



# BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

## VIRGINIA AND NORTH CAROLINA

SUMMARY OF THE FINAL GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN









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# CONTENTS

	<b>Overview</b>	3		<b>Mitigation Measures</b>	91
	Brief Description of the Parkway	4		Natural Resources	91
	Purpose of and Need for the General Management Plan	5		Water Resources	93
	Foundation for Planning and Management	8		Wetlands	93
	Park Purpose	8		Soils	93
	Park Significance	8		Air Quality	94
	Fundamental Resources and Values	9		Cultural Resources	94
	Primary Interpretive Themes	10		Visitor Safety and Experience	96
	Special Mandates and Administrative Commitments	12		Hazardous Materials	96
	Potential Boundary Adjustments	14		Noise Abatement	96
	Planning Issues and Concerns	15		Scenic Resources	96
				Socioeconomic Environment	97
				Sustainable Design and Aesthetics	97
	<b>Parkway-Wide Management Strategies</b>	23		<b>User Capacity</b>	99
	Scenery Conservation	23			
	Land Protection	23			
	Natural Resources	23		<b>Climate Change Management Strategies</b>	106
	Soundscapes	24		Strategy	106
	Cultural Resources	25		Science	106
	Interpretation and Visitor Services	26		Mitigation	106
	Concessions	26		Adaptation	107
	Access and Circulation	26		Communication	107
	Campgrounds	27			
	Trails	27		<b>Future Plans and Studies</b>	109
	Partnerships	28		Scenery Conservation	109
	Management Zones	29		Land Protection	109
				Natural Resources	109
	<b>Management Strategies for Parkway Segments</b>	45		Climate Change	110
	Segment 1 — Ridge, Mileposts 0-106	47		Cultural Resources	110
	Segment 2 — Roanoke, Mileposts 106-136	48		Visitor Use and Interpretation	111
	Segment 3 — Plateau, Mileposts 136-217	49		Concessions	111
	Segment 4 — Highlands, Mileposts 217-305	50		Access and Circulation	111
	Segment 5 — Black Mountain, Mileposts 305-377	51			
	Segment 6 — Asheville, Mileposts 377-394	52		<b>Appendix A</b>	<b>Enabling Legislation</b>
	Segment 7 — Pisgah, Mileposts 394-469	53		<b>Appendix B</b>	<b>Preparers and Contributors</b>
					115
					119
	<b>Management Strategies for Recreation Areas</b>	57		<b>List of Tables</b>	
	Humpback Rocks, Mileposts 6-10	58		Table 1. Parkway-wide Management Zones—Acreage Calculations	31
	James River / Otter Creek, Mileposts 60-65	60		Table 2. Blue Ridge Parkway Management Zones	32
	Peaks of Otter, Mileposts 82-91	62		Table 3. User Capacity Management Framework by Management Zones	102
	Roanoke Mountain, Mileposts 118-122	64			
	Smart View, Milepost 155	66			
	Rocky Knob, Mileposts 166-174	68			
	Mabry Mill, Milepost 176	70			
	Blue Ridge Music Center, Milepost 213	72			
	Cumberland Knob, Mileposts 217-219	74			
	Doughton Park, Mileposts 236-247	76			
	Julian Price Memorial Park, Mileposts 295-300	78			
	Linville Falls, Mileposts 315-319	80			
	Crabtree Falls, Mileposts 339-340	82			
	Craggy Gardens, Mileposts 364-369	84			
	Mount Pisgah, Mileposts 407-409	86			





# OVERVIEW



PUCKETT CABIN MILEPOST 189.8



JULIAN PRICE LAKE MILEPOST 296.7





DOUGHTON PARK PICNIC GRILL CONSTRUCTION CIRCA 1937



PARK PICNIC GRILL 2012



OTTER CREEK DAM 1960



OTTER CREEK DAM 2013



## OVERVIEW

This summary document has been prepared for the *Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement* for the Blue Ridge Parkway. The purpose of the summary is to provide a concise reference guide to the key components and management decisions of the plan.

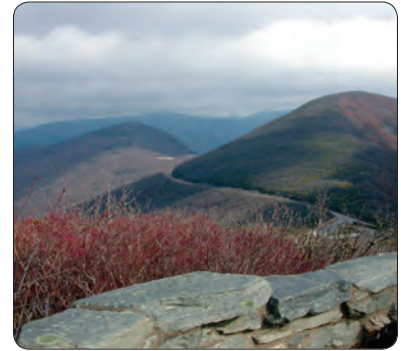
The Record of Decision for the plan was signed by the Southeast Regional director of the National Park Service on April 14, 2013. This approval paves the way for the Blue Ridge Parkway to implement the preferred alternative management strategies described in the plan. These management decisions are tied to the concept of actively managing the parkway as a traditional, self-contained, scenic recreational driving experience and designed landscape. To support that experience, many of the parkway's recreation areas will provide enhanced opportunities for dispersed outdoor recreation activities.

These management decisions proactively blend newer law and policy requirements and operational constraints with the traditional parkway concept developed from 1935 to 1955. As a result, the National Park Service will provide a better balance between traditional parkway experiences and modern-day management realities. For example, some areas will be managed differently to address natural and cultural resource concerns and visitor experiences or to achieve critical operational efficiencies.

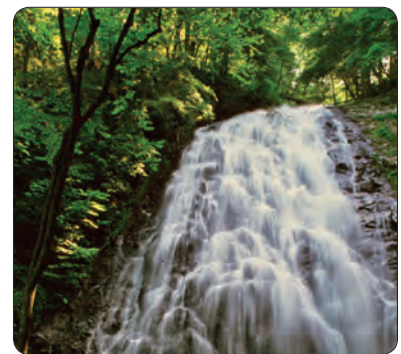
The general management plan also provides a comprehensive parkway-wide approach to resource and visitor use management. Specific management zones detailing acceptable resource conditions, visitor experience and use levels, and appropriate activities and development will be applied to parkway lands (parkway segments and recreation areas). The selected action seeks to enhance resource protection and regional natural resource connectivity and build stronger connections with adjacent communities.

The completion and approval of the general management plan is the culmination of a great deal of time, energy, and input from members of the public, other agencies, and the National Park Service. The National Park Service values the public's interest in the Blue Ridge Parkway and we look forward to implementing this plan with your support and collaboration.

This summary of the final general management plan provides comprehensive guidance for perpetuating natural systems, preserving cultural resources, and providing opportunities for high-quality visitor experiences along the parkway for the next 20+ years. More than 75 years after the parkway was established, this is the parkway's first comprehensive management plan. Sharing a vision for the parkway's future—and the management strategies to create that future—is the primary goal of this document.



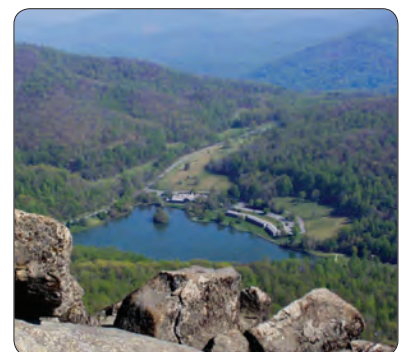
Craggy Pinnacle Milepost 364.4



Crabtree Falls Milepost 339.4



Humpback Rocks Milepost 6.0



Sharp Top Milepost 86.0





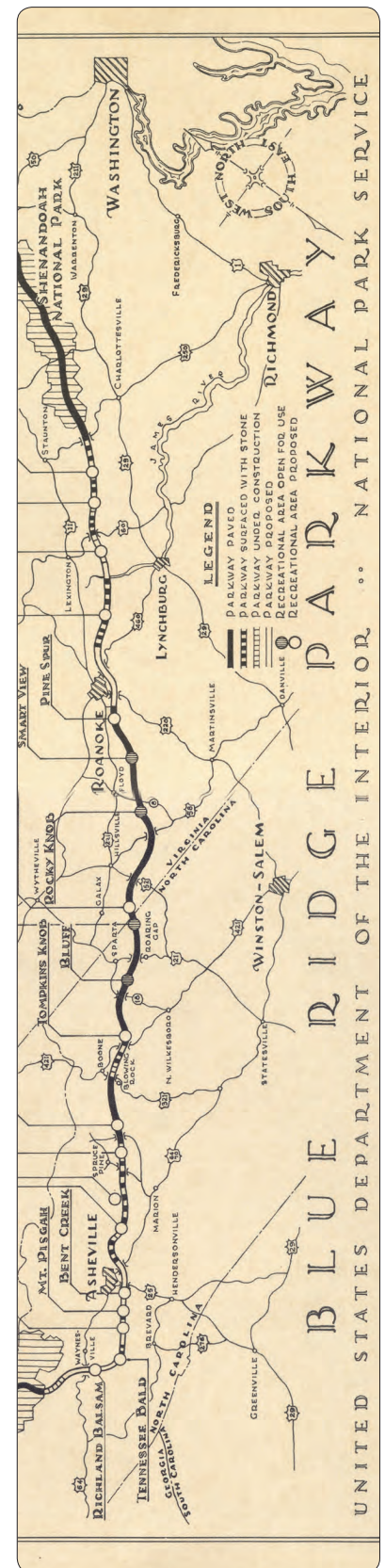
## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PARKWAY

Congress allocated funds for the initial construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway to traverse a substantial portion of Virginia and North Carolina on June 16, 1933, under authority of the National Industrial Recovery Act (48 Stat. 195, Public Law 73-67). Congress then authorized the National Park Service to administer and manage the parkway on June 30, 1936 (49 Stat. 2041, Public Law 74-848) as amended on June 8, 1940 (54 Stat. 249, Public Law 76-566).

The parkway is in Virginia and North Carolina in the central and southern Appalachian Mountains. It is 469 miles long and connects Shenandoah National Park to the north with Great Smoky Mountains National Park to the south. Created as a national rural roadway with limited access, the parkway was designed for pleasant motoring, a form of recreational driving free from commercial traffic. The Blue Ridge Parkway travels the crests, ridges, and valleys of five major mountain ranges, encompassing several geographic and vegetative zones ranging from 600 to more than 6,000 feet above sea level. It provides visitors with many varied vistas of scenic Appalachian landscapes ranging from forested ridgetops and mountain slopes to rural farm lands and urban areas. The parkway offers a “ride-a-while, stop-a-while” experience that includes scenic pullouts, recreation areas, historic sites, and visitor contact stations. It is known nationally and internationally for its designed landscape as a scenic motorway.

The parkway is many things to many people. It is the longest road planned as a single park unit in the United States. It is an extremely elongated national park system unit that protects significant mountain landscapes far beyond the shoulders of the road itself. It is a series of parks providing visitors access to high mountain passes, splendid natural “gardens” of flowering mountain plants, waterfalls and water gaps, deep forests, and upland meadows. It is a continuous series of panoramic views, the boundaries of its limited right-of-way rarely apparent and miles of the adjacent countryside seemingly a part of the protected scene. It is a “museum of the managed American countryside,” preserving the roughhewn log cabin of the mountain pioneer, the summer home of a textile magnate, and traces of early industries such as logging railways and an old canal. It is the product of a series of major public works projects that provided a boost to the travel and tourism industry and helped the Appalachian region climb out of the depths of the Great Depression. It is an important neighbor that links 29 counties through two states and shares boundaries with other national park system units, national forests, tribal lands, and state parks.

The Blue Ridge Parkway corridor is a complex area of overlapping jurisdictions, interests, and responsibilities. Strong and coordinated external relations are vital to the parkway’s role and mission. Formal and informal partner organizations provide essential services, staffing, funding, and innovative solutions to management of this linear park and the corridor through which it passes. And, it is the most heavily visited national park.



PARKWAY MASTER PLAN 1942

## PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Prior to the approval of this general management plan, the Blue Ridge Parkway had never had a comprehensive planning document. For the first 52 years of the parkway's existence, a major focus of management was to complete construction of the parkway, its designed landscape, and several major and minor recreation areas. This development was guided by master plans developed in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Once sections of the parkway were constructed, their management and maintenance was guided by a series of Parkway Land Use Maps, designed to maintain various aspects of the parkway designed landscape. With the parkway's completion in 1987, the focus of parkway management shifted to ensuring that the parkway's scenic, natural, cultural, and recreational qualities are protected into the future.

Today, the parkway is situated in a much broader resource and visitor context that extends both physically and philosophically far beyond its boundaries. It is this ever-changing dynamic that is driving the need to reexamine past and current approaches to the parkway's management and use.

The general management plan is the central document for managing the Blue Ridge Parkway for the next 20+ years. The purposes of the general management plan are as follows.

- Confirm the purpose, significance, and special mandates of the Blue Ridge Parkway.
- Clearly define resource conditions and visitor uses and experiences to be achieved in the parkway.
- Provide a framework for parkway managers to use when making decisions about how to best protect resources, provide high-quality visitor use and experience, manage visitor use, and develop facilities in and near the park.
- Ensure that this foundation for decision making has been developed in consultation with interested stakeholders and adopted by National Park Service leadership after an adequate analysis of the benefits, impacts, and economic costs of alternative courses of action.

Legislation establishing the National Park Service as an agency and governing its management provides the fundamental direction for the administration of the parkway (and other units of the national park system). This general management plan builds on these laws and the legislation that established the parkway to provide a vision for the park's future and addresses desired future conditions that are not mandated by law and policy and must, therefore, be determined through a planning process.

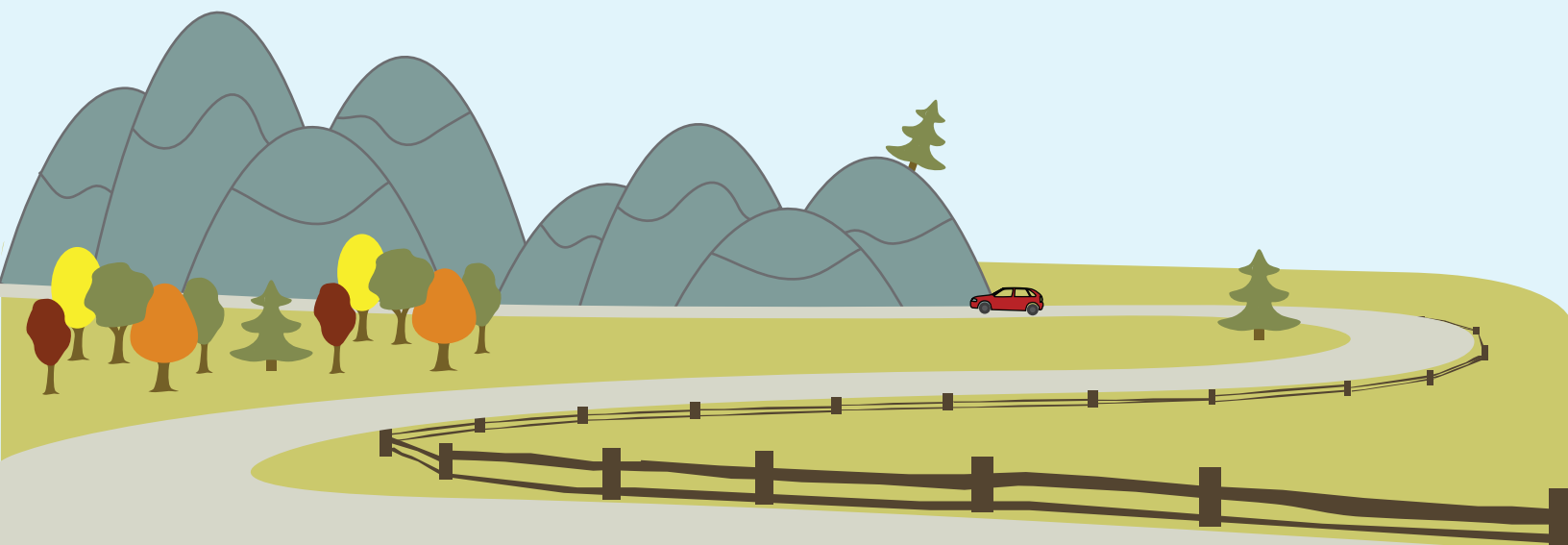
The general management plan does not describe how particular programs or projects for the parkway should be prioritized or implemented. Those decisions will be addressed in the future through more detailed planning efforts. All future plans relating to programs or projects will tier from the general management plan.



PARKWAY INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM



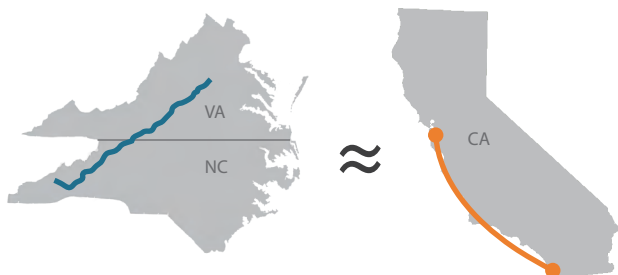
HISTORIC PARKWAY FENCING



## Blue Ridge Parkway by the Numbers

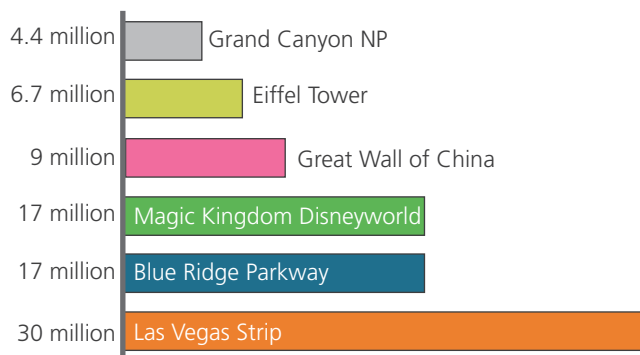
Blue Ridge Parkway stretches

**469** miles



Approximately equal to the distance between San Diego and San Jose

Attracts **17** million annual recreational visitors



Offers more than driving experiences



**3**

Concession Lodges



**9**

Campgrounds



**13**

Picnic Areas



**14**

Visitor Centers



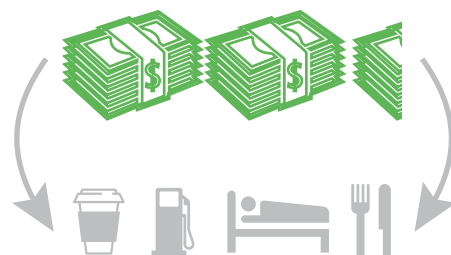
**369**

Trail Miles

Visitors contribute

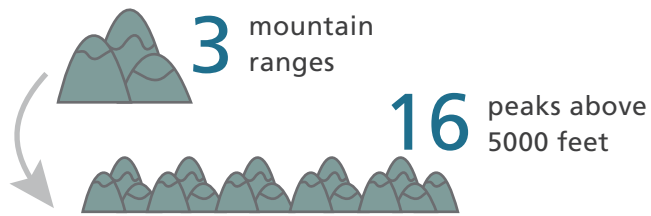
**\$2.3** billion

annually into local economies





Surrounded by scenic beauty and ecological diversity, the parkway contains



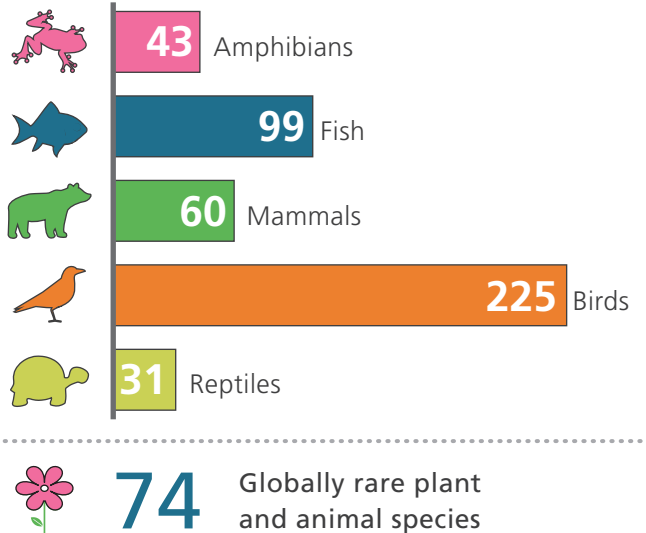
600 miles of streams



2074 plant species



A wide variety of animal species including



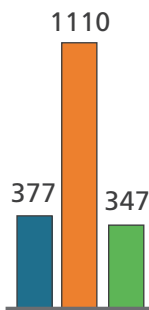
## Comprehending the sheer size and extent of our nation's first rural parkway

A monumental management commitment encompassing

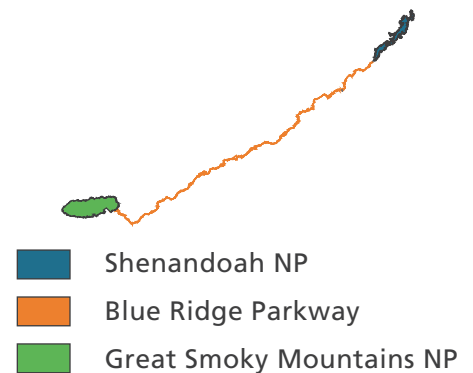
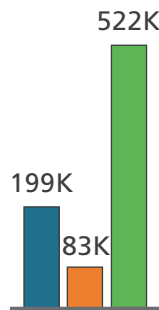


thousand adjacent private landowners

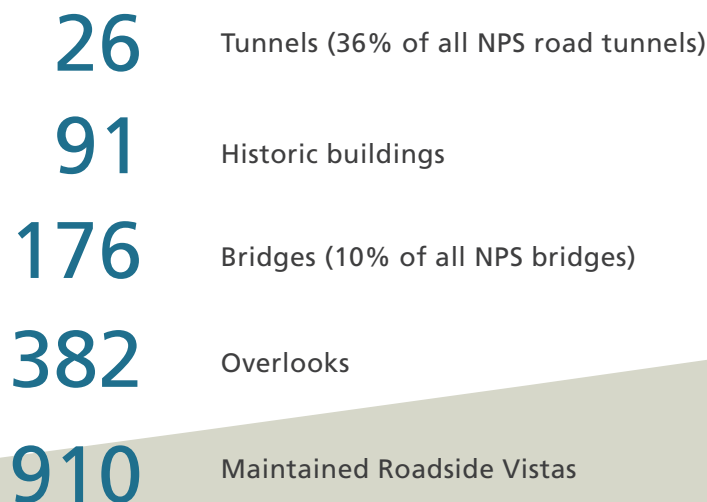
Boundary Miles



Acreage



The parkway's historic design includes





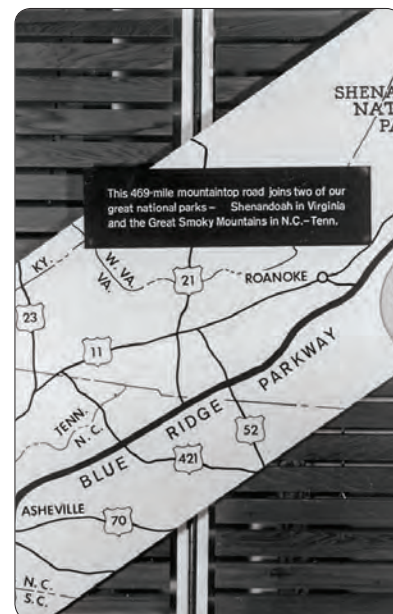
## FOUNDATION FOR PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

### PARK PURPOSE

Purpose statements provide the foundation for the management and use of each unit of the national park system; they also reaffirm the reasons why each area was established as a unit of the national park system. These statements help visitors, neighbors, cooperating agencies, and other users understand the framework in which park managers make decisions.

The following purpose statements are based on the Blue Ridge Parkway's enabling legislation as well as laws and policies governing management of all national park system units. The purposes of the Blue Ridge Parkway are to

- connect Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains national parks by way of a “national rural parkway”—a destination and recreational road that passes through a variety of scenic ridge, mountainside, and pastoral farm landscapes
- conserve the scenery and preserve the natural and cultural resources of the parkway's designed and natural areas
- provide for public enjoyment and understanding of the natural resources and cultural heritage of the central and southern Appalachian Mountains
- provide opportunities for high-quality scenic and recreational experiences along the parkway and in the corridor through which it passes



EARLY PARKWAY INTERPRETIVE EXHIBIT  
1964

### PARK SIGNIFICANCE

Significance statements capture the essence of the park's importance to our country's natural and cultural heritage. Significance statements do not inventory resources; rather, they describe the parkway's distinctiveness and help to place the parkway in its regional, national, and international contexts. Defining the park's significance helps managers make decisions that preserve the resources and values necessary to accomplish the national park's purpose.

The following statements define the significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway:

- The Blue Ridge Parkway was the first national rural parkway to be conceived, designed, and constructed for a leisurely driving experience. Its varied topography and numerous vista points offer easy public access to spectacular views of central and southern Appalachian rural landscapes and forested mountains.
- As an example of pre- and post-World War II era automotive rural parkway design, the parkway retains an exceptionally high degree of integrity. The parkway is further recognized throughout the world as an international example of landscape and engineering design achievements with a roadway that lies easily on the land and blends into the landscape.



HIGHWAY 89 MILEPOST 215.8

- The parkway is the highest and longest continuous route in the Appalachian area. Along its 469-mile length, the parkway provides scenic access to crests and ridges of three major ranges in the central and southern Appalachian Mountains, encompassing geographic and vegetative zones that range from 649 feet at James River in Virginia to 6,047 feet at Richland Balsam in North Carolina.
- The parkway's uninterrupted corridor facilitates the protection of a diverse range of flora and fauna, including rare and endangered plant and animal species and globally imperiled natural communities.
- The parkway preserves and displays cultural landscapes and historic architecture characteristic of the central and southern Appalachian highlands.
- The parkway is a primary catalyst for promoting regional travel and tourism, serving as a unifying element for 29 counties through which it passes, engendering a shared regional identity, providing a common link of interest, and being a major contributor to regional economic vitality.



HISTORIC ENTRANCE SIGN

## FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

Fundamental resources and values warrant primary consideration during planning because they are critical to achieving the park's purpose and maintaining its significance. The following resources and values are central to managing the parkway and express the importance of the parkway to our natural and cultural heritage.

### Cultural Resources

**The Parkway Historic Designed Landscape.** The Blue Ridge Parkway is the premier example of a national parkway designed for recreational motoring through rural scenery. The parkway is an exceptionally important work of design in the fields of landscape architecture and civil engineering. As a combination of scenic road and linear park, it represents a fusion of modern engineering with scenic landscape design. The original parkway road right-of-way and the sites and developments proposed as part of the 1936 master plan are elements of the designed landscape.

**Landscapes of Southern and Central Appalachian Context.** Several sites along the parkway, including the Blue Ridge Music Center and the Folk Art Center, are focused on the perpetuation and interpretation of regional cultural expression. The sources of traditional mountain culture are dying out and the National Park Service plays a role in documenting and celebrating examples of traditional culture.

**Sites Associated with Local Communities.** Many sites along the parkway have an affiliation with the parkway purpose and significance but have greater value as character-defining features of local communities and traditions. Such sites include Yankee Horse Railroad, Kelley School, Harris Farm, Moses H. Cone Park, and the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, among others.



SMART VIEW MILEPOST 154.6





## Natural Resources

**Globally Imperiled Communities.** The parkway protects several ecosystems that are of global significance. These include spruce/fir forests, rocky outcrops and granitic domes, grassy balds, and high-elevation wetlands. The parkway is also considered a keystone area in which to track environmental changes related to water and air quality that could affect the entire region.

**Rare and Endangered Plants, Animals, and Communities.** The parkway contains 12 federally listed and more than 100 state listed species and new species are being discovered. These species of concern include the Peaks of Otter salamander, bog turtles, timber rattlesnakes, and numerous others.

## Visitor Experience Values

**Visual and Leisure Driving Experiences.** When asked about the special values that are most important to their parkway experience, visitors describe the beauty of the views from and along the roadway. The natural setting of mountains and valleys, the peacefulness of rural and pastoral landscapes, and the dramatic high-elevation vistas are frequently highlighted by visitors. This idyllic scenery was integral to the experience intended by parkway designers.

The character of the parkway travel experience is also featured. Peace, solitude, leisure, freedom from traffic and speed, and the absence of commercial advertising are frequently mentioned as aspects of the parkway experience that are particularly valued.

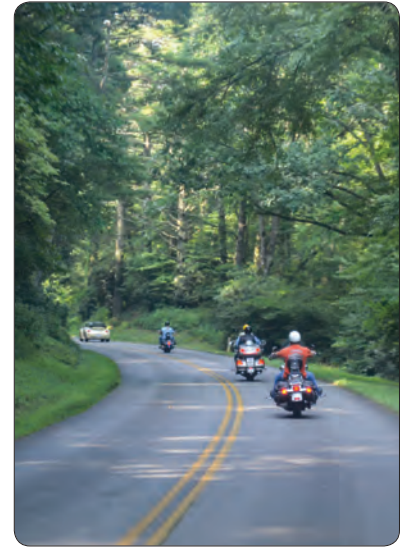
**Recreational Experiences.** Ready access to recreational opportunities also has high value to parkway visitors. Trails, both in the parkway and accessible from the park, are most frequently mentioned as important recreational facilities.

## Regional Connectivity

**Travel and Tourism.** The Blue Ridge Parkway, by virtue of its 469-mile length, provides a travel and tourism facility that unites a 29-county region in Virginia and North Carolina. The opportunity for some 20 million visitors each year to sample its scenic and recreational resources has established the parkway as a primary tourism magnet for the region. Parkway visitors spend some \$2.3 billion per year in communities outside the parkway boundary.

## PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

Primary interpretive themes are the most important ideas or concepts to be communicated to the public about a national park system unit. Their consistent use in park programs, events, exhibits, and publications helps increase visitor understanding and appreciation of park resources and values. The following interpretive themes have been developed for the Blue Ridge Parkway.



RIDING IN THE RIDGE DISTRICT



HISTORIC ROAD SIGN MILEPOST 229.6

## Parkway Design / Landscape

The Blue Ridge Parkway originated to generate employment and promote tourism in the mountains of southern Appalachia; it continues to influence and provide great economic benefits to the region.

The Blue Ridge Parkway incorporates innovative and enduring design, engineering, and construction techniques that harmonize with the southern Appalachian landscape.

The Blue Ridge Parkway is a linear park unit threaded by a road in which visitor driving and enjoyment of scenery is the primary objective.

The Blue Ridge Parkway is a human-manipulated environment that continues to shape parkway management practices.

## Biology

The Blue Ridge Parkway has a wide diversity of habitat and supports as many plant species as any other national park system unit in the United States.

The Blue Ridge Parkway provides a protected migration corridor for many forms of life.

Visitors and residents have long interacted with the Appalachian environment, both adapting to and altering the natural history of the area.

## Geology

The Blue Ridge Parkway stands at the summit of many local and regional watersheds that define the hydrological patterns of much of the southeastern United States. The three mountain ranges of the parkway include the oldest mountain-building processes in the world and contain economically significant minerals.

## Air Quality, Weather, and Climate

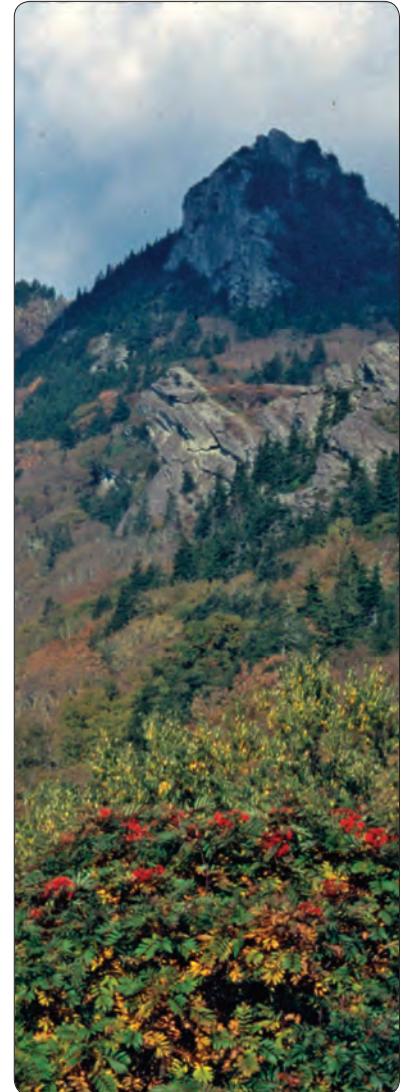
Activities of people living outside the Blue Ridge Parkway and extreme weather conditions in the southern Appalachian Mountains influence the natural resources, visitation patterns, and air quality of the parkway.

## Human Culture

The Blue Ridge Parkway conserves diverse and important examples of architecture, industry, and transportation associated with the people and communities of the mountains in southern Appalachia.

The Blue Ridge Parkway preserves evidence of human occupation from prehistoric to contemporary times.

Many Blue Ridge Parkway sites have been tourist and vacation destinations for more than two centuries.



GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN MILEPOST 305



A unique Appalachian culture, defined by arts, crafts, music, and social institutions, has evolved and persisted in the region through which the Blue Ridge Parkway passes.

## **SPECIAL MANDATES AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITMENTS**

Special mandates and administrative commitments refer to requirements for the parkway that are specified in laws or formal agreements. Consequently, these requirements are not open for evaluation as part of the general management plan; instead, they serve as guidelines with which planning proposals must be consistent. Mandates and administrative commitments that influence the Blue Ridge Parkway general management plan include the following.

### **Memorandum of Understanding between the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service**

On June 20, 1941, this agreement established procedures for determining the boundaries of the parkway where it passes through national forests and for protecting the scenic values of these lands and identified the management responsibilities of each agency to meet these goals.

