
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
2010



Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater
Rocky Mountain National Park

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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

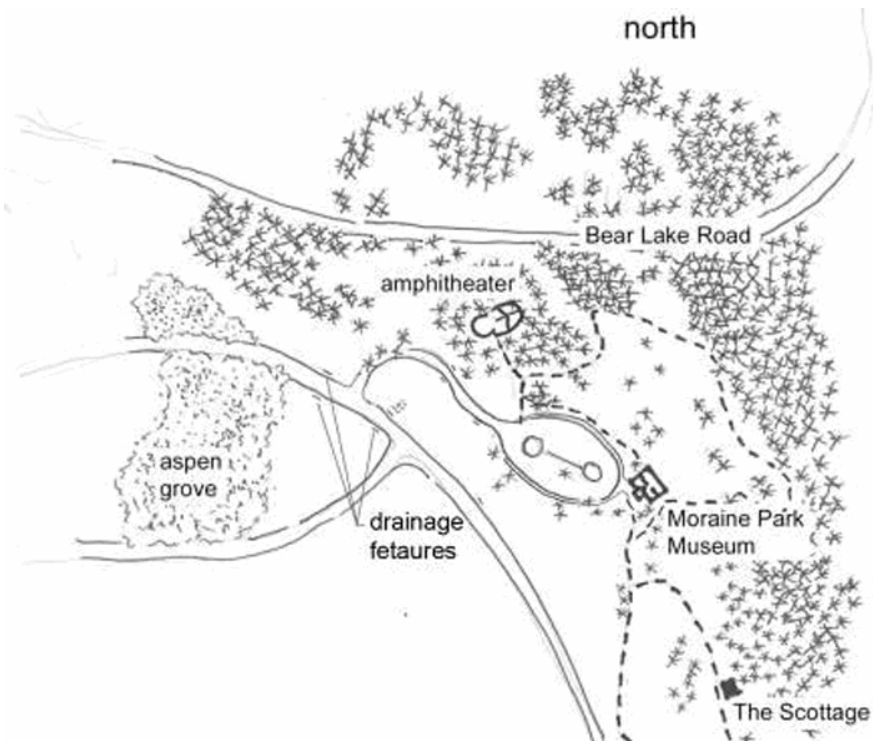
treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

Inventory Unit Description:

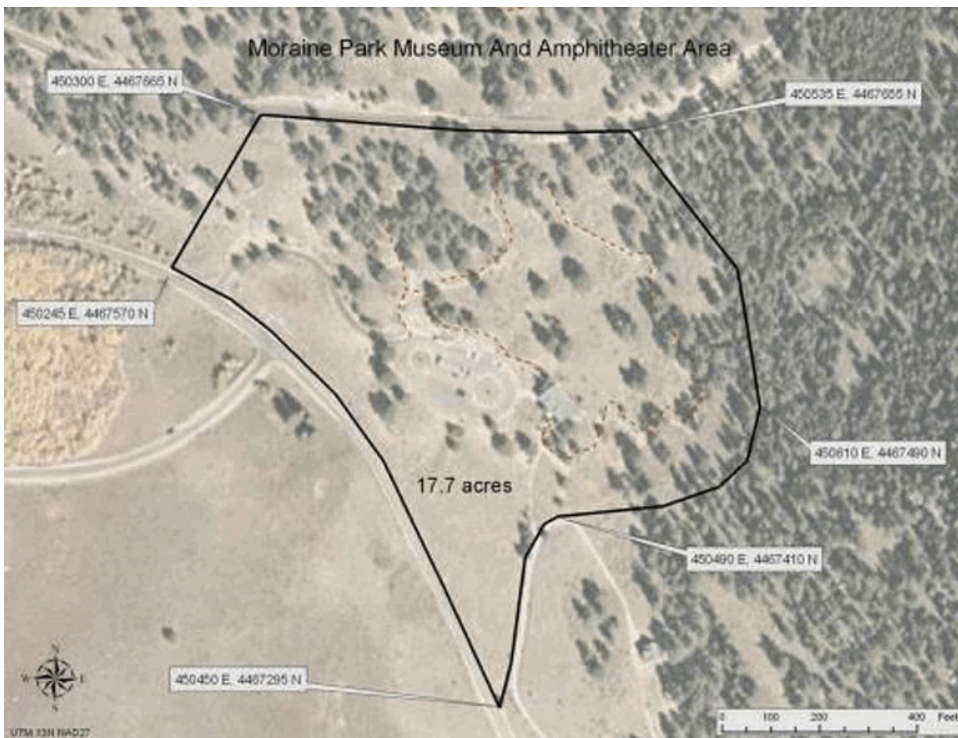
Within the boundary of Rocky Mountain National Park, this property sits in the northeast corner of Moraine Park, at the base of Eagle Cliff Mountain. The property can be accessed from Bear Lake Road, a little over one mile from the Rocky Mountain National Park Administration Building, (also known as Beaver Meadows Visitor Center, 5LR9947) on US Highway 36. It sits at an elevation of roughly 8100 feet. It affords spectacular views to the west of Moraine Park, a meadow of grass and shrubs that is surrounded by towering glaciated peaks and through which meanders the Big Thompson River. Views of Longs Peak dominate the setting amidst native upland shrub vegetation including ponderosa pines, gooseberry, bitter brush, common juniper, and native grasses. A privately owned cabin, called The Scottage, sits to the south of the museum. Beyond that lies the William Allen White National Register Historic District (5LR479), the summer residence of the Pulitzer Prize-winning author.

Important built features include the Moraine Park Museum; the amphitheater including plank and stone seating, drainage structures, the foundation of the screen, and fire pit; pedestrian circulation system including stone steps and trails; and the entry road and parking lot, including stone culverts. Important natural features include the curtain wall of pines surrounding the stage area; the ponderosa pine tree marking the intersection of the entry trails; the ponderosa pine tree within the seating area of the amphitheater; and the views of the valley and Longs Peak.

Site Plan



Site plan of the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater, August 2004. Drawn by Cheri Yost, ROMO. Augmented by Carrie A. Mardorf, 2010. Source: NR nomination.



Site plan of the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater showing boundary of district addressed in this CLI. Source: NR nomination.

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name:	Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater
Property Level:	Component Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	975211
Parent Landscape:	890028

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code:	Rocky Mountain National Park -ROMO
Park Organization Code:	1520
Park Administrative Unit:	Rocky Mountain National Park

CLI Hierarchy Description

Rocky Mountain National Park is divided into several component landscapes; the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater is one of those component landscapes.

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

This CLI was completed based on a 2005 National Register nomination, written by Cheri Yost. The information in the nomination was converted into the CLI format by CLI Coordinator, Carrie A. Mardorf, and was supplemented by a site visit in July 2010.

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence:	Yes
Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:	08/26/2010
National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- Keeper
Date of Concurrence Determination:	06/15/2005

National Register Concurrence Narrative:

The Keeper approved of a revised NR nomination for the district on June 15, 2005.

Concurrence Graphic Information:

Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater
Rocky Mountain National Park

MEMORANDUM

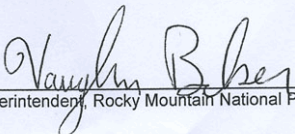
To: NPS-IMR CLI Coordinator
Box 728
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-0728

From: Superintendent
Rocky Mountain National Park
1000 Highway 36
Estes Park, CO 80517-8397

Subject: Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI)

I hereby concur with the content and the assessment of the cultural landscape for the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater.

1. The CLI has identified the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater component landscape as a Historic Designed Landscape (pg 11).
2. The CLI rates the condition of the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater cultural landscape as "Fair" (pg. 36) and the Management Category is listed as "Should be Preserved and Maintained" (pg 7).
3. The period of significance for Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater is 1923 to 1955 (pg. 10), and the Statement of Significance is on (pg. 8).
4. The contributing features for Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater are listed in the "Analysis and Evaluation" (pg. 28-36).



Superintendent, Rocky Mountain National Park

8-26-10

Date

Superintendent concurrence on the CLI, 8/26/2010.

Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater
Rocky Mountain National Park

NPS Form 10-900
OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 15A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and other significances, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative in the continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property
historic name Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater (additional documentation)
other names/site number Moraine Lodge/ Moraine Lodge Museum/ Moraine Park Visitor Center/ SLR.477

2. Location
street & number Rocky Mountain National Park (ROMO) [N/A] not for publication
city or town Estes Park [X] vicinity
state Colorado code CO county Larimer code 069 zip code 80517

3. State/Federal Agency Certification
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [] statewide [X] locally. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Signature of certifying official Janet Snyder Matthews NPS FPO Date 5/2/2005
National Park Service
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria.
([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Signature of certifying official Kristina Cortez State Historic Preservation Officer Date 3/22/05
Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification
I hereby certify that the property is:
[X] entered in the National Register [] See continuation sheet.
[] determined eligible for the National Register [] See continuation sheet.
[] determined not eligible for the National Register [] removed from the National Register [] other explain [] See continuation sheet.
Signature of the Keeper Debra H. Beall Date of Action 6/15/07

Concurrence from the Keeper of the National Register on the additional documentation for the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater, 6/15/2005.

Revisions Impacting Change in Concurrence:

Other

Revision Narrative:

Uploaded the revised National Register nomination (the basis of this CLI) to the Landscape Documents section, May 2012.

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

The boundary includes the resource and historically associated features such as the building, amphitheater, trails, parking lot, entry road, culverts, and signs. Landscape features such as vegetation and views are important to the experience of the visitor and may contribute to the overall integrity of the district.

To the north and south/southwest the landscape is defined by Bear Lake Road. The eastern boundary is defined by the driveway to The Scottage, the edge of the pine forest. The western boundary of the

Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater
Rocky Mountain National Park

district is marked by a steep rocky slope.

State and County:

State: CO

County: Larimer County

Size (Acres): 17.70

Boundary UTMS:

Type of Point: Area
Datum: NAD 27
UTM Zone: 13
UTM Easting: 450,300
UTM Northing: 4,467,665
Boundary Datum Other: GIS data obtained from 2005 NR nomination

Type of Point: Area
Datum: NAD 27
UTM Zone: 13
UTM Easting: 450,535
UTM Northing: 4,467,655
Boundary Datum Other: GIS data obtained from 2005 NR nomination

Type of Point: Area
Datum: NAD 27
UTM Zone: 13
UTM Easting: 450,610
UTM Northing: 4,467,490
Boundary Datum Other: GIS data obtained from 2005 NR nomination

Type of Point: Area
Datum: NAD 27
UTM Zone: 13
UTM Easting: 450,490
UTM Northing: 4,467,410
Boundary Datum Other: GIS data obtained from 2005 NR nomination

Type of Point: Area
Datum: NAD 27

UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	450,450
UTM Northing:	4,467,295
Boundary Datum Other:	GIS data obtained from 2005 NR nomination
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 27
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	450,245
UTM Northing:	4,467,570
Boundary Datum Other:	GIS data obtained from 2005 NR nomination

Location Map:



Location map showing Rocky Mountain National Park in black.

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

The first inhabitants of Rocky Mountain National Park were Native Americans. Although they made occasional encampments in the area, the region was primarily used as a hunting ground. Some evidence of their inhabitation are found in the Park in the form of arrow points, hand hammers, and crude pottery fragments. Traces of once well-worn Ute and Arapaho Indian trails still remain in the park.

Though it is likely that trappers along the Platte River explored the mountains of northern Colorado, the first written record of such a venture was by Major Stephen H. Long's expedition in 1820. It was not until 1859 that Joel Estes and his party discovered the open, park-like area that was later to be named Estes Park. Impressed by the region's scenic grandeur and its untouched beauty, he and his family became the first settlers in 1860.

Little thought was given to the creation of a Park prior to 1900. Early in twentieth century, however, automobiles proved to be a practical means of transportation, and visitation to what is now Rocky Mountain National Park increased. Rocky Mountain National Park was established by Congress on January 26, 1915.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

Massive glaciers shaped the meadows and peaks of the Rocky Mountains. Rocky Mountain National Park embraces one of the most magnificent and diversified sections of the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains, with 65 named peaks over 10,000 feet in elevation. The main mountain range, which forms the Continental Divide, lies in a general north-south direction throughout the park. The area is dotted with more than 100 lakes, the beds of which were carved by glaciers.

The Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater is located in the northeast corner of Moraine Park, at the base of Eagle Cliff Mountain at roughly 8100 feet in elevation. It affords spectacular views to the west of Moraine Park, a meadow of grass and shrubs that is surrounded by towering glaciated peaks and through which meanders the Big Thompson River. Views of Longs Peak dominate the setting amidst native upland shrub vegetation including ponderosa pines, gooseberry, bitter brush, common juniper, and native grasses.

Important natural features include the curtain wall of pines surrounding the stage area; the ponderosa pine tree marking the intersection of the entry trails; the ponderosa pine tree within the seating area of the amphitheater; and the views of the valley and Longs Peak.

Type of Context: Political

Description:

Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater are located within the boundaries of Rocky Mountain National Park. Estes Park, Colorado, is the nearest town, approximately two miles from the park entrance road. Otherwise, Rocky Mountain National Park is completely surrounded by national forests, with Roosevelt National Forest on the north and east, Arapaho on the south and west, and Routt on the northwest corner.

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Should be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 06/15/2005

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

A National Register nomination for the landscape of the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater was signed by the Keeper in 2005. As a result, the landscape should be preserved and maintained.

Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access

Management Agreement:

Type of Agreement:

Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

There are no management agreements associated with Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater.

NPS Legal Interest:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Other Agency or Organization: The NPS owns the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater outright in fee simple.

Public Access:

Type of Access: Unrestricted

Explanatory Narrative:

The public has unrestricted access to the site.

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? No

National Register Information

Existing National Register Status

National Register Landscape Documentation:

Entered Documented

National Register Explanatory Narrative:

In October 1976, the Keeper first entered Rocky Mountain National Park's Moraine Park Museum, also known as the Moraine Park Visitor Center (5LR477, LCS 10503), in the National Register of Historic Places. That early nomination, by Ranger-Naturalist D. Ferrel Atkins, focused on the building itself and its association with the Moraine Park Lodge (no longer extant). The June 1987 Multiple Resource Nomination for Rocky Mountain National Park also noted the Moraine Park Museum for its representation of the Pioneer Settlement and the Development of the Resort Industry and its relation to the theme of NPS Rustic Architecture within Rocky Mountain National Park. A 2005 amendment added other important features in the Moraine Park landscape, including the associated amphitheater. The Moraine Park Museum, amphitheater, drainage structures, trails, entry road, parking lot, and vegetation all contribute to a cultural landscape (entered as an historic district). Since the Museum is already listed in the National Register, the addition of these other features recognizes their historic relationship to the museum building. This CLI is based on the 2005 NR amendment.

Existing NRIS Information:

Name in National Register:	Moraine Lodge
NRIS Number:	76000206
Other Names:	Moraine Lodge, Museum, VC
Primary Certification Date:	10/01/1976

National Register Eligibility

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

Period of Significance:

Time Period:	AD 1923 - 1955
Historic Context Theme:	Creating Social Institutions and Movements
Subtheme:	Recreation
Facet:	Spectator Pastimes (Passive)
Time Period:	AD 1923 - 1955
Historic Context Theme:	Creating Social Institutions and Movements
Subtheme:	Recreation
Facet:	Tourism
Time Period:	AD 1923 - 1955
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Theater
Facet:	Festivals and Events--Theater
Time Period:	AD 1923 - 1955
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Music
Facet:	Festivals and Events--Music
Time Period:	AD 1923 - 1955
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	Rustic Architecture
Time Period:	AD 1923 - 1955
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Landscape Architecture
Facet:	The 1930's: Era Of Public Works

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category:

Politics - Government

Area of Significance Category:

Landscape Architecture

Area of Significance Category:

Entertainment - Recreation

Statement of Significance:

The cultural landscape of the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater is an important example of the growth of the local resort and tourism industry, of conservation efforts of Depression-era make-work programs and of the National Park Service, and of naturalistic design within the National Park Service.

The Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C, meeting the registration requirements set forth in the Rocky Mountain National Park Multiple Property Listing. Under Criterion A, the Moraine Park Museum building is eligible in the area of Entertainment/ Recreation for its association with the early resort industry and tourism in the Estes Park region, with a period of significance starting in 1923 and ending in 1931. Under Criterion A, the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater district is significant in the area of Politics/Government for the involvement of 1930s federal relief agencies, specifically the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and Emergency Conservation Works (ECW), with a period of significance from 1936-1937. The district is also eligible under Criterion C in the area of Landscape Architecture; the design and relationship of the building and its associated structures reflect National Park Service (NPS) Naturalistic Design of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s.

Additionally, the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater reflect the national trends described in Linda Flint McClelland's Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks Multiple Property Listing. In this second context, the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater are eligible under Criterion A, with a period of significance from 1936-1955, in the area of Entertainment/Recreation for its connection to the twentieth-century movement to develop national parks for public enjoyment, as well in the area of Politics/Government for the principles and practices of park landscape design used by the park in CCC projects. The Museum and Amphitheater are also eligible under Criterion C in the area of Landscape Architecture for a design that reflects NPS Naturalistic Design of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s.

