

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

1. Early Development at Big Basin Redwoods State Park, 1902-1933
2. The Civilian Conservation Corps in Big Basin Redwoods State Park, 1933-1941
3. Post World War II Development at Big Basin Redwoods State Park, 1941-1955

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Updated 2014 by California State Parks Archaeology, History & Museums Division Staff

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

Signature of certifying official

Title

Date

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

The National-State Park Cooperative Program and the Civilian Conservation Corps in California State Parks 1933-1942
Name of Multiple Property Listing

California
State

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Create a Table of Contents and list the page numbers for each of these sections in the space below.

Provide narrative explanations for each of these sections on continuation sheets. In the header of each section, cite the letter, page number, and name of the multiple property listing. Refer to *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* for additional guidance.

	Page Numbers
E. Statement of Historic Contexts	
(If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)	
Introduction	E-1
Early Development at Big Basin Redwoods State Park, 1902-1933	E-1
The Civilian Conservation Corps in Big Basin Redwoods State Park, 1933-1941	E-9
Post World War II Development at Big Basin Redwoods State Park, 1941-1955	E-19
F. Associated Property Types	
(Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)	
Employee Residences	F-24
Utility Buildings and Infrastructure	F-28
Roads and Associated Structures	F-30
Lodging and Related Facilities	F-32
Administration Buildings	F-33
Museum/Nature Center Buildings	F-34
Comfort Stations	F-35
Outdoor Theaters and Campfire Centers	F-36
Campgrounds, Picnic Areas, and Associated Features	F-37
Trails	F-39
G. Geographical Data	
The boundary of the multiple property group is coterminous with the boundaries of Big Basin Redwoods State Park.	N/A
H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods	
(Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)	
	H-42
I. Major Bibliographical References	
(List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)	
	I-43

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 250 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 1

STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

Introduction

Big Basin Redwoods State Park lies in the Santa Cruz Mountains of California, forty-three miles southeast of San Francisco and twenty three miles northwest of the city of Santa Cruz. The park contains 18,130 acres of land in one large and several smaller, noncontiguous parcels. It includes almost the entire Waddell Creek watershed. Big Basin is an oval-shaped depression, bounded by high hills and containing a number of streams that converge into a single waterway (Waddell Creek) on the west side of the park. The park is characterized by steep, north-south running ridges, canyons, perennial streams, and old-growth redwood forest. Elevations range from sea level to more than 2,000 feet.

The Coast Redwood groves are the park's primary attraction. Coast redwoods are the tallest trees on the planet, and at Big Basin, they reach to over 300 feet in height. The trees are found only in coastal areas between southern Oregon and central California, where they thrive in the cool, foggy climate. The park's oldest trees are about 2,000 years old. The park also has a variety of other microclimates and environments. Douglas fir, madrone, tan oak, and wax myrtle grow amongst the redwoods in the park, while a mixed evergreen forest thrives at slightly higher elevations. Knobcone pines, chinquapin and buckeye dominate the canopy on the dry, south facing ridgetops. Waterfalls, as high as 60 feet, dot the park. A freshwater marsh near the mouth of Waddell Creek on the Pacific Ocean provides a rare example of a relatively undisturbed coastal freshwater marsh in California.

Big Basin Redwoods has been a popular spot for tourists, hikers, and campers throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Most development has occurred in Governor's Camp (also called the Headquarters area), since this location has the largest trees, flattest terrain, and an abundant supply of fresh water. The site remains a center of visitor activity. California Highway 236 provides access to the area and to the eastern part of Big Basin Redwoods, while California Highway 1 skirts the western boundary of the park. Park roads provide access to a few other areas, such as the Sky Meadow residential area, which lies to the northeast of the headquarters area. However, much of the park is only accessible by foot or equestrian trail. Four campgrounds are located in or near the headquarters area, and a group camp and tent cabins are sited near Sky Meadow. Five backcountry camps are scattered throughout the park.

The history of Big Basin Redwoods can be divided into three periods of development. The early period, 1902 to 1933, represents initial development in the park. Established in 1902, Big Basin Redwoods is California's oldest state park, and it was the only California state park to have any significant visitor infrastructure or development built by the state until the 1920s. Big Basin Redwoods became a popular resort during this time, with a wide range of visitor amenities. Between 1933 and 1941, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a New Deal relief program, built extensive facilities for tourists and park staff in Big Basin, as they did in state parks across the country. Big Basin Redwoods was one of the earliest California state parks to benefit from CCC construction programs. The CCC removed many of the earlier facilities, and constructed distinctive Park Rustic style buildings in the park. Between 1941 and 1955, development at Big Basin reflected the new priorities of a growing California state park system, as well as the architectural trends of post-war America.

Early Development at Big Basin Redwoods State Park, 1902-1933

The creation of Big Basin Redwoods State Park in 1902 represented an early victory in the history of the conservation movement. The Sempervirens Club campaign to preserve the park was one of the first public campaigns in the burgeoning conservation movement. The park was the first redwood forest that was preserved as

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 2

the result of citizen action. Big Basin Redwoods became a popular vacation spot with the amenities of a full-fledged resort during this time. It remained unique in California throughout the early twentieth century, since it was the only state park that contained roads, hiking trails, lodging, camps, and other visitor facilities until the 1920s. Big Basin Redwoods remains California's oldest state park, and Big Basin Inn and the Krevis Cabin remain as reminders of this early period of development.

Early state park development

Big Basin Redwoods State Park was established due to the efforts of citizens and conservationists who, concerned about the rapid destruction of coastal redwood forests, worked to create a park in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Logging had begun on a small scale in the area in the 1830s by entrepreneurs who hoped to capitalize on the huge trees, some measuring over 300 feet tall and 50 feet in circumference. Throughout the nineteenth century, a number of factors increased demand for the Santa Cruz Mountain's redwoods. As San Francisco grew in the 1840s, the market for lumber expanded, and increased transportation options provided mill owners with easier ways to ship their product. During the gold rush of the late 1840s, demand increased tremendously for lumber from mature trees, which was essential for building the balloon frame assembly of western boomtowns. Railroad companies purchased large quantities of redwood timber for ties, cars, trestles, and locomotive fuel. New technologies of the late nineteenth century, such as steam power and band saws, meant that increasing numbers of redwoods were harvested. By 1868, there were twenty-eight sawmills, which processed 34 million board feet of lumber each year, in the Big Basin area. The rapid deforestation in the area spurred public concern about the loss of the coast redwoods.¹

Efforts to save coast redwoods in California began as early as the mid-nineteenth century. In 1852, state assemblyman Henry Crabb proposed dedicating all coastal redwood forests as public land. In 1879, Secretary of the Interior Carl Shurz appealed for the preservation of about 46,000 acres of coast redwoods. Increasing numbers of people called for protection of these trees in the late nineteenth century. Newspaper editors in Santa Cruz, San Francisco, and other Bay Area cities, concerned about the pace and scale of the logging, led the call. Some focused on an area known as Big Basin, in the Santa Cruz Mountains, which featured particularly large redwoods. Sierra Club president John Muir lobbied for preservation of these big trees in the Santa Cruz Mountains beginning in 1896.²

It was the efforts of San Jose photographer and painter Andrew Putnam Hill that ultimately led to the creation of the park. After visiting Felton Grove, a privately owned redwood grove in the Santa Cruz Mountains to which the public was charged admission, Hill began a campaign to establish a public park in the area. He lobbied civic groups, academics, and government agencies, convinced newspaper writers to write articles on the subject, and exhibited his photographs of the redwoods across the nation. In 1900, Hill organized a gathering of potential supporters, and the group decided, after consulting with a botanist familiar with the area, that preserving the larger redwoods in Big Basin was a higher priority and less expensive than preserving land in Felton Grove. The group organized as the Sempervirens Club, and formally committed themselves to working toward preservation of the redwoods and creating a public park in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The club was notable for its diverse array of members; it included men and women who were social reformers, scientists, sportsmen, and conservationists.³

¹ National Park Service, *Big Basin Redwoods State Park National Historic Landmark nomination* (draft), 2010, Pacific West Regional Office-Seattle; Joseph Engbeck, *State Parks of California, From 1864-Present*, (Portland, OR: Graphic Arts Publishing Center, 1980), 29-30.

² Engbeck, 29-30.

³ Engbeck, 30; William Richardson, *California Redwoods Park: An Appreciation*, (Sacramento: Superintendent of State

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 3

The club's efforts represent a shift in thinking about the natural world that occurred in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Until this time, the dominant view had been that nature was primarily a source of raw materials. The rapid industrialization of the United States, combined with the increasing prevalence of white collar, professional work, spurred a belief that visits to wilderness areas outside the city were a necessary, healthy part of life. Club member William Richardson wrote that a visit to Big Basin "might well gladden the hearts of millions of human beings in times to come, who, escaping from the clash and turmoil of a greater San Francisco, seek the enjoyment, the invigorations, the elevation, and the refinement of this glorious heritage." Other club members agreed, and pointed out that such a park was essential for the working class of San Francisco, who could not afford costly vacations. Establishing a park would bring "true democracy," according to supporters, who claimed that no working class man or woman could remain untouched by "the grandeur and beauty of these primeval forests."⁴ Furthermore, the idea that ecosystems, rather than just places of natural beauty, should be protected had gained favor. Thus, the Sempervirens Club lobbied the state to preserve the entire Waddell Creek watershed.⁵

The club decided to lobby the state, rather than the federal government, to preserve Big Basin. State parks were a new phenomenon in the early twentieth century, and only a handful of states had designated state parks by this time.⁶ However, the club believed that the chances of convincing the federal government to preserve Big Basin were slim. Congress was already considering a bill that would preserve the Calaveras Big Trees grove in the Sierra Nevada, and the club worried proposing more federal legislation might endanger that bill. In addition, many eastern politicians opposed the creation of more western parks, and most Congressmen opposed purchasing private land for parks when so many western forests remained in federal hands. Furthermore, some Californians were opposed to increased federal control of state lands.⁷

The group successfully garnered the support of local civic groups, newspapers, scientific organizations, church groups, and universities. Public concern over the large-scale logging of the redwoods aided their cause. The timber company that owned the area expressed willingness to sell to the state, and in March 1901, the California legislature approved the creation of a state park in Big Basin, called California Redwoods Park. The name changed to Big Basin Redwoods in 1927. The state acquired 3,601 acres from Big Basin Lumber Company in the vicinity of what became known as the Governor's Camp, and the parcel included what many considered to be the finest redwood grove on the California coast. Most state parks established during this time were carved out of federal land, so the purchase of Big Basin Redwoods from a timber company was unusual. The Sempervirens Club, sometimes with the assistance of the Save the Redwoods League, acquired additional land in subsequent years, including 3,980 acres in 1908. The Club also acted as a watchdog against illegal logging activities during this time.⁸

Initial facilities were centered in the Governor's Camp area, where the trees were most impressive, the terrain was relatively flat, and Opal Creek provided an abundant supply of water. A five-room cottage, built to house Governor Gage and his family during an extended visit while negotiations for the park's purchase were ongoing,

Printing, 1912), 28. Big Basin has thus far been spared from logging due to the lack of transportation options in the immediate area.

⁴ Richardson, 30-31.

⁵ National Park Service, *Big Basin Redwoods National Historic Landmark nomination* (draft), 23.

⁶ Ney C. Landrum, *The State Park Movement in America: A Critical Review*, (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2004), 48-50.

⁷ National Park Service, *Big Basin Redwoods National Historic Landmark Nomination* (draft), 27.

⁸ Engbeck, 32-33.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 4

was constructed in 1901. The building later became known as the clubhouse. Since there were no roads into the area that could accommodate a wagon team, timber for the building was brought in by mule. Subsequent visits, in 1903, by California Governor George Pardee and Utah Governor Heber Wells, earned the site the name Governor's Camp. The state had established a Redwood Park Commission to oversee the new park as part of the establishment legislation, and in 1903 the commission appointed J. H. B. Pilkington, Santa Cruz County horticultural commissioner, as the park's first warden. The commission charged Pilkington with protecting park resources and spending the \$10,000 allotted by the legislature for development.⁹

In anticipation of public use, Pilkington repaired existing roads, constructed new roads, and developed an area for camping. In 1903, workers built a road from Governor's Camp to Slippery Rock. The park formally opened to the public in 1904, and visitors could travel a new road from the town of Boulder Creek to Governor's Camp beginning in 1905. A road from Sempervirens Falls to Sky Meadow, also called Flea Potrero, was built that same year, and the existing road, from the falls to Governor's Camp, was improved. The Maddock Creek water system and a number of park support buildings and fire roads were also added in 1905.¹⁰ That same year, a log barn, constructed of unhewn redwood logs and "much admired by visitors," as well as a warden's house, was built near the park entrance, at today's Upper Sky Meadow area. Soon after, the state built a two-story, redwood log building known as "the lodge."¹¹

Visitors began journeying to the park soon after it opened. Stages met passengers from the Santa Cruz train at Mt. Hermon and ferried them to the park. In 1905, one of the heaviest travel days of the year saw forty-six people enter the park.¹² The 1906 earthquake damaged rail lines and train tunnels and stymied travel to Big Basin. Visitation rebounded after rail lines were repaired. In 1907, the Southern Pacific Railroad began to serve Boulder Creek. Visitors could not disembark at that town, and transfer to a stage for a twelve mile ride into the park.¹³

While some infrastructure had been built by 1907, the park lacked many essential facilities. The state forestry department reported that year that the park was "fast becoming a summer resort," but little lodging was available.¹⁴ 2,230 visitors registered at the park that year, and more certainly visited but did not register.¹⁵ In the park's first years, visitors camped, stayed with the warden, or lodged in a tavern three miles from Governor's Camp. Some older cottages, near the park entrance, were also used as guest accommodation at this time, and park staff erected large tents with board floors to hold additional visitors. The park could accommodate thirty people altogether, in these lodgings.¹⁶ Circa 1908, the clubhouse, the five-room cottage built for Governor Gage, was renovated as a dining hall and recreation building. Another building was constructed nearby for use as a boarding house for tourists.¹⁷ In rainy weather, campers gathered in the clubhouse to play cards, read, or socialize. A few

⁹ Clark Wing, Big Basin Redwoods State Park, 1940, 21, State Park and Recreation Commission Records, California State Archives, Sacramento, CA.

¹⁰ California State Board of Forestry, *First Biennial Report of the State Forester of the State of California*, (Sacramento: Superintendent of State Printing, 1906), 34.

¹¹ Richardson, 55; California State Board of Forestry, *Second Biennial Report of the State Forester of the State of California*, (Sacramento: Superintendent of State Printing, 1908). The building is no longer extant. Richardson puts the date of construction at 1905, while the state forester suggests the building was new in 1907.

¹² *Mountain Echo* (Boulder Creek CA), July 15, 1905.

¹³ California State Board of Forestry, *Second Biennial Report of the State Forester of the State of California*, 20.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁵ California State Board of Forestry, *First Biennial Report of the State Forester of the State of California*, 34.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 34; Richardson, 55; Kathleen Kennedy, *Historic Resources Study for Big Basin Redwoods State Park* (draft), 2009, 23, California Department of Parks and Recreation Files, Sacramento, CA.