### **Memorandum of Understanding between the National Park Service and the North Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Wildlife Resources Commission**

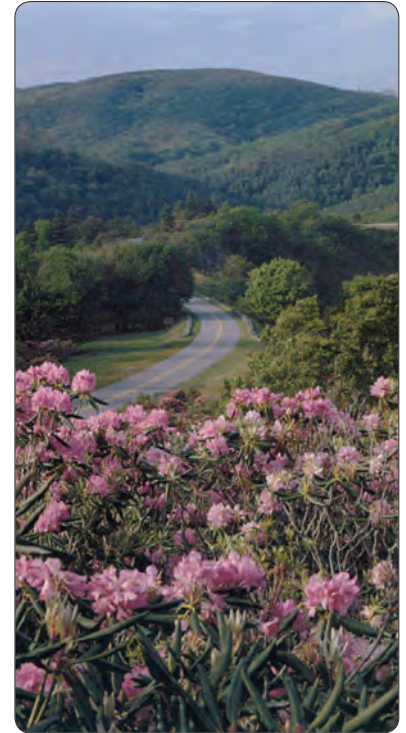
This agreement, signed on December 16, 2011, establishes standards, terms, and conditions under which the Wildlife Resources Commission will conduct surveys of Carolina northern flying squirrels on lands owned and accessed by the Blue Ridge Parkway.

### **Memorandum of Understanding between the National Park Service and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries**

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and the National Park Service agree to cooperate for the purpose of developing, maintaining, and managing fishery resources on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

### **Memorandum of Understanding between the National Park Service and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation**

This agreement supports cooperative efforts between the two agencies to maintain and protect lands necessary for the conservation of natural heritage resources that occur in Virginia in the Blue Ridge Parkway.



PARKWAY RHODODENDRON





## Cooperating Association Agreement between the National Park Service and Eastern National

Eastern National is a nonprofit cooperating association chartered in 1948 to provide interpretive book sales at visitor centers and to promote educational and interpretive activities by returning profits to the National Park Service. The Blue Ridge Parkway serves as an agent of Eastern National under Public Law 79-633, authorizing cooperating associations.

## Mountains-to-Sea Trail Memorandum of Agreement

This is an agreement of cooperation among the parkway; the U.S. Forest Service; the North Carolina Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources; and the Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail organization for planning and construction of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail system. Much of this trail is on parkway lands in North Carolina between the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Doughton Park recreation area. Trail maintenance is the responsibility of the Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail volunteers.

## Agricultural Leases

Agriculture has had an important influence on the land and the people of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Under the parkway's Agricultural Land Use Program, lands are leased out to other landowners for agricultural use to ensure and perpetuate the cultural and traditional pastoral scenes typical of the Appalachian hill country. This blending of the parkway and the adjoining lands helps create the impression of a park that extends, in some instances, to the horizon.

## Commitments Involving Roanoke River Parkway and Explore Park

The *Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987* (Public Law 100-17) authorized the National Park Service to design and build an extension of the Blue Ridge Parkway to connect to Explore Park in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The completed Roanoke River Parkway now provides a direct link for visitors from the parkway to the 1,100-acre property now owned by Virginia Living Histories. In June, 2005, the Virginia Recreational Facilities Authority—the state authority tasked with the development and operation of Explore Park—entered into a lease option agreement with Virginia Living Histories for the development of Explore Park. Explore Park was to become an outdoor living history museum and recreational park near milepost 115 on the Blue Ridge Parkway in Roanoke. The downturn in financial markets at the end of the decade created financing challenges and construction did not begin as planned. As a result, the Virginia Recreational Facilities Authority appointed an economic development consortium to create alternative plans for Explore Park if Virginia Living Histories was not able to proceed.



TRAIL SIGN MILEPOST 384.2



AGRICULTURAL LEASE MILEPOST 143



## Concurrent Legislative Jurisdiction

- Memorandum of Agreement for Concurrent Jurisdiction at National Park Service Units in the State of North Carolina, dated July 27, 1984.
- Memorandum of Agreement and Deed for Concurrent Jurisdiction at Areas of the Blue Ridge Parkway in the State of Virginia, dated July 12, 1982.

## POTENTIAL BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS

Unlike many national park system units, the Blue Ridge Parkway's enabling legislation did not limit or direct land protection by establishing a legislated boundary or an acquisition ceiling. However, more specific direction for any parkway boundary adjustments was promulgated under two congressional acts—the Act of June 30, 1936 (49 Stat. 2041), which created the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Act of June 30, 1961 (75 Stat. 196), which further authorized the purchase and exchange of land and interests in land to adjust ownership lines and to eliminate hazardous crossings of and access points to the parkway. Also, a ruling in the United States Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit (June 29, 1970) found that acquisition of land for the parkway was not limited solely to lands required for construction of the roadway but land acquired for recreation uses was within the statutory purpose of “consolidation” of land contiguous to the parkway when necessary for public uses. The Fourth Circuit Court ruling also concluded that “scenery,” “natural,” “historic objects,” and “wildlife” were included within the broad definition of the term “recreational.”

Land protection for the parkway adheres to the congressional acts and court ruling and is further guided by a 1994 land protection plan; the plan will be amended by a land protection process that moves away from the predetermined list of tracts of land to protect. Tracts of land that become available from willing sellers will be evaluated to determine which of eight resource and visitor use management criteria are met—boundary management and ownership, historic or cultural landscape sensitivity, transboundary natural resource threats, scenic easement issues, at-grade crossings or accesses, visual sensitivity or scenic quality, visitor experience opportunities, and off-parkway recreation needs and trends. Compatibility with parkway management zoning and current nonfederal ownership and uses and local land use planning will also be considered to establish priorities for protection.

Only those land protection actions with willing sellers and that meet the evaluation criteria and compatibility analysis stated above will be deemed necessary by the National Park Service to carry out the land protection purposes of the parkway. Land protection plan priorities will include acquiring interests in lands to accomplish one or more of the eight resource and visitor use management criteria, to ensure compatibility of adjacent land use, eliminate or control hazardous at-grade motor road crossings or accesses, provide for recreation or natural and cultural resource protection, and conserve high-quality scenic views.

When the parkway was established, the states of Virginia and North Carolina donated parkway right-of-way acreages of 100 and 115 acres per mile, respectively. This did not meet the National Park Service standard of 150 acres per mile. Thus, National Park Service acquisition of interests in land has been



BOUNDARY MONUMENT SECTION 2R

an ongoing land protection strategy for the parkway, with the goal of meeting or exceeding the 150 acres per mile standard. That strategy will continue under land protection proposals presented in the general management plan.

Other potential boundary adjustments will include focusing at-grade road access and crossing land protection projects throughout the Plateau and Highland segments and in the northern section of the Black Mountain segment where the majority of private and secondary road at-grade crossings and access points occur. Recreation projects will be more dispersed and might occur in any of the segments. Transboundary natural resource protection priorities will be greatest in segments 5 and 7 but could occur parkway-wide depending upon severity of threat to resources. Land protection projects to conserve high-quality scenic views will be based on the parkway's scenery conservation system.

The scenery conservation system identifies some 1,200 landscape or view areas that lie beyond the parkway boundary and that are visible from overlooks, roadside vistas, agricultural leases, or scenic easements. Of the 1,200 view areas, about half of the scenic views are in the Plateau, Highland, and Black Mountain segments. Conservation of scenic views will be focused in these segments. Potential acquisitions are identified on a project-by-project basis when a willing seller or a private land trust contacts park land resource staff.

Because discrete boundary adjustments are authorized for park purposes on an as-needed basis, this general management plan does not call for any specific boundary adjustments.

## PLANNING ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The following issues and concerns were identified during the general management planning process. Issues and concerns were identified by the general public; National Park Service staff; county, state, and other federal agencies; parkway partners; resource experts; and representatives from various organizations. An issue is defined as an opportunity, conflict, or problem regarding the use or management of public lands.

Comments received during the planning process demonstrated that there is much that the public values about the parkway, especially its protection of scenery and high-elevation habitats; interpretation of local history and heritage; access to trails; the opportunity it offers to escape from commercialism and traffic; and the beauty of the road and parkway architecture. Issues and concerns expressed generally focus on balancing appropriate visitor use, types and levels of facilities, services, and activities with desired resource conditions.

### Increasing Residential and Commercial Development Visible from the Parkway

The parkway was designed as a park without visual boundaries, in response to the congressional intent to provide a scenic and recreational driving experience from which visitors could view the landscapes of the central and southern Appalachian Mountains. This primary purpose for the parkway is being threatened by the subdivision of hundreds of privately owned acres



PARKWAY AGRICULTURAL LEASE



DEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO PARKWAY  
MILEPOST 125





of scenic farms and mountainsides for residential development. This land use trend is dramatically increasing in 14 of the 29 counties through which the parkway passes. By far the most commonly expressed concern in public comments relate to this issue. People are concerned with the loss of scenic quality and scenic variety. Some believe that solutions lie with additional vegetation buffers. Others advocate a stronger land protection program on the part of the park, ranging from cooperative agreements to purchase of scenic easements to full purchase of lands.

### Relationships between the Parkway and Surrounding Communities

The parkway plays an important role in the broader region in which it is located. It connects communities and heritage tourism opportunities, contributes to economies, provides recreational escape, protects and links natural corridors, and provides a 469-mile window to the beauty of the region. Many of those who provided comments encouraged increased communication and cooperation between the parkway and surrounding jurisdictions, emphasizing the potential for better land use planning, scenery protection, greenway connections, and visitor information that could result.

### The Design and Character of the Parkway

The parkway was carefully designed to create a special experience for visitors, from how the parkway road was situated on the landscape, to the details of parkway architecture, to the carefully placed vistas and overlooks, to the strategic location of recreation areas and visitor services. Some people are concerned that budget limitations and changing public expectations and demands are compromising the original design standards of the parkway. Others believe that elements of parkway character, such as the absence of roadway striping and width, cause safety hazards. Some people would like to see development of additional pullouts and overlooks; others believe that too many overlooks have low-quality views due to vegetation growth or adjacent development. Some others also feel that certain overlooks have safety issues that make them higher crime areas and that these facilities should be evaluated for possible closure or redesign.

### Regional Road System Improvements

The Blue Ridge Parkway was authorized by Congress to be a national rural parkway with limited at-grade road crossings and with entrance and exit points spaced at intervals to reduce interruptions to the main flow of visitor traffic. There are 199 public secondary at-grade and 30 primary grade separated access points to the parkway from the regional primary and secondary road systems in Virginia and North Carolina. Many of these are scheduled to be upgraded. The improvement of both primary and secondary roads in rural areas is making these areas more attractive for residential and commercial development; thus, road projects have considerable influence on the parkway's scenery by facilitating land use changes that are visually incompatible with parkway values. Also, the level of local traffic is increasing in several areas along the parkway. With the large number of at-grade road crossings, the potential for traffic accidents is rising from increasing cross-parkway traffic.



BLUE RIDGE MUSIC CENTER STAGE  
MILEPOST 212.8



PARKWAY CONSTRUCTION

## Motorized Use of the Parkway

Motorized use of the parkway involves a mix of visitors and local commuters and different types of vehicles, which can result in conflict and concerns. Commenters noted that motorcycle noise, and in some cases excessive speed by motorcycle riders, is disturbing to them. Some people are concerned about the increasing size and number of recreational vehicles (RVs) on the parkway and believe some limits to address these concerns may be needed. Many mentioned that the parkway has too much commuter traffic that interferes with the slower pace and low traffic levels that are valued as part of a recreational experience.

## Bicycling on the Parkway

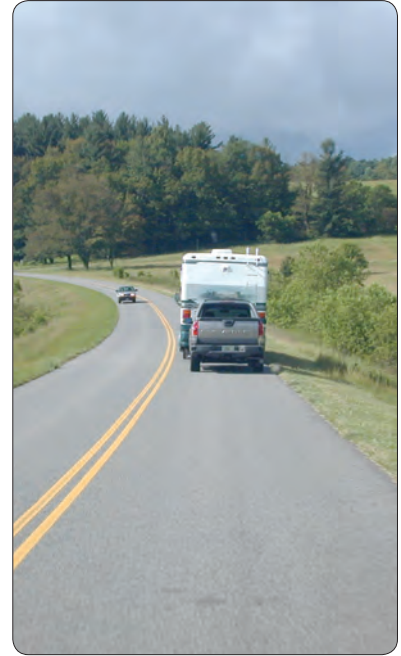
Bicycling is permitted along the entire length of the parkway. Although cyclists represent only 1% of the road's traffic mix, the parkway is popular with cyclists due to its limited access and relatively lower traffic levels and vehicle speeds when compared to most community streets and highways. The parkway, however, was not designed as a bicycle facility. It has no specific paved shoulders or bike lanes or paths; cyclists currently ride in the road's travel lanes. During the scoping process, bicycling along the parkway was an issue of much discussion and a variety of views. Some people advocate bike lanes along the full length of the parkway, while others believe this is not feasible and would inappropriately change the parkway road character. Other commenters advocate bike routes parallel to the road, either along the full distance or only in high-use areas. Other commenters proposed banning bicycle use on the parkway altogether. As a related issue, mountain biking on trails is supported by some people and opposed by others.

## Additional Recreational Opportunities

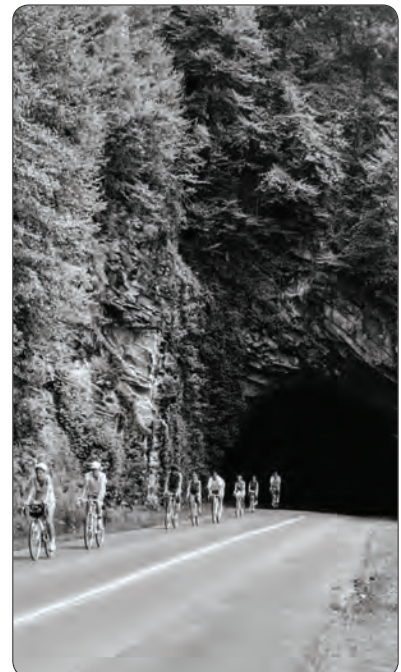
As population has increased adjacent to the parkway and as visitors' interests have shifted, there is more demand for additional or different day-use recreational opportunities along the parkway. For example, there is increasing demand for more off-season use and access, including keeping more of the parkway open in the off-season. Unlike most national park system units, parkway visitor services are only provided during a six-month season. Visitors traveling the parkway during the off-season do not have access to even basic amenities, such as restrooms. A lack of orientation and interpretive services during this time also limits visitors from understanding parkway resources and the range of recreational opportunities available to them. The public also advocated for additional rock climbing and horse riding opportunities. Some people would like to see more trails in the parkway and some are particularly interested in more links to trails and greenway systems with neighboring communities.

## Visitor Service Facilities

The parkway's visitor service facilities were originally placed along the parkway to provide a leisurely, self-contained, long-distance driving experience, where visitors could drive a while, stop a while to stretch their legs, obtain information, picnic, and stop overnight for camping or lodging. For



RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PLATEAU DISTRICT



WILD ACRES TUNNEL MILEPOST 336.8



a variety of reasons that include increased availability of services adjacent to the parkway and changing visitor use patterns and preferences, the parkway has concession services that struggle to remain economically viable and campgrounds that generally are underused. Some visitors have commented that the parkway should provide lodging with more modern amenities; others think concessions services are an outdated concept and compete with neighboring businesses.

Many visitors have noted they would stay on the parkway if the campgrounds provided more updated services, such as showers, electrical hookups, and better accommodation of large RVs. Others feel that such changes are not necessary and would alter the rustic character of the campgrounds. The campgrounds have not had significant upgrades since their construction between the 1930s and 1950s. None have water/electric hook-ups at RV sites or showers in the comfort stations. Furthermore, loop roads, parking areas, and campsites were designed to earlier standards that do not adequately accommodate modern RVs. The absence of these amenities is the primary reason most visitors do not stay at the parkway’s campgrounds.

In addition, there is limited access to visitor service facilities in the off-season when the road is open but most of the visitor facilities are closed. Also, there are several key places where large numbers of visitors access the parkway in the peak season but don’t have access to information and services for orientation. As a result, there is a high frequency of visitors becoming disoriented and lost. Some people oppose the development of any new facilities along the parkway, while others advocate some additional overlooks, trails, and support facilities so long as they harmonize with the parkway design.

### Protection of Natural Resources

Under the provisions of the parkway’s enabling legislation, the parkway is responsible for conserving, interpreting, and exhibiting the unique natural and cultural resources of the central and southern Appalachian Mountains. Parkway lands contain 2,074 different vascular plant species, 5 listed rare and endangered plant species, 7 rare and endangered animal species, several areas that are classified as “globally imperiled” natural systems, 21 natural heritage areas, and 110 miles of streams. There were many comments about air pollution effects on views and ecosystem health; the frequency and amount of plant and animal poaching; the invasion of nonnative plants, insects, and diseases; visitor trampling, social trailing, and illegal camping; and suppression of wildfires and other damage to natural systems due to park practices and development, such as habitat fragmentation from trails and roads.

### Protection of Cultural Resources

The parkway contains, and is challenged to manage, a diverse range of cultural resources, including 91 buildings, 2 sites, and 133 other structures that contribute to the parkway’s eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The parkway also contains historic structures and places associated with events and activities prior to the parkway’s construction. The traditional pastoral landscapes and structures of Appalachian farms and settlements contribute to the richness of scenery and stories of lifeways. Many commented about concerns over the deterioration of historic structures and



FOLK ART CENTER MILEPOST 382



PARKWAY TRILLIUM



other features. Some commenters thought that resource threats are increasing and suggested that park managers place more emphasis on resource protection in making management decisions.

## Climate Change

Climate change refers to any significant changes in average climatic conditions (such as average temperature, precipitation, or wind) or climatic variability (such as seasonality or storm frequencies) lasting for an extended period of time (decades or longer). Recent reports by the U.S. Climate Change Science Program, the National Academy of Sciences, and the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change provide clear evidence that climate change is occurring and is anticipated to accelerate in the coming decades.

The National Park Service recognizes that the major drivers of climate change are outside the control of the agency. However, impacts from climate change are already occurring or are expected to occur throughout the national park system. Therefore, an important goal of the general management plan is to gain a better understanding of the influences of climate change on the Blue Ridge Parkway and implement effective strategies to manage for them. Because climate change is a long-term issue that may affect the parkway beyond the scope of this general management plan, the plan is intended to lay the initial groundwork to address climate change issues.



WINTER AT CRAGGY GARDENS MILEPOST 365





BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY MILEPOST 239



# BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES



PARKWAY MOUNTAIN LAUREL



HISTORIC PARKWAY FENCING





SCENERY CONSERVATION



## PARKWAY-WIDE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Because of the length and complexity of the parkway, the strategies for managing it for the next 20+ years have been organized into three levels of detail: (1) parkway-wide, (2) 7 parkway segments, and (3) 15 major recreation areas. Management zones are associated with the parkway segments and recreation areas.

The parkway-wide management strategies are organized according to 10 management topics.

### SCENERY CONSERVATION

- Complete the baseline evaluation of the quality and condition of off-parkway scenic views as seen from parkway overlooks and roadside vistas. Using the baseline evaluation as a guide, identify views along the parkway to be protected.
- Actively collaborate with adjacent landowners, county officials, and developers on a site-specific project basis to conserve priority scenery. In addition, the parkway will work with its partners to provide leadership for regional efforts among adjacent landowners; local, state, and federal officials; and developers to establish long-term strategies for conserving views from the parkway.



FALL PARKWAY VIEW

### LAND PROTECTION

- Continue to acquire interests in lands adjoining the parkway boundary from willing sellers to eliminate private road accesses (consistent with parkway legislation), to consolidate irregular portions of the parkway boundary that are difficult to manage, and to conserve tracts of land of moderate to high scenic quality (see also “Scenery Conservation” above). In addition, acquire interests in lands for protection of natural, cultural, and recreational resources and seek regional partnerships to provide for additional options to protect resources.
- Implement a land protection strategy that does not identify specific tracts of land but establishes (1) resource and visitor use management criteria, (2) park management zoning and land use compatibility factors, and/or (3) other protection goals that will be used to evaluate the merits of a property when it becomes available from willing sellers. Proactively seek out willing sellers for high-priority parcels.

### NATURAL RESOURCES

- Make inventory and management of natural resources more proactive, incorporating a long-term approach that actively strives to advance regional ecosystem health through active partnerships with public and private entities.



MILEPOST 107.9





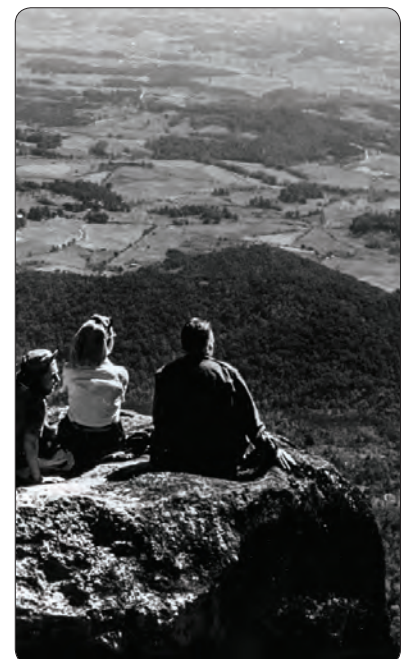
- Establish a multiyear planning process for the natural resource program to implement multiyear projects.
- Pursue class I air quality classification and seek National Park Service and other project funding for monitoring and influencing air quality standards in the region.
- Shift wildlife management focus to a more ecosystem-based approach in the region.
- Consider strategies to maintain and improve habitat connectivity along and across the parkway corridor.
- Shift management of invasive flora and fauna from reactive, site-specific management to more comprehensive, parkway-wide, and regional strategies.
- Continue to manage designed landscape features, such as human-made lakes, for scenic and recreational purposes.
- Modify some landscape areas traditionally managed for scenery, such as roadsides, vista clearings, and agricultural leases, to actively protect natural resources. Improve habitat external to the parkway boundary through work with partners.



DOGWOOD IN BLOOM

## SOUNDSCAPES

- The following list includes indirect management strategies that apply information, education, and persuasion techniques to influence visitor behavior. Indirect management is often preferred because it allows visitors the freedom to choose their actions.
  - Encourage visitors to be respectful of others by not producing excessive noise.
  - Develop and implement educational and interpretive programs on soundscapes.
  - Consider identifying and designating “quiet zone areas.” These areas would be identified on maps, through signs, and through interpretation. Visitors would be encouraged to be quiet enough to hear natural sounds in these areas.
  - Plan in advance. Notify visitors during the planning process of the importance of acoustic resources.
  - Encourage Leave No Trace Principle 7 (be considerate of other visitors) as related to soundscapes.
  - Collaborate with adjacent property owners and appropriate federal, state, and local agencies and organizations to reduce noise.
- The following list includes direct management strategies that rely upon enforcement of rules and regulations.
  - In sensitive acoustic zones, reroute loud vehicles to routes outside of the parkway or to less sensitive acoustic zones within the parkway.

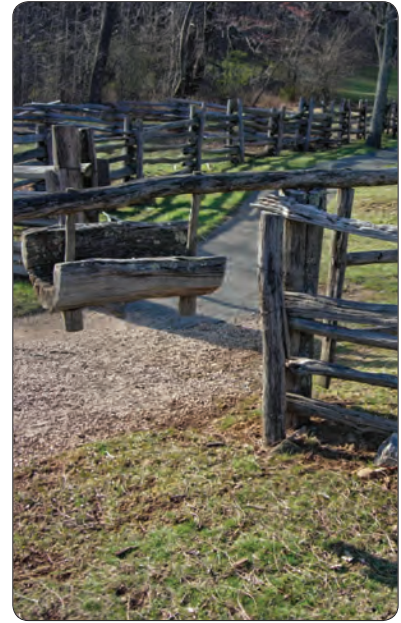


SHARPTOP MILEPOST 86





- Park management should consider ways to reduce their own noise footprint, as well as those caused by visitors or outside sources. Operation of maintenance equipment, tools, and construction equipment should be limited to times and locations that minimize impacts on visitors and ecologically sensitive areas. Parkway staff should select models of equipment with the lowest sound levels and operational specifications that meet their needs. Increase the use of quiet technology where appropriate.
- The following list includes indirect management strategies specifically designed for visitors riding motorcycles.
  - Encourage quiet and courteous riding through education. This message could be delivered to motorcyclists through a variety of “messengers” including National Park Service staff, gateway communities, friends groups, and local partners and stakeholders. Example messaging for roadside signs, brochures, website, and visitor center: Don’t rev it up! Ride motorcycles respectfully along the parkway. Example messaging for campgrounds: Be considerate of campground quiet hours. Be aware that the noise you make could affect other visitors and encourage friends and family to do the same.
  - Discourage use of modified exhaust systems that increase noise levels.
- The following list includes direct management strategies specifically designed for visitors riding motorcycles.
  - Consider having groups of organized riders acquire a special use permit.
  - Specify that any applications for organized rides must go through NEPA analysis.
  - Enforce existing noise ordinances (36 CFR section 2.12). Under this section the following is prohibited: operating motorized equipment or machinery that exceeds a noise level of 60 decibels measured on the A-weighted scale at 50 feet or, if below that level, nevertheless, makes noise that is unreasonable.



HUMPBACK FARM GATE MILEPOST 6

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

- Seek designation of the designed parkway corridor as a national historic landmark district while continuing to manage it as an eligible resource. The principal components of this designed landscape are the parkway road with its supporting structures and constructed landforms, a scenic corridor provided by a broad right-of-way, a chain of 17 original and 4 more recent recreation areas, and a variety of exhibits interpreting the natural and cultural histories of the region.
- Continue to give priority for preservation to historic structures that are directly associated with the parkway’s original design intent and that are listed as structures contributing to the national significance of the parkway. Structures constructed or acquired after 1955 are not considered to contribute to the significance of the parkway and



HISTORIC PHOTO OF GATE



their merits for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and preservation activities will be determined individually.

- Continue to manage currently maintained vistas above 4,000 feet elevation, but determine their size and configuration by best practices for managing the potential habitat of sensitive species.
- Update the historic Parkway Land Use Maps to protect the parkway's historic integrity while accommodating newer law and policy requirements and operational constraints.

## INTERPRETATION AND VISITOR SERVICES

- Continue to implement curriculum-based school outreach programs using current staffing levels at schools and in the parkway, as available, during the school year.
- Expand operations at selected locations to provide services for a nine-month visitor season. These locations include Humpback Rocks, James River, Peaks of Otter, Mabry Mill, Blue Ridge Music Center, Linn Cove, Linville Falls, Museum of North Carolina Minerals, Craggy Gardens, Folk Art Center, and Waterrock Knob.
- Increase visitor education using publications and waysides and emerging technology.
- Substantially increase the number of visitors contacted over current levels by providing visitor orientation services at underserved parkway entrances, particularly the northern and southernmost entrances.
- Continue to maintain 21 recreation areas along the length of the parkway with traditional visitor services that support a recreational and scenic driving experience, including camping, lodging, restaurants, camp stores, and picnic sites. Ensure that in the future these traditional recreation services remain a high priority and are enhanced, as needed, to respond to increases in visitor demand. This could be accomplished through hardening trails, providing overflow parking, and developing additional picnic sites, among other actions.

## CONCESSIONS

Continue to find ways to provide viable concession services at all existing locations to ensure the long-term availability of in-parkway lodging, food, and other services. Strategies might include making upgrades to existing infrastructure and/or adding new facilities where appropriate.

## ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

- Continue the moratorium on secondary road improvement projects in both Virginia and North Carolina until a comprehensive corridor access management plan and environmental impact statement are completed. Only address road improvements that are necessary to ensure public



OVERMOUNTAIN VICTORY TRAIL  
CELEBRATION HIGHLANDS DISTRICT



ABBOTT LAKE MILEPOST 86



health and safety outside the comprehensive planning and compliance process. Continue to evaluate primary state and federal highway improvements or new construction projects on a project-by-project basis.

- Accomplish management of some nonrecreational local and commuter traffic by replacing at-grade crossings with new grade separation structures (some without access between the parkway and state road).

## CAMPGROUNDS

- Continue to operate eight of the parkway's existing campgrounds, including future repairs and rehabilitations focused on meeting backlog maintenance needs. Convert the Roanoke Mountain campground to a day-use recreation area. Collaborate with local communities and other park partners to consider innovative ways to effectively manage Roanoke Mountain over the interim of this conversion from a campground to a day-use area.
- Upgrade selected campground comfort stations to provide showers.
- Upgrade all campground comfort stations to be universally accessible.
- Enlarge selected tent sites to better accommodate family sized tents.
- Upgrade certain amphitheaters to better accommodate visitors during interpretive programs.
- Upgrade existing RV sites with water and electrical hookups at all campgrounds, except at Roanoke Mountain.
- Improve RV access to portions of campgrounds at Peaks of Otter and Julian Price. Upgrades at these campgrounds will include such improvements as widening the campground entrance and one of the loop roads, increasing turning radii, and enlarging existing RV parking spaces. Only a portion of the RV spaces at the campgrounds will be redesigned to better accommodate RVs.

## TRAILS

- Work in partnership with the managers of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail to avoid sensitive resource areas by relocating some trail sections. Work with volunteer organizations and the state of North Carolina to complete the Mountains-to-Sea Trail within the parkway boundary where feasible.
- Continue to allow bicycling on the main parkway road and other parkway roads, recognizing that bicyclists will be sharing the road with higher volumes of motorized traffic, especially in the more urbanized areas of the parkway. Bicycling is not allowed on parkway trails.
- Ensure that undesignated social trails are not authorized within the parkway and any future designated connections to parkway trails will only be developed on public lands in collaboration with the associated local land management agencies.



MILEPOST 363



HIKING CRAGGY DOME MILEPOST 366





- Strive to close and restore undesigned social trails in the parkway as much as possible, particularly when the undesigned trails are known to be causing notable negative impacts to natural resources, visitor experiences, or adjacent neighborhoods.
- Develop adequate, formal parking areas for designated parkway trails to ensure visitor safety, protect resources, and preserve community character in adjacent or nearby neighborhoods.
- Develop improvements for equestrian use in designated areas.

## PARTNERSHIPS

Actively pursue new partnerships with public and private entities to plan and implement joint ventures that support parkway goals. Explore broader base of partnerships.



LINN COVE VIADUCT MILEPOST 304



## MANAGEMENT ZONES

The primary building blocks for a general management plan are the management zones. All zones are developed within the scope of the park's purpose, significance, mandates, and enabling legislation.

Management zones prescribe a range of desired resource conditions and visitor experience for the parkway and include statements about the appropriate kinds and levels of management, use, and development in each zone. The management zones provide primary guidance for subsequent decision making in the park. The eight management zones described below have been allocated across all Blue Ridge Parkway lands.

The table on the following pages gives an overview of each management zone and describes the desired conditions for resources within each zone. It also compares the differences between zones—some slight, some major—in the tolerance for resource impacts, appropriate management activities, visitor use levels, and appropriate recreational activities.

Management zone maps can be found under the parkway segment and recreation area sections of this document. These maps were created and assembled by the National Park Service for informational, planning, reference, and illustration purposes only. None of these materials should be utilized without the benefit of advice and instruction from appropriate professional services. These materials are not verified by a Registered Professional Land Surveyor and are not intended to be used as such. The National Park Service makes no warranty, express or implied, related to the accuracy or content of these maps.



MABRY MILL 1953



MABRY MILL 1961



MABRY MILL 2012



### ● Special Natural Resources

This zone represents areas that emphasize the highest level of protection of sensitive habitats. Natural resources and processes will be preserved to maintain their pristine conditions and ecological integrity. Visitor opportunities will be limited to avoid human-caused impacts on these sensitive or rare ecosystems.

### ● Natural Resources

This zone represents areas that support the broader ecological integrity of the parkway where natural processes predominate. Only low-impact recreational activities will be allowed. Visitors will be immersed in nature with opportunities to experience solitude and tranquility.

### ● Scenic Character

This zone represents areas of the parkway that emphasize protection and viewing opportunities of the scenic landscape and natural and cultural settings of the central and southern Appalachian highlands.

### ● Recreation

This zone represents areas that support moderate levels of visitor use to accommodate recreational, educational, and interpretive opportunities. While some resource modifications could occur, natural and cultural resources will remain largely intact.

### ● Visitor Services

This zone represents areas of the parkway that support moderate to high levels of development and visitor services in order to accommodate concentrated visitor use and diverse recreational, educational, and interpretive opportunities.

### ● Historic Parkway

This zone represents areas that emphasize protection and interpretation of the historic parkway corridor, which includes the road prism and its original supporting structures and constructed landforms.

### ● Special Cultural Resources

This zone represents areas that emphasize protection of cultural landscapes and historic structures not associated with the design and development of the Blue Ridge Parkway. These include vernacular landscapes, such as the Harris Farm, or designed landscapes, such as the Moses H. Cone Estate.

### ● Park Support

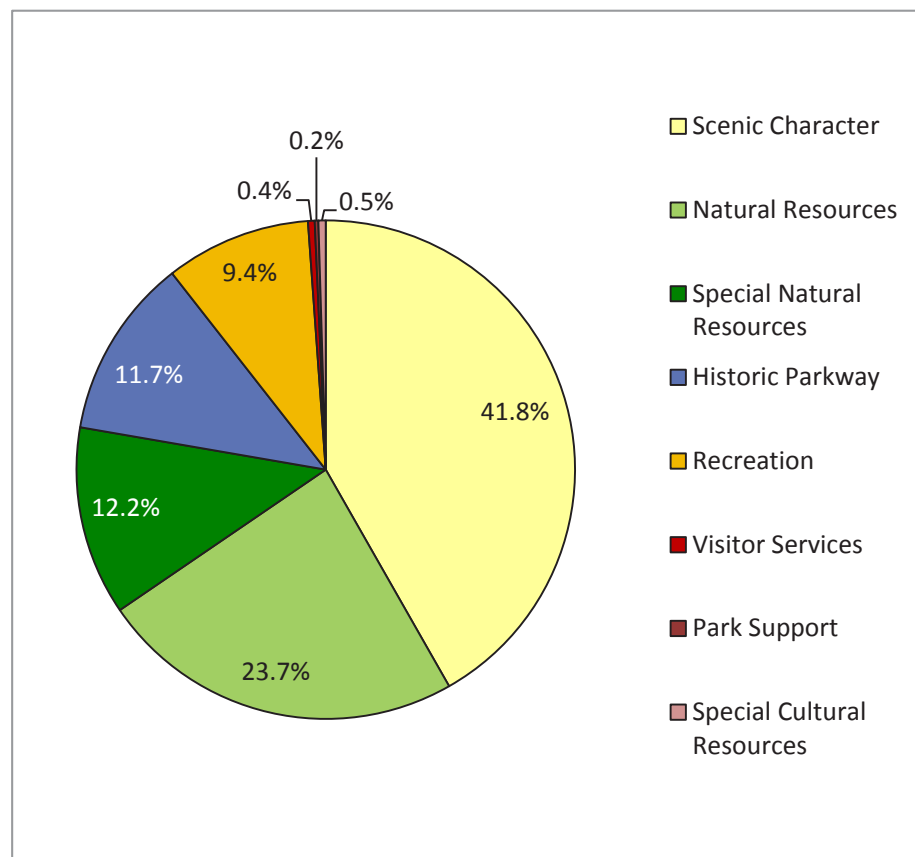
This zone represents areas of the parkway that support administrative facilities for operations and maintenance.





