

DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR THE PINNACLE OVERLOOK DEVELOPED AREA

CUMBERLAND GAP NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK, LEE COUNTY, VIRGINIA AND BELL COUNTY, KENTUCKY

**Prepared for
National Park Service,
Southeast Regional Office**



**Prepared by
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September 2023

**NORTHWIND
RESOURCE CONSULTING**

Determination of Eligibility for the
Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area,
Cumberland Gap National Historical Park,
Lee County, Virginia and Bell County,
Kentucky

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North Wind Cultural Resources Report No. 030573.001c

REPORT ABSTRACT

Report Title:	Determination of Eligibility for the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area, Cumberland Gap National Historical Park
Project Location:	Lee County, Virginia and Bell County, Kentucky
Project Locator UTM:	261467 mE, 4054484 mN (Zone 17, NAD 27)
Project Sponsor:	National Park Service
Lead Agency:	National Park Service
Applicable Regulations:	National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)
Funding Source:	National Park Service
Description of the Project/Undertaking:	The National Park Service contracted with North Wind Resource Consulting, LLC (North Wind) to prepare National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Determinations of Eligibility (DOEs) for four Mission 66-era component landscapes within Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. This documentation is part of a larger effort by the Southeastern Regional Office to record Mission 66-era properties and cultural landscapes located within the 88 Park Service units currently under its management and evaluate them for listing in the NRHP. The Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area is one of these landscapes.
Project Area:	The project area consists of an irregularly shaped parcel measuring roughly 692 feet (210 m) north-south by 729 feet (222 m) east-west.
Land Jurisdiction:	National Park Service
Total Acres:	6.0
North Wind Project No.:	030573.001c

Summary:

The on-site inspection resulted in the documentation of one historic-age property—the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area. The property is located at the terminus of Pinnacle View Road (formerly known as Skyland Road) and consists of a parking area, an overlook observation platform, a network of trails, and an interpretive shelter and comfort station. At the request of the Park’s cultural resources staff, the property was documented as a historic district.

The Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area is recommended eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A for its association with the recreational development of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park during the Mission 66 era. It is also recommended eligible under Criterion C as a good representative example of the design precepts and construction techniques established by the National Park Service for public-use areas constructed as part of its Mission 66 program. North Wind recommends that the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area Historic District generally retains its integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association.

While the seven resources that comprise the district are all recommended to contribute to its overall eligibility, only one—the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station—is recommended individually eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A for its association with the development of interpretive programming at Cumberland Gap National Historical Park as part of its Mission 66 initiative.

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INTRODUCTION

North Wind Resource Consulting, LLC (North Wind), on behalf of the National Park Service, conducted archival and background research and an on-site inspection of the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area located within Cumberland Gap National Historical Park in Lee County, Virginia and Bell County, Kentucky (Figure 1). This documentation is part of a larger effort by the Southeastern Regional Office to record and provide National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Determinations of Eligibility (DOEs) for Mission 66-era properties and cultural landscapes located within the 88 NPS units currently under its management. Pinnacle Overlook is one of five Mission 66-era component landscapes located within Cumberland Gap National Historical Park.

The Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area measures approximately 692 feet (210 m) north-south by 729 feet (222 m) east-west and encompasses approximately six acres of NPS-administered land in the south-central portion of the park. The property is depicted on the 2022 USGS 7.5' Middlesboro South, Kentucky topographical map. The Project Locator UTM is 261467 mE, 4054484 mN (Zone 17, NAD 27).

The Pinnacle Overlook was first opened to the public in the late 1920s; however, the area was significantly redeveloped following the establishment of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park in 1955. Funding for the construction of new visitor use facilities at the Pinnacle was provided by the Mission 66 program. Construction began in 1956 and was completed two years later, in 1958. Currently, the area is accessed from a parking area at the terminus of Pinnacle View Road (formerly known as Skyland Road), a winding four-mile-long paved road that extends generally north from the park's Visitor Center. Associated amenities currently present include an interpretive shelter and comfort station, information terrace, hiking trails, a stone overlook platform, and a drinking fountain.

Pursuant to Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), this DOE includes a description of the physical setting of the property; survey and research methodologies; a historic context that includes a discussion of the developmental history of the property, as well as a summary of the Mission 66 program within Cumberland Gap National Historical Park; detailed descriptions of all documented resources; and a summary of findings and recommendations for eligibility to the NRHP.

PHYSICAL SETTING

The Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area is located in the south-central portion of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, approximately 1.3 miles east of Middlesboro, Kentucky. The Park encompasses over 24,000 acres in Bell and Harlan Counties, Kentucky; Lee County, Virginia; and Claiborne County, Tennessee. Located within this area, referred to locally as the "tri-state area," is a notch within the Cumberland Mountains, from which the park's name is derived. This notch, which was caused by a fault block that runs perpendicular to the northeast-southwest axis of the mountain chain, served as a gateway for American western expansion in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

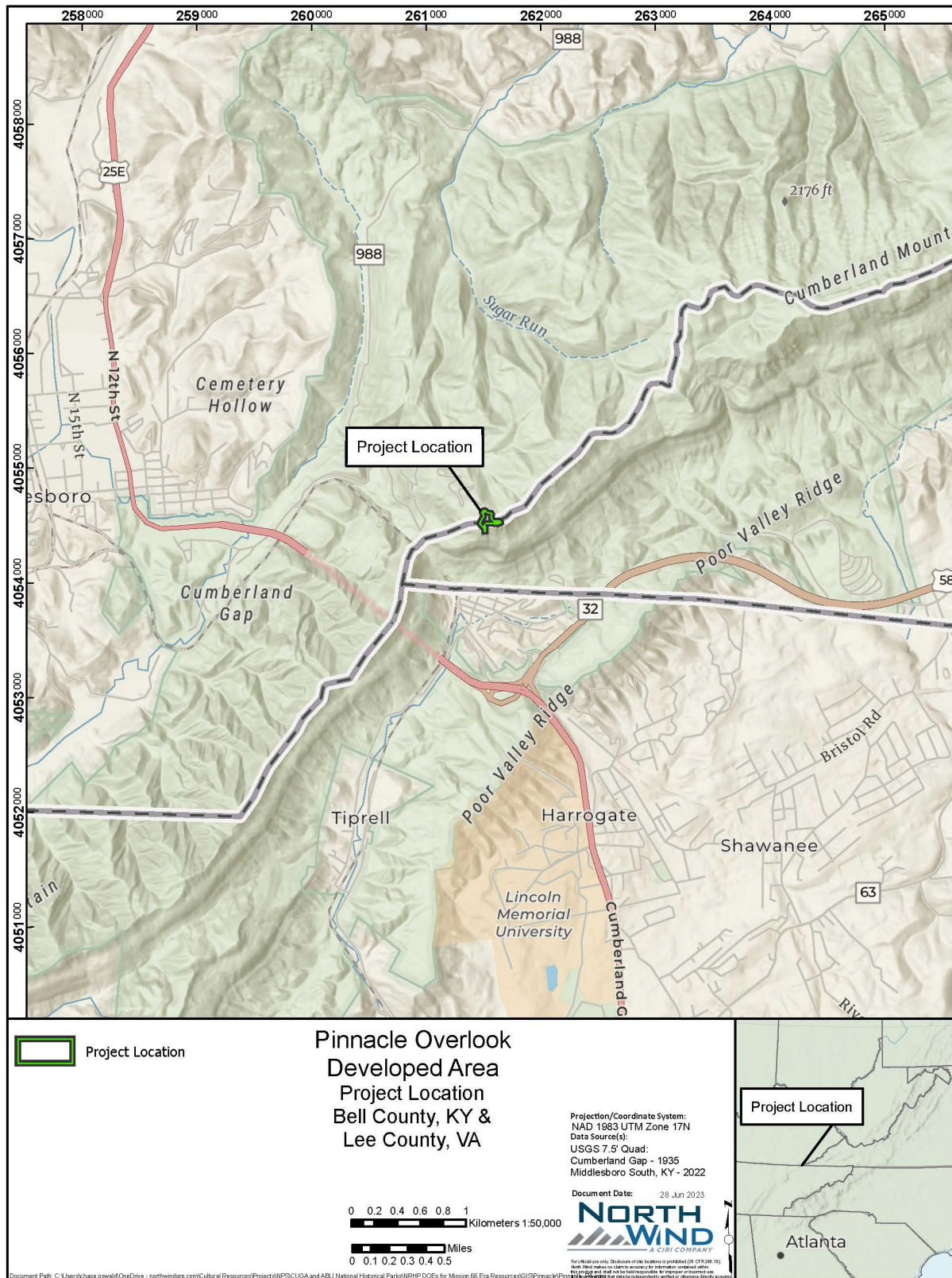


Figure 1. Project location.

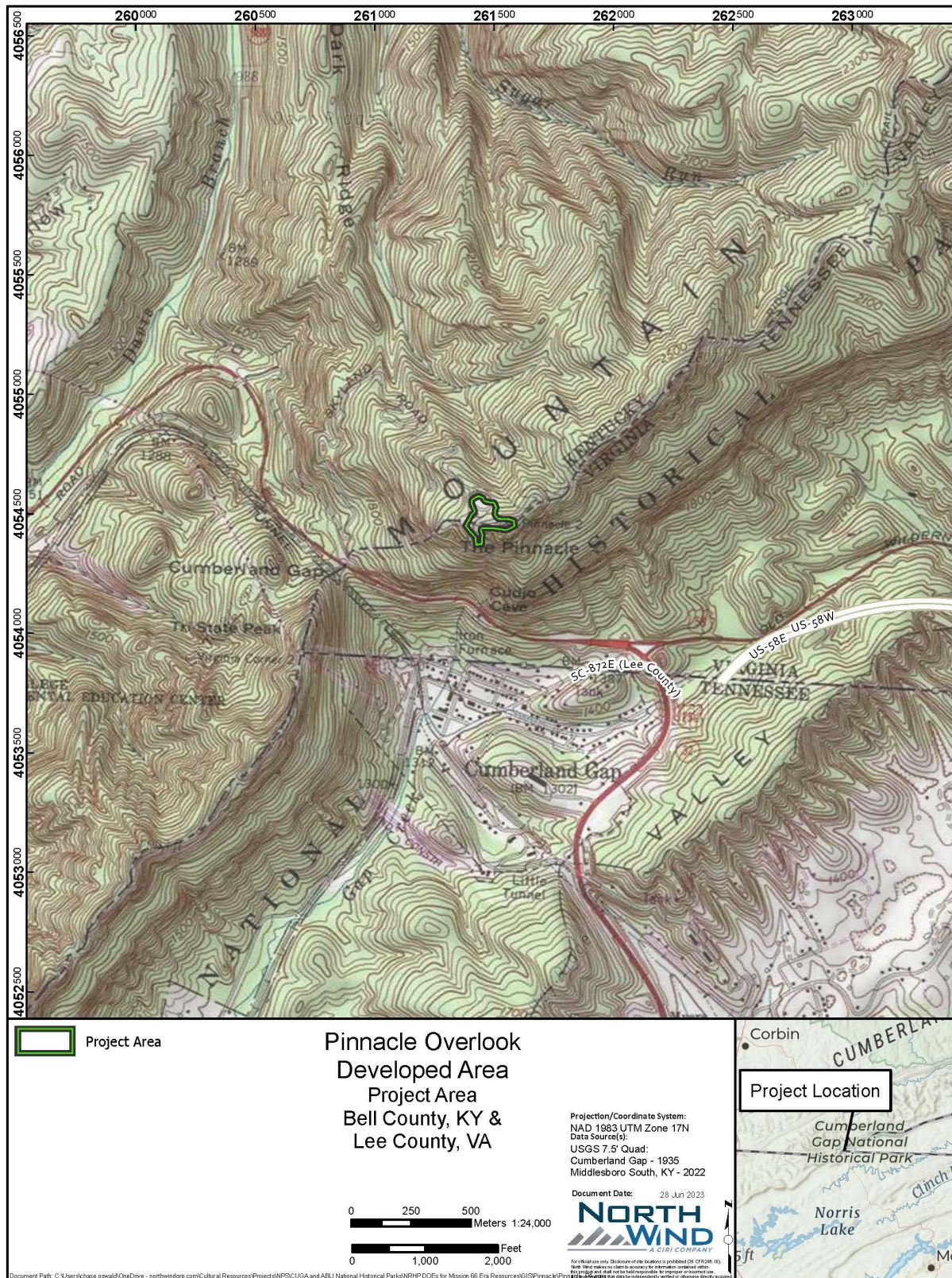


Figure 2. Project area location.

