
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
2007



Rock Creek 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

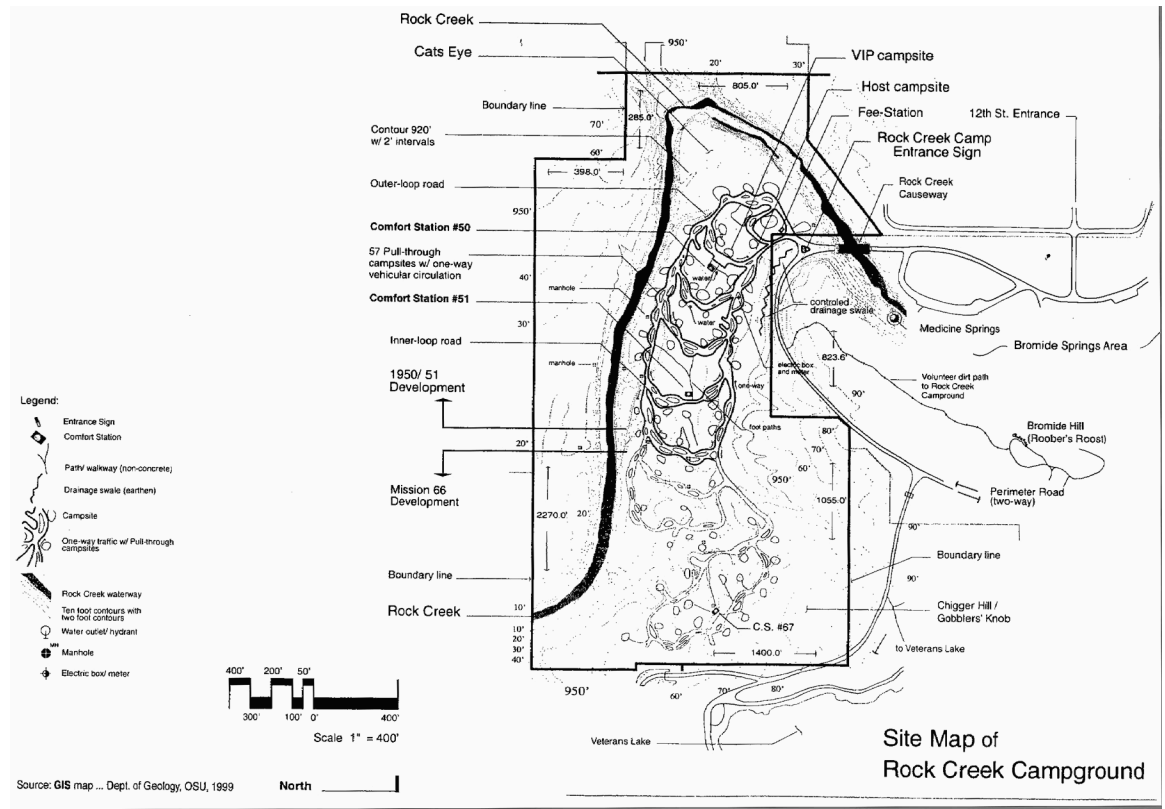
treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

Inventory Unit Description:

Rock Creek Campground is approximately 67.15 acres of forested land that comprises the Platt Historic District's largest campground in the Chickasaw National Recreation Area, Murray County, Oklahoma. It is located on the western edge of the Platt Historic District along the park's perimeter road. The campground is bordered on the west and north by Rock Creek. Access is provided from the perimeter road.

At present, the campground contains 106 campsites. About half of these (57) were constructed according to the original (1943) design layout with the exception that water and electrical hookups were not implemented. As the result these sites are mainly used for tent camping, but can accommodate small to medium size RVs. The original 57 sites were completed by 1951. The rest of the sites to the south were designed and added to the campground later (Mission 66), and these also do not have electricity and water for RV use. They are mainly used for tent camping and some sites are designed to accommodate medium-sized RVs. The only electric water hookup is available at the host site and VIP site.

Site Plan



Site Plan for Rock Creek. 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:	Rock Creek Campground
Property Level:	Component Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	850466
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 Rock Creek 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 Rock Creek Campground is not included in the Platt Historic District NR or NHL nominations, because it was constructed after the historic district's period of significance (1933-1940). Nonetheless, the Rock Creek Campground is a component landscape of the Platt Historic District parent landscape.

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 Rock Creek 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:	03/10/2006

National Register Concurrence Narrative:

The Oklahoma SHPO determined the Rock Creek Campground is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The SHPO also concurred with the findings of the Platt Historic District CLR, which included an analysis of the Rock Creek Campground.

Concurrence Graphic Information:

Rock Creek Campground
Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District



Oklahoma Historical Society

Founded May 27, 1893

State Historic Preservation Office • 2704 Villa Prom • Shepherd Mall • Oklahoma City, OK 73107-2441
Telephone 405/521-6249 • Fax 405/947-2918

March 10, 2006

CHICKASAW
NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
RECEIVED

Constance Rudd
Superintendent
Chickasaw National Recreation Area
1008 West Second Street
Sulphur, OK 73086

MAR 13 2006

SUPERINTENDENT
AT
RECEIVED

RE: Consensus Determination of Eligibility for Rock Creek Campground

Dear Ms. Rudd:

We have received and reviewed the documentation on the referenced project. We concur with your opinion that the property is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A & C, as a good example of changing design in recreational facilities in the post World War II era.

