



Operational Update – Winter 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. This work is funded by the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) Legacy Restoration Fund—a bipartisan initiative designed to tackle long-standing maintenance needs in national parks.

This is one of the largest transportation investments in NPS history and the first comprehensive rehabilitation of the Colonial Parkway since its full length opened in 1957. The goal is simple but vital: to ensure this nearly 90-year-old scenic roadway remains safe, beautiful, and enjoyable for generations to come.

Over the last few months, the contractor has accomplished multiple milestones:

- New concrete poured in the Williamsburg Circle area.
- Installation of another large culvert near the Jones Mill Pond Dam.
- Major progress in the Williamsburg Tunnel, including new lighting.
- Cleaning and repointing of numerous Parkway bridges.
- Tree planting along restored stream areas.
- Removal of the old Yorktown Creek bridge, installation of new girders, and preparations to pour the new deck when weather allows.
- Ongoing concrete replacement—over 80% of slabs in the project area are being renewed.



New lighting and panels installed inside the Williamsburg Tunnel.

For your safety, as well as the safety of the construction crew, please follow all posted closures, detours and safety signage.

For updates and detour/closure maps, please visit our website: nps.gov/colo/planyourvisit/colo-parkway-rehab or join our email list: COLO_Parkway_Rehab@nps.gov.

Jones Mill Pond Dam Rehabilitation Project

The park recently received funding to rehabilitate and upgrade safety features on the historic Jones Mill Pond Dam, located near the Cheatam Annex entrance to the Colonial Parkway. Portions of this earthen dam date back to the colonial era. It was rebuilt and strengthened during the original construction of the Parkway, which began in 1931. Today, the dam supports approximately 600 feet of Parkway roadway along its crest.

The contractor is making significant progress, including:

- Lowering the water level in Jones Mill Pond.
- Installing rock toe buttresses on the upstream side of the dam.
- Preparing the site for articulated concrete block matting (ACBM).
- Cleaning all masonry on the dam and spillway.



Contractors preparing for rock toe buttresses installation.

Funded by a combination of NPS Line-Item Construction funding and the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA), this project is critical to ensuring the long-term stability and safety of the Jones Mill Pond Dam and the Colonial Parkway. By armoring the dam to modern standards, installing monitoring devices, and adding new guardrails, the park will be able to closely track the dam's condition, protect the roadway, and enhance safety for all travelers. These improvements also help reduce the risk of environmental damage in the event of flooding or overtopping, preserving both the historic structure and the surrounding natural resources for future generations.

Navy Bridges Rehabilitation Project

Work has begun on a project to rehabilitate 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 effort will address critical maintenance needs on all three structures. Work includes a full deck replacement of the Mine Depot Bridge, while the other bridges will undergo repointing, cleaning, sealing, and concrete repairs to extend their lifespan and improve safety.

To complete this work safely, some closures and detours will be necessary. Visitors may notice automated signaling devices that allow alternating one-lane traffic. These measures ensure the contractor can work safely on, around, and beneath the bridges while minimizing disruptions for travelers. FHWA is coordinating efforts to reduce impacts on visitors and anticipates the project will be completed by June 2026.

Historic Buildings in Yorktown

In preparation for America's 250th, the National Park Service is prioritizing the preservation and restoration of physical resources linked to the Revolutionary War and its legacy. As part of a larger 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, ensuring that projects preserve the historic character of these nationally significant sites.

- **Moore House Siding Repair:** Work is underway to replace damaged and deteriorated siding on the Moore House. Over time, water has penetrated the wooden siding, causing rot and threatening the integrity of the structure. This project will reinforce any weakened framing and replace missing or compromised siding. Recessed flashing will also be installed to protect the siding and framing from future water damage.
- **Dudley Digges House Rehabilitation:** The park has awarded a contract to rehabilitate the Dudley Digges House. The project includes exterior and interior repairs, structural stabilization, basement waterproofing, and HVAC system upgrades. Work will replace deteriorated elements, reinforce critical framing, and restore interior walls to protect the building and ensure its continued use.
- **Burcher Cottage Siding Repair:** Slated to start this winter, this project will fund the replacement of any inappropriate and/or damaged wooden siding on the Burcher Cottage. Work will include removing and replacing damaged siding, replacement of other wooden elements, and a fresh coat of paint.



Damaged siding removed from Moore House.

Ranger Programs and Special Events

We the People: A Yorktown Battlefield Event

On Saturday, September 20, visitors gathered on the historic grounds of the Yorktown Battlefield for an extraordinary event—a special sneak peek screening of acclaimed filmmaker Ken Burns’s documentary, *The American Revolution*.

Presented in collaboration with WHRO Public Media, York County, the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, and the VA250 Commission, the evening featured never-before-seen excerpts highlighting the pivotal events of the Siege of Yorktown.

