
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
2001



Bluffs Picnic Area
Blue Ridge Parkway - Highlands District

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Inventory Summary

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory Overview:

CLI General Information:

Purpose and Goals of the CLI

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI), a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the national park system, is one of the most ambitious initiatives of the National Park Service (NPS) Park Cultural Landscapes Program. The CLI is an evaluated inventory of all landscapes having historical significance that are listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources through a public planning process and in which the NPS has or plans to acquire any legal interest. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, condition, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, as well as other valuable information useful to park management. Cultural landscapes become approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into a national database. In addition, for landscapes that are not currently listed on the National Register and/or do not have adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer or the Keeper of the National Register.

The CLI, like the List of Classified Structures, assists the NPS in its efforts to fulfill the identification and management requirements associated with Section 110(a) of the National Historic Preservation Act, National Park Service Management Policies (2006), and Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management. Since launching the CLI nationwide, the NPS, in response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), is required to report information that respond to NPS strategic plan accomplishments. Two GPRA goals are associated with the CLI: bringing certified cultural landscapes into good condition (Goal 1a7) and increasing the number of CLI records that have complete, accurate, and reliable information (Goal 1b2B).

Scope of the CLI

The information contained within the CLI is gathered from existing secondary sources found in park libraries and archives and at NPS regional offices and centers, as well as through on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the site's overall significance. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features, and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's overall integrity and an assessment of the landscape's overall condition. The CLI also provides an illustrative site plan that indicates major features within the inventory unit. Unlike cultural landscape reports, the CLI does not provide management recommendations or

treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

Inventory Unit Description:

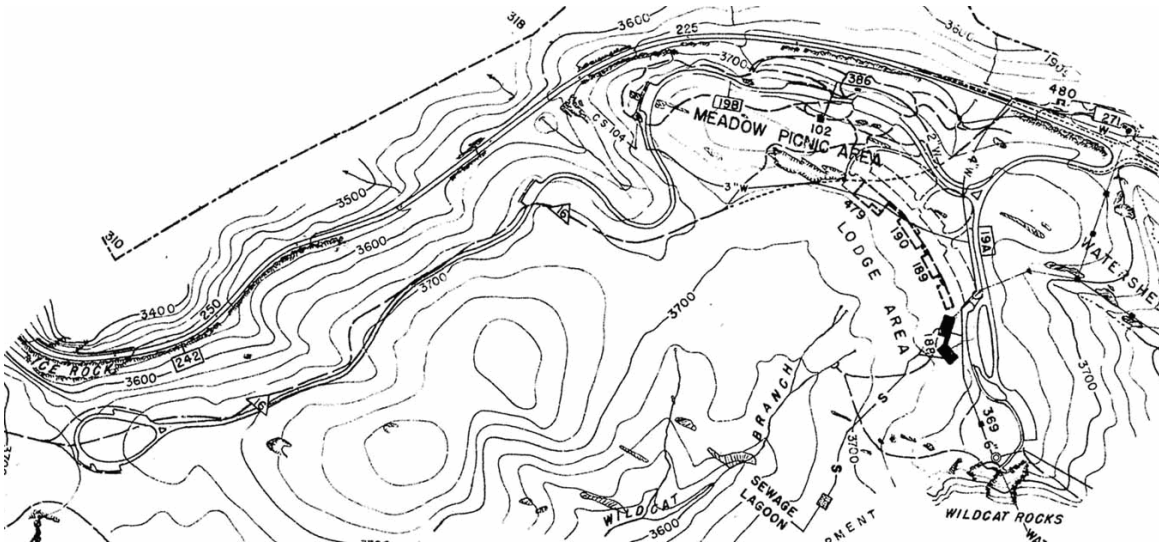
Bluffs Picnic Area is an 80-acre component landscape set within 6300-acre Doughton Park, a Blue Ridge Parkway developed area in North Carolina. The site is accessed by Ridge Road, which spans the entire picnic area starting at parkway Milepost 241.1. Ridge Road parallels the eastern side of the parkway road, and terminates in a cul-de-sac, roughly one mile to the south.