We concur that the following are contributing resources to the Rock Creek Campground site:

LCS#: 434717, Rock Creek Campground Loop Roads and Campsites
LCS#: 443767, Rock Creek Campground Comfort Station #1
LCS#: 444110, Rock Creek Campground Comfort Station #2
LCS#: 443763, Rock Creek Campground Traffic Island
LCS#: 443768, Rock Creek Campground Diversion Terrace
LCS#: 443767, Rock Creek Campground Culvert
LCS#: 445441, Rock Creek Campground Trails

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this project and look forward to working with you in the future.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Jim Gabbert, Architectural Historian, at 405/522-4478.

Sincerely,

Melvena Heisch
Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer

MH:pm

OK SHPO DOE on the Rock Creek Campground, 3/10/2006.



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, which included an analysis of the Rock Creek 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: Rock Creek Campground Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI)

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

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

- 1. The CLI rates the condition as "GOOD" (pg.40) and the Management Category is listed as "Should be Preserved and Maintained" (pg. 8).*
- 2. The period of significance for the Rock Creek Campground component landscape is 1942-1951 (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. 16-39).*

Bruce Noble

Superintendent, Chickasaw National Recreation Area

9/21/07

Date

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

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

Revisions Impacting Change in Concurrence:

Other

Revision Narrative:

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

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

The boundaries of Rock Creek Campground encompass an area that includes the entire campground, a portion of Rock Creek, and a portion of the perimeter road. The north, west, and portions of the southern boundary are formed by the original boundaries of the Platt District. The southern and eastern boundaries are formed by the perimeter road to the east and the access road to Veteran’s Lake to the southeast and south. Aerial photographs of the component landscape dating to 1940 and 1969 provide additional information about the site and its surrounding context. The 1940 aerial photograph shows agricultural farming practices and grazing to the land west of the ‘Giles Tract’ and Rock Creek. It may have been possible that the Giles Tract was also used for grazing during times of low water and drought periods.

The boundaries of the Rock Creek Campground component landscape are shown on the site plan.

State and County:

State: OK

County: Murray County

Size (Acres): 67.15

Boundary UTMS:

Source: USGS Map 1:24,000

Type of Point: Point

Datum: NAD 27

UTM Zone: 14

UTM Easting: 684,164

UTM Northing: 3,818,900

Source: USGS Map 1:24,000

Type of Point: Point

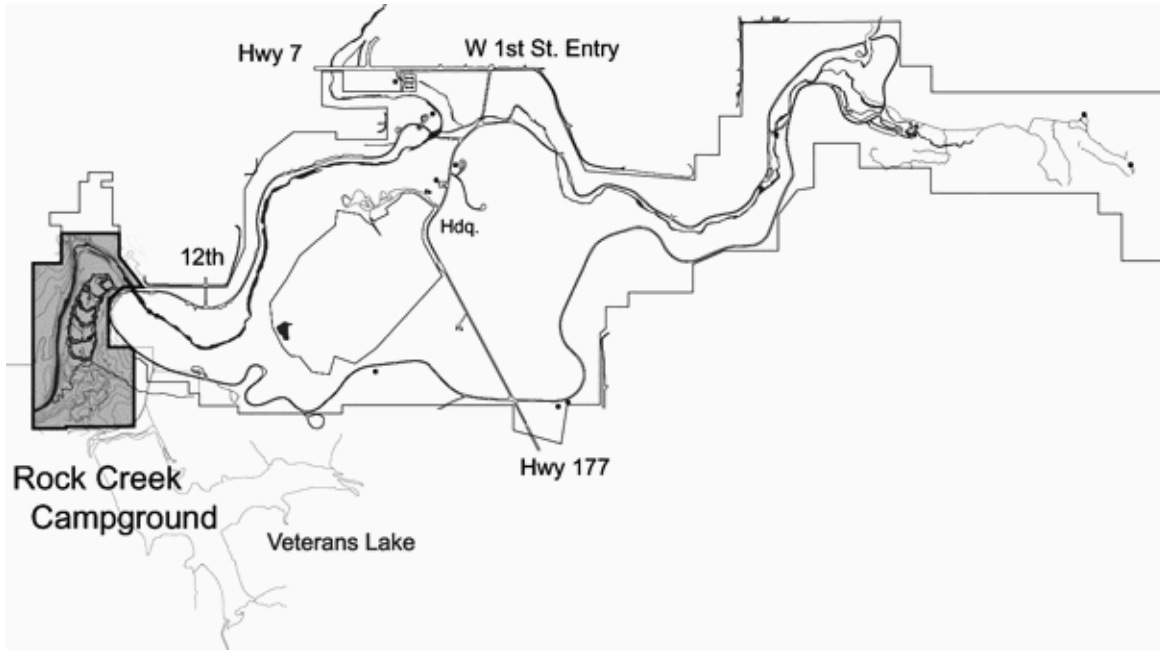
Datum: NAD 27

UTM Zone: 14

UTM Easting: 684,210

UTM Northing: 3,818,740

Location Map:



Location map of Rock Creek Campground within the Platt 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:

There is not a significant cultural context for this area beyond the cultural context of the district. The site has been used as a campground since the 1940s, and is associated with the cultural traditions of recreational camping. Residential sections of the city of Sulphur are located close to the northern boundary of the component landscape. To the south, the campground borders on the Veteran's Lake area, another unit of the NPS.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

Rock Creek Campground is located on a moderately flat, north-facing terrace above the bed of Rock Creek. Rock Creek, running in a wooded valley, wraps around the terrace. This western portions of the park are characterized by their Elandco silt-loam soils with moderate permeability, high water capacity and a deep root zone that fosters hardwood trees. The area is characterized by the vegetation of the lowland forest association of the Eastern deciduous forest. Plant species include *Ulmus* (elm), *Fraxinus* (ash), *Juglans* (walnut), and *Celtis* (hackberry).

