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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES INVENTORY

2022



Elk Prairie Landscape

Redwood National Park

Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park

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## Elk Prairie Landscape Redwood National and State Parks

Redwood National and State Parks concurs with the finding of the Cultural Landscape Inventory that the Elk Prairie Landscape is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as a cultural landscape.

DocuSigned by:

*Steve Mietz*

8815748A67964C8...

9/7/2022

Steven Mietz, Superintendent, Redwood National Park

Date

DocuSigned by:

*Victor Bjelajac*

A1FBEA008EE0488...

9/6/2022

Victor Bjelajac, Superintendent, California State Parks  
North Coast Redwoods District

Date

Please return to :

Kevin McCardle  
Historical Landscape Architect  
Redwood National Park  
121200 Highway 101  
P.O. Box 7  
Orick, CA 95555





**DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

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May 24, 2022

In reply to: NPS\_2022\_0308\_001

Steven N. Mietz, Superintendent  
Redwood National Park  
1111 Second Street  
Crescent City, CA 95531

**RE: Section 110 Evaluation, Elk Prairie Cultural Landscape, Redwood National Park,  
Humboldt County, California**

Dear Mr. Mietz:

Pursuant to Section (a)(2)(A) of Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Office of Historic Preservation has been asked to review the determination of eligibility of resources associated with the above identified property, per Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act, located in Redwood National Park, Humboldt County.

This office concurs with your determination regarding the eligibility of the Elk Prairie Cultural Landscape. The property is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) under any criteria, as described in the Cultural Landscape Inventory. However, two individual buildings, the California Conservation Corps (CCC) Superintendent's Residence and the Garage, are individually eligible for listing in the National Register.

If you have any questions about our assessment of this document, please contact William Burg of my staff at (916) 445-7004 or [william.burg@parks.ca.gov](mailto:william.burg@parks.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "J. Polanco", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Julianne Polanco  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
California Office of Historic Preservation



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# NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## CULTURAL LANDSCAPES INVENTORY

Elk Prairie Landscape

Redwood National Park

Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park

**Prepared by:**

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San Francisco, California 94117

**and**

JRP Historical Consulting, LLC  
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**Prepared for:**

Redwood National and State Parks  
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P.O. Box 7  
Orick, California 95555

**and**

North Coast Redwoods District  
California State Parks  
P.O. Box 2006  
Eureka, California 95502

January 2022

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## Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

Cultural Landscape Inventory Name:	Elk Prairie Landscape
Cultural Landscape Inventory Number:	975806 and 725492
Parent Cultural Landscape Inventory Name:	none
Parent Cultural Landscape Inventory Number:	NA
Park Name:	Redwood National and State Parks
Park Alpha Code:	REDW
Park Org Code:	8480
Inventory Unit Size:	216 acres
Property Level:	Landscape

### CLI Hierarchy Description

Elk Prairie is a landscape with no parent or component landscapes.

### Landscape/Component Landscape Description

Elk Prairie is located within the Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park within the boundary of Redwood National Park. It is cooperatively administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) as part of Redwood National and State Parks. Elk Prairie is within Yurok ancestral territory. Elk Prairie includes 120-acres of mostly grassland surrounded by old-growth coast redwood forests, with forested hills to the north and east, and bordered by Prairie Creek to the west and Boyes Creek to the north.

Elk Prairie, located approximately 22 miles north of Orick in Humboldt County, California, is the center of recreational activity in Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park and includes the Elk Prairie Campground, Visitors Center, amphitheater, parking, and hiking trails. There is a park administrative complex which includes buildings and structures related to park maintenance operations and employee housing. These features have been developed within an old growth redwood forest and a small prairie. The Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway (Parkway), originally the Redwood Highway, and a split rail fence running along both sides of the Parkway, bisect the prairie. Most of the buildings and structures are located either under forest canopy or in the northeast portion of the open prairie. This arrangement limits the view of buildings from the Parkway and has helped to maintain the view of the open prairie surrounded by a redwood forest.

Elk Prairie has many layers of history and use. During the pre-European settlement period, the lands, streams, and coastal areas throughout the park were important hunting and gathering areas for the Yurok people. Yurok people continue to have ties to the prairie and Redwood Creek, which has been valued for hunting and fishing, and as a confluence of several travel routes.<sup>1</sup> Building construction and commercial development began with Andrew and Jenett Harris who started a homestead in 1881 and continued after they sold to William and Emma Boyes in 1905. The land became part of the state park system in 1931. The prairie was the site of a camp for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) beginning in 1933. From 1933 to 1936, the CCC built park recreational facilities at Elk Prairie. The CCC activity ended by 1938 and the CCC camp was removed soon afterward. After World War II, DPR further developed Elk Prairie and the forest that bordered the prairie by adding new trails, campgrounds and restrooms, parking lots and public kiosks, maintenance facilities, and employee housing.

The landscape of Elk Prairie has been analyzed in this report as it relates to four historic eras: the Harris and Boyes Ranch Era (1881-1939), the CCC Era (1933-1938), the early Post-World War II Era of substantial development by California State Parks (1948 to 1961), and post-1961 to the present. The landscape was considered under National Register of Historic Places (hereafter National Register) Criterion A for its association with European American settlement of the Harris and Boyes families, with the CCC's role in the development of California State Parks in Prairie Creek Redwood National and State Parks, and with the development of California State Parks during the post-World War II era. For the post-1961 era, Elk Prairie landscape is not associated with significant events, trends, or pattern of events. The landscape lacks integrity for the Harris and Boyes, CCC, and early post-World War II eras and is not eligible for the National Register under Criterion A. Almost all of the buildings, structures, and constructed features from the Harris and Boyes era and the CCC era are no longer extant. The buildings, structures, and constructed features from the post-World War II era lack integrity due to modifications. The circulation features (roads, parking lots, and day-use trails) were modified or added during the post-1961 period. The majority of the small-scale features, consisting primarily of site furnishings and signs, were added during the post-1961 era.

Under Criterion B, the best-known individuals associated with the site are William and Emma Boyes. However, neither of these individuals are known to have significantly contributed to history beyond Elk Prairie.

Under Criterion C, although there are designed elements present in the landscape, Elk Prairie is not a designed landscape that can be attributed to any individual and is more appropriately considered under Criterion A for its association to history through groups or institutions.

There are several buildings originally constructed during the Harris and Boyes, CCC, and early post-World War II eras that remain extant. These buildings were evaluated individually under

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<sup>1</sup> T. T. Waterman, "Yurok Geography," University of California Publications in *American Archaeology and Ethnology* 16 (1920): 177-314.

Criteria A and C. Most of these buildings were found to be of a common design or to have been heavily modified and therefore lacking in integrity. However, two CCC era buildings, the Visitors Center (1934) and Garage (ca. 1936), meet the criteria for individual listing in the National Register under Criterion A for associations with the CCC construction program within the California State Parks system and under Criterion C as rare and intact examples of the National Park Service Rustic style of architecture built on State Parks facilities during the Great Depression.

An archeological survey was beyond the scope for this study and was not conducted as part of this CLI. The built and landscape features surveyed for this document within the Elk Prairie study area are not likely to yield information important in history. Individual archeological features have been previously documented, but as a district the Elk Prairie landscape is not eligible under Criterion D.

The condition of Elk Prairie landscape study area was assessed through a visual inspection of landscape characteristics and features on 22 and 23 September 2020. Overall, the Elk Prairie landscape was in good condition and showed no clear evidence of major negative disturbance or deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Although the Elk Prairie landscape is ineligible for the listing in the National Register, some features and characteristics are sensitive to change. These include the redwood forest and prairie, the Boyes House, the remaining trees in the orchard, and the split rail fence along both sides of the Parkway. These features should be maintained and protected. Additionally, recommendations for the placement of new built features were provided to limit the encroachment of new standing buildings and structures onto the prairie and to protect the views of the prairie and forest. Finally, the exact date when the stone camp stoves in the Picnic Area were constructed was not determined, and additional research and a field review to determine the date of construction and builder for these camp stoves is recommended.

The “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park Visitors Center and Garage; Historic Structures Report” provided a detailed examination of the condition of the Visitors Center and Garage. This report found the buildings to be in good overall condition.<sup>2</sup> The report noted that the existing conditions issues in these two buildings could be divided into deferred maintenance and necessary upgrades. The deferred maintenance issues were a result of material degradation through moisture exposure, pests, or the building materials reaching the end of their reasonable service lives. Necessary upgrades were required and included structural strengthening to improve seismic performance and building system upgrades to support an eventual reuse of spaces within the Visitors Center or reuse of the Garage. Pages 82-106 of this report provided details on these condition issues. Treatment for the Visitors Center and Garage, which are individually eligible for listing in the National Register, should follow the Secretary of the Interior’s Rehabilitation Standards. Detailed

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<sup>2</sup> Garavaglia Architecture, Inc., “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park - Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report,” prepared for California Department of Parks & Recreation, Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, 2015.

management and treatment recommendations for both buildings are provided in the “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park Visitors Center and Garage; Historic Structures Report.”

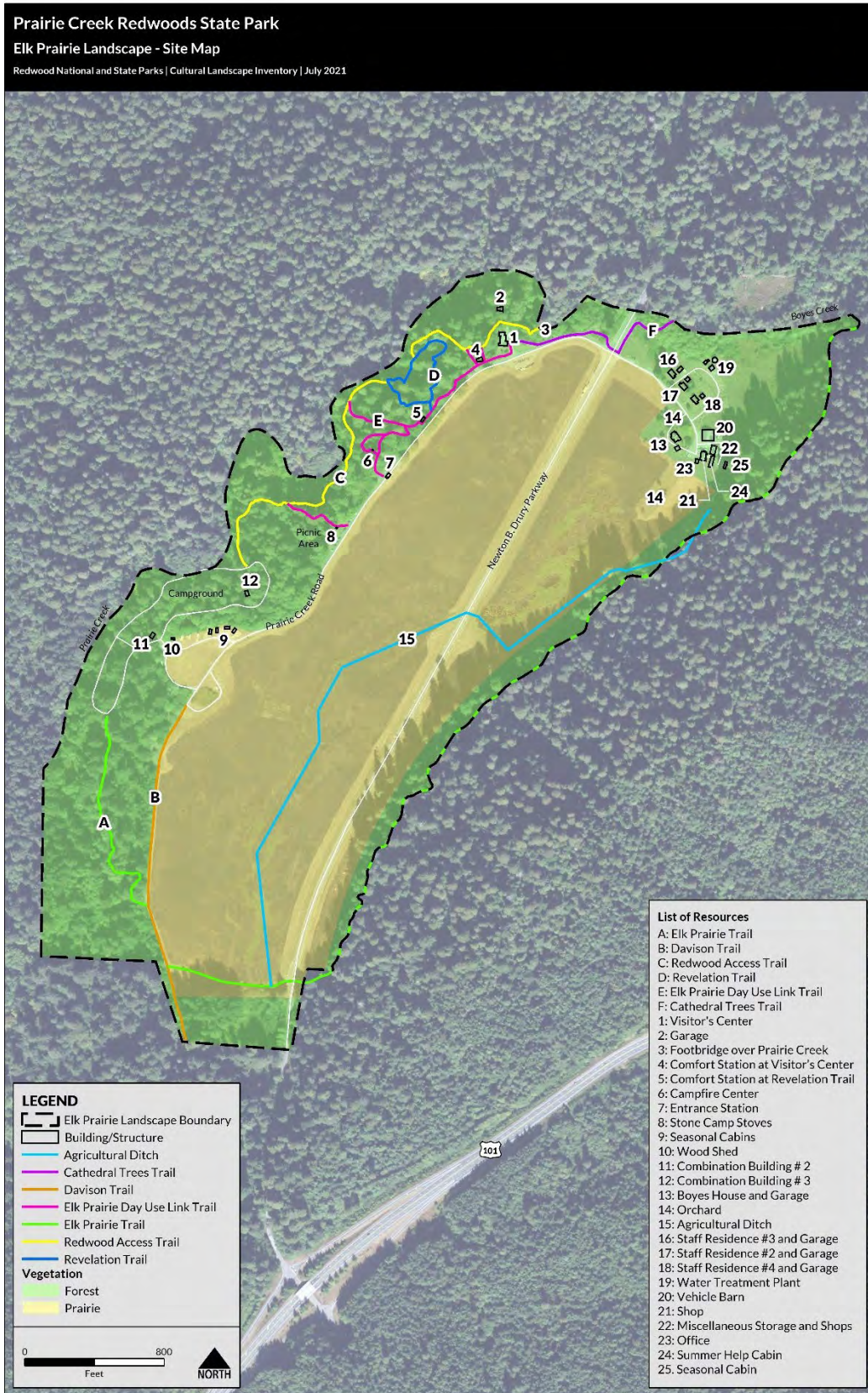


Figure 1: Site Map showing Elk Prairie Landscape

## Concurrence Status

Inventory Unit Completion Status:	Complete
National Park Superintendent Concurrence Date:	September 7, 2022
State Park Superintendent Concurrence Date:	September 6, 2022
National Register Eligibility:	District Not Eligible – SHPO CCC Superintendent House Eligible-SHPO
National Register Eligibility Concurrence Date:	May 24, 2022

## National Register Concurrence Explanatory Narrative

Denise Bradley (Denise Bradley Cultural Landscapes) and Bryan Larson (JRP Historical Consulting, LLC) conducted field work to document the features within the Elk Prairie Landscape on 22 and 23 September 2020. A visual inspection of the features to assess their condition was also done on these dates, and photographs, which were used to illustrate the CLI's Landscape Characteristics Explanatory Narrative, were taken.

Research was conducted in the collections of the California State Park Headquarters (Sacramento) and North Coast Redwoods State Parks (Eureka). Primary resources including historical plans, maps, and photographs, newspapers, CCC and park records, and deeds were reviewed. Secondary sources including previously prepared reports and site records, standard reference books, and online resources were also reviewed. Additionally, Kevin McCardle, Redwood National and State Parks Historical Landscape Architect and Cultural Resource Specialist, and Greg Collins, North Coast Redwoods State Parks Cultural Resources Program Supervisor, provided information on the orchard, parkway, and built environment features that supplemented information found in the DPR archives; Don Beers, California State Parks consultant and former long-time employee at Prairie Creek Redwood National and State Parks, answered questions (via email) about the construction and modification of the trails and their associated features; and Jeff Bomke, State Parks District Superintendent (retired), answered questions and provided context (via a phone conversation) on the development of trails, the campground, and site furnishings during the post-1961 era.

The CLI was prepared by Bradley and Larson with contributions from Joseph Freeman and Samuel Skow of JRP. A draft report was submitted to NPS and DPR in March 2021. Revised reports, which addressed NPS and DPR review comments, were submitted in August and November 2021. Bradley (Master of Landscape Architecture, Louisiana State University, 1986) meets the National Park Service's qualifications standards for Historical Landscape Architect. Larson (Master of History, California State University, Sacramento, 2005) meets the Secretary of the Interior's Historic Preservation Professional Qualifications for Architectural History and History.

## **Geographic Information & Location Map**

### **Inventory Unit Boundary Description**

The boundary for the Elk Prairie landscape is defined by a combination of natural features, human-made features, and legal boundaries.

The northern boundary for Elk Prairie landscape follows the south bank of Boyes Creek from the point where Elk Prairie Trail crosses the creek on the east side and to its confluence with Prairie Creek on the west side.

The western boundary for Elk Prairie landscape follows the eastern bank of Prairie Creek from its confluence with Boyes Creek to the point that the creek crosses the legal boundary between DPR and NPS land. The Elk Prairie landscape's boundary continues along this boundary line to the southern boundary between DPR and NPS to the east side of Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway.

From here, the boundary follows the eastern edge of Elk Prairie Trail to the point where the trail crosses Boyes Creek.

The Elk Prairie study area is approximately 216 acres.

### **Boundary Justification**

The boundary encompasses the developed area surrounding Elk Prairie including key features such as the Boyes House, the extant CCC-era buildings (Visitors Center and Garage), Campground, Campfire Center, roads (Parkway, Prairie Creek Road, and entrance road to the park administration complex), and day-use trails including Elk Prairie Trail. The boundary includes the land where non-extant historic era features were located including the Harris/Boyes Ranch, the CCC-era campground complex (within the forested area between Prairie Creek Road and Prairie Creek), and the CCC Company 1903 camp (on the prairie between the Parkway and Prairie Creek Road). The prairie and a portion of the surrounding forest are included within the boundary.

The two creeks along the northern and western sides create a physical boundary that defined the edges of the landscape during the historic eras and continue to serve this function today. Similarly, the combination of the topography and Elk Prairie Trail create this boundary definition along the eastern side.

At the south end, the end of the prairie and the beginning of the stand of trees creates a visual boundary. Because the distinction between these two vegetation features can change over time, the legal boundaries between DPR and NPS land provides a clear demarcation for the Elk Prairie landscape's boundary along its south side.

### **State and County**

State: CA

County: Humboldt

Size: 216 acres

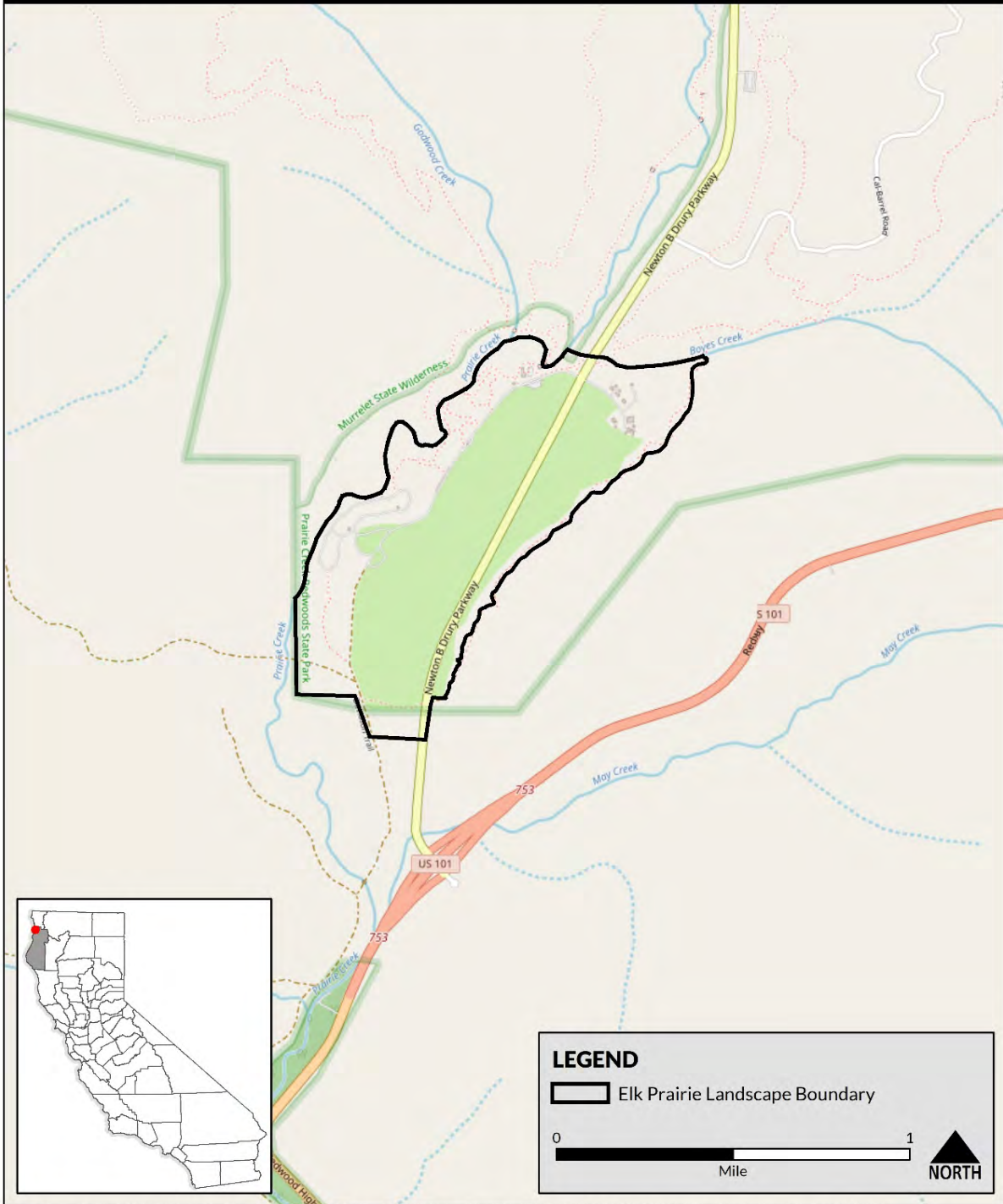


**Boundary UTMs:**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Datum</b>	<b>Zone</b>	<b>Easting</b>	<b>Northing</b>	<b>Boundary Point</b>
Point	NAD 83	10T	415032	4579720	A
Point	NAD 83	10T	414657	4579724	B
Point	NAD 83	10T	414486	4579770	C
Point	NAD 83	10T	413997	4579507	D
Point	NAD 83	10T	413629	4578909	E
Point	NAD 83	10T	413629	4578579	F
Point	NAD 83	10T	413832	4578572	G
Point	NAD 83	10T	413879	4578434	H
Point	NAD 83	10T	414069	4578420	I
Point	NAD 83	10T	414097	4578563	J
Point	NAD 83	10T	414140	4578561	K
Point	NAD 83	10T	414511	4579124	L

### Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park Elk Prairie Landscape - Location Map

Redwood National and State Parks | Cultural Landscape Inventory | July 2021

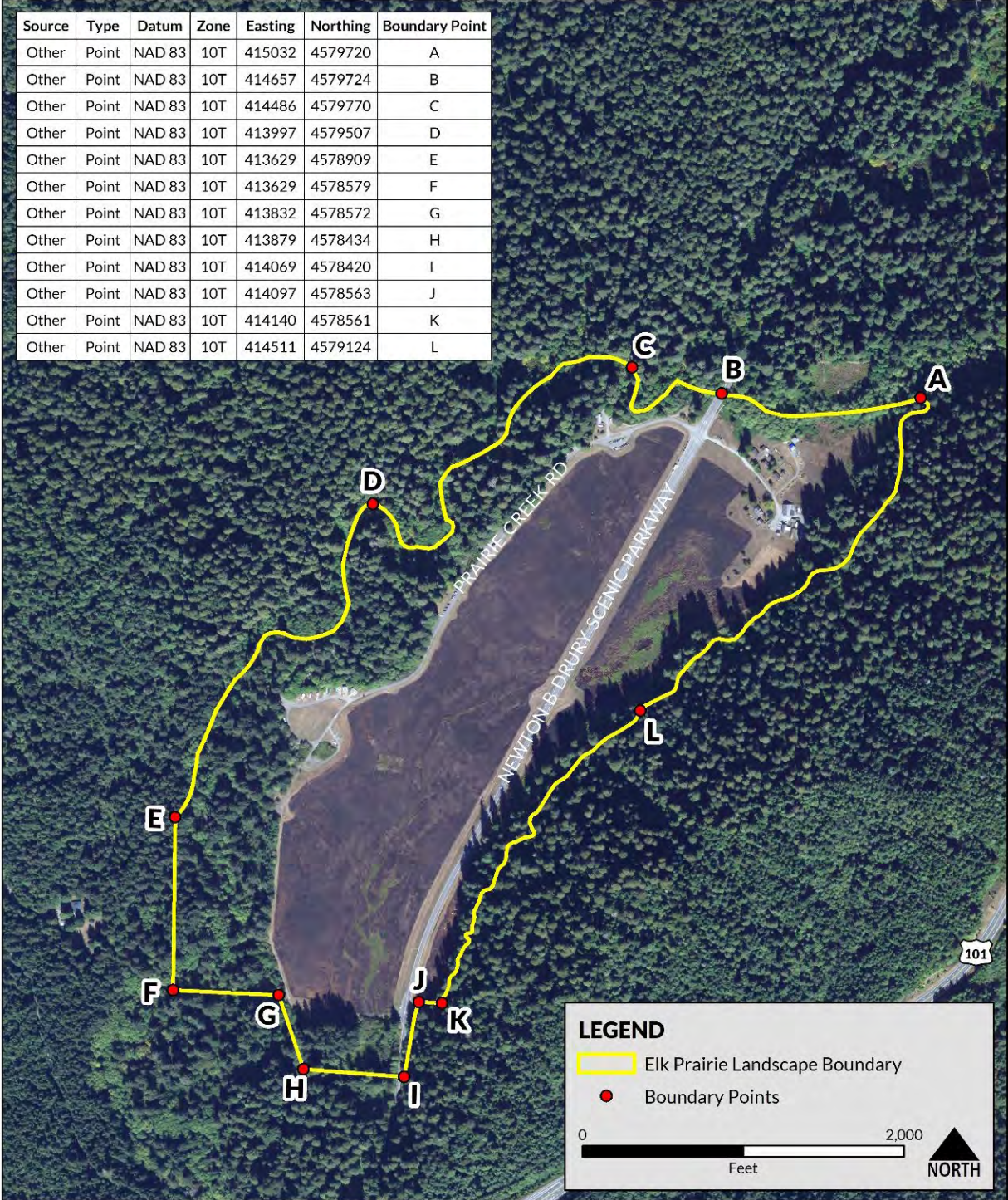


source: Denise Bradley (2021); JRP Historical Consulting, LLC (2021); California Spatial Information Library (2009); Esri, et al. (2021); © OpenStreetMap (and) contributors, CC-BY-SA.

Figure 2: Project Vicinity and Location Map

**Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park**  
**Elk Prairie Landscape - Boundary Map**

Redwood National and State Parks | Cultural Landscape Inventory | July 2021



source: Denise Bradley (2021); JRP Historical Consulting, LLC (2021); NAIP (2018).

Figure 3: Landscape Boundary Map

## Management Information

### General Management Information

Management Category:	May be Preserved or Maintained (Category C)
Management Category Date:	05/26/2016
Management Agreement:	Foundation Document Redwood National and State Parks California September 2016
Management Category:	May be Preserved or Maintained (Category C)
Management Category Date:	04/06/2000
Management Agreement:	Redwood National and State Parks General Plan
Management Category:	May be Preserved or Maintained (Category C)
Management Category Date:	06/17/2015
Management Agreement:	Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report

### Management Explanatory Narrative

The Elk Prairie landscape includes natural resources and features (Visitors Center, Garage, Boyes House, and Boyes orchard) that are managed as cultural resources. The “Foundation Document Redwood National and State Parks,” “Redwood National and State Parks General Plan,” and “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report” currently provide management guidance.

#### Foundation Document Redwood National and State Parks

The “Foundation Document Redwood National and State Parks California September 2016” (Foundation Document) provides current management direction and priorities. Its core components include a brief description of Redwood National and State Parks as well as the park’s purpose, significance, fundamental resources and values, and interpretive themes. This foundation document also provides the special mandates and administrative commitments, an assessment of planning and data needs that identifies planning issues, planning products to be developed, and the

associated studies and data required for park planning. It provides a focus for planning activities and establishes a baseline from which planning documents are developed.<sup>3</sup>

The Foundation Document recommended that a CLI be prepared for “Boyes Ranch,” “Prairie Creek CCC District (State Park)”, and “Prairie Creek Headquarters District (State Park)” (p. 25).

### Redwood National and State Parks General Plan

The “Redwood National and State Parks General Plan” (General Plan) was completed in 1999. At that time, this plan, part of the cooperative management of the Redwood National and State Parks by the NPS and DPR, was to provide a framework for “resource preservation and visitor use and a basic foundation for decision making and managing these four parks for the next 15 to 20 years.” The General Plan looked at the existing ecological and cultural resources of the parks and created a long-range view for their management. In addition, it addressed the relationship between the associated Yurok, Tolowa, and Chilula people and the parks. The General Plan (page 45) provides a list of the management strategies for cultural resources.<sup>4</sup>

The 1999 General Plan replaced NPS’s 1980 General Management Plan for Redwood National Park, which was prepared with the assumption that the three state parks—Prairie Creek, Del Norte Coast, and Jedediah Smith—would eventually come under the control of NPS. It also replaced a 1985 General Plan by DPR. The three parks, however, never became part of NPS and are cooperatively managed with DPR. Nonetheless, the 1999 General Plan still applies to the three state parks, including Prairie Creek.

The General Plan recommended that a CLI be prepared for “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park headquarters complex” in order to document it and to evaluate its NRHP eligibility (p. 48). The General Plan recommended that the Visitors Center be retained and continue to provide interpretation of and orientation to the resources of Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park (p. 55).

### Historic Structures Report: Visitors Center and Garage

The “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report” provides management and treatment recommendations for the Visitors Center and Garage, both of which are individually eligible under National Register Criterion A for their association with the CCC and Criterion C as rare and intact examples of the National Park Service Rustic style of architecture built on State Parks facilities during the Great Depression. The Historic Structures Report (HSR) provides guidance for integrating the interpretive features within the Visitors Center in a manner consistent with the Rehabilitation treatment under the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The HSR evaluated the feasibility of

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<sup>3</sup> United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, “Foundation Document Redwood National and State Parks California September 2016,” 3.

<sup>4</sup> Redwood National and State Parks, “Final General Management Plan/General Plan Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report for Redwood National and State Parks,” Volumes 1 and 2, 1999, accessed 16 February 2021 at [https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/21299/files/AR\\_103\\_11%20pt%202.pdf](https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/21299/files/AR_103_11%20pt%202.pdf).

rehabilitating the Garage, which is currently empty and was most recently used as a storage space. The HSR also assessed the existing mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) and structural systems and provides recommendations for upgrades and maintenance.<sup>5</sup>

### **NPS Legal Interest**

Type of Legal Interest: None-State Government Owned  
Other Agency or Organization: California Department of Parks and Recreation

### **Public Access**

Public Access: Unrestricted and restricted  
Public Access Explanatory Narrative Elk Prairie is open to the public. The maintenance yard is gated and not open to the visitors.

### **Adjacent Lands Information**

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? No

### **National Register Information**

#### **National Register Information**

National Register Landscape Documentation: Documented

#### National Register Explanatory Narrative

There are no existing National Register nominations, determinations of eligibility, or Section 110 consensus determinations for the Elk Prairie landscape or its features.

In 1982, the Visitors Center (called the Headquarters Building), CCC-era Garage (Restroom), Comfort Station HS 1, Footbridge HS 1, Boyes House, and Boyes House Garage were recorded on California Department of Recreation and Parks Standing Structures Inventory forms (DPR 421). No evaluations of significance were provided on these forms.<sup>6</sup>

NPS architectural historian Laura E. Soulli re prepared the “Architectural Survey and Evaluation [for] Redwood National Park” in 1983. The report evaluated the Visitors Center, the Garage, the Boyes House, the orchard next to the Boyes House, and four maintenance buildings in the vicinity of the Boyes House (three employee residences and a barn). She concluded that the Visitors Center

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<sup>5</sup> Garavaglia, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park - Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report.”

