

**MNDOT HISTORIC ROADSIDE DEVELOPMENT
STRUCTURES INVENTORY**

PO-GLC-022
CS 6108
Glenwood Overlook

Historic Name	Glenwood Overlook	CS #	6108
Other Name	Mount Lookout	SHPO Inv #	PO-GLC-022
Location	W side of TH 55 1 mi N of TH 28	Hwy	TH 55
City/Township	Glenwood, City of	District	4B
County	Pope	Reference	69.8
Twp Rng Sec	125N 37W Sec 6	Acres	2.6
USGS Quad	Glenwood	Rest Area Class	4
UTM	Z15 E314430 N5059030	SP #	6108-02 55-142-23-1
Designer	Nichols, A R, Consult Land Arch	SHPO Review #	99-0358
Builder	National Youth Administration (NYA)	MHS Photo #	013521.00-09
Historic Use	Roadside Parking Area	MnDOT Historic Photo Album	Nic 5.19 Ols 2.110
Present Use	Roadside Parking Area	Yr of Landscape Design	1938
Overall Site Integrity	Intact/Slightly Altered	Review Required	Yes
National Register Status	Eligible, see Statement of Significance		
Historic Context	Roadside Development on Minnesota Trunk Highways, 1920-1960		
List of Standing Structures			
Feat#	Feature Type	Year Built	Fieldwork Date
01	Overlook Wall	1938	06-01-97
			Prep by
			Gemini Research Dec. 98 G1. 27
			Prep for
			Site Development Unit Cultural Resources Unit Environmental Studies Unit
NOTE: Landscape features are not listed in this table			
Final Report	Historic Roadside Development Structures on Minnesota Trunk Highways (1998)		

■ BRIEF

The Glenwood Overlook (also known locally as Mount Lookout) is a 2.6-acre site that is located on the western side of T.H. 55 about one mile north of the intersection of T.H. 28 and T.H. 55 within the city of Glenwood.

■ STANDING STRUCTURES

Overlook Wall. Built 1938 by the NYA. The site has a large, curved, stone overlook wall that is located on a 90'-high promontory that overlooks Lake Minnewaska. The wall is constructed of roughly-faced, random ashlar (with some rubble) granite in various shades of pink and gray. (The original plan calls for "split-faced fieldstone.") The stones vary in size from about 6" by 6" to 2' by 2'. The overall length of the wall is approximately 360' and it is divided into three sections: a pair of straight wall sections at the entrance that measure about 12' in length; a pair of inverted curves that each measure about 41' in length; and a semicircular lookout bay that is approximately 250' in length. There are 10 piers (each roughly 3' square) distributed along the wall. A geological plaque on a stone lectern-style pedestal was added to the wall's midpoint in 1955. The text of the plaque addresses the geology of the Glenwood region. (See text at the end of this document.)

The outside height of the wall varies from about 3' to 6' as it follows the terrain. Along the inside curve of the wall are a concrete sidewalk and curb that are about 360' long. (The walk is specified as concrete on the plans.) The curbing extends about 42' beyond the ends of the wall.

■ OTHER LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND PLANTINGS

The site is fairly deep so that the overlook wall is located farther from the trunk highway than is typical of many scenic overlooks inventoried in this study. An asphalt-paved entrance road enters the southern side of the site from T.H. 55. The road enters a large picnic area and then branches off around a triangular curbed island to the overlook wall and to 14th Ave. NE, a local street that is also used as a northern entrance road. The drive continues toward the wall where it loops around a grassy, curbed, oval island.

In the picnic area are two metal-framed wooden picnic tables (on concrete slabs) and a metal picnic grill on a pole, all erected circa 1980. There is a concrete block well house located across 14th Ave. NE to the north of the rest area.

Most of the site is planted with grass. The picnic area between the concourse and highway is planted with young trees including six small evergreens at the northwestern corner, five flowering fruit trees near the highway, and several deciduous trees. Along the southern edge of the overlook site is a forest of mature deciduous and evergreen trees. Many of the evergreens were planted in 1948. Near the eastern side of the overlook wall are mature (and possibly original) deciduous plantings, two cedar trees, and a few low juniper shrubs. Younger plantings near the wall include a few evergreens and two flowering trees. There is a flower garden (probably recent) in the center of the oval island.

