

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

New Submission     Amended Submission

## A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

State Parks in Mississippi built by the CCC between 1934 - 1942

## B. Associated Historic Contexts

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

Development of Mississippi State Parks between 1934 - 1942

## C. Form Prepared by

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## D. Certification

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

*Todd Sanders*  
Signature and title of certifying official

8-26-96  
Date

State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

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

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

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E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

Mississippi, along with many other states, began the organized development of state parks in the early 1930s with the aid of several New Deal relief programs initiated by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. These programs were begun as a means of relieving the economic hardships of the Great Depression. During Roosevelt's long administration, the Federal government provided leadership and funding to establish a cooperative effort with many states to develop state parks and other recreation areas. As a result of these federal programs, state park acreage grew nationwide by 67.5% and many states for the first time established agencies to administer parks and recreation areas. (Jones: Section E)

Although a few state parks had been in existence since the late nineteenth century, it was not until January, 1921 that an organized national effort was begun to establish state parks. A group of about 200 individuals, under the direction of the National Park Service (established in 1916), met in Des Moines, Iowa at the first National Conference of State Parks. The movement to develop state parks was an outgrowth of the development of the national park system and represents the belief that the state governments had a responsibility, along with the federal government, to provide the public with recreational opportunities. Originally the emphasis in planning state parks was centered around the preservation of an area in its natural state. Recreational use of the area and recreational facilities were of secondary importance. At the time of the first national conference, only 19 states had state park systems. By the mid-1920s, however, all 48 states had started some kind of development program. (Jones: Section E; Cohen: 91)

History of Mississippi State Parks

In 1926 the Mississippi State Legislature, because of an increased interest in the State's forest problems caused by years of clear-cutting by lumber companies with little or no plans for reforestation, created the Mississippi Forestry Commission through an Act to provide for reforestation in Mississippi. In the third section of this Act, the Governor was "authorized to accept gifts of land to be held, protected and administered by the Commission as State forests and parks". No parks were ever acquired under this act, however (Lang: 1). By 1930, the depression had severely limited park projects all across the country. With the establishment of the Emergency Conservation Works organization in 1933 (renamed the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1937), park development was resumed (Cohen: 91)

In early 1934, the Mississippi State Forestry Commission was approached by representatives of the National Park Service, State Park Division. The National Park Service advised the State Forester that a cooperative program to develop state parks was possible, provided that the state furnish the land. Since neither the Forestry Commission nor the counties had statutory authority to

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purchase lands for the development of state park areas and the state had no legal justification for the use of state-owned lands for park development, the Mississippi Forestry Commission, with the assistance of legislators, civic organizations and individuals, sponsored a bill introduced in that year's legislative session. This bill, known as House Bill 446, provided for the use of state lands for state parks and authorized counties to purchase land to be conveyed to the state for park purposes (History: 1-2)

The passage of House Bill 446 was greeted with enthusiasm by community leaders in many parts of the state. Greenville, Tupelo, Meridian, Morton, and Quitman were among the first communities to request the establishment of Civilian Conservation Corps camps in their area for the purpose of developing state parks. The CCC occupied the area that was to become Leroy Percy State Park near Hollandale, Washington County, on May 29, 1934. This date marks the official beginning for construction of state parks in Mississippi (History: 3).

At the time that the locations for the new state parks were being occupied by the CCC, the lack of trained personnel in the field of park development in Mississippi was beginning to be seen. As the parks were occupied, the main group of construction workers were assigned to general cleanup and road development until plans for the parks could be prepared. Engineers came in to make boundary and topographical surveys of each proposed park so that organized planning could be done. Had it not been for the involvement of federal technicians employed by the Emergency Conservation Works organization, it is doubtful that the original state parks could have been developed in a manner nearing recognized state park standards (History: 3)

Requests for additional CCC camps for the development of state parks continued to be submitted. By July, 1935, a total of nine new parks were under construction. These nine were Leroy Percy in Washington County; Tombigbee in Lee County; Clarkco in Clarke County; Legion in Winston County; Tishomingo in Tishomingo County; Holmes County; Roosevelt in Scott County; Spring Lake (later re-named Wall Doxey) in Marshall County; and Percy Quin in Pike County. As each new state park area was placed under the supervision of the Mississippi Forestry Commission, it became increasingly evident that the commission needed assistance in administrating these new areas. By late 1934, there was a movement to set up a separate board for the supervision of state parks in Mississippi. At its April 15, 1935 meeting, the Forestry commission petitioned the Governor, "That in making future appointments to the State Forestry Commission that not less than two and not more than three such appointees be not only selected with reference to their knowledge of and interest in the continuous production and use of forest products, but also their knowledge of and interest in the development and maintenance of state parks." The State Board of Park Supervisors was created by a Legislative act on March 26, 1936 (History: 4).