Type of Context: Political

Description:

Since 1940, when the Rock Creek Campground was purchased, the area has been under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, first as Platt National Park and since 1976 as Chickasaw NRA. Lands adjacent to the component landscape boundary consist of park-owned lands and privately owned holdings.

Management Unit: Chickasaw NRA

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Should be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 07/25/2007

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

The Rock Creek Campground was found to be eligible for listing on the National Register by the Oklahoma SHPO. As a result, the campground should be preserved and maintained.

Although the campground is part of the Platt Historic District, which was listed as a National Historic Landmark on 7/7/2011, the Rock Creek Campground was not included in the NHL nomination due to differing periods of significance.

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 larger landscape of the Platt Historic District contributes to the integrity of Rock Creek Campground component landscape.

National Register Information

Existing National Register Status

National Register Landscape Documentation:

SHPO Documented

National Register Explanatory Narrative:

As of July 2002, the Platt District, which includes the Rock Creek Campground, has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the state level (letter to National Park Service from the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office dated December 3, 2001).

Based on the findings of the 2004 Platt Historic District CLR, the district and its component landscapes were determined to be nationally significant. 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 DOE - 7/6/2007
Other Names:	Platt Historic District DOE
Primary Certification Date:	12/03/2001
	NHL Nomination Pending - 7/11/2007

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 1942 - 1951
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	Rustic Architecture
Time Period:	AD 1942 - 1951
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:

Rock Creek Campground should be considered eligible as a historic landscape for the National Register under Criteria A and C, as is its parent landscape, the Platt District. As of July 2002, the Platt District has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the state level (letter to National Park Service from the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office dated December 3, 2001). It is possible, if not likely, that the district will, at a later date, be determined nationally significant, pending research and analysis currently underway.

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 designed buildings and structures in keeping and in harmony with the natural landscape. In specific terms, this meant using hand craftsmanship, local architectural styles and natural materials such as stone, wood and native plants in the design of each park structure or element.

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.

Rock Creek Campground comprises one component of this larger significant district landscape. Technically, the campground was not completed during the CCC-era, which lasted from 1933-1940 (dates of CCC camp occupation at Platt), but rather was designed in the 1940s and constructed in 1951. However, the campground is designed in the same manner and style as the rest of the park, under the direction of NPS landscape architects. The campground also appears to be an early example of designing pull-through campsites, a design change implemented to accommodate new, larger camping vehicles such as RVs. In its site planning, landscape architectural design and small-scale features, the Rock Creek Campground explicitly reflects the NPS principles of rustic design and construction, specifically in both overall layout and design of the campground and camping sites. As a result, the Rock Creek Campground should be considered to contribute to the significance of the overall district and enable the district to convey its significance. This component landscape also exists in a predominantly intact state, and should be considered to contribute to the integrity of the overall district.

Finally, Rock Creek Campground contains a number of Mission 66-era structures. The development of these structures and the expansion of the Rock Creek Campground in the 1960s should be explored and evaluated under this area of significance after completion of the Mission 66 theme study or as the need to better understand and protect these resources develops.

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	Type of Name
Rock Creek Campground	Both Current And Historic

Ethnographic Study Conducted: No Survey Conducted

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
AD 1940	Purchased/Sold	Aerial photo taken. Under Superintendent Branch, negotiations began regarding purchasing a tract of land (then known as the Giles Tract) adjacent to the Platt District's western boundary.
AD 1941	Developed	Idea of development a new campground began to take shape.
AD 1942	Designed	Drawing NP-PLA-2029-RC was produced by F.C. Miller, the park landscape architect. Drawing showed design for 50-odd campsites.
AD 1943		Addition of Giles Tract (65.25 acres) to the Park.
	Built	Most likely during 1943, culverts to control water runoff on the new tract were constructed. Facades of culverts were made from stacked natural limestone and conglomerate.
AD 1950		Construction of Rock Creek Campground was approved by the Regional Office, but work was stopped and then delayed because of the Korean War in June of 1950.

Rock Creek Campground
Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District

AD 1951		Rock Creek Campground opened in spring. Concrete picnic tables were formed, braced and constructed on site. U-shaped concrete fire pits with an insert grill for cooking were added to the campsites.
AD 1963		Entry sign for the campground was constructed.
AD 1966		Two comfort stations were constructed, using modified "rustic" style.
AD 1967 - 1969		Campground was expanded to serve tent and camping RV. Forty-nine new campsites and Mission 66 comfort station was added to the campground. An outdoor fire ring with concrete benches for small gatherings or fireside chats was constructed at an unknown date, but possibly at this time.
AD 1980		U- shaped concrete fire pits were replaced with modern, circular iron fire rings with adjustable grills.
AD 1988		Slight changes in vehicular and pedestrian circulation were implemented and a new fee station was built.
AD 1998		Metal lantern hangers were added to the campground to discourage campers from hanging lanterns on trees.
AD 1997	Developed	A draft CLI is written for the Platt District by Katherine (Kay) Sallee of the University of Texas at Arlington.
AD 2002	Developed	Rock Creek Campground CLI completed by Heidi Hohmann and Katarzyna Grala of Iowa State University.
AD 2003 - 2004	Developed	Platt Historic District CLR completed by Heidi Hohmann and Katarzyna Grala of Iowa State University.

