



THE RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER  
AT  
THE HISTORIC CAMP GYPSY

SILOAM SPRINGS, ARKANSAS





**Mission:**

*The River Bend Nature Center strives to create a rich educational experience for people of all ages in a natural setting, while celebrating and communicating the history and culture of the historic Camp Gypsy.*

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# Site Analysis

*"Camp is a bit of life in the open, where children are to gather educational experiences from nature; a place where they may listen to the silence of the stars and perhaps hear God speak. A place where they may catch His whisper in the still forest and see His hand in the faint traceries of a wild flower's petal. Make sure it is like that, and the uniform will not matter"*

—Angelo Patri. ( 1931 Gypsy Camp brochure)



[http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/us\\_2001/arkansas\\_ref\\_2001.pdf](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/us_2001/arkansas_ref_2001.pdf)

**National Context:** Camp Gypsy is located in the rapidly growing northwestern corner of Arkansas.

**Distances to Nearby Towns and Cities:**

- Siloam Springs, AR— 6.7 miles, 13 minutes
- Fayetteville, AR — 26.5 miles, 42 minutes
- Bentonville, AR — 43.9 miles, 54 minutes
- Watts, OK — 6.7 miles, 19 minutes
- Tulsa, OK — 89.7 miles, 1 hour 32 minutes



**The Property:** The Gypsy Camp property is half a mile long and a quarter mile wide.



Google Maps

**Regional Context:** The Gypsy Camp is located due south of Siloam Springs, Arkansas on Highway 59 South.

**Specific Location:**

- Watts Quadrangle
- Sections 30, 31, and 32
- Township 17 north, Range 33 west

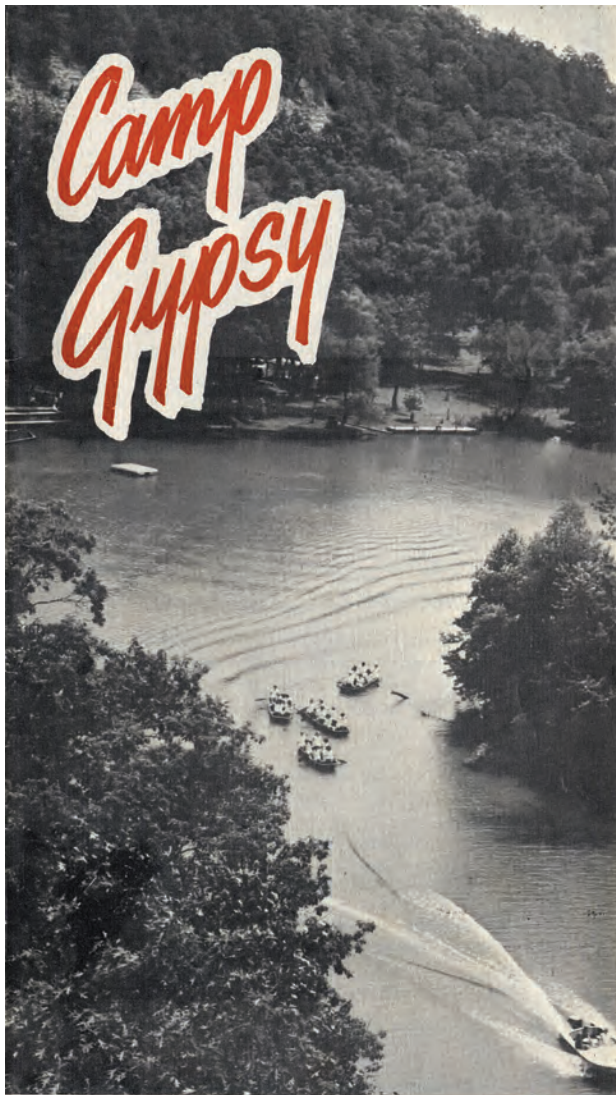


Google Maps

**Local Context:** The camp is located a mile from the Arkansas/Oklahoma line. The Gypsy Camp is bordered on its northern side by Spring Harbor Road (a county dirt road), on its eastern side by Arkansas State Highway 59 and on its southern side by the scenic Illinois River. The property has a half mile of river frontage.



**The Historic Gypsy Camp** sits on 300 dynamic acres located at the boundary between a vast agricultural flood plain, and the steep wooded hills that make up the Ozark Mountains. The Gypsy Camp property has remained in the same family for 87 years. Mr. Bob Coe is the owner and caretaker of the historic camp.



**Camp  
Gypsy**

**FOR GIRLS**

SINCE 1921

*"Where the Illinois is winding  
and the Ozark hills look down."*

Camp brochure from the summer of 1973.



Mrs. McAllister and students (c.1922)



Gypsy Camp cabin in the late 1920's

The Gypsy Camp at Lake Frances on the Illinois River was established by John H. McAllister and his wife, Weesie Griffith McAllister in 1921. Mrs. McAllister, an art instructor at the University of Tulsa, created the Gypsy Camp as an artist's retreat. The McAllisters, their friends, and art students would travel to Northwest Arkansas during the summer to relax and paint. Over the next few years the retreat transformed into Camp Gypsy for Girls. The ages of the girls that attended the camp ranged from 8 to 16 years. Activities at the camp included horseback riding, hiking, tennis, swimming, archery, arts & crafts, and float trips.

The camp remained in operation for 57 years before it closed in 1978 as a result of cultural shifts. Throughout the late nineteen seventies and early to mid nineteen eighties, the camp would reopen during the summer months for group retreats. In 1992 after many years of decay and silt buildup, the Lake Frances dam, failed after a large storm. The Water level at the camp dropped approximately five feet from the original level of the lake.

Throughout the past 50 years many Native American artifacts have been discovered on the Gypsy Camp property. Pottery found on the site dating from approximately 1200 b.c. has been attributed to the Mississippian Indians who lived in the fertile Illinois River Valley .



"Royal Hut" in the late 1920's



Campers at the canteen in the mid 1960's



A collection of Gypsy Camp images on display at the historic camp.

- The Gypsy Camp Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988 as a result of encroaching residential development.
- The Gypsy Camp was listed in 2006 as one of Arkansas' Top Ten Most Endangered Historic Places by the Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas.
- The Gypsy Camp Historic District was ranked as the third most significant cultural landscape in the state of Arkansas by the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) in February of 2007. The Gypsy Camp was only preceded in the ranking by Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park/ Pea Ridge National Military Park and the Buffalo National River.



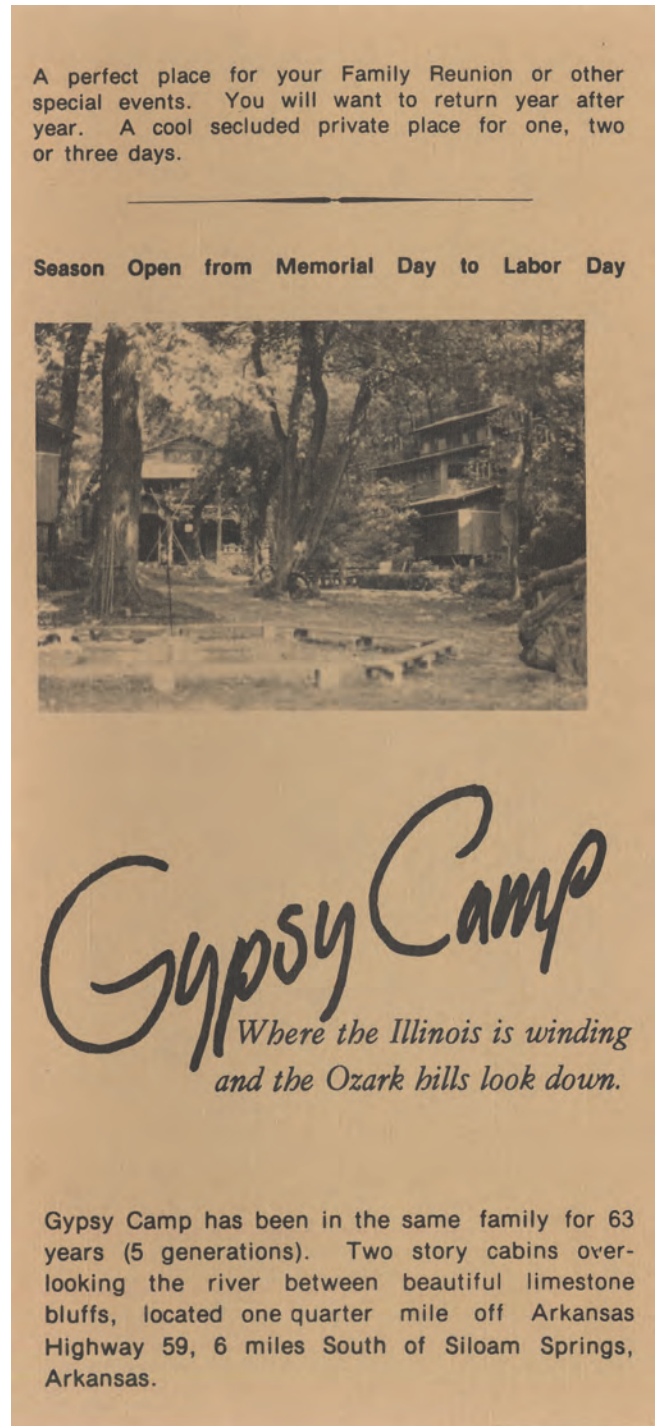
[http://cowlesla.com/images/ASLA\\_LOGO.jpg](http://cowlesla.com/images/ASLA_LOGO.jpg)



<http://www.preservearkansas.org>



NPS.gov



A brochure from the early 1980's.



**Circa 1900**

Gypsy Camp property was originally owned by Goforth family. The land was used for the production of corn. Mules were also raised on the property. Many mules were sold to the military during the WWI

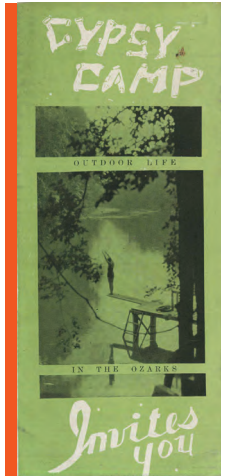


**1921**

The Gypsy Camp property was purchased by John H. McAllister and his wife, Weesie Griffith McAllister as the location for an artist colony. The first camp buildings are constructed.



**1931**  
Camp Brochure



**1937**  
Camp Brochure



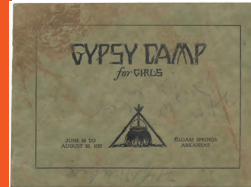
**Circa 1200 AD**

Native Americans were the first inhabitants of the Illinois River valley. Pottery, arrowheads, and stone tools from this era have been found on the Gypsy Camp property.



**1922**

Camp Brochure



**Circa 1930**

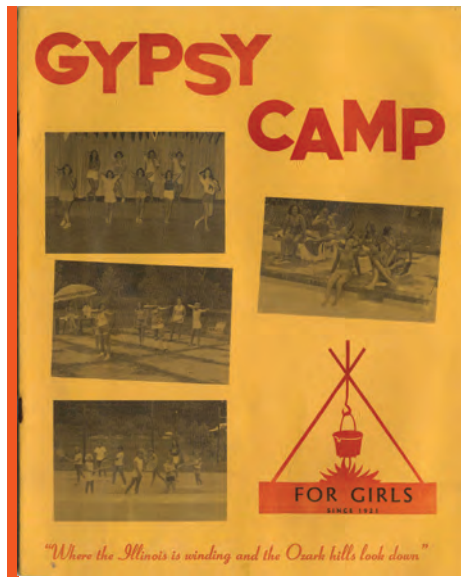
Gypsy Camp "Gypsys"



**Circa 1960**

"Gypsys" dancing around camp fire





*"Where the Illinois is winding and the Ozark hills look down"*

**1978**  
The Gypsy Camp ceases operations



<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/oh/hrl/dmip/2/docs/watts%20lake%20francis.ppt>

**Early 1990's**  
City of Siloam Springs works to condemn the Gypsy Camp to construct a new water intake structure on the Illinois River. The camp was saved as a result of its listing on the National Register of Historic Places.



**2011**  
A five-hundred year flood event ravaged the Gypsy Camp. Flood waters inundated many of the camp structures. The interiors of several buildings have significant water damage.

1980

1990

2000

2010

**Mid 1960's**

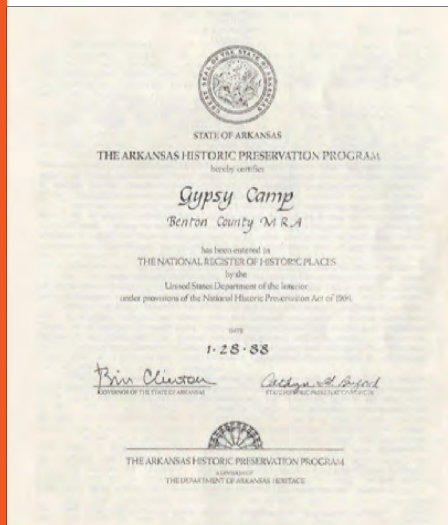
The Gypsy Camp structures began to show their age. Many of the buildings were updated and additions were added to the cabins.



Benton County Historical Society (Volume 38)

**1988**

The Gypsy Camp is added to the National Register of Historic Places.