Before the screening, visitors enjoyed an afternoon of Revolutionary-themed fun at the Revolutionary Festival, which offered hands-on history activities, live music, and a festive atmosphere for visitors of all ages. This memorable experience was made possible through the partnership of the park and local supporters, creating an unforgettable celebration of history and community.



Revolutionary Festival activity.



U.S. Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps.



Visitors attending the event.

Yorktown 1781: Before the Siege

On September 6–7, Colonial National Historical Park brought history to life during Yorktown 1781: Before the Siege, a powerful living history event held along Historic Main Street and at Redoubts 9 and 10.

Visitors were immersed in the sights and sounds of daily life for town residents and British troops in the weeks leading up to the Battle of Yorktown. Park rangers and living history reenactors offered a vivid glimpse into the past through black powder demonstrations, militia drills, camp life, and more—creating an unforgettable experience that connected guests to the pivotal moments of America’s fight for independence.



NPS volunteers firing muskets.

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 Visitor Center on select weekends through November. Witness the power, precision, and pageantry of Revolutionary War-era cannon firings—an unforgettable experience for visitors of all ages. **Check our full schedule on our website and follow us on social media for updates.**



NPS volunteers firing a cannon.

Ranger-Led Programs

Whether you’re strolling through Jamestown or exploring the grounds of Yorktown, let our expert park rangers bring the past to life with engaging guided programs offered **year-round!**

Programs run daily at **10:30 a.m.** and **1:30 p.m.** at both locations. For details, just ask a ranger at the front desk.

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!

Please note: programs are subject to change or cancellation.



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	8 a.m. – sunset	Jamestown Island grounds	8 a.m. – sunset
		Historic Glasshouse	9 a.m. – 5 p.m.



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](https://www.nps.gov/colo/planyourvisit/fees).

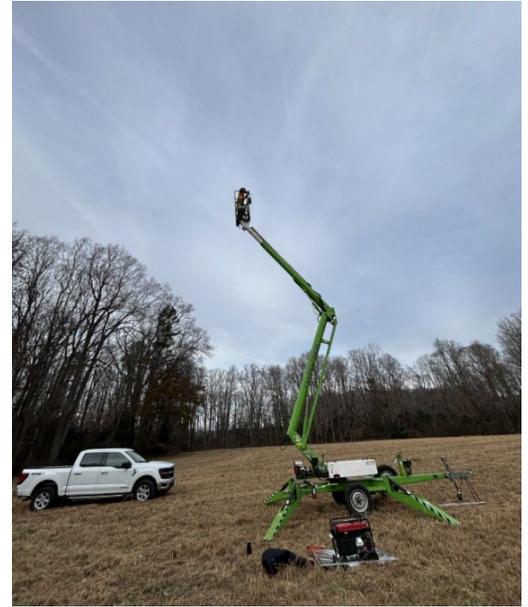
Capt. John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail

Mapping History at Werowocomoco

During the week of December 14, Capt. John Smith Chesapeake National Historical Trail staff worked with scientists from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) at Werowocomoco to create detailed maps using a special tool called LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging). LIDAR uses lasers to measure the land, and in this project, the camera was attached to a drone.

For several days, USGS pilots flew drones over the site, taking pictures and collecting data. A ground team, including park staff, helped guide the flights and manage operations.

Over the next few weeks, the team will study all the information gathered. The result will be high-resolution maps that show changes in the land's shape. These maps may reveal old trails or places where people once lived. They will also give more details about the natural landscape. This work will help trail staff better understand how the land was used in the past and guide how they care for Werowocomoco in the future.



USGS Remote pilots improve their line of sight at Werowocomoco by using a 50' lift.

Volunteers

Celebrating Our Volunteers



In August and December, the park hosted Volunteer Appreciation events to honor volunteers who served 16 or more hours in 2025. These gatherings celebrated the incredible dedication of our volunteers, recognized the impact they make, and thanked them for sharing their time and talents with the park throughout the year.

In FY2025, volunteers contributed a remarkable **total of 6,616 hours of service**. This included 414.25 hours from youth volunteers and 631.5 hours from active-duty military and veterans. Their efforts spanned a wide range of activities—welcoming visitors at front desks, presenting programs and artillery demonstrations, maintaining landscapes, removing invasive species, conducting historical research, and supporting special events.

Thank you, Volunteers! Your hard work helps preserve history, protect resources, and create unforgettable experiences for all who visit.

Bamboo Removal Volunteer Days

On July 19 and August 2, Colonial National Historical Park received incredible support from 80 volunteers from the U.S. Coast Guard Training Center Yorktown and Joint Base Langley-Eustis. Together with park staff, they tackled vital landscape restoration in historic Yorktown.

The team focused on removing bamboo and other invasive plants near Great Valley Road and restoring the hillside between the Victory Monument and Tobacco Road Trail. Their hard work is essential to preserving the park's natural beauty and protecting its historic views for all visitors to enjoy.

