Operational Update – FALL 2026

Ongoing Infrastructure Projects

Colonial Parkway Rehabilitation Project

In 2023, the National Park Service (NPS), in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), launched a four-year, $123 million project to restore the historic Colonial Parkway.

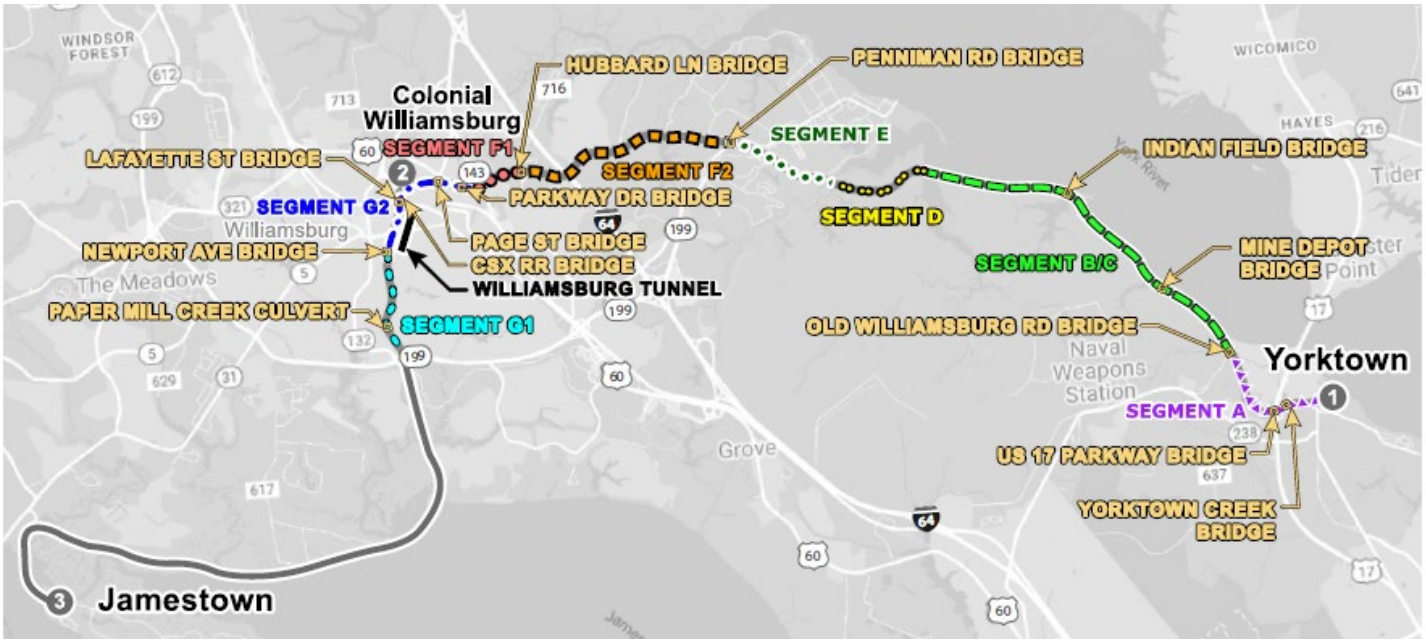
Funded through the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) Legacy Restoration Fund, this project addresses long-standing maintenance needs and represents one of the largest transportation investments in the nation. It is also the first comprehensive rehabilitation of the Parkway since its full length opened in 1957. The goal is to ensure this nearly 90-year-old scenic roadway remains safe, beautiful, and enjoyable for generations to come.

We are excited to report crews have made substantial progress across the project:

- All work in the section between Ballard Street and Fusiliers Redoubt Ramp in Yorktown, and between Hubbard Lane and Newport Avenue (including the Williamsburg Tunnel) in Williamsburg is complete, and these sections are now open.
- Work in the sections between Fusiliers Redoubt Ramp and Penniman Road at 199 in Yorktown, and Newport Avenue and Rt 199 in Williamsburg is almost complete and is expected to reopen later this fall.
- Work in the section between Hubbard Lane and Penniman Road continues. Crews are currently working on concrete pavement panel construction, shoulder grading, and seeding/stabilization.