Bluffs Picnic Area is one of the first picnic facilities planned for BLRI. The first section was completed in the late-1930s. An extension was proposed during this time, and then designed and built in the 1950s. The picnic area takes advantage of the rolling terrain of the Bluffs area, offering views of the surrounding mountain laurel meadows, and providing the visitor with rustic picnic sites secluded in the scattered forest. The first comfort station was built in 1941, and it is notable both for its rustic, Adirondack-style architecture and its prominent siting above the first Ridge Road parking area. The second comfort station was built close to two decades later, and better represents the later, utilitarian style found at BLRI. Many of the pathways leading through the picnic area were designed and built in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Their location and the use of stone steps and log interrupters are consistent with the design specifications of the parkway. Early examples of picnic tables, fireplaces, and drinking fountains are also seen, although repairs on some of these small-scale features have used materials inconsistent with the original. Picnic sites along the southern end of the extension show the progression from the rustic style of the first three periods of BLRI development (1933 – 1955), to the last two periods (1956 – 1987). Planting plans for the property were completed in the 1940s, and further enhance the naturalistic style already in place, with low-growing plants used in the rock ledges, more mountain laurel and rhododendron in open areas, and a few trees at the entry. Evidence of this naturalistic planting style is still seen today.

The period of significance for Blue Ridge Parkway, as defined in Ian Firth's draft National Historic Landmark (NHL) nomination, is 1933 – 1987. Parkway road development between these dates possesses NHL significance, while associated development – such as picnic areas – possesses NHL significance only through 1955. (Later development may be historically significant to a lesser degree.) Construction at the Bluffs Picnic Area began in 1938, and the first phase of development was complete by the end of the 1940s. The Ridge Road extension was designed in 1952 and completed at least by 1957. All this development contributes to the national significance of Blue Ridge Parkway as a NHL property. Development whose design and construction both post-date 1955 – namely the second comfort station and the additional picnic sites may have historic significance at a lesser level.

Bluffs Picnic Area, currently listed in good condition, retains all major features from the period of significance. More recent development is small in scale, and its inconsistencies with the earlier rustic style are mainly in terms of materials. The property possesses historic integrity in all seven criteria as defined by National Register standards.

Site Plan



Bluffs Picnic Area (draft)

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name:	Bluffs Picnic Area
Property Level:	Component Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	550215
Parent Landscape:	550140

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code:	Blue Ridge Parkway - Highlands District -BLRI
Park Organization Code:	5157
Subunit/District Name Alpha Code:	Blue Ridge Parkway - Highlands District - BLRI
Park Administrative Unit:	Blue Ridge Parkway

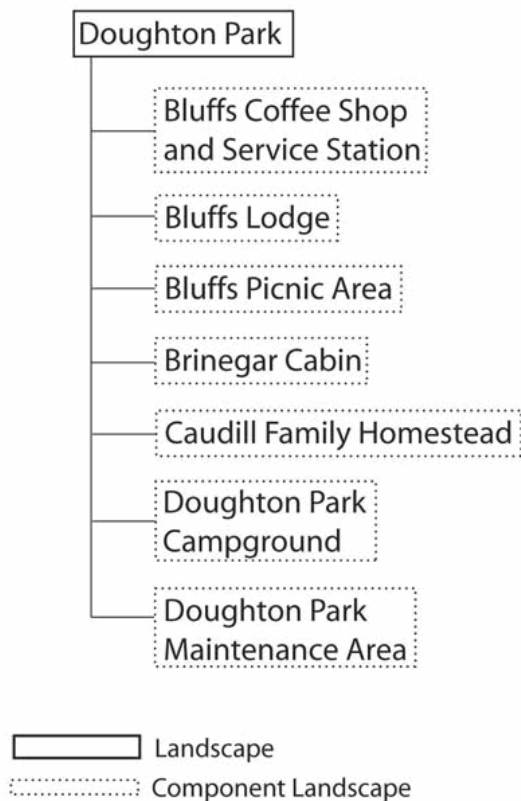
CLI Hierarchy Description

Bluffs Picnic Area

Blue Ridge Parkway - Highlands District

On the 1936 Blue Ridge Parkway Master Development Plan, Doughton Park (then known as The Bluffs) is shown as one of the proposed parkway developed areas. The 6300-acre site largely consists of steeply-sloping, forested land, with the built environment consisting of rustic trails, overlooks and a shelter. It is listed in the CLI in its entirety as Doughton Park. More intense development was planned for sites closer to the parkway in areas totaling 225 acres in size. Each of these seven sites has a separate developmental history and function and deserves individual listing in the CLI as a component landscape. They are, leading from parkway north to south: Brinegar Cabin, Doughton Park Campground, Bluffs Coffee Shop and Service Station, Bluffs Lodge, Caudill Family Homestead, Bluffs Picnic Area, and Doughton Park Maintenance Area.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY



Doughton Park CLI Hierarchy

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

Field work was conducted for landscapes and component landscapes at Doughton Park during Summer 2001 by David Hasty, Lucy Lawliss and summer interns Patrick Beasley, Tom Gibney and Lindsey Heller. The park contacts are: Gary Johnson, Chief of Planning, and Bambi Teague, Resource Manager.