Benton County Historical Society (Volume 38)

**Today**

The Gypsy Camp stands as an endangered cultural landmark. Visitors to the Gypsy Camp today can get a glimpse back into time, allowing them to see the camp as it was in the 1970's. The camp buildings, while in good condition, have started to show signs of their age and are in desperate need of preservation.

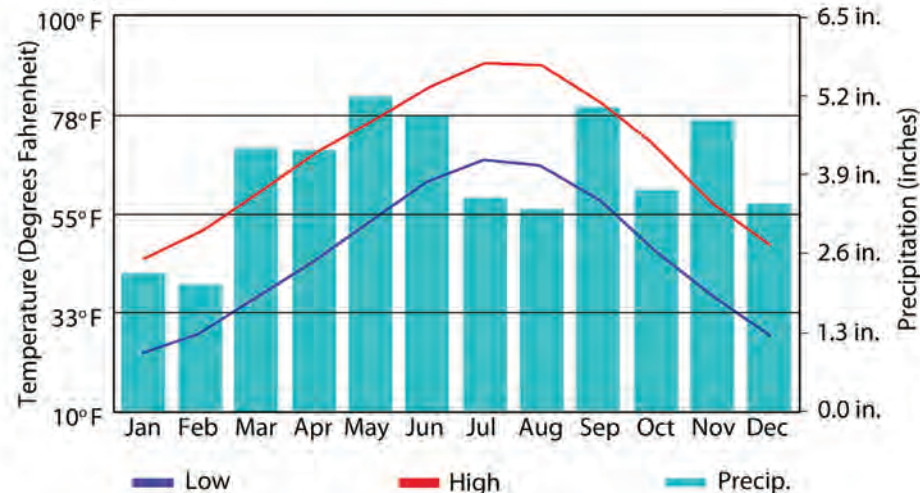


### Average Annual Climate Data

Siloam Springs, Arkansas	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
Average High Temperature	45.6	50.7	59.3	69.0	76.3	83.8	89.0	89.6	81.6	71.0	58.7	47.6	68.6
Average Low Temperature	23.5	26.7	34.8	43.5	53.5	62.1	66.3	64.9	56.5	45.1	35.6	25.8	44.9
Average Mean Temperature	34.5	38.7	47.0	56.3	64.9	72.9	77.6	77.3	69.0	58.0	47.1	36.7	56.8
* Record High Temperature	74	82	88	90	93	103	114	107	104	95	82	78	114
* Record Low Temperature	-15	-9	2	16	27	40	45	44	30	18	5	-15	-15
Average Days Above 100 Degrees	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.5	0.6	0.2	0	0	0	1.3
Average Days Above 90 Degrees	0	0	0	0.1	0.4	3.0	14.4	16.2	4.4	0	0	0	38.5
Average Days Below 32 Degrees	25.0	20.3	12.7	3.4	0	0	0	0	0.1	3.2	12.0	22.9	99.6
Average Days Below 10 Degrees	2.9	1.8	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.7	7.8	7.8
Average Rainfall	2.61	2.65	4.30	4.27	5.72	4.79	3.33	3.35	4.71	3.59	4.36	3.41	47.09
* Record Rainfall	5.85	8.52	10.36	10.86	19.41	10.59	10.08	9.41	14.70	9.18	8.52	9.06	n/a
Average Number of Rain Days	5.6	6.2	8.3	8.7	10.8	8.7	6.6	6.3	6.7	7.3	7.2	6.6	89.0
Average Snowfall	2.8	2.2	2.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.1	1.8	9.2
* Record Snowfall	18.0	15.0	16.0	1.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	7.5	8.7	n/a
Average Heating Degree Days	944	737	560	285	90	9	0	2	50	243	539	877	4336
Average Cooling Degree Days	0	0	3	22	87	248	393	381	172	28	3	0	1337
Station Information	Elevation: 1220 ft / Latitude: 36 19N / Longitude: 94 13W												
Temperatures are reported in Fahrenheit and Rainfall/Snowfall totals are reported in inches.													
* Records are for the period 1950-1992.													
Averages are for the period 1981-2010.													

[http://www.srh.noaa.gov/tsa/?n=climo\\_benton](http://www.srh.noaa.gov/tsa/?n=climo_benton)

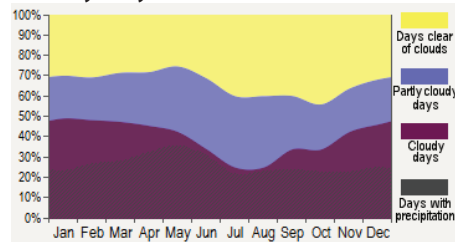
### Average Annual Temperatures and Percipitation



<http://www.usclimatedata.com/images/climate-chart/usa0515-climate-siloam-springs.gif>

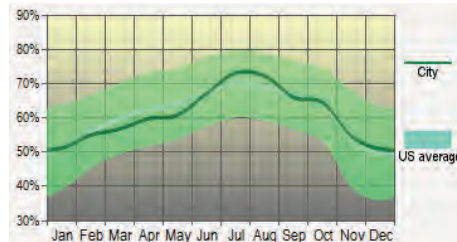
Siloam Springs, the closest town to the Gypsy Camp, is located in a humid subtropical climate zone. The climate in Siloam Springs is warm and humid during the summer with little rainfall, and cold and wet during the winter. Snow is common during the winter months, though little accumulation generally occurs. The hottest month of the year is July when the average high temperatures are in the mid to upper 80's. The coldest month of the year is January when the average high temperatures are in the 30's. The temperature variation between night and day are generally moderate with a difference of 22 degrees Fahrenheit in both the Summer and Winter months. The total average yearly precipitation in Siloam Springs is approximately 46.89 inches. The wettest month of the calendar year is May with an average rainfall of 5.20 inches. (noaa.gov)

### Cloudy Days



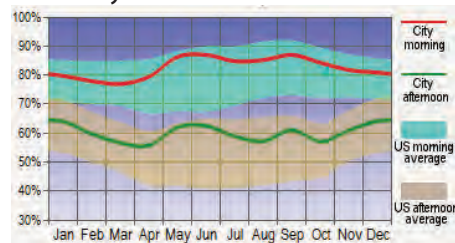
City-data.com

### Sunshine



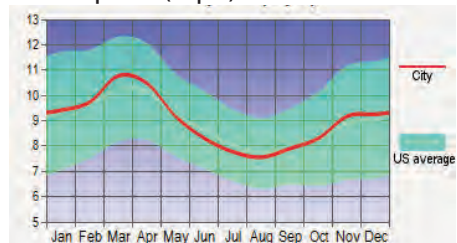
City-data.com

### Humidity



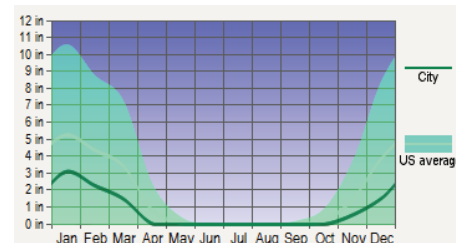
City-data.com

### Wind Speed (mph)



City-data.com

### Snowfall



City-data.com



**Inventory:** The Geology of the Gypsy Camp consists of sedimentary stone. The site has many karst topographic features composed of highly weathered limestone and shale. All geologic formations on the site have been formed and shaped by water over many millennia.

**Analysis:** Areas in the NfD category are the most buildable due to low slope. Areas in the CvF category are moderately buildable due to steep slopes. Construction in these areas would be the most costly on the site. Areas in the He and Hf categories would be unbuildable as a result of their location in the floodplain.

#### NfD- Nixa very gravelly silt loam.

Slope: 8 to 12 percent.

Parent Material: Loamy residuum weathered from cherty limestone.

Landform: Hills

Drainage Class: Moderately well drained.

Average depth: 0 to 17 inches: Very gravelly silt loam  
 17 to 30 inches: Extremely gravelly silt loam  
 30 to 60 inches: Extremely gravelly clay

#### CvF- Clarksville extremely gravelly silt loam.

Slope: 2 to 50 percent.

Parent Material: Clayey residuum weathered from cherty limestone.

Landform: Hills.

Drainage Class: Excessively drained.

Average depth: 0 -72 inches.

#### He- Healing silt loam, rarely flooded.

Slope: 0-2 percent.

Parent Material: Alluvium.

Landform: Stream Terraces

Drainage Class: Well drained.

Average depth: 0 -50 inches- silt loam.  
 50-72 inches- gravelly silt loam.

#### Hf- Healing silt loam, occasionally flooded.

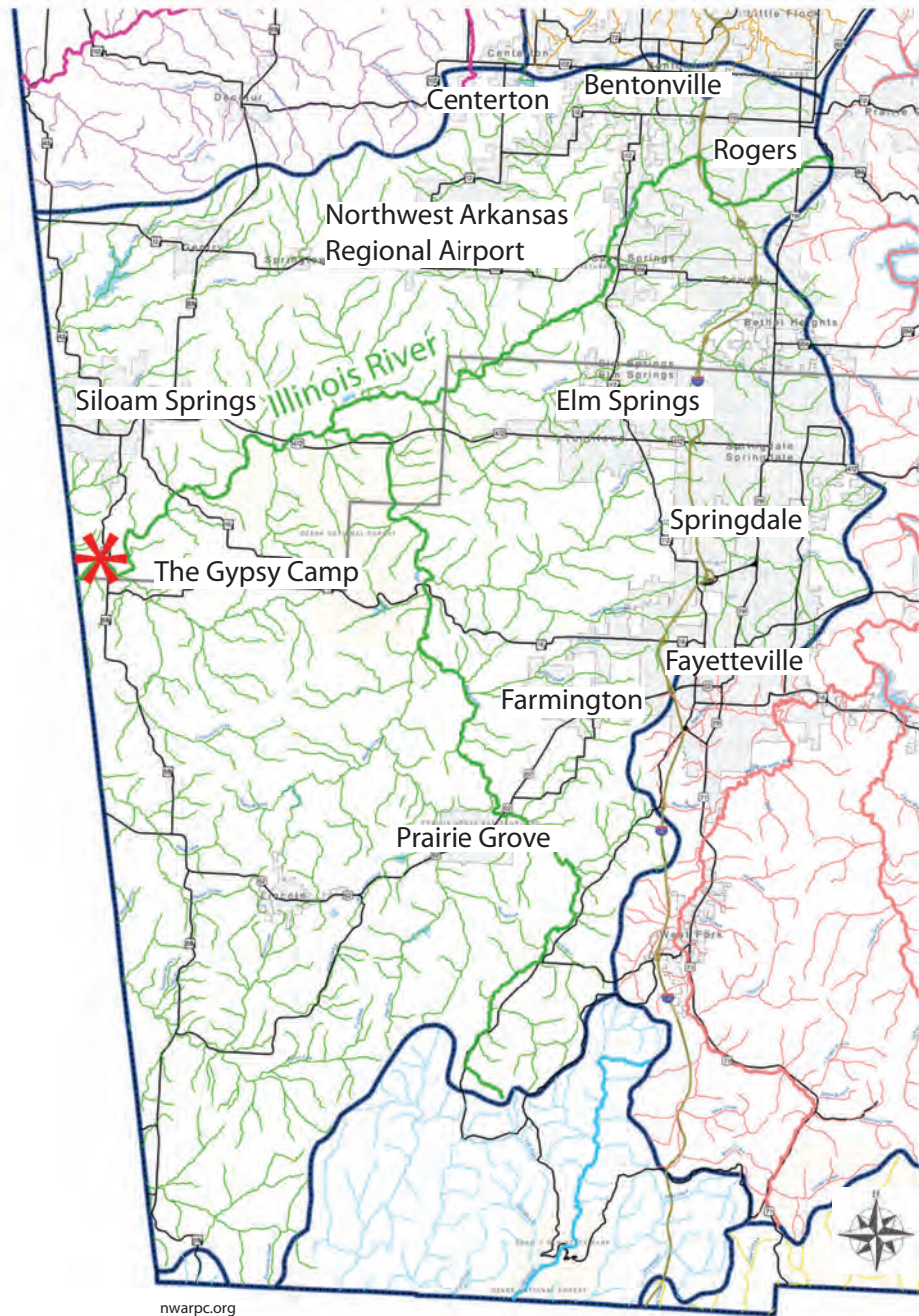
Slope: 0-2 percent.

Parent Material: Alluvium.

Landform: Flood Plains

Drainage Class: Well drained.

Average depth: 0 -50 inches- silt loam.  
 50-72 inches- gravelly silt loam.



Many of the largest cities in Northwest Arkansas are located within the Illinois River Watershed.

**Inventory:** The Gypsy Camp is situated on the banks of the Illinois River. The 145 mile long Illinois River originates in the Ozark Mountains and flows through both Arkansas and Oklahoma. The Illinois River has a drainage area of over one million square miles. Approximately a quarter million people live within the Illinois River watershed.