¹⁷ Kennedy, *Historic Resources Study for Big Basin Redwoods State Park*, 23; Don Meadows, *A Manual of the History and*

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 5

other buildings were erected as well. A 14' x 20' wood framed workman's cottage was built in 1907.¹⁸ A post office opened in 1908.¹⁹

In 1911, the California Legislature reinstated a state parks commission and hired a new warden, and these changes facilitated the development of the park. That same year, new warden William Dool oversaw the construction of an amphitheater and campfire center, a warden's office—the park's administrative office, where visitors secured their firearms and paid for campsites, a warden's house, and the park's first hotel facility, Big Basin Inn, alternately known as Redwood Lodge.²⁰ The one-story, wood framed building, which originally measured 26' x 94', featured unpeeled redwood log supports and an immense stone fireplace in the lobby. It contained a restaurant and public gathering space. The building did not contain guest rooms, and instead served as a management and public use facility for fifty-five 10' x 12' wood framed cabins that were built nearby between 1912 and 1923. Ten additional two-room, 12' x 18' cabins were completed in 1919.²¹ Twenty-nine toilet buildings were constructed around Governor's Camp between 1910 and 1923 to serve hotel guests and other visitors.²² Laundry facilities, garbage sheds, employee dormitories, and storage buildings associated with the lodging facility were also constructed during this time. New trails, a boat launch, and a dam were built in 1912. The dam, built on Opal Creek approximately two hundred yards behind the Warden's Office in Governor's Camp, created a lake for swimming and boating.²³

The Sempervirens Club continued to work toward the development and protection of what many considered "California's only great park."²⁴ Between 1910 and 1912, auto registration in California jumped 1700 percent, and Californians were increasingly using autos to access the park, a two hour drive from Santa Cruz in 1912. The state began work on a system of highways in 1912; a bond issue, passed by voters in 1910, the Motor Vehicle Act of 1913 and the State Highways Act of 1915 provided the funds.²⁵ The state built the portion of Highway 236 that lies within the park in 1913, and the section that connects the park to Boulder Creek in 1917.²⁶ At that time, visitation was about fifty people per day, most of who traveled to the park in cars. Some drove from as far away as Los Angeles.²⁷ However, no good roads led to the park from the north, and in the mid-1910s, Andrew Hill and

Biology of Big Basin Redwoods State Park, California, 19, California Department of Parks and Recreation Files, Sacramento, CA.

¹⁸ The building is no longer extant. "Warden's Office," Photo Album, Historical Record Photographs, Natural Resources Department of Finance Records, California State Archives; California State Board of Forestry, *First Biennial Report of the State Forester of the State of California*, 34.

¹⁹ Frank E. Hill and Florence Hill, *The Acquisition of California Redwoods Park*, (San Jose: Florence Hill Publishing, 1927), 29; Kennedy, 22.

²⁰ "Big Basin Inn," Photo Album, Historical Record Photographs, Natural Resources Department of Finance Records, California State Archives; Wing, Big Basin Redwoods State Park, 19.

²¹ "Hotel Cabins, 55" Photo Album, Historical Record Photographs, Natural Resources Department of Finance Records, California State Archives; "Hotel Cabins, 10," Photo Album, Historical Record Photographs, Natural Resources Department of Finance Records, California State Archives.

²² "Big Basin Inn," Photo Album, Historical Record Photographs, Natural Resources Department of Finance Records, California State Archives.

²³ Hill and Hill, 29.

²⁴ *Mountain Echo* (Boulder Creek, CA), November 11, 1911.

²⁵ Arthur A. Taylor, *California Redwood Park: An Appreciation*, (Sacramento: State Superintendent of Printing, 1912), 56; California Highway Commission, *First Biennial Report of the California Highway Commission*, (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1922), 11.

²⁶ History of California's State Highway System, online resource at http://wapedia.mobi/en/History_of_California%27s_state_highway_system#1.

²⁷ *Mountain Echo*, August 12, 1911.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 6

club members turned their attention toward making the park more accessible for San Francisco Bay area residents. A state highway already connected San Francisco with Saratoga Gap, north of the park, and the club launched a campaign to construct a road from Saratoga Gap to Big Basin, in part to accommodate the additional tourists they expected would be drawn by the upcoming Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco in 1915. The Saratoga-Big Basin Road was completed in 1915, and it allowed greater numbers of visitors to access the park. The new route was widely considered “the most attractive touring trip” in the San Francisco Bay area. The road was paved in the 1920s.²⁸

The Sempervirens Club also worked toward park expansion. In May 1917, Andrew Hill alerted club members to the planned construction of a saw mill adjacent to the park, increasing the danger of fire within park boundaries. Hill and the club sought support for the passage of a new bill authorizing \$150,000 to purchase the anticipated site of the mill and prevent its construction. The bill passed, tripling the original size of the park to more than 9,300 acres.

More park road and facility expansion followed. The state wanted to provide access to the new additions, and the Hihn-Hammond Road was built in 1918. The Hihn-Hammond Bridge was constructed the following year. The state continued to add other amenities. Workers built a wood framed park store and a lunch counter, with peeled redwood log supports, in 1918. A wood framed studio, with wood and shake siding, was built in 1918. Andrew Hill used the studio to produce and sell photographs of the park.²⁹

The Saratoga-Big Basin Road facilitated travel from San Francisco to the park, and visitors overwhelmed the park’s facilities. On July 4, 1919, the park’s campgrounds were at capacity, and 1,000 automobiles were parked within park boundaries. In response, Warden Dool constructed one hundred more camping sites, with brick stoves, tables, and seats. Three thousand autos squeezed into the park that year for the September 6th presentation of the allegorical play created by Sempervirens Club members and supporters called *Soul of the Sequoia*. Over 6,000 people attended the performance in 1920.³⁰

Big Basin was firmly established as a popular vacation spot for many San Francisco Bay area residents by this time. 1,182,911 people lived in the San Francisco Bay area in 1920, and Big Basin was still the only park where the state provided and maintained infrastructure and facilities for hiking, camping, and other recreational pursuits. Californians sought to view redwood trees and enjoy nature and outdoor activities, as well as to escape the foggy San Francisco Bay area for the sunny Santa Cruz Mountains.³¹ Some families camped for entire summers, with working fathers joining their wives and children on weekends. Other campers would leave their gear for the summer season, and come and go as they pleased.³²

Youth organizations such as the Girl Scouts and the Campfire Girls established camps in Big Basin Redwoods in the 1920s. From the 1920s through the 1940s, Big Basin Redwoods was one of the few California state parks to house these youth camps, and the organizations kept long waiting lists of campers who eagerly sought time in the

²⁸ Ben Blow, *California Highways: A Descriptive Record of Road Development by the State and by such Counties as have Paved Highways*, (San Francisco: H.S. Crocker and Co., 1920), 114.

²⁹ National Park Service, *Big Basin Redwoods National Historic Landmark Nomination* (draft), 30.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 30.

³¹ Kim Baker, Oral Interview with Jim and Aileen Brush, August 30, 2002, *Big Basin Redwoods State Park Centennial Oral History Project, Volume III*, 30, California Department of Parks and Recreation Files, Sacramento, CA.

³² Julie Sidel, Oral History interview with Shirley Gleason, October 2002, *Big Basin Redwoods State Park Centennial Oral History Project, Volume I*, 16-17; Michele Angilly, Ed Park Oral Interview, *Big Basin Redwoods State Park Centennial Oral History Project, Volume I*, 3.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 7

coast redwood forests.³³ The Girl Scouts operated two camps, including one in the Sky Meadow area for San Mateo area girls.³⁴ The other, Camp Chaparral, was associated with the Chaparral National Training School, a Girl Scout leadership training organization, and was founded in 1922. Camp Wastahi, which served the Santa Clara County Campfire Girls, was established in 1925 in Dolenz Grove, off of Lodge Road. The Ayum Mayu Girls' Reserve Facility, operated by the YWCA, was located along Hihn-Hammond Road just east of the intersection of Opal and Sempervirens Creek. It began in 1924 as a convalescent camp for working girls. As these girls' camps grew, park work crews constructed certain amenities in the camps, such as flush toilets. The organizations clamored for state help with damming creeks to create pools, eradicating poison oak, providing better sanitation, and constructing tables, storehouses and open kitchen structures.³⁵ By 1931, the park could accommodate 150 Girl Scouts at Camp Chaparral, 200 at Camp Wastahi, and 150 at Sky Meadow, and 75 girls and young women at Ayum Mayu, later named Hazelgreen.³⁶ By the 1930s, all camps had flush toilets and a cookhouse. There were no cabins or other sleeping quarters at any of the camps, and campers and leaders slept in the open air.³⁷

The state continued to develop tourist facilities in the 1920s to accommodate ever-increasing visitation. A 23.5' x 41' dining room wing was added to Big Basin Inn in 1920. The formerly L-shaped building resembled a T after the change.³⁸ A tennis court was added sometime before 1922. Several new campgrounds were built in the 1920s, and other park support buildings were added at this time. Three staff residences were built during this time in Governor's Camp as well; two wood framed, two-room cabins were constructed in 1925, and in 1926, the state built a three-room, wood framed cabin for employees.³⁹ A few service buildings, such as an auto maintenance building and an electric light plant, built in 1922 and 1920, respectively, were constructed as well. Gazos Creek Road was built in the mid-1920s in order to provide coastal access from the Governor's Camp area. By 1924, the Governor's Camp area of Big Basin resembled a full-fledged resort, with a variety of accommodations, entertainment and recreation amenities, services such as a post office, barber shop, and gas station, and park support structures.

By 1925, there were five California state parks. However, the state had only constructed visitor facilities and infrastructure in Big Basin Redwoods. Three other parks were completely undeveloped. Mount Diablo, surrounded by private land, was completely inaccessible. There were some concession facilities such as cabins at Richardson Grove that predated the park's founding in 1921. In 1925, Big Basin was "the only state park which can be said to have been adequately organized for use by the people of the state," according to Duncan McDuffie,

³³ Joseph Knowland, *Annual Report of the California State Park Commission, 1948-1949*, (Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1950), 3. By 1950, the other parks that housed youth camps were Cuyamaca, Palomar, and Pfeiffer State Parks.

³⁴ Wing, Big Basin Redwoods State Park, 27.

³⁵ Clark Wing, Report of the Chief of the Division of State Parks for the period ending November 15, 1929, Department of Natural Resources Records, Director's Records relating to the Division of Parks, Monthly Activity Reports, California State Archives.

³⁶ Clark Wing to Fred Stevenot, April 24, 1930, Monthly Report, Administrative Files, Division of Parks, California State Archives.

³⁷ Eva Fewel, Oral Interview with Edith Hubbard, *Big Basin Redwoods State Park Centennial Oral History Project, Volume IV*, "The Girls Camps," 3-10; Kim Baker, Oral Interview with Betty Jeanne Johnson, *Big Basin Redwoods State Park Centennial Oral History Project, Volume IV*, "The Girls Camps;" 4-6, 19-20.

³⁸ "Big Basin Inn," Photo Album, Historical Record Photographs, Natural Resources Department of Finance Records, California State Archives.

³⁹ "Workman's Cottage," Photo Album, Historical Record Photographs, Natural Resources Department of Finance Records, California State Archives.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 8

the Save the Redwoods League chairman for state parks.⁴⁰ By 1929, there were twelve state parks and five state monuments. Big Basin remained the most heavily visited and the most developed. The park was so popular that renowned plant pathologist E. P. Meinecke warned that “excessive tourist travel” was damaging the very trees that visitors flocked to see.⁴¹ In 1930, Big Basin drew 239,490 visitors, the most in the park system. Bidwell State Park, the second most popular park, attracted only 38,358 people that year. Even as the Great Depression began, visitation continued to rise—there was a 102% increase in visitation between 1931 and 1932, that park staff attributed to the development of campgrounds and picnic areas.⁴²

California state parks suffered from poor administration and inadequate funding. The Save the Redwoods League led a campaign to establish a State Parks Commission that would oversee the development of a statewide system of parks, and in 1928, the state’s citizens approved the passage of a \$6 million bond issue for this purpose, as well as for the acquisition of more state park land. The commission immediately began expanding the park system, and by 1934, there were forty-nine parks and eleven historic monuments.⁴³ However, even after the passage of the bond and the creation of the commission, little infrastructure was built—the state used the bond money primarily for acquisitions, not development.

Some development did continue at Big Basin. The park was still considered the system’s most important, and so it received the most attention. A two-room cabin now known as the Krevis Cabin was built circa 1928. The building was meant to resemble the studio, and it provided a bedroom and office for the nature study instructor.⁴⁴ In 1930, new cabins, designed by the state division of architecture, replaced some of the older cabins.⁴⁵ Rustic gates were built at the Saratoga and Boulder Creek entrances in 1929. Gatehouses, with multiple rooms and bathrooms, were built at the Saratoga and the Boulder Creek entrance in 1930 and 1931, respectively. These buildings helped park staff prevent potential problems with guns and dogs, both of which were a major source of complaints, since rangers could now identify and communicate with dog and gun owners at the park’s entrance.⁴⁶ The buildings, like others built in the 1910s and 1920s, were described as rustic, with redwood timbers, shake roofs, and board and batten siding.⁴⁷

The state began to utilize new, inexpensive sources of labor after the onset of the Great Depression. Work crews from California state labor camps built campgrounds in Big Basin in the early 1930s. The men were provided labor in exchange for food and clothing. Big Basin, along with Humboldt Redwoods, was one of only two state parks that utilized labor from state labor camps, since other parks were considered too small or too inaccessible

⁴⁰ Engbeck, 47.

⁴¹ E.P. Meinecke, *A Report on the Effect of Excessive Tourist Travel on the California Redwood Parks*, (State of California, Department of Natural Resources, 1929), 3.

⁴² Clark Wing, Attendance Report, 1930, Administrative Files, Division of Parks, California State Archives, Sacramento, CA; Clark Wing to Chief of Division of Natural Resources, July 20, 1932, Administrative Files, Division of Parks, California State Archives, Sacramento, CA.

⁴³ Engbeck, 61.

⁴⁴ California Redwood Park, Progress Report, November 11, 1929, Department of Natural Resources Records, Director’s Records relating to the Division of Parks, Monthly Activity Reports, California State Archives. Other sources claim the cabin was constructed in 1931.

⁴⁵ Clark Wing to Fred Stevenot, Monthly Report of the Division of Parks, April 24, 1930, Monthly Reports, Administrative Files, Division of Parks, California State Archives.

⁴⁶ Clark Wing, Report on Activities of the Division of State Parks, December 1, 1930, Monthly Reports, Administrative Files, Division of Parks, California State Archives.

⁴⁷ Clark Wing, California Redwood Park, Progress Report, November 12, 1929, Department of Natural Resources Records, Director’s Records relating to the Division of Parks, California State Archives.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 9

for the camps.⁴⁸ By 1932, the park counted 300 new campsites, which could accommodate 1,200 people.⁴⁹ In the early 1930s, during the Great Depression, the legislature slashed the budget of the newly established Commission, making any new development unfeasible. Most parks remained undeveloped and some remained inaccessible. Big Basin Redwoods remained the park with the most significant amount of visitor facilities into the 1930s. Not until federal government relief programs in the 1930s were enacted did California state parks obtain visitor facilities and infrastructure on a broad scale.

The Civilian Conservation Corps at Big Basin Redwoods State Park, 1933-1941⁵⁰

Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) work at Big Basin Redwoods transformed the park. While construction efforts at Big Basin prior to 1933 had been ad hoc, responding to visitor demand, the CCC utilized the expertise of National Park Service architects and landscape architects to formulate plans that protected natural resources while accommodating tourists. Big Basin Redwoods was one of the first California state parks to receive a CCC camp. CCC workers constructed buildings in the distinctive Park Rustic style, built roads, trails and other recreational amenities, and developed the first park master plan for the park. The remaining CCC buildings at Big Basin represent one of the largest public works programs in American history, and display the unique Park Rustic architectural style.