Side by side images show the different eras of Colonial Parkway construction: on the left, a 1930s Rex Paver mixes local stone and cement to build the original roadway; on the right, a modern cement mixer places a customized concrete.



SEGMENT	Reopening Timeline
SEGMENT A Yorktown to Fusiliers Redoubt Ramp	Open
SEGEMENT B & C Fusiliers Redoubt Ramp to Felgates Creek	Fall 2026
SEGEMENT D & E Felgates Creek to Penniman Road	Fall 2026
SEGMENT F1 Parkway Drive to Hubbard Lane	Open
SEGMENT F2 Hubbard Lane to Penniman Road	Fall 2026
SEGMENT G1 Newport Avenue to Route 199	Fall 2026
SEGMENT G2 Parkway Drive to Newport Avenue	Open

We appreciate the public's patience and support as these once-in-a-generation improvements move toward completion. Updates—including detour and closure maps—will be posted on the project webpage at nps.gov/colo/planyourvisit/colo-parkway-rehab and shared via our email list at COLO_Parkway_Rehab@nps.gov

Navy Bridges Rehabilitation Project

The Navy Bridges Rehabilitation Project is designed to address critical maintenance needs on three bridges along the Colonial Parkway near the U.S. Naval Weapons Station in Yorktown, ensuring their long-term safety, stability and performance. Funded through the Federal Lands Transportation Program and carried out in partnership with the FHWA and the U.S. Navy, this project calls for a full desk replacement of the Mine Depot Bridge, along with repointing, cleaning, sealing, and concrete repairs on the North Naval Pier and Indian Field Creek Bridges.

Work on the North Naval Pier and the Indian Field Creek Bridges was completed last spring. Work continues on the rebuilding of the Mine Depot Bridge. Most of the concrete work has been completed, and workers are continuing with bridge approach work, brick façade replacement, and parapet wall construction. The project is scheduled to be completed later this fall.

Jones Mill Pond Dam Rehabilitation Project

Work is nearing completion on the rehabilitation and safety upgrades to the historic Jones Mill Pond Dam near the Cheatham Annex entrance to the Colonial Parkway. Funded through GAOA and NPS Line-Item Construction, this project is essential to ensuring the long-term stability of the dam and protecting the 600 feet of Parkway roadway that runs along its crest.

Portions of the earthen dam date to the colonial era and were rebuilt during Parkway construction beginning in 1931. The current project brings the structure up to modern safety standards while preserving its historic character.

The contractor is making significant progress, including:

- finalizing all downstream slope stabilization and revegetation;
- stabilizing the soil and repouring the parkway slabs across the dam crest;
- rebuilding masonry guard walls along the dam;
- installing timber guardrails;
- refilling Jones Mill Pond



Concrete block matting installed for slope stabilization.

Once complete, modern armoring, monitoring devices, and new guardrails will reinforce the structure, protect the roadway, enhance visitor safety, and reduce the risk of damage during future high-water events—safeguarding this historic resource and its surrounding natural environment for generations to come.

Historic Buildings in Yorktown

The park continues to prioritize the preservation and restoration of Revolutionary War-era resources. As part of an ongoing effort to revitalize Main Street in the village of Yorktown, the park is awarding contracts to repair and rehabilitate several historic buildings. All work follows the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties to ensure these nationally significant sites retain their historic character.





Dudley Diggs House: during repair to siding (left) and after (right).

Dudley Digges Rehabilitation: Work was recently completed on extensive repairs to the Dudley Digges House, including structural stabilization, basement waterproofing, and HVAC upgrades to replace deteriorated elements and ensure the building's continued use.

Ballard House Repair: Work includes replacing and repainting damaged wood siding, trim, and window sills. The front porch steps have also been repaired and stabilized.

Victory Monument Restoration Project

The Yorktown Victory Monument is scheduled to undergo a major restoration following years of exposure to the elements and damage from multiple lightning strikes.

Funded through entrance fee revenues and generous contributions from supporters, restoration work is scheduled to begin in summer 2027 with completion anticipated by 2030.

