

Chapter 2. Site History

Introduction

1 Ozark NSR preserves the largest natural
 2 spring in Missouri and one of the largest in
 3 the world, with a daily flow of 288 million
 4 gallons. Surrounded by acres of oak hickory
 5 forest along the Current River, the rugged
 6 hillsides of the Courtois Hills frame the
 7 spring and park development. Established
 8 as Big Spring State Park in 1924 to protect
 9 the spring, conserve wildlife, and to provide
 10 public recreation, the park was further
 11 developed by the CCC / WPA in the 1930s and
 12 1940s. The work completed by these public
 13 work programs embodies the distinctive
 14 characteristics of Naturalistic landscape
 15 design and the Rustic architectural style
 16 and typifies the character of building and
 17 landscape seen today. Subsequent episodes of
 18 construction was led by the NPS in the 1970s,
 19 following designation of the area as part of
 20 the Ozark National Scenic Riverways.
 21
 22 The site history chapter presents an overview
 23 of the developmental history of Big Spring
 24 Historic District. This includes the earliest
 25 documented American Indian settlement, the
 26 establishment of the state park, development
 27 of the park by the CCC and WPA, and
 28 modifications undertaken by the NPS and into
 29 the present-day.
 30
 31 The chapter begins with a historical overview
 32 which provides background and context
 33 for understanding the development of Big
 34 Spring Historic District. This is followed by
 35 a statement of significance and period of
 36 significance. The period of significance is
 37 recommended as 1924 to 1969 to encompass
 38 implementation of the park, the CCC /
 39 WPA era of construction and development
 40 that continued until 1969. The statement
 41 of significance is followed by a detailed
 42 chronology of physical development and
 43 change, divided into six periods of landscape
 44 development. Each period of landscape

1 development begins with a summary
 2 describing how the landscape would have
 3 appeared at that time.
 4

Historical Overview

5
 6
 7 Small, temporary campsites were first
 8 established near Big Spring during the
 9 Woodland Period, 7000 BCE.^{2.1} During this
 10 period people were part of the Hunter-
 11 Forager Tradition, and hunted white-tailed
 12 deer and small fauna and exploited forest
 13 resources including berries, seeds, and nuts.^{2.2}
 14 Population size was small and probably
 15 limited to familial groups. The Osage were
 16 the most prevalent American Indian group
 17 in the Current River valley by the sixteenth
 18 and seventeenth centuries, when French and
 19 Spanish traders explored the region. In these
 20 days, Big Spring was referred to as “the spring
 21 that roars.”^{2.3} The Osage predominance waned
 22 and they eventually ceded all their tribal
 23 lands, over 45,000 square miles, to the United
 24 States government in 1825.^{2.4}
 25
 26 In the early nineteenth century, European
 27 Americans settled the region in increasing
 28 numbers, attracted by generous U.S. land
 29 grants. The rugged Courtois Hills are not
 30 conducive to large-scale farming, therefore
 31 most new settlers established small
 32 farmsteads and engaged in subsistence
 33 agriculture.^{2.5} The advent of the railroad made
 34 the region accessible at a larger scale, and
 35 the rich forests and inexpensive land were
 36 attractive to East Coast lumbering companies.
 37 Timber harvesting brought short term
 38 prosperity to the region and resulted in the
 39 development of towns and milling centers.
 40
 41 2.1 Chapman, *Indians and Archaeology of Missouri*, 96.
 42 2.2 Chapman, *Indians and Archaeology of Missouri*, 96.
 43 2.3 2016 CLI, 35.
 44 2.4 2016 CLI, 24.
 45 2.5 2016 CLI, 24.

1 By 1920, timber resources were depleted
2 and lumber mills closed, leaving widespread
3 unemployment and a landscape devastated by
4 unregulated clear cutting.

5
6 In response to the environmental damage,
7 a local effort grew to protect the spring,
8 conserve wildlife and the forest environment,
9 and to provide recreational opportunities
10 along the Current River. The nationwide
11 automobile trend and the statewide “Get
12 Missouri Out of the Mud” campaign spurred
13 the state to invest in roadway improvements.
14 Improved roads allowed for better access
15 to tourist and recreation destinations,
16 particularly the Current River valley.^{2.6}
17 Community activists led a pivotal role in
18 establishing Big Spring as a state park. Dr.
19 T. W. Cotton, a Van Buren businessman and
20 local land owner, bundled and consolidated
21 properties for state purchase. Ultimately, the
22 state acquired 4,258 acres for Big Spring State
23 Park – the largest state park in Missouri when
24 established in December 1924.

25
26 While initial state park development was
27 constrained by the state’s modest budget,
28 roads, trails, campgrounds, wildlife pens, and
29 recreational amenities were built. Thousands
30 visited Big Spring State Park the first year.^{2.7}
31 Soon afterwards, floods along the Current
32 River destroyed most of the state park
33 buildings, campgrounds and picnic areas.
34 With the onset of the Great Depression, repair
35 efforts were largely stalled.

36
37 As a result of the Great Depression, nearly
38 two million American workers lost their jobs.
39 In response, President Franklin D. Roosevelt
40 signed the Emergency Conservation Work
41 Act which laid the foundation of the CCC. The
42 CCC would employ thousands of unemployed

43
44 2.6 2016 CLI, 30-31.
45 2.7 Donald L. Stevens, Jr., *A Homeland and a Hinterland: The*
46 *Current and Jacks Fork Riverways Historic Resource Study*.
National Park Service, 1991.

1 Americans, and by 1936, over 2,000 CCC
2 camps were established across the United
3 States, including one at Big Spring State
4 Park.^{2.8}

5
6 In June 1933, CCC Company 1710 arrived
7 at Big Spring State Park. A master plan was
8 developed which provided guidance for CCC
9 projects. It identified areas for recreational
10 playfields, parking areas, hiking trails, scenic
11 overlooks, and river access points. It included
12 locations for lodging, visitor orientation,
13 concessions, and maintenance areas. The CCC,
14 and later the Works Progress Administration
15 (WPA), would construct over 40 buildings and
16 miles of trails between 1933 and 1943.

17
18 To implement the plan, Donald A. Blake was
19 hired as architectural foreman and John
20 Warren Teasdale as landscape architect.^{2.9}
21 Blake and Teasdale’s designs blended Tudor
22 influences with the Rustic architectural
23 style, popular in public parks at the time.
24 Buildings blended with the landscape, using
25 native materials: locally quarried dolomite
26 and oak timbers. Landscape design was
27 Naturalistic in style, with new features
28 subordinated to the native topography and
29 setting. “Irregular rock, placed with smooth
30 cleavage outside, and with a shade of cement
31 not too pronounced, but that would blend
32 with the color of the predominant rocks
33 used,” characterized the work at Big Spring
34 State Park, as described by Superintendent
35 N. Curtis Case.^{2.10} Leo Anderson, an expert
36 stone mason, directed stone cutting, dressing,
37 and laying.^{2.11} Donald A. Blake eventually
38 became park superintendent and his ongoing
39 architectural leadership provided a continuity
40 of architectural design, evident in the
41 landscape of today.^{2.12}

42
43 2.8 2016 CLI, 30.
44 2.9 2016 CLI, 40.
45 2.10 2016 CLI, 40.
46 2.11 2016 CLI, 40-41.
2.12 2016 CLI, 40.

