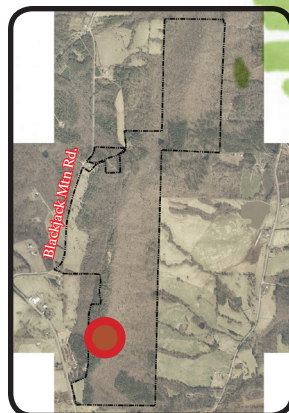
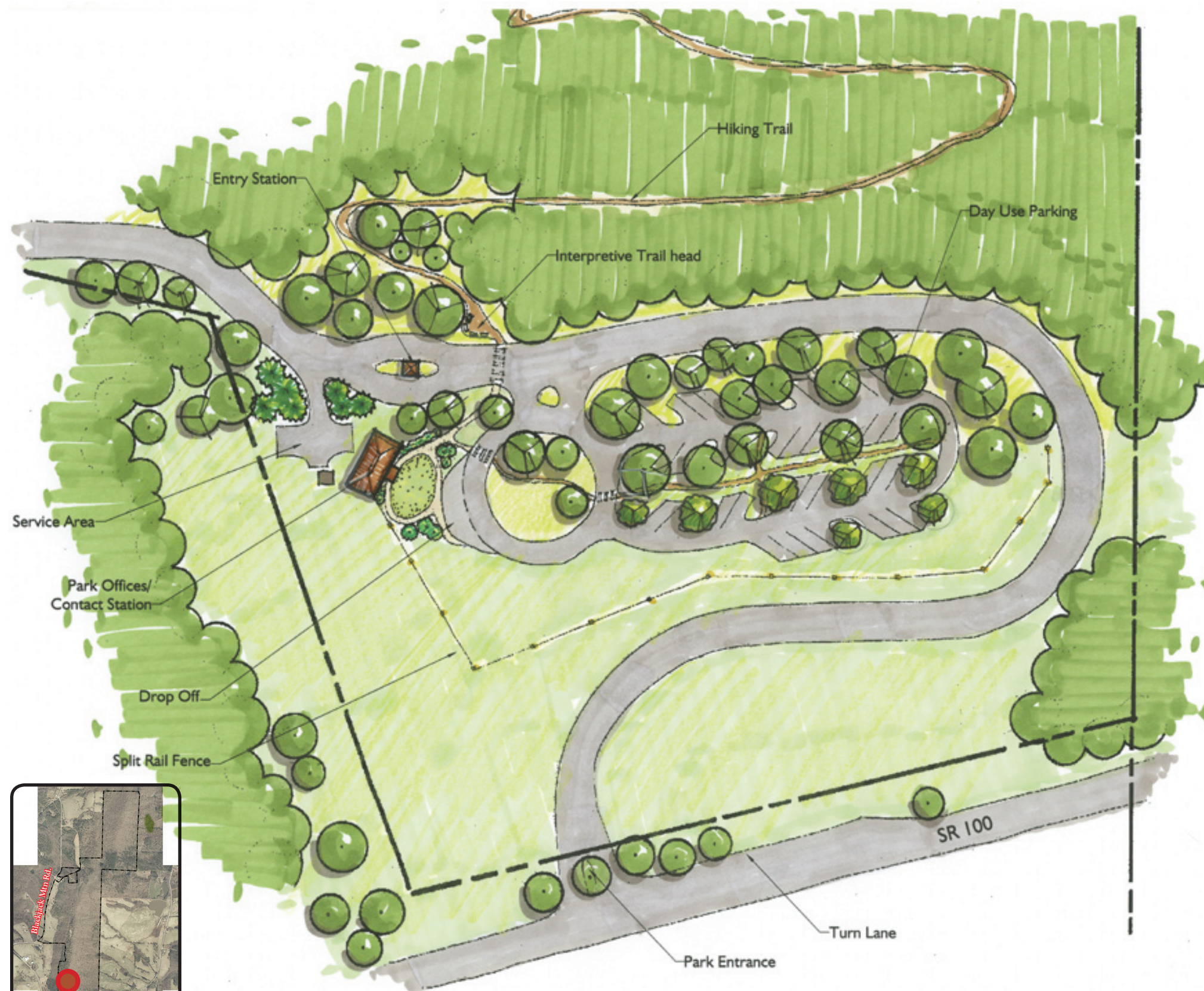


