



Operational Update – SUMMER 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.

The project is in its final phase, with full reopening scheduled for fall 2026. We are excited to report crews are making 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 section between Fusiliers Redoubt Ramp and Penniman Road (at Rt. 199) (Segments B – F) paused in June to allow these areas to temporarily reopen for the summer's Signature 250th events. These segments will close again later this summer so construction can resume and remain on track for completion by fall 2026.

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.



1955 Original Construction



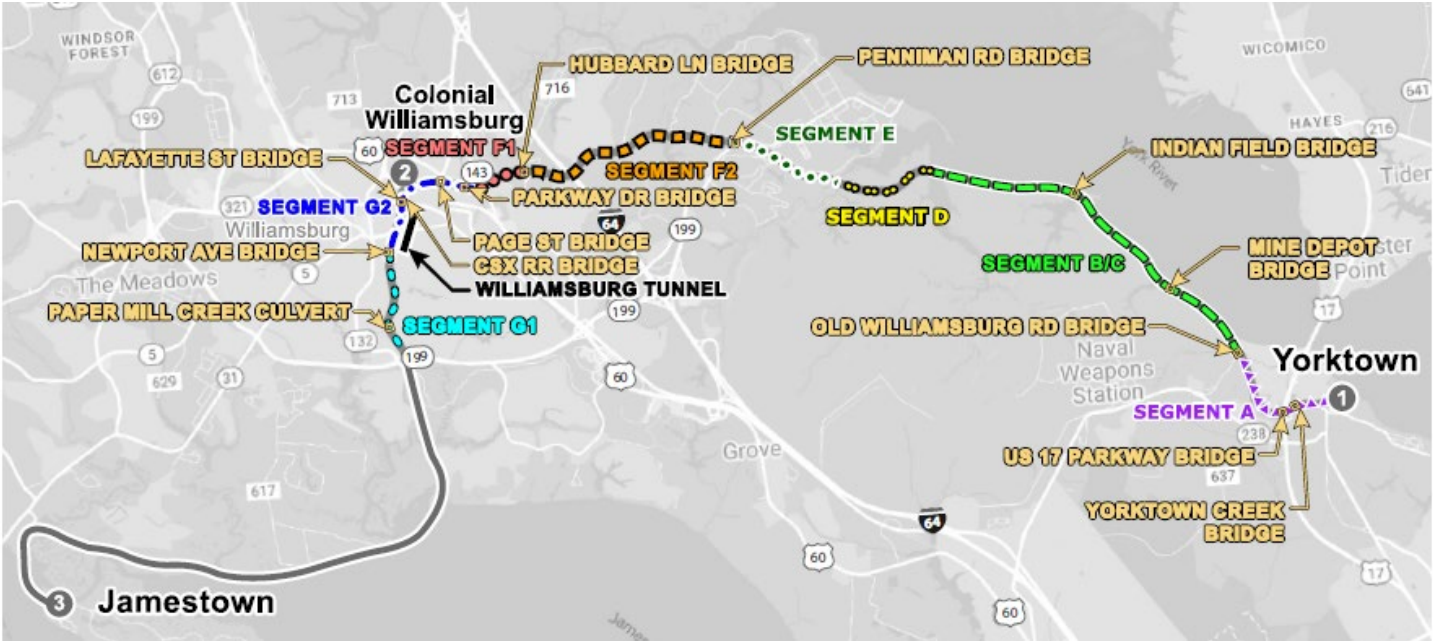
2025 Deck Demolition



2026 Deck Replaced

Yorktown Creek Bridge: original 1955 construction (top); deck demolition in 2025 (middle); deck replacement in 2026 (bottom).

Below is the anticipated timeline for segment openings and closures. Construction has **briefly paused in select areas to accommodate increased visitation during Signature 250th events and will resume sometime after July 20** to stay on track for completion in fall 2026.



SEGMENT	Construction & Reopening Timeline
SEGMENT A Yorktown to Fusiliers Redoubt Ramp	Open
SEGEMENT B/C Fusiliers Redoubt Ramp to Felgates Creek	Closure sometime after July 20 to complete construction. Reopening fall 2026
SEGMENT D/E Felgates Creek to Penniman Road	Closure sometime after July 20 to complete construction. Reopening 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

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 is now complete. Demolition work has begun on the Mine Depot bridge, where visitors may encounter automated signals that alternate one-lane traffic—measures that allow crews to work on, around, and beneath the bridge while minimizing disruptions. Once initial demolition is complete, a full closure with detours will be implemented to rebuild the bridge and address the concrete approaches.

Jones Mill Pond Dam Rehabilitation Project

Work is progressing 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.



