National Park Service • U.S. Department of the Interior

Rocky Mountain National Park

FALL RIVER PASS HISTORIC DISTRICT

Cultural Landscape Preservation Plan

APRIL 2023





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Rocky Mountain National Park
Fall River Pass Historic District

Cultural Landscape Preservation Plan

April 2023

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INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION



Figure 1-1. Fall River Pass Ranger Station, ca. 1932 to 1936 (source: ROMO-11-Q-3, neg. 5577).

Purpose of the Preservation Plan

The Cultural Landscape Preservation Plan (the plan) provides documentation and guidance for the treatment of cultural resources within Fall River Pass Historic District. The plan is needed to assist the park in addressing increasing visitation, increasing demand for interpretation and visitor conveniences, and addressing the maintenance backlog of the site in a manner that protects the cultural and natural significance of the district.

The plan presents detailed documentation of the historical development, existing condition, and integrity of the cultural landscape. It provides baseline documentation of cultural resources based on research, field reconnaissance, and review of relevant studies—the 2021 National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nomination for Fall River Pass Historic District, amongst other reports. The plan recommends a rehabilitation approach for the treatment of the cultural landscape with an emphasis on repair of contributing features and guidance for the long-term stewardship.

Fall River Pass Historic District

Fall River Pass Historic District (the district) is set within the rugged alpine tundra ecosystem of Rocky Mountain National Park (the park). The district is within the northwestern portion of the park where the highest elevations occur, and is subject to extreme climate variability. Nearly one-third of Rocky Mountain National Park is above tree line (11,400 feet) with seventy peaks rising above 12,000 feet. Severe rainstorms in spring, high winds and thunderstorms in summer, and sudden blizzards with high winds and deep snowpack in winter characterize the extreme conditions.

Fall River Pass Historic District was originally developed to provide visitor amenities to those traveling to the summit of Old Fall River Road. It continues this role today and is one of the park's most popular destinations. The district is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for the historical and architectural significance of its buildings, structures, and cultural landscape.

Fall River Pass Historic District is part of the park's extensive system of visitor facilities that include visitor centers, trails, scenic roads and overlooks, campgrounds, and historical sites related to indigenous peoples, homesteaders, and development of the national park by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and Mission 66 program.

Fall River Pass Historic District is set amongst the vast alpine tundra landscape of Colorado's Continental Divide where it offers visitors a curated experience created by its buildings, roads, and trails. The district includes two developed areas—Fall River Pass Complex and Pumphouse and Catchment Basin—Old Fall River Road, Trail Ridge Road, Alpine Ridge Trail, Ute Trail, Fall River Cirque, and the alpine tundra.

By placing a compact cluster of buildings at the cirque's edge, with views strategically oriented towards the towering peaks of the Rocky Mountains, visitors are immersed within the majestic alpine landscape. The buildings and landscape reflect the very best of the national park system's major design movements—the principles of compact development and rustic naturalistic design of the NPS rustic period with the modern and technologically innovative Mission 66 Program—harmonizing built form with nature. This extraordinary setting, built form, and curated experience are the character-defining features of Fall River Pass Historic District, reflecting its significance as "one of the most important stopping places en route across the Continental Divide."[1.1]

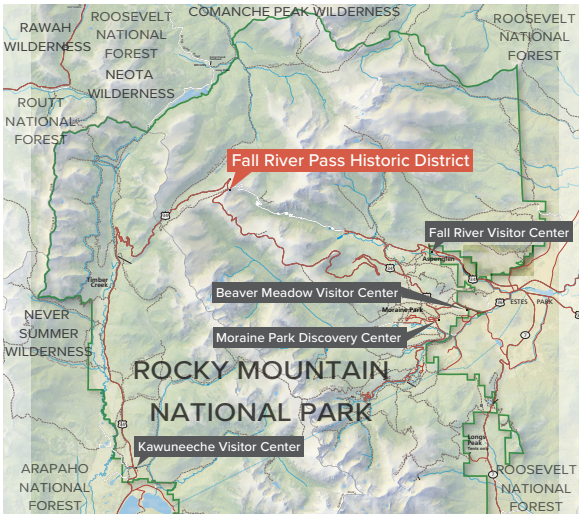


Figure 1-2. Fall River Pass Historic District is within the northwestern portion of Rocky Mountain National Park above tree line (source Mundus Bishop, adapted from NPS ROMO Map).

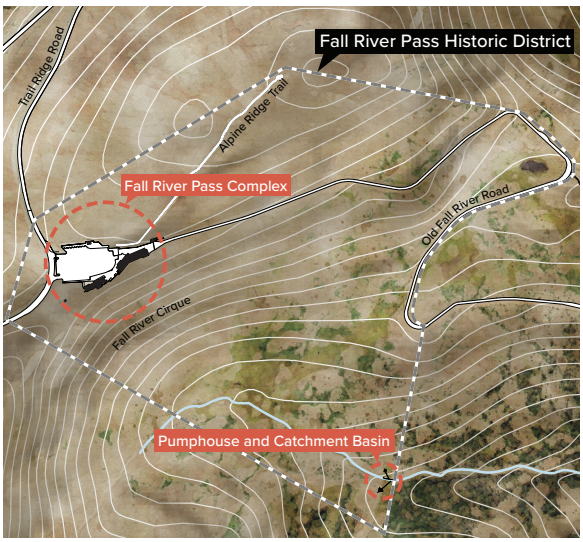


Figure 1-3. Fall River Pass Historic District consists of nearly 140 acres that includes Fall River Pass Complex, set on the rim of Fall River Cirque, and with Fall River Pumphouse and Catchment Basin set 1,000 feet below within the vast tundra. The district developed between 1920 to 1966 as a visitor destination at the top of Old Fall River Road. It has evolved into one of the park's most popular destinations offering visitors one convenient stop for basic amenities and to take a short hike (source: Mundus Bishop, 2022).

1.1 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, Branch of Plans of Plans and Design. *The Master Plan for Rocky Mountain National Park*. (San Francisco: National Park Service, Branch of Plans of Plans and Design, 1936), 94.

SIGNIFICANCE AND INTEGRITY

Fall River Pass Historic District is significant as the site of the highest elevation visitor center in the National Park System and for its embodiment of two of the national park system's major design movement—NPS rustic and Mission 66. Set amongst the vast alpine tundra of Colorado's Continental Divide Fall River Pass Historic District offers visitors a curated experience created by its buildings, roads, and trails.

Fall River Pass Historic District is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) at the state level with a period of significance of 1920 to 1966. This period captures the evolution of the district as a visitor destination, beginning with the completion of Old Fall River Road and ending with the first year of operation of Alpine Visitor Center and completion of associated site improvements. The district is significant under Criterion A in the area of Entertainment and Recreation and Criterion C in the area of Architecture.[1.2]

Fall River Pass Historic District is significant under Criterion A in the area of Entertainment and Recreation. The district represents how the visitor experience in Rocky Mountain National Park evolved. Initial development in the 1920s was minor, restricted by inadequate funding. The scale and design of Fall River Road and a warming hut and rest house (Fall River Pass Ranger Station) and lack of formalized trails and visitor use areas within the sensitive alpine tundra illustrate a period of limited financial resources. After World War II, park visitation increased, scientists began to study the impacts of visitors to the alpine tundra, and the Mission 66 program allocated funding for visitor facilities. Alpine Visitor Center and related improvements illustrate the movement to modernize national parks through the expansion of visitor services and facilities and protect the alpine tundra by hardening and defining visitor use areas.

Fall River Pass Historic District is significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The development of the district represents two major initiatives–NPS rustic and Park Service Modern.

Buildings and site features built from 1920 to 1944 are excellent examples of the NPS rustic style. NPS rustic style buildings were simple and employed handcrafted workmanship with native stone and log materials blending with their largely undeveloped surrounding landscapes. Fall River Pass Ranger Station (1922) and Fall River Pumphouse (1938) contribute to the district.

Buildings and site features built from 1956 to 1966 are excellent examples of the NPS Park Service Modern style. Park Service Modern continued to emphasize harmony with the natural environment while introducing concepts of functionality and technological advances. Primary construction materials included reinforced concrete, steel frames, and large expanses of glass. Designers selected native stone and log as veneers and decorative elements to ensure resources did not distract from the natural landscape. Denver architect William C. Muchow employed design precepts and construction techniques of Park Service Modern in the design of Alpine Visitor Center. The design featured stone veneer on the exterior, large window walls, and a cross-gabled roof covered in wood shakes with a gridwork of peeled logs for protection in harsh winds. The use of modern architectural elements and natural materials complemented NPS rustic buildings and the natural environment. Parking Lot, Public Plaza, sidewalks, and stone veneered retaining walls delineated visitor use areas and increased

1.2 This statement of significance and period of significance is based on the 2021 National Register Nomination for Fall River Pass Historic District.

protection of the alpine tundra. Alpine Visitor Center (1965) and Fall River Pass Generator House (1963) contribute to the district.

Integrity is the ability of a cultural landscape to convey its significance. The district was assessed to determine if the landscape characteristics that shaped the cultural landscape during the period of significance are present today.[1.3]

Fall River Pass Historic District retains integrity in location, setting, and feeling. The physical environment associated with the development of the district as a minor developed area along Trail Ridge Road and Old Fall River Road remains in the original location, and is one of the original clusters of development set within the alpine tundra. The district retains original relationships to Trail Ridge Road and Old Fall River Road and surrounding natural features including Fall River Pass, Fall River Cirque, Mummy Range, Lava Cliffs, Never Summer Mountains, and distant mountain ranges.

Materials, workmanship, and design of the district's contributing features as listed in the NRHP retain the original design aesthetics associated with the period of significance. The integrity of Public Plaza, Alpine Ridge Trail, and Fall River Pass Parking, walks, walls, and small scale are diminished due to modifications that occurred after the end of the period of significance.

1.3 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes.* Washington, DC: Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, 1996.

Integrity is evaluated according to seven aspects or qualities: location, setting, feeling, design, materials, workmanship, and association.

2

SITE HISTORY

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INTRODUCTION

Fall River Pass Historic District is one of several well-defined clusters of development built by the National Park Service (NPS) within Rocky Mountain National Park shortly after the park's establishment in the early twentieth century. Initial development embodied the NPS rustic style principles of preserving the natural landscape by building in a manner that harmonized with the landscape. Fall River Pass Ranger Station (originally built as a public warming hut and rest house), Trail Ridge Store, and supporting facilities were built between 1922 and 1938 to accommodate increased visitation to Fall River Pass. This rustic design aesthetic was expressed in the clustered development, spatial arrangement, architecture, and materials of the district.[2.1]

Mission 66 modifications and additions in the 1960s introduced a modern aesthetic to design and construction to national parks. Mission 66 modifications and additions included Alpine Visitor Center, Public Plaza, parking, walks, and associated site features. These modifications and additions built upon the principles of NPS rustic design that emphasized conservation (clustered development) and preservation of natural resources while adding the aesthetic and materials of Park Service Modern. Modifications included more clearly defined visitor use areas, improvements for vehicular circulation, and modernized facilities for interpretation.



Figure 2-1. Old Fall River Road opened to the public in 1920 and offered the first vehicular access to Fall River Pass, date unknown (source: ROMO 4014-2786).

This chapter presents the historical context and overview of the physical development of Fall River Pass Historic District. This is followed by a chronology of the district's physical development.

2.1 Buildings and features are described in this plan by their present-day names. The names of Old Fall River Road, Fall River Pass Ranger Station, and Trail Ridge Store varied during and after the period of significance.

Old Fall River Road (5LR.885) is a segment of the original Fall River Road that opened to the public in 1920. This segment was originally known as Fall River Road and became known as Old Fall River Road with the opening of Trail Ridge Road in 1933.

Fall River Pass Ranger Station (Building 0058, 5LR.1204) was originally built as a public warming hut and rest house in 1922. It was converted to a ranger station in 1931, temporary nature museum in 1932, and ranger station and residence after the opening of Trail Ridge Store in 1937. Ranger functions moved to Alpine Visitor Center in 1965 and Fall River Pass Ranger Station remained in use as an alpine cabin until an unknown time. The building is currently vacant.

Trail Ridge Store (Building 0170, 5LR.1207) was built as Fall River Pass Museum in 1936 with space for a museum, lobby, operator's room, kitchen, public lunch counter, employee housing, public restrooms, furnace room, and storage. The building was expanded in 1937, 1938, 1966, and 1971 and became known as Trail Ridge Store.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW

The massive peaks, long ridges, and incised valleys of Rocky Mountain National Park were carved by vast sheets of moving ice over 10,000 years ago. Humans may have occupied the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains, including areas near the national park, as early as 11,000 to 12,000 years ago. Geological indicators and archeological findings indicate humans lived in the region's high mountain areas approximately 6,000 years before common era (BCE). An arrowhead found along Ute Trail indicates human use of the trail 7,000 years ago.[2.2] [2.3]

Northern Ute and Northern Arapaho frequented the region and traveled to the Rocky Mountains to hunt and gather food until the middle of the nineteenth century. Old Fall River Road roughly traces a route used by Native Americans crossing the Front Range. Oral histories from the Arapaho identify present-day Old Fall River Road as “Dog Trail” where dogs pulled travois over the snowy pass.[2.4]

Early Euro-American hunters and trappers likely visited the district by the middle of the nineteenth century and improved Dog Trail for travel by horse. Pioneers established settlements to the east (Estes Park) and west (Grand Lake) of the district by 1900.

Shortly after Estes Park and Grand Lake were established, conservationists began to lobby for the protection of forested lands between the two villages. President Theodore Roosevelt established these lands, including present-day Rocky Mountain National Park, as Medicine Bow Forest Reserve in 1905. President William Taft renamed the Colorado portion of Medicine Bow Forest Reserve, including present-day Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado National Forest in 1910. The U.S. Forest Service reconstructed a hunting and trapping trail over Fall River Pass.[2.5] [2.6] [2.7]

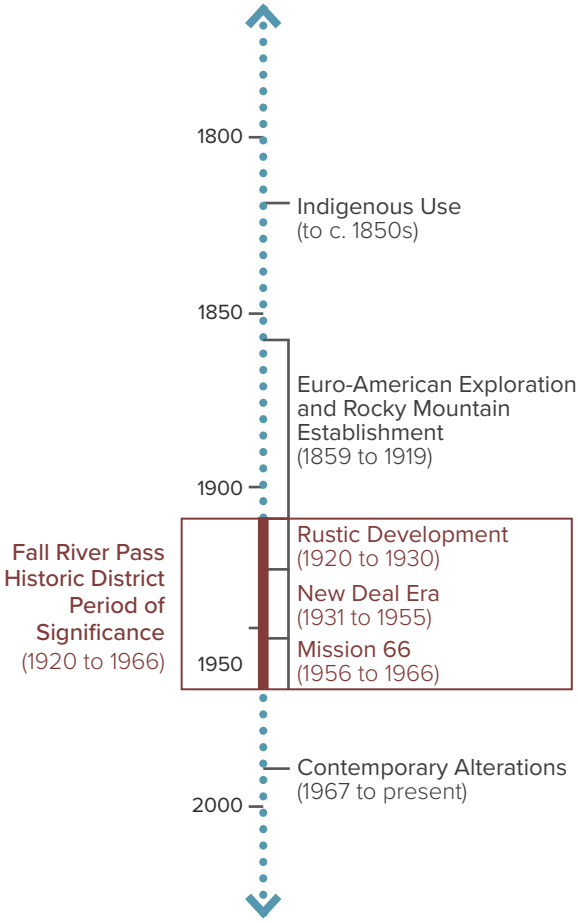


Figure 2-2. The period of significance is characterized by three periods of physical development and change. These include its initial development with the establishment of Rocky Mountain National Park and modification by the New Deal Era and Mission 66 program.

2.2 United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service. *Final Master Plan.* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1976), 6.
2.3 Brett, John A, *Ethnographic Assessment and Documentation of Rocky Mountain National Park*, 90.
2.4 NPS, *Fall River Road HAER,* 2.
2.5 NPS, *Fall River Road HAER,* 3.
2.6 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, Historic American Engineering Record. *Fall River Road, HAER No. CO-73.* (Washington D.C.: Historic American Engineering Record, 1993), 2.
2.7 Buchholtz, C.W., *Rocky Mountain National Park: A History*. (Boulder: Colorado Associated University Press, 1983), 99.

Local conservationists were concerned the national forest designation did not provide adequate protection from lumbering, mining, and cattle interests. The Estes Park Protection and Improvement Association, with Enos Mills as a prominent voice, lobbied for Congress to protect the natural resources of the area for the enjoyment of all citizens. President Woodrow Wilson signed the Rocky Mountain National Park Act on January 26, 1915.

Plans for the newly established Rocky Mountain National Park included access to Fall River Pass by way of the park's first transmontane road—Fall River Road. The State of Colorado, Larimer County, and Grand County began building Fall River Road in 1913 roughly following a trail through Fall River Pass used by hunters and trappers.[2.8]

Fall River Road was under construction at the time the U.S. Congress passed the Rocky Mountain National Park Act on January 26, 1915. As completed sections of the eastern and western segments neared tree line, two routes were considered above—the U.S. Forest Service trail at Fall River Pass or a lower crossing at Chapin Pass.

Park Superintendent L.C. Way inspected the two route options in September 1917 and indicated a preference for the higher more scenic Fall River Pass route. The Denver Civic and Commercial Association visited the two routes in August 1918 and unanimously supported the higher route. The State Highway Commission argued for the lower route at Chapin Pass, citing an additional cost of $50,000 to build the higher route. Superintendent Way stated the park had no preference. Enos Mills argued the higher route would offer more dramatic views and persuaded Secretary of the Interior Franklin Lane to order the NPS to build the higher route at Fall River Pass.[2.9]

Fall River Road opened to the public in 1920 and offered the first vehicular access to Fall River Pass. News of the road spread quickly and park visitation reached 240,966 visitors in the first year. The NPS recognized the need to provide shelter, restrooms, and interpretation at the crest of Fall River Pass. A public warming hut and rest house (Fall River Pass Ranger Station) and two stone restrooms were completed in 1922. The buildings were designed in the park rustic style and were simple buildings that employed handcrafted workmanship constructed using native stone and log materials. This design aesthetic harmonized with the undeveloped surrounding landscape where visitor use through the alpine tundra was unrestricted.[2.10]

Visitation to Fall River Pass continued to increase with the opening of Trail Ridge Road in 1933. The NPS had deemed the steep grades and narrow widths of Fall River Road to be inadequate for the high volumes of traffic on the route. Trail Ridge Road was the park's primary vehicular route spanning the Continental Divide, offered visitors scenic overlooks, comfortable grades and widths, and increased accessibility to Fall River Pass. Annual park visitation increased from 256,000 in 1929 to 292,000 in 1933.[2.11]

2.8 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 8, 19; NPS, *Fall River Road HAER,* 3; United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Fall River Pass Ranger Station.* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 2019), 2.

2.9 NPS, *Fall River Road HAER,* 7, 8.

2.10 Buchholtz, *Rocky Mountain National Park: A History,* 132; United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *National Register of Historic Places Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft.* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 2020), 15.

2.11 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Fall River Pump House*. (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 2019), 2; Buchholtz, *Rocky Mountain National Park: A History,* 150.

In response to increased visitation and access to Fall River Pass and attractions throughout the park, the NPS developed *The Master Plan for Rocky Mountain National Park* in 1936 to guide long-term development. Fall River Pass Complex was identified as a minor developed area and "one of the most important stopping places en route across the Continental Divide." The plan recommended developing a small parking area, service court for the concessioner, museum and operator's building, and paths from the parking area to the museum and operator's building.[2.12]

Rocky Mountain Motor Company opened Fall River Pass Museum (Trail Ridge Store) to the public on June 20, 1937. They immediately expanded the store to increase space for concessions, restrooms, and a small NPS museum. The NPS built Pumphouse and Catchment Basin to provide water service for Trail Ridge Store and established parking and walks to delineate visitor use within the alpine tundra.[2.13] [2.14]

The NPS and Rocky Mountain Motor Company development was designed in the NPS rustic style of earlier 1920s development. This style met local material requirements associated with New Deal programs of the time.

Improvement of the district during World War II (WWII) was limited to activities necessary for resource protection and public use facilities. This included the addition of new pit toilets in 1943.

Visitation to Fall River Historic District, and to all national parks rebounded dramatically after WWII ended. Increased prosperity, leisure time, and vehicle use and ownership within the post-war era put pressure on national parks as use increased. Post-war budgetary constraints coupled with the overuse of parks and lack of repaired or new facilities resulted in deterioration of park facilities and degradation of resources reaching crises proportions. NPS Director Conrad Wirth presented Mission 66–a plan to modernize and expand the national park system in 1956 to address this and provide a vision for the future. Mission 66 was named after the target date for the plan's completion in 1966, the NPS' fiftieth anniversary.

Mission 66 improvements within Fall River Pass Historic District introduced a modern aesthetic, focused on improving visitor use and interpretation while protecting the sensitive alpine tundra ecosystem. Mission 66 additions and modifications included Rocky Mountain National Park's first visitor center—Alpine Visitor Center, Fall River Pass Generator House, roads, walks, parking, and a water and sewer system.

These improvements created a curated experience where all visitor use spaces became opportunities for education and interpretation and the built environment complemented the alpine tundra. Set on the rim of Fall River Cirque, Public Plaza offered views across Fall River Pass to distant ranges with pay-to-view telescopes, signs, and benches to accommodate a range of visitors and experiences. Ranger-led programming and visitor use areas were designed to facilitate visitor connections to the district and its natural surroundings.

2.12 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, Branch of Plans of Plans and Design. *The Master Plan for Rocky Mountain National Park*. (San Francisco: National Park Service, Branch of Plans of Plans and Design, 1936), 94.

2.13 United States Department of Interior, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 20; United States Department of Interior, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 6.

2.14 Fall River Pass Museum later became known as Trail Ridge Store.

As Mission 66 improvements were built, Beatrice Willard (a graduate student at the University of Colorado) conducted research of the alpine tundra. Willard predicted it would take centuries for tundra plants to recover from foot traffic and convinced park management to protect the alpine tundra. Willard's techniques included education, interpretation, and the use of pavement to define visitor use and protect plants in heavily used areas. At Fall River Pass Complex, these recommendations led to nature classes, brochures, and installation of signs emphasizing the fragility of the ecosystem and each visitor's role in its protection. Key measures included the creation of a tundra protection zone, hardening of the landscape, and installation of fences and stone walls surrounding the Fall River Pass Complex.

Improvements within Fall River Pass Historic District after Mission 66 primarily addressed seasonal maintenance, repair of facilities due to increased visitor use and aging infrastructure, and protection and restoration of alpine tundra. Challenges of providing visitor-ready facilities in a high-elevation setting with extreme weather conditions remained.[2.15]

Mission 66 emphasized conservation, i.e., clustered developments, and preservation of natural resources as the new identity of the NPS. Mission 66 planning concentrated development into clusters to protect natural resources and grouped facilities by use and function. This assured "balanced relationships between preservation of the park resources and visitor needs."[2.16] The program focused on a modern design aesthetic for buildings, structures, and features but retained the naturalistic principle of harmonizing with nature.

Mission 66 introduced a new building type, the visitor center, as a successor to museums and centerpiece of the reinvented NPS. Visitor centers were located at park entrances, "en route" along major roads, and at major park destinations. Landscape architects, architects, and interpreters worked together to locate visitor centers for views to significant park features. The locations were ideal for interpreters to conduct programs. Visitor centers were designed to be subservient to the landscape through the design of low buildings massed into smaller units and use of materials and colors blending with the site.[2.17]

The Mission 66 planning prospectus for Rocky Mountain National Park emphasized visitor safety, improved staff working conditions, and resource protection and outlined a plan to replace outdated facilities and provide for modern use. Modernized facilities included roads, trails, parking, interpretive facilities, campgrounds, administrative facilities, and employee housing.[2.18]

2.15 United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service. *National Register of Historic Places Nomination–Fall River Pass Historic District* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 2021), 24.
2.16 Carr, Ethan. *National Park Service Mission 66 Era Resources Multiple Property Documentation Form.* (Santa Fe: National Park Service Intermountain Regional Office, 2015), 44.
2.17 Carr, *NPS Mission 66 Era Resources,* 13-17.
2.18 Allaback, Sarah. *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: The History of a Building Type*. (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2000), 182.

CHRONOLOGY

Rustic Development (1920 to 1931)

Visitation to Fall River Pass increased with the opening of Fall River Road in 1920 and the NPS recognized the need to provide visitors with shelter, restrooms, and interpretation at the district in 1922. Daniel P. Hull, Assistant Landscape Engineer in the NPS Yosemite Valley Office, and other NPS designers developed site design of the district and buildings in the NPS rustic style. Fall River Pass Ranger Station and stone restrooms were simple buildings and employed handcrafted workmanship with native stone and log materials. This design aesthetic harmonized with the undeveloped surrounding landscape where visitor use through the alpine tundra was unrestricted.

1920

Fall River Road was completed in 1920. The NPS quickly found Fall River Road to be inadequate for visitor travel and difficult to maintain. The cost of maintaining a passable route became a major park budget item and a constant drain on money, manpower, and maintenance.[2.19]

1922

The NPS built a public warming house and resting shelter (Fall River Pass Ranger Station) and two stone restrooms along the crest of Fall River Cirque, near the intersection of the Ute Trail and Old Fall River Road to accommodate increasing numbers of visitors. Daniel P. Hull, Assistant Landscape Engineer in the NPS Yosemite Valley Office, designed the facilities.

The Superintendent's Annual Report described the public warming house and resting shelter.[2.20]

> *"A shelter cabin, with inside dimensions 14' x 18' was completed at the summit of Fall River Pass, on August 22nd. This cabin constructed of stone throughout, with stone finish in the interior as well as exterior and a stone bench around three walls, form a pleasing and permanent structure, which will withstand the severest winter storms. It is used daily by many visitors…Two stone toilets were constructed at convenient distances from the cabin."*[2.21]

1924

The original stone restrooms near Fall River Pass Ranger Station were impractical to maintain. The NPS replaced the two original stone structures with two wood-framed pit toilets in a new location to the north of the parking area at the crest of the pass. The original stone restrooms were later removed at an unknown date.[2.22]

1925

Timberline Cabin was built east of the district as quarters for crews maintaining Fall River Road and later served as a patrol cabin and caretaker's cabin. Designs were prepared by members of the Landscape Division, Los Angeles Office, California, under the direction of Thomas C. Vint, Assistant Landscape Architect.[2.23]

2.19 Buchholtz, *Rocky Mountain National Park: A History,* 132.
2.20 NPS, *Fall River Pass Ranger Station,* 2.
2.21 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. Superintendent's Annual Report – 1938. Rocky Mountain National Park. (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1922), 14.
2.22 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 12.
2.23 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, Historic American Engineering Record. *Fall River Road, Timberline Cabin, HAER No. CO-73-C.* (Washington D.C.), 1, 2.