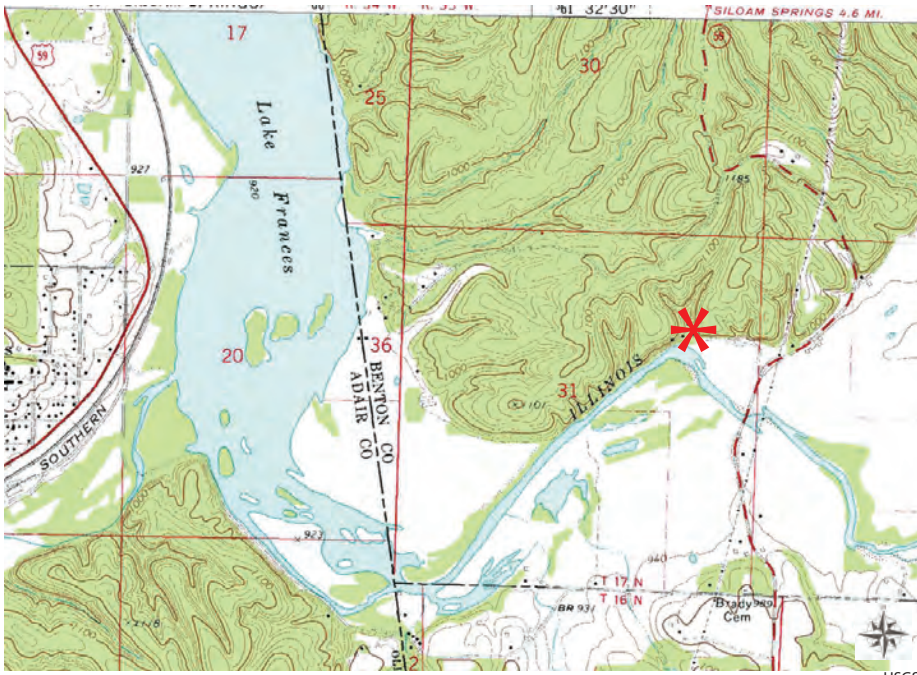
The Illinois River is a major source of tourism for both Arkansas and Oklahoma. Approximately 400,000 tourists visit the river annually. The Illinois River serves as the source of fresh drinking water for many towns along the river's course. Siloam Springs, Arkansas is one of these towns which relies on the Illinois River for water. The Illinois River also serves as a major resource for agriculture in both Arkansas and Oklahoma. In 2005 the state of Oklahoma filed a lawsuit against the Arkansas poultry industry. The lawsuit claimed that phosphorus runoff from poultry litter applied to agricultural fields was polluting the Illinois River.

**Analysis:** While there is very little pollution, runoff, and erosion coming from the Gypsy Camp; these are still problems on properties upstream from the camp. Increased pollution, erosion, and runoff in the Illinois River from the surrounding agrarian and urban areas does affect the Gypsy Camp. The riparian buffer at the camp is fairly degraded from its many years of agricultural use. Replanting riparian buffers along the Illinois River would have several key results. Buffers would help to stabilize riverbanks as a result of increased river flow. Buffers would increase infiltration which would remove pollution and sediment from the Illinois River. Finally buffers would help to slow the flow of the Illinois river during flood events. This would help to reduce the impact of flooding downstream.



The Illinois River as seen from a gravel bar at the Historic Gypsy Camp.

*The River Bend Nature Center at The Historic Camp Gypsy*



Lake Frances prior to 1992 \* Historic Gypsy Camp USGS



Lake Frances after 1992 Google Maps

**Inventory:** The Gypsy Camp was located on the upper end of Lake Frances. Lake Frances was constructed in the early 1900's as part of a resort community by the same name. The resort community was approximately a mile north of the Gypsy Camp. The Hotel was torn down in the mid to late 1960's. In February of 1992 a large portion of the dam washed out as a result of a large storm and many years of neglect. The lake level dropped approximately five feet at the Gypsy Camp.

**Analysis:** The camp's location on Lake Frances was a major part of its appeal throughout its history. With the loss of the lake, the historic camp will need to take advantage of its natural surroundings to once again become a major historic destination in the state of Arkansas.



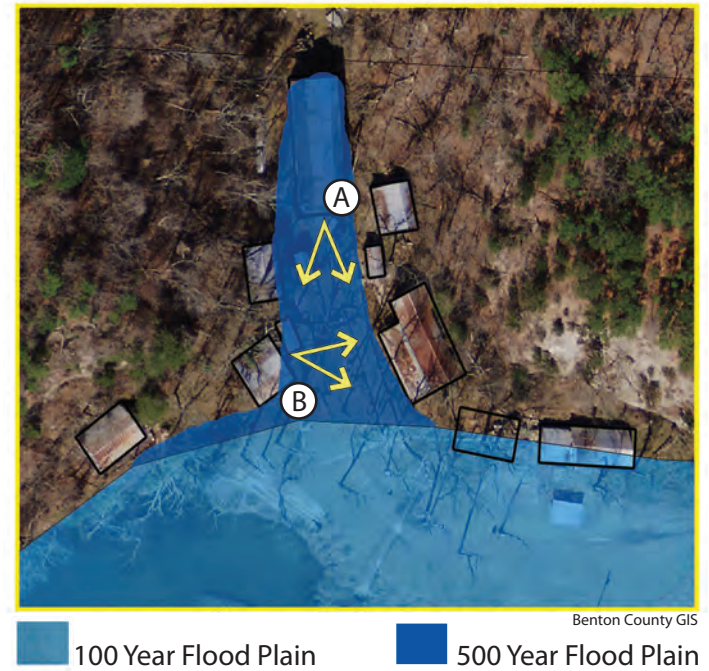
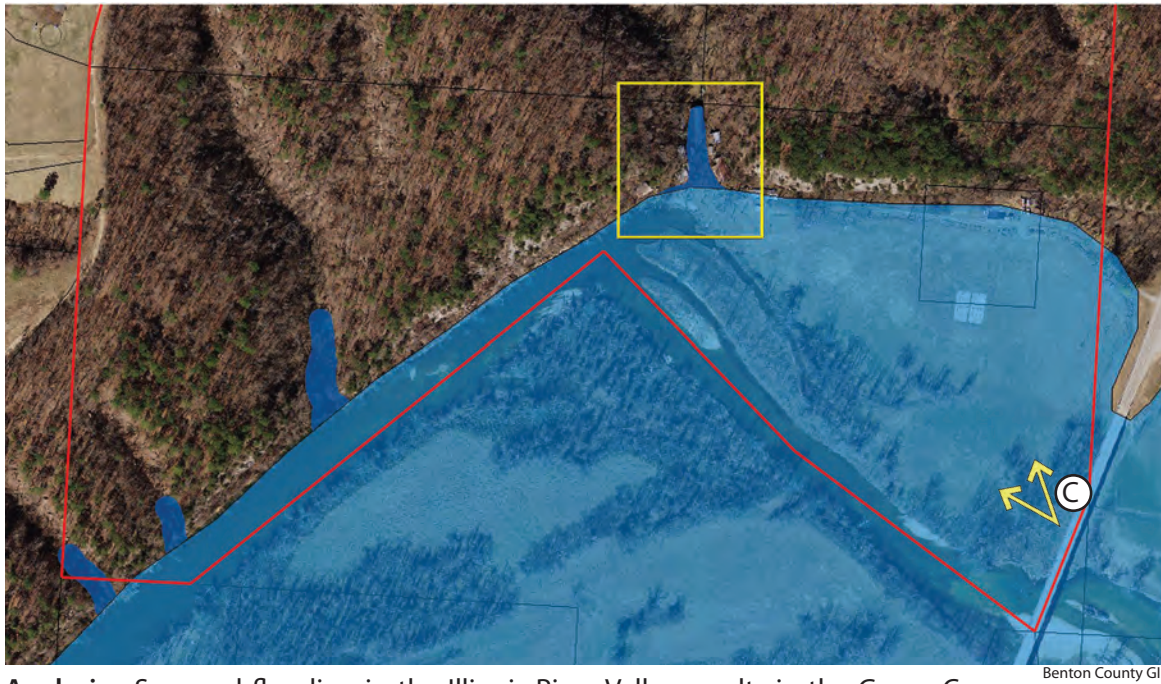
Remains of the historic Lake Frances Dam in 2011



Historic Lake Frances Resort Gateway



Postcard of Lake Frances Dam and Gateway



100 Year Flood Plain      500 Year Flood Plain

**Analysis:** Seasonal flooding in the Illinois River Valley results in the Gypsy Camp being inaccessible for short periods of time during the spring. This is a direct result of its location in the flood plain. Any new buildings will need to be built above the flood plain in order to have year round use.



The Illinois River rose another six feet after photograph was taken



Rising Floodwater with "Tree Top" in the background.



**Inventory:** The ecology within the Historic Gypsy Camp property is very diverse. The camp sits on the edge between a largely agrarian landscape and a vast mountainous woodland. Since its founding in 1921 very little has been done to the natural areas surrounding the camp. Several oak trees on the property appear to be more than one-hundred years old. The loss of Lake Frances in the early 1990's resulted in a large increase of the Lowland Riparian Woodland area. The Gypsy Camp property is only a small portion of a much larger ecological matrix that spans the entire Illinois River Valley and surrounding areas. The plants identified as growing on the site in the following pages only represent the most common plant species found at the Gypsy Camp.

### A) Riparian Woodland

The Riparian Woodland is located in the floodplain along the banks of the Illinois River. The plants located in this zone are water tolerant and have become adapted to frequent seasonal flooding. Soils within this zone are largely hydric in nature. Some areas may remain submerged by surface water for long periods of time whereas other areas stay relatively dry at the surface.

### B) Lowland Valley

The Lowland Valley serves as a natural drainage system in the Ozark Mountains. The Gypsy Camp is located at the mouth of one of these Lowland Valleys. While these areas are at higher elevations than the Wetland Woodland, they share many of the same native plant communities along with species commonly found in the much drier Oak/Hickory Forest. During storm events these areas may be submerged for very short periods of time.

### C) Oak/ Hickory Forest

The Oak/ Hickory Forest at the Gypsy Camp is characterized by the high number of Oak and Hickory trees that grow in this area. The soil in the Oak/ Hickory Forest generally has minimal levels of organic matter and retains very little water. The Oak/ Hickory Forest at the Gypsy Camp is home to the highly threatened Ozark Chinquapin (*Castanea ozarkensis*) whose once large native range has been reduced to only the northwest corner of Arkansas. The protection of these trees is very important to the survival of the species.

### D) Pine/ Cedar Glade

The Pine/Cedar Glade consists of stands of mostly Pine, Cedar, and shrub Oak that are located in areas with extremely poor growing conditions. These species are usually first to colonize in recently disturbed areas. At the Gypsy Camp these glades are located along the tops of the large bluffs and in areas that have been recently cleared.



**Oak/ Hickory Forest Plant Species Inventory**

- Blackjack Oak (*Quercus marilandica*)
- Post Oak (*Quercus stellata*)
- Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)
- Chinquapin Oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*)
- White Oak (*Quercus alba*)
- Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*)
- Black Oak (*Quercus velutina*)
- Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*)
- Shagbark Hickory (*Carya ovata*)
- Short Leaf Pine (*Pinus strobus*)
- Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*)
- Ozark Chinquapin (*Castanea Ozarkensis*)
- Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)
- Winged Elm (*Ulmus alata*)
- White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*)

The Existing Oak/Hickory Forest at the Historic Gypsy Camp has a very dense canopy that prevents the growth of understory trees, shrubs, and grasses.



Ozark Chinquapin  
*Castanea Ozarkensis*



[http://faculty.ncwc.edu/eastern\\_white\\_oak.jpg](http://faculty.ncwc.edu/eastern_white_oak.jpg)

White Oak  
*Quercus alba*



<http://www.treeplantflowerid/shaghickory.jpg>

Shagbark Hickory  
*Carya ovata*



<http://www.nybg.org/uploads/2010/04.jpg>

Bur Oak  
*Quercus macrocarpa*



[http://drclarkia.com/juglans\\_nigra.jpg](http://drclarkia.com/juglans_nigra.jpg)

Black Walnut  
*Juglans nigra*



## Lowland Valley Plant Species Inventory

- Northern Maidenhair Fern (*Adiantum pedatum*)
- Eastern Gama Grass (*Tripsacum dactyloides*)
- Inland Sea Oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*)
- Christmas Fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*)
- Osage Orange (*Maclura pomifera*)
- Green Ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*)
- Box Elder (*Acer negundo*)
- Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)
- Chinquapin Oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*)
- White Oak (*Quercus alba*)
- American Bladdernut (*Staphylea trifolia*)
- Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*)
- Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)
- American Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*)
- Native Pecan (*Carya illinoensis*)
- Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*)
- Common Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*)

The Existing Lowland Valleys at the Gypsy Camp have diverse plant communities. Trees, shrubs, grasses, and ferns all thrive in the moist environment that is found in these valleys.



