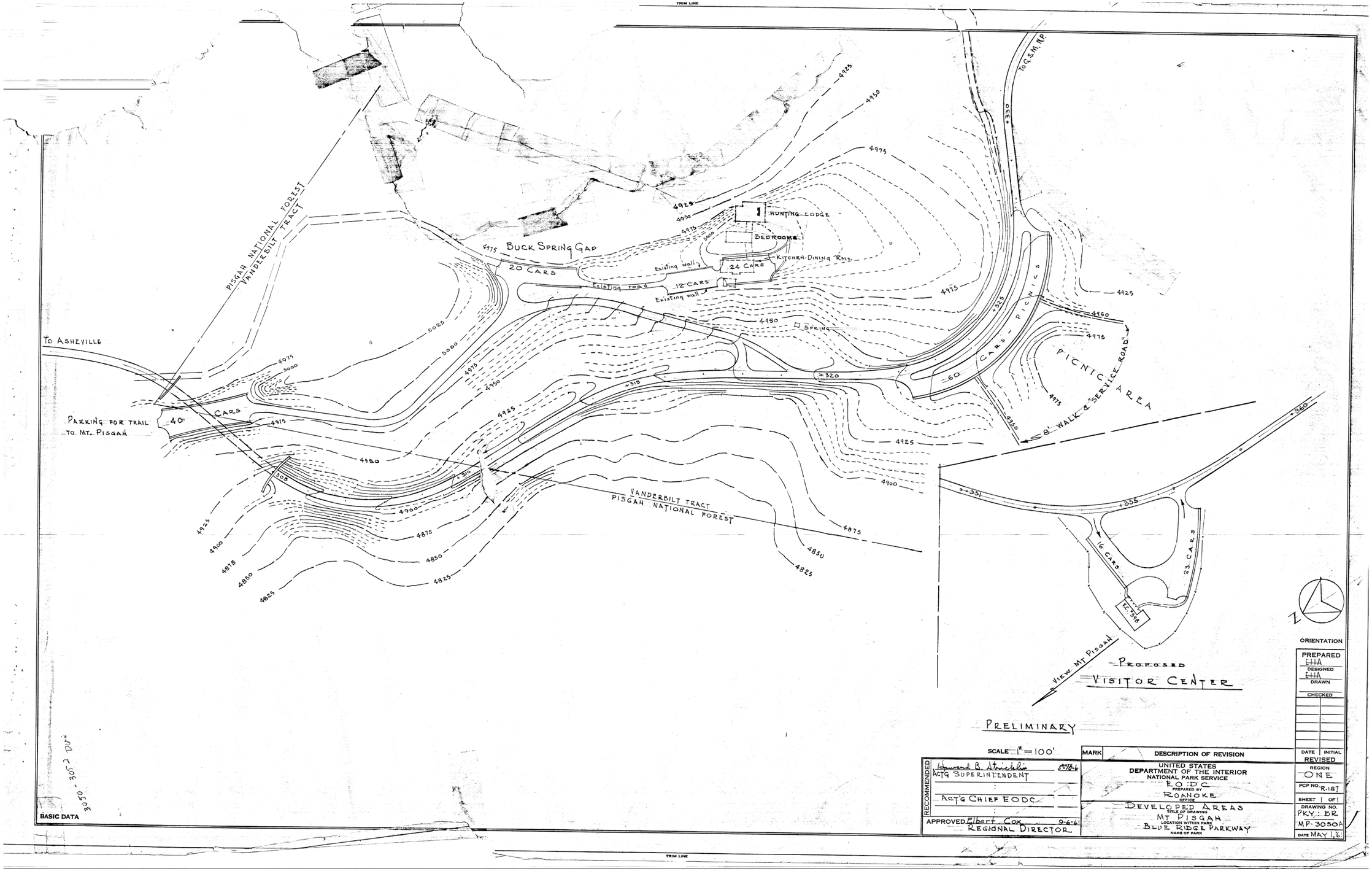



**Exhibit 27: Developed Areas: Proposed Visitor Center, circa 1961**

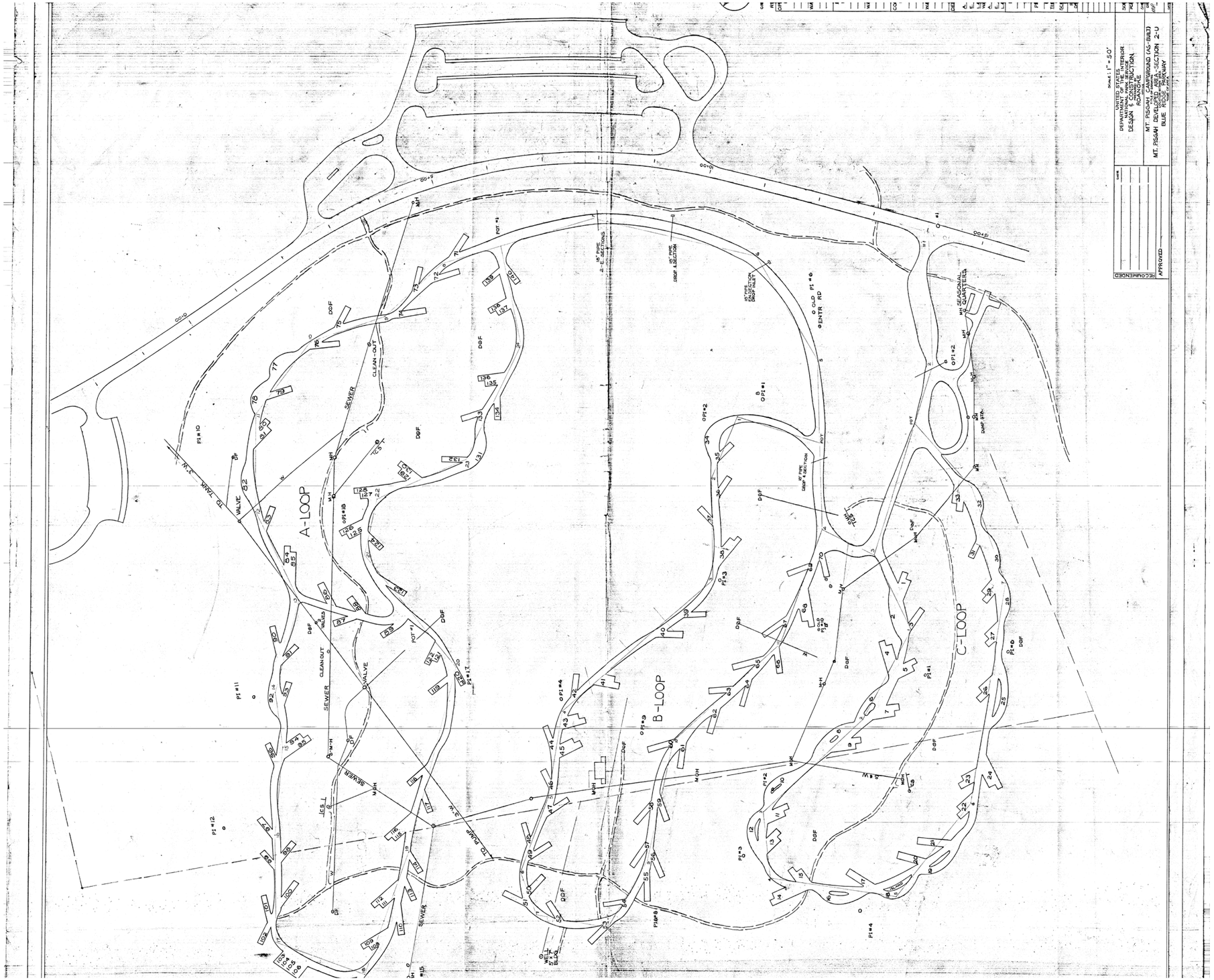



**Exhibit 28: Mt. Pisgah Campground (As Built)**

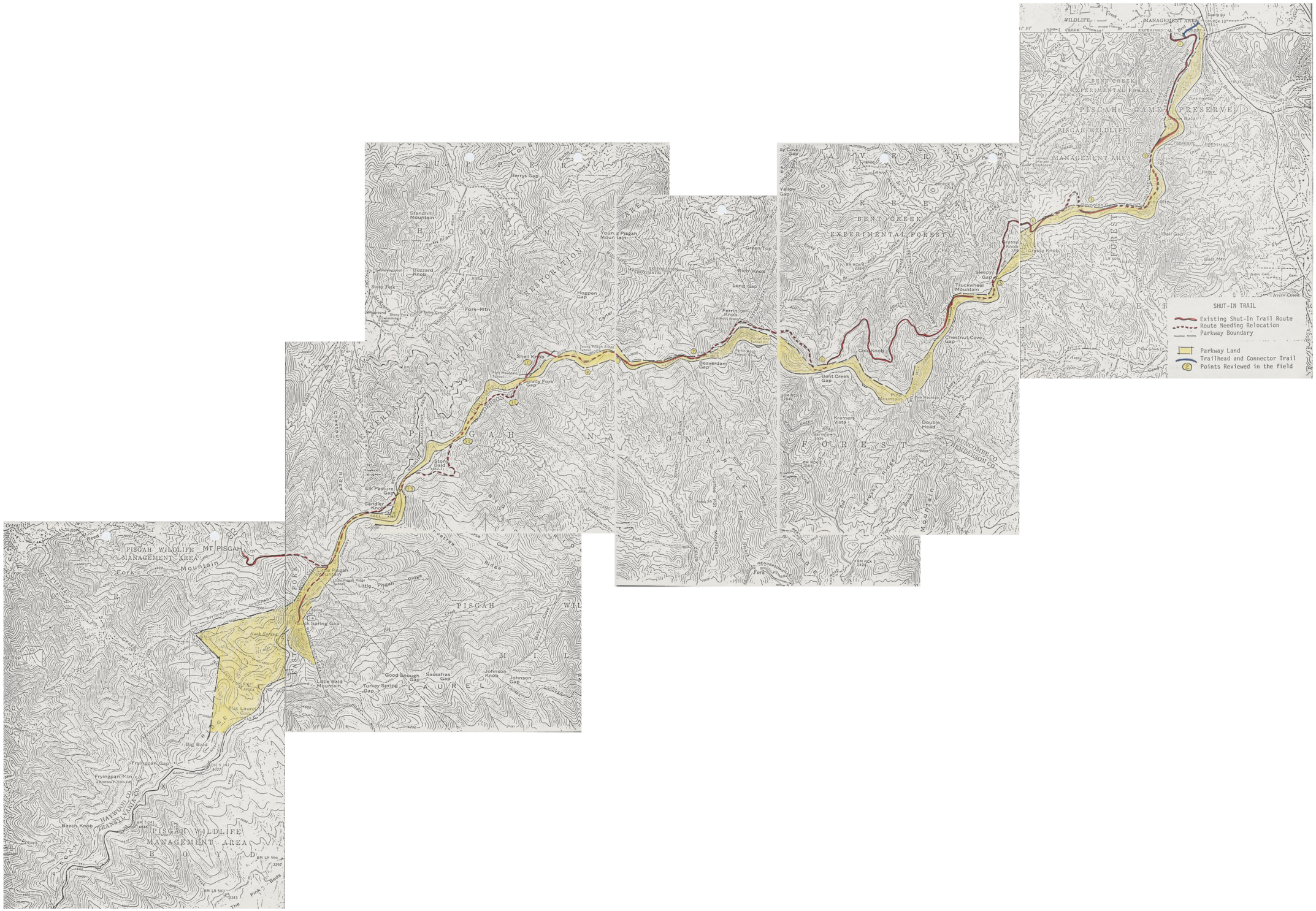



**Exhibit 29: Shut in Trail**

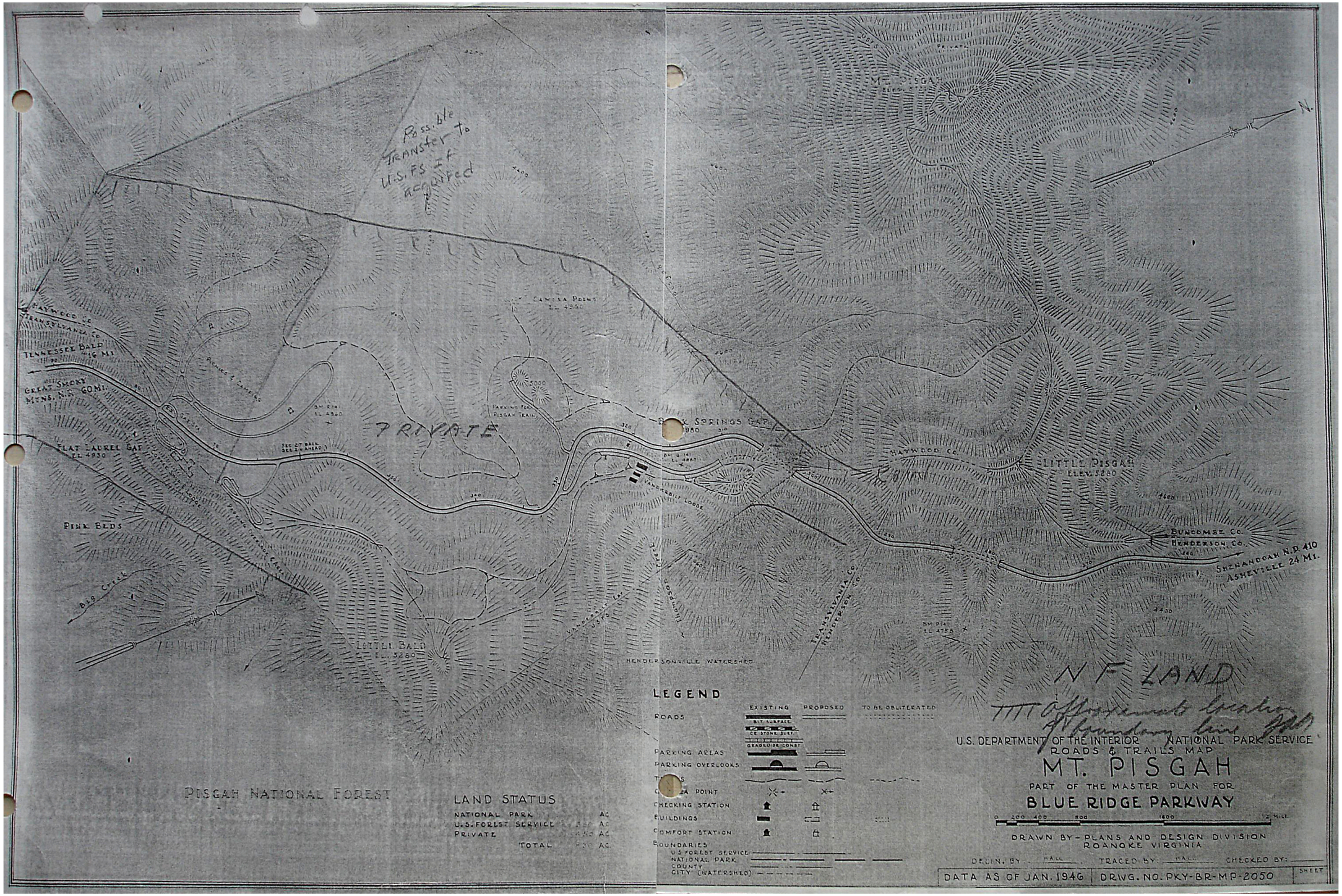
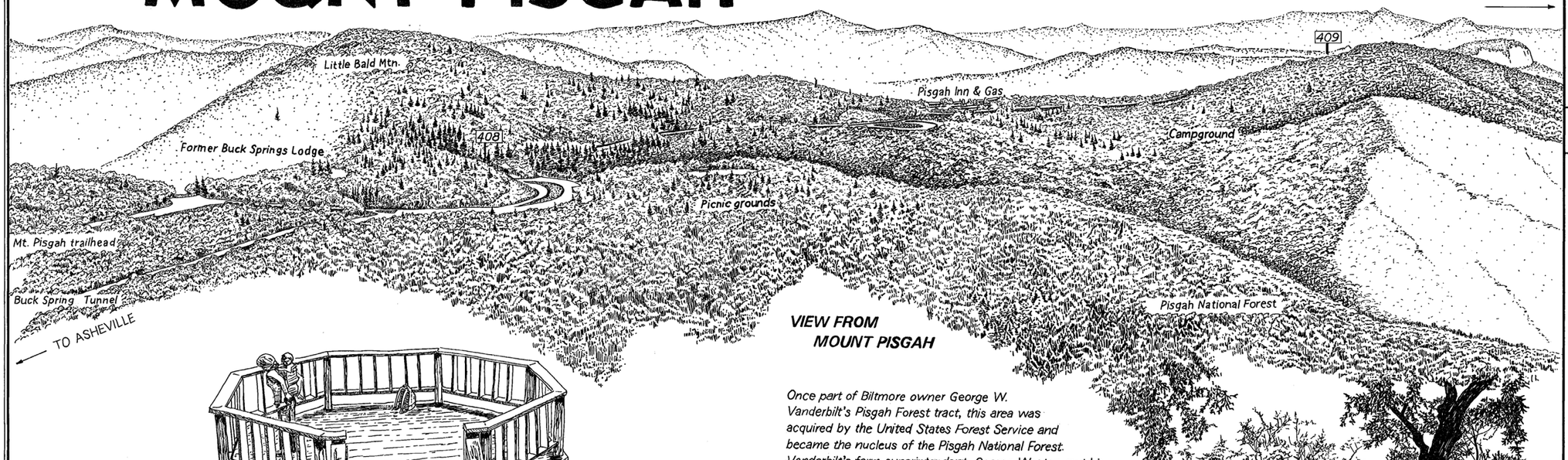



**Exhibit 30: 1946 Master Plan**

# MOUNT PISGAH




**VIEW FROM MOUNT PISGAH**

*Once part of Biltmore owner George W. Vanderbilt's Pisgah Forest tract, this area was acquired by the United States Forest Service and became the nucleus of the Pisgah National Forest. Vanderbilt's farm superintendent, George Weston and his wife, Mary, established the Pisgah National Forest Inn on the site adjacent to the present Pisgah Inn in 1919. Concessionaires have operated here ever since. The campground was established by the forest service in the 1930s as the "Frying Pan Gap Camping Area." Due to years of deterioration, Vanderbilt's Buck Spring Lodge was removed prior to the transfer of the land to the NPS. The Pisgah National Forest Inn received only limited use after 1968, and was demolished in 1990. Remnants of the Buck Spring Lodge can still be seen along the Buck Spring Trail.*