The Civilian Conservation Corps

President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) program in 1933 as part of the Federal Unemployment Relief Act. The program was one of Roosevelt's solutions to the economic calamity of the Great Depression, and one that was based on the president's own interest in the conservation of natural resources. The unemployment rate had reached 25 percent in 1933, and the number was even higher for young men. Legislation establishing the ECW passed at the end of March, only three weeks after Roosevelt's inauguration. The Civilian Conservation Corps was established to carry out the work of the ECW and to employ large numbers of young men in conservation work on public lands.

The CCC program was jointly administered by the departments of the Army, Interior, Agriculture, and Labor. The Labor Department recruited men, the Army established and maintained CCC camps, and the National Park Service in the Department of the Interior and the Forest Service in the Department of Agriculture coordinated and supervised CCC work on public lands. About one-quarter of all CCC work was park and recreation development, while the rest of the program focused on forestry and soil erosion.⁵¹

By July of 1933, only three months after Congress passed the ECW legislation, almost 250,000 men had enlisted in the Corps. At its peak in August of 1935, about 506,000 men served in 2,900 camps across the nation. Throughout the Depression, the CCC employed about 5 percent of the male population of the United States. Each enlistee was paid thirty dollars per month, and he was required to send twenty-five dollars of each paycheck back to his family. Government officials hoped not only to simply employ young men, but to teach job skills, to instill

⁴⁸ Clark Wing, Monthly Report of Division of Parks, September 17, 1932 to Oct 18, 1932, Department of Natural Resources Records, Director's Records relating to the Division of Parks, Monthly Activity Reports, California State Archives.

⁴⁹ Clark Wing, Report of Activities of Division of Parks, May 25 to June 20, 1932, Department of Natural Resources Records, Director's Records relating to the Division of Parks, Monthly Activity Reports, California State Archives.

⁵⁰ The CCC left Big Basin Redwoods in 1941 before the CCC program was abolished nationwide in 1942.

⁵¹ Joseph Engbeck, *By the People For the People: The Work of the Civilian Conservation Corps in California State Parks*, (Sacramento: California State Parks, 2002), 3-4.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 10

a love of the outdoors, and to impart a “wholesome outlook on life” through hard labor.⁵² In national parks, where much of the work was carried out, CCC workers engaged in projects including maintenance and construction of visitor facilities and infrastructure, forest improvement, erosion control, and landscape work. Some of the most iconic national park buildings and structures were constructed by CCC workers during this time. CCC companies also constructed fire breaks, fought insect outbreaks, and eradicated unwanted plants.⁵³

One of the CCC program’s major accomplishments was development of state parks. The NPS had sought involvement in state park development since 1921, when director Stephen Mather helped create the National Conference on State Parks. Mather’s successor, Horace Albright, was also enthusiastic about the creation of state parks, and he recognized the opportunity for the NPS to help establish and develop state parks through the CCC program. State park administrators were not numerous enough or experienced enough in the 1930s to conduct large scale development of their parks. National Park Service involvement, via the CCC, “provided the technical expertise and park planning guidance that was lacking” in state parks. The NPS created a new division to administer CCC work in state parks, and Conrad Wirth, who became the NPS director in the mid-1950s, was the first chief. State park inspectors, who were employed by the NPS and reported to the ECW district officer, had an advisory and supervisory role. Each inspector helped formulate state park master plans, and advised on the design and construction of park buildings and structures. The National Park Service provided the architects, landscape architects, and engineers that worked with each CCC camp to develop and manage projects. Staff worked out of four regional offices: in San Francisco, Denver, Indianapolis, and Washington D.C.⁵⁴

CCC workers were sent into state parks within the program’s first six months, and the program expanded rapidly. In September of 1933, there were 105 camps in state parks in twenty-six states. By October of 1934, there were 263 camps in thirty-two states, compared to only 102 camps in national parks at the same time. By 1935, forty-one states had park systems that were developed, enlarged, or created by the CCC. The CCC was crucial in helping Virginia, Mississippi, South Carolina, New Mexico, and West Virginia establish their first state parks, and new parks were added and existing parks enlarged in seventeen other states. By 1938, the CCC had developed almost three million acres in 854 state parks. The program is credited with helping establish 711 new state parks.⁵⁵

Recreation on public lands became more popular in the 1930s, and CCC work in state parks focused on recreational development. The CCC built campgrounds, picnic areas, trails, dance floors, theaters, and recreation buildings in state parks, as well as the roads that accessed these facilities. As a result, landscape architects disregarded some of the more rigorous environmental standards they adhered to in national parks. They dammed creeks to create lakes for swimming and boating, and moved earth and imported sand to create beaches on the new lakes. The Corps also built park support facilities, such as staff housing, maintenance buildings, and water systems; educational buildings, such as nature lodges and museums; and structures meant for park protection, such as fire lookouts.

In the 1930s, the CCC transformed many California state parks from inaccessible, undeveloped areas into parks with roads, trails and a variety of recreational amenities. CCC work allowed unprecedented public access to a

⁵² Linda McClelland, *Building the National Parks: Historic Landscape Design and Construction*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1998), 338.

⁵³ John C. Paige, *The Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Park Service, 1933-1942: An Administrative History* (Washington DC: National Park Service, 1985), 78.

⁵⁴ Paige, *The Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Park Service, 1933-194*, 80; McClelland, *Building the National Parks*, 381.

⁵⁵ Paige, 80.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 11

state park system that, in some cases, lacked even the most basic facilities or road access. Between 1932 and 1941, in California state parks CCC workers built more than 1,500 buildings, structures, and landscape features, and constructed thousands of miles of trails and roads.

The California state park system benefitted from the federal relief program almost immediately. Unlike many other states, California had a park system in place in 1933, so the state did not spend additional time acquiring new land or establishing administrative offices. The NPS established two new offices in California that would focus on state park work, in San Francisco and Glendale. Lawrence Merriam, the head of the San Francisco office, was the son of John C. Merriam, longtime leader of the Save the Redwoods League. Former NPS landscape architect Daniel Hull was hired by the state to oversee CCC work in California. Hull had helped create village designs in national parks, that emphasized siting buildings of similar functions together, such as visitor services, administration, or staff housing. Hull had worked on the 1927 survey for new California state park lands, so he had first-hand knowledge of the parks.⁵⁶

With an established system and knowledgeable personnel in both the state park commission and the NPS regional offices, work progressed quickly. In states without established systems, initial CCC work focused on erosion control or debris clean up. In California, major construction projects were planned or underway within the first year. In 1934, the federal government spent \$2 million to develop California state parks, while the entire state parks operating budget was only \$279,046. That year, over 30,000 men worked for the CCC on public lands in California. Twenty camps had been established statewide by the end of 1935.⁵⁷ Work ranged from grand public buildings such as the administration building at Big Basin or the Summit Building at Mt Diablo, to small service buildings such as comfort stations and garages.⁵⁸ By the end of the program, the CCC conducted significant development in thirty-seven state parks in California.

The program was one of the most popular of the New Deal, and some tried to make the CCC a permanent government organization. However, the federal government began reducing the number of recruits as well as the number of camps in 1936, and the program shrank in size throughout the late 1930s. The CCC lost its status as an autonomous agency in 1939, when it was incorporated into the Federal Security Agency. By 1940, war mobilization reduced the numbers of available men, and increased defense spending meant that more, higher wage jobs were available. Despite the continued support of President Roosevelt, Congress discontinued the CCC in 1942. By that time, 2 million enrollees had worked in 198 CCC camps in 94 national park and monument areas, and 697 camps in 881 state, county, and municipal areas.

The CCC and Park Rustic Architecture

The CCC constructed buildings, structures and landscape features in the distinctive Park Rustic style. This style was an attempt to build functional buildings and structures that harmonized with their environment and it became the dominant style of construction in the national parks during the 1920s and 1930s. NPS architects were inspired by Adirondack and Shingle style architecture, as well as the Arts and Crafts movement. Park Rustic design principles represented American ideas about the romanticism of nature and western settlement; architects sought to “achieve sympathy with natural surroundings and with the past” through rustic architecture. The landscape philosophies of Andrew Jackson Downing, Frederick Law Olmsted, Henry Hubbard, E.P. Meinecke, and Frank

⁵⁶ Engbeck, *By the People, For the People*, 14-18.

⁵⁷ Engbeck, *By the People, For the People*, 8; Carol Roland, National Register Multiple Property Nomination, *The National-State Park Cooperative Program and the Civilian Conservation Corps in California State Parks*, draft, June 30, 2009, 3-4.

⁵⁸ Engbeck, *By the People, For the People*, 16.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 12

Waugh also heavily influenced the work of NPS architects and landscape architects. Landscape architect Thomas Vint and his team in the National Park Service's Western Office of Design and Construction refined and institutionalized the Park Rustic style. The NPS managed CCC work in California state parks, and buildings and structures were constructed in this style.

NPS architects' primary goal was to subordinate buildings and structures to their surroundings. Buildings and structures were meant to provide access to nature, and to enhance visitors' experiences in the natural world. Architects sought to preserve the natural character of a site by "harmonizing manmade improvements with the natural setting and topography," and they accomplished this through a number of techniques. Buildings were screened with native vegetation and built with native materials so that they blended into the natural environment. Warm browns, driftwood grays, and stone colors were favored for exteriors. Architects ensured that buildings would not dominate their surroundings by designing them with low, rectangular forms, and eschewing right angles and straight lines.⁵⁹ Irregular, low-pitched, and gabled roofs were common. In landscapes with high mountains or tall trees, the structural elements such as logs and rock might be overscaled, so that the building was not overwhelmed by its surroundings.⁶⁰ Even recreational amenities like swimming pools were designed to blend into their setting.

Park Rustic style was characterized by use of native materials, such as logs, wood, and stone. It was not enough to simply use local products, however—the materials had to look rustic and unfinished. Carpenters left knots and whorls on the logs, in order to retain a natural look. They used hand hewn boards and avoided straight lines. Log buildings, which typified rustic design, were meant to appear rugged and handcrafted, as if they were built "by pioneer woodsman with limited hand tools."⁶¹ Construction methods proved labor intensive, and manual labor was abundant as men sought employment through the CCC. Some of the most iconic buildings and structures in California state parks, such as the mountain theater at Mount Tamalpais State Park and the Summit Museum Building at Mt. Diablo State Park, were constructed by the CCC in the Park Rustic style.

Architects took into account the color, scale, massing, and texture of natural features of the landscape when designing buildings. At the Grand Canyon, for instance, "chunks of rubble masonry laid in courses mimicked the local geologic strata, and the log detailing had sizes identical to the trunks of the surrounding forest." At Mt. Rainier, rounded, glacial boulders and large logs served as exterior building materials. Building elements must be in scale to each other, as well. For example, rock and timber walls required heavy roofing materials such as wood shingles 1" thick, and thick eaves lines.⁶² While earlier architectural styles prioritized the appearance of the front of the building, architects designing in Park Rustic style paid attention to all four sides of a building, so that it remained unobtrusive from all angles.⁶³

The National Park Service codified the style in 1935 for the agency with the publication of *Park Structures and Facilities*, an instructional manual edited by architect Albert Good. Funded by the CCC, the NPS intended the book to provide guidance for the numerous new architects and engineers hired by federal relief programs. Good compiled the best examples of rustic architecture and landscape design from state and national parks across the

⁵⁹ Albert Good, *Park and Recreation Structures*, (Boulder, CO: Graybooks, 1990), 2-6; McClelland, *Building the National Parks*, 394-5.

⁶⁰ Good, 6-8.

⁶¹ Good, 5-7.

⁶² William Tweed, Laura Soulliere and Henry Law, *National Park Service Rustic Architecture, 1916-1942*, (National Park Service, Western Regional Office, February 1977); Good, 2-6.

⁶³ Linda McClellan, *Presenting Nature: The Historic Landscape Design of the National Park Service, 1916-1942*, (Washington D.C: National Park Service, 1993).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 13

nation in this work. Lavishly illustrated with photos and plans, even architects with little or no experience designing and building in Park Rustic style could use the manual to design state and national park buildings and structures. The book offered recommendations, plans, and elevations for numerous buildings and structures, from drinking fountains to museums.⁶⁴ Good's *Park and Recreation Structures*, published in 1938, served as a revised and enlarged manual of rustic design.⁶⁵

In these books, Good recommended designs and features for dozens of types of park buildings and structures. Good believed that an administration building was particularly important for the business and management functions of a park. Too often, Good pointed out, state park administration functions were conducted from a caretaker's home or other building. Good argued that this building should have "importance, even dominance" among park buildings, since it represented authority and order within the park. Despite its importance as a symbol, it should still remain subordinate to its natural environment. Combining other functions under the roof of the administration building was acceptable as well, and even desirable if it meant that a single building could take the place of many smaller buildings.⁶⁶

High quality staff housing, according to Good, boosted employee pride and responsibility, and was thus an essential part of the CCC construction program. Good likened the ideal appearance of staff housing to a "pioneer homestead." He believed that modern housing could be built with a rustic, traditional appearance, and that climate, comfort, traditions and budget could all be accommodated in the home's design. Good proposed that the home reflect the vocation and salary of its occupant, whether naturalist, superintendent or laborer; a laborer, according to the architect, should be housed in more modest quarters than a superintendent. Staff housing should be convenient to the most popular sections of a park, though the buildings should be inconspicuous.⁶⁷

Cabins, too, were meant to evoke the idea of the pioneer frontier dwelling. Cabins could provide inexpensive lodging to visitors that could not afford the more expensive lodges, and were thus, according to Good, an instrument of democracy in parks. He believed that the use of "more economical, even if less picturesque and durable, methods of construction" was acceptable for "minor and often repeated units" such as cabins. The use of inexpensive materials, and the absence of kitchens, bathrooms, and fireplaces, also kept costs low. Close spacing was desirable, so as not to incur added costs for utilities and road construction, as well as to keep the cabin complex from encroaching on other public spaces. Good considered the fact that they were usually constructed in clusters an interruption in the natural landscape, and prescribed making them as unobtrusive as possible.⁶⁸

Good included recommendations for buildings such as comfort stations and maintenance buildings as well. While rustic exteriors were paramount on comfort stations, sanitation was key to the interior, so smooth and impervious materials were favored. Screening the exterior of the building was important. Good lobbied for windows above eye level, men's and women's entrances as far apart as possible and self-closing doors. Good placed less emphasis on the design of maintenance buildings. Since the public rarely saw these buildings, siting them sensitively and inconspicuously was enough. Exterior colors that blended in with the surrounding environment were particularly important on these buildings, since they often lacked the rustic exterior materials such as redwood logs and rock that helped other buildings blend in to the natural landscape.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ William C. Tweed et al, *National Park Service Rustic Architecture, 1916-1942*.

⁶⁵ Good, *Park and Recreation Structures*, 1938, 4.

⁶⁶ Good, 57-58.

⁶⁷ Good, 73.

⁶⁸ Good, 17-19.

⁶⁹ Good, 130.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 14

Recreational amenities such as campfire circles were also included in the manuals. The CCC constructed campfire circles in a number of state parks. The circle needed to be located near overnight accommodations or campgrounds, so that it could serve an activity center. Proximity to a nature center or museum was also desirable, so that it could serve as a place for naturalist talks. Seating should be semicircular and made of logs or stone, according to Good. The stage should be set to the east or north, so that the audience would not face a setting sun. Good envisioned the building as a sort of chapel, with forest undergrowth serving as reredos and tall trees serving as walls. He discouraged builders from cutting down trees to make room for seating; it was better, in his opinion, to design seating around the trees. Good considered situating the circle amid towering redwoods to be the best possible setting. "The glory of a campfire circle ringed by redwoods," stated Good, conveyed "the illusion of a world within a world."⁷⁰ Good also laid out guidelines for other recreational amenities, such as pools, picnic shelters, and organized camps.

