

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



282

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 O'LENO STATE PARK

other names/site number O'Leno State Forest FMSF#CO 1260

2. Location

street & number 410 Southwest O'Leno Park Road N/A not for publication

city or town High Springs vicinity

state Florida code FL county Columbia code 023 zip code 32643

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 Slade Lotane 4/16/14
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation
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] 6-9-14
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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	
22	9	buildings
5	0	sites
11	0	structures
0	0	objects
38	9	total

Name of related multiple property listings

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

"N/A"

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

CONSERVATION

PARK

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

PARK

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Frame Vernacular: Rustic

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls WOOD

roof ASPHALT

other

Narrative Description

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

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)

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

RECREATION

Period of Significance

1935-1964

Significant Dates

1935

1940

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Broward, Robert C. (architect)

Goin and Moore (architect)

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of Repository

O'Leno State Park
Name of Property

Columbia Co., FL
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 61 acres

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

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

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

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 Sidney Johnston/Robert O. Jones, Historic Preservationist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date April 2014

street & number 500 South Bronough Street telephone 850-245-6333

city or town Tallahassee state FL zip code 32399-0250

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 Divison of Recreation and Parks attn: Parks Small

street & number 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard telephone 850-245-2157

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399

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 Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

SUMMARY

O'Leno State Park is located in Columbia County, Florida, with the main entrance on US Highway 441/41, north of High Springs, and south of the intersection with CR 18. The National Register District designation encompasses numerous buildings and structures that supported a State Forestry training camp, and state park functions. The various structures include roads, trails, a sign, a bridge, earth retention walls, and two stone amphitheaters. Buildings of varying size are built with lumber and limestone obtained on site, and concrete. All resources reflect the Frame Vernacular: Rustic Style, which includes one large building employing modern engineering. The date span of significance is 1935-1964. There are thirty eight contributing resources. There are nine non-contributing resources of modern construction.

SETTING

This State Park has a rural setting characterized by a heavily wooded mature forest with pine, oak and magnolia trees, on sandy soil with a gently rolling terrain. Roughly a mile of the Santa Fe River runs through the park and the majority of historic construction is located at a bend in the river. State Road 441/41 runs north/south at the west end of the park. Six miles to the south is the City of High Springs. Interstate 75 is less than two miles to the east of the district, and an interstate access is five miles north on SR 441/41. Small residential and business developments are scattered along SR 441/41.

O'Leno State Park contains numerous archaeological sites, both historic and pre-historic. None of them have been subjected to a professional survey. More thorough investigations will need to be done to better define each site and its significance. The archaeological component of the park is outside the scope of this nomination.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Like other public works projects sponsored by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) program, the constructions at the O'Leno State Forest, later known as the O'Leno State Park largely relied on locally available materials. Trees were felled, cut into logs, and

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 2 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

milled into lumber on a mobile saw mill that was located at the site. Quarried limestone came from a sinkhole area on the north side of the main park road.

Road and Trails

The main road, now known as the O'Leno Park Road, was constructed in 1935 to access the park area (Figure #1). This road leads to the historic gate house, now the Nature Center, is 1.53 miles in length. As a quarry to the north developed a trail from the quarry to the main road developed. Another early River Trail along the south side of the Santa Fe River (Photo #1) was constructed. A dirt road southward from the main concentration of construction accessed three designated public camps grounds. These were the early historic roads and trails constructed in the park, accomplished by 1936. The three mentioned camping areas were isolated from the original construction activity. The two most remote camping areas were known as "Youth Camps," frequently used by Boy Scouts, Four "H" Clubs, and church groups. The other campsite, currently equipped with electric plug-ins, a public lavatory and showers, was built in 1942.

Quarry

Once plans were made for the development of the park, the quarrying of on-site limestone began in 1935. A sinkhole with exposed limestone served as the source for the stone (Photo #2). The stone was used immediately for building foundations, chimneys, and earthwork retention walls to retard erosion. Stone steps were a part of a retention wall that ran parallel to the mess hall to the south (Photo #3). The stone was also used as foundation material for the bridge, and for bases for signage. The stone used for soil retention walls served a second use as a tiered amphitheater located at the bend in the Santa Fe River (Photo #4). The former swimming dock at the bend of the river is no longer present. Immediately north of the amphitheater, another retention wall skirts the river adjacent to a camping and picnic area (Photo #5). Following a flood in 1942, this wall was deemed essential. The park near the river frequently flooded every two to five years to such an extent that the suspension bridge was often under water. The retention wall beside the popular camp area was an effort to deflect some flooding, and minimize erosion.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 3 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

Fire Tower

The steel fire tower at the entrance to O'Leno Park Road, built in 1935, was one of the early Forest Service projects (Photo #6). It was a standard steel tower fabricated by the Aermotor Corporation in Chicago identified by a steel plate affixed to the tower. It was assembled on the site by the WPA team. It was put up during the period when the Park Service was installing towers across the state, and today remains one of the oldest towers still remaining in Florida. The tower was used as an educational tool for the Forest Service training camp, and is still used for this purpose today.

Small Amphitheater

Roughly five-hundred feet eastward along the river trail from the mess hall is a crescent shaped stone retention wall built around 1937. It is about four feet in height with two short enclosing ends (Photo #7). Within this enclosure is a group of low wooden benches. The wall is set-back from the trail with a broad level clearing from the amphitheater to the river.

Sign

Where the main O'Leno road diverts from Highway 441/41, a large wooden sign supported by two up-right sections of small-gage railroad rail was built ca1936 (Photo #8). The base foundation of the sign is quarried limestone. In 1957, under new management of the state park system, the wooden sign portion was replaced.

Mess Hall

The most prominent building in the park as well as the most ambitiously engineered construction in the park is the log mess hall built in 1935 (Photo #9). Aligned parallel to the Santa Fe River, the hall has an elevated foundation and two massive stone fireplaces with chimneys. The eastern fireplace is internal (Photo #10), and the western one is placed externally. The large side-gable roof shelters the main assembly area, a cross-gable shelters a kitchen at the east end, and a lower, shorter extension gable is at the west end sheltering a stage. Broad eaves on the north and south sides cover porches that are

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 4 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

supported by posts made of tree trunks stripped of their bark. The north side has handrails and central stairs. The walls are composed of round logs stacked into rounded-notch corner joints. The joinery was enhanced by the insertion of vertical steel rods into the notched joints during construction. The gable areas of the walls have boards set on 45 degree angles. The main entrances centered on the north and south walls have tiered log corner joints (Photo #11).