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence:	Yes
Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:	08/01/2005
National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Date of Concurrence Determination:	09/08/2004

National Register Concurrence Narrative:

Through BLRI consultation with North Carolina SHPO, the entire parkway property within the state of North Carolina was deemed eligible for listing on the National Register. A National Historic Landmark nomination is also being written for the Parkway by Ian Firth.

Concurrence Graphic Information:

Bluffs Picnic Area
Blue Ridge Parkway - Highlands District



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Southeast Regional Office
Atlanta Federal Center
1924 Building
100 Alabama St., S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303



H22(SERO-CRD)

July 19, 2005

Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Blue Ridge Parkway
From: Chief, Cultural Resource Division, Southeast Region
Subject: Cultural Landscape Inventory

We are pleased to transmit Cultural Landscape Inventories (CLI) for five component cultural landscapes at Doughton Park Developed Area: Bluffs Coffee Shop and Service Station, Bluffs Lodge, Bluffs Picnic Area, Doughton Park Campground, and Doughton Park Maintenance Area. The CLI is an evaluated list of landscape properties in the National Park System eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NR) or that contribute to an existing historic property. In order for the CLIs to be certified and counted under goals 1a7 and 1b2B in PMDS, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) or Keeper of the NR needs to concur on the eligibility of the property for listing. The North Carolina SHPO concurred on the National Register eligibility of all Blue Ridge Parkway land in North Carolina on September 8, 2004.

The Park Superintendent also needs to concur on the condition assessment and management category provided within the inventory. A signature page is enclosed for Park Superintendent approval. The assessment form needs to be signed and returned to the Regional Office for final certification and listing in PMDS goals 1a7 and 1b2B. If the condition assessment and management category are agreed upon, please sign the attached approval forms and return to our office to the attention of David Hasty.

Attachments



Letter to Superintendent

Bluffs Picnic Area

Blue Ridge Parkway - Highlands District

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE INVENTORY
CONDITION ASSESSMENT CONCURRENCE SHEET - 6 June 2005

Park Information

Park: Blue Ridge Parkway
District: Highlands
State: North Carolina
Counties: Wilkes, Alleghany

Cultural Landscape Information

Inventory Name	CLI Id #	Condition	Management Category
Bluffs Coffee Shop and Service Station	550218	Fair	Must Be Preserved and Maintained
Bluffs Lodge	550214	Good	Must Be Preserved and Maintained
Bluffs Picnic Area	550215	Good	Must Be Preserved and Maintained
Doughton Park Campground	550216	Good	Must Be Preserved and Maintained
Doughton Park Maintenance Area	550219	Good	Must Be Preserved and Maintained

Park Superintendent Concurrence

Concur ☒

Do Not Concur ☐


Superintendent

8/1/05
Date

Superintendent Signature of Concurrence

Bluffs Picnic Area

Blue Ridge Parkway - Highlands District

**CULTURAL LANDSCAPE INVENTORY
CONDITION ASSESSMENT CONCURRENCE SHEET – 31 August 2011**

Park Information

Park: Blue Ridge Parkway
District: Highlands
State: North Carolina
Counties: Wilkes, Alleghany

Cultural Landscape Information

Inventory Name	CLI Id #	Condition	Previous Condition Date
Bluffs Coffee Shop and Service Station	550218	Fair	5/4/2005 (Fair)
Bluffs Lodge	550214	Good	5/4/2005 (Good)
Bluffs Picnic Area	550215	Good	5/4/2005 (Good)
Doughton Park Campground	550216	Good	5/4/2005 (Good)
Doughton Park Maintenance Area	550219	Good	5/4/2005 (Good)

Park Superintendent Concurrence

Concur ☒ Do Not Concur ☐



Superintendent Date 9/23/11

Superintendent Condition Recertification, 2011

Bluffs Picnic Area
Blue Ridge Parkway - Highlands District

10/12/2004 10:48 FAX

0002



H32

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Blue Ridge Parkway
199 Hemphill Knob Road
Asheville, North Carolina 28803