Good also provided guidelines for other park buildings, such as lodges, campgrounds, fire lookouts, and laundries. He offered guidelines for structures such as campgrounds, bridges, drinking fountains, and dams. Recreational facilities such as pool, picnic shelters, and organized camps were covered. Even camp furnishings, such as picnic tables, were discussed. NPS landscape architect E.P. Meinecke proved more influential regarding campground design during this time. Under his direction, Meinecke designed individual campsites, with defined parking spaces that were spurs off of a circulation road. Each site included furnishings, preferably fixed furnishings, so that campers would not move rocks and logs from the surrounding landscape. Meinecke designed each site so that it was screened from the next with vegetation, in order to provide privacy as well as shade. The CCC and NPS architects relied on his *Camp Planning and Recreation* for campground design.⁷¹

The popularity of Park Rustic style declined by the end of the 1930s as architects began to favor the cleaner lines, innovative materials, and techniques of the International Style. The manpower and federal relief money, abundant in the 1930s, was no longer available by 1940, as the United States prepared for war. Park Rustic style buildings and structures remain some of the most recognized and beloved in state and national parks. CCC buildings and structures remain the most widespread style of historic building in the California state park system.⁷²

The CCC at Big Basin Redwoods State Park

Big Basin was one of the state's first parks to receive a CCC camp. Unlike other California parks, Big Basin had significant visitor facilities before 1933, and CCC work expanded the park's infrastructure and amenities. CCC architects developed a master plan for the park, and constructed buildings and structures in the distinctive Park Rustic style. CCC crews removed existing buildings and rerouted roads and trails in order to provide more orderly development that would better protect the park's natural resources. They also built new visitor facilities that would better serve park visitors and staff. The remaining CCC buildings and structures in Big Basin Redwoods State Park are examples of one of the largest public works programs ever undertaken by the federal government.

CCC Company 1508 (SP-3), that arrived in April 1933, was the first to perform work in the park. The company was based on private land near the south entrance of the park, and it was assigned eighteen tasks, ranging from

⁷⁰ Good, 197.

⁷¹ Carol Roland, *The National-State Park Cooperative Program and the Civilian Conservation Corps in California State Parks*, draft, 12.

⁷² Carol Roland, *Park Rustic Buildings and Structures in the California State Park System*, July 31, 2003, California Department of Parks and Recreation Files, 1.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 15

building construction to landscape work. The company realigned and reconstructed the park's access road and entrances and built a new entrance station. Workers built fire breaks, performed fire hazard reduction along roads and trails, and developed eighty-one acres of campgrounds. They constructed campsite furnishings, including cupboards, picnic tables with wood bases and concrete tops, and stoves. Company 1508 crews began remodeling the existing rental cabins and constructing ten new cabins and a concessions building. Company 1508 ended their work at Big Basin in May 1934.⁷³

CCC Company 1913 arrived at the park in October 1933, and this group performed the majority of the construction at the park during the 1930s. The company built and occupied a camp located on the hill above the park's original entrance, called Old Lodge Camp (SP-15). Camp facilities included barracks, a mess hall, a hospital, garages, storage areas, and recreation areas; the camp housed 1,000 men. The company's initial duties included building a water pipeline and marking park boundaries, and they were soon engaged in a variety of projects. They worked on forest improvement in cutover lands of park, and continued the work of relocating roads in Governor's Camp. Crews built a road to serve the Eagle Rock Lookout Tower, a 20 foot tall wooden structure. The tower was built in 1935 in conjunction with the California Department of Forestry, outside park boundaries but for the purpose of protecting the area, including the park, from fire.⁷⁴ Workers moved campgrounds that had been built along the Redwood Trail. By April 1935 they extended the North Escape Road to a point about three miles north of G Camp, where it intersected with the road to Saratoga.⁷⁵ Crews also relocated the main highway, which ran through Governor's Camp directly in front of Big Basin Inn, away from park buildings and onto a more direct route through the heavily used area.⁷⁶

In June 1935, CCC Company 3342 set up Whitehouse Camp (SP-37), in the western part of the park, and remained there until September of that year. Between May and December in 1936 and 1937, part of Company 1913 moved to Whitehouse Camp in order to perform work in that section of the park. The move was spurred by the fact that Girl Scouts congregated in Sky Meadow near the Old Lodge Camp area during the summer, and park managers wanted to segregate the young men and the Girl Scouts.⁷⁷

These crews built hiking trails and truck trails. They also engaged in firefighting and built a California Department of Forestry ranger station at Whitehorse Camp. Fire was a constant threat; major fires burned in the park in 1904 and 1948, and fires scorched adjacent areas in 1936.⁷⁸

⁷³ W.P. Marshall, *California Redwood Park Camp SP-3, Work Completed*, October 31, 1933, Emergency Conservation Work Reports, Department of Natural Resources Records, California State Archives; Kennedy, 37.

⁷⁴ California Division of State Parks, *California Redwood State Park Draft Master Plan*, 34-35, California Department of Parks and Recreation Files; Dale Hawkins, Memo, August 18, 1937, RG 79, Records of the National Park Service, NARA-San Bruno; *Monthly Narrative Report*, Old Lodge-SP-15, May 25 to June 25, 1938, ECW Reports, Department of Natural Resources Records, California State Archives.

⁷⁵ Clark Wing, *Report on ECW Projects at California Redwood Park*, February 6, 1935, ECW Reports, Department of Natural Resources Records, California State Archives; Clark Wing, *Report on ECW Projects at California Redwood Park*, April 15, 1935, ECW Reports, Department of Natural Resources Records, California State Archives.

⁷⁶ H.G. Cotton, *Narrative Report for June and July 1935*, July 31, 1935, RG 79, Records of the National Park Service, NARA-College Park.

⁷⁷ Clark Wing, *Report on Federal Cooperative Projects in State Parks*, November 22, 1935, ECW Reports, Department of Natural Resources Records, California State Archives. The presence of Girl Scouts also affected the racial makeup of the camp. African-American enrollees were sent to SP-15 in 1935, but camp managers had them transferred elsewhere, because they objected to their proximity to the Girl Scout Camps. W.P. Marshall, *Narrative Report for April and May 1935*, June 22, 1935, RG 79, Records of the National Park Service, NARA-College Park.

⁷⁸ Kennedy, 42.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 16

In 1935, Company 1913 completed a new campfire circle and outdoor theater to replace the previous theater, built in 1911.⁷⁹ The structure was one of the most popular in the park. State park engineer Daniel Hull sought to incorporate the structure into the natural landscape as much as possible. Workers used some of the log benches of the previous theater, and enlarged the seating so that it could accommodate 1,000 people. The theater was considered the “center of social life in the park.” Hotel visitors, campers, Girl Scouts, and Campfire Girls all enjoyed educational programs such as ranger talks, as well as plays and concerts, performed on the theater stage. Frequently, campers themselves performed the evening’s entertainment. A campfire was built in the fire circle between the seating and the stage. Albert Good considered the campfire circle at Big Basin to be one of the finest examples of the type. “Here is rhythm in the wilderness,” he wrote.⁸⁰

In 1936, Company 1913 completed a park administration building that remains one of the most iconic in the park.⁸¹ The log and roughhewn wood building, with a masonry stone foundation, contains many of the hallmarks of Park Rustic style. Peeled redwood log trusses and a peeled redwood roof support a cedar shingle roof. Massive redwood logs provide support for the building. The building included an impressive stone fireplace. Stone steps and a stone patio lead into the building. The headquarters contained offices and a recreation hall.

Big Basin presented unique challenges to planners. The state had constructed significant visitor facilities in the park prior to the 1930s, and CCC planners expressed frustration at the lack of planning and design that were evident in the built environment. The park was so popular during the summer that the CCC had to curtail its activities in the heavily visited areas of the park, and instead, crews concentrated on road and trail work during this season. This made construction projects in Governor’s Camp more difficult, since crews had to contend with winter weather. Heavy rains often washed out access roads, and camp managers blamed wet weather on outbreaks of colds and flu that swept through the camp.⁸²

Not all of the changes were initially popular. Big Basin visitors, accustomed to camping in particular redwood groves, expressed resentment when the CCC converted these areas to general day use in order to reduce impacts on the natural environment. Many longtime visitors responded angrily to the replacement of the outdoor theater, the realignment of the highway through Governor’s Camp, and the relocation of the Warden’s Office. However, complaints gradually diminished as visitors became accustomed to the changes.⁸³ Camp Superintendent W.P. Marshall felt relief with the arrival of winter, despite the fact that heavy rains often impeded construction, since that season meant there were no “self-appointed critics to impede our progress or to get the state park officials worried over the outcome of the work.” He expressed disbelief at the public reaction to the CCC work. “It is peculiar,” Marshall reported, “to note the amount of public criticism during construction of new features, but the enthusiastic reception after some have been completed.”⁸⁴

⁷⁹ James Snook to George Nodenholt, *February 1936 Activity Report*, March 14, 1936, Department of Natural Resources Records, Director’s Records relating to the Division of Parks, Monthly Activity Reports, California State Archives.

⁸⁰ *The California Conservationist*, “Outdoor Theater is Completed in Big Basin Park,” March 1936, 19; Big Basin Redwoods State Park Centennial Oral History Project, Volumes III and IV.

⁸¹ Clark Wing, *Report of Federal Cooperative Projects in California State Parks*, March 1, 1936, ECW Reports, Department of Natural Resources Records, California State Archives.

⁸² National Park Service, *Narrative Report for Camp SP-15*, April and May 1935, RG 79, Records of the National Park Service, NARA- College Park; National Park Service, *Narrative Report for Camp SP-15*, October and November 1935, NARA- College Park.

⁸³ H.G. Cotton, *Narrative Report for June and July 1935*, RG 79, Records of the National Park Service, NARA-College Park.

⁸⁴ W.P. Marshall, *Narrative Report for December 1935 and January 1936*, RG 79, Records of the National Park Service, NARA-College Park.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California
County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 17

The park remained popular even during the Depression. During the July 4th holiday in 1936, 6,000 people crammed into the park, which could only accommodate 1,500 campers. Visitors slept in the cars or on any available patch of ground.⁸⁵ Camp superintendent W.P. Marshall credited the high visitations to the work of the CCC. In his opinion, the crews had “greatly beautified” the parks and add to the pleasure and comfort of park visitors.⁸⁶

Between 1933 and 1936, in addition to the above, CCC crews built thirty-eight miles of road and truck trails, including five bridges and 1,000 feet of culverts, and eighteen miles of foot trails, including ten footbridges. They enlarged four employee homes and built two garages and three shower houses for campers. Crews constructed twelve sewage disposal beds with 3,300 feet of sewer line, 79,500 feet of water lines, and eighteen miles of telephone lines. Workers built eighty-two picnic tables and developed twenty acres of campgrounds with 150 individual sites. They began a small nursery for the propagation of ground covers, which were planted in cuts and fills. They razed three “unsightly and obsolete” park buildings. Crews constructed twenty-four miles of firebreak, performed nineteen miles of roadside clearing, and cleared underbrush from sixty-eight acres of park land. In March 1936, the construction of new concrete and earthen reservoirs with a capacity of 545,000 gallons was underway.⁸⁷

By this time, Park Rustic style was firmly established within the NPS, and the buildings and structures constructed in the park exhibited this style. Buildings were commonly constructed with lower half walls of rubble masonry, hand hewn cedar shingles, massive peeled log posts, and gable roofs. The CCC used local materials whenever possible, and in Big Basin, they used redwood timber. Log benches and low wooden picnic tables were built in campgrounds and picnic areas. Buildings were ornamented with stone fireplaces and chimneys and wooden pergolas. Rustic landscape features such as split rail fences and stone steps were commonly constructed.

The CCC also built facilities for the organized girls’ camps. The CCC dammed Union Creek to create a swimming hole for the Sky Meadow Girl Scout Camp in 1934; the eighteen-foot long redwood timber dam created a pool six feet deep.⁸⁸ By 1938, all of the girls’ camps included tables and benches, open air kitchens with running water, shower rooms, and swimming pools. One additional camp—the Shadowbrook Municipal Girls WPA Camp—was established during this decade just off of Highway 9 near the Boulder Creek entrance.⁸⁹ One particularly notable feature was the open air fireplace and campfire circle built for the YWCA camp in 1935; the fireplace is still extant. A wood and log shelter in the Sky Meadow Girl Scout Camp may have been built by the CCC at the end of their tenure at Big Basin. The shelter remains in the meadow.

Between 1937 and 1938 Big Basin Redwoods along with Pfeiffer Big Sur experienced the greatest structural improvements of any park in the system.⁹⁰ During this time, the organization sought to construct buildings that were, as NPS architect Daniel Hull explained, more “modern and suitable” than older park buildings. In 1938,

⁸⁵ James Snook to George Nodenholt, *Monthly Report*, July 14, 1936, Department of Natural Resources Records, Director’s Records relating to the Division of Parks, Administrative Files, Monthly Activity Reports 1935-38, California State Archives.

⁸⁶ W.P. Marshall, *Narrative Report for October and November 1935*, RG 79, Records of the National Park Service, NARA-College Park.

⁸⁷ National Park Service, *Narrative Report of CCC Accomplishment, ECW Camp SP-15, Company 1913*, March 1, 1936, RG 79, Records of the National Park Service, NARA-College Park.

⁸⁸ National Park Service, *Narrative Report, Old Lodge Camp SP-15*, March 31, 1934, RG 79, Records of the National Park Service, NARA-College Park.

⁸⁹ California Division of State Parks, *California Redwoods State Park Draft Master Plan*, 28-30.

⁹⁰ A.E. Henning to George Nodenholt, Feb 3, 1938, RG 79, Records of the National Park Service, NARA-College Park.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 18

workers replaced an older studio and post office with the Nature Museum and Store building, also known as the Nature Lodge. Designed by Hull, the Nature Lodge proved to be one of the most prominent CCC buildings in the park. The facility included a gift shop, studio, post office, grocery, and cafeteria. The building, which included rough cut redwood timbers, a stone chimney and a wood shingled roof, embodied Park Rustic architecture. A rustic pergola, which featured prominently on the façade of the old store, was replicated on the new Nature Lodge.⁹¹ That year, CCC crews also built a ranger residence (Residence 3), and a shop and storage building near the administration building.⁹² In addition, they constructed a new sewer system, and a new 80,000 gallon water tank, in 1937-1938.⁹³

Beginning in 1936, NPS staff working with the CCC emphasized the development of park master plans. Master plans had been used successfully in National Parks to plan long term development, and NPS architects and engineers realized that state parks, too, could benefit from long term planning. Prior to the development of master plans, NPS inspectors, CCC camp leaders, and state parks staff prepared annual work plans to guide work for the upcoming year. By 1936 the NPS realized that the CCC would eventually be discontinued. Master plans represented a way to ensure that good planning practices were followed as the state parks lost the expertise of NPS staff. Big Basin Redwoods was one of the first California state parks to receive a master plan. Plans were drawn up for at least eighteen California state parks.

The master plan for Big Basin, created in late 1937 or early 1938, called for decentralizing visitor facilities, replacing or removing older buildings and structures, and constructing new roads and trails. Planners considered Governor's Camp to be the most magnificent part of the park, and one that should be restored to its natural state. They were concerned about auto and human congestion in Governor's Camp, as well as the human impact on the redwood trees.⁹⁴ Planners wanted to remove Big Basin Inn, the associated cabins, various employee housing buildings, the service station, and the dance floor. They sought new structures, such as a stable, a new maintenance yard, and a barbeque pit area to be located outside of Governor's Camp. Roads were of particular concern. Many roads were poorly designed and in poor shape. Planners called for widening, grading, realignment, beautification, and the construction of new culverts.⁹⁵ Trails, too, were a priority. The park had thirty-four miles of trails by 1937. They proved inadequate for the number of visitors, and many were suffering from erosion.⁹⁶ New parcels of land including oceanfront had been added to the park, and these areas were not served by trails.⁹⁷

However, few of the recommendations were put in place. As Congress cut back the CCC program nationwide, crews at Big Basin engaged in fewer construction projects. In the winter of 1939-1940, workers modernized twenty-five of the rental cabins by adding bathrooms. CCC crews also worked on trail maintenance, constructing tables and stoves for picnic areas and campgrounds, vegetation restoration, and fire suppression.⁹⁸ In January

⁹¹ Susan Doniger, *Big Basin Store at Big Basin Redwoods State Park*, July 2004, 19, California Department of Parks and Recreation Files.

