



Civilian Conservation Corps Park Road Signs

Introduction

Between 1933 and 1941 Pima County's Tucson Mountain Park (TMP) was transformed by the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). In 1961 the northern half of TMP became the Tucson Mountain District (TMD) of Saguaro National Monument.

Evidence of this transformation is everywhere in the park. The CCC took existing two-track roads, widened, graded, and landscaped them, and made them suitable for the average family automobile. They created all five of the picnic areas at TMD, three at TMP, and many of the trails, such as Hugh Norris, the trails now called Sendero-Esperanza, the Wasson Peak Trail, and a few trails that are no longer used. Almost all of their efforts can still be seen today. But there is one class of feature that the CCC built at TMP/TMD that longer exists. The existence of these features is documented only in a few old photographs. These are the park road signs

Description

As can be seen in the photograph at upper right, the CCC constructed many road signs for the park. In fact, there are 32 road signs noted on the 1937 Master Plan Map of TMP, there are historical photographs for only 12 of these signs. Of these 12 road signs, only nine have been identified as to location. None of these road signs exist today, but some of the historical photographs contained distinct topographic features that made locating and repeat photography possible.

The signs have a consistent appearance: one or two support posts made from saguaro ribs, probably with a concrete core, (much like the roof supports found at the park's ramadas) with hand-wrought metal hardware. The sign itself was a wood plank that was hand-lettered, first by burning the letters into the wood and then painting-in the letters. All of the hardware was made from iron that was hand-wrought on a forge at Camp Pima.

These signs were typical of the NPS Rustic architecture from that period. In fact, two of the parks signs which



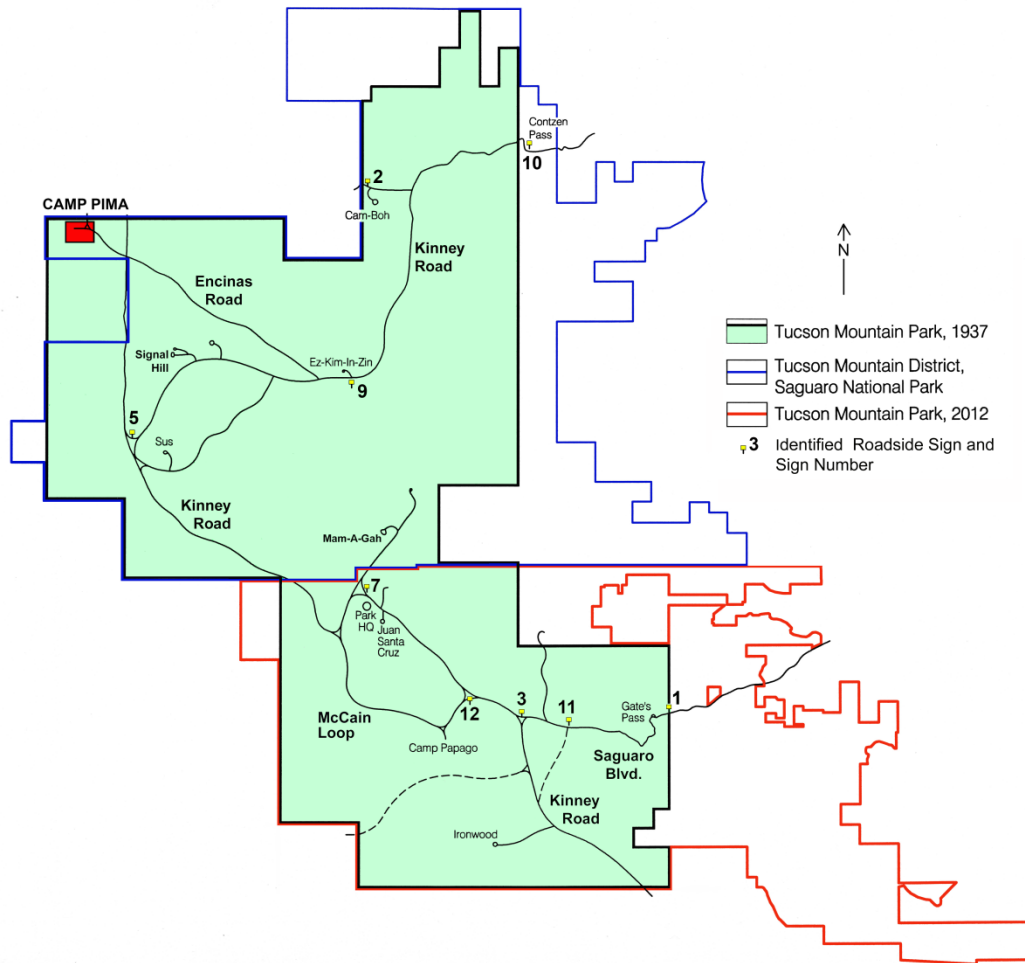
Photograph of men from Camp Pima with roadway signs that were to be used along the roads in TMP. Note adobe building in the background. This building is probably Feature 6, the garage and shop building. (Courtesy of Harold David Kennedy).



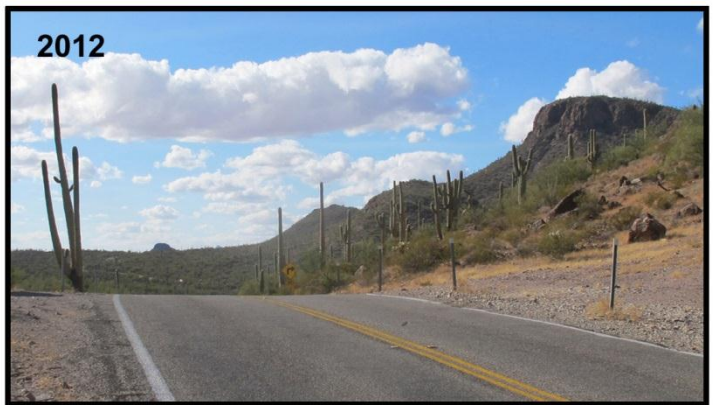
Historic photograph of CCC road sign. This one is labeled #12 on the accompanying map. Note saguaro rib posts, hand-wrought iron hardware, and hand lettering.

“successfully exemplify” this form were illustrated in Wood’s 1938¹ publication on NPS Rustic architecture. The signs, with their saguaro rib posts, hand wrought iron hardware, and hand lettering were created to blend in to the environment of the Sonoran Desert (see Resource Brief on NPS rustic style architecture).

Cultural Resource Brief



Map of TMP/TMD showing the locations of the nine identified road signs. The locations of road signs 4, 6, and 8 have not been determined.



An example of repeat photography; entrance sign to Tucson Mountain Park along Golden Gate Road at Contzen Pass, looking west. Left: photograph taken in the 1930s with CCC entrance sign; Right: photograph taken in 2012 showing same area as in the 1930s photograph.

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¹ Wood, Albert H.
1938 *Park and Recreation Structures; Part I.* National Park Service,
United States Department of the Interior.