MMB
8/17/04

JUL 21 2004

Dr. Jeffrey J. Crow, State Historic Preservation Officer
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
Division of Archives and History
4610 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4610

Dear Dr. Crow:

As you know the National Register of Historic Places is the official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture. These contribute to an understanding of the historical and cultural foundations of the Nation. The National Register includes:

- * All prehistoric and historic units of the National Park System;
- * National Historic Landmarks, which are properties recognized by the Secretary of the Interior as possessing national significance; and
- * Properties significant in American, State, or local prehistory and history that have been nominated by State Historic Preservation Officers, Federal agencies, Tribal Preservation Officers, and others, and have been approved for listing by the National Park Service.

The Historic Sites Act of 1935 (Public Law 74-292) established the National Historic Landmark Survey. The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665) authorized the National Register of Historic Places, expanding Federal recognition to historic properties of local and State significance. The National Park Service in the U. S. Department of the Interior administers both programs. Regulations for these programs are contained in 36 CFR Part 60, "National Register of Historic Places", and 36 CFR Part 65, "National Historic Landmarks Program".

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 authorizes State Historic Preservation Officers to nominate properties to the National Register of Historic Places and to carry out other preservation activities. Federal Preservation Officers have been designated in Federal agencies to nominate Federal properties and to fulfill other responsibilities of the Act. The Blue Ridge Parkway leadership, acting in concert with the leadership of the National Park Service Southeast Regional Office, are working energetically and enthusiastically to nominate the Blue Ridge Parkway for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as a National Historic Landmark. We would highly value your support and concurrence on the signature line below. We look

Memo to NC SHPO

Bluffs Picnic Area
Blue Ridge Parkway - Highlands District

10/12/2004 10:49 PAA

forward to working closely with your office as we strive to protect the resources and enhance the integrity of the fabulous Blue Ridge Parkway. Please sign on the line below on both copies of this document and return one copy to Parkway Headquarters.

Thanks so much for your assistance and willing cooperation.

Sincerely,



Daniel W. Brown
Superintendent

The Blue Ridge Parkway clearly meets the eligibility requirements for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as a National Historic Landmark. The Office of the State Historic Preservation Officer, State of North Carolina, supports and endorses the National Park Service efforts with regards to this listing of the Blue Ridge Parkway in the National Register of Historic Places.

I Concur: Jeffrey Brown, SHPO Date 9 Aug 04

	DIVISION CHIEF, RP & PS	
	LAND RESOURCES SPEC.	
	LAND RESOURCES SPEC.	
X	CULTURAL RESOURCES SPEC.	
	ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE SPEC.	
	COMMUNITY PLANNER	
	RESIDENT LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT	
	CURATOR	
	GEOGRAPHIC INFO. SPEC.	
	ENGINEERING DRAFTSMAN	
	ADMIN. ASSISTANT	
X	FILE	ALIZETTE - FILED COMPLIANCE FILE

GW 8/20

NC SHPO Signature

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

The Bluffs Picnic Area boundary begins at the spur road leading off from the road to the lodge, and extends down to the terminus of the picnic area road, including the open field to its south. The parkway road defines the western boundary, and the eastern boundary encompasses the areas visible from the picnic road.

Bluffs Picnic Area
Blue Ridge Parkway - Highlands District

State and County:

State: NC

County: Alleghany County

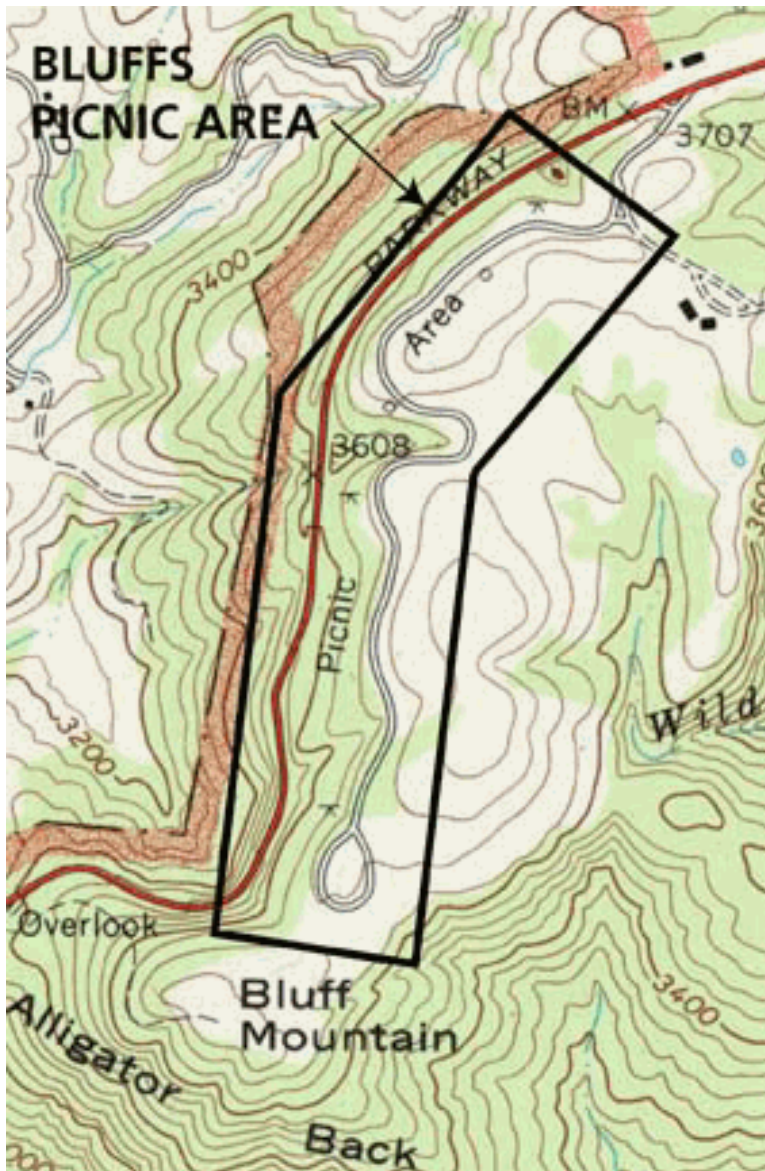
Size (Acres): 80.00

Boundary UTMS:

Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	17
UTM Easting:	483,801
UTM Northing:	4,031,280
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	17
UTM Easting:	483,169
UTM Northing:	4,030,363
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	17
UTM Easting:	483,508
UTM Northing:	4,031,450
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	17
UTM Easting:	484,019
UTM Northing:	4,031,607
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000

Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	17
UTM Easting:	483,966
UTM Northing:	4,031,737
Source:	USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	17
UTM Easting:	483,508
UTM Northing:	4,030,193

Location Map:



Doughton Park Picnic Area Location Map (Whitehead, NC, USGS Quadrangle - 1968)

Tract Numbers: 34-101, 35-104

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Must be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 05/04/2005

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

The first section of the picnic area was built in 1939, during the first period of BLRIs history as defined by Ian Firth. Thus, this section – including comfort station #102 (1941) – contributes to the national significance of Blue Ridge Parkway as a potential National Historic Landmark. Plans for the picnic area's expansion are in existence by 1952, and the roadway extension was completed between 1955 and 1957. Comfort station #104 was completed in 1959. With plans developed during the third period of BLRIs development, and roadway completion shortly thereafter, the Ridge Road extension still contributes to the integrity of the parkway. The second comfort station and picnic sites to its south may have historical significance, but not at the level of earlier development.

Maintenance Location Code:

4522
63534
4452
4454
4523
47921
4453
52615

Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access

Management Agreement:

Expiration Date: 1/1/9999

NPS Legal Interest:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Public Access:

Type of Access: Unrestricted

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? No

Adjacent Lands Description:

Bluffs Picnic Area

Blue Ridge Parkway - Highlands District

Bluffs Picnic Area is immediately adjacent to 'parkway left,' and has no association with or views out to adjacent land.

National Register Information

National Register Eligibility

National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Contributing/Individual:	Contributing
National Register Classification:	District
Significance Level:	National
Significance Criteria:	C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values
Significance Criteria:	A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history
Criteria Considerations:	G -- A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance

Period of Significance:

Time Period:	AD 1933 - 1987
Historic Context Theme:	Creating Social Institutions and Movements
Subtheme:	Recreation
Facet:	General Recreation
Other Facet:	None
Time Period:	AD 1933 - 1987
Historic Context Theme:	Developing the American Economy
Subtheme:	Transportation by Land and Air
Facet:	Carriage Roads, Touring Roads and Parkways
Other Facet:	None
Time Period:	AD 1933 - 1987
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	Rustic Architecture
Other Facet:	None
Time Period:	AD 1933 - 1987
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Landscape Architecture
Facet:	Protection Of Natural And Cultural Resources
Other Facet:	None

