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The LeConte Lodge: A Lens for the Evolution and Development of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park

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THE LECONTE LODGE: A LENS FOR THE EVOLUTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Schools of
Clemson University and College of Charleston

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science
Historic Preservation

by
Lindsay D. Lanois
May 2014

Accepted by:
Amalia Leifeste, Committee Chair
Kristopher King
Andrew Kohr
ABSTRACT

Officially established in 1934, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park originated as part of a widespread cultural trend towards outdoor recreation, national tourism, and the federal government’s assumption of responsibility for land conservation. However, the area of Tennessee and North Carolina selected by the federal government for the national park was not a purely unsettled landscape. Not only did the land serve as home to approximately ten permanent agricultural communities, but it also featured several hotels and lodges inspired by the burgeoning twentieth-century tourism industry. Beginning as a rudimentary hiking cabin constructed in 1925 and evolving throughout the 1930s, the LeConte Lodge is now the only structure that pre-dates the creation of the park to remain in its originally intended use. Therefore, the lodge can serve as a lens through which to explore the broader preservation practices of the National Park Service.

This thesis intends to address the question through a two-part research strategy. The thesis creates a narrative of the Lodge over time, focusing on a structural and managerial history of the property. Through written and photographic documentation of each structure in the resort, the thesis analyzes the LeConte Lodge’s contemporary state. The documentation process focuses on structural details, existing conditions, and each building’s usage. With information gleaning from the Lodge’s historic development and contemporary conditions, the thesis aims to generate insight on the preservation practices of the National Park Service within the Smokies.
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Lucien and Mimi, Granmommie and Papa, and in honor of my mom and dad: my family rooted in East Tennessee, who have all loved the Smokies and shared that passion with me in their own ways.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I’d like to express my immense appreciation and admiration for my advisor Amalia Leifeste. Her intuitive ability to understand, interpret, and articulate my most vague thoughts has enriched every step of my thesis process. Beyond her insightful support of my thesis, I appreciate her contributions to my entire graduate school career. The MSHP program is fortunate to have gained such an intelligent, accessible leader. A huge thank you also to Kris King and Andrew Kohr, my readers. I have greatly enjoyed and appreciated your unique contributions. Finally, thank you to Gerald Smith, for introducing me to historic preservation through the cemeteries and abandoned homesites around Sewanee.

The research that informed this thesis would not have been possible without the continued support and assistance of John McDade and Michael Aday of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park Archives. Thank you for answering my countless emails and questions and for guiding my research by allowing me access to so many of your resources. Thanks, too, to Anne Bridges and Ken Wise of the University of Tennessee.

The last two years would not have been the same without the empathy and laughter shared with my classmates. Thank you all for being on the same team, even when we’re tired, hot, or hungry. I am grateful for the support of my friends and family. Finally, a big thanks to my Dad for not forgoing our first site visit entirely when I realized I forgot my hiking boots once we reached the trailhead.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The LeConte Lodge was developed during the Great Smoky Mountains National Park’s pivotal transition point between centuries of private ownership and full public domain. Originating as a rudimentary hiking cabin constructed in 1925 and evolving to a full resort complex throughout the mid-twentieth century, the LeConte Lodge is now the only structural complex that pre-dates the Park’s creation and remains in its originally intended use. The LeConte Lodge also draws significance from its evolution as a private business within federally owned land, interconnected with the framework of the National Park Service as an official concession. Finally, the Lodge serves as an interesting comparison to the other historic structures that stand within the Park’s boundaries. While the majority of buildings selected for preservation reflect the region’s nineteenth-century pioneer heritage, the LeConte Lodge is among the few that represent the twentieth-century. This thesis intends to explore these architectural, legal, and cultural complexities, utilizing the history and development of the LeConte Lodge as a method for understanding the evolution of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the National Park Service’s preservation practices therein.

Located along the Southern Appalachian mountain chain and occupying approximately 521,000 acres of land in western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park is most visited national park
in the United States. Although the natural attractions of the landscape create an illusion of untouched wilderness, the park was not chartered by Congress until 1934. Because the federal government did not assume ownership of the Park until that year, the region was inevitably marked by the influences of nineteenth and twentieth-century American development. Although the Smokies remained a relatively isolated mountain region, communities within the area developed small-scale agriculture systems and participated in the economies of surrounding cities.

The land experienced a significant transition in the early twentieth century. Drawing on newfound railroad and resource extraction technologies, large northern timber companies heavily logged the mountains’ old-growth forests from the 1900s to the mid-1920s.

At the same time, advancements in transportation and technology facilitated the tourism movement. Dismayed by increasing industrialization, citizens of the United States looked to the outdoors for respite, and they gained access to more remote regions of the country through rail and automobile transportation. As outdoor tourism grew in popularity throughout the United States, the National Park Service emerged as the federal government’s system for promoting and managing publicly owned lands. While the earliest parks were in the western United States, the National Park Service eventually turned to the east coast and the Southern Appalachian Mountains. The combination of heavy industrial deforestation with recognition of the economic and natural benefits of a national park led to a regional movement to establish a federally protected landscape in the Smokies in the 1920s.
and 1930s. One organization that promoted a national park in the Smokies was the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association, based in nearby Knoxville, Tennessee. In seeking a showpiece to represent the Smokies to visiting National Park Service officials, the GSMCA was responsible for the creation of a small lodge located on Mount LeConte. The LeConte Lodge successfully enchanted the Park committee, and has remained in operation since its first visitors stayed in a rudimentary cabin in 1925.

Because the Smokies were not federally protected as a natural landscape until the early twentieth century, the region still experienced centuries of structural development. While modern forms of wood-frame construction inevitably populated the communities, the majority of structures chosen for preservation after the Park was created represented antiquated log construction and pioneer culture. The LeConte Lodge stands in the minority of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park's structural heritage, as it stems from the twentieth century. The following thesis will expound upon the Lodge's history, charting its structural and managerial development, before connecting it with its surrounding architectural context. A thorough exploration of the LeConte Lodge will serve as a lens to generate a broader understanding of the development of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the preservation practices of the National Park Service.

After the introduction, the first chapter serves as a more nuanced exploration of the twentieth-century context of the Great Smoky Mountains. This historic background focuses on the region's cultural state prior to the Park's creation, and
the events that led to the full establishment of the Park in 1934. After an overview of the area’s history, the first chapter explores the historic preservation practices of the National Park Service within the Smokies. A general overview of the discipline’s development in the Smokies will provide context for later connections of the LeConte Lodge. Finally, the first chapter features a review of the existing scholarly literature regarding both the National Park Service’s treatment of historic structures and new construction and the specific history of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

The second chapter begins the LeConte Lodge’s historic narrative, with emphasis on the site’s structural and managerial evolution. The first period examined in Chapter Two explores the 1920s and 1930s at the Lodge, referred to throughout the thesis as the Lodge’s period of origins. This section documents and analyzes the Lodge’s initial development. The first cabins were built on Mount LeConte to provide lodging for Park boosters and regular tourists alike, and they are described and illustrated in this chapter. Further attention is also given to the early operators of the Lodge, and how the private business began to evolve within the framework of the National Park Service. The second portion of Chapter Two continues this exploration of the Lodge’s development through the 1960s. Throughout this period of development, the Lodge grew from two single-room cabins to a full resort complex of several lodge buildings, smaller cabins, and secondary structures. The Lodge’s management within the National Park Service also evolved, as the concept of private businesses operating as concessions to the
federal government became more complex. Throughout this chapter, historic photographs will provide illustrations for the structural history of the Lodge.

The third chapter explores the second half of the twentieth century at the LeConte Lodge. Responding to changes in the National Park Service’s overarching priorities, the Lodge experienced a period of challenging uncertainty in the 1970s and 1980s. The first portion of the third chapter will analyze the cultural and legal factors that influenced this period, and their influence on the Lodge’s structural state. The second portion of the third chapter focuses on the resolution of these issues, with an exploration of the Lodge as it has developed from the 1980s to the present day. Structural developments, new construction, and managerial changes to the Lodge are also highlighted throughout Chapter Three.

Finally, Chapter Four compliments the Lodge’s history and development with a full exploration of the present day LeConte Lodge. Drawing on first-hand experience with the site, Chapter Four documents the results of a full survey of each individual building. The Lodge’s prominent architectural styles are explored, with connections to the stylistic vocabulary of the surrounding region. Details of the buildings’ architectural styles generate an understanding of the different messages the structures intend to convey, alongside the cultural traditions they are aligned with, and how they all work together as a coherent whole. The fourth chapter also provides an analysis of the Lodge buildings’ existing conditions, in order to explore the maintenance priorities of the Lodge operators and the National Park Service. This chapter draws conclusions from the Lodge’s stylistic elements and physical
state to more fully understand the context in which it developed and the conditions that have determined its evolution. Chapter Four is complimented by Appendix A, which features the results of a thorough building survey performed in October of 2013.

The final portion of the thesis develops conclusions on the LeConte Lodge and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. These conclusions are informed by the research gathered on the LeConte Lodge’s overall narrative, its location within the framework of the National Park Service, its specific relationship with the surrounding national park, and the implications of its continued existence. These conclusions are also informed by the LeConte Lodge’s unique nature. Many complex factors make the LeConte Lodge distinct from the other historic structures of the Park, including its origins, its development as a completely private business, and its priorities related to use and development instead of historic preservation. These nuances are highlighted throughout the thesis, and drawn upon to make connections with the Park’s other historic resources. While the Lodge is clearly a special case, its very existence within the Park’s landscape makes it necessary to consider alongside the other structures designated as historic by the National Park Service. Although conclusions gleaned from the LeConte Lodge cannot necessarily be applied to other historic structures within the Smokies, an exploration of its history and contemporary state can generate substantial insight into the preservation priorities of the National Park Service.
CHAPTER TWO
HISTORIC CONTEXT AND EXISTING LITERATURE

Historic Context: the Great Smoky Mountains in the Twentieth Century

An exploration of the Great Smoky Mountains region at the transition between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is necessary to provide context for the development of recreational tourism and the LeConte Lodge. This chapter will begin with historic background of the aforementioned time period, and then turn to historic preservation tactics within the area. Finally, the literature review section serves as a compliment to this historic framework, providing an overview of the scholarly perspectives of the cultural dimensions of the park’s creation.

The Great Smoky Mountain region experienced a period of great cultural and economic transition at the turn of the twentieth century. Previously characterized by geographic isolation and small-scale agriculture, the area was quickly introduced to modern industrial practice as the commercial logging industry began operations in the area. After two decades of uncontested resource extraction, the timber companies met their adversary in the Tennessee and North Carolina communities interested in conserving the natural landscape and boosting area businesses through the creation of a federally ordained national park. Existing cultural factors, corporate interests, and the growing role of the federal government are primary elements of the narrative of the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
The Great Smoky Mountains in the nineteenth century served as a home to two distinct cultural groups, both maintaining a strong interdependence on the natural landscape. Having occupied the forests and valleys of the Southern Appalachian mountains for centuries, Cherokee Indians continued to reside in the region, despite government pressure to abandon their long-held cultural traditions. Farmers of English and European descent also formed small communities, coexisting with their Cherokee neighbors in a relatively peaceful manner, despite their history of conflicted relations. In 1900, approximately 7,000 people resided in nineteen mountain communities within the future national park’s boundaries.\(^1\) While Cherokee people and white farmers drew on different cultural traditions for hunting, farming, and subsistence, both groups directly interacted with the

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landscape, utilizing the natural environment as a tool for survival instead of aesthetic appreciation. The higher elevations of the mountains provided fishing, large game hunting, and locales for herding cattle and sheep. Forests of American chestnut and yellow poplar trees served as habitat for wild game and provided wood for regional construction projects, while mountain inhabitants benefited from the nutritional and medicinal properties of the forest’s countless plants. The coves and valleys in the Smoky Mountain watershed held fertile soil for agricultural pursuits. Several farmers in locations such as Cataloochee and Cades Cove maintained profitable corn, tobacco, and apple farms of more than four hundred acres, while the majority of families depended on small corn crops and vegetable gardens for everyday subsistence. While early accounts of Southern Appalachian culture romanticized mountain residents as isolated from contemporary society, further investigation has disproven this theory. The appearance of the logging industry at the turn of the twentieth century brought a stark transition to the Smoky Mountains. The rapidly growing presence of modern technology and outside corporations surpassed any level upon which mountain communities had previously interacted with contemporary urban society.

Although local residents and businesses had logged portions of the Smokies throughout the nineteenth century, the appearance of large-scale timber companies

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3 See Horace Kephart’s *Our Southern Highlanders* of 1913 for a less nuanced perspective of Southern Appalachian residents, where mountain people are depicted as a product of generations of geographical and cultural isolation.
brought an abrupt transition to the area forests. Several local mills, including the Mingus Mill in the Oconoluftee region and those in Cades Cove, were built before the corporate logging industry. These smaller mills, combined with an abundance of old-growth trees, had previously contributed to the increasing use of wood-frame construction in Smokies communities.\footnote{Daniel S. Pierce. \textit{The Great Smokies: From Natural Habitat to National Park}. Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 2000. Page 25.} However, the mills had inconsequential effects on the surrounding forests compared to what was to come. National attention was drawn to the mountains’ abundant resources at the turn of the twentieth century. On a national level, the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service was established in 1881, and renamed the Bureau of Forestry in 1901.\footnote{The Forest History Society. “Agency Organization.” \textit{U.S. Forest Service History}. Accessed January 8, 2014. www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Policy/Agency_Organization/index.aspx} Under the direction of Gifford Pinchot, foresters Horace B. Hayes and William W. Ashe surveyed the Southern Appalachian Mountains in 1901 for undisturbed timber resources. Hayes and Ashe estimated that ten billion board feet of log timber had been destroyed in land clearing, with five billion board feet used in local construction and only three billion entering the local markets.\footnote{Brown, \textit{The Wild East: A Biography of the Great Smoky Mountains}, 49.} Instead of interpreting the Smoky Mountains as a collection of old-growth trees, the Forest Service perceived the land as wealth of efficient, accessible resource extraction. The national press further promoted this notion. The 1901 Forest Service report garnered attention from lumber corporations operating primarily from the Northeastern United States. These large corporations utilized pricing advantages
and company consolidations to force out smaller operations. Writing about the involvement of the Forest Service in the Smokies’ initial lumber prospecting, scholar Margaret Lynn Brown argues, “by calculating the tremendous timber possibilities available at bargain-basinment prices, Ayres and Ashe probably helped promote the Smokies’ rapid industrial development.”7 While inexpensive land prices and the media’s depiction of the Southern Appalachian mountains as an untouched resource were important elements in the rise of industrial timbering, other circumstances were also involved.

Numerous cultural and economic factors led to the rise of industrial timbering in the Smoky Mountains. As lumber companies purchased inexpensive land from speculators and mountain people, they also benefitted from advancements in railroad technology to construct railways and tramlines. The railroads facilitated access to the most remote areas of the mountains, and encouraged involvement from other companies. Improvements in technology also facilitated mechanized extraction of trees, employing industrial sawmills and steam-powered cable-pulley systems, known as skidders, to bring logs to the railroad tracks.8 These systems could quickly transport old-growth spruce, chestnut, poplar, and oak trees from the mountainside to the railroads, with devastating effects on the surrounding forest. On a cultural level, a steady, non-unionized workforce of low-wage employees, drawn from the surrounding mountain communities and Cherokee

8 Pierce, The Great Smokies: From Natural Habitat to National Park, 28.
groups, was also integral to the lumber industry's involvement in the Great Smoky Mountains. The surrounding cities of Knoxville, Tennessee and Asheville, North Carolina welcomed the economic development, actively improving railroad connections to their cities and extending lines out to the mountains.

Such dramatic intervention with the land inevitably resulted in numerous consequences. By the 1920s, the Smokies had lost two-thirds of its original forest cover, with sixty percent of trees clear-cut.⁹ On an environmental level, countless major fires erupted in previously logged areas as a result of sparks from skidders or trains, contributing to the “most dramatic forest fires in [the area’s] history” in the 1920s and 1930s.¹⁰ Fires were followed by substantial floods and natural erosion, destroying wildlife habitat and natural plant growth. Cultural life in the Smoky Mountains was also strongly affected by the timber industry. Pre-existing agricultural communities grew strongly intertwined with their lumber company neighbors, exchanging food and livestock and receiving employment, which was frequently poorly compensated and unstable. Historian Ronald L. Lewis argues that the introduction of temporary industrial work and the loss of the old-growth forest “eliminated the means for traditional subsistence life.”¹¹ Another consequence of timber industry involvement in the Smokies relates to the research explored later in the thesis; as railroads were constructed to transport timber out of the mountains,

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they were also used to bring tourists into the region. As the tourist industry grew in popularity and profit, so did surrounding cities’ perspective on the mountains. While logging contributed numerous economic benefits to the region, it was slowly recognized as a short-term solution. In contrast, the natural beauty of the mountains, increasingly rare in the urbanized eastern United States, could draw tourist business into the future. This attitude, shared by conservationists and regional business interests, contributed directly to the push for the creation of a national park in the 1920s and 1930s.

Formal negotiations for the development of a national park along the Southern Appalachian mountain chain in Western North Carolina and East Tennessee began in 1924, when Tennessee businessmen met with National Park Service representatives to state their initial intentions. Local organizations, embodied by the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association (GSMCA), played an integral role in the grassroots drive for a national park. Based in Knoxville, Tennessee, the GSMCA was formed by members of local automobile clubs, area businessmen, and numerous real estate companies. Headed by director of the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce David C. Chapman, the GSMCA initiated a campaign of heavy media promotion and regional fund-raising. For the involved citizens of the region and the National Park Service alike, the late 1920s were a time of intense political and private debate, financial exchange, and concentrated advertising of the
potential benefits of a park. By 1927, park promoters had raised approximately one million dollars in private donations, complimented by two million dollars each from both North Carolina and Tennessee state governments. Because this was only half of the money needed to establish the park, the 1928 donation of five million dollars from John D. Rockefeller Jr. was necessary to make the park a reality. In human terms, the creation of the national park was also extremely problematic. It took more than twelve years to buy the 1,132 small farms and 18 large tracts that comprise the present-day park, and an estimated 5,665 people were forced to leave their homes. In February of 1930, Tennessee and North Carolina turned over approximately 152,176 acres to the federal government, one third of the park’s final size. The park was officially chartered by Congress in 1934, completed in February of 1938, and dedicated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1940.

While countless factors were involved in the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, substantial scholarly focus has been granted to the political and economic elements of the process. Less explored topics include the preservation and maintenance of historic structures within the park, and how those practices reflect the overall historic preservation priorities of the National Park Service. While an overview of preservation within the Smokies and the scholarly literature regarding this topic follows, the later chapters of this thesis intend to use

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12 For a full description of the complex political debates and financial exchanges involved in the creation of the GRSM, see Daniel Pierce’s 2001 The Great Smokies: From Habitat to National Park, an exploration of the human factors involved in the park’s founding.

the LeConte Lodge as a specific example through which to further explore this concept.

**Historic Preservation in the Smokies**

As it evolved through the 1920s and 1930s, the organization of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park was concurrent with the evolution of historic preservation as a concept and as a federal undertaking. Both concepts, the formation of the national park and the guiding ideologies of historic preservation, experienced numerous changes in their early stages. Within the specific context of the Great Smoky Mountains, historic preservation was a challenging concept to establish and sustain, due to numerous factors. Multiple involved parties, such as the federal government, local residents, and individual Park Service employees, had distinct ideas of what constituted a significant historic resource. These differing perspectives were made even more complex by the fact that the land within the park boundaries was home to many different iterations of material heritage, from log cabins representative of early Southern Appalachian frontier communities, to Cherokee culture, to twentieth-century frame structures built for the timber camps. When the park was created, these various structures were not considered to be permanent. In exploring the park’s future, various writers and campaigners espoused an inevitable view that the residents of the area would be relocated
outside the park and the wilderness would be fully restored. As Park Service officials and federal government agents coordinated on decisions regarding the park’s structural heritage over the following decades, historic preservation within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park has been characterized by two distinct views of the park’s purpose. On one hand, the park has been defined as a strong example of Southern Appalachian mountain culture. However, the inherent value of cultural heritage is countered by the nature of a national park as an area where natural resources are paramount. This dichotomy has characterized decisions regarding historic preservation in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, from its origins to the contemporary period.

The first two decades of the national park’s creation were defined by sustained government involvement, drastic changes to the mountains’ landscape, and decisive action regarding natural and historic resources. Generally, few individuals made the numerous decisions regarding which structures to keep and which to remove from the landscape, without the benefit of an overarching guideline. As certain buildings and sites were selected for preservation, Park Service officials often prioritized early frontier examples of log construction. Before the park was created, communities were defined by both log cabins and frame construction. However, the Park Service articulated a goal of “cultural harmonization,” where pioneer structures were prioritized over any other elements

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of the built environment. Landscape architects employed by the National Park Service identified that the removal of modern framed buildings, barbed wire fences, and the box houses that accompanied timber camps would add “human interest to scenic beauty” by drawing attention to the early log buildings. Contemporary frame structures were sold at public auction, and others were burnt to the ground. In January 1931, Park Superintendent J. Ross Eakin directed his rangers to “destroy all abandoned buildings unless they were outstanding examples of pioneer architecture.” Within nine months, a total of 339 buildings had been razed entirely. Eakin considered abandoned buildings to draw vandalism and vagrants, and burnt buildings could not be reoccupied by their evicted residents. In the spring of 1932, National Park Service Director Horace Albright and his successor Arno Cammerer began to question whether more historic structures should be preserved in the Smokies, especially log cabins that were “put together by dovetailing rather than by use of nails.” As a result, Superintendent Eakin was required to inspect each log building personally before permitting it to be destroyed, keeping “only the best examples of pioneer architecture.” However, Eakin could continue to raze the frame structures he considered to be lacking in historic significance.

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19 Quote originates from a 1930 letter from Arno Cammerer to David Chapman, as cited in Pierce, *The Great Smokies: From Natural Habitat to National Park*, 177.
Superintendent J. Ross Eakin’s idea of historic significance as solely connected to construction techniques is limited by contemporary preservation standards. The contemporary criteria for evaluation of historic sites and structures are outlined by the U.S. Department of the Interior and the National Park Service for the National Register of Historic Places. Significance can stem from such a representation of architectural styles or techniques, potential archaeological resources, or association with specific historic events, and persons.\(^{20}\) However, these contributors to a site’s significance must be complimented by a more subjective concept: “integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association.”\(^{21}\) As Eakin and other National Park Service officials isolated specific architectural examples as significant to the Smokies, they consequently compromised each site’s integrity by removing its surrounding context. The log cabins, mills, and cantilever barns had existed only as part of functioning communities, supported and sustained by activities performed in less significant structures. However, the National Park Service’s attitudes towards historic structures in the early 1930s were characterized by rushed decisions and a need for immediate action. By eliminating all but the most important structures, the government could prevent people from moving back into the park or squatting in the houses.\(^{22}\) The desire to quickly clean up the landscape within the park motivated narrow conceptions of historic significance.  


\(^{21}\) Ibid.

\(^{22}\) Pierce, *The Great Smokies: From Natural Habitat to National Park*, 177.
The later portion of the 1930s served as the National Park Service’s initial attempts to reconcile the cultural heritage of the area with the constraints of the new park.

The early push towards historic preservation in the Smokies began in the mid-1930s, when a museum committee met to organize branch museums and coherent groups of historic buildings in various locations of the park. This museum committee was followed by a 1935 survey by naturalist Charles Grossman, who studied the buildings within the park to document the most valuable remaining architectural examples. By the end of 1935, 1,427 structures were inventoried, with 499 being log buildings and the remnants as frame or prefabricated structures from the modern period. In 1938, Grossman and naturalist Arthur Stupka formed the Mountain Culture Program. By 1943, this organization inspected over 1,700 buildings, documenting six structures to the standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey, and fully restoring twelve log buildings. One example was the Oconaluftee Pioneer Village, where Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) workers were employed to remove log structures from various locations and reassemble them to represent a typical mountain farm. The Mingus Mill, located on the Oconaluftee site, was reconstructed by CCC employees in 1936. Around the mill, they “demolished any modern homes and replaced them with more primitive alternatives.” While this was an extreme example of early reconstruction tactics, such actions created

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the impression that Smokies communities had remained isolated in their pioneer heritage until the twentieth century. Grossman also attempted to create a plan for the park's historic resources, aided by a National Park Service museum curator and H.C. Wilburn, a CCC engineer. The curator developed a plan that called for the collection and preservation of historic artifacts, and Wilburn collected over one thousand historic tools and utensils from the vacated homesteads. Grossman and Wilburn also promoted a collection of oral histories from the area, so as to add historic basis to the National Park Service's future interpretation programs. While these steps represented a first effort towards conserving cultural heritage, historic preservation in the first period of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park was characterized by a lack of financial funding, a prioritization of natural over historic resources, and a lack of an overarching program. While park officials recognized the importance of log structures, no attention whatsoever was paid to more modern structures. Early preservation within the park was lacking in the all-encompassing tactics crucial to contemporary historic preservation, but Smoky Mountains preservation was consistent with its with the context of the discipline's overall development.

Throughout the early twentieth century, historic preservation in the United States was characterized by smaller-scale practices, facilitated by mostly private financial support. House museums, similar to the ones organized at the Oconaluftee Pioneer Village, were a prevalent tactic. Preservationists were inclined towards the

\[26 \text{ Brown, The Wild East: A Biography of the Great Smoky Mountains, 133.}\]
practices of reconstruction instead of employing more encompassing perspectives of historic significance. Preservation tactics were also influenced by the specific demands of each region and guiding authority, lacking in an overarching guideline for accepted practices throughout the country. Major official guidelines for preservation were not outlined by the federal government until October of 1966, when the Senate passed the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The NHPA established several institutions tasked with enforcing historic preservation practices on federal and state levels, including State Historic Preservation Offices, the National Register of Historic Places, and a national advisory council. The NHPA served as an impetus for historic preservation’s development throughout all branches of the federal government, including within the national parks.

After the NHPA was passed in 1966, historic preservation moved closer to the forefront of the federal government’s priorities. The Act initiated a new period of preservation practices within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, but the inherent challenges were also immediately recognized. As the National Park Service developed a new General Management Plan in the late 1970s and early 1980s, they implemented several direct references to historic preservation. In the Management Objectives from 1977-1978 preceding the creation of the General Management Plan, the National Park Service articulated several of the obstacles in initiating cohesive historic preservation practices. Within the park, influences on management of cultural resources included “short supplies of money and manpower, limited
availability of technical skills, and the effect of natural forces.”27 Park Service officials also cited physical and anthropogenic mechanisms of decay as threats to historic structures. The specific complexities of the Smoky Mountains region were also explored in these management objectives, fully recognizing the conflict between natural and historic resources. While the preservation demands of the NHPA were applicable to all parks, there were “few if any places in which they more clearly bear the seeds of conflict than in the Smokies.”28 Although the park’s designated historic areas attempted to preserve the landscape’s integrity, they were countered by an avoidance of “impairment of key natural resources.”29 These challenges could only be met by a coherent preservation narrative, combining interpretation, public education, and law enforcement programs.