1 The last major construction project ended
 2 in 1937 and CCC Company 1710 departed
 3 Big Spring State Park, razing their camp.
 4 Beginning in 1938, the WPA continued the
 5 legacy, building Rustic style cabins and other
 6 structures. The WPA program dissolved
 7 as World War II production jobs increased
 8 and the American economy recovered. "The
 9 departure of the WPA bookended a ten year
 10 period of extraordinary development during
 11 which the identity of the Big Spring State Park
 12 was fully realized and appreciated by the
 13 visiting public."^{2.13}

14
 15 Further development of Big Spring State Park
 16 slowed afterwards, and the state park placed
 17 a renewed emphasis on the protection and
 18 reintroduction of wildlife populations. By the
 19 end of World War II, the Missouri State Park
 20 Board (MSB) was severely underfunded. With
 21 no influx of federal cash or labor, the park's
 22 lodges, cabins, shelters and other recreational
 23 facilities fell into disrepair.

24
 25 In the 1950s, the state park expanded and
 26 infrastructure was further developed. Efforts
 27 grew to convert the state park to a national
 28 park, due to increased commercial and
 29 private attempts to develop a hydroelectric
 30 power plant on the Current River. It became
 31 clear that the riverways in Missouri needed
 32 additional protection from development.
 33 Joseph Jaeger, the director the Missouri
 34 State Park Board, decided to spearhead
 35 the initiative to transfer ownership and
 36 protection of the Current and Jacks Fork
 37 rivers to the federal government. Missouri
 38 Governor Forrest Smith voiced his support
 39 in 1949, and in 1964 President Lyndon
 40 B. Johnson signed legislation establishing
 41 134 miles of free-flowing waterways as
 42 the OZAR "For the purpose of conserving
 43 and interpreting unique scenic and other
 44 natural values and objects of historic interest,

45
 46 ^{2.13} 2016 CLI, 50.

1 including preservation of portions of the
 2 Current and Jacks Fork Rivers in Missouri
 3 as free-flowing streams, preservation of
 4 springs and caves, management of wildlife,
 5 and provisions for use and enjoyment of the
 6 outdoor recreation resources thereof by the
 7 people of the United States."^{2.14}

8
 9 In late 1969, the Missouri State Park Board
 10 transferred ownership of Big Spring State
 11 Park to the federal government, as federal
 12 rules stipulated that lands had to be donated,
 13 not sold.^{2.15} The NPS assumed management
 14 for the state park that covered a 5,828.04
 15 acre area.^{2.16} There had been few modern
 16 intrusions or alterations to the park since
 17 the CCC / WPA work, and most of the historic
 18 features and landscape remained intact. In the
 19 1970s, the NPS upgraded utilities, repaired
 20 roads, replaced bridges, and established a
 21 new campground north of the BSHD. In 1981
 22 Big Spring Historic District was listed in the
 23 NRHP for its significance in architecture,
 24 landscape architecture, and conservation.

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42 ^{2.14} OZAR Enabling Legislation. U.S. Code, 2011 Edition Title
 43 16, Conservation. Chapter 1 - National Parks, Military
 44 Parks, Monuments, and Seashores, Subchapter LXX
 45 - Ozark National Scenic Riverways. U.S. Government
 46 Printing Office.

^{2.15} 2016 CLI, 52.

^{2.16} 2016 CLI, 7.

Statement and Period of Significance

1 Big Spring Historic District was listed in the
2 NRHP on March 17, 1981 under Criterion C,
3 as it embodies the distinctive characteristics
4 of a type, period, or method of construction.
5 Big Spring Historic District is a significant
6 example of Naturalistic style landscape design
7 and the Rustic architectural style that is
8 associated with CCC era park construction.
9 The Naturalistic style placed emphasis on
10 the natural landscape, and new features,
11 including buildings, walls, roads and trails,
12 were designed to be sympathetic and
13 subordinate to the natural features.
14
15 Materials, type of construction, and details
16 were determined by the natural qualities
17 of the environment. At Big Spring Historic
18 District this included extensive use of native
19 oak and local dolomite as building materials,
20 which matched in color and texture the
21 natural environment. Architect Donald A.
22 Blake integrated a Tudor influence into many
23 of the Rustic buildings, which resemble the
24 picturesque Victorian cottages made popular
25 in the nineteenth century by Andrew Jackson
26 Downing.^{2.17} Native plantings were intended
27 to blend the buildings with the landscape.
28 Elements of the Naturalistic style include
29 boulder lined parking areas, Rustic steps and
30 stone-paved paths, and the scenic orientation
31 towards the spring and river.

32
33 The CCC projects at Big Spring State
34 Park reflect the Naturalistic style while
35 accommodating recreational facilities
36 and desired use of the area as an active
37 recreational destination, a growing trend
38 in the 1930s. Recreational facilities, such
39 as an improved swimming area in the river,
40 along with scenic overlooks, picnic grounds,

42 2.17 Bonnie Stepenoff. *The Big Spring Historic District, The*
43 *Civilian Conservation Corps Builds a State Park to Last.*
44 *(Cape Girardeau, Missouri; Southeast Missouri State*
University, 2003).

1 playfields, and miles of hiking trails all reflect
2 the active recreation uses that brought the
3 visitor in contact with nature.^{2.18}
4 Consideration should be given into the
5 district's potential for national significance
6 under Criterion A, for association with events
7 that have made a significant contribution to
8 the broad patterns of our history, including
9 the history of federal work relief programs
10 during the Great Depression. The CCC
11 program signified the federal government's
12 engagement in public works and public
13 welfare, at a time when one out of four young
14 Americans was out of work. The federal
15 program of the CCC was intended to alleviate
16 the disastrous conditions of the American
17 economy and environment. The CCC and
18 WPA provided employment for thousands
19 of Americans, and the legacy of their work
20 is showcased at Big Spring Historic District,
21 considered one of the best examples in
22 the state of Missouri.^{2.19} As a CCC project
23 and campsite, Big Spring Historic District
24 represents historically important federal
25 policies and periods of public works, has a
26 direct association with events that promoted
27 the betterment of society, and is associated
28 with national trends in the development of
29 recreation.

30
31 As part of its significance, Big Spring
32 Historic District is an important record
33 of early conservation efforts and wildlife
34 management. The state park, established in
35 1924, focused on active recreation as well as
36 conservation of wildlife and protection of the
37 environment, a mission which was carried out
38 further by the CCC and WPA, and through the
39 1940s.

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42 2.18 *2016 CLI*, 31.

43 2.19 *Big Spring Historic District, National Register of Historic*
44 *Places Inventory - Nomination Form.* (1980), 10.

Periods of Landscape Development

1 The NRHP lists the historic district with two
 2 periods of significance – the first dates from
 3 1925 to 1927 and the second dates from
 4 1933 to 1937.^{2.20} As proposed by the 2016
 5 CLI, the period of significance should span
 6 from 1924 to 1969. This would encompass
 7 the implementation of the park, the CCC
 8 era of construction, and the development of
 9 the cultural landscape that continued until
 10 1969.^{2.21}

1 Six periods of landscape change describe the
 2 physical evolution of the Big Spring Historic
 3 District. The beginning and end of each period
 4 corresponds to and documents a point of
 5 major physical modifications or significant
 6 change in development patterns.

