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Reviewed work(s):

Source: *Environmental History*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Jan., 2001), pp. 95-117

Published by: [Forest History Society](#) and [American Society for Environmental History](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3985233>

Accessed: 13/01/2013 21:50

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Re-Creating the Wilderness

Shaping Narratives and Landscapes in Shenandoah National Park

Justin Reich

The view at Sawmill Park Overlook in Shenandoah National Park encompasses private woodlands in the distance, agricultural lands in the valley, and park forests in the foreground. An interpretive sign at the overlook describes “Shenandoah’s Patchwork Forest” and explains that the visible differences in vegetation occur because “Non-Park areas are subject to direct human change which Park lands no longer experience.” This wayside provides one short passage in a longer story told by the National Park Service (NPS) about Shenandoah, a story that has coevolved with the landscape during the last seventy-five years. This official story highlights certain aspects of Shenandoah’s history and shades others, and recent expressions of the park narrative have downplayed the integral role of human beings in shaping the Blue Ridge Mountains. One does not have to stray far from Sawmill Park Overlook to find places where the landscape contradicts the narrative. At the foot of the sign are rows of tree stumps neatly cut to maintain the vista.

For as long as they have been inhabited, Shenandoah National Park lands have been subject to direct human change. Homesteads, farms, cattle pastures, and orchards dotted the slopes of the Blue Ridge until the NPS took possession of the lands in 1936, and, to use the landscape architect’s term, obliterated almost all traces of human history. In recent decades, the official story of Shenandoah has been one of “re-creation,” of a wilderness lost to human exploitation and then restored by natural processes. But nature alone did not re-create a lost wilderness. The NPS and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) created a landscape never before seen on the Blue Ridge, through fire suppression, road construction, wildlife protection, human removal, landscaping, and engineering. Through the various stages of acquiring park lands, establishing Shenandoah, and re-creating the landscape, park officials and supporters told a variety of stories that justified both the “preservation” and the transformation of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Throughout Shenandoah’s history, stories and landscapes have re-created each other.

This history of storytelling and land management in Shenandoah National Park attempts to make two contributions to the broader study of environmental history.

In unveiling evidence of significant human influence in Shenandoah, it suggests that the historiography of the national parks, while focusing on how parks *preserve* landscapes, continues to underemphasize how these places *create* new landscapes. This history highlights the dynamic relationship between stories about nature and the landscapes of a national park. Those stories that park managers used to justify significant intervention in the environment, most notably during the interwar period, will be of particular interest to those seeking historical answers to our current “trouble with wilderness.”

Shenandoah National Park has occupied an uncomfortable position in the history of the National Park Service. The master narrative of this history, exemplified by Alfred Runte’s *National Parks: The American Experience*, describes a progression from parks designed to preserve natural wonders and scenic grandeur to ones designed to preserve representative environments from around the country. Runte treats Shenandoah as a “transition” between the two types of preservation in the park system. He argues Shenandoah “anticipated the ecological standards of the later twentieth century” but could only “approximate the visual standards of the national park idea as originally conceived.” He defines Shenandoah as a marginalized follower to the “crown jewels” of the West.¹

Recent historiography has begun to address the extent to which national parks shaped environments instead of simply preserving them, though Shenandoah remains largely ignored. Richard Sellars, Linda Flint McClelland, and Ethan Carr have focused on the essential role of landscape architects and engineers in constructing the parks as an experience for tourists. Although Shenandoah experienced as much manipulation as any other national park, its story remains largely untold throughout these works. Carr’s work even recapitulates Shenandoah’s official narrative when he observes that “generally parkland was allowed to succeed back to a condition that approximated (it was hoped) the presettlement wilderness conditions considered appropriate for national park scenery.”²

Shenandoah’s history suggests that the critique of the national park’s conventional narrative begun by these scholars can be pushed even further. National park scholars have highlighted numerous ways humans have changed park lands. Though Sellars argues that “ecological preservation” must be considered “the highest of many worthy priorities,” his book reveals the enormous importance of landscape architects and engineers within the national park system. Carr and McClelland emphasize the importance of these professions in shaping areas along park thoroughfares of travel. Runte observes how fire suppression and wildlife management influenced the shape of national parks. Mark Spence’s book explains how the NPS justified the removal of Native American residents from the parks in the West. In Shenandoah, NPS officials brought about all of these changes simultaneously to fashion a new landscape that Shenandoah landscape architect Harlan Kelsey believed would “restore so far as possible the natural conditions [of Shenandoah], ecologically and scenically.”³

After uncovering evidence of human design in the national parks, developing notions of how to shape landscapes become as important a theme in park history as developing notions of how to preserve landscapes. Runte may be partially correct in arguing Shenandoah represents a transition in national park preservation, but

within a narrative describing national park development, Shenandoah is not an inadequate follower but an important leader. In 1965, A. Starker Leopold suggested that "a reasonable illusion of primitive America could be recreated [in the parks] using the utmost in skill, judgment and ecological sensitivity."⁴ Shenandoah's first officials adopted this goal, ecologically and scenically, thirty years before.

The nps does not just shape places; it also shapes ideas about those places. In his recent book about tourism in the American West, Hal Rothman writes, "This process of scripting space, both physically and psychically, defines tourist towns and resorts. All places have scripted space. The scripting of space is essential to the organizing of the physical and social world for the purposes of perpetuation."⁵ Through park rangers, museum displays, maps, brochures, press releases, and way-side signs, every national park creates a narrative to explain itself. These narratives are often part educational and part celebrational. They attempt to explain both the history of the park lands and the role of the NPS in preserving America's natural heritage. These narratives are very much built into, or scripted into, the landscape.

These two threads of historical analysis—the management of landscapes and the management of stories—can be woven into a single history of Shenandoah. Land management in Shenandoah has been deeply influenced by the stories that park officials have told about nature and about appropriate human relations with the environment. At the same time, the official park narrative has always reflected the contemporary condition of the environment on the Blue Ridge. Stories about Shenandoah's nature lead to management practices that in turn lead to new stories. For the last seventy-five years, Shenandoah's landscape and story have changed and have changed each other.

Every park faces a tension between what it is and what it is supposed to be, otherwise management would be unnecessary. Parks can resolve this tension in two ways: rhetorically or materially. Supporters and officials can either argue that the park meets the relevant standards or that those standards ought to be changed to include the park. Or, park managers can materially change parklands so they approach the ideal landscape. This tension between ideal and reality has motivated the evolution of stories and land management in Shenandoah.

The history of Shenandoah began when the nps first proposed a park in the Southern Appalachians in 1924. Supporters of a site on Virginia's Blue Ridge immediately formed a lobby, and they argued that their mountains represented a fine example of nearly unspoiled wilderness. To those who suggested that no place in the East could meet standards for western parks, boosters retorted that eastern scenery had its own virtues. In 1936, the Virginia lobby celebrated their success at the dedication of Shenandoah National Park. With the land under federal protection, Frederick Delano Roosevelt spoke not of untouched nature but of a landscape impacted by human activities and dedicated Shenandoah to the human "re-creation" of nature. In the decade that followed, Shenandoah attempted to transform the landscape into a model of Southern Appalachian wilderness. So successful were landscape architects in both executing and veiling their efforts that the following generation of park managers described Shenandoah's re-creation entirely in terms of natural processes. This re-creation narrative is the one that presently dominates the signs, guides, and histories of Shenandoah National Park. Only recently, as

Shenandoah officials have found a renewed interest in the cultural history of their park, has the narrative of Shenandoah begun to again recognize the park's landscape as a collaboration between human and natural actors.

