

LOLETA RECREATION AREA, BATH HOUSE  
Allegheny National Forest  
Six miles southeast of the  
intersection of State Highway  
24041 and State Route 66  
~~Monticello~~ Vicinity  
Elk County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA 5963-A

HABS  
PA  
24-LOL.V,  
2A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

National Park Service

Northeast Region

U. S. Custom House

200 Chestnut Street

Philadelphia, PA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

LOLETA RECREATION AREA, BATH HOUSE

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Location: Allegheny National Forest  
Six miles southeast of the intersection of  
State Highway 24041 and State Route 66  
**LOLETA** Marienville Vicinity  
Elk County  
Pennsylvania

U.S.G.S. Marienville East Quadrangle  
U.T.M. Coordinates:  
17.660280.4584880

Significance: Constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps between the years of 1933 and 1936. The CCC work project was initiated by President Roosevelt to put young men to work while at the same time assisting in the national conservation of the state and national forests and parks. The rustic style of architecture is unique to the CCC work project and is evident on the bathhouse.

Description: The bath house is located in the day use area of the Loleta Recreation Area. The bathhouse measures 48'10"x15'11" and is rectangular in shape. The exterior of the structure has half-timbered logs of uniform shape and sizing set in a horizontal pattern. The ends of the logs are angled and fit snugly onto the 1" thick framing. The structure has four entries on the north facade. The doorways measure 6'8"x3'4". There is 8'7" distance between the two central doorways. 12' separates the end doorways from the central doors. This is symmetrical on both east and west facades. The two central doorways are flush with the facade and the east and west end doorways are recessed with new concrete footing. The east and west end doorways are positioned 1'7" from the edge of the building. The overall front facade is symmetrical and has balance in its fronting. The front facade has a porch centered with the gabled portion of the structure. This porch measures 18'8"x6' and is of poured concrete. The porch overhang is supported by four log supports which have log braces attached to the porch overhang. The log supports measure 7'5" high and are 2'4.5" round. The support braces are 26" long. The framing supports are set within the concrete pad and do not have separate bases. The east end of the porch has had a wheelchair ramp added with an iron hand rail. The ramp measures 6'9" in length and is 5'11" wide. The hand rail is 2" round and is positioned 2'9" high from the top of the concrete base. The windows on the structure consist of two sizes. The two north facade and two south facade windows measure 6'1"x24" and are aluminum frame with screens which pull inward on bottom hinges. The east and west facade windows as well as two central south facade windows measure 3'4"x24" and are also aluminum frame with screens. The entire structure has metal screens placed underneath the roof overhangs to allow for ventilation throughout the structure. These appear to be of the original design. The east and west portions of the structure were originally two separate buildings with pyramidal roofs. These two structures were joined with a central addition which has a gabled roof line. All of the roof is covered with asphalt shingles which have been placed over the bark shingles. The exposed roof joists are 5" wide and are angled cut. The roof edge displays gutters and downspouts which are of a later period. A central chimney is evident on the central gable ridge line and is made out of brick which is topped with cut fieldstone set in mortar. The foundation of the two original structures has a 2"

concrete base as oppose to the 8" concrete base in the middle addition. The interior of the bathhouse has undergone renovation in 1979. The original work and the work completed in 1979 have been removed from the interior. A central wall divides the structure in half. This wall was installed to divide the structure into two separate bathhouses for men and women. The flooring of the structure is concrete and there is no evidence of the foot bath having been installed. Toilet holes are located in the central portion of the structure next to the central interior wall. The interior walls are horizontal wood, being the backside of the cut horizontal logs which make up the exterior facade.

History:

In 1933, work began at the Loleta Recreation Area for the Allegheny National Forest by the CCC camp located near Marienville. On June 26, 1935, Company 2329 was established in a tent camp near the Big Salmon Bridge in the Allegheny National Forest approximately four miles from Marienville. In September, 1935 the company abandoned the tent camp and moved into barracks constructed one mile closer to Marienville. In May of 1936, projects included the improvement of the Loleta Forest Camp located six miles southeast of Marienville. Land was cleared for campsites, trails forged, phone lines installed, stationing of lifeguards at the swimming pond and landscaping were conducted.

The bath house was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps between the years of 1933 and 1936, according to blue line drawings performed by the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. The CCC constructed many bath houses within the National Forests which offered swimming ponds. The bath houses served as changing rooms and toilet facilities for the day use visitor to the recreation area. The bath house is situated next to the swimming pond created between the upper and lower dams spanning Millstone Creek. A sandy beach separates the structure from the fresh water and offers the day visitor a spot to rest.

The original bath house plans show two separate, square shaped buildings with hipped roofs with a central gabled section which houses the toilet facilities. The square shaped sections houses separated the changing facilities for men and women. Once the recreation area construction was completed, the central gable section was finished. This information was obtained from historic photographs which show the bath house in the original two separate buildings while construction was commencing and with the central gable section after the dams were completed.

The bath house underwent rehabilitation in 1979 according to blue line drawings. More toilet facilities were added, wash sinks, changing stalls and benches were installed within the structure. The exterior saw the addition of new braced doors, down spouts, and a wheelchair ramp for the disabled. A concrete porch which spans the east facade was added to accommodate the wheelchair ramp.

In 1991-1992, the interior of the bath house was gutted. All fixtures, interior wall treatments, benches and plumbing were removed. This removal was performed to prepare the structure for the installation of a museum which would interpret the sawmill town of Loleta and of the work performed by the Civilian Conservation Corp. As of this date, no work has been conducted on the interior.

Sources:

A. Historic Photographs: Photographs of the Loleta Recreation Area HABS No. PA-5963 show several views of the bath house during construction of the recreation area. The photographs show the bath house in its original two building construction as well as the completed three bay structure. The dating of the photographs and the photographer is unknown. All of the original

photographs are located at the United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service - Allegheny National Forest Supervisors Office in Warren, Pennsylvania.

**B. Architectural Drawings:** Loleta Forest Camp Bath House Floors and Foot Bath original drawing dated July 8, 1935, and signed by Paul V. Wakefield; Forest Camp Bath House original drawing dated May 26, 1936 and signed by L.T.B. (2 pages); Loleta Bath House Rehabilitation plans dated October 30, 1979 and signed by A.R. Fleching (3 pages). Also refer to the Loleta Recreation Area HABS No. PA-5963 documentation for landscape design plans depicting the location of the bath house. All of these drawings are located at the Allegheny National Forest Supervisors Office Map Room in Warren, Pennsylvania.

**C. Additional Sources Checked:** Elk County Courthouse; Elk County Historical Society; Forest County Historical Society; Marienville Public Library; National Association of Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni 2329 Files, St. Louis, Missouri; Oral Interview with Michael Schultz, Historian; United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service 1993 Allegheny National Forest Supervisors Office Cultural Resource Files; Warren Public Library.

Historian: Deborah L. Dobson-Brown, M.S., Archaeological Services Consultants, Inc., 1993