
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory

2014



Rocky Knob Section 1S
Blue Ridge Parkway

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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:

Parkway Section 1-S, including The Saddle, Rock Castle Gorge, and Twelve o'clock overlooks, is one of four component landscapes that make up the Rocky Knob Recreation Area. Section 1-S is the name for the section of parkway road that runs through Rocky Knob Recreation Area. This parkway section is 8.852 miles long in its entirety; this inventory focuses on the 4 miles associated with the developed area of Rocky Knob Recreation Area. The three overlooks mentioned above are located on the south side of Parkway Section 1-S within the recreation area.

Section 1-S is a gently winding roadway that follows a high ridgeline overlooking the Rock Castle Gorge below. The roadway connects the developed areas of the recreation area to one another along its sinuous route, providing an engaging driving experience for users. The asphalt roadway surface is 22 feet wide and consists of two driving lanes separated by a painted centerline. No painted shoulders are present.

The Saddle Overlook was one of the first parking overlooks constructed along the Parkway in the 1930s. "The Saddle" is a ridge connecting two high points on Rocky Knob. The NPS built the overlook in the middle of "The Saddle" to take advantage of the spectacular views of the Blue Ridge from both the north and south. Very few overlooks along the Parkway feature views of the surrounding countryside from both directions, making this overlook unique. The Saddle Overlook is located at an elevation of 3,380 feet.

The Rock Castle Gorge Overlook was the last overlook built in the Rocky Knob Recreation Area, constructed in 1958. The final layout of the overlook differs slightly from the one proposed on the Parkway Land Use Maps, or PLUMs, though the general location is the same. The overlook provides views of Rock Castle Gorge below and of the piedmont further in the distance. The elevation at this overlook is 3,195 feet.

The Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook was constructed in the 1930s during the Pre-War Planning and Construction era. Originally planned to serve as a parking and drop off area for a proposed lodge development that was never built, it now acts as an expanded parking area, overlook, and trailhead. Parking for 41 cars is provided in two parking bays at this location and the elevation here is 3,200 feet. Several attractive rock outcroppings are visible here and the designers took great care to incorporate these features into the parking layout.

Site Plan

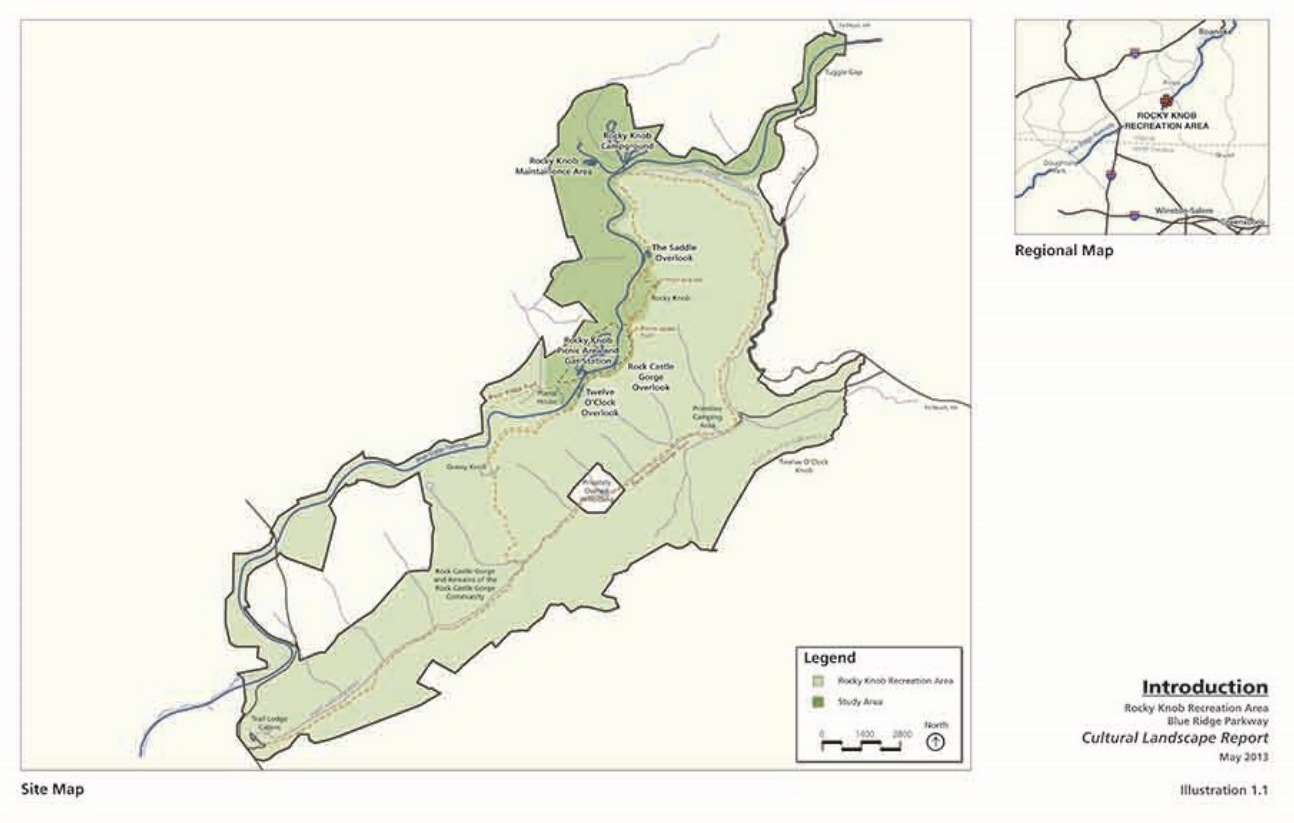


Figure 2. Section 1-S component landscape site plan overview. (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area Cultural Landscape Report, p.5)

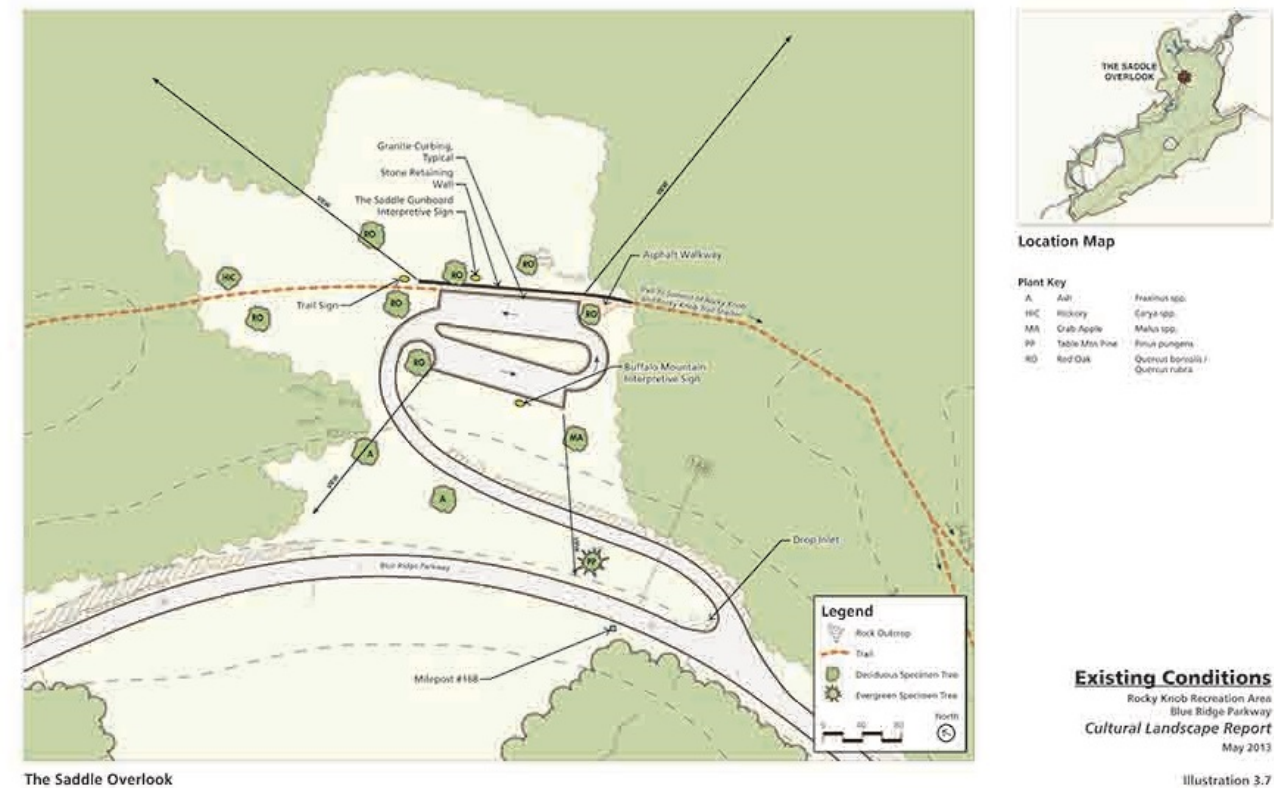


Figure 3. The Saddle Overlook site plan. (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area Cultural Landscape Report, p.163)

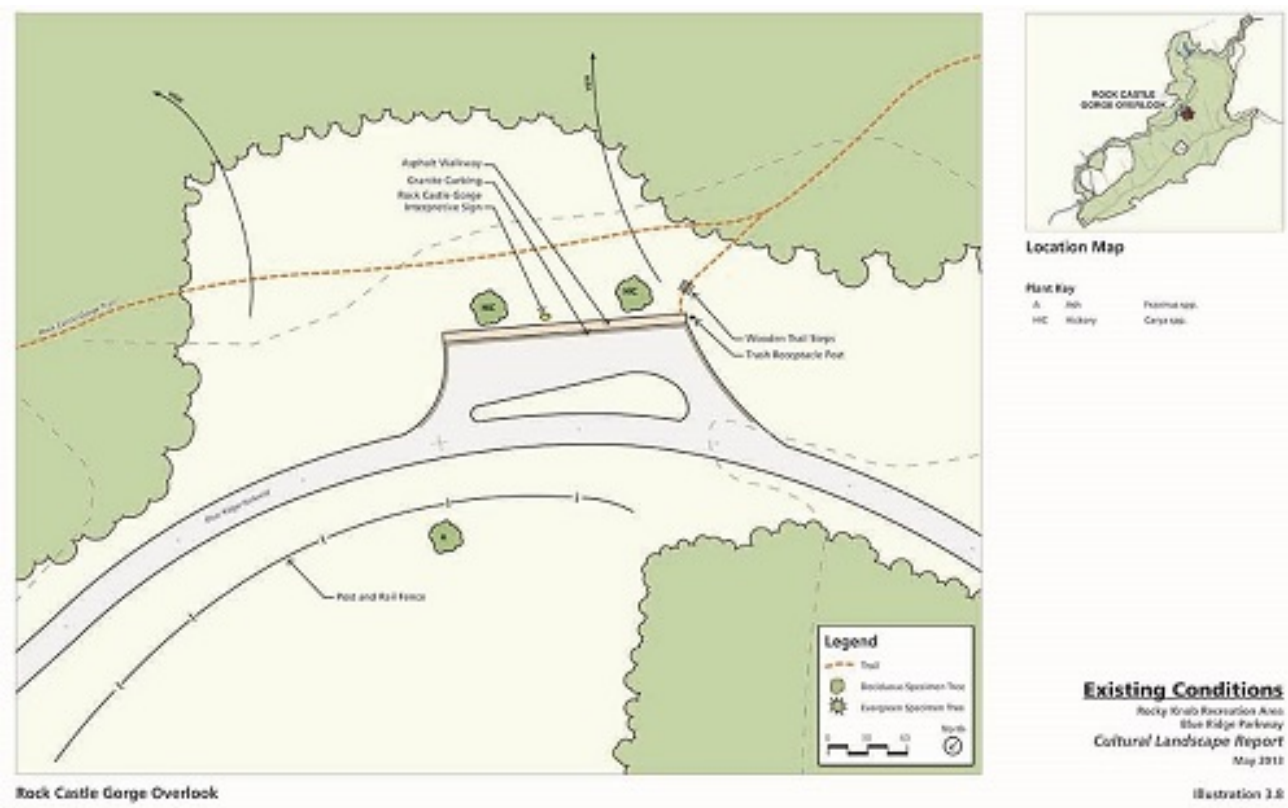


Figure 4. Rock Castle Gorge site plan. (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area Cultural Landscape Report, p.169)

