
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
2007



Central Campground
Chickasaw NRA - Travertine 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

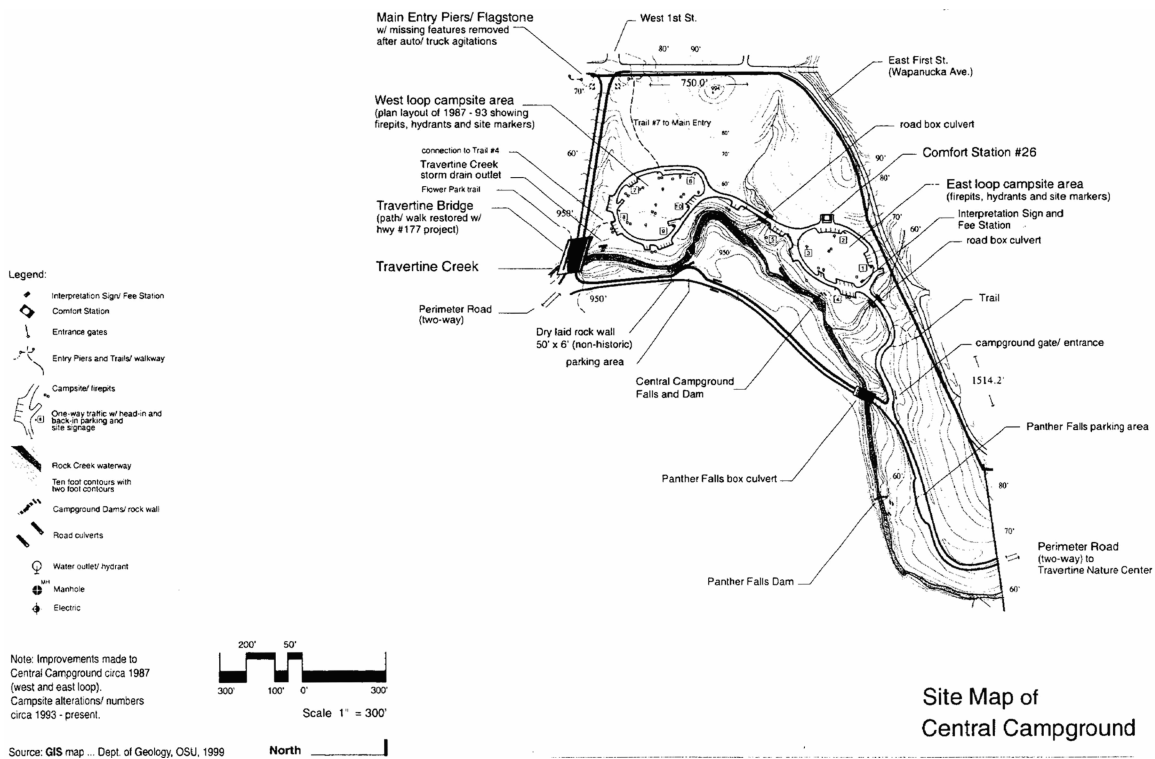
Central Campground
 Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District

treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

Inventory Unit Description:

The 15-acre Central Campground is the smallest of the three campground developments within the Platt Historic District, located in the Chickasaw National Recreation Area. Central Campground is located in the north-central half of the Platt Historic District, just east of Highway 177 and Flower Park, in Murray County, Oklahoma. The component landscape covers approximately 15 acres of open to wooded and relatively level terrain. Travertine Creek winds through the landscape, as does the perimeter road of the park. The landscape contains all of Central Campground, as well as some of the surrounding area, including a portion of Travertine Creek, the perimeter road, and Panther Falls. The area is used for camping and associated recreational activities, including bathing in Travertine Creek.

Site Plan



Site Plan for Central Campground. Source: GIS base map data obtained from Department of Geology, Oklahoma State University (1999), augmented by Iowa State University.

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name:	Central Campground
Property Level:	Component Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	850143
Parent Landscape:	850137

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code:	Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District -CHIC
Park Organization Code:	7516
Subunit/District Name Alpha Code:	Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District - CHIC
Park Administrative Unit:	Chickasaw National Recreation Area

CLI Hierarchy Description

The Platt Historic District of Chickasaw National Recreation Area (CNRA) is the parent landscape for Central Campground. The Platt Historic District is a historic designed landscape containing ten component landscapes, each with unique and individual landscape features. A study of these numerous component landscapes contributes to our understanding and appreciation of the district's entire cultural landscape.

The Platt Historic District is an irregularly shaped area extending for about three miles along both sides of two small streams, which flow through it in a generally east to west direction. The width of the district varies from 4,800 feet near the center to about 6,400 feet near the western edge and 2,300 feet along its eastern edge. Connecting the district's component landscapes is a six-mile (once eight-mile) perimeter road. This road provides both access to and opportunities for viewing the district's features.

