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Big South Fork
National River and Recreation Area

Lora Blevins Farmstead
Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area
Cultural Landscape Report



Lora Blevins Farmstead

Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area

Cultural Landscape Report

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Prepared by:
WLA Studio

Under the direction of
National Park Service
Southeast Regional Office
Cultural Resources, Partnerships, & Science Division
Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area



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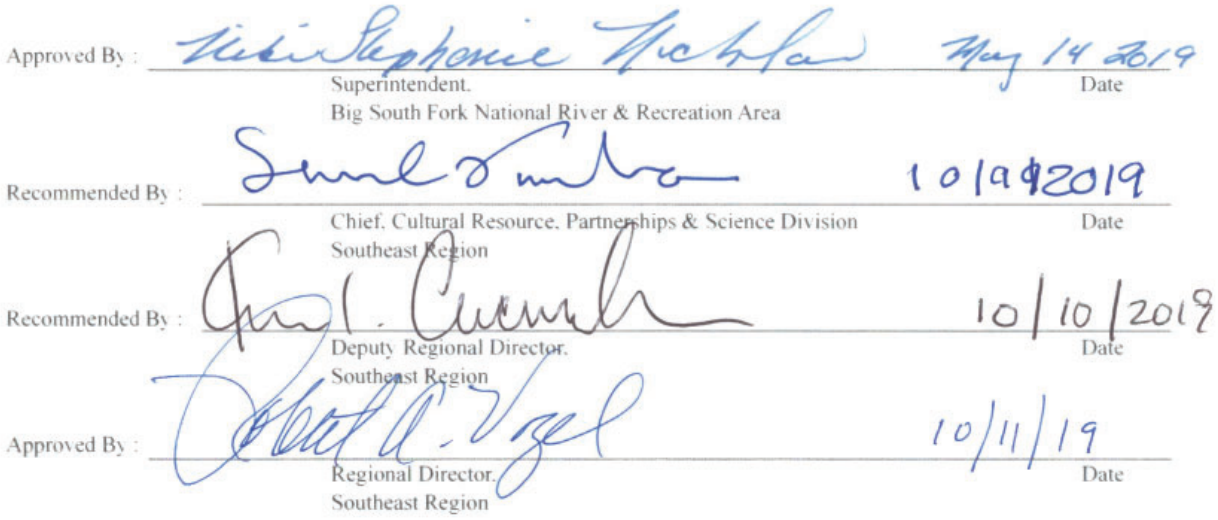
About the cover: Lora Blevins Farmstead, 2017. Source: WLA Studio.

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Lora Blevins Farmstead

Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area

Cultural Landscape Report



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Table of Contents

Foreword xvii

Introduction 1

Management Summary 1
Historical Overview 1
Scope of Work and Methodology 4
Description of Study Boundaries 5
Summary of Findings 5

Site History 7

Introduction 7
American Indian Land Use Prior to 1760 8
Settlement and Development of Big South Fork (1760-1927) 11
Early Exploration and Settlement (1760-1805) 11
Pre-Civil War Settlement and Development (1805-1865) 12
Post-Civil War Settlement and Development (1865-1927) 16
The Lora Blevins Farmstead (1927-1974) 18
Development of Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (1974-1990) 27
US Army Corps of Engineers Management Period (1974-1990) 27
National Park Service Management (1991-Present) 36

Existing Conditions 47

Introduction 47
Natural Systems and Features 48
Geology 48
Soils 48
Hydrology 48
Climate 48
Topography 49
Spatial Organization 49
Vegetation 49
Cultural Vegetation 51
Threatened and Endangered Species 52
Buildings and Structures 54
Lora Blevins House 54
Lora Blevins Pole Barn 54
Lora Blevins Corn Crib 55
Privy 56
House Ruins 56
Animal Pen Ruins 56

Utilities 57
Cluster Arrangement 58
Land Use and Cultural Traditions 58
Circulation 59
Vehicular 59
Pedestrian 59
Trails 59
Small-Scale Features 60
Signs 60
Fencing 60
Demonstration Garden 60
Root Cellar 61
Views and Vistas 61
Archeological Sites 61

Analysis and Evaluation 73

Introduction 73
National Register Status 74
Statement of Significance 74
Period of Significance 75
Analysis of Landscape Characteristics 76
Natural Systems and Features 76
Topography 77
Land Use 77
Cultural Traditions 78
Buildings and Structures 79
Spatial Organization 83
Cluster Arrangement 85
Vegetation 85
Circulation 87
Views and Vistas 89
Small-Scale Features 89
Evaluation of Landscape Integrity 91
Location 91
Setting 92
Design 92
Materials 92
Workmanship 92
Feeling 92
Association 93

Treatment and Use 105

Introduction 105
Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment 105
Standards for Preservation: 105
Standards for Rehabilitation: 106
Standards for Restoration: 106
Standards for Reconstruction: 107

Management Philosophy 107
Treatment Period 109
Treatment Recommendations 109
Primary Treatment 109
Overall Treatment Goals 109
General Treatment Issues 110
Buildings and Structures 110
Spatial Organization 111
Vegetation 112
Views and Vistas 117
Circulation 117
Small Scale Features 120
Further Study 125

Bibliography 131

Repositories 133

Appendix A 135

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List of Figures

About the cover: Lora Blevins Farmstead, 2017. ii

Introduction 1

Figure 1. BISO park map. 2
Figure 2. BISO park map, indicating location of Lora Blevins Farmstead. Map amended to note location. 3

Site History 7

Figure 3. The Big South Fork, rugged gorge walls, and dense forest 8
Figure 4. Rock shelter at Big South Fork. 9
Figure 5. Map showing full extent of Cherokee Nation, and the series of land cessions. The Big South Fork is located in the center of the image in the area marked "16." 10
Figure 6. Portion of 1795 map of Tennessee and Kentucky. Big South Fork is located in the center of the image. 12
Figure 7. Portion of 1874 map showing the lack of development in the Big South Fork area. Mergell, C. S. Military map of middle Tennessee and parts of East Tennessee and the adjoining states, being part of the Department of the Cumberland, commanded by Maj. Gen. Geo. H. Thomas, U.S.A. 15
Figure 8. 1919 photograph shows (left to right) Will J. Miller, Harve Slaven and Ellen Miller slaughtering a hog on their farm in the No Business Community.. 16
Figure 9. Comargo mining town, ca. 1920. Note the railroad on the other side of the river. A flood destroyed the small mining town in March of 1929. 17
Figure 10. Lora E. Blevins and Tealie Ann Blevins. Unknown date.. 19
Figure 11. Lora with family in front yard. Unknown date, though likely taken around 1940. Note the swept yard, perimeter yard fence, large trees, and clear vista towards the east. 20
Figure 12. George and Anne Blevins, late 1930s. The couple appears to be on the front porch of the Lora Blevins House. Note the wood shingle roof and log porch supports. 21
Figure 13. George and Poppie Blevins in the yard south of the Lora Blevins Pole Barn. The photo was likely taken in the mid-1930s 21
Figure 14. Lora Blevins working the fields with mule and plow. Unknown date. 23
Figure 15. 1951 aerial view of the Lora Blevins Farmstead (center) as well as other nearby farms. 24
Figure 16. Lora Blevins baptizing people in the river. No date. 25
Figure 17. Tealie Ann Blevins posing with food, ca. 1950s. Note in this photograph, the fence is still in place, and the yard is still swept bare. 26
Figure 18. 1974 family reunion photo. By this time, the yard was no longer swept bare, and dimensional lumber had replaced the log porch supports. 26

Figure 19. 1976 aerial of the farmstead. Much of the farmstead appears the same as it did in the 1950s, with the overall spatial arrangement remaining intact. Note the addition of two structures: one along the driveway to the house that may correspond to a mobile home belonging to George Blevins and a square structure to the east of the house that may correspond to the house Poppie noted as hers on the map she drew. 27
Figure 20. Page from the 1982 Inventory and Evaluation of Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Tennessee and Kentucky report. Note in the 1981 photo that the barnyard had recently been used for some crop. 29
Figure 21. Page from the 1982 Inventory and Evaluation of Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Tennessee and Kentucky report. Note in the 1981 photo that the area immediately around the corn crib was worn bare. 30
Figure 22. Page from the 1982 Inventory and Evaluation of Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Tennessee and Kentucky report. Note what may be a clothesline in the foreground. 31
Figure 23. Circa 1980 photograph of the east side of the barn. Note the presumed tractor tire in the bottom right corner of the photo. It is likely that by this time mule and plow were no longer used for planting. 32
Figure 24. Circa 1980 photograph of east side of Lora Blevins house. Note "lived-in" condition indicated by presence of potted plants on the porch. Also shown is the replacement chimney, which was added by Lora in the 1960s. 33
Figure 25. Circa 1980 photograph of west side of Lora Blevins house. Note "lived-in" condition indicated by the recently tilled area between the large walnut trees and the house. 33
Figure 26. Circa 1984 photograph of east side of barn. Note by this time the northern wing addition is missing as is much of the fencing and other farm objects. 34
Figure 27. Circa 1984 photograph of south side of barn. Note by this time the wing addition is in poor condition. The barnyard shows evidence of sorghum planting. 34
Figure 29. Circa 1984 photograph of north side of house. Note by this time the front porch and addition had been removed and the windows boarded up. Sorghum appears to have been planted in the yard between the house and the road. 34
Figure 30. Circa 1984 photograph of south side of corn crib. Note by this time all the various farm implements had been removed from around the structure. 34
Figure 31. 2005 repair work to the buildings and structures. Note the new roof. 34
Figure 32. 2005 repair work to the buildings and structures. Note the addition of a small log fence in front of corn crib. 35
Figure 33. 2005 repair work to the buildings and structures. 35
Figure 34. 2005 image of pumphouse. The structure was removed at this time, and useable lumber was used to repair the privy. 35
Figure 35. 2005 image of privy before repair. 35
Figure 36. Circa 2001 Spring Planting Day photograph. 35
Figure 37. 2013 photograph of side garden and fence. 35

Figure 38. 2004 image of downed black walnut tree. Note the protective portico on the house, as well as new roof. 36

Existing Conditions 47

Figure 39. Rock outcrop on east portion of property. 48
Figure 40. Long Field. The site of the annual Spring Planting Day event, when the mule-and-plow agricultural tradition is demonstrated for the public. 50
Figure 41. Thick successional forest in the northern portion of the site. Note the established pines, and the oak and maple saplings. 50
Figure 42. Sparse vegetation within successional forest northwest of the house. Note the multi-trunked trees in the depressed area indicating past logging activity. 50
Figure 43. Successional vegetation edge containing pines, black walnut, dogwood, and other vegetation. 51
Figure 44. Looking east across Katie Blevins Cemetery, established in 1812. 51
Figure 45. Table of flora species identified on the property in 2017. 52
Figure 46. Black walnuts surrounding the Lora Blevins House. 52
Figure 47. Largest black walnut on the property, located between the driveway and the house. Note the group of yucca at the base of the tree. 53
Figure 48. Typical appearance of black walnuts at the farmstead—solitary.. 53
Figure 49. Old overgrown path that now connects farmstead with horse trail. Note the yuccas marking the entrance to the path as it heads south.. 53
Figure 50. Yucca along forest edge.. 53
Figure 51. Remaining apple tree, located north of the log barn. 53
Figure 52. South facade of the Lora Blevins House. Note the protective shed roof. 54
Figure 53. West facade of the Lora Blevins House. 54
Figure 54. North facade of the Lora Blevins House 54
Figure 55. Reconstructed chimney on east facade of the Lora Blevins House. 55
Figure 56. South facade of the Lora Blevins Pole Barn. 55
Figure 57. Southeast corner of the barn showing small addition. 55
Figure 58. West facade of the barn showing vertical weatherboards, and the absence of chinking. 55
Figure 59. West facade of the log corn crib. 56
Figure 60. Northeast corner of corn crib showing additions and stone piers. 56
Figure 61. Southwest corner of privy. Note successional forest encroachment. 56
Figure 62. Long wall section of cinderblock foundation in woods east of the Lora Blevins House. 57
Figure 63. Animal pen in wooded area. Note surviving wood pilings. 57
Figure 64. Utility pole and wires running parallel across the site. 57
Figure 65. West Bandy Creek Road looking west. 57
Figure 66. Cluster arrangement of historic buildings and structures. 58
Figure 67. Driveway looking south toward West Bandy Creek Road. 59
Figure 68. Katie Trail as it bends through successional forest. 59
Figure 69. NPS-installed signage. 60

Figure 70. Assumed interpretive fence (circa 2002), with small, ill-defined garden plot to its south (right side of photo). 60
Figure 71. Modern post and wire fence along open portion of Katie Trail. 60
Figure 72. Scenic view looking east from high point towards western edge of property. Note cemetery, solitary black walnut, rolling topography, and historic structures. 61
Figure 73. View looking north across the long field. 61
Figure 74. View from West Bandy Creek Road as the landscape opens up and reveals the farmstead. 61

Analysis and Evaluation 73

Figure 75. Circa 1980 photograph of east side of Lora Blevins House. Note "lived-in" condition indicated by presence of potted plants on the porch. Also shown is the replacement chimney, which was added by Lora in the 1960s. Compare this image to the 2017 photo below. 94
Figure 76. 2017 photograph of east side of Lora Blevins House. Note removal of porch addition, and replacement chimney. 94
Figure 77. Circa 1980 photograph of the east side of the barn. Note the shed additions and fencing. Compare to 2017 photograph below. 95
Figure 78. 2017 photograph of the east side of the barn. Note the absence of the shed additions and fencing, except for the shed flush with the east facade. 95
Figure 79. 1981 photograph of the north and east facades of the corn crib. This is the earliest known ground photograph of the structure. 96
Figure 80. 2017 photograph of north and west facades of the corn crib. Note the new roof on the structure, and the overall change in character of the surrounding landscape. 96
Figure 81. Undated (ca. 1940) photo of the Blevins Family in the front yard. Note the swept yard, ornamental vegetation, and fencing. 97
Figure 82. 2017 photograph showing the changes to the domestic landscape. Note the absence of the swept-bare yard, fencing, and vegetation. 97

Treatment and Use 105

Figure 83. Example of fencing Option One. 116
Figure 84. Example of fencing Option Two. 116
Figure 85. Example of a stabilized soil path. 118
Figure 86. Example of aggregate and a geo-grid system. 118
Figure 87. Parking Option One. 118
Figure 88. Parking Option Two. 118
Figure 89. Example of a mown grass path. 119
Figure 90. The Blevins Family posing for a photograph in front yard. Paling fence and raised planting bed indicated by arrows. 121
Figure 91. Example of a rehabilitated paling fence at a historic home site along the Blue Ridge Parkway. Note the similarities between this fence and the one shown in the photograph of the Blevins fence above. 121

Figure 92. Example of weathered post and wire fencing. Note single strands of wire used. 122
Figure 93. Example of weathered post and wire fencing. Note the use of woven wire in this example. 122
Figure 94. Example of modern post and wire fencing. Note the use of both single wire and woven wire in this example. 122
Figure 95. 1981 image of post and wire fence west of the barn. Note the rustic character of the fencing and the repurposing of materials. 123

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List of Illustrations

Illustration 2.1. Historic Site Plan, 1951 37
Illustration 2.2. Historic Site Plan, 1951, Enlargement 39
Illustration 2.3. Historic Site Plan, 1971 41
Illustration 2.4. Historic Site Plan, 1971, Enlargement 43
Illustration 2.5. Historic Site Plan 1998 45
Illustration 3.1. Existing Conditions: Soils 63
Illustration 3.2. Existing Conditions: Topography and Hydrology 65
Illustration 3.3. Existing Conditions: Vegetation Communities 67
Illustration 3.4. Existing Conditions: Entire CLR Boundary 69
Illustration 3.5. Existing Conditions: Enlarged Area 71
Illustration 4.1. Contributing Resources 97
Illustration 4.2. Contributing Resources, Enlargement 99
Cultural Resources Table 103-104
Illustration 5.1. Treatment Recommendations 127
Illustration 5.2. Treatment Recommendations, Enlargement 129

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Foreword

Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, established in 1974, was set aside to conserve and interpret the Big South of the Cumberland River, portions of the major tributaries, and unique cultural, historic, geologic, fish and wildlife, archeologic, scenic, and recreational values. Knowledge of the human history of the Cumberland Plateau is integral to understanding the current landscape as well as the culture of this rural area. The Lora Blevins Farmstead was a self-sufficient farmstead developed between 1927 and 1974 by Lora Blevins and his wife Tealie Ann Blevins on the tablelands surrounding the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River. The site includes the log house, barn and corn crib historic structures and the surrounding farm landscape. This cultural landscape report will allow park managers to better understand the history and significance of the site and provides current and future managers with management options for many years.

This study would not have been possible without the knowledge, direction and support from Big South Fork staff Dwayne Scheid, Tom Blount, Effie Houston as well as retired staff members Wally Linder and Tom Des Jean. The diligent research and analysis from the staff at WLA Studio was also invaluable. We thank David Hasty, NPS Southeast Regional Office, for contract support and reviews of the study.



Niki Stephanie Nicholas, Superintendent
Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area
National Park Service
April 2019

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Introduction

Management Summary

This Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) is for the Lora Blevins Farmstead, a 52.6-acre component landscape of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area in Scott County, Tennessee. Between 1927 and 1974, Lora Blevins and his wife Tealie Ann Blevins owned and operated a self-sufficient farmstead on the tablelands surrounding the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River.[1] The farm's layout and operation reflected the vernacular traditions of the Upper Cumberland Plateau region. Such traditions included the use of mules for plowing, the production of a wide variety of food and textile goods from farm-derived sources, and the use of local materials for construction. Of note, three of the remaining buildings at the Lora Blevins Farmstead—the log house, barn, and corn crib—reflect the construction techniques of Appalachian settlers of the nineteenth century, although the family constructed them nearly three decades into the twentieth century. The Blevins family worked and lived at the property until the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) acquired the property in 1980 as part of the creation of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (BISO). In 1991, the National Park Service assumed management of BISO.

While the NPS drafted a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Lora Blevins Farmstead, the draft was not submitted, and the site is not currently listed in the register. However, previous research has found that the site's surviving resources meet the eligibility requirements for listing. Therefore, the NPS manages the resources as contributing to the historic character of the site in accordance with the NPS management category "should be preserved and maintained."

Figure 1 and Figure 2 illustrate the location of the site and of BISO. The property is significant under Criterion A (Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history) and Criterion C (Embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values). Contributing resources to the period of significance at the site are the Lora Blevins House, the Lora Blevins Barn, the Lora Blevins Corn Crib, the Lora Blevins Privy, and the cultural landscape features at the site including field patterns, remnant paths, and cultural vegetation.

The site history included in this report gives an overview of the Lora Blevins Farmstead. Research for the site history included consultation of both primary and secondary sources of information, including documents gathered from BISO archives, NPS Southeast Regional Office files, and the Scott County, Tennessee Register of Deeds Office. The existing conditions section provides a comprehensive description of cultural landscape features at the Lora Blevins Farmstead, including natural and cultural resources. The inventory includes information gathered during site visits by project team members in October and December 2017. The analysis of integrity section uses criteria developed by the National Register of Historic Places and the *Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* to evaluate the historic integrity of existing landscape resources. The section on treatment recommendations provides guidance for future management decisions related to the site's historic landscape resources.

Historical Overview

In 1927, Lora and Tealie Blevins purchased 45 acres of rolling tableland to establish a family farm. The Blevins family ran the farm in much the same way as generations of Big South Fork region residents before them: as a self-sufficient operation. Self-sufficient farming had a long history in the Big South Fork area. The region's first European settlers and their descendants initially farmed the limited arable land along the stream drainages that fed into the Big South Fork. While farming was difficult due to the rugged, rocky character of the region, residents raised their own livestock, grew their own crops, and made various food and fiber goods from farm-derived products. The

1. "Lora" is a male name. Genealogy does not reveal the origin of his name; Tablelands are a broad, high, level region or a plateau.

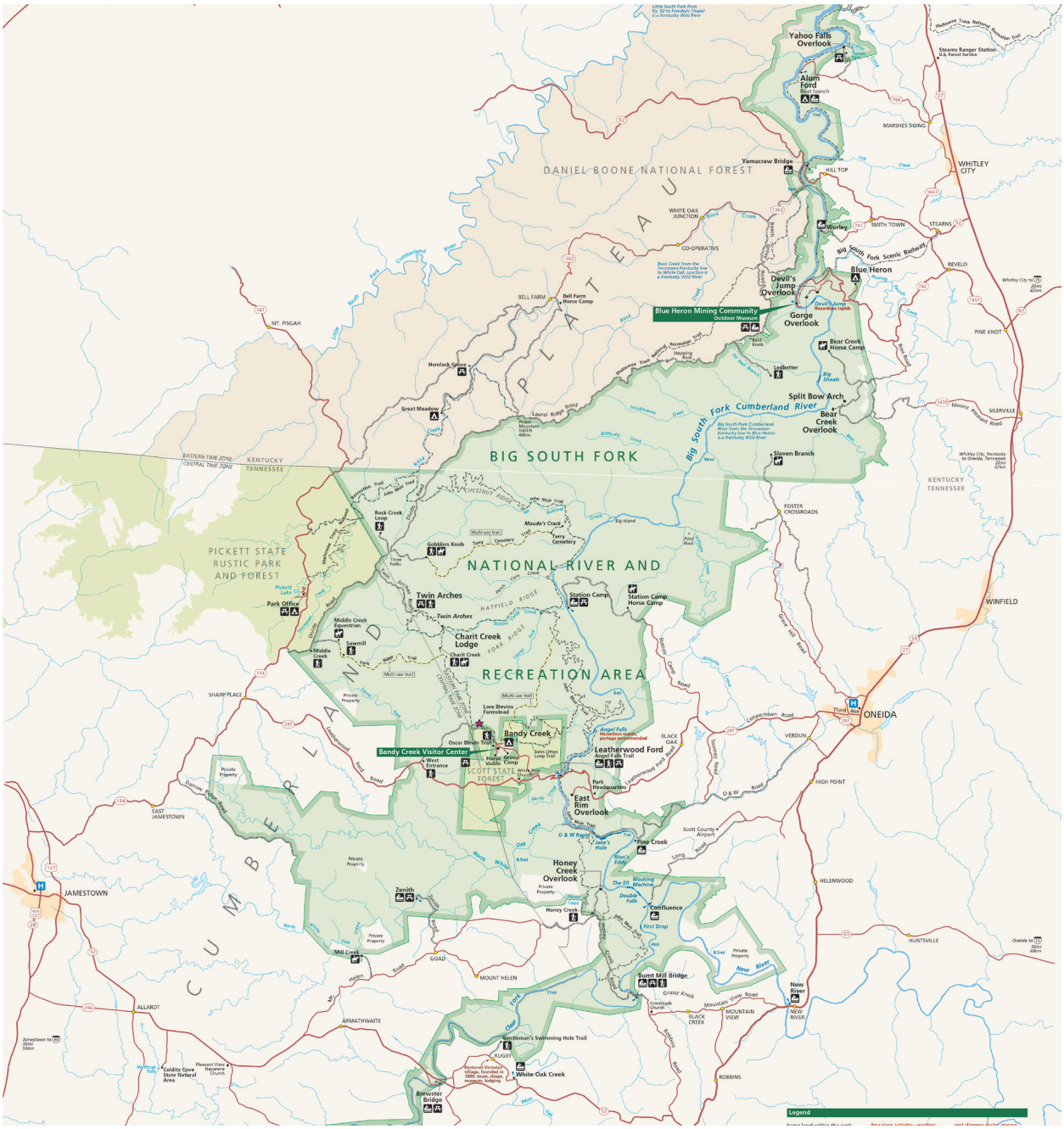


Figure 1. BISO park map. Source: Harpers Ferry Center, National Park Service.

surrounding forest provided settlers timber with which to construct farmstead buildings. These forests were also a source of food and plant-based medicine. As the initial farm families grew larger, they formed tight-knit communities in the bottomland areas and developed distinct cultural traditions over time. Eventually, farmable land became scarce in the bottomlands, and with the introduction of the Big South Fork area to the timbering industry in the late-nineteenth century, many families left their creek-side communities and established homesteads on the surrounding upland plateau.

Descendants of some of the earliest settlers in the area, Lora Blevins and Tealie Slaven were both raised in the bottomland communities of the Big South Fork basin. After marrying in 1915, the couple proceeded to have six children, all of whom were also born nearby.[2] Shortly after the birth of their youngest child, Poppie, Lora and

2. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman." From NPS/BISO Cultural Resources Office.

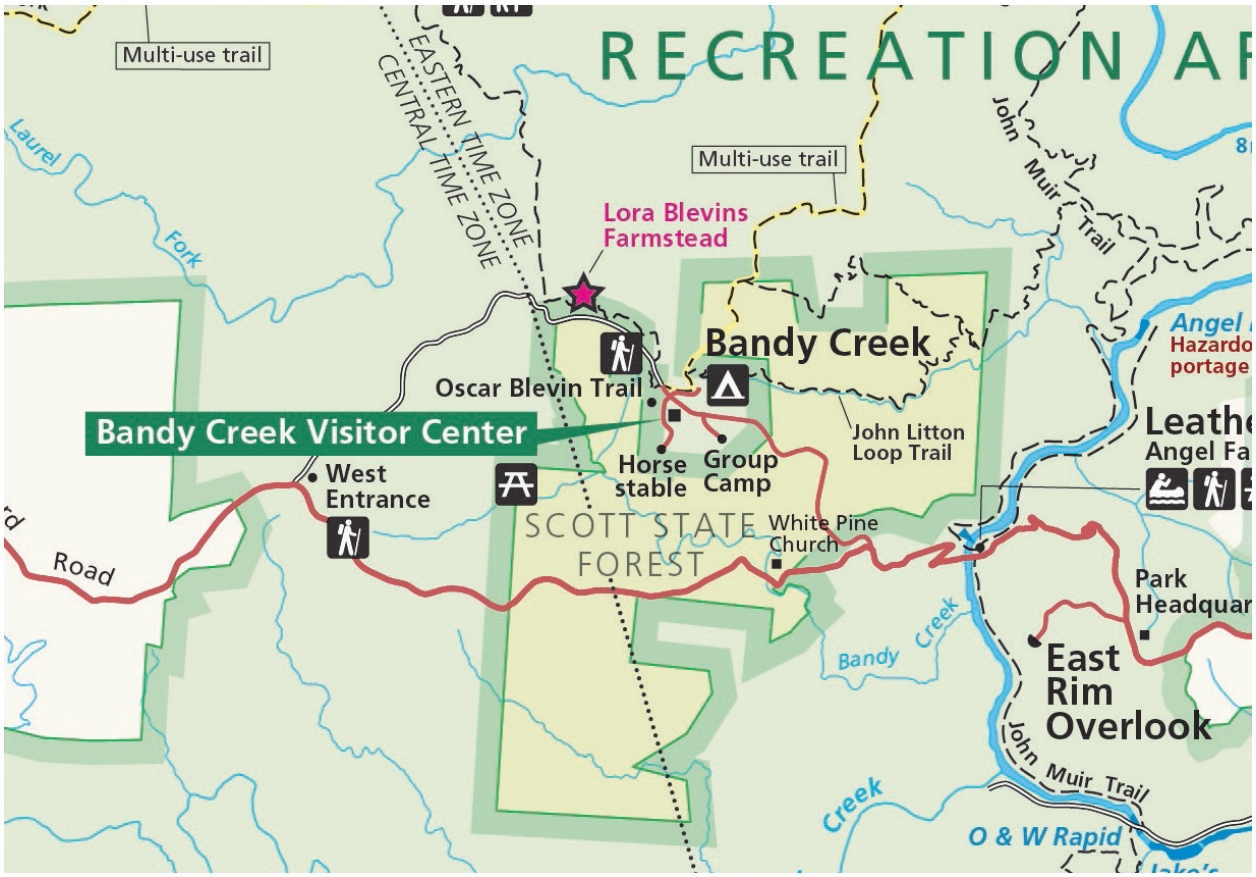


Figure 2. BISO park map, indicating location of Lora Blevins Farmstead. Map amended to note location. Source: Harpers Ferry Center, National Park Service.

Tealie purchased a 45-acre parcel from the Delk family.[3] It does not appear that the Delks made any improvements to the property prior to selling it to Lora and Tealie Blevins, though likely the previous owners logged the property. The property was located along West Bandy Creek Road, the historic route between the nearby towns of Oneida and Jamestown. While situated along a ridge, the property contained a limited amount of flat area, and the overall layout of the farm, including the siting of fields and structures, responded to the topography of the property.

In 1928, Lora Blevins constructed a single-pen log house for his family. He proceeded to construct a log pole barn, log corn crib, and several other farm buildings over the course of his time at the farm. Most of these structures featured a design in keeping with Appalachian cultural traditions passed down for generations. As evidenced by the surviving structures—the house, barn, and corn crib—Lora constructed the farm's buildings using hand-hewn timbers joined by half-dovetail notching. This technique is characteristic of the buildings constructed during the nineteenth century throughout Appalachia.[4] In addition to farming, Lora served as a minister, preaching at various local churches.[5] Tealie Blevins' knowledge and abilities related to the domestic sphere—raising children, cooking, folk medicine, gardening, making farm products from raw materials—were essential to the farmstead. The self-sufficient nature of their farm was not uncommon for the area. In 1930, the majority of farm products produced in the region were used by the farm families that made them.[6]

3. Scott County, Tennessee, "Book 60, Page 294, County Deed Records," (November 9, 1927).

4. Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc., and Others. 2016. Big South Fork NRRA Historic Resource Study. National Park Service. Southeast Region *Big South Fork NRRA Historic Resource Study*, (National Park Service, Southeast Region, 2016). 59.

5. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman."

6. Steven K. Hutchinson, Ellen A. Dugan, Richard S. Levy, with contributions by Joseph B. Kaskey, *Inventory and Evaluation of Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Tennessee and Kentucky*, (Nashville, Tennessee: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, February 25, 1982), 12.

The agricultural way of life that characterized the region ended in the 1950s, when a wave of outmigration fueled by new manufacturing industries led to a dramatic decline in the number of farms.[7] As the populations decreased in the area around them, the Blevins family continued to work their land. Aside from a few modern additions to the property, including electricity and a well, the character of the property appears to have remained much the same throughout its occupation by the family. Noticeable changes occurred however in the late 1960s and into the 1970s. Tealie Blevins died in 1969, and though Lora Blevins remarried, he transferred the bulk of the property to his two sons George and Lenard in 1974. Their tenure at the old family farmstead was short-lived, and soon the property was identified for inclusion in the proposed Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (BISO). The park was established in 1974, and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), who were the park's first operators, began purchasing properties. In 1980, they purchased the Lora Blevins Farmstead.

The creation of the park resulted in the removal of many cultural resources. Though research did not reveal a specific policy for the retention and demolition of resources, it appears that the USACE demolished most buildings and structures constructed after 1930. The USACE opted to preserve the Lora Blevins Farmstead along with several other historic properties and farmsteads. After its acquisition, the Lora Blevins Farmstead underwent dramatic changes. For the first time since the family constructed the house, no one lived at the property, making the upkeep of the structures and landscape difficult. Within a few years, the buildings began to deteriorate, and maintenance crews removed post-1930 additions to the house and barn. Site management also altered the character of the farmstead with the removal of fencing, farm apparatuses, and other markers of an active farmstead. A local resident still farmed the site under a lease throughout the 1980s, but this use ended sometime in the early 1990s.

The National Park Service assumed oversight of BISO in 1991. Since that time, site management has focused on the preservation of the remaining buildings at the site. Several repair projects have taken place over the last several decades, replacing the buildings' roofs and replacing deteriorating timbers with historically appropriate materials. The landscape has largely gone into successional processes, resulting in the loss of the site's historic field patterns. In 1997, the NPS produced a Cultural Landscape Inventory for the site, documenting a landscape for which there was little information. Twenty years later, this Cultural Landscape Report aims to fill in the gaps in our understanding of the historic Lora Blevins Farmstead and produce treatment recommendations to guide its future use.

The site history section of this report organizes the site into periods of development. These periods reflect changes in ownership and management of the site and physically express the site's landscape layers.

These periods are:

- Settlement and Development of Big South Fork (1760-1927)
- The Lora Blevins Farmstead Period (1927-1974)
- Development of Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (1974-Present)

Scope of Work and Methodology

According to the Project Statement, the CLR will (1) describe the historical development of the areas; (2) document the existing site conditions; (3) provide analysis of the landscape's potential National Register significance; (4) identify and assess integrity of character defining features; (5) determine appropriate treatment strategies; and (6) develop treatment recommendations that facilitate preservation of these resources, address park management concerns, and inform ongoing and proposed facility development.

The 1974 master plan for the proposed park contained the first federal documentation of the site. While the report illustrated the layout of the farm on a site analysis plan, the text of the report did not discuss the history of the property. Ten years later, the first in-depth research and documentation of the site occurred, when a private contractor documented the property as part of an inventory of historic resources at the park. In 1985, an interagency memo between the

7. Benita J. Howell, *Folklife along the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River*, (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2003), 238.

NPS and USACE stated the need for the USACE to protect the cultural resources within the park, something that the USACE had not prioritized in the first years of the park. The next year, a structural treatment plan outlined the need for the stabilization of the built resources at the site. The document guided the subsequent repairs made to the surviving structures. In 1997, the NPS completed a Cultural Landscape Inventory for the site. In 2000, the NPS drafted a historic context study for the park, which provided historical background to the development of the Lora Blevins Farmstead. In 2016, the NPS published a historic resources survey for the park, which placed the farmstead within National Register framework. Lastly, the 2017 park foundation document identifies that the "Laura Blevins" (sic) structures need restoration work. This CLR will help inform the decision process as the NPS works to improve interpretation of the site, address circulation concerns, and provide for the health, safety, and welfare of park employees and visitors.

This CLR uses primary and secondary sources to establish the historic significance of the landscape, identify a period of significance, and complete the historic analysis. Primary and secondary sources inform the comprehensive history of the Lora Blevins Farmstead in the Site History Section. These sources include Benita J. Howell's 1981 book *Folklife along the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River*, the 2016 *Historic Resource Survey for Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area,* Jeffrey W. Gardner's 1987 thesis "The Effects of Kinship on Land Transfer: A Study of Settlement on the Cumberland Plateau of Kentucky and Tennessee," and the 1982 report, *Inventory and Evaluation of Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Tennessee and Kentucky*. Of considerable assistance in report production was Tom Des Jean, retired BISO archaeologist, who interviewed Poppie Blevins Dishman in 2001. Mrs. Dishman's recollections of the site were invaluable to the creation of this report. An interview with retired NPS staff, Wallace Linder also provided key information about the site prior to and during NPS acquisition. Material from the previous studies of the site also informs and shapes the narrative of the site history section. Information pertaining to the development history, determination of the periods of development, and historical analysis of the resources draws heavily from these studies. BISO staff provided the images in the report with the citation of "National Park Service."

Using information gathered during site visits, this CLR identifies landscape characteristics and associated features that contribute to the historic significance of the site. This CLR compares the historic condition of a particular resource with its current condition to evaluate its historic integrity.

Description of Study Boundaries

The study boundaries include the 52.6 acres the USACE acquired during the establishment of BISO. Several individual parcels have been combined to create the CLR boundary for the property, which deviates from the original extent of the farm. The current boundary contains parcels 1301 (the "George Blevins Tract"), 1302 (the "Clara Sue Blevins Tract"), and 1309 (the "Robert Beatty Tract"). There is a discrepancy between the total acreage recorded at the time of purchase in 1927 and the acquisition by the government in 1980. Measurements conducted in ArcGIS provide a total of 52.6 acres based on parcel data provided by the NPS.

The property contains the remaining landscape features associated with the Lora Blevins Farmstead. Existing features include several historic buildings, remnant field patterns, and cultural vegetation. The site is located on West Bandy Creek Road. Figure 1 and Figure 2 depict the location and context of the Lora Blevins Farmstead.

Summary of Findings

The US Army Corps of Engineers acquired the Lora Blevins Farmstead in an effort to preserve its contribution to the cultural and physical development of the Big South Fork region. This mission continues today under management by the NPS.

An assessment was made of character-defining landscape features to inform future management decisions that may impact significant cultural landscape features. Treatment recommendations will guide future management decisions related to the Lora Blevins Farmstead's landscape resources. This section articulates a treatment philosophy that preserves and rehabilitates the landscape character

as it developed through the end of the Blevins family residency at the site.

This report recommends rehabilitation as the most appropriate choice for the site's overall treatment. Rehabilitation was selected to preserve historic features, improve features that are in decline, and allow compatible changes at the farmstead. This treatment ensures the site can continue to operate as a historic site and interpret the role the Blevins family had in the retention and reflection of local cultural traditions.

With rehabilitation selected as the treatment, the Treatment and Use section of this report addresses specific recommendations for landscape features, organized by landscape characteristics. The intent of this approach is to preserve and enhance the historic character of the site. The plan calls for removal of some non-historic site features and the replacement of missing historic landscape features to enhance the NPS' ability to interpret the site.

Site History

Introduction

The landscape at Lora Blevins Farmstead represents a significant period of transition in the evolution of settlement within the rugged Big South Fork region. For over a century preceding the establishment of Lora and Tealie Blevins' farm in 1927, European-descended settlers of the isolated region occupied the narrow valleys and gorges of the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River, developing self-sufficient farm communities on arable bottomlands, exploiting the natural environment for food, fuel, and building materials, and cultivating a rich cultural heritage. As these bottomland communities outgrew their physiographic limitations, beginning around the turn of the twentieth century, settlers began to occupy the surrounding upland plateau. While the transition resulted in the plateau's cultural landscape developing in ways dissimilar from previous settlement areas, settlers of the plateau also transposed many of the cultural traditions developed in the bottomlands to their new farmsteads. Such traditions included vernacular construction techniques, farming and gardening methods, and folk medicine practices.

Lora and Tealie Blevins, who had both grown up in the bottomland communities of the Big South Fork basin, adapted their environmental and cultural knowledge to the uplands, establishing a small family farm on a plateau of rolling hills. There, Lora, Tealie, and their six children worked and lived off the land in a manner that reflected the cultural traditions of the region. Even though they established the farm relatively late in terms of regional settlement, the landscape reflected conditions typical to bottomland farms that developed in the early- to mid-1800s. The family, at least initially, used mules, not tractors, for tilling the fields; hand-hewn timbers, not dimensional lumber, for constructing farm buildings; and a spring, not a well, for water. Their self-sufficient farm operation was not an anomaly, as a majority of farms located near the Big South Fork functioned in a similar manner.

After 50 years of continued farm operations, Tealie Blevins had died, Lora Blevins had moved away, and the farm was sold to the Army Corps of Engineers for the creation of Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (BISO). The Army Corps of Engineers demolished many resources within the new park, but along with several other historic farmsteads, they retained several buildings at the Lora Blevins property. In 1991, management of BISO transferred to the National Park Service, which soon began periodic stabilization work on the farm's remaining buildings and structures. Such actions have allowed for the preservation of the buildings at the farmstead, and the farm continues to reflect the area's distinct cultural history.

A note concerning the use of the term "Upper Cumberland Plateau": the National Park Service places all of Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area within the Upper Cumberland Plateau region, part of the larger Cumberland Plateau physiological region, and the NPS interprets the park's history within that context.[8] However, no clear consensus exists concerning the exact geographical boundary of the region. Some experts base the extent of the region on modern political (county) boundaries.[9] Others consider shared or related geology and hydrology as criteria for inclusion.[10] For some, Scott County, Tennessee, in which the Lora Blevins farmstead is located, constitutes a portion of the Upper Cumberland Plateau region's eastern edge or is peripheral to a core Upper Cumberland Plateau region. Others do not include Scott County within the region

8. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 1.
9. Michael E. Birdwell and W. Calvin Dickinson, "Introduction," in *People of the Upper Cumberland: Achievements and Contradictions*, ed. Michael E. Birdwell and W. Calvin Dickinson, (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2015), xx.; Certain state organizations such as the Tennessee Department of Health and state development and tourism groups exclude Scott County from the Upper Cumberland Region, and instead place it within "East Tennessee" region.
10. Michael E. Birdwell and W. Calvin Dickinson, "Introduction," in *Rural Life and Culture in the Upper Cumberland*, ed. Michael E. Birdwell and W. Calvin Dickinson, (Lexington, KY: The University of Kentucky Press, 2004), 8; Recreational groups tend to place Scott County within the Upper Cumberland region.

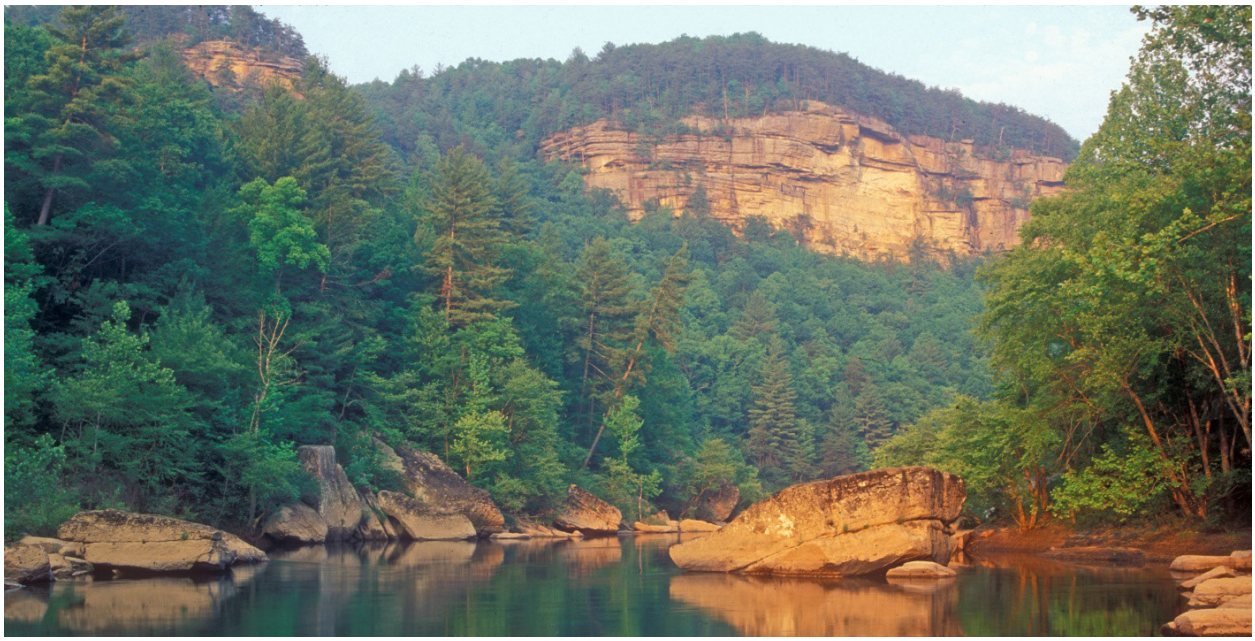


Figure 3. The Big South Fork, rugged gorge walls, and dense forest. Source: National Park Service.

and use Fentress County as the eastern border for the region. Yet, Scott County shares much of the same environmental, developmental, and cultural history as the counties immediately to its north and west, such as Fentress and Pickett counties. This is especially true for the Lora Blevins Farmstead, which is located 500 yards east of Fentress County. Therefore, the site history presented in this section places the Lora Blevins Farmstead within the Upper Cumberland Plateau geographic and cultural context.

American Indian Land Use Prior to 1760

The Upper Cumberland Plateau, along with the southern Appalachians as a whole, represents "some of the last areas in the Eastern Woodlands to be physically reached by colonizing populations moving up the large drainage systems of the mid-South and the Atlantic Coastal Plain."[11] It was not until the Paleoindian Period roughly 12,000 years ago that the Upper Cumberland Plateau contained a human population density similar to the rest of the Southeast.[12] Around this time, the climate shifted from the cold Pleistocene epoch to the warmer Holocene. The development of new vegetation communities accompanied the climatic shift, and by the time small bands of hunters reached the Upper Cumberland Plateau, a widespread mesic oak-hickory forest had developed.[13] "However," as archeologists Lane and Anderson explain, "this transition should not be pictured as a uniform replacement of flora but as an uneven change, with Pleistocene landscapes likely lasting longest in higher latitudes and elevations, resulting in an extremely diverse environment."[14] The diverse environment included a variety of faunal species, which the newly arrived humans exploited by maximizing their hunting strategy to include game within different ecological niches. Groups similarly exploited the growing diversity of plant material of the eastern woodlands, using the flora for food and medicine alike.

American Indians also adapted to the unique geology of the Cumberland Plateau. Stretching several hundred miles along the western edge of the Appalachian Mountains, the region is characterized by gently rolling hills and tableland of sandstone deeply incised by rivers and streams. The Upper Cumberland Plateau is an area where

11. Leon Lane and David G. Anderson, "Paleoindian Occupations of the Southern Appalachians: A View from the Cumberland Plateau of Kentucky and Tennessee," In *Archaeology of the Appalachian Highlands*, edited by L. P. Sullivan and S. C. Prezzano, (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 2001), 92.

12. Ibid., 102.
13. Ibid., 93.
14. Ibid.

the drainages cut into the landscape, and numerous gorges, caves, and cliffs formed (Figure 3). The resulting terrain made much of the region difficult to navigate and settle. Yet, the landscape offered excellent locations for seasonal base camps from which small groups could venture into the forest to hunt. American Indians used rock shelters—protected openings within cliff faces—as temporary occupation sites throughout the region, typically occupying them between late summer and early winter during the primary hunting season (Figure 4).[15] It is estimated that roughly 5,000 archeological sites exist within BISO, with many of these associated with the use of rock shelters over hundreds of years. Still, research reveals little about early prehistoric American Indians of the Upper Cumberland Plateau.[16]

The region remained remote from regional population centers during the Woodland Period, though the population of American Indians did increase in the area that would become the eastern United States.[17] At this time, a growing indigenous population, increasingly reliant on agricultural production began farming the large fertile floodplains. These patterns resulted in the establishment numerous permanent or semi-permanent settlements within the river valleys of the Southeast. The Upper Cumberland Plateau did not contain wide valleys suitable for extensive agricultural production such as those along the Mississippi or Ohio rivers. Further, the region's higher elevation tablelands contained generally rocky soil that hindered farming prospects. Therefore, permanent settlement of the region remained comparatively limited in scale. Near the Big South Fork basin, Woodland Period peoples established small agricultural settlements along the Highland Rim to the west and the Sequatchie Valley to the south. Interestingly, research reveals that at this time, even as settlement of the river valleys increased, the first known year-round occupation of rock shelters near BISO may have occurred.[18] As the Woodland Period progressed, American Indians created a network of trade and travel paths, allowing for the introduction of new



Figure 4. Rock shelter at Big South Fork. Source: National Park Service.

cultural traditions and land use practices, which ushered in the Mississippian Period.

