

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

Kentucky State Parks
Name of Multiple Property Listing

Kentucky
State

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E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Development and Growth of the Kentucky State Park System, 1924-1973

The State Park Movement comes to Kentucky

The Kentucky state park system was established during the 1920s, a decade when the state parks movement in the United States was coming into its own. Kentucky's park system was neither among the first nor the last created; rather, the system was born in a period when people from across the country were discussing the definition, purpose, and form of state parks. That national discussion provided broad ideological and practical grounding for what in Kentucky was, at its core, a truly local endeavor to preserve the Commonwealth's important places and to make them accessible for public enjoyment.

The first National Conference on State Parks met in 1921 in Des Moines, Iowa. That meeting, and others that would follow in the years preceding the Great Depression, evidenced widespread enthusiasm for establishing state parks, but also great diversity in motivations among those who promoted them. The first conference was convened by Stephen Mather, the first director of the National Park Service (NPS), which was established in 1916 and thus was in a period of great growth and definition of its own. As historian Rebecca Conard writes, "Mather's reason for promoting a state park organization was fairly transparent. The Park Service was inundated with requests for creating national parks in areas that he and his staff felt were 'more of local interest.' National park designation was to be reserved for areas of 'supreme and distinctive quality' or containing 'some natural feature so unique as to be of national importance.' Mather thus saw state parks as a medium for protecting and preserving places that were less than 'supreme' in their scenic quality or rarity."¹

Not surprisingly, many state parks officials, especially from states with well-established systems, bristled at the idea that they were simply second-tier national parks. Many did not agree, however, on exactly what a state park was, or should be.

The most obvious division was between those who conceived parks as places of recreation for human enjoyment and those who focused on the importance of conservation of natural and historical resources. However, there were many nuances and overlaps among these two wings. Certainly, some saw parks primarily as a natural response to the growing automobile culture and newfound leisure time of America's working classes who had recently won benefits such as an 8-hour work day and 40-hour work week.

Parks were part of a growing tourism economy that provided a wholesome and healthful form of recreation and needed escape from the drudgery of working life. Taking this a step further, conservationists in the tradition of Theodore Roosevelt saw parks as an essential component in the "conservation of human health," stressing the importance of time spent in wild and scenic places to the physical and mental health and spiritual renewal of modern Americans. Meanwhile, those who focused more distinctly on the conservation of rare or threatened natural resources typically were scientifically motivated, but often assigned moral or spiritual value to the study and contemplation of such things.² Thus, all were essentially advocating for setting aside natural areas for human

¹ Rebecca Conard, "The National Conference on State Parks: Reflections on Organizational Genealogy," *The George Wright FORUM* 14, no. 4 (1997): 30.

² Conard, "The National Conference on State Parks," 32-34.

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benefit, even if they varied in their motivations and their ideas about the acceptable extent of human “use” of such areas.

Surely there were ardent supporters in each camp, and they sometimes clashed over issues such as “the transportation question,” that is, the impact of the growing automobile-driving, consumer-oriented public on irreplaceable natural resources. However, by the end of the 1920s, many park proponents took a pragmatic view.³ As stated in the preface to *A State Park Anthology*, a compilation published by the National Conference on State Parks in 1930, the movement had evolved from the early days of focus on solitary places of extraordinary significance, such as Yosemite Valley and Niagara Falls, to include more broad focus on creating state park *systems* to serve the broad public:

“In the old days park advocates would say ‘Here is an area so outstanding in its beauty that it ought to be saved for the public.’ Today we say, ‘Here is a public, vast in numbers, with modern means of transportation, good roads and leisure, more and more cramped by the growth of cities, to whom contact with the beauty of nature and opportunities for the simple types of outdoor recreation are more and more necessary for a healthful mind and a healthy body. Let us find and preserve some of what is left of our unspoiled out-of-doors, so that our people today and tomorrow may have a chance to know what it is like and to enjoy it.’”⁴

Highlighting this democratic emphasis, the National Conference on State Parks adopted the slogan “A state park every 100 miles,” which the Kentucky State Park Commission later echoed with “A park for every County in Kentucky.”⁵ While some within the state park movement bemoaned this notion, feeling it cheapened the traditional understanding of parks as rare natural wonders, others advanced the opposite extreme, proposing that any piece of land, properly tended, could be returned to a natural state worthy of a park.⁶ Whatever one’s position, there was no denying that Americans were increasingly on the move and seeking new opportunities for outdoor recreation and leisure. While citizens grew to expect that their state and national governments would provide parks for such purposes, many also actively engaged in local movements to ensure that this would happen, as echoed in the origin stories of so many of Kentucky’s state parks.

Creation of the Kentucky State Park Commission

It was in this context that, in 1924, the Kentucky General Assembly passed Senate Bill No. 306, An Act creating a Kentucky State Park Commission. The bill had widespread support, passing the House 54 to 6 and unanimously passing the Senate with 27 votes in support. The short piece of legislation included three provisions. First, it established the Kentucky State Park Commission comprised of three members including the Director of the Kentucky State Geological Survey, the Dean of the State Agricultural College, and a third Commissioner appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Second, it charged the Commission with identifying “suitable and available State Park sites” that might be secured by public subscription and given to the state “for

³ Conard, “The National Conference on State Parks,” 31, 36.

⁴ Herbert Evison, editor, *A State Park Anthology* (Washington, D.C.: National Conference on State Parks, 1930), 7.

⁵ Conard, “The National Conference on State Parks,” 36; Mrs. James Darnell, *Biennial Report of the Kentucky State Park Commission, January 1, 1929–December 31, 1931* (Frankfort: Kentucky State Park Commission, 1932), 49.

⁶ James L. Greenleaf, “The Study and Selection of Sites for State Parks,” in *A State Park Anthology*, ed. Herbert Evison (Washington, D.C.: National Conference on State Parks, 1930), 76; Harold A. Caparn, “State Parks,” in *A State Park Anthology*, ed. Herbert Evison (Washington, D.C.: National Conference on State Parks, 1930), 40.

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their preservation, beautification, and maintenance.” Third, the legislation specified that the Commissioners would serve without compensation, but would be reimbursed for their expenses and official printing. The Kentucky State Park Commission was to report back to the General Assembly in 1926 to share their recommendations to date and/or request an additional two years to complete their stated mission, if needed.⁷

The first chairman of the Kentucky State Park Commission was Dr. Willard Rouse Jillson, Kentucky State Geologist from 1919 to 1932. Jillson was a powerful voice for the special places of Kentucky, bringing great enthusiasm for the geographical, natural, and human history of the Commonwealth. Born in Syracuse, New York in 1890 and educated at the University of Syracuse, University of Washington, University of Chicago, and Yale University, Jillson moved to Kentucky in 1917. He quickly found great success dealing in oil, gas, and coal leases in eastern Kentucky, and was appointed State Geologist in 1919. In this role, he oversaw the publishing of at least one map for each of Kentucky’s 120 counties, wrote extensively on the geography and oil and gas resources of his adopted home state, taught Geology at the University of Kentucky, and served as curator of the Kentucky State Museum.⁸ Serving alongside Jillson was Thomas P. Cooper, Dean of the State Agricultural College and director of the Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station and the Agricultural Extension Division who oversaw the growth of these bodies from 1918 through 1951. Cooper graduated from the University of Minnesota and worked in government and university service in Minnesota and North Dakota before coming to the University of Kentucky in 1918. His work on the State Park Commission was among a long list of service to various state and national agricultural, scientific, and educational associations.⁹ Vance Prather of Fort Thomas was the appointed member of the Commission who served as its secretary. Having previously worked to help establish state parks in Texas, Mr. Prather brought great support for the parks movement, knowledge of other state and national parks, and involvement with the National Conference on State Parks.¹⁰

Considered in the context of the nationwide state parks movement, Kentucky’s first State Parks Commission represents a balance of many of the interests expressed by park advocates, but generally seems to fall towards the pragmatic end of the spectrum. Dr. Jillson brought the curiosity and sense of wonder of a scientist, the economic sense of a businessman and bureaucrat, and the unbridled enthusiasm of a true lover of Kentucky’s natural and human history. Prather, having worked with the Texas state park system, undoubtedly was influenced by that state’s focus on state parks as mechanisms for increasing automobile tourism and stimulating local economies.¹¹ Cooper’s interests as they relate to parks are less well documented, but, given his background, may relate to resource conservation and utilization. Whatever their personal feelings, the Commission’s first report to the General Assembly in 1926 shows that they understood many of the political motivations for creation of a state park system. First and foremost, as one might expect, were economic motivations:

“Believing that Kentucky, by reason of its rare scenic beauty, will become in time, with the building of

⁷ Willard Rouse Jillson, Thomas P. Cooper, and Vance Prather, *Report and Recommendations of the Kentucky State Park Commission for the Biennial Period 1926–1928* (Frankfort: Kentucky State Park Commission, 1926), 3.

⁸ “Guide to the Willard Rouse Jillson Papers,” Berea College, Hutchins Library Special Collections and Archives, accessed August 16, 2017, <http://community.berea.edu/hutchinslibrary/specialcollections/saa19.asp>.

⁹ “Thomas Poe Cooper, Retired Dean of U.K. Agriculture College, Dies,” *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Kentucky), February 20, 1958, 24.

¹⁰ “Prather Goes on State Park Body,” *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Kentucky), July 17, 1924, 2; “State Park Bill Means Progress,” *Middlesboro Daily News* (Middlesboro, Kentucky), March 27, 1924, 1; “Annual Community Dinner of Mercer Commerce Chamber,” *Advocate-Messenger* (Danville, Kentucky), January 31, 1925, 1.

¹¹ Conard, “The National Conference on State Parks,” 31.

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good roads, a restful and inviting, and altogether attractive mecca for thousands of tourists who are crossing America awheel in increasing numbers each year; and believing that Kentucky, by reason of its rarely excelled, if equaled scenic splendor, should share in this tremendous revenue—a revenue that within the last year brought \$49,000,000 to the State of Colorado, and \$90,000,000 to the State of Minnesota, and other States of the American union in like proportion, the State Park Commission has endeavored, without a dollar of moneys appropriated by the State for that purpose, to link up some of these scenic wonderlands as a nucleus, or beginning, for what is intended shall be within a few years a comprehensive State Park system.”¹²

Suitable park sites were places exhibiting a “high type of physical excellence, great natural beauty, or outstanding historical importance”¹³ that were easily accessible by rail and to the growing body of motorists whose revenues the state sought to capture. Such places should afford “opportunity for the rest, recreation, and relaxation of great numbers of the people of this and other States.”¹⁴

Parks’ Role in America’s Changing Cultural Landscape

Just a few decades prior, it would have been almost unimaginable that “great numbers” of Americans had the time and resources to travel to state parks. Yet, by the time that Kentucky was beginning work to establish its state park system, many citizens had an automobile to access far-flung park sites as well as the available time off from work necessary to make a trip. As historian Foster Rhea Dulles described in 1940, “The wealthy could make the fashionable tour in 1825, the well-to-do built up the summer resorts in the 1890s, but every Tom, Dick, and Harry toured the country in the 1930s.”¹⁵ This was due, in large part, to the growing accessibility of automobile ownership, as Henry Ford’s increasingly-efficient moving assembly line allowed the company to reduce the price of a Model T from \$850 when it was introduced in 1908 to \$550 in 1913 and just \$380 when it was discontinued in 1927.¹⁶ While certainly there were still some Americans who could not afford to purchase an automobile, Ford had, in many respects, achieved his goal to “build a car for the great multitude...so low in price that no man making a good salary will be unable to own one.”¹⁷ In 1920, there were fewer than 10 million registered vehicles in the United States, but by 1930 there were 26.5 million registered vehicles, or one for every 4.6 Americans.¹⁸ Reflecting on the significance of this exponential increase, a Library of Congress article on consumerism in the Coolidge-era refers to the automobile as “the single most significant consumer product of the 1920s” and points to the many ways in which the boom in personal vehicle ownership sparked other sectors of the American economy “from plate glass, steel, rubber (for tires), gasoline, and auto accessories, to service stations, tourism,

¹² Jillson, Cooper, and Prather, *Report and Recommendations*, 5.
¹³ Willard Rouse Jillson, *Kentucky State Parks, A Brief Presentation of the Geology and Topography of Some Proposed State Park Areas Based upon Original Field Investigations* (Frankfort: Kentucky Geological Society, 1927), 6.
¹⁴ Jillson, Cooper, and Prather, *Report and Recommendations*, 6.
¹⁵ Foster Rhea Dulles, *America Learns to Play: A History of Popular Recreation, 1607-1940* (1940; reprint, Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1956), 319, as cited in Richard K. Popp, *The Holiday Makers: Magazines, Advertising, and Mass Tourism in Postwar America* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2012), 11.
¹⁶ Robert Casey, “Model T,” American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Landmark #233, accessed August 16, 2017, <https://www.asme.org/about-asme/engineering-history/landmarks/233-model-t>.
¹⁷ Henry Ford, quoted by Robert Casey, “Model T,” American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Landmark #233, accessed August 16, 2017, <https://www.asme.org/about-asme/engineering-history/landmarks/233-model-t>.
¹⁸ Library of Congress, “The Automobile: Consumerism on Wheels,” from *The Coolidge Era and the Consumer Economy, 1921–1929*, accessed August 16, 2017, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov:8081/ammem/amrlhtml/inauto.html>.

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hotels, roadside restaurants, and camping equipment.”¹⁹ Indeed, by 1939, despite setbacks during the early years of the Great Depression, the travel industry was valued at \$5.5 billion.²⁰ Americans were using their new cars not just to get to work and attend to daily business; they were, in the eyes of some observers of the day, addicted to the open road. American tourists traveled an estimated 67 billion miles in 1920, which grew to over 228 billion miles by 1938, with 83 percent of these miles traveled by automobile.²¹ New pastimes, such as car camping, soon gained widespread popularity, and entrepreneurs quickly found ways to capitalize on this trend, leading to the creation of commercial auto camps and later the first roadside motels.²² The potential trajectory of these trends was already evident by the mid-1920s when the Kentucky General Assembly took up legislation for creating a state park system. For state governments, promoting automobile tourism had the double benefit of stimulating local economies while also providing additional state revenues in the form of gas taxes; indeed, Kentucky was among the first states to capitalize on this revenue stream when, in 1920, it became the fifth state to pass a tax on gasoline sales.²³ The economic promises of a growing state tourism industry sparked by the development of state parks no doubt helped to capture the votes of some legislators who were less inclined to be won over by conservationist arguments.

While the State Park Commission was well aware of the economic considerations that would concern many legislators when identifying potential park sites, they also recognized that the selection of outstanding park sites was essential to building the public support needed for the long-term success of the state park system, and truly believed that Kentucky had places of remarkable beauty and importance worthy of preservation and investment for the benefit of all citizens of the Commonwealth. Indeed, Dr. Jillson wrote quite romantically of several of the sites under consideration. For example, of Breaks of Sandy he wrote, “At dawn, at noontide, at nightfall, the forest fragrances, the silences, the vistas, the overwhelming experience of freedom and the sense of the primeval—are magnificent and quite beyond description.”²⁴ And of the Kentucky River Gorge, he reflected “In the silent reaches of the river, particularly at nightfall, there is much to take one back to the days of the pioneer. The occasional rudely built log cabin nestling among the trees in or near the mouth of a cove, the fragrant odor of wood burning in an old-time fireplace, and the melancholy piping of some distant waterfowl, create a priceless atmosphere of olden times.”²⁵ Interestingly both quotes, and many early statements describing potential park sites in Kentucky, focus on their transformative power to evoke an earlier time.

While the enjoyment of parks by middle class Americans was made possible by new technologies such as the automobile and advancements in work that led to greater productivity and allowed for greater leisure time, such advancements also created the desire for an escape from modern life. Growing pressure from labor unions and changing business sensibilities of industrialists like Henry Ford had made the 8-hour workday and 40-hour workweek a reality for many American workers by the 1920s. In response, a new culture of leisure grew up in American cities, defined by recreational amenities such as movie theaters, dance halls, and amusement parks that provided a needed escape from work life in the evenings and on weekends. As first white-collar then blue-collar

¹⁹ Library of Congress, “The Automobile: Consumerism on Wheels.”

²⁰ Popp, *The Holiday Makers*, 12.

²¹ Popp, *The Holiday Makers*, 15.

²² Warren James Belasco, *Americans on the Road: From Autocamp to Motel, 1910-1945* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1979): 3–5.

²³ Tax Foundation, “When did your state adopt its gas tax?” 2017, accessed August 17, 2017, <https://taxfoundation.org/when-did-your-state-adopt-its-gas-tax/>.

²⁴ Jillson, *Kentucky State Parks*, 59.

²⁵ Jillson, *Kentucky State Parks*, 77.

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workers began earning paid vacation benefits in the 1920s and 1930s, many equated the escape from the drudgery of work with an escape from one's everyday environs, romanticizing the call of the open road and, often, of America's still wild and scenic places.

The "freedom" and "days of the pioneer" evoked by Jillson agreed with a popular notion: that wanderlust is an inherent component of the American character born from our history of pushing the frontier ever-westward. With increasing control of one's time and increasing mobility thanks to the automobile, modern Americans were able to act on these desires. To those conservationists who saw nature as a place of physical and mental renewal, escape from the hardships of modern life was found not only in the act of travel, but more specifically in time spent in places of unspoiled beauty untouched by modern industry and development. Thus, while Kentucky state parks were, from the start, seen as recreational amenities, Jillson's statements suggest that he saw a more fundamental value in these places, tied not only to the intrinsic values of the resources themselves but also to a sort of moral or spiritual valued derived from the escape that they provided from modern life.²⁶

Acquiring Kentucky's First State Parks

The three Commissioners set off across the state to examine potential park sites. Although the law did not take effect until June 1924, by May 1924, Dr. Jillson already had a well thought-out list of potential park sites that he presented in a talk to the Kentucky Academy of Science in Lexington.²⁷ The nucleus of the state park system, as Jillson envisioned it in the spring of 1924, was four notable properties already owned by the state: the new State Capitol grounds in Frankfort, the state forestry reserve at Pine Mountain in Harlan County, My Old Kentucky Home near Bardstown in Nelson County, and a small portion of the Perryville Battlefield in Mercer County.²⁸ Interestingly, none of these were among the first of Kentucky state parks dedicated in the 1920s, although My Old Kentucky Home and Perryville Battlefield, previously established as state shrines overseen by separate commissions, both were brought in to the state park system by the Kentucky State and Government Reorganization Act in 1936.²⁹ Beyond these state-owned properties, Mammoth Cave and Cumberland Falls, considered two of the most outstanding natural wonders of Kentucky, were at the top of Jillson's list of potential park sites because both faced development pressures at the time. Other places that "present[ed] a high type of physical excellence, great natural beauty, or outstanding historical importance" noted by Jillson included:

- Carter Caves in Carter County;
 - Cumberland Gap in Bell County;
 - Natural Bridge in Powell and Wolfe Counties;
 - "Breaks of Sandy" in Pike County;
 - "In Between the Rivers" (today's Land Between the Lakes) in Lyon and Trigg Counties;
 - Ohio River Lowlands in Ballard County or the Reelfoot Lake region in Fulton County;
 - A portion of the Kentucky River Gorge in parts of Jessamine, Garrard, Mercer, or Woodford Counties;
- and

²⁶ Popp, *The Holiday Makers*, 11–16; Conard, "The National Conference on State Parks," 32–33.

²⁷ Jillson, *Kentucky State Parks*, 6–8.

²⁸ Jillson, *Kentucky State Parks*, 2–3.

²⁹ Kentucky State Parks, "Perryville Battlefield History," accessed August 16, 2017, <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/historicsites/perryville-battlefield/history.aspx>; Kentucky State Parks, "My Old Kentucky Home History," accessed August 16, 2017, <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/recreationparks/old-ky-home/history.aspx>.

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- Harrodsburg or Boonesborough, the locations of the first settlements in Kentucky.³⁰

This list of sites features the geographical diversity that would be expected from a statewide park system, with proposed locations fairly well distributed across the state and capturing the variety of natural landscapes that are a hallmark of Kentucky. It also captures the diversity of purpose of the Kentucky State Park System, including “natural wonders” and other sites of exceptional scenic and geological significance, sites intended as fishing and game reserves (particularly the three sites identified in western Kentucky), and sites important to Kentucky’s history, especially its early pioneering past.

The public, of course, had opinions about appropriate sites for Kentucky state parks as well. As the Commissioners travelled across the state, they were invited to speak to local chambers of commerce and other groups to share their vision for the state parks system and, undoubtedly, discuss the merits of a local site under consideration. Newspapers from the period are filled with stories promoting places that people wished to see selected as state parks. In Harrodsburg, for example, the Kentucky Pioneer Memorial Association hosted Dr. Jillson and Mr. Prather at the Mercer Chamber of Commerce annual community dinner to promote their desire that Old Fort Hill, “the birthspot of Kentucky,” be dedicated as Kentucky’s first state park.³¹ At the ceremonies honoring the 63rd anniversary of the Battle of Perryville, members of the Perryville Battlefield Commission, the Danville Women’s Club, a Confederate veteran, and Dr. Jillson himself urged the creation of a state park on those hallowed grounds.³² The Danville *Advocate-Messenger* reported on several meetings to advance the argument for creation of a state park on Herrington Lake.³³ The Middlesboro *Daily News* highlighted continuing efforts to have the Cumberland Gap designated as either a national park or state park, including meetings of local boosters with NPS and state officials.³⁴

Public opinion did truly matter in this process. This was not only because the State Park Commission and the General Assembly ultimately were responsible to the people of Kentucky and no park would succeed without public support, but, more importantly, because no funds were initially allocated for obtaining park lands the state had to rely on local initiatives to bring new properties into the fold. The series of events that would make Pine Mountain Kentucky’s first state park well illustrate the importance of the efforts of local citizens in building the state park system. In early 1924, Dr. Jillson spoke to a joint meeting of the Kiwanis Clubs of Pineville, Middlesboro, and Barbourville to highlight the beauties of the Cumberland Mountains and plant a seed of suggestion that locals examine the possibility of advancing land in the area for a state park. The Pineville Kiwanis Club heeded his call and began looking for suitable locations. Once they focused on the lands at the mouth of Clear Creek, they took it upon themselves to work with the local government, which owned a poor farm at this location, and other property owners to determine their willingness to cede the land to the state. Through such efforts, the Bell County Fiscal Court deeded 2,000 acres to the Commonwealth in April 1925, with promises from many private property owners of additional gifts to follow. The Kiwanis Club and Chamber of Commerce of Pineville further took it upon themselves to acquire additional acreage in the vicinity to protect the scenic

³⁰ Jillson, *Kentucky State Parks*, 6–8.

³¹ “Annual Community Dinner of Mercer Commerce Chamber,” *Advocate-Messenger* (Danville, Kentucky), January 31, 1925, 1.

³² “Perryville is Urged for State Park,” *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Kentucky), October 9, 1925, 1.

³³ “New Committee Appointed for the State Park,” *Advocate-Messenger* (Danville, Kentucky), June 16, 1925, 1; “Herrington Lake Would Make Ideal State Park,” *Advocate-Messenger* (Danville, Kentucky), April 25, 1925, 1.

³⁴ “Park Prospects Again Looming,” *Daily News* (Middlesboro, Kentucky), July 23, 1924, 2.