7
 8 The periods of development are described
 9 through narrative text and illustrations. Three
 10 periods fall within the period of significance,
 11 noted in bold text.

12
 13 12000 BCE to 1540 CE: American Indian
 14 Settlement

15
 16 1541 to 1923: European Settlement and
 17 Development

18
 19 **1924 to 1932: State Park Development**

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 21 **1933 to 1943: CCC and WPA Development**

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 23 **1944 to 1969: Post-CCC / WPA era**

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 25 1970 to 1981: NPS Development and
 26 Stewardship

2.20 NRHP, 10

2.21 2016 CLI, 7.

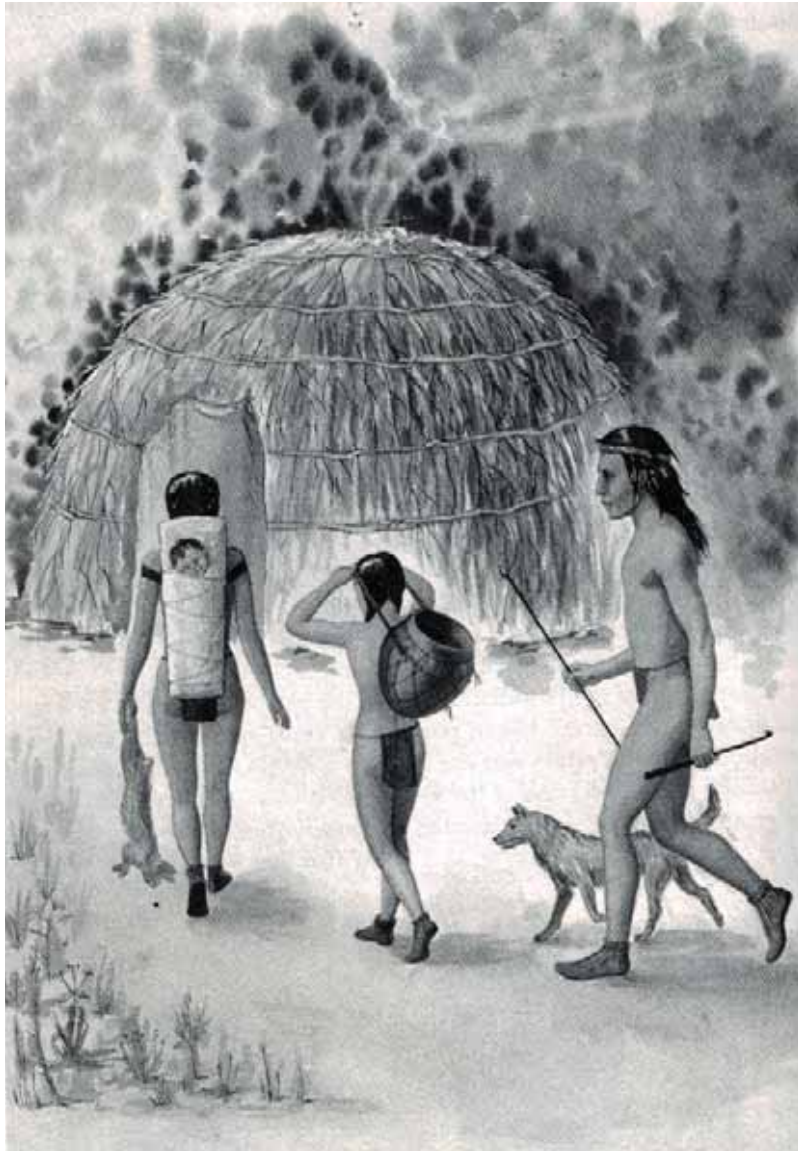


Figure 2-1. An artist's depiction of an early settlement shows shelters called 'wickiups' built with willow branches and covered in bark or hide. (Chapman, *Indians and Archaeology of Missouri*.)

1 12000 BCE to 1540 CE: American Indian 2 Settlement

3
4 American Indian groups inhabited the
5 Current River area throughout the Paleo-
6 Indian, Archaic and Woodland periods, until
7 about the middle Mississippian period (AD
8 1000-1350).^{2.22} The Ozarks were a habitable
9 region during the Paleo-Indian period, and as
10 temperatures warmed people took advantage
11 of new food resources in the lowlands and
12 practiced horticulture. Historical accounts
13 indicate that during the pre-contact period,
14 the Ozark highlands were primarily prairie
15 and oak savanna, whereas steep valley slopes
16 and valley bottoms were dominated by thick
17 deciduous and pine forest.^{2.23}

18 19 Paleo-Indian (pre - 7,000 BCE)

20 People first settled the Current River basin
21 as early as 12,000 years ago.^{2.24} Early hunters
22 were few in number and traveled widely in
23 search of game, establishing intermittent
24 campsites.^{2.25}

25 26 Archaic (7,000 BCE to 600 BCE)

27 During the late Paleo-Indian and early
28 Archaic periods, the Dalton Culture
29 occupied the Current River basin. This time
30 was a transition between the Pleistocene
31 hunter groups and the more generalized
32 Archaic forager groups in the region.^{2.26}
33 The settlement system typical during the
34 Dalton period consisted of small, minimal
35 use campsites where they spent longer
36

37 2.22 Zedeño, *Cultural Affiliation Study*. 16.

38 2.23 Robert B. Jacobson and Alexander Primm. *Historical*
39 *Land-Use Changes and Potential Effects on Stream*
40 *Disturbance in the Ozark Plateaus, Missouri*. U.S.
41 Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey Water-
Supply Paper 2484, 1997, 12.

42 2.24 Zedeño, María Nieves and Robert Christopher Basaldú.
43 *Ozark National Scenic Riverways, Missouri Cultural*
44 *Affiliation Study*. Bureau of Applied Research In
Anthropology, The University of Arizona, Tucson AZ.
Prepared for National Park Service, 2003.

45 2.25 Chapman, *Indians and Archaeology of Missouri*, 28.

46 2.26 Zedeño, *Cultural Affiliation Study*. 18.

1 periods of time, supplementing their diet by
2 collecting edible plants, made available by
3 warmer temperatures.^{2.27}

Sensitive Information hidden for Public
Review Draft

34 2.27 Chapman, *Indians and Archaeology of Missouri*, 38.