Suspension Bridge

The second major construction project that occurred in the initial phase of park development was a suspension bridge located to the east of the major bend in the Santa Fe River (Photo #12). Stone and concrete abutment foundations are located on either side of the river and provide pedestrian approaches, and reinforce pairs of tall tree trunk posts hold the steel cables that span the river. These tall posts are reinforced with small-gage railroad rails left from earlier lumber operations (Photo #13). The cables that span the river in turn support vertical steel cables that support a suspended board walkway.

Infirmary

In keeping with the most frequent approach to early park construction was the infirmary. It is a rectangular, side-gabled building with a gable-fronted central entrance. A timber frame supports sawn boards with rounded fronts, up to the window height, and common boards were attached on 45 degree angles above the windows and in the gables (Figure #2). The infirmary was resurfaced in 1964 in board and batten. At the same time a bathroom was added to the west/rear side of the building, also enlarging the two bedrooms (Photo #14).

Immediately south of the infirmary was a clay tennis court, now buried under two inches of soil. The integrity of this structure has not been investigated and for this nomination it is regarded as non-contributing.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 5 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

Camper Cabins – Leader Cabins

Many cabins were built beginning in 1935, for the laborers, public visitors, and work team leaders (Photos #15). They were built in rectangular, “L,” and “T”-shaped forms. They had gable and cross-gable roofs, and sawn boards with rounded fronts mounted onto a timber frame. Boards attached at 45 degree angles filled the gables and sometimes the walls above the windows. Due to the deteriorated wood condition, Jacksonville architect Robert C. Broward designed replacement visitor cabins. They were rebuilt in 1964 with board and batten exteriors. (Photo #16). Window spaces were filled with screens which allow ventilation but not interior temperature control.

Museum and Library

The museum and library building, constructed in 1936, is very distinctive for its east end tower with octagonal second story (Photo #17). Built with a continuous stone foundation, it also features sawn boards with rounded fronts attached to a timber frame. It has a large single open room intended to house historic documents and records, for educating the public about the forestry activities in the park.

Pavilion

One of the most picturesque buildings on site is the large open-air picnic pavilion that overlooks the bend in the river (Photo #18). Built in 1936, it has a cross form, and is built upon a slab stone and concrete foundation. Constructed with massive cypress tree trunks and thick branches, it has always served as a sheltered open air group gathering facility.

Handicraft Lodge

Built in 1937, the handicraft lodge was used to teach the trainees at the forestry school (Photo #19). The lodge has a “T” shaped form on a stone and concrete slab foundation, with a small rectangular building and open “T” shaped porch extending from the west side of the building. The porch has tree trunk posts supporting the roof. Waist-high wooden poles fill between the supporting posts. Continuous work benches for the students line the porch walls.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 6 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

Canteen Building

The canteen is small rectangular front-gabled building, built in 1937 to dispense snacks and personal necessities to the men working on the development (Photos #20). The front, west gable extends beyond the building to shelter the large concessions' window. The overhang is supported on its corners by 6" x 6" wooden posts. The building is surfaced with horizontal siding and has corner boards. The building and porch are constructed on a stone and concrete slab foundation. The yard space to the west of the building is terraced flat with a short stone retention wall.

A water tower formerly located east of the concession building was built 1935, but is no longer there. The date of its demolition is not known.

Experimental Tree Planting

A third of a mile east from the main park gate house, pine trees planted in rows are visible on either side of the main road (Photo #21). The 14 acres of long-needle pines are an early Forestry training camp project to test the adaptability of this variety of pine to the O'Leno geography.

Tool House

Constructed in 1938 entirely of stone, the building served as tool storage and an office. The southern half of the building was used for tool storage, and the north half was an office workers were paid every week (Photo #22). The building features stepped parapets at both gable ends and buttresses extending from the foundation corners. Rafters made of rough round lumber are exposed within the gable and support a steep pitched roof with two side gables sheltering two utility doors on the north elevation.

Storage/Smokehouse

The small rectangular board and batten storage shed was constructed in 1940 (Photo #23). It is built on a slab foundation with a cross gable roof extension to the south which is supported by two 4" x 4" posts on the corners. Though referred to as a "smokehouse," it

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 7 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

was used for food storage, and a root cellar is located under a trap door sheltered by the roof extension. Both the storage shed and the barn were built for the live-in superintendent of the newly formed state park, Carlos Maxwell.

Barn

The large barn which was built in 1940, has a broad front-gable roof and horizontal siding (Photo #24). The center of the barn opens to a loft for hay storage. One-story incised areas on both the east and west sides of the barn are open for storage and work areas.

Cook House

Located in the woods roughly one-hundred and thirty feet to the east of the Tool House is a small rectangular board and batten dwelling, constructed ca1937, that is referred to by its early use as the cooks' cabin (Photo #25). It has a door and two windows.

Gate Houses

In 1942, the state park built a gate house near, west of, the concentration of buildings adjacent to the bend in the Santa Fe River. This is now called the nature center. It is a small rectangular building on a concrete slab foundation, with a front-gabled roof facing north (Photo #26). Limestone walls rise to window sill level, and board and batten complete the walls up to the vents in the gable peak. The entrance door is located east of center and is sheltered by a large gable roof porch that covers the east half of the building. The roof is supported by 6" x 6" wooden posts that are joined along the east and west sides.

Near the ca1936 sign is a newer gate house built in 1981. It reflects the same style and materials as the 1956 gate house, but is non-contributing because of its age.

Dining Hall

In 1958, the parks program hired Goin and Moore architects of Gainesville, to design a large dining hall for the park (Photo #27). To accommodate an open space for large

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 8 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

gatherings of many people they relied the use of glue laminated lumber, a technology introduced to the United States before the Second World War (Photo #28). Large laminated curvilinear arches function as a truss system to support the walls and roof. The foundation is a concrete slab. Walls are limestone and fixed glass across the south elevation, and fixed glass across the north elevation. Stone exteriors cover the east and west elevations. The east end of the building contains a large kitchen, freezer room, and small lavatories. The west end of the building is finished on the interior with buff concrete block and contains a fireplace. The floor is terrazzo.

Bathrooms

The original lavatory and bath buildings were constructed of lumber on timber frames. By 1954, the wooden buildings were in poor condition. The Park Service Design department planned replacements that were located adjacent to the old buildings (Photo #29). These new facilities were divided in the middle so men and women could use the same building. Built upon slab foundations, the side gabled rectangular buildings have stone walls with narrow ribbon windows along the top perimeter of the walls.

