



Operational Update – SPRING 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.

Originally scheduled for completion in June 2026, **the project timeline has been extended to late fall 2026** due to weather delays, added improvements, and the detailed craftsmanship required to preserve the Parkway’s historic character.

- **Additional Improvements:** New GAOA and Federal Lands Transportation Program funding is allowing the park to address major infrastructure needs along the corridor, including rehabilitation of the Jones Mill Pond Dam and full deck replacement on additional bridges—work that will reduce future closures and improve long-term reliability.
- **Aesthetic Character:** Maintaining the Parkway’s distinctive appearance requires exceptional attention to detail. Some completed areas are being refined to meet NPS aesthetic standards, ensuring a consistent, high-quality look that maintains the Parkway’s scenic and cultural integrity.



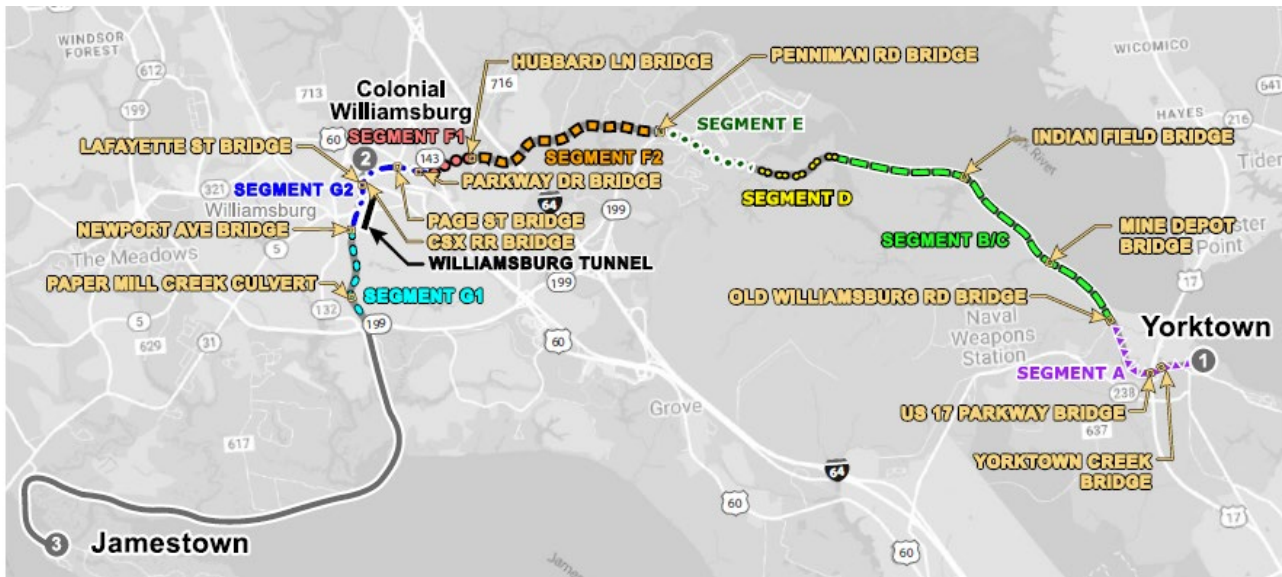
Workers stand on a makeshift bridge and use pressure washers to expose the aggregate in newly poured slabs, creating the historic exposed- aggregate finish.



Crews installing steel girders for the Yorktown Creek bridge.

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.

Below is the anticipated timeline for segment openings and closures. Construction will **briefly pause in select areas to accommodate increased visitation during Signature 250th events**, including the Sail Yorktown Festival (June 12–14) and July 4th festivities, and will resume immediately afterward to stay on track for completion in late fall 2026.