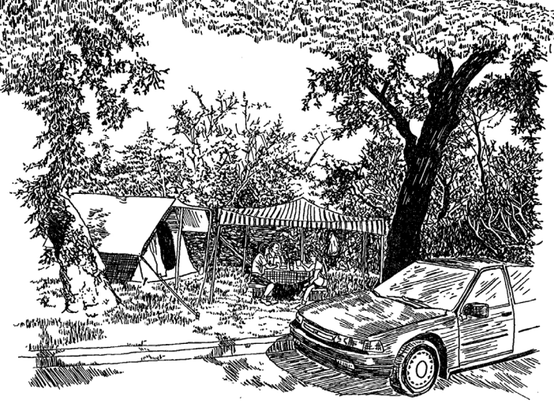


**OBSERVATION PLATFORM ON MOUNT PISGAH** *milepost 407.8*

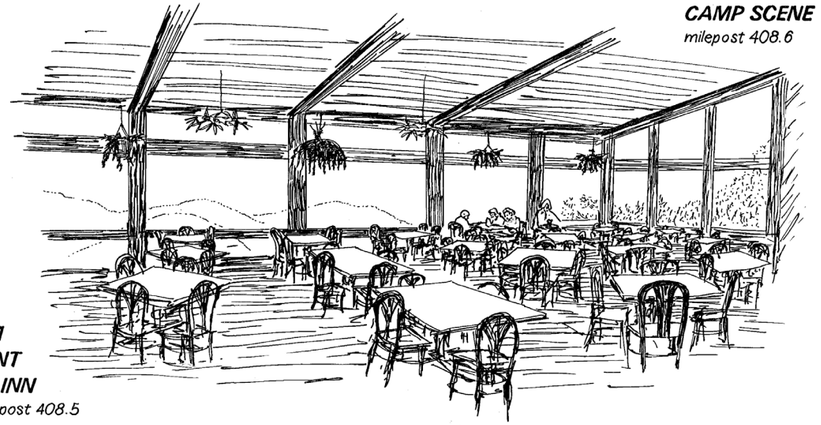


**BUCK SPRING TRAILHEAD** *milepost 407.8*

**CAMPSITE NESTLED IN THE RHODODENDRON** *milepost 408.6*



**CAMP SCENE** *milepost 408.6*



**VIEW FROM RESTAURANT AT PISGAH INN** *milepost 408.5*

DELINEATED BY: *Ian Shanklin 1997*

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
ROADS & BRIDGES RECORDING PROJECT
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY
BUNCOMBE COUNTY
ASHEVILLE VICINITY
NORTH CAROLINA

SHEET 18 OF 28

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
NC-42

IF REPRODUCED, PLEASE CREDIT: HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, NAME OF DELINEATOR, DATE OF THE DRAWING

TRIM LINE

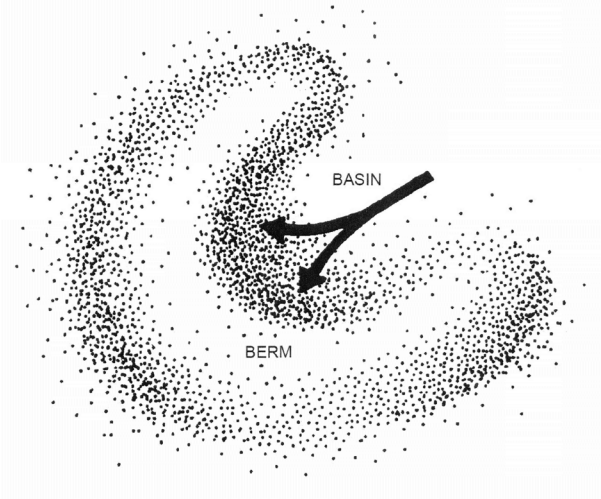
**Exhibit 31: Historic American Engineering Record, NPS, Ian Shanklin 1997**

# Appendix D

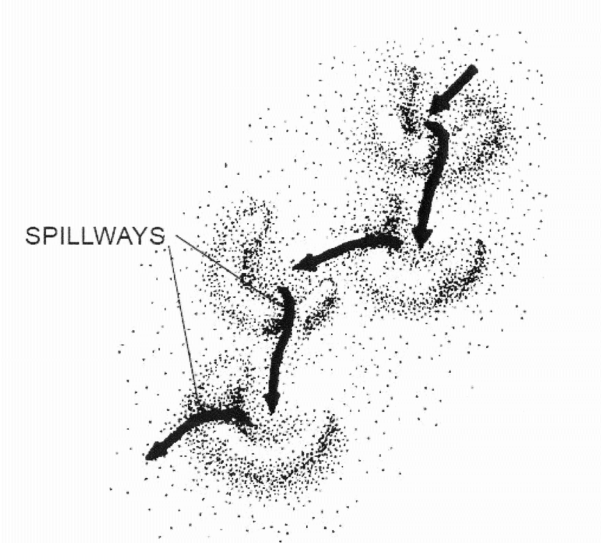
## Storm Water Harvesting Techniques

All images are taken from Stormwater havesting: a green concept. 2007. Mark E. Peterson

