



Denver Mountain Parks Foundation



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January 27, 2015

J. Paul Loether, Chief
National Register of Historic Places and
National Historic Landmarks Program
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street NW, #2280
Washington, DC 20005

RE: Designation of Red Rocks Park and Mount Morrison Civilian Conservation Corps Camp as a National Historic Landmark

Dear Mr. Loether:

Since its formation in 2004, the Denver Mountain Parks Foundation has collaborated with Denver Parks & Recreation to preserve and protect the historic integrity of this unique park system. We have been involved since the early days of development of the current nomination of Red Rocks Park as a National Historic Landmark and are writing in support of that designation.

Red Rocks Park, with its surviving Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp and renowned Amphitheatre, deserves this high recognition in light of the historic significance of its setting, and especially because of the cooperation between the CCC, the NPS, and the City and County of Denver that make the Park such an outstanding example of public landscape design produced by the CCC. As the nomination points out, Red Rocks Park is nationally significant in architecture and landscape architecture, as well as performing arts. Red Rocks is the best known and most visited of Denver's 22 developed mountain parks.

The historic significance of Red Rocks Park extends well before its acquisition by Denver in 1928, but the landmark designation focuses on the period of Denver's ownership until 1959, when basic improvements to the Amphitheatre were completed in the spirit of the original Burnham Hoyt design. Scenic roadways and other features built by Denver to display the natural landscape to advantage and make the park an attraction blended well with the NPS aesthetic that was introduced the following decade. The Park's impressive geologic setting is an important contribution to the rustic Amphitheatre and its attraction as a venue. The addition of a Visitor Center in 2003 was carried out to be sympathetic to Hoyt's plan for an agora, and carefully accomplished to prevent obstructing the important views to and from the Amphitheatre.

The Mount Morrison CCC Camp is a little-known part of the Park that is especially rich in historic value. During tours and open houses, hundreds of visitors have been surprised to

W. Bart Berger, *Chairman*

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discover this gem of New Deal history surviving today. This camp escaped the fate of the vast majority of CCC Camps because of its continued use as headquarters for the Denver Mountain Parks. Its intact layout is the only place in Colorado where visitors get a sense of the scope of this work-relief program. A small museum provides a glimpse into daily life in the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression.

Denver's long stewardship of the Park and its CCC Camp has given all of us a treasure worthy of this designation. We encourage you to recommend that Red Rocks Park and Mount Morrison CCC Camp be designated Colorado's next National Historic Landmark.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



W. Bart Berger
Chairman

