

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

## SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 100003021

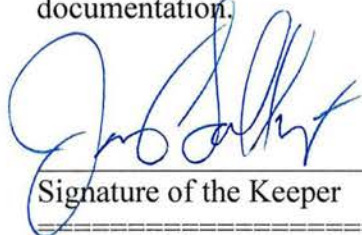
Date Listed: 10/16/2018

Property Name: Highland Hammocks State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum

County: Highlands

State: FL

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

10.16.2018

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

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Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8: Areas of Significance

“Social History” is hereby deleted as an area of significance. This area is not supported in the narrative.

Section 8: Period of Significance/Significant Dates

The period of significance is hereby changed to 1930-1968.  
1928 is deleted as a significant date.

The acquisition of land begins the actual “Conservation” of the land; the other areas of significance follow land acquisition. While planning and a visit from government officials in 1928 might have precipitated the actions of 1930, the actual preservation and eventual development of the park and arboretum did not begin until 1930.

\_\_\_\_\_  
The Florida State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

**National Register property file**

**Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**

MP3021



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum

other names/site number HG825

2. Location

street & number 5931 Hammock Road N/A  not for publication

city or town Sebring  vicinity

state Florida code FL county Highlands code \_\_\_\_\_ zip code 33872

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Alissa Lotane, Deputy SHPD 8/22/18  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register  See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature]  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

10.16.2018

Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum  
Name of Property

Highlands County, FL  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
25	7	buildings
1	0	sites
13	7	structures
1	1	objects
40	15	total

**Name of related multiple property listings**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Florida's New Deal Resources MPS

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

AGRICULTURE: horticultural facility

LANDSCAPE: park

LANDSCAPE: conservation area

LANDSCAPE: garden

DOMESTIC: institutional housing

DOMESTIC: camp

EDUCATION: research facility

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

LANDSCAPE: park

LANDSCAPE: conservation area

DOMESTIC: institutional housing

DOMESTIC: camp

RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Rustic

NO STYLE

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation various

walls various

roof various

other

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Name of Property

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) has been requested
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Conservation

Entertainment/Recreation

Social History

Architecture

Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance

1928-1968

Significant Dates

1928

Significant Person

Beck, Carol

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Vinten, Charles, landscape architect

see continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State Agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of Repository

#



10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property roughly 2,875 acres

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 5 |
Zone Easting Northing
2 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 9 |

3 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 3 |
Zone Easting Northing
4 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 1 |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Andrew Waber, Historic Preservationist

organization Florida Division of Historical Resources date February 2018

street & number 500 South Bronough Street telephone (850) 245-6430

city or town Tallahassee state FL zip code 32304

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Florida Internal Improvement Trust Fund, Florida Division of Recreation and Parks

street & number 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS100 telephone (850) 245-2555

city or town Tallahassee state FL zip code 32399-3000

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 amend 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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Summary**

The NR boundaries of the Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum encompass the historic core primarily comprised of pre-World War II buildings and structures. The district comprises three general periods of development: the Roebling era (1929-1933), the CCC era (1933-1941), and the post-World War II era. There are 40 contributing resources and 15 non-contributing within the district. The buildings within the district are largely concentrated in five areas: the Entrance Station and Administrative offices, the Camping Area, the Shop Area, the Residence Area, and the CCC Museum and Restaurant Area. The major automobile thoroughfares through the park include County Road 634, an unpaved two-lane road which bisects the district; Loop Drive, a small paved road that historically served as main public access road into Roebling era section of park; a paved access road that links Camping and Shop areas to rest of park; and an unpaved access road connecting Residential Area on the west side of district. The predominant style represented in this district is Rustic, with frame and masonry vernacular buildings primarily concentrated within pre-CCC era and post-World War II construction. The park has a significant concentration of dams, culverts, canals, and ponds primarily built during Roebling and CCC eras that were crucial to the park's creation.

**Setting**

Highlands Hammock State Park Historic District is located in unincorporated Highlands County, Florida. The closest municipality to the district is Sebring, which is northeast of the district. The immediate setting is rural and undeveloped, with cattle ranches and citrus groves outside the park boundaries. Within the boundary, cypress and pine trees and natural and artificial waterways dominate the landscape.

**Physical Description**

Roads and Trails

There are two primary access roads that run through Highlands Hammock: County Road 634 and Loop Road. By the time CR634 reaches the state park, it turns into a two-lane dirt road (Photo 1). It deviates to the north at roughly the halfway point just west of the Entrance Station and bisects the district. The construction of the county road is contemporary to the Roebling era of the park, and the irrigation infrastructure built by the CCC and Roebling is still very much utilized to provide proper drainage for the road. The setting, the route, and the surface materials all still reflect their historic 1968 appearance. The historic main access road through the Roebling era section of the park is Loop Road, which is a small two-lane paved road that extends from CR634

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then forms an irregular circle. It also serves as a trail. In places where the roads cross bodies of water, there are either Rustic Style rough-hewn stone bridges or wood bridges allowing access (Photos 2-3).

On the east side of the district, there is a large looping road, East Residence Road, which connects with CR634 just west of the entrance gate and connects back with CR634 near the Entrance Station. East Residence Road splits into two roads on the north side. The northern spur was historically known as the North Branch Road. Both roads eventually circle back toward the Work Area and Campgrounds. These roads are the last remaining major landscaping elements from the original Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum and still largely follow their original route.

The oldest and perhaps best known trail in the park, the Cypress Swamp Trail, was originally constructed to provide pedestrian access to the rest of the park for the watchman (Photos 4-6). The trail extends off the west end of Loop Road and loops back to its point of beginning. Its most distinctive feature, the boardwalk and catwalk which are located on the west end of the trail, are non-historic in-kind replacements but follow a similar path to the original historic trail. The boardwalk would have originally been a narrower catwalk, but was replaced by wider walkways for safety and ADA compliance. The trail was originally U-shaped, beginning and ending at different points along Loop Road. Another important Roebling era trail is the Ancient Hammock Trail, which extends from the south of Loop Road (Photos 7-8). Like the Cypress Swamp Trail, there is a boardwalk on the Ancient Hammock Trail which was replaced but is found in an almost identical location between two ponds. This trail also forms a loop that circles back near the footbridge. There would have originally been a long connecting trail extending from the south end of Ancient Hammock and leading from the east end to the west end of Loop Road. This is no longer extant.

Dams, Culverts, and Drainage

One of the key aspects of the park's development, especially during the Roebling and CCC eras, was the construction of an extensive irrigation system to both control water supply and to help prevent forest fires. Both Roebling and the CCC were active in constructing these structures, with the work from the Roebling period primarily composed of granite while the CCC projects were limestone. There are five steel weir dams constructed by Roebling, with steel likely coming from his steel mill (Photo 9). Perhaps the most notable resource associated with the water control is the dam located on the north side of the district, which crosses the Little Charley Bowlegs Creek (Photos 10-11). Known simply as "the dam," it is made of granite and steel, with steel locks controlled by two hand-cranked wheels that can be adjusted (Photo 12). There are also adjacent overflow culverts and a wood bridge going over the top of the dam (Photo 13). With the exception of the dam, the rest of the water control system is counted as one resource.

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Entrance Station and Administrative Offices

The main entrance into the historic section of the park is at the east end of CR634. An historic CCC era Rustic style welcome sign marks the entry point into the park. Also on the east side of the district is a small concentration of buildings that include the park's administrative office (Building 49), historic residence, and a non-contributing conference building (Photos 14-16). An ADA accessible wood wheelchair ramp connects the office with the conference room. The office is a simple masonry vernacular building built with concrete block. The residence and office were built in the late 1950s during the park's post-World War II development and are considered contributing to the district.

The Entrance Station is a simple, Rustic style, wood frame building with an accentuated limestone wall extending around the outside of the building that reaches roughly the halfway point of the building's height (Photo 17). The building was built in the 1950s in response to the increased demand of the park, replacing an earlier CCC era building that was relocated to the engineer's residence. To the rear of the Entrance Station is a non-contributing storage building.

Campground

The campground area north of the Entrance Station features a mixture of buildings and structures dating primarily from the CCC era and the 1950s and 1960s. The campground itself is a large open space with a number of fire rings, picnic tables, and benches. It was largely laid out in the 1950s, and was built around the existing CCC era buildings (Photo 18). The area also has a shuffleboard court and non-historic playground (Photo 19). There are three CCC buildings in this area: two Rustic style restroom buildings and a Rustic style bathhouse (Photos 20-22). These buildings, much like most of the CCC buildings in the park, have cypress shingle and rough-hewn limestone siding. There is a contributing CCC era picnic pavilion with a cypress wood shelter, rough-hewn limestone picnic tables, and a concrete slab foundation (Photo 23). There is a large non-contributing bathhouse on the north side of the campgrounds (Photo 24). A large circa 1959 Recreation Hall is located to the northeast of the campgrounds (Photo 25).

Work Area

The access road that connects to the campgrounds continues northwest to the historic CCC work area. This area historically functioned as the utility area of the CCC camp, where the workshops, sawmills, storage buildings, greenhouse, and herbarium were all located. The greenhouse and herbarium were all constructed in connection with the laboratory work associated with the Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum operations. The

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Herbarium is a simple stuccoed masonry vernacular building with a brick chimney and exposed eaves (Photo 26). The Greenhouse is a complex building composed of brick, glass, and metal with a metal roof supported by wood (Photos 27-28). The wood fixed glass ribbon windows have been partially covered over by sheet metal. On the north end of the greenhouse is an exposed brick section that historically served as the greenhouse boiler room. The greenhouse was damaged by Hurricane Irma, and as a result, much of the metal roofing on the east end of the building is either gone or severely damaged (Photo 29). The eaves and rafters are still largely intact however, and the building retains sufficient integrity to contribute to the historic district. There are also two pole barns, an historic workshop, three historic storage buildings, and two non-contributing storage buildings in this area (Photos 30-35).

To the northeast of the work area are two CCC-era buildings and a non-contributing carport. The CCC-era residence now functions as the Assistant Park Manager residence (Photos 36-37). It is a simple wood frame building with a hipped roof. It historically functioned as the CCC camp leader's residence. There is a small wood building adjacent to the residence, which was a CCC constructed building that originally functioned as the first Entrance Station to the park (Photos 38-39). This building was moved to its current location after the current Entrance Station was constructed in the 1950s, and is still considered contributing to the district.

Residence Area

On the far west end of the district is a collection of buildings that currently function as the ranger residences. The oldest building in the district is Building 1, which was the constructed circa 1930 by Roebing as the Watchman's Quarters (Photo 40). This building is a simple wood frame vernacular building with a hipped roof, exposed eaves, an enclosed front porch, and two brick chimneys. There are three other buildings from the Roebing era onsite: Building 41, Building 42, and Building 26. Building 41 historically functioned as the office of Alexander Blair, the chief engineer of the park and was later a bunkhouse (Photo 41). Building 42 was the original garage for the watchman's quarters and Building 26 was a storage area (Photos 42-43). There are two buildings dating from the CCC era, Building 40 and Building 4, which are very similar in appearance to the Roebing buildings (Photos 44-45). The only historic residential building in this area postdating World War II is Building 2, which was built in the 1950s. It is a simple masonry vernacular cinderblock building that currently functions as the Park Manager's residence (Photo 46). To the west of the residence area is a youth camp area, with a contributing circa 1967 restroom building and a non-contributing picnic shelter.



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CCC Concession and Auditorium Area

Perhaps the most notable CCC era buildings still standing in the district are the Hammock Inn/Combination Building and the Auditorium (Photos 47-48). Both buildings are high-style examples of New Deal Era Rustic architecture. Both buildings are constructed of cypress wood and contain rough-hewn limestone chimneys. The original cedar shingles on the roofs have been replaced, but other than this both buildings still retain a high degree of integrity. The center portion of the Combination Building (Building 3) was originally open but this was enclosed sometime prior to 1968, when the building was repurposed as the Hammock Inn. However, the original openings are still clearly visible. It is now a concession building. It sustained some roof damage during Hurricane Irma. Other than this, the building is in good condition and retains sufficient integrity to contribute to the district. A non-contributing statue and pedestal honoring the CCC workers was placed in front of the historic Auditorium (Photo 49).

Immediately adjacent to the Combination Building is a picnic area with five picnic shelters, a restroom building, a storage building, and two Rustic style water fountains (Photos 50-53). The most significant shelter is the Alligator Pavilion, which was historically the barbeque pit. It has a rough-hewn limestone chimney on the north end that is historic (Photos 54-55). Originally, there would have been a large barbecue pit that ran through the middle of the shelter. It was repurposed to its current usage as a picnic shelter sometime during the period of significance prior to 1968. The remnants of the barbecue pit and the extra ventilation holes in the roof can still be seen.

Amphitheater

A major contributing element to the district is the Amphitheater (Photo 56). This was one of the centerpieces of the Roebling era of the park. The religious vespers services regularly held here was a major draw to the park. Originally, the seating arrangement was curvilinear but this has been changed to its current rectangular layout. The seats have also all been replaced. This occurred after the period of significance and is considered a non-historic alteration. The original seats, although entrenched in the ground, were all wood and removable. The permanent structures of the amphitheater, which are the raised earthen speaker's platform and the stairs approaching it from the sides, are still very much present and reflect their historic appearance and configuration (Photo 57). For this reason, it is considered a contributing structure to the district.