The bathroom farthest east was near a baseball field that had been in use since the early period of the camp hence, it was referred to as the "ball field bathroom." Trees are beginning to fill the open space of the former baseball field, and a chicken-wire backstop for home plate is all that remains. Due to its loss of integrity it is not a contributing resource.

NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

In the early 1970s, new trainees in the Forestry Camp were given the assignment of building a cabin at the east end of the grouping of cabins. As a result, six new frame cabins referred to by park staff as "box" cabins were built (Photo #30). They are non-contributing due to their age.

The gate house currently used for visitor check-in was built in 1981, and therefore is a non-contributing resource.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 9 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

The public toilets and showers building located by the main parking area was built in 1983, and therefore is a non-contributing resource.

The covered display area for mill related artifacts was built in 2004, and therefore is a non-contributing resource.

Contributing Resource List	FMSF#
1935	
Main Road (structure)	
Unpaved Road to (structure)	
Three public camp sites (sites)	
Trail south side of Santa Fe River (structure)	
Quarry (site)	
Retention walls (structure)	
Mess Hall (building)	CO387
Fire Tower (structure)	
1936	
Signs (structure)	
Suspension Bridge (structure)	
Infirmery (building)	CO391
Museum (building)	CO385
Pavilion (building)	CO386
7 Cabins and 3 Leader Cabins (buildings)	
Cook's cottage (building)	
Amphitheater structure)	
1937	
Small amphitheater (structure)	
Handicraft Lodge (building)	
Canteen (building)	
Experimental Track of long-needle pine (site)	
1938	
Tool House (building)	CO388
1940	
Smokehouse (building)	CO389

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 10 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

Barn (building)

1942

Gate House (building)

CO390

1954

2 Bathrooms (building)

1958

Dining Hall (building)

Non-Contributing Resources

6 Cabins built 1970s

Gate House built 1981

Public Bathroom 1983

Display Shelter built 2004

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 1 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

SUMMARY

O'Leno State Park is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C at the local level in the areas of Recreation, Social History, and Architecture. The period of significance is from 1935 to 1964. This section of the Santa Fe River at the little community of O'Leno had long been a popular gathering place for people in the surrounding area. The park was locally supported since it was first conceived by the Florida Forest Service. The development of the O'Leno State Forest and then O'Leno State Park was part of a job creations program under the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Largely relying on locally quarried stone, and locally milled lumber, the buildings and structures were constructed in the Rustic Style of Frame Vernacular.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

O'Leno began as a former 19th century mill community on the Santa Fe River north of High Springs, and fully developed in the aftermath of the Second Seminole War. During the war in the 1830s, a cavalry fort, or cantonment, known as Fort Winfield Scott was located near the bend in the Santa Fe River. After the war a telegraph wire was run from Alachua to Live Oak, to create a "wire road" that traversed the community. The river provided the power to run several mills, and a small commercial area developed at the river's bend that catered to travelers.

This cluster of development had become a ghost town by the 1930s, when the Florida Forest Service examined the surrounding woodlands for a site of approximately 5,000 acres. The river front location was a favored recreational spot for residents of the area by the beginning of the 20th century. The favorable location of the region, the historical value of the community, and potentially low cost of the land proved inviting to the state. The river formed a sink near the town, where the entire Santa Fe River ran underground before emerging three miles farther south. The unique and natural beauty of the Santa Fe River and its sink, the historic Bellamy Road which ran diagonally through the area nine-tenths of a mile from the parks' nature center, and the ghost town of O'Leno intrigued Florida Forest Service officials.¹

¹ Sidney Johnston, "Cultural Resource Survey: New Deal Era Resources in Nine Florida State Parks," (St. Augustine, Florida: 1989), 29-31.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 2 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

Efforts to create what was initially referred to as O'Leno State Forest began in May 1934. Tourism became an important factor in the acquisition of O'Leno. The site was located adjacent to U. S. Highway 41 and U. S. Highway 441, significant arteries for tourist travel through Florida. State officials were sensitive to increased tourism in Florida, and the frequently used routes. They recognized that O'Leno contained several important elements for a park, including highway proximity, swimming facilities, and natural beauty. From its earliest conception, O'Leno was assigned a number of designations including "state forest," "state park," and "state forest park."²

Land acquisition presented numerous challenges. Nearly forty people held title to property in the vicinity. As victims of the Depression, many landholders had allowed their taxes to become delinquent. Additionally, numerous parcels were simply listed as owner unknown and no clear title could be obtained. In June 1934, Florida's attorney general Cary Landis, wrote to Harry Lee Baker, Florida's state forester, about the status of one section of land in what now includes the current location of the park. Landis cited fifteen separate parcels for which clear title had not been secured, and for which the state might encounter legal difficulties if it acquired them. One of the largest landholders in the area was the High Springs Bank, which owned a seven-hundred acre tract, considered the most desirable property in the area. Harry Lee Baker informed the bank that the state was interested in its land, including the natural bridge area. Baker also told bank officials that the state wanted to expand its ownership along the Santa Fe River. Subsequently, clear titles were obtained and through purchase and land exchanges the state acquired one-hundred and sixty acres on the Santa Fe River.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

In November 1934, a deal was struck between the State Board of Forestry and the federal government. The federal government absorbed the cost of acquiring lands at O'Leno, relieving the Florida Internal Improvement Fund and the State Forestry Board of their financial obligations. By 1936, 1,410 acres had been acquired, including the Santa Fe River sink and considerable riverfront property.³

² Ibid., 29-31.

³ Ibid., 29-31.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 3 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

In December 1934, the Florida Forest Service developed a general plan for a vocational training camp at O'Leno. The plan included a mess hall, guest lodges and cabins, infirmary, museum, and a swimming site. Individual building plans were prepared and construction approved in March 1935. Initially, Works Progress Administration (WPA) laborers from Gainesville were assigned the construction work. The WPA forestry camp project was designated "WPA 12-223." Later, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) enrollees from Olustee, an African American group, supplemented the forestry work force. Due to cost overruns, inexperienced WPA laborers, and the lack of sufficiently trained local experienced men (LEMs) to teach CCC enrollees construction skills, construction bids were let to private contractors. Hand-hewn pine and cypress logs and shakes adorned many of O'Leno's buildings. Skilled laborers from the surrounding communities directed construction of buildings and structures, using CCC enrollees and WPA laborers as assistants. The United States Forestry Service (USFS), in conjunction with the Florida Forest Service, supervised the development. Purchased materials included finished lumber for floors and window sashes and equipment for kitchens and cabins. By June 1936, the mess hall, infirmary, caretaker's cabin, and guest and camper cabins had been completed by WPA laborers. A suspension bridge spanning the Santa Fe and a small rock dam were also constructed by 1936.⁴