SEGMENT	Construction & Reopening Timeline
SEGMENT A Yorktown to Fusiliers Redoubt Ramp	Opening June 10, 2026
SEGMENT B/C Fusiliers Redoubt Ramp to Felgates Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closure after July 6 to complete construction, bridge work Reopening early Fall 2026
SEGMENT D/E Felgates Creek to Penniman Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Temporarily construction pause to reopen June 10 – July 6 Closure after July 6 to complete construction Reopening early Fall 2026
SEGMENT F1 Parkway Drive to Hubbard Lane	Opening Summer 2026
SEGMENT F2 Hubbard Lane to Penniman Road	Opening November 2026
SEGMENT G1 Newport Avenue to Route 199	Opening November 2026
SEGMENT G2 Parkway Drive to Newport Avenue	Opening Summer 2026

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.

The contractor is making significant progress, including:



Contractors applying articulated concrete block matting.

- Completing installation of rock toe buttresses on the upstream side of the dam
- Finalizing of articulated concrete block matting (ACBM) on the upstream side
- Continuing masonry work on the dam and spillway, including cleaning and repointing
- Stabilizing and preparing the downstream slope for ACBM installation
- 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.

Navy Bridges Rehabilitation Project

Work is progressing on the rehabilitation of the Mine Depot, North Naval Pier, and Indian Field Creek bridges along the Colonial Parkway. Funded through the Federal Lands Transportation Program and carried out in partnership with the FHWA and the U.S. Navy, this project addresses critical maintenance needs across all three structures. The Mine Depot Bridge is undergoing a full deck replacement, while the other bridges are receiving repointing, cleaning, sealing, and concrete repairs to extend their lifespan and improve safety.

To complete this work safely, temporary closures and detours will be required. Visitors may encounter automated signals that alternate one-lane traffic—measures that allow crews to work on, around, and beneath the bridges while minimizing disruptions. FHWA is coordinating closely to reduce visitor impacts.

Historic Buildings in Yorktown

In preparation for America’s 250th, the park is prioritizing the preservation and restoration of Revolutionary War-era resources. As part of a broader vision to revitalize Main Street in the village of Yorktown, the park is awarding contracts for the repair and rehabilitation of several historic buildings.

All work will follow the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties to ensure these nationally significant sites retain their historic character.

- **Moore House Siding Repair:** Work was completed to replace damaged and deteriorated siding on the Moore House. Over time, water had penetrated the wooden siding, causing rot and threatening the structure’s integrity. The project reinforced weakened framing, replaced missing or compromised siding, and installed recessed flashing to protect the building from future water damage.
- **Dudley Digges House Rehabilitation:** The park has awarded a contract for comprehensive repairs to the Dudley Digges House. The project includes structural stabilization, exterior and interior work, basement waterproofing, and HVAC upgrades to replace deteriorated elements and ensure the building’s continued use.
- **Burcher Cottage Siding Repair:** Work is now underway to replace damaged wooden siding on the Burcher Cottage. The project includes removing and replacing deteriorated siding, repairing other wooden elements, and applying a fresh coat of paint.



Moore House during repair (top) and after (bottom).

Ranger Programs and Special Events

250 Signature Events

As the proud stewards of some of America's most sacred historical places, the park is excited to join the nation in commemorating the 250th anniversary of American independence in 2026:



Sail Yorktown Festival • June 12–14

In partnership with York County and local organizations, the park will host a series of family-friendly programs during the Sail Yorktown Festival, an official SailVirginia 2026 Affiliate Harbor event. The festival will feature tall ship and military vessel deck tours, living history programs and artillery demonstrations, family activities, interactive exhibits, and musical performances, including a patriotic performance by the Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra.



Independence Day at Yorktown • July 4

Celebrate America's 250th birthday at Yorktown's annual Fourth of July observances. Events include a parade along Main Street, special ranger-led programs and family activities, and an unforgettable fireworks display over the York River—offering visitors the chance to reflect on American independence at one of the Revolution's most consequential sites.

Yorktown Day • October 19

Join us for the 245th Commemoration of the Victory at Yorktown, marking the 1781 surrender of British and German forces under Lord Cornwallis to General George Washington and his French allies on October 19, 1781—a decisive victory that ended major combat in the American Revolution and secured independence.