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Review Draft

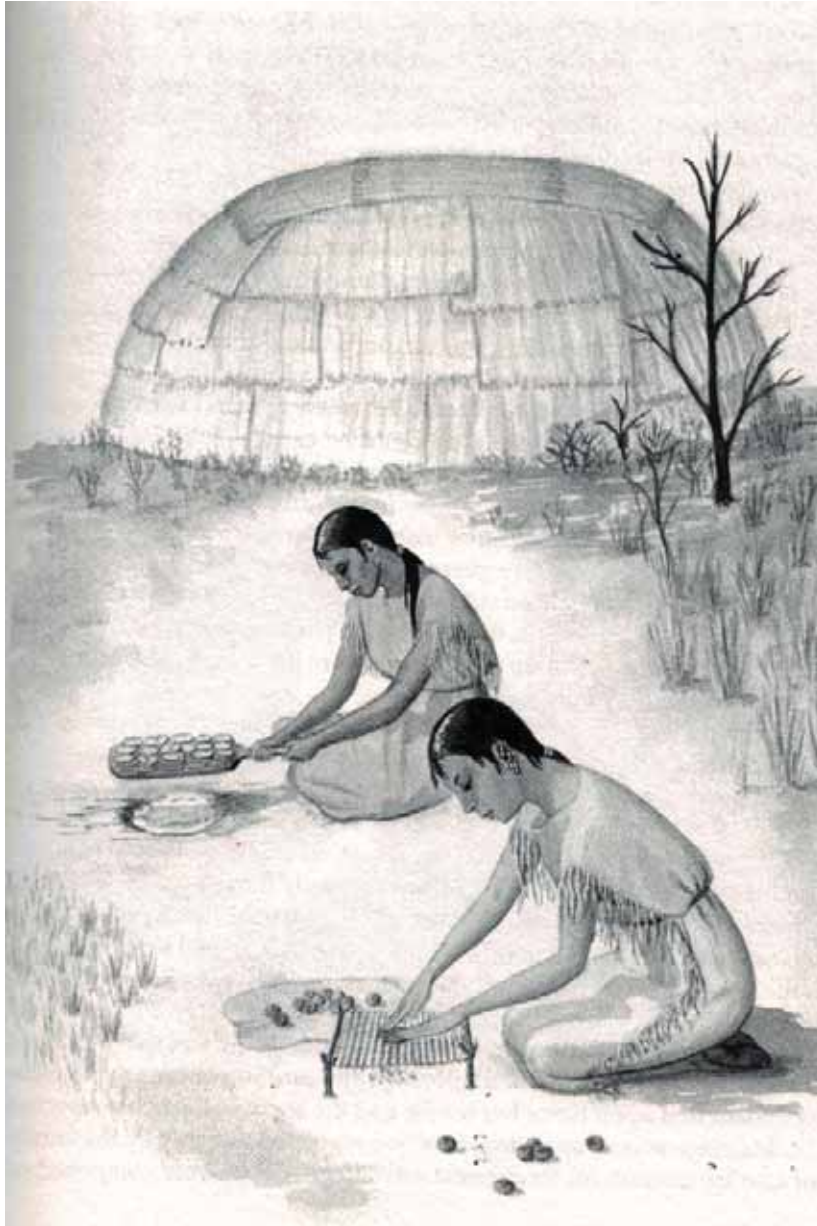


Figure 2-2. Settlement during the Dalton period consisted of small, minimal use campsites where they supplemented their diet by collecting edible plants, (Chapman, *Indians and Archaeology of Missouri*.)

1 Woodland (600 BCE to 900 CE)

2 Several general trends characterize the
3 Woodland period: spread of agricultural
4 economy, increase in sedentism, adoption of
5 ceramic technology, ritual activity involving
6 burial mound construction, and participation
7 in long-distance exchange networks.^{2.35}
8 Woodland groups had an increase in reliance
9 on wild and domesticated plants.

10
11 Woodland sites in the eastern Ozarks
12 are located on natural terraces or on the
13 floodplains of the Current River valley. It has
14 been postulated that the Ozarks at this time
15 was a place of overlapping traditions and
16 where critical resources were utilized by
17 more than one group, creating localized social
18 networks.^{2.36}

19
20 During the Middle Woodland period (250 BCE
21 to 450 CE), people began gardening, settling
22 into organized village communities, trading
23 widely, and creating elaborate art objects.^{2.37}

24
25 Mississippian Period (900 CE to 1540 CE)

26 The Mississippian period witnessed the
27 development of complex and socially
28 stratified communities, subsistence
29 increasingly relied on maize cultivation,
30 and settlement patterns became more
31 sedentary.^{2.38}

32
33 A thriving population resided along the
34 Current River during the Mississippian
35 period, with evidence of settlements at
36 Shawnee Creek, Round Spring, Isaac Kelley,
37 Owls Bend, and Gooseneck. Populations
38 continued to be dispersed in small farmsteads
39 or hamlets along the major valleys, with
40 limited activity locales on shelters and
41 ridges.^{2.39}

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43 2.35 Zedeño, *Cultural Affiliation Study*. 22.

44 2.36 Zedeño, *Cultural Affiliation Study*. 25.

45 2.37 Chapman, *Indians and Archaeology of Missouri*, 53, 63.

46 2.38 Chapman, *Indians and Archaeology of Missouri*, 71.

2.39 Zedeño, *Cultural Affiliation Study*. 26.

1 1300 CE to 1540 CE

2 By 1300 CE, ceramic evidence suggests that
3 the American Indian population left the
4 Ozark region. This coincides with widespread
5 population increases in settlements along the
6 Mississippi River valley in southeast Missouri
7 and northeast Arkansas. The reason for
8 abandonment of the region is unknown.^{2.40}

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43 2.40 Lynott, M., H. Neff, J. E. Price, J. W. Cogswell, and M.

44 D. Glascock. *Inferences About Prehistoric Ceramics*

45 *and People in Southeast Missouri: Results of Ceramic*

46 *Compositional Analysis*. *American Antiquity* 65(1):103-

126.



Figure 2-3. Concrete piers remain in the Current River, adjacent to Big Spring, located outside of the BSHD, from the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad originally built to support lumber companies in the region. (2016 CLI)

1541 to 1923: European Settlement and Development

When the French and Spanish arrived in the region, they encountered few American Indians living in the area. A trade network was established between the Europeans and American Indians, which extracted wildlife and mineral resources, but the land would have appeared as a wilderness to most Europeans. In the nineteenth century small farms were established in the region, and areas of forest were cleared for farmland, including the field north of Big Spring. The railroad had a greater impact upon the landscape, providing access for timber companies who harvested shortleaf pine for sawlogs and oak for railroad ties. Cutting was selective, and did not greatly alter the landscape.^{2.41} A lumber camp and two sawmills were established in Chubb Hollow.^{2.42}

1541 to 1650

Few American Indian settlements were within the Current River basin at this time, although the area was used for hunting through 1650.^{2.43}

1600s, late

In the late 1600s, the French were the first Europeans to permanently settle in the Ozark region. Later, this area became part of the French province of Louisiana and forts and settlements were established along the Mississippi River and interior waterways.^{2.44}

^{2.41} Robert B. Jacobson and Alexander T. Primm. *Historical Land-Use Changes and Potential Effects on Stream Disturbance in the Ozark Plateaus, Missouri*. USGS Open-File Report 94-33, 1994, 1.

^{2.42} The date the camp and sawmills were established is unknown. E.B. Williamson. *Dragonflies Collected in Missouri*. Occasional Papers of the Museum of Zoology, University of Michigan. June 6, 1932, No. 240.

^{2.43} 2016 CLI, 23.

^{2.44} 2016 CLI, 24.