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Margaret Shippen Roebling Memorial

There is one contributing object to the district, the Margaret Shippen Roebling Memorial, which was erected shortly after her death in 1931 (Photo 58). It is a simple rough-hewn marble tablet with a bronze plaque affixed. This marker was placed in front of the Memorial Live Oak, an ancient tree that was preserved through the use of tree surgery. The tree itself no longer stands but the marker remains in its original position along Loop Road.

**Integrity**

The resources in the Highlands Hammock Historic District are still in their original location and the setting is still undeveloped and heavily forested (Figure 1). As a result, the district retains sufficient integrity of location and setting. The main thoroughfares through the park, including Loop Road, Residence Road, and Hammock Road/CR634, retain their route and the surface materials that reflects their historic 1968 appearance. The major Roebling era foot trails, including the Cypress Swamp Trail and Ancient Hammock Trail, are all still there and still largely follow their historic 1968 paths. The major concentrations of resources, the Entrance Station and Administrative Offices; the Campground; the Work Area; the Residence Area; and the CCC Concession and Auditorium area all retain a high concentration of historic resources that reflect to a high degree the original workmanship and materials. The CCC era resources still reflect their original Rustic style appearance and feeling. Despite alterations and additions, the park retains to a high degree its historic 1968 layout and appearance. The extensive drainage work conducted at the park, with dams, culverts, ditches, and ponds, remain largely unaltered and clearly reflect their historic layout. Hence, the district retains a high degree of integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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**CONTRIBUTING**

<u>Resource</u>	<u>Building Number</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Site File No.</u>
Hammock Road/ CR634/ Loop Drive/ East Residence Road		1929-1941	
Highlands Hammock/Florida Gardens and Arboretum Water Control System		1929-1968	
Highlands Hammock/Florida Gardens and Arboretum Trail System		1929-1968	
Highlands Hammock/Florida Gardens and Arboretum Fence Line		1929-1941	
Little Charlie Bowlegs Creek Dam		1931	
Vesper Field/Amphitheater		1931	
Margaret Shippen Roebling Memorial		1931	

**Entrance Station and Administrative Office Area**

Main Entrance Fence		ca. 1930s	
Administrative Office	No. 36049	1957	
Entrance Station	No. 36031	1959	
Ranger Residence	No. 36005	1961	HG664

**Campground**

Rustic Picnic Shelter	No. 360010	1935	HG648
Bathhouse No. 11	No. 36011	1935	HG647
Campground		1956	
Restroom Building	No. 36030	1959	
Recreation Hall	No. 36029	1959	
Restroom Building No. 43	No. 36043	1963	

**Work Area**

Original Entrance Station		1934	
Herbarium	No. 36008	1935	HG642
Repair House "Truck Shed"	No. 36018	1935	HG644
Greenhouse	No. 36027	1936	HG643
Shop Building	No. 36025	1936	HG645

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Ranger's Residence	No. 36023	1938	HG663
Gas Pump Shelter	No. 36036	1959	
Storage	No. 360009	ca. 1960	
Chemical/Flammable Storage	No. S00036	ca. 1960	
Pole Barn	No. 36044	1965	

**Residence Area**

Caretaker's Residence	No. 36001	1930	HG655
Roebing Office/Bunk House	No. 36026	1930	HG660
Guest Cottage	No. 36040	1931	HG658
Ranger Residence	No. 36004	1934	HG657
Ranger Residence	No. 36044	1935	
Garage	No. 36042	1936	HG656
Guest Cottage	No. 36041	1938	HG559
Ranger Residence	No. 36002	1959	
Youth Camp Restroom	No. 36010	1967	

**CCC Concession and Auditorium Area**

Hammock Inn	No. 36003	1938	HG649
Alligator Bbq Shelter	No. 36009	1938	HG651
Owl Pavilion Shelter	No. 36012	1938	HG652
Bear Pavilion Shelter	No. 36013	1938	HG653
Auditorium/Museum	No. 36006	1939	HG650

**NON-CONTRIBUTING**

Entrance Station and Administrative Office Area

Conference Building (age)	No. 36059	2009	
Entrance Station Storage Shed (age)	No. 360012		

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Campground

Bathroom No. 58 (age)	No. 36058	2006
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Work Area

Ranger's Residence Carport (age)		
Storage Shed (age)		2000
Storage Shed (age)	No. 36056	2000
Supply Shed	No. 36019	2000
Fire Truck Pole Barn (age)	No. 36052	1992

Residence Area

Picnic Pavilion	No. 36057	2002
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CCC Concession and Auditorium Area

CCC Monument (age)		
Picnic Area Restroom (age)	No. 36060	2011
Panther Pavilion Shelter (age)	No. 36051	1992
Bobcat Pavilion (age)		
Otter Pavilion (age)		
Concert Stage (age)		



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**Architect/Builder**

Works Progress Administration, Builder  
Blair, Alexander, Builder  
Phillips, William Lyman, Landscape Architect

**Summary**

Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum is being nominated to the National Register under Criteria A, B, and C at the state and local levels in the areas of Conservation, Entertainment and Recreation, Social History, Architecture, and Landscape Architecture. The period of significance extends from 1928 to 1968. Originally known as Hooker Hammock, the park was the result of one of the earliest local grassroots conservation efforts in the state, which began in 1928. Highlands Hammock State Park was one of the first state parks created in the state of Florida and is one of the original units of the Florida Park Service. The actual development of the original core of the park began in 1930 as a privately run park financed primarily by John and Margaret Shippen Roebling. With its special emphasis on labor intensive techniques for the express purpose of providing employment, this park was an important job creating project that predated similar federal programs started several years later. The current Highlands Hammock State Park is actually the result of the merger of three adjacent parks, which took place in 1939: Highlands Hammock State Park, the Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum (FBGA), and DeSoto State Forest Park. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) first came into the area in 1934 for the purpose of constructing the FBGA. The Florida Federation of Garden Clubs played a pivotal role in the creation of the FBGA, enlisting an impressive list of consultants and trustees who worked on the project, including Ninah Cummer, Harold Hume, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and John Nolen, among others. The FBGA was intended to serve as an experimental laboratory for commercially profitable trees and plants, with a large greenhouse even constructed on the site. The project was abandoned after World War II, however, and after the war, the area was repurposed into campgrounds. For many years, starting in 1931, the park has hosted annual Vesper services in the amphitheater, which was constructed for this purpose. The park has also hosted community organizations, including the Girls Scouts and Boy Scouts.

The park is significant under Criterion B at the state level for its association with Carol Beck, the first chief naturalist of the Florida Park System. Beck's associations with the Highlands Hammock go back to 1942, when she was first hired on part time as a botanist, becoming a fulltime naturalist after World War II. After being named chief naturalist for the state parks, she continued to use Highlands Hammock as her base of operations until 1969. She was instrumental in shaping state park policies and strategies in both interpretation and

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conservation. Although her duties brought her into direct contact with other state parks around Florida, it is Highlands Hammock that is best associated with her work as a naturalist.

The park is also significant under Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Landscape Architecture. The buildings, fences, bridges, and other structures are locally significant examples of Rustic architecture. This is best embodied in the rough-hewn stone, wood shingle siding, and usage of locally sourced materials to blend into the natural surroundings. The original Roebling era park is a locally significant example of a naturalistic park, with its unpaved, narrow twisting trails and roads; minimum building intrusion; and incorporation of native, non-exotic plants and naturalistic scenery. The park is also an important work of a master landscape architect, Charles Raymond Vinten. Originally brought in to work on the Roebling park, Vinten returned to oversee the park during the CCC era. It was his work with Highlands Hammock that led to his promotion to state inspector of the National Park Service in Florida. In addition to overseeing and approving the design of all 7 CCC constructed state parks in Florida, Vinten would also have an impact upon other NPS projects in the state, including Everglades National Park. It was his work with Highlands Hammock that brought him to the attention of the NPS and led to his hiring.

The Highlands Hammock State Park Historic District contributes to the Florida’s New Deal Resources MPS under Associated Historic Contexts: The New Deal in Florida, 1933-1943 and Associated Property Type F.1 Buildings.

**Historical Context**

History of Sebring

The history of Highlands Hammock is intricately tied into the nearby city of Sebring. The city was founded in 1912 by George E. Sebring, one of the cofounders of the Sebring Pottery Company, a highly successful family pottery business based in Sebring, Ohio. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, George Sebring relocated to Florida for health reasons, retiring from the pottery business and devoting himself to land development. Looking for a place to establish a new development, Sebring was drawn to the land around Lake Jackson, purchasing 4,000 acres of land there in 1911. The following year, he began selling off the land in lots. Working closely with his sons, who joined him in the business, George Sebring advertised the new development of Sebring, Florida, as a retirement community with tremendous potential for economic growth through the citrus industry. The city was formally incorporated in 1913 and grew steadily from there. By 1917, its population was 700, with a city hall, a Chautauqua Assembly Hall building, and the Kenilworth Lodge, among other buildings. Rail connections were established and a city plan put in place. In 1921, Sebring was named as the county seat for the newly created

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county of Highlands County. The timing proved fortuitous for the city, as it stood primed to reap the benefits of the Florida Land Boom of the 1920s. Real estate speculation in Sebring exploded. By 1925, the population in Sebring grew to 4,500 people. This brief period of prosperity proved short-lived, however, as concerns over rampant land fraud and a disastrous hurricane in 1926 caused a collapse in the real estate market.<sup>1</sup>

Hooker's Hammock

The area which includes Highlands Hammock remained largely undeveloped until the 1880s. Up until that time, the only settlement between the Peace and Kissimmee rivers was the community of Crewsville, located five miles south of Highlands Hammock. The area was originally known as Hooker's Hammock, named after a Seminole War soldier who maintained a cow camp there. In circa 1881, Jonathan Skipper acquired about 40 acres in Highlands Hammock, where he established an orange grove. His son Chesley Skipper expanded these holdings, eventually acquiring title to several hundred acres of land around Highlands Hammock. Aside from some very limited farming and cattle ranching, this area remained undeveloped. This all began to change in 1912, when the city of Sebring was founded. In 1920, a group of Sebring businessmen formed a development business known as Hooker Hammock Farms. They later acquired several hundred acres of land, which included what is now Highlands Hammock, from Chesley Skipper. They intended to sell the land for agricultural development, but were only able to sell small tracts of land less than ten acres for residential purposes. By the time the Land Boom collapsed in 1926, the company still possessed a large tract of unsold and undeveloped land.<sup>2</sup>

**Historical Significance**

Highlands Hammock Conservation Movement

The movement to save Highlands Hammock started in the late 1920s. It was one of the earliest conservation movements in the state and the first major conservation movement in the area. In February 1928, Dr. Frederick H. Newell, former director of the US Reclamation Service, paid a visit to Highlands Hammock at the solicitation of Sebring businessman B.L. Laird. Newell was a leading conservationist who worked closely with Gifford Pinchot and President Theodore Roosevelt. Newell was also the former chief hydrologist of the US

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<sup>1</sup> Vicki Welcher, "Multiple Resource Area of Sebring, Florida," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, National Register # 1176482, Section 8, p. 1-8.

<sup>2</sup> Allen Altwater, *Highlands Hammock*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Sebring, FL: The Garage Print Shop, 2008), p. 11-14.

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Geological Survey. He was impressed by Highlands Hammock, and in an open letter published in the local newspaper, strongly recommended that it be set aside and placed under public control.<sup>3</sup>

Inspired by this review, three local citizens, William Evans, Ray Greene, and Charles N. Thompson formed a grassroots movement to have what was then still called Hooker Hammock declared a national park. In February 1930, Roger Toll from the National Park Service (NPS) and Ernest Coe from the Tropic Everglades Park Association in Miami met a delegation of prominent citizens from both Sebring and Avon Park to inspect Highlands Hammock to determine the feasibility of turning it into a national park. This was followed up the following month by a second visit by Dr. J. Horace McFarland, who was a member of the Department of the Interior's advisory committee on parks. The NPS declined to take the park, in part due to the comparatively small size of the land and the fact the federal government had up to that point never bought land for park related purposes. McFarland urged the group to form their own nonprofit corporation to lobby the state legislature for an appropriation for the park's acquisition. In response, they formed the Florida Parks Association. The association faced a significant crisis, however, after efforts to get state funding fell through due to difficulties created by the Great Depression.<sup>4</sup>

John A. Roebling and Margaret Shippen Roebling

The efforts to preserve Highlands Hammock received a much needed boost shortly after the national park efforts failed in 1930. George Sebring, the founder of the city, mentioned to Donald Roebling the troubles encountered in saving the area. At the time Donald Roebling's parents, John and Margaret Shippen Roebling, were in the process of building their estate in nearby Red Hills. He personally flew them over the hammock while taking them there, and Margaret Roebling was immediately impressed: "People have taken most of the state of Florida for their playground. I want to save a bit of it."<sup>5</sup> After a meeting with a local group comprising Ray Greene, Avon Park Mayor C.S. Donaldson, and the Reverend O.G. White, Margaret Roebling agreed to donate \$25,000 towards the purchase of 500 acres of land. A new group known as Tropical Florida Parks Association (TFPA) was formed in April 1930 to manage the money and execute the land purchases. Margaret Roebling was named as the president of the group but was later replaced by W.A. Davison. Alexander Blair, who managed the Roeblings' affairs at Red Hill, was named vice president of the TFPA and represented the

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<sup>3</sup> Altvater, p. 17; William D. Rowley, *The Bureau of Reclamation: Origins and Growth to 1945*, U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, 2006, p. 415-416.