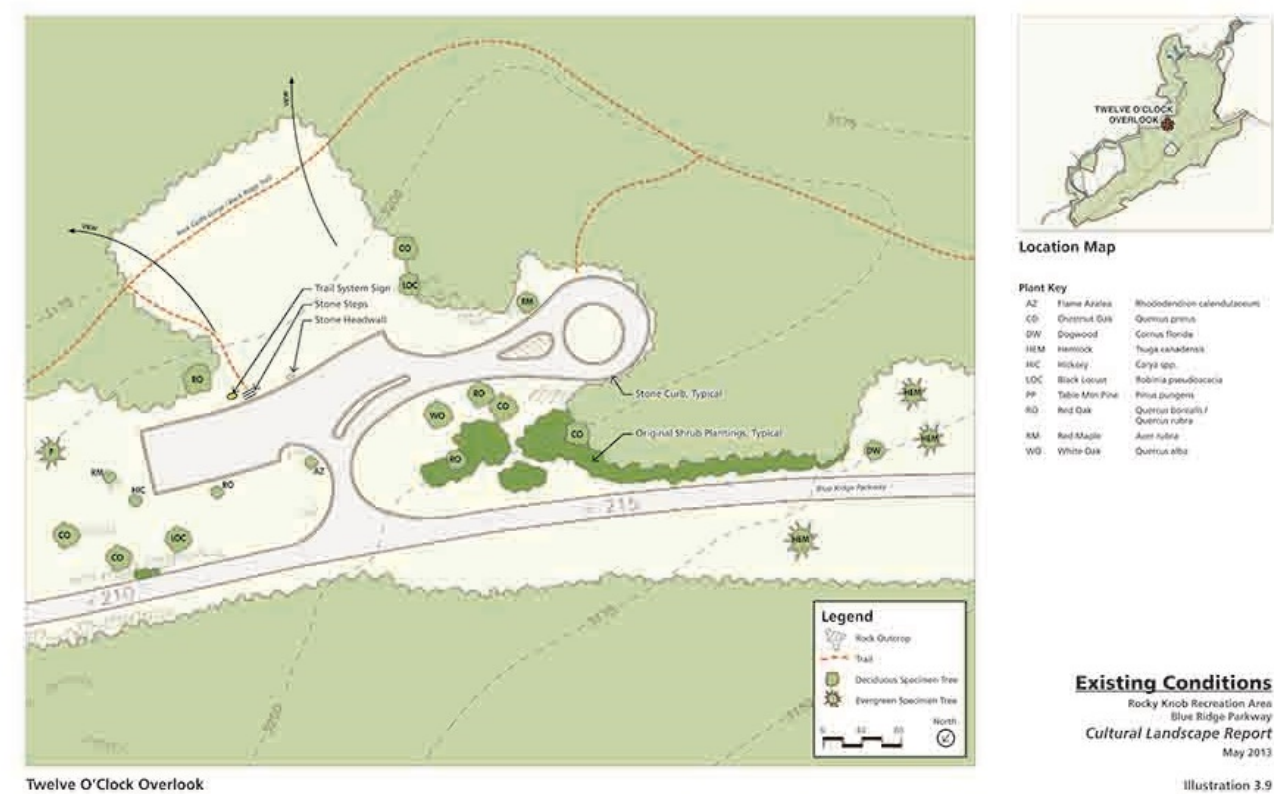


Figure 5. Twelve O'clock Overlook site plan. (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area Cultural Landscape Report, p.173)

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name:	Rocky Knob Section 1S
Property Level:	Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	976014
Parent Landscape:	975906

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code:	Blue Ridge Parkway - Rocky Knob Section 1S - BLRI
Park Organization Code:	5140
Park Administrative Unit:	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:

Park Superintendent Concurrence:	Yes
Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:	03/14/2014
National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Date of Concurrence Determination:	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 entries include: 080-5161-0255 The Saddle Overlook Access & Parking; 080-5161-0226 Rock Castle Gorge Overlook; 080-5161-0256 12 O'Clock Knob Overlook, Rocky Knob Trail Parking

Concurrence Graphic Information:

Foreword

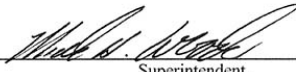
Rocky Knob Recreation Area provides parkway visitors an opportunity to experience the scenic beauty and historic charm that make the Blue Ridge Parkway the most visited park unit in the National Park Service. From the stunning views of Rock Castle Gorge lying 2,000 feet below the numerous overlooks, 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.

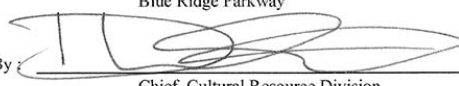
We would like to thank the staff of The Jaeger Company, in particular project leader Emmeline Morris and assistant project manager Daniel Lawson, for their thorough research, rigorous existing conditions documentation, and carefully considered recommendations. The parkway would also like to thank former 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.

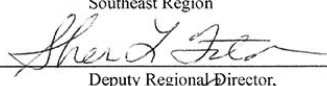
Monika Mayr

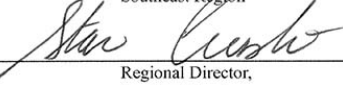
Acting Superintendent

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:

State:	North Carolina
County	Buncombe County

Size (Acres) 647.71

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. This study identified five component landscapes located within the recreation area and developed by the NPS between the late 1930s and the early 1960s: Rocky Knob Campground, Rocky Knob Maintenance Area, Rocky Knob Picnic Area, Rocky Knob Gas Station, and the Rocky Knob Trail Lodge Cabins. 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 Parkway Section 1-S consists of nearly four miles of gently winding roadway following a high ridgeline, which overlooks Rock Castle Gorge below. While the entirety of Section 1-S spans a distance of 8.85 miles, this inventory focuses only on the developed area of Rocky Knob Recreation Area, between Milepost 165.3 to Milepost 169.2. This area includes The Saddle Overlook, Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, and Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook, all of which are located on the south side of the Parkway. The Saddle Overlook consists of 2.85 acres, Rock Castle Gorge Overlook is 2 acres, and Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook is 1.5 acres.

Location Map:



Figure 6. Location map, The Saddle Overlook

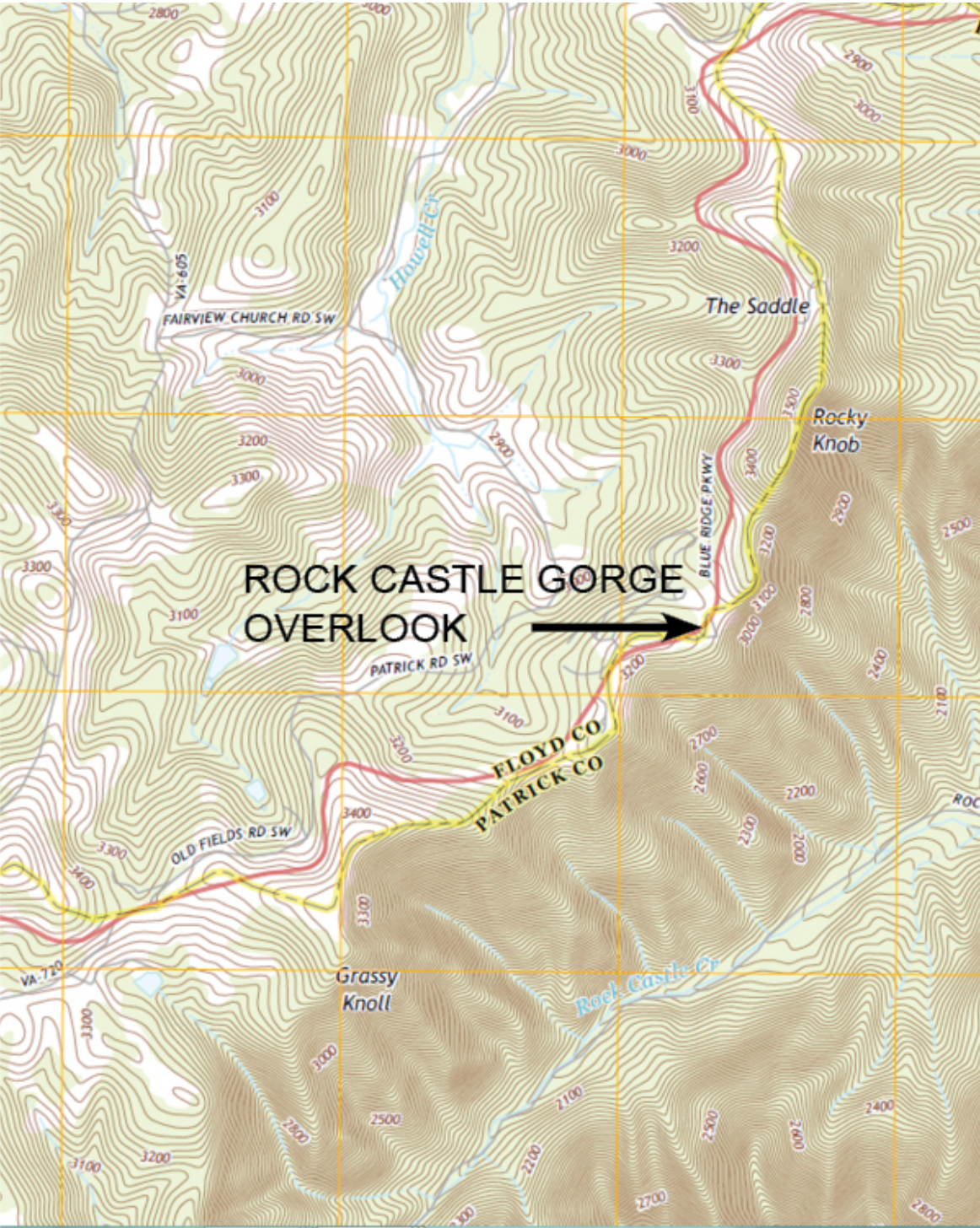


Figure 7. Location map, Rock Castle Gorge Overlook

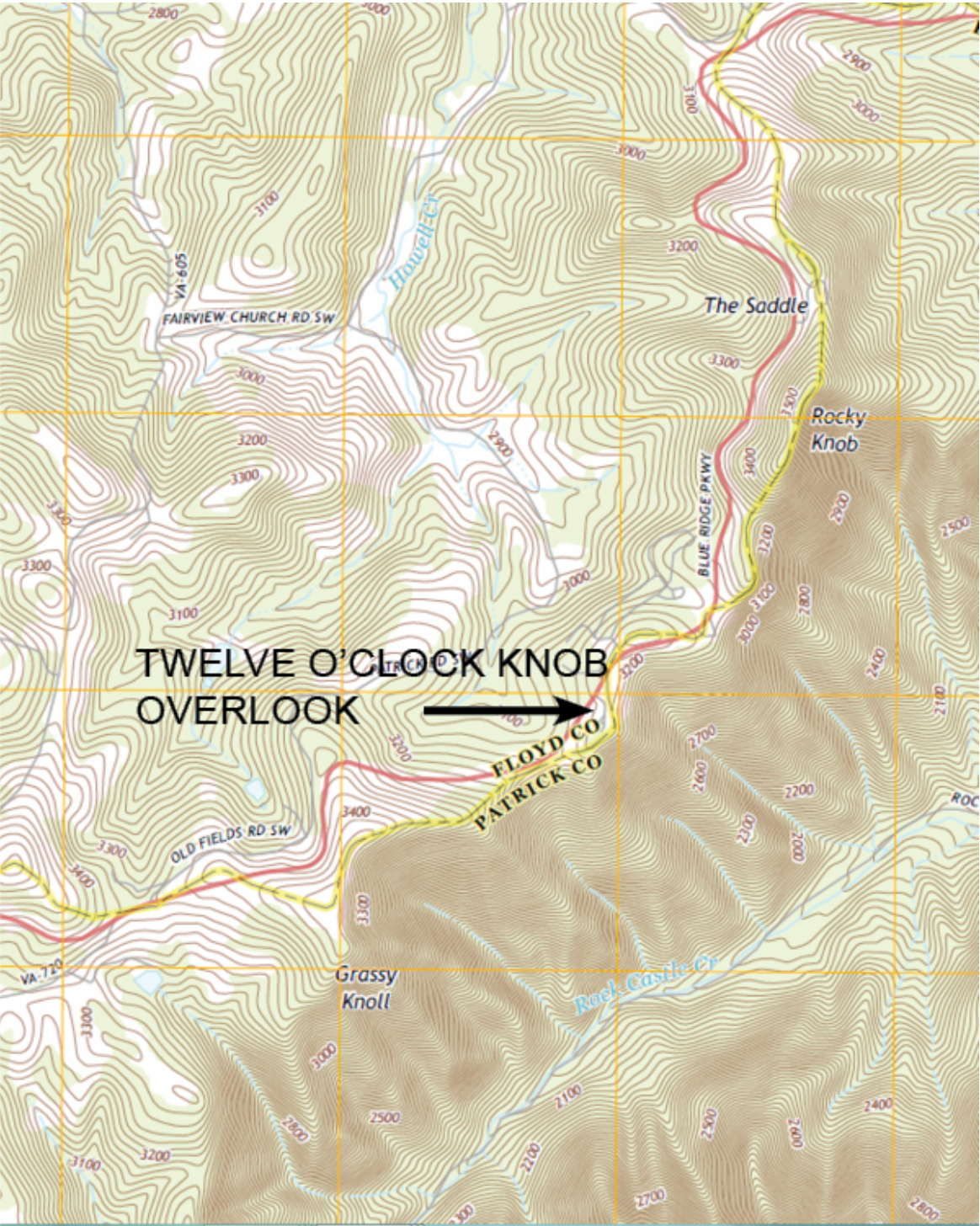


Figure 8. Location map, Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

The Blue Ridge Province forms the eastern portion 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. The managed landscapes surrounding the Maintenance Area component landscape are the exception. The majority of these areas are meadows and lawns kept open by either a mowing regime or grazing. The meadows and pastures feature meadow grasses and forbes with scattered bays of trees and shrubs, while the lawns feature turf and a variety of specimen trees and flowering shrubs native to the region. Two forest types dominate the forested portions of the recreation area, Southern Appalachian Oak Forest on the ridges and upland slopes, and Cove Forest along the lowland streams of the Rock Castle Gorge.

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, Highway Section 1-S, including the Saddle Overlook, Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, and Twelve O'clock Overlook, receives a category of 'Must Be Preserved and Maintained' as a contributing component landscape.

Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access

Management Agreement:

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 entries include: 080-5161-0255 The Saddle Overlook Access & Parking; 080-5161-0226 Rock Castle Gorge Overlook; 080-5161-0256 12 O'Clock Knob Overlook, Rocky Knob Trail Parking

National Register Eligibility

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

Period of Significance:

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

Time Period: CE 1939 - 1965

Historic Context Theme: Developing the American Economy

Subtheme: Transportation by Land and Air

Facet: Carriage Roads, Touring Roads and Parkways

Other Facet: None

Time Period: CE 1939 - 1965

Historic Context Theme: Developing the American Economy

Subtheme: Transportation by Land and Air

Facet: Planned Roads, Highways and Freeways

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

Time Period: CE 1939 - 1965

Historic Context Theme: Transforming the Environment

Subtheme: Conservation of Natural Resources

Facet: Scenic Preservation

Other Facet: None

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category: Architecture

Area of Significance Category: Conservation

Area of Significance Category: Entertainment - Recreation

Area of Significance Category: 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.” 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 recreational themes of historic significance such as 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:	Road-Related
Primary Current Use:	Road-Related
Other Use/Function	Other Type of Use or Function

Current and Historic Names:

Name	Type Of Name
Rocky Knob Parkway Section 1-S	Both Current And Historic
The Saddle Overlook	Both Current And Historic
Rock Castle Gorge Overlook	Both Current And Historic
Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook	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.

Rocky Knob Section 1S
Blue Ridge Parkway

Year	Event	Annotation
CE 1935	Designed	The Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) "in collaboration with The National Park Service" prepared the construction drawings for Section 1-S of the Parkway in Roanoke, Virginia, in July of 1935 (William M. Austin. "Final Construction Report United States Department of Agriculture" (Parkway Archives, Asheville, NC, 1939), 4).
CE 1936	Built	Construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway began on section 1-S through Rocky Knob. Work began in March of 1936, and by November 3, 1937, the contractor completed construction. The project included the grading, drainage and crushed stone surfacing of the road from Tuggle Gap in Floyd County to Rock Castle Gap in Patrick County.
CE 1936	Built	The contractor began clearing and grubbing operations on March 23, 1936. Next, the contractor stripped and stored the topsoil within the project area before beginning rough grading of the roadway in April. The contractor completed rough grading in August of 1936, before constructing the necessary pipe culverts, box culverts and other drainage features specified on the plans.
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]
CE 1937	Built	The contractor completed all masonry work by September 1937 (Austin, 1939, 13). Fine grading and crushed stone surfacing were complete in late summer and the contractor finished all work on Section 1-S in early November (Ibid, 4).
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 1939	Designed	Landscape Architect Malcom Bird scripted a manual entitled "Planning the Complete Landscape Development: the Problem and the Program" in which he outlined an overall NPS policy for landscape treatment along the Parkway. Included in the manual were plant lists and detailed processes for installation of plant materials. The manual also addressed the treatment of agricultural fields and woods within the Parkway right-of-way. These policies were applied to Parkway Section 1-S.

Rocky Knob Section 1S
Blue Ridge Parkway

Year	Event	Annotation
CE 1941	Altered	Section 1-S received final surface treatment some time in 1941 through a separate construction contract. According to Firth, the original “crushed stone was only intended to serve as the road surface for a year or so; a final surface treatment was to be added after the roadbed had time to settle” (Firth, 2005, 142).
CE 1941	Built	The NPS erected place name signs at completed overlooks and added milepost markers to recreation areas (Firth, 2005, 219).
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 1947	Built	NPS began to place concrete mileposts every mile indicating the mileage from the start of the Parkway at Rockfish Gap (Weems, 1947, 3).
CE 1947 - 1948	Altered	The NPS repaved Section 1-S of the Parkway with asphalt and added a single center strip the length of the roadway for safety (Franklin S. Wise “Final Construction, Report 1S7, Part A” (Parkway Archives, Asheville, NC), 14 April 1967, 1). In later years, the NPS added double striping to the roadway.
CE 1948	Designed	Sam Weems instituted a formal policy for signs along the Parkway, in an effort to avoid a proliferation of unnecessary signs along the route. All signs would be subject to approval of the Superintendent.
CE 1952	Built	Parkway staff installed interpretive panels along the trail from the Saddle Overlook to the trail shelter near the summit of Rocky Knob. Parkway staff also added a routed wood Parkway standard trail sign to the Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook during this period.
CE 1955 - 1959	Designed	Rocky Knob master plan updated as part of Mission 66 initiative...Sam Weems, Edward Abbuehl, [Henrick van Gelder, Thomas Chalmers Vint, Gilmore Clarke] [names with brackets are assumed]
CE 1958	Built	The Rock Castle Gorge Overlook was constructed.
CE 1960	Altered	Parkway staff updated the interpretive panels along the trail from the Saddle Overlook to the trail shelter near the summit of Rocky Knob.
CE 1971	Altered	The NPS repaved section 1-S of the Parkway.
CE 1984	Built	The NPS began installing modern interpretive signage designed by the NPS Interpretive Center at Harpers Ferry throughout the Parkway. Parkway staff installed one of these signs at The Saddle Overlook in Rocky Knob. The sign interprets nearby Buffalo Mountain, visible in the distance from this overlook
CE 2000	Altered	Early 2000s. Parkway staff replaced the gunboard sign at The Saddle Overlook with a pressed foam sign.

Physical History:

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 Parkway Section 1-S, for an overarching physical history of Rocky Knob Recreation Area, refer to that parent landscape physical history.

