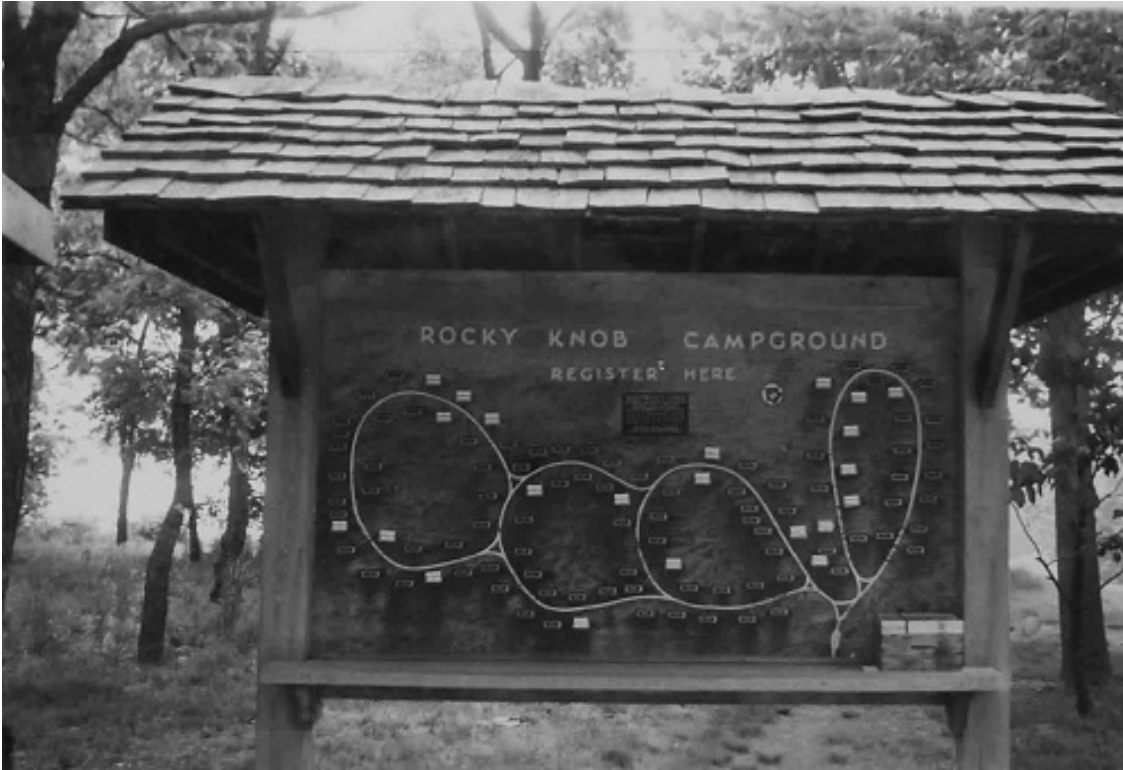


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National Park Service  
Cultural Landscapes Inventory

2014



Rocky Knob Campground  
Blue Ridge Parkway

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## Cultural Landscape Summary & Site Plan

### Cultural Landscapes in the Cultural Resources Inventory System:

#### The Cultural Resources Information System (CRIS)

CRIS is the National Park Service's database of cultural resources on its lands, consisting of archeological sites, historic structures, ethnographic resources and cultural landscapes. The set of CRIS records for cultural landscapes is referred to as CRIS-CL. CRIS-CL records conform to a standardized data structure known as the Cultural

Landscapes Inventory (CLI).

The legislative, regulatory and policy directions for conducting and maintaining the CRIS are: Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act, NPS Management Policies (2006), Director's Order 28 (Cultural Resources) and Director's Order 28a (Archeology).

#### The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI)

The CLI is the data structure within CRIS used to document and evaluate all potentially significant cultural landscapes in which NPS has, or plans to acquire any enforceable legal interest.

Each CRIS-CL record is certified complete when the landscape is determined to meet one of the following:

- Landscape individually meets the National Register of Historic Places criteria for evaluation; or,

- Landscape is a contributing element of a property that is eligible for the National Register; or,

- Landscape does not meet the National Register criteria, but is managed as cultural resources because of law, policy or decisions reached through the park planning process.

Cultural landscapes vary from historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes to historic ethnographic landscapes, but may also fit within more than one type. Those eligible for the National Register have significance in the nation's history on a national, state or local level, as well as integrity or authenticity.

The legislative, regulatory and policy directions for conducting and maintaining the CLI within CRIS are: *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 USC 470h-2(a)(1)). Each Federal agency shall establish...a preservation program for the identification, evaluation, and nomination to the National Register of Historic Places...of historic properties...*

*Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3(a)...Each agency with real property management responsibilities shall prepare an assessment of the current status of its inventory of historic properties required by section 110(a)(2) of the NHPA...No later than September 30, 2004, each covered agency shall complete a report of the assessment and make it available to the Chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior...*

*Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3(c) Each agency with real property management responsibilities shall, by September 30, 2005, and every third year thereafter, prepare a report on its progress in identifying... historic properties in its ownership and make the report available to the Council and the Secretary...*

*The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Federal Agency Historic Preservation Programs Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, 1998. Standard 2: An agency provides for the timely identification and evaluation of historic properties under agency jurisdiction or control and/or subject to effect by agency actions (Sec. 110 (a)(2)(A) Management Policies 2006. 5.1.3.1 Inventories: The Park Service will (1) maintain and expand the following inventories...about cultural resources in units of the national park system...Cultural Landscape Inventory of historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes,... and historic sites...*

*Cultural Resource Management Guideline, 1997, Release No. 5, page 22 issued pursuant to Director's Order #28. As cultural resources are identified and evaluated, they should also be listed in the appropriate Service-wide inventories of cultural resources.*

### **Inventory Unit Description:**

The Rocky Knob Campground component landscape, one of four component landscapes within the Rocky Knob Recreation Area, is located immediately north of Parkway Milepost 17 in the state of Virginia. Construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway through the Rocky Knob area began in 1937, with the combination picnic and campground area—consisting of 16 campsites, built that same year. In 1959, a revised master plan for Rocky Knob called for the construction of a new campground to offer more space to both picnickers and campers. Construction began in 1962 on a new 110-unit Rocky Knob Campground, north of the maintenance area; the previous picnic ground and campground was then dedicated solely to picnic use.

The Campground component landscape is accessed via a single entry road that also provides access to the maintenance area. The minimally graded, curvilinear road splits into four camping loops. Three of the loops, A, B, and C, wind north around Weddle Ridge, forming fully enclosed rings with the next loops beginning near the halfway point of the previous one. The fourth loop, T, extends east from the entrance and parallels the Parkway. Loop T is for trailer camping, with multiple pull-through sites. Loops A, C, and Teach have 28 sites, while B has 26. All of the 110 sites have a grill, picnic table, lantern pole, and tent pad. Located between linked loops A, B, and C, and loop T, a campfire circle area accommodates ranger led activities. Other campground features, such as the split-face stone curbs and rustic shake roof on the registration board represent Mission 66 development that intended to be consistent with early Parkway designs.

The Campground component landscape is significant under Criteria A, C, and D, contributing to the period of significance identified for the Rocky Knob Recreation Area parent landscape 1939-1965. That period encompasses initial parkway construction through completion of proposed developments consistent with early master plans for the site. Parkway design principles are conveyed throughout the developed area, including the campground, tying it to the broader 469-mile linear historic landscape. Rocky Knob Recreation Area also embodies several key components early designers considered important for motorists to experience when traveling the corridor - to connect more deeply with the region through recreation, to enjoy the scenic and intentionally conserved natural scenery, and to avail themselves of food, lodging, and other amenities.

Site Plan

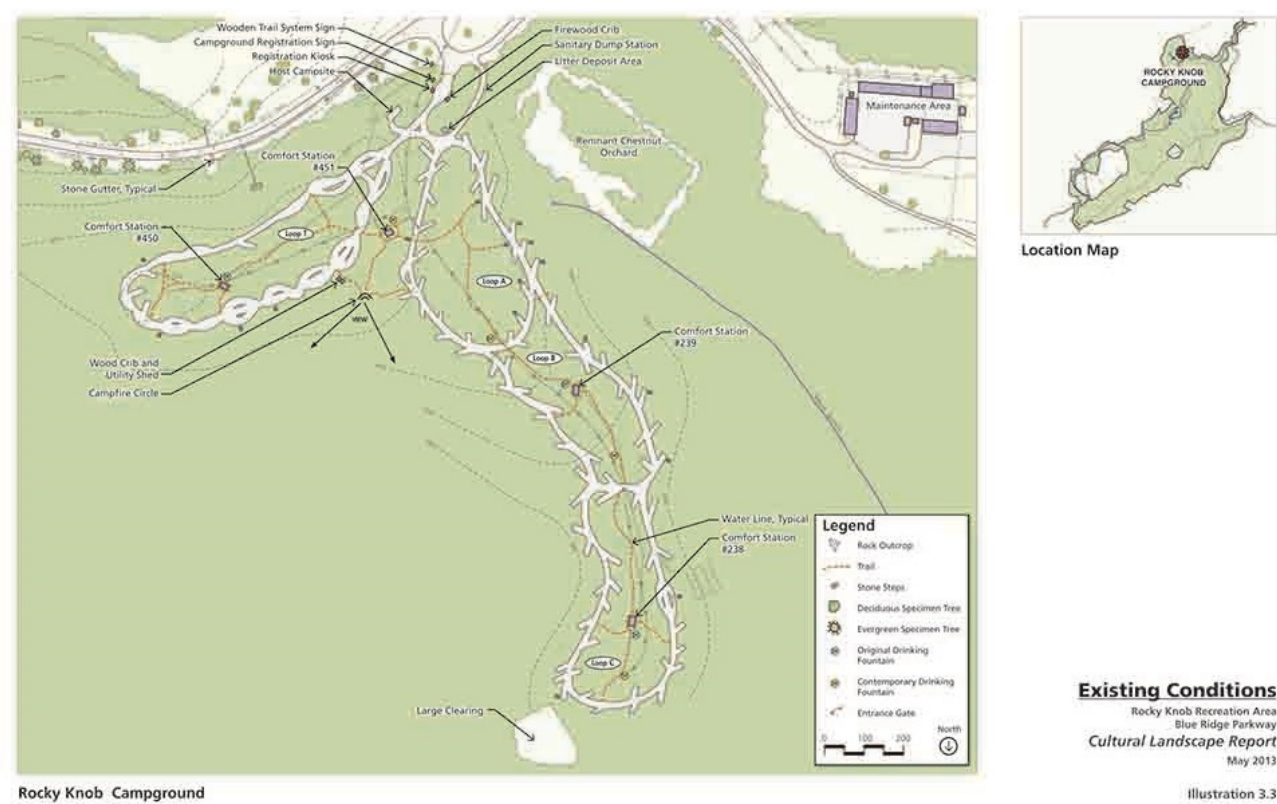


Figure 2. Campground component landscape site plan. (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area Cultural Landscape Report, p. 117. See larger image of this map on next page.)