<http://www.kibi.org/Chinquapin%20Oak%202.jpg>

Chinquapin Oak  
*Quercus muehlenbergii*



<http://deq.mt.gov/Climate/images/BoxElder.jpg>

Box Elder  
*Acer negundo*



<http://familytreeandtree.com/Sycamoretree.jpg>

American Sycamore  
*Platanus occidentalis*



Eastern Gama Grass  
*Tripsacum dactyloides*



Northern Maidenhair Fern  
*Adiantum pedatum*



### Pine/ Cedar Glade Plant Species Inventory

Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)

Short Leaf Pine (*Pinus echinata*)

Post Oak (*Quercus stellata*)

Smooth Hydrangea (*Hydrangea arborescens*)

Poverty Dropseed (*Sporobolus vaginiflorus*)

Farkleberry (*Vaccinium arboreum*)

The Pine/ Cedar Glade, on the edge of the bluffs, is a very distinct zone on the Gypsy Camp property. The plant species in this area are mostly made up of pines, cedars, oak, and various grasses. As a result of its southern exposure, lack of soil, and low moisture levels, the trees and shrubs in this area grow very slowly and appear stunted. Beneath the bluffs is a similar habitat, but with a higher level of moisture. Native smooth hydrangeas thrive in this habitat.



<http://www.sierrapotomac.org/EasternRedCedar.jpg>

Eastern Red Cedar  
*Juniperus virginiana*

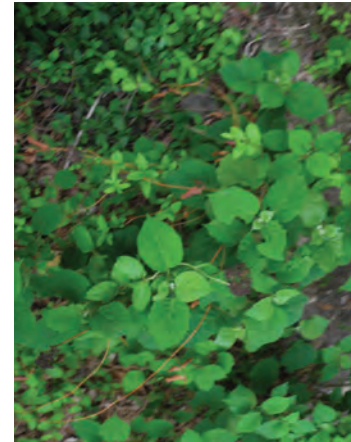


[http://www.meridian.k12.il.us/Shortleaf\\_Pine\\_Tree.jpg](http://www.meridian.k12.il.us/Shortleaf_Pine_Tree.jpg)

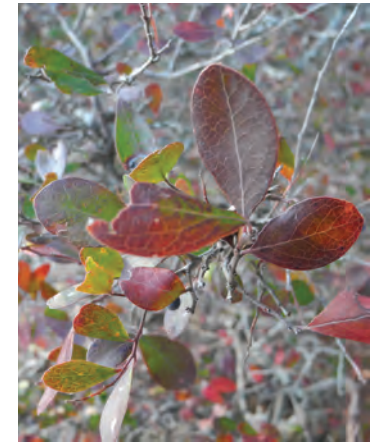
Short Leaf Pine  
*Pinus strobus*



Poverty Dropseed  
*Sporobolus vaginiflorus*



Smooth Hydrangea  
*Hydrangea arborescens*



Farkleberry  
*Vaccinium arboreum*



## Riparian Woodland Plant Species Inventory

- Inland Sea Oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*)
- River Cane (*Arundinaria gigantea*)
- Black Willow (*Salix nigra*)
- River Birch (*Betula nigra*)
- Shagbark Hickory (*Carya laciniosa*)
- Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*)
- Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)
- Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*)
- Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*)
- Osage Orange (*Maclura pomifera*)
- Green Ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*)
- Box Elder (*Acer negundo*)
- Chinquapin Oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*)
- American Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*)
- Native Pecan (*Carya illinoensis*)
- Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*)

Analysis

Riparian Woodland

The Existing Riparian Woodland has very little plant diversity in comparison to other natural areas on the camp property. This is likely the result of clearing that has taken place throughout the past one hundred years.



<http://www.bamboogarden.com/A.-gigantea2.jpg>

Rivercane  
*Arundinaria gigantea*



[http://www.cirrusimage.com/Trees/black\\_willow\\_1.jpg](http://www.cirrusimage.com/Trees/black_willow_1.jpg)

Black Willow  
*Salix nigra*



<http://farm4.static.flickr.com/3289/2891334.jpg>

Osage Orange  
*Platanus occidentalis*



<http://www.penick.net/images/Inlandsea oats.JPG>

Inland Sea Oats  
*Chasmanthium latifolium*



<http://www.higginsoutdoors.com/river-birch.jpg>

River Birch  
*Betula nigra*



[www.nearfamous.com/Images/BaldEaglePerched.jpg](http://www.nearfamous.com/Images/BaldEaglePerched.jpg)

**Bald Eagle**

*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*



[http://www.deersecrets.com/White-tailed\\_deer.jpg](http://www.deersecrets.com/White-tailed_deer.jpg)

**White Tailed Deer**

*Odocoileus virginianus*



<http://www.simply-san-juan.com/red-tailed-hawk.jpg>

**Red Tailed Hawk**

*Buteo jamaicensis*

**Inventory:** The wildlife found at the Gypsy Camp is just as diverse as the environment in which they live. Many species of mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates can be found on the Gypsy Camp property in the daytime and at night. The wide variety of wildlife is important in keeping a healthy ecosystem along the Illinois River.

**Analysis:** There is great potential to add to the existing habitats in order to attract more varieties of species to the Gypsy Camp property. Increasing the types and numbers of wildlife habitats along the Illinois River could result in an even higher level of diversity at the Gypsy Camp.

**Common Existing Wildlife**

Eastern Gray Squirrel  
*Sciurus carolinensis*

Copper Head  
*Agkistrodon contortrix*

Skunk  
*Mephitis mephitis*

Armadillo  
*Dasypus novemcinctus*

Channel Catfish  
*Ictalurus punctatus*

Barn Owl  
*Tyto alba*

Water Moccasin  
*Agkistrodon piscivoru*

Turkey Vulture  
*Cathartes aura*

Red Tailed Fox  
*Vulpes vulpe*

Bluegill  
*Lepomis macrochirus*

Snapping Turtle  
*Chelydra serpentina*

Little Brown Bat  
*Myotis lucifugus*

Opossum  
*Didelphis virginiana*

American Crow  
*Corvus brachyrynchos*

Smallmouth Bass  
*Micropterus dolomieu*



[1.bp.blogspot.com/Woodpecker/redheaded.jpg](http://1.bp.blogspot.com/Woodpecker/redheaded.jpg)

**Red Headed Woodpecker**

*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*



[tigertailfoods.com/wp/content/american\\_beaver.jpg](http://tigertailfoods.com/wp/content/american_beaver.jpg)

**American Beaver**

*Castor canadensis*



[www.animalpictures.tk/pictures/racoon.jpg](http://www.animalpictures.tk/pictures/racoon.jpg)

**Raccoon**

*Procyon lotor*



[wordpress.com/eastern-chipmunk/img\\_5636.jpg](http://wordpress.com/eastern-chipmunk/img_5636.jpg)

**Eastern Chipmunk**

*Tamias striatus*



[www.realaspen.com/images/original1/coyote1.jpg](http://www.realaspen.com/images/original1/coyote1.jpg)

**Coyote**

*Canis latrans*



**Inventory:** The numerous natural features along with the dramatic topography and the Illinois River access set the Gypsy Camp property apart from many other properties in Northwest Arkansas.

**Analysis:** The numerous bluffs, springs, waterfalls, wet weather creeks, gravel bars, and box canyons result in a dramatic landscape that lends itself to be an incredible place to hike, camp, swim, and explore.



A) Box Canyons



B) Bluffs



C) Gravel Bar



D) Springs



E) Waterfalls



F) Wet Weather Creeks



**Inventory:** While the landscape of the Gypsy Camp has changed and transformed over its ninety year history, many of the landscape features have remained unaltered. These features along with the historic structures helped to make memories for thousands of young girls. The preservation of the landscape features is equally important as preserving the historic camp structures.

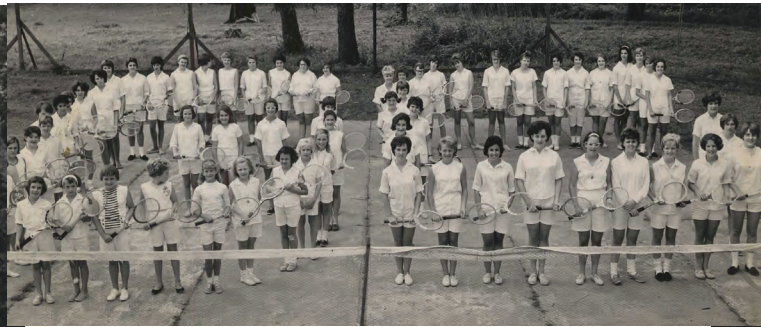
**Analysis:** The landscape features of the Gypsy Camp are an integral part of the camp's character. Vernacular elements such as native limestone as seen in the rock wall (A), and introduced vernacular elements (concrete and steel) as seen in the fire ring (C) have withstood the test of time and continue to tell the story of the Gypsy Camp. The integration of similar materials and features will be important to recreate the character of the Gypsy Camp.



**A) Rock Wall**  
**Date of Construction:** 1921  
**Materials:** Limestone  
**Condition:** Good



**B) Boat Dock**  
**Date of Construction:** 1923  
**Materials:** Concrete  
**Condition:** Fair



**C) Fire Ring**  
 Date of Construction: 1921  
 Materials: Concrete/ Brick/ Iron  
 Condition: Good

**D) Entry Gate**  
 Date of Construction: 1921  
 Materials: Pine  
 Condition: Recently Reconstructed

**E) Tennis Courts**  
 Date of Construction: 1960  
 Materials: Concrete  
 Condition: Poor

**F) Swimming Pool**  
 Date of Construction: 1960  
 Materials: Concrete/ Brick  
 Condition: Good



Round Log Chink



Native Limestone



Native Pine Log Veneer



Clapboard Siding



Vertical Pine Siding



Plywood



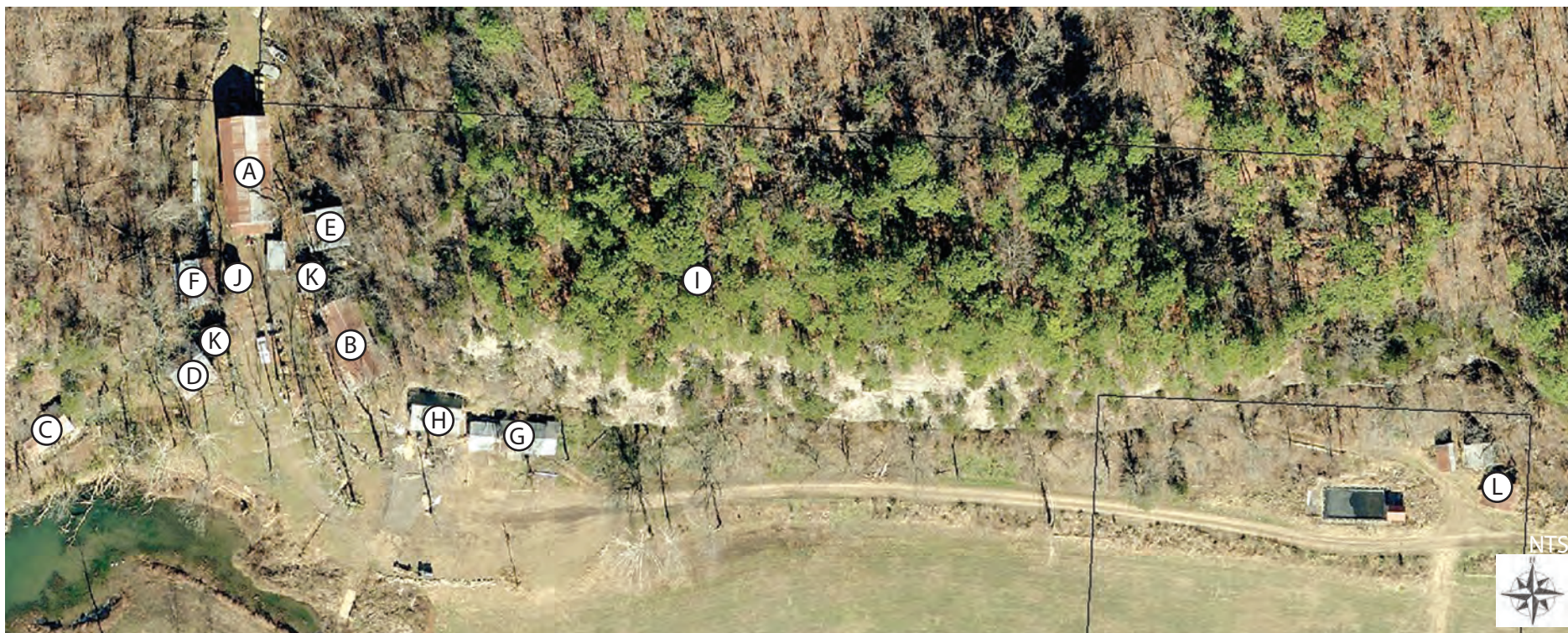
Sheet Metal



Pine Veneer

**Inventory:** The buildings at the Gypsy Camp were built in the rustic style. They were constructed from many of the same vernacular materials that the earliest settlers used when moving into the Ozark Region. All of the buildings dating from the 1920's were built from lumber that was harvested and milled on site. Later additions and remodels used milled lumber that was purchased locally. The resulting style was an eclectic mix of vernacular materials that give the Gypsy Camp the architectural character that is seen today.

**Analysis:** The vernacular materials of the Gypsy Camp are an integral part of the experience that guests have when visiting the camp today.



