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HISTORIC SITES AND  
STRUCTURES PROGRAM

STATE PARKS DIVISION

OF THE

TEXAS PARKS AND  
WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

# THE CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS

## IN TEXAS STATE PARKS







THE

CIVILIAN

CONSERVATION

CORPS

IN TEXAS STATE PARKS

# GETTING STARTED

The foundations of the state park system enjoyed by Texans today were laid in the bittersweet years of the 1930s. The Great Depression's hardships inspired many public works programs for the unemployed after 1929, and park development became a popular means of relief.



With Franklin D. Roosevelt's inauguration as president in March 1933, his New Deal elevated conservation and public recreation to a national crusade. Roosevelt immediately proposed the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) to Congress as a major emergency program devoted to natural resources, outdoor recreation and useful employment. Among its many innovations, the CCC directly involved the federal government for the first time in the development of state and local parks.

Created quickly and enthusiastically, the CCC provided jobs and family income for America's young men and war veterans who worked to improve public and private lands. Through local cooperation with federal agencies, many states including Texas welcomed the CCC as a vehicle for preserving natural resources and developing parklands.

Today in Texas, 29 state parks, numerous city and county parks, and a national park exhibit distinctive buildings, structures and facilities built by the CCC between 1933 and 1942.

**It is my belief that what is being accomplished will conserve our natural resources, create future national wealth and prove of moral and spiritual value, not only to those of you who are taking part, but to the rest of the country as well.**

**Franklin D. Roosevelt  
July 8, 1933**





*Army trucks bring new enrollees.  
Camp Bullis, Texas, 1933*

# GETTING ORGANIZED



Roosevelt had initially conceived the CCC as a “forest army.” Young men ages 17 to 25 (later, 16 to 28) would be assigned to reclaim over-cut or burnt-out woodlands and to protect the expanding national forest preserves. FDR’s advisors soon convinced him to broaden the scope of the CCC by including soil conservation and development of a nationwide chain of recreational parks.

Organized as a separate federal authority with a director responsible to the president, the CCC drew on the existing resources of four cabinet agencies. The Labor Department recruited young men from families registered with county welfare agencies. The War Department accepted recruits at central locations, then fed, clothed and housed them in remote 200-man companies assigned to either of two agencies guiding the work projects. The Agriculture Department was responsible for CCC efforts in forests and (after 1935) soil conservation districts. The Interior Department directed work that included park development under its National Park Service (NPS).



Pressure from Congress and the Veterans Administration assigned CCC enrollment of approximately 10 percent to jobless war veterans. These recruits were not limited by age and were organized into separate companies. In camps outside Texas, the CCC employed companies of American Indians for relief and conservation work on impoverished reservations. Although the Civil Rights movement was still decades away, the CCC recruited African Americans; about 10 percent of its total workforce served as “colored” enrollees in “junior” and veterans companies.

By July 1, 1933, barely three months after its organization, the CCC employed more than 274,000 men in remote camps nationwide. The enrollment, training, and transportation of these recruits represented the most ambitious mobilization of American men and material. The effort exceeded conscription statistics from World War I; and the country gained valuable experience for mobilizing during World War II.

Recruits enrolled for six-month periods and received \$30 per month. Selected men were paid \$36 and \$45 per month as clerks, cooks and leaders. At least \$25 of the monthly wage was sent directly to the CCC worker's family back home. The U.S. Army assigned two officers, usually called from reserves, to command each company. Each camp also hired "locally experienced men" (LEMs) as skilled craftsmen and instructors. In addition, as the "technical agency," NPS hired professional architects, landscape architects, and engineers to design improvements and supervise construction at park sites. The state provided the parklands—usually from donated acres—and hired the park superintendents.

The first five successful CCC state park camps in Texas were established by July, 1933, at Blanco, Caddo Lake, Davis Mountains, Meridian and Palo Duro Canyon. (Another summer 1933 state park began with CCC development at Mineral Wells, but that site is not the current Lake Mineral Wells State Park, although the latter boasts some New Deal development through another program.) The state unemployment-relief agency selected these sites with National Park Service advice and soon drafted master plans for their development with CCC labor.





# ALL ABOUT TEXAS

Struggling for 10 years since its founding in 1923, the Texas State Parks Board (predecessor of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department) sought at first to join the CCC and NPS partnership. San Antonian David E. Colp, an energetic promoter of good roads and state parks, headed the Parks Board.

Between 1923 and 1933, Colp had crisscrossed the state in car caravans filled with dignitaries including Governor Pat Neff and several statewide women's clubs' representatives. Together they kept the concept of a park system alive until the means could be found to develop it.



*Some of the most influential people who promoted and implemented Texas state parks met at Palmetto State Park in August 1935: former Governor Pat Neff (second from left) joined Parks Board Chairman, David E. Colp (third from left), and National Park Service virtuoso architect Herbert Maier (fourth from left).*







*CCC Company 1856,  
Balmorhea State Park, 1934–  
1936. Notice the variety of  
age and diversity represented  
in this company.*

*First State Parks Board*

*From left to right, David E. Colp of San Antonio, chairman; Phebe K. Warner of Claude, "secretary and statistician"; Pat M. Neff of Waco, governor; Mrs. W. C. Martin of Dallas, vice chairman; Robert M. Hubbard of Texarkana, State Highway Commission chairman; Katie Welder of Victoria, "historian"; and Hobart Key of Marshall, "attorney and sergeant at arms."*

*Park construction office and  
construction supervisors,  
Caddo Lake State Park, c. 1934*

By the end of the CCC's first six-month enrollment period in September 1933, fourteen 200-man companies were finally building a first-class recreational park system for the people of Texas. In November the Parks Board assumed control of its system's windfall development opportunity provided by the CCC and NPS.



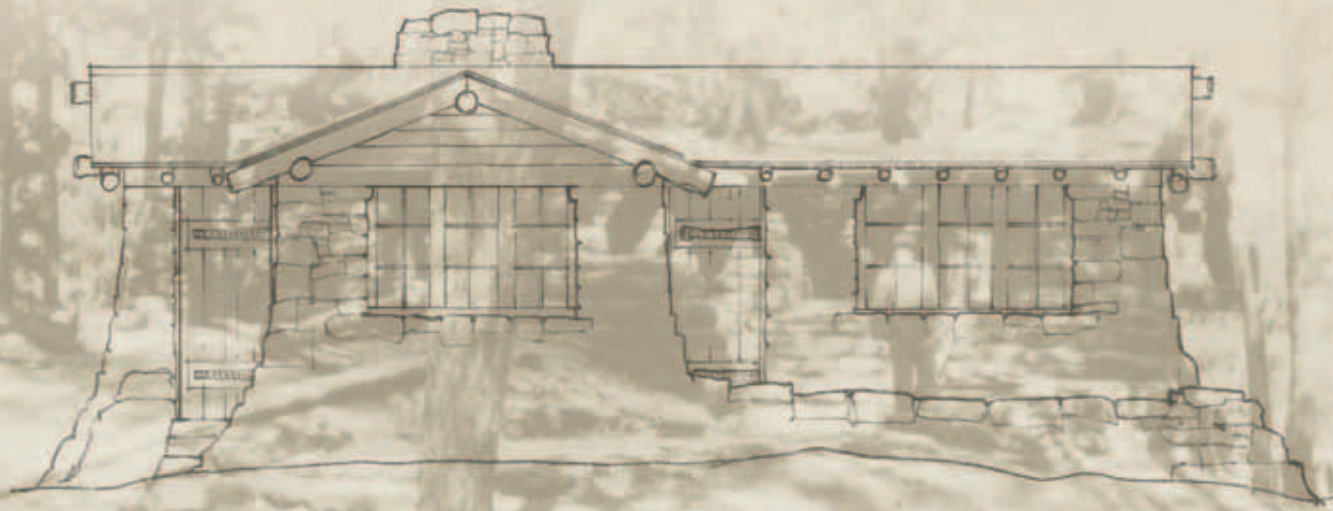
At the peak of the program and at the depth of the Depression in 1935, 27 CCC companies worked on Texas state parks. Forest and soil conservation camps, in contrast, comprised the majority of Texas CCC assignments with 70 camps and about 14,000 men in 1935 alone. This represented one of the largest concentrations of CCC camps in the country, from a nationwide total of 2,916 camps that year.