The original planting plan, drawn September 1938, specifies that the site be planted with 85 American Elm, 55 Silver Maple, 90 Green Ash, 40 Pfitzer Juniper shrubs, and 20 Red Cedar. The site would have been fairly shady, but is now relatively unshaded.

Although it is located on the top of a large hill, the topography of the site itself is flat, with the exception of the gradual incline that rises to the overlook. West of the wall the hill drops down to downtown Glenwood and Lake Minnewaska.

■ **SETTING**

The property is located within the city limits of Glenwood near the top of one of the area's largest hills. It is bounded by T.H. 55 on the east, 14th Ave. NE on the north, a wooded area on the south, and a steep drop on the west. Across T.H. 55 to the east is an industrial building.

■ **INTEGRITY**

Alterations

The site appears to have been built close to plan.

The geological marker was added in 1955. Some of the plantings specified on the original plan may not have been planted or have since been removed or replaced. The picnic tables and picnic grill were added circa 1980. The drives were originally gravel and have since been paved with asphalt, altering the curb depth from 6" to 4".

In general, the site retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Notes on Condition

The stone wall is in fair to good condition. The site is maintained fairly well.

■ **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The Glenwood Overlook (known locally as Mount Lookout) was constructed in 1938 by the National Youth Administration (NYA) in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Highways. It was built as part of a half-mile-long roadside development project. The site was designed by A. R. Nichols, the Department's Consulting Landscape Architect. The plans were signed by Nichols, Harold E. Olson (Engineer of Roadside Development), C. W. Lilly (Engineer of Plans), C. J. Swift (Project Engineer), O. L. Kipp (Construction Engineer), and Jay T. Ellison (Chief Engineer). An August 1940 highway department photo shows several wooden picnic tables at the site.

Thousands of trees were planted at the overlook on April 27, 1948, by over 200 Glenwood citizens. Children were released from school that day, and more than 110 students helped plant 22,500 seedlings. The project was sponsored by the Glenwood Sportsmen's Club and the Glenwood Chamber of Commerce. The spruce, Jack pine, and cedar seedlings were

furnished by the State through a bill passed in 1947 that provided seedlings to organizations that would furnish labor to plant them on public property. (Trees were also planted at other locations in Glenwood as part of the program, but the majority were planted at the overlook.) Many of the trees planted in 1948 appear to be extant.

The geological marker was added to the wall in 1955. The marker was jointly sponsored by the Geological Society of Minnesota and the Department of Highways, aided by a grant from the Louis W. and Maud Hill Family Foundation.

■ PREVIOUS SHPO REVIEWS

A Section 106 review was conducted in late fall of 1998 (1999 federal fiscal year) in preparation for a Mn/DOT project to repair and tuckpoint the Glenwood Overlook and clean the plaque (SHPO Rev #99-0358). The review occurred while this Mn/DOT Historic Roadside Development Structures Inventory was underway, and a draft version of the inventory form was submitted to the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) as part of the review. In a letter to Allyson Brooks (Mn/DOT) dated Nov. 12, 1998, Dennis A. Gimmetstad (MHS) concurred with the Inventory's draft recommendation that the property is eligible for the National Register (Gimmetstad 1998). The documents that chronicle this Section 106 review contain a few items of correspondence.

■ STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Glenwood Overlook, built in 1938, is one of 37 stone overlook walls recorded in this inventory. It is one of 19 sites in the inventory on which the NYA worked. The overlook is one of more than 60 sites in the inventory that were designed by, or whose design is attributed to, Arthur R. Nichols.

This property has been evaluated within the historic context "Roadside Development on Minnesota Trunk Highways, 1920-1960." It is recommended that the Glenwood Overlook is ELIGIBLE for the National Register under this historic context because it meets the following registration requirements:

Significant to the History of Roadside Development. The Glenwood Overlook is among the 68 Depression-era properties in the inventory that represent the MHD's first large-scale effort to construct roadside development facilities in the state. The site is an excellent example of the work of the NYA in cooperation with the MHD. The property is an example of the distinctive and well-constructed public facilities, built by the MHD in partnership with federal relief agencies, that met the objectives of roadside development while providing essential work and job training to the nation's unemployed during the Depression. (National Register Criterion A.)