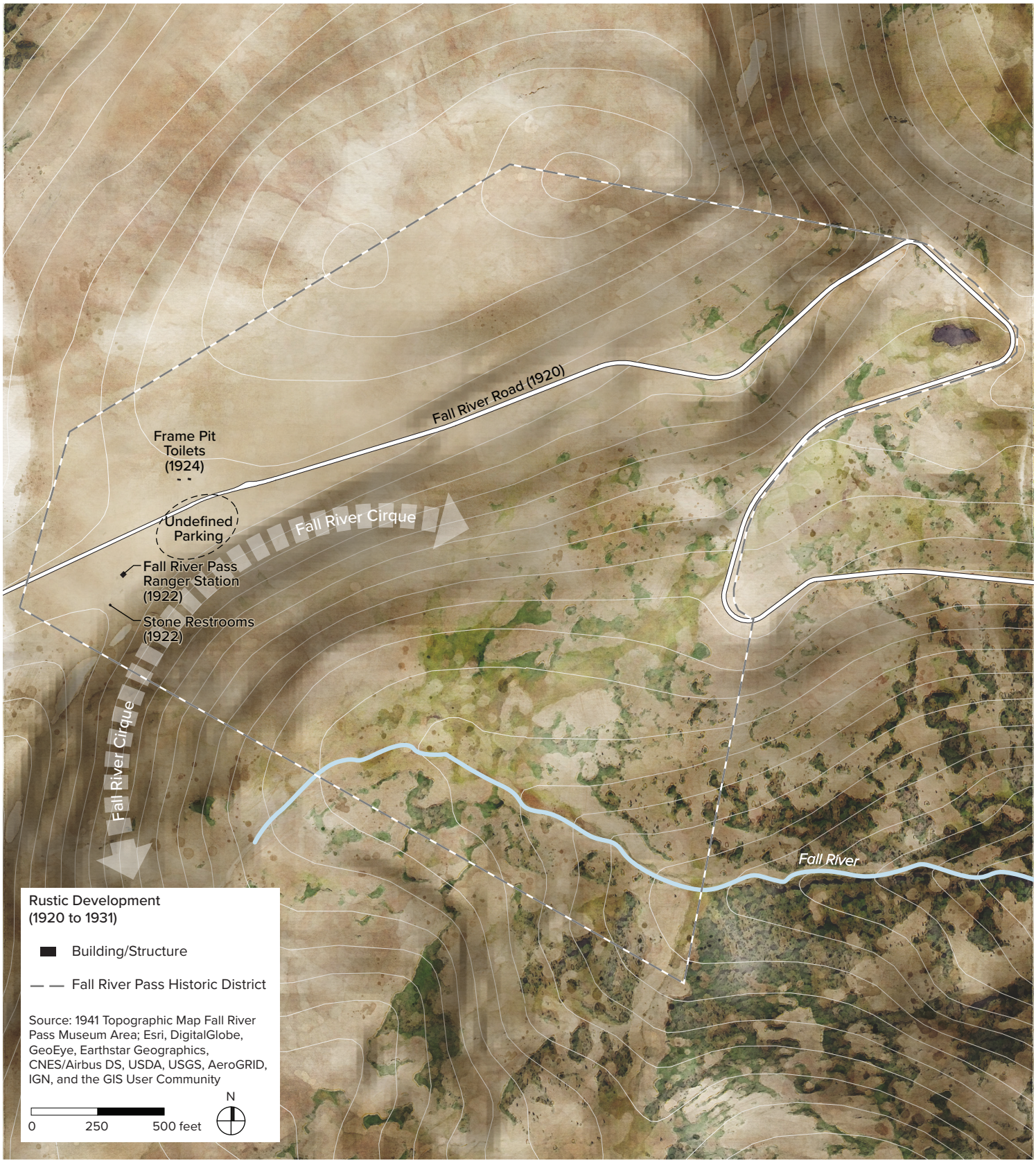


Figure 2-3. Fall River Pass Historic District - Rustic Development, 1920 to 1931 (source: Mundus Bishop, 2022).



Figure 2-4. Fall River Pass Ranger Station (front) and stone restrooms (back), date unknown, were simple buildings that employed handcrafted workmanship with native stone and log materials. This design aesthetic harmonized with the undeveloped surrounding landscape (source: ROMO 4014-2789).

1927

A study of Old Fall River Road completed by the Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) determined the *"amount of traffic moving over the present road is subject to serious congestion on account of the narrow road, on which autos cannot pass, and the steep grades that cause operation troubles. On account of the narrow road, steep grades and short turns, it is not a pleasure to drive over this road, and being near the bottom of a canyon most of the scenery is hidden from view."*

The NPS accepted the BPR's recommendation to build a new road along Trail Ridge and allocated funds from the 1927 budget for Trail Ridge Road.[2.24]

1929

Congress appropriated funding for the first phase of Trail Ridge Road in 1929.[2.25]

1931

The NPS converted the public warming house and resting shelter the shelter was converted to a ranger station (Fall River Pass Ranger Station).

2.24 NPS, *Fall River Road HAER,* 23-24.
2.25 Buchholtz, *Rocky Mountain National Park: A History,* 148.



Figure 2-5. Fall River Pass Complex preliminary development was limited and included Fall River Pass Ranger Station and parking set along the rim of Fall River Cirque, 1926 (source: NPS Fall River Pass NR Nomination).



Figure 2-6. Fall River Road increased access and visitation to the district, date unknown. Visitor facilities were limited and use through the alpine tundra was unrestricted (source: ROMO 4014-2790).

New Deal Era (1932 to 1955)

Visitation to the Fall River Pass continued to grow with the opening of Trail Ridge Road in 1933. The NPS responded to the immediate demand for visitor offerings by converting Fall River Pass Ranger Station into a museum. In its first year of operation, visitation exceeded that of the museum at park headquarters. The NPS expanded opportunities for visitors to interpret and experience the alpine tundra at Fall River Pass.[2.26]

The 1936 *Master Plan for Rocky Mountain National Park* established a long-term development plan for infrastructure, visitor facilities, and interpretation. Trail Ridge Store was the first master plan recommendation to be implemented. Rocky Mountain Motor Company opened the store to the public in 1937 and immediately expanded the building for concessioner and NPS use. In 1938, the NPS moved the museum to Trail Ridge Store and completed Pumphouse and Catchment Basin. Additions during this period were designed in the NPS rustic style.[2.27]

The United States entered World War II at the end of 1941. Visitation and little new development occurred within the district in the early 1940s. The 1946 Superintendent's Annual Report summarized this period at Rocky Mountain National Park and the drastic rebound of visitation within national parks after WWII ended.

"During the war years only the minimum amount of maintenance work essential for the protection of the Federal investment in public use facilities was carried on. Following the cessation of hostilities early in the fiscal year, together with the lifting of gasoline restrictions, the park public use facilities, especially the roads and trails, were not in condition to withstand the impact resulting from the large influx of visitors, nor were funds and manpower available in the amount required to hold the resulting damage to a minimum."[2.28]

The establishment of defined parking areas and walks during this period marked an understanding of the fragility of the alpine tundra and impacts associated with undefined visitor use.

2.26 United States Department of Interior, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 20; United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *National Register of Historic Places Nomination – Fall River Historic District.* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1987), 20.

2.27 United States Department of Interior, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 20; United States Department of Interior, *NRHP – Fall River Historic District 1987*, 6.

2.28 NPS, *Superintendent's Annual Report – 1938*, 3.

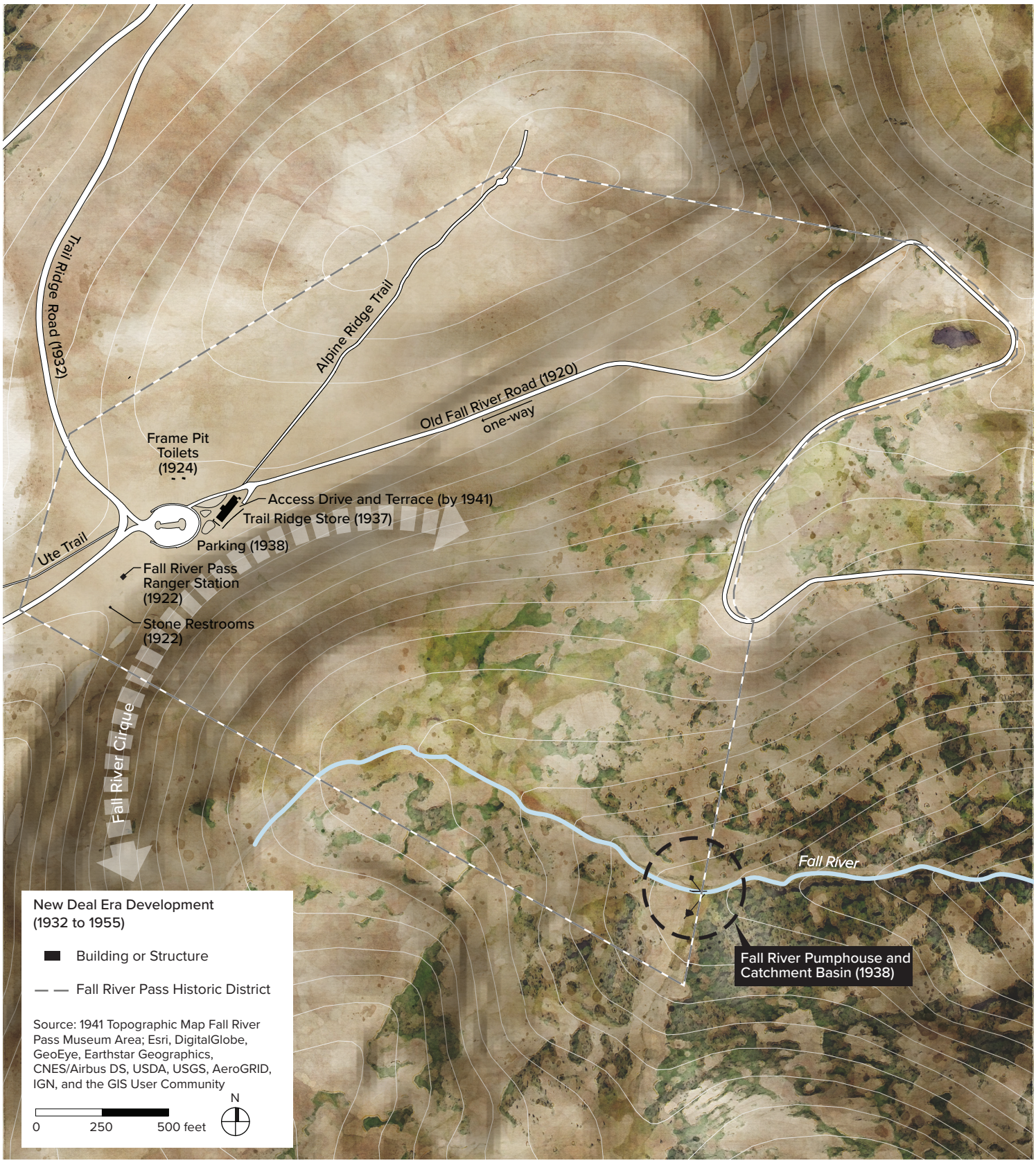


Figure 2-7. Fall River Pass Historic District - New Deal Era Development, 1932 to 1955 (source: Mundus Bishop, 2022).



Figure 2-8. Warming shelter and rest house (Fall River Pass Ranger Station), ca. 1932 to 1936. The use of Fall River Pass Ranger Station evolved to meet visitor and park needs. Originally built as a public warming hut and rest house, the shelter was converted to a ranger station in 1931, temporary nature museum in 1932, and ranger station and residence after the opening of Trail Ridge Store in 1937. Ranger functions moved to Alpine Visitor Center in 1965 and Fall River Pass Ranger Station remained in use as an alpine cabin until an unknown time (source: ROMO-11-Q-3, neg. 5577).

1932

The eastern portion of Trail Ridge Road was completed. Old Fall River Road, a segment of the original Fall River Road to the east of Fall River Pass Ranger Station, became, and remains, a one-way scenic drive.[2.29]

1933 to 1937

The NPS converted Fall River Pass Ranger Station to a museum.[2.30]

1933

Trail Ridge Road opened to the public in 1933. The route offered views of the tundra, scenic overlooks, and comfortable grades and widths for vehicular travel.[2.31]

2.29 Buchholtz, *Rocky Mountain National Park: A History,* 149.
2.30 NPS, *Fall River Pass Ranger Station,* 2.
2.31 NPS, *Fall River Pump House*, 2; Buchholtz, *Rocky Mountain National Park: A History,* 150.

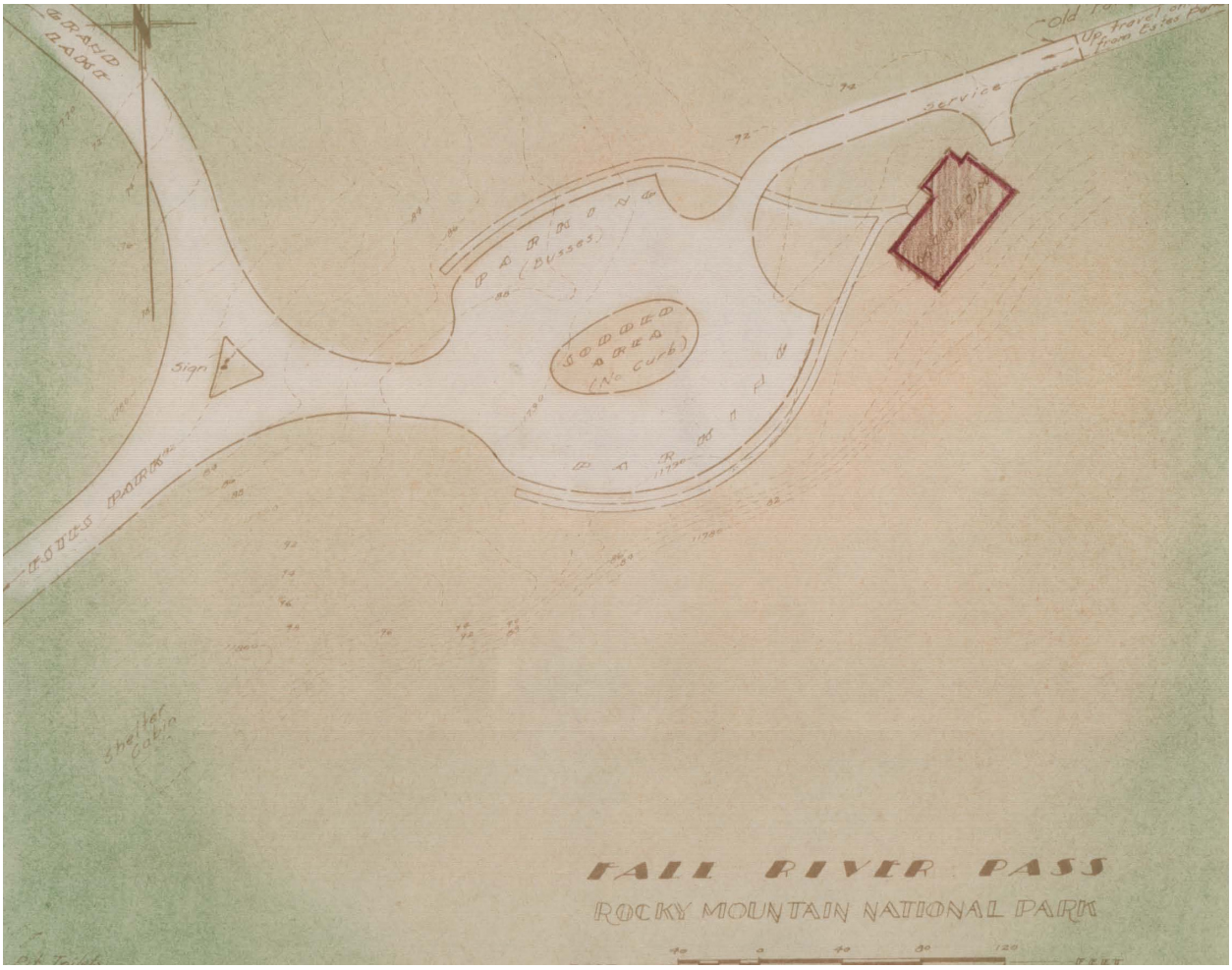


Figure 2-9. 1936 Master Plan (source: The Master Plan for Rocky Mountain National Park 1936).

1936

The NPS developed a master plan for Rocky Mountain National Park in 1936. The master plan identified Fall River Pass complex as a minor developed area, Existing Fall River Pass Complex development included Trail Ridge Road, Old Fall River Road, informal parking, Fall River Pass Ranger Station, two stone restrooms, and two frame pit toilets.

Master plan recommendations included development of a formalized, small parking area; service court for the concessioner; Museum and Operator's Building; and trails from the parking area to the Museum and Operator's Building.[2.32]

Rocky Mountain Motor Company financed and built Fall River Pass Museum (Trail Ridge Store) in 1936.[2.33] The CCC excavated the basement and hauled material from the district. Rocky Mountain Motor Company determined using CCC crews to build the store would be too time consuming given the short construction season of Fall River Pass.[2.34]

2.32 NPS, *The Master Plan for Rocky Mountain National Park 1936*, 94.
2.33 NPS, *Fall River Pump House*, 2.
2.34 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 26.



Figure 2-10. Trail Ridge Store and parking, July 1937 (source: ROMO-11-Q-2-a, neg. 1134).

1937

Trail Ridge Store opened to the public on June 20, 1937. Rocky Mountain Motor Company, recognizing an immediate need for additional space, built a forty-foot addition to the north end of the building in the autumn. The addition provided space for the concessionaire, a small NPS museum, and restrooms.[2.35]

1938

The NPS moved their museum from Fall River Pass Ranger Station to Trail Ridge Store. The BPR completed improvement of Fall River Pass Complex parking.[2.36] [2.37]

2.35 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 20; NPS, *NRHP – Fall River Historic District 1987*, 6.

2.36 NPS, *NRHP – Fall River Historic District 1987*, 6.

2.37 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Superintendent's Monthly Report – September 1938. Rocky Mountain National Park.* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1938), 218.

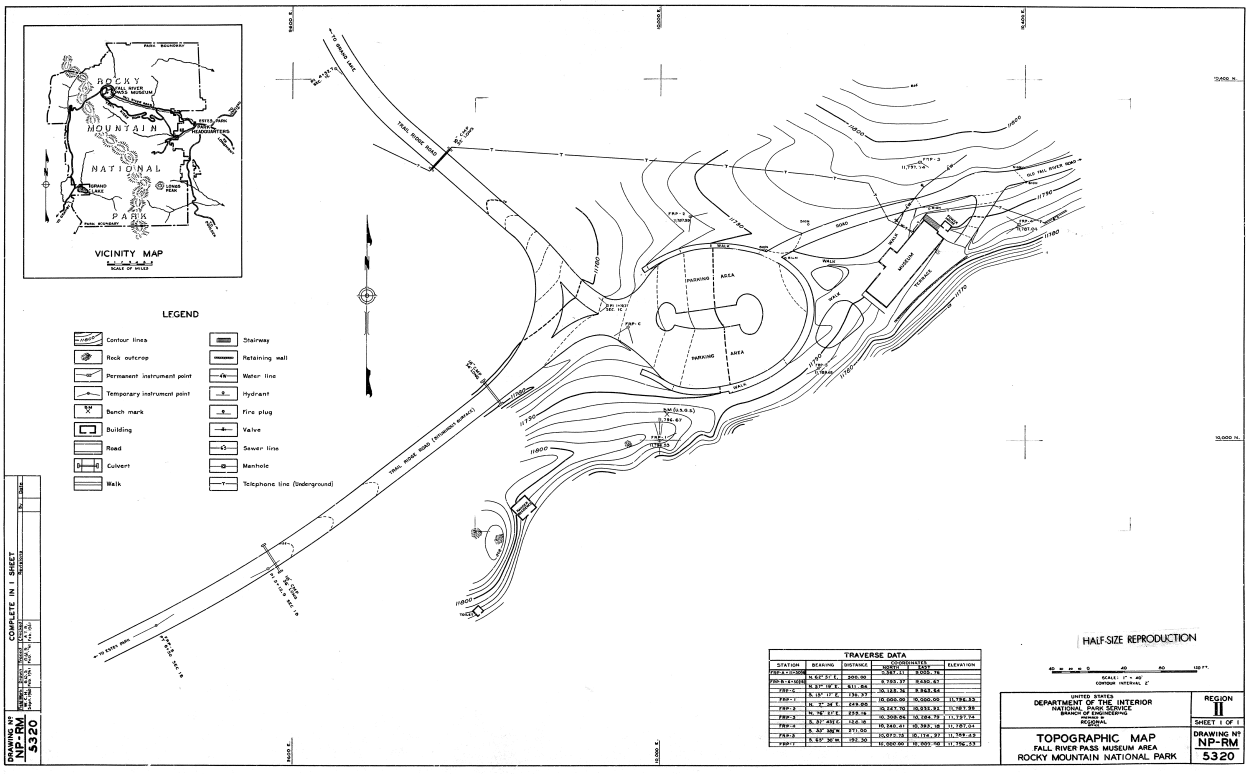


Figure 2-11. Topographic Map of Fall River Pass Complex, 1941. Map illustrates site steps along from the primary facade of the building to the south facade and an access drive from Old Fall River Road to a boulder-lined terrace along the south facade of the building (source: ROMO_121_5320).

1938 *(continued)*

Two NPS landscape architects, L. Fletcher and W.G. Hill, completed drawings for a system to collect water and pump it to the Trail Ridge Store. The Pumphouse and Catchment Basin were sited over 1,000 feet below the store. Surface water collected in Catchment Basin and diesel-fired engines in Pumphouse conveyed water uphill to a tank near Trail Ridge Store.[2.38]

1939

The CCC installed toilet facilities in Trail Ridge Store and the water and sewer system.[2.39] [2.40]

1941

A topographic survey of Fall River Pass Complex illustrates a terrace with a retaining wall and access route to the southeast of Trail Ridge Store, a powerhouse and steps to the northwest of Trail Ridge Store, and a parking area with an island to the southwest of Trail Ridge Store. A sidewalk lined the north, east, and south edges of the parking area. Fall River Pass Ranger Station included a separate toilet structure to the southwest of the structure. [2.41]

2.38 NPS, *Fall River Pump House*, 2.

2.39 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Superintendent's Annual Report – 1938. Rocky Mountain National Park.* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1939), 2.

2.40 NPS, *Superintendent's Annual Report – 1938*, 2.

2.41 Topographic Map, Fall River Pass Museum Area, 1941.

1943
The NPS built pit toilets at Fall River Pass Complex.[2.42]

1951
In response to increased visitation and traffic, the NPS developed preliminary drawings for the expansion of parking at Fall River Pass Complex. The drawing presented a concept to provide thirty-five additional parking spaces by creating two aisles of parking to the north of the sixty-vehicle parking lot.[2.43]

Pit toilets at Fall River Complex were removed and replaced to provide additional restroom facilities.[2.44]

1953
A rockslide 3.5 miles northwest of Chasm Falls closed Old Fall River Road. The NPS temporarily converted the upper section of the road to non-motorized trail. Old Fall River Road was reopened to vehicular use in 1968 as a one-way uphill road.[2.45]



Figure 2-12. Wood frame toilets at Fall River Pass Complex, July 1937 (source: ROMO-11-Q-2-a, neg. 3228).



Figure 2-13. Wood frame on stone pit toilet, Building No. 172, c. 1940s (source: B-0172 Form 10-768, page 5).



Figure 2-14. Wood frame on wood sills pit toilet, Building No. 173 and 174, c. 1950s (source: B-0173 Form 10-768, page 4).

2.42 NPS, *Superintendent's Annual Report – 1938*, 15.
2.43 ROMO_121_2121
2.44 NPS, *B-0173 Form 10-768.*
2.45 NPS, *Fall River Road HAER,* 28, 29.



Figure 2-15. Trail Ridge Store included pedestrian walks defined by boulders and alpine planting areas, date unknown (source: ROMO-11-Q-2-a, neg 5238).

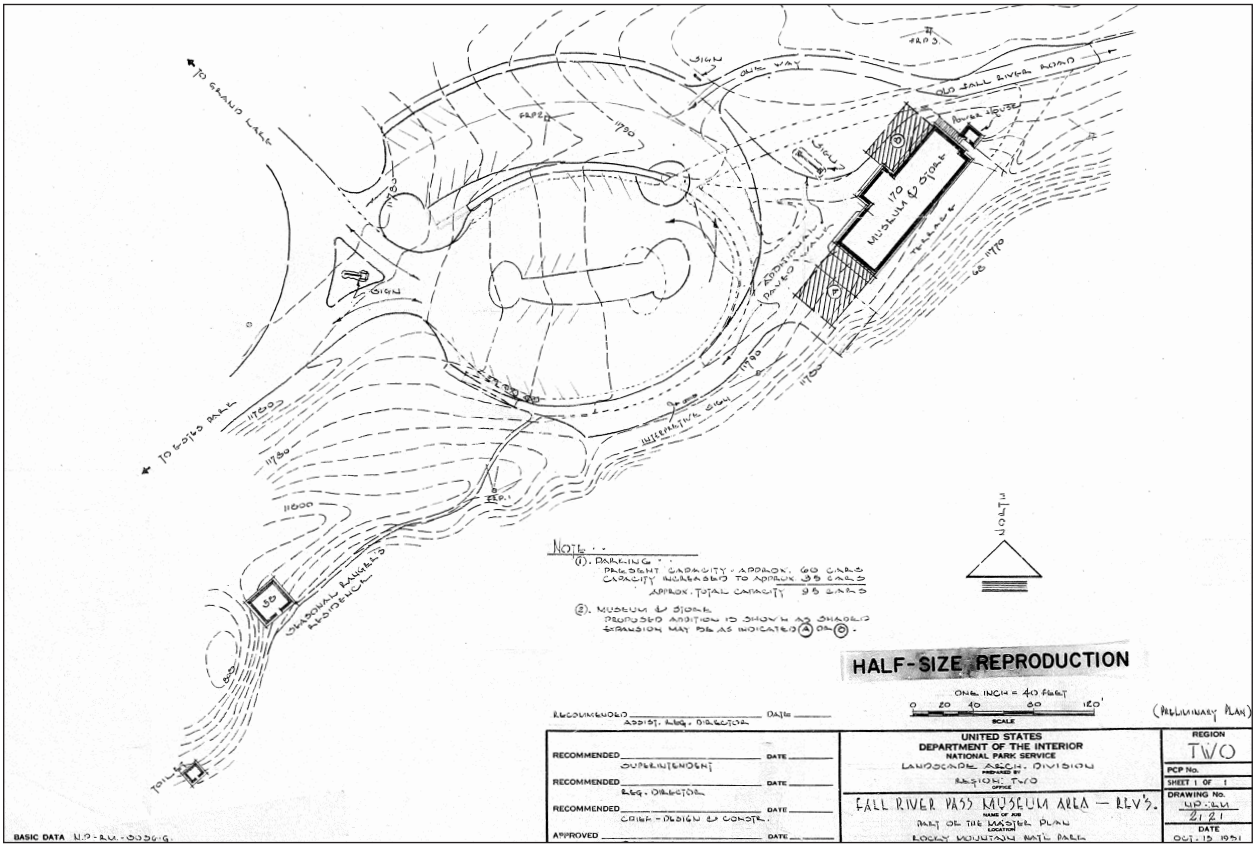


Figure 2-16. Preliminary design to expand parking and realign Old Fall River Road, 1951. The path to Fall River Pass Ranger Station was carved into the alpine tundra and remains visible today (source: ROMO_121_2121).