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quality of the state park tract, bringing the acquired and expected donations to over 4,000 acres by 1926.³⁵ Many other early state parks resulted from similarly coordinated efforts among local civic organizations, chambers of commerce, local governments, and private citizens. In other instances, local groups already in place to promote the preservation or commemoration of a given resource, such as the Kentucky Pioneer Memorial Association in Harrodsburg or the Blue Licks Battlefield Memorial Commission, spearheaded the efforts, often with the support of other local groups or officials. Some parks were granted through the generosity of single individuals or families, such as Levi Jackson State Park, which was donated to the state by the Jackson family. Natural Bridge was unique in that it was donated to the state by the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, which had previously developed the site as a tourist attraction.³⁶

The case of Cumberland Falls illustrates the limitations of this early reliance on donations to build the park system. When the Indiana-based Cumberland Hydro-Electric Power Company’s plans for a dam near the falls threatened this natural wonder in the mid-1920s, before Lake Cumberland was established as a state park, the State Park Commission had no legal authority to stop such development and no funds available to attempt to purchase the site. Thus, the battle for the falls was fought in hearings regarding the permitting of the power project and in the newspaper editorial pages, where conservationists were often characterized as anti-progress. Such efforts eventually led to a pledge by T. Coleman du Pont, businessman and U.S. Senator who was a native of Kentucky, to purchase the property and donate it to the state, a pledge that was later fulfilled by his heirs, but the fate of Cumberland Falls easily could have gone the other way.³⁷ Learning lessons from this near loss of one of the state’s treasured sites, in 1930, the Kentucky General Assembly granted the Kentucky State Park Board with condemnation authority, although it is not clear that the park board has since had need to make use of such powers.³⁸

Through such efforts, in their 1926 report to the General Assembly, the State Park Commission could report that the state had received deeds for four tracts of land that would become Kentucky’s first four state parks: Cumberland State Park (now Pine Mountain State Resort Park) in Bell County; the Blue and Gray State Park (eliminated from the state park system in the 1930s) located on Mallory Spring in Todd County; Pioneer Memorial State Park (now Old Fort Harrod State Park) in Harrodsburg, Mercer County; and Kentucky Natural Bridge State Park in Powell and Wolfe Counties.³⁹ The first four parks represent some of the variety that would come to define the Kentucky state park system: Cumberland was characterized by rugged mountain landscapes providing scenic vistas and ample opportunities for hiking and other outdoor recreation; the Blue and Gray was envisioned as a stop-over point for automobile tourists visiting the new Jefferson Davis monument and Abraham Lincoln’s birthplace; Pioneer Memorial would develop as a multi-attraction public history site anchored by the reconstructed fort; and Natural Bridge was an outstanding natural wonder seen as the anchor of an attractive (and lucrative) vacation destination.

In addition to expounding upon the virtues of each site in their report, the Commission made recommendations

³⁵ “State is Given Big Tract for Bell Co. Park,” *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Kentucky), April 14, 1925, 1, 3; Jillson, Cooper, and Prather, *Report and Recommendations*, 6–7.

³⁶ Jillson, Cooper, Prather, *Report and Recommendations*, 6–8; Mrs. James Darnell, *Biennial Report of the Kentucky State Park Commission, May 1, 1928–December 31, 1929* (Frankfort: Kentucky State Park Commission, 1930): 16–17, 28, 36.

³⁷ Freeman Tilden, *The State Parks, their Meaning in American Life*, (New York: Knopf, 1962), 175–177.

³⁸ Beatrice Ward Nelson, “Legislation,” in *A State Park Anthology*, ed. Herbert Evison (Washington, D.C.: National Conference on State Parks, 1930), 65.

³⁹ Jillson, Cooper, and Prather, *Report and Recommendations*, 6–13.

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for the improvements necessary to develop the properties into proper parks that would provide the amenities expected by the travelling public and generate self-supporting revenues. For Pine Mountain, they recommended impounding Clear Creek to create a small lake for boating and swimming, constructing an associated bathing and boating pavilion, clearing trails, and building cottages, camp sites, and “possibly a rustic hotel” to serve visitors.⁴⁰ At Harrodsburg, the Commission recommended reconstruction of the 1773–1774 stockade, to include guest rooms, a dining room and kitchen, and a bath house.⁴¹ At Natural Bridge, which already was a well-established tourist destination, the Commission saw the pressing need for a rustic hotel and guest cottages, as well as more rental boats and bathhouses, to transform it into a vacation destination where people would stay for several days or even weeks at a time.⁴² For the Blue and Gray State Park, they envisioned a bathing pavilion, an auditorium-dining hall entertainment venue, guest rooms, rustic cottages, and camp sites to serve the travelling public.⁴³ The proposed budgets for supporting these developments ranged from \$9,000 per year at the Harrodsburg and Todd County sites to \$15,000 at the Bell County site, with estimations that the parks could become self-supporting in short order if modest fees were charged for the proposed services.

Beginnings of a Kentucky State Park System

The General Assembly, one may assume, was pleased by the report of the Commission. In Chapter 192, Acts of the 1926 Kentucky Legislature, they repealed the 1924 law creating the Kentucky State Park Commission. Then they created a new corporation, also known as the Kentucky State Park Commission, and granted it expanded powers and purpose—to hire laborers and employees and expend allocated funds as necessary to carry out its mission of developing and maintaining a state parks system.⁴⁴ By the time when the 1928–1929 biennial report of the newly-empowered Kentucky State Park Commission was issued, all four parks were open to the public and some progress had been made towards developing the sites as described above.

Notably, the Commission had obtained the services of Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, Massachusetts, to provide landscape design services at Cumberland State Park and Pioneer Memorial State Park, and improvements were being made in accordance with their plans. At Cumberland State Park, the report noted improvements around the new lake, development of trails, construction of restrooms, and leasing of concessions to support hiring the Olmsted Brothers to develop plans for further improving the lake, park entrance and road system, and recreational amenities. At Pioneer Memorial State Park, the reconstructed fort designed by Frederick L. Morgan was completed in 1927. During the following two years, additional work included continued improvements to the reconstructed fort, the park grounds, and the mansion; construction of additional replica buildings and landscape features; enclosure of the cemetery and the park grounds; and placement of additional markers and monuments at the property. At Natural Bridge State Park, the hotel was completed and the grounds and recreational amenities were improved. A new highway to the park was nearly complete. Progress was slowest, it seems, at Blue and Gray State Park, where the hotel was only partially built and the park grounds remained largely unimproved, lacking a proper entrance, roadways, rest rooms, and other amenities. Blue Licks Battlefield in Nicholas County was added to the state park system during this period, and several other sites were under active consideration. No development had occurred at Blue Licks to date, but \$10,000 was appropriated for placement of a monument at that site. The report expressed a sense of urgency that new park sites should be developed as quickly as possible

⁴⁰ Ibid., 16.

⁴¹ Ibid., 17.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., 19.

⁴⁴ Darnell, *Biennial Report of the Kentucky State Park Commission, May 1, 1928–December 31, 1929*, 49.

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to become revenue-generating, but tempered this with recognition of the importance of careful planning and good design when developing these significant places for posterity.⁴⁵

Such caution was learned from experience. Due to poorly managed capital expenditures spent in hasty efforts to develop park sites, the State Park Commission was over \$10,000 in debt when Mrs. James Darnell assumed the role of secretary on May 1, 1928. During the first year and a half of her tenure in the position, she made progress in paying off this debt and setting a more fiscally-responsible course for the parks moving forward. Between July 1, 1928 and December 31, 1929, the State Park Commission spent \$74,177.57 in state appropriations for the improvement and upkeep of the four active parks, including \$9,894.17 for operating expenses and maintenance and \$64,283.40 for permanent improvements. From May 1, 1928 to December 31, 1929, the parks brought in \$22,480.04 in revenues, which included \$7,155.03 from rental of the hotel, rental of the grounds and concession stands, and gate admission fees at Natural Bridge State Park; \$14,573.26 from gate admission fees, registrations, and souvenir sales at Pioneer Memorial State Park; and \$751.75 from rental of the grounds and concession stands at Cumberland State Park.⁴⁶

As indicated by these statistics, Pioneer Memorial State Park led the other early parks in becoming a fully-developed tourist attraction with a solid revenue stream. This happened not only because Ms. Darnell took particular interest in this site, but because local boosters, led by Harrodsburg entrepreneur James L. Isenberg, worked tirelessly to garner the private, state, and national support needed to turn the site of Old Fort Harrod into an attractive if idiosyncratic tourist destination to bolster the economy of their small town.⁴⁷ In this he was largely successful: in 1931, the unique attraction, “the only park of its kind in the United States,” attracted visitors from every state in the union as well as 20 foreign countries.⁴⁸ When Franklin Delano Roosevelt dedicated the federally-funded National Pioneer Monument at the site in 1934, it had grown to encompass a wide array of elements from Kentucky’s past. It included the reconstructed pioneer fort with living history displays, the adjacent pioneer cemetery, the “mansion museum” with large collection of Civil War relics, and the Lincoln Marriage Temple, a Georgian-revival structure built to house the relocated and heavily restored log cabin where Lincoln’s parents were wed, all contained within a park landscape designed by the Olmsted Brothers.

The landscape of Pioneer Memorial State Park well illustrates the fluid definition of a state park; while located at a historic site, there is little “authentic” about the park as preservationists and conservationists would understand the concept today. The park’s various components, loosely connected by their broad associations to the history of Harrodsburg and the surrounding region, exist together because they were seen as objects of fascination to attract the travelling public. This common desire to attract the attention and meet the expectations of tourists would continue to guide the development of Kentucky state park sites, whether natural, historical, or recreational in their focus, throughout the twentieth century.

In 1928 the Kentucky General Assembly called for the creation of the Kentucky Progress Commission, predecessor to the state Department of Commerce, “to promote the development of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, making a general study of its resources, facilities, and advantages for agricultural, commercial, and

⁴⁵ Ibid., 6, 41–45.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 50–55.

⁴⁷ William D. Moore, “United We Commemorate: The Kentucky Pioneer Memorial Association, James Isenberg, and Early Twentieth-Century Heritage Tourism,” *The Public Historian* 30, no. 3 (August 2008): 51–81.

⁴⁸ Darnell, *Biennial Report of the Kentucky State Park Commission, January 1, 1929–December 31, 1931*, 19.

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industrial development and for the attraction of tourists to the Commonwealth.”⁴⁹ Recognizing the important role that he played in developing Pioneer Memorial State Park as a lucrative tourist attraction for Harrodsburg, James L. Isenberg was named to the first Commission.⁵⁰ The Commission spent part of its \$50,000 two-year appropriation to publish the *Kentucky Progress Magazine* to “advertise Kentucky to the world.”⁵¹ Kentucky state parks regularly were highlighted in this publication. In Volume 1 No. 11 published in July 1929, Governor Flem D. Sampson provided an introduction to “Kentucky’s Attractive Parks” that appealed to the most idealistic notions of what a park is, or could be:

“People on pleasure bent, gravitate toward places of ease, rare beauty, grandeur, scenic wealth—the unusual, the wild, the rugged and the picturesque. In all these things, Kentucky is wondrously rich.

“We all—every one—love the great outdoors, the open spaces, where nature reigns supreme. Here one senses the sublime, the majestic, the God-like.

“That is why we love Parks.”⁵²

The issue went on to include heavily illustrated features on each of the five state parks included in the system at the time, as well as an extensive list of points of interest throughout the state. Showing the state’s continued recognition of the value of tourism, even throughout the years of the Great Depression, the *Kentucky Progress Magazine* was published monthly through 1932, and quarterly until 1936, regularly highlighting Kentucky’s state parks and other attractions and events designed to attract visitors.⁵³

After the stock market crash in October 1929, while the nation’s economy was in turmoil, the growth of the Kentucky State Park System accelerated during the period from 1929 to 1931, even before President Franklin Delano Roosevelt took office and the programs of the New Deal spurred enormous investment of labor in state and national parks. Indeed, the biennial report for that period made no reference to the economic hardships of the Great Depression. Instead, it celebrated the addition of five new parks to the system—Butler Memorial State Park in Carroll County, Dr. Thomas Walker State Park in Knox County, Cumberland Falls State Park in Whitley County, Old Mulkey Meeting House in Monroe County, and Levi Wilderness Road State Park in Laurel County—all of which were acquired through gifts to the Commonwealth. The report also listed several other park sites under consideration. In an expression of great optimism, the Commission stated, “We hope to see adopted our slogan, ‘A park for every County in Kentucky.’”⁵⁴

⁴⁹ Kentucky Historical Society, “Moments in Kentucky Legislative History: Kentucky Progress Commission,” accessed August 17, 2017, http://www.lrc.state.ky.us/record/Moments04RS/53_web_leg_history.html.

⁵⁰ Moore, “United We Commemorate,” 74.

⁵¹ Robert Beanblossom, editor, *Histories of the Southeastern State Park Systems*, 3rd ed. (Association of Southeastern State Park Directors, 2011), 79; Kentucky Historical Society, “Moments in Kentucky Legislative History: Kentucky Progress Commission.”

⁵² Flem D. Sampson, “Kentucky’s Attractive Parks,” *Kentucky Progress Magazine* 1, no. 11 (July 1929): 9.

⁵³ Lexington Public Library, “Kentucky Progress Magazine,” accessed August 16, 2017, <http://www.lexpublib.org/digital-archives/kentucky-progress-magazine>.

⁵⁴ Darnell, *Biennial Report of the Kentucky State Park Commission, January 1, 1929–December 31, 1931*, 49.

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Effects of the Great Depression in Kentucky

The Commonwealth of Kentucky in the late-1920s was a rural state whose inhabitants primarily relied on an agricultural economy. Lexington, the state's third largest city, continued to depend on an agrarian-based economy of tobacco, grains, and livestock. Kentucky lagged behind neighboring states in modern improvements such as access to electricity, asphalt or concrete roads, and municipal water treatment. Low commodity prices during the 1920s continued to plague the state's farmers, as tobacco remained the primary cash crop.⁵⁵

Most rural Kentuckians did not immediately feel the effects of the financial crash of late October and November 1929, as few owned investments in the stock market. The impacts were soon evident in the closing of banks resulting in the loss of a lifetime of savings and a tightening of credit; rising unemployment in white and blue collar vocations; and the curtailing of full-time employment or closing of businesses in the retail, manufacturing, construction, and coal mining sectors of Kentucky's economy. Within four years of the stock market crash nearly half of the industries operating in Kentucky were closed and business failures continued to increase. Kentucky's per capita income lagged behind that of the nation prior to the stock market crash, at slightly over half of the national average. By 1933 Kentucky's per capita income stood at half the national average, having decreased by approximately 47 percent during the four-year span.⁵⁶ Declining commodity prices impacted farm incomes over the first years of the Great Depression as "income from corn, livestock, and dairy products fell from \$69 million in 1930 to \$38 million in 1932" and tobacco prices fell by nearly half during the same period.⁵⁷

To address the downward spiral of the nation's economy, President Herbert Hoover followed his conservative beliefs of limited government intervention. The President called for businesses to keep producing goods as he, and many others, initially thought the stock market and nation's economy would soon right itself. As the nation's economy sank further, Hoover continued to block efforts to directly assist the nation's unemployed, instead relying on local communities, businesses, religious organizations, and non-profit agencies to aid those in need.⁵⁸ Congress created, with Hoover's blessing, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) in early 1932 to address the country's faltering economic conditions. The RFC was created to loan money to financial institutions and railroads which in turn would loosen credit and thus the funds would pass through layers of the economy reaching those citizens most in need. Later that same year the RFC was given the responsibility to loan funds to states for highway construction and public works, including municipal parks, through the Emergency Relief and Construction Act.⁵⁹ Although the efforts of the RFC were beneficial they were not enough to dislodge the continuing effects of the Great Depression.

Vacations and Recreation During the Great Depression

The rise of collective bargaining for workers through the creation of unions had advanced off and on from the late-nineteenth century through the 1920s. The advances were often the result of bitter, sometimes violent,

⁵⁵ George T. Blakey, *Hard Times and New Deal in Kentucky, 1929–1939*, (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1986), 6–8.

⁵⁶ Blakey, 9–12, 14.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 14–15; History, "Herbert Hoover," accessed August 17, 2017, <http://www.history.com/topics/us-presidents/herbert-hoover>.

⁵⁹ Blakey, 19, 21.

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rivalries between ownership/management and labor as workers engaged their employers for benefits such as higher wages, better working conditions, and shorter work hours. The Great Depression proved to be a fertile period in the betterment of laborers' working conditions spurred in part by New Deal era legislation involving collective bargaining. During the expansion of unions, the two-week vacation began to appear not only for white collar office workers but also for blue collar industrial workers. At the start of the Great Depression, paid vacations for blue collar workers were a rarity. However, as workers pushed for fewer working hours, rather than shortening the work week, employers offered the two-week vacation, which became a time when workers could control their lives without the oversight and worries of the work place. Vacation periods also drove an expanding tourism economy within the nation. The two-week vacation, along with greater discretionary income, allowed families to take to the roadways, visiting far off tourist destinations rather than recreational areas close to home and previously visited for short periods of time such as amusement parks, beaches, and other diversions. More affluent families traveled by rail, air, and ocean liner to their vacation spot. For the rest, the family's automobile provided transportation to their destinations.⁶⁰

The automobile-oriented traveling public in the first years of the Great Depression barely slowed down in comparison to other sectors of the national economy. While those with small incomes had rarely traveled in the past, middle-class Americans continued to spend on their automobiles while shunning train travel when possible. Warren James Belasco states in *Americans on the Road: From Autocamp to Motel, 1910–1945* that while “railroad coach and Pullman fares dropped from \$201 million in 1929 to \$80 million in 1933, Americans spent almost as much on gas, oil, and other vacation car operating expenses in 1933 as in 1929, \$1,102 million and \$1,040 million, respectively.”⁶¹ Expenditures even increased through 1935 as the public's reliance on the automobile as a mode of transportation continued to increase, especially as other pre-Depression discretionary expenses such as tickets to movies, restaurant meals, and radio purchases plummeted.⁶²

It was middle class travelers, and later more affluent individuals, who continued to patronize tourist courts comprised of small detached cabins operated by individuals usually in rural settings on the fringe of urban areas. The terms tourist camps and tourist courts are synonymous in describing these small overnight accommodations. The owners of these establishments usually lived in their home located on the grounds. Tourist courts could also be adjacent to gasoline stations and restaurants, offering automobile service and meals to travelers. These expense-sensitive travelers avoided the pricier downtown hotels. The increase in business prodded tourist court owners to make improvements to their accommodations, including hot and cold running water (usually communal showers), insulation, better bedding, curtains, and hot plates for in-room cooking.⁶³ As the Great Depression lingered, “by 1933 recreational travel expenses had fallen 36 percent from 1929. People still drove but they wanted to save money on food and rooms—including cabins. Budget-minded tourists far outnumbered those for whom price was no object.”⁶⁴ After 1933, travel expenditures began to slowly climb throughout the nation except during the 1938 economic downturn. The economic expansion of 1940–1941 saw an increased number of travelers on the nation's highways. Trailer camps were becoming more numerous, as those travelers who wished to have a communal experience but more control over their accommodations started shunning tourist courts for trailer camps.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Popp, 13–22; History, “Labor Movement,” 2009, accessed August 25, 2017, <http://www.history.com/topics/labor>.

⁶¹ Belasco, 142–143.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 143.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 143–152.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 150.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 155–156, 165–167.

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Kentucky state parks addressed travelers’ preferences through the construction of cabins and campsites during the Great Depression. It was suggested in the third volume of the 1938 publication *Park and Recreation Structures* issued by the NPS that lodging at parks should be democratic in cost by offering a range of prices for various cost-sensitive travelers. Campsites were offered for those wishing to experience the lowest-cost option utilizing either tents or trailers for their lodging preference. For travelers seeking an experience similar to a tourist court, cabins of various designs were offered by state parks. The least expensive cabin option for visitors would be a single-room structure with few amenities, such as bunks and cupboards but without a kitchen or bathroom. An example of a one-room cabin built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a New Deal era federal employment program, in Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park is a simple side-gable three-bay structure supported by stone piers with a wood shake roof and no porch. A more substantial one-room three-bay side-gable cabin is featured at Butler Memorial State Park, exhibiting a nearly full-width porch, cornice returns, and mortared stone gable ends with a large stone chimney.⁶⁶ An improvement in cabin accommodations would be a larger structure containing a living room, bedroom, and kitchenette. The living room could be converted to additional sleeping arrangements. The NPS suggested that cabins offering the same features be clustered together rather than a grouping containing cabins of various size and amenities. The NPS also recommended constructing cabins of different sizes that could accommodate a varying number of guests. Two-bedroom cabins of three different designs were erected at Cumberland Falls State Park by the CCC. The three designs were of log construction with stone chimneys and included a living room, bathroom, and porch. One two-bedroom cabin design also included a kitchen.⁶⁷

The Kentucky state park system sought to take advantage of the growth in tourist travel in the first years of the Great Depression by continuing to expand the number of parks throughout the state. Locations offering recreational facilities were becoming more prevalent tourist destinations as the family’s automobile allowed travel further from home. The state’s park system also addressed the overnight accommodation preferences of the traveling public by offering various lodging options to guests through the development of campsites, cabins, and lodges within the parks. In 1932 the Great Depression showed no signs of improvement and the nation’s citizens were searching for new programs from the federal government to address the economic and employment hardships facing the average American family. The results of the 1932 presidential election would bring about substantial federally funded improvements to the nation’s infrastructure and forests. Kentucky’s state parks reaped the benefits of the New Deal’s programs throughout the remainder of the decade.

Expansion of and New Deal Impacts to Kentucky’s State Parks During Great Depression

The number of state parks in Kentucky continued to increase in the early-1930s despite the economic struggles of the Commonwealth’s citizens. The Dr. Thomas Walker State Park was created on June 20, 1931 to commemorate the first settler to construct a cabin in the future Commonwealth of Kentucky. By constructing his log cabin in 1750, Dr. Walker claimed the surrounding land. Dr. Walker also led a group of frontiersmen through the Cumberland Gap and later came upon the Cumberland River, naming both after the son of England’s King George II. Residents of nearby Barbourville in Knox County and members of the American Legion raised funds to purchase approximately 12 acres that were then donated to the state for a memorial to Dr. Walker.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Albert H. Good, *Park and Recreation Structures, Part 3 – Overnight and Organized Camp Facilities* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1938): 17, 21.

⁶⁷ Good, *Park and Recreation Structures, Part 3*, 18, 42–43.

⁶⁸ Kentucky State Parks, “Dr. Thomas Walker History,” accessed August 22, 2017,

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Established on August 12, 1931, Butler Memorial State Park became the sixth state park created in the Commonwealth. Approximately 300 acres of the park is comprised of the original William O. Butler farm. Butler was a veteran of the War of 1812 and the Mexican War. The park includes the circa 1859 Greek Revival-style William O. Butler residence. The park, situated near Carrollton in Carroll County, was later renamed General Butler State Park.⁶⁹

Senator Thomas Coleman du Pont, a former Kentuckian, gave a bequest of \$400,000 that enabled the purchase of land surrounding Cumberland Falls. Senator du Pont offered to buy the property for a state park, but the Kentucky legislature did not act on the proposal until March 10, 1930, after Senator du Pont's death. Senator du Pont's widow purchased approximately 500 acres and donated the land to the state's Park Commission. Cumberland Falls State Park was dedicated on August 21, 1931.⁷⁰

Established on November 8, 1931, the Old Mulkey Meeting House Memorial (currently known as the Old Mulkey Meetinghouse State Historic Site) is located in south-central Kentucky's Monroe County. The 1804 building is the oldest freestanding log meeting house in Kentucky. Religious services continued in the structure until approximately 1856. In the 1920s locals solicited the state to make the abandoned meeting house a state shrine. The parks commission accepted the building in November 1931. Located on the grounds is a cemetery that includes the interment of Daniel Boone's sister, Hannah Boone Pennington, who died in 1828.⁷¹

Members of the Jackson family, descendants of John Freeman and Levi Jackson, donated land for the Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park to the state. The state park, located near London in Laurel County, was established on December 7, 1931. Dedicated in June 1932 to honor Kentucky's pioneer settlers, the Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park was the tenth added to the state park system.⁷²

Although it was not yet clear at the time when these parks were established, several would be developed in the coming years through unprecedented federal investment in state and national parks. The nation's voters demanded a change in the country's leadership leading to Democratic nominee Franklin Delano Roosevelt's election as president in November 1932. The New Deal policies enacted after his March 1933 inauguration left a lasting impact on the nation, the fruits of which are still visible in Kentucky's landscape.⁷³

According to Kennedy and Johnson's *The New Deal Builds: A Historic Context of the New Deal in East Kentucky, 1933 to 1943*, "it could be argued that the New Deal's building program altered the Commonwealth's landscape to a degree experienced only during the drastic changes of the settlement period. In sum, new buildings, roads, bridges, whole communities, forests, and even programs to change the cultural landscape of

<http://parks.ky.gov/parks/historicsites/thomas-walker/history.aspx>.