<sup>4</sup> Altvater, p. 18-21.

<sup>5</sup> Freeman Tilden, *The State Parks: Their Meaning in American Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), p. 207.

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Roebblings' interests in the hammock. Ray Greene was in charge of negotiating the land purchases. He was able to acquire most of the land either through donation or through land sold with little or no profit.<sup>6</sup>

Constructing the Park

Highlands Hammock had long been a favorite local hunting and hiking spot even prior to its acquisition as a park. Due to inconsistent water drainage and retention, however, the grounds were often either too dry or too inundated with water for the public to fully enjoy. The dry grounds were significant fire hazards. The members of the TFPA quickly realized this and immediately made preparations to correct this problem as well as to improve access to the park itself. Plans were made to build roads, bridges, and foot trails as well as to erect a fence and firebreaks around the property and construct water control structures. Joe Hawkins was hired on to survey the land and serve as an engineer on the project. He was later joined in this endeavor by C. Ray Vinten, who served as landscape engineer and would have a large role in the future construction of the park. Shortly after the work began, however, the organization ran out of money. The Roebblings came to the rescue again, when Margaret Roebling gave another \$25,000 on the condition that the community raise a \$5,000 match. The money was raised and work resumed.<sup>7</sup>

A different phase in the park's development occurred with the death of Margaret Roebling in October 1930. By now, her husband John A. Roebling turned special attention to the park as a memorial to her. He waived the match requirements and offered to pay for the entirety of the project on the grounds that there be some official assurance of tax funding secured for maintenance of the park. He negotiated directly with contractors through Alexander Blair, whom he placed in charge of the project. By the end of 1930, Roebling contributed over \$48,000 towards improvements. Work continued throughout 1931, but Roebling halted all construction in early 1932 after a series of delays placed the promise of maintenance funds in doubt. Work on the project continued after the public reacted by increasing donations. Margaret Roebling made it known that she did not like the name "Hooker Hammock" and desired for its name to be changed, which it did after her death. In May 1931, the TFPA changed its name to Highlands Hammock, Inc.<sup>8</sup>

Roebling was very mindful of the employment opportunities brought to the area by this project. He placed special emphasis on labor-intensive construction techniques that would maximize the number of people needed to finish the work. In October 1931, Blair, acting on behalf of John Roebling, entered into an agreement with R.B. Stewart of Fort Myers to carry out some of the work. The agreement called for Stewart to build a fill along

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<sup>6</sup> Altvater, p. 21-22.

<sup>7</sup> Altvater, p. 22-24.

<sup>8</sup> Altvater, p. 24-27.



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Cottage Road using material gathered from the ditches along the side of the road. Stewart was also to construct a 36-pile bridge and extend an existing canal previously started to Charlie Bowlegs Creek, using the excavated materials along the sides of the canal. In April 1932, Blair entered into another agreement with Stewart to drive a steel sheet pile dam across the Little Charlie Creek and six steel sheet pile dams in the ditches running parallel to the county road.<sup>9</sup>

Also during this time, crews working under Joe Hawkins started construction of the Loop Road, the Vesper Service Field, the foot trails, and the watchman’s cottage. The watchman’s cottage, which was built on the west side of the park, was separated from the Loop Road section by Charley Bowlegs Creek. A service road and bridge connecting the cottage to the Loop Road was built. The work progressed so rapidly that by October 1930, the public was allowed into the park on the weekends. It was not until March 1931 that the park formally opened to the public in a ceremony attended by over 4,000 people.<sup>10</sup>

The Vesper Services proved to be a popular and long-running feature of the park. Encouraged by the strong showing in its opening dedication in 1931, the park opened the area for regular Sunday worship services during tourist season. The services, at first exclusively religious in nature, became more diversified by the late 1930s.<sup>11</sup>

In December 1933, the Ross Farrens Tree Service was hired by Blair to conduct what is known as tree surgery on three prominent trees which Margaret Roebling was particularly fond: a large laurel oak and two live oaks. The smaller of the two live oaks was known as the Memorial Live Oak. A tree surgery involves cutting a small hole into the center of the trees, which are hollow. After removing decaying matter from the center, the workers infill the tree with reinforced concrete and stabilize the tree with metal bracing on the outside to support the branches. The Laurel Oak Trail takes its name from the large repaired laurel oak tree, which is located along the trail near the main access road into the park. The Memorial Live Oak was named for the marker placed near it devoted to the memory of Margaret Roebling.<sup>12</sup>

Another important event that happened prior to the arrival of the CCC was the construction of County Road 634. In the early 1930s, after much complaints from people in the area, the county authorities decided to

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<sup>9</sup> Altvater, p. 24; “Contract for Drag Line Work,” contract between Alexander Blair and R.B. Stewart, October 29, 1931, Florida Park Service Historic Collections Facility & Archive; Contract between Alexander Blair and R.B. Stewart, April 13, 1932, Florida Park Service Historic Collections Facility & Archive.

<sup>10</sup> Letter from Alexander Blair to Joe W. Hawkins, July 13, 1933, in Florida Park Service Historic Collections Facility & Archive; Altvater, p. 47.

<sup>11</sup> Altvater, p. 47-51.

<sup>12</sup> Altvater, p. 59-60.



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arranged for a survey in the eastern portion of Highlands Hammock to help in the preparation for schematic plans for the garden.<sup>15</sup>

In October 1933, the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs took the lead in botanical garden planning, establishing a committee for the purpose. Ninah Cummer, a renowned gardener who created the Cummer Gardens in Jacksonville, was selected to chair the committee. Working in conjunction with the trustees of Highlands Hammock, Inc., they formed the Florida Botanical Garden and Arboretum Association in 1934. In addition to Cummer, there were a number of other prominent people associated with the project, including Harold Hume, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., William Lyman Phillips, and John Nolen. Clara I. Thomas, who was a landscape architect based in St. Petersburg, served as Secretary and played a leading role in promoting the new project. By March 1934, plans for the FBGA were in full operation.<sup>16</sup>

In contrast to Highlands Hammock, which started prior to the CCC's arrival, the FBGA was constructed entirely by the CCC. A new camp, Camp Number SP-3, arrived in 1934. The camp was originally based in Royal Palm State Park but was relocated in part because of fears over malaria outbreaks. Former Florida First Lady May Mann Jennings was instrumental in securing the CCC camp. Work began on the park that year, and for the first two years of the camp's existence, they were focused almost entirely on the FBGA. Ray Vinten, who was involved in the earlier work on Highlands Hammock, was brought in as the superintendent of the camp.<sup>17</sup>

Although the CCC was under the management of the US Army, it was the National Park Service that oversaw the work projects themselves in the state parks. The project superintendent of Highlands Hammock was a NPS employee who reported directly to a state coordinator. Vinten was later promoted from the superintendent position at Highlands Hammock to head the statewide NPS efforts. He was replaced at Highlands Hammock by Allen Altvater, who arrived in 1935 and served until 1942.<sup>18</sup>

While Vinten was still in charge of Highlands Hammock, he and State Forester Harry Baker were at odds with each other over how to develop the FBGA. Baker's ideas for the FBGA, which was originally proposed by C.S. Donaldson, was for something similar to Cypress Gardens in South Carolina. Royal palm trees were to be planted along the entrance road and flowering plants such as azaleas were interspersed within the natural vegetation. Baker also desired for the arboretum to be the primary focus. It was his desire to educate Floridians

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<sup>15</sup> Altvater, p. 77.

<sup>16</sup> Altvater, p. 79-81.

<sup>17</sup> Nelson, p. 111-112; Altvater, p. 166.

<sup>18</sup> Altvater, p. 166, 168.

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on the different kinds of plants and trees that could grow in the Florida climate. Baker and Vinten had disagreements over a number of elements, including the parking, the entrance, and the construction of buildings. Their disagreement soon turned into a feud which would carry over after Vinten's promotion.

Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. began working on the project in 1934 as a consultant but soon backed out as it became apparent that money for his involvement was not forthcoming. In his place, he recommended William Lyman Phillips, one of the most prominent Florida landscape architects of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Phillips, who was a protégé of Olmsted, was heavily involved in a number of well-known projects, including Bok Tower Garden, McKee Jungle Gardens, and the Fairchild Tropical Garden. During the 1930s, Phillips made a name for himself working extensively with the CCC. At the time he was hired on as a consultant with Highlands Hammock, he was also working on Greynolds Park in Miami. As consultant, he was given review authority of the plans drawn up on the garden and arboretum. His input contributed heavily to a number of important features of the park's landscaping, including the main entrance, the parking area near the main entrance, the reduced clearing of the original hammock, and the roadways and trails through the former arboretum grounds. Phillips, however, desired for a more naturalistic landscaping plan and his reluctance to go forward with Baker's planting plans for the arboretum placed the two men at odds. Phillips resigned shortly afterwards.<sup>19</sup>

The goal of the CCC at Highlands Hammock, like elsewhere, was to not only provide wages for young men, but also an education. Between 1934 and 1936, student teachers from the University of Florida subsidized by Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) taught enrollees at Highlands Hammock. By 1936, the US Army took over this program. Enrollees were taught a wide variety of practical and academic courses, including typing, wood shop, auto repair, arithmetic, civics, and reading among others. Highlands Hammock also hosted firefighting classes on its grounds. By 1940, educational classes at Highlands Hammock numbered 41 courses. Enrollees wrote a camp newspaper, known as *Roger's Post*, which was published through the Sebring Chamber of Commerce. This paper was actually professionally published and managed to get press credentials through the Florida Press Association. There was also a newsletter distributed known as *C-bring C-amp C-ourier*.<sup>20</sup>

During the 1930s, there were two notable paleontological finds discovered by CCC personnel while doing work on the park. While laying out a pipeline near the park entrance, workers stumbled upon two prehistoric mastodon tusks. Due to improper preservation techniques, however, the tusks crumbled. Learning from this mistake, the camp supervisors brought in two specialists when workers uncovered what turned out to be the fossilized remains of an ancient tortoise. The giant tortoise fossil measured approximately three feet high, four

<sup>19</sup> Faith Reyhler Jackson, *Pioneer of Tropical Landscape Architecture: William Lyman Phillips in Florida* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1997), p. 140-146.

<sup>20</sup> Altvater, p. 131-136; Nelson, p. 186-188.

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feet in width, and five feet in length and weighed nearly a ton. Later, in 1939, the state filled in some of the missing parts of the shell with plaster. This giant fossil is still on display at the park, and has been moved indoors as a centerpiece exhibit in the historic Combination Building.<sup>21</sup>

The FBGA was created to serve a dual purpose. In addition to its role as a park, it was also intended to serve as an agricultural and horticultural laboratory. An herbarium and a greenhouse was constructed on the property and gardens were laid out. Working in conjunction with the New York Botanical Garden, the herbarium held over 4,600 specimens in its collection. The arboretum was established in part to test the viability of various tree species in the Florida climate. To help provide adequate irrigation and drainage to the gardens and arboretum, further work was done on Tiger Branch. Access roads paved with red clay and lined with planted trees were laid out. The CCC also constructed a sawmill, entrance station, residences, caretakers' houses, comfort station, amphitheater, and picnic areas.<sup>22</sup>

Although the FBGA and Highlands Hammock State Park were officially separate entities, they were very closely tied together, as the support organizations established for both often shared the same members. The two organizations did not share finances, however. Highlands Hammock, Inc., thanks in large part to the generous donations of the Roebing family and to the fact it was already opened to the public, was in a much better condition financially than the FBGA Association. Despite her tireless efforts in support of the FBGA, Clara Thomas eventually resigned from the project in 1936, weakening the ties with the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, which was one of the principals in the FBGA's founding. By this time, the FBGA faced pressure from the federal government pressure to first divert some of the CCC labor and later to provide proof of the organization's ability to maintain the park. Faced with concerns over funding and the threat of losing the CCC camp, the FBGA agreed to merge with Highlands Hammock and the Desoto State Forest Park, which was finalized in 1939.<sup>23</sup>

The arboretum and botanical gardens continued to operate under the control of Highlands Hammock for a few years after the merger. With most of the project done, the CCC work shifted to Highlands Hammock itself. As World War II began, workers involved with the project realized they could make twice the amount of pay helping to construct the Army airfield at Sebring. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, many more were drafted into the military. The severe manpower shortages affected the botanical garden and arboretum, which quickly fell into disrepair and was eventually abandoned altogether. State forester Harry Lee Baker, who was one of the

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<sup>21</sup> Altvater, p. 75.

<sup>22</sup> Altvater, p. 77, 81-82.

<sup>23</sup> Altvater, p. 80-81.



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most outspoken proponents of the garden and arboretum, died. The infrastructure constructed for the FBGA was then fully incorporated into Highlands Hammock.<sup>24</sup>

During World War II, several state parks, including Highlands Hammock, closed due to staffing shortages. This all changed after the war, when the park reopened. Prior to World War II, development of the park was geared more towards day stay tourists. When it reopened, the focus shifted more towards providing accommodations for camping. The infrastructure put in place for the arboretum proved to be ideal for reuse for this purpose. Primitive campgrounds and parking spaces for recreational camping vehicles were added in this section.