<sup>6</sup> Pamala McGuire, “Headquarters Building (Visitors Center),” California Department of Recreation and Parks Standing Structures Inventory Form (DPR 421), 1982, provided by Redwood National and State Parks.

and Garage were “eligible for the National Register of Historic Places” but did not identify the criteria of significance or the period of significance associated with their eligibility.<sup>7</sup> She concluded that the Boyes House, orchard, and three employee residences and the barn were not eligible for the National Register.<sup>8</sup>

The report “Cultural Resources: Jedidiah Smith Redwoods State Park, Del Norte Redwoods State Park, Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park” described Native American and European American cultural features within the Elk Prairie landscape. This report did not provide evaluations of National Register eligibility for any of the resources.<sup>9</sup>

In 1988, DPR’s Resource Protection Division initiated a study to enumerate DPR’s CCC resources, to assess the status of available inventory data, and to establish priorities for future inventory and evaluation. The 1991 study “CCC Buildings in the California State Park System: An Inventory and Report” provided a summary of the findings and a data base of inventoried resources.<sup>10</sup> This report identified the Administration Building (Visitors Center) and Combination Building (Garage) as eligible for listing on the National Register.<sup>11</sup> However, no evaluation of significance was provided in this report.

The report “Inventory of Buildings and Structures Between 1942-1965 In California State Parks” included a survey of standing built environment resources within the Elk Prairie landscape. However, this report was limited to the evaluation of individual buildings and structures under California Register of Historical Resources Criterion 3. The purpose of the evaluation was to determine if a building or structure embodied the distinctive characteristics of design and method of construction of State Parks architecture from the 1942-1965 period. The report did not provide National Register evaluations under Criteria A, B, or C.<sup>12</sup>

In 2009, Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park was one of several California state parks included on a National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form entitled “The National-State Park Cooperative Program and the Civilian Conservation Corps in California State Parks, 1933-1942.” This report synthesized the existing historical and architectural studies of the national-state park cooperative program and drew upon earlier identification efforts—like the 1991 study referenced above—to offer a broad historic context for state parks in California that contain CCC-era built environment resources. The report provided a framework for evaluating said resources under National Register Criteria A and C, but it did not identify or evaluate specific

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<sup>7</sup> Laura E. Soulli re, “Architectural Survey and Evaluation, Redwood National Park,” Final, June 1983, provided by Redwood National Park, 17.

<sup>8</sup> Soulli re, “Architectural Survey and Evaluation, Redwood National Park,” 25-26.

<sup>9</sup> Joe D. Hood and Carol Roland, “Cultural Resources: Jedidiah Smith Redwoods State Park, Del Norte Redwoods State Park, [and] Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park,” Cultural Heritage Planning, Resource Protection Division, December 1983.

<sup>10</sup> Carol Roland, “CCC Buildings in the California State Park System: An Inventory and Report,” December 1991, provided by DPR.

<sup>11</sup> Roland, “CCC Buildings in the California State Park System: An Inventory and Report,” 7.

<sup>12</sup> Rebecca Allen and Scott Baxter, “Inventory of Buildings and Structures Between 1942-1965 In California State Parks,” Past Forward Inc., 2001.

resources within the park units, including Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park and its CCC-era resources.<sup>13</sup>

Existing documentation and evaluation information for the Elk Prairie landscape is lacking. The landscape and its features have not been documented or evaluated. Existing information only addresses individual resources and has not evaluated them within the context of the landscape. The evaluations from the 1980s for individual resources do not meet current professional standards for evaluation. This CLI provides an evaluation of the Elk Prairie landscape in accordance with National Register criteria. Additionally, the CLI provides an evaluation of the individual significance of the Visitors Center, Garage, and Boyes House.

### **National Historic Landmark Information**

National Historic Landmark Status: No

### **World Heritage Site Information**

World Heritage Site Status: Yes

World Heritage Site Date: 1980

World Heritage Site Category: II National Park

### **Statement of Significance**

#### Harris and Boyes Ranch Era (1881-1939)

##### *Elk Prairie Landscape: Significance Under Criteria A, B, C, and D*

Elk Prairie landscape was historically associated with the European American settlement and development of the region during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, the present-day Elk Prairie landscape does not appear to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register for its associations with the Harris and Boyes Ranch Era under Criteria A, B, C, or D because not enough of the landscape and built environment features from this period survive to convey any potential significance related to the themes of settlement and early development. Only the Boyes House and a remnant of the Harris/Boyes orchard remain from this era, and all other buildings, structures, and constructed features are no longer extant. The Elk Prairie landscape lacks integrity to the Harris and Boyes Ranch Era and therefore is not eligible under Criteria A, B, and C. The Elk Prairie landscape does not appear to contain information needed to answer important

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<sup>13</sup> Carol Roland, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: The National-State Park Cooperative Program and the Civilian Conservation Corps in California State Parks, 1933-1942," prepared by Mead & Hunt, Inc., June 30, 2009 (updated 2014 by California State Parks Archaeology, History & Museums Division Staff).



scientific research questions in relationship to the Harris and Boyes Ranch Era and is not significant under Criterion D.

*The Boyes House: Individual Significance Under Criteria A, B, C, and D*

The Boyes House is the only extant building from the Harris and Boyes Ranch Era, and it does not appear to meet the criteria for individual listing in the National Register. Although it retains a high degree of integrity to its presumed date of construction, 1924, the building does not possess significant associations with the themes of early settlement, agriculture, tourism, or any other theme (Criterion A). The house was one of the last buildings constructed by the Boyes family, which occupied the home site since the early twentieth century and owned and operated several other buildings during that timeframe for residential, agricultural, and commercial purposes.

Under Criterion B, Charles, Emma, and William, the three members of the Boyes family with direct associations to the residence, only lived there for a relatively brief period, and the historical record does not indicate that they made important contributions to local history during that timeframe.

Under Criterion C, the residence is an architecturally unremarkable example of California Bungalow, a style that proliferated throughout the state, including the northwest region, during the early decades of the twentieth century.

The Boyes House does not appear to contain information needed to answer important scientific research questions in relationship to the Harris and Boyes Ranch Era and is not significant under Criterion D.

CCC Era (1933-1938)

*Elk Prairie Landscape: Significance Under Criteria A, B, C, and D*

Elk Prairie landscape was historically significant for its association with the CCC—“one of the largest government public works programs ever undertaken”—and with the CCC’s role in state park development at Prairie Creek State Park. However, the present-day Elk Prairie landscape does not meet the criteria for listing in the National Register for its association with the CCC Era under Criteria A or C due to the lack of integrity. The Visitors Center and Garage are the only extant CCC-era buildings, and the other permanent CCC-era park features (campground including its circulation system and campsites, cabins, toilet buildings, fire circle, site furnishings and signs, water system, bridges, fences, and portions of the Elk Prairie trail) are nonextant. No extant vegetation features can be specifically tied to the CCC era.

The Elk Prairie landscape is not significant under Criterion B for associations with historically important persons, as the CCC’s planning, development, construction, and use were the product of the efforts of multiple agencies and countless individuals.

The Elk Prairie landscape does not appear to contain information needed to answer important scientific research questions in relationship to the CCC era and is not significant under Criterion D.

*CCC Visitors Center and Garage: Individual Significance under Criteria A, B, C, and D*

The Visitors Center and Garage, built in 1934 and circa 1936, respectively, meet the criteria for individual listing in the National Register under Criterion A at the local level for associations with the CCC construction program within the California State Parks system and under Criterion C as rare and intact examples of the National Park Service Rustic style of architecture built on State Parks facilities during the Great Depression.

The buildings do not appear eligible under Criterion B for associations with individuals who made significant contributions to our history. Rather, these buildings were the works of groups of individuals whose contributions and accomplishments are best recognized under Criteria A and C.

These two buildings do not appear to contain information needed to answer important scientific research questions in relationship to the CCC era and is not significant under Criterion D.

Post-World War II State Parks Era (1948-1961)

The Elk Prairie landscape does not appear to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register for its association with the Post-World War II State Parks era under Criteria A, B, C, or D.

None of the buildings, structures, or landscape features that were designed, built, and utilized at Elk Prairie by State Parks forces during the post-World War II era meet the criteria for listing in the National Register, whether considered individually or as a group (potential historic district). Individually, no single building or landscape feature possesses the strength of association necessary to be eligible for significant events, trends, or pattern of events (Criterion A). While the rapid development of new state park facilities beginning in the late 1940s was an important development within the history of the agency, taken as a group the existing facilities and landscape features at Elk Prairie from this period do not represent significant associations with this theme.

The Elk Prairie landscape is not significant under Criterion B for associations with historically important persons, as State Park's planning, development, construction, and use were the product of the efforts of multiple agencies and countless individuals.

Under Criterion C, the buildings from this period—which include several residences and outbuildings, public works facilities east of the Boyes House, and comfort stations and combination buildings (restrooms and showers)—are typical building types built on state parks in great numbers throughout the state. Furthermore, the buildings have collectively suffered diminished aspects of their integrity to this period. Nearly every building surveyed has had numerous windows replaced, and many have had other changes such as additions, replacement of wall siding, or replacement of original doors. Landscape features from this era including the Campground, the Campfire Center, the roads, the site furnishings, and vegetation (primarily the

plants in the yards at the three staff residences) have all been modified or replaced since 1961 and lack integrity to the Post-World War II era.

The Elk Prairie landscape does not appear to contain information needed to answer important scientific research questions in relationship to the Post-World War II State Parks era and is not significant under Criterion D.

### Post 1961-Present

None of the buildings, structures, or landscape features that were designed and added to Elk Prairie from 1962 to the present meet the criteria for listing in the National Register, whether considered individually or as a group (potential historic district). For this period (1962-present), Elk Prairie landscape is not associated with significant events, trends, or pattern of events (Criterion A), is not significantly associated with historically important persons (Criterion B), is not significant for design or construction (Criterion C), does not appear to contain information needed to answer important scientific research questions (Criterion D), and is not significant under Criteria Consideration G for properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years.

National Register Significance Criteria:	Not eligible
National Register Period of Significance:	1881 - present
National Register Classification:	District
National Register Concurrence:	Complete

### **Historic Context**

Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	Vernacular Architecture
Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	Rustic Architecture
Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values

Subtheme: Other

Theme: Developing the American Economy

Subtheme: Agriculture

Facet: Small-Scale Commercial Agriculture (Crops, Orchards)

Theme: Transforming the Environment

Subtheme: Conservation of Natural Resources

Facet: The Great Depression and Conservation

Theme: Transforming the Environment

Subtheme: Other

**Area of Significance**

Area of Significance Category: Conservation

Area of Significance Subcategory: None

**NRIS Information**

Alpha Code/NRIS Name (Number): NA

Other National Register Name: none

Primary Certification Date: NA

## Chronology & Physical History

### Primary Historic and Current Function

Primary Historic Function- Major Category:	Agriculture/Subsistence
Primary Historic Function- Category:	Farm
Primary Current Function- Major Category:	Recreation/Culture
Primary Current Function- Category:	Outdoor Recreation
Primary Current Function:	Campground and Picnic Area

### Other Current or Historic Uses/Functions

Other Historic Function or Current Use–Major Category:	Recreation/Culture
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Category:	Outdoor Recreation
Other Historic Function or Current Use:	Campground and Picnic Area
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Type:	Both Current and Historic
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Major Category:	Landscape
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Category:	Natural Area
Other Historic Function or Current Use:	Meadow
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Type:	Both Current and Historic
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Major Category:	Landscape
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Category:	Natural Area
Other Historic Function or Current Use:	Forest
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Type:	Both Current and Historic

Other Historic Function or Current Use–Major Category:	Landscape
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Category:	Parkway (Landscape)
Other Historic Function or Current Use:	
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Type:	Both Current and Historic
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Major Category:	Government
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Category:	Government-Other
Other Historic Function or Current Use:	
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Type:	Both Current and Historic
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Major Category:	Commerce/Trade
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Category:	Commerce/Trade-Other
Other Historic Function or Current Use:	
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Type:	Historic
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Major Category:	Transportation
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Category:	Road-Related
Other Historic Function or Current Use:	Service Station
Other Historic Function or Current Use–Type:	Historic

**Current and Historic Name**

<b>Current and Historic Name</b>	<b>Type of Name</b>
Elk Prairie	Current
Elk Prairie Campground	Current

Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway	Current
Civilian Conservation Corps Camp 1903	Historic
Camp Prairie Creek	Historic
Boyes Ranch	Historic
Boyes Prairie	Historic
Harris Ranch	Historic
Redwood Highway	Historic
Crescent City-Trinidad Wagon Road	Historic
Elk Grove	Historic

**Cultural Landscape Type**

Cultural Landscape Type: Vernacular and Designed Landscape

## Chronology

Year Begin	Year End	Event	Annotation
1,000 B.P.	ca. late 1800s	Land Use	Elk Prairie is located within the Yurok ancestral territory. The Yurok today have indicated the entire prairie is important and would have been utilized by Yurok people for a variety of activities. <sup>14</sup>
ca. 1881	1905	Homesteaded	Around 1881, Andrew and Jenett Harris established a homestead on the land that included Elk Prairie and forested land around its periphery. The Harris family farmed and raised stock on the property for the next 25 years. Buildings were clustered in the southeast quarter of Section 2 and included a house, barns, a corral, outbuildings, and fences. Around the 1890s, Harris planted a four-acre orchard. <sup>15</sup>
1887	1894	Built	The Crescent City-Trinidad Wagon Road, the first north-south wagon road connecting Humboldt and Del Norte Counties was built between 1887 and 1894. A portion of the road ran along the western edge of Elk Prairie along an alignment that generally corresponds to the alignment of Prairie Creek Road. <sup>16</sup>
1905	1905	Land Transfer	The Harrises sold their 320 acres to William and Emma Boyes. <sup>17</sup>
1905	1931	Farmed	The Boyes family occupied the property for the next 26 years. They farmed, established a dairy, maintained the orchard, and provided accommodations to travelers.
ca. 1924	ca. 1924	Built	Charles Boyes, son of William, built a house in the northeastern portion of the prairie. <sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Michael R. Peterson, "Cultural Resources Inventory Report for Fabricate and Install Interpretive Wayside Exhibits along NBD Parkway (PEPC ID No. 52722)," 2015, 60.

<sup>15</sup> Hood and Roland, "Cultural Resources," CR89-CR124; Susie Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History," prepared for Susan Doniger, North Coast Redwoods, California State Parks, September 2015, 31.

<sup>16</sup> Michael R. Peterson, "Crescent City-Trinidad Wagon Trail," Department of Parks and Recreation Primary Record (DPR523A), 2015.

<sup>17</sup> Deed 94: 16 (20 November 1905) in Susie Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: Research Notes," (2015), provided by North Coast Redwoods, California State Parks.

<sup>18</sup> Hood and Roland, "Cultural Resources," CR93.



<b>Year Begin</b>	<b>Year End</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Annotation</b>
1927	1927	Land Transfer	William and Emma Boyes granted the right of way and easements to construct and maintain the Redwood Highway through the prairie to the state. <sup>19</sup>
1927	1928	Built	Section A of the Redwood Highway, which ran from Orick to station 398 about a mile north of the Boyes Ranch was completed by H.W. Hauser company in 1928. <sup>20</sup> The new road cut through Elk Prairie dividing the Boyes Ranch.
Late 1920s	Late 1920s	Built	The Elk Grove Auto Camp was added to land west of the Redwood Highway. Although the exact date of its construction is not known, the complex was referenced in local newspapers from at least 1929. <sup>21</sup>
1930	1930	Paved	The portion of the Redwood Highway from Orick to the Del Norte County line, which included the section through Elk Prairie, was paved. <sup>22</sup>
1931	1931	Land Transfer	Save-the-Redwoods League purchased the 320 acres owned William and Emma Boyes. The deed included a 1.4-acre life estate around the Boyes house with a right-of-way for the road from the Redwood Highway to the house. <sup>23</sup> Save-the-Redwoods League transferred the land purchased from the Boyeses to the State of California, and it became part of Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park.
1933	1933	Established	The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Company 1903 established a camp at Elk Prairie in June 1933. <sup>24</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: Research Notes," Deed 182:406, 14 June 1927.

<sup>20</sup> Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History," 26.

<sup>21</sup> Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: Research Notes."

<sup>22</sup> Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History," 26.

<sup>23</sup> Van Kirk "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park Research Notes, Deeds 205:397, 21 October 1931.

<sup>24</sup> Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History," 36.

Year Begin	Year End	Event	Annotation
ca. 1933	ca. 1933	Removed	As part of its work at Elk Prairie, the CCC removed a barn (described by Donald Hobart in his CCC notes as “at the north side of the Prairie Creek”), the Elk Grove Auto Camp (exact location unknown), and debris from the construction of the Redwood Highway. Hobart in his CCC notes described this work as being done to “restore the area to [its] natural appearance.” <sup>25</sup>
1933	1933	Rehabilitated	After the auto camp cottages were moved to their new location, they were rehabilitated by the CCC. <sup>26</sup>
1933	1933	Built	In addition to the rehabilitated cottages, the CCC built several new ones. According to a newspaper article in the <i>Humboldt Standard</i> , “a number of new cabins were built” by the CCC. <sup>27</sup>
1933	1933	Built	The CCC built Company 1903’s camp on the portion of the prairie west of the Redwood Highway. The camp occupied the northern third of the prairie on land between the Redwood Highway and the route for the old wagon road (today’s Prairie Creek Road), which the CCC graded and improved. This road provided the entrance to the new state park facilities. The CCC camp included approximately 18 buildings (four barracks, a mess hall, a headquarters building, a supply store, a medical building, a latrine/laundry, and several unidentified buildings) in addition to an entrance road that connected the building complex directly to the Redwood Highway, walkways, fences, and recreational facilities (landscaping, a basketball court, a baseball diamond, and a boxing stage). <sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Donald Hobart, “Hobart’s Worksheets: Civilian Conservation Corps Camps and Projects in the California State Park System. Cultural Heritage Section,” California Department of Parks and Recreation, 1982.

<sup>26</sup> Hobart, “Hobart’s Worksheets.”

<sup>27</sup> *Humboldt Standard*, 14 April 1935.

<sup>28</sup> Hobart, “Hobart’s Worksheets”; Redwood National and State Park, “Aerials,” 1934; Redwood National and State Park “CCC Survey Notes,” 1937; Roland, “Prairie Creek Redwoods” in “CCC Resources in the State Park System”; Michael R. Peterson, “1933 CCC Camp Prairie Creek,” March 12, 2015, 1, 3.

<b>Year Begin</b>	<b>Year End</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Annotation</b>
ca. 1934	1935	Built	The CCC constructed permanent buildings for the new Prairie Creek Redwoods State including the Park Custodian's Residence, a secondary ranger's residence, and a woodshed. The designs for the custodian's and ranger's residences, prepared by the National Park Service, were dated July 1934 and January 1935, respectively. The CCC also constructed a campground and day use (picnic) facilities in the forested land along the western edge of Prairie Creek Road. <sup>29</sup>
ca. 1933	ca. 1935	Built	The CCC constructed hiking trails and footbridges through the park, and as part of this effort, they built a trail that ran along the west side of Prairie Creek, crossed the creek, went across the south end of the prairie, and along the along east side of the prairie up to Boyes Creek. This alignment includes parts of present-day Elk Prairie Trail (east of creek). <sup>30</sup>
ca. 1934	ca. 1936	Built	The CCC constructed a split rail fence along both sides of the Redwood Highway near the edges of the prairie. <sup>31</sup>
ca. 1937	ca. 1938	Removed	All of the features associated with the CCC camp complex (the buildings, the internal road and the pedestrian paths, internal fencing, etc.) were removed from the prairie. The exact date of this action is not known; however, an aerial photograph from 1940 confirmed the removal of these features. <sup>32</sup>
1939	1939	Land Transfer	Emma Boyes died, and her 1.4-acre life estate, which included the Boyes house, became part of the park. <sup>33</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Hobart, "Hobart's Worksheets."

<sup>30</sup> Don Beers, Email communication with Denise Bradley, 15 February and 2 March 2021.

<sup>31</sup> Hobart, "Hobart's Worksheets"; California State Parks, North Coast Redwoods District Collection, "CCC Co. 1903 Scrapbook," 1934.

<sup>32</sup> Redwood National and State Parks, "Aerials," 1940.

<sup>33</sup> *Humboldt Times*, 27 July 1939; Michael R. Peterson, "Boyes Home Place," Primary Record (DPR523A), 2015.

<b>Year Begin</b>	<b>Year End</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Annotation</b>
1930s	Present	Altered	After the Boyes property became part of Prairie Creek State Park, the orchard—originally about four acres in size and extending to the east and south of the Boyes house—was not actively managed. The orchard’s size decreased as individual trees were removed after they became diseased or died. <sup>34</sup>
1948	1948	Built	In 1948, a garage was built for the Boyes House; the new garage was behind (east) of the house. <sup>35</sup> The driveway, running along the front and south side of the house, was added around this time. <sup>36</sup>
1948	1948	Built	In 1948, two staff residences (Residence 2 and 3) and their adjacent garages, driveways, and sidewalks were built on the north side of the entrance road that led to the Boyes House. <sup>37</sup>
1948	1948	Built	In 1948, a group of buildings—including barn, office, and shop—were added to the east of the Boyes House and created the nucleus of the public works complex. <sup>38</sup>
1949	1949	Built	In 1949, a third staff residence (Residence 4), its adjacent garage, driveway, and sidewalks were added on the north side of the entrance road that led to the staff residences, Boyes House, and the public works complex. <sup>39</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Comparison of aerial photographs 1940 to present.

<sup>35</sup> Scott Baxter and Rebecca Allen, “Garage at Residence 1,” DPR523 Record, 2002.

<sup>36</sup> Comparison of aerial photographs from 1940, 1948, and 1954.

<sup>37</sup> Baxter and Allen, “Residence 2,” “Garage at Residence 2,” “Residence 3,” “Garage at Residence 3,” DPR523 Records, 2002; Comparison of aerial photographs from 1948 and 1954.

<sup>38</sup> Baxter and Allen, “Barn,” “Office,” and “Shop,” DPR523 Records, 2002; Comparison of aerial photographs from 1948 and 1954.

<sup>39</sup> Baxter and Allen, “Residence 4” and “Garage at Residence 4,” DPR523 Records, 2002; Comparison of aerial photographs from 1948 and 1954.

<b>Year Begin</b>	<b>Year End</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Annotation</b>
1949	1949	Expanded	In 1949, the camping facilities were expanded southward with the addition of 30 camp sites and two comfort stations (Combination Buildings 2 and 3) arranged around a looped network of roads—all of which were shown on a topographic survey from 28 June 1950. <sup>40</sup>
ca. 1952	ca. 1952	Built	Anson and Lola Webster sold 2.5 acres of land to Lenard and Joyce Powell who in turn developed an auto park and campground with cabins on the land at the south end of the prairie. <sup>41</sup>
Late 1950s-early 1960s	Late 1950s-early 1960s	Removed	Based on their location on a 1950 topographic survey, several campground roads, approximately 15 campsites and their camp stoves and picnic tables, and four toilet buildings were removed between the North Camp and the Picnic Area to accommodate the construction of the Campfire Center. <sup>42</sup>
ca. 1961	ca. 1961	Built	A Campfire Center, consisting of rows of wood benches set on a slope facing a large wood frame, was built. <sup>43</sup>
1961	1961	Built	The Summer Help Cabin was added east side of the group of park operations buildings which are east of the Boyes House. <sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Baxter and Allen, “Combination Building #2” and “Combination Building #3,” DPR523 Records, 2002; State of California, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Beaches and Parks (DBP), “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Campground Area, Topo,” 25 June 1950, California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

<sup>41</sup> Michael R. Peterson, “Webster’s Store,” Primary Record (DPR523A).

<sup>42</sup> State of California, DNR, DBP, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Campground Area, Topo,” 25 June 1950, California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

<sup>43</sup> California DPR, “Facility Inventory Listing,” October 21, 1988, North Coast Redwoods State Parks Collection; Garavaglia, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park - Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report,” Figure 7.

<sup>44</sup> Baxter and Allen, “Summer Help Cabin,” DPR523 Record, 2002.

Year Begin	Year End	Event	Annotation
ca. 1961	1962	Altered	<p>The entrance road to the Visitors Center and Campground was moved approximately 150 feet north so that its intersection with the Redwood Highway aligned with the entrance road to the Maintenance Facility on the opposite side of the highway.</p> <p>The paving for the pre-1961 entrance road and a small office building adjacent to the north side of this road were removed.</p> <p>The parking lot directly in front of the Visitors Center was also reconfigured and paved.<sup>45</sup></p>
ca. 1961	1962	Built	<p>A new entrance kiosk (located in a center median) with a small parking lot were added to provide check-in for the campground.<sup>46</sup></p>
Early 1960s	Early 1960s	Removed	<p>The group of cabins and cottages to the north of the Visitors Center appear to have been removed in the early 1960s. This area is labeled as “Summer Help Housing Area” on a 1961 plan for the new entry kiosk. However, neither the buildings nor the road system that connected them to the Visitors Center’s parking lot are shown on a survey from 1963. Van Kirk cited a newspaper article in the <i>Arcata Union</i> by Orick resident Thelma Hufford who remembered that the cabins at Prairie Creek were removed in the early 1960s.<sup>47</sup></p>
ca. 1960s	ca. 1960s	Altered	<p>The Parkway was widened during the post-1961 era, probably in the 1960s. When built in 1928, the highway was approximately 24 feet wide; it currently is approximately 50 feet wide.<sup>48</sup></p>

<sup>45</sup> State of California, DNR, DBP, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Proposed New Entrance, Kiosk, and Office,” Drawing 4729, 11 April 1961, California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

<sup>46</sup> State of California, DNR, DBP, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Proposed New Entrance, Kiosk, and Office,” Drawing 4729, 11 April 1961; Baxter and Allen, “Kiosk,” DPR523 Record, 2002.

<sup>47</sup> *Arcata Union*, 31 January 1980, qtd. in Van Kirk, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History.”

<sup>48</sup> Kevin McCardle, Email communication with Denise Bradley, 8 June 2021.

<b>Year Begin</b>	<b>Year End</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Annotation</b>
1963	1964	Land Transfer	In 1964, Healy and Magnuson sold the land at the south end of the prairie, where a small road-side store (Webster's store) and tourist camp (with cabins and spaces for recreational vehicles) were located, to Save-the-Redwoods League. The League then deeded the land to the State, and it became part of the park. <sup>49</sup>
1964	1967	Removed	Webster's Store and the tourist camp features were removed by the State from the south end of the prairie. <sup>50</sup>
ca. early 1960s	ca. late 1960s	Developed	The internal trail system between the new Campfire Center, the Picnic Area, and South Camp began to develop. By the mid-1960s, short trails led from Prairie Creek Road to the Campfire Circle. Another trail led from the new Campfire Circle to the north end of the South Camp. <sup>51</sup>
ca. 1968	ca. 1968	Built	A 60,000-gallon redwood water tank added to the water system. The tank was located north of the three staff residences. <sup>52</sup>
ca. late 1960s	ca. early 1970s	Removed	The North Camp's road, 39 campsites, four toilet buildings, and "fire circle" were all removed in the late 1960s or early 1970s. The designation on maps between a "North Camp" and "South Camp" was no longer needed, and South Camp was then labeled as the "Campground." <sup>53</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Peterson, "Webster's Store," Primary Record (DPR523A).

<sup>50</sup> Hood and Roland, "Cultural Resources," CR132.

<sup>51</sup> State of California, DNR, DBP, "Location Map" on "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Comfort Station Conversion to Combination Building," Drawing 10429, 10 January 1967, California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

<sup>52</sup> State of California, DNR, DBP, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Water System Additions," Drawing No. S-1829, 1968, North Coast Redwoods District Collection.

<sup>53</sup> Comparison of various plans including "Location Map" on "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Comfort Station Conversion to Combination Building," Drawing 10429, 10 January 1967, and "Prairie Creek Braille Trail Plan," ca. 1971; DPR internal communication, 1967-1968.

<b>Year Begin</b>	<b>Year End</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Annotation</b>
ca. late 1960s	ca. late 1970s	Built	The Campground was expanded. Campsites 69 and 70 were added on the south side of the open field just east of Combination Building # 2, and the campground was expanded to the east side of Prairie Creek Road, encroaching onto the prairie, for campsites 71-76. <sup>54</sup>
Early 1970s	Early 1970s	Developed	In 1971, the Braille Trail was laid out to the west of Comfort Station 1—in the area that had previously been the North Camp. <sup>55</sup>
ca. 1972	ca. 1972	Paved	Around 1972, Prairie Creek Road was paved with asphalt from the entrance at Redwood Highway to just past the Entry Kiosk. The Kiosk and Visitors Center parking lots were also paved. <sup>56</sup>
1977	1977	Paved	In 1977, Prairie Creek Road was paved with asphalt from the Entry Kiosk to the Campground. The pull-out parking lots along the west side of the road were also paved. <sup>57</sup>
1977	1977	Paved	The campground's roads and spurs at the individual campsites were paved with asphalt. <sup>58</sup>
1977	1977	Paved	The entrance road to the maintenance facility and the driveways to the three staff residences and to the former Boyes House were paved. <sup>59</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Resources Agency of California, DPR, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park Road Repair," Drawing No. 15889, 8 August 1977, California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

<sup>55</sup> California DPR, "Facility Inventory Listing," October 21, 1988, North Coast Redwoods State Parks Collection; Resources Agency of California, DPR, "Prairie Creek Braille Trail Plan," Drawing 12257/1 (n.d.), California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

<sup>56</sup> Resources Agency of California, DPR, "Paint Storage Bldg. Prairie Creek Redwoods St. Park," Drawing No. 10631, 17 May 1972, California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

<sup>57</sup> Resources Agency of California, DPR, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park Road Repair," Drawing No. 15889, 8 August 1977, California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

<sup>58</sup> Resources Agency of California, DPR, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park Road Repair," Drawing No. 15889, 8 August 1977, California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

<sup>59</sup> Resources Agency of California, DPR, "Dry Lagoon & Prairie Cr. Redwoods State Parks Trinidad Area Road Repair," Drawing No. 15768, 15 May 1977, California State Parks Headquarters Collection.



