

CH-668

Piscataway Park, (National Park Service Property)

Architectural Survey File

This is the architectural survey file for this MIHP record. The survey file is organized reverse-chronological (that is, with the latest material on top). It contains all MIHP inventory forms, National Register nomination forms, determinations of eligibility (DOE) forms, and accompanying documentation such as photographs and maps.

Users should be aware that additional undigitized material about this property may be found in on-site architectural reports, copies of HABS/HAER or other documentation, drawings, and the “vertical files” at the MHT Library in Crownsville. The vertical files may include newspaper clippings, field notes, draft versions of forms and architectural reports, photographs, maps, and drawings. Researchers who need a thorough understanding of this property should plan to visit the MHT Library as part of their research project; look at the MHT web site (mht.maryland.gov) for details about how to make an appointment.

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Last Updated: 11-21-2003

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

RECEIVED 7

DATE ENTERED 5/3/79

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

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

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Accokeek

X VICINITY OF

First, Fourth

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Maryland

24

Charles (017) Prince Georges (140)

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS (if applicable)

National Park Service, National Capital Region

STREET & NUMBER

1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Washington

VICINITY OF

D.C. 20242

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Charles and Prince Georges County Courthouses

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

La Plata and Upper Marlboro, Maryland

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

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) Scenic protectio
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

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 G., 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.

DESCRIPTION

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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		

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.)

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.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 4,216.53
 UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	3,241.60	4,218.515.80	B	1,8	8,252.20	4,219.42.90
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1,8	8,253.00	4,218.317.10	D	1,8	8,245.40	4,218.241.0

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
		Prince Georges	017

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

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

ORGANIZATION

National Capital Region, National Park Service

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

1100 Ohio Drive S.W.

(202) 426-6660
TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C. 20242

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

William L. J. King

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

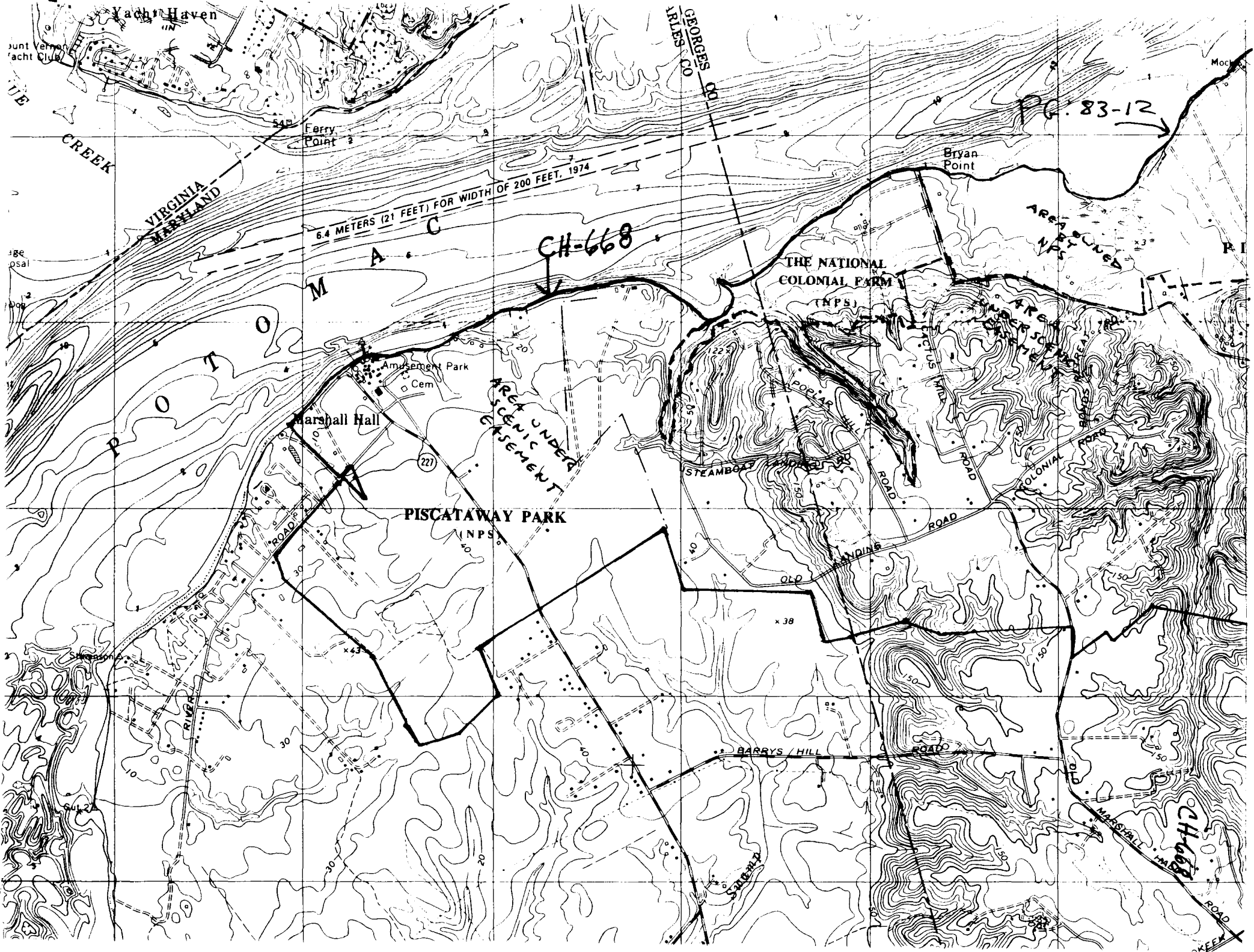
C. Beardsley Adams
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