Pinnacle Overlook is accessible from Pinnacle View Road (formerly Skyland Road), which extends approximately four miles from the Visitor Center. The area is situated at an approximate elevation of 2,440 feet above mean sea level (amsl) (Photograph 1). It is located on Cumberland Mountain, a long ridge that extends approximately 100 miles from northeastern Tennessee, through southeastern Kentucky, and into southwestern Virginia. The terrain is generally rugged and steeply sloped, with roughly 70 percent of its acreage having slopes of more than 15 percent.



Photograph 1. View from the Pinnacle Overlook Terrace, facing southeast.

METHODS

An on-site inspection of the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area was conducted by North Wind personnel Greta Rayle, M.A., RPA, Courtney Mooney, M.S., AICP, and Kasey Fulwood, M.A. on November 3, 2022. Historic Architect Robert Vint of Vint and Associates Architects also visited the site independently on November 3, 2022, to document the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station. The property was not surveyed for archaeological resources, and only resources dating to the Mission 66 period were recorded at the request of the National Park Service. As the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area is comprised of a “significant concentration, linkage, or continuity” of buildings and structures “united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development” it was evaluated in its entirety as a historic district (National Park Service 1997:5).

Archival research included a review of historic superintendent reports, project completion reports, and historic photographs on file at the park archives in Middlesboro, Kentucky. These documents provided information on the history of recreation and the development of

visitor facilities at the park, as well as the implementation of the Mission 66 program. Historic as-built plans for buildings and structures and circulation features within the Pinnacle area and Mission 66-era development plans for the park were also provided to North Wind electronically by National Park Service staff from the Technical Information Center (eTIC) at the Denver Service Center (DSC). Secondary research included, but was not limited to, online resources such as historicaerials.com and newspapers.com, as well as “Recreating Appalachia: Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, 1922–1972” by Angela R. Sirna, which provided a comprehensive history of the park from its initial development through the end of the Mission 66 program.

The Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area was evaluated for listing in the NRHP based on its significance under the four criteria outlined in 36 CFR 60 and per guidelines presented in *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (National Park Service 1997). The property was also evaluated for NRHP eligibility using the guidelines established in the *NPS Mission 66 Era Resources Multiple Property Documentation Form* (MPDF), prepared by Ethan Carr, Elaine Jackson-Retondo, Len Warner, Rodd Wheaton, John Feinberg, and Carly Piccarello in 2015, which provides additional guidance for evaluating resources constructed for America’s national parks as part of the Mission 66 program (Carr et al. 2015). The Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area was evaluated within its important historic context and evaluated on whether it retains integrity of those features necessary to convey its significance. As defined by the NRHP, aspects of integrity that must be considered are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. For the detailed analysis of eligibility, please see the Evaluation of Eligibility section of this document.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

INITIAL ESTABLISHMENT OF CUMBERLAND GAP NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK (1920–1955)

In the 1920s, local boosters in Middlesboro, Kentucky joined a regional movement dedicated to the creation of a national park in the southern Appalachian Mountains (Sirna 2015). The movement to create the park was rooted in Progressive-era reforms of the early twentieth century that aimed to protect the region’s spectacular natural environment from widespread industrialization while also capitalizing on its enormous tourism potential. The location for the proposed park was centered on the Cumberland Gap—a natural break in the Appalachian Mountains that served as a major transportation route for wildlife, Native American populations, and Euro-American settlers emigrating to the American West in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. With the support of local business leaders, Congressman John M. Robison (R-KY) introduced a series of bills calling for the establishment of a national park at Cumberland Gap in the early 1920s; however, the region’s rich mineral deposits complicated efforts at federal land acquisition and Robison’s bills were not enacted (Tinney 1965).

Local leaders continued to push for the establishment of a national park in the tri-state area for the next decade; however, it wasn’t until the late 1930s that President Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal program made the park’s development a reality (Sirna 2015). New

Deal-era policies increased federal funding for state and national park development and created work relief programs for forest, water, and soil conservation. Following the passage of the Historic Sites Act of 1935, the National Park Service sent a team of inspectors to survey Cumberland Gap and evaluate its suitability as a potential park site (Sirna 2015). In 1935, National Park Service inspectors recommended that the area around the Cumberland Gap should be dedicated as a National Historical Park due to its association with the Wilderness Road and frontier expansion (Sirna 2018). Three years later, in 1938, National Park Service officials again assured local business leaders that a National Historical Park would be created at Cumberland Gap, provided that the lands were donated to the federal government. Park advocates formed the Cumberland Gap National Park Association (CGNPA) to promote the benefits of the park within the local community.

The bill creating the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park was introduced by Congressman John W. Flannagan (Democrat-Virginia [D-VA]) in July 1939 and passed by both Houses of Congress the following spring (Sirna 2015). President Roosevelt signed the bill authorizing the park on June 11, 1940. Although Congress passed enabling legislation in 1941, the park's development was initially delayed by land acquisition efforts within the tri-state area of Kentucky, Virginia, and Tennessee. In May 1943, Congress passed an amendment that required the three states to purchase a minimum acreage of privately held land before the National Park Service would officially assume control of the project (Sirna 2015).

Land acquisition proved to be a lengthy process that was frequently hampered by the unavailability of state funding, extensive condemnation proceedings, and conflicts with local businesses and municipalities whose property fell within the park's proposed boundaries (Sirna 2015). At the same time, the termination of the New Deal program and the country's entry into World War II (WWII) diverted federal resources away from the National Park Service, further impeding development. The protracted land acquisition process was finally completed in 1955 when the park was officially accepted by the Federal government (Sirna 2018). The Interior Department established Cumberland Gap National Historical Park on September 14, 1955. Fortunately, the park's transfer to the National Park Service coincided with the beginning of the Mission 66 program—a period of accelerated park development that followed WWII.

MISSION 66 AT CUMBERLAND GAP NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK (1956–1970)

As land acquisition finally ended at Cumberland Gap in the mid-1950s, National Park Service planners utilized funding from the Mission 66 initiative to expand the park's existing infrastructure (Figure 3). The Mission 66 program was a 10-year parks improvement program that was devised by NPS Director Conrad Wirth in 1955. The program was intended to dramatically expand park infrastructure and visitor facilities in order to accommodate the massive growth in tourism that had been overwhelming America's national parks for more than a decade. As proposed, the Mission 66 program would allow the National Park Service to repair and build roads, hire additional employees, and construct new park facilities for visitor use (Allaback 2000). In addition to new construction, the program also included a sweeping overhaul to the planning, interpretive, and educational goals of the agency.



Figure 3. Visitors to Cumberland Gap National Historical Park during the Mission 66 era, ca. 1960s (Photograph from Souvenir Folder of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, Author's Personal Collection).

The Mission 66 program was guided by the National Park Service's objective to promote visitor enjoyment while simultaneously channeling visitation to avoid overuse and protect the parks' natural resources from exploitation (Carr et al. 2015). The implementation of the Mission 66 program required the National Park Service to change how national parks functioned as public spaces. In order to promote day-use within the parks, National Park Service planners devised wider roads, larger parking lots, and expanded "visitor use centers," which included ample interpretive displays, restrooms, and administrative areas for employees (Carr et al. 2015). A key component to this redevelopment was the removal of concession facilities and administration and maintenance buildings from sensitive areas that would detract from the parks' natural environment. Additionally, a new building type—the visitor center—was developed to serve as the focal point of visitor experience and interpretation. Visitor centers constructed under the Mission 66 program adopted the Park Service Modern style as the premier design idiom. This style incorporated elements of modernism and utilized contemporary building materials such as concrete, steel, and glass. Visitor centers constructed during Mission 66 were intended to be inconspicuous and low maintenance and were designed to blend in with the park's natural setting (Allaback 2000).

In addition to visitor center construction, Mission 66 also included other types of projects that were intended to improve and direct visitor use within the parks. For example, the program included extensive infrastructure developments, including numerous road and trail

improvements. Roadway projects typically supported greater traffic volumes and faster automobile speeds, and trails were shortened to accommodate short-term visitation and promote more direct access to principal interpretive areas within the parks (Carr et al. 2015). In order to maintain these new buildings and structures, as well as the road and trail systems, new utility and maintenance buildings were also constructed as part of the program. Utility buildings typically used standardized plans and were usually situated near employee housing areas. Under Mission 66, staff housing was also expanded to accommodate the influx of new National Park Service employees.

National Park Service planners at Cumberland Gap utilized Mission 66 funding to develop a new master plan for the park. Planners incorporated many ideas from earlier New Deal-era plans that had been postponed during land acquisition, including the construction of modern visitor facilities and trails, restoration of portions of the Wilderness Road, and the removal of almost all evidence of modern human habitation to recreate an idealized eighteenth-century landscape within the park (Sirna 2015). While Cumberland Gap may have been new to the national park system, the area had already experienced a significant amount of modern development prior to the National Park Service's acquisition of the site.

An existing conditions map prepared in 1955 for the Cumberland Gap area shows the buildings and other infrastructure that were present at the park prior to its Mission 66-era development (Figure 4). Modern highways, including U.S. Highway 25 East (25E), had already been constructed through the Gap, and numerous motels, gas stations, restaurants, and tourist shops were scattered throughout the area. Other infrastructure included a "pioneer campsite," which was situated in the approximate location of the current Visitor Center, as well as Skyland Road, a curvy three-mile highway to the top of Pinnacle Mountain, that had been constructed "exclusively for the use of sightseers" in 1929. A toll house depicted along the roadway had been constructed by the Kentucky National Park Commission to augment the land acquisition fund prior to the park's establishment (Sirna 2018). According to the 1955 map, Skyland Road terminated at the Pinnacle, where an existing wooden overlook was located.

Mission 66 development plans sought to utilize and expand on the park's existing infrastructure. A development plan prepared in August 1956 illustrates the scope of the improvements proposed under the Mission 66 program (Figure 5). According to the plan, proposed improvements included the construction of Pinnacle View Road, which would extend south from US 25E in Middlesboro to the proposed Visitor Center before turning northeast to eventually merge with the existing alignment of Skyland Road. Interpretive stations and parking overlooks were also planned along the new route. Additional improvements included the construction of a "lunching area" and overlook near the Pinnacle, and the construction of Ridge Trail from the Pinnacle to "Salt Petre Cave." While earlier planners had viewed the construction of U.S. Highway 25E as compatible with the park, Mission 66-era planners considered relocating and tunneling the highway to restore the region's natural appearance and offer better traffic control through the saddle of the Gap (Sirna 2015). The 1956 development plan depicts a proposed alternative route of U.S. Highway 25E turning southwest to bypass the town of Cumberland Gap.