## Property Level and CLI Numbers

|                                   |                       |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Inventory Unit Name:</b>       | Rocky Knob Campground |
| <b>Property Level:</b>            | Landscape             |
| <b>CLI Identification Number:</b> | 975904                |
| <b>Parent Landscape:</b>          | 975906                |

## Park Information

|                                  |                                                   |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Park Name and Alpha Code:</b> | Blue Ridge Parkway - Rocky Knob Campground - BLRI |
| <b>Park Organization Code:</b>   | 5140                                              |
| <b>Park Administrative Unit:</b> | Blue Ridge Parkway                                |

## CLI Hierarchy Description

The Rocky Knob parent landscape—Rocky Knob Recreation Area—contains four component landscapes: Rocky Knob Campground, Rocky Knob Maintenance Area, Rocky Knob Picnic Area and Gas Station, and Parkway Section 1-S.

The Rocky Knob Recreation Area Campground was constructed north of the maintenance area in 1962 as an expanded version of the original 1937 campground, which is now the Picnic Area (see the Picnic Area and Gas Station component landscape).

The Picnic Area and Gas Station component landscape was constructed beginning in 1937 on the picnic grounds. While the Gas Station was included in early plans, construction did not begin until 1949. The Picnic Area originally had a combined use, also serving as a campground until 1962. The Gas Station now serves as a visitor information center.

The Rocky Knob Maintenance Area was constructed beginning in 1940 in a large cleared area north of the Parkway. The area was intended to serve as a functional element necessary for running and constructing the Parkway. This area acts as a core of Parkway administrative offices, supplies storage area, and employee housing.

Construction began on Parkway Section 1-S in March of 1936. This section of the Blue Ridge Parkway includes The Saddle, Rock Castle Gorge, and Twelve O'clock Knob overlooks. The Saddle was the first overlook constructed along Section 1-S, followed by Twelve O'clock Overlook. Both were constructed during the pre-War and Planning era between 1933 and 1941. The Rock Castle Gorge Overlook was built in 1958, the last overlook constructed along Section 1-S.

**Concurrence Status**

**Inventory Status:** Complete

**Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:**

Inventory data, including condition, is from CLR and was approved by park in 2014. Additional info will be added to CLI in FY 18 in form of GIS maps and FMSS crosswalks. At that point, condition assessment will be reconfirmed with superintendent.

**Concurrence Status:**

|                                                 |                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>Park Superintendent Concurrence:</b>         | Yes                                      |
| <b>Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:</b> | 03/24/2014                               |
| <b>National Register Concurrence:</b>           | Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination |
| <b>Date of Concurrence Determination:</b>       | 09/07/2017                               |

**National Register Concurrence Narrative:**

Through consultation with VA-DHR, VCRIS entries for BLRI's Humpback Rocks and Rocky Knob have been updated with correct GIS footprints, and contributing status. For this particular landscape, VCRIS ID# 080-5161 "Blue Ridge Parkway Historic District" is the primary resource. Additional VCRIS properties include: 080-5161-0161 Blue Ridge Parkway, Building 439, Rocky Knob Campground Comfort Station, B Loop; 080-5161-0162 Blue Ridge Parkway, Building 451, Rocky Knob Campground Comfort Station, A Loop; 080-5161-0334 Rocky Knob Campground Comfort Station, C Loop; 080-5161-0335 Rocky Knob Campground Comfort Station, T Loop; 080-5161-0330 Rocky Knob Campground Information Building; 080-5161-0163 Blue Ridge Parkway, Building 985, Rocky Knob Campground Wood Storage Shed

**Concurrence Graphic Information:**

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# Foreword

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

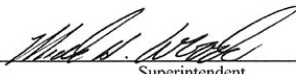
We would like to thank the staff of The Jaeger Company, in particular project leader Emmeline Morris and assistant project manager Daniel Lawson, for their thorough research, rigorous existing conditions documentation, and carefully considered recommendations. The parkway would also like to thank former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

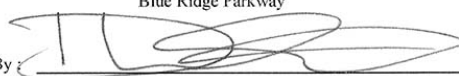
Monika Mayr

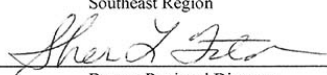
Acting Superintendent

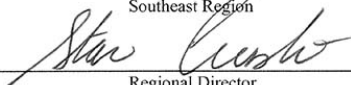
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# Rocky Knob Recreation Area Blue Ridge Parkway Cultural Landscape Report

Approved By :  3-24-14  
Superintendent,  
Blue Ridge Parkway Date

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

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

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

**Geographic Information**

**Geographic Information & Location Map**

**State and County:**

|               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| <b>State:</b> | North Carolina  |
| <b>County</b> | Buncombe County |

**Size (Acres)**                30

**Land Tract Number(s)**

**Inventory Unit Boundary Description:**

Rocky Knob Recreation Area contains over 4000 acres of mountainous land running northeast to southwest along the Patrick and Floyd county lines in southwestern Virginia. The Parkway and its associated right-of-way generally make up the northern boundary of the Rocky Knob Recreation Area, though many of the developed areas are found north of the Parkway. Route 8 generally defines the eastern boundary of the recreation area, while the slopes of Rock Castle Gorge comprise the southern and western boundaries. Land adjacent to Rocky Knob Recreation Area consists mostly of low-density residential and/or agricultural properties. Five component landscapes are located within the recreation area and developed by the NPS between the late 1930s and the early 1960s: Rocky Knob Campground, Rocky Knob Maintenance Area, Rocky Knob Picnic Area, Rocky Knob Gas Station, and the Rocky Knob Trail Lodge Cabins. Although the Trail Lodge Cabins are a Rocky Knob Component Landscape, a detailed study of that site was not included in the scope of the Cultural Landscape Report.

The Rocky Knob Campground component landscape is comprised of approximately 30 acres located immediately north of Milepost 17 on the west side of the Parkway.

**Boundary Coordinates:**

|                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Source:</b>        | USGS Map 1:24,000 |
| <b>Type of Point:</b> | Point             |
| <b>Latitude:</b>      | 36.83139          |
| <b>Longitude:</b>     | -80.34444         |
| <b>Narrative:</b>     |                   |

Location Map:

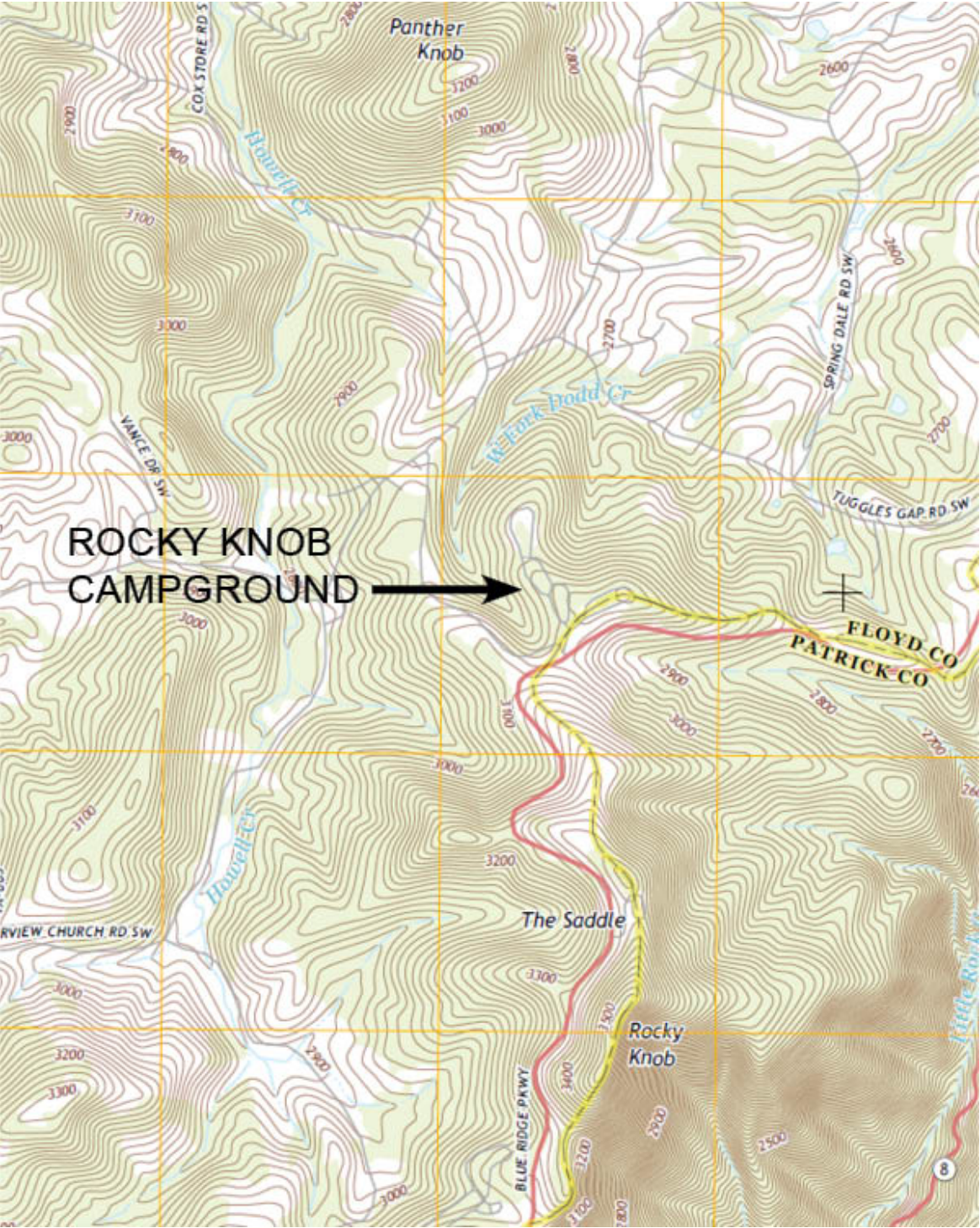


Figure 3. Location map

**Regional Context:**

**Type of Context:** Physiographic

**Description:**

The Blue Ridge Province forms the eastern portion of the Appalachian Mountain region and contains the entirety of Rocky Knob Recreation Area. The Rocky Knob Recreation Area falls within the Southern Blue Ridge sub region. The Southern Blue Ridge consists of a gently rolling plateau up to 50 miles wide, bordered on the southeast by a pronounced escarpment abruptly descending to the Piedmont. Rocky Knob itself is an exception to the prevailing plateau character of the Blue Ridge in Southern Virginia, rising as an individual mountain from the surrounding land. It is the highest elevation in the area at 3,572 feet. Rock Castle Creek and Rock Castle Gorge divide Rocky Knob Recreation Area from the northeast to the southwest. Additional ridges and creeks, which form valleys and coves, further partition the interior of the recreation area.

Rocky Knob Recreation Area is composed of nearly all forested slopes. Two forest types dominate the forested portions of the recreation area: Southern Appalachian Oak Forest on the ridges and upland slopes, and Cove Forest along the lowland streams of the Rock Castle Gorge. The Campground landscape is predominantly the ridge and upland Southern Appalachian Oak Forest type.

**Type of Context:** Political

**Description:**

Rocky Knob straddles two Virginia counties, Patrick and Floyd Counties. The recreation area is located in Virginia's 9th Congressional District.

**Type of Context:** Cultural

**Description:**

Archeological evidence indicates that pre-historic Native Americans (Paleo Indian, Archaic, and Woodland cultures) inhabited the area for thousands of years. During the historic period, Canaway, Iroquois, and Cherokee were some of the tribes known to have inhabited the area. European settlers began moving into the area in the mid-18th century. By the 1790's, English, German, French, Scottish and Irish immigrants settled in what is now Floyd County. While this area remained a predominantly agricultural region until the development of the Blue Ridge Parkway, the specific land use in the campground area is unknown.

## Management Information

### General Management Information

**Management Category:** Must be Preserved and Maintained

**Management Category Date:** 04/14/2014

#### Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

As part of a potential Blue Ridge Parkway National Historic Landmark nomination, Rocky Knob Campground receives a category of 'Must Be Preserved And Maintained' as a contributing component landscape.

## Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access

### Management Agreement:

**Type of Agreement:**

**Type of Context:**

#### Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

### NPS Legal Interest:

**Type of Interest:** Fee Simple

**Narrative:**

**Located in managed wilderness?:** Unknown

**Public Access:**

**Type of Interest:** Unrestricted

**Explanatory Narrative:**

**Adjacent Lands Information**

**Do Adjacent Lands Contribute?** No

**Adjacent Land Narrative:**

## National Register Information

### Documentation Status:

Undocumented

### National Register Explanatory Narrative:

Neither the Blue Ridge Parkway nor any of its constituent component landscapes—with the exception of Brinegar Cabin at Doughton Park—are currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places. National Register nomination is currently pending for Flat Top Manor, part of the Moses Cone Estate.

Some documentation has occurred for the Blue Ridge Parkway including draft Historic Resource Studies crafted in 1993 and 2005, and a draft National Historic Landmark (NHL) nomination prepared in 2005. All of these cultural resource documents were prepared by Ian Firth, Professor Emeritus in the College of Environment and Design at the University of Georgia. The 2005 draft NHL nomination suggests the likely areas, aspects, and period of significance for the road corridor and associated resources. Although Firth's findings did not include Mission 66 era features, the 2012 CLR conclusions do find the Mission 66 era features contributing; hence the Mission 66 features within the Rocky Knob Recreation Area developed area are considered significant.

There currently are two contracts in place to complete the NHL nomination: the first being a contract for an inventory of all buildings, structures, bridges, tunnels and overlooks, to support section 7 of the NHL nomination. The inventory project started in the Fall of 2012 in preparation of the National Historic Landmark nomination which began in the Fall of 2013 and currently continues.

### Concurrence Narrative:

Through consultation with VA-DHR, VCRIS entries for BLRI's Humpback Rocks and Rocky Knob have been updated with correct GIS footprints, and contributing status. For this particular landscape, VCRIS ID# 080-5161 "Blue Ridge Parkway Historic District" is the primary resource. Additional VCRIS properties include: 080-5161-0161 Blue Ridge Parkway, Building 439, Rocky Knob Campground Comfort Station, B Loop; 080-5161-0162 Blue Ridge Parkway, Building 451, Rocky Knob Campground Comfort Station, A Loop; 080-5161-0334 Rocky Knob Campground Comfort Station, C Loop; 080-5161-0335 Rocky Knob Campground Comfort Station, T Loop; 080-5161-0330 Rocky Knob Campground Information Building; 080-5161-0163 Blue Ridge Parkway, Building 985, Rocky Knob Campground Wood Storage Shed

**National Register Eligibility**

|                                          |                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>National Register Concurrence:</b>    | Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination                                       |
| <b>Contributing/Individual:</b>          | Contributing                                                                   |
| <b>National Register Classification:</b> | Site                                                                           |
| <b>Significance Level:</b>               | National                                                                       |
| <b>Significance Criteria:</b>            | A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history        |
| <b>Significance Criteria:</b>            | C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values |

**Period of Significance:**

|                                |                                            |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | CE 1939 - 1965                             |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Creating Social Institutions and Movements |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Recreation                                 |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Tourism                                    |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None                                       |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | CE 1939 - 1965                             |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Creating Social Institutions and Movements |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Social and Humanitarian Movements          |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Historic Preservation Movement             |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None                                       |

**Time Period:** CE 1939 - 1965

**Historic Context Theme:** Expressing Cultural Values

**Subtheme:** Architecture

**Facet:** NPS Mission 66

**Other Facet:** None

**Time Period:** CE 1939 - 1965

**Historic Context Theme:** Expressing Cultural Values

**Subtheme:** Architecture

**Facet:** Rustic Architecture

**Other Facet:** None

**Time Period:** CE 1939 - 1965

**Historic Context Theme:** Expressing Cultural Values

**Subtheme:** Landscape Architecture

**Facet:** NPS Mission 66--Landscape Architecture

**Other Facet:** None

**Time Period:** CE 1939 - 1965

**Historic Context Theme:** Expressing Cultural Values

**Subtheme:** Landscape Architecture

**Facet:** Protection Of Natural And Cultural Resources

**Other Facet:** None

**Time Period:** CE 1939 - 1965

**Historic Context Theme:** Expressing Cultural Values

**Subtheme:** Landscape Architecture

**Facet:** The 1930's: Era Of Public Works

**Other Facet:** None

|                                |                                   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | CE 1939 - 1965                    |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Transforming the Environment      |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Conservation of Natural Resources |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Scenic Preservation               |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None                              |

**Area of Significance:**

|                                       |                            |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Area of Significance Category:</b> | Architecture               |
| <b>Area of Significance Category:</b> | Conservation               |
| <b>Area of Significance Category:</b> | Entertainment - Recreation |
| <b>Area of Significance Category:</b> | Landscape Architecture     |

**Statement of Significance:**

Rocky Knob Recreation Area is situated along Section 1-S, from Milepost 165.3 to 169.2, of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The roadway and the Recreation Area are part of the Parkway system. The Parkway in its entirety is significant under Criteria A and C, according to the Draft Historic Resource Study, commissioned to evaluate National Historic Landmark eligibility, which follows similar criteria to the National Register (Firth, 2005).

The Blue Ridge Parkway is significant under Criterion A, “because of its association with the history of American parkways—an important part of the American Parks movement and the history of transportation. It is the premier example of a national parkway designed for long distance motoring through rural scenery” (Firth, 2005). The Parkway developed in several phases that were associated with events that made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of NPS and United States history. Beginning with the pre-war phase, associated with the public works program initiated under Roosevelt's New Deal that helped build many parks and roadways, and later followed by the post-war Mission 66 program that addressed recreational pressures on National Parks and facilitated the completion of the Parkway. Section 1-S, as well as Rocky Knob Recreation Area, were among the earliest developments of the parkway. In 1938, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) established their first camp along the Parkway at Rocky Knob.