Concrete block matting installed for slope stabilization.

The contractor is making significant progress, including:

- nearing completion of upstream slope stabilization and revegetation;
- performing masonry work on the dam and spillway, including cleaning and repointing;
- stabilizing the downstream side and installing articulated concrete block matting;
- installing drainage features, monitoring points, and accessways on the downstream side.

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

As a part of commemorating America's 250th, 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 Digges House Rehabilitation:** Work is underway to conduct 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.
- **Burcher Cottage Siding Repair:** Repairs were recently completed to replace damaged wooden siding on Burcher Cottage. The project included removing and replacing deteriorated sections, repairing additional wooden elements, and applying a fresh coat of paint.



Burcher Cottage before repair to siding (left) and after (right).

Ranger Programs and Special Events

Sail Yorktown Festival



Colonial National Historical Park, in partnership with York County, successfully hosted the Sail Yorktown Festival from June 12–14, 2026, part of the national Sail250® initiative and an official Sail VirginiaSM Affiliate Harbor event. This three-day celebration brought a vibrant commemoration of America's 250th anniversary to Yorktown and drew more than 45,000 visitors to the waterfront and historic sites throughout the park.

Festival programming showcased Yorktown's pivotal role in securing American independence and featured a wide range of interactive experiences. Visitors enjoyed hands-on activities, free tall ship and military vessel deck tours, living history encampments, historic weapons demonstrations, ranger-led programs, special exhibits, and live musical performances. Activities took place across iconic locations including historic Main Street, the Victory Monument, the Yorktown Battlefield and Visitor Center, the National Cemetery, the Moore House, and Redoubts 9 and 10.

The event represented a major operational undertaking for the NPS. The park welcomed 35 additional NPS rangers from units across the country, expanding capacity for visitor services, hands-on interpretation, historic weapons programming, law enforcement, and logistics. In addition, approximately 200 volunteers and partners contributed nearly 1,800 service hours supporting living history, visitor services, activity tents, parking and transit operations, and overall festival logistics. Their efforts ensured a safe, engaging, and meaningful experience for visitors.

The Sail Yorktown Festival successfully highlighted the region's historical, cultural, and maritime heritage while strengthening community partnerships and deepening public engagement in anticipation of America's 250th anniversary. As one of the park's most significant recent programs, the festival stands as a major accomplishment for both the park and the Yorktown community.



NPS staff and volunteers at the Sail Yorktown Festival.



The Fifes and Drums of Yorktown performing at the Victory Monument.



Rangers and volunteers at an Information Tent.



Visitors participating in the Washington's Last Shot interpretive activity.

250 Adventure Ranger Program

This spring, 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 model, the program invites families, students, and history enthusiasts to embark on a regional quest that promotes stewardship, civic awareness, and deeper connections to iconic historic sites.

Participants receive a special adventure book—available exclusively at the Yorktown Battlefield Visitor Center—and travel to designated partner locations across the region to complete interactive challenges and collect unique site stamps documenting their journey. Activities are intentionally open-ended, designed to spark curiosity, conversation, and engagement with the people, places, and stories that shaped American independence.

After collecting all required stamps and completing the book activities, participants are eligible to receive a limited-edition commemorative medallion, symbolizing their achievement and connection to America's 250th.

The program represents a meaningful collaboration among the park and its regional partners, strengthening shared interpretive goals and expanding opportunities for public engagement. By blending exploration, education, and adventure, the 250 Adventure Ranger Program offers a fun and memorable way for visitors of all ages to connect with Virginia's Revolutionary War history—and to “collect your stamps, complete your quest, and claim your place in history”.



York County History Day

On April 11, the park hosted a special open house at the Poor Potter Archeological Site during York County History Day, offering visitors a rare look at one of Yorktown's most significant 18th-century industrial sites. Guests learned how William Rogers—the “Poor Potter”—helped shape the region's early economy and produced the earliest known stoneware in North America.

A highlight of the event was a live pottery demonstration by a partner from the James City County Recreation Department, who crafted reproduction stoneware mugs on site. She added a hand-applied swan motif inspired by a historic mug discovered at the nearby Swan Tavern and believed to have been originated from the original Poor Potter operation. The open house blended archeology, history, and hands-on learning, bringing Yorktown's early industrial story vividly to life for the community.



Pottery demo (left) and mug with swan motif (right) at Yorktown History Day.

Junior Ranger Day at Historic Jamestown

On April 19, the park hosted its annual Junior Ranger Day at Historic Jamestown, offering families a full day of hands-on learning and historical exploration.