TABLE 1. PARKWAY-WIDE MANAGEMENT ZONES—ACREAGE CALCULATIONS

Class	Zone Description	Acres in the Zone Selected Action
SC	Scenic Character	34,322
N	Natural Resources	19,491
SNR	Special Natural Resources	10,068
HP	Historic Parkway	9,623
R	Recreation	7,751
VS	Visitor Services	356
PS	Park Support	193
SCR	Special Cultural Resources	388



PROPORTION OF MANAGEMENT ZONES FOR ALL PARKWAY LANDS



TABLE 2. BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY MANAGEMENT ZONES

	Special Natural Resources	Natural	Scenic Character	Recreation
Overview	Areas that emphasize the highest level of protection of sensitive habitats. Natural resources and processes will be preserved to maintain their pristine conditions and high ecological integrity. Visitor opportunities will be limited to avoid human-caused impacts on these rare ecosystems.	Areas that support the broader ecological integrity of the parkway where natural processes predominate. Only low-impact recreational activities will be allowed. Visitors will be immersed in nature with opportunities to experience solitude and tranquility.	Areas of the parkway that emphasize protection and sightseeing opportunities of the scenic landscapes and natural and cultural settings of the central and southern Appalachian highlands.  Desired conditions include maintaining the visual variety of the parkway road's forested and pastoral/rural landscape settings consistent with early parkway design.	Areas that support moderate levels of visitor use to accommodate a wide range of recreational, educational, and interpretive opportunities. While some resource modifications could occur, natural and cultural resources will remain largely intact.
Natural Resource Condition	Ecological communities will be protected in a pristine condition, functioning unhindered by human activities and development.  Globally imperiled habitats, state natural heritage areas and conservation sites, federal and state listed species, and other rare and exceptional natural resources, processes, systems, and values will be preserved and enhanced. <sup>1</sup>	Ecological integrity will be maintained by preserving and restoring natural resources and processes through an integrated natural resource management approach.	A mosaic of native vegetation communities will be maintained to showcase the parkway's diverse natural settings.	Natural processes will function unhindered by human activities and development in most areas, except where managed specifically for visitor use.  The natural and pastoral settings of the parkway will be maintained or modified as necessary to provide appropriate recreational opportunities and visitor health and safety.
Tolerance for Natural Resource Impacts	Extremely low tolerance for natural resource impacts.  Modification of natural resources will only occur when necessary to restore habitats or to mitigate for human-caused impacts.  Evidence of visitor use will be largely unnoticeable.	Low tolerance for natural resource impacts.  Only minimal modifications will be allowed that harmonize with the natural environment.	Low to moderate tolerance for natural resource impacts.  Modifications that enhance the scenic qualities of the parkway's landscapes will be allowed in a manner that minimizes natural resource impacts.	Low to moderate tolerance for natural resource impacts to accommodate visitor use and ensure visitor health and safety.  Modifications will be aesthetically blended with the environment and designed to minimize resource impacts.

1. All globally imperiled habitats, state natural heritage areas and conservation sites, and federal and state listed species will be protected within all of the management zones, as required by National Park Service policy.



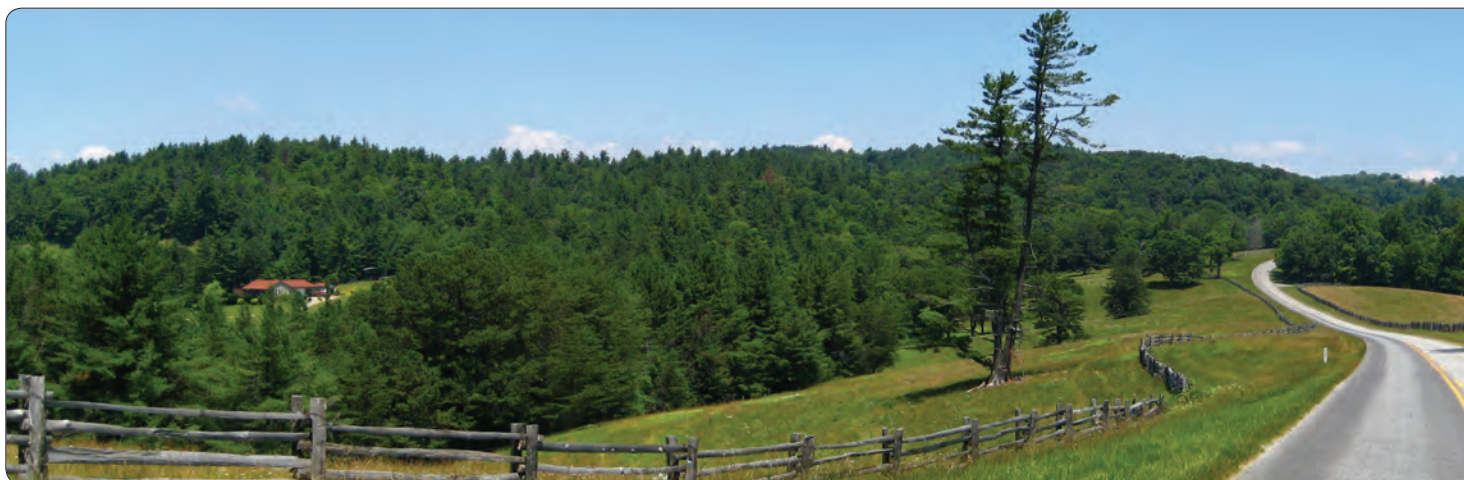
Visitor Services	Historic Parkway	Special Cultural Resources	Park Support
Areas of the parkway that support moderate to high levels of development and visitor services in order to accommodate concentrated visitor use and diverse recreational, educational, and interpretive opportunities.	Areas that emphasize protection and interpretation of the historic parkway corridor, which includes the parkway road prism and its original supporting structures and constructed landforms, including overlooks, water features, and recreation areas.	Areas that emphasize protection of cultural landscapes and historic structures not associated with the design and development of the Blue Ridge Parkway. These include vernacular landscapes, such as the Harris Farm, or designed landscapes, such as the Moses H. Cone Estate.  Visitors will have opportunities to explore history first hand.	Areas of the parkway that support administrative facilities for operations and maintenance.
Natural systems and processes will be maintained to the greatest extent possible while emphasizing visitor use management objectives.  The effects of development and visitor use on the natural surroundings will be minimized through planning and design efforts.	The historic character of the parkway will be protected and maintained while allowing for modifications that achieve desired conditions for special natural resources.	Natural resources will be managed to maintain the character of these cultural landscapes.	Natural resources will be managed to accommodate facilities for park operations.  The effects of developments on the natural surroundings will be minimized through planning and design efforts.
Moderate tolerance for resource impacts to accommodate visitor use and facilities.  Modification of some visitor use areas will be allowed to enhance protection of sensitive natural resources.	Moderate tolerance for natural resource impacts in order to preserve the parkway's original design and historic structures that contribute to its national significance.  Modification of some designed landscape areas, such as roadsides, vista clearings, and agricultural leases, will be allowed to enhance protection of sensitive natural resources.	Moderate tolerance for natural resource impacts to maintain these special cultural resources.	Moderate tolerance for natural resource impacts.  Modification of natural resources will be allowed to accommodate park operations and to maintain employee health and safety.





TABLE 2. BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY MANAGEMENT ZONES

	Special Natural Resources	Natural	Scenic Character	Recreation
<b>Appropriate Natural Resource Management Activities</b>	<p>Rare habitats will be actively restored and rare species will be recovered or reintroduced.</p> <p>Management activities will emphasize research, inventory, monitoring, prescribed burns, pest management, nonnative species eradication, and other types of resource stewardship.</p> <p>There will be very little evidence of on-site management except when necessary to address threats to resources or prevent human-caused impacts.</p>	<p>On-site management actions will emphasize resource protection objectives while providing limited facilities and services to support basic visitor needs.</p> <p>Management activities will emphasize research, inventory, monitoring, prescribed burns, pest management, nonnative species eradication, and other types of resource stewardship.</p> <p>Degraded sites will be restored in order to reestablish natural systems and processes with a priority on rare habitats for threatened and endangered species.</p>	<p>On-site management actions will emphasize maintaining the designed landscapes and open pastoral settings of the parkway with sensitivity to natural resource conditions, including wildlife corridors.</p> <p>Appropriate activities could include managing for certain types of vegetation over others to help maintain certain desired landscapes, such as open, pastoral settings.</p> <p>Activities could also include prescribed burns, pest management, and nonnative species eradication and other types of resource stewardship.</p>	<p>Degraded sites will be evaluated to determine if they should be hardened in order to accommodate visitor use or restored to a desired natural condition.</p> <p>Invasive species will be suppressed to prevent further spread or eradicated where feasible.</p> <p>Management will be adapted as needed to protect threatened and endangered species and rare habitats.</p>
<b>Cultural Resource Condition</b>	<p>Cultural resources contributing to national historic landmark designation and national register-eligible properties will be preserved using methods that do not impact sensitive natural resource conditions.</p> <p>All other cultural resources will be evaluated to determine if they should be preserved, stabilized, restored, or left unmaintained.</p>	<p>Cultural resources contributing to national historic landmark designation and national register-eligible properties will be protected.</p> <p>Selected cultural resources will be preserved or stabilized in order to provide educational opportunities for visitors.</p>	<p>The visual variety of the parkway's forested, pastoral, and rural landscapes will be maintained in a manner consistent with the Parkway Land Use Maps.</p>	<p>Cultural resources contributing to national historic landmark designation and national register-eligible properties will be protected.</p> <p>Selected cultural resources will be preserved to reflect a particular era, allowing people to experience these resources firsthand to learn about their associated stories and events.</p>



DOUGHTON PARK MILEPOST 244



Visitor Services	Historic Parkway	Special Cultural Resources	Park Support
<p>Natural resources will be actively managed to accommodate interpretive, educational, and other visitor services.</p> <p>Invasive species will be controlled to prevent further spread into other adjacent management zones.</p> <p>Management will be adapted as needed to protect threatened and endangered species and rare habitats.</p>	<p>Natural resources in the designed landscapes of the parkway will be actively managed to maintain the landscape appearance.</p> <p>Management will be adapted as needed to protect threatened and endangered species and rare habitats.</p>	<p>Natural resources will be actively managed as a component of the cultural landscape.</p> <p>Management will be adapted as needed to protect endangered species and rare habitats.</p>	<p>Natural resources will be managed as necessary to accommodate facilities for park operations.</p> <p>Management will be adapted as needed to protect endangered species and rare habitats.</p>
<p>Cultural resources will be actively managed to accommodate interpretation, education, and other visitor services.</p> <p>Selected cultural resources will provide distinct visitor opportunities and experiences and will be the backdrop for interpretation, visitor use, and services where appropriate.</p>	<p>The historic design character and components of the parkway road prism, certain recreation areas, and facilities will be preserved.</p>	<p>Maintain the integrity of these primarily local and regionally significant structures and landscapes. A variety of resource treatments may be appropriate, depending on the condition and location of the resource.</p>	<p>Cultural resources contributing to the parkway's national historic landmark designation will be protected.</p>







TABLE 2. BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY MANAGEMENT ZONES

	Special Natural Resources	Natural	Scenic Character	Recreation
<b>Tolerance for Cultural Resource Impacts</b>	Low to moderate tolerance for cultural resource impacts.	Low to moderate tolerance for cultural resource impacts.  Minor modifications of cultural landscape elements will be allowed only for resource protection.	Low to moderate tolerance for cultural resource impacts.  Modifications that enhance the scenic qualities of the parkway's cultural landscapes will be allowed.	Low to moderate tolerance for cultural resource impacts when necessary to provide for visitor use.
<b>Appropriate Cultural Resource Management Activities</b>	Cultural landscapes will be allowed to gradually revert to a more natural state, except when cultural features can be preserved without compromising natural resource values.  Cultural resources that do not contribute to parkway's national historic landmark designation could be stabilized or left unmaintained.	Selected historic structures will be stabilized or hardened <sup>2</sup> to provide enhanced educational and interpretive opportunities for visitors.  Cultural resources that do not contribute to parkway's national historic landmark designation could be stabilized or left unmaintained.	The parkway's designed landscapes and open pastoral settings will be maintained with sensitivity to cultural resource conditions.  Selected historic structures could be stabilized or hardened to provide enhanced educational and interpretive opportunities for visitors.	Cultural resources that do not contribute to parkway's national historic landmark designation could possibly be stabilized or left unmaintained.  Selected historic structures could be stabilized or hardened to provide enhanced educational and interpretive opportunities for visitors.
<b>Overall Visitor Experience</b>	Most visitors will experience these areas visually, as part of the more distant and rugged scenic views of parkway landscape. Limited opportunities will be available to visitors with time and backcountry skills who are seeking opportunities for outdoor challenge and solitude.  Access will require a moderate to high level of skill, self-reliance, and effort for visitors to these areas.	Visitors to these areas are likely to encounter intact natural resources, features, and systems for personal inspiration, education, and recreation.  Visitors will have, among a variety of outdoor recreation activities, opportunities to experience solitude, contemplation, self-reliance, challenge, and risk.  Access will require a moderate to high level of skill, self-reliance, and effort for visitors to these areas.	Visitors will have opportunities to see and experience a variety of scenic settings evocative of central and southern Appalachian landscapes.  Access will involve a low to moderate degree of difficulty.	Visitors will have opportunities to participate in a range of both structured and self-guiding recreational, interpretive, and educational opportunities.  Visitors will experience a mostly natural setting where some visitor services are available to accommodate moderate levels of use.  Access will involve a low to moderate degree of difficulty.
<b>Visitor Use Levels</b>	Visitor use levels will be very low to protect resource integrity. If conditions warrant, especially fragile areas could be closed to visitation.	Visitor use levels will be low to avoid degrading natural resources and values.	Visitor use levels will be low to high, depending on the level of amenities and services.	Visitor use levels will be low to moderate, depending on the proximity to access points and developments.

2. In this context, hardening refers to properly securing structures to prevent unauthorized access, treating surfaces in historically appropriate methods to prevent vandalism (graffiti), placement of sacrificial surfaces to deter defacing of historic structures, increased patrol of these areas by law enforcement, or better illumination, etc.



Visitor Services	Historic Parkway	Special Cultural Resources	Park Support
Low to moderate tolerance for cultural resource impacts when necessary to provide for visitor use.	Low tolerance for cultural resource impacts.	Extremely low tolerance for cultural resource impacts.	Moderate tolerance for cultural resource impacts to accommodate facilities for park operations.
Selected historic structures could be stabilized or hardened to provide enhanced educational and interpretive opportunities for visitors.	The historic character of the parkway will be preserved while allowing for minor modifications to achieve desired conditions for visitor experiences, resource protection, and vista management.	Cultural landscapes and historic structures will be preserved and maintained to reflect a particular era or appearance.	Cultural resources will be left undisturbed, except when necessary for constructing new facilities for park operations.
<p>Visitors will have opportunities to participate in a range of recreational, interpretive, and educational opportunities to experience and learn about the natural and cultural heritage of the central and southern Appalachians in built environments and social settings.</p> <p>Visitors will experience a designed setting that supports high levels of use, including a variety of visitor services and overnight accommodations.</p> <p>Access to these areas will be easy for visitors.</p>	<p>Visitors will have a leisurely, uninterrupted driving experience in a designed roadway setting with a scenic backdrop of central and southern Appalachian landscapes and in the absence of commercial advertising, congestion, and driving conflicts.</p> <p>Access to these areas will be easy for visitors.</p>	Visitors will see and experience historic structures in their original landscape settings that are indicative of the cultural heritage and settlement patterns of the region.	Visitor opportunities and experiences will not be emphasized in this zone to avoid interference with park operations and maintenance activities.
<p>Visitor use levels will be moderate to high.</p> <p>Visitors may experience traffic congestion in parking areas.</p>	Visitors will encounter other vehicles at volumes and frequencies where free-flow speeds are maintained; where the ability to move in traffic is only slightly restricted; and where the effects of minor incidents and breakdowns are easily absorbed.	Visitor use levels will be low to moderate, depending on the proximity to access points and developments.	Visitor use levels will be very low.





TABLE 2. BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY MANAGEMENT ZONES

	Special Natural Resources	Natural	Scenic Character	Recreation
<b>Appropriate Recreational Activities</b>	<p>Law enforcement-led walks will be provided when appropriate for resource protection.</p> <p>Hiking and backpacking will be limited to designated trails only.</p> <p>Backcountry camping at designated sites will be considered.</p> <p>No horseback riding, mountain biking, or motorized vehicles will be allowed.</p>	<p>Low-impact recreational activities could include: hiking, backpacking, nature observation, photography, backcountry camping at designated sites, self-guiding interpretation, and small-group guided activities that do not degrade natural values.</p> <p>Horseback riding will be allowed on certain designated trails where appropriate. No mountain biking or motorized vehicles will be allowed, except when authorized for management activities.</p>	<p>Recreational activities will include: scenic viewing, photography, walking, guided hikes, and other activities that will be appropriate for particular landscape settings.</p> <p>Biking and horseback riding will be allowed on certain designated trails.</p>	<p>Recreational activities will include: organized group programs, self-guiding interpretation, nature observation, picnicking, hiking, backpacking, viewing natural and cultural resources, photography, exploring, and backcountry camping at designated sites.</p> <p>Biking and horseback riding will be allowed on certain designated trails.</p>
<b>Visitor Services</b>	<p>Limited directional signs, on-site interpretive materials, and structured interpretive programs related to the management and protection of natural resources will be available to visitors at selected locations.</p> <p>Proactive education and law enforcement strategies will be emphasized to prevent exploitation of resources.</p> <p>Park staff and law enforcement presence will be low.</p>	<p>Directional signs, interpretive waysides, and structured interpretive programs will be provided to promote safe and responsible recreation.</p> <p>Proactive education and law enforcement strategies will be emphasized at targeted locations to prevent exploitation of resources.</p> <p>Park staff and law enforcement presence will be low.</p>	<p>Low levels of visitor services will be provided. The majority of services will be in adjacent zones, such as the historic parkway and visitor services zones.</p> <p>Park staff and law enforcement presence will be low.</p>	<p>Moderate levels of visitor services could be provided, such as orientation, guided interpretive programs, signs and wayside exhibits, and commercial services such as guided hikes and guided bicycle rides.</p> <p>Park staff and law enforcement presence will be moderate.</p>



ROANOKE VALLEY MILEPOST 129.7



Visitor Services	Historic Parkway	Special Cultural Resources	Park Support
There will be a wide variety of recreational opportunities available to visitors, including: dining, lodging, camping, walking, bicycling, picnicking, shopping, scenic viewing, park special events, structured interpretive programs, and guided walks.	Recreational activities will include: low-speed and safe driving, scenic viewing, picnicking, bicycling, hiking, running, jogging, camping, interpretive activities, and other similar compatible uses.	Recreational activities will include: interpretive programs, sightseeing, photography, walking, and other activities appropriate to the setting.	Recreational activities will only be offered if they do not conflict with parkway operations and maintenance activities.
<p>Moderate to high levels of visitor services will be provided and could include: orientation and interpretive programs, signs, wayside exhibits, commercial operations, convenience stores, dining, lodging, gift shops, and shuttle services.</p> <p>Park staff and law enforcement presence will be moderate to high.</p> <p>Orientation, interpretation, and educational opportunities will be concentrated in this zone.</p>	<p>Moderate levels of visitor services will be provided, such as orientation, interpretive and educational programs, signs and wayside exhibits, and commercial services.</p> <p>Proactive education and law enforcement will be emphasized to promote visitor safety.</p>	Specific on-site interpretive themes will be presented to visitors.	Minimal visitor services will be provided.







TABLE 2. BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY MANAGEMENT ZONES

	Special Natural Resources	Natural	Scenic Character	Recreation
<b>Levels of Developments</b>	<p>Minimal developments, such as unpaved trails, will be provided in a manner that limits habitat fragmentation and generally protects natural resource conditions.</p> <p>Existing developments that are not consistent with the desired natural resource conditions could be removed.</p>	<p>Minimal facilities will be provided for visitors that support resource protection and facilitate low-impact use, including backcountry campsites, pit toilets, unpaved trails, trailhead facilities, and on-site interpretive media when needed.</p> <p>Trail networks will be well planned; network density will be kept low to limit habitat fragmentation and generally avoid natural resource impacts.</p> <p>Existing developments that are not consistent with the desired resource conditions could be removed or modified.</p>	<p>Trails, roads, and other recreation facilities will be provided that are unobtrusive and blend with the natural and cultural landscapes of the parkway.</p>	<p>A moderate level of development will be provided to guide visitor use, enhance recreational opportunities, and protect resources, including: interpretive media, trails, trailhead restrooms, trail shelters, picnic tables, camp sites, access roads, and shuttle vehicles.</p> <p>There will be a low to medium density of road and trail networks to ensure safe access, circulation for visitors, and protection of resources. The surfaces of roads, trails, parking areas, and other heavy use areas may be hardened where appropriate.</p>



ASHEVILLE CORRIDOR MILEPOST 380





Visitor Services	Historic Parkway	Special Cultural Resources	Park Support
<p>There will be a moderate to high level of development to meet visitor use and park operation needs.</p> <p>Orientation, amenities, and visitor services will be provided that support a safe and satisfying experience, including: visitor centers, contact stations, concession lodging and food services, developed campgrounds, picnic areas, trails, interpretive media, parking areas, and sidewalks.</p> <p>There will be a medium to high density of paved roads and parking lots to ensure safe access and circulation for visitors.</p>	<p>Developments will include existing facilities in the parkway road prism, such as: roads, parking areas, trails, vista cuts, waysides, information and regulatory signs, bridges, tunnels, walls, fences, guard walls and rails, and drainage structures.</p> <p>Other types of development directly associated with the original parkway concept will include visitor contact stations, campgrounds, picnic areas, comfort stations, exhibits, and maintenance areas.</p>	<p>Trails, roads, signs, waysides, and interpretive exhibits will be provided in a historic context.</p>	<p>Administrative offices, maintenance structures, equipment and fuel storage, utility systems, staff offices, meeting spaces, and living quarters could be located in this zone.</p>









# MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR PARKWAY SEGMENTS



1959 HUMPBACK FARM MILEPOST 5.8



HUMPBACK ROCKS FARM MILEPOST 5.8





PARKWAY VISITORS ROCKY KNOB 1940

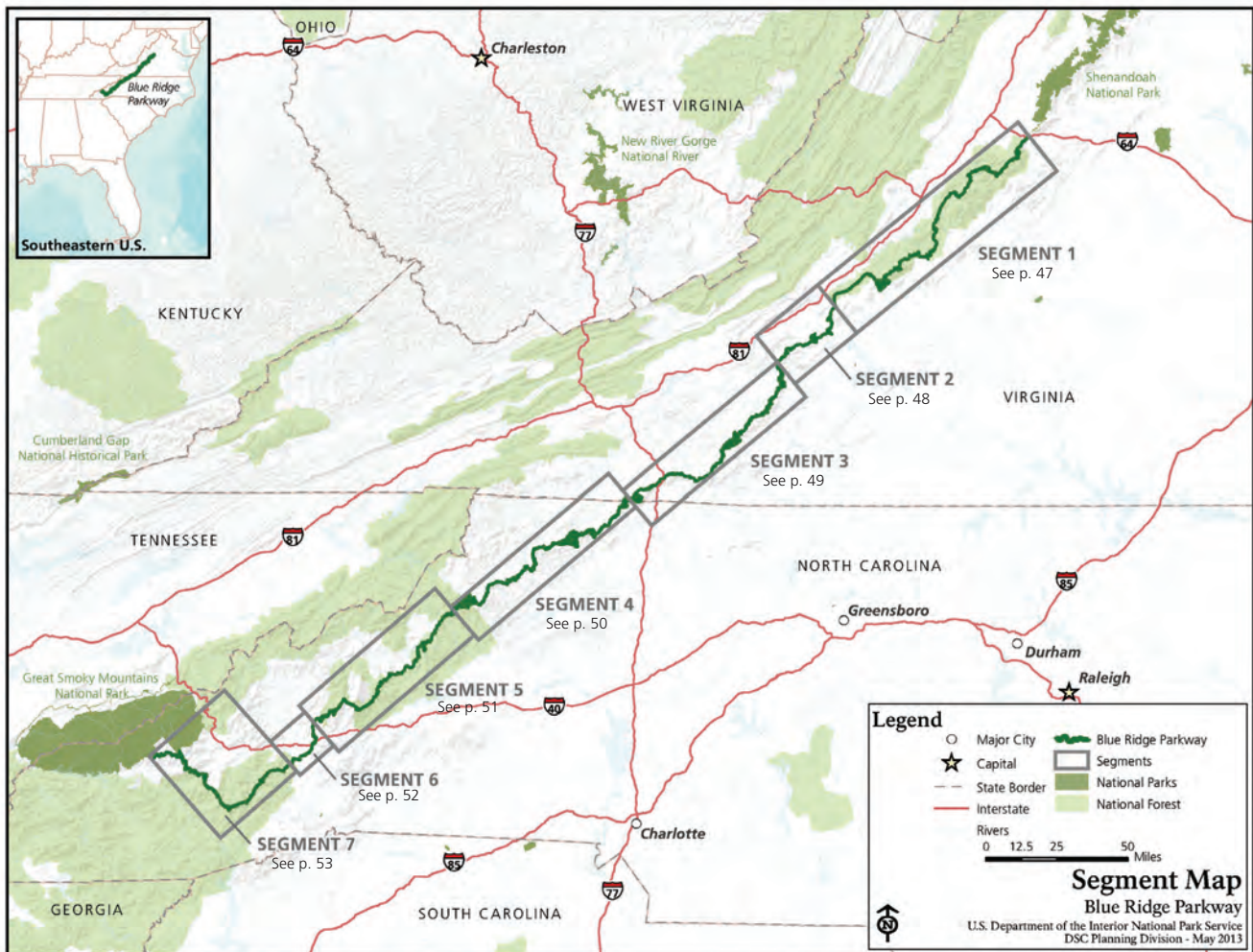


## MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR PARKWAY SEGMENTS

On the following pages, a brief description of each parkway segment is provided along with management strategies and a zoning map. The seven segments of the parkway are presented in order from north to south. They are as follows:

- Segment 1—Ridge, mileposts 0–106
- Segment 2—Roanoke, mileposts 106–136
- Segment 3—Plateau, mileposts 136–217
- Segment 4—Highlands, mileposts 217–305
- Segment 5—Black Mountain, mileposts 305–377
- Segment 6—Asheville, mileposts 377–394
- Segment 7—Pisgah, mileposts 394–469

Note the widths of the management zone colors shown on the segment maps are exaggerated for readability. The typical width of the parkway right-of-way averages 800 feet, but can be as narrow as 200 feet.







**BLUFF MOUNTAIN TUNNEL MILEPOST 53.2**





## SEGMENT 1 — RIDGE, MILEPOSTS 0-106

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Many visitors travel directly from Shenandoah National Park and its Skyline Drive and enter seamlessly into the Blue Ridge Parkway at Rockfish Gap. For some this begins a spectacular 469-mile journey south to Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Visitors traveling through the Ridge segment experience a scenic drive through deep mountain forests interspersed with pastoral vistas of agricultural lands. Almost the entire segment is bounded by national forest lands and four wilderness areas. Climbing and descending ridgetops and gaps offer magnificent views of the Great and Rockfish valleys.

The segment also includes some of the parkway's best examples of pre-1950 Appalachian structures, sites, and transportation routes. Many miles of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (the AT) are located in this segment of the parkway. The trail is managed under separate rules and regulations and the only allowable trail uses are hiking, backpacking, and backcountry camping.

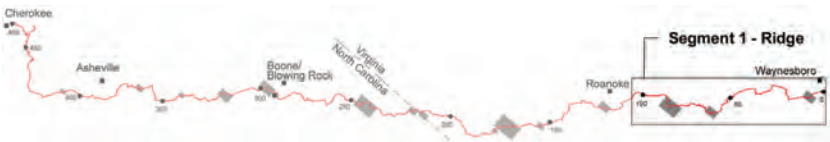
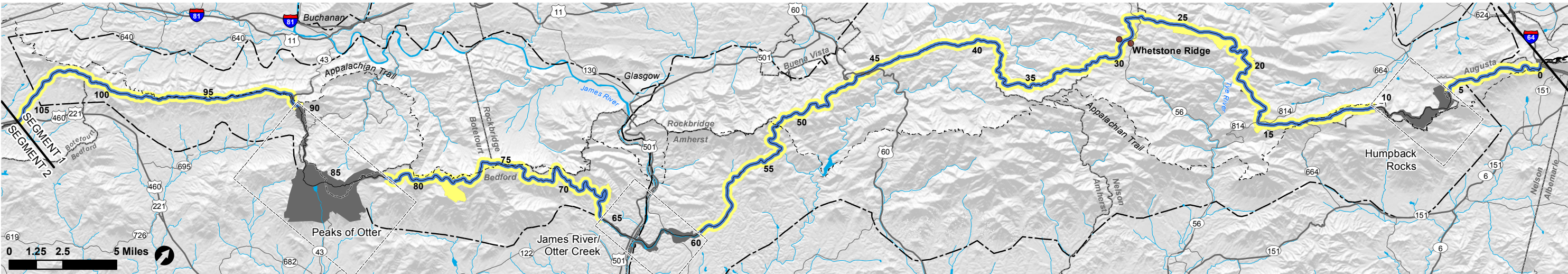
### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

At the north entrance, improve the quality of the visitor entry experience and provide orientation services. The goal is to substantially increase visitor contacts over current levels. Potential actions include providing additional information and orientation through redesigning the existing pull-off parking area and installing new waysides. Parkway right-of-way is so narrow at the north entrance that National Park Service staff will have to partner with private landowners, local governments, Shenandoah National Park, and U.S. Forest Service to provide parkway information and orientation for visitors. The National Park Service will not fund or own a visitor center facility.

The proximity of U.S. Forest Service lands and regional trails provides opportunities for trail connections. Continue ongoing partnership efforts with local stakeholders to improve regional trail connections and potentially accommodate new or additional types of uses. Make minor modifications to some overlook landscaping to improve pullout visibility by passing traffic.



FALL IN THE BLUE RIDGE DISTRICT MILEPOST 74.7







## SEGMENT 2—ROANOKE, MILEPOSTS 106–136

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The pulse of the parkway begins to change as visitors travel into the Roanoke Valley, the largest urban area along the parkway with a population of 225,000. The elevation is lower, the number of farms increases as the land levels out, and the city approaches. Visitors find this area in a state of dramatic change from pastoral landscape to suburban residential growth. This area is one of the best on the parkway for interpreting land use through time, as well as the current issues of scenic protection and land use management.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

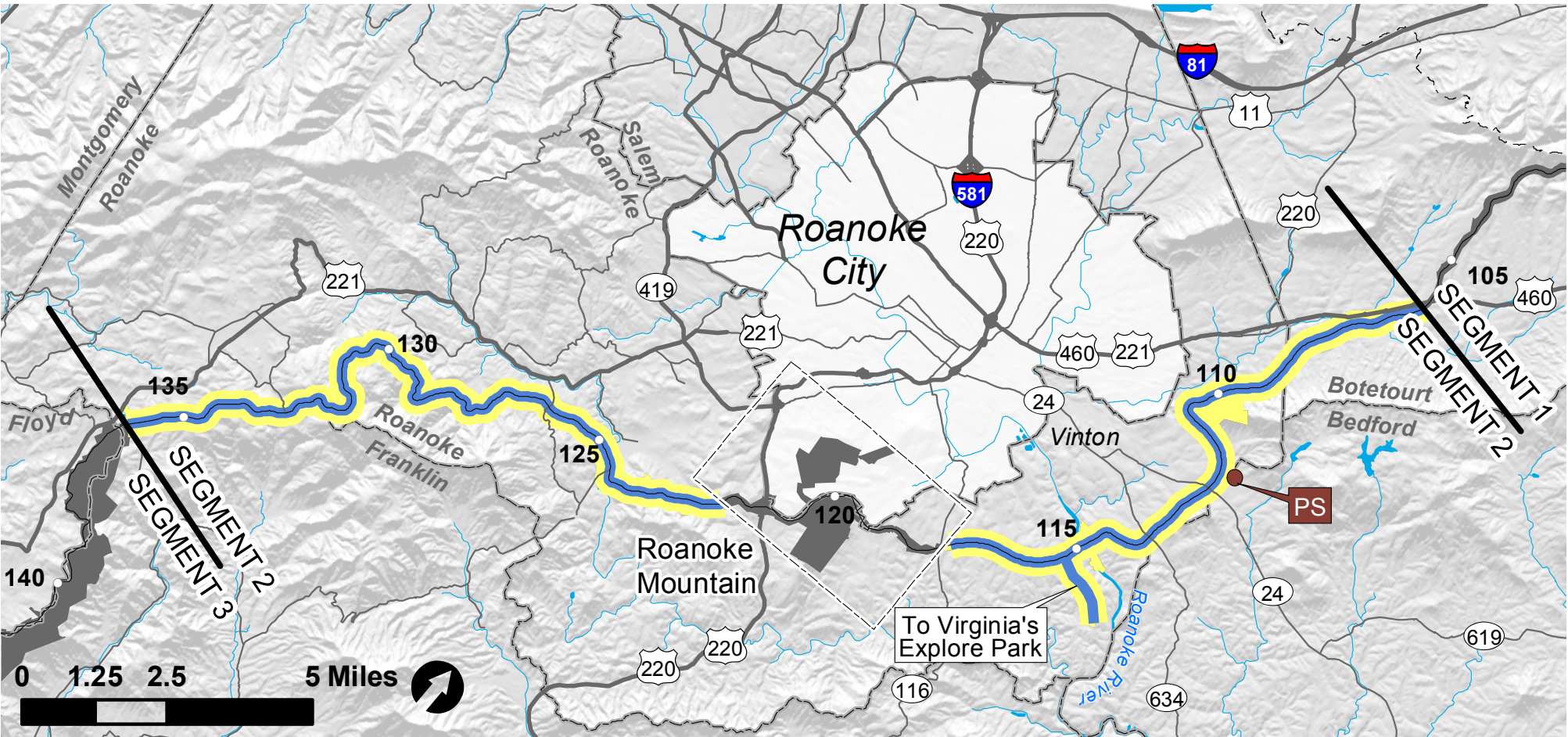
Improve visitor orientation services in the Roanoke area of the parkway. The goal is to substantially increase visitor contacts over current levels by staffing a National Park Service / Blue Ridge Parkway information desk and giving programs at a site off the parkway such as in a downtown Roanoke location.