The General Management Plan of 1981 stood as a strong attempt to clearly articulate historic preservation values in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The National Park Service created two different types of historic management areas. Historic Preservation Subzones were areas devoted to structural preservation and interpretation, and Historic Land Management Zones are areas farmed before the park’s establishment and maintained as pastoral scenes.30 Selected specifically for their associations with “pioneer life, such as log residences, churches, schools, and

barns,” the historic preservation and historic land areas were small areas where cultural heritage was prioritized over natural conservation.\textsuperscript{31} As of 1981, Historic Preservation Subzones occupied 450 acres, or 0.1% of the park’s overall land. Historic Landscape Management Subzones comprised 1.1% of the park, with 5,727 acres.\textsuperscript{32} The standards that defined preference of one area over another were outlined by another federal government undertaking, the National Register of Historic Places. Historic areas with features that did not qualify for the Register were classified as less significant and allowed to be “reclaimed by natural processes.”\textsuperscript{33} While the 1981 General Management Plan for the park represented an outward attempt at a historic preservation program, it still left opportunities for the loss of many historic sites.

Historic preservation within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park has evolved greatly since the park’s creation in the 1930s. While early preservation practices placed a strong emphasis on pioneer culture, both in written and verbal articulations and in practice, less attention has been paid to more modern elements of the park’s history. Park Service officials have preferred log buildings to other methods of construction, despite log being in the minority of the park’s structural examples. This preference has transferred into the overall building vocabulary of the park; new structures, whether built for visitor services or as concessions, mimic

the structures that were selectively maintained. New structures are designed for stylistic continuity, with influence drawn from an idealized section of the Park’s built history. Stylistic features that compliment this perspective are visible throughout concessions buildings, visitor centers, and residential quarters, including shingled roofs, log construction, and stone chimneys. Later in the twentieth century, as historic preservation developed in the national consciousness and as a responsibility of the federal government, preservation became fully articulated as a part of the management plans of the 1970s and 1980s. However, alongside the recognition of preservation as a priority was recognition of the numerous challenges inherent in its application. Whether at the time of the park’s creation or in the late twentieth century, preservation in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park has been characterized by a strong dichotomy between natural resources and cultural heritage. Through active practices and legal prescriptions, the National Park Service has consistently struggled to balance the two values in historic preservation campaigns.

**Literature Review**

Charged with management of both cultural and natural resources within their lands, the National Park Service has worked to balance a diverse array of priorities since its origins in the early twentieth century. This challenge can be explored on general terms, by analyzing the National Park Service’s structural preservation practices and new construction, and through more specific examples.
Officially created in 1934, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park is an interesting case study within the overall park system. Because the region was not protected by the federal government until the 1930s, the Smokies experienced the development of modern agriculture, residential communities, and the timber industry. When the National Park Service assumed control of the land, the organization was also forced to reckon with the human and material vestiges of such contemporary development. To allow for a more thorough exploration of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, this literature review will begin with a brief overview of the National Park Service's development. It is also necessary to examine the literature regarding the organization's attitudes and practices towards both structural preservation and new construction within the parks. Finally, the scholarly discourse surrounding the Great Smoky Mountains National Park will provide context for the following thesis's discussion of the LeConte Lodge as a representation of the National Park Service's preservation practices.

The creation of the National Park Service was a lasting manifestation of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century tourism movement that spread throughout the United States. Tourism served an integral role in providing access to, and stimulating interest in, the national parks. All levels of society demonstrated marked interest in the nascent national parks: railroad corporations in the West managed the sites and advertised rustic hotels, newly created roads facilitated increasing automobile access, and outdoor recreation groups took advantage of the natural resources. In a similar fashion, commercial groups, private citizens, and
local and state governments were involved in the organization of the country's national parks. Yellowstone National Park was created in 1872, and after a twenty-year hiatus, the turn of the century featured the creation of ten new national parks and their consolidation under an official branch of government in 1916. As Marguerite Shaffer describes in *See America First: Tourism and National Identity, 1880-1940* of 2001, the first two decades of the twentieth century saw the national parks transformed from “a collection of independent scenic wonders” to a “system of nationalized tourist attractions, overseen by an official, independent government bureau.” In assuming management of the diverse national parks, the federal government took on a set of complex responsibilities. While obligated to conserve the natural resources of the parks, the National Park Service is also expected to make them accessible for visitors into perpetuity. The expectation that the government must facilitate access to the parks’ resources, through both physical and educational means, is balanced by the requirement that such practices “leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.” This juxtaposition was made more difficult by the wealth of historic resources and physical structures already existing within the areas now owned and managed by the federal government. Driven by the motivation to facilitate access and enjoyment for generations of Americans, the National Park Service has assumed an active, yet

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complex role regarding its national parks. The government’s intervention also influences decisions towards structures and historic resources within the parks, and their practices in historic preservation in general. Academic exploration of the National Park Service’s treatment of physical structures and historic resources within the parks varies depending on scholarly context and motivations for the study.

Tasked with intense expectations relating to natural conservation and public access, it is inevitable that the National Park Service would frequently permit the treatment of physical structures to be less of a priority. Two categories of physical structures exist within the national parks: those that pre-date the parks’ creations, and those that were constructed by the government or outside concessionaires for intentional use by the National Park Service. Whether due to political motivations or lack of strong research, scholarly literature only grants a limited view of structures that existed within national parks before the government’s ownership of the land. This lack of documentation is also compounded by the fact that pre-existing construction and communities were more prominent in some park regions than others; parks in the West, established earlier and featuring more rugged landscapes, were less developed and settled than those in the Eastern United States. Due to the multitudes of established communities that pre-date the park, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park is one park that is frequently discussed in terms of the National Park Service’s treatment of pre-existing structures. This literature will be further explored in the following sections.
On the other hand, much analysis has been focused on new construction within the national parks. The study of newer structures is relevant to this discussion, as they attempted to utilize similar architectural styles, building techniques, and historic foundations as those they encountered within the park. As Ethan Carr explores in *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma* of 2007, developed areas of the national parks were the result of two periods of modernization and construction overseen by the National Park Service. In the 1920s, Congress began making generous appropriations for the development of public facilities in national parks. The execution of this plan was furthered as a result of the Great Depression, by the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps. The second wave occurred in the 1950s, as a post-war era of development entitled “Mission 66” intended to modernize the park system by its fifty-year anniversary in 1966. Carr argues that both campaigns of construction resulted from substantial increases in heavy public use of the park system.\(^{36}\) Lacking the benefit of decades of retrospection, R.G. Ironside still agrees with Carr on the necessity for carefully planned development of structures in national parks in “Private Development in National Parks: Residential and Commercial Facilities in the National Parks of North America” of 1970. Ironside states that without visitor services provided by the national parks, landscapes based on tourist conveniences will arise outside of the

natural areas as a “garish clash with scenic surroundings.” Ironside describes heavily commercial Gatlinburg, Tennessee as a clear example of the incongruous settlements that develop outside of park gates, resulting from the National Park Service’s 1940 decision to not provide overnight accommodation within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Whatever the intention for construction, the National Park Service maintained an attentive perspective to the aesthetics of its new buildings within the parks. In a 1998 landscape study commissioned by the National Park Service entitled *Wilderness by Design: Landscape Architecture and the National Park Service*, Ethan Carr articulates the active role the National Park Service occupied in making such decisions. The National Park Service chose to utilize physical structures and landscape design to shape the pattern of public activities, frame visual encounters with scenery, and choreograph the visitors’ enjoyment of the park. Specific natural or cultural elements of the area were selected as significant or appealing, and tourists were guided in those directions by signage, roads, and visitor centers. Writing also with the support of the National Park Service in *Building the National Parks: Historic Landscape Design and Construction* (1998), Linda McClelland also emphasizes the active decisions made with regards to design and construction. Not only did new construction serve to guide visitors to specific experiences, but it was

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also modified to adapt to specific surroundings. Structures within parks, including entrance stations, administration buildings, and museums, were constructed with “principles of informality and naturalism, and above all harmony with the specific characteristics of each location.” Both Carr and McClelland wrote their studies with the financial and ideological support of the National Park Service, so they maintain relatively accepting perspectives about the government’s decisions within the parks. While they laud the aesthetic harmony of rustic park construction, they neglect to mention any structures that previously existed within the park. However, studies of the new structures remain relevant, as their distinctive architectural styles serve as a highly idealized mirror of what historic styles and techniques the National Park Service considered significant from each park area.

It is important to also explore the scholarly conversation regarding the National Park Service’s treatment of historic resources within the parks. While the National Park Service has taken a strongly active role in decisions about landscape design and new construction, historic resources have often been neglected. Numerous scholars lament the state of historic resources in areas prized for natural beauty. In “Cultural Resource Management in Natural Areas of the National Park System” of 1987, Stephanie Toothman details numerous bureaucratic issues that lead to irresponsible management of historic resources. Toothman states that the National Park Service creates a theme of common significance for each park, and

when historic resources in the area lie outside of that theme, they are neglected. She also articulates the lack of a park-specific congressional mandate for managing cultural resources, low budget priorities for historic interpretation, and a lack of staff to fulfill duties.\footnote{Stephanie S. Toothman. “Cultural Resource Management in Natural Areas of the National Park System.” The Public Historian 9, no. 2 (Spring 1987): 64–76.} Also writing in 1987 in “Technology, Preservation Policy, and the National Park Service,” Ray Williamson states that although interpretation programs previously focused on environment and natural history, cultural matters in the parks have gained importance in recent years.\footnote{Ray A. Williamson. “Technology, Preservation Policy, and the National Park Service.” The Public Historian 9, no. 2 (Spring 1987): 118–124.} In “The National Park Service Moves into Historical Interpretation” of 1987, Barry Mackintosh further explores this transition to historic interpretation. Before the 1930s, the National Park Service was almost entirely concerned with preserving natural areas, until Horace Albright, director from 1929-1933, made historic areas a major priority. A consistent problem in historic park areas was that they often maintained little resemblance to the way they had appeared in their historic periods. Numerous features had been removed and nature had been allowed to re-take the land, and the National Park Service debated often about whether altered sites should be restored or reconstructed. Mackintosh argues that the sole responsibility of the government in these situations is faithful interpretation, avoiding the “local public and political pressure behind particular sites” that prioritize imbalanced perspectives.\footnote{Barry Mackintosh. “The National Park Service Moves into Historical Interpretation.” The Public Historian 9, no. 2 (Spring 1987): 50–63.} In 2001’s \textit{Wilderness in the National Parks}, John Miles acknowledges the progress made
since Mackintosh wrote in the late 1980s. Miles recognizes that national parks experience constantly evolving natural and cultural contexts, and the government’s decisions have shifted in response to these demands. While early in the development of national parks, natural features took a high priority, “the mission of preservation was [later] extended to the historical legacies” that existed within the boundaries.\textsuperscript{43} As a more contemporary researcher, Miles recognizes that national parks have responded to different obligations and expectations over the decades. However, the literature regarding historic resources in national parks as a whole fails to fully acknowledge the revisionist effects that the National Park Service’s decisions in new construction and historic preservation have had on the land. The following exploration of the scholarly literature regarding the treatment of the historic narrative and representative resources within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park intends to provide a specific portrayal of the highly nuanced role the National Park Service has assumed.

One national park that clearly represents the active role of the National Park Service is the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The scholarly analysis of the creation and development of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park explores two main factors: the people involved in the process of the park’s creation, and those displaced by the government’s taking of the land. More time and distance from the park’s original creation has lent to a more nuanced analysis of the park’s

history. Writing in the early twentieth century, Laura Thornborough and Carlos Campbell’s accounts of the park’s creation employ a general focus, while contemporary writers Daniel Pierce and Margaret Lynn Brown utilize a more complex perspective. The literature regarding the Great Smoky Mountains National Park has transitioned from a focus on the supposed heroes of the story to an increasing recognition of other factors, such as the communities removed from the land. An exploration of this transition will offer specific examples of the National Park Service’s active role in creating and manipulating a historic narrative.

Early scholarly literature regarding the history of the Great Smoky Mountains and the creation of the national park is narrow in scope. In describing the origins of the national park, historians initially placed a strong emphasis on the role of the federal government and private citizens who contributed ideological and financial support, instead of providing a full portrayal of the existing context of the region. In *The Great Smoky Mountains* of 1937, Laura Thornborough makes the first attempt at a history of the region after the creation of the national park. While Thornborough does demonstrate sound research of certain aspects of the area, her historic narrative neglects numerous factors. In describing lumber companies’ intervention with the land in the early twentieth-century, Thornborough highlights the previously explored connection between railroad technologies and access to previously isolated areas. Timber companies such as the Little River Lumber Company extended existing rail lines from nearby counties into the heart of the mountains, and passenger cars were added to lumber trains to facilitate tourist
access. The lumber trains were integral in bringing the “very best citizens of Knoxville” to mountain landscapes, and residents of nearby cities eventually organized exclusive outdoor recreation clubs such as the Appalachian Club, the Wonderland Hotel, and the resort cabins in Elkmont. Thornborough also explores the transition between train and automobile travel in the Great Smoky Mountains; in heavily visited areas such as Elkmont, where rail lines brought early travelers, roads inevitably followed in the 1910s and 1920s. In engaging in an initial study of the Great Smoky Mountains, Thornborough focused on the immediate factors that led to the park’s creation instead of a full array of involved factors. However, it must be noted that Thornborough was a female, writing in an early period of the region’s history, and her inevitable bias was most likely influenced by her presence as a minority.

In 1960, Carlos Campbell expounded upon Thornborough’s early efforts in *Birth of a National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains*. Campbell served as the secretary of the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association for numerous years and consequently, he was heavily involved in the regional organization most responsible for the park’s creation. Therefore, Campbell demonstrates an inevitable bias towards the work of those who contributed to the national park effort. Because Campbell spent decades embroiled in the painstaking fundraising and dramatic political conflicts between area citizens and the federal government, he emphasizes

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that the existence of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park should not be taken for granted. Instead, the national park should be recognized as a result of “a very large sum of hard-to-get money and a prodigious amount of work in overcoming an amazing number of obstacles.”

Campbell outwardly states the source of many of his claims in the book; to construct the narrative of the debates and decisions that contributed to the park’s creation, he utilized journals and scrapbooks created by the East Tennessee Automobile Club and the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association. Therefore, the perspective of regional commercial organizations plays a prominent role in Campbell’s narrative.

In 1966, Michael Frome’s Strangers in High Places: The Story of the Great Smoky Mountains initiates the transition towards a more encompassing perspective of the area’s story. While Frome still argues that the “ultimate outcome was a victory for all the people,” he begins to acknowledge the existence of varying perspectives on the government’s assumption of land ownership. Similar to both Thornborough and Campbell’s analyses, Frome also places a strong emphasis on the role of lumber companies and area businessmen in the park’s development. An entirely different set of problems existed in creating a national park in the Eastern United States than in the West; the Great Smoky Mountains were completely controlled by private owners, in no less than 6,600 separate tracts. Eighteen timber

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46 Campbell, Birth of a National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains, 1.
companies owned eighty-five percent of the area’s total acreage, and the remaining fifteen percent was divided among 1,200 farms of various sizes in the valleys and 5,000 summer tourist homesites. By articulating these complex factors, Frome emphasizes the various hurdles the federal government was forced to negotiate in creating the park. Frome’s work stands as a transition point between the literature on the Great Smoky Mountains National Park; while he certainly focuses strongly on the government and commercial forces at work, he at least mentions the issue of those citizens who occupied the land.

One element of the Great Smoky Mountains’ story that has been increasingly explored in scholarly literature is the issue of those residents removed from the region for the park’s creation. As Frome recognized in 1966, the area in the Great Smoky Mountains selected for the national park was entirely privately owned. Therefore, to assume ownership of the land, the “Park Commission faced the forbidding job of surveying, mapping, appraising, and negotiating the purchase of more than 6,200 separate tracts” in Tennessee alone. While park boosters and government officials claimed frequently in the early 1920s that no resident would be forcibly removed from the land, it soon became clear that human beings would not inhabit the national park on a permanent basis. Between 1926 and 1930, the Great Smoky Mountains saw a process of purchase and condemnation of homes, farms, and businesses that Daniel Pierce referred to as “one of the most contentious,

48 Frome, Strangers in High Places, 175.
49 Frome, Strangers in High Places, 195.
controversial, and unpleasant aspects of the park's creation.”\textsuperscript{50} These landowners, primarily residing in nine to ten communities based on small-scale agriculture, were initially overlooked and neglected by scholars of the region. When they were mentioned, such as in Horace Kephart's landmark of 1913, \textit{Our Southern Highlanders}, mountain culture was portrayed as dramatically isolated from twentieth-century society.\textsuperscript{51} Due to mountain residents' purported distance from modern technology and an assumed devaluation of their culture, the coming of a national park was articulated as a benefit. In \textit{The Great Smoky Mountains} of 1937, Laura Thornborough stated that removal from the park was an opportunity for local farmers, who could then afford larger amounts of land closer to big cities.\textsuperscript{52} Even thirty years later, Carlos Campbell avoids recognizing the negative factors regarding the displacement of people, stating that the park's creation "unavoidably [imposed] on a few for a benefit to the whole public."\textsuperscript{53} These early researchers of the Great Smoky Mountains did not benefit from the intellectual tradition characteristic of contemporary scholarship, which now encourages a nuanced perspective of the multitudes of cultural factors involved in any occurrence. Later iterations of scholarship on the Great Smoky Mountains National Park allow for a more cohesive, encompassing perspective on area's history.

\textsuperscript{51} Horace Kephart. \textit{Our Southern Highlanders}. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1913.
\textsuperscript{52} Thornborough, \textit{The Great Smoky Mountains}, 10.
\textsuperscript{53} Campbell, \textit{Birth of a National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains}, 63.
The end of the twentieth century and the ensuing decades have seen resurgence in more complex research on the Great Smoky Mountains. In her 1992 article “Captains of Tourism: Selling a National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains,” Margaret Lynn Brown takes a groundbreaking step in acknowledging the less savory aspects of national park creation.\textsuperscript{54} Instead of portraying Campbell and the other members of the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association as champions of environmentalism, Brown classifies them as captains of tourism: ambitious upper-middle class residents of Knoxville and Asheville who valued governmental and economic expansion. The wealth inherent in those pushing for the park’s creation was strongly contradicted by the mountain residents, who were “repeatedly lied to” about their inevitable removal.\textsuperscript{55} Brown claims that not only were Smoky Mountain residents lied to, but also promotional campaigns even attempted to minimize the fact that humans lived within the proposed park’s boundaries.

This perspective is further explored in Michael Williams’s article “Vernacular Architecture and the Park Removals: Traditionalization as Justification and Resistance” of 2001. Williams states that the Great Smoky Mountains saw the

\textsuperscript{54} The aforementioned journal article was a precursor to Brown’s \textit{The Wild East: A Biography of the Great Smoky Mountains}, published in 2001. This book stands out as a contemporary, historically accurate portrayal of the social, political, and environmental changes in the region in the nineteenth and twentieth centurieless. Brown goes so far as to conclude that the Great Smoky Mountains are an entirely re-constructed wilderness landscape, a product of strong government manipulation of the land.

“largest removal of a local population for a park in United States history,” and the National Park Service made it their mission to reinvent the wilderness for which they had assumed responsibility, removing the cultural traces that distracted from natural scenes.56 Williams is one of the few scholars to even mention the concept of structural preservation in the national park. While a researcher named Dr. Hans Huth produced an investigative report on the preservation of mountain culture within the national park in 1941, an interpretive plan for the still-existing structures did not emerge in the Smokies until the 1950s. By that point, most of the modern structures had been removed, including “most of the ‘pretentious frame’ houses, all the boxed houses, most of the industrial and commercial structures, and virtually all remnants of the twentieth century.”57 Little research has been performed on the tactics of historic preservation enacted by the National Park Service within the Smokies, and Williams emphasizes the highly stylized, “radically edited” nature of the mountain culture as portrayed to date.58 That which did not contribute to a narrative of isolated people, subsisting on small-scale agriculture and antiquated traditions was removed, “just as the individuals [were] themselves.”59

In *The Great Smokies: From Natural Habitat to National Park* of 2000, Daniel Pierce employs a similarly detailed tactic in analyzing the subject. Pierce occupies a

57 Williams, “Vernacular Architecture and the Park Removals,” 36.
58 Williams, “Vernacular Architecture and the Park Removals,” 40.
59 Williams, “Vernacular Architecture and the Park Removals,” 40.
more holistic, less critical stance than Williams and Brown, expressing an intent to focus on all of the citizens behind the national park movement in the 1920s and 1930s, from the environmentalists, to the businessmen, to the “tragic tale of the thousands of individuals who called the Smokies home.” However, Pierce attempts to de-romanticize the portrayal of the mountain residents, stating that recent studies have overdramatized the process of removals. Pierce argues that the depiction of “the mountain folk as the story of a people violently ejected from their tranquil, preindustrial existence” is not necessarily factual. His work provides anecdotal evidence and population statistics to illustrate the decreasing viability of life in the Great Smoky Mountains by the time the National Park Service became involved. The academic conversation on the Great Smoky Mountains has prioritized numerous elements of the region’s story over time, but discourse has grown increasingly nuanced and multi-faceted with more distance from the park’s creation. Despite the many iterations of the Great Smoky Mountains’ story provided by scholarly literature, the fact remains that the National Park Service occupied the land through means of active intervention with the natural, historic, and cultural resources of the land.

The aforementioned topics, the building practices and preservation decisions of the National Park Service and the specific example of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, are entirely interrelated. In the discourse surrounding the National

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Park Service, scholars have clearly emphasized the government agency’s requirement to act within their spheres with a heavy, decisive hand. Instead of passively accepting the existing conditions of structures within the parks, the National Park Service has asserted its control through many manifestations. However, the literature on the National Park Service focuses significantly on the natural elements of the parks, including conservation efforts and landscape design practices. There is a serious lack of literature regarding the organization’s historic preservation practices, especially with regards to structures. Whether the National Park Service has served as a standard for historic preservation within its own lands can still be debated, and should be explored further using specific examples from national parks in both the Eastern United States and the West.

Scholarship regarding the Great Smoky Mountains National Park has also developed in detail and cohesion over the last few decades. The region was originally described as home to an isolated culture of Appalachians, opened to modern society by the environmentally motivated efforts of regional businessmen and politicians, but this perspective has evolved over time. To date, the Great Smoky Mountains can be analyzed as an area greatly affected by trends of tourism, the government actions of the National Park Service, and the specific cultural elements of the region. After examining the scholarly conversation regarding both the National Park Service’s preservation practices and the historiography involved in one specific park, it is clear that further research connecting the two topics will generate interesting conclusions.
CHAPTER THREE
THE LECONTE LODGE IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

1920s to 1930s: The Lodge’s Period of Origins

The LeConte Lodge is named for its location on Mount LeConte, a peak 6,612 feet above sea level on the Southern Appalachian mountain chain. Mount LeConte is “often depicted as an anomaly, an outpost of the Appalachian chain,” standing approximately five miles northwest of the main spine of the Smoky Mountains.\(^1\) The mountain’s summit consists of a short ridge extending from Myrtle Point to West Point, which runs parallel to the main divide of the Smoky Mountains. Mount LeConte is connected to the main divide by a steep ridge known as the Boulevard, home to one of the six trails that lead to the contemporary Lodge.

Figure 3.1: Map of Mount LeConte and trails leading to the site. (National Park Service, http://www.nps.gov/grsm)

Mount LeConte was a familiar landmark to the Cherokee Indians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially those who settled in the flat plains south of the Smokies, in the direct shadow of Mount LeConte. The mountain was even given a Cherokee name, although Mount LeConte does not appear frequently in Cherokee myths. By the late eighteenth century, settlers of small groups of Scotch Irish, German, and English settlers had gained full access to the highland mountains of the Southern Appalachian region after a series of treaties with the Cherokees. This initiated a pattern of exploration of the higher mountains, first for fur trapping and big game hunting, and later for scientific explorations. By the middle of the nineteenth century, various scientists on expeditions had explored Mount LeConte. Geologist Arnold Henry Guyot, the namesake for another tall peak in the Smokies, was the first scientist to accurately measure the mountain, and the peak was named for John LeConte, a scientist who assisted in the measurement of a nearby mountain called Clingman’s Dome.\(^2\) From this period of exploration until the beginnings of the national park movement in the 1920s, few people visited Mount LeConte. Interactions with the mountain were limited to solitary hikers, mountain residents and regional visitors on hunting trips, and students seeking nature. However, as tourism in the Smokies grew in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Mount LeConte’s panoramic views of the surrounding mountains, challenging routes of access, and interesting flora and fauna began to draw visitors.

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\(^2\) Wise and Peterson, *A Natural History of Mount LeConte*, xxiv.
At the turn of the twentieth century, Mount LeConte was part of a greater portion of the Southern Appalachian region owned by the Champion Fibre Company. Based in North Carolina, the corporation owned 92,800 acres, or almost one-fifth of the present day national park’s boundaries. Despite maintaining full rights to the timber and mineral resources on Mount LeConte, Champion neither extracted any lumber nor constructed any lasting structures on the mountain. While the rights to Mount LeConte’s ownership and management are clearly documented by Champion Fibre Company, details surrounding the earliest structures built on the mountain are less clear. The earliest recorded permanent human structure found on Mount LeConte is described by Smoky Mountain historian Kenneth Wise as a “hunter’s crude lean-to” built near a spring on the slope below Cliff Top, a rocky outcropping at the summit of Mount LeConte. This structure, using material from the surrounding trees, was possibly constructed for hunters’ overnight stays or for area men hired to improve a nearby trail, during the period of Champion’s land ownership. While searching for a freshwater spring, Paul Adams found the dilapidated remains of this structure in July of 1925, and wrote that he had encountered a similar lean-to on his first trip up to Mount LeConte in 1918. Writing in retrospect, Wise clarifies the existence of these two structures by stating that at least two cabins were constructed on Mount LeConte between Adams’s 1918 visit and his pivotal trips in 1925, including the aforementioned

4 Wise and Peterson, *A Natural History of Mount LeConte*, 115.
rudimentary lean-to and an eight foot by six foot cabin constructed in 1921 by two regional hunters and outdoorsmen. No photographs, drawings, or documentation exists of either of these structures beyond vague descriptions in Paul Adams’s diaries. However, the first structures to populate Mount LeConte in the early twentieth century initiated a long tradition of using materials from the surrounding environment and employing simple, rustic construction methods. Paul Adams would adapt similar tactics for the first structures of the LeConte Lodge in 1925.

The LeConte Lodge originated during the pivotal period of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park’s creation. While the federal government and regional businesses were integral to the park boosting effort, several prominent citizens also played important roles. Without the impassioned involvement of Paul Adams, the LeConte Lodge would not have been created as a showpiece for the potential national park. Paul Adams was a graduate student at the University of Tennessee, passionate about the Smokies and as familiar with the mountains “as the postman knew the streets of nearby Knoxville.”

In August of 1924, Adams was invited to attend a meeting of the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association (GSMCA). Area businessmen, members of local automobile clubs, and the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce founded this organization in 1923. David C. Chapman, previous director of the Chamber of Commerce, was elected president soon after. The

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GSMCA assumed a guiding role in the initial drive to establish the Southeast’s first national park in the Smokies, serving as delegates for visiting federal government officials from the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission. While the Shenandoah National Park preceded the Smokies as the first federally authorized national park in the Southeast, the Park Commission remained interested in the Smokies. Through the “dogged persistence” of both individual citizens such as Adams and organizations like the GSMCA, the Park Committee members visited the Smokies multiple times through the 1920s, and “Mount LeConte was always the overnight objective of these visits.”