Since the 1870s, Moraine Park cast a spell over visiting tourists, many of whom remained and homesteaded its quiet meadows. One of these tourist-turned-landowners was Imogene Greene MacPherson. Between 1905 and 1923, she built the Moraine Lodge, a collection of rustic buildings that treated guests to the Rocky Mountain experience. Mother MacPherson had a reputation as a gracious and accommodating hostess. She was an advocate for the Rocky Mountain National Park, which Congress approved in 1915. After her death in 1928 and with the Great Depression of the 1930s, the number of guests declined rapidly. In 1931 the National Park Service bought the property from the

MacPherson estate, quickly altering the property from a rustic resort to a modern visitor facility.

The site reflects an important period of National Park Service conservation philosophy-- including naturalizing developed areas, building visitor facilities in a "naturalistic" design, and communicating a strong natural ethic to visitors--all focused on preserving the "wildness" of National Parks. To accomplish these goals in the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps obliterated most of the Moraine Lodge, restoring the land to its "natural" state. By 1936, they converted the Moraine Lodge's Assembly Hall to a National Park Service museum, and they began to construct an amphitheater nearby. This amphitheater design followed then-prominent naturalistic principles of utilizing native plants and materials and the natural features of the bowl-shaped topography to construct a structure connected to its landscape. The strong association between the amphitheater and the newly converted museum reflected the National Park Service's evolving education and interpretation programs, which focused on formal presentations with cutting-edge technology of lantern slides. The date the park discontinued regularly scheduled amphitheater programs at the Moraine Park Museum is unknown. The amphitheater is currently used for weddings and K-12 education programs.

The amphitheater's naturalistic design reflected the conservation efforts of the National Park Service during the 1930s when hand labor was readily available from the CCC. In the 1920s, the San Francisco design office of the National Park Service created a naturalistic style following the 19th century romantic landscape design tenets promoted by Frederick Law Olmsted and Andrew Jackson Downing. The basic tenets of this NPS naturalistic (or NPS Rustic) design was that architecture would play a subordinate role to nature, the massing of the structure would respond to the terrain, and the design would hide and blend with the naturalness of the setting. Although NPS standardized the design of new buildings in terms of floor plan and elevations, they did not standardize the materials and techniques of construction. Instead, the use of native material available in the vicinity of the site was encouraged, making stone and timber the materials of choice for most parks, including Rocky Mountain National Park. The National Park Service applied this naturalistic or rustic design to buildings, by having materials blend with their natural surroundings and reflect handtool construction. With wood shingle roofs, log framing, rough textures, stone foundations, and dark-stained siding, many buildings within Rocky Mountain National Park exemplify this design philosophy. Similarly in landscape architecture, built features like trails and amphitheaters were to play a subordinate role to the natural surroundings and use local materials.

The prototype for the National Park Service outdoor amphitheater is in Yosemite National Park. Typically called the "woodland amphitheater," the design was a rustic interpretation of the Greek amphitheater built into a hillside with seating radiating in semicircles from a center stage. The National Park Service's Albert Good, in his style manual of 1938, recommended two types of "open air assembly" sites: campfire circles, which were "elementary expressions...found in many parks" and amphitheaters, found "in large parks appealing to more than local interest." For the amphitheater design, Good recommended "a distant view as background for a stage platform" or "a background of trees." He also noted that "the cutting of large trees existent within the limits of the seating of the amphitheater is to be avoided" and that "usually a campfire is built in front of the stage." (Good 1938, 171-187).

The Moraine Park site represents one of the earliest, fully realized examples of this type of amphitheater design in the National Park Service. The Moraine Park Amphitheater's naturalistic design utilized the natural bowl site, retained and enhanced native plantings, used rustic materials such as wood and stone, included the fire circle, and focused the view across Moraine Park. In 1938, Rocky Mountain National Park built two, simpler lecture circles (Aspenglen Campground and Glacier Basin Campground both constructed in 1938) using cut logs for seats and the screen. Neither of these had the elaborate stone work found in the Moraine Park Museum Amphitheater's more formal design (NPS Drawing RM-5174, 8 July 1935; McClelland 1993, 147; HABS drawings, no date).

In summary, as the last remaining extant building from the numerous lodges that once covered Moraine Park, the Moraine Park Museum represents the pre-park era of rustic resorts and lodges. The Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater represent the New Deal conservation efforts of the CCC and the National Park Service and the post war evolution of the National Park Service's education programs.

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Designed

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Primary Historic Function: Museum (Exhibition Hall)-Other

Primary Current Use: Museum (Exhibition Hall)-Other

Other Use/Function

Other Type of Use or Function

Amphitheater

Both Current And Historic

Music Facility

Historic

Outdoor Recreation-Other

Both Current And Historic

Leisure-Passive (Park)

Both Current And Historic

Government-Other

Both Current And Historic

Outdoor Recreation-Other

Both Current And Historic

Current and Historic Names:

Name	Type of Name
Moraine Park Visitor Center	Current
5LR477	Current
Moraine Lodge	Historic
Moraine Lodge Museum	Historic
Assembly Hall	Historic
Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater (NRHP name)	Both Current And Historic

Ethnographic Study Conducted:

No Survey Conducted

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
AD 1898	Homesteaded	Imogene Greene visits Sprague Ranch and is inspired to homestead a 160-acre parcel in Moraine Park, which already had a small cabin.
AD 1903	Altered	Greene earns her patent on the land after making some improvements. She calls the land Hillcrest.
AD 1905	Built	Greene, along with her new husband, William D. MacPherson, a lumber dealer, decides to expand her private retreat. A lodge, dining facility, livery, and small guest cabins are built. The resort is known as Moraine Lodge.
AD 1910	Inhabited	The first guests arrive at MacPherson's Moraine Lodge.
AD 1915	Established	January 26. Rocky Mountain National Park is established.
AD 1916	Established	The National Park Service is established.
AD 1919	Altered	William D. MacPherson dies; Mrs. MacPherson continues to run the resort.
AD 1921	Established	It costs \$35 a week to stay in a gas-lighted cabin with a shower and tub and telephone and telegraph service.

AD 1923	Built	Mrs. MacPherson builds an Assembly and Recreation Hall on the grounds.
	Established	July 23. The Estes Park Trail boasts: Very elaborate ceremonies ushered the fine new rustic assembly hall just completed at Moraine Lodge into the center of the social activities of the popular resort.
AD 1928	Altered	Mrs. MacPherson dies; her family continues to run the resort.
AD 1929 - 1931	Altered	The MacPherson family leases the Moraine Lodge to J. Russell McKelvey, who later ran the Fall River Lodge in Horseshoe Park.
AD 1931	Land Transfer	Fall. The National Park Service purchases the property for \$30,125.
AD 1931 - 1939	Established	1930s. The National Park Service follows conservation philosophies that require the naturalizing of its western National Parks. Such philosophies included erasing all signs of human activity or building new visitor facilities that harmonized with the natural environment.
AD 1933	Demolished	Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) members stay at the Moraine Lodge but soon begin to dismantle the complex.
	Demolished	September. "The razing of the buildings at Moraine Lodge was finished and the [ECW] crew was proceeding with filling up of the remaining excavations."
	Demolished	October. The demolition work at Moraine Lodge is 98% complete. Twenty-seven buildings have been razed, the earth regraded to its original slope and some planting done.
	Altered	After demolition, remaining landscape features include the former Assembly Hall, an unidentified building of similar size to the east, storage tank to the northwest, spring house to the south, and oval loop drive to the south and east.

Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater
Rocky Mountain National Park

AD 1936	Planned	March. The 1936 Master Plan outlines planning efforts for the Moraine Park area, including a site plan or proposed conditions and utility plan for the area (The Master Plan, Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado 1936, 37).
	Altered	ECW crews remodel the remaining building at the Moraine Lodge, the Assembly Hall, for use as a museum and begin construction of an adjacent amphitheater with capacity for 390 people.
	Built	April 25. Construction on the amphitheater (project 476) starts.
	Built	Undated progress report on the construction of the amphitheater states "All the stone work and the planking on the seats is complete and the cement for the stage has been poured. The conduits are laid and a cleanup of the chipped rocks has been started. When complete this will seat an audience of 500 people." (Carlson, Narrative Report NP-4-C)
	Built	August 7. Construction on the Truck Trail to Moraine Park Museum (project 474) begins.
	Built	Sometime between August 7 and September 23. An undated report included in the 1936 Master Plan notes the completion of the museum, amphitheater, and entrance road. Remaining improvements include the construction of the parking lot, planting, and entrance sign. (The Master Plan, Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado 1936).
	Built	September 23. Construction of the parking area (project 475) starts. Crews move 560 cubic yards of dirt for the parking lot.
AD 1937	Built	May. Work on the Moraine Museum (former Assembly Hall) and amphitheater continue. Specific improvements include "steps to the amphitheater, the trail to the amphitheater, the path to the museum, sodding slopes, surfacing the parking area, erosion control, and cementing of steps in amphitheater." At the museum, the porte-cochere and open porch is enclosed.

Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater
Rocky Mountain National Park

	Built	June. The Superintendent's Monthly Report states "The Moraine Park Amphitheater and parking area are fast rounding into shape and should be completed early next month..."
	Established	August 6. The amphitheater is completed and opens to the public. The facility includes a large moving picture screen, stage, lighting, projection booth, a fire pit, and comfortable wooden seats arranged in a semi circle. The first meeting draws 97 people.
AD 1937 - 2010	Established	The Museum and Amphitheater play an important role in educating park visitors on the natural history of the park.
AD 1941	Altered	The Museum is remodeled. The NPS adds an exterior stairway and a second door on the porch surrounding the chimney, among other interior alterations.
AD 1955	Planned	Plans are made for the 1957 Fiscal year, including \$5,300 of improvements to Glacier Basin and Moraine Park Amphitheaters. Proposed improvements include replacing the seat tops and platform at the Moraine Park Amphitheater. (NPS Urgently Needed Construction Projects, 1955)
AD 1956	Planned	Mission 66 is launched to improve park facilities and increase interpretation.
AD 1957	Altered	The improvised log museum in Moraine Park is inadequate and outmoded; the nearby amphitheater has deteriorated beyond usefulness. (Mission 66 Prospectus for Rocky Mountain National Park, 3).
	Planned	Mission 66 plans for Moraine Park include the demolition of the Museum, Amphitheater, and approach path and use of the site for a small, glacier interpretive station (Mission 66 Prospectus for Rocky Mountain National Park, 7, 14).
	Planned	Plans are proposed to relocate and adjust Bear Lake Road in the Moraine Park area to accommodate a new park entrance road (Mission 66 Prospectus for Rocky Mountain National Park, 31).
AD 1958	Altered	Seat tops and the platform are replaced at the Moraine Park Amphitheater. (NPS Urgently Needed Construction Projects, 1955)

Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater
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AD 1960	Altered	Circa 1960. Use of the lecture hall within the museum is discontinued.
AD 1965	Planned	Late 1960s. The 1960s Master Plan outlines the need for a self-guided interpretive loop at Moraine Park (The Master Plan for Preservation and Use, Rocky Mountain National Park)
AD 1970	Altered	By 1970. The museum exhibits are expanded to the second floor.
AD 1971	Altered	Construction drawings for the "Renovation and Addition for Moraine Park Museum" show vegetation clustered around the museum and an interpretive loop trail.
AD 1976	Memorialized	October 1976. Moraine Park Museum, also known as the Moraine Park Visitor Center (5LR477, LCS 10503) is entered on the National Register of Historic Places.
AD 1978	Altered	The lower-floor of the museum is remodeled and utilities are upgraded.
AD 1990 - 1992	Rehabilitated	A rehabilitation project removes the original one-story kitchen wing/exhibit space/stage of the museum. A two-story addition is added to the museum's southeast elevation to house the elevator/lift shaft and accessible bathroom.
AD 2005	Memorialized	An amendment is made to the National Register listing, adding important features in the Moraine Park landscape, including the associated amphitheater.
	Altered	After 2005. A bus-drop off was constructed at the east end of the parking lot to accommodate the park shuttle bus.
AD 2010	Established	A CLI is completed for Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater.

Physical History:

Development of Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater, 1898-2010

The cultural landscape of the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater is an important example of the growth of the local resort and tourism industry, of conservation efforts of Depression-era make-work programs and of the National Park Service, and of naturalistic design within the National Park Service.

In 1898, a visit to Sprague Ranch inspired Imogene Greene to homestead a 160-acre parcel in Moraine Park, which already had a small cabin. After making some improvements, in 1903 she earned her patent on the land she called Hillcrest. In 1905, with her new husband, William D. MacPherson, a lumber dealer, she decided to expand her private retreat into a place others could enjoy. She built a lodge, a dining facility, a livery, and small guest cabins. By 1910, the first guests arrived at her Moraine Lodge. The resort grew rapidly and was advertised as "rustic and distinctive with modern improvements, private baths, good food-and-a-plenty, and our auto meets the four daily auto stages at Estes Park." Mother MacPherson had a reputation as a gracious and accommodating hostess. She also became an active member of the community, campaigning in her role as President of the Estes Park Women's Club with Enos Mills for the establishment of Rocky Mountain National Park. Although her husband died in 1919, MacPherson continued to run her resort. In 1921, it cost \$35 a week to stay in a "gas-lighted cabin with a shower and tub and telephone and telegraph service." In 1923, she built an Assembly and Recreation Hall, where guests could dance on the large upper floor and then rest by the fire in the lower Tea Room. On July 23, 1923, The Estes Park Trail boasted: "Very elaborate ceremonies ushered the fine new rustic assembly hall just completed at Moraine Lodge into the center of the social activities of the popular resort." In 1928, following MacPherson's death at age 84, her family continued to run the resort. Between 1929 and 1931, they leased the Moraine Lodge to J. Russell McKelvey, who later ran the Fall River Lodge in Horseshoe Park. In the fall of 1931, amid the Great Depression, the National Park Service purchased the property for \$30,125 (Pederson 1993, 97-102; Malcomson 1998, 2; Buchholtz 1983, 117; Atkins 1975; HABS/HAER no date).

During the 1930s, the National Park Service followed conservation philosophies that required the "naturalizing" of its western National Parks. Many management tasks focused on erasing all signs of human activity or building new visitor facilities that harmonized with the natural environment. These tasks were made possible because of New Deal makework programs, including the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). In Rocky Mountain National Park, recruits helped out with a variety of tasks relating to construction of roads, trails, campgrounds, and buildings. They were also involved with conservation, maintenance, demolition, vegetation management, and general park improvements. In 1933, CCC members stayed at the Moraine Lodge but soon began to dismantle the complex. According to the Superintendent's Monthly Report of August 1933, "During the past month a crew of E.C.W. [Emergency Conservation Works] men have been wrecking several of the old buildings. All material of value will be salvaged, the remainder is being given to people in the surrounding county for fire wood. When completed its obliteration will greatly improve the lower Moraine Park Valley." The next month's report stated:

“The razing of the buildings at Moraine Lodge was finished and the crew was proceeding with filling up of the remaining excavations.” In October the Superintendent reported the progress as follows: “Moraine Lodge Rehabilitation and Obliteration. This work was 98% complete at the close of the month. Twenty-seven buildings have been razed, the earth regraded to its original slope and some planting done. All good lumber has been salvaged and piled at the Utility site.” These efforts to naturalize the landscape reflected the National Park Service's philosophy of Conservation (Buchholtz 1983, 185; Superintendent's Monthly Report August 1933, September 1933, and October 1933).

After demolition was complete, the former Assembly Hall remained along with an unidentified building of similar size to the east. A storage tank was also left to the northwest, a pump house remained to the south, and a spring house remained to the southwest. Both the storage tank and pump house located on the opposite side of the road now known as Bear Lake Road. An oval loop drive accessed the Assembly Hall from the south and east, portions of which remain today as the drive to the Scottage and the earth trail alignment leading from the museum to the Scottage drive.

In addition to the removal of buildings and the naturalization the park during the 1930s, the National Park Service developed a modern formal education and interpretation program, which reflected its conservation philosophy and required specialized facilities. As part of this process, the park drafted a master plan to direct future improvements at the park. Entitled, “The Master Plan, Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado” the plan was coordinated by the Branch of Plans and Design, 5th Complete Edition in 1936.

While the master plan addressed a number of areas throughout Rocky Mountain National Park, preliminary plans for Moraine Park converted the Assembly Hall of the former resort complex into a museum. Proposed plans showed the removal of the building to the east of the former Assembly Hall, as well as the removal of the oval loop drive to the south of the building. Instead, the new museum would be accessed from a short curvilinear spur road from the west that lead to an oval-shaped parking lot with central median with two light standards. At the edge of the parking lot, a series of walks link to the museum and lead upslope to a proposed amphitheater to the west. Plans for the Moraine Park Museum were recommended by the Deputy Chief Architect on March 19, 1936. A day later, the Acting Chief Engineer approved it for engineering.