⁹² National Park Service, *Monthly Narrative Report, Old Lodge-SP-15*, May 25 to June 25, 1938, RG 79, Records of the National Park Service, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Pacific Region-San Bruno.

⁹³ California Division of State Parks, *California Redwoods State Park Draft Master Plan*, 34-35; Dale Hawkins, Memo, August 18-19, 1937; *Monthly Narrative Report, Old Lodge-SP-15*, May 25 to June 25, 1938.

⁹⁴ California Division of State Parks, *California Redwoods State Park Master Plan*, ca.1937, California Department of Parks and Recreation Archives.

⁹⁵ California Division of State Parks, *California Redwoods State Park Master Plan*, 7-9.

⁹⁶ California Division of State Parks, *California Redwoods State Park Master Plan*, 9-11.

⁹⁷ Kennedy, 43.

⁹⁸ Darwin Tate to Richard Sachse, December 20 to January 21, Department of Natural Resources Records, Director's Records relating to the Division of Parks, Administrative Files, Monthly Activity Reports, California State Archives.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 19

1940, crews finished the auto bridge across Opal Creek, and removed the Whitehouse CCC camp. The lumber was salvaged for use in the park.⁹⁹ In 1940, the CCC constructed a concrete-lined swimming pool in a meadow near the beginning of the Redwood Loop. The pool measured 175 feet long and 98 feet wide, and was nine feet deep at deepest. Workers imported sand to form a beach, and built log benches near the pool's edge.¹⁰⁰ In early 1941, the Big Basin CCC camp was nearly empty, as enlistees were increasingly involved in defense work. That year, the Old Lodge camp closed. It was removed at an unknown date. Park staff immediately missed the road and power line maintenance that the CCC had performed.¹⁰¹ The CCC improvements served throngs of visitors at Big Basin. In the summer of 1941, park staff reported record crowds every week.¹⁰²

Many of the buildings built by the CCC, or by the state prior to the 1930s, were removed in subsequent decades. The comfort station next to the administration building that the CCC replaced in 1937 was replaced in 1940. That building was reconstructed in the 1960s, with the exception of a single retaining wall. The cabins were removed in 1961. Some facilities remain. Residence 3, the administration building, a three car garage, the North Escape Road, the Nature Lodge, a comfort station near the administration building, the outdoor theater and campfire center, campgrounds, and a blacksmith shop remain as examples of CCC work in Big Basin. In California state parks systemwide, about 900 of the original 1500 CCC buildings, structures, and landscape features remain and are still in use.

Post World War II Development in Big Basin Redwoods State Park, 1941-1955

Visitation to California's state parks boomed after World War II. The state's population grew tremendously, by more than 3.5 million people between 1940 and 1950.¹⁰³ Rationing and travel restrictions ended in 1945, and Californians were eager to explore their natural surroundings. Work weeks shortened after the war, and Californians increasingly spent their leisure time pursuing outdoor activities. As a result, visitors flooded California's state parks. Campgrounds overflowed, parking lots filled, and rangers worked overtime. The road through Mount Tamalpais State Park averaged 120 cars per weekend during World War II. The weekend after gasoline rationing ended, 220 cars per hour jammed the road. Visitation to Humboldt Redwoods State Park increased tenfold.¹⁰⁴

State legislators worked to acquire new parkland and to provide more visitor amenities in existing parks during and just after World War II. In 1943, state legislators directed 70 percent of all oil royalty revenues to state parks and beaches. The legislature passed a park acquisition bill in 1945, and the bill placed particular emphasis on acquiring and developing parks in areas of the state with few state parks, such as the interior deserts and mountains. Other bills passed that same year provided money for the purchase of beaches, the development of a statewide system of hiking and riding trails, and the maintenance of park facilities. Together, these bills provided

⁹⁹ Darwin Tate, *Report of Activities for the Month of January 1941*, Department of Natural Resources Records, Director's Records relating to the Division of Parks, Administrative Files, Monthly Activity Reports, California State Archives.

¹⁰⁰ Darwin Tate to Richard Sachse, *Monthly Report*, September 11, 1940, Department of Natural Resources Records, Director's Records relating to the Division of Parks, Administrative Files, Monthly Activity Reports, California State Archives.

¹⁰¹ Kennedy, 44.

¹⁰² Darwin Tate, *Report of Activities for the Month of July 1941*, August 22, 1941. Department of Natural Resources Records, Director's Records relating to the Division of Parks, Administrative Files, Monthly Activity Reports, California State Archives.

¹⁰³ U.S. Census Bureau, <http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/resapport/states/california.pdf>.

¹⁰⁴ Engbeck, *State Parks of California*, 78.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 20

for the largest expansion and development program in California state parks' history.¹⁰⁵ Between 1945 and 1952, the state added twenty-four parks and beaches to the system, and completed about \$10 million worth of development projects. The money appropriated from these new bills proved particularly important after 1947. In that year, the federal government impounded state oil royalty revenues, cutting off an important source of funding for parks.¹⁰⁶

Far fewer buildings and structures were constructed during the postwar period than had been built during the 1930s. Some new facilities were erected. Campgrounds were the most commonly constructed resource in the late 1940s. The most common building type constructed during this time was the comfort station. Park administrators also prioritized new staff housing. Little housing for employees was built during the CCC era, and with the tremendous growth of the park system between 1928 and 1950, there was a dire need for more employee residences. Park system architects planned fifty-four residences and garages in 1946. The next year, administrators implemented an official program, the State Park Residence Program of 1947-1948, to fulfill the need. The homes were completed in January of 1948.¹⁰⁷ A number of other structures, such as stone Diablo stoves (an outdoor cooking hearth), group campgrounds, picnic areas, and picnic shelters, were constructed throughout state parks. A few of these incorporated elements of Park Rustic architecture; the Diablo stoves were similar to those built by the CCC. Picnic shelters often were constructed with massive peeled logs.¹⁰⁸

Most new buildings represented architectural styles that could be built quickly and at a low cost. The CCC had provided legions of men who could perform detailed craftsmanship on state park buildings. During and after World War II, the labor pool was significantly smaller and funds were less available. Furthermore, the flood of visitors after the war necessitated large amounts of work done quickly. As a result, department planners began producing standardized plans for employee residences, comfort stations, and other building. Buildings designed from standardized plans could meet the needs of park staff and visitors, while requiring a minimum of money and labor. In this way, the parks department was able to continue development even with the loss of oil royalties.¹⁰⁹

The parks department sought the experience of men who had supervised CCC construction, while also looking to those who understood the construction of inexpensive buildings. Daniel Hull, who had been the NPS state park inspector for California during the 1930s, now served as chief engineer for California State Parks, and he oversaw the production of the standardized plans. The California State Parks engineering department grew from two to thirty-one employees between 1945 and 1947, in order to fulfill the need for new construction in parks. Hull retired in 1947, and former Army Corps engineer Edwin Kelton oversaw many of the final plans. Kelton had worked on prefabricated, mass produced buildings and standard plans while in the Army Corps of Engineers. The U.S. military had been an innovator in designing and building based on standardized plans. The Office of State Architecture (OSA) refined plans produced by the parks department, and developed additional plans.¹¹⁰

The result was simple, unornamented buildings that were finished to complement the natural setting. These buildings were characterized by horizontal shapes, their small scale, a lack of ornamentation, and simple lines. Similar types of buildings had similar floor plans, and different finishes or materials depending on geographic location—beach, valley, desert, or mountain. Forest green and dark brown were most commonly used in forest

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 78.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 79-82.

¹⁰⁷ Roland, *Park Rustic Buildings and Structures in the California State Park System*, 18; Allen, 24.

¹⁰⁸ Roland, *Park Rustic Buildings and Structures in the California State Park System*, 22.

¹⁰⁹ Allen, 21-24; California Division of Beaches and Parks, *News and Views*, February 1948, Department of Natural Resources Records, Records of the Division of Parks, Construction Files, California State Archives.

¹¹⁰ Allen, 15-16; 20-22.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 21

settings, while concrete, stucco, and tile were used in desert and beach areas. A building set at the beach, for example, would have stucco walls and a tile roof. The same building in a mountain setting would instead have wood siding and a snow-bearing shingle roof.¹¹¹

The postwar buildings contrasted with the CCC Park Rustic style. Materials were inexpensive and mass produced, rather than hand hewn. For the first time, state parks architects designed buildings with eight foot ceilings, sheet rock, and composition roofs. Windows were simple and unornamented, and fixtures were inexpensive. Inexpensive wood fences often screened buildings. Architects sometimes tried to include elements of Park Rustic style. Gabled roofs and covered porches were sometimes found on employee housing. Architects still sought to site buildings sensitively, and residential and maintenance facilities were typically set out of public view. Park architects most commonly used board and batten or clapboard siding and wood shingle roofs, though the wood was not commonly hand hewn or locally sourced.¹¹²

The buildings were utilitarian, and some felt that they were aesthetically lacking. In 1950, engineers and superintendents agreed that staff housing in particular appeared monotonous, especially when grouped together, and did not blend into the natural surroundings well. The group agreed that more varied exteriors and a wider use of colors could remedy the problem. Others criticized the buildings as “flimsy looking.”¹¹³

By 1953, some state parks staff sought to reduce the human impact on the park’s natural resources by avoiding construction altogether. Former NPS director Newton Drury became state parks director that year, and he practiced restraint in regard to new development. Drury emphasized the preservation of the natural landscape rather than development. The emphasis shifted from new construction to the removal of facilities. However, oil royalties were restored in 1954, and the state embarked on a new era of planning and development in 1956, when an \$83 million five year master plan was approved. A new era for state park architecture began in 1955, when architect Robert Uhte began designing modern park buildings. Uhte soon issued a new set of standardized plans to replace earlier plans.¹¹⁴

Big Basin Redwoods State Park, 1941-1955

Just as visitation soared at other California state parks, Big Basin Redwoods State Park experienced a sharp increase in visitors after World War II. Frederick Law Olmsted reported in 1950 that Big Basin “has long suffered from an overload of visitors,” since there were only two state parks, and few other recreation areas, in the Bay Area.¹¹⁵ During a single month in 1946, 145,000 tourists visited the park, compared to 165,000 for all of 1945. In 1946, 427,000 people visited Big Basin, more than any other state park. That number was surpassed the next year in only nine months. Between January and September of 1947, 575,000 visitors traveled to the park. These tourists overwhelmed park facilities, and the State Park Commission enacted a two week limit on campground stays.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Allen, 15-22.

¹¹² Roland, *Park Rustic Buildings and Structures in the California State Park System*, 18-20; Allen, 22.

¹¹³ William Mueser, Oral History Interview with Robert Uhte, October 8, 1998, 8, California Department of Parks and Recreation Files; Allen, 24.

¹¹⁴ Roland, *Park Rustic Buildings and Structures in the California State Park System*, 23. Buildings remained inexpensive to construct and horizontal in form, but Uhte increasingly relied on modern materials such as concrete blocks, metal, and narrow brick.

¹¹⁵ Frederick Law Olmsted, *Report of Frederick Law Olmsted to the California State Park Commission*, (Sacramento: Superintendent of State Publishing, 1951), 22.

¹¹⁶ California State Parks, *Guide to Big Basin* (map), 1948, San Francisco Public Library, Big Basin Clipping File; Kennedy,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 22

At Big Basin Redwoods, little new development occurred during this time. The 1945 legislation that represented such a significant expansion of the park system prioritized acquisitions and development in undeveloped parks, and Big Basin already had a significant amount of infrastructure and visitor amenities.¹¹⁷ Instead, many of the facilities at Big Basin were converted or removed during this time. In 1948, the concessionaire renovated the Nature Lodge by removing the cafeteria and converting the space into a museum. The space became the first permanent museum in the California state park system. The dance floor, which by 1950 drew local residents for an evening's entertainment, rather than serving campers, was taken out in 1951. The swimming pool was first closed and then removed in 1951 due to hysteria about polio. Concerned about the impact of heavy visitor use on the redwoods in the headquarters area, park administrators removed the rental cabins that had also fallen into disrepair and so were no longer popular, in 1961. The two week camping limit meant that park visitors did not need a post office or a barber shop, so these were closed. Big Basin Inn, which had served as the office and lobby for cabin guests, was shuttered in 1961. It was used as an office for the California State Forester from 1971 to 1986. In 1983, the Warden's Tree fell on the building during a windstorm, crushing the oldest part of the Inn.¹¹⁸

Some new buildings were constructed. Housing and comfort stations were the most prevalent new buildings built systemwide after the war, and at Big Basin Redwoods, new staff housing and comfort stations were erected. Comfort stations were built at the amphitheater in Governor's Camp, in the middle picnic area, in Blooms Creek Campground, and at Opal Creek day use area. Two comfort stations were built at Gazos Creek Road Picnic Area. Three of these had been erected by the CCC but never finished, and state parks workers updated both the interior and exterior appearance when they completed the buildings. Smaller toilet buildings were constructed around the park as well.

The most significant development project of the time in the park was the Lower Sky Meadow residential area. Construction began in October of 1941, and though bad winter weather hindered work, four residences were completed in the summer of 1942. The Sky Meadow area was considered the only sunny location in the park, and it also represented a safer location for housing than Governor's Camp. Staff had rarely been able to live in the park in the winter, since existing housing in the densely forested Governor's Camp was in constant danger from falling trees during winter storms.¹¹⁹

The houses were constructed in the Minimal Traditional architectural style. Minimal Traditional style was commonly found in domestic architecture in the United States from about 1930 to 1950. These homes emerged as a response to Great Depression era privations. They are simplified, less expensive versions of the period revival architectural styles of the 1910s and 1920s, with lower pitched roofs and without period detailing. The style incorporated basic Colonial and Tudor forms, while also displaying the modern and International style preference for little ornamentation. The style remained popular after World War II, since resources were still limited and inexpensive construction methods and materials remained popular. These one or one-and-a-half story homes were usually small cottages, particularly after World War II, with practical floor plans. They were known for being durable and functional. Built-ins and quality cabinetry were typical in these homes. Forward facing gables and small covered porches often covering only the front door were common, and garages were usually detached. These homes were affordable, due to the fact that builders could use mass produced and prefabricated materials.

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¹¹⁷ Engbeck, *State Parks of California*, 78-9.

¹¹⁸ Kennedy, 45-48.

¹¹⁹ Darwin Tate, *Report of the Activities of the Division of Parks and Beaches for October 1941*, November 17, 1941, Department of Natural Resources Records, Records of the Division of Parks, Administrative Files, Monthly Activity Reports, California State Archives.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
Santa Cruz County, California
County and State
Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number E Page 23

The style was succeeded in popularity by the ranch style in the 1950s.