Sixty student volunteers from Jamestown High School's Rho Kappa National Social Studies Honor Society supported the event, contributing a combined 360 volunteer hours. Throughout the school year, these students researched Jamestown's history and developed a wide variety of educational activities—including crafts, games, dances, archeology-themed stations, and interactive demonstrations—designed to bring Jamestown's story to life for young visitors.



Jamestown High School students participating in Junior Ranger Day.

Despite cold weather, the event welcomed 426 visitors, with student-led activities reaching up to 200 participants. The volunteers' creativity, preparation, and enthusiasm significantly enriched the visitor experience and demonstrated the powerful impact of youth engagement in interpreting and preserving our shared history. Their dedication ensured a meaningful and memorable Junior Ranger experience for all who attended.

Decoration Day at Yorktown National Cemetery



Gravestones at Yorktown National Cemetery.



Luminaria at grave sites in Masonic Cemetery.

In partnership with the Yorkstar-Zedekiah Masonic Lodge, the park hosted a Decoration Day evening program on May 30 honoring those laid to rest in the Yorktown National Cemetery and the Yorkstar-Zedekiah Masonic Cemetery. Approximately 100 attendees—including community members, descendants, partners, and park staff—gathered for an evening of reflection, remembrance, and shared commitment to preserving the stories of those interred.

Throughout the event, speakers highlighted the ongoing rehabilitation and preservation efforts in both cemeteries, underscoring the shared dedication to caring for these sacred resting places. Participants reflected on the layered history of the two cemeteries and the generations of individuals connected to them and recommitted to ensuring the stories of those interred are neither forgotten nor overlooked.

The ceremony concluded with a moving illumination event. Hundreds of softly glowing luminaria were placed on every grave site—including the 377 previously unmarked graves in the Yorkstar-Zedekiah Masonic Cemetery, identified through recent group-penetrating radar surveys—creating a powerful moment of communal reflection and honoring the lives and legacies of those who came before us.

Pedal the Parkway

On May 2, the park, working in partnership with BikeWalk Williamsburg and the Williamsburg Area Bicyclists, hosted a community recreation event along a seven-mile, vehicle-free stretch of the Colonial Parkway near Jamestown Island.

Despite chilly rain and less-than-ideal weather, families, friends, and solo participants arrived in strong numbers, transforming the Parkway into a joyful procession of bicycles, joggers, and walkers. Their enthusiasm, rain gear, and good spirits set a positive tone for the morning.



Bicyclists on the Colonial Parkway.

Throughout the event, park staff and volunteers engaged visitors with information about the park's history and natural resources, while also sharing best practices for recreating responsibly. The program offered participants of all ages the rare opportunity to experience the scenic, historic Parkway without vehicle traffic, fostering recreation, community connection, and deeper appreciation for the park's cultural and natural landscapes.

The Today Show Visit to the Jamestown Glasshouse



The Today Show filming at the Jamestown Glasshouse.

The segment offered viewers across the country a rare glimpse into one of Jamestown's most enduring trades, highlighting the artistry, skill, and history preserved at the Glasshouse. This national feature elevates public awareness of the park's cultural resources and showcases the immersive experiences available to visitors.

The pre-recorded segment aired on Friday May 16 on NBC, providing a wonderful opportunity for audiences nationwide to learn about Jamestown's craftsmanship and the park's ongoing mission to bring early American history to life.

The park, and our partner Eastern National, welcomed national attention on May 15 when the *3rd Hour of TODAY* visited the historic Jamestown Glasshouse to film a special segment showcasing 17th-century glassmaking techniques.

As part of their trip to Williamsburg, the hosts explored the traditional craft as it was practiced in 1608, taking turns shaping molten glass into a handcrafted mug. Their enthusiasm and genuine excitement brought new energy to the site, creating a memorable moment for the crew and the glassblowers, who are Eastern National employees.



The Today Show hosts with Superintendent Marr and Eastern National staff.



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 Towne, and recreational access along the Colonial Parkway. For more information: nps.gov/colo/planyourvisit/fees.

Artillery Demonstrations

Feel the *boom* of History! Through October, 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.	Jamestown Visitor Center	9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Tour roads and grounds	9 a.m. – sunset	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:



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Capt. John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail

Interpretation, Outreach & Community Engagement



Trail staff at the Sail Yorktown Festival.

This spring, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail (CAJO) team delivered a vibrant season of outreach, education, and partnership building across the Chesapeake watershed. Their efforts reached thousands of visitors, strengthened relationships with both longstanding and new partners, and highlighted the cultural, ecological, and historical significance of the trail through creative and meaningful programming.

