

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 9 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NOT FOR PUBLICATION  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

Charles, Prince Georges (149)

CODE

**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.

are individually listed in the National Register.

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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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			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> 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	1.8	324160	42185580	B	1.8	25220	42184290
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1.8	25300	42183710	D	1.8	24540	42182410

**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 DATE: 3/12/79

ORGANIZATION: National Capital Region, National Park Service TELEPHONE: (202)426-6660

STREET & NUMBER: 1100 Ohio Drive S.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: 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: Harry W. Jones DATE: 4/18/79

TITLE: Acting Federal Representative, National Park Service

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION: [Signature] DATE: 4.9.79

ATTEST: Emma Rose Sore DATE: 8.2.79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
 Regional Coordinator