Physical History:

General Historical Overview

For a more complete narrative history of the Rock Creek Campground area, refer to the 2004 Cultural Landscape Report for the Platt Historic District, written by Heidi Hohmann and Katarzyna Grala of Iowa State University.

During the early (1902-1933) part of the Platt District's existence, there was little interest in the area now known as Rock Creek Campground. The parcel, located outside the park boundaries, was owned by the Giles family. By the late 1930s, however, as visitation increased, talk of using this parcel for park expansion began.

As early as July 1940, Superintendent Branch spoke with NPS administrators about purchasing this 65.25-acre tract of land adjacent to the Platt District's western boundary, then known as the Giles Tract. Although the Giles family was willing to sell the tract for \$50 an acre, Branch thought the price too high. Condemnation proceedings eventually ensued, and the NPS acquired the land for \$5,654. The land was officially acquired in March 1943, and Platt National Park reached its full size of 912 acres.

Branch desired to acquire the Giles tract for use as a campground. It was a good site, because it was close to the Bromide Springs area, a much loved and used part of the park. Up to this point, the Bromide Springs area had been impacted heavily by camping, which often filled the whole area from Rock Creek to 12th Street. By November 1942, though the land was not yet purchased, the park had already drawn up plans for a campground on the Giles tract. The plans, drawn by F.C. Miller, the park's landscape architect, showed 59 sites designed for camping with both recreational vehicles (RVs) and trailers (Drawing NP-PLA-2029-RC). The use of pull-through sites for RVs was necessary, because simple tent camping was declining with the rise in automobile usage.

Although the land for Rock Creek Campground was in possession by 1943, campground construction did not begin immediately. In 1942, the WPA program, which had facilitated much of Platt National Park's construction, was terminated by the federal government, and funds and construction crews were pulled from the park. World War II then took its toll, as government monies were diverted to the war effort, and even routine maintenance in the park was deferred due to lack of funding.

However, immediately after the war, public use of the park rose again, with visitors topping one million in 1949. The park desperately needed Rock Creek Campground, and in early 1950, the Regional Office approved construction, allotting \$51,000 to the effort. Though work proceeded, it was then delayed by the Korean War in June. As a result, the new campground was not ready for use until the summer season of 1951.

Usage of the park continued to rise through the 1950s, and by 1962, summer attendance saw an average of 70,000 visitors per week (Boeger, 83). As a result of demand, Rock Creek was enlarged again in the years between 1967 and 1969 to its current size of over 100 campsites.



*Early park outing at Rock Creek Campground, 1953.
(CNRA archives, photograph RC-60)*

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

Rock Creek Campground has not changed appreciably over the years in either function or appearance. All major designed elements and structures are extant. These include major landscape features such as the overall layout, vegetation, topography, circulation patterns, and small scale features, which, based on a comparison of historic photographs and existing conditions, seem to match their original appearances. Minor changes over time have included the widening and creation of new pathways within the campground, loss of vegetation cover, particularly understory plants, and the addition of an area of new campsites. Some of these changes are due to heavy use and the increasing size of vehicles accessing campsites.

Below is a list of the landscape's 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.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

- Natural System Features (natural course of Rock Creek)
- Spatial Organization (location within flood plain, campground and pull-through campsite layout)
- Cultural Traditions (use as family campground)
- Land Use (use as campground)
- Topography (natural, minimally graded topography)
- Vegetation (Eastern deciduous forest and understory and canopy plantings)
- Circulation (vehicular roads, footpaths)
- Buildings and Structures (2 1950s comfort stations)
- Small Scale Features (concrete picnic tables, barrier stones, entry signs)
- Views and Vistas (interior views)

NONCONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

- Circulation (widened concrete walkways)
- Buildings and Structures (Mission 66 comfort station)
- Small Scale Features (Fee Collection unit at entry, new fire pits, lantern hangers)

Analysis of Integrity

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its historical significance. Integrity is based on the presence of physical features dating to the historic period, and is further defined by seven aspects, which are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A property, to convey its significance, must have integrity in several if not all of the aspects. Below is a preliminary analysis of the integrity of the Rock Creek Campground.

Location

Rock Creek Campground

Chickasaw NRA - Travertine District

The campground and major features such as buildings remain in their original location. In 1967-69 the campground was expanded to serve additional campers and RV vehicles. Integrity of location is high.

Design

The campground's physical layout and organization of roads and campsites remains today as it was designed and constructed in the 1950s, as do elements of topography, circulation, and vegetation. Little change has occurred to these latter features. However, some of the small structures (such as fire pits) have been removed or altered due to nature and human agency. A few new features (lantern hangers and fee station) have been added, yet do not detract from the original design. A major change to the design was the addition of about 50 new campsites in the 1960s. However, the design of these new spaces was in keeping with the previous design. Integrity of design is therefore moderately high.

Setting

The integrity of location and the campground's location next to other park lands has assured that the recreational camp setting has been changed little. Integrity of setting is high.

Materials

The integrity of materials used to design the buildings, signage and campsite environment is high. The entry sign to Rock Creek Campground, Comfort Stations, light standards, tent areas and many of the concrete tables exist as designed in 1942 and retain their integrity. Some architectural elements for accessibility (wider concrete walks), metal and wood picnic tables and modern fire-rings with grills (replacing all stone firepits) have lessened the integrity of materials somewhat. However, from an overall standpoint, integrity of materials is high.

Workmanship

The masonry and craftsmanship of features such as the entry sign, comfort stations, and concrete tables was originally high, and this level of workmanship has been retained. Repairs or alterations have generally been in keeping with the high level of workmanship.

Feeling

The natural setting, views, topography and silence all contribute to the site's feeling of seclusion in a natural environment, as was also true historically. Integrity of feeling is high.