<b>Year Begin</b>	<b>Year End</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Annotation</b>
ca. 1978-1979	ca. 1978-1979	Built	A paint storage building was added to the group of public works facilities that are east of the Boyes House. <sup>60</sup>
late 1960s-early 1980s	late 1960s-early 1980s	Removed	Two CCC-era restrooms were removed from the Picnic Area. <sup>61</sup>
1977-1983	1977-1983	Built	An unpaved road was laid out to provide access to the water system structures located to the north of staff residences. <sup>62</sup>
1981	1981	Developed	In 1981, the northern portion of the Redwood Access Trail was laid out by the California Conservation Corps. It ran from the vicinity of the Visitors Center to Revelation Trail and was paved with asphalt. <sup>63</sup>
1982	1982	Built	In 1982, the California Conservation Corps built a new bridge over Prairie Creek. The bridge bed, pier, retaining wall at abutments, etc. were designed by Prairie Creek Redwood State Park’s maintenance staff. <sup>64</sup>
1980s	1980s	Altered	The Campfire Center was altered. A new projection screen and projection booth were added. <sup>65</sup>
1980s	1980s	Removed	The log bridge over the creek that provided direct access to the campground (in the vicinity of the end of the Nature Trail) failed; this bridge was never replaced. <sup>66</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Resources Agency of California, DPR, Annotation (“1978-79 Minor Capital Outlay”) on “Paint Storage Bldg. Prairie Creek Redwoods St. Park,” Drawing No. 10631 (n.d.), California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

<sup>61</sup> Comparison of various plans including “Location Map” on “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Comfort Station Conversion to Combination Building,” Drawing 10429, 10 January 1967, and “Resources Agency of California, DPR, “Prairie Creek [sic] State Park Water System,” Drawing No. 16182, 23 May 1978, California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

<sup>62</sup> Comparison of “Dry Lagoon & Prairie Cr. Redwoods State Parks Trinidad Area Road Repair” and aerial photographs.

<sup>63</sup> Beers, Email communication; Jeff Bomke, Personal communication with Denise Bradley, 17 February 2021.

<sup>64</sup> Beers, Email communication; Bomke, Personal communication.

<sup>65</sup> Bomke, Personal communication.

<sup>66</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<b>Year Begin</b>	<b>Year End</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Annotation</b>
ca. 1983-1988	ca. 1983-1988	Altered	The alignment for a section of the split rail fence that runs along the west side of the Parkway was altered to accommodate the Madison Grant Forest and Elk Refuge commemorative displays. <sup>67</sup>
late 1980s	late 1980s	Altered	In the late 1980s, the southern half of the Elk Prairie Trail that was the west of Prairie Creek was removed by State Park Staff. Much of this portion of the trail was within the creek's floodplain and frequently suffered damage during high water events. The portion of the trail on the east side of the creek was realigned to connect directly the south end of the Campground. <sup>68</sup>
early 1990s	early 1990s	Altered	The Revelation Trail (originally called the Braille Trail) was reconstructed in the early 1990s to meet accessibility standards. This work included grading the trail to meet linear grade standards and adding gravel to meet firmness and stability requirements; installing new posts and rope for the guiderail along the side of the trail; and constructing ramps and a boardwalk around a large redwood tree. <sup>69</sup>
late 1990s	late 1990s	Altered	The asphalt was removed from the original segment of the Redwood Access Trail (which ran between the Visitors Center and Revelation Trail) and was replaced with gravel. <sup>70</sup>
late 1990s	late 1990s	Developed	The Redwood Access Trail was extended south from Revelation Trail to the Campground to link the Visitors Center and all of the major destinations in the campground—Revelation Trail, Campfire Center, Picnic Area, and Campground. <sup>71</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Review of aerial photographs available on [HistoricAerials.com](http://HistoricAerials.com).

<sup>68</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<sup>69</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<sup>70</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<sup>71</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<b>Year Begin</b>	<b>Year End</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Annotation</b>
late 1990s	late 1990s	Rehabilitation	In the late 1990s Elk Prairie Trail underwent a major rehabilitation project “when it was redesigned to meet accessibility standards. The footprint of the trail stayed basically the same with the exception of minor reroutes [that were] needed to meet linear grade requirements. Trail structures [such as bridges and retaining walls] were added or improved, and the trail surface was hardened with gravel to meet firmness and stability requirements. <sup>72</sup>
late 1990s	late 1990s	Altered	The short segment of the Cathedral Trees Trail that is located west of the culvert on the Parkway was rerouted over the Parkway instead of going through the culvert. The new alignment continued alongside the entrance road into the Campground where it shortly ended in front of the Visitors Center. This was part of the larger accessible trail project that also included alterations to the Elk Prairie and Foothill trails. <sup>73</sup>
early 1990s-early 2000s	early 1990s-early 2000s	Altered	The alignment for a section of the split rail fence that runs along east side of the Parkway was altered to accommodate interpretive signs. <sup>74</sup>
early 2000s	early 2000s	Altered	The Prairie Creek bridge and its approaches (1982), located to the northeast of the Visitors Center, were modified to comply with accessibility standards when Prairie Creek Trail (recently renamed Karl Knapp Trail) was reconstructed in the early 2000s. <sup>75</sup>
ca. 2005	ca. 2005	Built	A new Comfort Station was added about 100 feet southwest of the Visitors Center on the west side of Prairie Creek Road. <sup>76</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<sup>73</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<sup>74</sup> Review of aerial photographs on HistoricAerials.com and Google Earth.

<sup>75</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<sup>76</sup> Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, “Comfort Station Exterior Elevation,” Drawing No. 28345.030, approved 28 March 2005, California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

<b>Year Begin</b>	<b>Year End</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Annotation</b>
ca. 2009-2010	ca. 2009-2010	Built	A new entrance station for the campground was built on Prairie Creek Road approximately 300 yards south of the ca. 1961 entry kiosk. The new building was located in a center median that was built as part of this project. <sup>77</sup>
ca. 2009-2010	ca. 2009-2010	Removed	The ca. 1961 entry kiosk was removed. <sup>78</sup>
ca. 2010s	ca. 2010s	Built	Wood benches were added at various times along western edge of prairie. <sup>79</sup>
ca. 2016	ca. 2016	Built	A sculpture featuring a group of elk was added in the vicinity of the Visitors Center and interpretive panels were added to the east side of the Parkway across the road from the large rock with the Madison Grant Forest and Elk Refuge Rock dedication plaque. <sup>80</sup>
ca. 2016	ca. 2016	Built	A row of four cabins were added to the open land along the northwest side of the road leading into the Campground. <sup>81</sup>
2021	2021	Removed	The large rock with the former Madison Grant Forest and Elk Refuge Rock dedication plaque, located west of the Parkway along the edge of the prairie, was removed

## Historic Context Narrative and Physical History<sup>82</sup>

### Introduction

Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park encompasses roughly 14,000 acres in northwest Humboldt County, with a few hundred acres in southwest Del Norte County. The park is bounded to the west

<sup>77</sup> Review of aerial photographs on Google Earth; Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, “Entrance Station Exterior Elevation,” Drawing No. 28345.019, approved 28 March 2005, California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

<sup>78</sup> Review of aerial photographs on Google Earth.

<sup>79</sup> Bomke, Personal communication.

<sup>80</sup> Peterson, “Cultural Resources Inventory Report for Fabricate and Install Interpretive Wayside Exhibits along NBD Parkway,” 2015, 6 and 11; Review of aerial photographs on Google Earth.

<sup>81</sup> Review of aerial photographs on Google Earth.

<sup>82</sup> This historic context of the built environment resources at Elk Prairie in Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park draws primarily from the following sources: Van Kirk, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History”; Hood and Roland, “Cultural Resources”; Soullière, “Architectural Survey and Evaluation, Redwood National Park;” Roland,

by the Pacific Ocean, to the east by the US 101 freeway, and to the north and south by Redwood National Park. It is cooperatively administered by DPR and NPS as part of Redwood National and State Parks, an expanse of preserved old-growth redwood stands along the northern California coast and a World Heritage Site.<sup>83</sup>

### Pre-History

Elk Prairie is located within the Yurok ancestral territory. During the pre-European settlement period, the lands, streams, and coastal areas throughout what is now Redwood National and State Park were important hunting and gathering areas for the Yurok people. Yurok people continue to have ties to Elk Prairie and Redwood Creek, which has been valued for hunting and fishing, and as a confluence of several travel routes. The Yurok today have indicated the entire prairie is important and would have been utilized by Yurok people for a variety of activities.<sup>84</sup>

### Early Land Use and Settlement during the American Period

Some of the first non-native visitors to the bottomlands of Prairie Creek were drawn to the area by the promise of gold along the coast during the mid 1800s. Gold Bluff, located on the coast to the west of Elk Prairie, was the site of a gold deposit, but it did not compare to the bonanza of the Sierra Nevada and yielded only modest and short-lived returns. The area's mild, wet climate was well suited for agriculture, and trees could be logged for building materials or kept as a potential asset. Elk Prairie was particularly desirable, leading to years-long battles over property ownership between miners and homesteaders that ultimately ended in the favor of Andrew and Jenett Harris, who established their homeplace and farm at the northern end of Elk Prairie in the early 1880s.<sup>85</sup>

Andrew Harris came to Elk Prairie from Illinois by way of Missouri, where he married Jenett McIntosh in 1880. By 1883, they made their way to Elk Prairie where they built a home, barns, a sawmill, and other outbuildings in support of their farm. The buildings were likely concentrated near the north end of the prairie, where the current Boyes House (built in 1924) remains today. The Harrises devoted about 80 to 100 acres of their 320-acre property to growing hay and other grains, and they eventually added a four-acre orchard in the area immediately southeast of their home (a handful of the trees survive today). Approximately 140 acres of their holdings remained undeveloped forest land, from which they periodically logged timber for the sawmill. They raised a variety of animals, including cows, hogs, sheep, and poultry on the remainder of their land. By

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“CCC Resources in the State Park System”; Peterson, “1933 CCC Camp Prairie Creek”; and Garavaglia, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park - Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report.” Additional sources were consulted where cited in the text.

<sup>83</sup> Van Kirk, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History,” 2; National Park Service, “US Biosphere Reserves” (no date), 6, available at <http://npshistory.com/publications/mab/us-biosphere-reserves.pdf> (accessed March 2021).

<sup>84</sup> Waterman, “Yurok Geography”; Peterson, “Cultural Resources Inventory Report for Fabricate and Install Interpretive Wayside Exhibits along NBD Parkway,” 60.

<sup>85</sup> Van Kirk, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History,” 27-31; Hood and Roland, “Cultural Resources,” CR-89, CR-123.

the early twentieth century, the Harrises decided to sell their property, listing the house, two barns, four-acre orchard, 60 head of cattle, 22 cows, 13 horses, 40 sheep, and hogs.<sup>86</sup>

After waiting several years for an offer, the Harrises sold their property in 1905 to William and Emma Boyes, who had moved to Humboldt County at the end of the nineteenth century. In addition to continuing farm operations started under the Harrises, William, Emma, and their two children, Charles and Ethel, rented out rooms and provided meals to travelers along the Crescent City-Trinidad Wagon Road, which ran along the west side of Elk Prairie and grew in popularity as automobile use and auto-based tourism increased in the early twentieth century. Within a couple years, food and lodging offered at the Boyes' establishment, known variously as the "The Oaks" or "Elk Tavern," received rave reviews by local newspapers.

The primary focus of the farm shifted over the Boyes family's 26-year-long ownership. In the early years, the family appears to have concentrated on raising sheep, increasing the herd to 175 head by 1910. By 1919, they had turned their attention to dairying, and in the 1920s they again shifted to raising stock cattle. Throughout their tenure, the Boyeses continued to grow crops, maintain the old Harris orchard, and raise hogs and poultry.<sup>87</sup>

In 1924, Charles Boyes built the California Bungalow-style residence that remains on the property – the only standing building from this era. California Bungalows were numerous throughout the California's northwest region – and the rest of the state – during this same period. The style has its roots in the Arts and Crafts movement and is commonly associated with the designs of brothers Charles and Henry Greene of Pasadena, California. The Bungalow style peaked in popularity throughout California and the American West between the early 1900s and the 1930s, during which time both working- and middle-class residents gravitated toward this type of house because they were modestly priced and relatively easy to build, yet attractive and possessing artistic flare. They were commonly seen in residential suburbs and rural settings alike, as with the Boyes house.<sup>88</sup>

In 1931, the Boyeses sold the 320-acre property to Save-the-Redwoods League (League). The deed included a life estate that allowed William and Emma to remain in their house for the rest of their lives. The life estate included 1.4 acres of land around the house and a right-of-way for the road from the Redwood Highway to the house. The League transferred the rest of the land to the State of California, and it became part of Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park. However, no work was undertaken at Elk Prairie for the new park until the arrival of the CCC in 1933.<sup>89</sup> William Boyes

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<sup>86</sup> Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History," 27-31; Hood and Roland, "Cultural Resources," CR-89, CR-123.

<sup>87</sup> Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History," 31-33; Hood and Roland, "Cultural Resources," CR-93.

<sup>88</sup> Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History," 32-34; Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2015), 566-578; Clifford E. Clark, *The American Family Home, 1800-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 171-192.

<sup>89</sup> Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History," 34.

died in 1932, and Emma Boyes continued to live on the property until her death in 1939. At that point the 1.4-acre life estate was incorporated into the park.<sup>90</sup>

*Physical History: Harris and Boyes Ranch Era (ca. 1881-1939)*

Around 1881, Andrew Harris established a homestead on the land that included Elk Prairie and all of the forested land around its periphery. Harris and his family farmed and raised stock on the property for the next 25 years. They added built features, included a house, barns, a corral, outbuildings, and fences, in the northeast corner of Elk Prairie (southeast quarter of Section 2, Township 12 North, Range 1 East). Around the 1890s, Harris planted a four-acre orchard.<sup>91</sup>

The Crescent City-Trinidad Wagon Road, the first north-south wagon road connecting Humboldt and Del Norte counties, was built between 1887 and 1894. A portion of the road ran along the western edge of Elk Prairie along an alignment that generally corresponds to the current route of Prairie Creek Road.<sup>92</sup> Refer to Figure 4 for a view of the road taken around 1914.

In 1905, the Harrises sold their 320 acres to William and Emma Boyes, and the Boyes family occupied the property for the next 26 years. They farmed, established a dairy, maintained the orchard, and provided accommodations to travelers. Like the Harrises before them, the Boyes family's house and farm buildings were concentrated near the north end of Elk Prairie. The historical record does not make clear the full extent of the buildings the Boyeses used and built during their ownership, but these features included the family's primary house, multiple barns, and other farming facilities, none of which remain extant. At some point the Boyes family began providing accommodations and meals to tourists; however, no information was found in the historic record if the Boyeses added separate buildings for these services. Refer to Figure 5 for a view of the Boyes Ranch taken around 1914, and Figure 6 for a view of corn growing in the prairie in the early 1900s.

In about 1924, Charles Boyes, son of William and Emma, built the California Bungalow-style residence that remains on the property, and it is the only extant building from this period. The house served as William and Emma's residence until their deaths in 1931 and 1939, respectively. Refer to Figure 7 for a view of the house soon after its construction. In addition to their own buildings, the Boyeses permitted an acquaintance—Mrs. Lundblade—to build a summer home on their property; the exact location of this building was not shown in the historic record. Lundblade's home burned in October 1926 and does not appear to have been rebuilt.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> *Humboldt Times*, 28 October 1931; *Humboldt Times* 27 July 1939; Peterson, "Boyes Home Place," Primary Record (DPR523A).

<sup>91</sup> Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History," 31-32; Hood and Roland, "Cultural Resources," CR89–CR124; Peterson, "Boyes Home Place," Primary Record (DPR523A).

<sup>92</sup> Peterson, "Crescent City-Trinidad Wagon Road," Primary Record (DPR523A); Edwin C. Bearss, "Redwood National Park: History Basic Data, Del Norte and Humboldt Counties, California," U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1969, accessed 16 February 2021, [https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/redw/index.htm](https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/redw/index.htm).

<sup>93</sup> Hood and Roland, "Cultural Resources," CR93; Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History."

In 1927, William and Emma Boyes granted the right of way and easements to the State to construct and maintain the Redwood Highway through the prairie. Section A of the Redwood Highway, which ran from Orick to station 398 about a mile north of the Boyes Ranch, was completed by H.W. Hauser Company in 1928. The new road cut through Elk Prairie dividing the Boyes Ranch. In 1930, the portion of this highway from Orick to the Del Norte County line, which included the segment through Elk Prairie, was paved.<sup>94</sup>

The Redwood Highway provided better and easier access to Elk Prairie and the nearby redwoods, and by at least the late 1920s the Boyes family added an automobile court to the property alongside the Redwood Highway. Known as the Elk Grove Auto Camp, it included cabins, a service station, and store. The historical record does not provide information on the exact location of these buildings.<sup>95</sup> In 1931, the League purchased the 320 acres of land owned by the Boyeses. The property – minus 1.4 acres that remained the Boyeses’ home until their deaths – was transferred to the State of California and became part of Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park. When Emma Boyes died in 1939, the 1.4-acre life estate, which included the Boyes house, became part of the park.<sup>96</sup>

#### Establishment of Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park

After decades of unfettered logging, efforts at redwood conservation in Humboldt County began around the turn of the twentieth century. Following a few failed attempts, including legislation introduced by the Native Sons of the Golden West and a letter-writing campaign by Eureka schoolchildren, the idea of public stewardship of endangered redwood stands gained traction in the fall of 1910 following the passage of an \$18-million bond issue for the construction of the state highway system. It soon became apparent to the Humboldt County business community that in order to reap tourist dollars from the proposed Redwood Highway—one of two north-south corridors that traversed the California coastline through Sonoma, Mendocino, Humboldt, and Del Norte counties—conservation of the region’s biggest tourist draw became absolutely imperative. In fact, the California Highway Commission adopted these preservation practices and only felled those redwood trees that directly hindered construction activities, as opposed to previous practices whereby counties purchased rights-of-way, logged them for profit, and turned them over to the State. Construction of the northern reaches of the Redwood Highway were ultimately delayed by

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<sup>94</sup> Deed 182:406, 14 June 1927, qtd. in: Van Kirk, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Research Notes”; Van Kirk, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History,” 26.

<sup>95</sup> Van Kirk, in “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History,” was not able to definitively identify the location of the Boyes’ auto camp (p. 40). Leases 8:109 (15 August 1930), in Van Kirk’s “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: Research Notes,” described that the Boyeses leased the “certain auto and tourist camp consisting of cabins and their accessories and service station and store located on the Boyes Ranch near Prairie Creek and formerly rented by Frank Millerbis and said auto camp and service station is bounded on the west by Prairie Creek; also between four and five acres of said ranch adjoin said camp and lying between the highway and Boyes Creek, the land leased covers about seven acres . . .” The size of the parcel (four to five acres) and its location between the auto camp, highway, and Boyes Creek seemed to fit with its being in the north part of the prairie. Older versions of the Orick USGS map (1945 and 1952) have a label for “Elk Grove” at the north end of prairie.

<sup>96</sup> *Humboldt Times*, 28 October 1931; *Humboldt Times*, 27 July 1939; Peterson, “Boyes Home Place,” Primary Record (DPR523A); Van Kirk, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History,” 34.



wartime exigencies and other financial considerations; work on the stretch that traverses the present-day state park did not, in fact, begin until 1927, with the completion of the highway in Del Norte County lasting into the 1930s.<sup>97</sup>

The drive to establish a public park for the preservation of redwoods engaged and unified local business interests, public officials, and environmental activists. One of the most prominent groups dedicated to this purpose was the League, incorporated in 1920 by east coast conservationists Madison Grant, Henry Fairfield Osborn, and John C. Merriam. Following the founders' exposure to both old-growth redwood stands in Humboldt County and deforestation practices further south, the League waged a campaign of public awareness, which set up local chapters throughout the country, collected revenue through dues-paying memberships, and launched numerous fundraising initiatives. While the group and its supporters agreed that expanses of redwoods should be acquired and preserved as a public park, the key issue was how to best acquire the acreage in question. As opposed to other national parks at the time, which were exclusively created out of federal lands, the northern California redwood groves occupied lands that had passed from the public domain into the hands of private owners, mainly logging companies. Neither the League – largely composed of industrial capitalists and other wealthy individuals – nor the US Congress wanted to create a precedent for condemning private lands for park purposes. However, the League also recognized that private fundraising alone would be insufficient to purchase more than just a token representation of the redwood belt. Through the 1920s, the League and other environmental groups sponsored state legislation that essentially created the modern state park system under the authority of the newly formed State Park Commission to identify potential parks and to administer acquired lands. The League also spearheaded an innovative fundraising method by which donors could purchase or donate individual trees or whole groves as memorials. The earliest memorial grove, Bolling Grove in Humboldt Redwoods State Park, was dedicated to the memory of Colonel Raynal C. Bolling in 1921. The League continued to use this method to acquire land along the redwoods region of northern California.<sup>98</sup>

The park that became known as Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park was assembled piecemeal over the decades beginning in 1923. That year, Zipporah Russ, widow of Joseph Russ, donated a 160-acre redwood grove located along Prairie Creek and the Redwood Highway to the State of California as a memorial to Humboldt County pioneers and in memory of her late husband. By the end of the decade, the Russ grove—referred to as “The Humboldt County Pioneer Memorial Grove”—had grown by the addition of numerous small tracts. Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park was officially established in 1931 following the acquisition of nearly 5,000 acres from the Sage Land and Improvement Company of New York. With this addition, the park's acreage totaled more than 6,000 acres, including the 286-acre Boyes tract that the State acquired in 1931, around

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<sup>97</sup> Van Kirk, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History,” 26, 43-45.

<sup>98</sup> Van Kirk, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History,” 45-46; Laurence R. Warren, “Development of the Memorial Grove System in Humboldt Redwoods State Park,” M.A. Thesis, Sacramento State College, 1966, 57, 65-66, 75-85.

the same time as the Sage Land acquisition. Park growth slowed during World War II, but acquisitions resumed after hostilities ceased, with several additional parcels donated by the Sage Land and Lumber Company, successor to the Sage Land and Improvement Company. By 1949, the park had grown to 8,000 acres in size, and now included several elk refuges. During the 1950s, the State began to acquire coastal properties in the Upper and Lower Gold Bluff areas, although it did not secure mineral rights in those areas until the mid 1960s. In 1965, Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park grew by more than 2,100 acres when the Pacific Lumber Company donated Fern Canyon (and other lands) to the State, expanding the park to 12,423 acres. Three years later, Redwood National Park was established via federal legislation, realizing the decades-long ambition of countless regional activists. Additional parcels purchased since 1965 have expanded Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park to its current size of 14,000 acres. Beginning in the 1960s, the California Highway Commission proposed expanding the Redwood Highway that passed through the heart of Elk Prairie; however, following decades of opposition the US 101 bypass was constructed to the east, and the old stretch traversing the prairie was renamed the Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway after the California State Parks director, National Park Service director, and longtime redwoods preservation advocate.<sup>99</sup>

#### The Civilian Conservation Corps at Prairie Creek State Park

Although marred by mass economic hardship, the 1930s marked a period of substantial growth and development for public lands, including state and national parks. Reducing widespread unemployment was an important component of America's response to the Great Depression, and to this end President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 6106, "Relief of Unemployment through the Performance of Useful Public Works," in April 1933 to establish the Emergency Conservation Work agency, or ECW. Congress appropriated \$10 million for the ECW to fund work programs aimed at the conservation of the nation's natural resources. Although formally designated as Emergency Conservation Work, the agency was generally referred to as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).<sup>100</sup> The CCC developed programs with a two-fold purpose: to provide employment to those out of work; and to support preservation of natural resources through various public works projects.

In California, Great Depression unemployment was intensified by the influx of thousands of migrants from the Midwest in search of work. To be eligible for CCC employment, enrollees had to be unemployed, unmarried men between the ages of 18 and 25. The Departments of War, Agriculture, Interior, and Labor oversaw CCC activities and administration. Responsibility for physical conditioning, transportation, camp construction and administration, and procurement of supplies fell under the jurisdiction of the War Department. The Department of Agriculture planned and conducted CCC work projects in national forests, while the Department of the Interior

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<sup>99</sup> Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History," 26, 47-52.

<sup>100</sup> The name was officially changed from Emergency Conservation Work to the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1936.

managed projects on national, state, county, and local park lands. Originally designed for a limited six-month enlistment period, re-enrollment in the CCC was first allowed in September 1933.<sup>101</sup>

The CCC provided a cheap and plentiful labor pool for a variety of national and state parks projects during the 1930s. Crews aided in forest protection through firefighting and disease- and insect-control work, and participated in forest-improvement projects, including timber stand improvement, reforestation and seed propagation, and the development of recreational facilities. Many CCC crews also assisted in projects, such as trails, roads, bridges, administrative buildings, and campgrounds.<sup>102</sup>

Roughly 100 CCC work camps were distributed throughout California, a state that was initially slated for 11,000 enrollees but ultimately employed nearly 160,000. In northwest California, the U.S. Army established a CCC district office in Eureka in May 1933. Within a month, the agency assigned numerous work camps to the region, the bulk of which were located on Siskiyou and Trinity national forests in Del Norte and Trinity counties, respectively.<sup>103</sup> The Eureka district reportedly extended 400 miles north-south and 80 miles east-west, with camps located anywhere from 45 to 270 miles away from headquarters and accessible by “negotiable” roads.<sup>104</sup>

In July 1933, Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park was selected as a location for a new CCC camp assignment. Whereas many other camps in the district, including camps at Hawkins Bar, Gasquet, Orleans, Big Bar, and Mad River, were converted lumber camps and relatively inexpensive to repurpose, the CCC complex at Elk Prairie was an entirely new project, costing over \$10,000 to build. Construction of the main camp was carried out at Elk Prairie (also referred to as Boyes Prairie) by a detachment of 15 enrollees from Hyampom Camp in Trinity County, overseen by company commander First Lt. Edwin P. Crandall. Following construction of winterized quarters, CCC Company 1903—which largely consisted of World War I veterans, many of whom hailed from the San Francisco Bay Area—was reassigned from Hyampom to the new camp at Elk Prairie. The company was tasked with clearing debris from earlier construction of the Redwood Highway, relocating or removing obsolete auto camp buildings and agricultural facilities leftover from the Boyes period, and restoring and improving the locale’s natural environment for the enjoyment of park visitors. Work crews additionally constructed various park facilities, including guest cabins, public campgrounds, picnic tables, benches, shelters, stoves, and comfort and combination stations (restrooms and showers), in addition to water treatment and distribution systems, parking lots, and trails. Conservation and construction activities continued at the Elk Prairie site through fall 1935, with firefighting crews staging operations from the location through 1938. The CCC camp was abandoned sometime after 1938 and an aerial photograph taken in 1940 showed all of the buildings

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<sup>101</sup> Alison T. Otis, William D. Honey, Thomas C. Hogg, and Kimberly K. Lakin, *The Forest Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps: 1933-1942* (USDA Forest Service, 1986), 7.

<sup>102</sup> Otis et al., *The Forest Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps*, 11, 41-43.

<sup>103</sup> Garavaglia, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park - Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report,” 23; Van Kirk, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History,” 34-35.

<sup>104</sup> *Humboldt Times*, 2 July 1933, qtd. in Van Kirk, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History,” 35.

and roads associated with the CCC camp complex had been removed. The government formally ended the CCC program in 1942.<sup>105</sup>

At its peak, CCC Company 1903's camp at Elk Prairie housed approximately 190 enrollees and included a complex of about 18 buildings, an entrance road that connected the building complex directly to the Redwood Highway, walkways, fences, and recreational facilities (a basketball court, a baseball diamond, and a boxing stage). In July 1934, construction of the extant Park Custodian's Residence (present-day Visitors Center) was completed. It included quarters for the park supervisor as well as a store in the southern wing. This permanent building was constructed from local hand-hewn timber and sited just northeast of the main CCC complex. About two years later, CCC crews also built a secondary residence (present-day Garage) a short distance north of the Custodian's Residence. The secondary residence was also built to permanent standards.<sup>106</sup>

The Visitors Center and Garage were both built based on Park Rustic-style designs prepared by the Department of Interior, National Park Service (NPS), and accepted by Charles Wing, Chief of the Division of State Parks. "Park Rustic" refers to architecture and landscape design developed by the NPS during the early twentieth century. The style is characterized by its use of local, unfinished, natural materials, application of handcraftsmanship, and emphasis on harmony with the surrounding natural landscape. It was developed as an amalgamation of several styles—colonial vernacular from New England; vernacular log cabins from the Southeast and West; adobes from the Southwest; the "Great Camps" of the Adirondack Mountains of New York; and "shingle-style" summer houses of the East Coast. The overriding design philosophy was to unify the built environment with the natural landscape as well as reference the indigenous material culture and regional building practices. These design standards were first implemented nationally in the 1920s, as the National Park Service began to fill its parks with intentional tourist facilities, as opposed to the privately run, ad hoc retail establishments of earlier eras (which were typically constructed without larger environmental considerations in mind). By the following decade, California State Parks likewise began to employ Rustic design aesthetics within their facilities. The historical particulars of the CCC—a large labor force deployed to develop accessible facilities on protected public lands, many in natural settings—allowed for the widespread realization of these principles, as evidenced by labor-intensive hand-hewn wood elements, hand-forged metal fixtures and hardware, detailed stone masonry, and other high-quality ornamentation present among CCC-constructed facilities.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History," 36, 40, 42-43; Peterson, "1933 CCC Camp Prairie Creek," Primary Record (DPR523A), 1; Garavaglia, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park - Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report," 24-29.

<sup>106</sup> Roland, "Prairie Creek Redwoods" in "CCC Resources in the State Park System"; Peterson, "1933 CCC Camp Prairie Creek," 1, 3; Garavaglia, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park - Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report," 24, 26, 30; Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History," 43.

<sup>107</sup> Roland, "CCC Resources in the State Park System," 3; William C. Tweed, Laura E. Soulliere, and Henry G. Law, *Rustic Architecture, 1916-1942* (National Park Service, Western Regional Office, Division of Cultural

*Physical History: CCC Era (1933-1938)*

CCC Company 1903 established a camp at Elk Prairie in June 1933. As part of its work at Elk Prairie, the CCC removed a barn (“at the north side of the Prairie Creek”) and debris from the construction of the Redwood Highway.<sup>108</sup> CCC field notes indicate that the auto camp cottages were moved to a new location and rehabilitated.<sup>109</sup> Additionally, according to a newspaper article in the *Humboldt Standard*, “a number of new cabins were built” by the CCC.<sup>110</sup> Based a 1948 topographic survey, the cottages were relocated north of the new Park Custodian’s Residence (today’s Visitors Center) that was built by the CCC; refer to Figure 16 for the 1948 topographic survey. This work of removing features from the prairie was undertaken to “restore the area to [its] natural appearance.”<sup>111</sup>

During the summer and early fall of 1933, the CCC built Company 1903’s camp on the northern third of the prairie to the west of the Redwood Highway. The prairie was likely chosen as the location for the CCC complex because its relatively flat terrain and lack of trees meant that the site required limited preparation prior to building the complex. The camp was occupied by mid-October and was located on the northern third of the prairie on land between the Redwood Highway and the route for the old wagon road (today’s Prairie Creek Road), which the CCC graded and improved. This road provided the entrance to the new state park facilities.