Make minor modifications to some overlook landscaping to improve pullout visibility by passing traffic.

Continue to coordinate with municipalities and other partners on the Roanoke trail plan. Develop trails and provide trail connections.



VIEW OF ROANOKE VALLEY



- Special Natural Resource (SNR)
- Natural (N)
- Recreation (R)
- Visitor Services (VS)

- Historic Parkway (HP)
- Scenic Character (SC)
- Special Cultural Resource (SCR)
- Park Support (PS)

- Parkway Lands
- Recreation Trails

Note: Parkway land boundaries are based on the best available information.







## SEGMENT 3—PLATEAU, MILEPOSTS 136–217

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Visitors to this segment travel across the great plateau that overlooks Virginia’s piedmont region. They experience a mostly scenic drive through rolling hills that are a patchwork of farms, fields, and forests. Visitors have access to some major cultural sites along this segment, such as Mabry Mill, the most visited site on the parkway.

This segment also includes Groundhog Mountain picnic area, observation tower, and fence exhibit. Unlike many segments of the parkway that are bordered by national forest lands, here the narrow parkway corridor is bounded by mostly privately owned rural and agricultural lands. The parkway maintains hundreds of agricultural leases; however, many of the adjacent lands have been or are being subdivided. The quality of the views in this segment is diminished by development and the loss of the traditional pastoral landscape. With the

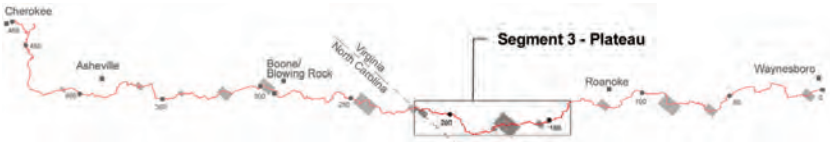
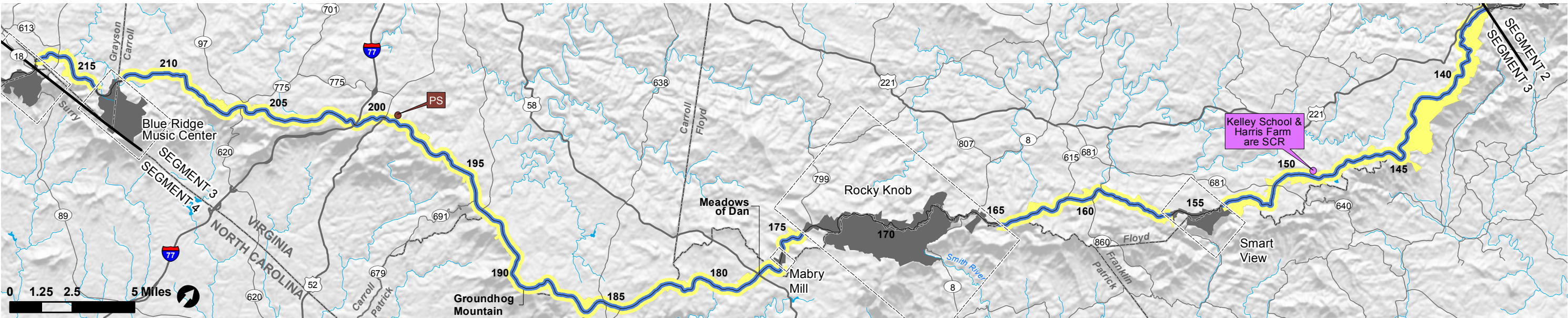
growing development, the parkway has a high level of local traffic crossing and using it as part of the local road network.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Continue to manage the Kelley School and a number of farms near milepost 149, including the Harris Farm, for their scenic pastoral qualities.



PUCKETT CABIN MILEPOST 189.8







SEGMENT 4—HIGHLANDS, MILEPOSTS 217–305

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The Highlands segment begins at the state line between Virginia and North Carolina. This segment offers the greatest variety of views and gives visitors a strong sense of “being away from it all.” The designed landscape in this segment retains much integrity of original vistas, landscaped bays, agriculture leases, stone walls, and wood fences. Also, this segment includes the oldest original section of the parkway. Just south of the state line the parkway climbs onto the edge of the escarpment where Cumberland Knob, the parkway’s first recreation area, is located.

From Cumberland Knob the roadway continues to wind around high mountain pastures before it drops in elevation to a forested landscape with views to the piedmont and high mountain valleys to the west. Much of the parkway is bordered by private lands in this area. The Northwest Trading Post is a concession-operated country store that provides local crafts and food products

for visitors at milepost 258.6. EB Jeffress Park, at milepost 272, is a day-use recreation area for hiking and picnicking and no specific changes in facilities or visitor experiences are proposed.

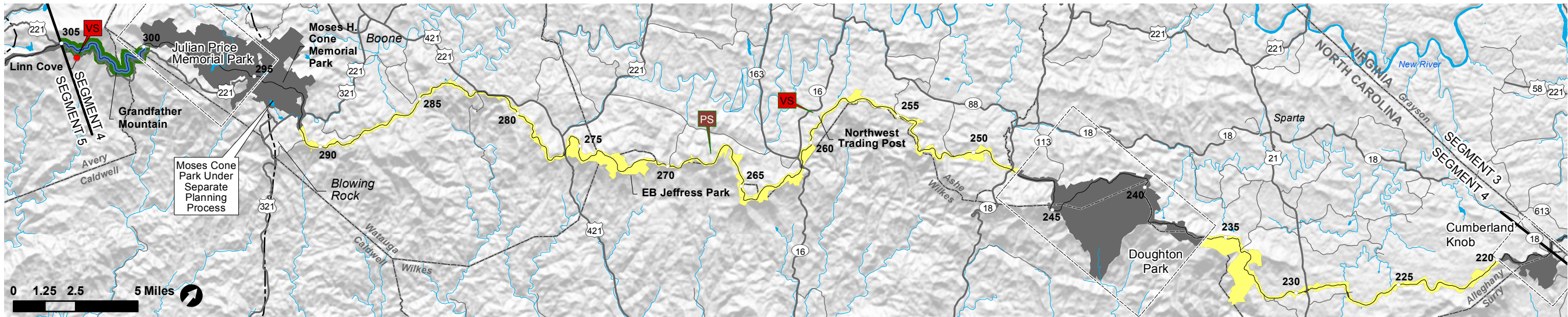
The greatest area of population growth adjacent to this segment is in the Boone / Blowing Rock area, which is evident on the parkway in more urban views and higher levels of commuter traffic. At the southern end of this segment between mileposts 300 and 305 is Grandfather Mountain, which protects some of the most significant natural habitat and rare species in the southern Appalachians. This section of the parkway is bordered by national forest land and the state-owned Grandfather Mountain nature preserve. Outside of the road prism, this Grandfather Mountain section is zoned Special Natural Resources.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Continue ongoing partnership efforts with local stakeholders to improve regional trail connections and potentially accommodate new or additional types of uses.

There are unmet opportunities for additional recreation trails, especially in the Boone / Blowing Rock area.

No major point of contact for visitors for park information and orientation will be provided in the Boone / Blowing Rock area.



Moses H. Cone Memorial Park in North Carolina is a 3,500-acre site along the Blue Ridge Parkway near the Boone / Blowing Rock communities. This parkway area receives considerable recreational use and has some very specific management issues relating to trail use for bicycling and horseback riding. A separate developed area management plan and environmental assessment for the site is under way. You will not see zoning maps for Moses Cone in this publication. However, any planning proposals for Moses Cone will be consistent with proposals made in the general management plan.







## SEGMENT 5—BLACK MOUNTAIN, MILEPOSTS 305–377

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

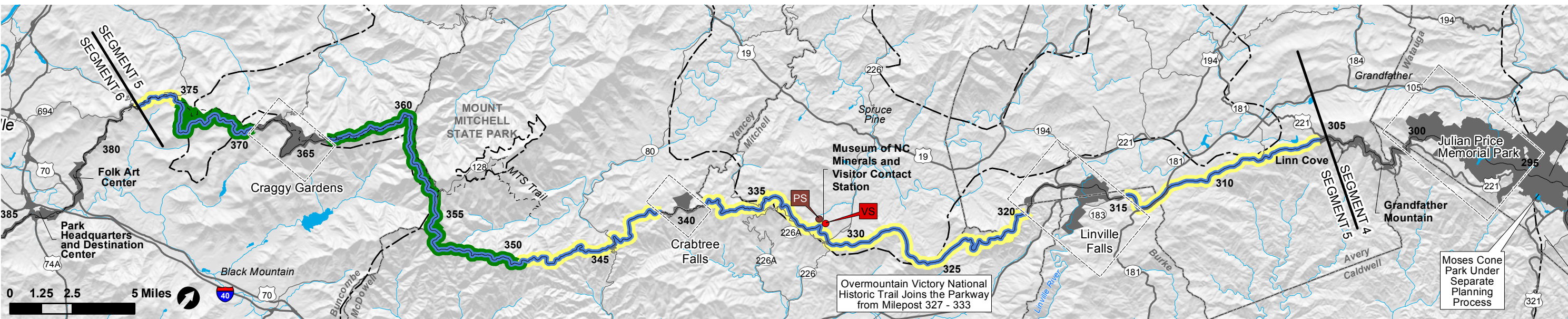
Visitors traveling through the Black Mountain segment experience a scenic drive through a mountain forest, climbing and descending ridgetops, and gaps that offer magnificent views of the valleys below. The Museum of North Carolina Minerals, in cooperation with the Mitchell County Chamber of Commerce, is a visitor facility that was recently renovated. This parkway segment, especially between mileposts 348 and 375, contains the critically, globally imperiled high-elevation spruce/fir forest community. Also, the broad, central dome of the massive Black Mountains includes the highest mountain east of the Mississippi, found at Mount Mitchell State Park near milepost 355. Through this segment, much of the adjacent land use is national forest, which helps protect the quality of views. The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, commemorating the Revolutionary War route to the Battle of Kings Mountain, will intersect and follow the parkway between mileposts 327 to 333. The Minerals Museum is open year round.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

No specific management strategies have been developed for the Black Mountain segment, other than management zone prescriptions.



Craggy Pinnacle Tunnel Milepost 364.4



- Special Natural Resource (SNR)
- Natural (N)
- Recreation (R)
- Visitor Services (VS)

- Historic Parkway (HP)
- Scenic Character (SC)
- Special Cultural Resource (SCR)
- Park Support (PS)

- Parkway Lands
- Recreation Trails

Note: Parkway land boundaries are based on the best available information.





## SEGMENT 6—ASHEVILLE, MILEPOSTS 377–394

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The Asheville segment is the second largest urban area that the parkway passes through. Unlike the Roanoke segment, visitors entering this area are enveloped by the urban forest and have few views of the city landscape other than where the parkway crosses over city streets and waterways. This segment is popular for recreational trail use and is a major access area between the parkway and regional transportation corridors. At milepost 382, the Folk Art Center is operated by the Southern Highland Craft Guild, whose mission is to preserve and interpret the many expressions of folk art associated with the region, including music, dance, storytelling, and crafts. At milepost 384 is a new regional destination center that will help orient and introduce visitors to the many attractions of the western North Carolina region. The center includes offices for the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area, which promotes the traditional Appalachian heritage of western North Carolina. Near milepost 393 the parkway and the North Carolina

Arboretum work cooperatively on educational programs about traditional native plant uses.

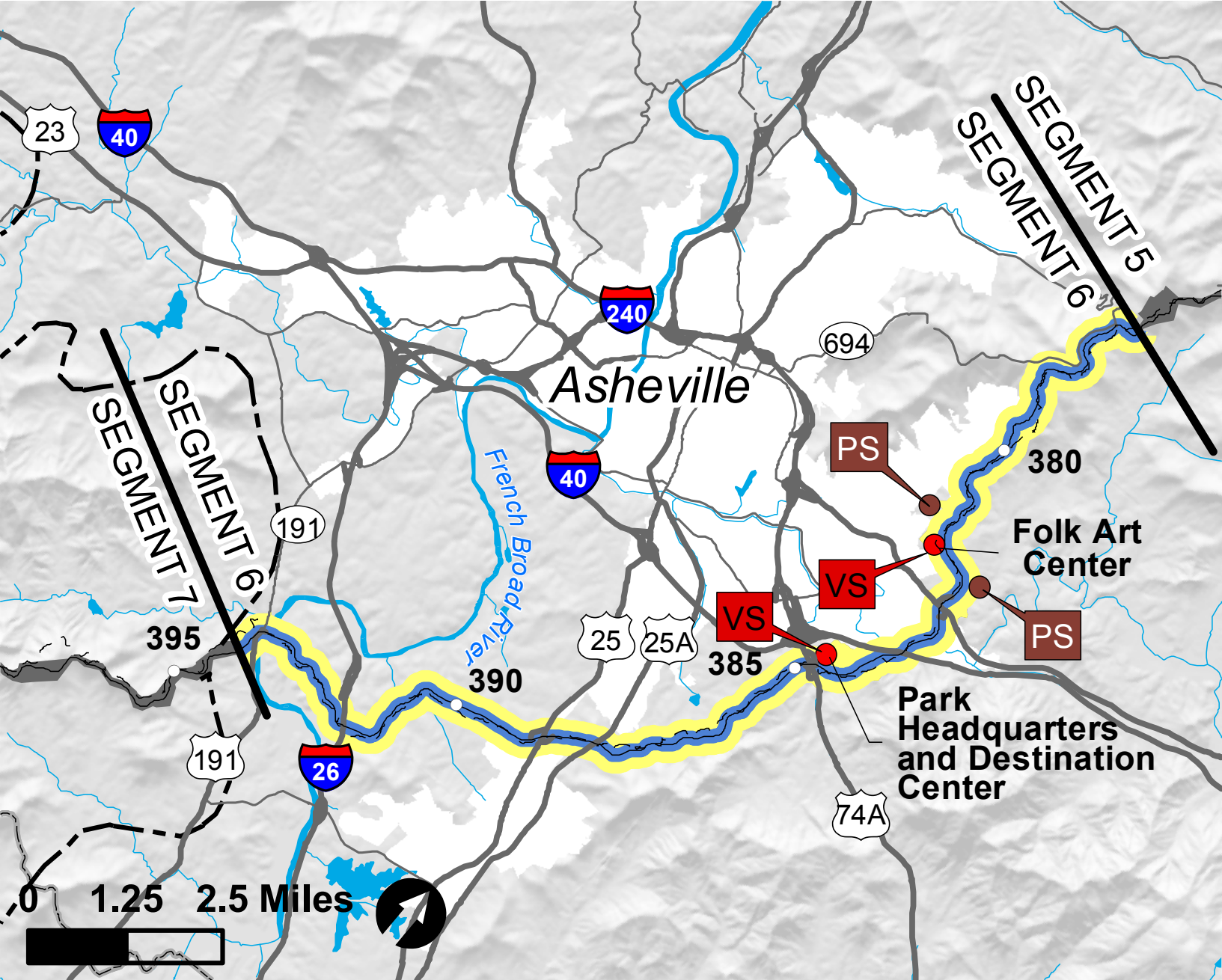
### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Existing trails in the Asheville segment are heavily used, primarily by local residents. Continue ongoing partnership efforts with local stakeholders to improve regional trail connections and potentially accommodate new or additional types of uses.

Develop additional parking for recreational use.



BENT CREEK, MILEPOST 393.6







SEGMENT 7—PISGAH, MILEPOSTS 394–469

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

In the Pisgah segment, the visitor experience is dominated by remote natural areas and dramatic views of high mountains. Most of the parkway here is bordered by national forests, including portions of the Shining Rock Wilderness. The area between mileposts 417 and 460 is dominated by the critically globally imperiled high-elevation spruce/fir forest. It is host to numerous sensitive vegetation and wildlife species. Here visitors have many opportunities to learn about the area’s biological diversity and the parkway’s role in protecting many unusual plant and animal species. Visitors are encouraged to experience this area through scenic overlooks and hiking. The last 20 miles of the parkway pass through ancestral lands owned by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, finally ending at Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

At the south entrance, improve the quality of the visitor entry experience and provide orientation services. The goal is to substantially increase visitor contacts over current levels. Potential actions include providing additional information and orientation through redesigning the existing pull-off parking area and installing new waysides. Parkway right-of-way is so narrow at the south entrance that National Park Service staff will have to partner with private landowners, local governments, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, U.S. Forest Service, or Eastern Band of Cherokee to provide parkway information and orientation for visitors. The National Park Service will not fund or own a visitor center facility.

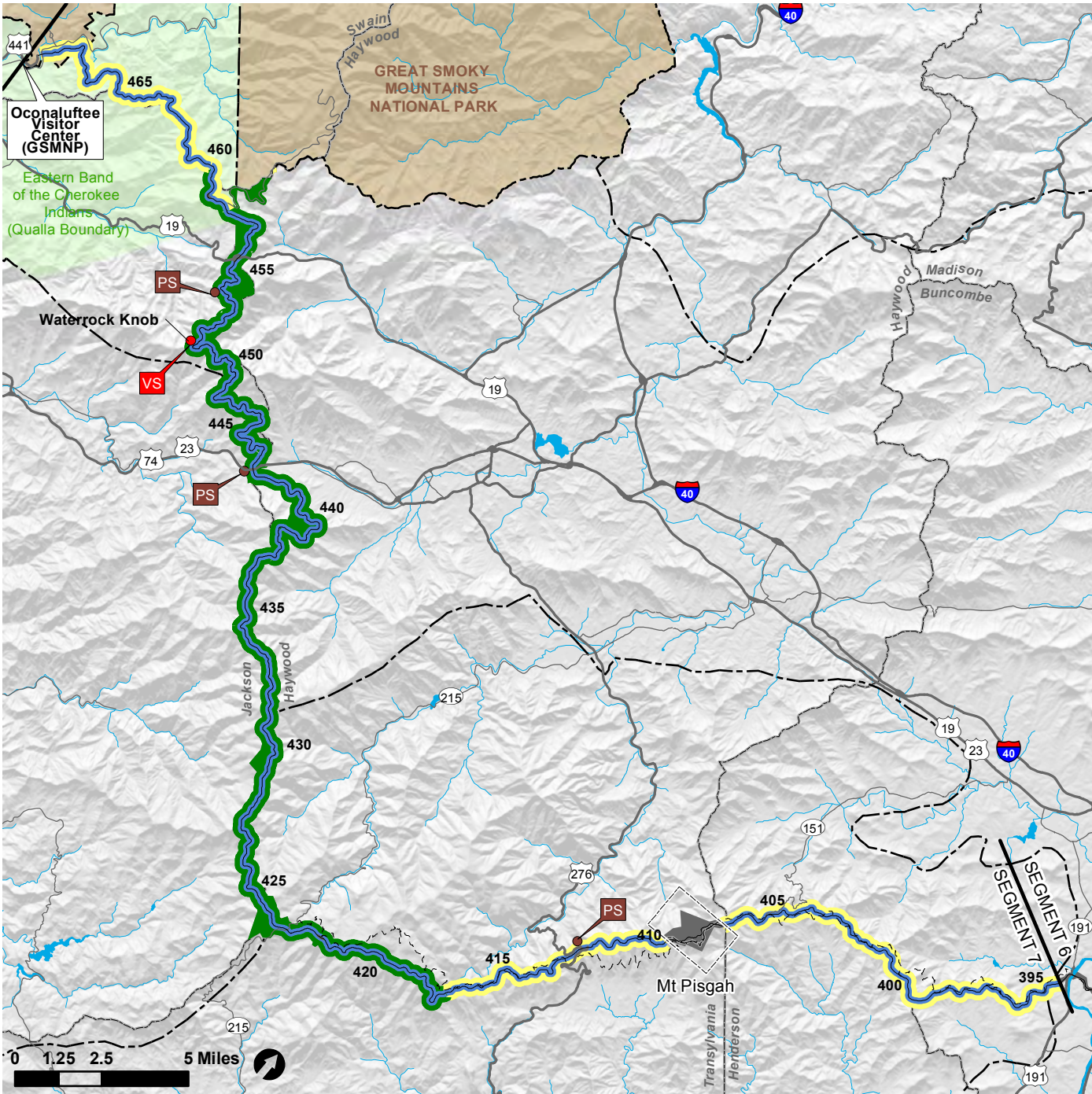
Modify designed landscapes, including vistas and overlooks as needed, to protect sensitive natural resources. Modifications could include altering mowing patterns and vegetation management practices, including the extent to which vistas are cut, and modifying drainage structures.

Develop a comprehensive parkway-wide strategy to manage invasive plants, focusing on the segment between Asheville and Mount Pisgah.

In cooperation with other land management agencies, develop regional strategies for managing invasive plants.



Mt. Pisgah and Pisgah Inn Milepost 408.5







# MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR RECREATION AREAS



VISITOR AT LINVILLE FALLS MILEPOST 316.4



PICNICKING AT CUMBERLAND KNOB 1946





CHESTOA VIEW 1946 MILEPOST 320.8



CHESTOA VIEW 2013 MILEPOST 320.8

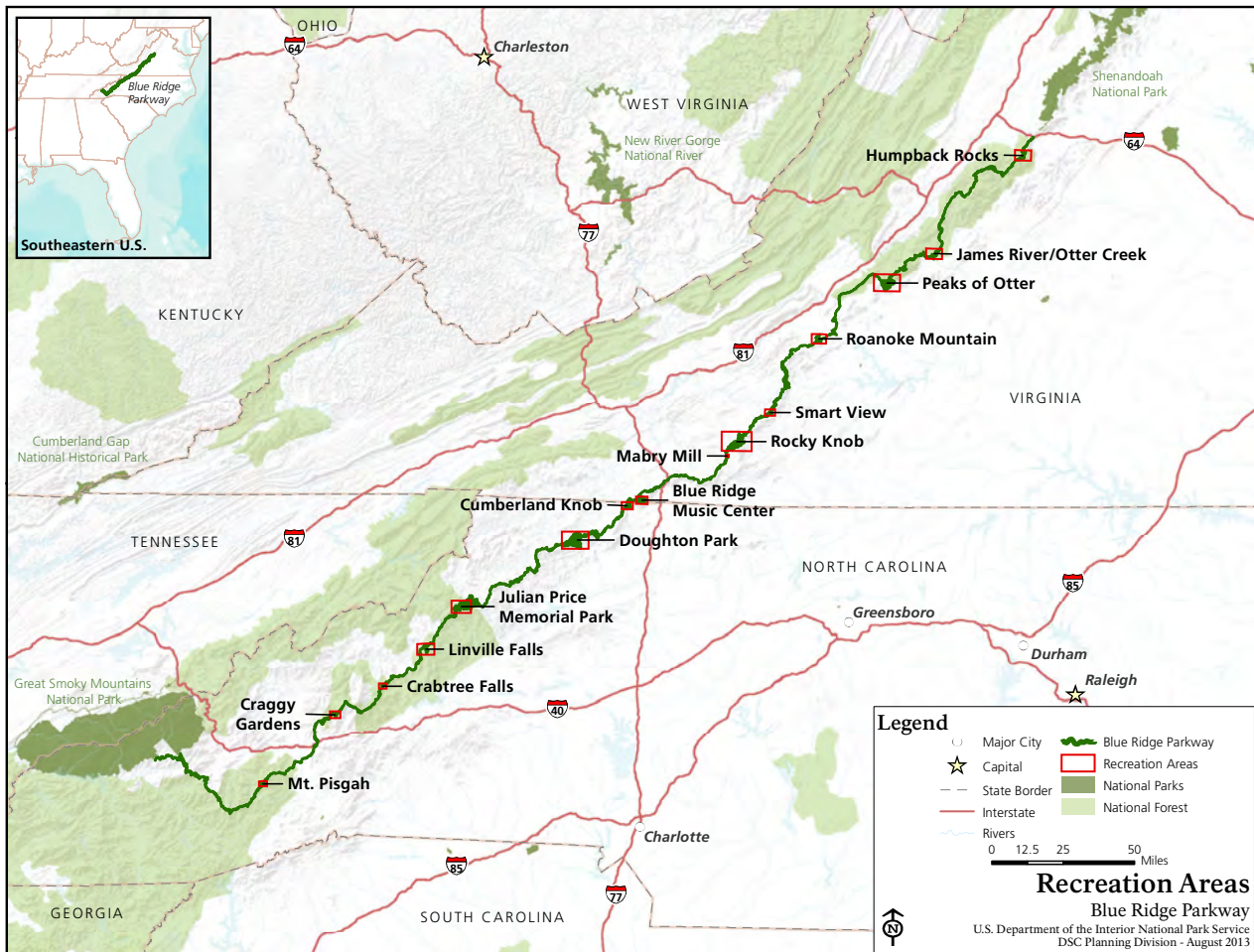




## MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR RECREATION AREAS

The following pages present specific management strategies for 15 of the park's 21 recreation areas. They include a brief description of the recreation areas, the management strategies table, and zoning maps. The recreation areas are presented in order from north to south as follows:

- Humpback Rocks, mileposts 6–10 (see page 58)
- James River/Otter Creek, mileposts 60–65 (see page 60)
- Peaks of Otter, mileposts 82–91 (see page 62)
- Roanoke Mountain, mileposts 118–122 (see page 64)
- Smart View, milepost 155 (see page 66)
- Rocky Knob, mileposts 166–174 (see page 68)
- Mabry Mill, milepost 176 (see page 70)
- Blue Ridge Music Center, milepost 213 (see page 72)
- Cumberland Knob, mileposts 217–219 (see page 74)
- Doughton Park, mileposts 236–247 (see page 76)
- Julian Price Memorial Park, mileposts 295–300 (see page 78)
- Linville Falls, mileposts 315–319 (see page 80)
- Crabtree Falls, mileposts 339–340 (see page 82)
- Craggy Gardens, mileposts 364–369 (see page 84)
- Mt. Pisgah, mileposts 407–409 (see page 86)





## HUMPBACK ROCKS, MILEPOSTS 6-10

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Humpback Rocks is the first major recreation area that visitors encounter traveling south from Rockfish Gap. The 3,000 acres of mostly hardwood forest include several trails, including one to the geological feature of Humpback Rocks. Visitors are introduced to the Blue Ridge Parkway experience through staff, publications, and wayside exhibits at the visitor contact station. Adjacent to the contact station is the Mountain Farm, which consists of a single-room log cabin and a series of outbuildings that represent elements of regional architecture of the 19th and early 20th centuries. These buildings were collected during the early 1950s from several locations and reassembled at the current location. Costumed interpreters provide demonstrations and emphasize lifestyles of subsistence farmers of the late 19th century. Scattered through this area are remnants of an early farm and traces of the historic Howardsville Turnpike, which provided a transportation link between the Rockfish and South rivers. The Appalachian Trail parallels the parkway through a portion of the area to Rockfish Gap.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Retain the original management emphasis on traditional recreational pursuits; allow for and accommodate future increases in demand for these activities. Expect visitors to have moderate to high frequency of contact with others.

Mark the Howardsville Turnpike route and improve interpretation for visitors.

Keep visitor facilities consistent with the historic design; however, improve existing trails and potentially develop more trails to accommodate future increases in use levels and programs.

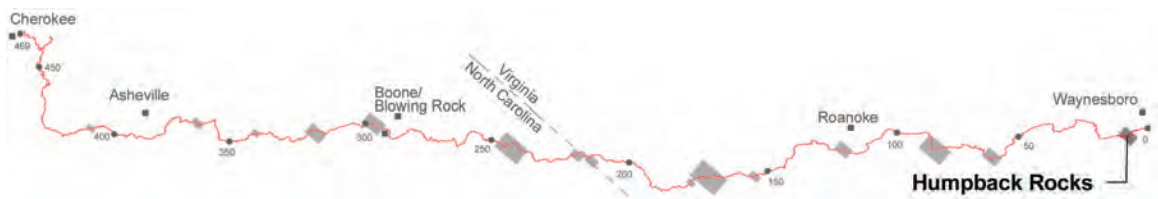
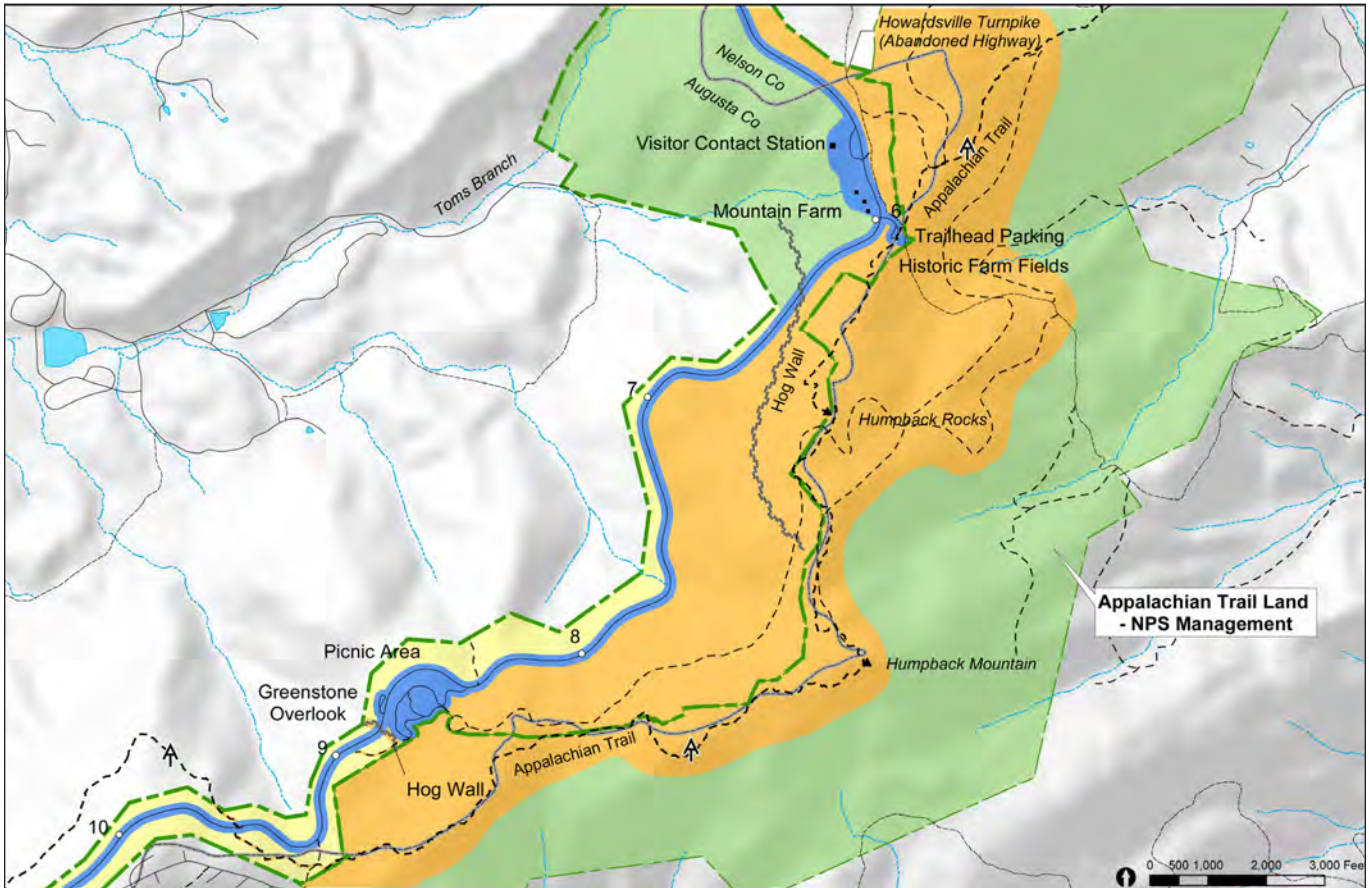
Continue to work in partnership with the Appalachian Trail to establish a route that avoids sensitive resource areas. This may entail rerouting trail sections or repairing trail treads.

Expand operations to provide services for a nine-month visitor season.



HUMPBACK ROCKS MILEPOST 6







## JAMES RIVER / OTTER CREEK, MILEPOSTS 60–65

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The James River / Otter Creek recreation area offers hiking, camping, picnicking, seasonal concessions dining, and fishing. An accessible fishing pier on Otter Lake provides opportunities for visitors with disabilities to fish. A bridge and pedestrian walkway across the James River connects the seasonally open visitor contact station with the restored Battery Creek canal lock.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Retain the original management emphasis on traditional recreational pursuits; allow for and accommodate future increases in demand for these activities.

Convert function of visitor contact station to a wayside shelter for the Otter Creek Trail but retain historic appearance.

Continue to periodically dredge the lake, which is part of the historic design, to remove silt and maintain lake qualities.

Continue to find ways to offer seasonal concession food service at Otter Creek. Strategies might include making upgrades to existing infrastructure and/or adding new facilities where appropriate.

Realign trail between restaurant and lake and provide additional trail links to accommodate higher use levels, with the possibility of expanding trail for future multiuse.

Allow for upgrades to the campground as described below.

Continue to implement future repairs and rehabilitations focused on those needed to meet backlog maintenance needs.

