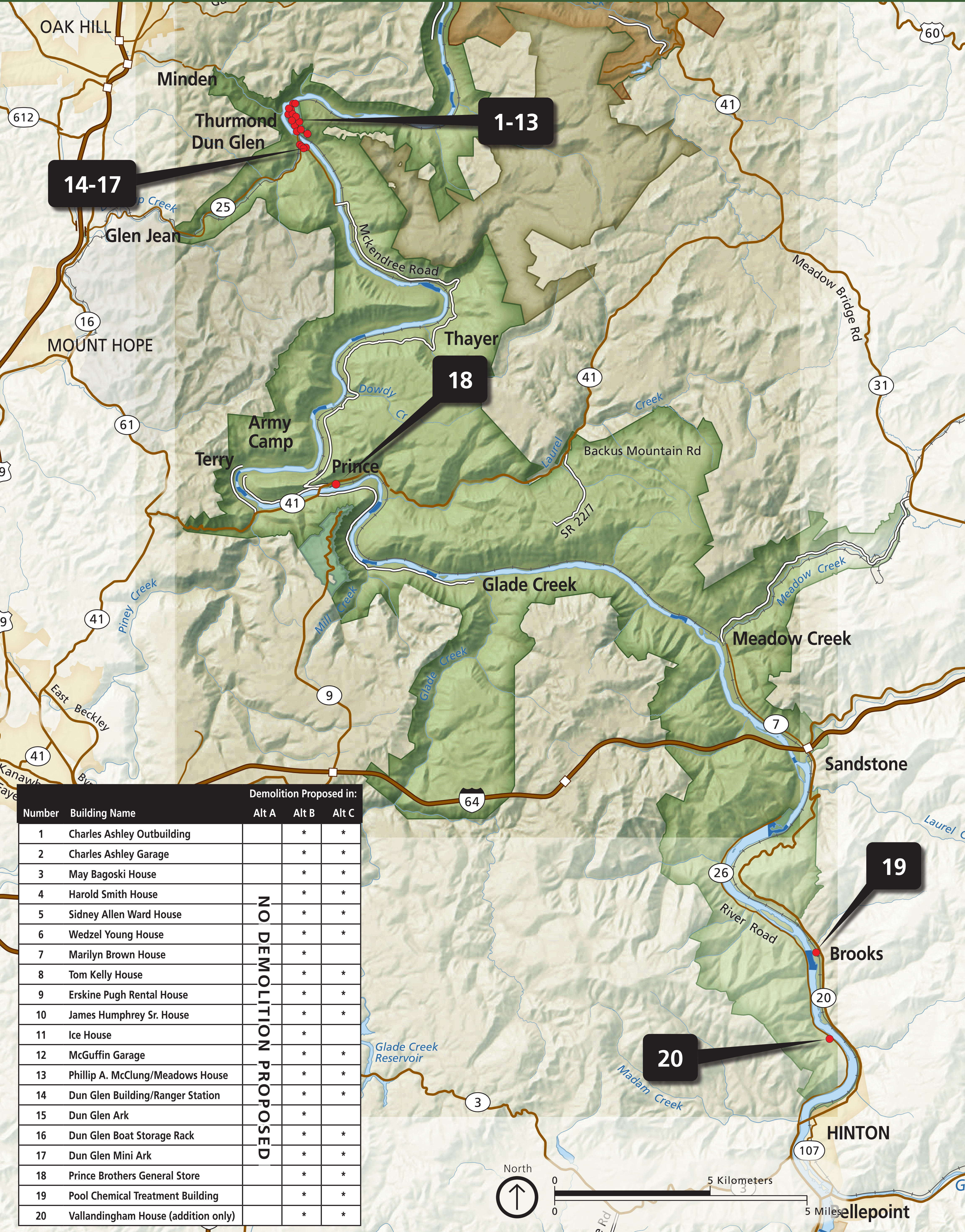




Proposed Demolition of Historic Structures | Environmental Assessment





Proposed Demolition of Historic Structures | Environmental Assessment

Thurmond



① Charles Ashley Outbuilding



② Charles Ashley Garage



③ May Bagoski House (exterior)



③ May Bagoski House (interior)



④ Harold Smith House (exterior)



④ Harold Smith House (interior)