European settlers brought violence and disease as they passed through the region looking for gold. Later sixteenth and seventeenth century explorers noted a prevalence of American Indian settlements along the Mississippi River and in southeast Missouri. A few villages were in the hills east of the Current River, but no recorded settlements were in the Current River valley.^{2.45}

1700 to 1800s

The Osage, Kansas, Ponca, and Mahas tribes occupied current day Missouri. The Osage tribe was the most prevalent near the Current River. Although hostile to European settlers, the Osage did develop strong trading relationships with French trappers and traders who traveled the area.^{2.46}

1800s

American Indian tribes displaced east of the Mississippi River began a western migration and settled in the Ozark region. Altercations erupted between various tribes and Europeans who competed for hunting and trading resources.^{2.47}

1803

The United States purchased the Louisiana territory from Spain, resulting in increased European American settlement of the Mississippi River and associated riverways.^{2.48} Pocahontas Randolph had a minor mandate to explore the area, and called Big Spring by its native name, "The Spring that Roars."^{2.49} The area around the spring was known as Bear Camp or Bark Camp, "either from a camp for bear hunters, or on account of temporary bark-covered huts constructed there."^{2.50}

^{2.45} 2016 CLI, 24.

^{2.46} 2016 CLI, 24.

^{2.47} 2016 CLI, 24.

^{2.48} 2016 CLI, 24.

^{2.49} 2016 CLI, 35.

^{2.50} Shaper, 2001. In, 2016 CLI, 35.



Figure 2-4. Big Spring and its location in the Current River Valley was an ideal location for state park development, date unknown. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-5. Before the 1925 bridge in Van Buren was built, people ferried across the Current River to access Big Spring State Park, date unknown. (OZAR Archives)

1 1825

2 The Osage tribe ceded 45,000 square miles in
3 Missouri and Arkansas to the United States.^{2.51}

5 1833

6 The town of Van Buren, four miles north
7 of Big Spring, was founded as the seat of
8 Ripley County along an old American Indian
9 crossing.^{2.52}

11 1854

12 Congress passed the Graduation Act,
13 encouraging settlement in the Ozark region.
14 Settlers, primarily from Tennessee, Virginia,
15 and the Carolinas, of Scotch-Irish heritage,
16 built small farms and homesteads in the
17 rugged terrain of the Courtois Hills. The
18 region was reached by river highways due to
19 the difficulty of overland travel. The hills were
20 not conducive to large-scale farming, so most
21 settlers engaged in subsistence agriculture.^{2.53}
22 The Scotch-Irish were “clannish,” self-
23 sufficient, and integrated well into the rugged
24 setting and with the American Indians.^{2.54}
25 Their handcrafted cabins and barns, crafts,
26 dance and music continue to influence the
27 region.

29 1859

30 Van Buren was established as seat of Cater
31 County, when Ripley and Shannon Counties
32 were combined.^{2.55}

34 1870s and 1880s

35 The region’s abundance of timber attracted
36 East Coast lumber companies. The industry
37 brought economic prosperity from the
38 development of railroads, milling centers, and
39 towns, and new settlers arrived in the region,
40 seeking jobs in the mills.^{2.56}

42 ^{2.51} 2016 CLI, 24.

43 ^{2.52} 2016 CLI, 35.

44 ^{2.53} 2016 CLI, 24.

45 ^{2.54} Rossiter, Phyllis. *A Living History of the Ozarks*. Gretna,
LA: Pelican Publishing Company, 2006, 283.

46 ^{2.55} Rossiter, Phyllis. *A Living History of the Ozarks*. Gretna,
LA: Pelican Publishing Company, 2006, 403.

^{2.56} Jacobson and Primm. *Historical Land-Use Changes*, 25.

1 1887

2 Prior to 1887 the Missouri Lumber and
3 Mining Company obtained a railroad right-
4 of-way for property north of Big Spring
5 branch.^{2.57} In 1887, the Kansas City, Fort Scott,
6 and Memphis Railroad entered an agreement
7 with Missouri Lumber and Mining Company
8 to build a railroad from Toliver Pond in
9 Carter County to Willow Spring in Howell
10 County – often referred to as the Current
11 River Railroad. Construction was completed
12 in 1889, and the railroad was used primarily
13 to transport timber and timber products.
14 During the CCC development of Big Spring
15 State Park, it was used to transport workers
16 and supplies.^{2.58}

18 1889

19 The Kansas City, Fort Scott, and Memphis
20 Railroad was built east of the Current River.

22 1913

23 Thomas Morgan purchased a 400-acre tract
24 of land, including Big Spring from the federal
25 government. This was the first recorded
26 ownership of the land. Morgan sold the land
27 to Henry and Martha Sawyer, who then sold to
28 Dr. T. W. Cotton and L.Z. Hosack.^{2.59}

30 1920s

31 By 1920, the region’s timber resources were
32 depleted and lumber mills closed.^{2.60}

43 ^{2.57} Stepenoff. *The Civilian Conservation Corps Builds a State
Park to Last*, 4.

44 ^{2.58} 2016 CLI, 28.

45 ^{2.59} 2016 CLI, 36.

46 ^{2.60} 2016 CLI, 25.



Figure 2-6. Missouri State Park Board improved a foot trail to Big Spring that likely followed a social trail that pre-dated park development. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-7. The cave inside Big Spring, one of the largest springs in the United States, date unknown. (OZAR Archives)