Creating Wilderness: Forging Shenandoah's Early Image

Stories create national parks. Parks also require deed transfers, congressional approval, public support, and other efforts to come to pass, but all of these efforts are motivated in one way or another by stories that explain and justify the permanent protection of land. The creation of Shenandoah National Park required the confluence of arguments from a number of different constituencies: citizens, business leaders, philanthropists, and government officials. The park was first defended as an equal to the parks of the West both in terms of scenic beauty and economic potential, though these rationales gave way to the re-creation narrative once the park was protected under federal law. These first arguments in support of Shenandoah represent the incoherent genesis of the scripting of the park.

On 7 December 1924, Harlan Kelsey rode over the Blue Ridge on horseback, charged with judging the mountains as a potential national park. In January 1924, nps Director Stephen T. Mather made the suggestion to establish a park in the Southern Appalachians, and soon after Secretary of the Interior Hubert Work created a five-man Southern Appalachian National Park Commission to find an appropriate site. Kelsey sat on the Temple Commission, named for Pennsylvania congressman and chairman Henry Temple, as a landscape architect and member of the Appalachian Mountain Club. He staunchly supported the Great Smoky Mountains as the first site for a southern park and was the last member of the commission to visit the Blue Ridge.⁶

When Kelsey and the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission judged potential park sites, they considered six qualifications:

1. Mountain scenery with inspiring perspectives and delightful details.
2. Areas sufficiently extensive and adaptable so that annually millions of visitors might enjoy the benefits of outdoor life and communion with nature without the confusion of overcrowding.
3. A substantial part to contain forests, shrubs and flowers, and mountain streams, with picturesque cascades and waterfalls overhung with foliage, all untouched by the hand of man.
4. Abundant springs and streams available for camps and fishing.
5. Opportunities for protecting and developing the wild life of the area and the whole to be a natural museum, preserving the outstanding features of the Southern Appalachians as they appeared in the early pioneer days.
6. Accessibility by rail and road.⁷

These six standards embodied the diverse ideals of the national parks as they had developed in the American West. The requirements emphasized outstanding scenery, picturesque natural elements, and an untouched wilderness suitable for protecting. The new park needed sufficient space, access, and recreational activities to

accommodate millions of visitors. Shenandoah boosters quickly went about defending their area on all fronts with varied and conflicting arguments about Shenandoah's virtues.

Before examining the various arguments for and against Shenandoah, it is important to consider what the Blue Ridge Mountains actually looked like in the 1920s. A Forest Service report sent to the Temple Commission in 1925 provided an invaluable glimpse. Forest Examiner R. Clifford Hall reported: "At present about 20 percent of this mountainous section is cleared. . . . Of the 80 per cent now in forest, about 50 per cent is culled and cut over, while thirty percent may be classified as virgin."⁸

Hall noted that "lumbering is an important industry" along with some iron mining and agriculture. He described the "erosion and irregularity of stream flow" produced by these activities and observed that "there is much land on the west slope which has been cleared and burned until it supports only a scrubby growth of worthless brush." Hall concluded that the Blue Ridge "might be considered as a possible area of third rate importance."⁹

Harlan Kelsey's tour of the mountains did not include side trips to burnt and scrubby underbrush. His guide through the Blue Ridge was George Pollack, owner of the Skyland Ranch, labeled as "The Only Dude Ranch in the Eastern U.S." Pollack was a talented host as well as one of Shenandoah's most enthusiastic boosters. Pollack and Kelsey rode over freshly cut trails through the least impacted parts of the hillsides, and they gazed out onto the Piedmont from newly built observation towers. As the story goes, Kelsey was quite taken with the landscape and insisted on riding through the mountains late into the night. On December 11, Kelsey returned to Washington to meet with the Temple Commission, and according to a promotional book from 1929, he met his colleagues saying, "Well I'll be damned, that's all I can say gentlemen." Kelsey decided that Blue Ridge met the qualifications, and that evening the commission unanimously cast their votes for the establishment of Shenandoah National Park.¹⁰

The next day, the Temple Commission presented their report to Secretary Work. They urged the NPS to establish Shenandoah as the first Appalachian national park and later develop the Great Smoky Mountains. Their report stated that the Smokies "easily stand first because of the height of their mountains, depth of valleys, ruggedness of the area, and the unexampled variety of trees, shrubs and plants," but the commission chose the Blue Ridge because it could serve "a larger number of people in a shorter period at less expense."¹¹

The report to Work began the campaign to establish Shenandoah National Park. As the park changed from dream to possibility to inevitability, park supporters experimented with a variety of arguments to convince an array of audiences of Shenandoah's merit as a national park. After the commission's initial recommendation, a conglomeration of Virginia business interests, including the new Shenandoah National Park Association, worked to convince Congress and the public that the Blue Ridge's wilderness merited preservation. They combined their efforts with the Virginia State Conservation and Development Commission, headed by William Carson, the National Park Service, and numerous regional and national newspapers to begin promoting the park.

Initially, Shenandoah supporters emphasized the scenic and primeval qualities of the park along with its recreational and restorative potential. A press release from the Department of the Interior heralded the Blue Ridge's "splendid primeval forests." The Washington Star reported in March 1926 on the rare and varied scenery and the "striking wilderness." A pamphlet published by the Shenandoah National Park Association declared that the mountain range had "been preserved in its virgin loveliness." Stephen T. Mather declared that at Shenandoah "the spiritual and mental relaxation found in the quiet of the shady forests or beside the running stream is almost necessary in this age of jazz."¹²

Some acknowledged the human presence and potential in Shenandoah's wilderness. In September 1924, a booster article from the *Greene County Record* announced that "the government wants nature in the most primeval and ... the Blue Ridge meets the requirements. The land is either primeval forest or grazing farms with but a small area of cultivated estates." One newspaper suggested that "its pasture lands would be well stocked with buffalo, deer and elk" roaming about in their "wild state." The Temple Commission report declared that "the greatest single feature" of the proposed park was a possible skyline drive atop the mountain ridge. The Shenandoah National Park Association claimed that "camping sites, highways, artificial lakes, the restoration and protection of animal and plant life, have been spoken of as logical provisions of the Government." All of these predictions eventually came to pass.¹³

The development of Shenandoah National Park took an important step forward in 1926 when Congress agreed to accept Shenandoah into the park system if Virginia gave the land to the federal government. The lack of federal funds for new parks was well known, and the Shenandoah National Park Association had started fundraising efforts in the summer of 1925.¹⁴ Touting the park's scenic grandeur might convince Virginians to favor the park, but civic organizations needed to prove the financial benefits of wilderness for the citizenry to invest in the promise of Shenandoah.