Highlands Hammock After World War II (1945-1968)

The park's focus at this time also shifted more towards natural interpretation. This was affected largely by the hiring of Carol Beck, the first chief naturalist of the Florida Park System. Beck's associations with the Highlands Hammock go back to 1942, when she was first hired on part time as a botanist, becoming a fulltime naturalist after World War II. After being named chief naturalist for the state parks, she continued to use Highlands Hammock as her base of operations until 1969. She was instrumental in shaping state park policies and strategies in both interpretation and conservation. She played a key role in returning the park back to its natural state, encouraging the planting of only native plants and discontinuing the exotic plantings that dominated the former botanical garden and arboretum areas. Beck also helped guide park natural resource interpretation policies, emerging as one of the faces of the park through her highly popular guided tours. Under her guidance, tree labels were put in place on nature trails throughout the state park system, including Highlands Hammock. Working with Oscar Baynard from Hillsborough River State Park, Beck authored and contributed to a number of brochures and programs that saw general distribution across the state. She also began the process of conducting natural resource inventories, working closely with William Harmon. Although her duties brought her into direct contact with numerous state parks around Florida, it is Highlands Hammock that is best associated with her work as a naturalist.<sup>25</sup>

In 1949, state parks such as Highlands Hammock were moved under the jurisdiction of the newly created Florida Board of Parks and Historic Memorials. Due to a shortage of funding and a marked increase in usage, the state parks faced significant issues in upkeep. It would not be until the early 1950s that the legislature provided adequate maintenance funding for the parks. In 1951, a new camping area was constructed for Highlands Hammock. This was supplemented by the construction of a new combination office/information

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<sup>24</sup> Altwater, p. 82.

<sup>25</sup> Altwater, p. 39-40.

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building, a new camper's restroom, a new office, and an entrance station, which were all completed by the mid-1950s.<sup>26</sup>

In 1956, a fire that began south of the park worked its way north, aided in part by a lack of adequate firebreaks and dry conditions. It eventually found its way into the park and caused considerable damage to the surrounding area but was largely controlled on the first day. By the second day, however, embers from the previous day's fire reignited, this time destroying many of the trees within the park. The presence of the county road and surrounding canals along with the quick action of local firefighters and the National Guard saved the CCC buildings. In response, the park's advisory council, working in conjunction for the Florida Forest Service, decided to bolster existing firebreaks around the park and place additional firebreaks in open areas within the park. The forest service also worked with Highlands County to establish a countywide fire prevention system aimed at improving the efficiency of firefighting efforts. A new garage and ranger's residence were built in the late 1950s, which replaced the older buildings destroyed by the fire.<sup>27</sup>

In 1960, the park saw extensive damage as a result of Hurricane Donna. The park remained closed for over two weeks in September as much of the trees and vegetation were lost. By the early 1960s, the overnight campgrounds were expanded. The accommodations at the park included picnicking, barbeque pits, trailer and tent camping, youth tent area, refreshments, restaurant, lodge, museum, and nature trails.<sup>28</sup>

**Historic Context 1968-present**

The park has remained in continuous operation since the 1930s. The historic core of the park has remained relatively unchanged since 1968. In 1988, the Cypress Swamp Trail was updated to allow for American with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility. The boardwalk was widened and railings were added. The interpretive center was converted into a museum on the CCC in the early 1990s. The recreation hall was modernized with

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<sup>26</sup> Florida Board of Parks and Historic Memorials, *Annual Report Florida Park Service* (Tallahassee, FL: 1952), p. 2; Florida Board of Parks and Memorials, *Biennial Report of the Florida Board of Parks and Historic Memorials for the Years July 1, 1955, through June 30, 1957* (Tallahassee, FL: 1957), p. 18-19.

<sup>27</sup> Altwater, 71-73; Florida Park Service, *Biennial Report of the Florida Board of Parks and Historic Memorials for the Years July 1, 1955, through June 30, 1957*, p. 18-19; Florida Park Service, *Biennial Report of the Florida Board of Parks and Memorials for the Years July 1, 1957, through June 30, 1959* (Tallahassee, FL: 1959), p. 17-18.

<sup>28</sup> Florida Park Service, *Biennial Report of the Florida Board of Parks and Memorials for the Years July 1, 1959, through June 30, 1961* (Tallahassee, FL: 1961), p. 18-19; Florida Park Service, *Biennial Report of the Florida Board of Parks and Memorials for the Years July 1, 1961, through June 30, 1963* (Tallahassee, FL: 1963), p. 24; Florida Park Service, "Enjoy Life at Florida State Parks," in *Biennial Report of the Florida Board of Parks and Memorials for the Years July 1, 1961, through June 30, 1963* (Tallahassee, FL: 1963).

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HVAC and the CCC era bridges were restored back to their original appearance. Amenities have been expanded to include handicapped access, bicycling and horseback trails, a shuffleboard court, and playgrounds for children.<sup>29</sup>

**Architectural Context**

The description and context for the Rustic Style is already discussed in the Florida's New Deal Resources MPS, p. F 94-95.

**Architectural Significance**

The Highlands Hammock State Park Historic District contains an excellent representation of the Rustic Style. This is perhaps best reflected in the Concession and Auditorium buildings. This is best embodied in the rough-hewn stone, wood shingles, and usage of locally sourced materials to blend into the natural surroundings.

**Landscape Architecture Context**

Origins of Landscape Architecture

The origins of modern landscape architecture in the United States starts with the opening of Central Park in New York City. Designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., and Calvert Vaux, the park owed much to the traditions of English landscape garden design. A crucial aspect of Olmsted and Vaux's design was in the minimization of artificial intrusion and incorporation of the natural surroundings of the park itself into a large public space. They paid special attention to the function of the park, with largescale construction focused primarily on carriageways, walkways, trails, and bridges. The goal of this was to provide a relaxed, healthful visit designed to allow as many people to enjoy the scenery as possible. It was a school of landscape architecture that became known as the Fairsted School. The success of Central Park inspired numerous projects similar in nature across the country. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, however, landscape architecture in municipal areas shifted from scenic preservation to more formal European garden styles. In what became

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<sup>29</sup> Peter Anderson, "Over the Years...", in Alvater, p. 248; Highlands Hammock State Park, "General Information," in Alvater, p. 254-255.

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known as the City Beautiful Movement, landscaping was but one element of a larger urban plan that incorporated and was often built around imposing artistic and architectural buildings and structures.<sup>30</sup>

By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were two other developments in landscape architecture that also influenced park development: the development of natural gardens and the creation of city and regional planning. Landscape architecture has often been tied to architectural trends. The development of Prairie Style led to the creation of the Prairie Style of landscape architecture. This method of landscape design was in effect an attempt to recreate the prairie, through the use of native plantings and incorporation of layered limestone to mimic rock outcroppings. The Prairie Style landscape was what was classified as a natural garden, which merged the two predominant philosophies of landscape architecture into one, as these gardens were just as artificial as any formal garden. Perhaps the most prominent practitioner of Prairie style landscape architecture was Jens Jensen. With the advancement of the plant ecology, landscape architects began to appreciate its importance and emphasize the use of native plant species into their designs. Perhaps the most influential book on this subject was Frank Waugh's *The Natural Style in Landscape Gardening*, which was published in 1917. For Waugh, the aim of the natural style was for the landscape architect to "discover and to follow the principles of composition followed by nature." It was in many ways a restatement of the Fairsted School ideology, with the crucial differences being that with natural gardens they focused on scenic creation as opposed to scenic preservation and there was much more emphasis on plant species. Waugh would later be hired by the US Forest Service as a consultant and would also have an impact on the development of Grand Canyon National Park.<sup>31</sup>

Another development that would influence landscape parks would be the implementation of city and regional planning. City planning, which owes its origins in part to landscape architecture, really became more specialized as a profession by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In England, the Garden City Movement, which developed starting in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, was especially important to both municipal and park development in the United States. As Ethan Carr noted, the garden city concept emphasized "broken grids of streets that partially conformed to topography, hierarchy of street types..., and a segregation of industrial and residential areas."<sup>32</sup> The plans also incorporated centrally located town squares that housed civic buildings and communal open spaces and garden spaces. An important element of these plans were the use of cul-de-sacs as opposed to traditional grid patterns for residential sections and the placement of Arts and Crafts inspired cottages. During World War I, the United States government formed the U.S. Housing Corporation, which was headed by

<sup>30</sup> Ethan Carr, *Wilderness by Design: Landscape Architecture and the National Park Service* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), p. 19-23, 34-39; Linda Flint McClelland, "Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, National Register #64500683, p. E 8-10.

<sup>31</sup> Carr, p. 99-101; McClelland, p. E 23-26.

<sup>32</sup> Carr, p. 109.

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Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. This agency was instrumental in spreading the English garden city inspired concept across the country through the construction of government housing. The agency also employed a team of engineers, landscape architects, and architects, many of whom were exposed to city planning for the first time. Among them was Daniel Hull, who would play a pivotal role in the early development of national parks.<sup>33</sup>

Landscape Architecture and the NPS

The ideals of scenic preservation never actually went away but rather shifted away from cities. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, railroad travel greatly improved and industrialization took more people away from day-to-day management of farms and created a larger middle class with more leisure time. Sensing an opportunity, certain enterprising individuals and companies began advertising the vast wilderness of the west in an effort to promote tourism. The railroad companies in particular were active in this promotion, building grand lodges in a number of areas, including Yellowstone and the Grand Canyon. They established the precedent of Rustic style buildings later used within the national parks. In 1872, the first national park, Yellowstone National Park, was created. The conservation interests of the parks, however, remained secondary to the economic interests of agriculture and industry. This began to change in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when more national parks were created and Congress passed legislation granting the president of the United States authority to declare national monuments and national forests.<sup>34</sup>

The focus of the parks changed considerably with the advent of automobile travel. At first, the national parks were ill-equipped to handle the influx of newly mobile tourists traveling via automobile. Crowd control soon replaced illegal hunting and logging as the primary conservation concern of the parks. The travelers simply set up camps anywhere. The lack of trails created erosion problems and the lack of toilet facilities posed environmental concerns. The growing modernization of the west also created problems perhaps most famously exemplified in the fight over the Hetch-Hetchy Valley in California. As the number of automobile bound travelers grew, it soon became apparent that the potential economic value of tourism into the areas outweighed the value of the resources extracted. It also became apparent that in order take full advantage of this potential, there needed to be infrastructure put in place similar to that of a city. In order to do this, there needed to be more efficient management of the parks, which led to the creation of the National Park Service (NPS) in 1916.<sup>35</sup>

From its beginnings, the NPS worked closely with landscape architects. The principles of scenic preservation developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in municipal parks were especially well-suited for national parks. While the park

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<sup>33</sup> Carr, p. 109-110.

<sup>34</sup> Carr, p. 41, 52, 62; McClelland, p. E 38.

<sup>35</sup> Carr, p. 63-67, 82-83; McClelland, p. E 43-45.

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planners recognized the importance of conservation, they also realized that the public was crucial to the long term survival of the parks. Landscape architects were brought in to the planning of the parks because there was a recognition of their expertise in balancing the public use of the space with the visual integrity of the scenery. In 1918, the NPS created the position of landscape engineer. Although this position was initially officially considered advisory, the landscape engineer had a profound impact upon the development of parks. He was responsible for designing all buildings and structures in the park, including ranger cabins, public use buildings, gates, and roads. He also gave input on anything deemed to affect the appearance of the park, including scenic views and the placement of roads and trails. The first chief landscape engineer was Charles Punchard, who held the position until his death in 1920. He was followed by Daniel Hull, who was removed in 1927, and later Thomas Vint.<sup>36</sup>

The National Park Service recognized the need for a controlled and orderly development of parks that retained and respected the scenery and general wilderness of the area. Two of the earliest and most important park plans were of Yosemite and Grand Canyon national parks. Both parks posed unique challenges but set a number of important precedents that would be followed for years to come throughout the park system and later in state parks. Many of the ideals borrowed from the garden city were repurposed in the creation of the national park villages. In addition to establishing the Rustic motif as a general design guideline, the parks were laid out in clearly established zones. So as to preserve as much of the wilderness areas as possible, roadways were kept at a minimum. They were also very rarely in a straight line. Residential, general public use, and utility areas were separated. Within the general use areas were usually administration buildings, concession buildings, and museums. As in the case of Yellowstone and Grand Canyon, they often incorporated preexisting buildings into these areas. The residential areas as laid out in the Grand Canyon and Yosemite plans used classic English garden style planning, with simple cottages aligned along narrow cul de sacs and residential roads. The utility areas were whenever possible kept completely out of the public view.<sup>37</sup>

By the end of the 1920s, the scope of landscape architecture within the NPS expanded even more. The increased usage of automobiles now made the commute to and through the parks a priority. This necessitated NPS involvement in larger infrastructure projects inside and outside the parks. The NPS expanded beyond the city level planning of individual parks into regional level planning outside the parks. The NPS, working in conjunction with a number of local groups, created the National Park-to-Park Highway, which connected the various national parks through a series of improved roads. The NPS soon formed a working partnership with Public Lands that would mutually benefit both agencies. The NPS landscape architects worked closely with the engineers with Public Lands to assure that all construction done did not adversely affect the natural scenery.