VISITOR CENTER

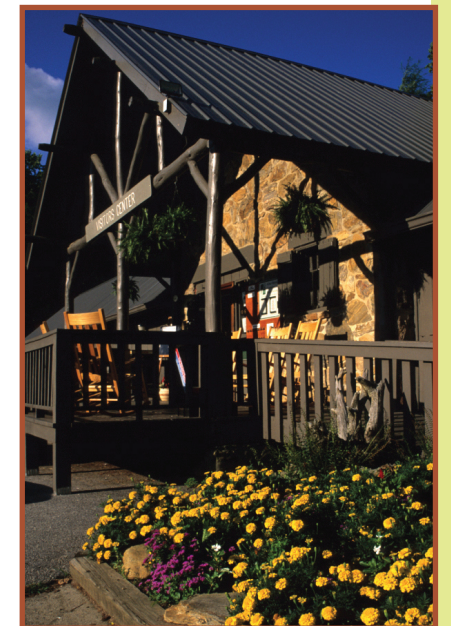
CONCEPT PLAN



VISITOR CENTER:

A park office and Visitor Center will be necessary once the park is fully developed. Until then a temporary structure will be acceptable, such as a trailer or other inexpensive building for managing the park. The Visitor Center will serve the following functions:

- Park offices and possibly as an emergency management or police substation for the County.
- Provide information to park visitors, issue backcountry camping and equestrian riding permits, and possibly provide a convenient place for hunting seminars and issuance of hunting licenses for this area of the county. (Hunting should be prohibited in the park due to safety issues).
- Provide refreshments, restrooms and a first aid station.
- The Visitor Center will serve as a security checkpoint as well, as park gates could be installed at the roadway to the summit and a fee collection booth can be considered.



*Architectural Styles
For Visitor Center*

Blackjack Mountain Master Plan

PARK ENTRANCE DEVELOPMENT:

The small pasture located on the Carroll/ Heard County line is directly accessed from SR 100. The pasture is the best location for access to the park and for the development of a park visitor center, offices, access control, parking area and trailhead.

The pasture has commanding views of the mountains in Alabama and may be a scenic destination in itself. The proposed entrance has good sight distance but a right turn lane off of SR 100 will be required (possibly a left turn lane as well) in order to obtain a curb cut permit from the Georgia Department of Transportation. The steep slope of the pasture should be preserved, and any roadways will follow the gradient of the land gradually making its way around the hill to the

Visitor Center.

A parking area will be located at the edge of the woodland and should be designed to have gravel parking spaces set within existing trees. The naturalized appearance of the parking area will increase the aesthetic nature of the park entrance area.

Architectural Styles For Visitor Center



Typical Parking Area

HIKING TRAILHEAD:

Leading into the forest from the Visitor Center will be the major hiking trail head which leads to approximately 8.5 miles of hiking trails around the mountain. It is not recommended that this trailhead be used by equestrian users, as a separate trailhead and service area will be provided in the pasture. The trailhead will have a significant interpretive shelter with maps, safety information, and facts about the ecology and geography of the mountain.

GROUP AND BACKCOUNTRY CAMPING:

In addition to providing permits for use of the observatory, group and backcountry camping can be allowed by permit as well. Special regulations will need to be identified to prevent overuse of park features, waste disposal (pack in and out is recommended) and for visitor safety. The group camp areas should be limited to the picnic area on the summit, and backcountry sites should be located along hiking trails.

HIKING AND EQUESTRIAN TRAILS:

Before the County purchased the Blackjack Mountain property, volunteers began establishing equestrian trails on the mountain. Until park infrastructure is developed, the County should continue to encourage volunteer support in developing a series of hiking/equestrian trails throughout the property. Routing of trails should be carefully considered, as trails along steep slopes need to take into account erosion issues and overall difficulty or ease of use.

The trails should be multiple use except for hiking access at the visitor center, where equestrian parking will not be allowed. Due to the sensitive nature of the landscape and the steep topography, mountain biking should not be allowed within Blackjack Mountain.

SUMMIT DEVELOPMENT:

The development of the summit of Blackjack Mountain will be an expensive endeavor, but could become a tourist attraction as special facilities are developed on the mountain top. The summit is intended to be developed in the rustic style of state and national parks from the 1930's, with stonework and structures emulating the craftsmanship of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and Works Progress Administration (WPA) of the New Deal.

SUMMIT ROAD:

The park property currently owned by the County straddles the ridge to the top of the mountain. The location of this area should be verified for the ease of construction of a road along the ridge top and not on the edge of the ridge line. Additional property may be required to provide an

adequate buffer between the road and property adjacent. The roadway construction may also require special soil surveys to determine the extent of rock and impact on constructing the road base. The road should utilize stone curbing and steel backed timber guardrails in keeping with the rustic style of the park.



Typical View Of Summit Road

The summit will have a paved parking area surrounded by a paved walking path with interpretive overlooks. The overlooks will be installed on a stone and timber parapet wall to bring visitors closer to the edge of the hilltop.