This year's observance features artillery salutes, interpretive programs, exhibitions, a parade, wreath-laying ceremonies, and live music. These events provide meaningful opportunities for the public to engage with the 250th anniversary while reflecting on Yorktown's enduring role in securing the nation's independence.



Cannon Demonstrations Return This Spring

Feel the *boom* of History! 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.



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.

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!



Park ranger presenting a program.

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.

Yorktown Day Art Contest Winners

The 2025 Yorktown Day Art Contest centered on the theme “Journey Through Your Backyard: Exploring Yorktown’s Path to Life, Liberty, and Freedom.” Forty students in grades K–12 submitted artwork inspired by Yorktown’s history, landscapes, and community traditions, reflecting both the town’s role in the American Revolution and its ongoing connection to the ideals of freedom and independence.

Park visitors voted on the entries across grade categories, and non-monetary awards were presented to the top artists. Leyla Pinner of Bruton High School received Best in Show for her watercolor depicting a ship firing cannons during the siege of Yorktown. Her artwork was selected for the park’s 2026 Annual Pass.

A sincere thank-you goes out to all the talented young artists who participated—their creativity brought this year’s theme to life and highlighted the many ways Yorktown’s past continues to inspire its community.



A composite image of all the 2025 Yorktown Day Art Contest winners. Middle image is Best in Show, Leyla Pinner.

Capt. John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail

Collaborative Visit to Werowocomoco Inspires National Historic Landmark Work



Tribal members take in the views along Leigh Creek during the NHL visit.

In January, tribal representatives and NPS staff met at Werowocomoco to tour the site and gather inspiration for developing ideas related to the criteria for the National Historic Landmark (NHL) application.

Tribal members representing five of the affiliated tribes were welcomed by leadership from the Captain John Smith National Historic Trail (CAJO), who expressed appreciation for their continued dedication to the conservation of this important site.

A contracted consultant led the onsite tour, guiding discussions on criteria, periods of significance, boundaries, and contributing resources. As participants walked the grounds and took in views of the York River, they shared insights and ideas inspired by being on the landscape itself.

An NPS historian who specializes in NHL nominations provided an overview of the process and helped participants better understand the requirements for a successful submission.

The day generated a strong exchange of perspectives and renewed energy for the work ahead. For some, it was their first visit to Werowocomoco, and many reflected on the emotional impact of being at the site. The group concluded with unanimous agreement to meet again on site as the next phase of the NHL effort moves forward.

Connections Along the Trail: Canoemobile on the Susquehanna

Now in its tenth year, CAJO continued its support of the Canoemobile program at the Zimmerman Center for Heritage. The Center, which serves as the headquarters of the Susquehanna National Heritage Area and the trail's Pennsylvania visitor center, hosts this on-water learning experience for more than 3,000 fifth graders each year. Over the course of seven to ten days, students from York County, PA, and nearby communities learn canoeing basics and explore the Susquehanna River.

Throughout the day, students rotate between paddling sessions and educational land-based stations led by trail staff, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and other conservation partners. A public day also invites the broader community to participate.

Originally funded through the Every Kid Outdoors initiative, NPS continues to support Canoemobile as a key educational program. It remains a powerful way to connect young people with their local waterways, build confidence in the outdoors, and inspire future stewardship of the trail and the Susquehanna River.



York County, PA fifth graders enjoy the day on the Susquehanna during Canoemobile activities.

Teaching with Sturgeon

CAJO continued its partnership with the James River Association (JRA) and Virginia Commonwealth University's (VCU) Rice Rivers Center to support long-term research on Atlantic sturgeon. VCU has studied these ancient fish in the James River for more than 20 years, using a network of receivers that detect tagged sturgeon as they pass—functioning much like electronic toll readers.



Illustration of an Atlantic sturgeon, a key species highlighted in the trail's education and research partnerships.