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<sup>36</sup> Carr, p. 88-89, 95.

<sup>37</sup> Carr, p. 114-116.

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The National Park Service in effect became trailblazers in a field they classified as landscape engineering. Perhaps the most renowned example of this NPS-Public Lands partnership was the Going-to-the-Sun Road in Glacier National Park.<sup>38</sup>

Park service planning reached its height during the administration of Thomas Vint. Under his leadership, the landscape engineer position was elevated to the status of civil service and a civil service test was crafted for it. The role of the landscape engineer also became more clearly defined, and its multi-disciplinary nature led Vint to hire professionals from other backgrounds such as engineering and architecture. His focus, however, was very clear, as he was a firm believer that the first priority of the NPS should be in the preservation of landscapes.<sup>39</sup>

The National Park Service's expertise in park design and planning would come into use during the Great Depression. Early on, conservation work was seen as a natural area for federal work relief programs. This led to the creation of a number of programs, including the CCC, WPA, and PWA among many others. With the creation of these agencies, there was a real fear that there would be ill-advised work that could potentially destroy important natural areas. The NPS, along with the US Forest Service, took the lead in providing technical expertise. The NPS was responsible for providing technical oversight of all CCC work in parks and recreation areas outside of national forests. The CCC and other government programs literally saved the landscape architect profession and also marked a profound shift in it. The profession was hit hard by the Depression, as there was an unemployment rate of close to 90%. The federal government, particularly the NPS, preferred to hire landscape architects outright as opposed to contracting with them. This led to a shift towards public employment and away from private practice. By the late 1930s, nearly all landscape architects were engaged in some form of New Deal related work.<sup>40</sup>

One of the most important legacies of the NPS and the CCC was their role in establishing and expanding state park systems across the country. The oversupply of qualified personnel to oversee construction work led to an expansion of CCC work from reforestation projects into actual construction of more complex parks and buildings. To help oversee this expanded work, the NPS hired Conrad Wirth, who was also tasked with guiding states in the crafting of state park comprehensive plans. All CCC-built park designs outside national forests, including those at Highlands Hammock, required the approval of landscape architects working under Wirth. To help streamline the process, design guidelines were crafted by Albert H. Good, working in close collaboration

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<sup>38</sup> Carr, p. 146-147, 170-176; McClelland, p. E 60-68.

<sup>39</sup> Carr, p. 193, 227.

<sup>40</sup> Carr, p. 250-253.

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with Herbert Maier. Good produced two works, *Park Structures and Facilities* in 1935 and *Park and Recreation Structures* in 1938, which went a long way in standardizing park architecture.<sup>41</sup>

Prior to the 1930s, the NPS was far from an agency with a national reach. For most people living in the United States at the time, the parks were not easily accessible. This led to a growing movement for more localized opportunities to experience the outdoors. While states such as New York and California made significant strides in creating state parks, in Florida like many of the states in the south it remained lacking. Although the first national wildlife refuge, Pelican Island, is located in the state, conservation efforts in Florida were primarily limited to local efforts and often relied on wealthy and influential backers. Highlands Hammock was no exception. By the mid-1930s, as the NPS started taking the lead in state park planning, the agency also expanded into a number of other fields, including historic preservation and recreational park management. New national park types such as national seashores and national recreation areas were created and control of national monuments and battlefields were given over to the NPS. To help manage their new responsibilities as well as guide state and local park construction through the CCC, the NPS emerged as a leader in the recreational park planning.<sup>42</sup>

The guiding philosophy of NPS state park planning was very similar to national park planning, which was to make the wilderness accessible to the public while conserving as much of the original landscape as possible. One important difference was in the permissible activities allowed on state parks, which tended to be more varied than national parks. State parks also tended to have a proportionally larger developed area than national parks. Aside from this, the planning of state parks tended to be very similar to national parks, with specific wilderness, developed, residential, and utility zones. Much as with national parks, the NPS was very stringent in assuring that all development in the state parks be kept to a minimum. Wirth firmly believed that conservation and recreation were not incompatible, as long as they were carefully accommodated.<sup>43</sup> As Good himself stated, "Since the primary purpose of setting aside these areas is to conserve them as nearly as possible in their natural state, every structure... can only be regarded as an intruder."<sup>44</sup>

The CCC was widely considered one of the most successful New Deal programs, a success greatly augmented by the technical expertise of the NPS. Through programs such as the CCC, PWA, and WPA, the park planning and building design developed by the NPS in the 1910s and 1920s truly became a national style. Roughly 70%

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<sup>41</sup> Carr, p. 257-259, 266, 280-285; McClelland, p. E 137-146.

<sup>42</sup> Carr, p. 257, 273-275; McClelland, p. E 110-111.

<sup>43</sup> Carr, p. 269, 297.

<sup>44</sup> Carr, p. 284.



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of all NPS work with the CCC took place outside of national parks.<sup>45</sup> In Florida, like many other states across the country, the New Deal era work was both foundational to its state park and state forest programs and established a design ethos that would be duplicated across the state in subsequent parks.

**Landscape Architecture Significance**

The two component parts of the district's historic core, Highlands Hammock and the Florida Botanical Garden and Arboretum, were the beneficiaries of the input of several prominent landscape architects. The botanical garden in particular had three nationally renowned landscape architects who served on the advisory board: Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., John Nolen, and Albert Davis Taylor. The landscape architect most associated with both parks, however, was Charles Raymond Vinten. The park is significant for its Roebling-era landscape architecture, as little to none of the Botanical Gardens and Arboretum landscaping aside from the large looping road remain.

The original Roebling era park is a locally significant example of a wilderness landscape park. The original Roebling-era park presents an interesting dichotomy. There was a strict desire to maintain only native vegetation in the park and to protect its natural, undeveloped setting. The park itself, however, is in some ways an artificial creation. The efforts to create both an effective firebreak and to create what they felt was a more desirable park brought considerable attention to the construction of water control structures. There are also elements in the park that would not normally be found in Fairsted School-inspired landscapes, such as the usage of non-native granite and steel in the dams, the use of frame vernacular as opposed to Rustic in the buildings, and the usage of long boardwalks and catwalks. Despite this, the park is clearly laid out in a naturalistic manner. The roads and trails are unpaved, narrow, and twisting. The intrusions of the buildings are kept at a minimum, with the residences clearly kept off to the side and out of view. The original designers of the park were careful to keep out exotic plants. Although the neighboring Botanical Gardens and Arboretum was by design planted with nonnative and artificial plantings, after the two parks merged, the philosophy shifted back to using only native plants. When the CCC moved into the park, the construction was primarily confined adjacent to but outside the Roebling era park. The public use zones created by the NPS and the CCC in many ways helped preserve the integrity of the original Vinten design by diverting development pressure away from it. The Hammock Road, considered a historic Roebling era alteration, was diverted to the north of the park core. Like other parks in this era, the developers of Highlands Hammock had to find a way to balance infrastructure projects such as public highways with conservation. Although the NPS was a trailblazer in the field, the

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<sup>45</sup> Carr, p. 257.

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question of how to properly handle a public automobile road through a nature park was still struggling to be answered. Hence, Hammock Road represents an early example of this attempt at rectification.

Charles Raymond Vinten

Charles Raymond Vinten was originally hired on to work with Highlands Hammock while it was still a privately owned park. He came back later to oversee the CCC camp at Highlands Hammock. Vinten was hired by the National Park Service as state inspector of Florida, a role that had him overseeing the CCC and other NPS-funded park projects. As superintendent of the NPS in Florida, Vinten emerged as one of the leading figures in conservation and park planning and design in the state. He had a profound impact upon the designing of all seven original Florida state parks and would later shape other important projects in the state, most notably Everglades National Park. It was Vinten's work at Highlands Hammock that brought him to the attention of the NPS and ultimately led to his hiring by the park service.

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**UTM References**

<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
5) 17	447550	3040303
6) 17	449133	3040287
7) 17	449088	3037480
8) 17	448508	3037482
9) 17	447711	3038294
10) 17	447518	3038290
11) 17	447512	3037881
12) 17	444304	3037895

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary is entirely contained within the present limits of Highlands Hammock State Park. Please see boundary map for more details.

**Verbal Boundary Justification**

The boundary encompasses the entirety of the area historically associated with the Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum operations. The boundary encompasses the extant historic loop of the botanical gardens, the CCC work area, the campgrounds, the original roads and trails, and the Roebling era park. The northern and southern boundaries of the western portion of the district encompass the historic Roebling fence line, which historically served as the boundary of Highland Hammock.

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**Photographs**

Name of Property: Highlands Hammock State Park Historic District

City of Vicinity: Sebring County: Highlands State: Florida

Photographer: Andrew Waber Date Photographed: December 2017

Description of Photographs(s) and number, including description of view indicating direction of camera

1. View of Hammock Road, facing southwest
2. View of Rustic bridge near intersection of Hammock Road and Camping Area Road, facing northwest
3. View of wood bridge, facing east
4. View of Cypress Swamp trail, facing north
5. View of Cypress Swamp Trail catwalk, facing west
6. View of Cypress Swamp Trail boardwalk, facing west
7. View of Ancient Hammock Trail, facing north
8. View of Ancient Hammock Trail boardwalk, facing south
9. View of weir dam, facing northeast
10. View of Little Charley Creek Dam footbridge, facing east
11. View of Little Charley Creek Dam, facing southwest
12. View of Little Charley Creek dam control, facing south
13. View of Little Charley Creek overflow culverts, facing south
14. View of Administrative Office, facing northeast
15. View of Conference Room, facing north
16. View of Assistant Park Manager's Residence, facing northwest
17. View of Entrance Station, facing east
18. View of Campground Area, facing south
19. View of Campground Area shuffleboard court and playground, facing northwest
20. View of Campground Area Rustic Bathroom Building, facing west
21. View of Campground Area Rustic Bathhouse, facing east
22. View of Campground Area Rustic Bathroom Building, facing southeast
23. View of Campground Area Rustic Picnic Shelter, facing east
24. View of non-historic Campground Area bathhouse, facing northeast
25. View of Recreational Hall, facing northwest

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26. View of Herbarium, facing north
27. View of Greenhouse, facing northwest
28. View of Greenhouse, facing east
29. Detail view of Greenhouse, facing west
30. View of Building No. 25, facing northwest
31. View of Building No. 18, facing northeast
32. View of Building No. 19, facing northeast
33. View of Pole Barn, facing northeast
34. View of Work Area Historic Wood Storage Shed, facing northwest
35. View of non-historic storage sheds adjacent to Greenhouse, facing northeast
36. View of CCC residence, facing west
37. View of CCC residence, facing east
38. View of original Entrance Station, facing west
39. View of original Entrance Station and carport, facing west
40. View of Roebling era Caretaker's Cottage (Building No. 1), facing east
41. View of Building No. 41, facing northwest
42. View of Building No. 26, facing north
43. View of Garage (Building No. 42), facing west
44. View of Building No. 40, facing northwest
45. View of Building No. 4, facing northeast
46. View of Park Manager's Residence (Building No. 2), facing southwest
47. View of historic Auditorium, facing east
48. View of Concession Building, facing west
49. View of CCC Monument, facing east
50. View of Alligator Barbeque Shelter and Owl Pavilion Picnic shelter, facing southwest
51. View of playground and Bear Pavilion Picnic Shelter, facing southwest
52. View of picnic area, facing southeast
53. Detail view of Rustic water fountain, facing southwest
54. Detail view of Alligator Barbeque Shelter, facing north
55. Detail view of Alligator Barbeque Shelter, facing north
56. View of Amphitheater, facing southeast
57. Detail view of Amphitheater steps, facing northeast
58. View of Margaret Shippen Roebling Memorial, facing north