The Mississippian Period is characterized by the development of centralized political authorities, large permanent towns and villages, and the reliance on agriculture-based diet. While no Mississippian Period sites within the Upper Cumberland Plateau can compare to large southeastern prehistoric cities such as Cahokia or Ocmulgee, this does not mean that the relative isolation of Upper Cumberland Plateau hindered cultural evolution. Instead, evidence suggests that prehistoric people of the region remained not only "very much connected to the greater Mississippian world but also managed to maintain elements of their own traditions."[19] Mound-building traditions spread into the region along with new pottery forms and trade goods. With the arrival of the Spanish, the spread of foreign diseases led to a dramatic collapse of Mississippian societies. Out of the disaster, surviving peoples formed new tribal affiliations based on shared cultural systems such as language or kinship, resulting in the formation of the Cherokee (*Aniyunwiya*), Shawnee (*Shawanwa*), and many other tribal groups.

15. Jonathan P. Kerr, "Prehistory of the Upper Cumberland River Drainage in the Kentucky, Virginia and Tennessee Border Region" (Cultural Resource Analysts, Inc., 1996-2010), 5. http://crai-ky.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Prehistory-of-the-Upper-Cumberland.pdf
16. Lane and Anderson, "Paleoindian Occupations," 90.
17. Ibid., 31.
18. Ibid., 32.
19. Jay Franklin, "Archaeology of the Mississippian Pile Mound Site, Upper Cumberland Plateau," *Tennessee Council for Professional Archaeology*, 2014, https://tennesseearchaeologycouncil.wordpress.com/2014/09/24/30-days-of-tennessee-archaeology-day-24/

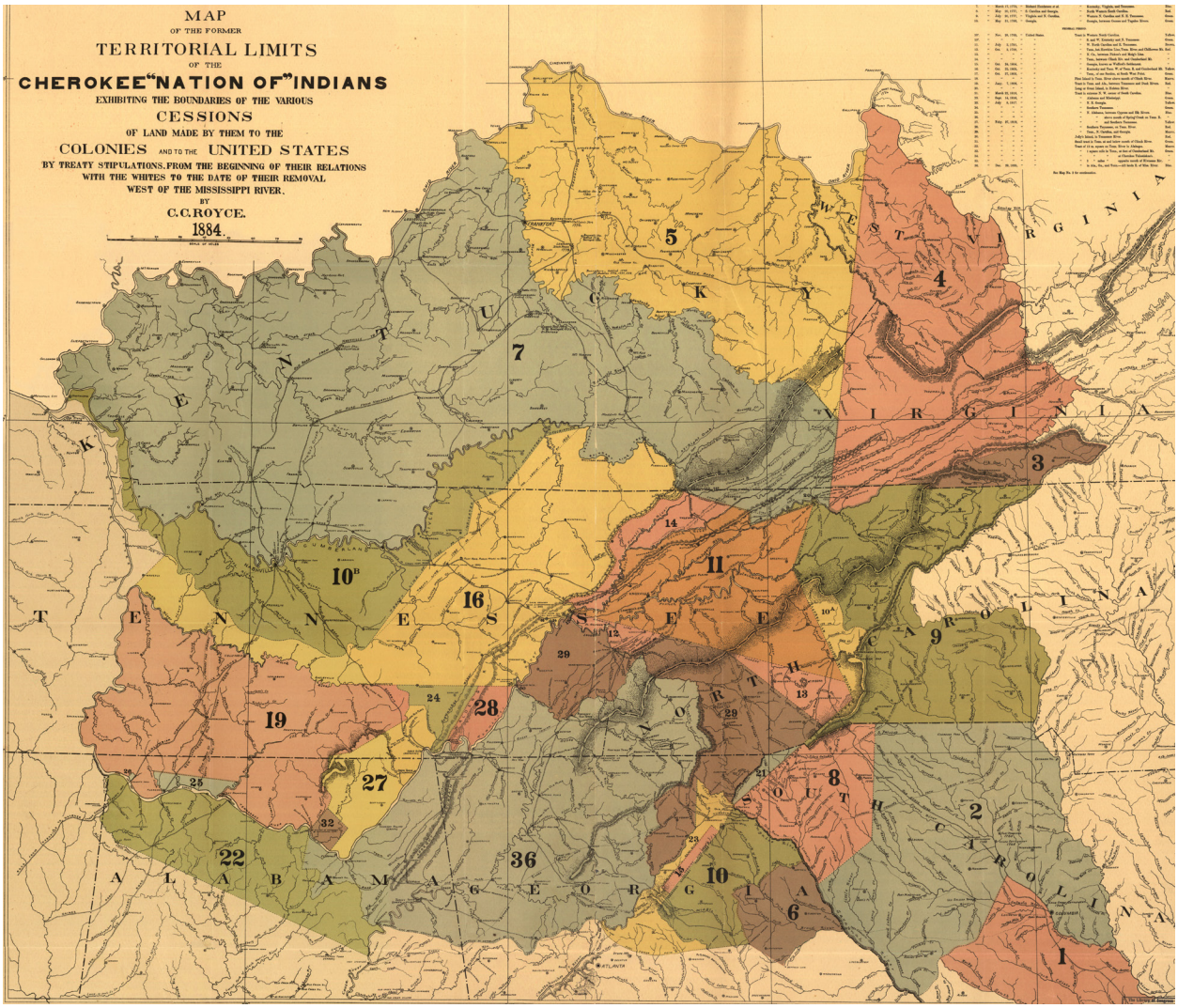


Figure 5. Map showing full extent of Cherokee Nation, and the series of land cessions. The Big South Fork is located in the center of the image in the area marked "16." Source: Royce, C. C. Map showing the territory originally assigned Cherokee "Nation of" Indians. [S.l, 1884] Map. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/99446145/. (Accessed December 05, 2017.)

During the initial period of European exploration of the Southeast, the Cherokee "claimed an area spanning what would eventually become eight states and encompassing more than 124,000 square miles," including the Upper Cumberland Plateau and Big South Fork basin areas[20] (Figure 5). However, the Cherokee of Tennessee primarily settled lands within the Tennessee River Valley to the south. Their neighboring rivals, the Shawnee, primarily settled the Ohio Valley to the north. For the Cherokee and Shawnee, the Big South Fork region and the Upper Cumberland Plateau existed as contested hunting grounds. While neither nation established large permanent settlements in the Big South Fork, both ventured into and through the area while trading and hunting. By the 1710s, the Cherokee had forced the Shawnee out of the Upper Cumberland Plateau.[21] European settlers began exerting their own influence over the region through "a relentless process" of land acquisition that lasted for two centuries.[22]

Initially, both the French and the English sought to establish trading relationships with the Shawnee and the Cherokee. The French generally aligned with the Shawnee, while the British affiliated with the Cherokee. With the removal of the Shawnee in the area, French influence over the Cumberland Plateau waned. By around 1750, prospectors

20. William L. Anderson, "Introduction," in *Cherokee Removal: Before and After*, ed. William L. Anderson (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1991), vii.

21. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 33.

22. William Martin Jurgelski, "A New Plow in Old Ground: Cherokees, Whites, and Land in Western North Carolina, 1819-1829," (Dissertation, University of Georgia, 2004).

entered Kentucky through Cumberland Gap in search of lands for English settlement, but due to the rough terrain and the outbreak of hostilities with the French and American Indians, the English put their plans on hold. After the French and Indian War ended in 1763, the British renewed their expansion into Eastern Tennessee. By then, American Indians of the Upper Cumberland Plateau "had been in contact with European culture for over one hundred years, time enough for affairs of Indians to be inextricably linked with those of the whites."[23]

Settlement and Development of Big South Fork (1760-1927)

Early Exploration and Settlement (1760-1805)

In the final decades of the 1700s, the remaining Cherokee as well as European frontiersmen known as long hunters frequented the Big South Fork basin. So named for their months-long hunting forays, the long hunters, drawn to an abundance of deer and other wildlife, used the region "to trap animals for pelts and to fish and hunt."[24] The long hunters relied on the rock shelters in the area, using them in very much the same manner as American Indians had for the preceding millennia. Both Europeans and Indians also traveled the network of trails and primitive roads that crisscrossed the plateau and greater region, connecting to the north and east through the Cumberland Gap, to the south along the Catawba Trace, and to the west along the Cumberland Trace toward Nashville and the Mississippi River.[25] Today, several area roads follow the alignment of these historic paths.[26]

Interactions between American Indians and Europeans in the Upper Cumberland Plateau at this time varied by location and ranged from relatively equitable trading relationships and intermarriage to aggressive encounters over illegal settlement and surveying on Cherokee lands. One reason for the variability pertains to the evolution of early settlement of the plateau. While long hunters used the Big South Fork area, it was not legal to establish settlements in the area. However, a small number of settlers established homesteads in the Big South Fork basin potentially as early as 1776 and "certainly by 1786 or 1787."[27] On the other hand, treaties in 1770s opened up much of Kentucky and west-central Tennessee to settlement, which directed settlers around Big South Fork towards Nashville and the Kentucky bluegrass region, as these areas were much more amenable to farming (Figure 6). The relatively small number of settlers in Big South Fork reduced, but did not eliminate, hostile encounters with Cherokees.[28]

Bitterness between settlers and the Cherokee in the Upper Cumberland Plateau increased during and after the American Revolution, as the Cherokee typically sided with the British during the conflict. As a result, following the patriot victory in the war, hostilities between Cherokee and white settlers continued. The conflicts, ranging from organized raids to isolated incidents between individuals, served as an impetus for a number of controversial land cessations and peace treaties between the Americans and Cherokee. The treaties did little to stop the violence, with conflicts occurring into the last decade of the eighteenth century. In fact, "the years 1792 and 1793 were the bloodiest on record" in the Upper Cumberland Plateau region.[29] The Cherokee-American War, as it came to be known, took its toll on both European settlers and Cherokee alike, but in the end, the English successfully forced a majority of the Cherokee to surrender.[30]

As the eighteenth century came to a close, Cherokee settlements in the Upper Cumberland Plateau became scarce, and it is unknown exactly how many American Indians were living in the area at that time. Accounts from Upper Cumberland Plateau counties indicate the presence of several small Cherokee settlements at the turn of the

23. Randal Williams, "An Enigmatic Tale: American Indians in Tennessee's Upper Cumberland" in in *People of the Upper Cumberland: Achievements and Contradictions*, ed. Michael E. Birdwell and W. Calvin Dickinson, (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2015), 17.
24. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 16.
25. William E. Myer, "Indian Trials of the Southeast," *42nd Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, 1924-1925, (Washington, D.C.), 747-748.
26. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 31.
27. Ibid., 41; Michael R. O'Neal, "The Civil War on the Upper Cumberland Plateau in Tennessee" (Scott County Historical Society, 1982), 2. https://www.nps.gov/biso/learn/historyculture/upload/Civil-War-on-the-Upper-Cumberland-Plateau-2.pdf
28. Williams, "An Enigmatic Tale," 15.
29. Ibid., 17.
30. Williams, "An Enigmatic Tale," 18.



Figure 6. Portion of 1795 map of Tennessee and Kentucky. Big South Fork is located in the center of the image. Source: Russell, John, Active, and H. D Symonds. Map of the state of Kentucky: with the adjoining territories. London: H. D. Symonds, 1794. Map. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/2007630404/. (Accessed December 05, 2017.)

century, but by then, most Cherokee had either assimilated into European society or moved further south and west.[31] In 1805, with the signing of the Third Treaty of Tellico, the Cherokee ceded their remaining Upper Cumberland Plateau lands to the United States government.

Pre-Civil War Settlement and Development (1805-1865)

With settlement in the Big South Fork region now legal, homesteaders who had difficulty obtaining land elsewhere purchased property in the rugged areas of the Cumberland Plateau. Some settlers who were former long hunters knew the area well. The US government also issued land grants to American Revolutionary War veterans. By 1799, records indicate at least seven settlers living on the Kentucky side of the current Big South Fork area. And though records for initial settlers on the Tennessee side are missing, "this initial settlement in Kentucky was soon followed by a southerly migration into Tennessee wherein descendants of the original pioneers and later settlers followed the Big South Fork upstream to several of its major tributaries."[32] The settlers faced the same agricultural prospects as the American Indians before them. They established their farmsteads in the narrow river valleys in order to grow crops and have easy access to water and fertile alluvial soils, as opposed to trying to farm the wooded and rocky uplands. In the valleys, settlers grew corn, wheat, and rye in the fields, and tubers, cabbage, and beans in gardens; they raised hogs, cattle and chickens for meat, bees for honey, and sheep for wool; they kept orchards for fruit and brandy

31. Ibid.

32. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 41.; Jeffrey W. Gardner, "The Effects of Kinship on Land Transfer: A Study of Settlement on the Cumberland Plateau of Kentucky and Tennessee," (Master's Thesis, University of Tennessee, 1987), 9, http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gradthes/4160.

production and used horses and mules for travel, hauling, and plowing.[33]

In addition to agricultural fields, the farm landscape typically contained a log house, log barn, and a variety of outbuildings such as a corn crib, smokehouse, chicken coop, and small sheds.[34] Settlers generally clustered the buildings and structures close to each other and located them on the least productive land. Farmers fenced their fields to protect crops from the livestock they allowed to roam free. Like the American Indians before them, settlers also exploited the various environments within the deep river gorges. As Jeffrey W. Gardner describes,

> The total farm area encompassed sections of slope, bluffline and upland as well as stream bottoms, in order that the varied resources available in each of these zones could be utilized. Streams and rivers contained fish and frogs and often attracted various water fowl. Wooded hillsides supported an array of wild game including wild turkey and squirrels, while also providing the pioneer with wood for structures, furniture, and tool manufacture. When game became scarce, hogs were raised on wooded slopes, nourished by the abundant oak and chestnut mast. Cleared hillside areas also served as expanded cornfields as populations increased and bottom soils became depleted. Bluffline rockshelters served a number of useful purposes, including temporary housing, livestock pens, equipment storage; and water sources. Patchy upland areas supported a varied population of wild game, most important of which was the white-tailed deer, which provided a welcome meat supplement to the diet of the early settlers. As deer populations dwindled as a result of over-hunting and disease, cattle and sheep were grazed in the scattered woodland and meadow areas.[35]

Over the first several decades of the 1800s, the population within the Big South Fork basin gradually increased. While migration into the area from other parts of Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and North Carolina occurred, the steady rise in population is mostly attributed to the large family size of early settlers.[36] The majority of the settlers traced their ancestry to England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.[37] And though limited in number as compared to other parts of the South, African Americans also lived in the Big South Fork basin; in 1820, 28 enslaved African Americans lived in the area.[38] Settlers who migrated into the area did so along three principal American Indian trails. Two routes ran east-west across the Big South Fork in Kentucky, and another trail ran north-south along the east side of the river, connecting Tennessee and Kentucky.[39] The abundance of natural resources in the Big South Fork basin from which to derive important products convinced settlers to stay in the area. In addition to hunting for pelts, subsistence farming and other crop-based production activities, settlers engaged in mineral extraction in the early settlement period, including niter and salt mining.[40]

American Indians and early European explorers had for many years extracted brine from seeps, also known as salt licks, which they let evaporate to produce salt for seasoning and curing.[41] Regional salt shortages in the first two decades of the 1800s necessitated new sources of the essential preservative for the growing frontier settlements. In order to address the issue of the shortage of salt, the Kentucky legislature promoted settlement of the region and "made land available at a reduced price in exchange for salt production."[42] While subsistence-scale extraction and production of salt continued by homesteaders, the scaled-up use of "iron kettles to evaporate surface brine and later drilling wells to reach larger and richer brine deposits" resulted in large quantities of salt for commercial and revenue generating purposes.[43]

Early settlers also engaged in mining niter, a primary ingredient of gunpowder. In order to secure domestic supplies, the federal government

33. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 46.
34. Gardner, "The Effects of Kinship," 11.
35. Ibid., 10-11.
36. Ibid.
37. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 73.
38. Tom Des Jean, "Invisible People: The Legacy of the African-American on the Upper Cumberland Plateau" (Oneida, Tennessee: National Park Service, Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, 1999), 2.
39. Benita J. Howell, *Folklife along the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River*, (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2003), 19.
40. Niter is the mineral form of potassium nitrate, KNO3, also known as saltpeter.
41. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 95.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.

required niter be manufactured within the United States in 1809. Settlers obliged, and "caves throughout Virginia, Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee, known as being sources of nitrate-rich soil, were among the first to be mined."[44] Extraction occurred throughout the Big South Fork gorge and its tributaries, where speculators purchased thousands of acres for mining purposes. Demand for niter increased during the War of 1812 and declined after the conflict ended. Other extractive activities would be established not long after salt and niter mining, leading to the creation of local oil, coal, and logging industries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Most of the first settlers of the Big South Fork basin "lived along one of three important tributaries of the river: No Business, Parch Corn, or Station Camp creeks," establishing their farmsteads and families there between 1810 and 1820.[45] As the families grew, and the bottomland became unproductive for agriculture, residents acquired new property to settle, while generally still maintaining their old landholdings. The evolution of settlement in the creek valleys "led to a close-knit social pattern, especially as family members tended to settle near one another, creating kinship groups that gave each cluster of creeks its own identity and character."[46] Over the decades, this social pattern helped to establish traditional folkways of the Big South Fork basin. Residents maintained local traditions concerning agriculture, gardening, music, fishing, plant-based medicine, and building construction. Anthropologist Benita Howell and others recorded many of these long-lived traditions in the book *Folklife along the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River*.

The region grew more populous in the middle half of the nineteenth century. As a result of the population increase, Scott County, which contains the Lora Blevins Farmstead, was formed in 1849 from parts of Fentress, Campbell, Anderson, and Morgan counties. Those counties had all been created in the first two decades of the 1800s (Figure 7). The increase in population coincided with expanded economic opportunities. At this time, the river facilitated the transport of both people and goods, especially timber. Prior to this point, settlers had cleared timber mostly for needs related the development of their individual farmsteads, but with the expansion of trade made feasible by the Cumberland River, a market developed for Big South Fork timber. The economic progress was put on hold during the Civil War, and the isolated area became ensnared in a nation-wide conflict.

The Civil War played out in a unique though disastrous manner in the Upper Cumberland Plateau. The region's isolation, limited ties to large financial markets, fierce independence, and relative lack of enslaved labor resulted in most of the population of East Tennessee being pro-Union. When the issue of secession was first put to Tennessee citizens for a vote, they overwhelmingly voted to remain in the Union, especially so in East Tennessee. For Scott, Morgan, and Fentress counties, the votes were even more pro-Union than the region as a whole, as "in Morgan County the vote was 488-13 against [secession], in Scott 385-29 against, and in Fentress 334-325."[47] The push to secede continued and was especially promoted by those in West and Middle Tennessee. The state government put the issue to a second vote, and though "seventy percent of East Tennesseans voted against secession . . . the section as a whole represented only forty per cent of the state's total ballots: when the final tally was made the secession ordinance had been carried by a majority of 108,399 to 47,233 votes."[48] As a result, Scott County drafted its own declaration of secession in an attempt to create the Free and Independent State of Scott. The now Confederate State of Tennessee did not recognize Scott County's move.

Tennessee's vote of secession was met with a call to arms by many in the region. While pro-Union sentiment was strong in the Big South Fork region, many locals supported the Confederate cause. Almost immediately, recruitment of the men of the Upper Cumberland to fight for the Confederacy began, and local military posts popped up across the area. On the other hand, droves of Tennesseans—over 31,000—left the region to join the US Army in neutral, later Union, Kentucky.[49] Thousands of additional citizens from Appalachia abandoned their Tennessee and North Carolina homes for Kentucky, forsaking house and land alike.[50] Those who did stay home in the

44. Ibid., 96.
45. Ibid., 48.
46. Ibid., 50.
47. O'Neal, "The Civil War," 2.
48. Ibid., 3.
49. Ibid., 5.
50. Ibid., 5.



Figure 7. Portion of 1874 map showing the lack of development in the Big South Fork area. Mergell, C. S. Military map of middle Tennessee and parts of East Tennessee and the adjoining states, being part of the Department of the Cumberland, commanded by Maj. Gen. Geo. H. Thomas, U.S.A. [N.Y., Am. Photo-Litographic Co., Osborne's process, 1874] Map. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/99448451/. (Accessed December 05, 2017.)

Upper Cumberland faced a dire situation. While "almost no official military activity occurred near the Big South Fork," Benita Howell explains, "divided loyalties gave rise to both Confederate and Union guerillas who preyed upon the civilian populace, wantonly destroying what they did not appropriate for their own use."[51] Home Guard units, which were "local groups of Unionists organized under state militia laws to act as 'armed police' protecting life and property, but outside direct Federal control," formed by late 1861.[52] Similar groups of locals with Confederate allegiances also formed at this time. Both groups carried out attacks on troops, militia groups, and local citizens throughout the war. Based in a style of warfare developed over generations of conflict with American Indians, the guerrilla attacks often involved the expert use of the rugged landscape in the commission of small raids, thefts, and revenge killings.

Perhaps as apparent in the Big South Fork area as anywhere else in the country, the Civil War took on a pronounced "brother against brother" quality. It was not only bonds of family and friendship that were destroyed; according to witness accounts, the whole region began to resemble a desolate no-man's-land during the war. A soldier's account of Jamestown in Fentress County describes it as "a small cluster of houses in a rocky, barren county, almost destitute of any sign of life, where the wind's only song is the sad requiem of starvation."[53] Another account described the few people who still remained in the area as "dirty, uneducated, and appear[ing] to live for their stomachs altogether."[54] While these descriptions may have been exaggerated, they nevertheless speak of the hardships people in the area faced at this time.

51. Howell, *Folklife*, 21.
52. O'Neal, "The Civil War," 5.
53. W. J. Worsham, as quoted in O'Neal, "The Civil War," 8.
54. Westwood James, as quoted in O'Neal, "The Civil War," 8.

Post-Civil War Settlement and Development (1865-1927)

After the Civil War, even with out-migration, a precipitous fall in property values, and the lingering social wounds caused by guerilla fighting, the population actually increased in much of the region.[55] Still, there was a general "scarcity of money, salt, and food," prompting many locals to return to the way of life practiced before the war relying on subsistence farming, selling excess goods, moonshining, and limited extractive activities to survive and raise a family[56] (Figure 8). While farming remained a central facet of Big South Fork life, by the last several decades of the nineteenth century, significant changes had come to the region, made possible by the "growth of mining and timbering industries, expansion of railroads into the area, and innovations in farming technology."[57] The Tennessee and Kentucky state governments encouraged these techniques. These changes took place as part of the development of the so-called "New South," a movement characterized by a series of social reforms and "economic transformations that swept through the south in the late nineteenth century."[58] Though New South changes "arrived in the Upper Cumberland several decades late," when modernization did arrive, the region experienced enormous growth, with population gains well above the state average in the last two decades of the nineteenth century.[59] Many of the new residents came to work in the coal mines and lumber mills. These wage workers also established and maintained farms "as a way of providing raw materials for food and clothing."[60]

Coal mining activities, which began modestly from the outset of European settlement of the Big South Fork, exploded in scale after the Civil War. Beginning around 1880, locals mined coal and sold it to coal processing operations that had recently been established.[61] With the expansion of the railroad into the area shortly thereafter, outside coal companies purchased large tracts of land and mineral rights and established commercial mines.

55. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 56.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid., 71; Howell, *Folklife*, 21.
58. Jeanette Keith, *Country People in the New South: Tennessee's Upper Cumberland,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 2
59. Keith, *Country People,* 2.
60. Ibid., 58.
61. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 102.



Figure 8. 1919 photograph shows (left to right) Will J. Miller, Harve Slaven and Ellen Miller slaughtering a hog on their farm in the No Business Community. Source: National Park Service.

These businesses employed many local residents and led to the creation of new communities within the Big South Fork area (Figure 9). The mines operated well into the twentieth century, but most were no longer in operation following World War II.

After the Civil War, widespread harvesting of the Big South Fork's forestlands began due to a surge in demand for lumber for new construction. As balloon-frame construction methods gained popularity, the need for lumber increased. Initially, timbering was carried out by local residents who continued the same system as before the war, harvesting the trees themselves and using the river for transporting their logs to market. With the expansion of the railroads, large outside companies purchased massive tracts of land for timber. The companies established mill towns to house workers and their families. One such company was the Michigan-based Stearns Company. Stearns diversified from just timber operations to include coal mining as well, and by 1905, the company owned more than 100,000 acres of Big South Fork land. In one year alone, the company was able to



Figure 9. Comargo mining town, ca. 1920. Note the railroad on the other side of the river. A flood destroyed the small mining town in March of 1929. Source: National Park Service.

produce 970,000 tons of coal and 18 million board feet of lumber.[62]

Railroads made the growth of these industries possible. Throughout the mid-nineteenth century, some local officials and businesspeople lobbied for their introduction to the region, though economic, topographic, and political challenges put projects on hold. After the war, the greater availability of steel coupled with the mostly untapped potential for resource extraction in the Big South Fork area resulted in the construction of several regional railroads. The Cincinnati Southern was the first line to come to the Big South Fork region.[63] Completed by 1880, the rail line ran between Cincinnati, Ohio and Chattanooga, Tennessee. While the line did not reach into the Big South Fork gorge itself, it was responsible for the development of the nearby city of Oneida. Eventually, the coal and timber companies partnered with the railroad companies, such as the Oneida and Western Railroad, and trunk lines were run into the river basin to aid in moving timber and coal out of the area.[64] Other railroads soon followed, essentially replacing river transportation and offering an alternative to travel along rough roads. The railroads connected the Big South Fork region, including its burgeoning towns, to "a larger world, broader markets, and the changes that were occurring elsewhere due to industrialization."[65] These economic changes coincided with a shift in regional settlement patterns, as industry sustained new schools, stores, and communities, many of which were located on the increasingly settled upland plateau.[66]

Not all Big South Fork residents benefitted from these changes. Though supplying jobs to some, the working conditions of these extractive industries were especially harsh. Throughout Appalachia, worker demands for better wages and conditions led to Union-led labor strikes and subsequent violent backlash from mine and mill owners who were often supported by politicians and law enforcement.[67] Labor-related conflicts within the Big South Fork area resulted in several deaths.[68] Further, the new job opportunities did not always equate to lessened poverty. As Elizabeth Catte explains, the poverty experienced by many people in Appalachia has "deep and coherent history rooted in economic exploitation."[69] Those who worked outside of the new economic system

62. Russ Manning, *The Historic Cumberland Plateau, An Explorer's Guide*, (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1993), 115.
63. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 19.
64. Ibid., 100; 139.
65. Ibid., 140.
66. Future park-wide reports and studies might address how Big South Fork residents dealt with the rapid industrialization and changes to the established economic and social order. See Elizabeth Catte's *What You Are Getting Wrong About Appalachia* for insight into how the extractive economy in Appalachia affected locals both economically and socially.
67. "West Virginia's Mine Wars," accessed March 29, 2019, http://www.wvculture.org/history/archives/minewars.html.
68. Howell, *Folklife*, 91.
69. Elizabeth Catte, *What You Are Getting Wrong About Appalachia* (Cleveland, OH: Belt Publishing, 2018), 14.

retained a degree of autonomy in how they made their living and the conditions of their lives.

"As early as 1910, families began to relocate to the plateau" above the Big South Fork.[70] A variety of factors influenced this shift from the bottomlands to the plateaus, including the lack of farmable land in the river bottoms, new and improved transportation routes, the timber market encouraging logging of upland locations, and new wage labor opportunities in developing towns. Such development patterns also corresponded with an expanded economic network flowing into and out of the remote communities of Big South Fork. Farmers sold excess hogs, crops, and moonshine by way of improved roadways and railroads servicing the area.[71] The improved routes also allowed travelers to visit family or sell goods to residents. The relocation to the uplands was also an attempt by farmers to find new arable land, rich in grass, which was in limited supply in the bottomlands.

Despite the changes in settlement, labor, economics, and social relations, area residents maintained a rich collection of Big South Fork-specific folk traditions. Though some residents gave up farming for new employment prospects in the mines and mills, those who remained self-sufficient farmers continued the agricultural practices and homesteading traditions developed in the bottomland communities over many generations. As such, while representative of a pivotal moment of change in regional settlement, the historical development of the Lora Blevins Farmstead on the plateau also reflects a continuity of cultural traditions, for which the farmstead is now federally protected.

The Lora Blevins Farmstead (1927-1974)

It appears that the "three decades of economic development that radically changed the pace and the context of doing business in the region" did not have a profound impact on every resident.[72] Even with increased opportunities offered by regional factories, mines, and mills, many farm families continued to work their small land holdings in the Big South Fork area. On the eve of the Great Depression, "52.5 percent of the total Fentress County population [and] 44.6 percent of the Scott County population" were farm families.[73] The subsequent economic collapse resulted in the region's coal and timber industries slowing down or closing altogether. Yet despite the lack of employment opportunities, between 1930 and 1940 population in the area increased, as did the number of farms.[74] Reflecting property trends in Appalachia at this time, while the quantity of farms increased, the size of these farms decreased. In 1900, the average farm size was 118 acres; the average size was reduced to 67 acres by 1930.[75] Though the farms were smaller, rather than leave for bigger regional towns in search of work, many Big South Fork residents opted to stay and try to make a living from the land. Farming was fairly self-sufficient in the Big South Fork region during this period. In 1930, "about 66 percent of the value of all farm products produced in McCreary County, Kentucky, and Scott and Fentress counties, Tennessee, was used by the farm household."[76]

The Lora Blevins Farmstead represents a continuation of the self-sufficient farmstead traditions that date back to the first settlers of the Big South Fork basin. Researchers have noted that the continuation of these folk practices extended well into the twentieth century because of the region's physical isolation and the resulting lack of access to the economic and social development occurring in other parts of the country.[77] Such conditions included a lack of running water and electricity, ailments such as worms, and high rates of infant mortality.[78] That is not to say that the Blevins Family did not experience joyful times; Poppie Blevins Dishman, Lora and Tealie's youngest daughter, once remarked that "there was lots of love in this house" when speaking of the house her father had constructed.[79] These conditions fostered close-knit communities of people who often did not charge money for services and were willing to lend a helping hand when needed. According to Mrs. Dishman,

70. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 65.
71. Gardner, "The Effects of Kinship," 8.
72. Ibid., 2.
73. Howell, *Folklife*, 28.
74. Ibid., 29.
75. Howell, *Folklife*, 240.
76. Hutchinson, *Inventory and Evaluation,* 12.
77. Howell, *Folklife*, 46.
78. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman."; Keith, *Country People*, 35.
79. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman."

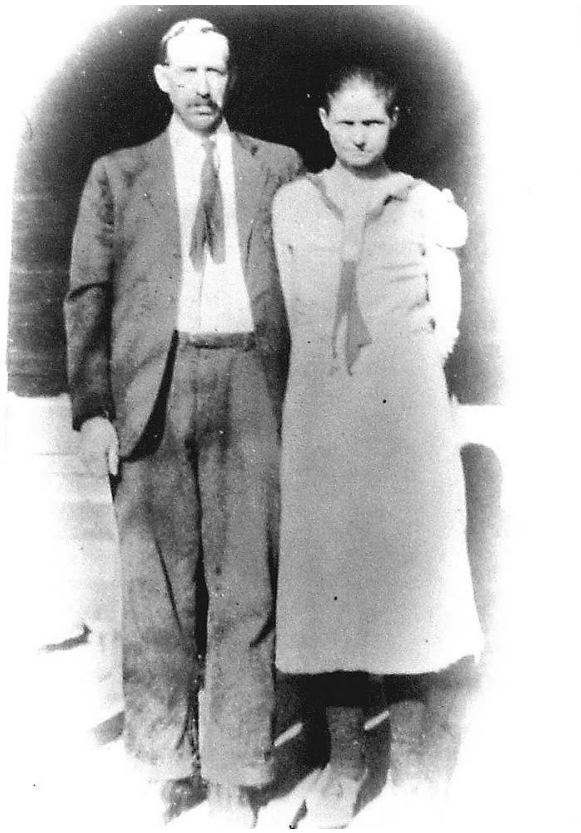


Figure 10. Lora E. Blevins and Tealie Ann Blevins. Unknown date. Source: National Park Service.

"people just did things for each other in those days."[80]

Lora Blevins was the great-great grandson of the first Blevins to arrive in the Big South Fork area, Jonathan Blevins. While often-repeated oral history places Jonathan among the first settlers of what is now Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, records analyzed by historian Jeffrey W. Gardner indicate that this is likely not the case. Jonathan Blevins moved with his family to Wayne County, Kentucky, in 1800, when he was ten or eleven years old. In 1804, Jonathan married Katy Troxell and they proceeded to have seven children. The family then moved to the Parmleysville area of Kentucky, where in 1814, Jonathan acquired 100 acres via a Tellico Land Grant.[81] That year, Katy Troxell died.[82] Jonathan then proceeded to acquire several additional properties in the area, some of which were purchased and some were granted.[83] Not long after, Jonathan sold his original holdings, which varied from 150 to 300 acres and moved to the Rock Creek area, located on the western edge of the current BISO park boundary. Here Jonathan, his new wife Sarah Minton, and his children acquired lands throughout the Rock Creek area. As they became more financially stable, the Blevins family began purchasing land in other areas both within and outside of Kentucky. Notably, the first Blevins land purchase in Scott County, Tennessee, occurred when Isaac Blevins purchased 375 acres in the Pine Creek area.[84] While some Blevins family members stayed in Kentucky, by 1860, Isaac, along with his father Jonathan Sr. and brothers Armstead and Henley, had sold their Rock Creek properties and moved to Scott County.[85]

It is not exactly known where Jonathan Blevins Sr. moved within Scott County, as oral histories place him anywhere between Parch Corn, No Business, and Station Camp creeks. The Civil War complicated tracing land records at this time. "Due to relative political uncertainty and guerilla activity in the area between 1861 and 1863, plateau residents may have been inclined to avoid monetary transactions which might later be voided in the changing tides of war."[86] After the Civil War, members of the Blevins family participated in numerous land transactions throughout the area. Jonathan's youngest son, Isaac Blevins, even acquired interest in nearly 100,000 acres in the region.[87] While the family participated in land speculation, a large portion of the land transactions on record were between family members. For instance, over the ten years prior to his death, Armstead Blevins, Lora's grandfather, sold over 13,000 acres, of which over 8,000 acres was transferred to his children and grandchildren.[88]

Lora Elzick Blevins was born in March 1896 to Shadrack (Shade) and Polly Ann Blevins.[89] His parents owned a farm in Scott County, potentially located at mouth of Laurel Fork just before it entered Station Camp Creek. Representative of the large families of the area, he was one of nine children. Lora Blevins and Tealie (sometimes written as Tillie) Ann Slaven, one year his junior, married in Scott County in 1915 (Figure 10).

80. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman."
81. Tellico Land Grants were for lands ceded to the United States by the Cherokee in 1805.
82. Gardner, "The Effects of Kinship," 59.
83. Ibid., 60.
84. Ibid.
85. Ibid., 60-61.
86. Ibid., 62.
87. Ibid., 63.
88. Ibid., 64.
89. Shade was the son of Armstead, who was the son of Johnathan Blevins, Sr. Thus, Johnathan, Sr., was Lora's great-great-grandfather.



Figure 11. Lora with family in front yard. Unknown date, though likely taken around 1940. Note the swept yard, perimeter yard fence, large trees, and clear vista towards the east. Source: National Park Service.

The Slaven and Blevins families share a similar history. Both families migrated to Tennessee from Kentucky in the mid-nineteenth century, settling in the small communities that were forming at that time. One of Tealie's ancestors, Richard Slaven, moved to Fentress County, Tennessee, by 1833. The growing Slaven families proceeded to settle within the Big South Fork basin. Many of the Slaven family members are buried at Terry Cemetery, which is located in the northern Tennessee portion of the park.[90]

It does not appear that his grandfather granted Lora any land nor did he inherit his family's farm. Deed records show he and Tealie purchased 45 acres from Oliver and Lucy Delk in November of 1927.[91] Research in Scott County records did not reveal ownership of the property prior to this transaction. The Delks are listed as renters in the 1920 census. Poppie Blevins Dishman recalled that Lora owned 67.5 acres.[92] The reason for this discrepancy in acreage is unknown. It could be that Lora and Tealie owned other property that was not located in Scott County records.

Though the property was purchased in 1927, Poppie recalled that Lora completed the log house in October 1928, after which the family moved to the site (Figure 11). It is likely that the Blevins constructed the other buildings and structures, including the surviving corn crib and double crib barn, soon after the house. All the children slept upstairs in the house, where on occasion, snow would blow in and cover them as they slept, which is likely a result of deteriorated chinking.[93] Poppie said that her father dug red clay for chinking from an elevated rise east of the house, and "rived out clapboards to nail up over the chinking to keep wasps and rain from degrading the clay."[94] Repairs and alterations to the house occurred throughout their occupancy. Such alterations included adding two different kitchens on the north side of the house, an addition on the south side of the porch, and replacement of the original chimney. Aside

90. Chuck Murray, "Descendants of Richard Harve Slaven," accessed February 2, 2018, http://murraycamber10.homestead.com/Slaven.html.; "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman."
91. Scott County, Tennessee, "Book 60, Page 294, County Deed Records," (November 9, 1927).
92. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman."
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.



Figure 12. George and Anne Blevins, late 1930s. The couple appears to be on the front porch of the Lora Blevins House. Note the wood shingle roof and log porch supports. Source: National Park Service.

from replacing the chimney, which occurred in the 1960s, the dates for these other alterations are unknown.

The buildings that existed at the Lora Blevins Farmstead fit within the folk building traditions found throughout Appalachia.[95] "The local vernacular architecture" typified by the farmstead "generally reflects an environmental consciousness, reliance on native materials, adaptable modularity, low-cost construction and maintenance practices, construction methods achievable using semiskilled labor, and a rustic



Figure 13. George and Poppie Blevins in the yard south of the Lora Blevins Pole Barn. The photo was likely taken in the mid-1930s. Source: National Park Service.

character."[96] Poppie recounted that the farm's buildings originally had shake shingle roofs, and she noted a preference for using red oak for the shakes (Figure 12). The buildings featured hand-hewn logs and half-dovetail notching, which was a popular construction technique for log buildings during the nineteenth century.

Poppie also noted the existence of other non-surviving buildings and structures (Figure 13). Such structures included a log springhouse, smithy or workshop, smokehouse, chicken coop, hog pen, outhouse, and pumphouse. The springhouse, a "log structure with a rived out board roof," enclosed a built-up spring, which was "made of rock about 2' high with a pole across it (forming a sort of catch basin)."[97] This structure was located at a spring that formed one fork of a bifurcated tributary of Cecil Fork Creek. No description is given for the "smithy" which is also labeled as "shop" on the map of the property Poppie drew of the farmstead

95. In addition to other surviving farmsteads within BISO, see John Rehder, "Hensley, Kentucky: A Twentieth-Century Pioneer Folk Settlement," *Material Cultural* 37, no. 1 (Spring 2005), for a good example of a related settlement featuring a collection of Appalachian traditional buildings.

96. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 59.

97. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman."

in 2001, though she notes that it was located in the small valley near the spring. A chicken coop "sat between the corn crib and the cabin, about 10' north of the pumphouse."[98] Poppie did not provide details for the other structures noted on her map. The pumphouse was added in the 1960s when the Blevins dug the first well for the farm. The map Poppie drew of the farm landscape provides some useful locational information, but as some of her renderings of features are inaccurate (the driveway location leading to the east as opposed to the west side of the house, for instance), the drawing is largely illustrative and general (Appendix A-03).

Census records show that by 1930, the growing family were farming the property.[99] While traditions kept Upper Cumberland women relegated to the home, their work and deep knowledge concerning all things homesteading was essential to a functioning farm.[100] Like most farming women at this time, Tealie's work centered on the homestead, which included raising her six children, cooking meals, gardening, making goods from raw agricultural products, and many other daily tasks. In addition, it appears she was business savvy in terms of land ownership. Though born in the No Business Creek community, Tealie owned land in Kentucky, which she swapped with the Stearns Company for a property located east of her and Lora's home. Tealie later sold the property to Oscar Blevins.

On census records, Lora's occupation is listed as "general farming."[101] Little specific information is currently known about what crops Lora and his family tended. However, based on accounts from other farms in the area, oral history, and agricultural records, a general understanding of farm operations in the at the Lora Blevins Farmstead, is possible. Historians provide a succinct picture of regional farm operations:

> Throughout the region, the farm animals and produce raised for food and feed included hogs, chickens, cattle, and geese; vegetables such as soybeans, beans, tomatoes, cabbage, potatoes, corn, onions, cucumbers, sweet potatoes, beets, okra, carrots, peas, lettuce, turnips, peppers, melons, and mustard; and grains such as corn, oats, and hay. Some farmers grew tobacco. Fruits included strawberries, apples, raspberries, blueberries, pears, peaches, and grapes. Sweeteners were developed from honey, maple sap, and sorghum molasses. Food was processed to preserve it beyond the growing season, using processes such as smoking, curing, canning, drying, and milling. Molasses was made using a mill composed of two metal rollers that acted like the old wringer type washing machine. Root crops were kept in root cellars and potato holes. Alcoholic beverages were made from apples, including cider, applejack, and apple brandy, as well as other fruits. Corn whiskey was produced following procedures similar to those used by the ancestors of the settlers hundreds of years earlier in the British Isles. Sweet mash whiskey was kept on hand for medicinal purposes, as a general tonic, and for hospitality.[102]

This description aligns with accounts of the Blevins' farm. Poppie recalled that her family raised "anywhere between 20-25 sheep and 12-15 cows," of which two or three were milk cows and the rest were raised for beef or breeding.[103] Meat was kept in the smokehouse, where it was cured in salt for a month and coated in ashes to repel pests. The family used a root cellar for storing root vegetables. The family made their own cheese and butter, raised chickens and hogs, and sheared wool. Poppie said that after shearing in April, they would send the wool off, and "got $0.02 /yard of cloth material that they picked from a catalog for the value of what they traded in wool. Using this cloth to make clothing, Tillie would take strips from inner tubes to make elastic bands in garments, pants, and around the knees of bloomers."[104] The Blevins also had horses and mules, which were used for plowing as well as transportation (Figure 14).

Poppie noted that they grew corn and tobacco. According to Wallace Linder, a longtime resident of the Big South Fork basin, friend of the family, and former BISO staff, they also grew plums, peaches, apples, and various vegetables. A grape arbor and

98. Ibid.
99. 1930 United States Federal Census, Scott County, Tennessee. Ancestry.com [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2017.
100. Keith, *Country People*, 37.
101. 1930 United States Federal Census, Scott County, Tennessee.
102. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 58.
103. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman."
104. Ibid.



Figure 14. Lora Blevins working the fields with mule and plow. Unknown date. Source: National Park Service.

raspberry shrubs existed to the east of the house.[105] While Poppie said that they grew "sugar cane," she was likely referring to sorghum, from which they made molasses using a press that was shared among area farmers. She described the process of making the molasses:

> It [the sorghum press] was set up on blocks so that the circling arm could be attached and a mule harnessed up to this to turn the press. A hole was dug into the [barnyard] ground (to be beneath the circling arm) and a chair was placed in this in front of the rollers so that Lora could "feed" sugar cane into the press. He would feed 2 to 3 canes into the rollers at a time and they tried to grind out 12-13 (#3) wash tubs of juice a day. The juice was strained and then poured into a boiler box that Lora made out of sheet metal. A wooden paddle was used to skim off the green foam which was dropped into a hole. Tillie boiled down the molasses, and the kids stripped off the branches and the heads. The children also rode the mule to keep it circling all day until about 11pm.[106]

Poppie also described some of the gardening traditions, which she and her mother practiced. To the east of the house they tended a small herb and vegetable garden, which was fenced in to keep animals out. She recalled growing peppers, sage, and parsley. Ornamental plants grown at the farmstead included asters, petunias, zinnias, phlox, daffodils, red hot poking stick, and a rose bush. The front yard was enclosed by a paling fence, with a gate located between two large black walnut trees on the west side of the yard. Within the fence, the ground was swept bare. Two peach trees were located in the southeast corner of the yard, and a "snowball bush," likely a viburnum, grew between the trees.[107]

While Poppie's recollections provide invaluable firsthand information about the farmstead, a 1951 aerial photograph offers the clearest image of the landscape prior to federal acquisition (Appendix A-01). The most striking aspect of the photo is the extent of farming operations at this time. The image shows a large patchwork of irregularly-sized fields carved from a swath of forestland north of West Bandy Creek Road. The image clearly shows the small Katie Blevins Cemetery, established in 1868, to the west of the core of the farmstead (note: Some BISO management documents spell Katie "Katy" when referring to the cemetery). Several separate farmsteads also occupy the clearing, with the core of the Blevins farmstead located on center at the bottom (southern) edge of the fields. One cluster of buildings exists at the extreme southwest corner of the clearing, while another is located in the northeast corner. These other building clusters do not seem as extensive as the Lora Blevins farmstead, with each containing only a building or two. Land records and current parcel boundaries indicate that Lora and Tealie owned these properties. Census and land records do not reveal who lived at these other farms or what arrangement they may have had with the Blevins Family. It is possible, though unconfirmed, that George Blevins, the son of Lora and Tealie, and his wife Anna lived at the farm in the southwest corner of the property.[108]

In 1951, the core of the Lora Blevins landscape contained at least three distinct enclosures and a network of pathways (Illustration 2.1 and Illustration 2.2). The 1951 aerial image shows the fenced-in swept yard immediately to the south of the house. Two additional enclosed areas existed within the core of the farm. The western enclosure corresponds to the barnyard Poppie described and occupied the space between the road and the barn. Its fence ran along the main road, edged the Katie Blevins Cemetery on the west, ran across the south face of the barn, and skirted the western edge of the driveway. On the east side of the driveway,

105. Wallace Linder (retired BISO staff), in discussion with the author, December 2017.
106. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman."
107. Ibid.
108. Interview with Wallace Linder.