Mission 66 (1956 to 1966)

The Mission 66 program responded to over three decades of continued growth in visitation to Fall River Pass by modernizing and expanding concessions and interpretation while protecting the alpine tundra.

Mission 66 improvement of Fall River Pass Historic District introduced a modern aesthetic and focused on improving visitor use and interpretation of the site while protecting the sensitive alpine tundra. Mission 66 additions and modifications included Alpine Visitor Center, Fall River Pass Generator House, roads, walks, parking, and a water and sewer system.

1956

The draft Mission 66 planning prospectus for Rocky Mountain National Park included recommendations to expand concessions and interpretation relevant to the alpine setting at Fall River Pass. Trail River Store museum accommodated a maximum of thirty visitors and was unable to adequately serve the thousands of daily visitors to Fall River Pass. The NPS recommended a new building, Alpine Visitor Center, at Fall River Pass Complex to complement new visitor centers at Beaver Meadows and Grand Lake.[2.46]

1959

Beatrice Willard, a graduate student at the University of Colorado, installed research plots along Trail Ridge Road at Rock Cut and Forest Canyon Overlook. Willard inventoried alpine plants and measured the time it took for tundra plants to recover from foot traffic. She predicted it would take centuries for plants to recover. Willard's research convinced park management to protect alpine tundra through education and interpretation highlighting the fragility of the ecosystem and each visitor's role in the protection. Willard recommended the use of pavement to provide access through the tundra and protect the plants in heavily used areas.[2.47]

2.46 Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers*, 182.
2.47 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 23-24.

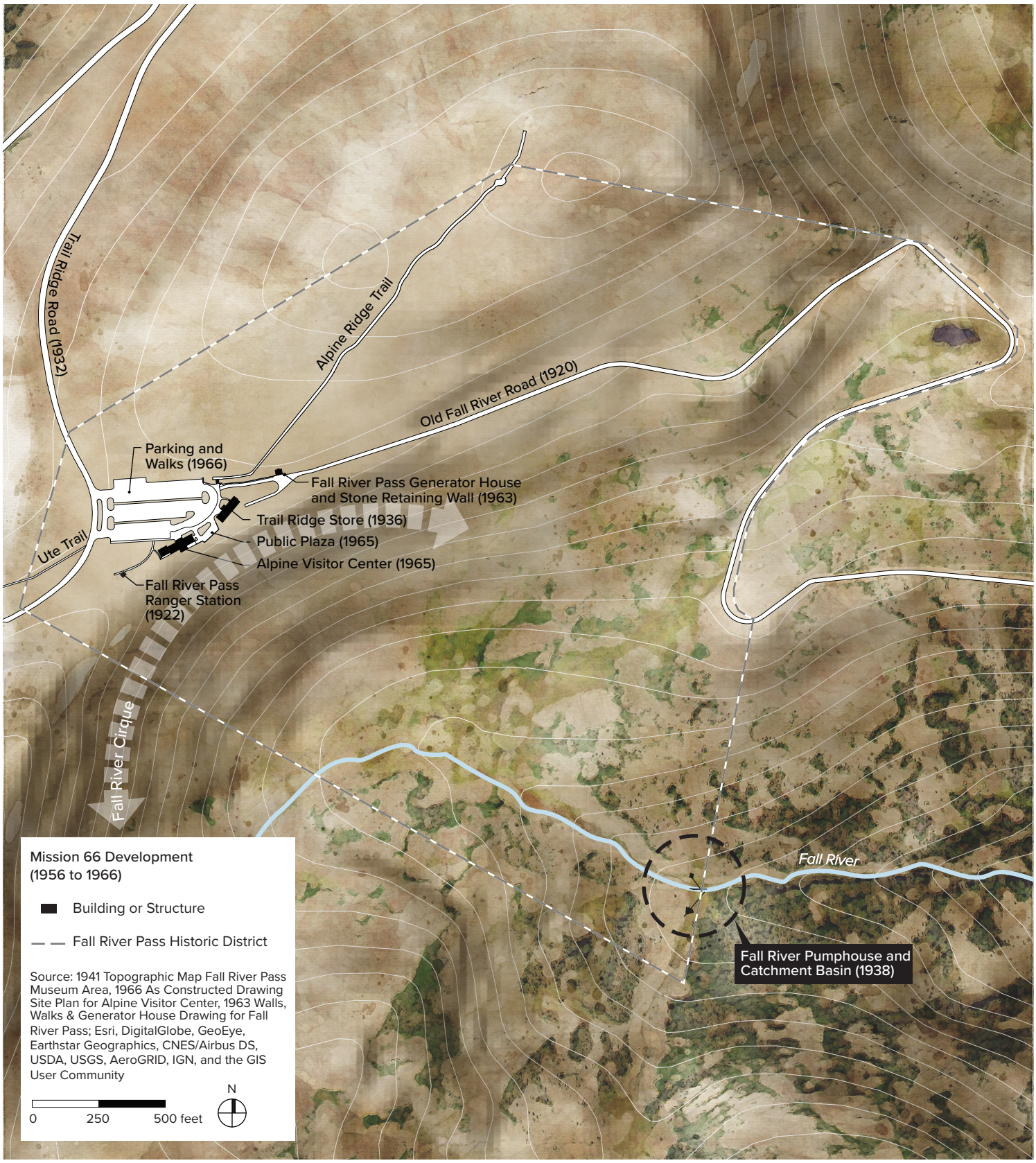


Figure 2-17. Fall River Pass Historic District - Mission 66 Development, 1956 to 1966 (source: Mundus Bishop, 2022).



Figure 2-18. Asphalt walk along Fall River Cirque to Trail Ridge Store, October 1962 (source: ROMO-11-Q-2-a, neg 1130).

1962

The NPS completed the Mission 66 Master Plan for Rocky Mountain National Park. The plan described the desired visitor use experience at Fall River Pass Complex:

> *"From this overlook the road drops into Fall River Pass one mile beyond. Here the Alpine (Wayside) Visitor Center will provide interpretive services and information concerning the arctic-alpine environment which now surrounds the visitors. Ranger services are also available here. The awesome view down Fall River Canyon is a picture which many will cherish.*
>
> *The concessioner in the area will cater to the needs of the visitors, supplying limited food service and appropriate merchandise…"*[2.48]

Jay O'Shea, NPS Landscape Architect, collaborated with William C. Muchow, the architect designing the Alpine Visitor Center, to develop the site plan. The design capitalized on views to the surrounding landscape and included Public Plaza, walks, native plantings, and an enlarged parking area. Public Plaza, a concrete plaza, extended from Alpine Visitor Center to Trail Ridge Store. The plaza included a small, landscaped island with rocks and low vegetation.[2.49]

1963

Mission 66 improvement of Fall River Pass Complex began. This included Alpine Visitor Center, Fall River Pass Generator House, roads, walks, parking, and a water and sewer system.[2.50]

Fall River Pass Generator House was completed the same year. P.A. Kay and others from the Division of Architecture in the Western Office of Design and Construction designed Fall River Pass Generator House.[2.51]

2.48 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, Western Office, Design & Construction. *The Master Plan Rocky Mountain National Park.* (San Francisco: National Park Service, Western Office, Design & Construction, 1965), 9.
2.49 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 9.
2.50 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Superintendent's Annual Report – 1963. Rocky Mountain National Park*. (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1963), 15.
2.51 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 5.

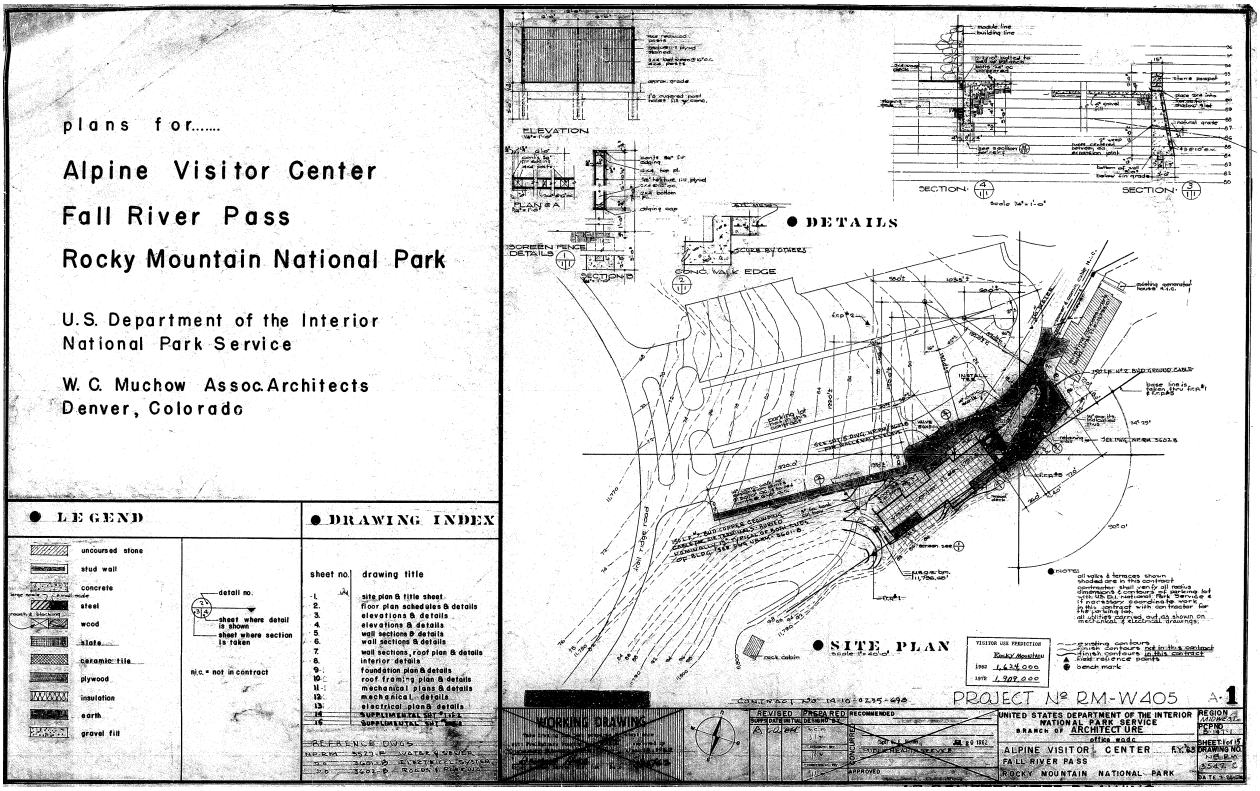


Figure 2-19. Alpine Visitor Center, Fall River Pass by Muchow Assoc. Architects, July 1962. Site plan illustrates parking, Public Plaza with a small, landscaped island (source: ROMO_121_3542C_[234578]).

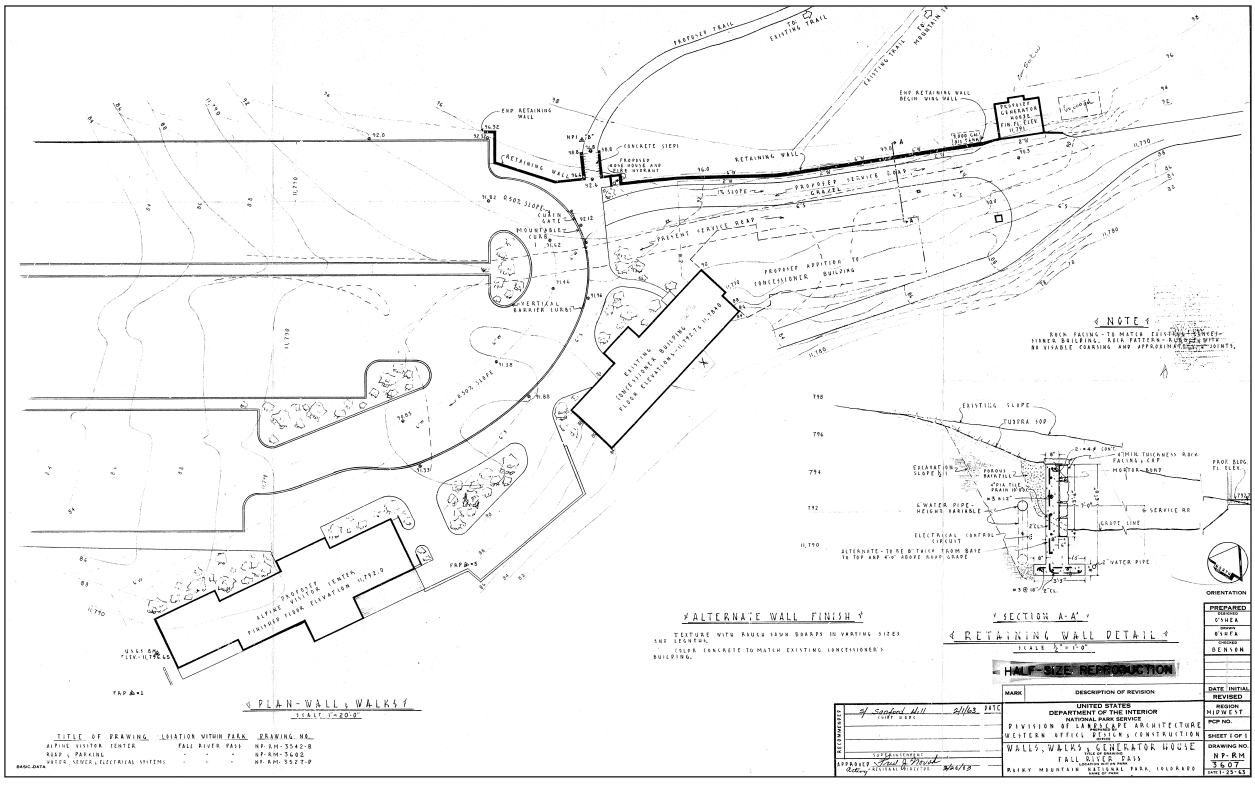


Figure 2-20. 1963 Alpine Visitor Center site plan illustrates parking, Public Plaza with a landscaped island, site walls and walks, and realigned path to Alpine Ridge Trail (source: ROMO).

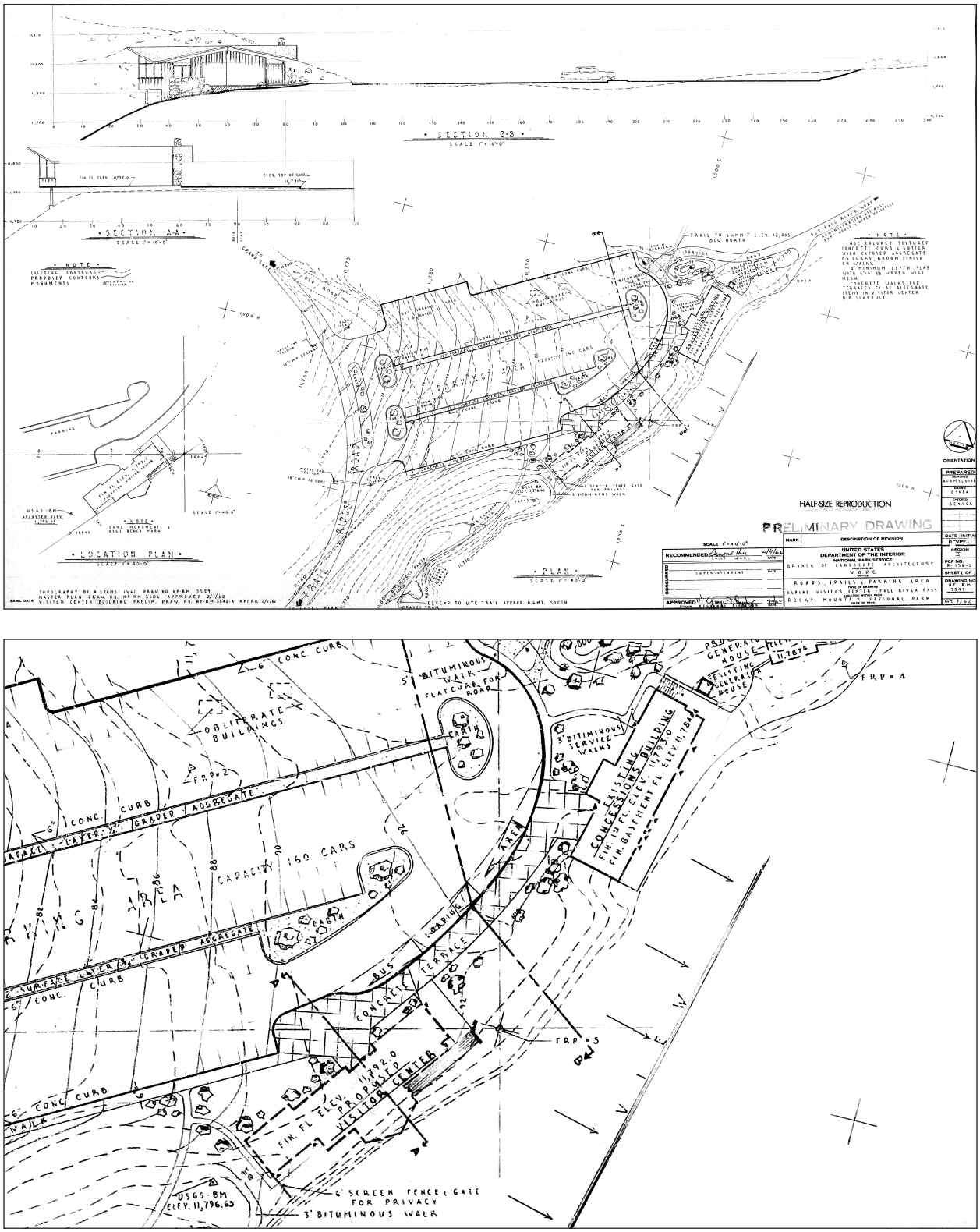


Figure 2-21. Preliminary drawing (and enlargement) illustrating parking and a concrete terrace, 1962. This initial concept for Public Plaza illustrates a geometric scoring pattern. Plans note to "use colored textured concrete curb and gutter with exposed aggregate on curbs, broom finish on walks" (source: ROMO).

1965

Alpine Visitor Center, the first visitor center in Rocky Mountain National Park, and Public Plaza were completed. Alpine Visitor Center's dedication on July 16, 1965 marked the fiftieth anniversary of Rocky Mountain National Park. The visitor center was stone and concrete with a shingled gabled roof and log beams. The building included a glass viewing area to Fall River Cirque and the Mummy Range.[2.52]

Public Plaza, a concrete plaza, included a small, landscaped island with boulders and low vegetation, a sidewalk along the parking lot, and fence extending from Alpine Visitor Center to Trail Ridge Store. The original fence barrier with a stone veneer wall was replaced at an unknown later time.[2.53]

Estes Park Chalet, Inc., the concessioner operating Trail Ridge Store, requested an expansion of the building to the east. The NPS approved the request. Trail Ridge Store public restrooms were converted to a storage area and mechanical room and the building was extended to the east.[2.54]

1966

The NPS completed Fall River Pass Parking Lot, adjacent walks, and water and sewer system.[2.55]



Figure 2-22. Alpine Visitor Center under construction, September 1963 (source: ROMO-11-Q-2-a, neg 4993)



Figure 2-23. Alpine Visitor Center Opening, May 1970 (source: ROMO-11-T-2, neg 1780).

2.52 Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers*, 181.
2.53 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 9.
2.54 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 11; NPS, *NRHP – Fall River Historic District 1987*, 6.
2.55 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Superintendent's Annual Report – 1966. Rocky Mountain National Park*. (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1966), 17.

Contemporary Alterations (1967 to present)

Fall River Pass Historic District improvements completed after 1967 continued to address increasing visitation to the district. These primarily included on-going seasonal maintenance, replacement of aging infrastructure, and protection and restoration of the alpine tundra. Modifications to the cultural landscape included the expansion of Trail Ridge Store in 1971, enlargement of Fall River Pass Parking Lot in 1985, and addition of Vault Toilets in 2001.

Improvement of Fall River Pass Historic District reflected the goals of the earlier NPS rustic and Mission 66 programs to provide for high quality visitor use while maximizing protection of the alpine tundra.

1968

NPS Director George Hartzog ordered extensive repair of Old Fall River Road in 1967. The road reopened to vehicular use in 1968.[2.56]

1971

The park approved a 110-foot addition to nearly double the square footage of Trail Ridge Store. The addition to the northeast of the building provided additional space for food services and retail storage, offices, mechanical areas, and employee restrooms on the lower level.[2.57]

This addition likely required the removal of the access road from Old Fall River Road and terrace along the south facade of Trail Ridge Store.



Figure 2-24. Trail Ridge Store after the 110-foot addition to the east of Trail Ridge Store and angled parking, 1975 (source: Rocky Mountain National Park).



Figure 2-25. The 110-foot addition to the northeast of Trail Ridge Store nearly doubled the interior square footage of the building, 1975 (source: Rocky Mountain National Park).

2.56 NPS, *Fall River Road HAER,* 29.
2.57 NPS, *Fall River Road HAER,* 11.



Figure 2-26. Alpine Visitor Center and Public Plaza with landscaped island, c. 1970s (source: ROMO_121_P7_ALPINE VISITOR CENTER).

1974

The NPS placed 1,200 feet of buck and rail fence at Fall River Pass Complex to protect tundra vegetation from trampling by visitors.[2.58]

1976

Fall River Pass sewage facilities were replaced with an oil base flush system. The system resulted in a 1/10 decrease in average water consumption at Fall River Pass Complex. Alpine Visitor Center restroom renovation included selective removal and replacement of concrete along the north façade of the building, an accessible ramp from the parking area to the northwest corner of the building, and an expanded wooden viewing deck with removable redwood panel for access to holding tanks below. A battery storage shelter was placed along the building's northeast façade.[2.59] [2.60]

2.58 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Superintendent's Annual Report – 1974. Rocky Mountain National Park.* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1974), 12, 16.

2.59 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Superintendent's Annual Report – 1976. Rocky Mountain National Park.* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1976), 26.

2.60 Restroom Renovation-Alpine Visitor Center. Rocky Mountain National Park, 1975.

1979
A restoration project removed a trail behind Alpine Visitor Center.[2.61]

1983
Fall River Pass Ranger Station was restored and stabilized and Trail Ridge Store roof was replaced with the addition of an entry vestibule.[2.62]

1984
Trail Ridge Road was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.[2.63]

1984 to 1985
Pressure treated log stairs with road base were built at Alpine Ridge Trail.[2.64]

1985
Fall River Pass Parking Lot was enlarged to provide 145 parking spaces. The Denver Service Center prepared drawings for the enlargement of Fall River Pass Parking Lot. The expansion to the north included walks, a concrete plaza for a future vault toilet, and additional bus, RV, and accessible parking. The northern edge of the walk and plaza was defined by a stone-veneered wall and stepped bench seating wall. A two-foot-tall stone-veneered wall was placed along the southern sidewalk. A rock/cobble mix and boulders were placed in parking islands. Parking and sidewalks were graded to convey stormwater via surface flow and underdrains to a catch basin in the southwest corner of the site. A striped fire zone was marked at Alpine Visitor Center and a pedestrian crossing was striped to Alpine Ridge Trail at Old Fall River Road Crossing.[2.65]

7,500 square feet of tundra sod was salvaged and transplanted in disturbed areas along Trail Ridge Road and at Alpine Visitor Center.

The wood deck at Alpine Visitor Center was replaced with concrete to facilitate snow removal with equipment rather than hand shoveling.

The NPS completed a trail project at Alpine Visitor Center using 300 tons of tread material and defined trail edges using 6” wolmanized logs.[2.66] [2.67]

1987
Old Fall River Road (5LR.885) was listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is "typical of early built park highways and was the first trans-divide highway that provided a circuitous trip to and from the Front Range of Colorado."[2.68]

1988
Fall River Pass Ranger Station (5LR.1204) was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as "an excellent example of early National Park Service Rustic style architecture and served as a ranger station until 1932 when it was temporarily converted into a nature museum."[2.69]

2.61 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. Superintendent’s Annual Report – 1979. Rocky Mountain National Park. (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1979), 11.
2.62 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Superintendent’s Annual Report – 1983. Rocky Mountain National Park.* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1983), 18; NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 11.
2.63 History Colorado. "Trail Ridge Road." accessed April 17, 2023. https://www.historycolorado.org/location/trail-ridge-road.
2.64 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 8.
2.65 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Trail Ridge Road and Alpine Visitor Center As Constructed Drawings: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1986.*
2.66 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Superintendent’s Annual Report – 1985. Rocky Mountain National Park.* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1985), 1, 34, 37, 40.
2.67 Wolmanized wood is pressure treated with Chromated Copper Arsenate (CCA) preservative to provide protection from decay.
2.68 History Colorado. "Rocky Mountain National Park Multiple Resource Area." accessed April 17, 2023. https://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/media/document/2017/642.pdf.
2.69 History Colorado. "Fall River Pass Ranger Station." accessed April 17, 2023. https://www.historycolorado.org/location/fall-river-pass-ranger-station.