Finding laborers to construct buildings proved difficult. In December 1935, WPA funding for the O'Leno development expired, and though a few CCC enrollees remained, construction was curtailed. Assistant State Forester H.J. Malsberger made inquiries about securing other sources of laborers. Hulan Whitehead, the extension ranger at O'Leno, expressed an interest in securing additional CCC enrollees to aid in the construction of the museum building, handicraft lodge, waterfront facilities, and amphitheater. In April 1936, twenty-five CCC enrollees from camp P-67 in Clay County were sent to O'Leno to continue work. In July 1938, the WPA authorized a proposal to continue improvements at O'Leno. Work during the interval included the construction of a limestone tool house, the library/museum building, the addition of dormers to the mess hall, terracing the river bank, and developing an amphitheater.⁵

⁴ Florida Forest and Park Service, Fourth Biennial Report (Tallahassee:1936), 16-23; Johnston, "Cultural Resource Survey," 29-31.

⁵ Johnston, "Cultural Resource Survey," 29-31.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 4 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

Construction of nine rustic wood frame rental cottages followed in 1936. Overnight cabins or cottages were the exception at Florida's state parks during the New Deal, available only at Gold Head, Hillsborough River, Myakka River, and O'Leno state parks. Cabin design and selection of construction materials differed at each park, a decision generally left to the discretion of either the park or project superintendent and his staff. The National Parks Service reserved final approval for the plans.⁶

Initially, the O'Leno Forestry Camp was developed as a youth forestry training center. As early as June 1934, the Boy Scouts, 4-H clubs, and vocational high school programs expressed interest in using O'Leno as part of their educational programs. A favorite location for those groups, O'Leno was the site for annual local Boy Scouts and Future Farmers of America activities between 1936 and 1940. The camp operated for three two-week periods each year, during which time instructors taught forestry lessons to high school vocational and agriculture students and Boy Scouts. During the remainder of the year, the camp was made available to the public on a rental basis. It included overnight cabins and other public facilities, nature trails, an amphitheater, and historical sites. Developed as a state forest, O'Leno was transferred to the park division of the Florida Forest and Park Service in October 1940. Public visitation reached six thousand in 1945.⁷

By 1941, the State had developed and opened parks at Florida Caverns at Marianna, Fort Clinch at the north end of Amelia Island, Gold Head Branch near Keystone Heights, Highland Hammock at Sebring, Hillsborough River near Zephyrhills, Myakka River near Sarasota, O'Leno near High Springs, and Torreya in Liberty County.

⁶*Pictorial Review, Civilian Conservation Corps, District I, Company 2444, FLA. SP-5, n.p.; Johnston, 17-19.*

⁷Lewis G. Scoggin, "The History of Florida State Parks," *Florida Park Service News*, (Tallahassee: 1947), 22; Florida State Planning Board, *Florida Park, Parkway and Recreational-Area Study* (Tallahassee: 1940), 40-41; Florida State Planning Board, *Summaries of the Park, Parkway, and Recreational Area Study and Forest Resources Survey for Florida*, 37, 38; Jerrell H. Shofner, "Roosevelt's 'Tree Army,'" *Florida Historical Quarterly*, (1987), 439 & 452; Florida Forest and Park Service, *Fourth Biennial Report*, (Tallahassee: 1936), 17-23; *Fifth Biennial Report* (Tallahassee: 1938), 26, 51; *Sixth Biennial Report (1940)*, 56; Johnston, 29-31.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 5 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

Although the property transitioned to a park, its earliest mission was as a State Forestry training camp for young forest rangers, a training function still carried on today. Some of the historic resources extant are related to the early forestry training camps. The fire tower was, and is still used to train rangers in forest monitoring. The experimental pine tree planting that straddles O'Leno Park Road was done to gauge the suitability of the area's geography to the reintroduction of long-needle pine forests that had been obliterated across Florida by the early twentieth century. Though planted in the 1930s, the long-lived and hardy trees are not yet mature. The 1937 Handicraft Lodge still provides a work place for forester trainees to learn craft and manual-skills.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

Rustic or Adirondack Style is a variation on vernacular forms of residential construction. This distinctive variation was developed and popularized between 1870 and 1930, most notably in the Adirondack region of New York State. Typically, large vacation lodges were built within wooded, rural settings, frequently overlooking bodies of water. Log construction was used most frequently although some stone construction was common, and displayed the use of locally available materials. The style was characterized by broad eaves on roofs with exposed large timber construction, large porches, simply proportioned window and doors, and rough lumber building elements used as ornamental features. Developed as rural vacation lodges or camps, various living functions were separated into distinct buildings such as guest cottages, kitchen, dining hall, library, and assembly spaces.⁸

Glue-laminated timber arches were used in Switzerland in 1893, but the technique was not common in Europe until after 1906, when Otto Hetzer of Germany received a patent for curved laminated members. Known as the Hetzer method, the structural members were used in railroad stations, factories, and workshops. A shortage of casein glue curtailed their use during World War I. In the United States, glued laminated wood resulted in the development of plywood, and the McKeown Brothers Company of Chicago used glue and nails to assemble bow-string-truss chords in the 1920s. Otto Hanisch, who had worked with Hetzer in Germany, came to the United States in 1923. In 1934, he formed the Unit Structures firm in Peshtigo, Wisconsin. That same year they built the first glue laminated

⁸ "The Adirondack Rustic Style," Old House Journal, Vol. 11, #1, (January/February 1983).

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 6 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

timber building in the United States, the Peshtigo High School gymnasium. Between 1935 and the United States' involvement in World War II, Unit Structures remained the primary contractor for the technology. More than one hundred buildings were constructed, including schools, churches, barns, and storage facilities. Most were built in Wisconsin. With the onset of World War II, many military contracts included glue laminated timber because metals were diverted for weapons use.⁹

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Dining Hall, built in 1958, was designed by Gainesville architects Goin and Moore. The hall utilizes a technology of glue laminated timber arches to build this large open-space public gathering facility. Little attention has been given to this construction technique that is often regarded as a modern element. There are several notable large glue-laminated arch buildings in Florida, which include the 1949 All Saints Episcopal Church in Ft. Lauderdale, and the 1962 First United Methodist Church in Winter Park. The laminated arch was a remarkable way to provide the structural support for both the walls and roof of a building in one unit. The laminated arches were assembled in a plant and were transported by truck to the building site, where a crane hoisted the pieces into place. The spacious interior of the O'Leno dining hall is modern in appearance, and glass lines both the north and south elevations. Rubble laid limestone surfaces the walls on the south elevation up to the window sills, and the east and west ends of the elevation, which integrates it with the Rustic Style construction used in every other resource in the park.