The ten component landscapes are:

- Rock Creek Campground (not part of Historic District)
- Flower Park and Black Sulphur Springs
- Antelope Springs and Buffalo Springs/ Nature Center
- Bromide Springs/ Bromide Hill
- Central Campground
- Cold Springs Campground
- Pavilion Springs / Hillside Springs/ Headquarters and Maintenance Area
- Walnut Grove
- Travertine Island and Little Niagara Falls
- Buffalo Pasture and Prairie Uplands

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

This CLI was written and completed by Heidi Hohmann and Katarzyna Grala of Iowa State University. Previous cultural landscape documentation for the Platt District, which includes the Central Campground, was carried out in 1997 by Kay Sallee et al., of UT Arlington. CLI database entry was completed by Michele Curran, CLI Coordinator.

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence:	Yes
Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:	09/21/2007
National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Date of Concurrence Determination:	07/06/2007

National Register Concurrence Narrative:

The Oklahoma SHPO concurred with the findings of the CLI on 7/6/2007.

Concurrence Graphic Information:



Oklahoma Historical Society

Founded May 27, 1893

State Historic Preservation Office

Oklahoma History Center • 2401 North Laird Ave. • Oklahoma City, OK 73105-7914
(405) 521-6249 • Fax (405) 522-0816 • www.okhistory.org/shpo/shpom.htm

July 6, 2007

Mr. Bruce Noble, Superintendent
Chickasaw National Recreation Area
1008 West 2nd Street
Sulphur, OK 73086

Dear Mr. Noble:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for the Platt District at Chickasaw National Recreation Area. The Platt District is a significant landscape to both Oklahoma and to the National Park Service.

We concur with the opinion that the Platt District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the national level of significance. We concur with the findings of the CLR as well, specifically that the period of national significance for the Platt District is 1933-1940, and with the CLR's definition of the boundary for the district.

Additionally, we believe that the treatments outlined in the CLR for the overall landscape are generally consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. We look forward to reviewing projects on a case-by-case basis, using the treatments outlined in the CLR as a baseline plan. Should you wish to discuss the creation of a Programmatic Agreement based on the findings of the CLR, we will be happy to work with you.

Please feel free to contact me at (405)522-4484 (or e-mail at mheisch@okhistory.org). Thank you for your interest in Oklahoma's historic and architectural heritage.

Sincerely,

Melvina Heisch
Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer

✓ cc: Jill Cowley, IMR Santa Fe

OK SHPO concurrence on the Platt Historic District CLR, includes the Central Campground component landscape, 7/6/2007.

MEMORANDUM

To: Deputy Associate Regional Director
Cultural Resources
12795 W. Alameda Pkwy.
Lakewood, CO 80228

From: Superintendent
Chickasaw National Recreation Area, 1008
W. 2nd
Sulphur, OK 73086-4814

Subject: Central Campground Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI)

I concur with the content and the assessment of the Central Campground cultural landscape for the Chickasaw National Recreation Area.

The CLI has identified the Central Campground component landscape as a "Historic Designed Landscape."

- 1. The CLI rates the condition as "GOOD" (pg. 34) and the Management Category is listed as "Must be Preserved and Maintained" (pg. 8).*
- 2. The period of significance for the Central Campground component landscape is 1933-1940 (pg. 10).*
- 3. The Statement of Significance is located on pgs. 10-11.*
- 4. The contributing features are discussed and listed in the "Analysis and Evaluation" section (pg. 19-33).*

Bruce Noble
Superintendent, Chickasaw National Recreation Area

9/21/07
Date

Cc: Michele Curran, IMR, Landscape Historian, CLI Coordinator

CHIC Superintendent concurrence on the Central Campground CLI, 9/21/2007.

Revisions Impacting Change in Concurrence:

Other

Revision Narrative:

Uploaded CLR to Landscape Documents section, added NHL information, and edited text to correct typos, May 2012.

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

To the west, the area is bounded by Highway 177 and Broadway Avenue forms the northern boundary. To the east, the area's boundary follows the park's boundary to the southeast, which follows the terrain of the banks of Travertine Creek to the southeast. As Wapanucka Avenue turns due east, the boundary of the component landscape turns south, until it reaches Travertine Creek. The southern boundary is then defined by Travertine Creek until it reaches the bridge over the creek on the perimeter road. From here, the boundary follows the perimeter road back to Highway 177. The boundary of the component landscape is shown on the site plan.

State and County:

State: OK

County: Murray County

Size (Acres): 15.00

Boundary UTMS:

Source: USGS Map 1:24,000

Type of Point: Point

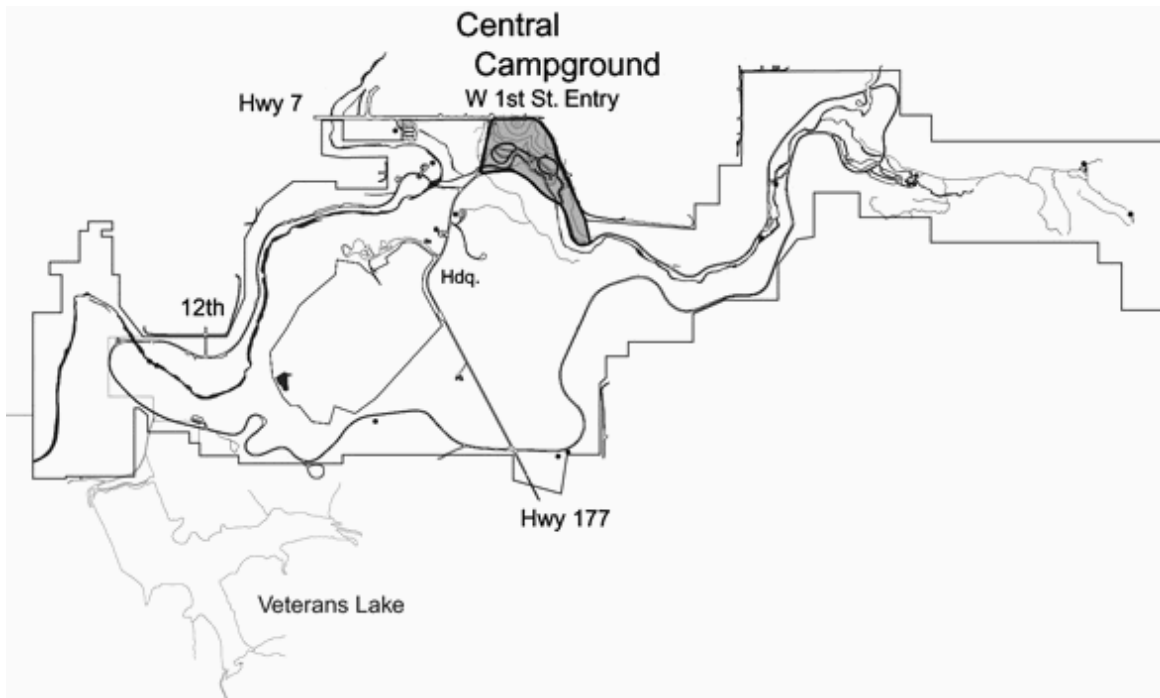
Datum: NAD 83

UTM Zone: 14

UTM Easting: 686,735

UTM Northing: 3,819,742

Location Map:



Location of Central Campground within the Platt Historic District. Source: GIS base map data obtained from Department of Geology, Oklahoma State University (1999), augmented by Iowa State University.

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

Camping began in this area of the park very early on. By 1908, Central Campground was the site to which large gatherings were restricted. After 1937, this area was the location of the “colored campground,” representative of the segregated nature of public facilities in the south prior to the Civil Rights movement. After 1957, Central Campground was designated by the park as the site for large, organized groups such as scouting and school groups to camp.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

The study area is located on the banks of Travertine Creek, a moderately flat floodplain. Vegetation in this area is that of the Eastern deciduous forest. Characteristic species are *Ulmus* (elm), *Quercus* (oak), *Juglans* (walnut), and *Celtis* (hackberry) of the lowland forest association.

Type of Context: Political

Description:

Since 1902, when lands for Sulphur Springs Reservation were taken by the government, Central Campground has been under the jurisdiction of the federal government. Since 1916, the park has been under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, first as Platt National Park and since as Chickasaw NRA Lands adjacent to the component landscape boundary consist of federally owned park lands and privately owned holdings within the town of Sulphur

Management Unit: Chickasaw NRA

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Must be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 07/11/2007

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

The Platt Historic District, which includes the Central Campground, was listed as a National Historic Landmark on 7/7/2011. As a result, the landscape must be preserved and maintained. Park Superintendent concurrence was received on 9/21/2007, prior to the formal NHL listing.

NPS Legal Interest:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Public Access:

Type of Access: Unrestricted

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? Yes

Adjacent Lands Description:

The landscape of the broader Platt Historic District contributes to the character and setting of the Central Campground.

National Register Information

Existing National Register Status

National Register Landscape Documentation:

SHPO Documented

National Register Explanatory Narrative:

Based on the findings of the CLR, the Platt Historic District, the Central Campground component landscape, has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places by the Oklahoma SHPO. Additionally, the Platt Historic District was listed as a National Historic Landmark on 7/7/2011.

Existing NRIS Information:

Other Names:	Platt Historic District DOE
Primary Certification Date:	12/03/2001
Other Certifications and Date:	Platt Historic District CLR DOE - 7/6/2007
Other Names:	Platt Historic District DOE
Primary Certification Date:	12/03/2001
	Platt Historic District NHL Nomination - 7/7/2011

National Register Eligibility

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

Period of Significance:

Time Period:	AD 1933 - 1940
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	Rustic Architecture
Time Period:	AD 1933 - 1940
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Landscape Architecture
Facet:	The 1930's: Era Of Public Works

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category:	Architecture
Area of Significance Subcategory:	None
Area of Significance Category:	Landscape Architecture
Area of Significance Subcategory:	None
Area of Significance Category:	Entertainment - Recreation
Area of Significance Subcategory:	None

Statement of Significance:

The Platt District has been determined eligible under Criteria A (association with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history) and C (design), as an excellent example of National Park recreational design. Under Criterion A, the district is significant for its association with the development of National Park landscapes completed during the depression and funded as part of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "New Deal" programs such as the PWA (Public Works Administration), WPA (Works Progress Administration), and CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps). Under Criterion C, the district is significant as embodying the characteristics of the type, period, and methods of construction typical of the "rustic style" of park design developed by the National Park Service in the years between World War I and World War II (1916-1942) under the leadership of Thomas Vint. In general terms, "rustic" park design limited development to preserve natural scenery and developed park architecture and landscape designs in keeping and in harmony with the natural landscape. In specific terms of constructing buildings, roads, and campgrounds, this meant using hand craftsmanship, local

architectural styles and natural materials such as stone, wood and native plants in the park designs.