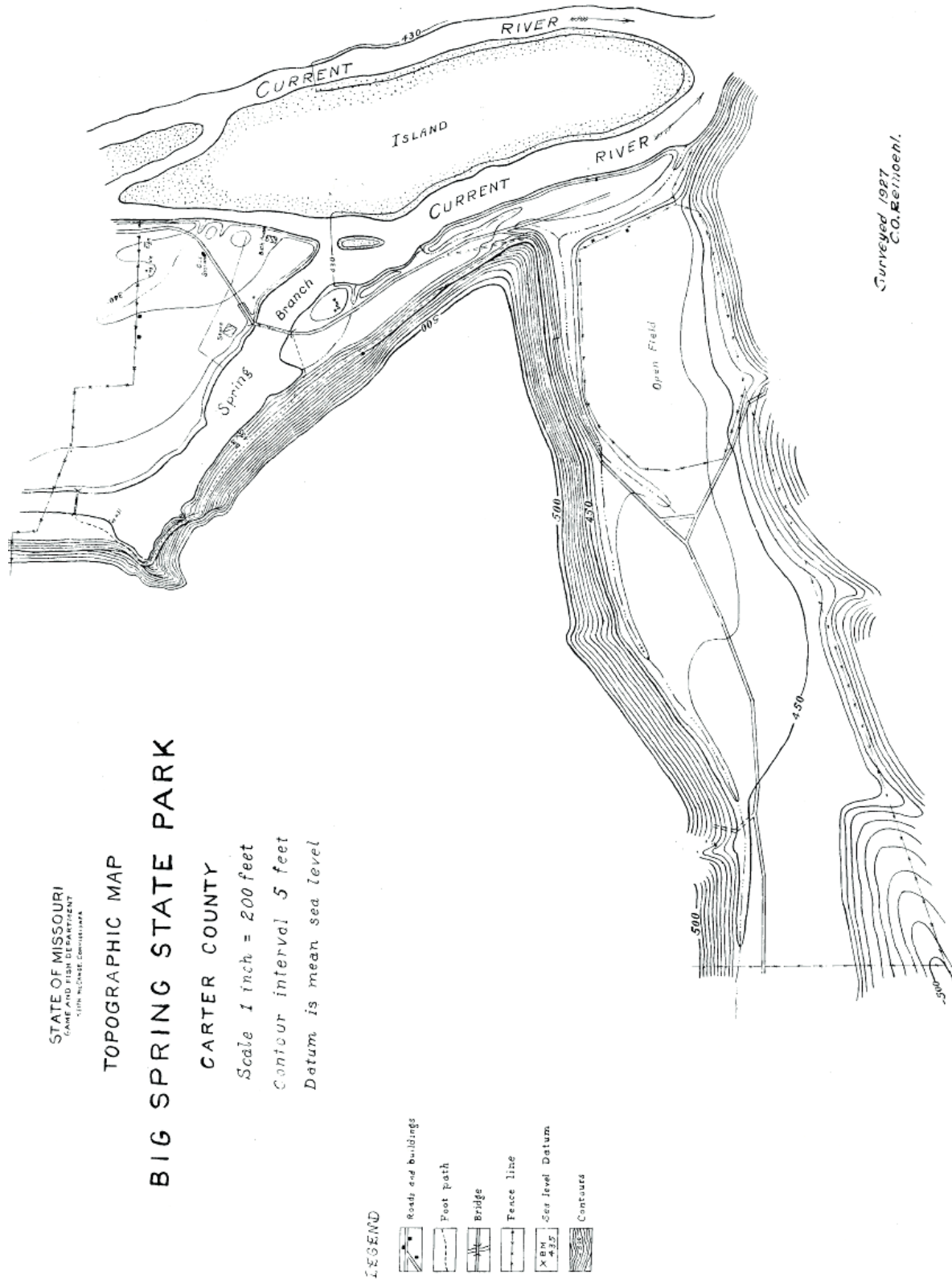


Figure 2-8. Near Big Spring, a bath house, store, gas station, two latrines, flag pole, sign, and stove served campers, 1927. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-9. By 1927, the state had built roads, trails, several buildings, and a water tank. Three other structures are shown located in Chubb Hollow, which were remains of a lumber camp and sawmill, 1927. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-10. A 'pontoon' style bridge crossed Big Spring branch just north of its confluence with the Current River. The store is in the background, date unknown. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-11. A 'pontoon' style bridge crossed Big Spring branch; the bath house is in the background on the Current River, date unknown. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-12. Road and bridge improvements made Big Spring more accessible, and visitation of the park expanded, 1930. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-13. The Current River was popular for floating trips, 1931. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-14. A major flood of the Current River submerged the Big Spring campground and picnic areas, resulting in extensive damage, date unknown. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-15. The CCC Camp at Big Spring State Park, date unknown. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-16. CCC Company 1710 remained at Big Spring for more than four years, and was joined by companies 734 and 1740 for brief periods, 1935. (OZAR Archives)

1924 to 1932: State Park Development

After the departure of the timber companies, many left the region, while others returned to subsistence agriculture and open range grazing in the uplands.^{2.61} The Current River valley became known for its beautiful natural scenery, and was a tourist destination. With its rugged topography and natural spring, Big Spring was an ideal location for a new state park. Initial park development included roads, trails, campgrounds, picnic areas, and recreational amenities. Development was clustered around the area of Big Spring branch and Big Spring, which was developed into a park-like setting with grass and shade trees. Adjacent park land was restored as woodlands and areas were fenced to preserve deer and turkey populations.

1924

While the Missouri state park program was initiated in 1919, the first state parks were not established until 1924. Three of Missouri's first eight parks, Big Spring, Alley Spring, and Round Spring, were created along the Current and Jacks Fork River.^{2.62}

1925

The Missouri State Park Board established Big Spring State Park in December 1924, encompassing 4,416 acres. While initial park development was slow, park roads, property fencing, and campsites were built.^{2.63} Boundary fencing and cattle guards were built to minimize destructive impacts of free-grazing practices. Turkey and deer pens were built to assist in repopulation efforts.^{2.64}

The primary public approach to Big Spring at this time was likely from the south, as the property north of Big Spring branch remained

under the private ownership of Dr. T. W. Cotton.

A bridge across the Current River in Van Buren was built July 17, 1925, making Big Spring State Park more accessible to visitors traveling along the east-west highway, which later became US Highway 60.^{2.65} For most of the twentieth century, roads in the Current River valley were primitive wagon trails.^{2.66}

1927

By 1927, the state had built roads, trails, several buildings, bridges, and a water tank. A 'pontoon' style bridge floated across Big Spring branch just north of its confluence with the Current the Current River. A pedestrian foot bridge crossed Big Spring branch on the north side, connecting the campground near the spring to a trail (present-day Spring Branch Trail) along the western edge of Big Spring branch. Near Big Spring, a bath house, store, gas station, two latrines, flag pole, sign, and stove served campers. A trail (present-day Rocky Ridge Trail) extended along an old wagon trail to the top of the ridge over Big Spring.^{2.67}

One of the state park's principal functions was as a game preserve. The southern portion of the state park was managed as a game refuge, and "immediately after acquisition, the state began stocking the park with wild turkey and deer."^{2.68}

1928

A major flood of the Current River submerged the campgrounds and picnic areas, resulting in extensive damage. A new graded dirt road from the railroad station at Chicopee to the

^{2.65} 2016 CLI, 36.

^{2.66} 2016 CLI, 36.

^{2.67} C.O. Remoehl. *Topographic Map, Big Spring State Park, (Showing Big Spring), Carter County.* (State of Missouri, Game and Fish Department, 1927).

^{2.68} Stepenoff. *The Civilian Conservation Corps Builds a State Park to Last*, 6.

^{2.61} Jacobson and Primm. *Historical Land-Use Changes*, 25.

^{2.62} 2016 CLI, 25.

^{2.63} 2016 CLI, 36.

^{2.64} 2016 CLI, 188.