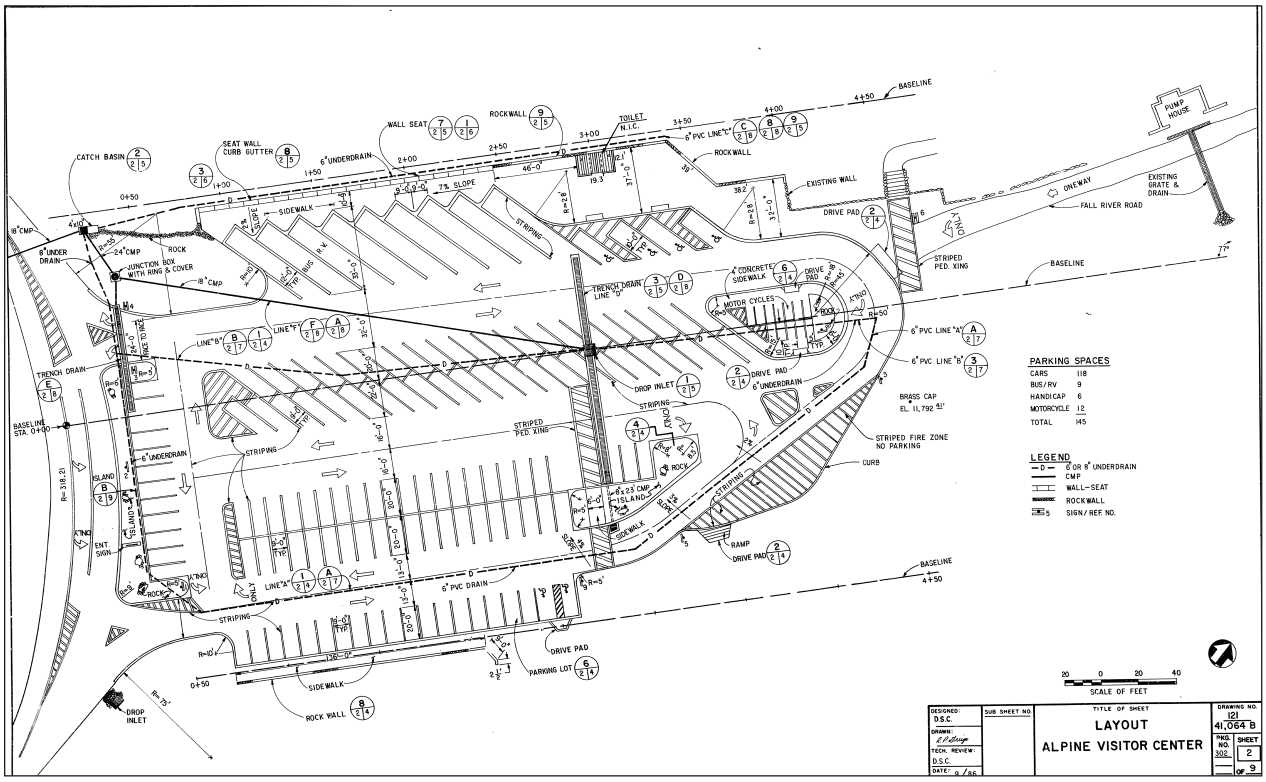


Figure 2-27. Fall River Pass Parking Lot expansion in 1985 (source: 133118-ROMO_121_41064_B).

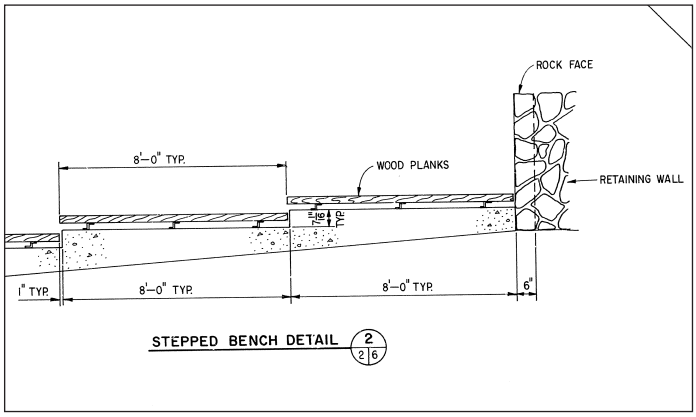


Figure 2-28. Stepped bench detail for seating placed along the north of the expanding parking lot (source: 133118-ROMO_121_41064_B).

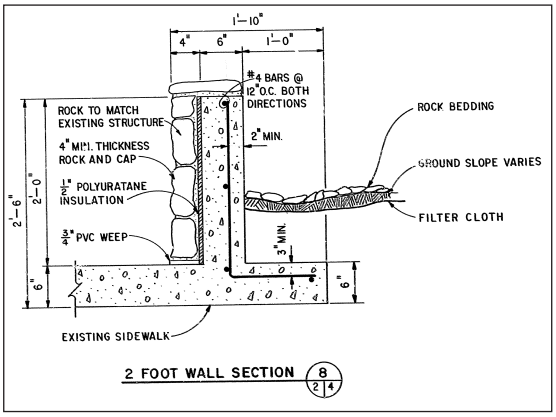


Figure 2-29. Stone veneer wall detail for walls to the south of the expanding parking lot (source: 133118-ROMO_121_41064_B).

c. 1985 to 1991
The NPS placed an entrance sign near the entry of Fall River Pass Parking Lot at Trail Ridge Road.[2.70]

1988
The NPS removed Timberline Cabin, located to the east of the district, after a study determined there was no viable use of the building. Use of the building had increasingly lessened with the opening of Trail Ridge Road in 1932.[2.71]

1991
Re-striping of Fall River Pass Parking Lot created twenty-one additional parking spaces.[2.72]

1995
Major reconstruction of Alpine Ridge Trail included addition and replacement of checkdams, waterbars, and trail surfacing.[2.73]

1998
Helipad was established on Ute Trail.[2.74]

The NPS replaced 1,300 feet of power cable, replaced an underground fuel storage tank, upgraded electrical generation and distribution facilities, and installed new sewage holding tanks and lines at Fall River Pass.[2.75]

2000
The fire sprinkler room was added to the south end of Trail Ridge Store to house fire pump equipment for Trail Ridge Store and Alpine Visitor Center. Two 12,000 gallon tanks were located below Public Plaza.[2.76]

2001
The NPS built present-day Vault Toilets and expanded parking to the north for bus and RV parking. Vault Toilets, designed by Rocky Mountain National Park Engineer Joe Arnold, required expanding the existing concrete plaza to the north, removing a segment of retaining wall, cutting into the hillside to the north, and building a retaining wall with a drainage swale.

Sewage lagoons to the northeast of the district were reclaimed with sewage from Fall River Pass Complex being pumped and hauled daily.[2.77]

2003
The rock wall between Alpine Visitor Center and Trail Ridge Store was repaired and the NPS Resource Operations Crew revegetated areas of disturbed alpine tundra at Vault Toilets.[2.78]

2004
Vault Toilets rockwork and a new entrance sign were completed.[2.79]

2.70 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 12.
2.71 NPS, *Timberline Cabin, HAER,* 2.
2.72 Striping Plan Options, Alpine Visitor Center, 1991.
2.73 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Superintendent's Annual Report – 1995. Rocky Mountain National Park.* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1995), 10.
2.74 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 12.
2.75 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Superintendent's Annual Report – 1998. Rocky Mountain National Park.* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1998), 6.
2.76 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 11.
2.77 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District*, 12, 24.
2.78 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Superintendent's Annual Report – 2003. Rocky Mountain National Park.* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 2003), 13, 37.
2.79 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Superintendent's Annual Report – 2004. Rocky Mountain National Park.* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 2004), 11, 17.

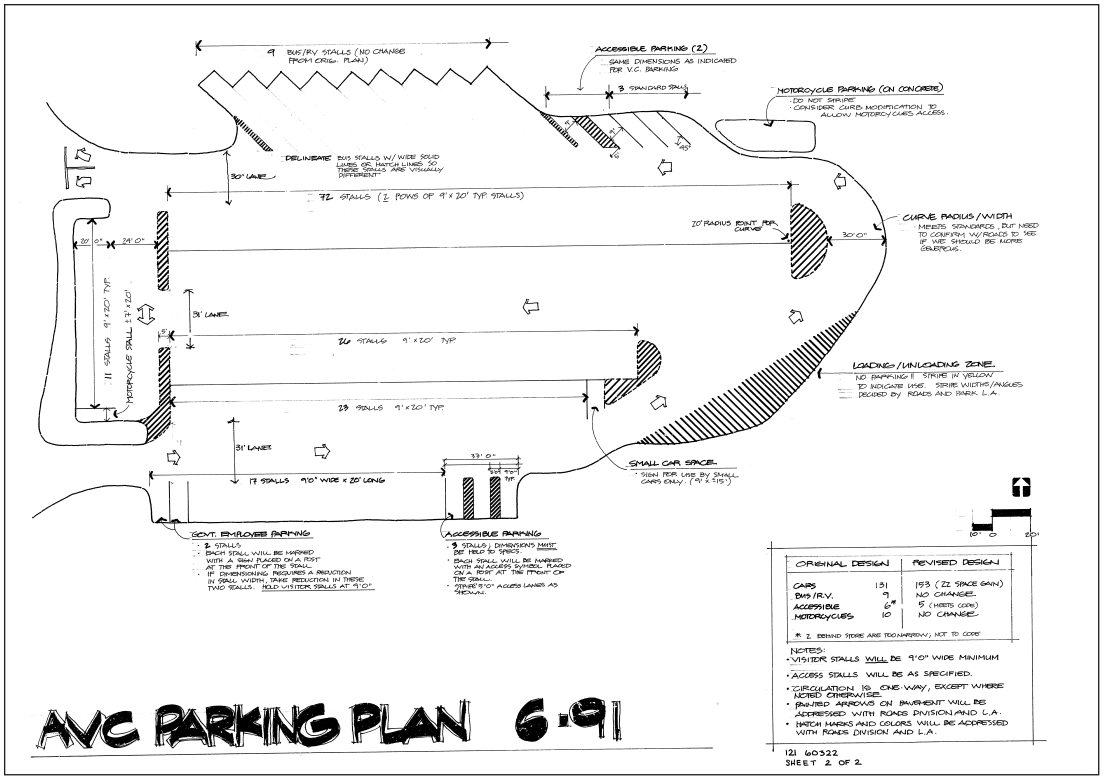


Figure 2-30. Striping plan options to increase parking capacity, 1991 (source: ROMO_121_60322).

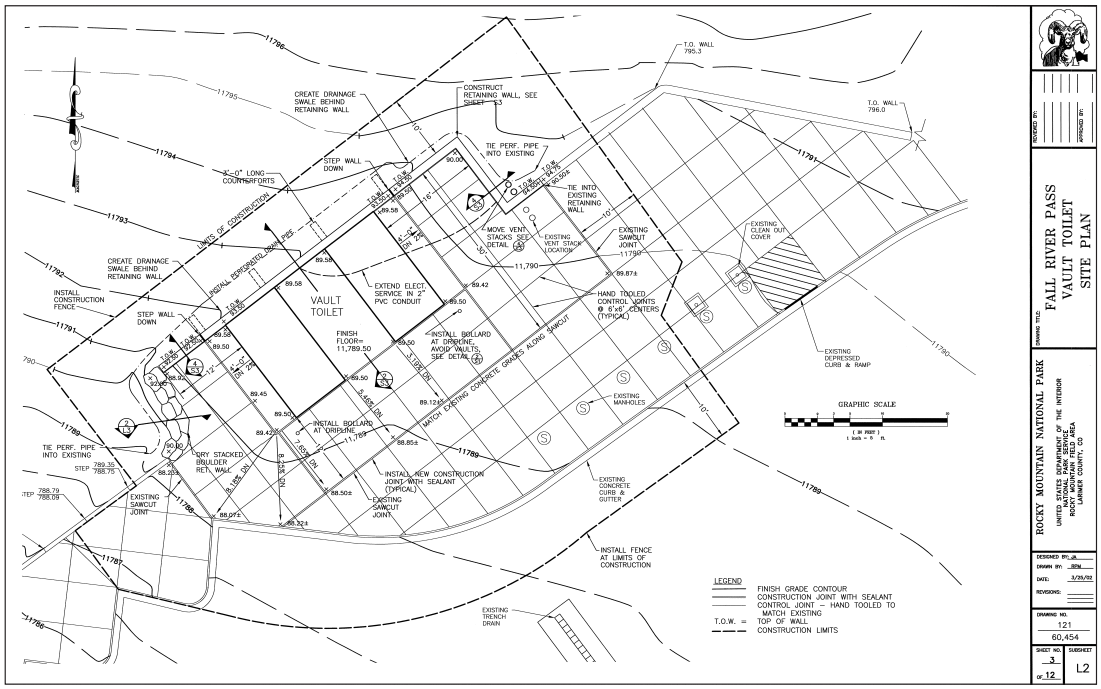


Figure 2-31. Vault Toilets site plan, 2002 (source: ROMO_121_60454_1).

2006
Fall River Pump House and Catchment Basin (5LR.10936) were listed in the National Register of Historic Places as "examples of National Park Service Rustic, a design philosophy blending buildings and structures with their environment through the use of local materials and specific placement that avoids distracting visitors from the surrounding scenic beauty."[2.80]

2008
Waterline and conduit were installed at Fall River Pass Complex.[2.81]

2010
A 20,000-gallon water tank was installed near Alpine Ridge Trail. Visitors developed a social trail along a gentler grade from the parking lot to the water tank.[2.82]

2012
Alpine Ridge Trail was modified to follow the alignment of social trail created in 2010 and shortened to remove a segment through was the park's then proposed wilderness. Improvement included precast concrete steps and revegetation.[2.83]

2017
To meet safety standards, the NPS replaced handrails and stairs from Public Plaza to the back of Trail Ridge Store and added a metal handrail to the top of the stone veneer wall.[2.84]

Solar panels were placed on the eastern side of Trail Ridge Store roof.[2.85]

2018
The generators at Fall River Pass Complex were routinely replaced. Replacement generally occurs on a ten-year cycle.

2019
The terminus of Alpine Ridge Trail was defined by short, removable metal posts with rope.[2.86]

2021
Fall River Pass Historic District (5LR.14866) was listed in the National Register of Historic Places "for its association with providing a center for recreation and education within a distinctive Alpine ecosystem of the park system."[2.87]

2.80 History Colorado. "Fall River Pump House & Catchment Basin." accessed April 17, 2023. https://www.historycolorado.org/location/fall-river-pump-house-catchment-basin.
2.81 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Superintendent's Annual Report – 2008. Rocky Mountain National Park.* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 2008), 12.
2.82 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 8.
2.83 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 8.
2.84 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 9.
2.85 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 11.
2.86 NPS, *NRHP Nomination – Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 8.
2.87 History Colorado. "Fall River Pass Historic District." accessed April 17, 2023. https://www.historycolorado.org/location/fall-river-pass-historic-district.

3

CONDITION, ANALYSIS, AND TREATMENT

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the existing condition of the cultural landscape of Fall River Pass Historic District, analyzes its integrity according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards seven aspects of integrity, and presents treatment guidance to inform planning and design for the district.[3.1]

Preservation is the selected treatment approach for Fall River Pass Historic District, aside from Fall River Pass Complex. Preservation provides for the stabilization and protection of features and characteristics associated with the period of significance of 1920 to 1966, and protection of resources.

Rehabilitation is the selected treatment approach for Fall River Pass Complex. This approach emphasizes repair of features and characteristics associated with the period of significance and allows for compatible modifications including the addition of new buildings, structures, or features.

Treatment guidance is provided to ensure protection of resources, and inform design of planned and future modifications within Fall River Pass Historic District. This guidance is based upon the fundamental tenets established during Fall River Pass Historic District's period of significance. These fundamental ideas arose during both the NPS rustic style and Mission 66, which emphasized limiting development within clusters to protect the sensitive ecology, use of on-site materials, and climate adaptations that suited new development to harsh alpine environment.[3.2]

All future work planned for the cultural landscape will be guided by The Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the NPS' Guide to Treatment for Cultural Landscapes.

Rustic Style
Rustic design principles brought the ideals of subordinating development to natural and scenic character, following naturalistic practices of landscape design, and maximizing landscape preservation. Design of structures and features ensured a harmonization of built features, minimal disruption of natural topography, and blending of man-made structures with natural surroundings.

Mission 66 / Park Service Modern Style
Mission 66 built upon these rustic principles by placing mid-century development within existing clusters of development. Its new modern approach to construction, with a focus on functional design, streamlined forms and mechanized technology, built upon earlier principles of using on-site natural materials and designs adapted for local climate and regional construction techniques. Reuse of previously developed sites were tenets of both phases of development.

3.1 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes.* Washington, DC: Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, 1996.

3.2 Fall River Pass Complex is referred to as "the visitor service area at Fall River Pass proper" in 2021 NRHP designation.

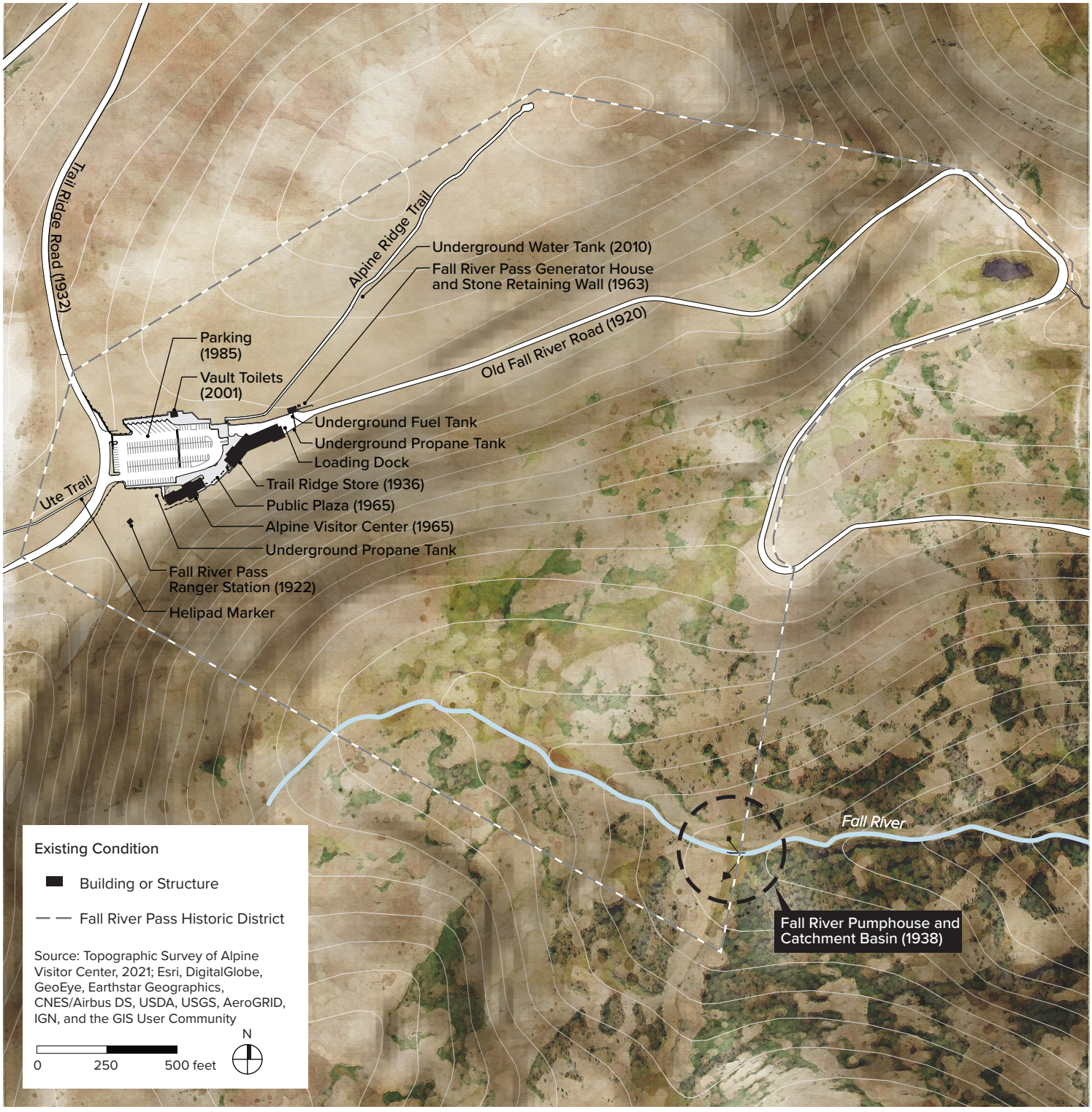


Figure 3-1. Fall River Pass Historic District Existing Condition Plan (source: Mundus Bishop, 2022).

Character Defining Features

Fall River Pass Historic District is characterized by its careful placement in the extraordinary setting of Fall River Cirque. This extraordinary setting, built form, and curated experience are the character-defining features of Fall River Pass Historic District, reflecting its significance as one of the most important stopping places en route across the Continental Divide.

Setting

Set amongst the vast alpine tundra landscape of Colorado's Continental Divide, it offers visitors a curated experience through well-orchestrated buildings, roads, and trails.

Built Form and Curated Experience

By placing a compact cluster of buildings at the cirque's edge, with views strategically oriented towards the towering peaks of the Rocky Mountains, visitors are immersed within the majestic alpine landscape.

The buildings and landscape reflect the very best of the national park system's major design movements—the principles of compact development and rustic naturalistic design of the NPS rustic period with the modern and technologically innovative Mission 66 Program—harmonizing built form with nature.



Figure 3-2. **Setting.** Set on the edge of Fall River Cirque, views to the towering peaks of the Rocky Mountains immerse visitors within the majestic alpine landscape (source: Mundus Bishop, 2022).



Figure 3-3. **Built Form and Curated Experience.** Characterized by its buildings and landscape, Fall River Pass Historic District reflects the very best of the national park system's major design movements—the principles of compact development and rustic naturalistic design of the NPS rustic period with the modern and technologically innovative Mission 66 Program (source: Rocky Mountain National Park).

SETTING

Characterized by its careful placement in the extraordinary setting of Fall River Cirque, Fall River Pass Historic District offers visitors a curated experience through well-orchestrated buildings, roads, and trails. The compact cluster of buildings at the cirque's edge, with views strategically oriented towards the towering peaks of the Rocky Mountains, immerses visitors within the majestic alpine landscape.

The setting of Fall River Pass Historic District is described through its natural systems and features, views and vistas, and archeological sites.



Figure 3-4. Fall River Pass Historic District Setting (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).

> *The alpine tundra is a land of contrast and incredible intensity, where the sky is the size of forever and the flowers the size of a millisecond...the great wash of light illuminating the alpine tundra gives one a sense of encompassing comprehension verging on euphoria.*[3.3]

3.3 Willard, Beatrice E.., Zwinger, Ann. *Land Above the Trees: A Guide to American Alpine Tundra, 3-4.*

Natural Systems and Features

Condition and Analysis

Natural systems and features—Fall River Cirque, the alpine tundra ecosystem, and surrounding mountain ranges—shaped the development and character of Fall River Pass Historic District throughout the period of significance.

The landform and views from the rim of Fall River Cirque informed the location and arrangement of Fall River Pass development. This includes the scenic qualities of Fall River Pass that persuaded financial backers to invest in a more expensive alignment of Fall River Road above tree line and informed the placement of Fall River Pass Ranger Station, Trail Ridge Store, Alpine Visitor Center, and Public Plaza prominently set on Fall River Cirque to capitalize on views to natural features. Landform also provided shelter from winds and snow at Fall River Pass Ranger Station and facilitated collection and movement of water at Pumphouse and Catchment Basin.

The district is subject to extreme environmental conditions including high winds, severe temperature shifts, thunder and hailstorms, freezing, and drifting snowpack. The district's remote location and exposure to harsh and ever-changing weather conditions have and continue to be challenging to maintain visitor-ready facilities and select materials and features suited for these conditions. Buildings and features are designed to withstand harsh conditions, be seasonally removed, or be susceptible to the conditions of the district while minimizing impacts to the fragile alpine tundra (e.g., pulp thrown from striking a wood snowpole presents less of an impact than plastic or metal).

The remote, exposed character of Fall River Pass Historic District remains similar to the period of significance and continues to be the dominant influence on the district's development. The fragility of the alpine tundra and long-lasting impacts of human use informed the compact development of the district. This maximized protection of the landscape and provided a natural experience with views across the alpine tundra to mountain ranges.

Treatment Guidance

Protect Fall River Cirque, the alpine tundra ecosystem, and landforms of Fall River Pass Historic District by avoiding development outside currently developed areas and by protecting topographic features, soils, and plants



Figure 3-5. Protect landforms and alpine tundra of the district (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).

Natural Systems and Features - Alpine Tundra

Condition and Analysis

Fall River Pass Historic District is above tree line with portions of Fall River Pass Complex managed as a Tundra Protection Zone and closed to visitor use. Extreme winds and cold temperatures limit the species and growth of native alpine tundra vegetation. Plants primarily include perennials–flowering plants, cushion plants, non-flowering lichens that grow on rocks and soil, and grasses and sedges that grow where soil is well developed. Foot travel contributes to soil compaction and destroys fragile vegetation, causing exposed soil to blow away. Recovery of alpine tundra takes hundreds of years.

Treatment Guidance

Protect the alpine tundra ecosystem.

- Locate new visitor uses within current clusters of development and not within the alpine tundra.
- Provide physical barriers where outreach is ineffective and where visitor use cannot be separated from alpine tundra.
- Design physical barriers to be compatible with the alpine tundra—small scale, metal or wood in material, and a color that harmonizes with contributing features and the alpine tundra ecosystem. All shall be removable, elk compatible, and non-conductive to lightning strikes.
- Temporary measures may include thimble eye anchor rod fencing in areas of limited or temporary use. Permanent measures in areas of high use or where visitor control is challenging may include low profile stone walls, buck and rail fence, or Lawson Logs.[3.4]

Protect the alpine tundra by complying with, and implementing, the Rocky Mountain National Park Vegetation Restoration Plan.[3.5]

Inventory, monitor, and allow for the removal of invasive species. Ensure accordance with the Rocky Mountain Exotic Plant Management Plan.[3.6]

Concentrate new uses and facilities within existing developed areas to minimize disruption to the alpine tundra ecosystem.

- Locate new features in previously disturbed areas or in areas immediately adjacent to existing development or in areas conducive to restoration of the alpine tundra ecosystem.
- Where new development impacts alpine tundra, ensure ground disturbance minimizes impacts to the alpine tundra and vegetation to the greatest extent possible. Salvage and stockpile all plant material and topsoil for revegetation actions.
- Mitigate soil compaction and erosion through repair and restoration of impacted alpine tundra.

Design new features to harmonize with the alpine tundra ecosystem.

- Design new features to be compatible with the alpine tundra—of a scale, material, and color that harmonizes with the alpine tundra

Restore impacted alpine tundra by following the park's best practices including reinforcing delineation of resource protection areas and selecting native alpine tundra species with local provenances.[3.7]

3.4 See Figure 3-43 for photograph of Lawson Logs placed at Fall River Pass Historic District.
3.5 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *Rocky Mountain National Park Exotic Plant Management Plan Environmental Assessment* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 2018).
3.6 NPS. *Exotic Plant Management Plan*.
3.7 The success of alpine tundra revegetation is increased by salvaging sod prior to ground disturbance, collecting seeds for propagation in the park's greenhouse, and through the collection of sod from adjacent established areas.