The three trips to Mount LeConte served as the primary tangible pitch in the campaign to establish a park in the Great Smoky Mountains.

Paul Adams guided the first excursion up Mount LeConte. “Charged with promoting the location as a park site,” Adams led twenty-four men up the mountain in August 1924, including two members of the Park Commission, several GSMCA representatives, and members of the local press. The group spent one night at the Mountain View Hotel in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, and then hiked up Mount LeConte to view a panoramic sunrise. The enthusiastic response to the first organized visit prompted Chapman and other GSMCA leaders to establish a permanent camp on the mountaintop, although the land was still technically owned by the Champion Fibre Company. The next summer, the GSMCA designated Paul Adams as the property

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manager and guiding force in the first lodge's development. A July 11th, 1925 letter from David C. Chapman serves as the first written documentation of Paul Adams’s involvement in the LeConte Lodge project. In conjunction with the Champion Fibre Company, Paul Adams was named custodian of the upper portion of Mount LeConte, working to “make the visitors more comfortable.” The letter also first establishes the camp as a business, allowing Adams to charge a reasonable fee to visitors. With financial assistance secured and the full support of the GSMCA pledged, Adams began his process of constructing the first cabin of the LeConte Lodge.

In early July 1925, Paul Adams, David Chapman, and another Knoxville resident named Will Ramsey made an initial trip up Mount LeConte in search of a water source. The present day lodge’s location was selected due to its proximity to a spring, and the men returned on July 13th with supplies to construct the first campsite. Adams and Ramsey hiked up the mountain with a six-foot saw, an axe, and a large sledgehammer, and surveyed the surrounding natural resources for building materials. Similar to the rudimentary lean-tos previously observed on the mountain, Adams elected to use basic materials from surrounding trees to create the first lodging. Adams and Ramsey cut two small spruce trees for use as tent poles and constructed a seven-foot by fourteen-foot bunk bed frame out of balsam logs. The bedframe fit within the tent, raising the mattresses made out of branches and pine boughs slightly off the ground. They covered the bedframe with fern leaves.

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and briers and topped the entire structure with a firmly secured tarpaulin as a roof. Eventually, Adams constructed a second bed frame out of balsam logs on the other side of the tent, with an aisle running between the two, to accommodate more guests.\textsuperscript{10} The tent was cited as nearly complete by July 18, 1925.

![Figure 3.2: Paul Adams, canine Cumberland Jack, and Frank Wilson in front of first tent on Mount LeConte. (Paul J. Adams Photograph Collection, University of Tennessee)](image)

Adams operated the campsite for visitors through the summer of 1925, and then spent the fall and winter alone on the mountain. As Department of the Interior pilots flew overhead, creating aerial surveys of the proposed national park area, Adams developed signals to reassure the men of his continued survival.\textsuperscript{11}

Throughout the winter of 1925 and 1926, Adams constructed the first permanent cabin of the LeConte Lodge. The cabin was a fifteen-foot by twenty-foot structure,

\textsuperscript{10} Stipe, “Paul Adams: Portrait of a Mountaineer,” 31.

\textsuperscript{11} Stipe, “Paul Adams: Portrait of a Mountaineer,” 32.
constructed of notched spruce and fir logs. Clay from the surrounding terrain was combined with moss to serve as the log’s chinking, and Adams used fir wood shakes for the roof cladding.

Figure 3.3: Paul Adams in front of unfinished first cabin on Mount LeConte. (Paul J. Adams Photograph Collection, University of Tennessee)

A 1925 photograph shows Adams standing in front of his cabin; the logs are notched in place but missing a roof. The initial nine to ten courses of logs are laid with preliminary chinking between them, and a larger sill log is visible on the left side. Immediately next to Adams are two vertical logs used to mark the opening for the cabin’s sole entryway. The rear eight feet of the cabin were reserved for a bunk bed, with bunks created from poles notched into the sides of the cabin walls. Only one door provided access to the cabin, with one window on the right exterior wall. A
basic stove in the center of the room provided heating. Several details about the cabin’s construction can be gleaned from the few photographs that exist to date. The logs were unhewn and of varying sizes, kept round to facilitate a simple saddle notching, with some log ends projecting further than others.

A photograph from the winter of 1925-6 (Figure 2.4) shows chinking and daubing of varying materials, with the upper courses of log using a more refined white mortar daubing and vegetative elements on the lower courses. A small chimney is cut into the tarp on the right side, which leads to the conclusion that the tarp roof was considered to be at least a semi-permanent element.

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12 Wise and Peterson, *A Natural History of Mount LeConte*, 115.
In addition to ease of access and a challenging climate for construction, Adams also had to contend with a similar problem that continues to complicate construction for the Lodge: the ground plane. Another historic photograph shows the left corner of the cabin elevated substantially higher than the right and rear corners. This adaptation to the natural terrain shows us that even in the Lodge’s origins, building construction was strongly based on the demands of the terrain. Adams occupied the campsite around his first cabin until May of 1926, when he transferred the rights to the Lodge to Jack and Pauline Huff. The Huffs would be responsible for the Lodge’s initial period of substantial growth.

On May 10, 1926, Jack and Pauline Huff began their long period of Lodge development and management. Residents of nearby Gatlinburg, Tennessee, the couple had been recently married on the mountaintop at Myrtle Point. Jack Huff grew up in the tradition of tourism and hospitality; his father Andrew Huff opened the six-bedroom Mountain View Hotel in 1918, and the hotel stayed in the family until the 1960s.\textsuperscript{13} One of two hotels in the burgeoning town of Gatlinburg, the Mountain View Hotel had also housed Park Committee visitors as they toured the Smoky Mountains.\textsuperscript{14} Huff utilized his knowledge of the complexities of mountain tourism as he began constructing the second cabin of the LeConte Lodge in the summer of 1926.

\textsuperscript{13} Brown, The Wild East: A Biography of the Great Smoky Mountains, 84.
A 1926 photograph provides orientation for the new cabin in relation to Paul Adams’s construction. The two cabins are visible, with Jack Huff’s newer structure on a slightly elevated plane to the right of the old cabin. The two cabins are separated by a wood collection area, an outdoor cooking area, two long tables, and a large tent. Huff’s log cabin, often referred to in news articles as “the house that Jack built,” was twenty-four feet long by thirty-four feet wide. The cabin was constructed from balsam logs, with natural vegetation as chinking and daubing, and ferns and oxalis flowers that eventually grew from the moss between the logs.

The cabin’s floor plan was laid out with sixteen bunks arranged in two two-story rows of eight beds on the side closest to the entryway and a lounge at the opposite end. The lounge consisted of a rock fireplace and board seats along the wall, with a straight bench extending across the room in front of the fireplace.\textsuperscript{16} Hardened dry clay served as the floor, and newspaper covered the interior walls. Guests to the hotel experienced rustic accommodations for sleeping; the beds rested directly on a board floor above the clay, with a layer of balsam branches to soften the terrain. Similar to the bedframes constructed for Adams’s cabin, the bed supports were constructed of unhewn logs connected directly to the floor.

\textsuperscript{16} Wise and Peterson, \textit{A Natural History of Mount LeConte}, 118.
and roof systems. The structural details of the Huff cabin created an interesting experience for lodge visitors in the late 1920s.

Upon visiting the Lodge, a member of the local press described it as “something unusual in hotel accommodations.”¹⁷ To reach the Lodge, visitors first traversed one of several trails up the mountain. The trails ranged from five miles long and steeply inclined to eight miles at a more gradual elevation change. However challenging the journey, the experience was highly sought out by both experienced hikers and regular tourists. Groups drawn to outdoor recreation opportunities, such as the prominent Smoky Mountain Hiking Club (SMHC), organized several pilgrimages to the retreat. Photographs from the time period document organized visits from both the SMHC and the Knoxville Rotary Club. Once they reached their destination, Lodge visitors found rustic accommodations that matched their undeveloped surroundings. The outdoor kitchen area featured an

open-air stone fireplace, with sheets of iron laid on top for pots, kettles, and skillets that the hikers were encouraged to carry along. Visitors also brought their own food, dining outside at a communal table constructed of “bare wood boards, with complete absence of style.”

The cabin also offered a similar degree of simplicity. When it came time for rest, men and women shared the same room, in a manner “as democratic as if there was no such thing as caste in this mountain world.”

The open, irreverent experience of visiting the Lodge was clearly appealing to everyday citizens and federal government officials alike, as it was used three times in efforts at promoting the creation of the national park.

Figure 3.9: Outdoor kitchen area, featuring communal dining table. (Thompson Brothers Digital Photograph Collection, University of Tennessee)

Members of the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee and the National Park Service made their first visit to Mount LeConte in the summer of

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1924, and the visit was so successful that Paul Adams was given authorization to found the first permanent campsite. The second official visit to Mount LeConte immediately followed the completion of Adam’s first campsite; On August 7, 1925, Will Ramsey hiked up the mountain to share a letter with Paul Adams from David C. Chapman. Chapman informed Adams that National Park Service Director Arno B. Cammerer, accompanied by two other government officials, would arrive that Sunday afternoon in Gatlinburg, before hiking up to the Lodge on Monday. A trail register that dates to August 10, 1925 shows that Cammerer and his Park Committee colleagues were accompanied by several other members of the GSMCA and the local press. Before the summer of 1925 was complete, Park Committee members made one more visit to the LeConte Lodge. They found themselves enchanted by the challenging hike, the panoramic views, and the warm welcome they received at the summit of the mountain. Without Paul Adams and the Huff family’s work in developing the Lodge as a showpiece for the Smokies, the Southern Appalachian national park might have been established elsewhere.

At the conclusion of the time period established in this thesis as the LeConte Lodge’s period of origins, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park was finally authorized and dedicated in 1934. The land and the lodge buildings upon it were among the deeds transferred to the National Park Service from the Champion Fibre

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21 Trail Register, LeConte Lodge, August 10, 1925. Folder: Individuals: Adams, Paul. GRSM Archives. Gatlinburg, TN.
Company, and the Lodge continued to be operated privately as a concession.\textsuperscript{22} The Huff family was permanently installed at the lodge, at the helm of the pivotal transition from private land to federal ownership. Through this transition, the Huffs were armed with the ability to further develop the lodge complex, making opportunities available for more visitors by constructing even more accommodations. From rudimentary tents, to a basic one-room cabin, to a larger and more elaborate structure, the Lodge’s buildings were intimately aligned with their natural context. The structures were built with materials extracted directly from the surrounding environment, in visual and aesthetic harmony with the natural area.

The first two decades of the LeConte Lodge also secured it as symbolically aligned with the myriad possibilities of a national park in the Smokies, representative of the best opportunities the mountains could provide. The multiple tales told about the Lodge during this period reinforce its permanent establishment in the overall mythology of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. From the integral assistance of Paul Adams’ canine companion Cumberland Jack in the first cabin’s construction, to the fated marriage of the Huffs on their future home mountain, the LeConte Lodge began creating cultural traditions while being developed.\textsuperscript{23} These anecdotes would only ingratiate themselves further in the


\textsuperscript{23} For a further exploration of canine Cumberland Jack’s important role in the Lodge’s construction, see \textit{Mount LeConte}, a memoir written by Paul Adams and published by the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association.
regional consciousness as the Lodge developed throughout the mid-twentieth century and grew in the public's awareness. Finally, the Lodge's integral role in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park's creation allowed it to survive and flourish. When the national park was established and the other twentieth-century developments within its boundaries were stripped away and razed, the Lodge was expected to remain in operation. This allowed for the decades of substantial development that were to follow underneath the Huffs' management.

1930s to 1960s: the Lodge's Period of Development

As the Great Smoky Mountains National Park evolved in the three decades following its creation, the LeConte Lodge also experienced a period of substantial development and structural growth. Under the management of Jack and Pauline Huff and Herrick Brown, the middle decades of the twentieth century at the Lodge were characterized by new construction and heightened visitation. From the 1930s to the late 1960s, the Lodge's growth in popularity accompanied the park's rise. Newly developed roads, government-promoted automobile tourism, and post-War financial successes all contributed to increased visitation of national parks, especially those within easy driving range on the more heavily populated east coast. Because more people visited both the park and the Lodge each year, the owners were forced to add several new structures to accommodate guests. However, although the 1930s to the 1960s were a period of active construction, both the owners and National Park Service officials maintained only haphazard records of
the evolution of the Lodge. As articulated in official documents, contracts, and concessions negotiations, the Lodge professed no overarching goal for its operations, driven only to accommodate visitors on a year-to-year basis. Despite this lack of a clear development narrative, the LeConte Lodge’s evolution in the mid-twentieth century was characterized by numerous complex factors, including the establishment of concessions relations with the National Park service and substantial structural growth.

One factor inherent in the LeConte Lodge’s development is the establishment of a private business within the structure of a federally owned landscape. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park was authorized fully in 1934. LeConte Lodge stood as a pre-existing private business within the park’s boundaries, with its operation and management modified to exist on the land now owned by the federal government. To enact this process, the National Park Service followed models of earlier lodges in western national parks. Yellowstone National Park, established in 1872, set a standard of private companies providing lodging services. To operate privately within a public national park, a business is contracted as a concession. Concessions exist within the expectations of the Organic Act of 1916 for the National Park Service to “provide for the enjoyment” of its resources, with visitor services that the organization is either unable or unwilling to provide, including food, retail, and lodging. However, these concessions must be balanced by a priority of natural resource conservation and land management. Concessions are expected to be “consistent with the protection of park resources and values and demonstrate
sound environmental management” while allowing for increased use and enjoyment of the parks.²⁴ Many of the guiding laws and policies for concessions management post-date decades of the LeConte Lodge’s operation; however, they are an important element to consider in relation to the Lodge’s period of development through the mid-twentieth century. The 1965 Concession Policy Act was enacted as a first attempt at mandating the relationship between private business and the National Park Service.²⁵ The 1998 Concessions Management Improvement Act was created with the objective of improving concessions and increasing competition of contracts.²⁶ By 1998, the National Park Service aimed for increased oversight of private companies. Contracts are strictly limited to “those that are necessary and appropriate for public use and enjoyment” of the national park area, although the concept of public enjoyment can also be interpreted as a subjective concept.²⁷ The nuances of concessions management within the National Park Service can be explored through the relationship between the LeConte Lodge and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

In the context of concessions development within the National Park Service, LeConte Lodge serves as a strong indicator of the fluid nature of early operations during the mid-twentieth century. As the National Park Service’s organization

solidified throughout the twentieth century, the Lodge also grew and developed. These concurrent evolutions necessitated frequent modifications of expectations between the two organizations, which can be illustrated through the multiple contract negotiations between Lodge operators and the Park Service. In May of 1926, Jack and Pauline Huff took over management of the Lodge as the first operators to engage in negotiations with the National Park Service. While the Huffs' structural contributions to the Lodge complex will be further explored later in the chapter, their initial relationship with the National Park Service also merits mention. Responsible for the construction of the first permanent Lodge cabin, the Huffs further developed the complex in terms of buildings and visitation. They operated the Lodge through the 1949 summer season, when Jack Huff began to remain in nearby Gatlinburg to manage the family's Mountain View Hotel. However, Pauline remained on the mountain to oversee operations through 1959.\textsuperscript{28} No concessions contracts belonging to the Huffs remain in the archives of the National Park Service, and expectations for maintenance are similarly un-documented. The majority of concessions reports pertaining to the Huff family's operation of the Lodge are annual financial statements that range from 1939 to 1959.\textsuperscript{29} While they vary in level of detail, the Huffs were expected to report the costs of building modifications, equipment acquisitions, and any financial accumulation from cabin rentals. The


financial statements serve as a strong reference for the approximate construction
dates of many structures on the complex and the financial value attributed to each
individual building. However, no building and site maintenance plans or full
contracts between Huff and the National Park Service are accessible. Therefore,
most of the Huff family’s interactions with the National Park Service over the course
of their Lodge management appear to be undocumented until the end of their
contract.

A transition in concessions management began in 1949, with an initial call
for concessions proposals to be submitted to the National Park Service. The
document calls for proposals for “negotiating a concession permit for maintaining
and operating the LeConte Lodge and furnishing services such as operating the
lodge, rental of cabins, sale of meals, [and] furnishing of horses.”30 This document
serves as the first outward articulation of the expectations the National Park Service
held for concessions, which include not only managing the lodge’s everyday
operations, but service to the public as the primary objective. Another requirement
was that the concessioner must also be in full ideological sympathy with all National
Park Service policies and objectives. Finally, the proposal is an initial articulation of
financial exchange policies between the old and new concessioners. The proposal
states that before the new concessioner takes over management, he is obligated to
pay the old concessioner the appraisal values of all concession buildings, equipment,

and facilities. This initial documentation of financial and management expectations facilitated the transition in Lodge ownership that occurred when the Huff family left the Lodge after the 1959 season.

As a result of the call for proposals, Herrick Brown was announced as the next operator of the Lodge in January of 1960. Brown was a Knoxville businessman and past president of the Smoky Mountain Hiking Club, and purchased the Huff interests in the Lodge to conclude their five-year lease agreement with the National Park Service. Similar to Jack Huff’s period of Lodge management, the most substantial paper trail existing from the early period of Brown’s Lodge development is financial records. On February 1, 1960, Brown acquired the Lodge property from Huff for $17,500. The financial worth of each building, including seven single cabins, two larger lodges, the dining room and kitchen, and other facilities, are all articulated in the same report. The most expensive structure was the kitchen and dining room, cited at $5,000, while the wood house and generator houses were only $200. Brown was also expected to report the monetary value of improvements to various facilities, and in 1960, this related to the washhouse and employee quarters cabins. In 1962, a financial audit was performed for the LeConte Lodge, where Herrick Brown was cited as carrying the complex at a total of $18,700.


In the mid-1960s, the Huffs were expected to renew their concession with the National Park Service. Superintendent George W. Fry negotiated a proposed contract with Brown on September 22, 1964, with a minimum fee established with knowledge that Brown would be “required to spend considerable sums upon rehabilitation and maintenance of the premises.”\footnote{George W. Fry. Memorandum to Regional Director, Southeast Region, September 28, 1964. “Proposed Renewal of Concession for Mt. LeConte Lodge.” Folder: Concessionaires, Contracts & Permits. GRSM Archives. Gatlinburg, TN.} The increased use of the Lodge in the 1960s had taken a considerable toll on the resort complex and Brown was encouraged to begin rehabilitation work in the following month after renegotiating the contract. Brown’s second contract with the National Park Service lasted from January of 1965 to 1969.\footnote{U.S. Department of the Interior: National Park Service. Contract: National Park Service and Herrick B. Brown, Concessioner, January 1, 1965-December 31,1969. Draft. GRSM Archives. Gatlinburg, TN.}

In 1976, the Department of the Interior prescribed a new system of account classification for concessioners operating in national parks. This document articulates requirements for accounting reports, including a call for individual records involving specific structures and their improvements. The system stands as a further articulation of expectations for increasingly complex factors of concessions management. In the system, buildings are differentiated as buildings wholly owned inside the parks, government-owned structures assigned for concessions use, and concessions buildings immediately outside the parks. Each
type of structure must be reported separately, with documentation of investments in individual structures each year. Over the course of the Huff family’s Lodge management and the early years of Herrick Brown’s role, concessions management evolved within the National Park Service from a relatively undocumented, fluid concept, to an increasingly complex framework of expectations. The precedents set by concessions management in the 1930s to the 1960s would be challenged further in the following decades, as the continued operation of the Lodge came into question.

Figure 3.10: LeConte Lodge in winter of 1929. Jack Huff’s cross-gable cabin is visible to the right, while Jack Huff’s first structure is located on the left. (Albert “Dutch” Roth Digital Photograph Collection, University of Tennessee).

The mid-twentieth century was the LeConte Lodge’s most active period of structural development. As Jack Huff became the proprietor of the Lodge in 1926, he immediately initiated a campaign of substantial construction, which continued in the summer periods until the mid-1940s. The earliest photographs of the Lodge after Huff began construction were taken by Albert “Dutch” Roth, a member of the
Smoky Mountain Hiking Club and an ardent supporter of the national park effort. Two photographs taken of the Lodge complex in 1929 document the Lodge complex before the demolition of Paul Adams’ initial cabin (see Figure 3.10). Only two structures are visible, with Paul Adams’s log cabin located to the east and Jack Huff’s cross-gable structure slightly to the northwest. Huff’s cabin is also constructed of logs, with a more modern roof covering than Adams’s tarpaulin over boards. Both cabins have stacked stone chimneys attached to the south elevations, and the landscape has been obviously cleared for human habitation, as recently cut tree stumps surround the cabins. While the Adams Cabin and Huff’s first lodge were sufficient in the late 1920s, the full establishment of the national park called for increased lodging for visitors.

*Figure 3.11:* Aerial view of Lodge complex in 1934. (Special Collections, University of Tennessee)

By 1934, three structures had been added to the Lodge complex. Adams’s cabin and Huff’s first lodge still remain standing, but they were joined by another
cross-gable lodge structure located just west of the first lodge, and the origins of the lodge’s dining hall and kitchen building to the north. The dining hall building was a wood frame structure covered in shingle siding, with a gable roof running east to west, a chimney attached to the south exterior, and a small dependency attached to the east side. The wood shingles chosen for the dining hall’s exterior in the 1930s would remain in the Lodge’s aesthetic vocabulary to the contemporary period, adopted for the multiple additions to the dining hall and other smaller cabins. The newest lodge, constructed by 1934, was also a cross-gable log structure with a central chimney. The cross-gable structures also remained as part of the lodge’s vernacular throughout time: when a third lodge was constructed in the 1980s, it took a similar shape. An aerial shot from 1936 shows almost no changes in the complex’s layout, beyond the removal of a smaller one-room rectangular cabin that had been previously visible beside Jack Huff’s first cabin.

Figure 3.12: Aerial view of Lodge complex in 1936. (Albert “Dutch” Roth Digital Photograph Collection, University of Tennessee)

The next available resources on the Lodge’s mid-century development period date to 1947, with several building surveys and photographs taken by park
naturalist and historian Charles Grossman. The 1947 surveys document the existence of nine small, rectangular sleeping cabins, with eight designated for guest use and one for employees. The sleeping cabins were built originally as tent cabins, but remodeled periodically to make into enclosed cabins. Their construction is cited as continuous through summer periods from 1936 to 1943. Built of wood frame construction on a foundation of log piers, the cabins were clad in board and batten sheathing, with balsam paneling for the interior. The roof was clad in oak shingles, and interior finishes are cited as plain and unadorned. One section of the surveys calls for assessment of the existing conditions of the buildings. As of 1947, the cabins are documented as in good structural condition; however, no details are elaborated.

![Guest cabin in 1947. Board and batten siding is not yet added. (Special Collections, University of Tennessee.)(303,456,693,638)](image)

The surveys also document the dining hall and kitchen structure, which was constructed in January of 1938 on the same site of the previously referenced dining

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hall. The structure served as a dining hall, kitchen, and employee quarters, and this variety of uses is visible in its plan.\textsuperscript{37} Constructed of wood frame construction on a foundation of log piers, the dining hall was clad in wood shingles, with similar shingles on the roof and tongue-and-groove sheathing on the interior walls. The dining room was also documented as in good structural and mechanical condition, nine years after its construction. Finally, the surveys explore the two cross-gable lodge structures, constructed around 1934. One structure, presumably Jack Huff's first lodge, was rebuilt in 1940 as a three-room structure. The three-room lodge utilized round logs and a mortar chinking upon a concrete block foundation. The other lodge, which had four guest rooms, was constructed of hewn logs on a masonry foundation. Both lodges have rustic interior finishes of hewn logs, with mortar chinking. The interior ceilings are cited as exposed wood-frame rafters, with cedar shingles as cladding. Several photographs from the same year support the written descriptions from the 1947 building surveys.

\textsuperscript{37} See Appendix A for a plan of the dining hall-kitchen structure.
One interesting factor is the tar paper covering of the sleeping cabins in 1947. Later in the year, the roofs were covered in shingles, a more durable material which usually employs tar paper as an underlay material. The building surveys and photographic documentation from the mid-1940s highlight a trend in the LeConte Lodge’s development that persists to date. While the Lodge has undergone a structural evolution, the National Park Service has not been involved in substantial concrete documentation of its changes. Although the developing concessions requirements called for financial records, structural changes enacted by the Lodge concessioners were not a priority for the National Park Service.

After the initial rush of construction for guest and employee lodging that occurred before 1947, the remainder of the mid-twentieth century at the LeConte Lodge was dedicated to construction of smaller service structures. An aerial perspective of the resort complex from the mid-1950s shows several smaller one-room cabins at the Lodge’s northern boundary, and these structures are further
explained by an addendum to Herrick Brown’s 1960 contract.\textsuperscript{38} By 1960, a wood house and log barn had been added to the LeConte complex. The barn was constructed of round log construction with saddle notching and rough chinking that appears missing or in poor condition in a 1963 photograph.

![Figure 3.15: Log barn, 1963. (GRSM Archives)](image1)

![Figure 3.16: Tool house, 1963. (GRSM Archives)](image2)

The tool house was a small wood frame structure, with board siding and a gable roof. By 1963, a wash house was constructed on the northern boundary of the Lodge. The wash house was constructed of hewn logs with a square notching, with a gable roof running east to west and clad in wood shingles. These structures supported the everyday operations, allowing space for storage, laundry, and maintenance practices necessary to maintaining a thriving business. Purpose-built secondary structures such as the barn, tool house, and pit toilet buildings receive even less documentation by National Park Service officials than the more

aesthetically pleasing cabins and lodges. However, their architectural details and construction techniques were clearly aligned with the rest of the Lodge complex; although they were more minor buildings, log construction was still used as much as possible to visually compliment the larger structures.

The structural evolution of the LeConte Lodge from the 1930s to the 1960s reflected its immediate growth as a tourist destination with the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. As demand increased for overnight stays at the Lodge, so did the cabins and lodges that provided sleeping accommodations. These structures were built first, with a smaller array of secondary support buildings to follow. As the opportunities for experiencing the LeConte Lodge grew, so did its cultural importance within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Originating as a showpiece for the park itself, the LeConte Lodge grew throughout the 1930s to the 1960s into a longstanding tradition for area residents. By the year 1961, over
two thousand people stayed in the Lodge’s accommodations.\textsuperscript{39} This number grew steadily over the 1960s, and reached over 3,700 visitors a year by 1966.\textsuperscript{40}

Beyond simple statistics of visitation, the LeConte Lodge began to factor prominently in the growing mythologies surrounding the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. One substantial element of the Lodge’s narrative is the small, everyday stories told about it. From tales about Paul Adams’s famous dog, to Jack Huff carrying his handicapped mother up the mountain in a backpack, to the constant presence of the Brown family, the Lodge proprietors occupied a strong place in the park’s cultural traditions. In the following two decades, the long-held traditions so specific to the Lodge would serve as a firm foundation for area residents and National Park Service officials involved in the debate over the Lodge’s continued existence in the future.