Rocky Knob Parkway Section 1-S Component Landscape Site History

The Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) “in collaboration with The National Park Service” prepared the construction drawings for Section 1-S of the Parkway in Roanoke, Virginia, in July of 1935 (William M. Austin. “Final Construction Report United States Department of Agriculture” (Parkway Archives, Asheville, NC, 1939), 4.). The route of 1-S followed a high ridgeline overlooking Rock Castle Gorge and provided the variety in scenery desired by the master planners of the Parkway. The design speed of the roadway was 35 miles per hour. The plans “provided for a twenty foot surfacing, widened for curvature and consisting of a six-inch loose thickness of crushed stone” (Ibid, 7). In sections where fill was necessary, “five foot road shoulders were planned. Cut sections received a three-foot shoulder with a two-foot ditch” (Ibid).

The BPR invited bids for the construction of Section 1-S of the Parkway on October 22, 1935. J. Lee and E.A. Vilbig, Inc. of Dallas, Texas won the contract with a low bid of \$234,675.50 on December 7, 1935. Work began in March of 1936, and by November 3, 1937, the contractor completed construction. The project included the grading, drainage and crushed stone surfacing of the road from Tuggle Gap in Floyd County to Rock Castle Gap in Patrick County (Ibid, 4). According to Firth, “crushed stone was only intended to serve as the road surface for a year or so; a final surface treatment was to be added after the roadbed had time to settle” (Firth, 2005, 142). Section 1-S received final surface treatment some time in 1941 through a separate construction contract.

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

Masonry structures are one of the most recognized and iconic features of the Parkway. Stone masonry operations along the route of Section 1-S consisted of constructing pipe culvert headwalls, box culvert head walls, grouted rubble gutter, and tree wells. At first, workers used masonry stone secured from roadway excavation and properties adjacent to the project site; however, this source soon ran out. The contractor obtained additional material from outside the project area. A nearby quarry located close to Payne Creek Church in Franklin County, Virginia, supplied the remaining stone needed to complete the project. This quarry also supplied stone for Sections 1-P, 1-Q, and 1-R further north on the Parkway. The contractor completed all masonry work by September 1937 (Austin, 1939, 13). Fine grading and crushed stone surfacing were complete in late summer and the contractor finished all work on Section 1-S in early November (Ibid, 4). Abbott and Austin performed the final inspection of Section 1-S together on November 3, 1937.

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

Evison, 1958, 16, transcript in Parkway Archives).

NPS landscape architects developed the site plans for parking areas and overlooks along the Parkway. Some were widened areas of the roadway with a narrow strip of flagstone between the drive lane and the pull-off area. The Rock Castle Creek Overlook (constructed much later in 1958), is this type of overlook, only instead of a flagstone strip separating the parking area from the roadway a small island of turf is used in place of the stone. Other overlooks were located with more separation from the drive lanes of the Parkway, often with a loop road, parking area and trails to pedestrian overlooks. These areas “encourage[d] motorists to take longer breaks from driving” (Firth, 2005, 143). The Saddle Overlook in Section 1-S is a good example of this type. The overlook consists of a short entrance drive leading to a small parking area and turnaround.

The designers carefully positioned the overlook in a “saddle” or a small ridge between two peaks, in order to take advantage of views in all directions. They also provided a short hiking trail leading to a small trail shelter near the summit of Rocky Knob. From this shelter, pedestrians can take in a breathtaking view of the Rock Castle Gorge below. The designers of the third overlook in Section 1-S, known today as Twelve O’clock Overlook, originally intended for this pull-off to serve as a parking area for a planned lodge development that was not constructed. Designers planned a fourth overlook, called Grassy Knoll that also went unconstructed. Designers added stone curbing to the edges of overlooks and parking areas. Firth states that stone masonry was used in many of the construction details for the overlook and parking areas “because of the close inspection these areas invited” (Ibid).

One of the challenges for the designers was to retain the rural quality of the landscape adjacent to the Parkway. The NPS initiated a master plan “to determine the most fruitful use of all lands within the park boundary” (Jolley, 1987, 13). This study resulted in PLUMs. These maps are extremely detailed and illustrate both the road alignment and the landscape treatment for each section of the Parkway. The maps also indicate property lines, adjacent landowners, and land use, “and similar data so essential to the architect and planner. The details required much research but Abbott provided it, feeling that prescribed land use was the key to Parkway distinctiveness” (Ibid).

Out of the PLUMs land use study “came a pioneering development which is still providing the rural picture so desired by the landscape architects. This was the land leasing program, whereby the Service, once it had rehabilitated land and restored its fertility, leased portions of it to local farmers who put it to traditional agricultural use. Abbott set forth two values he saw in the program: ‘(1) It will maintain the open character of the country where it is desirable without any considerable maintenance cost to the Federal Government and (2) It will build up the friendly feeling of the farmer toward the Parkway’” (Ibid., 36).

According to a NPS report on the agriculture lease program:

When land was leased back to neighboring farms, they were required to continue to improve land. This involved the requirements for improvement of the land by crop rotation, limiting the period of pasturage or the number of animals per acre, brush hooking weed trees such as locust, sassafras, and briars, and the use of cover crops in the fall, liming fertilizing, re-seeding, and fencing...[PLUMs] depict many locations where agriculture leases were planned along the Parkway. The agriculture leases were identified by location, reference[d] by milepost, total area of the lease in acreage, and type of lease as being cropland, pasture, or hay leases referenced in the drawings as meadows (NPS, “Agriculture Lease: Visual Impact Analysis Action Plan,” Draft – 9 January 2002, 6).

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

A private contractor paved Section 1-S in 1941, according to construction reports (Middleton, E. G. “Final Construction Report Project 1-S4-T7 Blue Ridge Parkway” (Parkway Archives, Asheville, NC), 1 March 1941). In 1942, Parkway maintenance crews took over work along the Parkway from CCC and WPA enrollees. “The onset of war halted all contract work on the road in the fall of 1942, by which time the end of CCC and WPA programs had stopped most of the development work in the

recreation areas. The CCC Camp in Rocky Knob closed in November 1941 (Quin, 1997, 77).

Restrictions on construction materials effectively ended construction work on the recreation areas throughout the Parkway. However, at Rocky Knob NPS crews were able to complete a few projects already underway. In 1942, NPS crews built a sewer system for a planned lodge development at what is now Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook. The lodge was never completed.

Virginia imposed a statewide ban on pleasure driving from May 1942 until August 1943, forcing the closure of Rocky Knob and Smart View recreation areas. The Parkway also allowed commercial trucks to use the Parkway to save on tires and gasoline during the war. Truckers paid a small fee to obtain a permit to travel on the road, in order to offset wear and tear on a road surface designed for light duty passenger vehicles (Ibid, 80). The NPS reduced the speed limit on the Parkway to 40 miles per hour to conserve fuel for the road effort.

By the start of 1947, the majority of staff members of the PRA and the NPS returned to their positions and were ready to continue the design process for the Parkway. Deferred maintenance during the war left portions of the Parkway severely deteriorated, making it necessary to devote considerable resources to the sections damaged during the war. As a result, most of the construction contracts at the beginning of the post-war period were for repairs and paving along portions of the Parkway that were already complete. In 1947-1948, the NPS repaved Section 1-S of the Parkway with asphalt and added a single center strip the length of the roadway for safety (Franklin S. Wise "Final Construction, Report 1S7, Part A" (Parkway Archives, Asheville, NC), 14 April 1967, 1). In later years, the NPS added double striping to the roadway. Parkway staff has successfully resisted efforts to add edge striping to the road shoulders, by arguing that such stripes would disrupt the integration of the road into the surrounding landscape (Quin, 1997, 112).

In 1947, NPS began to place concrete mileposts every mile indicating the mileage from the start of the Parkway at Rockfish Gap (According to Weems the mileposts were unique in the National Park System; Weems, 1947, 3). This small-scale feature is one of the most iconic along the roadside today. The larger tavern-style signs built before the war remained in the landscape. Staff eventually removed the signs but did not replace them. The new mileposts lacked the rustic character of previous small-scale elements built along the Parkway, but they did provide a way for motorists to know their exact location along the route (Firth, 2005, 245).

Sam Weems instituted a formal policy for signs along the Parkway in 1948, in an effort to avoid a proliferation of unnecessary signs along the route. All signs would be subject to approval of the Superintendent. This effort coincided with a change in policy at BPR, which pressured the Parkway to adopt provisions of its Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Reluctantly, Parkway staff adopted the change and began using metal traffic signs that contributed, "no unique character to the parkway" (Quoted in Quin, 1997, 141). The old wooden signs designed to harmonize with their surroundings and the interpretive signs along the Parkway were eventually phased out.

Parkway staff installed interpretive panels along the trail from the Saddle Overlook to the trail shelter near the summit of Rocky Knob in 1952. The trail interpreted the creation of soils in the forest (Quin, 1997, 216). Parkway staff also added a Parkway standard trail sign to the Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook during this period. Similar in character to the gunboard interpretive signs that date to the late 1940s, this routed wood sign maps all of the trails within Rocky Knob.

During the Mission 66 era, from 1956 until 1966, routine maintenance of the Section 1-S roadway, continued vista clearing at overlooks, and general upkeep prevailed. In addition, Mission 66 provided the additional funding required for the construction of a new overlook within Rock Knob. The NPS developed construction plans for the Rock Castle Gorge overlook, a pull-off style overlook, in 1958. Located along a dramatic curve in the roadway across from the picnic area, this overlook takes full advantage of a spectacular view of the gorge below. The original PLUMs proposed an overlook in this location prior to the war.

Few alterations have been made to Parkway Section 1-S since the end of the Mission 66 era. The NPS repaved section 1-S of the Parkway in 1971. NPS staff probably replaced the original slate

curbing at Rock Castle Gorge and The Saddle Overlooks with pink colored granite during this period. The NPS also began installing modern interpretive signage designed by the NPS Interpretive Center at Harpers Ferry throughout the Parkway in 1984, including a sign at The Saddle Overlook in Rocky Knob. The sign interprets nearby Buffalo Mountain, visible in the distance from this overlook (Ibid., 145). In the 2000s, Parkway staff replaced the gunboard sign at The Saddle Overlook with a pressed foam sign. The sign did not weather well and staff had to replace the it again quickly.



Figure 9. Rough grading operations in Rocky Knob, c. 1938. Note stands of dead American chestnut trees. (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 21)



Figure 10. Construction of rubble gutter, c.1938. (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 21)



Figure 11. Road leading to the parking area at The Saddle Overlook from the Parkway lined with timber guardrail, (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 22)



Figure 12. Sheep grazing an agricultural lease near the Maintenance Area at Rocky Knob, c. 1940 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 23)

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

Parkway Section 1-S, including The Saddle, Rock Castle Gorge, and Twelve O'clock Knob overlooks, within the Rocky Knob Recreation Area developed area, contains features related to the landscape characteristics of Land Use, Topography, Vegetation, Circulation, Buildings and Structures, Small-scale Features, and View and Vistas. This section provides an overview of these existing features, as well as a discussion of their integrity as it related to the historic significance of the parent landscape, Rocky Knob Recreation Area. The following landscape characteristics do not apply to the Rocky Knob Maintenance Area: Archeological Sites, Constructed Water Features, Spatial Organization, Natural Systems and Features, Cultural Traditions, and Cluster Arrangements.