The Blue Ridge Parkway meets Criterion C, “as an exceptionally important work of design in the fields of landscape architecture and civil engineering; as a combination of scenic road and linear park, it represents a fusion of modern engineering with scenic landscape design. It was a recreational project of unprecedented scale and complexity, focused on the needs of motorists, and it illustrates a high point in the history of American parkways. As the first long distance, scenic national parkway, the intention of the Parkway was to provide a model for others. Its design is particularly notable for presenting a sequence of carefully framed and composed pictures of the Southern Appalachians, in the spirit of the Regionalist Movement of the 1930s. After the Second World War, it became clear that there would be no national network of long distance, scenic parkways, but redoubled efforts to complete this Parkway as one of only two examples of its kind. Therefore the

significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway arises from its role as the first long distance, scenic national parkway.” The period of significance includes design styles that are representative of Pre-war and Construction, Resumption of Construction, and Mission 66.

As one of fifteen developed areas along the Blue Ridge Parkway, and one of just eight in the state of Virginia, Rocky Knob Recreation Area is historically significant because its historic structures and cultural landscapes physically represent the full range of National Park Service recreational design from its inception along the Blue Ridge Parkway in the late 1930s through the height of Mission 66 development in the mid-1960s. The Blue Ridge Parkway period of significance is from 1935 until 1965. The Rocky Knob Recreation Area period of significance begins with the initial development of the area in 1939 and continues through 1965, when Mission 66 projects brought earlier design ideas and goals to fruition.

The Rocky Knob Recreation Area and Rocky Knob Campground component landscape are significant under Criteria A and C. The Rocky Knob Recreation Area cultural landscape is significant under Criterion A as a recreation area along the Blue Ridge Parkway and as a destination for travel and tourism. Initially proposed in the 1934 Blue Ridge Parkway master plan as one of thirteen recreation areas at intervals along the parkway, Rocky Knob is one of eight recreation areas along the Virginia section. The Rocky Knob Recreation Area developed over the course of several decades, shaped by the vision and design of its early planners. The initial four supporting components required by each recreation area master plan included: 1) conservation of natural scenery, 2) facilities for active recreation, 3) provisions of food, lodging, and motor service in an attractive manner where it is not available, and 4) utility buildings for maintenance and operations of the parks and the Parkway.

The Rocky Knob Campground component landscape represents the historically significant recreational themes of camping, picnicking, and outdoor grilling. The Campground also represents the themes of rustic architecture, Mission 66 landscape architecture, and scenic preservation. Although the Campground was not constructed until 1962, features such as the vehicle circulation and split-face stone curbs are consistent with the design of the original campground, which was built in 1937. Some features within the campground are distinct to the Mission 66 era, such as the utilitarian architectural style of the comfort stations. These features, among others, are still extant today, reflecting the historic period of significance.

The Rocky Knob Maintenance Area component landscape represents historic significance as a supporting landscape within the Rocky Knob Recreation Area. The Maintenance Area was intended to provide a base for operation and maintenance of both the road and recreation areas. As such, it is associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history. It also embodies distinctive construction from the period of significance, ranging from CCC and WPA structures built in the early 1940s, to structures built during post WWII resumption of construction

The Rocky Knob Picnic Area and Gas Station component landscape is historically significant based on criterion A as a designed landscape that supported the American Parks movement and the history of transportation beginning with the pre-war phase and continuing through the post Mission 66 program. The Picnic Area and Gas Station component landscape were essential to long distance motoring along the Parkway and embody significance Criterion A.

Parkway Section 1-S, including The Saddle, Rock Castle Gorge, and Twelve O'clock Knob overlooks, is a historically significant component landscape within Rocky Knob Recreation Area. Section 1-S, including the overlooks, is significant under Criterion A as a defining characteristic that made the Blue Ridge Parkway a national parkway designed for long distance motoring through rural scenery. It is also significant under Criterion C “as an exceptionally important work of design in the fields of landscape architecture and civil engineering...focused on the needs of motorists” (Firth, 2005).

## Chronology & Physical History

### Cultural Landscape Type and Use

**Cultural Landscape Type:** Historic Designed Landscape

### Current and Historic Use/Function:

**Primary Historic Function:** Outdoor Recreation

**Primary Current Use:** Outdoor Recreation

**Other Use/Function** **Other Type of Use or Function**

### Current and Historic Names:

| Name                  | Type Of Name              |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Rocky Knob Campground | Both Current And Historic |

### Chronology:

| Year    | Event    | Annotation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CE 1934 | Designed | Master plan for Blue Ridge Parkway route drafted and approved. The master plan included Rocky Knob as one of thirteen proposed recreation areas ... Landscape Architects: Thomas Chalmers Vint, Gilmore Clarke, Stanley Abbott, Edward Abbuehl, Hendrick van Gelder; Engineers: Jay Downer, William Austin                                                                                 |
| CE 1935 | Built    | Construction began on the Blue Ridge Parkway at section 2-A in North Carolina. In Virginia, construction began at section 1-P, north of Rocky Knob.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| CE 1935 | Built    | Construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway began on section 1-S through Rocky Knob.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| CE 1936 | Designed | Blue Ridge Parkway master plan updated...Assumed same team for master plan update - Landscape Architects: Thomas Chalmers Vint, Gilmore Clarke, Stanley Abbott, Edward Abbuehl, Hendrick van Gelder; Engineers: Jay Downer, William Austin                                                                                                                                                 |
| CE 1936 | Designed | General Development Plan created for Rocky Knob was the first of the plans as required by NPS policy. It indicated locations of trails, shelters, campground and picnic facility, soil improvement sites, and buildings slated for demolition...Landscape Architects: Thomas Chalmers Vint, Gilmore Clarke, Stanley Abbott, Edward Abbuehl, Hendrick van Gelder [same design team assumed] |

Rocky Knob Campground  
Blue Ridge Parkway

| Year           | Event    | Annotation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CE 1937        | Built    | Construction underway on campground and picnic area. About 10 miles of trail and the trail shelter at the summit of Rocky Knob complete.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| CE 1938        | Built    | 3,500 acres had been acquired for Rocky Knob Recreation Area. CCC established first camp, known as NP-14, in Rock Castle Gorge, in what is now Rocky Knob Recreation Area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| CE 1941        | Designed | Rocky Knob master plan (refinement of 1936 plan)...Thomas Chalmers Vint, Gilmore Clarke, Stanley Abbott, Edward Abbuehl, Hendrick van Gelder; Architect: Kenneth McCarter                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| CE 1943        | Designed | Rocky Knob master plan updated. Plan included active recreation facilities, playgrounds, swimming pool, and several lakes.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| CE 1955 - 1956 | Built    | New Comfort Station #84 built along original campground loop.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| CE 1955 - 1959 | Designed | Rocky Knob master plan updated as part of Mission 66 initiative. Updated plan included a new campground north of the maintenance area, which is now known as the Rocky Knob Campground...Sam Weems, Edward Abbuehl, [Henrick van Gelder, Thomas Chalmers Vint, Gilmore Clarke] [names with brackets are assumed]                                                                                                                           |
| CE 1962        | Built    | New 110-unit campground opened at Rocky Knob and old campground loop converted to picnic use, adding 56 picnic sites to the picnic grounds.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| CE 1965        | Designed | Rocky Knob master plan updated, including plans for the construction of additional staff lodging between the maintenance area and the existing employee residences, the conversion of the Gas Station into a Visitor Contact Station, the construction of a 48-unit lodge and restaurant on the Grassy Knoll, the obliteration of the Trail Lodge Cabins, and the recommendation to purchase in-holding property within Rock Castle Gorge. |
| CE 1967        | Built    | Sanitary dump station built near Campground entrance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| CE 1968        | Built    | Campground visitor contact kiosk moved from Asheville to Rocky Knob campground. The kiosk was installed on the east side of the entrance road.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| CE 1997        | Altered  | Post 1997. NPS staff replaced the registration kiosk with present kiosk.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| CE 2000        | Damaged  | Late 2000s. A severe ice storm resulted in the loss of many trees in the campground, including the 1940s experimental chestnut orchard.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

**Physical History:**

1937-1997

This physical history has been adapted from the 2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area Cultural Landscape Report Site History. The citations were converted from footnotes in the CLR to parenthetical citations in this CLI. As this physical history only covers the Rocky Knob Campground, for an overarching physical history of Rocky Knob Recreation Area, refer to that parent landscape physical history.

#### Rocky Knob Campground Component Landscape Site History

Campgrounds were an important component of the Blue Ridge Parkway recreation areas. They provided another way for visitors to connect with the mountain environment. The Rocky Knob Recreation Area includes one campground first established in 1959. The design is based on the original 1937 campground within the Recreation Area. The earlier campground was converted to a picnic area after the second campground was constructed.

In the 1930s, the NPS based their campground designs on the work of Emilio P. Meinecke, a plant pathologist who worked as a consultant for both the NPS and the United States Forest Service. Meinecke recommended careful site selection for campgrounds based on soil types and clear organization of vehicular access and campsites, in order to limit damage to natural settings and systems. The early designers of Rocky Knob Recreation Area followed these principles when laying out the first Rocky Knob Campground in 1937, which was a combination campground and picnic area (Firth, 2005, 198). The plans show two loops set back from the Parkway in a protected cove. The first loop functioned as a picnic area with a variety of parking slip configurations to accommodate a wide range of group sizes. The second loop acted as the campground, with separate areas for tent and trailer camping, comprising sixteen campsites. Each site contained a fireplace and picnic table. For more information see Rocky Knob Picnic Area and Gas Station Component Landscape CLIs.