To explain the potential of the proposed park to a skeptical public, boosters began an aggressive publicity campaign to raise funds for the park. The Shenandoah National Park Association produced the pamphlet *Virginia's Proposed National Park*, which pronounced that "the value of Virginia's scenery crop can best be predicted by comparisons with results in the west," where more than one million tourists each spent hundreds of dollars. Civic organizations also took out ads in county papers to encourage a wider array of citizens to purchase park lands. One ad in a Harrisonburg paper with the bold headline "Shall We Lose the Park?" argued that nearly everyone—farmers, grocers, lawyers, doctors, land owners, wage earners, hotel men, housewives, and working women—stood to gain from the new park and should invest in Shenandoah.¹⁵

While explaining the financial benefits of a park in the Blue Ridge Mountains, supporters carefully noted that these mountains had no other value. Supporters characterized the proposed park area as "worthless lands." One Greene County resident wrote, "What enterprise now can anyone in the Blue Ridge get money out of? The principal part of the chestnut oak bark is gone and all the best timber has been cut on land where teams can be used."¹⁶

The proposition that wilderness could be the Blue Ridge's most profitable land use rallied Virginians behind the Shenandoah National Park proposal. As early as February 1926, the sixteen counties adjacent to the proposed park raised almost \$200,000 to purchase land. In general, the park enjoyed the support of Virginia's Piedmont and valley residents who risked little by investing in the potential rewards of Shenandoah. Few remained to resist the park except the landowners themselves.¹⁷

In 1928, the Virginia General Assembly adopted a resolution allowing the condemnation of proposed park lands and forcing reluctant owners to sell.¹⁸ The immediate challenge to this resolution in the press and in the courts once again changed the public discourse about Shenandoah. With the imminent threat to people's homes, objections to Shenandoah stepped up considerably, and regional papers published the dissent.

B. I. Bickers led a typical campaign of park resistance in Greene County. Even before the condemnation resolution, Bickers saw the threat Shenandoah represented to landowners. He found that of Greene County's 45,387 acres within the park's proposed boundaries, there were 567 homes, of which 138 held more than 100 acres of land. Grazing farms and timberlands amounted to almost eight thousand more acres. Bickers warned that the government's prices for the lands were unfair, and the whole county would suffer when taxes from these productive lands were lost. From Bicker's standpoint, "30,000 people [are] to be deprived of their homes for a playground," though his estimates proved to be about 25,000 people too high.¹⁹

The resistance to the park failed. One landowner lost a challenge to the condemnations in Virginia's highest court in 1928, and the Supreme Court dismissed a second test case in 1931.²⁰ Opposition to the park afterward was negligible. The various civic organizations that coordinated Shenandoah's fundraising found that their arguments for the park's economic and recreational potential produced substantial results. The purchase of the park lands was only a few years away. Discussion of Shenandoah in the papers quieted, and supporters turned their attention away from defending the park and toward completing the process.

Shenandoah National Park stayed mostly out of the headlines during the early 1930s, but one burst of press came during fall 1932. Construction of Skyline Drive began in 1931 as a federal drought relief project, and in September 1932, Virginia offered a tour of the partially completed highway to a government conference on parks and planning.²¹ In October, the state opened a section of the highway to the public for five weeks, and those who had lobbied for the creation of a parkway drove along the highway they had imagined. The press gave both events positive coverage, reflecting many of the explanations and justifications for the park.

A press release from the Department of the Interior revived depictions of the park as a place of "scenic panoramas of high mountain peaks, forest-clad slopes, and vast stretches of historic Shenandoah Valley." In a speech to the conference delegates, Horace M. Albright, Mather's successor as National Park Service Director, emphasized the economic benefits the construction brought to local residents. He described Skyline's development as the opening of a practically virgin forest, protected from the depredations of vandals. Free from the criticism of detractors, all the park's virtues could be revived: scenic grandeur, pristine or mostly pristine wilderness, recreational opportunity, and economic benefit.²²

One more significant argument for Shenandoah appeared in Albright's speech: a predecessor to FDR's re-creation narrative. At the September opening of the Skyline Drive, Albright proposed the park should "be allowed to revert to the care of Mother Nature with every effort being bent to help Nature reclaim and repopulate the region as she sees fit."²³

Albright's comment was not the first of its kind. Others had suggested the notion that Shenandoah National Park would rejuvenate the wilderness on the Blue Ridge. In a 1928 speech to a Richmond audience, Secretary Work argued the country should "protect [Shenandoah] and let Nature restore it as God left it."²⁴ But this story never rose to prominence in the way that notions of Shenandoah's scenic grandeur or economic potential did.

Why did the re-creation narrative fail in the late twenties and early thirties and then define the park for the next six decades? In part, the timing was wrong. During the mid-1920s, when scenery strongly influenced national park politics, arguing that Congress should accept Shenandoah so the lands could be healed would be unthinkable. Later, as park supporters tried to sell the park's economic potential, Virginia's investors wanted to hear about the park's merits, not its flaws. Restoring nature might be a reasonable goal for a wilderness the nation already had, but few were interested in purchasing degraded land in order to heal it.

More importantly, the assumptions about wilderness that made the re-creation narrative convincing had not yet been developed. Albright's notion that people should "help Nature reclaim" the Blue Ridge assumed a wilderness where people have a role as healer. This tenet of New Deal conservationism, developed in reaction to the Dust Bowl and other catastrophes of the early 1930s, was only nascent when Albright spoke in 1932. An inadequate nature did not mesh well with the scenic or recreational ideals celebrated in the decade preceding Shenandoah's dedication.

In 1934, Virginia gave the Blue Ridge to the federal government, and the NPS took official control of Shenandoah National Park. Along with taking possession of Shenandoah's lands, the NPS inherited Shenandoah's story. Between accepting the new park in 1934 and its dedication in July of 1936, the Park Service faced the responsibility of reinterpreting that story to explain Shenandoah's past and give the park meaning within the nation's present and future. In the years prior to Shenandoah's official opening, the NPS prepared suggested dedication speeches for Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes and President Roosevelt.²⁵ These documents provide insight into the earliest developments of Shenandoah's official narrative.

The Park Service revived many of Shenandoah's narratives to explain its future. Each speech touched on the spiritual value of national parks, the benefits of recreation, and the economic opportunities created by national parks. One speech for the president wove all three together: "We realize that lives without play are warped. . . . Too long we have thought of recreation as a luxury. We should realize that national parks and parkways, for instance, are a legitimate and profitable form of land use."²⁶ The dedications also recounted the park's history and recognized Shenandoah's important supporters and philanthropists. The drafts portrayed Shenandoah as the most recent of Virginia's many contributions to the nation.