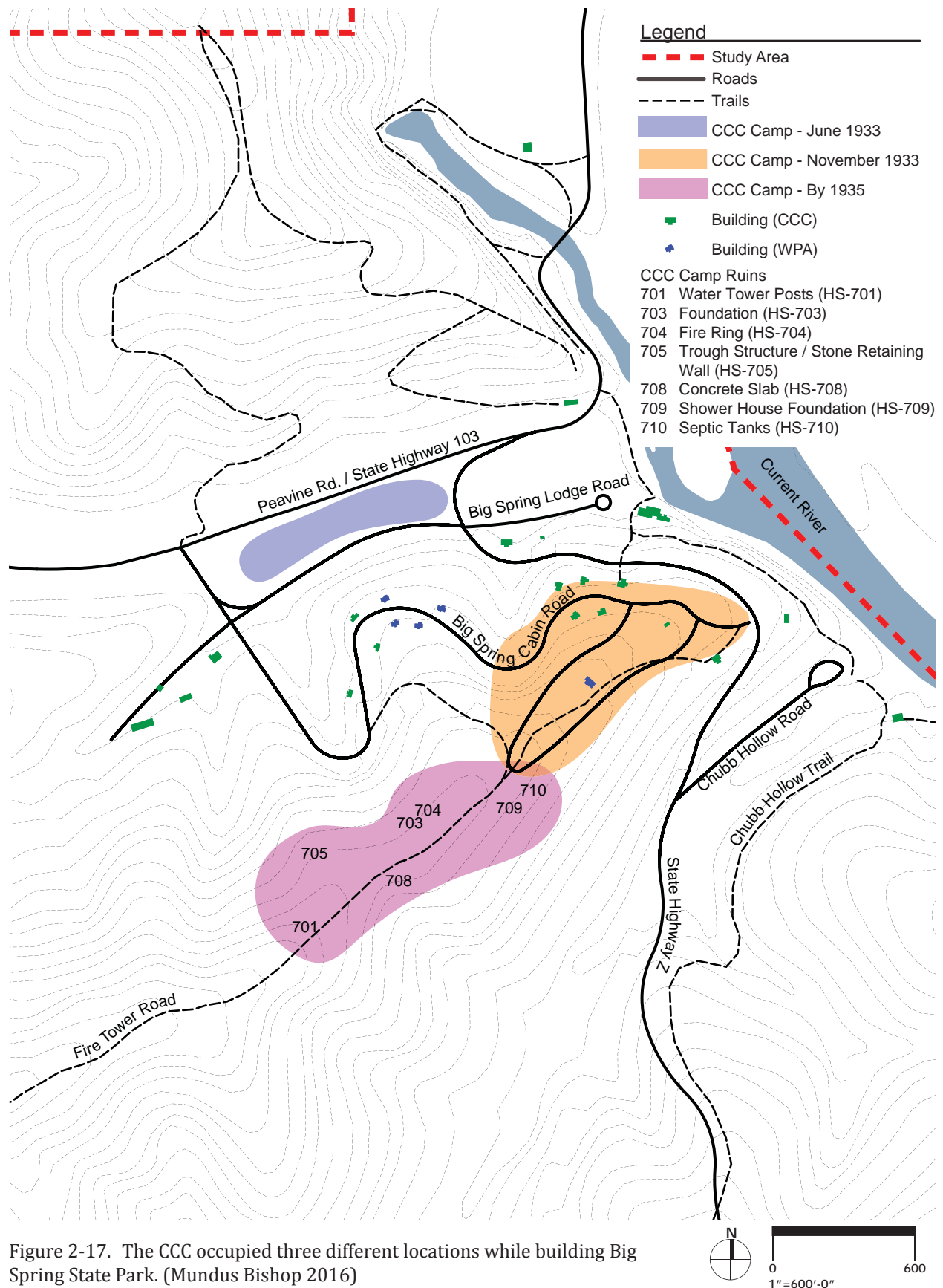


Figure 2-17. The CCC occupied three different locations while building Big Spring State Park. (Mundus Bishop 2016)

1 park was completed after the flood made the
2 old road impassable.^{2.69}

3

4 1930s

5 The state built a caretaker's house (possibly
6 HS-416), concession building, shelter house,
7 zoo, and vehicle and foot bridges over Big
8 Spring branch, replacing buildings and
9 structures damaged by the 1928 flood. The
10 existing pontoon bridge over Big Spring
11 branch was replaced with a new vehicular
12 bridge. Overhead electrical wires were
13 extended from Van Buren to the park, and Big
14 Spring was illuminated at night.^{2.70}

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^{2.69} 2016 CLI, 70.

^{2.70} 2016 CLI, 70.



Figure 2-18. In June 1933, CCC Company 1710 set up a tent camp at Spring Hollow, near the entrance to Big Spring State Park, date unknown. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-19. The CCC built a dining hall, fire ring, water trough, retaining walls, water tower, shower house, septic tanks, gymnasium, and new barracks at their third and final camp, date unknown. (OZAR Archives)

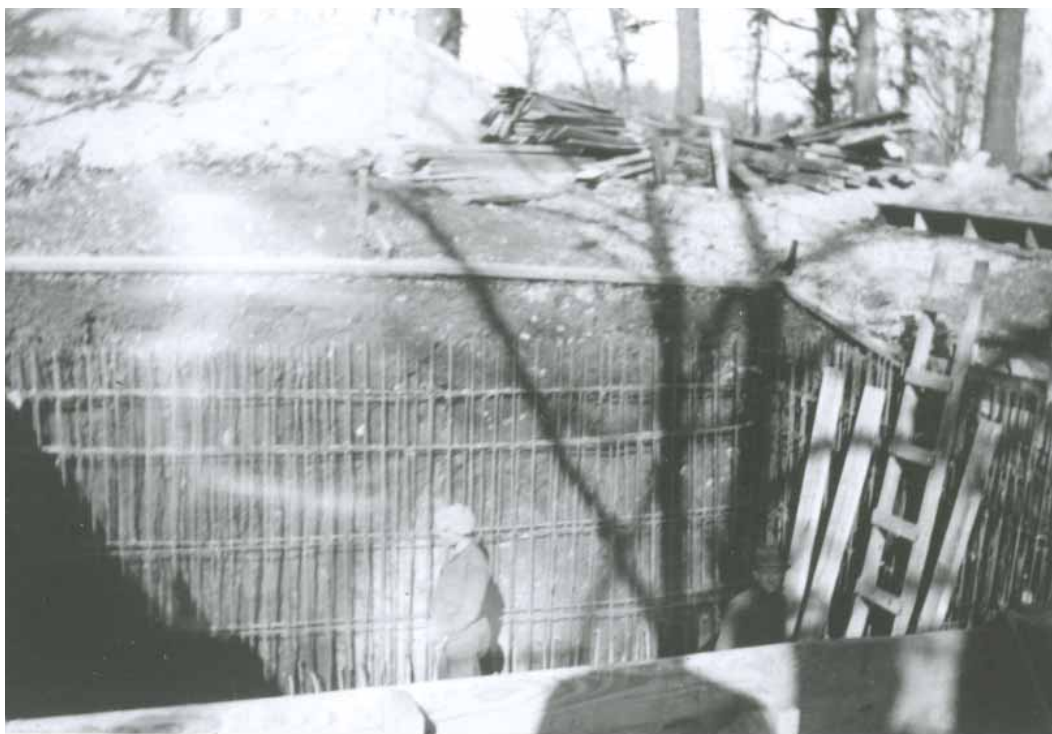


Figure 2-20. The CCC built an 18'x7' septic tank at their camp, date unknown. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-21. In 1933, a bridge crossed Big Spring branch and provided access to a bath house, concession building, and two toilets, 1933. (OZAR Archives)