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Shortly after his election as president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt called an emergency session of Congress on March 9, 1933, to hear and authorize his program designed to help end the economic and social devastation of the Great Depression. The President's plan called for the recruitment of thousands of unemployed young men to form a peacetime army to combat the destruction and erosion of the nation's natural resources. This program would also provide these men with jobs and training. The Emergency Conservation Work Act (Senate Bill 598), creating what became known as the Civilian Conservation Corps, was introduced in the Senate on March 27, and by March 31, 1933 had been signed into law (Leake: 1). The CCC was jointly administered by the Departments of the Interior, Agriculture, and War. These Departments were assisted by scores of state and federal agencies, including the Department of Labor and the state relief agencies (Leake: 1). The speed with which the plan moved through proposal, authorization, implementation, and operation was a miracle of cooperation among all branches and agencies of the federal government. It was a mobilization of men, material and transportation on a scale never before known in peacetime. From President Roosevelt's inauguration on March 4, 1933 to the induction of the first enrollee on April 7, only 37 days had passed (Leake: 1). The states and territories were divided into several administrative corps areas. Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee composed the Fourth Corps, headquartered at Atlanta (Cohen: 25).

A candidate for enrollment first was interviewed by a local selecting agency to determine his capacity to benefit from the CCC program. He then had to pass a physical examination, and after that took the oath of enrollment. Most enrollees were single young men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five with dependent relatives (Cohen: 46). On May 11, 25,000 veterans of the Spanish-American War and World War I, men considerably older than twenty-five, were authorized for employment. The enrollment of veterans in their own camps was seen as a partial solution to severe unrest and unemployment among these veterans. The marriage restrictions did not apply to war veterans (Leake: 3). Enrollees from the territories (Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands), and American Indian enrollees composed two other groups of enrollees that operated under slightly different circumstances. The CCC camps composed of enrollees from these two groups were administered by either the U.S. Forest Service or the Office of Indian Affairs rather than the War Department which was in charge of all other camps. There were no age or marital restrictions placed on these enrollees. Enrollees from the territories lived at home (Cohen: 89, 92 and 95).

The enlistment period was for six months with the option to re-enlist for another six months, up to a maximum of two years. Pay was \$30.00 a month, or \$1.00 a day. \$25.00 was sent home to the enrollee's family, while the remaining \$5.00 could be used at the enrollee's discretion. The

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government provided room, board, clothing and tools. Each enrollee was expected to work a forty hour week and follow all camp rules (Cohen: 46-47). While the pay was opposed by labor leaders as being too low, the wage was intended to be primarily an instrument to get the thousands of unemployed off the streets and into productive work. Between 12 to 15 million people directly benefited from the enrollees' monthly salary. More than \$700 million was sent to families (Cohen: 19). Initially the enrollees were sent to conditioning camps at existing army bases where they went through "basic training" to prepare them for their duties at their assigned camps. The War Department ran most of the camps and by July 1, 3,000 regular Army officers were on active duty supervising CCC operations. Also on duty were 1,890 reserve officers, 556 Navy and Marine officers, and 300 contract surgeons. The first recruits in the spring and summer of 1933 occasionally had to wait until a campsite was ready or even had to help build the camp. In 1937, with the introduction of pre-cut portable buildings at the camps, construction was speeded up considerably (Cohen: 46).

Work projects administered by the Civilian Conservation Corps were many and varied and involved such diverse activities as road construction, forest conservation and reforestation, soil erosion control, disaster relief, historical restoration, national defense and construction of park facilities. The overwhelming majority of CCC camps were on National forest land and they contributed greatly to the protection and management of the forests. Next to the Forest Service, the National Park Service was perhaps the greatest participant in CCC projects. Although the military was responsible for the enrollees in camp, whatever agency the enrollee was working for (Interior, Agriculture or a state agency) was responsible for the young men once they were out of the camps and working. Camps were composed of one company with an average 200 enrollees each. The enrollees were eligible to become "rated men" to help with the camp administration. These men were picked from the company roster and were paid \$45.00 or \$36.00 per month depending on their rating. Each company had a company commander, either a regular or reserve army officer, a junior officer, camp doctor, and an educational adviser. The project superintendent, usually employed by the technical service the camp was under, was in charge of all work projects away from camp and had eight to ten foremen under him. An average camp was composed of approximately 24 buildings, including the kitchen and mess hall, recreational building, school building, infirmary, barracks for the enrollees, and quarters for the officers and enlisted personnel. Each camp was self-contained with food, health, educational, religious, and entertainment facilities as well as facilities for blacksmithing, plumbing, and automobile repair (Cohen: 25). Since many enrollees were illiterate, programs were developed in the camps to teach basic educational skills. These programs varied considerably from camp to camp, both in efficiency and results. However, more than 40,000 illiterate men were taught to read and write (Leake: 3).