In 1959, during the Mission 66 era, a revised master plan for Rocky Knob called for the construction of a new campground along the Parkway near the maintenance area. Superintendent Sam Weems submitted a plan for a new campground that separated the camping and picnic uses of the site. He reported that an “unsatisfactory situation” had arisen at the old combination camping and picnic area in which campers had to pass through the picnic area to reach their sites while picnickers were spilling over into the campground. The new campground was to be located on a knoll north of the maintenance area. The NPS approved the proposal, and in 1962, the Parkway opened a new 110-unit campground at Rocky Knob. NPS staff converted the old campground loop into only picnic use, adding 56 sites to the picnic grounds (Quin, 1997, 216). The construction of the new campground was the most significant development within the recreation area funded by Mission 66. The Rocky Knob Campground exhibits many of the design principles associated with early Blue Ridge Parkway planning as well as Mission 66 park development.

The new campground featured four vehicular loops, a campfire circle, four comfort stations, and 12 drinking fountains. The Roanoke office of the NPS also designed a unique campground registration sign that harkened back to the rustic aesthetic and materials so prevalent in pre-war parkway construction. The sign used hand split shakes on the roof overhang, a cost that could be justified for such a small structure. The NPS also installed a large wooden trail sign, similar in dimension, character, and construction to a gunboard sign near the campground entrance. The four comfort stations in the campground were identical to one another. They represent a further refinement of Comfort Station #84, built a few years earlier in the picnic area. Designers of the campground specified a new type of fireplace/grill for use at all campsites within the new campground. Just like the newly designed comfort stations, this new grill type employed modern materials that were easier to maintain and less expensive than their pre-war counterparts.

The newly constructed campground also contained a campfire circle. Ranger led talks in the evening had proven popular at other campgrounds along the Parkway, and with the newly constructed facilities at Rocky Knob these talks could now be incorporated into the recreation area’s interpretive program (Firth, 2005, 320-321). The campfire circle at Rocky Knob is less elaborate than others along the Parkway, consisting of simple wooden seat slats mounted atop precast concrete bases.

The campground has experienced little change since the 1962 developmental period.

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

NPS staff identified a need for a registration kiosk building after completing construction of the campground in 1962. Rather than design and build a new building for this purpose, staff chose to relocate a visitor contact kiosk from an area south of Asheville for use at the new campground in 1968. The small kiosk was originally part of a failed program to provide information stations along the Parkway. Sometime after 1997, the NPS replaced the registration kiosk at the campground with the current one. The current building features a pitched roof that is more in keeping with the rest of the architecture along the Parkway than the original. Identical buildings appear elsewhere at campgrounds throughout the Parkway, indicating that the current building was once a Parkway standard.

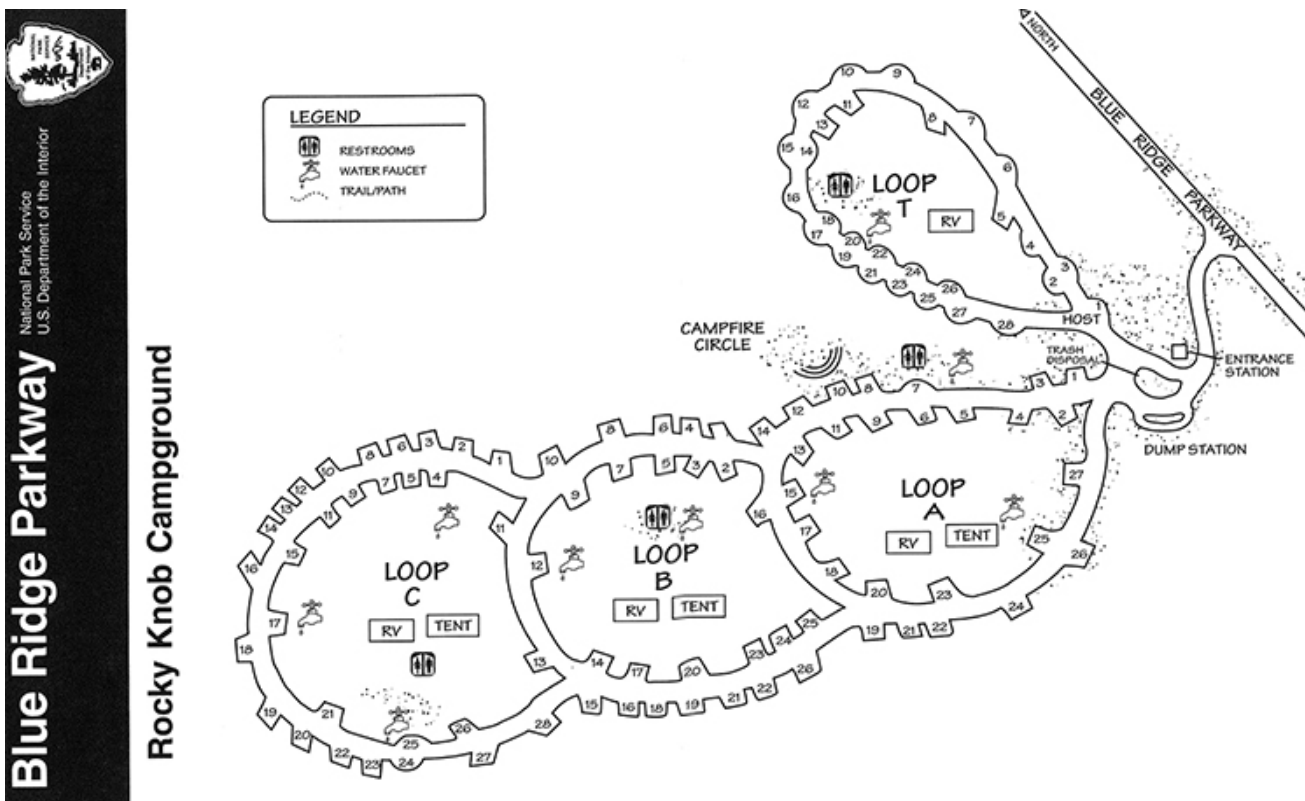


Figure 4. Rocky Knob Campground brochure (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 119)

Map of the 1962-1963 trail system in the Mount Mansfield State Park area. The map shows a network of trails, with the 1962-1963 system highlighted in red. Key features include:

- Wooden Trail System Signs (1962)
- Background Registration Signs (1962)
- Registration Kiosk (1962)
- Comfort Station #451 (1962)
- Stone Curtain (1962)
- Comfort Station #450 (1962)
- Wood Cr. and Utility Shed (1962)
- Sanitary Circle (1962)
- Enwood Crib (1962)
- Sanitary Dump Station (1962)
- Water Droplet Area (1962)
- Comfort Station #219 (1962)
- Water Lane (1962)
- Comfort Station #218 (1962)
- Entrance Gate (1962)
- Entrance Gate (1962)

The map also shows the Mount Mansfield State Park building and the Mount Mansfield State Park entrance. A legend in the bottom right corner defines symbols for Rock Gully, Trail, Stone Steps (1962), Openings/Specimen Traps, Registration System, Stone Gully, Stone Gully (1962), Compostory Gully, Entrance Gate (1962), and Entrance Gate (1962). A scale bar and north arrow are also present.



*Figure 13. Rocky Knob Campground Site History (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 93)*

## Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

### Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

The Rocky Knob Campground component landscape, within the Rocky Knob Recreation Area developed area, contains landscape features related to the landscape characteristics of Natural Systems and Features, Spatial Organization, Land Use, Vegetation, Circulation, Buildings and Structures, Views and Vistas, and Small-Scale Features. This section provides an overview of these existing features, as well as a discussion of their integrity related to the historic significance of the parent landscape, Rocky Knob Recreation Area. The following landscape characteristics do not apply to the Rocky Knob Campground: archeological sites, cluster arrangement, constructed water features, cultural traditions, and topography.

#### Landscape Characteristic Summary

The primary characteristic related to natural systems and features is where Rocky Knob Campground is sited, at the top of Weddle Ridge, with Wahoo Branch Creek to the west. Area soils contain high concentrations of stone, which was used as a construction material for some features within the campground.

Spatially, the Campground component landscape has changed little since its development during the Mission 66 era. The campground is still organized with a single entry drive off the Parkway that gives access to the Maintenance area to the left and the Campground to the right. The Campground drive then divides into four paved vehicular driving loops, three of which form a linked chain extending along Weddle Ridge to the north. The fourth loop parallels the Parkway to the east.

Land use within the Campground component landscape has remained consistent with the period of significance. The primary land uses remain recreation, tourism, interpretation, and utility, related to the campsites, the campfire circle, and comfort stations.

In general, the vegetation character of the Campground is woodland with a few open lawn areas containing specimen trees. The wooded areas are Southern Appalachian Oak Forest composed of chestnut oak (*Quercus prinus*), northern red oak (*Quercus falcata* / *Quercus borealis*), hickory (*Carya* spp.), and sweet birch (*Betula lenta*). These species replaced the American chestnut (*Castanea dentate*) that once dominated the region.

Vehicular and pedestrian circulation within the Campground component landscape remains essentially the same as it was throughout the period of significance, with four loop roads for vehicular access and the internal pedestrian path system that cuts through the loop centers connecting campsites to comfort stations, drinking fountains, and the registration kiosk. The automotive roads and pedestrian routes were built in 1962, following the Pre-WWII design style previously established at Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

A total of five buildings exist in the campground: four comfort stations that were built in 1962, and one registration kiosk of unknown construction date.

Views and vistas related to the Campground are minimal and consist of the intentional view from the campfire circle.

Small-scale features existing within the Campground component landscape consist of a firewood crib, campfire circle, stone curbs, steps, drinking fountains, drainage structures, entrance gates, signage, a sanitary dump station, and litter deposit area. Campsites, including one host campsite, each have grills, picnic tables, tent pads, and lantern poles.