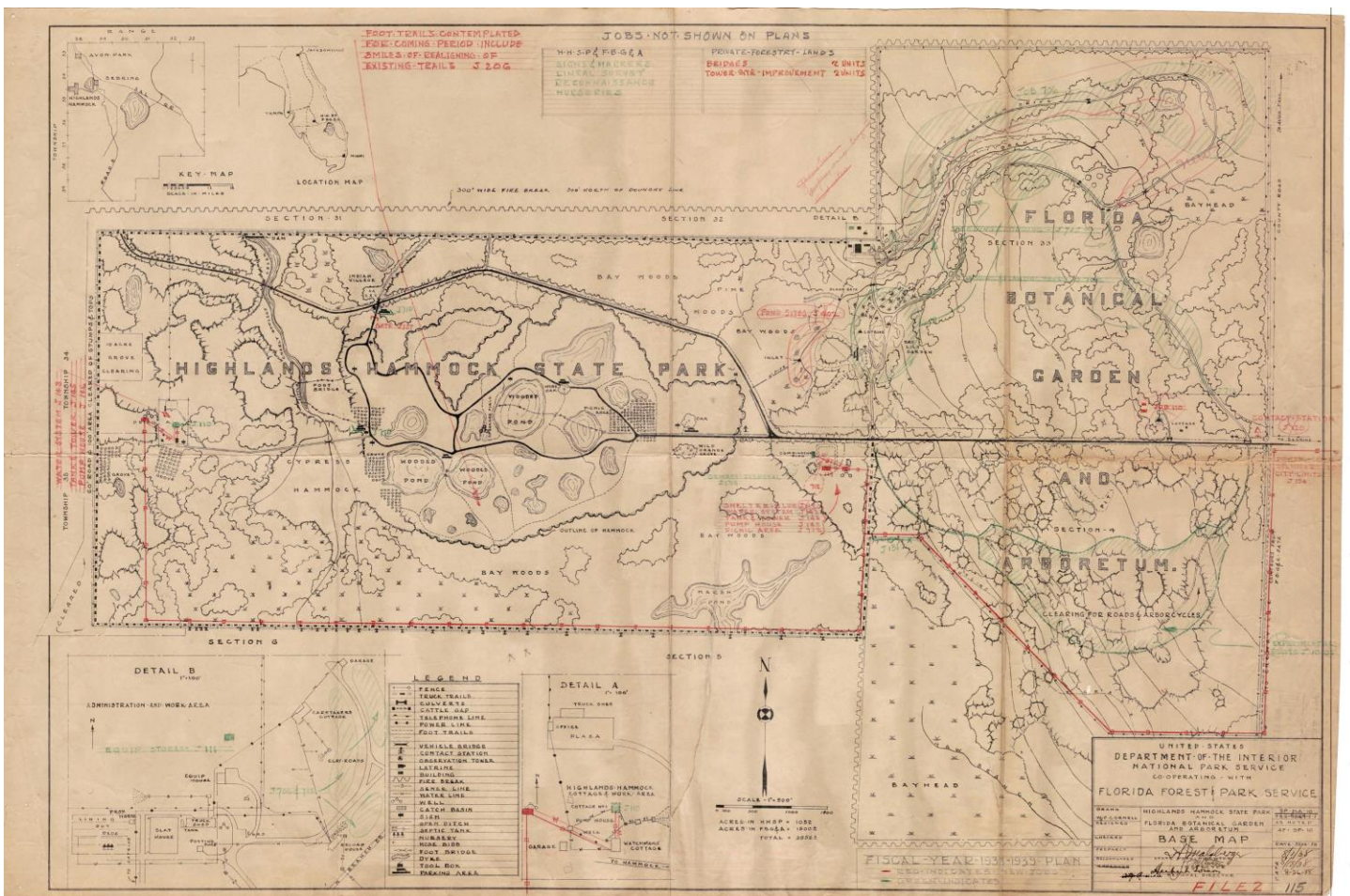
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Figure 1



Base map of Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum dated 1938  
Source: Florida Park Service Historic Collections Facility & Archive



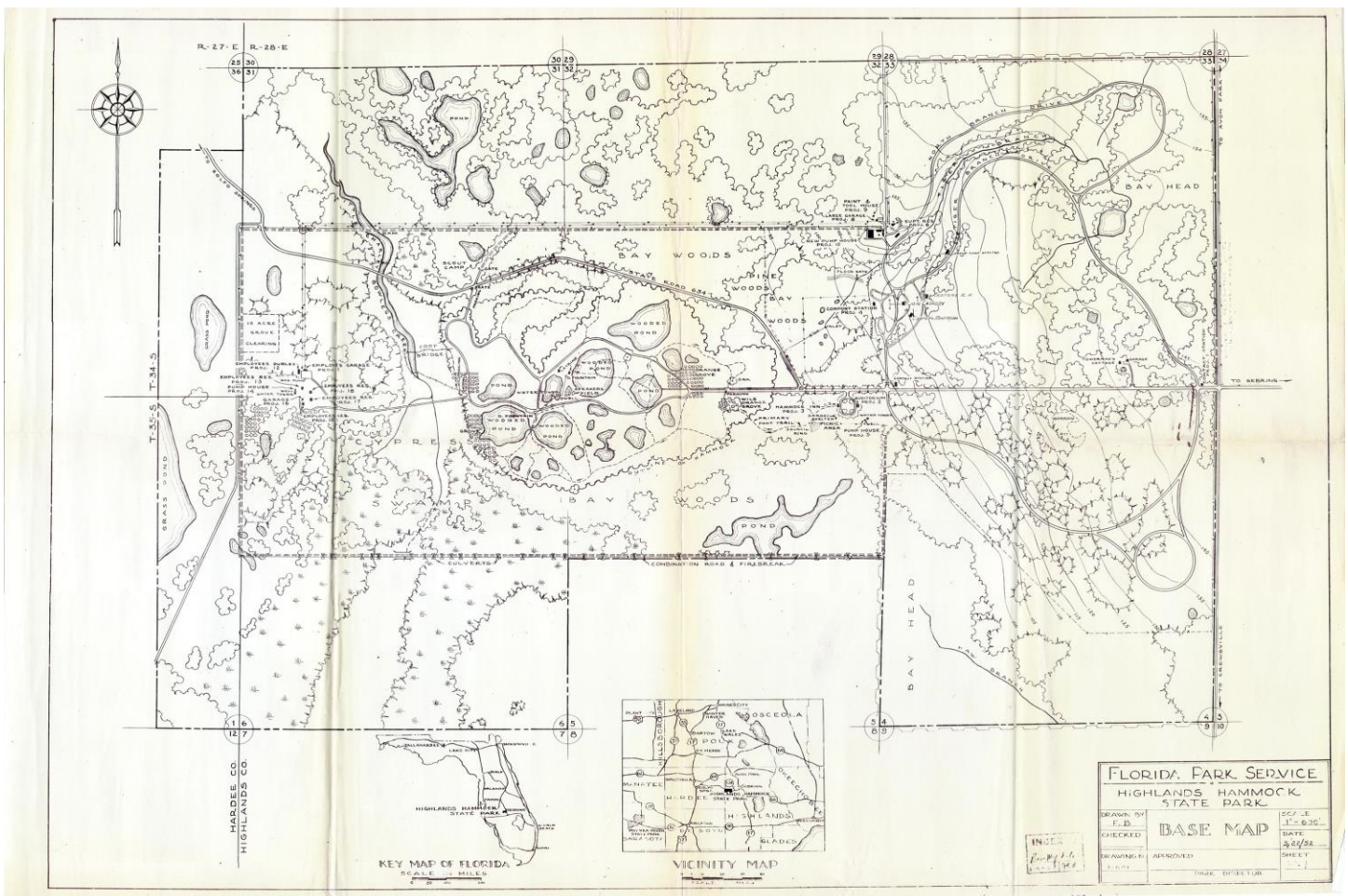
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number    Figures    Page    2

Highlands Hammock State Park and  
Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum  
Highlands County, FL

**Figure 2**



Base map of Highlands Hammock State Park dated 1952  
Source: Florida Park Service Historic Collections Facility & Archive





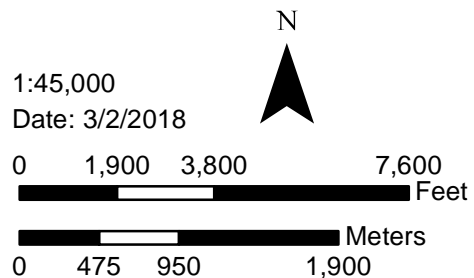
# Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum

5931 Hammock Road  
Sebring, Highlands Co. FL

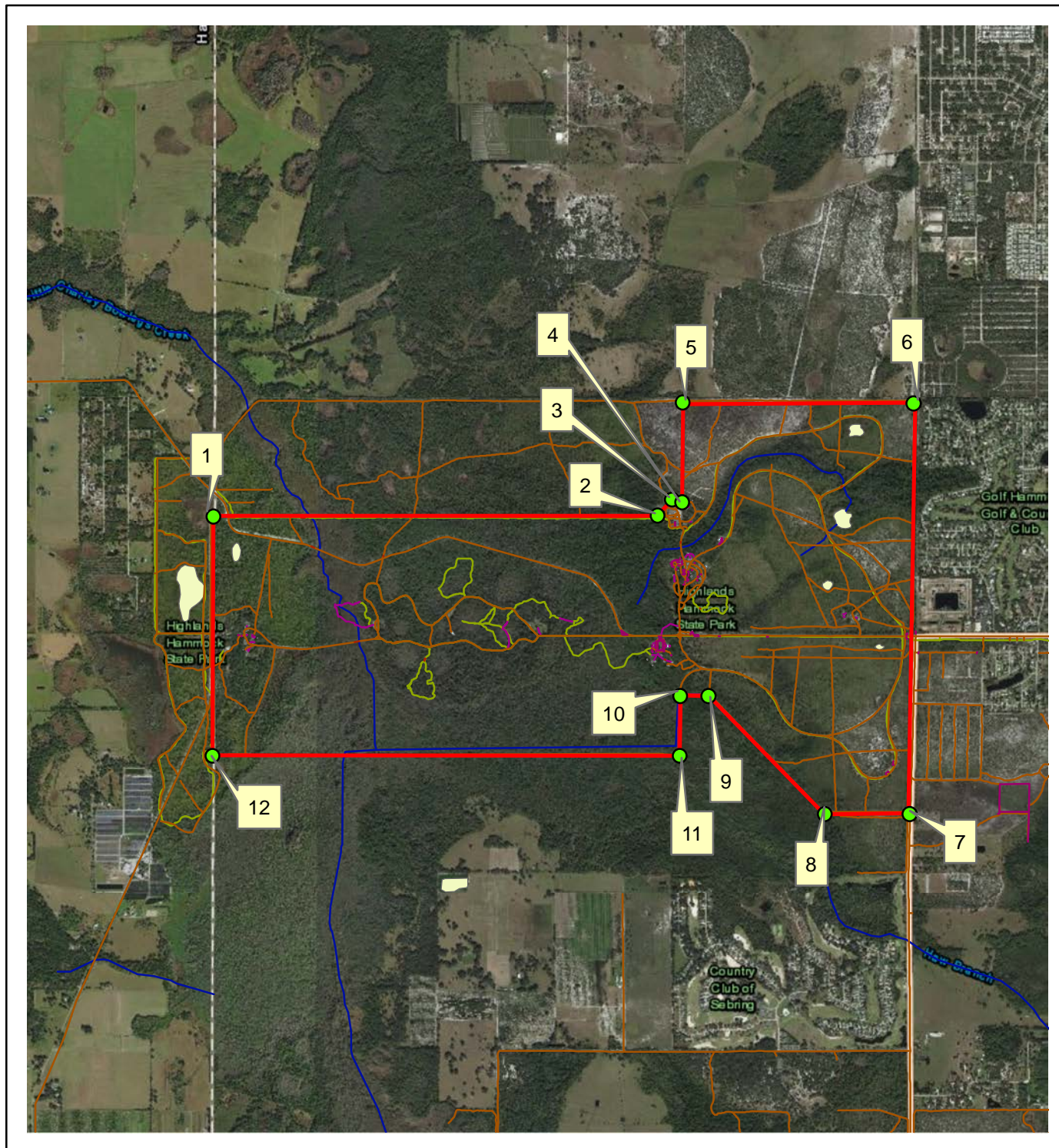
UTM:

- 1) 17R 444314 3039535
- 2) 17R 447371 3039529
- 3) 17R 447468 3039633
- 4) 17R 447540 3039621
- 5) 17R 447550 3040303
- 6) 17R 449133 3040287
- 7) 17R 449088 3037480
- 8) 17R 448508 3037482
- 9) 17R 447711 3038294
- 10) 17R 447518 3038290
- 11) 17R 447512 3037881
- 12) 17R 444304 3037895

Datum: WGS84



Basemap Source: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community





# Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum

5931 Hammock Road  
Sebring, Highlands Co. FL

UTM:

- 1) 17R 444314 3039535
- 2) 17R 447371 3039529
- 3) 17R 447468 3039633
- 4) 17R 447540 3039621
- 5) 17R 447550 3040303
- 6) 17R 449133 3040287
- 7) 17R 449088 3037480
- 8) 17R 448508 3037482
- 9) 17R 447711 3038294
- 10) 17R 447518 3038290
- 11) 17R 447512 3037881
- 12) 17R 444304 3037895