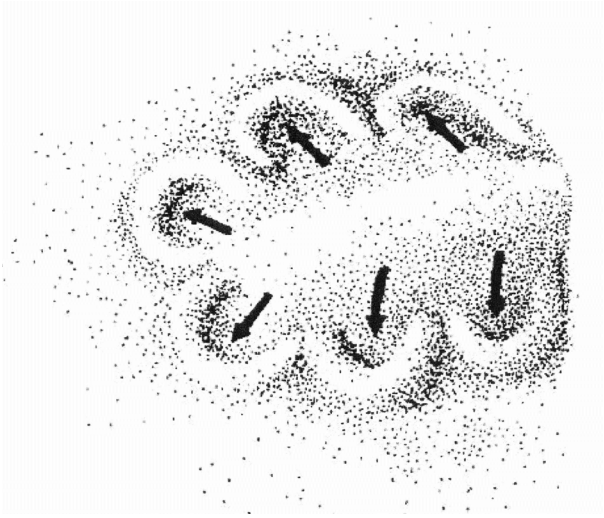
**Microbasin, pocket berm**



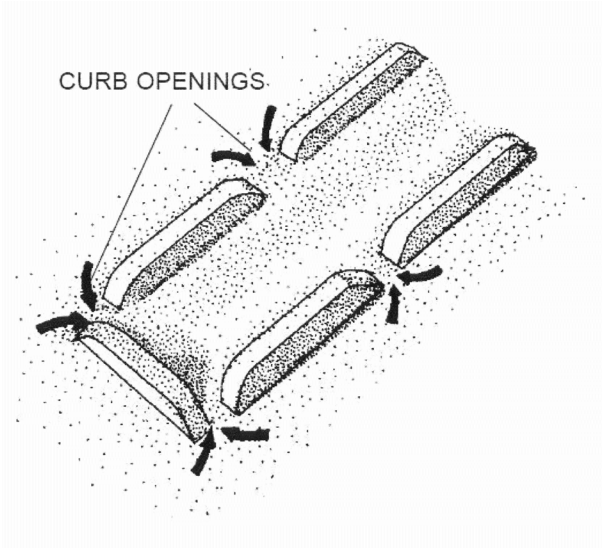

**Microbasin in series**



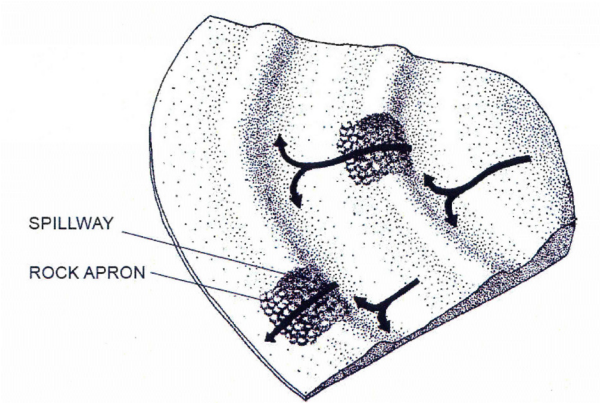

**Microbasin in association with pathways**



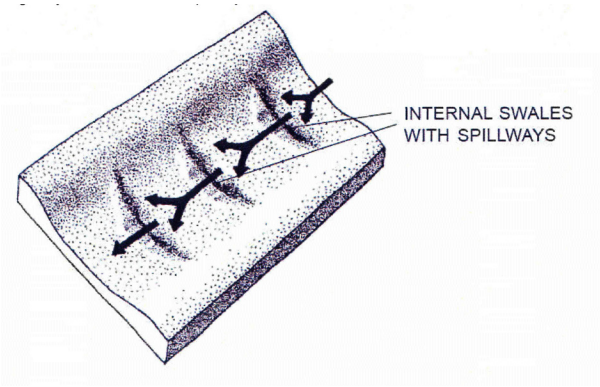
**Microbasin within curb cuts**



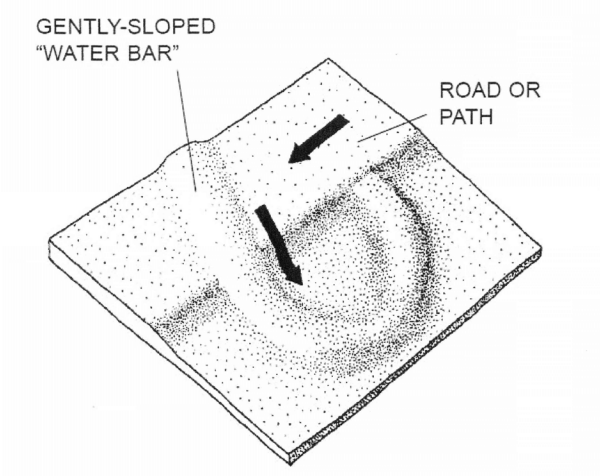
**Large-scale parallel on-contour swales**