#### Aspects of Integrity Summary

1. Location: The Campground component landscape and contributing features within the campground has

remained in the same location since the final completion of the area in 1962, retaining a high degree of integrity. The four driving loops that provide access to parking, picnic, and campsites were altered only slightly in 1967. Other features located in accordance with original designs include: pedestrian circulation, comfort stations, drinking fountains, and the campfire circle.

2. Materials: The materials for Rocky Knob Campground, such as slate stone curbing, asphalt automotive and pedestrian paths, stone on drinking fountains, and shake shingle roofs, are largely intact. Some replacement materials have been used for key historic resources such as comfort stations and stone curbing. Some materials are in need of repair such as stairs, circulation and retaining walls. Therefore, the Rocky Knob Campground component landscape retains moderate integrity of materials

3. Design: The Rocky Knob Campground retains a high degree of design integrity. The campground design is based on guidelines the NPS adopted in the 1930s, based on the work of Emilio P. Meinecke. Subsequent expansion and alterations that occurred during Mission 66 remain intact. One of the major projects undertaken by Mission 66 was the Blue Ridge Parkway, which had remained only about one-third complete after the onset of WWII. Construction was an important element of the program, and since plans already existed for many of the incomplete Parkway projects, Mission 66 additions closely followed those prewar design plans. The construction of the new Rocky Knob Campground was the most significant Mission 66 funded project at the recreation area and was based on a revised master plan submitted by Sam Weems in 1959. The existing campground reflects the 1959 master plan for it, hence it retains integrity in design.

4. Setting: The Campground component landscape setting is consistent with that of the period of significance; it continues to be surrounded by forest at the top of the ridge as it was originally sited. No developments have been constructed around the campground to impact the setting.

5. Workmanship: Workmanship integrity is retained through features that remain unaltered to moderately unaltered from the period of significance. Integrity of workmanship is retained in the original stone drinking fountains, the campsites, pedestrian circulation, and other small scale features.

6. Feeling: The Campground component landscape retains integrity of feeling, expressing the aesthetic and historic sense of the period of significance. Rocky Knob Campground exhibits a distinct aesthetic and historic sense associated with the local vernacular.

7. Association: The Campground component landscape was among the early construction period for Rocky Knob Recreation Area and the Parkway. Many of the construction methods, designs and engineering systems represented in the buildings, structures and plans are important examples of the three eras of style implemented during the full development of Rocky Knob Recreation Area. This section of the Parkway is clearly associated with the rest of the Parkway in its history, appearance, design, and significance. Therefore, Rocky Knob Campground retains a high level of integrity of association with the early and on-going development of the Parkway.

**Landscape Characteristic:**  
**Natural Systems and Features**

Historic Conditions: Topography and hydrology are the most important natural systems influencing the initial development of the Parkway, Section 1-S, the Rocky Knob Recreation Area and ultimately locating the campground. This section of the Parkway is consistently above 3,000 feet in elevation. The elevations ascend to surrounding knobs and descend to Rock Castle Creek and Rock Castle Gorge. The NPS landscape architects and engineers artfully designed the roadway to capitalize on the various aspects of the rolling topography. The Campground drive winds around the crest of Weddle Ridge, and the campfire ring area is arranged to provide visitors with a view of surrounding hills. Geology is also an important feature because of the use of local stone in the construction of steps, curbs, headwalls, drinking fountains, and grills within the campground. The Wahoo Branch creek runs north along the western side of Loops A, B, and C.

Existing Conditions: The natural topography, hydrology, and geology of Rocky Knob Recreation Area are largely unchanged from the initial development of the Parkway period. The three linked campground loops wind around the crest of Weddle Ridge

**Character-defining Features:**

|                              |              |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Feature Name:</b>         | Weddle Ridge |
| <b>CLI Feature ID:</b>       | 179289       |
| <b>Feature Contribution:</b> | Contributing |

**Landscape Characteristic:  
Spatial Organization**

Spatial Organization

Historic Conditions: Completed in 1967, the Campground is divided into two sections: the north section, subdivided into three linked loops A, B, and C, are all aligned perpendicular to the parkway, and the trailer campground, composed of one loop T extending east from the entrance and parallel to the parkway. Each individual loop forms a fully enclosed ring, with the next loop beginning near the halfway point of the previous one. In plan view, Loops A, B, C resemble links in a chain. All four loops feature regularly spaced campsites and associated parking slips located on either side of the drive. All three campground loops wind around the crest of Weddle Ridge, which extends north of the maintenance area and descends in elevation as one travels north.

Existing Conditions: The layout of the Rocky Knob Campground component landscape exists spatially as it was originally designed, planned and documented on the Parkway Land Use Maps (PLUMs).

**Character-defining Features:**

|                              |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Feature Name:</b>         | 4 Campground Loops (A, B, C, T) |
| <b>CLI Feature ID:</b>       | 179287                          |
| <b>Feature Contribution:</b> | Contributing                    |

**Landscape Characteristic:**  
**Land Use**

Historic Conditions: Recreation, tourism, interpretation, and utilitarian were the primary land uses associated with the period of significance of Rocky Knob Campground. Typical camping functions such as hiking, picnicking, and interpretive programs were associated supportive uses.

Existing Conditions:  
Currently all sections of the Rocky Knob Campground are still providing their intended recreational role along the Parkway. Ranger programs are provided for the campers with ranger-led interpretive activities conducted at the campfire circle located between Loops T and A. The four driving loops feature parking, picnic, and campsites situated around each of the loops. Each loop contains a comfort station and at least one drinking fountain, making toilet facilities and water available to all campers. A sanitary dump station as well as a trash disposal and recycling area are also located on site.

**Character-defining Features:**

**Feature Name:** Campfire Circle  
**CLI Feature ID:** 179291  
**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** Campsites  
**CLI Feature ID:** 179293  
**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Landscape Characteristic:**  
**Vegetation**

**Historic Conditions:** In general, the vegetation character of the Campground was woodland with a few open lawn areas containing specimen trees. Although the PLUMs do not list specific tree species for use in reforestation efforts at the Campground and no planting plans for the Campground were located in the Parkway Archives, it is clear from the PLUMs that the designers intended to return the entire Campground to canopy. It is difficult to be certain of the exact plant palette used by the designers, but it likely included species typical of the Southern Appalachian Oak Forests common to upland slopes and ridges. These include chestnut oak (*Quercus prinus*), northern red oak (*Quercus falcata* / *Quercus borealis*), hickory (*Carya* spp.), and sweet birch (*Betula lenta*). These species replaced the American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) that once dominated the region. Additionally, in 1940, the NPS planted a test orchard of Chinese chestnut trees (*Castanea mollissima*) on the knoll between the Campground and Maintenance area.

**Existing Conditions:** The vegetative character of forest canopy in the Campground, as planned on the PLUMs, remains largely intact. The general character of the Campground is woodland with a few open lawn areas containing specimen trees. The upland forests within the recreation area contain a smaller proportion of oak trees than many of the forests along the Parkway, making the forests of Rocky Knob unique

Winter storms have damaged some trees in the campground. Damage from an ice storm in 2010 has resulted in an overall thinning of the forested areas. The ice storm decimated the 1940s experimental Chinese chestnut (*Castanea mollissima*) orchard. Plantings around the comfort stations consist of mature mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) and appear to be original based on location and apparent age. The vegetation in the Campground is a contributing resource and maintains a moderate degree of integrity.

**Character-defining Features:**

|                              |                                          |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>Feature Name:</b>         | Southern Appalachian Oak Forest          |
| <b>CLI Feature ID:</b>       | 179295                                   |
| <b>Feature Contribution:</b> | Contributing                             |
|                              |                                          |
| <b>Feature Name:</b>         | Mountain laurel planting comfort station |
| <b>CLI Feature ID:</b>       | 179297                                   |
| <b>Feature Contribution:</b> | Contributing                             |
|                              |                                          |
| <b>Feature Name:</b>         | Chinese chestnut experimental orchard    |
| <b>CLI Feature ID:</b>       | 179299                                   |
| <b>Feature Contribution:</b> | Non contributing                         |

**Landscape Characteristic:  
Circulation**

**Historic Conditions:** The campground road circulation was originally completed in 1962. The asphalt Campground road divides into two loop sections: the north extending section, subdivided into three linked loops A, B, and C, and the trailer campground, composed of one loop T extending east from the entrance. Each individual loop A, B, and C forms a fully enclosed ring, with the next loop beginning near the halfway point of the previous one. In plan view, Loops A, B, C resemble links in a chain. The internal pedestrian path system cut through the centers of Campground loops, connecting users to amenities like comfort stations, drinking fountains, and the campfire circle. Most trails within the Campground were asphalt and approximately 4-5 feet wide. Some trails were unpaved, mulch paths.

**Existing Conditions:** The Rocky Knob Campground still accommodates both pedestrian and vehicular circulation. The vehicular circulation was altered slightly to accommodate the Sanitary Dump Station in 1967. Despite poor asphalt conditions, the alignment is intact and therefore retains integrity. In general, the pedestrian trail alignments are intact, well marked, and in fair condition, with the exception of minor areas where erosion and asphalt deterioration have occurred. No trails are ADA accessible.