By 1942, when the Congress ended the CCC, this unprecedented cooperative effort had developed 56 parks in Texas. Most of them remain public parks, including the 29 sites in the state park system. Of special note is former Big Bend State Park, accepted as a new national park by Roosevelt on June 6, 1944, a gift of the state of Texas complete with initial CCC development in the Chisos Mountains between 1934 and 1942.

# LANDSCAPES, DESIGNS, AND PEOPLE

The National Park Service brought its high standards and development skills to the state park programs. Since its creation in 1916, the NPS had carefully formulated a design policy for buildings and recreational improvements in the national parks. With the attitude that each structure was an intrusion in the natural landscape, NPS designers had determined that park buildings should relate closely to their sites. Therefore, they should be built of native materials and finished with simple tools.

Low silhouettes and horizontal coursings gave each building and structure a harmonious relationship with the ground. Heavy stone foundations and roughly hewn timber frames tied their designs to early "pioneer" efforts, perceived by the NPS as ideally sensitive to the natural surroundings. This aspect of park building design had been encouraged by the founder and first director of the National Park Service, Stephen Mather. The NPS reluctantly labeled its style "rustic," but in recent years the term "NPS Rustic" has fastened itself to many park buildings and structures built between 1916 and 1942.





NPS Rustic required time and labor; the CCC could provide both. Directed by local design professionals and LEMs, unskilled CCC workers quarried their own stone, felled and worked their own timber, and wrestled the heavy components into place. In many parks, primitive forges produced wrought iron and steel hinges, latches, and other hardware. When designers detected latent talent, they encouraged CCC enrollees to carve wood and stone works of art to be integrated into the buildings. At several parks, including Bastrop and Palo Duro Canyon, the Parks Board set up woodshops to produce park furniture.



NPS architects were serious about design; and CCC enrollees consistently executed those design principles in Texas state parks. The architect, landscape architect, and engineer at the Austin design office or park site submitted plans to both the NPS and the Texas State Parks Board for approval of each design. An NPS district inspector advised at planning and construction stages.

*CCC workers at Bastrop did everything from quarrying their own stone to carving detailed reliefs like the one above, used in the refectory.*



For much of the CCC's duration, the chief NPS inspector in Texas was George Nason, an engineer and landscape architect from Minnesota. His supervisor at the regional office in Oklahoma City, later Santa Fe, was Herbert Maier, an architect who designed many national park buildings in the 1920s and who now, with Nason, personally motivated each state park designer.

D.E. Colp, Nason, and Maier were the guiding personalities behind the location and appearance of Texas parks of the 1930s. They impressed upon the local park designers—Texas architects, landscape architects and engineers who were delighted to have the work during the Depression—the needs of the public and the necessity of “nonintrusive” structures. With early training and experience outside the specialized field of park planning, the designers invariably incorporated a few of their own ideas into these structures while at the same time following the overarching NPS Rustic.

Many of the Texas recreational parks of this period featured a central concession or “refectory” building. Combining a group shelter with toilets, kitchen, patio and—always—huge rustic fireplaces, the refectory was the most visible building in the park.

*The facilities at Garner exemplify the concept of a multiuse building.*





It was designed not necessarily to blend into the landscape, but certainly to harmonize with it. To accomplish this, NPS architects and the CCC usually produced a one-story building with heavy chimneys and sometimes an observation cupola projecting above the low roof line. At various parks native limestone, sandstone, and even concrete blocks manufactured from local materials were roughly faced and laid in random-ashlar or simpler patterns to harmonize with the surroundings. If wood siding was used, the boards were roughly cut with the bark edge exposed. Extended rafters and interior trusses were hewn, notched and pinned to reflect pioneer building techniques.



*Interior of combination building, Lake Brownwood State Park, c. 1954*

Other park buildings in rocky or forested areas were cleverly designed and built to appear as if they had grown out of the ground. In some cases, landscape features were integral to a building's walls, with no clear division between ground and foundation. These buildings in particular resembled some NPS Rustic designs that Maier had contrived at national parks in the 1920s. From rocky pavilions perched on the rim of Palo Duro Canyon to mushroom-like bungalows in the pine forests at Bastrop, these buildings were intended to blend thoroughly into their natural context.

*Stone cabin, Palo Duro  
Canyon State Park, c. 1935*



President Roosevelt favored incorporating historical elements from regional architecture into all New Deal federal buildings. In Texas, architects looked to history for inspiration during the 1920s and 1930s. It was natural then for some of the state's architects to look to local historical examples for pioneer craftsmanship in their NPS Rustic buildings. Log cabins inspired buildings at Caddo Lake State Park. The residence at Lockhart reflected European-immigrant architecture in Central Texas, with walls of stucco and stone, some half-timbering, and an outside stairway to an attic door. Indian Lodge at Davis Mountains and a cluster of cottages at nearby Balmorhea were built of adobe blocks, stuccoed and punctuated with roof timbers in the Pueblo and Southwestern manner.



Landscape features were part of the master plan and the CCC work schedule. Structures including dams, entry portals, culverts, bridges, walls and fences followed the same nonintrusive principles as park buildings. At Bastrop and Tyler much of the parkland first was reclaimed with erosion prevention measures and extensive tree plantings. The CCC built dams at those parks and at Bonham, Cleburne, Huntsville, Daingerfield, Meridian, and Fort Parker to impound scenic lakes and enhance soil conservation. Scenic drives were carefully and laboriously cut through picturesque areas to encourage leisurely motoring through Bastrop-Buescher, Lake Brownwood, Garner and Big Spring state parks.