⑤ Sidney Allen Ward House (exterior)



⑤ Sidney Allen Ward House (interior)



⑥ Wedzel Young House (exterior)



⑥ Wedzel Young House (interior)



⑦ Marilyn Brown House (exterior)



⑦ Marilyn Brown House (interior)



⑧ Tom Kelly House (exterior)



⑧ Tom Kelly House (exterior)



⑨ Erskine Pugh Rental House (exterior)



⑨ Erskine Pugh Rental House (interior)



⑩ James Humphrey Sr. House (exterior)



⑩ James Humphrey Sr. House (interior)



⑪ Thurmond Ice House



⑫ McGuffin Garage (exterior)



⑫ McGuffin Garage (interior)



⑬ McClung/Meadows House (exterior)



⑬ McClung/Meadows House (interior)



Structure proposed
to be retained
under Alt C



Proposed Demolition of Historic Structures | Environmental Assessment

Dun Glen



14 Dun Glen Building (exterior)



14 Dun Glen Building (exterior)



14 Dun Glen Building (interior)



15 Dun Glen Ark



15 Dun Glen Boat Storage Rack



17 Dun Glen Mini Ark

 Structure proposed to be retained under Alt C

Other Buildings



18 Prince Brothers General Store (exterior)



18 Prince Brothers General Store (exterior)



18 Prince Brothers General Store (interior)



19 Camp Brookside Pool
Chemical Treatment Building



20 Vallandigham House Addition



Proposed Demolition of Historic Structures | Environmental Assessment

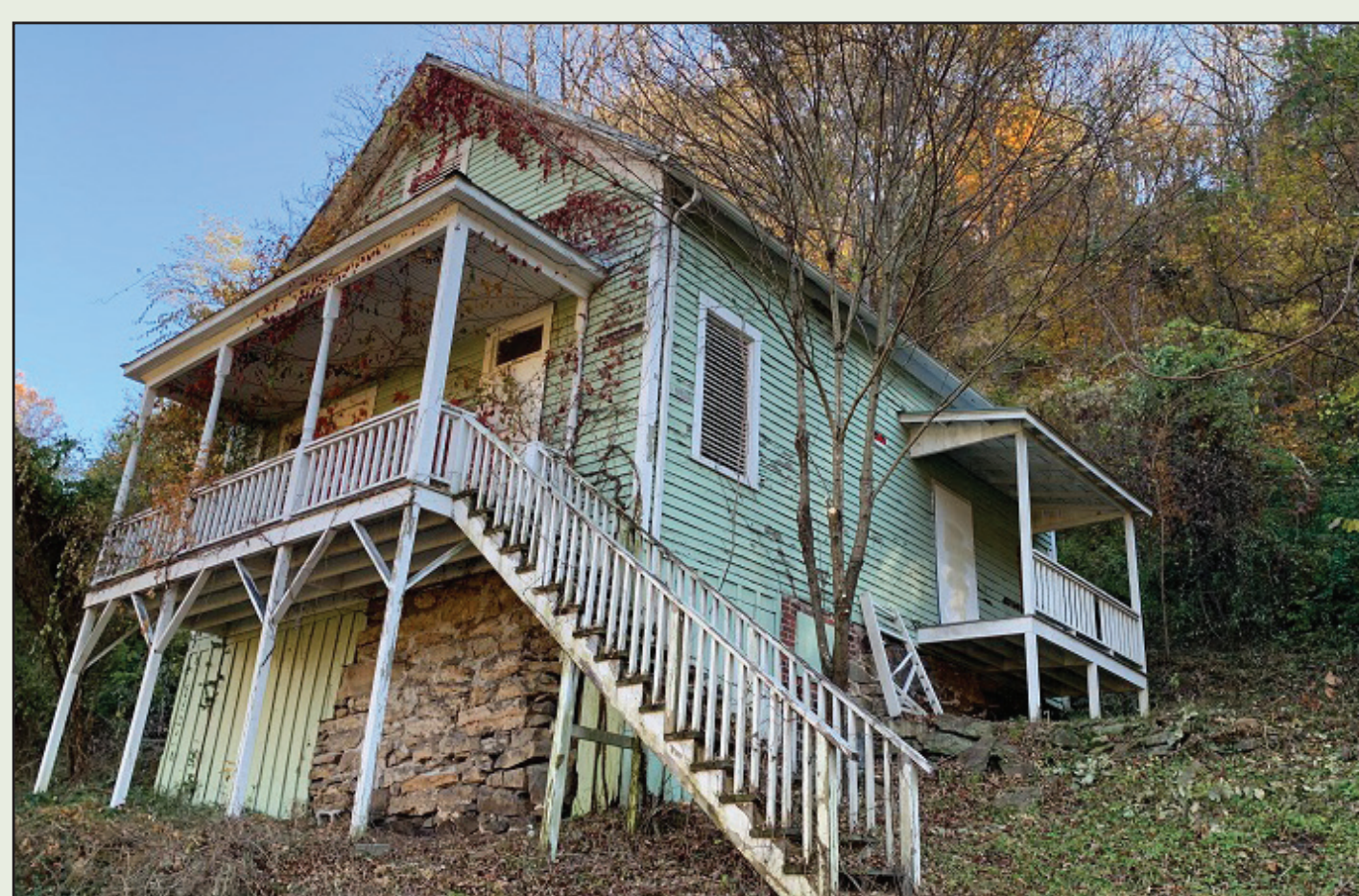
Key Issues

During the planning process, the NPS solicited feedback from the general public, stakeholders, and subject matter experts to understand the potential issues that would result from implementation of any of the alternatives. The following issues were identified during this process, which are addressed in the Environmental Assessment.

- » These structures are either listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and contribute to the history of the local area, the State of West Virginia, and the broader Appalachian region.
- » Demolition of structures within the Thurmond Historic District may affect its eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
- » Residents and community members have generational and personal ties to many of the structures proposed for demolition, particularly in Thurmond and Dun Glen.
- » Loss of structures, particularly in Thurmond, may impact the park's tourism value because even though they are in a deteriorated state, visitors may still value these structures as physical representations of area history.
- » Visitors' unauthorized entry to or clambering on or in these deteriorated structures pose safety risks to both visitors and the park staff who interact with them.
- » Maintaining these structures unnecessarily adds to the park's ongoing operational costs and drains resources from the maintenance of priority structures.