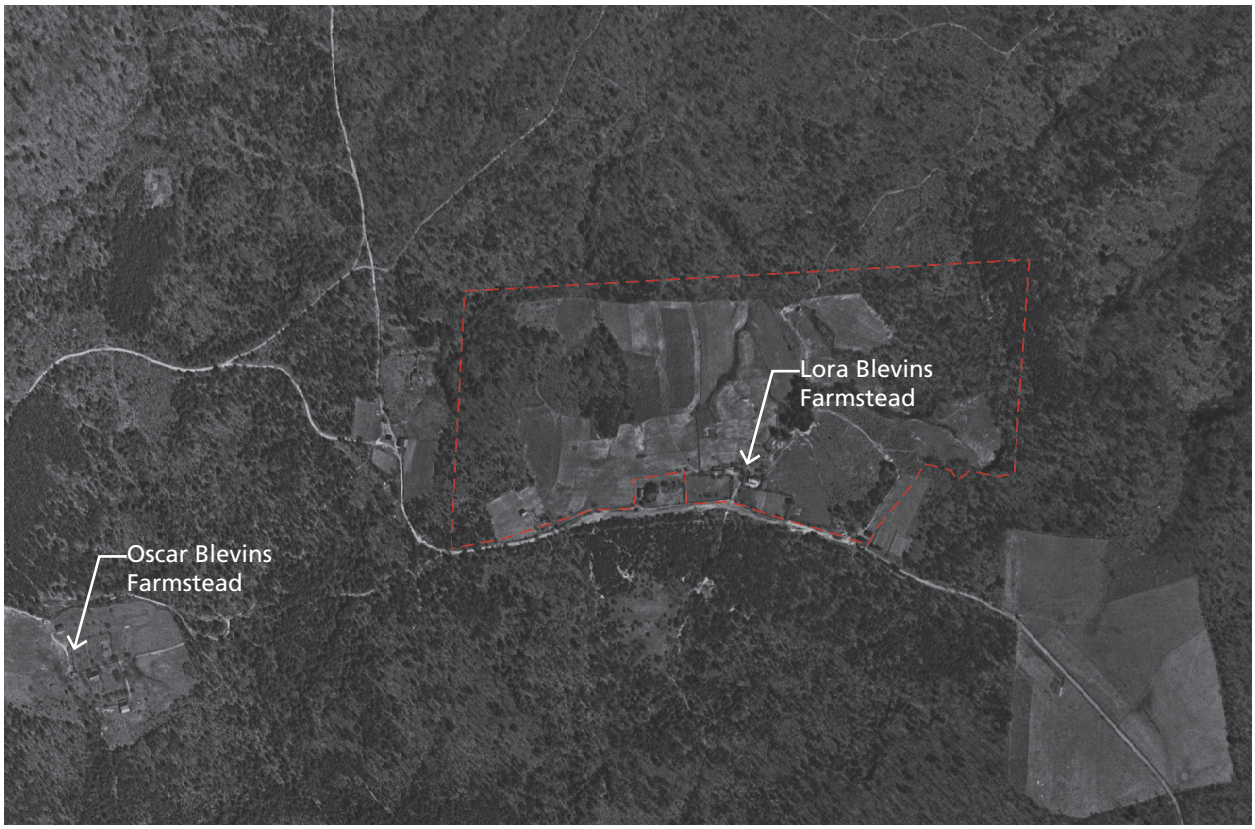


Figure 15. 1951 aerial view of the Lora Blevins Farmstead (center) as well as other nearby farms. Source: USGS.

a near mirror image of the barnyard enclosure occupied the space between the swept yard and the road.

Meeting the north side of the barnyard fence at a 90-degree angle, a long fence ran northward for the extent of the cleared area and terminated at the wood line at the edge of the property. A "bar gate" was located where the two fences met, allowing access in to and out of the fields. The field referred to as the "long field" or "holler field" existed just to the west of the fence in the northern portion of the clearing. What appears to be an orchard occupied the space between the house and a wooded area to the north. It is possible that the orchard was more extensive prior to 1951. A small wooded area just north of the orchard corresponds to the probable location of the spring, though neither the springhouse nor the shop buildings described by Poppie are visible in the image. A short section of fencing appears to have screened the spring and wooded area from the fields to the west. A well-defined path led from the house to the woods, indicating regular use. Four other paths came into the wooded area from the southeast, east, and north, connecting the spring to other neighboring farms. Other paths visible in the image include two that extend out from the bar gate; one that connected the house, driveway, and barn; several that skirt field edges; and one that crossed over West Bandy Creek Road from the driveway and headed south into what appears to be early successional forest. Evidently, a second spring was located in a rock shelter south of the house and was used when the closer spring north of the house periodically went dry.[109] It is likely the path leads to that spring.

Unfortunately, the other structures Poppie described are not visible in the image, indicating they were either not built or removed by 1951, or they are obscured by vegetation or the quality of the image. Subsequent aerials from 1952, 1953, 1954, and 1976 are of poorer quality than the 1951 image, making the 1951 aerial the most useful for identifying landscape features from this time period (Figure 15). Other structures beyond the Lora Blevins Farmstead include those associated with adjacent farms, as well as a building located on the west side of the Katie Blevins Cemetery. According to NPS staff and Effie Houston, this building was initially used as a church and later as

109. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman."

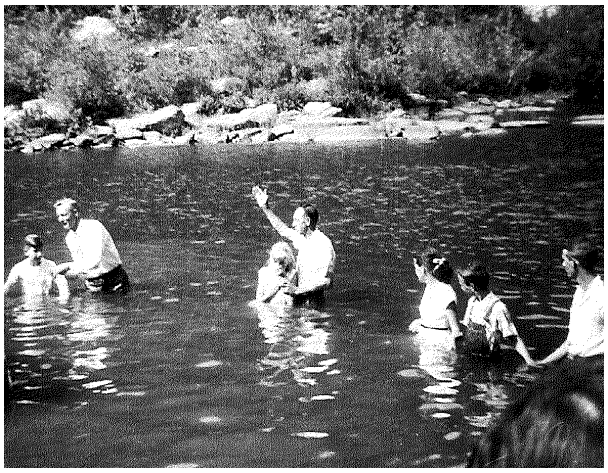


Figure 16. Lora Blevins, in center, baptizing people in the river. No date. Source: National Park Service.

a tobacco barn.[110] These two uses of the building correspond to Lora's two primary occupations: farming and ministering.

Census records do not indicate that Lora Blevins held a wage position in addition to his farming activities. Instead, he served as a Baptist circuit preacher for 60 years (Figure 16). Poppie recalls that Lora preached on occasion at a log schoolhouse and church at the mouth of Station Camp Creek.[111] In 1929, this building was destroyed by a flood, and a new school was built. Later, the new schoolhouse was disassembled and rebuilt at Alticrest and became New Zion Church. Tealie's obituary from 1969 stated she was a member of the New Zion Baptist Church, and he may have continued preaching there.[112] Alticrest is located in Fentress County, along Highway 297 / Leatherwood Ford Road. It is likely Lora preached in other area churches on occasion as well, including the one on his property beside the cemetery.

Immediately following World War II, out-migration reduced population numbers in the Big South Fork region.[113] This trend was enabled by the gradual reduction of logging and coal mining in the area, followed by the abandonment of the local railroads.[114] Many residents who left the basin found work in new industries that developed after WWII, specifically at manufacturing factories in nearby cities. By the 1970s however, the industrial and extractive economy, including coal mining and manufacturing, returned to the Big South Fork region. This resulted in a slight increase in regional population, but the number of people engaged in agriculture for their livelihood declined significantly.[115] Strikingly, "by 1974, there were only 958 farms remaining in the area, an 80 percent decrease since the historic high of 4,922 farms in 1940."[116] Additionally, following post-war trends, a rise in tourism activity in the Big South Fork area began. The arrival of tourists foreshadowed the more substantial changes to the region that occurred in the mid-1970s.

While many others left the region, throughout the Great Depression, WWII, and into the 1970s, Lora, Tealie, and the family continued to live and work at the Blevins Farmstead (Figure 17 and Figure 18). Photographs from this time indicate the continuation of agricultural activities and show a well-used farm landscape and similar field patterns to those shown in the 1951 aerial image, albeit with the presence of successional vegetation in areas. Three sources of information shed light on the condition of the property prior to Army Corps of Engineer's acquisition of it: Poppie's recollections and map (Appendix A-03), a 1974 Army Corp of Engineers site analysis plan drafted as part of the initial master plan for the not-yet-established park (Appendix A-02), and a 1976 aerial photograph (Figure 19). Also refer to Illustration 2.3 and Illustration 2.4.

According to Poppie, sometime in the 1960s, both she and her older brother George moved back to the farm. Poppie told Tom Des Jean that they lived in "trailers" or prefabricated homes. Poppie's home was located northeast of the old house, and George's was located to the south along the driveway.[117] On the map Poppie drew of the farm; however, she drew a more substantial structure, labeled "Poppie's house," in the general location of a house-shaped structure that appears on both a 1974 site map and the 1976 aerial. Thus, it is possible that only George lived in a prefabricated home on the site. Poppie did not draw George's residence along the driveway, though the 1976 aerial confirms its existence. The 1974 site

110. Effie Houston, in discussion with the author, December 13, 2017.
111. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman."
112. "Tealie Ann Slaven Blevins," accessed February 2, 2018, Find A Grave, https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/11804280/tealie-ann-blevins.
113. Howell, *Folklife*, 238.
114. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 148.
115. Ibid, 215.
116. Howell, *Folklife*, 30.
117. Tom Des Jean, Personal Communication.



Figure 17. Tealie Ann Blevins posing with food, ca. 1950s. Note in this photograph, the fence is still in place, and the yard is still swept bare. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 18. 1974 family reunion photo. By this time, the yard was no longer swept bare, and dimensional lumber had replaced the log porch supports. Source: National Park Service.

analysis plan labels the building and a smaller adjacent structure as "wooden structures in poor condition."

The 1974 site analysis plan also shows the presence of extensive fencing, buildings, and structures. The core of the Lora Blevins Farmstead contains the log house, barn, corn crib, what may be the chicken coop, and George's trailer. These structures are also labeled as being in poor condition. Much of the fencing appears in the same location as the 1951 aerial photograph with the addition of several smaller enclosures that are shown in the area between the barn and the house. By this time, it appears the farm located in the far northeast portion of the property, seen in the 1951 aerial, is no longer present. There is no evidence of the church/tobacco barn building west of the cemetery. The farm in the southwest corner of

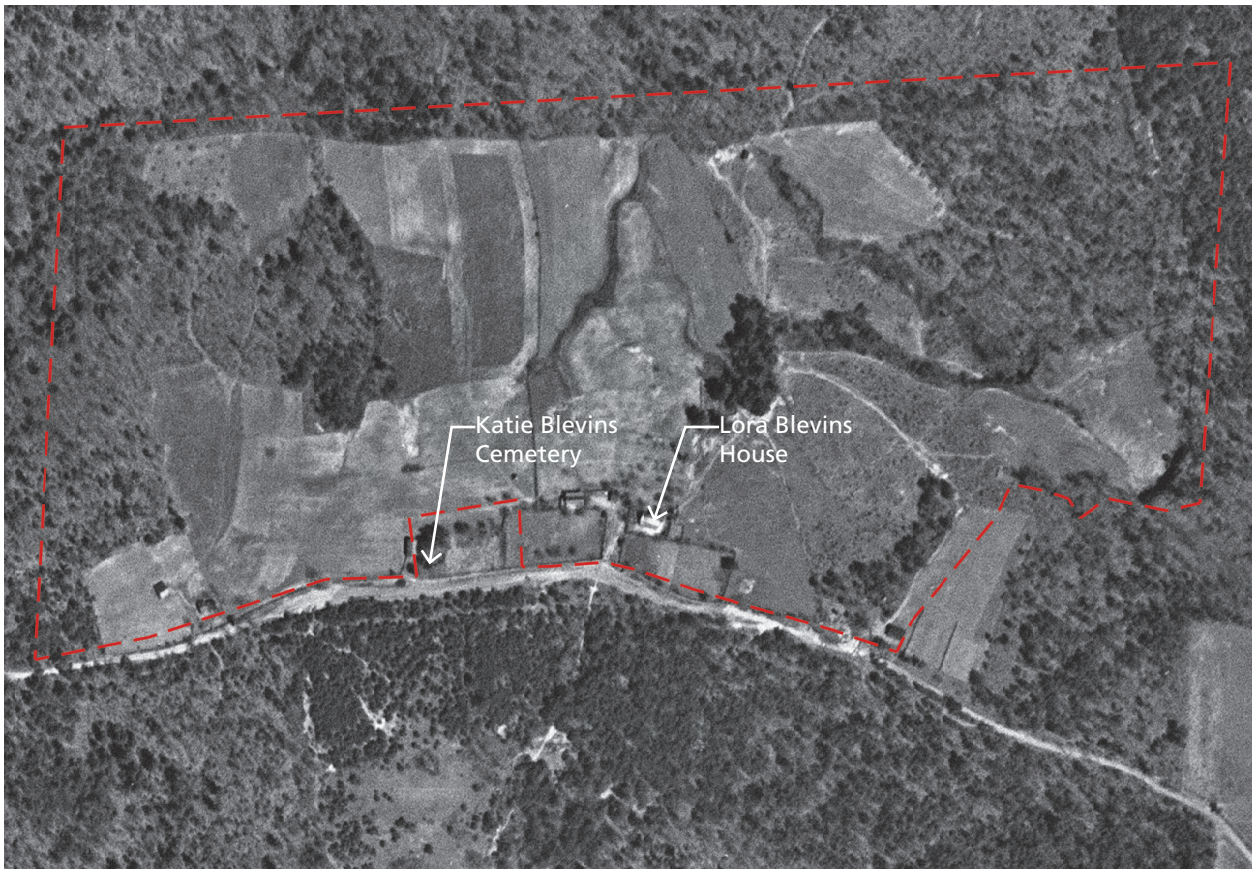


Figure 19. 1976 aerial of the farmstead. Much of the farmstead appears the same as it did in the 1950s, with the overall spatial arrangement remaining intact. Note the addition of two structures: one along the driveway to the house that may correspond to a mobile home belonging to George Blevins and a square structure to the east of the house that may correspond to the house Poppie noted as hers on the map she drew. Source: USGS.

the property still existed at this time, labeled as "wooden structures in poor condition." The plan also indicates the extent and composition of the growing forest around the property, labeling the woodland in various locations as "mixed oak" and "mixed pine."

By the beginning of the 1970s, momentum for the creation of a park to encompass the scenic Big South Fork basin was well underway. Valued for both its cultural and natural resources, the area would be an experiment in balancing continued use and preservation. Within a decade, the Lora Blevins Farmstead became a managed cultural resource, part of Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area.

Development of Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (1974-1990)

US Army Corps of Engineers Management Period (1974-1990)

The background to the creation of Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area began with the attempts of the federal government to dam the rivers of Appalachia, including the Big South Fork and the Cumberland River. Beginning in the 1930s, both the USACE and the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) surveyed the area for potential dam locations. As a result, the USACE proposed a dam to be located in the Kentucky portion of the Big South Fork gorge in order to generate electricity and control flooding.[118] Named for the rapids at which it would be located, the Devil's Jump Dam was approved several times in the 1950s and 1960s by the United States Senate, but

118. Wiss, *Historic Resources Study*, 20.

the House of Representatives could not agree on a bill to fund construction.[119] As such, interest temporarily moved on to constructing dams elsewhere.

In the interim, local conservationists lobbied to have the Big South Fork protected from any dam projects and sought its placement on the Scenic Rivers Bill that was being crafted in the Tennessee State House. After the Big South Fork was not included in that list, conservation groups tried unsuccessfully to get it listed in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Bill in 1968. With the Big South Fork back under consideration for dam projects, federal agencies drafted new studies to determine the feasibility of such projects, as well as alternatives, such as permanent protection. The alternatives study was shelved, so conservationists tried a new approach—wrap the proposal in a larger bill. When this new bill was vetoed by President Nixon, they reintroduced it again, only this time with the National Park Service (NPS) as manager as opposed to the USACE.[120] The bill passed, and on March 7, 1974, the federal government established the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area.

The way the bill was crafted, the USACE would carry out administrative duties for the park until 1990, after which the park and its management would fall to the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior.[121] A key component of the USACE's role during that time included the acquisition of approximately 123,000 acres of land that would make up the park, which "was secured both from willing sellers and through eminent domain."[122] The proposed boundary included 34 year-round houses with approximately 125 residents.[123] Issues related to the acquisition of land and the creation of the park resulted in perceived inadequate communication by the USACE and NPS. Some residents simply did not trust the federal government to treat them fairly.[124] In the end, the USACE acquired the necessary lands, and the last Big South Fork residents dispersed into the nearby area.

It is unknown exactly how Lora Blevins' move out of the park area transpired and whether Lora moved grudgingly or willingly. Tealie Ann Blevins died in 1969, and Lora married Eva Crabtree later that year. It is also unknown if Lora and Eva stayed at the farm after Tealie's death, but if they did, it was not for long. In January 1974, Lora and Eva sold 35 acres of the farm to Clara Sue Blevins and Lenard Blevins, Lora's son. Lora and Eva also transferred ten acres to their son George at the same time. The 35 acres constituted the bulk of the farmstead (tract 1302), and the ten-acre parcel occupied the western edge of the original property (tract 1301). Lora may have known the bill creating the park was working its way through Congress, but if he did not, the timing of the sale is interesting—the park was created three months after the sale.

When Lora and Eva sold the property, it appears the farm was still in active use. A 1976 aerial image shows that the general field patterns evident on the 1951 aerial from 20 years earlier are still visible, though successional vegetation was visible north and east of the house. Wallace Linder noted that a local farmer, Louis Cravens, had a lease to grow corn in the open fields of the property during the 1970s.[125] Active use was still apparent in 1981, when the Lora Blevins Farmstead was documented as part of an inventory and evaluation of architectural and engineering resources of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area.[126] At this time, Clara Sue Blevins Campbell was listed as the owner (Leonard Blevins died in 1976), and Lona Slavens was listed as tenant of the house, though its present use was listed as "vacant."

Photographs of the site focused primarily on the buildings, though some landscape context is visible (Figure 20, Figure 21, Figure 22). An image of the south facade of the barn shows the south wing addition in poor condition. In the foreground, it appears that the tenant had tilled the barnyard into rows. Another photograph focuses on the west facade of the barn and shows both additions and a fenced in side yard. The post-and-wire fence

119. Manning, *Explorer's Guide*, 118.
120. Manning, *Explorer's Guide*, 118.
121. Wiss, *Historic Resources Study*, 2.
122. Ibid., 21.
123. Howell, *Folklife*, 11.; Carol Jo Evans, "'Everyday Symbols for Mediation': Conflict and Cooperation Over the Cultural and Natural Resources Within the Big South Fork of National River and Recreation Area," (PhD diss.,University of Kentucky, 2010), 225. http://uknowledge.uky.edu/gradschool_diss/16
124. Howell, *Folklife*, 22.; Carol Jo Evans, "'Everyday Symbols for Mediation,'" 225.
125. Interview with Wallace Linder.
126. Hutchinson, *Inventory and Evaluation*, 157.

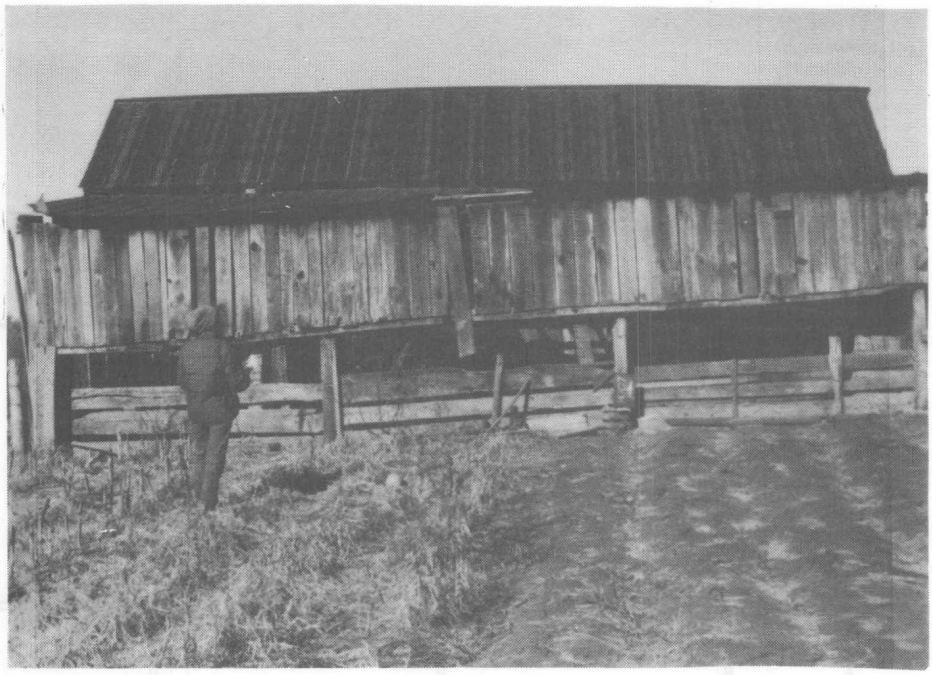


Fig. 4.56A (H007) Side view of barn with plank addition.

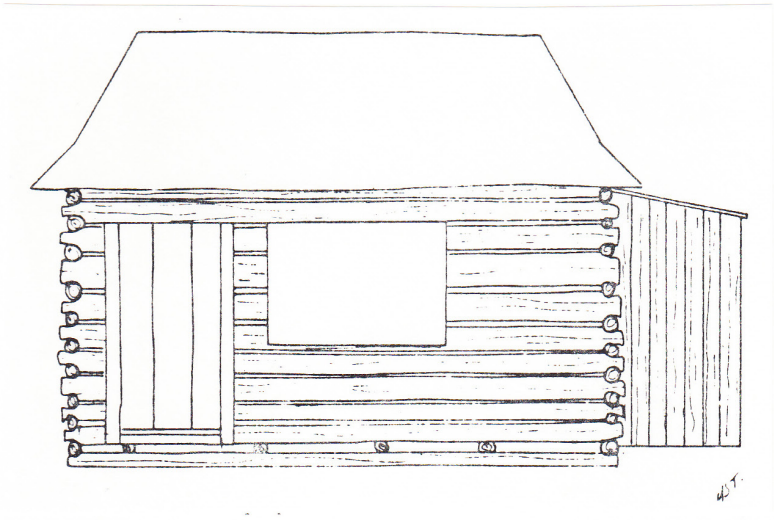


Fig. 4.56B (H007) Side view of log barn showing original log building in center and additions on either side.

Figure 20. Page from the 1982 Inventory and Evaluation of Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Tennessee and Kentucky report. Note in the 1981 photo that the barnyard had recently been used for some crop. Source: Hutchinson, Dugan, and Levy.

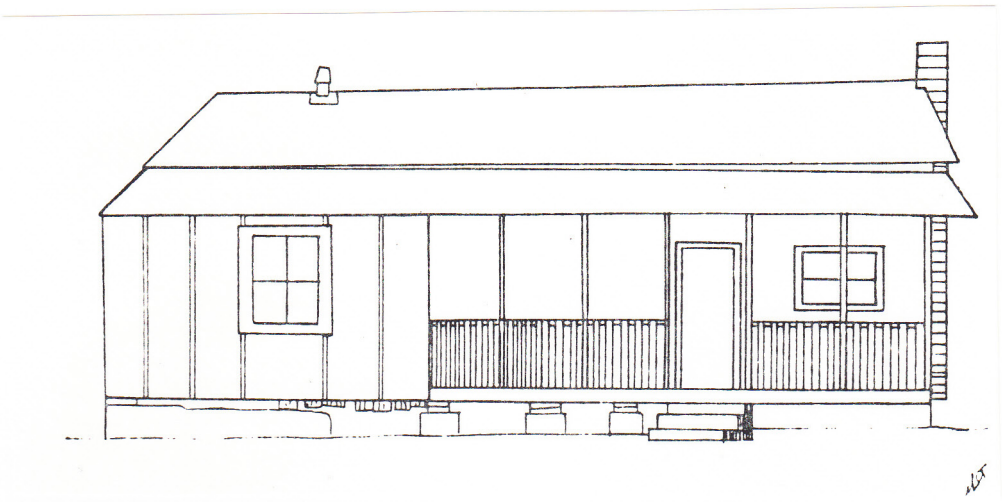


CLARA SUE (BLEVINS) CAMPBELL LOG CORN CRIB (HOO7a); North and East Elevations, 1981.



CLARA SUE (BLEVINS) CAMPBELL LOG CORN CRIB (HOO7a); South Elevation, 1981.

Figure 21. Page from the 1982 Inventory and Evaluation of Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Tennessee and Kentucky report. Note in the 1981 photo that the area immediately around the corn crib was worn bare. Source: Hutchinson, Dugan, and Levy.



CLARA SUE (BLEVINS) CAMPBELL LOG HOUSE (HOO8); South Elevation, 1981.



CLARA SUE (BLEVINS) CAMPBELL LOG HOUSE (HOO8); East Elevation, 1981.

Figure 22. Page from the 1982 Inventory and Evaluation of Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Tennessee and Kentucky report. Note what may be a clothesline in the foreground. Source: Hutchinson, Dugan, and Levy.

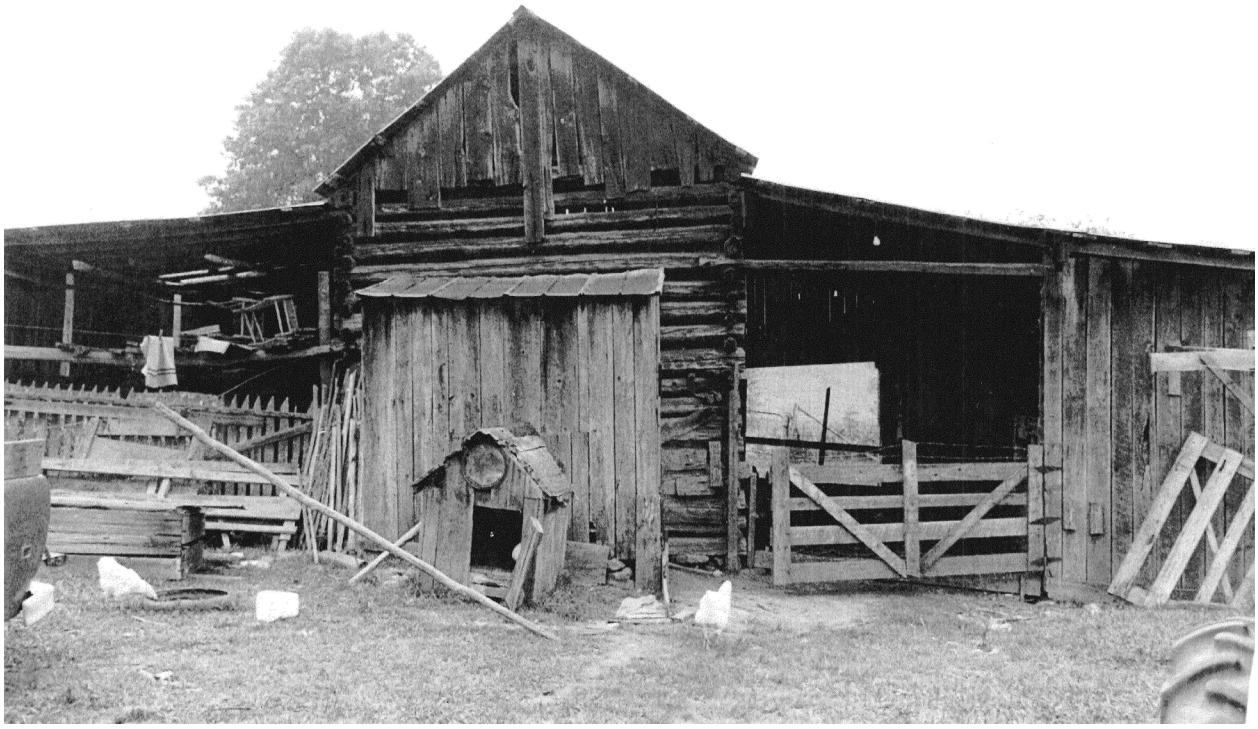


Figure 23. Circa 1980 photograph of the east side of the barn. Note the presumed tractor tire in the bottom right corner of the photo. It is likely that by this time mule and plow were no longer used for planting. Source: National Park Service.

features a large metal swing gate on its west side, which provided access to the western fields. A third photograph of its east facade taken as part of research for Howell's *Folklife* book also shows the small shed building that sat flush with the facade, as well as a small doghouse-type structure in front of the addition (Figure 23).

Chickens are shown in the yard, suggesting that someone was living at the farm at the time. Several photos also show the condition of the house prior to federal acquisition. A family reunion photo from 1974 shows that the once swept bare yard now contained short grass, and a small tree, possibly a black walnut, grew by the front steps (Figure 18). Also, the front porch supports, which were once rustic logs, were replaced with dimensional lumber by this time. A photograph taken during Howell's research shows many potted plants on the front porch, the remnants of a screen door leaning against the cinderblock chimney, and a mature black walnut on the west side of the house (Figure 24). Between the house and the tree was a bare patch of earth, which appears to have been recently tilled (Figure 25). The photos also show the first evidence of electricity at the house, as cables are seen running to an electrical meter on the west facade of the house. Wallace Linder noted that electricity came to the area in the 1960s.[127] The corn crib was also photographed at this time. The photograph shows the area immediately around the structure densely cluttered with various items such as plows, cinder blocks, buckets, fabric, and other materials. When surveyed in 1980, the corn crib's function was listed as "storage," indicating active use of the site. In October 1980, Clara Sue Blevins sold the property to the USACE for $55,000. George Blevins also sold his neighboring property at this time.

The USACE's acquisition of the Lora Blevins Farmstead resulted in dramatic changes to the landscape. Within a few years, when the site was photographed for assumed maintenance purposes, the scene was much different (Figure 26 through Figure 30). The northern shed addition on the barn had been removed, as had the two additions on the house. The two buildings, along with the corn crib, appear in poor condition. The landscape had been cleared as well, with all the farm implements, buckets, lumber, fencing, and other items related to its past function removed. Though the landscape had been cleared, the site was still being farmed, as evidenced by the plowed field in period photographs. In 1987, the site was the subject of

127. Interview with Wallace Linder.



Figure 24. Circa 1980 photograph of east side of Lora Blevins house. Note "lived-in" condition indicated by presence of potted plants on the porch. Also shown is the replacement chimney, which was added by Lora in the 1960s. Source: National Park Service.

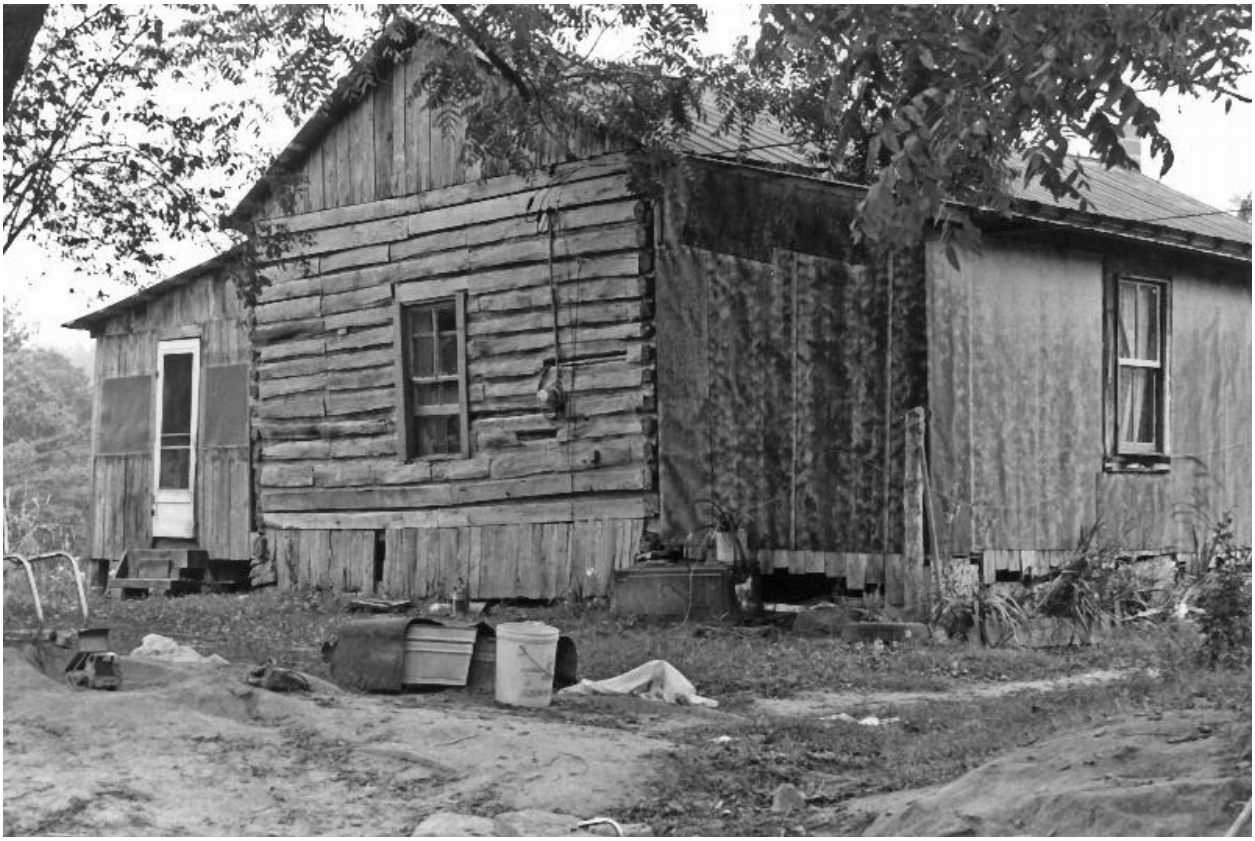


Figure 25. Circa 1980 photograph of west side of Lora Blevins house. Note "lived-in" condition indicated by the recently tilled area between the large walnut trees and the house. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 26. Circa 1984 photograph of east side of barn. Note by this time the northern wing addition is missing as is much of the fencing and other farm objects. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 29. Circa 1984 photograph of south side of house. Note the continued agricultural use shown in the foreground of the photograph. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 27. Circa 1984 photograph of south side of barn. Note by this time the wing addition is in poor condition. The barnyard shows evidence of sorghum planting. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 30. Circa 1984 photograph of south side of corn crib. Note by this time all the various farm implements had been removed from around the structure. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 28. Circa 1984 photograph of north side of barn, without wing addition. Note all chinking is missing in between logs. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 31. 2005 repair work to the buildings and structures. Note the new roof. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 32. 2005 repair work to the buildings and structures. Note the addition of a small log fence in front of corn crib. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 33. 2005 repair work to the buildings and structures. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 34. 2005 image of pumphouse. The structure was removed at this time, and useable lumber was used to repair the privy. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 35. 2005 image of privy before repair. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 36. Circa 2001 Spring Planting Day photograph. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 37. 2013 photograph of side garden and fence. Source: "Where's Liz 2013."



Figure 38. 2004 image of downed black walnut tree. Note the protective portico on the house, as well as new roof. Source: National Park Service.

Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) work, though the documentation was never submitted to the NPS.[128] At this time, the USACE commissioned a structural treatment plan for the stabilization of the site's buildings.[129] It does not appear that any actions were taken in terms of repair or stabilization by the USACE; instead, in 1991, the entirety of BISO was transferred to the National Park Service.

National Park Service Management (1991-Present)

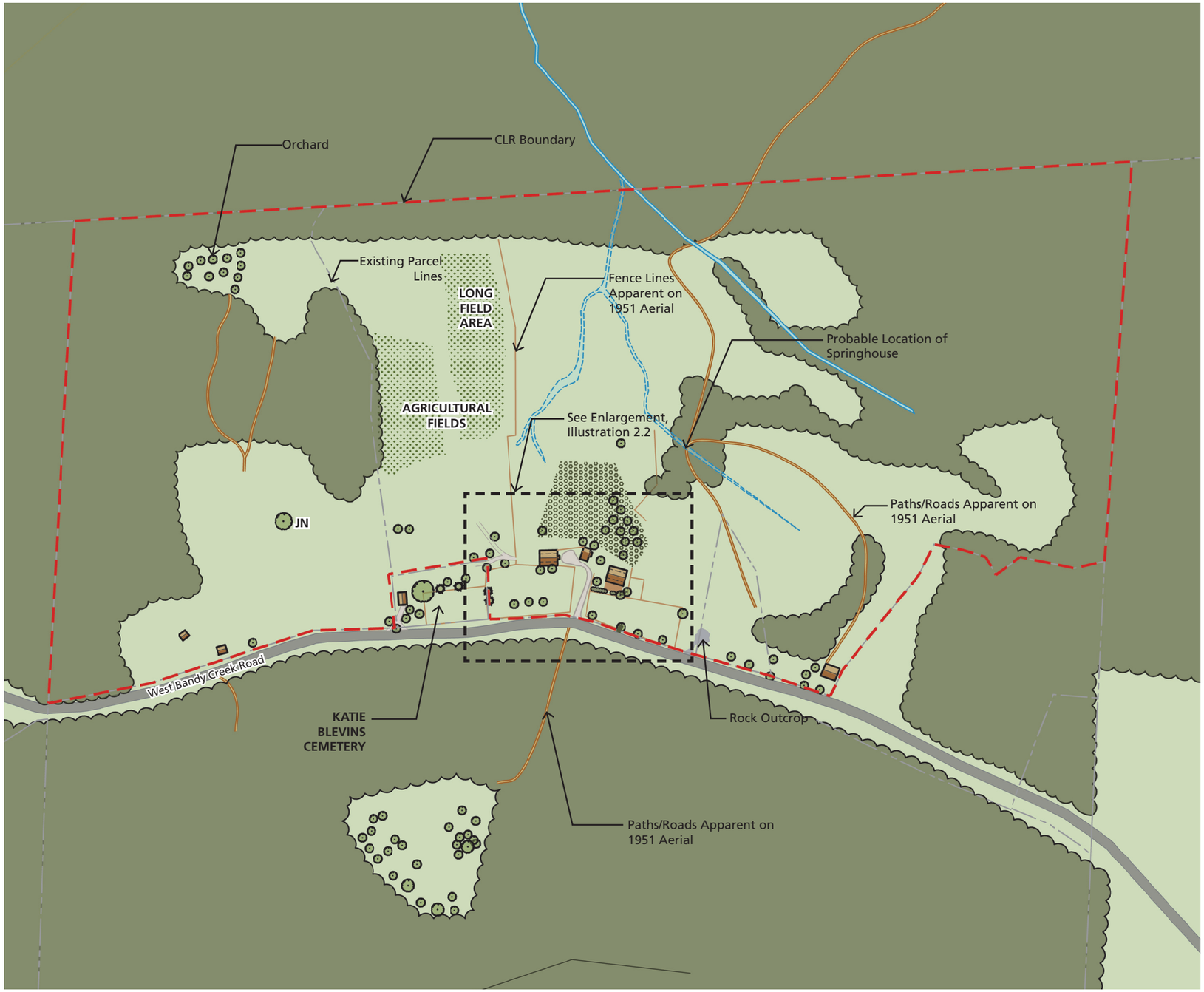
From 1991 forward, the NPS prioritized the stabilization and safeguarding of the remaining structures at Lora Blevins Farmstead. To that end, the NPS issued work request orders in the early 1990s to make necessary repairs. Much of the work took place between 1996 and 2006. Actions and interventions included stabilizing buildings, replacing in kind deteriorated building timbers, installing new metal roofs on all surviving structures, and resetting the stone piers.[130] In 1996, the NPS removed the cinderblock chimney Lora Blevins added to the house in the 1960s and replaced it with a reconstruction of the original chimney using stone obtained from a historic house in Kentucky.[131] Around this time, NPS erected a protective porch on the south facade of the house to shield the siding from the effects of inclement weather. In 1997, field work for a series of Cultural Landscape Inventories of the park's remaining historic farmsteads was conducted (Illustration 2.4 and Appendix A-04). In 1998, the NPS stabilized the log barn, replacing deteriorated logs in kind. In 2005, the NPS performed more stabilization work on all three remaining structures (Figure 31 through Figure 33). Also at this time, the NPS removed the pumphouse that was constructed for the new well (Figure 34). Lumber from the pumphouse was used to repair the privy (Figure 35).

Since 2001, the NPS has used Lora Bevins Farmstead as the site for the annual Spring Planting Day (Figure 36). The public event centers on the demonstration of mule-drawn plowing techniques and the planting of sorghum, which takes place in the long field of the site. On occasion, the event features the interpretation of other farmstead activities such as "blacksmithing, basket making, hand spinning, weaving, woodcarving, chair caning, soap making, garden herb lore and use, and paling fence making."[132] The event is the only interpretation of the historic land use of Lora Blevins Farmstead. At some point in the recent past, someone installed a small interpretive garden on the east side of the house (Figure 37). This garden plot is currently overgrown and unused. Another area of formerly used garden space is located in the open area east of the house.

In general, field management practices have allowed the encroachment of successional vegetation south towards the historic core of the farmstead. As a result, historic-era fruit trees have been overtaken and lost. Additionally, the successional growth obscures historic spatial arrangement of the site, in particular the relationship between forest and field. In 2004, one of the mature black walnut trees on the west side of the house blew over in a storm, and the NPS replaced it in kind (Figure 38).

In 2017, field work was conducted as part of the production of a Cultural Landscape Report for the Lora Blevins Farmstead.

128. Victor P. Hood, and Glyn D. DuVall, Barcon, Inc., Environmental Services, *Historic American Building Survey Documentation and Structural Assessment of 12 Structures in the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Tennessee. Contract No. DACW62-84-D-0052*. Submitted to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Nashville District, Nashville, Tennessee. July 1987.
129. Wiss, *Historic Resources Study*, 243.
130. Ibid., 244.
131. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman."
132. Big South Fork NRRA, "Annual Spring Planting & Music Festival," accessed December 31, 2017, https://www.nps.gov/biso/planyourvisit/springplanting.htm.



Key

- Roadway
- Dirt Path*
- Stream
- Ephimeral Stream
- CLR Study Boundary
- Parcel Boundaries
- Orchard Area*
- Active Agricultural Fields*
- Tree*
- Fence Lines*

*Apparent on 1951 Aerial Image

Plant Key

JV	Red Cedar	*Juniperus virginiana*
CF	Dogwood	*Cornus florida*
CG	Pignut Hickory	*Carya glabra*
JN	Black Walnut	*Juglans nigra*
MP	Apple	*Malus pumlia*
SA	Sassafras	*Sassafras albidum*
YA	Yucca	*Yucca aliofolia*

NOTES

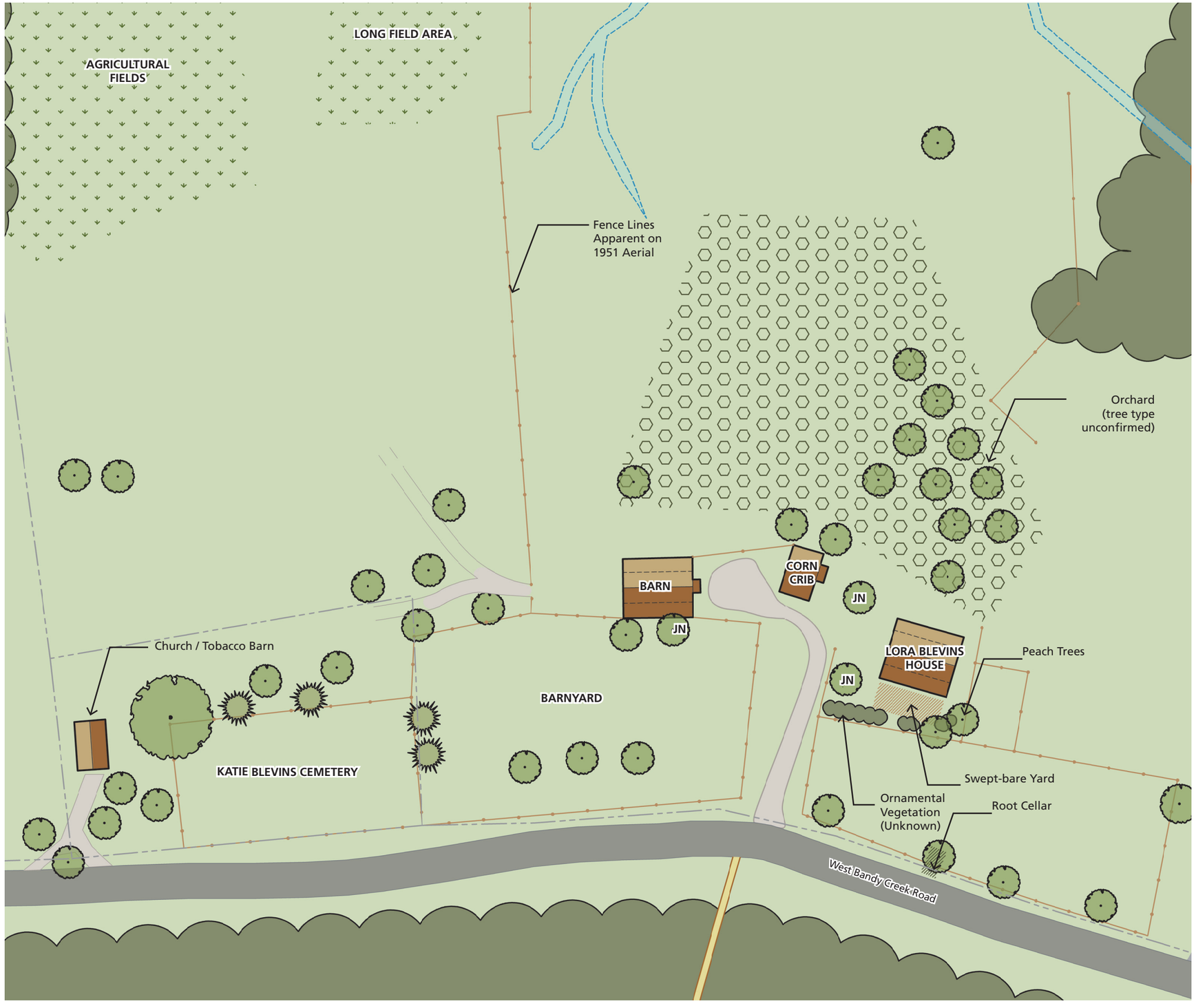
** BISO parcel and circulation GIS datasets produce conflicting boundaries.