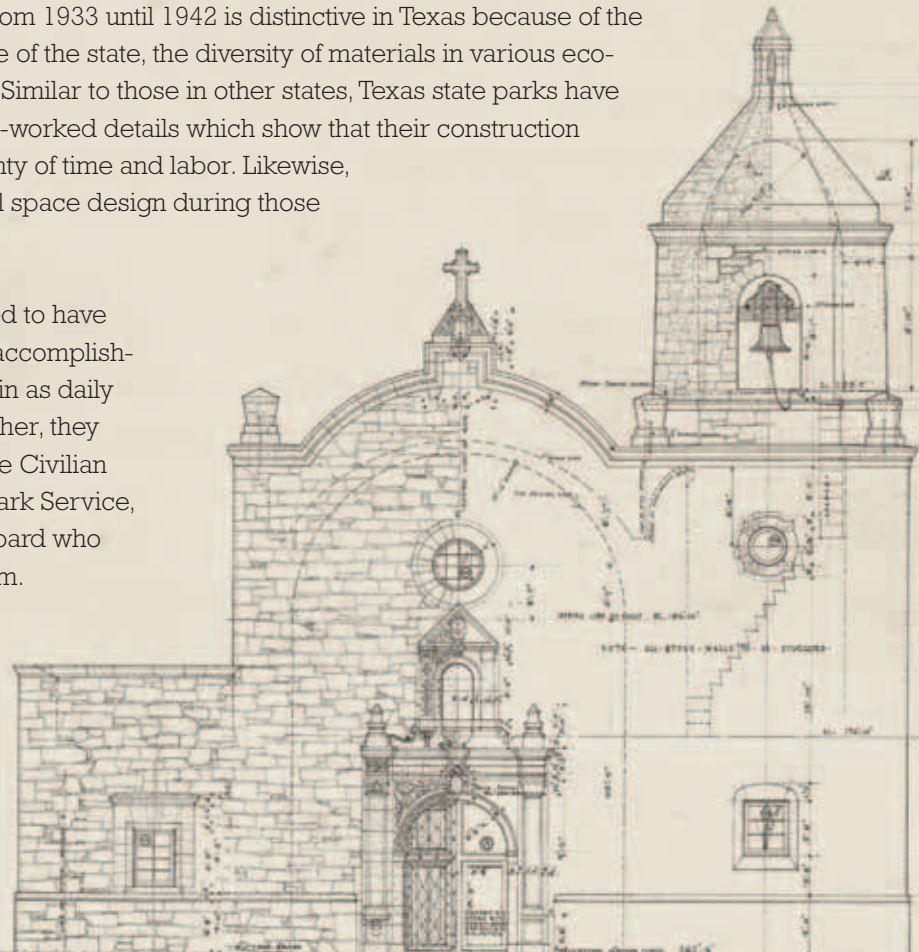


Some projects created unusual work assignments for the CCC. At Balmorhea the world's largest spring-fed swimming pool was built over a prolific desert spring. Several thousand feet of Longhorn Cavern were cleared of silt and debris deposited through centuries of underground seepage. Palmetto State Park preserved a bottomland forest with dwarf palmettos and extensive marshes in the rolling plains east of San Antonio. And at Goliad, the ruins of *Mission Nuestra Señora del Espíritu Santo de Zúñiga* were painstakingly reconstructed by the CCC.

Despite its popularity, the CCC was never reauthorized beyond emergency status. As the economy slowly recovered, funding and enrollment slid as the advent of World War II diverted budgets and manpower to new emergencies of war. The U.S. Congress ended the CCC program in the summer of 1942.

The CCC built durable buildings and structures that continue to well serve the visitors in many Texas parks. The park building boom from 1933 until 1942 is distinctive in Texas because of the generous government program, the size of the state, the diversity of materials in various ecosystems, and some of the personalities. Similar to those in other states, Texas state parks have numerous landscape features and hand-worked details which show that their construction belongs to an era characterized by plenty of time and labor. Likewise, NPS Rustic style dominated recreational space design during those years, both in Texas and elsewhere.

CCC and NPS participants were pleased to have the work, and they were proud of their accomplishments as well. Their contributions remain as daily reminders in the parks. And taken together, they survive as a monument to the men of the Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Park Service, and the members of Texas State Park Board who helped build the Texas State Park system.



Left: Cottages at Balmorhea

Above: Balmorhea swimming pool

Right: Plans for the mission at Goliad

# ABILENE

## STATE PARK

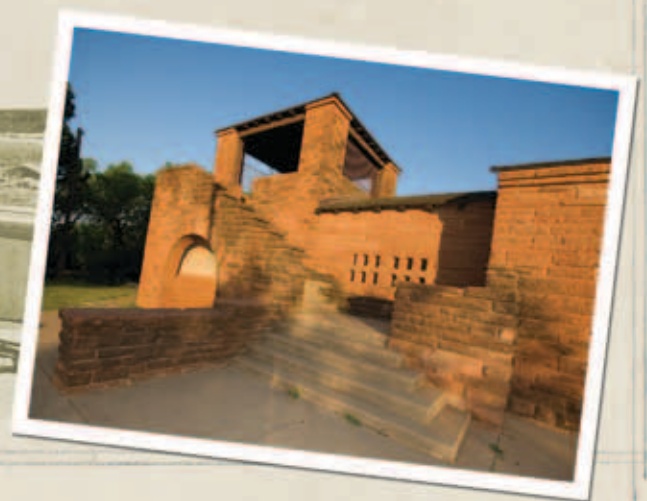
Two CCC companies developed this 529-acre park near Buffalo Gap in Taylor County between 1933 and 1935. Veteran Company 1823 first occupied the site in 1933 and 1934, constructing roads, the concession building and the swimming pool. In 1935, Company 1823 was reactivated as a camp for African American veterans, who added lookout towers, culverts and latrines. This group gained popular attention in the community with its winning baseball team and singing quartet. The CCC's Baird Trophy was awarded to the company for its accomplishments in religious activity.

COMPANY 1823



*CCC workers construct an arched opening at the concession building.*

*Bottom left: pool construction*





# BALMORHEA

## STATE PARK

COMPANY

1856



*Men of the 1st Cavalry from Fort Bliss in El Paso, camped just across the road, take a break during a long training mission.*

Company 1856 undertook the unusual task of building the “world’s largest spring-fed swimming pool” at San Solomon Springs in Reeves County from 1934 to 1940. The V-shaped pool is formed with a 200-foot circle over the spring and two 389-foot tangents, lined with limestone and bordered with flagstone paving. The spring’s flow of 23 million gallons per day had long been tapped for local crop irrigation and still proved adequate for filling the immense pool.

*Superintendent Temple Phinney directed the enrollees in constructing the pool and park buildings, including the San Solomon Courts. These overnight cottages, built of adobe blocks molded at the site and finished with stuccoed walls and red-tiled roofs, recalled the Spanish heritage of early settlement in the region. The CCC also built a group shelter, combination building, bathhouse and footbridges over the irrigation ditches.*



# BASTROP

## STATE PARK

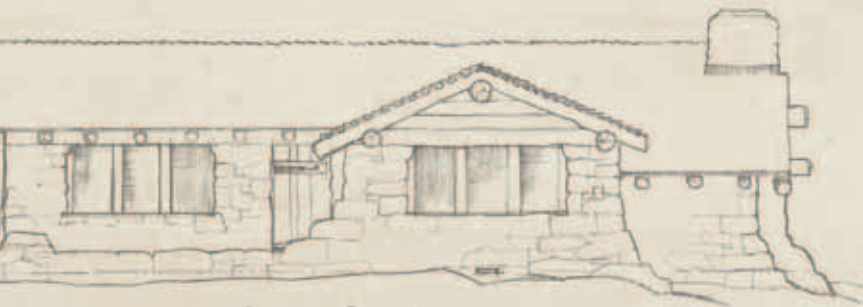
COMPANY 1805

COMPANY 1811

The "Lost Pines" of Bastrop County provided enough potential park land to host two CCC camps from 1933 to 1939. When Company 1805 was transferred to Wyoming, Company 1811 remained at Bastrop through 1939, continuing development of the 6,500+-acre park. The CCC transformed the overcut pine forest by seeding, transplanting, and clearing the tangle of brush and fallen timber. The NPS Rustic buildings constructed under the direction of architect Arthur Fehr earned the praise of NPS supervisors from Oklahoma City to Washington, D.C.