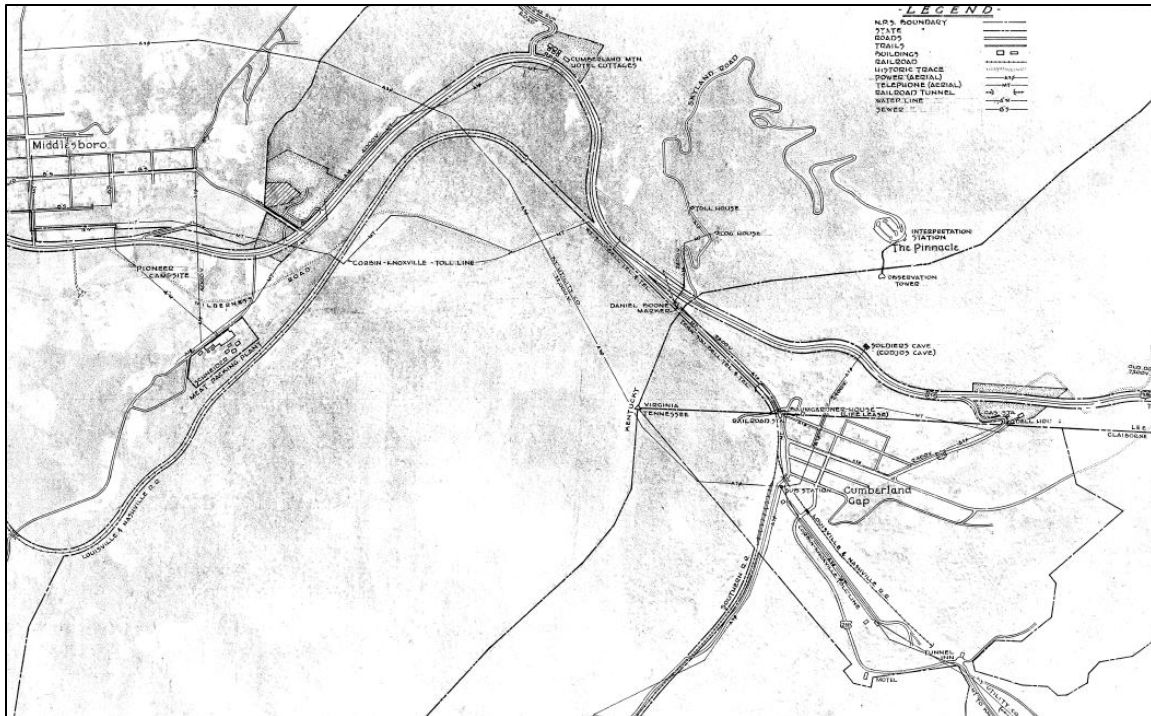


Figure 4. Excerpt from the 1955 Existing Conditions map, showing the layout of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park shortly after it was transferred to the National Park Service and before its Mission 66-era development (Image on file at eTIC [no. 547310-CUGA_380_3008B]).

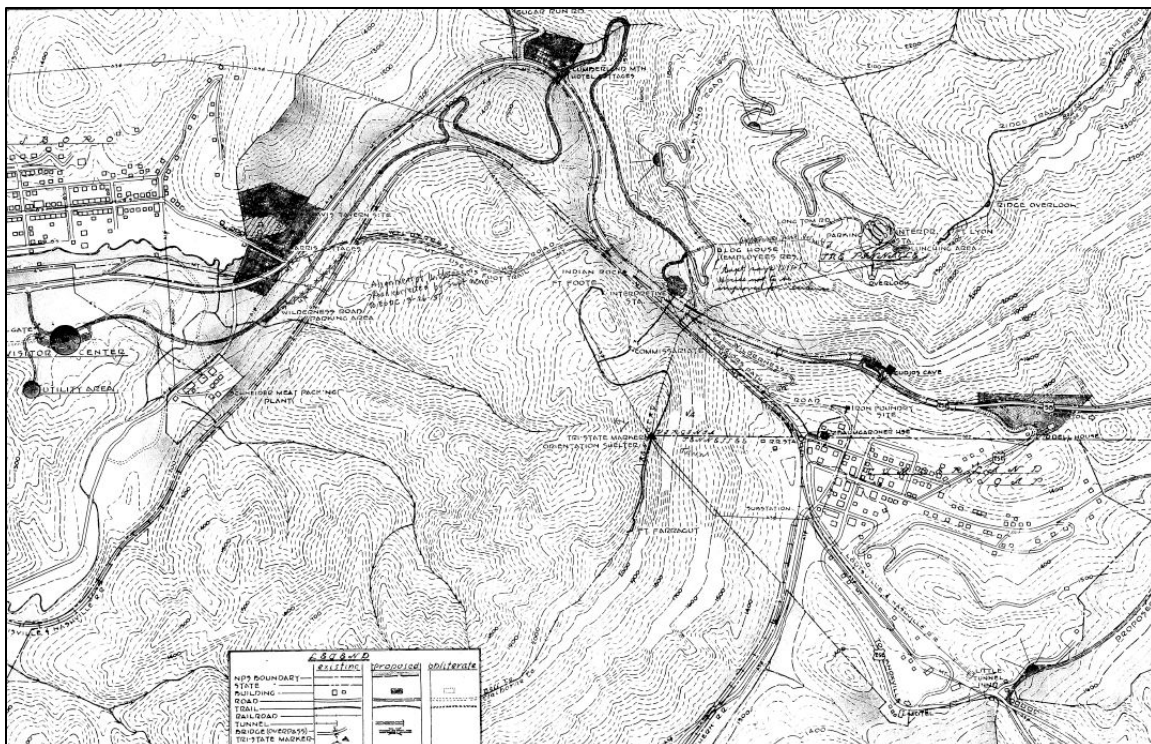


Figure 5. Excerpt from the 1956 Development Plan, showing the proposed Mission 66 redevelopment (Image on file at eTIC [no. 41187-CUGA_380_3003D]).

In 1956, the first year of the Mission 66 initiative, appropriations for Cumberland Gap amounted to just \$193,990, which was used to hire a permanent staff, finalize boundary issues, engage in community outreach, and remove remaining buildings and lessees from the park (Sirna 2015). That April, development began in the Pinnacle area with the construction of an information shelter and comfort station, parking area, overlook, and trails (National Park Service 1958). While the Park remained closed to the public during this time, planners also began working on a prospectus for its interpretation. According to the Mission 66 prospectus, finalized in 1959, the program's goals at Cumberland Gap were "to breathe the spirit of past adventure and human striving into the mountains and valleys, to provide a wilderness experience, and to combine art and nature into a pleasing and provocative whole..." (CUGA 1959a).

Additionally, the Mission 66 prospectus attempted to offer visitors a more comprehensive explanation of the park's history, including information about Civil War activities and industrial development in the Gap. Regarding improvements, the prospectus emphasized the park's development as a day-use only area, and provided only limited information about proposed road, trail, and parking areas (CUGA 1959a). According to the prospectus, Mission 66 was expected to "...bring about the transformation of the park from a status of largely inaccessible and almost unenjoyable assets to an area easily visited and providing an inspiring experience" (CUGA 1959a).

To this end, Cumberland Gap National Historical Park received its largest appropriation under the Mission 66 program in 1959, just ahead of its formal dedication that July. The \$765,236 appropriation was used to construct an entrance sign to the Skyland Road, a new bridge over U.S. Highway 25E, and a new visitor center that would serve as the primary visitor interface for the park (Sirna 2015). The visitor center was constructed on U.S. Highway 25E, about one-half a mile from Middlesboro and was intended to be the starting point for most tourists to the Cumberland Gap (Sirna 2015). The building, designed by architect William Cramp Sheetz Jr. of Philadelphia, contained a spacious lobby, museum, 150-seat assembly room, restrooms, and an observation deck (National Park Service 1958). The dedication ceremony for the park was held at the visitor's center on July 4, 1959, and was attended by National Park Service Director Conrad Wirth, as well as Fred A. Seaton, Secretary of the Interior under President Dwight Eisenhower (Figure 6) (CUGA 1959b).

Following the park's dedication, National Park Service planners began work on the Mission 66 Master Plan for Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, which was laid out in a series of volumes devised between 1960 and 1963. The plan offered a more comprehensive outline of the park's interpretation objectives, organization, and future facilities and staffing needs. Notably, the plan advocated for the expansion of the park's recreational facilities, especially as they pertained to camping and hiking. According to the Mission 66 plan, the objective under the program should be "to encourage the study of the park's remote natural history and historical resources through increasing use of the recreational facilities of overnight camping, picnicking, and wilderness hiking trails..." (CUGA 1963). To this end, Mission 66 planners shifted their focus to the construction of recreational facilities, including the Wilderness Road Campground and the Ridge Trail that were designed to enhance visitor experience while also channeling visitation to less sensitive areas of the park.



Figure 6. Dedication ceremony for Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, July 4, 1959 (Image on file at Cumberland Gap National Historical Park archives, Middlesboro, Kentucky).

Campgrounds developed under the Mission 66 program combined elements of Modernism with proven design strategies for campground construction developed by plant pathologist E. P. Meinecke in the 1930s. Meinecke's guidelines for campground construction focused on creating suitable campsites that were adapted chiefly for automobile tourism, including the use of one-way loop roads and angled parking spurs that allowed drivers to easily maneuver their vehicles without turning or damaging native vegetation (McClelland 1993). The guidelines recommended by Meinecke served as the inspiration for campground construction during the Mission 66 program, with a few key alterations. For example, Mission 66-era campsites and parking spaces were typically larger and embraced mass produced, industry standard materials and construction methods over the hand-crafted construction techniques utilized by Depression-era work forces (National Park Service 2020).

While construction on the Wilderness Road Campground was still underway in the early 1960s, Cumberland Gap National Historical Park entered a new phase of development that overlapped, and eventually supplanted, the Mission 66 program. This new phase of development began in August 1963 when the park received additional funding through a new Accelerated Public Works (APW) program, funded by the Area Redevelopment Administration—a rural poverty program initiated under the Kennedy administration (Sirna 2015). Under the program, Cumberland Gap received a \$20,000 appropriation for trail

improvements on the Virginia side of the park (*Bristol Herald Courier* 1963). Approximately 100 local men from the tri-state area were hired to perform the improvements. Eventually, persistent unemployment in the Appalachian region led to the creation of a larger, more expansive poverty work program—known as Job Corps—in the 1960s (Sirna 2015). The Job Corps program was created in 1964 as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson’s War on Poverty and Great Society initiatives. The program provided an opportunity for national parks to modernize their facilities while also providing job training opportunities for the nation’s underprivileged youth (Sirna 2015).

The National Park Service officially selected Cumberland Gap as the location for a new Job Corps Conservation Center (JCCC) in November 1964. Between January and June 1965, contractors constructed Job Corps facilities at the location of the former Bartlett-Rhodes Park—a Progressive era municipal park that the City of Middlesboro had deeded to the federal government in the 1940s to be incorporated into the boundaries of the national park (Sirna 2015). Improvements at the site included the construction of an administrative office, three dormitories, a mess hall, an education building, a supply building, a dispensary, and a lounge. A year later, the National Park Service and the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) also funded the construction of a Butler-type prefabricated steel gymnasium in the headquarters area (Job Corps 1967). Prior to the program’s termination in 1969, Job Corps enrollees constructed foot trails and truck roads within the park, cleared brush, and participated in the construction of the Wilderness Road Campground. Restoration of the Hensley Settlement was another major Mission 66-era achievement performed by Corpsmen at Cumberland Gap (Job Corps 1968). Although it was a twentieth century community, the Hensley Settlement possessed many characteristics of a pioneer settlement and was promoted by Mission 66 planners who were interested in expanding interpretation at the Gap (Sirna 2015).

DEVELOPMENT OF PINNACLE OVERLOOK

The Pinnacle consists of a tall rock cliff that overlooks the saddle of Cumberland Gap. The area offers spectacular views of the surrounding countryside and has long been recognized as a point of scenic interest in the tri-state region. The area’s commercial appeal was first explored by businessman J. L. Manring in the late 1920s. In 1928, Manring formed the Sky Land Company to develop a toll road—later known as Skyland Road—to the top of the Pinnacle (Sirna 2015). Following the road’s completion, a dedication ceremony was held in June 1929. Just three months later, the *Lexington Herald* reported that more than 14,000 people had visited the Pinnacle since the completion of Skyland Road (*Lexington Herald* 1929). While the Sky Land Company initially had plans to erect a “model filling station” with a “sanitary lunchroom” and souvenir shop at the Pinnacle, very little infrastructure was actually constructed during this early period (Sirna 2015). Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, facilities at the Pinnacle consisted of an unpaved parking area and primitive wooden lookout tower, with utilities such as electric light and water provided (Figure 7 and Figure 8).