⁶⁹ Kentucky State Parks, "General Butler History," accessed August 17, 2017, <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/resortparks/general-butler/history.aspx>; Clara Wootton, *The History of the Kentucky State Parks* (Bluegrass Press, Inc., 1975), n.p.

⁷⁰ Wootton, n.p.; Blakey, 85; Kentucky State Parks, "Cumberland Falls History," accessed August 17, 2017, <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/resortparks/cumberland-falls/history.aspx>.

⁷¹ Kentucky State Parks, "Old Mulkey Meeting House History," accessed August 18, 2017, <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/historicsites/old-mulkey/history.aspx>; Wootton, n.p.

⁷² Wootton, n.p.; Kentucky State Parks, "Levi Jackson History," accessed August 17, 2017, <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/recreationparks/levi-jackson/history.aspx>.

⁷³ Blakey, 19–24.

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farming came into being in this time period, because of direct federal government involvement.”⁷⁴ The Roosevelt Administration’s New Deal created numerous agencies to address the needs of the country by putting the unemployed back to work. The New Deal legislation and agencies that primarily functioned to build public works and improvements to the natural landscape include:

- the Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA) provided funds to states for various assistance programs from 1933 to 1935;
- the Civil Works Administration (CWA) was a short-term effort employing persons during the winter of 1933–1934;
- the Public Works Administration (PWA), operating from 1933 to 1943, provided loans and grants to states and local governments for infrastructure proposes, including large scale projects;
- the Works Progress Administration (later renamed Work Projects Administration) (WPA) provided funds for various infrastructure projects including the construction of parks, bridges, water lines, sidewalks, etc.;
- the National Youth Administration (NYA), operating from 1935 to 1944, provided employment and training for the country’s youth, including forestry work;
- the Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) Act created the CCC which operated from 1933 through 1942, employing young men (including World War I veterans) to construct improvements to forestry areas, state and national parks;
- the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), established in 1933 to construct dams for generation of electricity, flood control, and reforestation programs.⁷⁵

Of greatest consequence for Kentucky state parks, the ECW Act was passed by Congress in March 1933 during the first one hundred days of the Roosevelt administration. The CCC was created within the Act, employing single men aged 17 to 25 for enlistment periods of 6 months with possible re-enlistment. The age of enlistment was later expanded to include those up to 28 years old, and camps were also created specifically for World War I veterans and Native Americans. The enrollees were paid \$30 per month, of which \$25 had to be sent home to their families, thus ensuring their pay would be spent in their own communities. Four federal agencies were involved in the organization of the CCC: Labor Department (recruiting the enrollees); the War Department (for organizational purposes and managing the camps); and the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture (preparing the designs and planning the proposed work). The projects undertaken by the CCC were

⁷⁴ Rachel Kennedy and Cynthia Johnson, *The New Deal Builds: A Historic Context of the New Deal in East Kentucky, 1933 to 1943*, (Frankfort: sponsored by Kentucky Transportation Cabinet in cooperation with the Kentucky Heritage Council, 2005), 1.

⁷⁵ Kennedy and Johnson, 2; Nick Taylor, *American-Made: The Enduring Legacy of the WPA: When FDR Put the Nation to Work*, (New York, New York: Bantam Dell, 2008), 100–101; The Living New Deal, “Federal Emergency Relief Act,” accessed August 16, 2017, <https://livingnewdeal.org/glossary/federal-emergency-relief-administration-fera-1933-1935/>; The Living New Deal, “Civil Works Administration (CWA),” accessed August 16, 2017, <https://livingnewdeal.org/glossary/civil-works-administration-cwa-1933/>; The Living New Deal, “Public Works Administration (PWA),” accessed August 16, 2017, <https://livingnewdeal.org/glossary/public-works-administration-pwa-1933-1943/>; The Living New Deal, “Works Progress Administration (WPA),” accessed August 16, 2017, <https://livingnewdeal.org/glossary/works-progress-administration-wpa-1935/>; The Living New Deal, “National Youth Administration (NYA),” accessed August 16, 2017, <https://livingnewdeal.org/glossary/national-youth-administration-nya-1935/>; The Living New Deal, “Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC),” accessed August 16, 2017, <https://livingnewdeal.org/glossary/civilian-conservation-corps-ccc-1933/>; Ney C. Landrum, *The State Park Movement in America: A Critical Review* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 2004), 127; The Living New Deal, “Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA),” accessed August 16, 2017, <https://livingnewdeal.org/glossary/tennessee-valley-authority-tva-1933/>.

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located on federal land such as national parks and forests and on property owned by the states, including state parks. Projects were also completed on private property. The Department of Agriculture oversaw nearly 70 percent of the projects undertaken by the CCC.⁷⁶

Since the establishment of the National Conference of State Parks in 1921, the development of state parks had been bolstered by the NPS. The NPS aggressively planned improvements for both national and state parks throughout the nation utilizing the CCC workforce, as there were 175 CCC camps in parks by September 1933. In mid-1937, there were six CCC camps in Kentucky state parks. The ECW offered the NPS the opportunity to give direct assistance to states in the development of their parks, including construction projects and conservation of the natural landscape. The NPS employed state park inspectors to ensure their designs for roads, structures, hiking and horse trails, and other improvements were being followed through the utilization of CCC enrollees. The NPS hired local craftsmen to train CCC camp enrollees in accomplishing certain tasks.⁷⁷ Linda McClelland states in the Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form that “Technical specialists employed by the park service, including landscape architects, architects, and engineers, were assigned to each CCC camp and closely supervised the work of the CCC foremen and enrollees. The specialists developed plans and drawings under the direction of the state park inspectors.”⁷⁸

The CCC in Kentucky employed young men from relief rolls and unemployed World War I veterans selected by local officials of the Veterans Administration. Over 80,000 Kentuckians enrolled in the CCC during its nine years of operation (1933–1942) although the supply of applicants often outnumbered available positions at the camps. Enrollees were first brought to Army training camps where they were given uniforms, fed, and performed exercise regimens to prepare for work in the CCC camps. Enrollees in Kentucky were sent to Fort Knox for their initial training. The camps were organized and operated in a military fashion as the War Department managed the CCC camps. Each camp contained approximately 200 young men. Enrollees could be sent to any state and many Kentuckians served across the nation, including as far away as California. Enrollees from other states also worked in the Commonwealth. Kentucky, as in many states, segregated the CCC camps with a quota of African Americans filling 10 percent of the total number of enrollees. Initially African American enrollees were placed in integrated camps but were not given opportunities offered to white enrollees, often only allowed to work menial tasks. Integrated camps were quickly segregated in Kentucky. Four segregated African American CCC camps were operated in the Commonwealth, although none appear to have worked in the state parks. Veteran camps were integrated although the majority of enrollees were white. Segregated living quarters were utilized even in the integrated camps. The quotas were discontinued in mid-1941 at which point the number of African Americans enrollees expanded greatly. One segregated CCC camp for African Americans at Mammoth Cave was featured in the national CCC publication because of its achievements. A few integrated camps were also located in Kentucky.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Blakey, 79–80; Landrum, 127–129.

⁷⁷ James B. Jones and Claudette Stager, *State Parks in Tennessee Built by the CCC and WPA between 1934–1942* National Register of Historic Places nomination (Nashville: Tennessee Historical Commission, 1986), E-1; Linda Flint McClelland, *Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form* (Washington, D.C.: National Register of Historic Places, 1995), E-125, E-130; Michael I. Smith, *Civilian Conservation Corps Resource Page*, “State-By-State: Kentucky,” 2013, accessed August 29, 2017, <http://cccreources.blogspot.com/2013/08/state-by-state-kentucky.html>; Landrum, 129–130.

⁷⁸ McClelland, E-125.

⁷⁹ Blakey, 80–82; Connie M. Huddleston, *Kentucky’s Civilian Conservation Corps* (Charleston, South Carolina: The History

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CCC camps were at times temporary, with enrollees living in tents that could be transported to locations close to work sites, while other camps operated for longer periods. Reforestation projects under the guidance of the Forest Service and the Soil Conservation Service were one of the highlights of the CCC, both nationally and in Kentucky. These projects not only assisted in controlling erosion but also provided natural habitats, planting trees that provided sustenance (both cover and food) to wildlife.⁸⁰ The Department of the Interior utilized the CCC workforce in national parks including those former state parks that had recently been transferred to the federal government as national parks. An example is Mammoth Cave National Park which at one time included four CCC camps with enrollees “planting nearly one million trees, building miles of new roads and hiking trails, preparing topographical survey maps, and constructing rustic homes for park employees.”⁸¹

Project proposals were submitted to the NPS from those states that already had state parks, such as Kentucky. The NPS would select those proposals they deemed worthy, provide the workforce, and supervise the projects along with the state’s parks governing body. Once the Department of the Interior authorized CCC camps in state parks the director of Kentucky’s State Parks was immediately requesting their services. Emma Guy Cromwell, previously the Kentucky state treasurer (1927–1931), served as the director of Kentucky state parks from 1932 to 1936 under Governor Ruby Laffoon’s administration. Bailey P. Wootton succeeded Mrs. Cromwell as state park director from 1936 to January 1941 in Governor A. B. Chandler’s administration. Over the first two years of the New Deal programs, approximately \$1 million was spent on improvements to Kentucky’s state parks. CCC enrollees provided numerous benefits to the early state parks and according to Wootton the improvements were worth about \$3 million over the program’s nine years of operation.⁸² Kentucky state parks that received improvements through the efforts of the CCC include: Cumberland Falls State Park; Natural Bridge State Park; Pine Mountain State Park; Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park, Butler Memorial State Park; Cumberland Falls State Park; Columbus-Belmont Battlefield Memorial Park; John James Audubon State Park; and Dawson Springs State Park (currently part of Pennyryle Forest State Park).⁸³

Through the work of the CCC under the leadership of the NPS, the Kentucky state park system began to exhibit a more cohesive identity. When first conceived, a park was defined, first and foremost, by the outstanding historical or scenic attraction at its center. Through the early work of the State Park Commission and the Olmsted Brothers, park landscapes were defined as places set apart through fencing and internal road networks. Early tourist accommodations included small rustic lodges and water-based recreational facilities for swimming, boating, and fishing on small impoundments. Such trends generally continued in the 1930s, with the NPS promoting a distinctive rustic design vocabulary for the construction of a range of typical and expected park amenities including picnic areas and shelters, campgrounds, comfort stations, cabins, lodges, bathhouses, and trails. Such buildings and structures were constructed of native wood and stone, creating visual unity among the built features of the park and the natural landscape. Recreational pursuits at parks likewise were conceived to

Press, 2009): 18–19, 80.

⁸⁰ Blakey, 83–84.

⁸¹ Blakey, 84.

⁸² Blakey, 84–85; Landrum, 132; Emma Guy Cromwell, compiler, *The 1935 Kentucky State Parks Annual* (Frankfort, Kentucky: Board of Public Property, State Park Board, 1935): 2–4; Tim Talbott, “Emma Guy Cromwell,”

ExploreKYHistory, accessed August 17, 2017, <http://explorekyhistory.ky.gov/items/show/504?tour=20&index=13>; Wootton, n.p.; Rebecca S. Hanly, “Emma Guy Cromwell and Mary Elliott Flanery: Pioneers for Women in Kentucky Politics,” *Register of Kentucky State Historical Society* 99, no. 3 (Summer 2001): 298.

⁸³ Huddleston, 37.

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include those activities that harmonized with and promoted appreciation of the landscape – namely sight-seeing, hiking, and water recreation.

The governing authority of Kentucky state parks changed in 1934. During that year, state parks were placed under the Board of Public Property comprised of nine members, including the Governor as the Chairman of the Board and the Director of State Parks. The former State Park Commission ceased operating as a government entity. Upon its creation, the Board of Public Property approved a recommendation to begin charging admission fees for six of the state parks. As the Great Depression continued, funding sources were expanded to continue ongoing operations for the parks.⁸⁴

The Columbus Belmont Battlefield Memorial Park, currently known as the Columbus-Belmont State Park, was established on February 10, 1934. Overlooking the Mississippi River in Hickman County, local and state efforts were underway to raise private funds to purchase the land containing the Civil War battlefield and trenches as early as 1931. By mid-1931, 90 of the 110 acres were purchased through local fund raising events. Difficulty in clearing title to the property and other issues delayed further progress for the project. The Department of the Interior agreed to accept the state park as a project in March 1934 and in July 1934 created a CCC camp in the vicinity to assist in its development. The current park, comprised of 160 acres, includes a circa 1850 residence that operates as a museum.⁸⁵

Camp Cromwell, possibly named for the state parks director, was located in Henderson, Kentucky. Along with WPA workers, the CCC enrollees of Camp Cromwell (Camp 1540) assisted in the development of a new state park currently known as the John James Audubon State Park. Named in honor of the famed painter and ornithologist who once lived in Henderson, John James Audubon State Park was dedicated on October 3, 1934 after local citizens secured 275 acres to donate to the state for a park. Initial improvements by CCC and WPA workers included an electric plant, a new water system, hiking and horse trials, picnic areas and shelters, and a service building. A lake, cabins, gardens, and a structure to house a museum were among the later federal improvements to the John James Audubon State Park. The museum building, executed in the French Norman-style, was designed by architects Barnard Stebbins from Kentucky and Donald Corley of the WPA.⁸⁶

The George Rogers Clark Memorial, a large granite monument memorializing the first permanent settlement west of the Appalachian Mountains and to Clark’s exploring the Northwest Territory, was dedicated in 1934 at Pioneer State Park, currently known as Old Fort Harrod State Park in Harrodsburg, Kentucky. Dedicating the monument on November 17, 1934, President Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke to a crowd estimated at 50,000 persons. The president was accompanied by his wife, Eleanor Roosevelt, and other dignitaries including Kentucky Senator Alben W. Barkley, Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, Quartermaster General Major General L. H. Bash, Kentucky Governor Ruby Laffoon, and Director of State Parks Emma Guy Cromwell. Also attending the ceremony was Ulric H. Ellerhusen, the memorial’s sculptor, and the architect, Francis Keally. The War Department had appropriated \$100,000 for the memorial in Pioneer State Park.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Wootton, n.p.; Cromwell, compiler, 1935, 2–4.

⁸⁵ Kentucky State Parks, “Columbus-Belmont History,” accessed August 18, 2017, <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/recreationparks/columbus-belmont/history.aspx>; Wootton, n.p.

⁸⁶ Blakey, 85; Cromwell, complier, 1935, 23–25; Kentucky State Parks, “John James Audubon History,” accessed August 17, 2017, <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/recreationparks/john-james/history.aspx>.

⁸⁷ Wootton, n.p.; “Dedication of George Rogers Clark Memorial,” *Register of Kentucky State Historical Society* 33, no. 102

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According to *The 1935 Kentucky State Parks Annual*, covering calendar year 1934, there were 12 state parks comprised of over 6,000 acres, including: Pine Mountain State Park, Natural Bridge State Park, Blue Licks Battlefield State Park, Pioneer Memorial State Park, the Blue and Gray State Park, the Dr. Thomas Walker State Park, Butler Memorial State Park, Cumberland Falls State Park, Old Mulkey Meeting House Memorial State Park, Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park, Columbus Belmont Battlefield Memorial Park, and John James Audubon State Park. Neither Dawson Springs State Park nor the Jefferson Davis State Monument are mentioned in the annual report. The motto of the state parks was “Build Kentucky State Parks.”⁸⁸ Improvements were made to seven parks in 1934 with assistance of the NPS through the ECW Act: Pine Mountain State Park, Cumberland Falls State Park, Natural Bridge State Park, Butler Memorial State Park, Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park, Columbus-Belmont Battlefield Memorial Park, and John James Audubon State Park. The acreage of the remaining five state parks was too small to qualify for NPS assistance. At the time of the annual report, there were eight CCC camps situated in Kentucky’s state parks. The 1935 annual report stated no state funds were utilized for the improvements authorized by the NPS and that small admission fees were initiated at all parks except Old Mulkey Meeting House Memorial State Park, the Dr. Thomas Walker State Park, and the Blue and Gray State Park. The admission fees were an effort to make the state park system financially self-sufficient. The NPS and Department of the Interior are often commended in the 1935 annual report for their efforts in improving the parks for the visiting public.⁸⁹

Between November 1933 and January 1, 1935 the NPS managed many improvements to Natural Bridge State Park. A new water and sewage system was constructed during this time along with a custodian’s dwelling, parking lots, shelter houses, picnic grills, maintenance structures, hiking trails, and electricity had been added to portions of the park.⁹⁰

Cumberland Falls State Park benefitted from CCC improvements, including the construction of the rustic-style DuPont Lodge with 26 guest rooms. Unfortunately, the lodge was destroyed by fire in 1940 but was rebuilt the following year. The 1935 annual Kentucky state parks report states that nearly \$82,000 of improvements were made to Cumberland Falls State Park through federal efforts. Improvements to the park conducted at the time through federal supervision and funds comprised five new cabins, a dwelling for a custodian, three shelter houses with fireplaces, a 600-space parking lot, a bath house near the swimming beach, the planting of trees and shrubs, and water and sewage systems. The following year it was expected the CCC would complete four additional cabins, a lookout tower, hiking and horse trails, and a shelter house. CCC enrollees also constructed roads, camp sites, and picnic areas in Cumberland Falls State Park.⁹¹

General Butler State Park was also the beneficiary of CCC improvements. Beginning in late 1933 the NPS constructed a CCC camp within the park. The CCC enrollees by the end of 1934 completed construction of dam for the creation of a lake, a custodian’s dwelling, parking areas, picnic areas, planting of trees of shrubs, and a new water and sewage system.⁹²

(January 1935): 52–54, 59.

⁸⁸ Cromwell, compiler, 1935, 5, 46.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 3–5.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 11–13.

⁹¹ Blakey, 85; Cromwell, compiler, 1935, 8–9; Kentucky State Parks, “Cumberland Falls History.”

⁹² Cromwell, compiler, 1935, 27; Kentucky State Parks, “General Butler History.”

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Cumberland State Park, established in 1924 and renamed Pine Mountain State Park in 1938, substantially benefited from NPS oversight and CCC involvement. An amphitheater, named Nature's Amphitheater, was constructed by CCC enrollees for the annual Mountain Laurel Festival activities held at the park. Log cabins for guests, a new water system, roads, bridges, parking areas, picnic areas and shelters, hiking trails, and an office building were built with CCC labor which amounted to over \$500,000 of improvements.⁹³

The Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park received approximately \$55,000 in improvements through the NPS during the mid-1930s. Improvements by the CCC included electric lights through the park, water and sewage system, a new road from the Dixie Highway (U.S. 25) to the park, a bridge spanning the Laurel River, a custodian's house, picnic areas and shelters, a gate house, parking lots, fencing of the park, a reproduction log house to be utilized as a museum, a lookout tower, hiking and horse trails, and the planting of trees and shrubbery.⁹⁴ Additional projects expected to be completed by the CCC after 1934 included "an administration building, group cabins, more trails, slave cabin and an old water mill."⁹⁵

Enticements for Kentucky to continue to expand the number of state parks through the mid-1930s included the continued assistance in planning and design of park improvements offered by the NPS and labor provided by the CCC. The site of the largest Civil War engagement in Kentucky became a state park on February 26, 1936. The Perryville Battlefield was the scene of the October 8, 1862 battle between Confederate and Union forces resulting in more than 7,000 casualties. The site, comprised of 17 acres according to the 1936 state parks annual report, included the cemetery and a Confederate monument erected by the Perryville Commission and the state of Kentucky in 1928.⁹⁶

My Old Kentucky Home State Park containing Federal Hill, a brick residence constructed circa 1812–1818 by the Rowan family, was brought in to the state park system on February 26, 1936. A descendant of the family sold the house and over 200 acres to the state in 1922 and it was designated the first state shrine on July 4, 1923. Authority over the site was transferred to the state's Division of Parks in 1936. Stephen Collins Foster purportedly visited the Rowans and the property may have served in part as the inspiration for the song "My Old Kentucky Home, Good Night" published in 1853 and later adopted as the official state song in 1928.⁹⁷

The Lincoln Homestead Country Monument in Washington County was established on June 19, 1936 following the donation of land by the county's fiscal court. Originally comprised of 5 acres with a reproduction log cabin, an additional 12 acres were donated for a nine-hole golf course in 1938. The state legislature in 1942 approved moving the historic Berry House, which is associated with the Lincoln family, from eight miles north of Springfield to the park. The park is a memorial to the parents of President Abraham Lincoln. Improvements continued at the park including land acquisitions that have expanded the Lincoln Homestead State Park to 112 acres and adding nine additional holes to the golf course.⁹⁸

⁹³ Blakey, 85; Cromwell, compiler, 1935, 21; Kentucky State Parks, "Pine Mountain History," accessed August 17, 2017, <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/resortparks/pine-mountain/history.aspx>.

⁹⁴ Kentucky State Parks, "Levi Jackson History;" Cromwell, compiler, 1935, 16–17.

⁹⁵ Cromwell, compiler, 1935, 17.

⁹⁶ Kentucky State Parks, "Perryville Battlefield History;" Division of State Parks, Department of Conservation, *Yearly Report 1936* (Frankfort, Kentucky: Department of Conservation, 1937): 3; Wootton, n.p.

⁹⁷ Kentucky State Parks, "My Old Kentucky Home History;" Wootton, n.p.; Tim Talbott, "Federal Hill – My Old Kentucky Home," *ExploreKYHistory*, accessed August 24, 2017, <http://explorekyhistory.ky.gov/items/show/184>.

⁹⁸ Kentucky State Parks, "Lincoln Homestead History," accessed August 23, 2017,

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On June 23, 1936 Congress passed “An Act to Authorize a Study of the Park, Parkway, and Recreation Area Programs in the United States, and for Other Purposes” that authorized the NPS to report on existing recreational areas, including state parks, and assisting the states in developing and maintaining such public resources.⁹⁹ The act recognized “the principle of regional planning and the provision that two or more states could enter into agreements with one another to develop recreation areas. The act, although limited in its scope, codified the cooperative relationship that the National Park Service had with state parks informally since 1921 and through Emergency Conservation Work since 1933...The state surveys resulted in reports, many of which were individually published. They functioned as comprehensive plans and as guides to recreational resources that coordinated the activities of parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and reservations at all levels of government into a single recreational system for each state.”¹⁰⁰ The legislative act was successful even though it did not contain a funding source for the survey and reports. The NPS utilized funds from the CCC but states were in charge of their individual surveys although CCC funding may have been utilized. Comprehensive park system plans were completed by 46 states by the end of 1941. The onset of World War II and the termination of the CCC program in 1942 brought an end to the state park studies, although individual states continued to produce detailed reports concerning their state park systems’ assets through the early-1960s.¹⁰¹

By the end of 1936 the operational hierarchy of the state park system had once again been altered, as it became the Division of Parks, Department of Conservation. The nine parks that were charging admission through 1936 recorded net income of over \$8,000 from 152,000 admissions. For improvements to the parks, the state provided over \$268,000 in materials and other goods and services while the federal government provided slightly over \$1,566,000 including labor from the NPS and CCC among other federal entities during the 1936 calendar year.¹⁰² In 1937 admissions to the parks increased to over 215,000 visitors. During 1937, the state’s contribution to the park system remained stable, at nearly \$280,000, but the federal government’s contribution to the parks through materials and labor (both skilled and unskilled) increased to over \$2 million.¹⁰³

Emma Weisiger donated three acres in downtown Danville, Boyle County, for use as a historic site that became Constitution Square State Park in 1937. Work on restoring the property began in 1937 and continued through 1941 until the United States’ entry into World War II. The park is the location of the signing of Kentucky’s constitution and includes historic replicas and original structures dating to the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century. A number of the structures are of log construction. Constitution Square State Historic Site was operated by the state’s park department from 1937 through 2012 at which time the park was transferred by the state to Boyle County’s Fiscal Court.¹⁰⁴

Added to the state park system on February 25, 1938, the William Whitley house is purported to be the oldest

<http://parks.ky.gov/parks/recreationparks/lincoln-homestead/history.aspx>.

⁹⁹ Landrum, 148–149; McClelland, E-135.

¹⁰⁰ McClelland, E-135–E-136.

¹⁰¹ Landrum, 151–153.

¹⁰² Division of State Parks, Department of Conservation, *Yearly Report 1936*, 2–5.

¹⁰³ Division of State Parks, Department of Conservation, *Yearly Report 1937* (Frankfort, Kentucky: Department of Conservation, 1938): 2–6.

¹⁰⁴ “Constitution Square Historic Site, The Birthplace of Kentucky,” accessed August 23, 2017, <http://constitutionsquare.boyleky.com/>; American Heritage, “Constitution Square State Historic Site,” 1949–2017, accessed August 23, 2017, <http://www.americanheritage.com/content/constitution-square-state-historic-site>; Wootton, n.p.

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brick house in Kentucky, having been constructed between 1787 and 1794. Brick headers on the front of the house indicate the original owner's initials (WW) while his wife's initials (EW) are found on the rear elevation of the dwelling. The Whitley Park Association and other organizations in Lincoln County raised funds to purchase the home and donated the property to become a state park, currently named the William Whitley House State Historic Site.¹⁰⁵

Over 245,000 visitors paid admission to the state parks in calendar year 1938. Income from the parks, comprised of admissions, rental fees, sales, etc. was over \$53,000 and the legislature appropriated \$30,000 for the year's operation. The number of parks in the state system increased to 21, but only 8 were charging admission in 1938. While the state parks had benefitted from improvements provided by the NPS, WPA, and CCC, only three CCC camps remained in operation at the end of 1938; the previous camps having been abandoned with unfinished projects that were completed by the Division of Parks. Additionally, previous projects had been completed with green wood that was beginning to rot and had to be replaced also at state expense. Special mention was made in the 1938 annual report for the excellent cooperation between the Division of Parks and the federal NPS, WPA, and NYA and other state agencies such as the State Highway Department.¹⁰⁶

The Dr. Ephraim McDowell House in Danville, Kentucky was the site of the first successful abdominal operation by removing a large ovarian tumor without anesthesia from Jane Todd Crawford in 1809. Ms. Crawford lived for an additional 32 years after the surgery. The main house was constructed circa 1800 and the adjacent apothecary shop circa 1795. The Kentucky Medical Association (KMA) purchased the Dr. Ephraim McDowell House in 1935 and donated it to the Kentucky Division of Parks. The house was restored by the WPA and dedicated as a museum on May 20, 1939. Ownership of the house was transferred back to the KMA in 1949 and ten years later the shop was returned to the KMA's ownership. The house is currently operated as a museum and is no longer associated with the state park system.¹⁰⁷

In addition to providing for physical improvements to parks, New Deal projects helped promote the expanding state park system. The Federal Writer's Project of the WPA was a New Deal program that included the publication of American Guides, books that emphasized travel destinations in individual states. The *WPA Guide to Kentucky* provided background information about the state and presented automobile tours throughout the Commonwealth, offering information about each town and attractions along the route. This federal relief program provided income to unemployed writers and journalists who were suffering the effects of the Great Depression.¹⁰⁸ The completion of the Kentucky WPA Guide was assisted by WPA-employed researchers and writers but "the actual writing of the book was done largely by university professors, newspaper reporters, and others with special knowledge of Kentucky."¹⁰⁹ The state parks are well represented in the publication, serving as a federally-

¹⁰⁵ Kentucky State Parks, "William Whitley History," accessed August 23, 2017, <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/historicsites/william-whitley/history.aspx>.

¹⁰⁶ Division of State Parks, Department of Conservation, *Yearly Report 1938* (Frankfort, Kentucky: Department of Conservation, 1939): 3-8.

¹⁰⁷ McDowell House Museum, Inc., "McDowell House History," 2015, accessed August 23, 2017, <http://www.mcdowellhouse.com/history/mcdowell-house-history/>; Preceden, "McDowell House Museum Timeline," accessed August 23, 2017, <https://www.preceden.com/timelines/40658-mcdowell-house-museum-timeline>; Horace J. Sheely, Jr. and Polly M. Rettig, Dr. Ephraim McDowell House National Historic Landmark nomination (Washington, D.C.: Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service, 1976): 7-1, 8-1, 8-2.

¹⁰⁸ F. Kevin Simon, editor, *The WPA Guide to Kentucky* (1939. Reprint, Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1996): xvii-xix; Popp, 20-21.

¹⁰⁹ Simon, editor, xviii.

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underwritten promotional guide to the Commonwealth's natural and historic parks. For example, the description of National Bridge State Park includes admission prices, park amenities including the lodge, cabins, boating, swimming, and shelter houses.¹¹⁰ The guide was written for the motoring public and its publication in the waning years of the Great Depression was viewed as opportune for the improving tourism economy. The American Recreation Series was another Federal Writer's Project that included publications for the 48 states and the District of Columbia. Published in 1941, *Kentucky Facts, Events, Places, Tours* provides a brief history, facts concerning the Commonwealth (including 3 million visitors spent \$60 million in the state during 1940), a listing of recreation and state parks, and automobile tours within its 32 pages.¹¹¹

Nearly 300,000 paying patrons visited the state parks during 1940 for total revenue of gate receipts and other income of nearly \$63,000. Most parks did not charge admission except for museums, use of the elevator in the Jefferson Davis State Monument, and access to the area under the falls of the Cumberland Falls State Park (which is no longer accessible). The state legislature also provided an appropriation of \$30,000 for the year.¹¹² The 1940 annual report indicates that of the 23 areas in the state park system most are "historic monuments, shrines or recreational areas."¹¹³ Approximately 14,000 acres of the Pennyryle Forest Park (in Christian County) and 11,200 acres of the Kentucky Ridge Forest (in Bell County next to Pine Mountain State Park) owned by the United States Department of Agriculture were leased and operated from 1939–1940 by the Division of Kentucky State Parks. Other improvements indicated in the 1940 annual report include: improvements to the Moonbow Inn and 12 new cabins at Cumberland Falls State Park and six cabins at Butler Memorial State Park; construction beginning on the new DuPont Lodge at Cumberland Falls State Park; structures at Columbus Belmont State Park and Dawson Springs State Park; Ephraim McDowell House restoration underwritten by the WPA and Division of Parks; reconstructions at Constitution Square, the Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park, and the Dr. Thomas Walker State Park; and various improvements to other state parks. The CCC, WPA, and NYA all were noted for their contributions to the Commonwealth's parks.¹¹⁴

Attendance at the state parks continued to increase through 1941 prior to the nation's entering World War II, as over 364,000 visited the 10 parks that charged admission fees. The admission fees and other receipts amounted to nearly \$81,000 plus the state parks received an appropriation of \$41,000 from the legislature. The yearly reports for the Division of State Parks to this date were reported on a calendar year basis while appropriations were based on the state budget's fiscal year. Nelle B. Vaughan was serving as the new Director of Parks in 1941. Improvements continued to be implemented at the various state parks during the calendar year 1941. The CCC, under direction of the NPS, completed projects at Pine Mountain State Park and John James Audubon State Park where five cabins and a 37-acre lake were built. A museum and loom house of log construction were completed at Old Mulkey Meeting House State Park. A cabin and various structures were built at Butler Memorial State Park during 1941 and DuPont Lodge was rebuilt at Cumberland Falls State Park after fire destroyed the original lodge the previous year. Advertising the parks to the public primarily occurred through pamphlets and accounts carried by the state's newspapers. The state highway department also promoted the state parks through the magazine *In Kentucky* and in state maps provided to the public. The annual report also addresses the uncertainty

¹¹⁰ Simon, editor, 243.

¹¹¹ Federal Writer's Project of the Works Projects Administration, *Kentucky Facts, Events, Places, Tours* (Northport, New York: Bacon and Wieck, Inc., 1941): 3–32.

¹¹² Division of State Parks, Department of Conservation, *Yearly Report 1940* (Frankfort: Department of Conservation, 1941): 3.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 6, 8, 9.

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of the effects that war would have on attendance and revenue of the parks for the upcoming year (1942).¹¹⁵

In late 1940, near the end of Bailey P. Wootton’s term as director of the Division of State Parks, the state park system was a stable organization with parks located throughout the Commonwealth. The expansion of parks had closely followed the suggestions put forward by initial park director, Dr. Willard R. Jillson, in the mid-1920s. By the beginning of the 1940s, the nation’s economy finally exhibited signs of recovery from the Great Depression’s economic downturn. The ramping up of the federal government’s military spending in preparedness for possible entry to the war overseas began to increase employment. The division of parks recognized federal funding for park improvements through the efforts of the CCC, WPA, and NPS might end in the near future as the national government changed spending priorities and began addressing budget deficits. In state parks nationwide, the number of CCC camps had declined to just 113 in July 1941 and by the end of December only nine remained in operation.¹¹⁶ Most of the Commonwealth’s early state parks were associated with historic sites or locations of scenic beauty. Future state parks would include locations of similar traits but there was an increasing realization that for the parks to become economically self-sufficient, additional amenities were necessary to entice guests into longer and more frequent visits. As the nation’s workforce gained greater discretionary income and vacation time, visitors demanded increased recreational facilities and improved accommodations for their traveling destinations. The state parks system would soon turn its attention to new lodges, restaurants, cabins, and increased recreational opportunities, such as lakes with marinas, fishing, and swimming facilities, campsites, playgrounds, swimming pools, miniature golf, recreation rooms in the lodges, hiking trails, and golf courses.¹¹⁷ Before an expansion of state parks and facilities could take place, the years during and immediately following World War II would bring nearly all improvements and spending on state parks to a halt.

A Park System in Transition

The beginning of World War II marked the end of the first period of exceptional growth within the Kentucky state park system. The William Whitley House became the 21st state park when it was added to the system as a state historic site in 1938. The next state park would not be added until after the war, in 1946, when Carter Caves, long discussed as a potential park site, was officially added to the system. So began the second phase of expansion of the Kentucky state park system that would see 3 parks added in the late-1940s, 7 parks added in the 1950s, and 14 parks added between 1960 and 1971. The state also constructed 12 new lodges during this period and heavily invested in park properties to provide the sorts of amenities that the growing vacationing middle class came to expect.

After the rapid expansion of the Kentucky state park system in the 1930s, the 1940 and 1944-45 annual reports indicated that the system was experiencing some growing pains. After celebrating the recent contributions of New Deal-era programs at a great number of state parks, as previously mentioned, the 1940 report stated that

“We have a number of so-called state parks in our system that should never have been accepted by the state as such, but since we have them the only thing we can do now is to maintain them as best we can in our limited appropriation, with the hope that the general assembly will some day appropriate sufficient funds with which to operate and improve these areas that they may be made self-supporting. The

¹¹⁵ Division of State Parks, Department of Conservation, *Yearly Report 1941* (Frankfort: Department of Conservation, 1942), 2–4, 6–8.

¹¹⁶ Landrum, 155.

¹¹⁷ Wootton, n.p.

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Division of Parks has had to scrimp, beg, borrow and swap to obtain enough to get by. This should not be."¹¹⁸

It is not clear which parks the report is referring to, although the 1946-47 report broke from tradition by identifying specific "problem parks," including Old Mulkey Meeting House, Dr. Thomas Walker Memorial, and William Whitley House, all historic sites that had not yet been properly developed as park sites and which, in some cases, possibly lacked the level of significance necessary to attract a broad-based audience.¹¹⁹ The overall tone of the 1940 report indicated the Director of Parks' frustration that as federal investment in state parks began to dwindle, the state budget did little to compensate, providing almost no funding to continue capital improvements in the newly-dedicated parks. The 1941 annual report was a simple statement of facts with no such commentary, but it did foresee the effects of wartime rationing on park attendance, revenues, and future development plans.¹²⁰ By the 1943-1944 fiscal year, the parks system experienced a budget shortfall, and a reduced appropriation for the 1944-1945 fiscal year led to cuts in salaries and renewed efforts to increase revenues. The Blue and Gray State Park, "which no longer served acceptably any useful purpose," was eliminated from the state park system, and the Ephraim McDowell House, which only briefly operated as a state historic site, was returned to its donors.¹²¹ Expressing an ambiguity similar to the 1941 report, the 1944-1945 report stated that "The value of some of our areas as State Parks continues to be questioned."¹²² More scrutiny was needed in selecting appropriate park sites, the report suggested, and, until all parks within the system were fully developed, no new sites should be accepted. The report did conclude with good news, however: the 1946 legislature appropriated \$450,000 for development of the state park system, monies that would prove much needed as Kentuckians took to the roads in the period of great economic expansion that followed World War II.¹²³

The 1945-1946 annual report indicated a renewed sense of purpose for the Division of State Parks as the country sought to rebuild a sense of normalcy after the war. As the country worked to construct the housing and other amenities needed by returning veterans, the \$450,000 appropriation previously reported was not yet spent. Instead, the state had hired Hilbert E. Dahl, its first professional State Park Planner, to undertake a master plan of each state park that would guide how these funds would be spent during the following fiscal year. The report also announced plans for hiring additional staff to serve in the central office, expanding promotional efforts, and adding several new vacation lodges to the system.¹²⁴

The following year's report revealed progress made, but also showed growing needs based on increased visitation and public expectations. Director Russell Dyche announced that total receipts for 1946-47 were more than double those of the best prewar year of 1941 (\$172,558.80, up from \$80,853.61 in 1941) and that the state park system had operated at a profit of \$8,540.24. Such gains demonstrated significant increases in paid admissions, from 122,947 during the months of July and August 1946 to 156,766 during the same months in 1947.¹²⁵ To address the growing demands placed on park properties, the state had made progress in spending much of the

¹¹⁸ Division of State Parks, Department of Conservation, *Yearly Report 1940*, 6.

¹¹⁹ Russell Dyche, Director of Parks, *Annual Report 1946-47* (Frankfort, Kentucky: Division of State Parks, 1947): 13-17.

¹²⁰ Division of State Parks, Department of Conservation, *Yearly Report 1941*, 8.

¹²¹ Russell Dyche, Director of Parks, *Annual Report 1944-45*, (Frankfort, Kentucky: Division of State Parks, 1946): 3.

¹²² Dyche, *Annual Report 1944-45*, 4.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Russell Dyche, Director of Parks, *Annual Report 1945-46*, (Frankfort, Kentucky: Division of State Parks, 1946).

¹²⁵ Dyche, *Annual Report 1946-47*, 2-3.

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\$450,000 appropriation through completion of several projects during the past year, including additions of picnic tables, playground equipment, improved camping facilities, new bathhouses, and a range of other maintenance-oriented improvements spread throughout the park system. Major improvements were made at Audubon State Park, including construction of a stone shelter house, development of a well-appointed area for organized tent camping, and installation of hot water in five vacation cabins; and at Cumberland Falls State Park, including construction of four new vacation cabins, addition of baths and kitchenettes to ten existing vacation cabins, construction of a new service and storage building and a new garage, installation of a new kitchen at DuPont Lodge, and addition of new bathhouses to the campground. Significant restoration work had occurred at My Old Kentucky Home, and much progress was made in preparing the new park site at Kentucky Lake for use by the public.¹²⁶ However, the report identified a major unmet need for funds to construct vacation facilities (lodges) at the parks, and presented a plan in the works to seek revenue bonds for such purposes. The report also identified the need for a significant increase in professional staffing, including an executive assistant to the director, and auditor, a supervisor of concessions, a supervisor of recreation, an additional maintenance supervisor, and additional clerks.¹²⁷

Perhaps the most interesting part of the 1946–47 annual report is a brief section under the heading *What and Why is a State Park?* Likely recognizing that this annual report would be his last, among the statistical reporting and accounting of future needs and plans Director Dyche included a sort of personal interlude to remind the reader of the state park system's higher calling. To the questions of what and why, he answered:

A state park is an area of outstanding and unusual scenic beauty or grandeur, the handiwork of Nature that will afford opportunity for restful recreation and be an inspiration to a more satisfying way of life; or the locale of some great event in history that through its impact on the human race provides inspiration for better living, which has become a shrine or may be made into a monument to the living spirit that provoked the event...

The purpose and justification of a State Park is to expose the tired and restless people—seeking escape and relief from the every day grind and fatigue of attempting to solve the problems of life and living in this hurrying and bustling world—to the great handiwork of Nature under the most favorable conditions to give relief and inspiration which Nature alone affords: to acquaint them with things of natural beauty and grandeur, to awaken and strengthen the sense of immortality of the things within and about us, to permit contact with the soil, the source of all life—forests and streams, mountains and valleys, flowers and birds, and all the good things that our Maker and Nature have so bountifully provided for us.¹²⁸

According to Dyche, all development and accommodations in state parks should be directed to these ends. Hotels have an appropriate place in state parks “only as they expose their guests to the call of Nature,” which could be at least as well accomplished through campgrounds that cost less to develop and are less expensive for guests.¹²⁹

Dyche's message seems to be that rather than focus on developing facilities that would best help the state parks to capture tourist dollars, Kentucky should focus on developing parks that inspire love of the land. Dyche's sentiments exposed a prominent strain within the state parks movement, but it was a strain that was doomed to be overshadowed by the ever-increasing public demand for more and better accommodations at state parks.

¹²⁶ Dyche, *Annual Report 1946–47*, 6–7.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 7–9.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 10–11.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

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Kentucky State Parks leadership under the following administration would not share Dyche’s ambiguous feelings towards the development of resort-like facilities, and instead would set a course of development that came to be known as the beginning of Kentucky’s “modern” state park system.

Post-War Expansion of the Kentucky State Park System

Nationwide, the post-World War II years ushered in a second phase of expansion for state park systems marked by both the addition of new park properties and the continued development of properties already owned by the states. NPS data indicates that in 1946 there were 1,549 state parks totaling 2,251,449 acres; by 1950, 174 parks were added, bringing the total to 1,723 parks comprising 2,407,716 acres. Land acquisition continued at an impressive pace in the 1950s, adding 864 new parks by 1960, when records account for 2,587 parks totaling 3,153,767 acres. Such gains were attributable to increased state appropriations for land purchase, as well as the Flood Control Act of 1944, which opened up lands on federal reservoirs for recreational purposes, and a 1948 act that directed surplus military properties to state and local governments for recreational uses.¹³⁰ While the 1948 act did not spur the creation of any Kentucky state parks, there were nine state parks established on lakes created by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in the 1950s through 1970s, with an additional two parks on USACE impoundments added in the 1980s.

Through the efforts of a group of local citizens who formed the Kentucky Lake Association, Kentucky’s first lakeside park, Kenlake State Park, was established in the late-1940s on land leased from the TVA on Kentucky Lake. The 160,000-acre Kentucky Lake has the largest area of any manmade lake in the United States. Created by the construction of Kentucky Dam on the Tennessee River in 1944, the 184-mile long lake begins in Gilbertsville, Kentucky, 22 miles upstream from the confluence of the Tennessee and Ohio Rivers, and extends across the state of Tennessee. While Kentucky Lake has become one of the state’s most important recreational resources, the dam’s primary purposes are to reduce flood crests on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, produce hydroelectric power, and link the Tennessee River with the nation’s Inland Waterway System.¹³¹ In 1945, the Commonwealth of Kentucky entered a lease agreement with TVA to develop Kenlake State Park on 1,146 acres. The subsequent development of the boat dock, beach, bathhouses, cottages, and picnic areas was done according to the master plan of Park Planner Hilbert E. Dahl. Construction of the Art Moderne Kenlake Hotel, designed by Madisonville, Kentucky architect Lawrence Casner, made Kenlake the first of Kentucky’s modern resort-style parks and a model for the many other lakeside resort parks that would be developed in the coming decades.¹³²

While state and federal recreational development on TVA land had a significant economic impact on western Kentucky, agreements with the USACE under the provisions of the Flood Control Act of 1944 would benefit communities throughout the state. Federal legislation passed in the 1920s and 1930s made flood control one of the major responsibilities of the USACE, leading to the creation of hundreds of reservoirs throughout the nation. These man-made lakes provided prime opportunities for water recreation, which was officially authorized in the Flood Control Act of 1944. As stated in Section Four of the act: “The Chief of Engineers...is authorized to construct, maintain, and operate public park and recreation facilities in reservoir areas under control of (the

¹³⁰ Landrum, 167.

¹³¹ Tennessee Valley Authority, “Kentucky,” accessed August 23, 2017, <https://www.tva.gov/Energy/Our-Power-System/Hydroelectric/Kentucky-Reservoir>.

¹³² Kentucky State Parks, “Kenlake History,” accessed August 23, 2017, <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/resortparks/kenlake/history.aspx>.

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Department of the Army), and to permit the construction, maintenance and operation of such facilities.”¹³³ Under this provision, the Commonwealth of Kentucky entered in to several long-term leases with the USACE at no cost to the state, the only consideration of the leases being “the operation and maintenance of the premises by the Lessee for the benefit of the United States and the general public in accordance with the conditions herein set forth.”¹³⁴ Using such agreements as the primary means of expanding the Kentucky state park system in the post-World War II years, almost all funds allocated to parks could be used for their development, operation, and maintenance, rather than land acquisition.¹³⁵

Tourism and the Growing Demand for Lodging

Indeed, there was strong demand for development of new facilities at state parks during this period. State park systems across the country were investing heavily in developing their parks, particularly to provide additional overnight accommodations in order to capture a larger portion of the growing tourist market. The total number of lodges and hotels at state parks nationwide increased from 60 in 1950 to 80 in 1960. Meanwhile, almost 1,000 cabins were added, increasing their numbers from 2,808 to 3,801, and the number of tent and trailer campsites more than doubled, from 24,582 to 56,321. Attendance numbers show that such amenities clearly were needed – from 1946 to 1960, state park visitations increased from approximately 92.5 million, with 4 percent of guests staying overnight, to 259 million, with 8 percent spending the night.¹³⁶ Kentucky was early to realize the importance of such overnight accommodations, with lodges at Natural Bridge, Pine Mountain, Cumberland Falls, Pennyryle Forest, and Kenlake State Parks by 1950 (in addition to the early lodge at the then-defunct Blue and Gray State Park), representing an above-average share of lodges located across the country. While the only lodges added to the system in the 1950s were the original Lure Lodge (now Pumpkin Creek) at Lake Cumberland and the dining hall at Cherokee (Kentucky’s state park for African Americans during the era of segregation), plus additions to the lodges at Cumberland Falls and Pennyryle Forest, the early-1960s would see an incredible building boom of new state park lodges, making Kentucky again one of the leading states in providing such accommodations.¹³⁷

This push for more lodging was one manifestation of the increasing focus of state parks on capturing tourist dollars, although, indeed, such motivations were evident from the very beginning of the Kentucky state park system.

In the late-1940s, heated debate reemerged in the National Conference on State Parks between those who saw state parks as places designated to preserve special natural and scenic qualities and those who saw a significant role for recreation in state parks. The argument that favored strict conservation and more passive forms of enjoyment of parks became the officially sanctioned view of the organization. A report authored by Charles Sauers, chairman of the National Conference on State Parks Committee on State Park Standards, Facilities, and

¹³³ United States Army Corps of Engineers, *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Recreation Study, A Plan Prepared for the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1990), 5.

¹³⁴ “Department of the Army Lease to States for Public Park and Recreation Purposes, Lake Cumberland State Resort Park, Wolf Creek Dam and Lake Cumberland Project, Russell County, Kentucky,” 2015.

¹³⁵ Kentucky Department of Parks and Spindletop Research, Inc., “Introduction to Kentucky State Parks,” Spindletop Research Project No. 311 (Lexington, Kentucky: Spindletop Research, n.d.), n.p.

¹³⁶ Landrum, 168.

¹³⁷ Anne Saint-Aignan, “‘Parkitecture’ in Kentucky State Parks: The Lodges,” (Frankfort: Kentucky State Parks, Division of Facility Management, Branch of Planning and Design, 2013), n.p.

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Services, captured this view in blunt terms. He wrote, “Elaborate hotels or inns are generally not justified in a state park...sleeping rooms should be mere cubicles,” and “Special play facilities such as tennis courts, shuffleboard courts, play apparatus, golf courses and amphitheaters in general are functionally related to hotels or inns and exclusion of one excludes the other.”¹³⁸ This question of use was closely tied to the issue of over-development of state parks, which the National Conference took up in 1952. That report addressed “the possibility that some recent developments and trends may lead to impairment or destruction of state park values for which the parks have been established,” advancing the view that “state parks are reserves, not resorts.”¹³⁹ The report was wary of the trend toward developing more and more overnight accommodations within parks and warned against the impacts of adding more income-producing facilities in a quest for making state parks financially self-sufficient. There is little indication, however, that many state park directors heeded these warnings; in fact, by 1961, Kentucky undertook an ambitious plan that would spend millions of dollars to add exactly the sorts of resort-like recreational amenities that the reports discouraged.

Indeed, states were compelled to respond to the overwhelming growth in tourist travel evident shortly after the war’s end, as more Americans than ever before earned paid vacation time and had the means to travel. Continuing trends of the previous two decades, by 1944, 85 percent of union agreements included paid vacation, and by 1949 the number had grown to 93 percent. Paid time off was increasingly seen as an essential benefit for health and dignity of the worker, which also benefited the employer through improved morale, efficiency, and lower turnover rates.¹⁴⁰ In greater numbers than ever before, Americans used their new-found leisure time to take to the roads, utilizing the new interstate highway system and state-constructed parkways and toll roads to access more distant destinations. The increasing accessibility of tourist destinations increased competition, encouraging commercial and public destinations to offer the most up-to-date accommodations to attract visitors.

In 1950, the American Automobile Association (AAA) noted that “there’s a greater trend this year toward family vacations; more parents are taking their children with them.”¹⁴¹ This often meant that mom was making many of the key decisions regarding the vacation, which was apparent from articles on travel in women’s magazines such as *Better Homes and Gardens*, and in advertising highlighting features such as comfort, cleanliness, modernity, and family-friendly amenities. The mom-and-pop tourist “camps” and “cabins” of the 1920s and 1930s were seen as outdated; new, convenient, well-appointed motor courts and motor inns, commonly referred to as motels, became the accommodations of choice. Luxuries such as color televisions and swimming pools came to be expected; reportedly motels that installed swimming pools saw business increase by up to 60 percent, paying off the investment in just three and a half years.¹⁴² These new high expectations of the travelling public were well understood by the decision-makers in Kentucky State Parks when planning their capital improvement programs in the post-war era.

In a parallel trend, more American families were deciding to “rough it” in the post-World War II period, with

¹³⁸ Charles G. Sauers, chairman, National Conference on State Parks Committee on State Park Standards, Facilities, and Services, committee report submitted March 10, 1948, quoted in Landrum, *The State Park Movement in America*, 179.

¹³⁹ Sydney S. Kennedy, chairman, joint committee of the National Conference on State Parks, the American Institute of Park Executives, the National Recreation Association, and the National Park Service, “Suggested Policy Statement Relating to Development, Use, and Operation of State Parks,” 57–59, quoted in Landrum, *The State Park Movement in America*, 180.

¹⁴⁰ Susan Sessions Rugh, *Are We There Yet? The Golden Age of Family Vacations* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2008), 17.

¹⁴¹ “Biggest Year for Resorts,” *Business Week*, June 10, 1950, 90, quoted in Rugh, 16.

¹⁴² Rugh, 37.

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camper registrations across the nation swelling from 10 million in 1950 to 30 million in 1960. Camping “was seen as inexpensive, fun, and wholesome to be outdoors...Camping guides argued that ‘a camping vacation is probably the most relaxing type of vacation’ a family could take; ‘no schedules have to be met, no need to lay out large amounts of money for accommodations.’”¹⁴³ While commercial campground chains such as Kampgrounds of America (KOA) gained popularity in the 1960s, a large portion of family camping trips occurred in state and national parks, which scrambled to update and expand camping facilities to meet this somewhat unexpected boom in demand. In 1962 approximately one-third of all vacationers visited a state or national park, with a desire to be close to nature cited as the primary motivation of three-fourths of these visitors.¹⁴⁴ While camping was seen to offer an escape from the stresses of modern life, campers, of course, brought some of their modern expectations with them. By 1963, the Rand McNally camping guidebook reported on a wide-variety of amenities provided by campgrounds, including “modern sanitary facilities, showers, stores, as well as such recreational activities as playgrounds, swimming, riding and even golf.” Campgrounds were rated on a scale of one to five for “very primitive” to “ultramodern” facilities.¹⁴⁵ In both resort parks and recreation parks, Kentucky sought to provide campers with the amenities and range of recreational options to earn rankings on the modern end of the spectrum.

A “Modern” Park System for Kentucky

The election of Governor Earle Clements in 1947 led to new leadership within the Department of Conservation and Division of Parks that led the Louisville *Courier-Journal* to declare that “State Parks’ Future Looks Brighter.”¹⁴⁶ As a candidate, Clements, well-aware of the trends in travel and tourism described above, had pledged new investment in Kentucky’s state parks:

I shall see that our Conservation Department embarks on a construction program providing for tourist hotels and facilities, so that Kentucky will become a Mecca for tourists. I am aware that construction costs are high, but I also am aware that the price of delay is higher.¹⁴⁷

To lead this charge, Clements selected Henry Ward, a Democratic senator from Paducah, as Commissioner of Conservation. With a background as a newspaper editor, Ward placed strong emphasis on the importance of promotion of the park system, and strongly pushed Clements’ agenda to construct more facilities for overnight guests, criticizing former Director Dyche for failing to accomplish much in this arena.¹⁴⁸ Lucy Smith, the former teacher and school superintendent who Clements named Director of Parks, shared the priorities of her bosses. Stressing the importance of public education, she contended that,

Until the people of Kentucky learn that the scenery and guest facilities at Cumberland Falls equal almost anything in the Maine woods, and that the fishing at Kentucky Lake rates with that of the Wisconsin Lakes...it will be difficult to lure out-of-state tourists in numbers sufficient to make the parks realize

¹⁴³ Ibid., 120–121.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 120.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 130.

¹⁴⁶ “State Parks’ Future Looks Brighter,” *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Kentucky), April 25, 1948, 35.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ “Henry Ward Promises He Will Make Conservation a Full-Time Job,” *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Kentucky), April 25, 1948, 35; “Mr. Dyche’s Park Policy,” *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Kentucky), January 7, 1954, 6.

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their potential as paying propositions.¹⁴⁹

To these ends, the Department of Parks engaged in a wide variety of promotional activities, ranging from the regular placement of advertisements and special features in Kentucky newspapers to offers of a free summer vacation at a Kentucky State Resort Park with the purchase of a new car.¹⁵⁰ Kentucky also was well-advertised in out-of-state newspapers, with a wide range of full-color pamphlets available to those who wrote for more information. These included a 60-page booklet on “Historic Kentucky Highways,” a 20-page booklet on the state park system, “In Kentucky” magazine featuring a variety of articles addressing topics of interest about the Commonwealth, a state map with state parks and attractions highlighted, a pamphlet highlighting Kentucky’s various regions titled “Kentucky, a hundred vacationlands in one,” and smaller pamphlets for individual state parks. From April 1952 to April 1953, the state sent out 117,000 such promotional packets in response to inquiries received. Such efforts helped the state’s tourist economy to grow to \$393 million by 1952, more than double that of six years prior.¹⁵¹

To both fuel and meet this growing demand, from 1948 to 1955, under the leadership of Ward and Smith during the Clements and Wetherby administrations, Kentucky invested almost \$10 million in the state park system. A large portion of this was spent creating Kentucky’s first modern resort park at Kenlake, as previously described, and developing the nearby Kentucky Dam Village State Park, which included an area of TVA worker housing located near the dam that was transferred to the state for use as a state park in 1949. There, existing housing was upgraded to serve as visitor accommodations and new cottages were added, a beachfront was developed and bathhouse constructed, a new dock was built, a campground was developed, a stable and horse trails were built, an 18-hole golf course was completed, tennis courts were added, and an old landing strip was upgraded, providing ample modern recreational facilities to complement those at Kenlake.¹⁵²

The state’s investments on Kentucky Lake also included development of Cherokee State Park (NRIS 08001120) as Kentucky’s only state park for African Americans during the period of racial segregation. The park was celebrated as “A Honey of a Park for Negro Citizens” and touted as “the finest colored vacation site in the South.”¹⁵³ Cherokee opened in 1951 and was annexed by Kenlake State Resort Park in 1964 after Governor Combs’ 1963 Executive Order ending segregation in public facilities.¹⁵⁴ An article written two years after its opening stated that the park “rounds out the system” by providing well-appointed facilities “complete in every sense of the word, with all the essentials for an afternoon picnic or a month-long vacation” for Kentucky’s African American citizens:

Facilities for daytime use include picnic tables and ovens, benches, a fine bathing beach and bath house, fishing dock and boats. Overnight facilities include a large dining room and 10 cottages of various sizes.

¹⁴⁹ “State Parks’ Future Looks Brighter,” *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Kentucky), April 25, 1948, 35.

¹⁵⁰ “Free! A Summer Vacation for Two with Each Used Car!” *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Kentucky), April 2, 1952, 9.

¹⁵¹ “Kentucky is Luring Tourists with Attractive Pamphlets,” *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Kentucky), October 30, 1953, 9.

¹⁵² Kentucky Department of Parks and Spindletop Research, Inc., “Kentucky Dam Village State Resort Park, Gilbertsville, Kentucky,” Spindletop Research Project No. 311 (Lexington, Kentucky: Spindletop Research, n.d.), 11.

¹⁵³ “Cherokee State Park (Kentucky Lake, KY),” Notable Kentucky African Americans Database, accessed August 23, 2017, <http://nkaa.uky.edu/nkaa/items/show/1430>.

¹⁵⁴ “First Kentucky Negro Recreation Center is Opened,” *Middlesboro Daily News* (Middlesboro, Kentucky), May 31, 1951, 6; Kentucky Historical Society, “Cherokee State Park” historic marker, 2010.

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The State certainly didn't pinch its pennies in developing Cherokee. The cottages equal those found at nearby Kentucky Lake State Park, Cumberland Falls, or any of the other Kentucky Parks that have gained so much national recognition since the big spending spree started.¹⁵⁵

While widely celebrated in the newspapers and by the state, as the historic marker installed at the former Cherokee State Park in 2010 expresses, "Some thought the park overdue. Others thought Cherokee an obstacle to full equality."¹⁵⁶ Whatever one's stance, thousands of African American families from Kentucky and across the country vacationed at Cherokee in the 1950s, sharing in the boom in leisure pursuits enjoyed by many other Americans.

In addition to developing the parks on Kentucky Lake and continuing to improve existing park units, the Commonwealth also added five lakeside parks to the system in the 1950s, all located in the central and eastern portions of the state, helping to balance the recent investment on Kentucky Lake in the west. While investment in state parks slowed under the administration of Happy Chandler from 1955–1959, minor development continued through the end of the decade. As previously noted, Lake Cumberland State Park was accepted in to the system in 1951 through the first of many lease agreements with the USACE. Initial improvements to this park included the construction of a 15-room lodge with a dining room to accommodate 40 guests, a new boat dock, ten vacation cabins, a picnic area, a rudimentary campground, utilities and service facilities, and a superintendent's house, along with the original road system and general landscape improvements.¹⁵⁷ In 1958, Kentucky added a second park on Lake Cumberland when the USACE deeded General Burnside Island to the Commonwealth, creating Kentucky's only island park.¹⁵⁸ The year 1954 saw the addition of Jenny Wiley State Park, located on Dewey Lake in Prestonsburg, Kentucky, the second Kentucky State Park located on land leased from the USACE. Initial development of the site included construction of a new dock, dredging the harbor, creating a temporary beach and bathhouse, developing the park roadways and parking facilities, building a house for the superintendent, and constructing five duplex cottages.¹⁵⁹ Through the efforts of the Greenbo Recreation Association, Greenbo Lake State Park was accepted by the state in 1955, and the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources began construction on a lake that year to provide water recreation opportunities within the park.¹⁶⁰ Like Greenbo, the addition of Kincaid Lake State Park in 1958 was the result of the efforts of local park boosters, namely the Kincaid Park Development Association who acquired the lands in Falmouth for the first state park in northern Kentucky. The Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources also was responsible for the construction of the lake at this park.¹⁶¹ Kincaid Lake, and all of the parks acquired in the 1950s, would benefit greatly from the huge capital investment in state parks in the 1960s, which would see the parks developed as modern resort and recreational facilities.

¹⁵⁵ Joe Creason, "A Honey of A Park for Negro Citizens," *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Kentucky), July 19, 1953, 101.
¹⁵⁶ Kentucky Historical Society, "Cherokee State Park" historic marker, 2010.
¹⁵⁷ Kentucky Department of Parks and Spindletop Research, Inc., "Lake Cumberland State Resort Park," Spindletop Research Project No. 311, (Lexington, Kentucky: Spindletop Research, 1970), 8–9.
¹⁵⁸ Kentucky Department of Parks and Spindletop Research, Inc., "General Burnside Island State Park," Spindletop Research Project No. 311, (Lexington, Kentucky: Spindletop Research, n.d.), 12.
¹⁵⁹ Kentucky Department of Parks and Spindletop Research, Inc., "Jenny Wiley State Resort Park," Spindletop Research Project No. 311, (Lexington, Kentucky: Spindletop Research, n.d.), 17.
¹⁶⁰ Kentucky Department of Parks and Spindletop Research, Inc., "Greenbo Lake State Resort Park," Spindletop Research Project No. 311, (Lexington, Kentucky: Spindletop Research, n.d.), 14.
¹⁶¹ Kentucky Department of Parks and Spindletop Research, Inc., "Kincaid Lake State Park," Spindletop Research Project No. 311, (Lexington, Kentucky: Spindletop Research, n.d.), 420.

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“The Nation’s Finest”

In December 1960, Governor Bert T. Combs outlined an ambitious proposal for significant new development within Kentucky’s state park system in the coming years. Notably, his address made *no* mention of the outstanding scenic qualities of Kentucky’s state parks and no ideological references to the physical, mental, and spiritual importance of parks to Kentucky’s citizens. The focus, instead, was on “developing Kentucky in to the recreational center of America” with “the finest system of parks in the nation.”¹⁶² A fine park, it seems, was defined not so much by the intrinsic qualities of the place, but by the quality of the recreational amenities that modern tourists had grown to expect. As such, the development program was intended to improve, expand, or create such amenities at parks throughout the system. This would include:

- A swimming pool, dock, or beach area at every vacation park (as resort parks were then known);
- A boat dock, boat launches, and water skiing facilities at every park with an accessible waterfront;
- Riding stables or access to saddle horses at 15 parks;
- Golf courses at 11 parks;
- Modern tent campgrounds at all major parks to include restrooms, showers, and upgraded campsites with water and electrical outlets at every site;
- Modern playground equipment at every park;
- New lodges and dining rooms at 8 parks, bringing the total number of lodges to 11;
- New vacation cottages at 9 parks;
- Complete remodeling and redecorating of all existing cottages;
- Enlargement of picnic areas and construction of new picnic shelters at 16 parks;
- New visual interpretive programs following the NPS model installed at 15 parks and historic sites;
- Extension of nature trails;
- A wide range of new programming to include nature studies, tours, and lectures; social programs in lodges; childcare services; additional winter programs; and presentation of outdoor dramas.¹⁶³

In describing these plans, Combs was confident that “It is going to prove a money-maker for the people of Kentucky.”¹⁶⁴ If there were critics of this recreational and commercial-based development model for state parks, their concerns were not well-represented in the news media of the period. While building the Commonwealth’s tourist economy was a primary motivation of the Kentucky state park system from the very beginning, this drive was tempered by a widespread appreciation for the park system’s higher callings to natural conservation and human inspiration, which were well-represented in public discussion and government promotion of the parks. By the 1960s, advertisements for parks were more likely to focus on the plushness of the lodge rooms or the recreational activities enjoyed on the lake. The development of the state’s parks was seen as just one component of a larger tourism initiative that also included highway development and a vigorous promotional program with the goal of bolstering the private sector tourist trade alongside the state park system.

To achieve these ambitious plans, the Commonwealth approved \$10 million in bonds in 1960 and an additional \$9.9 million in 1962. In just three years the state built eight new lodges, completely renovated two 1930s lodges, and constructed additions at two lodges. They also added 600 new camping sites and a wide array of recreational

¹⁶² Bert T. Combs, “Plans for State Park Development,” in *The Public Papers of Governor Bert T. Combs: 1959—1963* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2015), 159, 161.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 161–162.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 162.

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amenities. The new Department of Public Information undertook an ambitious campaign to sell “The Nation’s Finest” parks to tourists across the region.¹⁶⁵

Renewed Federal Investment in State Park Development

While states faced a remarkable surge in the demand for outdoor recreational amenities in the post-World War II era, many felt that renewed federal investment was necessary for state parks to experience the needed expansion comparable to that of the New Deal years. Recognizing this need, Conrad Wirth, director of the NPS responsible for its ambitious Mission 66 initiative to improve visitor experiences in National Parks, launched a “Parks for America” program in 1957 to assess the current condition of state parks and recreation programs and to provide federal funding to address identified needs. However, the political climate changed before the program was fully realized, which ultimately led to the establishment in 1962 of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation under the Department of the Interior, but distinct from the NPS. The Outdoor Recreation Act of 1963 granted the Secretary of the Interior the power to develop a national outdoor recreation plan, provide technical assistance to states, and promote regional cooperation for outdoor recreation programs. The next year, Congress authorized the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act to provide 50/50 matching grants to states for outdoor recreation planning, land acquisition, and facility development. The grants were funded by earmarked revenues, most notably offshore oil leases, meaning that funding levels varied from year to year, but from 1967 through the 1970s annual grants to states averaged \$174 million. About one-fourth of all state parks have benefited from the program, with the acreage in state parks increasing 26 percent between 1967 and 1981. While states increased their total park acreage, they used almost two-thirds of their grant moneys for park development.¹⁶⁶

To benefit from these new federal programs, states were required to develop statewide outdoor recreation plans. Kentucky issued a preliminary plan in November 1965. The plan addressed outdoor recreation generally, “defined broadly as the use of leisure time for purposeful acts in the outdoors.”¹⁶⁷ While state parks are just one of many types of recreational facilities addressed in the plan, it provides a valuable perspective on state parks by defining their role within the broader context of outdoor recreation in Kentucky. As described, “In general, federal agencies are responsible for resource-oriented areas; cities and counties for user-oriented areas; states for a combination of both types.”¹⁶⁸ The role of state parks is further defined:

State parks are areas larger than the foregoing facilities [playground-parks, playfield-parks, large urban parks, and regional park-reservations] and are designated to serve both state residents and visitors. A significant portion of the visitations take place on a day-use basis, although visits do range from several hours to more than 10 days. The park locations are determined with respect to the significant natural or man-made features of interest. Due to the significance of the sites, the majority of the areas are left in the natural state. Although development is held to a minimum, a wide range of land-based and water-based activities can be pursued within state parks. Facilities are oriented toward the day-user, the traveler, and the vacationer.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ “Kentucky’s travel industry and how it grew,” *Times Journal* (Russell Springs, Kentucky), September 16, 1965, 7.

¹⁶⁶ Landrum, 183–194.

¹⁶⁷ Spindletop Research, “Preliminary Kentucky Outdoor Recreation Plan,” prepared for the Department of Finance (Lexington, Kentucky: Spindletop Research, 1965), 55.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

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A subset of state parks (Cumberland Falls was given as an example) was more appropriately viewed as natural preservation areas, which contain outstanding natural features. The plan proposed that such areas should contain facilities to serve those who have travelled long distances to view such attractions, but the focus should remain on preservation and appreciation of the resources over other recreational uses.¹⁷⁰ The plan went on to describe Kentucky's existing recreational assets, including the state park system, which at that time was comprised of 35 parks and historic shrines, divided among 13 resort parks and 22 shrines and recreation areas, comprising over 51,000 acres. Generally, the resort parks all featured a lodge, including guest rooms and a dining room, and offered a variety of recreational facilities, although Audubon State Park, which has never had a lodge, was counted among the resort parks (it did have 5 vacation cottages and 36 campsites). The other parks were divided into four categories: those located at places of historic occurrences (Blue Licks Battlefield, Boonesborough, Columbus-Belmont Battlefield, Constitution Square, Perryville Battlefield, and Pioneer Memorial); places associated with famous people (Dr. Thomas Walker State Shrine, Isaac Shelby State Shrine, Jefferson Davis Monument, Lincoln Homestead State Shrine, and My Old Kentucky Home); parks with significant historic structures (Old Mulkey Meeting House and William Whitley House); and parks in scenic areas (Big Bone Lick, Falmouth Lake, General Burnside Island, Greenbo Lake, Kingdom Come, Lake Malone, and Levi Jackson).¹⁷¹ The purpose of all Kentucky state parks, and the Department of Parks, as defined by the plan, was to "encourage the growth of the tourist and travel trade in Kentucky...providing a nucleus around which the trade can be built and stimulating the development of private facilities."¹⁷² In so doing, they also provided an important service to the people of Kentucky and other states and increased recreational usage of Kentucky's lakes, rivers, and other natural amenities with which they were associated.

After defining recreational areas, the plan included an inventory of amenities associated with various popular recreational activities. Throughout the state, tallied water-based activities included:

- Swimming, defined by number of swimming pools (222 total) and linear feet of swimming beach (38,840 total)
- Boating, defined by boating water acreage (187,245 total)
- Fishing, defined by acres of impounded fishing water (also 187,245 total).

And land-based activities included:

- Driving and sight-seeing
- Picnicking, defined by acres of picnicking area (4,490 total)
- Camping, defined by areas of group camping space (1,090 total), acres of tent camping space (1,708 total), and areas of trailer camping space (363 total)
- Hiking, defined by miles of trails (1,414 total)
- Hunting, defined by acres of game hunting land (674,990 total) and acres of waterfowl hunting area (5,895 total, including impounded areas only)
- Golf, defined by number of holes (1,582 total)
- Drama and concerts, defined by number of seats (17,653 total).

Statistics are further broken down by region (based on Kentucky's five physiographic regions) and by ownership (federal, state, city, county, and private).¹⁷³ Notably, Kentucky's state parks offered all of the types of recreation

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 21.

¹⁷² Ibid., 38.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 27–36.

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examined except for hunting.

The outdoor recreation plan includes recommendations for needed amenities and improvements based on anticipated demand. Such demand was expected to continue to grow in the coming decades due not only to population increase, but also because “America is on the threshold of becoming a leisure society... Technology and machines are setting us free to pursue lifelong ambitions which go hand in hand with leisure”¹⁷⁴ Such statements were predicated on recent historical trends towards working fewer and fewer hours; indeed, the decrease from six 12-hour work days to five 8-hour work days was a significant advancement of the past century that dramatically changed the lives of millions of working Americans. Such trends were expected to continue, whether in the form of an even shorter workday, a four-day workweek, or longer periods of vacation. While not all of this newfound leisure time would be directed to outdoor recreation, according to the plan, over 90 percent of American adults engaged in at least one type of outdoor recreation activity, so it certainly seemed reasonable to expect that some of their additional free time would be spent pursuing such activities.

The plan used accepted standards regarding number of acres of recreational land per 1,000 people to calculate anticipated deficits in various types of recreational amenities for 1970. The study found that more acreage was needed across the board, but the biggest deficit was in intermediate or regional recreational areas, which were large reservations of land located outside of cities and developed as user-oriented day-use areas to serve local and regional populations, of which the state could boast none.¹⁷⁵ The state park system, the plan recommended, could help fill this void by increasing emphasis on day-use activities at those parks located near urban areas and by working to create – or support county or regional efforts to create – additional user-oriented regional parks. Such recommendations, one may assume, led to the creation of E.P. Tom Sawyer State Park in Louisville, established in 1970, which is unique among Kentucky state parks as the only one developed purely on the user-oriented (as opposed to resource-oriented) model. Other recommendations for Kentucky state parks included completing major improvements at the newly-acquired Lake Barkley, Barren Reservoir, and Green River state parks; expanding facilities at the two parks located on Kentucky Lake, the state’s most popular outdoor recreation and water area; additional improvements at most other existing parks; and significantly increasing the acreage in parks from 56,400 acres in 1965 to 100,000 acres in 1970. USACE flood control lakes, in particular, were recommended as venues for expanding the park system. Other general recommendations that could fall under the purview of the state park system included the preservation of the Falls of the Ohio, Perryville Battlefield, Whitehall, and the Kentucky River Palisades.¹⁷⁶

As the plan pointed out, there were, in fact, funds available to begin pursuing these goals. In November 1965 Kentucky voters had approved a \$176 million bond issue to provide matching funds for federal grant programs including, predominantly, highway projects, as well as land acquisition and facilities development in state parks. As such, the plan recommended that Kentucky’s share of the Land and Water Conservation Fund grants for the following two fiscal years be dedicated exclusively to planning, land acquisition, and development in state parks, in accordance with the goals and priorities outlined in the plan, which would result in the greatest immediate gains for the people of the Commonwealth. As such efforts helped to gain momentum for outdoor recreation initiatives across the state, funds would be shifted to support more local and regional projects.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 56.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 58–59.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 62–63.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 65.

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The 1965 bond issue had been intensely promoted by the Breathitt administration, viewing the issue “almost as a vital campaign for the governorship.”¹⁷⁸ Through brochures, pamphlets, news releases, and an array of personal appearances by the governor, the issue was framed as a simple choice: “Move now, or fall behind.”¹⁷⁹ At stake were not only funds for roads and parks, but also colleges and universities, correctional institutions, mental health facilities, small lakes, forest fire control towers, local libraries, airports, child welfare centers, county health centers, the Hazelwood Tuberculosis Hospital, animal disease laboratory, livestock sale pavilions, and state police barracks.¹⁸⁰ For state parks, passage of the bond issue would mean \$9 million (\$4.5 million in bond revenues to match \$4.5 million in federal grants) to pursue an ambitious Park Development Program that would include construction of vacation resort facilities at Lake Barkley and Barren River Reservoir, two new parks located on USACE impoundments; improvements at all existing parks including “room additions to lodges, complete modernization of older facilities, new cottage construction, expanded camping area developments, new swimming pools, improved boat dock facilities, improved picnic areas and recreation area facilities and improved interpretive presentations in museums and shrines;” and the ability to add additional parks to the system, including additional locations on reservoirs then under construction by the USACE.¹⁸¹ Parks Commissioner Robert D. Bell ardently supported the measure, sending letters to all state park employees and suppliers of materials and services to the state park system urging them to vote in favor of the bond issue. Such investment was needed, he argued, to continue to grow the state’s tourist and travel industry, which generated \$346 million in sales in 1964, including \$236 million from out-of-state visitors, while providing Kentuckians with “the finest recreational opportunities in the nation.”¹⁸² The overwhelming passage of the bond issue by a vote of 393,597 in favor to 127,443 opposed¹⁸³ set off another wave of expansion that saw construction of lodges at Barren River, Lake Barkley, and Greenbo Lake in 1969; additions and/or renovations to the lodges at Cumberland Falls (1966), Pine Mountain (1967), Carter Caves (1969), and Buckhorn Lake (1970); and a wide range of other smaller construction projects. White Hall State Historic Site (1968), Green River Lake State Park (1969), Grayson Lake State Park (1970), E.P. “Tom” Sawyer State Park (1970), and Waveland State Historic Site (1971) also were added to the system.

After a decade of unprecedented investment in Kentucky state parks, which created a system that truly was a national leader, development slowed in the early-1970s. After building three new lodges in 1969, the Commonwealth would not add another lodge to its system until 1995 when a new lodge was built at Dale Hollow Lake. After the wave of new parks added around 1970, the park system expanded slowly over the next 15 years, with parks located on new USACE impoundments added in 1978 (Dale Hollow), 1983 (Taylorsville), and 1986 (Paintsville). While there are likely many reasons for this slow down, not least of all the possibility that the demand for state park facilities was largely met by the huge investments of the 1960s, the national mood also had shifted from the post-World War II period. Travel across the nation, as well as statewide, declined considerably

¹⁷⁸ Sy Ramsey, “\$176 Million Bond Issue Is Treated Almost As Campaign for Governor,” *Advocate-Messenger* (Danville, Kentucky), September 28, 1965, 5.

¹⁷⁹ “Some Facts on Kentucky’s Proposed Bond Issue,” Records of Kentucky State Parks, Administrative Services Division, Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives.

¹⁸⁰ “A Long Range Public Improvements Program for Kentucky,” (Frankfort, Kentucky: Department of Finance, Commonwealth of Kentucky, 1965).

¹⁸¹ Letter from Robert D. Bell, Commissioner, to Friends of the Kentucky State Park System, October 19, 1965. Records of Kentucky State Parks, Administrative Services Division, Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives.

¹⁸² Letter from Robert D. Bell, Commissioner, to Friends of the Kentucky State Park System, October 19, 1965. Records of Kentucky State Parks, Administrative Services Division, Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives.

¹⁸³ Hugh Morris, “State Bond Issue Wins Approval by 3-1 Margin,” *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Kentucky), November 3, 1965, 1.

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during the early-1970s due to the oil embargo, which led to an increase in gasoline prices. Beginning in 1973 and lasting into the spring of 1974, the oil embargo was a result of the Arab-Israeli War. Arab members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) imposed an embargo against the U. S. to retaliate against the U.S. decision to aid the Israeli military and gain leverage in post-war peace negotiations. The oil embargo banned petroleum exports to the U. S. and introduced cuts in oil production. Years of negotiations between the oil-producing nations and the oil companies had already led to destabilization in the oil-pricing system prior to the embargo. Once the embargo was enacted, it caused further damage. Thus, the impact on the foreign oil-dependent U. S. economy was severe, leading to an increase in gasoline prices, gasoline rationing, a national speed limit of 55 miles per hour, an imposition of fuel economy standards, and a general national push to conserve energy.¹⁸⁴ Domestic travel suffered following the oil embargo, as Americans began to feel they could no longer afford to fuel their cars or spend unnecessarily on vacations during a time of conservation. While tourism lagged overall, under such economic conditions, Kentuckians undoubtedly enjoyed benefits from the huge investment in the state park system that had occurred the previous decade, finding ample recreational amenities close to home that they could easily and affordably reach.

Architecture in Kentucky State Parks, 1924-1973

Development of Park Service Rustic Architecture

The architectural style referred to as Park Service Rustic, or sometimes “Parkitecture,” was inspired by early lodges and other support structures constructed by the railroads to entice visitors to view the natural wonders of the American West. Early tourist accommodations often were constructed in nationally popular architectural styles of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century such as the Queen Anne style. The Northern Pacific Railroad’s construction of Old Faithful Inn at Yellowstone National Park at the turn of the twentieth century marked a significant change in architectural design. The large, imposing structure was comprised of roughly hewn native materials such as logs and stone that spoke to the building’s natural surroundings. At Grand Canyon the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway company utilized architectural styles inspired by the natural surroundings and structures built by Native Americans to craft a variety of buildings during the first four decades of the twentieth century, including a log railroad station; structures by architect Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter such as the Hopi House, a Hopi pueblo-styled structure next to the large lodge; and structures near the canyon’s rim also designed by Colter that respected the existing rock formations by attempting to blend in with the natural landscape.¹⁸⁵

Early on, the rustic style became the dominant architectural language of the NPS, which was created in 1916 as a bureau within the Department of the Interior with a mandate to preserve natural landscapes but also promote public visitation of the parks. The NPS soon issued a policy that all structures and improvements to be constructed in the national parks should be in harmony with the existing landscape. The policy statement also proposed that landscape architects and engineers with past experience in working within the confines of the

¹⁸⁴ United States Department of State, Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, “Oil Embargo, 1973–1974,” *Milestones: 1969–1976*, accessed August 15, 2017, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/oil-embargo>.

¹⁸⁵ Laura Soullière Harrison, *Architecture in the Parks National Historic Landmark Theme Study* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Department of the Interior, 1986): 2–3; Xanterra Parks and Resorts, “Historic Structures at South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park Offer Glimpse of Tourism Through the Years,” *Grand Canyon National Park Lodges, 2006–2013*, accessed August 28, 2017, <http://www.grandcanyonlodges.com/historic-structures-at-south-rim-of-grand-canyon-national-park-offer-glimpse-of-tourism-through-the-years/>.

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natural landscape be given priority for working on NPS projects.¹⁸⁶ The continued use of rustic architecture by business interests to promote natural tourist attractions, utilizing local natural materials and siting structures unobtrusively within the landscape, continued during the 1920s through the efforts of Gilbert Stanley Underwood, an architect employed by the Union Pacific Railroad for tourist structures at Bryce Canyon, Zion National Park, and along the Grand Canyon's north rim. Also during the 1920s, the NPS began hiring architects and landscape architects who experimented with designs for buildings that inconspicuously blended into the natural environment, utilizing organic materials such as stone and wood similar to the building's surroundings. From the mid-1920s to early-1930s, rustic architectural designs continued to be utilized at western parks such as Mount Rainier National Park, Crater Lake National Park, and Yellowstone National Park. Larger buildings were usually constructed by concessioners, i.e., by companies that had leased areas in the national parks to operate tourism enterprises. Because of its budget constraints, the NPS normally constructed only small structures within the parks.¹⁸⁷

Parkitecture in Kentucky During the New Deal

The passage of the ECW Act in 1933 created the CCC, which would continue to operate through 1942. The Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture managed the projects undertaken by the CCC. Under this program, engineers, landscape architects, and architects hired by the NPS designed projects and improvements with input from state park staff. The enrollees of the CCC were mostly young and unskilled workers. Local builders and other skilled workers were brought into the CCC camps to train the enrollees in various trades, including masonry, carpentry, and other building trades. State park inspectors under the NPS visited the various park projects to ensure the work was conducted to NPS standards.¹⁸⁸

The Park Service Rustic style was the primary architectural style utilized in Kentucky state parks through the New Deal's CCC era from 1933 through 1942. Local materials, such as hewn logs, lumber, and quarried stone, were usually accessible from the park properties, lowering the Commonwealth's material expenses for improvements undertaken by the CCC. These readily available materials, while cost effective, also blended the park improvements into the natural surroundings as was desirable in Park Service Rustic architecture. Under normal commercial conditions, the labor-intensive methods of Park Service Rustic architecture that often required processing raw materials and employing traditional masonry, log, and timber framing techniques, would have been cost prohibitive for the state parks, especially during the lean years of the Great Depression. Thus, the inexpensive labor provided by CCC enrollees was vital to building the many improvements to state parks, such as new roads, culverts, hiking trails, and support structures, that shaped these properties in the 1930s.¹⁸⁹

While small structures often adhered to standardized plans, larger projects such as lodges, museums, and cabins were individually designed. To ensure CCC projects met the NPS standards, in 1935 the NPS published *Park Structures and Facilities*. The publication was utilized by park planners, engineers, architects, and landscape architects to facilitate the design of various structures for state parks.¹⁹⁰ Arno B. Cammerer, Director of the NPS, stated in the publication's foreword: "A basic objective of those who are entrusted with development of such

¹⁸⁶ Harrison, 4.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 5–7.

¹⁸⁸ Blakey, 79–80; McClelland, E-125.

¹⁸⁹ Blakey, 80–82; Huddleston, 18–19, 80.

¹⁹⁰ Harrison, 7; National Park Service, Branch of Planning, *Park Structures and Facilities* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, 1935): 2.

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areas for the human uses for which they are established, is, it seems to me, to hold these intrusions to a minimum and so to design them that, besides being attractive to look upon, they appear to belong to and be a part of their settings.”¹⁹¹ Albert H. Good, Architect, State Park Division of the NPS served as editor for the 1935 publication. “Rustic” architecture is defined in the 1935 publication of *Park Structures and Facilities*:

The style of architecture which has been most widely used in our forested National Parks, and in other wilderness parks, is generally referred to as ‘rustic.’ It is, or should be, something more than the worn and misused term implies.... ‘rustic,’ in spite of its inaccuracy and inadequacy, must be resorted to in this discussion. Successfully handled, it is a style which, through the use of native materials in proper scale, and through the avoidance of rigid, straight lines, and over-sophistication, gives the feeling of having been executed by pioneer craftsmen with limited hand tools. It thus achieves sympathy with natural surroundings and with the past.¹⁹²

The 1935 publication includes examples of the NPS’ principles and practices through a variety of structures located in national and state parks exhibiting the Park Service Rustic architectural style. Historian Linda Flint McClelland states that “The illustrations were intended to show not prototypes to be copied but examples to foster imaginative harmonious solutions adapted to the needs and character of each situation.”¹⁹³ Included are photographs and architectural drawings of constructed examples of smaller structures, such as: entranceways/gatehouses at the entrance to a park; signage; fencing/retaining walls; guardrails; steps along hiking trails; culverts/bridges for roadways and footpaths; picnic tables; picnic shelters; comfort stations and privies; benches; and grills. Also included in the publication are substantial structures: administration buildings; museums; concession buildings; recreation buildings and shelters; cabins; custodians’ dwellings; maintenance buildings; lookout towers; amphitheaters; bathhouses and swimming pools; and boathouses and landings.¹⁹⁴

Requests for the 1935 *Park Structures and Facilities* overwhelmed the limited number of books printed. In response, it was followed in 1938 with the publication of three volumes titled *Park and Recreation Structures* that provided additional examples of rustic-style structures that had been completed through the efforts of the CCC and NPS under the ECW Act since the publication of *Park Structures and Facilities*. As the title of the 1938 publication indicates, recreation was recognized as becoming a more prominent function of national and state parks than in the past. Having served as editor of the 1935 publication, Albert H. Good served as author for the 1938 volumes as an architectural consultant with the NPS. The first volume was titled *Administration and Service Facilities* and was comprised of examples, both photographs and architectural drawings, of many of the same types of structures included in 1935’s *Park Structures and Facilities*. Examples of CCC projects in Kentucky state parks highlighted in the first volume include structures from Butler Memorial State Park, Cumberland Falls State Park, Audubon Memorial State Park, and Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹¹ National Park Service, Branch of Planning: 1.

¹⁹² National Park Service, Branch of Planning: 3–4; Harrison, 8.

¹⁹³ McClelland, E-139.

¹⁹⁴ National Parks Service, Branch of Planning: v.

¹⁹⁵ Albert H. Good, *Park and Recreation Structures, Part 1 – Administration and Basic Service Facilities* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1938): v, vii, ix, 38, 74–75, 96–97, 154; Joseph E. Brent, *New Deal Era Buildings in Western Kentucky, 1933–1943 National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form* (Frankfort: Kentucky Heritage Council, 1991): E-7–E-8.

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The second volume of *Park and Recreation Structures* addresses recreational and cultural facilities. The structures and improvements included small ephemeral structures such as picnic tables, trash receptacles and waste pits, seating for hiking trails, campfire circles, and markers. Examples of larger structures associated with recreational activities were also exhibited in the volume: museums, picnic shelters, concession buildings, dams and ponds, boathouses, bathhouses, amphitheaters, and sports structures. A chapter addressing Historical Preservations and Reconstructions recognizes Colonial Williamsburg and Greenfield Village as new examples of outdoor living history museums. The chapter offers instances of restorations and reconstructions in state and national parks completed for both tourism and educational purposes, such as the Jim Cable Gristmill and Jim Carr “Tub” Mill in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Colonial National Historical Park containing Jamestown and Yorktown Battlefield, and Spring Mill State Park in Indiana.¹⁹⁶ In terms of historic preservation, Good states “Large or small, restoration and reconstruction projects in parks call for exceptional skill and sympathetic collaboration on the part of the many professions and interests concerned with park planning, if successful accomplishment is to result.”¹⁹⁷ Projects at Kentucky state parks included in the second volume of the series include lookout towers in Cumberland Falls State Park and Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park, and an example of a marker in Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park.¹⁹⁸

The third and final volume in the series addresses overnight and organized camp facilities. This volume indicates the necessity of providing accommodations to an increasing number of the automobile traveling public, including those who preferred less costly camping options to the more expensive lodges offered by national and state parks. Although the effects of the Great Depression may have weighed on the needed inclusion of these less costly facilities, camping itself continued to rise in popularity.¹⁹⁹ As shown in the first two volumes, volume three continued to exhibit architectural drawings and photographs of completed CCC projects in the Park Service Rustic style. Substantial structures in this volume include lodges, inns, hotels, community buildings, washhouses, and laundries. Examples of smaller structures and sites are comprised of tent and trailer campsites, the potential layouts of camps, recreational and cultural facilities, sleeping, cooking, and dining facilities. A chapter also addresses furniture and furnishings for lodges and cabins.²⁰⁰ CCC projects in Kentucky state parks continued to be highlighted in the third volume, including one-room cabins at Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park and Butler Memorial State Park; three different plans for two-bedroom cabins at Cumberland Falls State Park; and a small two-room lodge with a small kitchen for campsites and a one-room cabin with porches at the Otter Creek Recreational Demonstration Area in Meade County.²⁰¹

While not highlighted in the NPS publication, the original lodge at Cumberland State Park, renamed Pine Mountain State Park in 1938, is a notable example of the Park Service Rustic style in Kentucky. The original CCC-constructed Cumberland State Park lodge was comprised of a lobby, dining room, and kitchen. No guest rooms were contained in the lodge; cabins were utilized for overnight accommodations. A gatehouse designed by CCC Landscape Foreman Mr. Barker also was completed at Cumberland State Park along with roads and additional buildings. The second CCC camp at Cumberland State Park built the 62-foot-span stone masonry

¹⁹⁶ Albert H. Good, *Park and Recreation Structures, Part 2 – Recreational and Cultural Facilities* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1938): v, 185–189, 191, 192, 195.

¹⁹⁷ Good, *Park and Recreation Structures, Part 2*, 187.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 113, 118, 174.

¹⁹⁹ McClelland, E-140–E-141.

²⁰⁰ Good, *Park and Recreation Structures, Part 3*, v.

²⁰¹ Good, *Park and Recreation Structures, Part 3*, 21, 42–43, 99–108, 148–149, 176–177.

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bridge known as Arch Bridge. CCC enrollees also constructed the Laurel Cove Amphitheater comprised of seating, a stage, dressing room, and reflecting pool in a natural cove that would provide the setting for the park's famous Mountain Laurel Festival. The CCC structures at Cumberland State Park utilized the landscape's topography and natural materials in their design. Other lodges exhibiting rustic design completed by the CCC in Kentucky state parks include the DuPont Lodge at Cumberland Falls State Park and the original portion of the current Pennyrile Forest State Resort Park's lodge which was initially named the Princeton Game Refuge.²⁰²

By the beginning of the 1940s, use of the Park Service Rustic aesthetic began to wane in the national parks, as architects shifted to new architectural styles utilizing modern building methods and materials such as curtain walls, steel, and aluminum. Meanwhile, the onset of World War II brought improvements and construction at Kentucky State Parks to a virtual standstill as monies and materials were shifted to the nation's war efforts.²⁰³ The loss of the virtually cost-free manpower of the CCC enrollees marked the beginning of the end for the Park Service Rustic style. The labor intensive efforts necessary for constructing in the rustic manner were too cost prohibitive in an era of economic expansion following the war. Nevertheless, while some buildings constructed in Kentucky state parks after World War II exhibited a dramatic break from the Park Service Rustic style, others show the strong and persistent influence of this aesthetic, even if not executed in the traditional manner. For example, Pumpkin Creek Lodge at Lake Cumberland State Park was built in the early-1950s and exhibits rustic characteristics and materials. State park infrastructure also continued to utilize the tenets of Park Service Rustic through use of local materials in fashioning culverts, retaining walls, fencing, benches, and other structures found within the parks. Even the clearly modern buildings constructed in the 1960s made use of stone, wood, and a natural color palette inspired by this traditional notion of "Parkitecture."

Modern Influences on State Park Lodge Design in the Post-World War II Period

The modern architectural forms that were introduced to Kentucky state parks in the 1950s and 1960s relate to changing needs, changing public expectations, and changing ideas about what park architecture should be. As in the earlier period, the NPS influenced trends in park building design. However, NPS's influence was less direct than during the New Deal period, and Kentucky State Parks' strong emphasis on lodging and recreational facilities was different than NPS's focus on visitor experience and resource interpretation during the period. As such, architectural trends from the commercial lodging industry also heavily influenced design in Kentucky state parks, as did the preferences of the local architects who were hired to design the state park lodges of the period.

Strongly influencing park architecture in the post-World War II period, Mission 66 was a 10-year program leading up to the 50th anniversary of the NPS in 1966. It was a much-needed response to the incredible boom in park attendance following the Great Depression and World War II, which saw numbers rise from approximately 3,500,000 visitors in 1931 to 30,000,000 in 1948, putting enormous strain on existing park amenities and threatening fragile resources. The goals of the program were twofold: "to elevate the parks to modern standards of comfort and efficiency, as well as an attempt to conserve natural resources."²⁰⁴

Within the NPS, the most significant and iconic product of the Mission 66 program were the new visitor centers designed to provide visitors with information and interpretation to guide their use and experience of the park.

²⁰² Saint-Aignan, n.p.; Kennedy and Johnson, 166–167.

²⁰³ Harrison, 9.

²⁰⁴ Sarah Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: The History of a Building Type* (Washington, D.C., United States Department of the Interior, 2000), accessed August 24, 2017, https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/allaback/index.htm.

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While this building type would not become prevalent within the Kentucky state park system, the architectural style of these buildings, which came to be known as “Park Service Modern,” influenced park architecture at all levels during this period.

In the construction boom that followed World War II, rising labor and material costs and the strong sense of urgency to construct new facilities to meet the exponential growth in public demand made rustic architecture wholly impractical.²⁰⁵ Further, while some continued to feel that rustic design was the most appropriate choice for park buildings, in light of the over-used and under-maintained condition of many existing rustic facilities within national parks in the post-World War II period, “‘Rustic’ began to take on negative connotations of dated, inadequate, and even unsanitary.”²⁰⁶ Modern architecture, on the other hand, “expressed progress, efficiency, health, and innovation—values the Park Service hoped to embody.”²⁰⁷ It also took advantage of new inexpensive building materials and labor saving techniques that were transforming the construction industry, helping to stretch available budgets to meet the extraordinary needs of the period.

In *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma*, landscape architect Ethan Carr states “Postwar modernist park architecture...often featured low profiles and horizontal massing, as well as materials with muted colors and rough textures that helped new buildings blend visually with their surroundings. But the new park architecture also assiduously eliminated the (admittedly spurious) historical associations of the rustic era, replacing them with architectural surfaces swept clean” of the rustic sentimentalities of the pre-World War II period.²⁰⁸ The Park Service Modern architectural movement in the NPS grew out of efforts to lower construction costs, meet the needs of a much larger traveling public, and implement the architectural trends of the time. The use of concrete, low rooflines, and minimal ornamentation allowed NPS structures to continue to address the surrounding landscapes while economically achieving these ends.²⁰⁹

A traditional goal of Park Service Rustic architecture was to “harmonize” with the natural environment through use of materials and aesthetic sensibilities that seemed born of the picturesque park landscape. While Park Service Modern buildings utilized forms and materials that broke from vernacular traditions, architects sought to harmonize the new buildings with the park setting through designs that served functional purposes while keeping attention focused on the park’s natural or historical resources. Visitor centers, the iconic NPS buildings of the period, maintained low horizontal profiles, often featuring flat roofs and sited on slopes to present a single-story façade while housing additional functions in the second lower story on the rear. Material treatments were simple, with earth-toned brick or textured concrete, stone veneer, and painted steel columns.²¹⁰

While the Mission 66 program and the Park Service Modern architecture that grew out of it would significantly impact state park architecture across the nation, the impact was far less direct than during the New Deal period, when NPS was responsible for the design of many of the rustic buildings constructed by the CCC in state parks. Rather, during Mission 66, the abundance of new buildings being constructed by NPS provided a model that state park systems could choose to emulate. That translation would not always a direct one, particularly since the most

²⁰⁵ Allaback.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma* (Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007): 134–135.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 137–146, 166, 170–171.

²¹⁰ Allaback.

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notable NPS buildings constructed during the period were visitor centers and Kentucky parks lacked such a building. Kentucky parks, however, did have a prominent building constructed by the state park system during the period: the lodge.

As the nation’s leading park agency, NPS’s embrace of modern design provided official sanction, in a sense, for state park systems to fully commit to modern architecture in the post-World War II period. Indeed, many of the lodges constructed in Kentucky in the 1960s exhibit the low profile, simple ornamentation, and modern but rustic-inspired material treatments including concrete, stone veneer, steel, and wood paneling, found in NPS buildings of the period. However, there also is a great deal of variety among Kentucky’s modern lodges, and no indication that Kentucky State Parks ever tried to establish any official design guidelines or adapt an official style. The guiding principle, if there was one, was to design buildings that met expectations for comfort and convenience of the travelling public. As such, lodge design was heavily influenced by the design of commercial motor lodges, even as they sought to achieve a higher purpose than these common roadside amenities.

In basic design, the state park lodges of the 1960s were essentially motor inns, a type of roadside lodging that had become popular in the 1950s. The motor inn was larger and better appointed than the single-story motor court. Motor inns, popularized by chains like Howard Johnson’s and Holiday Inn, typically featured a complex of two- or three-story buildings surrounding a courtyard featuring a swimming pool and other outdoor amenities. Indoor public spaces included a lobby with registration desk and often a gift shop, a dining room with adjacent cocktail lounge, and banquet and meeting rooms. Such public functions were concentrated in a distinct space, sometimes attached to and sometimes separate from, the guest room wings. Guest rooms could be arranged in a single row or back-to-back with utilities run down the center. Rooms were large and well-appointed: “the typical room contained two double beds, a night table with telephone, a baggage rack, several lounge chairs, a chest of drawers, a desk or table, and there was a dressing and bath area with vanity separated from the shower and toilet. Rooms were air conditioned, and of course there was a television set.”²¹¹ The travelling public expected these amenities, and they were more confident that they would find them in a building that presented the standard form and modern design that had become the hallmark of contemporary motor inns. Since Kentucky’s state park lodges were constructed with the explicit goal of attracting more tourists and encouraging them to spend more time—and money—in the state, the lodges generally drew upon these well-understood forms and design vocabulary to project the image of modernity, convenience, and comfort that such tourists would expect.

Modern “Parkitecture” in Kentucky State Parks

Throughout the post-World War II period, Kentucky State Parks was dedicated to hiring private architectural firms to design new lodges (as opposed to utilizing in-house architects); all but one of the lodges constructed in the 1960s were designed by Kentucky-based architectural firms (see Table 1). While a few architects were hired for multiple projects, the state employed a variety of firms over the years. In some cases, the architects had well-established regional practices in the area where the park was located. For example, in western Kentucky, Madisonville-based architect Lawrence Casner was hired to design the hotel at Kenlake State Park. Casner, a native of Webster County, attended the University of Kentucky and the Georgia School of Technology before establishing his practice in Madisonville. His work included a number of educational and governmental buildings in Madisonville, Hopkinsville, and at Murray State University.²¹² He also is credited with the Art Deco design of

²¹¹ John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, Jefferson S. Rogers, *The Motel in America* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 49.

²¹² American Institute of Architects, *American Architects Directory, Third Edition, 1970* (New York: RR. Bowker, LLC,

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the Webster and Caldwell County Courthouses constructed by the PWA in the 1930s, important buildings that helped shape the modern character of these western Kentucky communities.²¹³ In eastern Kentucky, Pikeville-based architect Jack T. Hatcher was hired to design the lodge at Jenny Wiley State Park. Hatcher was a native of Pikeville who returned to the city to practice architecture after receiving his degree from the University of Virginia. Among his noted works listed in the 1962 American Institute of Architects (AIA) directory, which included several schools, the only buildings located outside of Pike County are the museum and restaurant at Breaks Interstate Park in Breaks, Virginia, just across the state line from Pike County. Similarly, Jenny Wiley State Park is located in adjacent Floyd County.²¹⁴

Table 1. Construction dates and architects of Kentucky State Resort Park Lodges.

Kentucky State Resort Parks	Lodge Construction Date	Architect
Cumberland (Pine Mountain)	1930s	CCC
Pennyrile Forest	1930s	CCC
Cumberland Falls	1941	CCC
Kenlake	1950-1952	Lawrence Casner, Madisonville, KY
Lake Cumberland - Pumpkin Creek	1952	KY State Park staff
Carter Caves	1961-1962	Harry E. Homan, Ashland KY
Jenny Wiley	1961-1962	Jack T. Hatcher, Pikeville, KY
Kentucky Dam Village	1961-1962	Sweet & Judd Architects, Louisville, KY
General Butler	1961-1962	Braun & Ryan, Louisville, KY
Lake Cumberland - Lure Lodge	1961-1962	McCulloch & Bickel, Louisville, KY
Rough River Dam	1961-1962	Sweet & Judd Architects, Louisville, KY
Buckhorn Lake	1962-1964	Gillig Chrisman & Miller Architects, Lexington, KY
Natural Bridge	1963-1964	Brock & Johnson, Lexington, KY
Barren River Lake	1969-1971	McCulloch Associates Architects, Louisville, KY
Greenbo Lake	1969-1971	Harry E. Homan, Ashland, KY
Lake Barkley	1967-1970	Edward Durell Stone, New York, NY; Lee Potter Smith & Associates, Paducah, KY (Associate Architects)
Blue Licks Battlefield	1997-1999	Associated Designers, Inc. Architects & Engineers, Lexington, KY
Dale Hollow Lake	1995-1997	WMB, Inc. Architects-Engineers, Lexington, KY

Other firms, headquartered in the state's metropolitan areas, were influential within their cities but also had more of a statewide presence. The Lexington firm of Gillig, Chrisman, & Miller designed the lodge at Buckhorn Lake, and the Louisville firms of Sweet & Judd and McCulloch & Bickel each designed two lodges. The *Louisville*

1970), 142.

²¹³ Saint-Aignan, n.p.

²¹⁴ American Institute of Architects, *American Architects Directory, Second Edition, 1962* (New York, RR. Bowker, LLC, 1962), 295.

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Guide notes architects Norman Sweet, Arnold Morris Judd, and John Bickel among the six most influential architects in the city between 1950 and 1970, playing important roles in promoting modern architecture while designing a large portion of the city’s new schools, houses, churches, temples, hospitals, housing projects, office buildings, and civic buildings constructed as part of a major building boom during this period.²¹⁵ Committed to the development of the profession and improvement of modern design throughout Commonwealth, these three architects and Norman Chrisman of Lexington all were leaders in their regional and state chapters of the AIA, each serving as local chapter president and president of the Kentucky Society of Architects at some point during the 1950s and 1960s.²¹⁶

While the variety of architects involved in the design of Kentucky state park lodges led to significant variation among the buildings, some commonalities can be found. Most follow the motor inn model of having the registration desk, lobby, restaurant, and offices concentrated in a distinct building or in a hub within the main building, and guest rooms contained in two-story, and occasionally in three-story, wings. The guest wings typically were a single room deep, so that every room had a patio or balcony with a view to the natural environs of the park. Siting was very important; while lodges were often found at high-spots on the park landscape to maximize views, they generally did attempt to “harmonize” with the landscape as was the expectation in parks. Many lodges employed the technique common at many NPS visitor centers of presenting a low, horizontally-oriented façade, with hillside construction exposing a lower level on the rear. Most often the rear of the building overlooked the water or other noteworthy natural feature, and featured the dining room with huge expanses of glass to take full advantage of the view. Roofs generally exhibited low gabled forms with wide eaves. Wood paneling and native stone were the most widely used materials, typically paired with metal windows and occasionally other exposed metal structural features. Pools and recreational amenities often were sited in close proximity to the lodge for the convenience of guests. Overall, the lodges generally succeeded in harmonizing with and enhancing visitor appreciation of the park landscape while providing the modern amenities that vacationing families had grown to expect.

As an example, Lake Cumberland State Resort Park’s Lure Lodge was built in 1961 based on the design of McCulloch & Bickel. The lobby of Lure Lodge at Lake Cumberland State Resort Park is oriented to the parking lot and provides a canopy for guests to park under while checking in at the lobby’s front desk. The dining room, situated in the rear of the lodge’s main building that also contains the lobby and public lounging area, has large windows offering diners vistas of Lake Cumberland and wooded areas in the far distance. The public lounging area of the main lodge building has seating and card tables set up near the large stone fireplace and also provides large windows for views to the outdoors. The two-story guest accommodations are aligned perpendicular to the main lodge building and have exterior entries, similar to motor courts, and separate balconies on the rear of each guest room, providing views of a wooded area and the lake beyond. The rooflines of the guest room wings near the main lodge building are lower, therefore subordinate to, the main building’s roofline. Lure Lodge offers guest amenities such as an indoor swimming pool, recreation room, playground, tennis courts, disc golf, and other outdoor activities.

The two most pronounced outliers among Kentucky state park lodges were constructed at the very beginning and very end of the lodge-building boom of the 1950s and 1960s, both on lakefronts in western Kentucky. Kenlake

²¹⁵ Gregory A. Luhan, Dennis Domer, and David Mahney, *Louisville Guide* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004), 28.

²¹⁶ American Institute of Architects, *American Architects Directory, Second Edition, 1962*; American Institute of Architects, *American Architects Directory, Third Edition, 1970*.

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State Resort Park, situated in Marshall County along the west bank of Kentucky Lake, is the only park in the system that has a “hotel” rather than a lodge. The park was established in March 1948 on nearly 1,800 acres leased from TVA. Kenlake State Resort Park’s designer, Madisonville, Kentucky architect Lawrence Casner, placed guest rooms opening to interior corridors, rather than opening to an exterior entrance, as found at the other state park lodges. Casner designed the hotel in the Art Moderne architectural style, which emphasized the horizontal character of the structure and exhibited little if any ornamentation. It is perhaps the only modern lodge in Kentucky State Park system that completely lacks any reference to rustic design principles. Rather, former Kentucky State Park architect Anne Saint-Aignan states in “Parkitecture,” that the Kenlake Hotel, completed in 1952, exhibits Nautical Moderne features. These features include its white/buff exterior; large central lobby extending forward from the façade plane and looming over the adjacent wings comprised of guest accommodations; the four bays of the main entrance, facing the parking lot, created by deep, narrow, columns; the wide eaves along the public portion of the building (lobby and dining area); the rear deck over the dining room extending from the rear of the lobby providing views of the outdoor swimming pool located downhill from the hotel and Kentucky Lake further beyond; and the nautically-inspired railing of the rear deck and the stainless steel baluster on the stairs leading from the lobby downstairs to the dining room.²¹⁷

The lodge at Lake Barkley State Resort Park is the largest in the state park system, offering 120 guest rooms situated on a peninsula of Lake Barkley. The lake was created with the impounding of the Cumberland River in 1966 by the USACE. Lake Barkley State Resort Park has the only lodge designed by a firm not located in Kentucky. Edward Durell Stone, who designed buildings across the globe from his firm’s office in New York, designed the lodge in 1967 with the Paducah, Kentucky architectural firm Lee Potter Smith and Associates serving as the project’s associate architects. The large lodge structure is sited within a circular area comprised of two-story gable-roofed guest accommodations and parking lots, which are both situated at a lower elevation than the lodge building. A concrete bridge, also designed by the lodge architects, provides the only vehicular access to the lodge. Saint-Aignan identifies the lodge as Stone’s interpretation of the Northwest Regional architectural style, possibly a singular example in the Commonwealth, especially of this size.²¹⁸ The style incorporated the tenets of the International Style with the use of local materials (particularly wood) and large expanses of rectangular glass to create buildings that “embrace the surrounding environment. As Saint-Aignan states, “Wood is the predominant material used for the lodge. The central lodge building is constructed of post-and-beam sawn Douglas fir, using bolted connections. The building is clad in western red cedar vertical shiplap siding as well as substantial amounts of glass (the dining room alone has over 7,500 square feet of windows).”²¹⁹ The dining room windows provide expansive views of the lake, and a substantial gable-roof porch provides a vista view of the outdoor swimming pool below and the lake beyond. When it opened in 1970, the lodge at Lake Barkley was considered the flagship of the Kentucky state park system, recognized as the largest wooden structure built in the United States since 1930, and praised for its spectacular design, setting, and lush accommodations.²²⁰ It marked an impressive end to Kentucky State Parks’ lodge building-boom; no additional lodges would be added to the system until the lodge at Dale Hollow Lake was constructed in 1995.

²¹⁷ Kentucky State Parks, “Kenlake History,” accessed August 23, 2017, <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/resortparks/kenlake/history.aspx>; Saint-Aignan, n.p.

²¹⁸ Saint-Aignan, n.p.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ “The accent’s on luxury at the three new lodges,” *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Kentucky), May 2, 1971, 85.

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F. Associated Property Types

Property Type: Kentucky State Parks

Under the established historic contexts, the key property type eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is the Kentucky State Park. Such parks are located in Kentucky on land owned or leased by the Commonwealth, and they are operated as recreational amenities for the enjoyment of Kentuckians and visitors from across the country and from around the world. Eligible parks were developed during the Period of Significance. This Period begins with the establishment of the Kentucky State Parks Commission in 1924, and includes the early development of the park system in the 1920s, growth of the system through the investment of federal New Deal programs in the 1930s, and expansion of the system to serve growing public demand during the period of prolonged prosperity following World War II. The 1960s saw the addition of 11 new state parks (with 3 more added 1970–1971), construction of 10 new state park lodges plus additions to existing lodges, and major investment in recreational amenities at state parks. The year 1973 marks the end of the Period of Significance because projects initiated during the period of expansion in the 1960s were completed by this time. Further, the 1973 oil embargo curtailed automobile tourism that had driven the expansion of the park system in the 1960s, and generally marked a change in national mood from the optimism that had driven growth in the post-World War II period.

While new parks and lodges have been added since 1973, the model for the modern Kentucky state park system was solidly established by that time. Today the Kentucky state park system divides its units into three distinct types of properties: resort parks (sometimes referred to as vacation parks), state parks (sometimes referred to as recreation parks), and state historic sites (historically sometimes referred to as state shrines or memorials).

Kentucky has 17 state resort parks, one of which falls outside of the Period of Significance for this study. Generally, resort parks are defined by lodges providing a restaurant and overnight accommodations for guests. Other lodging options, including cottages and/or a campground, also are offered. Resort parks also provide a variety of recreation options and in many cases are associated with an outstanding natural feature or a man-made reservoir.

Kentucky has 21 state parks, 6 of which fall outside of the Period of Significance of this study. State parks are perhaps the most diverse property type within the state park system. Most, but not all, state parks feature a campground and at least one major recreational attraction. Almost half are located on a man-made lake. A few, like Old Fort Harrod State Park, are geared towards the interpretation of original or recreated historic resources, but they are larger in scale and scope than the state historic sites.

Kentucky’s 12 state historic sites are focused on the interpretation and appreciation of a single significant historic building or property. While such sites may have picnic facilities and one or two small-scale recreational amenities, these are secondary to the historic site itself. Two of the state historic sites were added to the state park system after the Period of Significance of this study.

Subtype 1: State Resort Parks

Description: State resort parks are the largest properties in the state park system, both in terms of acreage and numbers of built resources. All state resort parks have a lodge (in a few cases referred to as a hotel, inn, etc.) that

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includes a dining room and guest rooms. At the lakeside parks, the lodges overlook the water and are situated with the dining room enjoying a prominent view. The vast majority of resort parks also have both cottages and a campground; all have at least one or the other type of accommodation, in addition to the lodge. A few parks offer other specialty camping options, including horse camping or backcountry camping. Cottages typically are located in wooded settings on short dead-end or loop roads and may or may not be in the vicinity of the lodge. Most campgrounds are laid out with single or multiple-loop arrangements.

Approximately half of the resort parks feature conference/convention/meeting facilities highlighted as amenities distinct from the lodge. Other guest service buildings found at a handful of parks include ranger stations, visitor centers, grocery stores, gift shops, and snack bars. Most of the state resort parks lack a control building at the entrance to the park, although some relics remain from the parks' early histories. Often there is a control building at the entrance to the campground. Picnic facilities may be scattered throughout the park. Landscape features such as stone curbing and overlooks help unite the park landscape. Generally, the majority of the park's acreage is left in a natural state, although sometimes, recreational amenities such as golf courses constitute a large portion of the property.

The other public resources found at state resort parks may be broadly defined as recreational resources. All resort parks have a swimming pool; more often than not this is associated with the lodge, although some parks have community pools distanced from the lodging facilities. A few of the parks located on lakes also feature beaches. Bathhouses are associated with community pools, beaches, and campgrounds. Other common public amenities found at all, or nearly all, resort parks include hiking (and in some instances bridle) trails, scenic overlooks, picnic areas, shelters, and playgrounds. Also, some combination of recreation courts (tennis courts, basketball courts, etc.) and recreation areas (often with shuffleboard, horseshoe pits, etc.) are found at almost all resort parks. Sometimes recreation buildings or fitness centers also are present, providing indoor recreation such as billiards and ping pong tables, arcade games, and/or exercise equipment. Such small-scale recreational features generally are sited near the lodge or campground; if the park features a community pool separate from these amenities, some additional recreational features may be located near the pool.

Most state resort parks are located on bodies of water: many are on large man-made lakes impounded by the USACE or TVA, while some feature smaller impoundments within their boundaries, and a few are on rivers. Thus resources associated with the enjoyment of the water—boat ramps, slips, docks, marinas, and fishing piers—are common. Almost half of the resort parks include a golf course, and many include miniature golf and/or disc golf. Stables and amphitheaters are fairly common. Other unique recreational features include a dance pavilion, a miniature railway, and archery and trap shooting ranges. Three of the resort parks (Carter Caves, Cumberland Falls, and Natural Bridge) are focused around a "natural wonder" that is the key attraction of the park, while Pine Mountain, one of the only parks without a significant water feature, is known for its mountain scenery, nature preserve, and hiking. Blue Licks Battlefield and General Butler have prominent historical attractions, while a few other parks feature a historic building of local interest within their borders.

In addition to the public accommodations and recreational facilities, maintenance buildings and staff residences are almost universal features of state resort parks. Often these buildings are grouped in small distinct areas, but sometimes they are scattered throughout the property.

While three of Kentucky's lodges date to the New Deal era, and several of the resort parks retain buildings and landscape features built by the CCC, the overall concept of what defines state resort parks, as they exist today, express ideas developed in the post-World War II period. These ideas were largely implemented in the 1960s,

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when the state placed strong emphasis on providing ample modern overnight accommodations and a wide variety of recreational opportunities to attract vacationers from throughout Kentucky and from outside the state. The desire to provide amenities that tourists would perceive as up-to-date continues through to present day, so updates dating after the Period of Significance are found throughout most park properties. Thus, it is expected that the parks added to the state system in the 1920s and 1930s will contain several resources dating from the post-World War II era and that all parks will have some additions and alterations extending beyond the Period of Significance. So long as a park retains a significant concentration of resources built during its historical development between 1924 and 1973, and all significant changes are in keeping with the notion that Kentucky state parks are places set aside for recreation, natural conservation, and historic preservation, such updates typically are not considered overly intrusive.

Significance: Kentucky state resort parks may be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A at the state level in the areas of Commerce, Recreation, Conservation, and Government. They are significant for their associations with the efforts of the state government to promote automobile tourism to support the state’s economy, provide recreational amenities for the growing number of citizens who had available leisure time and the means to travel for pleasure, and preserve natural, scenic, and historic resources that define the unique character of Kentucky. From the start, the Kentucky State Parks Commission recognized that the provision of comfortable overnight accommodations was a key to attracting tourists and encouraging them to prolong their stay. Two of the original four state parks had lodges in the 1920s, and the CCC constructed three additional lodges in the 1930s. In 1948, the construction of modern lodging was seen as the most pressing need of the state park system, as it sought to capitalize on the post-World War II tourism boom. The Commonwealth would commit to the first of three major capital investment programs of the post-war period, to develop state resort parks based on the model that exists today. By 1969, Kentucky had 15 state resort parks with a lodge, making it a national leader in the development of this type of park property.

Kentucky state resort parks also may be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C in the area of Architecture for their collections of buildings representing significant trends in park architecture and lodging design from 1924 to 1973. Several of the state resort parks retain buildings constructed by the CCC that carry the Park Service Rustic style that was the ubiquitous architectural language found throughout state and national parks developed in the 1930s, utilizing local materials, labor-intensive building techniques, and references to local vernacular architecture to create buildings that fit in to the picturesque park landscape. By the 1950s and 1960s, Kentucky State Parks, like the NPS, was committed to modern design in parks, hiring local architects to create buildings that spoke to visitors’ expectations for convenience and comfort while seeking to harmonize with and enhance visitor appreciation of the park’s natural landscape through optimal building siting, horizontal massing, and use of a combination of modern and natural materials.

Registration Requirements: To be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A, a state resort park should retain the following characteristics:

- 1) The natural, historical, or recreational feature that provided the original motivation for creating the park should be well preserved and remain a central attraction of the park;
- 2) The park should retain a lodge dating to the Period of Significance that retains adequate integrity to convey prevalent ideas about tourist accommodations from the period in which it was built; additions may demonstrate such ideas for their own period. The most important qualities of integrity for a lodge to retain in order to contribute to a resort parks’ eligibility under Criterion A include the following:

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- a. The lodge is sited in its original location and maintains its historic relationship among its component parts (centralized lodge/dining room and guest wings), and its historic orientation to the lake or other scenic views that comprise the significant aspects of its setting; and
 - b. The lodge’s original design is evidenced through retention of a centralized guest service area, which may be attached to or separate from the guest wings, and which contains the registration desk, lobby/lounge, dining room, and offices; and associated two- or three-story guest wings with views oriented to the lake, woods, or other significant features of the park.
- 3) If present during the Period of Significance, the park should retain cottages and/or a campground, although the loss of some cottages does not preclude eligibility if others survive. Cottages likely have been upgraded and may exhibit material changes and/or additions, but their original forms and overall character should be evident to contribute to the district. Campgrounds should retain the key elements of their historic setting and landscape design, evidenced through roadway layouts and campsite locations, but may have upgraded bathhouses and other facilities;
- 4) The park should retain a variety of recreational amenities that were present during the Period of Significance, although upgrades (i.e. new playground equipment or picnic tables) are expected;
- 5) The historic landscape and land-use patterns should remain evident through retention of the majority of original circulation patterns, relationships among key amenities and developed and undeveloped areas, infrastructure such as stone curbing and culverts, and scenic overlooks.

To be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C, a state resort park should retain the following characteristics:

- 1) A lodge constructed during the Period of Significance that exhibits the influence of Park Service Rustic, Park Service Modern, or other major trends in motel and lodging design and retains integrity and the key character-defining features of such style or form. In addition to those aspects of integrity identified under the Registration Requirements for Criterion A, such lodges should retain the following:
 - a. The lodge as a whole, or the centralized guest service lodge if separate from the guest wings, should retain the most notable features of its original design including original roof pitch, eave depth, fenestration pattern, entrance canopy (if historically present), and expanse of glass overlooking the lake or scenic vista (if historically present);
 - b. The guest wings should retain their original rectangular forms, roof pitch, eave depth, and fenestration patterns;
 - c. Any guest wings added after the period of significance should be sympathetically sited in response to the original lodge design; and
 - d. All portions of the lodge should retain the majority of its original exterior materials, with any replacement materials generally conforming to the original design intent (composite wood paneling in place of solid wood paneling may be acceptable in certain cases, for example);
- 2) Cottages, recreational, and support buildings and landscape features also following such trends in park architecture and retaining integrity to the Period of Significance, as evidenced through original massing, original roof pitch, original or minimally-altered fenestration patterns, original or sympathetic replacement of exterior materials, and no or small and unobtrusive additions. Retention of original materials and evidence of original hand-crafted workmanship is especially important for rustic-style buildings;
- 3) Buildings and structures contributing under Criterion C may or may not exhibit the same stylistic influences and date to the same period as one another. If dating from different periods (i.e. some from

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the New Deal era and some from the 1960s), buildings should characterize the periods in which they were built to foster understanding of the architectural development of the Kentucky state park system.

Subtype 2: State Parks

Description: State parks are the most diverse properties within the system. The only nearly-universal features found at state parks are picnic areas, shelters, playgrounds, and hiking trails. The majority of state parks have campgrounds with bathhouses, and a few feature a camp store. One, Audubon State Park, also offers rental cottages.

State parks generally can be divided into places of historic interest (Columbus-Belmont, Fort Boonesborough, Levi Jackson, Audubon, Lincoln Homestead, My Old Kentucky Home, Old Fort Harrod), and parks located on impounded reservoirs (General Burnside Island, Grayson Lake, Kincaid Lake, Lake Malone), with the exceptions of E.P. Tom Sawyer, a suburban recreation park, and Kingdom Come, which has a small lake but is primarily defined by its mountain scenery. The state parks of historic interest feature a museum, historic buildings, and/or recreated historic buildings. Unlike state historic sites, however, they generally also contain one or more major recreational attractions and often a campground. The parks located on lakes feature a boat ramp, boat dock, and/or marina for enjoyment of the water, and may also contain a variety of other recreational amenities such as a golf course, miniature golf, a swimming pool, or recreational courts. Parks of either variety may contain an amphitheater.

Lacking a lodge as the central hub for park visitors and staff, several state parks contain visitor centers and/or offices. Most have some sort of maintenance building or area, and less than half have a staff residence. Other occasional amenities include a convention center, snack bar, or gift shop.

While a few state parks, such as Old Fort Harrod and Levi Jackson, exhibit strong integrity to the 1930s, the majority of the state parks, like the state resort parks, exhibit changes and upgrades throughout the Period of Significance and beyond. Some changes have been rather dramatic, such as the addition of golf courses to My Old Kentucky Home and Lincoln Homestead, but they show the strong emphasis on recreational facilities at the time they were constructed and undoubtedly increased visitor rates in a manner that helped support the preservation of the park’s historic buildings.

Significance: Kentucky state parks may be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A at the state level in the areas of Commerce, Recreation, Conservation, and Government. They are significant for their associations with the efforts of the state government to promote automobile tourism to aid the state and local economy, provide recreational amenities for the growing number of citizens who had available leisure time for outdoor pursuits, and preserve natural, scenic, and historic resources that define the unique character of Kentucky. Lacking lodges, the state parks largely served as day-use areas serving the local and regional population, although campgrounds provided for longer stays and attractions such as fishing and other water sports along with historic sites of statewide, if not national, interest were promoted to attract visitors from farther afield. Many state parks are the direct result of the efforts of local citizens to create sites that would preserve historically important places, provide amenities desired by the population, and foster expansion of tourism in the area.

Kentucky state parks also may be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C in the area of Architecture for their collections of buildings representing significant trends in park architecture from 1924 to 1973. Lacking a lodge as the central focus, and often lacking many major buildings at all, state parks are most likely to qualify for

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listing under Criterion C if they retain a concentration of buildings, structures, and landscape features constructed by the CCC in the Park Service Rustic style. That ubiquitous architectural language found throughout state and national parks developed in the 1930s, utilized local materials, labor-intensive building techniques, and referenced local vernacular architecture. In doing so, those efforts created buildings that blend into the picturesque park landscape. Buildings and structures that clearly articulate the principles of Park Service Modern design also contribute to a state park’s architectural significance.

Registration Requirements: To be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A, a state park should retain the following characteristics:

- 1) The natural, historical, or recreational feature that provided the original motivation for creating the park should be well preserved and remain a central attraction of the park;
- 2) The park should retain a variety of recreational amenities that were present during the Period of Significance, although upgrades (i.e. new playground equipment or picnic tables) are expected;
- 3) Campgrounds, if historically present, should retain the key elements of their historic setting and landscape design, evidenced through roadway layouts and campsite locations, but may have upgraded bathhouses and other facilities;
- 4) The historic landscape and land-use patterns should remain evident through retention of the majority of original circulation patterns, spatial relationships among key amenities and developed and undeveloped areas, infrastructure such as stone curbing and culverts, and scenic overlooks, if historically present.

To be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C, a state park should retain the following characteristics:

- 1) Interpretive, recreational, and/or support buildings and landscape features showing the influence of Park Service Rustic and/or Park Service Modern design and retaining integrity to the Period of Significance, as evidenced through original massing, original roof pitch, original or minimally-altered fenestration patterns, original or sympathetic replacement of exterior materials, and no or small and unobtrusive additions. Retention of original materials and evidence of original hand-crafted workmanship is especially important for rustic-style buildings;
- 2) Buildings and structures contributing under Criterion C may or may not possess the same stylistic influences and date to the same period as one another. If the buildings date from different periods (i.e. some from the New Deal era and some from the 1960s), buildings should reveal the periods in which they were built, to foster understanding of the Kentucky state park system as one in continuous evolution during the Period of Significance.

Subtype 3: State Historic Sites

Description: Kentucky state historic sites preserve a wide variety of historic resources including an archaeological site (Wickliffe Mounds), a cemetery (Isaac Shelby Cemetery), a memorial site (Jefferson Davis Monument), a site of early settlement with a recreated cabin (Dr. Thomas Walker), the state’s oldest religious meeting house (Old Mulkey Meeting House), a battlefield (Perryville), and several historic houses. Unlike the state parks that contain a historical attraction but also may offer recreational opportunities, the state historic sites are dedicated exclusively to the preservation and interpretation of the historic site. Generally, such is accomplished through tours of the historic buildings and site; sometimes museums offer additional interpretation. Still catering to tourists, the state historic sites generally include a picnic area and occasionally one or two small-scale recreational amenities such as a playground, recreation court, or miniature golf course, to enhance the visitor’s experience. Other support structures sometimes include a gift shop, maintenance building, office, or

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residence.

Significance: Kentucky state historic sites may be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A at the state level in the areas of Commerce, Conservation, and Government. They are significant for their associations with the efforts of the state government to promote automobile tourism to add to the state’s economy and preserve historic resources that defined the unique character of Kentucky. From the very beginning, the Kentucky state park system included properties of historical interest, in addition to sites of natural and scenic importance, with particular focus on those properties associated with the state’s pioneer origins and its history through the Civil War. By including such sites in the park system, the Commonwealth acknowledged the importance—and heritage tourism potential—of historic preservation. Almost all of Kentucky’s state historic sites are already listed in the NRHP based on the historic merits of the site that inspired the preservation of the property. In order to list a state historic site as part of the Kentucky State Parks Multiple Property Listing, the property should exhibit significant associations with key themes in the development of the state park system. The important events would include, for example, the establishment of the property as a state historic site through the efforts of local individuals or groups; improvements of the site through federal work relief programs during the New Deal era; and/or development of the site as a tourist attraction with attendant interpretive facilities and amenities during the post-World War II era.

Given the small numbers of resources present at state historic sites, and the secondary nature of all resources aside from the main historic attraction, it is unlikely that state historic sites will be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C under the established contexts for the Kentucky state park system. Historic sites may be individually listed or eligible for listing under Criterion C for the architectural merits of the original historic property.

To be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A, a state historic site should retain the following characteristics:

- 1) The historical feature that provided the original motivation for creating the park should be well preserved and remain the central attraction of the park;
- 2) The park should retain a small collection of support buildings that may include a museum, picnic shelter, small-scale recreational amenities, and a staff office or residence, if historically present;
- 3) The park should not have any major additions that focus attention away from the main historic attraction;
- 4) The historic landscape and land-use patterns dating to the establishment and development of the property as a state historic site should remain evident through retention of the majority of original circulation patterns, spatial relationships among key amenities and developed and undeveloped areas, infrastructure such as stone curbing and culverts, and scenic overlooks, if historically present.

Property Type: Buildings within Kentucky State Parks

Generally, Kentucky state parks should be nominated for listing in the NRHP as historic districts with the boundaries containing the portions of the historic park properties that retain integrity. However, there may be instances when the park lacks integrity for listing as a historic district, but individual buildings merit listing under the historic contexts. Based on research to date, lodges, cottages, and museums are the three types of buildings identified for potential listing as individual buildings or small groups of related resources.

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Subtype 1: Lodges

Description: Lodges are the largest and most architecturally distinctive buildings found at Kentucky State Resort Parks. Lodges generally incorporated the Park Service Rustic or Park Service Modern design principles that influenced park architecture at the time of the lodge’s design, although a few exhibit modern architectural influences outside of these traditions. Lodge design also was influenced by motor inn design and other trends in the provision of modern commercial roadside accommodations. Three Kentucky state park lodges were constructed by the CCC, with the remainder designed by private architects. As a result, designs vary widely, but some common characteristics are evident. Most lodges are sited at a high spot within the park landscape to take advantage of a scenic view. While lodges are prominent buildings, they generally display a sense of horizontality and do not overwhelm the natural landscape. Most lodges contain a central hub, sometimes a standalone building and sometimes connected to the guest wings, containing the registration desk, lobby, dining room, and sometimes a lounge, gift shop, offices, and other public or staff functions. Guest rooms are contained in two- or three-story wings which may be constructed in various arrangements relative to the central lodge. In all but one instance, the guest rooms feature exterior entrances on one side and a view to the park’s natural environment on the other.

Significance: As the most significant buildings associated with Kentucky state resort parks, lodges are potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criteria A and C under the same statements of significance included for that property type. If the park as a whole lacks the integrity for listing under the established historic contexts, the lodge alone could convey significance in these areas if it retains integrity.

Registration Requirements: To be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A, a lodge should retain the following characteristics:

- 1) The lodge should date to the Period of Significance and retain adequate integrity to support associations with prevalent ideas about tourist accommodations from the period in which it was built, as evidenced through the characteristics previously discussed. Additions may support associations with ideas from their own period;
- 2) The lodge should maintain its historic setting including relationship within the lodge complex (among the lodge, guest wings, and parking areas, for example) and the most important components of the park landscape (views over the lake, for example).

To be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C, a lodge should retain the following characteristics:

- 1) The lodge should be constructed during the Period of Significance and display the influence of Park Service Rustic, Park Service Modern, or other major trends in motel and lodging design, as evidenced through the characteristics previously discussed;
- 2) While the lodge may feature additional guest wings or other minor additions, the overall form and massing of the original design and its component parts should be readily evident and not overwhelmed by additions;
- 3) The lodge should retain key original exterior materials such as stone masonry and wood paneling;
- 4) The original design intent of the lodge’s important public spaces such as the dining room and lobby should remain intact.

Subtype 2: Cottages

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Description: Cottages are a common building type found at most state resort parks and one state park, providing another option for overnight accommodations distinct from the lodge and campground. Cottages generally are grouped together on a dead-end or loop road within a wooded setting or a clearing in the woods. Cottages may involve a single or duplex form and an efficiency or multi-room plan, but they are generally compact, single-story buildings as the term cottage would suggest. Cottages provide living, sleeping, kitchen, and bathroom spaces and often include an open or screened porch or other defined area for enjoyment of the outdoors. Exteriors are usually clad in wood paneling in muted colors and some examples include stone detailing. Cottages may have come about through rustic or modern architectural sensibilities. They generally have been updated several times over the years to meet changing visitor expectations.

Significance: While cottages are common features of Kentucky state resort parks, they are not central defining features, in the same sense as lodges, since they lack the physical and ideological prominence of lodges in defining the state resort park landscape. Thus, if a park as a whole lacks integrity for listing in the NRHP, the cottages could not convey the significance of the resort park more generally in the same manner as an intact lodge could. Instead, within the established historic contexts, an intact group of cottages could be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A as an intact example of the work of the CCC at Kentucky state parks, or under Criterion C if the cottages demonstrate significant trends in rustic or modern park architectural design. An individual cottage, rather than a group, is unlikely to be eligible unless it exhibits extraordinary significance.

Registration Requirements: To be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A, a group of cottages should retain the following characteristics:

- 1) The cottages should date to the Period of Significance and retain adequate integrity to display their original forms and character indicative of the work of the CCC; minor additions and some unobtrusive material changes may be acceptable;
- 2) The cottages should maintain their historic setting including relationships among the cottages, the natural setting of the park, and other key elements of the park landscape;
- 3) Other CCC-era features, such as stone curbing and culverts, in the vicinity of the cottages would enhance their setting and could contribute to the significance of the group as the work of the CCC.

To be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C, a group of cottages should retain the following characteristics:

- 1) The cottages should be constructed during the Period of Significance and show the influence of Park Service Rustic or Park Service Modern design;
- 2) While the cottages may feature minor additions, the overall form of the original design and its component parts, as evidenced through original massing, original roof pitch, and original or minimally-altered fenestration patterns, should be readily evident and not overwhelmed by additions;
- 3) The cottages should retain key original exterior materials such as stone masonry and wood paneling; retention of original materials and evidence of original hand-crafted workmanship is especially important for rustic-style buildings;
- 4) Interior changes are expected and are acceptable so long as they do not detract from the exterior design;
- 5) Relationships among the cottages and key aspects of their natural setting should remain intact.

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Subtype 3: Museums

Description: Museums are unique buildings within Kentucky’s state parks that may not conform to traditional ideas about park architecture. Instead, their forms may be more indicative of the subject that they are interpreting. For example, the museum at John James Audubon State Park is constructed in a Norman-French style to honor Audubon’s French heritage, while the museum at Blue Licks Battlefield State Resort Park partakes of the Colonial Revival style, relating to the history of the site as the last battle of the Revolutionary War. In addition to such purpose-built museum buildings, other state park museums are contained in historic buildings. These include typical museum exhibits with artifacts and interpretive displays, distinct from those historic buildings with interiors decorated to align with a particular historic period and presented as historic house museums, which are not included in this subtype.

Significance: Under the established historic contexts, only purpose-built museum buildings would be individually eligible for listing in the NRHP. These museums may be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A for their associations with the efforts of the Commonwealth to provide interpretive facilities that would attract additional tourists to Kentucky state parks, or for their associations with the activities of various New Deal programs that worked in Kentucky state parks. A museum may be eligible under the existing contexts under Criterion C if it is an outstanding example of the Park Service Rustic or Park Service Modern style or otherwise typifies the architectural work of a New Deal building program.

Registration Requirements: To be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A, a museum should retain the following characteristics:

- 1) The museum should date to the Period of Significance and retain adequate integrity to show its original form and character, as evidenced through original massing, roof pitch, and fenestration patterns; minor additions and some unobtrusive material changes may be acceptable;
- 2) The museum should maintain its historic setting including relationship to the park’s circulation system and other key elements of the park landscape;
- 3) If the museum was constructed during the New Deal, other features built during that period, such as stone curbing, culverts, or other landscape elements, in the vicinity of the museum would enhance its setting and could contribute to the significance of property.

To be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C, a museum should retain the following characteristics:

- 1) The museum should be constructed during the Period of Significance and display the influence of Park Service Rustic or Park Service Modern design or otherwise typify the architectural work of a New Deal building program;
- 2) While the museum may feature minor additions, the overall form and intent of the original design and its component parts should be readily evidenced through original massing, roof pitch, fenestration patterns, and stylistic details, and not overwhelmed by additions;
- 3) The museum should retain key original exterior materials and evidence of its original workmanship;
- 4) Interior changes are expected and are acceptable so long as they do not detract from the exterior design.

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G. Geographical Data

Kentucky state parks are located throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky on lands owned or leased by the Commonwealth. The locations of the current units of the state park system are included in the following table:

Kentucky State Resort Parks	Established Date	Location
Cumberland (Pine Mountain)	1924	Pineville, KY
Natural Bridge	1926	Slade, KY
Blue Licks Battlefield	1927	Carlisle, KY
Cumberland Falls	1931	Corbin, KY
General Butler	1931	Carrollton, KY
Carter Caves	1946	Olive Hill, KY
Kenlake	1948	Hardin, KY
Kentucky Dam Village	1949	Gilbertsville, KY
Lake Cumberland	1951	Jamestown, KY
Jenny Wiley	1954	Prestonsburg, KY
Pennyrile Forest	1954	Dawson Springs, KY
Greenbo Lake	1955	Greenup, KY
Buckhorn Lake	1961	Buckhorn, KY
Rough River Dam	1961	Falls of Rough, KY
Lake Barkley	1964	Cadiz, KY
Barren River Lake	1965	Lucas, KY
Dale Hollow Lake	1978	Burkesville, KY
Kentucky State Parks	Established Date	Location
Old Fort Harrod	1927	Harrodsburg, KY
Levi Jackson Wilderness Road	1931	London, KY
Columbus-Belmont	1934	Columbus, KY
John James Audubon	1934	Henderson, KY
Lincoln Homestead	1936	Springfield, KY
My Old Kentucky Home	1936	Bardstown, KY
General Burnside Island	1958	Burnside, KY
Kincaid Lake	1958	Falmouth, KY
Kingdom Come	1961	Cumberland, KY
Lake Malone	1962	Dunmor, KY
Fort Boonesborough	1963	Richmond, KY
Green River	1969	Campbellsville, KY
E. P. "Tom" Sawyer	1970	Louisville, KY
Grayson Lake	1970	Olive Hill, KY
Taylorsville Lake	1983	Mt. Eden, KY

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Paintsville Lake	1986	Staffordsville, KY
Mineral Mound	1991	Eddyville, KY
Yatesville Lake	1992	Louisa, KY
Carr Creek	1997	Sassafras, KY
Nolin Lake	2001	Mammoth Cave, KY
Fishtrap Lake	2003	Shelbiana, KY
Kentucky State Historic Sites	Established Date	Location
Jefferson Davis	1924	Fairview, KY
Dr. Thomas Walker	1931	Barbourville, KY
Old Mulkey Meeting House	1931	Tompkinsville, KY
Perryville Battlefield	1936	Perryville, KY
William Whitley House	1938	Stanford, KY
Big Bone Lick	1960	Union, KY
White Hall	1968	Richmond, KY
Waveland	1971	Lexington, KY
Isaac Shelby Cemetery	1991 (?)	Junction City, KY
Boone Station	1992	Lexington, KY
Wickliffe Mounds	2004	Wickliffe, KY

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H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

This project was sponsored by Kentucky State Parks to develop historic context for evaluating park properties and provide a mechanism for listing state parks in the NRHP. The scope of the study included all units of the Kentucky state park system, including state resort parks, state parks, and state historic sites. Archival research included a broad review of readily-available primary and secondary sources concerning the history and development of Kentucky state parks in order to understand its place within larger trends of park development, travel, tourism, recreation, conservation, and park architecture. This included a review of available annual reports from the 1920s through 1940s, records relating to capital improvement projects from the 1950s through 1970s, the state recreation plan from 1965, several studies conducted by Spindletop Research Center for the state in the 1960s and 1970s, a study of Kentucky state park "Parkitecture" completed by former Kentucky State Park architect Anne Saint-Aignan in 2013, and newspaper coverage of Kentucky state parks from throughout the period. This was complemented by a review of published works addressing topics such as the history of state parks and related themes in national parks, the history of travel and tourism, and the history of federal programs that influenced park development such as the CCC and the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. The Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives (KDLA), the University of Kentucky libraries, online resources of the NPS, and online collections of historic newspapers served as the primary resources for the study.

Budgetary constraints only allowed for conducting a field visit and detailed survey of one park: Lake Cumberland State Resort Park. All buildings, structures, and notable landscape features within the park were thoroughly digitally photographed and noted on a site plan, and additional site-specific archival research was conducted utilizing resources available at the park, the local library, and KDLA. An individual NRHP nomination has been developed for that property. One other park, Audubon State Park, was previously listed in the NRHP.

The project architectural historians familiarized themselves with the other units of the state park system by reviewing the parks' websites, site plans, and facilities lists, as well as discussion of individual parks within the above-mentioned resources. They also had previous personal experiences visiting some Kentucky state parks that provided a basis for making sense of the available written data.

Based, in part, on a review of existing studies of other state park systems in the United States, the study utilized a chronological approach to understanding the development of Kentucky state parks. Research confirmed the appropriateness of such an approach, as the factors influencing state park development, including government funding and public expectations, changed significantly over time. The Period of Significance was defined to begin in 1924, the year Kentucky State Parks were legally established, and ended in 1973, the year of the oil embargo, which marked the end of a period of ambitious expansion of the state park system following World War II.

Property types were defined by the Kentucky park system's established means for categorizing its properties. The study also identified individual resource types within parks with the potential to be

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eligible for listing in the NRHP if the park, as a whole, was found to lack integrity for listing. Such property types fit in to standard functional categories of park buildings.

Information regarding integrity was based on the desktop review of park properties, which included, for example, information about the dates of additions to lodge buildings and the construction of new buildings within the parks. If funding becomes available to conduct a more comprehensive field survey of Kentucky state parks, it may be appropriate to update the registration requirements to more accurately and thoroughly speak to current conditions.

Recommendations for Future Work

A comprehensive survey of all Kentucky state parks established within the Period of Significance is needed to determine which other sites are eligible for listing in the NRHP under the established historic contexts. Lacking available funding for a comprehensive survey, Kentucky State Parks may choose to focus on surveying those parks associated with certain significant themes in the development of the park system, such as those that retain a high concentration of CCC-era resources, those that preserve particularly unique natural wonders, those constructed on USACE lakes, or those with lodges constructed in the 1960s. Surveying multiple parks of a particular property subtype and associated with a common theme would allow for gathering more comparative data to further refine the registration requirements.

Individual parks of particular interest within the established contexts are Pine Mountain, Natural Bridge, and Old Fort Harrod, the three extant original parks; Kenlake, the first modern resort park; and Lake Barkley, with its lodge designed by internationally-renowned architect Edward Durell Stone. A study of any extant landscape features and archaeological evidence at the former Blue and Gray State Park could provide interesting information regarding the early development of the park system that would not be readily apparent at those parks that have been repeatedly updated over the years.

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