The preservation of scenery and wilderness played prominently in each speech, as well as the development of those areas. One draft emphasized “the importance of preserving” national parks and “the need to conserve . . . supreme wilderness scenery.” The speeches praised the CCC’s “attractive landscaping” in the park and heralded the “magnificent highway” spanning the Blue Ridge. In the conclusions, each speech reflected the duality of the NPS’s mission; as one put it, “I dedicate the Shenandoah National Park to those twins of national park integrity—conservation and human use.”²⁷

Ickes accepted most of the Park Service’s suggestions, but the president’s speech took a different rhetorical route. For FDR, the human and natural sides of wilderness were not twin but integrated. FDR envisioned Shenandoah as a place where people could both play and work in the wilderness.

FDR’s speech at the park’s dedication in 1936 began by celebrating Shenandoah’s CCC camps. By putting “idle people to the task of ending the waste of our land,” Shenandoah ended both the “involuntary idleness” of the CCC’s young men and the “idleness of Shenandoah National Park.” For FDR, Shenandoah offered an opportunity to emphasize the social welfare and conservation dimensions of the New Deal. The CCC camps represented the rejuvenation of human lives through their active rejuvenation of park lands. He expressed his passion for planning, a key element of New Deal conservationism, and envisioned the fruits of this planning as a Shenandoah where vacationers would find a national park “good for their bodies and good for their souls.”²⁸

FDR ended by emphasizing his vision of conservation as including human development. He called the national parks “in the largest sense a work of conservation.” He contended that “through all of them we are preserving the beauty and wealth of the hills” and “maintaining useful work for our young men.” Though the NPS drafts included both preservation and development, FDR’s speech knit them more closely together. FDR concluded: “I, therefore, dedicate Shenandoah National Park to this and succeeding generations of Americans for the recreation and the re-creation which we shall find here.”²⁹

On 5 July 1936, the *Washington Evening Star* printed an article titled “Shenandoah Afterthought.” An editorialist wrote, “[Americans] know that the natural resources of the country cannot be expropriated wastefully without penalty. Policies which once devastated areas vastly larger than Shenandoah have been halted. Decades, however will be needed to restore what has been lost.”³⁰ Two days after the dedication, a story of Shenandoah as a place where humans could re-create a lost wilderness had begun to replace the earlier stories of Shenandoah as a primeval wilderness that had sold the park.

Creating the Re-Creation: The Landscaping of Shenandoah

On 2 July 1936, Harlan Kelsey rode by automobile over the Skyline Drive, charged with judging the condition of the Blue Ridge. He was now a Collaborator-at-Large for Shenandoah with great influence though no actual authority. Shenandoah was safely protected, and Kelsey’s role shifted from booster to constructive critic. In

1924, Kelsey found the Blue Ridge's wilderness worthy of national park status, in 1936 he observed that "nature has been badly upset, but it should be and can be restored."³¹ Kelsey still believed that Shenandoah should meet the highest park standards, but now he was free to transform the park not merely in people's minds but on the land as well.

The standards Kelsey understood in 1936 differed significantly from the six qualifications used by the Temple Commission in two ways. Where the Temple standards called for environments "untouched by the hand of man," Shenandoah was embarking on a program of intensive re-creation. Roosevelt's New Deal conservationism depended extensively on humans working to restore nature. Pare Lorenz concluded his 1939 film, *River*, "We had the power to take the valley apart; we have the power to put it together again," and such sentiments could apply equally to the CCC efforts on the Blue Ridge Mountains. The second key change in Kelsey's thought at this time was that the forest succession model of Frederick Clements now deeply informed his ecological understanding. This model explained how disturbed environments succeeded back into their natural state, and Clements's idea of a "climax community," the association of plants inevitably stemming from undisturbed forest succession, provided Kelsey with a goal for his re-creation efforts.³²

In the report of his 1936 trip, Kelsey concluded: "It is an erroneous and fatal idea to consider that the free, *proper* use of the axe is violating nature—it is merely *aiding* nature in its struggle to over come man's destructive operations of the past. The object is to restore so far as may be possible, the natural conditions, ecologically and scenically, that once existed in the area."³³ The immediate future for Shenandoah, as Kelsey saw it, involved humans working with nature to re-create Shenandoah. He instructed Shenandoah officials to restore the Blue Ridge's climax community as it existed before humans impacted the environment. The qualification that Shenandoah be restored "ecologically and scenically" allowed Kelsey to deviate from the Clementsian ideal to maximize Shenandoah's scenic potential for visitors' recreation and enjoyment. The confluence of the NPS's recreational mission, the New Deal conception of human/environment relations, and the Clementsian story of forest history guided the remarkable transformation of Shenandoah.

If Kelsey created the vision for Shenandoah as a landscape architect, then engineer James Lassiter executed that vision on the ground. Lassiter became involved with Shenandoah as the Emergency Conservation Work–CCC engineer in charge of the Skyline Drive project from 1933 to 1936. In 1936, NPS Director Arno B. Cammerer made Lassiter the park's first superintendent, and Lassiter managed the initial growth of the park until his retirement in 1941. During his term he oversaw the creation of the Skyline Drive and the first crucial phases of the park's development.³⁴

The transformation of the Blue Ridge began with the removal of the park's inhabitants. As Mark Spence observes, "national parks enshrine recently dispossessed landscapes," and Shenandoah was no exception, though the removal of the mountaineers from the Blue Ridge was not always an assured event.³⁵ For many years the "mountain folk" occupied a border between natural and human, just as Native Americans did in the West, and some believed people could remain as a part of the park. A newspaper from Grand Rapids, Michigan, predicted: "Attractions will

be, principally, the wild scenery of a timbered area largely ravaged by lumberman and the picturesque natives. . . . It is assumed the mountain folk will not be moved from their shacks. They are local color and proof of the untamed nature of the park—just as deer or bear might be in Michigan or Alaska.”³⁶

NPS policy on inhabitants wavered during the park’s development. In 1929, Secretary of the Interior Ray Lyman Wilbur maintained that the government could permit tenants on the Blue Ridge as lessees, under a strict set of regulations forbidding hunting, logging, injury of “natural features,” and opening up new land for farming. The NPS later found human inhabitants incompatible with the mission of the national parks, and in 1934, Arno B. Cammerer declared that the federal government would not accept any populated lands.³⁷

A 1934 census declared that 465 families lived on the Blue Ridge, although we may never know how many left before then. After the Virginia State Commission on Conservation and Development and Lassiter removed these families, the Blue Ridge Mountains had no permanent inhabitants for the first time in recorded history. Europeans and Native Americans had shaped the Blue Ridge Mountains for millennia, and the Shenandoah removals marked the beginning of a new landscape on the Blue Ridge.³⁸

If human removals were the most significant erasure to transform Shenandoah, then Skyline Drive was the most prominent addition. During the park’s early years, Shenandoah and Skyline Drive were synonymous. In 1933, a critic of Shenandoah called the park “nothing more than a wide right of way for the Skyline Drive.” The majority of Shenandoah’s first visitors interacted with the park exclusively through the highway. Shenandoah’s first publication was “Shenandoah National Park: A Motorist’s Guide.”³⁹

The construction of Skyline Drive reflects the importance of landscape architects and engineers in the NPS. The engineers of the Bureau of Public Roads and their subcontractors took responsibility for the road’s construction, and the NPS’s landscape architects determined the highway’s route and replanted roadsides to blend with the forest. Skyline Drive was a remarkable engineering feat. Even a short ten-mile section from Black Rock to Jarman Gap took an entire year to build, required excavating 558,581 cubic yards of earth and laying down 52,000 tons of stone, and a cost of \$267,992.⁴⁰ The result was a careful human construction that showcased the Shenandoah Valley and the peaks beyond.