### Key:

- A) Queen's Tavern (1925)
- B) Tree Top Inn, Devil's Den, Angel's Alley (1921)
- C) Coe House (1921/1928)
- D) Romany Inn and Vagabond Villa (1928)
- E) Upper and Lower Rover's Rest (1928)
- F) Upper and Lower Gypsy Cabins (1928)
- G) McAllister- Coe House (1923)
- H) River View Cabin (2011)
- I) Sleep-Out Cabin "Wildflower" (1965)
- J) Well House and Canteen (1921)
- K) Restroom and Shower Buildings (1960)
- L) The Indian House "The Gate House" (1910)

### Inventory

The buildings at the Historic Gypsy Camp are nestled in a small drainage way at the edge of the Illinois River Valley. The location of the buildings along with their design gives the Gypsy Camp its distinct character and genius loci. The buildings at the Historic Gypsy Camp are a product of their environment.

### Analysis

The vernacular architecture and building materials found at the Gypsy Camp were once much more widespread throughout Northwest Arkansas. As commercial lumber has become more easily available, the character of new buildings has changed. This change can be seen in later additions to many of the Gypsy Camp buildings. Examples include the shed additions to the cabins, the restroom/shower structures, and most recently can be seen in the newly constructed River View Cabin.



### A) "Queen's Tavern"

**Date of Construction:** 1925

**Architecture:** Rustic wood framed structure on limestone foundation.

**Materials:** Sheet Metal, Pine Slab Veneer, Limestone

**Additions:** None

**Condition:** Good, Access to upper level is limited due to the deterioration of stairs.

**Original Use:** Dining & Recreation Hall

**Current Use:** Owner's Wood Shop, Storage



### B) Tree Top Inn, Devil's Den, Angel's Alley

**Date of Construction:** 1921

**Architecture:** Rustic wood framed structure on limestone foundation

**Materials:** Sheet Metal, Plywood

**Additions:** None

**Condition:** Good, Access is limited due to the deterioration of stairs.

**Original Use:** Dining, Sleeping Quarters, and Recreational Hall until Queen's Tavern was constructed. After 1925 structure housed Arts and Crafts, Sleeping Quarters, and a Nurse's Station

**Current Use:** Vacant/ Storage



### C) Coe House

**Date of Construction:** 1921, Rebuilt 1928

**Architecture:** Original log structure was destroyed by a fire. Existing structure is two stories. Ground floor is constructed of limestone and the second floor is framed with wood. Structure is built on a limestone foundation.

**Materials:** Sheet Metal, Limestone, Wooden Siding

**Additions:** None

**Condition:** Good

**Original Use:** Residence

**Current Use:** Vacant/ Storage



### G) McAllister - Coe House "Royal Hut"

**Date of Construction:** 1923

**Architecture:** Log and multi-story rustic wood framed structure on limestone foundation.

**Materials:** Pine Logs, Pine Veneer, Limestone, Concrete, Sheet Metal.

**Additions:** Two story framed addition d. 1928

**Condition:** Fair

**Original Use:** Residence (1923-2011)

**Current Use:** Vacant/ Storage



### H) River View Cabin

**Date of Construction:** 2011

**Architecture:** Contemporary wood framed structure with stained pine veneer on concrete slab foundation.

**Materials:** Metal Roofing, Pine Veneer, Concrete

**Additions:** None

**Condition:** New

**Original Use:** Residence

**Current Use:** Same



### I) Sleep-Out Cabin "Wildflower"

**Date of Construction:** c. 1965

**Architecture:** Rustic framed structure on post foundation.

**Materials:** Sheet Metal, Plywood

**Additions:** None

**Condition:** Good

**Original Use:** "Sleep-Out Cabin" a once-a-week getaway for the girls

**Current Use:** Vacant



**D) Romany Inn (Top) & Vagabond Villa (Bottom)**

**Date of Construction:** 1928

**Architecture:** Rustic board and batten wood framed structure on post foundation.

**Materials:** Sheet Metal, Plywood

**Additions:** Shed Addition c. 1960

**Condition:** Good, Access is limited due to the deterioration of stairs.

**Original Use:** Cabin for older aged girls.

**Current Use:** Vacant/ Storage



**E) Upper and Lower Rover's Rest**

**Date of Construction:** 1928

**Architecture:** Rustic board and batten wood framed structure on post foundation.

**Materials:** Sheet Metal, Plywood

**Additions:** Shed Roof Addition c. 1960

**Condition:** Good, Access is limited due to the deterioration of stairs.

**Original Use:** Cabin for younger girls.

**Current Use:** Vacant/ Storage



**F) Upper & Lower Gypsy Cabins**

**Date of Construction:** 1928

**Architecture:** Rustic wood framed structure situated on post foundation.

**Materials:** Sheet Metal, Plywood

**Additions:** Shed Roof Addition c. 1960

**Condition:** Good, Access is limited due to the deterioration of stairs.

**Original Use:** Cabin for middle aged girls.

**Current Use:** Vacant/ Storage



**J) Well House and Canteen**

**Date of Construction:** 1921

**Architecture:** Rustic wood framed structure on concrete foundation.

**Materials:** Pine Slab Veneer, Concrete, Sheet Metal.

**Additions:** None

**Condition:** Good

**Original Use:** Well House/ Canteen

**Current Use:** Well House/ Storage



**K) Restroom and Shower Buildings**

**Date of Construction:** Two structures, c. 1960

**Architecture:** Wood framed structure on post foundation.

**Materials:** Sheet Metal, Plywood.

**Additions:** None

**Condition:** Good

**Original Use:** Restrooms and Showers

**Current Use:** Vacant



**L) The Indian House "The Gate House"**

**Date of Construction:** c. 1910

**Architecture:** Wood framed structure with stained pine siding on limestone foundation.

**Materials:** Asphalt Roofing, Pine Siding, Limestone.

**Additions:** None

**Condition:** Very Poor

**Original Use:** Guest House/ Storage

**Current Use:** Vacant/ Uninhabitable

1985



National Register of Historic Places

Historic Core/ Queen's Tavern



National Register of Historic Places

Upper Gypsy Cabin



National Register of Historic Places

Treetop Lodge

2011



The core of the Gypsy Camp has remained largely intact with only a few minor changes in the past twenty-five years. The Queen's Tavern as seen in the image above has lost both stair cases on its front, and has damage from the 2011 flood.



The Upper Gypsy cabin while structurally sound has become inaccessible due to the loss of the staircase leading to the second floor.



Treetop Lodge has lost its exterior staircase. The upper floors of the structure are still accessible by way of an interior staircase. The lower level of the structure had some damage during the 2011 flood.

**Analysis:** When the Gypsy Camp was included in the National Register of Historical Places in 1988 it was under the direct threat of encroaching development that was occurring on the southern edge of Siloam Springs. While this encroaching development is still a serious problem, a more pressing problem has taken precedence. Throughout the past twenty years since the Gypsy Camp was added to the National Register of Historic Places it has begun to show signs of its age. With all historic structures the upkeep is intensive and costly. The Gypsy Camp is no

exception. While the camp structures are in most cases structurally sound, the exterior features such as stairs, porches, and sidewalks have rapidly decayed in the past two decades. This decay has resulted in the upper floors of some camp structures becoming inaccessible. This has made these structures nearly impossible to properly maintain. The Historic Gypsy Camp needs to be preserved with many of the buildings being repaired. Without immediate attention, the Historic Gypsy Camp is at risk of fading away and eventually becoming only a memory.



National Register of Historic Places

**Romany Inn**

Romany Inn is structurally sound. The staircase and railings leading into the structure are unstable. The lower level of the cabin had some damage in the 2011 flood.



National Register of Historic Places

**Gate/ River View Cabin**

The construction of the River View Cabin in 2011 on the edge of the camp's central core has changed the character of the camp.



National Register of Historic Places

**Indian House/ Gate House**

The Indian House (The Gate House) has fallen into disrepair during the past two decades. The structure will likely need to be reconstructed as a result of its poor condition.



**Analysis:** A major part of the Gypsy Camp’s character is its interior and exterior views. The buildings in the historic core all have windows facing into the central space with the Queen’s Tavern, the large gathering structure, having a few of the only views looking toward the Illinois River.



A) Central Core of the Historic Gypsy Camp.



B) Historic Camp from top of mountain with Illinois River in the background.



C) Illinois River Valley looking toward Highway 59 bridge.



D) Exposed limestone bluffs in Box Canyon.



E) Historic Gypsy Camp as viewed from Illinois River.



F) "Big Bluff" from the Illinois River Valley with Gypsy Camp in distance.



G) Bluff over the Illinois River.



H) Gravel bars give locations to access the Illinois River.



I) Distant bluffs as seen from the Historic Core.

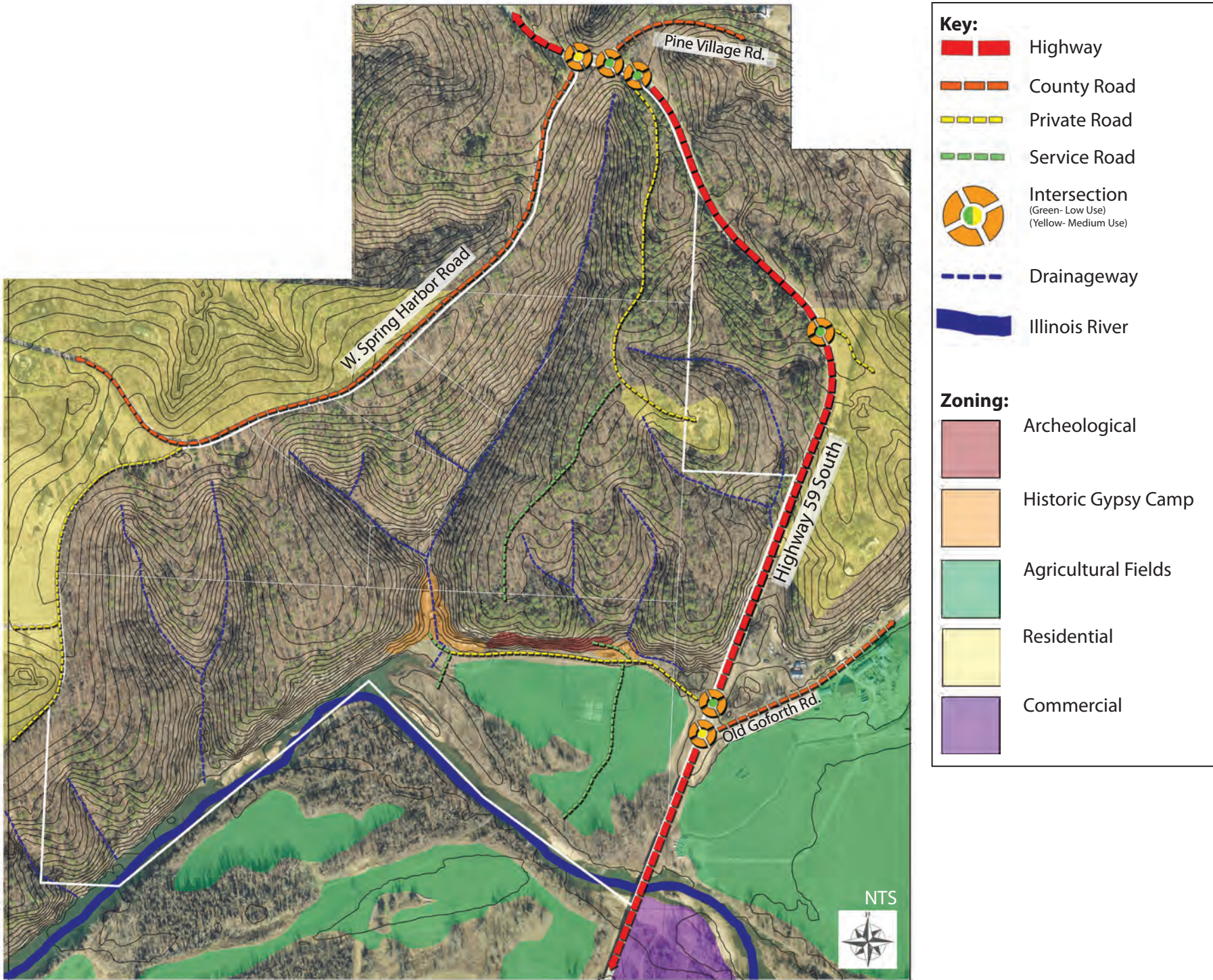


J) Historic Gypsy Camp as seen from Highway 59 during the winter.



K) Illinois River Valley with fall leaves from the overlook point. Small islands have formed in the area where Lake Frances was once located. The McAllister/Coe House "Royal Hut" can be seen on the left hand side of the image. Highway 59 and the Illinois River Bridge are visible in the distance.