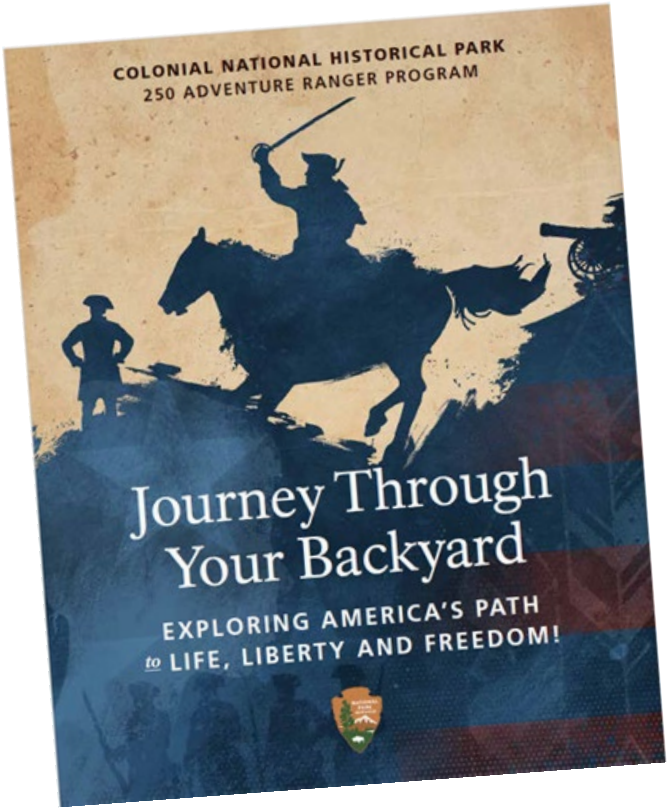
The project will include cleaning and descaling the monument's stone surfaces, installing a modern lightning-protection system to better safeguard the structure, and replacing the existing torso of the figure with a newly carved version designed to improve both historical accuracy and long-term durability.

This significant preservation effort will help safeguard one of Yorktown's most recognizable landmarks and ensure it continues to inspire visitors for generations to come.



Close up of the statue on the Victory Monument showing damage to her hands.

Special Events and Programs



250 Adventure Ranger Program

Earlier this year, the park launched the 250 Adventure Ranger Program to engage visitors in a hands-on exploration of Virginia's American Revolution history in honor of America's 250th anniversary.

Inspired by the NPS's popular Junior Ranger program, participants receive a special adventure book—available exclusively at the Yorktown Battlefield Visitor Center—and travel to partner sites throughout the region, completing interactive challenges and collecting stamps that document their journey through history.

Designed to encourage exploration, curiosity, and civic engagement, the program connects visitors with the people, places, and stories that shaped American independence. After completing the required activities and collecting all designated stamps, participants are eligible to receive a limited-edition commemorative medallion, symbolizing their achievement and connection to America's 250th.

Developed through collaboration with regional partners, the program expands educational opportunities, promotes stewardship, and creates a fun and memorable way for visitors of all ages to experience Virginia's Revolutionary landscape and "collect your stamps, complete your quest, and claim your place in history."

Independence Day in Yorktown

On July 4, 2026, Yorktown provided a fitting backdrop for the nation's 250th Independence Day celebration, welcoming thousands of visitors to experience the nation's history in the place where the ideals of the Declaration of Independence were ultimately transformed into reality.

Throughout the day, visitors enjoyed a patriotic Main Street parade, ranger-led programs, family-friendly activities, and waterfront festivities before gathering at the Victory Monument or along the York River for a spectacular fireworks display.

The event also showcased the strength of partnerships among the park, York County, and gateway community partners. Their collaboration ensured a safe, welcoming, and memorable experience for visitors while bringing America's story to life during this historic anniversary year.



Visitors enjoying the fireworks at the Victory Monument.

Junior Ranger Day

Junior Ranger Day, held during National Park Week in August, welcomed families to Jamestown and Yorktown for a day of hands-on learning, exploration, and fun. Through interactive activities and ranger-led experiences, young visitors discovered the stories, people, and events that shaped our nation's history.

More than 200 children earned their Junior Ranger badges while exploring the significance of Jamestown and Yorktown and connecting with the park in meaningful ways. The event sparked curiosity, encouraged stewardship, and strengthened community engagement with the resources and stories preserved at Colonial.



Interpretive activity on Junior Ranger Day at Jamestown.