The excavation and banking of the road left the roadsides denuded, and in his 1936 report, Kelsey outlined a plan for replanting the edges of Skyline Drive. Kelsey’s first priority was restoring the “*original growth*” of the Blue Ridge. He reminded his colleagues “that primeval plant growth in this park area has been manhandled to such an extent that a large part of the area is covered with . . . an entirely different nature from what it was originally.” He argued that an “ecological study” could reveal the original growth lost to “cutting and resulting robber growth.” With this knowledge the proper “plant associations,” Clements’s term for a regional climax community, could be restored.⁴¹

At the same time, Kelsey did not intend for this original flora to grow freely. Uncontrolled tree growth crowded the road “giving a monotonous and shut-in feeling which should be avoided.” The Park Service planted roadside plant associations

along a gradient so taller growth remained closer to the forest. Lassiter described these associations as “transitional borders ranging from closed forest background to the annuals, perennials, and lower shrubs and herbs found immediately adjacent to the roadside.” Lassiter employed the CCC in restricting the “ever-encroaching forest cover along the Skyline Drive to alleviate the tunnel effect” and keeping the highway “cleaned of weeds, grass, and overhanging limbs and brush.” This landscaping pattern allowed the “original” growth of the Blue Ridge to return and offered tourists a “clean,” wide, well-lit highway. The result was, and still is, masterful, and at 35 mph the roadsides show no hint of their careful planning.⁴²

To complete the effect, Kelsey suggested scenic vistas be cleared and open spaces caused by construction or past human disturbance be left open. Kelsey emphasized that new cuts should be done under “expert supervision” so that the borders of the vista “may have a permanent, naturalistic appearance.” He also claimed the areas already cleared “must be preserved and *augmented*,” and the views should be “actually opened up still more.” Through the maintenance of these scenic vistas, visitors gazed at the distant mountains or the pastoral valley at the foot of the Blue Ridge.⁴³

In a phrase capturing the essence of the Skyline Drive, Lou Henry Hoover offered Director Albright “heartiest congratulations to you and your department for so workmanlike a job and so splendid a work of natural art.”⁴⁴ The drive embodied the intricate relationship between humans and their environment on the Blue Ridge. From their cars along an evenly graded highway, motorists like Hoover looked through cleared spaces in the well-managed forest and down on the farms and fields of the Shenandoah Valley. The job was at once a human effort and a natural result, a workmanlike piece of natural art. The same landscaping principles that guided Skyline Drive towards its impressive development also guided projects along the highway’s sides.

While constructing Skyline Drive, the NPS developed facilities for motor tourists. Some were no more than a “comfort station” to provide weary motorists a place of respite. A few, such as Skyland, provided a fuller array of services: camping, dining, and lodging. The NPS planned some in conjunction with scenic vistas, nestled others on the edges of forest, and placed several alongside the park’s open areas.

Most of the preserved open spaces of Shenandoah had been pastures before the park’s opening. In 1938, Associate Director and Acting Director of the NPS, Arthur E. Demaray asked Lassiter to “provide for maintenance in an open condition of a reasonable number and acreage of existing open areas.”⁴⁵ Maintenance was the key word. Without consistent human intervention, the pastures would eventually grow shrubs and trees until completely forested. Mowing pastureland may not have fit the park’s plan “ecologically,” but it did “scenically.”

The vast majority of tourists enjoyed Shenandoah National Park through the Skyline Drive, campgrounds, comfort stations, scenic vistas, and open grasslands. It was not until April 1939 that Lassiter remarked on the “noticeable increase in the number of visitors using trails.” On one day he observed that two parties of more than thirty and several other groups hiked along Shenandoah’s trails. That same month 62,240 people entered the park.⁴⁶ Such a comparison indicates the dominance of Skyline Drive as an attraction during Shenandoah’s early years.

The Park Service's efforts focused on the spine of the Blue Ridge, but landscapers and CCC workers also affected the slopes of Shenandoah. In the distant areas, the relationship to Skyline Drive was still of primary importance; a project tagged with the phrase "directly visible from the drive" received top priority.⁴⁷ But even out of sight of the highway, the NPS powerfully altered the land.

Harlan Kelsey proposed an ambitious plan for replanting the Blue Ridge. "For the present and as a starter, you ought to plant at least the following where the natural indications for them are quite apparent: 25,000 Canada Hemlock, 25,000 Fraser Fir, 10,000 Table Mountain Pine, and 100,000 White Pine." These trees, more appropriate for the Great Smoky Mountains than the Blue Ridge, were to replace the "robber 'tree-weed' growth" which dominated disturbed parts of the mountains. In his 1936 report, he stated emphatically that "a 'laissez faire' attitude . . . would be disastrous" and the 160,000-tree planting program was his elaborate solution.⁴⁸

Kelsey's suggestions prompted a 1938 report from Lassiter entitled "Restoration of Original Forest Growth: Shenandoah National Park." To give his supervisors a sense of the enormity of his task, Lassiter reported that "cleanup" activities, including removing downed timber and scattering or burning brush, had gone on since 1933 and covered only 8,714 acres. "This treatment is exceedingly slow and the acreage apparently endless," he lamented. Lassiter's plan for restoring the Blue Ridge's climax forest involved planting associations appropriate for the different regions of the park: hemlock and white pine in the coves, white pine and oak on the slopes with increasing red spruce, and Blue Ridge fir towards the summit. Lassiter noted the immensity of such a program and suggested initial treatment reach areas of greatest need and further projects extend to more isolated areas.⁴⁹

Nowhere near the extent of Kelsey's plan for the entire park was completed during Lassiter's term. The CCC camps had their hands full planting along the miles of highway. Lassiter's monthly reports reveal several notable plantings. In March 1938, the NPS planted 3,600 Black Locusts and 1,200 Fraser Fir. Other noteworthy plantings include 1,390 Fraser Fir transferred from the nursery in August of 1937 and 1000 Black Walnut seedlings planted in November 1938. According to a recent NPS estimate, the CCC planted more than 300,000 trees along and around the Skyline Drive.⁵⁰

Insects and tree diseases quickly joined tree-weed growth on Shenandoah's list of forestry concerns. Lassiter confronted numerous infections and infestations during his term: walking sticks, pine twig beetles, locust leaf miners, leaf beetles, leaf scorch, and White Pine Blister Rust. In June 1937, Lassiter declared, "White Pine Blister Rust work was begun, with a total of 130 acres being treated with initial eradication." In 1938, he mounted a more aggressive campaign, and using 350 man-days of CCC labor, the NPS "cleaned" 720 acres. Over the next three years, the NPS and the State Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine treated another 7,480 acres.⁵¹