Three minimal traditional residences and two detached garages were added to the residential area in 1947. One additional home, identical to these three single family homes, was built in the maintenance yard. In 1953-54, two additional homes and two duplexes were constructed in the same architectural style at Upper Sky Meadow.¹²⁰ Four of the Lower Sky Meadow homes, built in 1941-1942, were raised and placed on new foundations in 1949. New drainage systems were installed around the outside of the foundations at this time.¹²¹

Various other buildings and structures were constructed during this time. Maintenance buildings, such as an auto shop, storage, carpenter shop, and office, were also built at Big Basin between 1948 and 1950. In addition, three combination buildings were constructed. A bridge over Bloom's Creek was erected in 1949. Four miles of road into K Campground were constructed. One campground, Sempervirens, may have been constructed in the late 1940s. All campsites at this time had a picnic table that sat eight, a wood stove for cooking, running water, and a nearby comfort station. Seventy-one new stoves were added in the picnic area in 1949-1950 as well. A lumber and storage shed was built in the service area.¹²²

The park continued to close or remove facilities into the 1960s and 1970s. Campgrounds D, L, M, and N closed in 1967. Camp E was closed and the site was reforested. The park removed the gas station and Opal Creek Dam in 1975. The paved parking lot and road between the theater and lodge in the headquarters area was removed, and trees were planted in the area, in 1976. The park continued to grow in size throughout the late twentieth century, and few new facilities were built.¹²³

¹²⁰ Joseph Knowland, *California State Parks Progress Report, 1946-1948*, 19; Roland, *Park Rustic Buildings and Structures in the California State Park System*, 69.

¹²¹ J.R. Knowland, *Annual Report of the California State Park Commission, 1948-1949* (Sacramento: Superintendent of State Printing), 52.

¹²² California State Parks, *Guide to Big Basin* (map); California Department of Parks and Recreation, Big Basin General Plan, Existing Facilities, August 2, 2002, 4, California Department of Parks and Recreation Files.

¹²³ Kennedy, 50.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park Name of multiple listing (if applicable)
--

Section number F Page 24

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Property Type: Employee Residences

Sub-type: Employee residences, 1902-1933

Description

Employee housing was built to provide staff with homes within the state park. This was particularly important during this early period at Big Basin Redwoods, when poor roads made travel difficult and time consuming. Residences built between 1902 and 1933 were generally rustic style, single-story, two- to three-room wood framed homes. Wood floors, divided light windows, shake roofs, and vertical board and batten siding were common. Homes were built for park wardens and for maintenance staff. Maintenance staff homes were known as "workman's cottages," and they were located in Governor's Camp and at park entrances. At least four workman's cottages were built during this time. Two employee dormitories, one for men and one for women, were also built in Governor's Camp in 1929 for staff working at Big Basin Inn. Residence 1, a two bedroom residence that originally served as the gate house, was constructed in 1930 near the park's south entrance. The state also built a two-room cabin, meant to resemble the studio, for the nature study instructor circa 1928. The building is now called the Krevis Cabin. Only Residence 1 and Krevis Cabin are extant.

Significance

Employee residences may be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance for their association with development at Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Big Basin Redwoods was the only state park in California between 1902 and 1921, and it was the only state park with substantial visitor facilities until the 1920s. Roads were poor in the early twentieth century, and key personnel needed to live within Big Basin Redwoods in order to effectively manage the park. Homes were built for wardens, for workmen, and for the park photographer during this time. Extant employee residences from this time represent the only remaining housing built in any California state park in the early twentieth century.

Registration Requirements

Under Criterion A, employee residences must demonstrate association with the early period of development at Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Properties must have been constructed within the park between 1902 and 1933. Properties must retain integrity to the historic period. This should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials. To be eligible at the state level, properties must retain a high level of integrity.

Extant Employee Residences, 1902-1933

Krevis Cabin (circa 1928)

Residence 1 (1930)

Sub-type: Employee Residences 1933-1941

Description

Employee residences constructed between 1933 and 1941 in Big Basin Redwoods State Park were built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). In California state parks, CCC-built residences were usually single-story, single family homes. They often contained two bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen and one bathroom. The homes had a low, horizontal form, stone chimneys, gable and cross gable roofs, deep overhangs, and exposed rafters and beams. Front porches, back service areas, and fireplaces were common. Some homes featured detached garages,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

----- Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California ----- County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park ----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number F Page 25

sited nearby, although many of these were built after the CCC period. On the interior, many had wood floors, knotty pine walls, divided light wood frame windows, masonry fireplaces, tongue and groove wainscoting, decoratively trimmed kitchen cabinets, and hand wrought fixtures and hardware. The buildings exhibited Park Rustic style architecture, with rough finished and local materials, such as logs, stone, shakes, and a high level of craftsmanship. The CCC built at least one residence in Big Basin Redwoods. Residence 3, sited along the North Escape Road in the northern part of Governors Camp, was constructed by the CCC in 1939 and remains today. A garage for the residence was built in 1944.

Significance

Employee residences at Big Basin Redwoods State Park constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps may be eligible for listing at the local or state level of significance in the National Register under Criterion A for their association with CCC development in California state parks. The CCC was one of the largest public works program in U.S. history, and one that provided Big Basin Redwoods and other California state parks with their first comprehensive construction program. Housing was essential to the operations of state parks since parks were often in remote areas where housing was unavailable. Residences were constructed by the CCC in all California state parks, although few housing units were typically built in each park.

These buildings may also be significant under Criterion C for their representation of Park Rustic architecture. The form, materials, design, craftsmanship, and siting of CCC employee housing in Big Basin Redwoods embodies Park Rustic style as it was carried out in California state parks.

Registration Requirements

Under Criterion A, employee residences must have been constructed by the CCC in Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Properties must demonstrate the characteristics of CCC planning and style, such as use of native materials, evidence of hand craftsmanship, sensitive siting, and subordination to the natural environment. Properties may be eligible at the local level of significance for their association with the CCC as the program was carried out in California state parks. Properties may be eligible at the state level of significance if they represent an outstanding example of CCC planning and design. Properties must retain integrity to the historic period, 1933 to 1941. This should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials.

Under Criterion C, properties must demonstrate the Park Rustic style of architecture. This includes the use of local and native materials that are treated in a rustic or roughhewn manner. Buildings should appear hand crafted and should appear to harmonize with their natural environment. They should demonstrate a horizontal form. Major design characteristics of the building should remain the dominant design features. Properties may be eligible at the local level of significance as examples of Park Rustic style as it was interpreted and implemented in the park. Properties may be eligible at the state level of significance if they demonstrate a high degree of artistry and craftsmanship, or represent facilities within the property type that are unique or unusual in their scale. This includes exemplifying the elements of Park Rustic style, use of native materials, hand finishing of these materials, architectural embellishment, and handcrafted fixtures. The property should retain a high degree of integrity. This should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

----- Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California ----- County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park ----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number F Page 26

Sub-type: Employee residences 1941-1955

Description

Employee residences built at Big Basin Redwoods between 1941 and 1955 were based on standardized plans produced by state architects. All of the homes built in this period, except for one, are set in Upper or Lower Sky Meadow. The houses are clustered together away from public facilities. Four of the homes in Lower Sky Meadow, Residences 7, 8, 9 and 10, are set along the south side of Sky Meadow Lane, which runs east-west off of Sky Meadow Road. These four homes were built in 1942 and are identical in plan. Residences 14, 15, and 16 were built in 1947 and are identical in plan to each other. These are located on the north side of the lane, and just east of Residences 7 through 10. Residence 17 is identical to Residences 14, 15 and 16, and is set in the maintenance yard. Upper Sky Meadow, which is situated about a mile by road from Lower Sky Meadow, consists of Residences 18 and 19 that are single family homes, and two duplexes: Residences 20 and 21, and Residences 22 and 23. All of these homes are located along Lodge Road. Residences 18 and 19 represent the state’s “Standard Employee’s Residence, Mountain Type,” published in 1954, although the homes were built a year earlier. The duplexes represent “Duplexes—Mountain Type and Valley Type.”

These homes were built in the minimal traditional architectural style. The homes are single story, rectangular, and characterized by their small scale, simple lines, and lack of ornamentation. They are wood framed, with board and batten or beveled wood siding. Concrete foundation walls, with a wood floor system over a crawl space, support the homes. Exterior paint colors include green, beige, and tan. Roofs are medium pitched and side gabled. Wood framed windows and wood doors are common. The homes have front porches, with porch roofs supported by 4’x4’ or 6’x6’ posts. They have concrete walkways that lead to a front door, and galvanized steel stovepipes on the roof. Wide windows and glass paned doors may be found on the homes built in 1942. The homes typically have yards enclosed by wood fences. These residences are all extant.

Detached garages are common. There are three garages associated with Lower Sky Meadow housing. A four car garage, shared by Residences 14, 15 and 16, is located fifteen feet west of Residence 15. Another four car garage, for Residences 8, 9 and 10, is set behind Residence 10 on an alley that runs south of the four homes. The garage for Residence 7 is set behind the home and across the alley. There are two two-car garages in Upper Sky Meadow. These are associated with Residences 18 and 19. Garages can be two- or four-car, with side sliding doors or overhead doors. Garages are wood frame, with wood door and wood framed windows, and wood siding. Exterior paint colors include beige and green. Medium pitched side or front gabled roofs are common. The duplexes share carports that were built after the historic period. The garages are extant.

Sky Meadow Lane was constructed in 1949. It is a paved roadway that provides access to Lower Sky Meadow. It is a spur off of Sky Meadow Road, a road that connects Upper and Lower Sky Meadows and the maintenance area to the headquarters area. The road is 891’ long and 26’ wide. This road is extant.

Significance

Residences at Big Basin Redwoods constructed between 1941 and 1955 may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance for their association with development in Big Basin Redwoods State Park. At Big Basin Redwoods, for the first time, a complex of employee residences was developed in order to house park staff. Housing built at Big Basin Redwoods during and after World War II filled a dire need. Little housing for employees was built during the CCC era at Big Basin Redwoods and other California state parks. Visitation grew tremendously during the 1940s and 1950s, necessitating higher levels of staffing, and the state sought to provide its employees with modern residences within each park. Throughout the California state park system, administrators prioritized the construction of new staff residences, and these became

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park Name of multiple listing (if applicable)
--

Section number F Page 27

one of the most commonly built property types after World War II. The new residences provided staff with modern housing comparable to homes in an American suburb. For the first time, homes were built from standardized plans, and these reflected the modern designs and layouts of postwar America. The designs also reflected the priorities of the state park system, which needed buildings that could be constructed inexpensively and quickly. The residential area is two distinct districts, Upper and Lower Sky Meadows.

The homes also may be eligible at the local or state level of significance under Criterion C for their representation of minimal traditional architecture in California state parks. The homes at Lower Sky Meadow represent the largest and best preserved example of a minimal traditional style housing development in California State Parks. The development was also the first housing complex built in a California state park after the CCC program ended. This style represented the socio-economic changes during the Depression and during and after World War II. The simple architecture and lack of ornamentation was a product of the quicker, cheaper building methods developed during Depression era shortages and perfected in the 1940s and 1950 to meet the needs of a growing postwar America. These same requirements also proved suitable for a growing state park system that needed to provide modern, inexpensive housing for employees.

Registration Requirements

To be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A at the local level of significance, employee residences must be associated with development at Big Basin Redwoods State Park between 1941 and 1955. They must retain integrity to the historic period. This should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials. To be eligible at the state level of significance, residences must represent a unique example within the state park system, combined with a high level of integrity.

Extant Employee Residences and Associated Buildings and Structures, 1941-1955

Residence 7 (1942)
 Residence 8 (1942)
 Residence 9 (1942)
 Residence 10 (1942)
 Residence 14 (1947)
 Residence 15 (1947)
 Residence 16 (1947)
 Residence 17 (1947)
 Residence 18 (1953)
 Residence 19 (1953)
 Residence 20 & 21, Duplex (1953)
 Residence 22 & 23, Duplex (1953)
 Garage for Residence 1 (1944)
 Garage for Residence 3 (1944)
 Garage for Residence 7 (1942)
 Garage for Residences 8, 9 & 10 (1942)
 Garage for Residences 14, 15 & 16 (1947)
 Garage for Residence 17 (1947)
 Garage for Residence 18 (1953)
 Garage for Residence 19 (1953)
 Sky Meadow Lane (1949)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

----- Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California ----- County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park ----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number F Page 28

Property Type: Utility Buildings and Infrastructure

Sub-type: Utility Buildings and Infrastructure, 1933-1941

Description

In California state parks, utility buildings and infrastructure constructed by the CCC included offices, garages, auto and equipment repair shops, dams, pump and power houses, water tanks, carpenter shops, barns, and storage sheds. These were generally located in a service area with good access for large vehicles, and away from public view. Utility buildings and infrastructure built by the CCC in California state parks were often utilitarian, one-story, with gable and or shed roofs. They were often built with native materials, though rarely as exquisitely crafted as other, public CCC buildings. Wood, stone, and logs were commonly used. Wood frame windows, wooden doors, and forged hardware were common. Water tanks were often semi-subterranean and constructed of concrete.

Utility buildings and infrastructure constructed in Big Basin Redwoods State Park include water tanks, a blacksmith shop, and a garage. The CCC blacksmith shop, a one-story, wood framed building located just north of Lodge Road, was built in 1933. A three-car garage of peeled log, wood, and rock construction was built in 1937. The garage is set just northeast of the administration building. The Panoramic Water Tank, a semi-subterranean structure, was built in 1937 and is located forty meters west of Highway 236, near Slippery Rock. These buildings and structures are extant.

Significance

Utility buildings and infrastructure at Big Basin Redwoods constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance for their association with CCC development in California state parks. The CCC was one of the largest public works program in U.S. history, and one that provided Big Basin Redwoods and other California state parks with their first comprehensive construction program. Utility buildings and infrastructure were essential to the maintenance and operations of state parks. Utility buildings and infrastructure were constructed by the CCC in all California state parks, and were one of the most common property types constructed during this time.

These buildings may also be significant under Criterion C for their representation of Park Rustic architecture. The form, materials, design, craftsmanship, and siting of CCC buildings and structures in Big Basin Redwoods embodies Park Rustic style as it was carried out in California state parks.

Registration Requirements

Under Criterion A, utility buildings and infrastructure must have been built by the CCC in Big Basin Redwoods between 1933 and 1941. They must also demonstrate the characteristics of Park Rustic planning and style, such as use of native materials, evidence of hand craftsmanship, sensitive siting, and subordination to the natural environment. Utility buildings and infrastructure may be eligible at the local level of significance for their association with the CCC as the program was carried out in state parks. Properties may be eligible at the state level of significance under Criterion A if they represent an outstanding example of CCC-era planning and design, or if they represent a rare subtype once prevalent in parks. Properties must retain integrity to the historic period, 1933 to 1941.

Under Criterion C, properties must demonstrate the Park Rustic style. This includes the use of local and native materials that are treated in a rustic or roughhewn manner. Buildings should appear hand crafted. Major design characteristics of the building should remain the dominant design features. Properties may be eligible at the local

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

----- Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California ----- County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park ----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number F Page 29

level of significance as examples of Park Rustic style as it was interpreted and implemented in the park. They must retain integrity, and this should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials. Properties may be eligible at the state level of significance if they demonstrate a high degree of artistry and craftsmanship. Buildings nominated at the state level should represent facilities within the property type that are unique or unusual in their scale, craftsmanship, or design, or represent a rare subtype once common in parks, and retain a high level of integrity.