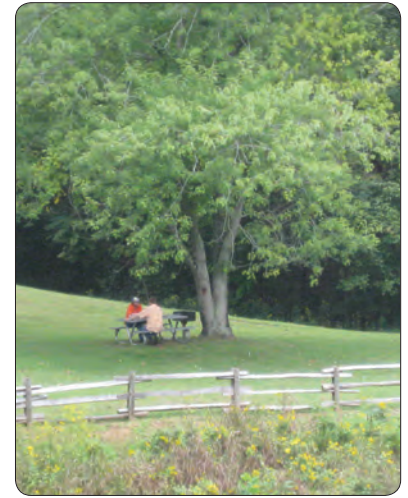
Upgrade certain comfort stations to provide showers. Upgrade all comfort stations to be universally accessible.

Enlarge selected tent sites to better accommodate family-sized tents.

Upgrade existing RV sites to provide water and electrical hookups.

Continue to provide limited access (i.e., narrow roads, tight turns, and small parking spaces) that does not adequately accommodate larger RVs.

Expand operations for a nine-month visitor season.

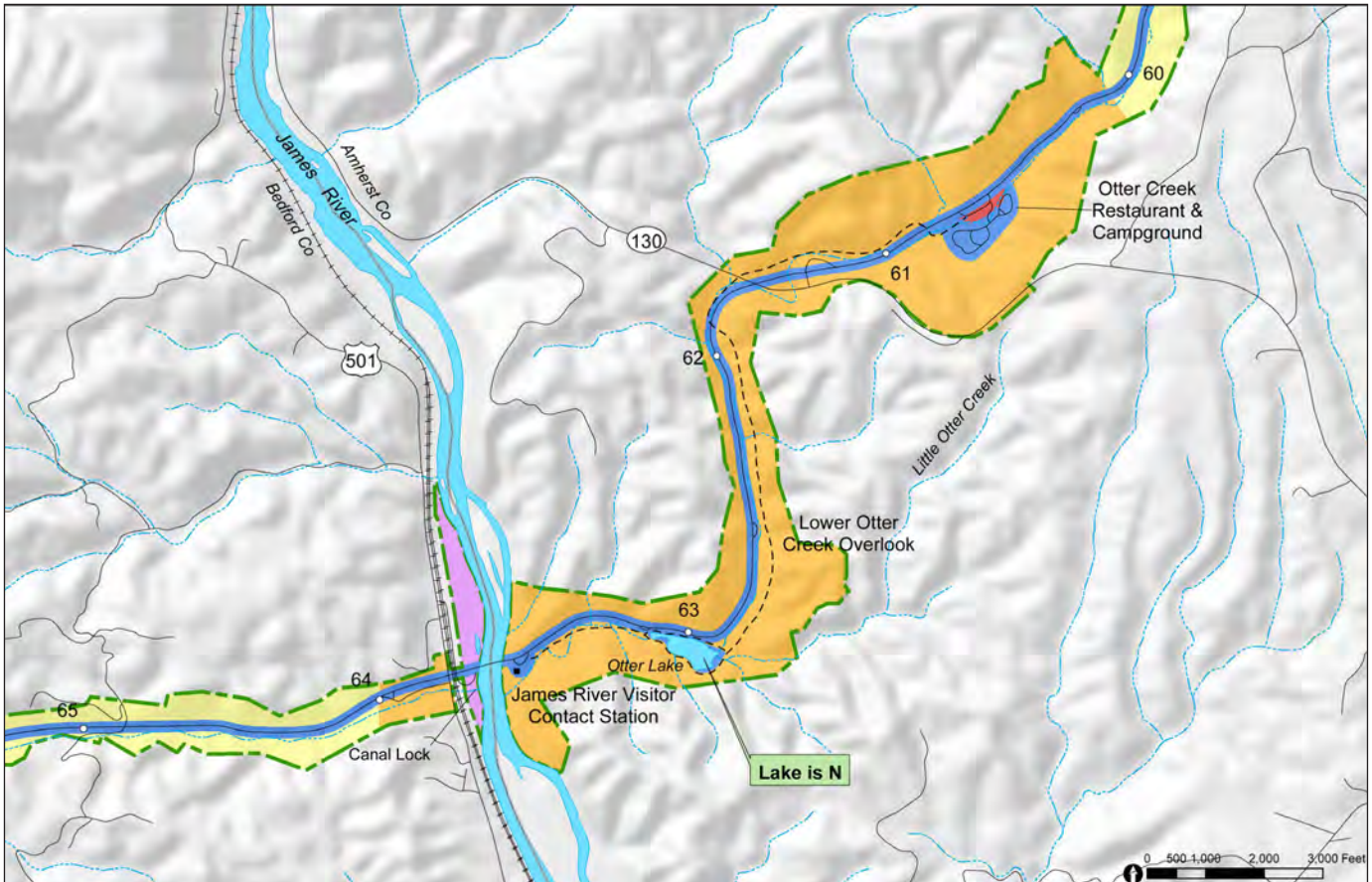


PICNIC AT JAMES RIVER VISITOR CENTER  
MILEPOST 63.6



OTTER CREEK TRAIL MILEPOST 61





- |                                |                                 |                   |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Special Natural Resource (SNR) | Historic Parkway (HP)           | Parkway Lands     |
| Natural (N)                    | Scenic Character (SC)           | Recreation Trails |
| Recreation (R)                 | Special Cultural Resource (SCR) |                   |
| Visitor Services (VS)          | Park Support (PS)               |                   |
- Note: Parkway land boundaries are based on the best available information.





## PEAKS OF OTTER, MILEPOSTS 82–91

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The Peaks of Otter recreation area includes about 4,100 acres of mostly hardwood forest. It is nestled within the triangle formed by Sharp Top Mountain, Flat Top Mountain, and Harkening Hill. Abbott Lake, created by parkway designers, provides the aesthetic focal point. The area is home to rare plants and animal species and is a prehistoric site of human occupation. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the cooler climate and mountain scenery began to attract vacationers and a small community developed to serve the needs of these tourists. The Johnson family and Polly Woods Ordinary are both intricately connected with tourism development. The Peaks community also included African Americans, including the Saunders family, whose home remains as visible ruins near the picnic area. Visitor amenities include the Peaks restaurant and lodge (open year-round), a campground, picnic area, general store, shuttle bus to Sharp Top Mountain, visitor contact station, environmental education center, and extensive trail system. The Peaks lodge and campground are part of the original historic design. These facilities are outdated and do not meet the needs of many visitors. There are few off-parkway lodge or camping options nearby.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Retain the original management emphasis on traditional recreational pursuits; for much of this site, allow for and accommodate future increases in demand for these activities.

Rehabilitate Saunders farm and the landscape at Johnson farm. Interpret both sites for visitors.

Continue to find ways to provide concession food and lodging services at Peaks of Otter. Strategies might include making upgrades to existing infrastructure and/or adding new facilities where appropriate.

Allow for upgrades to the campground as described below.

Continue to implement future repairs and rehabilitations needed to meet backlog maintenance needs.

Enlarge selected tent sites to better accommodate family-sized tents.

Upgrade existing RV sites with water and electrical hookups.

Improve RV access to a portion of the campground. Upgrades will include widening the campground entrance and one of the loop roads, increasing turning radii, and enlarging existing RV parking spaces.

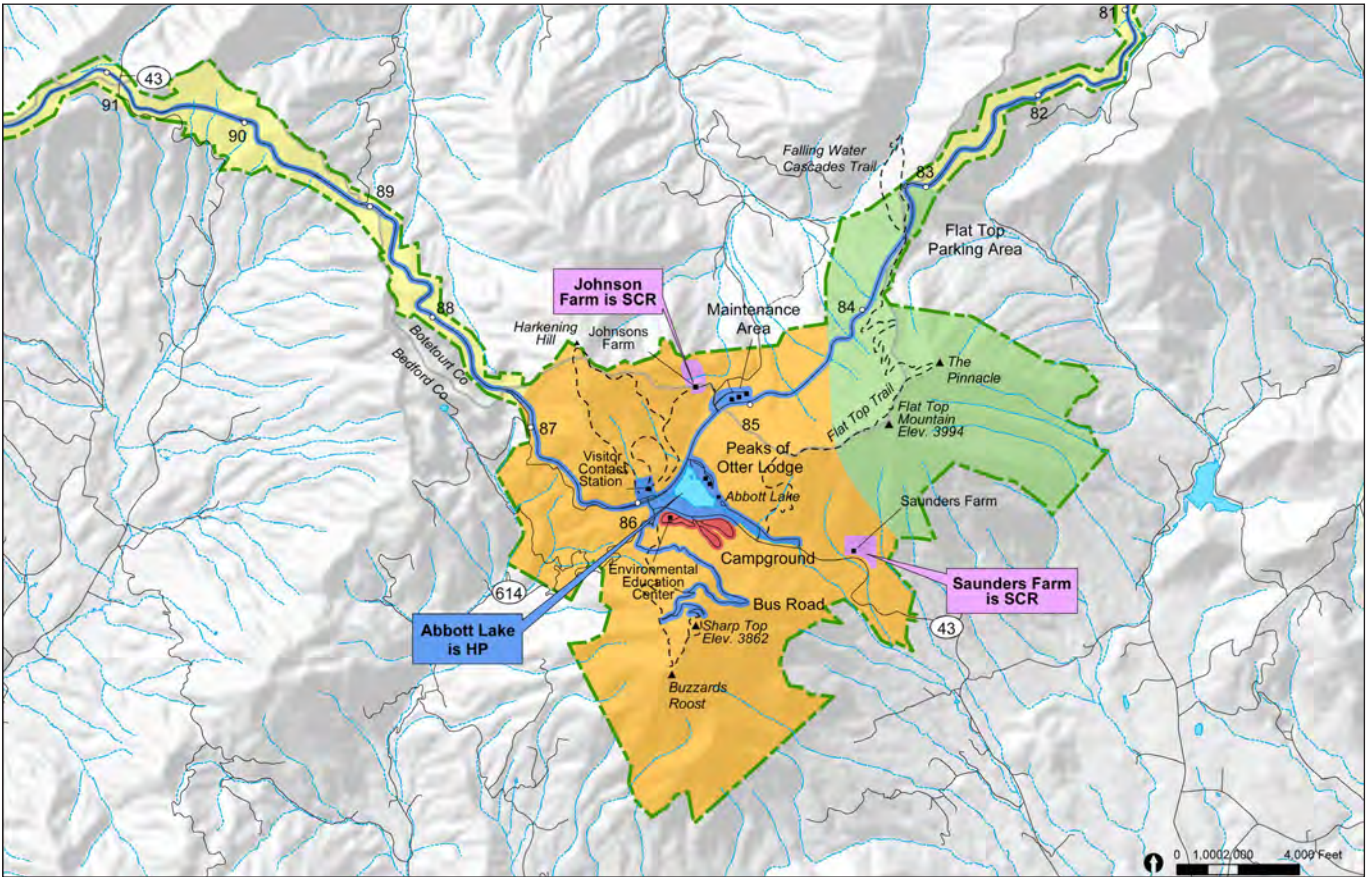
Continue to only offer tent and RV camping within the Peaks of Otter campground.

Expand operations to provide services for a nine-month visitor season.



ABBOTT LAKE MILEPOST 62





- Special Natural Resource (SNR)
  - Natural (N)
  - Recreation (R)
  - Visitor Services (VS)
  - Historic Parkway (HP)
  - Scenic Character (SC)
  - Special Cultural Resource (SCR)
  - Park Support (PS)
  - Parkway Lands
  - Recreation Trails
- Note: Parkway land boundaries are based on the best available information.





## ROANOKE MOUNTAIN, MILEPOSTS 118–122

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

A loop road to the top of Roanoke Mountain is a popular attraction with dramatic overlooks of the city and the Roanoke Valley. Hang glider enthusiasts use the summit by permit. Mill Mountain Road provides access to a parkway campground, trails, a local zoo, and city overlooks. There are hiking and fishing opportunities along the Roanoke River and hiking near the campground. The area also offers horseback riding. Adjacent city and county of Roanoke visitor amenities, such as the zoo, generate demand for more day-use amenities in parkway-managed areas. The campground is underused, in part because its valley location makes it the hottest of the parkway campgrounds during the summer.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

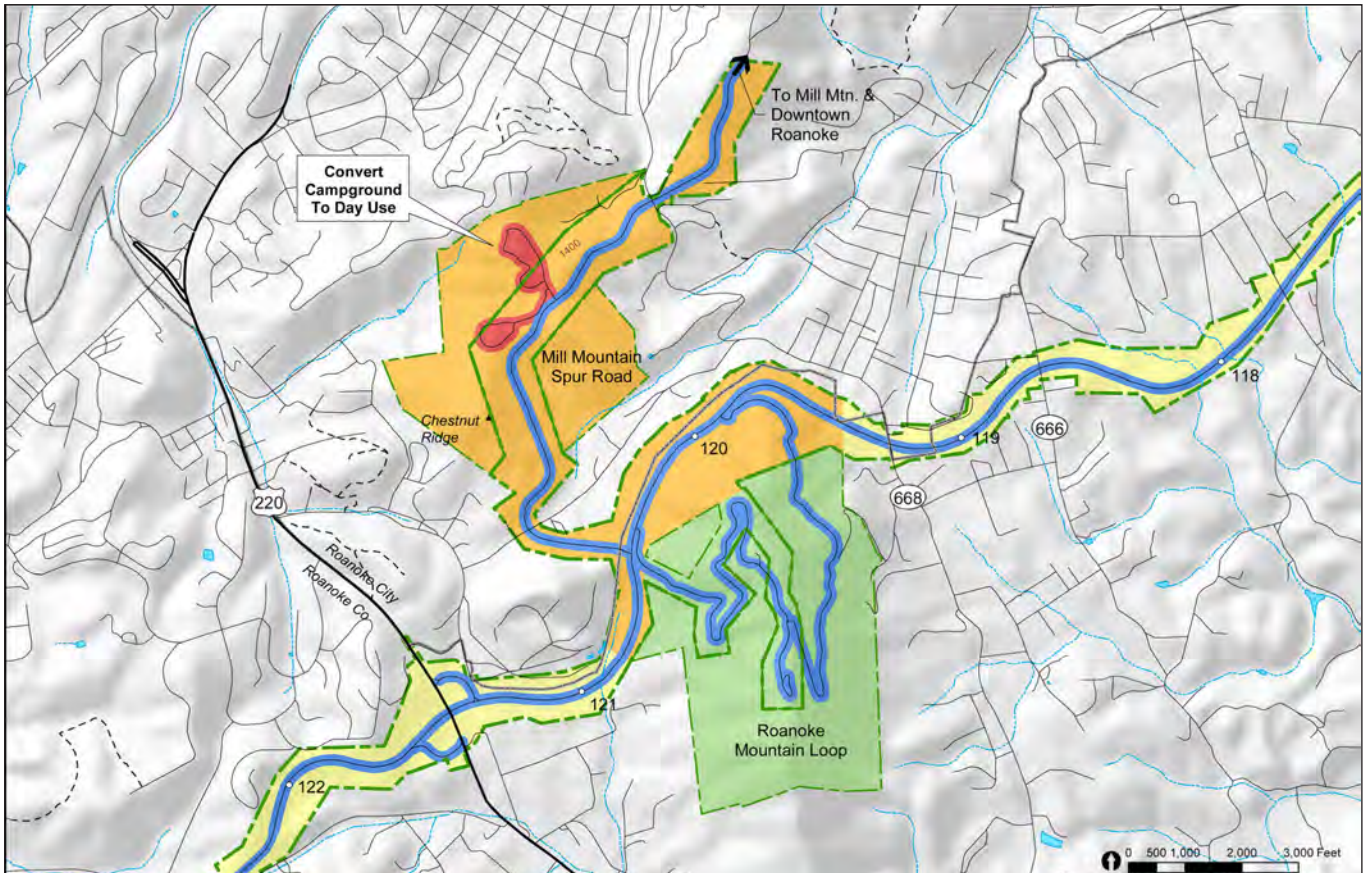
Establish an agreement with the city of Roanoke for partnership management of the Mill Mountain spur road area.

Convert the entire Roanoke Mountain campground to a day-use recreation area, including picnic and trail staging facilities. Collaborate with local communities and other park partners to consider innovative ways to effectively manage Roanoke Mountain over the interim of this conversion from a campground to a day-use area. Any new trail developments will be compatible with the Roanoke trail plan.



VIEW FROM ROANOKE MOUNTAIN MILEPOST 120





- |                                |                                 |                   |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Special Natural Resource (SNR) | Historic Parkway (HP)           | Parkway Lands     |
| Natural (N)                    | Scenic Character (SC)           | Recreation Trails |
| Recreation (R)                 | Special Cultural Resource (SCR) |                   |
| Visitor Services (VS)          | Park Support (PS)               |                   |
- Note: Parkway land boundaries are based on the best available information.







## SMART VIEW, MILEPOST 155

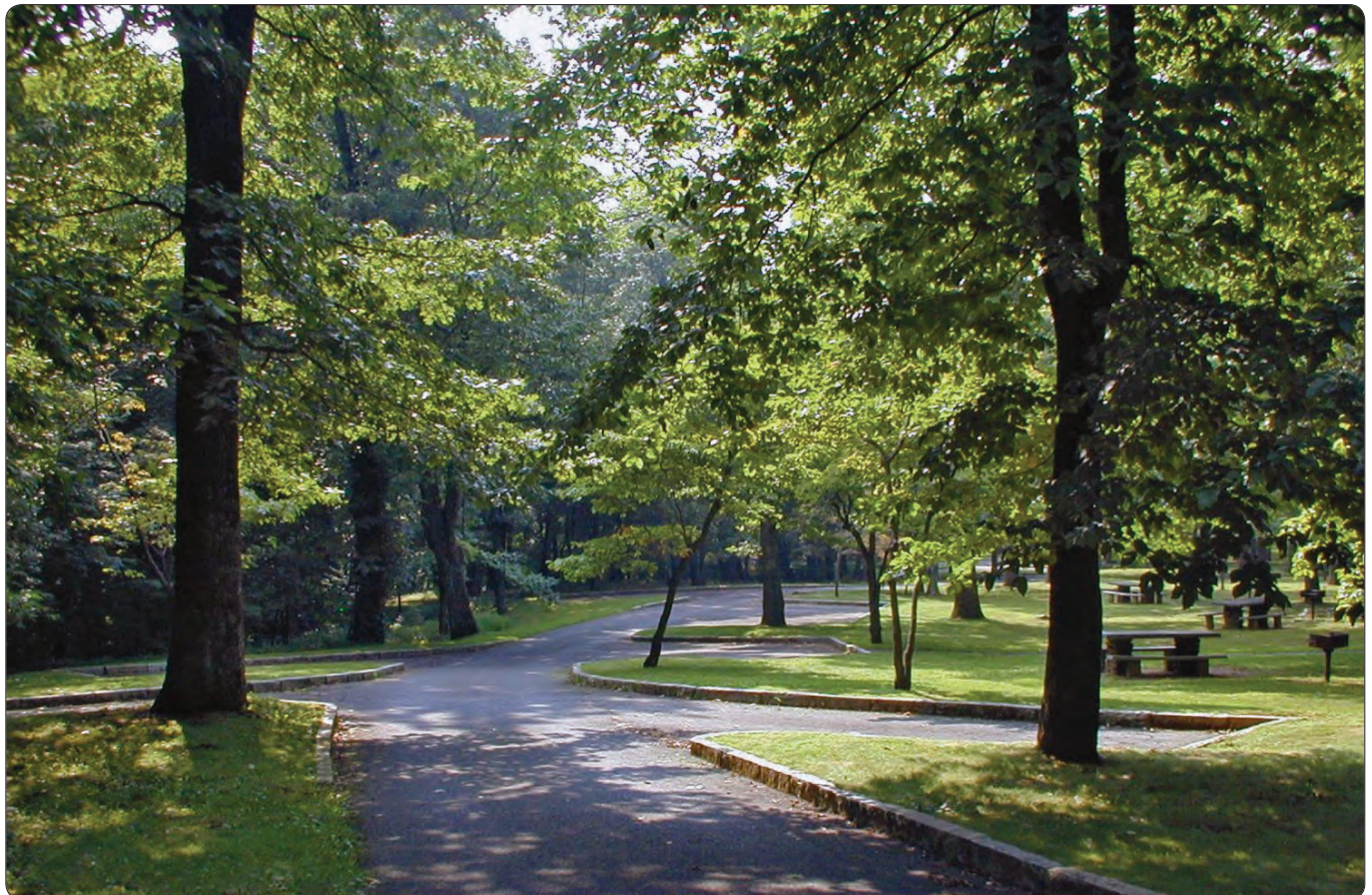
### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

This recreation area encompasses about 700 acres. The trails, group picnic shelters, and restroom facilities provide opportunities for visitors to participate in a variety of day-use recreational activities.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

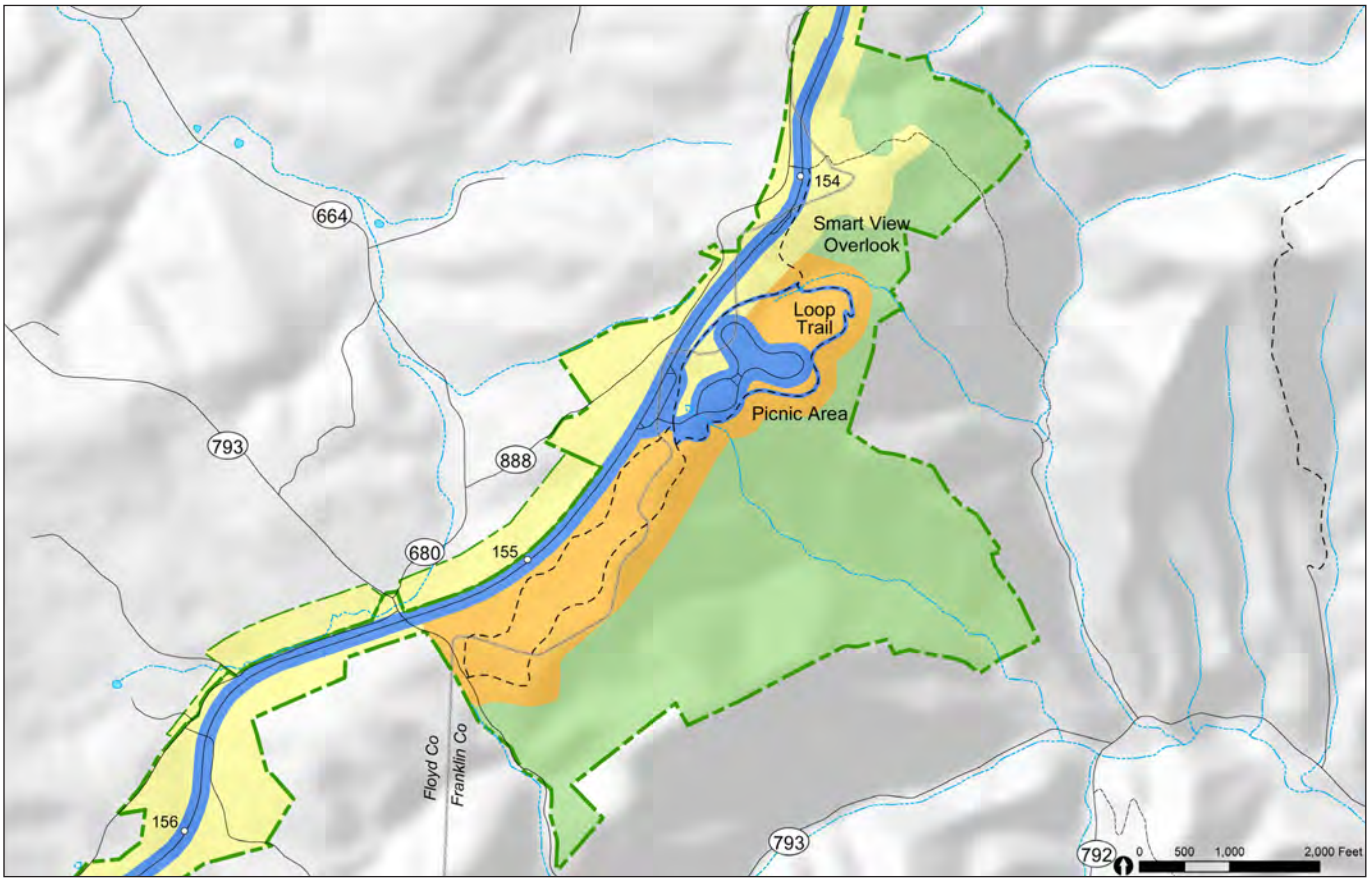
Retain the original management emphasis on traditional recreational pursuits, allowing for and accommodating future increases in demand for these activities, including additional trail infrastructure.

Further protect the pastoral landscape through possible acquisition of lands or conservation easements



SMART VIEW PICNIC AREA MILEPOST 154.5





- |                                |                                 |                   |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Special Natural Resource (SNR) | Historic Parkway (HP)           | Parkway Lands     |
| Natural (N)                    | Scenic Character (SC)           | Recreation Trails |
| Recreation (R)                 | Special Cultural Resource (SCR) |                   |
| Visitor Services (VS)          | Park Support (PS)               |                   |
- Note: Parkway land boundaries are based on the best available information.





## ROCKY KNOB, MILEPOSTS 166–174

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The Rocky Knob recreation area, including Rockcastle Gorge, has more than 3,500 acres of mostly rugged, forested terrain. There are many overlooks and vistas along the parkway of the dramatic Rockcastle Gorge, making it an important scenic focal point. Near the parkway are a campground, picnic area, and a visitor contact station that is housed in a converted historic gas station. The gas station structure is an excellent example of original parkway design; however, as a contact station, this structure is small and inadequately serves the visitor. An extensive trail system in Rockcastle Gorge provides excellent hiking and access to backcountry and cabin camping opportunities. In the gorge are remnants of an abandoned mountain community. The National Park Service owns and administers the entire watershed of Rockcastle Gorge, which is home to a number of rare plants and provides opportunities for natural resource monitoring and comparative study.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Convert visitor contact station to trailhead shelter when a visitor contact facility is established at Mabry Mill.

Reduce the size of the picnic area to the historic footprint of the old campground.

Continue to provide guided walks to the historic Rockcastle Gorge settlement sites.

Upgrade gorge trail system and enhance backcountry camping area. Provide trailhead staging and improve parking near backcountry campsite.

Continue to find ways to provide cabin concession services. Strategies might include making upgrades to existing infrastructure and/or adding new facilities where appropriate. Retain historic character if possible.

Allow for upgrades to the campground as described below.

Continue to implement future repairs and rehabilitations needed to meet backlog maintenance needs.

Upgrade certain comfort stations to provide showers. Upgrade all comfort stations to be universally accessible.

Enlarge selected tent sites to better accommodate family-sized tents.

Upgrade existing RV sites with water and electrical hookups.

Continue to provide limited access that does not adequately accommodate larger RVs within the seven campgrounds that offer RV camping (i.e., narrow roads, tight turns, and small parking spaces).

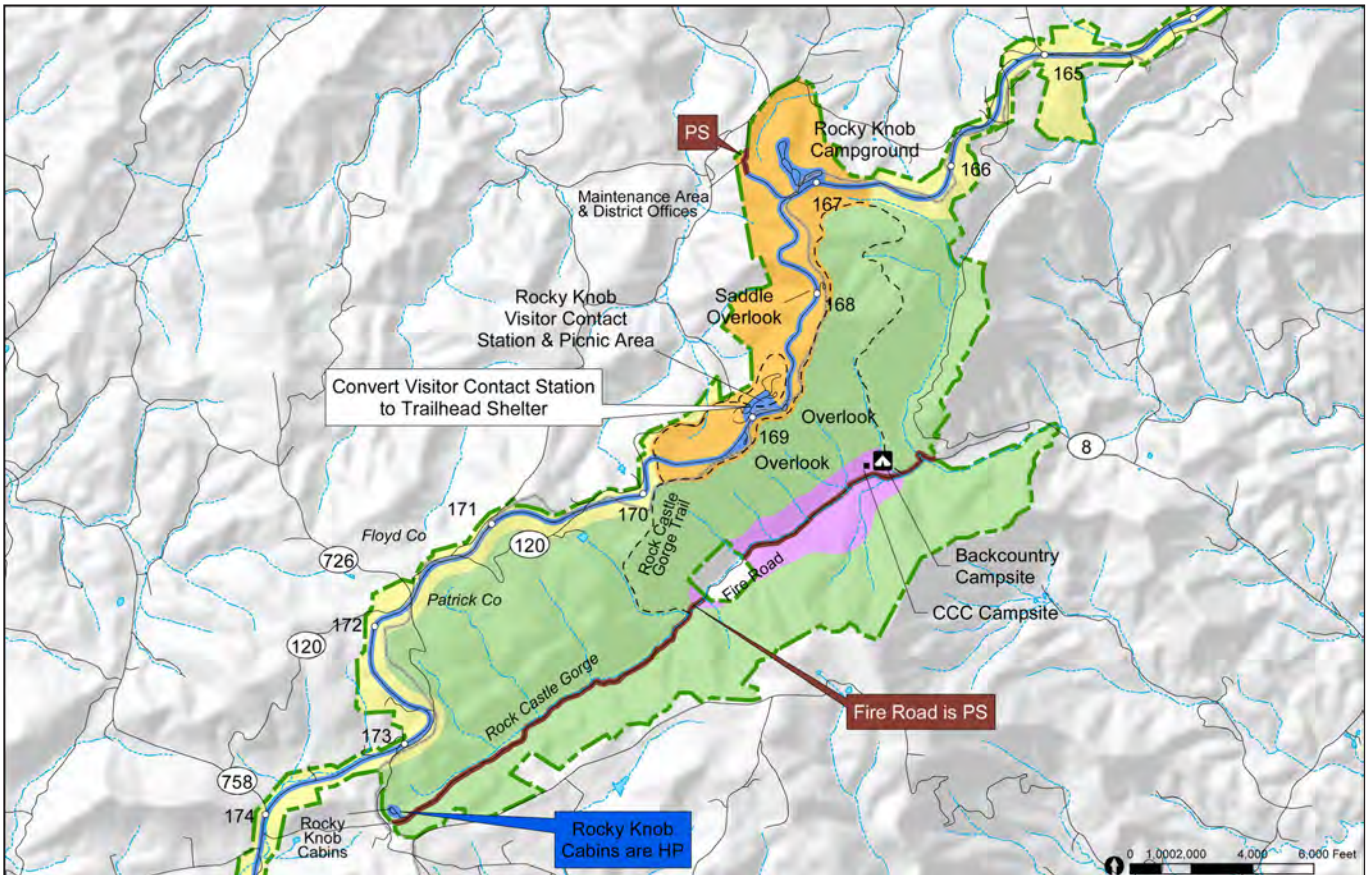


ROCKY KNOB VISITOR CENTER  
MILEPOST 169



WHORLEY HOUSE MILEPOST 174







## MABRY MILL, MILEPOST 176

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The Mabry Mill complex is one of the most picturesque and popular cultural sites on the parkway. It is an outdoor museum with an eclectic assemblage of buildings and exhibits that display Appalachian mountain industry and lifestyles. The mill was built around 1908 by Ed Mabry and operated until the mid-1930s. The reflecting pond was added later by the National Park Service. In addition to the mill and Mabry's blacksmith shop, parkway designers added a number of other outdoor exhibits, including a sorghum cooker and shed, moonshine still, and farm implements. Mabry's house, a wood-frame house, was apparently too modern for the designers and was replaced with the Mathews log cabin. Site personnel occasionally provide cultural demonstrations in the house and on the grounds. The Mabry Mill site, including its restaurant, is a very popular and traditional destination for many visitors, especially on weekends when pancake breakfasts and live music are big draws.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Continue to manage the Mabry Mill area—its buildings, raceways, and walkways—as an outdoor museum consistent with the experience intended by the parkway designers.

Continue to provide concession food services. Strategies might include making upgrades to existing infrastructure or constructing a new restaurant elsewhere on site if appropriate.

Improve interpretive media and provide more diverse presentations of mountain industry. Pursue development of a visitor contact station.

Within the Historic Parkway zone improve quality of existing trails and upgrade site signs and wayside exhibits. For remainder of site, redesign pedestrian circulation, signs, and wayside exhibits.

Relocate the state road crossing that bisects Mabry Mill.

Expand operations to provide services for a nine-month visitor season.