Outreach & Public Events

Throughout June, Trail staff participated in multiple outreach events. On June 7, staff attended *Virginia Resolved*, a 250th-anniversary event hosted by Stratford Hall in Stratford, VA, where they shared stories of John Smith, Indigenous homelands, and the Chesapeake's intertwined natural and cultural heritage. On June 18, CAJO partnered with the Waterman's Museum of Yorktown to offer an accessible fish-printing program for disabled adults from The Arc of Greater Williamsburg in celebration of National Go Fishing Day.



Visitors participating in one of CAJO's hands-on activities at the Sail Yorktown Festival.

Later in the month, on June 27, CAJO deepened its engagement with tribal partners by hosting a Maritime Crafts School with the Nansemond Indian Nation, where participants learned traditional skills such as cordage production, net making, and flintknapping—hands-on experiences that illuminated techniques central to Indigenous survival and Chesapeake lifeways for centuries.

The Trail's largest engagement of the season took place June 12-14 during the Sail Yorktown Festival. In partnership with Colonial NHP and York County, CAJO offered interactive educational activities focusing on colonial navigation instruments, Indigenous fishing techniques, and Chesapeake Bay ecology. The team also assisted Colonial's facilities and ground crew by providing historic landscape maintenance in preparation for the event.

Partnerships Across the Watershed

Beyond public programming, the CAJO crew strengthened partnerships across the watershed. The team visited the Deltaville Maritime Museum to exchange interpretive approaches and provide interpretive training. Trail personnel also contributed to important National Historic Landmark nomination tribal meetings at Werowocomoco, one of the region's most significant ancestral landscapes.



Where in the Bay is John Smith Today? activity.

Interpretation at Historic Jamestown

Throughout the season, CAJO staff continued to bring the trail to life at Historic Jamestown through pop-up interpretation on topics such as Eastern Woodlands ornamentation, colonial armor, and the cultural importance of deer. At the Jamestown Visitor Center, they launched an interactive activity—*Where in the Bay is John Smith Today?*—inviting visitors to follow John Smith’s exploratory voyages and add their own travels to a growing wall of shared journeys.

Together, these initiatives reflect CAJO’s commitment to inspiring stewardship, deepening public understanding of Indigenous and colonial histories, and building connections between communities and the Chesapeake places that continue to shape our national story.

Park Internships

This year, the park and the trail welcomed eleven interns from four partner organizations, forming a connected cohort that experienced the breadth of the NPS mission. MobilizeGreen, National Council for Preservation Education (NCPE), Conservation Legacy, and the Appalachian Conservation Corps contributed placements spanning natural resources, cultural resources, interpretation, GIS, and outreach. Working directly with staff across all park programs, the interns gained insight into NPS



COLO and CAJO interns and staff.

operations. They played a major role preparing for 250th events like the Sail Yorktown Festival, supported visitor engagement at both Jamestown and Yorktown, assisted with shoreline and turtle monitoring, and contributed to archeological and resource projects across the park.

The program reflects the Superintendent’s commitment to fostering a welcoming, collaborative environment that supports interns as valued contributors and emerging conservation professionals. Through hands-on work, mentorship, and dedicated career development, interns strengthened practical skills, confidence, and leadership abilities while building connections that support future opportunities—particularly for those pursuing careers with the NPS.

The 2026 cohort represented a wide range of institutions: University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Washington College, Virginia Tech, William & Mary, Christopher Newport University, Dennison University, Bryn Mawr, the University of Texas at Austin, and Virginia Wesleyan. Their energy, perspectives, and contributions enriched park operations during this commemorative year and helped advance the park’s commitment to developing the next generation of land stewards.

Volunteers

Community Stewardship Activities

Between April and June, volunteers from partner organizations, student groups, military units, and the local community contributed significant time and energy to advancing Colonial National Historical 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.

Environmental Stewardship

Environmental stewardship remained a major focus this quarter. The Virginia Master Naturalists led multiple cleanups along the Colonial Parkway, removing nearly 100 pounds of trash in April, May, and June. Their ongoing efforts continue to make a measurable difference in the ecological health and preservation of park shorelines.

Historic Landscape & Site Preservation

Volunteers from the U.S. Coast Guard Training Center Yorktown (TRACEN) contributed substantially to landscape and preservation work. Teams cleared invasive bamboo, removed dense vegetation, and maintained historic landscapes across several sites, including the Moore House Subdivision, Fusiliers Redoubt, Nelson House gardens, and the Yorktown Tour Loop Road. These efforts directly supported visitor safety, historic preservation, and overall site readiness ahead of the busy summer season.