As the Great Smoky Mountains National Park grew in popularity over the mid-twentieth century, the LeConte Lodge evolved from two log cabins to a fully functioning lodge complex with multiple rental options and support structures. As the park became recognized as full of natural and cultural resources and physically accessible, the Lodge experienced structural growth throughout the 1930s and 1940s. These simultaneous increases in use and popularity formed the Lodge’s place in the park’s overall mythology as a much-beloved cultural tradition. On a


more practical side, the Lodge’s evolution from the 1930s to the 1960s also paralleled the development of concessions management within the National Park Service’s organization. As the Lodge grew and developed, so did the expectations between the concessioner and the National Park Service. Such expectations are reflected in the increasing amount of financial records required by the National Park Service over the period, and the consistently evolving contracts that were negotiated between the concessioners and the federal government. This pattern of quick structural growth and complex legal negotiations would have complex ramifications in the following two decades.
CHAPTER FOUR
THE LECONTE LODGE IN THE LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY

1970s – 1980s: The Lodge’s Period of Uncertainty

After substantial growth throughout the mid-twentieth century, the LeConte Lodge had an uncertain future throughout the 1970s and 1980s, where its continued existence within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park was in question. Numerous factors influenced this unstable transition period. Throughout the entire United States, the 1960s and 1970s were marked by a cultural upheaval, where previously held societal values were questioned. One element of this trend was the environmental movement. Drawing on widespread societal pressure to embrace and conserve the country's remaining natural resources, the federal government enacted the Wilderness Act of 1964. Faced with “an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization,” the government established designated wilderness areas on existing federal public lands.¹ These wilderness areas received the highest level of conservation protection, preserved for the “use and enjoyment of the American people in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use” into perpetuity.² After the law passed, the Secretary of the Interior was directed to review all areas under his jurisdiction for inclusion in the wilderness system by September of 1974. This law inevitably had ramifications on the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. In 1966,

the National Park Service proposed designating 247,000 of the Park as protected wilderness, and the LeConte Lodge was listed as a “potential wilderness addition.”

If the Lodge area were to be fully designated as a wilderness land, all of the structures would be removed to create a completely natural environment. The designation of wilderness would work in tandem with Mount LeConte’s presence within the national park, designating the area as one which would be conserved into perpetuity.

The environmental movement of the 1960s and 1970s also resulted in increased scientific study of the natural environment of the park, with substantial exploration of human’s effect on nature. Government officials, area citizens, and scientists began to recognize and document the negative impacts of commercial development within national parks. In the Smokies, this cultural movement resulted in several scientific studies in the early 1970s as part of a process to update the park’s Master Plan. Changes to the Master Plan included new recommendations on which portions of the park would be preserved and modified under the Wilderness Act.

In addition to the Wilderness Act and increased attention to human influence on the park’s natural processes, the 1970s and 1980s were marked by a “shift in management emphasis from accommodating as much public use as possible to closer attention to the Park Service’s obligation to conserve and protect park

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resources for future users.” As a result of these factors, collectively signaling the shifting cultural values towards a conservation-based mentality, the LeConte Lodge’s continued existence was in question for two decades. The resulting uncertainty had substantial effects on the Lodge’s structural development.

In the 1970s, the LeConte Lodge was identified as a potential detractor from the park’s overall wilderness capacity. A combination of results from early scientific studies, the creation of a new management plan, and the desire for more wilderness lands led to the recognition of various negative effects on the park due to the Lodge’s existence. In the years leading up to the creation of the 1981 General Management Plan for the entire national park, natural resources were identified as a serious priority in the Smokies, balanced by a growing recognition of the park’s cultural heritage. Park officials spent several years exploring the dichotomy of natural and cultural resource conservation, and how these two priorities were affected by increased visitation and public use.

From 1976 to 1978, graduate students in the natural sciences initiated several studies of the Lodge’s environmental impacts. Results from the earliest study of the Lodge’s impacts were published in December of 1975. Researchers identified the lodge buildings as arranged at five different levels on a ground slope, with terraced walkways built up to prevent erosion. The water supply came from a

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4 Nichols, Closing LeConte Lodge, 14.
spring east of the Lodge buildings, with water flowing underground into collecting tanks and pumped by a ram to a large holding tank above the lodge. Wastewater was identified as flowing into a large drain field northwest of the lodge, at a slightly lower elevation. The 1975 research identified some of the major environmental factors resulting from the Lodge’s operation, including water use, sanitation and waste, and ground erosion.

The second major study of the Lodge occurred in 1976, with reports that became available to the National Park Service in October of 1977. Researchers identified that visitation of approximately forty guests a day for a seven-month period affected more than the 2.42 acres devoted specifically to the Lodge. The drainfield caused serious pollution to the surrounding landscape, and over sixteen acres of Mount LeConte’s woodland were affected by the Lodge’s woodcutting operations. Researcher Rosemary Nichols expounded upon the results of her 1970s studies in a document published in 1981, stating that the complex’s environmental effects were substantial but localized in a small area around the Lodge.

Concentrated recreational use of one small area of land had caused significant soil erosion and trampled vegetation. The use of area trees for firewood and construction materials, along with the inevitable land clearing necessary to construct new lodge buildings, resulted in extensive openings in the site’s forest.

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7 Nichols, Closing LeConte Lodge, 13.
canopy. There were also various issues in providing a safe water supply and achieving adequate sanitation levels for public use. In the late 1960s, the sanitary conditions at the Lodge were documented as not meeting standards set by the Tennessee Department of Public Health. Because the sewage system consisted of a septic tank and drain field, there had been instances of toxic sludge rising to the top of the ground at various areas, with runoff finding streams down the side of Mount LeConte. While some of the blame was placed on the Lodge operators, Nichols also recognized the role of the public, stating that “many summit users simply did not see the accelerated resource impairment that increasing outdoor recreation, particularly the backpacking boom of the 1960s, caused.” Nichols’s 1977 study, and the ensuing commentary, was the first presentation of the major environmental effects of the Lodge to the public.

As a result of the scientific studies, multiple options for the Lodge’s future were explored by the National Park Service. Officials considered keeping the status quo of the Lodge, continuing to allow logging and heavy public use, or eliminating any woodcutting from the surrounding areas. Other proposed tactics included restricting the Lodge to daytime use or reducing the complex to a single building. Finally, one proposed alternative was eliminating the Lodge entirely. The cabins, lodge buildings, and associated structures would be razed from the landscape, and

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9 Nichols, *Closing LeConte Lodge*, 13.
the area would be “allowed to revert to nature.” The option of the Lodge’s removal remained a strong possibility from the mid-1970s until approximately 1980. Due to environmental concerns, issues in water supply and sanitation, and the demands of the federal government, the LeConte Lodge experienced a long period of uncertainty. While Lodge operators clearly wanted to continue providing a mountaintop experience to thousands of visitors a year, numerous other opinions were voiced from private citizens and federal officials alike.

Alongside the more objective scientific studies of environmental effects, the 1970s and 1980s saw a period of impassioned public and legal debate over the Lodge’s future. Media sources in nearby Knoxville and Maryville seized on news of the Lodge’s potential removal, and widely disseminated the possibility through area citizens. Early correspondence between area residents and National Park Service officials hinted at the ensuing debates over the Lodge’s existence, as private citizens felt driven to write letters to Park Service officials. One citizen even explored the other options to reduce the Lodge’s impact on the mountain, including the removal of any cooking on the mountain top, allowing only one horse per week on the access trails, and eliminating heating for overnight guests. While the Lodge would “no longer offer the full services of a typical tourist motel,” the writer would not consider the Lodge’s removal as an option. In this letter and many others, one

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consistently highlighted element was the Lodge’s provision of an experience for the thousands of annual hikers who would not otherwise camp on the mountain. Because it provided the comforts of a hotel, the Lodge attracted numerous visitors to appreciate the Smokies’ beauty, without the challenges of backcountry camping.

In contrast to the claims of individual citizens, some National Park Service documents argued for the removal of the Lodge. Park Service officials cited the poor physical condition of some lodge buildings, “the high cost of rehabilitation, garbage and sanitation disposal problems, and the difficulty of obtaining supplies” factors in the advocacy to eliminate the Lodge.13 Park rangers also noted the old wooden structures such as the cabins and lodges as a definite fire hazard. Finally, they recognized the Lodge’s role within the overall park as an exception: an enclave of development and public use in a region of natural conservation. Removal of the lodge would permit more consistent management within the park, and preserve the wilderness of the surrounding Mount LeConte.

The general public in nearby East Tennessee, especially in the city of Knoxville, became strongly involved. Local press cited families’ relationships with the Lodge as a long-standing tradition and an inherent part of the park and the region. The LeConte Lodge allowed area residents to connect with the Smoky Mountains on a deep level, whether through the ritual hikes up the mountain to the hospitality provided by the Lodge operators. Numerous private citizens spoke up in

local newspapers, sharing stories of hundreds of hikes to the mountain and reminiscing about the Lodge’s origins. More than any other impassioned claim, the Lodge was cited as directly related to the creation of the national park. The Lodge stood as a symbol for the park’s origins, as tales were recounted about Paul Adams guiding Park Committee members to the mountain, and “their impressions of the mountain’s beauty were carried into initial planning sessions” for the park. Several groups formed specifically to promote one cause or the other. The Great Smokies Park Wilderness Advocates pushed for the Lodge’s closing, claiming that it created enormous problems of sanitation, deforestation, and ground erosion. The group called for the Lodge to be declared a non-conforming use of designated wilderness areas. Both groups and individuals wrote opinionated letters to the National Park Service, and a survey in 1979 found that sixty-eight percent of citizens desired the Lodge to remain in operation, while only thirty-two percent actively opposed it. Even the main players in the LeConte Lodge’s development got involved in the debate. While Paul Adams felt that the damage to LeConte was too great to continue to operate the Lodge, the Huffs “actively campaigned for perpetuating an outdoor recreation opportunity they felt could not be obtained

Organized recreation groups from the surrounding areas also provided input to the National Park Service. While the Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning, the Sierra Clubs of North Carolina and Tennessee, and the Smoky Mountain Hiking Club supported the Lodge, the Wilderness Society stood in strong opposition. In the federal government, the local newspapers, and the homes of private citizens, the operation of the LeConte Lodge was a hotly contested notion throughout the late 1970s. However, the final decision rested solely in the hands of the National Park Service and the federal government.

After years of public and governmental debate, the General Management Plan of 1981 determined that the LeConte Lodge would remain in operation. However, various modifications were necessary. In 1975, National Park Service official Boyd Evison first proposed a list of necessary changes for the Lodge’s continued operation, including reducing the use of pack stock for transporting supplies and converting to primarily freeze-dried foods to reduce kitchen waste. He also urged the cessation of the use of a sawmill for the conversion of fallen trees to construction materials, and implemented a program to phase-out the use of firewood for heat. In 1976, the Lodge began to impose greater restrictions on visitation, limiting overnight visitors to forty guests a night, and substituted kerosene heating for wood fires. Trail erosion was mitigated through the decision

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18 Nichols, Closing LeConte Lodge, 15.
to reduce horse trains to one weekly trip, supplemented by a biannual helicopter delivery of larger supplies.\textsuperscript{20} While the modifications to the Lodge’s practices were superficial instead of structural, they served as resolution to the issues identified previously as detrimental to the surrounding environment of Mount LeConte. The resulting changes were on a much smaller scale than many of the proposed options, including reducing the Lodge to daytime use or eliminating all the structures entirely. However, modifications in the Lodge’s consumption, transport systems, and waste production placated the concerns of many involved National Park Service officials.

Published finally in 1981, the new General Management Plan for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park brought the issue to a conclusion. The General Management Plan organized the boundaries of the park into several categories, including Historic Preservation Subzones and Historic Landscape Management Subzones, where historic resources were prioritized. However, although the Lodge was directly aligned with “the values for which the park was established,” the Plan did not recognize the LeConte Lodge for the historic nature of its structures.\textsuperscript{21} The LeConte Lodge was placed in the category of Development Subzone, which allowed development of the land for commercial purposes. Inherent in this category is the prevailing attitude towards the Lodge throughout the late twentieth century and to

\textsuperscript{20} Nichols, \textit{Closing LeConte Lodge}, 16.

date: while physically and metaphorically symbolic of the park’s origins, the National Park Service’s priorities towards the Lodge have always related to public use and the supporting necessary development, instead of historic preservation.

As a result of both the permanence established by the 1981 General Management Plan and expected modifications to the Lodge’s operations, a series of concessions negotiations were written with new requirements for Lodge proprietors. Concessioners were urged to enact a full “construction and improvement program” to the various buildings of the Lodge, costing not less than $250,000 and achieved before December 31, 1985. Multiple structural modifications were prescribed for the Lodge’s buildings, ranging in scale from the replacement of the existing two-bedroom lodge with a new two-bedroom lodge, to the construction of a new wood deck on the front of the recreation building. New foundations systems were an important element of the expected modifications. The 1930s one-room guest cabins, the kitchen and dining hall structure, the woodshed, and all employee quarters received new concrete masonry unit foundations, faced with stone piles to maintain a rustic aesthetic. Responding to the detrimental effects of climactic moisture, the guest cabins also received new bottom boards and battens on the exterior walls, alongside new roof shingle cladding, log steps, window frames, and door jambs. Interior wall paneling and several portions of exterior

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shingles were replaced on the kitchen and dining hall. This building also received new roof shingle cladding.\footnote{Lodge Feasibility Study. Sevierville, TN: LeConte Lodge, Inc., 1982. Folder: LeConte Lodge, Historical Files to Keep, 1985-1989. Unprocessed Concessions Management Records. GRSM Archives. Gatlinburg, TN.}

![Figure 4.1: Roof shingle repairs from 1971. Limited photographic documentation was performed of the repairs in the 1970s. (GRSM Archives)](image)

Beyond this range of structural modifications, the new concessions guidelines also articulated a plan for routine maintenance and periodic inspections. This contract authorized a Staff Park Specialist to annually conduct unannounced inspections, and a concession manager would be obligated to attend all inspections and prepare reports. After the Lodge’s perpetual existence was confirmed through the General Management Plan, the Park Service and the concessioner coordinated on these necessary structural repairs and maintenance plans. However, two decades of insecurity had resulted in haphazard conditions for many of the Lodge’s buildings. The structural changes of the 1970s and 1980s reflected the unstable
nature of the Lodge’s existence. After a 1978 inspection, a National Park Service official perfectly articulated this problem:

“Until we can decide whether the facilities should stay or go, it appears we must contend with a patchwork operation. Old facilities and an uncertain future make a good concession operation difficult.”

The period of uncertainty had massive implications on the structural conditions of the cabins, lodge buildings, and secondary structures. Many minor details and routine maintenance were neglected, which is reflected in the massive amount of small repairs deemed necessary in the 1982 concessions negotiations. Because Herrick Brown and the other Lodge employees had remained uncertain as to whether the Lodge would be maintained or eliminated, they prioritized only the most necessary repairs and maintenance. After the Lodge’s existence was confirmed, tasks such as window and door repairs and new foundation underpinnings occupied the concessioners throughout the 1980s.

Further compounding the issues of such deterred maintenance, Herrick Brown had constructed a brand new structure in 1971, immediately preceding the Lodge’s period of uncertainty. Built over the course of five years, the new recreation building served as an office and a lobby for the Lodge, with a basement that held two flush privies. The recreation building’s architectural style mimicked the one room, rectangular cabin first built by Paul Adams. Employing unhewn cedar log

construction with half-dovetail notching on the first level, the recreation building utilized a stacked stone façade on the basement that conformed to the terrain’s steep groundline. The construction of the recreation building called for concentrated resources and labor. Herrick Brown’s focus in the early 1970s of “all available manpower on that building forced the neglect of maintenance on the old buildings,” which contributed to the need for the smaller repairs of the 1980s.²⁵

Figure 4.2: Construction of recreation building, 1971. (GRSM Archives)

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Beyond the large-scale construction of the recreation building, several other buildings received updates and modifications in the 1970s and 1980s. These infrastructure updates and additions addressed needs considered pressing, while regular maintenance decreased alongside uncertainty about the Lodge’s future. The kitchen and dining hall structure underwent structural modifications in 1984, when a small addition was attached to one side to serve as residential quarters for the Lodge managers.26

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Other modifications were mandated by life safety concerns. By 1971, a new aluminum firewall was installed to separate the kitchen space from the rest of the structure. This minor modification allowed the Lodge's kitchen to meet safety standards.
On a larger scale, the new two-bedroom lodge encouraged by the 1982 concessions plan was promptly constructed. The new lodge took the exact same shape as its predecessor, using dovetail-notched and hewn logs, a cross-gable shape, and a stone chimney attached to the south façade.

Figure 4.6: New multi-room lodge building, 1982. (GRSM Archives)

Figure 4.7: Aerial view of Lodge complex, 1982. (GRSM Archives)
Another element of the Lodge’s development throughout the 1970s and 1980s was the modification of water and sewage systems. In 1968, the Park Service awarded a Gatlinburg, TN firm with an approximately $75,000 contract for construction of new water and sewage facilities at the Lodge, including a potable water supply and distribution system, a 10,000 gallon water tank, and a 5,000 septic tank. This substantial development in the 1970s necessitated the construction of a larger water tank, which Lodge operators adapted to the architectural vernacular of the surrounding complex, covering it in large wood shingles. From the new lodge building and the dining hall addition to the secondary support structures, the Lodge operators employed a coherent style. The structural developments of the 1970s and 1980s reflected a challenging path of evolution throughout the Lodge, made more complex by the need to meet safety requirements, reconciling some deterred maintenance issues, and a need to accommodate an increasing amount of visitors.

Figure 4.8: Water tank, 1971. Lodge manager Herrick Brown standing in front. (GRSM Archives)

Throughout the 1970s and the 1980s, the LeConte Lodge experienced a period of uncertainty and transition that would strongly influence its business practices, negotiations with the National Park Service, and the condition of its buildings and structures. The period while the Lodge’s existence remained in question is due to the operation’s existence as embedded within several greater systems, with complex and dynamic viewpoints from each stakeholder, manager, and landowner. Operating as a private business concession within a national park, the Lodge’s business and development goals were inevitably secondary to the park’s priority of natural resource conservation. Due to the National Park Service’s operation within the federal government, they were expected to conform to the demands of the 1964 Wilderness Act within each national park, with no exceptions. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Lodge managers were expected to modify their operations according to the demands of the National Park Service, while continuing to provide services to its visitors and guests. This challenge, alongside a general uncertainty about its continued existence, led to several examples of haphazard structural maintenance practices. The 1970s and 1980s at the Lodge influenced the complex’s development to the present day. While the Lodge structures maintain a coherent vocabulary of stylistic techniques, each building is different from the next in conditions and maintenance levels, and this contrast will be explored in the following chapters.

1980s – 2000s: The Lodge’s Period of Resolution
After a period of uncertainty in the 1970s and early 1980s, the LeConte Lodge experienced a transition in the late twentieth century. The changes experienced by the Lodge were rooted in multiple parties’ agreement that the Lodge would be a permanent fixture within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. As opposed to the previous two decades, Lodge operators drew newfound confidence from the knowledge that the Lodge would no longer be removed from Mount LeConte to contribute acres to the park’s designated wilderness areas. This knowledge allowed the concessioners to perform numerous necessary repairs in the early 1980s, and construct several new structures to accommodate visitors into the future. This investment of time and money was critical, as the previous decades had taken their toll on the buildings’ conditions. While the Lodge managers enacted several maintenance and construction campaigns immediately after the 1982 Management Plan, the site was already marked by the haphazard repairs of the previous decades. The “patchwork” repairs left each cabin, lodge, and secondary structure with distinct conditions, ranging from newly constructed to severely damaged by moisture intrusion. On a level of business operations, the LeConte Lodge now fully existed within the framework of the late twentieth century. After changes in ownership when Herrick Brown sold his stakes, the Lodge became a modernized business operation, owned by a larger corporation and managed by multiple people. The Lodge also grew in popularity to receive more visitors than ever. The publicity it received throughout the previous years, and the staunch advocacy of its many proponents, stimulated the public’s interest in a stay on the
mountaintop. Resulting from heavy visitor use and a system of piecemeal repairs and construction projects, everyday preventative maintenance has been the LeConte Lodge’s primary priority for structural development throughout the late twentieth and early twenty-first century.

A change in management and ownership paralleled the Lodge’s assured existence within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Immediately after the 1981 General Management Plan, a new Statement of Requirements for Concessioners outlined the expectations for the new operation. Herrick Brown no longer operated the Lodge by 1981, and a corporation headed by Jack Huff’s relative James Huff headed management. The new concessions requirements outlined the relationship between the National Park Service and the private corporation. On the level of National Park Service responsibilities, the Superintendent of the Park was defined as responsible for the total Park Operation and the Staff Park Specialist was expected to oversee daily administration of the concessions program. On a smaller scale, the district and sub-district Park rangers provide daily liaison and supervision with the concessions operators in each respective area.  

In defining the responsibilities of a corporation that owned the land but delegated management duties to a separate employee, the operational plan designated the “resident manager” to live on the property and “provide professional direction” to daily

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operations. In 1989, a new partnership took over the Lodge operation. Stokely and Huff Hospitality Enterprises, formed as a partnership of a Gatlinburg-based firm and a Knoxville corporation, were awarded the concession with the National Park Service. Later, Stokely and Huff became known solely as Stokely Hospitality Enterprises. Now based in Sevierville, Tennessee, Stokely Hospitality Enterprises also oversees management of several area hotels and restaurants. The LeConte Lodge is one of several successful tourist opportunities owned by the group. While Stokely Enterprises are the current owners, they employ separate managers, Tim and Lisa Line and family, to oversee the daily operations. This multi-leveled business structure has created a system where three levels of authority exist over the LeConte Lodge property. While individuals serve as daily managers of the property, Stokely Hospitality Enterprises operates the Lodge as a business, and the National Park Service still maintains full jurisdiction over the land. The existence of different interests in the Lodge’s operation is seen in several structural changes of the 1980s. In 1984, Tim Line recognized the need for more space for his family to live on the property, as they engaged themselves fully in daily management responsibilities. After the addition of residential quarters for the Line family to the dining hall and kitchen building, the immediate presence of the most directly

29 Ibid.
32 This addition to the kitchen and dining hall structure is explored and illustrated in Chapter 7.
involved tier of authority over the Lodge can be seen in the complex. The National Park Service is also represented on the Lodge complex, with a specific building providing residence for a park ranger. Such divided management creates the potential for dissenting perspectives about the property and the necessity for a clear exploration of the multiple levels of responsibility for the Lodge.

After the 1982 General Management Plan assured owners of the Lodge’s continued existence, property modifications and new operation tactics developed throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Overarching guidelines for the Lodge’s structural state were articulated clearly in the General Management Plan, and clarified further in 1983. In the late twentieth century, the Lodge is designated as an area within the park devoted to general park development. Alongside this development designation, the Lodge structures are classified as “non-historic buildings” instead of belonging to historic preservation or historic land management areas. While non-historic buildings make up the largest number of facilities within the park, they are maintained at what’s known as Level A for resource protection. As opposed to the more attentive maintenance given to structures designated as historic, non-historic buildings receive the lowest level of protection, where “cyclic and preventative maintenance ... is deferred where it will not result in costly and irreversible damage to the facility.”

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33 This National Park Service structure is illustrated in Chapter 9.
requirements, including contemporary demands for energy and handicap accessibility, non-historic buildings are prioritized as second to other structures in order to conserve financial resources. Facilities and visitor areas are maintained in “an acceptable condition” instead of to the highest standards.\textsuperscript{36} The Statement for Management articulates the National Park Service’s priority of keeping visitor areas operating efficiently and safely, while making no alignment of the LeConte Lodge with the Park’s official historic resources. From the 1980s and on, the LeConte Lodge has not been perceived to be a historic structure; its treatment is entirely motivated towards public use, with no priorities driven towards the preservation of its historic fabric.

Many of the changes made to the Lodge in the late twentieth century have been based on the motivations of visitor safety and use, with basic preventative maintenance as a substantial priority. In 1990, a maintenance plan was added on a supplement to the contract between Huff and Ogle Enterprises (later to become Stokely Hospitality Enterprises) and the National Park Service. The plan serves as a clear articulation of the National Park Service’s expectations for concessions maintenance, especially faced with heightened rates of visitor use. The official objective of the National Park Service policy is stated that all routine maintenance within the concessioner’s area is accomplished by the concessioner, and that outlined responsibilities are accomplished annually and not deferred. The National Park Service expects a “high standard of physical appearance and operation,” and

\textsuperscript{36} Cook, \textit{Statement for Management}, Page 14.
will ensure this by carrying out annual inspections by the National Park Service and the concessioner to determine maintenance and repair needs. All routine maintenance, “defined as unvarying and recurring, due to normal wear and tear” is to be performed by the concessioner. Routine maintenance includes the basic care of both grounds and structures. Structural maintenance includes interior painting, refurbishing of floors and interior finishes, and repairing broken windows and screens. The concessioner is also expected to maintain the Lodge’s grounds, including mowing along walkways, monitoring for litter, and keeping vegetation away from buildings. Concessioners were also responsible for all building repairs, including roof repairs, exterior and interior finish repairs, and foundation repairs or replacements. However, major structural repairs and improvements are allowed only with prior written approval from the Park Superintendent.

Lodge operators were also expected to enact regular maintenance of a previous issue for the complex, its utility systems. In the 1960s, the National Park Service had agreed to assist the concessioner in upgrading water and sewage systems to meet United States Public Health Service standards, and the projects were completed in 1970. After receiving government funding for their construction, the systems were turned over to the concessioner to maintain. Another interesting tactic was taken by the Lodge to counteract the previous issue of horse

38 Mt. LeConte Lodge, Maintenance Agreement. Page 3.
39 Mt. LeConte Lodge, Maintenance Agreement. Page 4.
traffic on the mountain’s trails. Instead of employing horse or mule trains, the Lodge operators decided to utilize llamas to transport goods and materials to the lodge on a weekly basis. With their more gentle feet, llamas were expected to have less detrimental effects on the trails.\(^ {40}\)

Finally, the 1990s saw small renovations to provide more efficient and successful services to visitors. In 1994, the kitchen and dining hall underwent a renovation of its equipment and flooring systems, using discarded pieces of wood from the kitchen to construct shelves for the cabins.\(^ {41}\) In these renovations and other activities, Lodge employees began to stress the need to recycle and reuse materials. In new projects, the Lodge managers attempted to minimize waste, mitigate environmental effects, and still accommodate the maximum amount of visitors possible. The structural modifications and new concessions expectations that characterize the Lodge today are defined by regular maintenance to ensure visitor comfort. Because the Lodge exists within a development zone instead of one devoted to historic preservation, the structural decisions made in the late twentieth century are based on accommodating use and achieving a coherent aesthetic program. The results of this motivation on the LeConte Lodge’s contemporary landscape will be explored in the following chapter.