Figure 3-6. Rocky Mountain National Park spans the Continental Divide in the southern Rocky Mountains. Elevations of the park range from 7,800 feet above sea level to 14,255 feet at the summit of Longs Peak and support three distinct ecosystems. Montane, occurring at elevations of 7,000 to 9,500 feet, is characterized by meadows, Ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, lodgepole pine, and aspen. Subalpine, occurring at elevations of 9,500 to 11,500 feet, is characterized by Englemann spruce, alpine fir, and limber pine. Alpine tundra, characterized by barren tundra, occurs at elevations of 11,500 feet to mountain summits and represents nearly one-third of Rocky Mountain National Park. The district is on the rim of Fall River Cirque in the northwest portion of the park, located just east of Colorado’s Continental Divide, within the alpine tundra (source: Mundus Bishop, 2022).

Views and Vistas

Condition and Analysis

Fall River Pass Historic District views and vistas orient visitors to the natural beauty of the district. These includes four NRHP contributing views—the view from Public Plaza to the south and east; the view from the summit of Alpine Ridge Trail; the view from Old Fall River Road to Fall River Pass Complex; and the view from Trail Ridge Road to the Fall River Pass Complex.

Views and vistas influenced the historic siting and orientation of Fall River Pass Complex, Trail Ridge Road, Old Fall River Road, and Alpine Ridge Trail. Fall River Pass Complex was sited at the crest of Fall River Pass with views across the alpine tundra to the high peaks of Mummy Range, Never Summer Mountains, and distant mountain ranges. Original views from Trail Ridge Road and Old Fall River Road to natural features and buildings created an arrival sequence through the study and a sense of arrival at Fall River Pass Complex.

Mission 66 additions followed a similar approach with the siting and design of Alpine Visitor Center and Public Plaza. Both Alpine Visitor Center are oriented for views across Fall River Cirque.[3.8]

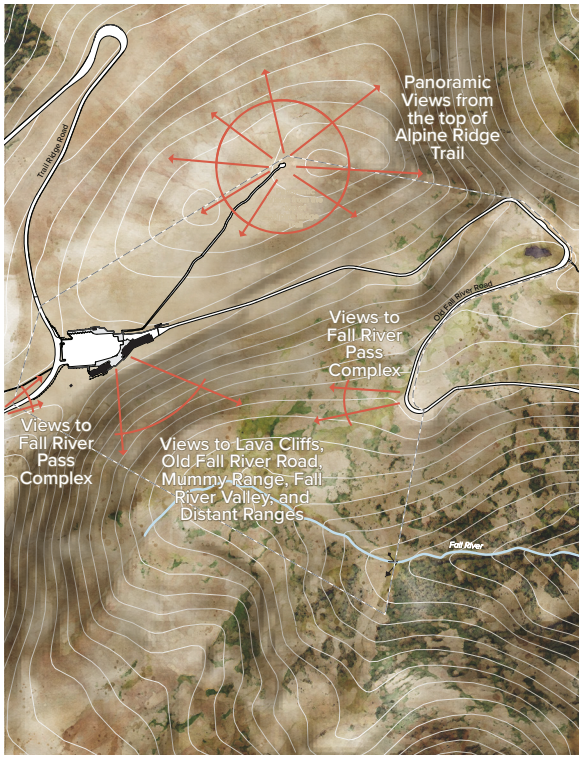


Figure 3-7. The district includes four NRHP contributing views–the view from Public Plaza to the south and east; the view from the summit of Alpine Ridge Trail; the view from Old Fall River Road to Fall River Pass Complex; and the view from Trail Ridge Road to the Fall River Pass Complex (source: Mundus Bishop, 2022).

3.8 Carr, *Mission 66 Era Resources Nomination,* 14, 17.

Treatment Guidance

Protect views and vistas associated with Fall River Pass Historic District. These include views from Public Plaza to the south and east; the view from the summit of Alpine Ridge Trail; the view from Old Fall River Road to Fall River Pass Complex; and the view from Trail Ridge Road to the Fall River Pass Complex.

Remove, move, or modify features that obscure or detract from views and vistas.

- Consider modifying Alpine Ridge Trail to better harmonize with the alpine tundra (re: Circulation - Alpine Ridge Trail Design Guidance).
- Move or remove small scale features from views and vistas.
- Locate new features out of identified views and vistas.
- Consider materials that blend with the alpine tundra and features of a scale that do not detract from the alpine tundra if required within views and vistas.

Protect the arrival sequence and sense of arrival to Fall River Pass Complex.

- Maintain views from Old Fall River Road and Trail Ridge Road to natural features and Alpine Visitor Center and Trail Ridge Store.

Prioritize views in site planning and design.

- Orient new buildings, circulation features, and gathering spaces to capitalize on views to natural features.





Figure 3-8. Views to the valley, Old Fall River Road, and Mummy Range. Protect views and vistas associated with Fall River Pass Historic District (top image source: ROMO 4014-2785; bottom image source (from present-day Public Plaza): Mundus Bishop, 2021).

Archeologial Sites

Condition and Analysis

Further investigation is needed to determine the location, condition, and significance of existing archeological features throughout Fall River Pass Historic District.

Previous compliance activities included several archeological surveys of the district. Fall River Pass Complex was formally surveyed by archeologists from the University of Northern Colorado in 1999. No cultural resources were documented.[3.9]

NPS Ranger Jack Moomaw noted the presence of site 5LR608 in the district in 1928 and 1931. Moomaw indicated finding flint relics and noted Fall River Pass was the site of a large camp. Development of Fall River Pass Complex likely destroyed Site 5LR608.[3.10]

Treatment Guidance

Protect known and potential archeological sites. Consult with NPS cultural resources subject matter experts when conducting archeological investigations and excavations. Where appropriate, include other agencies and federally recognized tribes in consultation.

Ensure potentially sensitive resources and traditional cultural properties are identified, recorded, and evaluated through consultation with associated tribes. Ensure the integrity of traditional cultural properties is preserved and protected.

Consult with affiliated tribes to identify themes and approaches to interpreting their history and connection to Fall River Pass.

3.9 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *AVC Medical Room Entrance Sidewalk Improvement Project Proposal / Clearance Form. Rocky Mountain National Park* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 2003).

3.10 United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. *AVC Facility Improvements Project Proposal / Clearance Form. Rocky Mountain National Park* (Estes Park: Rocky Mountain National Park, 1998).

BUILT FORM AND CURATED EXPERIENCE

Characterized by its buildings and built landscape, Fall River Pass Historic District reflects the very best of the national park system's major design movements:

- Principles of compact development and rustic naturalistic design of the NPS rustic period;
- Modern and technologically innovative Mission 66 Program—harmonizing built form with nature.

This extraordinary setting, built form, and curated experience are the character-defining features of Fall River Pass Historic District, reflecting its significance as one of the most important stopping places en route across the Continental Divide.

Spatial arrangement, cluster development, circulation, buildings, and features describe Fall River Pass Historic District's built form and curated experience.



Figure 3-9. Fall River Pass Historic District Built Form and Curated Experience (source: Rocky Mountain National Park).

Spatial Organization and Cluster Arrangement

The cluster arrangement of Fall River Pass Historic District retains integrity. The district remains in its original location as one of several developed areas along Trail Ridge Road. The district is set within the alpine tundra and is organized into two distinct areas connected by views and Old Fall River Road. These include Fall River Pass Complex at the crest of Fall River Pass and Pumphouse and Catchment Basin set in the valley over 1,000 feet. The complex retains its cluster of development surrounded by undeveloped alpine tundra and sited to maximize protection of natural resources and capitalize on views.



Figure 3-10. Preserve Fall River Pass Historic District as a cultural landscape by retaining its original clusters of development—Fall River Pass Complex, Fall River Pass Ranger Station, and Fall River Pumphouse and Catchment Basin (source: Jorgensen, 2021).

1. Fall River Pass Catchment Basin
2. Fall River Pass Pumphouse
3. Old Fall River Road
4. Water Tank
5. Trail Ridge Store
6. Alpine Visitor Center
7. Fall River Cirque

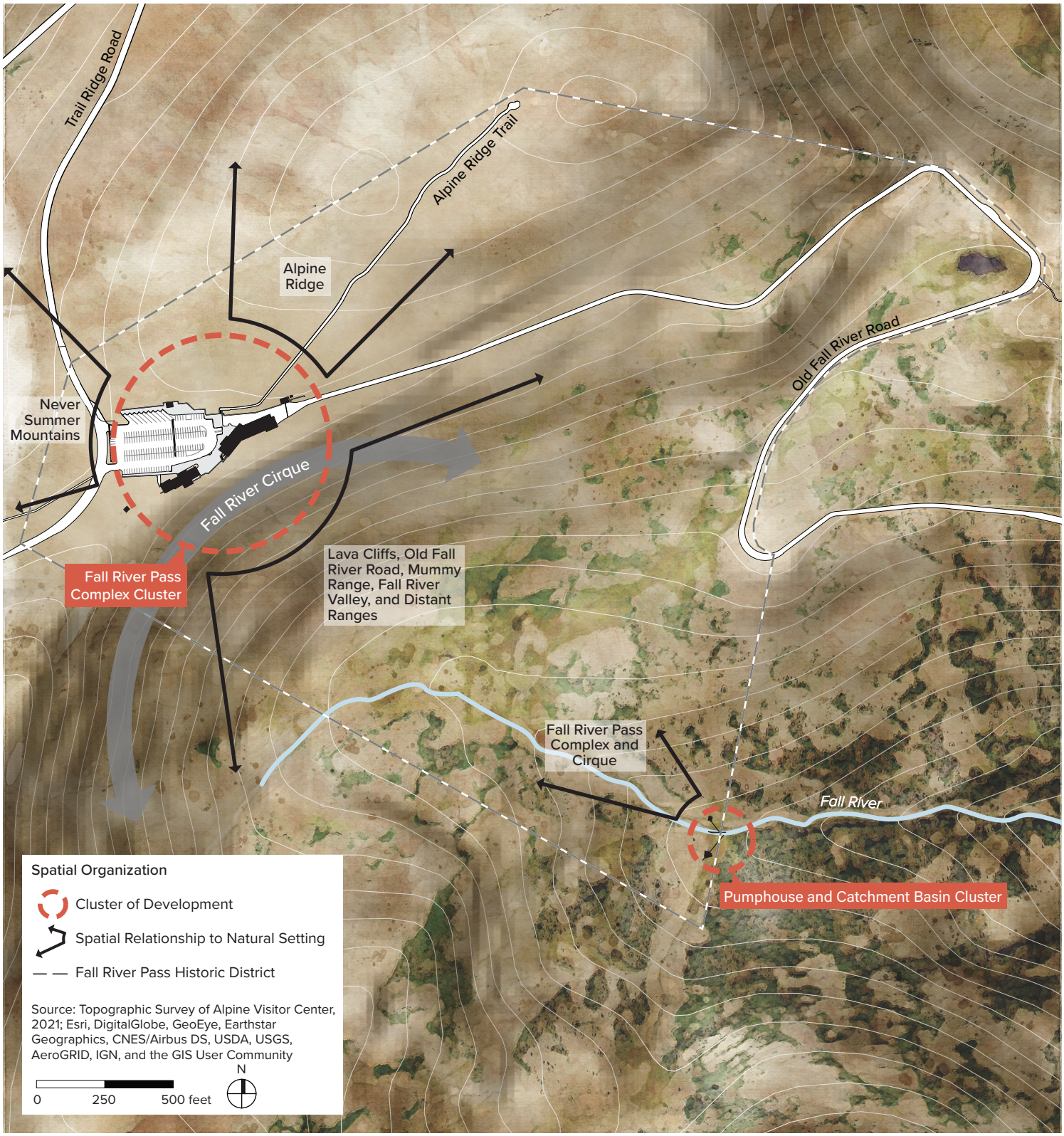


Figure 3-11. Preserve the historic clusters of development surrounded by undeveloped alpine tundra and sited to maximize protection of natural resources and capitalize on views (source: Mundus Bishop, 2022).

Cluster Arrangement - Fall River Pass Historic District

Condition and Analysis

Initial development of the district was limited and included Fall River Pass Ranger Station, restrooms, and informal parking and trails in the 1920s. The complex was set on the northwest rim of Fall River Cirque with views of Fall River Pass and surrounding mountain ranges. The 1936 Master Plan for the park formalized the complex as a minor developed area. New development extended north of Fall River Pass Ranger Station along the rim of the cirque to the intersection of Old Fall River Road and Trail Ridge Road. Visitor and concessioner facilities included Trail Ridge Store, parking area, and walks. Pumphouse and Catchment Basin were built in the valley below to provide water to Trail Ridge Store.

The Mission 66 program expanded concessions and interpretation of the alpine setting. Development of Alpine Visitor Center, Fall River Pass Parking Lot, walks, and Public Plaza was concentrated to protect natural resources, define visitor use areas, and provide exemplary visitor experiences. Alpine Visitor Center and Public Plaza were prominently located to intercept visitors as they entered the complex and orient visitors to the site and its natural surrounds.

The complex retains its historic cluster of development surrounded by undeveloped alpine tundra and sited to maximize protection of natural resources and capitalize on views.





Figure 3-12. Fall River Pass Complex retains its historic cluster of development surrounded by alpine tundra set on Fall River Cirque to capitalize on views. Preserve Fall River Pass Complex as a distinct cluster of development (top image source: ROMO, HS-0170; bottom image source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).

Treatment Guidance

Retain original clusters of development—Fall River Pass Complex and Fall River Pumphouse and Catchment Basin.

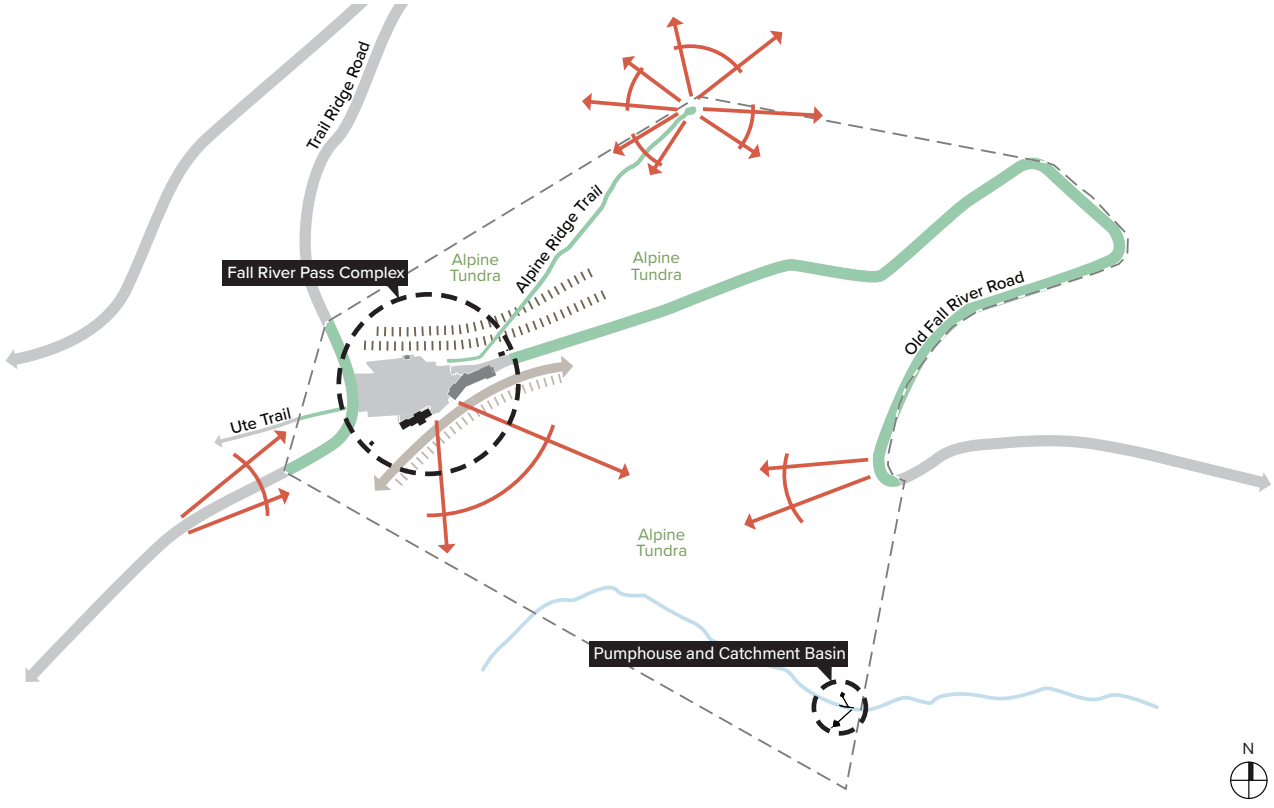
Preserve and maintain contributing buildings while minimizing disturbance and ensuring harmony with the natural setting of the alpine tundra.

Preserve and maintain contributing circulation while minimizing disturbance and ensuring harmony with the natural setting of the alpine tundra.

Preserve contributing views and vistas.

Protect the natural and man-made topography, including the topographic rise on which the Fall River Pass Complex sits and relationship of Alpine Visitor Center, Public Plaza, Trail Ridge Road, and Old Fall River Road to the steep hillsides of Fall River Cirque.

Preserve the steep hillside of Alpine Ridge by integrating modifications to Alpine Ridge Trail with the natural topography and ensuring modifications for access between Trail Ridge Road and Old Fall River Road occur within disturbed sites and follow established development patterns.



Cluster Arrangement - Fall River Pass Complex

Condition and Analysis

Fall River Pass Complex is set on the headwall of Fall River Cirque. The headwall extends to the north and south with topography steeply dropping to Fall River to the east and Big Thompson River to the west. Fall River Pass Ranger Station, Alpine Visitor Center, Public Plaza, and Trail Ridge Store are set prominently on the northwest rim of Fall River Cirque. They are oriented for views to Lava Cliffs, Old Fall River Road, Fall River Valley, and Mummy Range to the east, Never Summer Mountains to the west, and distant ranges to the northeast. Alpine Visitor Center and Trail Ridge Store are set on a rise and are visually prominent to visitors within the complex and to visitors approaching from the south via Trail Ridge Road and east via Old Fall River Road. The complex is organized by discrete uses–parking, restrooms, and interpretation and concessions–connected by sidewalks and Public Plaza.

The complex retains its historic cluster of development surrounded by undeveloped alpine tundra and sited to maximize protection of natural resources and capitalize on views.

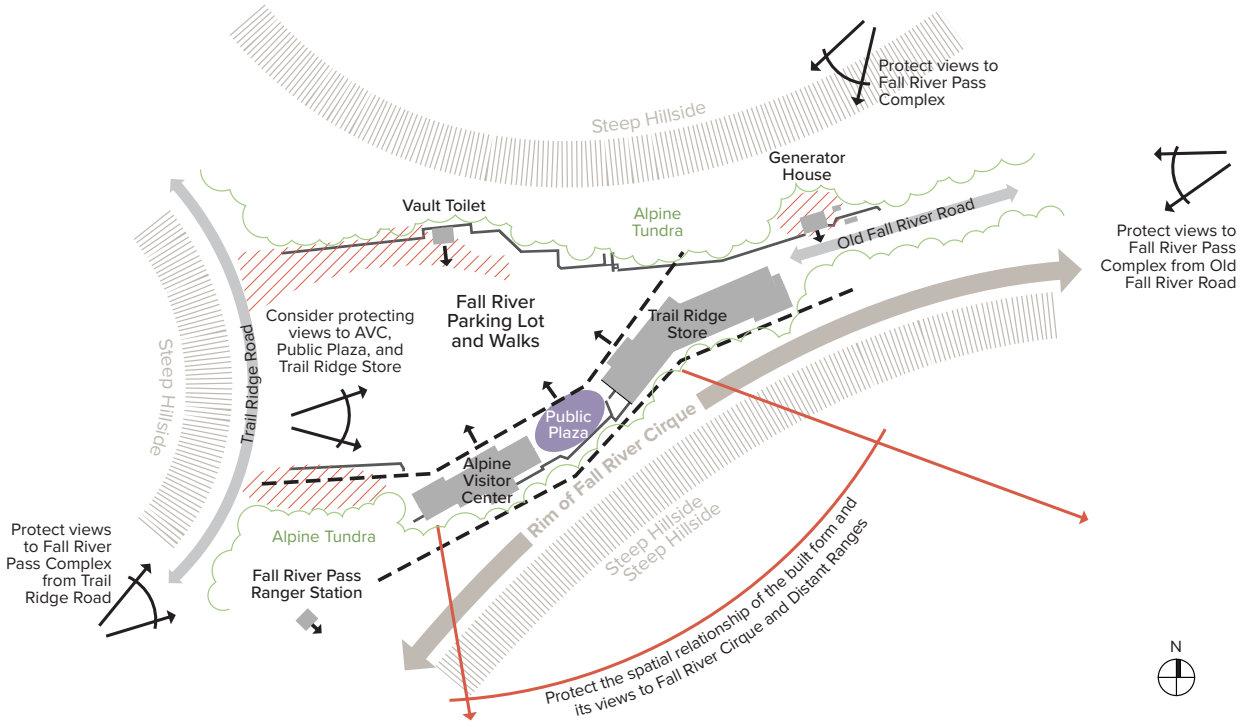


Figure 3-13. Preserve Fall River Pass Complex as a distinct cluster of development set on the rim of Fall River Cirque at the edge of the alpine tundra (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).

Treatment Guidance

Preserve Fall River Pass Complex as a distinct cluster of development set at the edge of the alpine tundra on the rim of Fall River Cirque.

- Protect Public Plaza
- Preserve the rim of Fall River Cirque and the relationship of the buildings and Public Plaza on a prominent rise from Trail Ridge Road
- Preserve the relationship of the buildings and Public Plaza to the north and west hillsides
- Preserve established patterns of development including building setbacks
- Preserve established patterns of development including primary building entrance orientation
- Interior and exterior views to Fall River Cirque and distant ranges
- Preserve views and vistas to Fall River Pass Complex
- Allow new buildings and features on modified or previously developed sites, areas out of significant views and vistas, and where additions can follow established patterns of development. Do not allow new structures or buildings within Public Plaza.



Treatment Guidance

Ensure modifications and new additions, including buildings, structures or features, preserve distinct building and cluster arrangement.

Arrange new buildings and features along Old Fall River Road and Fall River Pass Parking Lot. Locate and orient new buildings and features to fit within established patterns of development including respecting the building setbacks.

Orient primary public entrances towards Fall River Parking Lot and Walks.

Orient primary visitor views towards Fall River Cirque and distant ranges.

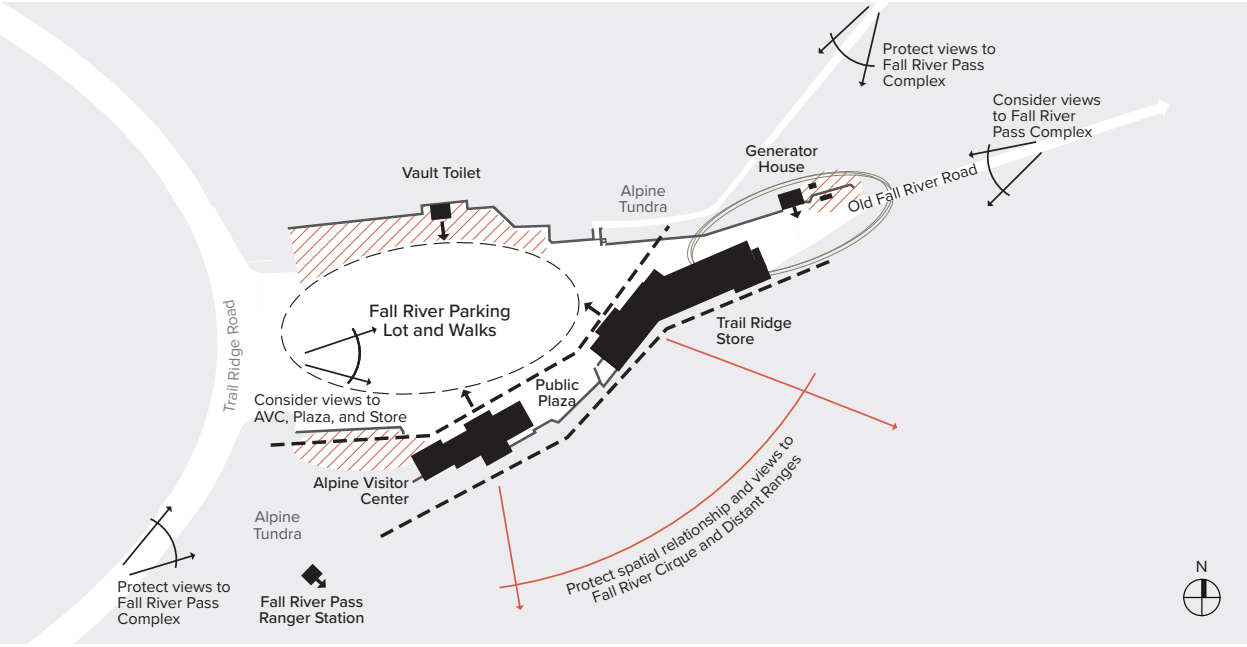
Organize operations within existing operations areas.

Organize parking within existing open area.

Allow new buildings and features on modified or previously developed sites, areas out of significant views and vistas, and where additions can follow established patterns of development. Do not allow new structures or buildings within Public Plaza.

Concentrate new uses and facilities to minimize disruption to the historic setting, topography, and alpine tundra ecosystem. Repair vegetation and take measures to repair soil compaction and erosion and protect the alpine tundra.

Allow new uses and additions, designed harmoniously with Fall River Pass Complex and the alpine tundra ecosystem. Design modifications and additions as integrated components that respect the setting by concentrating uses and locating new features out of significant views and vistas.



Circulation

Fall River Pass Historic District circulation includes vehicular and pedestrian routes. Circulation evolved through the period of significance to accommodate increased visitation and ensure protection of the alpine tundra. The overall arrangement of circulation patterns remain from the period of significance.

Vehicular routes contributing to Fall River Pass Historic District include Trail Ridge Road and Old Fall River Road. These features retain historic alignments and widths with minor alternations since the period of development. The historic use and relationship of the Fall River Pass Parking Lot to adjoining roads and buildings remains. During the period of significance, parking evolved from an informal parking area to a small, formalized parking lot to a parking lot similar to present-day.

Pedestrian circulation original to Fall River Pass Historic District includes Public Plaza, Alpine Ridge Trail, and Ute Trail. These features retain historic alignments with few modifications to accommodate visitor use.

