

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

MAY 7 1979

DATE ENTERED

approved 8/3/79

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Piscataway Park

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Accokeek

STATE

Maryland

☒ VICINITY OF

CODE

24

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First, Fourth

COUNTY

CODE

Charles, Prince Georges (149)

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT

☐ BUILDING(S)

☐ STRUCTURE

☒ SITE

☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC

☐ PRIVATE

☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS

☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED

☒ UNOCCUPIED

☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED

☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED

☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☒ AGRICULTURE

☐ COMMERCIAL

☐ EDUCATIONAL

☐ ENTERTAINMENT

☐ GOVERNMENT

☐ INDUSTRIAL

☐ MILITARY

☐ MUSEUM

☒ PARK

☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

☐ RELIGIOUS

☐ SCIENTIFIC

☐ TRANSPORTATION

☐ OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

National Park Service, National Capital Region

STREET & NUMBER

1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.

CITY, TOWN

Washington

VICINITY OF

STATE

D.C. 20242

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Charles and Prince Georges County Courthouses

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

La Plata and Upper Marlboro, Maryland

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Accokeek Creek Site (NHL) and Marshall Hall, included in Piscataway Park.

DATE are individually listed in the National Register.

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT

☒ GOOD

☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED

☐ RUINS

☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED

☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE

☐ MOVED

DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

From the prehistoric period to the present, the Piscataway area has contained a mixture of woodland and cultivated cropland with a scattering of low dwellings and farm buildings.

Of note within the boundaries of Piscataway Park are

(1) The Accokeek Creek Site, an archeological site which has yielded evidence of prehistoric occupation through as much as 5500 years and has been designated a National Historic Landmark;

(2) The National Colonial Farm, a project of the Accokeek Foundation to study and interpret agricultural practices of the late 18th century. However, none of the structures or fields is specifically related to conditions onsite in the historic past. Most of the buildings are of recent construction and do not replicate late 18th-century architecture in anything but scale;

(3) Marshall Hall, added to the park in 1975 to complete the protection of the Maryland shoreline visible from Mount Vernon and to phase out the amusement park there. The Marshall Hall residence dates from c.1725. (It and the Accokeek Creek Site have been listed individually in the National Register and are described and evaluated separately.)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
☐ PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION	
☐ 1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☒ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE	
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE	
☐ 1600-1699	☐ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
☒ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER	
☐ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION	
☒ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☒ OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		☐ INVENTION		Scenic protection	

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Piscataway Park is principally significant for its role in maintaining the historic vista across the Potomac River from Mount Vernon. As the only unit of the National Park System established specifically to protect the environment of a privately owned historic property, it is secondarily important as a new departure in the recent history of Federal conservation activity. The park itself is not significant for particular on-site landmarks or features (excepting the separately nominated features referenced in Section 7); its value derives from its general scenic character as viewed from across the Potomac.

"No estate in United America is more pleasantly situated than this," wrote George Washington of Mount Vernon in 1793. Noted visitors to the mansion echoed Washington's admiration. "Toward the east nature has lavished magnificence," Benjamin Latrobe wrote of the prospect from the famous portico in 1796, and he recorded in ink and watercolor the scene of the Potomac and the opposite shore. Julian Niemcewicz described the view even more enthusiastically in 1798: "It is from there [the portico] that one looks out on perhaps the most beautiful view in the world.... It is there that in the afternoon and evening the G1., his family and the [guests] go to sit and enjoy the fine weather and the beautiful view. The opposite bank, the course of the river, the dense woods all combined to enhance this sweet illusion. What a remembrance!"

Although the Piscataway area was occupied in Washington's time, the predominant impression from Mount Vernon, as recorded in Latrobe's sketch, was of a natural scene. Except for Marshall Hall, no structures of the period have survived. By the middle of this century, proposals by private developers to build high-rise offices and apartments and by public authorities to construct a giant sewage treatment facility on the property threatened the view from Mount Vernon. In 1961 Congress authorized the National Park Service to acquire lands and scenic easements to preclude such esthetically intrusive developments. As a result, Piscataway Park now preserves the approximate character of the landscape as seen from Washington's estate, thereby safeguarding a vital and historic aspect of the environment of one of America's greatest shrines.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Anna Coxe Toogood, "Piscataway Park, Maryland, General Historic Background Study," National Park Service, 1969. Contains bibliography.

B. H. Latrobe. The Journal of Latrobe. New York, 1905.

J. U. Niemcewicz. Under Their Vine and Fig Tree. Elizabeth, N.J.

George Washington. Writings of Washington.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 4,216.53

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 324160 4285580
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B 18 325220 4284290
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C 18 325300 4283710

D 18 324540 4282410

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

E 18/323440/4282260 F 18/321080/4282240 G 18/318320/4282580 H 18/317560/4281860
I 18/316850/4282720 J 18/316890/4283680 K 18/322170/4285530

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: The National Register boundary is that of the park. See enclosed land acquisition map (two sheets).

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Maryland	24	Charles	149
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
		Prince Georges	017

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Paul Goeldner, Historical Architect; Barry Mackintosh, Historian 3/12/79

ORGANIZATION

National Capital Region, National Park Service

DATE

(202) 426-6660

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1100 Ohio Drive S.W.

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Washington

D.C. 20242

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION (Park automatically listed in National Register upon authorization by Congress.)

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State X Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

Acting Federal Representative, National Park Service

DATE

4/18/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 4.9.79

ATTEST: Emma Jane Saxe

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 8.2.79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Regional Coordinator