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category:	Transportation
Area of Significance Subcategory:	None
Area of Significance Category:	Landscape Architecture
Area of Significance Subcategory:	None
Area of Significance Category:	Architecture
Area of Significance Subcategory:	None
Area of Significance Category:	Conservation
Area of Significance Subcategory:	None

Statement of Significance:

Bluffs Picnic Area is one of the first picnic areas to be designed and built along the Blue Ridge Parkway. A comfort station and trail shelter (Building # 102) was completed in 1941, using a rustic Adirondack architectural style. The first portion of the picnic road (later to be named Ridge Road) was completed by 1939, with picnic sites and trails constructed during the same time. The specifications for the picnic tables and fireplaces called for a rustic style of stonework. The Ridge Road extension was designed in 1952 and completed by 1957, and increases the picnic road to a total of about one mile.

The setting of mountain laurel and rhododendron meadows interspersed with patches of forest figured prominently in this location for the picnic area. A 1942 planting plan called for the enhancement of this existing flora, with a few trees suggested for the entry, more rhododendron and mountain laurel throughout, and smaller, lower-growing species for the rock ledges – enhancing the rock garden feeling of the rock ledges along Ridge Road.

Later development at Bluffs Picnic Area includes a second comfort station (c. 1959) which uses the utilitarian style of that period. More picnic sites were installed south of this building, although this time they did not use the rustic materials of the earlier ones.

As one of the first picnic areas to be designed and built, the property contributes to the historical significance of the parkway. The development that took place during the first three periods of BLRI history (1936 – 1955) contributes to the national significance of BLRI as an NHL. These features

include the entire length of Ridge Road, since the second portion was designed before 1955 and construction completed shortly after. It also includes the comfort station and trail shelter (Building # 102), the c. 1939 trails, picnic sites and drinking fountains, as well as the vegetation, including what remains of the 1940 planting design. Comfort station (Building # 104), and the associated picnic sites, post-date 1955 and may have significance at a lower level.

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type:

Designed

Other Use/Function

Campground/Picnic Area

Other Type of Use or Function

Both Current And Historic

Current and Historic Names:

Name

Meadow Picnic Area

Bluffs Picnic Area

Picnic Area #3

Type of Name

Both Current And Historic

Current

Both Current And Historic

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
AD 1938	Built	A pipeline and dam are built to supply water to the Bluffs proposed developed areas - including the picnic area.
	Built	The entrance road leading from the parkway road to Wildcat Rocks and the lodge site is built.
AD 1938 - 1939	Built	Leading south from the lodge entry road, the first section of the picnic road is built. Future expansion of this road is planned for.
AD 1939	Built	Approximately 1 mile of trails (with log interrupters and approx. 25 stone steps) and 36 picnic units (table and fireplace) are built amongst the scattering of woods and mountain laurel south and east of the picnic area road.

Bluffs Picnic Area

Blue Ridge Parkway - Highlands District

AD 1939 - 1940	Built	Water distribution and sewage disposal systems are built. Four drinking fountains and a comfort station/trail shelter are proposed.
AD 1940 - 1941	Built	The comfort station and trail shelter (bldg #102) is built. The structure couldn't be buffered, with the surrounding low mountain laurel & rhododendron. As an alternative, the rustic Adirondack structure is set prominently above the parking lot.
Kenneth McCarter		
AD 1942 - 1947	Designed	A planting plan is designed and approved, proposing a scattering of trees at the parkway entry, more rhododendron and kalmia above and among the rock ledges, and low growing plants in the rock ledges (hairy rockcress, coral bells, rock geranium, etc.).
AD 1939 - 1943	Built	The Master Plan for Bluff Park in 1943 shows that 6 drinking fountains and 28 picnic sites have been installed.
AD 1952	Planned	A Road System Plan shows the proposed extension of the picnic road and associated parking.
AD 1952 - 1957	Built	By 1957, the picnic road - now called Ridge Road - extension is built.
AD 1957 - 1959	Built	Comfort Station (Building # 104) is designed in 1957 and construction is completed by 1959. This structure is located partway down the new Ridge Road extension.

Physical History:

g



cover

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

Bluffs Picnic Area is part of one of the first developed areas to be designed and built along Blue Ridge Parkway. The area consists of Ridge Road which parallels the parkway road for approximately 1 mile heading southwards from Milepost 241.1. To the west, there are a series of picnic sites located down a partially wooded slope. To the south and east are views out over the highland meadows and rhododendron and mountain laurel stands.