Erskine Pugh Rental House



Sidney Ward House



Camp Brookside Pool Chemical Treatment Plant



Proposed Demolition of Historic Structures | Environmental Assessment

Alternatives

In the Environmental Assessment, the NPS evaluated the impacts of three alternatives considered for this project, which are summarized below.

Alternative A: No Action

Under this alternative, the NPS would take no action on the structures, and they would remain in place and unoccupied. Some deteriorating structures may need fencing or other security measures to keep people away, both for their own safety and to protect the structures from vandalism.

Alternative B: Demolish All Proposed Excess Historic Structures
(Proposed Action)

Under this alternative, the NPS would demolish 19 historic structures and one non-historic addition to a historic structure. This encompasses all proposed excess historic structures throughout the park. When possible, foundations of the structures would be left in place or cut to ground level to minimize ground disturbance. After demolition, the sites would be restored as needed to reflect the natural conditions of the landscape.

Alternative C: Retain Proposed Excess Historic Structures with
High Potential for Reuse

Alternative C would be the same as Alternative B, but only 16 of the 19 proposed excess historic structures (and one non-historic addition to a historic structure) would be demolished. Three historic structures proposed for demolition under Alternative B that are stable and have a potential for reuse and interpretation would be retained. These three structures are: the Ice House and the Marilyn Brown House in Thurmond as well as the Ark in Dun Glen.



Thurmond Ice House



Marilyn Brown House



Dun Glen Ark



Proposed Demolition of Historic Structures | Environmental Assessment

Project Overview

The National Park Service owns numerous buildings and structures within the established boundaries of New River Gorge National Park and Preserve (the park). Many of these structures came into the possession of the National Park Service through land acquisition and are now abandoned, dilapidated, and overgrown.

The National Park Service proposes to demolish 19 excess historic structures and one non-historic addition to a historic structure. Many of these excess structures pose safety hazards for visitors and park staff and are vulnerable to vandalism. After the structures are demolished, the sites would be restored to a condition consistent with their natural surroundings. This proposal is part of a larger project within the park to rehabilitate historic structures, invest in park infrastructure, address deferred maintenance needs, and reduce unnecessary operational costs and maintenance burdens.