Association

The campground retains its association with both NPS rustic design and with its historic uses as a campground. Integrity of association is high.

Overall Rating

Rock Creek Campground has high integrity, as demonstrated by its retaining high integrity in all seven aspects that define integrity.

Landscape Characteristic:

Archeological Sites

N/A

Buildings and Structures

1950s Comfort Stations: The buildings at Rock Creek Campground are different from those at Cold Spring and Central Campgrounds., having been built nearly 15 years later than those other campground structures. Yet this difference is primarily material; in their design, the buildings of Rock Creek Campground still represent the NPS's philosophy of "rustic" design. The buildings are sensitively sited within their setting; their design emphasizes the horizontal lines of the landscape; the roof lines (hip on gable) match the original design of previous structures constructed within the park, and the buildings' brick and masonry materials still harmonize with the surrounding environment in color and texture. In general, these buildings show a desire to update rustic design principles within the post-war architectural ideas of Modernism. These buildings represent a link between earlier design and the Mission 66-era designs occurring a little later elsewhere in the park and the NPS.

1960s Comfort Station: The comfort station built in the Chigger Hill area shows a departure from naturalistic design and construction principles. During this time, additions and modifications were made in the international style of concrete block and wood.

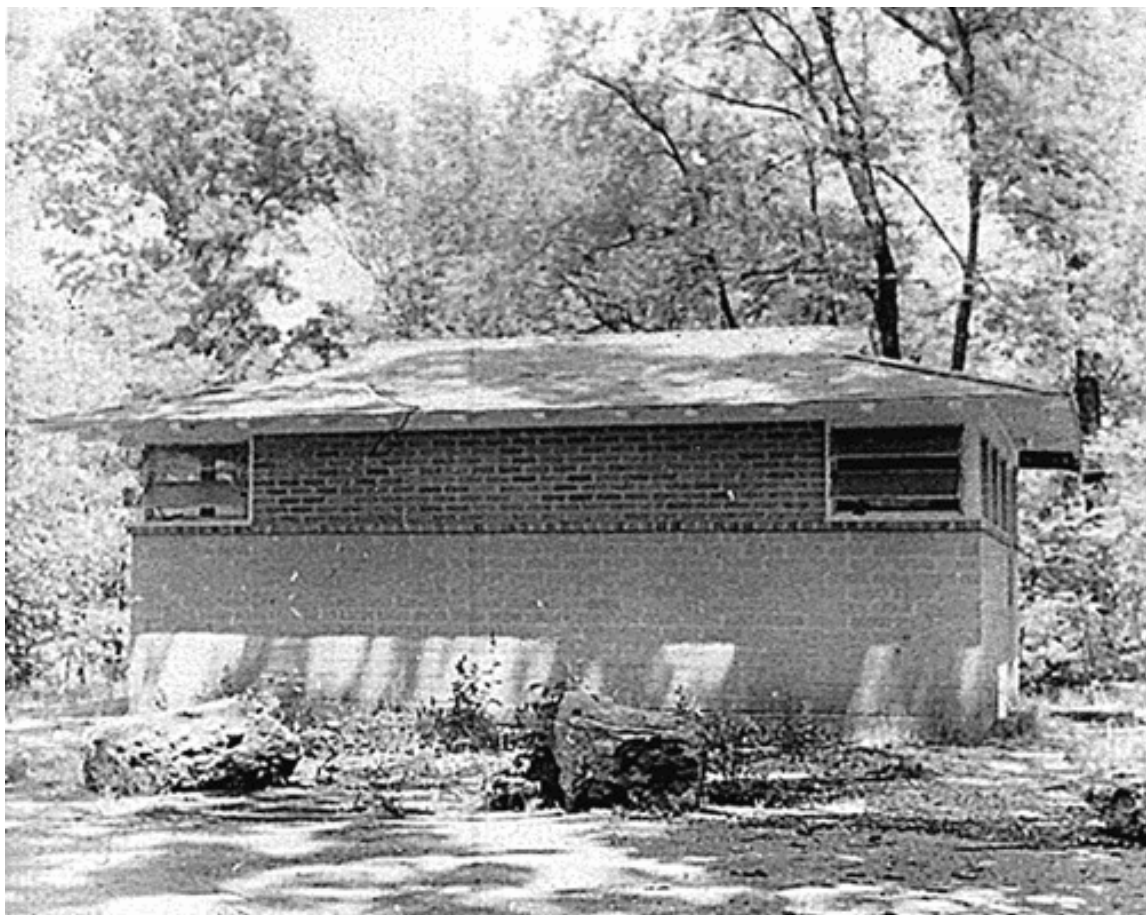
Character-defining Features:

Feature:	RCC Loop Road
Feature Identification Number:	120334
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	434717
LCS Structure Name:	Rock Creek Campground, Loop Roads & Campsites
LCS Structure Number:	RCC
Feature:	RCC Comfort Station #1
Feature Identification Number:	120336
Type of Feature Contribution:	Non Contributing
IDLCS Number:	443767
LCS Structure Name:	Rock Creek Campground Comfort Station #1
LCS Structure Number:	B-050
Feature:	RCC Comfort Station #2
Feature Identification Number:	120338
Type of Feature Contribution:	Non Contributing
IDLCS Number:	444110
LCS Structure Name:	Rock Creek Campground Comfort Station #2

LCS Structure Number:

B-051

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Comfort Station #51, showing brick and tile block construction and hip on gable roof, 1957.