## Site Opportunities

1. Rich historical and cultural background.
2. Direct access to Illinois River
3. Strong architectural character and overall atmosphere
4. Genus Loci- strong sense of place in historic camp
5. Existing historic structures
6. Ease of access to historic camp from Highway 59 and available access to wooded areas from W. Spring Harbor Rd.
7. Diverse vegetation throughout site
8. Existing remnant native plant communities in remote areas on the site
9. Diverse Wildlife Communities
10. Location in Northwest Arkansas
11. Southern exposure
12. Cool breezes through valleys
13. Fertile soils in floodplain
14. Picturesque bluffs overlooking Illinois River
15. Overlooks giving views into the Illinois River Valley
16. Dramatic topography
17. Numerous natural landscape features
  - Waterfalls
  - Box Canyons
  - Springs
18. Densely Wooded Site

## Constraints

1. Design must be sensitive to existing historical camp
2. Large unbuildable floodplain
3. Seasonal flooding in river valley and in historic camp
4. Vehicular noise from Highway 59
5. Views of Illinois River Bridge
6. Historic Camp is built in a natural drainage way that expels large amounts of water during strong storm events
7. Steep/ Rugged Topography- Some areas are unbuildable, other areas would be very expensive to build on
8. Encroaching residential development on northern side
9. Steep bluffs could create liability
10. Location of existing structures (In floodplain)
11. Age of structures- high maintenance costs
12. Historic structures restricted to mostly seasonal use





<http://www.nps.gov/peri/images/20081125165531.jpg>



<http://www.nps.gov/peri/images/20081125170748.jpg>



<http://www.nps.gov/peri/planyourvisit/images/Virginia-s-web-photos-017.jpg>

## Pea Ridge National Military Park

Pea Ridge National Military Park is located near the town of Pea Ridge in Northwest Arkansas. Pea Ridge National Military Park was the location of the Battle of Pea Ridge during the Civil War. The Pea Ridge National Military Park is a 4,300 acre site with many well preserved historical structures and markers located throughout. The fields and forests where the battle took place became agricultural land following the war and remained that in use until the 1960's when the first steps were taken to return the thousands of acres of agricultural fields back to their native state. Controlled burns are a common occurrence at the park so that the native prairie species will flourish. The Pea Ridge Military Park is covered with many hills, valleys, and creeks which create a very dynamic landscape similar to that of the Gypsy Camp.

The Pea Ridge National Military Park was very successful in taking large expanses of degraded agricultural land and restoring it to create a series of large prairies which are connected together by a system of wooded historic fence rows. These fence rows have become a highway for animal populations moving between the interconnected patches located on the site. The restoration of the battlefields was very successful because animal and plant populations flourish in these created landscapes. Pea Ridge has shown through their replanting of prairies and woodlands that mixing native landscapes with historic sites is possible without losing the site's historic integrity. By maintaining the historical spatial definition of these sites in an sustainable way, we can preserve history while preserving our natural landscapes.

## Camp Ouachita

Camp Ouachita was located on Lake Sylvia in the Ouchita Mountains of central Arkansas. The camp operated between the early 1930's through 1979. The camp was constructed during the great depression by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The camp was operated by the Girl Scouts of America. In 1979 the camp was closed as the result of repeated well failures. The camp fell into disuse, and disrepair. The camp is believed to be the only existing example of a Girl Scout Camp built by the the WPA. In 1992 the camp was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The camp has recently been renovated and updated by the National Forest Service with help from the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Over two million dollars have been spent on the needed repairs. The plan is for the camp to be opened year round as a conservation education center. The state has plans to use it to help combat "nature deficit disorder" in children through camps and other educational events. Camp Ouachita will offer hands on training for teachers who are a part of the Project Wild program. The goal of the project wild program is to integrate nature into school curriculum.

"Deputy Director David Goad said the camp would be a "Central Arkansas treasure." He referred to "Last Child in the Woods," a book by Richard Louv that warns that children who grow up without exposure to the natural world are at risk for mental and physical health problems. "We're trying to get kids outside," Goad said." (Peacock/ARTimes)

Many of the Camp Ouachita buildings were in advanced stages of decay before the restoration project began. The cost of restoring the Historic Gypsy Camp would be much less than what was spent to restore Camp Ouachita due to the existing structural integrity of the Gypsy Camp buildings. The restoration of the Historic Camp Ouachita specifically shows that the goal of rehabilitating the Gypsy Camp is not out of reach.



<http://www.uer.ca/locations/galpics/norm/286589.jpg>



[http://i33.photobucket.com/albums/d87/LCrow/camp%20ouchita/IMG\\_0471.jpg](http://i33.photobucket.com/albums/d87/LCrow/camp%20ouchita/IMG_0471.jpg)



# Site Design

*"But the place which you have selected for your camp, though never so rough and grim, begins at once to have its attractions, and becomes a very centre of civilization to you: "Home is home, be it never so homely."*

—Henry David Thoreau

**Mission:**

*The River Bend Nature Center strives to create a rich educational experience for people of all ages in a natural setting, while celebrating and communicating the history and culture of the historic Camp Gypsy.*

**Project Goals and Objectives:****To preserve and interpret the history of Camp Gypsy.**

- Through the creation of a museum containing educational displays and offering interpretive programs to communicate the rich history and culture of the Gypsy Camp.
- Through the creation of an artist in residence program.
- Through the creation of an Art Gallery displaying paintings by Mrs. McAllister, students, and the artist in residence depicting the Gypsy Camp and surrounding areas.
- Through the connection of the new River Bend Nature Center to the historic core.
- By allowing past campers the opportunity to return to the Gypsy Camp and spend the night in the historic cabins .

**To combat “nature deficit disorder” in both children and adults. (Richard Louv)**

- Through a nature center that facilitates summer camps, school field trips, and retreats.
- Through the creation of interpretive nature trails.
- Through the creation of “sleep out cabins” that allow visitors to the nature center the opportunity to spend the night out in the woods.
- Through the use of the Illinois River for float trips and swimming, and fishing.
- Through the use of community outreach. (lectures/ nature walks/ overnight tent camping)

**To conserve and restore ecological systems along the Illinois River.**

- Through the restoration of degraded wetlands and riparian woodlands.
- Through the restoration of eroded riverbanks.
- Through the creation of a wetland prairie in the Illinois River Floodplain.



**Metaphors**  
 Community  
 Heritage  
 Seclusion  
 Harmony  
 Spirit  
 Nostalgia



The design of the Historic Gypsy Camp is in direct response to its surroundings. This results in the camp feeling like it is a part of the surrounding vernacular landscape. This design vocabulary must be retained in any new design in order to maintain the historic camp's integrity and genius loci.



### **Historic Gypsy Camp**

- Museum
- Gallery
- Gate House/ Caretaker's House
- Residence for Owner/ Staff
- Studio/ Housing for Artist in Residence
- Overnight Guest Cabins
- Access to Illinois River

### **Check-In for Nature Center**

- Seating Area
- Gathering Space
- Administrative Offices
- Drop Off Zone
- Staff Parking
- Overflow Parking
- Parking
- Service and Maintenance Structure

### **River Bend Nature Center (ADA Accessible)**

- Sleep Out Cabins
- Amphitheater
- Community Building
- Group Gathering Spaces
- Classrooms
- Staff Residence
- Dining Hall
- Services Entry (Vehicular Access)
- Showers and Restrooms
- Cabins
- Proposed Phase II Cabins
- Nature Trails
- ADA Nature Trails
- Access to Illinois River
- Canoe Landing
- Swimming Hole

### **Observation Points**

- Formal Observation Point
- Informal Observation Point

### **Ecological Restoration**

- Native Wetland Prairie Restoration
- Riparian Woodland Restoration
- Wetland Restoration

**Overview:**

The Historic Gypsy Camp as it is seen today is the product of a long and storied history. This history continues with the creation of the River Bend Nature Center at the Historic Camp Gypsy.

Throughout the River Bend Nature Center design process, special care was taken to see that the nature center did not replace or take precedence over the Historic Gypsy Camp. Since the beginning of the project, the River Bend Nature Center has been a means to breath life back into the historic camp. The River Bend Nature Center will help fund the preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, and future maintenance of the Historic Gypsy Camp.

**Key:**

1. Historic Gypsy Camp
2. River Bend Nature Center
3. Parking and Check-in Center for Nature center
4. Formal Observation Point
5. Sleep Out Cabins
6. Informal Observation Point
7. Trail System
8. Gate House/ Caretakers Home
9. Wetland Prairie Restoration
10. Riparian Woodland Restoration
11. Wetland restoration
12. Location of Future Expansion of Trails System.
13. Public River Access Road

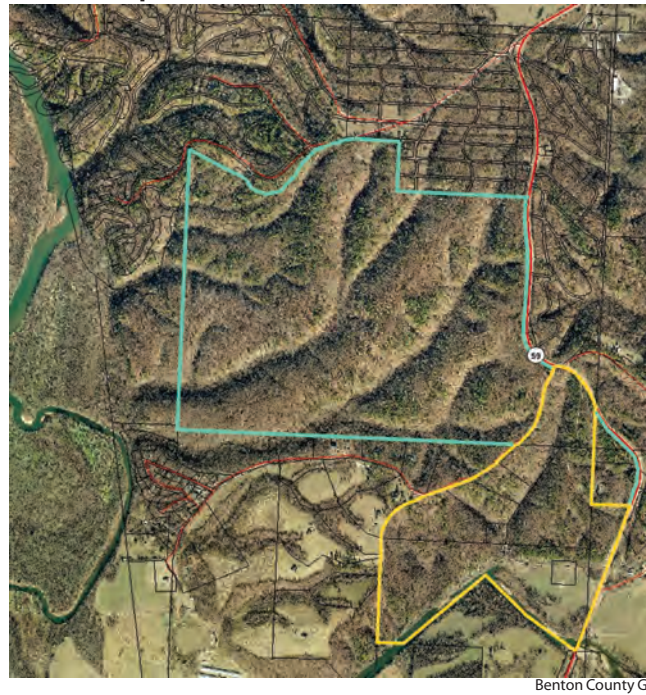
### Location of Reception/ Parking

The location of the reception hall and the parking areas was selected for several reasons. The location has direct access to Highway 59, it has mostly level topography, and most of the location has already been cleared of most vegetation. Several large pine trees are currently growing at the proposed location. Most of these pine trees will be saved. The pine trees will shade the parking areas and with time the pine needles will create a natural carpet that cars will be able to drive on. The location of the parking and reception hall is also near the proposed River Bend Nature Center which will help with the nature center's accessibility.

### Location of Nature Center

Several locations on the Gypsy Camp property were selected as possible locations for the River Bend Nature Center. Many of these locations did not have the character or sense of place that the Historic Gypsy Camp is known for. Through this process the location of the River Bend Nature Center was selected. The River Bend Nature Center is located at the convergence of two deep drainage valleys a short walk from the Historic Gypsy Camp. This location for the nature center was selected for several reasons. The first reason was its similarity to the topography of the historic core. The topography of the historic core is important in giving the historic camp its sense of place. This sense of place along with the buildings perched on the hillside help to give the Gypsy Camp its character. The second reason was the high diversity of flora and fauna. Due to the remote nature of the drainage valleys, many native plant populations still exist in these areas. The design of the River Bend Nature Center takes this into account by leaving the most fragile riparian areas undeveloped. By leaving these areas free of developed, nature is integrated into the design of the nature center. The third reason was the need to protect the integrity of the Historic Gypsy Camp. The location that was selected for the nature center is near the historic core, but is far enough away that it doesn't impose.

### Future Expansion



The Gypsy Camp property is bordered on its northern side by approximately 450 acres of wooded Oak/ Hickory forest that was once part of the Lake Frances Resort Community. This land could be leased or purchased in the future to expand the River Bend Nature Center. Expansion could increase the recreational potential of the River Bend Nature Center. Additional trails, backpacking, and camping could attract a larger number of people to the River Bend Nature Center. There are currently residential properties on the east side of the Gypsy Camp property. These properties should be purchased if they become available. This will help protect the long term integrity of the Gypsy Camp property.