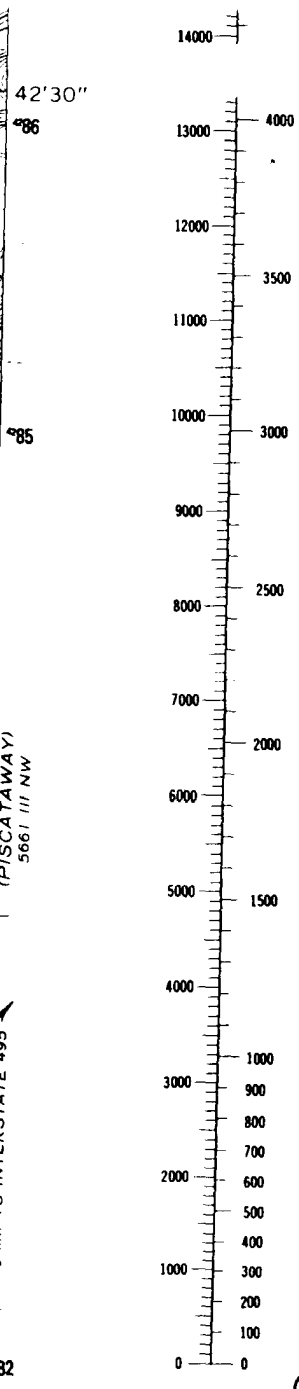
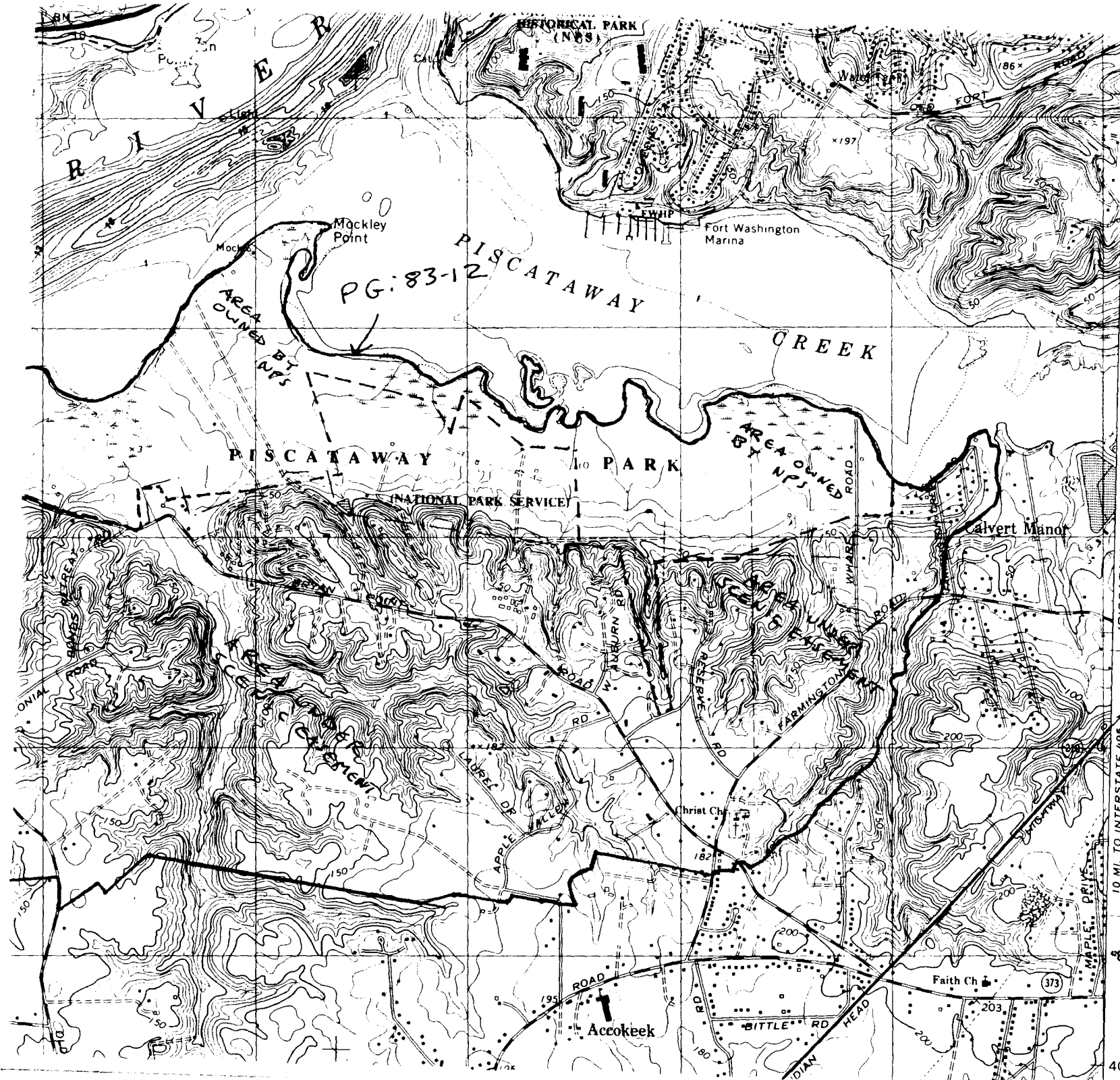
DATE 2.9.79

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER





Feet	Meters
1	.3048
2	.6096
3	.9144
4	1.2192
5	1.5240
6	1.8288

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