Company 1903’s camp complex included approximately 18 buildings (four barracks, a mess hall, a headquarters building, a supply store, a medical building, a latrine/laundry, and several unidentified buildings) which were arranged around the edges of a rectangular-shaped open space, or courtyard, which was planted with grass. The outer edges of this courtyard were defined by unpaved paths. At its center was an unpaved circle with a flagpole. Paths radiated out from the circle (like spokes on a wheel) dividing the courtyard and providing formal pedestrian connections to the buildings. An unpaved entrance road, which aligned with the center of the building compound, connected the complex to the Redwood Highway; it forked at the east end of the complex and then ran along the north and south sides of the compound. The open field to the north of the CCC complex contained a baseball diamond and a basketball court. A picket fence ran along the south side of the complex, and a split rail fence was added to both sides of the Redwood Highway near the edges of the prairie.<sup>112</sup> Refer to Figures 8, 9, and 10 for photographs of the camp complex and to Figure 11 for a view of the split rail fence.

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Resource Management, 1977), no pagination; Linda Lux, Judy Rose, Dan E. Supernowicz, Mike McIntyre, Pam Conners, Jon Brady, Jan Cutts, Joan Brandoff-Kerr, Steve McNeil, and Susan Lassell, “Strategy for Inventory and Historic Evaluation of Recreation Residence Tracts in the National Forests of California from 1906 to 1959,” USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, revised April 21, 2003, 60-61.

<sup>108</sup> Hobart, “Hobart’s Worksheets.”

<sup>109</sup> Hobart, “Hobart’s Worksheets.”

<sup>110</sup> *Humboldt Standard*, 14 April 1935.

<sup>111</sup> Hobart, “Hobart’s Worksheets.”

<sup>112</sup> Redwood National and State Park, “Aerials,” 1934; Redwood National and State Park, “CCC Survey Notes,” 1937.

The western side of the CCC complex was defined by the portion of the Crescent-City Trinidad Wagon Road (today's Prairie Creek Road) which ran along the western edge of the prairie. The CCC graded and improved this road, and it provided access to the facilities for the new Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park which were constructed by the CCC between 1933 and 1935. The CCC built a Park Custodian's Residence (Visitors Center) at the edge of the forest and adjacent to the entrance road; refer to Figure 12 for an image of this building. To the northeast of this building, the CCC built a secondary ranger's residence (Garage) and moved and renovated cabins from an existing auto camp. Additionally, according to a newspaper article in the *Humboldt Standard*, "a number of new cabins were built" by the CCC.<sup>113</sup> This area had approximately 13 cabins scattered on the slope down to Prairie Creek which were accessed via a looped road; refer to Figure 16 for a 1948 topographic survey that shows the location of the cabins and road.

South of the Visitors Center, the CCC developed a network of unpaved roads around which were laid out camp sites and picnic facilities. This campground occupied the land south of the Visitors Center to today's "Picnic Area," and a network of unpaved curvilinear roads provided access to the individual campsites. The CCC built site furnishings (wood cupboards, wooden tables made from redwood slabs and benches from logs, tabletop stoves, and small wooden signs), small toilet buildings, and one comfort station. They laid out a water system which provided water through underground pipes to water bibs which were spaced throughout the camp sites. Two water tanks were located just north of today's Revelation Trail Loop. The CCC also created a gathering place (the Fire Circle) for small groups which consisted of a wooden stage with two semi-circular rows of log benches; this feature was located in the vicinity of today's Revelation Trail Loop.

The arrangement of the CCC-era campsites was informal; they were laid out along both sides of the road but were placed at random distances from the road. The roads and paths were unpaved, and there were no formal designations for where automobiles parked within each campsite or within the campground. The campground was situated under the forest canopy, and the CCC added native understory vegetation including ferns, rhododendrons, and other native plants and shrubs as part of their work. The CCC hand built the site furnishings and signs from native materials—primarily wood—that gave them a rustic appearance that was consistent with the character of the small toilet buildings and the Visitors Center and Garage. These buildings were constructed of local hand-hewn timber with timber shingles for siding and roof.<sup>114</sup> Refer to Figures 13, 14, and 15 for photographs of the campground and to Figure 16 for the campground's layout.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> *Humboldt Standard*, 14 April 1935.

<sup>114</sup> Hobart, "Hobart's Worksheets"; California State Parks, North Coast Redwoods District Collection, "CCC Co. 1903 Scrapbook," 1934; *Humboldt Standard*, 13 April 1935.

<sup>115</sup> A CCC-era map showing details of the campground was not found during research. The historic record provided no evidence that any additional work was undertaken by State Parks after the CCC left and during World War II. A topographic survey map prepared by State Parks in February 1948 provided the layout of the CCC-era campground prior to any post-World War II expansion. This 1948 map and historical images from the CCC era provided basis for analysis of the CCC era campground facilities; refer to Figure 16 for this map.

The CCC added hiking trails and footbridges through the park, and as part of this effort, they built a trail that ran along the west side of Prairie Creek and along the along east side of the prairie up to Boyes Creek.<sup>116</sup> The trail was accessed from the campground via two bridges across Prairie Creek. One bridge was northeast of the Visitors Center and one was west of the campground (where today's Nature Trail crosses the creek).

The CCC complex was occupied by Company 1903 until late 1935 or early 1936 and was used in some form for fire-fighting purposes from 1936 to 1938. The CCC camp was abandoned sometime around 1938 and an aerial photograph taken in 1940 showed all of the features associated with CCC Company 1903's camp complex (the buildings, the internal road and the pedestrian paths, internal fencing, etc.) had been removed. The historic record provided no information on any additional work undertaken at Elk Prairie until after the end of World War II.<sup>117</sup>

#### Prairie Creek State Park in the Post-War Era

In the years following the end of World War II in 1945, California State Parks renewed its efforts to improve and expand facilities at state parks and to acquire and present new parks to the public. A bullish economy helped replenish state coffers, which had grown depleted during the Great Depression and war years, while a demand for improved outdoor recreational facilities grew throughout the state alongside a rapidly expanding population. Indeed, when gas rationing was lifted after the war, many Californians took to the roads on auto-tours around the state. Humboldt Redwoods State Park alone saw a tenfold increase in daily visitors, while campgrounds systemwide were typically filled to capacity. As California became a popular destination for out-of-state tourists, these issues only intensified. In response, the California legislature drafted the 1945 Omnibus Park Bill to provide funds to acquire parks in underserved parts of the state. The bill also set aside money to improve existing parks by funding the development of new campgrounds, picnic areas, comfort and combination stations, and other recreational facilities. Additional funding was allocated to develop support facilities like staff housing, maintenance buildings and structures, and administrative offices. New acquisitions from this period include Donner Memorial State Park at Donner Lake and Samuel P. Taylor State Park in Marin County, while new acreage was added to older redwoods state parks like Humboldt, Jedediah Smith, and Prairie Creek.<sup>118</sup>

Much of the California State Park's success during this period may be attributed to the appointment of Newton B. Drury as director. As the retired director of the National Park Service and former chief executive with the Save-the-Redwoods League, Drury was a longtime and accomplished

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<sup>116</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<sup>117</sup> Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History," 42-43; Redwood National and State Parks, "Aerials," 1940.

<sup>118</sup> Joseph H. Engbeck, Jr., *State Parks of California from 1864 to the Present* (Portland, Oregon: Charles H. Belding, 1980), 77-83; Rebecca Allen and James D. Newland, "CCC and Post-World War II State Parks Administrative Facilities (1933-1965): Cultural Resource Surveys and Evaluation Approach for Determining Historical Eligibility," prepared by ESA for California State Parks, August 2017, 11-14.

advocate of public parks. Under his direction, California State Parks not only increased its volume of acquisitions, but also expanded its interpretive programming. Administratively, he modeled the California State Park system after the National Park Service, instituting system-wide five-year plans and coordinating park unit-specific masterplans. During his tenure, 143 park units were operational by 1956, including some of today's most popular attractions, like Hearst San Simeon State Park in San Luis Obispo County and Angel Island State Park in the San Francisco Bay. Following Drury, landscape architect and former parks administrator Charles De Turk was appointed director. Under De Turk, California State Parks was completely reorganized, with the present-day Department of Parks and Recreation established within the Resources Agency and incorporating the former Beaches and Parks, Small Craft Harbors, and Recreation divisions into a single department. De Turk oversaw the development of a new five-year plan to address overcrowding and inadequate facilities that ultimately funneled \$150 million throughout the state park system. With nearly half of the funds earmarked for new park acquisitions, the system grew to include over 200 park units by the end of the 1960s. De Turk was replaced by Fred L. Jones in 1965, who was soon succeeded by William P. Mott, Jr. in 1967. A longtime administrator with California State Parks, Mott was appointed to the directorship position by newly elected California Governor Ronald Reagan, and he led the department for 18 years before assuming the position of NPS Director in 1985, to which he was appointed by then-President Reagan.<sup>119</sup>

During the latter half of the twentieth century, California State Parks developed a streamlined program of building standardization. As park acquisitions grew during this period, so too did personnel, resulting in a massive residential building program. The State Park Residence Program was launched in 1947 and 1948 to build new housing and garages for the growing employee population. The department employed standardized plans throughout the state, which cut costs and created a more uniform aesthetic overall. The buildings were economical, using limited architectural ornamentation and readily available materials. Architects turned to the CCC-era Park Rustic style developed by NPS for inspiration and direction. Discussed above, the Park Rustic style emphasized harmony between the built and region-specific natural environments. During this period, architects employed standard building types with architectural details that reflected one of four regional environments: beaches, valleys, deserts, and mountains. Logs and timber, for example, were used in forest and mountain parks.<sup>120</sup>

By the end of the 1950s, however, Rustic-style buildings gave way to a more modern aesthetic. Director Drury hired first associate architect Robert F. Uhte to modernize the department's standardized building stock. Having studied under prominent modernist architect William Wurster

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<sup>119</sup> Engbeck, *State Parks of California from 1864 to the Present*, 83-84, 87, 91-93, 97-99, 102; Rebecca Allen and James D. Newland, "Architectural Overview of Buildings and Structures Constructed Between 1942-1964 in California State Parks and Beaches," prepared for California Department of Parks and Recreation, December 1998, 10; Carol Roland, "Park Rustic Buildings and Structures in the California State Park System, Survey and Evaluation" [Survey and Initial Assessments by Rebecca Allen and James D. Newland, 2002], prepared by Roland Nawi Associates, Preservation Consultants, for California Department of Parks and Recreation, December 2003, 24.

<sup>120</sup> Allen and Newland, "CCC and Post-World War II State Parks Administrative Facilities," 24-28.



at the School of Architecture at University of California, Berkeley during his employment at the NPS regional office in San Francisco, Uhte was uniquely qualified for the position, with a strong grasp of both Park Rustic design principles and Modern architecture. Between 1955 and 1957, Uhte prepared a set of standardized designs for the department's most common buildings, including comfort stations, combination buildings, offices, maintenance buildings, and entrance kiosks. While employing Contemporary Modernistic design elements—such as low-pitched gable roofs, clerestory windows, post-and-beam construction, and a heavy reliance on horizontal concrete blocks—Uhte's designs nonetheless incorporated California State Park's primary design principle and guiding architectural philosophy: harmony with the surrounding environment.<sup>121</sup>

At Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, several buildings were added during this postwar period, with most built according to standardized plans for their type. A comfort station and two combination buildings were added between 1948 and 1949. Additionally, a park administration complex with residential buildings and public works facilities was developed in the northeast corner of Elk Prairie, including three residences with detached garages built in 1948 and 1949, an office and shop building (1948), a vehicle storage barn (1949), and a cabin for seasonal employees (1961). In subsequent decades, most of these earlier buildings have been altered and upgraded through a combination of window, door, and wall siding replacements. Additionally, a comfort station has been added to the Visitors Center, and a miscellaneous storage building, staff housing cabin, water treatment plant, campground entrance kiosk, and campground cabins were likewise added to the park.

*Physical History: Post-World War II Expansion (1948-1961)*

In 1949, the camping facilities were expanded southward with the addition of 30 camp sites and two comfort stations (Combination Buildings 2 and 3) arranged around a looped network of roads.<sup>122</sup> This group of campsites became known as South Camp. The 55 CCC-era campsites, located between the Visitors Center and today's Picnic Area, became known as North Camp. Refer to Figure 17 for the arrangement of the new campground and CCC era campground in 1950.

Between 1948 and 1950, State Parks developed the east side of the prairie in the vicinity of the Boyes House. In 1948, a garage was built behind the Boyes House, and a driveway, running along the front and south side of the house, was added around this time. Also in 1948 and 1949, three staff residences (Residences 2, 3 and 4) and their adjacent garages, driveways, and sidewalks were built on the north side of the entrance road that led to the Boyes House.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Allen and Newland, "CCC and Post-World War II State Parks Administrative Facilities," 16, 28-29, 32-35, 52-53; Roland, "Park Rustic Buildings and Structures in the California State Park System," 22-25.

<sup>122</sup> Baxter and Allen, "Combination Building #2" and "Combination Building #3," DPR523 Records, 2002; State of California, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Beaches and Parks (DBP), "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Campground Area, Topo," 25 June 1950, California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

<sup>123</sup> Baxter and Allen, "Garage at Residence 1," "Residence 2," "Garage at Residence 2," "Residence 3," "Garage at Residence 3," "Residence 4", and "Garage at Residence 4," DPR523 Records, 2002; Comparison of aerial photographs from 1948 and 1954.

In 1948, a group of buildings (including a barn, office, and shop) were added to the east of the Boyes House and created the nucleus of the public works complex.<sup>124</sup> A cabin for summer help was added to this complex in 1961.<sup>125</sup>

In 1961, the Campfire Center was built. It consisted of three rows of wood benches set on a slope which faced a simple timber frame (two upright logs connected at the top with a horizontal log) which supported a projection screen.<sup>126</sup> The addition of this facility required the removal of the southern portion of the CCC era campground including 15 campsites (and their camp stoves and picnic tables), four toilet buildings, and the associated roads and paths.

Also in 1961, the entrance road to the Visitors Center and Campground was moved approximately 150 feet north so that its intersection with the Redwood Highway aligned with the entrance road to the maintenance facility on the opposite side of the highway. As part of this project, the paving for the pre-1961 entrance road and a small office building adjacent to the north side of this road were removed. A new entrance kiosk (located in a center median) with a small parking lot were added to provide check-in for the campground, and the parking lot directly in front of the Visitors Center was also reconfigured and paved.<sup>127</sup>

#### Post-1961 Development (1962-Present)

California State Parks culminated its post-war improvements program at Elk Prairie in the early 1960s. In the decades that followed, the agency focused its energy on maintaining and improving existing infrastructure throughout the park, and added new facilities on an as-needed, piecemeal basis. Most of the extant buildings and standing structures date to the pre-1962 period, though many of these have been modified in recent years through the addition of new windows, doors, wall siding, and roofing, in various combinations. New construction in recent decades has consisted primarily of entry stations (kiosks) and comfort stations (restroom facilities); several of these replaced earlier facilities that were demolished.

#### *Physical History: Post-1961 Development (1962-Present)*

In the 1950s, a store (known as Webster's store) and an auto park with camp sites and cabins were built at the south end of the prairie on land that was just outside the state park boundary.<sup>128</sup> Around 1963-64, the land where these facilities were located was purchased by Save-the-Redwoods League. The League then deeded the land to the State, and it became part of the park. The store and tourist camp features were removed by the State from the south end of the prairie in the mid-

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<sup>124</sup> Baxter and Allen, "Barn," "Office," and "Shop," DPR523 Records, 2002; Comparison of aerial photographs from 1948 and 1954.

<sup>125</sup> Baxter and Allen, "Summer Help Cabin," DPR523 Record, 2002.

<sup>126</sup> Garavaglia, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park - Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report," 27.

<sup>127</sup> State of California, DNR, DBP, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Proposed New Entrance, Kiosk, and Office," Drawing 4729, 11 April 1961, California State Parks Headquarters Collection; Baxter and Allen, "Kiosk," DPR523 Record, 2002.

<sup>128</sup> Peterson, "Webster's Store," Primary Record (DPR523A).

1960s.<sup>129</sup> Sometime after the cleanup, a trail was laid out across the south end of the prairie that linked the east and west sides of Elk Prairie Trail; refer to Figure 18 for the alignment of the trail after this addition.

The portion of the Parkway that ran through the prairie had paved shoulders added during the post-1961 era. When built in 1928, the highway was approximately 24 feet wide; it currently is approximately 50 feet wide.<sup>130</sup>

The group of CCC-era cabins and cottages to the north of the Visitors Center were removed in the early 1960s.<sup>131</sup> After this change, Elk Prairie Campground provided approximately 39 campsites in its North Camp (the designation for the CCC era campsites) and an additional 61 campsites at its South Camp (constructed in 1949). The day use sites were now concentrated in the “Picnic Area” between the two camps in an area that had been the location of campsites 50 to 55 during the CCC era. A network of day use trails was developed to connect these new destinations (the Campfire Center, Picnic Area, and South Camp) to each other and to Prairie Creek Road. Refer to Figure 19 for the location of these features in the mid-1960s.

In the late 1960s, studies were undertaken that recommended the removal of the 39 CCC-era campsites in North Camp. A Hazardous Tree Inspection Program had identified the potential for serious hazards due to the condition of the old-growth redwood trees in this area. Additionally, removing the campsites from North Camp allowed DPR to restore the redwood grove and add nature trails, which were considered a more compatible use for the health of the grove and the safety of the public. The North Camp facilities were to be replaced with 14 new campsites at Elk Prairie’s South Camp (today known as the Campground) and 25 new campsites at Gold Bluff Beach. At South Camp, campsites 69 and 70 were added on the south side of the open field just east of Combination Building # 2, and the campground was expanded to the east side of Prairie Creek Road, encroaching onto the prairie, for campsites 71-76.<sup>132</sup>

During the 1970s, the roads were paved. Around 1972, Prairie Creek Road was paved with asphalt from the entrance at Redwood Highway to just past the Entrance Kiosk. The Entrance Kiosk and Visitors Center parking lots were also paved. Then in 1977, the rest of the road, from the Entry Kiosk to the Campground, and the pull-out parking lots along the west side of the road were paved.

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<sup>129</sup> Peterson, “Webster’s Store,” Primary Record (DPR523A).

<sup>130</sup> Kevin McCardle, Email communication.

<sup>131</sup> This area was labeled as “Summer Help Housing Area” on a 1961 plan for the new entry kiosk. However, neither the buildings nor the road system that connected them to the Visitors Center’s parking lot are shown on a survey from 1963. Van Kirk cited a newspaper article in the *Arcata Union* (31 January 1980) by Orick resident Thelma Hufford who remembered that the cabins at Prairie Creek were removed in the early 1960s (Van Kirk 2015:42).

<sup>132</sup> Dale H. Buschke (Park Supervisor), Memorandum to District 1 Headquarters, 7 November 1967; John H. summerly (District Forester, District 1), Memorandum to Assistant Superintendent, Technical Services, 25 September 1967 ; Mr. Alan Philbrook (Superintendent District 1), Memorandum to Chief of Operations, 17 November 1967; James P. Tryner (Chief Division of Resource Management and Protection, Letter to Mr. John H. Knight (Chief, Division of Operations), 29 December 1967; John H. Knight (Chief, Division of Operations), Letter to Mr. Alan Philbrook (Superintendent District 1), 6 February 1968; correspondence on file in North Coast Redwoods District Collection.

The Campground's roads and the spurs at the individual campsites were also paved during this same project. On the east side of the prairie, the entrance road to the maintenance facility and the driveways to the three staff residences and to the former Boyes House were also paved in 1977.<sup>133</sup>

Much of the development at Elk Prairie during the 1970s through the 1990s related to the trails. In 1971, Braille Trail, which provided a looped trail with 17 interpretive stations that began and ended at Prairie Creek Road, was laid out. At some point, the name of this trail was changed to Revelation Trail, and it appears on maps from the late 1970s with this new name. In the early 1990s, the trail was rebuilt to its current alignment and now provides a short loop (0.3 mile) through the redwoods. As part of the early 1990s project, ramps and a boardwalk were added inside the trail loop to provide access around a large redwood tree, and new guiderails and interpretive displays were added along the trail.<sup>134</sup> Refer to Figure 20 for a map from the late 1970s.

In 1981, the first segment of Redwood Access Trail was built to connect the Visitors Center to the north side of Revelation Trail Loop. Then in the late 1990s, the trail was extended south of Revelation Trail to connect to the north end of the Campground. At that time, the asphalt paving on the original (1981) portion of the trail was removed and replaced with gravel, and the internal trails from the Campfire Center and Picnic Area were rerouted to connect to the new segment of Redwood Access Trail.<sup>135</sup>

Elk Prairie Trail was altered in the late 1980s and again in the late 1990s. The southern half of Elk Prairie Trail that ran along the slopes above the west side of Prairie Creek was removed in the late 1980s. "Much of this portion of the trail was within the creek's floodplain and frequently suffered damage during high water events."<sup>136</sup> At that time, a new segment of trail was laid out east of the creek to link the south end of the Campground to Davison Trail. This change, which connected the trail to the post-World War II campground rather than continuing across Prairie Creek, has contributed to the sense that the creek forms a boundary along the western side of Elk Prairie Campground. In the late 1990s, Elk Prairie Trail underwent a major rehabilitation project "when it was redesigned to meet accessibility standards. The footprint of the trail stayed basically the same with the exception of minor reroutes [that were] needed to meet linear grade requirements. Trail structures [such as bridges and retaining walls] were added or improved, and the trail surface was hardened with gravel to meet firmness and stability requirements."<sup>137</sup> The portion of Cathedral Trees Trail that is west of the Parkway was rerouted to cross over the Parkway; previously, the trail had gone through the culvert under the Parkway. The trail then continued alongside Prairie Creek Road to the Visitors Center.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Resources Agency of California, DPR, "Paint Storage Bldg. Prairie Creek Redwoods St. Park," 17 May 1972; "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park Road Repair," 8 August 1977; and "Dry Lagoon & Prairie Cr. Redwoods State Parks Trinidad Area Road Repair," 15 May 1977.

<sup>134</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<sup>135</sup> Beers, Email communication; Bomke, Personal communication.

<sup>136</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<sup>137</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<sup>138</sup> Beers, Email communication.

In the 1980s, the two bridges over Prairie Creek were altered or removed. In 1982, the CCC-era bridge over Prairie Creek that was northeast of the Visitors Center was replaced by a new bridge which was designed by Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park staff. The 1982 bridge and its approaches were later modified to comply with accessibility standards when the Prairie Creek Trail (recently renamed Karl Knapp Trail) was reconstructed in the early 2000s. During the 1980s, the log bridge over the creek that provided direct access to the CCC-era campground failed; this bridge was not replaced, and today the Nature Trail ends at the creek. A bridge appears on 1948 and 1950 topographic surveys in this location; refer to Figures 17 and 18 for these maps. However, log bridges last around 10 years in the climate at Prairie Creek, and this bridge was likely replaced several times after its initial construction.<sup>139</sup> The loss of this log bridge removed a direct pedestrian connection to the west side of Prairie Creek and has contributed to the sense that Prairie Creek is the edge or boundary for the western side of Elk Prairie Campground.

The primary changes during the past two decades have been the construction of new buildings including a Comfort Station (2005) near the Visitors Center, a new entrance station for the Campground (ca. 2009-10) that replaced an earlier entrance kiosk (1961), several woodsheds (ca. 2009-10), and a row of four cabins (2016) which were added to the open land along the northwest side of the road leading into the Campground. On the east side of the Parkway, a water treatment facility and small storage and shop buildings were added.

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<sup>139</sup> Beers, Email communication.



Figure 4. View to the north of the western side of prairie and wagon road, ca. 1914.  
Source: Redwood National and State Parks.



Figure 5. View to the east/northeast of the Boyes Ranch and eastern side of prairie,  
ca. 1914. Source: Redwood National and State Parks.



Figure 6. Cornfield in the prairie, ca. early 1900s. Source: Redwood National and State Parks.



Figure 7. Boyes House soon after its construction, ca. 1924. Source: Redwood National and State Parks.



Figure 8. Aerial view of CCC Company 1903's camp, ca. 1934-35. Source: Redwood National and State Parks.



Figure 9. View to the north across the prairie to CCC Company 1903's camp, ca. 1934-35. Source: Redwood National and State Parks.





Figure 10. View to the north of the row of barracks in CCC Company 1903's camp, ca. 1934-35. Source: Redwood National and State Parks.



Figure 11. Split rail fence added by CCC along both sides of the Redwood Highway, April 1936. Source: California State Parks, North Coast Redwoods District Collection.



Figure 12. Park Custodian's Residence (Visitors Center), April 1936. Source: California State Parks, North Coast Redwoods District Collection.



Figure 13. Campsite furnishings in the CCC-era campground, April 1936. Source: California State Parks, North Coast Redwoods District Collection.



Figure 14. Outdoor stage and log benches in the CCC-era campground, ca. 1935. Source: California State Parks, North Coast Redwoods District Collection.



Figure 15. Example of the type of toilet buildings in the CCC-era campground, ca. 1936. Source: California State Parks, North Coast Redwoods District Collection.

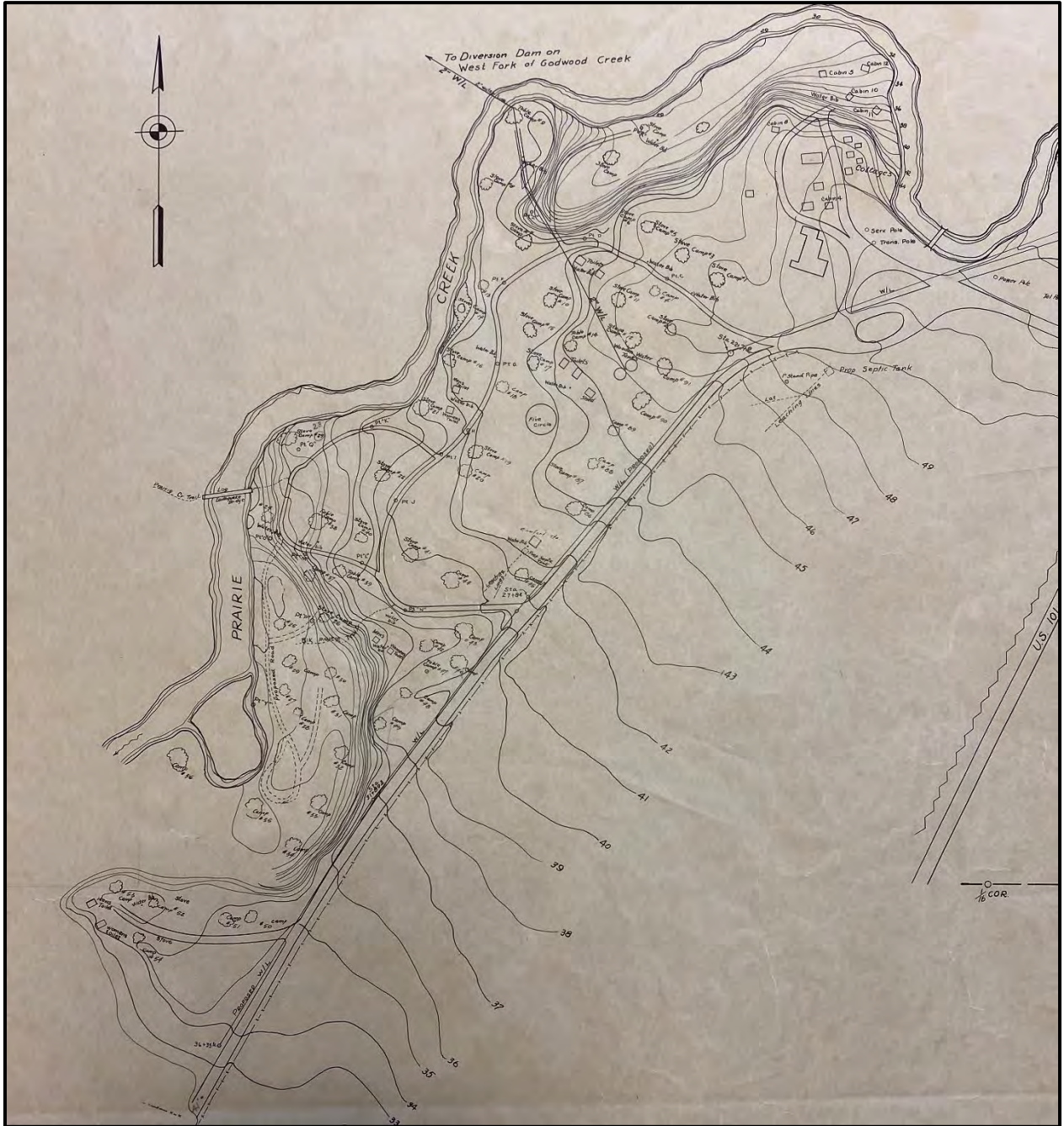


Figure 16. Location of cabins, campsites, roads, and other features at the CCC-era campground before any post-World War II construction had occurred, as shown on a 1948 topographic survey. Source: California State Parks Headquarters Collection. [See Appendix A for enlarged version of this figure.]

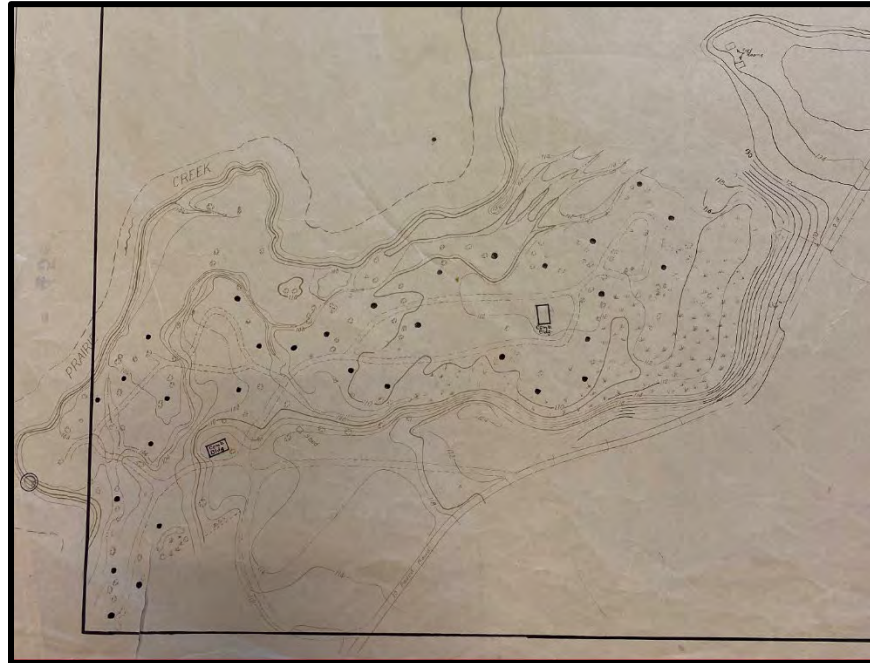


Figure 17. Location of roads, campsites, and other features as shown on 1950 topographic survey after the addition of the second campground in 1949. Source: California State Parks Headquarters Collection. [See Appendix A for enlarged version of this figure.]