CHAPTER FIVE
THE CONTEMPORARY LECONTE LODGE

To create a full portrayal of the present day LeConte Lodge, it is necessary to compliment the Lodge's history and development with an exploration of the various structures that exist on the site today. While the previous chapter served as an overview of the concessions negotiations and maintenance expectations that have defined the last few decades on Mount LeConte, this chapter will explore the current state of each building that comprises the resort complex. The structures that comprise the LeConte Lodge can be categorized in several ways, whether according to usage or ownership. There are twenty-three buildings on the LeConte Lodge’s property, with ten structures relating to guest lodging, seven that serve as employee quarters, two public buildings, and five more that serve as secondary support to Lodge operations. Among the guest quarters, there are seven one-room guest cabins and three larger multi-room lodge buildings. The employee quarters range in size from multiple rooms and stories to one-room cabins. A kitchen and dining hall structure provides opportunities for communal meals, while the recreation building serves as an office for the Lodge and a public lobby for visitors to the mountain. There are two freestanding restroom structures, a wood shed, and a food storage building. Finally, the National Park Service asserts its presence on the land in one structure: a one-story building that serves as an office and overnight quarters for
Park Service employees. The remaining twenty-two structures are owned and managed by Stokely Hospitality, Inc.

While the following chapter will expound upon each structure's architectural styles and existing conditions, it must also be noted that each structure receives different patterns of usage and maintenance. While some structures, like the recreation building, receive a steady stream of visitors throughout the year, access to the cabins is restricted to guests during the Lodge's operating season of March through November. During the season, the guest cabins receive at least daily superficial maintenance through routine cleaning. The dining hall and kitchen building also receives active use, cooking three meals a day for daytime visitors and lodge guests alike. Other structures are limited to private access. Some employee quarters serve as long-term residences for Lodge staff who live and work on Mount LeConte for months at a time, and the support structures such as the woodshed are also less frequented. The distinct patterns of access, use, and maintenance have a strong effect on the conditions of each individual Lodge building.

Methodology of Project

The information that comprises this chapter of the thesis was gleaned through first-hand experience with the LeConte Lodge’s buildings. On site research included a short-form survey created in September and October of 2013 and applied to each individual structure on the Lodge complex in October 2013. Full photographic documentation also accompanied this research. The survey that was
used to document each building noted the structures’ architectural details and conditions. It allowed for a written architectural description of each building’s overall layout, use, and character-defining features, with a space for documentation of any modifications that might have been made to the building. By recording the elements of the building that are original and those which are altered, the survey intended to serve as a scale for sensitivity to the structural preservation of the Lodge’s historic fabric. The survey then allowed for a quick written description of each element of the building system: the foundation, any porch elements, exterior walls, doors and windows, chimneys, and the roof. In the property description category, details on both materials and stylistic techniques employed were noted. The survey then provided space for an assessment of the existing conditions of each of the aforementioned building elements. The conditions of each system were documented on site on a scale of one to five, with one being very poor and five being exemplary. Space provided next to the conditions ratings also allowed for documentation of specific details about each building system. Finally, a more theoretical element served as the survey’s end. Described as “messages in the architecture,” the final section assumed that because a building’s stylistic features can reveal certain attitudes about the site, the structures could be connected with the cultural themes that shaped their styles. As explored in the previous chapters, the LeConte Lodge employs a rustic vernacular style throughout its multiple structures, referencing an idealized period of pioneer log construction, although
many structures also utilize twentieth century building technologies. This chapter will explore this dichotomy.

A thorough explanation of the different architectural styles and structural conditions in the contemporary LeConte Lodge will compliment the previous exploration of the Lodge’s history and development. Details of the buildings’ architectural styles will generate an understanding of the different messages the structures intend to convey, alongside the cultural traditions they are aligned with, and how they all work together as a coherent whole. Several stylistic tactics, such as log construction and board and batten siding, will be explored alongside their architectural influences that exist within the Park today. By drawing parallels between the Lodge’s architectural styles and their surrounding context, the Lodge can be compared to other important elements of structural preservation within the Park. Existing conditions also shed light on the priorities and responsibilities of the LeConte Lodge and the National Park Service. The conditions of each building can show each organization’s priorities, and what structures receive the most active use. It is also beneficial to interpret what changes have been made to each structure over time. Finally, documentation of existing conditions can show what sort of a relationship the buildings have with their surrounding landscape, and to what degree of success the preventative maintenance tactics are being carried out.

**Organization of Site**
To begin an exploration of the present day LeConte Lodge, it is necessary to first explore the overall complex’s layout and the general characteristics of its structures. The Lodge is arranged on a ground plane that slopes down towards the north, looking outward towards the valley, and visitors’ principal approach to the complex is from the south.
Upon entering the Lodge, the first structures visible are the seven small guest cabins. The cabins are all one-room, one-story wood frame structures, covered in board and batten siding, with gable roofs clad in wood shingles. Each cabin has a one-story porch covered with a shed roof, which extends the full width of the façade to which it is attached. While the orientations of the cabins’ roof gables and porches are slightly different, each has at least one principal entry way and one window consisting of two vertical panes. As explored in the previous chapters, the guest cabins were constructed at various periods from the late 1930s throughout the 1940s, and they were all fully constructed by 1947.¹ By the present date, they have received several campaigns of renovation, including new windows, new foundation underpinnings, and new roofing materials.²

![Typical multi-room guest lodge.](image)

**Figure 5.3:** Typical multi-room guest lodge. (Photograph by author)

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² See Chapter 7 of the thesis for a more full exploration of the modifications made to the cabins throughout the years.
As the visitor moves north through the complex, the next structures encountered are the three multi-room lodge buildings. The lodges are one-story cross-gable structures, with chimneys located either centrally or on the south end of the building. Each lodge uses a slightly different variation of log construction, with wood shingle cladding for the roofs. The first lodge (referred to in the attached surveys as Lodge 1, located furthest to the west) was constructed around 1940, as a replacement for Jack Huff’s first lodge structure of the 1930s. The second and third lodges were constructed in the 1960s and 1980s.

![Figure 5.4: Kitchen and dining hall building. (Photograph by author)](image)

Located slightly north and west of the private lodging buildings, the public recreation building and the kitchen and dining hall employ similar overall structural characteristics. The kitchen and dining hall building is a one-story wood frame structure, covered in wood shingle siding. The principal gable is a rectangular structure that runs north to south, with a primary entry on the south elevation that
serves as an iconic location for visitor photographs. While a first portion of the structure was built around 1938, it has received multiple modifications throughout the Lodge's evolution, including the addition of a wing for residential quarters in 1984. The dining hall's complex plan and multiple roof gables are representative of its multipurpose use over the years.

Figure 5.5: Recreation building (Photograph by author)

Located to the west of the lodge buildings, the recreation building was constructed in 1971 as a public lobby and office structure. The recreation building is a two-story log structure, rectangular in plan, with a gable roof running from north to south and a porch attached to the east side. The first story conforms to the groundline, which slopes gradually to the north, with a stacked-stone and mortar foundation that covers the entire façade. The building's second level is constructed

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of roughly hewn logs of varying sizes, featuring dovetail notching and projecting log ends.

![Figure 5.6: Restroom structure. (Photograph by author)](image)

Figure 5.6: Restroom structure. (Photograph by author)

![Figure 5.7: Wood shed. (Photograph by author)](image)

Figure 5.7: Wood shed. (Photograph by author)

As one moves further north and lower in elevation on the complex, one encounters the less iconic structures of the LeConte Lodge. To the west are two
separate restroom structures, one reflecting a dogtrot style cabin and both employing full log construction. The wood shed and food storage structures are both more simple buildings of wood-frame construction, rectangular in plan, covered in board and batten siding. Finally, arranged at the northern end of the Lodge complex are several employee cabins. The employee quarters range from one-room, one-story cabins to multi-room structures with full-width porches. While some are constructed of a similar combination of wood framing and board-and-batten siding, others are log buildings.

Figure 5.8: Employee cabin. (Photograph by author)

Architectural Styles

The stylistic elements of the LeConte Lodge’s structures are closely aligned with not only the vernacular architectural tradition of the surrounding region, but
also the materials omnipresent in the immediate context. The use of log
collection in many buildings, from the Lodge’s origins to the present day,
highlights this fact. While this thesis will not attempt to provide a full exploration of
the cultural roots of log construction, it is important to note some connections to
Southern Appalachian culture for its eventual application in the Smokies. Log
collection in the United States originated with early Germanic settlers in the
Pennsylvania region, who later spread their techniques to Scotch-Irish and English
pioneers. Log building techniques were often simpler than constructing
frameworks to be covered with cladding. The use of round or hewn logs stacked
horizontally to make a solid wooden wall took advantage of the vast timber
resources of colonial North America. Chinking made of mud and other natural
materials filled in the gaps between logs, and different cultures developed distinct
techniques of corner notching to secure the logs in place.4 While single-pen cabins
of one square or rectangular room were initially most prominent, variations on the
plan developed and spread throughout the upland south, as pioneers moved south
along the Appalachian mountain chain.5

A strong tradition of log construction developed within the Great Smoky
Mountains, and these structures benefitted from more careful preservation in the
early twentieth century than many of the park’s other buildings. While log
construction was certainly used for houses, it was also adapted to the various

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outbuildings and secondary structures crucial to the mountain farms throughout the area. Typical farms included not just house and barns, but spring houses for keeping perishable foods, smokehouses, corn cribs, wood sheds, and small-scale mills.⁶

Southern Appalachian mountain residents depended on the abundant timber resources of the surrounding area. Chestnut wood was noted to be the most insect-proof and rot-resistant, and it grew so large that many cabins could be constructed from one or two trees. However, other builders preferred oak, and the chestnut blight of the early twentieth century quickly decimated the large tree’s population. Spruce, balsam, and poplar trees grew in the higher elevations, and such trees provided logs for the first cabins on Mount LeConte.⁷ Several forms of log construction were either prominent in or original to the Smokies, and their styles were later adapted to the twentieth century buildings of the LeConte Lodge. One adaptation specific to the Southern Appalachians was the cantilever barn, a two-story structure with an overhang on the second floor.⁸ Another common log plan was the dogtrot cabin, where two full square or rectangular log pens were separated by an outdoor passageway and connected by a single roof. Whatever the tree utilized for wood, the iteration of the plan, or the kind of building used, a variety of the log structures within the Smokies were deemed significant and selected for

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preservation upon the creation of the national park. As previously explored in this thesis, log construction was selected as the most significant building technique on the land within the national park’s boundaries.\(^9\) While it would be wrong to assume that regional structures were exclusively built of log, management practices enacted by National Park Service officials negated the significance of other construction methods, and often eliminated them completely.

The examples of log buildings scattered throughout the Park are not necessarily representative of the vast array of construction methods used in the Smokies. Both Paul Adams’s initial cabin on the Lodge premises and Jack Huff’s subsequent lodge buildings employed log construction, and the three multi-room lodge buildings that exist today are also built of log. The three log buildings (referred to in the attached surveys as Lodge 1, 2, and 3) all employ flat-hewn log construction with either half or full dovetail notching and projecting log ends. While dovetail notching was indeed utilized in the surrounding area’s nineteenth-century log buildings, it is also a difficult technique, requiring craftsmanship and careful attention. The application of dovetail notching in a contemporary era of expensive labor but accessible materials is representative of the developers’ conscious choice to align the Lodge with its surrounding context, despite the difficulty involved.

\(^9\) See Chapter 2 for a more full exploration of the National Park Service’s prioritization of log structures.
Another active choice is the recreation building's use of a cantilever. A cantilever is a structure where the second story of log projects approximately three feet out over the stacked-stone first story. Despite its 1971 construction, the recreation building harkens back to an idealized period of log construction, with logs exhibiting hand-hewn saw marks and notching that ranges from square, to dovetail, to saddle. Underneath both the cantilevered second story and the roof gables, round log ends project to compliment the overall aesthetic program.
Finally, the two smaller restroom structures are both constructed of neatly hewn logs with complex half-dovetail notching. The public pit privy (referred to in surveys as RR1) furthers its alignment with regional construction techniques, as it employs a dogtrot style plan. The pit privy is covered with a wood shingle-clad gable roof that runs the full length of both interior spaces and the inner hallway.
In constructing both the contemporary Lodge structures and its original buildings, LeConte Lodge designers have attempted to connected with the architectural roots of the surrounding area through log construction. At first, Paul Adams and Jack Huff might have considered log construction to be an efficient, convenient use of the surrounding materials. These early founders perhaps also drew on a latent familiarity with the region’s architecture. Now, in the buildings constructed throughout the later twentieth century, the log buildings represent an intentional adherence to antiquated construction methods.

Another typical architectural style employed in the LeConte Lodge buildings that can be viewed elsewhere in the Park is the use of wood-frame construction with wood shingles or board and batten siding. Developed as a result of the advent of wood frame construction, both shingles and board and batten siding serve as easy-to-fix systems of wall siding. While wood shingles were popularized as a high style technique in the late nineteenth century in New England, they have served as a widespread method of exterior covering throughout the United States. Board and batten siding is a similarly popular exterior siding, where wooden boards cover a structure’s framing system or lathe and vertical battens cover the boards’ seams. Both wood shingles and board and batten siding are appropriate techniques in areas where wood is a prolific building material, and the individual pieces of each system can be moved or replaced for easy maintenance.10 Wood shingle and board and batten siding are employed on a grand scale at the LeConte Lodge, and this style is

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also visible in the Elkmont community, another location within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Developed at the same time period as the LeConte Lodge, Elkmont serves as an interesting comparison for the Lodge and a necessary mention in discussing both historic preservation and the Park’s architectural context.

Similar to the LeConte Lodge, the twentieth-century communities in Elkmont were founded as outlets for regional outdoor recreation groups. As the Little River Lumber Company developed a railroad into the area for logging purposes, the logging company recognized the value of tourism in the area and added a passenger car to the lumber train. Beyond a method of access, the Little River Lumber Company also provided the land for the Elkmont communities, deeding previously forested areas to groups known as the Appalachian Club and the Wonderland Club. From 1910 throughout the 1920s, both clubs constructed resort communities including large clubhouse structures and smaller vacation cottages. On a level of historic preservation, the Elkmont structures serve as an interesting parallel to the National Park Service’s prioritization of log buildings and adaptation of such techniques into their own vernacular. While almost all other modern structures were removed upon the creation of the national park, the Elkmont buildings met a different fate. Similar to the LeConte Lodge, many citizens involved in the debate surrounding the National Park were involved in the Elkmont communities. Members of the Appalachian Club vehemently opposed the

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integration of their resort properties into the federal lands. After a long legal battle throughout the 1930s, landowners in both clubs were eventually offered long-term leases. Both Appalachian Club and Wonderland Club properties were acquired by the National Park for half the appraised land value, and lifetime leases were granted to the owners.\(^\text{12}\) By 1992, all property leases had terminated entirely, and ownership of the land reverted to the National Park Service. In 1994, the Wonderland Hotel, the Appalachian Clubhouse, and numerous cottages were placed on the National Register of Historic Places. However, in 2005, the Wonderland Hotel collapsed from a structural failure, and the wreckage was removed from the site. All structures will eventually be removed from the Wonderland Club section. The National Park Service announced plans to restore the Appalachian Clubhouse and eighteen cabins in the Appalachian Club area in 2009, with intentions to document and carefully remove the remaining structures.\(^\text{13}\) In 2014, Elkmont remains a somewhat haphazard conglomeration of structures. The National Register District exists as a small street lined by intact cottages, but other dilapidated cottages are scattered along the creek, not yet removed, but not preserved. The Elkmont communities, similar to the LeConte Lodge, serve as the few vestiges of twentieth-century architecture allowed to stand within the boundaries of the national park. Unlike the Lodge, however, Elkmont was never assumed to be a permanent fixture in the Park. It did not benefit from the Lodge’s

\(^{12}\) National Register of Historic Places. Section 8, page 10.

designation as a private concession for lodging, and was not allowed to further develop after the Park was created. The middle ground between the Lodge’s designated development and the other modern buildings’ prompt removal from the Park created challenges for Elkmont’s preservation. While LeConte, allowed to develop and evolve throughout the twentieth century, remains a functioning business with intact structures today, Elkmont has experienced piecemeal preservation practices. The Lodge’s structurally sound cabins and lodges stand in stark comparison to the historic cottages that are disintegrating into the Elkmont landscape today.

Returning to the lens of architectural styles, Elkmont’s buildings can also be compared to the LeConte Lodge. As modern wood frame construction became widespread and prominent styles such as Craftsman architecture stressed a return to nature and craftsmanship, both the LeConte Lodge and Elkmont were influenced by the architectural trends of the early twentieth century. The clubhouse complexes at the Appalachian and the Wonderland Club resorts were large-scale vernacular adaptations of Arts and Crafts techniques. Both Club complexes utilized balloon frame construction, with exteriors of board and batten siding. Board and batten siding was the most prominent exterior wall finish for the smaller cabins in the resorts, with full-width porches serving as another integral design element. Wood shingles were also utilized in several cottages throughout Elkmont. At the LeConte

15 National Register of Historic Places. Section 7, page 5.
Lodge, developers were similarly influenced by the era’s popular architectural styles. All seven guest cabins utilize the same exterior treatment of untreated cedar wood boards and battens, and the dining-hall and kitchen structure is covered in wide wood shingles. These decorative choices, while first related potentially to convenience of construction and maintenance, represent an adherence to the stylistic trends of the area. The use of board and batten and shingle siding throughout the LeConte Lodge identifies it as a contemporary of Elkmont: a complex of twentieth-century recreation structures that capitalized on the efficiency and aesthetics of wood-frame construction. However, because the LeConte Lodge became inextricably woven into the National Park Service’s bureaucratic system as a private concession, the Lodge was allowed to flourish and evolve over the decades.

Figure 5.12: Board and batten siding on one-room guest cabin. (Photograph by author)
Figure 5.13: Wood shingle siding and roof cladding on dining hall-kitchen structure. (Photograph by author)

Existing Conditions

The next step in evaluating the contemporary state of the LeConte Lodge is an assessment of the existing physical conditions of the individual buildings. Existing conditions refer to the physical state of the involved structure, with emphasis on structural integrity and potential mechanisms of decay. Traditional conditions assessments can involve a combination of visual and hands-on noninvasive inspection methods. In this circumstance, no other methods beyond visual assessment were employed. While conditions inspections often attempt to provide recommended courses of mitigation, this specific assessment’s purpose is to document each structure’s existing conditions and attempt to identify the causes of deterioration, revealing potential systemic issues but not recommending specific
remediation plans. As visible in the attached surveys, this conditions assessment was organized by the different elements of the overall building system. From the structure’s foundation, to its exterior envelope and roof system, each individual part was analyzed to identify physical integrity and sources of moisture penetration. Conclusions about the Lodge’s specific conditions were gathered through visual assessment during site visits performed in October 2013.

An analysis of the LeConte Lodge’s existing conditions allows for several conclusions to be drawn about the Lodge’s daily operations, the role of the National Park Service in the complex’s management, and the Lodge’s development over time. First, assessing the individual structures’ physical states serves as a means of evaluating the efficiency and success of the maintenance plans agreed upon by the concessioners and the National Park Service. As previously explored in the thesis, concessions agreements developed between Lodge operators and the National Park Service have outlined evolving expectations for regular maintenance. While expectations for structural maintenance were not fully documented upon the initial creation of the Park, they have evolved in contracts negotiated over the next decades.

Next, the physical conditions of the Lodge buildings illustrate the Lodge’s regular maintenance practices. While it is prescribed and inspected by the National Park Service, routine maintenance is performed solely by Lodge employees. The

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17 See Appendix A for the attached surveys.
Lodge must balance multiple priorities, operating as a private business with visitor comfort as its primary goal. The maintenance challenge is compounded by the fact that the Lodge is closed for operations for more than three months of the year, and only one caretaker occupies the complex from December through mid-March.

The buildings’ conditions can also serve as a means of evaluating the historic preservation priorities of the National Park Service towards the historic structures of the Lodge. However, this cannot be achieved through the expected path; while historic according to the National Park Service’s standards, the Lodge buildings exist within a designated development subzone, instead of a historic preservation subzone. This designation from the 1981 General Management Plan aligns the Lodge with the Park’s other visitor services structures, instead of the buildings designated for strict preservation. Because of this, they are subjected to a lower level of routine maintenance than the designated historic buildings, including a more prominent prioritization of replacement over repair. Therefore, the Lodge buildings can represent the National Park Service’s preservation priorities in that they are not perceived to be strictly historic, despite their age.

Finally, the LeConte Lodge’s conditions are representative of the physical surroundings of Mount LeConte. Reaching a very high elevation in a climate known for prolific precipitation, Mount LeConte is subject to extreme climactic conditions. The cabins and lodges of the complex are subject to several feet of snow, regular

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rain, and high humidity in the summer. The Lodge is also situated on a dramatically sloping ground plane, where the elevation slopes downward towards the north, and buildings are arranged to conform to such elevation changes. Unpainted wood and stone, the primary materials chosen for the Lodge’s buildings, are subject to inevitable processes of decay that are hastened by heavy exposure to moisture. Due to all of these factors, the LeConte Lodge’s contemporary conditions are representative of a delicate balance between numerous factors: the basic expectations and minimal enforcement of the National Park Service, the Lodge operators’ prioritization of routine maintenance and everyday visitor use, and extreme climactic conditions from its physical surroundings.

To explore some specific applications of the LeConte Lodge’s existing conditions, it is necessary to return to a quote from a safety inspection performed in 1978. Recognizing the problems inherent in the Lodge’s potential removal, a National Park Service official stated that “until we can decide whether the facilities should stay or go, it appears we must contend with a patchwork operation.”\(^{19}\) The current state of the LeConte Lodge reflects the patchwork nature of repairs performed on the individual structures throughout the late twentieth century. On the whole, the Lodge exists on a middle level of conditions; some buildings are almost entirely intact and pristine, while some show severe instances of physical and biological decay. The following conditions assessment is a general exploration

of selected elements from the Lodge’s buildings, and serves as a compliment to the more specific details and documentation provided by the attached surveys. While the following text explores the guest cabins, lodges, and public buildings in more depth, each secondary structure is also documented in the surveys.

As a whole, the Lodge buildings’ foundations most prominently display the patchwork system of repairs and modifications over time, mostly driven by aesthetic goals. Each of the seven small guest cabins and the three multi-room lodge buildings feature foundations of concrete masonry units, covered with stacked stone-and-mortar piles for aesthetic purposes. These foundation systems range from haphazardly composed and in poor condition to fully intact in the various buildings. In the smaller guest cabins, the stone piles masking the concrete masonry units rest directly on the ground or soil, and are exposed to heavy moisture intrusion from the ground. Because of this, several cabins show substantial vegetative growth on the stone piles. However, the concrete masonry units behind the stones remain relatively intact, although the stone pile layers could potentially undermine the foundation system by locking in outside moisture. Whatever their conditions, these stone-and-mortar piles serve solely aesthetic purposes; they bear no loads from the buildings, instead serving only to mask the concrete masonry units that do not conform to the Lodge’s rustic stylistic program.
The foundations of several guest cabins are strongly indicative of a haphazard approach to repairs, as they utilize a combination of stone piles, concrete blocks, wooden wedges, and sill logs underneath the structure. This indicates that at various points, foundation support was deemed necessary but applied in a piecemeal fashion. Cabin 9 is most representative of the damaging effects of moisture intrusion from the ground. Located furthest away from the rest of the Lodge complex, Cabin 9 was constructed on a portion of land with a severely sloping groundline. Because of this, several corners of the cabin’s foundation demonstrate severe moisture intrusion and rising damp through vegetative growth and staining.
The larger lodge buildings’ foundations also feature similar conditions. Due to its close proximity to the ground on the southern elevation and the vertical orientation of the wood grain, Lodge 1’s sill logs show the effects of moisture intrusion through rot. Some stone piles attached to the underlying concrete masonry units are in pristine condition, such as those on Lodge 2’s south elevation, but others show substantial biological growth near the groundline. On the whole, the foundations’ conditions are marked by the haphazard use of several material components, a close proximity to the frequently damp ground, and a dramatically sloping elevation.

The Lodge buildings’ exterior walls feature both log construction and board and batten or shingle siding. Whichever method chosen to enclose the cabins, lodges, and secondary structures, the use of wood is defining factor in both aesthetics and conditions. Wood is subjected to a specific array of mechanisms of...
decay, many of which can be viewed on the Lodge’s buildings. The guest cabins all utilize board and batten siding, constructed of a similar wood that is subject to a discoloration and decay over time. This grey staining due to age is compounded by the siding’s frequent exposure to rain and snow, which facilitates a biological growth visible in green staining and moss on many cabins. The staining can also be attributed to ultraviolet radiation, an inevitable byproduct of excessive sunlight.

Figure 5.16: Minor staining and discoloration on guest cabin siding. (Photograph by author)

Many exterior walls on the guest cabins also show the effects of corrosion from the nails used in construction, as staining is visible in a weeping pattern underneath the nails. Dark staining is also evident underneath the roof overhangs on several guest cabins, where rain and other moisture run-off has infiltrated the connections between roofs and exterior walls.
The recreation building displays the worst conditions of the log structures. The bottom level, marked by a stacked stone exterior, is covered in vegetative growth, with dramatically cracking mortar between the stones. On its south elevation, substantial rot is visible in the bottom two log courses, and both logs have been identified as in strong need of full replacement. Moisture runoff is visible underneath the north and south roof gables and the overhangs on each side. Underneath the recreation building’s south roof gable, the decorative shingle siding is cracked, with missing shingles and staining at connections. The log’s projecting ends show a green staining. Also visible in the notching is the swelling and contracting caused by moisture intrusion, that has warped the logs to the extent that some connections do not fully fit together.
While they were constructed earlier than the recreation building, the other multi-room lodge structures feature more intact log walls. Some staining exists underneath roof gables and on logs that rest directly on the groundline, but none of the three lodge buildings show the destructive moisture intrusion visible in the recreation building. Out of the various siding materials used on the lodge buildings, the shingle siding that encloses the dining hall and kitchen building has fared the most successfully. While the shingles show some minor staining underneath roof overhangs, they remain even, un-warped, and generally intact. The buildings' exterior walls show one of the major challenges inherent in adhering to a coherent aesthetic program throughout an entire complex of structures; wood, while attractive, is strongly susceptible to physical and biological mechanisms of decay
introduced by moisture. Mitigating the effects of rain and ground moisture is a difficult task and requires regular maintenance.

Perhaps because they have been the recipients of regular necessary maintenance and replacement, the roof systems on the cabins and lodge buildings are in relatively good condition. Throughout the guest cabins, the shingles show no signs of rot or heavy moisture intrusion. Some shingles are broken or mildly warped, but very few have missing elements. Some moss and vegetative growth can be seen on cabins such as Cabin 6.

![Roof shingles with minor vegetative growth, Cabin 6. (Photograph by author)](image)

**Figure 5.19:** Roof shingles with minor vegetative growth, Cabin 6. (Photograph by author)

Cabin 9 features the roof system with the most causes for concern, as nearby trees rest upon the shingle cladding and pose a threat to the framing underneath. The dining hall and kitchen’s roof is clad in larger wood shingles that match the building’s siding, and multiple connection points between the complex plan’s many
gables necessitate attentive flashing and drainage valleys. However, while some corrosion is evident in these metal drains, the flashing is successful in keeping connections free of visible staining and leakage. Skylights are cut into the rooflines of both the dining hall and kitchen and the recreation building, but they are also reinforced with adequate flashing to keep the roof cladding free of run-off. Similar to the cabins, the multi-room lodges demonstrate relatively intact roof systems, with little vegetative growth or missing shingles. Such good conditions visible throughout the Lodge’s roofs can only indicate their maintenance has been prioritized over other building systems, in order to keep moisture from penetrating interior surfaces and creating a negative experience for guests.