Through NPS funding, the trail supported the purchase of two additional receivers and the tagging of 20 adolescent sturgeon, expanding the data available to researchers. The project also funded development of an educational app that will allow JRA and NPS to share real-time tracking data with students and visitors, helping connect the public to the story of sturgeon conservation in an interactive way.

This collaboration strengthens scientific understanding of a threatened species while creating new opportunities for education, engagement, and stewardship.

Volunteers

Community Stewardship Activities

Colonial National Historical Park continued its commitment to community engagement and resource stewardship through several volunteer events in early 2026. These efforts supported invasive plant removal and landscape preservation, with volunteers playing an essential role in advancing projects and strengthening community partnerships.

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

January 19 – Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service

Thirty-seven volunteers from the U.S. Coast Guard Training Center Yorktown assisted park staff with the removal of invasive bamboo near Cornwallis Cave. Their work supported ongoing efforts to protect historic structures and promote native vegetation.

February 14 – Scout Troop 318 Service Project

Thirteen volunteers from Scout Troop 318 worked with park staff to remove flagging tape from wooded areas near the former Slabtown community. Their efforts contributed to site maintenance and helped participating scouts earn their Trail Maintenance badges.



Volunteers on Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service.



Volunteers removing invasive bamboo near Cornwallis Cave in Yorktown.

March 21 – Erosion Control at the Grand French Battery

Thirty-one volunteers from the U.S. Coast Guard Training Center Yorktown and five volunteers from the College of William & Mary helped park staff support erosion control efforts to help protect the park’s historic earthworks. Volunteers built paths, cleared brambles and saplings, and raked away debris at the Grand French Battery at Yorktown. This work also ensured the site’s readiness for upcoming semiquincentennial visitation.



Volunteers building pathways at the Grand French Battery.

Resource Stewardship and Science

Turtle Protection Study on Jamestown Island

Each spring, turtles on Jamestown Island—including tiny hatchlings just an inch long—begin crossing wetlands, forests, and marshes in search of safe habitat. To better understand their seasonal movements, the park is conducting a multi-year study focused on turtle migration and how traffic may affect them.

As part of this research, the park plans to temporarily close the Island Loop Drive to vehicles for six weeks beginning in May. Pedestrians and cyclists may continue using the loop but should watch carefully for turtles on or near the roadway.

Turtle activity increases significantly in spring and fall, and early observations suggest that reducing motor-vehicle access may help reduce turtle mortality. During this test period, park staff will be monitoring the area to learn more about how turtles use the habitat around the loop.



Bicyclist on the Jamestown Island Loop Drive.



New signs posted on the Island Loop Drive.

Visitors can make a meaningful difference simply by moving slowly, staying alert, and using only designated paths.

With seasonal monitoring, temporary adjustments, and the support and assistance of park visitors, the park is working to better understand how to protect turtles on Jamestown Island. The information gathered during this study will help guide future decisions.

Earthwork Preservation at Yorktown

Each winter and early spring, park staff undertake annual mowing operations to care for the historic earthworks at Yorktown Battlefield. Using specialized riding mowers, a tractor with a long-arm flail attachment, and string trimmers, staff spend two to three weeks cutting back vegetation across the earthworks. This routine maintenance helps prevent saplings and other woody plants from taking root, protecting the fragile structures from long-term damage.

Yorktown’s earthworks—original, modified, and reconstructed—represent key moments in the site’s history, from the 1781 siege to Civil War activity and the reconstruction work of the 1930s. These features face ongoing challenges from natural erosion, vegetation growth, and visitor use, making regular maintenance and public cooperation critical to their preservation.



Park staff mowing the earthworks near the Yorktown Visitor Center.

To further protect these sensitive resources, visitors are asked to stay off the earthworks, including freshly mowed areas.

The earthworks are intentionally mowed only once per year to encourage grassy vegetation that helps limit erosion and discourages foot traffic.

Through this annual maintenance, combined with responsible visitor practices, the National Park Service works to preserve Yorktown’s earthworks so they remain protected and meaningful for future generations.