Figure 7. Wooden overlook tower at the Pinnacle, July 1941 (Image courtesy of the Department of Conservation Photograph Collection, 1937–1976, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee).

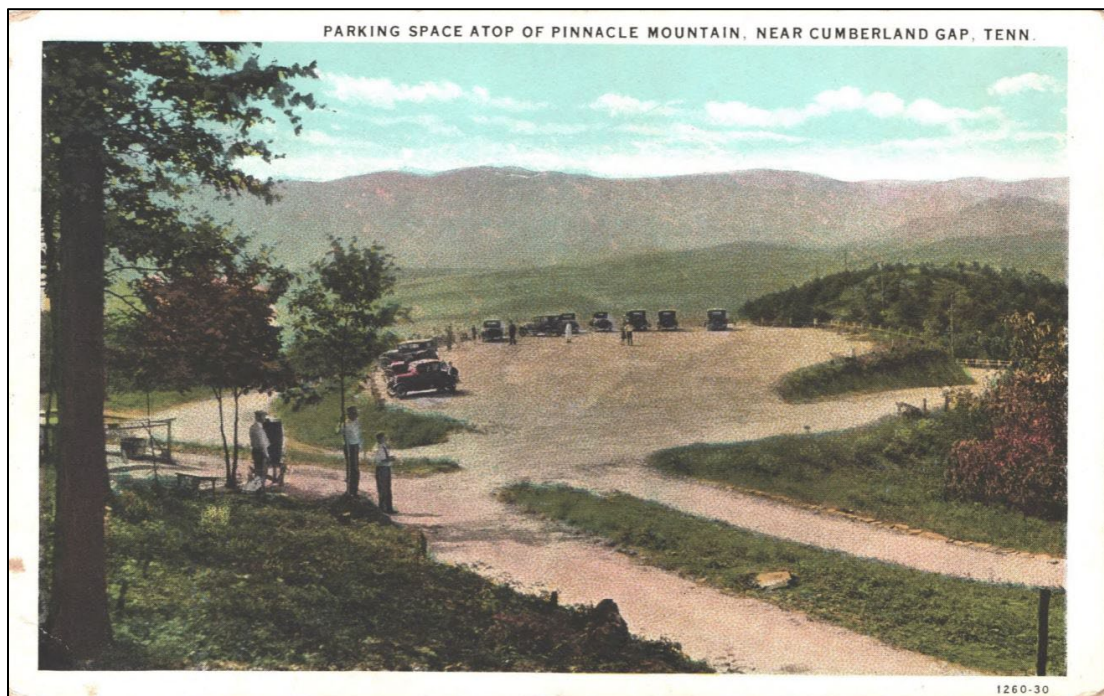


Figure 8. Parking area at the Pinnacle, ca. 1930s (Image courtesy of the Tennessee Postcard Collection, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee).

Following the establishment of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park in September 1955, the redevelopment of the Pinnacle was considered of utmost importance to park officials. In February 1956, working drawings for the construction of a parking area and overlook were developed by the Eastern Office of Design and Construction (EODC) of the National Park Service (National Park Service 1956). The following month, a contract in the amount of \$77,728 was awarded to the Southern Landscape Company of Maryville, Tennessee for the project's construction (*Johnson City Press* 1956). Work commenced in April 1956 in accordance with Contract Drawings NHP-CG 3011 (National Park Service 1956). Early construction was completed by July 1956 and included basic sub-grading of the existing parking area, as well as the construction of drainage structures, retaining walls, and a masonry overlook (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Pinnacle Parking Area under construction, ca. 1956 (Image reprinted from National Park Service 1956).

That October the *Knoxville Journal* reported that the first construction project at Cumberland Gap had recently been completed, including the enlargement of the former Pinnacle Parking Area to accommodate 85 automobiles, construction of a hard-surface trail from the parking area to the Pinnacle Overlook, and the replacement of the former wooden overlook platform with a terrace of native stone” (Figure 10) (*Knoxville Journal* 1956). The following month, an open house was held at the Pinnacle area so that “the public could come and see what has been done in the park’s development” since its establishment (*The Courier-Journal* 1956). During the event, more than 2,600 people visited the Pinnacle area—traveling in more than 841 vehicles (National Park Service 1956).



Figure 10. Construction of the Pinnacle Overlook Terrace, taken in April 1956 (Photograph on file at the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park archives, Middlesboro, Kentucky [Classification No. 978, Negative No. 2461]).

Despite the high attendance at the open house, visitors to the Pinnacle in November 1956 were able to glimpse only a small fraction of the improvements that were ultimately planned for the area. Construction at the Pinnacle continued throughout the fall, with Park officials undertaking a series of improvements to modernize existing facilities and improve visitor experience at the park. For example, in September 1956, the National Park Service contracted with the Pineville Plumbing and Heating Company of Pineville, Kentucky to construct a new public water and sewage system for the area (National Park Service 1957). Construction on the new system involved the installation of a 2-inch water line, 10,000-gallon steel water storage tank, 2,500-gallon septic tank, and a sewage leaching trench. Additional improvements consisted of the installation of new pumping equipment, including a jet well pump, high pressure pump, and electrical control devices (National Park Service 1957). A new pump house was also constructed at the south end of Skyland Road to shelter the jet pump and other pumping equipment. The pump house was built using day labor at a cost of approximately \$1,200 (National Park Service 1957a). Following the installation of the new water system, Collingsworth and Tamer, Inc. of Middlesboro, Kentucky constructed a stone masonry drinking fountain for park visitors.

Beginning in September 1956, Collingsworth and Tamer, Inc. were also responsible for the construction of one of the most significant improvements to the Pinnacle Overlook area—the Pinnacle Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station (National Park Service 1957b). Construction of the shelter was reportedly necessary to “provide...adequate interpretive and sanitary facilities at the Pinnacle which [was] an area of high visitor concentration” (National Park Service 1957b). The plans for the building were drafted by the EODC in June 1956.

They were approved by Edward Zimmer, Chief of the EODC, as well as Park Superintendent Millard D. Guy, later that summer. The total cost of the shelter's construction was approximately \$20,000 (National Park Service 1957b). Historic plans for the interpretive shelter and comfort station indicate that the structure originally contained a small, enclosed booth on its north end; a large, central display area; and men's and women's restrooms located on the building's southeast corner (Figure 11). According to the Mission 66 Master Plan for Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, the Pinnacle Interpretive Shelter was considered the "hub and heart of interpretive service" and its effectiveness was "largely dependent on operating...as a 'junior' visitor center" (CUGA 1963). Construction of the shelter was completed in February 1957 (Figure 12).

Following completion of the shelter, several trailside exhibits were installed at the Pinnacle. Exhibits "A" through "E" consisted of fabricated ½ inch plastic coated plywood panels that were installed in wooden cases on the interior walls of the interpretive shelter (National Park Service 1958). The five panels included information about the geography and history of the Gap. Each panel was designed by the Washington Office's Museum Branch and was produced by Arts and Graphic of Washington, D.C. The exhibits were installed in June 1957 by Sohasky and Brown (National Park Service 1958). Shortly after the initial installation, two additional trailside exhibits—known as Exhibit "F" and "G" were added outside of the shelter. The two exterior exhibits were constructed of cast aluminum panels and were mounted at an angle for easy viewing (National Park Service 1958).

The final improvements at the Pinnacle took place in the spring of 1957. That April, construction was started on a hiking trail to connect the Pinnacle Overlook with the Ridge Trail (NPS 1958a). The trail consisted of a gravel footpath that extended a distance of approximately 0.6 mile along the crest of Cumberland Mountain (National Park Service 1958a). This project was completed in June 1958. Landscaping around the Pinnacle was also accomplished during this period. Plantings at the Pinnacle included material supplied by local nurseries, including J. A. Weddington and Son and Boyd Nurseries, as well as collected specimens, such as rhododendron and kalmia (Mountain Laurel) (National Park Service 1958b). Landscaping was complete by April 1958 (Figure 13).

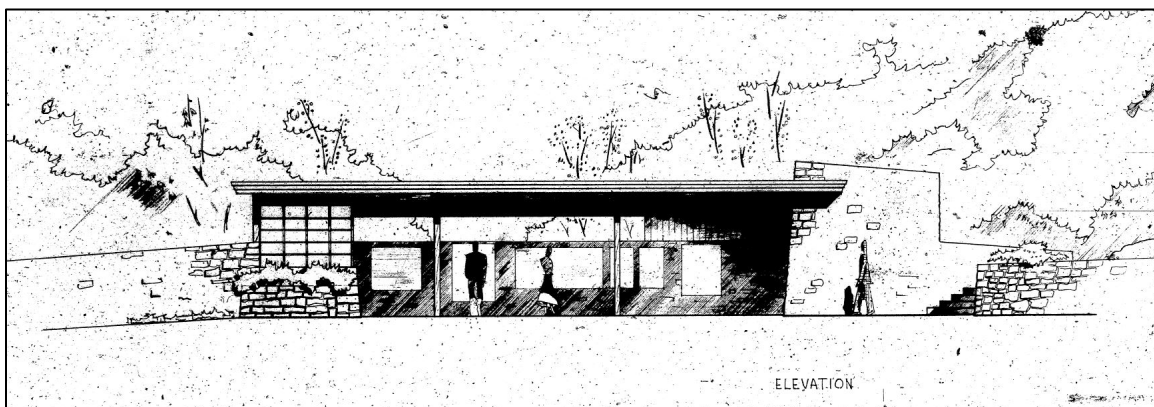


Figure 11. Original elevation drawing for the Pinnacle Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station, ca. 1956 (Image on file at eTIC [no. 547482-CUGA_380_3012_A_0001]).



Figure 12. Postcard showing the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station as it appeared shortly after construction, ca. 1960s. Note the trailside exhibits installed on the interior (Photograph courtesy of Walter and Co. Inc., Williamsburg, Virginia).



Figure 13. Landscaping in the Pinnacle Parking Area, shortly after completion, ca. 1958 (Image reprinted from National Park Service 1958b).

The improved visitor use facilities at Pinnacle Overlook were completed just in time for the formal dedication of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park in July 1959. During the two-day celebration, the Pinnacle was visited by Vice President Richard Nixon who had traveled to Middlesboro to take part in the park's dedication ceremony (Figure 14) (*The Park City Daily News* 1959). After being escorted to the overlook by Harry Hoe, general chairman of the dedication ceremony, Nixon signed the register at the interpretive shelter and in the "comment" field wrote, "A magnificent view" (*The Park City Daily News* 1959).



Figure 14. Photograph of Vice President Nixon in front of the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station, ca. 1959 (Image courtesy of Jack E. Boucher, National Park Service [Negative Number: C59-JB-226]).

Improvements at Cumberland Gap under the Mission 66 initiative led to a steady increase in park visitation throughout the 1960s. In July 1960, more than 25,000 people visited the park, an increase of more than 22 percent over the previous month (*Lexington Herald-Leader* 1960). The Pinnacle remained the primary tourist attraction in the park during this period, with the Park's Mission 66 Master Plan noting that "good publicity and the perennial appeal of this scenic and historic site" was responsible for drawing more than two-thirds of the total traffic within the park by 1962 (CUGA 1963). According to the Mission 66 Plan, programming at the Pinnacle included both scheduled and impromptu interpretive talks by park personnel at the shelter and on the nearby overlook terrace (CUGA 1963).

Since its initial construction, the Pinnacle Overlook has maintained its status one of the most visited attractions in Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. The area has undergone only minor alterations since the culmination of the Mission 66 program in the mid-1960s.