The Platt District exemplifies all of these aspects of National Park Service development, planning and design. Most of the district's extant features were designed and constructed between circa 1930 and 1940 (the tentative period of significance for the district, pending further research) during the depression years under the New Deal. Most of the park's construction was undertaken by Company 808 of the CCC, one of the largest CCC camps in Oklahoma. The park's architecture and landscape design also exhibit classic "rustic" style design characteristics. Park development in the 900-odd acres of the park is limited and preserves natural scenery and key features, such as the mineral springs and creeks. The buildings and landscape features constructed in the park by Company 808 of the CCC are made of local stone and wood, emphasize the horizontal lines of the landscape, and merge with their surroundings in color, scale, and appearance. It should be noted that a good number of the NPS-designed and CCC-constructed buildings in the district appeared as examples in the NPS's summary of design techniques, the "handbook" of rustic park design, *Park and Recreation Structures*, compiled by Albert H. Good in 1938.

Central Campground comprises one component of this larger significant district landscape, and as such, reflects and contributes to the significance of the entire district. In its site planning, architectural style, landscape architectural design and small-scale features, the design of Central Campground explicitly reflects the NPS principles of rustic design and construction. Though the area has been somewhat reconfigured to accommodate group camping, overall the landscape retains enough integrity to be an excellent example of the CCC-era landscape engineering projects undertaken in Platt National Park and throughout the country. Because of this, Central Campground contributes to the significance of the overall district and enables the district to convey its significance.

It should be noted that there may be other areas of significance for the district and for the campground area as yet undeveloped. For example, Central Campground is associated with the area's segregation history, a thematic area not yet widely researched.

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Designed

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Primary Historic Function: Recreation/Culture-Other

Primary Current Use: Recreation/Culture-Other

Current and Historic Names:

Name

Central Campground

Type of Name

Both Current And Historic

Ethnographic Study Conducted:

No Survey Conducted

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
AD 1903	Platted	Area shown on Sanborn fire insurance map.
AD 1904	Platted	Land Survey of Sulphur Springs Reservation shows area as Central Park.
AD 1918	Built	Panther Falls constructed by Superintendent Snead as a 5-foot, curved concrete wall across Travertine Creek, which created a large pool (Boeger 87).
AD 1933	Designed	Drawing NP-PLA 4948 shows culverts on Rock Creek and Travertine Road and separate comfort stations for men and women in campground.
AD 1934	Designed	Lower, eastern loop of the campground was designated for "negroes" ostensibly because it was close to the town's residential community where many "negro" families resided. Unclear when or if whole area segregated.
AD 1933 - 1934	Designed	Drawing NP-PLA 4998 shows two looping camp roads. Early photos show that the loop traffic was a two-way system. 0.53 miles of road built in Central Campground; major roads were 12 feet wide, minor roads were 10 feet wide (CCC quarterly report). Trees also planted.

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AD 1936 - 1937	Built	<p>Extant comfort station (#26) constructed. Was meant to be identical to the comfort station at Cold Springs Campground.</p> <p>Whole area apparently designated as “Negro campground;” based on oral tradition and campground site plans (1908, 1937-39, 1985); south entrance constructed to serve the ‘Negro Camp’ area. Drawing NPS-PLA-5051 shows entrance from the west along State Hwy 18 and entrance from the south along the perimeter road.</p> <p>Swimming Pool on Travertine Creek constructed; close to the south entrance.</p>
AD 1940	Removed	<p>Aerial photograph shows early CCC era development, with west entrance removed.</p>
AD 1969	Altered	<p>Aerial photograph shows evergreen tree growth and change in the perimeter road alignment near the south entrance.</p>
AD 1982	Designed	<p>New design created 15 group sites with asphalt parking and wood bollards.</p>
AD 1993	Removed	<p>Reduction in campsite density; 5 group sites removed.</p>
	Designed	<p>Work completed by park staff. Numbered posts moved to new locations. Dead tree and hollow tree at site #12 removed. Topsoil added and sites 1, 2, 11 reseeded. Boulders added between western loop and Highway 177 to discourage pedestrians from walking along former link to Flower Park; mowing was also discontinued in this area. Old job corps grills and pads removed from sites. 20 new grills (2 per site) added. Picnic tables redistributed.</p>
AD 1997	Developed	<p>Draft CLI for the Platt District completed by Katherine Sallee, of the University of Texas at Arlington.</p>
AD 2000	Removed	<p>Park staff removed all wood bollards.</p>
AD 2002	Developed	<p>Central Campground CLI completed by Heidi Hohmann and Katarzyna Grala of Iowa State University.</p>

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AD 2003 - 2004	Developed	Platt Historic District CLR completed by Heidi Hohmann and Katarzyna Grala of Iowa State University.
AD 2006 - 2011	Developed	Platt District NHL Nomination prepared by Heidi Hohmann of Iowa State University. NHL nomination formally accepted and listed on 7/7/2011.