The use of the Rustic Style of vernacular architecture in the development of O'Leno, other Florida parks, and the nation, became a public park hallmark of the age. Brought about during the Great Depression, and sponsored by the WPA, government sponsored employment got people back to work, expanded the nations' parks, developed conservation lands, and provided training opportunities in forestry and construction trades. The Rustic Style harkened back to a pre-urbanized America, of a self-sufficient rural life, and a reliance on the materials that one had available. The construction at O'Leno was accomplished with stone and lumber harvested from the park property. Various forms of vernacular construction were undertaken at O'Leno by the Forestry Training School teams

⁹ Thomas C. Jester, editor, "Twentieth-Century Building Materials," (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1995), 141-144.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 7

**O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

and members of several WPA and Civilian Conservation Corps. The 1935 "mess" building was a massive log construction. The "pavilion" was composed of all cypress log construction. The "tool" building is composed entirely of limestone. Timber construction formed the skeleton for half-log and milled-on-site boards for many buildings including the "museum." Board and batten, and board and batten combined with rubble stone was used on the bath and lavatory buildings and ranger station. A defining characteristic of the earlier Adirondack Style was that it was a camp collection of buildings with different functions, and the ensemble fronted onto a body of water. This characteristic is evident in the O'Leno Park development, fronting onto a riverfront, with each building having its own function. The functions of the buildings are arranged in separate areas as well, with the community functions such as mess hall, infirmary, canteen, and amphitheater grouped near the bend in the river. The residential functions with cabins, toilets and showers are located south of the community buildings.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 9 Page 1 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

BIBLIOGRAPHY

"The Adirondack Rustic Style," Old House Journal, Vol. 11, #1., January/February, 1983.

Carpenter, Mark, interview with Robert Jones, February, 2014.

Columbia County Property Appraiser (parcel identification)

Division of Recreation and Parks, Bureau of Design and Construction, "Construction Drawing Files (1933- 1988)," Microfiche Collection. Carr Building, Tallahassee.

Florida Forest and Park Service, *Fourth Biennial Report*, 1936.

Florida Memory Project, Photographs, "O'Leno," Library of Florida.

Jester, Thomas C., editor, "Twentieth-Century Building Materials," Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, 1995.

Johnson, Sidney, Historic Property Associates, "Cultural Resource Survey: New Deal Era Resources in Nine Florida State Parks," St. Augustine, Florida, 1989.

Mardis, Dr. Robert, interview with Robert Jones, October, 2013.

Scoggin, Lewis G., "The History of Florida Parks." Florida Park Service News, June, 1947.

Shofner, Jerrell H. "Roosevelt's Tree Army." The Florida Historical Quarterly, Vo. 65, #5, 1987.

Tyrone, Morgan, interview with Robert Jones, February, 2013.

Werndli, Phil, Florida State Parks...75 Years, (Altamonte Springs, Florida: Florida Media Incorporated), 2010.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 10 Page 1

**O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBUS
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The concentration of historic resources within the several thousand acres of the O'Leno State Park are at the main public entrance to the park, and the numerous resources near the bend in the Santa Fe River. These two areas are joined by the O'Leno Park Road, a linear resource that has the historic quarry and experimental pine planting adjacent to it.

The historic resources and their designated setting are portions of four parcels of land.

They are:

Columbia Property Appraiser parcel #02-7S-17-09867-000; #34-6S-17-09856-000; #35-6S-09861-000; #34-6S-17-09854-000.

The designated portion comprises approximately 61 acres.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary encompasses the man-made historic resources associated with the O'Leno State Forest, that later became the O'Leno State Park.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number _____ Photos _____ Page 1 **O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

PHOTOGRAPHIC LIST

1. O'Leno State Park, 410 Southeast O'Leno Park Road, High Springs
2. Columbia County, Florida
3. Robert Jones
4. February 2014
5. River Trail along the south side of Santa Fe River, looking east
6. Photo #1 of 30

Figure #1: historic image of O'Leno Park Road, 1935

Items 1 – 5 are the same for the following photographs.

5. Quarry for limestone, looking southeast
6. Photo #2 of 30

5. Retention stone steps, looking southwest
6. Photo #3 of 30

5. Stone amphitheater, looking north
6. Photo #4 of 30

5. Stone wall by campground area, looking northwest
6. Photo #5 of 30

5. Fire tower, looking southeast
6. Photo #6 of 30

5. Small amphitheater, looking south
6. Photo #7 of 30

5. Sign, looking east
6. Photo #8 of 30

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number Photos Page 2

**O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

5. Mess, general assembly building, looking southeast
6. Photo #9 of 30

5. Mess east end fireplace, looking southeast
6. Photo #10 of 30

5. Mess north elevation entrance, looking southwest
6. Photo #11 of 30

5. Suspension bridge, looking northeast
6. Photo #12 of 30

5. Detail of suspension bridge, looking northeast
6. Photo #13 of 30

5. Infirmary, looking southwest
6. Photo #14 of 30

5. Cabins, looking west
6. Photo #15 of 30

5. Individual cabin, looking west
6. Photo #16 of 29

5. Museum/Library, "tower" building, looking west
6. Photo #17 of 30

5. Pavilion, looking west
6. Photo #18 of 30

5. Handicraft shelter, looking east
6. Photo #19 of 30

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number Photos Page 3

**O'LENO STATE PARK, COLUMBIA
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

-
5. Canteen building, looking southeast
6. Photo #20 of 30
5. Experimental tree planting, looking
6. Photo #21 of 30
5. Stone storage building, looking south
6. Photo #22 of 30
5. Storage shed, looking north
6. Photo #23 of 30
5. Barn, looking north
6. Photo #24 of 30
5. Cook's cabin, looking east
6. Photo #25 of 30
5. Gate House building, looking southwest
6. Photo #26 of 30
5. Dining hall south elevation, looking north
6. Photo #27 of 30
5. Dining hall interior with laminated arches, looking northwest
6. Photo #28 of 30
5. Bathroom, looking southwest
6. Photo #29 of 30
5. Non-contributing "box" cabin, looking east
6. Photo #30 of 30