Sometime before 1976, the trailside exhibits located on the interior walls of the interpretive shelter were removed and replaced by a sculptural wood mural created by Franklin Boggs (Photograph 2). Otherwise, all of the changes at the Pinnacle have been related to routine maintenance or the replacement of aging infrastructure and/or landscape features. For example, in 1981, a new water system was constructed for the Pinnacle area. This project was followed, in 1984, by the replacement of the original roof on the Pinnacle Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station by Montgomery Brothers Roofing Inc. of Nicholasville, Kentucky. The following year, the trails at the Pinnacle were resurfaced by the Kentucky-Virginia Stone Company of Middlesboro. A short spur trail was also constructed on the south side of the Pinnacle Parking Area to provide a wheelchair accessible route to the overlook. While the exact date of the trail's construction is not known, it was likely added sometime after the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990.



Photograph 2. View of the current wood sculptural mural displayed on the interior of the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station, facing northwest.

SURVEY RESULTS

The Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area is a public-use area located within the boundaries of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. The area is accessed from Pinnacle View Road (formerly known as Skyland Road), an approximately four-mile-long parkway that originates at the Visitor Center. Originally opened to the public in the late 1920s, the Pinnacle Area was redeveloped in the mid-1950s as part of the Park's Mission 66 program. The area is situated in a wooded setting and currently offers an array of amenities for park visitors, including an interpretive shelter and comfort station, a parking area, an information terrace, hiking trails, a stone overlook platform, and a drinking fountain.

A total of seven resources were documented by North Wind as part of the current survey (Table 1; Figure 15). Documented resources include four structures, one building, one object, and one site. All seven of these resources are considered to contribute to a potential Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area Historic District. Detailed descriptions and photographs of the seven resources present within the district, organized by type and contributing/non-contributing status, are presented below.

Table 1. Summary of Documented Resources located within the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area			
Resource Name	Build Date	Resource Type	Status
Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area Mission 66-Era Cultural Landscape	1956–Present	Site	Contributing
Pinnacle Loop Trail	1956	Structure	Contributing
Pinnacle Overlook Terrace	1956	Structure	Contributing
Information Terrace	1956	Structure	Contributing
Pinnacle Parking Area	1956	Structure	Contributing
Water Fountain	1957	Object	Contributing
Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station	1957	Building	Contributing

CONTRIBUTING AND NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Sites

Contributing Site

Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area Mission 66-Era Cultural Landscape (1956–Present)

The district's landscape is treated in this nomination as a site, per the National Register guidance for documenting designed historic landscapes (Keller and Keller 1994). The site is defined as an area which includes key landscape elements such as: spatial relationships and boundaries, views and vistas, landscape dividers, vegetation, site furnishings and small-scale features, drainage and engineering structures, and circulation systems. As the majority of the key landscape elements within the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area have not been altered and demonstrate a direct association with the Mission 66 program, the cultural landscape as a whole is considered to be contributing to the district.

Natural Systems and Topography

With its expansive view of the tri-state area, the topography of the Pinnacle Overlook was crucial in the site's selection as a focal point of the park's Mission 66 era interpretive program. Situated at an elevation of more than 2,400 feet above sea level, the Pinnacle Overlook offers panoramic views of the Cumberland Gap and surrounding natural

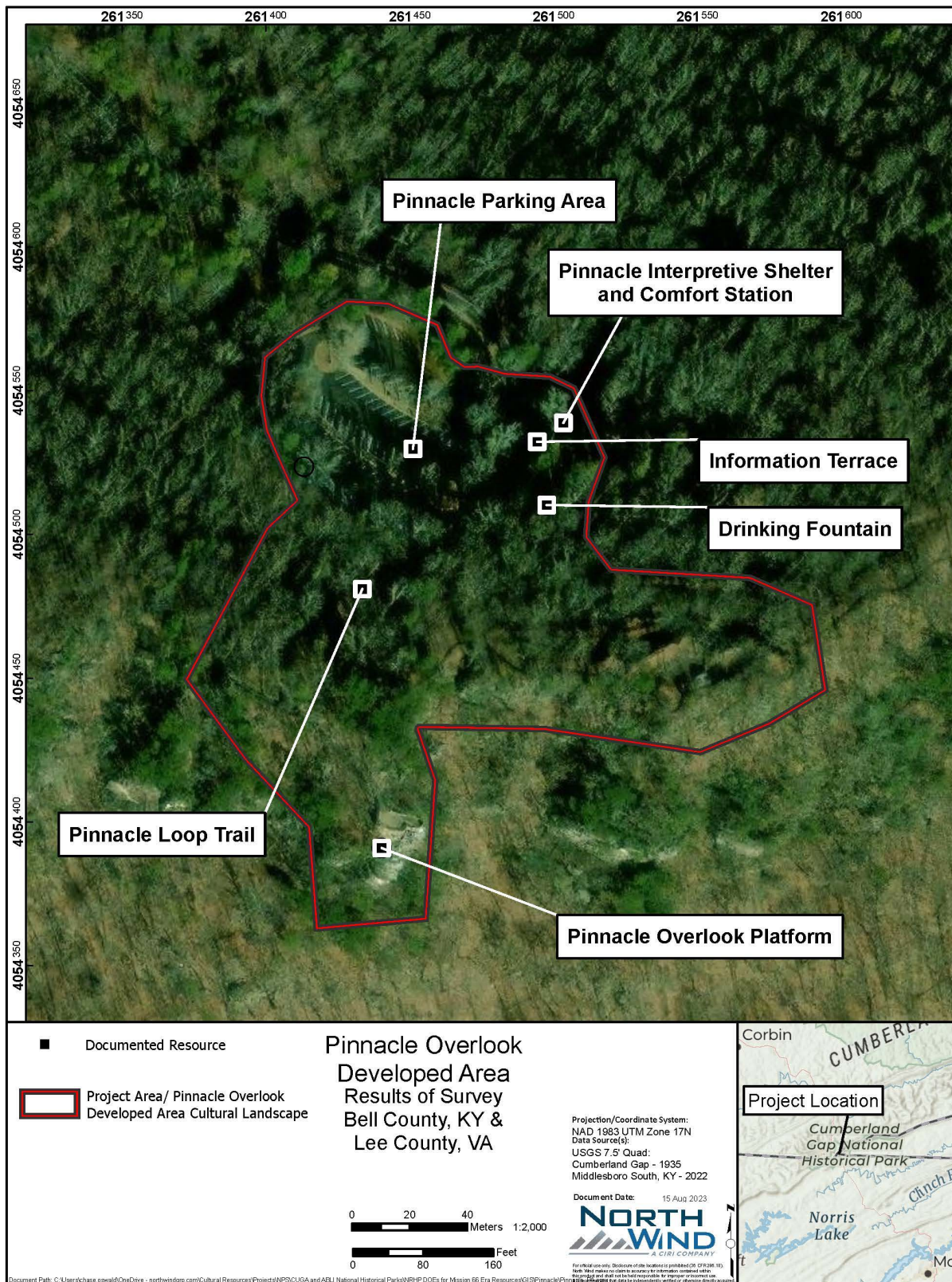


Figure 15. Resources documented within the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area.

environment (Photograph 3). The location also provides easy access to other important interpretive features within the park, including Fort Lyon and Fort McCook—two of the largest intact Civil War era earthwork fortifications in the region. The relationship between the Pinnacle Overlook and the surrounding landscape has not changed since its redevelopment during the Mission 66 period.



Photograph 3. View of Cumberland Gap from the Pinnacle Overlook Terrace, facing south.

Character-Defining Features:

- Use of topography to maximize views
- Convenient access to Fort Lyon and Fort McCook

Land Use

The primary land use of the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area remains recreation and visitor services. Historically, the district served as the primary public-use area within the park, and it continues to be the most visited location within the park today. Utility use at the Pinnacle Overlook includes water, sewer, and electrical infrastructure that service the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station. Utility lines are underground, with limited above grade infrastructure, such as the stone drinking fountain, which is designed to blend in with the surrounding natural landscape.

Character-Defining Land Uses:

- Recreation
- Visitor services

Spatial Organization and Circulation

The current circulation system for the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area centers around the Pinnacle Parking Area, a paved parking lot located at the south end of Pinnacle View Road (formerly Skyland Road). The parking area offers 76 angled parking spaces for automobiles, including three ADA accessible parking spaces. It serves as the central circulation hub for the Pinnacle Overlook Area and provides access to both the Pinnacle Overlook Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station and the trailhead for the Pinnacle Loop Trail (Photograph 4).



Photograph 4. Overview of the Pinnacle Parking Area, showing its relationship to the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station, facing east.

The Pinnacle Loop Trail provides additional circulation within the district. The trail consists of a short, paved pathway that extends from the Information Terrace to the Pinnacle Overlook Terrace. The trail also provides access to the Fort Lyon earthworks, an important wayside exhibit that interprets the history of Fort Lyon and the strategic role that Cumberland Gap played in the American Civil War (Photograph 5). Construction of the Pinnacle Loop Trail is emblematic of the Mission 66 program, which encouraged the construction of “close-in trails,” that led from parking areas to nearby features of special interest (McClellan 1998). Except for the construction of a short spur trail needed to provide handicap access to the Pinnacle Overlook Terrace, all the hiking trails in the vicinity of the Pinnacle Overlook Area appear to date to the Mission 66 period.



Photograph 5. View of the Pinnacle Overlook Trail showing Fort McCook earthworks, facing northeast.

Character-Defining Features:

- Central parking area
- Organization of the trails around primary interpretive features

Vegetation

In keeping with Mission 66-era design tenets that a park's naturalistic landscape should be maintained rather than destroyed, existing native vegetation in the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area was protected and preserved to the extent possible during construction. Native vegetation throughout the area includes a mixture of older hardwood and younger conifer-hardwood forests. Similarly, intentional plantings that were added by the National Park Service during the Mission 66 period typically consisted of native species that were either supplied by local nurseries or collected from other areas of the park (National Park Service 1958b). Landscaping within the Pinnacle Parking Area includes landscaped medians and areas on the lot's periphery. Characteristic species in the Pinnacle Parking Area consist of mature Flowering Dogwood (*Cornua florida*) and Northern Red Oak (*Quercus borealis*) trees.

Character-Defining Features:

- Flowering Dogwood and Northern Red Oak within the Pinnacle Parking Area and in the vicinity of the Information Terrace

Views and Vistas

The Mission 66 era redevelopment of the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area aimed to provide modern interpretive facilities for park visitors and improve physical access to the Pinnacle. The use of natural building materials for both the Pinnacle Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station and the Pinnacle Overlook Terrace enabled these resources to blend into the surrounding environment and minimized their visual impact on the park's natural setting. Regional changes, such as highway development and new residential construction, have impacted the view from the Pinnacle Overlook Terrace since its initial construction; however, the platform continues to offer park visitors an unobstructed view of the tri-state area, as well as the surrounding rural communities. Additionally, modern development within the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area has been extremely limited, with most construction performed as part of the regular maintenance of Mission 66-era buildings and structures or to provide handicapped accessible facilities.

Character-Defining Features:

- Views from the Pinnacle Overlook Terrace and views of surrounding mountains and native vegetation

Small-Scale Features

Recurring small-scale features documented within the district include trash cans and recycling receptacles; benches; numerous wayfinding and interpretive signs (both wood and fiberglass panels); drainage features; and a drinking fountain with a stone masonry base.

Modern trash cans and recycling receptacles are located on the northwest corner of the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station and on the south side of the Pinnacle Parking Area, near the trailhead for the handicap accessible spur of the Pinnacle Loop Trail. Additional signage along the Pinnacle Loop Trail consists of several low-profile waysides located at the top of Fort Lyon and wood wayfinding signage and upright orientation waysides located at the Information Terrace and on the south side of the Pinnacle Parking Area (Photograph 6).