Landscape Characteristic Summary

Land use within the Section 1-S component landscape has remained consistent with the period of significance. The primary land uses remain recreation, interpretation, and agricultural. The Parkway continues to function primarily as a scenic motor road, while the overlooks continue to function as such.

The topography of Section 1-S runs consistently above 3000 feet along the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The topography of Section 1-S and associated overlooks has not changed since the period of significance.

In general, the vegetation character of Section 1-S is consistent with historic conditions. The vegetation along the Section 1-S consists of a mixture of hardwood and evergreen tree species consistent with those listed on the PLUMs. Mature vegetation and changes in maintenance routines have altered viewsheds somewhat at the overlooks.

Vehicular and pedestrian circulation of Section 1-S and associated overlooks remains essentially the same as it was throughout the period of significance. In general, the roadway is in good condition and appears as intended by the Parkway designers. The Saddle and Twelve O'clock overlooks both have two parking bays and entrance road. The Saddle has a drive loop and Twelve O'clock has a circular turn-around. The Rock Castle Gorge Overlook is set close to the road and has one parking bay. Both The Saddle Overlook and Rock Castle Gorge Overlook have paved pedestrian circulation, while Twelve O'clock does not.

One structure is associated with the Parkway Section 1-S component landscape. An arched bridge, constructed in 1955, is located at the Tuggle Gap Grade Separated Interchange.

Multiple vistas were planned as a part of the overlooks within the Section 1-S component landscape, as well as along Section 1-S motor way. These remain intact with slight variation based on changes in vegetation.

Small-scale Features that are a part of the Section 1-S component landscape include drainage structures, stone gutters, fences, a spring outlet wall, stone retaining walls, stone curbs, guardrails, stone steps, wooden steps, stone headwalls, and various signs. Many of the signs have been altered.

Aspects of Integrity: (R) Pick list: (select one to many)

Aspects of Integrity Summary

1. Location: Parkway Section 1-S, including The Saddle, Rock Castle Gorge, and Twelve O'clock Overlooks, and their associated contributing features have remained in the same location since construction began on this Parkway section in 1936, retaining a high level of integrity. Parkway Section 1-S connects primary areas of activity within Rocky Knob Recreation Area, including the Picnic Area and the Gas Station, Maintenance Area, Campground, and overlooks. It also permits vehicle circulation along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

2. Materials: The materials used for Parkway Section 1-S and associated overlooks include mortar, asphalt, slate curbs, pink split-face granite curbs, concrete curbs, stone drainage features and retaining walls, etc., remain intact. Some materials, such as wooden signs, have been replaced. Other features, such as mortar and asphalt paving, have been retouched, while other features, such as timber guardrail fences, have been removed. The materials within the component landscape therefore retain a moderate level of integrity.

3. Design: Parkway Section 1-S and associated overlooks retains a high level of design integrity. The plan, form, space, and style of the area are consistent with the design during the period of significance.

4. Setting: The setting of Parkway Section 1-S and associated overlooks is consistent with that of the period of significance and retains a high level of integrity. The views from Section 1-S and associated overlooks includes stream gorges, cove forests, open mature hardwoods, and traditional agricultural scenery, all of which remain consistent with views during the period of significance. Section 1-S is not compromised by modern visual intrusions such as buildings and signs on private land visible from the Parkway.

5. Workmanship: The workmanship of the original construction along Section 1-S includes the road, drainage structures, and the stone bridge at Tuggle Gap. Much of this was constructed by the CCC, leaving a distinct mark on the final product. Therefore, the workmanship of Section 1-S and associated overlooks retains a high degree of integrity.

6. Feeling: The current feeling associated with Section 1-S and associated overlooks is consistent with the feeling of the area during the period of significance. The majority of current land-use practices along Section 1-S are similar to those envisioned by Parkway planners. The Recreation Area itself has a unique expression through its elevation, terrain, and rocky nature of the landscape. In general, the sensory experience of sights, sounds, and scents remains consistent with the period of significance.

7. Association: Parkway Section 1-S and associated overlooks retains a high degree of association integrity. This section of the Parkway was one of the earliest to be constructed, and is clearly associated with the rest of the Parkway in its history, appearance, design, and significance. It therefore retains a high degree of association integrity.

**Landscape Characteristic:
Land Use**

Historic Conditions: The Parkway functioned primarily as a scenic motor road with adjacent recreational, interpretive and agricultural uses. Passive recreation, interpretation, and agricultural leases were the primary land use functions.

Its designers referred to the Parkway as a “viewing platform” (Abbott, Carlton. “Visual Character of the Blue Ridge Parkway.” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1997, 63). In addition to providing a platform from which to view the surrounding scenery, the Saddle Overlook also served as a trailhead. From the overlook, it is only a short hike to the summit of Rocky Knob, which contains a trail shelter built by the CCC in 1937. This shelter was one of the first structures built along the Parkway. Interpretation occurs at the overlook in the form of interpretive signage. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, a leaflet dispenser was located at this overlook. This metal structure contained a nine page “Guide to Rocky Knob Nature Trail”, which provided descriptions of the various tree and shrub species located along the trail to the summit of Rocky Knob. This feature no longer exists in the landscape.

The NPS created the Rock Castle Gorge overlook to facilitate recreation along the Parkway primarily in the form of viewing the surrounding rural landscape. To a lesser extent, this area was used for hiking, as the Rock Castle Gorge Trail is accessible from the parking area. Other uses at this site included picnicking and interpretation. A 1943 Master Plan shows that this location was originally intended to be used as a ‘negro picnic ground’, but the facilities were never developed (Quin 1997, 214).

Similar to the other two overlooks located within the project area, the Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook was created to facilitate recreation in the form of viewing the surrounding landscape. The overlook also provided parking for users who wished to access the Rocky Knob Recreation Area trail system from this location.

Existing Conditions: Passive recreation, interpretation, and agricultural leases continue to be the primary land use functions along Parkway Section 1-S. The Parkway continues to function as a “viewing platform” and the overlooks contained along the route are used as such to this day. In recent years, the Rock Castle Gorge Overlook has also become a popular place for locals to take engagement photos.

Character-defining Features:

Feature Name: The Saddle Overlook
CLI Feature ID: 179585
Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature Name: Rock Castle Gorge Overlook
CLI Feature ID: 179587
Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature Name: Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook
CLI Feature ID: 179589
Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature Name: Agricultural lease plots
CLI Feature ID: 179591
Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic:
Topography

Historic Conditions: The Blue Ridge Parkway runs northeast to southwest along the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The roadway is consistently located above 3,000 feet in elevation as it travels through the recreation area. Parkway Section 1-S consists of nearly four miles of gently winding roadway following a high ridgeline, which overlooks Rock Castle Gorge below. The roadway connects the developed areas of the recreation area to one another along its sinuous route, providing an engaging driving experience for users. The elevation of The Saddle Overlook is 3,380 feet, Rock Castle Gorge is 3,195 feet, and Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook is 3,200 feet.

Existing Conditions: The topography of Parkway Section 1-S remains consistent with conditions during the period of significance.

Character-defining Features:

Feature Name:	Blue Ridge
CLI Feature ID:	179593
Feature Contribution:	Contributing

Landscape Characteristic:
Vegetation

Historic Conditions: The PLUMs list intended species composition for areas along the Parkway at variable intervals ranging between 250-500 feet. These plant lists are composed entirely of native species appropriate to the area. Some of the more frequently occurring species from the plants listed on the PLUMs are recorded below:

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

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

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

Parkway designers situated The Saddle Overlook in a large clearing consisting of mown grasses dotted with specimen trees and bordered by woodland. Specimen tree species include: red oak (*Quercus falcata* / *Quercus borealis*), American beech (*Fagus grandiolia*) and table mountain pine (*Pinus pungens*).

The PLUMs show a small orchard consisting of approximately fifty trees to the west of the Saddle Overlook, near an unnamed spring and associated creek. The PLUMs do not list species information for this orchard and no evidence of this orchard remains in the landscape today.

Designers sited the Rock Castle Gorge overlook in a maintained clearing approximately two acres in size. Drawings dated 1958 show two large specimen trees in the same locations that two existing trees occupy currently. The PLUMs also illustrate two specimen hickory trees (*Carya* spp.) in these locations.

Approximately one and a half acres of maintained landscape surrounds the Twelve O'clock Overlook. Like the other overlooks within the Park, this landscape consisted primarily of mown turf interspersed with specimen trees. Mountain Laurel and Rhododendrons were planted shortly after the NPS constructed this overlook. Tree species include chestnut oak (*Quercus prinus*), red oak (*Quercus falcata* / *Quercus borealis*), white oak (*Quercus alba*) and black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*).

Existing Conditions: The vegetation along the Parkway consists of a mixture of hardwood and evergreen tree species that are consistent with those listed on the PLUMs. The trees are generally in mature stages of growth. Understory conditions vary, from being relatively open to dense stands of rhododendron, flame azalea, and other shrub species. Open pastures and fields are also visible from the roadway.

The extent of the maintained open area at The Saddle Overlook has decreased over time, as portions of the original cleared area shown on the PLUMs have been allowed to return to woodland. For the most part though, the original design intent for the wood line at this overlook has been realized.

High winds, common to the exposed location near the top of Rocky Knob have battered and twisted the trees at The Saddle Overlook. As a result, it is difficult to tell with certainty whether or not the existing specimen trees are the same ones that appear in historic photographs and on the PLUMs. However, based on the historic photos and the current condition of the trees, it is likely that they are original. If these specimens are in fact replacements, they appear to be in their original locations.

At the Rock Castle Gorge overlook, the ground plane is composed almost entirely of turf and the over story layer is limited to three large specimen trees. It is very likely that these two trees are the original plantings listed on the PLUMs. All three of the trees are in good condition, as is the rest of the vegetation at the overlook, except for patches of eroding turf. Several successional species exist down slope from the parking bay in the vista clearing.

Mature mountain laurel and rhododendron thickets and mown turf remain at the Twelve O'clock overlook.