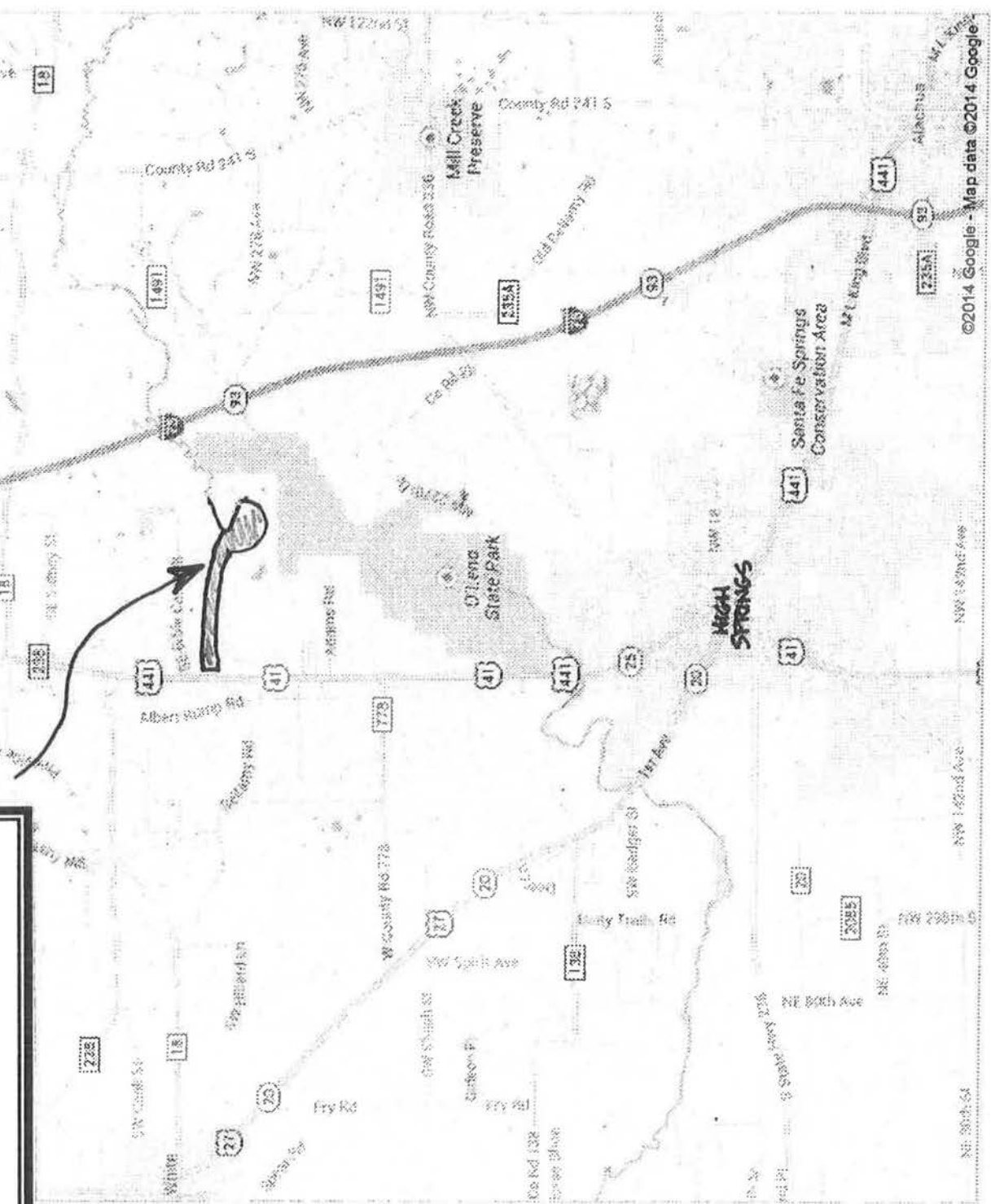
O'LENO STATE PARK
410 Southeast O'Leno Park Road
High Springs, vicinity

UTMs

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	17	344728	3311026
2.	17	345776	3310321
3.	17	347682	3311101
4.	17	347112	3309850

O'LENO STATE PARK

Columbia County, Florida LOCATOR MAP



BIBLE CAMP ST — O'LENO STATE PARK — 1894 S.E. O'LENO PARK RD,

PINE TRACK

QUARRY

1935

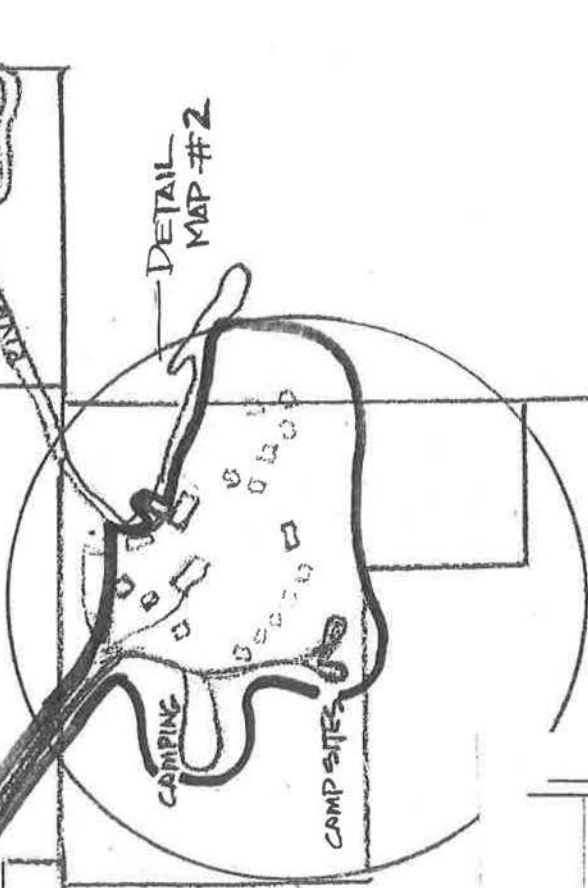
GATE HOUSE

1935

SIGN 1936

FIRE TOWER

DETAIL MAP #2



O'LENO STATE PARK
 NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY
 COLUMBIA Co., FL