Extant Utility Buildings and Infrastructure, 1933-1941

- Blacksmith Shop (1933)
- Three-car garage (1937)
- Panoramic Water Tank (1937)

Utility Buildings and Infrastructure, 1941-1955

Description

Utility buildings and infrastructure may include garages, auto and equipment repair shops, carpenter shops, offices, water tanks, storage buildings, and water and sewage treatment facilities. Shop buildings and garages are typically small, simple buildings. They are often wood frame, one-story, rectangular and set on concrete slab foundations. Many were built from standardized plans. Many utility buildings at Big Basin are clustered in a discrete maintenance area near Upper Sky Meadow, off of Old Lodge Road. The buildings are laid out east to west along the maintenance access road. Water and sewage treatment facilities are a diverse group of structures. These include structures that are wooden or concrete, and round or rectangular. These structures may be semi-subterranean. Sewage treatment facilities are set in the gated sewage treatment facility yard west of Blooms Creek Campground. Water Tanks 1 and 8, as well as Pump House 3, are located in the gated water treatment facilities area, which is set along the road to Sempervirens Reservoir.

Significance

Utility buildings and infrastructure at Big Basin Redwoods may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance for their association with development in California state parks between 1941 and 1955. These buildings were vital to the state park system’s mission of accommodating increasing numbers of visitors that flooded the park in the postwar period, while protecting the natural resources that attracted park goers. As visitation increased, the California state park planners prioritized the construction of new utility buildings and water and sewage treatment facilities throughout the system, including at Big Basin Redwoods.

Registration Requirements

To be eligible under Criterion A at the local level of significance, utility buildings and infrastructure must be associated with development at Big Basin Redwoods State Park between 1941 and 1955. They must retain integrity to the historic period, and this should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials. To be eligible at the state level of significance, utility buildings and infrastructure must represent a unique example within the state park system, combined with a high level of integrity.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park Name of multiple listing (if applicable)
--

Section number F Page 30

Extant Utility Buildings and Infrastructure, 1941-1955.

Carpenter Shop (1949)
Auto Shop (1949)
Storage Building (1949)
Office (1949)
Lumber Storage (1950)
Paint Supply Storage (1950)
Master Control Room, Sewage Treatment Plant (1954)
Biological Filter Building (1954)
Slow Sand Filter Building (1954)
Water Tank 1
Water Tank 8
Water Tank 10 (1946)
Pump House 3
Sempervirens Dam

Property Type: Roads and Associated Structures

Sub-type: Roads, 1902-1933

Description

Roads in Big Basin Redwoods during the early twentieth century were largely unpaved, dirt roads. Lodge Road and Highway 236 were the main roads in the park during this time. The first road built into the park was Lodge Road, which was built in 1904 over a former logging road, and connected Boulder Creek with the park. The road runs for two miles within the park, is currently ten to fifteen feet wide, and is exceptionally curvy at its eastern end. The state built the portion of Highway 236 that lies within the park in 1913. In 1915, a state highway between Saratoga Summit and the park provided an easier way for San Francisco Bay area visitors to access Big Basin. The road was paved in the 1920s. Between 1902 and 1933, the state also built roads from Governor's Camp to attractions within the park, such as Slippery Rock and Sky Meadow. Roads also provided a crucial transportation corridor for firefighting; the Middle Ridge and East Ridge Roads were built for this purpose. The Hihn-Hammond Road was built in 1917 to provide access to newly acquired park lands. Gazos Creek Road is a narrow winding dirt road about twelve feet wide, built in the mid-1920s to provide a route to the coast from Governor's Camp.

Associated structures include the powder magazine, built between 1925 and 1930 for the storage of explosives during the construction of Highway 236. The powder magazine is a wood framed, reinforced vault with a concrete floor, set into the hillside on the east side of the highway, just south of the North Escape Road exit gate.

Significance

Roads and associated features at Big Basin Redwoods State Park may be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance for their association with development in Big Basin Redwoods State Park between 1902 and 1933. Roads were vital for allowing access to and within California's only state park in the early twentieth century. The earliest visitors arrived by stage road, and by 1912, most visitors arrived by private auto. As auto travel grew, the state constructed new roads to and within the park, while existing roads were widened and improved, allowing the public to better access their first state park. Roads built at Big Basin Redwoods were the only roads built by the state to facilitate tourism in a California state park until the 1920s.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

----- Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California ----- County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park ----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number F Page 31

Registration Requirements

To be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A at the local level of significance, roads and associated features must demonstrate their association with the early development of Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Roads must have been constructed within the park between 1902 and 1933, and they must retain integrity to the historic period. This should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials. Roads would most likely be eligible as part of a historic district.

Extant Roads, 1902-1933

- Lodge Road (1903)
- Middle Ridge Road (1905?)
- East Ridge Road (1905?)
- Gazos Creek Road (c. 1924?)
- Saratoga Summit Road (1915)
- Hihn Hammond Road (1917)
- Boulder Creek Highway (1929)
- Blooms Creek Campground Road (1930)
- Jay Camp Road (1930)
- Sempervirens Camp Road (1930)

Sub-type: CCC Roads, 1933-1941

Description

Road construction during this time included entry roads, loop and circuit roads such as campground and picnic area loops, and internal destination roads. Park roads constructed by the CCC in California state parks generally follow the topography, and they were engineered to preserve important natural features and to blend into the surrounding environment. CCC roads were typically curvy, in order to slow traffic, provide scenic views, and provide park drivers with shoulders are gently sloped and covered with gravel. Associated features include stone retaining walls, pullouts, bridges, and drainage systems such as culverts. Roads in campgrounds and picnic areas are generally loop roads.

The CCC realigned a number of roads in the Governor’s Camp area in order to improve traffic flow and protect natural resources. Crews moved the main highway through Governor’s Camp, which ran directly in front of Big Basin Inn, away from the hotel facility. They built the North Escape Road, which runs north from Governor’s Camp along Opal Creek before connecting with Highway 236. The North Escape Road was constructed in 1935 to provide visitors in Governor’s Camp with a northerly route out of the area in case of fire.

Significance

Roads may qualify for listing under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance for their association with CCC development in Big Basin Redwoods State Park at the local or state level of significance. Roads built by the CCC represented the first efforts to facilitate visitor access while also protecting natural resources. Roads were an important component of CCC plans to develop Big Basin Redwoods for visitor use and to protect the park from fire, but planners also sought to protect redwood groves by moving roads away from the most popular groves. Roads may qualify for listing under Criterion C at the local or state level of significance for their representation of Park Rustic landscape architecture as it was implemented in California state parks. CCC roads were designed with the hallmarks of Park Rustic landscape architecture. These roads were sensitively sited and included characteristic features such as drainage systems constructed of local, rustic materials, framed vistas and views, and retaining

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

----- Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California ----- County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park ----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number F Page 32

walls.

Registration Requirements

Under Criterion A, roads must have been designed and built by the CCC in Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Roads and associated features should be in their original location, and retain historic integrity. This should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials. Under Criterion C, roads must demonstrate the principles of Park Rustic landscape architecture. Road alignments should remain intact, with minimal evidence of widening and later road cuts. Road resurfacing does not disqualify a road from eligibility. Roads would most likely be eligible as part of a historic district.

Extant Roads

North Escape Road (1935)

Property Type: Lodging and Related Facilities

Sub-type: Lodging and related facilities, 1902-1933

Description

Lodging and related facilities built at Big Basin Redwoods State Park between 1902 and 1933 included a clubhouse, a boarding house, cabins, and a lodge office and dining room. Small, associated wood buildings and sheds used for laundry, garbage, and storage were also built nearby. Lodging facilities built in the park during this time were rustic in style. They were generally one-story, wood framed, with wood floors and shake roofs. Vertical board and batten siding was common, and redwood logs were sometimes used as supports in the larger buildings such as the Clubhouse and Big Basin Inn. Big Basin Inn, located in Governor’s Camp, was a one-story building constructed from unpeeled logs. It featured an immense stone fireplace in the lobby, and contained a restaurant and public gathering space. Other character defining features included an outdoor dining area and log pergola. The building did not contain guest rooms, and instead served as a management and public use facility for fifty-five cabins that were built nearby between 1912 and 1922. Cabins were small, simple wooden buildings clustered close together, and set among the redwood trees in Governor’s Camp in between Big Basin Inn and Opal Creek. They included 10’ x 12’ wood frame single units, as well as larger duplex cabins. Big Basin Inn is the only extant building.

Significance

Lodging and related facilities at Big Basin Redwoods State Park may be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance for their association with development in Big Basin Redwoods State Park between 1902 and 1933. Big Basin Redwoods was the only state park between 1902 and 1921, and it was the only one with substantial visitor facilities developed by the state, including lodging, until the 1920s. Visitors flocked to the park, and lodging facilities were in high demand, since the park’s remote location meant that tourists needed overnight accommodations. The state tried to accommodate rising visitation by constructing new lodging facilities during this time. By the 1920s, Big Basin contained all the amenities of a resort, including a variety of lodging. A boarding house, cabins, and a lodge office and dining room called the Big Basin Inn all served guests at this time. These facilities were the only accommodations developed by the state available in any California state park until the 1920s.

Registration Requirements

To be eligible under Criterion A at the local level of significance, lodging and related facilities must demonstrate their association with the early development of Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Properties must have been

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

..... Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California
..... County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
..... Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number F Page 33

constructed within the park between 1902 and 1933. They must retain integrity to the historic period. This should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials.

Extant lodging, 1902-1933
Big Basin Inn (1911)

Property Type: Administration Buildings

Description

Administration buildings served as the primary point of contact for park visitors, and also served as office space for park personnel. The administrative building often served as a visitor center as well, with interpretive displays. These buildings generally were located in a central location, close to a main entry road.

Administration buildings built by the CCC were constructed in the Park Rustic style. These buildings exhibit a low, horizontal form and contain a gable or cross gable roof, deep overhangs and exposed rafters and beams. The interior is often finished with knotty pine or exposed log walls, open beam ceilings, plank floors, multi light frame windows, masonry fireplaces, and hand wrought fixtures and hardware. Materials such as logs, shakes, unpeeled half logs, and rough hewn stone predominate. Partial masonry walls are not uncommon. Hand craftsmanship is usually evident.

Significance

Administration buildings at Big Basin Redwoods constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps may be eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance for their association with CCC development in Big Basin Redwoods State Park. The CCC was one of the largest public works program in U.S. history, and one that provided Big Basin Redwoods and other California state parks with their first comprehensive construction program. The development of visitor facilities such as administration buildings, designed to provide services to state park visitors, were a priority of the CCC.

Administration buildings may be eligible under Criterion C at the local or state level of significance for their representation of Park Rustic style architecture. The form, materials, design, craftsmanship, and siting of CCC visitor facilities in Big Basin Redwoods embodies Park Rustic style as it was carried out in California state parks. Characteristic features include the use of logs, wood and stone building materials, and hand forged and crafted design elements.

Registration Requirements

Under Criterion A, administration buildings must have been constructed by the CCC in Big Basin Redwoods State Park. They must demonstrate the characteristics of CCC planning and style, such as use of native materials, evidence of hand craftsmanship, sensitive siting, and subordination to the natural environment. Buildings and structures must convey their original function, even if rehabilitated for a different use. Administration buildings may be eligible at the local level of significance for their association with the CCC as the program was carried out in state parks. Properties may be eligible at the state level of significance if they represent an outstanding example of CCC planning and design in California state parks. They must retain integrity to the historic period. This should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials.

Under Criterion C, properties should be designed in the Park Rustic style. This includes using local and native

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

----- Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California ----- County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park ----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number F Page 34

materials that are treated in a rustic or roughhewn manner. Buildings and structures should appear hand crafted. Character defining features such as log posts and trusses and stone faced foundations should be evident. Properties may be eligible at the local level of significance as examples of Park Rustic style as it was interpreted and implemented in Big Basin Redwoods. The property must retain integrity to the historic period. This should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials. A property may be eligible at the state level of significance if it demonstrates a high degree of artistry and craftsmanship, through the use of native materials, hand finishing of these materials, architectural embellishment, and handcrafted fixtures. The property should retain a high level of integrity. Buildings at the state level should represent facilities within the property type that are unique or unusual in their scale, craftsmanship, and design, or are a rare example of a once common type.

Extant Administration Buildings
Administration Building (1936)

Property Type: Museum/Nature Center Buildings

Description

Museum/Nature Center buildings were built to house exhibits related to the natural environment, ethnography, and local history of the park and the adjacent area. They were sited in a central location in the park, close to the main entry road and administration building. They were generally large, with an exhibit room or rooms, as well as some private office and storage space. While the CCC built many combination administration/nature museum buildings, only about five stand alone museum/nature centers were constructed by the CCC in California state parks, including the nature museum at Big Basin Redwoods. At Big Basin, the Nature Museum building also includes a store and gift shop.

Museum/Nature Center buildings constructed by the CCC in California state parks were constructed in the Park Rustic style. The buildings exhibited a low, horizontal form, gable or cross gable roof, wide overhangs and exposed rafters, purlins and beams. The interior was often finished with knotty pine or exposed log walls, open beam ceilings, plank floors, multi light frame windows, masonry fireplaces, and hand wrought fixtures and hardware. Materials such as logs, shakes, unpeeled half logs, and roughhewn stone predominated. Partial masonry walls were not uncommon. Hand craftsmanship was usually evident. Interior display cases held artifacts and documents.

Significance

Museum/Nature Center buildings at Big Basin Redwoods constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance for their association with CCC development in Big Basin Redwoods State Park. The CCC was one of the largest public works program in U.S. history, and one that provided Big Basin Redwoods and other California state parks with their first comprehensive construction program. The development of visitor facilities such as Museum/Nature Center buildings designed to provide services to state park visitors, was a vital part of the CCC mission.

These properties may be eligible under Criterion C at the local or state level of significance for their representation of Park Rustic style architecture as it was carried out in California state parks. The form, materials, design, craftsmanship, and siting of CCC visitor facilities in Big Basin Redwoods embodies Park Rustic style. Characteristic features include the use of logs, wood and stone building materials, and hand forged and crafted design elements.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

..... Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California
..... County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
..... Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number F Page 35

Registration Requirements

Under Criterion A, visitor facilities must have been constructed by the CCC in Big Basin Redwoods State Park. They must demonstrate the characteristics of CCC planning and style, such as use of native materials, evidence of hand craftsmanship, sensitive siting, and subordination to the natural environment. Buildings and structures must convey their original function, even if rehabilitated for a different use. Museum/Nature Center buildings may be eligible at the local level of significance for their association with the CCC as the program was carried out in state parks. Properties must retain integrity to the historic period. This should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials. Properties may be eligible at the state level of significance if they represent an outstanding example of CCC planning and design in California state parks.

Under Criterion C, properties should be designed in the Park Rustic style. This includes using local and native materials that are treated in a rustic or roughhewn manner. Buildings and structures should appear hand crafted. Character defining features originally present, such as plank floors, divided light windows, open beam ceilings and stone fireplaces, should remain extant. Properties may be eligible at the local level of significance as examples of Park Rustic style as it was interpreted and implemented in Big Basin Redwoods State Park. A property may be eligible at the state level of significance if it demonstrates a high degree of artistry and craftsmanship. This includes the presence of the characteristics of Park Rustic style in California, including use of native materials, hand finishing of these materials, architectural embellishment, and handcrafted fixtures. The property should retain a high level of integrity. Buildings nominated at the state level should represent facilities within the property type that are unique or unusual in their scale, craftsmanship, and design, or are a rare example of a once common type.