Construction began shortly thereafter, as E.C.W. crews began the construction of the amphitheater (project 476) in April 25 (NARA DC, RE79, Entry 42, Box 11). Remodeling of the remaining building at the Moraine Lodge, the Assembly Hall, for use as a museum also likely began at this time. Other CCC records note the construction on the "Truck Trail" to Moraine Park Museum (project 474) started August 7th, and the parking area (project 475) started September 23 (NARA DC, RE79, Entry 42, Box 11). During this time, crews eventually moved 560 cubic yards of dirt for the parking lot.

Sometime between August 7 and September 23, 1936, an undated report included in the 1936

Master Plan was drafted that outlined the progress of the construction. It noted the existing entrance road, museum alterations, and amphitheater, thus implying those construction projects were completed first. Remaining improvements included the construction of the parking lot, trails, plantings, and entrance sign. More specifically, the document states,

“CIRCULATION

Roads (Existing)

This area is reached from Estes Park over the proposed Thompson River Parkway and the Deer Ridge-Moraine Park Highway. The building was served by an old narrow road which originally served the lodge which is to be obliterated where the road trespasses Government land. During the Fifth E.C.W. Period a new approach road was constructed to this area. The road is about 600 feet long and 20 feet wide.

Roads (Proposed)

It is proposed to gravel and oil this project, also the parking area, at the time Section 3-A Deer Ridge-Moraine Park Highway is oiled.

Parking Area (Proposed)

It is proposed to construct a parking area at the terminus of this road to provide parking for the Museum and amphitheatre. This parking area will be defined by a log curb.

Trails (Proposed)

The parking area, museum, and amphitheatre will be connected by foot trails as shown on the plans.

GOVERNMENT BUILDING UNITS

Museum (Existing)

The [former Assembly Hall] salvaged from the Moraine lodge development, has been converted into a museum. The building is a log structure with masonry foundations. There are two stories in the building, the lower floor devoted to information office, naturalist's office and comfort stations; the second floor is devoted to Museum exhibits in cases around the exterior walls and a large Indian display in the center of the room. In a room overlooking the valley and Continental Divide is a large relief map of the park forming an interesting part of the exhibit.

Pump House (Existing)

A small building exists in this area to house the pumping facilities necessary to bring the water to the building.

Storage Tank (Existing)

A storage tank exists above the amphitheatre which is half above the ground requiring a frame structure.

MISCELLANEOUS

Amphitheatre (Existing)

This development was started during the Fifth E.C.W. Period and the development proper has been practically completed. The amphitheatre was constructed in a natural bowl, containing log seats with stone base, a stage and screen and fire circle. The area will seat approximately 500 people and is to be used for night lectures by the naturalist.

Planting (Proposed)

It is proposed to accomplish some planting around the Museum and amphitheatre during the Seventh E.C.W. Period.

Entrance Sign (Proposed)

It is proposed to construct a directional sign at the junction of the main highway and the museum approach road. This sign is to have the letters cut out with green reflecting glass as a back ground so it will be readily visible at night." (Undated Report from Master Plan, 1936)

The landscape improvements at Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater continued throughout 1936 and 1937. The Superintendent's Annual Report from Fiscal Year 1936 stated that the amphitheater "will be ready for use before the end of the summer." However, construction on the site was still underway a year later, as is evident from the Superintendent's Monthly Report from May 1937: "In the Moraine Museum area the following E.C.W. construction is under way: the steps to the amphitheater, the trail to the amphitheater, the path to the museum, sodding slopes, surfacing the parking area, erosion control, and cementing of steps in amphitheater." The Superintendent's Monthly Report from June 1937 states that "The Moraine Park Amphitheater and parking area are fast rounding into shape and should be completed early next month. This job has been one of the largest that E.C.W. crews have been placed on, and has taken them a year to complete. The job called for many types of works, including log, rock, cement, grading and landscaping. When completed, it will be an excellent improvement to the park." The amphitheater was opened to the public on August 6, 1937, and "its first meeting drew 97 people, a very encouraging prospect for the new centralized lecture program." (Superintendent's Annual Report, 1936; Superintendent's Monthly Report May 1937, June 1937, and July 1937)

This combination of museum and amphitheater reflected the development of new approaches to visitor interpretation in the National Park Service. Early interpretive efforts focused on

individual naturalists escorting small groups of visitors into the field. By the 1920s, as visits to the park increased, the National Park Service Education Division, under the leadership of chief naturalist Ansel F. Hall, began to create new methods for reaching visitors, including wayside exhibits, amphitheaters, and park museums. By holding interpretive programs at amphitheaters, the park naturalists were able to reach large audiences and serve a greater number of people. In Rocky Mountain National Park, the recently remodeled museum and newly constructed amphitheater, linked together spatially by the parking lot and a short trail, played a joint role in educating park visitors on the natural history of the park. Although the amphitheater was the venue for most evening programs, in the event of “rain or cold, Moraine Amphitheater Lectures are held indoors at the Museum.” Program titles included “Winter Scenes in Colored Movies” and “The Red Man in the Rockies.” On April 22, 1938, The Estes Park Trail remarked: “Of importance to the naturalist program for the Park visitors was the construction of an amphitheater, seating 390 persons, near the Moraine Park Museum. Complete in every respect, it is equipped with a large moving picture screen, stage, lighting, projection booth, a fire pit for the comfort and comfortable wooden seats arranged in a semi circle on a slope to assure visibility for all visitors.” Further, in 1937, the park itself noted, “The development of the new lecture center at Moraine Park Amphitheater has shown itself to be logical, in that attendance has been showing a steady figure of 75 to 100 when weather conditions are favorable. Rainy and cold evenings [reduce] crowds somewhat, but no lectures are postponed, rather being held inside the museum in improvised arrangements.” (Estes Park Trail, July 1, 1938 and July 28, 1939).

After the completion of the construction, the landscape of the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater changed little. The Museum was remodeled in 1941, with few exterior changes. However, by 1955, the amphitheater was in disrepair. In a report entitled, “Urgently Needed Construction Projects,” improvements were proposed to replace the seat tops and platform at the Moraine Park Amphitheater. (NPS Urgently Needed Construction Projects, 1955).

Less than two years later in 1957, the park reevaluated its facilities under Mission 66 and made plans for the removal of both the museum and amphitheater, noting the “improvised log museum in Moraine Park is inadequate and outmoded; the nearby amphitheater has deteriorated beyond usefulness.” (Mission 66 Prospectus for Rocky Mountain National Park, 3). Despite plans to remove both the museum and amphitheater, the demolition of the structures never materialized. One year later, the amphitheater seat tops and platform were repaired in 1958.

In the late 1960s, Rocky Mountain National Park underwent another master planning process. Focusing mostly on interpretive opportunities within the park, the plan noted the “outdated” interpretive exhibits at the Moraine Park Museum, and made recommendations for a self-guided interpretive devices and “nature trails at Moraine Park.”

By 1971, an interpretive loop trail was constructed north of the Moraine Park Museum. Though the exact construction date of the trail is unknown, it is likely it was constructed as part of Mission 66 interpretive improvements. Construction drawings from the 1971 museum renovations and additions show the trail connecting to the northwest and southeast corners of the building. The plans also show vegetation clustered around the building and a hose house

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and underground propane tank to the west of the structure.

From the late 1970s to today, little information is known about the evolution of the area. The museum was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. It later underwent additional renovations in 1978 and again from 1990-1992. More recently, the east end of the parking lot was altered to accommodate a bus drop-off for the park shuttle system.

Overall, the landscape of the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater retains a number of features dating to the period of significance. The Moraine Park Museum's evolution over time reflects the desire to satisfy visitor needs and constantly improve interpretation of the park's natural and cultural history. Since 1936, the amphitheater and landscape that surround it have remained largely unchanged, a testament to the timelessness of naturalistic design and the consistency of the National Park Service mission.



Moraine Park Lodge's Assembly Hall, now the Moraine Park Museum, circa 1925.

Source: NPS-ROMO, 10-C-1-I neg 272; NR nomination.



Razing Moraine Lodge, July 17, 1933. Source: NPS-ROMO, 11-G-3, album 4008, neg 2966; NR nomination.



Landscape completed after Moraine Lodge removal, October 1933. Source: NPS-ROMO, 11-G-3, album 4008, neg 2964; NR nomination.



Shingling at Moraine Museum, July 20, 1935. Source: NPS-ROMO, 11-G-3, album 4008, neg 3145; NR nomination.