CREDITS

1. National Park Service and Big South Fork NRRA
2. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman", 2001
3. 1951 Aerial Image, USDA

Illustration 2.1
1951 Period Plan
Lora Blevins Farmstead
Big South Fork
National River and Recreation Area
Cultural Landscape Report

May 2019



Key

- Roadway
- Dirt Path*
- Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- Parcel Boundaries
- Orchard Area*
- Active Agricultural Fields*
- Tree*
- Fence Lines*

*Apparent on 1951 Aerial Image

Plant Key

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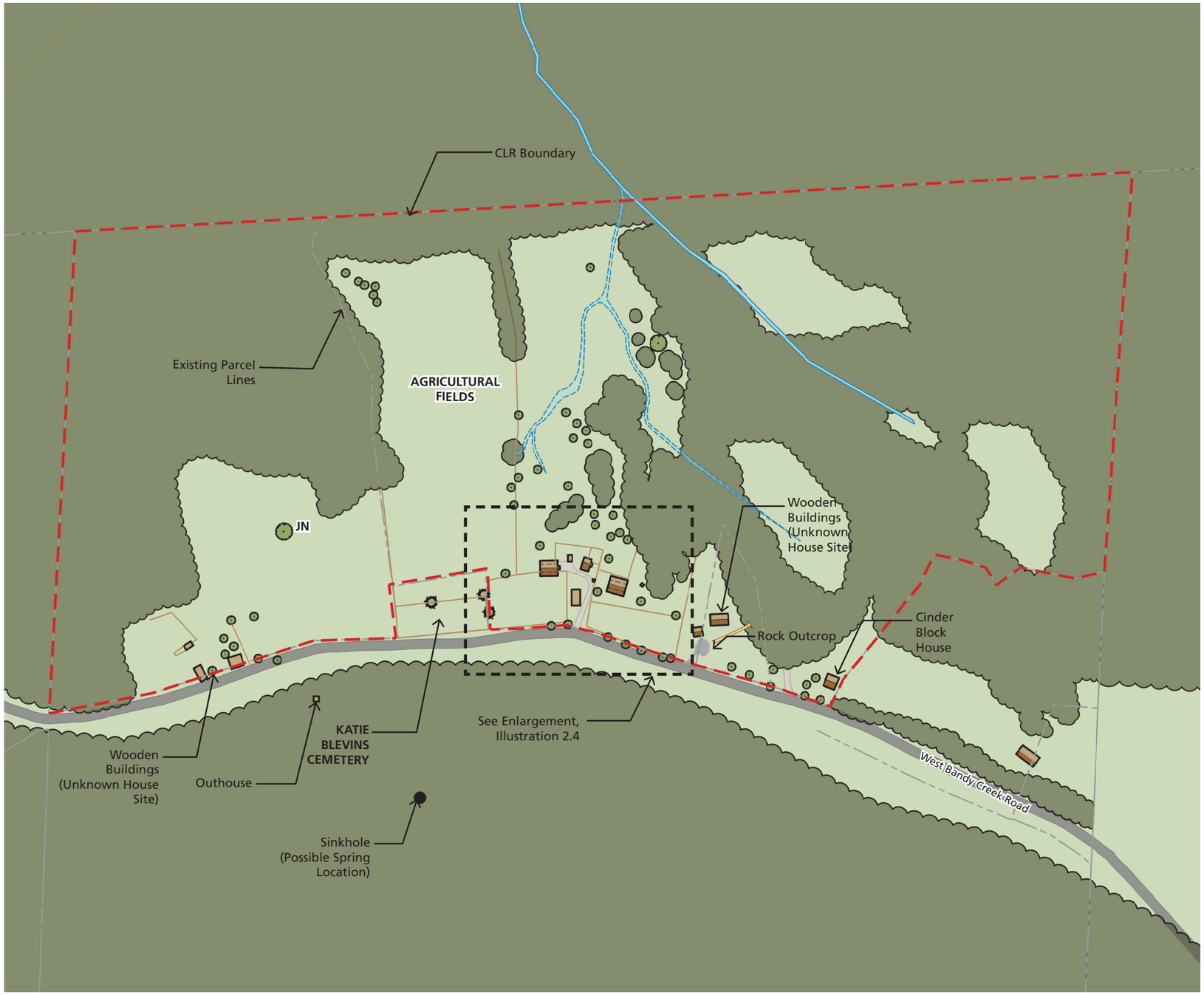
** BISO parcel and circulation GIS datasets produce conflicting boundaries.

CREDITS

1. National Park Service and Big South Fork NRRA
2. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman", 2001
3. 1951 Aerial Image, USDA

Illustration 2.2
1951 Period Plan
Lora Blevins Farmstead
Big South Fork
National River and Recreation Area
Cultural Landscape Report

May 2019



Key

- Roadway
- Stream
- Ephimeral Stream
- CLR Study Boundary
- Parcel Boundaries
- Specimen Tree*
- Fence Line*

*Noted on 1974 Plan

Plant Key

JV	Red Cedar	*Juniperus virginiana*
CF	Dogwood	*Cornus florida*
CG	Pignut Hickory	*Carya glabra*
JN	Black Walnut	*Juglans nigra*
MP	Apple	*Malus pumlia*
SA	Sassafras	*Sassafras albidum*
YA	Yucca	*Yucca aliofolia*

NOTES

** BISO parcel and circulation GIS datasets produce conflicting boundaries.

CREDITS

1. National Park Service and Big South Fork NRRA
2. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman", 2001
3. 1974 Plan, Source: US Army Corps of Engineers, *Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area Master Plan,Volume II*, "Bandy Creek Site Analysis Composite," Figure 29.

Illustration 2.3
1974 Period Plan
Lora Blevins Farmstead
Big South Fork
National River and Recreation Area
Cultural Landscape Report

May 2019



Key

- Roadway
- Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- Parcel Boundaries
- Specimen Tree*
- Fence Line*

*Noted on 1974 Plan

Plant Key

JV	Red Cedar	*Juniperus virginiana*
CF	Dogwood	*Cornus florida*
CG	Pignut Hickory	*Carya glabra*
JN	Black Walnut	*Juglans nigra*
MP	Apple	*Malus pumlia*
SA	Sassafras	*Sassafras albidum*
YA	Yucca	*Yucca aliofolia*

NOTES

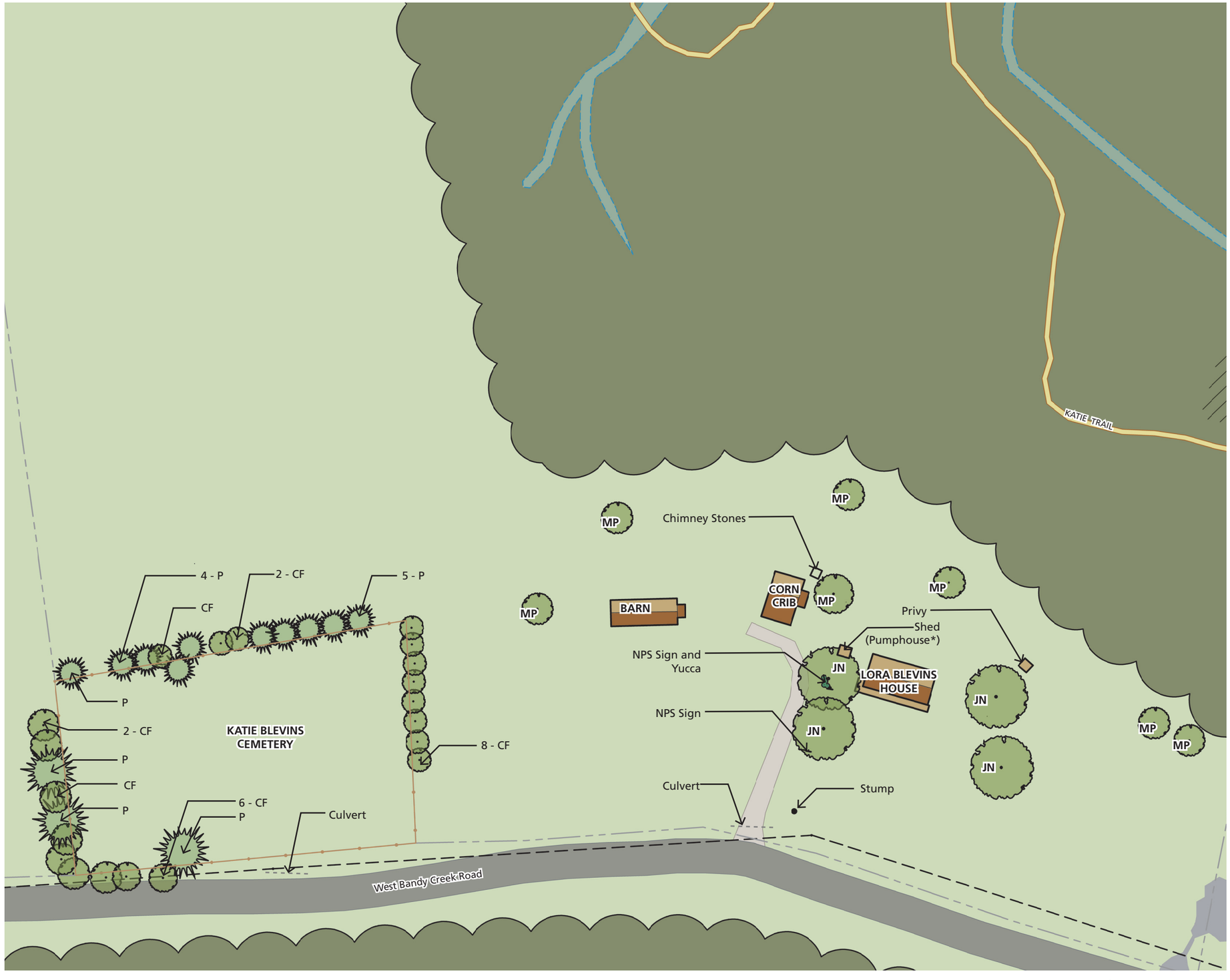
** BISO parcel and circulation GIS datasets produce conflicting boundaries.

CREDITS

1. National Park Service and Big South Fork NRRA
2. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman", 2001
3. 1974 Plan, Source: US Army Corps of Engineers, *Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area Master Plan, Volume II*, "Bandy Creek Site Analysis Composite," Figure 29.

Illustration 2.4
1974 Period Plan
Lora Blevins Farmstead
Big South Fork
National River and Recreation Area
Cultural Landscape Report

May 2019



Key

- Roadway
- Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- Parcel Boundaries
- Tree
- Fence Line

Plant Key

CF	Dogwood	*Cornus florida*
JN	Black Walnut	*Juglans nigra*
MP	Apple	*Malus pumlia*
P	Pine	*Pinus* sp.

NOTES

* The location of the pumphouse is different on the 1974 USACOE Plan and the 1998 NPS plans. Since these plans were both drawn from field measurements, it is unknown which location is correct.

** BISO parcel and circulation GIS datasets produce conflicting boundaries.

CREDITS

1. National Park Service and Big South Fork NRRA
2. David Hasty and Cari Goetcheus, Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area Existing Conditions, Lora Blevins Farmstead, May 1998 (see Appendix A-04 for larger site map).

Illustration 2.5
1998 Period Plan
Lora Blevins Farmstead
Big South Fork
National River and Recreation Area
Cultural Landscape Report

May 2019

Existing Conditions

Introduction

The focus of this study is the Lora Blevins Farmstead, a component landscape within the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (BISO). The 52.6-acre farmstead, established in 1927, is located in rural Scott County, Tennessee. The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the National Park Service (NPS) have managed the property since its acquisition in 1980. The site is roughly 10 miles west of Oneida, 13 miles east of Jamestown, and 57 miles north of Knoxville, Tennessee. West Bandy Creek Road serves as the property's southern boundary, and adjacent properties owned by the NPS and a cemetery association constitute the eastern, western, and northern boundaries. Illustrations 3.1 through 3.5 illustrate the existing conditions of the site.

While it was once more sprawling and developed, the landscape of the Lora Blevins Farmstead still contains various features related to early-twentieth-century agricultural and residential land uses. Surviving resources include a log house, log barn, log corn crib, privy, field patterns, and cultural vegetation. The adjacent Katie Blevins cemetery is still in use and is privately owned. Other adjacent properties support the rural character of the site.

This section of the Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) inventories the existing conditions of the site using a combination of contemporary photographs, plan view graphics, and narrative description. This inventory organizes site features by landscape characteristic, which are the "tangible and intangible aspects of an inventory unit which have either influenced the history of the development of the landscape, or are products of its development, respectively."[133] Further, "these aspects individually and collectively give a landscape its historic character and aid in the understanding of its cultural importance."[134] The NPS identifies thirteen landscape characteristics. These landscape characteristics are defined as follows:[135]

- Natural Systems and Features: Natural aspects that often influence the development and resultant form of a landscape.
- Spatial Organization: Arrangement of elements creating the ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces.
- Land Use: Organization, form, and shape of the landscape in response to land use.
- Cultural Traditions: Practices that influence land use, patterns of division, building forms, and the use of materials.
- Cluster Arrangement: The location of buildings and structures in the landscape.
- Circulation: Spaces, features, and materials that constitute systems of movement.
- Topography: Three-dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features and orientation.
- Vegetation: Indigenous or introduced trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers, and herbaceous materials.
- Buildings and Structures: Three-dimensional constructs such as houses, barns, garages, stables, bridges, and memorials.
- Views and Vistas: Features that create or allow a range of vision which can be natural or designed and controlled.
- Constructed Water Features: The built features and elements that utilize water for aesthetic or utilitarian functions.
- Small-Scale Features: Elements that provide detail and diversity combined with function and aesthetics.
- Archeological Sites: Sites containing surface and subsurface remnants related to historic or prehistoric land use.

133. Robert R. Page, *National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Inventory Professional Procedures Guide*, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, January 2009), 7-4.

134. Ibid., 53.

135. Ibid.



Figure 39: Rock outcrop on east portion of property. Source: WLA Studio.

While most sites contain at least several of the 13 characteristics, "[n]ot all characteristics are always present in any one landscape."[136] It total, the existing landscape of Lora Blevins Farmstead contains 11 of the 13 landscape characteristics, with only archeological sites and constructed water features not present at the site.

Natural Systems and Features

Geology

The Lora Blevins Farmstead is located within the Cumberland Plateau physiographic region. The region stretches from southern Kentucky into northern Alabama and serves as the western edge of the Appalachian Mountains. It is characterized by gently rolling hills and tableland of sandstone deeply incised by rivers and streams. Where the drainages have cut into the landscape, numerous gorges, natural arches, caves, and cliffs have formed. The Big South Fork region contains outcrops of exposed sandstone, known as sandstone glades. One such outcrop extends from the edge of West Bandy Creek Road into the eastern portion of the site (Figure 39). The Lora Blevins Farmstead is located on a ridge that runs northwest to southeast.

Soils

The majority of the soils of the site belong to the Lily-Gilpin complex at 5 to 12 percent slopes. These soils are located mostly within the cleared upland portions of the site. The second most prominent soil type belongs to the Lily-Ramsey complex at 20 to 35 percent slopes, which are located within the steeply sloped and forested northern portions of the site. Both soil complexes originated from weathered sandstone and are well-draining. The northeast portion of the site contains Lily-Gilpin soil complex soils at 20 to 35 percent slopes. Due to their propensity for runoff, the soils at Lora Blevins Farmstead are not identified as being particularly well-suited for agriculture. See Illustration 3.1, Soil Map.

Hydrology

Two spring-fed water drainages that nearby residents historically used for potable water fall away from the ridge on which the Lora Blevins Farmstead is situated. Only one is located on site. This drainage area includes the eastern fork of a bifurcated tributary of Cecil Fork Creek, which is a tributary of Laurel Fork Creek and later the Big South Fork. The spring is located roughly 300 feet north of the Lora Blevins House. During fieldwork, both streambeds of the tributary were mostly dry, and the spring did not appear active, indicating ephemeral character. The intermittent flow helps to explain the historic use of two separate water sources.[137]

The second stream, located off-site on an adjacent property to the south, is an unnamed tributary of Bandy Creek. The family used this stream as a water source when the spring north of the house periodically went dry. See Illustration 3.2, Topography and Hydrology Map.

Climate

The climate of the Big South Fork area is characterized by hot and humid summers and mild winters. Seasonal variations in temperatures and precipitation are common and are mostly a result of varying terrain; the valleys are typically hotter and drier than the plateau. Summer high temperatures can reach into the nineties, while winter lows fall into the twenties. Spring is the wettest season, with March being the wettest month, when 6 inches of precipitation on average is recorded at BISO. The driest month is October, which registers 3.4 inches of precipitation on average. Seventeen inches of snow typically falls each year at BISO. Annual precipitation for the area is roughly 55 inches. Due to the effects of El Niño, an increase in annual temperature has not

136. Ibid.

137. Tom Des Jean, Personal Communication, October 18, 2017.

occurred the southeastern United States, though this may change in the future as the global climate changes.[138]

Features:

- Sandstone Outcrop
- Cecil Fork and Bifurcated Tributary
- Soils

Topography

The Lora Blevins Farmstead is located on top of a ridge of gently rolling hills that spans northwest to southeast. The site features an overall concave topography, with the natural elevation of the site varying from over 1,540 feet on the eastern edge of the property to 1,420 feet along the creek bed north of the house and back up over 1,520 feet on the western edge of the property. Though the slopes of the site are not as severe as other locations in the park, there is little level ground located at the site. Topographical features of note include high points east and west of the core of the developed property, significant sloping towards the creek in the northern portion of the site, and the depressed "long field" area. The long field is also where modifications to the natural topography of the site are most easily seen, as this area continues to be plowed and planted. See Illustration 3.2, Topography and Hydrology Map.

Features:

- Topography (Rolling Hills, Plateau, Ridge)

Spatial Organization

Site vegetation currently accounts for the overall sense of spatial organization of the landscape. The property contains a mixture of open field and forest. The surrounding context is completely forested. The sharp transition from open field to dense forest defines spaces along horizontal and overhead planes. Three distinct but connected open spaces exist at the site: an open space in which the historic structures are situated, the long field area, and the western field area. The adjacent Katie Blevins Cemetery, enclosed by fencing and trees, occupies its own space within the open fields of the site.

138. Patrick Gonzalez, "Climate Change Summary, Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Kentucky, Tennessee," (Washington, DC: Natural Resource Stewardship and Science, U.S. National Park Service, April 27, 2015), 1.

Features:

- Parallel alignment to West Bandy Creek Road
- Field / Open space patterns
- Relationship between forest and field
- Katie Blevins Cemetery space in landscape

Vegetation

Natural Vegetation

The Lora Blevins Farmstead landscape has a vegetative character that is as much a result of cultural influences as of natural processes. As historic aerial photographs show, prior to NPS acquisition in 1980, agricultural fields, as opposed to native forest or grassland, characterized the site. Therefore, natural plant communities of the site have only recently begun the process of reestablishment. NPS management has allowed gradual encroachment of successional vegetation within the northern portion of the property, while several fields are maintained as open meadow.

Out of a total of 47 distinct plant associations found within BISO, the Lora Blevins Farmstead site contains 7: Little Bluestem– Broomsedge Grassland, Rubus Shrubland, Cultivated Meadow, Virginia Pine Successional Forest, Appalachian Shortleaf Pine–Mesic Oak Forest, Southern Appalachian Hemlock Forest (White Pine Type), and Mixed Oak/Heath Forest.[139] See Illustration 3.3, Vegetation Map.

The Little Bluegrass–Broomsedge plant association contains a "variety of essentially native perennial grasslands which are (or have been) human-maintained to some extent and which contain a variable mix of *Schizachyrium scoparium* with *Andropogon* spp. It may occur on annually mowed powerline rights-of-way, mowed successional or abandoned agricultural fields, pastures, etc."[140] At the Lora Blevins Farmstead this association is located within the long field area. It is assumed that when not planted with crops, the field will display this vegetation community.

139. Carl W. Nordman, *Vascular Plant Inventory and Plant Community Classification for Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area*, (Durham, North Carolina: Appalachian Highlands Inventory and Monitoring Network, NatureServe, 2011), 11; Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (BISO) Vegetation Map Data, The National Park Service and the I & M Network.
140. Ibid., 178.



Figure 40: Long Field. The site of the annual Spring Planting Day event, when the mule-and-plow agricultural tradition is demonstrated for the public. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 41: Thick successional forest in the northern portion of the site. Note the established pines, and the oak and maple saplings. Source: WLA Studio.

According to the vegetation mapping GIS file for BISO, open space within the Lora Blevins Farmstead contains a Rubus Shrubland plant association. The association develops after a disturbance event and features young tree saplings, blackberry bushes, grasses, and vines. However, during fieldwork, the area shown on the BISO GIS layer as Rubus Shrubland appeared to contain a Cultivated Meadow plant association. The association is described as including "grassland pastures and hayfields, more-or-less cultural, though sometimes no longer actively maintained. It occurs in areas which have been cleared in the past, including abandoned farmlands, strip mines, and other areas disturbed by human activities."[141] The dominant plant species in this association is tall fescue (*Lolium arundinaceum*), though the fields may contain many other seasonal grasses and forbs (Figure 40). The GIS file shows the Katie Blevins Cemetery as the only location in Cultivated

141. Ibid., 186.



Figure 42: Sparse vegetation within successional forest northwest of the house. Note the multi-trunked trees in the depressed area indicating past logging activity. Source: WLA Studio.

Meadow. Both the cemetery and a large swath of open space at Lora Blevins Farmstead contain an abundance of tall fescue.

Several distinct forest types exist within the property. First, dominating the northern and eastern portion of the site, a Virginia Pine Succession Forest plant association is present. This association "occurs in areas where canopy removal has created dry, open conditions and bare mineral soil, allowing for the establishment of *Pinus virginiana*. These habitats include old fields, old pastures, clearcuts, and burned or eroded areas; soils are typically dry, acidic, and infertile."[142] This successional forest can be fairly diverse and include tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), or other pine species (Figure 41). The Virginia Pine Succession Forest plant association develops early in the successional process and will transition to new forest associations within 75 years. This transitional process is underway at Lora Blevins Farmstead (Figure 42).

The second forest type, the Appalachian Shortleaf Pine – Mesic Oak Forest, exists along the western edge of the property as well as in the northeast corner. As its name suggests, this forest contains a "mixture of *Pinus echinata* and mesophytic and dry-mesophytic oaks" such as white oak (*Quercus alba*), red oak (*Quercus rubra*), and black oak (*Quercus velutina)*.[143] Additionally, a sub-canopy of smaller trees is common and can include red maple, black tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*), pignut

142. Ibid., 13.
143. Ibid., 138.



Figure 43: Successional vegetation edge containing pines, black walnut, dogwood, and other vegetation. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 44: Looking east across Katie Blevins Cemetery, established in 1812. Source: WLA Studio.

hickory (*Carya glabra*), dogwood (*Cornus florida*), and sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboretum*).

The two other forest types exist in small areas within the property boundary. The first is a section of Southern Appalachian Eastern Hemlock Forest (White Pine Type) located in the northwestern portion of the site along the eastern face of a drainage area. This forest type is characterized by the presence of eastern hemlock (*Tsuga Canadensis*) and white pine (*Pinus strobus*), in addition to tulip poplar and big leaf magnolia (*Magnolia macrophylla*). The second is a small extension of a large area of Mixed Oak / Heath Forest in the southeast portion of the property. This forest type is characterized by the presence of various oak and pine species growing in dry, nutrient-poor uplands.[144]

In the narrow zone between the successional forests and the fields, additional species are present including sumac (*Rhus spp.*), loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*), dogwood, and eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) (Figure 43). The Katie Blevins Cemetery acts as another edge environment (Figure 44). The perimeter of the cemetery is lined on all sides with various tree species including dogwood, eastern red cedar, Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), pines (*Pinus spp.*), and pignut hickory. It does not appear that any of these trees were intentionally planted.

During fieldwork in October 2017, researchers identified a variety of species within the Lora Blevins Farmstead site, which are compiled in Figure 45.

144. Ibid., 108.

Cultural Vegetation

Existing cultural vegetation at the Lora Blevins Farmstead includes black walnut trees (*Junglans nigra*), an apple tree (*Malus spp.*), and many yuccas (*Yucca filamentosa*) spread out across the site (Illustration 3.4 and Illustration 3.5).

Five black walnut trees are clustered around the house, two of which exceed 24 inches in diameter (Figure 46). The largest walnut is located just off the southwest corner of the house by the driveway (Figure 47).

A young black walnut with its base wrapped in protective wire fencing was planted just to the south of this large tree as a replacement for one that was blown over in 2015. Other black walnuts are also growing along the edge of the successional forest. It is unclear if these were deliberately planted and the forest has encroached upon them, or they are “volunteers” that have established themselves in that location (Figure 48). A large solitary black walnut is located in the open field formerly associated with George Blevins in the western portion of the site. All the black walnuts at the site appear in good condition.

Groups of yuccas are also present in locations that indicate intentional planting. The first group is at the base of the large black walnut tree by the southwest corner of the house (Figure 47). The second group flanks the end of the grown-over path where it meets the horse trail (Figure 49). Other yuccas are located along the successional forest edge (Figure 50). All yuccas are in good condition.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
Acer rubrum	Red Maple	Woods
Acer saccharum	Sugar Maple	Woods
Carya glabra	Pignut Hickory	Woods, Edge
Cornus florida	Dogwood	Woods, Edge
Juniperus virginiana	Eastern Red Cedar	Woods, Edge
Liriodendron tulipifera	Tulip Poplar	Woods
Lolium arundinaceum	Tall Fescue	Field
Lonicera japonica	Japanese Honeysuckle	Woods
Lycopodium digitatum	Ground Cedar	Woods
Magnolia macrophylla	Big Leaf Magnolia	Woods
Mitchella repens	Partridge Berry	Woods
Oxydendrum arboreum	Sourwood	Woods
Pinus echinata	Short Leaf Pine	Woods, Edge
Pinus strobus	Eastern White Pine	Woods, Edge
Pinus taeda	Loblolly Pine	Woods, Edge
Pinus virginiana	Virginia Pine	Woods
Polystichum acrostichoides	Christmas Fern	Woods
Rhus spp.	Sumac	Edge
Sassafras albidum	Sassafras	Woods, Edge
Smilax rotundifolia	Common Greenbrier	Woods
Symphyotrichum spp.	Aster	Edge
Toxicodendron radicans	Poison Ivy	Woods, Edge
Tsuga canadensis	Eastern Hemlock	Woods
Quercus alba	White Oak	Woods
Quercus spp.	Oak, various	Woods, Edge

Figure 45: Table of flora species identified on the property in 2017. Source: WLA Studio.

During fieldwork, only one apple tree was identified (Figure 51). It is located roughly 60 feet north of the log barn and is in poor condition. While other apple trees were identified during research for the Cultural Landscape Inventory in 1997, these trees either died or were overtaken by successional vegetation.

Threatened and Endangered Species

No threatened or endangered species are currently known to exist within the Lora Blevins Farmstead cultural landscape.

Features:

- Natural and semi-natural vegetation
- Black Walnut Trees
- Apple Tree
- Yuccas



Figure 46: Black walnuts surrounding the Lora Blevins House. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 47: Largest black walnut on the property, located between the driveway and the house. Note the group of yucca at the base of the tree. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 49: Old overgrown path that now connects farmstead with horse trail. Note the yuccas marking the entrance to the path as it heads south. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 50: Yucca along forest edge. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 48: Typical appearance of black walnuts at the farmstead—solitary. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 51: Remaining apple tree, located north of the log barn. Source: WLA Studio.

Buildings and Structures

Although Lora Blevins constructed the log house, barn, and corn crib around 1928, these buildings and structures reflect vernacular building traditions from several decades earlier.[145] Given the relatively short time span between construction and park acquisition, and the subsequent stabilization and restoration interventions, the landscape's buildings and structures exist in good to fair condition.

Lora Blevins House

The Lora Blevins House stands a story-and-a-half tall, features a two-pen design, and measures 40 feet long by 18 feet wide (Figure 52, Figure 53, and Figure 54). It is assumed that the house was first constructed as a single pen structure, with the second pen being added at a later date. The house displays vernacular building traditions through its use of hewn yellow pine logs and half-dovetail notching. A reconstructed stone chimney is located on the east side of the house (Figure 55). The house rests on a dry-stacked stone pier foundation. A modern protective open shed-roofed structure protects the south facade of the house from weather. The house's gable roof is covered in corrugated metal.

The Lora Blevins House is located to the east of the driveway and set among several maturing black walnut trees. It is part of a cluster of other surviving buildings and structures. The List of Classified Structures database currently lists the Lora Blevins House in poor condition. However, during fieldwork the house was assessed as being in fair condition due to a rotting support timber on the north facade below the doorway.

Lora Blevins Pole Barn

Lora Blevins also constructed the log pole barn using the same vernacular techniques as the log house, and it is thought to have been constructed in 1928 as well (Figure 56, Figure 57, and Figure 58). The 40-foot-long by 13-foot-wide double-pen log barn is one-and-a-half stories atop stone footers and is constructed of hewn yellow pine logs joined with half-dovetail notching. The barn



Figure 52: South facade of the Lora Blevins House. Note the protective shed roof. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 53: West facade of the Lora Blevins House. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 54: North facade of the Lora Blevins House. Source: WLA Studio.

145. David Hasty and Cari Goetcheus, *Cultural Landscape Inventory: Lora Blevins Farmstead, Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area*, (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1998), 1.



Figure 55: Reconstructed chimney on east facade of the Lora Blevins House. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 56: South facade of the Lora Blevins Pole Barn. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 57: Southeast corner of the barn showing small addition on east facade. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 58: West facade of the barn showing vertical weatherboards, and the absence of chinking. Source: WLA Studio.

features a similar replacement corrugated metal roof to the house. The barn has a central aisle between the two pens, which corresponds to the English hay barn type. Doorways to access each of the pens are located on the north facade. Outside access to the upstairs hay loft is located on the east side of the north facade of the barn. Vertically-oriented weatherboarding covers the gable ends on each side. The barn does not currently have any chinking between logs. A small detached shed is located on the eastern facade of the barn. The shed is enclosed, except for a small opening at the base of its eastern facade and an open doorway on its northern facade.

The Lora Blevins Pole Barn is located west of the Lora Blevins House, and it is set among open field and the remnants of an orchard. It is part of the cluster of other surviving buildings and structures. Stabilization of the barn occurred in 1998, and it is presently in good condition as a result.

Lora Blevins Corn Crib

Like the house and barn, the smaller single-pen log corn crib features hewn logs with half-dovetail notching (Figure 59 and Figure 60). The structure measures 25 feet long by 20 feet wide. A log-frame lean-to addition adjoins the corn crib on its north

facade, and a smaller enclosed shed addition is located on the corn crib's east facade. The structure, shed, and addition are supported by dry-stacked stone piers. Like the log barn, vertically-oriented weatherboarding covers the gable ends on each side. Weatherboarding also covers the gable end of the northern addition on its eastern facade. A large corrugated metal shed roof extends southward away from the structure, supported by wooden posts. The east and north additions have several access points.

The corn crib is located between the Lora Blevins House and the log barn and is currently in good condition.



Figure 59: West facade of the log corn crib. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 60: Northeast corner of corn crib showing additions and stone piers. Source: WLA Studio.

Privy

A privy, likely constructed around 1968, is located northeast of the house (Figure 61). The structure measures 64 inches long by 50 inches wide. A hinged door on the west facade provides access to the interior. The wood frame structure is enclosed by vertical boards. It has a slightly sloped shed roof covered in corrugated metal.

The privy is located northeast of the Lora Blevins House, along the successional forest edge. The privy is in fair condition due to erosion on the northern side of the building.

House Ruins

A cinderblock foundation of a former house is located about 225 feet east of the house along an overgrown path (Figure 62). The foundation measures roughly 40 feet by 40 feet, though one corner was unmeasured due to a fallen tree. The foundation features various sized cinderblocks, now overgrown with vegetation.

Animal Pen Ruins

The ruins of what is presumed to be an animal pen are located within the successional forest roughly 180 feet northeast of the house and west of the cinderblock house ruins (Figure 63). Based on its materials, the feature appears to be a modern addition to the landscape. The rectangular animal pen is almost completely collapsed, and only three palings and some wire from a wooden fence enclosure remain.



Figure 61: Southwest corner of privy. Note successional forest encroachment. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 62: Long wall section of cinderblock foundation in woods east of the Lora Blevins House. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 63: Animal pen in wooded area. Note surviving wood pilings. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 64: Utility pole and wires running parallel across the site. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 65: West Bandy Creek Road looking west. Source: WLA Studio.

Utilities

The only visible utility structures within the Lora Blevins Farmstead landscape are the overhead power and communication cables and poles and culverts at two locations within the road right-of-way. The wood utility poles are widely spaced along the north side of West Bandy Creek Road, with one located in the front yard space immediately east of the driveway, another outside the cemetery fence, and another in the open field on the western side of the property (Figure 64).

One concrete culvert runs underneath the driveway entrance from West Bandy Creek Road (Figure 65). The culvert services the swale running parallel to the road within the right-of-way. The second culvert is located underneath the access point for the cemetery and features a stacked stone headwall.

Features:

- Lora Blevins House
- Lora Blevins Pole Barn
- Lora Blevins Corn Crib
- Privy
- House Ruins
- Culverts + Headwall
- Privy
- Utility Poles



Figure 66: Cluster arrangement of historic buildings and structures. Source: WLA Studio.

Cluster Arrangement

The existing buildings and structures of the site are arranged linearly east-to-west in relatively close proximity to one another and parallel with West Bandy Creek Road (Figure 66). Roughly 50 feet separates the barn from the corn crib and the corncrib from the house. The long facades of the house and the barn parallel the road.

Features:

- Farmstead Core

Land Use and Cultural Traditions

Reflecting the overall management of BISO, current land use at the Lora Blevins Farmstead primarily relates to recreational and heritage tourism. In terms of heritage tourism, Lora Blevins Farmstead's location along West Bandy Creek Road makes it the most visible and easily accessed historic settlement in this area of the park. The annual Spring Planting Day event, which is held each April at the site, increases the public visibility of the site. During the event, the historic cultural tradition of using mule-and-plow to plant sorghum is demonstrated for the public. The event draws in hundreds of people. BISO currently interprets the Lora Blevins site as a rural landscape common to the region. A small sign located near the log house identifies the site as the Lora Blevins Farmstead.

Other land uses of the site pertain to recreational opportunities afforded by the park, specifically related to equestrian and hunting activities. An equestrian trail winds through the northern forested portion of the site. Due to its location, the trail does not impact the character of the historic farmstead landscape. BISO is legislated to allow hunting throughout the park, with the exception of within designated safety areas. While two safety areas flank the farmstead, hunting is currently allowed within the Lora Blevins Farmstead landscape.

The historic landscape of the site also reflects cultural traditions related to subsistence farmers of the Big South Fork region, in particular

building traditions and settlement patterns. The construction methods Lora Blevins used to build the farmsteads buildings and structures—hand hewn logs and half dovetail notching—reflect building traditions common to the region.

Features:

- Tourism (Recreation and Heritage)

Circulation

Vehicular

The Lora Blevins Farmstead is located along West Bandy Creek Road. The 8-foot-wide gravel road may be the original alignment of the road connecting the nearby towns of Oneida and Jamestown (Figure 65).[146] West Bandy Creek Road is accessed from Leatherwood Ford Road (TN 297), which runs east-west through the south-central portion of BISO. An approximately 100-foot-long unpaved driveway connects the farmstead to West Bandy Creek Road (Figure 67). The drive meets the road at a 90-degree angle and extends northward before forking in two directions: one parallel with the south facade of the house and one toward the barn. The gravel driving surface of both forks does not extend far beyond the main drive.

The Lora Blevins Farmstead contains the remnant of a former road or path that extends southwest to northeast through successional forest in the far eastern portion of the property. The overgrown path is about 120 feet in length and connects to the Katie Trail. The path provides access to the ruins of a former house, now mostly obscured by vegetation (Figure 49).

Pedestrian

No formal or informal pedestrian walkways exist within the Lora Blevins Farmstead.

Trails

The Katie Trail (equestrian) winds through the forest north of the farmstead (Figure 68). The trail generally runs east to west through the site. The sand-covered path is mostly 5 feet wide, but it narrows to roughly 3 feet wide in some locations. The trail follows topographical changes and bends around hilltops, creating a visually-interesting riding experience.



Figure 67: Driveway looking south toward West Bandy Creek Road. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 68: Katie Trail as it bends through successional forest. Source: WLA Studio.

146. Ibid.

Features:

- West Bandy Creek Road
- Farmstead Driveway
- Drive / Path at former house site
- Katie Trail

Small-Scale Features

Signs

Two signs exist at the Lora Blevins Farmstead. The first consists of two wooden posts spanned by a brown horizontal member with "LORA BLEVINS FARMSTEAD" above "CIRCA 1920's" painted in white lettering (Figure 69). The sign is located off the southwest corner of the house, between the house and the large black walnut tree. The second is a small NPS advisory sign detailing "Historic Protection" efforts by BISO. The sign is attached to the easternmost boarded-up window on the south side of the house.



Figure 69: NPS-installed signage. Source: WLA Studio.

Fencing

An incomplete section of split rail fencing extends roughly 40 feet in front of the modern protective overhang on the south side of the house. A similar 30-foot section is located in front of the corn crib. Both appear to be protective in nature, not interpretive, and are meant to delineate protected space. The fences are not assumed to be based on historic conditions. Potentially associated with an unused former interpretive garden on the east side of the house, a 100-inch section of post and rail fence extends north-south. The fence has 20 wood pickets set between two log posts (Figure 70). The northern post is 95 inches tall, and the southern post is 64 inches tall. An additional fence runs along the Katie Trail where it bends toward the open field in the western portion of the property. The contemporary metal post-and-wire fence is meant to keep horses from entering the field and terminates on both ends when the trail bends back into the forest (Figure 71).



Figure 70: Assumed interpretive fence (circa 2002), with small, ill-defined garden plot to its south (right side of photo). Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 71: Modern post and wire fence along open portion of Katie Trail. Source: WLA Studio.

Demonstration Garden

The remnants of a contemporary (circa 2012) interpretive garden are located on the eastern side of the house. Remaining features include brick edging (Figure 70).

Root Cellar

The remnants of a root cellar are located between the house and West Bandy Creek Road. The rectangular depression measures 16 feet by 9 feet.

Features:

- Lora Blevins Farmstead Identification Sign
- NPS Historic Protection Sign
- Fencing at horse trail
- Fencing at interpretive garden
- Split rail fencing at corncrib and house
- Demonstration Garden
- Root Cellar

Views and Vistas

While the site does not contain any designed views or vistas, the topography and vegetation of the site allow for scenic views across the landscape. A view from the open field in the western portion of the property sweeps over nearly the entire landscape and includes the cemetery, rolling topography, and historic buildings bordered by woodland vegetation (Figure 72). Another impressive view extends north from the center of the site and along the length of the long field used for Spring Planting Day (Figure 73). The surrounding successional forest frames the view, and in fall, the changing leaf colors add to the view's scenic quality. A third noteworthy view includes the eastern portion of the farmstead from West Bandy Creek Road. The view captures the scenic nature of the landscape and provides a good perspective of the arrangement of the road, house, barn, and cemetery in the landscape (Figure 74).

Features:

- Scenic Views

Archeological Sites

No archaeology surveys have been conducted at the Lora Blevins Farmstead.



Figure 72: Scenic view looking east from high point towards western edge of property. Note cemetery, solitary black walnut, rolling topography, and historic structures. Source: WLA Studio.

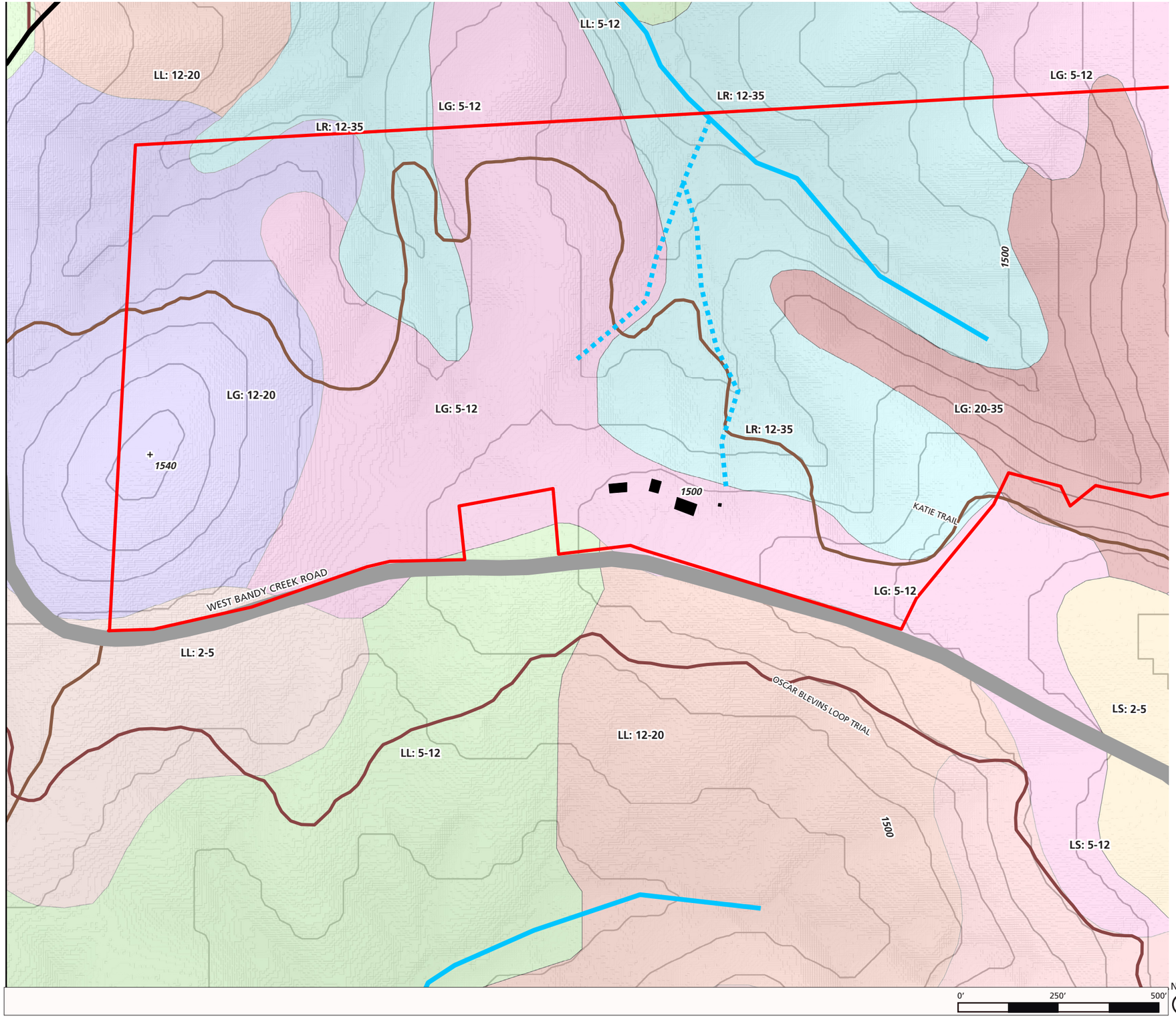


Figure 73: View looking north across the long field used for Spring Planting Day. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 74: View from West Bandy Creek Road as the landscape opens up and reveals the farmstead. Source: WLA Studio.

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SOILS

Soil Type Key

LG: 5-12	Lily-Gilpin complex, 5 to 12 percent slopes
LG: 12-20	Lily-Gilpin complex, 12 to 20 percent slopes
LG: 20-35	Lily-Gilpin complex, 20 to 35 percent slopes
LR: 12-35	Lily-Ramsey complex, 20 to 35 percent slopes
LS: 2-5	Lonewood silt loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes
LS: 5-12	Lonewood silt loam, 5 to 12 percent slopes
LL: 2-5	Lily loam, 5 to 12 percent slopes
LL: 5-12	Lily loam, 5 to 12 percent slopes
LL: 12-20	Lily loam, 12 to 20 percent slopes

Key

- Roadway
- Recreational Trail
- Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- CLR Study Boundary

NOTES

* BISO vegetation GIS dataset classifies this area as "rubus shrubland." At the time of fieldwork in 2017, this area reflected a fescue-based plant community.

** BISO parcel and circulation GIS datasets produce conflicting boundaries. These conflict have been corrected for this map.