The picnic area was planned for and partially designed in the late 1930s, with the first section of road, parking, trails and picnic sites installed in 1939. A rustic-style comfort station and shelter (building # 102) was completed in 1941. A Parkway Land Use Map called for the addition of 6 trees at the parkway entrance to the site, more mountain laurel and rhododendron – adding to the ones already there, and low growing plants for the rock ledges that punctuate the span of Ridge Road. In 1952, the Ridge Road extension, which had been planned for in the 1930s, was designed. It was completed by 1957.

Later development at Bluffs Picnic Area includes a second comfort station (building # 104) in 1959. More picnic sites were installed to the south of this building. This comfort station is built in a utilitarian style, not in the rustic style of the first. Similarly, the picnic tables in this area are not built with stone like the earlier ones to the north.

As one of the first picnic areas to be designed and constructed, the property contributes to the national significance of Blue Ridge Parkway. Most major construction took place during the first three periods of BLRI development (1936 – 1955), as defined by Ian Firth in his draft National Historic Landmark nomination, with the Ridge Road extension designed in 1952 and completed by 1957. The construction from this time is consistent with the rustic style intended for parkway picnic areas. The second comfort station and subsequent picnic sites represent a later, more utilitarian style and may have historical significance for the parkway at a lesser level.

Bluffs Picnic Area retains integrity in all seven aspects of the National Register criteria: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The location of all primary features – Ridge Road, comfort station (building # 102), 1930s picnic sites and associated trail system, existing natural and introduced vegetation – is the same today as during the historic period. The design, materials and workmanship of these earlier features largely remains rustic in nature. Modern repairs, however, have often used materials and workmanship different than the original. Post-1957 development follows a utilitarian design ethic. The feeling of the area is the same as originally intended, a picnic area following a contour just below the crest of a plateau, offering views into the meadow to the east and south, and access to the picnic sites set in the woods and shrubs to the west. The mountain plateau setting, with its open meadow and abundant stands of mountain laurel and rhododendron, that first attracted BLRI designers, remains in place. Finally, the original association of this property – namely a picnic area for Blue Ridge Parkway visitors – continues today.

Landscape Characteristic:

Buildings And Structures

Two buildings exist at the picnic area: comfort station and trail shelter (Building # 102), constructed in 1941; and comfort station (Building # 104), constructed c. 1957 - 1959. A rustic, Adirondack style was used with Building # 102, and it was intentionally sited in a prominent location above the first parking area along Ridge Road. The building is still in good condition today and contributes to the national significance of the parkway as an NHL. Building # 104 has a more utilitarian style, which is consistent with its date of construction, and it is sited in a more secluded location. The building remains in place today, in good condition. While it was built after 1955, and therefore does not contribute to the parkway as an NHL, it may have historical significance of a lower level.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Comfort Station and Trail Shelter (Building # 102)

Feature Identification Number: 97932

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Comfort Station (Building # 104)

Feature Identification Number: 97931

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Picnic Area Comfort Station and Shelter - building # 102 (pre-1956)



Bluffs Comfort Station and Shelter - building # 102 (2002) - note that vegetation has matured, and Ridge Road now continues on.



Bluffs Comfort Station (Building # 104) (2002)

Small Scale Features

Small-scale features at the picnic area include the drinking fountains, picnic tables, and fireplaces - all built with stone in a rustic style, and dating from the 1930s-40s. Some of the repair work on these features has used materials and workmanship inconsistent with the original fabric (see photo). Yet they still retain, overall, enough integrity to contribute the significance of the property as an NHL. Later additions to the picnic area do not use the same type of material or workmanship, but may have significance at a lower level.

Character-defining Features:

Feature:	Stone Drinking Fountains
Feature Identification Number:	97938
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
Feature:	Stone Picnic Tables
Feature Identification Number:	97939
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
Feature:	Picnic Fireplaces
Feature Identification Number:	97937
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Picnic Area drinking fountain - note the addition on left (2002)

Circulation

The first section of Ridge Road was completed in 1939, with an extension designed in 1952 and construction completed by 1957. It weaves through the forested areas and mountain laurel and rhododendron meadows, offering views out into the rolling plateau and access to the adjacent picnic sites. Other than an additional parking area, the road retains its original form and design, and contributes to the national significance of the parkway as an NHL. The picnic trails that were built in 1939 also contribute to the national significance of the parkway. These trails extend roughly to where the second comfort station (Building # 104) is located today. With the extension of Ridge Road, a portion of these trails were obliterated in the 1950s, but most remain in place and retain their integrity. Stone steps and log interrupters are still in place. Trails built south of the second comfort station - and post-dating 1955 - do not contribute to the national significance of the parkway, but may have historical significance at a lower level.