Before the Siege Living History Event

For the third consecutive year, Before the Siege immersed visitors in the sights, sounds, and stories of British-occupied Yorktown in 1781. Held September 12-13, the event welcomed approximately 500 visitors and featured living history encampments, military drills, artillery demonstrations, and hands-on activities.

Reenactors portrayed both soldiers and townspeople, offering a firsthand look at daily life on the eve of the Siege of Yorktown. The weekend provided an engaging and educational experience that showcased the park's commitment to bringing the past to life through immersive interpretation.



Reenactors at the Before The Siege event in Yorktown.

Entrance Fees

Colonial National Historical Park requires a visitor entrance pass for all persons, age 16 & older. *This pass provides access to the following resources managed by the park, including the Yorktown Visitor Center and Battlefield Tour Roads, Jamestown Visitor Center, Glasshouse, Island Drive Tour Road, New Town, and recreational access along the Colonial Parkway. For more information: nps.gov/colo/planyourvisit/fees.*

Artillery Demonstrations

Feel the *boom* of History! Through November, volunteer members of the Royal Artillery and Lambs Artillery are conducting live artillery firings at the Yorktown Battlefield Visitor Center on select weekends. Witness the power, precision, and pageantry of Revolutionary War-era cannon firings—an unforgettable experience for visitors of all ages.

Find the full schedule on our website and follow us on social media for updates.



NPS volunteers firing a cannon.



Park ranger presenting a program.

Ranger-Led Programs

Whether you're strolling through Jamestown or exploring the battlefield at Yorktown, let our expert park rangers bring the past to life with engaging guided programs offered year-round.

Programs are scheduled daily at Jamestown and Yorktown. For details, just ask a ranger at the front desk.

Please note: programs are subject to change or cancellation.

Prefer to explore at your own pace? Try our **self-guided walking and driving tours**. And don't forget to ask about our popular **Junior Ranger Program**—perfect for young adventurers!

Hours of Operation

Yorktown Visitor Center	9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Tour roads and grounds	9 a.m. – sunset
Jamestown Visitor Center	9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Jamestown Island grounds	9 a.m. – sunset
Historic Glasshouse	9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

All programs are subject to change or cancellation. For updated information, please reach out to us:

www.nps.gov/colo
www.nps.gov/cajo

COLO_info@nps.gov
CAJO_info@nps.gov

757-898-2410

www.facebook.com/ColonialNPS
www.facebook.com/CaptainJohnSmithChesapeakeNHT

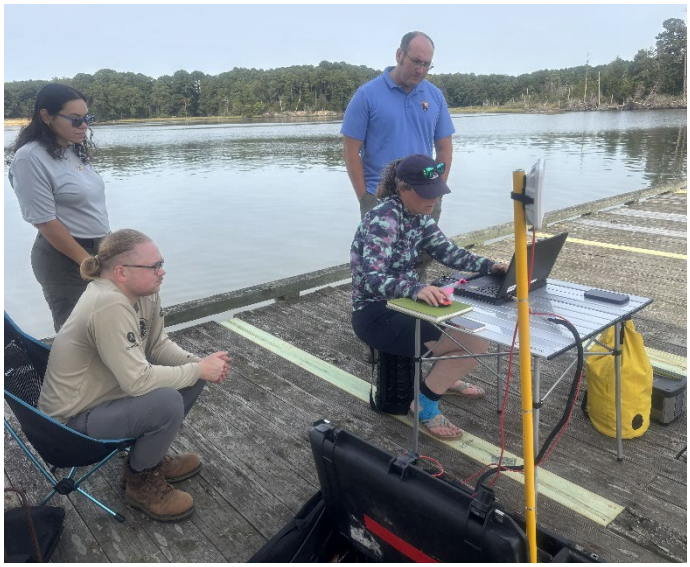
www.instagram.com/ColonialNPS
www.instagram.com/npschesapeakenht

Capt. John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail

Werowocomoco Marine Remote Sensing Survey

Archeologists from the NPS's Ocean and Coastal Resources Program recently conducted a marine remote sensing survey at Werowocomoco to better understand the underwater landscape surrounding this nationally significant cultural site. Using an autonomous surface vessel equipped with a marine magnetometer, side-scan sonar, and multibeam bathymetric scanner, the team surveyed the York River and adjacent creeks bordering the site.