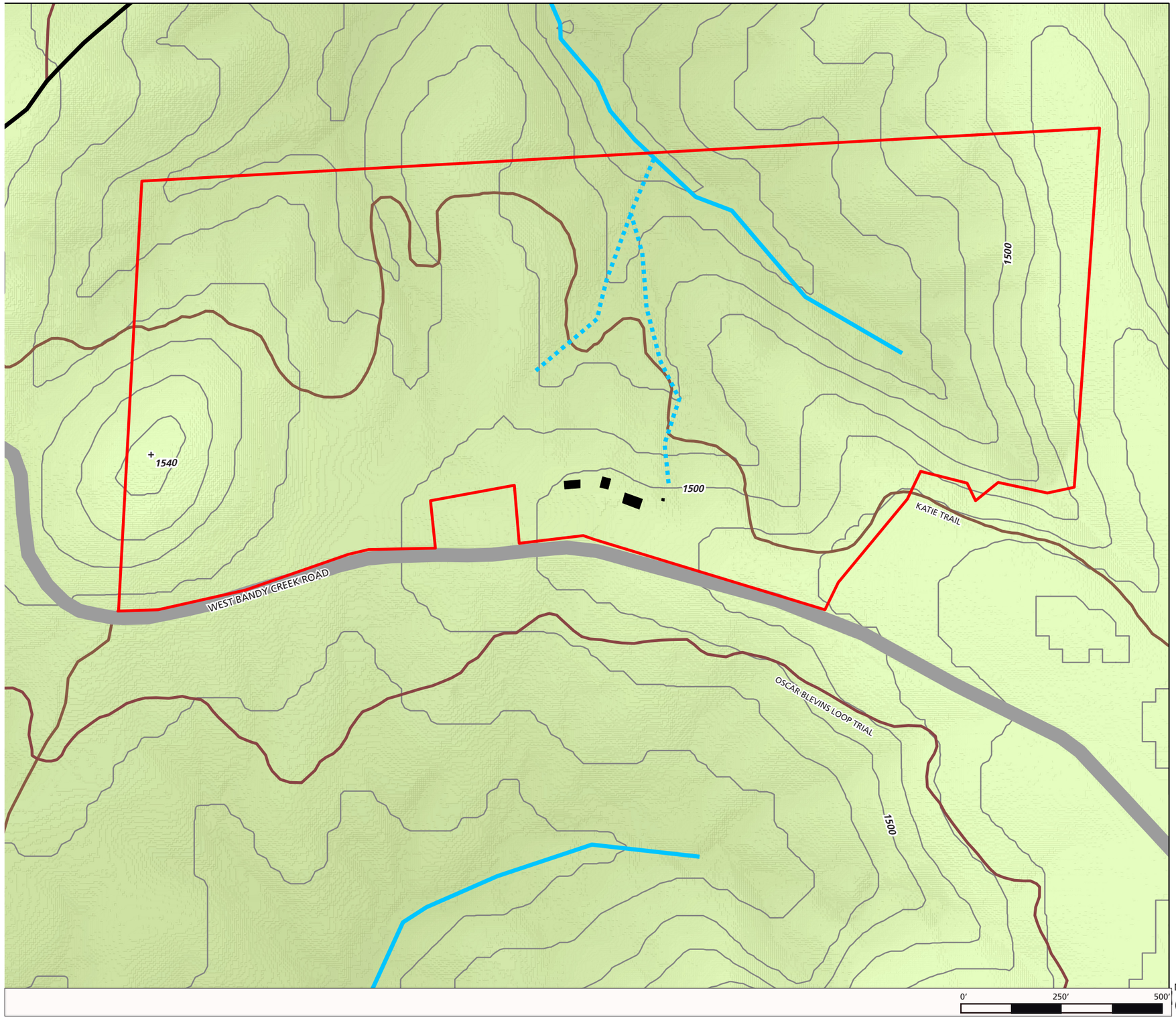
CREDITS

1. National Park Service and Big South Fork NRRA
2. The National Hydrography Dataset, USGS
3. The National Park Service and the I & M Network
4. State of Tennessee and USGS

Illustration 3.1
Soils

Lora Blevins Farmstead

Big South Fork
National River and Recreation Area
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2019



Topography + Hydrology

Key

- Roadway
- Recreational Trail
- Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- CLR Study Boundary

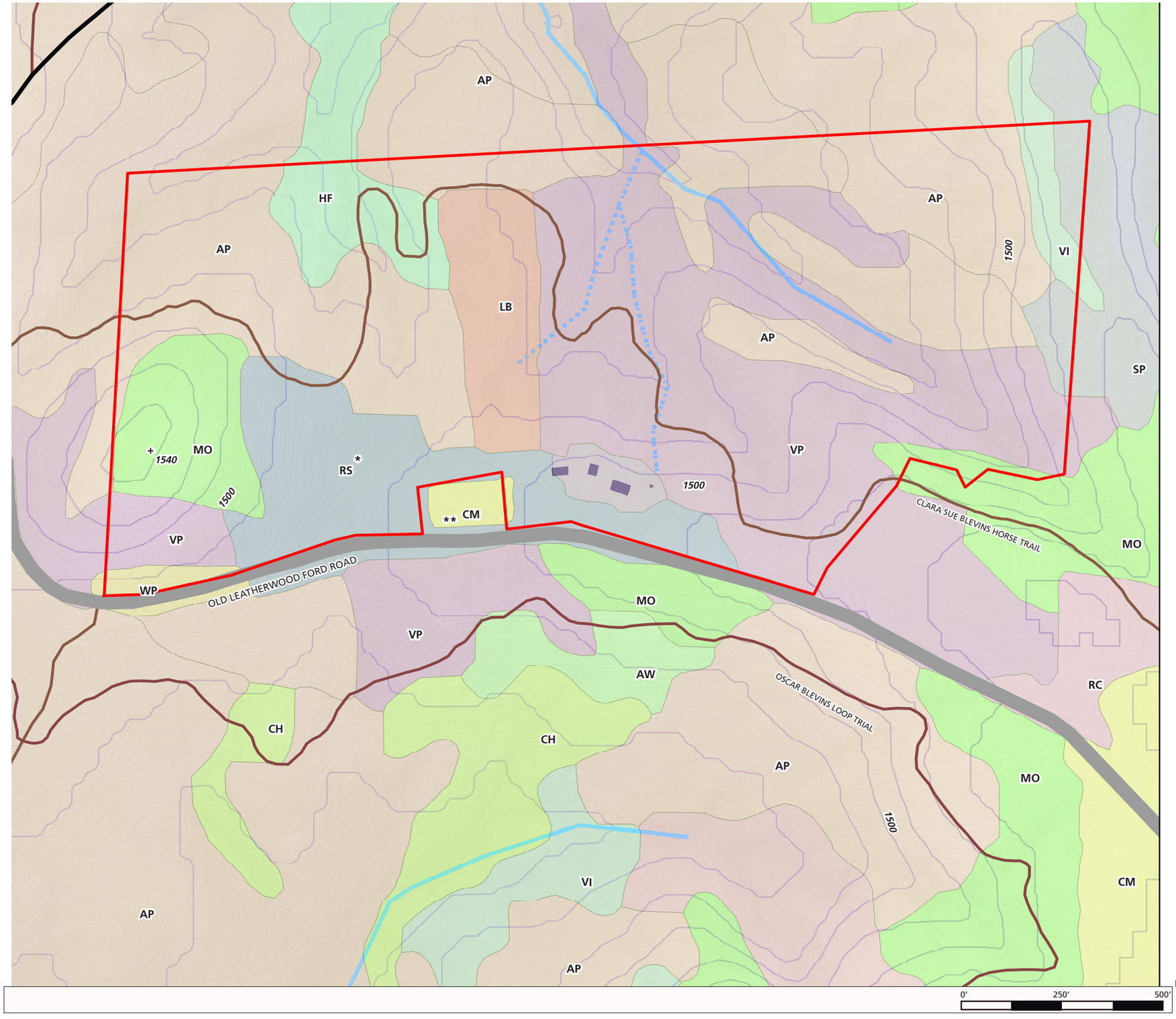
NOTES

- The highest point is 1540', located along the western boundary.
- The lowest point is 1420', located along the streambed north of the house.
- The bifurcated stream north of the house is ephemeral and is fed by a spring. Historically the eastern branch served as the water source for the Blevins family.
- Due to the limited areas of flat terrain, field crops were confined to narrow areas within the property.

CREDITS

1. National Park Service and Big South Fork NRRA
2. The National Hydrography Dataset, USGS
3. The National Park Service and the I & M Network
4. State of Tennessee and USGS

Illustration 3.2
Topography + Hydrology
Lora Blevins Farmstead
Big South Fork
National River and Recreation Area
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2019



VEGETATION

Vegetation Communities Key

AP	Appalachian Shortleaf Pine - Mesic Oak Forest
AW	Appalachian White Pine / Mesic Oak Forest
CH	Cumberland/ Appalachian Hemlock - Hardwood Cove Forest
CM	Cultivated meadow
HF	Southern Appalachian Hemlock Forest (White Pine Type)
LB	Little Bluestem - Broomsedge Grassland
MO	Mixed Oak / Heath Forest (Piedmont / Central Appalachian low-elevation Type)
RS	Rubus shrubland
SP	Southern Blue Ridge Escarpment Shortleaf Pine - Oak Forest
VI	Virginia Pine
VP	Virginia Pine Successional Forest
WP	White Pine Successional Forest

Key

- Roadway
- Recreational Trail
- Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- CLR Study Boundary

NOTES

* BISO vegetation GIS dataset classifies this area as "rubus shrubland." At the time of fieldwork in 2017, this area reflected a fescue-based plant community.

**BISO parcel and circulation GIS datasets produce conflicting boundaries. These conflict have been corrected for this map.

CREDITS

1. National Park Service and Big South Fork NRRA
2. The National Hydrography Dataset, USGS
3. The National Park Service and the I & M Network
4. State of Tennessee and USGS

Illustration 3.3 -Vegetation

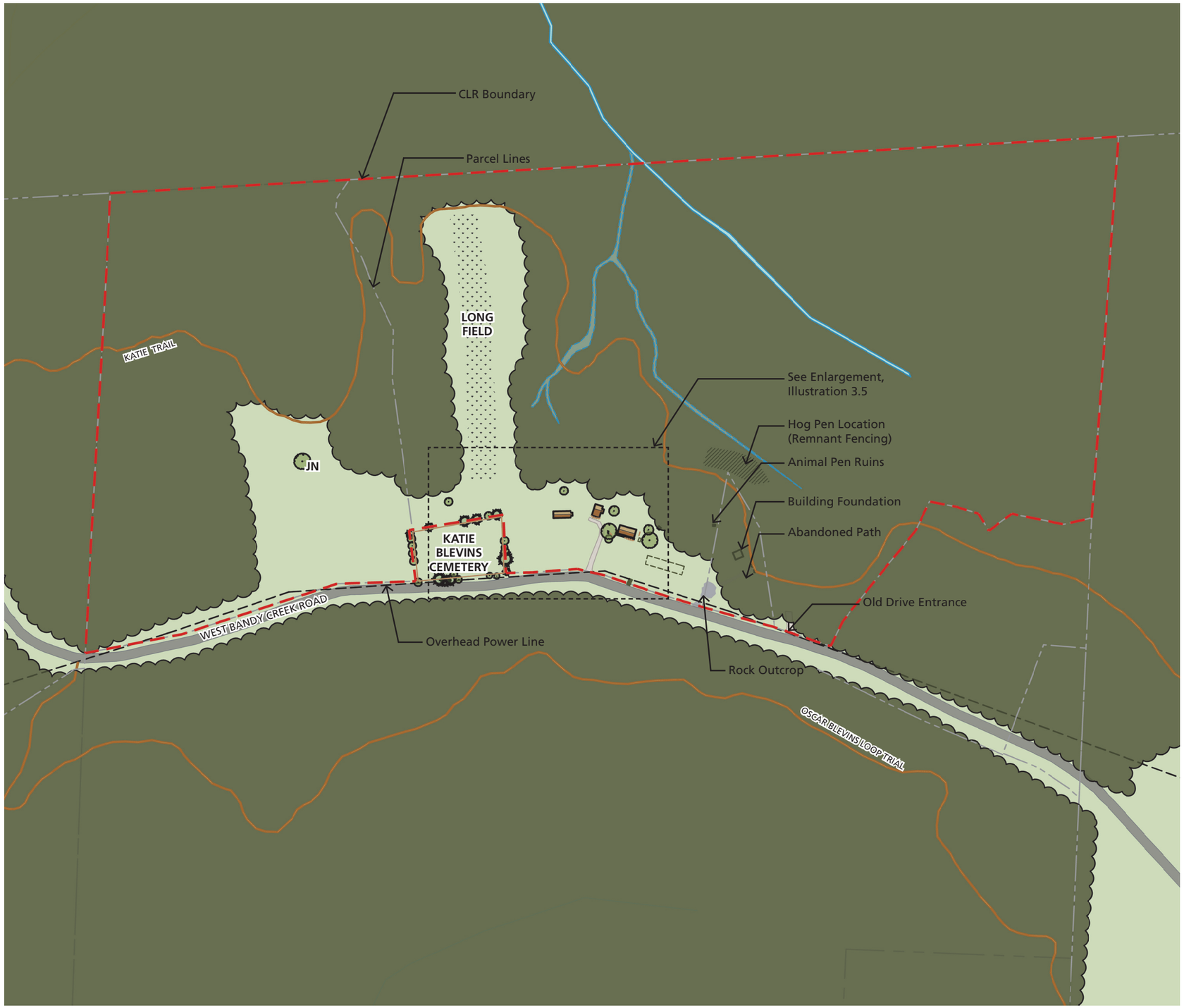
Lora Blevins Farmstead

Big South Fork

National River and Recreation Area

Cultural Landscape Report

May 2019



Key

- Roadway
- Recreational Trail
- Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- CLR Study Boundary
- Parcel Boundaries
- Existing Tree (see plant key for species)

Plant Key

JV	Red Cedar	*Juniperus virginiana*
CF	Dogwood	*Cornus florida*
CG	Pignut Hickory	*Carya glabra*
JN	Black Walnut	*Juglans nigra*
MP	Apple	*Malus pumlia*
SA	Sassafras	*Sassafras albidum*
YA	Yucca	*Yucca aliofolia*

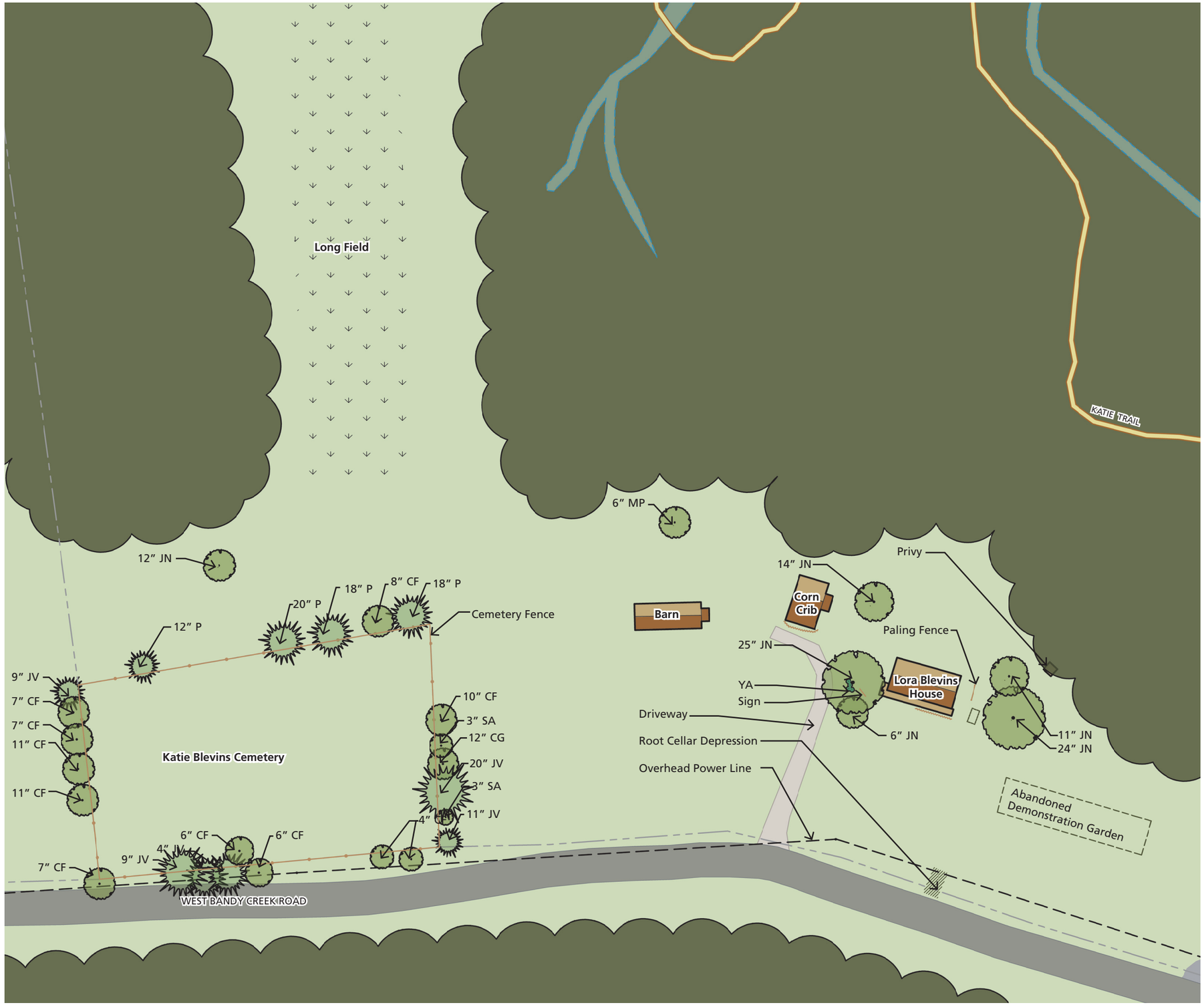
NOTES

** BISO parcel and circulation GIS datasets produce conflicting boundaries.

CREDITS

1. National Park Service and Big South Fork NRRA
2. Field Work, October and December 2017

Illustration 3.4
Existing Conditions
Lora Blevins Farmstead
Big South Fork
National River and Recreation Area
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2019



Key

- Roadway
- Recreational Trail
- Stream
- Ephemeral Stream
- CLR Study Boundary
- Parcel Boundaries
- Existing Tree (see plant key for species)

Plant Key

JV	Red Cedar	*Juniperus virginiana*
CF	Dogwood	*Cornus florida*
CG	Pignut Hickory	*Carya glabra*
JN	Black Walnut	*Juglans nigra*
MP	Apple	*Malus pumlia*
SA	Sassafras	*Sassafras albidum*
YA	Yucca	*Yucca aliofolia*
P	Pine	*Pinus spp.*

NOTES

** BISO parcel and circulation GIS datasets produce conflicting boundaries.

CREDITS

1. National Park Service and Big South Fork NRRA
2. Field Work, October and December 2017

Illustration 3.5
Existing Conditions, Enlargement

Lora Blevins Farmstead

Big South Fork
National River and Recreation Area
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2019

Analysis and Evaluation

Introduction

For cultural landscapes such as the Lora Blevins Farmstead, documenting existing conditions and analyzing and evaluating natural and human-made historic resources is critical in the development of a strategy for their management and treatment. Cultural landscape analysis involves two primary activities: evaluating historic significance and assessing historic integrity. Both use criteria determined by the National Register of Historic Places, which has developed nationally recognized methods for evaluating the significance and integrity of historic buildings and landscapes. The evaluation of historic significance identifies the important historical associations of the property, as well as its architectural, archeological, and social value. The property's significance is tied to a discrete period of time (period of significance) in which its important contributions were made and the broader historic contexts (historic context themes) within which the activities that occurred on the property may be placed. The analysis and evaluation section considers the site's history within recognized historic contexts to determine its contribution to the broad patterns of American history. It is important to note that historic resources, particularly cultural landscapes, change over time. As a result, a cultural landscape may have several areas of historical significance and multiple periods of significance. In order to determine whether a landscape feature contributes to the historic significance of the landscape at the Lora Blevins Farmstead, this chapter compares the existing conditions of landscape features to its understood historic state. The objective of this analysis is to identify the specific features associated with the historic periods and assess to what degree they continue to convey their historic significance. Figure 75 through Figure 82 at the end of this chapter compare existing conditions of specific landscape features to historic scenes. Illustration 4.1 maps the contributing resources of the site.

To aid in this assessment, landscape features are categorized based on their contribution to our understanding of the historic character of the landscape during the period or periods of significance. These categories are:

- Contributing
- Noncontributing
- Missing
- Undetermined

Contributing landscape features survive from the periods of significance and continue to reflect their historic appearance and function. Noncontributing landscape features include those added to the site since the periods of significance or that no longer retain enough physical integrity to convey their historic appearance or function. Missing features existed during the period of significance but have been removed, destroyed, or cannot be recognized in their current condition. Undetermined include features whose age cannot be determined or whose contribution to the historic landscape is unknown. Please refer to the table at the end of this chapter for a summary of this information.

The process to identify landscape elements follows a National Park Service methodology that categorizes all landscape elements as one of thirteen landscape characteristics:

- Archeological Sites
- Buildings and Structures
- Circulation
- Arrangement of Buildings
- Constructed Water Features
- Cultural Traditions
- Land Use
- Natural Systems and Features
- Other
- Small-Scale Features
- Spatial Organization
- Topography
- Vegetation
- Views and Vistas

Landscape characteristics are the "tangible and intangible aspects of an inventory unit which have either influenced the history of the development of the landscape, or are products of its development,

respectively."[147] Further, "these aspects individually and collectively give a landscape its historic character and aid in the understanding of its cultural importance."[148] Based on this understanding of the landscape, National Register of Historic Places methodology aids in establishing a site's significance.

National Register Status

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 authorized the creation of the National Register of Historic Places as the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. The National Park Service is responsible for maintaining the list and coordinating with public and private entities to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources. The National Park Service has developed criteria for evaluating historic resources to determine their eligibility for listing on the National Register. The National Register Criteria for Evaluation examine a property's age, integrity, and significance. To be considered historic, a property typically needs to be at least 50 years old. To possess integrity, a historic landscape needs to look and feel to some degree how it did in the past. The categories of integrity used to evaluate a property include: location, design, setting, material, workmanship, and feeling or association. The property must also be associated with historical events, activities, or developments that were important in the past. The National Register identifies the type of significance of a property based on the following criteria:

A. Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
B. Association with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
C. Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
D. Yielding or potential to yield information in history or prehistory.

A site may be significant in any or all of these four criteria.

In the 1990s, the NPS developed a draft National Register nomination that included a number of the historic farmsteads within the park, including the Lora Blevins Farmstead. The extensive nomination addressed the region's various extractive industries that developed over time, surviving historic farmsteads, and several of the small cemeteries located throughout the park. However, the NPS did not submit the proposed "Big South Fork Rural Historic District" for approval. As such, the Lora Blevins Farmstead is not included in the register at this time.

The three production-level List of Classified Structures entries for the Lora Blevins property include the Lora Blevins House, Lora Blevins Corn Crib, and Lora Blevins Pole Barn. Each of these entries suggest a Management Category of 'Should Be Preserved and Maintained.' The Lora Blevins Cultural Landscapes Inventory does not suggest a Management Category but does show a State level of National Register Significance. This report agrees with both the Management Category of 'Should Be Preserved and Maintained,' and the State level of National Register Significance.

Based on the draft nomination, the Historic Resource Study, the Cultural Landscape Inventory for the site, and research conducted as part of this CLR, a statement of significance can be drafted for the Lora Blevins Farmstead.

Statement of Significance

The Lora Blevins Farmstead reflects the historical evolution of European American settlement and land use within the Upper Cumberland Plateau—a unique area of Appalachia noted for its physical isolation, delayed economic development, and rich cultural traditions. Located on the tablelands that surround the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River, the Lora Blevins Farmstead developed at a time when area residents were moving out of the bottomlands and into recently logged uplands. Due to the manner of construction of its buildings and its focus on self-sufficiency, the farmstead, established in 1927, resembles those that developed and existed in the area 100 years prior. Though the site has undergone substantial

147. Robert R. Page, *Professional Procedures Guide*, 7-4.
148. Ibid., 53.

change since its establishment, the site still retains integrity related to the period of significance. The Lora Blevins Farmstead is therefore significant under Criterion A for its reflection of Big South Fork basin cultural history and Criterion C for the vernacular building traditions embodied by surviving buildings and structures at the site.

After a series of land cessions in the last decades of the eighteenth century, American Indians on the Upper Cumberland Plateau vacated claims to the Big South Fork basin area, opening it up to European settlement. Initially, the area was sparsely populated due to its limited transportation routes and arable land. Yet, reflecting trends in westward migration following the American Revolution, over the first several decades of the 1800s, population within the Big South Fork watershed gradually increased. This increase is attributed to both migration into the area from other parts of Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and North Carolina, as well as to the large family sizes of early settlers.

The early settlers established farmsteads along the tributaries of the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River. Families grew crops in narrow valleys and exploited the natural environment for needs related to food, health, and shelter. The communities that formed in the valleys were close-knit and practiced a largely self-sufficient lifestyle. In turn, distinct cultural traditions developed. Cultural practices related to agriculture, gardening, music, medicine, construction, and hunting among other themes were passed down through the generations of large Big South Fork basin families. The traditions that developed in the nineteenth century were continued in the twentieth by residents who moved out of the valleys and up onto the surrounding tablelands. Even as industries such as coal mining and logging came into the area and offered wage-work for residents, many Big South Fork area families continued to work their land in a manner not dissimilar to the earliest settlers of the area.

Reverend Lora E. Blevins and his wife Tealie Ann Slaven Blevins were both born and raised in the bottomlands of the Big South Fork basin and were steeped in the cultural traditions of the region. Reflecting the trend in settlement to the uplands, in 1927, Lora and Tealie purchased 45 acres of rolling tableland located on a ridgeline in close proximity to West Bandy Creek Road. The following year, Lora constructed the family house, followed by the barn, corn crib, and other structures. Lora and Tealie proceeded to have a large family and operate a self-sufficient farm for several decades. Even as the number of farm operations in the region fell precipitously during the mid-twentieth century, the Blevins' farm endured, serving as a tangible link to the Big South Fork basin's agricultural history and development. Today, the Lora Blevins Farmstead is one of a few remaining historic farms in the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area.

The buildings at the Lora Blevins Farmstead including the log house, barn, and corn crib are excellent examples of the use of regionally-associated construction techniques. All three buildings feature hand-hewn pine logs joined with half-dovetail notching. This particular vernacular construction method was used throughout the eastern and midwestern United States, but its use was especially prevalent in the southern Appalachians. "The local vernacular architecture" typified by the Lora Blevins Farmstead "generally reflects an environmental consciousness, reliance on native materials, adaptable modularity, low-cost construction and maintenance practices, construction methods achievable using semiskilled labor, and a rustic character."[149] At one point in time, the farmstead featured a variety of buildings and structures, but today, the three original log buildings and a more recent privy, are all that remain. They not only reflect the traditional land use practices of the site but also the regionally-specific building practices developed by the descendants of European settlers in America.

Period of Significance

While no National Register nomination exists for the Lora Blevins Farmstead, nor is it part of any other existing nomination, other NPS reports have provided guidance in establishing a period of significance for the Lora Blevins Farmstead. The 1997 *Cultural Landscape Inventory for the Lora Blevins Farmstead* identifies the site's period of significance as 1929-1974. These dates correspond to the presumed establishment of the farm (1929) and the creation of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (1974).[150] The 2016

149. Wiss, *Historic Resource Study*, 59.
150. Note, earlier reports use 1929 as the date of establishment, however, the property was purchased in 1927 and the house was built in 1928.

Historic Resources Survey for BISO also proposes the 1929-1974 period of significance. The draft Rural Historic District nomination proposed a 1821-1950 period of significance for the cultural resources in the proposed district (including the Lora Blevins Farmstead). Though it does not explain why these dates were chosen, 1821 likely corresponds to the beginning of European settlement in the area, while 1950 may mark the decline of extractive industry in the region.

Lora and Tealie Blevins purchased the property in 1927, moving there in 1928. Lora Blevins sold the property in January 1974—just a few months prior to the creation of the park. It appears that his children and possibly other relatives lived at the farm for several years after the sale. His daughter, Poppie Blevins Dishman recounted that she and her brother George both lived on the property as adults; George in a trailer and Poppie in a house.[151] These buildings appear in a 1976 aerial. In 1980, when documented as part of a survey of park resources, the Lora Blevins Farmstead appears lived-in, with farm implements, chickens, and tilled fields shown in photographs. Though the Lora Blevins house was labeled on a map as "vacant," the survey form listed Lona Slaven as the tenant.

This report proposes a 1927-1974 period of significance for the site. 1927 corresponds to the property's initial purchase date by the Lora and Tealie Blevins, and 1974 pertains to the Lora's selling of the property as well as the creation of the park. Due to continued agricultural and family residential use of the farm until its purchase by the US Army Corps of Engineers in 1980, this report additionally proposes that all resources in the landscape dating from 1980 and earlier be managed as contributing cultural resources.

151. Note, some discrepancy exists concerning the residency of Poppie and George during this time. Poppie's map, referenced throughout this document, clearly indicates the presence of "Poppie's House" east of the Lora Blevins House. Photographic evidence shows the presence of only one trailer on the property in the 1970s. However, Tom Des Jean recalled that Poppie told him that both she and George lived in two separate trailers on the property. This report is deferring to the evidence presented by the 1970s aerials and the map of the property drawn by Poppie.

Analysis of Landscape Characteristics

Natural Systems and Features

Historic Condition

During the historic period, natural systems and features informed the development of the Lora Blevins Farmstead. Hydrological and geological systems were particularly influential. The Blevins family developed their farmstead on a plateau with rolling hills and steep slopes. The Blevins family responded to the landforms by siting buildings, structures, and fields on the few relatively flat areas of the property. In doing so, they clustered buildings and structures within a dense core area and spread their farming operation across the other areas of the property. As they tilled the ground, the family had to avoid areas containing rock outcrops. A significant geological feature present during the historic period, a large sandstone outcrop, occupied a highpoint in the eastern portion of the site. The feature is evident on the 1951 aerial photograph and is drawn and labeled on Poppie's 2002 map as "rocks" (Appendix A-03).

Access to water was another key aspect to the decision of where to construct the farmstead. The plateau fell away toward two separate drainages on the north and south. The north drainage was located on the Blevins' property, and the family constructed the core of the farmstead a short distance south of it. The spring-fed drainage, a bifurcated tributary of Cecil Fork, served as a source of water for the family and for their animals, though accounts indicate it was ephemeral. Poppie Blevins Dishman recounts using the spring to keep dairy products cool.[152] The Blevins family used another spring, located on an adjacent property south of West Bandy Creek Road, during the historic period as a secondary source of fresh water.[153]

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

There is no evidence of a change to geology of the site after the period of significance. The rock outcrop present during the period of significance

152. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman."
153. Ibid.

remains in place, and the terrain of the site remains as it was during the historic period. In terms of the hydrology of the site, field researchers observed the bifurcated stream beds north of the house in dry condition, which indicates the ephemeral nature of the spring. It is unknown if the spring is still active.

Summary

The site has generally retained the natural systems and features present during the historic period. While obscured by vegetation, the bifurcated tributary of Cecil Fork remains in place. The overall terrain of the site reflects the character of the period of significance.

Landscape Features

- Hydrological features: the bifurcated tributary of Cecil Fork; Cecil Fork
- Sandstone outcrop
- Soils

Topography

Historic Condition

The site's undulating topography and proximity to a prominent ridgeline influenced the arrangement and function of the farmstead. The property extended north from the ridge, which runs generally east to west along the southern edge of the site. The Blevins placed the farm's buildings and structures along this relatively flat area, which resulted in their linear arrangement. The rolling hills of the site offered few other flat areas for agricultural use; those that did exist were located in the north-central portion of the site. The "long field" area, which though slightly sloped, appears to have been the flattest area outside the ridge. The family used this area for row crops. Plowing likely altered the topography of the site, smoothing irregularities and creating more uniform fields where they existed. It is assumed that the pasturing of animals occurred outside the long field area, on more steeply sloped areas of the farm. While the site does contain high points and other individual topographic features, they do not appear to have held any cultural association or significance.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

While agricultural use of the site continued after the period of significance, no apparent alterations to the topography of the site have occurred since 1974. The site generally slopes downward from south to north, with the elevation of the site ranging from over 1,540 feet at high points in the eastern and western edges of the property to 1,420 feet along the creek bed north of the house.

Summary

The overall topography of the site is similar to the historic period. Individual features of the site include the ridge, rolling hills, and the smoothed topography of the agricultural fields. All three features are character-defining, contribute to the period of significance, retain integrity from the period of significance, and are in good condition.

Landscape Features

- Ridge
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
  - Condition: Good
- Rolling hills
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
  - Condition: Good
- Agricultural fields
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
  - Condition: Good

Land Use

Historic Condition

While the property was purchased in 1927, Poppie Dishman Blevins noted that Lora Blevins constructed the house the following year. The start of farming activities shortly thereafter established the two primary uses of the site: residential and agricultural. Use of the site prior to 1928 is unknown. From 1928 until the sale of the property in 1980, Lora Blevins and his family engaged in a self-sufficient farming operation at the site. Agricultural activities included row cropping, gardening, and raising livestock. During the period of significance, residential use of the site was concentrated at the house and potentially at two other smaller farmsteads on the outer fringes of the property (Illustration 2.2). Tealie and Lora's daughter, Poppie, stated in interviews that she and her brother returned to live at the site in the 1960s. In 1969, Tealie died, and Lora remarried Eva Crabtree later that year. It is unknown if he and Eva continued to live at the site. In 1974, Lora sold the property to his two sons, George and Lenard, and likely moved off site. It is not clear who lived at the site during this time.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

Lenard died in 1976, leaving the property to his wife Clara Sue Blevins. It is possible that George lived in a house in the southwestern portion of the property during the remainder of the 1970s. In 1980, documentation of the site notes Lona Slavens as the tenant of the house. The USACE purchased the property in 1980, resulting in the end of residential land use of the site.

In terms of agricultural use, a local farmer held an agricultural lease for the farm during the 1970s, and photographs from 1970s and early 1980s show evidence of this continued agricultural use. It is unknown precisely when the lease ended. Agricultural use of the site may have been discontinued during the 1990s. In 2001, the annual Spring Planting Day event began, reintroducing agricultural use of the site. During the event, volunteers plant the long field in sorghum using historic methods. This event, as well as general management of the BISO landscape, reflects a new use of the site: recreational tourism. Both the Spring Planting Day and recreational tourism management continue at the site.

Summary

Residential use of the site has been discontinued and is now missing from the landscape, though the tangible evidence of this use remains with the presence of the Lora Blevins House. The Spring Planting Day event has revived agricultural use of the site, though at a limited scale. The reduced scale of this activity renders it in fair condition. Lastly, the federal government established recreational tourism land use with the acquisition of the site as part of the creation of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. Features related to recreational use are the landscape itself, as well as individual recreational features such as the scenic building core and Katie Trail.

Landscape Features

- Residential land use
    - Contribution Status: Missing
    - Condition: N/A
- Agricultural land use
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Fair
- Recreational tourism land use
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
    - Condition: Good

Cultural Traditions

Historic Condition

During the period of significance, cultural traditions that influenced the appearance and function of the Lora Blevins Farmstead included regionally-specific construction methods, the use of draft animals for plowing, and homesteading practices related to self-subsistence.

Lora Blevins constructed the farm's log buildings and structures using traditional methods of European settlers of Appalachia. Such methods include using hand-hewn logs, half dovetail notching, and locally acquired and produced chinking and roofing materials. Based on European precedents, these specific building methods originated in America in the Mid-Atlantic Region and traveled south and west with new settlers. Though traditional, these built features were not crude or simple. On the contrary, these construction methods required extensive skill and knowledge in addition to a number of specialized tools. The fact that Lora Blevins was still using these traditional methods long after the region had been settled and new methods of construction introduced is testament to their usefulness and value.

The tradition of using mules and horses for plowing farm fields has long been practiced by agricultural societies. Lora Blevins used mules and horses for plowing the fields, powering the sorghum press, and likely for hauling and general transportation. A photograph taken around 1940 shows Lora working fields with two mules as he rides behind on a gang plow or other type of cultivator. The use of livestock necessitated the allocation of shelter and storage spaces, which is likely a reason for the shed additions on the barn. Other agricultural traditions included maintaining orchards and smaller garden spaces. The Blevins family grew a variety of fruit trees and shrubs at the site, which were located to the north and east of the house. A small garden space for herbs and vegetables was located east of the house, and these areas were fenced to keep roaming livestock out.

Other traditional homesteading activities practiced by the Blevins family included hunting, raising and butchering livestock, making dairy products, and shearing wool. These activities also required the addition of specialized equipment,

structures, and spaces. For instance, the farm contained a springhouse to store perishable items, a smokehouse to process meat, a root cellar, and various animal pens. Like traditional construction methods, these homesteading activities required possessing wide-ranging knowledge, which was passed down through the generations.

The farm underwent modernization in the 1960s, which transformed the use of the farm landscape and diminished the use of traditional homesteading activities. Electricity came to the area in the 1960s, and the family installed a well for water at that time. The addition of the well meant that collecting water from the spring was no longer necessary. The electricity likely allowed for refrigeration of perishables within the house, which meant that the springhouse was also no longer necessary.

Finally, Lora was a reverend and on occasion preached in the small building that existed west of the Katie Blevins Cemetery, thus establishing a religious cultural tradition at the site. This building was later used to cure tobacco.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

After the period of significance, the cultural traditions that influenced the development of the farmstead began to wane before ceasing altogether. In terms of traditional building methods, while documentation is scant, it appears that built features constructed after initial farm establishment used modern methods and materials such as dimensional lumber, manufactured nails, and sheet metal for roofing. Examples of modern construction include the pumphouse (removed in 2005), barn additions (removed by the mid-1990s), and the existing privy. It appears the barn and the house featured metal roofing by 1951.

While farming continued at the site into the 1980s, it is unknown if mules or tractors were used. The annual Spring Planting Day event interprets the traditional use of mules and horses for plowing, providing a contemporary link to this historic cultural tradition. It is unknown to what extent cultural traditions related to animal raising, hunting, and processing continued after the period of significance. Hunting is generally allowed within BISO boundaries, with the exception of designated safety zones. The Lora Blevins Farmstead is being designated a safety zone.

Summary

Some of the cultural traditions that shaped the development of the farmstead are still apparent in its surviving features. The log house, barn, and corn crib continue to display the traditional building methods with which they were constructed. While repairs to the structures replaced some of the original materials, most repairs were completed with appropriate materials and reflect the original construction techniques. The cultural tradition of traditional building methods remains in good condition and contributes to the period of significance.

The Spring Planting Day event has revived the traditional use of horses and mules at the site. However, the horses are not kept at the farm, so they do not necessitate the use of the barn or other structure for housing or storage. Therefore, the landscape, other than the one field that is tilled on Spring Planting Day, does not effectively reflect this cultural tradition and does not possess integrity to the period of significance.

Much of the evidence of animal raising, orcharding, and other activities is missing or is in poor condition. Missing or severely deteriorated features include: fruit trees, agricultural fields, fencing, outbuildings, tools, and farm apparatuses. Hunting activities still occur on site.

Landscape Features

- Traditional building methods
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
  - Condition: Good
- Historic agricultural practices
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
  - Condition: Poor
- Orcharding
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
  - Condition: Poor
- Homesteading traditions
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
  - Condition: Poor
- Religious traditions
  - Contribution Status: Missing
  - Condition: N/A

Buildings and Structures

Historic Condition

A number of buildings and structures have existed at the Lora Blevins Farmstead, including a log house, barn, corn crib, springhouse, smithy /

workshop, smokehouse, chicken coop, hog pen, privy, and pumphouse. It is assumed that the construction of the initial buildings (roughly 1928-1930) at the site was in keeping with the vernacular traditions of the region. Each of the log structures used half-dovetail notching for joining members, which "involves sloping the top side of the end of the log downward to the outside of the joint, leaving the wider remaining portion to the inside of the wall."[154] This method—differentiated from full-dovetail or saddle notching—was widespread throughout southern Appalachia and the Upper Cumberland Plateau during the nineteenth century.

While the property was purchased in 1927, Poppie Dishman Blevins noted that Lora Blevins constructed the house the following year. Lora sited it on a relatively level location near both a spring and West Bandy Creek Road. He built the side-gabled house of yellow pine logs (unknown species) at a height of one-and-a-half stories. Half-dovetail notching secured the logs in place. He first constructed the house as a single pen structure, and then he added a second pen to the building. Based on materials and its manner of construction, it is likely the second pen was added soon after the family moved to the site.[155] Lora Blevins used red clay dug from a hole east of the house for chinking material.[156] Vertical weatherboarding covered the gable ends. The finished outside dimensions of the house were 40 feet long by 18 feet wide. The side-gabled building originally featured a stone chimney on the east side and a wood shake roof. The house rested on a stacked-stone footer foundation. Separate doorways provided access to each of the two pens on the south side of the house, while the north side only had one doorway to access the eastern pen. A single square-shaped window was located east of the doorway on the south facade of the eastern pen. Another window was located on the western side of the house.

The building underwent several alterations during the period of significance, though the exact dates for these changes are unknown. By 1951, it appears the house had a metal roof. Fairly early in its existence, Lora Blevins added a porch along the south facade of the house. The western portion of this porch was enclosed and incorporated into the existing structure. The addition had a window on its south side. The porch featured log support beams and waist-high railing. The enclosed addition aligns with the smaller of the two pens of the original structure. Poppie recounts that Lora added a small lean-to type of kitchen onto the northeast side of the house, and after it fell in, he constructed an 8-foot by 10-foot replacement kitchen.[157] Photographs from the late 1970s show a full-length addition on the north side of the house, possibly indicating that Lora Blevins constructed the kitchen during the period of significance. In the 1960s, Lora removed the original stone chimney and replaced it with a simple concrete block chimney. By 1974, the family had replaced log porch support beams with dimensional lumber.

Lora Blevins likely built the double-crib log barn at roughly the same time as the house. He constructed it in the same manner and used the similar materials to the house—yellow pine joined by half dovetail notching. A wide central opening separated the two pens on the ground level. A full length upper story bridged the two pens. The side-gabled building measured 40 feet long by 13 feet wide. Vertical weatherboarding covered the gable ends. Three access points were located on the north facade, one for each pen and one wider opening above the eastern pen to provide access to the hay loft. No doors were located on the east, west, or south facades. At some point during the period of significance, likely within a decade of its construction, Lora Blevins constructed full-length shed additions on the north and south facades of the barn. Access into these sheds was from the east and west sides. The northern addition extended approximately 10 feet from the barn. The family stored machinery in the addition. The southern addition contained two stalls for housing livestock. The family used the western stall to cure tobacco. Lastly, Blevins constructed a small shed addition on the east end of the barn to store horse tack. Photographs indicate that the family added a metal roof early in the barn's existence. It is unknown if the barn ever featured a wood shake roof like the house or corn crib.

Like the barn, it is assumed the family built the corn crib soon after they moved to the site. The single-pen structure featured hand-hewn logs secured with half-dovetail notching. Like the barn

154. Wiss, Historic Resource Study, 59.
155. Ibid., 242.
156. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman."
157. Ibid.

and house, vertical weatherboarding covered the gable ends. A doorway was located on the western side of the south facade. An opening spanned the south facade from the doorway to nearly the end of the structure. The family built an addition onto the north side of the structure in a similar manner as the main structure. The addition extended out over sloped ground, requiring stacked stone footers on its northern end to level the addition with the main structure. The access point to the addition was located on its west facade. An elongated open shed extended southward from the roof, supported by three log poles. An additional smaller shed addition was built on the east facade of the structure and featured a sloping shed roof, enclosed by vertical boards. Access to the addition was from small openings on the north and south facades. Though unconfirmed, a 1951 aerial photograph suggests that a metal roof had not yet been added to the structure.

Throughout the existence of the farmstead, a privy was located on some part of the property. It was likely relocated every five to ten years, meaning that the privy was moved at least three times during the period of significance. The family likely reused the privy structure, either by relocating it as a complete structure or disassembling and reassembling it in a new location. It has been speculated that the privy moved to its current location in 1968 when the family installed a well. The 1968 location was just upslope of the spring where potable water was previously drawn. This location for the privy does not make sense if the family was still using the spring as a water source. Unlike other structures at the site, the privy is constructed of dimensional lumber. The privy measures approximately 4 feet by5 feet and featured a slightly sloped shed roof and an entry door on its west facade.

Other structures present at the Lora Blevins Farmstead during the period of significance included a pumphouse, chicken coop, smokehouse, workshop, and springhouse. The pumphouse was used to shelter the well installed by Lora Blevins in the 1960s and was located immediately to the west of the house. The front gabled structure featured vertical wood weatherboards, a hinged entry door on its east facade, and a corrugated metal roof. The structure measured roughly 6 feet by 7 feet and was over 8 feet in height.

The chicken coop was located between the corn crib and the house, roughly ten feet north of the pumphouse. It is unknown when the feature was constructed or its manner of construction.

According to Poppie Blevins Dishman, the smokehouse was located off the northeast corner of the house and measured 8 feet by 10 feet. No other information is known about this structure.

The springhouse, located north of the house, was a log structure with a rived-out board roof. Inside, the rock was stacked about 2 feet high to form a catch basin for the water. Dairy products were stored in the springhouse, and therefore some sort of shelving may have also been inside. No other information is known about this structure.

Lastly, the workshop, also referred to as the "smithy," was located near the springhouse north of the house. In the drawing of the structure by Poppie, it appears to have featured a chimney and was also of log construction. No other information is known about this structure.

In addition to the buildings and structures related to the Lora Blevins Farmstead, the property appears to have contained two additional farms. The 1951 aerial shows these other farms located in the southwest and northeast portions of the property. In the southwest, two buildings (potentially a house and a barn) were located in a square-shaped clearing close to the road. In the northeast corner of the property, a singular building is shown. No information is known about any of these structures.

The 1951 aerial shows a building located directly west of the Katie Blevins Cemetery. The front gabled building was evidently used first as a church and then as a tobacco barn.[158] No other information is known about this building. A 1974 site analysis map of the area shows additional buildings on the property that were not present in 1951. East of the core of the Lora Blevins Farmstead there were two buildings labeled as "wooden structures in poor condition." By this time, it appears the farm located in the far northeast portion of the property, seen in the

158. Effie Houston, Personal Communication, December 12, 2017.

1951 aerial, is no longer present, nor is the church/tobacco barn west of the cemetery. The farm in the southwest corner of the property still existed, but the USACE map labels these buildings as "wooden structures in poor condition." The larger of the two buildings could be where Poppie lived as an adult.