![Figure 5.20: Minor corrosion from metal screens on window trim. (Photograph by author)](image)

Several smaller elements of the Lodge’s building systems are in much better condition, due to regular maintenance and recent additions. Because doors and windows are non-structural elements, they can be easily modified and replaced over
the years. Such frequent replacement is also compounded by the concessioner's less strong prioritization of the buildings’ original historic fabric. This fact is reinforced by the concessions negotiations of the 1970s and 1980s, which document several modifications of the cabins’ and lodges’ doors and windows. Throughout the complex, the doors and windows are the elements in the most consistently good condition. On the guest cabins, the most negative elements visible are some evidence of moisture run-off under the window trim and visible corrosion from the attached wire screens. However, the flush panel doors and divided-light window panes are intact.

Throughout the Lodge complex, porches are also in relatively good condition. Full-width porches are attached to each of the guest cabins, covered with shed roofs. Because they are protected by wide eave overhangs, the porches show very little moisture intrusion. A porch was added to the east elevation of the recreation building in the 1980s. While the porch itself remains intact, heavy moisture intrusion and rot are visible in the connection between the porch and the east exterior wall. Moisture intrusion is also evident on the porches of the multi-room lodges, as green staining follows the path of water run-off from the porch floor. These conditions reinforce how new additions to structures must be carefully detailed to prevent maintenance issues and introduce mechanisms of decay that harm the more historic fabric.
The elements of the LeConte Lodge complex that demonstrate better conditions are the result of regular maintenance, performed on a routine basis to ensure visitor comfort. Lodge employees must achieve a balance of regular structural maintenance activities, while also prioritizing tasks directly related to visitor services. While the National Park Service performs annual inspections of the Lodge’s structures, their role is more supervisory and does not involve any active intervention with structural maintenance on a regular basis. While smaller elements of the cabins and lodges receive regular work, less accessible elements of the buildings’ systems should be given the same dedicated attention. Although elements like doors, windows, and roof shingles can be modified or replaced more easily than foundations or exterior siding, the cabins and lodges should be regarded as an interrelated system where each part plays an integral role. Future efforts at mitigating the Lodge’s mechanisms of decay should attempt to address the intrusion

Figure 5.21: Staining from moisture run-off on Lodge 3’s porch. (Photograph by author)
of moisture from the ground, underneath rooflines, and from run-off from other
surfaces. However, the divided attentions of the Lodge employees are compounded
by a demanding climate and aesthetically driven construction materials prone to
moisture-related decay. The challenges of the National Park Service’s maintenance
expectations, accommodating heavy visitor use, and a challenging physical
environment make the LeConte Lodge subject to a set of complex and constantly
changing existing conditions.

Through both aesthetic and material attributes, the contemporary LeConte Lodge is inherently connected with its cultural and physical surroundings. By
exploring the Lodge’s stylistic elements and physical state, one can fully understand
the context in which it developed and the conditions that determine its evolution.
On a cultural level, evaluation of the Lodge’s stylistic decisions serves to align it with
the architectural threads that prevail in the surrounding region, whether they are
nineteenth-century log construction or Craftsman-style cottage details. The Lodge’s
architectural elements are clearly influenced by the full continuum of styles that
have prevailed through the Great Smoky Mountains over time. On a physical level,
assessment of the Lodge’s existing conditions portrays the complex as dependent
upon both the immediate demands of the climate, and the actions taken by
individuals in response. Conditions also illustrate that both aesthetics and the
visitor’s experience are prioritized over preservation of the lodge buildings’ original
fabric. However, this value set has served the Lodge well, as the buildings remain in
good condition and the area portrays a neat, consistent aesthetic narrative.
CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSIONS

Three factors chart the LeConte Lodge's evolution within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park: the overall history of the park itself, the Lodge's historic development, and the complex's contemporary state. The body of this thesis explores the aforementioned topics and presents analysis of how the Lodge represents the National Park Service’s evolving priorities in historic preservation. Several conclusions can be derived from analyses of the Lodge's history and current state gleaned in the thesis research. The first conclusion is that as with any case study, the LeConte Lodge is a singular case within the greater scheme of the national park, not representative of the other historic structures within the park. This individual nature derives from several elements of the Lodge's development, explored in depth in this chapter. Second, the Lodge is representative of the evolution of concessions management within the National Park Service. The final conclusions revolve around the Lodge's cultural importance within the Smokies. Not only is the Lodge inextricably involved in the park's cultural narrative, but also its continued existence and architectural styles are representative of a selective narrative employed by the National Park Service in their management of the park. These conclusions lead to a final argument for the LeConte Lodge's continued existence, and several questions for further research.
Following an overview of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park’s overall history, an exploration of the LeConte Lodge’s development, and a representation of the Lodge’s contemporary state, this chapter serves as a conclusion to the thesis. The initial thesis set out with several goals that evolved over the course of in-depth research on the Lodge. First, the thesis intended to connect the LeConte Lodge with the cultural threads that surrounded its origins, including the twentieth-century tourism movement and the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Second, the thesis intended to utilize the LeConte Lodge as a lens through which to explore historic preservation practices enacted by the National Park Service in one specific national park. To achieve this, the thesis created a narrative of the LeConte Lodge’s structural and managerial development. This history component was complimented by a full exploration and documentation of the contemporary Lodge. Through the research process, these goals evolved in many ways. In attempting to answer the first research question and connect the Lodge to its context, it became obvious that the Lodge was indeed inherently related to tourism and the Park movement. However, this fact has been substantially explored in previous literature on the Smokies, and little new information was required to fully portray such a connection. While this thesis certainly relies on the connection between the LeConte Lodge, early tourism, and the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park as a crucial element in drawing conclusions, it was not necessary to find new research to reinforce that foundation.
On the other hand, using the LeConte Lodge as a lens to further understand the historic preservation principles of the National Park Service became a complex and interesting undertaking. Upon research of the Lodge and its development within the National Park Service, it became obvious that the LeConte Lodge is an individual entity. Before exploring the factors that contribute to the Lodge’s unique nature, it must be noted that such nuanced individuality becomes the case with any specialized case study. The fact that the Lodge is distinct from the other historic structures of the Smokies does not diminish its significance or detract from its wide-reaching implications. However, it is important to precede the conclusions engendered by this thesis with a brief description of what sets the LeConte Lodge apart. Several factors contribute to the Lodge’s unique nature. First, the realities of the Lodge’s establishment make it different from any other group of structures within the Park. As explored in the thesis, the LeConte Lodge was established with a national park in the Smokies in mind. Carrying this idea further, the Lodge was even created for the national park movement, constructed as a rustic and aesthetically pleasing showpiece to house visiting members of the federal government and the National Park Service. The initial plans for this thesis identified the Lodge’s existence as the only operating business within the Smokies to pre-date the national park’s creation as a significant element. However, it must be acknowledged that the Lodge was mostly created for the Park effort; it could even be considered a precursor to other National Park Service structures. The Lodge is indeed an outlier within the Park, operating in its originally intended purpose instead of displayed as
a museum like the other historic structures. To achieve this goal, it has developed alongside the ideological and physical goals of the National Park Service.

Another element contributing to the LeConte Lodge’s singularity is its ownership and management over the course of its development. The LeConte Lodge is a private business, operating as a concession to the National Park Service. While the land on Mount LeConte is owned by the federal government, the Lodge itself is not and has not ever been owned by the National Park Service. This fact lends it to a distinct difference between the Lodge and the other historic structures of the Park. While the National Park Service might be responsible for management of the land, the organization does not perform routine maintenance on the Lodge’s structures. The National Park Service’s annual maintenance inspections of the lodge complex cannot serve as a full parallel to their regular preservation practices on the historic structures within the Smokies. However, much insight can be gleaned about the National Park Service’s structural management priorities by comparing the Lodge to other properties. While the overarching guidelines for the Lodge are not the same as those applied to more traditional historic buildings, they serve as an extension of the National Park Service’s overall perspective. Another element of the Lodge’s singularity is the fact that the LeConte Lodge has never owned its own land; it originated on land owned by a private timber company, and was transferred to the federal government alongside the Park’s full creation in 1934. Instead of carefully managing land of its own, the Lodge operators have always served as stewards of land owned by private and federal organizations. The LeConte Lodge’s private
ownership and maintenance makes it a singular entity within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park; it originated as a private business and has never been operated by the federal government, even when the National Park Service assumed ownership of so much else within the area.

The LeConte Lodge’s purpose and use also lend to its individual nature. The Lodge was created as a temporary service for visitors to Mount LeConte, and its motivations have always been to facilitate backcountry tourism in the Smokies. The Lodge’s period of uncertainty in the 1970s and 1980s motivated a clear expression of the LeConte Lodge’s significance to the local community. In local newspapers, letters to the National Park Service, and public opinion meetings, private citizens and official Lodge supporters alike cited the Lodge as providing a resource unavailable anywhere else. Were the Lodge to no longer exist, thousands of visitors each year would be deprived of such a convenient avenue to experience the Smoky Mountains. Because the Lodge’s sole purpose revolves around accommodating heavy visitor use, it developed within the Park’s framework as an area specifically designated for development. Therefore, the National Park Service has always regarded the LeConte Lodge with a perspective influenced by development and use, instead of as a group of historic buildings that must be preserved. While the Lodge’s primary function has always been a crucial factor in the National Park Service’s attitudes towards the complex, its function has also allowed it to remain on the landscape.
These different factors come together to define the LeConte Lodge as a singular entity within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Although several factors contribute to the Lodge’s individuality, such is the nature with an in-depth case study, and the Lodge must be studied for its implications on the National Park Service’s concessions management and preservation practices. While it has never been officially regarded as a complex of historic buildings, several cabins and lodges are certainly historic by the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards. However, since the Lodge has been operated as a development zone and a private business since its origins, the complex’s buildings have been allowed to undergo numerous modifications, additions, and removals. Such structural evolution is inevitable when attempting to accommodate increasing visitor use, but the Lodge buildings’ many changes make it difficult to classify any one structure as historic, at least according to traditional standards of preservation. On the other hand, the Lodge’s very existence within the Park’s landscape makes it necessary to consider alongside the other structures designated as historic by the National Park Service. When all the other modern structures (such as the wood-frame houses in several communities or the temporary timber camps) were being eliminated from the Park’s boundaries, there was never a question as to whether the LeConte Lodge would stay or not. The only time that the Lodge’s existence within the Park came into question was in the 1970s and 1980s, when it was already too ingrained within the National Park Service’s system and the regional culture to be removed successfully. While it can’t stand as a full representation of the Park’s other historic resources, substantial
insight can still be gleaned from a connection between the two. Implications generated from the Lodge’s continued existence can extend out to create a greater understanding of National Park Service’s preservation activities. An exploration of its history and contemporary state concludes that the Lodge occupies a significant place within the Great Smoky Mountains.

The LeConte Lodge’s existence within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park allows for several cultural implications. The Lodge did not originate in the nineteenth century alongside the Park’s other actively preserved structures. However, it has grown to occupy a prominent role in the overall cultural narrative of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. From its origins, the Lodge was identified as significant to the Park’s story. The Lodge is often described as a crucial factor in the Park’s creation, originating as a single log cabin where government officials were charmed into designating that specific portion of the Southern Appalachians as a federal Park. Throughout its existence, the Lodge has been home to multiple smaller anecdotes that bring character to its buildings and color its history. From anecdotes about Paul Adams’s dog’s crucial role in the first Lodge’s construction, to tales of Jack Huff carrying his mother up the mountain on his back to view his handiwork, area residents place a high value on the stories surrounding the Lodge. On a personal level, regional citizens also developed their own connections with the Lodge over time. Located approximately fifty miles from Knoxville, residents of the nearby city have developed a strong attachment to the Lodge as an element of East Tennessee’s culture. The culmination of such ingrained
devotion that has been engendered towards the Lodge was voiced vehemently in the 1970s and 1980s, when it was slated for removal. This period of uncertainty not only provided an avenue for people to voice their appreciation for the Lodge, but also furthered the region’s passion for the site. Once designated as permanent in the mid 1980s, the Lodge experienced an increased demand for visitation that has been sustained to this date. While the LeConte Lodge did not originate alongside the other historic structures of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, it is now fully enmeshed in the Park’s mythologies. It contributed to the Park’s origins, has been used by generations of regional tourists, and remains incredibly popular today. For these reasons, the LeConte Lodge must be regarded as culturally significant and irreplaceable within the Park and should be treated as such.

The LeConte Lodge’s evolution as a private business, operating as a concession to the National Park Service, also holds strong implications. As previously explored in this thesis, the LeConte Lodge’s operations are defined by the fact that it originated as a private business and evolved over the following decades as a concession, existing within the overall framework of the National Park Service. The Lodge’s development within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park represents the complexities of operating a private business on federally owned land. One element of this is the existence of multiple levels of authority over one site. These different perspectives, assuming shared responsibility for one area, can lead to a lack of action. While this is not a major issue at the LeConte Lodge, the involvement of multiple perspectives could result in no single party assuming
responsibility for problems, possibly causing deferred maintenance of the buildings or an inattention to the landscape surrounding the Lodge. Multiple levels of authority also inevitably have different priorities for a site. While the National Park Service might prioritize general safety requirements and conservation of Mount LeConte’s natural resources, the Lodge struggles to balance numerous other demands. The Lodge must accommodate heavy visitation, while performing regular maintenance on the buildings and landscape and still meeting the expectations of the National Park Service. The Lodge’s experience from the 1920s to the contemporary day reflects another general conclusion that can be drawn about concessions within the National Park Service: each concession, and each site, is different. The nuances between sites necessitate an acceptance of the complexities in expectations between the two organizations. Represented by the frequent adjustments to maintenance plans at the Lodge, regular modifications to the expectations between the Park Service and the concessioner are necessary. Because each site is distinct, no single overarching contract should apply to every concession. Also, these evolving expectations should be outwardly articulated in writing, as seen in the contract negotiations between the Lodge operators and the National Park Service. The relationship between the National Park Service and their many concessioners must be one of open communication, with a respect for the complexities of each private business and each site. Finally, the existence of multiple levels of authority over the Lodge’s land makes it important to note the varying levels of success of each involved party. While the National Park Service has
been lacking in attention to the site’s historic nature, it must be emphasized that the Lodge concessioners have achieved successful results in focusing on everyday operations. It is interesting to note that the National Park Service does not oversee routine structural maintenance at the Lodge (as they do with the park’s other historic sites), but this can be interpreted as a positive fact: the concessioner has not only managed routine maintenance, but the demands of heavy tourist visitation, while also meeting the expectations of overarching federal guidelines.

The LeConte Lodge’s implications on the historic preservation practices of the National Park Service within the Smokies are also complex and multi-faceted. The multiple specific aspects of the Lodge’s existence are previously explored in this chapter. However, the connection between the Lodge and historic preservation within the Park requires a bit more interpretation. As a whole, historic preservation has been a complex discipline as it has evolved over the twentieth century, originating with a more narrow focus and encompassing more cultural nuances as it has evolved. Inevitably, this complexity is the case within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, as well.

The most recent literature on the Smokies places a strong emphasis on the historiography involved in the Park’s story, and this thesis has reinforced such a concept.¹ The Park’s development has been subject to a selective narrative, constructed by involved parties from Park boosters, to early historians and preservationists, to National Park Service officials. On both ideological and physical

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¹ See Chapter 2 for a review of the existing literature on the Park.
levels, the LeConte Lodge reflects this selective narrative. The mentality surrounding the Park’s creation in the 1920s and 1930s represented the land as a pristine natural resource, populated only by isolated mountain people. The existence of modern twentieth-century communities within the region was downplayed as the potential Park was promoted, and their stories have not been valued as highly as the Park’s triumphant narrative. After the Great Smoky Mountains National Park was created, National Park Service officials enacted a program of selective structural preservation, prioritizing the cultural thread of early pioneer culture. Through a haphazard process, employees isolated only the Park’s log construction as significant, reconstructing museum versions of typical communities and eliminating all other vestiges of modern construction. The only twentieth-century structures allowed to remain within the Park’s boundaries factored into the overall selective narrative, whether they contributed to the Park’s origins or, as in Elkmont, provided vacation spots for some of the Park’s major donors. To remain within the Smokies as an example of modern construction meant to become enmeshed within the overall system and story of the National Park Service. Not only a private business operating within the National Park Service’s structure, the LeConte Lodge also became a mythical site and a symbol of the Park’s creation.

On a stylistic level, the LeConte Lodge also represents the National Park Service’s preservation mentality that favored log construction and other antiquated methods. The architectural details applied throughout the Lodge, from the guest
cabins to the secondary structures, were drawn from the specific vernacular vocabulary selected to represent the Great Smoky Mountains. While they are not necessarily representative of the full range of construction methods used in the Smokies, such details were employed by Lodge operators to align the complex with its context. The log structures that were initially selected for preservation later served as significant influence for new construction. The buildings that have resulted from this development create an idyllic narrative, where the only humans residing in the region were generations of pioneers, living in relative isolation until the National Park Service triumphantly stepped into preserve the area’s natural resources in perpetuity. This perspective creates a sense of false historicism. As a contemporary tourist visits the Smokies’ historic sites, he or she could easily perceive that such pioneer traditions were the only cultural threads to exist within the region. Because the Lodge structures aesthetically conform to that narrative, they do not represent the full spectrum of buildings and culture that have existed within the Park. While conclusions drawn from the LeConte Lodge’s treatment and evolution have limited applications to the rest of the Park’s historic structures, the Lodge’s existence does factor into the overall historiography constructed by the National Park Service.

From the Lodge’s singular nature, to its reflection of government concessions management, to its representation of the National Park Service’s creation of a selective narrative, the factors involved in the LeConte Lodge’s significance form the story of a complex, nuanced site. The characteristics of the Lodge’s history and
continued existence, while distinct from those details inherent in the Smokies’ other historic sites, have allowed for it to continue existing in the park. Instead of being subjected to the strict preservation regulations applied to the park’s other historic resources, the Lodge has been allowed to develop in response to necessity and circumstance. Instead of being preserved piecemeal like the cottages in the Elkmont Historic District, the Lodge buildings have never been officially regarded as historic structures. However, the Lodge stands as a strong contrast to both the officially preserved structures and the Elkmont communities: it still operates in its original purpose. The LeConte Lodge represents a contemporary trend in historic preservation theory, where continued use and habitation of historic structures are considered more productive than strict regulation. Although the specific nuances of the Lodge’s historic fabric have not been strictly preserved, the Lodge remains standing on the landscape, alive with history, and greatly beloved by the surrounding region. While the actual structures have been modified to accommodate heavy use, the Lodge complex itself still retains several of the elements established as critical to a historic site. It demonstrates a historic association with the park’s origins, while maintaining integrity in its layout, architectural campaign, and surroundings. The LeConte Lodge is a strong example of the benefits of continued use for historic structures. In the future, the National Park Service must not lose sight of the Lodge’s original purpose: facilitating visitor enjoyment of the Great Smoky Mountains. Instead of restoring the site to a particular period or attempting to halt time and preserve the Lodge’s contemporary
state, the LeConte Lodge should be allowed to remain in a designated development zone. The Lodge’s significance lies not only in its singular nature, but also in almost seventy years of continued operation. This operation has been successful in maintaining the Lodge as a prominent element of the park’s cultural narrative thus far, and should be allowed to continue until new factors arise.

One element of the site’s treatment in the future could be the creation of a new, specialized zone in the area surrounding the Lodge on Mount LeConte. As previously mentioned, the Lodge is currently located within a specific “development zone” in the park’s overarching management plan, while the park’s other historic structures exist within “historic preservation zones” and “historic land management zones.” These different zones govern the basic maintenance and management principles of each portion of land within the park. While further research into the nuances of management zones within national parks is necessary, it would strongly benefit the Lodge’s future to combine recognition of a site’s historic fabric while also allowing for the structural development necessary to sustain a thriving hospitality business. A new type of zone, designated specifically for the Lodge, would promote the preservation of the historic fabric of both the overall site and the individual buildings of the complex. However, the new zone would also recognize the Lodge’s need to grow in size and modify its buildings to accommodate visitor use. Future research into the National Park Service’s management of other historic concessions, such as those in Yosemite and Yellowstone National Parks, could generate further insight into the requirements for such a new zone.
Alongside these conclusions, it is necessary to briefly explore some more general recommendations for the Lodge's future treatment. After a full exploration of the Lodge's history, it has become clear that the LeConte Lodge has never been regarded as a true historic resource within the Park. This is highlighted not only by the lack of academic literature on the site's history, but also in the Lodge complex itself. Beyond a small display of historic photographs in the recreation building, there are no other visible references to the Lodge's significance today. Whether fulfilled through interpretive programs, lectures, or simply more signage, the LeConte Lodge's historic roots should be represented more clearly on the site. More attentive archiving of the Lodge’s history could also serve to make such information more accessible to the everyday visitor, perhaps including some information on where to seek out other resources. These goals could be achieved by the Lodge operators and employees, but more official recognition of the Lodge as a historic complex could also be enacted by the National Park Service. While a nomination to the National Register of Historic Places might hinder the Lodge’s development goals, some form of official recognition of the Lodge’s history would contribute to the overall narrative of the Park.

Finally, it is important to address several questions generated over the course of researching this thesis. In addressing the preservation practices of the National Park Service within the Great Smoky Mountains, this thesis has generated a substantial amount of questions that could be explored through future research. First, it is interesting to posit the notion of when, if ever, the Lodge buildings will be
regarded as historic structures by the National Park Service, and what factors would have to change for these buildings to be considered historic structures. Were they designated as historic by a National Register nomination, it is also interesting to consider whether such a designation would change the practices of the concessioner or the Lodge buildings themselves. On a similar level, further research could shed light on where the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for historic preservation enter into the National Park Service’s perspective on the Lodge. The research performed for this thesis has indicated that they have not been applied to the Lodge buildings, even though some of them certainly date to more than fifty years old. Whether in preparing a National Register nomination or fully employing the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards, both applications of federal preservation practices would require some statement of significance or an evaluation of the Lodge’s integrity. While this thesis has attempted to contribute to such a goal, an official project would be necessary for the National Park Service to fully acknowledge the LeConte Lodge as a historic site.

Further research could also contribute interesting insight into the management of the LeConte Lodge in comparison to the other public historic sites under the National Park Service’s direct management. On a regional level, the Lodge’s treatment could be more actively compared to the other historic sites within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The LeConte Lodge could also be analyzed alongside the other historic concessions within the National Park system, including the historic lodges of Yellowstone and Yosemite National Parks. Finally,
the Lodge could be compared to the historic sites directly managed by the National Park Service; future research could interpret whether the LeConte Lodge is evaluated differently from the Park Service’s more traditional historic resources.

The evolution of the LeConte Lodge within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park reinforces the final conclusion gleaned from this research: there exists a profound need for more nuanced guidelines for the treatment of historic structures within the National Park Service’s lands. Due to the demands of balancing both natural and cultural resources and the multiple levels of authority often involved in management, national parks are interesting examples of historic preservation. However, each individual park and site has evolved under different cultural, historic, and legal influences, and an overarching guideline for historic preservation will never address the complexities involved in the national parks.

Another challenge lies in the National Park Service’s role as a major enforcer of historic preservation guidelines. The National Park Service is the federal guiding force in regulating both private and public historic preservation throughout the United States. However, within their own lands, the organization’s programs and priorities are not necessarily the model for preservation best practices. Calling attention to the potential inconsistencies in the National Park Service’s management of its own historic sites reinforces a question that this thesis has attempted to answer in the small microcosm of one site, in one specific Park: in their own lands, to whom is the National Park Service held accountable in terms of historic preservation? Such questions could be addressed through further research into the
National Park Service’s preservation practices. However, as this concentrated research on the LeConte Lodge has proved, each site within each national park has evolved in an individual way. While the Lodge’s inherent significance and cultural heritage rests on its continued use, other sites draw significance from other sources. Only with full recognition of the inherent complexities of historic sites within the country’s national parks can each site be treated with a true respect for its historic integrity.
APPENDIX
Appendix: Individual Building Surveys

Performed by: Lindsay Lanois                                                        LeConte Lodge
October 2013                                                                        Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Tennessee

This section serves as an appendix to the thesis entitled The LeConte Lodge: A Lens for the Evolution and Development of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, written by Lindsay Lanois. This thesis was produced in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Historic Preservation for the Graduate Schools of Clemson University and College of Charleston.

The appendix documents results from a survey performed in October 2013 at the LeConte Lodge. The LeConte Lodge is located on Mount LeConte, within the Tennessee portion of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Through on-site experience, written documentation, and detailed photography, the survey intended to record the physical details and existing conditions of each building of the LeConte Lodge.

The following sheet serves as a plan view of the site, with a key corresponding to the number and page number of each individual building on the complex.

Each structure’s portion of the survey consists of a locator map with the building highlighted in red. The first page includes general information regarding the building’s construction dates and use. The first page also features an architectural description, with details on each individual element of the building system.

The second portion of the survey is documentation of the building’s existing conditions. The same individual building elements used in the first portion of the survey are examined for signs of physical, biological, and structural decay. Each building system element is attributed a rating to describe its level of structural integrity. A rating of 1 indicates the poorest condition, unsafe or unsound, necessitating immediate work. A rating of 3 indicates fair condition, with some evident issues but requiring a minor amount of maintenance. A rating of 5 indicates good condition, with zero or very few problems. All conclusions on structural conditions are based on visual, non-invasive assessment.

The third portion of the survey presents photographic documentation of the buildings and various details. The photographs were taken on the same site visits in October 2013.
Appendix: Individual Building Surveys
Performed by: Lindsay Lanois
LeConte Lodge
October 2013
Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Tennessee

L1: Lodge 1 • Page 185
L2: Lodge 2 • Page 159
L3: Lodge 3 • Page 193
C4: Cabin 4 • Page 156
C5: Cabin 5 • Page 159
C6: Cabin 6 • Page 162
C7: Cabin 7 • Page 165
C8: Cabin 8 • Page 168
C9: Cabin 9 • Page 171
C10: Cabin 10 • Page 174
Wood Shed • Page 206
Food Storage • Page 209
NPS: NPS Quarters • Page 197
Rec. Bldg: Recreation Building/Office • Page 181
Kitchen-Dining Hall • Page 177

EQ1: Emp. Quarters 1 • Page 212
EQ2: Emp. Quarters 2 • Page 215
EQ3: Emp. Quarters 3 • Page 218
EQ4: Emp. Quarters 4 • Page 221
EQ5: Emp. Quarters 5 • Page 224
EQ6: Emp. Quarters 6 • Page 227

RR1: Restroom 1 • Page 200
RR2: Restroom 2 • Page 203
**Architectural Description:** Cabin 4 is a one-room, one-story wood frame cabin with board and batten siding, a gable roof clad in wood shingles, and a one-story porch, covered with a shed roof, that extends the full width of the east façade.

**Property Modifications:** Porch, hardware, interior paneling, log step to north door

**Property Description**

**Foundation:** Combination of logs on the soil, CMU blocks, and unhewn stone-and-mortar piles (especially located at the corners of the structure to mask concrete masonry units)

**Chimney:** n/a

**Exterior Walls:** Wood frame structure with vertical board-and-batten siding. Wood (possibly cedar) used in siding is relatively untreated and unfinished, with visible knots, deformations, and nails.