Character-defining Features:

- Feature: Ridge Road (c. 1938 portion)
- Feature Identification Number: 97935
- Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
- Feature: Ridge Road Extension (c. 1952 - 1957)

Bluffs Picnic Area

Blue Ridge Parkway - Highlands District

Feature Identification Number: 97936

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Bluffs Picnic Area Pathways (c. 1939)

Feature Identification Number: 97933

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Bluffs Picnic Area Pathways (post-1955)

Feature Identification Number: 97934

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Picnic Area Parking Lot circa 1954



Bluff Mountain Trail leading off from the end of Ridge Road (2002)



Ridge Road - note rock ledges, stone curbs and walkway (2002)

Views And Vistas

While many of the picnic sites are concealed in forested areas, there are views from Ridge Road into the meadows to the east and to the south. These views still remain intact and contribute to the national significance of the parkway.

Topography

Bluffs Picnic Area straddles the 3700' contour for much of its path, just below the crest of the adjacent meadow. The siting largely buffers the road's presence from visitors in the meadow, but still offers a series of views from Ridge Road into that area. The alignment of the road is still intact, and the topography has not been manipulated, thus it contributes to the national significance of the parkway.

Spatial Organization

The development of Bluffs Picnic Area is centered along Ridge Road. The character of the area is defined by picnic sites and trails tucked downhill into the forested areas to the west of the road and views leading to the east and south up into the meadows - punctuated by rock ledges, mountain laurel and rhododendron stands. This same organization remains today as it did in the 1940s and 50s, and it contributes to the significance of the property.

Vegetation

The Bluffs area is notable for its open meadows punctuated with stands of mountain laurel and rhododendron - species usually found in understory locations. The unique beauty of it is one of the reasons that BLRI designers located a developed area here. In the 1940s, BLRI planting designs called for the enhancement of this character, calling for more mountain laurel and rhododendron, smaller species for the rock ledges to create a rock garden look, and a cluster of trees near the parkway entrance. Though further research is needed, it appears that remnants of this planting plan remain. The open character of the meadow is still intact, and the forested areas between Ridge Road and the parkway road are still in place, although it appears that the area is more heavily forested than it was in the 1940s. Even with the small changes in vegetative patterns, the site largely retains its integrity and contributes to the significance of the parkway.

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Good
Assessment Date: 05/04/2005
Condition Assessment: Good
Assessment Date: 09/23/2011

Impacts

Type of Impact: Deferred Maintenance
External or Internal: Internal
Impact Description: Bluffs Picnic Area is a popular destination, and its trails and sites show signs of heavy use.

Type of Impact: Inappropriate Maintenance
External or Internal: Internal
Impact Description: Some of the earlier picnic sites still contain the original style picnic tables, water bubblers, and fire pits. These elements have been repaired over time, but not always using materials or practices matching the original fabric or workmanship.

Stabilization Costs

Landscape Stabilization Cost: 0.00
Landscape Stabilization Cost Explanatory Description:

No LCS or landscape stabilization costs exist. With the completion of the pending CLR, cost data will be available.

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Undetermined

Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:

A CLR is pending for Doughton Park, and a GMP is underway for the Parkway. With the completion of these efforts, approved treatment should become available.

Approved Treatment Costs

Landscape Treatment Cost: 0.00

Landscape Approved Treatment Cost Explanatory Description:

No approved cost data exist for the Bluffs Picnic Area. With the completion of the pending CLR, cost data will be available.

Bibliography and Supplemental Information

Bibliography

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18 March 1948; Designed by Kearney

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Year of Publication: 1952

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Year of Publication: 1952

Source Name: DSC/TIC

Citation Title: 2078 B "Doughton Park, NC – Developed Areas & Utilities Plan
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Jan 1952; designed by PVC-AFR

Year of Publication: 1952

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Year of Publication: 1952

Source Name: DSC/TIC

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Year of Publication: 1955

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Year of Publication: 1957

Source Name: DSC/TIC

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December 1962 update; designed by PVC-AFR; recommended by
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