Physical History:

General Historical Overview

For a full narrative history of Central Campground, refer to the 2004 Cultural Landscape Report for the Platt District, written by Heidi Hohmann and Katarzyna Grala of Iowa State University.

Central Campground, according to the 1904 Land Survey of Sulphur Springs Reservation, was initially located in the area known as Central Park, which included today's Central Campground as well as what is now Flower Park and Black Sulphur Springs. The campground likely received its name because of the name of Central Park and because of its central location in the overall reservation.

In the early years of Platt National Park, campgrounds had been developed as visitors sought areas for recreation or relaxation. As early as 1908, large gatherings were restricted to the Central Campground area (CCC report). Central Campground in 1908 was the site for a mock 'battle' between a "Yankee battery" and Confederate Veterans (Boeger, 84).

Few documents/ maps of the original design layout are available from the 1908 to the early 1930s. In the 1920s, new features were added to the campground. Drawing NP-PLA from August 1933 shows some of these features, including separate comfort stations for men and women. Also indicated on the map is a "colored camp" area, located just south of the present location of Central Campground in an area known today as Panther Falls. Thus it appears that as early as 1933, the park had a segregated use area. Ostensibly, the "colored camp" area was located where it was adjacent to Sulphur's African-American residential community.

By 1934, large organized groups—and their need for picnic facilities, overnight camping and for sanitation—were becoming difficult to accommodate. Plans for Central Campground 'as a place for an organized group picnic area' were approved, and in 1934, Central Campground was filled and graded. The new design improved things greatly. The design layout of 1934 (NP-PLA-4998) shows two looping camp roads. Each camp loop is divided near the center (interior roads) to allow for easy exit. From early day camping photos, it appears that the loop traffic was a two-way system, although present loop traffic is now one-way.

Between May 1933 and April 1934, 0.53 miles (2,835 feet) of road were constructed in the campground. The CCC quarterly report noted that "a new system of roads in the campgrounds of Cold Spring, Bromide and Central were completed" and that these roads were purposely designed for the use of campers and not as thoroughfares. The major roads of this system were 12 feet wide, the minor roads, 10 feet wide and all efforts were made to adapt roads to vegetation and topography. However, it does not appear that specific pull-in or pull-through campsites were defined in an organized pattern as they were in Cold Springs and Rock Creek Campgrounds; rather, photographs show a more haphazard camping organization.

An entrance road accessed the campground from the west, off of Highway 177 (then known as State Highway 18). Another entrance was added in 1937, as shown on drawing

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NP-PLA-5051 (1937). This entrance accessed the eastern loop off the perimeter road, at a point south of the campground. It appears this entrance may have been designed as an entrance to the “Negro Camp,” which was the designation for the lower (eastern) loop of the campground until 1957 and the end of segregation. By 1940, as seen on the 1940 Master Plan, the west entrance to Central Campground was removed. It seems that the designers may have intended to close the western loop permanently, though this never happened.

In 1936, construction began on the Central Campground comfort station, which was a replica of the Cold Springs comfort stations, with heavy stone walls and rustic style architecture. The building was finished in 1937, and opened for use in the 1938 summer camping season.

In the 1940s and 1950s, major changes did not occur in the campground. A tracing of the 1940 Master Plan illustrates the conditions in 1940. In 1969, the eastern entry road alignment was changed, and in the 1980s, interior campground roads were removed and the campground reorganized into fifteen group camping sites. In the 1990s, the fifteen group sites were reduced to ten.



*Early wagon camping, 1904.
(CNRA archives)*



*Early day camping at Central Camp, circa 1933. Note comfort station (no longer extant) to the right.
(CNRA archives, photograph CC-110)*



*View of minor roadways and lack of defined camping sites in Central Campground,
1961.
(CNRA archives, photographCC-310)*

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

The Central Campground area has changed slightly since the period of significance. This change is primarily a change in function and use. Today, the campground is used predominantly for group camping, whereas previously it had been used for individual camping. This is a relatively minor distinction, however. In addition, much, if not most, of the original CCC-era design elements still remain. These include the extant comfort station; the overall circulation pattern and layout; and associated structures such as small bridges. Major charactering defining landscape features such as the topography, natural water course of Travertine Creeks and dense vegetation in the northern part of the site are also much like their historic conditions. Similarly, small-scale features, such as the extant stone boulders delineating parking and recreational dams along the Creek are also extant. In general, integrity of the landscape appears to be quite high.