(CNRA archives, photograph RC-157)



*Comfort Station #51, circa 2000
(Photograph by Harlen Groe)*

Circulation

Vehicular circulation patterns in Rock Creek Campground were constructed only slightly differently from the original design layout of 1942. The 1942 design of vehicular circulation focused around the protecting existing tree and understory canopy and providing optimal campsites throughout the campground's vegetative environment. The approach road to the Rock Creek Campground conformed to the topography by gently curving to follow the contours of the sloping terrace. Circulation was one-way, clockwise movement through a network of concentric circular roads orienting from a Fee Station at the camp's entry. Campsites were organized along these looping circles in an alternating pattern of pull-through driveways. All roads were asphalt and the tenting areas were separated from the parking drive-throughs by large stone boulders. Since their construction in 1951, the vehicular circulation patterns in the older section of Rock Creek Campground have not changed. In the 1960s, new sites were added, and a portion of these sites followed the concentric ring road pattern of the original design. However, this proved impossible in the steepest part of the site, and a loop of campsites, accessed via a spur off the main campground circulation was added to the southernmost part of the site. Though not consistent with the earlier concentric, looping roads, this change was made to respond to the rougher topography and more dissected drainage patterns.

Since the 1960s, changes to vehicular circulation patterns of the Rock Creek Campground have

been minimal and have been implemented primarily in response to the increasing size of RVs. These have included widening drive-throughs and removing trees and branches that impede large vehicles.

Pedestrian circulation through Rock Creek Campground is concentrated along a central “axis” through the campsite extending between comfort stations. Paths and walkways mainly connect campsites to the comfort stations. Designed to be three feet wide, the width and locations of pedestrian paths may have altered slightly over time; for example, there is a “new” route to the recently built fee station. Paths were intended to be, and remain, surfaced with granite fines.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: RCC Loop Roads
Feature Identification Number: 120340
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 434717
LCS Structure Name: Rock Creek Campground, Loop Roads & Campsites
LCS Structure Number: RCC

Feature: RCC Traffic Island
Feature Identification Number: 120342
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 443765
LCS Structure Name: Rock Creek Campground Traffic Island
LCS Structure Number: RCC.A

Feature: RCC Trails
Feature Identification Number: 120344
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 445441
LCS Structure Name: Rock Creek Campground Trails
LCS Structure Number: RCC.D

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*Extension of Rock Creek loop road system, showing alternating campsite drive-through access pattern, 1966.
(CNRA archives, photograph RC-511)*



*Loop road campground showing intersection, circa 2000.
(Photograph by Harlen Groe)*

Cluster Arrangement

N/A

Constructed Water Features

N/A

Cultural Traditions

Cultural traditions at Rock Creek Campground are primarily traditional camping activities.

Land Use

Rock Creek Campground has continuously served as a place for automobile and tent camping experiences. As was true historically, the site today is used primarily by tent campers but also by small and medium size RVs and a few large RVs. Use expanded in 1967, with the addition of 49 campsites to accommodate increased visitation.

Natural Systems and Features

Rock Creek Campground is set on a moderately flat terrace with Rock Creek bordering its western and northern limits within the Platt District. To the west of the Rock Creek waterway is a wooded hillside environment with an east-facing exposure.

Visitors entering the campground from the perimeter road can view the area's exposed stone bluffs along Rock Creek. Here, the park's geology and subsurface characteristics (changing soil and rock layers and water seepage from underground crevices) are on display. The area's change in elevation is also demonstrated. Elevation varies from the crossing of Rock Creek at Bromide Causeway at 920 feet to Bromide Hill at elevation 1072 feet. This topographic variation is also seen within the campground proper, with the Chigger Hill area being much hillier than the lower areas.

Small Scale Features

Many small-scale features contribute to the character of the Rock Creek Campground.

Barrier Stones: Enhancing the campsites' are barrier stones designating vehicular parking. Their naturalistic form, random sizes and shapes, and their arrangement add to the naturalistic camping environment. Also, in designating the parking areas they also separate camping or tent areas (the "outdoor living spaces") from automobile areas.

Concrete Picnic Tables: The concrete picnic tables were formed, braced and constructed on site in 1951. Their placement helped create an outdoor living space. The reasons for their design and construction are not well documented. Many of these still remain in the campground.

Fire Pits: The fire pits throughout Rock Creek Campground originally consisted of a U-shaped concrete form with an iron cooking grate. This design was consistent with the design of fire pits in Cold Spring Campground in size and shape, but differed in materials, since fire pits in other areas were constructed of stone masonry. The placement of the fire pit opposite the picnic table complemented the circular arrangement of each campsite. In the 1980s, these original fire pits were replaced with more modern circular, steel fire rings with adjustable grills.

Culverts: Culverts within the area were constructed in keeping with the rustic design principles used elsewhere within the park. Culvert headwalls were constructed of dry-laid natural sandstone blocks with the best examples of this type of construction found along the outlet areas close to Rock Creek. In fact, few culverts exist within the area of the campground constructed in 1951, where an open diversion ditch was constructed along the eastern edge of the campground to intercept and control water runoff to the north and to allow for the natural runoff within the campground.

Entry Sign: The entrance sign is an original feature. The sign is approximately 71 inches long and 43 inches high and is constructed of three-inch horizontal, redwood planks, four large, massive vertical logs with smaller diameter top and bottom logs. The letters are routed: "Rock Creek Campground" is 10 inches high, and "Entrance" is four inches high.

Fee Station: In 1998, a self-pay fee station was installed near the campground's entry.

Lantern Hangers: In early 1998, metal lantern hangers were added to stop camp users from

using the surrounding vegetation to hang exterior lighting.