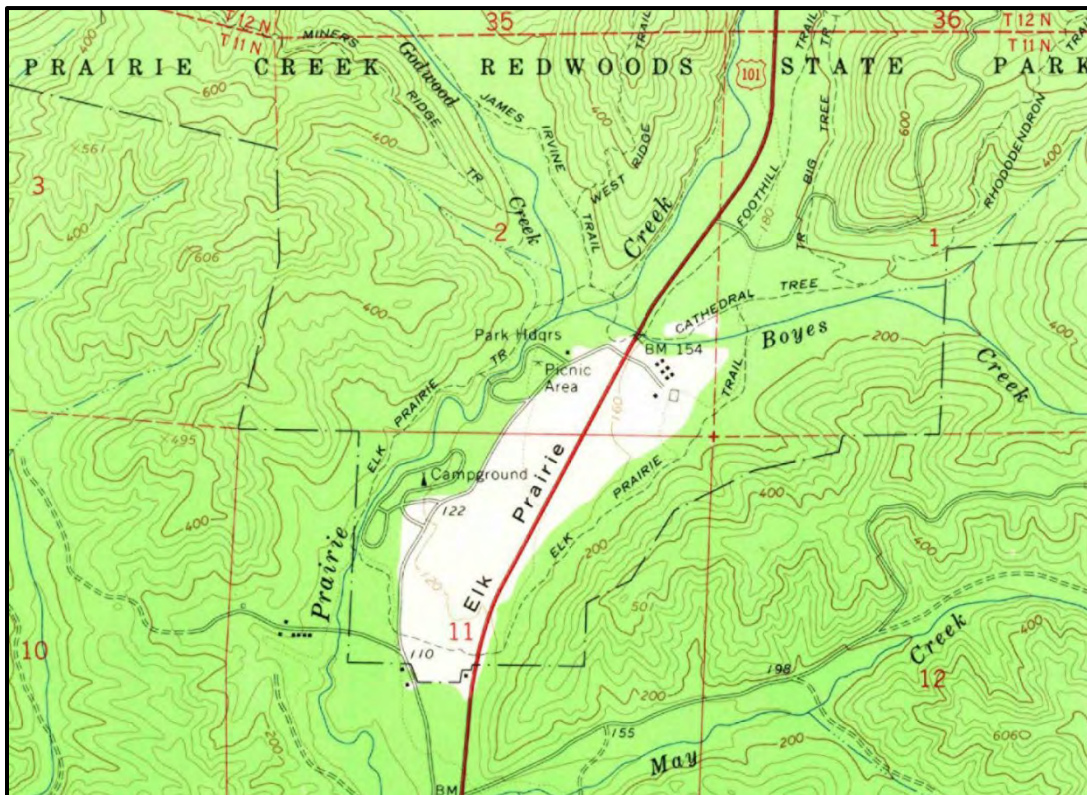


Figure 18. Alignment of Elk Prairie Trail in mid-1960s. Source: 1966 Orick CA USGS Quad Map.

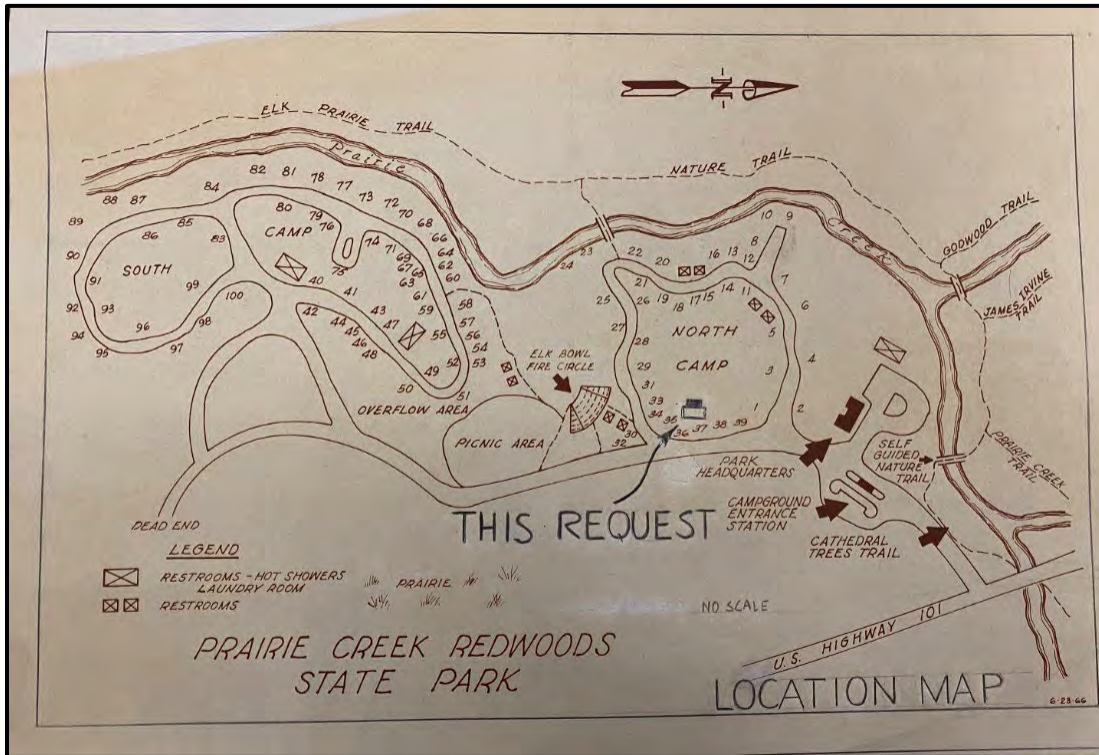


Figure 19. Schematic layout of Elk Prairie Campground from 1967 showing the addition of the Campfire Center (labeled as Elk Bowl Fire Circle), beginnings of the development of the internal trail system, and designation of North and South Camps. Source: California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

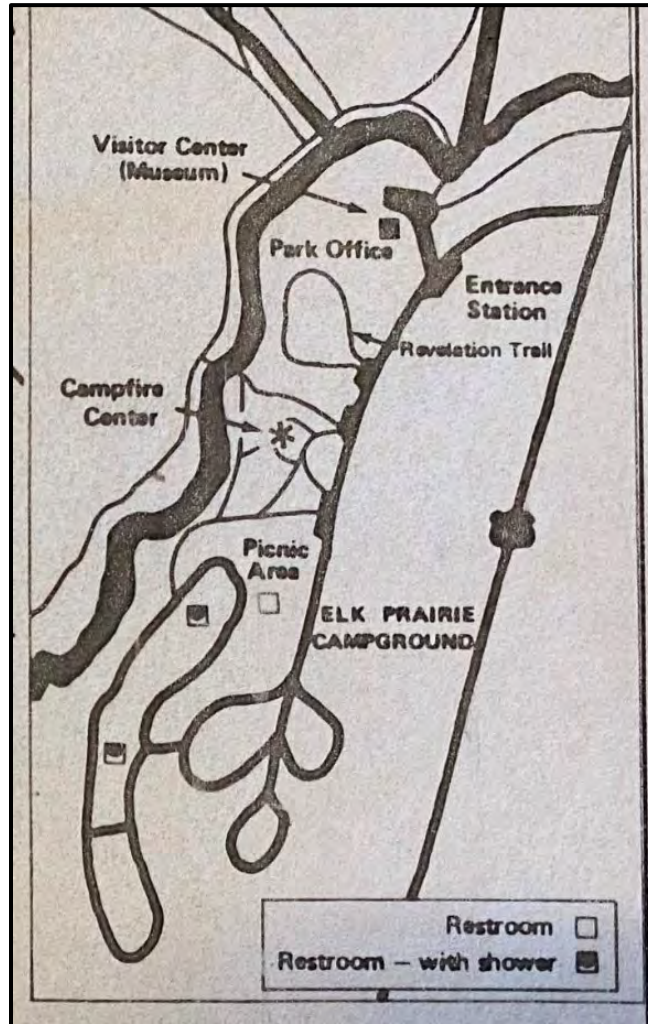


Figure 20. Schematic layout of Elk Prairie Campground from 1978 showing the addition of the Revelation Trail, the development of the internal trail system, and the expansion of the campground onto land adjacent to the prairie. Source: California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

## **Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity**

### **Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary**

The Elk Prairie landscape has been analyzed in this report as it relates to four historic eras: the Harris and Boyes Ranch Era (1881-1939), the CCC Era (1933-1938), the Post-World War II Era of significant development by California State Parks (1948 to 1961), and post-1961 to the present. Elk Prairie landscape was considered under National Register Criterion A for its association with European American settlement of the Harris and Boyes families, with the CCC's role in the development of California State Parks in Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, and with the development of California State Parks during the post-World War II era. During the post-1961 period, Elk Prairie landscape is not associated with significant events, trends, or pattern of events. The landscape lacks integrity for the Harris and Boyes, CCC, and post-World War eras and is not eligible for the National Register under Criterion A. Almost all of the buildings, structures, and constructed features from the Harris and Boyes Era and the CCC Era are no longer extant. The buildings, structures, and constructed features from the post-World War II era lack integrity due to modifications. The circulation features (roads, parking lots, and day-use trails) were modified or added during the post-1961 period. The majority of the small-scale features, consisting primarily of site furnishings and signs, were added during the post-1961 era.

Under Criterion B, the best-known individuals associated with the site are William and Emma Boyes. However, neither of these individuals are known to have significantly contributed to history beyond Elk Prairie. The historic record does not indicate that any individuals with associations to other periods have met the significance threshold under this criterion.

Under Criterion C, although there are designed elements present in the landscape, Elk Prairie is not a designed landscape that can be attributed to any individual and is more appropriately considered under Criterion A for its association to history through groups or institutions.

There are several buildings originally constructed during the Harris and Boyes, CCC, and post-World War II eras that remain and that were considered individually under Criteria A and C. Most of these buildings were found to be of a common design or to have been heavily modified and lacking integrity. However, two CCC-era buildings, the Visitors Center (1934) and Garage (ca. 1936), meet the criteria for individual listing in the National Register under Criterion A for associations with the CCC construction program within the California State Parks system and under Criterion C as rare and intact examples of the National Park Service Rustic style of architecture built on State Parks facilities during the Great Depression.

An archeological survey was beyond the scope for this study and was not conducted as part of this CLI. The built and landscape features surveyed for this document within the Elk Prairie study area are not likely to yield information important in history. Individual archeological features have been previously documented, but as a district the Elk Prairie landscape is not eligible under Criterion D.



## **Integrity Assessment**

### Harris and Boyes Ranch Era (1881-1939)

The Elk Prairie landscape no longer retains integrity for the Harris and Boyes Ranch Era.

#### *Location*

The extant features remain in their original location; these include the Boyes House, the trees that remain in the orchard, the entrance road to the house, and an agricultural ditch. However, due to the loss of most of the features from this era, Elk Prairie landscape no longer conveys the full extent or location of the Harris and Boyes Ranch era features.

Two other roads remain extant from this era, although they are not directly associated with the Harris and Boyes history. Prairie Creek Road follows the general alignment of the Crescent City-Trinidad Wagon Road (1887-1894) along the western edge of Elk Prairie. Also, The Parkway, originally known as the Redwood Highway when it was completed in 1928, remains in its original alignment cutting through the prairie, although it was widened, likely in the 1960s.

#### *Design*

Due to the loss of the majority of features, Elk Prairie landscape no longer conveys the arrangement of the features or organization of space that characterized the design of the Harris and Boyes ranches. Additionally, the historic functions and the associated technologies associated with this small, rural ranch during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are no longer extant.

The buildings and structures, including barns, other outbuildings, a corral, and the Elk Grove Auto Camp with its cabins, a service station, and store, were all clustered at the northern end of the prairie; this arrangement or organization of the buildings is no longer extant. Additionally, the internal paths that connected the ranch features and that contributed to the organization of the landscape are no longer extant.

The prairie was used for grazing and growing crops during the Harris and Boyes Ranch era. No evidence of the agricultural crops or fences used to define the edges of fields or subdivide this space remain, and this component of the design is no longer extant.

The eight extant walnut trees and nine fruit trees in the vicinity of the Boyes House are a remnant of an orchard from this era and are the only vegetation feature that remains to represent the agricultural activities of the Harris and Boyes families. However, these trees are only a small fragment of the original orchard. They do not convey the original size of the orchard or the arrangement of the orchard where trees were planted in rows that created a grid pattern. When the orchard was more intact, it provided a setting around the Boyes House (after it was built in 1924) and helped to create a separation between the house and its immediate surrounding and the broader prairie. The cumulative loss of trees has resulted in the loss of this component of the design.

### *Setting*

The setting of the landscape during the Harris and Boyes Ranch era, within a prairie surrounded by redwood forest, remains.

### *Materials and Workmanship*

Most the materials and their associated workmanship from this era have been lost. This loss includes the materials and workmanship for the ranch buildings, original residences, structures (such as corral and fences), circulation features (such as unpaved paths between buildings), vegetation features (such as crops, ornamental vegetation around the original houses, and different species and varieties of trees from the orchard), and small-scale features.

### *Feeling*

The Elk Prairie landscape no longer expresses the aesthetic or historic sense that was present during the Harris and Boyes Ranch era due to the loss of the majority of features from this era and the addition of features from the three later eras.

### *Association*

The direct link or association between Elk Prairie landscape and the Harris and Boyes Ranch era has been lost due to the loss of the majority of features from this era.

### CCC Era (1931-1938)

The Elk Prairie landscape no longer retains integrity for the CCC era.

### *Location*

The Visitors Center and Garage are the only extant CCC-era features, and they remain in their original location. However, the other permanent CCC-era park features (campground including its circulation system and campsites, cabins, toilet buildings, fire circle, site furnishings and signs, water system, bridges, fences, and portions of the Elk Prairie trail) are nonextant, and Elk Prairie landscape no longer conveys the full extent or location of the features during the CCC era.

### *Design*

Elk Prairie landscape no longer conveys the arrangement of the features or organization of space that characterized the design of CCC-era campground and cabin area which extended from north of the Visitors Center down to the current Picnic Area and between Prairie Creek Road and the creek. The aesthetic of the CCC Era with its rustic buildings, structures, and site furnishings is nonextant. The paths that connected the CCC-era campground and cabin area and that contributed to the organization of the landscape are no longer extant.

The split rail fence (five rails held in place by wire between four posts at both ends of each section of fence) that the CCC added to the prairie along both sides of the Parkway along has been

reconstructed with a different design (three rails held in place by wire between two posts at both ends of each section) and no longer reflects its original design.

The CCC constructed segments of Elk Prairie Trail as part of their trail building activities throughout the park. However, the southern half of CCC-era trail alignment that ran along the slopes above the west side of Prairie Creek was removed in the late 1980s. The CCC-era alignment along the eastern edge of the prairie underwent a major rehabilitation project to address accessibility standards in the late 1990s; the current bridges and retaining walls along the trail were built during this rehabilitation project based on current State Park designs.

### *Setting*

The setting of the landscape during the CCC Era, within a prairie surrounded by redwood forest, remains.

### *Materials and Workmanship*

Most the materials and their associated workmanship from the CCC Era have been lost. This loss includes the materials and workmanship of the rustic wooden buildings (toilet buildings and cabins), wooden structures (water tanks, bridges, and fire circle components), handmade wooden site furnishings and signs, and unpaved trails and paths.

Much of the exterior building materials for the Visitors Center and Garage are original to construction, but these do not convey the full extent of the materials and workmanship for the landscape during the CCC Era.

### *Feeling*

The Elk Prairie landscape no longer expresses the aesthetic or historic sense that was present during the CCC Era due to the loss of features from this period and the addition of features from the two later eras.

### *Association*

The direct link or association between Elk Prairie landscape and the CCC Era has been lost due to the loss of the majority of features from this era.

### Post-World War II Expansion Era (1948-1961)

The Elk Prairie landscape no longer retains integrity for the Post-World War II Expansion Era.

### *Location*

The extant features remain in their original location and continue to convey the integrity of location for this era. On the west side of the prairie, these features include three comfort stations and combination buildings (restrooms and showers). The Campground remains within its original general location but the location of its roads and campsites were altered during the post-1961 era.

On the east side of the prairie, the three staff residences, four garages, and buildings for the public works complex remain in their original location.

### *Design*

Elk Prairie landscape no longer conveys the arrangement of the features or organization of space that characterized the post-World War II facilities. The arrangement of post-World War II era roads and campsites within the Campground (1949) were altered during the post-1961 era. The design of the area between the Campground and Visitors Center, which included the CCC-era campsites, was altered by the removal of these campsites and the addition of the day use trails during the post-1961 era.

The Campground and Campfire Center, which were the key facilities that were added to the west of the Parkway during the post-World War II era, were placed within the forest to limit their visibility from views along the Parkway. However several features have been added outside of the forest and have altered this component of the post-World War II design; these include a small parking lot (ca. 1961) next to the prairie in the vicinity of the Visitors Center, the entrance station building on Prairie Creek Road (ca. 2009), the four cabins (ca. 2016) and campsites 5-7 (ca. 1970s and 1980s) into an open area to the east of the Campground, and campsites 71 to 76 and its road in the open land immediately next to the prairie (ca. late 1960s-1970s).

All of the original components of the Campfire Center (1961) were replaced during the post-1961 era with new features that differ in design from the original ones.

### *Setting*

The setting of the landscape during the post-World War II expansion era, within a prairie surrounded by redwood forest, remains.

### *Materials and Workmanship*

The alteration of the buildings and a key structure (Camp Fire Center) has altered the materials and their associated workmanship that characterized the designs from this era. Nearly every building from the Post-World War II Era has had numerous windows replaced, and many have had other changes such as additions using new materials, replacement of wall siding, or replacement of original doors. The original wooden components (including the projection screen, hand rails, and benches) of the Campfire Center (1961) were replaced during the post-1961 era with new wooden features with different designs and associated workmanship. The unpaved roads were paved with asphalt, adding a new material, during the post-1961 era.

This era's site furnishings at the campsites were replaced with different furnishings during the post-1961 era. Only the five concrete picnic tables in the Picnic Area remain from this era, and these alone do not convey the materials or workmanship of site furnishings from the post-World War II era.

The primary vegetation features associated with this era were the yards at the three staff residences. No plans or photographs were found of the original vegetation. However, the extant trees were planted in the 1960s or later, and the foundation plantings are all more recent. The vegetation features are common examples of their type and do not reflect materials or workmanship from a particular era.

### *Feeling*

The Elk Prairie landscape no longer expresses the aesthetic or historic sense that was present during the post-World War II expansion era.

### *Association*

The direct link or association between Elk Prairie landscape and the Post-World War II Expansion Era has been lost due to the alterations that have occurred.

## **Landscape Characteristics Explanatory Narrative**

### Natural Systems and Features

Natural Systems and Features are defined as the natural aspects that have influenced the development and physical form of the landscape. The development of Elk Prairie has been influenced by the area's climate, topography, hydrology, native vegetation, and fauna.

The regional climate of coastal northern California is characterized by mild, wet winters and cool, dry summers with frequent coastal fog. Annual rainfall averages 70 inches. Winter storms from the Pacific Ocean bring intense rainfall over several hours or days, particularly with warmer storms at lower latitudes. These storms may cause both small streams and larger rivers to flood. Snow is infrequent and usually does not last long. Temperatures vary only slightly from summer to winter, and the mean temperatures at Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park are 47°F in January and 59°F in June. Temperatures above 90°F or below freezing are rare.<sup>140</sup>

Elk Prairie is an open grassland which may have been expanded by human activity, including repeated burning, livestock grazing, and limited tree cutting.<sup>141</sup> It is approximately 120 acres and is surrounded by forested land. The topography is fairly flat, with a gradual downward slope from the northeast to the southwest, and with hills rising along its eastern edge. Refer to Figure 21 for a photograph of the prairie and surrounding forest.

Prairie Creek and Boyes Creek are adjacent to Elk Prairie. Prairie Creek is an 11.5-mile-long tributary of Redwood Creek. It originates just north of the Ossagon Trail and drains southerly to a confluence with Redwood Creek approximately one mile upstream of Orick. Prairie Creek runs

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<sup>140</sup> Redwood National and State Parks, "Final General Management Plan/General Plan," Volume 2, 168.

<sup>141</sup> Redwood National and State Parks, "Final General Management Plan/General Plan," Volume 2, 189.

along the west side of the Elk Prairie, and the prairie is within the creek's floodplain.<sup>142</sup> Boyes Creek, which runs along the north side of the prairie, is 2.25-mile-long tributary of Prairie Creek which originates in the hills to the east and drains into Prairie Creek just north of the Elk Prairie. Refer to Figure 22 for a photograph of Prairie Creek.

Stands of redwood forest, dominated by coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) and Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), surround the Elk Prairie, and the redwood forest provides the setting for key features including the Visitors Center, the Campfire Center, the Campground, and its internal trail system. Here redwood trees and the common understory species, including oxalis (*Oxalis oregana*), sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*), and several types of berry (*Rubus* spp. and *Ribes* spp.), are found. Forested/shrub wetland vegetation is found along the banks of the creeks. The prairie contains grasses and forbs. Emergent wetland vegetation is found along a ditch that runs through the prairie.

The habitats found within the Redwood National and State Parks support a wide range of birds, small mammals, and large mammals. The creeks support self-sustaining populations of four species of salmonid fishes, a variety of native non-salmonid fishes, salamanders, and frogs. Seven herds of Roosevelt elk (*Cervus elaphus roosevelti*), which is the largest of the six recognized subspecies of elk in North America, are found with the parks, and the opportunity to view the elk at Elk Prairie is a key attraction.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Figure 4 (Distribution of wetland types and floodplain habitat in Prairie Creek based on data from the 1987 Floodplain and National Wetland Inventory of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) in Margaret A. Wilzbach and Vicki Ozaki, "Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of Prairie Creek," Natural Resource Report NPS/REDW/NRR—2017/1492, Fort Collins, CO: U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service Natural Resource Stewardship and Science, August 2017, accessed 16 February 2021 at <https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/DownloadFile/582002>.

<sup>143</sup> Redwood National and State Parks, "Final General Management Plan/General Plan," Volumes 1 and 2; Wilzbach and Ozaki, "Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of Prairie Creek."



Figure 21. Natural Systems. Overview of the prairie and forest. View to the north.

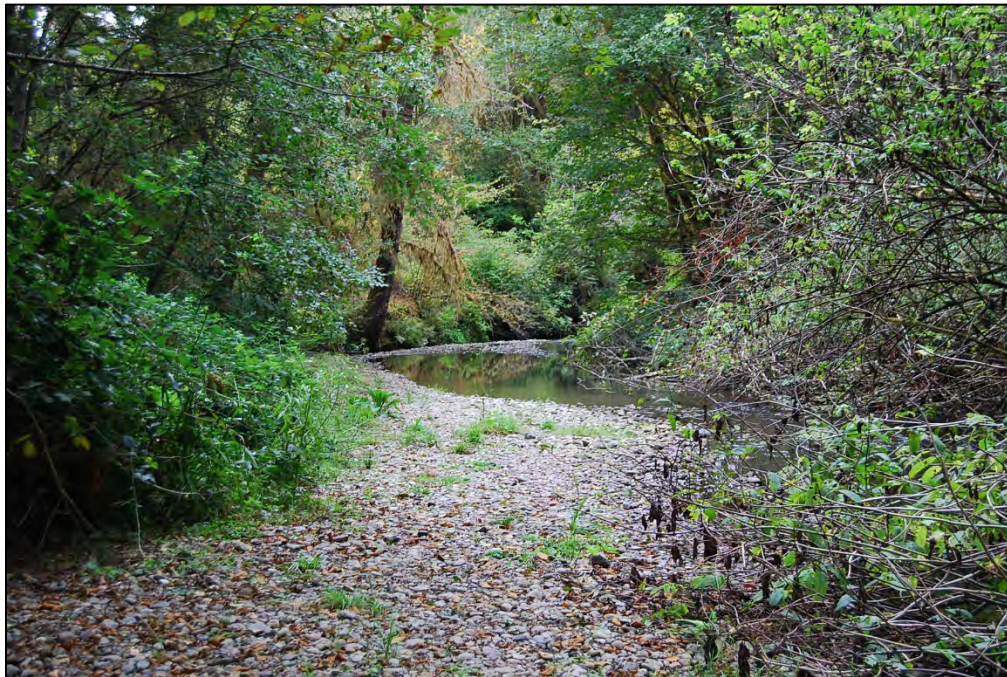


Figure 22. Natural Systems. Elk Prairie Trail and Redwood Access Trail provide views of Prairie Creek.

### Spatial Organization

Spatial Organization is defined as the three-dimensional organization of physical forms and visual associations in the landscape, including the articulation of ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces.

The broad open expanse of the prairie whose edges are defined by the tall trees of the surrounding forest are key components of the spatial organization of the Elk Prairie landscape. The Parkway, built on a low causeway above the meadow, bisects Elk Prairie. A split-rail fence which runs along both sides of this highway emphasizes the straightness of the roadway.

The campground facilities are to the west of the Parkway. Prairie Creek Road runs along the western edge of the prairie, and the major facilities are located under the forested canopy and between Prairie Creek Road and Prairie Creek. These facilities include the Visitors Center and Garage, which are the only extant CCC-era facilities in this area, the post-World War II Campground and Campfire Center, and various day-use trails.

Built features to the east of the Parkway are clustered in the northeastern portion of the prairie and are organized in relation to the entrance road into this area, which may have been laid out during the latter part of the Harris and Boyes Ranch era to provide access from the new Parkway (built in 1928) to the Boyes House. The Boyes House and the remnants of the Harris/Boyes orchard are south of this road. A row of three staff houses and their garages lines the north side of the road; the yards associated with these features are defined by fences. A group of buildings and structures for public works-related operations is clustered around a large, paved area at the east end of the road.

The forest and prairie have been consistent spatial organization features throughout the four historic eras. During the Harris and Boyes Ranch era, buildings were concentrated in the northern part of the prairie, and during the latter part of this era, the Parkway was constructed, dividing the Boyes Ranch and bisecting the prairie. During the CCC Era, the constructed park facilities were located west of the Parkway and within the forest to limit their visibility from views along the Parkway. In a letter written in 1935, Charles B Wing, Chief of the Division of Parks, explained that the rationale for the location of the new facilities emphasized the “natural values and scenic wonders of the surrounding woodlands” so that the effect would be “to have almost no structures visible from the highway as you drive through the prairie and have a view of the redwood forest predominated in the foreground.”<sup>144</sup> During the Post-World War II Era, the addition of facilities west of the Parkway maintained this practice. However several modern (post-1961) features have been added outside of the forest and are visible from the Parkway; these include a small parking lot (ca. 1961) next to the prairie in the vicinity of the Visitors Center, the entrance station building on Prairie Creek Road (ca. 2009), the four cabins (ca. 2016) and campsites 5-7 (ca. 1970s and

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<sup>144</sup> Hood and Roland, “Cultural Resources,” CR-96.



1980s) into an open area to the east of the Campground, and campsites 71 to 76 and its road in the open land immediately next to the prairie (ca. 1970s).

During the CCC era, no new facilities were constructed to the east of the Parkway, and at that time, the Boyes House was surrounded on three sides (north, west, and south) by a small orchard which provided a setting for the house creating a separation between it and the prairie and reduced its visibility from the Parkway and from Campground to the west. After World War II, new buildings (staff houses, garages, public works buildings) were added to east of the Parkway. These post-World War II facilities were clearly visible from the Parkway, but the orchard, although diminished in size, continued to buffer views of the Boyes House and the new public works facilities that were east of the Boyes House. In the post-1961 era, the majority of the trees have been lost from the orchard, and the separation between the Boyes House and its immediate surrounding and the broader prairie has been lost. Additionally, due to the loss of the orchard trees, the grouping of public works facilities is now more visible from the Parkway and from the campground.

### Land Use

Land Use is defined as the principal activities in the landscape that have formed, shaped, or organized the landscape as a result of human interaction.

During period that the Harris and Boyes families occupied the land (ca. 1881-1939), the principal activities or land uses included domestic activities associated with a small homestead, farming operations, and accommodations for tourists or travelers.

During the CCC era (1933-1938), the principal land uses were related to the CCC Troop 1903's headquarters (with its living quarters and administrative, storage, and recreational facilities) and outdoor recreation. On the east side of the prairie, the Boyeses continued to live and use a small plot of land around their house. The CCC camp, whose purpose was the development of outdoor recreation facilities throughout the park, was removed by 1940, and this land use ended.

From the post-World War II era to the present, outdoor recreation has been the principal land use. Staff housing and maintenance yard are also present and support the outdoor recreation land use. The development related to recreation, including the Visitors Center, the Campground, and the Picnic Area, are generally found within the forested land or along the western edge of Elk Prairie. Hiking trails, which ring the prairie and move out from it, are also generally under tree cover. Starting the late 1940s and continuing to the present, facilities for park maintenance operations have been located in the northeastern portion of the prairie north and east of the former Boyes residence.

## Topography

Topography is defined as the three-dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features (such as slope and articulation) and orientation (such as elevation and solar aspect).

The topography of the Elk Prairie landscape is characterized by the steep slope of the forested hillside along the eastern side of the prairie, the level prairie with its gradual downward slope from the northeast to the southwest, and the fairly level terrain of the forested land west of Prairie Creek Road and the steep banks along the creek. Topographic modifications, which include grading for the foundations of buildings, grading to create the circulation features (roadbeds, hiking trails, and parking lots), and excavations to create agricultural ditches in the meadow, have not drastically altered these topographic characteristics.

At some point during the Harris or Boyes Ranch era, a ditch was excavated through the prairie, most likely to create drier pastures.<sup>145</sup> The ditch runs from the eastern edge of the prairie, near the public works complex, in a southwest direction, goes under the Parkway via a culvert, and continues in a southwest direction to the south end of the prairie. The ditch is no longer maintained, and this topographic modification is subtle and not obvious to most visitors. Its location is marked by the contrast between the emergent wetland vegetation and the prairie vegetation along its alignment.

The Redwood Highway was constructed through the prairie in 1928 on a low causeway. The causeway impedes drainage from east to west. However, the causeway is not such a significant height that it dominates the prairie, and it provides a vantage from the road to the surrounding prairie and forest.