Two concrete benches are situated in the northern portion of the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station, in the approximate location of the original interpreter's booth. An additional concrete bench is located along the side of the Pinnacle Loop Trail near Fort Lyon. A composite boardwalk and railing have been installed along a segment of the handicap accessible spur trail and a composite viewing platform has been added at the top of the Fort Lyon earthworks (Photograph 7 and Photograph 8). Within the Pinnacle Parking Area, granite curbing with metal stormwater inlets facilitates drainage throughout the parking lot. A stone water fountain is located on the south side of the Information Terrace. Historic photographs and plans for the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area indicate that, except for the drainage system and water fountain, nearly all of the small-scale features are of modern construction.



Photograph 6. View of interpretive signage and trash receptacles clustered around the trailhead for the handicap accessible spur of the Pinnacle Loop Trail, facing south.



Photograph 7. View of composite boardwalk and railing along the handicap accessible portion of the Pinnacle Loop Trail, facing northeast.



Photograph 8. View of the composite viewing platform at the top of Fort Lyon, facing east.

Although the current small-scale features and site furnishings are compatible with the character of the historic landscape, the majority have been added or altered since the period of significance. For this reason, this key landscape element is not considered to be character defining to the district's cultural landscape.

Buildings

Contributing Buildings

Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station (1956)

Designed in 1956, the Information Shelter and Comfort Station is a convincing example of the Organic style of architecture, displaying the powerful influence of Frank Lloyd Wright on mid-century American architecture. The tenets of Organic Architecture, as espoused by Wright, include the use of natural building materials in their unadorned state. The stone walls of the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station seem to grow naturally from the ground. The timber posts and beams supporting the roof are left unpainted, with the wood grain exposed (albeit stained with a wood preserver). The visitor enters a shelter of wood and stone, materials which imbue the space with an organic character (Photograph 9).

The Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station was designed in-house by National Park Service architects of the EODC in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The drawings are dated August 10, 1956. Construction was completed in 1957 (Figure 16). The building functions both as a place for visitor orientation, with a covered exterior gathering area for Ranger presentations and a set of park maps and display panels mounted on the walls; and as a



Photograph 9. View of the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station, facing southeast.

comfort station, with adjoining men's and women's restrooms placed modestly around the corner. The floor plan is L-shaped with the Interpretive Shelter forming the long leg of the 'L' and the restrooms the short leg. The planning is subtle in the arrangement of form, space, and function. The building is sited facing west on the side of a hill that drops away sharply to the northeast and rises just as sharply to the southeast. It is immediately adjacent to the parking area and is open and inviting to visitors as they arrive to see the overlook.

The materials used in its construction successfully integrate the building with its site. Battered random ashlar stone walls rise from the earth and visually blend with their setting. A wood-framed shed roof provides protective cover for the informative displays (Photograph 10). The restrooms, located behind the shelter, are wood framed with stained (not painted) shiplap siding. Access to the restrooms is via a concrete sidewalk alongside a stone retaining wall that was cut into the hillside to create a level area on which to erect the building (Photograph 11). The roof of the restrooms is a shallow gable that tees into the shed roof of the shelter at the southwest corner of the "L" plan. Roofing is standing seam metal and has a deep warm gray color that blends with the surrounding woods and rock.

The low-pitched single slope shed roof of the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station, rising above the battered stone walls, recalls the form of Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin West in Scottsdale, Arizona, which was widely published and much admired by architects in the mid-twentieth century (Figure 16 and Figure 17). A strong proponent of the Organic style of architecture, many of Wright's mid-twentieth century designs sought to achieve a harmonious balance between buildings and their surrounding landscapes through the use of native materials, such as unadorned stone and wood. Although not responsible for the design



Photograph 10. Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station, showing the gathering area, facing south.



Photograph 11. View of the wood frame restrooms on the rear of the Information Shelter and Comfort Station building, facing west.



Figure 16. Photograph of the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station shortly after its completion, ca. 1958 (Image reprinted from National Park Service 1958).



Figure 17. View of the main building at Frank Lloyd Wright's School of Architecture at Taliesin (Taliesin West), now home of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, facing east (archeyes.com 2020).

of the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station, Wright did contribute to the National Park Service's Mission 66 program at Rocky Mountain National Park with his successor firm's design of the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center (also known as the Rocky Mountain National Park Administration Building), which was opened to park visitors in 1967 (Figure 18) (Allaback 2000; Carr et al. 2015). The building was listed as a National Historic Landmark in 2001 (Allaback and Carr 2000).



Figure 18. Entrance of the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center as is appeared in 1999 (Image reprinted from Allaback 2000).

The floor of the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station is an exposed-aggregate concrete slab-on-grade, scored with expansion joints in a rectangular pattern. This is a durable, functional, 'non-slip' paving material, suitable for exterior use without a veneer or covering, which is consistent with the Organic principle of honesty in the use of materials. A prominent feature of the building as it now exists is a bas-relief sculpture depicting the westward migration of settlers that came through the Cumberland Gap in the historic period. The sculpture, designed by artist Franklin Boggs, consists of a dramatic semi-abstract work comprised of a particle board and plywood base covered with metallic paint. It measures 6 feet in height by 27 feet in length and is in good condition, with limited areas of deterioration. The sculpture was a later addition to the building, which is evident by both its abstract composition and in the use of particle board, which was not in wide use until the 1970s. It also does not appear on the original construction drawings for the building.

A study of the original construction drawings reveals some discrepancies between current conditions and the original design of the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station. These discrepancies are primarily in regard to details of the building, not its overall form or

composition. To simplify the review of these discrepancies, they are presented numerically below.

1. Construction plans and elevations show a small, enclosed office for an “Interpreter” at the north end of the shelter, measuring 8 feet in width by 11 feet in length (see Figure 16). The west and south walls of the office as shown in the elevations have multi-pane fixed glass windows with wood mullions. The west wall has a half-height stone wall with an integral stone planter. The north and east walls of the office are stone with clerestory glass from the top of the stone to the underside of the wood roof structure. These windows are indicated as sliding, to allow natural cross ventilation. The interpreter booth/office has been removed from the building since its initial construction. No remnants of the partitions that would have enclosed it are evident on either the stone walls or floor.
2. The roofs of both the shelter and the restrooms in the 1956 plans are shown with built-up roofing with gravel topping held by metal gravel stops on all edges. The restrooms are originally shown with a perfectly flat roof. A gable roof was added over the restrooms, and the entire structure has been reroofed with standing seam metal. The shed roof form of the shelter was not altered, and since the shed slopes away from the front of the building, and the restrooms are concealed behind the shelter and not readily visible from the public way, the appearance of the shelter remains unchanged.
3. It is evident in comparing the original details of post and beam joinery that the original 6-by-6 wood posts and 6-by-12 beams that supported the west edge of the Information Shelter and Comfort Station have been replaced in-kind. The 1956 drawings show an elaborate lapped and concealed lag-screw connection that no longer exists. The 2-by-10 roof joists appear to be original, while the wood fascia evidently was replaced: the drawings show a beveled 3-part lapped 1-by-6 fascia that weathered and was replaced by a simple 2-by-10 with a metal drip edge. This is a relatively minor alteration from the original that could be recovered if desired by the National Park Service. This modification is not considered to have substantially altered the essential form, function, and feeling of the building.
4. The restroom portion of the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station as shown on the 1956 plans originally had a continuous ribbon of sliding clerestory windows along the north wall of both the Women’s and Men’s rooms, and a bank of three windows centered on the east wall of the Men’s room. These windows are no longer extant. The windows on the north elevation have been replaced with a series of individual awning-type windows (two each at the Men’s and Women’s rooms, and one at an interstitial plumbing maintenance bay between the two restrooms). The east windows at the Men’s room have been removed, and a shed-roofed storage room was added on the west wall. The restrooms have been completely remodeled and updated on the interior, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The original flush wood panel doors at the restroom building have also been replaced with wood six-panel doors, which have been stained and not painted (Figure 19).

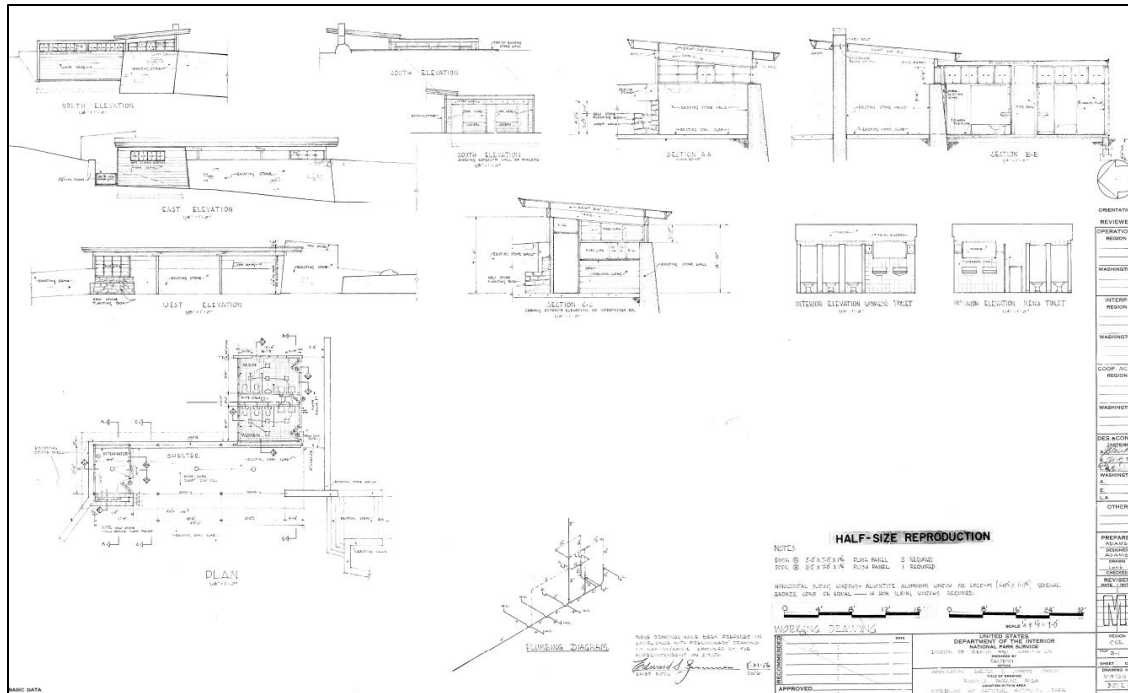


Figure 19. Original plans for the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station, ca. 1956 (Image on file at eTIC [no. 40372-CUGA_380_3012_B]).

Although the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station has experienced minor exterior modifications since its initial construction, the building continues to retain the majority of its character-defining features, including its use of natural building materials like stone and unvarnished wood, and its original composition and massing. For these reasons, North Wind recommends that the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance as a mid-century modern building, designed in the tradition of Park Service Modern architecture. For this reason, the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station is considered to be a contributing resource to the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area Historic District.

Structures

Contributing Structures

Pinnacle Parking Area (1956)

The Pinnacle Parking Area is an elliptical shaped parking lot located at the south end of Pinnacle View Road (formerly Skyland Road). It is situated to the west of the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station (Photograph 12). The area is paved with asphalt and contains two irregularly shaped landscaped medians situated between three drive aisles. The medians have a linear design, with an east-west orientation and are situated parallel to each other. The two medians are anchored at their east and west ends by a landscaped island. Each median is constructed of concrete with pink granite curbing. Landscaping throughout the parking area consists of grasses and a variety of mature trees, including Flowering Dogwood and Northern Red Oak trees. A coursed rubble sandstone masonry retaining wall runs along its south side.



Photograph 12. Overview of the Pinnacle Parking Area, facing east.

The Pinnacle Parking Area was initially constructed by the Southern Landscape Co. in 1956. The following year, the parking area underwent repairs which consisted of restoring the settled portion of the parking lot; replacing the base, surface, and concrete curbing; and installing perforated pipe as needed (National Park Service 1957c). These modifications were completed by the Kentucky-Virginia Stone Company of Middlesboro, Kentucky, over an 84-day period between April and August of 1957 (National Park Service 1957c). The total cost of the project was \$21,962.11 (National Park Service 1957c).