Site plan showing proposed improvements from the 1936 Master Plan. Existing buildings are outlined in red; private land is shaded in brown. Source: ROMO Archives.



Detail of museum area and parking lot from 1936 Master Plan. Existing buildings are outlined in red. Note the oval loop road south of the museum building. Source: ROMO Archives.



Moraine Park Museum Amphitheater construction, May 29, 1936. Source: NPS-ROMO, 11—5, album 4008, neg 3132; NR nomination.



Sunrise religious service at Moraine Park Museum Amphitheater, June 16, 1940. Source: NPS-ROMO, 11-P-2, neg1018.



Moraine Park Museum Amphitheater, circa 1937. Source: NPS-ROMO, 11-Q-5, album 4008, neg 1526; NR nomination.



*Junior Nature School (KOA) Broadcast from Moraine Park Museum, August 28, 1940.
Source: NPS-ROMO-11-P-2, neg 1032.*



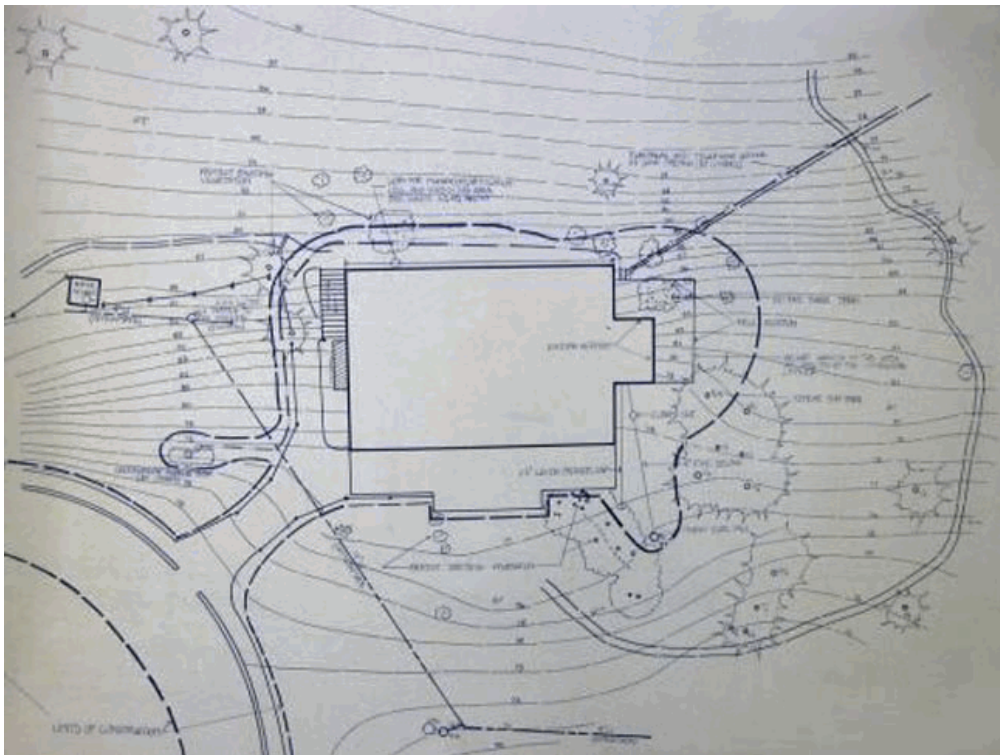
View of the amphitheater, 1955. Note fire circle in foreground and deteriorated wood seats. Source: Urgently Needed Construction Projects, ROMO Archives.



View of the deteriorated wood seats in the amphitheater, 1955. Source: Urgently Needed Construction Projects, ROMO Archives.



View of the deteriorated stage at the amphitheater, 1955. Source: Urgently Needed Construction Projects, ROMO Archives.



Construction drawing from 1971 renovations and additions to the museum. Note loop interpretive trail to northwest and southeast of building. Source: ROMO Archives.

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

The Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater as a whole retains essential features that convey its history after 1936 and therefore retains a high level of integrity. Because there have been few modifications to the district, it retains its integrity of location, design, form, material, setting, feeling, and association.

The Moraine Park Museum is the last extant building from any of the numerous resorts that once dotted the landscape of Moraine Park. Its integrity as a "resort" building is questionable, considering that the feeling of the resort is gone and the other associated resort buildings were effectively obliterated. The National Park Service altered the design of the building in 1936, heavily modifying the character-defining feature, the grand staircase. The building does, however, have integrity of location, materials, pioneer-craftsman workmanship, and setting amongst the ponderosa pines. Although the building has been altered, the major modification (enclosing the porch) happened during the period of significance. The modern addition is subservient to the original building because of its smaller scale, modern materials, and location opposite the entry road. It does not distract from the integrity of the building.

The amphitheater has lost some minor architectural features--such as the projection booth and screen--but the loss does not diminish the overall design integrity. The fire pit can be excavated relatively easily and the screen and projection booth can be reconstructed, based on historical documentation without much difficulty. The overall form of the building, parking lot, and amphitheater has not changed. Although the trail tread has changed, the remaining materials of stone, concrete, and wood have remained the same. Trees have both died and sprouted, this reflects the natural succession in the ponderosa pine ecosystem (making things look "natural" was a goal of naturalistic design); therefore the setting has changed slightly as it was designed to change. The feeling of being in a rustic setting among the trees, looking at Longs Peak, remains. The essential association between the museum and amphitheater continue. Despite the loss of some historic materials and disrepair, largely due to minimal maintenance, the district retains a majority of the features that illustrate its historical significance.

Aspects of Integrity:

Location
Design
Setting
Materials
Workmanship
Feeling
Association

Landscape Characteristic:

Archeological Sites

Not used.

Buildings and Structures

Moraine Park Museum

The Moraine Park Museum is the only building in the district. Visitors approach the building from the west, following the historic path, which breaks the mass of the building into smaller pieces. Thus, although a large building (approximately 5000 square feet), the overall impression is of a Rustic cabin tucked into the hillside.

The two-and-a-half story building faces southwest and has a side-gable roof with two shed dormers. The entire roof is covered in green-painted wood shingles that double every fifth course. The upper stories are of log construction, with log sizes ranging from 7 to 11 inches in diameter. The corners are not notched. The upper stories are painted dark brown.

The front or southwest elevation is two-and-a-half stories in two parts: the original building and, to the southeast, a 1991 addition. True-divided-light, wood sash windows punctuate this elevation in a symmetrical fashion. The windows on the upper stories are double hung, while the first story contains casements. A two-story, front-gabled porch extends from the front of the building. The second story of the porch has large picture windows; the lower story is open for access to the front door. The upper part of the front door has one light; it is constructed of multiple layers of wood boards with tongue-and-groove joints, painted dark brown. The basement story, partially excavated into the hillside, is concrete veneered in uncoursed fieldstone. On the 1991 addition, there are 1-over-1 wood sash windows on both the first and second stories. A dark-brown painted steel door provides access to the first story of the addition. The first story of the addition is poured concrete, painted dark brown. Centered on the west elevation and extending through the roof is a prominent, uncoursed stone chimney. A log balustrade porch surrounds the fieldstone chimney on the second story and is accessed through two tongue-and-groove doors.

The northeast elevation is one story and has four twelve by twelve, true-divided-light hopper windows. There is one six-by-six hopper window to the west end. At the foundation, a concrete gutter/swale moves water to a steel drain grate.

The southeast elevation is dominated by a 1991 addition to the building. It has a hipped roof covered in green-painted wood shingles. Brown-painted, clapboard siding covers the addition, which sits on a dark-brown-painted poured-concrete foundation. The paired exterior doors are steel, painted dark brown.

Alterations to Museum

Originally a first-floor kitchen and tea room with second floor dance hall, the building has served as a museum since 1936. There have been four major alterations since that time.

Between 1936-1937, the park turned the former assembly hall into a museum. Originally across the front elevation, there was a porte-cochere and open porch, with a set of stairs descending each to the southeast and northwest. The National Park Service enclosed it during the 1936 remodel with smaller, single-light sash windows. At an unknown date, the National Park Service replaced these with picture windows. On the west elevation, the National Park Service moved the first story door a few feet southwest, to an existing window opening, and altered the original gable roof to a shed. On the southeast elevation, there was originally a small wing containing the kitchen, clad in shingles on the second floor and roofing paper on the first floor. The 1936 remodel changed the addition's exterior to a more compatible log veneer on the second floor and stone veneer on the first floor. Interior work during this remodel included placing exhibit cases against the exterior walls of the second floor and installing a large "Indian Exhibit" in the center of the room. The old kitchen became an exhibit space for a "Trapper's Cabin." In 1941, the park remodeled the museum. On the northwest elevation on the porch surrounding the chimney, the National Park Service added an exterior stairway and a second door. Also on the northwest elevation first story, the National Park Service removed the roof covering the door altogether. Inside, the park removed the Indian Exhibit and changed the Trapper's Cabin to a stage, so that the remainder of the second floor could be used as an "indoor amphitheater" or lecture hall. On the first floor, the National Park Service installed casework for exhibits, which were moved from the Headquarters Museum (near Estes Park).