There is one topographic modification that is more significant. The expansion of the campground into the area east of Prairie Creek Road, which occurred during the 1970s, required grading to create level ground for Campsites 71-76. This topographic modification created a cut bank along the western edge of this portion of the prairie as seen from the campsites.

## Vegetation

Vegetation includes deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers and herbaceous plants, and plant communities, whether indigenous or introduced in the landscape.

### *Indigenous Vegetation Communities*

Stands of redwood forest surround the Elk Prairie. Elk Prairie Campground's key features including the Visitors Center, the Campfire Center, the Campground, and its day use trail system are located within this forested area; refer to Figure 23 for a representative photograph. Forested/shrub wetland vegetation is found along the banks of Prairie Creek and Boyes Creek. The

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<sup>145</sup> Peterson, "Boyes Home Place," Primary Record (DPR523A), 2015.

prairie contains grasses and forbs. Emergent wetland vegetation is found along the ditch that runs through the prairie.

### *Introduced Vegetation Features*

Introduced vegetation features are on the east side of the prairie and include the remnants of the orchard near the Boyes House and the ornamental vegetation and yards around the Boyes House and the three staff residences.

#### Orchard

There are five walnut trees to the west of the Boyes house and three to the north in the narrow strip of land between the Boyes yard and the road. There is a Greening/Rhode Island Greening apple tree west of the house. There are four apple trees located south of the house including a Baldwin apple tree and a row with three apple trees (two Gravenstein Washington Red/Worthen Gravenstein trees and one White Winter Pearmain/Crimson Gold/Yar Mohammadi tree). Three fruit trees are located within the fenced area that defines the Boyes House yard; these include a pear in the southwest corner of the yard and two cherry trees in the backyard, one of which is dead. Refer to Figure 24 for a map of the location of these trees and the names of the varieties of the apple trees and to Figures 25 and 26 for photographs of the remaining trees.

Sometime around the 1890s or the early 1900s, Harris planted a four-acre orchard in the northeastern portion of the prairie. A newspaper article in the *Arcata Union* advertising the sale of the property mentioned “a 4-acre orchard of young trees all bearing.”<sup>146</sup> Historical photographs indicate that the Boyeses continued to maintain the orchard after they purchased the property; refer to Figure 6 for an example. After the property became part of Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, the orchard was not actively managed, and its size decreased as individual trees were removed after they became diseased or died.

An aerial photograph taken in 1940 provides an overview of the extent of the orchard within the first decade after the property became part of the park. Approximately 110 trees were extant at this point, although the exact number of trees is difficult to determine due to the resolution of the photograph. The photograph does not provide information on the varieties of trees, but it does show the spatial organization of the orchard. The trees were planted in rows with regular spacing between the rows and between the trees within each row. There were trees to the west and south of the house and in the narrow strip of land on the north side of the house. In 1940, the most intact portion of the orchard was to the west of the house; here six rows began at the road and extended southward; some of the rows were missing trees but the one row which was the most intact had 17 trees.<sup>147</sup>

An aerial photograph taken in 1965 showed that approximately half of the trees that were visible in 1940 had been removed. The spatial organization of the orchard, with trees planted in rows in a

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<sup>146</sup> *Arcata Union*, 20 July 1901.

<sup>147</sup> Redwood National and State Parks, “Aerials,” 1940.

grid pattern, was less apparent in this photograph than had been the case in 1940. There were still parts of four rows to the west of the house, parts of three rows in the southeast corner of the orchard, and a few trees to the east of the house.<sup>148</sup>

Aerial photographs taken in 1983 and 1988 showed an additional decline in the number of trees with only fragments of several rows remaining, each with three to four trees, to the west of the house and two rows, with about three trees, at the southeast edge of the orchard. Only a few trees remained to the east of the house.<sup>149</sup>

The orchard is the only agricultural vegetation feature that remains from the Harris and Boyes Ranch era. However, the design integrity of the orchard, laid out in rows with regular spacing between trees, and its original four-acre size have been lost. The range of species and varieties of fruits or nuts growing may have diminished as trees died and were removed; and this change has impacted the integrity of materials. When the orchard was more intact, it provided a setting around the Boyes House (after it was built in 1924) and created a distinction between the house and the yard immediately next to the house and the broader prairie. The orchard also buffered views to and from the house and Parkway (after the road was constructed in 1928) and from the campground (after it was constructed in 1930s). These functions of the orchard have been lost due to the cumulative loss of trees.

### Boyes House

The yard around the Boyes house is delineated by a fence that separates it from the prairie. The lawn within this fenced area extends up to the north and south sides of the house's foundation. There are ferns along the front (west) foundation, and a planting across part of the back (east) side. All of the vegetation around the foundations of the house is fairly recent; it does not appear in photographs from the late 1980s. A large Douglas fir tree is growing at the edge of the front yard next to the fence. As noted in the preceding subsection on the orchard, there are several fruit trees including a pear in the southwest corner of the yard, a cherry behind the house, and another cherry (which is dead) in the northeast corner of the yard. A large redwood tree is growing in the northeast corner of the yard next to the fence.

### Three Staff Residences

The post-World War II construction of the three staff residences, on the north side of the entrance road into the park administration complex, resulted in the development of yards around these houses. Today, the yards are delineated by fences and specific vegetation within each yard is characterized by an open lawn around the house and a foundation planting (with varying types of shrubs, annuals, ferns, etc.) across the front (and some sides) of the house. There are trees growing along a portion of the front fence line in front of Residences 3 and 4. Tall evergreen trees are found in the western corner of the front yard of Residence 2 and to the east of Residence 3. Historical

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<sup>148</sup> Redwood National and State Parks, "Aerials," 1965.

<sup>149</sup> HistoricAerials.com, accessed 16 February 2021, <https://www.historicaerials.com/>.

aerial photographs show that these trees were planted in the 1960s or later. The foundation plantings are all more recent. Refer to Figure 27 for a representative photograph of these vegetation features.

### *Summary*

The redwood forest and prairie have been vegetation features during the four historic eras.

The prairie was used for growing crops during the Harris and Boyes Ranch era. These practices ended after the William and Emma Boyes sold the land to the League in 1931, and no evidence of the agricultural crops remains. The current composition of vegetation within the prairie has evolved since this practice ended and the land has been part of the park. The emergent wetland vegetation along the ditch in the prairie has developed during the extended period that the land has been part of the park as a result of the lack of maintenance along the ditch.

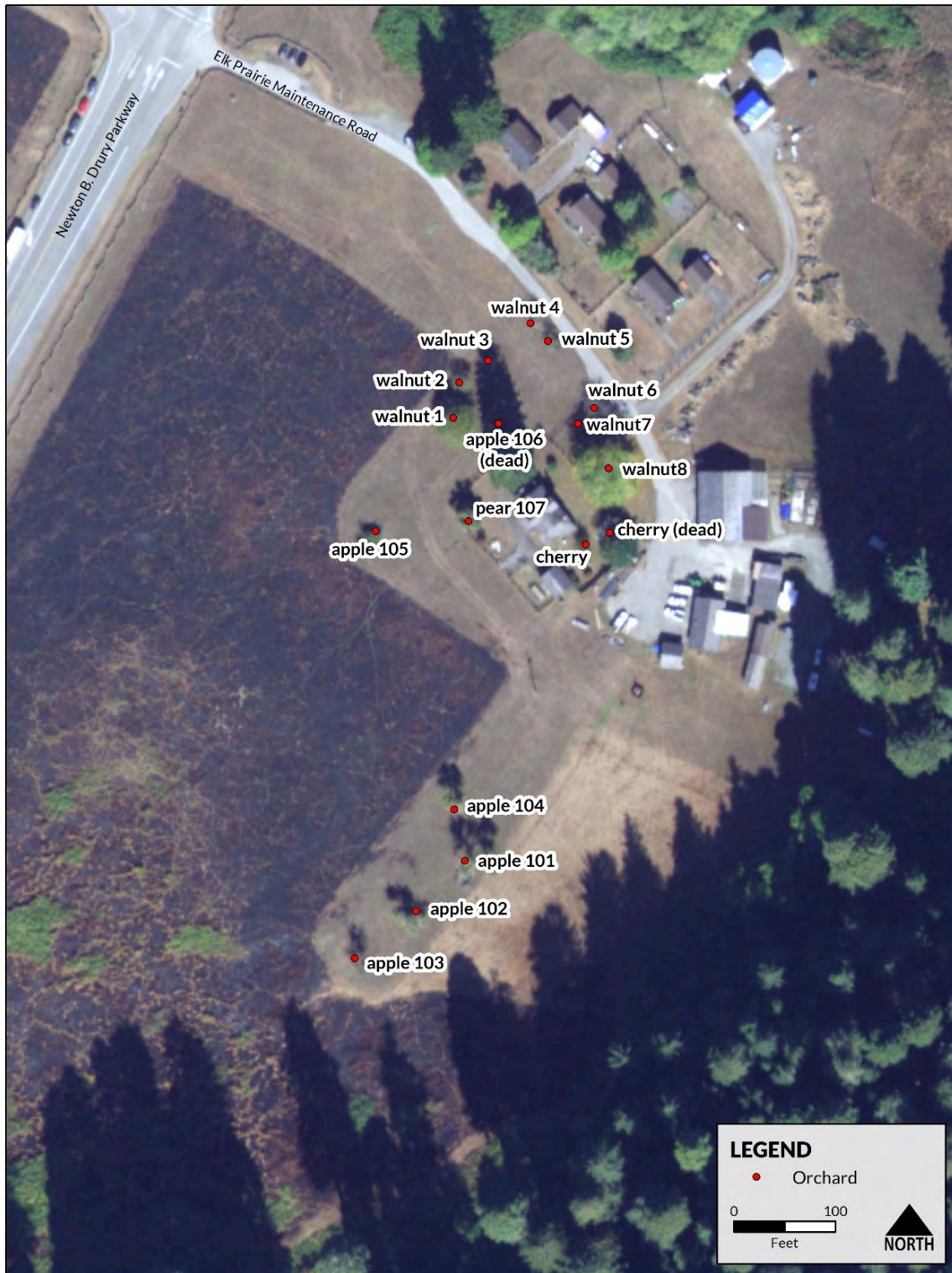
The remnant of the orchard in the vicinity of the Boyes House is the only vegetation feature that remains to represent the agricultural activities of the Harris and Boyes families. The extant trees are only a small fragment of the original orchard and do not convey the original size of the orchard or the original arrangement of the trees in a grid pattern. Additionally, some of the varieties of fruit and nuts that were present during the Harris and Boyes Ranch era may have been lost as trees were removed or died.

No vegetation features are present that can be specifically tied to the CCC era. An article in the *Humboldt Standard* (13 April 1935) noted that the CCC added native understory vegetation (including ferns, rhododendrons and other native plants and shrubs) to the campground as part of their work. The removal of the CCC-era campground and the construction of new features in that area have probably removed those specific plantings or they have naturalized with the forest vegetation.

The primary vegetation features associated with the post-World War II era are the yards around the three staff residences. No plans or photographs were found of the original vegetation. However, the extant trees were planted in the 1960s or later, and the foundation plantings are all more recent. The vegetation features are common examples of their type and do not reflect materials or workmanship from a particular era. The date when the yard around the Boyes House was defined (as a separate feature from the surrounding orchard) is less clear. The smaller size of the pear tree indicates that it was likely planted after the other orchard trees. The date when the cherry trees were planted is unclear; these trees may be a remnant of the portion of the orchard that extended to the east of the house. The foundation plantings around the Boyes House have been added since the late 1980s.



Figure 23. Vegetation Features. Representative example of redwood forest and understory vegetation setting.



source: Denise Bradley (2021); JRP Historical Consulting, LLC (2021); NAIP (2018).

Figure 24. Vegetation Features. Locations and types of trees that remain from the orchard. Source: Redwood National Park.



Figure 25. Vegetation Features. Vegetation setting around the Boyes House and the remaining orchard trees that are west of the house.



Figure 26. Vegetation Features. Remaining orchard trees to the south of the Boyes House.





Figure 27. Vegetation Features. Representative example of ornamental vegetation around the three staff residences and Boyes House.

### Circulation

Circulation is defined as the spaces, features, and applied material finishes which constitute the systems of movement in a landscape. Circulation features at Elk Prairie include roads, trails, driveways and sidewalks associated with the residences, and edging materials.

#### *Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway*

A portion of the Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway (Parkway) runs through Elk Prairie. The road is paved with asphalt and is approximately 50 feet wide with paved shoulders for parking the length of the Parkway through the prairie. Refer to Figure 28 for a photograph of the Parkway.

The Parkway (originally the Redwood Highway) was built in 1928 as part of segment constructed from Orick to about a mile north of the Elk Prairie. The original roadway was typically about 28 to 30 feet wide. The road was paved in 1930<sup>150</sup> and later widened, probably in the 1960s.

#### *Prairie Creek Road*

Prairie Creek Road is the entrance road into Elk Prairie Campground and also provides vehicular access to the Visitors Center and Picnic Area. The road begins at the Parkway and continues southward along the western edge of the prairie for approximately 0.65 miles. It is paved with asphalt and lacks a curb. For most of its length, the road is wide enough for two lanes of traffic with a width that varies from approximately 18 to 24 feet. At its south end near the Campground, Prairie Creek Road narrows to about 13 feet. There are a number of small parking lots (which

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<sup>150</sup> Van Kirk, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park: A History," 26.

provide 90-degree and 45-degree parking) on the west side of Prairie Creek Road near restrooms, day use trailheads, and the Picnic Area.

The road widens around a small median near the Visitors Center. This median was the location of a small entry kiosk from 1961 to about 2009. There is a small, paved parking lot immediately east of this median, and access into the paved Visitors Center parking lot is just west of this median. Approximately 300 yards south, the road widens around a second median. The current entrance kiosk, which was built around 2009, is located in this median.

Prairie Creek Road is gated near campsite 71, and the road's alignment south of this gate is designated as the Davison Trail.

Prairie Creek Road generally follows the alignment of the Crescent City-Trinidad Wagon Road, completed in 1894, that ran through the Harris/Boyes Ranch along the western edge of the prairie. The CCC graded and improved this section of the wagon road and used it to provide access to the facilities for the new Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park which were constructed by the CCC between 1933 and 1935. The entrance kiosk and parking lot (both from 1961) near the Visitors Center were added during the post-World War II era. The asphalt paving, small parking lots along the west side, and current entrance kiosk and median were part of the changes and development that have occurred from 1962 to the present.

Refer to Figures 29 to 35 for photographs of Prairie Creek Road.

#### *Campground Road System*

The Campground is located near the south end of Prairie Creek Road. Two segments of road extend from Prairie Creek Road to converge in front of Combination Building 2 and provide access to campground features that located outside of the forest canopy. One road (20 feet wide) runs in front of the cabins and the other (14 feet wide) provides access to campsites 5-7.

A short semi-circular road (12 feet wide) connects to the west side of Prairie Creek Road to provide access to campsites 71-76 which are adjacent to the prairie.

The main campground road provides access to campsites 8-70 and to the two Combination Buildings. The road is approximately 12 feet wide and is laid out in an oblong oval.

All of these roads are paved with asphalt and lack a formal edge such as a curb. The parking spurs at each campsite are also paved.

The campground road and two segments connecting it to Prairie Creek Road were laid out in 1949 when the campground was constructed during the post-World War II expansion era. The pavement and road for campsite 71-76 were added around the 1970s as part of the changes and development that have occurred from 1962 to the present.

Refer to the Site Plan in Figure 1 for the location of the roads and to Figures 36 and 37 for photographs.

### *Roads East of the Parkway*

Access to the Park Administration Complex, which includes the three staff residences, the Boyes House, and public works facilities, is provided by a road that begins at the Parkway and continues eastward for approximately 0.15 mile. This road is approximately 12 to 14 feet wide and leads to a large, paved maintenance yard. There are two small parking lots on the north side of the road just east of its intersection with the Parkway.

There are four driveways including one on the east side of Residence # 3, one on the west side of Residence # 2, one on the east side of Residence # 4, and one that runs along the west and south sides of the Boyes Residence. A road runs along the eastern side of the yard for Residence # 4 and leads to the water treatment plant. All of these roads connect to the entrance road. The entrance road and the driveways are paved with asphalt and lack a formal edge such as a curb or gutters. The road to the water treatment plant is graveled.

The entrance follows the general alignment for the Boyes era access road to the Boyes house. The driveways to the Boyes House and three staff residences were added in 1948-49 during the post-World War II expansion period. The asphalt paving (added around 1977), the two parking lots on the north side of the entrance road (added in the early 1980s), and the gravel road to the water treatment plant (added in the late 1970s or early 1980s) are all part the changes and development that have occurred from 1962 to the present.

Refer to Figure 38 to 40 for photographs of these features.

### *Sidewalks around the Staff Houses and Boyes House*

At each of the three staff residences, a concrete sidewalk, aligned parallel with the front of the house, connects the front door to the driveway. This front sidewalk forms a continuous paved path between Staff Residence # 2 and Residence # 4. A second concrete sidewalk is aligned parallel to one end of the house; this sidewalk provides a paved path that connects the front sidewalk, a side entry into the house, and the garage. At Staff Residence # 2, a concrete pad is located east of the front door between the sidewalk and house.

At the Boyes House, there are two concrete sidewalks in the backyard. One sidewalk runs perpendicular from the house's backdoor to a fence gate along the east side of the yard, and a second sidewalk provides a paved path from the backdoor to the driveway and garage.

All of the sidewalks are approximately three feet wide and were constructed in 1948-49 as part of the post-World War II development of this area. The concrete pad at Residence # 2 is a later addition.

Refer to Figure 41 and 42 for photographs of these features.

### *Elk Prairie Trail*

Elk Prairie Trail begins at the south end of the Campground at the road loop for campsites 46 to 68. It continues in a southeastward direction and briefly merges with Davison Trail. The trail

continues across the southern end of the prairie in an eastward direction to the Parkway. East of the Parkway, the trail runs through the edge of the forested hillside east of the prairie, crosses Boyes Creek, and ends at Cathedral Trees Trail. The trail is approximately 1.3 miles long; its width ranges from three feet to five feet; and the surface material of the trail is native soil or wood chips. Refer to the Site Plan in Figure 1 for the location of Elk Prairie Trail and to Figures 43 to 46 for photographs of the trail.

The CCC constructed segments of Elk Prairie Trail as part of their trail building activities throughout the park.<sup>151</sup> As originally laid out, the trail ran through the forested slopes above the western side of Prairie Creek and through the forested edge along the eastern side of the prairie to Boyes Creek. Its two northern termini connected to the park's broader trail network.<sup>152</sup>

Several segments of Elk Prairie trail were removed, altered, or developed during the post-1961 period. The segment across the south end of the prairie was added in the mid-1960s after Webster's Store and its tourist camp facilities were removed. Refer to Figure 19 for the alignment of Elk Prairie Trail after this addition. The southern half of Elk Prairie Trail that ran along the slopes above the west side of Prairie Creek was removed in the late 1980s, and a new segment of trail was laid out east of the creek to link the south end of the Campground to Davison Trail. In the late 1990s, Elk Prairie Trail underwent a major rehabilitation project to address accessibility standards; however, the footprint of the trail stayed basically the same with the exception of minor reroutes.<sup>153</sup>

#### *Cathedral Trees Trail*

Cathedral Tree Trail begins at the Visitors Center, goes across the Parkway, and continues to the Cathedral Tree grove. A short section of the Cathedral Trees Trail (approximately 0.1 mile) runs alongside Prairie Creek Road between the Parkway and the Visitors Center. The trail ranges from three feet to five feet wide; the surface material of the trail is native soil or wood chips.

The alignment of Cathedral Trees Trail west of the Parkway was altered in the late 1990s. At that time, the trail was rerouted to cross the Parkway; it previously had gone through a culvert under the Parkway to across the Parkway. This change was part of the larger accessible trails project that included alterations to the Elk Prairie and Foothill trails.<sup>154</sup> Refer to Figure 19 for the alignment of the trail prior to this change and to the Site Plan in Figure 1 for its current alignment.

#### *Day-Use Trail System*

A day-use trail system connects the key destinations (the Visitors Center, the Campfire Center, the Picnic Area, and the Campground) to each other and to Prairie Creek Road. In addition to these short unnamed trails, there are two longer trails (Revelation Trail and Redwood Access Trail) located under the forested canopy to the west of Prairie Creek Road.

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<sup>151</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<sup>152</sup> No map was located that showed this CCC-era alignment and the description of the original alignment is based information provided by Don Beers.

<sup>153</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<sup>154</sup> Beers, Email communication.

Revelation Trail begins at Prairie Creek Road, just north of the Comfort Station, and provides a short loop (0.3 mile) through the redwoods. Ramps and a boardwalk are located inside the trail loop near the Comfort Station and provide access around a large redwood tree. Interpretive displays are located along the trail, and posts and rope guiderails run along one side of the trail.<sup>155</sup>

Redwood Access Trail runs under the forest canopy along the western edge of Elk Prairie Campground from the Visitors Center to the Campground. Between these two points, the trail (0.7 mile in length) provides access to Revelation Trail, the Campfire Center, and the Picnic Area and views of the creek.

All of these trails range from three feet to five feet wide; the surface materials are native soil or wood chips. Refer to the Site Plan in Figure 1 for the location of the day-use trails and to Figures 47 and 48 for photographs.

This day-use trail system is part of the changes and development that have occurred during the post-1961 era. The unnamed trails that connect the Campfire Center, the Campground, and Picnic Area to each other and to Prairie Creek Road were laid out during the 1960s through the late 1990s, and their alignments have changed several times. Refer to Figure 20 for their location during the late 1960s and Figure 21 for their location during the late 1970s. Revelation Trail (originally known as Braille Trail) was laid out in 1971; its current alignment, interpretive displays, guiderails, and ramp around the redwood tree date from the early 1990s.<sup>156</sup> Redwood Access Trail was developed in two separate projects. The first segment that connects the Visitors Center to Revelation Trail was laid out in 1981. The trail was extended south of Revelation Trail to the north end of the Campground in the late 1990s.<sup>157</sup>

### *Bridges and Boardwalks*

#### *Prairie Creek Bridge*

A wood bridge, whose alignment incorporates two large redwood trees, spans Prairie Creek and connects Prairie Creek Trail (recently renamed Karl Knapp Trail) on the north and Redwood Access Trail on the south. The bridge has a deck constructed of milled wood boards which are supported by log stringers. Both sides of the deck have a wooden handrail attached to upright wooden posts with wooden diagonal bracing and wooden post braces. Refer to Figure 49 for a photograph of this bridge.

This bridge (its deck, pier, retaining wall abutments, etc.) were designed by Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park maintenance staff when the bridge was built in 1982 by the California Conservation Corps. It replaced a CCC-era bridge that was previously in this location. The 1982

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<sup>155</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<sup>156</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<sup>157</sup> Beers, Email communication; Bomke, Personal communication.

bridge and its approaches were modified to comply with accessibility standards when the Prairie Creek trail was reconstructed in the early 2000s.<sup>158</sup>

### Elk Prairie Trail Bridges

There are seven bridges along Elk Prairie Trail. One bridge, which spans the former agricultural ditch, is located along the section of the trail that crosses the south end of the prairie. Five bridges, which span seasonal drainages, are found along the portion of the trail on the east side of the prairie, and a bridge spans Boyes Creek near the northern end of the trail. All of these bridges are variations of standard State Parks' designs for milled stringer bridges from the late 1990s; they vary in length; some have wood handrails on one or both sides attached to upright wood posts. Refer to Figure 50 for photograph of one of these bridges.

The bridges date from the late 1990s when Elk Prairie Trail underwent a major rehabilitation project that addressed accessibility standards.<sup>159</sup>

### Revelation Trail Boardwalk

A raised boardwalk provides tactile access to a large redwood tree located within the eastern portion of the Revelation Trail loop. The boardwalk, constructed of milled lumber, has a gradual incline on both ends and wooden handrails along both sides. Refer to Figure 51 for a photograph of this boardwalk.

This boardwalk was reconstructed in the early 1990s when Revelation Trail was reconstructed.<sup>160</sup>

### *Edging*

Different materials are used to create or designate the edges of roads, trails, parking lots, and campground spaces. Most of the edging is some type of wood or stone. Refer to Figures 29, 31, and 34 for photographs with examples of edging.

Examples that are found in multiple locations include the following: large uncut rocks used to designate the sides of Prairie Creek Road and the edges of individual campsites; logs of varying dimensions used to designate the sides of trails and the sides of the Visitors Center parking lot; short wood posts or bollards along the edges of roads, campsites, and parking lots; short wood posts with a low board railing between each posts along both sides of Prairie Creek Road from its intersection with the Parkway to the entrance parking lot; and wood posts with wood handrails along trails.

Examples of edging materials found only in one location include the following: wood bollards with a light inserted into one side are found along one of the trails leading from Prairie Creek Road to the Campfire Center (these do not appear to be functional); wood posts connected by a rope railing along one side of Revelation Trail; stone and mortar curbs (ca. 1961-62) at the entrance

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<sup>158</sup> Beers, Email communication; Bomke, Personal communication.

<sup>159</sup> Beers, Email communication.

<sup>160</sup> Beers, Email communication.

parking lot and median in front of the Visitors Center; and concrete curbs around the Entrance Station median (ca. 2009-10).

The dates when these edging features were added varies, but most (if not all) have been added within the last few decades.<sup>161</sup>

### *Summary*

The entrance road in the Park Administration Complex, which provides access to the Boyes House from the Parkway, is the only circulation feature directly associated with the history of the Boyes family. Two other roads remain extant from this era, although they are not directly associated with the Harris and Boyes history. Prairie Creek Road and Davison Trail follow the general alignment of the Crescent City-Trinidad Wagon Road (1887-1894) along the western edge of Elk Prairie. The Parkway, originally the Redwood Highway and completed in 1928, remains in its original alignment cutting through the prairie. Prairie Creek Road and the entrance road to the Park Administration Complex were paved during the post-1961 era, and Prairie Creek Road and the Parkway were widened during the post-1961 era.

The only extant circulation feature constructed by the CCC is the portion of Elk Prairie Trail that runs along the eastern edge of the prairie, and this segment of the trail was renovated during the post-1961 era.

Circulation features from the post-World War II era include the driveways and sidewalks at the three staff residences, the driveway and sidewalks at the Boyes House, and the roads associated with the main part of the Campground. The alignment of roads within the Campground were modified and paved during the post-1961 era. The driveways were paved during the post-1961 era.

During the post-1961 era, new circulation features were added and existing circulation features were paved or modified. The day-use trails and the portions of Elk Prairie Trail (between the Campground and Davison Trail and across the south end of the prairie) were added. The bridges and boardwalks along the trails were built in the 1980s and 1990s using current State Parks' designs. Prairie Creek Road was paved, sections of the road were widened, and parking lots added adjacent to the road. At the Campground, the original alignment for the looped road was altered, parking spurs were added to each campsite; the short segment of road to Campsites 71-76 was added; and all of these features were paved. On the east side of the prairie, the entrance road and driveways were paved, and two small parking lots and a road to the water treatment plant was added. The small concrete pad to the east of the front door at Staff Residence # 2 was added sometime during the post-1961 era; it is not part of the original pavement at the house.

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<sup>161</sup> Bomke, Personal communication.



Figure 28. Circulation Features. Drury B. Newton Scenic Parkway, constructed in 1928, bisects the prairie. View to southwest.



Figure 29. Circulation Features. Prairie Creek Road runs along the western edge of the prairie and provides access into Elk Prairie Campground.





Figure 30. Circulation Features. This configuration for the Visitors Center parking lot dates from the 1960s.



Figure 31. Circulation Features. Entrance parking (added in 1961 and expanded in 1970s).



Figure 32. Circulation Features. Example of one of the small parking lots along the west side of Prairie Creek Road.



Figure 33. Circulation Features. Prairie Creek Road widened to accommodate the addition of the Entrance Station and median (ca. 2009-2010).



Figure 34. Circulation Features. Parking lot adjacent to the Picnic Area.



Figure 35. Circulation Features. Representative view of Davison Trail.



Figure 36. Circulation Features. Representative view of the road network in the Campground.



Figure 37. Circulation Features. Road that provides access for Campsites 71-76 (added in 1970s).



Figure 38. Circulation Features. Road that provides access to the Park Administrative Complex which includes three staff residences, the Boyes House, and public works facilities.



Figure 39. Circulation Features. Driveway to the Boyes House.



Figure 40. Circulation Features. Road to water treatment plant buildings and structures.



Figure 41. Circulation Features. Example of sidewalks at the three staff residences.



Figure 42. Circulation Features. Sidewalks in the backyard at the Boys House.



Figure 43. Circulation Features. Segment of Elk Prairie Trail that connects the south end of Campground to Davison Trail.



Figure 44. Circulation Features. Segment of Elk Prairie Trail across the south end of the prairie.



Figure 45. Circulation Features. Segment of Elk Prairie Trail along the east side of the prairie.





Figure 46. Circulation Features. Example of one of the retaining walls added to Elk Prairie Trail as part of rehabilitation project in the late 1990s.

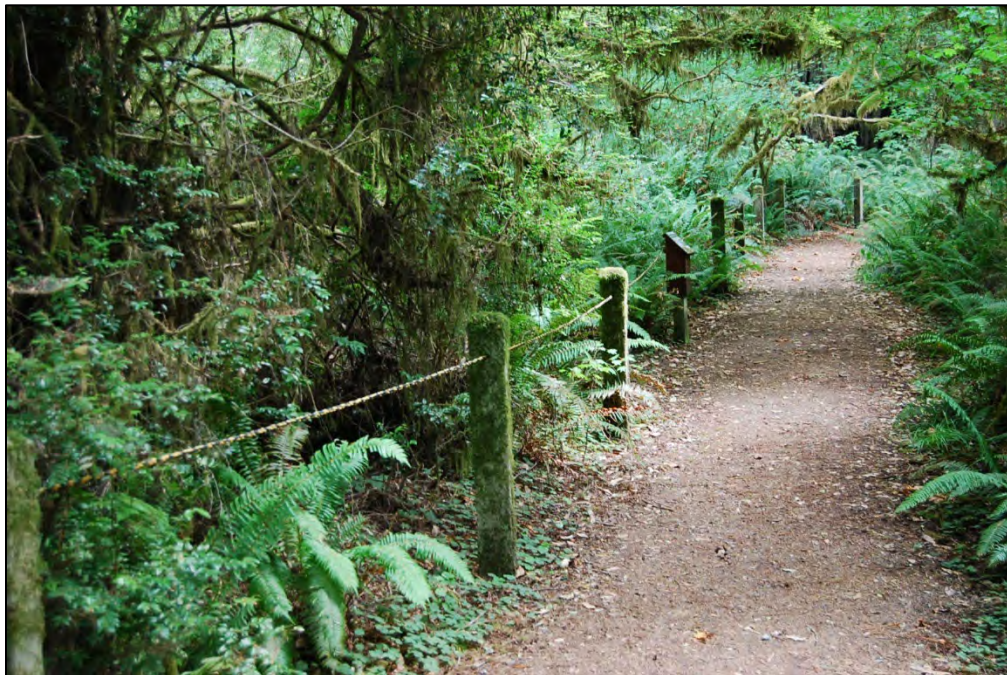


Figure 47. Circulation Features. Representative view of Revelation Trail Loop and guiderails.

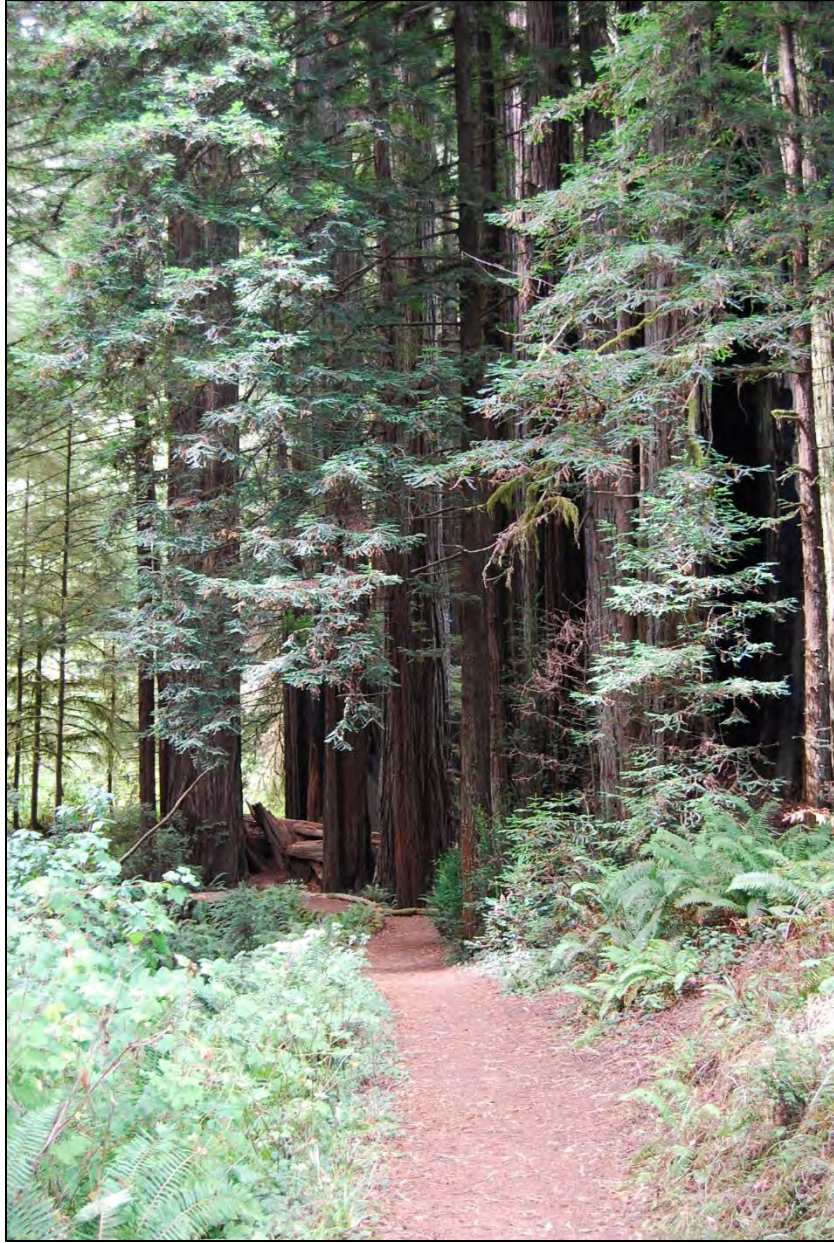


Figure 48. Circulation Features. Representative view of Redwood Access Trail.



Figure 49. Circulation Features. Bridge over Prairie Creek. A bridge was built in this general location by the CCC in the mid-1930s. The current bridge and its design date from 1982; the bridge was further modified in the early 2000s.



Figure 50. Circulation Features. Representative example of the bridges along Elk Prairie Trail. These bridges were rebuilt in late 1990s.



Figure 51. Circulation Features. Boardwalk at Revelation Trail.

### Buildings and Structures

Buildings are defined as the elements primarily built for sheltering any form of human activities. Structures are defined as the functional elements constructed for other purposes than sheltering human activity.

The following descriptions are based on previous documents, historic building plans, and observations made in the field for the current survey.

#### *Boyes House (1924)*

The Boyes House, constructed by the Boyes family around 1924, remains extant and its location and general appearance represent the homestead and farming operations of Elk Prairie from 1871, when Andrew Harris settled here, through 1931 when William and Emma Boyes sold their land to Save-the-Redwoods League and transferred to the state. All other buildings from the Harris and Boyes Ranch era have been removed.

The Boyes House is a two-story California Bungalow-style residence. The building is of wood frame construction and has horizontal clapboard wall siding. It is topped with a front gable roof sheathed with wood shingles. The main facade, which faces west toward the Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway, is accessed by a wood staircase that leads to a porch. The porch is sheltered by a gable-on-shed roof. A front-gable dormer is located on the south side of the roof, below which is a shed roof extension. A similar dormer on the north side is partially pieced by an exterior brick chimney. A salt-box extension is located at the rear (east side) of the building. Windows throughout are four-over-four wood frame double hungs. The building retains a high degree of physical integrity to its original appearance. Period photos show the original front porch has been

enclosed and the front of the house has changed. Refer to Figure 18 for a photograph of the house soon after its construction and Figure 52 for a current photograph.

### *Visitors Center and Garage*

Two buildings—the Visitors Center and its Garage—remain from the CCC-era. All other buildings from the CCC era—including five cottages, eight cabins, and 10 toilets—were removed in association with development during the 1960s and 1970s. The Visitors Center and Garage have been renovated to adapt these buildings for park use. However, their location and general appearance continue to represent the CCC era development. Brief descriptions of the two buildings are provided below. For a more detailed description refer to the “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report.”<sup>162</sup>

#### Visitors Center

The Visitors Center – originally the Park Custodian’s Residence – is a single-story, wood-frame building with an L-shaped plan. It rests on a post-and-pier foundation and has a covered porch located at the inside of the ell. The porch features wood post support and hand-cut wood balusters for the railing. The building has cross-gable roof topped with wood shake, and exterior walls are clad with redwood shingles. A shed roof extension with porch – apparently part of the original construction – is located at the rear of the building. Windows throughout are multiple-light with wood frames in fixed and casement configurations, and there are various types of personnel doors located throughout the building – some possibly original and some recent replacements. Refer to Figure 12 for a photograph of the Visitors Center soon after its construction and Figure 53 for a current of this building.

The "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report" recommended the Visitors Center as individually eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A for its association with the CCC and under Criterion C as a rare and intact example of the National Park Service Rustic style of architecture built on State Parks facilities during the Great Depression. The report states that, in general, the Visitors Center retains a very high degree of integrity relative to its (proposed) period of significance (1934-1961), noting only minor alterations to the building materials.<sup>163</sup>

#### Garage

The CCC-era Garage (originally secondary ranger’s residence) is a single-story, wood-frame building with a T-shaped plan on a concrete slab foundation. It has a wood frame hipped roof with ten-in-wide eaves. The roof has wood shake cladding, but this feature is currently covered by a plastic tarp. The walls are also clad with wood shakes. Wall openings consist of fixed-pane, multiple-light, wood-frame windows, flush wooden doors, and lattice ventilation woodwork near

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<sup>162</sup> Garavaglia, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park - Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report.”

<sup>163</sup> Garavaglia, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park - Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report,” 77-78.

the roofline. The doors are located on the west and north elevations and have modern lighting fixtures mounted adjacent to the openings. Refer to Figure 54 for a photograph of this building.

Garavaglia's 2015 Historic Structures Report recommended the CCC-era Garage as individually eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A for its association with the CCC and under Criterion C as a rare and intact example of the National Park Service Rustic style of architecture built on State Parks facilities during the Great Depression. The report concluded that the Garage retains a very high degree of integrity relative to its (proposed) period of significance (1934-1961), noting only minor alterations to the building materials.<sup>164</sup>

#### *Buildings Associated with the Post-World War II Expansion*

In the late 1940s, new buildings were added to expand of the campground facilities; refer to Figure 18 for a map from 1950. The extant buildings from this era include Combination Buildings 2 and 3 (1949) at the Campground and a Comfort Station (restroom only) (1949) near today's Revelation Trail.

Also in the late 1940s and early 1950s, a maintenance facility was developed east of the Parkway in the area around the Boyes House. Three houses and garages were built for staff (between 1948 and 1949), and a new garage was built behind the Boyes House (1949). A group of maintenance buildings—Vehicle Barn (1949), Shop (1949), Office (1949), Oil/Gas Building (1950, since demolished)—were added to the east of the Boyes House.

With the exception of the Vehicle Barn, all of these buildings were constructed following State Park standard plans, which were developed by the state architects for application throughout the park system statewide. The buildings are all of wood frame construction, typically with simple rectangular plans, and as originally built featured predominantly wood frame windows and wood panel doors. Owing to numerous alterations over the years – primarily in the form of window and door replacements, but also replacement of original siding in some cases – the collective physical integrity of these buildings has been substantially diminished.

Brief descriptions of these buildings are provided below.

#### Combination Building and Comfort Stations

California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) built three restroom facilities at Elk Prairie during the early post-war period, all on the west side of the Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway: the Comfort Station at the Revelation Trail (1948), located on the west side of Prairie Creek Road, south of the Visitors Center and near the CCC-era former campground; Combination Building 2 (1949), located at the southern end of Prairie Creek Road and at the entrance to the current campground facility; and Combination Building 3, located inside the campground facility north of

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<sup>164</sup> Garavaglia, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park - Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report," 77-78.

Combination Building 2. Combination buildings have restrooms and showers, while comfort stations include only restroom facilities.

All three buildings are built to standardized plans of the period, are of wood frame construction, and have gable roofs with composition shingle sheathing, board-and-batten wall cladding, steel and wood frame single doors, and bands of wood frame awing style windows on the long walls. The comfort station measures 30 feet long by 10 feet wide and the combination buildings measure 30 feet long by 18 feet wide.

As a group, the physical integrity of the three buildings has been substantially diminished by the replacement of the original horizontal clapboard wall siding with vertically-oriented board-and-batten; the almost complete replacement of original five-panel doors with steel doors (one survives on the west side of the Revelation Trail Comfort Station); and complete interior remodels. Refer to Figures 55 to 57 for photographs of these buildings.

#### Staff Residences and Garages

Located at the north end of Elk Prairie and to the east of Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway, on the north side of Prairie Creek Road is a row of residential buildings with detached garages built between 1948 and 1949. The buildings are located along the maintenance yard access road that wraps around the north and east of Boyes House.

The houses are based on State Park “Inland Type Residence” standard plans. Residences 2 and 3, the center and westernmost house, respectively, were built in 1948; Residence 4, the easternmost house, was built in 1949. The layout of Residence 4 follows the standard plan, while Residences 2 and 3 are mirror images of the plans. Each residence has a detached garage, located to the rear, that was built at the same time as the house.

All of the residences are wood frame and have rectangular plans that measure 38 feet by 27 feet. Wall cladding consists of horizontal beveled-edge siding, and the gable roofs are covered with composition shingles. Front porch entries on the south side are offset, sheltered by a front gable porch roof, and accessed by concrete steps. A secondary side entrance is located in a side gable extension of the main building. Wall openings consist of wood panel and flush doors, and windows are single light, double hung, and horizontal sliding.

The garages are based on State Park standard plans for a two-car garage. Like the residences, each has a rectangular plan, composition shingle gable roof, beveled-edge wood siding, and a variety of window types. Each garage building has a steel roll-up vehicle door and wood panel personnel doors. The garage for Residence 2 has a wood frame and corrugated fiberglass addition that is used as a woodshed, and the garage for Residence 3 has an 8-foot by 16-foot lean-to addition.

Collectively, this group of buildings retains marginal physical integrity to their original construction. Integrity is diminished by the replacement of most original wood frame windows with aluminum frame sliding sash, the exception being Residence 2 which retains all of its original windows. Several of the residences’ wood panel doors have been replaced with flush doors. The

garage roll-up doors are also replacements, and the two garage additions diminish integrity of design.

A fourth detached garage is located behind the Boyes House. It was built in 1949 and does not appear to be based on State Park standard plans. The garage has a roughly square plan, gable roof with wood shingles, beveled-edge horizontal siding, six-light wood frame windows, and a double set of metal roll-up vehicle doors. Except for the replacement vehicle doors, the garage retains a high degree of physical integrity. Refer to Figure 58 to 60 for photographs of these buildings.

### *Public Works Complex*

The main concentration of public works buildings is located east of the Parkway and behind the Boyes House. Most are based on State Park standard plans. They are described briefly below by date of construction.

#### Office (1948)

This office building follows a standard two-car garage plan with modifications. It is of wood frame construction and has a simple rectangular plan. The building has a side gable roof with wood shingles and walls clad with board-and-batten siding. There is a recessed porch cut into the northeast corner of the building, which provides access to the interior through solid wood door. Windows consist of a combination of wood frame, aluminum sliding, and vinyl frame windows. The vinyl windows and additional board-and-batten siding have replaced original garage doors.

The building's integrity is marginal. It has been diminished with the replacement of numerous windows, loss of garage doors, and addition of the cut-out porch. Refer to Figure 61 for a photograph of this building.

#### Shop Building (1948)

Built according to State Park standard plans for a Type C Utility Building, the shop building has a rectangular plan, measuring 48 feet by 26 feet, and a side gable roof covered with wood shingles. It is of wood frame construction and has board-and-batten walls. Windows consist primarily of six-light wood frame windows in groups of one, two, and three. The front elevation (west side) has three main openings: a metal roll-up vehicle door two flanking personnel doors. There is a shed roof canopy roof at the rear of the building and small additions on each of the short sides. There is a modern fuel island on the north side of the building.

The integrity of this building has been marginalized by the modifications of all door openings on the main elevation and additions to each of the other sides of the building. Refer to Figure 62 for a photograph of this building.

#### Vehicle Barn (1949)

This building, a vernacular style barn that does not appear to be based on State Park standard plans, has been used as vehicle storage throughout its history. The wood frame building has a side-gable roof with wood shingles and board-and-batten exterior walls. The original main building measures



about 64 feet by 62 feet and has six open bays that face west. A 30-by-30-foot office addition with a shed roof clad with corrugated metal extends from the rear. There is also a wood frame awning cover on this side. The building's few windows appear to be aluminum replacements.

The two extensions from the rear of the building, coupled with window replacements, has diminished its physical integrity. Refer to Figure 63 for a photograph of this building.

#### Summer Help Cabin (1961)

This residential building is a heavily modified conglomeration of four cabins that are linked together to form a long, rectangular-plan unit with a side gable roof. The building was being renovated at the time of the current survey. The roofing material on the north end is composition shingling, and the south end is sheathed in corrugated metal. Wall cladding is modern horizontal vinyl siding, and all windows are replacement vinyl sash sliders.

The physical integrity of this building is nearly completely compromised. Refer to Figure 64 for a photograph of this building.

#### *Later Buildings*

Since the post-World War II expansion period, only a few buildings have been added; these include a restroom building (ca. 2005) just south of the Visitors Center, the entrance station and an adjacent storage shed (ca. 2009-10), Cabins 1-4 (ca. 2016), and a water treatment plant located north of the staff residences. Brief descriptions of the buildings and structures are provided below.

#### Cabins 1-4 (ca. 2016)

There is a row of four visitor's cabins located along Prairie Creek Road just east of the entrance to the campground. These buildings are virtually identical. They have a simple rectangular plan, front gable roof with corrugated metal cladding, vinyl frame windows, and vinyl front doors within an inset porch. Refer to Figure 65 for a photograph of these buildings.

#### Woodshed (ca. 2009-10)

This is small, simple, wood frame building with a gable roof and board-and-batten-type plywood siding. There is a set of swinging doors on the main elevation. There are examples of this building type next to Combination Building #2, in the Campground, and adjacent to the Entrance Station. Refer to Figure 66 for a representative photograph of this building.

#### Combination Building 1 (closest to Visitors Center) (2005)

This restroom building mimics the approximate design, dimensions, and materials of the other the comfort stations and combination building located at Elk Prairie, including wood frame construction, gable roof, board-and-batten siding, rows of windows below the roofline, and steel doors. Refer to Figure 67 for a photograph of this building.

### Entrance Station (ca. 2009-10)

Located on Prairie Creek Road, approximately midway between the Visitors Center and the campground, is an entrance station. It is a wood frame building with a cross gable roof and two shed roof extensions. The walls are clad in board-and-batten and windows are multiple light with aluminum sash. Refer to Figure 68 for a photograph of the Entrance Station and Figure 64 for a photograph of the woodshed.

### Water Treatment Plant

Located behind (north of) the row of three residential buildings on the east side of the Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway is a cluster of water treatment buildings and facilities: two gable roof buildings used to pump and treat water; a riveted steel cylindrical water storage tank; and a wood frame water aeration tower. Refer to Figure 69 for a photograph of the water treatment plant.

### Miscellaneous Storage and Shops

Located at the north end of the Shop Building, in the group of public works facilities that are east of the Boyes House, is a collection of three wood frame storage and shops buildings and structures that do not appear to be based on State Park standard plans. The grouping includes a shed roof building with beveled-edge siding; an open-sided structure with a shed roof and corrugated metal siding; and a gable-roof building with corrugated metal roof and walls.<sup>165</sup> Refer to Figure 70 for a representative photograph of these features.

### Staff Housing Cabin

A short distance east of the Summer Help Cabin, in the group of public works facilities that are east of the Boyes House, is a modular housing unit with a simple rectangular plan and side gable roof with wood shingles. Walls are clad with vertical groove plywood siding and windows are vinyl sliding sash. Refer to Figure 71 for a photograph of this building.

### *Summary*

As discussed above, the CCC-era Visitors Center and Garage are both individually eligible for listing in the National Register: under Criterion A for their association with the CCC, and under Criterion C as rare and intact examples of the National Park Service Rustic style of architecture built on State Parks facilities during the Great Depression.

None of the other buildings at Prairie Creek State Park meet the criteria for individual listing in the National Register. No single building possesses the strength of association necessary to be eligible for significant events, trends, or pattern of events (Criterion A). Additionally, none of the buildings has been found to meet Criterion B requirements for associations with historically important persons. Under Criterion C, the non-CCC buildings, which include several residences

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<sup>165</sup> The storage sheds are structures but are included with the description of these buildings for the continuity of the description.

and outbuildings, public works facilities, and comfort stations and combination buildings (restrooms and showers), are not individually eligible because none represents a significant example of design or engineering. Finally, the built environment features at Prairie Creek State Park are well documented and therefore are unlikely to yield information important in history (Criterion D).



Figure 52. Buildings and Structures. Boyes House (ca. 1924) and detached garage (1949).



Figure 53. Buildings and Structures. Visitors Center, formerly the CCC-era Park Custodian's Residence (built 1934).



Figure 54. Buildings and Structures. CCC-era Garage near Visitors Center (built ca. 1936).



Figure 55. Buildings and Structures. Comfort Building at Revelation Trail (1948).



Figure 56. Buildings and Structures. Combination Building #2 (1949) at the Campground.



Figure 57. Buildings and Structures. Combination Building #3 (1949) at the Campground.



Figure 58. Buildings and Structures. Staff Residence #3 and Garage (1948).



Figure 59. Buildings and Structures. Staff Residence #2 and Garage (1948).



Figure 60. Buildings and Structures. Staff Residence #4 and Garage (1949).



Figure 61. Buildings and Structures. Office (1948) in the group of public works facilities that are east of the Boyes House.





Figure 62. Buildings and Structures. Shop Building (1948) in the group of public works facilities that are east of the Boyes House.



Figure 63. Buildings and Structures. Vehicle Barn (1949) in the group of public works facilities that are east of the Boyes House.



Figure 64. Buildings and Structures. Summer Help Cabin (1961) in the group of public works facilities that are east of the Boyes House.



Figure 65. Buildings and Structures. Modern Seasonal Cabins (Cabins 1 through 4) near Campground.



Figure 66. Buildings and Structures. Example of modern Woodshed, examples of which are at various locations in and near the Campground area.



Figure 67. Buildings and Structures. Modern Combination Building adjacent to Visitors Center.



Figure 68. Buildings and Structures. Modern Entrance Station on Prairie Creek Road between Visitors Center and Campground.



Figure 69. Buildings and Structures. Water Treatment Plant located behind Staff Residences, consisting of pump and water treatment houses, riveted steel tank, and aeration tower.



Figure 70. Buildings and Structures. Miscellaneous Storage and Shops cluster in the group of public works facilities that are east of the Boyes House.



Figure 71. Buildings and Structures. Modular Staff Housing Cabin in the group of public works facilities that are east of the Boyes House, at Public Works Complex.

## Small-Scale Features

Small-scale features are the elements which provide detail and diversity for both functional needs and aesthetic concerns in the landscape. The small-scale features within the Elk Prairie can be grouped by their uses and locations including trail signage, benches, fences, utility related features, site furnishings or sculpture near the Visitors Center, and the collections of small-scale features at the Campfire Center, Picnic Area, Campground, features along the Parkway, and within the yards of the three staff houses and the Boyes House. Brief descriptions of these groups are provided below.

### *Signs*

The directional signs and interpretive signs at the Campground and along the trails have varying appearances and were likely added at different times. The oldest extant sign may be the Redwood Access Trail sign which was added in 1981 when the northern portion of this trail was first laid out. Many signs likely date from the 1980s and 1990s (when the trails were rehabilitated) or later. Refer to Figure 72 for a photograph of some of the various types of signs.

### *Benches*

Eleven wooden benches are found along the western edge of the prairie. These benches are about 10 years old or less. They have different designs, each of which is a variation of a bench design developed by the Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park chief of maintenance; several have dedication plaques attached to the backs. The benches are built and pre-assembled by the DPR maintenance crews and then delivered to the site.<sup>166</sup> Similar benches are found along Elk Prairie Trail, in front of the Visitors Center, and in front of Combination Building No. 2 at the Campground. Refer to Figure 73 for a photograph of one of the typical benches.

There is a log bench at each of the two bus stops. Each bench consists of a log that is approximately three feet long; a quarter cut in the log forms the bench's backrest and seat. These two log benches are modern, but they are similar in design to ones shown in photographs from CCC-era. This design continued to be made by State Parks maintenance staff and used throughout the park until the last few decades.<sup>167</sup> Refer to Figure 74 for a photograph of one of the log benches.

### *Fences*

#### Split Rail Fence Along Parkway

A split rail fence runs along both sides of the Parkway from where Elk Prairie Trail crosses the Parkway to the entrance roads into the Elk Prairie Campground and the maintenance area. The fence consists of three rails between two posts held in place by wire at both ends of each section. The fence contributes to the spatial organization of the Elk Prairie landscape by defining the edge of the prairie in relationship to the Parkway. On the west side of the Parkway, the fence's alignment veers outward, around the former Madison Grant Forest and Elk Refuge commemorative displays

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<sup>166</sup> Bomke, Personal communication.

<sup>167</sup> Bomke, Personal communication.

(these displays were removed 2021). On the east side, the alignment similarly veers outward around the Redwood National Park sign and interpretive panels. Refer to Figure 75 for a photograph of this fence.

The origin of a fence in this location dates from the CCC era when the CCC constructed a split rail fence along both sides of the prairie. A historical photograph from 1936 showed that this fence had five rails held in place by wire between four posts at both ends of each section of fence;<sup>168</sup> refer to Figure 12 for a photograph of the CCC era fence. The fence has been reconstructed since then with a different design. Based on a review of historical aerial photographs, the change in alignment around the commemorative displays on the west side occurred sometime in the 1980s; this change on the east side was implemented in the mid-1990s or mid-2000s on the east side.

#### Split Rail Fence Along Entrance Road to the Park Administration Complex

A split rail fence extends for about 150 along both sides of the entrance road into the park administration complex that includes staff housing, the Boyes House, and a public works area. The fence also extends around the first parking lot on the north side of the road. This fence has a similar design to the one along the Parkway; it has three rails held in place by wire between two posts that are at both ends of each section. Refer to Figure 38 for a photograph of this fence.

Based on a review of historical aerial photographs, this fencing was built sometime after the parking lots on the north side of the road were added in the 1980s—possibly in the early 2000s.

#### Fences at the Residences

Fences define the yards around Staff Residences # 2 and # 4 and around the Boyes House. Each of these is a variation of woven wire fencing attached to wood or metal posts. The section of fence across the east side of the back yard at the Boyes house has vertical wood slats interwoven with the wire. Refer to Figures 76 to 78 for photographs of these fences.

The exact dates these fences were added was not found in the historic record.<sup>169</sup>

#### *Utility-Related*

Small-scale features related to utilities include fire hydrants, utility poles, water spigots, gas tanks, and utility manhole covers; these are found throughout Elk Prairie Campground and the park administrative complex. Refer to Figure 79 for a photograph of one of the fire hydrants.

With the exception of the fire hydrants most of these appear to be modern. The fire hydrants are located near the Boyes and staff houses, along Prairie Creek Road near the restroom buildings, in the Campground near the two Combination Buildings, and in the vicinity of the Garage. The fire

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<sup>168</sup> This same design was shown on a 1937 plan for split rail fencing that was used at the Big Tree and Corkscrew Tree.

<sup>169</sup> Aerial photographs from the Redwood National and State Parks collection were reviewed. No fences were visible on the 1948 aerial. The resolution on an aerial from 1954 is inconclusive. In the 1965 aerial, vegetation is growing along the fence line in the south side of the front yards of Residences # 2 and #4. Today trees remain in this same location suggesting that a fence may have been in place by 1965.

hydrants vary in style, but most were manufactured by M. Greenberg's Sons of San Francisco. This firm was founded in 1854 by Morris Greenberg as the Eagle Brass Foundry and manufactured a wide range of fire hydrants from the late 1870s until at least the late 1960s. The ones at Elk Prairie Campground are similar to the "screw bonnet types" with one outlet (Models 119-123) shown in the company's catalog from the early 1950s.<sup>170</sup>

### *Visitors Center*

Small-scale features at the Visitors Center include several wooden benches (all from the past 10 years), the flagpole (1976), a wooden outdoor phone kiosk (date unknown), a cast concrete picnic table with an engraved State of California seal (unknown date), and a metal elk sculpture and an interpretive panel (post-2015).

### *Campfire Center*

The Campfire Center is located on the west side of Prairie Creek Road under the canopy of the forested area between Revelation Trail and the Picnic Area. It consists of three rows of wood benches set on a slope which face a large projection screen which is located at the base of the slope. A small projection booth is located at the top of the slope. Refer to Figures 80 and 81 for photographs of the Campfire Center.

The projection screen consists of wood boards which create a frame around a projection screen; the structure has a shallow storage closet that extends from the back side which is covered with board and batten siding; a sloping roof covered with wooden shingles covers this extension.

The projection booth is a small rectangular structure covered with board and batten siding; it has a gable roof with wooden shingles.

The backrest and seat of each bench are each one board; wood posts support the backrest of the bench and extend into the ground; wooden footings are spaced along the underside of the seat. The benches are different lengths depending on their location within each row.

Based on a facilities inventory list, the original Campfire Center was built in 1961.<sup>171</sup> However, all of the Campfire Center's original projection screen, hand rails, and benches have been replaced with new features with different designs. In the early 1980s, a new projection screen and projection booth were built; both of these features remain extant. In the 1990s, the current benches were added. The designs for the new components were developed by Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park maintenance staff.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> M. Greenberg's Sons, *Greenberg Fire Hydrants-Valves Standpipe Fittings: Fire Protection, Brass, and Bronze Products. Catalog No. 10* (San Francisco: M. Greenberg's Sons, 1952), 11, accessed 16 February 2021, <https://archive.org/details/AEC1951greensberg32>; Jewish Museum of the American West, *Morris Greenberg: Brass Foundry Owner & First Supplier of Fire Hydrants, San Francisco*, 2013, accessed 16 February 2021, <http://www.jmaw.org/greenberg-brass-jewish-san-francisco/>.

<sup>171</sup> California DPR, "Facility Inventory Listing 10/21/1988."

<sup>172</sup> Bomke, Personal communication.



Other small-scale features at the Campfire Center include a water fountain mounted on a stone-and-mortar pedestal (1962) on the north side of the projection booth structure and a round stone and mortar fire pit surrounded by three wood benches (all ca. 1961). The fire pit and benches are located west of the projection screen. Refer to Figure 82 for a photograph of the fire pit and benches. These small-scale features are associated with the original construction of the Campfire Center.<sup>173</sup>

### *Picnic Area*

Site furnishings at the Picnic Area include wooden picnic tables and metal grills. Refer to Figure 83 for a photograph of a table and grill.

At the north end of the Picnic Area and a little to the west under the tree canopy are four concrete picnic tables and six stone camp stoves. Each picnic table has a concrete pedestal (broader at the base than at the top) at each end; the pedestals support a tabletop constructed of three wooden boards. Each table has two stationary benches—one on each side of the table; each bench consists of two concrete pedestals that support one wooden board seat. Only two of the tables are intact. These tables are similar to a standard State Parks design for a “Camp and Picnic Table Concrete Type” from the mid-1950s, and identical tables in other State Parks were found in photographs from 1950s and early 1960s.<sup>174</sup> Refer to Figure 84 for a photograph of a concrete picnic table.

The six camp stoves in the Picnic Area are constructed of uncut stone and mortar. Five have a similar design. In these, the front of the stove consists of a rectangular-shaped, brick-lined fire box which connects to a chimney at the rear of the stove. In the most intact stove, a metal grate covers the top of the fire box and a hinged metal door covers the front of the fire box. Several of the stoves are missing the metal grates and doors for the fireboxes and have missing or loose stones; the side of one stove has collapsed. These camp stove do not appear to be actively maintained. There are weeds growing next to several of the stoves, and fire-prevention measures such as sand or gravel in front of the fireboxes are missing. One camp stove, located at the eastern edge of this grouping, has a shorter chimney and lower height of the firebox from the ground. The exact date when these stoves were constructed has not been determined. The designs for these camp stoves are similar to those from the CCC era.<sup>175</sup> However, these stoves were not shown on topographic surveys from 1948 and 1950 that identified the location of CCC-era campsite features and do not appear to have

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<sup>173</sup> The water fountain is listed as being added in 1962 in a DPR “Facility Inventory Listing 10/21/1988” and the fire circle and benches are shown in a ca. 1961 photograph (Figure 7 in Garavaglia 2015).

<sup>174</sup> John Robinson and Alfred Calais, *A Sunset Book: State Parks of California* (Menlo Park, CA: Lane Publishing Company, 1961).

<sup>175</sup> These two types of camp stove are similar to designs shown in the U. S. Forest Service’s CCC-era publication *Camp Stoves and Fireplaces*. See: A. D. Taylor, *Camp Stoves and Fireplaces* (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1937), accessed 16 February 2021 at <https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/21299/files/camp%20stoves%20and%20fireplaces%20sm.pdf>. This publication was intended to provide designs and guidance for the construction of safe camp stoves for a variety of situations and was based on a study of existing recreation facilities undertaken by A. D. Taylor, consulting landscape architect for the Forest Service, during the summer and fall of 1935.

been built by the CCC in their current location.<sup>176</sup> It is possible that CCC-era stoves were moved to this location after the CCC-era campsites were demolished in the 1960s and early 1970s. Or these stoves may have been constructed, after the 1950s, by DPR using a design that was similar to the CCC era stoves.<sup>177</sup> Refer to Figures 84 and 85 for photographs of two of these camp stoves.

### *Campground*

A metal water fountain mounted onto a wood pedestal and a wood bike rack (made from half of a log) are located in front of Combination Building # 2. Metal, animal-proof trash receptacles and water spigots are found throughout the Campground.

Each campsite in the Campground is furnished with a wooden A-frame picnic table, a metal fire pit, and a metal food storage locker. Refer to Figure 86 for a photograph of the site furnishings at a typical campsite.

All of these small-scale features are associated with the post-1961 era of development at Elk Prairie. The campground site furnishings are iterations of prototypes developed by State Parks. The prototype for the fire pits was developed in the 1960s from a U.S. Forest Service design, and the current design, taller and with a smaller circumference than the original prototype, dates from the mid-1980s. The prototype for the metal trash receptacle and metal food storage locker was developed and tested at Elk Prairie Campground in the mid-to-late 1980s and then manufactured by a Canadian firm called Haul All. The wooden picnic tables are based on a design developed in the 1980s by State Parks. The fire pits and picnic tables were likely constructed for the Campground by either the Sonoma County or Del Norte County youth correction program.<sup>178</sup>

### *Along the Parkway*

Small-scale features along the sides of the Parkway include entry signs for Elk Prairie Campground (date unknown), a Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park sign on the east side of Parkway near the south end of the prairie (date unknown), a Redwood National Park sign and interpretive panels on the east side of Parkway (ca. 2015), and a large rock with a mounted a metal dedication plaque for the former Madison Grant Forest and Elk Refuge on the west side of the parkway (date unknown; removed in 2021).

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<sup>176</sup> DNR and DBP, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Topo of Campground Area Near Headquarters," 11 February 1948, and "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Campground Area, Topo," 25 June 1950, California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

<sup>177</sup> Bomke, Personal communication. This type of stove is sometimes generically referred to as a "Diablo Stove" in California State Park literature after the stoves at Mount Diablo State Park. Roland, in "CCC Resources in the State Park System," listed 12 "Diablo stoves" (1935) at the campground's CCC-era day use sites; however, the exact location of these stoves and if they were still present in 1991 is unclear. It seems unlikely that all 12 would have been extant at that date since the last CCC-era campsites were removed around 1971 to accommodate the construction of the Braille Trail.

<sup>178</sup> Bomke, Personal communication.

### *Staff Residences and Boyes House*

Small-scale features are found in the yards around the three staff residences and the Boyes House. Examples include a clothes lines, outdoor furniture, wooden boards defining a small, raised garden, and a concrete fire pit.

All of these small-scale features are modern and are associated with the recent residential use of these buildings.

### *Summary*

No small-scale features from the Harris and Boyes Ranch era remain extant.

With the possible exception of six stone camp stoves at the Picnic Area (whose construction dates could not be determined), none of the small-scale features associated with the development by the CCC are extant. The CCC-era split rail fence that ran both sides of the Parkway is no longer extant; the current fence (construction date unknown) has a different design than its CCC-era counterpart.

A few isolated examples from the post-World War II era remain including fire hydrants (ca. late 1940s or later), several concrete picnic tables (ca. 1950s) in the Picnic Area and Campground, and the Campfire Center's water fountain, stone fire pit, and the wood benches at the fire pit (all ca. 1961-62). The Campfire Center was constructed in 1961 at the end of the post-World War II era; however, its original benches, projection screen, railings, and projection booth were replaced with new features with new designs in the 1980s and 1990s.

The exact dates of construction for the fences around the yards at the three staff residences and Boyes House are not known; these fences were added at some point after the staff residences were built in the late 1940s; they are common examples of their type.

Most of the extant small-scale features have been added within the last couple of decades, and most of the current signs and site furnishings are standard designs developed by DPR within the last couple of decades. The split rail fence along the entrance road to the maintenance area was added between 1980s and early 2000s. The metal elk sculpture near the Visitors Center and NPS signs along the Parkway are NPS designs that were installed after 2015.



Figure 72. Small-Scale Features. Representative examples of signs.



Figure 73. Small-Scale Features. Representative example of wooden benches that are found along the western edge of the prairie, along trails, at the Visitors Center, and at the Campground.



Figure 74. Small-Scale Features. One of log benches found at the bus stops near entrances to Campground and Park Administration Area.



Figure 75. Small-Scale Features. Split rail fence along Parkway.



Figure 76. Small-Scale Features. Example of the type of fences around the yards at Staff Residences #2 and #4 and the Boys House.



Figure 77. Small-Scale Features. Example of the type of fences around the backyards at Staff Residences #2 and #4.



Figure 78. Small-Scale Features. Fence along the backside (east) of the Boyes House.



Figure 79. Small-Scale Features. Representative example of one of the fire hydrants found along Prairie Creek Road, at the Campground, and near the Garage. Additional fire hydrants are found near the Staff Residences and Boyes House.





Figure 80. Small-Scale Features. Campfire Center. View west.



Figure 81. Small-Scale Features. Campfire Center. View east.



Figure 82. Small-Scale Features. Campfire Center. Stone fire circle and wooden benches.



Figure 83. Small-Scale Features. Representative example of picnic tables and grills at the Picnic Area.



Figure 84. Small-Scale Features. Representative example of the stone camp stoves (date unknown) and concrete picnic tables (ca. 1950s) located just west of the Picnic Area.



Figure 85. Small-Scale Features. Smaller camp stone stove (date unknown) located at the western edge of the Picnic Area.



Figure 86. Small-Scale Features. Representative examples of site furnishings found at each of the campsites in the Campground.

### Archeological Sites

Archeological sites are defined as the location of ruins, traces, or deposited artifacts in the landscape, and are evidenced by the presence of either surface or subsurface features.

Several archeological sites have been recorded with the boundaries of the Elk Prairie landscape. Brief descriptions are provided below.

A precontact site (Site CA-HUM-220) was recorded in 1969 and was described as a hunting camp or village site with flaked stone artifacts.<sup>179</sup>

The former Webster's Store Site was recorded on a Primary Record (DPR523A) in the "Cultural Resources Inventory Report for Fabricate and Install Interpretive Wayside Exhibits along NBD Parkway" (2015). The site was the location of a small road-side store. Tourist cabins and a campground were also located on the parcel. The property was acquired by Save the Redwoods League in 1964 and transferred to DPR. The store, cabins, and campground were subsequently removed and there are no extant buildings on the site. A small cement foundation and some historic debris were noted in a field survey conducted in April 2015.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Peterson, "Cultural Resources Inventory Report for Fabricate and Install Interpretive Wayside Exhibits along NBD Parkway," 60.

<sup>180</sup> Peterson, "Cultural Resources Inventory Report for Fabricate and Install Interpretive Wayside Exhibits along NBD Parkway," 60.

The Harris/Boyes Home Place Site was recorded on a Primary Record (DPR523A) in the “Cultural Resources Inventory Report for Fabricate and Install Interpretive Wayside Exhibits along NBD Parkway” (2015). The site consists of approximately seven acres and includes the Boyes House (ca. 1924) and remaining trees of the orchard planted by A. J. Harris. The site also a barn and maintenance buildings constructed by DPR during the post-World War II era. The orchard trees are described in more detail in the Vegetation Features section of this CLI, and the buildings are described in the Buildings section of this CLI.<sup>181</sup>

The 1934 Civilian Conservation Corps Camp 1903 Site was recorded on a Primary Record (DPR523A) in the “Cultural Resources Inventory Report for Fabricate and Install Interpretive Wayside Exhibits along NBD Parkway” (2015). The only evidence of CCC camp “includes the camp’s driveway entrance, some depressions, miscellaneous artifacts, and undulating surfaces all within Elk Prairie.”<sup>182</sup> The history of the CCC camp is described in more detail in the Historic Context and Physical Historic section of this CLI.

A precontact site (CA-HUM-0180) was first documented in 1950 and 1969 as being comprised of flaked stone and ground stone artifacts. Since that time, no direct evidence of the site has been found in its documented location.<sup>183</sup> Peterson, in the “Cultural Resources Inventory Report for Fabricate and Install Interpretive Wayside Exhibits along NBD Parkway” (2015), noted that “[t]his precontact site has direct ties and significance to Yurok people living today. It could have information potential regarding precontact lifeways and could contribute to broad patterns of Humboldt County history.”<sup>184</sup>

In the same 2015 study, Peterson provided the following information on the Indian House Tree (HS-7):

The “Indian House Tree” (HS-7) is an isolated feature consisting of a single redwood tree or “goose-pen” that is about 20 feet in diameter . . . The tree base has been hollowed out by fire and possibly anthropogenically modified, but the top is still thriving . . . The hollow bole was once used as a shelter or small house . . . The hollow is large enough to have served as a “goose-pen”, a location to cache items, or use as temporary shelter. Goose pens are known to have significance to Yurok people who are indigenous to this location. In the early 1930s Alexander J. “Zan” Stark photographed the Indian House Tree (HS-7) for a photo-postcard that shows an entrance with a door frame and door of hand-hewn lumber . . . Hood et al. (1983) noted that the door frame was present but the door was removed before his investigations. Hood, et al. (1983:131) speculated that the tree house was

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<sup>181</sup> Peterson, “Cultural Resources Inventory Report for Fabricate and Install Interpretive Wayside Exhibits along NBD Parkway,” 62.

<sup>182</sup> Peterson, “Cultural Resources Inventory Report for Fabricate and Install Interpretive Wayside Exhibits along NBD Parkway,” 63.

<sup>183</sup> Peterson, “Cultural Resources Inventory Report for Fabricate and Install Interpretive Wayside Exhibits along NBD Parkway,” 76.

<sup>184</sup> Peterson, “Cultural Resources Inventory Report for Fabricate and Install Interpretive Wayside Exhibits along NBD Parkway,” 77.

specifically constructed as a tourist attraction, but this is currently unsubstantiated. Today, a few nails still exist in the tree and few pieces of deteriorated wood are located on the ground in front of the tree (Jim Wheeler Personal Communication 09/30/2015). Although there are no physical remains of the framework, the Indian House Tree as a “goose-pen” may retain significance to Yurok people. Further research could result in finding the tree eligible for listing in the National Register.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Peterson, “Cultural Resources Inventory Report for Fabricate and Install Interpretive Wayside Exhibits along NBD Parkway,” 77.

## Condition Assessment

Condition Assessment:	Good
Condition Assessment Date:	09/22-23/2020

### Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative

The condition of the Elk Prairie landscape study area was assessed through a visual inspection of landscape characteristics and features on 22 and 23 September 2020. Overall, the Elk Prairie landscape was in good condition and showed no clear evidence of major negative disturbance or deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Condition issues for specific vegetation features, circulation features, buildings, structures, and small-scale features are noted below.

#### Vegetation Features

##### *Indigenous Vegetation Communities*

Elk Prairie's redwood forest communities were well preserved. The prairie was cultivated during the Harris/Boyes era, and DPR has been periodically burning the prairie in order to restore the indigenous vegetation communities. It is in good condition.

##### *Introduced Vegetation Communities*

The orchard was in poor condition due to the loss of trees. The original size of the orchard and the organization of the orchard with trees planted in rows forming a grid pattern have been lost. Of the six extant apple trees, five were in poor condition and one was dead. The condition of the walnut trees varied. The large walnut tree north of the Boyes House had a balanced branching structure and a healthy looking canopy. The three walnut trees next to the entrance road were in poor condition; most of the branches on each tree appeared to be dead or dying. The three walnut trees south of the house had balanced branching structures and healthy looking canopies. Of the two cherry trees located behind the Boyes House, one had a poor branching structure (no central leader and two large branches that formed a wide angle or crotch near the ground), and one was dead. The pear tree in the southwest corner of the Boyes yard had a balanced branching structure and a healthy looking canopy.

Overall, the trees in the yards and the foundation plantings at the three staff houses were in fair condition. Some of the individual shrubs in the foundation plantings at each of the staff houses were overgrown.

The trees and vegetation in the yard around the Boyes House were in fair condition. Some of the shrubs, on the south side of the house and north side of garage, were overgrown.



## Circulation Features

### *Roads*

No deterioration or disrepair was noted for the asphalt paving for the roads and parking lots.

The paving for the driveways to the three staff residences and Boyes House had places where the edges of asphalt was deteriorated. In several places, the asphalt was cracked across the driveways with small weeds growing through the cracks.

No deterioration or disrepair was noted for the gravel road to the water treatment plant.

### *Trails*

The surfaces along the trails were level and firm and no deterioration or disrepair was noted.

### *Bridges and Boardwalks*

No deterioration or disrepair was noted for the bridge over Prairie Creek, the bridges along Elk Prairie Trail, and the boardwalk along Revelation Trail.

### *Sidewalks*

The concrete sidewalks at the three staff houses and in the back yard at the Boyes House did not have any major cracks or deterioration.

### *Edging*

The various types of stone used to designate the edges of roads, trails, parking lots, and campground spaces were in good condition.

Some of low wood bollards used as edging in the Campground showed signs of decay.

Low wooden bollards, with a light inserted into one side, along one of the day-use trails leading from Prairie Creek Road to the Campfire Center were in poor condition; these bollards do not appear to be functional; several of the bollards were missing parts of the light fixtures, and the wood was decayed.

## Buildings and Structures

### *Visitors Center and Garage*

The “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park Visitors Center and Garage; Historic Structures Report” provided a detailed examination of the condition of the Visitors Center and Garage. This report found the buildings to be in good overall condition.<sup>186</sup> The report noted that the existing conditions issues in these two buildings could be divided into deferred maintenance and necessary upgrades. The deferred maintenance issues were a result of material degradation through moisture exposure, pests, or the building materials reaching the end of their reasonable service lives. Necessary upgrades were required and included structural strengthening to improve seismic performance and

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<sup>186</sup> Garavaglia, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park - Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report.”

building system upgrades to support an eventual reuse of spaces within the Visitors Center or reuse of the Garage. Pages 82-106 of this report provided details on these condition issues.

### *Other Buildings*

The other buildings located at Elk Prairie are all well-maintained and in good condition. No substantial deterioration or disrepair was noted on their exteriors.

### Small-Scale Features

Overall, the small-scale features were in fair condition. Specific issues for the small-scale features are described below.

#### *Signs*

A custom-made wooden sign (1981) for Redwood Access Trail, near the north end of the trail, showed signs of deterioration. There was a horizontal crack in the wood across the entire width of the sign.

#### *Benches*

No deterioration or disrepair was noted for the various benches found throughout Elk Prairie Landscape.

#### *Fences*

The split rail fences were in fair condition; some sections had leaning posts; and some sections had missing or fallen railings.

At the Boyes House, part of the fence has been removed along the north side of the yard; several posts were leaning or were on the ground; and woven wire fencing (rusted) had been rolled up and was lying on the ground. Along the west side of the yard several posts were leaning over; the woven wire fencing was still attached to these leaning posts. Part of the fence (posts and wire fencing) has been removed from the south side of the yard. No issues were noted for the portion of the fence (with vertical wood slats interwoven with the wire) along the east side of the yard.

All of the fences around the staff housing yards were standing. However, some of the metal posts were rusted; some sections of the wire mesh fencing were rusted; and a few wooden posts were leaning.

#### *Utility-Related*

No deterioration or disrepair was noted for the various utility-related small-scale features.

#### *Visitors Center*

The phone kiosk, located a few feet south of the Visitors Center, was in poor condition. It was missing wooden shingles from its roof; several boards were loose; and the structure needed painting.

### *Campfire Center*

No deterioration or disrepair was noted for the various components of the Campfire Center including the benches, railings, projection screen, projection booth, and lecture podium.

### *Picnic Area*

The six stone camp stoves in the Picnic Area were in various states of disrepair. Several of the stoves were missing the metal grates and doors for the fireboxes. Several had missing or loose stones. The side of one stove was collapsed. There were weeds growing next to several of the stoves, and fire-prevention measures such as sand or gravel in front of each stove's firebox was missing.

Two of the four concrete picnic tables in the Picnic Area were missing their wooden tabletops and/or wooden benches. As a result, the tops of the concrete pedestals, which provide the bases for both the tables and their stationary benches, were exposed. At one table, raised nail heads were protruding from the exposed concrete pedestals.

### *Campground*

No deterioration or disrepair was noted for the various small-scale features within the Campground area.

## Treatment

Approved Treatment:	Undetermined
Approved Treatment Completed	No
Approved Treatment Document:	Not Applicable
Approved Landscape Treatment Document Date:	Not Applicable

## Landscape Treatment Explanatory Narrative

### Visitors Center and Garage

The Visitors Center and Garage are individually eligible for listing in the National Register. Treatment for these two buildings should follow the Secretary of the Interior’s Rehabilitation Standards. The “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report” provided detailed management and treatment recommendations for both buildings; pages 15-17 provided a summary of the treatment recommendations; and pages 116-130 provided detailed recommendations for treatment.<sup>187</sup>

### Elk Prairie Landscape

Although the Elk Prairie landscape is ineligible for the listing in the National Register, some features and characteristics are sensitive to change and should be protected.

### *Forest and Prairie*

The redwood forest and prairie have been a consistent presence throughout the four historic eras, and these vegetation features should be maintained and protected. The prairie has been maintained by human activity throughout the four historic eras, and maintenance practices, such as mowing and burning, should be continued to maintain the prairie.

### *Recommendations for the Location of Future Built Features*

The protection of the “natural values and scenic wonders” of the forest and prairie has been a concern since the initial park facilities were created by the CCC in the 1930s. In a letter written in 1935, Charles B Wing, Chief of the Division of Parks, explained that the facilities were placed “to have almost no structures visible from the highway as you drive through the prairie and have a view of the redwood forest predominated in the foreground.”<sup>188</sup> This guidance should be considered when adding new built features to limit the encroachment of built features onto the prairie and to protect the views of the prairie and forest.

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<sup>187</sup> Garavaglia, “Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park - Visitors Center and Garage: Historic Structures Report,” 15-17, and 116-130.

<sup>188</sup> Hood and Roland, “Cultural Resources,” CR-96.

To the west of the Parkway, new built features (including buildings, structures, and circulation features) should be placed under the forest canopy and to the west of Prairie Creek Road to reduce their visibility and to reduce intrusions onto the prairie. Extant features, such as the entrance parking lot and campsites 71 to 76, which are located on what was formerly prairie land or immediately adjacent to the prairie should not be expanded and options to remove them from these locations should be reviewed.

To the east of the Parkway, new built features (buildings, structures, storage areas, or circulation features) should not be added south of the entrance road into the Park Administration Complex. Any new additions north of the entrance road should be placed behind the staff residences to minimize their visibility. Any additions to the public works area should not expand southward onto the prairie to minimize their visibility.

Built features that are no longer needed should be removed, and the land rehabilitated as prairie or forest.

#### *Boyes House and Orchard*

The Boyes House was evaluated in the CLI as not individually eligible for listing in the National Register. However, the building is the only surviving built feature from the Harris and Boyes Ranch Era. The house should be maintained and protected and should be managed as a cultural resource. Repairs and alterations should follow the Secretary of the Interior's Rehabilitation Standards.

The remaining trees in the orchard are the only vegetation feature that remain to represent the agricultural activities of the Harris and Boyes Ranch Era, and these trees should be maintained and protected. Refer to Figure 24 for the location of these trees. The orchard, when more intact, contributed to the setting for the Boyes House and created a distinction between the house and its yard and that of the broader prairie. The orchard reduced the visibility of the house from the Parkway and from the Campground to the west. The orchard also reduced the visibility of the public works buildings after this complex was constructed in the late 1940s to the east of the Boyes House. Options to rehabilitate the orchard to restore the setting around the Boyes House, buffer views, and to provide interpretive opportunities for historic agricultural activities at Elk Prairie should be reviewed. If rehabilitating the orchard is not feasible, the remaining orchard trees should be perpetuated through genetic stock cuttings.

#### *Split Rail Fence along Parkway*

A split rail fence along both sides of the Parkway has been part of the Elk Prairie landscape since the CCC era. The fence contributes to the spatial organization of the Elk Prairie landscape by defining the edge of the prairie in relationship to the Parkway. A split rail fence in this location should be maintained and protected. The extant fence has a different design (three rails held in place by wire between two posts at both ends of each section) than the original CCC-era fence

(five rails held in place by wire between four posts at both ends of each section). If the current fence is replaced, a new split rail fence should be constructed using the CCC-era design.

#### *Stone Camp Stoves in the Picnic Area*

The stone camp stoves in the Picnic Area are in various states of disrepair. These stoves should be protected and stabilized.

The exact date when the stone camp stoves in the Picnic Area were constructed was not determined. The designs for these camp stoves are similar to those from the CCC era. However, these stoves were not shown on topographic surveys from 1948 and 1950 that identified the location of CCC-era campsite features and do not appear to have been built by the CCC in their current location.<sup>189</sup> It is possible that CCC-era stoves were moved to this location after the CCC-era campsites were demolished in the 1960s and early 1970s. Or these stoves may have been constructed, after the 1950s, by DPR using a design that is similar to the CCC era stoves. Additional research and a field review should be undertaken to try to determine the date of construction and builder for these camp stoves.

#### *General Recommendations for Small-Scale Features*

Small-scale features such as benches and signs should only be placed along the edge of the prairie in locations and in numbers that limit their visual and physical presence in relationship to the prairie. For example, the wooden benches that are currently along the western edge of the prairie next to Prairie Creek Road are a limited visual and physical presence in relationship to the prairie.

Small-scale features that are in disrepair (like the concrete picnic tables in the Picnic Area) should be repaired or removed.

Small-scale features that are no longer functional (like the wooden light bollards along one of the day-use trails leading to the Campfire Center or outdated interpretive signage) should be removed.

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<sup>189</sup> DNR and DBP, "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Topo of Campground Area Near Headquarters," 11 February 1948, and "Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Campground Area, Topo," 25 June 1950, California State Parks Headquarters Collection.

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**APPENDIX A:**  
**Enlarged Figures**  
**(Figures 16 and 17)**



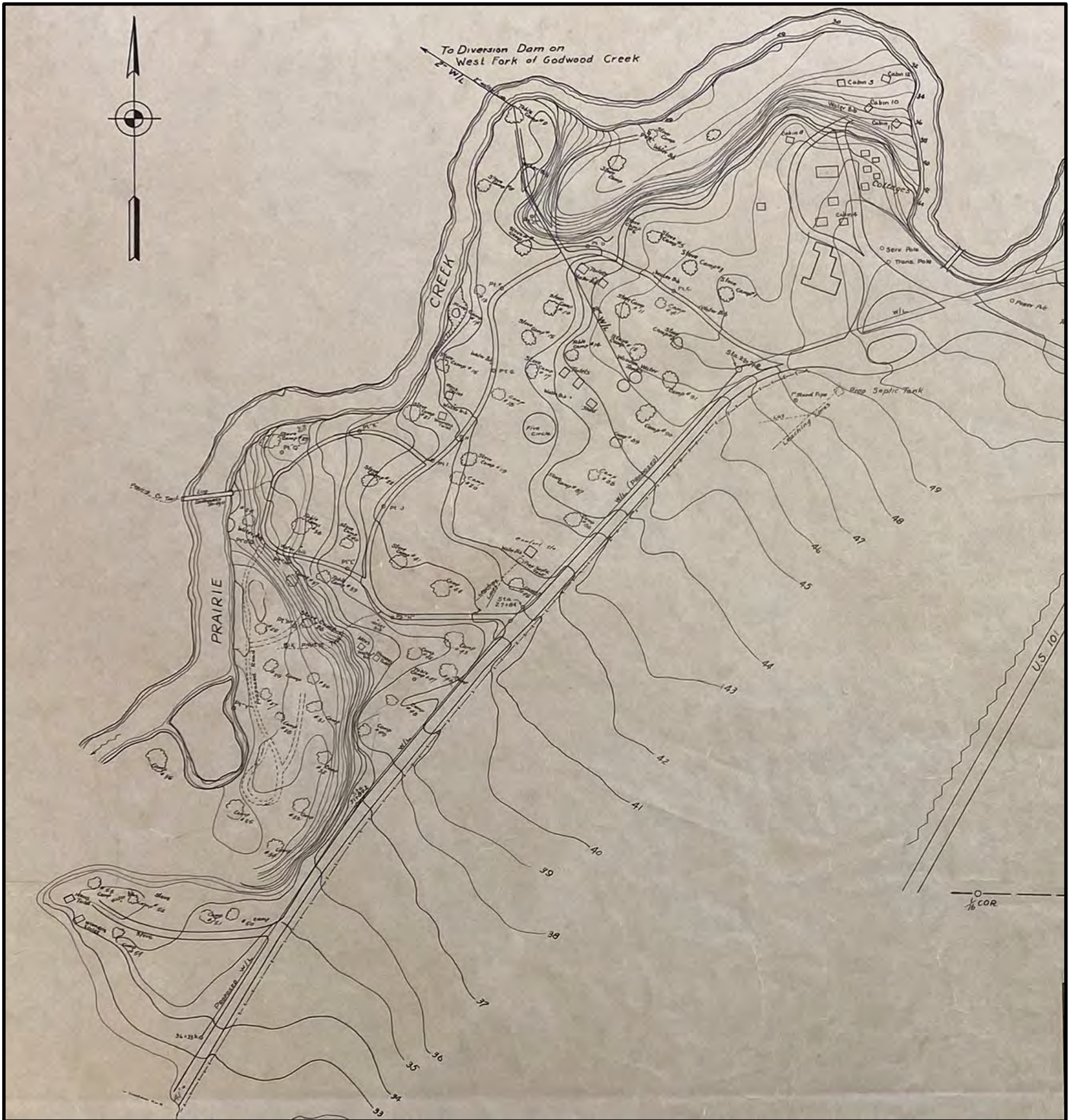


Figure 16. Location of cabins, campsites, roads, and other features at the CCC-era campground before any post-World War II construction had occurred, as shown on 1948 topographic survey. Source: California State Parks Headquarters Collection.





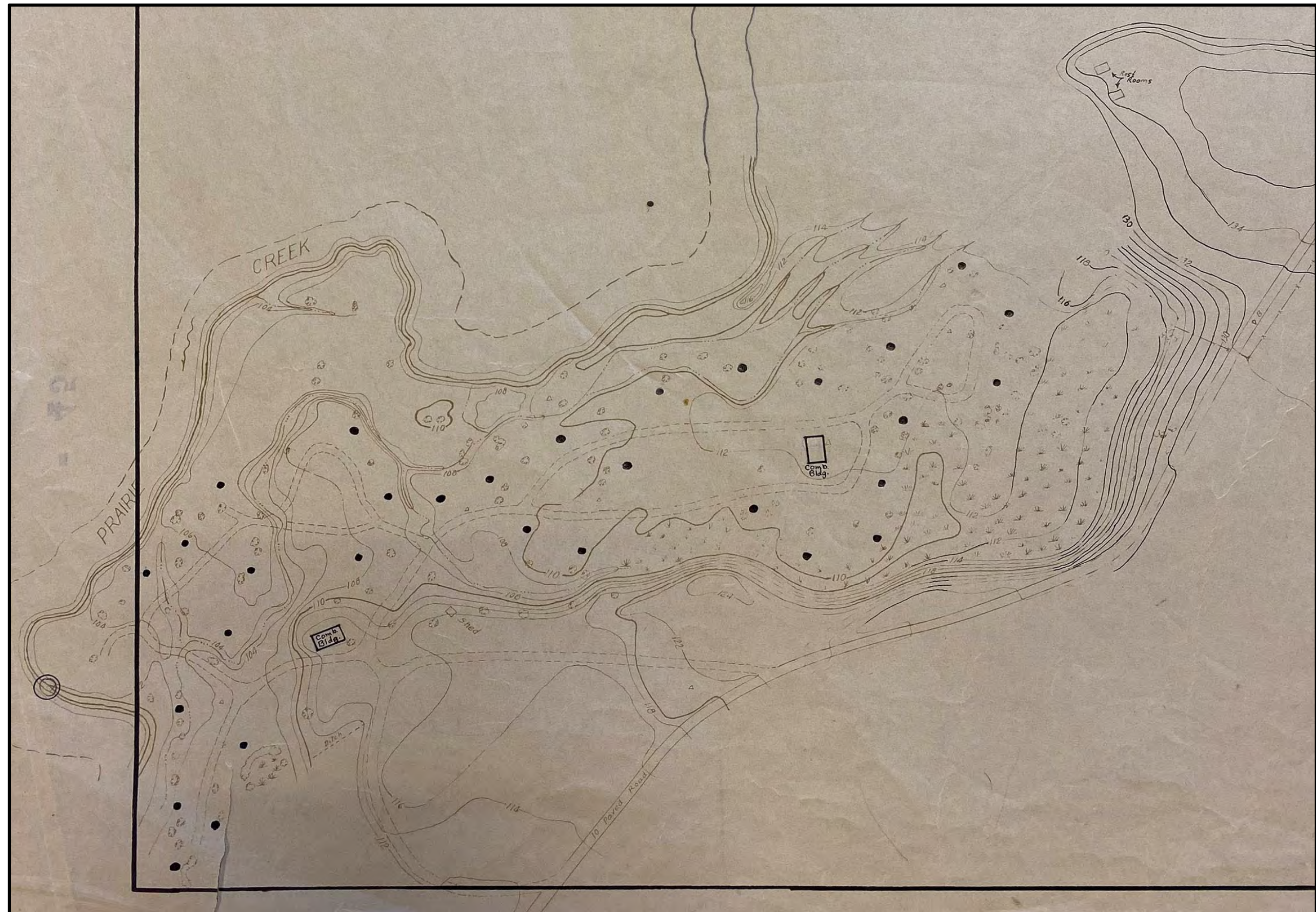


Figure 17. Location of roads, campsites, and other features as shown on 1950 topographic survey after the addition of the second campground in 1949. Source: California State Parks Headquarters Collection.