**Doors/Windows:** All doors constructed in same wood as siding; north elevation has a flush panel door and west elevation has one flush panel door leading to porch; east facade has one vertical two-light window with thick wooden frame and covered in chicken wire.

**Porch:** One-story porch attached to cabin’s west elevation, extends the full width of the west façade, covered with a wood shingle roof with exposed rafter tails and a wide eave overhang. Porch is enclosed by three larger wood posts on the west façade and rests on short wood piers that extend to the groundline and logs.

**Roof:** Gable runs north-south; approximately two layers of cedar shingle cladding on wood sheathing; wood shingles are uneven sizes
Conditions Assessment

**Foundation:** Combination of stones, logs, CMUs, and superficial stone piles. Lots of vegetation and biogrowth on stones, but foundation systems rest very close to groundline and in direct plane of drainage. Haphazard nature of foundation system makes it seem like they potentially needed more support, but maybe didn’t take the most lasting path.

**Chimney:** n/a

**Exterior Walls:** Effects of corrosion visible in weeping underneath nails on south elevation; wood discoloration under shallow roof overhang on south elevation, indicates some sort of moisture intrusion; biogrowth and wood staining visible on north elevation; similar wood discoloration underneath east exterior roof overhang.

**Doors/Windows:** Heavy vegetation surrounds north door; east window shows some corrosion around chicken wire’s connections to frame

**Porch:** All elements of the porch are in good condition, especially due to the wide shed roof overhang. Stainless steel fasteners are visible on the porch support piers

**Roof:** Some shingles are broken or missing but wood is in decent condition, no visible signs of rot

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Messages in Architecture

Untreated wood siding and shingles complement rustic nature of cabin; purposeful eschewing of modern electricity or heating systems employed to connect cabin with the past; one-room cabin shows that the structure is really only used for very brief experiences (one or two night stays); propane tank completely obscured beneath wood attachment.

**Additional Notes**

Dark wood board-and-batten siding interior with lighter wood panelling on ceiling
Some moisture intrusion evident on wood siding.

Concrete masonry unit foundation with stone pile coverings.
Architectural Description: Cabin 5 is a one-room, one-story wood frame cabin with board and batten siding, a gable roof clad in wood shingles, and a one-story porch, covered with a shed roof, that extends the full width of the east façade.

Property Modifications: Porch, hardware, roof shingles, interior ceiling and wall paneling

Property Description

Foundation: Combination of logs on the soil, CMU blocks, and unhewn stone-and-mortar piles (especially located at the corners of the structure to mask concrete masonry units)

Chimney: n/a

Exterior Walls: Wood frame structure with vertical board-and-batten siding. Wood (possibly cedar) used in siding is relatively untreated and unfinished, with visible knots, deformations, and nails.

Doors/Windows: Doors constructed in same wood as exterior siding; east elevation has a flush panel cedar door and a vertical two-light window; west elevation has one vertical two-light window; chicken wire serves as cage-like window covering

Porch: One-story porch runs full length of east elevation, covered with a wood shingle shed roof with exposed rafter tails and a wide overhang. Porch is enclosed by three larger wood posts on the east façade and rests on short wood piers that extend to the groundline. Appears to be a more recent addition.

Roof: Gable runs north-south; approximately two layers of cedar shingle cladding on wood sheathing; wood shingles are uneven sizes
**Conditions Assessment**

**Foundation:** Stone piles rest directly on ground, exposed to heavy vegetative growth and moss; CMU attached to northeast corner appears to be leaning heavily, perhaps due to differential settlement upon soil; logs resting directly on soil

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**Chimney:** n/a

**Exterior Walls:** Vegetation on siding, especially close to foundation and groundline on north elevation; moss growing between connections on siding and foundation. Some sort of decay or staining that is similar on each cabin. Evidence of corrosion on staining below nail holes

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**Doors/Windows:** Porch overhang protects door; corrosion evident in connections with wire cage on frames; west window shows some moisture intrusion in wood

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**Porch:** appears to be an addition; wide roof overhang protects column supports, rafter tails, and floor from moisture intrusion

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**Roof:** Some shingles are broken or missing but wood is in decent condition, no visible signs of rot

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**Messages in Architecture**

Similar to other cabins in rustic façade and eschewing of modern technology, Cabin 5 also serves as an illustration of the strong contrast between the cabin’s exteriors and interiors. The interior of Cabin 5 shows much more modification than the exterior, with treated, manufactured wood as ceiling paneling, while the untreated wood clads the outside. While the cabins attempt to appear rustic on the outside, they still receive modifications for the visitors’ comfort.
North elevation

South elevation

Some corrosion visible on window trim from wire window coverings

Heavy vegetation near groundline

East elevation

West elevation

Photographic Documentation
October 2013
Cabin 5
Architectural Description: Cabin 6 is a one-room, one-story wood frame cabin with board and batten siding, a gable roof clad in wood shingles, and a one-story porch, covered with a shed roof, that extends the full width of the west façade.

Property Modifications: Porch, hardware, roof shingles, interior ceiling and wall paneling

Property Description

Foundation: Stone piles mask concrete masonry units, bricks, wooden planks, and smaller wooden wedges. Foundation is in closer proximity to the groundline than other cabins.

Chimney: n/a

Exterior Walls: Wood frame structure with vertical board-and-batten siding. Wood used in siding is relatively untreated and unfinished, with visible knots, deformations, and nails.

Doors/Windows: Door (located on west façade under porch, alongside a 1 by 1 vertical light window) constructed in same wood as exterior siding. Same window located on east elevation, covered in a wire protective screen. Hardware appears new.

Porch: One-story porch runs full length of west elevation, covered with a wood shingle shed roof with exposed rafter tails and a wide overhang. Porch roof is enclosed by three wooden posts, spaced evenly across the west elevation, which extend to the porch floor. The southern end of the porch’s floor rests directly on the groundline.

Roof: Gable runs north-south; approximately two layers of cedar shingle cladding on wood sheathing; wood shingles are uneven sizes

Location: Cabin 6, LeConte Lodge
Date: 10/19/2013

Period of Construction: 1930s

Usage: Guest cabin
Conditions Assessment

Foundation: Stone piles rest directly on ground, exposed to heavy vegetative growth and moss; CMU attached to northeast corner appears to be leaning heavily, perhaps due to differential settlement upon soil; logs resting directly on soil

Chimney: n/a

Exterior Walls: Some minor vegetation or biological growth is evident closer to the groundline on the north façade. The east façade is in the worst condition out of the four; substantial staining is evident on the top of the siding boards underneath the roofline, and heavy biological growth is visible along the groundline and underneath the window. On the south façade, some moisture intrusion is evident through staining on the wood underneath the horizontal gable line, and underneath the roof. The west façade appears to be in the strongest condition, due to the roof overhang.

Doors/Windows: Some corrosion is visible underneath wire window coverings. However, doors and windows appear to be newer additions and in good condition.

Porch: Porch appears to be a much more recent addition, potentially constructed with different wood. Porch floor, supporting posts, and bench are all protected by substantial eave overhang.

Roof: Some shingles are broken or missing but wood is in decent condition, no visible signs of rot

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Messages in Architecture

Cabin 6 was obviously constructed alongside the other smaller guest cabins. It employs the same rustic façade and only utilizes kerosene for electricity, although higher technologies are available. It uses a coherent architectural style with the rest of the resort property.
Moisture intrusion evident underneath window frames.

Some shingles on roof cladding are warped, cracking, or show vegetation.
Architectural Description: Cabin 7 is a one-room, one-story wood frame cabin with board and batten siding, a gable roof clad in wood shingles, and a one-story porch, covered with a shed roof that extends the full width of the east façade.

Property Modifications: Porch, hardware, roof shingles, north door

Property Description

Foundation: Stone piles mask concrete masonry units, bricks, wooden planks, and smaller wooden wedges. Foundation in close proximity to groundline, with ground substantially sloping down as it moves north.

Chimney: n/a

Exterior Walls: Wood frame structure with vertical board-and-batten siding. Wood (possibly cedar) used in siding is relatively untreated and unfinished, with visible knots, deformations, and nails.

Doors/Windows: One flush panel door located on north exterior, using same wood as exterior siding, with three log steps leading up to entry level; 1 by 1 vertical light windows located on east and west exteriors, covered in wire shield.

Porch: One-story porch runs full length of east elevation, covered with a wood shingle shed roof with exposed rafter tails and a wide overhang. Porch roof is enclosed by three wooden posts, spaced evenly across the west elevation, which extend to the porch floor. The southern end of the porch’s floor rests directly on the groundline.

Roof: Gable runs north-south, covered in approximately one to two layers of cedar wood shingles over a layer of sheathing. Small roof overhang.
Conditions Assessment

**Foundation:** Substantial moss and vegetative growth on stone piles and wooden boards close to the foundation. However, stone piles do not serve as load-bearing elements of the structure, and the concrete masonry unit elements of the foundation appear intact.

**Chimney:** n/a

**Exterior Walls:** Some vegetative growth and staining visible on east elevation, alongside visible corrosion weeping down from nails inserted into siding. Exterior walls are in a similar condition to those of the other small cabins. North elevation is in the worst condition, with substantial biological growth, especially to the right of the door.

**Doors/Windows:** Both doors and windows appear to be much newer additions, also with new hardware attached.

**Porch:** Porch appears to be a much more recent addition, potentially constructed with different wood. Porch floor, supporting posts, and bench are all protected by substantial eave overhang.

**Roof:** Visible bent nails; some shingles appear warped and distorted. Small overhang does not provide adequate protection to exterior walls.

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Messages in Architecture

Cabin 7 was obviously constructed alongside the other smaller guest cabins. It employs the same rustic façade and only utilizes kerosene for electricity, although higher technologies are available. It uses a coherent architectural style with the rest of the resort property.

Additional Notes

Interior shows new ceiling with treated wood paneling.
Foundation system utilizes stone pile, concrete block, wooden wedge

Heavy vegetative growth on right side of log steps and stone pile
**Architectural Description:** Cabin 8 is a one-room, one-story wood frame cabin with board and batten siding, a gable roof clad in wood shingles, and a one-story porch, covered with a shed roof, that extends the full width of the west façade.

**Property Modifications:** Porch, hardware, roof shingles, log steps leading to main entry, doors and windows

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**Property Description**

**Foundation:** Stone piles at corners of structure mask concrete masonry units, bricks, a substantial round log, smaller wooden wedges.

**Chimney:** n/a

**Exterior Walls:** Wood frame structure with vertical board-and-batten siding. Wood (possibly cedar) used in siding is relatively untreated and unfinished, with visible knots, deformations, and nails.

**Doors/Windows:** Flush panel door constructed of same wood as exterior walls located on north façade; one-by-one vertical light windows located on east and west elevations covered in wire protective covering. Appear to be recently modified.

**Porch:** One-story porch runs full length of west elevation, covered with a wood shingle shed roof with exposed rafter tails and a wide overhang. Porch roof is enclosed by three wooden posts, spaced evenly across the west elevation, which extend to the porch floor. The southern end of the porch’s floor rests directly on the groundline.

**Roof:** Gable runs north-south; approximately two layers of cedar shingle cladding on wood sheathing; wood shingles are uneven sizes
**Conditions Assessment**

**Foundation:** Substantial vegetation and moss growth on stone piles; however, stones are not load-bearing, so their integrity does not determine any structural issues in the foundation. On the other hand, the haphazard nature of the various materials involved in the foundation makes it cause for concern. Structure is distinct in that it has a log included in the foundation, which shows some biological growth at the endgrains.

**Chimney:** n/a

**Exterior Walls:** Substantial vegetative growth visible on north exterior and underneath windows on east elevation. Aging evident in un-preserved wood, and some green staining close to groundline.

**Doors/Windows:** Doors are in good condition, perhaps due to their newer additions to the structure.

**Porch:** Porch appears to be a recent addition, potentially constructed with different wood. Porch floor, supporting posts, and bench are all protected by substantial eave overhang.

**Roof:** Roof appears in better condition than other small guest cabins; shingles appear evenly sized and hewn, with no missing elements.

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**Messages in Architecture**

Untreated wood siding and shingles complement rustic nature of cabin; purposeful eschewing of modern electricity or heating systems employed to connect cabin with the past; one-room cabin shows that the structure is really only used for very brief experiences (one or two night stays); large porch added to face the principal attraction of the lodge, the big view to the north.

**Additional Notes**

Distinct frame pattern on south exterior wall, including one horizontal board.
Complex foundation system of concrete block, sill log, wooden wedge

Some warping and breaking in roof framing members
**Location:** Cabin 9, LeConte Lodge  
**Date:** 10/19/2013

**Period of Construction:** 1930s  
**Usage:** Guest cabin

**Architectural Description:** Cabin 9 is a one-room, one-story wood frame cabin with board and batten siding, a gable roof clad in wood shingles, and a one-story porch, covered with a shed roof, that extends the full width of the west façade.  
**Property Modifications:** Porch, hardware, roof shingles, doors and windows

**Property Description**  
**Foundation:** Stone piles at corners of structure mask concrete masonry units, larger stones, bricks, and sill logs. Due to structure’s location on groundline, exterior siding must be cut into a right angle to make room for stone piles.  
**Chimney:** n/a  
**Exterior Walls:** Wood frame structure with vertical board-and-batten siding. Wood used in siding is relatively untreated and unfinished, with visible knots, deformations, and nails.  
**Doors/Windows:** One flush panel door located on north exterior, and two one-by-one vertical light windows located on east and west exteriors. Appear to be more recent additions.  
**Porch:** One-story porch runs full length of west elevation, covered with a wood shingle shed roof with exposed rafter tails and a wide overhang. Porch roof is enclosed by three wooden posts, spaced evenly across the west elevation, which extend to the porch floor. The southern end of the porch’s floor rests directly on the groundline.  
**Roof:** Gable runs north-south; approximately two layers of cedar shingle cladding on wood sheathing; wood shingles are uneven sizes
Cabin 7 was obviously constructed alongside the other smaller guest cabins. It employs the same rustic façade and only utilizes kerosene for electricity, although higher technologies are available. It uses a coherent architectural style with the rest of the resort property.

Conditions Assessment

Foundation: Located on very sloped ground plane, close to a substantial amount of vegetation. Therefore, stone piles show great deal of moss and other vegetative growth, foundation logs are similarly stained green, and wood close to groundline shows substantial moisture intrusion through rising damp.

Chimney: n/a

Exterior Walls: Similar to foundation, the exterior walls on this cabin show substantial moisture intrusion, especially along the groundline. East elevation is in the worst condition, with portions close to the groundline towards the south end of the structure showing substantial dark green to black staining. A tree and some smaller plants rest almost directly on this corner of the structure. Staining is also visible underneath the roof overhangs.

Doors/Windows: In good condition relative to the other exterior siding, potentially because they are modifications.

Porch: appears to be an addition; wide roof overhang protects column supports, rafter tails, and floor from moisture intrusion.

Roof: Roof is in direct contact with several low-hanging trees. Vegetative growth is visible on roof shingles, and some shingles appear close to rotting. The south end of the east side of the gable is the worst.

Messages in Architecture

Cabin 7 was obviously constructed alongside the other smaller guest cabins. It employs the same rustic façade and only utilizes kerosene for electricity, although higher technologies are available. It uses a coherent architectural style with the rest of the resort property.
Nearby trees pose a threat to roof shingle cladding

Substantial moisture intrusion and rising damp lead to staining and vegetative growth

Photographic Documentation
October 2013

Cabin 9
Location: Cabin 10, LeConte Lodge
Date: 10/19/2013

Period of Construction: 1930s
Usage: Guest cabin

Architectural Description: Cabin 10 is a one-room, one-story wood frame cabin with board and batten siding, a gable roof clad in wood shingles, and a one-story porch, covered with a shed roof, that extends the full width of the north façade.

Property Modifications: Porch, hardware, roof shingles, log steps to south door

Property Description
Foundation: Combination of wood piers, CMU blocks, and unhewn stone-and-mortar piles at corners of structure.

Chimney: n/a

Exterior Walls: Wood frame structure with vertical board-and-batten siding. Wood used in siding is relatively untreated and unfinished, with visible knots, deformations, and nails.

Doors/Windows: All wood used in doors is same as siding; north elevation has one flush panel door leading to porch; south elevation has one vertical two-light window with relatively thick wooden frame and covered in chicken wire; one flush panel door on south elevation; one smaller window set underneath roof gable on west elevation

Porch: One-story porch attached to cabin’s north elevation, extends the full width of the north façade, covered with a wood shingle roof with exposed rafter tails and a wide eave overhang. Porch is enclosed by three larger wood posts on the north façade and rests on wood piers that extend to the groundline.

Roof: Gable runs east-west; approximately two layers of cedar shingle cladding on wood sheathing; wood shingles are uneven sizes
### Conditions Assessment

**Foundation:** Structure rests very close to groundline, especially on south elevation. Wood piers remain relatively dry, but lots of vegetation surrounds structure, increasing the risk of moisture intrusion. Stone piles are covered in moss and other forms of vegetation, but they are decorative instead of structural and do not pose a major risk to the cabin’s support.

**Chimney:** n/a

**Exterior Walls:** Some biogrowth close to groundline on south elevation; some sort of growth or aging on wood siding; moisture intrusion evident in change of wood’s color underneath roofline on south elevation; effects of corrosion visible in weeping underneath nails, especially on east elevation.

**Doors/Windows:** Some corrosion visible underneath door number on principal entrance; doors potentially additions.

**Porch:** Due to the more pristine condition of the wood elements, the porch appears to be an addition. Columns, balustrade, and floor are in good condition, due to wide shed roof overhang.

**Roof:** Very small overhang on all elevations except north; some shingles are cracked, missing, or warped.

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### Messages in Architecture

Untreated wood siding and shingles complement rustic nature of cabin; purposeful eschewing of modern electricity or heating systems employed to connect cabin with the past; one-room cabin shows that the structure is really only used for very brief experiences (one or two night stays); large porch added to face the principal attraction of the lodge, the big view to the north.

### Additional Notes

Unhewn log paneling on interior, with darker wood; no insulation.
North elevation

East elevation

South elevation

West elevation

Some corrosion evident in staining below nail holes

Interior unhewn ceiling paneling
Location: Dining Hall, LeConte Lodge  
Date: 10/20/2013

Period of Construction: Initial construction in 1940s with additions and modifications through 1970s  
Usage: Public dining hall; kitchen; employee quarters

Architectural Description: One-story wood frame structure covered in wood shingle siding; multiple rooms and interior spaces also defined by multiple roof gables. See aerial map and photographs for visual representation of dining hall’s complex plan.

Property Modifications: Window trim and glass; wood shingle roof cladding; skylights; porches; kitchen fire wall; several building campaigns

Property Description

Foundation: Stone and mortar piles cover concrete masonry units, while porch is supported by wood piers.

Chimney: At least three contemporary metal flues on various gables.

Exterior Walls: Exterior walls are clad in large, flat wood shingles with small contemporary nails visible throughout.

Doors/Windows: Vertical two-light windows utilized on most elevations of structure; contemporary wood flush panel doors.

Porch: Full-length porch supported by wood piers is attached to central gable of north façade, enclosed under projecting gable roof; smaller porch covered with separate small roof gable located on far east side of north façade.

Roof: Wood shingle cladding; multiple gables run both north to south and east to west; metal drains at gable connections and roof valleys; skylights
Conditions Assessment

Foundation: Substantial moss and biological growth on stone piles; south exterior foundation rests directly on groundline; terrain slopes dramatically towards the building, resulting in poor drainage

Chimney: Contemporary metal chimneys in frequent use in kitchen structure; tar flashing material weeping down onto roof; some corrosion visible.

Exterior Walls: Some visible moisture intrusion and staining on shingles; corrosion evident in weeping from nails, especially on the south façade; dramatic changes in shingles’ colors as they transition away from groundline.

Doors/Windows: Fair

Porch: Porches are in fair condition; some green staining and moss growth on porch floor attached to north elevation.

Roof: Drains, flashing, and chimney vents show substantial corrosion; flashing appears bent in multiple locations; however, shingles appear relatively consistent and intact.

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Messages in Architecture

The dining hall and kitchen structure is both purposeful and highly iconic. The south elevation serves as main tourist highlight for Lodge, while it also receives a heavy daily use as kitchen structure. Evident in the addition of residential quarters in the 1970s, the structure’s multiple campaigns of construction show the building’s adaptation to serve multiple purposes.
South elevation of addition on east end of structure; kitchen

Iconic south elevation entrance

West end of south elevation

Far west elevation

North elevation with porch attached

North elevation of east addition
New skylight system and metal chimney flue on roof gable

Skylights cut into dining hall roof gable

North elevation of east addition

Kitchen fire wall installed in the 1970s

Foundation system of stone piles attached to concrete blocks

New skylight system and metal chimney flue on roof gable

North elevation of east addition

East elevation

Dining Hall
Architectural Description: The recreation building is a two-story lodge structure, rectangular in plan, with a gable roof running north-south and a porch attached to the east side. The first story’s exterior is marked by a stacked stone and mortar construction that covers the entire façade, and rough hewn logs of varying sizes, using dovetail notching and projecting log ends comprise the second floor. On the north end, the second story cantilevers approximately 3 feet out over the second story, with exposed log ends underneath.

Property Modifications: Heating system, multiple campaigns of daubing, windows, east porch, chimney, window awnings on north side, roof shingles

Property Description

Foundation: Stone and mortar foundation rests directly on the groundline, with a usable basement devoted to privy toilets. No concrete masonry units are visible in basement foundation. The ground slopes dramatically towards the north end of the structure, so that on the south end, the sill logs rest directly on the groundline.

Chimney: One small, contemporary metal chimney flue projects from center of structure.

Exterior Walls: The basement’s exterior is enclosed by stacked stone and mortar walls, while the second floor is constructed of rough hewn log construction with projecting log ends, and the exterior walls underneath the roof gables are covered in a wood shingle siding. Logs show visible irregular saw marks, potentially from hand sawing. Multiple campaigns of chinking and daubing are visible on all elevations of the structure.

Doors/Windows: Windows are one over one modern sashes, with contemporary Plexiglas and simple wood frames. Principal elevation is from porch on east exterior, with a flush panel wooden door. On north exterior, two adjacent doors lead to bathrooms in basement floor. Smaller windows are cut in basement on north, east, and west elevations.

Porch: Porch appears to be a newer addition to the lodge, attached to the east elevation and supported by wood posts to project over the basement level and lead to the principal entrance on the second level of the east façade. A simple balustrade of square wood posts encloses the porch. Constructed of similar wood to the rest of the structure. Many areas of the porch appear haphazardly attached to the exterior walls. Porch foundation supported on north exterior by wood piles attached to concrete masonry units with metal ties.

Roof: Wood shingle clad roof gable runs north to south, with round exposed rafter tails underneath cladding on east and west elevations and wood shingle siding underneath gables on north and south elevations. Small shed roof extends from the east elevation, partially covering the porch, also employing round log exposed rafter tails.
**Conditions Assessment**

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<tr>
<td>Heavy vegetative growth visible on stone piles, since they are sitting directly on the groundline.</td>
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<td>Visible cracking in mortar, but stones remain in good condition. Some differential settling is visible in stone piles, and some areas of stone piles have been replaced by log splicing. On south exterior, sill log and second log are rott ing substantially and need to be replaced. Multiple campaigns of mortar are visible in chinking and daubing around log foundation, and some is cracked and missing.</td>
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<td><strong>Exterior Walls:</strong></td>
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<td>Stacked stone walls show vegetative growth, cracking mortar, and biological staining along groundline around structure. Logs show varying levels of moisture intrusion; on south façade, bottom two logs are rott ing substantially and in strong need of replacement. Moisture runoff is visible underneath roof gables and overhangs on each side. Bottom two log connections on northwest corner are missing. Shingle siding underneath gable on south exterior is cracked, with missing shingles and staining at connections. Projecting log ends show substantial vegetative growth and staining, and swelling and contraction is visible in logs as some connections do not fully fit together.</td>
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<td><strong>Doors/Windows:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Some moisture runoff visible in window frames and on doors. Glass appears to be recent modification. Some corrosion visible underneath metal “bear screens.”</td>
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<td><strong>Porch:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Porch balustrade might be a recent modification, as it appears new and much cleaner than floor. A thick line of Portland cement connects porch floor and lodge’s log walls; vegetation is growing along it and it is also leading to cracking in the logs. Underneath porch, substantial biological growth from moisture collection and improper drainage is visible on flooring systems and supporting beams.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Roof:</strong></td>
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<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shingles are in fair condition, with some cracking and staining visible. On north façade, log that supports roof gable shows substantial cracking and wood loss at the end grain. Wood drain attached to east façade.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Messages in Architecture**

The recreation building was constructed to serve as a public and communal space, with opportunities to enjoy the picturesque views to the north. The basement stands as an effort to modernize plumbing systems. The structure is in poor condition.

---

182  Recreation Building
Rot in bottom two log courses on south elevation

Missing log connections on north elevation

Some cracking visible in stone pile

Wooden patch for stone pile foundation on west elevation

Heavy moisture intrusion and rot visible in connection between east porch and log exterior

Photographic Documentation
October 2013
Architectural Description: Lodge 1 is a one story cross-gable structure with a central chimney and a porch on the north façade, enclosed underneath the lodge’s north-south roof gable. The lodge utilizes log construction, with half-dovetail notching and ends that project approximately six to eight inches away from the corner of the structure. The roof is clad in cedar wood shingles. While the north façade is rectangular in plan with the attached porch, the lodge is an actual cross shape, with the north end of the structure projecting out from the structure. 

Property Modifications: Some window frames, doors, multiple campaigns of daubing, roof shingles, hardware, rubber flashing around chimney, steel ties connecting bottom logs to foundation

Property Description

Foundation: Some sill logs of actual lodge structure rest directly on the ground, while adjacent interlocked logs are slightly elevated above the groundline. Some stone piles are visible underneath bottom logs, perhaps to hide concrete masonry units. Other corner logs are supported by stacks of stone piles, wooden wedges, bricks, and Portland cement mortar. The porch is supported by wooden joists connected to concrete masonry units with steel ties.

Chimney: Chimney is a central stone pile chimney with Portland cement flashing around the edges.

Exterior Walls: Exterior walls made of either rough hewn or hewn half logs of varying sizes; the heights of the logs used in the facades are not completely regular. Multiple campaigns of daubing are visible, including a modern Portland cement mortar. Some logs, especially on the south elevation, show visible saw marks and appear hewn by hand.

Doors/Windows: Windows are the same one-by-one vertical lights as used throughout the lodge complex, with simple wooden frames and exterior “bear screens.” The sole entrance is attached to the north façade, and is a flush panel door constructed of a similar wood as the logs and porch.

Porch: Porch is attached to full length of north façade, enclosed underneath the north-south roof gable. Enclosed by a closed balustrade of large flat shingles. Several semi-circular openings carved in along porch’s groundline for water drainage. Porch’s front elevation shows one full roof gable to the right of the structure, with an attached gable roof extending to the east, implying that maybe that part of the roof and porch was an addition.