While the Park Service tried to keep insects and infections out of the park, they encouraged the return of other wildlife to Shenandoah. In 1929, a botanist from the Carnegie Institute of Washington wrote "the animals and birds have been decreasing in numbers due to excessive hunting by mountaineers and people from the valley. The Virginia deer has long since disappeared from the mountains. The Blue

Ridge can support a large quantity of game if the animals and birds are only given a fair chance." His appraisal proved accurate. With human removal and hunting restrictions, the fauna of the Blue Ridge returned to the mountains. In April 1938, the superintendent claimed that "squirrels seem to be rapidly increasing and are seen constantly," indicating the East's most ubiquitous rodent was once a novelty at Shenandoah. In October 1939, Lassiter wrote: "An unusual sight to workers in the southern section was that of three deer grazing in the same spot for several hours." By 1940, Lassiter could confirm that "wild life [sic] appears to be on the increase in the Park."⁵²

The return of Shenandoah's wildlife represented another contiguous phase in the human management of the Blue Ridge. Native Americans promoted game habitat using fire and European settlers hunted several species such as deer, off the Blue Ridge. Wildlife reclaimed the mountains in the 1930s and 1940s because humans again encouraged their presence. Hunting restrictions protected terrestrial animals and rangers aggressively enforced these regulations. During one particularly hard winter, the park even set up feeding stations to help birds endure the season.⁵³

Along with protecting animals, Shenandoah officials reintroduced several species to the park. Even before Shenandoah became a park, thirteen deer were released within its boundary. During March 1938, Shenandoah released eleven wild turkeys from George Washington Birthplace National Monument into the park. Perhaps as a result of the success of the wild turkeys, Shenandoah embarked on a more ambitious project later that year. In October, Lassiter reported a plan to introduce a pair of beavers from Bear Mountain State Park in New York.⁵⁴

November 1938 proved a bittersweet month for Shenandoah's wildlife introduction efforts. CCC enrollees watched twelve wild turkeys walk along a fire road, confirming their continued success. The beavers did not fare so well. Rangers released the pair on the fifth and on the ninth reported the beavers were eating bark from elm trees and alder bushes. On the tenth, in an event revealing competing notions about proper interactions between humans and nature on the Blue Ridge, it was discovered that Jesse Henry of Browntown, Virginia, had shot the male beaver. The judicial system was not entirely sympathetic to Henry's conception of human-environment relations, and he spent three weeks in a Harrisonburg jail. Lassiter observed in December that the female adjusted "herself to the new environment in spite of the fact that her mate was killed" and had constructed a dam twenty feet long and two feet deep.⁵⁵

While efforts to reintroduce terrestrial animals may have been limited and sporadic, Shenandoah worked closely with Virginia officials to stock Shenandoah's streams. Though park officials forbade hunting, they made fish a marketable commodity. Rangers and CCC enrollees yearly assisted state wardens in stocking Shenandoah's streams and between 1938 and 1941 the park received more than 50,000 trout.⁵⁶

If park officials were concerned about wildlife, they were obsessed by fire. In a 1932 letter to Kelsey, Albright wrote, "The comparatively slight scar such a road [Skyline Drive] would make is nothing compared to the terrible scars of fire already apparent in many places in the park area." Preventing such scarring received top

Figure 1. Fire Suppression in Shenandoah National Park, 1936–1941.

Year	# of Fires	Acreage Burned	Time Spent on Suppression
1936	26	744.95	718 worker-days
1937	12	185.5	1,208 worker-days
1938	3	55	209 worker-days
1939	8	164.2	1,985 worker-hours
1940	4	3.8	537.5 worker-hours
1941	13	68.25	2,963.6 worker-hours

Source: Shenandoah monthly reports, 1936–1941.

priority within the CCC camps. In April 1940, fire danger remained so high that it was “necessary to retain a large proportion of these crews on standby in camp or working on projects within a few minutes call.” That construction was compromised not just for fire but for the possibility of fire indicates this issue’s importance.⁵⁷

The CCC controlled fire using multiple tactics. They attempted to clean out areas of the forest with considerable undergrowth and decomposing material. This proved an impossible task for the park as a whole but was useful in targeting areas with a high probability of fire. The Park Service staffed fire towers throughout the park, especially during the most dangerous spring months. CCC enrollees also received training in and practiced fire prevention and suppression.⁵⁸

During the course of Lassiter’s term, the efforts of the CCC dramatically reduced the incidence of fire within the park. Numerous fires that burned significant acreage marked Lassiter’s first year, and 1936 was not an atypical year in terms of weather. The following years saw a decrease in the number of fires and the acres burned.

Resource extraction for construction projects further altered Shenandoah’s environment. The park maintained a “Rock Crusher,” which produced over 13,000 tons of crushed rock for roads during 1939. The NPS also ran several sawmills, and in one month CCC workers milled 39,960 boardfeet of timber and dragged another 40,000 feet of logs out of the forest. Park officials then used the wood for fences and buildings, and once Shenandoah exported 9,250 Chestnut rails and 550 riders to other national parks.⁵⁹

Park officials treated water as another of Shenandoah’s usable commodities. Just as the NPS managed fish differently from the park’s animals, so did they consider water in a different category from terrestrial systems. In May 1939, Virginia Governor James Price discussed the possibility of developing tennis courts, swimming pools and golf courses at Skyland with John White, who served as acting director of the NPS while Cammerer recuperated from a heart attack. White dissuaded him from most of these “urbanizations” but did consider the pool, partially because other pools had been developed in the West. He reported to his supervisor, “with regard to a swimming pool, perhaps it might be possible to design one in the stream in such a way as to not appear as artificial, much as we have done in Sequoia in the Lodgepole Camp.”⁶⁰

The Park Service already had created similar pools in several of Shenandoah's streams. By August 1936, they had built five dams in Big Run and its left fork. Shenandoah's Assistant Landscape Architect, Scudder Griffing, described the objective: "The purpose is to back up the water to a sufficient depth to make an attractive pool and at the same time be deep enough to allow trout to 'summer over' . . . The dams are simple and naturalistic." Photographs of the dams reveal little of the landscaper's influence.⁶¹

Throughout the park, the CCC developed water supplies for campgrounds and comfort stations. In September 1938, CCC camps worked on seven different springs within the park. In May 1939, these altered springs fed the reservoirs that enrollees were building at Big Meadows, Front Royal, Turk Gap, Loft Mountain, and at Dickey Ridge. These reservoirs were quite large. Front Royal's had a 10,000-gallon storage capacity, and another supply at Sexton Hill Picnic Area had a 20,000-gallon capacity.⁶²

Shenandoah's streams did not receive the same ecological consideration as the trees along their banks, and White's letter indicates that this phenomena was not isolated to Shenandoah. If one sees the national parks for the trees, then a story of the parks that emphasizes preservation can be developed. Seeing the parks for the streams—and observing the many other human interventions in the wilderness—allows a different story about the creation of landscapes in the parks to emerge.