**Character-defining Features:**

|                              |                                        |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>Feature Name:</b>         | Single lane asphalt road system        |
| <b>CLI Feature ID:</b>       | 179301                                 |
| <b>Feature Contribution:</b> | Contributing                           |
|                              |                                        |
| <b>Feature Name:</b>         | Asphalt & mulch pedestrian path system |
| <b>CLI Feature ID:</b>       | 179303                                 |
| <b>Feature Contribution:</b> | Contributing                           |

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Figure 6. Campground entrance (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 202)*

**Landscape Characteristic:  
Buildings and Structures**

**Historic Conditions:** Four Comfort Stations were built in the Campground in 1962. These buildings reflect the utilitarian Mission 66-style and are common throughout the Parkway. The original Registration Kiosk was also likely built in 1962. It was replaced in 1968 with a building that was exactly the same as one at Otter Creek, indicating that it was probably a Parkway standard building at one time.

**Existing Conditions:** Some alterations have occurred to the comfort stations Post-Mission 66. For example, NPS staff altered the exterior materials by adding a thin wood veneer over the original concrete block walls, as well as painting over the stained board and batten upper portion of the exterior. The architectural style and craftsmanship of these buildings remain intact. The buildings retain their original doors, roofs and ridge caps. The buildings are significant contributing resources to Rocky Knob Recreation Area. The buildings retain a moderate to high degree of integrity, as their exterior modifications are reversible.

The Campground also contains a registration kiosk. As mentioned above, NPS staff added it sometime Post-Mission 66 to replace the original kiosk. Despite being of more recent construction, its wooden materials and rustic craftsmanship, particularly its wooden shake roof, recall the feeling of early Parkway designs. The kiosk is a Post-Mission 66 Parkway standard. The registration kiosk at the Rocky Knob Campground is noncontributing. A c. 1971 photograph reveals a registration kiosk of different design and craftsmanship in the location of the current one. While this earlier kiosk originated in 1968, its date of removal is unknown.

**Character-defining Features:**

**Feature Name:** Comfort station (Building #450, 1962)

**CLI Feature ID:** 179305

**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** Comfort station (Building #451, 1962)

**CLI Feature ID:** 179307

**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** Comfort station (Building #438, 1962)

**CLI Feature ID:** 179311

**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** Comfort station (Building #439, 1962)

**CLI Feature ID:** 179309

**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** Registration Kiosk (date unknown)

**CLI Feature ID:** 179313

**Feature Contribution:** Non contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Figure 7. Comfort Station #450 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 120)*

**Landscape Characteristic:  
Views and Vistas**

Historic Conditions: No planned views or vistas exist on the PLUMs, however the Campfire Circle, developed in 1962, was oriented to take advantage of a particularly pleasant view of the surrounding countryside.

Existing Conditions: NPS staff currently maintains the view from the campfire circle in a semi-open condition.

**Character-defining Features:**

|                              |                                  |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Feature Name:</b>         | View from campfire circle (1962) |
| <b>CLI Feature ID:</b>       | 179315                           |
| <b>Feature Contribution:</b> | Contributing                     |

**Landscape Characteristic:  
Small Scale Features**

**Historic Conditions:** Small-scale features in the Campground that opened in 1962 included 12 stone drinking fountains, a campground registration sign, a large wooden trail sign, wooden entrance gate, wooden firewood crib, a campfire circle, stone curbs, stone steps, stone drainage structures, a litter deposit area, a host campsite, and 110 campsites that each included a grill, tent pad, and picnic table. Grills dating to Mission 66 were square with slats and had a continuous metal griddle surface to accommodate a variety of cooking methods. Although the design and craftsmanship of the original Mission 66 picnic tables in this area is unknown, it is likely they were similar to the concrete and stone ones NPS staff added to the Campground in 1953. All of the campsites provided an open, level area originally intended for tent-use during Mission 66. Plans from the 1960s located in the Rocky Knob Maintenance Area flat file show the layout of the tent pads across the entire Campground. Historical documents suggest that the tent pads were comprised of concrete or stone. Original split-face stone curb lines all of the parking slips within the Campground and dates to Mission 66. The material is "Rocky Knob Black Stone," a type of slate used at other Parkway overlooks, and recreation areas including Otter Creek. The NPS obtained "Rocky Knob Black Stone" slate from a nearby quarry in Franklin, Virginia. They used this type of slate to replace the native stone they had quarried within the park during the 1930s. Historic documents indicate the placement of a host trailer nearby the current host campsite. A litter deposit area dates to ca. 1962 during Mission 66.

Various signs throughout the campground informed visitors of important information. A large wooden entrance sign with painted lettering originated during Mission 66 and existed on the left hand side of the drive before the entrance gates. The sign marked the direction toward the campground, in addition to the maintenance and ranger offices. Beyond the entrance gates, a small wooden registration sign, dating to 1962, existed beside the registration kiosk. The registration sign was unique because it represented the rustic aesthetic so prevalent in pre-war parkway construction era. The sign used hand split shakes on the roof overhang. A historical photograph indicates two additional signs, including one that denoted the speed limit, once existed near the registration sign. A "Rocky Knob Trail System" routed wooden sign dating from 1962 informed campers about park trails; photo documentation confirms wooden originals at other access points throughout the park. Historical photographs show two wooden signs located beside a sanitary dump station that likely originated in 1962. Other original Mission 66 routed wooden signs included the campground host and campfire circle signs. In 1962, NPS staff painted campsite numbers in white on corresponding parking slips.

**Existing Conditions:** The Campground has undergone various modifications Post-Mission 66. The small-scale features that exist in the Campground today include a registration sign, firewood crib, campfire circle, stone curb, steps, drinking fountains, drainage structures, entrance gates, signage, a sanitary dump station, litter deposit area, host campsite, and campsites that each have grills, picnic tables, tent pads, and lantern poles.

The registration sign has undergone slight alterations. NPS staff added lighting to both sides of the sign Post-Mission 66. In addition, a metal box replaced a wooden registration box that previously existed on the right side of the sign. The replacement box is located on the left side of the registration sign and is painted a shade of brown that blends with the wooden sign. The hand-split shakes on the roof remain a predominant element and the sign retains its original font and map. The feature is in good condition.

NPS staff replaced the original firewood crib sometime Post-Mission 66. Historical photographs confirm that the materials, form, and size of the present crib are similar to the original. The design, however, differs as wooden legs elevated the original slightly above the ground. In addition, the front of the original crib was open while the current one has locked doors. Accordingly, this variation in design alters the feeling of the firewood crib, as a sign on the front of the original crib suggests a time when visitors respected the honor system.

The campfire circle retains its historic use as an interpretive space for ranger-led talks. Post-Mission 66, the design of the campfire circle has remained mostly unchanged, consisting of simple wooden seat slats mounted atop precast concrete bases arranged in a semicircular, amphitheater form. This craftsmanship and design appears to be a Parkway standard from Mission 66 as a similar campfire circle exists at Doughton Park and standardized plans exist in the Parkway Archives. Presently, some elements of the campfire circle at Rocky Knob Recreational Area are not original. For example, a

1960s plan from the Rocky Knob Maintenance Area flat file shows a detail for a fire pit constructed of stone. This documentation suggests NPS staff originally built the feature of native materials. Today, the fire pit is a Post-Mission 66 metal replacement. NPS staff has also modified other elements of the campfire circle, such as the amphitheater, where they have replaced wooden seat slats in kind. The location, setting, and feeling of the campfire circle mostly have stayed the same, with a countryside vista maintained as the backdrop.

Some sections of the split-face stone curb "Rocky Knob Black Stone" slate in the Campground are missing and others need resetting.

NPS staff added stone steps to many of the campsites during Mission 66, as part of the original design of the campground. The material recalls the stone curbing that appears throughout the campground. The stairs are in various states of repair, but most are intact. The steps exude a rustic, vernacular feeling intended by early Parkway designers. In addition to the stone steps, NPS staff later constructed a single set of wooden steps to campsite A-20 Post-Mission 66. The wooden steps are noncontributing because of its stark difference in material, craftsmanship, and feeling compared to the stone.

Seven drinking fountains exist in the Campground today. Three fountains are original stone Parkway drinking fountains that date to Mission 66. Four fountains are Post-Mission 66 replacements. Five additional Mission 66 stone fountains no longer exist. The Mission 66 fountains retain their original materials and rustic craftsmanship of stacked native stone set on mortared stone bases, hence are considered contributing. The Post-Mission 66 replacements, however, differ greatly in material and craftsmanship, hence are considered noncontributing.

Stone culverts and headwalls exist throughout the campground and date to Mission 66. The type of stone matches the other stone used throughout the campground for curbing, drinking fountains, and steps. The drainage structures are intact and in good condition.

The entrance gates are original Parkway standard gates from Mission 66. NPS staff, however, have repaired or replaced portions as needed over time. The gates have undergone only minor material alterations and are in good condition.

Various types of signs still exist in the Rocky Knob Campground and direct visitors to specific points, such as the campground, ranger offices, registration, and trail systems.

NPS staff replaced the entrance sign sometime Post-Mission 66. The replacement sign only directs visitors toward the maintenance shop and ranger office. Although the location and setting remain similar, the new sign exhibits distinct changes in design, craftsmanship, and materials. It is smaller than the original and constructed from painted metal rather than wood.

A small registration sign similar to the original but of different material replaced the original sometime Post-Mission 66. The replacement is similar in size but slightly different in content and material. NPS staff replaced the speed limit sign and the other sign Post-Mission 66 with different types. In addition, a new sign exists between the registration kiosk and the large registration sign that provides instructions regarding how to register. The instructions were originally located centrally on the large registration sign, beneath the title.

Presently, a trail sign of recycled plastic exists in the campground area and informs visitors of the "Rocky Knob Trail System." The recycled plastic sign at the campground replaced earlier wooden sign. The material change from routed wood to smooth plastic gives a less rustic feeling than intended by early Parkway designers.

NPS staff removed the wooden signs adjacent to the dump station Post-Mission 66. Today, a tall, painted metal sign exists to the right of the sanitary dump station.