Project Justification

The purpose and need for this project has two parts:

1. reduce the risk to the health and safety of park employees and the public by demolishing deteriorated and unsafe historic structures within the park boundary and
2. reduce the maintenance burden on park resources by demolishing proposed excess historic structures that are not required to meet the park's needs or to fulfill its mission.

In deciding whether to demolish these structures, the National Park Service considered operational efficiency and costs of removing the structures compared with rehabilitating and maintaining them over a long period of time, among other factors.



Dun Glen Building



Erskine Pugh Rental House



Prince Brothers General Store (interior)



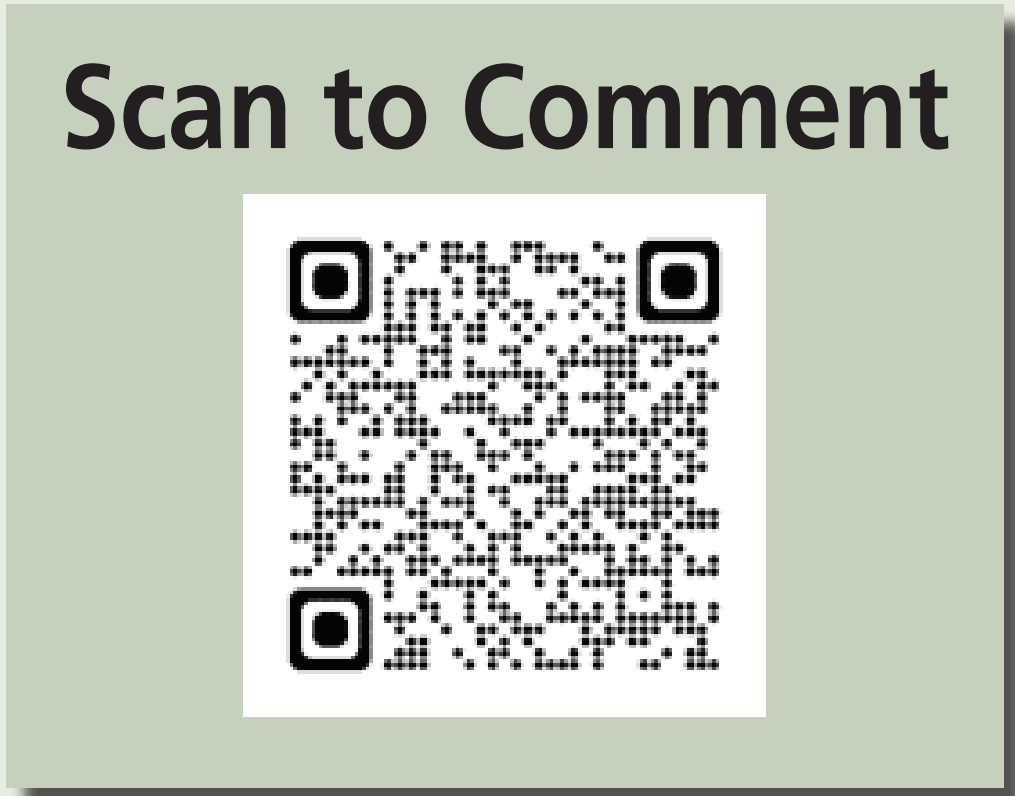
Proposed Demolition of Historic Structures | Environmental Assessment

How to Comment

The National Park Service invites your input on this Environmental Assessment (EA) and Programmatic Agreement. Formal comments will be accepted three ways:

- 1. Submit comments electronically at:
<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/GAOAExcessStructureDemo>
- 2. Submit a hand-written comment card at this meeting
- 3. Mail or hand deliver written comments to park headquarters:

Superintendent
RE: Proposed Demolition of Historic Structures
New River Gorge Park & Preserve
P.O. Box 246, 104 Main Street
Glen Jean, WV 25846



The NPS will respond to all substantive comments received during the review period. Substantive comments are those that:

- 1. Question, with reasonable basis, the accuracy of information in the EA;
- 2. Question, with reasonable basis, the adequacy of the environmental analysis;
- 3. Present reasonable alternatives other than those presented in the EA; or
- 4. Cause changes or revisions in the proposal.