Below is a list of contributing and non-contributing elements. In addition, there is a listing of LCS structures to clarify which LCS listings are located within this component landscape. The LCS listings can be found in Landscape Characteristics under Landscape Features.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

- Natural Systems (Travertine Creek)
- Spatial Organization (double loop configuration of camping area)
- Cultural Traditions (use as campground; use as “Negro campground”)
- Land Use (use as campground)
- Topography (level floodplain)
- Vegetation (Eastern deciduous forest and designed plantings)
- Circulation (Campground roads, perimeter road, footpaths and trails)
- Buildings and Structures (comfort station)
- Water Features (dams)
- Small Scale Features (travertine boulders defining parking, entry road culvert)
- Views and Vistas (interior view sheds)

NONCONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

- Buildings and Structures (Box Culvert between camp loops, Panther Falls Box Culvert)
- Small Scale Features (camping signage/kiosk)

INTEGRITY DISCUSSION

Location

Central Campground and its major features exist in their original locations during the period of significance. Some changes in locations of foot trails has occurred, but this is a relatively minor change of location. Therefore, integrity of location is high.

Design

The original design of the campground is predominantly intact. This includes the overall layout of the campground as two loops, the topography, plantings, and the design of the associated comfort stations. However, some changes have occurred in the design. Changes include the loss of interior campground roads, and relocation and realignment of the campground's primary entrance. These do not seem to be major changes, however, so integrity of design would appear to be moderately high.

Setting

The setting of Central Campground appears quite similar to the way it did during the period of significance. No major changes have occurred in the park landscape immediately surrounding the campground. Similarly, little, if any change has occurred in either the residential or downtown districts of Sulphur which are adjacent to the park. These areas both retain their almost sleepy character, and help maintain the feeling that the campground is situated in a wilderness setting. Only increased traffic on Highway 177 impinges on the setting. Integrity of setting would appear to be high.

Materials

The campground retains most of its original materials of grass, trees, and paving. Materials in the comfort station are also primarily original. Changes and additions to original materials have primarily affected small scale features such as the culvert and signage. Because the additions of some features are potentially reversible and because changes to culverts are relatively unobtrusive, these material alterations do not have a huge impact on integrity. Therefore, material integrity is judged high.

Workmanship

The integrity of masonry and craftsmanship is high. The masonry building materials reflect a high level of skill and design philosophies typical of the 1930s Rustic design principles. The integrity of Workmanship is high.

Feeling

The integrity of feeling is relatively high, in part because, as discussed above, the setting remains relatively unchanged. In addition, the campground has exhibited continuity of use over the years, with the sounds and sights of camping contribute greatly to the traditional feeling of the landscape as one of recreation, leisure and enjoyment. These elements increase integrity of feeling. However, one major change has occurred in the campground's feeling. Increased traffic along Highway 17 has increased the noise within the campground, especially in the western loop, affecting its undeveloped, almost wilderness-like feeling, and reminding visitors of the nearby city. This impact is not insignificant. Integrity of feeling is judged to be medium to high.

Association

Integrity of association is relatively high. The campground's association with its traditional uses remains high, and evidence of 1930s and CCC-era park development remains prominent. The campground has lost its association with segregated camping, and it may or may not be appropriate to interpret the historical nature of that association, thereby renewing it.

Overall Rating

Because the seven aspects of integrity are all moderately high or high, overall integrity for Central Campground is high.

Landscape Characteristic:

Archeological Sites

N/A

Buildings and Structures

Comfort Station: The only major structure in the component landscape is the Central Campground comfort station, which is a CCC-era building similar to the comfort stations in Cold Springs campground. It is located at the northwest “corner” of the eastern loop, on a south facing slope. It displays typical rustic style features, including the use of native stone and rough-sawn timbers.

Character-defining Features:

Feature:	CC Comfort Station
Feature Identification Number:	119560
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	62818
LCS Structure Name:	Central Campground Comfort Station
LCS Structure Number:	B-026

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*Central Campground comfort station, circa 1999.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)*

Circulation

The major vehicular circulation pattern in Central Campground Area is the double-loop road, a configuration which has existed since the mid 1930s. However, some minor changes have occurred to this configuration over time. First, it appears that the double loop road was at one time a two-way system, whereas today, with the exception of the stretch of roadway between the loops, it is a one way (bearing right) system. Second, there has been a loss of the roadways which once cut through the interiors of the loops. This has increased vehicular traffic on the loop road, and parking has been reconfigured into small parking lots which are all located adjacent to the loop road.

The double loop is accessed from the perimeter road by a windy little access road that is located just south of the campground and just north of Panther Falls. This little roadway has been reconfigured at least once. However, it is important to note that this roadway approach is not the original entrance to the campground. Rather, the campground was originally accessed via the western loop, from a roadway which intersected with Highway 177. This entrance was closed in 1940, and barrier rocks were placed across it to discourage access. However, these rocks are occasionally moved to access the campground, when floodwaters are high enough to cut off the perimeter road. (This may explain why this area has never revegetated.) Other vehicular circulation features include, of course, the perimeter road and the parking area located next to Panther Falls.

