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National Park Service  
Cultural Landscapes Inventory  
2011



Elkwallow  
Shenandoah National Park

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## Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

### Inventory Summary

#### The Cultural Landscapes Inventory Overview:

##### CLI General Information:

###### Purpose and Goals of the CLI

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

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

###### Scope of the CLI

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

treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

**Inventory Unit Description:**

Elkwallow is a recreation and visitor service area within the boundaries of the 196,000-acre Shenandoah National Park (NP) in Virginia. The site encompasses around twenty-one acres and is located at Mile Post 24.0 along the 105-mile Skyline Drive, a designated National Historic Landmark District that traces the park's ridgeline and offers panoramic views of the Piedmont Plain to the east and Shenandoah Valley to the west. In addition to the beauty offered by the Skyline Drive views, Elkwallow serves as a popular trailhead to the Appalachian Trail that passes nearby.

Elkwallow is comprised of two distinct but adjacent areas—a picnic area and a wayside station—connected by a path and located on the north side of the Skyline Drive. The picnic grounds are situated on a picturesque knoll that rises to an elevation of around 2,440 feet and slopes gently to the east, north, and west. The surrounding forest extends into the area and provides a mature canopy of trees overhead, but admits enough sunlight to support some areas of grass and scattered masses of shrubs. The picnic spots are accessed by a one-way loop road and series of parking lots that connect to winding asphalt paths. A one-story log comfort station built in 1935 by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) is located at the north end of the picnic grounds, and nearby is smaller non-historic year-round privy. Historic stone water fountains are located along the paths, around which are the familiar elements of a picnic area, including picnic tables and grills.

The wayside station is centered around a one-and-a-half-story wayside building, constructed by the park concessioner in 1938. Designed by Marcellus Wright, Jr., the building represents the rustic style developed by the National Park Service (NPS) that blended new construction into the landscape using native materials and traditional construction methods. To the northwest of the wayside building is a former guest cabin moved from Dickey Ridge that now serves as a concessioner office. Nearby are gasoline pumps, a gas station office, and a restroom building. Parking lots are located northeast and west of the wayside building, and next to the gas station. Travelers can still purchase meals, camp supplies, and gifts in the wayside building, and relax on a sunny patio and lawn on its south side or in shady picnic spots on the north side. The wayside area also offers ice, vending machines, and a public telephone.

**HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**

Prior to its establishment, the Shenandoah National Park area was inhabited by Native Americans and later settled by European immigrants beginning in the early 1700s and reaching its peak in the nineteenth century. Homesteads were established where families raised a variety of crops and fruit trees and kept pastures for cattle grazing. In the early part of the 1900s, several environmental disasters occurred, diminishing the economic livelihood of many area residents. The chestnut blight brought catastrophic change to the forest ecosystem, decimating chestnut trees that once made up twenty percent of the forest. Chestnuts were a food source for animals and could also be sold for cash. The bark was used for tanning, and the wood was used in the construction of telephone poles, railroad ties, wheel rims, and tools. In addition, the region experienced a severe drought in 1930 causing crops and the apple harvest to fail.

Concurrent with the agricultural uses of the mountains were recreational uses, which had begun as early as 1830 with the construction of Black Springs Hotel and the development of Stony Man Camp (later Skyland) in 1894. In 1924, the idea of establishing a national park in the region came about when the U.S. Secretary of the Interior formed the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee, which recognized the potential of locating a scenic drive atop the Blue Ridge Mountains in northern Virginia with dramatic views of the Shenandoah Valley to the west and the Piedmont Plain to the east. In 1926, Congress authorized Shenandoah NP to provide a large, western-type park accessible from the urban centers of the East Coast. However, the act did not provide federal funding to acquire land for the park. Until the park was officially established in 1935, lands were acquired through private donations and funding from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The need to provide economic relief and jobs to the region, already suffering from the crop failures and droughts as well as the Great Depression, moved forward the plan to make the Shenandoah area more accessible by building the motor road. The construction of this road, Skyline Drive, began in 1931 through the coordinated efforts of the National Park Service and the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Public Roads. As part of his New Deal legislation, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt established the CCC in 1933 to help create jobs through natural resource conservation efforts on federal, state, and municipal properties. At Shenandoah, the CCC was involved in erosion control, planting trees and shrubs, and the construction of site amenities at developed areas along the drive, including trails, shelters, overlooks, parking lots, picnic tables, fireplaces, drinking fountains, and other site furnishings. Construction of Skyline Drive occurred in three phases, starting with the Central District, then the North District followed by the South District. Clearing operations in the North District began in mid-August 1934, and the grade finishing operations were completed in September 1935.

Development of Elkwallow began in 1935 as a picnic area, one of several—along with Dickey Ridge, Pinnacles (formerly Sexton Knoll), Big Meadows, Lewis Mountain, and South River—built at convenient intervals along Skyline Drive to allow visitors to experience the park's natural surroundings. The picnic grounds were accessed by a one-way road that looped northward from the drive around a picturesque knoll. Three parking areas were set out on the east, north, and west sides of the access road. Picnic spots were located off of the road and throughout the interior space created by the loop, where the CCC constructed of a rustic style comfort station. The CCC also built a series of meandering paths throughout the grounds and around several picturesque rock outcroppings. The site's rustic and naturalistic setting was enhanced by using stone for steps, drinking fountains, and fireplaces, as well as logs for guardrails. CCC workers planted trees in clusters to create more shady areas. Within a few years, the west parking lot was enlarged and several new paths and picnic spots were added.

Early plans for the Elkwallow picnic grounds also proposed a lunch stand, but this idea was abandoned when the Virginia Sky-Line Company was awarded the park's concessionaire contract in 1937. By this time, Elkwallow was envisioned as one of four multi-use developments aimed at providing expanded services to motorists along Skyline Drive. Overnight facilities, including lodges and cabins, and dining rooms were planned for Skyland, the resort formerly owned by George Freeman Pollock, and at new sites at Big Meadows, Dickey Ridge, and Lewis Mountain. Wayside stations—having a cafeteria,

## Elkwallow

### Shenandoah National Park

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store, service station, and restrooms—were established adjacent to the drive at Elkwallow and Big Meadows. The concessionaire hired a Richmond architect named Marcellus Wright, Jr. to design their facilities, which used native materials and followed principles of rustic park planning and design principles promoted by the National Park Service. This design style aimed to blend new construction into the surrounding landscape.

In 1938, in an area east of the picnic grounds, the concessionaire completed the Elkwallow wayside area, which was sited to work with the natural topography while also easily accessible for motorists off of Skyline Drive. A main building facing the drive housed dining services and a gift shop, and was surrounded by lawns with scattered trees and shrubs. Wright designed the one-and-a-half story frame building, which featured local stone and wood, flitched siding, and a large stone fireplace. Two entrance/exits provided access to the wayside area and formed a loop at the rear of the building, which provided access to gas pumps, a parking lot, and a concessioner office. The wayside area and picnic grounds had separate vehicular entrances, but were connected by a path.

After the U.S. entered World War II, development of the park was suspended and visitation plummeted as fuel shortages curbed opportunities for leisurely drives and people were encouraged to conserve resources for the war effort. This forced the closure of the park's concession facilities. After the war, the concession facilities re-opened, but business remained slow. In the early 1950s, the declining use of guest cabins at nearby Dickey Ridge resulted in the concessioner relocating the cabins, including two to Elkwallow. One of the cabins, also designed by Wright, remains on site today as a concessioner office called Birch Cabin.

In the 1960s, the park made improvements to the gas station area, adding a restroom building and office north of the gas pumps. Between 1992 and 1994, the gas pumps were replaced and relocated farther to the north, on the north side of the gas station buildings. The old pumps and loop road were replaced with paths, picnic tables, lawns, and trees. A new loop was created from the original parking lot to the new gas pumps and a second new parking lot almost twice as big as the original lot. The new parking lot also featured a center median and, unlike the original parking lot, was clearly visible from Skyline Drive.

No major changes have occurred at the Elkwallow picnic grounds, except for the removal of stone fireplaces and the replacement of site furniture, and the paving of some of the pathways with asphalt. In 1992, the park reshingled the wayside building, and in the early 2000s restored the picnic grounds comfort station while also making it universally accessible. Overall, the layout of both the picnic grounds and wayside area remain much as they were during the period of historic significance.

#### SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

Elkwallow is within the boundaries of the Skyline Drive Historic District, which was designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL) on October 6, 2008. Skyline Drive, with its adjoining overlooks, waysides, picnic areas, campgrounds, and developed areas, is nationally significant under NHL Criterion 1 and 4. The period of significance for the Skyline Drive Historic District is 1931-1952. Construction

of Skyline Drive began in 1931 and occurred in three distinct phases, and extended to 1952, which recognizes the small amount of work done to complete the guardwalls after World War II and some minor changes that were in keeping with the 1930s plans. Elkwallow is within the boundaries of the Skyline Drive Historic District, and therefore shares the same areas and period of significance.

For the purposes of this Cultural Landscape Inventory, the historic significance of Elkwallow is evaluated according to the National Register criteria A and C, which align with NHL Criterion 1 and 4, respectively. Elkwallow is nationally significant under National Register Criterion A in the areas of entertainment/recreation and politics/government for its association with Shenandoah NP as one of the first eastern national parks and is associated with the early twentieth century movement to accommodate the growing popularity of the automobile while also conserving natural and scenic areas. Skyline Drive was created as a recreational park road that provided motorists with a shifting panorama of the Blue Ridge Mountains, the Shenandoah Valley, and the Piedmont. Located off Skyline Drive in the North District of the park, Elkwallow offered motorists the opportunity to stop over and get gas, have a meal, buy gifts, or go picnicking. Elkwallow is also associated with federal government efforts to mitigate widespread unemployment during the Great Depression through work programs, most notably the CCC that constructed many of the site amenities along Skyline Drive and throughout Shenandoah NP.

Elkwallow is also nationally significant under Criterion C in the areas of architecture and landscape architecture for its association with the rustic style developed by the NPS in the 1930s and 1940s. This style emphasized preserving existing landscapes and restoring landscapes altered by man to their original condition, using native vegetation. It also emphasized the incorporation of scenic views in the layout of buildings and circulation features and sited them to be as inconspicuous as possible. The NPS also encouraged the use of local materials and building traditions in the construction of buildings, structures, and site furnishings. Though built separately, the overall layouts of the Elkwallow picnic grounds and wayside area conformed to the existing topography as much as possible and highlighted natural features, such as rock outcroppings. Parking areas were integrated with the vehicular circulation, which curved and looped through both areas to blend with the topography. Pedestrian pathways weaved through the site linking parking areas to the picnic grounds and the wayside. Trees were planted in clusters at the picnic grounds and wayside area to provide shade and screening. In addition, specimen trees and foundation plantings were installed around the wayside building. Buildings, structures, and other site furnishings were constructed of wood and stone from the region.

#### ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION SUMMARY AND CONDITION

The physical integrity of Elkwallow is evaluated by comparing landscape characteristics and features present during the period of significance (1931-1952) with current conditions. Many of the site's historic characteristics and features are unchanged. The locations of the picnic grounds on a secluded picturesque knoll and of the adjacent wayside area next to Skyline Drive continues to reveal the original intent of the National Park Service (NPS) and the Virginia Sky-Line Company to provide recreation and amenities to passing motorists. The circulation layout, siting of buildings, and local building traditions reflect the NPS rustic design style, which aimed to harmonize new construction with the surrounding

landscape. Access roads, parking areas, and pathways remain much as they did during the period of significance. The original comfort station built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and the wayside building and concessioner office (formerly a guest cabin) designed by Marcellus Wright, Jr., retain integrity in their overall exterior designs with subsequent renovations using similar materials and workmanship. The design of site furnishings using local stone and wood to blend in with the natural surroundings can still be seen in the stacked stone and boulder water fountains, stone steps, and granite curbing. Although panoramic views were not intended at Elkwallow, partial views of the surrounding mountains are still possible from some of the shady picnic spots nestled amongst the trees in the picnic grounds or from the patio and lawn areas at the wayside area.

Since 1952, the picnic grounds have changed very little except for the replacement of the stone fireplaces with metal grills, the loss of the log guardrails, the alteration of a few sections of the path system, and the relocation of a pit toilet. Portions of the wayside area have been altered with the addition of a gas station office and restroom building, relocation of the gas pumps, and a reconfiguration of the loop road, but these changes have not negatively affected the area. However, the presence of a new parking lot west of the wayside building does alter the historic view between Skyline Drive and the wayside area. The growth of CCC-planted vegetation and natural succession have affected both the picnic grounds and the wayside area, but is in keeping with the historic design intent, which was to encourage the landscape to return to a more forested environment. Although the picnic tables, entrance signs, and directional/informational signs at Elkwallow are not historic, they are compatible in keeping with the historic designs. Other non-historic features such as interpretive signs, vending and ice machines, public telephones, fences, culverts, retaining walls, trash cans, dumpsters, and recycling bins are generally inconspicuous in the landscape. More elaborate alterations have occurred inside the buildings to accommodate accessibility requirements or adaptive uses.

The condition of the Elkwallow landscape at the time of this report's completion is evaluated as "good." The vehicular circulation system has been well maintained through repaving, although those in the wayside area are due for rehabilitation. The original pedestrian paths in the picnic grounds are currently in poor condition. The surviving historic small scale features, including the drinking fountains and stone curbing, are in good condition. Both the comfort station and the wayside have been well maintained. In addition, the trees that were originally planted at the picnic grounds and around the wayside have grown in and are well maintained, although some of the plantings around the wayside have been removed.

**Site Plan**



### Property Level and CLI Numbers

<b>Inventory Unit Name:</b>	Elkwallow
<b>Property Level:</b>	Component Landscape
<b>CLI Identification Number:</b>	300123
<b>Parent Landscape:</b>	300115

### Park Information

<b>Park Name and Alpha Code:</b>	Shenandoah National Park -SHEN
<b>Park Organization Code:</b>	4840
<b>Park Administrative Unit:</b>	Shenandoah National Park

### CLI Hierarchy Description

Elkwallow is one of nine component landscapes of the Skyline Drive landscape. They include Big Meadows, Dickey Ridge, Lewis Mountain, Piney River, Pinnacles, Skyland, South River Picnic Grounds, Simmons Gap, and Skyline Drive (North District, Central District, and South District). Shenandoah National Park includes four other landscapes and three component landscapes:

- Rapidan Camp landscape
- Headquarters landscape
- Appalachian Trail landscape with component landscapes: Appalachian Trail North District, Appalachian Trail Central District, and Appalachian Trail South District.



*Hierarchy Description. Illustration of the Skyline Drive component landscapes (PHSO 2002).*

## Concurrence Status

**Inventory Status:** Complete

### Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

Field work for Elkwallow was conducted by Allison Crosbie and Michael Commisso of the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation (OCLP) in Boston, Massachusetts in the spring of 2011. Additional work on the report was done by Jeff Killion (OCLP). Archival research at the park was accomplished with the assistance of Kandace Muller, Museum Specialist. GIS information was provided by the park's GIS Specialist, Dan Hurlburt. The park's Cultural Resource Manager is Ann Kain. She can be reached at 540-999-3500, x3435.

### Concurrence Status:

<b>Park Superintendent Concurrence:</b>	Yes
<b>Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:</b>	09/06/2011
<b>Date of Concurrence Determination:</b>	10/06/2008

### Concurrence Graphic Information:

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES INVENTORY  
CONCURRENCE FORM

Elkwallow  
Shenandoah National Park

Shenandoah National Park concurs with the findings of the Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) for Elkwallow including the following specific components:

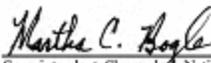
MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: Must Be Preserved and Maintained  
CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Good

**Good:** indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

**Fair:** indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

**Poor:** indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The Cultural Landscape Inventory for Elkwallow is hereby approved and accepted.

  
Superintendent, Shenandoah National Park

  
Date

*Park concurrence was received on September 6, 2011.*

## Geographic Information & Location Map

### Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

Elkwallow is located off Mile Post 24 on Skyline Drive. For the purposes of this Cultural Landscape Inventory, the boundaries are described as extending from Skyline Drive and northward to 125 feet beyond the looping access road in the picnic grounds and 125 feet beyond the parking areas in the wayside area.

The boundary of Elkwallow is consistent with existing National Register and National Historic Landmark documentation for the Skyline Drive Historic District, the boundary is described as 125 feet on either side of the drive's centerline, creating a 250-foot right-of-way. At picnic grounds and wayside areas such as Elkwallow, the boundary widens. In both the April 1997 and the October 2008 documentation, the boundary for Elkwallow is described as extending 125 feet beyond picnic ground roads and wayside parking areas.

### State and County:

**State:** VA

**County:** Page County

**Size (Acres):** 21.00

**Boundary UTMS:**

<b>Source:</b>	USGS Map 1:24,000
<b>Type of Point:</b>	Area
<b>Datum:</b>	NAD 83
<b>UTM Zone:</b>	17
<b>UTM Easting:</b>	4,290,990
<b>UTM Northing:</b>	733,910
<b>Source:</b>	USGS Map 1:24,000
<b>Type of Point:</b>	Area
<b>Datum:</b>	NAD 83
<b>UTM Zone:</b>	17
<b>UTM Easting:</b>	4,290,920
<b>UTM Northing:</b>	733,720
<b>Source:</b>	USGS Map 1:24,000
<b>Type of Point:</b>	Area
<b>Datum:</b>	NAD 83
<b>UTM Zone:</b>	17
<b>UTM Easting:</b>	4,291,060
<b>UTM Northing:</b>	733,560
<b>Source:</b>	USGS Map 1:24,000
<b>Type of Point:</b>	Area
<b>Datum:</b>	NAD 83
<b>UTM Zone:</b>	17
<b>UTM Easting:</b>	4,290,890
<b>UTM Northing:</b>	733,600

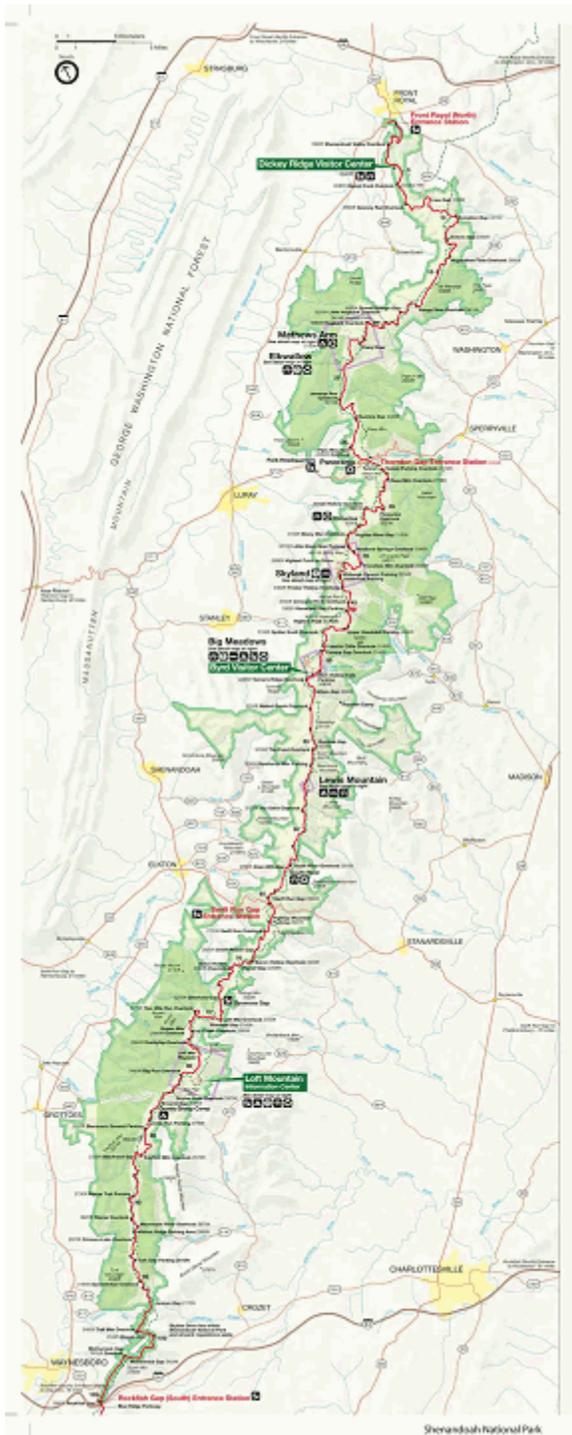
**Location Map:**



*Location Map Information. Shenandoah National Park is located in northwest Virginia (Map courtesy of Great Outdoors Recreation pages).*

Elkwallow  
Shenandoah National Park

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*Location Map Information. Map of Shenandoah National Park. Elkwallow is in the North District, south of the Dickey Ridge Visitor Center (Shenandoah NP website, <http://www.nps.gov/shen/planyourvisit/upload/.jpg>).*

**Regional Context:**

**Type of Context:** Cultural

**Description:**

Elkwallow is part of Shenandoah NP, where recreation is the primary cultural use. In the surrounding region, tourism is a significant industry. Agriculture, particularly poultry production, is the main industry to the west, with convenient north-south access via Interstate 81 and Route 340. Suburban development in the Washington D.C.-Baltimore metropolitan area dominates the east, with east-west access via Interstate 66 and Routes 7, 50, and 211.

**Type of Context:** Physiographic

**Description:**

Elkwallow is located on a knoll along the ridgeline of the Blue Ridge Mountains within Shenandoah National Park (NP), with its highest elevations near Skyline Drive, between 2420 and 2440 feet. South and east of Elkwallow is Hogback Mountain (3474 feet) and Pignut Mountain (2570 feet). The site is within the watershed of the Jeremy's Run, which empties into the South Fork of the Shenandoah River (see Regional Landscape Context graphic).

Elkwallow  
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*Regional Landscape Context. Elkwallow is located in the North District of Shenandoah National Park in Virginia (Shenandoah NP website, <http://www.nps.gov/shen/planyourvisit/upload/north.jpg>).*

**Type of Context:** Political

**Description:**

In 1926, Congress first authorized Shenandoah NP but without funds for land purchases. In the following years, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt was responsible for programs and initiatives to aid the unemployed, reform businesses and financial practices, and assist in the recovery of the economy during the Great Depression. These programs were collectively known as the New Deal, and a critical aspect of the initiative for Shenandoah NP was the use of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) to develop and construct many of the park's features, including the Elkwallow. Congress officially established the park in 1935 from land purchased through private donations and by the Commonwealth of Virginia. The construction of the Elkwallow picnic grounds beginning in 1935 and the Elkwallow wayside area beginning in 1937 exemplifies the rustic design principles used by the National Park Service for developed areas along Skyline Drive and executed through the CCC's labor efforts, and in collaboration with the park's concessioner, the Virginia Sky-Line Company.

Elkwallow  
Shenandoah National Park

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**Management Unit:** North District

**Tract Numbers:** 16 (portion)  
17 (portion)  
18 (portion)

## Management Information

### General Management Information

**Management Category:** Must be Preserved and Maintained

**Management Category Date:** 09/06/2011

#### Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

Elkwallow falls within the management category, "Must Be Preserved and Maintained," because it is nationally significant as defined by National Historic Landmark (NHL) criteria. The site is within the boundaries of the Skyline Drive Historic District, which was designated as a National Historic Landmark on October 6, 2008. The district meets NHL criteria 1 and 4.

#### NPS Legal Interest:

**Type of Interest:** Fee Simple

#### Public Access:

**Type of Access:** Other Restrictions

#### Explanatory Narrative:

Skyline Drive, the only public road through the park, is periodically closed during inclement weather and at night during deer hunting season. Visitors can still enter the park on foot to hike even when the road is closed. The Elkwallow wayside building and picnic grounds are closed from early November to around April 15, depending on the weather.

## Adjacent Lands Information

**Do Adjacent Lands Contribute?** No

#### Adjacent Lands Description:

Elkwallow is located within Shenandoah National Park (NP) and is surrounded by a vast, forested area of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Along the mountainous spine of the park runs Skyline Drive, providing the only public vehicular access to the site. Elkwallow is located in the North District of Shenandoah NP along a ridge with elevations rising up to 2,440 feet. Although lands beyond the park's boundaries comprise views from the drive, only limited views of the surrounding mountaintops adjacent to the site were present during the historic period.

## National Register Information

### Existing National Register Status

#### National Register Landscape Documentation:

Entered Documented

#### National Register Explanatory Narrative:

Elkwallow is within the boundaries of the Skyline Drive Historic District in Shenandoah National Park (NP). On October 6, 2008, the district was designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL) under NHL Criterion 1 and 4, with the period of significance extending from 1931 to 1952. The areas of significance were identified as community planning and development, conservation, entertainment/recreation, politics/government, social history, architecture, engineering, and landscape architecture. In the NHL documentation, Elkwallow is described as two contributing sites: a picnic grounds and a wayside.

The NHL documentation is consistent with the National Register of Historic Places documentation for the historic district, entered on April 28, 1997. The drive's resources were identified by their corresponding mile post markers through this effort, as well as through two boundary increases to the historic district on September 19, 1997 and December 5, 2003. Significance was identified under Criterion A in the areas of community planning/development, conservation, entertainment/recreation, politics/government, social history, and transportation, and Criterion C in the areas of architecture, engineering, and landscape architecture, for the period of 1931 to 1952. The Elkwallow wayside (Mile Post 24.0) is described as a contributing structure that retains its historic appearance and functions despite some alterations in the 1960s. The gift shop/cafeteria is listed as a contributing building. The Elkwallow picnic grounds (Mile Post 24.2-24.3) is described as a contributing structure comprised of a circular loop road with two entrances; parking on the north, east, and west sides; asphalt paths; a CCC-constructed log comfort station; fireplaces; fountains; and picnic tables. The comfort station is listed as a contributing building, while a boulder water fountain and stacked rock water fountain are listed as contributing objects.

According to research conducted for this CLI and the categories of National Register documentation outlined in the "CLI Professional Procedures Guide," the areas and periods of significance for Elkwallow are adequately documented in existing National Historic Landmark and National Register of Historic Places documentation. The existing documentation also adequately describes the site's numerous historic resources that contribute to its significance. Therefore, for purposes of the CLI, Elkwallow is considered "Entered-Documented."

#### Existing NRIS Information:

<b>Name in National Register:</b>	Skyline Drive Historic District
<b>NRIS Number:</b>	97000375
<b>Primary Certification Date:</b>	10/06/2008

### National Register Eligibility

<b>Contributing/Individual:</b>	Contributing
<b>National Register Classification:</b>	District
<b>Significance Level:</b>	National
<b>Significance Criteria:</b>	A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history
<b>Significance Criteria:</b>	C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values
<b>Period of Significance:</b>	
<b>Time Period:</b>	AD 1931 - 1952
<b>Historic Context Theme:</b>	Expressing Cultural Values
<b>Subtheme:</b>	Landscape Architecture
<b>Facet:</b>	The 1930's: Era Of Public Works
<b>Time Period:</b>	AD 1931 - 1952
<b>Historic Context Theme:</b>	Creating Social Institutions and Movements
<b>Subtheme:</b>	Recreation
<b>Facet:</b>	General Recreation
<b>Time Period:</b>	AD 1931 - 1952
<b>Historic Context Theme:</b>	Transforming the Environment
<b>Subtheme:</b>	Conservation of Natural Resources
<b>Facet:</b>	The Great Depression And Conservation
<b>Time Period:</b>	AD 1931 - 1952
<b>Historic Context Theme:</b>	Developing the American Economy
<b>Subtheme:</b>	Transportation by Land and Air
<b>Facet:</b>	Carriage Roads, Touring Roads and Parkways

**Area of Significance:**

<b>Area of Significance Category:</b>	Architecture
<b>Area of Significance Category:</b>	Entertainment - Recreation
<b>Area of Significance Category:</b>	Landscape Architecture
<b>Area of Significance Category:</b>	Politics - Government

**Statement of Significance:**

Shenandoah NP was one of the first and largest national parks established in the eastern United States, and raised national and regional awareness of the importance of the government’s role in preserving large portions of the environment for public recreation and enjoyment. From the park’s early history, a key feature has been Skyline Drive, designed and constructed primarily from 1930 to 1942, which traces the mountaintop ridges and offers panoramic views of the Piedmont to the east and the Shenandoah Valley to the west. As stated in the National Historic Landmark (NHL) documentation, Skyline Drive, with its adjoining overlooks, waysides, picnic areas, campgrounds, and developed areas, is nationally significant under NHL criteria 1 and 4:

“Because of the pivotal role that the Skyline Drive Historic District played in the history of the national park system and the evolution of park road design, federal policies in conservation and recreation, and the employment of relief measures of the New Deal, Skyline Drive is nationally significant under the NHL theme Transforming the Environment. For its exemplary expression of the principles and practices of National Park Service road design, landscape naturalization, and rustic architectural design and as a showcase of the landscape conservation work of the Civilian Conservation Corps, the park road and its associated features are also nationally important under the theme Expressing Cultural Values (planning, landscape architecture, and architecture).”

The NHL documentation identifies the period of significance for Skyline Drive Historic District as 1931-1952. Construction of the road began in 1931 and occurred in three distinct phases, and extended to 1952, which recognizes the small amount of work done to complete the guardwalls after World War II and some minor changes that were in keeping with the 1930s plans. While construction of the Elkwallow developed area did not begin until 1935, the site is within the boundaries of the Skyline Drive Historic District, and therefore shares the same areas and period of significance.

For the purposes of this CLI, the significance of the landscape is evaluated according to National Register Criterion A, which corresponds to NHL Criterion 1, and National Register Criterion C, which corresponds to NHL Criterion 4. As such, Elkwallow is nationally significant under Criterion A in the areas of entertainment/recreation and politics/government, and nationally significant under Criterion C in the areas of architecture and landscape architecture.

#### NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERION A

Elkwallow is nationally significant under Criterion A for its association with Shenandoah NP. The park is significant in part as one of the first eastern national parks, and is associated with the twentieth century movement to develop national parks for public enjoyment and to conserve natural features and scenic areas as public parks. The park was one of two national parks in the Southern Appalachians authorized by Congress in 1926 and established in the 1930s through the acquisition and donation of land by the states in which they were located. Shenandoah NP is also associated with efforts of the federal government to provide economic relief in the form of employment for both skilled and unskilled labor during the Great Depression. These efforts included a special allocation in 1931 for drought relief funds for road construction in national parks, and the extensive economic relief programs of the New Deal era (1933 to 1942) which included the CCC, Public Works Administration (PWA), and Works Progress Administration (WPA), and Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). The programs not only promoted economic stability but also reflected the social-humanitarian purposes of the New Deal by advancing the conservation of natural areas and expanding the recreational resources of the nation, while creating employment for thousands of skilled and unskilled workers. Elkwallow typifies the work of CCC laborers who were employed to install trees and other plantings and construct site amenities including a log comfort station, pathways, fireplaces, picnic tables, drinking fountains, and stone steps. The park also represents the increasing popularity of recreational motoring in the United States in the 1920s and 1930s and the evolving design of national park facilities to attract and accommodate increasing numbers of visitors who were visiting the parks by automobile. Elkwallow was one of several wayside stations incorporated at regular intervals along Skyline Drive offering visitors the opportunity to buy gasoline and food, use rest rooms, or just stop to rest and enjoy the scenery. Elkwallow retains sufficient integrity to convey the site's significance to the entertainment/recreation and politics/government themes.

#### NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERION C

Elkwallow is nationally significant under Criterion C in the areas of architecture and landscape architecture for its association with the rustic design style developed by the NPS and implemented by the CCC. In the rustic design style, constructed features utilized labor-intensive methods that created a rugged, frontier-like quality appropriate to a wilderness setting. Though general design standards remained the same throughout the NPS, features were typically customized with local materials, such as stone or wood, to fit the environment in which they were constructed. At Shenandoah NP, the rustic design style echoed the early regional building traditions of the Blue Ridge Mountains and conveyed the nineteenth-century rusticity of the region.

Elkwallow was one of the picnic areas incorporated at regular intervals along Skyline Drive. Built in 1935-1936, the picnic ground's circulation features were laid out as a response to the site's topography and natural features, and provided easy access to shady picnic sites. A log comfort station and stone water fountains incorporated local materials and methods of construction. New trees and shrubs were planted in the lawn areas to provide additional shade and screening. In 1937-1938, the Virginia

Sky-Line Company, Inc., the park's concessioner, built a wayside station comprised of a cafeteria, store, service station, and restrooms just east of the picnic grounds. Although the wayside area was easily accessible from Skyline Drive, parking and other services were located behind the buildings to make the development less intrusive. Marcellus Wright, Jr., a Richmond architect, was hired to design this and other park concession facilities, which used native materials and followed principles of rustic park architecture promoted by the NPS. The development of the facility was coordinated with the NPS, accommodated in the park's master plan, and received the technical assistance from the park service engineers and landscape architects. The Civilian Conservation Corps also assisted the development of the wayside areas by constructing roads, paths, and parking lots. The picnic grounds and wayside area each had their own access road, but were connected by a path.

Elkwallow retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance to the architecture and landscape architecture themes. Resources that illustrate the rustic design philosophy include the layout and design of the 1935 log comfort station, 1938 wayside building, 1939 concession office (formerly a guest cabin), looped access roads, parking areas, meandering paths, and site furnishings. Plantings by the CCC have matured and blend in with the surrounding forest and provide accent around the wayside, while lawn areas provide shady picnic and resting spots. Original site features, such as stacked rock and boulder water fountains, stone fireplaces, and stone steps also reflect the naturalistic design expression advocated by the NPS. Other furnishings, such as picnic tables and grills, have been updated, but overall are compatible with the historic scene. Although additional parking and gas station structures were added to the wayside area after the historic period, it retains its historic appearance and function.

### State Register Information

**Identification Number:** 69-0234  
**Date Listed:** 07/02/1997  
**Name:** Skyline Drive Historic District

#### Explanatory Narrative:

Elkwallow is part of the Skyline Drive Historic District.

### National Historic Landmark Information

**National Historic Landmark Status:** Yes  
**Date Determined Landmark:** 10/06/2008  
**Landmark Theme:** III. Expressing Cultural Values, VII. Transforming the Environr

### World Heritage Site Information

**World Heritage Site Status:** No

## Chronology & Physical History

### Cultural Landscape Type and Use

**Cultural Landscape Type:** Designed

**Current and Historic Use/Function:**

**Primary Historic Function:** Campground/Picnic Area

**Primary Current Use:** Campground/Picnic Area

<b>Other Use/Function</b>	<b>Other Type of Use or Function</b>
Comfort Station (Latrine)	Both Current And Historic
Concession	Both Current And Historic
Leisure-Passive (Park)	Both Current And Historic
NPS Class III Special Purpose Road	Both Current And Historic
Parking Area	Both Current And Historic

**Current and Historic Names:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Type of Name</b>
Elkwallow	Both Current And Historic
Elk Wallow	Historic

**Ethnographic Study Conducted:** No Survey Conducted

**Ethnographic Significance Description:**

As with most areas of Shenandoah National Park (NP), it is quite possible that Native American tribes used this site at one time. The Monacan and Manahoac tribes used the general park area, but no other information was found on their use of the area currently known as Elkwallow.

**Chronology:**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Annotation</b>
1600 - 900 BC	Established	First human habitation in Blue Ridge Mountains takes place about 11,000 years ago as seasonal encampments.
AD 1000	Established	Native American use of the mountains is mainly for game hunting (Resource Management Plan 1998: 23). The Monacan and Manahoac tribes inhabit the area (Pinnacles CLI 2007:13).

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AD 1669	Explored	Dr. John Lederer, from Germany, is the first European to record exploration in this area of Blue Ridge Mountains, describing a forest full of game and a large open area believed to be Big Meadows (Pinnacles CLI 2007:13).
AD 1700 - 1799	Settled	Immigrants from Tidewater area come to Piedmont region and from Pennsylvania to Shenandoah Valley, leading to the disappearance or departure of Native Americans from the area (Pinnacles CLI 2007:13).
AD 1716	Explored	Alexander Spotswood, Lieutenant Governor of the Colony of Virginia, leads a party across the Blue Ridge to try to extend the boundaries of Virginia and promote trading to the west (Historic Resources Study 1997:7).
AD 1750 - 1830	Settled	Settlers move from lower elevations into mountain hollows, where they pursue farming, grazing, timbering, and hunting game (Pinnacles CLI 2007:13).
AD 1830 - 1839	Established	Recreational use of the mountains begin with the opening of Black Rock Springs Hotel south of Skyline Drive (Historic Resources Study 1997:41).
AD 1894	Built	George Freeman Pollock establishes Stony Man Camp, later named Skyland (Lambert 1979:i).
AD 1924	Established	The Secretary of the Interior assembles Southern Appalachian National Park Committee (SANPC) to study the issues regarding establishing a national park (SHEN website, Historical Overview).
AD 1925	Established	February 21, Congress passes legislation allocating \$20,000 for survey and evaluation of Shenandoah and other parks (SHEN website, Historical Overview).
AD 1926	Established	Congress first authorizes Shenandoah National Park (NP) on May 22, but without funds for land purchases.
AD 1928	Built	The Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) begins building the Appalachian Trail from Thornton Gap to Skyland.
AD 1931	Designed	March 25, map of "Proposed Shenandoah National Park" is issued by the Department of the Interior showing the North District (Engle 2006:34).

	Built	July 18 marks the official groundbreaking of Skyline Drive at Thornton Gap, heading south to Swift Run Gap (NHL Documentation 2008:8).
AD 1933	Established	In December, President Franklin Roosevelt establishes the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and six CCC camps are set up in Shenandoah, (National Register 9/1997, Sec 8:50).
AD 1934	Established	Construction contracts for the North District for grading, drainage, and stone surfacing are advertised (National Register 4/1997, Sec 7:26).
	Established	On June 16, Waugh Brothers is awarded a contract to construct Section 2-A consisting of 9.76 miles of road from Front Royal to Compton Gap (National Register 4/1997, Sec 7:26-27).
	Established	Sammons-Robertson Company is contracted to construct 10.4 miles of Section 2-B on June 16 (National Register 4/1997, Sec 7:27).
	Established	Albert Brothers is awarded the contract for the 10.325 mile long Section 2-C on July 18 (National Register 4/1997, Sec 7:27).
AD 1935	Built	Section 2-A is completed in late summer (National Register 4/1997, Sec 7:27).
	Built	Clearing grubbing operations are started on Section 2-B in July and graded in October (National Register 4/1997, Sec 7:27).
	Built	Clearing and grade finishing operations are completed on Section 2-C by September (National Register 4/1997, Sec 7:27).
	Built	In June, Corson and Gruman Company is awarded the contract to place a road-mix bituminous surface course from Front Royal to Thornton Gap.
	Built	The CCC builds an access road to the Elkwallow picnic grounds from Skyline Drive, twelve feet wide and .3 miles long with angled parking for fourteen cars at the east end (LCS 1997, Elkwallow Picnic Grounds Comfort Station).

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AD 1935 - 1936	Built	The CCC constructs picnic grounds and associated pathways at Elkwallow (NHL Documentation 2008:29).
	Built	The CCC constructs a comfort station at Elkwallow at Mile Post 24, comprised of a 12' by 24' log planks with saddle diamond notch on a stone foundation (LCS 1997, Elkwallow Picnic Grounds Comfort Station).
AD 1935 - 1940	Built	The CCC constructs three water fountains at Elkwallow, including two stacked stone fountains and a boulder fountain (LCS Elkwallow Picnic Grounds Comfort Station).
AD 1935 - 1942	Built	The CCC helps with the Skyline Drive construction and reconstruction of portions of the Appalachian Trail.
AD 1936	Reconstructed	CCC completes relocation and reconstruction of portions of the AT in the North District from Chester to Thornton Gap (AT-North District CLI 2007:32).
	Established	Franklin Roosevelt dedicates Shenandoah NP on July 3.
	Built	By 1936, twenty overlooks are constructed in the North District of Skyline Drive.
	Established	On October 1, the North District is opened for traffic (NHL Documentation 2008:19).
AD 1937	Established	National Park Service (NPS) awards a contract to Virginia Sky-Line Co., Inc., to become the park concessionaire and be responsible for planning and designing most of the facilities within the park (SHEN website, Historical Overview).
AD 1938	Built	The concessionaire for the park constructs a wayside at Elkwallow, including a gift shop and cafeteria, designed by Marcellus Wright, Jr. (NHL Documentation 2008: 32, National Register 4/1997, Sec 7:61).
AD 1938 - 1939	Built	A paved access road with granite curbs and parking area designed by Marcellus Wright, Jr. is constructed at Elkwallow (LCS 1997: Elkwallow Picnic Grounds Comfort Station).

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AD 1939	Abandoned	On June 26, the House of Representatives passes House Joint Resolution 338, which closes all roads to the ridge within the bounds of Shenandoah NP with the exception of U.S. Route 211 at Thornton Gap (Lee Highway), and U.S. Route 33 (Spotswood Trail) at Swift Run Gap (National Register 4/1997, Sec 7:8).
	Built	Guardwalls in the Central and North Districts are completed prior to the dedication of the park (NHL Documentation 2008:25).
AD 1941	Altered	The wayside at Elkwallow is altered, but details are not known (LCS 1997: Elkwallow Wayside).
AD 1952	Moved	Two tourist cabins, designed by Marcellus Wright, Jr., are moved from Dickey Ridge to Elkwallow including Birch Cabin (NHL Documentation 2008:37).
AD 1960 - 1968	Built	A new gas station and restroom are constructed at Elkwallow wayside (National Register 4/1997, Sec 7:61).
AD 1992	Rehabilitated	The roof of the wayside station at Elkwallow is resingled (National Register 4/1997, Sec 7:61).
AD 1992 - 1994	Built	The gas pumps are moved to the north side of the gas station office. The loop road is also rerouted to this area and includes parking. It leads to a second and larger parking lot built to the west. The former loop road is replaced with picnic spots and is landscaped.
AD 2002	Restored	The NPS restores the comfort station and makes it accessible (LCS 1997: Elkwallow Picnic Grounds Comfort Station).
AD 2004	Preserved	The Elkwallow wayside is preserved (LCS 1997: Elkwallow Wayside).

**Physical History:**

The following section provides information on the physical development and evolution of the site, organized by time periods. Graphics associated with this section are located at the end of this report.

9000 BC TO 17TH CENTURY: NATIVE AMERICAN USE

This area of the Blue Ridge Mountains was known and used by Paleo-Indians for many centuries, with the first human habitation taking place about 11,000 years ago, sometime after the last Ice Age. The Paleo-Indians were hunters and gatherers who used the mountains for seasonal camps. With the development of farming in the valleys by 1000 AD, Native American use of the mountains focused on game hunting (Resource Management Plan 1998:23). The Monacan tribe settled in most of the Piedmont region and portions of the Blue Ridge Mountains while Manahoac tribe inhabited the area east of the Blue Ridge Mountains and along the Rappahannock River (<http://indians.vipnet.org/tribes/monacan.cfm>).

1669 TO 1923: EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

Dr. John Lederer, a German immigrant, was the first European to record exploration of this area of the Blue Ridge Mountains in 1669, describing the woods as wild and full of game. In 1716, Alexander Spotswood, Lieutenant Governor of the Colony of Virginia, led an expedition across the Blue Ridge Mountains to encourage settlement and extend the boundaries of the colony. The crossing place was probably Swift Run Gap or the Big Meadows area (Lambert 1989:32-33). The land Spotswood claimed was soon bought up by investors, but disputes over ownership led to court cases that went unresolved well into the early nineteenth century (Historic Resources Study 1997:7-8).

Most of the first European settlers were English immigrants, followed by a large number of Germans and Scotch-Irish by the mid-eighteenth century (Historic Resources Study 1997:9). Settlers moved from the Tidewater area to the Piedmont region, and from Pennsylvania to the Shenandoah Valley. Even before European settlement started here, local Native Americans were dying of introduced diseases, and by 1800 they had disappeared completely or moved away (Lambert 1989:21-22; Resource Management Plan 1998:23). As the better farming land was taken, new settlers moved into the mountain hollows where they developed a life reliant on hunting, farming, grazing, and timbering that led to extensive clearing of the land (Resource Management Plan 1998:23 cited in Skyland CLI). Industrial use also developed in some areas, such as the Mt. Vernon Iron Furnace and the Stony Man Mountain Tract, where copper was mined and charcoal was produced for smelting occurred from 1845 to 1850 (Engle 1994:1). (The park has recently begun researching the significance of the Belmont Winery area, near Dickey Ridge.)

In 1830, the first recreational use of the area occurred in what is now the South District of the park. A resort called Black Rock Springs Hotel touted seven mineral springs with curative powers. The resort became a popular regional tourist destination and maintained operation until 1909 when a fire destroyed most of the buildings (Historic Resources Study 1997:41-42).

Large plantation-like farms typically cultivated tobacco for a few years, followed by corn crops and then were eventually left fallow. In addition, many smaller scale subsistence farms existed in the area comprised of small gardens with corn, rye, and other vegetables, and small orchards. Other land uses included cattle grazing, especially from 1830 to 1845, and lumbering that provided material for rebuilding after the Civil War, such as for railroad expansion. Tanneries were another important industry, utilizing chestnut bark for the source of tannin in the process (Historic Resources Study 1997:13-15). The chestnut blight that began in the United States around 1904 put an end to local reliance on the chestnut tree, which at one time made up twenty percent of the Appalachian forest (<http://www.virginiaplaces.org/natural/chestnut.html>).

In 1894, George Freeman Pollock created a popular resort initially called Stony Man Camp and later renamed Skyland. It was a destination and summer residence for middle and upper middle classes mostly from Baltimore, Washington, Richmond, and Philadelphia. Pollock was known as a showman who held theatrical events, such as bonfires, Indian “pow-wows,” and medieval jousts for guest entertainment (Lambert 1979:i and Uhler <http://www.shenandoah.national-park.com/info.htm>). Pollock strongly supported the establishment of a park and would play a key role in this effort (Historic Resources Study 1997:44).

#### 1924-1952: PARK DEVELOPMENT

##### Shenandoah National Park:

In 1924, Hubert Work, the United States Secretary of the Interior, assembled a five-member group, called the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee (SANPC), to study the issues regarding establishing a national park in the region, authorized by Congress. The Committee distributed a questionnaire to gain public input into suggested sites for a new national park (SHEN website, Historical Overview). George Pollock filled out the questionnaire with the aid of several colleagues, promoting the establishment of a park near Skyland. Pollock personally met with the members of the SANPC, and his enthusiasm and persuasive manner convinced the committee of the merits of his proposal (Historic Resources Study 1997:46).

In February 1925, Congress passed legislation allocating \$20,000 for survey and evaluation of proposed parks, including Shenandoah. It also stipulated that the Commonwealth of Virginia purchase the land and present it to the federal government for such purpose (SHEN website, Historical Overview). In April 1926, Virginia Governor Harry F. Byrd established the Commission on Conservation and Development, headed by William Carson, to take over management of funds collected for the park’s creation. On May 22, Congress authorized Shenandoah National Park (NP), but without funds for land purchases. Land owner resistance caused conflicts and court challenges, delaying the clearance of deeds (NHL Documentation 2008:6 and SHEN website, Historical Overview). Other obstacles involved resettlement requirements for former residents and funding issues (Historic Resources Study 1997:45). It would take ten more years for the park lands to be acquired.

In 1927, Pollock helped organize the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) in Washington D.C. in order to develop and maintain the Appalachian Trail in the mid-Atlantic Region. The Appalachian Trail Conservancy had been formed two years earlier by Benton MacKaye, a

forester for the U.S. Division of Forestry (a forerunner of the Forest Service), with the aim of establishing a continuous recreational route along the mountain crests of eastern United States. One of Pollock's underlying goals in forming the PATC was to further promote the establishment of Shenandoah NP (NHL Documentation 2008:30). Members of the PATC constructed a trail on weekend visits during the next four years, with some of the trail traversing property that was later developed for Skyline Drive. A portion of the Appalachian Trail passed just north and east of the future Elkwallow site.

In 1929, Carson successfully promoted the merits of the Blue Ridge Mountains to President Herbert Hoover who went on to build a fishing camp and retreat on a 164-acre site along the Rapidan River on the eastern slope of the Blue Ridge. After he lost his bid for re-election, Hoover donated the camp to the federal government and would later become part of Shenandoah NP.

#### Skyline Drive and the New Deal:

In 1930, a severe drought hit the Piedmont region of Virginia, drastically reducing the livelihood of many farmers and apple pickers (SHEN website, Skyline Drive History). Coinciding with the drought disaster were the effects of the Great Depression caused by the stock market crash in October 1929. As economic conditions continued to look bleak, it became more imperative to bring jobs to the area. William Carson promoted a plan to both create jobs and make the Shenandoah area more accessible by building a road. As described in the Report of the SANCP from June 30, 1931: "the greatest single feature, however, is a possible skyline drive along the mountaintop, following a continuous ridge and looking down westerly on the Shenandoah Valley...and commanding a view [to the east] of the Piedmont Plain...Few scenic drives in the world could surpass it (Engle, 1999:15). That same year, President Hoover authorized drought relief funds to finance the work of building Skyline Drive, provided that much of the labor be done by locals using traditional hand tools and farm implements (HAER 1996:1).

The National Park Service (NPS) prepared a map showing the proposed route of the new roadway and it was sent to Hoover for review (Figure 1). The designers selected the location of the road and developed numerous overlooks based on scenic vistas of the ridge and the valley. The road was envisioned as a scenic drive on the crest of the Appalachian Mountains. It was to be the backbone of a national park and become an essential link in the park-to-park highway envisioned in the eastern United States to connect the Shenandoah and Great Smokey Mountains parks. The restoration of woodlands from former clearings, fields, and pasture to a natural mixed hardwood forest also figured prominently in the design of the road (National Register 4/1997, Sec 8:112). The President agreed with what was proposed. At this time, the road through what would become the North District was identified as future expansion.

Construction of the major roads in national parks at this time was carried out cooperatively by an interbureau agreement between the NPS and the Department of Agriculture Bureau of Public Roads (BPR), combining the expertise of BPR's civil engineers with NPS standards for protection of natural scenery in parks. NPS staff selected the route of Skyline Drive and located the scenic overlooks and recreational waysides. BPR personnel oversaw the

surveying, awarding of contracts, and actual construction. Road builders were required to fit the roadway into the surveyed route, and the grade was not to exceed 8 percent or the curves to have radii less than 200 feet (NHL Documentation 2008:15).

The official groundbreaking of Skyline Drive occurred in the Central District, at Thornton Gap heading south toward Swift Run Gap, on July 18, 1931, and work continued through the summer and stopped in winter. Construction of the road occurred in three phases starting with Central District, then North District followed by South District (NHL Documentation 2008:8). Project One was the Central District, from Thornton Gap to Swift Run Gap. Project Two, or the second phase of the construction, comprised the North District, from Front Royal to Thornton Gap. Project Three comprised the South District, from Swift Run Gap to Jarman Gap (NHL Documentation 2008:6, 16).

The North District was constructed as projects 2-A-B-C: Section 2-A-1 ran from Front Royal to Compton Gap; Section 2-B-1 from Compton Gap to Hogback Mountain; and Section 2-C-1 from Hogback Mountain to Thornton Gap (and is the section where Elkwallow is located) (NHL Documentation 2008:16, 18-19). The contract for Project 2-C was awarded on July 18, 1934, to Albert Brothers of Salem, Virginia, for the 10.325-mile-long section. Clearing operations began in mid-August 1934, and the grade finishing operations were completed in September 1935. After the finishing operations were completed, the various sections required final surfacing with asphalt. In early June, 1935, the Corson and Gruman Company of Washington, D.C., was awarded a contract to place a road-mix bituminous surface course from Front Royal to Thornton Gap for \$30,580. This phase of work on Project 2-A, 2-B, and 2-C began in late June or early July 1935 and was mostly completed in the summer of 1936 (NHL Documentation 2008: 19, citing Contract File No. 630-03.1, SHEN). The North District terrain was less rugged and rocky than the other districts, affording more time for survey and the careful incorporation of NPS design conventions. The road width in this area was increased from thirty to forty feet, allowing twenty feet of pavement and a five-foot shoulder between the road and guardwall (NHL Documentation 2008, citing Benson "The Skyline Drive:" 6).

In 1933, Franklin D. Roosevelt was inaugurated as President of the United States. In March, one of his first presidential acts was to freeze all federal funding. Not until he visited the area in April did he release funding, and construction of Skyline Drive resumed (National Register 4/1997, Sec 7:7). The following December, as part of his New Deal legislation, Roosevelt established the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), created to help relieve high unemployment and carry out a broad program of natural resource conservation on federal, state, and municipal lands. Six CCC camps were set up in Shenandoah where workers undertook a wide range of projects including erosion control, planting trees and shrubs, the construction of trails, shelters, and picnic areas with drinking fountains, tables, and fireplaces (SHEN website, Historical Overview).

#### Development of Elkwallow:

The first Master Plan for Shenandoah NP was produced in 1935 through the collaboration of the superintendent, landscape architects, chief engineer, and sanitary engineer. Revisions occurred each year until 1942, with the exception of 1941. Reed Engle, a former cultural

resource specialist at Shenandoah NP, wrote in his book that “the first plans were sterling examples of optimistic over-development” (Engle 2006:119). Initial plans had called for significant construction every eight miles, with fourteen major developments and eight picnic areas. The Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes expressed his concern that these plans would compromise the inherent natural character of the area and consequently encouraged a more modest approach to development (Engle 2006:119). In the end, four sites became multi-use developments with overnight accommodations, including Big Meadows, Skyland, Loft Mountain, and Dickey Ridge (Engle 2006:118-119).

Elkwallow, located at Mile Post 24 on Skyline Drive, was initially developed as a picnic area for park visitors (Figure 2). Situated on a knoll off the drive, the site’s varied topography, rock outcroppings, and woods provided screened areas where visitors could enjoy some privacy as well as pleasant scenery while picnicking. In 1935 construction commenced, consisting of three parking areas, a comfort station, pathways, fireplaces, stone water fountains, and picnic tables. A one-way access road to the picnic grounds was designed as twelve-foot-wide paved loop with a separated entrance and exit. Three separate pull-off parking areas were located along the access road—a single-loaded lot to the east, a double-loaded lot to the north, and a single-loaded lot to the west—totaling over eighty angled spaces defined by log guardwalls (Figures 3 and 4). Workers from the CCC cleared the portions of the area and created meandering trails, generally three feet wide, that wove through the loop road interior, providing access to a comfort station and other amenities while highlighting occasional views of the surrounding mountains (National Register 4/1997, Sec 8:123). The CCC also built site amenities such as fireplaces, wood signs, and drinking fountains. Several of the fountains were constructed as stacked and mortared stone piers fitted with pipes and bubblers. Another fountain was constructed from a single boulder, bored and piped with metal spigots. The fountains were located throughout the grounds for easy access. In addition, CCC laborers constructed a rustic stone stairway connecting the west parking area to the trails and picnic areas. The CCC also most likely constructed the rustic signage at Elkwallow, such as a hanging chestnut wood panel with metal straps attached to a pole fashioned from a tree trunk (Figure 5). A 1936 master plan showed a lunch stand to be located at the northern end of the loop interior, but it was never constructed (Figure 6). Another plan from 1938 shows the west parking area was expanded into a double loaded lot and an additional loop path was built (Figure 7). This later plan also shows slightly different locations for the comfort station and path alignments, suggesting adjustments were made to the earlier 1936 plan. Also, by this time a small covered pavilion was located near the earlier location of the lunch stand, but it is not clear if it was built.

The CCC constructed the comfort station located within the loop created by the access road, which consisted of a twelve-foot by twenty-four-foot wood frame on a stone foundation. The building featured log planks with saddle diamond notches (where two logs come together) and a gabled roof with board and batten detailing at the gabled ends. Log privacy screens, approximately six feet long, were built at the two entrances.

In 1937, the NPS awarded a contract to Virginia Sky-Line Company Inc. to become the park concessionaire, which included the responsibility of planning and designing most of the visitor

service facilities within the park. In 1938, the company completed construction of a roadside station at Elkwallow to accommodate motorists visiting the North District area of the park. This and other similar stations in the park were called wayside areas and typically included a lunch room, gift shop, gas pumps, restrooms, and parking. Elkwallow's station was developed as its own distinct area, setback from the Skyline Drive and sited well east of the original picnic grounds, connected to it by a path (see Figure 7). A plan from 1938 for the Elkwallow wayside area included a concession building, small ranger station building, two gas pumps, and a parking lot for fifty vehicles. Two separate entrances off the drive converged at the rear of the concession building to form a loop (Figure 8). Wood guardrails defined the north and northeast edge of the parking lot that was arranged around a planted island. The 1938 plan shows deciduous and evergreen trees, as well as groupings of shrubs scattered around the buildings, parking lot, and two access roads. The plan also shows that the plantings framed the view between the concession building and Skyline Drive. Historic photographs indicate other spaces in the wayside area were planted as lawn or as meadow, but it is not clear on the plan to what extent.

The main concession buildings at some of the stations were themselves also called waysides. Marcellus Wright, Jr., an architect from Richmond, Virginia, designed the wayside building at Elkwallow in addition to other park lodge and service buildings at Big Meadows, Dickey Ridge, Lewis Mountain, and a conference center at Skyland. The one-and-a-half story wayside building featured a stone foundation supporting a wood frame with exterior horizontal flitched siding. An outdoor storage area enclosed with a fence was located on the southwest side of the building (Figure 9). The interior was paneled with vertical chestnut boards, and a fireplace with a cut stone chimney was located at the south facade. The fireplace was central to the large open interior that housed a lunch room and gift shop. A pantry, restrooms, and offices were located in a smaller wing on the building's west side, which also accommodated two bedrooms and a bathroom on the second floor.

Wright based his design on the rustic design principles developed by the NPS Landscape Division, with the purpose to "blend unobtrusively into the natural setting" (NHL Documentation 2008:34). In an interview, Wright noted, "fitting into the landscape was the main goal...and then using the native materials to the greatest extent possible" (NHL Documentation 2008:34). Commenting on wayside stations at both Elkwallow and Big Meadows, Harvey Benson, a resident landscape architect at Shenandoah NP, praised their designs; "Both these stations, of attractive design fitting harmoniously into the landscape, are situated far enough from the Drive, with all parking and service facilities in the rear, not to encroach too seriously on the scenic value of the motorway, but they still are readily accessible to the traveler" (Benson, "The Skyline Drive," 1940, 8).

By 1950, a concrete patio was added to the south side of the wayside building and accessed by doors from the lunch room. Historic images show that this patio, as well as the lawn between the building and Skyline Drive, were used as a concession area (Figure 10). Another historic photo shows stone curbing around the north side of the wayside as well as a shingled structure housing the gas pumps. Several shrubs can be seen along the foundation and larger trees and shrubs are in the parking lot island (Figure 11). A plan from 1953 indicates that a 22,000 gallon

reservoir southeast of Elkwallow provided water to both the wayside area and the picnic grounds. The septic tanks and septic field for Elkwallow were north of the picnic grounds (Figure 12). These utility features were presumably built at these locations when Elkwallow was developed in the 1930s.

#### Closure of the CCC Camps and Post-War Visitation:

The CCC provided invaluable assistance in the development of both the Elkwallow picnic grounds and wayside area by constructing roads, paths, and parking lots, and planting trees and shrubs (NHL Documentation 2008:78). After the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the United States entered World War II, ending most development in Shenandoah NP until after the war. As the country directed all manpower toward the war effort, the CCC camps were closed by the end of March 1942 (Engle 1999:30). With the decline of visitation due to the war, the park's concessions were also closed that year and the workforce shrank to 1/20th of its size (Lambert 2001:263). By 1943, park visitation was the lowest in history, at 42,000 for the year, and was the most drastic drop of any national park (Lambert 1979:289). This decline in visitation was also due to the fuel shortages caused by the war, as most families had to curtail sightseeing by automobile (Lambert 1979:289).

In August 1942, the Civilian Public Service (CPS) established a camp for conscientious objectors in the park, at former CCC camp NP-10. The CPS provided work for men unwilling to serve in the military based on religious upbringing or belief. At Shenandoah, the CPS took over fire and erosion control projects previously done by the CCC, continued the revegetation efforts, installed utilities, and built trails, roads, and park structures. They were also assigned to raze pre-park structures. CPS workers did not receive wages and were financially supported by their churches or families. Around this time, the concessioner office at Elkwallow was modified, but for what purpose is unclear.

Concession facilities at the park reopened in 1946, but business was slow to return. The CPS camp also closed in June (Historic Resources Study 1997:100). At the same time, pressure was mounting from Washington to end segregation of NPS facilities at Shenandoah such as Elkwallow, which was specifically used by whites only (Figure 13). Secretary of the Interior Ickes mandated full desegregation in the parks. After several park-wide attempts to limit or end segregation, both blacks and whites were using Lewis Mountain and all the other park facilities by October 1947. In 1950, a park planner from Washington visited Shenandoah and spoke with personnel as well as tourists. The planner reported back with the conclusion that the park was fully integrated (Lambert 1979:271-284, 305).

In 1951, Guy D. Edwards succeeded Edward D. Freeland as the third Superintendent at Shenandoah. He renewed a long-term contract with Virginia Sky-Line Company to help expand Skyland and Big Meadows' overnight capacity. During the same year, mileposts were installed along Skyline Drive and guardwalls were completed at the South District, marking the official completion of the drive (National Register 4/1997, Sec 8:91; NHL Documentation 2008:6).

A decline in the use of the guest cabins at Dickey Ridge at Mile Post 4.6 prompted the NPS to

move the guest cabins to other developments along Skyline Drive, including two to the Elkwallow wayside area in 1951-1953 (NHL Documentation 2008:33, List of Classified Structures 2011, EW-0003). A duplex cabin was placed at the site of the original ranger station, northwest of the wayside building and next to the path to the picnic grounds, presumably replacing that earlier building. This cabin, designed by Marcellus Wright, Jr., is now known as the Birch Cabin. (Note: According to the National Register documentation from April 1997, the park built a new ranger station—a one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled frame construction with a concrete foundation—northwest of the wayside building in the 1960s. However, the park's List of Classified Structures correctly states that the building, called Birch Cabin, was a former cabin moved from Dickey Ridge, and according to park staff has always been used as a concessioner office. National Register 4/1997, Sec 7:62; email from Reed Engle, 2 August 2011; and draft comments from Ann Kain.) The location of the other cabin from Dickey Ridge is less clear; a plan from 1953 indicates a building or structure on the north side of the loop, just north of the gas pumps that probably served as an office or storage. It may be the second cabin or another structure.

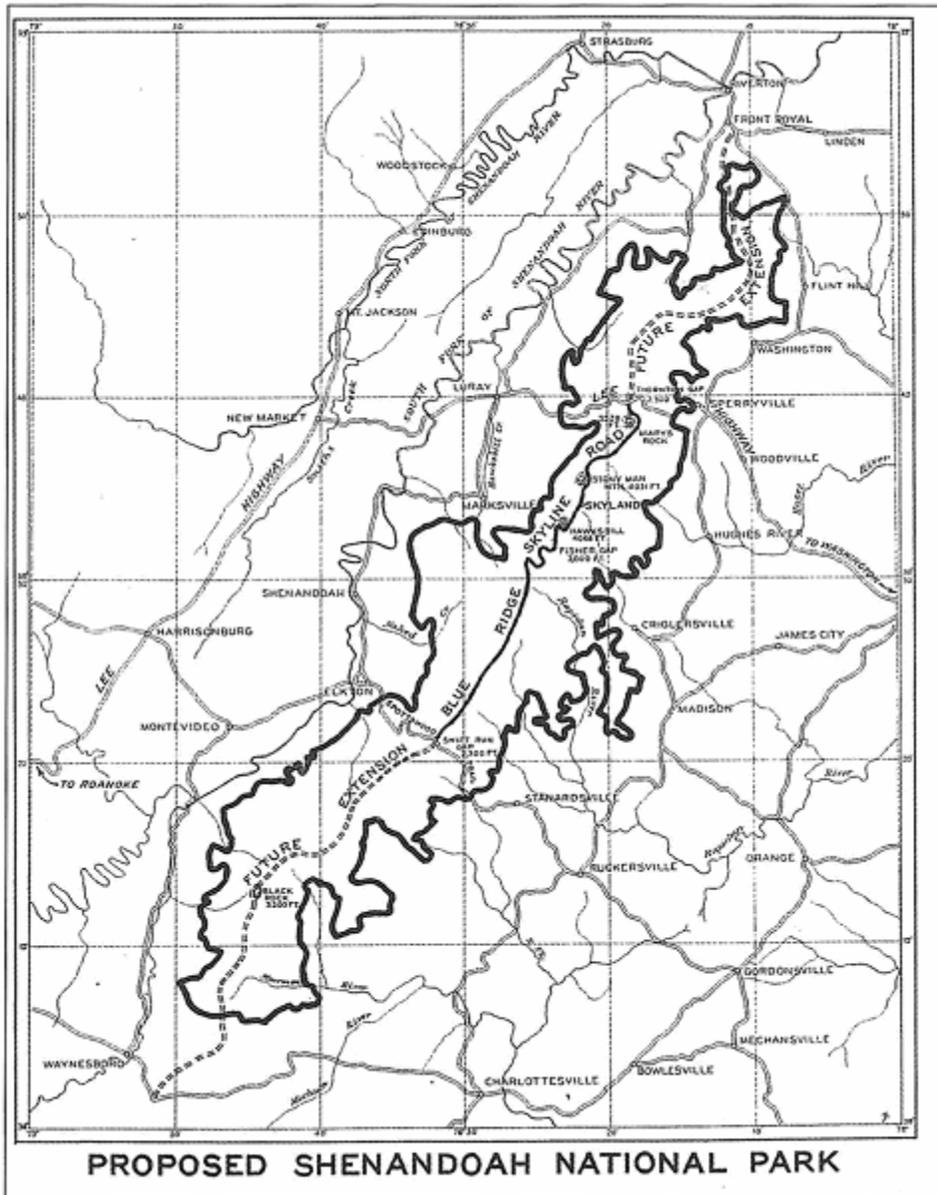


Figure 1. Map of proposed Shenandoah National Park issued by the Department of the Interior in 1931. The plan illustrates the proposed North District portion of Skyline Drive from Front Royal to Thornton Gap as a dotted line (Engle 2006:34).

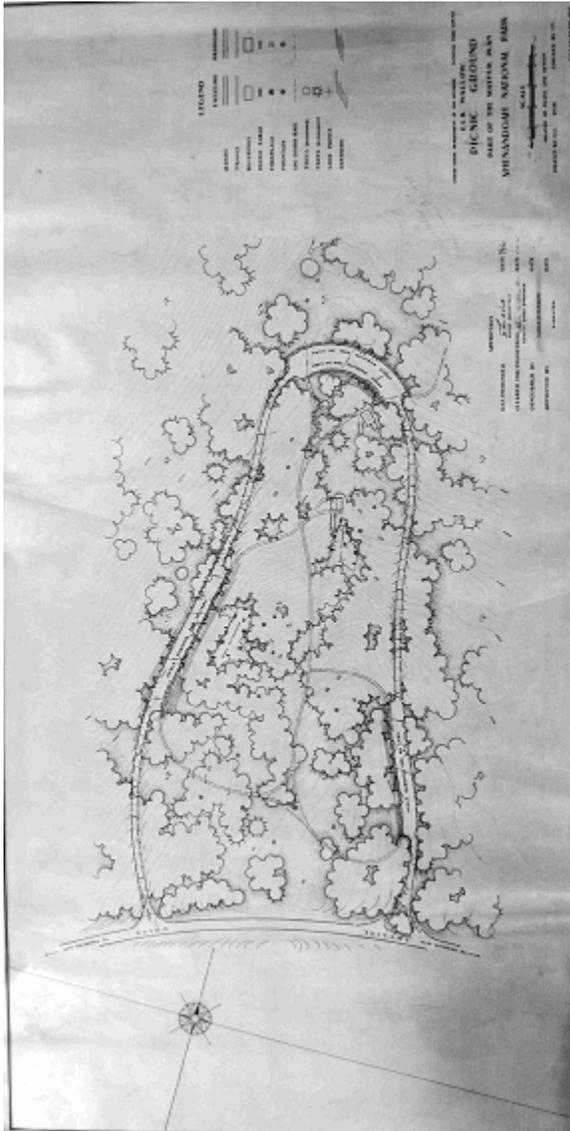


Figure 2. Site plan for Elkwallow picnic grounds from 1936 park master plan (Shenandoah National Park Archives, SHE 1167).



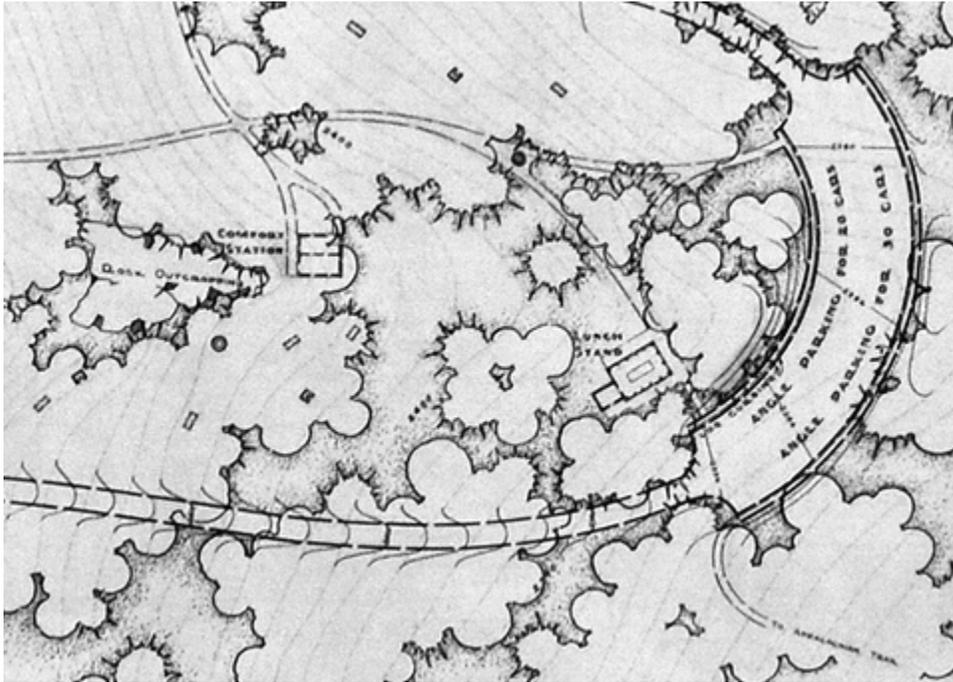
*Figure 3. Initial clearing of one of the parking lots at Elkwallow picnic grounds in the mid-1930s (Shenandoah National Park Archives, SHEN 52092-17E).*



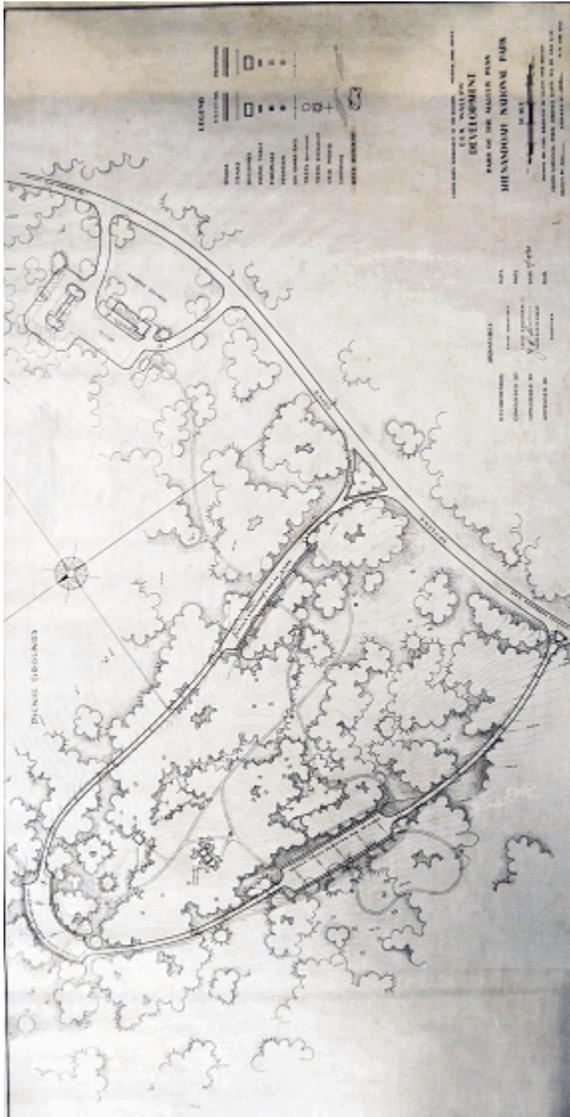
*Figure 4. View of final stages of construction of the parking lot and installation of a log guardrail (Shenandoah National Park Archives, SHEN 52092-17E).*



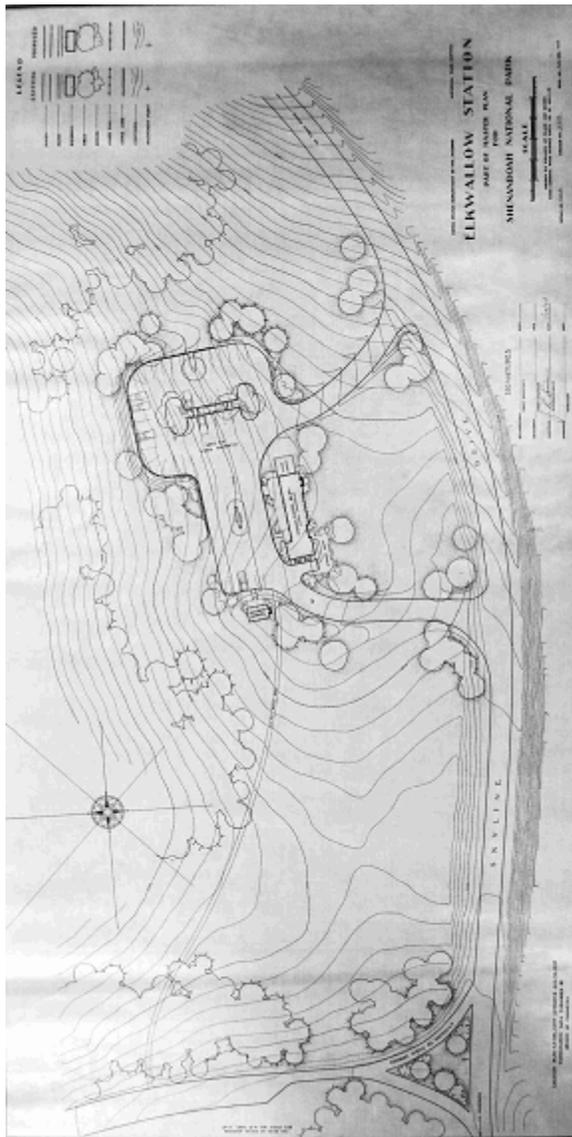
*Figure 5. View of rustic style entrance signage at Elkwallow picnic grounds in 1937 (Shenandoah National Park Archives, SHEN 633-5).*



*Figure 6. Enlargement of 1936 site plan for Elkwallow picnic grounds showing a proposed lunch stand between the comfort station and the north parking area (Shenandoah National Park Archives, SHEN 1167).*



*Figure 7. Site plan from 1938 showing the expanded west parking lot and a new loop trail adjacent to it, as well as a separate wayside and parking area to the east, connected to the original picnic grounds by a path (Shenandoah National Park Archives).*



*Figure 8. Plan from 1938 showing the wayside building, ranger station, gas pumps, parking lot, and access roads, scattered trees and shrubs, and the open area between the front windows and Skyline Drive (Shenandoah National Park Archives, SHEN 2055).*



*Figure 9. View of the Elkwallow wayside looking northeast from the west entrance on Skyline Drive (Shenandoah National Park Archives, SHEN 29217).*



*Figure 10. View of the patio on the south side of the Elkwallow wayside building in 1950 (Shenandoah National Park Archives).*



*Figure 11. View of the north side of the wayside building, date unknown. The structure on the left houses the gas pumps. Note what appears to be stone curbing along the building (Shenandoah National Park Archives).*

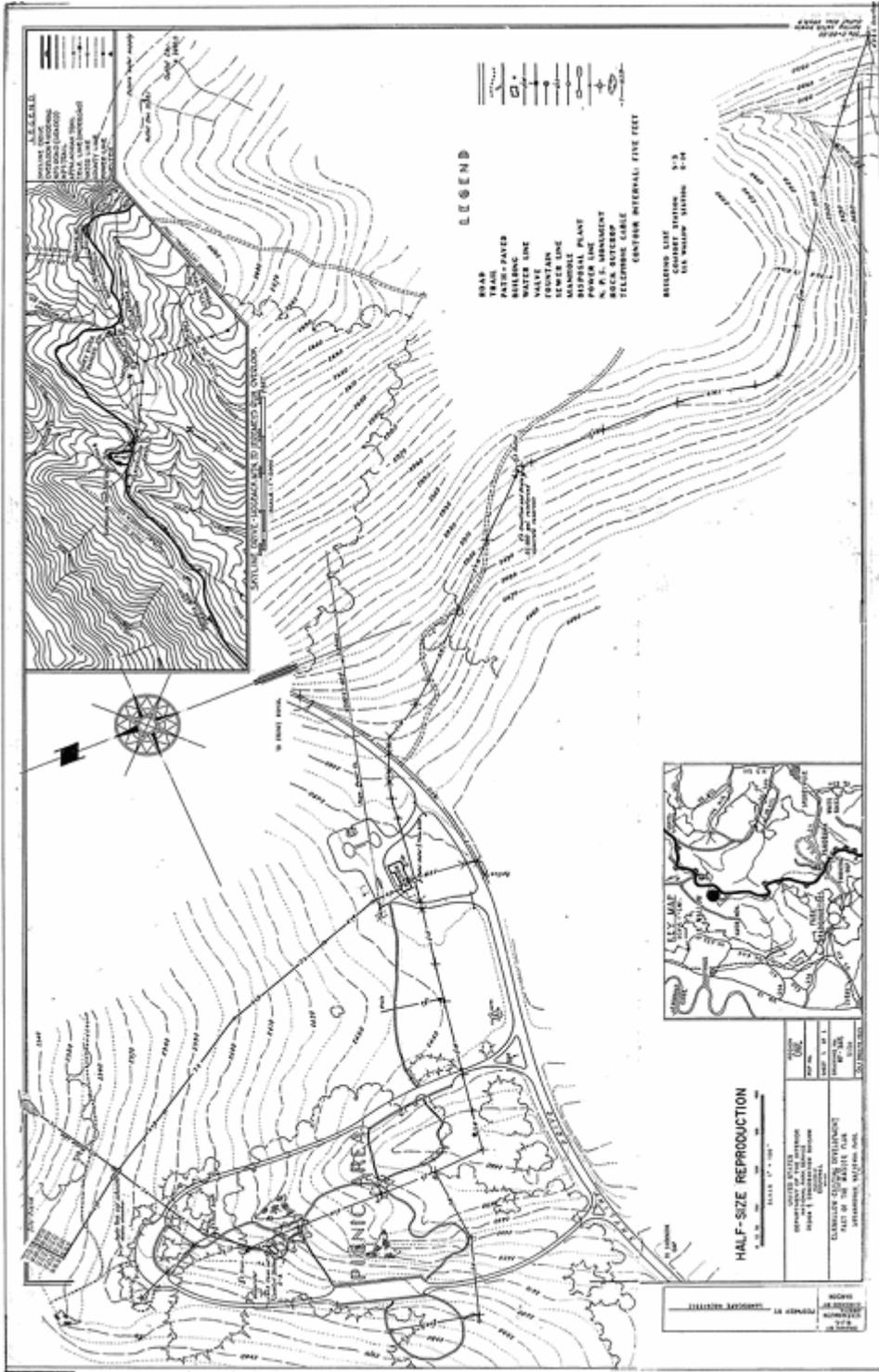


Figure 12. Portion of a plan from 1953 of Elkwallow (Denver Service Center, etc Drawing 134-2120).



*Figure 13. View of “whites only” signage at the entrance to the Elkwallow picnic grounds, c.1939-1950 (Shenandoah National Park website, <http://www.nps.gov/shen/historyculture/Segregated-Facilities-1939-1950.htm>).*

#### 1953 – PRESENT: LATER DEVELOPMENT / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ERA

In the mid-1950s, the NPS was planning “Mission 66,” an ambitious ten-year development program designed to upgrade the national park facilities to modern standards to accommodate rising visitation after World War II. The goal was to develop and adequately staff the NPS by 1966, the fiftieth anniversary of the agency (Lambert 1979:314). The NPS gained Congressional funding for the work in 1956. New facilities were designed in a contemporary modern style, in contrast to the rustic aesthetic that had been employed at Shenandoah and other national parks.

In the 1960s, the park made improvements to the gas station area. New buildings were constructed on the north side of the loop, comprised of two separate structures containing restrooms and an office, connected by a breezeway. The restrooms were in a concrete block, side gabled building with an asphalt shingled roof, awning windows, clapboard gables, and an overhanging eave on the back façade. The breezeway featured a low-pitched gable roof with asphalt shingles. The office was a single-story, end gabled frame construction building with clapboard siding, single hung windows, and asphalt shingled roof, and a projected end gable on the rear façade. The restroom building replaced similar facilities in the wayside building, which

according to a plan from 1970, were remodeled into a storage area for a kitchen. The 1970 plan also indicates that the lunch room was replaced by a camp store, and food services were offered at a “stand up snack bar” in the building.

Between 1992 and 1994, the gas pumps were replaced and relocated to the north side of the gas station buildings, presumably in part to have them farther away from the wayside building (Figure 14). The old pumps were removed and this part of the loop was abandoned and planted with grass and trees and several paths and picnic areas. A new loop was created from the parking lot to the gas pumps and then headed west to a second parking lot almost twice as big as the original parking lot. The new parking lot also featured a center median, but unlike the original parking lot, was clearly visible from Skyline Drive.

In 1992, the roof of the wayside building was reshingled, and in 2004 the wayside building and Birch Cabin were restored. In the early 2000s, the park restored the comfort station while also making it universally accessible. In addition, the Elkwallow wayside building has also been restored. A stacked stone water fountain was built just east of the wayside building, but its construction date is not known. Most recently, the access road in the picnic grounds has been repaved. The overall layout of both the picnic grounds and the wayside area, including circulation and building locations, remain as they were during the period of historic significance.



*Figure 14. View looking east at the wayside area in 1992 showing the new location of the gas pumps. On the left is the wayside building, on the right are the gas station buildings and the gas pumps (Skyline Drive Historic District, April 1997).*

## Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

### Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

Significant landscape characteristics identified for Elkwallow include natural systems and features, topography, spatial organization, land use, circulation, buildings and structures, vegetation, views and vistas, and small-scale features. Many of these characteristics have associated with them features that contribute to the site's overall historic significance and identity, as well as features that do not contribute or are undetermined.

The physical integrity of Elkwallow is evaluated by comparing landscape characteristics and features present during the period of significance (1931-1952) with current conditions. Many of the site's historic characteristics and features are unchanged. The locations of the picnic grounds on a secluded picturesque knoll and of the adjacent wayside area next to Skyline Drive continues to reveal the original intent of the National Park Service (NPS) and the Virginia Sky-Line Company to provide recreation and amenities to passing motorists. The circulation layout, siting of buildings, and local building traditions reflect the NPS rustic design style, which aimed to harmonize new construction with the surrounding landscape. Access roads, parking areas, and pathways remain much as they did during the period of significance. The original comfort station built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and the wayside building and concessioner office (formerly a guest cabin) designed by Marcellus Wright, Jr., retain integrity in their overall exterior designs with subsequent renovations using similar materials and workmanship. The design of site furnishings using local stone and wood to blend in with the natural surroundings can still be seen in the stacked stone and boulder water fountains, stone steps, and granite curbing. Although panoramic views were not intended at Elkwallow, partial views of the surrounding mountains are still possible from some of the shady picnic spots nestled amongst the trees in the picnic grounds or from the patio and lawn areas at the wayside area.

Since 1952, the picnic grounds have changed very little except for the replacement of the stone fireplaces with metal grills, the loss of the log guardrails, the alteration of a few sections of the path system, and the relocation of a pit toilet. Portions of the wayside area have been altered with the addition of a gas station office and restroom building, relocation of the gas pumps, and a reconfiguration of the loop road, but these changes have not negatively affected the area. However, the presence of a new parking lot west of the wayside building does mar the historic view between Skyline Drive and the wayside area. The growth of CCC-planted vegetation and natural succession have affected both the picnic grounds and the wayside area, but is in keeping with the historic design intent, which was to encourage the landscape to return to a more forested environment. Although the picnic tables, entrance signs, and directional/informational signs at Elkwallow are not historic, they are compatible in keeping with the historic designs. Other non-historic features such as interpretive signs, vending and ice machines, public telephones, fences, culverts, retaining walls, trash cans, dumpsters, and recycling bins are generally inconspicuous in the landscape. More elaborate alterations have occurred inside the buildings to accommodate accessibility requirements or adaptive uses.

### INTEGRITY

## Elkwallow

### Shenandoah National Park

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#### Location:

The relationship between Elkwallow and its location along Skyline Drive is still intact and evident. The development's location on fairly flat terrain for the wayside and knoll for the picnic grounds influenced the physical arrangement of buildings and structures and their connection to Skyline Drive. In addition, the location of the site within Shenandoah National Park (NP) has remained unaffected by any adjacent land uses. Except for the addition of a cabin moved from Dickey Ridge to its present location on the site, the principal buildings at Elkwallow that were present at the end of the period of significance are in their original locations.

#### Design:

Design refers to the combination of elements that characterize the built landscape at Elkwallow, recognized today as the NPS rustic style. The physical factors, such as natural features and Skyline Drive itself, which influenced where roads, walkways, buildings, and structures were located, are still evident. The wayside was designed in the rustic architectural style based on local building traditions and the idea of blending into the natural surroundings as much as possible. The picnic grounds also illustrate the concept of fitting into the natural landscape through the layout of pathways and picnic spots that worked with the natural topography. In addition, the planting of native trees to define spaces and provide shade and the installation of site furnishings using native materials, such as wood and stone, further emphasizes the qualities of the rustic style.

#### Setting:

The setting of Elkwallow as a rustic NPS developed area along Skyline Drive is still intact. The picnic grounds were organized to fit in with the natural terrain, and the wayside development was laid out to provide easy access off of Skyline Drive. The relationships between the wayside, the picnic grounds, and Skyline Drive are still intact, as well as with the surrounding topography. Original pathways and access roads weaving these areas together.

#### Materials:

Extant original materials at Elkwallow include the stone water fountains and stone steps in the picnic grounds, and stone curbing in the wayside area. Few original materials remain on the roads as most have been repeatedly paved with asphalt, as have some formerly earthen paths. Historic vegetation remains from CCC-period plantings, which have matured since the historic period, including several groves of trees, trees for screening in and around the picnic areas, and specimen trees around the wayside.

#### Workmanship:

Workmanship refers to the physical evidence of the construction techniques at Elkwallow. The stone water fountains and stone steps exemplify the typical rustic style in which site amenities were constructed by the CCC during the period of significance. The CCC also built the original comfort station in keeping with the NPS rustic style tenets, utilizing log planks, gabled roof, and board and batten detailing. The wayside building also retains much of its original workmanship, although it has undergone several changes to accommodate accessibility improvements.

Feeling:

Elkwallow continues to provide visitor amenities for motorists along Skyline Drive. The presence of the wayside, as well as the roads, pathways, and picnic areas, combine to convey the historic character of Elkwallow. Trees planted by the CCC have matured to provide shade and woodland scenery, and the area around the wayside remains unaltered except for the added parking, new gas station office and restrooms, and some path alterations.

Association:

The wayside, the comfort station, as well as the historic circulation features and some of the small-scale features are still present to directly link the site to the creation of Shenandoah NP and construction of Skyline Drive, the work of the CCC, and the rustic architectural style used by the NPS and the Virginia Sky-Line Company's architect, Marcellus Wright, Jr. during the period of significance.

The section that follows presents an analysis of landscape characteristics and their associated features and corresponding List of Classified Structures names and numbers, if applicable. It also includes an evaluation of whether the feature contributes to the property's National Register eligibility for the historic period (1931-1952), contributes to the property's historic character, or if it is noncontributing, undetermined, or managed as a cultural resource.

**Landscape Characteristic:**

**Natural Systems and Features**

Historic and Existing Conditions:

Shenandoah NP is located within the Blue Ridge Mountains that separate the Shenandoah Valley to the west and the rolling hills of the Piedmont Plain to the east. The mountains are part of the larger, ancient chain of Appalachian Mountains. These mountains consist of billion-year old gneiss and granite, 570-million-year-old volcanic basalt, and 530-million-year-old sandstone and quartzite.

Elkwallow is located in the Blue Ridge Mountains along the park's Skyline Drive, which traces the mountaintops. The site occupies a knoll that rises to an elevation to just over 2,440 feet near the drive. The site's surrounding terrain falls away to the north and west toward Jeremy's Run, a stream that eventually empties into the Shenandoah River farther to the west. The NPS chose this location because of the varied topography, interesting rock outcroppings, and views of the surrounding mountains, all of which combined to provide a picturesque setting for visitors while creating a sense of privacy for picnickers.

Forests of oak (*Quercus* spp.), hickory (*Carya* spp.), and American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) once covered the Blue Ridge Mountains, but tree cutting for lumber, tanbark, and firewood reduced the density considerably. By the 1930s few living American chestnuts remained because of chestnut blight, a tiny and devastating fungus introduced from Asia. Other changes came from frequent wild fires; between 1930 and 1937, more than 44,000 acres, or 25.7 percent, of park land had burned. While a few patches of mature forest existed, as much as a third of the parkland along the Skyline Drive was pasture in the 1930s and two thirds was early second-growth forest (National Register 4/1997, Sec 7:14).

Both forest and open land conditions were present in and around Elkwallow when it was initially developed as a picnic grounds in 1935, although no specific vegetation records have been found. Historic photographs of one of the parking lots in the picnic grounds indicate that at least some areas around the knoll were densely wooded. Both a 1936 plan and 1938 plan show extensive amounts of vegetation in the picnic grounds, but it is not clear which plants were existing and which plants were proposed. The 1938 plan also shows vegetation in the wayside area and indicates much less there than in the picnic grounds. Many of the mature trees at Elkwallow were likely retained to provide a shady canopy. By the early 1940s, according to the park's Geographic Information system, vegetation in and around Elkwallow was comprised primarily of a mix of red oak, cove hardwood, chestnut oak, and open grassland (SHEN GIS).

Since the 1950s, several infestations have had a major impact on the park's maturing forest. By 1990, fifty-nine percent of the forest had been affected by gypsy moth infestation (Shenandoah NP staff, 2006). Many hemlocks (*Tsuga canadensis*) have also been killed by the hemlock wooly adelgid. Today, nearly ninety-five percent of the park is forested, with large portions officially designated as wilderness. This second growth forest is the result of seven decades of regeneration, designed reforestry, beautification, and fire control. The Civilian Conservation Corps made important contributions to the park's forests. Their role at Elkwallow is examined in more detail in the Vegetation section of this chapter.

Species observed at Elkwallow include hickory, black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), pine (*Pinus* spp.), and black cherry (*Prunus serotina*) with an understory of striped maple (*Acer pensylvanicum*), sumac (*Rhus* spp.), mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), blueberry (*Vaccinum* spp.), ferns, and various perennials and vines.

#### **Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Picnic Grounds Rock Outcroppings  
Feature Identification Number: 152735  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

#### **Topography**

Historic Condition (through 1952):

From 1935 to 1936, the topography of the knoll that would become the Elkwallow picnic grounds was manipulated to accommodate a loop access road and three parking lots, as well as a comfort station and water and sewer lines. From 1937 to 1938, similar changes were made to the topography of an area east of the knoll for the development of concession and service facilities by the park's concessioner. In both the picnic grounds and wayside area, grading and construction adhered to the park's overall design intent of integrating and highlighting natural landscape features while also balancing cut and fill where possible. These measures were subtle and worked with the existing topography, which at Elkwallow was not as rugged or rocky compared to other developed areas of the park.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

The topography of the historic landscape has not been significantly altered since 1952 except in the wayside area for grading associated with a second parking lot and relocation of the loop road to a location away from the wayside building.

**Spatial Organization**

Historic Condition (through 1952):

Elkwallow was one of six picnic areas built along Skyline Drive that were located between twelve and twenty miles apart. Others included Dickey Ridge, South River, Big Meadows, Pinnacles, and Lewis Mountain. The spacing of the picnic areas at regular intervals along the road to serve the motoring public was an important characteristic of Skyline Drive's design.

Elkwallow was developed first as a picnic grounds and then a wayside area. One of the planning principles employed at Shenandoah NP was the separation of NPS facilities and concessioner facilities, which at Elkwallow resulted in the creation of two separate developed areas. The NPS operated the picnic grounds, and Virginia Sky-Line Company operated the wayside, café, and gas station. The picnic grounds were set back from the road, organized around a picturesque knoll with rock outcroppings and accessed by a one-way loop road with three separate parking areas. Within the center of the loop was a comfort station, surrounded by meandering paths and shady picnic spots. The wayside area was located to the east of the picnic grounds and sited closer to the drive. At the center of this area was a wayside building that housed a lunch room, store, and restrooms. To the rear of the building and farther from the road were a concessioner office, gas pumps, and parking lot, accessed by two separate entrances/exits that formed a loop.

The wayside area's amenities were developed according to the concept that public spaces should be more visible, accessible, and proximate to Skyline Drive. It was more visually prominent along Skyline Drive with an open, mown lawn facing the road with a few trees dotting the roadside and framing the picturesque wayside building. In contrast, the picnic grounds were screened from the road with vegetation and natural topography, creating a more secluded space for visitors.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

Since the end of the period of significance, the spatial organization of the Elkwallow historic landscape has essentially remained intact. The picnic grounds have not been substantially altered, except for the removal and replacement of some site furnishings (Figure 15). The wayside area has been expanded with new gas station services and additional parking to the west of the wayside building that is more visually prominent than the original parking lot to the northeast of the building. Since the loop road and gas services were moved northward in the 1990s, the area between the gas station and the wayside building has been replaced with paths, picnic spots, and shaded lawns (Figure 16).

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Figure 15. The picnic grounds feature numerous picnic spots set within lawns and shaded by trees, accessed by either the loop road or paths (OCLP, 2011).*



*Figure 16. View looking west at the area between the wayside building (left) and the gas station (right) that historically was the location of the gas pumps and a loop road (OCLP, 2011).*

### **Land Use**

Historic Condition (through 1952):

Prior to the creation of Shenandoah NP, land use practices throughout the Blue Ridge Mountains varied—from small-scale subsistence farming, to large-scale market-driven agriculture, to iron and copper mining, timber harvesting, and in a number of areas resort development and operation. In 1926, Congress authorized Shenandoah NP, and the removal of farmsteads on the future park lands began. However, as there was no funding for land acquisition, land was acquired through private donations and funding from the Commonwealth of Virginia. As a result, the park was not officially established until 1935.

In the Elkwallow area, recreational land use began in 1929-1930 when the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club began building the Appalachian Trail (AT) along the park's ridgeline. A section of the AT passed north and east of the Elkwallow. Construction of Skyline Drive, the park's main motor road that also traced the park's ridgeline, began in 1931. Envisioned as the park's most important feature, Skyline Drive provided numerous overlooks and conveniently located picnic, wayside, and lodging areas to serve the motoring public. Construction of the road occurred in three phases starting in the park's Central District, followed by the North District and then the South District. The North District segment, where Elkwallow would be located, ran from Front Royal to Thornton Gap. Construction in the North District began in 1934 with paving mostly completed in the summer of 1936.

In 1935, Mile Post 24 along Skyline Drive was identified as a picnic spot called Elkwallow (sometimes spelled Elk Wallow), most likely because of its picturesque knoll and views of the surrounding mountains. The Elkwallow picnic grounds were organized around a curving loop road and included a log comfort station, parking areas, paths, water fountains, fireplaces, and picnic tables set within shady lawns. Most features were in place by 1936. In 1937, the park's concessioner, the Virginia Sky-Line Company, built the wayside area to the east of the picnic grounds, which included a concession building with food services, store, and restroom, as well as a gas station and parking. The wayside area also included a concessioner office. Much of the site work at both the picnic grounds and the wayside area was accomplished by the CCC. When the concessioner closed guest lodgings at Dickey Ridge in the early 1950s, two former guest cabins were relocated to Elkwallow for use as support buildings. One became the concessioner office, but the use of the other is unclear.

#### Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

Elkwallow continues to provide amenities for motorists traveling along Skyline Drive. At the picnic grounds, some site furnishings have been changed, a few paths have been reconfigured, and a pit toilet has been added. Updates have occurred at the wayside area to better accommodate the motoring public, including expanded parking and gas service facilities and changes to some of the vehicular and pedestrian circulation. However, overall land uses at Elkwallow remain as they did historically.

#### **Circulation**

##### Historic Condition (through 1952):

Construction of Skyline Drive began on July 18, 1931. Elkwallow was located along Section 2-C-1, completed in 1935, within the drive's North District that was completed by October 1936. Elkwallow was designed to serve motorists traveling along Skyline Drive.

The picnic grounds were accessed via a wye intersection with Skyline Drive. A one-way access road looped around a picturesque knoll and provided three separate pull-off parking areas on the east, north, and west sides of the road, totaling eighty spaces. A set of stone steps built adjacent to a large rock outcropping led visitors from the west parking lot area up to the upper elevations of the knoll. Pathways, roughly two to three feet wide, meandered through the site, linking the three parking lots and providing access to the picnic spots and a comfort station at the north end of the knoll. By 1938, the west parking lot was expanded and additional paths were built in the area just to the west.

Motorists approached the Elkwallow wayside area via two entrance roads from the Skyline Drive that converged in a loop between the wayside building and the gas station. A parking lot with a planted median was located northeast of the wayside building, providing fifty spaces. Along the south façade of the wayside building, the concessioner also constructed a terrace for outdoor dining (see Figure 9). The picnic grounds and wayside area were connected by a pedestrian pathway through a wooded area that visually separated the two sites.

**Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:**

Since the end of the period of significance in 1952, the one-way access road, parking lots, path system, and stone steps at the picnic grounds remain (Figures 17-19). Some portions of the path system have been reconfigured or paved to improve accessibility and safety, but overall its original design is intact. However, many surfaces are in poor condition. At the wayside area, the two entrance/exit roads, original parking lot and planted median to the northeast, and patio remain (Figures 20 and 21). The route of the original loop between the wayside building and the gas station was abandoned in the 1990s and shifted to the north to access new gas pumps on the north side of the gas station building (see Figure 16). Around the same time, a large parking lot with a grass median was built to the west, providing over sixty additional spaces (Figure 22). Existing parking spaces east of the concessioner office were removed and roughly thirty-four new spaces were organized along a new roadway connecting the east entrance drive to the new parking lot and west entrance drive (Figure 23). The path still connects the picnic grounds and wayside area, although it has been shortened and paved.

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Elkwallow Picnic Grounds Access Road

Feature Identification Number: 152737

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 81916

Feature: Elkwallow Picnic Grounds Pathways

Feature Identification Number: 152739

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 81915

Feature: Elkwallow Picnic Grounds Stone Steps

Feature Identification Number: 152741

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 81915

Feature: Elkwallow Access Road and Parking Area

Feature Identification Number: 152743

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 81911

Feature: Path connecting Picnic Grounds and Wayside Building

Feature Identification Number: 152751

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Expanded Parking Areas at Wayside

Feature Identification Number: 152753

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Concrete Accessible Ramp on North Side of Wayside

Feature Identification Number: 152755

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Figure 17. The one way access road loops around the knoll in the picnic grounds. This view looks north at the east parking lot (OCLP, 2011).*



*Figure 18. Asphalt and gravel paths originally built by the CCC still meander throughout the picnic grounds. In the background is the comfort station (OCLP, 2011).*



*Figure 19. Stone steps built by the CCC lead from the west parking lot to the upper portions of the knoll in the picnic grounds (OCLP, 2011).*



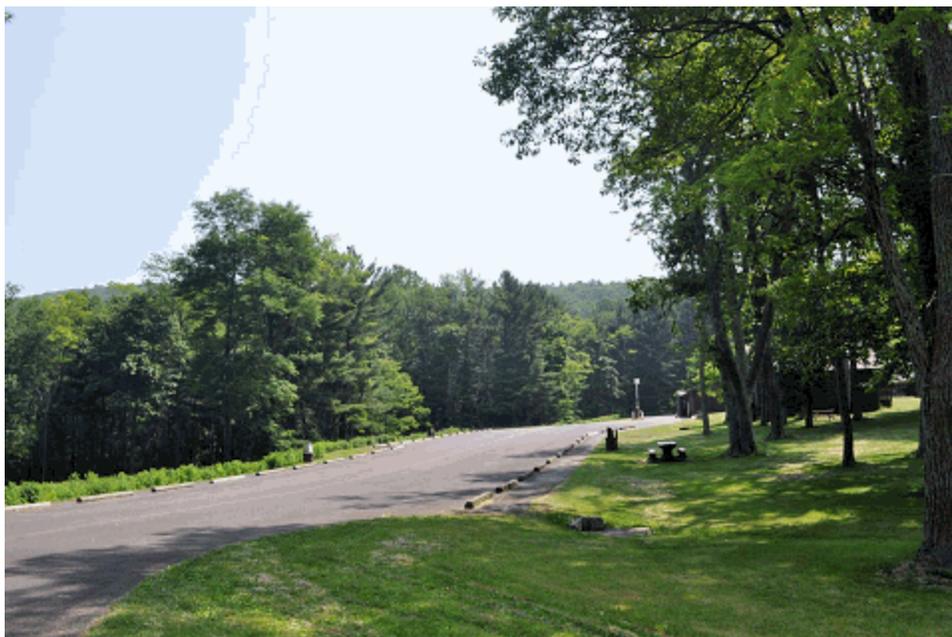
*Figure 20. View looking west at the original parking lot and planted median at the wayside area. Also note the original curbing along the parking lot (OCLP, 2011).*



*Figure 21. View of the patio on the south side of the wayside building at Elkwallow (OCLP, 2011).*



*Figure 22. View looking southeast at the plarge parking lot west of the wayside building. Skyline Drive is in the background (OCLP, 2011).*



*Figure 23. View looking east at the parking lot on the north side of the wayside area. In the distance are the gas pumps (OCLP, 2011).*

### **Buildings and Structures**

Historic Condition (through 1952):

The design of visitor facilities throughout Shenandoah NP involved the coordination of government and private entities. The NPS San Francisco and Philadelphia planning offices undertook the master planning design work and developed the standards with which the CCC constructed the site's buildings and structures. Other buildings associated with visitor services were constructed under the direction of the concessioner's architect, Marcellus Wright, Jr., with oversight held by the NPS regional office.

The historic development of buildings and structures at the Elkwallow site occurred between 1935 and 1939, including the one-story comfort station at the picnic grounds and the one-and-a-half-story concession building at the wayside area. The CCC constructed the comfort station, which consisted of a twelve-foot by twenty-four-foot wood frame on a stone foundation, log planks with saddle diamond notches (where two logs come together), and a gabled roof with board and batten detailing at the gabled ends. Log privacy screens, approximately six feet long, were built at the two entrances. Marcellus Wright, Jr. designed the one-and-a-half-story wayside building at Elkwallow, one of many buildings that he designed in the park. The wayside building featured a stone foundation supporting a wood frame with exterior horizontal flitched siding. The interior featured chestnut paneling and a fireplace with a cut stone chimney. The fireplace was central to the large open interior that housed a lunch room and gift shop, while a pantry, restrooms, and offices were located in a smaller wing on the building's west side, which also housed two bedrooms and a bathroom.

A ranger office and quarters was also built in the wayside area, but apparently replaced in 1952 with a former one-story wood frame duplex guest cabin that was moved from Dickey Ridge (it is now called Birch Cabin) for use as a office for the concessioner. A second cabin was moved to the wayside area but its location and function are not known. A plan from 1953 indicates a pit toilet down the hill from the northwest corner of the north parking lot. A lunch stand and pavilion were proposed on some early plans for the picnic grounds, but they were never built.

**Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:**

In the 1960s at the wayside area, a new restroom building and gas station office were built on the north side of the loop and just north of the gas pumps (Figure 24). The restroom building was a concrete block, side gabled structure with an asphalt shingled roof, awning windows, clapboard gables, and an overhanging eave on the back façade. The office was a single-story, end gabled frame construction building with clapboard siding, single hung windows, and asphalt shingled roof, and a projected end gable on the rear façade. A covered breezeway featuring a low-pitched gable roof with asphalt shingles connected these two buildings. (Note: The gas station office may be the second cabin that was moved from Dickey Ridge in the 1950s, but additional research is needed on the matter.) Between 1992 and 1994, the gas pumps were replaced and relocated to the north side of the gas station office.

The comfort station in the picnic grounds is extant and in good condition (Figure 25). The wayside building has been preserved and continues to offer takeout dining as well as a gift shop (Figure 26). The concessioner office (Birch Cabin) moved from Dickey Ridge is also extant (Figure 27). At the picnic grounds, a one-story pit toilet was installed at an unknown date on the north side of the north parking lot next to a trailhead. It is not in the same location as the earlier pit toilet in this area, but presumably replaced that structure.

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Elkwallow Picnic Grounds Comfort Station

Feature Identification Number: 153297

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 81913

LCS Structure Name: Elkwallow Picnic Grounds Comfort Station

LCS Structure Number: MI024.2A

Feature: Elkwallow Wayside Building (Gift Shop/Cafeteria)

Feature Identification Number: 153299

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 360436

LCS Structure Name: Elkwallow Wayside

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LCS Structure Number: EW 00-14

Feature: Birch Cabin

Feature Identification Number: 153301

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 414275

LCS Structure Name: Birch Cabin

LCS Structure Number: EW-0003

Feature: Elkwallow Gas Station/Office

Feature Identification Number: 153303

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Feature: Elkwallow Restroom at Wayside Area

Feature Identification Number: 153309

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Elkwallow Pit Toilet at Picnic Grounds

Feature Identification Number: 153311

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Figure 24. View looking north at the restroom building, breezeway, and gas station office at the wayside area (OCLP, 2011).*



*Figure 25. View of the comfort station at the picnic grounds, built by the CCC in 1935-1936 (OCLP, 2011).*



*Figure 26. View looking southwest at the north side of the wayside building, designed by Marcellus Wright Jr. and completed in 1938. The accessible ramp was added after the historic period (OCLP, 2011).*



*Figure 27. View looking northwest at the concessioner office (Birch Cabin) that was formerly a duplex cabin at Dickey Ridge. It was built in 1939 and moved to the wayside area in 1952 (OCLP, 2011).*

### **Vegetation**

#### Historic Condition (through 1952):

As they did throughout the park's developed areas, the CCC's work at Elkwallow included clearing some trees for construction of buildings, roads, and paths, and supplementing the existing vegetation with clusters of new plantings. This included deciduous trees such as red oak and black walnut for shade, evergreen trees such as pine for screening, and flowering shrubs and ornamental trees around the wayside building. As they matured, these plantings began to define spaces. Historic site plans illustrate these clusters of deciduous and evergreen trees provided shade and screening in the picnic grounds. At the wayside area, plans indicate smaller clusters of trees, shrubs around the wayside building, and open lawns.

#### Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

Like the forests throughout the rest of the park, the vegetation planted at Elkwallow has matured since the period of significance. Most of the Elkwallow picnic grounds are wooded, and the CCC plantings have also matured and naturalized into the surrounding woods, as intended (Figure 28). However, breaks in the tree canopy still allow turf to grow within the picnic areas and along the access road shoulders. The dense tree canopy in the picnic grounds contrasts with the wayside area that is dominated by lawns with scattered trees and shrubs (Figure 29). Some vegetation appears to have been removed, including some foundation plantings as well as trees and shrubs along the edge of Skyline Drive. Remaining plantings include trees within the median at the northeast parking lot, a mountain laurel at the west side of the wayside building, and several deciduous trees along the west and east facades of the building (Figure 30). Other trees and vegetation in this area are part of the second-growth

forest ecosystem that extends throughout the park. A mass of pines helps visually separate the picnic grounds and wayside area.

**Character-defining Features:**

- Feature: CCC Plantings at Picnic Grounds  
Feature Identification Number: 153609  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
- Feature: CCC Plantings at Wayside Area  
Feature Identification Number: 153611  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
- Feature: Lawns at Wayside Area  
Feature Identification Number: 153615  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Figure 28. A dense canopy of trees, some planted by the CCC, shade the Elkwallow picnic grounds (OCLP, 2011).*



*Figure 29. There is much less vegetation at the Elkwallow wayside area, which is dominated by lawns with scattered trees and shrubs, allowing for an open view from the drive (OCLP, 2011).*



*Figure 30. View of mature mountain laurel along the board fence on the west side of the storage area of the Elkwallow wayside building. In the foreground is a section of worm fencing (OCLP, 2011).*

### **Views and Vistas**

Historic Conditions (through 1952):

Views and vistas were one of the most important characteristics of Skyline Drive as it traced along the spine of the Blue Ridge Mountains. As vehicles motored along the ridge, their views alternated between the Shenandoah Valley and Appalachians to the west to the Piedmont and Tidewater to the east. At the time of the drive's construction in 1931, the patchwork landscape of Virginia's Blue Ridge was comprised of cultivated lands, farms and mills, as well as a few old-growth forests. This resulted in mostly open expansive views at the beginning of the period of significance. Successional forests, and plantings installed by the CCC around the developed areas along the drive, began to limit some of the views by the end of the period of significance.

Views were so fundamental to the motoring experience that all overlooks and developed areas were carefully sited to offer either panoramic or partial views of the surrounding scenery. The Elkwallow picnic grounds appear to have fallen in the latter category. Although it was sited on a knoll, the few historic images of the site suggest that it was wooded and that widespread clearing of vegetation was not undertaken. Instead, many trees were retained and new plantings were installed, which resulted in the site having only distant views of the surrounding mountains, which were also wooded. At the wayside area to the east, long views into the surrounding landscape also appear to have been less of a consideration. Instead, the most important view was between Skyline Drive and the wayside building, which was purposely left open, or possibly cleared, so that passing motorists would stop. The presence of a patio on the wayside building's south side suggests that there may have been a long view to the south, but no historic photographs have been found to confirm this.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

Today, the picnic grounds at Elkwallow feature dense woods with picnic spots tucked in between clusters of trees. In the summer, views of the surrounding mountains are extremely limited, though the distant ridgelines are partially visible at times during the other months (see Figure 28). At the wayside area, the open view between Skyline Drive and the wayside building is intact (see Figure 29). However, the view is somewhat marred by the large parking lot to the west. To the south of Skyline Drive, across from the wayside, is a dense wooded area. As the park's vegetation matured, views from Skyline Drive and overlooks have changed, with intimate woodland scenes replacing distant vistas. In response to the overgrowth, in 1997 the park initiated a five-year program to restore the vistas along the drive (HAER VA-119 1996: sheet 18 of 18).

### **Character-defining Features:**

Feature: View from Picnic Grounds to Surrounding Mountains

Feature Identification Number: 153629

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: View between Skyline Drive and Wayside Building

Feature Identification Number: 153633  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

### **Small Scale Features**

Historic Condition (through 1952):

Albert H. Good's 1938 "Park and Recreation Structures" catalogued variations on small-scale features within the NPS. The three-volume encyclopedic work provided examples of site features that were important to visitor safety and comfort—barriers, water fountains, picnic tables, picnic fireplaces, signs, and comfort stations—and were designed to be adaptable and sensitive to local and regional customs and traditions. The use of native materials in these features helped blend them with the surrounding landscape and evoke a timeless quality.

Throughout Shenandoah NP's developed areas, small-scale features followed the design philosophy described in Good's work and included the following: log and rock barriers; boulder, log, and stacked stone water fountains; rusticated log-framed signage; wood picnic tables; and stacked-stone grills. Small-scale features at Elkwallow were highly characteristic of park-wide and even NPS-wide standardized variations on rustic-style features. Among these variations, the following have been verified at Elkwallow in historic photographs: stacked stone water fountains, stacked stone grills, rusticated log-framed signage, and stone curbing.

Numerous site features at Elkwallow, such as water fountains, fireplaces, and curbing, made use of native stone. Six drinking fountains shown were shown on the 1938 plan, and five were stacked stone that consisted of laid, coursed, and stacked rocks with mortared foundations in a battered design, which tapered to a flat surface with a bowl and spigot set in the top. A single step protruded and rose six to eight inches to allow easier access. Some of the stacked stone water fountains were along the paths while others were amongst groupings of picnic spots. The other water fountain was a boulder water fountain, consisting of a medium sized boulder with a pipe inserted to access water, and a bubbler on top and a spigot on the side. This fountain was the one closest to the north parking lot. Typical fireplaces constructed by the CCC consisted of stacked and mortared stone covered with a metal grate, and were located throughout the picnic grounds. According to historic plans, approximately fourteen fireplaces were planned for Elkwallow picnic grounds. Curbing made from local stone was constructed along edges of parking areas north of the wayside and at the parking lot northwest of the wayside building. The curbing consisted of a narrow line of stones only three to four inches high.

Historic plans indicate that log barriers, or guardrails, were constructed along the wooded edges of all three parking areas within the picnic grounds, which can be seen under construction in historic photos (see Figure 4). Log guardrails were also placed around the parking lot northeast of the wayside building, but photographs have not been found that could verify whether they were actually constructed.

Historic photographs indicate that a number of unique, rusticated wood entrance signs once announced access to the picnic grounds as well as for gas and oil services. It appeared that at

least two entrance signs were installed during the period of significance. One of the earliest signs at the entrance to Elkwallow consisted of a wooden plank board suspended from a supporting log post on one side by metal straps.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

Several historic small-scale features are extant at Elkwallow. The five original stacked stone water fountains remain at the picnic grounds and are in good condition (Figure 31). A stacked stone fountain was installed on the east side of the wayside building after the historic period at an unknown date. At the time of this inventory, it was not functioning. The historic boulder water fountain near the north parking lot in the picnic grounds remains and is in good condition (Figure 32). Original stone curbing still remains around portions of the original wayside parking lot, northeast of the wayside building (see Figure 20), but has been lost on the north side of the wayside building. There are no longer any log guardrails or stone fireplaces at Elkwallow. The park removed the stone fireplaces because of their poor condition. Visitors now use contemporary metal grills, either circular types that sit on the ground or rectangular types supported on a post anchored in a concrete pad.

Some historic features, such as signage and picnic tables, have been replaced with different designs, although they are compatible with the historic designs. Rustic wooden signs at the site from the historic period were in keeping with the unified design standards for the park, but were updated along with other park signs. Some of this occurred as part of the Mission 66 period using an art deco style lettering. Most of today's signage consists of brown-painted wood with the classic Shenandoah 1930s-style lettering etched in and painted white. These signs include the entrance signs, directional/informational signs, and trailhead signs. A contemporary sign with current gas prices is mounted on a mortared stone base in the lawn on the south side of the wayside building. Other signs include two interpretive kiosks and one interpretive sign. Elkwallow's original picnic tables have been replaced with movable metal and wood picnic tables and stationary steel post picnic tables for use by disabled guests. The picnic tables are scattered throughout both the picnic grounds and wayside area.

All other small-scale features at Elkwallow post date the historic period. A wood stockade fence surrounds the storage area at the wayside building, while sections of worm-style fencing can be found around the wayside area to control vehicular and pedestrian traffic (see Figure 30). A low stone retaining wall is located next to the restroom building at the wayside area and likely dates to the 1960s when the building was constructed. A log retaining wall has been built along a path heading west from west parking lot at the picnic grounds, but its construction date is not known. Numerous culverts convey stormwater under the two access roads to the wayside area, but they are considered part of Skyline Drive. However, there is a culvert with stone headwalls at the west end of the reconfigured loop road, which was built in the 1990s.

Contemporary metal trash receptacles, dumpsters, and recycling bins are located throughout Elkwallow, and there are ice machines, a vending machine, and a public telephone under the covered breezeway between the restroom and gas station office. Concrete bumpers define the parking spaces in the new parking lots in the wayside area. The current gas pumps date to the early 1990s.

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Stacked Rock Water Fountains (5)  
Feature Identification Number: 153679  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing  
IDLCS Number: 81914  
LCS Structure Name: Elkwallow Picnic Grounds Drinking Fountains  
LCS Structure Number: MI024.2B

Feature: Elkwallow Boulder Water Fountain  
Feature Identification Number: 153987  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing  
IDLCS Number: 81914  
LCS Structure Name: Elkwallow Picnic Grounds Drinking Fountains  
LCS Structure Number: MI024.2B

Feature: Stone Curbing at Wayside Parking Lot  
Feature Identification Number: 153989  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing  
IDLCS Number: 81911  
LCS Structure Name: Elkwallow Access Road and Parking Area  
LCS Structure Number: MI024.0

Feature: Stacked Rock Water Fountain at Wayside  
Feature Identification Number: 153991  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Metal Grills (rectangular)  
Feature Identification Number: 153993  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Metal Grills (circular)  
Feature Identification Number: 153995  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Wayside Entrance Sign

Feature Identification Number: 154019  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Picnic Grounds Entrance Sign  
Feature Identification Number: 154021  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Directional/Informational Signs  
Feature Identification Number: 154023  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Trailhead Signs  
Feature Identification Number: 154065  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Gas Station Fuel Sign  
Feature Identification Number: 154067  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Interpretive Kiosk (2)  
Feature Identification Number: 154071  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Interpretive Sign  
Feature Identification Number: 154073  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Movable Picnic Tables  
Feature Identification Number: 154075  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Steel Post Picnic Tables  
Feature Identification Number: 154057  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Stockade Fence at Wayside Building

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Feature Identification Number: 154063  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing  
Feature: Worm Fencing  
Feature Identification Number: 154051  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing  
Feature: Stone Retaining Wall at Restroom  
Feature Identification Number: 154055  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing  
Feature: Log Retaining Wall at Picnic Grounds  
Feature Identification Number: 154087  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing  
Feature: Culvert in Wayside Parking Lot  
Feature Identification Number: 154079  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing  
Feature: Metal Trash Receptacles  
Feature Identification Number: 154081  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing  
Feature: Dumpsters  
Feature Identification Number: 154083  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing  
Feature: Recycling Bins  
Feature Identification Number: 154085  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing  
Feature: Concrete Bumpers  
Feature Identification Number: 154077  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing  
Feature: Gas Pumps  
Feature Identification Number: 154089

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Figure 31. View of typical stacked stone water fountain at Elkwallow picnic grounds (OCLP, 2011).*



*Figure 32. View of the boulder stone water fountain at Elkwallow picnic grounds (OCLP, 2011).*

## Condition

### Condition Assessment and Impacts

**Condition Assessment:** Good

**Assessment Date:** 09/06/2011

#### Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The condition of the Elkwallow landscape is evaluated as “good,” which indicates the property shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The site’s cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

The vehicular circulation system has been well maintained through repaving, although those in the wayside area are due for rehabilitation. The original pedestrian paths in the picnic grounds are currently in poor condition. The surviving historic small scale features, including the drinking fountains and stone curbing, are in good condition. Both the comfort station and the wayside have been well maintained. In addition, the trees that were originally planted at the picnic grounds and around the wayside have grown in and are well maintained, although some of the plantings around the wayside have been removed.

### Impacts

<b>Type of Impact:</b>	Adjacent Lands
<b>External or Internal:</b>	Both Internal and External
<b>Impact Description:</b>	Growth of woodland vegetation around Elkwallow may overwhelm the picnic spaces.
<b>Type of Impact:</b>	Fire
<b>External or Internal:</b>	Both Internal and External
<b>Impact Description:</b>	Fire has had a long history within Shenandoah NP. Such events could impact views from the site.
<b>Type of Impact:</b>	Pests/Diseases
<b>External or Internal:</b>	Both Internal and External
<b>Impact Description:</b>	Continued spread of the gypsy moth and wooly adelgid diseases, as well as the sudden oak disease, may impact trees within the site’s boundaries and beyond them, and should be monitored.

## Treatment

### Treatment

**Approved Treatment:** Undetermined

**Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:**

The General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan were completed in 1983. However, these documents are considered out of date and the park superintendent now signs off on the treatment of all buildings and structures as they are added to or updated in the List of Classified Structures (LCS). A memo from the Superintendent states that all structures listed on National Register of Historic Places will be classified under the “Must Be Preserved and Maintained” management category. For resources listed in the LCS, the superintendent approved the management category on September 8, 2010.

The LCS identifies preservation as the treatment for the following resources: Picnic Grounds Comfort Station, Picnic Grounds, Pathways, Picnic Grounds Access Road, Elkwallow Wayside, and Birch Cabin. Treatment is not identified in the LCS for the following resources: Elkwallow Access Road and Parking Area and Picnic Grounds Drinking Fountains.

There is currently a project in the Project Management Information System (PMIS) entitled “Rehabilitate Elkwallow Wayside Road and Parking Area” (PMIS 142614). Funding for \$250,000 has been requested for 2014.

**Approved Treatment Completed:** No

## Bibliography and Supplemental Information

### Bibliography

- Citation Author:** Benson, Harvey P.  
**Citation Title:** “The Skyline Drive, A Brief History of a Mountaintop Motorway, Regional Review  
**Year of Publication:** 1940  
**Citation Publisher:** National Park Service
- Citation Author:** Engle, Reed L.  
**Citation Title:** “Shenandoah National Park Historical Overview”  
**Citation Publisher:** <http://www.nps.gov/shen/historyculture/historicaloverview.htm>
- Citation Author:** Engle, Reed L.  
**Citation Title:** “The Single Greatest Feature...A SKYLINE DRIVE: 75 years of Mountaintop Motorway”  
**Year of Publication:** 2006  
**Citation Publisher:** Shenandoah National Park Association, Inc.
- Citation Author:** Engle, Reed L.  
**Citation Title:** Skyline Drive  
**Citation Publisher:** <http://www.nps.gov/shen/historyculture/skylinedrive.htm>
- Citation Author:** Good, Albert H.  
**Citation Title:** “Park and Recreation Structures”  
**Year of Publication:** 1999  
**Citation Publisher:** Princeton Architectural Press
- Citation Author:** Heatwole, A.J.  
**Citation Title:** “Guide to Shenandoah”  
**Year of Publication:** 1988  
**Citation Publisher:** Shenandoah Natural History Association

- Citation Author:** Holmes, R. et al.  
**Citation Title:** Soil Survey of Warren County, Virginia  
**Year of Publication:** 1984  
**Citation Publisher:** U.S. Soil Conservation Service
- Citation Author:** Lambert, Darwin  
**Citation Title:** Administrative History, Shenandoah National Park, 1924-1976  
**Year of Publication:** 1979  
**Citation Publisher:** Unpublished NPS report
- Citation Author:** Lambert, Darwin  
**Citation Title:** "The Undying Past of SNP"  
**Year of Publication:** 2001  
**Citation Publisher:** Roberts Rineheart, Inc.
- Citation Author:** McClelland, Linda Flint  
**Citation Title:** "Building the National Parks"  
**Year of Publication:** 1998  
**Citation Publisher:** JHU Press
- Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** List of Classified Structures  
**Year of Publication:** 1997  
**Citation Publisher:** Unpublished NPS report
- Citation Author:** National Park Service, Denver Service Center  
**Citation Title:** General Management Plan, Development Concept Plan  
**Year of Publication:** 1983  
**Citation Publisher:** NPS

**Citation Author:** National Park Service, Historic American Engineering Record  
**Citation Title:** Skyline Drive  
**Year of Publication:** 1996  
**Citation Publisher:** Unpublished NPS report

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** National Historic Landmark Documentation  
**Year of Publication:** 2008  
**Citation Publisher:** Unpublished

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Skyline Drive Historic District National Register  
**Year of Publication:** 1997  
**Citation Publisher:** Unpublished

**Citation Author:** National Park Service  
**Citation Title:** Skyline Drive Historic District Boundary Increase  
**Year of Publication:** 1997  
**Citation Publisher:** Unpublished

**Citation Author:** Reeder, Carolyn and Jack  
**Citation Title:** "Shenandoah Secrets"  
**Year of Publication:** 1991  
**Citation Publisher:** Potomac Appalachian Trail Club

**Citation Author:** Robinson & Associates and EDAW, Inc.  
**Citation Title:** Shenandoah National Park: Historic Resources Study  
**Year of Publication:** 1997  
**Citation Publisher:** n/a

- Citation Author:** Spelman, H. J.  
**Citation Title:** Building Roads in Shenandoah National Park: Area in Virginia Blue Ridge Made Accessible by Recreational Parkway”  
**Year of Publication:** 1935  
**Citation Publisher:** Civil Engineering
- Citation Author:** n/a  
**Citation Title:** Monacan Indian Nation  
**Citation Publisher:** <http://indians.vipnet.org/tribes/monacan.cfm>
- Citation Author:** n/a  
**Citation Title:** “Chestnuts in Virginia”  
**Citation Publisher:** <http://www.virginiaplaces.org/natural/chestnut.html>

### Supplemental Information

- Title:** Elk Wallow [Elkwallow] Picnic Area Utility Layout, SHE 4003-1-4. Electrostatic print, Prepared by Branch of Engineering, NPS. Approved by Arno B. Cammerer, Director, NPS, 03/30/1937.
- Description:** Site plan
- Title:** Elk Wallow Development, SHE 1167. Part of the Master Plan, 3 sheets. Ink, drafting cloth, Prepared by Branch of Plans & Design, NPS. Drawn by M.J.O. 3 copies. Signed by J. R. Lassiter, 2/28/38; 2nd & 3rd copies are diazo prints; 3rd copy has note Correc
- Description:** Plan shows roads, trails, buildings, picnic table, fireplace, fountain, log guard rails
- Title:** Preliminary Plan for Elk Wallow Picnic Area, SHE 1187, 01/18/1936. Scale 1=40'. Graphite, tracing paper, Prepared by Branch of Plans & Design, NPS. Drawn by W.G.A. Approved by A. E. Demaray, Acting Director, NPS, 01/21/1936. Topo lines on verso in red pe
- Description:** Site plan
- Title:** Regional Context graphic showing the North District.
- Description:** Shenandoah NP website, <http://www.nps.gov/shen/planyourvisit/upload/north.jpg>
- Title:** The Master Plan: Elkwallow Existing Development, SHE 2120, 10/30/1953. Sheet 21 of 55.
- Description:** Site plan