441
441

BIBLE CAMP ST — O'LENO STATE PARK — 1894 S.E. O'LENO PARK RD

FIRE TOWER

1481 GATE HOUSE

PINE TRACK

QUARRY

8 X SIGN 1936

1935

21

25

DETAIL MAP #2

CAMPING

CAMP SITES

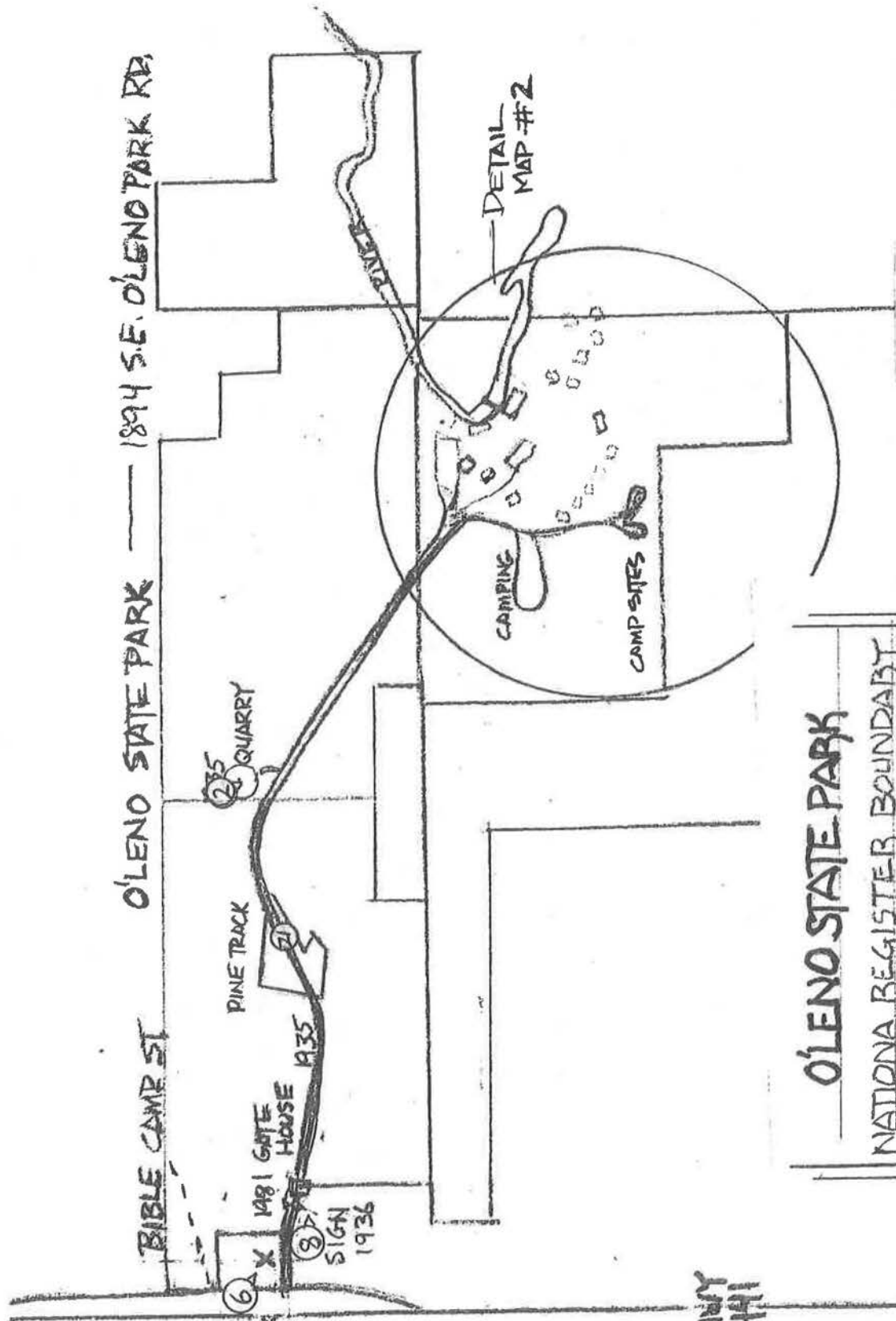
O'LENO STATE PARK
NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY

PHOTO DIAGRAM

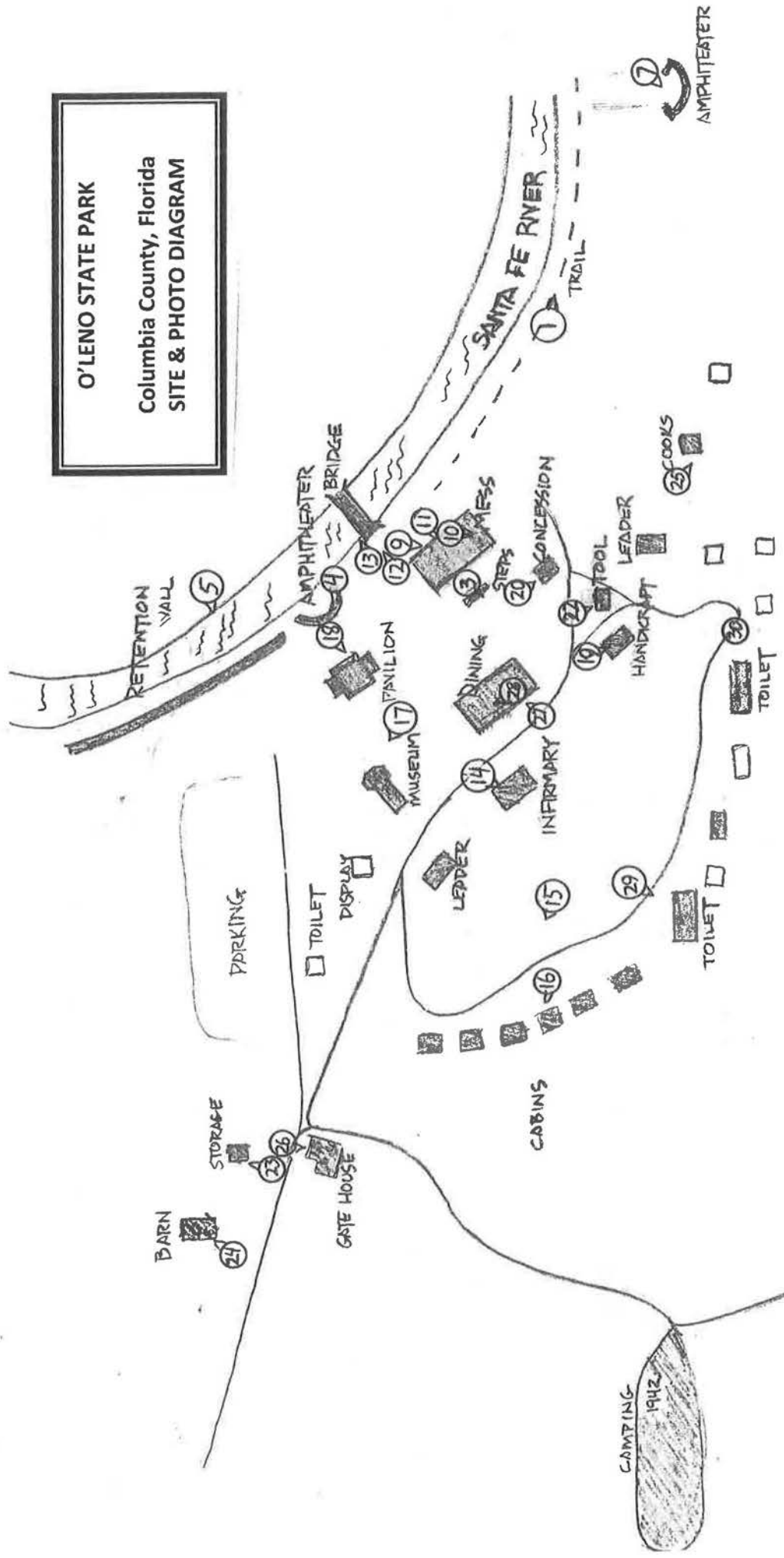
O'LENO STATE PARK
Columbia County, Florida
SITE & PHOTO DIAGRAM