EAST ELEVATION



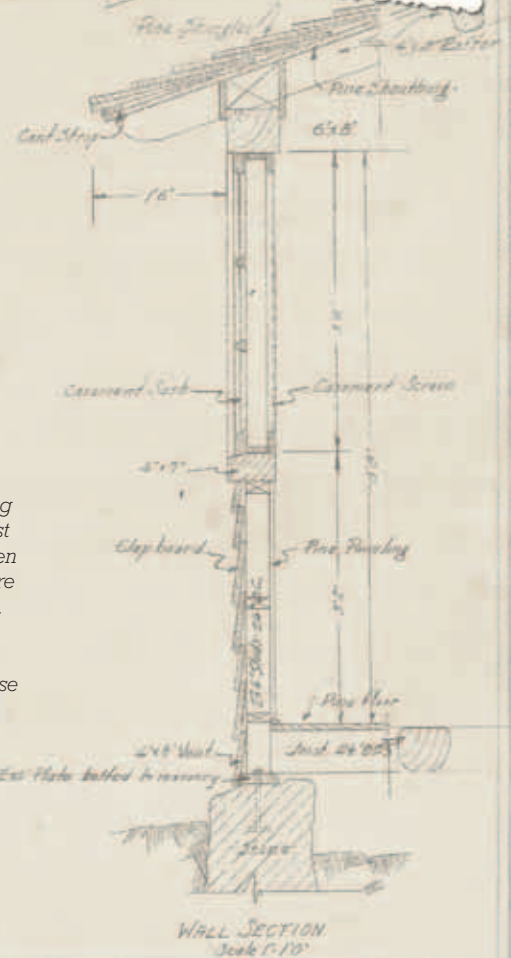
Improvements include a scattered complex of 12 cabins from rough stone and timber, several utility buildings, a small lake, and numerous landscape structures. Finished in local walnut, oak, cedar and pine, the refectory interior is a showplace of CCC artwork. CCC workers, along with local craftsmen, built furniture designed by Fehr for this and several other state parks. The swimming pool and golf course were built under another New Deal agency, the Works Progress Administration.



*Members of the CCC are well along in construction of the refectory. Most of the masonry work is in place (men working in foreground), the walls are being erected, and the roof framed. (far left).*

*Pine was laboriously hand-cut for use throughout the park (above).*

*The CCC made use of talented craftsmen to create unique touches (above, right).*



# BIG SPRING

## STATE PARK

COMPANY 1857

Scenic Mountain, rising 400 feet above the West Texas plains of Howard County, was already an undeveloped state park, donated in 1924, when CCC Company 1857 settled here on 370 acres during 1934 and 1935. The enrollees constructed a six-mile scenic loop up to the limestone summit along with the open-air group pavilion atop it. Limestone blocks, each weighing as much as two tons, line the winding road that inspires the name "Roman Wall" for the feature. CCC enrollees also built a residence and a concession building of local stone and cedar. Some evidence of the CCC company's camp area remains, including images of eagles carved into limestone blocks.



*Atop Scenic Mountain, the caretaker's residence is near completion.*





# BLANCO

STATE PARK

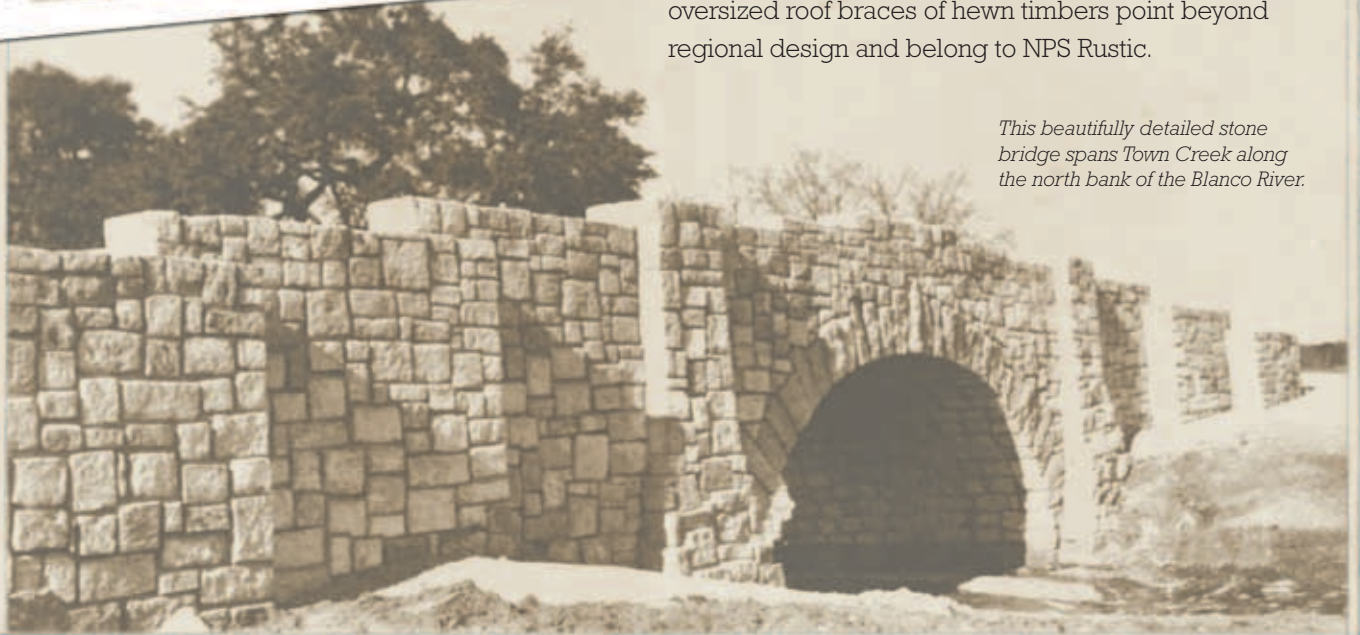
COMPANY

854



Considered one of Texas' most beautiful natural resources, the Blanco River attracted the early attention of the CCC, and they constructed a 105-acre park in Blanco County. From June 1933, through May 1934, Company 854 built two stone dams on the river and blended picnic structures and support facilities into the landscape of oaks and cedars. With rough limestone walls and massive chimneys, the concession building echoes the region's German architectural heritage. The building's handcrafted detailing and oversized roof braces of hewn timbers point beyond regional design and belong to NPS Rustic.