A number of pedestrian trails run through the Central Campground component landscape. These include two spurs off the western camping loop. The first spur leads from a midway

point on the northern edge of the loop north through the wooded area to downtown Sulphur, terminating at the Park entry piers (see Flower Park and Black Sulphur Springs CLI for description of these features). The second spur leads of the western portion of the western loop, and runs to meet Travertine Bridge over the creek on Highway 177. It should be noted that aerial photographs show changes in the locations of these two spurs over time.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Panther Falls Parking Area

Feature Identification Number: 120620

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 499527

LCS Structure Name: Panther Falls Parking Area

LCS Structure Number: P-Rd.K

Feature: CC, Loop Roads & Campsites

Feature Identification Number: 119562

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 62817

LCS Structure Name: Central Campground, Loop Roads & Campsites

LCS Structure Number: CC

Feature: CC Trails

Feature Identification Number: 119564

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 420283

LCS Structure Name: Central Campground Trails

LCS Structure Number: CC.A

Cluster Arrangement

N/A

Constructed Water Features

As in other areas of the park, the stretch of Travertine Creek within the Central Campground component landscape also contains two dams and swimming areas which, although they appear quite natural, are designed features. The first of these is a dam just south of the eastern campground loop known as the Central Campground dam. This is a stone dam, with a swimming area located above it. The swimming area, located below the grade of the

campground, is quite secluded. This swimming area was the designated bathing area for African Americans during the segregation era.

A short distance southeast, along the parks perimeter road, is another bathing pool, at Panther Falls. The dam at this location is a 5-foot high, curved concrete wall that was constructed in 1918 under the supervision of Superintendent Snead. The area is characterized by a level picnic area leading to the swimming hole above the dam; the slope just south of the swimming hole is very steep and a ledge on this slope provides a place from which bathers can jump into the pool below.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: CC Dam CC.D LCS 062819
Feature Identification Number: 119566
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 62819
LCS Structure Name: Central Campground Dam
LCS Structure Number: CC.D

Feature: Panther Falls Dam CC.E LCS 062820
Feature Identification Number: 119568
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 62820
LCS Structure Name: Panther Falls Dam
LCS Structure Number: CC.E

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*Central Campground Dam, looking east or upstream, circa 1999.
(CNRA archives, LCS photo).*



*Central Campground Dam, looking west or downstream, circa 1999.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph).*



*Concrete dam at Panther Falls, circa 1999.
(CNRA archives, LCS photo).*



*Detail of Concrete dam with travertine accretion (now lost) Panther Falls, circa 1999.
(CNRA archives, LCS photo).*

Cultural Traditions

The strongest cultural tradition of this area is its traditional use as a campground, which dates to the earliest configuration of the park. In addition, it should be noted that part or all of the campground was the site of the “Negro Camp” between the years of (at least) 1933-1957. Pending an ethnographic study of the area, it is unclear how local African Americans view the segregation history of this area.

Land Use

Since early times, Central Camp has continuously served as a place for camping. As early as 1908 the site was used as a meeting place for large organized groups such as family reunions and scout groups, although individual camping was also prevalent. Today, Central Campground

is used primarily as a group campground, where groups larger than ten people may reserve sites in advance. However, during open season any sites not already reserved can be rented (at group rate) by using the Cold Springs fee machine.

Natural Systems and Features

Central Campground is set on a moderately flat, south-facing, open wooded terrain and its sunny south exposure makes it a perfect camping site during the spring and fall. Running through the landscape is the most important natural feature, Travertine Creek, to which the campground is oriented. The campground is located on the flat “floodplain” terrain of the creek. Vegetation systems will be discussed in the section on “Vegetation.”

Small Scale Features

Panther Falls Bridge Culvert: The Panther Falls bridge culvert is located along the perimeter road and provides vehicular passage over Travertine Creek. This structure has been altered from its original condition and is a non-contributing feature.

Central Campground Bridge Culvert: The Central Campground bridge culvert is located under the entry road just east of the eastern loop of the campground. This structure has undergone some alteration, yet still serves its original drainage purposes.

Other small-scale features: These include elements such as conglomerate parking barrier stones. It is unclear whether all of the stones date to the period of significance. The bollards are recent additions.

Character-defining Features:

Feature:	Panther Falls Box Culvert Bridge
Feature Identification Number:	120622
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	62815
LCS Structure Name:	Panther Falls Box Culvert Bridge
LCS Structure Number:	P-Rd.E
Feature:	Boulder Barrier
Feature Identification Number:	120624
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
Feature:	CC Road Box Culvert
Feature Identification Number:	119570
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	62816

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LCS Structure Name: Central Campground Road Box Culvert

LCS Structure Number: CC.C

Feature: CC Road Dual Box Culvert

Feature Identification Number: 119572

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 62821

LCS Structure Name: Central Campground Road Dual Box Culvert

LCS Structure Number: CC.B

Feature: CC Culvert w/Stone

Feature Identification Number: 119574

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 420352

LCS Structure Name: Central Campground Culvert w/Stone Cap

LCS Structure Number: CC.G

Feature: CCC w/Stone Headwall

Feature Identification Number: 119576

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 420355

LCS Structure Name: Central Campground Culvert w/ Stone Headwall

LCS Structure Number: CC.F

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*Panther Falls bridge culvert, circa 1995.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)*



*(Central Campground box culvert at entrance to southeast loop, circa 1995.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)*

Spatial Organization

Spatial organization has not changed greatly over the years but it has changed somewhat. Central Campground is essentially divided spatially into two roughly oval or circular spaces that are defined by the circulation system (see below). This pattern seems to date from at least the 1930s, based on early photographs. Today the design of these two space has been altered slightly, with interior roads within the circular areas largely missing. Instead, campsites are located within the circles and parking bays around the perimeter of the spaces are delineated by stone boulders of Travertine and post bollards. Despite the change, it is important to note that the circulation system still serves to define the spatial areas of the park.