Many of the original hand painted campsite number signs have faded and become less visible Post-Mission 66. Accordingly, NPS staff has placed vertical markers made of recycled plastic to mark

campsites rather than repainting the numbers. Although these markers are the most prevalent type of sign within the campground, they are noncontributing features that diminish the integrity of the campground. Aside from the differences in material, craftsmanship and location, the strong vertical markers give a very different visual feeling than the original markers simply painted on the ground.

The original campground host sign still exists. Others, such as the campfire circle sign are Post-Mission 66 replacements constructed from recycled plastic. The font, colors, shape, and size of the recycled plastic signs make them appear similar to the original wooden ones. Upon closer inspection, however, the difference in material changes the overall feeling of the signs. For example, the recycled plastic signs will weather in a different manner than the wood. This seemingly minor detail is important to consider when determining integrity as early Parkway designers, such as Abbott, intended for signs to weather naturally. Thus, the routed wooden signs dating from 1962 are contributing features whereas their recycled plastic replacements are not.

Throughout the Rocky Knob Campground, the change in materials and craftsmanship of the signage individually does not diminish a great amount of integrity. The sum of these altered features, however, amounts to a greater loss of integrity throughout the Rocky Knob Recreational Area.

Of the 110 campsites that originated during Mission 66, 109 remain in the Rocky Knob Campground. They are comprised of four small-scale features, including grills, picnic tables, tent pads, and lantern poles. All campsites are intact with the exception of one lost in 1967 due to construction of the Sanitary Dump Station. One is also designated as the Host site.

Presently, several different grill configurations exist around the campsites. Post-Mission 66, NPS staff replaced some of the original grills with ones ordered from contemporary catalogs. In some instances, original concrete bases are deteriorating or absent. Replacement grills are circular-shaped and only slightly larger than the original square-shaped ones.

Existing picnic tables around the campsites are Post-Mission 66 Parkway standard replacements dating to the 1990s.

Although there is no evidence of original tent pad materials today, it is likely that NPS staff implemented the design during Mission 66 and altered it sometime thereafter.

NPS staff added standard lantern poles to the campsites, Post-Mission 66.

A large campsite with an expanded parking slip is located immediately north of the campground entrance. Parkway designers planned for the host campsite during Mission 66. The area contains typical campsite amenities, such as a picnic table, a grill, and a lantern pole. The types and conditions of these amenities are similar to those listed above in the campsite area. In addition, an electrical transformer, electrical hookups, buried telephone lines, and a water spigot are located at this site. A 2,000-gallon septic tank and associated leaching field is located nearby. According to historic plans, NPS staff previously located a host trailer in this location. The host trailer is missing from the landscape today.

A fenced space for the collection of trash and recyclables from campground users is located near the campground exit. A weathered wooden fence surrounds two separate dumpsters for trash and recycling on all sides except the one adjacent to the drive lane. A brown metal reflective sign directing visitors back to the Parkway also exists at this location.

The sanitary dump station area consists of a single lane asphalt drive, concrete dump pad, and potable water tower. Slate curb dating to Mission 66 lines a portion of the drive lane. In addition, a short asphalt sidewalk dating to Post-Mission 66 surrounds the potable water tower. The dumping facilities are located on a concrete pad bound by concrete curb on one corner. According to working drawings, the NPS constructed this drive lane and associated facilities in 1967, five years after the rest of the campground construction was complete. Historic photographs show routed wood signs in this location originally.

**Character-defining Features:**

**Feature Name:** Campground registration sign (1962)

**CLI Feature ID:** 179317

**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** Campground Host sign (1962)

**CLI Feature ID:** 179319

**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** Trail sign

**CLI Feature ID:** 179321

**Feature Contribution:** Non contributing

**Feature Name:** Trail sign

**CLI Feature ID:** 179323

**Feature Contribution:** Non contributing

**Feature Name:** Campfire Circle sign

**CLI Feature ID:** 179325

**Feature Contribution:** Non contributing

**Feature Name:** Speed Limit sign

**CLI Feature ID:** 179327

**Feature Contribution:** Non contributing

**Feature Name:** 108 Campsite Number signs  
**CLI Feature ID:** 179331  
**Feature Contribution:** Non contributing

**Feature Name:** Sanitary Dump Station sign  
**CLI Feature ID:** 179333  
**Feature Contribution:** Non contributing

**Feature Name:** 1 Firewood crib  
**CLI Feature ID:** 179335  
**Feature Contribution:** Non contributing

**Feature Name:** 1 Campfire circle  
**CLI Feature ID:** 179337  
**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** Split-face stone curb at parking slips  
**CLI Feature ID:** 179339  
**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** Stone steps at campsites  
**CLI Feature ID:** 179341  
**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** Set of wooden stairs at campsite A-20  
**CLI Feature ID:** 179343  
**Feature Contribution:** Non contributing

**Feature Name:** 3 pre-Mission 66 drinking fountains

**CLI Feature ID:** 179345

**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** 4 post-Mission 66 drinking fountains

**CLI Feature ID:** 179347

**Feature Contribution:** Non contributing

**Feature Name:** Drainage structures-culvert and headwall

**CLI Feature ID:** 179349

**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** 4 wooden entrance gates

**CLI Feature ID:** 179351

**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** Grill, picnic, tent pad, and lantern

**CLI Feature ID:** 179353

**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** Mission 66-era grills

**CLI Feature ID:** 179355

**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** Replacement grills (circular)

**CLI Feature ID:** 179357

**Feature Contribution:** Non contributing

**Feature Name:** Picnic tables in each campsite  
**CLI Feature ID:** 179359  
**Feature Contribution:** Non contributing

**Feature Name:** Level spaces for tent in campsites  
**CLI Feature ID:** 179361  
**Feature Contribution:** Non contributing

**Feature Name:** Lantern poles in each  
**CLI Feature ID:** 179363  
**Feature Contribution:** Non contributing

**Feature Name:** 1 Host campsite  
**CLI Feature ID:** 179365  
**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** Litter deposit area (ca. 1962)  
**CLI Feature ID:** 179367  
**Feature Contribution:** Contributing

**Feature Name:** Sanitary dump station (1967)  
**CLI Feature ID:** 179369  
**Feature Contribution:** Non contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



Figure 8. Campground registration sign (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 199)



Figure 9. Firewood crib (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 200)



Figure 10. Stone drinking fountain (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 147)



Figure 11. Grill types: Mission 66 grill on left, post-Mission 66 grill on right (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 126)



Figure 12. Typical campsite (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 125)

**Condition**

Assessment Interval (Years): 6

Next Assessment Due Date: 09/06/2023

**Condition Assessment and Impacts**

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 09/06/2017

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

Stabilization Measures:

**Impacts**

**Type of Impact:** Deferred Maintenance

**Other Impact:**

**External or Internal:** Internal

**Impact Description:**

**Type of Impact:** Erosion

**Other Impact:**

**External or Internal:** Both Internal and External

**Impact Description:**

**Type of Impact:** Exposure to Elements

**Other Impact:**

**External or Internal:** Both Internal and External

**Impact Description:**

**Type of Impact:** Improper Drainage

**Other Impact:**

**External or Internal:** Both Internal and External

**Impact Description:**

**Type of Impact:** Inappropriate Maintenance

**Other Impact:**

**External or Internal:** Internal

**Impact Description:**

**Type of Impact:** Release To Succession

**Other Impact:**

**External or Internal:** Internal

**Impact Description:**

|                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Type of Impact:       | Removal/Replacement        |
| Other Impact:         |                            |
| External or Internal: | Both Internal and External |
| Impact Description:   |                            |
| Type of Impact:       | Structural Deterioration   |
| Other Impact:         |                            |
| External or Internal: | Both Internal and External |
| Impact Description:   |                            |
| Type of Impact:       | Vegetation/Invasive Plants |
| Other Impact:         |                            |
| External or Internal: | Both Internal and External |
| Impact Description:   |                            |
| Type of Impact:       | Visitation                 |
| Other Impact:         |                            |
| External or Internal: | Both Internal and External |
| Impact Description:   |                            |

**Stabilization Costs**

# Treatment

## Treatment

**Approved Treatment:** Preservation  
**Approved Treatment Document:** Cultural Landscape Report  
**Document Date:** 2014-04-01

**Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:**

Preservation and rehabilitation are the primary treatment recommendations to guide long-term management of the cultural landscape at Rocky Knob. As funding becomes available the recommendations should be considered to facilitate the preservation and rehabilitation of the cultural landscape thus ensuring the integrity of the resources as per the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes and Director’s Order No. 28: Cultural Resource Management Guidelines. The preferred treatment for Rocky Knob Recreation Area is preservation to ensure that the cultural resources remain intact and the visitor experience remains uncompromised. While preservation is the overarching treatment, exceptions have been made for the rehabilitation of specific resources to accommodate current visitor use.

**Approved Treatment Completed:** No

**Approved Treatment Costs**

**Landscape Approved Treatment Cost Explanatory Description:**

Preservation and rehabilitation are the primary treatment recommendations to guide long-term management of the cultural landscape at Rocky Knob. As funding becomes available the recommendations should be considered to facilitate the preservation and rehabilitation of the cultural landscape thus ensuring the integrity of the resources as per the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes and Director’s Order No. 28: Cultural Resource Management Guidelines. The preferred treatment for Rocky Knob Recreation Area is preservation to ensure that the cultural resources remain intact and the visitor experience remains uncompromised. While preservation is the overarching treatment, exceptions have been made for the rehabilitation of specific resources to accommodate current visitor use.

**Bibliography and Supplemental Information**

**Bibliography**

|                             |                                                                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Citation Title:</b>      | See Rocky Knob Recreation Area parent landscape for full list of references |
| <b>Year of Publication:</b> |                                                                             |