A review of historic photographs and planting plans for the Pinnacle area indicate that the parking area has not undergone any major alterations since its initial construction in the mid-1950s (Figure 20). For this reason, the Pinnacle Parking Area is considered to be a contributing resource to the district.



Figure 20. Overview of the Pinnacle Parking Area, shortly after its construction (Photograph on file at the Park Archives, Middlesboro, Kentucky [Classification No. 910, Negative No. 1576]).

Information Terrace (1956)

The Information Terrace is located on the eastern edge of the Pinnacle Parking Area, in front of the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station (Photograph 13). The structure consists of a level concrete terrace with an ashlar sandstone curtain wall on its southwest side. West of the curtain wall are three short flights of sandstone stairs separated by a series of paved landings. Metal pipe railings are located in the center and along the sides of the stairs. The stairs provide access to the principal trailhead for the Pinnacle Loop Trail. Sandstone retaining walls flank the stairs on the north and south sides. A small, landscaped island is present in the center of the concrete terrace, which contains a mature Northern Red Oak tree.

The Information Terrace was completed by the Southern Landscape Co. in 1956 and was constructed as part of the initial Mission 66 era redevelopment of the Pinnacle Overlook Area. A review of historic photographs and planting plans indicate that the terrace has undergone only minor changes since its initial construction (Figure 21). According to the original planting plan for the Pinnacle Area, the north side of the concrete terrace originally featured a stepped design which contained three Flowering Dogwood trees (Figure 22). At an unknown date the trees were removed and replaced with trash receptacles. Other changes include the installation of metal handrails on the stairs to enhance visitor safety and the removal of a small grass island in front of the stairs. As the Information Terrace has not undergone any major exterior alterations and still retains its historic function, it is considered to be a contributing resource to the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area Historic District.



Photograph 13. Overview of the Information Terrace, facing southeast.



Figure 21. Information Terrace as it appeared shortly after its construction in 1958 (Image reprinted from National Park Service 1958).

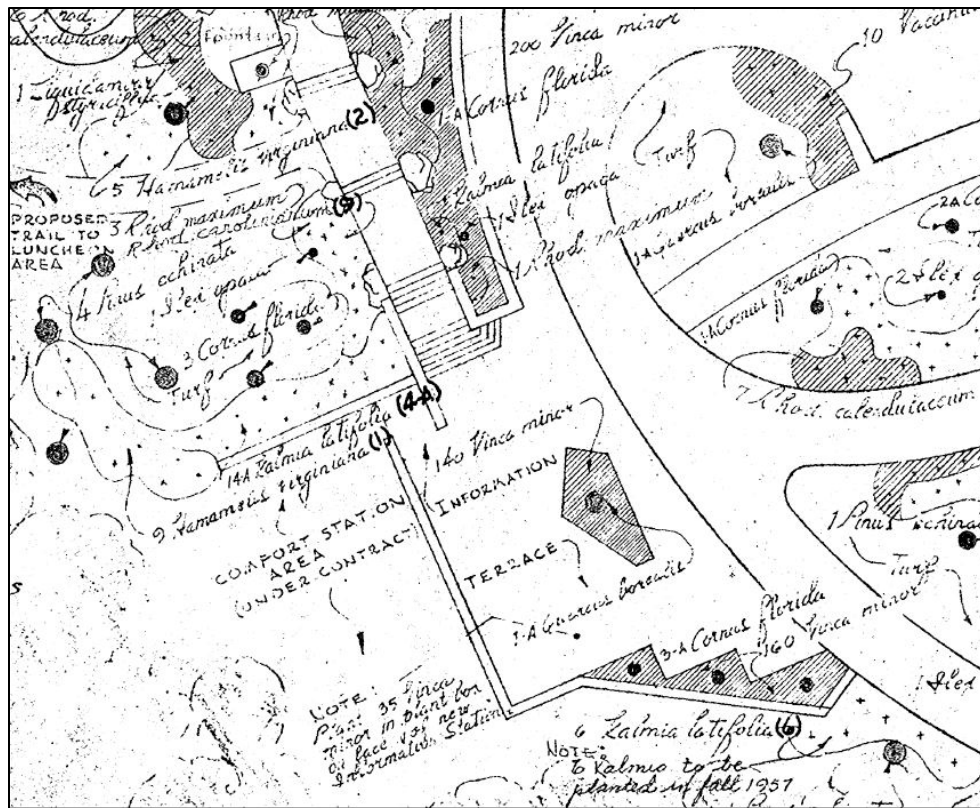


Figure 22. Excerpt from the planting plan for the Pinnacle Parking Area, Overlook, and trails, ca. 1957 (Image on file at eTIC [no. 689654-CUGA 3015 B 0001 of 0001]).

Pinnacle Loop Trail (1956)

The Pinnacle Loop Trail consists of a paved loop trail that extends from the Pinnacle Parking Area to the Pinnacle Overlook Terrace (Photograph 14). The primary trailhead for the Pinnacle Loop Trail originates at the Information Terrace on the east side of the parking area. This portion of the trail extends south for approximately 80 feet before forming an approximately 0.3-mile-long loop that surrounds the Fort Lyon earthworks before eventually returning to the Information Terrace. A secondary trailhead, originating at the southern edge of the parking area, leads to a short spur trail that provides wheelchair access to the Pinnacle Overlook Terrace. The spur trail extends southwest from the parking lot for approximately 370 feet before merging with the loop trail and then continuing approximately 170 feet to the overlook. Steep portions of the trail feature either metal pipe or composite railings.

Construction on the Pinnacle Loop Trail was originally completed by the Southern Landscaping Co. between April and October 1956 (National Park Service 1956). The completed project was presented to the public during an open house which was held in November 1956. As constructed, the loop trail was originally surfaced with bituminous concrete (Figure 23). Since its initial construction in the mid-1950s, the Pinnacle Loop Trail has experienced some minor alterations to its original design., including the installation of modern safety railings and the construction of the short spur trail on the west side of the original loop, which was likely constructed following passage of the Americans with



Photograph 14. Overview of the Pinnacle Loop Trail looking towards the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station, facing northeast.



Figure 23. Pinnacle Loop Trail shortly after its completion, ca. 1956 (Image reprinted from National Park Service 1956).

Disabilities Act in 1990. Despite these changes, the trail still generally retains its historic alignment and function as the primary access route for the Pinnacle Overlook Terrace (Figure 24). As the trail is still able to convey the principles of the Modern Movement, or “Park Service Modern” style, as defined in the Park Service Mission 66-Era Resources MPDF, it is considered to be a contributing resource to the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area Historic District.

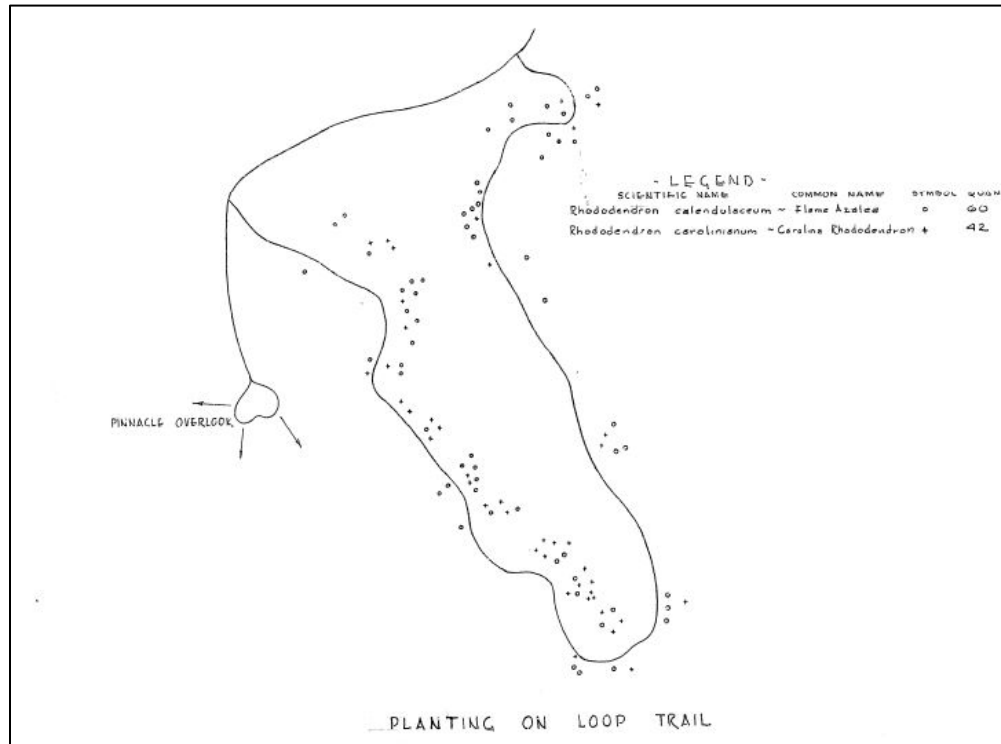


Figure 24. Excerpt from the Planting plan for the Pinnacle Loop Trail showing the trail's original alignment, ca. 1958 (Image on file at eTIC [no. 548617-CUGA_380_3032_0001_of 0001]).

Pinnacle Overlook Terrace (1956)

The Pinnacle Overlook Terrace consists of a masonry structure with an irregular shape that measures roughly 30 feet by 40 feet in size. The platform has a concrete slab foundation overlaid with a bed of mortar. The mortar used for the construction of the platform includes a combination of cement and sand. The south side of the platform has an undulating curved design. The platform is constructed of natural stone at the bottom, followed by walls of coursed rubble sandstone masonry with raked joints (Figure 25). The stone walls are 2 feet 8 inches tall and are capped by a steel railing. The deck of the platform is comprised of flagstone, which is set to avoid acute angles as much as possible (Photograph 15).

Construction of the Pinnacle Loop Platform occurred simultaneously with the construction of the associated loop trail (National Park Service 1956). Since its initial construction, the platform has experienced only minor alterations (Figure 26). For the most part, these changes have been necessary to enhance visitor safety, such as the installation of a modern steel

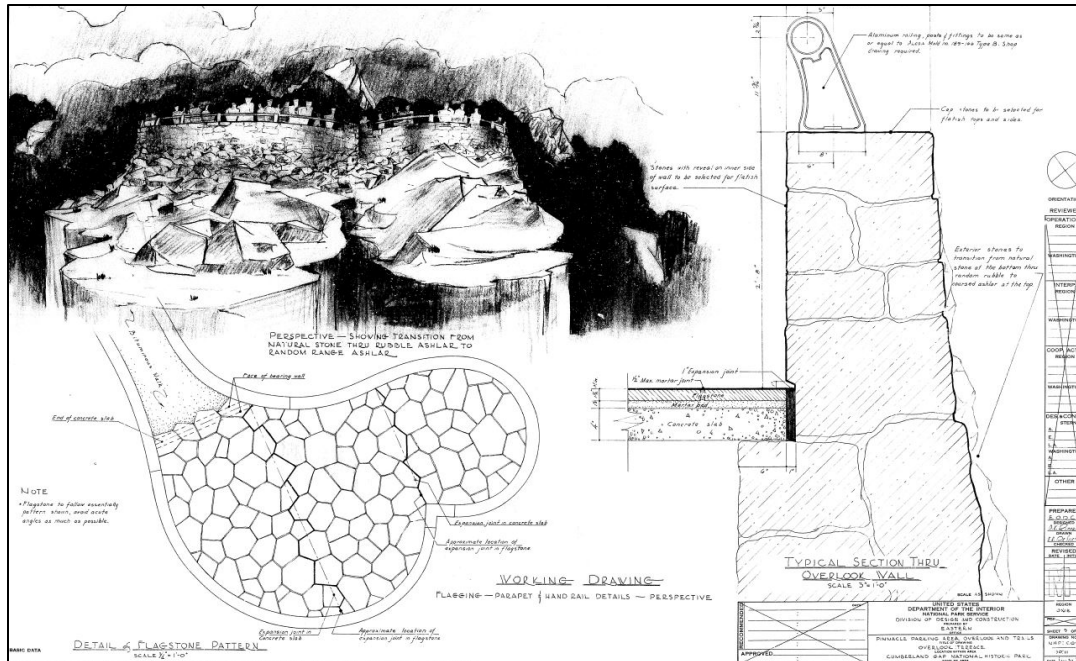


Figure 25. Working drawing for the Pinnacle Overlook Terrace, ca. 1956 (Image on file at eTIC [no. 39408-CUGA_380_3011]).