MAY 441



O'LENO STATE PARK
 Columbia County, Florida
 SITE & PHOTO DIAGRAM



O'LENO STATE PARK
 DETAIL OF CONCENTRATION
 PHOTO PROGRAM

MAP #2

CONTRIBUTING 
 NON-CONTRIBUTING 

CAMPING
 1942

REMOTE CAMPING
 YOUTH AREAS
 A & B













NO LIFEGUARD ON DUTY
SWIM AT OWN RISK
CAUTION!
SWIFT CURRENT









O'LENO STATE PARK

PARK OPENS
8:00 A.M.
CLOSES AT
SUNDOWN

Let Your Cell Phone
Be Your Guide
Welcome
Call 352.385.5351
Enter 1016









NO TRAILS FROM BRIDGE

NO TRAILS FROM BRIDGE









SCHEIDT



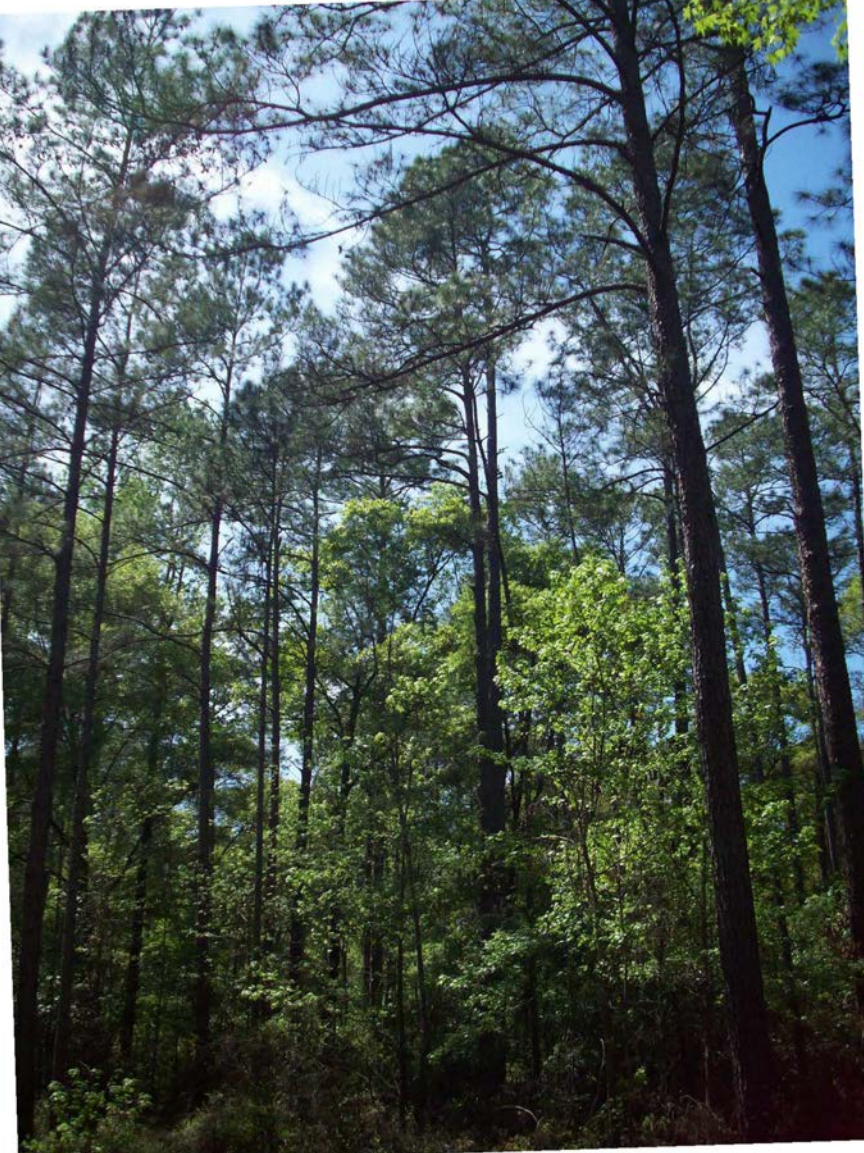
7















BL080037



OLD TIME DANCE
SUNDAY 10 / 21
2:00-5:00
OLEND





NATURE
CENTER
IS OPEN

1000-1000

Coca-Cola
Coca-Cola



FLORIDA STATE
FIDDLERS
ASSOCIATION







BLUSTEE

10



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY O'Leno State Park
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: FLORIDA, Columbia

DATE RECEIVED: 4/22/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/20/14
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/04/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/08/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000282

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 6.9.14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

RICK SCOTT
Governor

KEN DETZNER
Secretary of State

April 15, 2014

Ms. Carol Shull, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
1201 Eye Street, N.W., 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed is a submission of the nomination and additional materials (nomination form, continuation sheets, site plan, GIS data, digital images and disk) for:

O'Leno State Park (FMSF #8CO1260)

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (850) 245-6357 if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Desiree Estabrook".

Desiree Estabrook
Survey & Registration Supervisor
Bureau of Historic Preservation



Division of Historical Resources
R.A. Gray Building • 500 South Bronough Street • Tallahassee, Florida 32399
850.245.6300 • 850.245.6436 (Fax) fheritage.com
Promoting Florida's History and Culture VivaFlorida.org