Around 1960, the park discontinued use of the lecture hall, and by 1970 expanded the museum by installing centrally located exhibits on the second floor. The 1978 lower-floor remodeling included upgrading the electrical system and plumbing fixtures to comply with current code, refinishing all exhibit cases and building some new ones, strengthening load bearing partitions, rebuilding the first floor fireplace, recarpeting the first floor, and reshingling the roof over the observation room (second story of the front porch).

In 1990-1992, the park rehabilitation included removing the original one-story kitchen wing/exhibit space/stage and building a two-story addition to house the elevator/lift shaft and accessible bathroom. The interior rehabilitation modernized the museum, shop, and lobby.

Moraine Park Museum Amphitheater

Located about 100 feet northwest of the Museum lies the Moraine Park Amphitheater, an elliptical structure 125 feet long by 75 feet wide. The design maximizes the use of the bowl-shaped setting and native materials to carefully craft a space that blends with the environment, enhancing the naturalness of the site. The earth cut from the seating area of the amphitheater was likely used to create the terrace holding the stage.

The elliptical stage includes the remains of a stone fire ring and the projection screen. Two stone and concrete footers that held the log posts of the movie screen are present, but the actual wooden picture screen, on which the slides and movies were projected, no longer exists. Stones that once defined the ring of the circular fire pit can still be seen in front of the screen

foundation; a few large stones remain in situ, revealing their smooth surface on the floor of the stage. The stage is enclosed by a curtain wall of ponderosa pines.

Sixteen rows of seats in two arcs ascend from the stage area, arranged in an irregular fan shape, facing the stage and fire pit. The seats sit on somewhat regular stones some 10" high. Concrete mortar stabilizes the rocks holding the rectangular seating planks. Timber wedges (11" x 4") lie on these stone walls about 4-5 feet apart, with rectangular planks of milled lumber (2¼" x 11" x 4-6") nailed to the wedges. The joinery between the planks as well as the wedges use large unfinished nails. The planks are painted dark brown. The seating between rows 10 and 13 in the right arc is broken to accommodate an existing tree in a rectangular planting bed. Lighting fixtures installed under the seats remain but no longer function.

Three main circulation paths with stone steps provide access to the seats. The aisle in the center is the most regular, about 4 feet wide. Those on the sides hug closely to the natural slope. Large stones and pines surround the northern corner of the seating area. The circulation path of the south side is defined by a line of pines.

Amphitheater Alterations

In 1958, the wood seats and wood stage were replaced by the National Park Service. It is also likely that the projection booth and screen were removed at this same time. No major alterations or demolitions have occurred since its construction.

Drainage Structures

Numerous stone drainage structures move water through the site. Drainage features include a 60-foot-long stone gutter above the amphitheater, which channels water into a drain. A steel drain grate lies behind the screen foundation at the edge of the stage area. At the bottom of the slope below the stage area, a 24-inch steel culvert with stone and concrete battlements channels water under the entry road. Down the slope from this culvert, lies another stone battlement and culvert that carries water under Bear Lake Road. To the southeast, a second system of matching stone battlements and steel culverts moves water under the roads. This drainage pattern points to the elaborate construction techniques used in the creation of the site.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Moraine Park Museum (including stone wall and stone steps west of museum)
Moraine Park Amphitheater (including stage, arc seating alignment, stone steps, fire ring, projection screen remnants, stone walls, planting bed)
Stone culverts
Stone gutters and battlements

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES: NA

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Moraine Park Museum from parking lot, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.



Moraine Park Amphitheater, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.



Seats of the Moraine Park Amphitheater, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.



Stone drainage structure along entrance road to Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.



Stone drainage structure along entrance road to Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.

Circulation

Trails

A network of earth footpaths, asphalt trails, and stone steps connect the amphitheater with the adjacent Moraine Park Museum. The primary trail to the amphitheater extends from the north end of the parking lot. This trail starts with a flight of 16 rough-hewn stone steps that have irregular treads measuring 14-16 inches and risers measuring 3-5 inches. The steps reach an asphalt trail 3-4 feet wide that heads north in the direction of the amphitheater. The grade is an average of 11% up to the amphitheater. It appears that the original trail to the amphitheater was finished with irregular stones or an earth path lined with stones. Evidence of these original materials exists under the extant layers of asphalt.

On the north and northeast side of the parking lot, an interpretive trail runs along the top of a steep slope from the museum to the amphitheater steps. The trail is earth-packed, lined with rough stones, and marked with small, simple, wood interpretive signs. A log buck-and-rail fence parallels the interpretive trail, preventing visitors from falling off the steep slope to the parking lot below. The interpretive trail is part of a larger interpretive loop trail that departs from the north and south sides of the Moraine Park Museum to meet the asphalt trail near the edge of the stone amphitheater steps.

This convergence between the interpretive loop trail and the asphalt path leading to the amphitheater is marked by a large pine tree surrounded by common chokecherry, with other shrubs and stones scattered in the landscape. From this point, the asphalt trail to the amphitheater is lined by pine trees and continues to the north/northwest, gaining elevation to arrive at the stage area of the amphitheater. The interpretive loop trail heads upslope to the northeast, before it loops back to the south, connecting to the museum.

Other pedestrian paths include two 4-foot asphalt paths that line the curved north and south edges of the parking lot. Both paths provide access from the parking area to the museum; however, the northern path also connects the museum to the stone steps that lead to the amphitheater. At the east end of the parking lot paths, they connect to another asphalt sidewalk that leads to the museum's front door. South of the museum are two additional gravel paths—one that connects to the loop interpretive trail and one that leads to driveway of the privately-owned Scottage.

Road and Parking Lot

The 20-foot-wide, asphalt entry road has a 15% grade and leads from Bear Lake Road to the museum area. The entrance drive curves and follows the topography upslope to an asphalt parking lot that serves approximately 65 cars. The parking lot is paved in asphalt and lined with 8-12 inch diameter log curbs. The parking lot is generally oval shaped with a central island that contains native shrubs, grasses, and one small ponderosa pine. Toward the eastern end of the parking lot, a concrete bus drop-off area has been constructed (post-2005) for the park shuttle.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

- Stone steps leading from parking lot to amphitheater
- Asphalt path from stone steps to amphitheater
- Entrance drive
- Parking lot
- Stone steps west of museum
- Asphalt path leading to museum front door
- Gravel path leading to driveway of The Scottage
- Paths at edge of parking lot

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Interpretive trail loop north/northeast of Museum
Concrete bus drop-off

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Oval shaped parking lot with center island, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.



Asphalt entry road leading into parking lot, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.



Asphalt walk and stone steps leading to amphitheater, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.



Informal dirt trail leading from Museum building to southeast, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.



Interpretive trail along the top of a steep slope with buck-and-rail fence, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.

Cluster Arrangement

See Spatial Organization.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES: NA

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES: NA

Constructed Water Features

Constructed water features at the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater include numerous stone drainage structures, such as stone gutters, culverts, and battlements. For additional information on these features, see Buildings and Structures.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES: NA

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES: NA

Cultural Traditions

Not used.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES: NA

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES: NA

Land Use

Historically, the principal activity of the area was related to the numerous resorts that once dotted the landscape of Moraine Park. Constructed as an Assembly Hall, the Museum building served as a gathering place for the resort residents of the Moraine Lodge. After the property was purchased by the National Park Service in 1931, land use shifted to incorporate visitor contact and interpretation with the renovated museum and newly constructed amphitheater.

Today, use of the site for visitor contact and interpretive programs remains today. Additionally, non-contributing land uses, such as recreational uses, have been added since the end of the period of significance.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Visitor parking and access
Visitor contact and interpretation

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Recreational land use (hiking)

Natural Systems and Features

See Topography and Vegetation.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES: NA

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES: NA

Small Scale Features

Little information is known about the historic small-scale features of the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater landscape. Known historic small-scale features are mainly associated with the amphitheater, such as the wood seats, fire ring, stage, and projection booth and screen. Of these, the seats and stage were replaced in 1958. The stone fire ring remains, but is now filled in with soil. The projection booth and screen were removed, likely at the same time the seats and stage were altered. Other remaining historic small-scale features include the stone wall and stone steps west of the museum. Written documentation also suggests the 1930s landscape included an entrance sign and two light fixtures in the parking lot median; however, it is unknown if these features were ever installed.