Other spatial zones within the component landscape might be considered to be the entry road corridor as well as the corridor defined by Travertine Creek, as an area used for swimming and recreation. Close to the south entrance, due south of the western loop of campsites, there is one massing of boulders/ manipulation of water to provide visitors/ camp users with picturesque falls and pools. This area of the eastern loop has remained popular as a swimming area. Early CCC quarterly reports mention this area as a place for swimming by colored people as part of the “Negro Camp” area shown on plans as early as 1933.

Another feature within the swimming area a short distance south along the creek is the bathing

pool at Panther Falls, which is detailed below under water features. The whole swimming area, with a flat beach like space adjacent to the swimming hole is, in effect, another separate spatial area within the component landscape.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Central Campground design
Feature Identification Number: 119582
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*Central Campground parking area and east loop's spatial area, defined by circulation and bollards, circa 2000.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph)*

Topography

The wooded terrain and topography (valley stream/ hillside) within Central Campground provides much of the site's interest. The campground is located on moderate to flat slopes with south-facing exposures. Steepest slopes are located along the banks of Travertine Creek.

Elevations generally fall off to the southwest. Elevation changes from the stream bank edges at 950 feet along the east loop and 940 feet along the west loop to 994 feet near the northern part of the site near Broadway.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Level Floodplain
Feature Identification Number: 119578
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Vegetation

Early vegetation in the component landscape was recorded during the 1937 vegetation survey done in the park. The information gathered in this survey is shown in a digitized (GIS) version of the 1937 vegetation plan (see in Iowa State University hardcopy CLI or park files). The area was not surveyed by Dale in 1965. However, based on a review of existing conditions, the vegetation of the area around Central Campground is predominantly a xeric floodplain and lower hillside community—an association of American elm, sycamore, and hackberry. Overstory species consist of *Ulmus americana*, *Platanus occidentalis*, *Juglans nigra* and *Celtis laevigata*. Understory species are *Quercus Muhlenbergii*, *Q. texana* and *Cornus drummondii*. Shrub layers are a mixture of *Celastrus scandens*, *Smilax bona-nox*, *Rhus toxicodendron* and *Elephantopus carolinianus*.

The 1934 topographical survey of Central Campground (NP-PLA –4998) confirms that these same species existed in the 1930s at the time of the campground’s construction. The plan lists large trees by tree type (genus) and size (dbh); sycamore, elm, willow, hackberry, walnut and persimmon are called out on the plan, while all other trees are indicated to be oaks. The east central loop also shows small groupings of Chitams (or *Bumelia lanuginosa*/Gum *Bumelia* on this plan. The upper knoll near the town of Sulphur is shown as being open grassland.

After the 1934 plan, it is known that the Platt District was altered by the planting of trees, shrubs, and turf grasses by many early CCC projects, though the extent to which these activities were undertaken at Central Campground is not fully known. A quarterly report of the CCC crews notes that “Central Campground was cleaned up, graded, camp roads installed and planted some trees for shade” but no mention of the number or types of trees is made. Today the vegetation may be characterized as natural, native forest in the wooded areas, with camping areas defined by a canopy of widely spaced specimen trees.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Canopy over camping area
Feature Identification Number: 119580
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Views and Vistas

There are no large scale vistas within the campground. Views are primarily interior, within the campground spaces. In the eastern loop, views of the comfort station are prominent, but only when the campground is not in use.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*View of Central Campground comfort station from the south, circa 1999.
(CNRA archives, LCS photograph).*

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Good

Assessment Date: 07/12/2007

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The landscape of the Central Campground was assessed in good condition. The park superintendent concurred on 9/21/2007.

Impacts

Type of Impact: Deferred Maintenance

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Description: Unutilized buildings show some signs of deterioration.

Type of Impact: Vegetation/Invasive Plants

External or Internal: Both Internal and External

Impact Description: Non-native shrub species can invade understory areas unless kept in check.

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Preservation

Approved Treatment Document: Cultural Landscape Report

Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:

The approved treatment recommendations are outlined within the Cultural Landscape Report for the Platt Historic District, written by Iowa State University.

Approved Treatment Completed: No

Bibliography and Supplemental Information

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Supplemental Information

- Title:** Cultural Landscapes Inventory of Platt District (Katherine Sallee), 1997 (NPS).
- Description:** Document located in IMR Cultural Landscapes Program files.