Fire Circle: A fire circle with concrete benches once existed in the campground. It presumably served as a meeting or interpretive program area. This feature is no longer extant. Its original location is not yet known.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: RCC Diversion Terrace

Feature Identification Number: 120346

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 443768

LCS Structure Name: Rock Creek Campground Diversion Terrace

LCS Structure Number: RCC.B

Feature: RCC Culvert

Feature Identification Number: 120348

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 443769

LCS Structure Name: Rock Creek Campground Culvert

LCS Structure Number: RCC.C

Feature: RCC 1951 Concrete Picnic Tables

Feature Identification Number: 126273

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: RCC Entry Sign

Feature Identification Number: 126277

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: RCC Campsite Barrier Stones

Feature Identification Number: 126275

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*Stone boulders defining campsite, circa 2000.
(Photograph by Harlen Groe)*



*On-site construction of concrete picnic table, 1951.
(CNRA archives, photograph RC-1).*



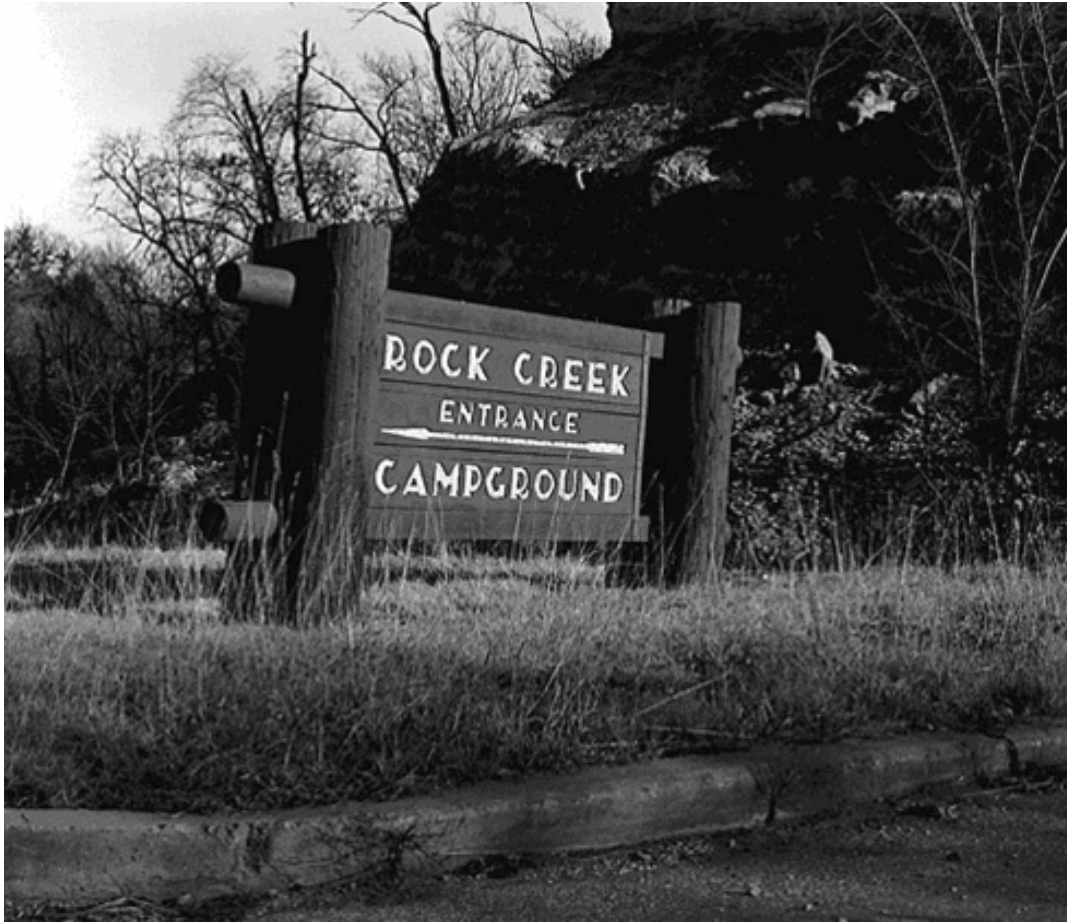
*Concrete picnic table, 1951.
(CNRA archives, photograph RC-977)*



*Original U-shaped fire pit with iron cooking grate, 1951.
(CNRA archives, photograph RC-970).*



*Dry-laid drainage culvert headwall, located along loop road, 2000.
(Photography by Harlen Groe)*



*Entry Sign to Rock Creek campground, 1963
(CNRA archives, photograph RC-297)*



*Fee collection station, circa 2000.
(Photograph by Harlen Groe)*



*Lantern hangers and iron fire-rings in campsites, circa 2000.
(Photograph by Harlen Groe)*



*Fire circle with concrete benches, no longer extant, 1967.
(CNRA archives, photograph RC-3)*

Spatial Organization

The Rock Creek Campground is divided into two major areas, defined by their periods of construction. These are the northerly portion of the campsite constructed in 1951 and the southerly portion of the campground, constructed in the 1960s. In general, it should be noted that the southern half of the campground, constructed in the 1960s, is a little less densely designed, as it was meant to accommodate tents as well as the somewhat larger RVs which were then becoming popular. Spatially, however, the site might be considered to be composed of two areas with different circulation systems. One zone would be the loop of camping sites (in the area known as Chigger Hill) located to the far south off a separate spur. This zone is defined by their different organization as a loop of both pull-in and pull-through sites, arranged around a central area with a comfort station. In contrast, the other zone of campsites is organized as one unit, on roads which form eight looping concentric circulation circles. With a few exceptions, these campsites are all pull-through campsites located on alternating sides along the roadways.