The National Park Service/Department of the Interior was responsible for the establishment of Civilian Conservation Corps camps on both federal and state lands. Prior to 1933, direct federal government involvement in state park development and construction had been minimal. Because

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the National Park Service would be directly involved with the states in the establishment and administration of Civilian Conservation Corps camps and in the building and planning of parks, guidelines for cooperation between state and federal agencies were established in April, 1933. By September, 1933, 1,520 camps had been established nationwide, 105 of which were on state park lands. Nationwide, CCC camp level was at its highest in 1935 when there were 2,916 camps, including 475 on state park lands (Jones: Section E, page 5). In Mississippi, there were an average of 33 CCC camps from 1933-1941 with 52 being listed in November of 1935 (Mississippi). The enrollment averaged more than 55,000 men (Cohen: 151). From all indications, the first CCC company organized in Mississippi was mustered in June of 1933, and was established at the Vicksburg National Battlefield. The Vicksburg National Battlefield was the only National Park Service reserve existing in the state at the time.

In addition to supervising the construction of state parks, the federal government provided plans for parks and park structures. Standards and guidelines for park structures and layout were developed by the National Park Service. In planning the parks, the location of administrative facilities, camps, cabins, trails, signs, furniture, and roads was as important as the construction of a single structure. Ideally each park was planned to have a sufficient type and number of manmade buildings and structures to accommodate the proposed recreational uses of the area without diminishing the natural or scenic qualities of the park. Buildings were to be constructed on a scale compatible with the landscape and be constructed from materials native to the area (Jones: Section E, page 6). In Mississippi, most park structures were constructed of wood. Only Tishomingo State Park and Wall Doxey make substantial use of stone construction. Percy Quin State Park makes extensive use of brick. Because all four sides of park buildings were visible, care was taken to design all elevations of a building. The rustic quality of the structures resulted from the use of native materials, the original designs, and the craftsmanship of the builders.

In the late 1930s and early 1940s, as the threat of war increased, Federal relief programs began to be phased out. The CCC was placed under the Federal Security Administration. After December 7, 1941, the CCC offered all its camps to the army for work on military projects, and to the American Red Cross it offered help with war emergencies. In early 1942, Congress enacted legislation to end the CCC program and the only funds allotted were eight million dollars for liquidation of the agency. Corps supplies and equipment were given to various military agencies. Many young men who had learned mechanics in the camps enlisted in non-commissioned ranks while former corps technical supervisors were given commissions. On June 30, 1942, the CCC officially went out of existence after nine years of service to the people of the United States. The nation still reaps the benefits of the CCC's accomplishments (Cohen: 144-145).

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## F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

I. Name of Property Type: State Parks in Mississippi built by the CCC between 1934 and 1942

## II. Description:

The multiple property listing "State Parks in Mississippi built by the CCC between 1934 and 1942" has only one property type, a park district. Various resources necessary for the control, supervision, and maintenance of the park and resources used for recreation and camping, are located within the district. All of the components of the park are functionally and aesthetically interrelated. Types of resources or components of the park include: cabins, spillways and embankments, fountains, picnic shelters, Park and Assistant Park Manager's residences, lodges, shower/restroom facilities, stone culverts, barns, storage buildings, Park offices, museums, group camps, swinging bridges, bath houses, dams, bridges, lakes and ponds, stone stairs, signage, pump houses, barbecue grills, pylons for gates, entrance fences and gateways, and landscape features such as allees, trails, roads and stone walls.