Today, a number of small-scale features are evident in the landscape. Two, 4-foot-tall steel bases that hold telescopes for interpretive programs sit on the east end of the parking lot island.

Along the south edge of the parking lot, four modern, black steel wayside signs face Moraine Park and tell the story of some of the non-extant lodges, of the glacial history of Moraine Park, and of artists in the park (i.e. Albert Bierdstadt). At the east end of the parking lot are two bear-proof garbage cans (one brown-painted and one green-painted); another brown-painted garbage can sits just outside the front door. Along the asphalt sidewalk to the museum's front door is a 15-inch-tall log "bumper" fence, made of 6-inch logs to prevent visitors from wandering off trail. The north side of this same asphalt sidewalk is lined with large granite boulders that both retain the slope above and serve as seating for visitors. This wall blends into a set of stone stairs at the west end of the museum that wrap around the fireplace and connect to the loop interpretive trail. A red fire hydrant stands in the grass near the front door. When the museum is open, the flag on the pole in front of the lodge constantly snaps in the wind. Two rustic, half-log benches allow visitors to admire the view of Longs Peak from the front door. Two small, wood signs teach visitors about native vegetation. An additional sign is located at the entrance road, reading "Moraine Park Visitor Center" and is constructed of log posts and 11" x 2-1/2" boards painted tan.

Other small-scale features found throughout the area include lighting fixtures in trees, a bat house, buck and pole fencing, and a picnic table.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

- Fire ring
- Stage (replaced)
- Wood seats (replaced)
- Stone steps west of museum
- Stone wall west of museum

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

- Steel telescope bases
- Wayside signs
- Garbage cans
- Bumper fence
- Fire hydrant
- Benches
- Wood interpretive signs
- Entrance sign
- Light fixtures in trees
- Bat house
- Buck and pole fencing
- Picnic table

MISSING FEATURES:

- Projection booth and screen

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Fencing, benches, signage, and flagpole outside the entrance to the Museum, July 2010.

Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.



Stone steps and stone wall west of the Museum, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.



Fire ring and stone stage at Amphitheater, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.



Benches (non-contributing) near the Museum, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.

Spatial Organization

The overall organization of the area is based on the arrangement of the museum, amphitheater, parking lot, and interconnecting paths between. The museum and parking lot are sited roughly mid-slope in the center of the district. The amphitheater is to the west, sited upslope. Between the amphitheater and Bear Lake Road to the south are the curvilinear entrance drive and a series of stone culverts and gutters. North of the museum and east of the amphitheater is an interpretive loop trail with interpretive signs. Bear Lake Road defines the area to the north and south/southeast, while the edge of the forest defines the east edge.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Arrangement of museum, amphitheater, parking lot, and interconnecting paths between

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES: NA

Topography

In general, the topography of the area steeply slopes to the south and southwest, creating a natural “bowl” shape that drains to Moraine Park. The highest point within the site is along Bear Lake Road to the north, and the lowest point is along Bear Lake Road as it follows the topography to the south of the museum. The parking area and museum building are sited

mid-slope within level areas that were carved out of the sloping topography. The amphitheater is sited uphill from the parking lot, utilizing the naturally sloping, bowl-shaped topography for the seating and stage areas. Other key topographic features within the site include a steep slope north of the parking area. All topographic features date to the period of significance.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Steeply sloping topography to the south/southwest
Level parking area and museum building sites
Sloping, bowl-shaped topography of amphitheater
Steep slope north of parking area

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES: NA

Vegetation

Historically, the vegetation patterns of the Moraine Park and Amphitheater landscape remain similar as they are today. Vegetation within the area consists of scattered pines over a sloping grassy and shrubby ground plane. The pines are denser along the east edge of the boundary and around the amphitheater, with more open and scattered pines between. Pine species consist of Lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), Ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), while the understory includes bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier* spp.), thimbleberry (*Rubus parviflorus*), chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*), and fendler buckthorn (*Ceanothus fendleri*). An aspen grove is also located along the west edge of the site.

In addition, there are also key specimen trees within the landscape that are important to note. Within the amphitheater, a large Ponderosa pine was incorporated into the eastern seating area. This pine remains today as a reminder of the site-sensitive design and craftsmanship of the CCC. Another large Ponderosa pine is located at the intersection of the interpretive loop trail and the path leading to the amphitheater. A grouping of smaller Ponderosa pines is located behind (south) of the amphitheater stage to screen views of the adjacent road. All of these trees date to the period of significance, and the park is currently taking steps to ensure their continued survival.

While the vegetation composition has remained fairly static throughout the 20th century, recent infestations of pine bark beetle have impacted the forests of Rocky Mountain National Park. A large percentage of the Lodgepole pine in the area are in decline because of the infestation. Some pines within the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater landscape have already declined, and others have been removed. Those trees mentioned above as key specimen trees are regularly sprayed in attempts to safeguard them from the beetle.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*)
Ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*)

Bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentate*)
Serviceberry (*Amelanchier* spp.)
Thimbleberry (*Rubus parviflorus*)
Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*)
Rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*)
Fendler buckthorn (*Ceanothus fendleri*).
Aspen grove
Large Ponderosa pine within eastern amphitheater seating area
Large Ponderosa pine at intersection of the interpretive loop trail and the path leading to the amphitheater
Grouping of Ponderosa pines located behind (south) of the amphitheater stage

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Loss of pine trees due to pine bark beetle infestations

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



General view of vegetation surrounding the Museum, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.

Views and Vistas

All views and vistas of the site remain similar to those extant during the period of significance.
As visitors enter the Moraine Park area along Bear Lake Road from the west, the Moraine

Park Museum, entrance road, and parking lot become visible to the north. However, northward views from the road to the museum area are foreshortened due to sloping topography and scattered vegetation.

From within the site, views are directed from the parking lot and museum to the south and southwest to the broad, low-lying Moraine Park surrounded by mountains. Since the topography of the immediate surroundings slopes steeply to the south, views in that direction are vast. The adjacent lands of Moraine Park are relatively undeveloped and the views are thus uninterrupted. Views to Longs Peak and other surrounding mountains are also important from the museum.

Views from within the amphitheater area exhibit a different character than found throughout the rest of the site. The presence of pine trees throughout the amphitheater area provides screened views from the amphitheater seating area to the broader landscape. In particular, pines behind (southwest) of the stage area provide a backdrop for the stage and screen views in and out of the amphitheater area. Pines along the north edge of the amphitheater also screen views to the adjacent Bear Lake Road, as it ascends the topography.

While today's viewsheds remain relatively similar to the period of significance, the pine bark beetle infestation throughout Rocky Mountain National Park is having a significant impact on the area's vegetation. As the pine bark beetle continues to affect the pines in the area, views may be significantly altered.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Foreshortened views from Bear Lake Road to museum
Expansive views from museum and parking lot to Moraine Park
Expansive views from museum and parking lot to Longs Peak and surrounding mountains
Screened views from amphitheater to broader landscape
Screened views providing backdrop behind amphitheater stage

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Altered viewsheds from pine bark beetle infestations

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



View east to Museum and parking lot with surrounding mountains, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.



View south to low-lying Moraine Park and surrounding mountains, July 2010. Source: C. Mardorf, NPS.

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 07/09/2010

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

Overall, landscape of the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater is in fair condition. Few elements, such as the museum and parking lot are in good condition, while the majority of features, such as pedestrian paths, drainage features, and vegetation show some signs of deterioration. In particular, the CCC path leading to the amphitheater is in poor condition. Because of the varying conditions of the different features, the landscape is in fair condition.

Impacts

Type of Impact: Pests/Diseases

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Description: Lodgepole and Ponderosa Pines throughout Rocky Mountain National Park. While Lodgepole pines are more susceptible to the pest than Ponderosa pines, the pines within and around the Moraine Park Museum and Amphitheater show signs of decline. Some pines within the area have already been removed. The park is making concerted efforts to save some key historic trees, such as those in the amphitheater, by spraying them with insecticide.

Type of Impact: Deferred Maintenance

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Description: Deferred maintenance of the landscape has led to the deterioration of some features, such as the CCC era pedestrian path leading to the amphitheater and amphitheater seats. Lack of routine maintenance and substantial pine needle drop has also obscured some historic features in the amphitheater area.

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Undetermined

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