Culverts likely existed underneath the driveways where they met the swale paralleling West Bandy Creek Road.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

Numerous alterations to individual structures occurred after the period of significance. Some of these occurred while the family continued to occupy the site, while others were undertaken by the USACE and later by the NPS.

A 1976 aerial shows a single-wide prefabricated house located along the driveway leading into the historic core of the property. After USACE acquisition, the federal government removed this building. The property was documented in 1981. Photographs of the house show vertical weatherboarding covering approximately one-third of the house's east facade. These photographs also show a screen door on the east end of the northern addition. However, by the mid-1980s, in an attempt to return the building to pre-1930 conditions, the NPS removed the porch, southern addition, and the entire northern addition. The removal of these features allowed managers to assess the building's condition, and beginning in 1986, the NPS drafted a series of plans for the stabilization and preservation of the house. However, the removal of the additions also exposed the historic core of the house to the elements. To counter potential damage from harsh weather, the NPS added a protective shed structure with a corrugated metal roof to run the full length of the house's south facade, extending slightly beyond and wrapping around its southwest corner. It is unknown when this work was undertaken but was likely done in the mid-to-late 1990s. Around the same time, in 1996, the NPS removed the 1960s cinderblock chimney that Lora constructed and replaced it with a reconstruction of the original using sandstone from a chimney in Kentucky. Poppie provided design guidance for the reconstruction. Around 2000, the NPS reroofed all surviving structures—the house, barn, corn crib, privy, and pumphouse. Then, after a series of work orders requesting funding for repairs, the NPS undertook stabilization work on the house in 2005. This work entailed replacing deteriorated sill timbers, repairing the roof, and replacement of deteriorated log piers with dry stacked stone. It does not appear that the house has undergone any repairs since 2005. The current condition status in the NPS List of Classified Structures (LCS) dates to 2012 and lists the house in poor condition. The primary impact listed by the LCS is "structural deterioration," with a "moderate" impact level. Other impacts include "weather" and "animal/pest infestation." During fieldwork for this report however, the house was assessed to be in fair condition due to a rotting support timber on the north facade below the doorway.

The barn also underwent dramatic alterations after federal acquisition of the site. Photos of the barn during the 1981 documentation project show the barn in fair condition. However, photos and condition reports from the mid-1980s show the southwest portion of the southern shed addition partially collapsed and the northern shed addition missing altogether. The southern shed remained in this condition until at least 1990. Photos show that in 1993, the NPS undertook stabilization work on the barn, with bracing lumber positioned at the compromised locations inside and outside the barn. Repair documentation indicates the NPS removed the southern shed by 1996. In 1998, the NPS undertook another stabilization project, and by 2002, the NPS had stabilized the barn several times. A major project at the site occurred in 2005, when "a number of maintenance treatments were carried out on the barn including: new clapboard was replaced in kind over the chinking on the barn, deteriorated logs were replaced in kind, foundation stones were restacked and elevated."[159] Currently, the barn is stabilized, but is missing all chinking material. The current condition status in the LCS dates to 2012 and lists the barn in good condition.

Like the barn and the house, the corn crib also underwent repairs and maintenance after the period of significance. Records concerning such treatment is scant. Like the barn and the house, the corn crib received a new roof in 2000. In 2005, the structure underwent additional repairs; the NPS replaced several logs in kind at this time. The LCS for the corn crib notes that the NPS used a nail gun during repair work, and the appearance of modern nails compromises the integrity of the structure.

159. LCS # 092177.

The current condition status in the LCS dates to 2012 and lists the corn crib in good condition.

While the NPS repaired and preserved other buildings and structures at the site, the pumphouse did not receive the same treatment. The NPS determined the structure ineligible for the National Register due to a lack of information, though the NPS recommended that it be managed as a cultural resource and that it should be preserved and maintained. While it survived the initial removal of post-1930s features, the NPS demolished it in 2005. The NPS spared the privy from demolition, though it likely dates to the same general time as the pumphouse. In 2000, the privy received a new metal roof. In 2005, the NPS used lumber salvaged from the pumphouse to repair the structure. The current condition status in the LCS dates to 1998 and lists the privy in good condition. During fieldwork in 2017, report researchers assessed the privy in fair condition because of erosion at the base causing it to lean, as well as encroaching vegetation threatening to overtake the structure.

Summary

Despite alterations, the remaining buildings and structures at the Lora Blevins Farmstead—the house, barn, corn crib, and privy—are contributing features and continue to reflect the period of significance. Their historical significance pertains to the traditional manner of their construction, as well as their association with early twentieth century agrarian society in the Big South Fork basin.

The conditions of the buildings vary. Though assessed in poor condition in 2012, during fieldwork for this report in 2017, the house appeared to be in fair condition. Current threats to its condition include missing chinking and rotting support members. The NPS assessed both the barn and corn crib in 2012 as being in good condition, which remains the case. The NPS assessed the privy as being in good condition in 1998, but despite receiving a new roof in 2000, during fieldwork in 2017, the privy was assessed as being in fair condition.

Landscape Features

- Lora Blevins House
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Fair
- Lora Blevins Pole Barn
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Good
- Lora Blevins Corn Crib
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Good
- Privy
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Fair
- Culverts and headwall
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
    - Condition: Good
- Chicken coop
    - Contribution Status: Missing
    - Condition: N/A
- Pumphouse
    - Contribution Status: Missing
    - Condition: N/A
- Smokehouse
    - Contribution Status: Missing
    - Condition: N/A
- Workshop
    - Contribution Status: Missing
    - Condition: N/A
- Church / tobacco barn
    - Contribution Status: Missing
    - Condition: N/A
- Associated houses / barns
    - Contribution Status: Missing
    - Condition: N/A

Spatial Organization

Historic Condition

The Lora Blevins Farmstead is representative of the plateau farmsteads of the Big South Fork region. As opposed to the more spatially-concentrated farmsteads established several decades earlier in the valleys of Big South Fork, plateau farmsteads allowed settlers to spread out across the rolling landscape. Such an arrangement is found at the Lora Blevins Farmstead. It is evident the site was logged at some point in the past. The 1951 aerial shows the area surrounding the property was mostly forested and was likely in the early stages of succession. It can therefore be assumed that when Lora and Tealie Blevins purchased the property in 1927, the site was even more spatially-open. Visual and physical divisions in the landscape were likely created by drainages (the bifurcated tributary of Cecil Fork and Cecil Fork itself), circulation

features (West Bandy Creek Road), and property boundaries.

An aerial photograph from 1951 provides the earliest understanding of the spatial organization at the site. At this time, most of the property existed as open fields, with forest surrounding the property in all directions. In several locations, the forest extended into the cleared area. Within this overall spatial pattern, three relatively distinct areas existed: a narrow developed zone running along West Bandy Creek Road and two separate open areas north of the developed area.

Spanning from the entire southern edge of the property, the developed zone contained several distinct nodes of development. In the southwest corner, two buildings occupied a small clearing, surrounded on the north, south, and west by forest. The space was open on the east, connecting it to the rest of the property. Roughly 600 feet to the east, Katie Blevins Cemetery and a small building occupied a space at the southern extent of the clearing. It appears that the cemetery was fenced in, and several trees lined its northern and western edge. The fencing and trees visually separated this area from the rest of the site. Less than 200 feet to the east was the core of the Lora Blevins Farmstead. The relatively tight cluster of buildings, structures, enclosures, small farmed fields, and trees distinguished this area as the center of activity for the property. Lastly, in the southeast corner of the site, another small farmstead containing one or two buildings and fencing occupied a clearing bounded on all sides by forest.

Behind (north) of this line of development, spanned two distinct field-and-forest expanses, referred to here as the "western area" and the "eastern area." Otherwise continuous, the two areas were separated by a fence that ran north to south from the wooded property line toward the Lora Blevins barnyard.

The spatial organization of the western area was defined by the woods that formed its western and northern edges. The rest of the area was spatially open. A portion of woodland jutted eastward into the open fields, and the 1951 aerial shows that the cleared area formed a horseshoe shape around the woods. Within the cleared area, field patterns shown in the 1951 aerial seem to indicate that this area was the focus of crop planting at the farm. The individual fields were primarily located in the northern portion of the area. A 1952 topographic map of the area reveals that this zone contained the most level ground at the site, aside from the ridge line that the buildings occupied. Of note, it appears that an orchard grew in a small clearing in the northwest corner of the area. To the south of the fields, the western area transitioned into the road-side zone where the church/tobacco barn and Katie Blevins cemetery were located. A long fence defined the border between the eastern and western areas.

The character of the eastern area resembles the western area in several ways. The eastern area was bordered on the north and east by woodland, and like the western area, a small portion of the woods extended into the area. It is likely the use of the eastern and western areas was different, as the eastern portion of the site appears to lack planting rows. The family may have used this portion of the property for pasturing ground for livestock. As it was customary for livestock to roam free in the Big South Fork Basin, farmers used fences to keep animals out of crop and garden fields rather than to contain them in a particular area. It is likely the dividing fence between the eastern and western areas served this purpose. The eastern area was closely connected to the developed zone, specifically to the developed core of the farmstead. This connection may be related to the presence of the spring in the middle of the eastern area. The spring exited within one of the two narrow bands of woods that curved into the site from the east and turned south. During the period of significance, the spring area contained additional buildings, structures, and heavy use. An orchard existed in the space between the spring and the house.

The 1974 site analysis map provides a snapshot of changes to the spatial organization of the site since 1951. In general, the eastern portion of the site underwent the most change, with successional vegetation occupying large swaths of the area. Successional reforestation resulted in the formation of four distinct open areas within the forest matrix in the eastern area. It is unknown if these were intentionally kept clear at this time. The map shows that the encroaching vegetation had begun

to overtake the orchard north of the house. It appears that the orchard in the western area also succumbed to successional processes. The rest of the western area appears roughly the same as it did in the 1950s.

Post-historic and Existing Condition

By 1976, when the next aerial image was taken, successional vegetation continued to extend toward the core of the farmstead. The eastern and western fields remained generally in the same configuration as they were depicted on the 1974 site analysis map.

By 1991, the date of the next available aerial image, the amount of open space within the site is greatly reduced. At this time, successional vegetation had completely filled in the eastern area, and the forested areas extend spread north and south. The successional growth framed three distinct open spaces at the site: one smaller field in the southwestern portion of the property, the long field north of the building cluster, and a narrow clearing containing the surviving built resources. These conditions remain today, with the successional forest now encroaching closer to the buildings at the site.

Summary

In summary, during the period of significance activity nodes existed at the Lora Blevins Farmstead. The spaces related to land use activities, chiefly agriculture and housing. Landscape management intervention undertaken by the NPS and USACE included removing fencing and buildings and allowing reforestation. As a result, the historic spatial arrangement of the site was mostly lost. Today, remnant historic spatial organization is represented by the long field area, the field in the southwest portion of the site (referred to as the George Blevins field), and the clearing around surviving building resources.

Landscape Features

- Historic condition of western area
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Poor
- Historic condition of developed zone
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Fair
- Parallel alignment to West Bandy Creek Road
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Good
- Relationship between forest and field
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Poor
- Katie Blevins Cemetery
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Good
- Eastern area
    - Contribution Status: Missing
    - Condition: N/A

Cluster Arrangement

Historic Condition

During the period of significance, the primary grouping of buildings, structures, orchards, and livestock yards comprised the core of the farmstead. The location of the farm on a plateau, as opposed to the more spatially-confined valleys of the Big South Fork basin, allowed Lora Blevins to disperse the development of the site. However, the site was still confined by topography; steep slopes limited development to the ridge along the southern edge of the site. Here, in a narrow area of relatively flat land, the Blevins family developed the core of the farmstead. Buildings and structures within this complex included the house, barn, corn crib, smokehouse, and chicken coop. Knitting these buildings together within this landscape were fences, garden spaces, an orchard, and a barn yard. While other buildings existed at the site, they were not clustered within the core complex, nor did they appear to have any distinct clustering of their own. In the 1960s, the family constructed a pumphouse, and they relocated the privy. It is unknown if the family removed the smokehouse and chicken coop during the period of significance.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

After the period of significance, site managers significantly altered the cluster arrangement of the farmstead. While the family demolished the smokehouse and chicken coop prior to federal acquisition of the site, during site cleanup, the federal government removed the remnants of these structures and all fencing. Over the years, vegetation overtook the orchard. In 2005, the NPS removed the pumphouse, leaving only the house, barn, corn crib, and privy.

Summary

While many features related to the historic condition of the farmstead core are now missing, the remaining buildings and structures continue to reflect the original cluster arrangement at the site. Therefore, the remaining cluster arrangement contributes to the period of significance, retains integrity, and is in good condition.

Landscape Features

- Farmstead core
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Good

Vegetation

Historic Condition

Vegetation at the Lora Blevins Farmstead is characterized by the presence of cultural, natural, and semi-natural vegetation. Unfortunately, few accounts exist concerning what grew or was grown at the site. Based on regional history, it can be assumed that prior to the period of significance, the property was forested with native trees such as poplar, pine, and oak. Logging activity in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries removed much of the old growth trees in the region. Afterward, in areas that were timbered and not farmed, successional processes occurred, resulting in young forests. On dry, upland areas, the initial plant communities to emerge were likely dominated by native grasses and brambles, such as broomsedge and blackberry. Coniferous trees emerged soon after, and various species of pines dominated the first post-timbering forests. Depending on the location of the forest, it would transition into one of many possible vegetation types, which could take over 75 years to occur.

In areas that featured agricultural activities, farming practices prevented successional vegetation, due to repeated plowing or livestock grazing. Therefore, natural and semi-natural vegetation at farmsteads generally included small woodlots, vegetated drainage areas, and volunteer species along fence lines or the unmaintained woodland edge. Cultural vegetation was located in ornamental and food gardens, fruit and nut orchards, and in fields where crops were grown.

At the Lora Blevins Farmstead, aerial photographs from the 1950s suggest that successional processes were limited during the period of significance due to agricultural activity. Features related to agricultural activity included two orchards: one located just to the north of the house and one in the northwest corner of the site. Fields show the presence of different crops, and neighboring fields were likely used for pasturing livestock. Crops known to be grown at the Lora Blevins Farmstead included sorghum, corn, and tobacco, though it is likely that the family grew other crops such as wheat. Though not visible in historic aerial photographs, Poppie Blevins Dishman also described some of the gardening activities she and her mother participated in while growing up at the farm. To the east of the house they tended a small herb and vegetable garden, which was fenced in to keep animals out. She recalled growing peppers, sage, and parsley. Ornamental plants grown at the farmstead included asters, petunias, zinnias, phlox, daffodils, red hot poking stick, and a rose bush. The front yard was enclosed by a paling fence, with a gate located between two large black walnut trees on the west side of the yard. The area within the fence was swept bare. Two peach trees were located in the southeast corner of the yard, and a "snowball bush," likely a viburnum, grew between the trees. Longtime BISO employee Wallace Linder recalled that a grape arbor and raspberry shrubs existed north of the garden.

Limited photographic evidence from the site prevents further description of the site's vegetation during the historic period.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

Agricultural activity continued into the 1970s and 1980s, though likely at a much-reduced scale. Photographs from this time show tilled fields and the remnants of harvested crops in several areas in the farmstead core. As agricultural activity at the site waned, successional vegetation began to fill in formerly cleared fields beginning first with the northeastern fields and then filling in a large portion of the western fields. Successional processes are still ongoing as field and forest management at the site has allowed the spread of successional vegetation in formerly open areas. A vegetation inventory for BISO conducted between 2002 and 2005 identified four different forest associations at the property: Virginia Pine Succession Forest, Appalachian Shortleaf Pine – Mesic Oak Forest, Southern Appalachian Eastern Hemlock Forest (White Pine Type), and Mixed Oak / Heath Forest. The inventory also classified the majority of open space within the Lora Blevins

Farmstead as a Rubus Shrubland plant association. The shrubland type is characterized by the presence of young tree saplings, blackberry bushes, grasses, and vines. However, during fieldwork in 2017, this area appeared to contain a Cultivated Meadow plant association, which is characterized by the dominant presence of tall fescue, with other seasonal grasses and forbs intermixed.

Though successional forest overtook much of the open space at the site, the NPS maintained the long field as an open field to plant sorghum as part of the annual Spring Planting Day event. The annual presence of the crop provides a link to the period of significance and is currently the only remaining cultural vegetation at the site related to agriculture.

There are numerous black walnut trees within the farmstead core, some of which were present during the period of significance. Five black walnuts are clustered around the house, two of which exceed 24 inches in diameter. The largest is located just off the southwest corner of the house, by the driveway. In 2004, the NPS planted a young black walnut and wrapped its base in protective wire fencing just to the south of this large tree as a replacement for one that was blown over. Other black walnuts are also growing along the edge of the successional forest. It is unclear if these were deliberately planted and the forest has encroached upon them, or they are "volunteers" that have established themselves in that location. A large black walnut is located in the open field formerly associated with George Blevins in the western portion of the site. All the black walnuts at the site appear in good condition.

Groups of yuccas are also present in locations that indicate intentional planting. The first group is at the base of the large black walnut tree by the southwest corner of the house. The second group flanks the end of the overgrown path in the eastern portion of the property where it meets the horse trail. Other yuccas are located along the successional forest edge. It is unknown when the yuccas were planted. All yuccas appear in good condition.

During fieldwork, only one apple tree was identified. It is located roughly 60 feet north of the log barn and is in poor condition. While other apple trees were identified during research for the Cultural Landscape Inventory in 1997, these trees either died or were overtaken by successional vegetation and could not be located during fieldwork in 2017.

Other post-period of significance vegetation features include a small demonstration garden located just east of the house. The NPS and/or volunteer groups established the garden by 2013, and it featured various herbs and ornamental plants. During fieldwork in 2017, the small garden was overgrown, and its brick border was barely visible.

Summary

The vegetative character of the Lora Blevins Farmstead has changed significantly since the period of significance, with only a few vegetation features remaining from the period of significance. Surviving features include five black walnut trees, an apple tree, and portions of woodland. Missing features include the herb and vegetable garden, the orchard, the grape arbor, raspberry bushes, ornamental vegetation around the house, and the full extent of agricultural crops. In 2004, a character-defining black walnut dating to the period of significance was blown over, but it has since been replaced in kind. Successional vegetation that only existed in patches during the period of significance now covers large portions of the property. Agricultural-related vegetation now only pertains to the presence of sorghum in the long field.

Landscape Features

- Black walnut trees (5)
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Good
- Apple tree
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Poor
- Yuccas
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Good
- Natural and semi-natural vegetation communities
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Good
- Agricultural crops (sorghum)
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Good
- Garden vegetation
    - Contribution Status: Missing
    - Condition: N/A

- Ornamental shrubs and trees
    - Contribution Status: Missing
    - Condition: N/A
- Orchard
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Poor
- Grape arbor
    - Contribution Status: Missing
    - Condition: N/A
- Raspberry shrubs
    - Contribution Status: Missing
    - Condition: N/A
- Full extent of agricultural crops
    - Contribution Status: Missing
    - Condition: N/A

Circulation

Historic Condition

During the period of significance, circulation features ranged from historic roadways to informal paths through the property. West Bandy Creek Road was the historic route connecting the towns of Oneida, Helenwood, and Winchester in Scott County to Jamestown in Fentress County. The road was unpaved throughout the period of significance. Two smaller roads passed through the property, but they were not as developed as West Bandy Creek Road. One crossed over West Bandy Creek Road from the driveway and headed south. This path provided access to a spring on the adjacent property as well as to other farms further to the south. The other road began at the spring area and headed northeast out of the property and into the surrounding area.

A central circulation feature in the landscape was the short north-south-oriented driveway that connected the core of the farmstead to West Bandy Creek Road, which it met at a 90-degree angle. As it approached the house, the drive curved west in front of the corn crib and toward the barn. In the space between the corn crib and the barn, the ground was bare, indicating regular use of the area.

Multiple paths that connected the spring area to various points in the landscape are also clearly visible on the 1951 aerial photograph. A well-defined path from the northeast corner of the house connected the core farmstead with the area. Four other paths came into the wooded spring area from the southeast, east, and north, connecting the spring to neighboring farms. Other circulation features visible in the 1951 image appear to be agriculturally-related and include two lightly-worn paths that extended out from the bar gate on the northwest side of the barn and several that skirted field edges. Two additional driveways were also present at this time; both were unpaved and short. One provided access to the farm in the southwest corner of the property and another to the church by the cemetery.

By 1974, changes to site circulation had occurred. While West Bandy Creek Road and the short driveways existed at this time, the two local roads that crossed the site do not appear in site recordation from the time. Their absence may relate to disuse on account of the local depopulation. The short driveway segments spurring from West Bandy Creek Road are still present on the map except for the drive to the old church and tobacco barn, which was removed sometime before 1974.

At some point, likely in the 1970s, the Blevins descendants constructed an additional short drive from the rock outcrop in the eastern portion of the property to access the house constructed in that location. On the 1974 site analysis map, the drive is shown as going in a northwestward direction.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

After federal acquisition, minimal changes to circulation features occurred, with one significant addition. In 1982, the NPS constructed the Katie Trail and connected it to a network of other hiking, biking, and equestrian trails throughout the park. The trail switchbacks east to west through the rolling terrain north of the core Lora Blevins landscape, skirting the edge of the successional forest. Mostly located within the forest, the trail only breaks through the forest in one location, at the northern edge of the long field.

In 1986-1987, the NPS resurfaced West Bandy Creek Road, topping it with gravel and slightly widening it.

In a 2012 aerial of the site, the drive trace east of the house is shown as going in a northeastward direction further into the property. The northeastward alignment was documented during 2017 fieldwork.

Summary

During the period of significance, the property contained multiple pathways that were a result of an active farm and interconnected community. Well-worn foot and horse paths connected residences to important landscape features. Local roadways crisscrossed the area. As farms became fewer in number, however, the more seldom used paths became reforested. In the 1980s, the USACE removed driveways and other paths from the area, while other circulation features became reforested through disuse.

West Bandy Creek Road remains the most prominent circulation feature in the immediate area. The driveway into the core of the Lora Blevins Farmstead also remains. The driveway currently shows the wear pattern of vehicular use, introduced after the period of significance. An overgrown drive trace stretches between the rock outcrop and the Katie Trail.

Landscape Features

- West Bandy Creek Road
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Good
- Farmstead driveway
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Good
- Drive trace at former house site
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
    - Condition: Poor
- Katie Trail
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
    - Condition: Good
- Informal paths
    - Contribution Status: Missing
    - Condition: N/A

Views and Vistas

Historic Condition

No known vistas existed at the site during the period of significance, though several views can be assumed to have existed. The relationship between topography, site vegetation, and open space allowed for multiple views throughout the farmstead, but it is likely the most important views for the family were those within and out from the core of the farmstead. It appears that sight-lines were maintained within the farmstead core between buildings and workspaces. From the front yard, the barn, corn crib, and other buildings were visible. Additionally, a view from the north side of the house out across the fields and through the orchard would have would have provided sight lines across a large portion of the property and enable the Blevins family to monitor oncoming weather.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

Successional vegetation, which filled in the open area north of the farmstead core, significantly reduced the views out from the building cluster until they were no longer present. The removal of buildings, structures, fencing, and additions also altered views within the farmstead core. However, no intrusions have impacted the remaining views between the house, corn crib, and barn.

Three scenic views currently exist at the site: looking east from a high point in the western field, looking west from West Bandy Creek Road out across the farmstead core, and looking north from the middle of the site along the length of the long field.

Summary

The only remaining views from the period of significance pertain to those within the farmstead core. While altered, these views remain in good condition, and they contribute to the period of significance. The post-historic views of scenic quality do not contribute to the period of significance.

Landscape Features

- Views within farmstead core
    - Contribution Status: Contributing
    - Condition: Good
- Scenic views
    - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
    - Condition: Fair

Small-Scale Features

Historic Condition

Details concerning small-scale features that existed during the period of significance are limited. Based on available photographs and oral history, most documented small-scale features at the farmstead pertained to fencing and gates.

Both aerial and ground photographs reveal some detail about fence location, extent, appearance,

and function. In total, it appears that the farm contained at least eight distinct fences in 1951: one that enclosed the barnyard; one that enclosed and area between the house and West Bandy Creek Road; one that surrounded the swept-bare front yard; one that enclosed a small space east of the swept yard; one the extended north from the barnyard fence to the property line; a "v"-shaped fence section to the west of the spring area; and a fence that ran along the length of the property's road frontage. The design and materials of these fences varied, though it is assumed most were of post-and-wire construction. The exception was the paling fence enclosing the swept-bare front yard. A swinging metal gate was located on the west side of the barnyard at the junction of the barnyard enclosure and the long fence that ran north to the property line.

Also present at the site was a sorghum press. Poppie Blevins Dishman recalled the following about the device:

> It was set up on blocks so that the circling arm could be attached and a mule harnessed up to this to turn the press. A hole was dug into the [barnyard] ground (to be beneath the circling arm) and a chair was placed in this in front of the rollers so that Lora could "feed" sugar cane into the press. He would feed 2 to 3 canes into the rollers at a time and they tried to grind out 12-13 (#3) wash tubs of juice a day. The juice was strained and then poured into a boiler box that Lora made out of sheet metal. A wooden paddle was used to skim off the green foam which was dropped into a hole. Tillie boiled down the molasses, and the kids stripped off the branches and the heads. The children also rode the mule to keep it circling all day until about 11pm.

The site contained a root cellar, which was located between the house and West Bandy Creek Road. No other information is known about its historic use. The working farm would have undoubtedly contained many other small-scale features such as large outdoor pots, tables, troughs, and additional fencing.

When documented in 1974, many of the same fences present in 1951 were still extant, and new fencing had been added. The new fencing included a number of small segments that created two distinct spaces between the barn and the corn crib. A new fence extended east from this fencing cluster across the northside of the house. An additional new fence extended north from the easternmost yard enclosure, separating the farmstead core from the new dwellings to the east. The fenced enclosure east of the house, likely containing the herb garden, was removed from the site by this time. No other small-scale features were documented as part of the 1974 park master plan.

Post-Historic and Existing Condition

By the end of the 1980s, the NPS had removed all fences. After this point, the NPS added several fences back to the landscape.

First, by 2002, the NPS installed a 20-foot section of wood split rail fencing south of corn crib seemingly to shield the roof support beams from being damaged by vehicles. By 2017, the fence had mostly collapsed. Similarly, an approximately 30-foot section of wooden split rail fencing runs east-west immediately to the south of the house, in front of the protective portico.

In 2002, the NPS added a fence at the northern edge of the long field between the Katie Trail and the field. The "t-post" and wire fence runs east to west for roughly 200 feet. A similar fence exists at the northern edge of the George Blevins field. The NPS installed these fences to prohibit horses from leaving the horse trail and riding throughout the cultural landscape

The NPS erects a temporary fence that separates the long field from core of the property annually for the Spring Planting Day event. The fence runs southwest from the corner of the wood line for approximately 100 feet before angling westward in alignment with the fence surrounding Katie Blevins Cemetery to the south for another 70 feet.

Lastly, the NPS erected a short section of fence in the early 2000s east of the house. The NPS installed the fence to demonstrate the historic fence type that surrounded the house during the period of significance. The wooden paling fence runs north-south for roughly 8 feet. Paling members measuring 45 inches tall span between two large log end posts that measure 95 inches (north) and 64 inches (south).

The brick edging of a small garden space is adjacent to the demonstration fence. The small garden, which interpreted the Blevins family gardening traditions, was maintained as recently as 2013, though in 2017 the garden was overgrown. The rectangular depression of the former root cellar is still evident today and measures 16 feet by 9 feet.

Two signs currently exist at the site. They are modern NPS additions and include an identification sign and an informational advisory sign.

Summary

Many of the small-scale features that existed during the period of significance—features that add essential character to a farm's landscape—are no longer present at the farmstead. All farm apparatuses, objects, and fencing were removed during the "cleanup" of the site after federal acquisition. Existing small-scale features are noncontributing to the period of significance, with the exception of the remnant root cellar.

Landscape Features

- Root cellar
  - Contribution Status: Contributing
  - Condition: Poor
- Fencing at Katie Trail
  - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
  - Condition: Good
- "Lora Blevins Farmstead" identification sign
  - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
  - Condition: Good
- "Historic Protection" sign
  - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
  - Condition: Good
- Split rail fencing at corn crib
  - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
  - Condition: Good
- Split rail fencing at house
  - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
  - Condition: Good
- Brick edging at interpretive garden
  - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
  - Condition: Fair
- Interpretive fence section
  - Contribution Status: Noncontributing
  - Condition: Fair
- Full extent of fencing at farmstead
  - Contribution Status: Missing
  - Condition: N/A

Evaluation of Landscape Integrity

Landscape integrity refers to a cultural landscape's ability to convey its historic significance. *National Register of Historic Places Bulletin 16A* defines historic integrity as "the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's prehistoric or historic period." In *National Register Bulletin 15*, the National Register defines seven aspects of integrity to use when evaluating a historic property:

1. **Location** is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred;

2. **Setting** is the physical environment within and surrounding a property;

3. **Design** is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property;

4. **Materials** are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property;

5. **Workmanship** is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory;

6. **Feeling** is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time; and

7. **Association** is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

In order to retain historic integrity, a property must possess several, and usually most, of these seven aspects. Evaluating historic integrity involves first determining the historic significance of a property and then identifying the existing features that contribute to our ability to recognize and understand this significance. Character defining features are those distinctive features or qualities that make a property unique. They are the individual parts that make the whole place special and worthy of our recognition as a historic property.

Location

Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. While many features dating to the period of significance have been removed, existing historic resources remain in their original location. The three remaining log buildings have not been moved from where they were first built. The driveway into the site has also remained in the same location. Despite vegetation encroachment, several open spaces, especially the long field, remain in place. Cultural vegetation—in particular several mature black walnut trees—are in their original location. Overall, the Lora Blevins Farmstead location retains integrity to the period of significance.

Setting

Setting is the physical environment within and surrounding a property. Throughout the period of significance, the Lora Blevins Farmstead was set within and reflected a rural context. Both the surrounding area and the farmstead itself were characterized by a mixture of fields, farms, and forest. Despite missing historic land uses that often produce such a rural character, the overall setting generally remains as it was during the historic period. Overall, the Lora Blevins Farmstead setting retains integrity to the period of significance.

Design

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. The general form of the farmstead Lora Blevins and his family laid out is still discernable despite encroachment by successional vegetation and the loss of historic resources. The original buildings of the site are still arranged linearly along the ridge, facing West Bandy Creek Road. The buildings themselves—the house, barn, and corn crib—reflect the vernacular design characteristic of western Appalachia. Their half-dovetail notching, rustic character, and use of local materials is in keeping with cultural traditions passed down among Big South Fork residents. Additionally, some of the historic field patterns that existed during the period of significance reflect their original form. The site remains an excellent example of regional vernacular design. Despite the loss of individual features such as fence lines, orchards, and small-scale features, the design of the Lora Blevins Farmstead retains integrity to the period of significance.

Materials

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. Site managers removed much of the physical material that was present during the period of significance after federal acquisition of the site. Missing features including non-surviving buildings and structures, fencing, and cultural vegetation. The remaining buildings—the house, barn, corn crib, and privy—mostly retained their original materials. These materials include the half-dovetail notched logs used in the construction of the resources. Missing original materials include wood shake roofs, building additions, and chinking. Repairs to the buildings replaced deteriorating logs in kind. Retained vegetation material includes the mature black walnut and remaining apple trees on site. While the buildings on the site are in fair to good condition, overall the cultural landscape does not have enough original material to retain integrity to the period of significance.

Workmanship

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. The cultural traditions that informed the land use and construction techniques at the site developed early in the European settlement of North America and spread south and west along the Appalachians as settlers established homes, farms, and communities in the frontier. Specific examples of workmanship present at the Lora Blevins Farmstead include the half-dovetail notching of the site's log buildings and structures and the form of the long field, which is still used for crops today. These contributing

features are in good condition. Despite the loss of fence lines and other small-scale features, the workmanship visible in the remaining landscape features support the Lora Blevins Farmstead in retaining integrity to the period of significance.

Feeling

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. The period of significance for the site is 1927-1974. For the duration of the period, the site was a working farm. With the end of year-round farm activity and use of the farmstead as a residence, the site is missing many of the visual references, sounds, and smells that accompany agricultural sites. The removal of site features, essentially "cleaning up" the site, took away much of the character one would expect to find at a working farm. Still, the rural setting and surrounding woodland, coupled with the surviving cultural resources express enough of the historic sense of the site mean that the feeling at the Lora Blevins Farmstead retains integrity to the period of significance.

Association

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. The NPS preserves the site as the "Lora Blevins Farmstead," associating the site with the family that lived and worked there during the historic period. Further, the associated adjacent Katie Blevins Cemetery contains many Blevins family members, including Lora and Tealie Blevins. The retention of resources dating to the period of significance further associates the site with period of significance, meaning the site's association retains integrity to the period of significance.



Figure 75. Circa 1980 photograph of east side of Lora Blevins House. Note "lived-in" condition indicated by presence of potted plants on the porch. Also shown is the replacement chimney, which was added by Lora in the 1960s. Compare this image to the 2017 photo below. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 76. 2017 photograph of east side of Lora Blevins House. Note removal of porch addition, and replacement chimney. Source: WLA Studio.

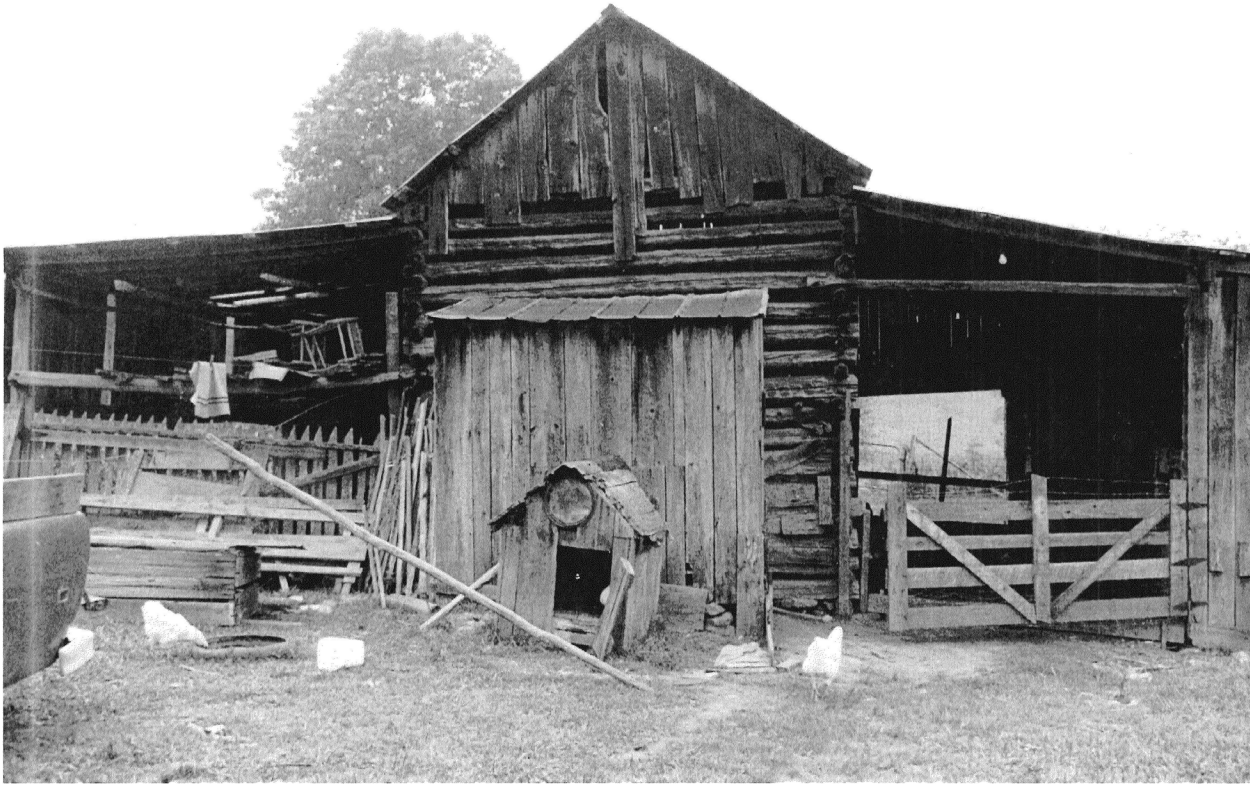


Figure 77. Circa 1980 photograph of the east side of the barn. Note the shed additions and fencing. Compare to 2017 photograph below. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 78. 2017 photograph of the east side of the barn. Note the absence of the shed additions and fencing, except for the shed flush with the east facade. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 79. 1981 photograph of the north and east facades of the corn crib. This is the earliest known ground photograph of the structure. Source: Hutchinson, Dugan, and Levy.



Figure 80. 2017 photograph of north and west facades of the corn crib. Note the new roof on the structure, and the overall change in character of the surrounding landscape. Source: WLA Studio.

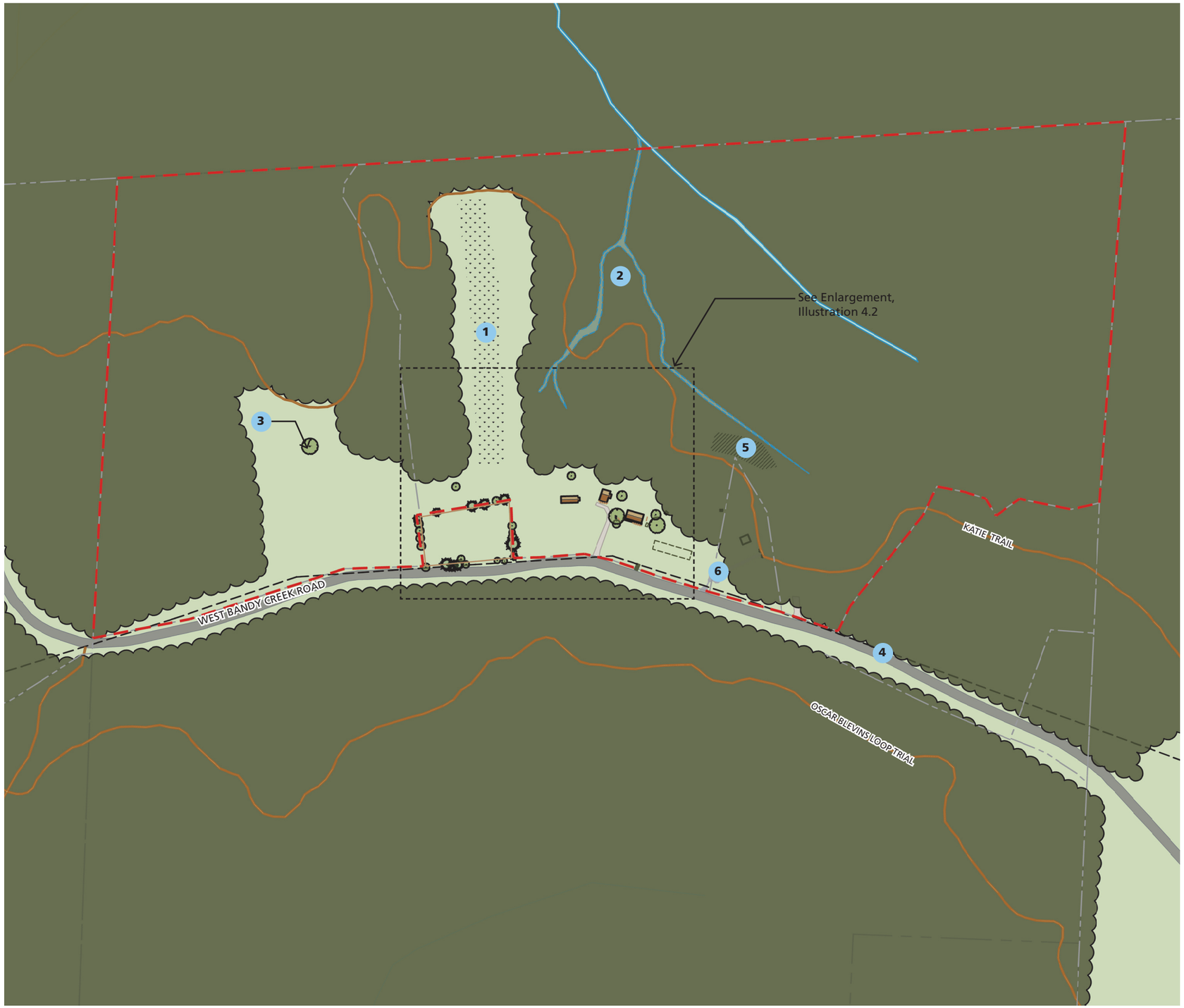


Figure 81. Undated (ca. 1940) photo of the Blevins Family in the front yard. Note the swept yard, ornamental vegetation, and fencing. Source: National Park Service.



Figure 82. 2017 photograph showing the changes to the domestic landscape. Note the absence of the swept-bare yard, fencing, and vegetation. Source: WLA Studio.

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Contributing Resources

		Year Built
1	Long Field	c. 1928
2	Bifurcated Tributary of Cecil Fork	NA
3	Black Walnut in West Field	pre-1951
4	West Bandy Creek Road	pre-1893
5	Animal Pen Area	c. 1960
6	Rock Outcrop	NA

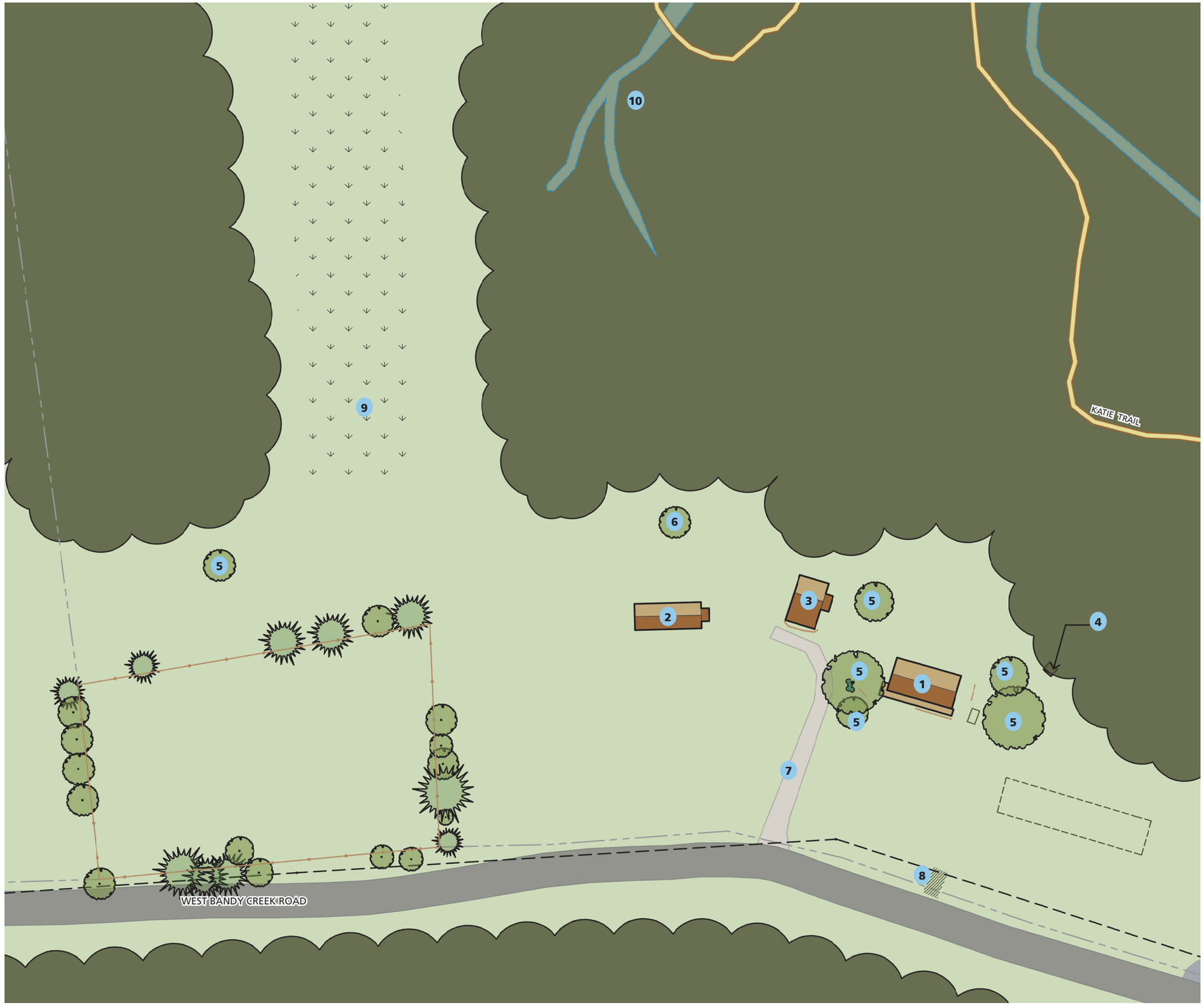
NOTES

** BISO parcel and circulation GIS datasets produce conflicting boundaries.

CREDITS

1. National Park Service and Big South Fork NRRA
2. Field Work, October and December 2017

Illustration 4.1
Contributing Resources
Lora Blevins Farmstead
Big South Fork
National River and Recreation Area
Cultural Landscape Report
May 2019



Contributing Resources

		Year Built
1	Lora Blevins House	1928-1930
2	Lora Blevins Barn	1928-1930
3	Corn Crib	1928-1930
4	Privy	c. 1960
5	Black Walnuts (7)	Unknown
6	Apple Tree	Unknown
7	Entry Drive	c. 1928
8	Root Cellar Depression	Unknown
9	Long Field	Unknown
10	Bifurcated Tributary of Cecil Fork	NA

NOTES

** BISO parcel and circulation GIS datasets produce conflicting boundaries.

CREDITS

1. National Park Service and Big South Fork NRRA
2. Field Work, October and December 2017

Illustration 4.2 Contributing Resources, Enlargement

Lora Blevins Farmstead

Big South Fork

National River and Recreation Area

Cultural Landscape Report

May 2019

Cultural Landscape Features Table

Feature Name	Date of Origin	Contributing	Non-Contributing	Missing	Condition
Natural Systems and Features					
Sandstone outcrop	No Date	X			Good
Cecil Fork and bifurcated tributary	No Date	X			Good
Soils	N/A	X			Unknown
Missing Natural Systems and Features					
Pre-agriculture forest	N/A			X	N/A
Topography					
Topography (Rolling Hills, Plateau, Ridge)		X			Good
Missing Topography Features					
Land Use					
Tourism (Recreation and Heritage)	1974		X		Good
Agriculture	1928	X			Fair
Missing Land Uses					
Residential	1928			X	N/A
Cultural Traditions					
Traditional building methods	1928	X			Good
Historic agricultural practices	1928	X			Poor
Orcharding	1928	X			Poor
Homesteading traditions	1928	X			Poor
Missing Cultural Traditions					
Religious traditions	1928			X	N/A
Buildings and Structures					
Lora Blevins House (LCS#092179)	1928	X			Fair
Lora Blevins Pole Barn (LCS# 092177)	1928	X			Good
Lora Blevins Corn Crib (LCS# 092178)	1928	X			Good
Privy (Shadow LCS # 092181)	1968	X			Fair
Culverts + Headwall	by 1998		X		Good
Utility Poles	c. 1960		X		Good
House Foundation	by 1971		X		Poor
Animal Pen	Unknown		X		Poor
Missing Buildings and Structures					
Chicken Coop	1928			X	N/A
Pumphouse	1968			X	N/A
Smoke House	1928			X	N/A
Workshop	1928			X	N/A
Church/ Tobacco Barn	by 1951			X	N/A
Associated Houses / Barns	by 1951			X	N/A
Spatial Organization					
Parallel alignment to West Bandy Creek Road	1928	X			Good
Relationship between forest and field	No Date	X			Poor
Katie Blevins Cemetery space in landscape	1812	X			Good
Historic condition of western area	1927-1967	X			Poor
Historic condition of developed area	1927-1974	X			Fair
Missing Patterns of Spatial Organization					
Eastern Area				X	N/A
Cluster Arrangement					
Farmstead Core	1928	X			Good

Cultural Landscape Features Table

Feature Name	Date of Origin	Contributing	Non-Contributing	Missing	Condition
Vegetation					
Black Walnut Trees (5)	Pre-1951	X			Good
Apple Tree	Unknown	X			Poor
Yuccas	Pre-1980	X			Good
Natural and Semi-natural vegetation Communities	No Date	X			Good
Agricultural Crops (Sorghum)	1927-1967	X			Good
Missing Vegetation					
Garden Vegetation (asters, petunias, zinnias, phlox, daffodils, red hot poking stick)	1927-1967			X	N/A
Ornamental Shrubs + Trees (rose bush, snowball viburnum, peach)	1927-1967			X	N/A
Orchard	1927-1967			X	N/A
Grape Arbor	1927-1967			X	N/A
Raspberry shrubs	1927-1967			X	N/A
Full Extent of Agricultural Crops	1927-1967			X	N/A
Circulation					
West Bandy Creek Road	Unknown	X			Good
Farmstead Driveway	pre-1951	X			Good
Drive / Path at former house site	pre-1971		X		Poor
Katie Trail	1982		X		Good
Missing Circulation Features					
Informal Paths	pre-1951			X	N/A
Views and Vistas					
Views within farmstead core	1927-1967	X			Good
Scenic Views	1927-1967		X		Fair
Small Scale Features					
Fencing at Katie Trail	2002		X		Good
"Lora Blevins Farmstead" Identification Sign	Unknown		X		Good
"Historic Protection" sign	Unknown		X		Good
Split rail fencing at corncrib	by 2002		X		Poor
Split rail fencing at cabin	by 2002		X		Poor
Brick edging at interpretive garden	c. 2000		X		Fair
Interpretive fence section	Early 2000s		X		Fair
Root Cellar Depression	1927-1967	X			Poor
Missing Small Scale Features					
Full Extent of Fencing	1927-1967			X	N/A

Treatment and Use

Introduction

The treatment recommendations for this Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) propose a preservation strategy for long-term management of the cultural landscape based on research, inventory, and analysis. The appropriate preservation approach considers the evolution of the landscape alongside significance, existing conditions, and current use. The CLR combines the site history and analysis with input from the current site managers to formulate an appropriate treatment and management philosophy.