When the myriad forms of exacting control of the Blue Ridge are considered, their magnitude measures on the order of thousands. Thousands of people removed from the hills. Thousands of tons of earth moved for the Skyline Drive. Thousands of tons of rock quarried and crushed for pavement. Thousands of trees planted along the highway's sides. Thousands of vines draped along guardrails. Thousands of trout added to the stream. Thousands of squirrels claiming the Blue Ridge. Thousands of hours spent suppressing fires. Thousands of forested acres treated for disease. Thousands of boardfeet of timber harvested. Thousands of gallons of water stored and diverted. These thousands of changes created a new landscape on the Blue Ridge. They reveal the powerful human influence on Shenandoah National Park.

Re-creating Shenandoah: Finding a Place for the Park

Over time, successive generations of Shenandoah's stewards have reinterpreted the re-creation narrative. Kelsey's model for re-creation guided the park until World War II limited resources for Shenandoah. The war created a kind of dormancy for Shenandoah, where the park's federal funding and number of visitors both dropped drastically. The park housed training facilities for troops during the war years and even stored some of the Smithsonian's collection. When Shenandoah again received resources in the 1950s and 1960s, Shenandoah officials continued using the rhetoric of re-creation, but the same language began to tell a different story.⁶³

Where the re-creation narrative justified human efforts to restore the Blue Ridge, recent interpretations of the re-creation narrative explain Shenandoah's re-creation as the result of natural recuperation, not human restoration. As a typical guidebook explains, "rather than an attempt to preserve a healthy landscape, Shenandoah

National Park became a long-term experiment in the recuperative powers of nature on a severely damaged landscape.”⁶⁴ Shenandoah was originally described as an attempt to preserve a healthy environment, and the park’s re-creation was not due to nature’s recuperative powers alone. This re-creation narrative superficially seems similar to FDR’s ideas, but human efforts in Shenandoah have been edited out.

The Park Service video, *The Gift*, shown at the Big Meadows Visitor Center codifies a similar re-creation narrative, one without human intervention, into the official story of Shenandoah: “Though the Shenandoah wilderness was interrupted not once, but repeatedly, [the Park is] a symbol of rebirth. . . . [The Park will] slowly return to its natural state, with only mute evidence of man’s years of settlement, grazing, logging, and farming. Given time the wilderness will return completely.”⁶⁵

Through Darwin Lambert’s *The Undying Past of Shenandoah National Park*, the re-creation story has become Shenandoah’s history as well. Lambert ably recounts Shenandoah’s early human history and mentions CCC efforts to restore nature in the park, but his narrative leaves the overwhelming impression that nature, by and large, restored itself. He reports that Shenandoah’s superintendent during World War II believed “that nature was now restoring the landscape better than 1,200 CCC boys could ever have done.” Lambert also asserts that the park “really was a superb example of the wild and natural Southern Appalachians” and that “the wilderness has returned, strongly demonstrating the healing ‘miracle’ of nature.” Such statements downplay the importance of humans in creating Shenandoah’s landscape, a story that is an essential part of Shenandoah’s past.⁶⁶

Such stories are not meant to deceive Shenandoah’s visitors. In part they merely reflect the changes in Shenandoah’s environment and American ideas about nature. Signs built in the 1960s and 1970s along Skyline Drive describing Shenandoah as a “recycled” park reflect both the growing influence of environmentalism and the fact that nature on the Blue Ridge bore far fewer marks of human impact. The landscape architects of the 1930s and 1940s successfully shaped the Blue Ridge Mountains while concealing the evidence of their handiwork. Shenandoah’s first re-creation narrative shaped the landscape, and the landscape then shaped Shenandoah’s new narrative.

Within the last few years, park officials have begun to once again consider the official story of Shenandoah. A Shenandoah National Park Symposium in May 1997 spawned an issue of the NPS’s journal *Cultural Resource Management* titled “Shenandoah: Managing Cultural Resources in a Natural Park.” Articles discuss the landscaping and human history of Shenandoah, the management of cultural resources, and the need to better understand and explain Shenandoah’s history. In one article, Cultural Resource Specialist Reed Engles claims “that no area within immediate view of the Skyline Drive, in fact, is natural” and that the history of the CCC in Shenandoah challenges “our traditional definition and understanding of . . . ‘natural’ parks.”⁶⁷

The new insights of Shenandoah’s officials into the human history of the park have changed the park’s management and narrative. A pamphlet handed to Shenandoah’s visitors describes how fees help “preserve and restore historic views on Skyline Drive” and “continue research for the restoration of Big Meadows landscape [sic].” The centerfold of the Shenandoah issue of *Cultural Resource Management*

describes how vista restoration crews hope to “turn back the results of twenty years of deferred maintenance.” Another article describes a plan for “reclaiming and maintaining the general character” of an overgrown cottage garden north of Skyland.⁶⁸

The re-creation narrative appears to be in the midst of another reinterpretation as Shenandoah embarks upon a new management strategy and embraces a new wilderness ideal, one where humans have a place and a past. In the 1930s, the re-creation narrative justified the landscaping of the park; in the 1960s, it obscured those efforts; and now in the 1990s, the language of re-creation shifts again to justify a restoration of the landscape created by Shenandoah’s first landscape architects. It remains to be seen whether a cultural landscape can be re-created any more successfully than natural landscapes. More likely the NPS will continue to shape and change Shenandoah to meet its visions and needs, just as humans have done on the Blue Ridge for centuries.

The question of Shenandoah’s broader significance hinges on whether or not what has happened on the Blue Ridge over the last several hundred years represents a unique set of circumstances or reflects larger trends. While Shenandoah’s transformation may have been unique in its degree, it was not unique in kind. Examples of every intervention in the Blue Ridge landscape—human removal, road construction, fire prevention, wildlife management—can be readily found within national park historiography. Shenandoah’s history reveals the powerful influence of these forces in concert and suggests the potential for this type of analysis in other parks. A national park narrative focusing on these human interventions might conclude that instead of simply preserving landscapes, the NPS shapes and changes places to meet its visions and needs, just as humans have always done.

Perhaps the most intriguing insight from Shenandoah’s re-creation is that this national park historiography, which environmental historians have recently taken much responsibility for maintaining, is not merely a record of park history but an actor in it. Stories—whether as wayside signs, newspaper articles, ecological models, or academic histories—shape and are shaped by landscapes. Shenandoah officials long understood the NPS as preservers of natural environments, and they shaped the lands of the park so that the landscape, as much as possible, met their criteria for a natural environment. As Shenandoah officials have come to understand themselves as protectors of a cultural landscape as well, the actual, physical land of the Blue Ridge Mountains has felt ripples of change: forgotten gardens bloom again and anthropogenic fires release the seeds of the Table Mountain Pine. It is impossible to predict how a re-created national park historiography might affect the Park Service, but no doubt we would see the changes not just in books and signs but on the land itself.

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Notes

I would like to gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the many people who helped bring this project to fruition. Thanks go to Emily Minor for the genesis of this research and to Tico Braun, Tamara Giles-Vernick, and Paul Sutter for their insightful critiques. Special gratitude goes to Ed Russell for his unwavering support and encouragement.