Non-extant circulation features from the period of significance include an access road and terrace to the south of Trail Ridge Store, trail to Fall River Pass Ranger Station, and a "well-traveled path" between Fall River Pass Ranger Station and Iceberg Lake. The trail to Iceberg Lake is documented in early photography and in an article in the 18 November 1932 edition of the Estes Park Trail. The trail was closed to visitor use at an unknown time. The trail is carved into the alpine tundra landscape and traces remain visible to the south of Fall River Pass Ranger Station.

Formal access is not provided to Fall River Pass Ranger Station or Fall River Pumphouse and Catchment Basin. Historic access to Fall River Pass Ranger Station included informal paths removed after the period of significance. Trails were carved into the alpine tundra landscape and traces remain visible. Historic access to Fall River Pumphouse and Catchment Basin is undocumented.

Treatment Guidance

Provide routes to ensure safe, accessible routes throughout visitor use areas and protect the alpine tundra. Ensure routes are sited and designed to minimize impacts to alpine tundra. Consider low-profile barriers such as small boulders or temporary thimble eye anchor rod fencing to define to protect the alpine tundra.

Consider formalizing social trails or routes where access through the alpine tundra ecosystem is necessary. If a route to Fall River Pass Ranger Station and Pumphouse and Catchment Basin is desired in the future, ensure the route is built to minimize impacts to soil and alpine tundra vegetation.

- Consider only a narrow, soft-surface trail sited to minimize disruption to the alpine tundra ecosystem.
- Consider following original trail alignments and design trails with characteristics similar to historic trails where documented.
- Where use has expanded into the alpine tundra, repair trail erosion and alpine tundra vegetation.

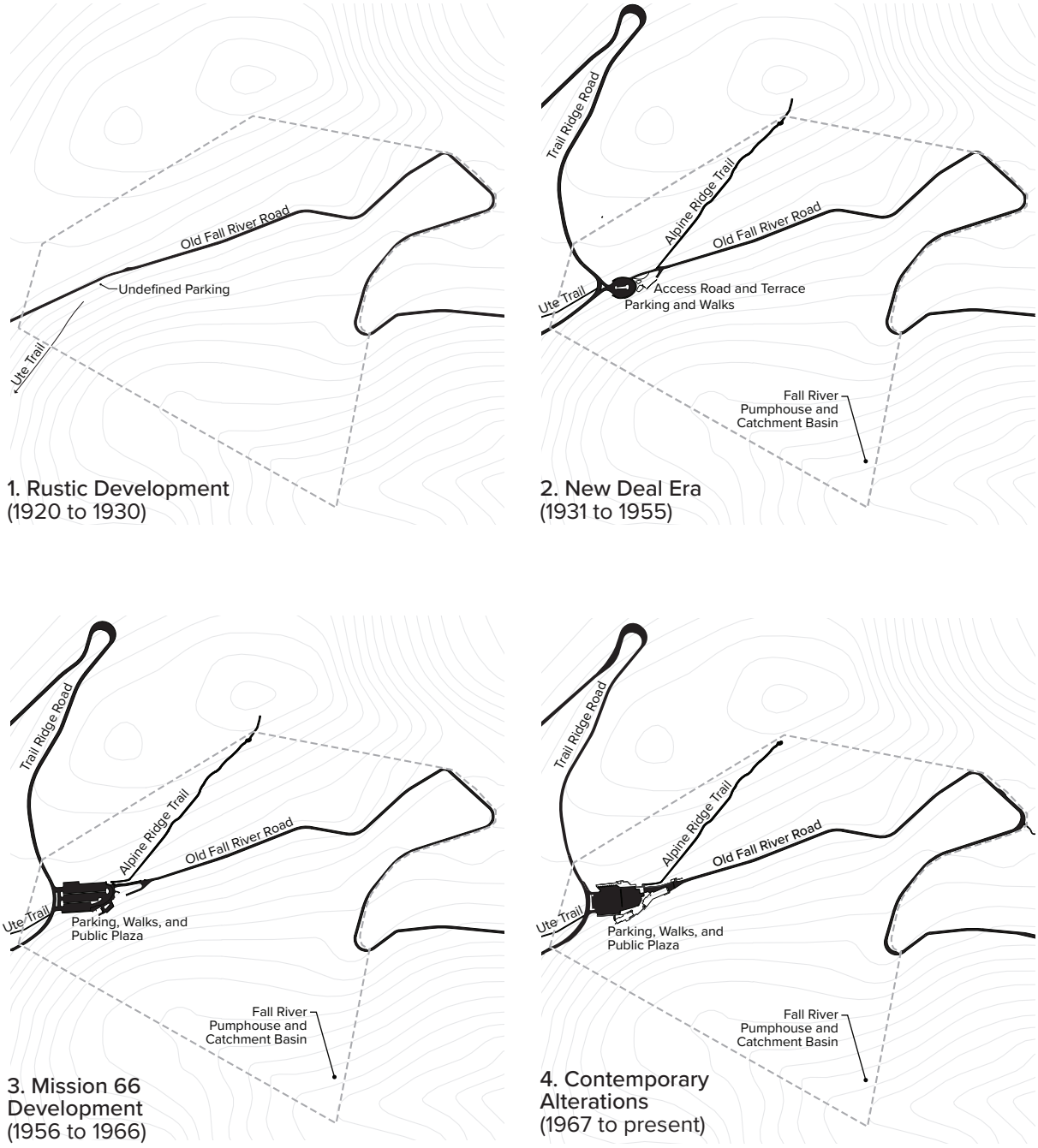


Figure 3-14. Circulation features evolved throughout the period of significance to provide defined and expanded parking and walks accommodating increased visitation and protection of the alpine tundra. The arrangement of circulation features remains similar to the period of significance (source: Mundus Bishop, 2022).

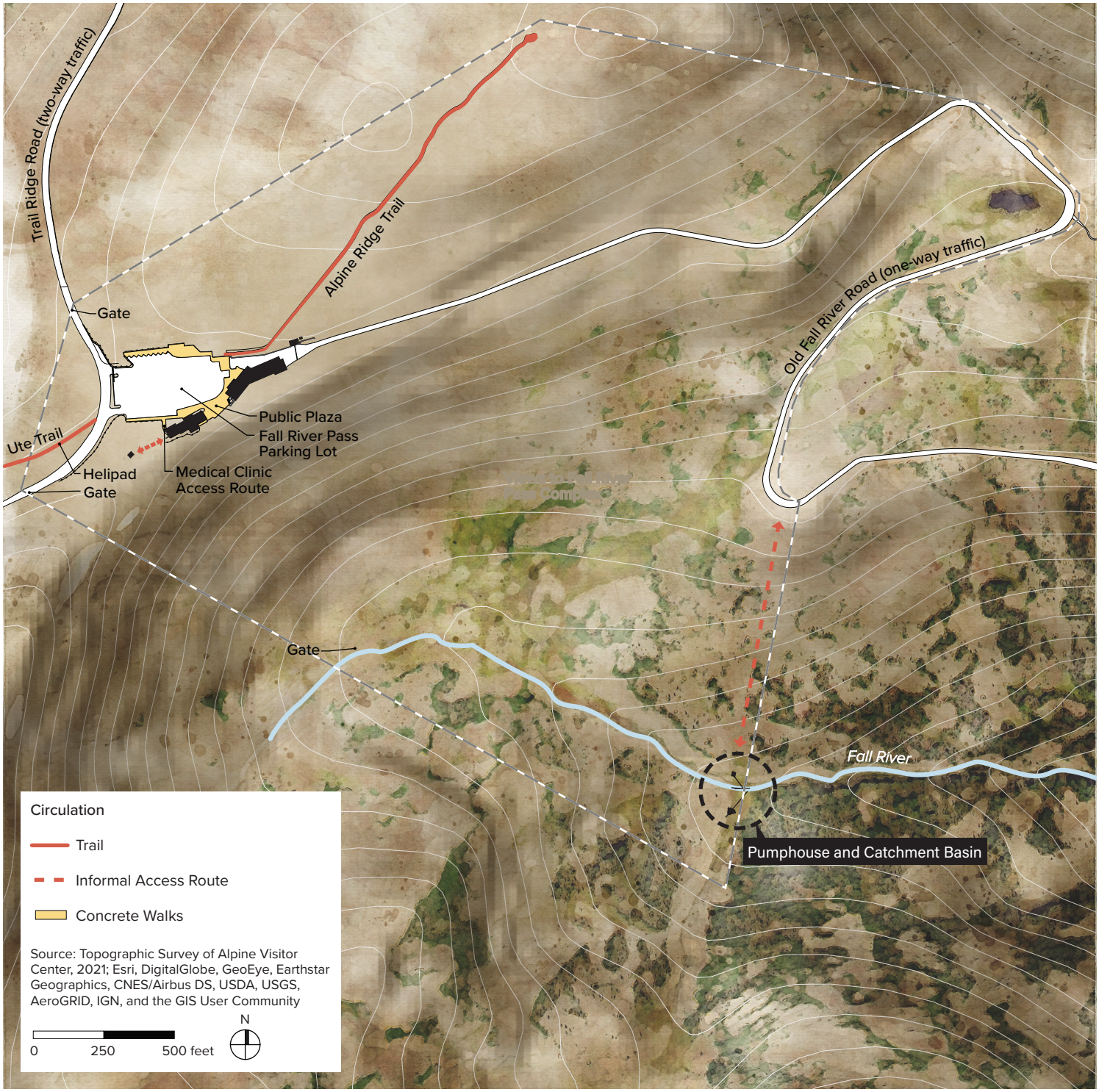


Figure 3-15. Circulation existing condition plan. Contributing circulation features include Trail Ridge Road Segment (5LR.502), Old Fall River Road Segment (5LR.885), Parking Lot, Alpine Ridge Trail (5LR.14880), Ute Trail (5LR.803.1), and Public Plaza (source: Mundus Bishop, 2022).

Circulation - Trail Ridge Road (5LR.502)

Condition and Analysis

Trail Ridge Road (Highway 34) is the primary vehicular route to Fall River Pass Historic District and east-west route through the park and is closed to all vehicles for the winter season. Trail Ridge Road is an All-American Road and Colorado Scenic Byway. Eight hundred feet of the asphalt surfaced road is within Fall River Pass Historic District. The route is in good condition.

Trail Ridge Road is an original feature of Fall River Pass Historic District. The road retains original alignments and widths. Modifications after the period of significance are those required to accommodate vehicular movements–larger turning radii, and an addition of a northbound turning lane into Fall River Pass Parking Lot and northbound merging lane from the parking lot.

Treatment Guidance

Preserve the alignment, width, and surfacing of Trail Ridge Road. Minimize modifications to existing features and avoid modifications that could impact the alpine tundra ecosystem.

Allow roadway improvements for safety, ensuring impacts to the alpine tundra are minimized and that views are retained.



Figure 3-16. Trail Ridge Road is the primary route to and an original feature of Fall River Pass Historic District. Treatment guidance preserves its historic alignment, width, and surfacing and narrow shoulders and corridor of the historic route (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).

Circulation - Old Fall River Road (5LR.885)

Condition and Analysis

Old Fall River Road provides one-way, uphill access from the east (Endovalley Picnic Area) and terminates at Fall River Pass Parking Lot. Old Fall River Road is closed to all vehicles for the winter season. Nearly one mile of the gravel, asphalt, and concrete surfaced road is within Fall River Pass Historic District. Gravel sections are generally in good condition. Asphalt and concrete paving near Trail Ridge Store are in poor condition.

Old Fall River Road contributes to Fall River Pass Historic District and retains historic alignments and widths with minor alternations after the period of significance.

Treatment Guidance

Preserve the alignment, width, and surfacing of Old Fall River Road.

- Allow modifications to the width and alignment of the road at Trail Ridge Store to provide safe vehicular access, decrease conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles, and provide space for the NPS and concessioner operations.
- Reconstruct the road and associated features using original or in-kind materials—gravel, asphalt, and concrete surfacing and stone veneer walls.
- Minimize modifications to the alpine tundra and existing features, i.e., existing stone wall and Generator Building to the extent possible. Where minor modifications are required, such as rebuilding discrete sections of the existing stone wall, deconstruct the wall and salvage stone for reuse, rebuild the wall as a stone veneer wall on a concrete stem wall, and set at a similar height and width as the original.



Figure 3-17. Preserve and repair the alignment, width, and surfacing of Old Fall River Road. Repair road surfacing using in-kind gravel (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).



Figure 3-18. Repair asphalt and concrete distress west of Trail Ridge Store. Repair surface material using in-kind materials and allow modifications in this area to decrease conflicts and increase safe travel for all modes (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).

Circulation - Fall River Pass Parking Lot

Condition and Analysis

Fall River Pass Parking Lot offers spaces for government and visitor vehicles—RVs, motorcycles, oversized vehicles, and buses—and accessible parking. Parking demands often exceed its 178-vehicle capacity for much of the summer. Concrete curbs vary in condition. Asphalt paving is in generally good condition with minor distress within the center drive lane.

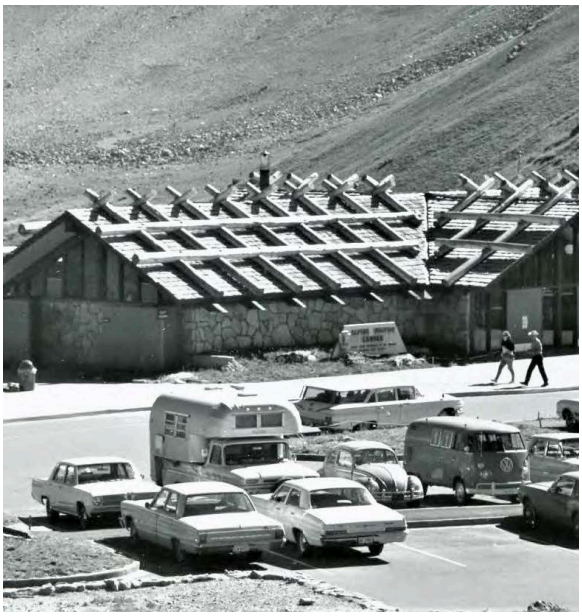
The historic use and relationship of the Fall River Pass Parking Lot to adjoining roads and buildings remains. During the period of significance, parking evolved from an informal parking area to a small, formalized parking lot to a parking lot similar to present-day Fall River Pass Parking Lot. The northern edge was expanded in 2001 to accommodate RV, bus, and oversized vehicle parking. Parking lot surface, striping, and curbing are repaired and replaced as needed.



Undefined parking area and walls, c. 1937
(source: ROMO-11-Q-2-a, neg. 1134).



Parking defined by boulders with paved walks, c. 1959
(source: ROMO-11-Q-2-a, neg 5238).



Asphalt parking with concrete walks and curbs, c. 1970s
(source: ROMO_121_P7_ALPINE VISITOR CENTER).

Figure 3-19. The alignment and surface material of Fall River Pass Parking Lot and Walks varied throughout the period of significance. The NPS hardened walks and parking and placed physical barriers (fences and walls) to define visitor use areas and protect the alpine tundra. Historic walks paralleled the edge of parking and provided access to trails and buildings.

Treatment Guidance

Preserve Fall River Pass Parking Lot's spatial qualities and circulation, while allowing modifications to improve contemporary use and safety.

Preserve the open space of Fall River Pass Parking Lot as an essential feature of the complex's built form, arrangement, and views and vistas.

Preserve general circulation patterns and separation of uses, while allowing modifications to alleviate congestion, reduce conflicts, and provide safe pedestrian routes. Minimize the use of signage and barriers.

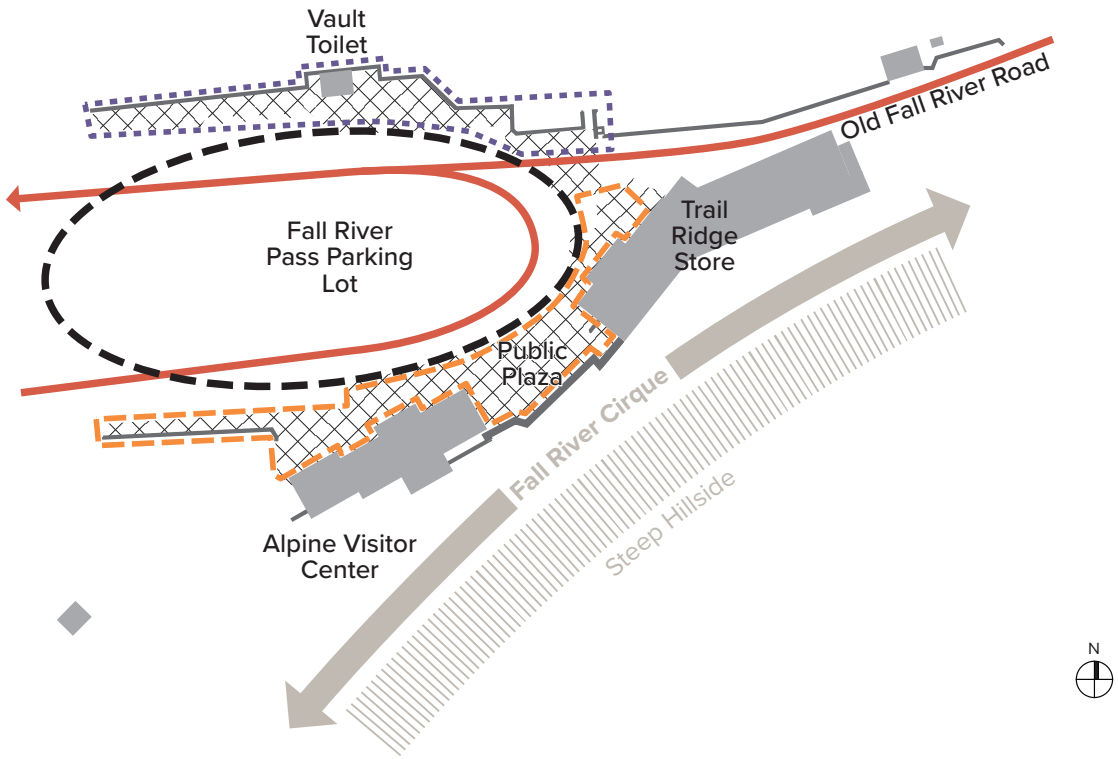
Vehicular Circulation

Pedestrian Circulation

Allow modifications to curbs, paving, and stone veneer walls at the north edge to accommodate future operational, visitor use, or circulation needs. Provide adequate queuing within pedestrian spaces to prevent overflow into parking spaces and drive lanes.

Preserve the arrangement of pedestrian spaces along the south edge and relationships to buildings and park.

Locate ABAAS parking and routes for safe access to Alpine Visitor Center, Public Plaza, Trail Ridge Store, and Vault Toilets.



Treatment Guidance

1. Define the travel lane of Old Fall River Road. Allow pavement markings or a change in material to delineate the edge of the travel lane and temporary physical barriers (e.g., Lawson Logs) if additional measures are needed to restrict parking along Old Fall River Road.

   Provide improvements to reduce conflicts between visitors walking to Alpine Ridge Trail and vehicles entering Fall River Pass Parking Lot from Old Fall River Road.

Design paving materials to be compatible with Fall River Pass Complex's contributing features and to harmonize with the alpine tundra.

2. Repair and replace paving using an asphalt pavement of durable texture with a thickness that accommodates the numbers, types, turning radii, and weights of the vehicles that use the parking area.
3. Repair and replace concrete curbs using a concrete mix that includes a local aggregate and finish of a durable texture and thickness to accommodate uses. Consider a mountable curb and a sandblasted or light exposed aggregate finish as these are less likely to show minor damage.

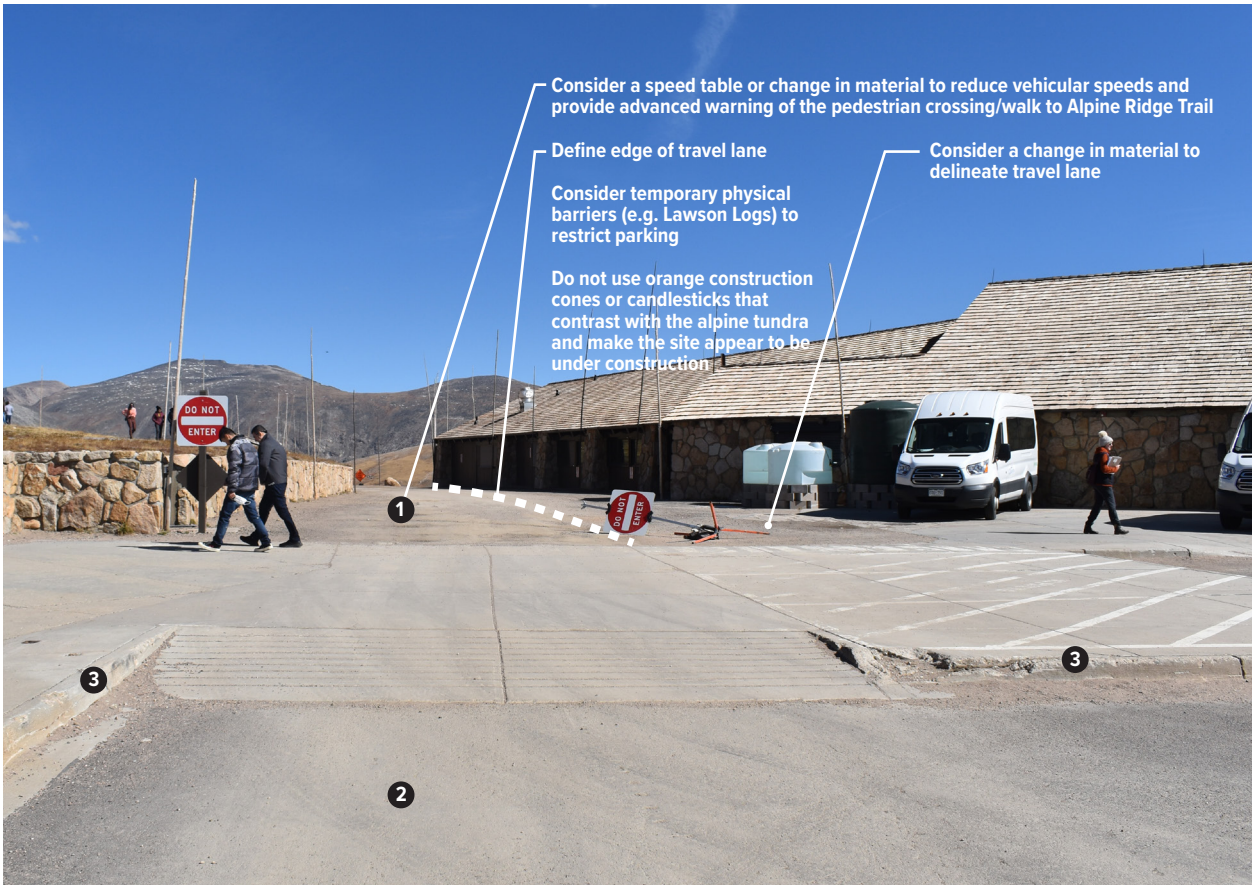


Figure 3-20. Concrete curbs vary in condition. Repair and replace as needed (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).

Circulation - Fall River Pass Complex Walks

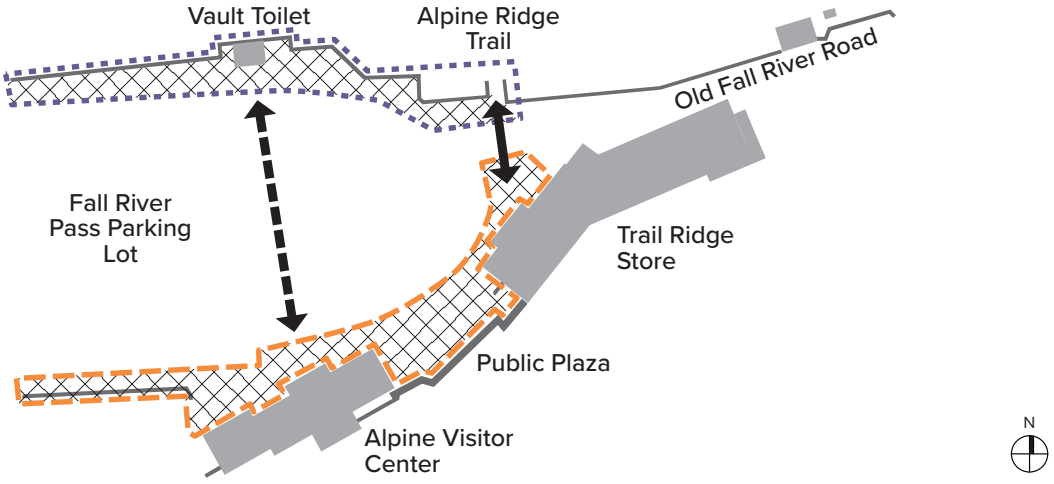
Condition and Analysis

Walks with retaining walls define pedestrian use along Fall River Pass Parking Lot and prevent the creation of social trails through the alpine tundra. Visitors often walk through the parking lot to avoid cold, windy conditions and take the shortest route to Alpine Visitor Center, Vault Toilets, and Trail Ridge Store. Conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians are high at the parking lot and the walk leading to Alpine Ridge Trail/intersecting Old Fall River Road. Walks at Vault Toilets and in front of Alpine Visitor Center are in poor condition.

Walk alignments and surface material varied during the period of significance as the layout of parking was modified. Historic walks paralleled the edge of the parking lot and provided access to buildings. Historic walk surfaces included soft surfaces, asphalt, and concrete. The use and relationship of walks to adjacent parking and buildings remain from the period of significance. The walk to the north of the Fall River Pass Parking Lot is modified by the expansion of the parking and Vault Toilets from 2000 to 2001. The walk was widened and relocated to the north.

Treatment Guidance

- Preserve alignments and widths adjacent to Alpine Visitor Center and Trail Ridge Store. Repair concrete paving using a consistent paving mixture. Match, width, alignment, and scoring pattern of existing walks. At the time replacement is required use a sandblasted or light exposed local aggregate finish scored to match original geometric patterns.
- Allow modifications to curbs, paving, and stone veneer walls at the north edge to accommodate future operational, visitor use, or circulation needs. Provide adequate queuing within pedestrian spaces to prevent overflow into parking spaces and drive lanes.
- Provide an improved pedestrian crossing across Old Fall River Road to Alpine Ridge Trail.
- Provide an improved pedestrian connection through Fall River Pass Parking Lot from Vault Toilet to Alpine Visitor Center and Trail Ridge Store. Consider pavement markings or a change in material to delineate pedestrian use.
- Integrate accessible ramps and features to be components of walks in compliance with ABAAS standards.