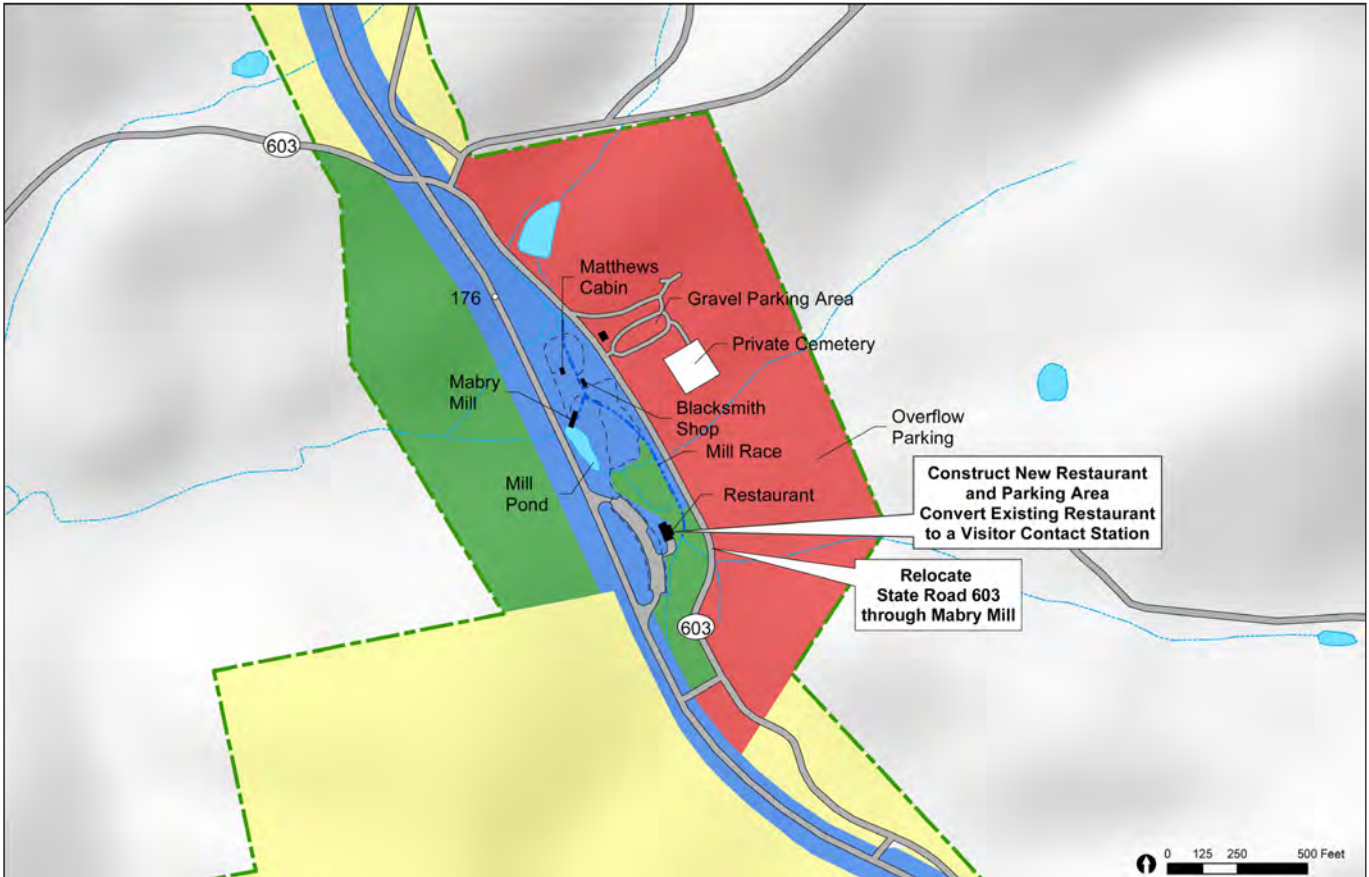


MILEPOST 176.3



MABRY MILL MILEPOST 176.3







## BLUE RIDGE MUSIC CENTER, MILEPOST 213

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The Blue Ridge Music Center recreation area, one of the newest along the parkway, covers more than 1,700 acres of meadow and forest landscape, including part of Fisher Peak Mountain. Located just north of the North Carolina state line in Virginia's Grayson and Carroll counties, the music center is in the heart of the Blue Ridge old-time and string band music region. Much of this traditional Appalachian music was commercially recorded in the 1920s and 1930s but has roots going back to 19th century European and African influences. The music center complex, operated in partnership with the National Council for the Traditional Arts, provides opportunities to learn about this music in the interpretive center and hear it performed at an amphitheater at a series of summer concerts. The music center is one of the major stops along Virginia's Heritage Music Trail, the Crooked Road. This recently added site is likely to see considerable growth in visitation as the public becomes more aware of its amenities and the number and diversity of cultural demonstrations, music, and other events offered increase over time.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

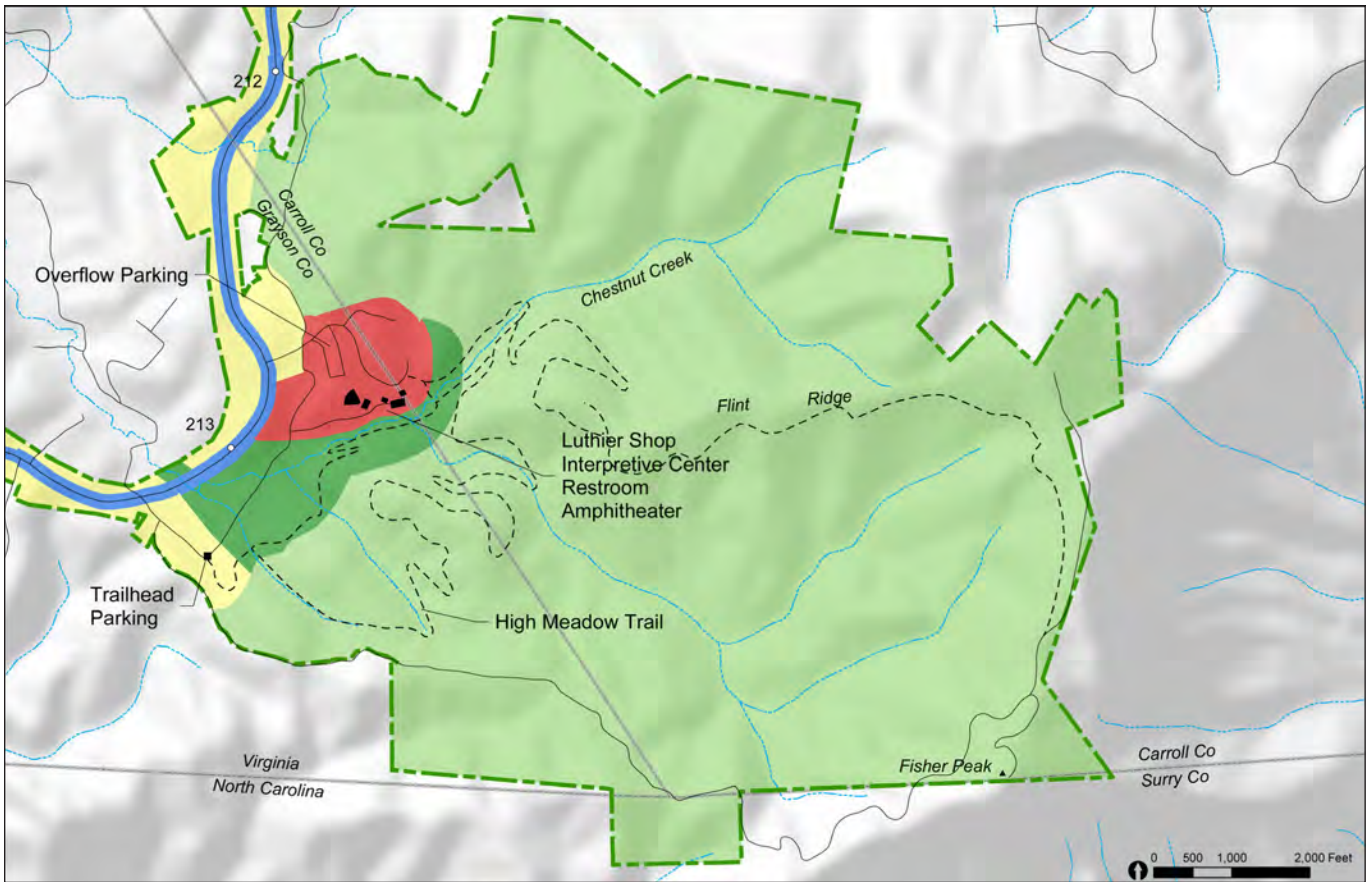
Expand information and orientation capabilities through partnership and park staff at the Blue Ridge Music Center. Expand the parkway's active participation in regional heritage tourism projects.

Expand operations for a nine-month visitor season.

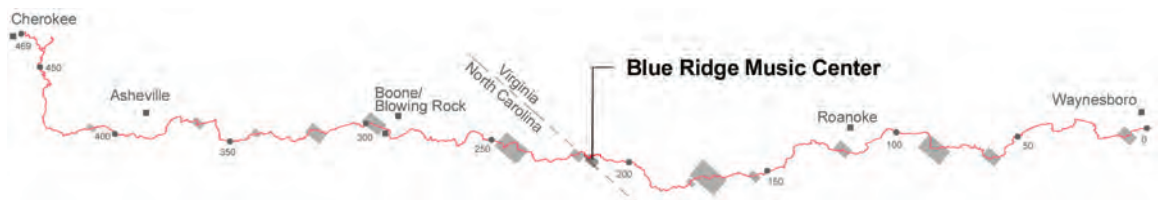


BLUE RIDGE MUSIC CENTER MILEPOST 212.8





- Special Natural Resource (SNR)
  - Natural (N)
  - Recreation (R)
  - Visitor Services (VS)
  - Historic Parkway (HP)
  - Scenic Character (SC)
  - Special Cultural Resource (SCR)
  - Park Support (PS)
  - Parkway Lands
  - Recreation Trails
- Note: Parkway land boundaries are based on the best available information.





## CUMBERLAND KNOB, MILEPOSTS 217–219

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The 2,000-acre Cumberland Knob recreational area is the site where construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway began on September 11, 1935. The recreational area opened in 1937. The visitor contact station, which opened in 1942, is an outstanding example of rustic architecture. This day-use area includes mostly forested mountainsides, a popular picnic area, and hiking trails. The parkway closed the visitor contact station in 2005 when the Blue Ridge Music Center opened.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Restore the visitor contact station to its original historical appearance and install interior and exterior exhibits that present the story of parkway construction and early use.

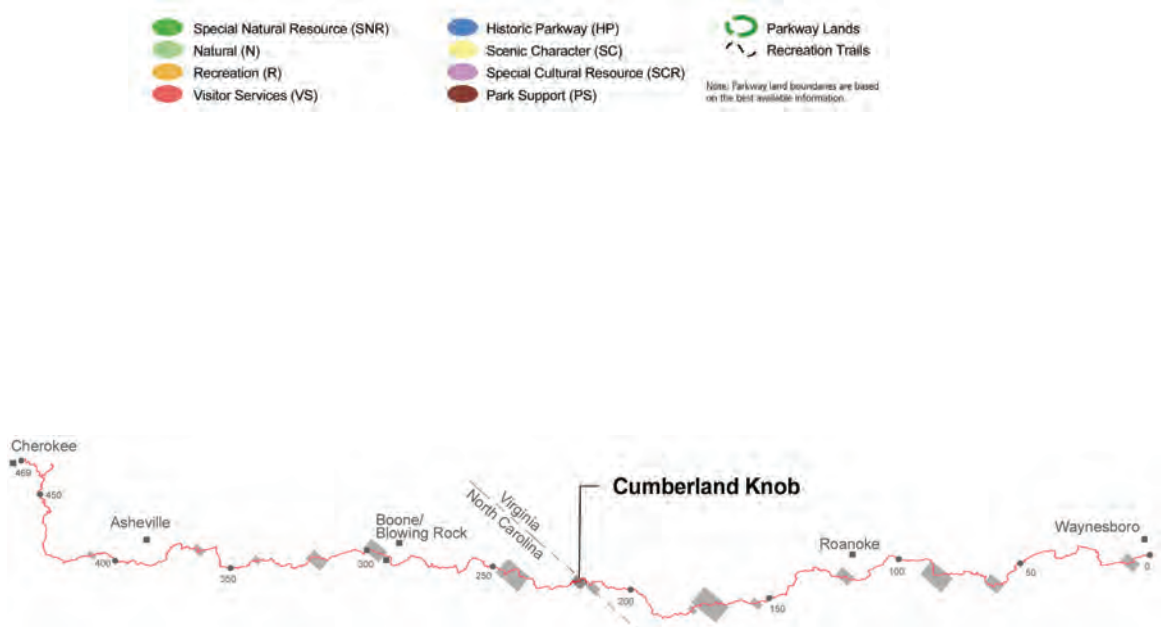
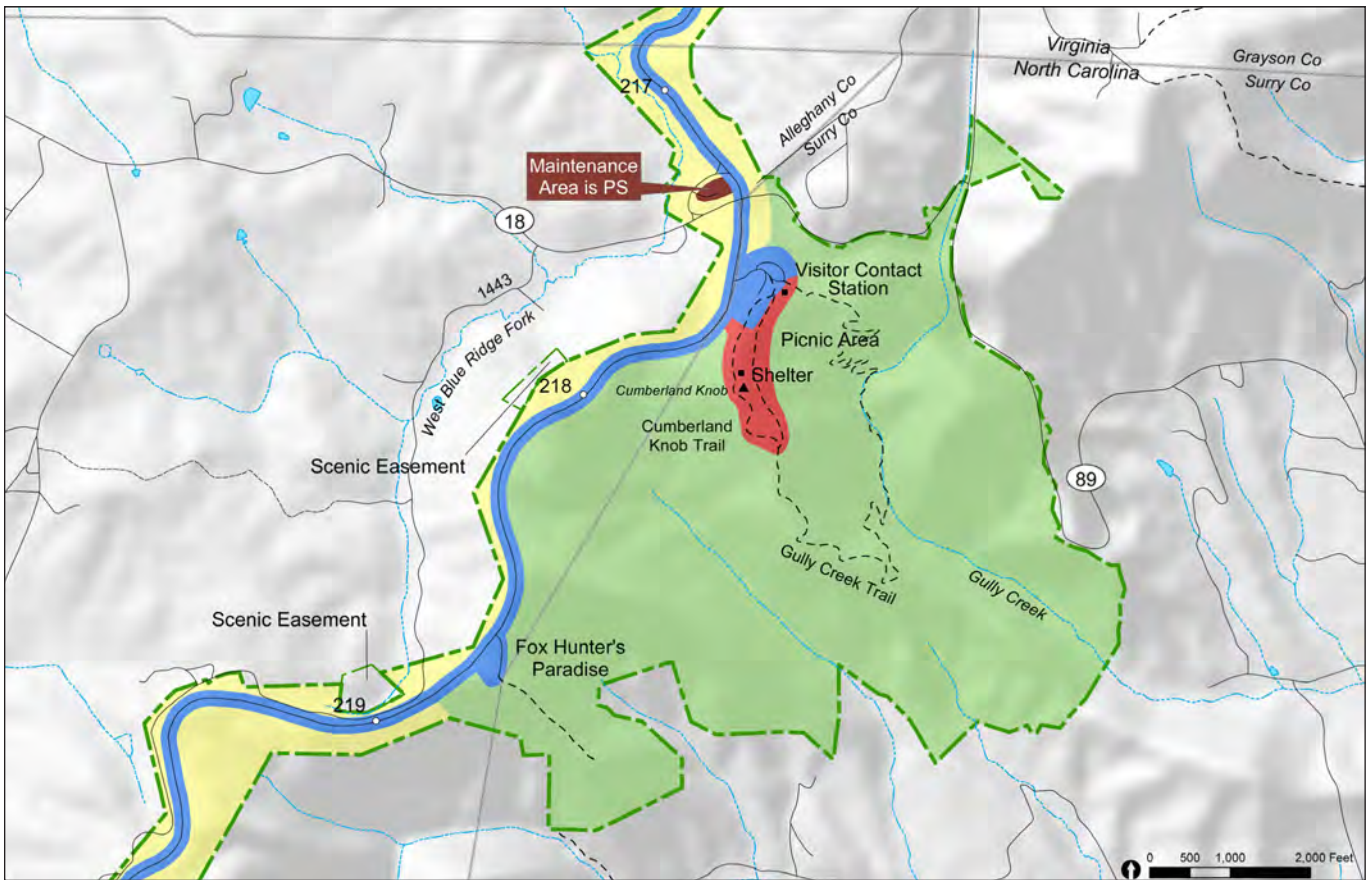
Increase visitor services and enhance the visitor experience (e.g., staff visitor contact station and increase ranger-led programs).

Within the visitor services area, accommodate future increases in demand for use of picnic area as a day-use area and a location for on-site Parks-as-Classrooms programs for schools from the surrounding counties, including additional trail and picnic infrastructure and outdoor program shelters.



CUMBERLAND KNOB SHELTER AND COMFORT STATIONS MILEPOST 217.4







## DOUGHTON PARK, MILEPOSTS 236–247

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

This recreation area of more than 5,000 acres contains the entire watershed for Basin Cove. It is a fairly isolated site and has a very rugged backcountry. It is contiguous with the Thurman Chatham Game Lands and Stone Mountain State Park. Originally called the Bluffs, this area offers a range of concession services, including a 24-room lodge, restaurant with craft sales, and store. There is no visitor contact station. This area has one of the parkway's larger campgrounds, a popular picnic area, and more than 30 miles of backcountry hiking trails that access Basin Cove. The cove is popular for fly-fishing, horseback riding (Grassy Gap fire road), and backcountry camping. In the early 1900s, the Basin Cove area was home to a small community, but in 1916 a devastating flood forced many people to leave. Interpretive programs are offered at Brinegar Cabin, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Designate mixed-use trails for horses and hiking. Construct trailhead parking, accommodate horse trailers, and provide equestrian backcountry campsites at trail junction.

Upgrade popular picnic area to better accommodate existing and future use.

Continue to provide concession services at Doughton, including Bluffs Lodge and coffee shop. Strategies might include making upgrades to existing infrastructure and/or adding new facilities where appropriate.

Manage the fields at Brinegar Cabin to replicate the historic landscape.

Allow for upgrades to the campground as described below.

Continue to implement future repairs and rehabilitations needed to meet backlog maintenance needs.

Upgrade certain comfort stations to provide showers. Upgrade all comfort stations to be universally accessible.

Enlarge selected tent sites to better accommodate family-sized tents. Convert some tent sites to RV sites.

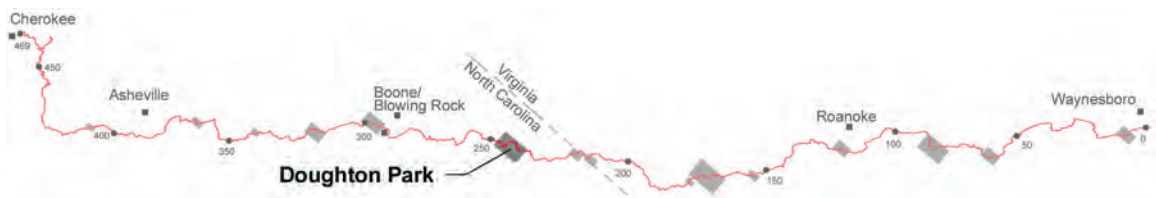
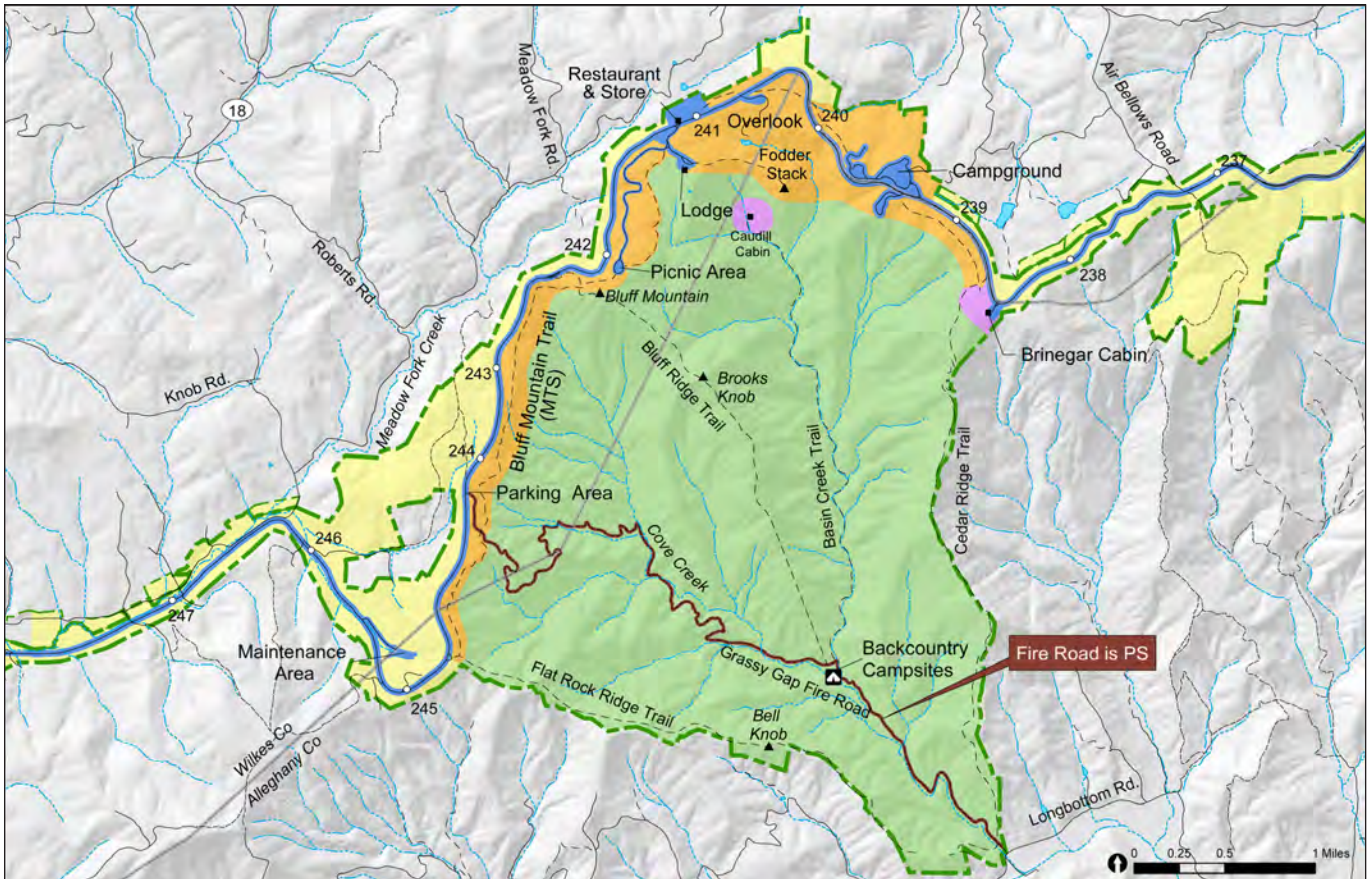
Upgrade existing RV sites with water and electrical hookups.

Continue to provide limited access (i.e., narrow roads, tight turns, and small parking spaces) that does not adequately accommodate larger RVs.



BLUFFS LODGE MILEPOST 241.2







## JULIAN PRICE MEMORIAL PARK, MILEPOSTS 295–300

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The wilderness-like appeal of more than 4,000 acres of forested highlands and cold mountain streams welcomes outdoor enthusiasts to Julian Price Memorial Park, a popular recreation area. Price Lake—47 acres of cool, mountain headwaters—further fulfills the wish of Julian Price to provide recreational opportunities for the public, including boaters and anglers. Currently the site includes a campground, picnic area, hiking trails, and a concession-operated boat rental facility at Price Lake. The campground has sites that are available through the national campground reservation system. It is one of the most heavily used campgrounds on the parkway. The boat rental office and dock are located in an area that is difficult for visitors to see or find. It is also difficult for concessions to monitor boating activity on the lake from this location.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Manage wetlands to protect sensitive species by adjusting current landscape management practices.

Relocate the picnic area out of the floodplain and restore current site.

Relocate boat rental office and dock to resolve current visibility problems.

Maintain the existing trail system and allow hiking only. Develop a part of the paved multiuse trail discussed under the Highlands segment, if feasible, through Julian Price recreation area to enhance opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists to recreate and travel safely through the area with minimal interaction with automobile traffic.

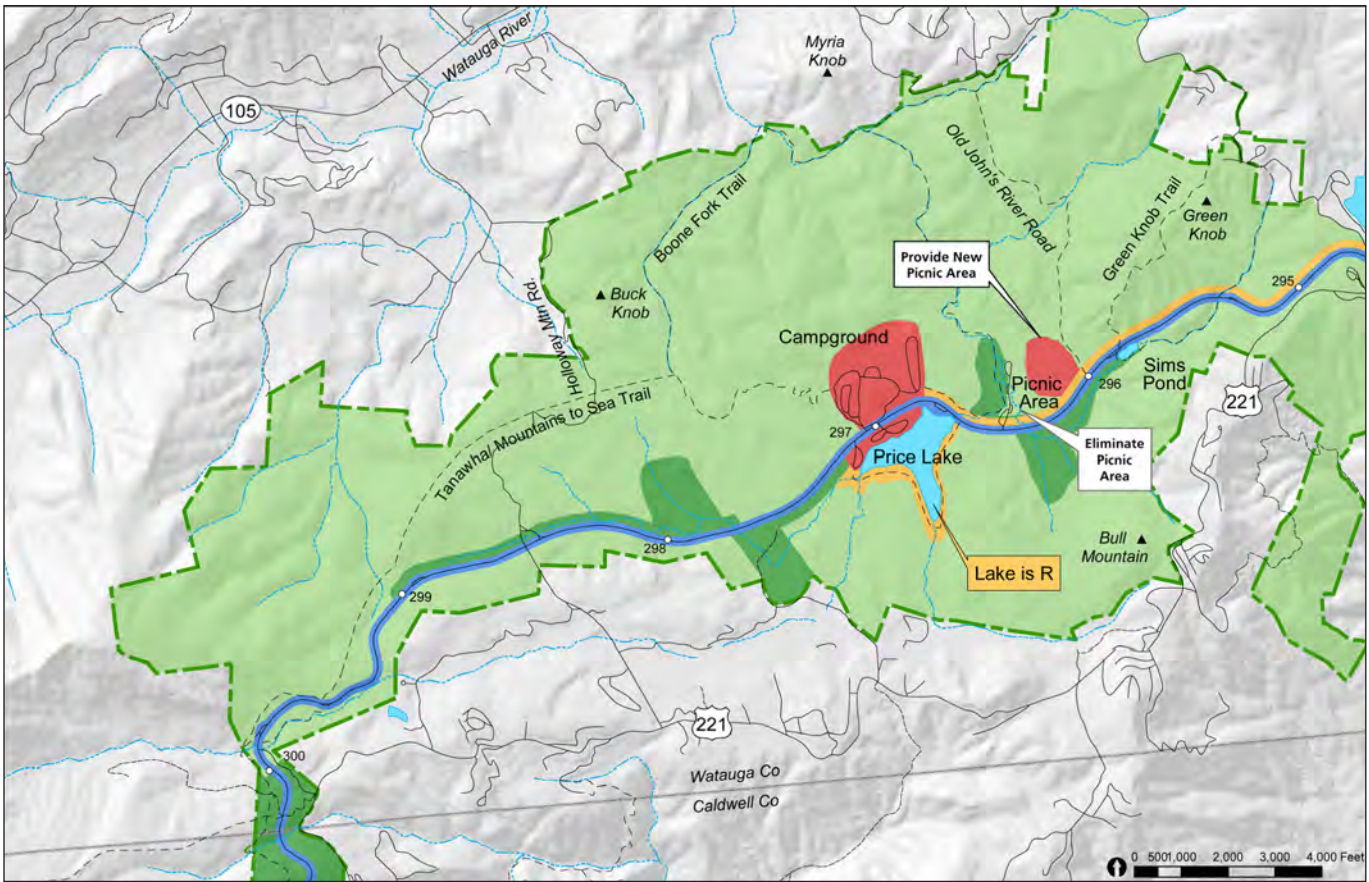
Improve RV access to a portion of the campground. Upgrades will include widening the campground entrance and one of the loop roads, increasing turning radii, and enlarging existing RV parking spaces.

Allow for upgrades and redesigns to the campground as described above.



PRICE LAKE MILEPOST 296.7







## LINVILLE FALLS, MILEPOSTS 315–319

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Linville Falls is a very popular, highly used recreation area of more than 1,100 acres. A 1.2-mile spur road travels along the Linville River to within walking distance of the falls. A heavily used trail system takes the visitor to the falls, which cascade through a forested gorge of old growth eastern hemlock stands. Looking eastward, away from the falls and into the adjacent Pisgah National Forest, is a view of the Linville Gorge Wilderness Area. Currently the site includes a picnic area, campground, hiking trails, fishing opportunities, and a visitor contact station. This campground has sites that are available through the national campground reservation system.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Retain the original management emphasis on traditional recreational pursuits; allow for and accommodate future increases in demand for these activities.

Better delineate and possibly pave trails. Formalize access to visitor opportunities; improve universal access for fishing.

The visitor contact station is in the floodplain. It was recently remodeled and enlarged and provides site orientation and interpretation.

Allow for upgrades to the campground as described below.

Continue to implement future repairs and rehabilitations needed to meet backlog maintenance needs.

Upgrade certain comfort stations to provide showers. Upgrade all comfort stations to be universally accessible.

Enlarge selected tent sites to better accommodate family-sized tents.

Upgrade existing RV sites with water and electrical hookups.

Continue to provide limited access (i.e., narrow roads, tight turns, and small parking spaces) that does not adequately accommodate larger RVs.

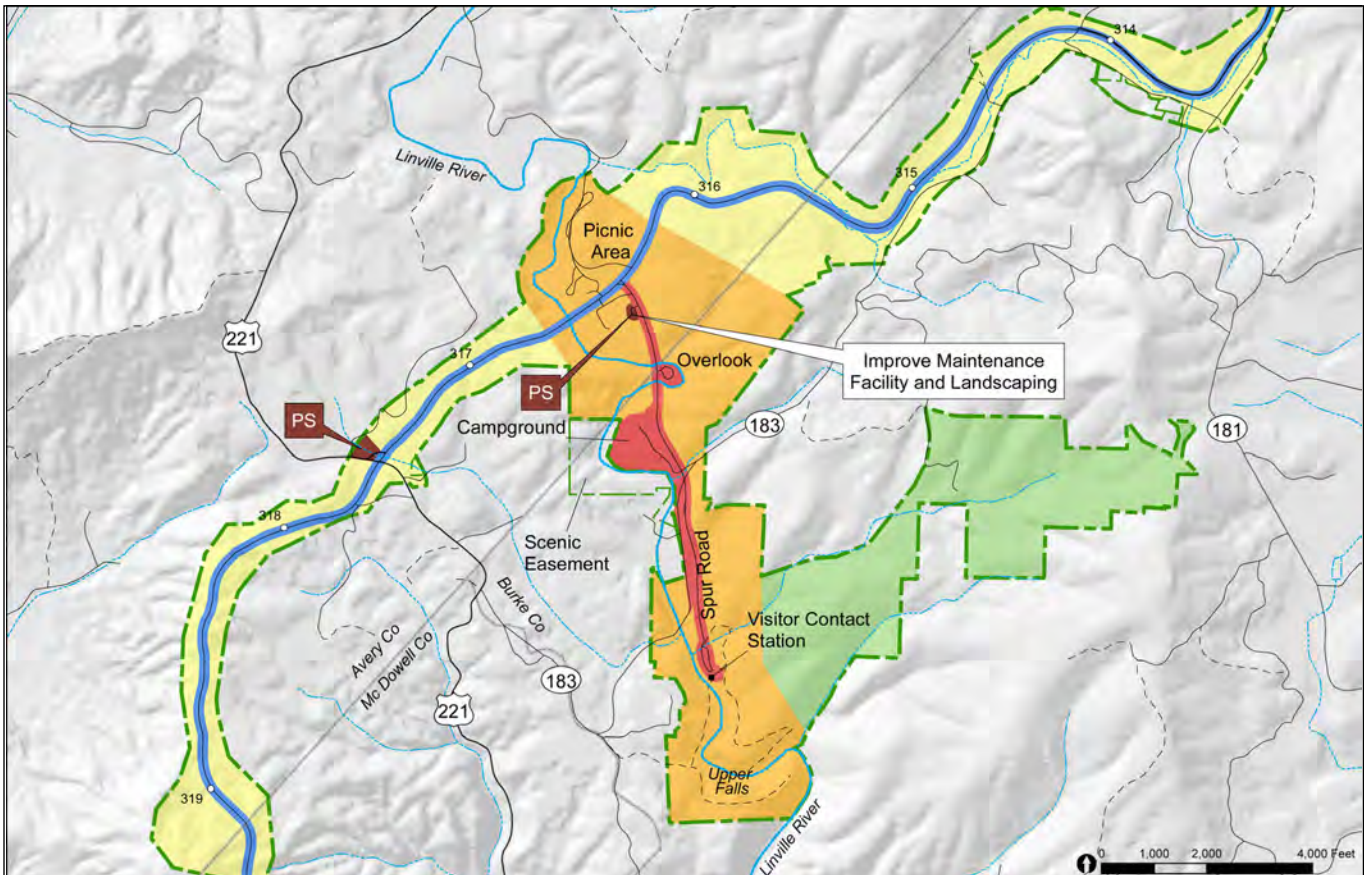
Improve maintenance facility and area landscaping.

Expand operations to provide services for a nine-month visitor season.

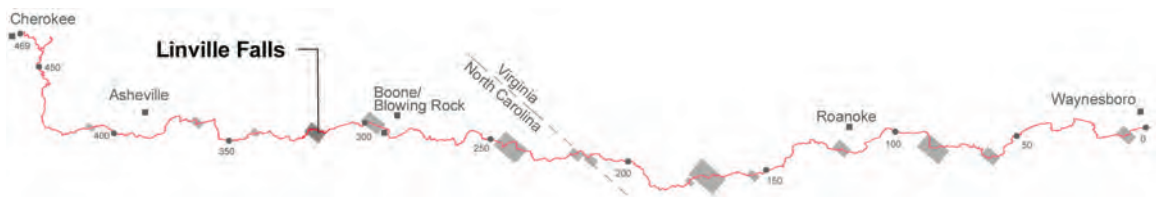


UPPER LINVILLE FALLS MILEPOST 316.4





- Special Natural Resource (SNR)
  - Natural (N)
  - Recreation (R)
  - Visitor Services (VS)
  - Historic Parkway (HP)
  - Scenic Character (SC)
  - Special Cultural Resource (SCR)
  - Park Support (PS)
  - Parkway Lands
  - Recreation Trails
- Note: Parkway land boundaries are based on the best available information.





## CRABTREE FALLS, MILEPOSTS 339–340

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Visitors can participate in a variety of recreational activities at Crabtree Falls, including camping, hiking, picnicking, amphitheater programs, and dining. Visitors also have access to a camp store, gift shop, and snack bar. The many acres of meadows, adjoining forest, and spectacular Crabtree Falls provide a cool and delightful summer retreat within the shadow of the Black Mountain Range. Facilities include a picnic area, campground, hiking trails, fishing opportunities, and a visitor contact station.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Retain the original management emphasis on traditional recreational pursuits; allow for and accommodate future increases in demand for these activities. Expect visitors to have moderate to high contact with others.

Continue to provide concession food and gift store services. Strategies might include making upgrades to existing infrastructure and/or adding new facilities where appropriate.

Allow for upgrades to the campground as described below.

Continue to implement future repairs and rehabilitations needed to meet backlog maintenance needs.

Upgrade certain comfort stations to provide showers. Upgrade all comfort stations to be universally accessible.

Enlarge selected tent sites to better accommodate family-sized tents.