Recommendations follow National Park Service policy, including the Director's Orders No. 28: *Cultural Resource Management Guidelines* and *the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*. These documents identify four types of treatment: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Each treatment ranges by level of physical intervention and includes specific guidelines and standards.

Preservation is the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of a historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the on-going maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project.

Rehabilitation is the act or process of making possible a compatible use of a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

Restoration is the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other historic periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make the property functional is appropriate within a restoration project.

Reconstruction is the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and details of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, or objects for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time in its historic location.[160]

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment

Standards for Preservation:

A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that maximizes the retention of distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships. Where treatment and use have not been identified, a property will be protected and, if necessary, stabilized until additional work may be undertaken.

The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The replacement of intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate, and conserve existing

160. Charles A. Birnbaum, ed. T*he Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes,* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1996, 9, 18, 48, 90, 128.)

historic materials and features will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection, and properly documented for future research.

Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

The existing condition of historic features will be evaluated to determine the appropriate level of intervention needed. Where the severity of deterioration requires repair or limited replacement of a distinctive feature, the new material will match the old in composition, design, color, and texture.

Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

Standards for Rehabilitation:

A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.

The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be supported by documentary and physical evidence.

Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Standards for Restoration:

A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that reflects the property's restoration period.

Materials and features from the restoration period will be retained and preserved. The removal of materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize the period will not be undertaken.

Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate and conserve materials and features from the restoration period will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable

upon close inspection, and properly documented for future research.

Materials, features, spaces, and finishes that characterize other historical periods will be documented prior to their alteration or removal.

Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the restoration period will be preserved.

Deteriorated features from the restoration period will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials.

Replacement of missing features from the restoration period will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence. A false sense of history will not be created by adding conjectural features, features from other properties, or by combining features that never existed together historically.

Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

Archeological resources affected by a project will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.

Standards for Reconstruction:

Reconstruction will be used to depict vanished or non-surviving portions of a property when sufficient documentary and physical evidence is available to permit accurate reconstruction with minimal conjecture and when such reconstruction is essential to the public understanding of the property.

Reconstruction of a landscape, building, structure, or object in its historic location will be preceded by a thorough archeological investigation to identify and evaluate those features and artifacts which are essential to an accurate reconstruction. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

Reconstruction will include measures to preserve any remaining historic materials, features, and spatial relationships.

Reconstruction will be based on the accurate duplication of historic features and elements supported by documentary or physical evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different features from other historic properties. A reconstructed property will re-create the appearance of the non-surviving historic property in materials, design, color, and texture.

A reconstruction is clearly identified as a contemporary re-creation. Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.

Management Philosophy

Section 108 of the Water Resources Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-251) authorized Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. The Lora Blevins Farmstead is included in the designated area. Enabling legislation states that effective upon August 25, 1991, "responsibility for all planning, acquisition, and development, as well as administrative jurisdiction over all Federal lands, water, interests therein, and improvements thereon, within the National Area is hereby transferred to the Secretary of the Interior."[161] Since that date, the National Park Service has administered the park. The national recreation area's mission statement states, "The Big South Fork NRRA provides healthful outdoor recreation while preserving the free-flowing condition of the Big South Fork and its tributaries, the scenic, natural, and cultural values of the area, and the essentially primitive condition of the gorge."[162]

The *General Management Plan for Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area* (GMP) addresses the development of visitor facilities stating,

161. US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *General Management Plan, Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area* (2005), np.
162. Ibid., 19.

> Any facilities would be in keeping with cultural resource values and would include facilities identified as necessary to ensure protection of resources and provide for visitor education and safety. Trails, steps, railings, and signs would be common elements. Parking and hitching rails, if not intrusive, may also be provided. Structures needed for maintenance may be provided with specific approval and would be sensitively located and designed to harmonize with their setting and not degrade identified cultural values.[163]

The GMP does not provide an approved treatment for the park but does note that NPS would "continue an ongoing effort to inventory and classify historic sites and their features and determine their treatment."[164] Approved treatment would be determined on a case-by-case basis for the park's historic sites. The GMP also recommends development at the Lora Blevins Farmstead to "provide parking for trail access as well as for the cemetery and cultural site."[165]

The significance statement in the 2017 *Foundation Document for Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area* states that the park "contains numerous examples of human history in the Cumberland Plateau including thousands of rock shelters, settlements, farmsteads, mining sites, logging camps, and other resources representing the life and culture of the region."[166]

The *Foundation Document* identifies the following interpretive theme: "Land has Shaped the People; People have Shaped the Land. Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area has a rich cultural history spanning approximately 10,000 years. The land of the Big South Fork region has influenced human activity, but has also been affected by human presence and use."[167] The document identifies the buildings at Lora Blevins Farmstead as "in need of restoration work."[168] The document does not make specific recommendations for restoration. The *Foundation Document* identifies an opportunity for expanding visitor access, as "access to home sites and cemeteries can be a challenge for individuals with accessibility needs."[169] The *Foundation Document* also identifies the opportunity to "expand interpretation of cultural resources, including opportunities for virtual interpretation of displays and exhibits."[170]

The *Foundation Document* addresses maintaining family access to cemeteries. The Katie Blevins Cemetery is outside the scope of this CLR, but because it is an adjacent property, its management is important. The Katie Blevins Cemetery is a private, active, family-owned burial area, and the *Foundation Document* states that this use should continue.[171]

NPS maintenance staff performs landscape maintenance and site management at the Lora Blevins Farmstead. Duties include bush hogging and mowing, cleanup, and removal of refuse and trash.

Changes to the cultural landscape over time reflect the abandonment of agricultural practices at the site. During the period of significance, the farmstead was surrounded by agricultural fields and grazing areas. The area immediately surrounding the house included fences, a swept yard, and a small garden. After the Blevins family left the site, the front yard was no longer maintained as a swept dirt area, and fields were eventually left fallow. The USACE and NPS undertook recordation and stabilization efforts for the remaining structures after acquisition of the property. The USACE stabilized and recorded the major buildings at the site and removed fences and auxiliary buildings. Successional vegetation began to fill in the fallow fields. The NPS undertook restoration efforts on the house, barn, and corn crib and maintained the large trees at the site, replacing one black walnut tree in kind. Starting in 2001, volunteer groups associated with Spring Planting Day worked with NPS to plant sorghum in the long field annually. This group also installed small demonstration garden east of the house around this time. The NPS has introduced few visitor amenities at the site.

163. Ibid., 37.
164. Ibid., 225.
165. Ibid., 130.
166. US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Foundation Document: Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Kentucky and Tennessee* (October 2017), 5.
167. Ibid., 8.
168. Ibid., 24.
169. Ibid., 25.
170. Ibid.
171. Ibid., 12.

The goal of the recommendations in this report is to provide a framework for NPS managers to use when making decisions about how best to protect historic resources at the site, how to provide a range of visitor experience opportunities, how to manage visitor use, and what kinds of additional facilities to develop at the site.

Treatment Period

The period of significance (1927-1974) recognizes the site's association with Lora Blevins and the Blevins family and their use of the site as a home and farm. While Lora Blevins sold the property in 1974, family members still occupied and actively farmed the site until its purchase by the USACE in 1980. As such, the NPS should manage any features or activities dating between 1974 and 1980 as cultural resources.

Treatment Recommendations

Since the NPS acquired the property, the agency has focused cultural resource planning efforts at the Lora Blevins Farmstead on stabilization and maintenance rather than interpretation of the site. In addition to recommendations concerning the ongoing preservation of the site, this report recommends the addition of visitor amenities to interpret the cultural landscape features at the site.

Primary Treatment

This CLR recommends rehabilitation as the primary treatment of the Lora Blevins Farmstead. Rehabilitation protects the significant historic features that contribute to the integrity of the property while allowing for necessary improvements. Like preservation, rehabilitation involves identifying, retaining, and preserving character-defining features. Additionally, when the landscape's historic character is diminished because an important landscape feature is missing, rehabilitation provides strategies to accurately and faithfully return the missing feature to the landscape. Rehabilitation provides for the continued use of the property through alterations and additions that do not damage the character-defining features. Additions are sometimes necessary to facilitate a new use of a historic landscape, but the rehabilitation guidelines emphasize that new additions should only occur when there is no viable alternative.

Overall Treatment Goals

The overall goal of treatment is to improve the interpretation of the Lora Blevins Farmstead by preserving and/or rehabilitating the character-defining elements of the cultural landscape when it served as a residence and working farm. The primary characteristics of the cultural landscape that existed during period of significance related to:

- A domestic landscape designed to support the family's needs and that reflected regional cultural traditions. Specific domestic landscape-related features included a log house, swept front yard with ornamental vegetation, and other outbuildings such as a springhouse and a privy.
- An agricultural landscape designed to support the family's needs and that reflected regional cultural traditions. Specific agriculture-related features included a number of garden and crop spaces, animal pen areas, and outbuildings such as the surviving barn.

The treatment recommendations also aim to improve visitor orientation, access, and circulation. Rehabilitating the Lora Blevins Farmstead landscape involves preserving the existing features that contribute to the historic significance of the site while reestablishing additional documented features to facilitate interpretation. New features may improve visitor access to the site. There are currently no permanent interpretation elements at the site. Interpretation is limited to the annual Spring Planting Day activities and ranger-led educational programs.

The treatment goals should:

- Maintain and enhance the overall aesthetic of a farmstead landscape set in the context of the Upper Cumberland Plateau by rehabilitating the historic landscape features. The primary features currently contributing to the residential character of the site include the remaining large trees, the long field, and the log buildings.
- Use interpretive signage and replace documented features where possible to make the historic landscape more legible

to visitors. Strengthen the interpretive opportunities for making the historic landscape more legible and accessible for visitors.
- Follow the *Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* as well as the recommendations provided by the specialized reports and studies discussed at the end of this chapter.

General Treatment Issues

General treatment issues for the site include the effects of weather on historic materials, issues related to pests, the encroachment of successional vegetation on former agricultural areas, missing historic features, and available resources to perform site maintenance.

The following treatment recommendations address methods for improving the site's ability to convey the landscape setting during the period of significance.

Buildings and Structures

The buildings at the Lora Blevins Farmstead served residential and agricultural uses during the period of significance. Several secondary structures existed that supported the operation of the site as a working farm. During the period of significance, the Blevins family had a springhouse north of the main dwelling, as well as a smokehouse and "smithy." Following the departure of the Blevins family, the USACE removed several residential buildings from the site associated with later residents. A pumphouse also existed on the site, but the NPS removed this building and reused its siding to stabilize the privy.

A general treatment recommendation for the remaining log structures at the site is to establish a preservation plan to monitor the structural integrity of the buildings. A portion of this plan would address the establishment of a moisture-monitoring program to collect baseline data and study impacts of rising relative humidity and more intense rain events on the site's historic structures. Consult *Preservation Brief 39 - Holding the Line: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Buildings* for specific guidance. Higher relative humidity can lead to "increased desiccation, warping, and cracking" in wood buildings.[172] Additionally, the NPS should establish a pest-monitoring program to assess impacts related to insects. As fluctuations in temperatures disrupt ecological processes, pests may present a new challenge to the preservation of the structures.

Lastly, the NPS should install signage to interpret buildings and structures of the site for the public. See the Small-Scale Features section below.

Lora Blevins House (LCS # 092179)

Rehabilitate the Lora Blevins House (Illustration 5.2, note # 1). To assist in its rehabilitation, the NPS should complete a Historic Structure Report (HSR) for the house. The HSR would be an update to the 1987 *Historic American Building Survey Documentation* report.

Upon completion of the HSR, the NPS should follow any specific treatment recommendations provided by the document. If consistent with the HSR's preservation objectives, the NPS should rehabilitate the house to its circa 1935 appearance. Achieving this appearance would require the removal of the protective shed structure on the south side of the house. After its removal, the NPS should reconstruct the front porch and room addition on the south side of the house as well as the full-length addition on the north side of the house, which served as a kitchen for the Blevins family. These additions existed throughout the period of significance and were likely in place by the mid-1930s, with the kitchen addition undergoing at least two rebuilding efforts. Additionally, the NPS should install a red oak (or other appropriate species) shake roof on the house.[173]

172. Rockman, Marcy, Marissa Morgan, Sonya Ziaja, George Hambrecht, and Alison Meadow. *Cultural Resources Climate Change Strategy* (Washington, DC: Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science and Climate Change Response Program, National Park Service, 2016), 20.
173. It has been reported that wooden shake roofs "can provide superior performance in areas that experience high winds or damage from hail. Although they do have certain limitations (susceptibility to rotting, splitting, and warping), proper maintenance and care can minimize these limitations." (Source: S.S. Niemiec and T.D. Brown, "Care and maintenance of wood shingle and shake roofs," Oregon State University Extension Service, accessed August 30, 2018, http://owic.oregonstate.edu/sites/default/files/pubs/shake_roof_maintenance.pdf.)

Lora Blevins Corn Crib (LCS # 092178)

Rehabilitate the Lora Blevins Corn Crib (Illustration 5.2, note # 2). To assist in its rehabilitation, the NPS should complete an HSR for the building. The HSR would be an update to the 1987 *Historic American Building Survey Documentation* report.

Upon completion of the HSR, the NPS should follow any specific treatment recommendations provided by the document. If consistent with preservation objectives of the HSR, the NPS should install a red oak (or appropriate species) shake roof on the building. To aid in its preservation and prevent future damage, the NPS should not use the corn crib to store corn or other agricultural products.

Lora Blevins Pole Barn (LCS # 092177)

Rehabilitate the Lora Blevins Pole Barn (Illustration 5.2, note # 3). To assist in its rehabilitation, the NPS should complete an HSR for the building. The HSR would be an update to the 1987 *Historic American Building Survey Documentation* report.

Upon completion of the HSR, the NPS should follow any specific treatment recommendations provided by the document. If consistent with preservation objectives in the HSR, the NPS should rebuild the two wings of the barn, which the federal government removed after acquisition of the property. The reintroduction of the wings would aid in the interpretation of barn, as its current appearance does not reflect historic conditions. Further, the replacement of the wing additions would aid in the preservation and protection of the core building. After addressing any stabilization issues that the HSR identifies, consider restoring the chinking between log members. Lastly, the NPS should maintain the metal roof currently on the barn, as the earliest known photograph of the structure appears to show that the barn featured a metal roof and not a wood shake roof.

The barn could serve as a support building for the limited agricultural activities proposed throughout this section, including for equipment storage and potentially livestock containment.

Privy (Shadow LCS # 092181)

The LCS identifies the Lora Blevins Privy as a non-contributing to the significance of the site, but the NPS treats the structure as a cultural resource. However, the privy dates to the proposed period of significance for the cultural landscape, and the NPS should reevaluate its significance.

The NPS should rehabilitate the privy (Illustration 5.2, note # 4). The NPS should remove encroaching vegetation from the north side of the structure (see vegetation recommendations below). The NPS should also improve ground conditions to provide a more level surface for the privy building and prevent further erosion from around its base.

Building Foundation (No LCS record)

The Building Foundation is located east of the core historic landscape. While noted in the Cultural Landscape Inventory, the NPS has not added the foundation to the LCS. The NPS should clear vegetation encroaching on building foundation as part of the vegetation removal project (see recommendations below). Further, the NPS should seek out period photographs of the house from local family members. Such photographs may reveal additional information concerning the building as well as the surrounding cultural landscape.

Additional Outbuildings (Non-existing)

Conduct archeological testing to determine the locations of the original outbuildings and interpret these locations if located (Illustration 5.1, note # 2). Potential outbuildings include a springhouse (north of the house), smithy (north of the house), smokehouse (north of the house), and a church/ tobacco barn (in the vicinity of the cemetery).

Spatial Organization

While the NPS has retained some aspects of the historic spatial organization of the site, successional vegetation threatens to diminish further the historic character of the site. Additional site improvements can help to better interpret the historic spatial organization and character of the landscape.

Historic Farmstead Core

Preserve the spatial relationship of the house, barn, and corn crib with West Bandy Creek Road. This relationship is a character-defining feature of

the historic landscape. The NPS should conduct archeology to determine the historic locations of the following missing features: the swept front yard and associated paling fence, the herb garden and fence east of the house, the enclosed areas around the barn, and the original outbuildings north of the house.

Ideally, archeology (or LIDAR survey) will reveal the historic location of the fence; however, if such methods prove inconclusive, the feature is still significant enough to warrant reestablishment.[174] If undetermined, the NPS can use historic photographs and the description provided by Poppie Blevins Dishman to create a representation of the yard space. Install the replacement paling fence, remove grass ground cover, and reestablish the swept yard (Illustration 5.2, notes # 5 and # 6).

Poppie Blevins Dishman described the herb garden east of the house as being located "near the cabin just east and outside of the paling fence." A small enclosed area appears on the 1951 aerial of the property. This is most likely the herb garden location. The NPS should reestablish the garden and erect a fence to enclose it, based on archeological evidence (Illustration 5.2, note # 7).

In both cases, if the exact historic locations of the features cannot be located with archeology or LIDAR survey, interpretive signs should explain that the locations of the yard and herb garden are approximated based on photographic evidence.

The NPS should reestablish the fencing that created several distinct spaces and visually unified the historic core of the landscape. As seen on the 1951 aerial and 1974 USACE plan, fencing framed a barnyard field that abutted the east side of the Katie Blevins Cemetery. Additional fencing between the barn and the corn crib created other enclosed areas. Fencing in this area was likely of post-and-wire construction.

The NPS should conduct archeology and LIDAR survey north of the core farmstead area to identify any possible building remains. Should the historic locations of the smithy, springhouse, or smokehouse be determined, the NPS should maintain the area clear of ground vegetation and erect interpretive signs based on the findings of the archeological investigation.

Agricultural Fields

The NPS should reestablish the livestock field east of the long field through vegetation removal and maintain the long field as a crop-growing field. While the Blevins family used the long field for growing crops, it appears they used the eastern field for grazing livestock such as sheep. Separated from the long field area by a fence, the historic extent of the eastern field may be determined through an analysis of aerial photographs, archeology (fence post hole locations), and surveying the current vegetation of the site. Based on this analysis, the NPS should erect a new (post-and-wire) fence to delineate the long field from the eastern livestock field (Illustration 5.2, note # 11).

To aid in both the establishment and maintenance of the livestock field, the NPS may want to explore the a long term goal of reintroduction of sheep to the site. The reintroduction of sheep to the site would aid in the interpretation of historic farming operations. However, the NPS should place emphasis on the rehabilitation of the landscape, buildings, structures, and farm fences prior to their introduction. In the short term, the NPS can bring sheep to the site for special occasions, such as Spring Planting Day, and keep them in the barnyard fence enclosure for the day.

The primary reason for not placing emphasis on sheep reintroduction is the extent of fencing required. Historically, it does not appear the Blevins Family fenced the livestock field on all sides but enclosing the area would be a necessity today. The extent of fence required would constitute a major impact to the historic spatial organization this report recommends rehabilitating. Further, sheep keeping diverts limited park resources from more important tasks at the site. Should park managers decide to reintroduce sheep, it is recommended the NPS erect the fence enclosure north of the proposed orchard area, tying it to the long fence delineating the two fields. The NPS should base the size and alignment of the fence on specific site conditions (such as riparian areas), historic conditions, and the number of sheep desired. Partnerships with local school groups (such as Future Farmers of America) and other interested parties may aid in animal caretaking.

174. Researchers often use LIDAR (or laser scanning) surveys to detect differences in topography and historic feature locations at sites.

Several NPS units, such as Cuyahoga Valley National Park, feature livestock. Consult Richard Westmacott's report *Managing Culturally Significant Agricultural Landscapes in the National Park System* for specific guidance concerning the use of animals in historic farmsteads.

Vegetation

During the historic period, a variety of trees, herbs and vegetables, and crops grew on the farmstead. The historic core of the landscape featured black walnut trees, fruit trees, and ornamental vegetation within the swept front yard. Open grassed areas, agricultural fields, and wooded areas surrounded the buildings. Today, changes to the vegetation have resulted in a diminished historic character at the site. Specifically, the successional forest has encroached on the former agricultural fields and overtaken old orchard areas. Addressing the issue of successional vegetation will improve interpretation of the site as a historic farmstead.

Successional Forest

The NPS should clear successional vegetation and rehabilitate the wood line as shown in the 1951 aerial photograph. The NPS should balance removal of the forest with the need to protect important ecological areas, riparian corridors, and wildlife habitat. The NPS should identify these protected areas as part of a planning process prior to beginning the vegetation removal project. If any such areas and features are still present, the NPS should spare them from clearing.

A multi-phase vegetation clearing process is recommended (Illustration 5.1, note #1). Phasing the project allows the NPS to prioritize areas to clear based on available resources. Three phases are recommended.

- *Phase One* should focus on removing the successional vegetation immediately north and east of the house and privy, pulling the wood line back to the existing Katie Trail. The NPS should retain the black walnut trees currently along the wood line, as well as any remaining orchard trees that may still exist in this area of forest. The NPS should maintain a 30-foot buffer along the creek bank.
- *Phase Two* should focus on the woods north of the corn crib, removing vegetation back to the existing Katie Trail in this area. This phase will aid in the reestablishment of the eastern livestock field.
- *Phase Three* should remove the vegetation along the eastern edge of the long field and an area of woods north of the existing Katie Trail in order to reestablish the eastern field. The NPS should maintain a 30-foot buffer along the creek bank.

Field Management

Once the NPS has completed removing successional forest, the NPS should manage the historic farmstead's fields appropriately. The goal for the fields is not to reestablish their historical productivity. Rather, the maintenance of the fields should support the *feeling* of the farmstead, as park resources may not allow for a complete restoration of farming activities. The recommendations for the fields are as follows:

Long Field

Since 2001, a live demonstration of sorghum planting has taken place in the long field. Poppie Blevins Dishman confirmed the cultivation of the crop at the farmstead. It is probable that the family used the field for a rotating variety of crops during the period of significance.

Continue planting sorghum in the long field to serve as the demonstration of historic agricultural activity (Illustration 5.1, note # 8). Maintain a mown edge on all sides of the field to facilitate visitor circulation. Consider planting cover crops between growing seasons in order to conserve soil and nutrients. A possible regionally appropriate cover crop for fall planting is a mixture of annual ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*) and radish (*Raphanus sativus*). The NPS would need to eradicate the rye in the spring to prevent it from establishing at the site.

Livestock Field

It is unknown what species of grasses grew in the livestock field during the period of significance. The encroaching forest eventually shaded these grasses out.

After the removal of the successional forest, prepare the site for seeding grasses. There are two suggested options. The first (recommended) option utilizes native-only species and the second is based

on the potential for the reintroduction of sheep to the site:

- Plant a native grass mix. This mix would be in keeping with NPS environmental initiatives but would possess a different visual character than the rest of the site which features a fescue ground cover. A possible regionally-appropriate mix would contain some or all of the following:
    - Eastern Gamagrass, *Tripsacum dactyloides*
    - Switchgrass, *Panicum virgatum*
    - Big Bluestem, *Andropogon gerardii*
    - Indiangrass, *Sorghastrum nutans*
    - Little Bluestem, *Schizachyrium scoparium*
    - Sideoats Grama, *Bouteloua curtipendula*

- Plant a mixture of fescue and alfalfa to support sheep. This mix, recommended by the Ernst Seed Company, would visually blend with the existing ground cover of the open space at the farmstead. Secondarily, this mix is a recommended mix for sheep grazing. A sample mix of this sort would contain:
    - 57.1% *Festuca elatior x Lolium perenne*, 'Duo' (*Festulolium*, 'Duo')
    - 42.9% *Medicago sativa*, VNS (Alfalfa, VNS)

Other open areas
The site contains several other fields of different sizes, all of which currently have a mostly-fescue ground cover. It is recommended the NPS maintain these fields as they have in the past, keeping the height of the grass low enough to facilitate pedestrian use balanced against mowing costs.

Orchard
Rehabilitate and interpret the orchard that was located immediately north of the house (Illustration 5.1 and 5.2, notes # 4 and # 10). Currently, only one known apple tree exists on site, but more trees may survive in the successional forest that has now overtaken the historic orchard location (apple trees can live up to 150 years with proper care). Though fruit trees have been difficult to establish at the park in the past due to foraging wildlife, establishing a demonstration orchard at the site would add to interpretation of the farmstead.

Orchard Goals
The goal for the orchard is not to produce a market crop. Rather, the orchard should serve as an opportunity to interpret the homesteading traditions of the Blevins family. For this reason, the orchard would not require an abundance of resources to maintain once established. Since the exact spacing of trees in the historic orchard is unknown, it is recommended that the NPS plant a similar number of apple trees in a similar grid arrangement as the historic period. This planting should occur after *Phase Two* of vegetation removal is complete. The arrangement and spacing should balance historic conditions with modern day orcharding best practices that would result in a successful orchard establishment.

Historic Conditions
The 1951 aerial of the property shows at least 20 to 25 trees arranged in rows extending across the north side of the historic farmstead core. Concerning spacing, there are gaps in the grid pattern indicating missing trees, and the tree spacing does not appear to be regular, perhaps due to the sloping topography in that location. In general, it appears that the trees were spaced between 15 feet and 20 feet apart, with rows spaced approximately 25 feet apart. The close spacing places the orchard within the third period of orchard development in the United States, which spans from 1881 and 1945.[175]

Orcharding has a long history in the Big South Fork region. It is likely that Lora and Tealie both had experience tending an orchard prior to the purchase of the property in 1927. In *Fruitful Legacy: A Historic Context of Orchards in the United States*, Susan Dolan explains that the period between 1881 and 1945 marked a shift towards scientifically informed orcharding practices, which included the use of pesticides and government- and university-developed cultivars.[176]

175. Susan A. Dolan, *Fruitful Legacy: A Historic Context of Orchards in the United States, With Technical Information for Registering Orchards in the National Register of Historic Places*, (National Park Service, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, Pacific West Regional Office, Cultural Resources, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, 2009), 91-92.
176. Ibid., 65-70.

This period is also marked by an increase in the commercialization of orchards and a reduction in small-scale farm orcharding. The presence of a subsistence-scale orchard at the Lora Blevins Farmstead represents an exception to this trend. Yet, the influence of the other agricultural trends on the orchard is not currently known. Research did not reveal whether the Blevins family used pesticides, grew standardized (i.e. non-heirloom) cultivars, or if they pruned and fertilized their orchard based on the advice of government agents.

Stabilization

The NPS should stabilize the remaining tree or trees immediately (Illustration 5.2, note # 15). The single tree identified at the site during fieldwork is in poor condition. Stabilization actions "do not alter the integrity of the potential or known historic resource or cause any loss of information while at the same time arrest deterioration in condition."[177] A certified arborist should conduct a thorough condition assessment of the tree and conduct any necessary actions to stop the decline of the tree's health. As recommended by NPS historic landscape architect Susan Dolan, immediate actions include:

> 1. Remove all dead wood from the terminal ends to open up the interior of the canopy to more light. Don't remove live canopy this time around (as there is so little live tissue).
>
> 2. Remove the vegetation growing beneath the tree. Establish a 10' diameter turf-free circle around the tree, spread 2-3" of nutritional mulch, such as mushroom or chicken compost. Hold the mulch away from the trunk.
>
> 3. We really need about 8" new scionwood growth to graft the tree in December 2019 or January 2020 (*see "grafting" below*). This is possible with adequate water. [It is] important to supply 1" depth per week in the root zone from a drip system [should natural precipitation be inadequate].[178]

Additional actions include cabling and bracing of the tree if necessary and protection from wildlife (see "fencing" below). Consult the NPS's *Historic Orchard and Fruit Tree Stabilization Handbook* and *Fruitful Legacy: A Historic Context of Orchards in the United States* for specific information. Since increased climate variability may lead to higher temperatures in the area, the NPS should assess the quality of the soil in the proposed orchard area as high heat can lead to a loss in soil fertility.[179]

Cultivar Identification

The exact cultivar of the surviving apple tree at the Lora Blevins Farmstead is unknown, but it appears to be low-headed due to the low height of the lowest limbs. The NPS should analyze the DNA of the tree to best determine the cultivar or cultivars of apples grown at the site. "DNA Fingerprinting" uses microsatellites on mitochondrial DNA to identify the exact cultivar of a plant. According to Susan Dolan, "most heirloom and contemporary cultivars now have known genomes," which should make identification of the Lora Blevins Farmstead apple tree possible.

The Foundation Plant Services Lab at the University of California-Davis offers an affordable DNA testing service. Current pricing is $345 per sample for one to five samples. Concerning the sample material, the lab's website states "[d]ried young leaves are the standard sample, but plant varieties can also be identified using other parts of the plant such as fruit or dormant cuttings. This allows samples to be tested in any season."[180]

Grafting

After stabilization and identification, the NPS should initiate a grafting project to clone the historic tree. Susan Dolan provides guidance:

> Grafting is the process of vegetative propagation in which two different plants are joined together in order to take advantage of the special characteristics of each. Dormant cuttings should be taken from the new growth of the canopy, also

177. US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Pacific West Region, Cultural Landscape Program with California Department of Parks and Recreation, Archaeology, History and Museums Division, *Historic Orchard and Fruit Tree Stabilization Handbook*, (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2012), 31.

178. Susan Dolan, personal communication, February 2018.

179. Rockman, Marcy, Cultural Resources Climate Change Strategy, 21.

180. "Foundation Plant Services," accessed March 4, 2019, http://fps.ucdavis.edu/dnamain.cfm.

known as scionwood, and grafted onto an apple seedling rootstock (i.e., a non-clonal rootstock). Approximately 1/2" caliper scionwood and rootstock" is a good size. A seedling rootstock will produce a period-accurate, full-size clone of the historic tree. Avoid using clonal rootstocks, such as M.M. 111 or M.9, as this will dwarf the tree, resulting in an unauthentic scale and a shorter lifespan. Grafting services can be provided by the USDA National Clonal Germplasm Repositories, a university Cooperative Extension, or a plant nursery. The grafted whip is grown in the nursery for one to two years before planting in the orchard.[181]

Physical Barriers

It does not appear that the historic orchard at the Lora Blevins Farmstead was ever fenced. However, in order to establish a successful orchard at the site, some form of physical barrier from wildlife is necessary. The *Historic Orchard and Fruit Tree Stabilization Handbook* states that two types of physical barriers are suitable for historic sites: fences and tree cages.

Installing fencing to enclose the orchard would introduce a new, if temporary, element to the historic landscape. To comply with Secretary of the Interior Guidelines, fences must be compatible but distinct from the other historic features of the site.

The NPS has two options concerning fencing in relation to orchard establishment.

- *Option One*: Fence in the entirety of the orchard space with a singular post and wire perimeter fence (Figure 83). The fence would need to be at least 6 feet tall. This option would introduce a visual impact to the historic character of the site. However, from a functional standpoint, the western side of this fence can be shared with the rehabilitated long fence (see Small-scale Features). Similarly, this fence can be used as part of the fencing required to enclose the livestock field, should the NPS opt to reintroduce sheep to the landscape. A fence of this size would be expensive and would require heavy-duty gates. Any gates should be located along historic circulation routes to prevent the establishment of new circulation features.
- *Option Two (recommended):* Fence the trees with cages (Figure 84). Tree cages are post and wire fences that encircle individual trees. Typically, site managers use tree cages until the tree grows above animal browsing height. While tree cages constitute a visual impact to the historic site, this option better facilitates pedestrian circulation through the site.



Figure 83: Example of fencing Option One. Source: http://scbarns.com/deer-orchard/.



Figure 84: Example of fencing Option Two. Source: Presentation: "Historic Orchards in National Parks," Susan A. Dolan, NPS Park Cultural Landscapes Program Manager, August 2014. Available online http://www.homeorchardsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/evening-2-Susan-Dolan-Historic-Orchards-in-National-Parks.pdf.

181. Susan Dolan, personal communication, February 2018.

Other Vegetation

Aside from the apple tree, the only known historic trees on the site are the several mature black walnut trees primarily concentrated in the historic core of the farmstead. While some date to after the period of significance, all the black walnut trees are character-defining features that the NPS should preserved with ongoing maintenance. The NPS should replace any mature black walnuts in kind should they be lost or decline, as was the case due to weather in 2004.

Yuccas grow in at least three locations on the property. Research does not reveal the date of their installation, but it is appears that the clump directly below the mature black walnut next to the house is less than 30 years old. The yuccas that flank the remnant pathway alongside the cinder block foundation appear older and intentionally planted and may date to the period of significance. The NPS should retain all yuccas at the site. Photographs collected through the recommended public outreach effort may provide an approximate date for their presence and/or establishment (See Further Study).

After the reestablishment of the swept yard, the NPS should install the ornamental plant species described by Poppie Blevins Dishman. She relayed to Tom Des Jean that "two peach trees were located at the [southeast] corner of the yard inside of the paling fence and a 'snowball bush' was planted between them."[182] As with the orchard, the NPS does not need to maintain the peach trees for fruit production. The "snowball bush" was likely a viburnum shrub (*Viburnum opulus*). The NPS should plant two peach trees and one viburnum in the southeast corner of the rehabilitated swept yard.

After the reestablishment of the herb garden fence line, the NPS should install the plant species described by Poppie Blevins Dishman. She noted that she grew "peppers, sage, parsley" and likely other medicinal and culinary plants in the space. The NPS should plant these mentioned species along with other medicinal and culinary species described by former Big South Fork residents in the garden space. Consult Benita J. Howell's *Folklife Along the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River* for specific plant species grown and used by area residents.

Poppie Blevins Dishman recounted that she and her mother grew a variety of other ornamental plants including asters, petunias, zinnias, phlox, daffodils, and red-hot poking stick. The planting locations for these species is unknown, as photographs of the site do not conclusively show their presence. It is possible that they lined the interior of the swept yard and paling fence or that the Blevins family planted them in the herb garden. The NPS should plant these ornamental species inside the rehabilitated swept yard fence and inside the herb garden fence.

Views and Vistas

While some views within the farmstead remain intact, views toward the farmstead from other locations within the property have changed since the period of significance due to encroaching vegetation. The views in and around the historic core of the farmstead have remained consistent with the historic period. However, the views to and from the agricultural areas north and west of the farmstead core are missing.

The NPS should preserve the views from the buildings toward West Bandy Creek Road as well as the views between the buildings themselves. This will involve keeping the area under the powerlines as well as the space between the buildings clear of vegetation.

The NPS should rehabilitate the historic views to and from the now-forested fields north of the farmstead core. This involves the removal of the successional growth in these areas. The reestablishment of the orchard would provide lines of sight through the rows of trees. Refer to the vegetation treatment recommendations for the removal of successional vegetation.

Circulation

Circulation features present during the period of significance included informal footpaths, several sections of driveway, and the alignment of West Bandy Creek Road.

Driveway

The NPS should rehabilitate the drive with stabilized material (Illustration 5.2, note # 8). While the original drive material is unknown, it

182. "Interview with Poppie Blevins Dishman." From the personal files of Tom Des Jean (BISO).



Figure 85: Example of a stabilized soil path. Source: https://www.environmentalpavingsolutions.com/soil-stabilization/.



Figure 86: Example of aggregate and a geo-grid system. Source: https://www.ndspro.com/products/permeable-pavers/ez-roll-gravel-pavers.html.

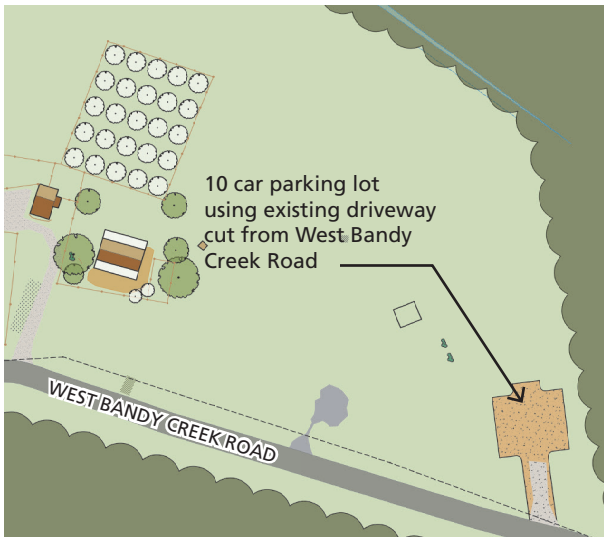


Figure 87: Parking Option One. Source: WLA Studio.

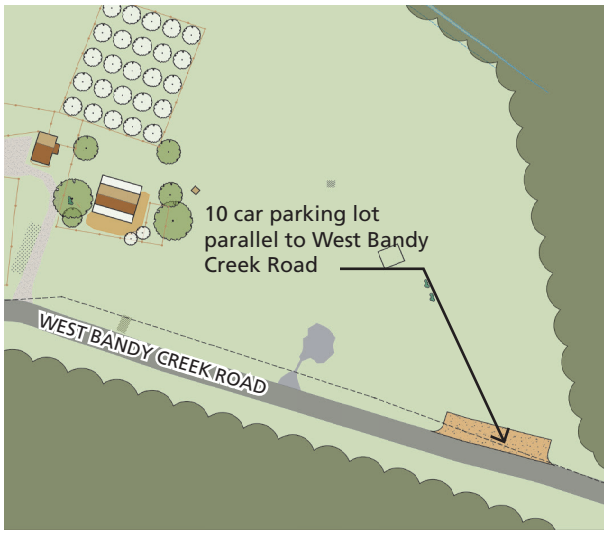


Figure 88: Parking Option Two. Source: WLA Studio.

was probably a soil surface. The NPS should use a stabilized soil material in lieu of gravel to make the site more accessible and return the appearance of the drive to historic conditions. The NPS can construct an ABAAS-compliant driveway using natural crushed stone bound with a binding agent. The binding agent holds the natural aggregate in place. The best results are achieved using an edge restraint and a hard aggregate like crushed stone or decomposed granite. The NPS could use a native stone that has a similar, tan color to the native soil. It may also be possible to stabilize the native soil itself should it pass sieve analysis for use with the stabilizer. The stabilizer is sprayed onto or mixed into loosened soil or the aggregate, saturating approximately 2-3 inches. There are several products on the market, including a natural binder produced by Stabilizer Solutions, Inc. (Figure 85).

An alternative construction method would be to mix resin with a desired aggregate to create a cured, highly porous walkway. Blue Green Urban Limited produces a product called Arboresin that creates universally compliant surfaces. The NPS could use a local stone with the resin.

A reinforced grid system should be integrated into the stabilized driveway. An example of a grid designed for heavy traffic is Gravelpave®. Gravelpave is a reinforced plastic grid designed to hold aggregate in place and distributing the point load of service vehicles (Figure 86).

It is recommended the NPS discontinue regular public vehicular use of the drive except for special circumstances such as Spring Planting Day, funerals at Katie Blevins Cemetery, or for disabled persons (see options concerning site accessibility below). The NPS should use the driveway primarily



Figure 89: Example of a mown grass path. Source: WLA Studio.

for pedestrian circulation as part of a pedestrian circulation system (see pedestrian path options below). The stabilized drive will allow for access by service vehicles and equipment when needed.

Parking

Lora Blevins Farmstead Site Access

The NPS should establish a new parking area along West Bandy Creek Road, east of the historic core of the farmstead (See Figure 87 and Figure 88). This parking area can facilitate visitor access to the site via a connecting trail (discussed below) and remove vehicles from the historic core area. The recommended parking area should accommodate at least 10 vehicles. There are several possibilities for the configuration of the parking lot. Overall, due to the presence of the rock outcrop in the area, grading the lot will be difficult. Therefore, the parking area should be an aggregate surface lot, following existing contours, enclosed by a park-appropriate border feature (boulders, wood bollards, or other natural material).

1. 50 foot x 60 foot Lot: This design compresses the parking lot to a tight area in the landscape. Doing so limits the visual impact on the historic landscape. This compact design might also avoid the exposed rock outcrops in the area.

2. 100 foot x 20 foot Lot: This design elongates the parking lot along West Bandy Creek Road. Cars would pull off the road into the spaces. It is possible the rock outcrops would become part of the lot. Culverts would be required at the access point from West Bandy Creek Road to accommodate water carried by the existing swale, which parallels West Bandy Creek Road.

Katie Blevins Cemetery Access

Katie Blevins Cemetery is an adjacent property that is not owned by the NPS, but it is surrounded by the Lora Blevins Farmstead. The NPS has previously agreed to facilitate access to the cemetery. It is enclosed by a 3-foot tall post and wire fence, which is lined on the outside by a number of trees of various species. Currently, visitors to the cemetery typically park along West Bandy Creek Road or in the driveway at the farmstead. Two options are proposed for the treatment of the landscape around the cemetery.

1. Construct a small reinforced grass parking lot west of the cemetery to accommodate several cars. This lot could additionally function as an overflow lot should the proposed lot east of the site become full. Archeology would need to be conducted in this area to confirm the location of the church/tobacco barn.

2. Extend the proposed trail leading from the proposed vehicular parking lot east of the site toward the cemetery. Should the proposed parking lot east of the house become full, overflow parking should be directed to the Visitor Center for larger events, and a shuttle could provide service to the site.

Pedestrian Paths

Historically, informal paths led to various site features and spaces. Worn paths evident on historic aerial photos indicate foot travel to features that are no longer present at the site (e.g. the springhouse). Unless the NPS locates these features, it is not recommended that the NPS rehabilitate this network of paths. However, the addition of new circulation features can facilitate visitor access to the farmstead. A new connection between the proposed parking area and the historic core of the farmstead is recommended should the parking lot be constructed.

Path to Historic Farmstead Core
It is recommended that the NPS establish a new pedestrian connection between the proposed parking area and the farmstead (See Illustrations 5.1 and 5.2, notes #11 and #14). There are two possible options for the materials and ABAAS-compatibility of the pathway.