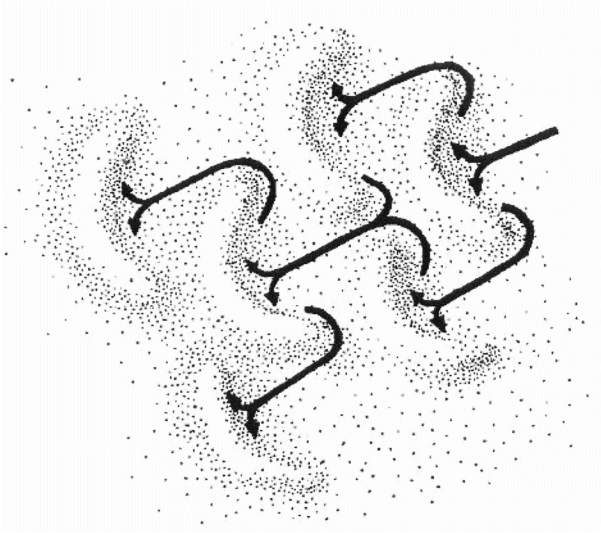

**Internal microbasins within swale/spillway**



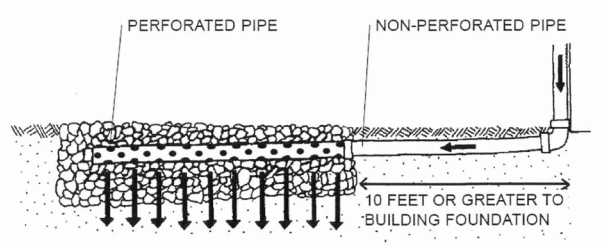

**U-shaped microbasin along road or path**




**Boomerang microbasin on slope**



**French drain attached to downspout**



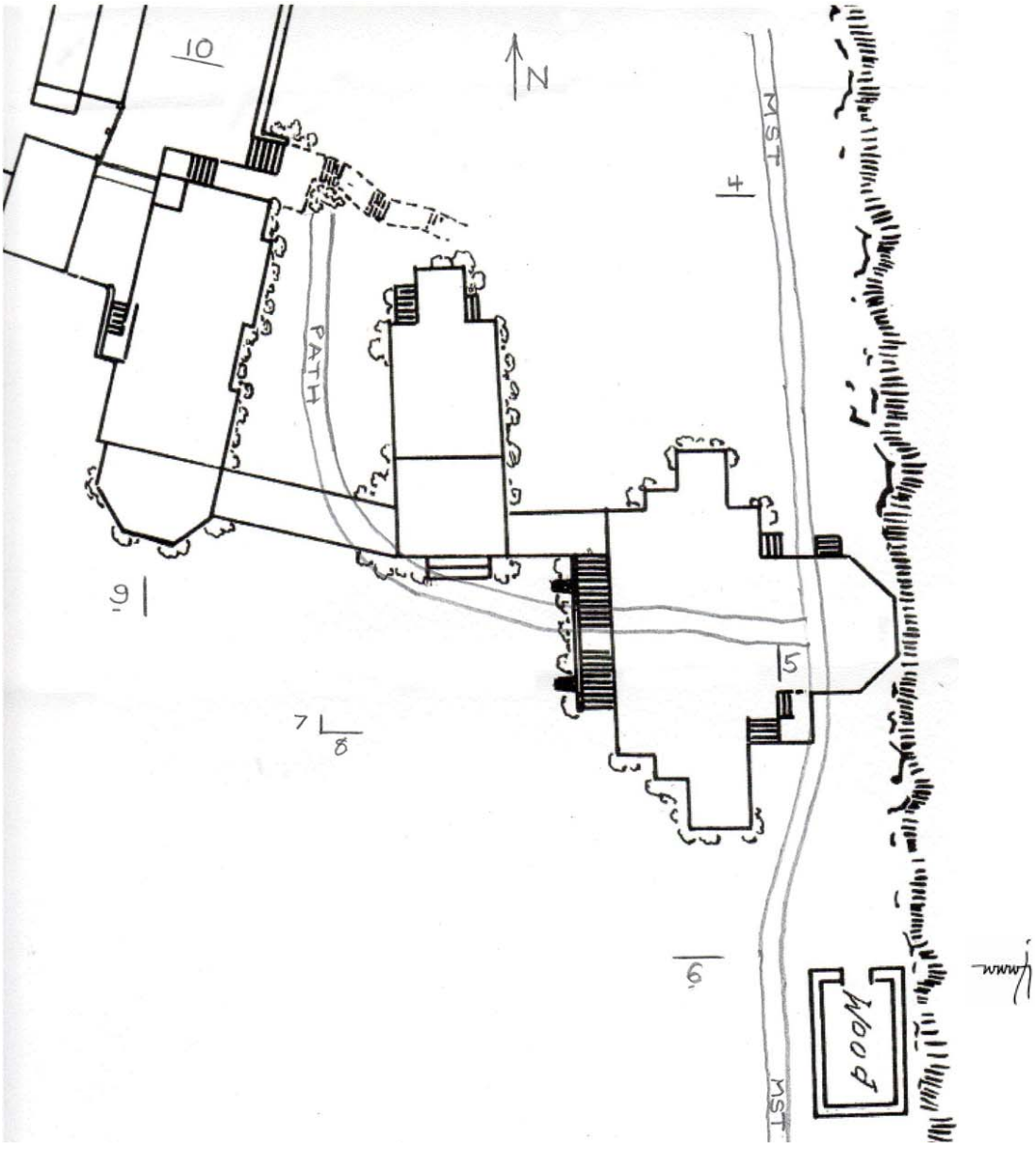
# Appendix E

## Walt Webber Proposal for Biltmore Estate

The Buck Spring Lodge

**A proposed Interpretive Exhibit Site Plan – December 2007**

The placement of the exhibits presented below are approximations. Their actual positions would depend upon the measured or discovered outlines of the building foundation footprints and of the terrain and areas not blocked by trees and other vegetation growth.



**Buck Spring Lodge**
**An Exhibit Site Plan**

The images presented for the proposed exhibits, below, are representative of what is available from various sources. There are many others available, especially from the Biltmore Estate archives. Some of those shown are of low quality as they were copy machine copies of actual photographs. The photo sources are indicated for each image and actual photographic prints should be available from these sources for any that would be used for the exhibits.

**Location 1 – at entrance to Vanderbilt Motor Road (facing North)**



**At the Horse Trail Terminus at Buck Spring Gap.** Edith Vanderbilt (probably early 1900's) on horse trail with a box camera (Shut-in or Stony Fork Trail) on first curve to left north of Buck Spring Gap.

The original trail was from Stony Fork at the end of the road from Candler up the ridge south of present day Elk Pasture Gap. Visitors would take a train to Candler and pick up horses at that point for the trip to the Lodge. It is not known when the Shut-In Trail from Sandy Bottom was built. The trail from Stony Fork to Pisgah Ridge can be found on the 1936 Dunsmore Mountain Topo. (undated Biltmore Estate photo)




## The Vanderbilt Motor Road

William Jennings Bryan on auto trip to Mt. Pisgah, fall of 1918. (picture from Pack Library - Grove Park Inn collection) First car Bryan and Fred Seeley, Sr. Back Seat Mrs Bryan Right and Mrs. Seeley, center. Congressman & Mrs. James M. Gudger and other dignitaries in other cars.

The Motor Road was built in 1909-1910 by Estate Superintendent Chauncey Beadle. The section from Elk Pasture Gap to the Lodge entrance followed the route of the Stony Fork and Shut-In Trails. It was originally a one lane road (as can be seen in the photo). Traffic was up until 100PM and then down after that. When the State later took it over it was widened and was identified as NC Route 112 and is now NC Route 151 to Elk Pasture Gap. It originally terminated at the Forestry School in the Pink Beds

Mr.Beadle was quite proud of this road and in his later years stated that other than widening the road the State only cut one little corner out (George Cecil interview 9/28/06)

The section from Buck Spring Gap extends to the top of the portal at the north end of Buck Spring tunnel

**<u>Location 1</u> – at entrance to Vanderbilt Motor Road (continued)**

**Plaque at foot of Motor Road** at Stony Fork October 1920. Edith Vanderbilt, NC Gov. Locke Craig, Cornelia Vanderbilt, Geo S. Powell Secy Appalachian Park Association. (Biltmore Estate photo)



**The Elk Pasture** at Elk Pasture Gap (Motor Road on Right). (Wm. Cogburn collection)



**<u>Location 2</u> – At Buck Spring Gap Parking lot (looking South**

**Caretaker's Cottage**
(Biltmore Estate photo)



**Automobile arrival from Motor Road**
(William Cogburn Collection)



**Motorcycles at the Caretaker's Cottage**

(William Cogburn collection)