The survey collected detailed geographic information system (GIS) data documenting riverbed and shoreline topography. This information will help park managers evaluate the potential impacts of shoreline erosion, improve understanding of the site's historic environment, and inform future resource management decisions.



Project team surveying the York River near Werowocomoco.

Data analysis and report preparation are currently underway. Once completed, the project team will share the results with affiliated Tribal representatives through a virtual briefing, continuing the park's commitment to collaboration, stewardship, and the preservation of important cultural landscapes.

Outreach, Interpretation, and Stewardship



Interpretive activity at Jamestown.

The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail (CAJO) team remained active throughout the summer, delivering educational programs, supporting outreach events, and assisting with community stewardship projects. Seasonal rangers and an Appalachian Conservation Corps intern developed new interpretive programs on topics including Powhatan culture, Chesapeake Bay geology, Indigenous ornamentation, oyster history, and early navigation techniques, while also creating new exhibits and outreach materials to enhance public engagement.

The team connected visitors with the history and natural resources of the Chesapeake Bay through partnerships and events such as Maritime Craft Schools, Junior Angler programs, the National Parks Passport Collectors Convention, James River Association programs, Junior Ranger Day, and Independence Day activities in Yorktown. Staff also supported archeological investigations, site assessments, preservation work at Werowocomoco, and facility improvement projects throughout the park.

Collectively, these efforts enhanced visitor engagement, expanded educational opportunities, improved park facilities, and strengthened stewardship of the cultural and natural resources associated with the trail.

Volunteers

Community Stewardship Activities

Between July and September, volunteers from partner organizations, student groups, military units, and the local community contributed significant time and energy to advancing the park's mission. Their service and dedication continues to enhance visitor experiences, safeguard park resources, and deepen community connections. The park extends its deepest appreciation and looks forward to continuing these impactful collaborations.

To learn more about volunteering with us, visit https://www.nps.gov/colo/getinvolved/volunteer.htm or email us at: COLO_info@nps.gov.

U.S. Coast Guard Training Center Yorktown

Volunteers from the U.S. Coast Guard Training Center Yorktown (TRACEN) made significant contributions across Colonial throughout the summer and fall.

- On July 4th, ten volunteers assisted with parking and crowd management during Yorktown's Independence Day celebration, helping create a safe and enjoyable experience for thousands of visitors on one of the park's busiest days of the year.
- In July, fourteen volunteers joined park staff at Slabtown to remove approximately 125 cubic yards of invasive vegetation. This work improved habitat for native species and increased visitor access to the area.
- In August, nine volunteers spent three hours cleaning 158 historic grave markers in Yorktown National Cemetery, restoring the visibility of inscriptions and supporting ongoing preservation and research efforts connected to the cemetery's Civil War-era history.
- On National Public Lands Day in September, sixteen volunteers removed more than 10,000 square feet of vegetation from a historic British earthwork threatened by erosion.



TRACEN volunteers cleaning grave markers.



TRACEN volunteers on National Public Lands Day.

Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools

In August, twenty National Honor Society students from Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools participated in a park-wide litter cleanup along the Colonial Parkway and at Yorktown's Beach Picnic Area.

The students collected fourteen bags of trash, helping prevent litter from reaching the James River watershed while creating a cleaner and more welcoming environment for visitors. Their service demonstrated a strong commitment to environmental stewardship and community engagement.



Williamsburg-James City County National Honor Society students.

Virginia Master Naturalists

Members of the Virginia Master Naturalists continued their longstanding commitment to park stewardship through a series of litter cleanup events at College Creek Beach, Archer's Hope, and Glebe Gut.

During July and September, volunteers removed approximately 600 pounds of trash and recycled nearly 20 pounds of glass, helping protect wildlife, improve water quality, and enhance visitor experiences at some of the park's most popular natural areas. Their ongoing efforts continue to make a measurable difference in the ecological health and preservation of park shorelines.



Members of the Virginia Master Naturalists.

Volunteer Recognition Dinner



In July, we honored our incredible volunteers at our annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. Since the previous July, volunteers have contributed more than 8,500 hours of service, supporting visitor engagement, resource stewardship, and park operations across Colonial National Historical Park.