1. Option One: Establish a 5-foot-wide ABAAS-compliant stabilized earth pathway (see vehicular circulation for product recommendations) extending parallel along West Bandy Creek Road and connecting to the existing driveway. Use the driveway as a part of the path system. This option would involve grading to meet ABAAS code requirements, as the path would be laid across a moderately steep slope.

2. Option Two: Establish a mown grass path from the proposed parking area running parallel along West Bandy Creek Road and connecting to the existing driveway (see Figure 89). For ABAAS-accessibility, install two reinforced grass parking spaces to accommodate vehicles. These spaces would be reserved for disabled persons, designated by signage at the road. This option eliminates the need for an ABAAS-compliant path from the new parking area, reducing installation costs and visual intrusion. The presence of the vehicles and signs would create a minor, non-permanent, visual impact in the historic core of the farm.

Path to Secondary Spring
Reestablish the pedestrian trail connection to the spring south of the site. This would require the NPS to coordinate with the State of Tennessee (Scott State Forest). Presently, there is a short length of overgrown trail running from West Bandy Creek Road toward a clearing (the location of an old house site and the spring). This could be cleared and re-used. This path can be a natural surface trail.

Katie Trail
The proposed treatment recommendations necessitate rerouting Katie Trail north of its present alignment. Currently the equestrian trail winds through the forest north of the historic core of the farmstead. The proposed vegetation removal recommendations would "daylight" the trail. The current alignment cuts through the areas proposed for the orchard rehabilitation. The NPS would need to establish a new alignment for Katie Trail through the areas of forest on the property not included in the vegetation removal project. See Illustration 5.1, note # 7 for a possible route location. Note that the NPS would need to confirm that this alignment is possible given the existing slope and terrain.

Small Scale Features
During the period of significance, the site's small-scale features included fences, animal pens, and other features. The lack of fencing in the front yard is one of the most noticeable changes between the period of significance and the current condition at the site. The following recommendations address preservation of existing contributing features and the addition of features to interpret the historic character of the landscape. These features are ranked in terms of their priority, with a goal of rehabilitating the historic spatial arrangement of the site for interpretive purposes.

Fence in Front Yard (high priority)
A wooden paling fence existed around the front swept yard area during the period of significance. The NPS should reestablish the fence in its historic location, ideally based on archeological evidence (Illustration 5.2, note # 5). Should archeology prove inconclusive concerning the location of the historic fence, the NPS can use photographic evidence to rehabilitate the fence location.

Based on the 1951 aerial photograph, the three-sided fence measured approximately 80 feet long on the south, 40 long on the east, and 65 long on the west. The fence stood roughly 25 feet south of the south facade of the house. The rehabilitated fence should match these layout dimensions. The distinct characteristics of the fence evident in historic photographs, including spacing between palings, width and height of the palings, horizontal timber supports, and unpainted character of the fence, should be replicated (Figure 90). Research does not reveal the species of wood used in the fencing.

Additionally, a low-height timber-constructed raised planting bed ran along the inside base of the fence's eastern and southern sides. This feature should also be reintroduced at the site. Archeology

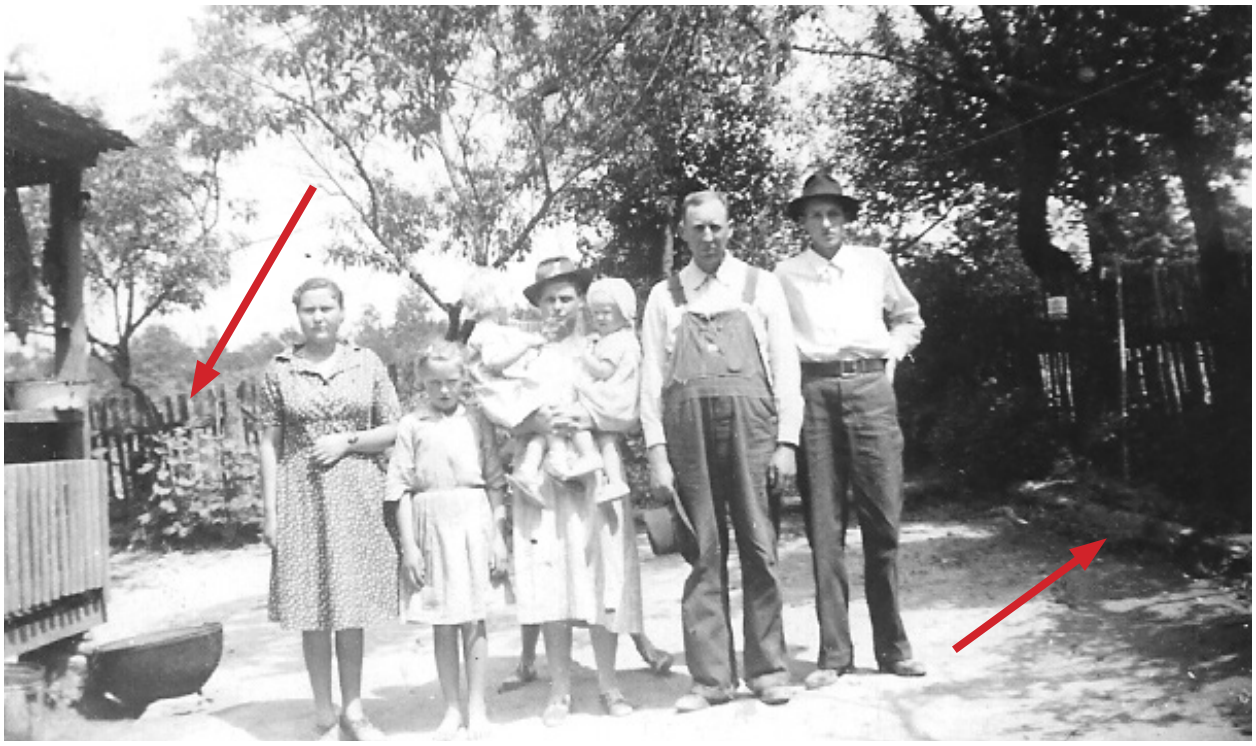


Figure 90: The Blevins Family posing for a photograph in front yard. Paling fence and raised planting bed indicated by arrows. Source: National Park Service.

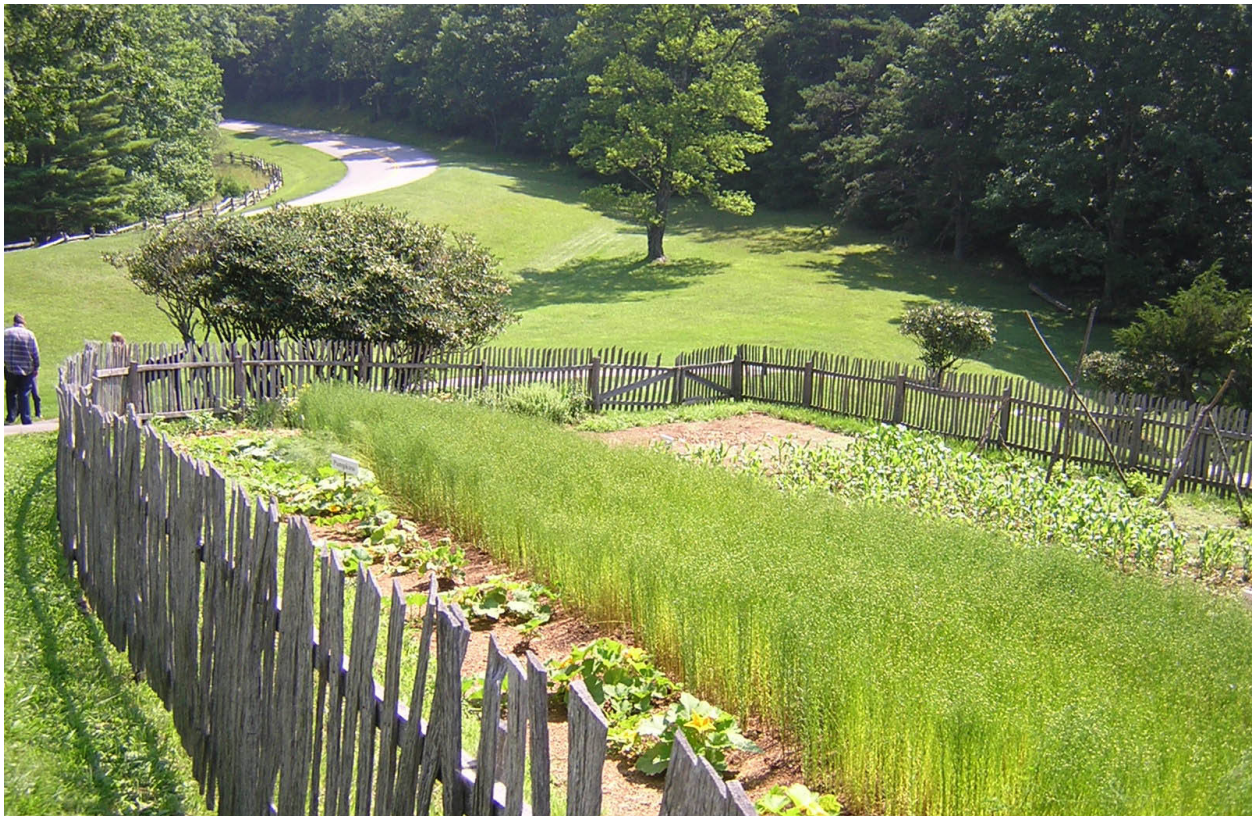


Figure 91: Example of a rehabilitated paling fence at a historic home site along the Blue Ridge Parkway. Note the similarities between this fence and the one shown in the photograph of the Blevins fence above. Source: WLA Studio.

may help in identifying the exact dimensions of the planting bed. Figure 91 shows a paling fence at a farmstead part of the Blue Ridge Parkway that can serve as an example for the front yard fence.

Herb Garden Fence (high priority)

Poppie Blevins Dishman described the family herb garden as being located "near the cabin just east and outside of the paling fence." A small enclosed area appears on the 1951 aerial of the property. This is likely the herb garden location. The NPS should reestablish the garden and erect a fence to enclose it, ideally based on archeological evidence (Illustration 5.2, note # 7). If archeology proves inconclusive concerning the location of the fence, the NPS should erect the fence based on the evidence shown in historic aerial photographs.

Based on the aerial images, the fence that enclosed the garden measured approximately 35 feet wide and 45 feet deep. It appears to have shared the front yard paling fence's eastern side. Unfortunately, no photographs of the herb garden exist (beyond the historic aerial), and the historic material of the fence is unknown. The NPS could either install a paling fence like the front yard fence (Figure 91) or a post and wire fence (Figures 92- 94), as either of these options would be site-appropriate.[183] This report recommends installing a paling fence, with a simple wooden gate. The gate should be located at the northwest corner of the enclosure, facing the orchard.

Barnyard / Corn Crib Fencing (high priority)

As seen on the 1951 aerial and 1974 USACE plan, fencing created several distinct spaces in the historic farmstead core during the period of significance. The NPS should rehabilitate the fences in the area west of the house in two specific locations.

(1) The Barnyard: during the period of significance, a fence enclosed a large space between the south side of the barn and West Bandy Creek Road. The fence measured approximately 180 feet x 105



Figure 92: Example of weathered post and wire fencing. Note single strands of wire used. Source: WLA Studio.



Figure 93: Example of weathered post and wire fencing. Note the use of woven wire in this example. Source: Nicepik.com.



Figure 94: Example of modern post and wire fencing. Note the use of both single wire and woven wire in this example. Source: Bekaert Fencing, Gaucho Horse Fence non-climb.

183. Note that the farmstead likely featured a variety fencing wire types. Some would be newly bought, and some would be reused. The Blevins probably used both woven wire and single strand wire types. Therefore, site managers should choose the type of wire used for replaced fences based on availability, cost, maintenance, and safety considerations.

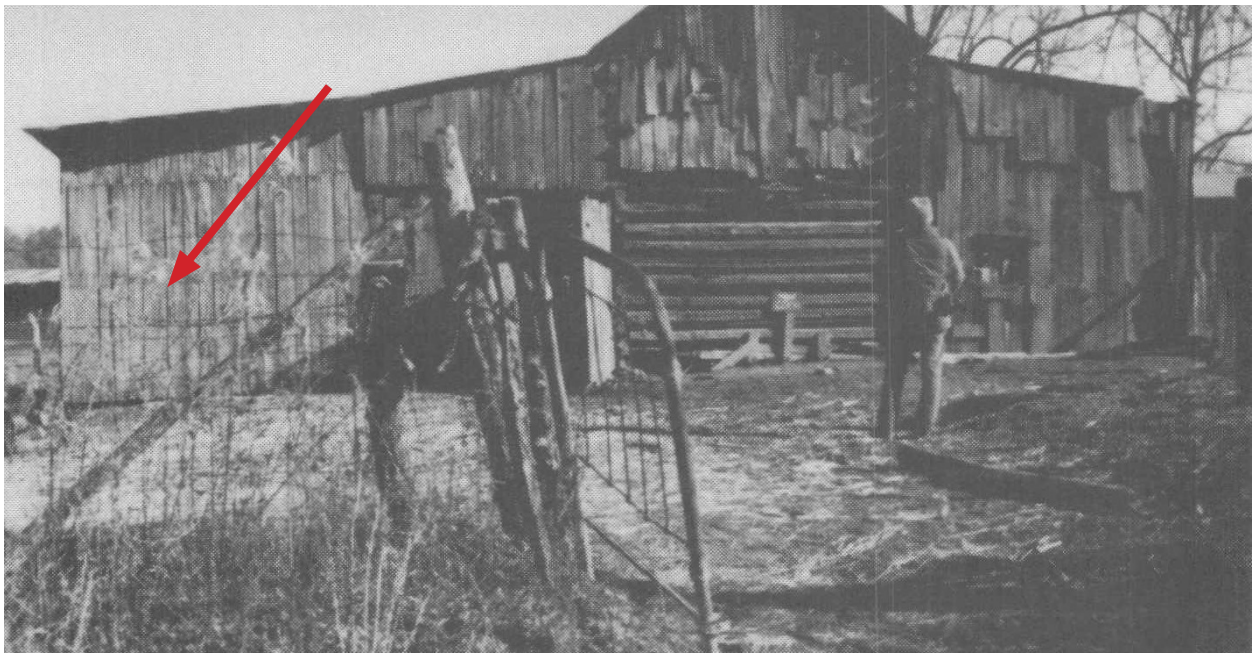


Figure 95: 1981 image of post and wire fence west of the barn. Note the rustic character of the fencing and the repurposing of materials. Source: National Park Service.

feet. The north side of the fence connected to the southeast and southwest corners of the (presently missing) barn addition. The barnyard fence shared the eastern side of the Katie Blevins Cemetery fence. Given its size, it is probable that the historic barnyard fence was of post and wire construction. The current cemetery fence is of post and wire construction, though it appears to be modern.

The park should erect a post and wire fence to enclose the barnyard, ideally based on finding original locations of postholes via archeology (Illustration 5.2, note # 12). Should archeology prove inconclusive, the park should approximate the location of the fence based on the 1951 aerial photograph and the dimensions provided above. In addition to rehabilitating the historic spatial organization of the farmstead core, the enclosed space can serve as an animal holding area during special events, such as Spring Planting Day.

(2) Corn Crib Area: Additional fencing between the barn and the corn crib created other enclosed areas. The 1951 aerial shows a 60 foot section of fencing spanning the area between the northeast corner of the barn and the northwest corner of the corn crib. The 1974 site plan shows additional fencing; however, this area is obscured in the 1951 aerial. This additional fencing created two small enclosed areas north of the corn crib. It is recommended that the park first reinstall the section of fencing spanning from the corn crib to the barn, again basing the location of archeology. Should archeology also reveal the locations of the additional fenced enclosures surrounding the corn crib, the NPS should also rehabilitate these sections of fence, as they likely existed during the period of significance. All fencing in this area was probably of post-and-wire construction. See Illustration 5.2, note # 16 for fencing arrangement. See Figures 92- 94 for an example post and wire fence.

Agricultural Fencing (low priority)

During the period of significance, an approximately 700-foot-long, north-south oriented fence separated the long field from the eastern field, likely serving to keep livestock out of the crops. On the south, the fence terminated at the east-west oriented barnyard fence. The northern terminus point is unknown, as vegetation obscures

the view of the fence on the 1951 aerial image, but it is probable it ran at least to the property line. A photograph taken during the 1981 documentation of the site reveals that the fence was of post and wire construction (Figure 95). It is probable that this condition reflects that of the historic period. A large metal swing gate—potentially a bed frame headboard—was located at the junction between the barnyard fence and this long fence. The NPS should replace this fencing in the same location as it ran during the historic period. While there is not an immediate need to reinstall this fence (no livestock on the farm), it is recommended the park reinstall this fence to aid in rehabilitating the historic spatial organization of the site. See Illustration 5.1 for location. See Figures 92- 94 for an example post and wire fence.

Fencing at Spring (low priority)

As seen on the 1951 aerial, a zigzagging 240 foot section of fencing existed northeast of the orchard. Its purpose is unknown, but it potentially controlled livestock access to the spring immediately east of the fence. Like most other farm fencing, the manner of its construction is unknown. Based on archeology, reestablish the fence with post and wire fencing, so long that the fence does not interfere with the establishment or maintenance of the orchard. Should archeology prove inconclusive, base the rehabilitation of the fence on the 1951 aerial photograph of the site. See Figures 92- 94 for an example post and wire fence and Illustrations 5.1 and 5.2, notes # 9 and # 11 for location.

Existing Fence Remnant (high priority)

Currently, a short section of paling fence extends north-south along the east side of the house. This feature does not appear to be historic, but perhaps it served an interpretive purpose at some point during the USACE or NPS tenure of the site. The NPS should remove the fence to accommodate the installation of the front yard fence and the herb garden fence.

Signs (high priority)

The Lora Blevins Farmstead currently contains one sign identifying the site and providing a date of establishment. The NPS should install several new signs to interpret the site for visitors. Proposed signs should be properly sized and not detract from a visitor's experience of the site, using current NPS standards. See Illustration 5.2 for proposed locations.

Thematically, the signs should address the particular cultural lifeways of the farmstead as well as their historic context. New interpretive signs should include information on:

- *The Lora Blevins Farmstead and Farm Life on the Cumberland Plateau:* This sign would interpret the subsistence farming operations at the farmstead established by the Blevins family. Topics could include: raising livestock, growing crops, orcharding, and the regional farm economy. This sign could be located in vicinity of the barn and corn crib.
- *Home Life on the Cumberland Plateau:* This sign would interpret the homesteading traditions of the Blevins family including the use of medicinal herbs, animal butchering, making molasses from sorghum, and making products (i.e. butter and wool) from animal products. This sign should address thee central role women played in maintaining the household. Information for this sign could come from the Poppie Blevins Dishman interview. This sign could be located east of the house, near the herb garden.
- *Log building traditions of the Big South Fork Region:* This sign would interpret the traditional log building traditions prevalent in the Big South Fork region. This sign could be located on the west side of the house.
- *Orchards in the Big South Fork Region:* This sign would interpret the practice of orcharding in the Big South Fork region. This sign could be located on the west side of the corn crib.

Root Cellar (medium priority)

Currently, a 10 foot x 15 foot' rectangular depression south of the house and along West Bandy Creek Road indicates the former presence of the family root cellar (Illustration 5.2, note # 13). Unfortunately, the 1951 aerial photograph's resolution is too low to determine any characteristics of the cellar. The NPS should conduct archeology on the depression feature.

Should archeology reveal enough information, rehabilitate the cellar based on archeological findings, oral history, and other surviving examples from the region. The nearby Oscar Blevins farm has the stone foundation of a cellar that could be used for comparative analysis. This feature provides an opportunity to talk about regional foodways and self-sufficient homesteading, and information about these traditions would benefit the site's interpretive program.

Hog Pen Area (low priority)

The hog pen area is located in the woods north of the historic core of the property. Not much remains of the small site and remaining fencing and pens are in ruinous condition. The date of its establishment is unknown. As part of the vegetation removal program, the NPS should remove brush and excessive leaf litter in this area to locate the site's surviving features. If the full extent of site fencing is located, the NPS could potentially rehabilitate fence line to interpret this location. If possible, stabilize the pen shelter inside the fencing. The fence type appears to be post and wire. As this feature is well outside of the historic farmstead core, the rehabilitation of the hog pen area is a low priority.

Further Study

The following studies will help guide specific treatment actions proposed above, as well as the future management of the site.

Archeological Study

Conduct an archeological study at the site to locate missing features at the site including ancillary structures, planting bed limits, and fence lines. Priority should be given to the area immediately around the existing buildings at the farmstead.

Historic Structure Reports

Conduct Historic Structure Reports (HSR) for the three remaining log buildings, as well as the privy. These reports will provide information about the construction and developmental history of the buildings and give recommendations concerning their preservation and rehabilitation.

Preservation Maintenance Plan

Based on the findings of the HSRs, develop a preservation maintenance plan for entire site. Items to address in the plan would include the recommended moisture and pest monitoring programs. Additional plan items should include the replacement of damaged historic materials and the impacts related to visitors.

Call for Public Assistance

Develop a strategy for public outreach to solicit photographs and information concerning the history of the site. While none of the Blevins children are still alive, other descendants, relatives, and friends may have valuable information that would assist in site management and interpretation.

National Register Nomination

The NPS drafted a National Register of Historic Places nomination for several of the park's historic farmsteads, including the Lora Blevins Farmstead. The nomination for the "Big South Fork Rural Historic District" was not submitted however, and the site is not currently listed in the register. However, previous research has found that the site's surviving resources meet the eligibility requirements for listing. The park has several options for completing the nomination:

(1) Review, amend, and submit the Big South Fork Rural Historic District nomination.

(2) Develop a Multiple Property nomination, which would include, but not be limited to, Lora Blevins.

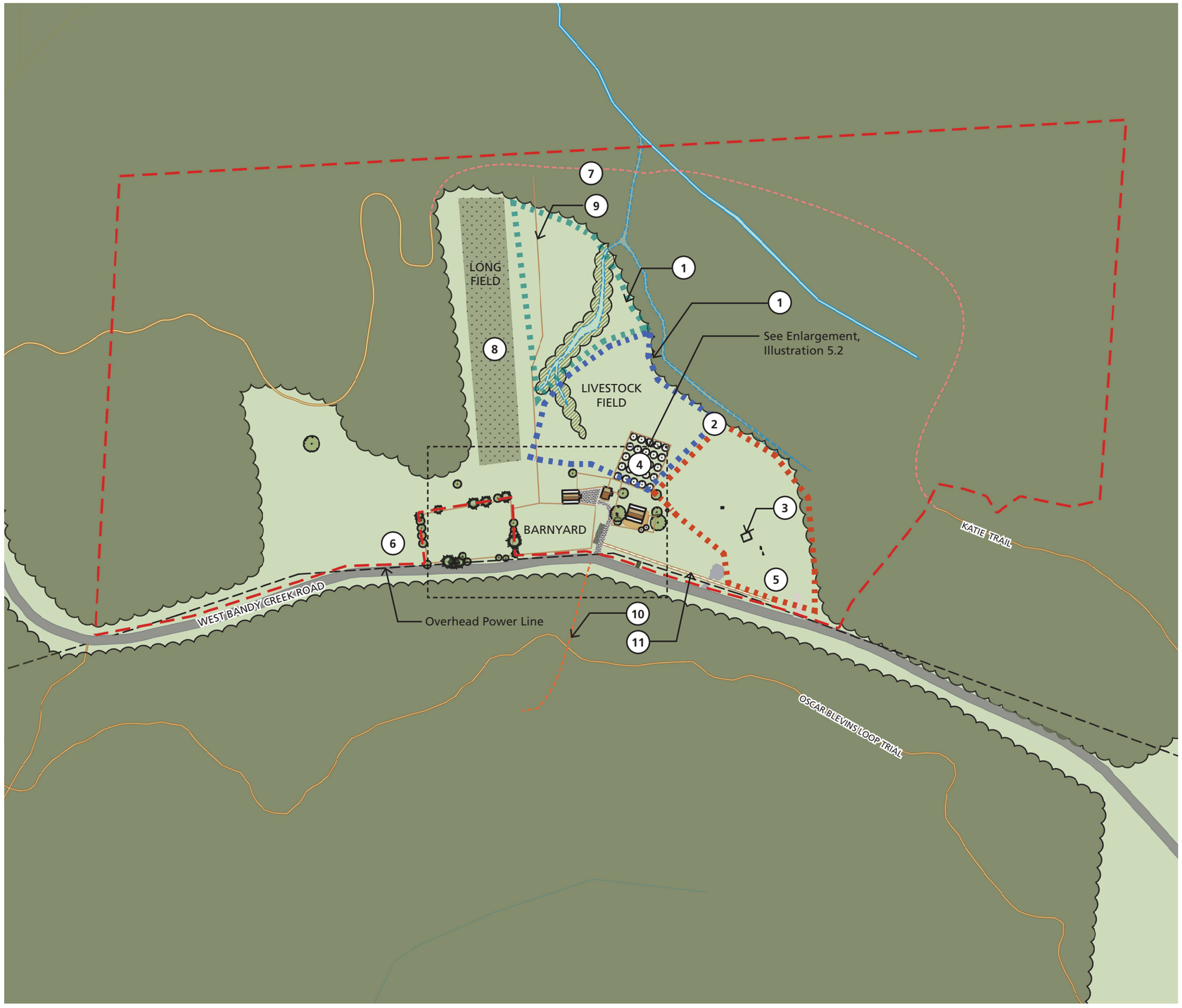
(3) Develop a separate nomination just for the Lora Blevins Farmstead property.

This report recommends submitting the Big South Fork Rural Historic District nomination, as this thematic area is central to the interpretation of cultural history within the park and much work has already been completed for the nomination.

Cultural Landscape Inventory

Revise the Cultural Landscape Inventory for the Lora Blevins Farmstead to reflect the findings of the Cultural Landscape Report.

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Key

- Roadway
- Driveway (Stablized Soil)
- Existing Recreational Trail
- Stream
- Existing Trees
- Proposed Orchard Trees
- Agricultural Field (Cultivated)
- CLR Study Boundary
- Proposed Relocated Recreational Trail
- Rehabilitated Trail to Spring
- Proposed Walkway from Parking Area
- Stream Buffer Area
- Vegetation Removal Phase One
- Vegetation Removal Phase Two
- Vegetation Removal Phase Three

NOTES:

1. Vegetation Removal Zone. Remove successional forest growth as part of a multi-phase project. See report text for specific project guidance on phasing and livestock field replanting.
2. Conduct archeological testing to determine the locations of outbuildings at spring.
3. Clear vegetation encroaching on building foundation.
4. Rehabilitate and interpret the orchard.
5. Establish new parking area along West Bandy Creek Road. See report for location and layout options. Establish pedestrian connection to historic farmstead and Katie Blevins Cemetery.
6. Provide parking or pedestrian access to Katie Blevins Cemetery from newly established parking area east of the site. See report for layout options.
7. Reroute Katie Blevins Trail out of historic farmstead area.
8. Continue use of Long Field area for sorghum planting demonstration.
9. Rehabilitate fencing at livestock field to interpret agricultural use of site.
10. Rehabilitate path to spring.
11. Add pedestrian path from potential parking area to farmstead. See narrative for recommendations.

Illustration 5.1 Treatment Recommendations

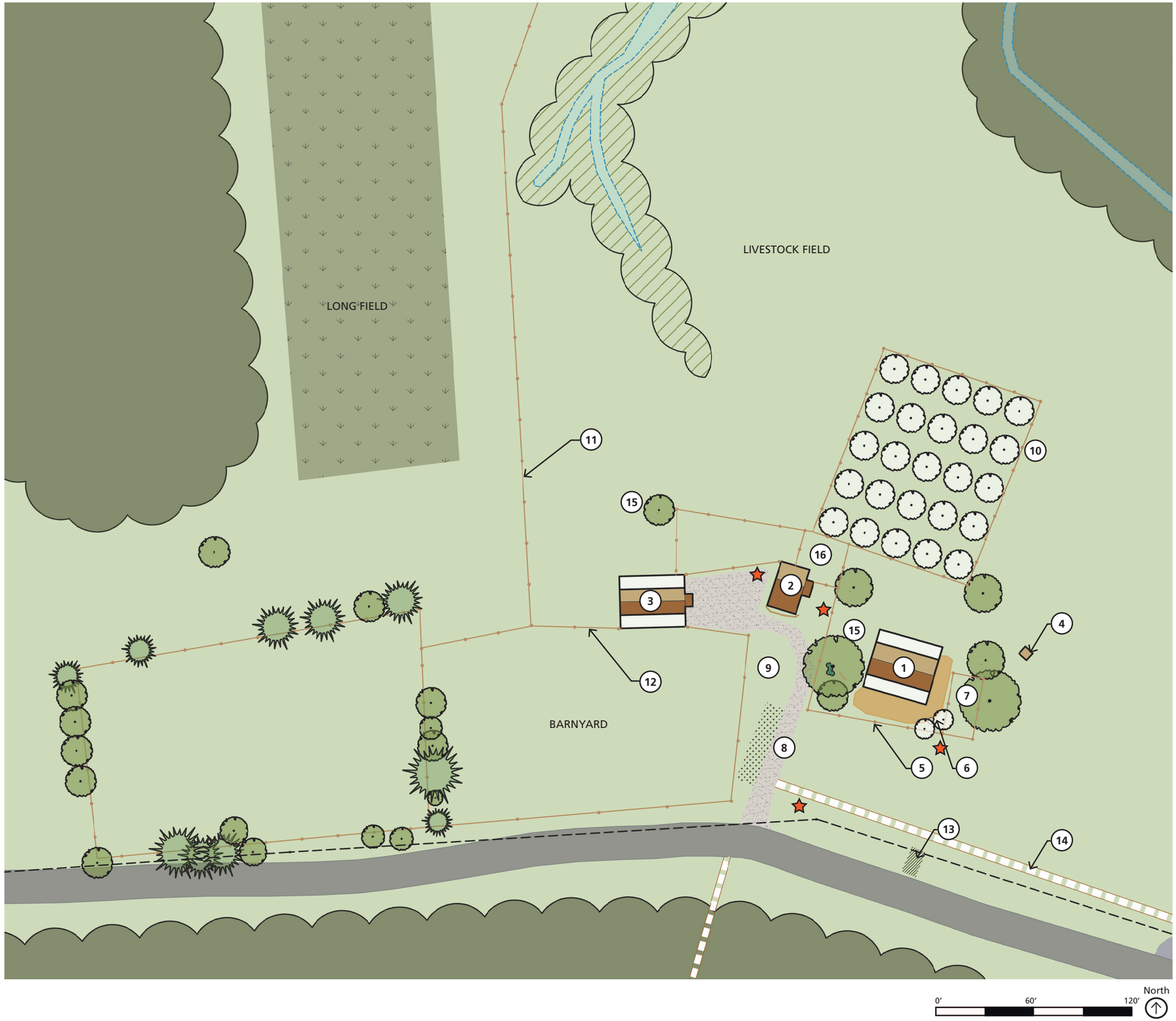
Lora Blevins Farmstead

Big South Fork

National River and Recreation Area

Cultural Landscape Report

May 2019



Key

- Roadway
- Driveway (Stablized Soil)
- Stream
- Existing Trees
- Proposed Orchard Trees
- Agricultural Field (Cultivated)
- CLR Study Boundary
- Rehabilitated Trail to Spring
- Proposed Walkway from Parking Area
- Fencing (see text for type)
- Stream Buffer Area
- Potential Exhibit Location

NOTES:

1. Rehabilitate Lora Blevins House to circa 1935 appearance. Remove protective shed structure on south side of house. Reconstruct the front porch and room addition on the south side of house. Reconstruct addition on north side of house.
2. Rehabilitate Lora Blevins Corn Crib. Install a red oak shake roof on the structure.
3. Rehabilitate Lora Blevins Pole Barn. Rebuild the two wings of the barn. Restore chinking between log members.
4. Rehabilitate Lora Blevins Privy. Improve ground conditions to provide a more level surface for the privy building and prevent further erosion from around its base.
5. Rehabilitate paling fence in front yard.
6. Reestablish swept yard area within front yard fence. Plant ornamental species along fence described by Poppie Blevins Dishman.
7. Reestablish herb garden space.
8. Rehabilitate drive with stabilized material.
9. Install new interpretive signs at site.
10. Rehabilitate and interpret orchard. Fence in with a post and wire perimeter fence or individual tree cages.
11. Rehabilitate livestock fence.
12. Rehabilitate barnyard fence.
13. Conduct archeology at root cellar location and interpret.
14. Add pedestrian path from potential parking area to farmstead. See narrative for recommendations.
15. The NPS should stabilize the remaining apple tree immediately. See text for guidance.
16. Rehabilitate corn crib area fencing.

Illustration 5.2 Treatment Recommendations, Enlargement

Lora Blevins Farmstead

Big South Fork

National River and Recreation Area

Cultural Landscape Report

May 2019

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Appendix A

Appendix A - 01, 1951 Aerial
Appendix A - 02, 1971 Plan
Appendix A - 03, Poppie Blevins Dishman Map
Appendix A - 04, 1998 CLI Map

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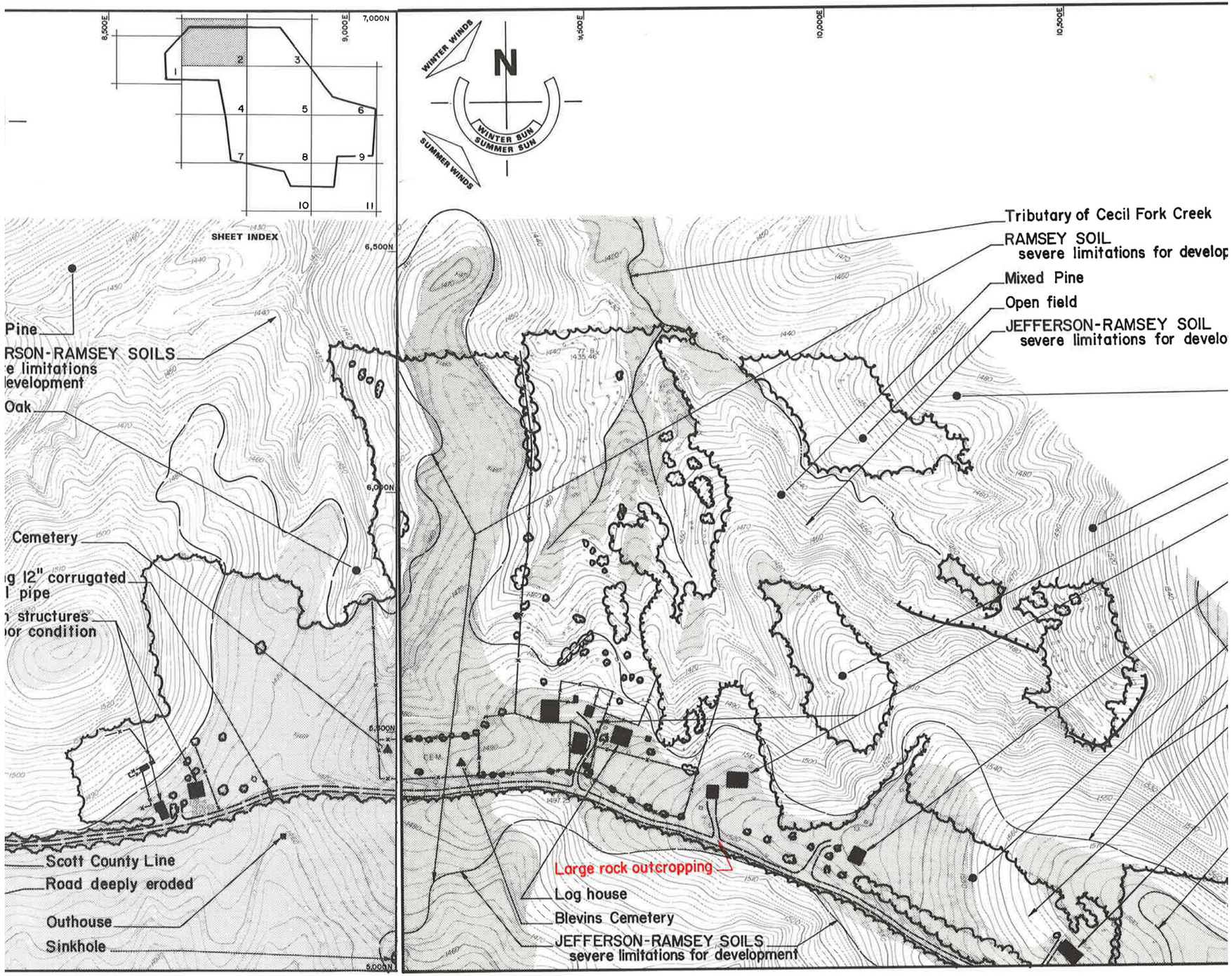
1951 Aerial, Source: USDA

North

Appendix A - 01
1951 Aerial

Lora Blevins Farmstead

Big South Fork
National River and Recreation Area
Cultural Landscape Report
April 2019



North

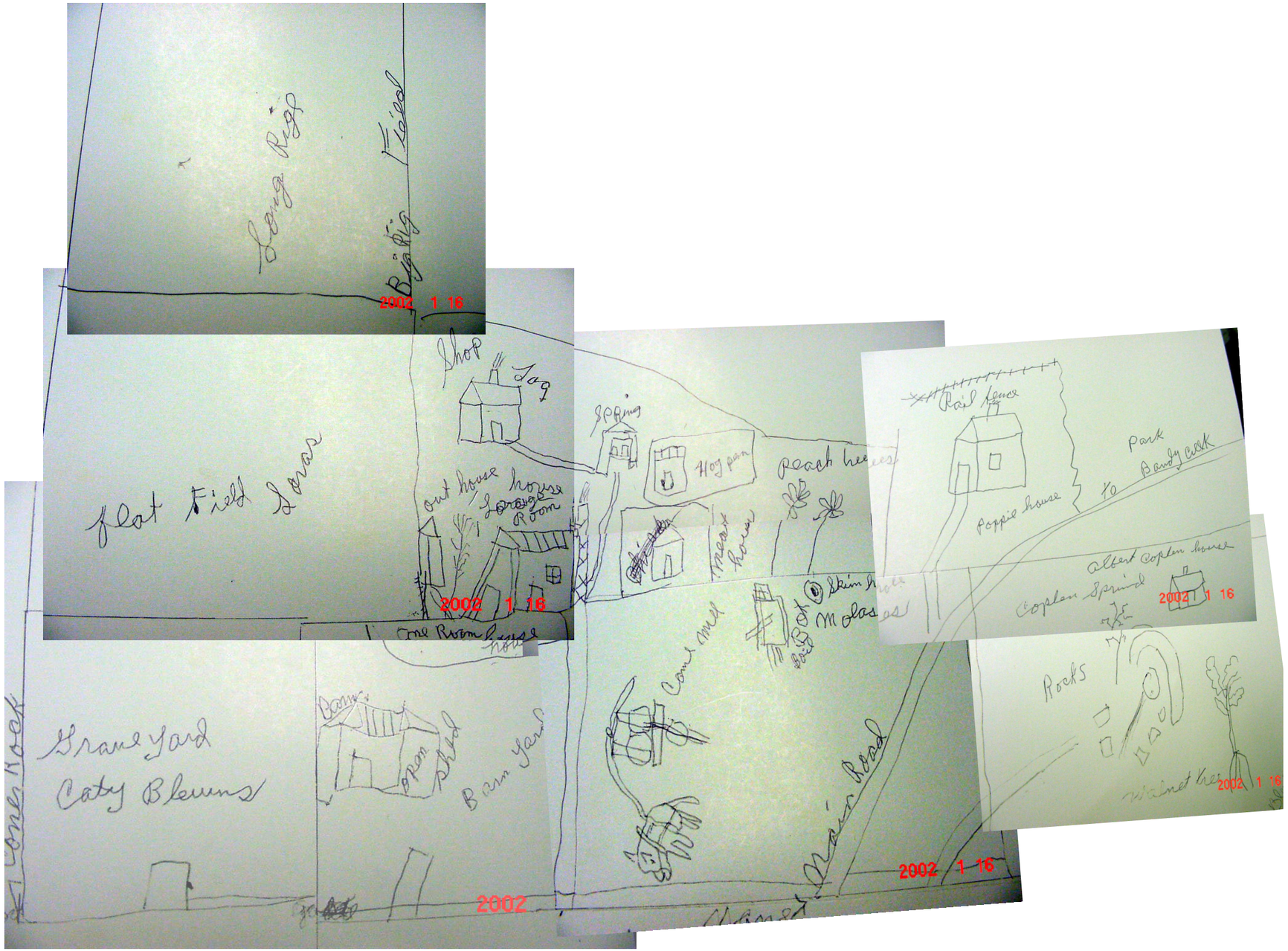
1971 Plan, Source: US Army Corps of Engineers, *Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area Master Plan,Volume II*, **"Bandy Creek Site Analysis Composite," Figure 29.**

Appendix A - 02
1971 Plan

Lora Blevins Farmstead

Big South Fork
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Cultural Landscape Report
April 2019

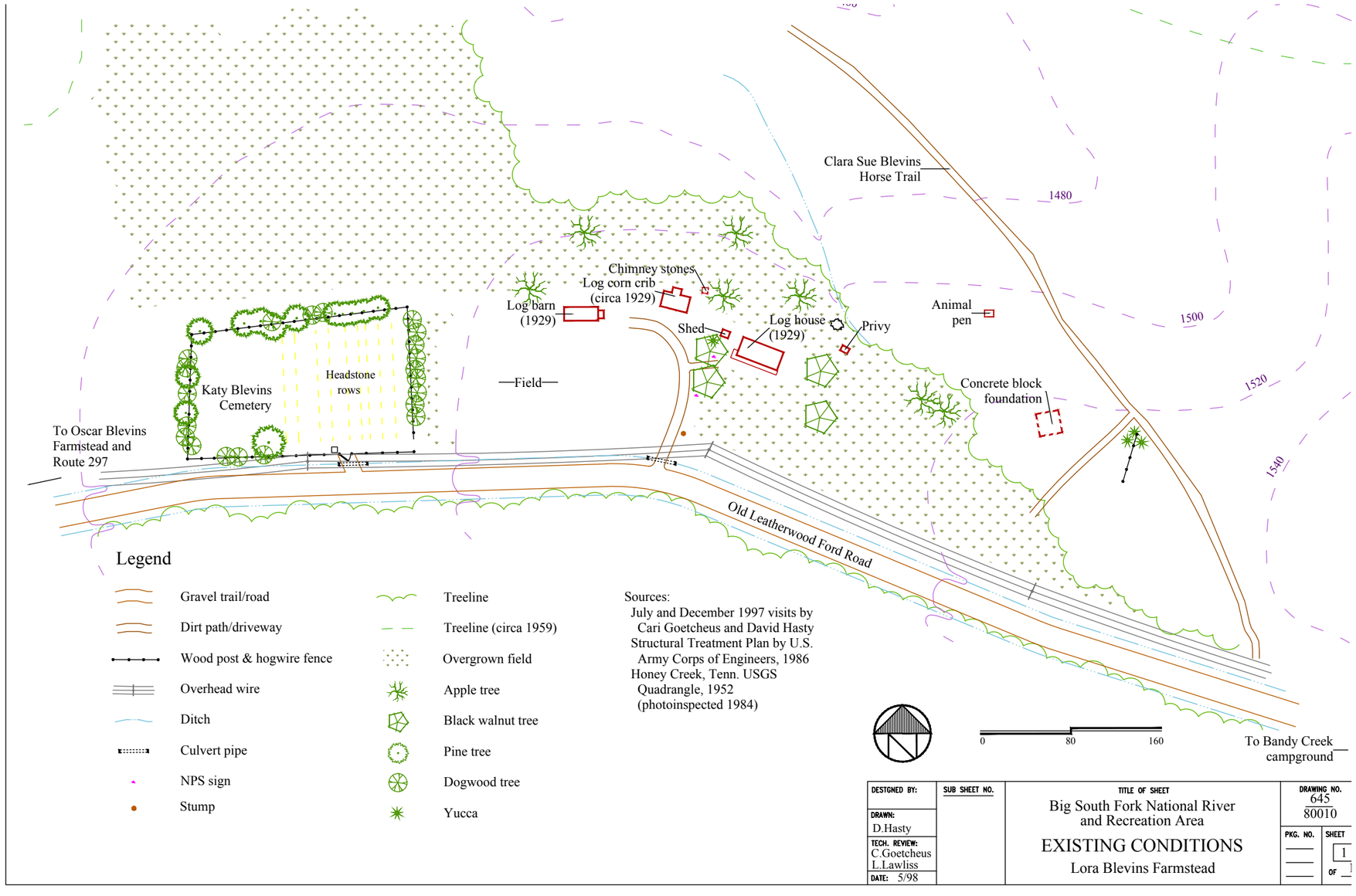
Poppie Blevins Dishman Map
Source: National Park Service, 2001



Appendix A - 03
Poppie Blevins Dishman Map

Lora Blevins Farmstead

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Cultural Landscape Report
April 2019



Legend

- Gravel trail/road
- Dirt path/driveway
- Wood post & hogwire fence
- Overhead wire
- Ditch
- Culvert pipe
- NPS sign
- Stump
- Treeline
- Treeline (circa 1959)
- Overgrown field
- Apple tree
- Black walnut tree
- Pine tree
- Dogwood tree
- Yucca

Sources:
July and December 1997 visits by Cari Goetcheus and David Hasty
Structural Treatment Plan by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1986
Honey Creek, Tenn. USGS Quadrangle, 1952 (photoinspected 1984)

DESIGNED BY:	SUB SHEET NO.	TITLE OF SHEET	DRAWING NO.
DRAWN: D.Hasty		Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area EXISTING CONDITIONS Lora Blevins Farmstead	645 80010
TECH. REVIEW: C.Goetcheus L.Lawliss			PKG. NO. — — — / SHEET 1 OF 1
DATE: 5/98			

North

Appendix A - 04
1998 CLI Map
Lora Blevins Farmstead
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Cultural Landscape Report
April 2019

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As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.



NPS BISO 645/151675, May 2019
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