**Main Entrance (May 1935)**
(NPS photo)



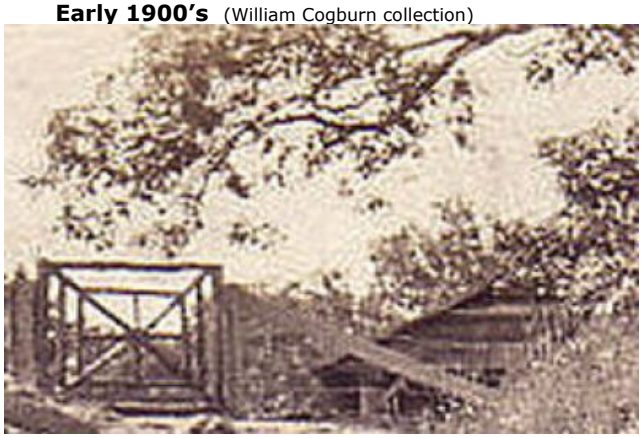
## Location 3 – On MST just south of Honeymoon Cottage site looking North

The Honeymoon Cottage was so-named because of its distant location from the other Lodge buildings (per George Cecil) This building was originally located at Stony Fork, Upper Harmony, next to the present day Davis Chapel United Methodist Church. From our current research we determined that it was probably built around 1852 and was a one room building known as the Stony Fork Meeting House, was used as a Buncombe County school house and in 1868 was also used by the Stony Fork Methodist Episcopal Church. It was located along the original road from Candler that terminated at Stony Fork and led to the trail to Pisgah Ridge and the Buck Spring Lodge. In 1911 the building was sold to Vanderbilt and was moved to the Lodge site for use as a 2 bedroom-1 bath cottage. It was again moved just before the other lodge buildings were razed and after several other relocations is now located at The Ramble development where it serves as the Horticulturalist's office.

**Honeymoon Cottage, just before removal** (photo by George Cecil)



**Early 1900's** (William Cogburn collection)



**Today (at the Ramble)**



**Location 4 – along MST north of Main Lodge facing South (see Site Plan)**

**North Side Main Lodge** (NPS August 1961)



**North Wing Main Lodge** (NPS August 1961)



**Main Lodge & Midway** (NPS August 1961)



**Midway & Kitchen-Dining** (NPS August 1961)



### Location 5 – Main Lodge Interior – using existing exhibit

**NE Corner** (undated Biltmore Estate photo)



**SE Corner** (undated Biltmore Estate photo)



**NW Corner** (undated Biltmore Estate photo)



**Location 5 – Main Lodge Interior (continued)**

**Lounge over East Porch (**undated Biltmore Estate photo)



**1920 East side**
(Mrs. Wm Todd Ashley photo)



**Bedroom** (undated Biltmore Estate photo)



**Location 6 – South of Main Lodge looking North (see site plan)**

**Main Lodge south side** (photo by George Cecil soon before razing)

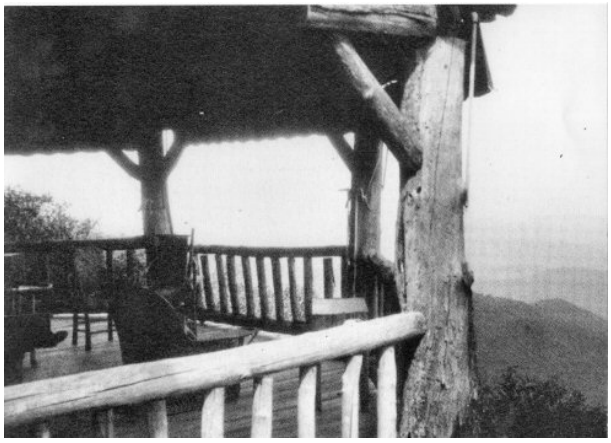


**1920 – Main Lodge from Laurel Mountain (**Mrs. Wm Todd Ashley photo)



**Location 6 – South of Main Lodge looking North – sheet 2**

**1920 – East Porch** (Mrs. Wm Todd Ashley photo)

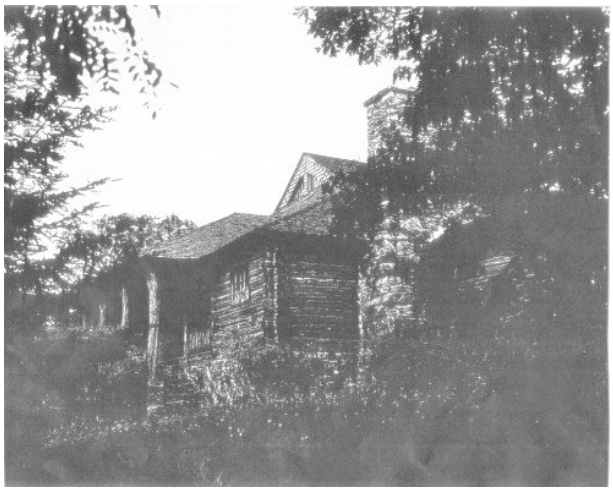


**1961 South Side** (NPS photo)



**Southwest corner Main Lodge**

(undated Biltmore Estate photo)



**Original Main Lodge structure – before 1903**

(Biltmore Estate Photo)



**Location 7 – Down the hill looking East (see site plan)**

(undated Biltmore Estate photo)



(1961 NPS photo)



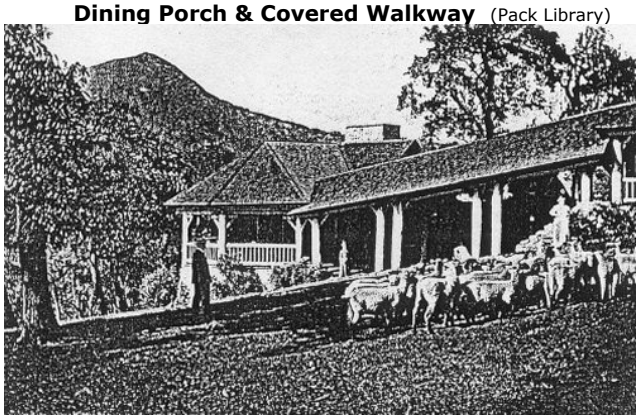
**Location 8 – Down the hill looking North (see site plan)**

**Dining-Kitchen Building around 1903 – Midway Cottage apparently under construction.**

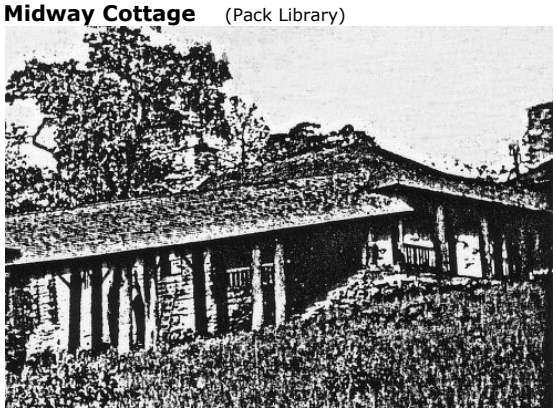


(Pack Library)