Circulation - Public Plaza

Condition and Analysis

Public Plaza lines the rim of Fall River Cirque and offers panoramic views of the alpine tundra and landscape below. The plaza extends east from Alpine Visitor Center to Trail Ridge Store with Fall River Pass Parking Lot to the west and a stone veneer wall defining the edge of the plaza to the east. Public Plaza's concrete surface is scored to create a geometric pattern continuing along the sidewalk at Alpine Visitor Center. Condition varies with failure of concrete in areas of Public Plaza.

Public Plaza was modified by the removal of a landscape island near Alpine Visitor Center in the 1990s, replacement of the fence barrier with a stone veneer wall at an unknown time, addition of accessible ramps at unknown times, replacement of handrails and stairs at Trail Ridge Store in 2017, and addition of a metal handrail to the top of the stone veneer wall in 2017. Ongoing maintenance includes resetting stone in the wall and replacement of concrete walks and curbs.

Treatment Guidance



Figure 3-21. Public Plaza, c. 1970s, reflected Mission 66 design of plazas defined by hardscape, seating areas, planting beds, raised planters, seating, and site and building walls. Preserve these elements and consider re-establishing the original landscape island or pavement design to assist with visitor flow and experience (source: ROMO, HS-0170).

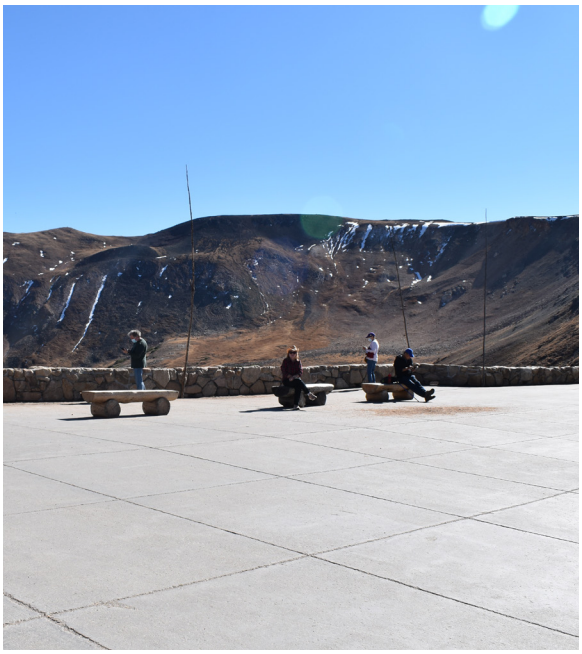


Figure 3-22. Preserve and repair Public Plaza. Replace concrete paving using a durable concrete material. Consider a sandblasted or light exposed aggregate finish, scored in a simple pattern or original scoring pattern if additional research verifies the pattern of the original plaza (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).

Treatment Guidance

Preserve and repair Public Plaza and allow compatible modifications for contemporary use.

Preserve the scale, form, and width of Public Plaza and its setting between Trail Ridge Store and Alpine Visitor Center.

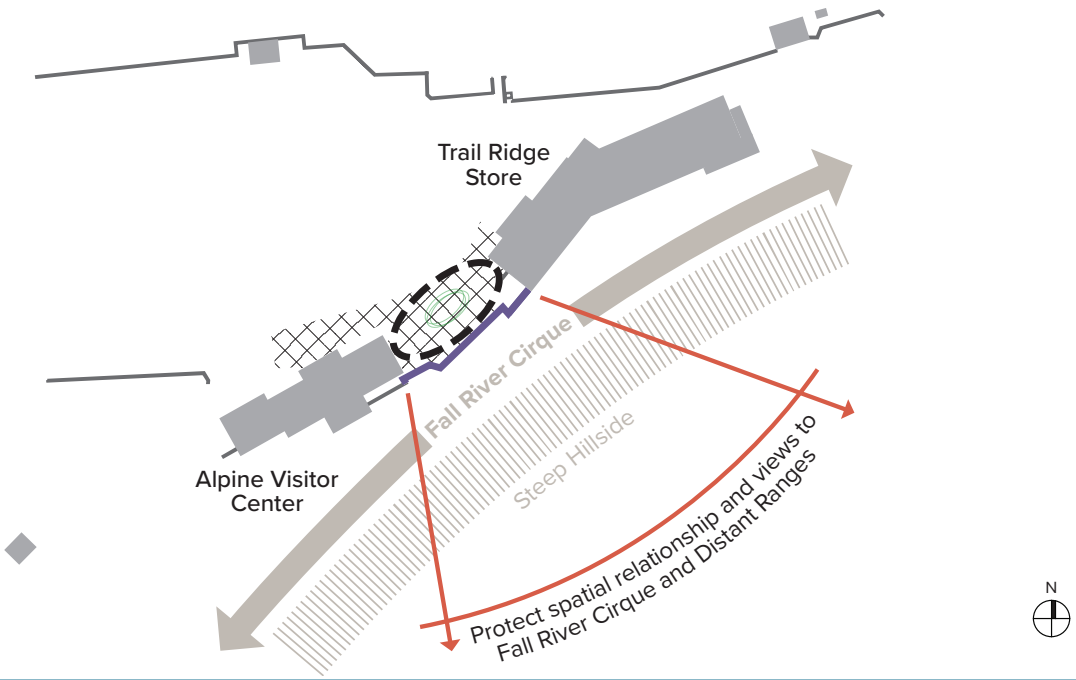
Preserve Public Plaza's orientation towards Fall River Cirque.

Replace the concrete paving of Public Plaza using a durable concrete material of a finish, thickness, and structural qualities to withstand the harsh conditions of the setting and use by large numbers of visitors. Consider a sandblasted or light exposed aggregate finish, scored in the geometric pattern of the original plaza, and graded for positive drainage. Consider using a consistent paving mixture and finish throughout Fall River Pass Complex to ensure future repair and patching is consistent.

Consider a pavement design that interprets the original plaza's landscaped island planted with native vegetation and boulders. If possible, consider re-establishing the original landscape island to assist with visitor flow and experience.

Design simple metal handrails to be securely anchored to the outside of stone walls and grounded. Ensure handrails do not impede views and meet current building and accessibility codes.

Integrate accessible ramps and features to be components of Public Plaza and in compliance with ABAAS standards.



Circulation - Alpine Ridge Trail (5LR.14880)

Condition and Analysis

Alpine Ridge Trail, an out and back route, extends 1,600 feet from Fall River Pass Parking Lot to the small, paved platform at the summit. Alpine Ridge Trail follows an unsustainable alignment along the fall line of the hill that requires the trail to be hardened. The 6'-0" wide asphalt paved trail includes precast concrete, stone, and stone-edge steps along steep portions of the route and two stone veneer retaining walls lining concrete steps at the start of the trail. Condition varies. Erosion, cracking of asphalt, and cracking and separation of precast concrete steps occurs along the trail.[3.11]

The trail does not meet accessibility requirements and the climb is difficult for many visitor. This results in the widening of the trail corridor by visitors seeking resting areas. Small boulders and removal metal posts connected with rope define segments of the trail.

Alpine Ridge Trail alignment remains similar to the period of significance and contributes to Fall River Pass Historic District. The historic surfacing, width, and alignment of Alpine Ridge Trail are modified by improvements to formalize social trails and measures to address trail sustainability and visitor experience. This includes building pressure treated log steps in the summers of 1984 and 1985; realigning a portion of the trail to follow a gentler grade from Fall River Pass Parking Lot to the water tank, installing precast concrete steps, restoring a segment of the trail in 2012, and installing removable metals posts with rope at the terminus of the trail in 2019.[3.12]

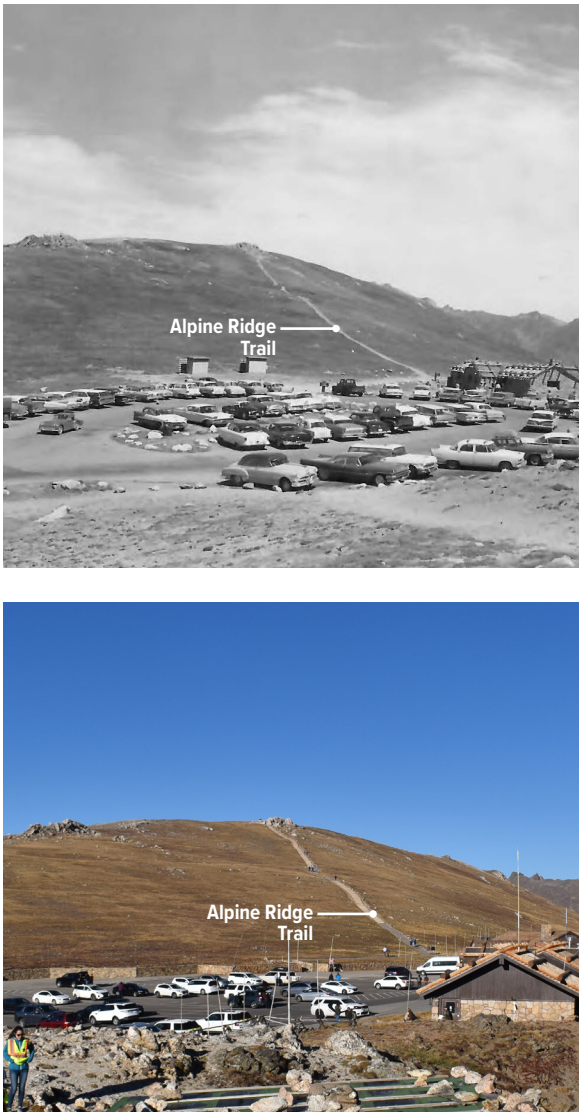


Figure 3-23. The historic alignment and relationship of Alpine Ridge Trail to Fall River Pass Complex remains similar to the period of significance. Preserve Alpine Ridge Trail and allow modifications for improved safety, sustainability, and protection of the alpine tundra. Replace the existing trail with a step / sloped walk that follows the same alignment and is fitted with the hillside's topography (top image source: ROMO-11-Q-2-a, neg 5238; bottom image source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).

3.11 The NPS previously studied options for a more sustainable route. These options were dismissed as they presented significant impacts to the alpine tundra ecosystem and views.

3.12 NPS, *NRHP Nomination - Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 8.

Treatment Guidance

Preserve Alpine Ridge Trail and allow modifications for improved safety, sustainability, and protection of the alpine tundra.

1. Repair trail erosion and vegetation where use has expanded into the alpine tundra.

2. Replace the existing trail with a step / sloped walk that follows the same alignment but better fitted with the hillside's topography.
   - Consider a wider trail to provide adequate space for trail users, passing, and resting areas for two-way travel.
   - Design step sections to have a consistent rise and tread depth to create a comfortable walking rhythm.
   - Design drainage to minimize erosion.
   - Design the trail edge to discourage stepping into the alpine tundra using physical, barriers including boulders, cobble pans, or thimble eye anchor rod fencing where additional delineation is required.

3. Design trail surfacing to be slip resistant, stabilized for high volumes of users, durable to the harsh environment and freeze thaw cycles.

4. Install trail features, e.g., steps, water bars, using locally sourced, natural materials and colors that blend or assimilate the trail with the alpine tundra ecosystem.

5. Acceptable materials include Lyons Sandstone or locally sourced native stone (indigenous to the high alpine tundra), integral color concrete of a color compatible with the natural setting and with a rough finish, or crushed stone or aggregate.



Figure 3-24. Segments of Alpine Ridge Trail are in poor condition with missing steps, erosion, and expansion into the alpine tundra ecosystem (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).



Figure 3-25. Consider a wider trail to provide adequate space for trail users, passing and resting areas for two-way travel (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).

Circulation - Ute Trail (5LR.14880) and Helipad

Condition and Analysis

Ute Trail, a narrow, native surface route, extends beyond the district from the southwest corner of Fall River Pass Parking Lot to Milner Pass. The trail drops steeply from the crosswalk across Trail Ridge Road to a relatively even grade near the Helipad. The trail is generally in good condition. Erosion exists along the edge of Trail Ridge Road.

The alignment of Ute Trail remains similar to the period of significance and contributes to Fall River Pass Historic District.

Helipad is set on Ute Trail to the east of Trail Ridge Road and is marked by a small metal sign. Established in 1998 as a landing zone for medical helicopters.

Treatment Guidance

Preserve Ute Trail and allow modifications for improved safety, sustainability, and protection of the alpine tundra.

1. Preserve the alignment, width, and surfacing of Ute Trail. Where use expands into the alpine tundra, repair trail erosion and vegetation.
- When trail repair or resurfacing is required, retain the same aggregate surfacing or a material that is similar in color and texture. Replace trail features, e.g., steps, water bars, using locally sourced, natural materials and colors that blend or assimilate the trail with the alpine tundra.
- Where needed install barriers, ensuring these do not detract from the alpine tundra ecosystem and are removable, elk compatible, and non-conductive to lightning strikes.



Figure 3-26. Preserve Ute Trail while maintaining access to Helipad (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).

Treatment Guidance

Allow modifications to provide a safe and accessible connection between Fall Pass Complex and Helipad/Ute Trail.

1. Provide a continuous sidewalk from the Medical Clinic entrance at Alpine Visitor Center to the eastern edge of Trail Ridge Road. Provide curb ramps, resting areas, and landing areas to meet current ABAAS requirements.

2. Provide and maintain a marked and identifiable pedestrian crossing at Trail Ridge Road with landings and curb ramps to the east and west. Consider a change in pavement material (i.e., concrete) to delineate the pedestrian crossing, improve visibility of the crossing, and reduce ongoing maintenance required to maintain pavement markings. Ensure the marked crossing and signage increases the visibility of the crosswalk while minimizing impacts to the natural setting and views from Trail Ridge Road to Fall River Pass Complex.

3. Reduce the gradient of Ute Trail's longitudinal slope west of Trail Ridge Road. Stabilize the surfacing where Ute Trail intersects Trail Ridge Road.



Figure 3-27. Reduce the gradient of Ute Trail and stabilize surfacing where the trail intersects with Trail Ridge Road Trail (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).

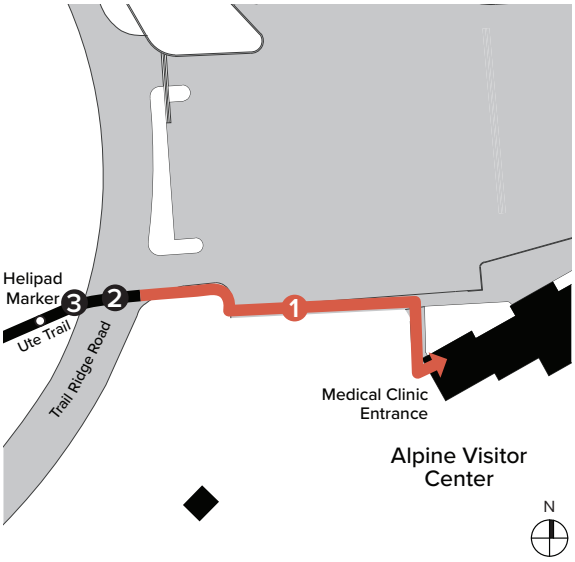


Figure 3-28. Provide a continuous sidewalk from the Medical Clinic entrance at Alpine Visitor Center to Trail Ridge Road (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).

Building and Structures

Condition and Analysis

The district includes five historic buildings Alpine Visitor Center, Fall River Pass Ranger Station, Fall River Pass Pumphouse and Catchment Basin, Fall River Pass Generator House, and Trail Ridge Store. The Preservation Plan for historic buildings, developed as a separate volume, provides detailed building chronology, analysis, and treatment guidance for Generator House, Fall River Pass Ranger Station, and Fall River Pass Pumphouse and Catchment Basin.

The following existing condition information provided in figure captions is based on the 2021 Fall River Pass Historic District National Register of Historic Places registration form.

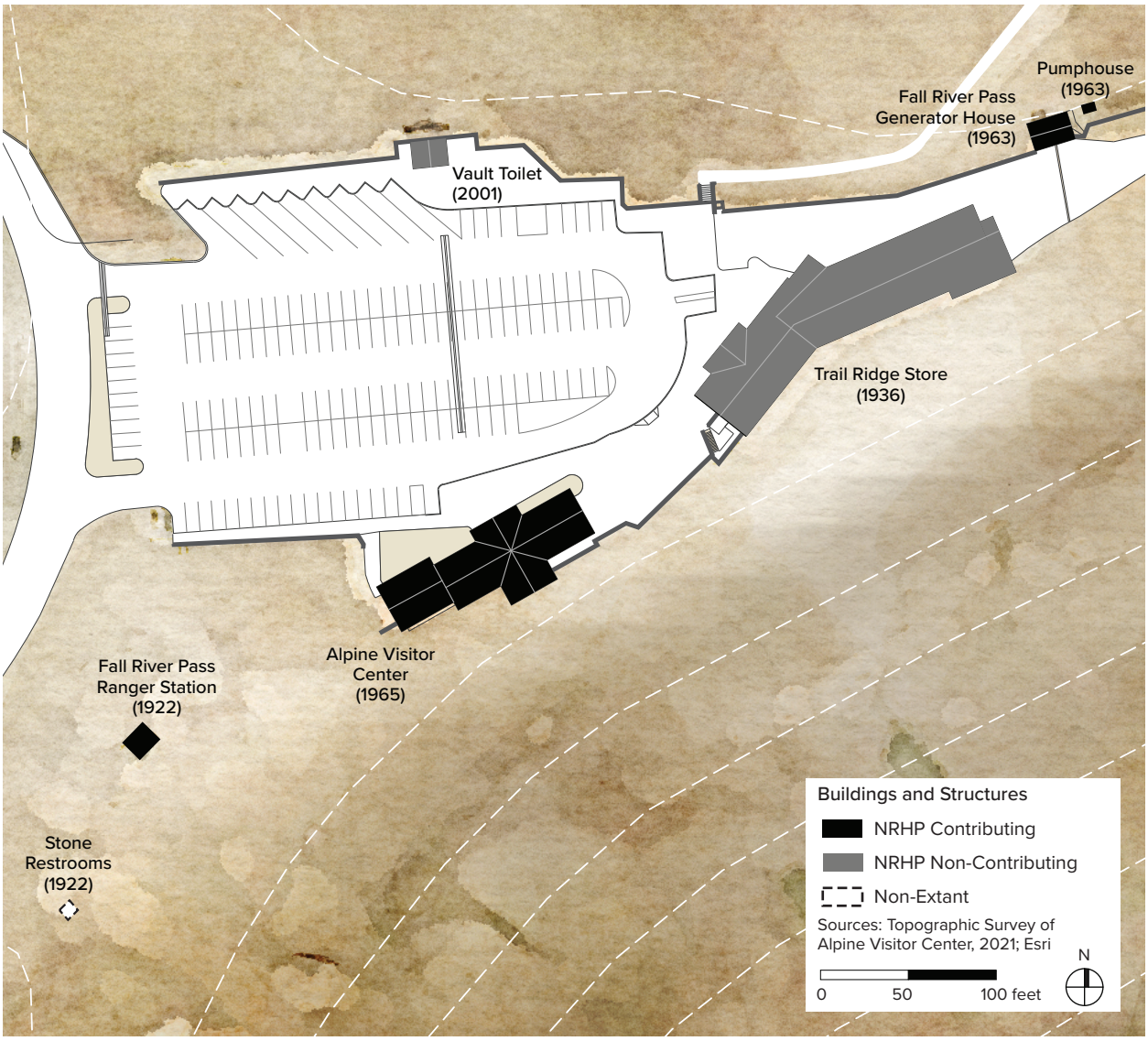


Figure 3-29. Fall River Pass Complex's Buildings and Structures (source: Mundus Bishop, 2022).



Figure 3-30. Alpine Visitor Center (Building 0543, 5LR.11033) is a one-story steel-frame and concrete building covered in stone veneer and plywood with large window walls on two facades and a cross-gabled roof with exposed rafter ends and wood shake shingles. Architect William C. Muchow designed the building in the Park Service Modern style. Exterior modifications to the original design are minimal (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).



Figure 3-31. Fall River Pass Generator House (Building 0692, 5LR.14267) (left) is a one-story stone veneer building on a concrete block foundation with a gabled roof covered in wood shakes designed by P.A. Kay and others from the Division of Architecture in the Western Office of Design and Construction. Modifications include the addition of two large utility boxes to the façade and numerous additions of venting access (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).



Figure 3-32. Fall River Pass Ranger Station (Building 0058, 5LR.1204) is a one-room building partially built into the sloping hillside. The rubblestone masonry structure was built in 1922 and designed by Daniel P. Hull, Assistant Landscape Engineer in the NPS Yosemite Valley Office. The building is currently vacant with no identified use. Use of the building presents significant challenges related to accessibility and building code compliance (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).



Figure 3-33. Fall River Pumphouse and Catchment Basin (Building 0171, 5LR.10936) is a one-room building partially built into the sloping hillside. The early NPS rustic style structure was built in 1938. The building is currently vacant with no identified use. Use of the building presents significant challenges related to accessibility and building code compliance (source: Jorgensen, 2021, 2021).



Figure 3-34. Trail Ridge Store (Building 0170, 5LR.1207) is a one-story building with a basement. Trail Ridge Store was built in 1936 in the NPS rustic style. Modifications to the building are extensive and the building does not contribute to the historic district (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).



Figure 3-35. Vault Toilets were built in 2001. The building has stone veneer siding on its lower portion and vertical siding on its upper portion, stonestring course, a roof covered in wooden shakes, and open entry façade with large metal doors (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).

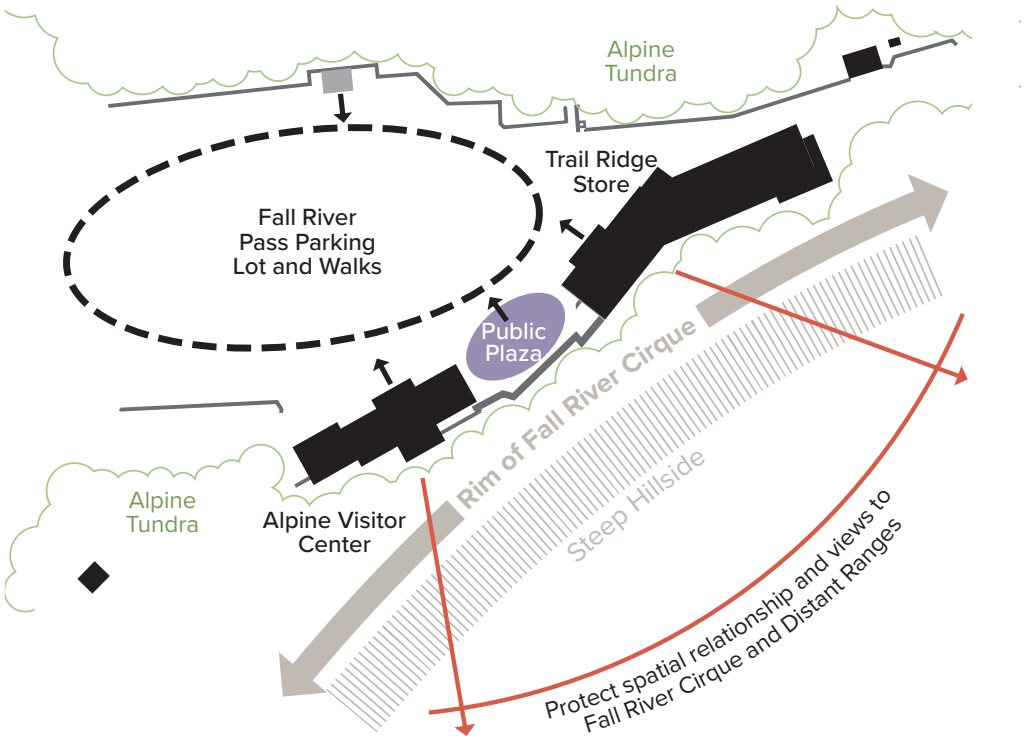
Treatment Guidance

Preserve the historic orientation and siting of NPS rustic and Mission 66 buildings to Fall River Pass Parking and Walks, Fall River Cirque, and distant ranges. Orient new buildings to capitalize on significant views.

- Fall River Pass Parking and Walks
- Fall River Cirque
- Significant Views
- Primary Building Entrance Orientation

Site building additions or modifications to be subordinate to the original building and natural features. Ensure additions or modifications do not obstruct relationships to natural features–alpine tundra, Fall River Cirque, mountain ranges. Locate utilitarian functions (e.g., mechanical and solar infrastructure) outside of significant viewsheds and outdoor gathering spaces.

- Original Building
- Fall River Cirque
- Alpine Tundra
- Significant Views



Treatment Guidance

Consider buildings and structures that are compatible in mass, form, and scale with the original NPS rustic and Mission 66 buildings and are designed in accordance with the current Rocky Mountain National Park Design Guidelines.

Ensure designs respect but do not imitate historic buildings and structures, are designed in a contemporary style, and are products of their own time. Ensure the design is compatible with construction materials of historic architecture and colors that blends with the alpine tundra.

Consider low-profile buildings and structures set into hillsides where possible to blend structural masses with the natural horizontal landforms of the district.

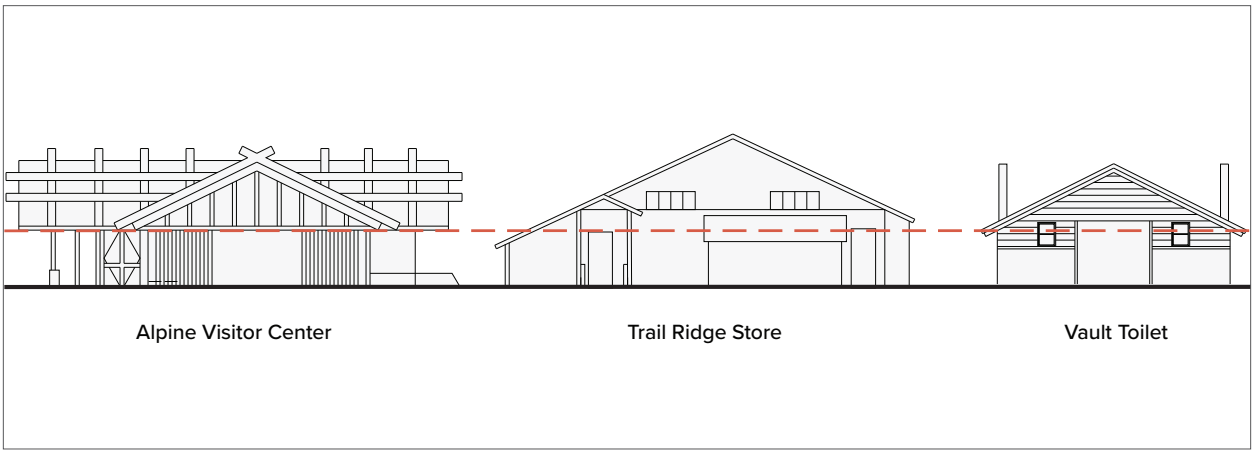


Figure 3-36. Fall River Pass Complex buildings share a consistent scale. Ensure new features are proportional in height, mass, and scale, but are subordinate to existing buildings and natural features.