*This beautifully detailed stone bridge spans Town Creek along the north bank of the Blanco River.*



# BONHAM

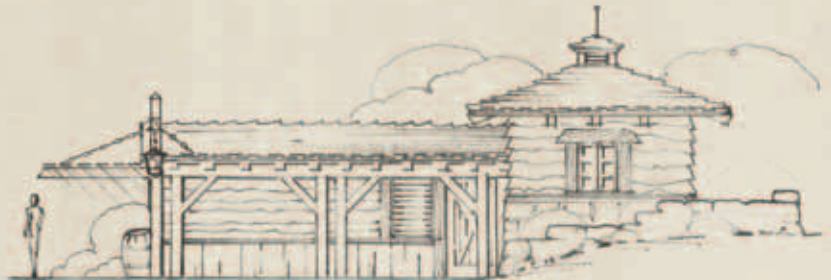
## STATE PARK

COMPANY 894

This 261-acre park epitomizes the CCC-park formula—an earthen dam impounds a small lake, refectory, and landscape features for the purposes of erosion control and public recreation. Between 1933 and 1936, CCC Company 894 camped on this high ground in Fannin County surrounded by long-used cotton fields.



The enrollees fashioned a pleasant oasis from rocky, scrub brush hills and built a 65-acre lake which has remained a favorite retreat for Bonham swimmers and anglers alike. Local cream-colored limestone and sturdy cedars were fashioned into building material for the refectory and bathhouse, since converted to the park headquarters. Similar NPS Rustic styling was applied to the open-air pavilion, boathouse, water tower and footbridge.



EAST ELEVATION ~  
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



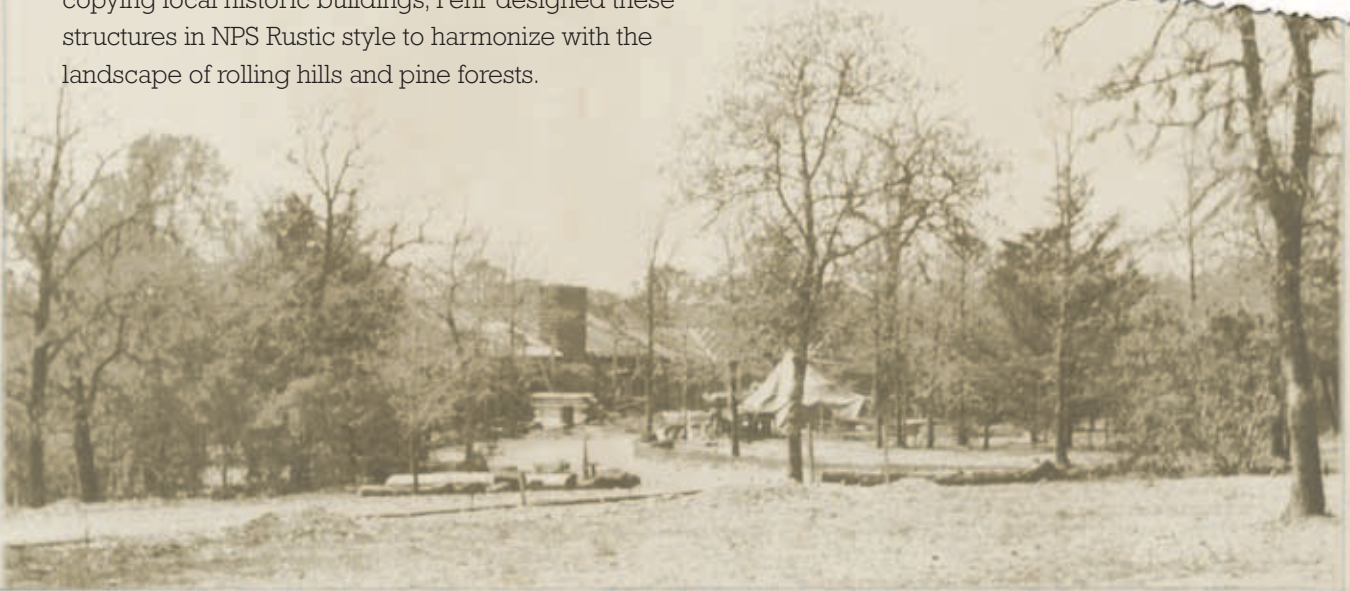
# BUESCHER

## STATE PARK

COMPANY 1805

COMPANY 1811

The local Buescher family and City of Smithville donated a scenic area of 1,017 acres in Bastrop County to the state for park development beginning in 1924. Between 1933 and 1939, CCC Companies 1805 and 1811 at Bastrop developed both parks, connecting them with a 7.5-mile scenic drive along a 500-foot right-of-way, today's Park Road 1. Enrollees built a large earthen dam at Buescher to impound a 65-acre lake. Architect Arthur Fehr designed the CCC buildings here, including a group pavilion, concession building, residence, and maintenance building of rough stone and timber. Instead of copying local historic buildings, Fehr designed these structures in NPS Rustic style to harmonize with the landscape of rolling hills and pine forests.



# CADDO LAKE

## STATE PARK

COMPANY 889

COMPANY 857



One of the first Texas state parks chosen for CCC development was this enchanting 480 acres of bayous forested by cypress and pine trees. During several six-month enrollment periods during 1933 and 1934, CCC Company 889 made the initial improvements with trails, firebreaks and lookout towers. During later periods, the CCC stationed a "side camp" here as an auxiliary to Company 857, which was assigned to Lamar County near Paris.



Large stone entry pylons greet visitors to the park, where the concession building, reminiscent of pioneer log construction, harmonizes with the tranquil woods. NPS Rustic designs blend with the landscape, like the trail shelter with its low roofline, nestled into place with rough rock footings.



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State 1937-1938





# CLEBURNE

## STATE PARK

COMPANY

3804

CCC Company 3804 developed this 529-acre park from the rolling hills and dense thickets of Johnson County. The enrollees built an earthen dam to impound the park's 135-acre lake, then cleared a three-mile-long scenic roadway around the lake. A concession building, boathouse, bathhouse and other features were built between 1935 and 1940. The park residence, water tower, and interior furnishings display a variety of handcrafted wood and metal details.



# DAINGERFIELD

## STATE PARK

COMPANY 2891

COMPANY 1801

This 501-acre park in the pine forests of Morris County in East Texas followed the successful CCC park master plan. An earthen dam impounded the 80-acre lake, a road wound comfortably through the scenery, and local stone, timber, and innovative cast concrete formed the buildings. Company 2891 labored here from 1935 to 1938, when Company 1801—composed of African American enrollees—transferred to the park during 1938 and 1939. The CCC developed a peninsula jutting into the lake as a landing pier, swimming beach and picnic area. Their park facilities include the combination building, a boathouse, park residence and several cabins.