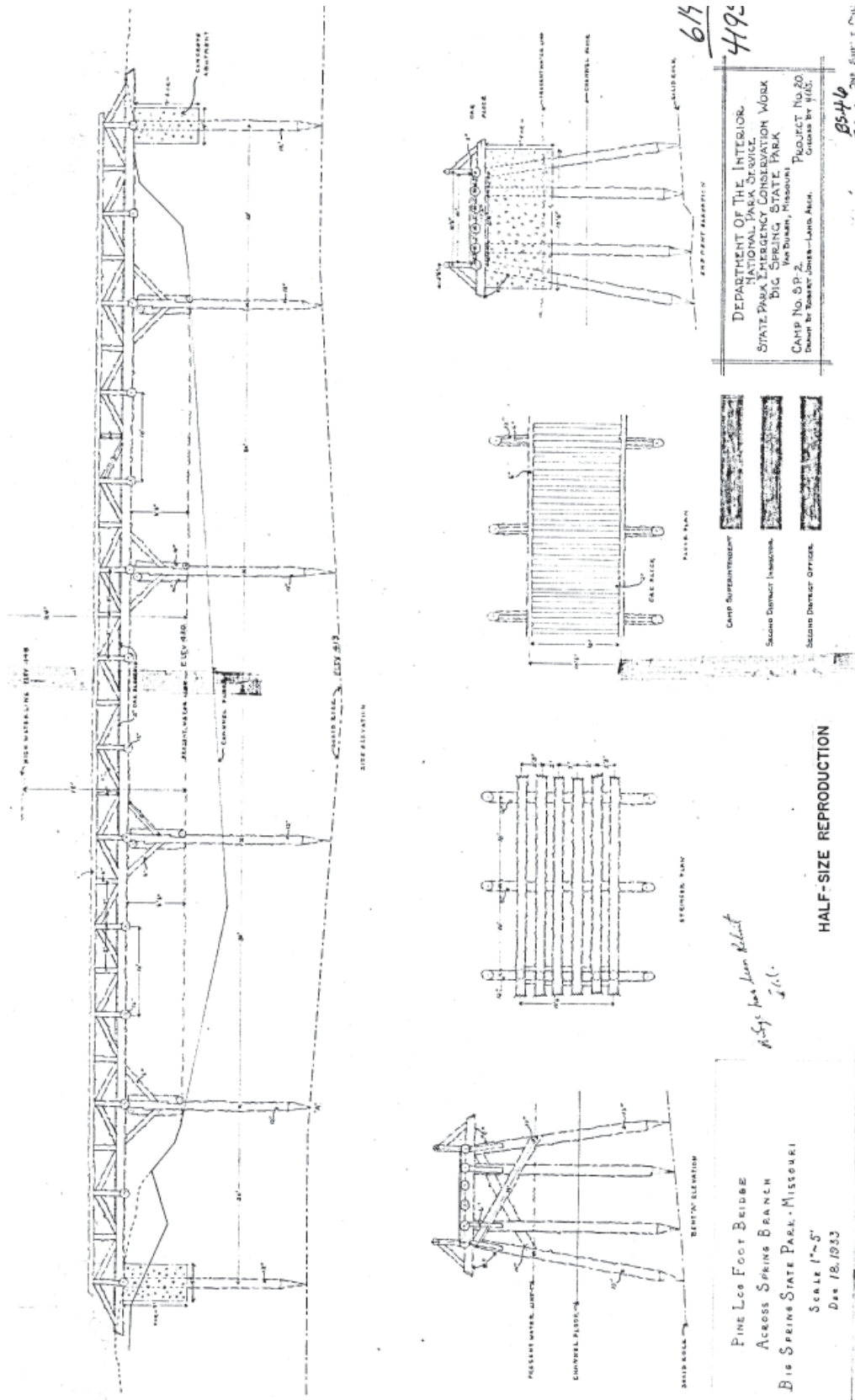


Figure 2-22. Landscape Architect Robert Jones designed a new pine log bridge for Big Spring branch, 1933. (OZAR Archives)

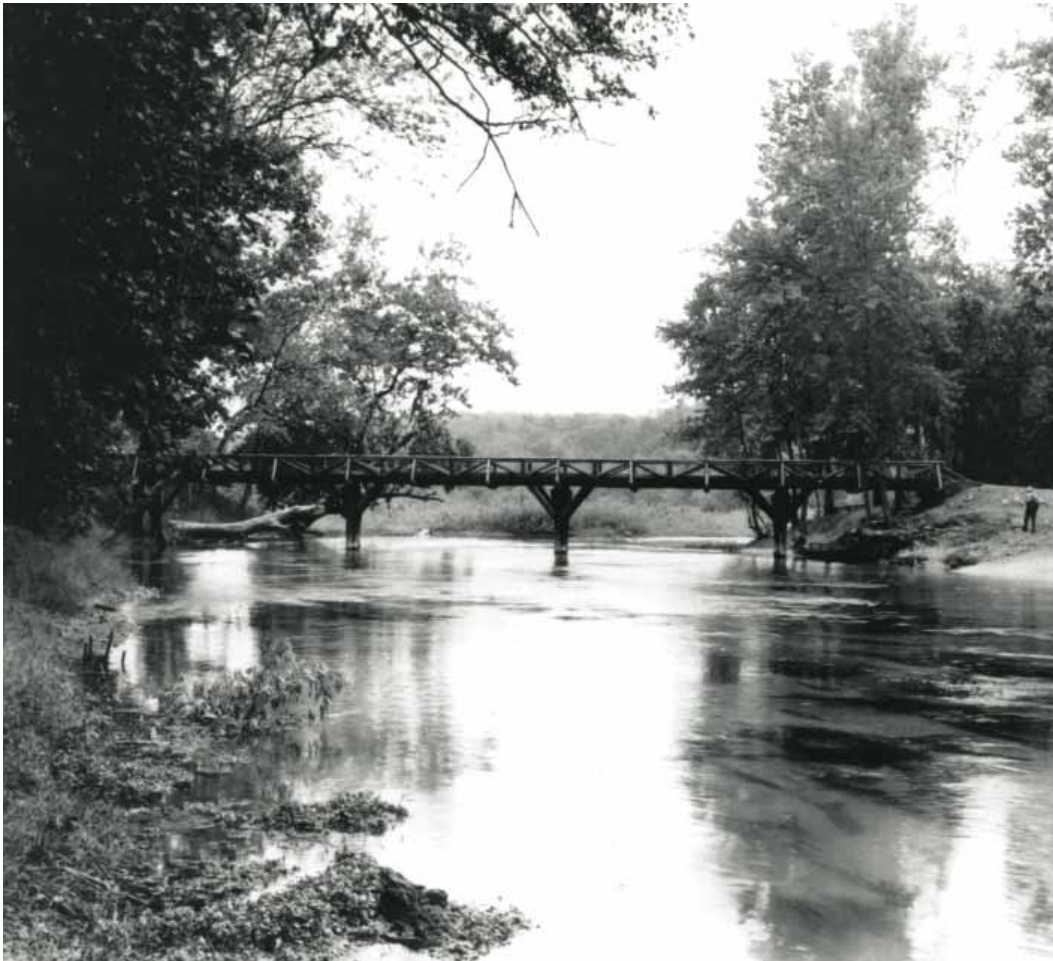


Figure 2-23. Workers used a pile driver for support pilings. The bridge was engineered to support a 10-ton load and wide enough for a vehicle to cross, date unknown. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-24. CCC Quarry workers, date unknown. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-25. The CCC chiseled rocks to have smooth cleavage outside with clean edges for irregular courses, 1936. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-26. The CCC harvested trees on-site and cut dimensional timbers for buildings, date unknown. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-27. Leo Anderson, an expert stone mason, oversaw CCC enrollees and directed stone cutting and dressing, date unknown. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-28. The CCC stockpiled stones for building use, date unknown. (OZAR Archives)



Figure 2-29. The CCC paved an existing trail along the west side of Big Spring branch with gravel, dates unknown (OZAR Archives)