Comments will be accepted through November 8, 2024

Project Schedule

Milestone	Targeted Schedule	Opportunity for Public Input
Civic Engagement	Winter 2023/2024	Engage the public on issues and potential impacts. Public comment period.
Intiate Environmental Compliance Process	Spring/Summer 2024	NPS staff review public comments and prepare compliance document
Public Review of Compliance Document	Fall 2024	Compliance document released for public review. Public comment period. << WE ARE HERE
Decision Document	Winter 2024/2025	NPS selects the alternative to be implemented and prepares decision document.



Proposed Demolition of Historic Structures | Proposed Mitigation Measures

Proposed Mitigation Measures to Address the Adverse Effect

To address the adverse effects that would occur as a result of this project, the National Park Service (NPS) developed several proposed mitigation measures as part of the consultation process under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR part 800). This consultation process is ongoing and the NPS seeks public input on the following proposed mitigation measures.

Measures Common to All Structures Proposed for Demolition

- » Ensure all structures are thoroughly documented prior to demolition through means such as measured drawings, photographs, and 3D scans.
- » Retain existing foundations and piers when possible, which offers opportunities for future interpretation.
- » Minimize ground disturbance during demolition and restore the sites to natural conditions by seeding and/or planting vegetation.
- » Develop an updated interpretation strategy for affected historic structures and districts including traditional methods such as wayside exhibits and tours, as well as novel approaches such as augmented reality.



The Goodman-Kincaid Building In Thurmond's Commercial Row would be stabilized and preserved.

Thurmond Historic District

- » Stabilize and preserve the Thurmond Commercial Row buildings.
- » Stabilize and preserve the Fatty Lipcomb, McClung, and McGuffin Houses.
- » Replace the failing river retaining wall in front of the Thurmond train depot to improve site stability and visitor access and safety.
- » Replace the existing wastewater and water treatment system with a more effective and higher capacity system to meet safety standards and demands from increased visitation.
- » Revise the National Register of Historic Places documentation for the Thurmond Historic District to reflect current conditions and evaluate the Southside Junction African American Baptist Church and cemetery for inclusion in the district.
- » Develop a cultural landscape report for the Thurmond Historic District.



Foundation remains of the original location of the Thurmond Ice House. A similar approach may be taken for the structures in this project.

Dun Glen

- » Repair and rehabilitate several facilities built by Wildwater Expeditions Unlimited, Inc. the two picnic shelters, public restrooms, launch site, and day use area.
- » Complete a historic resources study to address the early whitewater rafting industry theme including construction and use of the Dun Glen Dormitory, Ark, Mini Ark, and Boat Storage Rack by Wildwater Expeditions Unlimited, Inc.



Picnic shelters at Dun Glen constructed and used by Wildwater Expeditions, Inc.

Prince Brothers General Store

- » Add associated archives and objects into the NPS museum collections, including accessioning, cataloging, and curating the items.
- » Develop a means to include the Prince Brothers General Store in park interpretive measures.



The Prince Brothers General Store interior, including some historic objects and materials.



Great American Outdoors Act | Projects Proposed for the Future

Stabilization of Key Historic Structures in Thurmond Historic District

The National Park Service is currently in the planning and design process for a related project to stabilize key historic structures within the Thurmond Historic District. This project includes remediating site and building drainage issues and stabilizing the following historic structures:

- » Commercial Row
 - National Bank of Thurmond
 - Goodman-Kincaid Building
 - Mankin-Cox Building
- » Historic Houses
 - Fatty Lipcomb House
 - McClung House
 - McGuffin House

Commercial Row



National Bank of Thurmond



Goodman-Kincaid Building



Mankin-Cox Building

Historic Houses



Fatty Lipcomb House



McClung House



McGuffin House



Great American Outdoors Act | Projects Proposed for the Future

The National Park Service is currently in the planning and design process for related projects to invest in infrastructure throughout the park.

Proposed Dun Glen Upgrades



Improvements to Dun Glen Day Use Area, River Access and Facilities

Proposed Restroom Upgrades



Grandview Playground Area



Fayette Station



Cunard

Proposed Wastewater Treatment and Water System Upgrades



Sandstone Visitor Center



Thurmond



Canyon Rim Visitor Center



Grandview (multiple locations)



Burnwood



Dun Glen