

SKYLINE DRIVE OVERLOOK REHABILITATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Section 106 Compliance

Shenandoah National Park is planning to rehabilitate 49 historic overlooks along Skyline Drive. The plan will be phased over a number of years with a few of the overlooks done each year. The first phase of the project will include 5 overlooks: Crescent Rock (MP 44-45), Stony Man/ Hughes River Gap (MP 38-39), Gimlet Ridge (MP 18-19), Browntown Valley (MP 14-15), and Gooney Manor (MP 7-8). In 2007 a Programmatic Agreement, involving the 5 overlooks, was prepared and signed between Shenandoah National Park and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to insure the project would be done to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

At that time, compliance with the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was not addressed. Park management felt this issue needed to be addressed and formed a multi-disciplinary team to survey the overlooks (67 in all) and assess the accessibility needs and the potential impacts to the historic overlooks. Overlooks having a slope greater than the 2% required by the ABA would not be considered for accessibility as regarding to achieve 2% would significantly change the overall character of the overlook. Using the 2% criteria, all but 28 overlooks were eliminated. Of these 28, 11 can be made accessible with no impact to the historic fabric and 11 more will be ABA/ADA compliant with the removal of the non-historic rolled asphalt curb and walkway.

The remaining 6 overlooks, Jewell Hollow (MP 36-37), Stonyman/ Hughes River Gap (MP 38-39), Timber Hollow (MP 43-44), Crescent Rock (MP 44-45), Franklin Cliffs (MP 49), and Hazeltop Ridge (MP 54.7), will require modification to the historic fabric to make them accessible. These overlooks have distinct attributes: rock/stone curbing with an approximate 2' gravel walkway between the curbing and the guard wall; or rock/stone curbing with an approximate 2' asphalt walkway between the curbing and the guard wall; or rock stone curbing with no guard wall. To make the overlooks compliant with ABA/ADA will require lowering the curb for no less than 5' and no more than 13'. The rocks from the curb, in the area where lowering occurs, will not be removed but replaced flush with the overlook pavement, allowing access to the guard wall. The stone curbing would taper at each end to meet the actual curb height allowing a smooth transition between the cut and the curb.