# DAVIS MOUNTAINS

STATE PARK

COMPANIES

879, 881 + 1856

Dramatic scenery and cool mountain air, along with some 500 donated acres of ranch land in Jeff Davis County, encouraged the development of one of the earliest CCC parks in the Big Bend of Texas. A five-mile scenic road was carved in switchbacks along the ridge between Hospital and Keesey canyons, affording a spectacular view of the historic military fort and the distant mountain ranges. Companies 879, 881, and 1856 worked here and on Indian Lodge during 1933 to 1938 and 1940 to 1942.

*Likely designed by William C. Caldwell, the stone overlook shelter resembles the prototype that NPS architect Herbert Maier designed in 1924 for Yosemite National Park.*



# FORT PARKER

## STATE PARK

COMPANY 3807

Developed between 1935 and 1942, this 1,459-acre park in Limestone County rested on the former county seat of Springfield, donated by the City of Mexia and several property owners. The young African American men of Company 3807 built a 423-foot dam of limestone, concrete and earth across the Navasota River, impounding 750-acre Fort Parker Lake. Timber cleared from the lake bed, including walnut, oak and cedar, formed the fences, a clubhouse, boathouse and bathhouse. A road threading through the wooded park connected picnic shelters set at picturesque points around the lake. A Texas Centennial project reconstructed nearby Fort Parker in 1936, and CCC Company 3807 assisted with roads and utilities.





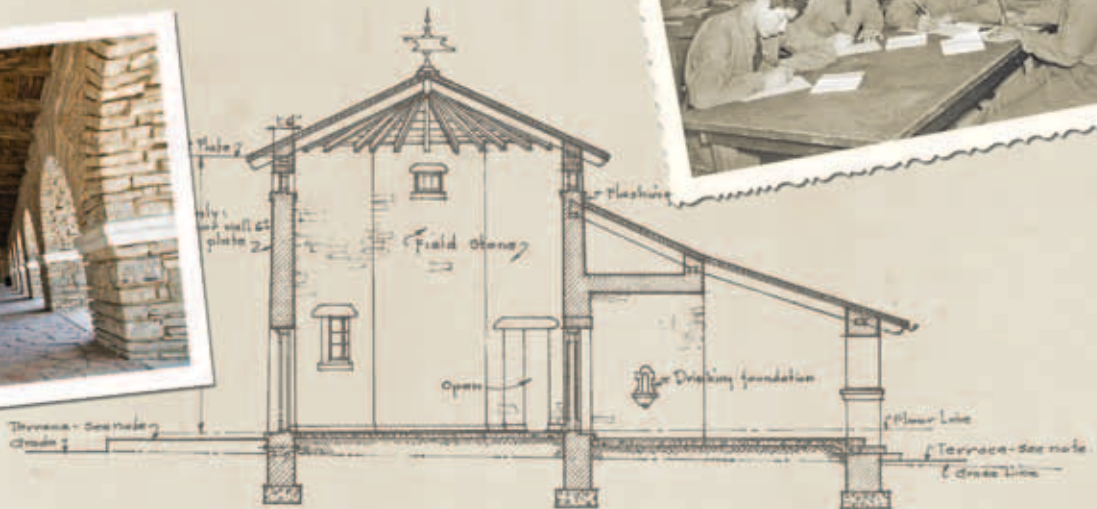
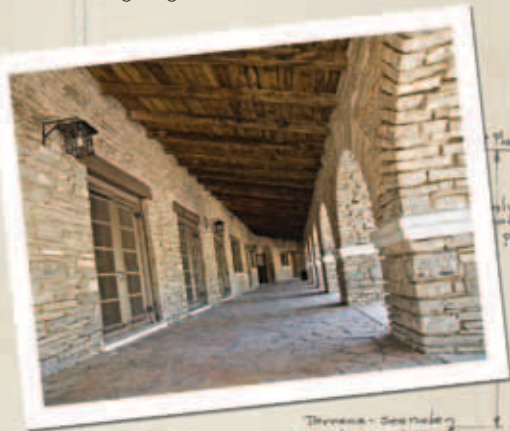
# GARNER

## STATE PARK

COMPANY 879

John Nance Garner was vice president of the United States under Roosevelt from 1933 to 1940 and was instrumental in pushing the New Deal through Congress. Located north of Garner's home in Uvalde, the park sits on the Frio River in Uvalde County, where it was developed by CCC Company 879 between 1935 and 1941. A concession building, park residence and 14 cabins follow NPS Rustic principles and take inspiration from limestone architecture of Alsatian immigrants to this region in Texas. The men also cut more than 10 miles of riding and hiking trails through the lush valley of the Frio River.

*Forged by the CCC enrollees, metal hardware includes ornamental hinges, latches, and lighting fixtures.*







# GOLIAD

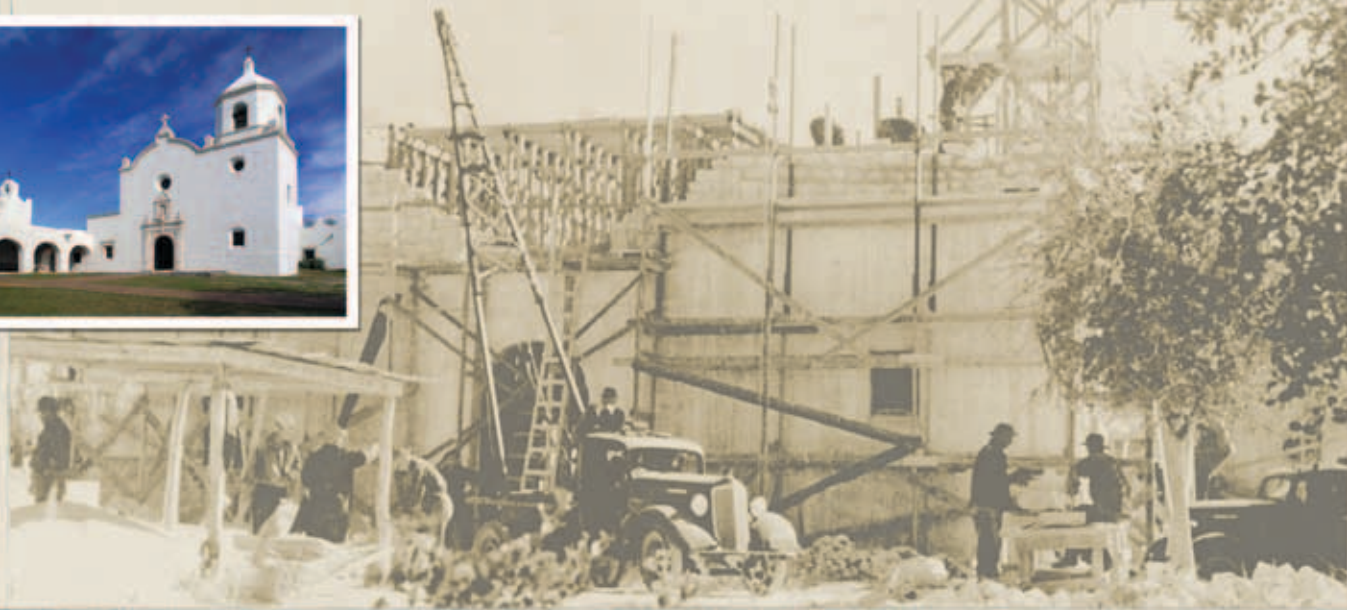
## STATE PARK AND HISTORIC SITE

COMPANY 3822

### LEGEND OF SYMBOLS

ORIGINAL WALLS	
CWA RESTORED WALLS	
TO BE RESTORED	
RUINS	

Goliad city and county donated these 237 acres and mission ruins in 1931 as a state park. Reconstruction of the 18-century Spanish mission *Nuestra Señora del Espíritu Santo de Zúñiga* was the primary accomplishment of Veteran Company 3822 here in Goliad County between 1935 and 1941. Historical records, archeological excavations, and architectural details from existing Spanish Colonial churches contributed to the design of the reconstruction. The church walls and compound walls were rebuilt with local limestone, as in the original mission. Architects Raiford L. Stripling and Samuel C. P. Vosper, along with NPS engineers, designed a new vaulted roof of reinforced concrete for the church. CCC veterans crafted furniture, ornamental metalwork and other decoration for the complex.