Character Defining Features

Feature: Large clearing of mown grass extending north and east of the parking area at The Saddle Overlook

Feature Identification Number:

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Specimen trees within The Saddle Overlook clearing: 7 Red Oaks, 1 Hickory, 2 Ash, and 1 Table Mountain Pine

Feature Identification Number:

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Specimen trees at the Rock Castle Gorge Overlook: 2 hickory trees near parking area and 1

Ash across the Parkway

Feature Identification Number:

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Clearing east of parking area at Twelve O'clock Overlook

Feature Identification Number:

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Specimen trees at Twelve O'clock Overlook: 3 Chestnut Oak, 3 Red Oak, 2 Black Locusts, and 1 White Oak

Feature Identification Number:

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Mountain Laurel and Rhododendron thickets (Twelve O'clock overlook)

Feature Identification Number:

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Native plant species grouped at intervals along Parkway, as specified by PLUMs

Feature Identification Number:

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: 21 acre pasture area across the Parkway from Section 1-S

Feature Identification Number:

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 13. The Saddle Overlook, c. 1938 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 166)



Figure 14. The Saddle Overlook, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 166)

Landscape Characteristic:
Circulation

Historic Conditions: This section of the Parkway consisted of nearly four miles of gently winding roadway following a high ridgeline, which overlooks Rock Castle Gorge below, from Milepost 165.3 at the Tuggle Gap Grade Separated Interchange to Milepost 169.2 near Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook. The roadway connected the developed areas of the recreation area to one another along its sinuous route, providing an engaging driving experience for users. The asphalt roadway surface was 22 feet wide and consisted of two driving lanes separated by a painted centerline. No painted shoulders were present.

Circulation for The Saddle Overlook consisted of a simple asphalt-paved pull-off drive loop separated from the Parkway by a large open grassed area. The drive loop accommodated two-way traffic and was approximately 950 feet long. At the end of the loop, the drive lane split into a one way traffic loop divided by a grassed median lined with granite curb. The median separated two distinct parking bays situated to take full advantage of the surrounding views from both sides of the mountain. The overlook provided parking for 26 cars. A narrow asphalt sidewalk located on the edge of the western parking bay handled pedestrian circulation. In addition, a portion of the recreation area's trail system traveled through this overlook providing access to the Rocky Knob Trail Shelter and the summit of Rocky Knob.

Vehicular circulation for the Rock Castle Gorge overlook was handled by a single asphalt pull off and parking bay. Pedestrian circulation at the overlook was accommodated by a 7 foot wide asphalt walkway.

The Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook was originally planned to serve as a parking and drop off area for a proposed lodge development that was never built. Construction of the overlook occurred concurrently with Parkway construction and was complete by 1940. Parking was provided in two parking bays at this location. Circulation at the overlook consisted of a two-way entrance/exit to the Parkway with a parking area for 41 vehicles located to the north of the entrance/exit and a single lane, circular turnaround located to the south. The circulation plan was ingenious and intuitive at the same time: a series of curbed medians helped drivers navigate the overlook and separated the lanes of travel.

Existing Conditions: In general, the roadway is in good condition and appears as intended by the Parkway designers. The primary circulation route for Parkway Section 1-S is the 3.9 miles of Parkway included in the study area, from Milepost 165.3 at the Tuggle Gap Grade Separated Interchange to Milepost 169.2 near Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook. In general, the asphalt paved Parkway is in good condition.

Circulation for The Saddle Overlook remains consistent with the historic conditions during the period of significance.

The circulation at the Rock Castle Gorge overlook remains consistent with that of the period of significance. The vehicular circulation asphalt is in good condition overall and the pedestrian circulation asphalt is in generally fair condition, although a section of the walkway adjacent to the interpretive panel has eroded away completely. A portion of the Rocky Knob Recreation Area trail system passes through this location as well.

The Twelve O'clock Knob overlook still acts as an expanded parking area, overlook, and trailhead. The designers originally intended the circular turnaround to serve as the drop-off and check-in area for a future lodge development, but since the lodge was never completed, the turnaround makes little sense in the landscape today. Bituminous asphalt covers all of the driving lanes, which are in good condition.

Character Defining Features

Rocky Knob Section 1S
Blue Ridge Parkway

- Feature: 3.9 miles of Section 1-S road
 Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
- Feature: 26 vehicle asphalt parking area and driving loop at The Saddle Overlook
 Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
- Feature: Narrow asphalt walkway along eastern edge of parking area at The Saddle Overlook (1938)
 Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
- Feature: Section of dirt hiking trail to the Summit of Rocky Knob and Rocky Knob Trail Shelter (c.1940)
 Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
- Feature: 17 vehicle asphalt parking bay at Rock Castle Gorge Overlook
 Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
- Feature: Asphalt walkway along eastern edge of Rock Castle Gorge Overlook parking area (1959)
 Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
- Feature: Parkway trail system at Rock Castle Gorge Overlook (c. 1940, connecting trail 1959)
 Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
- Feature: Two parking bays that accommodate 41 vehicles and circulation loop at the Twelve O'clock Knob Overlook
 Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
- Feature: Parkway trail system at Twelve O'clock Overlook (c. 1940)
 Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

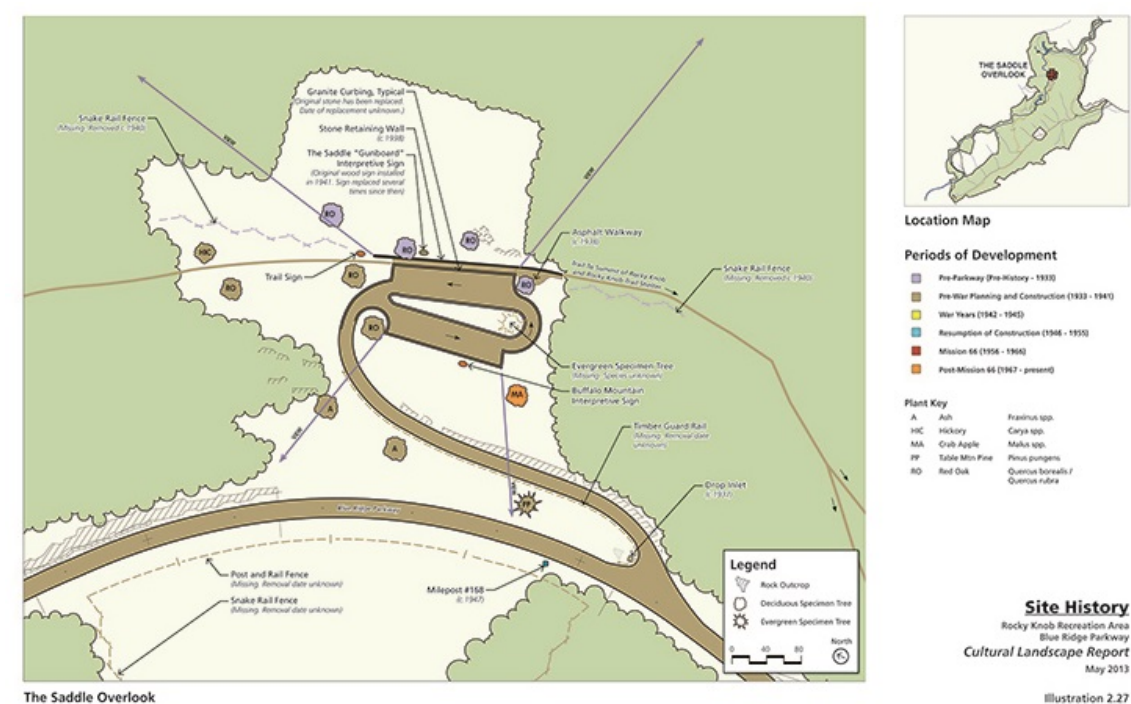


Figure 15. The Saddle Overlook periods of development map (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 101)

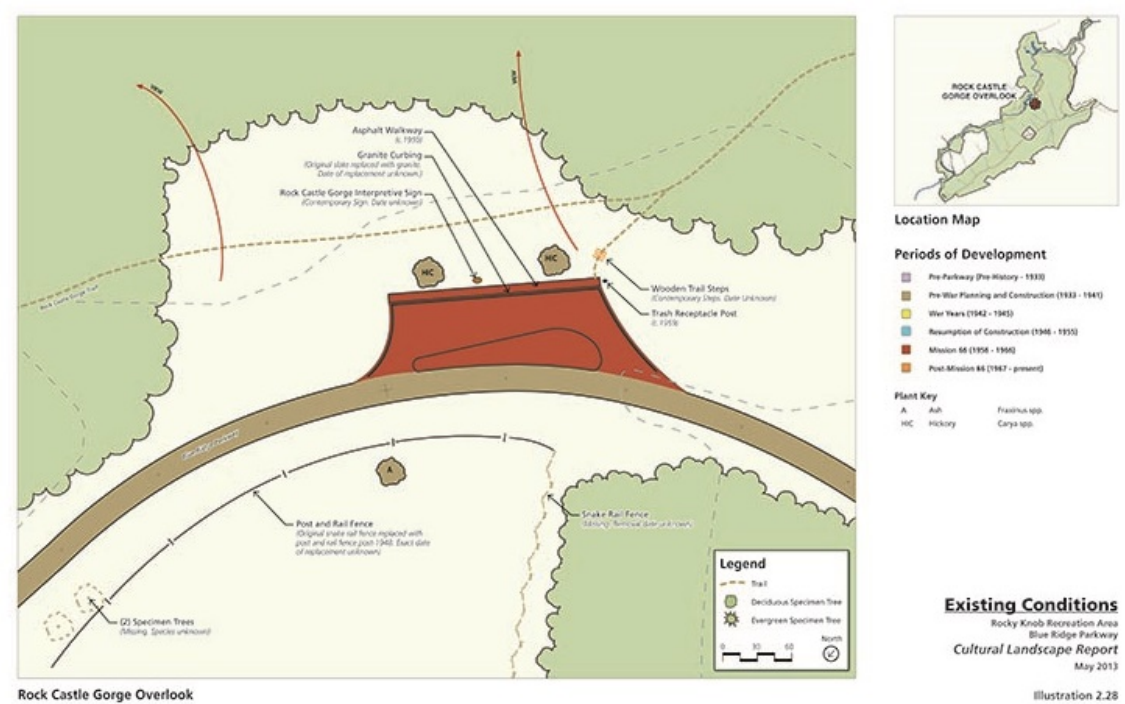


Figure 16. Rock Castle Gorge Overlook periods of development map (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 103)