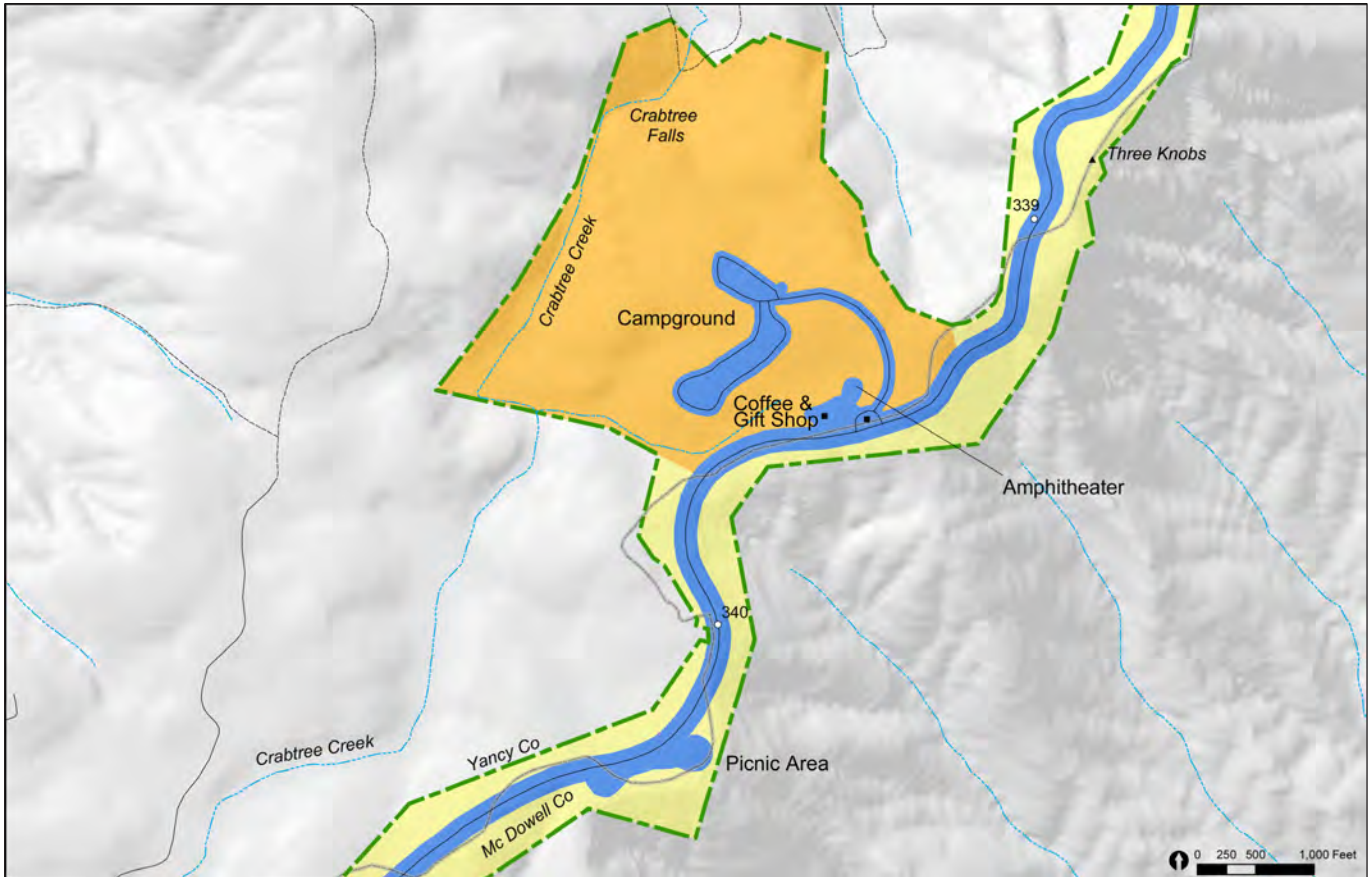
Upgrade existing RV sites with water and electrical hookups.

Continue to provide limited access (i.e., narrow roads, tight turns, and small parking spaces) that does not adequately accommodate larger RVs.

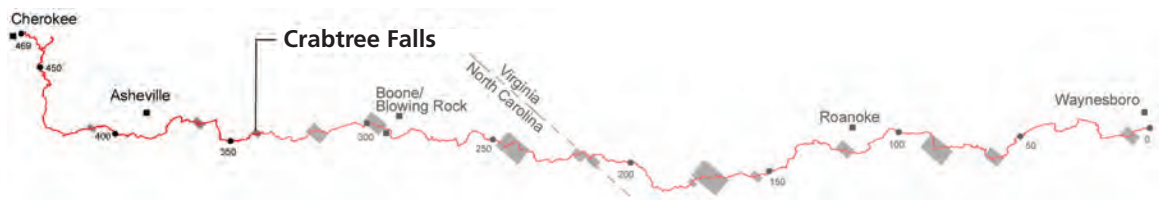


CRABTREE FALLS MILEPOST 339.5





- Special Natural Resource (SNR)
  - Natural (N)
  - Recreation (R)
  - Visitor Services (VS)
  - Historic Parkway (HP)
  - Scenic Character (SC)
  - Special Cultural Resource (SCR)
  - Park Support (PS)
  - Parkway Lands
  - Recreation Trails
- Note: Parkway land boundaries are based on the best available information.





## Craggy Gardens, Mileposts 364–369

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Craggy Gardens comprises almost 600 acres, including important heath and grassy bald habitat. Visitor amenities include trails, picnic area, restrooms, and a visitor contact station. Site interpretation includes wayside exhibits supplemented with roving personal service, publications, and media inside the contact station.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Restore the grassy bald to its historic size and actively maintain it.

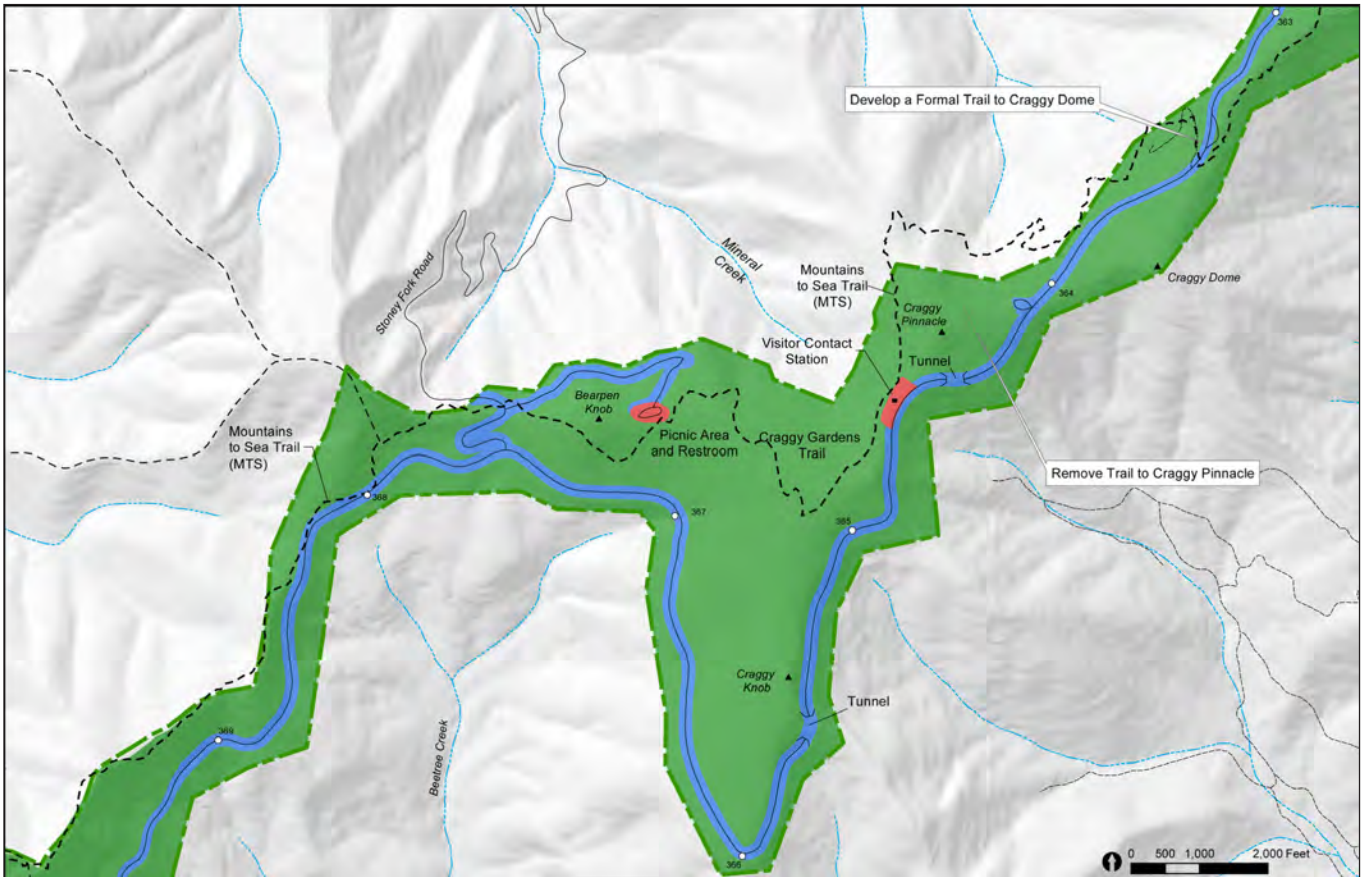
Close Craggy Pinnacle trail and restore trail tread to natural conditions in order to protect rare plant species. Provide a new formal hiking trail to Craggy Dome.

Expand operations for a nine-month visitor season.



Craggy Dome Milepost 364.1







## MOUNT PISGAH, MILEPOSTS 407–409

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The Mount Pisgah recreation area is a scenic, high-elevation site. It provides a variety of recreational and educational opportunities, including a popular concession-operated lodge, restaurant, gift shop, and camp store. Across from the concession facilities is a campground and amphitheater, picnic area, and trails. Most interpretive activities are concentrated at the campground. This area includes spruce/fir habitat and an 8,000-year-old high altitude bog. The bog is at risk because it is surrounded by a popular campground.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Continue to provide concession food, lodging, and gift store services. Strategies might include making upgrades to infrastructure.

Restore the Buck Spring Lodge cultural landscape, including clearing vegetation.

Close and rehabilitate all tent camping sites that are directly adjacent to the bog.

Convert a portion of existing RV sites to tent camping sites.

In sensitive resource areas near the bog restrict visitor use to trails.

Continue to implement future repairs and rehabilitations needed to meet backlog maintenance needs.

Upgrade certain comfort stations to provide showers. Upgrade all comfort stations to be universally accessible.

Enlarge selected tent sites to better accommodate family-sized tents.

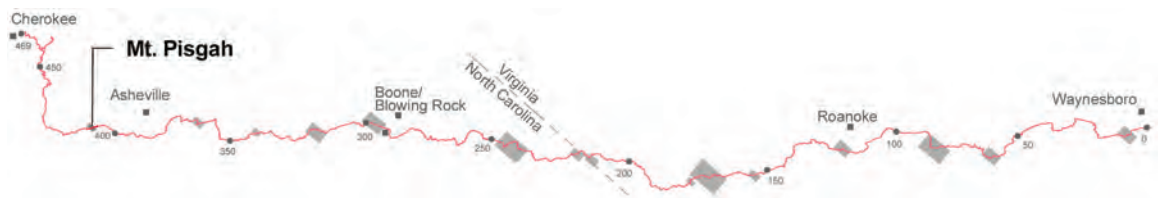
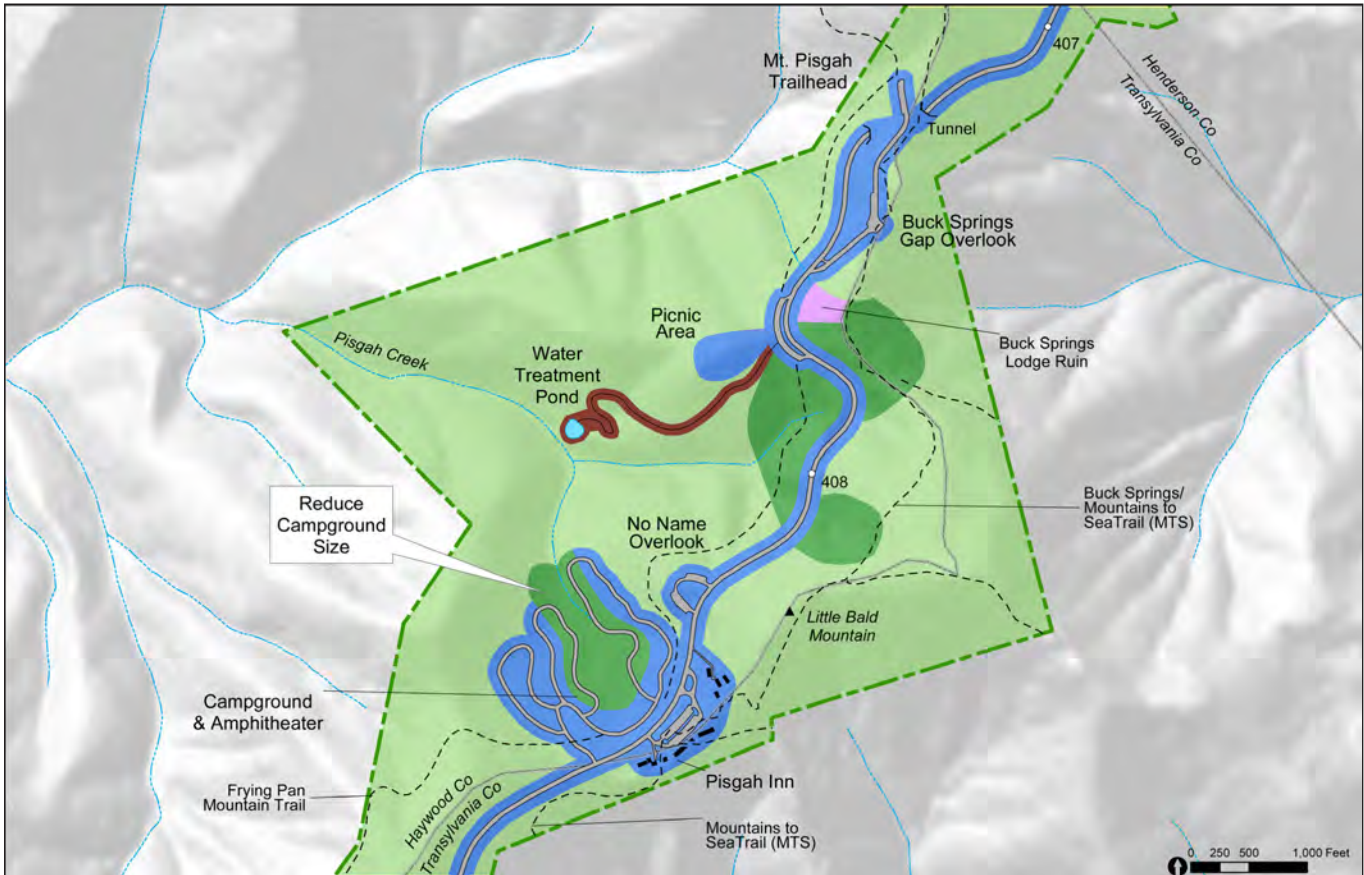
Upgrade existing RV sites with water and electrical hookups.

Continue to provide limited access (i.e., narrow roads, tight turns, and small parking spaces) that does not adequately accommodate larger RVs.



Mt. Pisgah Trailhead Milepost 407.5







FALL MOTORCYCLE RIDER MILEPOST 418.6



MITIGATION MEASURES  
USER CAPACITY  
CLIMATE CHANGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES  
FUTURE PLANS AND STUDIES



MOUSE SPECIES MONITORING



WHITE PINE



SABLE CLUBTAIL (GOMPHUS ROGERSI)





## MITIGATION MEASURES

Congress has charged the National Park Service with managing the lands under its stewardship “in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations” (National Park Service Organic Act 16 USC 1). As a result, the National Park Service routinely evaluates and implements mitigation whenever conditions occur that could adversely affect the sustainability of national park system resources. The following mitigation measures and best management practices will be applied to avoid or minimize potential adverse impacts from implementation of the general management plan.

### NATURAL RESOURCES

#### Vegetation

- Monitor areas used by visitors (e.g., trails) for signs of native vegetation disturbance. Use public education, revegetation of disturbed areas using native plant species, erosion control, and barriers to control potential impacts on plants from trail erosion or social trailing.
- Designate streamcrossing points for cattle in agricultural parcels and use barriers and closures to prevent trampling and loss of riparian vegetation.
- Develop revegetation plans for disturbed areas and require the use of native species. Revegetation plans should specify seed/plant source, seed/plant mixes, soil preparation, etc. Salvage vegetation should be used to the extent possible.

#### Wildlife

- Employ various techniques to reduce impacts on wildlife, including visitor education programs, restrictions on visitor activities, and park law enforcement patrols.
- Consider the use of large mammal wildlife passages at various key points along the parkway to maintain and enhance the wildlife habitat connectivity across the roadway.
- Implement a natural resource protection program that includes such standard measures as
  - scheduling construction during seasons that are best for wildlife
  - monitoring for adverse impact
  - implementing best management practices to prevent and reduce erosion and sediment
  - installing and maintaining fences or other barriers to protect sensitive resources adjacent to construction sites
  - removing all food-related items to reduce or prevent bear intrusion



GRASSY BALD INVENTORY



BOG TURTLE



- salvaging topsoil
- replanting with native vegetation
- periodic monitoring by resource management specialists or other park staff who will provide treatment and status reports
- Designate stream crossing points for cattle in agricultural parcels and use barriers and closures to prevent disturbances to wildlife habitat.

## Invasive Species

- Apply an integrated pest management approach to comprehensively address invasive, nonnative plants on parkway lands. Implement integrated pest management at existing, developed park sites, at proposed future sites, and at other areas in need of pest management. Standard measures could include the following elements:
  - ensure construction and maintenance-related equipment arrives on-site free of mud or seed-bearing material
  - use only seeds and straw material certified as weed-free
  - identify areas of noxious weeds preconstruction
  - use registered herbicides, where applicable (and low toxicity applications in areas with sensitive resources)
  - treat noxious weeds or noxious weed topsoil before construction (e.g., topsoil segregation, storage, herbicide treatment)
  - revegetate with appropriate native species
  - consider use of other management techniques such as mechanical removal, biological controls, prescribed fire, etc.
- Implement an abatement program for nonnative, invasive wildlife (e.g., gypsy moth, hemlock woolly adelgid, etc.)

## Threatened and Endangered Species and Species of Concern

Mitigation actions will occur during normal park operations as well as before, during, and after construction to minimize immediate and long-term impacts on rare, threatened, and endangered species. These actions will vary depending on the type of project and its location. Many of the measures listed previously for vegetation and wildlife will also benefit rare, threatened, and endangered species by helping to preserve habitat. Mitigation actions specific to rare, threatened, and endangered species will include the following:

- Conduct surveys for rare, threatened, and endangered species as warranted. Also, consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the frequency required for surveys prior to the commencement of construction activities. Apply site and design facilities/actions to avoid adverse effects on rare, threatened, and endangered species. If avoidance is infeasible, minimize and compensate adverse effects on rare,



Craggy Bald Restoration 2002



Craggy Dome Milepost 364.1





threatened, and endangered species as appropriate and in consultation with the appropriate resource agencies.

- Develop and implement restoration and/or monitoring plans as warranted. Plans should include methods for implementation, performance standards, monitoring criteria, and adaptive management techniques.
- Implement measures to reduce adverse effects of nonnative plants and wildlife on rare, threatened, and endangered species.

## WATER RESOURCES

- Establish effective water quality best management practices to prevent soil erosion and sedimentation into creeks, rivers, and other water bodies. Apply on all construction projects on parkway lands.
- Use erosion control measures (as per best management practices), minimize discharge to water bodies, and regularly inspect construction equipment for leaks of petroleum and other chemicals to prevent water pollution during construction.
- Build a runoff filtration system to minimize water pollution from larger parking areas.
- Designate streamcrossing points for cattle in agricultural parcels and use barriers and closures to minimize effects on water quality.



LOWER LINVILLE FALLS MILEPOST 316

## WETLANDS

- Through consultation with the National Park Service regional wetland ecologist, determine if a wetlands statement of findings is needed for any future implementation project that could affect wetlands in the parkway and produce wetlands statement of findings documents where necessary.
- Consult with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for guidance and assistance on section 404 jurisdictional wetland delineations.
- Delineate wetlands and apply protection measures before any ground disturbance. For example, wetlands will be delineated by qualified National Park Service staff or certified wetland specialists (with possible assistance by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) and clearly marked before construction work. Perform construction activities in a cautious manner to prevent damage caused by equipment, erosion, siltation, etc.

## SOILS

- Build new facilities on soils suitable for development.
- Minimize soil erosion by limiting the time that soil is left exposed and by applying other erosion control measures, such as erosion matting,



silt fencing, and sedimentation basins in construction areas to reduce erosion, surface scouring, and discharge to water bodies. Once work is completed, revegetate construction areas with native plants in a timely period.

- Identify potential acid-bearing rocks prior to construction activities (e.g., pyritic shale, high sulfur-bearing rocks) and take proper precautions to prevent acid drainage from rocks exposed during construction.

## AIR QUALITY

Implement a dust abatement program. Standard dust abatement measures could include the following elements: water or otherwise stabilize soils, cover haul trucks, employ speed limits on unpaved roads, minimize vegetation clearing, and revegetate after construction.



PARKWAY AIR QUALITY

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

In general, actions to mitigate adverse effects will be determined in consultation with the state historic preservation officer(s) and/or tribal historic preservation officer, local governments, the public, and others as appropriate, in accordance with 36 CFR 800 and the 2008 programmatic agreement among the National Park Service (U.S. Department of the Interior), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers for compliance with section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

### Archeology

- Mitigation measures concerning archeological resources will follow Director's Order 28A for archeological management and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archeology and Historic Preservation*. Archeological collections will be curated per the curation regulations in 36 CFR 79.
- Wherever possible, new facilities will be constructed in previously disturbed areas where archeological resources are not likely to occur. Archeological surveys will precede any ground disturbance of undisturbed or unsurveyed lands. National register-listed or -eligible archeological resources will be avoided during construction activities. Mitigation activities associated with invasive species may also require cultural resource compliance to ensure that ground-disturbing activities avoid archeological resources or other cultural resources.
- If during construction previously unknown archeological resources are discovered, all work in the immediate vicinity of the discovery will be halted until the resources can be identified and documented and, if the resources cannot be preserved in situ, an appropriate mitigation strategy will be developed in consultation with the state historic preservation officer and, as necessary, American Indian tribes. In the unlikely event that human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony are discovered during construction, provisions



ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY HOLLOWAY  
MOUNTAIN ROAD MILEPOST 298.6

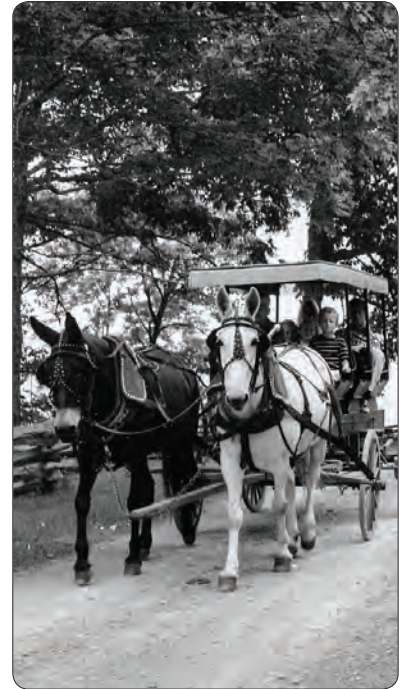




outlined in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 USC 3001) of 1990 will be followed. If non-Indian human remains are discovered, standard reporting procedures to the proper authorities will be followed, as will all applicable federal, state, and local laws.

## Cultural Landscapes

- The preservation and rehabilitation of cultural landscapes will be undertaken in accordance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*.
- Rehabilitate and/or restore cultural landscape resources to the extent feasible. This could entail restoring important historic viewsheds through manual vegetation thinning, rehabilitating agricultural fields and orchards, removing noncontributing and incompatible structures, and incorporating new additions using compatible design.
- Whenever possible, modify project design features to avoid effects to cultural landscapes. New developments will be relatively limited and will be on sites that blend with cultural landscapes. If necessary, use vegetative screening, as appropriate, to minimize impacts on cultural landscapes.



MOSES CONE ESTATE  
CARRIAGE CONCESSION 1975

## Ethnography

- Accommodate and facilitate access to and ceremonial use of sites and resources of significance to American Indians or other associated individuals and groups in a manner that is consistent with the park purposes and avoids adversely affecting the physical integrity of these sites and resources.
- Document cultural and ethnographic landscapes and other resources in the park and identify treatments to ensure their preservation.

## Historic Structures

- The preservation and rehabilitation of national register-listed or -eligible structures will be undertaken in accordance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (1995)* to ensure that the character defining features and integrity of the structures are minimally affected.
- Any materials removed during rehabilitation efforts will be evaluated to determine their value to the park's museum collections and/or for their comparative use in future preservation work at the sites.



## VISITOR SAFETY AND EXPERIENCE

- The Blue Ridge Parkway has hired a safety officer to coordinate all aspects of employee and visitor safety.
- Implement parkway-wide or site-specific traffic control plans, as warranted. Standard measures include strategies to maintain safe and efficient traffic flow during the construction period.
- Implement measures to reduce adverse effects of construction on visitor safety and experience.
- Implement an interpretation and education program. Continue directional signs and education programs to promote understanding among parkway visitors.
- Conduct an accessibility study to understand barriers to parkway programs and facilities. Based on this study, implement a strategy to provide the maximum level of accessibility.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Implement a spill prevention and pollution control program for hazardous materials. Standard measures could include hazardous materials storage and handling procedures; spill containment, cleanup, and reporting procedures; and limitation of refueling and other hazardous activities to upland/nonsensitive sites.

## NOISE ABATEMENT

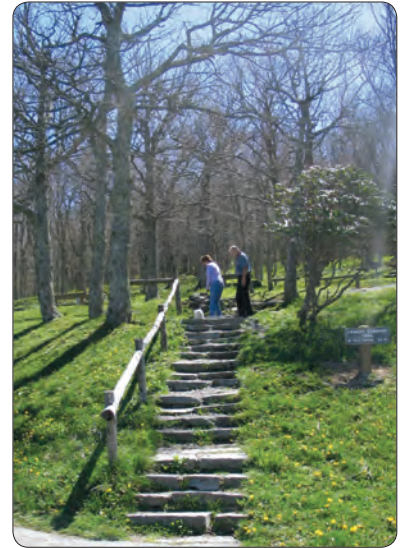
Implement standard noise abatement measures during construction. Standard noise abatement measures could include the following elements: a schedule that minimizes impacts on adjacent noise-sensitive uses, the use of the best available noise control techniques wherever feasible, the use of hydraulically or electrically powered impact tools when feasible, and the location of stationary noise sources as far from sensitive uses as possible. Mitigation measures will be applied to protect the natural sounds in the national park. Specific mitigation measures include exploration of options to reduce the noise levels from vehicular traffic, including motorcycles, and siting and design of facilities to minimize objectionable noise.

## SCENIC RESOURCES

The parkway actively engages in a scenery conservation program that routinely reviews and assesses proposed developments on lands adjacent to and in the parkway. Parkway staff participate when landowners and/or developers request that parkway planners and landscape architects work with them or when local jurisdictions have land management requirements that provide for public review of proposed land use changes.

The parkway's scenery conservation system process involves

- identifying visual preferences and landscape character types



HIKING AT CRAGGY GARDENS PICNIC AREA  
MILEPOST 367.6



VIEW FROM ROUGH RIDGE  
MILEPOST 302.8

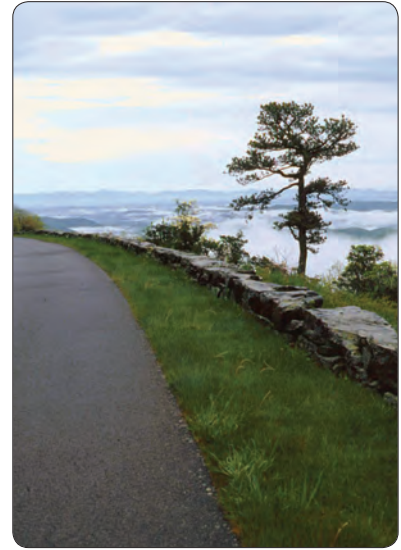




- determining viewshed sensitivity
- mapping view areas
- assessing view area scenic qualities
- identifying desired future conservation objectives
- monitoring and maintaining desired conditions

The data gathered throughout this process provides information to planning staff and leads to rational decisions relative to scenery as a key part of the parkway's mission. Specific mitigation measures include the following.

- Where appropriate, use facilities such as boardwalks and fences to route people away from sensitive natural and cultural resources, while still permitting access to important viewpoints.
- Design, site, and construct facilities to avoid or minimize adverse effects on natural and cultural resources and visual intrusion into the natural and/or cultural landscape.
- Provide vegetative screening, where appropriate.
- Subject viewshed-related projects to site-specific planning and compliance. Avoid adverse impacts through use of *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation* to preserve historic scenic views and landscapes where scenic resources are an integral component of the cultural landscape (see cultural resource mitigation measures above). If adverse impacts cannot be avoided, mitigate these impacts through a consultation process with all interested parties.



LONG RANGE PARKWAY VIEW  
DOUGHTON PARK

## SOCIOECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

During the future planning and implementation of the approved management plan for the parkway, the National Park Service will work with local communities and county governments to further identify potential impacts and mitigation measures that will best serve the interests and concerns of both the National Park Service and the local communities. Partnerships will be pursued to improve the quality and diversity of community amenities and services.

## SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND AESTHETICS

### Sustainable Development

Projects will avoid or minimize adverse impacts on natural and cultural resources. Development projects (e.g., buildings, facilities, utilities, roads, bridges, etc.) or reconstruction projects (e.g., road reconstruction, building rehabilitation, utility upgrade, etc.) will be designed to work in harmony with the surroundings, particularly in historic districts. Projects will reduce, minimize, or eliminate air and water nonpoint-source pollution. Projects will be sustainable whenever practicable, by recycling and reusing materials, by minimizing materials, by minimizing energy consumption during the project, and by minimizing energy consumption throughout the lifespan of the project.



HIGHWAY 89 BRIDGE  
MILEPOST 215.8



## Sustainable Trails

Trails will be designed and constructed in a sustainable manner. This means that the design of the trails will minimize natural and cultural resource damage including erosion, accommodate appropriate uses, plan for minimum maintenance while providing maximum ecological variety, and minimize conflict between trail users.

Archeology will be conducted on a site-specific basis to ensure that there is no impact to cultural or historic resources before trail alignments are considered. Trail alignments, where possible, will follow the natural contour, incorporate drainage to prevent erosion, have a durable tread, and maintain a grade of less than 10%. Trail alignments will avoid environmentally sensitive areas, wetlands, or areas where species of concern exist. Trail alignments will be chosen so as not to disturb wildlife migration routes. Trail construction materials, grades, and trail clearances will be chosen to reflect those sustainability goals and will be based on the type and volume of use anticipated, on the stability of native materials, and on the type of terrain along the route. In addition, surface treatments on some trails will be chosen to provide accessibility in compliance with the *Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards* (UFAS) and the *Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines*—this may include crushed gravel, asphalt, and appropriate grading.



HIKERS AT DOUGHTON PARK MILEPOST 241.6





## USER CAPACITY

General management plans for national park system units, including the Blue Ridge Parkway, must address the management of user capacity. The National Park Service defines user capacity as the type and extent of use that can be accommodated while sustaining the quality of a park unit's resources and visitor experiences consistent with the park unit's purpose.

User capacity management involves establishing desired conditions, monitoring, and taking actions to ensure the park unit's values are protected. The premise is that with any visitor use comes some level of impact that must be accepted; therefore, it is the responsibility of the National Park Service to decide what level of impact is acceptable and what management actions are needed to keep impacts within acceptable limits.

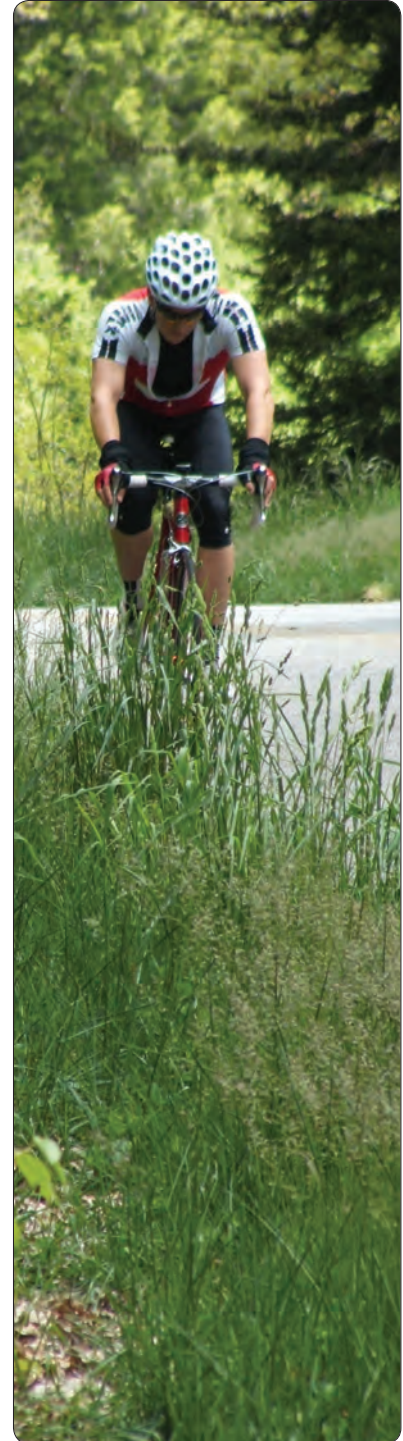
National Park Service staff actively manage the levels, types, and patterns of visitor use to the extent necessary to achieve and maintain desired resource conditions and a high-quality visitor experience. The monitoring component of this process helps National Park Service staff evaluate the effectiveness of management actions and provides a basis for informed management of visitor use. The user capacity management process can be summarized by the following major steps:

- Establish desired conditions for resources and visitor experiences (through management zoning), including the types of appropriate recreation opportunities and levels and types of development.
- Identify indicators—measurable variables that are monitored to determine whether desired conditions are being met (e.g., vegetation damage, encounter rates on trails).
- Identify standards (minimum acceptable conditions) for the indicators.
- Monitor indicators to determine trends in conditions and if management actions are needed.
- Take management actions to maintain or restore desired conditions.