Features

Condition and Analysis

Features include contemporary additions that serve visitor and operational functions. These primarily include regulatory and wayfinding signage, seating, trash receptacles, buck and rail fences, and stone veneer walls. Low stone walls define the walks to the north and south of Fall River Pass Parking Lot, Public Plaza, and the northern boundary of Old Fall River Road near Trail Ridge Store. Historic photographs indicate features during the period of significance served similar visitor and operational functions. These included snow poles, seating, signage, flagpoles, fences, and boulders. These features are non-extant.

Stone veneer walls at Fall River Pass Generator House and Alpine Visitor Center (south) likely date to Mission 66. Public Plaza Wall replaced the original fence barrier between Alpine Visitor Center and Trail Ridge Store at an unknown time.[3.13] The NPS built North and South Walls in 1985 to provide additional parking and protect alpine tundra. North Wall was modified in 2001 with the addition of new Vault Toilets.

3.13 NPS, *NRHP Nomination - Fall River Pass Historic District Draft*, 9.

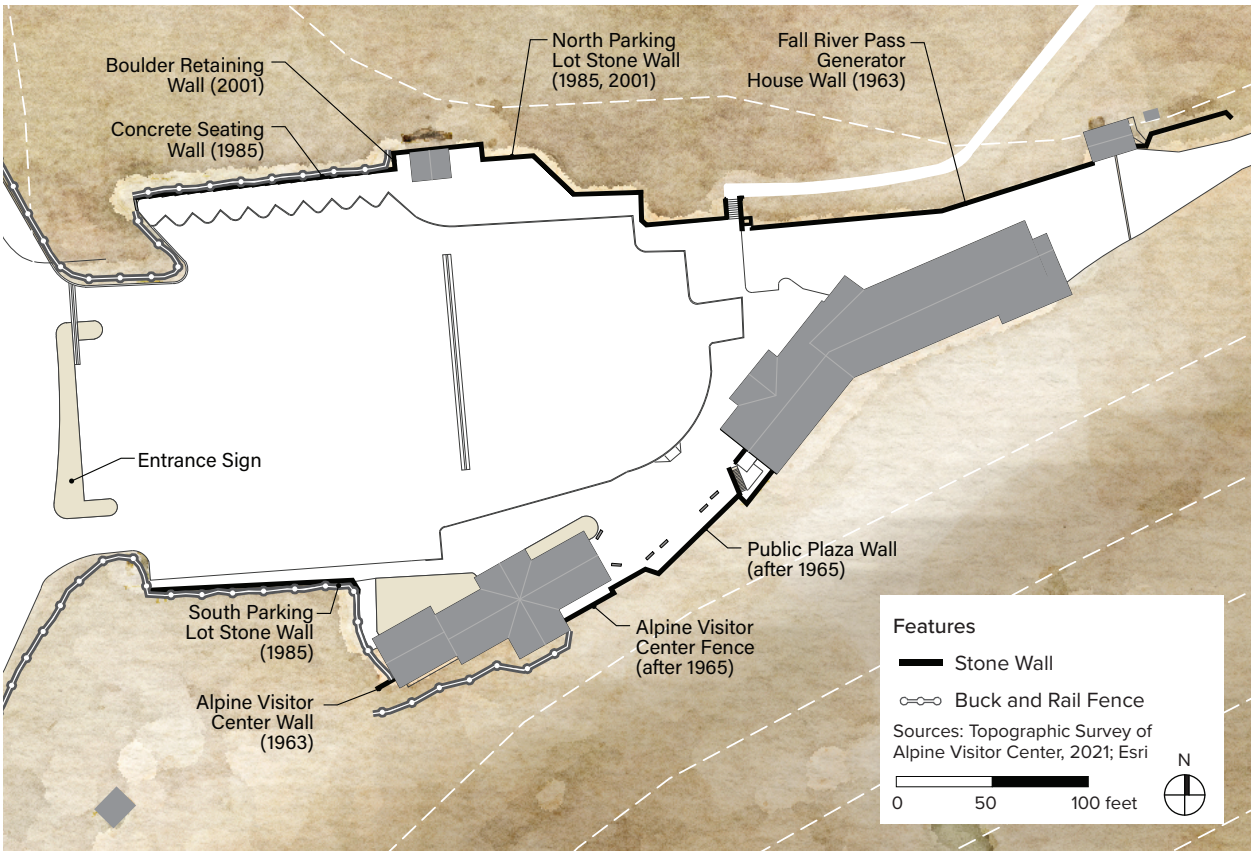


Figure 3-37. Fall River Pass Complex Features Existing Condition Plan (source: Mundus Bishop, 2022).

Treatment Guidance

Repair or replace the peeled log and wood lattice fence at Alpine Visitor Center. Consider a simple steel guardrail, e.g. weathering steel with a bolted assembly and anchored to the back of the back of the wall to the outside of walls. Ensure handrails do not impede views and meet current building and accessibility codes.

Provide barriers to protect the alpine tundra and restrict visitor access along trails and visitor use areas.

- Ensure barriers are designed to be elk compatible, non-conductive to lightning strikes, and blend with the alpine tundra.
- Consider low-profile barriers such as small boulders or temporary thimble eye anchor rod fencing to define visitor use areas.
- Provide a low-profile buck and rail fence or Lawson Logs where more substantial protection is required.

Consider removing buck and rail fencing where stone walls define the edge of the alpine tundra.

Install sustainability infrastructure or facilities to not obscure scenic views or vistas or negatively interrupt the visitor experience.

Locate infrastructure in areas used or identified as operations areas.

- Ensure sustainability infrastructure is of a scale, material, and color that harmonizes with the historic setting and aesthetic.

Ensure measures to integrate sustainability and resiliency are undertaken in a manner that preserves the setting.

Locate sustainability infrastructure, i.e., photovoltaic panels, out of contributing and significant views and in areas associated with operations.

- Locate infrastructure at ground level, on poles, or on building so that it does not obscure scenic views or vistas or negatively interrupt the visitor experiences.
- Ensure sustainability infrastructure is of a scale, material, and color that harmonizes with contributing features and the alpine tundra ecosystem.

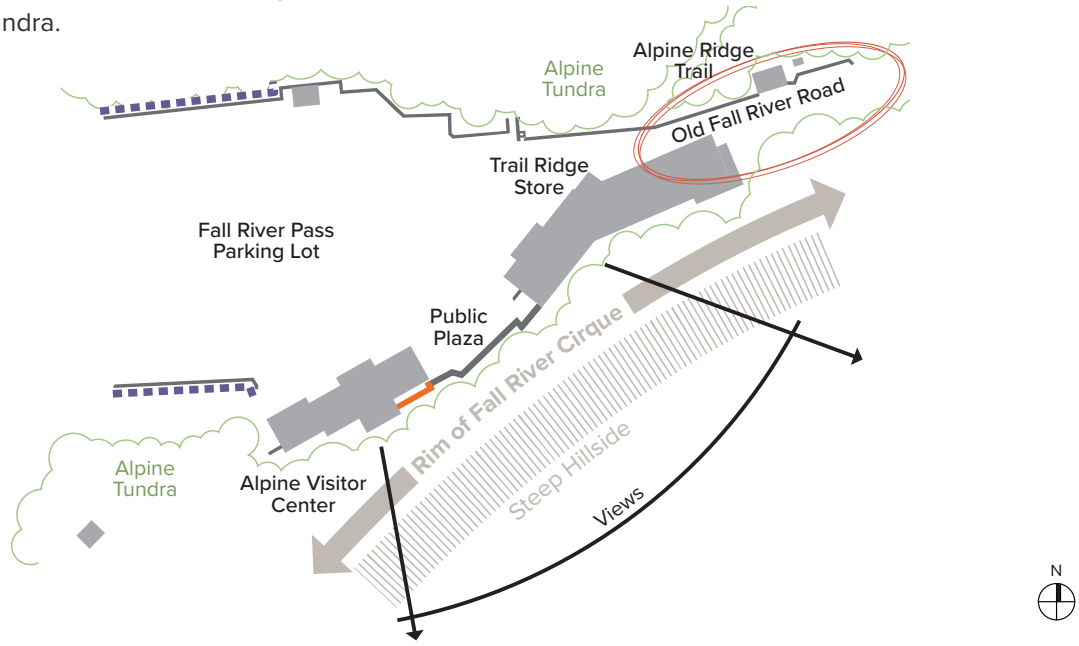




Figure 3-38. Fall River Pass Generator House Wall built in 1963 with Mission 66 improvement of Fall River Pass Complex (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).



Figure 3-39. Stone veneer wall north of Parking Lot (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).



Figure 3-40. Stepped concrete seating wall built in 1985 (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).



Figure 3-41. Typical stone veneer wall and cap built in 1985 to the north and south of Fall River Pass Parking Lot (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).



Figure 3-42. Public Plaza concrete with stone veneer wall built after 1965 (source: Mundus Bishop, 2021).

Treatment Guidance

Preserve and repair Mission 66 stone veneer walls—Public Plaza Stone Wall, Alpine Visitor Center Wall and Fall River Pass Generator House Wall.

- Preserve alignment, height and width of contributing stone veneer walls built during the original construction in 1963.
- When repair is needed, repoint missing mortar and reset missing stones. Match color and texture of original mortar of historic walls. Ensure uniform strength and uniform color and ensure joints are raked to expose mass of stones as originally built. Reuse original stones to the greatest extent possible. If new stones are needed, match stone to original stone from salvaged, local, or regional quarries using new stones that are compatible in composition, texture, color, and size to historic walls.
- Provide positive drainage away from Public Plaza Stone Wall and at base on the rim of Fall River Cirque. If additional height is needed, consider adding a steel guardrail, e.g. weathering steel with a bolted assembly and anchored to the back of the back of the wall facing Fall River Cirque. Ensure guardrail do not impede views and meet current building and accessibility codes.

Repair or replace stone veneer walls associated with Fall River Pass Parking Lot – Pumphouse Wall, Parking Lot Stone Wall (south) and Parking Lot Stone Wall (north), and allow new stone walls as replacements.

- When repairing stone walls match the original workmanship including finishing joints to match original technique and cutting stone and laying in courses to match the original construction. Each wall has a slightly different craftsmanship, stone coursing and mortar joint pattern and raking.
- Repoint walls to replace missing mortar and to reset missing stones. Match mixture and materials in mortar mix and rake joints to match original depths and technique. Reuse original stones to the greatest extent possible. If new stones are needed, match stone to original stone from salvaged, local, or regional quarries using new stones that are compatible in composition, texture, color, and size to historic walls.
- If new walls are required, design walls to be a simple and timeless aesthetic, compatible in material, mass, form, scale, and detail with contributing features and the alpine tundra ecosystem. Provide full width stone veneer concrete walls with stones compatible in composition, texture, color, and size to contributing walls but that are clearly not replicative.

Treatment Guidance

Provide a unified set of site furnishings carefully detailed and built of quality materials and craftsmanship to provide essential administrative, operational, and visitor use (e.g, trash and recycling receptacles, seating, signage, barriers).[3.14]

- Provide furnishings built of natural materials, e.g. weathering steel and wood, that are compatible with the setting and locally sourced. Ensure materials are durable, maintainable, and easily replaced. Consider stone, logs, and dimensional lumber for seating and barriers and steel for trash and recycling receptacles.
- Ensure furnishings are easily removed for snow plowing and seasonal storage.
- Acceptable materials for benches include (indigenous) natural materials including locally sourced native stone, weathered steel, dimensional wood, logs, and concrete.
- Acceptable materials for trash receptacles steel, weathered steel, and dimensional wood.
- Follow the Sign Plan for Rocky Mountain National Park for sign design guidance.
- Acceptable materials for signage include steel, weathered steel, dimensional wood, and logs.
- Provide signage at select locations for site identification, building identification, wayfinding, and interpretation.
- Locate signage to provide function while minimizing the number so as to not detract from the setting.





Figure 3-43. Acceptable materials for features include (indigenous) natural materials including locally sourced native stone, weathered steel, dimensional wood, logs, and concrete. This includes log benches at Public Plaza and Lawson Logs (top image source: Mundus Bishop, 2021; bottom image source: NPS).

3.14 Design all site furnishings in accordance with current Rocky Mountain National Park Design Guidelines.

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX B: TREATMENT TERMINOLOGY

The following terminology is used in this report to describe recommended actions.[1]

Consider is to routinely evaluate if a treatment action can be undertaken. Budget constraints and long-term maintenance may result in delayed treatment action. As circumstances change, the treatment action should be reevaluated and eventually completed.

Design intent refers to the creative objectives that were applied to the development of a historic property.

Introduce is the addition of a new, nonhistoric feature compatible with the cultural landscape. This may also include the replacement of a missing historic feature.

In-kind refers to the replacement of features extensively deteriorated or missing parts of features using materials that match the historic detail, configuration, and appearance as closely as possible.

Maintain refers to measures that sustain the form, integrity and materials of contributing features, either on a regular basis or as a nonrecurring event.

Preserve refers to those measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of contributing features. It includes initial stabilization work, where necessary, as well as ongoing preservation maintenance and repair of historic materials and features.

Protect refers to actions to safeguard a historic feature by defending or guarding it against further deterioration or loss. Such action is generally of temporary nature and anticipates future preservation treatment.

Reconstruct refers to the act or process of depicting, by means of new work, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving historic structure or any part thereof, for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific time in its original location.

Rehabilitate refers to the act or process of allowing a compatible use through repair, alteration, or additions as long as those features that convey the historical, cultural, or architectural values are preserved.

Repair refers to those measures that are necessary to correct deteriorated, damaged, or faulty materials of features. These measures are more extensive than regular maintenance and undertake work necessary to bring a contributing feature or area to good condition.

Restore refers to those measures necessary to accurately depict the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared during a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period.

Retain are those actions that are necessary to allow a feature (contributing or noncontributing) to remain in place in its current configuration and condition.

Stabilize refers to those measures that require more work than standard maintenance practices, and that are necessary to prevent the further deterioration, failure, or loss of contributing features.

1 Adapted from The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties as amended and annotated, 1995 and http://www.nps.gov/dscw/definitions.htm.

APPENDIX C: METHODOLOGY

This plan was conducted at a thorough level of investigation and documentation for historical research, existing condition assessment, and landscape analysis. This research methodology, as defined by the NPS, focuses on the use of select documentation of known and presumed relevance including readily available primary and secondary sources. This work is in accordance with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the *Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes, A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports, and Cultural Landscape Inventory Professional Procedures Guide*.[1]

Review of select documentation of known and presumed relevance included readily available primary and secondary sources. These included data from the park and the NPS' Denver Service Center Electronic Technical Information Center (eTIC) data and information. Planning documents, administrative reports, technical reports, natural resource studies, and correspondence were reviewed. Review of documentation included drawings and photographs, correspondence from primary and secondary sources, and archeological documentation.

Drawings and illustrations were prepared using background data provided by the NPS. This included original drawings supplemented by a site reconnaissance in the fall of 2021 to document existing conditions. These investigations were conducted according to best practices.

EXISTING CONDITION ASSESSMENT & ANALYSIS OF INTEGRITY

Site investigation documented the existing condition of the cultural landscape. Existing condition is evaluated using the following criteria.

- Good—Those features of the landscape that do not require treatment. Only minor or routine maintenance is needed at this time.
- Fair—Some deterioration, decline, or damage is noticeable; the feature may require immediate intervention. If intervention is deferred, the feature will require extensive attention in a few years.
- Poor—Deterioration, decline, or damage is serious; the feature is seriously deteriorated, damaged, or presents a hazardous condition. Due to the level of deterioration, damage, or danger, the feature requires extensive and immediate attention.

1 Page, Robert R., Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan, *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Processes and Techniques.* (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, 1998).

This document evaluates the district according to landscape characteristics that include tangible and intangible aspects. These landscape characteristics collectively create the historic character of the district and aid in understanding its cultural significance. The following seven landscape characteristics are included.

- Natural Systems are natural aspects that have influenced the development and physical form.
- Archeological Sites are areas containing surface and subsurface remnants related to historic or prehistoric land use.
- Spatial Organization is the arrangement of elements creating the ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create space, including topography, buildings, and vegetation.
- Views and Vistas are features that create or allow a range of vision that can be natural or designed and controlled.
- Circulation are features and materials that constitute systems of movement.
- Buildings and Structures are three-dimensional man-made constructs.
- Small Scale Features are human-scaled elements that provide detail and function.

These seven landscape characteristics were evaluated for integrity according to the period of significance of 1920 to 1966. This assessment was undertaken to understand the cultural landscape as a whole; to identify and document qualities that contribute to its historic character; and to identify individual features that contribute to its significance.

APPENDIX D: NRHP CONTRIBUTING FEATURES SUMMARY

Table 1. Natural Systems and Features

Feature	Description	Condition	NRHP Contributing Feature	Contributes to Historic Character
Alpine Tundra Ecosystem	Alpine tundra primarily comprised of perennials–flowering plants, cushion plants, non-flowering lichens grow on rocks and soil, and grasses and sedges grow where soil is well developed.	Good	NRHP Contributing Feature	Contributes to Historic Character

Table 2. Archeological Sites

Feature	Description	Condition	NRHP Contributing Feature	Contributes to Historic Character
Site 5LR608	Flint relics were first noted by Jack Moomaw in 1928. Development of Fall River Pass Complex likely destroyed site.	Poor		

Table 3. Spatial Organization

Feature	Description	Condition	NRHP Contributing Feature	Contributes to Historic Character
Fall River Pass Complex Cluster	Cluster of development set on the headwall of Fall River Cirque and surrounded by Alpine Tundra.	Good	NRHP Contributing Feature	Contributes to Historic Character
Fall River Pumphouse and Catchment Basin Cluster	Cluster of development set 1,000 below Fall River Pass Complex and surrounded by Alpine Tundra.	Good	NRHP Contributing Feature	Contributes to Historic Character

Table 4. Views and Vistas

Feature	Description	Condition	NRHP Contributing Feature	Contributes to Historic Character
View from Public Plaza to the South and East	180-degree view from Public Plaza to the valley, Lava Cliffs, and Old Fall River Road. The peaks of the Mummy Range - Chapin, Chiquita, and Ypsilon - are prominent to the east.	Good	NRHP Contributing Feature	Contributes to Historic Character
View from the summit of Alpine Ridge Trail	Panoramic view from the top of Alpine Ridge Trail to Mummy Range to the east, Never Summer Mountains to the west, and distant mountain ranges to the northeast. The buildings, structures, and sites comprising Fall River Pass Historic District are visible from the site. Views extend beyond the district to Wyoming.	Good	NRHP Contributing Feature	Contributes to Historic Character
View from Old Fall River Road to Fall River Pass Complex	View from Old Fall River Road to Alpine Visitor Center, Public Plaza, and Trail Ridge Store. Approaching from the east, the viewpoint is at a bend in the road a quarter-mile from Fall River Pass Complex.	Good	NRHP Contributing Feature	Contributes to Historic Character
View from Trail Ridge Road to the Fall River Pass Complex	View from Trail Ridge Road into the Fall River Pass Complex. Approaching from the east, the viewpoint is where the road descends after a bend in the road. It is a quarter-mile from Fall River Pass Complex.	Good	NRHP Contributing Feature	Contributes to Historic Character
Arrival Sequence	Arrival sequence of views from Old Fall River Road and Trail Ridge Road.	Good		Contributes to Historic Character

Table 5. Circulation

Feature	Description	Condition	NRHP Contributing Feature	Contributes to Historic Character
Trail Ridge Road (1932, 5LR.502)	Asphalt paved road with northbound turning lane to Fall River Pass Parking Lot and northbound merging lane from Fall River Pass Parking Lot. 800 feet of the road are within Fall River Pass Historic District. Trail Ridge Road is an All-American Road and Colorado Scenic Byway.	Good	NRHP Contributing Feature	
Old Fall River Road (1920, 5LR.885)	Gravel, asphalt, and concrete surfaced road. Nearly one mile of the road is within the Fall River Pass Historic District. Gravel sections are generally in good condition. Asphalt and concrete paving near Trail Ridge Store are in poor condition.	Good (varies)	NRHP Contributing Feature	
Fall River Pass Parking Lot	Asphalt paved parking lot with concrete curbs to the east of Trail Ridge Road. Parking capacity is 178 vehicles with reserved spaces for government vehicles, RVs, motorcycles, oversized vehicles, buses, and accessible parking. Concrete curbs vary in condition and asphalt paving is in generally good condition.	Good		
Trail Ridge Store Administrative Parking	Four reserved parking spaces near loading docks to the north of Trail Ridge Store.	Good		
Trail Ridge Store Loading Area	Loading area to the south of Generator House at Trail Ridge Store. Asphalt in poor condition.	Fair		
Alpine Ridge Trail (5LR.14880)	6'-0" wide asphalt paved trail with precast concrete, stone, and stone-edge steps from the northeastern corner of Parking Lot to a small, paved platform at the summit. Two stone veneer retaining walls line concrete steps at the start of the trail. Small boulders and removal metal posts connected with rope line segments of the trail. Erosion exists along the trail, precast concrete and asphalt are cracking, and precast concrete steps are separating.	Fair	NRHP Contributing Feature	
Ute Trail (5LR.803.1)	2'-0" wide native surface trail west of Trail Ridge Road. The trail drops steeply from the crosswalk across Trail Ridge Road to a relatively even grade near the Helipad.	Fair	NRHP Contributing Feature	
Pumphouse and Catchment Basin Access Route	2'-0" +/- wide native surface route. The vaguely defined access route provides NPS access from Old Fall River Road to Pumphouse and Catchment Basin.	Fair		
Medical Clinic Access Route	Native surface route from the Medical Clinic entrance at the southwest façade of Visitor Center to the concrete patio at the southeast façade of Visitor Center.	Fair		
Fall River Pass Parking Lot Walks	Concrete walks of varying widths to the south, east, and north of Fall River Pass Parking Lot. Concrete walks to the east and west of Vault Toilets and in front of Alpine Visitor Center are in poor condition.	Fair (varies)		
Public Plaza	Concrete plaza extending from Alpine Visitor Center to Trail Ridge Store. Concrete is failing in areas.	Good	NRHP Contributing Feature	
Helipad	Landing zone for medical helicopters marked by a small orange metal sign with a large black "H" on Ute Trail.	Good		

Table 6. Buildings and Structures

Feature	Description	Condition	NRHP Contributing Feature	Contributes to Historic Character
Alpine Visitor Center (Building 0543, 5LR.11033)	139'-2" by 36'-0" one-story building.	Good	NRHP Contributing Feature	
Fall River Pass Generator House (Building 0692, 5LR.14267) and Pumphouse	28'-0" by 22'-0" one-story building with 6'-0" by 10'-0" one-story pumphouse.	Good	NRHP Contributing Feature	
Fall River Pass Ranger Station (Building 0058, 5LR.1204)	20'-0" by 16'-0" one-room building.	Fair	NRHP Contributing Feature	
Fall River Pumphouse and Catchment Basin (Building 0171, 5LR.10936)	14'-0" by 12'-0" one-room building. Catchment Basin is built of concrete veneered with local boulders.	Fair	NRHP Contributing Feature	
Trail Ridge Store (Building 0170, 5LR.1207)	140'-0" by 60'-0" one-story building.	Good		
Vault Toilets (Building 1115)	33'-0" by 20'-0" one-story building.	Good		

Table 7. Small Scale Features

Feature	Description	Condition	NRHP Contributing Feature	Contributes to Historic Character
Fall River Pass Generator House Wall	42” +/- tall concrete with stone veneer wall north of Old Fall River Road. Wall extends from Fall River Pass Generator House west to Alpine Ridge Trail Steps. Failing mortar joints and loose, damaged, or missing stones along length of wall.	Good		Contributes to Historic Character
Parking Lot Stone Wall (north)	42” to 51” tall (varies) concrete with stone veneer wall. Failing mortar joints and loose, damaged, or missing stones along length of wall. Portions of the wall are beginning to tilt to the south.	Good		
Concrete Seating Wall (north)	Concrete seating wall to the west of Vault Toilets. Wall is stepped with wood bench seating. Condition of concrete wall and wood seating varies.	Fair		
Boulder Retaining Wall	Dry stacked boulder retaining wall to the west of Vault Toilets.	Good		
Parking Lot Stone Wall (south)	2’-0” tall concrete with stone veneer wall. Failing mortar joints and loose, damaged, or missing stones along length of wall.	Poor		
Alpine Visitor Center Wall	2’-0” +/- tall concrete with stone veneer wall.	Good		Contributes to Historic Character
Public Plaza Stone Wall	2’-0” +/- tall concrete stone veneer wall east of Public Plaza. Wall extends from Visitor Center to Trail Ridge Store.	Fair		
Alpine Visitor Center Fence	Peeled log and wood lattice fence to the south of Public Plaza.	Poor		
Buck and Rail Fence	Wood fence at Fall River Pass Parking Lot and entrance/exit drives.	Good		
Alpine Ridge Trail Barriers	Stone, treated lumber, and thimble eye anchor rod fencing along trail.	Varies		
Utility and Drainage Infrastructure	Manhole covers, service hatches, drainage pipes, metal grating, fire hydrants, and water quantity and quality monitoring wells.	Varies		
Weather Station	Weather station between Alpine Visitor Center and Fall River Pass Ranger Station.	Good		
Flagpole	Flagpole to the northwest of Alpine Visitor Center.	Good		
Waste Receptacles	Trash receptacles, recycling receptacles, and outdoor cigarette trash receptacles throughout complex.	Varies		

Table 7. Small Scale Features (continued)

Feature	Description	Condition	NRHP Contributing Feature	Contributes to Historic Character
Entrance Sign	Double-sided vehicular site identification sign set on a stone base. Brown metal sign notes the location of Alpine Visitor Center and Trail Ridge Store.	Good		
Regulatory Signage	Cautionary and directional signage throughout complex.	Varies		
Interpretive Signage	Waysides bolted to surface of Public Plaza. Waysides are removed and stored during winter closure.	Varies		
Helipad Sign	Small, square metal sign with a large black “H” on Ute Trail marking the location of Helipad.	Good		
Snow Poles	Poles, typically peel tree branches, delineating the edges of roads and Parking Lot.	Varies		
Benches	Large half logs with short horizontal logs to support the seat	Good		



Rocky Mountain National Park
Fall River Pass Historic District

Cultural Landscape Preservation Plan

April 2023