# GOOSE ISLAND

STATE PARK

COMPANY

1801

“Goose Island” became a state park in 1931 and today is only a small part of a larger park that takes in 307 acres largely on Lamar Peninsula in Aransas County. CCC Company 1801, a mixed-race camp of Anglos and African Americans, worked here during three six-month periods during 1934 and 1935. They constructed roads along the beach and paved them with crushed oyster shells. The enrollees built picnic units and originally finished them in a tropical manner with thatched roofs of palmetto leaves.

*Enrollees used oyster shells to mix into concrete and cast into blocks, which they used to form the concession building.*

*The CCC also cleared undergrowth, planted trees, and assured protection for the “Big Tree,” an ancient coastal live oak in the park.*



# HUNTSVILLE

## STATE PARK

COMPANY

1823

Once part of the vast Big Thicket of East Texas, these 2,083 acres in Walker County had been largely stripped of timber between 1880 and 1930. CCC Company 1823, composed of African American veterans of World War I accomplishing their fifth park development here, reclaimed the forest with plantings of pine, sweetgum, maple, oak and dogwood. The men built (and later rebuilt) a large earthen dam across the Prairie Branch of Big Chinquapin Creek for erosion control and creation of Lake Raven. They also constructed a road along the lake shore and built a concession building of stone and timber.





# INDIAN LODGE

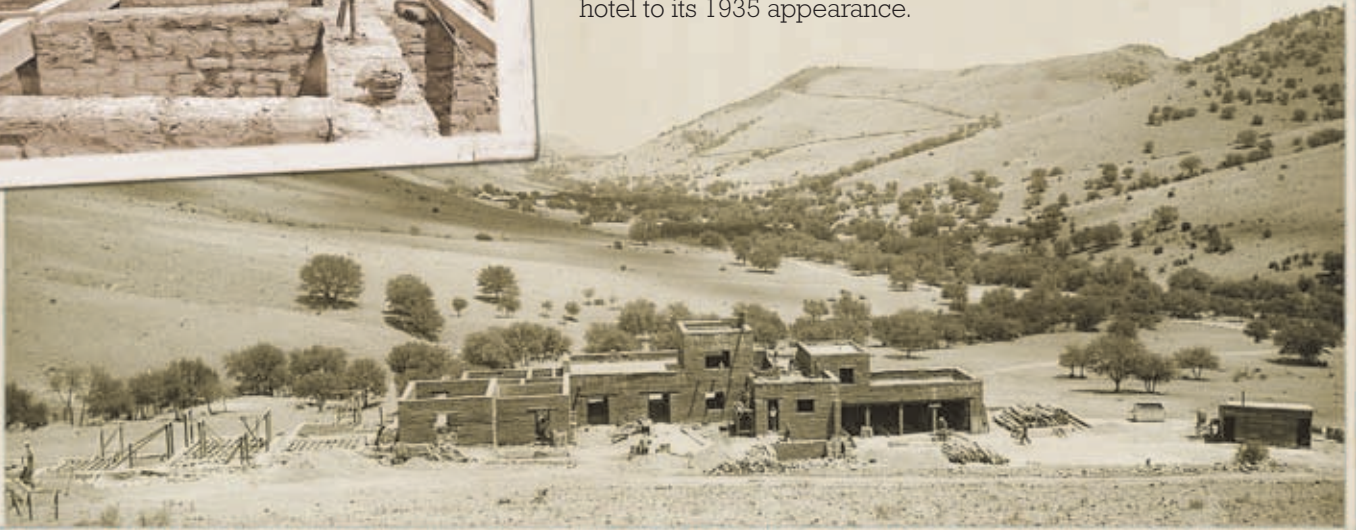
AT DAVIS MOUNTAINS STATE PARK

COMPANIES

879 & 1856

Indian Lodge is a 16-room, pueblo-style hotel set on the north slope of Keesey Canyon in Davis Mountains State Park. Built of hand-hewn pine beams and adobe blocks made on-site, the hotel was adorned by longleaf pine floors, casement windows, cane and log ceilings, hand-carved cedar furniture, and a plaza-like exterior courtyard. Architect Bill Caldwell studied historic Southwestern buildings for the theme of Indian Lodge and selected the rambling pueblos of New Mexico as his model. Enrollees molded adobe blocks on the site, just as earlier builders had done for vernacular residences and military structures in the Big Bend area.

The lodge was furnished with hand-carved cedar furniture embellished with Southwestern Indian motifs and made at Bastrop State Park. During 1964 and 1965, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department built a 24-room addition that includes a dining room, meeting room and swimming pool. In 2004–2006 TPWD took steps to restore the original section of the hotel to its 1935 appearance.



# INKS LAKE

## STATE PARK

COMPANY

854

When the men of CCC Company 854 had finished their improvements at nearby Longhorn Cavern State Park, they were assigned the brief task during 1940–1942 of improving this 1,201-acre park in Burnet County. The Lower Colorado River Authority donated the land to the state when Inks Lake was created by a new Colorado River dam in 1938. The CCC constructed picnic and water recreation facilities here and constructed Park Road 4 along the lake's northern shore. A few stone culverts and the retaining wall of a boat dock remain as evidence of CCC improvements.





# LAKE BROWNWOOD

## STATE PARK

COMPANIES

872 & 849

The Parks Board and CCC maintained this state park camp near Brownwood in Brown County during most of the program's duration. Company 872 worked here in 1934 and 1935, and then Company 849 settled at the 538-acre park from 1936 through 1942.

Numerous NPS Rustic buildings and structures were built of local limestone rubble, including a concession building, two lodges, 17 overnight cabins, a scenic overlook shelter, and support facilities. General improvements included stone boat docks, roads and park entry, trails and picnic facilities. After World War II, the park's name was changed to "36th Division State Park" in honor of the Texas National Guard division that trained here and at nearby Camp Bowie, but has since reverted to its original name.