**Dining Porch & Covered Walkway** (Pack Library)

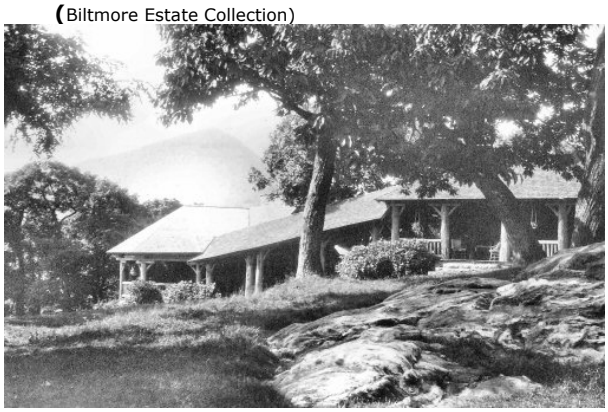


**Midway Cottage** (Pack Library)

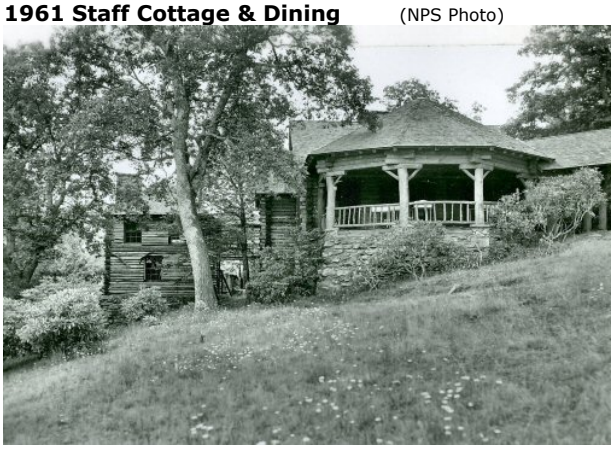


**1910 – Dining & Midway**

(Biltmore Estate Collection)



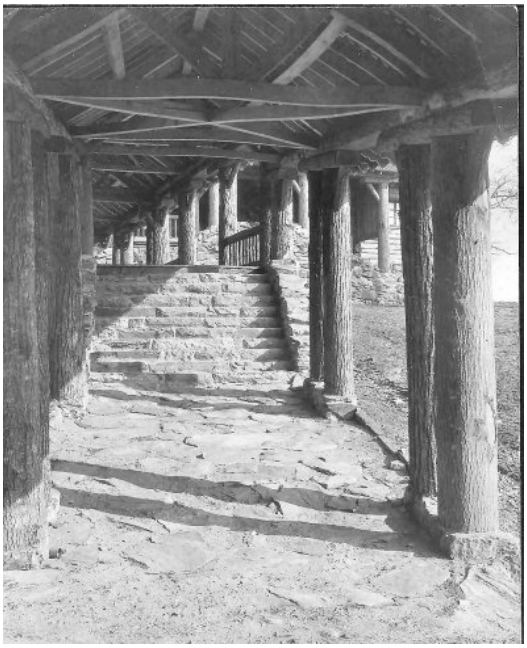
**1961 Staff Cottage & Dining** (NPS Photo)



**Location 9 – On the Dining Porch -actual location to be determined due to Rhododendrons.**

**Under Covered Walkway** **Covered Walkway from Dining Porch**

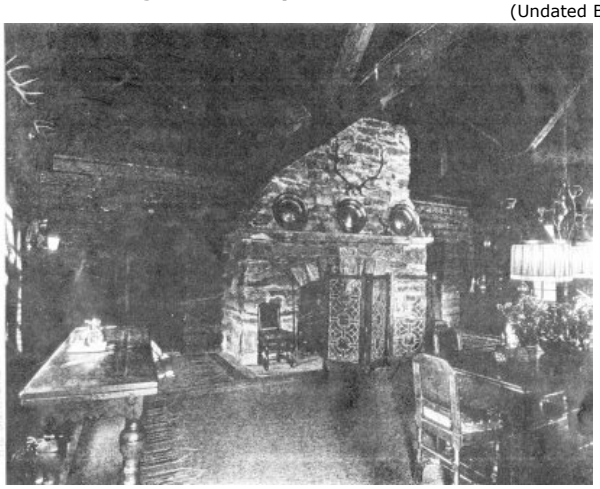
(undated Biltmore Estate photos)

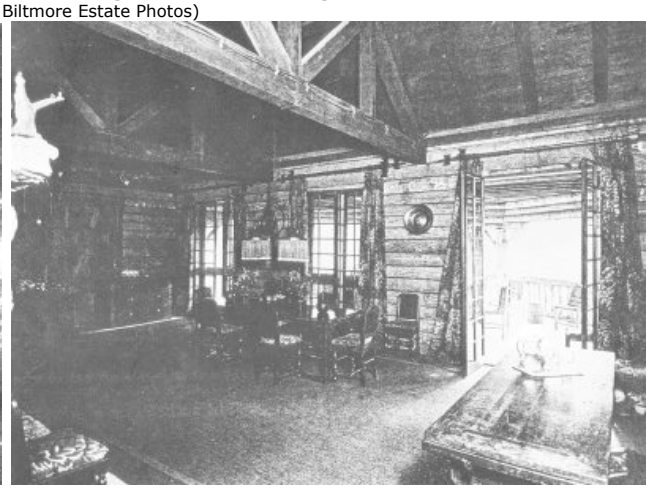




**Dining Room Fireplace** **Dining Room and Dining Porch**

(Undated Biltmore Estate Photos)





**Location 10 - On Lower Driveway near steps looking south (see site plan).**

**Kitchen – Staff Building – Stable (before 1903)**



(Biltmore Estate image)

**Kitchen – Staff (after 1903)** (Biltmore Estate photo)



**1961 Midway & Kitchen** (NPS photo)



**1961 Dining-Kitchen** (NPS Photo)



**Location 10 - On Lower Driveway near steps looking south – sheet 2.**

**Early Photo – Staff Building, Bridge and Stable** (William Cogburn collection)



**1895-96 Stable** (Biltmore Estate photo)