Photograph 15. Overview of the Pinnacle Overlook Terrace looking towards the Pinnacle Loop Trail, facing north. Note the stone memorial bench which was added in 2018.



Figure 26. Pinnacle Overlook Terrace after its completion, ca. 1956 (Image reprinted from National Park Service 1956).

railing, and do not alter its essential form and character. A small stone memorial bench was added on the northeast corner of the platform in 2018 but is not a permanent part of the platform. Changes made to the Pinnacle Overlook Terrace are compatible with the original design and would meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. For this reason, the structure retains sufficient integrity to convey its association with the Mission 66 program and is considered a contributing resource to the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area Historic District.

Objects

Contributing Object

Drinking Fountain (1957)

A review of completion reports on file at the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park archives indicates that the drinking fountain was installed by Collingsworth and Tamer, Inc. of Middlesboro, Kentucky in 1957 (Figure 27) (National Park Service 1957). The fountain has a stone masonry base and cost \$480 to install. It originally had a Haws Model M Head, Model 7 W basin, and a Model 423 self-cleaning faucet with cast iron valve box (Photograph 16). Haws was originally formed by its namesake Luther Haws in Berkeley, California in 1909 following his patent for the first drinking fountain. The company was known as the Haws Sanitary Drinking Faucet Company until 1933, at which point the word "Sanitary" was dropped from its name. The company, which has been known as Haws



Figure 27. Drinking fountain, ca. 1957 (Image reprinted from NPS 1957).



Photograph 16. Current view of the drinking fountain, facing north.

EVALUATION OF ELIGIBILITY

According to the National Park Service (1997), a property may be considered eligible for listing in the NRHP if it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history (Criterion A); is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past (Criterion B); embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represents the work of a master, possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction (Criterion C); or has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to an understanding of prehistory or history (Criterion D). In order to establish this association, historic contexts appropriate for the property must be developed. Additionally, in order for a property to be NRHP-eligible, it must also retain a sufficient level of integrity in order to convey its historical significance. The National Park Service (1997) defines seven aspects of integrity including: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

As the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area “encompass[es] a major developed area with a range of representative facilities that embody the goals of the Mission 66 program,” the area was evaluated as a Mission-66 public-use district (Carr et. al 2015: F-79). Although the Park Service Mission 66-Era Resources MPDF acknowledges that a public-use district “constitute[s] a single, significant developed area,” it does not provide individual guidelines for evaluating the NRHP eligibility of a public-use district. Instead, public-use districts are grouped in the same category as campgrounds and day-use areas and blanket guidelines are provided for the evaluation of these property types.

Based on the guidelines established by Carr et al. (2015:F-79), in order for a Mission 66 public-use district to be eligible for listing in the NRHP, it should fall within the period of significance established for Mission 66-era properties (1942–1972) and possess the following characteristics:

- Contain a range of contributing buildings, structures, and cultural landscape features that encompass the goals of the construction program;
- Demonstrate integrated campground and day-use area planning including the entrance road and signage, the camp tender’s station (if one existed), the looped road system, and individual parking details at each site, such as a pull-in or a mini-loop layout;
- Reflect the new concepts of providing more privacy for users and contribute to the integrity of the development through its landscape features and constructed components;
- Trail access leading to one or more comfort stations, an amphitheater for evening programs, and for hiking to nearby scenic resources, representing the part of the site planning for campground and day-use areas that indicates a relationship to other park facilities; and,
- Retain furnishings at individual campsites or day-use sites, if important. The MPDF notes, however, that updates to furnishings (i.e., picnic tables and grills) are common.

All resources located within the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area were evaluated for individual listing in the NRHP under the four criteria outlined in 36 CFR 60, and per guidelines presented in *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (National Park Service 1997). Additionally, as the property is comprised of a “significant concentration, linkage, or continuity” of buildings and structures “united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development,” the developed area was evaluated in its entirety as a district (National Park Service 1997).

North Wind has defined the period of significance for the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area as beginning in 1956, the year that the first plan for the property was drafted, and ending in 1958, when all of the improvements in the area that were planned as part of the Mission 66 program were completed. Specifically, the property was evaluated for eligibility under Criterion A, for its association with the development of public-use areas in the park during the Mission 66 era; under Criterion B for association with the lives of significant persons; and under Criterion C for Design/Construction as a representative example of Mission 66 program-funded, public-use area construction within the park. Per the guidance presented in Carr et al. (2015), the property was not evaluated for listing in the NRHP under Criterion D. It was determined that for a resource to be considered individually eligible for NRHP listing it must be able to individually convey significance under one of the above Criteria, and also retain the majority of its integrity.

Individual Eligibility Recommendations:

Carr et al. (2015) notes that for a Mission 66-era resource to be considered individually eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A, it must be a “potentially significant” example “of the changing visions for national park planning and development during the period of significance.” With respect to Criterion C, the MPDF states that a resource would demonstrate significance for its association with the “design precepts and construction techniques of the Modern Movement style,” which became known as “Park Service Modern” and was practiced by National Park Service architects, landscape architects, and planners during the Mission 66 era (Carr et al. 2015). Each of the seven contributing resources within the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area was evaluated for individual eligibility and only one—the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station—was found to meet these criteria.

Based on the guidelines established by Carr et al. (2015:F-81-83), the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station was evaluated for individual eligibility as a “wayside exhibit shelter,” a property type that was incorporated into Mission 66 park planning to provide shade and interpretation opportunities for visitors at key natural areas of the park (Carr et. al 2015: F-82). In order to be considered eligible for listing in the NRHP, interpretive service structures, such as wayside shelters, should be constructed within the period of significance established for Mission 66-era properties (1942–1972) and also possess the following physical characteristics:

- Make use of the formal vocabulary and materials of contemporary Modern Movement style architecture (1945–1972), including flat roofs as well as other types of roofs, expansive fenestration, frame and concrete block construction, and use of appropriate exterior wall cladding;

- Elevations that typically reflect a low-profile, horizontal effect; and,
- Outdoor spaces and site work, including parking areas and walkways, that are incorporated into the planning and construction of the structure.

Additionally wayside exhibits and other interpretive service structures should possess physical integrity dating to the period of significance. Examples of alterations that may impair integrity include:

- Additions or other major exterior alterations that transform the outward appearance of the building; and/or,
- A new roof structure that is nonreversible and completely alters the exterior appearance of the building, such as pitched, raised seam metal roofing replacing the original flat roof.

Based on the guidance provided by the MPDF, North Wind recommends that the Pinnacle Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station has significance under Criterion A for its association with the development of interpretive programming under the Mission 66 program. The building is not recommended eligible under Criterion B as no association with a significant individual whose specific contributions to history could be identified and documented. The building is also not recommended eligible under Criterion C due to exterior modifications, including, most importantly, the removal of the interpreter's booth and information panels on its interior, followed by the replacement of the original roofing material. Alterations to the comfort station, including replacement of its original fenestration materials and patterns and roof form, are less impactful as this portion of the building is not immediately visible to the public. When considered in total, the alterations have diminished the building's integrity of design, materials, and workmanship; however, it still retains the majority of its integrity and is able to convey its association with the interpretive goals of the Mission 66 program. Therefore, it is recommended eligible for inclusion in the NRHP under Criterion A.

Mission 66-Era Historic District Recommendation:

The MPDF provides guidance on evaluating Mission 66-era developments as a cohesive historic district within a larger park area by determining the significance and integrity of individual functional components. The significance of individual component areas should then be evaluated in conjunction with adjacent Mission 66-era development including cultural landscape characteristics such as circulation, spatial organization, topography, vegetation, and views. An eligible Mission 66-era historic district would need to include a representative range of contributing components, buildings, structures, and cultural landscape characteristics which are able to convey their significance as Mission 66-era resources.

Based on this guidance, North Wind recommends that the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area is eligible for NRHP listing under Criterion A for its association with the recreational development of the park under the Mission 66 program, and under Criterion C as a good representative example of the design precepts and construction techniques established by the Park Service for Mission 66 public-use areas. All seven of the properties that comprise the

Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area are recommended as contributing resources to the district.

Overall, the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area Historic District generally retains its integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association. However, due to the alterations to the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station and several of the structures, the district no longer retains its integrity of materials. A discussion of each of the seven aspects of integrity as they relate to the recommended Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area Historic District is included below.

Location: the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. The Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area has not been moved from its original location; therefore, integrity of location is retained.

Design: the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. The general layout and arrangement of the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area remains largely unchanged, and the resources located within the district retain most of their historic features. Although the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station and several of the other structures have undergone some alterations, including the removal of the original interpreter booth, modifications to trailside exhibits, and the installation of new safety features, many of these modifications are compatible with the historic appearance of the resources and/or do not have a significant visual impact on the district's overall design. Additionally, the alterations that have occurred have not diminished their ability to convey their association as part of a public-use area constructed under the Mission 66 program. Therefore, the district retains integrity of design.

Setting: the physical environment of a historic property. The Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area retains its integrity of setting as the basic physical conditions under which the property was constructed, as well as its original function, is retained. The district is located in the south-central portion of the park and is accessed from Pinnacle View (formerly Skyland Road). The area is surrounded by natural landscape, including a mixed hardwood forest, and retains many of the original landscape plantings dating from the area's Mission 66 redevelopment. Virtually no modern development encroaches on the district's setting.

Materials: the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. The Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area retains many of the key physical elements and configuration dating from the period of significance (1956–1958). However, as the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station, as well as several other structures associated with the property have undergone modern alterations, including the removal of the original interpreter booth, modifications to trailside exhibits, and the installation of new safety features, the area no longer retains its integrity of materials.

Workmanship: the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. The Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area generally retains integrity of workmanship as it continues to convey evidence of the Mission 66

construction methods and the aesthetic principles of the Park Service Modern architectural style, including the use of natural building materials and an unobtrusive appearance that is designed to blend in with the park's rustic setting.

Feeling: a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. The Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area retains integrity of feeling, which is defined as the physical features, that, when taken together, are able to convey the property's historic character and function as a public-use area constructed by the National Park Service during the Mission 66 era. These features include the elements that make up the setting and association of the property.

Association: the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. The district generally retains its integrity of association. The Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area Historic District is still able to convey its original functions and association with recreation in Cumberland Gap National Historical Park during the Mission 66 period, and therefore, its contribution to the recreational development of the same area.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

North Wind, on behalf of the National Park Service, conducted archival and background research and an on-site inspection of the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area located within Cumberland Gap National Historical Park in Lee County, Virginia. This documentation is part of a larger effort by the Southeastern Regional Office to record and provide NRHP DOEs for Mission 66-era properties and cultural landscapes located within the 88 National Park Service units currently under its management. The Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area is one of five Mission 66-era component landscapes located within Cumberland Gap National Historical Park.

North Wind recommends that the Pinnacle Overlook Developed is eligible for NRHP listing as a historic district under Criterion A for its association with the recreational development of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park during the Mission 66 era, and under Criterion C as a good representative example of the design precepts and construction techniques established by the Park Service for Mission 66 public-use areas. North Wind recommends that the Pinnacle Overlook Developed Area Historic District generally retains its integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association.

While all seven of the properties that make up the district are recommended as contributing resources, only one—the Interpretive Shelter and Comfort Station—is recommended individually eligible for NHRP listing under Criterion A for its association with the development of interpretive programming at Cumberland Gap National Historical Park as part of its Mission 66 initiative.

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