Mississippi's state parks were constructed between 1934 and 1942 by personnel of the Civilian Conservation Corps as part of the Federal government's response to alleviate unemployment during the Great Depression. The overall plans for each park as well as the designs for the structures within them follow plans and guidelines formulated by the National Park Service. The kind of local material available determined the type of structures built. Thus, Mississippi's varied geography is expressed in these first state parks. From the northeast hills to the coastal marshes, from the pine woods to the cypress bayous, the subtle differences in native material are evident in each park's architecture and landscaping. The general rule in designing structures for the parks was to make them appear to belong to and be a part of their setting.

Most buildings in Mississippi state parks constructed by the CCC are one story high with rectangular plans and gabled roofs. Screened porches and stone fireplaces are found on many of these park buildings. Most park buildings are of wood construction, usually covered with siding that displays a rough edge indicative of the log from which it was sawn, thus heightening its rustic appearance. These wooden buildings were originally painted or stained a dark natural color. Many of the CCC buildings at Percy Quin State Park are built of old brick salvaged from a factory at Hazlehurst, Mississippi, which had burned. Most of the CCC buildings at Tishomingo State Park are constructed of a locally quarried free-stone.

The pattern of trails and roads and the relationship between various groups of buildings are important in the design layout of each park. Buildings are situated so that they blend with the landscape but are easily accessible to the public and park employees. Cabins and group camps are

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generally composed of several buildings clustered together along a ridge, at the edge of a pond or lake, or around an open field. These groups of buildings are usually located away from the park entrance and administration areas where there tends to be more traffic. The park offices, park lodge, picnic pavilions and other buildings where there is much activity are usually located in more heavily traveled areas with adequate parking space and room for visitors. Maintenance buildings are generally located away from areas where there is much activity. Low stone walls and fences are located in many parks to help define roadways and parking areas. Trail steps are used to help facilitate hiking on steep slopes and blend in well with their natural setting.



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III Significance:

State park districts in Mississippi are significant under National Register criterion A because of their association with the development of state parks in Mississippi. Prior to the federal government's involvement in the state park movement through various New Deal relief agencies such as the CCC, Mississippi had no state parks. The development of these state parks is an excellent example of cooperative efforts between the state and federal government to help reduce the unemployment rates during the Great Depression.

State park districts in Mississippi are also significant under National Register criterion C as the best and most intact representation of a distinct grouping of resources designed in the rustic style of park architecture of the 1930s. The parks were planned as a group of functionally and aesthetically related buildings and structures. Plans that determined the patterns of trails and roads and the arrangement of buildings helped to integrate the buildings to the natural landscape. Although the resources in the park were designed to appear as if constructed by local artisans, they were in fact built following designs and guidelines formulated by the National Park Service. These buildings were mainly constructed of naturally finished native materials, such as wood and stone, and resulted in resources with a high degree of quality and craftsmanship.

IV. Registration Requirements:

The registration requirements for listing the property type state parks districts in the National Register under Criterion A are that they must have been constructed between 1934 and 1942 by personnel of the CCC. All of the parks are administered by the State of Mississippi and remain in use as state parks except for Magnolia. Because the construction of the parks was undertaken as part of a nationwide effort to ease unemployment during the depression, the park districts are significant in the area of social history.

Contributing resources in the district are significant to the historic and architectural development of the district, possess compatible design elements, and maintain the scale, use, and historic feel of the district. Non-contributing resources are features that have been considerably altered, or do not fall within the period of significance.

State parks constructed between 1934 and 1942 that may meet the registration requirements are: Clarkco, Holmes County, Legion, Leroy Percy, Percy Quin, Roosevelt, Tishomingo, Tombigbee, Wall Doxey and the former Magnolia State Park, now part of the Gulf Islands National Seashore.

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G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Based on survey information collected in 1994-1996, state parks in Mississippi were found to be located in the following counties: Clarke, Holmes, Jackson, Lee, Marshall, Pike, Scott, Tishomingo, Washington, and Winston.

H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

The identification and evaluation of resources was accomplished by comparison of extant structures in the state parks with Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks inventory records that indicated what structures were built during the time the CCC was in operation. Further identification of CCC structures was accomplished by comparison of architectural features common to buildings of this type with known documented CCC structures in the state park system. Mississippi Department of Archives and History staff conducted oral interviews with individuals who were involved in the CCC as well. Additional information was obtained through research in the Mississippi Department of Archives and History's archives and library division and the State Historical Museum's exhibit files.

The original survey was conducted in 1997, with additional survey work conducted in 1996. All Mississippi state park facilities identified as originating from the labor of the CCC were surveyed.

The period of significance for thematic context and property type is 1934-1942, the years during which the CCC created what became Mississippi's first state parks.

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