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14. For more on fundraising efforts for Shenandoah and the history of the Shenandoah National Park legislation, see Simmons, "Conservation, Cooperation, and Controversy," 392–97.
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25. The national park archives contain one draft presented to Ickes and two to FDR. Although the author remains anonymous, Acting Director Arno Cammerer approved the drafts. The speeches include "Suggested: Address by President Roosevelt at the Dedication of the Shenandoah National Park, Virginia, at Big Meadows" (hereafter Draft President's Dedication Speech, 6/11/36) and "Suggested: Address by Secretary of the Interior Harold A. Ickes at the Dedication of the Shenandoah National Park, Virginia, at Big Meadows," both of which have no date, but notes on them indicate they were finished by 6/11/36. Another draft, "Address of the President at the Dedication of Shenandoah National Park, Virginia" (hereafter Draft President's Dedication Speech, 6/3/36) was sent by Albright to Ickes on 6/3/36. All three can be found in the same file: Shenandoah National Park, File No 101-01, Part 1; Shenandoah: History (General): Dedication; CCF 1933–1949; RG 79; NACP.
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27. Draft President's Dedication Speech, 6/11/36, 8–9 ; Draft President's Speech, 6/3/36, 7.
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40. The Benson Reports from December 20, 1937 to December 20, 1938, chronicle the development of this stretch of highway.
41. 1936 Kelsey Report, 2, emphasis in original. For more on plant associations see Frederic E. Clements, *Plant Succession: An Analysis of the Development of Vegetation* (Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1916), 128.
42. 1936 Kelsey Report 5. Lassiter, "Restoration of Original Forest Growth"; also Shenandoah monthly report, July 1939.
43. 1936 Kelsey Report, 3-4. Emphasis in original.
44. Lou Henry Hoover, First Lady, to Horace Albright, Director, National Park Service, 6 December 1932; General National Park, File No. 630, Part 3; Shenandoah: Lands, Buildings, Roads and Trails: Roads: Skyline Drive; National Parks: Shenandoah 630; CCF 1907-1932; Entry 7; RG 79; NACP.
45. A. Demaray to James Lassiter, January 3, 1938; National Parks: Shenandoah 120 - 201-06 Shenandoah National Park, File No. 207; Part 1; Shenandoah: Administration & Personnel: Reports: Kelsey; CCF 1933-1949; Entry 7; RG 79; NACP.
46. Shenandoah monthly report, April 1939.
47. Shenandoah monthly report, June 1938.
48. From Harlan Kelsey, Collaborator-at-Large to Arno Cammerer, Director, National Park Service, July 24, 1936; Shenandoah National Park, File No. 207, Part 1; Shenandoah: Administration & Personnel: Reports: Kelsey; National Parks: Shenandoah 120 - 201-06; CCF 1933-1949; RG 79; NACP. Interestingly, Kelsey's combination of trees would probably be much more appropriate for the Great Smoky Mountains than the Blue Ridge. Fraser Fir does not grow on the Blue Ridge unless planted; it usually occurs further south. 1936 Kelsey Report, 3.
49. Lassiter, "Restoration of Original Forest Growth."
50. Shenandoah monthly reports, October 1937, March 1938, August 1937, November 1938. Reed Engle, "Shenandoah: Not Without the CCC," *Cultural Resource Management* 21, no. 4 (1998): 23.
51. Lassiter comments on insects and tree diseases throughout his reports. Summaries of yearly efforts can be found in Shenandoah monthly reports, April 1938, May 1939, May 1940, and September 1941.
52. *Shenandoah National Park, Official Pictorial Book*, n. p.; Shenandoah monthly report, April 1938; Shenandoah monthly report, October 1939; Shenandoah monthly report, April 1940.
53. For more on Native Americans on the Blue Ridge, see Lambert, *The Undying Past of Shenandoah National Park*, 11. Lambert also describes a traveler in 1671 seeing wolves, deer, and beavers, which were all hunted off the Blue Ridge. See Lambert, *The Undying Past of Shenandoah National Park*, 26. Shenandoah monthly report, February 1939.
54. Hugh Crandall and Reed Engle, *Shenandoah: The Story behind the Scenery* (Las Vegas, Nev.: KC Publications, 1997), 33. Shenandoah monthly report, October 1938.
55. Shenandoah monthly report, November 1938.
56. Shenandoah monthly reports, March 1937, April 1937, January 1938, January 1939, February 1939, February 1940, March 1940, April 1940, February 1941 and March 1941,

57. Horace Albright, Director, National Park Service to Harlan Kelsey, Collaborator-at-Large, 29 November 1932; General National Park, File No. 630, Part 3; Shenandoah; Lands, Buildings, Roads and Trails: Roads: Skyline Drive; CCF 1907–1932; Entry 7; RG 79; NAPC; Shenandoah monthly report, April 1940.
58. Shenandoah monthly report, January 1938.
59. For rock crushing see Shenandoah annual report 1939; for the timber milling see Shenandoah monthly reports April 1940; for railroad material see Shenandoah monthly reports March 1941. Other examples of resource extraction can be found throughout Lassiter's reports.
60. John R. White, Acting Director, National Park Service, to A. E. Demaray, Director, National Park Service, May 17, 1939; Shenandoah National Park, File No. 201-15, Part 1; Shenandoah: Administration & Personnel: Policy; CCF 1933–1949; RG 79; NACP.
61. Griffing Report, July 1936; Benson Report, 1/20/37–2/20/37; photo #589f.
62. Shenandoah monthly report, Sept 1938; Shenandoah monthly report, May 1939; Shenandoah annual report, Fiscal Year 1939, Griffing Report Aug 36, picture #488d.
63. Lambert, *The Undying Past of Shenandoah National Park*, 265.
64. John A. Conners. *Shenandoah National Park: An Interpretive Guide*. (Blacksburg, Va.: McDonald and Woodward, 1988), 90.
65. *The Gift* (National Park Service) shown in Big Meadows Visitor Center at Shenandoah National Park.
66. Lambert, *The Undying Past of Shenandoah National Park*, 265, 269, 272.
67. Reed Engle, "Shenandoah: Not Without the CCC," *Cultural Resource Management* 21, no. 1 (1998): 23, 24.
68. "Why Fees? We need your support." Pamphlet distributed at Shenandoah Entrance Station. (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1997); centerfold, *Cultural Resource Management*, 21, no. 1 (1998): 20–21; Shaun Eyring, "Judd Gardens—Between Culture and Nature," *Cultural Resource Management* 21, no. 1 (1998): 19.

In Memoriam

Morgan Sherwood, a founder and past president of ASEH, died at his home in Davis, California, on the evening of October 31, 2000. The cause was bronchial and esophageal cancer. Morgan was a fighter, and not sentimental. He was also brilliant, witty, and deeply caring. He was in his office on the Davis campus on the Friday before his death. He wrote friends a few weeks ago saying he'd already voted absentee in the California elections, noting with glee that his vote would be counted whether he was around or not. He said it reminded him of the fellow who wanted to be buried in old Mayor Daley's Chicago so he could remain politically active. He was true to form to the last.

— Steve Haycox