A huge thank you to everyone who rolled up their sleeves to make a difference. Your efforts help keep this special place healthy and beautiful for generations to come.



Bamboo removal along Great Valley Road.



Bamboo removal along Tobacco Road Trail.

Wreaths Across America at Yorktown National Cemetery

On Saturday, December 13, the park hosted the annual Wreaths Across America ceremony at Yorktown National Cemetery. This national event honors America's veterans by speaking their names aloud and placing wreaths on their graves.

Yorktown National Cemetery holds 2,204 burials, including Union and Confederate soldiers and civilians from the Civil War era—747 known and 1,436 unknown. This year, more than 650 participants gathered on a crisp winter day to take part in the solemn ceremony and help decorate over 1,500 graves.

The event was organized in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard Training Center Yorktown and supported by dedicated volunteers and community members. Their efforts ensure that the sacrifices of America's veterans are remembered and honored.



Wreaths Across America ceremony.

Resource Stewardship and Science

National Cemetery Rehabilitation Project



SCA crew resetting gravestones at Yorktown National Cemetery.

From September 2 through November 26, a crew from the Student Conservation Association (SCA) completed a major rehabilitation project at Yorktown National Cemetery, funded by a grant from the National Park Foundation. Their mission: excavate, align, raise or lower, and reset severely misaligned grave markers to restore the cemetery’s historic design.

After receiving specialized training on the cemetery’s original layout and proper techniques, the crew worked diligently—even through a lapse in federal appropriations—to ensure the project stayed on track. Their professionalism and respect for cultural resources were evident throughout the process.

The results exceeded all expectations. The team reset more than 600 grave markers, nearly one-third of the cemetery, far surpassing the original

goal. Rows of sunken, root-disrupted markers were transformed into neat, dignified lines that honor those interred at Yorktown National Cemetery.

Colonial National Historical Park is deeply grateful for the SCA’s contributions and the lasting impact of their efforts at this important site.

Mid-Atlantic Invasive Plant Management Team Site Visit

In September, the Mid-Atlantic Invasive Plant Management Team (MAIPMT)—a unit based at Shenandoah National Park that supports invasive plant control across 23 National Park Service sites in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia—visited Colonial National Historical Park.

During the visit, the team treated several invasive species, including Chinese wisteria, golden bamboo, Chinese privet, kudzu, paper mulberry, and Japanese honeysuckle. They also surveyed additional areas in Yorktown for future treatment projects, focusing on sites near the Yorktown Visitor Center, where bamboo, wisteria, and jetbead are present.

These efforts are part of an ongoing strategy to protect native landscapes and historic views. The team will return in 2026 to continue annual invasive plant management work.



MAIPMT treating invasive species near Yorktown waterfront.

Geophysical Study at Dudley Digges Area



Geophysical study near the Dudley Digges House.

This summer, the park completed a geophysical study near Great Valley Road, Cornwallis Cave, and the Dudley Digges House. The project was part of a mitigation effort following the removal of bamboo from the hillside.

The study involved non-invasive archeological testing using advanced Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) technology to scan for potential subsurface features. Supported by NPS interns, the team identified several underground anomalies that may represent historic deposits or structures.

These findings will help guide future excavations and provide valuable insight into an area of the park that currently lacks documented archeological data. This research is an important step toward understanding the site's history and informing how it is managed in the future.

Bamboo and Invasive Species Removal Project Continues

The multi-phase project to remove bamboo and other non-native plants from areas around the Yorktown Battlefield and Historic Main Street is ongoing. Started in 2024, this effort targets invasive species such as golden bamboo, empress tree, Chinese privet, wisteria, and English ivy.

Contractors will allow treated areas to regrow to about 4–5 feet before returning for follow-up treatments. Multiple visits will be needed to retreat and hand-cut regrowth, as bamboo is highly persistent. This process will take several years to fully restore the landscape.

These efforts are important because non-native species spread quickly, forming dense vegetation that crowds out native plants, reduces wildlife habitat, and alters historic views. Removing these invasives will allow native trees and shrubs to return, improving ecosystem health and preserving the cultural landscape.

Please help by staying out of posted areas. Debris can be slippery, bamboo stalks can be sharp, and foot traffic can cause soil erosion and destabilize slopes. Your cooperation keeps both visitors and the park safe.

Surrender Field Cannon Conservation Project

In August, eleven French artillery pieces at Surrender Field were removed from their mounts for conservation treatment. The cannons were transported offsite to allow conservators from the Harpers Ferry Center full access for preservation work.

The process includes washing and cleaning each piece, removing debris, and applying a protective wax coating to safeguard them for years to come.

Originally scheduled for completion within six weeks, the project was delayed due to a lapse in funding and colder temperatures. Conservation work is expected to resume in February or March 2026, with the goal of returning the cannons to Surrender Field as soon as possible.



Contractors removing artillery pieces.