Major Event Support

On Memorial Day weekend, members of Disabled American Veterans Chapter 13 helped prepare more than 2,000 luminary bags for the Yorktown National Cemetery Decoration Day ceremony, reinforcing an important tradition of remembrance. During the Sail Yorktown Festival, 170 volunteers contributed nearly 1,800 hours. Their support—including living history demonstrations, activity and information tents, and logistical assistance—facilitate more than 30,000 visitor interactions and ensured the success of one of the park's largest public events.

Trail Stewardship

Several volunteer efforts supported natural resource protection. On National Trails Day, volunteers and interns cleared trail flagging near former Slabtown in Yorktown, while documenting local wildlife. On May 2, 41 volunteers participated in Clean the Bay Day, removing over 450 pounds of litter from two park locations along the Colonial Parkway—directly supporting the health of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.



Members of the Virginia Master Naturalists.



U.S. Coast Guard Training Center Yorktown students at historic Nelson House on May 16.



Volunteers on Clean the Bay Day on May 2.

Resource Stewardship and Science

Surrender Field Cannon Conservation Project



Artillery pieces on display at Surrender Field.

All eleven artillery pieces have successfully completed their conservation treatments and have been returned to Surrender Field in Yorktown. The cannons underwent offsite preservation work performed by NPS staff and contracted specialists, including comprehensive washing and debris removal, targeted corrosion treatment, and the application of durable protective wax coating designed to ensure long-term stability.

With the conservation process now complete, the artillery pieces are once again available for public viewing. Their restored condition supports the park's ongoing efforts to preserve key Revolutionary War resources and provide visitors with accurate, well-maintained interpretive features that strengthen understanding of Yorktown's historical significance.

Cultural Resources Fieldwork

This quarter, the Cultural Resources team advanced several major archeological and preservation initiatives across the park. On Jamestown Island, staff conducted targeted archeological fieldwork in New Town ahead of planned wayside installations, strategically placing excavation units where new signposts will be installed. These evaluations confirmed that upcoming improvements will not negatively impact the island's sensitive archeological resources. The team also engaged the community by participating in multiple STEAM nights at local Williamsburg–James City County schools, sharing archeological principles and hands-on activities to inspire student curiosity about cultural heritage.

Staff also actively monitored archeological resources associated with construction, interpretation, and rehabilitation projects in Yorktown. This included oversight of sign installations along Main Street and careful monitoring of repair work at the Dudley Digges House to ensure protection of underlying archeological features. The team also launched new fieldwork at the Victory Monument grounds, assessing conditions and documenting resources in advance of forthcoming repairs to the monument. Additionally, staff conducted site-condition assessments across previously recorded archeological sites, revisiting locations to evaluate their current state and identify areas needing attention.

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.



Park intern completing fieldwork on Jamestown Island.

Shoreline Monitoring Program

The park recently launched a comprehensive shoreline monitoring program along key locations of the James and York Rivers to assess conditions, document erosion trends, and guide future protection efforts. The data collected will inform future stabilization projects aimed at reducing bank erosion, improving storm resilience, and maintaining safe recreational access along both rivers.

Severe erosion driven by sea level rise, increased storm frequency, and higher tidal impacts continues to affect shoreline segments adjacent to the Colonial Parkway. These changes pose increasing risks to significant archeological sites and to the long-term stability of the Parkway itself.

This past spring, staff repaired protective fencing surrounding cordgrass plantings to support ongoing shoreline stabilization initiatives. These efforts reflect the park's commitment to understanding and mitigating the impacts of sea level rise on the cultural and natural resources, ensuring the protection of the shoreline both for visitor enjoyment and long-term resource preservation.



Park staff repairing fencing around cordgrass plantings.

Bamboo and Invasive Species Removal Project Continues



The park is continuing a multi-phase project to remove bamboo and other invasive plant species from areas around the Yorktown Battlefield and Historic Main Street. Initiated in 2024, the project targets aggressive non-native vegetation—including golden bamboo, empress tree, Chinese privet, wisteria, and English ivy—that crowds out native plants, degrades wildlife habitat, and alters historic views.



Contractors are allowing previously treated areas to regrow to a height of approximately 4–5 feet before returning for follow-up treatments. Due to the persistence of these species, multiple treatment cycles and hand-cutting will be required over several years to fully restore the landscape. These ongoing efforts support long-term ecosystem health and help preserve important cultural landscapes throughout the village of Yorktown and the surrounding battlefield.

To ensure visitor safety and protect resource restoration work, the park requests that the public avoid posted work zones where debris may be slippery, bamboo stalks sharp, and foot traffic may contribute to erosion or destabilize slopes. Cooperation from visitors helps safeguard both park resources and the people who come to enjoy them.

Yorktown's Great Valley Road before (top) and after (bottom) bamboo areas were treated and removed.