The spatial organization of each campsite in both areas is similar. Each campsite has a circular arrangement of small scale elements which include a concrete picnic table, a fire-ring with grill and a tent area. Barrier stones define parking spaces and separate vehicular access from the

camping area.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Campground loop layout

Feature Identification Number: 120350

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Pull-through sites

Feature Identification Number: 120352

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*Typical campsite arrangement at Rock Creek Campground, 1950.
(CNRA archives, photograph RC-2)*

Topography

The Rock Creek site, was in some ways an ideal site for a campground, because its relatively level topography located within the curve of Rock Creek, offered an opportunity to lay out campsites without needing to greatly manipulating the natural landforms. The linear, narrow tract dictated that campsites would be located on the flat terrace above the creek, between the more steeply sloping creek bank and the steeply sloping woodland along the perimeter road to the east. With little grading required in this area, roads and campsites were easily constructed

without disturbing trees, and the campground maintained good canopy and shade.

In contrast, on Chigger Hill where the terrain was hillier, the “new” campsites, designed in the 1960s are not well integrated into the landscape. Because of the lumpy and sloping terrain, more grading was required, and tent areas are often elevated above vehicle pull-ins or drive-throughs. As a result, campers are challenged with steep approaches, barrier-less parking areas, sloping tent sites, and a lack of a canopy enclosure where grading removed existing trees and shrubs.

Both conditions of the campground are retained today, and reflect the change in design methods required by topography. Some erosion is seen in the steeper part of the campsite.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Level floodplain terrace
Feature Identification Number: 120354
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Vegetation

Because Rock Creek Campground was not part of the park in 1937, it was not part of the 1937 vegetation survey and is not shown on the 1937 vegetation map. The vegetation of Rock Creek Campground area was surveyed in 1965 by Dale, and as shown on Dale’s map (unit 15 and area south), is predominantly a xeric community of the Texas Oak/ Chinquapin Oak association (See map in the Iowa State CLI hardcopy or park files). Overstory species consist of *Quercus texana*, *Quercus Muhlenbergii*, *Fraxinus texensis*, and *Ulmus americana*. Understory species include *Ulmus americana* and *U. alata*, *Cornus drummondii*, *Celtis laevigata*, and *Viburnum rufidulum*. Shrub layers are dominated by a mixture of *Cornus drummondii*, *Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*, *Aster drummondii* and *Viburnum rufidulum*.

Although much of the Platt District was significantly changed by the planting of trees, shrubs, and turf grasses by CCC crews, the campground of Rock Creek saw none of this CCC-type of planting. The campground was essentially designed as, and remains, a natural ecotone. Recent vegetation surveys (Hoagland, 1998) confirms this.

From a design standpoint, vegetation serves two major functions. First, the forest vegetation of the campground shelters and encloses campers with a dense canopy of tall hardwood trees. Second, within this canopy enclosure, native understory serves to screen campsites from other sites, providing a sense of privacy. Both of these elements are somewhat diminished in the newer section of campground on Chigger Hill where vegetation on steeper slopes was impacted by grading for campsite construction.

Views and Vistas

Views and vistas within the Rock Creek Campground are not a primary visitor experience. Views and vistas are limited due to the site’s location and elevation on a wooded terrace

bordered by the watercourse of Rock Creek adjacent to the campground. The town of Sulphur may be viewed to the north during early spring and late fall, when the leaves of the forest canopy have fallen. Nevertheless, there are several views of particular significance. First is the view of the large log Entry Sign as one approaches from the perimeter road. The designers of the past CCC-era tightly controlled the approach to both create a sense of drama and entry as well as to communicate an official presence. Views and vistas from the pedestrian viewpoint are unlimited. Views to the north from the Fee Station overlook Rock Creek's valley terrain below. During the fall and winter seasons, limited views of the town of Sulphur may be seen. Views like window openings exist to the west overlooking Rock Creek, including its valley terrain and the steep wooded slopes beyond. Views from Chigger Hill and other campsites of the Mission 66 development are not particularly significant, being primarily views of other campsites from changing elevation points.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



*View from Perimeter Road of the entry sign and campground entry, 2000.
(Photograph by Harlen Groe)*



*Typical insignificant view to the west across Rock Creek in Rock Creek campground, circa 2000.
(Photograph by Harlen Groe)*

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Good

Assessment Date: 07/25/2007

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

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

Impacts

Type of Impact: Deferred Maintenance

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Description: Non-native shrub species invade understory areas when on-checked or cleared.

Type of Impact: Vegetation/Invasive Plants

External or Internal: Both Internal and External

Impact Description: Non-native shrub species invade understory areas when on-checked or cleared.

Type of Impact: Visitation

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Description: High usage at the campsites can cause deterioration to the campsites.

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Preservation
Approved Treatment Document: Cultural Landscape Report
Document Date: 01/01/2004

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

Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Date: 01/01/2004

Bibliography and Supplemental Information

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Source Name: Other

Citation Author: Katherine Sallee

Citation Title: A Cultural Landscape Inventory of Plat District, National Park Service

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Year of Publication: 1943

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Citation Title: Draft Amendment to General Management/Development Concept Plan Environmental

Year of Publication: 1994

Source Name: Other

Supplemental Information

Title: Cultural Landscapes Inventory of Platt District (Katherine Sallee), 1997 (NPS).

Description: Document located in IMR Cultural Landscapes Program files.