Extant Museum/Nature Center Buildings
Nature Lodge/Museum (1938)

Property Type: Comfort Stations

Sub-type: Comfort Stations, 1941-1955

Description

Comfort stations built during this era contain men’s and women’s restrooms; a utility or storage room may be set in between the two restrooms. Some comfort stations are designated “combination buildings,” and these include features such as showers or laundry rooms, as well as men’s and women’s restrooms. Other comfort stations were composed of pairs of small toilet buildings. Five comfort stations, four combination buildings, and four pairs of toilet buildings were constructed between 1941 and 1955 and remain extant. Additional comfort stations were constructed during this time, and have been removed. These buildings were based off of standardized plans. Comfort stations of this era are set in campgrounds or picnic areas. The buildings are single-story, rectangular, with wood siding. Horizontal V-groove siding is typical. They have a low or medium pitched side gabled roof that features narrow eaves, fascia boards, and wood shingles. Wood doors are set on both ends of the building as well as the center, if there is a utility or storage room. The restroom entrances are protected by wood privacy screens. Ribbons of wood framed windows are set under the eaves and also on the gable ends. Wood louver vents occupy the gable ends. Small pipe vents protrude from the roof. The interior features wood toilet stall partitions, modern toilets and sinks, and wood clad walls. In combination buildings, shower stalls may be located within the restrooms, or individual stalls may be accessible from exterior doors. A toilet building typically contains one or two stalls for either men or women; two toilet buildings, one for each gender, are set near each other. These are typically small buildings, set on concrete slabs, with board and batten siding and low pitched gable roofs. Privacy

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Name of Property ----- Santa Cruz County, California ----- County and State ----- Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park ----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)
--

Section number F Page 36

fences are set in front of the doorway. The toilet buildings are furnished with modern flush toilets, urinals, and sinks.

Significance

Comfort stations at Big Basin Redwoods may be eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A at the local level of significance for their association with development in California state parks between 1941 and 1955. Comfort stations were the most commonly constructed building type in the postwar period throughout the state park system. Visitors overwhelmed the park after World War II, and facilities were inadequate to meet the public’s needs. Comfort stations provided the legions of postwar visitors with modern, sanitary restroom facilities. They were built from standardized plans, which reflected the construction trends of postwar America as well as the priorities of the California state park system.

Registration Requirements

Comfort stations are likely not eligible individually, but as contributing buildings to a district.

To be eligible under Criterion A at the local level of significance, comfort stations and toilet buildings must be associated with postwar development at Big Basin Redwoods State Park. They must have been built between 1941 and 1955, and must retain integrity to the historic period. This should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials.

Extant Comfort Stations, 1941-1955

- Comfort Station 1 (1942)
- Comfort Station 2 (1951)
- Comfort Station 3 (1948)
- Comfort Station 4 (1951)
- Comfort Station 6 (1942)
- Comfort Station 9 (1948)
- Comfort Station 10 (1945)
- Gazos Creek Comfort Station (1950)
- Middle Picnic Area Restrooms (1953)
- Combination Building 1, Sempervirens Campground (1950)
- Combination Building 2, Blooms Creek Campground (1945)
- Combination Building 5, Opal Creek Picnic Area (1945)
- Combination Building 6, Opal Creek Picnic Area (1945)

Property Type: Outdoor Theaters and Campfire Centers

Description

Outdoor theaters and campfire centers were designed for outdoor visitor entertainment, such as plays, concerts, dances, and storytelling, and education, such as ranger talks. Big Basin Redwoods had most of the amenities of a resort during this time, and evening entertainment at the theater and campfire center was a beloved part of campers’ and hotel guests’ experience. These structures were constructed in the Park Rustic style as it was implemented in California state parks. In California state parks, seating was arranged in a semi-circular pattern, facing a stage and/or a fire pit or fireplace. Benches were masonry or log, situated on flat or sloping ground. At Big Basin Redwoods State Park, the theater was comprised of an irregular stage with a dressing room to the rear. It contained a front gabled roof with deep overhangs, log trusses, log screens on each side, log bench seating for 800 people, and a small fire pit in between the stage and the seating.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

----- Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California ----- County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park ----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number F Page 37

Significance

The outdoor theater and campfire center at Big Basin Redwoods constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance for its association with CCC development in Big Basin Redwoods State Park. The CCC was one of the largest public works program in U.S. history, and one that provided Big Basin Redwoods and other California state parks with their first comprehensive construction program. The development of visitor facilities such as the outdoor theater was a priority of the CCC, and they were built throughout the California state park system.

The outdoor theater and campfire center may be eligible under Criterion C at the local or state level of significance for its representation of Park Rustic style architecture. The form, materials, design, craftsmanship, and siting of CCC visitor facilities in Big Basin Redwoods embodies Park Rustic style, and Albert Good considered the theater at Big Basin Redwoods to be the epitome of the type. Characteristic features include the use of logs, wood and stone building materials, the gradient of the slope, the spacing of the benches, and the siting of the theater.

Registration Requirements

Under Criterion A, the outdoor theater and campfire center must have been constructed by the CCC in Big Basin Redwoods State Park. It must demonstrate the characteristics of CCC planning and style, such as use of native materials, evidence of hand craftsmanship, sensitive siting, and subordination to the natural environment. The outdoor theater and campfire center may be eligible at the local level of significance for its association with the CCC as the program was carried out in California state parks. It must retain integrity to the historic period. This should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials. Properties may be eligible at the state level of significance if they represent an outstanding example of CCC planning and design in California state parks, and if they retain a high level of integrity.

Under Criterion C, properties should be designed in the Park Rustic style. This includes using local and native materials that are treated in a rustic or roughhewn manner. The property should appear hand crafted. Character defining features such as log benches must be present. Properties may be eligible at the local level of significance as examples of Park Rustic style as it was interpreted and implemented in Big Basin Redwoods. A property may be eligible at the state level of significance if it demonstrates a high degree of artistry and craftsmanship. This includes the presence of the characteristics of Park Rustic style as it was implemented in California state parks, including use of native materials and the hand finishing of these materials. Properties nominated at the state level should represent facilities within the property type that are unique or unusual in their scale, craftsmanship, and design, or are a rare example of a once common type, combined with a high level of integrity.

Extant Outdoor Theaters and Campfire Circles

Outdoor Theater and Campfire Circle (1936)

Property Type: Campgrounds, Picnic Areas, and Associated Features

Description

Campgrounds and picnic areas were developed by the CCC to provide inexpensive overnight accommodations and/or meal preparation facilities to park visitors. The patterns of landscape design found in campgrounds and picnic areas in Big Basin Redwoods represent the design principles of rustic landscape architecture as practiced by the CCC in California state parks. Campgrounds included an access road and campsites. Each campsite had a parking pad, which was sometimes marked by large rocks, logs, or rail fencing, and furnishings, such as a picnic

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

..... Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California
..... County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
..... Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number F Page 38

table, a stone stove, and/or a food locker. Vegetation or boulders provide a screen between campsites.

Picnic areas included stone stoves and picnic tables. Picnic tables usually had poured concrete tops. They were occasionally constructed entirely of poured concrete. Some picnic tables were originally split log and hewn board tops. Diablo stoves were generally built of rough stone masonry with a forged iron grill. Comfort stations and combination buildings were often set in campgrounds and picnic areas. The CCC also built resources such as fireplaces, flush toilets, shower houses, and cookhouses, in campgrounds used by the girls' organizations that camped at Big Basin Redwoods. The stone fireplace in the Hazelgreen YWCA camp is one extant feature. The shelter at the former Sky Meadow Girl Scout camp may be another associated feature, though more research is needed to determine the construction date.

Significance

Campgrounds and picnic areas may be eligible under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance for their association with CCC development in California state parks. The CCC program was charged with making state parks accessible and available for recreational use. The development of campgrounds and picnic areas was a step toward fulfilling this goal, especially for lower income visitors who could not afford hotels and restaurants. Campgrounds, picnic areas, and associated features were commonly built by the CCC in California state parks.

Under Criterion C, campgrounds may be significant examples of Park Rustic style landscape architecture as it was implemented in California state parks by the CCC. Characteristic features may include associated features, such as stoves and fireplaces, constructed of rustic building materials, especially stone masonry. Campgrounds and picnic areas may exemplify rustic landscape architecture design principles in their siting, use of rustic materials, and relationship with the surrounding environment.

Registration Requirements

Under Criterion A, campgrounds, picnic areas and associated features must have been constructed by the CCC in Big Basin Redwoods. They must demonstrate the characteristics of CCC planning and style, such as use of native materials, evidence of hand craftsmanship, and subordination to the natural environment. Campgrounds and picnic areas must convey their original function. They may be eligible at the local level of significance for their association with the CCC as the program was carried out in California state parks. They must retain integrity to the historic period. This should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials. Properties may be eligible at the state level of significance if they represent an outstanding example of CCC planning and design in California, and they must retain a high level of integrity. Associated features would likely be eligible as part of a district, rather than individually.

Under Criterion C, campgrounds, picnic areas, and associated features must have been constructed by the CCC in Big Basin Redwoods. Campgrounds and picnic areas should be designed in the Park Rustic style. Major character defining features such as stone Diablo stoves or stone fire pits, wood and/or concrete picnic tables, parking pads, and individual camp or picnic site delineation through topography, vegetation or fencing must be present. The majority of original camp furniture and overall design and organization should be present. The property should retain integrity to the historic period, and this should be evident through the historic qualities of location, setting, feeling, association, workmanship, design, and materials. Campgrounds nominated at the state level should represent facilities within the property type that are unique or unusual in their scale, craftsmanship and/or design in California state parks. Campgrounds were commonly constructed by the CCC in California state parks, and most follow relatively clear guidelines for design and furnishings. Only in circumstances where they exhibit an unusual landscape design or high degree of craftsmanship combined with excellent integrity would be they eligible at the state level of significance under Criterion C.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

----- Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California ----- County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park ----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number F Page 39

Extant Campgrounds, Picnic Areas, and Associated Features

- Campground K (1930s, converted to a group camp in 1950s)
- Campground L (Late 1930s, converted to day use 1961)
- Campground M (Late 1930s, converted to day use 1961)
- Campground N (1939, converted to day use in 1961)
- Sempervirens Campground (Late 1930s)
- North Escape Road Picnic Area (1930s)
- Hazelgreen YWCA Stone Fireplace (1935)
- Girl Scout Shelter (circa 1942)

Property Type: Trails

Sub-type: Trails, 1902-1933

Description

The trail system was designed to access most parts of the park. Some trails were social trails, that were never formally built. These generally followed roads, are narrow and low in altitude, and exist mainly around park headquarters. Other trails were established by the park and designed for recreational purposes. These trails provided access to the park’s natural features. Most of these park-built trails are located in the western part of the park. The trails are often three to four feet wide, and narrower trails are also found. Skyline to Sea Trail, Sunset Trail, and Dool Trail are examples of recreational trails from this time period.

Significance

Trails may be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance for their association with development at Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Big Basin Redwoods was the only state park in California between 1902 and 1921, and it was the only state park with substantial visitor facilities until the 1920s. Trails were a key recreational feature, since they provided access to the park’s natural features, such as the old growth redwoods, waterfalls, and mountain peaks.

Registration Requirements

Under Criterion A, it must be demonstrated that the trail was established during and is associated with the early period of development at Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Trails must have been constructed within the park between 1902 and 1933. Trails must retain integrity of location and setting to the historic period. Alterations do not necessarily disqualify a trail from eligibility, if the trail still conveys its historic character and retains many of its character defining features. Minor adjustments in the location that have little impact on the resource's overall continuity, identity, and character are permitted. Minor changes to allow for maintenance of an unstable resource are allowable. However, significant trail widening, large-scale alteration of original routing, major changes in vegetation, complete replacement of bridges, or extensive integration of the trail into a more modern and extended trail system would impair integrity. To be eligible at the state level, trails must retain integrity, and must represent a particularly good example of the property type when compared to other state park trails in California from this period. Trails will most likely be eligible as part of a historic district.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park Name of multiple listing (if applicable)
--

Section number F Page 40

Extant trails, 1902-1933

Dool Trail (circa 1912)
Sunset Trail (circa 1912)
Pine Mountain (circa 1924)
Blooms Creek Campground Trail (circa 1912)
Skyline to Sea Trail (circa 1914)
Meteor Trail (circa 1924)

Sub-type: Trails, 1933-1941

Description

Trails during this period were constructed by the CCC. Trails were meant to provide access between principle attractions in the park, such as impressive groups of trees, waterfalls, or recreational facilities. They were also designed to continually engage walkers, by traversing changing vegetation, elevation and other natural features. However, they were also intended to lessen the impact on these features. Foot trails were often built for fire protection as well. CCC landscape architects and engineers designed trails to appear naturalistic, and to follow the topography of the landscape. Typical trail width ranged from three to five feet, and the maximum grade was usually about 10 percent. Associated features include footbridges, trailheads, culverts, overlooks, and stairs. Some trails were interpretive trails, which were intended to foster a greater appreciation of the park's redwoods through interpretive signage. Interpretive trails include the Redwood Trail, which is a level loop, 0.6 mile in length, designed to access and provide interpretation for the largest trees in Governor's Camp. Between 1933 and the end of 1936, the most prolific period of CCC trail building in the park, the CCC built almost twenty-four miles of trails and ten footbridges in Big Basin.

Significance

The CCC was one of the largest public works program in U.S. history, and one that provided Big Basin Redwoods and other California state parks with their first comprehensive construction program. The CCC program was charged with making state parks accessible and available for recreational use, and trails were an important means of providing access to and promoting enjoyment of the natural environment of the park. Trails constructed between 1933 and 1941 may qualify for listing under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance for their association with CCC development in Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Trails constructed between 1933 and 1941 may qualify for listing under Criterion C at the local or state level of significance for their representation of Park Rustic landscape architecture as it was implemented in California state parks. CCC trails at Big Basin were designed with the hallmarks of Park Rustic landscape architecture. These trails were sensitively sited and included characteristic features such as footbridges. Properties may be eligible at the local level of significance for their association with the CCC as the program was carried out in California state parks. Properties may be eligible at the state level of significance if they represent an outstanding example of CCC planning and design within the California State Park system. Properties must retain integrity to the historic period, 1933 to 1941.

Registration Requirements

Under Criterion A, trails must have been designed and built by the CCC in Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Trails must retain integrity of location and setting. Integrity of design and workmanship should be taken into account as well. Under Criterion C, trails must represent examples of Park Rustic style landscape architecture as it was implemented in California State Parks in the 1930s. Trails must retain integrity of location, setting, design, and workmanship. Many characteristic features should remain in place. These include sensitivity of design to topographic and natural features, drainage systems constructed of local rustic materials, rustic bridges, framed

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California
County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number F Page 41

vistas and views, retaining walls, stone pillars, and markers.

Alterations do not necessarily disqualify a trail from eligibility, if the trail still conveys its historic character and retains many of its character defining features. Minor adjustments in the location that have little impact on the resource's overall continuity, identity, and character are permitted. Minor changes to allow for maintenance of an unstable resource are allowable. However, significant trail widening, alteration of original routing, major changes in vegetation, complete replacement of bridges, or extensive integration of the trail into a more modern and extended trail system would impair integrity. Trails will most likely be eligible as part of a historic district.

Extant trails and associated features, 1933-1941

Redwood Trail (circa 1940)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California
County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number H Page 42

SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

In 2010, a NPS historian from the Pacific West Region worked with staff from the California Department of Parks and Recreation to complete the Multiple Property Submission. A survey of secondary sources related to the history of Big Basin Redwoods State Park, California State Parks, and the Civilian Conservation Corps was undertaken. Studies prepared or collected by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR) and architectural data forms prepared by CDPR that provided descriptions of historic buildings and structures were vital to the preparation of this document. The architectural data forms along with Cultural Resource Inventories compiled by CDPR were also used to determine the number and types of resources that were extant within Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Archival research included work in San Francisco and Santa Cruz public libraries and National Archives branches in San Bruno, California. An archivist at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, transmitted CCC records relating to Big Basin Redwoods State Park.

The list of extant properties that follows each property type in Section F was compiled based on current available sources. These properties have not been evaluated individually for the National Register, and further research may reveal additional properties that are extant.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Santa Cruz County, California
County and State Historic Resources of Big Basin Redwoods State Park
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 1 Page 43

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number I Page 44

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