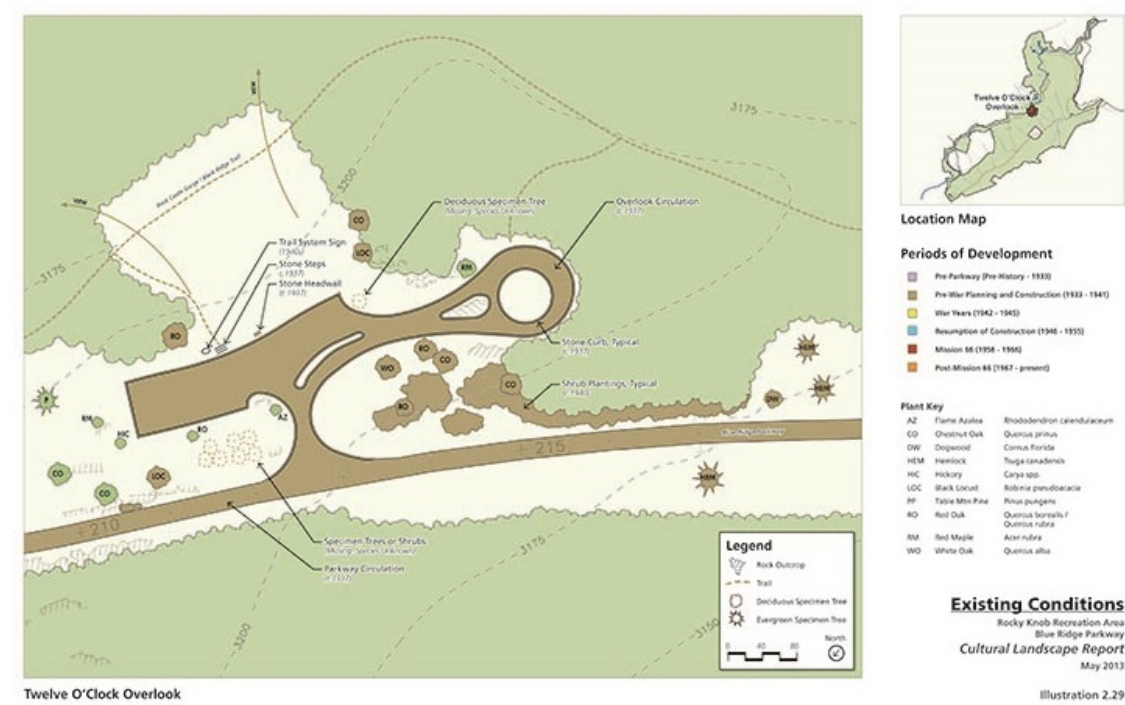


Figure 17. Twelve O'clock Overlook periods of development map (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 105)

Buildings and Structures

Historic Conditions: An impressive arched bridge is located at the Tuggle Gap Grade Separated Interchange along Parkway Section 1-S. This single span bridge is a good example of a stone-faced Parkway bridge constructed over a state route. Built by NPS in 1955, this bridge is constructed of poured reinforced concrete faced in masonry stone. It features a stepped stone parapet wall.

Existing Conditions: The arched bridge at the Tuggle Gap Grade is in good condition. A historic photo of the bridge under construction shows that the bridge has changed little since its construction in the 1950s.

Character Defining Features

Feature: Stone bridge at Tuggle Gap grade separated interchange, 1955
Feature Identification Number:
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 18. Grade-separated interchange at Tuggle Gap, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 159)



Figure 19. Grade-separated interchange at Tuggle Gap, c.1954 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 159)

**Landscape Characteristic:
Views and Vistas**

Historic Conditions: Canopy shrub vistas and open pastureland comprised much of the intended vistas along this stretch of Parkway. The PLUMs indicate the presence of two 175-foot vistas located on the perimeter of each parking bay at The Saddle Overlook. There were very few overlooks constructed along the Parkway that allowed for views of the surrounding landscape in all directions making this one particularly unique. According to the PLUMs, designers planned a single 300-foot long vista at the Rock Castle Gorge Overlook. The vista takes in a portion of the Rock Castle Gorge below and provides an excellent view of the piedmont further in the distance. The PLUMs show two maintained vistas at the Twelve O'clock Overlook. One vista provided a view of Twelve O'clock Knob in the distance with Rock Castle Gorge in the foreground below. The remaining view was intended as part of the lodge development that was never developed.

Existing Conditions: NPS staff maintains the majority of views specified on PLUMs. The views denoted as 'open woods' on the PLUMs are no longer maintained, reducing the variety of scenery intended by Parkway designers. All existing views indicated on the PLUMs are contributing resources. The open pastures appear to be similar to their original configuration as shown on the historic PLUMs, as are the shrub and grass bays.

The NPS maintains both of the original planned views at The Saddle Overlook. NPS staff maintain the majority of the viewshed at the Rock Castle Gorge Overlook in an open condition, however, approximately 75 feet of the original vista shown on the PLUMs has been lost. Park staff currently maintains one view at the Twelve O'clock Overlook that consists of an opening in the woodland equal to the length of the eastern parking bay, but has allowed the lodge development view area to return to forest canopy.

Character-defining Features:

Feature Name: 2 175 foot views at the Saddle Overlook
CLI Feature ID: 179599
Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature Name: 225ft view at Rock Castle Gorge Overlook
CLI Feature ID: 179601
Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature Name: Twelve O'clock Knob view
CLI Feature ID: 179603
Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 20. View from Twelve O'clock Overlook, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 176)

**Landscape Characteristic:
Small Scale Features**

Small-scale features along Parkway Section 1-S include drainage structures, stone gutters, signage, a variety of fence types, and a spring outlet wall. At the overlooks, features include stone retaining walls, stone curbs, signage, fences, guardrails, drainage structures, stone steps, and stone gutters. Many original small-scale features remain intact.

Historic Conditions:

Parkway Section 1-S

Drainage Structures- There were numerous pipe culverts with small stone headwalls along this portion of the Parkway, often at intersections with drives or at the terminus of a grass swale or stone gutter. A few concrete drop inlets were located along this section of the Parkway as well.

Stone Gutters- Stone gutters were located alongside the Parkway within the project area. Rustic stone cobbles were mortared to form an approximately one foot deep gutter. No asphalt gutters were constructed in this section, which is uncommon along the Parkway route. The CCC constructed the stone gutters at Rocky Knob from 1937-1943.

Signage- A variety of sign types were installed along the Parkway. The majority of these signs functioned as site identification signs, regulatory signs or directional signs. Most were brown metal with white reflective lettering typical to the Parkway. Concrete mile markers were also installed at Rocky Knob, consistent with others found throughout the Parkway. These markers are precast concrete with recessed letters. At every mile, the markers are located 5 feet from the roadway

pavement. This type of mile marker became the parkway standard in 1947. At the Tuggle Gap Grade-Separated Interchange, the Parkway access drive contains a large wooden Parkway entrance sign. These signs are found throughout the Parkway, feature the Parkway logo, and serve to announce to the visitor that they are now entering NPS property. The design of this sign dates to 1949.

Fences- Different fence types exist along the Parkway including split rail, barbed wire and post and wire. Fences typically separate pastures and/or agricultural land, or visitor use areas from the roadway. Fence types and locations are indicated on the original PLUMs. Due to a shortage of suitable fence material during the Resumption of Construction Era, Parkway staff and agricultural lessees replaced many of the split rail fences located out of direct view from the roadway with post and wire fences. The fences in Rocky Knob were originally constructed of chestnut.

Spring Outlet Wall- By 1942, a stone wall surrounding a spring outlet was constructed in a pasture adjacent to the roadway near milepost 169.6, just outside the project area. This simple stone feature surrounds a small spring outlet and was likely used as a water source for livestock as part of the agricultural lease program.

The Saddle Overlook

Stone Retaining Wall- A 220-foot long stone masonry wall runs along the eastern edge of the east parking bay. This wall is approximately six feet tall and two feet wide and was built to create a level parking area on a sloping site. This wall is one of the oldest structures on the site, being part of the early phases of construction for this overlook. Both ends of the wall gradually step down to meet the existing grade. A stone drop inlet captures water run-off from the parking area and sends it through a stone-lined hole integrated into the wall construction.

Stone Curbs- According to historic photographs, the original curb at this overlook was likely made from a type of slate called, "Rocky Knob Black Stone", which was used for curbing in many of the sections of the Parkway that pass through Virginia. Examples of this kind of slate stone curbing are located at other sites within the study area, including the Camping and Picnic Areas.

Signage- A traditional gunboard interpretive sign, which interprets The Saddle and the settlements in the valleys below, is located at the Saddle Overlook. Constructed of 2-inch thick redwood signboards mounted to locust posts, original gunboard signs are unique to the Parkway.

In addition to the interpretive signage, a concrete milepost is located near the beginning of the overlook entrance drive in a grassed area adjacent to the Parkway. A Post-Mission 66 wooden directional trail sign also exists at the site located at the northern end of the stone retaining wall. Both of these signs are in good condition.

Fences- According to the PLUMs, Parkway designers did not plan to install fences at this overlook. However, two separate historic photographs from the late 1930s show a section of wooden snake fencing located along the northern edge of the tree line that extended from the low point of the saddle to the stone retaining wall. The NPS built this fence ca. 1940, as no evidence of the fence appears in aerial photographs from that year, despite the fact that identical fences are clearly visible in nearby locations on these photographs. The portions of fence visible in 1930s photos were probably remnant agricultural fences in place prior to construction of the overlook and the NPS removed and repurposed them once construction of the overlook was complete. The PLUMs also show snake, post, and rail fencing in the pasture area located to the west of the overlook on the opposite side of the Parkway.

Guardrail- Historically, a low wooden guardrail lined the entrance road leading to the overlook parking area. This elegant, curving rail also appears on the PLUMs at this location.

Drainage Structures- A drainage structure was located in a low point where the overlook entrance drive meets the Parkway. This structure consisted of a metal grate surrounded by mortared stone. This inlet collected water from a grass-lined swale that runs along the Parkway.

Rock Castle Gorge Overlook

Stone Curb— Stone curb lined the parking bay and a portion of the asphalt pull-off. The original stone that appears in photographs was likely a type of slate called, “Rocky Knob Black Stone”, which the NPS used in many other locations within the park and the Parkway.

Twelve O'clock Overlook

Stone Curb- Stone curbing is installed along the edge of the parking area, circular turnaround, and all internal medians. The stone used appears different from the pink granite and slate curbing found elsewhere in the Rocky Knob Recreation Area, and has more in common with the rock outcrops that surround the overlook. It is likely that workers used stone secured from roadway excavation within the boundaries of Rocky Knob Recreation Area to construct the curb of this overlook. According to the Final Construction Report for this Parkway section, the contractor used stone quarried within the park until they ran out. Because the stone at this overlook differs from the slate used elsewhere, the curbing at Twelve O'clock Overlook was likely the first curb constructed along this Parkway section and the only curb that utilized stone quarried within the recreation area.

Trail Sign- A routed wood trail system sign is located near the middle of the eastern parking bay.

Stone Steps- Several large, native stone steps are set into a gently sloping section of lawn south of the trail system sign. The steps connect the Rocky Knob Recreation Area trail system to the overlook parking area.

Stone Headwall- A Parkway standard stone headwall is located adjacent to the parking area. This headwall surrounds a corrugated metal pipe.

Existing Conditions:

Parkway Section 1-S

Drainage Structures- All of these original drainage structures appear on the PLUMs, are functional and appear to be in good condition.

Stone Gutters- The overall condition of the gutter system is fair due to encroaching vegetation in the mortar joints of some sections of gutter. However, the NPS appears to have maintained some sections better than others over the years, and there is evidence that some sections were reset recently.

Signage- The concrete mile markers are in good condition. This Parkway standard style is still used today. The Parkway entrance sign at the Tuggle Gap Grade-Separated Interchange is in good condition.