Design Significance. The Glenwood Overlook is a well-preserved example of the type of stone overlook walls built by the Roadside Development Division. It is an excellent example of the application of the "National Park Service Rustic Style" to a roadside development facility. It has stonework of excellent quality, and displays the special labor-intensive construction techniques and distinctive use of indigenous materials that characterize both the Rustic style and federal relief construction in Minnesota. Furthermore, the Glenwood Overlook

is an important example of the roadside development work of prominent landscape architect A. R. Nichols. (National Register Criterion C.)

This property may also be associated with the "Federal Relief Construction, 1933-1943" and "Tourism and Recreation in the Lake Regions, 1870-1945" historic contexts.

■ OTHER COMMENTS

This property may require further evaluation for potential archaeological resources.

T.H. 55 is fairly busy past this site. However, the overlook wall is quite far from the highway so that the traffic is not intrusive.

The text of the marker is associated with this general vicinity and uses the phrases "view from this point" and "lying 230 feet below this elevation."

■ REFERENCES

Anderson, Rolf T. "Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941." National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form. Oct. 9, 1990; amended Aug. 30, 1993.

Annual Report of the Accomplishments of Roadside Development Along the Trunk Highways in Minnesota. Minnesota Department of Highways, 1938.

Benson, Bob. "Trees at Mount Lookout were Planted During Community Planting in 1948." *Pope County Tribune*, June 3, 1996.

Gimmestad, Dennis A. (MHS). Letter to Allyson Brooks (Mn/DOT). Nov. 12, 1998.

Pederson, Dorothy C. A. "Pope County, Minnesota." Subject files, Pope County Historical Society.

Pope County Tribune, Mar. 18, 1948; Apr. 15, 1948; Apr. 22, 1948; Apr. 29, 1948; May 6, 1948; and Aug. 11, 1949.

Site Plans. Minnesota Department of Transportation, St. Paul.

■ ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND MARKER TEXT

The overlook wall may have been built of St. Cloud granite. Granite quarrying began in Stearns County in the 1860s. The St. Cloud-Cold Spring granite region produces a fine-grained granite that ranges in color from black to gray, to varying shades of red and pink, to a clear white.

The Glenwood Overlook is located on the northeastern shore of Lake Minnewaska in Glenwood, the largest city on the lake. Lake Minnewaska is the 13th largest lake in Minnesota and has 18 miles of shoreline. Its name is derived from the Dakota words mini or minne, for

"water," and washta or waska, meaning "good." (For brief periods of time before 1883 it was also known as White Bear Lake, after a Dakota leader who is buried on the lake's northern shore, and as Lake Whipple, for Episcopal Bishop Henry Whipple.)

Glenwood is located in Pope County, an agricultural area in west central Minnesota. The city was platted in 1866 at the northeastern end of Lake Minnewaska by early settlers and became the county seat in 1867. It was named "Glenwood" after the home of one of the founder's families in New York state. Most of the county's early settlers were Swedish and Norwegian farmers who were joined in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by immigrants from Germany, England, and Bohemia. Glenwood first received rail service in 1882 and was eventually served by three rail lines. Glenwood's economy was fueled by agriculture and by the Lake Minnewaska resort industry. Glenwood has a current population of about 2,570, just slightly more than its population during the 1930s.

Text of Metal Plaque on Stone Marker

"The view from this point reveals the effects of major glaciation in its most vigorous form. Some 10,000 years ago, as the last glacier receded slowly to the north and west, it paused here long enough to deposit, in characteristic fashion, the rock material in the recessional moraine that forms the hills around Lake Minnewaska. The basin of the lake is chiefly within the moraine itself but on this, the northeastern side, it is bounded by an extensive outwash plain.

"The part of the glacier that filled the lake basin became detached from the main body of ice and remained stagnant for many years. During this time it was partially or completely buried by outwash sand and gravel carried toward the northeast by meltwater from the main ice field. As a consequence, this portion of the basin had a steep ice-contact slope, formed while the ice block supported the loose material.

"Lake Minnewaska, lying 230 feet below this elevation, is a typical example of a lake in an ice-block basin." [Erected by the Geological Society of Minnesota and the Department of Highways, State of Minnesota, aided by a grant from the Louis W. and Maud Hill Family Foundation].