# LAKE CORPUS CHRISTI

## STATE PARK

COMPANY

886



*The men of Company 886 built forms and combined the locally plentiful lime-rich caliche soil with cement and then cast caliche crete blocks. Nearby stands a brush-covered ramada, typical South Texas shelter, which will protect the curing blocks.*

This lake was created with other public works funds by damming the Nueces River in the 1930s for a 21,000-acre water supply to serve nearby Corpus Christi. The 365-acre park was developed by CCC Company 886 between 1934 and 1936, at a cove where the boundaries of San Patricio, Jim Wells, and Live Oak counties converge. CCC buildings included a boathouse, park residence, and a refectory, but only architect Olin Boese's impressive refectory and its extensive landscaping remain. This Mediterranean-style building was built of cast caliche blocks; these were cast in various sizes and laid in a random-ashlar pattern, closely resembling cut limestone.





# LOCKHART

## STATE PARK

COMPANY 3803

The City of Lockhart and Caldwell County donated these 264 acres to the state in 1933, and two years later CCC Company 3803 developed the park. Architect George Walling designed a park residence of stone and half-timbering, resembling European-immigrant architecture in Central Texas. A wooden frame refectory overlooks the park from a wooded cliff, reached by a winding road blazed with CCC labor. The valley below, lush with elm, oak, ash and pecan trees, was landscaped with picnic facilities, stone bridges, a swimming pool and a golf course.







# MERIDIAN

STATE PARK

COMPANY

1827



CCC Veteran Company 1827 developed this 502-acre park in Bosque County between 1933 and 1934. The enrollees built a rock and earthen dam across Bee Creek to impound 75-acre Lake Bosque. Through the rough valley of oaks and cedars, they cut a five-mile-long scenic drive leading to the lake and constructed recreational facilities.

On the lake's northern shore, a refectory of exceptional craftsmanship was fashioned of limestone and timber from the park. Visitors enter from the parking lot, through the refectory's open-air pavilion, and down a dramatic staircase to the water's edge. Other original buildings and structures include the bathhouse, park residence, culverts, picnic tables and barbecue pits.



# MISSION TEJAS

STATE PARK

COMPANY

888



The Texas Forest Service first managed Mission Tejas; and New Deal labor developed it before it joined the State Parks Board and eventually Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Following completion of the unit's conservation work in surrounding Davy Crockett National Forest, CCC Company 888 focused on developing this 117-acre recreational site during the summer of 1935. To commemorate the 1690 Spanish mission San Francisco de los Tejas, whose archeological evidence has appeared along nearby San Pedro Creek, the CCC built the park's log "mission church" to symbolize early Spanish colonization of the region.





# MOTHER NEFF

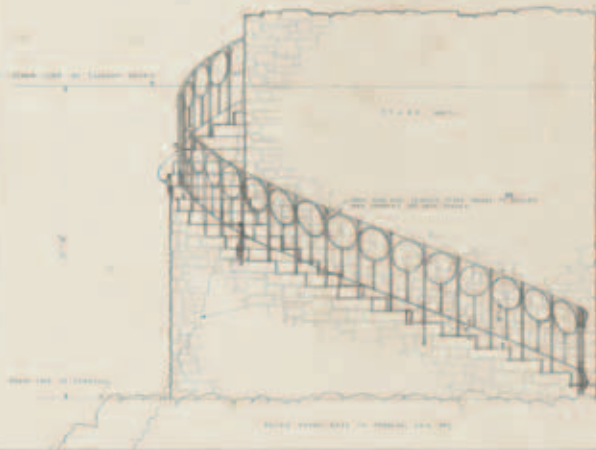
STATE PARK

COMPANY

817

Six acres of this Neff family Leon River bottomland in Coryell County comprised the State Parks Board's first land donation in 1923. Governor Pat Neff recommended creation of the Parks Board that year and wished to honor his mother through the parkland gift. When he served on the Parks Board in 1934, Neff donated an adjacent 250 acres, where CCC Company 817 worked through 1938.

The enrollees constructed picnic and meeting facilities at this traditional gathering place for reunions and religious groups, and built NPS Rustic stone buildings and structures, including an open-air pavilion, a park residence, and a water tower. The stone concession building is now the park headquarters. A Tonkawa Indian burial was discovered by the CCC workers, prompting archeological investigations in the park.



# PALMETTO STATE PARK

COMPANIES

873, 886 & 1823



On a bend of the San Marcos River in Gonzales County, occasional flooding and sulphur springs combined over centuries to create an unusual swamp isolated from the surrounding scrub prairie. Between 1934 and 1937, three CCC companies developed 264 acres donated by the City of Gonzales, the Texas and New Orleans Railroad, and other property owners, as a preserve for the unusual plants and scenery.

Company 873 camped here during 1934 and 1935; Company 886 made improvements during 1936 and 1937; and Company 1823, a group of African American veterans, finished the work in 1937. The men built the scenic entrance along Park Road 11 along an abandoned railroad right-of-way and constructed other landscape features of native stone. The refectory, designed by architect Olin Smith in 1935, is a superbly executed NPS Rustic structure. The boulders in its walls seem to tumble down into the earth surrounding the building with no clear division between ground and foundation. Its first roof was thatched with palmetto fronds.





# PALO DURO CANYON

## STATE PARK

### COMPANIES

1821, 1824,  
1828, 1829, 894,  
2875 + 2876

Early Texas State Parks Board member and newspaper columnist Phoebe K. Warner campaigned for more than a decade to create a state park here, along the canyon etched into high plains of the Texas Panhandle by the Prairie Dog Town fork of the Red River. Between 1933 and 1937 several CCC Companies developed what was then 16,420 acres of parkland in Armstrong and Randall counties. Veteran Companies 1821, 1824, 1828, and 1829, Junior Company 894, and two companies of young African American men, 2875 and 2876, made the improvements to what was then the largest state park.

The major challenge for each company was to make the magnificently rugged canyon accessible to the public, so road construction was an ongoing assignment for park development. An interpretive center of native stone, originally intended to become "Coronado Lodge" and designed by Guy Carlander, perches on the canyon rim and blends with exposed rock strata. Several park residences and picnic shelters were similarly positioned.



# POSSUM KINGDOM

## STATE PARK

COMPANY

2888

A large dam across the Brazos River in Palo Pinto County was built with Public Works Administration assistance between 1935 and 1941 and named for staunch state park supporter U.S. Senator Morris Sheppard. When the dam was finished and 20,000-acre Possum Kingdom Lake began to fill, CCC Company 2888 concentrated state park improvements along the south bank in 1941. Reduction of CCC enrollment in the early 1940s and reassignment of remaining camps to military projects, however, soon halted the work here. Seven-mile-long Park Road 33, one picnic table, a stone culvert, and various ruins of the CCC camp remain as evidence of the enrollees' work.





# TYLER

## STATE PARK

COMPANY 2888

These 986 acres in Smith County were severely eroded before CCC Company 2888 developed the land between 1935 and 1941. The CCC first restored the pine and hardwood forests, built erosion-control structures, and constructed an earthen dam to impound the 90-acre lake. By the time that the men undertook building construction at Tyler, NPS Rustic was no longer the prevailing style for either the NPS or Texas state parks. Architect Joe C. Lair designed a bathhouse, concession building and support structures of conventional wood framing. His low roof lines and circular motifs made them appear modern and akin to the works of acclaimed architect Frank Lloyd Wright. A large swimming pool, an amphitheater and fishing piers were built by the CCC for public convenience at the park.



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