The sheer scope of the parkway presents many challenges to managing user capacity. Not only does the parkway extend for 469 miles across two states and 29 counties, but it also includes many major recreation areas and myriad entry and exit points used by more than 16 million visitors annually. Given this incredible scope, user capacity management must be strategic through the efficient use of limited staff and funding, targeted focus on areas of most concern along the parkway, and creative approaches to monitoring and management strategies.

This general management plan provides a general management framework tailored to the parkway that provides the fundamental structure for a long-term, comprehensive strategy to manage user capacity. This framework guides the strategic use of limited park staff and funding regarding future user capacity planning and management. This management framework includes the following components:

- The eight management zones described earlier provide the basis for managing user capacity. Each zone prescribes desired resource conditions, visitor experiences, and recreational opportunities for different areas of the parkway. The zones also prescribe the types



BICYCLING NEAR MT. MITCHELL



and levels of developments necessary to support these conditions, experiences, and opportunities. This element of the framework is the most important to long-term user capacity management in that it directs the National Park Service on how to best protect resources and visitor experiences while offering a diversity of visitor opportunities.

- Existing and potential visitor-related concerns for each management zone are described, along with identification of priority areas in each zone for managing user capacity. As parkway managers collect more detailed information on visitor-related concerns in those areas, specific indicators and standards will be identified.
- Considerations for selecting potential indicators and standards are included to determine if unacceptable visitor-related impacts are occurring.
- Potential management strategies are outlined that could be implemented to avoid or minimize adverse impacts from visitor use.

This framework is intended to be a starting point to an effort needing further reflection, development, and adaptation. Final selection of indicators and standards for monitoring purposes and implementation of management actions that affect use will comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (1969), section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, other laws, and National Park Service management policies as appropriate.

Table 3 describes the user capacity management framework for the Blue Ridge Parkway. Although the framework is organized by management zones, the approach developed for one zone can be adapted and applied to other zones as needed and appropriate. The ultimate goal of the framework is to provide strategic management guidance that is effective and efficient while maximizing flexibility for managers to maintain the desired resource conditions and visitor experiences of the parkway.



GRAVEYARD FIELD WITH CARS





MODERN PARKWAY BRIDGE



TABLE 3. USER CAPACITY MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK BY MANAGEMENT ZONES

	Special Natural Resources	Natural	Scenic Character	Recreation
<b>Potential Visitor-Related Concerns</b>	Impacts on rare plant and animal species, sensitive habitats, and ecosystem processes as a result of human-caused vegetation trampling and sensory-based disturbances.	Impacts on vegetation and soils resulting from off-trail use, camping in undesignated areas, or concentrated levels of use in fragile areas.	Impacts on visitors' ability to experience the high-quality scenic landscapes.  Impacts on the visitor experience as a result of conflicts between user groups (e.g., mountain bikers, horseback riders, hikers, and groups using the paved, multiuse trail).	Impacts on the visitor experience as a result of conflicts between user groups (e.g., mountain bikers, horseback riders, and hikers).
<b>Priority Areas for Managing User Capacity</b>	Globally ranked plant communities; critical habitats for threatened and endangered species; and state natural heritage areas and conservation sites that are accessible or near visitor-use areas.	Trail systems or backcountry campsites that are experiencing impacts and/or are not adequately designed to support heavy use or certain types of use.	Trail systems that receive high levels of visitation.	Trail systems that receive high levels of visitation.
<b>Considerations for Potential Indicator Topics</b>	Extent of trampling of select plant species.  Measures of disturbance to certain wildlife species.	Extent and severity of trampling of vegetation cover, soil compaction, and/or erosion.  Number of visitor-created trails and/or campsites.  Trail and/or campsite condition assessments.	Encounter rates between different types of user groups.  Frequency of complaints that are related to visitor-use conflicts and/or crowding.  Visitor evaluations of degree of use conflicts and/or crowding.	Encounter rates between different types of user groups.  Frequency of complaints that are related to visitor-use conflicts and/or crowding.  Visitor evaluations of degree of use conflicts and/or crowding.  Parking use rates and typical duration of parked vehicles at selected trailheads/parking areas.





Visitor Services	Historic Parkway	Special Cultural Resources	Park Support
Impacts on the visitor experience as a result of crowding and conflicts between user groups (e.g., RV and tent campers).	Impacts on the visitor experience while traveling the parkway as a result of traffic congestion and conflicts among user groups (e.g., automobiles, motorcycles, and bicycles).  Impacts on visitors' ability to experience the high-quality scenic landscapes of the parkway as a result of crowding at or near popular vistas and overlooks.	Impacts on historic structures that contribute to the national significance of the parkway, resulting from overuse or inappropriate types of use.	User capacity is not addressed for this zone, because visitor opportunities and services are generally not provided. As a result, visitor use is extremely low. If visitor use poses any future impacts, then indicators and standards will be developed.
Areas of the parkway that receive the greatest visitation or the highest frequency of complaints (including campgrounds, picnic areas, and lodges).	Parkway stretches that receive the highest traffic volumes or where the greatest visitor conflicts occur, such as near Roanoke, Boone / Blowing Rock, and Asheville.  Vistas and overlooks along the parkway that receive the highest levels of use.	Sensitive cultural sites that are accessible to visitors, especially those that receive high levels of use or those that do not have park staff present fulltime.	
Frequency of complaints related to visitor-use conflicts and/or crowding.  Visitor evaluations of degree of use conflicts and/or crowding.	Level of service along road segments.  Vehicles per viewscape.  Frequency of complaints related to traffic volumes and/or use conflicts.  Safety incidents.  Visitor evaluations of traffic congestion and/or use conflicts.  People at one time at high-use overlooks.  Portion of time parking is available.  Portion of visitors who avoid overlooks due to perceived crowding or lack of parking.  Visitor complaints about crowding.  Visitor evaluations of degree of crowding.	Wear on historic structures as a result of visitor use.  Incidents of disturbance or vandalism of historic structures.  Historic site condition assessments.	



TABLE 3. USER CAPACITY MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK BY MANAGEMENT ZONES

	Special Natural Resources	Natural	Scenic Character	Recreation
<b>Considerations for Developing Potential Standards</b>	Determine minimum levels of trampling and disturbances to avoid interference with factors affecting species viability.	Determine trampling thresholds to maintain plant vigor. Determine an acceptable level of vegetation loss, soil compaction, and/or erosion at camp sites or along select trails.	Determine appropriate levels of user group interaction considering setting conditions, use patterns, and visitor perceptions of use conflicts and crowding.	Determine appropriate levels of user group interaction considering setting conditions, use patterns, and visitor perceptions of use conflicts and crowding.
<b>Potential Management Strategies</b>	Educate visitors on reducing their impact on the natural environment. Restrict the types or levels of use to certain sensitive areas if standards are exceeded. Consider seasonal closures if impacts are specific to certain times of the year.	Educate visitors on reducing their impact on the natural environment. Consider establishing or relocating designated backcountry campsites, reroute trails away from fragile areas, or redesign them to accommodate different types or more use. Consider backcountry permits or other means to manage use levels, patterns, and behaviors.	Provide education on trail etiquette. Consider modifications or improvements to the trail design to make it more compatible for visitor use patterns. Consider one-way trails, seasonal-use trails, or trails dedicated to fewer types of activities.	Provide education on trail etiquette. Consider modifications or improvements to the trail design to make it more compatible for multiple uses. Consider one-way trails, seasonal-use trails, or trails dedicated to fewer types of activities.



LINN COVE VIADUCT MILEPOST 304





Visitor Services	Historic Parkway	Special Cultural Resources	Park Support
Determine acceptable levels of conflict and crowding at selected sites considering use patterns and visitor preferences.	<p>Determine minimum levels of traffic volumes for different modes of transportation to maintain free-flowing speeds, where the effects of minor incidents are easily absorbed and encounters with other travelers do not diminish the leisure traveling experience.</p> <p>Determine an acceptable amount of time when parking is at maximum capacity at select overlooks. Determine an acceptable degree of crowding considering visitor use patterns and visitor preferences at select sites.</p>	Determine an acceptable level of damage (if any) to select cultural sites. Consider a range of standards that trigger incrementally more stringent management actions.	
Provide pretrip planning information to visitors about peak periods of use along the parkway. Consider traffic-flow improvements and other redesigns that enhance the visitor experience in developed areas.	<p>Provide pretrip planning information to visitors about peak periods of use along the parkway. Restrict commuter traffic on the parkway, limit access onto the parkway, establish vehicle size restrictions, or provide new or additional off-parkway parallel bicycle paths, while still allowing bicycles on the roadway.</p> <p>Provide pretrip planning information to visitors about peak periods of crowding at certain overlooks. Provide real-time information about parking lot conditions. Consider expanding parking or converting RV parking spaces into additional spaces for cars.</p>	Provide education on appropriate behaviors. Use signs and/or barriers to limit and manage contact with cultural resources. Increase park staff presence at cultural sites to avoid further damage. Modify visitor access and circulation or close portions of the site to minimize direct impacts.	





## CLIMATE CHANGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Climate change has the potential to adversely affect the future resource conditions of the parkway. As global and regional climates continue to change, a management approach that enhances the protection and resilience of climate-sensitive resources is becoming increasingly important. The following outlines a strategy that adapts to our growing understanding of climate change influences and the effectiveness of management to contend with them.

Climate change science is a rapidly advancing field and new information is continually being collected and released, yet the full extent of climate change impacts on resource conditions is unknown. Park managers and policy makers have not determined the most effective response mechanisms for minimizing impacts and adapting to change. For this reason, this proposed management strategy does not provide definitive solutions or directions; rather it provides science-based and scholarship-based management principles to consider when implementing the broader management direction of the parkway.

### STRATEGY

The National Park Service Climate Change Response Program aims to prepare the agency and its parks for the anticipated management needs that result from climate change. To help parks cope with the uncertainty in future climate conditions, the Climate Change Response Program serves to help park managers determine the extent to which they can and should act to protect the parks' current resources while allowing the parks' ecosystems to adapt to new conditions. Efforts of the National Park Service Climate Change Response Program focus on the following strategies.

### SCIENCE

- Conduct scientific research and vulnerability assessments necessary to support National Park Service adaptation, mitigation, and communication efforts.
- Collaborate with scientific agencies and institutions to meet the specific needs of management as it confronts the challenges of climate change.
- Learn from and apply the best available climate change science.

### MITIGATION

- Reduce carbon footprint of the National Park Service.
- Promote energy efficient practices, such as alternative transportation.
- Enhance carbon sequestration as one of many ecosystem services.
- Integrate mitigation into all business practices, planning, and the National Park Service culture.



PARKWAY MILEPOST





## ADAPTATION

- Develop the adaptive capacity for managing natural and cultural resources and infrastructure under a changing climate.
- Inventory resources at risk and conduct vulnerability assessments.
- Prioritize and implement actions and monitor the results.
- Explore scenarios, associated risks, and possible management options.
- Integrate climate change impacts into facilities management.

## COMMUNICATION

- Provide effective communication about climate change and impacts to the public.
- Train park staff and managers in the science of climate change and decision tools for coping with change.
- Lead by example.

With the guidance of the above strategies, the parkway will use the following management approach to address climate change throughout the implementation of this general management plan. Many of these specific management strategies are adopted from *Some Guidelines for Helping Natural Resources Adapt to Climate Change* (International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change, 2008). Further elaboration and adaption of these strategies is anticipated as implementation of the general management plan proceeds.

- Identify key natural and cultural resources and processes that are at risk from climate change. Establish baseline conditions for these resources, identify their thresholds, and monitor for change. Increase reliance on adaptive management to minimize risks.
- Restore key ecosystem features and processes and protect cultural resources to increase their resilience to climate change.



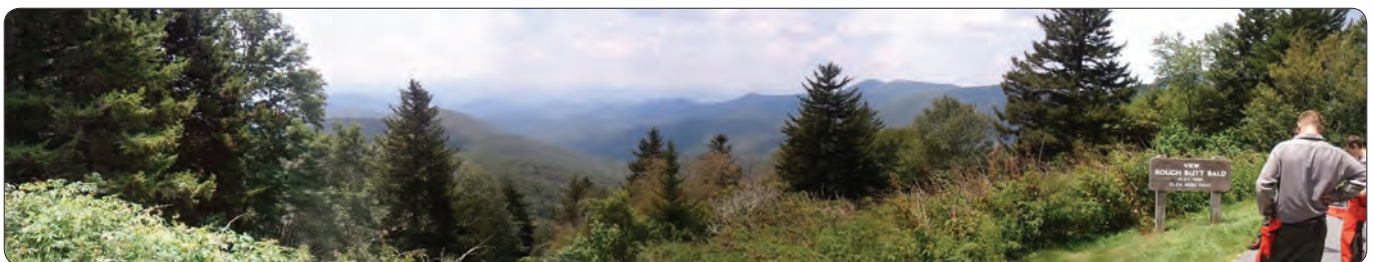
ADNEY GAP MILEPOST 136



- Use best management practices to reduce human-caused stresses (e.g., park infrastructure and visitor-related disturbances) that hinder the ability of species or ecosystems to withstand climatic events.
- Form partnerships with other resource management entities to maintain regional habitat connectivity and refugia that allow species dependent on parkway resources to better adapt to changing conditions.
- Reduce or mitigate greenhouse gas emissions associated with parkway operations and visitor use, such as alternative transportation options (e.g., shuttles and low-emission vehicles for the park's fleet) and biofuels and other renewable energy sources for visitor centers, administrative buildings, and campgrounds.
- Use the fragile environments of the Blue Ridge Parkway as an opportunity to educate visitors about the effects of climate change on the resources they are enjoying. Inspire visitors to take action through leadership and education.
- Manage parkway facilities and infrastructure (structures, trails, roads, drainage systems, etc.) in a way that prepares for and adapts to the effects of climate change.



VISTA MITIGATION ROUGH BUTT BALD BEFORE RESTORATION MILEPOST 425.4



VISTA MITIGATION ROUGH BUTT BALD AFTER RESTORATION MILEPOST 425.4





## FUTURE PLANS AND STUDIES

Implementation of the general management plan will require other more detailed studies and plans prior to moving forward with certain actions. Some of these actions will require additional environmental compliance, public involvement, and consultation. The extent of further public input and environmental analysis will vary depending on the impacts anticipated from the management action. Appropriate permits may also be needed for certain actions.

The following list of future plans and studies is organized by parkway-wide management strategies presented earlier in this chapter.

### SCENERY CONSERVATION

- Complete the baseline evaluation of the quality and condition of off-parkway scenic views from parkway overlooks and roadside vistas in order to identify specific views along the parkway for protection.
- Work with partners to establish long-term strategies to conserve views from the parkway.

### LAND PROTECTION

Develop a land protection strategy that does not identify specific tracts of land, but establishes (1) resource and visitor use management criteria, (2) park management zoning and land use compatibility factors, and/or (3) other protection goals that can be used to evaluate the merits of a property when it becomes available from willing sellers.

### NATURAL RESOURCES

- Develop a resource stewardship strategy that provides comprehensive, long-range direction for natural and cultural resource management. This strategy will establish a multiyear, ecosystem-based planning process for the natural resource program to implement inventories, condition assessments, monitoring, and restoration projects for
  - vegetation, including both native and invasive species
  - wildlife, including mammals, birds, reptiles, fish, and amphibians
  - wetlands, including bogs, springs, seeps, and riparian areas
  - ecologically sensitive areas, including globally imperiled habitats, state natural heritage areas, conservation sites, and critical habitat for endangered species
  - active management measures to maintain and restore natural ecosystems (e.g., addressing maturing oak forest that has not been exposed to wildfire over the past century)
  - special status species, including federal and state listed plants and animals.



PARK LAND USE MAP (PLUM) OVERLAY  
MILEPOST 292



- Conduct continuous water quality and air quality monitoring along the parkway.
- Develop a restoration plan or plans to provide guidance for restoring rare habitats and special status species.
- Through consultation with the National Park Service regional wetland ecologist, determine if a wetlands statement of findings is needed for any future implementation project that could affect wetlands in the parkway and produce wetlands statement of findings documents where necessary.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

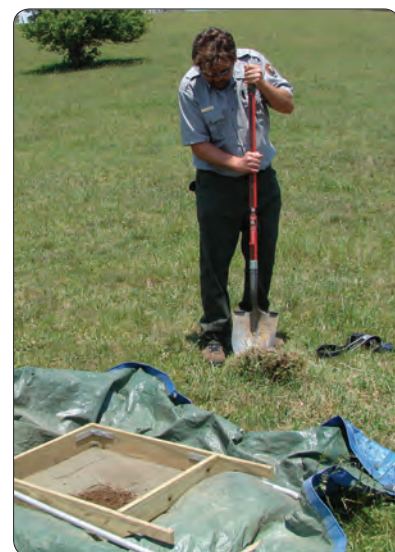
- Develop a climate change action plan that builds on the parkway's approach to addressing climate change outlined in this general management plan, including strategies to reduce the parkway's carbon footprint and an analysis to determine the effects of climate change on park resources, values, facilities, and visitor services.
- Pursue data collection and research that addresses climate change effects on natural and cultural resources as well as human dimensions. These efforts could include scenario planning via the assistance of the Climate Change Response Program and partnership research efforts with other agencies/institutions.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

- Develop a resource stewardship strategy that provides comprehensive, long-range direction for cultural resource management, including the establishment of a multiyear planning process for resource inventory, assessment, research, interpretation, and protection. Cultural resources (such as archeological sites, historic structures, cultural landscapes, and ethnographic resources) will continue to be inventoried and assessed parkway-wide.
- Update the collection and archive management plan, integrated pest management plan for collections, and scope of collections as needed.
- Complete the nomination of the parkway as a national historic landmark.
- Develop a parkway-wide strategy to identify, monitor, and mitigate the impacts of climate change on cultural resources.
- Develop treatment plans for special cultural resource areas (e.g., Harris farm) and cultural landscapes.
- Develop treatment plans for cultural resources in need of rehabilitation and stabilization (e.g., Saunders farm). Historic structures currently in use for concession operations may require specific plans for rehabilitation, restoration, or adaptation for new uses.



HISTORIC SIGN, MILEPOST 169



ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY ON PARKWAY





## VISITOR USE AND INTERPRETATION

- Develop an implementation plan or plans to substantially increase the number of visitors contacted over current levels by providing visitor orientation services at underserved parkway entrances, especially the northern and southernmost entrances.
- Develop a user capacity strategy for the parkway consistent with the user capacity framework presented in this general management plan.
- Update visitor use and analysis data to serve as a foundation to help guide a variety of other implementation studies and plans.
- Develop new methods to reach a wider variety of audiences using available new technologies.
- Update the parkway's comprehensive interpretive plan as needed.

## CONCESSIONS

Develop a strategy (such as a new commercial services plan) to provide viable concession services at all locations to ensure the long-term availability of in-parkway lodging, food, and other services. An implementation plan will be developed if either upgrades to infrastructure or the addition of new facilities is appropriate.

## ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

### Campgrounds

Develop an implementation plan or plans to upgrade all nine of the parkway campgrounds, including comfort stations, tent sites, RV sites, and amphitheaters. Roanoke Mountain campground will be converted to a day-use recreation area.

### Partnerships

Strategies to enhance existing partnerships or actively pursue new ones with public and private entities will be incorporated into the future studies and plans listed previously.

### Access Plans

Develop a comprehensive access management plan that defines locations and traffic control strategies for all driveway and secondary road access on the parkway, including locations for the potential replacement of at-grade crossings with new grade separation structures.

- Complete study and final design to evaluate, identify, and design improvements at pullouts.



BRINEGAR CABIN MILEPOST 238.5



BLUE RIDGE MUSIC CENTER STAGE  
MILEPOST 212.8



- Complete conceptual and final design of new grade separation structures at locations identified in the access management plan, including negotiations for acquisition of right-of-way, if needed.
- Complete study and final design to evaluate, identify, and design parking and access improvements at recreational areas along the parkway.

## Trail Plans

Develop an implementation plan or plans to expand and improve parkway trail systems to accommodate potential increases or changes in recreation demand.

- Develop a trail master plan to identify the expanded locations and treatments of improvements for the trail systems to accommodate potential increases in recreation demand, including mountain bikes where appropriate.
- Subsequently complete an implementation plan to negotiate agreements with adjacent agencies, if necessary, and outline funding.
- Complete final design of new trails and trail improvements.



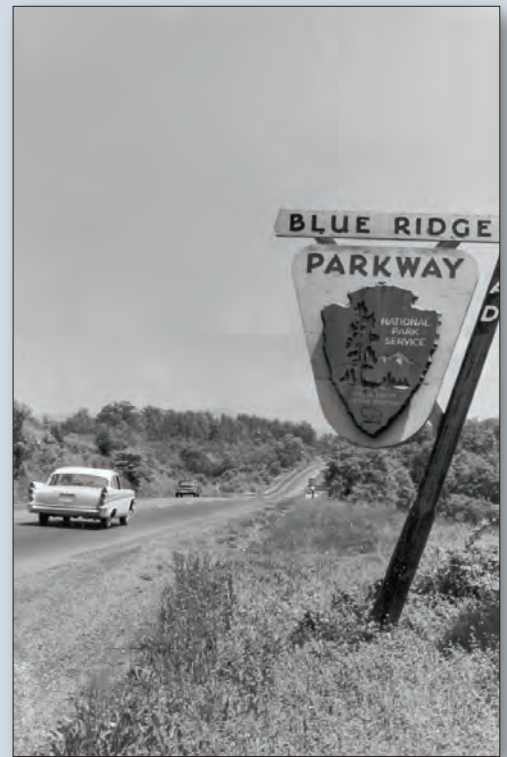
TRAIL BUILDING ON PARKWAY



# APPENDIXES



PARKWAY DIRECTIONAL SIGN MILEPOST 0



PARKWAY APPROACH SIGN





## APPENDIX A: ENABLING LEGISLATION

[CHAPTER 883.]

### AN ACT

To provide for the administration and maintenance of the Blue Ridge Parkway, in the States of Virginia and North Carolina, by the Secretary of the Interior, and for other purposes.

June 30, 1936.  
[H. R. 12455.]  
[Public, No. 848.]

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That hereafter all lands and easements conveyed or to be conveyed to the United States by the States of Virginia and North Carolina for the right-of-way for the projected parkway between the Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks, together with sites acquired or to be acquired for recreational areas in connection therewith, and a right-of-way for said parkway of a width sufficient to include the highway and all bridges, ditches, cuts, and fills appurtenant thereto, but not exceeding a maximum of two hundred feet through Government-owned lands as designated on maps heretofore or hereafter approved by the Secretary of the Interior, shall be known as the Blue Ridge Parkway and shall be administered and maintained by the Secretary of the Interior through the National Park Service, subject to the provisions of the Act of Congress approved August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535), entitled "An Act to establish a National Park Service, and for other purposes", the provisions of which Act, as amended and supplemented, are hereby extended over and made applicable to said parkway: *Provided,* That the Secretary of Agriculture is hereby authorized, with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Interior, to connect with the parkway such roads and trails as may be necessary for the protection, administration, or utilization of adjacent and nearby national forests and the resources thereof: *And provided further,* That the Forest Service and the National Park Service shall, insofar as practicable, coordinate and correlate such recreational development as each may plan, construct, or permit to be constructed, on lands within their respective jurisdictions which, by mutual agreement, should be given special treatment for recreational purposes.

Blue Ridge Parkway,  
Va., and N. C.  
Projected parkway  
between the Shenandoah and Great Smoky  
Mountains National  
Parks, etc., to be known  
as.

Administration, etc.,  
by National Park Service.

Vol. 39, p. 535.  
U. S. C., p. 591.

*Provisos.*  
Roads and trails.

Coordination of recreational development  
by Forest Service and  
National Park Service.

Approved, June 30, 1936.

[CHAPTER 701]

### AN ACT

To authorize the exchange of certain lands within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park for lands within the Cherokee Indian Reservation, North Carolina, and for other purposes.

August 19, 1937  
[H. R. 5472]  
[Public, No. 320]

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the Secretary of the Interior is hereby authorized, under such terms and conditions as he may deem proper, to exchange a tract of land of approximately one thousand two hundred and two acres, near Smokemont, North Carolina, known as the Towstring tract and forming a part of the Cherokee Indian Reservation, for three tracts of land, totaling approximately one thousand five hundred and forty-seven acres, in the vicinity of Ravensford, North Carolina, known as the Boundary Tree, Ravensford, and Tight Run tracts and forming a part of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, conditioned upon the consent of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians to this exchange and to the acquisition by the State of North Carolina of a right-of-way, which shall vary in width between two hundred feet and eight hundred feet, for the Blue Ridge Parkway across the said reservation, and further conditioned upon payment to the said Cherokee Indians by the said State of North Carolina of such compensation as shall have been determined by the said Secretary as just and reasonable for the said right-of-way. When the foregoing conditions have been complied with, the Secretary of the Interior is hereby further authorized to grant to the State of North Carolina a right-of-way as hereinbefore provided for.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park,  
N. C.  
Exchange of certain  
lands within, for lands  
within the Cherokee  
Indian Reservation,  
authorized.

Conditions.

Right-of-way grant  
to State.

SEC. 2. The consent of the said Cherokee Indians to any proposed exchange and the acquisition of a right-of-way by the State of North Carolina as provided for herein shall be expressed by secret ballot in a general election, in which a majority vote in favor thereof. Such election to be arranged and supervised by the tribal council within sixty days after the passage of this Act, and the results of such election shall be final.

Consent of Indians to be determined by ballot.

SEC. 3. No exchange shall be consummated pursuant to the provisions of this Act unless and until the consent of the State of North Carolina is first had and obtained thereto as indicated by an Act of its legislature.

Consent by State.

SEC. 4. Upon the consummation of the exchange made pursuant to the provisions of this Act, the lands transferred to the Indians shall be held in trust by the United States for the said Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and shall be nontaxable and nonalienable the same as the balance of the Indian land of the aforesaid reservation, and the lands transferred to the United States for park purposes shall become and be a part of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and shall be subject to the provisions of the Act of Congress approved August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535), as amended: *Provided*, That should any of the exchanged area or parkway right-of-way herein dealt with cease to be used for park or parkway purposes, the title thereto shall revert to its status prior to the exchange.

Lands transferred to Indians to be held in trust; nontaxable, etc.

Acquisitions by United States for park purposes.  
39 Stat. 535.  
16 U. S. C. § 1.  
*Proviso.*  
Reversionary provision.

Approved, August 19, 1937.

## [CHAPTER 277]

### AN ACT

To amend the Act of June 30, 1936 (49 Stat. 2041), providing for the administration and maintenance of the Blue Ridge Parkway, in the States of Virginia and North Carolina, by the Secretary of the Interior, and for other purposes.

June 8, 1940  
[H. R. 4282]  
[Public, No. 566]

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That the Act entitled "An Act to provide for the administration and maintenance of the Blue Ridge Parkway, in the States of Virginia and North Carolina, by the Secretary of the Interior, and for other purposes", approved June 30, 1936 (49 Stat. 2041), be amended to read as follows:

Blue Ridge Parkway, Va. and N. C.  
16 U. S. C., Supp. V, § 403i.

"That all lands and easements heretofore or hereafter conveyed to the United States by the States of Virginia and North Carolina for the right-of-way for the projected parkway between the Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks, together with sites acquired or to be acquired for recreational areas in connection therewith, and a right-of-way for said parkway of a width sufficient to include the highway and all bridges, ditches, cuts, and fills appurtenant thereto, but not exceeding a maximum of two hundred feet

Projected parkway between Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks to be known as.



through Government-owned lands (except that where small parcels of Government-owned lands would otherwise be isolated, or where topographic conditions or scenic requirements are such that bridges, ditches, cuts, fills, parking overlooks, landscape development, recreational and other facilities requisite to public use of said parkway could not reasonably be confined to a width of two hundred feet, the said maximum may be increased to such width as may be necessary, with the written approval of the department or agency having jurisdiction over such lands) as designated on maps heretofore or hereafter approved by the Secretary of the Interior, shall be known as the Blue Ridge Parkway and shall be administered and maintained by the Secretary of the Interior through the National Park Service, subject to the provisions of the Act of Congress approved August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535), entitled 'An Act to establish a National Park Service, and for other purposes', the provisions of which Act, as amended and supplemented, are hereby extended over and made applicable to said parkway: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Agriculture is hereby authorized, with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Interior, to connect with the parkway such roads and trails as may be necessary for the protection, administration, or utilization of adjacent and nearby national forests and the resources thereof: *And Provided further*, That the Forest Service and the National Park Service shall, insofar as practicable, coordinate and correlate such recreational development as each may plan, construct, or permit to be constructed, on lands within their respective jurisdictions which, by mutual agreement, should be given special treatment for recreational purposes.

*Sec. 2.* In the administration of the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Secretary of the Interior may issue revocable licenses or permits for rights-of-way over, across, and upon parkway lands, or for the use of parkway lands by the owners or lessees of adjacent lands, for such purposes and under such nondiscriminatory terms, regulations, and conditions as he may determine to be not inconsistent with the use of such lands for parkway purposes.

*Sec. 3.* The Secretary of the Interior is hereby authorized, in his discretion, to approve and accept, on behalf of the United States, title to any lands and interests in land heretofore or hereafter conveyed to the United States for the purposes of the Blue Ridge or the Natchez Trace Parkways, or for recreational areas in connection therewith."

Approved, June 8, 1940.

[CHAPTER 318]

AN ACT

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey to the State of North Carolina for use in connection with the Blue Ridge Parkway certain land within the Cherokee Indian Reservation in the State of North Carolina.

June 11, 1940

[H. R. 6668]

[Public, No. 503]

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That the Secretary of the Interior is authorized and directed to convey to the State of North Carolina for use as a right-of-way in connection with the Blue Ridge Parkway in the State of North Carolina all right, title, and

Blue Ridge Parkway, N. C.  
Conveyance of land to State of N. C., authorized.

Description.	<p>interest of the United States and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in such land and the timber thereon, to be determined as hereinafter provided, within the Cherokee Indian Reservation in the State of North Carolina as may be necessary for the construction and maintenance of such parkway over the following course: Beginning at a point in State Highway Numbered 293 near Soco Gap and extending to a junction with State Highway Numbered 107, near the mouth of the Ravens Fork of the Oconoluftee River by way of the following approximate controls: Leaving Soco Gap and following the east and northerly slopes of Soco and Bunches Bald ridge and crossing through Docks Gap to the south and west side of Soco and Bunches Bald; thence crossing Lickstone Ridge and entering Bunches Gap from the south; thence from Bunches Gap, following the south slopes of the main ridge, crossing Jenkins Divide ridge and entering Big Witch Gap from the southeast; thence leaving Big Witch Gap in a northwesterly direction and keeping on the northerly and westerly slopes of the main ridge, but crossing the various spur ridges circling around the heads of Mingo Creek and Sherrills Cove, and around the north end of the ridge lying immediately northeast of the Ravensford Mill site, crossing the Oconoluftee River to the junction with State Highway Numbered 107, previously referred to, and in addition, starting in a northeasterly direction from Bunches Gap passing about one-half mile north of Soco Bald; thence turning north and intersecting the boundary between the Qualla Indian Reservation and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park at a point approximately one mile northeast of Bunches Gap.</p>
Survey before conveyance.	<p>SEC. 2. Before making such conveyance, the Secretary of the Interior shall have the lands along such course surveyed and shall determine the exact location and boundaries of the land to be conveyed for use as such right-of-way, which shall not exceed one hundred and twenty-five acres per mile. The deed of conveyance for such land shall contain an accurate description of the location and boundaries of such land in order that the interests of the United States and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians may be properly protected.</p>
Deed of conveyance.	<p>SEC. 3. In consideration of conveyance, the State of North Carolina shall pay to the United States the sum of \$40,000 or \$30 per acre for the lands embraced in the right-of-way described in section 1, whichever sum is the largest, which shall be deposited in the Treasury to the credit of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and held in trust by the United States for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. It is understood and agreed that the State of North Carolina shall build without further payment for right-of-way, and without expense to the United States or the Cherokee Indians, a suitable State highway between Soco Gap and Cherokee Village, subject to the same laws, rules and regulations applicable to all State highways of North Carolina.</p>
Payment by State to U. S.	<p>SEC. 4. The Secretary of the Interior is hereby authorized, in his discretion, to grant to the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians the beneficial interest in any lands selected by the council of said band within the Boundary Tree tract, containing approximately eight hundred and eighty-four acres; and the said Secretary is hereby directed to exclude from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park any lands so selected and granted. Prior to the consummation of any such grant, payment shall be made for all lands included therein by the transfer of a sum equal to the fair market value of such lands, as determined by the Secretary of the Interior, from any funds in the United States Treasury to the credit of said band, including funds made available under section 3 hereof, to the credit of the fund "National Park Service, donations", which transfer the Secretary of the Treasury is hereby authorized to make upon request by the council of said band approved by the Secretary of the Interior.</p>
Deposit.	<p>Funds so transferred shall be available for national park and monument uses, including the acquisition of lands for inclusion in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. All lands purchased or otherwise acquired for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians under authority contained in this Act shall constitute a part of the Cherokee Indian Reservation in North Carolina, shall be held by the United States in trust for said band, and shall be nontaxable, nonalienable to the same extent as other lands within said reservation.</p>
Construction of State highway; location.	<p>Approved, June 11, 1940.</p>
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. Granting to, of interest in designated lands, authorized.	
Payment by transfer of funds.	
Availability of transferred funds.	
Inclusion of acquired lands in Reservation.	



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As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historic places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

BLRI 601/122355

October 2013

## BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

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### SUMMARY OF THE FINAL GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN



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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR • NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