Roof: Cross gable roof covered in cedar wood shingles. Metal drains run down the roof valleys. Exposed round log rafter tails underneath roof gables.
## Conditions Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foundation:</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some sill logs rest directly on groundline and appear to be absorbing substantial moisture, showing staining and vegetative growth. Surrounding ground's drainage plane runs towards the structure. Vegetation is also present on haphazard stacks of bricks, mortar, and wood.</td>
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</table>

| **Chimney:**        | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    |
| As is visible, stone and mortar mixture for chimney in fair condition, with some stone delamination and some cracking in the mortar. Rubber (or Portland cement) flashing around chimney in moderate condition, with visible tar weeping from some connections. |

| **Exterior Walls:** | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    |
| Vegetation visible on many exterior logs, especially those closer to the groundline. Projecting log ends show a dark blue-green stain from moisture intrusion. Some rising damp and bright red staining at connections between daubing and logs. Daubing appears to be recently redone and is in reasonably good condition. Worst area of vegetation is located on the north façade. |

| **Doors/Windows:**  | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    |
| Windows on north façade show substantial biological growth and staining on frames. Glass in good condition. Wire “bear screens” subject to substantial corrosion and staining of wood elements beneath them. Some wooden frames newer than others. |

| **Porch:**          | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    |
| Porch is in relatively good condition, due to wide roof overhang. Visible staining on porch foundation underneath drainage cut-outs and on top of balustrade where rain frequently hits. |

| **Roof:**           | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    |
| Fair condition, with shingles intact and consistent. Substantial green staining underneath roofline on projecting rafter tails. |

## Messages in Architecture

While this lodge is a larger size and scale than the small guest cabins, it is constructed in a similar architectural style and wood to align it with the older structures. Although more modern techniques of construction were available, log construction is employed here, even with a complicated form of notching for the logs. However, modern materials are visible, including the rubber flashing around the chimney and metal drains.
Green staining and biological growth on projecting log ends

Some rot in bottom logs on north elevation

Interior stone chimney with metal drain valleys and portland cement flashing

Some missing wood shingles

Brick, stone pile, and concrete blocks involved in support for sill logs

Heavy vegetative growth on stone foundations
**Location:** Lodge 2, LeConte Lodge  
**Date:** 10/19/2013

**Period of Construction:** 1960s  
**Usage:** Multi-room guest lodge

**Architectural Description:** Lodge 2 is a one-story cross gable structure with a chimney on the south end and a porch attached to the north façade, enclosed underneath the lodge’s north-south roof gable. The lodge uses log construction, with half-dovetail notching, rough-hewn logs, and log ends that project approximately six to eight inches away from the corner of the structure. The roof is clad in cedar wood shingles.  
**Property Modifications:** Window frames, roof shingles, hardware

**Property Description**  
**Foundation:** Both bottom foundation logs and porch floor rest on stone piles, which most likely cover concrete masonry units, as in the other structures of the lodge. Stone piles appear new.  
**Chimney:** Full-length stone pile chimney is attached to the south elevation. Thin, long stones that match stones of surrounding enclosing walls are stacked with a modern mortar and some moss growth. Some larger, rounded rocks included in piles.  
**Exterior Walls:** Exterior walls are made of rough-hewn log construction of logs of relatively consistent sizes. Logs appear relatively untreated and unfinished, with visible knots and grain. Daubing campaigns also appear consistent. Some logs, especially on lower campaigns, show visible machine saw marks. Elements of the floor system are visible projecting elements on the exterior walls as notched into the bottom logs.  
**Doors/Windows:** Windows are one-over-one as used throughout the lodge complex, with simple wooden frames and exterior “bear screens.” The sole entrance, a flush panel door, is on the north façade.  
**Porch:** Porch is attached to north façade of structure, and enclosed underneath the lodge’s north-south roof gable. A simple balustrade of square posts encloses the porch, and on the front façade, three square columns support a decorative truss system imitation underneath the roof gable.  
**Roof:** Cross gable roof covered in cedar wood shingles. Metal drains run down the roof valleys. Exposed round log rafter tails underneath roof gables.
Conditions Assessment

**Foundation:** While they are not necessarily structural, stone piles appear much newer than others used throughout the complex, with little to no biogrowth or vegetation.

**Chimney:** Substantial moss growth and vegetation visible on stone piles. Modern mortar appears cracking, especially in places where it connects with log exterior. Aluminum flashing around top of chimney is bent and rusting.

**Exterior Walls:** Portland cement daubing shows some cracking and moisture runoff from logs, but logs appear intact and free from moisture intrusion. Projecting log ends are free of staining. Some staining from water run-off visible underneath windows.

**Doors/Windows:** Some window frames appear to be recent modifications, while glass is a very contemporary Plexiglas-like material.

**Porch:** More staining is visible on the porch than on the rest of the structure, with dark grey staining and green biological growth visible in areas where porch floor drains any collected water. Green staining also visible on lower portions of the balustrade.

**Roof:** Wood shingles appear intact, with few missing elements. Lodge utilizes larger overhangs, which protect exterior walls. Metal drains at roof valleys rusting

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Messages in Architecture

This lodge is potentially the most recent construction of the larger lodges in the complex. Its rustic architectural style aligns it with the rest of the lodge complex, although many stylistic elements are much neater and consistent than others in the lodge, such as the stone piles and the logs.
North elevation

East elevation

Eastern portion of south elevation

Western portion of south elevation

Stone chimney on south elevation

West elevation
South elevation shows stone piles in pristine condition, projecting log ends from floor joist systems

Portland cement flashing between log exterior and stone chimney; some vegetative growth

Stone chimney with slightly bent metal flashing

Projecting roof rafter tails are un-hewn logs

Heavy biological growth near groundline on north exterior

Green staining from water runoff off porch
Lodge 3 is a one story cross-gable structure with a central chimney and a porch on the north façade, enclosed underneath the lodge’s north-south roof gable. The lodge utilizes log construction, with half-dovetail notching, rough-hewn logs, and log ends that project approximately six to eight inches away from the corner of the structure. The roof is clad in cedar wood shingles.

**Property Modifications:** Aluminum and tar flashing around the chimney, window frames.

**Property Description**

**Foundation:** Stone piles mask concrete masonry unit block foundation; CMUs are exposed in some areas of the foundation. Stone piles appear new.

**Chimney:** Central chimney utilizes stone pile construction with a substantial amount of mortar and aluminum flashing at connection points.

**Exterior Walls:** Exterior walls made of either rough hewn or half hewn log construction, with half-dovetail notching and projecting log ends. Logs used in construction are consistent in size, with some circular saw marks visible on lower logs. Modern mortar is used as daubing, and some daubing has fallen off on north exterior to reveal a lower “scratch coat” of chinking. Elements of the floor system are visible projecting elements on the exterior walls as notched into the bottom logs. Board-and-batten siding underneath roof gables.

**Doors/Windows:** Same vertical two light windows as used throughout resort complex, with simple wood frames. Flush panel door with a “Z” support of wood planks on the exterior.

**Porch:** Porch is attached to full length of north façade, enclosed underneath the north-south roof gable. Enclosed by a closed balustrade of large flat shingles. Several semicircular openings carved in along porch’s groundline for water drainage. A small landing porch is also attached to the east façade, leading up to the lodge’s principal entryway. Porch’s foundation is also concrete masonry units covered by stone piles.

**Roof:** Cross gable roof covered in cedar wood shingles. Metal drains run down the roof valleys. Board-and-batten siding underneath roof gables.

**Location:** Lodge 3, LeConte Lodge

**Date:** 10/19/2013

**Period of Construction:** 1970s-1980s

**Usage:** Multi-room guest lodge
## Conditions Assessment

**Foundation:** While stone piles remain relatively free of vegetation, staining, and biological growth, some stones have fallen off to reveal concrete masonry units below. Structure is sufficiently elevated above ground to ensure water run-off away from foundation.

**Chimney:** Portland cement flashing and mortar are cracking, tar used around flashing shows weeping down chimney and logs, visible corrosion on metal drains and aluminum flashing. However, stone piles and mortar are free of any vegetation.

**Exterior Walls:** Logs and log ends are free from any substantial effects of moisture. Some cracking in daubing, and some daubing missing on north elevation. Portion of north elevation where wall connects with small entrance landing is area of highest moisture intrusion, with dark staining visible on logs.

**Doors/Windows:** Some window frames appear to be recent modifications, and some moisture runoff visible on lower window sills and on logs below. Corrosion underneath hardware on door.

**Porch:** Some staining underneath semi-circular drainage holes, but porch is relatively free of any moisture intrusion. East entrance landing shows some staining on floor and balustrade.

**Roof:** Some shingles are broken or missing but wood is in decent condition, no visible signs of rot.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chimney</td>
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<td>Exterior Walls</td>
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<td>Doors/Windows</td>
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<td>Porch</td>
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<td>Roof</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Messages in Architecture

While this lodge is a larger size and scale than the small guest cabins, it is constructed in a similar architectural style and wood to align it with the older structures. Although more modern techniques of construction were available, log construction is employed here, even with a complicated form of notching for the logs. However, modern materials are visible, including the rubber flashing around the chimney and metal drains.
Some staining evident on window trim and logs below

Metal flashing around stone chimney; some corrosion in roof drainage valleys

Half-dovetail log notching with board and batten siding under gables

Some staining from water runoff off porch floor

Some stones broken and missing from foundations

Heavy staining around porch connection on western entrance
Location: NPS Quarters, LeConte Lodge
Date: 10/19/2013

Period of Construction: Unknown

Usage: Serves as residential quarters and office space for National Park Service employees

Architectural Description: Rectangular wood frame structure covered in board-and-batten wood siding, with a gable roof and a porch attached to the north elevation.

Property Modifications: Porch, contemporary doors, asphalt shingles on roof, metal chimneys, windows

Property Description
Foundation: Bottom sill of wood framing system rests on concrete masonry units, with metal flashing projecting at connections; porch supported by wood piers connected to concrete masonry units

Chimney: Contemporary metal chimney flues indicate presence of interior heating system and some sort of stove

Exterior Walls: Wood board-and-batten siding; visible break in siding, foundation, and roofline indicates that west portion of structure might be an addition

Doors/Windows: Contemporary vinyl one over one windows on east, south, and west elevations, surrounded by simple wood trim; contemporary vinyl panel doors; east corner of south addition shows two wooden doors

Porch: New addition to structure; half-width porch attached to east side of north elevation; utilizes similar wood to rest of resort complex; trellis siding serves as enclosure to porch foundation

Roof: Asphalt shingle cladding, the only time used in resort complex. Roof gable runs east to west
### Conditions Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>vegetation growing</td>
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</table>

**Messages in Architecture**

One cabin occupied and owned by National Park Service on resort complex shows many more contemporary modifications than other structures, including new roofing, metal drains, metal chimney flues, and some sort of HVAC system attached.
Location: RR1, LeConte Lodge
Date: 10/20/2013

Period of Construction: Unknown

Usage: Guest and visitor access guest toilet

Architectural Description: “Non-flush guest privy” structure takes the shape of a dogtrot-style log cabin, using a concrete slab foundation and log construction, with a wood shingle-clad gable roof that runs east to west and covers the entirety of the two interior spaces and the inner hallway

Property Modifications: Skylights; drainage system; metal chimney vents; doors; hardware

Property Description

Foundation: Concrete slab extends full width of structure, with stone and mortar piles underneath sill logs of rooms and wood flooring covering the concrete in the interior hallway; vaulted for toilet drainage

Chimney: Modern metal chimney with spinning circular chimney caps for improved ventilation

Exterior Walls: Log construction, using logs of consistent sizes and half-dovetail notching; some logs show circular saw marks, especially on south elevation; contemporary mortar visible in daubing; wood shingles underneath roof gables

Doors/Windows: Modern dimension lumber doors; windows use mottled bathroom-style glass

Porch: Central hallway porch enclosed underneath full-length roof gable; two porches underneath wide roof overhang on east and west elevations; half-size log walls enclose east and west porches

Roof: Wood shingles attached to wood sheathing; skylights cut into south elevation for lighting in bathrooms; gable runs east to west
Conditions Assessment

**Foundation:** Concrete slab extends full width of structure, with stone and mortar piles underneath sill logs of rooms and wood flooring covering the concrete in the interior hallway; vaulted for toilet drainage

**Chimney:** Modern metal chimney with spinning circular chimney caps for improved ventilation

**Exterior Walls:** Log construction, using logs of consistent sizes and half-dovetail notching; some logs show circular saw marks, especially on south elevation; contemporary mortar visible in daubing; wood shingles underneath roof gables

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**Messages in Architecture**

Even public facilities take the shape of more rustic styles, shown in the dogtrot style design used for this purely utilitarian structure. Architectural coherence is employed strongly throughout the LeConte Lodge, seen even in the complex notching system for the logs.
Architectural Description: RR2 is a small, one-story log structure with a gable roof clad in wood shingles and porches attached to east and west elevations.

Property Modifications: Very new—flush privy toilet remnant of new sewage system installed in early 1980s

Property Description

Foundation: Concrete slab floor rests on stone and mortar piles; some form of vaulting or aperture exists underneath floor system to allow for flush toilet drainage

Chimney: n/a

Exterior Walls: Exterior walls are constructed of square hewn logs of consistent sizes, using full-dovetail notching on the corners and log ends that project approximately three to four inches; log ends project in center of structure as part of interior wall; area of walls underneath roof gables covered in wood shingle siding.

Doors/Windows: Two flush panel wood doors on east elevation and two of the same on west elevation; small vinyl windows on both elevations

Porch: Porches attached to east and west elevations to provide exterior entrances to each bathroom; enclosed underneath roof gables

Roof: Gable roof runs east to west, clad in wood shingles; wide overhang on east and west sides to enclose porch; small skylights cut in on north and south sides of roof to provide natural light for bathrooms; exposed rafter tails

Location: RR2, LeConte Lodge
Date: 10/19/2013

Period of Construction: Unknown

Usage: Lodge guest-only-access flush toilet
Conditions Assessment

**Foundation:** Some staining on concrete floor; some vegetation and moss visible on stone piles and concrete floor; primary structural members not visible

**Chimney:** n/a

**Exterior Walls:** Some vegetation on logs, especially directly underneath roofline and on north elevation; some staining on projecting log ends

**Doors/Windows:** Good

**Porch:** Wide roof eave overhang protects concrete floor and log enclosure, some vegetation growing between logs and concrete floor

**Roof:** Visible element of sheathing shows some vegetation from roof runoff; some biological growth on shingles but cladding in relatively good condition overall

<table>
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<td>Doors/Windows</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porch</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Messages in Architecture**

Incredibly detailed, elaborate construction system for a public restroom, including log construction and full dovetail notching.

**Additional Notes**

Incised into concrete slab is “Nathaniel Line Nov 7 1983”
North elevation

East elevation

South elevation

West elevation

Inscription: “Nathaniel Line Nov 7 1983”

Dovetail notching and projecting log ends from interior wall

Photographic Documentation
October 2013
**Location:** Wood Shed, LeConte Lodge  
**Date:** 10/20/2013

**Period of Construction:** Unknown

**Usage:** Storage space

**Architectural Description:** Shed 2 is a rectangular wood frame structure covered in board and batten siding, with a gable roof that runs north to south, and a two-story structure with lower level delineated by stacked stone and mortar foundation.

**Property Modifications:** Solar panels on roof

**Property Description**

**Foundation:** Not completely visible, but stone and mortar piles combined with concrete masonry units

**Chimney:** n/a

**Exterior Walls:** Exterior walls are clad in vertical board and batten siding, in a wood consistent with rest of resort complex wood shingle siding utilized below roof gables

**Doors/Windows:** Single small contemporary Plexiglas window on north elevation; skylights; principal entrance on south elevation with flush panel wood door with “z” metal hinge

**Porch:** n/a

**Roof:** Clad in wood shingles; gable runs north to south; wide eave overhang on east and west sides; small gable centrally located on east elevation over entrance
Conditions Assessment

Foundation: Some vegetation visible on stone piles and wood siding close to groundline; drainage could be difficult due to dramatic ground slope

Chimney: n/a

Exterior Walls: Siding appears almost new and in very good condition; stone and mortar piles also free of vegetation and biological growth; some staining close to groundline on south-east corner

Doors/Windows: Good

Porch: n/a

Roof: Some shingles are cracked or missing, but roof in overall good condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Messages in Architecture

Shed structures employ a similar structural vocabulary to the rest of the lodge, while adapting them to a primarily utilitarian purpose.
North elevation

East elevation

South elevation

West elevation

Solar panels

Basement of structure serves as storage
Location: Food Storage, LeConte Lodge  
Date: 10/20/2013

Period of Construction: Unknown

Usage: Shed serves as food and other miscellaneous storage

Architectural Description: Shed 3 is a rectangular wood-frame structure covered in vertical board and batten siding with a wood shingle clad gable roof.

Property Modifications: Siding, shingles

Property Description
Foundation: Stone piles with Portland cement cover concrete masonry units
Chimney: n/a
Exterior Walls: Exterior walls are clad in vertical board and batten siding, in a wood consistent with rest of resort complex
Doors/Windows: One flush panel wood door on east elevation
Porch: Small landing on east façade underneath small gable that protects door
Roof: Wood shingle clad roof; gable runs east to west
## Conditions Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foundation:</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good; some vegetation on stone piles</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chimney:</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exterior Walls:</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some battens cracked or missing; some staining on east elevation and biological growth close to ground-line on west elevation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Doors/Windows:</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Porch:</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roof:</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some shingles are cracked or missing, but roof in overall good condition</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Messages in Architecture**

Shed structures employ a similar structural vocabulary to the rest of the lodge, while adapting them to a primarily utilitarian purpose.
Property Description

Foundation: Wood piles rest on concrete masonry units, connected with steel ties

Chimney: n/a

Exterior Walls: Board and batten siding, constructed of similar wood to rest of resort complex

Doors/Windows: Principal entrance on south elevation is flush panel door; modern one over one light windows on south, east, and west elevations with simple wood frames; four light transom type of window on north elevation

Porch: n/a

Roof: Wood shingles over wood frame sheathing; one gable runs north-south, while a large shed roof extends to the east

Architectural Description: EQ1 is a one story wood frame structure with vertical board and batten siding and a wood shingle roof. The principal entrance is on the south side of the structure, underneath a gable which forms an L with the larger shed roof that extends to the east.

Property Modifications: Window glass

Location: EQ1, LeConte Lodge
Date: 10/19/2013

Period of Construction: Unknown

Usage: Employee quarters
Conditions Assessment

**Foundation:** Good condition; wood piles appear intact; some biological growth on concrete blocks and some vegetation on south side, closest to groundline

**Chimney:** n/a

**Exterior Walls:** Some moisture evident underneath roofline, otherwise exterior siding appears intact

**Doors/Windows:** New

**Porch:** n/a

**Roof:** Some shingles are broken or missing but wood is in decent condition, no visible signs of rot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Messages in Architecture
Employee quarters show a strict adherence to the overall building vocabulary of the lodge complex, while utilizing less complex stylistic details in smaller structures.
Location: EQ2, LeConte Lodge
Date: 10/20/2013

Period of Construction: Unknown

Usage: Employee quarters

Architectural Description: EQ2 is a one story wood frame structure, covered in vertical board-and-batten siding, with a gable roof covered in wood shingles. It has a wrap-around porch that begins on the west elevation and extends the full length of the north façade.

Property Modifications: Window glass

Property Description

Foundation: Concrete masonry units; porch is supported by tall wood posts

Chimney: n/a

Exterior Walls: Vertical board-and-batten siding, similar wood as rest of lodge complex

Doors/Windows: Contemporary glass storm windows; smaller 3-light transom-esque windows on south elevation with full one over one lights on north façade

Porch: Porch begins on east elevation and extends full width of north elevation; enclosed by simple balustrade of square posts

Roof: Gable runs east to west with shed roof covering porch; wood shingles
## Conditions Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foundation</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some biological growth on concrete blocks, visible in green staining; some vegetation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chimney</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exterior Walls</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some moisture evident underneath roofline, otherwise exterior siding appears intact</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Doors/Windows</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New modern wood doors and contemporary windows</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Porch</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substantial amount of biological growth and vegetation on porch rails and floor, despite wide roof overhang</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roof</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shingles intact; exterior siding wood underneath roof eaves shows some degree of staining</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Messages in Architecture

Employee quarters show a strict adherence to the overall building vocabularity of the lodge complex, while utilizing less complex stylistic details in smaller structures.
Location: EQ3, LeConte Lodge
Date: 10/20/2013

Period of Construction: 1940s

Usage: Employee quarters; previously served as a wash house

Architectural Description: EQ3 is a rectangular log cabin structure with a wood-shingle-clad gable roof. The logs are roughly hewn, with some visible hand-saw marks, and utilize a notching similar to square notching.

Property Modifications: Basement level wood paneling and metal flashing on north exterior; window glass; multiple campaigns of daubing; chimney

Property Description
Foundation: Difficult to discern from heavy vegetation around groundline, but some stone piles are visible; wood paneling addition on basement is probably hiding some more contemporary foundation method
Chimney: Modern metal chimney flue, addition
Exterior Walls: Log construction, utilizing logs of varying sizes; square notching; some hand-saw marks visible on logs; multiple campaigns of chinking and daubing with newest campaign appearing very contemporary; North elevation shows mortise-and-tenon-esque notching in center of structure, indicating an interior wall that runs through the cabin.
Doors/Windows: Principal entrance is located on south exterior, with a 6-light window incised into door; south elevation also has modern one-over-one light windows; west elevation has similar one over one window with smaller, single pane, modern window incised into logs
Porch: n/a
Roof: Gable runs east to west with exposed round log rafter tails underneath; clad in wood shingles
Conditions Assessment

**Foundation:** Substantial amount of vegetation on stone piles; plants and trees surround entire foundation

**Chimney:** Contemporary metal chimney flue indicates that this cabin has heat

**Exterior Walls:** Some vegetation and staining on logs showing signs of both moisture intrusion and age; lower courses of logs on east elevation show some staining; however, on the whole, logs are relatively intact and projecting log ends are free of staining

**Doors/Windows:** Modern storm windows are an addition

**Porch:** n/a

**Roof:** Some moisture intrusion and staining underneath eave overhangs; shingles are relatively intact; wood gutter

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chimney</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exterior Walls</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Doors/Windows</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Messages in Architecture

Employee quarters show a strict adherence to the overall building vocabulary of the lodge complex, while utilizing less complex stylistic details in smaller structures.
North elevation  

East elevation  

South elevation  

West elevation  

Unhewn log projecting rafter tails  

Multiple campaigns of modern chinking and daubing
Location: EQ4, LeConte Lodge  
Date: 10/20/2013

Period of Construction: Unknown
Usage: Employee quarters

Architectural Description: One story, one room wood frame structure covered in wood shingle siding and a gable roof that projects southward to enclose a small porch underneath the roof.

Property Modifications: Window glass

Property Description
Foundation: Difficult to discern due to location on groundline; however, it can be assumed that it employs some combination of wood piles and concrete masonry units as utilized by other employee cabins of the same period
Chimney: n/a
Exterior Walls: Long, wide, flat-hewn wood shingles serve as siding
Doors/Windows: Contemporary glass material used in single-pane windows on each exterior
Porch: Small landing rests on groundline and is enclosed under structure’s roof gable; roof supported by unhewn logs on east and west corners
Roof: Wood shingle cladding; wood gutter attached to south side
Conditions Assessment

**Foundation:** Wood piers and concrete blocks appear intact, considering proximity to vegetation and slope of ground run-off

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor</th>
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<th>Good</th>
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<td></td>
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</table>

**Chimney:** n/a

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<th>Poor</th>
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<th>Good</th>
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</table>

**Exterior Walls:** Wood shingles show similar moisture issues to roof; some runoff along connections, some corrosion weeping from nails

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Fair</th>
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**Doors/Windows:** Good

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**Porch:** Good

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<th>Poor</th>
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<th>Good</th>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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</table>

**Roof:** Some biological growth visible on shingles, some shingles missing

Messages in Architecture

Employee quarters show a strict adherence to the overall building vocabulary of the lodge complex, while utilizing less complex stylistic details in smaller structures.
**Location:** EQ5, LeConte Lodge  
**Date:** 10/20/2013

**Period of Construction:** Unknown  
**Usage:** Employee quarters

**Architectural Description:** EQ5 is one room, one story wood frame structure covered with board-and-batten siding, using a gable roof clad in wood shingles

**Property Modifications:** Window glass

**Property Description**  
**Foundation:** Wood piers rest on concrete blocks with metal rivets  
**Chimney:** n/a  
**Exterior Walls:** Board and batten siding, constructed of similar wood as rest of resort complex  
**Doors/Windows:** Contemporary glass used with simple wood frames; single pane window located on south elevation under roof gable; single pane windows on north, east, and west elevations  
**Porch:** n/a  
**Roof:** Gable runs north to south; covered in wood shingles similar to rest of lodge complex
### Conditions Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foundation:</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood piers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appear intact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some staining</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very bottom of piers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next to concrete</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masonry units</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substantial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetation growing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concrete blocks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chimney:</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exterior Walls:</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood shows</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some biological</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some staining</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underneath roof</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overhangs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-west corner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure shows</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substantial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staining close</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groundline</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Doors/Windows:</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good; new</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Porch:</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roof:</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No missing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shingles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Messages in Architecture**

Employee quarters show a strict adherence to the overall building vocabulary of the lodge complex, while utilizing less complex stylistic details in smaller structures.
Architectural Description: Rectangular one and a half story wood frame structure covered with board-and-batten siding and a wood shingle-clad gable roof, with a full length porch attached to the north elevation, covered in a shed roof.

Property Modifications: Doors, window glass, porch support, porch rail

Property Description

Foundation: Concrete masonry units, porch supported by wood piers that rest on concrete masonry units

Chimney: n/a

Exterior Walls: Board and batten siding, constructed of similar wood as rest of resort complex

Doors/Windows: Window sills on south elevation showing some wood loss and chipping; some staining underneath windows visible from water runoff

Porch: Full length porch attached to north elevation; covered y shed roof which extends over with a wide eave overhang and exposed hewn rafter tails; four-post porch support system with beam that extends underneath roof and projects approximately two and a half feet beyond structure on each side

Roof: Shingles appear newly modified or new
Conditions Assessment

**Foundation:** Some biological growth and staining, otherwise fair condition

**Chimney:** n/a

**Exterior Walls:** Wide roof overhang serves as protection; some brown staining visible on north and south elevations underneath roofline due to water run-off; some minor vegetative growth on east side near groundline; some sort of duct-tape and wire patching visible in three to four inch spots on east elevation

**Doors/Windows:** Window sills on south elevation showing some wood loss and chipping; some staining underneath windows visible from water run-off

**Porch:** Some biological growth visible on porch flooring; porch rails appear to be newer

**Roof:** Shingles appear newly modified or new

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Messages in Architecture

Employee quarters show a strict adherence to the overall building vocabulary of the lodge complex, while utilizing less complex stylistic details in smaller structures.
North elevation

Some vegetative growth on east elevation

South elevation

Wire patching on exterior boards

West elevation

Some vegetative growth on east elevation
REFERENCES


Fanslow, Mary. “From Timbering to Tourism: The Wonderland Hotel's Early Years.” *Journal of Appalachian Studies* 9, no. 2 (Fall 2003): 433–449.


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Fry, George W. Memorandum to Regional Director, Southeast Region, September 28, 1964. “Proposed Renewal of Concession for Mt. LeConte Lodge.” Folder: Concessionaires, Contracts & Permits. GRSM Archives. Gatlinburg, TN.


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