We proudly recognized volunteers serving at our Visitor Center Information Desks, Artillery Crews, and Mobile Maintenance Team, as well as our dedicated partners from the Virginia Master Naturalists, U.S. Coast Guard Training Center Yorktown (TRACEN), and the Fifes & Drums of Yorktown. Their commitment, enthusiasm, and countless contributions help create meaningful experiences for visitors while advancing the park's mission.

Special congratulations went to Randy Punchard, the inaugural recipient of the Superintendent's Excellence in Volunteer Service Award. As leader of the Mobile Maintenance Team, Randy has strengthened park operations, inspired fellow volunteers, and helped create welcoming and memorable experiences for visitors. His dedication, leadership, and spirit of service exemplify the values of the National Park Service.

Thank you, volunteers! Your contributions support every aspect of the park's mission, from preserving historic sites and protecting natural resources to enhancing visitor experiences and strengthening community connections. The time, talent, and enthusiasm you share help ensure that the park remains a vibrant and welcoming place for all who visit.



Pictured left to right: Deputy Superintendent Terry Sims, Randy Punchard, Superintendent Jerri Marr.

Resource Stewardship and Science

Victory Monument Archeological Investigations

Beginning in July, park archeologists conducted the first archeological investigation around the Yorktown Victory Monument to better understand the resources buried beneath the landscape and ensure their protection during modern park operations and special events. Fieldwork, conducted from July 6 through August 18, included 29 shovel test pits and three excavation units and resulted in the recovery of more than 2,000 artifacts spanning from Indigenous occupation through the construction of the monument in the late nineteenth century.



Park interns conducting field work.

The investigation identified several significant features, including an intact four-foot-wide brick feature of unknown function, an oyster shell deposit, and a collection of precontact Indigenous materials. Archeologists also documented evidence of past landscape modifications, including soil disturbances and deep deposits likely associated with Civil War earthworks displaced during construction of the monument.

In addition to advancing scholarly understanding of the site, the project provided hands-on training for 10 summer interns and engaged more than 1,300 visitors through interpretation and public outreach.

Artifact cataloging has been completed, with GIS analysis and report preparation continuing through the fall. Additional ground-penetrating radar (GPR) surveys are planned as part of upcoming National Park Service training activities to further investigate and protect archeological resources surrounding one of Yorktown's most iconic landmarks.



Park staff and intern conducting field work.

Jamestown Island Archeological Investigations

The park recently awarded a contract to conduct Phase II archeological investigations at 42 known archeological sites on Jamestown Island. The project will help identify the sites most vulnerable to loss while evaluating their potential to contribute valuable information for future resource management and preservation planning.

The contract was awarded to New South Associates of Stone Mountain, Georgia, and is expected to span five years, including three years of fieldwork followed by two years of analysis and report preparation. A kickoff meeting was held in September, with the first field season tentatively scheduled to begin in spring 2027.

This effort represents a significant investment in understanding and preserving Jamestown Island's archeological resources, ensuring that critical information is documented and incorporated into future stewardship decisions.

Cultural Resources Fieldwork

This quarter, the Cultural Resources team advanced several important archeological and preservation initiatives across the park.

From July through October, staff conducted approximately 90 hours of archeological monitoring during ground-disturbing activities. Projects included work at the Indian Field Creek Bridge, Mine Depot Bridge, North Pier Access Road Bridge, the Colonial Parkway/Route 199 intersection, and Historic Green Spring. Monitoring ensured that any cultural materials or features potentially affected by construction could be identified and documented. No significant archeological resources were encountered during these activities.

Staff also completed site condition assessments at 78 previously documented archeological sites throughout Yorktown, Jamestown, and along the Colonial Parkway. These assessments evaluated site conditions and identified threats such as erosion, vegetation growth, treefall, inundation, and other natural or human-caused disturbances. While no evidence of looting or unauthorized digging was observed, significant impacts were documented along the southern shoreline of Jamestown Island, where erosion, inundation, and wetland encroachment continue to threaten archeological resources. Two documented sites were found to be completely inundated, underscoring the ongoing challenges posed by shoreline change and rising water levels.

Collectively, these efforts reflect the park's commitment to protecting, understanding, and interpreting its archeological landscape while fostering community engagement and preparing for future landmark initiatives.