### Gypsy Camp Character Precedents



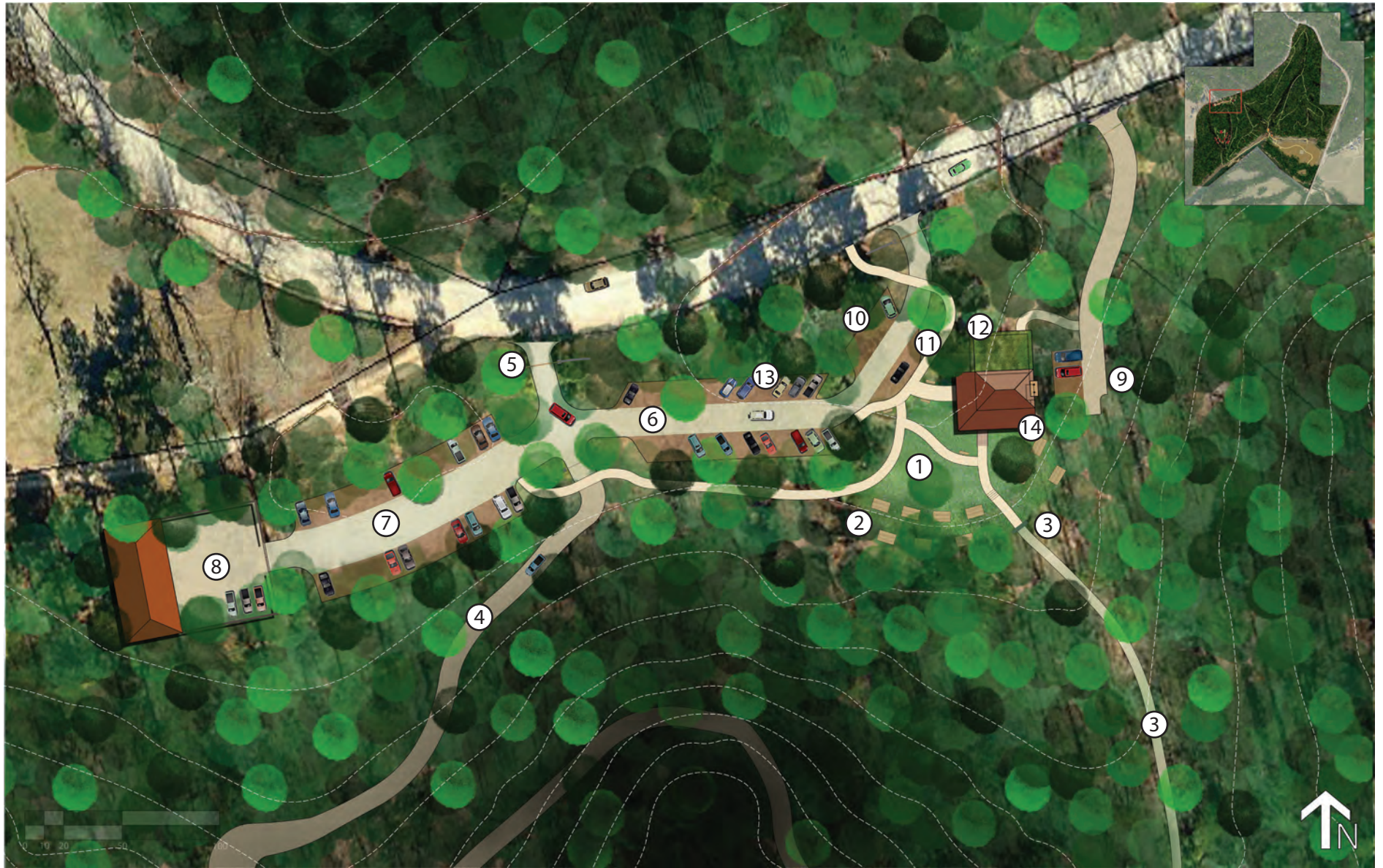
Sense of Community





Buildings integrated with Nature



Design with Natural Topography



-  **Reception/ Information/ Offices**  
-One Story  
-1,800ft<sup>2</sup>
-  **Maintenance/ Services Shop**  
-One Story  
-1,800ft<sup>2</sup>

**Key:**

1. The Great Lawn
2. Group Seating/ Meeting Area
3. Trail to Nature Center
4. Service Road to Nature Center
5. Entry Gate
6. Parking
7. Overflow Parking
8. Service/ Maintenance Yard
9. Staff Parking
10. ADA Accessible Parking
11. Drop-Off Zone
12. Green Roof
13. School Bus/

- Charter Bus Parking/ Drop-Off
14. Wrap Around Porch



[http://kentuckyhiddenlakedodge.com/images/cabin\\_exterior\\_back\\_porch.jpg](http://kentuckyhiddenlakedodge.com/images/cabin_exterior_back_porch.jpg)

The reception hall at the River Bend Nature Center will be a rustic log structure with a large majestic wraparound porch that offers panoramic views onto the great lawn.



The Parking and reception hall will try to retain many of the existing Pine Trees as possible. Many more pine trees will be added to the existing in order to create a pine forest which will create a parking area that is interspersed with pine trees that coat the ground with their pine needles.

**Parking**

There will be two parking lots at the River Bend Nature Center. The main lot located near the Reception Hall will have twenty-six parking spaces with two ADA accessible spaces. The main lot will have room for two fifty foot school buses to parallel park when the lot is vacant. The overflow parking lot will also hold twenty-six vehicles. The overflow lot will have a gate that can be raised and lowered in response to the number of spaces needed. All guests will be required to leave their vehicles in the parking lots when visiting the camp due to the remote location of the nature center. A shuttle will be available for those needing ADA access to the nature center.

**Reception Hall**

The reception hall will be the first building guests will see when visiting the nature center. Guests will check-in at the reception hall before descending into the River Bend Nature Center. The Reception Hall will also be the location of the nature center's three business offices.

**The Great Lawn**

The great lawn will be the gathering space outside of the reception hall. This will be where school groups and campers will meet before they descend into the Nature Center. Ten tables will be located on the perimeter of the great lawn for the school groups and groups of campers to sit. The tables will also allow guests to have eat meals at arrival or departure.

**Staff Parking**

Three staff parking spaces will be located behind the reception hall. This drive will also be where the luggage truck will pick up guests' belongings to transport them down into the nature center.



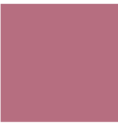


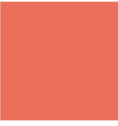

**Entry Gate**

A stone gateway similar to the one the Historic Gypsy Camp will mark the entrance to the entry trail. This trail will lead guests to the River Bend Nature Center.

**Service Road**

The service road will be the life line of the River Bend Nature Center. The service road will only be used by service/maintenance vehicles. The service road will allow for the delivery of any needed supplies.



	<b>Community Building</b> -Two Story -3,000ft <sup>2</sup>
	<b>Classroom Building</b> -Two Story -3,600ft <sup>2</sup>
	<b>Classroom and Staff Residence</b> -Two Story -3,300ft <sup>2</sup>
	<b>Dining/ Services</b> -Three Story -8,000ft <sup>2</sup>
	<b>Showers/ Restrooms (2)</b> -Two Story -800ft <sup>2</sup> Each
	<b>Cabins (4)</b> -Two Story -900ft <sup>2</sup> Each
	<b>Future Cabins (2)</b> -Two Story -900ft <sup>2</sup> Each

- Key:**
1. Amphitheater (140 seats)
  2. Elevated Walkway (4)
  3. Boardwalk
  4. Canopy Walk (1)
  5. Service Road
  6. Service Entry/ Service Parking (7 spaces)
  7. Entry Trail from Reception
  8. Trails to Historic Camp Gypsy
  9. Trail to Swimming Hole and Canoe Landing
  10. Suspension Bridge
  11. Twin Waterfalls
  12. Riparian Corridor

**Entry Trail**

The trail leading into the River Bend Nature Center starts out from the reception hall following the top of the ridge. From this vantage point guests are able to look off from both sides of the ridge into the valleys below. As guests walk further into the Oak/ Hickory forest the trail begins to descend from the ridge. Filtered views into the nature center begin to give guests a sense of excitement. When guests descend low enough on the hillside, the Illinois River Valley begins to appear through the trees. Guests then round a sharp bend in the trail and begin their final descent into the nature center. The community building is one of the first structures guests see through the trees. It is a dominant feature located on the ridge between two valleys. From this point the rest of the River Bend Nature Center becomes visible as guests transition from the dirt trail onto the wooden boardwalks.

**Suspension Bridge**

The suspension bridge is an exciting feature for guests entering the River Bend Nature Center. The location of the suspension bridge near the main entry trail creates a sense of discovery as groups hike around the final bend in the trail on their way into the nature center. Guests on the suspension bridge are provided unparalleled views of the nature center as it spreads up the two valleys. The box canyon, and the twin waterfalls are also visible from this vantage point.

**Amphitheater**

The amphitheater, located in a small clearing in the Oak/ Hickory forest, provides a naturalistic gathering space for events such as weekly campfires, and lectures during retreats. The amphitheater could also serve as the location for community outreach in the form of free lectures that could be held covering a wide range of environmental and historical topics. This would be in a similar format to evening lectures given by park rangers to guests at many of the National Parks.

**Boardwalk**

A major result of the River Bend Nature Center's location is the ADA Accessible boardwalks. The boardwalks run along both sides of the valleys. They cantilever from the hillside which gives guests views into the central riparian corridor that runs through the nature center. Larger open areas of boardwalk are located near each of the buildings. These areas can be used as gathering spaces.

**Canopy Walk**

The canopy walk provides visitors a chance to walk in the tree canopy of the lowland woodland. The walkway also serves as an ADA accessible walkway to the second floors of the classroom and community buildings. The canopy walk creates an observation point that provides visitors unobstructed views down onto the boardwalks of the River Bend Nature Center and the surrounding woodland.

**Elevated Walkway**

Four elevated walkways cross the riparian corridor. These walkways connect the three sections of boardwalk allowing guests to cross the riparian corridors. The elevated walkways along with the boardwalks allow the River Bend Nature Center to have minimal impact on the natural ecological systems found in the valley. The walkways allow the nature center to remain open during seasonal flooding. The walkways also allow native wildlife to move up and down the valleys through the riparian corridors.

**Service Entry/ Parking**

The service entry is located on the third floor of the dining hall. The dining hall structure is the only structure at the nature center that has an elevator. This elevator allows for the delivery of groceries and other items. The elevator also serves as the ADA accessible connection between the service road, the canopy bridge, and the boardwalk. Parking spaces for service vehicles are located on the roof of the dining hall.

**ADA Accessibility**

The River Bend Nature Center is ADA Accessible. This is made possible by a shuttle that brings nature center guests to the service entry. From the service entry they can then use the elevator that will allow them to access the boardwalk and canopy walk.

**Design Feature Precedents**



<http://www.bsatroop7.org/VESPER5.jpg>

**Amphitheater**



<http://bridgehunter.com/photos/17/87/178769-L.jpg>

**Suspension Bridge**



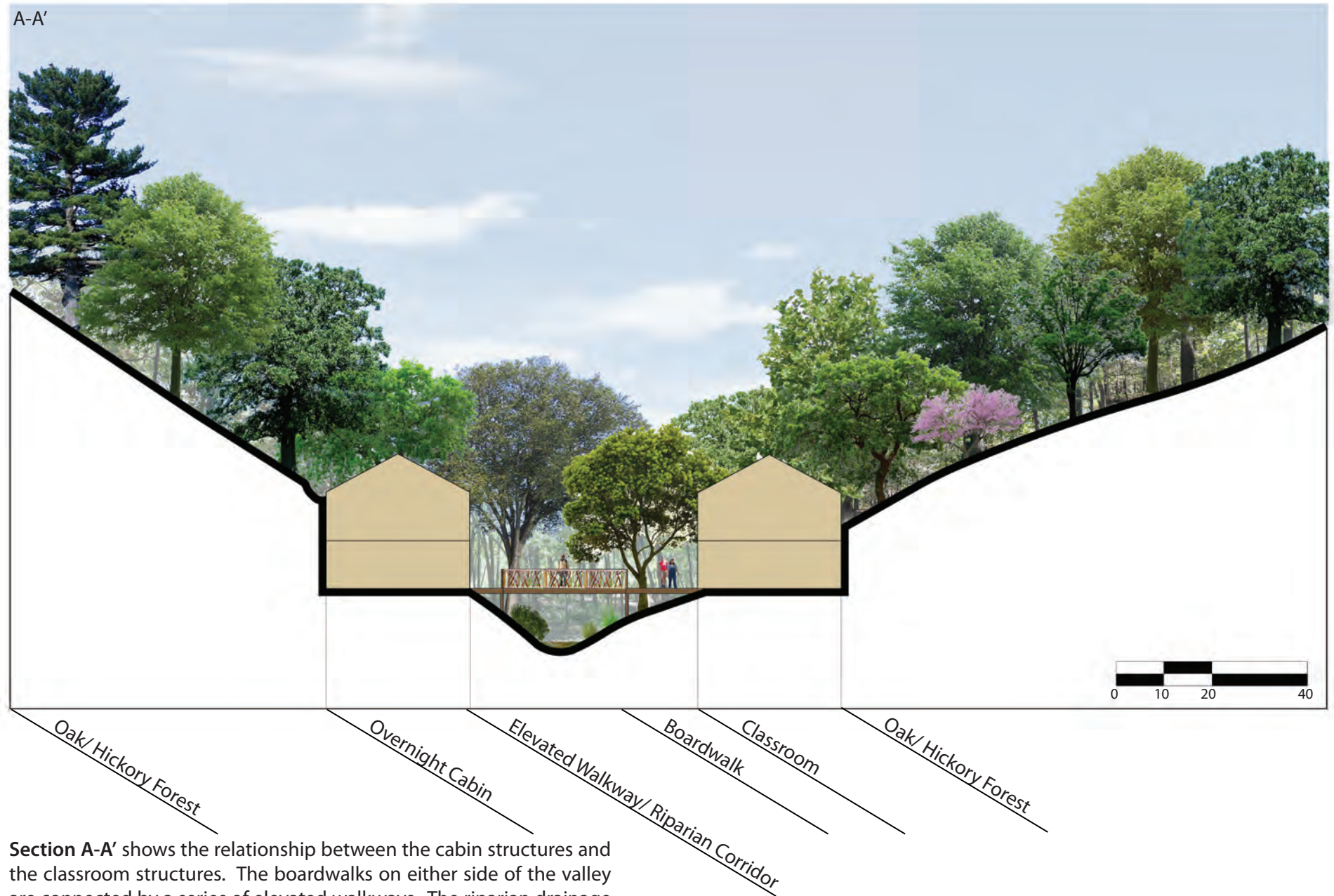
<http://menbook.net/uploads/2011-02/1298282446729009yo.jpeg>