Datum: WGS84

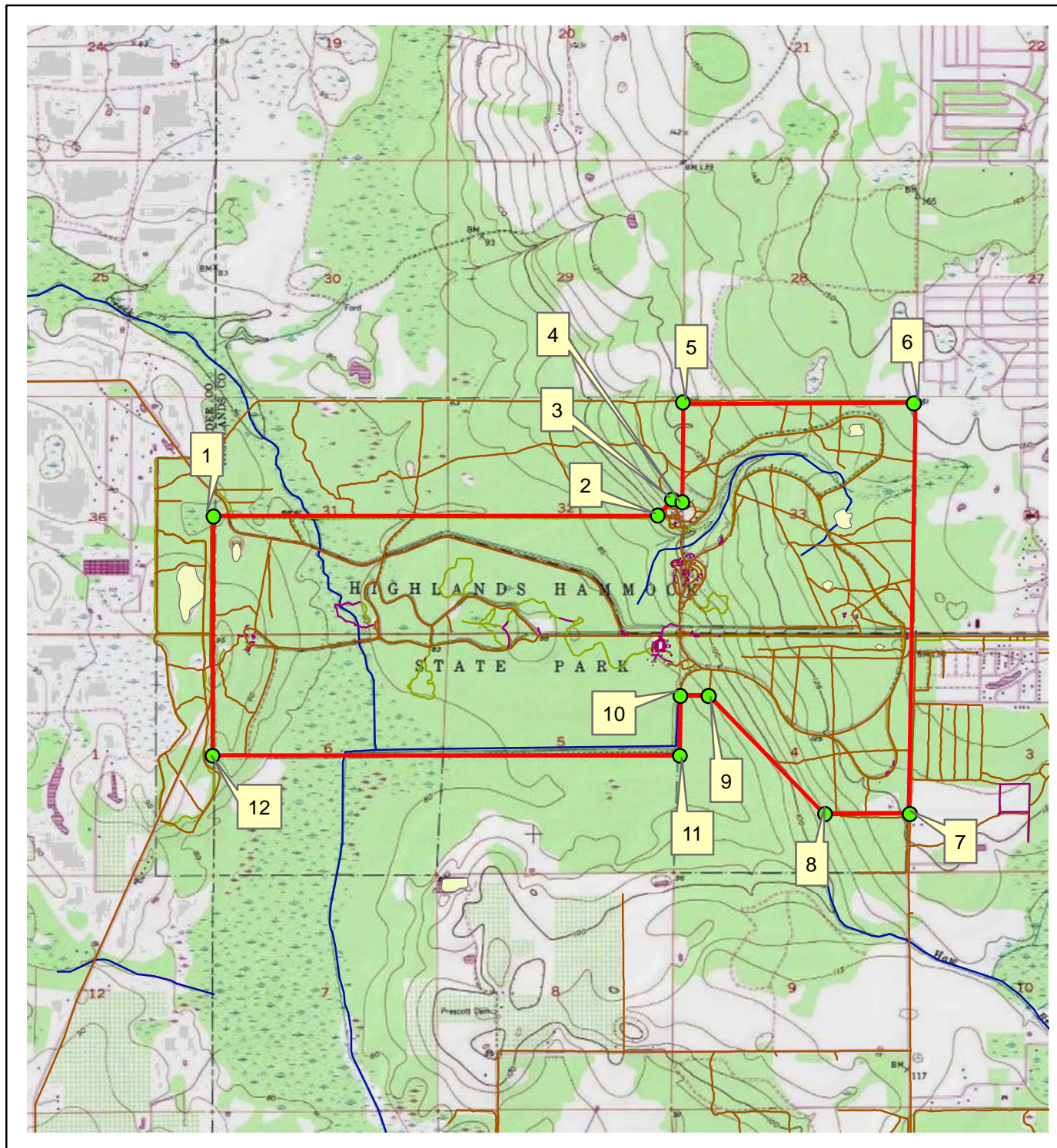
1:45,000

Date: 3/2/2018

0 1,900 3,800 7,600  
Feet

0 475 950 1,900  
Meters

Basemap Source: Source: Esri,  
DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar  
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,  
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,  
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo,  
and the GIS User Community

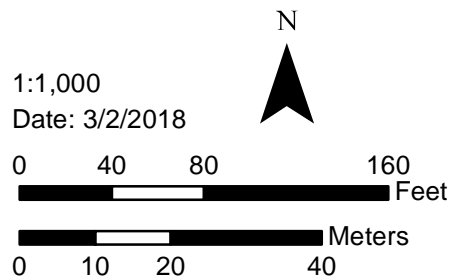




# Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum

5931 Hammock Road  
Sebring, Highlands Co. FL

Administrative Office Area



Basemap Source: Source: Esri,  
DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar  
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,  
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,  
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo,  
and the GIS User Community





# Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum

5931 Hammock Road  
Sebring, Highlands Co. FL

Campground Area

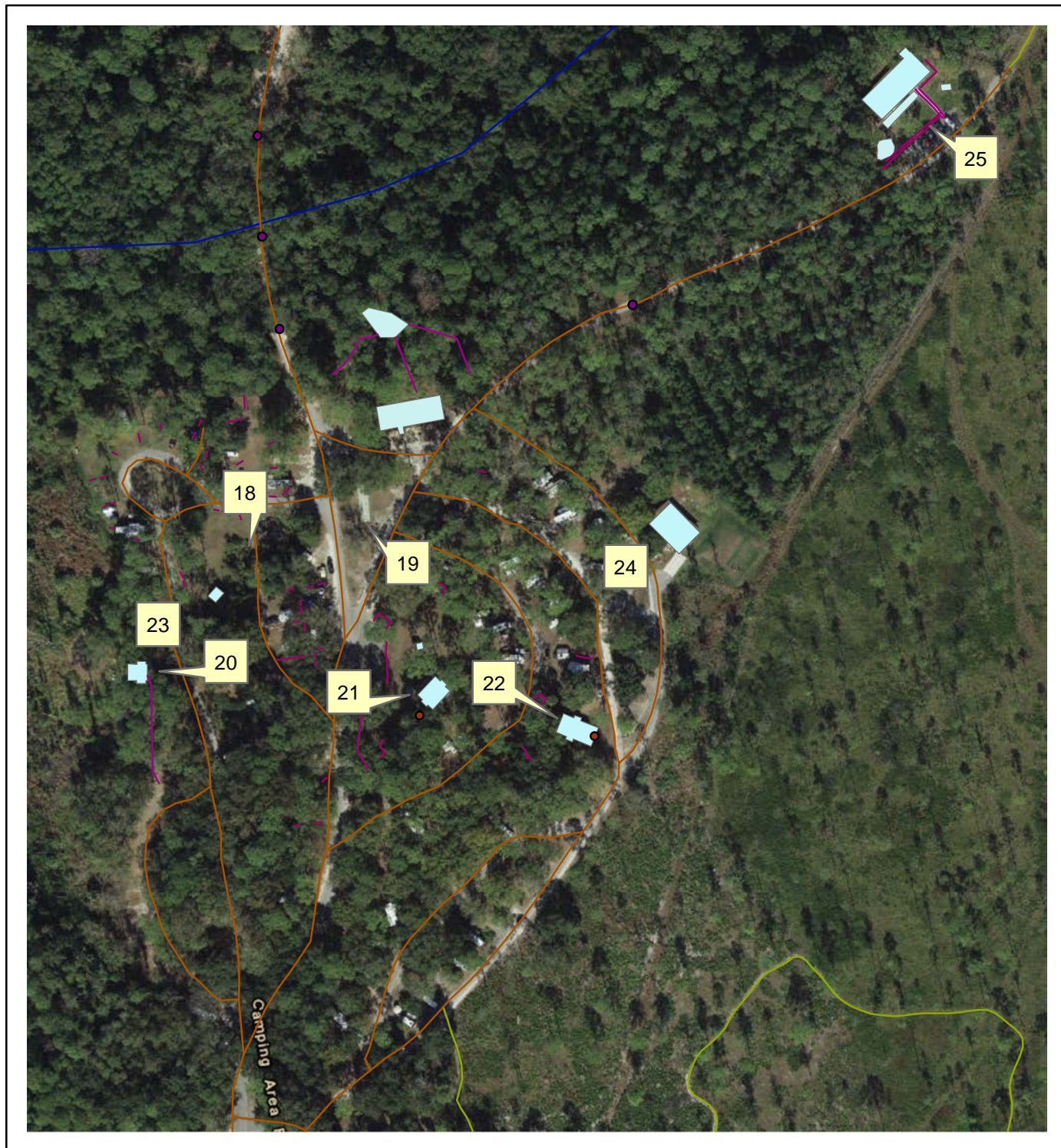
1:2,750

Date: 3/2/2018

0 115 230 460 Feet

0 25 50 100 Meters

Basemap Source: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community





# Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum

5931 Hammock Road  
Sebring, Highlands Co. FL

CCC Concession and Auditorium Area

1:1,250

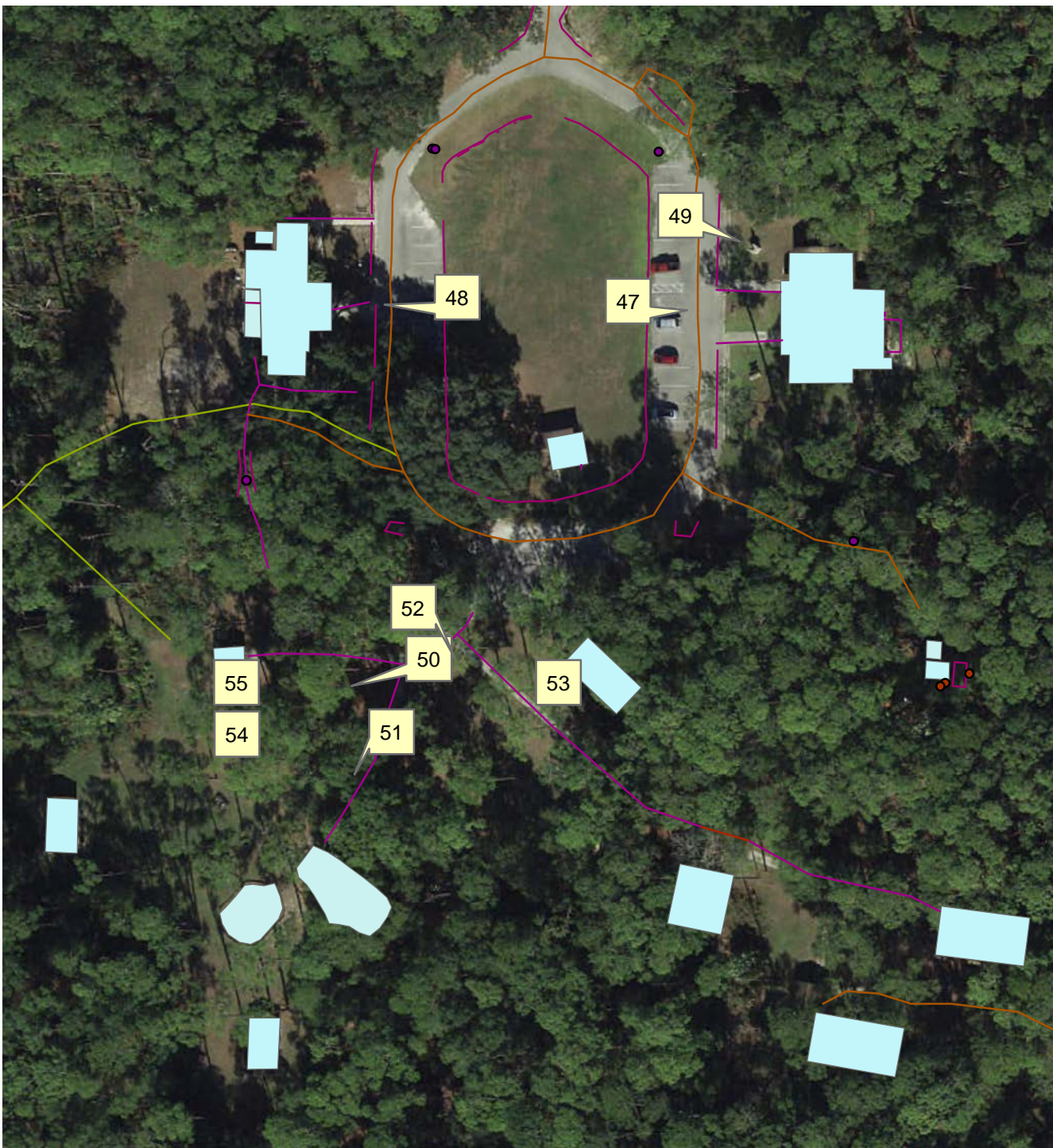
Date: 3/2/2018



0 50 100 200 Feet

0 12.5 25 50 Meters

Basemap Source: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

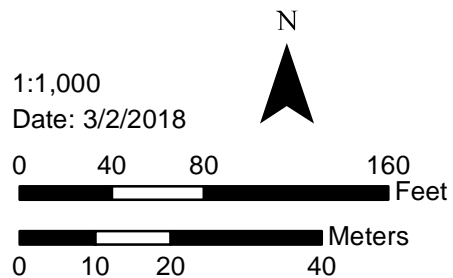




# Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum

5931 Hammock Road  
Sebring, Highlands Co. FL

Entrance Station Area



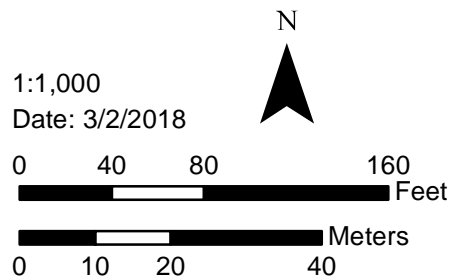
Basemap Source: Source: Esri,  
DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar  
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,  
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,  
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo,  
and the GIS User Community



# Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum

5931 Hammock Road  
Sebring, Highlands Co. FL

Little Charlie Bowlegs Creek Dam



Basemap Source: Source: Esri,  
DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar  
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,  
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,  
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo,  
and the GIS User Community