Angela Archaeological Collection Rehousing

The park's museum specialist is nearing completion of a year-long project to rehouse the Angela archaeological collection, a significant assemblage that helps tell the story of Angela (sometimes recorded as Angelo), one of the first known Africans brought to English North America.



Coin found at Angela site.

Conducted in partnership with the Jamestown Rediscovery Foundation, the project explored Angela's life, who lived in the household of Captain William Pierce on Jamestown Island in 1625. The project also provided an opportunity to build on the work of African American Civilian Conservation Corps archeologists who first investigated the site in the 1930s.



Artifacts preparing to be cataloged and rehoused.

As the project approaches completion, more than 100,000 artifacts have been organized, cataloged, labeled, and rehoused to improve long-term preservation and research access. The collection includes ceramics, animal bone, jewelry, buckles, buttons, tools, and coins dating from the seventeenth through the twentieth centuries. This work ensures that an important collection documenting multiple layers of African American history at Jamestown remains accessible to future research, interpretation, and education.

Water Quality Monitoring and Resource Stewardship

Park Biological Science Technicians partnered with scientists from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) to monitor water quality where the James and York Rivers meet the Chesapeake Bay. By measuring dissolved oxygen, algae concentrations, and water clarity, staff tracked environmental conditions that serve as important indicators of river health.

This monitoring helps identify changes that may affect aquatic ecosystems, including excess nutrient levels that can contribute to algae blooms, reduce water clarity, limit sunlight for underwater vegetation, and decrease oxygen available for aquatic life. The data collected provides valuable information for understanding long-term trends in water quality and supports ongoing stewardship of the rivers and estuarine resources that surround the park.



Park and VIMS staff conducting water quality monitoring in the James River.

Forest Health Monitoring



Forest scientists from the Schoodic Institute establish plot boundaries.

In August, the park's Natural Resources team partnered with forest health specialists from the National Park Service Inventory and Monitoring (I&M) Network and the Schoodic Institute to observe and learn advanced forest health monitoring techniques used across public lands. Through this collaboration, staff gained valuable training in plant identification, ecological monitoring methods, and data collection practices used to assess forest conditions and long-term ecosystem health.

The experience provided hands-on learning opportunities focused on native plant identification, forest regeneration, and the impacts of deer browsing on understory vegetation. Staff learned to identify more than 30 native plant species and gained a deeper understanding of factors influencing forest health, including the importance of protecting understory communities from excessive herbivory. The knowledge and skills acquired during this training will directly support ongoing vegetation management efforts and plant community assessments throughout Colonial National Historical Park, particularly along the Jamestown Island shoreline.

Artifacts on Display

The park's collections staff collaborated with the Torggler Fine Arts Center at Christopher Newport University to develop *Revolution Close to Home*, an exhibit highlighting Revolutionary War artifacts from the park's collection. Working with Sheri Shuck-Hall, Chair of the History Department and Director of the Public History Center at CNU, staff identified and loaned a selection of Revolutionary War uniform buttons recovered from the Yorktown Battlefield for public display.

Though small in size, these artifacts told a larger story about the international nature of the Revolutionary War, featuring buttons from American, British, and French military uniforms. Recovered during archeological excavations conducted on the Yorktown Battlefield in the 1970s, the objects provided students and visitors with a tangible connection to the people who participated in the conflict.

The exhibit expanded public access to the park's museum collections and demonstrated the value of partnerships in sharing and interpreting the stories of the American Revolution with new audiences.



Revolution Close to Home exhibit at Torggler Fine Arts Center.

Washington Tent Conservation and Preservation



Conservators cleaning the Washington Tent.

In August, two conservators from the National Park Service Harpers Ferry Center visited the park to assess and perform conservation work on the Washington Tent exhibit at the Yorktown Visitor Center. Over two days, the specialists evaluated the exhibit environment, documented the condition of the original campaign tents used by George Washington during the American Revolution, and provided recommendations to improve their long-term preservation.

As part of the visit, conservators conducted a routine cleaning of the tent, carefully removing dust and debris from its surfaces. Following their assessment, the Harpers Ferry Center fabricated new protective materials, which were subsequently installed by the park's museum staff. These improvements will help ensure the continued preservation of this nationally significant artifact and enhance its protection for future generations of visitors.