**Circulation "Tree House"**



<http://images.wikia.com/starwars/images/9/98/RMQ-ewokvillage.jpg>

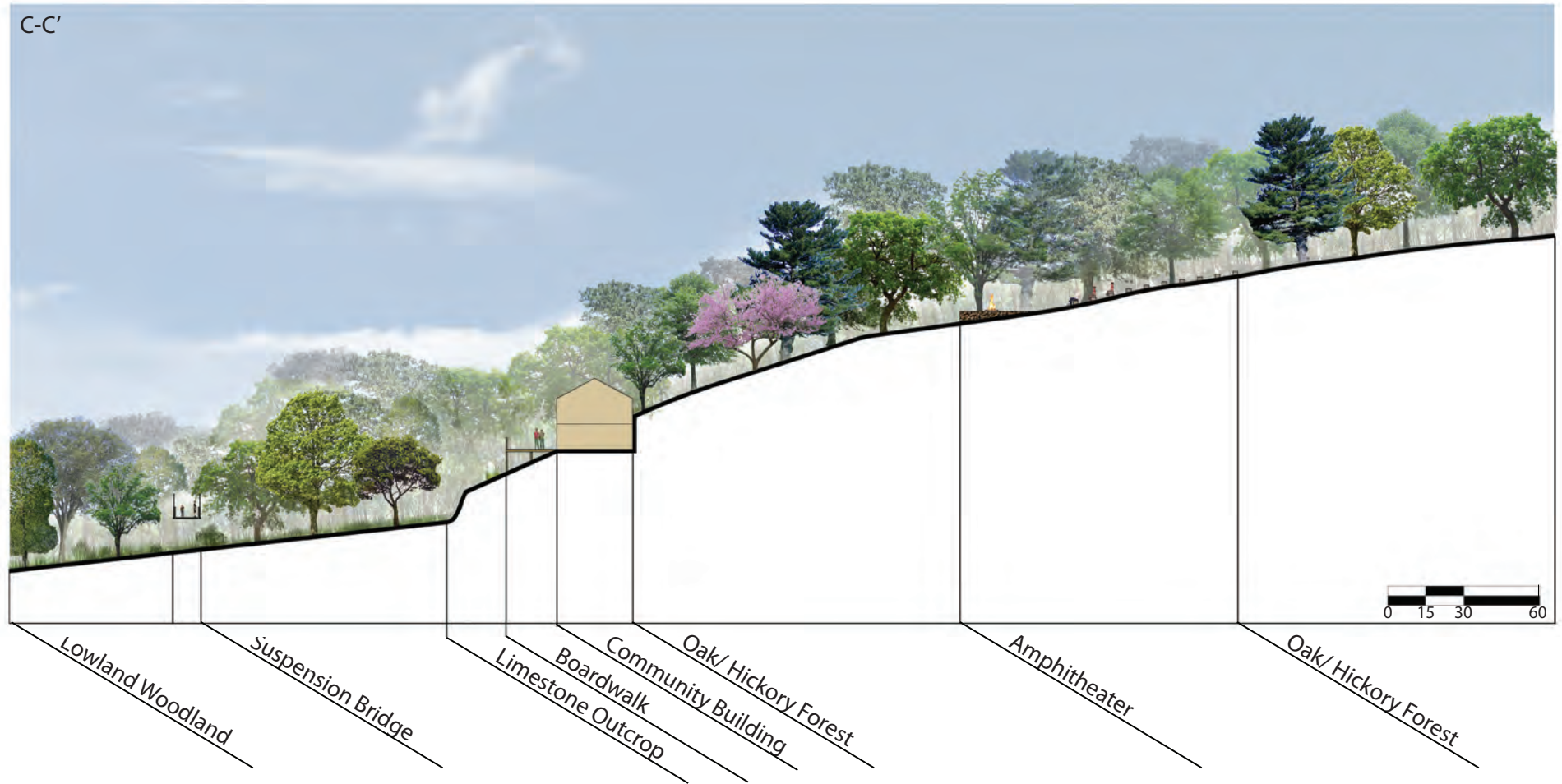
**Boardwalks**



**Section A-A'** shows the relationship between the cabin structures and the classroom structures. The boardwalks on either side of the valley are connected by a series of elevated walkways. The riparian drainage way at the bottom of the lowland woodland as seen in the section is untouched by development in order to reduce overall impact on the site. The shape, size and heights of the buildings at the Nature Center are modeled off of the structures at the Historic Gypsy Camp.



**Section B-B'** shows the canopy walk that connects the dining hall to the classroom building across the valley. Parking for service vehicles is located on the roof of the dining hall to reduce the amount of unnecessary grading. Boardwalks along the edges of the valley provide views into the riparian corridor.



**Section C-C'** shows the relationship between the amphitheater, the nature center, and the suspension bridge. The large gathering space in front of the community building provides views into the valley. The suspension bridge provides panoramic views of the River Bend Nature Center. Guests in the amphitheater will have distant views of the Illinois River Valley.



### Nature Trail Study Topics

#### Native Arkansas Ecosystems

- Oak/ Hickory Forest
- Pine/ Cedar Glade
- Wetlands
- Wetland Prairie
- Wetland Woodland

#### Riparian Zones

#### Ecology

- Native Plants Identification
- Native Wildlife Identification
- Ecological Restoration

#### Geology

#### Forestry

#### Hydrology

#### Astronomy

#### Native American Culture

#### Key:

1. Box Canyons
2. Swimming Hole
3. Big Bluff
4. Waterfalls
5. Camp Overlook
6. Springs
7. Formal Overlook
8. Natural Overlook

1. Box Canyon



2. Swimming Hole



7. Formal Overlook



3. Big Bluff



5. Camp Overlook



4. Waterfalls



6. Springs



8. Natural Overlook





- Short Grass Wetland Prairie
- Riparian Woodland
- Riparian Wetland

### Ecological Restoration:

The long agricultural history of the Gypsy Camp property has had a negative affect on the native ecology and biodiversity of the floodplain on the Gypsy Camp property. The floodplain of the Illinois River Valley including the Gypsy Camp property once consisted of wetland prairies, wetland woodlands, and riparian wetlands. These areas have been tilled and mowed hundreds of times in the past one hundred fifty years. These frequent disturbances have resulted in an overall decrease in native plant species, an increase in exotic plant populations, and the destruction of the natural soil microtopography/ strata.

The agricultural floodplain will be rehabilitated with attention to not only the historic integrity of the landscape, but also the sustainable ecological function of the landscape. Through the rehabilitation of the agricultural field, the spatial definition of the historic fields will be preserved, but the land use will change. With time, the Gypsy Camp property will become much more ecologically diverse and as a result will have a much larger population of flora and fauna that will help attract guests to the River Bend Nature Center. The agricultural fields where the seasonal wetland prairie is proposed are so severely degraded that they will have to be completely restarted. This will mean that these areas will have to be treated with herbicides to remove the existing exotic grasses. In normal cases prescribed burns would be used, but with the Historical Gypsy Camp in close proximity this is creates too much of a risk.

The restoration plant lists consist of plants that would have once been found throughout the Illinois River Valley. The plants were selected for their ability to withstand both droughts and short periods of flooding. Many native species can still be found within the remnant wetland woodland on the Gypsy Camp property. These species include American Sycamore, Osage Orange, Black Walnut, Pecan, Elm, Oaks, and Maples. These plants were not selected for re-introduction to the riparian woodland due to their existing abundance. These trees in most cases will quickly set seed in the restored riparian woodland resulting in a more diverse plant community in a short period of time. The existing riparian wetland is extremely fragile, and has been severely degraded by frequent large floods. This ecological zone has few existing native plant species. The riparian wetland at the Gypsy Camp will also need to be replanted.

The ecological images show areas along the Illinois River that represent the proposed ecosystems after a successful restoration. These areas are located in what was once part of the Lake Frances lake bed. These areas have returned to their native state through natural re-vegetation that has taken place during the past twenty years. The goal of the ecological restoration at the Gypsy Camp is to speed up the natural process seen in the images through the reintroduction of healthy native plants that would have once thrived along the Illinois River.



### Seasonal Wetland Prairie (9.47 Acres)

- Bladder Sedge (*Carex intumescens*)
- Canada Bluejoint (*Calamagrostis canadensis*)
- Beaked Panic Grass (*Panicum anceps*)
- Canadian Wild Rye (*Elymus canadensis glaucifolius*)
- Crimson Eyed Rosemallow (*Hibiscus moscheutos*)
- Eastern Gama Grass (*Tripsacum dactyloides*)
- Fowl Bluegrass (*Poa palustris*)
- Grassleaved Goldenrod (*Euthamia graminifolia*)
- Indian Grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*)
- Joe Pye Weed (*Eupatorium purpureum*)
- Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)
- Pennsylvania Smartweed (*Persicaria pensylvanica laevigata*)
- Purple Top (*Tridens flavus*)
- Redtop Panicgrass (*Panicum rigidulum*)
- Smooth Panicgrass (*Panicum dichotomiflorum*)
- Tall Coreopsis (*Coreopsis tripteris*)
- Turks' Cap Lily (*Lilium superbum*)
- Woolgrass (*Scirpus cyperinus*)



[http://media.kickstatic.com/62688/photos\\_ap.jpg](http://media.kickstatic.com/62688/photos_ap.jpg)

**Pennsylvania Smartweed**  
*Persicaria pensylvanica*  
*laevigata*



[http://meltonwiggins.com/hibiscus\\_moscheutos.jpg](http://meltonwiggins.com/hibiscus_moscheutos.jpg)

**Crimson Eyed Rosemallow**  
*Hibiscus moscheutos*



**Grassleaved Goldenrod**  
*Euthamia graminifolia*



**Indian Grass**  
*Sorghastrum nutans*



<http://www.avalonialandconservancy.org/joepye.jpg>

**Joe Pye Weed**  
*Eupatorium purpureum*



**Wetland Woodland (8.19 Acres)**

- Arrowwood *Viburnum dentatum*
- Black Chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*)
- Bottlebrush Grass (*Elymus hystrix*)
- Eastern Gamagrass (*Tripsacum dactyloides*)
- Green Ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*)
- Hercules' Club (*Aralia spinosa*)
- Inland Sea Oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*)
- Native Pecan (*Carya illinoensis*)
- Ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*)
- Nodding Bur Marigold (*Bidens cernua*)
- Osage Orange (*Maclura pomifera*)
- Pinebarren Goldenrod (*Solidago fistulosa*)
- Rice Cutgrass (*Leersia oryzoides*)
- River Locust (*Amorpha fruticosa*)
- Sandbar Willow (*Salix exigua ssp. interior*)
- Shining Aster (*Aster firmus*)
- Virginia Wild Rye (*Elymus virginicus*)
- Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*)



<http://www.duke.edu/~cwcook/trees/150869.jpg>

**Ninebark**  
*Physocarpus opulifolius*



<http://www.pbase.com/vantis/image/37588042>

**Winterberry**  
*Ilex verticillata*



<http://powellgardens.wordpress.com/bottlegrass.jpg>

**Bottlebrush Grass**  
*Elymus hystrix*



[www.mnr.isu.edu/plantid/species/sandbarwillow.jpg](http://www.mnr.isu.edu/plantid/species/sandbarwillow.jpg)

**Sandbar Willow**  
*Salix exigua ssp. interior*



**Cardinal Flower**  
*Lobelia cardinalis*



### Riparian Wetland (1.05 Acres)

Canadian Rush (*Juncus canadensis*)  
 Eastern Gama Grass (*Tripsacum dactyloides*)  
 Floating Managrass (*Glyceria borealis*)  
 Green Bulrush (*Scirpus atrovirens*)  
 Leathery Rush (*Juncus coriaceus*)  
 Soft Stem Bulrush (*Scirpus validus*)  
 Many leaved bulrush (*Scirpus polyphyllus*)  
 Pennsylvania Smartweed (*Persicaria pennsylvanica laevigata*)  
 Smooth Panic Grass (*Panicum dichotomiflorum*)  
 Reed Canarygrass (*Phalaris arundinacea*)  
 Rice Cutgrass (*Leersia oryzoides*)  
 Arrow Arum (*Peltandra virginica*)  
 Riddell's Goldenrod (*Solidago riddellii*)  
 Roughleaf Goldenrod (*Solidago patula*)  
 Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)  
 Turtlehead (*Chelone glabra*)



<http://www.forages.psu.edu/Fall%20Panicum.jpg>

Smooth Panic Grass  
*Panicum dichotomiflorum*



<http://www.missouriplants.com/Scirpusatrovirens.jpg>

Green Bulrush  
*Scirpus atrovirens*



<http://www.cas.vanderbilt.edu/hchgl2-wp38386.JPG>

Turtlehead  
*Chelone glabra*



<http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/images/pelvir/pelvir3w.jpg>

Arrow Arum  
*Peltandra virginica*



<http://www.geospectra.net/cheyanne/veg01.jpg>

Soft Stem Bulrush  
*Scirpus validus*



Historical Gypsy Camp images and brochures courtesy of Mr. Bob Coe.  
Gypsy Camp current condition images and ecological images not cited within booklet are by author.

Illinois River Watershed (Page 10)

<http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=6248>

Pea Ridge Battlefield (Page 36)

<http://www.nps.gov/peri/index.htm>

<http://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=3367>

<http://images.library.wisc.edu/EcoNatRes/EFacs/NAPC/NAPC07/reference/econatres.napc07.edale.pdf>

Camp Ouachita (Page 37)

<http://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=4204>

<http://www.arktimes.com/arkansas/camp-ouachita-revival/Content?oid=865835>



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