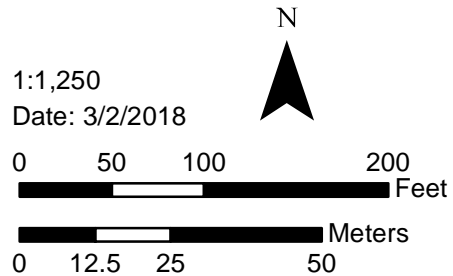




# Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum

5931 Hammock Road  
Sebring, Highlands Co. FL

Residence Area



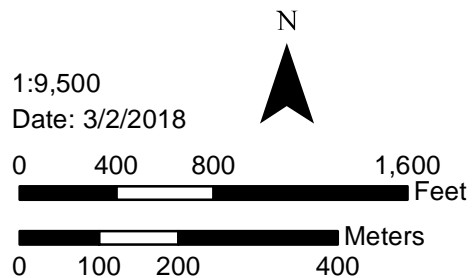
Basemap Source: Source: Esri,  
DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar  
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,  
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,  
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo,  
and the GIS User Community



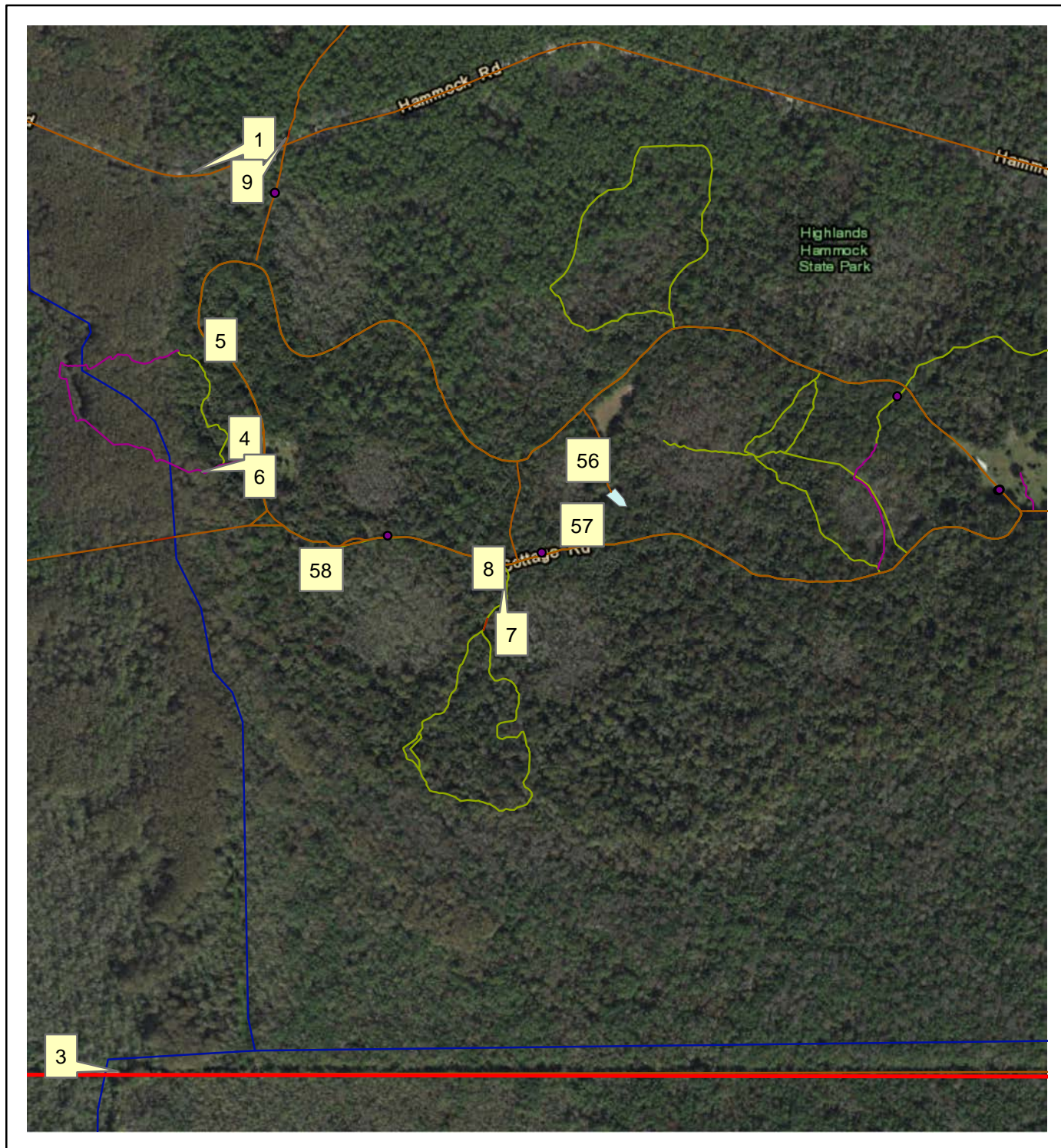


# Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum

5931 Hammock Road  
Sebring, Highlands Co. FL  
Loop Road/Trails/Amphitheater



Basemap Source: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community





# Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum

5931 Hammock Road  
Sebring, Highlands Co. FL

Work Area

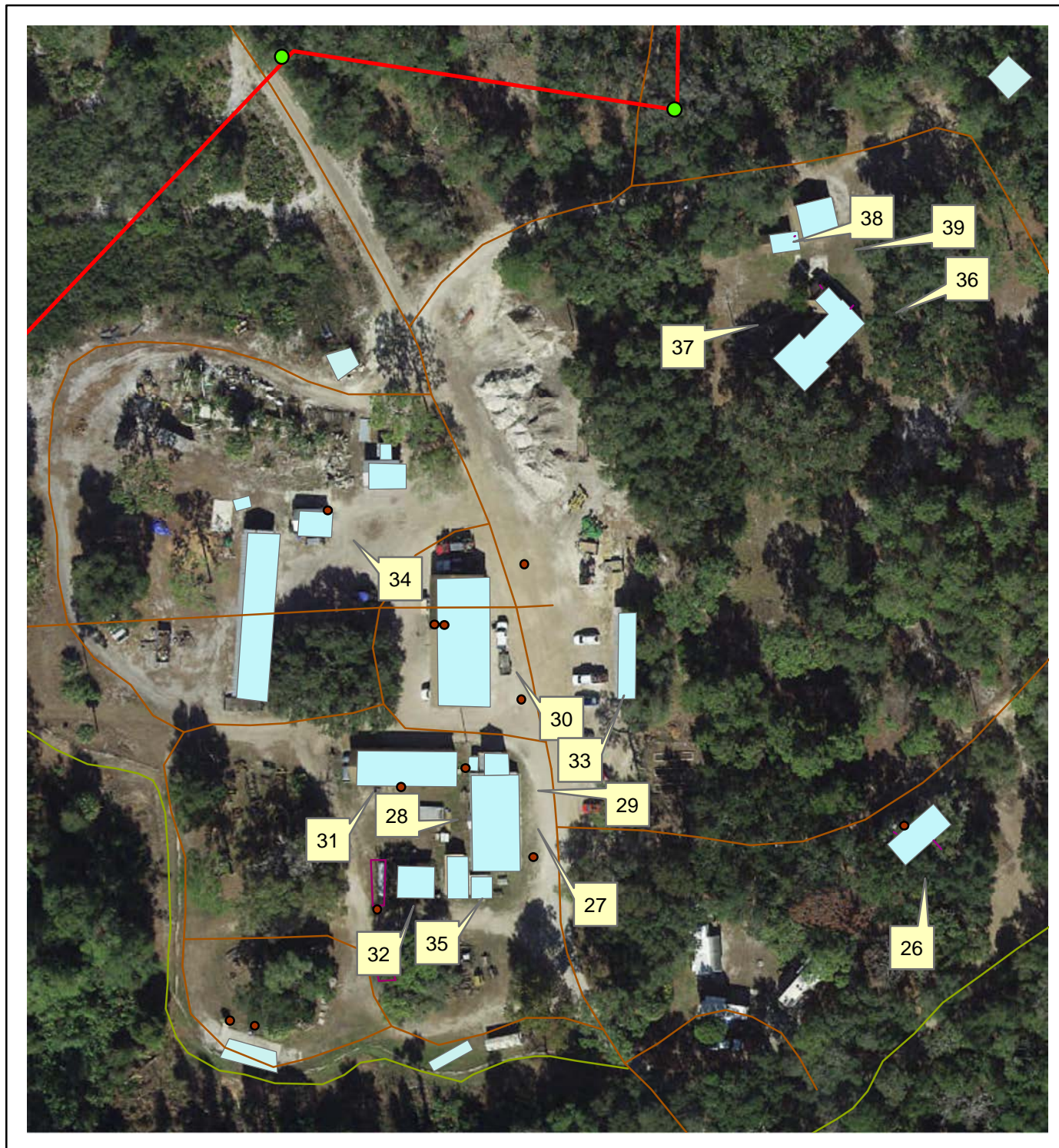
1:1,250

Date: 3/2/2018

0 50 100 200 Feet

0 12.5 25 50 Meters

Basemap Source: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



















































































PLEASE  
NO DOG WALKING  
IN BIRDS  
OR BUSHES

































Jack Cochran  
**BAIL BONDS**  
863-382-4066











WINDSOR GOLF COURSE  
11111 WINDSOR DRIVE  
WINDSOR, ONTARIO L9R 4R7

BALL BOWLS









































17

























Finishes

CCC MUSEUM  
1933-1948





Ave Direa

OPEN

Handicapped parking symbol









































HIGHLANDS HAMMOCK  
PURCHASED BY THE LATE  
MARGARET SHIPPEN ROEBLING  
(Mrs. JOHN A. ROEBLING)  
TO BEST JOUDICE AND TO CONSERVE IN THEIR ORIGINAL STATE  
THE VEGETATION AND ALL FORMS OF ANIMAL LIFE HEREIN.  
IN HER MEMORY THE OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS OF  
HIGHLANDS HAMMOCK INC. HERE PLACE THIS TABLET  
MAY 12, 1927



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Highlands Hammock State Park and Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum

Multiple Name: Florida's New Deal Resources MPS

State & County: FLORIDA, Highlands

Date Received: 9/4/2018      Date of Pending List: 10/1/2018      Date of 16th Day: 10/16/2018      Date of 45th Day: 10/19/2018      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: MP100003021

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

- |                                       |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal       | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL            | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape       | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver       | <input type="checkbox"/> National        | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other        | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP             | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
|                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG             |   |

Accept       Return       Reject      10/16/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: Meets the registration requirements of the MPS. The park was one of the state's first, and made use of the NPS state park program and partnership with the CCC. The park also became a center for botanical study and was the home base for state botanist Carol Beck, the first woman to hold that position.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept / A, B, and C

Reviewer Jim Gabbert      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : **Yes**

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.





# HIGHLANDS COUNTY

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

---

Date: May 1, 2018

To: Mr. Ruben A. Acosta  
State Historic Preservation Office  
Florida Department of State  
R.A. Gray Building, 500 South Bronough Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Subject: Support of Nomination to the Historic Register for Highlands Hammock  
State Park (HE00825), 5931 Hammock Road, Sebring, Highlands County, Florida  
33872

Dear Mr. Acosta,

It is with great pleasure that the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners gives its support to the nomination of the Highlands Hammock State Park and the Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Board enthusiastically supports the nomination to the national register of the park with the inclusion of the gardens and arboretum as a historical district. Highlands Hammock was initially formed by a private group of citizens and opened to the public in 1931. The Civilian Conservation Corps began construction of the gardens and arboretum in 1934, providing jobs to young men recruited nation-wide during the *Great Depression*. When Florida established its state park system in 1935, Highlands Hammock became one of the first state parks created in the state of Florida.

Highland County's citizens and visitors have enjoyed the park for the last 87 years; and placing the park on the National Register of Historic Places, gives Highlands Hammock State Park the historical status it richly deserves.

Respectfully,

R. Greg Harris  
Chairman







# HIGHLANDS COUNTY

PLANNING DIVISION

May 3, 2018

State Historic Preservation Office  
Florida Department of State  
Attention: Mr. Ruben Acosta  
R.A. Gray Building, 500 South Bronough Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399


Subject: Support of Nomination to the Historic Register for Highlands Hammock  
State Park (HE00825), 5931 Hammock Road, Sebring, Highlands County, Florida 33872

Dear Mr. Acosta,

I happily forward to you the enclosed letter from the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners providing support for the nomination of Highlands Hammock State Park and the Florida Botanical Gardens and Arboretum for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Thank you for giving Highlands County the opportunity to comment on this nomination.

Respectfully,

  
Joedene Thayer, AICP  
Planning Supervisor

Encl.

RECEIVED  
BUREAU OF  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
2018 MAY -7 P 3:13

501 S. Commerce Ave.  
Sebring, Florida 33870  
863-402-6650  
FAX 863-402-6651





## FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

**RICK SCOTT**  
Governor

**KEN DETZNER**  
Secretary of State



August 27, 2018

Dr. Julie Ernstein, Deputy Keeper and Chief,  
National Register of Historic Places  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C St, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Dr. Ernstein:

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the nomination for the **Highlands Hammock (FMSF#: 8HG00825), in Highlands County**, to the National Register of Historic Places. The related materials (digital images, maps, and site plan) are included.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (850) 245-6364 if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Ruben A. Acosta  
Supervisor, Survey & Registration  
Bureau of Historic Preservation

RAA/raa

Enclosures