Fences- Existing fence locations appear to be consistent with the PLUMs; however, some of the fence types have been altered. For example, both the PLUMs and historic photographs show the use of “snake” or “worm” fencing along sections of the roadway that are now lined with split rail fence. These alterations likely occurred for maintenance reasons and probably took place when agricultural leases changed from raising livestock to hay production. Sheep and cattle are able to maintain vegetation around complicated fence lines more easily than modern maintenance equipment can. Fences are now built from poplar and locust instead of chestnut. The condition of the fences varies, but they appear to be good to fair overall. Of particular note is a section of three rail fence that parallels a dramatic curve in the Parkway between the Rock Castle Gorge Overlook and the Picnic Area. This fence visually reinforces the curvilinear alignment of the Parkway and is cited as evidence of the early Parkway designer's willingness to locate fencing for aesthetic reasons alone, as this fence was never part of an agricultural lease (Abbott, Carlton. “Visual Character of the Blue Ridge Parkway.” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1997, 234).

Spring Outlet Wall- The structure collapsed and only portions of the stone and mortar remain in the landscape today, leaving this resource in poor condition.

The Saddle Overlook

Stone Retaining Wall- This feature is in good condition, as is the rest of the wall, although there are some areas where stones are missing and recent mortar repairs are obvious.

Stone Curbs- Split face granite curb exists around the perimeter of the parking area at the Saddle Overlook. The same type of curbing surrounds the center median. The type of granite used contains a considerable amount of quartz, which gives each section of curbing a distinct pinkish hue. Granite was not the original curbing material at this location. Examples of the pink granite curbing type exist at the Rock Castle Gorge Overlook and the parking area adjacent to the Gas Station. All curbs at this location are in good condition and feature the characteristic gradual transition into grade at the starting point of each section, which is common design detail present throughout the Parkway.

Signage- Two interpretive signs are located at the Saddle Overlook. The first sign is located on the edge of the western parking area. This sign focuses on the history of Buffalo Mountain, which is visible in the distance from this location. This sign is constructed of metal posts that hold a vandal-proof integrated graphic board, which is consistent with the new interpretive signs found along the Parkway. The second sign was the traditional gunboard style sign. Over time, the NPS replaced many of the original wooden signboards with Post-Mission 66 signboards made from either recycled plastic or foam. At the time of this report, the Saddle gunboard sign was missing and only the mounting posts were visible. Through research, a recent photograph of this particular sign was discovered that shows a badly deteriorated replacement foam sign at this location. This damaged foam sign was likely in the process of being replaced at the time fieldwork was conducted by the project team.

Fences- The snake, post, and rail fencing in the pasture area located to the west of the overlook on the opposite side of the Parkway is visible in historic aerial photography from 1966. No evidence of any of these fences exists in the landscape today.

Guardrail- No evidence of this feature exists in the landscape today.

Drainage Structures- The original grated metal drop inlet is in good condition and is visible in multiple historic photographs from the period of significance.

Rock Castle Gorge Overlook

Stone Curb- Split face, pink granite curb lines the parking bay and a portion of the asphalt pull-off. Identical granite curb exists at the Saddle Overlook and the Gas Station parking area. Construction plans dated 1958 show a 30 foot 6 inch taper from the finished grade to the top of the 6 inch curb at the terminus of each curb section. This detail is common throughout the Parkway; however, the tapering of the curb at this overlook is particularly well executed and documented. Historic photos dating from 1959 show a curb of a different stone material at this location. According to park staff, due to the large sizes needed for replacement curbing, acquiring in-kind replacement pieces of slate proved too costly and the NPS used pink granite as a replacement curb material instead.

Trash Receptacle Post- A precast concrete post used to mount a trash receptacle, is located at the far western corner of the parking bay. No trash receptacle was present at the time of this study. It is not known whether this trashcan was removed for the winter season, or in the process of being replaced with a Post-Mission 66 bear-proof model.

Wooden Steps- A set of Post-Mission 66 wooden trail steps is located at the western end of the parking bay. These steps provide access to the Rock Castle Gorge Trail from the parking area. The stairs are in fair condition; however, the adjacent turf is compacted and eroding away due to heavy foot traffic.

Signage— A single interpretive sign is located near the center of the parking area. This sign provides information about the Rock Castle Gorge and associated community below. This sign features metal posts, which hold a vandal-proof integrated graphic board that is consistent with the new interpretive signs found along the Parkway, and identical in construction to others found in the Rocky Knob Recreation Area.

Twelve O'clock Overlook

Stone Curb- This original native stone curb is in good condition.

Trail Sign- The sign is in good condition and is identical to others throughout the recreation area and the Parkway.

Trash Receptacle Post- A precast concrete post used to mount a trash receptacle is located adjacent to the trail sign. This post is identical to the one located at Rock Castle Gorge Overlook.

Stone Steps- These steps are in fair condition, with some erosion occurring near the edge of each stone.

Stone Headwall- This headwall is in good condition.

Character Defining Features

Feature: Pipe culverts with stone headwalls and concrete drop inlets (along Section 1-S), 1937
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Stone gutters (along Section 1-S), 1937-1943
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: 4 Concrete milepost signs (Mile 169 at Gas Station, Mile 168 at The Saddle Overlook entrance, Mile 167 east of Campground entrance, Mile 166 near the private drive and large pasture area), 1947
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Parkway entrance sign, 1950
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Gunboard (The Saddle Overlook), 1941
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Wooden Trail Sign (The Saddle Overlook), 1950
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Rustic worm fence or snake fence (between mile markers 166 and 167 along north side of Parkway, across from the Parkway from the Campground, between mile markers 167 and 168 on the south side of the Parkway, in the clearing near the Picnic Area, and near Mile marker 170 along the south side of the Parkway)
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Post and wire fencing (along the north side of the Parkway between mile marker 166 and 167, on both sides of the Parkway near the Maintenance Area, and across the Parkway from the Saddle Overlook)
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Replacement post and wire fence (across the Parkway from Rock Castle Gorge Overlook), post-1948 (exact date unknown)
Type of Feature Contribution: Noncontributing

Feature: Spring outlet wall (near Milepost 169.6), 1942
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Drop inlet drainage feature (The Saddle Overlook), 1937
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Stone retaining wall (The Saddle Overlook), 1938
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Replacement split faced granite curb (The Saddle Overlook), (date unknown)
Type of Feature Contribution: Noncontributing

Feature: Concrete trash receptacle posts (1 at Rock Castle Gorge Overlook and 1 at Twelve O'clock Overlook), likely Mission 66 era (date unknown)
Type of Feature Contribution: Noncontributing

Feature: Replacement split faced granite curb (Rock Castle Gorge Overlook), (date unknown)
Type of Feature Contribution: Noncontributing

Feature: Wooden trail steps (Rock Castle Gorge Overlook), contemporary (date unknown)
Type of Feature Contribution: Noncontributing

Feature: Stone steps (Twelve O'clock Overlook), c. 1937
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Trail System Sign (Twelve O'clock Overlook), c. 1940
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Stone headwall (Twelve O'clock Overlook), c. 1937
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Stone curb (Twelve O'clock Overlook), c. 1937
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 21. Typical stone headwall along Parkway Section 1-S, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 159)



Figure 22. Concrete drop inlet along Parkway Section 1-S, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 159)



Figure 23. Stone gutter along Parkway Section 1-S, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 160)



Figure 24 A. Parkway signage, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 161)



Figure 24 B. Parkway signage along Parkway Section 1-S, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 161)



Figure 24 C. Parkway signage along Parkway Section 1-S, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 161)



Figure 25. Concrete mile marker along Parkway Section 1-S, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 161)



Figure 26. Parkway entrance sign (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 161)



Figure 27. Fence types along Parkway Section 1-S, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 162)



Figure 28. Stone spring outlet wall along Parkway Section 1-S near mile 169.6, 1942 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p.162)



Figure 29. Collapsed spring outlet wall along Parkway Section 1-S near mile 169.6 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 162)



Figure 30. Stone retaining wall at The Saddle Overlook, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 166)



Figure 31. Snake fence at The Saddle Overlook parking area, c. 1938 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 167)

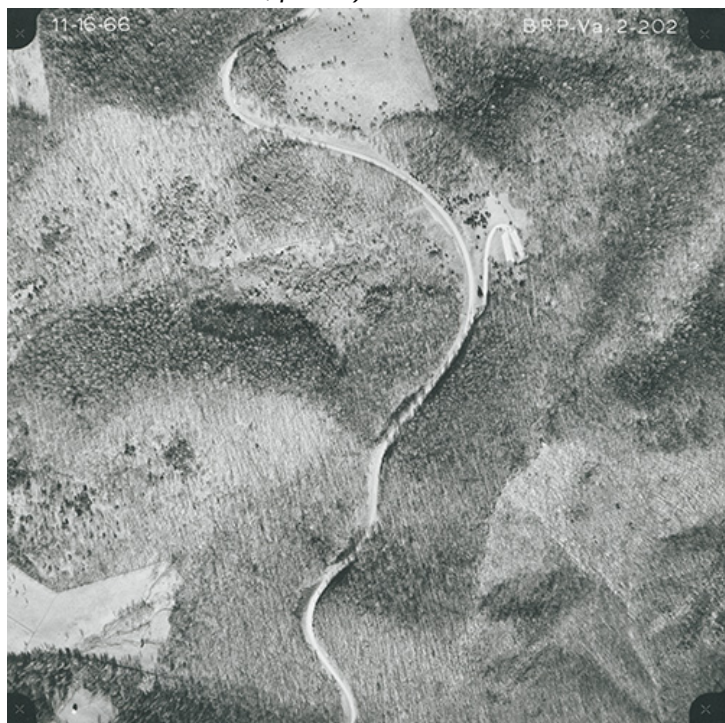


Figure 32. The Saddle Overlook aerial photograph, c.1966 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 167)



Figure 33. Wooden guardrail at The Saddle Overlook, c. 1938 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 168)



Figure 34. Trail sign and stone steps at Twelve O'clock Overlook, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 175)



Figure 35. Pink granite curbing at The Saddle Overlook, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 166)



Figure 36. Post-Mission 66 interpretive sign at The Saddle Overlook, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 167)



Figure 37. Foam gunboard sign at The Saddle Overlook, 2010 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 167)



Figure 38. Stone curb transition into grade at Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 172)



Figure 39. Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, c. 1959 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 172)



Figure 40. Wooden trail steps at Rock Castle Gorge Overlook, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 172)



Figure 41. Stone headwall at Twelve O'clock Overlook, 2011 (2014 Rocky Knob Recreation Area CLR, p. 176)

Condition

Assessment Interval (Years): 6
Next Assessment Due Date: 09/30/2023

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Good
Assessment Date: 09/07/2017
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: Operations On Site

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: 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
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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

Citation Title: See Rocky Knob Recreation Area parent landscape
for a full list of references.

Year of Publication: