

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Robbers Cave State Park Historic District

other names/site number Tom Hale Boy Scout Camp; Latimer County State Park

2. Location

street & number 7.3 miles north of junction of SH 2 and SH 270 not for publication N/A
city or town Wilburton vicinity X
state Oklahoma code OK county Latimer code 077 zip code 74578

NATIONAL REGISTER
LISTED

JUL 23 '02

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
☐ public-local
☒ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

	Contributing	Noncontributing
buildings	35	46
sites	2	0
structures	48	20
objects	20	15
<hr/>		
Total	105	81

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National
Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
 N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RECREATION AND CULTURE Sub: outdoor recreation
LANDSCAPE park

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RECREATION AND CULTURE Sub: outdoor recreation
LANDSCAPE park

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Park Service Rustic

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
roof ASPHALT
walls STONE: sandstone
WOOD: weatherboard
other WOOD: log

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ B removed from its original location.

☐ C a birthplace or a grave.

☐ D a cemetery.

☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ F a commemorative property.

☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Period of Significance 1926-1942

8. Statement of Significance (Continued)

Significant Dates _____

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

_____ N/A _____

Cultural Affiliation N/A _____

Architect/Builder _____

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been
requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☒ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Name of repository: Oklahoma Department of Libraries, archives

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4,480 MOL

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	15	<u>288040</u>	<u>3876920</u>	3	15	<u>287160</u> <u>3873720</u>
2	15	<u>287950</u>	<u>3873710</u>	4	15	<u>287120</u> <u>3872100</u>

☒ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Neysa Clark, Historical Geographer; edited by Jim Gabbert, Architectural Historian

organization Private Consultant; SHPO date 2/28/95; 2/2002

street & number 1601 Hillside Court telephone (405) 624-3759

city or town Stillwater state OK zip code 74074

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
Robbers Cave State Park Historic District
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Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name State of Oklahoma/Department of Tourism/State Parks Division

street & number Adams² telephone (405) 521-3411

city or town Oklahoma City state OK zip code 73105

name State of Oklahoma/Wildlife Conservation Department

street & number 1801 North Lincoln Blvd. telephone (405) 521-3851

city or town Oklahoma City state OK zip code 73105

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SUMMARY

Robbers Cave State Park, part of a large recreational area of 8,275 acres, is located seven miles north of the town of Wilburton, the seat of Latimer County, in southeastern Oklahoma. The park is nestled in the wilderness of the San Bois Mountains, a range of the remote and rugged Ouachita Mountains that span east and west across the Oklahoma and Arkansas borders in a band of steep and narrow sandstone ridges. The north/south axis of Robbers Cave State Park aligns with a clear, fast flowing mountain stream, Fourche Maline Creek. The creek and its major tributary, Coon Creek, cut narrow valleys in the sandstone ridges and are the focal point of many of the park's amenities. The ridges above the streams are covered with dense stands of post oak, yellow pine, and a wide variety of hardwoods. The economy of the area is dedicated mainly to forestry, tourism, hunting, fishing, and farming, although there is some oil activity in the area and coal mining once played a role.

The area around Robbers Cave has long been used as a recreational site. It took the efforts of the State of Oklahoma, the talents of the National Park Service, and the hard work of the men and boys of the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress (later Works Projects) Administration to turn the spectacular wilderness into a first-class public recreational area. The boundaries of the nominated property reflect the section of a now much larger park that was most influenced by the work of the Park Service and the New Deal agencies. Since the 1930s, the park has grown to include areas leased from the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, expanding the boundaries to include more wilderness area.

Consisting of a little over 2,700 acres, The nominated section of Robbers Cave State Park reflects the highest concentration of design elements reflective of the National Park Service's philosophy as applied to a state park. Bisected by a state highway (Highway 2), the park features recreational activities on the west side and camping/residential facilities on the east. The greatest amount of historic development occurred in four primary areas: on the north end of the park is Robbers Cave and the old Tom Hale Boy Scout camp; the original CCC camp area is now a group camp facility and is south of Robbers Cave; Lake Carleton was created by damming Fourche Maline Creek and a number of recreational amenities are located there; and finally, east of Lake Carlton, east of the highway is the main cabin/campground area. Scattered around these and other areas are objects, structures, buildings, and sites that also relate to the period 1933-1942 and that contribute to the overall character of Robbers Cave State Park. The buildings, structures and objects created by the men and boys of the CCC and the WPA are exemplary of the design philosophy of the National Park Service in the 1930s. Termed "Park Service Rustic," the buildings and structures emphasize the use of natural materials wrought in a rustic manner. The built amenities are meant to harmonize with the setting, to appear a natural part of the environment. This philosophy is reflected in everything from the massive stone and timber bathhouse to the simple hand-wrought iron directional signs on the Robbers Cave trail. Careful attention was paid to the siting of structures and buildings and full advantage was taken of the natural viewsheds of the park.

There have been changes made to the park since the last CCC detail set down their picks and hammers. New amenities have been added to the park; the highway was re-routed and upgraded, and some of the original buildings have been altered. The park, though, retains a high degree of integrity, and while the changes are obvious in some aspects, they

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complement the original resources in their materials and do little to detract from the integrity of feeling and association of the park.

DESCRIPTION

Robbers Cave State Park is located approximately 7 miles north of Wilburton, Oklahoma. Wilburton is the county seat of Latimer County, located in southeastern Oklahoma. The terrain of the area varies from relatively flat floodplain to the steep escarpments of the San Bois Mountains. Robbers Cave State park is located along the south edge of the San Bois, in a drainage area serviced by Fourche Maline Creek. The creek and its tributaries cut narrow valleys in the foothills of the San Bois Mountains, creating a picturesque, rugged landscape that is the primary feature of the park. There are three large water features in the park, Coon Creek Lake, Lake Carlton, and Lake Wayne Wallace. The former two were created during the period of significance and have a number of resources in their vicinity. Lake Wayne Wallace was created after the period of significance, but its location does not affect the historic nature of the park, nor were any historic resources adversely affected by its creation. Coon Creek Lake and Lake Carlton are located in the southern third of the park and primarily service the recreational and residential areas of the park. In addition to these larger bodies of water, a number of small dams along stretches of Fourche Maline Creek have created water features accessible throughout the park. These date to the period of significance. Lake Wayne Wallace is located in the northern half of the park, west of the main park road. It is near the old CCC camp, but is not visible from it or any of the historic park service areas.

Robbers Cave is located at the north end of the park. It is not a cave in the true sense of the word, more of crevice created by the shifting of inclined layers of sedimentary rock. It is located in a rock outcropping in a finger of a ridge that runs in a northeast/southwesterly direction. Fourche Maline Creek runs its course around a sixth of a mile to the east. On the western bank of the creek, just southeast of the cave, is the location of the Tom Hale Boy Scout Camp, now known as Group Camp 2.

Fourche Maline Creek flows in a southwesterly direction, feeding into Lake Wayne Wallace about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile south of Group Camp 2. On the eastern bank of the creek, on a slight ridge overlooking the creek at this point, is Group Camp 1. This camp had its genesis as the camp for the CCC company stationed at the park, Company 1825. Made up of veterans, the company moved from Tulsa into semi-permanent status at Robbers Cave. While much of the present camp is new construction, there are still some of the original buildings left.

Another $\frac{3}{4}$ mile south of the Lake Wayne Wallace dam, Fourche Maline Creek again is impounded, this time creating Lake Carlton. The west bank of the lake features steep bluffs while the east side is the location of the swimming/recreational area. Here the CCC created recreational amenities including a bathhouse and a boathouse. South of this area, the creek features a number of low water dams, creating pools and features for the primitive campsites that hug the shoreline between the old park road and the creek.

To the east of Lake Carlton, east of both the new and old roads, is the cabin/camping area. The land rises steeply here, culminating at a ridge that overlooks Coon Creek Lake. The cabins, both CCC and newer, are strung out along the

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ridge affording each a spectacular view to the southeast. A new lodge building anchors the northeast end of this line of buildings. Northwest of the cabins, tucked into the woods, is the Circle Campground, designed in the 1930s for motorized campers. It has been upgraded somewhat for the modern camping lifestyle, but retains the overall feel and many of the original amenities of the 1930s design.

At the south end of the park, along the bank of Fourche Maline Creek, are camping/day use areas and trail heads. Many of the park's trails were created by the Soil Conservation Service in the 1970s. The CCC constructed few trails and concentrated those in the Robbers Cave area. Interspersed throughout the park are modern amenities – parking areas, picnic tables, and restrooms – that are necessary to serve the public need. For the most part, these objects and structures are minimally intrusive and do little to disturb the integrity of the park as a whole.

The following is an accounting of the contributing and noncontributing resources of Robbers Cave State Park. Contributing resources will be highlighted in bold. The resources will correspond to their locations on the larger park map or the inset maps. The resource count will start at the north end of the park and continue to the south end. Concentrations of like, small scale resources in a particular area will be counted as one resource, but the description will detail how many are included.

Resources of Robbers Cave State Park(Contributing resources in **Bold**; B = building, S = structure, O = object, St = site)

1. **Bridge** (c. 1930) S: Concrete deck bridge with concrete rail. Two spans. Spans Fourche Maline Creek near junction of old park road and State highway 2 at north end of park. (Photo #1, typical)
2. **Sign** (c. 1937) O: Directional sign located in triangle of land at intersection of old park road and road to Robbers Cave. Consists of large stone base with timber vertical and horizontal members. Sheet iron letters are inset into the horizontal timbers and direct visitors to Robbers Cave and Group Camp No. 2. Smaller metal letters are placed on the first course of the stone base and offer directions to the Lake Carlton area. (#2)
3. **Low Water Bridge** (c. 1937) S: Concrete low water bridge with stone abutments. Abutments coursed in such a manner as to "spill out" into the streambed. There are no side walls or curbing. (#3)
4. **Bridge** (c. 1930) S: Concrete deck bridge with concrete rail. Single span. Located south of intersection of old park road and Robbers Cave road, spanning unnamed tributary of Fourche Maline Creek. (#1)
5. **Robbers Cave Trail System** (1936-39) S: Trail leading from parking to the cave and around the rock formation. Some parts of the trail are rock-lined. The trail included seven separate sets of trail steps, some consisting of individual stones set in a naturalistic manner and others carved out of the stone itself. (#4,#5)
6. **Trail and Cave Signage** (1936-1939) O: Robbers Cave and the trail system are marked with signage made from iron boiler plate, cut and fashioned into directional arrows or words. These are located along the trail, directing hikers along the path. There are five extant examples. (#6,#7)

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7. Stone Entry Marker at Parking Area (c. 1975) S: Two large stone pylons made of local stone marking the entry onto the Robbers Cave path near the parking area. N/C due to age.
8. Rock Pile Fountain (c. 1939/1975) O: In the 1970s, the old CCC-built water fountains were refashioned into the current appearance. The old fountains were attached to wooden timbers; the current fountains consist of almost conical piles of rock, mortared together. These keep in tune with the general philosophy of the park and look like they might be original, but they are N/C due to age. (#8)
9. Restroom (c. 1990) B: Newer, concrete block latrine facility at parking area for Robbers Cave. N/C due to age.
10. **Shed** (c. 1933) B: Located in Tom Hale Boy Scout Camp. This open front building has a Halifax-type roof and vertical board siding. The foundation is hand poured concrete. Possible used and equipment storage. (#9)
11. **Shed** (c. 1933) B: Small, gabled shed located a few feet from resource #10. It has a gable-end entry, clapboard walls, and exposed rafter tails. It sits on a concrete foundation. (#10)
12. **Cabin #2, "McAlester Rotary Club"** (1931) B: One story, side-gabled bunkhouse. It has an entry centered on the longitudinal side with evenly spaced 1/1 windows flanking. There were smaller windows between the larger 1/1, but these have been infilled. The gable ends each have two 1/1 windows. All have recessed stone sills. The walls are random ashlar stone veneer. There is a limestone block inset in the south gable end that reads "McAlester Rotary Club 1931." (#11)
13. **Cabin #1, "B.S. of A."** (1931) B: One story, stone veneer. The building is a "U" plan, with projecting gables that feature exposed rafter tails. Each gable end features paired 1/1 windows. The smooth ashlar veneer walls are highlighted by corbelled rubble window surrounds and a corbelled rubble belt at the eave level. The entry is in the base of the "U" and features double doors flanked by single 1/1 windows. The building faces south and the easternmost gable has a smooth limestone block that reads "19 B. S. OF A. 31" in block letters. (#12)
14. **Cabin #4, Caretakers Cabin, "McAlester Lions Club"** (1932) B: Virtually identical to resource #12 with the difference being the overall length of the building (this is shorter) and the name on the granite inset in the gable. This cabin also features a large chimney on the gable end. (#13)
15. Restroom (c. 1980) B: Modern concrete block restroom with gabled roof. N/C due to age. (#14)
16. **Cabin #5, "Quinton"** (c. 1931) B: One story, side gabled cabin with massive battered chimney on gable end. The roof has exposed rafter tails and a stoop that extends out over the central entry. The entry is flanked by two 1/1 windows with segmental arch lintels. The sills are smooth stone. The walls are uncoursed, load-bearing rubble stone. A red granite plaque reading "Quinton" is set into the chimney. (#15)
17. **Cabin #3** (c. 1931) B: One story, ashlar veneer cabin with gabled roof. There are exposed rafter tails and knee braces at the corners. The roof extends over the central entry as a stoop, supported by metal poles. The entry is a double door and is flanked by 1/1 windows with segmental arch lintels and flat stone sills. The gable end has two 1/1 windows and a diamond-shaped vent in the gable. There once was a smaller window between the two gable end windows. All that remains is the sill that extends outward in an arc. (#16)

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18. Cabin (c. 1990) B: Dogtrot-style wood frame cabin. Hipped roof and tall 1/1 windows. N/C due to age. (#17)
19. **Kitchen/Dining Hall, "American Legion Post #79 McAlester"** (c. 1931) B: Cross-gabled, one story, "T" plan. Ashlar stone veneer. The stem of the T is the dining hall, the top is the kitchen. The entry is into the gable end and is flanked by single 1/1 windows. The sills are all smooth stone but the lintels are usually large, unfinished stones. The side windows are symmetrically placed with four pairs of wide 1/1 on each side. There are entries into the kitchen flanking the stem of the T. (#18)
20. **Pavilion** (c. 1936) S: Open air, gabled pavilion on a concrete foundation. The pavilion is approximately 100' long. The walls feature board and batten sidewalls and 12" posts. The gable ends have matching board and batten. A stage is located at the north end. (#19)
21. Bathhouse (c. 1990) B: One story, gabled concrete block building with vertical board siding in the gables. The gabled roof features heavy, exposed purlins and also has skylights. The entries are at the corners and are screened by wooden privacy walls. N/C due to age. (#20)
22. **Latrine** (c. 1931) B: Small, almost square ashlar veneer building with hip roof and exposed rafter tails. There is a small gabled dormer vent on the south roof slope. The south wall has a single offset entry and small 1/1 window. The east wall has a centered door and two window openings that have been infilled. The north side is identical to the south. (#21)
23. **Cabin #7, "Wilburton"** (c. 1931) B: One story, gabled cabin with knee braces and a small stoop. It has rubble walls and features a battered chimney on the gable end. The chimney is flanked by 1/1 windows with vertically oriented stones in the lintel, resembling a jack arch. The entry is centered on the longitudinal side and is flanked by similar 1/1 windows. A vertically oriented polished granite plaque reading "Wilburton" is located next to the door. (#22)
24. Cabin #4 (c. 1990) B: Dogtrot-style wood frame cabin. Hipped roof and tall 1/1 windows. N/C due to age.
25. **Cabin #6, "Hartshorne – Haileyville"** (c. 1931) B: Cross gabled, single story cabin with rubble veneer walls. The central entry and flanking windows have corbelled rubble surrounds. There are stone walls flanking the steps to the entry. The end gables have vents – long, arrow-shaped openings – and below are smaller window openings. The central gable, above the entry, features a pentagon vent opening and the words "Hartshorne Haileyville" inlaid in stone. (#23)
26. **Council Ring** (c. 1931) S: The council ring is at the south end of the camp, located in a clearing in the woods. A central stone alter/firepit is surrounded by low, stone benches in a circle that is about 100' in diameter. (#24)
27. Playground (c. 1990) S: Modern playground equipment surrounded by landscape timbers. N/C due to age. (#25)
28. **Swim Deck** (c. 1938) S: Located on the edge of the pond created by the Fourche Maline dam (see #29). There are three tiers of concrete decks leading down to the water. Each deck is supported by stone walls and is flanked by stone pylons. On the top of one flanking wall, pressed into the concrete cap, are small colored stones spelling out "CCC Co. 1825" and some indistinguishable initials. (#26)

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29. **Dam** (c. 1938) S: Located just south of the group camp, the dam was built around 1938 to create a swimming/recreation area for the camp. It consists of a concrete dam and wing walls with tiered stone walls downstream. (#27)
30. Cabin #12 (c. 1970) B: Simple, side gabled, wood frame building on concrete block foundation. N/C due to age. (#34, typical)
31. Cabin #11 (c. 1970) B: Simple, side gabled, wood frame building on concrete block foundation. N/C due to age.
32. Cabin #10 (c. 1970) B: Simple, side gabled, wood frame building on concrete block foundation. N/C due to age.
33. Cabin #9 (c. 1970) B: Simple, side gabled, wood frame building on concrete block foundation. N/C due to age.
34. **Building** (c. 1935) B: Part of the original CCC camp, possibly a barracks. Long, clapboard sided building on stone piers. Entry into gable end. Ranks of small windows on longitudinal side.
35. Cabin #8 (c. 1970) B: Simple, side gabled, wood frame building on concrete block foundation. N/C due to age.
36. **Pavilion** (c. 1935) S: Open air, gabled pavilion on a concrete foundation. The pavilion is approximately 100' long. The walls feature clapboard sidewalls and 12" posts. The gable ends have dog-eared board and batten. A stage is located at the north end and the foundation is hidden behind courses of rough-hewn stone. (#28)
37. Cabin #7 (c. 1970) B: Simple, side gabled, wood frame building on concrete block foundation. N/C due to age.
38. **Refuse Pit** (c. 1935) S: Circular concrete and stone structure with concrete cap held in place by horizontal tie bar. (#29)
39. **Latrine/Bathhouse** (c. 1935) B: One story, clapboard building that served as the bathhouse for the CCC camp. It is currently used for storage. It has a concrete foundation, a low pitch gabled roof and louvered window openings. There are two entries with plank doors. (#30)
40. **Vehicle Ramp** (c. 1935) S: Located near old latrine (#39); parallel concrete slabs that had been constructed into the slope of a hill, allowing for access to the undercarriage of vehicles. (#31)
41. Bathhouse (c. 1980) B: Concrete block, single story building with gabled roof. There is a shed roof extension on each end that serves as the entry point. N/C due to age. (#32)
42. Picnic Shelter (c. 1935/c. 1980) S: Open-sided, timber frame shelter with gabled roof. Build on foundation of former CCC garage. N/C due to alteration. (#33)
43. Cabin #6 (c. 1970) B: Simple, side gabled, wood frame building on concrete block foundation. N/C due to age.

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44. Cabin #5 (c. 1975) B: Similar to previous cabins, but with gabled stoop over entry. N/C due to age. (#34)
45. Cabin #4 (c. 1975) B: Similar to previous cabins, but with gabled stoop over entry. N/C due to age. (#35)
46. **Mess Hall/Kitchen** (c. 1937) B: T plan, single story, gabled building. The kitchen wing is stone veneer and the dining wing is clapboard, both with dog-eared board-on-board vertical siding in the gables. The foundation is concrete. This was constructed for the CCC camp and has had some alteration over the years. Still features original siding and the sandstone chimney on the west side. (#36)
47. Rock Fountain (c. 1970) O: Another refurbished CCC era fountain, again hidden in a pile of mortared rock. N/C due to age/alteration. (#37)
48. Concession Stand (unknown) B: Small, gabled building on concrete slab. Has openings on three sides that are covered with awning-type, plank, hinged covers. There is an offset entry. The siding matches the dining hall, but it is unclear as to the age of this resource. N/C due to lack of information. (#37)
49. Camp Office (c. 1970) B: One story, T plan, roughly ranch-style frame building that serves as the group camp office. It has drop siding and a gabled stoop. N/C due to age. (#38)
50. **Flag Pole** (c. 1936) O: Flag pole in front of camp office. Dates to CCC occupation.
51. Playground (c. 1980) S: Wooden playground equipment. N/C due to age. (#39)
52. Cabin #3 (c. 1975) B: Similar to previous cabins, but with gabled stoop over entry. N/C due to age.
53. Cabin #2 (c. 1975) B: Similar to previous cabins, but with gabled stoop over entry. N/C due to age.
54. Caretakers Cabin (c. 1975) B: Wider version of cabins #2 & 3, with shed porch. N/C due to age. (#40)
55. **Utility Building** (c. 1937) B: This small CCC era building has a gabled roof and rough hewn lap siding. The stone foundation is battered and carried up the side walls like a wainscot. The entry is offset. (#41)
56. **Council Ring** (c. 1939) S: Smaller in diameter than the Tom Hale Boy Scout Camp ring, this features large, monolithic stone benches in a circle approximately 60' in diameter. (#42)
57. **Sign** (c. 1938) O: "ASH CREEK RD" inset into horizontal log supported by large stone at one end and piled stone at the other. The piled stone base also features metal sign directing visitors to the cave. (#43)
58. Bridge (c. 2000) S: New concrete bridge that carries Ash Creek Road over Fourche Maline Creek. Just west of junction of Ash Creek Road and old park road. N/C due to age.
59. Dam (1966) S: The Soil Conservation Service created this large, earthen dam on Fourche Maline Creek. It inundated the tributaries of the creek to the west and replaced two smaller CCC low water dams. N/C due to age. (#44)
60. **Culvert** (c. 1930) S: Concrete box culvert on old park road. Features stone wing walls.

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61. **Culvert** (c. 1930) S: Concrete box culvert on old park road. Features stone wing walls.
 62. **Culvert** (c. 1930) S: Concrete box culvert with concrete wing walls.
 63. **Picnic Shelter** (c. 1980) S: In the Equestrian RV Camp area. Simple gabled roof supported by 4X4 posts on a concrete slab. N/C due to age. (#45)
 64. **Playground** (c. 1980) S: Simple wooden playground equipment. N/C due to age. (#46)
 65. **Restroom** (c. 1980) B: Gabled roof, concrete block walls, screened corner entries. N/C due to age. (#47)
 66. **Sign** (c. 1938) O: Timber sign, sheet iron letters spelling out "ARTESIAN WELL." 1 timber replaced. (#48)
 67. **Sign** (c. 1938) O: This sign consists of a horizontal timber member supported on two stone bases. The stones on the base are stepped back and the timber is cradled among them. The sheet iron lettering has been removed and a simple wooden sign has replaced them. (#49)
 68. **Low Water Bridge** (c. 1937) S: Concrete deck, low water bridge with concrete curb. Carries vehicular traffic over Fourche Maline Creek to the maintenance area. There are stone abutments and wingwalls that step down into the creekbed. (#50)
 69. **Pumphouse/Shelter** (c. 1935/1939) B: Originally, this stone building served as a pumphouse and treatment facility. It is a T plan with cross gables. It has rustic stone walls, flared at ground level, and large exposed timbers that support the roof. Originally, the stem of the T, the wing, was lower in height and sheltered an underground settling pool that extended in a circle outside of the building. Later, it was decided to remove the treatment function to a more remote location. The roof was raised to accommodate use by people and the old settling tank area was covered with flagstones surrounded by a low, stone wall. (#51)
 70. **Picnic Table** (c. 1939) O: Constructed with stone bases for the tabletop and the two benches, this table features concrete slab horizontal members and is located just south of the shelter. (#52)
 71. **Landscape** (c. 1939) S: After the conversion of the old pumphouse into a picnic shelter, the area was landscaped with natural boulders and carefully placed stones that created separated areas for cooking and picnicking. The area was divided into levels separated by low steps. (#53)
 72. **Fire Pits** (c. 1939) S: Two stone fire pits with metal grates. These are located just off the terrace south of the shelter. (#54)
 73. **Parking Area** (c. 1939) S: A graded parking area is just north of the shelter. It features stone berms and a small sheet iron sign on a boulder. The sign reads "PARKING."
 74. **Culvert** (c. 1930) S: Concrete box culvert on old park road, just east of picnic area.
 75. **Caretakers Residence** (unknown) B: Located just across Fourche Maline Creek from the picnic area, this gabled house has had extensive alterations made over time. It is unclear as to its original age and is therefore N/C due to alteration. (#55)

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76. **Culvert** (c. 1937) S: Stone culvert on former trail leading to power house. Has large stone wing walls and large stone head walls.
77. **Power House** (c. 1935) B: This stone building has the characteristic stone, battered walls that reflect the NPS design philosophy. A gabled roof on timber trusses covers this functional building. The roof is badly deteriorated, but plans are to restore it for interpretive purposes. The building still houses the original generator. (#56,#57)
78. **Low Water Dam** (c. 1935) S: Concrete dam across the Fourche Maline Creek upstream from the Low water Bridge (#68), near the maintenance facility. It has stone wingwalls at the bank. (#58)
79. **Regional Office** (c. 1980) B: New metal building that houses the regional park maintenance offices. N/C due to age. (#59)
80. **Caretakers Residence** (c. 1937) B: Cross gabled with exposed rafter tails. The walls are rough-hewn lap siding and feature a large, exposed, battered stone chimney on one gable end. The foundation is concrete, but stone is used to accent the corners. There is a small addition to the east end. (#60, #61)
81. **Shed** (c. 1937) B: Simple, shed roof, drop sided storage shed with similar extension added at unknown time. (#62)
82. **Barn** (c. 1937) B: Wood frame equipment barn with gabled roof. Part of the Maintenance quadrangle.
83. **Shed** (c. 1937) S: Open front equipment shed with Halifax-style roof. Simple pole construction with tin roof and walls. (#63)
84. **Shed** (c. 1937) B: Smaller, gabled shed located in quadrangle. Tin roof, wood siding.
85. **Shed** (c. 1960) B: Larger equipment shed, metal siding and roof. Part of quadrangle. N/C due to age.
86. **Culvert** (c. 1930) S: Concrete box culvert on old park road. Located between maintenance area and lake Carlton area.
87. **Culvert** (c. 1930) S: Concrete box culvert on old park road. Located between maintenance area and lake Carlton area.
88. **Culvert** (c. 1930) S: Concrete box culvert on old park road. Located between maintenance area and lake Carlton area.
89. **Dam** (c. 1936) S: Low water dam spanning Fourche Maline Creek. Concrete dam and spillway, stone wingwalls at bank. (#64)
90. **Culvert** (c. 1930) S: Concrete box culvert on old park road. Located between maintenance area and lake Carlton area.
91. **Sign** (c. 1937) O: Stone and timber directional sign with sheet iron letters. Directs to boathouse, bath house,

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- and amphitheater. Has been changed to reflect new amenities, but is essentially intact. (#65)
92. Picnic Shelter (c. 1990) S: Gabled roof supported by battered rock piers. Has a central chimney and low stone walls. N/C due to age. (#66)
93. Amphitheater (c. 1980) S: Located on the bank of Lake Carleton, it features a concrete deck with timber frame superstructure. The seating has stone bases and concrete seats. N/C due to age. (#67)
94. **Retaining Wall** (c. 1936) S: Stone retaining wall constructed along lakeshore of Lake Carlton on the north side of the picnic area. (#68)
95. **Picnic Site** (c. 1937) St: Features newer concrete picnic tables and older, CCC-built grills, all clustered at the water's edge. Taken together as a single site. (#69)
96. **Fire Pits** (c. 1937) S: Stone fire pits with steel grates, located along shoreline where they once serviced picnickers. (#70, #71)
97. **Sign** (c. 1937) O: Large boulder with sheet iron lettering that reads "PICNICKING," located just north of shelter. (#72)
98. Pool House and Pool (c. 1970) B: Flat roofed, concrete block building with interesting vented wall. Pool is standard, in-ground type. N/C due to age. (#73, #74)
99. Mini Golf (c. 1975) S: 18 hole miniature golf course and associated structures. N/C due to age. (#75)
100. **Bathhouse** (c. 1936) B: Long, low, side-gabled sandstone building. Thick, rough-cut slabs of sandstone are laid in somewhat regular courses, battered from the ground up. Large logs are used in the gables as well as for the roof purlins. Rafters are oversized and rough-cut. The plan is basically cruciform, with entries into each end as well as into the center. The building has an oversized fireplace in the south end and has had some upgraded plumbing installed at the south end, hidden behind a block wall. The building was converted into the nature center and a community room recently, under the supervision of an actual former CCC foreman. (#76-80)
101. **Parking Area** (c. 1936) St: Currently paved in asphalt, the parking area that served the Lake Carlton area was graded and lined with a sandstone berm, and landscaped with planted trees and flagstone terraces and steps. The landscaping has matured and the terraces are a little care-worn, but the area still retains much of its design integrity. (#81)
102. **Shoreline** (c. 1936) S: The physical shoreline of the area features a stone retaining wall and landscaping that created a swimming area in front of the bathhouse. Much has deteriorated, but the design intent is still visible.
103. **Sign** (c. 1938) O: Two stone pier/piles supporting a horizontal timber. "CAFÉ" with an arrow is inset. (#82)
104. **Sign** (unknown) O: Single timber pole set into ground with wooden signboard. Sheet iron letters read "NO CAMPING OVERNIGHT IN THIS AREA." Similar to CCC-era signs, but the date is unconfirmed. N/C due to lack of information. (#83)

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105. Sign (c. 1980) O: Newer telephone pole-type timber frame with hanging board sign. Reads "CABIN OFFICE CAFÉ." N/C due to age. (#84)
106. Sign (c. 1980) O: Similar to above but with stone piers, reading "CABIN OFFICE." N/C due to age. (#85)
107. Concession Building (c. 1970) B: Former nature center. Simple gabled building with lap siding. N/C due to age. (#86)
108. Grave Marker (1947) O: Headstone for Carlton Weaver, father of the park. N/C due to age. (#87)
109. Information Booth (c. 1990) S: Small gabled shelter with stone foundation and wood shake roof. Contains interpretive displays and informational brochures. N/C due to age. (#88)
110. Boathouse/Café (c. 1936-1970) B: Former boathouse constructed by CCC, converted into café by the addition of a building on top of the stone structure. N/C due to alteration. (#89, #90)
111. Rock Pile Fountains (c. 1970) O: Two drinking fountains, identical to #9. N/C due to age. (#91)
112. Rock Pile Fountains (c. 1970) O: Three drinking fountains, identical to #9. N/C due to age. (#92)
113. **Lake Carlton Dam** (1935-37) S: The large, curved, concrete dam that impounds Lake Carlton was constructed initially by the CCC. The stone buttresses that are located on the east and west ends were later repaired and strengthened by the WPA. The dam features a wide, concrete apron that catches the spillway water, reducing downstream erosion. (#93)
114. **Drop Structures** (c. 1937) S: Along the roadbed winding up the hill from the old park road to the cabin/camping area, the CCC constructed erosion control drainage structures consisting of small stone check dams and a stone-lined gutter. (#94)
115. **Sign** (c. 1938) O: Simple timber post and cross-beam sign reading "WINDING ROAD" in metal letters. (#95)
116. **Trail** (c. 1938) S: Trail leading from cabin area to Lake Carlton area. Features some small stone culverts over intermittent drainage areas. (#96)
117. **Residence** (c. 1940) B: Residence constructed for park manager. Gabled roof, L-plan single story building with weatherboard siding and rustic, stepped stone foundation. It features shed roof porches and a large, stone exterior chimney. There have been minor modifications done to modernize the building, but it still retains a great deal of integrity. (#97)
118. **Office/Garage** (c. 1940) B: Originally constructed as a garage for the park manager's residence, this building was converted into additional office space. It is now used as a residence for park employees. It matches the managers residence in materials and design, but the former auto entry has been enclosed nad a gabled stoop added over the new pedestrian entry. (#98)

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119. **Power House** (c. 1938) B: Small gabled, weatherboard building constructed into the slope of a hill. It features a stone foundation and retaining wall and an offset, gable-end, plank entry door. Houses a generator that serviced the managers residence and surrounding area. (#99)
120. **Shed (?)** B: Small, gabled shed with novelty siding and an offset entry. Sits on concrete blocks. N/C due to age/lack of information. (#100)
121. **Shed** (c. 1990) B: Small, prefabricated utility shed. N/C due to age. (#100)
122. **Kennel** (c. 1980) S: Wooden post and chain link enclosure. N/C due to age. (#101)
123. **Picnic Shelter** (c. 2000) S: Gabled, open air picnic shelter constructed of wood timbers and 4X4 posts. N/C due to age.
124. **Camp Store** (c. 1940/1950) B: Gabled, T-plan building with shed roof porch. Features weatherboard siding and a stone foundation. Has been extensively altered since its construction. N/C due to alterations. (#102)
125. **Latrine** (c. 1980) B: Concrete block building with gabled roof. Serves the Whispering Pines campground. N/C due to age. (#103)
126. **Rock Pile Fountain (?)** O: Stone pile with faucet protruding. Utilizes and original sheet iron sign that reads "WATER." N/C due to age. (#104)
127. **Picnic Tables** (c. 1980) O: Six picnic tables that constitute one N/C resource, located in the Whispering Pines campground. (#105)
128. **Sign** (c. 1938) O: Located at the fork in the road that leads to the cabin and camping areas. The sign has a shallow V footprint, with a stone base supporting boars with lettering that reads "CABINS" and "CAMPING" with integral directional arrows. (#106)
129. **Culvert** (c. 1936) S: Large stone blocks serve as the wing alls and a large stone block acts as the lintel, hiding a simple, concrete box culvert under the road leading to Circle Campground. The bed of the drain is stone. (#107)
130. **Culvert** (c. 2000) S: Simple CMP culvert located near fork in Circle Campground road. Replaced an older. CCC-constructed stone and concrete culvert. N/C due to age.
131. **Sign** (c. 1938) O: Large boulder located at fork in Circle Campground road. "KEEP RIGHT" is inset into a panel chiseled in the face of the stone. Like all of the historic signs, the letters are cut out of sheet iron. (#108)
132. **Signs** (c. 1938) O: There are three original campsite signs left in Circle Campground, constituting one contributing resource. Set into small boulders at the entrance of each campsite pull-out. (#109)

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133. **Signs** (c. 1938) O: Scattered throughout the interior section of the Circle Campground road are small stone signs indicating the location of water and restrooms. These 9 signs constitute 1 contributing resource, although the signs themselves are not identical. Some spell out "WATER/RESTROOMS" while others have only the initials "W/RR." (#110, #111)
134. **Steps/Landscape** (c. 1938) S: Leading from the campsites to the bathhouse are paths. Near the road, these are often denoted by small stone steps or naturalistic outcroppings. The four sets identified constitute one contributing resource. They are found in conjunction with signs (#133). (#112)
135. **Culvert** (c. 1937) S: Simple box culvert on Circle Campground road. Features stone headwall.
136. **Culvert** (c. 1937) S: Simple box culvert on Circle Campground road. Features stone headwall and downstream drop structure. (#113)
137. **Culvert** (c. 1937) S: Simple box culvert on Circle Campground road. Features stone headwall.
138. **Bathhouse** (c. 1938) B: The signature building in the area of Circle Campground. This low, gabled building is the epitome of NPS Park Rustic style construction. It features naturalistic battered stone walls with deeply inset fenestration and a low, gabled roof. The roof is supported by massive hewn timbers and once was sheathed in wooden shakes. (#114, #115)
139. **Faucet-in-Rock** (c. 1938) O: Cleverly constructed, this faucet appears to spring from a solid boulder. Located next to the bathhouse. (#116)
140. **Firepits** (c. 1938) S: These three firepits or grills are the only extant original amenities for the campsites. They are configured by the use of three large, flat stones placed in a U, with a firebox built of stone and a steel grate. They constitute one contributing resource. (#117)
141. **Grills** (c. 1980) O: Eight modern, free standing charcoal grills. N/C due to age.
142. **Picnic Tables** (c. 1980) O: Eight modern, concrete picnic tables. N/C due to age.
143. **Culvert** (c. 1937) S: Simple box culvert on cabin area road, featuring stone headwall.
144. **Culvert** (c. 1937) S: Simple box culvert on cabin area road, featuring stone headwall.
145. **Sign** (c. 1939) O: Stone base and timber supports. Directs visitors to cabin area and lodge. The signage has been changed to reflect the newer amenities, but the structure is intact. (#118)
146. **Lodge** (1995) B: New, two story lodge. Features central lobby area with rooms on flanking wings. Large timbers and natural materials used to create a rustic appearance. N/C due to age. (#139)
147. **Cabin #26** (c. 1975) B: Gabled cabin with vertical sheet siding and enclosed screen porch. Concrete foundation and wooden deck on front. N/C due to age.

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148. Cabin #25 (c. 1975) B: Gabled cabin with vertical sheet siding and enclosed screen porch. Concrete foundation and wooden deck on front. N/C due to age.
149. Cabin #24 (c. 1975) B: Gabled cabin with vertical sheet siding and enclosed screen porch. Concrete foundation and wooden deck on front. N/C due to age. (#119)
150. Cabin #22/23 (c. 1965) B: Duplex cabin. Gabled with inset corner porches, wide weatherboard siding, and rubble stone foundation. Simple, small 1/1 windows. N/C due to age. (#120)
151. Cabin #20/21 (c. 1965) B: Duplex cabin. Gabled with inset corner porches, wide weatherboard siding, and rubble stone foundation. Simple, small 1/1 windows. N/C due to age.
152. Cabin #18/19 (c. 1965) B: Duplex cabin. Single story, gabled building with large stone end chimneys. Inset corner entries. Raised stone foundation and wide overhanging eaves. N/C due to age. (#121)
153. Cabin #16/17 (c. 1965) B: Duplex cabin. Single story, gabled building with large stone end chimneys. Inset corner entries. Raised stone foundation and wide overhanging eaves. N/C due to age. (#122)
154. Cabin #15 (c. 1950) B: Single cabin, designed to be completely compatible with the original cabins. Features a side gable orientation with shed roof porch and shed roof rear addition. Battered stone chimney and raised stone foundation skirt. Rough hewn weatherboard. Central entry with 1/1 windows flanking. While consistent with NPS design, constructed after period of significance. N/C due to age. (#123)
155. Cabin #14 (c. 1950) B: Similar to #15, but with only a stoop over the entry. #15 might have originally looked this way. N/C due to age. (#124)
156. Cabin #13 (c. 1950) B: Similar to #15, but with only a stoop over the entry. #15 might have originally looked this way. N/C due to age.
157. Cabin #12 (c. 1950) B: Similar to #13 and #14, but the stoop is gabled and this cabin has novelty siding. N/C due to age. (#125)
158. **Culvert** (c. 1937) S: Large stone headwalls and down stream drop structure mark this concrete box culvert. (#126)
159. Cabin #11 (c. 1950) B: Back to rough hewn siding and a half-width shed roof porch. Still similar to the previous cabins. N/C due to age. (#127)
160. **Cabin #10** (c. 1940) B: Almost cruciform in plan, this cross gabled cabin has a large exterior stone chimney, and offset entry, and a stone wainscot that tapers up from the ground. The rear ell is the bedroom and once was screened. Like all other cabins, it was provided with more permanent windows when central heat and air was added. It does not diminish the original plan. The siding is rough hewn weatherboard with vertical plank board and batten in the gable. (#128)
161. **Cabin #9** (c. 1940) B: Identical to cabin #10. (#129)

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162. **Cabin #8** (c. 1940) B: The plan is the same as the previous two cabins, but the bathroom ell has a shed roof and the entry is more centered. (#130)
163. **Cabin #7** (c. 1940) B: Cruciform in plan, the entry is into the side of the drop wing. The foundation/wainscot is more regular. Slightly larger than the previous cabins. (#131)
164. **Culvert** (c. 1937) S: Stone headwalls and a simple concrete box culvert on driveway between cabins seven and six. (#133)
165. **Cabin #6** (c. 1970) B: Newer construction – replaced a cabin similar to #7 that burned. Simple gabled form with weatherboard siding. N/C due to age. (#132)
166. **Cabin #5** (c. 1939) B: Cruciform plan, with lower cross gables. Rough hewn weatherboard siding, board and batten in gables. Exposed purlins are large. Stone chimney in corner of ell. Entry offset into wing. Single and paired 1/1 windows. These last five cabins are all similar, with slight variations. These were the first to be designed and constructed and occupy the prime spot on the ridge overlooking the Coon Creek valley. These cabins were designed with the natural rock outcroppings in mind and appear to rise naturally out of the ground. (#136, typical)
167. **Cabin #4** (c. 1939) B: See Cabin #5.
168. **Cabin #3** (c. 1939) B: See Cabin #5.
169. **Sign** (c. 1939) O: Large rock with "DRIVE RIGHT" inset. Located at loop near end of cabin road. (#134)
170. **Cabin #2** (c. 1939) B: See Cabin #5.
171. **Cabin #1** (c. 1939) B: See Cabin #5. (#136)
172. **Signs** (c. 1939) O: Smaller stones with inset letters denoting cabin numbers. There are four extant (cabins #2, 3, 4, and 5) and represent one contributing resource. (#137, #138)
173. **Culvert** (c. 1938) S: Stone headwalls and drop structure upstream. Located on loop at end of cabin road. (#140)
174. **Coon Lake Dam** (c. 1970) S: Large earthen dam constructed by the Soil Conservation Service. This dam was built in place of one of the earlier WPA dams that initially impounded the Coon Creek Lake. N/C due to age. (#141)
175. **Water Tank** (c. 1980) S: Large metal water storage tank, located in conjunction with the water treatment facility. Replaced earlier facility which has since been removed. N/C due to age. (#142)
176. **Water Treatment Facility** (c. 1980) S: New treatment facility for the cabin/campground area. N/C due to age. (#143)
177. **Low Water Dam** (c. 1936) S: Constructed by WPA on Coon Creek, just upstream from current lake. Concrete with notched spillway.

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178. **Dam and Pumphouse** (c. 1936, 1939) S: Constructed initially by WPA, the concrete dam impounded Coon Creek to create the lake. The pumphouse was constructed at that time. The dam was later worked on by the CCC, facing the concrete spillway with stone and creating stone wingwalls down stream, as well as stabilizing the streambed and the canyon area with stone. (#144)
179. **Bridge** (c. 1970) S: Modern concrete beam bridge that carries State Highway 2 over Coon Creek. N/C due to age.
180. **Bridge** (c. 1930) S: Concrete I-Beam and deck bridge, carries old park road over Coon Creek at Deep Ford Campground.
181. **Rock Pile Fountains** (c. 1970) O: Three fountains in the Deep Ford Campground area constituting one noncontributing resource. N/C due to age. (#145)
182. **Picnic Tables** (c. 1980) O: Seven modern tables constituting one resource. N/C due to age.
183. **Restroom** (c. 1980) B: Concrete block restroom facility with gabled roof. N/C due to age. (#146)
184. **Sign** (c. 1938) O: Stone and horizontal timber sign with inset letters reading "DEEP FORD CAMP GROUND." (#147)
185. **Dam** (c. 1936) S: Concrete low water dam across Fourche Maline Creek. Constructed by WPA, the dam is now integral to the park's trail system. (#148)
186. **Sign** (c. 1970) O: South entry sign for park. Constructed of stone and timber, upon first glance it would appear original. However, it was constructed after the State Highway 2 was upgraded and moved. The sign may have been dismantled and moved, but it is not in its original location. N/C due to age. (#149)

The district contains a total of 186 resources, of which 105 are considered contributing. This total includes 35 buildings, 48 structures, 20 objects and 2 sites. Of the noncontributing resources, 46 are buildings, 20 are structures and 15 are objects. This information was field checked in November, 2001.

Robbers Cave State park has grown outside of its original 1930s boundaries. The nominated area represents, for the most part, the area that was most highly developed by the CCC and the WPA in the decade of the 1930s. The Park Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps collaborated to produce a recreational/scenic system, utilizing the natural and existing features of the area. The designs for amenities were at the forefront of contemporary recreational planning. While the park has evolved to meet the modern recreational needs of the state, the historic resources have been left intact. Intrusions are to be expected, but their location or their scope do not greatly inhibit the ability of the park to convey its historic development. In fact, the rerouting of State Highway 2, the largest change in the park's landscape, helped in fact to retain many historic structures. The park retains a high degree of integrity of feeling, setting, and design, the most important of the integrity issues. It also retains a great degree of integrity of association, workmanship, and materials.

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SUMMARY

Robbers Cave State Park was designed and constructed in a collaboration between the Oklahoma Planning and Resources Board (State Parks Division), the National Park Service, and the Civilian Conservation Corps. Other federal programs involved included the Works Progress Administration and the U.S. Forest Service. The park was developed during the decade of the 1930s, taking advantage of existing amenities centered around the natural rock formation named "Robbers Cave," including a boy scout camp and a game refuge.

Originally saddled with the rather unimaginative name "Latimer State Park," Robbers Cave State Park was developed as a part of the State of Oklahoma's new, comprehensive park plan. The state worked closely with various New Deal programs, emphasizing the recreational and conservation aspects of federal relief programs. The resulting landscape illustrates these programs and how they laid a foundation for the state park system in Oklahoma. The designed landscape of the park and the design of the buildings and structures of the park reflect the philosophy of the National Park Service. The emphasis on natural, local materials combined with "rustic" design reflects the NPS philosophy of the first half of the 20th century. It was the collaboration of federal New Deal agencies and state and local governments that disseminated this philosophy from the national parks to the state and local level. The close association of Herbert Maier and his chief architect, Cecil Doty, on the planning and development of Robbers Cave is shown in the distinctive "feel" of the park structures and buildings. Robbers Cave, along with Lake Murray State Park (NR 2001) show the most direct influence of the NPS regional office in the design of individual park amenities.

Robbers Cave State Park was one of nine state parks in Oklahoma that were developed in the 1930s. Along with Lake Murray State Park, Robbers Cave is the best example of the park development philosophy of the NPS and the Oklahoma Planning and Resources Board. For this reason, Robbers Cave State Park Historic District is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C at the national level of significance.

BACKGROUND

Robbers Cave State Park was built by the Oklahoma veterans Civilian Conservation Corps from 1933 until 1941 when the CCC company was transferred to Lake Murray. Other agencies cooperated in a joint venture, including the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the U.S. Forest Service, to build the state's second largest park. The park was located on a pre-existing state game refuge and a Boy Scout camp developed between 1926 and 1932. The resulting landscape and its built environment are evidences of the New Deal's relief and conservation programs of the 1930s that provided the foundation for today's state parks system in Oklahoma, thus meeting the significance for Criterion A. The extensive use of native rock and hand-tooled logs in the bathhouse and other buildings found within the district are prime examples of the return-to-nature philosophy of the National Park Service that ultimately influenced architecture and landscape in all state parks of that era. With a regional office in Oklahoma City, headed by Herbert Maier, the father of the Park Rustic style, the National Park Service had more direct control over the design of Robbers Cave. It is eligible under Criterion C as a designed landscape and for its architectural significance, closely associated with Maier and Cecil Doty.

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In March of 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt sought relief for an economically depressed nation. The New Deal agenda and legislation resulted in the formation of a number of social programs including the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The underlying philosophy of the Civilian Conservation Corps was to rescue the masses of young, healthy, single men, 18 to 25 years of age, from the despair of the unemployment and relief rolls, to discipline them in military style, to provide vocational training, and to rebuild their morale by creating in them a sense of worth. By May of the same year, unemployed World War I veterans were also allowed to enroll in the CCC but under a different system of selection and standards. Selected from the various veteran agencies and organization, the middle-aged veterans did not have to meet the same age requirement as the younger men.¹ At the forefront of allowing veterans into the program was US Representative John D. Nichols, of Oklahoma's 2nd District.

The standards set forth in Roosevelt's master plan to help the men was to be accomplished in two ways: first, they were to be actively involved in conservation efforts to recover and improve land usage by planting trees, sodding grass, building bridges, fighting forest fires, conducting biological surveys and building parks -- benefiting not only themselves but the greater society. Secondly, they were to be responsible to their families by sending \$25 of the \$30 they earned per month back home, which eventually helped the states' relief programs.²

The construction of Robbers Cave State Park at the Tom Hale Boy Scout camp and the state game refuge was not by accident. Permanent, organized youth camping facilities of the Y.M.C.A.-Y.W.C.A. and Boy Scouts, as examples, were favored locations for the state parks built by the New Deal agencies. this was an extension of the philosophy that the "rugged environment" builds character in children. The Oklahoma Planning commission, organized in 1933 to bring federal help at the state and local level, implemented a policy that if there were no enough available organized camps to meet the needs of the number of children within 100-mile radius, temporary camps were to be built until permanent sites at or near state parks could be developed in cooperation with local civic leaders. The Tom Hale Scout Camp at Robbers Cave, located adjacent to a state game refuge, was a permanent scouting site so it and the state game refuge were ideally suited for a state park. The plan further stipulated that the state parks were to maintain the organized camps year around.³

In 1926 the Choctaw Boy Scout Council, representing five counties in southeastern Oklahoma, began constructing a summer scout camp at Robbers Cave, the reported hideout of Civil War deserters and notorious outlaws including Belle Starr. Although the area was only accessible by hiking, it was already a popular campsite, especially at Deep Fork swimming hole on the Fourche Maline Creek. By March of 1930, Highway 2 was completed and by late summer

1 Congressional Record, 73rd. Cong., 1st Sess. Vol. 77, pt. 1, pp. 630, 651, 701, 983.

2 Reid A. Holland, "Life in Oklahoma's Civilian Conservation Corps," Chronicles of Oklahoma 48 (Summer 1970) 224-234.

3 Oklahoma Planning and Resource Board, "Parks and Recreation in Oklahoma: Progress Report, 1939" (Oklahoma City: 1939) 179-183 (see plate I); "Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior, 1939" (Washington D.C.: Department of the Interior, 1939) 297.

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of the same year a kitchen and swimming platform were added to the camp.⁴ Seven permanent cabins, built by prisoners from the McAlester State Prison, were finished with the material paid by the local Boy Scout chapters at the nearby towns of Quinton, Hartshorne and Haileyville.⁵ An additional \$300 was raised to build a mess hall which completed the facilities at the camp.⁶ One of the principal promoters of the organization of the scouts was Tom Hale, a local businessman of McAlester for whom the camp was named in 1932.⁷ Another civic leader involved with the development of the Boy Scout camp was Carlton Weaver, the editor and publisher of the Latimer County News-Democrat, state representative, and local rancher. He, along with Hale and other businessmen, donated the original 175 acres for the camp near Robbers Cave. He promoted not only the establishment of the Boy Scout camp but also a state game refuge in the immediate area of the camp. In 1926, he leased to the State Game Commission thirty-two hundred acres, in sections 8, 16, 17, 20, 21, and small tracts in sections 7 and 15 in township 6 North, Range 19 East, to be used as a state game refuge which was often referred locally as the Carlton Weaver State Game Refuge.⁸ Eventually, he donated or sold more than 8,000 acres to the state of which 2,270 acres were set aside for Robbers Cave State Park.

By late 1932, Governor William Murray authorized Carlton Weaver, who was also the superintendent of the Federal Emergency Relief projects for Latimer County, to begin constructing a dam across the Fourche Maline Creek on the State Game Refuge. A total of \$4,620 was spent on clearing the lake and road improvement. The Federal Relief Project for Latimer County was suspended in 1933 before the dam was completed.⁹

The early recruits of the U.S. Forest Service created fire trails and cleared underbrush on the refuge, made improvements to the Boy Scout camp, and continued to excavate the Fourche Maline for the dam.¹⁰

By June of 1934, the Oklahoma Regional Office of the Veteran's Administration selected 217 men to fill the state's veterans' quota for CCC recruits. Company #1825 was located at the State Game Reserve north of Wilburton, although many of the veterans were already stationed at the forestry camp prior to this time. Permanent facilities for Company 1825 were constructed, including a 2,500 gallon water tank, a 20' x 100' mess hall-kitchen, a 20' x 80' supply

⁴ Latimer County News-Democrat, March 28, 1930; June 13, 1930.

⁵ Ibid., September 11, 1931.

⁶ Ibid., February 5, 1932.

⁷ Ibid., June 4, 1926; May 6, 1932.

⁸ Ibid., May 7, 1926.

⁹ Ibid., April 28, 1932; November 11, 1933; November 26, 1933.

¹⁰ Ibid., June 22, 1933.

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house, a bathhouse, laundry house, blacksmith shop, garage, and latrine, sidewalks and driveways.¹¹

Since many of the 217 men were older World War I veterans from the Wilburton area, an American Legion Post was organized in the camp.¹² Within three months, the progress at the camp was threatened by a planned removal from the area; by November of 1934 the Company was shipped to Tulsa to help with the improvements at Mohawk Municipal park at Tulsa.¹³ In August of 1935, they returned to the camp on the State Game Preserve. The reason stated was because so many of the men had large families in the area, representing approximately 1,000 children. They were commissioned to build Latimer State Park on the state Game Refuge. At that time, the state Fish and Game Commission purchased from Carlton Weaver 160 acres where the original CCC camp was located, preserving the original CCC camp site.¹⁴

In August 7, 1936, the park's name was changed from Latimer State Park to Robbers Cave Park.¹⁵ It was proposed as early as 1934 to name the lake after Carlton Weaver but it was not until 1938 that it was officially named by the Oklahoma Planning and Resource Board.¹⁶

Various government agencies frequently cooperated on special projects; such was the case at Robbers Cave State Park. The construction of the original dam across the Fourche Maline began in 1932 as a state relief project. The CCC continued with the dam's construction; however the dam posed continuous structural problems and in 1937, the Works Progress Administration tackled the project, spending an additional \$4,834 on expansion and improvements. The concrete dam was extended into the mountainside to the south and against the highway on the north. A wide sandstone apron below the dam was added later.¹⁷ In the same year, the WPA built a low water dam across Coon Creek, impounding fifty-eight acres of water.¹⁸ In September of 1938, President Roosevelt allocated \$37,500 for the construction of another dam north of Lake Carlton, the present day Wayne Wallace Reservoir, a new trail, and the

11 Ibid., June 16, 1933; July 21, 1933; August 25, 1933.

12 Ibid., October 27, 1933.

13 Ibid., November 2, 1934; July 5, 1935.

14 Ibid., August 2, 1935.

15 Ibid., August 7, 1936; Progress Report on CCC Projects in state and Local Parks in Oklahoma, National Records and Archive Service, Record Group No. 79, Washington D.C. "Bi-Monthly Photographic Report."

16 Ibid., December 7, 1934; January 21, 1938.

17 Ibid., November 6, 1936; March 19, 1937.

18 Ibid., February 28, 1936.

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completion of a dam at the Deep Ford campground below Lake Carlton.¹⁹ Eventually, the WPA constructed three additional low water dams across the Fourche Maline Creek and two on Coon Creek.²⁰

The CCC began in 1933 and ended by the summer of 1943 when the focus of the nation and its young men was diverted by the United States' involvement in the World War II.²¹ Statewide, the CCC enrollment peaked between 1935 and 1936, employing an average of 12,000 men a month. As the state's economy stabilized, the young men found more permanent jobs. One of the main boosts to the national as well as the state economy was the raging war in Europe. In Oklahoma, the CCC discharged 48,000 men to accept employment in the military and defense plants. Major I. L. Thomson, head of Camp 1825 at Robbers Cave State Park, was one of those men. He was replaced by Lt. William Bartel, U. S. Navy reserve. By July, 1941, the construction of Robbers Cave State Park came to a halt when the rest of the camp was transferred to Lake Murray facilities.²² The downsizing of CCC camps continued throughout the year and by July, 1942, congress ordered that the liquidation of the Civilian Conservation Corps be completed by July of the following year.²³

ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Nationwide, the massive labor force of the CCC, under the oversight of the National Park Service, utilized the architectural style and landscape design developed in the national parks since 1916 now known as Park Service Rustic. This style emphasized informality and naturalism and can be associated with the Arts and Crafts Movement. The architecture and landscape features at Robbers Cave State Park are examples of the impact of CCC built parks. It was developed under the direction of a newly formed Oklahoma State Planning and Resource Board-Parks Division under the oversight of the National Park Service. Architect Paul Rice and landscape architect Robert Stone of the National Park service directed its construction by the veterans of CCC 1825. The bathhouse at Robbers Cave State Park is a classic expression of the NPS Rustic architectural design. The massive structure, with oversized native rock, exposed hand-tooled log supports, rough hewn weatherboard siding, horizontally laid logs, and battered boulder foundation,

¹⁹ Ibid., September 22, 1938.

²⁰ Accomplishments of the Works Progress Administration for Oklahoma--July 1, 1935-March 1, 1937 (Washington D.C., 1937) 70.

²¹ "Civilian Conservation Corps Program of the United States Department of the Interior, March 1933 to June 30, 1943" (Washington D.C., 1944) 3.

²² Latimer County News-Democrat, April 3, 1941; July 3, 1941.

²³ "Final Report to Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior," Civilian Conservation Corps Program of the United States Department of Interior, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office) January, 1944.

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appears to be emerging from the lakeside. The irregular floor plan and sandstone masonry wall counters all speculation of a highly stylized architectural plan that was actually a standard of the National Park Service.²⁴ This was further enhanced by the architectural landscape. The bathhouse sits below a rock-lined curvilinear drive and is terraced with wide slabs of sandstone along the sloping terrain. Lake Carlton Dam, built by several agencies including the CCC and Works Progress Administration (WPA), pools the waters of the Fourche Maline creating Lake Carlton. Water cascades over the gentle arched dam to an apron of terraced sandstone slabs. Although it was rebuilt by the WPA in the late 1930s, the buttress design on the west side is evidence of the CCC's earlier construction.

The rationale used to develop the park's landscape suggested that if people had to drive a reasonable distance to the park, the recreational features should be made accessible from their automobiles. The landscape of the park unfolded as visitors skirted along the well-planned park road. Numerous signs on rock boulders and logs, still evident today, directed them to areas of recreational activity and scenic vistas. The park road curves along the contours to the highest point on the spine of the steep mountainside where cabins were strategically hidden at the end of a tree-lined and boulder-strewn cul-de-sac. The oversized fireplaces of the cabin appear to have been piled up from the rocky landscape. Behind the cabins, the terrain abruptly spirals downward to the scenic bend of the fast flowing Fourche Maline Creek and Coon Creek. The architectural landscape design of the Old Campground Circle capitalizes on a brief break in the steep slope of the forested mountainside. The oversized rock slabs of the bathhouse/latrine sinks into the center of the camp circle and the campsites hover along the edge of the circle drive. Below the campground on a gentle slope, the landscape terracing and retaining wall between the Park manager's residence and garage (now the office) reflects the detail of the planned landscape built in the park during the 1930s.

The natural bend of the Fourche Maline Creek is used as a backdrop for a picnic area and a rock shelter. Set below the adjacent park road and a low water bridge, the pavilion (designed first as a pumphouse), a picnic table, and rockpit fireplaces hover near the water's edge of the bend. To diminish its imposition upon the landscape, the slope of the roof extends over the large boulder walls. The low pitched roof of the side addition, parallel to the river, does not obstruct the view of the bend from the park road.

The architecture at the Tom Hale Boy Scout Camp pre-dates the NPS Rustic implemented by the CCC in the park. The self-styled buildings underscore originality using natural settings and native materials. The low sloped roofs and deep eaves are not inconsistent with the design philosophy espoused by the Park Service. The buildings are constructed with a more regular design motif than those in the balance of the park; they would fit in nicely with buildings and structures found in state parks located in eastern or northern states, but neither do they detract from the intended design of Robbers Cave. Located at the end of the park road near the entrance of Robbers Cave, the CCC further developed the landscape along the creek with low water dams to create pools of water, a footbridge (no longer existing), and an unobtrusive vehicle bridge to the camp and Robbers Cave.

Along with the spectacular scenery, the exploration of the caves encourage further recreation activities. The CCC carved a stone stairway to the caves and developed trails with native stone along the landscape. The integrity of

²⁴ James Wright Steely, "Rustic Style in Depression Texas: Federal Architecture in the State Parks, 1933-1941" (Austin, Texas: University of Texas, 1985) 12.

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Robbers Cave State Park is further enhanced by the many smaller resources including culverts, drop structures, and rock boulder signs.

The period of significance begins in 1926 with the start of the construction of the Tom Hale Boy Scout Camp and continues through to 1941 when the CCC left the park. Although there are some intrusions, including camping sites and newer cabins, they fail to dampen the integrity of the architectural and landscape design of the park. The bathhouse, the Old Campground circle bathhouse/latrine, the nine cabins, the Lake Carlton Dam, the Tom Hale Boy Scout Camp, the park manager's residence/office, and the Fourche Maline Picnic area and shelter have been relatively unscathed by changes over the past 60 years. The integrity of the architecture and architectural landscape at Robbers Cave State Park is significant as a historic district. Therefore, Robbers Cave State Park is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C as a designed landscape and for its exemplification of NPS/New deal-era ideals, its high level of integrity, including the survival of the CCC camp.

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UTM, continued

	Zone	Easting	Northing
5.	<u>15</u>	<u>285560</u>	<u>3872160</u>
6.	<u>15</u>	<u>285520</u>	<u>3870940</u>
7.	<u>15</u>	<u>284730</u>	<u>3870970</u>
8.	<u>15</u>	<u>284740</u>	<u>3871340</u>
9.	<u>15</u>	<u>283900</u>	<u>3871360</u>
10.	<u>15</u>	<u>284040</u>	<u>3877050</u>

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Begin at NE corner, NW $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 8, T6N, R19E, go south 2 miles to SE corner, SW $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 17, T6N, R19E; thence west to corner, Sections 17,18,19,20, thence south to corner Sections 19,20,30, 29; thence west to corner Sections 19 and 30, T6N, R19E and Sections 24 and 25, T6N, R18E; thence south along section line $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, thence west $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, then north to center point Section 25, T6N, R18E; then west to section line, then north $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles to corner Sections 1,2,11,12, T6N, R18E, then east to point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the lands historically associated with the Tom Hale Boy Scout Camp, plus lands acquired for Latimer (later Robbers Cave) State Park and the state game refuge. The boundaries chosen reflect the area most impacted by the work of the NPS and CCC in the park, as well as areas of natural viewshed.

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 96000489

Date Listed: 8/23/2002

Robbers Cave State Park
Property Name

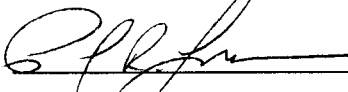
Latimer
County

OK
State

N/A

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



10/3/02

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

Level of Significance:

The appropriate level of significance for the park property is: *Statewide*

Acreage:

The correct acreage is: 4480

[The statements made in Section 7, page 9, refer only to the original 2700 acres sold to the state during the initial creation of the park. The nominated acreage – 4480 acres – includes this original park acreage, the expanded historic park grounds, and the areas and viewsheds affected by the New Deal era work.]

These revisions were confirmed with the OK SHPO office staff.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file

Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)



Robbers Cave State Park





Robbers Cave State Park





Robbers Cave State Park

